ISSN 2043-0663

Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society

Journal No. 29

(2021)



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Front cover picture:

One of the earliest 'lightweight' caravans that Bertram Hutchings designed, a Maisonette, looking very crude to modern eyes, but highly praised at the time, and now in a public collection.
(©Hampshire County Council, provided by Hampshire Cultural Trust, SH1995.193,DPABLS88)
[see page 9]

Back cover pictures:

Top: Extract from Tithe Map of Millbrook Parish, 1840, (Hampshire Record Office)
Property occupied by Charles Mortimer Wheeler: (underlined in red)
265 Meadow and osier bed, 266 Paddock and garden,
267 House, yard and wharf (canal wharf, presumably), 269 Part of osier bed, 270 Marsh island.
Walter Morrice's shipyard is numbered 278, timber pound 271 and timber yard 288.
(underlined in green). These properties passed to William Sharland in 1843.
Purkis's Wharf must be alongside the orange-coloured road as it approaches the bridge, although it is not identified as such.
[see page 21]

Centre left: Fort Widley, showing the brick tower from which Generals Eisenhower and Montgomery watched the fleet assemble for D-Day.

Centre right: Dock No. 6 being surveyed by Sarah Roberts and Martin Crichley.

Bottom left: Another boatload of visitors arrives at No Man's Land Fort (www.solentforts.com).

Bottom right: VIC56, a restored Royal Navy victualling ship for supplying ships in harbour.
(all illustrations from book by Celia Clark & Martin Marks)

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Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society

(formerly Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group)

Journal No. 29, 2021

Contents

Editorial ……..……..1
The Contributors and Acknowledgements……2
Bertram Hutchings, the Winchester pioneer who built 'houses on wheels' (1911-1959)
Barry Shurlock ……..,……3
The Case of Charles Mortimer Wheeler v the Southampton & Dorchester Railway Company, concerning the Redbridge Viaduct and Purkis's Wharf: a Calculated Risk?
Philip A. Brown ……..……..……..……..……20
Barracks, Forts and Ramparts: Regeneration Challenges for Portsmouth Harbour's Defence Heritage
Celia Clark ……..……..……..……..29

Editorial

Welcome to issue **29** of our *Journal* which contains three articles.

In our first article, Barry Shurlock writes about Bertram Hutchings, a caravan pioneer in Winchester. In the 1920s and 1930s, the 'Winchester' was the Rolls-Royce of caravans and Hutchings' company, with its small factory near the railway station, carried off many awards for its products. Sadly, it fell on hard times after 1945 and closed in 1959.

Philip Brown writes about the impact of the coming of the Southampton & Dorchester Railway on a small business in Redbridge, which lost its access to the Solent when its wharf on the River Test estuary was cut off by the viaduct of the Southampton & Dorchester Railway.

Celia Clark gives us an introduction to her new book, with Martin Marks, on the repurposing of unwanted defence establishments in the Portsmouth area. Publication details of *Barracks, Forts and Ramparts: Regeneration Challenges for Portsmouth Harbour's Defence Heritage* are to be found on page 29.

Martin Gregory
March 2021

Published by the Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society, Registered Charity Number 276898
Edited and produced by Martin Gregory

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ISSN 2043-0663

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The Contributors

Philip A. Brown
A recent recruit to HIAS, Philip was born and grew up in the Southampton Waterside area but now lives in the West Midlands. He spent the first half of his working life in the electricity industry, his final position being Coal Programmer for Powergen, responsible for arranging delivery of half a million tonnes of coal per week to the Company's power stations. With the demise of coal-fired electricity generation he spent the remainder of his career in the education sector. He has a life-long interest in transport history and railway architecture and has contributed to a number of commercial magazines and society journals. He is the current administrator of the Railway & Canal Historical Society's Transport History Book of the Year awards.

Celia Clark
Celia Clark PhD MSc is a writer, campaigner and academic who publishes widely on the history, post-defence planning and futures of former naval and military sites. Her research into local communities' influence on the government's disposal of redundant land focused on historic dockyards: Portsmouth, Plymouth, Chatham and Venice Arsenale. Her Europe-wide report on dockyards was published by the University of the West of England in 2000. She initiated three conferences with the Wessex Institute of Technology to explore international experience of reuse of historic defence sites in Portsmouth, Venice and Alicante. In 2016, with Professor Samer Bagaeen, she edited a book of case studies from Taiwan, China, Holland, the UK and the US published by Routledge: *Sustainable Regeneration of Former Military Sites.* Her new book focuses in Portsmouth Harbour, which contains in microcosm both the many challenges and varied solutions to the transformation of complex historic defence sites to new, locally beneficial new uses.

Barry Shurlock
Barry Shurlock spent most of his working life as a medical journalist. He has had a long interest in local history, is a founder of the Worthys Local History Group, a trustee of the Hampshire Archives Trust and contributes regularly to the Hampshire Chronicle. His published works include *The Speaker's Chaplain & The Master's Daughter: A Georgian Family & Friends,* Winchester, 2014.

Acknowledgements

My thanks are due to all who have contributed to this edition of the *HIAS Journal*. Acknowledgements and thanks for the provision of illustrations are made as follows:

P. A. Brown, (Figures 19, 20, 21); Caravan & Motorhome Club Collection, (Figures 1-8, 12, 13, 16); Celia Clark and Martin Marks, (Figures 22-29, Back cover [centre & bottom]); Hampshire Cultural Trust, (Front cover); Hampshire Record Office [HRO], (Figures 17, 18, Back cover [top]); Carrie Hutchings, (Figure 11); Mike Pettigrew, (Figures 9, 10); George Windsor, (Figures 14, 15).

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Bertram Hutchings, the Winchester pioneer who built 'houses on wheels' (1911-1959)

Barry Shurlock

The leisure caravan business is an international, mass production exercise in the hands of a few companies under the umbrella of the National Caravan Council, based in Aldershot. It started in the 1880s when 'gentlemen gypsies' took to the road in horse-drawn caravans in a display of eccentricity and romance. The advent of the motor car virtually put paid to horses and for a while it seemed that this way of life would be enjoyed in motor caravans, now called motorhomes. But the imposition of a 'horse power tax' eventually made trailer caravans more attractive.[1]



Figure 1. Bertram the caravan designer (Camping and Motorhome Club Collection, 2016-CC-P23)

In 1911, a young man from Winchester called Bertram Hutchings, supported by his new wife, Grace (née Ings) became entranced by 'a life on the road' and in a very short time had designed and had built lighter, more practical models, initially for hire and then for sale.[2] Building caravans, unlike boats or aircraft, is relatively straightforward and over the years has attracted hundreds of 'back of an envelope' designers. But Bertram was never one of those: on the contrary he was always near the top of the league, with a reputation for building the 'Rolls-Royce of caravans'. He really got into his stride after the First World War and thereafter led one of the three most respected companies in Britain. 'Winchesters' were the epitome of design and craftmanship and are now keenly sought by collectors. This paper tells the story of the business Bertram, and later his son Lionel, ran on a small site off Stockbridge Road, Winchester, near the railway station. Registered as Bertram Hutchings Caravans Ltd, 5 Elm Road, Winchester, its letterhead boasted: 'Designers and Builders of Horse, Motor and Trailer Caravans'. Much of the paper depends on commercial literature, but there is no evidence from independent sources that the company engaged unduly in 'salesman's hyperbole'.

Artisans in a cathedral city

Bertram came from two generations of craftsmen. His grandfather had been a cabinet maker and his father a compositor with a well-known Winchester firm of printers and stationers.[3] His mother had lived for three years with relatives in the British Embassy in Madrid and played classical guitar. He was brought up in a terraced house, 12b Romsey Road, in the centre of Winchester, virtually opposite the county council offices. His father had originally thought of becoming a teacher, but opted for print and won prizes for his display work from the *British Printer*. He, like his father, was extremely active in the Ancient Order of Foresters, and the Ancient Order of Shepherds, serving for many years on the Management Board of its South-Western District.[4]

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Winchester in the late Victorian period underwent considerable growth and hosted a huge range of trades and occupations. By the time Bertram had reached his teens, as indicated in the 1901 census, he was a competent musician and had a strong interest in photography, then undertaken with large-plate cameras. He even made light-sensitive paper impregnated with silver nitrate solution and egg-white.[5] Before long he was earning small sums of money by selling prints and postcards. At the age of 15 his father had him indentured as an apprentice compositor with his employers, Warrens.[5] And at about the same time he was appointed organist and choirmaster at a local church in Headbourne Worthy,[6] a move which was to prove of great significance in his caravanning career. Before long he was also playing the organ at the Garrison Church attached to Peninsular Barracks in the city. But the job at Warrens did not gel and before about 1910,[7] probably with the help of his parents, he set up a health food shop or 'food reform' shop, the only one in the city. It was part of movement that has come full circle in modern times – the belief that eating anything but meat is beneficial. In particular, Bertram became involved with, and may have been an agent for, the Fruitarian Society, a strict but quirky branch of vegetarianism which had been founded in 1902 by Dr Josiah Oldfield.[8] An advocate known to Bertram was the Scottish writer Dugald Patterson McDougall Semple (1884-1964), who is credited with co-founding the vegan movement.[9]



Figure 2. Bertram's health food shop Southgate Street, Winchester, early 1900s. (Camping and Motorhome Club Collection, 2016-CC-P301)

Bertram named his enterprise the Winchester & Southern Counties Health Food Company and opened a fine-looking shop, 'The Healtheries', initially at 2a Southgate Street on the south-west corner of St Clements Street and, from about 1913, also at No. 4 alongside. For the next few years it was his parents' home and the focus of the family. His interest in health foods may have come from a personal need to eat carefully. A few years later in a talk to the Jewry Street Literary and Social Union, Winchester, on 'The Fruitarian Diet', he spoke of the 'haphazard vegetarianism of ten years ago, [which] was very different to the scientific food reform of the present day.'[10] It was, no doubt, Bertram the salesman, keen to promote his business at the risk of talking 'quack dietetics'. He also developed an appreciation of the value of 'fresh air' for health, which in turn led him to camping and caravanning. Semple and his followers may have been a trigger, as he himself lived for long periods in a tent, and earned the nickname 'The Hut Man' when he moved to more solid accommodation.[11]

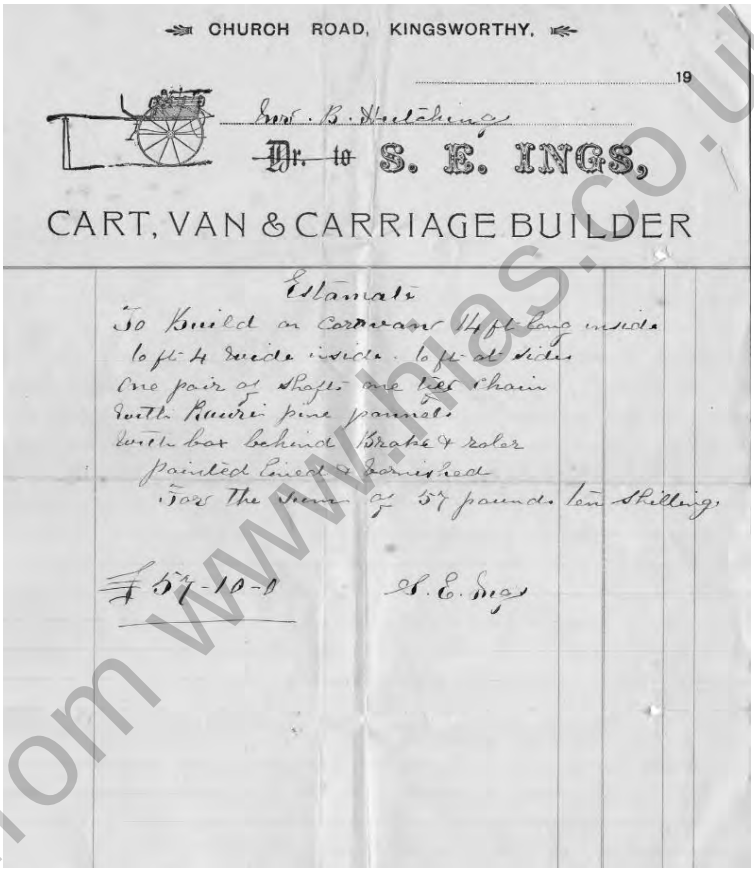
One of the most important consequences of Bertram's time at Headbourne Worthy was that in some way he met and fell in love with Grace Eva Ings, whose father lived in Church Lane in nearby Kings Worthy and traded as a 'Cart, Van & Carriage Builder'.[12] He may also have gained some courage from a great-uncle, Henry Hutchings, who was active as a coachbuilder in Winchester in the mid-19th century.[13] A photograph of the couple taken by Frank, her brother, in Ventnor in 1909 shows a well-dressed confident-looking pair that you

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might well think would 'go somewhere'. Bertram in particular does not look the sort of man who would happily set type in a noisy, messy print room. Two years later they were married and, believe it or not, started their married life in a tent. When the winter closed in, they moved into a caravan drawn by two horses that Bertrand had bought in Ringwood, on the edge of the New Forest. It seemed that Grace shared Bertram's passion for fresh air (and probably fruitarianism) – and, as the daughter of a coach-builder, a caravan might not have been a great surprise.

Many years later Bertram told the story to a patronising *Daily Mail* reporter at the 1938 annual dinner of the British Caravanners' Club held at Café Royal:[14]

> If you want to meet a real pioneer, talk to Mr Bertram Hutchings, a sprightly little man from Winchester, who was living in caravans three years before the [First World] war. For the first six months of their married life, he and his wife shared a tent. Now, with their son and daughter, they spend six months of every year in their caravan and travel between 3,000 and 4,000 miles each summer.


CHURCH ROAD, KINGSWORTHY.

19

Dr. to S. E. INGS,

CART, VAN & CARRIAGE BUILDER

Estimate

To Build a Caravan 14ft long inside
6ft 4 wide inside. 6ft sides
One pair of Shafts one set chain
with Rauri pine panels
with box behind Brake & roler
painted Lined & varnished
For the Sum of 57 pounds ten Shillings

£57-10-0 S. E. Ings

Figure 3. An estimate for one of the first, if not the first caravan built for Bertram by his father-in-law in 1911. (Camping and Motorhome Club Collection, 2017-CC-3.3)

He might have added that their son, Lionel Edgar, was born after two years of marriage. The shortcomings of the Ringwood caravan were crucial to future events. It was a heavy, two-berth 18ft vehicle drawn by two powerful horses, so Bertram decided to design a much lighter van which only needed a single horse. It was 14 ft by 6 ft 4 in (4.3 m x 1.9 m). with 'Rauri' panels, lined and varnished, and built by Grace's father, Sidney Ings, for £57 10s 0d. Much later the doyen of caravan journalism, W. M. ('Bill') Whiteman wrote:[15]

> Weight reduction was explored with even greater thoroughness by a little dapper man with remarkable flair who entered the hiring business … and was destined to become one of the most distinguished men in the history of caravan building: Bertram Hutchings of Winchester.

Before the First World War

Living in a caravan if you were not a Romany at the time Bertram and Grace were doing so was not unknown, but it was unusual. They were pioneers at a time when the leisure caravan was spawning an organized activity served by an emerging industry. The full story is a tangled tale, with camping and caravanning sharing common, but often adversarial, roles.[16] Its roots go back to 1879, when Sir Samuel White Baker KCB, FRS, a larger-than-life explorer and much else, shipped a Gypsy caravan to Cyprus for a tour of the island and later published an account of his travels. Five years later, what is regarded as the world's first leisure touring caravan was ordered by Dr William Gordon Stables from the Bristol Wagon & Carriage Works. It was 18 ft (5.5 m) long and drawn by horses, with a design based on wagons used by travelling preachers in the US. His adventures are described in *Cruise of the Land-Yacht Wanderer*, and the van is now preserved at the Caravan and Motorhome Club Site at Broadway, Worcestershire.

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At a similar time, the lure of 'life in the wild' was attracting 'cycle campers', who were less wealthy than caravanners but sought holidays away from the grime of industrial Britain. In 1878, journeyman tailor Thomas Hiram Holding (1844-1930) founded the Bicycle Touring Club and 20 years later wrote an influential book, *Cycle and Camp in Connemara*, which led to another organization, the Association of Cycle Campers. But for caravans, still drawn by horses, the key year was 1907, when they featured in a travel exhibition held in May in London and the first practical guide was published, *The Book of the Caravan* by L. C. R. Cameron. These happenings sparked the formation of the Caravan Club of Great Britain[16] and Ireland, today named the Caravan and Motorhome Club, a thriving organisation with about a million members and extensive archives hosted by the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu. The prime mover was barrister and journalist John Harris Stone MA, whose book *Connemara & The Neighbouring Spots of Beauty & Interest* had just been published by a little-known company. In 1913 he published a bestseller, *Caravanning and Camping-Out*, with subsequent editions issued until 1931. And leisure caravans started to feature in fiction, in Elizabeth von Arnim's *The Caravaners* [sic] (1909), now back in print, and Marion ('Mollie') Countess Russell's *Five Women and A Caravan* (1911). For a short while from July 1907 three organisations – the Camping Club, the Association of Cycle Campers and the Caravan Club of Great Britain and Ireland – came together as the Camping Union, with shared offices in Charing Cross.[16] But after only two years the campers merged, which ultimately led to the current Camping and Caravanning Club, and The Caravan Club went its own way. The schism no doubt reflected the different needs of 'living under canvas' and having 'a house on wheels', but more fundamentally it was probably a matter of money and social status.

The Caravan Club was extremely active in its early years, arranging dinner-dances and rallies, the first of which took place in 1908 at Ockham, Surrey. Bertram became a member and started to follow his undoubted ambition to be a 'designer and builder of private touring caravans'. According to a press report:[17]

> By 1913 members of the Caravan Club were learning of his activities and pressing him to build specials. When, at the request of the Club, he arranged a meet in the New Forest in 1914, six or seven of the twelve caravans that turned up had the maker's name (Hutchings-Winchester) engraved on the axle caps, and thus he found himself commercially interested almost before he realized it.

His commitment is evident in the most substantial bit of writing he ever did, *Caravanning Made Easy*, a 44-page book which first appeared in 1913.[2] Listed in the catalogue of the British Library, it was professionally published, printed by his father's employers, Warren & Son, Winchester, and distributed in London and elsewhere by Simpkin & Co. Significantly, the book had a preface by fruitarian Dugald Semple, in which he writes of the desire of caravanners to be 'free from the complexities of civilisation', to 'rest a little from the daily routine', to 'live the simplest life under the blue canopy of heaven' and to taste 'a spell of freedom [for] those who are sick of our starched civilisation'. In another mark of professionalism, the booklet carried advertisements: for Emprote, a 'compact food for caravanners'; Mapleton's Nut Foods of Liverpool; caravan fittings from George Wilson of Piccadilly; and, of course, Bertram's shop, The Healtheries, which doubled as an office for the caravan business.

Caravanning Made Easy is still a good read and helps piece together Bertram's move from health foods to caravans: tellingly, he refers to 'the outskirts of Winchester, where the writer and his wife are caravanning all the year round'. In 1936 in an article in *The Caravan* he wrote:[18]

> In 1911 I became bitten with the caravan craze, and I have it as badly now as I did all those years ago, when Mrs Hutchings, then a bride of a few months, sportingly fell in with my whim to live all through the winter in a van we had used for a summer holiday.

He told the story of the van he built a year later, probably using light woods such as silver spruce and white cedar, to replace the heavy and cumbersome two-horse 18-footer:

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> This caravan saw the light of day in early 1912 and was the founder of the 'Winchester' family. …At that time we had relatives in the coach-building business, and their experience and equipment, allied to our enthusiasm, made a very good and presentable job of this pioneer lightweight van.

The 'relatives' no doubt included his father-in-law, the coachbuilder Sidney Ings, who built another van to great acclaim:

> So enthusiastically were these two vans received by such contemporary caravanning celebrities as Mr J. Harris Stone and Captain Harvey Jarvis, the Countess of Shaftesbury and many others that I decided to engage myself seriously in the business of manufacturing caravans.

Bertram's first sales brochure for the business of hiring out the fleet of horse-drawn caravans that he had spirited up was *Caravanning Made Easy*[2]. It was only two years after he had been 'bitten by the caravan craze', though he writes – probably with some hyperbole – that he 'has experimented for several years, and built many vans of various sizes and patterns', including the Maisie, Utopia, Walden and Excelda and Rambler. His fleet for hire in 1913 already included:

> three of the two-compartment [14 ft] (4.3 m) type vans...three light 10 ft (3.1 m) vans similar to the Rambler, two gipsy-pattern vans, and a small pony van very suitable for quick touring.

He recalled that he and Grace 'lived in one van or another until 1914, when they had 15 vans [for hire]'.[17] For a novice he writes with great authority on the business:[2] to hire a van in the summer is 30s-70s, to which should be added the cost of the horse, 20s-25s, its oats, 10s, and a 'driver or man-servant' at 15s-20s, with the same additional cost for food as the horse! He goes into great detail on cooking and heating, recommending specific items such as the Hostess coal stove and the wickless Primus stove. Linking the two businesses he now owned, he advocates health foods and gives a recipe for meals based on nuts, writing: 'Fruit spells health and when man has health of body as well as mind, he becomes a new creature…'. Hampshire was an ideal setting for the caravanner, as 'weeks and months at a time may be spent between Southampton Water and Bournemouth without exhausting its many attractions…. Free and glorious pitches and kind hospitable natives make the New Forest very dear to the man who likes to travel with his house on his back'.

He puffs the virtues of his 'Maisonette' van, an example of which from 1919 is being restored at the Milestones Museum, Basingstoke: [21]

> So popular does this type of caravan seem likely to become, that it is highly probable before the summer of 1914 there will be several more 'Maisonettes' with their noses turned towards the New Forest, that happy hunting ground of make-believe gypsies, which is only twelve miles distant from the workshop in which each one grew from rough timber and hammered iron into a dainty and well-appointed Maison Roulante.[2]

Sometimes, rather than having two heavy horses to draw the van he had only one, with another small pony to take the strain on hills – and he trailed a small gig for trips out from a site, like modern motorhomes trail a small car.

Already he is moving from hiring to manufacturing and writes:

> Frequently we sell a van, and in this way we are able to constantly launch new 'ships' and keep our 'fleet' entirely up to date. …we have an increasing number of friends, who, like ourselves, find caravan life so convenient that a house on wheels becomes their one and only home.

Where exactly his first workshop was situated is not clear – perhaps it was the Kings Worthy yard of his father-in-law – though he reveals that he had bought 'a small farm two miles from Winchester…on which to stand the caravans and turn the horses out to graze [where] we intend shortly to erect new workshops for the building

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of the caravans'.[22] This was almost certainly the premises on the north corner of the entrance to North Drive, with a frontage of 116 ft (35 m) on the Winchester-Littleton road containing a 'shed and other buildings' that appears in a deed of 1913, where he is described as a 'food specialist'.[23] By 1922, in another conveyance involving the Littleton land he had become a 'caravan builder'.[24] Whatever his plans, his workshops eventually settled at 124 Stockbridge Road, Winchester, running back to Fairfield Road. During the first winter of World War II they were destroyed by fire caused by an accident, and had to be rebuilt.[5]



Figure 4. Hutchings motor caravan made for the RN during World War I, parked outside R. Long, Coopers, Western Road, Winchester. (Camping and Motorhome Club Collection, 2016-CC-P129)

Overall, the achievements of Bertram were huge, especially for a man who, according to his grandson 'never did anything practical'! *Caravanning Made Easy* depicts a man who seems to be much more than a newcomer: he writes of the chore of 'voluminous correspondence', but a 'fair return', limited to the summer months, 'a pleasant business helping people to take to a real simple life holiday'.[2] And he adds: 'one meets many unorthodox people whom it is a pleasure evermore to count as friends.' He boasts of an 'unsolicited testimonial' from the man he remembered 25 years later, Captain E. Harvey Jarvis, editor of the caravan section of *C.B. Fry's Magazine*, which was founded by a former cricketer who had a Hampshire link – in 1908 Fry took over the *T.S. Mercury* training ship at Hamble.[25] Years later in a 1927 sales brochure he was still quoting Fry's plaudit: 'Yours Vans are far and away better than any I have seen. Your "Maisonette" Van is indeed a triumph.' It was one of 37 such 'testimonials' cited, including one from Lady Isobel Ryder in September 1914: 'There could be nothing but praise for the "Maisonette", which is most convenient and charming.' And another in February 1927 from Mrs Buckingham in Pontardawe: 'After four months of bad weather in it [a double-wall "Concord" caravan] we are delighted with it.'[19] Praise indeed from some unusual people!

During the First World War.

Although the war of 1914-18 advanced the development of the motor-car, it virtually brought horse caravanning to an end, if only because most horses were commandeered by the military, including twelve of Bertram's. But the logic of a motor was irrefutable: it outperformed the horse, which could only pull a certain weight and travel slowly, needed regular rest periods, had a limited range, and required good supplies of hay and water. Even so, in 1918 the horse caravan showed its value when members of the Caravan Club rallied and sent about fifty vans to France, following a call from Field Marshall Haig, who needed mobile operations rooms and officers' quarters in pursuit of the retreating German army.[26]

Bertram was medically unfit for war, though in 1916 in a tragicomical court case which he won (he was accused of selling a clapped-out horse!) he said that he was 'expecting to be called up by the Army'.[27] Later he wrote about the war years:[18]

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> It seemed that it might be necessary to close down our workshops, which then had a floor area of 1,500 square feet. Soon, however, it became apparent that caravans had many uses for war purposes. Several of our horse-drawn vans were sent overseas for the use of Red Cross detachments and for officers' quarters. In 1915 we built our first caravan body on a motor chassis and this was employed by the Royal Naval Division. Other motor caravans followed and were used in war work of many different kinds. To the writer, who had not been accepted for war work on account of physical disabilities, this was a particular pleasure.

More detail of the story of the near-demise of Bertram's company at the outbreak of war has been researched by Angela Willis:[28]

> Hutchings was thrown a lifeline by fellow [Caravan] Club Member, Commander Eldred, who commissioned a motor caravan for use as a mobile recruiting office by the Royal Naval Division. Hutchings also recognised that the excellent mobility of caravans made them a perfect shelter amidst a front line that was constantly shifting. He sent several caravans from his hire fleet across the channel, where they were used as mobile units for the Red Cross and as officers' quarters. He then continued to build caravans for use near the battlefield throughout the conflict.



Figure 5. An early Hutchings trailer caravan. (Camping and Motorhome Club Collection, 2016-CC-P93)

An uncertain period: 1918-1930

At the end of the First World War there were two major challenges that the emerging caravan industry faced. First, although Bertram and others had shown that during the hostilities the motor caravan was an ideal mobile unit, it was not clear whether the future lay in that direction or with the trailer caravan, the first of which had probably been built in London in 1914 by motoring pioneer Frederick Alcock.[29] Secondly, the wave of enthusiasm that followed the foundation of The Caravan Club in 1907 weakened progressively – hastened by the Depression – and it took until the late 1930s to return. After the war a good deal of cheap ex-WD material became available, and it certainly looked at first as if the motor caravan would win. Cars and lorries were, of course, relatively rare at the time, though even in Winchester there were companies to hand, including the Winchester Motor & Dean's Engineering Company in Upper Brook Street, advertising 'cars for sale and on hire, open and closed'; and Gandy & Son in Parchment Street with 'motor bodies built to customers' chassis'.[30]

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Charles Salter in High Street with his 'steam motor waggon hire' was looking distinctly outmoded. But, although much lighter motor caravans could now be built, they tended to break down, were cramped, and were limited to 20 mph, a restriction which endured until 1931 (maximum towing speed stood at 30 mph until 1958). The final argument in favour of the trailer came in 1920, when the so-called 'horsepower tax' – £1 per hp of RAC engine power – was introduced, in order to disadvantage foreign imports, especially the Model T Ford.[1] Based on the diameter and number of cylinders, it was deliberately devised by the RAC to favour British cars. Although intuitively it also favoured the motor caravan, since a trailer required a more powerful engine, there were other factors, as Bertram recalled:[18]

> We built a large number of them [motor caravans] before it became realized by the public from the motor taxation point of view it is more economical to run a reasonably powerful motor car towing a two-wheel trailer than to run a motor- propelled caravan [and a car].



Figure 6. Bertram and Grace enjoy time away in a 'Lady Nimble' caravan. (Camping and Motorhome Club Collection, 2016-CC-P48)

In about 1920 he and Grace moved with the family to Elmleigh, 5 Elm Road, close to the works and lived there until about 1950. Bertram's first trailer built in 1920 'put him on the map as a commercial caravan builder'.[31] He recalled the advent of the two-wheel trailer caravan (which required purpose-built axles):[18]

> Eccles of Birmingham and Piggotts of Cheapside [makers of camping equipment] began caravan making, and together with ourselves produced caravans of this type within a few months of one another and it seemed clear from the start that this new kind of caravanning had an important future. ... It was a temptation to use converted motor car axles but even 17 years ago we realized their unsuitability!

Eccles is a name that even now is synonymous with 'caravan' and must always have been in the forefront of Bertram's mind. It started in 1919 when father and son, W. A. J. ('Bill') and W. J. Riley, bought an ailing haulage company. Recently retired from retailing, Bill fancied motor caravans, but his son, preferred trailers, which he had seen in action with the RFC during the war. And by the late 1920s the nascent company had demonstrated their potential.[32]

It is important to realize that at the time only relatively wealthy individuals could buy any sort of commercially built caravan. Lower down the scale, many built their own trailers, often with a wooden chassis fixed to the wheels and springs of a written-off car, with walls of plywood or hardboard and a doped canvas roof, mimicking early aircraft. For a decade or so, as well as building trailers, Bertram still sold traditional types of caravan, as he explained: [18]

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> During this transition phase we were building large numbers of our well-known 'Concord' models, many of which are being lived in at the present time. They were 21-footers designed to travel by rail or be drawn by a pair of horses, and we still occasionally get orders for building them. From 1924 to 1930, when the streamlined vogue came in, our most popular trailer caravan was known as the 'Voyageur', a lantern-roof 12-footer that enjoyed a long period of popularity.

As the 1930s advanced, Bertram must have looked with unease at the state of the Caravan Club, which represented the industry. In 1912 membership stood at 267 (about one-third women) and by 1921 it had reached about 700. But by 1933, ravaged by the Depression and other factors, it stood at a mere 80 members – mainly elderly and struggling to embrace the new modern trailer caravan.[16] The downward trend was only reversed in that year by the launch of a new magazine, *Caravan and Trailer*, whose publishers acquired and re-energised The Caravan Club, and by 1937 had boosted its membership to about 1300. Shortly afterwards there was a hiatus when one of the editors founded a competitor title, *Caravan World*, but by 1938 both titles had been bought by Link Publications and merged to create what became the leading magazine, *The Caravan*, which is still going strong. In 1954, The Caravan Club was returned once more to its trustees and members.

'Streamlining': the vintage years, 1930-1939

The term 'vintage years' is taken from *The History of the Caravan* (1973) by Bill Whiteman, dubbed 'Mr Caravan', who for 32 years was at the centre of the industry, 22 of them as editor of *The Caravan*. For Bertram – whom Whiteman called 'that wise old hand'– they spanned a period when his designs took the caravan industry by storm, until the outbreak of the Second World War. The key event came about at the 1930 Motor Show where Bertram unveiled the 'Winchester', a 14 ft (4.3 m) four-berth caravan with a roof that curved down at all four corners – a design that called for the very best in craftmanship. It was not a new idea: several others with knowledge of aircraft design had done the same previously, but Bertram pulled it off at the right time and with unrivalled elegance. Describing the moment, Whiteman wrote:[33]

> When that shrewd judge Bertram Hutchings introduced his 'Winchester' model with [a] profile faired off at both ends, a quiver of excitement ran round. Until then, ideas of what a good caravan ought to look like had been set by the deluxe Eccleses… with square ends, bowed sides and [a] lantern roof.

The model was so successful that thereafter Bertram adopted 'Winchester' as his brand name. Although he had registered the design, as was his practice, copying was inevitable (and perhaps a compliment), so the streamlined look soon became *de rigueur* in the industry and continued to dominate it for decades. Above all, it put paid to traditional 'boxes on wheels', but there were caveats:[34]

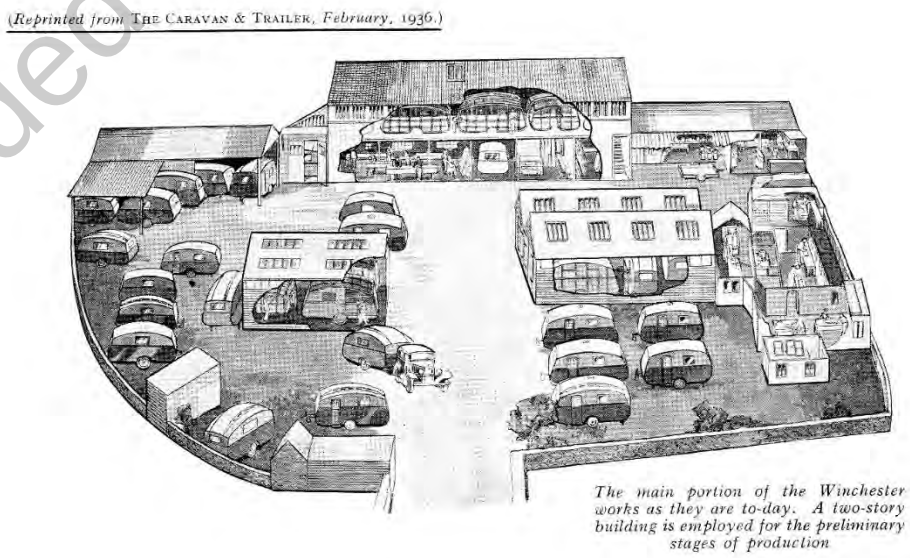


Figure 7. Hutchings' works, Stockbridge Road, Winchester, 1936[18]

> Winchester constructed a streamlined tourer on a lightweight truck chassis: its lines may have been curvaceous, but the conversion did look a bit obvious, as if a caravan body had just been dropped upon the chassis (which is what in fact happened).

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The Birmingham-based firm of Eccles improved the design by better blending the body profile with the chassis. But for Bertram the caravan designer, the 'Winchester' was the equivalent of 'getting a break' in show business, and for the rest of his life he was an undisputed star of the caravan stage.



Figure 8. Hutchings' workforce, Stockbridge Road, Winchester, ca. 1936, with Lionel 2nd left. (Camping and Motorhome Club Collection, 2016-CC-P507)

Rallies and shows were places where caravan builders displayed their wares. In the first competitive trailer caravan rally ever held, organized by *Autocar* on 27th August 1932 in Minehead, the top prize went to an Eccles van, but 'five of the other six awards, for two-berth, three-berth and four-berths caravans were won by streamlined models, and four of them were won by 'Winchesters'.'[35] In the RAC rally held in the spring of 1933 at Cheltenham, the prize exhibits were a 16 ft 'Winchester' and a smaller model by the Cheltenham Caravan Company Ltd, both with a streamlined lantern roof. If any event can be said to be an awakening of the caravan industry it was that, when elegance became the theme – it was a great story for the world's first caravan paper, the *Caravan and Trailer*, which was launched at the same time. At the rally Bertram won a driving and manoeuvrability test with a time of 28 seconds, versus a standard performance of two minutes!

There were many other prizes that Hutchings Caravans carried away. In 1938 at the Caravan Club's rally at Warwick 'the competition successes of 'Winchesters'…were so numerous as to embarrass the judges'.[36] In other ways it was a tragic time, as two years earlier he and Grace lost a young daughter to meningitis. At the 1937 Motor Show the company had 'one of the largest stands in the Caravan Section' and was visited by the Duke of Kent, who was shown 'the marvels of the modern caravan' by Bertram, according to *Caravan World*, which noted that he then employed more than 50 craftsmen.[37] These would have included coachbuilders to build the vans, cabinet makers to fit them out, as well as painters, blacksmiths, and seamstresses. The last employee of the company after its sale was Walt Banting, whose family have memories of 'skilled and respected craftsmen', working to high standards with intricate drawings and the 'pungent smell of wood glue'. It was a happy ship, with works' outings and visits to trade shows in London.[38]

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Trade shows were very important in the life of a successful caravan builder. Bertram had shown as a young man, when he made people 'shake with laughter' with comical songs,[39] that he had an extrovert side and a strong an eye for publicity. The showmanship he honed in many talks on photography (such as: 'Donkeys I Have Met and Shot')[40] were huge assets. There are hundreds of pictures of caravans in the archives of the Caravan and Motorhome Club at Beaulieu, generally taken in picturesque locations. And even at the most basic level, from the beginning he embossed axle-caps, which occasionally crop up on eBay, with 'Hutchings-Winchester' or 'B. Hutchings, Builder, Winchester'.

'Winchesters' came in variety of styles and layouts. An example made in 1935 had two partitions that could be separated by elegant folding doors. [46] There were double berths at each end, with a drop-down sofa-bed at the rear. A galley kitchen had a two-hob gas cooker and sink, with a number of clever features, including a plate-warmer, a sink cover that served as a tray on one side and a chopping block on the other, and a removable draining board. It was supplied with china from Staffordshire custom-designed by Wood & Son, kept in place by rattle-proof, spring-loaded shelving. Hidden under a trapdoor in the floor was an enamel bath – not huge, but fine for a child or even a sit-up wash for adults. There were two generous wardrobes, gas-mantle lighting and a paraffin heater for chilly nights.



Figure 9. Cover of sales brochure, 1932[20] (courtesy of Mike Pettigrew)

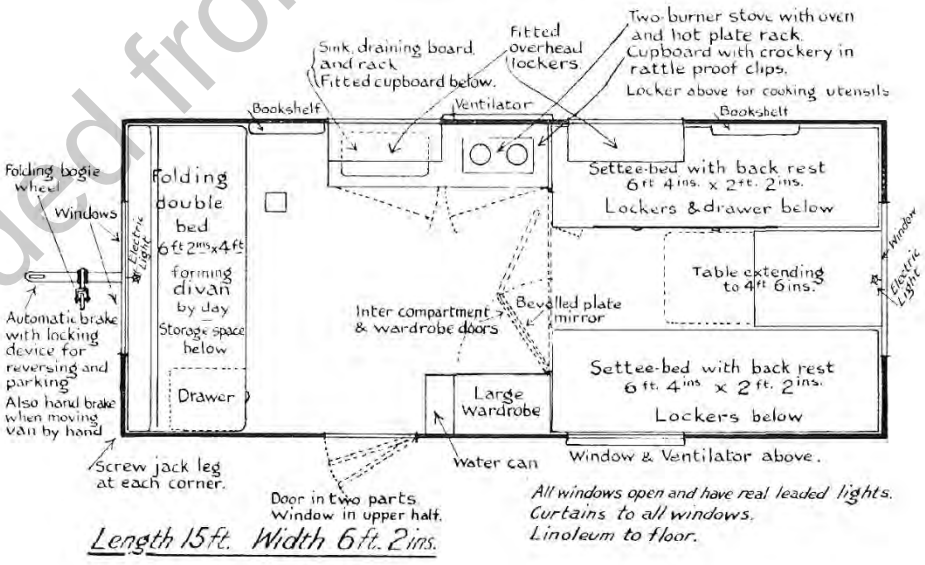


Figure 10. Layout of a 15ft 'Winchester', from 1932 sales brochure[20]. (courtesy of Mike Pettigrew)

As well as elegance and convenience, caravans made in the 1930s exhibited many technical advances. There were improvements in braking; ball coupling and the use of a jockey wheel; prefabricated windows, later made with rounded corners (to avoid accidents!); and bottled gas and other facilities for cooking, lighting and heating. Although the growth of car ownership by less affluent people opened a new market, there were still those who sought expensive and luxurious vans. And Bertram gave them

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what they wanted – 'elegance, superb workmanship and completeness of equipment', as Bill Whiteman put it, outlining some key features:[42]

> Many 'Winchester' tables were made to swivel up to the ceiling, where a catch gripped the outer end; very useful when getting at under-bed drawers or lockers. The 'Winchester' was not much inhibited by the high labour cost of hand-made fitments, and Hutchings showed great ingenuity in racks for milk bottles, eggs, spices and the like, book-shelves with lift-out retaining rails, and locker racking made to fit the china which he supplied, decorated specially with a 'Winchester' design. 'Winchester' roof lockers had inconspicuous slots in the bottom through which dust or spilt sugar could be swept out. A recessed doormat with a boot scraper underneath was another practical idea.

One simple but important advance at first fitted exclusively to 'Winchesters' was a C-shaped aluminium moulding for rigging awnings.[43] It was a spin-off from the mouldings used on yachts to take the luff rope of sails and had been invented and patented by Jack St A. Jewell, chairman of the Caravan Club, who was killed in 1939 in an air raid.[44] Another more technical feature of 'Winchesters' was a flap on the floor that ran across the width of the caravan van, above the axle, allowing the floor to drop down when fully loaded. Suitable toilet facilities were a challenge, and not always met: Bertram experimented with a discrete slide-out section, but it could not be rainproofed and was abandoned.[45]



Figure 11. 'Ready for tea', custom-made Hutchings crockery (Carrie Hutchings)

A snapshot of Hutchings Caravans in 1932 comes from a comprehensive catalogue produced at the time.[20] It recites a long of registered trademarks and patents, cites the company's 'Northern Agents' as Cara-Cars, Ben Rhydding, Ilkley, and gives an impressive and comprehensive list of available 'accessories'. It is the catalogue of a company in full swing, headed with a description of the 'Winchester', available in 15 ft and 13 ft models, with 'flowing, graceful lines…ample head room inside' and windows arranged to give the driver a 'clear view of following traffic'. No doubt written by Bertram, it boasts that 'after 20 years of Caravan building we feel a thrill of satisfaction in placing on the market a Caravan of original design which must prove the ideal Two-Compartment Caravan for a light car'. Its vans, it says, are made by skilled coach builders and cabinet makers 'with the aid of Power Machinery' and recites prizes won at the Minehead *Autocar* rally. The 'Winchester' looks very much like a modern caravan, whilst others in the catalogue are obviously yesterday's products. They included two 8 ft (2.5 m) vans, the 'Tom Thumb' and 'The Nimblette', and the 9 ft 6 in (2.9 m) 'Lady Nimble', an example of which from 1926 is on show at the Cotswolds Motor Museum, Bourton-on-the-Water. The collection was completed with the 12 ft (3.7 m) 'Voyageur' and the three-compartment 'Concord deluxe', with a coal stove, described as 'virtually a three-room flat on wheels'. Some photos of Bertram's even show vans equipped with harmoniums.

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Figure 12. The carcass of a 'Winchester' being lowered onto its chassis before fitting out. (Camping and Motorhome Club Collection, 2016-CC-P505)

'Winchester' vans are in great demand by restorers. In 2017 a 1935 model was the subject of a Channel 4 programme *Amazing Spaces*, fronted by architect George Clarke. And a YouTube video by Cameron Burns treasurer and editor of the Retrocaravan Club gives an excellent overview of many of the features that made the 'Winchester' so highly regarded.[46] Its price at the time was more than that of an ordinary house – and it was even given as a consolation prize to some owners of stately homes requisitioned by the military during World War II.

In 1939 there we some 92 makers of caravans, and more than 100 others that had started since 1919 and failed.[47] Bertram was still in the front rank of the industry, together with others such as Car Cruiser, Cheltenham and Raven, though Eccles was the undoubted leading brand. He managed to stay at the forefront throughout the 1930s, as well as travelling extensively and taking photographs – in Rome, Naples, Venice and elsewhere.[48] Although the company was obviously not in a large industrial centre, like Eccles, which was in Birmingham, a local press report praised it for being 'one of the few remaining bits of business in the city of Winchester'.[49] The war brought commercial production everywhere to an end: only four examples of one of Bertram's new designs at the time – the 11 ft (3.4 m) 'Imp' – were ever produced.[50] One innovation that just avoided the hiatus of war was the Order of Winchester Waggoners, a privileged club for owners of 'Winchesters', set up in 1938 to match the Eccles Owners' Club. To distinguish between club members and mere hirers, Bertram introduced subtle differences between the finish of the vans – such things as windows of hire vans being edged in wood rather than aluminium.[46]

One significant advance for the industry as a whole, which increasingly needed a single voice to talk with government and set standards, was the creation of the National Caravan Council, first proposed by the editor of *The Caravan* Bill Whiteman in March 1939 and formed two months later.[51] The initial members were the Caravan Club, British Caravanners Club, Trailer Caravan Club, Caravan Manufacturers Association and Caravan Distributors and Agents Association. It started with 'no money, no premises and no staff' and for ten years operated from the offices of the journal.

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Figure 13. Trade stand, displaying Hutchings 'Voyageur' and 'Lady Nimble' vans. (Camping and Motorhome Club Collection, 2016-CC-P384)

Final years: 1939-59

Bertram and Grace had three children, including Lionel who read Engineering at the Hartley Institution (forerunner of the University of Southampton) and during the war served in the RAF on flying boats as an Engineering Officer with the rank of Squadron Leader. It was no doubt his influence which fed into models of the late 1930s, which had a heavy-duty battery, an on-board charger, electrically pumped hot and cold water and electric lighting. At the end of the war Bertram, who had been elected a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society in 1941,[48] was nearing 60 years of age and hereafter would put even more of his time and money into his twin delights of travel and photography. It is clear from an interview in 1946 in the *Caravan & Trailer Trades Journal* of 'men who have made their mark' that he was happy to coast along:[17]

> Mr Hutchings is that rare phenomenon – a man with no secret ambition to build up his business into a sprawling commercial empire… His son…is well-equipped to carry on the Winchester tradition of fine workmanship and the firm looks forward to a calm and prosperous future.

Clearly, the firm was not following the path of an industry that over the next 20 years would change utterly. Despite hopes to the contrary, caravans were little used during the last war and builders had to turn their attention to other activities. When hostilities ended, however, there was a great demand for caravans as homes, but the deluxe products of Bertram and his like were too expensive. Also, the forcing house of war had led to many new technical advances unsuited to traditional building methods, such as 'laminated bends, thermo-setting and catalytic glueing, forming of thermoplastics, anodizing and priming of aluminium'.[52] At the same time costs were being reduced by the market leaders Eccles, who adopted production lines and other

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measures.[53] And the market was increasingly driven by maverick producers like W. E. C. ('Bill') Knott of Parkstone, the self-styled 'Ford of Caravans', whose Bluebird model was originally built from scrap! By the 1960s he was building thousands of vans and claimed 65% of the market.[54]



Figure 14. A surviving 'Imp' caravan in 2013 (courtesy of George Windsor)

Lionel continued to play a prominent part in the industry, winning prizes at rallies. At the 1946 Motor Show the Duke of Gloucester paid a special visit to the firm's booth, where he 'expressed particular interest in the largest of the Winchester caravans, which was the most expensive' on show.[55] At the same event in 1950 the company displayed three vans, the largest of which at 21 ft (6.4 m) was the 'Winchester Royal'. It had three compartments, four berths, a coal fire, hot and cold water and shower, bath and kitchen and was priced at £1,800 – for which you could then buy a very nice house! Despite the obvious commercial challenges, the company continued to be at the forefront: in 1952 it featured in a BBC radio programme. Four years later at a Caravan Club Rally, Winchesters ran away with cups in five of six classes, two won by Lionel himself.[56] At another rally in 1958 he won the Brighton Trophy in the Concours d'Élegance with an Armstrong Sapphire towing a £1,200 caravan, 'the first of a new luxury series'.[57] But the writing was on the wall: most attention at the event went to a DIY five-berth van in glass-fibre priced at £700. Bertram's old adage, 'The quality remains when the price is forgotten',[17] was wearing thin.



Figure 15. The badge on the 'Imp'. (courtesy of George Windsor)



Figure 16. Still winning in the final years of the company: Lionel Hutchins with the Brighton Trophy for the Concours d'Elegance, won at the fourth British Caravan Road Rally, held in Brighton in April 1958, with an Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire towing a spruced-up Winchester. (Caravan and Motorhome Club, 2016-CC-P539).

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Lionel continued to design new caravans with ingenious features, but the end of the company was near. His last contribution was a very clever sort of bed, but the market had moved on:[58]

> One of the neatest and most workable was the double-fold sideboard bed in the 16½ft 'Winchester Widgeon', designed by Lionel Hutchings, one of the last products of this famous and glamorous firm before it closed in 1959, beaten by the soaring costs of top grade handwork in a city with fierce competition for labour. …Experience showed that broadly the public does not take to unorthodox cleverness, awkward dual- purpose compromises, or large units serving no purpose by day.

The business of Bertram Hutchings Caravan Ltd, but not the land on which the works stood, nor the Littleton plot, was sold to Stephens and West of Cirencester. It was an established firm with experience of selling high-quality touring vans under the Stirling brand and continued to produce Winchesters – with Bertram and son as consultants – for some years. In 1981 it went into receivership (though Stirling Caravan Services continues).[59] Lionel was in his late 40s and took up a lectureship at Basingstoke Technical College until retirement.[5] The name Winchester Caravans is still extant, used by a dealership at Colden Common, which has no connection with the company, but honours the past by proudly owning an example of a Hutchings two-berth Pipit from 1955.[60]

The caravan industry, once the preserve of virtuosi and brilliant and colourful eccentrics, had been taken over by businessmen and self-publicists like Sam Alper, who developed the Sprite brand (and elsewhere founded the Little Chef chain of restaurants).[61] In 1963 he forged the leading brand Eccles with Sprite and Bluebird to form Caravans International Ltd, which thrived until 1982, when it went into liquidation. In other settings, the brands Sprite and Swift Eccles survive to the present day. But the enthusiasm and skill that had sparked such a major industry will always best be displayed by Hutchings caravans, designed by father and son on a small site near Winchester railway station.

Acknowledgements

This article was written during the coronavirus pandemic, when access to archival resources was limited. There may therefore be other important material to be explored, especially in the Caravan and Motorhome Club Collection, where the Hutchings archive has been catalogued by Richard Noyce.[62] The curator, Angela Willis – even in furlough – has been a great support and shared her vast knowledge of the subject. Thanks are due also to Bertram's grandson, Chris Hutchings, who made available family papers and provided much helpful information. The Hutchings family has been meticulously researched by John ('Hutch') Hutchings, a distant relative, who made available his findings and offered useful comments on earlier drafts. Mike Pettigrew, who was brought up near the Hutchings works, generously shared his material as well as knowledge of the firm, as did Mike Banting, whose father worked there, and Derek Brockway, who has researched the Ings family.

Angela Willis, Curator of the Caravan and Motorhome Club Collection at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, writes:
We are asking for help in identifying the locations featured in many of the pictures held in the Hutchings archive at the National Motor Museum. Photographs are regularly uploaded to the Collection's Flickr and Twitter platforms (see below) where we would love the public to share their ideas of where the scene is set. Any help welcome!
www.flickr.com/photos/camc_collection/; @camccollection; angela.willis@beaulieu.co.uk.

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The Case of Charles Mortimer Wheeler v the Southampton & Dorchester Railway Company, concerning Redbridge Viaduct and Purkis's Wharf: a Calculated Risk?

Philip A Brown

The Southampton & Dorchester Railway (S&DR) was promoted in the early 1840s by local interests, led by Charles Castleman, a solicitor who practised in Wimborne and Ringwood and who subsequently became the railway's secretary and solicitor. The intention was to bring all the perceived benefits of this new form of communication to the largely rural communities in western Hampshire and Dorset. At its eastern end the S&DR would connect with the existing London & South Western Railway (L&SWR) at Southampton, before wending its sinuous way westwards, serving as many towns en route as possible. The engineer appointed by the promoters was Capt. W. S. Moorsom and construction was placed in the safe hands of the contractors Grissell and Peto.

As the deadline approached for submission of the Railway's Bill, uncertainty remained over the precise line of its route in a number of places, not least the portion through the New Forest. Protracted negotiations with the Commissioners of Woods and Forests delayed the start of work on this stretch of the line. In addition, the deposited plans[1] showed alternative routes at two locations near Southampton. One concerned the final approach to Southampton where the options were for a line along the foreshore to the Royal Pier, with a tramway connection beyond to the LSWR station, or else an inland route broadly following the line of the abandoned Southampton & Salisbury Canal to a junction with the L&SWR at Northam. The other case of uncertainty was the position of the viaduct across the head of Southampton Water, between Redbridge and Eling. Previous writers have analysed the circumstances surrounding the first of these two situations,[2] but I am not aware that anyone has examined the second.



Figure 17. Extract from Deposited Plans of the Southampton and Dorchester Railway, 1844, (Hampshire Record Office)
This plan gives a clearer indication than the Tithe Map of Purkis's Wharf, to the left of the road as it approaches the bridge, and shows how the more northerly of the alternative railway alignments would have avoided interference with the wharf's sea approach.

From the deposited plans it would seem that Moorsom's initial idea at Redbridge was to build the railway on the northern, upstream side of the existing road crossing of the River Test, at the point where the river flowed into Southampton Water. The line would have curved round the northern and eastern sides of Redbridge village. The 'alternative line', as it was labelled on the plans, placed the railway south of the road crossing, avoiding interference with land and buildings in the village itself but crossing a wharf and the corner of an adjacent shipyard. The route Moorsom adopted was the

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southern alternative, which raises the question as to why the longer (by a furlong) and probably more costly northern route was considered in the first place. It was likely to have been more costly not only because of its greater length but also because it required two public road crossings and interfered with more properties.

Evidence has recently come to light in the form of a legal brief [3] prepared by the solicitors Stead & Tylee of Romsey for their client Charles Mortimer Wheeler, described as a 'merchant of Redbridge', who intended to claim compensation from the Southampton & Dorchester Railway for injury to his business caused by construction of the railway viaduct. This document provides a plausible reason why the northern route would have been considered, namely that Wheeler's business would not have been affected if that route had been selected.

A brief description of the transport infrastructure at Redbridge at the time may be helpful. The village is situated at the head of Southampton Water, on its eastern shore. Two quays or wharves, known at that time as Purkis's and Sharland's, enabled sea-going vessels to berth, and there was also an old-established shipyard. There were two inns, appropriately named 'The Ship' and 'The Anchor'. The road from Southampton to the west (now the A35) passed through the village before crossing the River Test by means of two stone-built bridges over the main channels and linking causeways or embankments across the intervening tidal mudflats and marshland. Upstream, the Test was shallow and of limited use for transport purposes. Around 1794 the Andover Canal had opened, following the Test and Anton valleys north through Romsey and Stockbridge to Andover. At Redbridge it terminated in a sea lock just above the road bridge. Its Act (29 Geo III 1789) specified the maximum size of barges as 60 ft x 8 ft (18 m x 2.5 m), to draw not more than 3 ft 6 ins (1.1 m). A second canal scheme, the Southampton & Salisbury, made a junction with the Andover canal a few hundred yards north of the sea lock and was intended to provide a route for canal barges to reach Southampton. This would avoid the need for barges to trans-ship their cargoes at Redbridge or risk the passage (presumably under tow) along the exposed tidal estuary. It opened in 1802 but was out of use by 1806. The Andover canal, in contrast, continued to carry a modest volume of traffic. It is known that in 1849 there were sixteen 18-ton barges at work. However, the L&SWR reached Andover from Basingstoke in 1854 and commenced rate cutting on Southampton traffic. In the face of this competition the canal proprietors



Figure 18. Extract from Tithe Map of Millbrook Parish, 1840, (Hampshire Record Office)
Property occupied by Charles Mortimer Wheeler:
265 Meadow and osier bed, 266 Paddock and garden,
267 House, yard and wharf (canal wharf, presumably),
269 Part of osier bed, 270 Marsh island.
Walter Morrice's shipyard is numbered 278, timber pound 271 and timber yard 288.
These properties passed to William Sharland in 1843.
Purkis's Wharf must be alongside the road as it approaches the bridge, although it is not identified as such.

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decided they would do best by converting their canal into a railway. Amid much robust manoeuvring involving the Great Western Railway, who saw an opportunity to obtain access to Southampton, and the LSWR, who were keen to prevent the GWR from so doing, the canal was stopped in 1859 and much of its bed filled in. The undertaking was eventually sold to the L&SWR and reopened as a railway in 1865.[4,5]

According to the legal brief, Mr Wheeler carried on his business from leasehold premises of more than 11 acres (4.5 ha) extent, situated between the River Test and the Andover Canal, to the north of the road bridge. The premises were within 100 yards (91 m) of Purkis's Wharf, just south of the bridge, which he also leased. The landowner of Wheeler's yard was Sir John Barker Mill of Mottisfont Abbey, who had extensive property holdings in the area (and should not be confused with John Mills of Bisterne Park, Ringwood, a director of the Southampton & Dorchester Railway). The premises comprised a dwelling house, brick and lime kilns, bark barn, saw houses and pits, coal and timber yards. In addition, the lease permitted extraction of gravel and the Tithe Map of 1840 [6] shows that the holding included a meadow and osier beds. Wheeler had also owned a trading vessel which moored immediately below the bridge and could be loaded by boat or lighter or, in the case of timber, by towing it down the river. The property had been in use for these purposes for at least 60 years, initially let to Messrs Benjamin White, Poor and Thomas Hoare. Subsequently Mr Wheeler had carried on his business there for more than 30 years. Wheeler's lawyer made the point that 'the proximity of the premises to the river below the bridge and to Purkis's Quay was the original cause of its appropriation to its present purpose and gave it its chief value'. However, construction of the Southampton & Dorchester Railway's viaduct, built on wooden piles, some 200 yards (182 m) below the road bridge had completely cut off access to Purkis's Wharf and the adjacent part of Southampton Water to all vessels other than (canal?) barges.

The brief goes on to explain how timber was frequently deposited in the yard by other merchants, at a charge of one shilling per load, often for a year before it was shipped. Since construction of the railway bridge, timber had to be towed or conveyed four times the previous distance to load. The usual charge for towing timber to vessels lying in the river before the railway was built was four pence per load. Because of the greater distance and the obstruction of the bridge piles, eight or nine pence was now demanded. An instance was cited where the purchasers of 50 loads of timber deposited in Wheeler's yard preferred to take their vessel to Eling Quay, a mile away on the other side of Southampton Water, and have the timber drawn there by road rather than load at Redbridge. This incurred additional costs of two shillings per load. Another merchant who deposited timber at Mr Wheeler's yard now refused to pay the shilling per load but would pay only eight pence.

Mr Wheeler also traded in bark and bricks which were principally shipped from Purkis's Wharf, along with gravel for use as ships' ballast, whilst he imported limestone, chalk and coal. Now that vessels could no longer reach Purkis's, the only alternative was to use Sharland's Quay. This was private property belonging to a rival in trade.[7] The distance involved was 600 yards compared to 100 yards from Purkis's Wharf and Mr Sharland could demand whatever toll he thought fit. Furthermore, it was simply not worthwhile taking gravel for ships' ballast to Sharland's Quay.

Anticipating a challenge from the railway company's advocate, the brief acknowledged that Purkis's Wharf was currently in a decayed state and that Mr Wheeler carried on only a limited trade. However, it observed that the quay was usable up until the advent of the railway and there had always been the option of loading ships moored in the river. As regards the limited volume of current trade, Mr Wheeler was stated to be an elderly person, having been in trade upwards of 30 years at the premises concerned, and his lease had only a limited time to run.[8] The amount of his claim reflected these facts. It would be proved that Mr Wheeler had carried on 'a very snug and profitable trade' up to the present time. The railway's advocate might also contend that because Wheeler's premises were not directly encroached upon by the railway, the legislation did not entitle him to any compensation, as implied in a letter received from Mr Castleman. However, it argued that

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Mr Wheeler had been deprived of some of the conveniences and facilities of carrying on trade which he previously possessed, a quite different situation from one where trade had been injured through direct competition from a railway company.

The brief described Wheeler's previous efforts to obtain compensation. In response to his initial demand for £50, Mr Woolley, the Railway Company's surveyor, had offered £36-10s-0d, which Wheeler had declined. Later, on discovering that his landlord had submitted a claim for £540 for injury to his reversionary interest in the property, and realising how much the railway viaduct would affect his business, Wheeler had decided to submit the present claim. He estimated his losses at £20 per year and, assuming the life on which he held the lease to be worth 8 years, claimed the moderate sum of £160. Wheeler and his solicitor felt this was a very small amount on which to go before a jury. They had tried to settle with Mr Castleman but he had met the claim 'with great indifference'. Mr Wheeler had therefore been compelled to bring the claim before a jury.

The testimony of a number of witnesses in support of the claim was then set out. Mr John Cork Knell of Redbridge stated that his recently deceased father had made use of Wheeler's bark barn for storing bark for sale, and at different times had considerable quantities of timber lodged there. He had timber there at the time the railway bridge was closed up and had drawn 30 loads to Eling Quay at a cost of 2/6 d (12 p) a load, whereas towing to a vessel in the old way would have cost only 4 d (3 p).

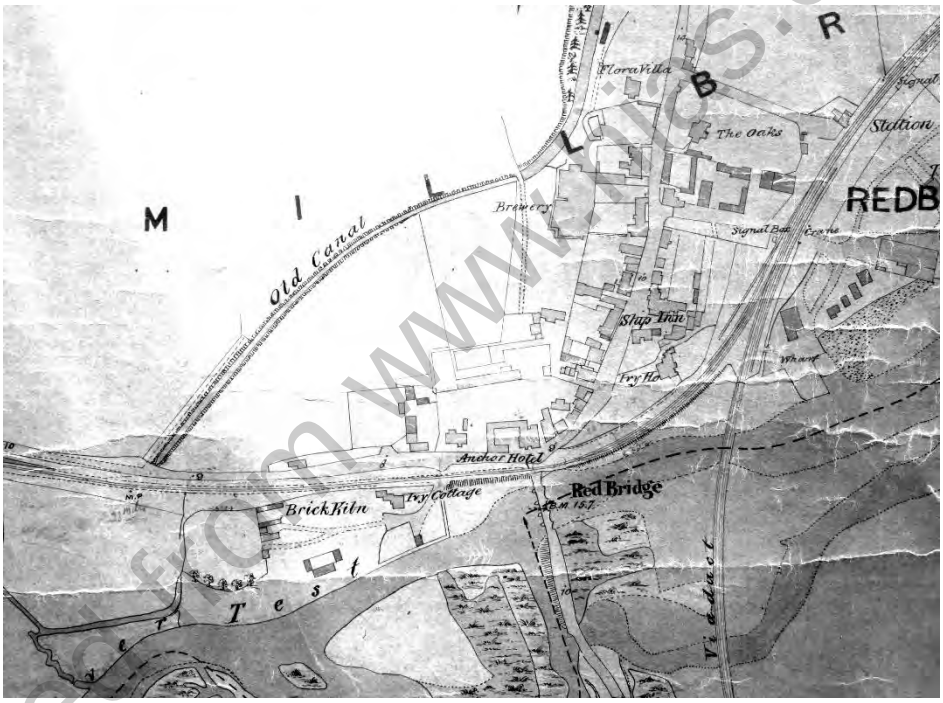


Figure 19. L&SWR Plan of the Andover – Redbridge Railway, Romsey Junction to Redbridge Junction, undated.
The Andover – Redbridge line is shown as single track, dating the plan to pre-1884. From its junction with the Southampton & Dorchester Railway, the line was built on a curved embankment on the seaward side of Purkis's Wharf before crossing the road on the level at Test Gates Crossing and then picking up the alignment of the canal. Some of the features in Wheeler's former premises are identified.

Mr Edward Hoskins of Anfield, a timber merchant, had known the premises since the time of Messrs White, Poor and Hoare as a yard for the storage and shipment of timber for the Navy and general ship-building purposes. It was very conveniently situated, its value chiefly arising from its location. During the last year he had delivered nearly 200 loads of timber there to wait for a market and had negotiated a reduction in charge from 1/0 d to 8 d a load because of the difficulty in shipping. The only other yard at Redbridge was Sharland's but often no space was available there, and there was the risk of timber being mixed.

Anthony Manning, aged 72, had lived at Redbridge since 1795. He had been the captain of a trading vessel for more than 40 years and had frequently been employed by private merchants and government officers to take cargoes of timber to Portsmouth, London, Chatham and elsewhere, the last time about 7 years previously. When loading, he moored his vessel in the channel opposite Purkis's wharf, in a location called Bridge Hole, close to the road bridge. The timber was towed down from Wheeler's yard in rafts, which was easily done

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with horses. There were two places for drawing timber into the water. The sawn timber and plank were taken from a place near the sawpits and other timber from the place opposite the bridge. If he now had to take timber from Wheeler's yard, the vessel must lie off a point called the Bight, 500 yards further down the river, which was more exposed and less convenient. The towers would have to contend with the currents and tides and the railway bridge created an obstruction, particularly as it was built aslant the river. Timber was likely to be driven against the piles whereby rafts might become entangled and ropes and tackle broken. The consequent delay could cause ships to miss a tide (thus increasing their costs).

Jeremiah Jerram of Redbridge was a carpenter and had been employed by Mr Wheeler in various capacities for more than 30 years. He used to keep accounts for Mr Wheeler, in particular taking daily account of the timber, bark etc brought into the yard and shipped out by the different merchants. He recalled cargoes being shipped to London, Newcastle and Shields, amongst other destinations.[9] He remembered the yard and the field adjoining being full of timber and had known great quantities of gravel taken for ships' ballast to Purkis's quay and Sharland's yard. There had been access to the latter 'under Mrs King's wall' but this was now cut off by the railway. The delivered price at those quays was 15 d per ton but with the increase in distance this was no longer possible.

James Purkis was a licenced pilot who had lived all his life at Redbridge. He had brought up many vessels during the last 32 years to Purkis's wharf and the Bridge Hole to take in timber, bark and other goods from Wheeler's yard. There was good and safe lying for them. Since the railway, vessels must lie in the Bight, an exposed place where they were likely to lose timber from the current as there was nowhere to fasten the rafts as near Purkis's. He considered the passage under the railway bridge to be dangerous for timber rafts as it was built at an angle across the river and the tides would drive them against the piles. He considered the loss of Purkis's wharf to be a great injury to Redbridge. Vessels had called there right up to the time the railway was finished.

Samuel Purkis, aged 60 years, had also lived at Redbridge all his life. Mr Wheeler employed him to tow timber from his yard to vessels lying in Bridge Hole and the adjoining hard. This was conveniently done by taking the timber in rafts to the ship's side. The charge was 4 d a load. There was now nowhere apart from the Bight where ships could lie to take in timber. Towing to the Bight before the railway cost 6d but could not be done now for less than 10 d, with the risk of losing timber and breaking tackle.

John Wiltshire had carted and shipped 800 loads of timber per year for several years. He confirmed the charge for drawing timber to the water was 9 d and for towing to the vessel 4 d, a total of 1/1 d. Drawing timber to Sharland's yard was 1/6 d and wharfage 6 d.

Thomas White, a shipbuilder of Cowes, Isle of Wight would testify to a great quantity of timber being cut in the country for 12 miles around Redbridge, for many purposes. Redbridge was only 4 miles from the New Forest. Nearly all this timber was shipped from Redbridge or Eling. He had known Wheeler's yard for upwards of 30 years and had purchased large quantities of timber and plank lodged there from different merchants. He considered the yard to be greatly deteriorated in value following formation of the railway.

Finally, Mr Joshua Hill, surveyor and valuer of Southampton, would give his reasons for concluding that the premises had been injured as a place of trade by more than the amount of compensation claimed by Mr Wheeler.

Confirmation of receipt of the claims from Wheeler and his landlord is to be found in the minute book of the Southampton & Dorchester Railway.[10] Minute 597 of 22nd April 1847 authorised the company's solicitor 'to put the seal of the company to a warrant to the Sheriff of Hants to summon a jury to assess the damages claimed

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by Mr Charles Wheeler of Redbridge for damage to his wharf there'. Similarly, minute 636 of 20th May 1847 gave the solicitor the same authority in respect of the claim for compensation by Sir John Barker Mill for severance.



Figure 20. Commercial postcard by F.G.O. Stuart, postmarked 1906, (collection P A Brown).
The view is from the Totton/Eling shore, on a high tide, looking towards the Bridge Hole where ships used to moor for loading with timber. Wheeler's premises were to the left, beyond the bridges. The Anchor Hotel is the prominent white building at the foot of the right hand bridge. The S&DR railway viaduct is out of view to the right.

Whether the two claims actually went before a jury in court is unclear. However, subsequent events can be traced in the records of Stead & Tylee deposited at Hampshire Record Office.[11] An extract of a conveyance from Abraham Purkis to the Southampton & Dorchester Railway Company dated 25th December 1847 can be summarised to the effect that Purkis was the lessee for a period of 59 years from that same date of a certain wharf, storehouse, buildings and tenements. The lessor was Jane Amor(?), a widow, who received a gross yearly rent of £50. Purkis had agreed to sell and the Railway Company to purchase the property for the remainder of the lease period for a sum of £210 by way of full compensation for all damage, loss and inconvenience which might be sustained by Purkis or any other person by severance and also by reason of the viaduct at Redbridge obstructing, interfering with or lessening the approach to the wharf. It was also agreed that Jane Amor should receive £50 of the agreed purchase price in consideration of the yearly rent being reduced to £45 and that Purkis or other person entitled to the wharf should continue to pay the rent in future. The Railway Company should not at any time thereafter be called upon to make or allow to be made any communication or other works over, under or across the railway for the accommodation of the lands adjoining those purchased.

Presumably the wharf had been sub-let to Wheeler and possibly another legal agreement, now lost, between Purkis and Wheeler would have mirrored this settlement. Although Wheeler is not named in the conveyance, it does twice refer to 'other persons'. If the £50 paid to Jane Amor is deducted from the agreed sum of £210, one is left with £160, the precise amount which Wheeler had claimed from the Railway Company. It would seem a reasonable assumption that he did receive the compensation he sought, perhaps as an out-of-court, negotiated settlement.

Sir John Barker Mill's claim took longer to settle and fared rather differently. A document amongst the solicitors' papers refers to the existence of a bond between the Railway Company and Sir John Barker Mill dated 30th April 1846 for £630. Interestingly, this predates the reference to his claim in the S&D's minute book by over a year. The bond would become void either on payment of the full amount by the Company or their successors (the LSWR operated the S&DR from its opening in 1847 and full amalgamation was effected

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by Act of Parliament in July 1848), or else by payment of compensation as provided for in the Land Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845.

Taking the latter option, under this Act the two parties each appointed arbitrators and they in turn appointed an umpire to settle points on which they were not able to agree. Sir John nominated Francis Attwood of the city of New Sarum (Salisbury), Surveyor, whilst the L&SWR nominated Thomas Smith Woolley the Younger of South Collingham in the County of Nottingham, Surveyor.[12] These two appointed William Simonds of Saint Cross near Winchester, Solicitor, as Umpire. After the arbitrators failed to agree, Simonds awarded a nominal 'one shilling of lawful British money' as compensation to Sir John. The award was dated 11th August 1849. The Secretary of the LSWR wrote very promptly thereafter to request the return of the balance of the £630 bond.

Francis Attwood, writing to Stead & Tylee, was clearly unhappy about the decision. On 17th August he wrote: 'I am quite taken by surprise at Mr Simonds' decision in this case between Sir John Barker Mill and the Railway Co. It is so entirely at variance with the conclusions which I had reason to expect he would come to from the impressions seemingly made on him by the facts laid before him – especially that of compensation having been given to the lessee. I cannot at all understand it and I am persuaded Mr Woolley will be as much surprised as I am. Mr Simonds has not had courage to make known his award to me'.

He wrote again on 20th August, acknowledging that 'a more upright man than Simonds I know not' but observing that Simonds, in a letter, had admitted that 'the award had been a most anxious business'. Attwood took this to mean that there must have been some doubt about the matter and urged an appeal, suggesting that the amount of compensation paid to the lessee would give proof of the value of the property and hence the wrong done to Sir John.

On 5th November 1849 Attwood wrote again:
'The unlooked for and extraordinary termination of the business, the result of which I have reason to know as much surprised our opponents as it did you and me, so annoyed me that I have never thought of it with the patience to make a charge of my own. I find I paid £1-19s-0d for (?) and expenses on one journey to Romsey and two to Southampton and if you like to send me a cheque for that, be it so, but I will receive nothing for my own fruitless labours'.

Stead & Tylee evidently persuaded him otherwise, perhaps having pointed out that costs could be recovered from the LSWR, for three days later he wrote once again:
'It cannot but be right that the Company should be made to pay as much as under the award you can obtain but, under the circumstances of the case, I am still unwilling to receive anything more than money paid out of pocket. I however send you a bill as you desire and beg to thank you and Sir John for the friendly expression of your satisfaction at my endeavours, abortive as they were. My partner Rigdew(?) heard from the London solicitor that it was considered that no compensation was awarded because Sir John had been previously compensated in a former arrangement. Mr Simonds cannot however plead this as an excuse because Mr Woolley admitted such was not the case'[13].

And there the papers in the HRO bundle leave the matter, so presumably there was no appeal. No doubt the evidence in the legal brief would have been carefully selected to make the strongest possible case for the claimant, so it is perhaps surprising that it makes no reference to traffic on the Andover Canal, other than the statement that construction of the railway viaduct had completely cut off access to Purkis's Wharf to all vessels other than barges. Presumably these could still exit the sea lock at high tide and be propelled with poles under the railway viaduct to Sharland's wharf or alongside vessels berthed there. Perhaps this simply indicates that Wheeler's business did not involve trans-shipment of goods between canal barges and sea-going vessels, or

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maybe there was little trans-shipment traffic by 1847, despite the fact that sixteen barges were apparently still at work in 1849.

The Canal's Act of 1789 refers to 'a certain wharf or quay ... in the tenure of John Poore ... situate adjoining or near to the place where the said intended canal will enter the Southampton River'. John Poore was entitled to various rates and tolls for riverage, wharfage and storehouse room, as set out in the Act, and all persons passing on the canal were required to pay the dues and rates mentioned. There was a caveat that if the owner or occupier of the wharf failed to provide an acceptable service, the canal company could take over the facilities or make its own wharf. It should also be noted that John Poore was one of the canal's subscribers listed in the Act. No doubt he had high hopes for his investment although, in the event, the Andover Canal never paid an ordinary dividend. He did have his timber business and canal tolls to compensate. Interestingly, the rate specified in the Act for timber, including the expense of drawing it on shore, was one shilling for a load of fifty feet. Nearly fifty years later, Wheeler's charge for depositing timber in his yard was still one shilling per load, despite the cost inflation of the intervening Napoleonic Wars.

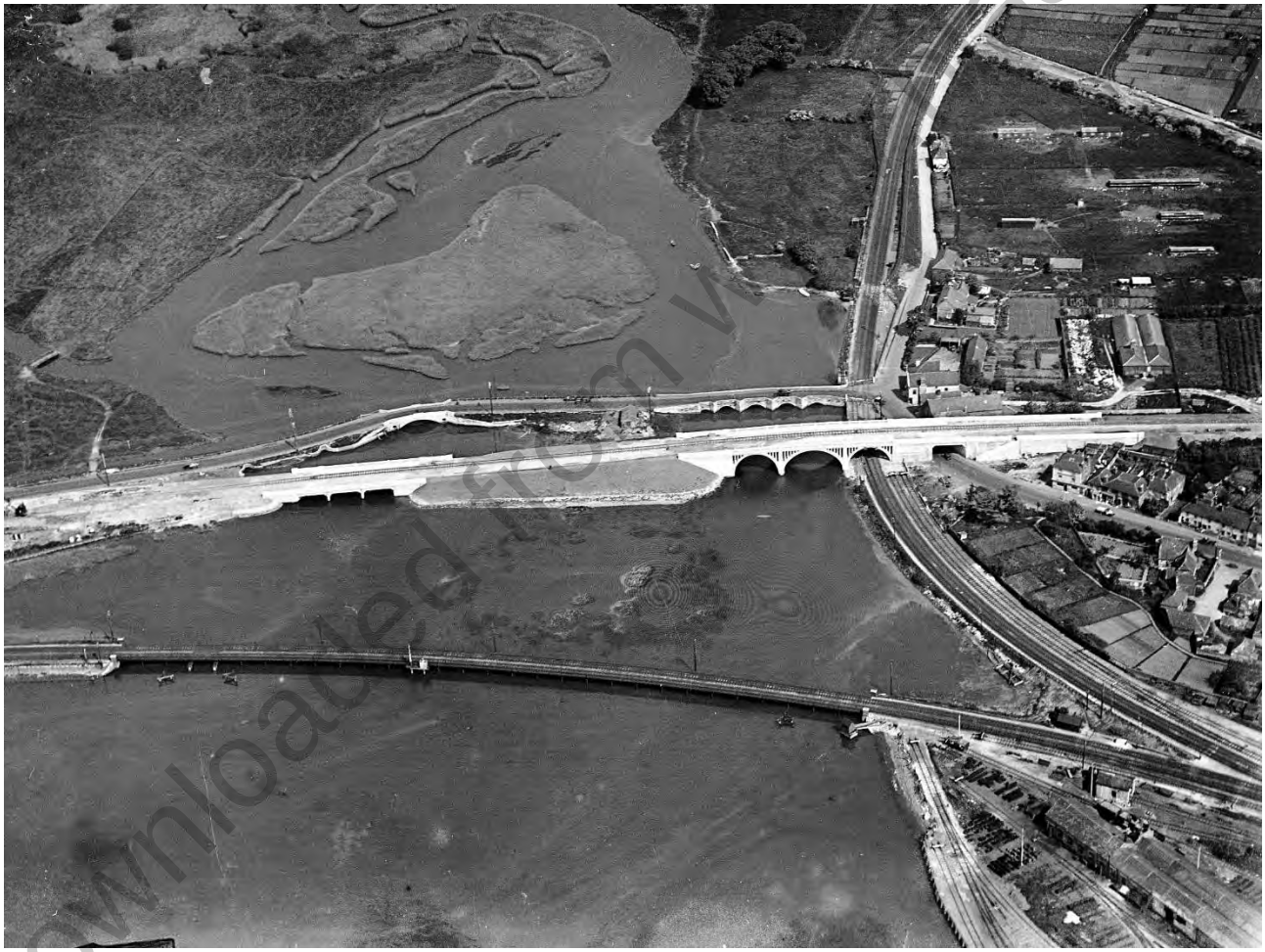


Figure 21. **Aerial photograph, late 1920s, (collection P A Brown).**
The replacement for the ancient road bridges nears completion. This major road improvement scheme would eliminate several notorious traffic bottlenecks caused by level crossings here, in Totton and at Lyndhurst Road. Note that the contractor used a narrow gauge railway to move materials, though no rolling stock is visible. Wheeler's premises, top of view to right of centre, look abandoned although the site of the level crossing into his yard can still be picked out as a lighter area on the railway track.

In conclusion, it appears that those acting for the Southampton & Dorchester Railway made a calculated decision to locate the viaduct where it best suited their interests, aware of the consequences for Wheeler's business. They must have concluded that this was a risk worth taking. Their surveyor, Woolley, offered a

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relatively small sum of £36-10s-0d in compensation which was declined. Their solicitor, Castleman, argued that there was in any case no legal entitlement to compensation. Wheeler persisted with his claim and appears to have obtained the sum of £160 that he sought. The landowner's claim of some four times that amount was dismissed with the nominal award of one shilling for his pains. The S&DR having put up a bond of £630, the L&SWR as its successor was no doubt very pleased to settle the matter for only £210-1s-0d plus expenses. The case provides an example of the tactics and stratagems required to build a railway and the consequences that had to be worked through.

It is not clear exactly when business ceased at Wheeler's yard, but that was its fate. Sharland's more favourably located premises, which retained their sea access, were later leased and then purchased by the LSWR, becoming the site for its Redbridge Permanent Way Works. It was perhaps inevitable that the Andover Canal, like most others in the south of England, failed to survive. It never managed to connect to the national network, so was never a through route, and it served few significant industrial premises to generate profitable volumes of traffic. Its replacement railway met with mixed fortunes. The section from Redbridge to Romsey remains part of the national network, carrying traffic between Southampton, Salisbury and points beyond. The northern portion survived as a quiet country railway until closure in 1964 as part of Dr Beeching's rationalisation.

Notes and references:

1. Hampshire Record Office, DP/B10/1
2. These include Cox, J, G., *Castleman's Corkscrew, The Southampton & Dorchester Railway 1844-1848,* (1975) and Jackson, B. L., *Castleman's Corkscrew Vol 1,* (2007)
3. Private collection, *Charles Mortimer Wheeler v the Southampton & Dorchester Railway Company, Case for compensation to be tried before the Sheriff of Hants, Brief for claimant.*
4. Hadfield, Charles, *The Canals of South and South-east England,* (1969)
5. Hutson, Mick, 'The Sprat & Winkle 1859-1885' *Historical Model Railway Society Journal*, Vol **18,** Nos 6, 7 & 8, (2004) describes the railway's construction and early days in detail.
6. Parish of Millbrook Tithe Plan. Copies in Southampton Archives and Hampshire Record Office
7. Kemish, Joyce, *The Ships and Shipbuilders of Eling, 1748-1863*, privately published, undated, reports that William Sharland leased the wharf and shipyard in 1843 following the death of the previous lessee, Walter Morrice. Sharland was still listed in an 1859 directory as a shipbuilder, corn & timber merchant etc at Redbridge.
8. Charles Mortimer Wheeler died on 21 October 1860, leaving an estate valued at under £450 (Hampshire Record Office, 5M62/4)
9. Lewis, M. J. T., *Early Wooden Railways*, (1970) mentions timber from the New Forest being taken to Tyneside in the early 19th century for the construction of wooden colliery railways.
10. Southampton Archives, D/X/416
11. Hampshire Record Office 4M92/A10/1/13 *Papers and correspondence re: Purkis's Wharf; Southampton & Dorchester Railway*
12. Biddle, Gordon, *The Railway Surveyors*, (1990) mentions that T. S. Woolley was a prominent figure in the surveying profession. He was an Assistant Tithes Commissioner, became a founder member of the Institution of Surveyors and carried out work for a number of railway companies.
13. Drummond, Ian S., *Southern Rails around Southampton*, includes an un-credited and undated reproduction of the first page of a legal notice from Sir John Barker Mill to the S&D Railway Company, claiming compensation of £3,830 for severance, damage and deterioration in value to the shore and mudlands he owned, caused by construction of the railway. This would appear to be a separate case to that of Wheeler's yard and perhaps gives substance to the suggestion that Sir John had already obtained some compensation. Further research required!

This is an updated version of an article first published in *The South Western Circular*, the journal of the South Western Circle, October 2012.

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Barracks, Forts and Ramparts: Regeneration Challenges for Portsmouth Harbour's Defence Heritage

Celia Clark PhD with Martin Marks OBE

Tricorn Books 2020
ISBN 9781912821648
£40 + £4 Post and Packing
Available from celiadeane.clark@btopenworld.com

This new book by Celia Clark and Martin Marks describes the transformation of the many historic defence sites around Portsmouth harbour to new civilian life: a gradually accelerating process. It's a celebration of many people's achievements: individuals, specialist groups, civic societies and developers. It's dedicated to the memory of Ray Riley, who taught us all much about industrial archaeology, including the importance of fieldwork. He was Celia Clark's mentor, the supervisor of her PhD and long-term friend of Deane and the Clark family. The book was launched by the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth outside the Nauticalia bookshop in Boathouse 7 on 15th December 2020.

Celia Clark writes for us:

> "Without the Royal Dockyards there could have been no Royal Navy...The English royal dockyards, victualling yards and hospitals formed what are arguably the largest industrial centres in Britain before the Industrial Revolution, while their economic impact was out of all proportion to their size."
>
> *The Royal Dockyards* 1690-1850 *Architecture and Engineering Works of the Sailing Navy*, Jonathan Coad 1989

Portsmouth Harbour has one of the densest concentrations of specialised defence establishments in the country, within the context of South Hampshire on England's south coast. Its extensive area, narrow entrance from Spithead within the shelter of the Isle of Wight and proximity to our rivals on the high seas made it ideal for the development of the dockyard. For many centuries fleets and armies sailed from the country's premier naval port to fight in turn the French, Spanish, Dutch, Americans, Germans and Russians, and to supply and garrison the global British empire.

During wars, for every uniformed person in action, there were thousands of men and women and a substantial portion of the nation's material and financial resources supplying and equipping them. A complex system of military, naval and air force support facilities developed over the centuries around the harbour: gunwharf, victualling and ordnance yards, hospitals, barracks and airfields, defended by successive rings of fortifications. In the nineteenth century the government feared the threat of a French invasion, with the dockyard as a particular target, so the 'ring fortress' of twelve forts was constructed to protect it. Until after WWII many local defence installations were guarded by a substantial army presence.

Even within a comparatively small compass around the harbour, these sites' new uses include industrial and residential estates, museums, art gallery, art cinema and multi-purpose auditorium, artists' studios, film locations, hotel, shopping centre, squash court, leisure facilities, traditional boatbuilding and restoration school, marina, conservation laboratory, archaeology and marine research centre, schools, riding stables, luxury hotels, university facilities, student hostel, rifle range, veterans centre, distillery, band practice room, boxing gym, ship recycling yard, squash courts, storage for historic military vehicles, nature trails, open air

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arena, climbing wall, fitness trail, rose garden, public open space... and this conversion process is still ongoing.

Understanding each site's history and how it came to be how it is now is an essential stage in determining appropriate futures for it. We do not offer detailed histories, but short accounts using documentary sources of these diverse places and how they came to be preserved, and new uses found for them. We celebrate the extraordinary creativity that gives these places new and unusual life – as they continue to evolve.

As participants and observers, Celia Clark and Martin Marks decided to document this complicated transition with first-hand accounts by people who played key parts in it, and to offer a snapshot of what has been achieved by the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century. As the wheel of time turns, it takes with it the living memory of how these extraordinary transformations from military to civilian life were achieved. We focus on more recent events - from the late nineteenth century releases of defence land to more detailed accounts from the mid-twentieth century onwards. Of course, it is a challenge to document a moving picture. In such a broad canvas and long sweep of time there will be omissions and mistakes – which we fully acknowledge and are happy to have corrected.

The closure of defence sites around the harbour, how the conservation tide came in from the early 1970s and local responses to it, how Fort Grange hosted early flights and navy pilots were taught to fly, HMS Daedalus and its development as a civilian airfield are described in detail, with chapters on education, research, housing and open space.

Portsmouth Naval Base Heritage Area

Central to the book are the two chapters about the dockyard. *The Times* death notice on October 1st 1982 announced: "HM Royal Dockyard Portsmouth passed peacefully away at 12 o'clock last night after nearly 800 years of faithful service. It will be sadly missed by many." It was a memorial to the deep feelings of the workforce about the loss of centuries of craft tradition. As the first secretary to the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Society [PRDHS], launched in 1982 when the dockyard workforce was severely reduced as part of its downgrading to a Fleet Maintenance and Repair Base, Celia Clark had sent it to *The Times* at the request of the Society's founders - who had been working eighteen hours a day in preparation for defence of the Falkland Islands. Archie Malley told her that when the dockyard was formally renamed, a longer version of the obituary appeared in the local *Evening News*, adding "Died peacefully at midnight September 30th 1984, of considerable age. Has been seriously ill since June 25th 1981. Will be sadly missed by thousands."

Founder member and master shipwright liner Brian Patterson was summoned by the Admiral Superintendent. Brian explained that the Society's brief was to remember the city's contribution to the Dockyard – the workforce – fathers and sons – grandfathers and great grandfathers and those before that who made the Dockyard what it was. Future generations would not have the same incentive or patriotic opportunity to follow their fathers' footsteps – because of government decisions – not naval ones!

The Society's collection of tools, equipment and archives was praised by the Science Museum. They said that the shipwrights' tools were unrivalled. On a very cold day Celia Clark remembers helping to identify different sizes of 'fids' when the Society's collection was in the Foundry. A flood there damaged the archives, and several moves into new storage places resulted in damage and thefts as the collection was moved from place to place within the dockyard.

The first dockyard chapter outlines the history of the Naval Base Property Trust [NBPT] and the National Museum of the Royal Navy [NMRN] as well as other initiatives to transform the site. The Heritage Area and its preserved vessels is an international exemplar of defence heritage tourism. The second chapter about the dockyard describes the buildings, preserved ships and boats in the Heritage Area as well as concerns about the

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deteriorating condition of the important historic buildings such as the Old Naval Academy and the Parade in the operational naval base.

As landlord of the Naval Base Heritage Area, the Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust [PNBPT] recognised and celebrated the PRDHS's key role in the history of the harbour communities, creating the Dockyard Apprentice Exhibition in Boathouse 7 in 1994. The demonstration of how pulley blocks work was the first interactive installation in Portsmouth museums. The Society later became a Trust with a supporters' group.

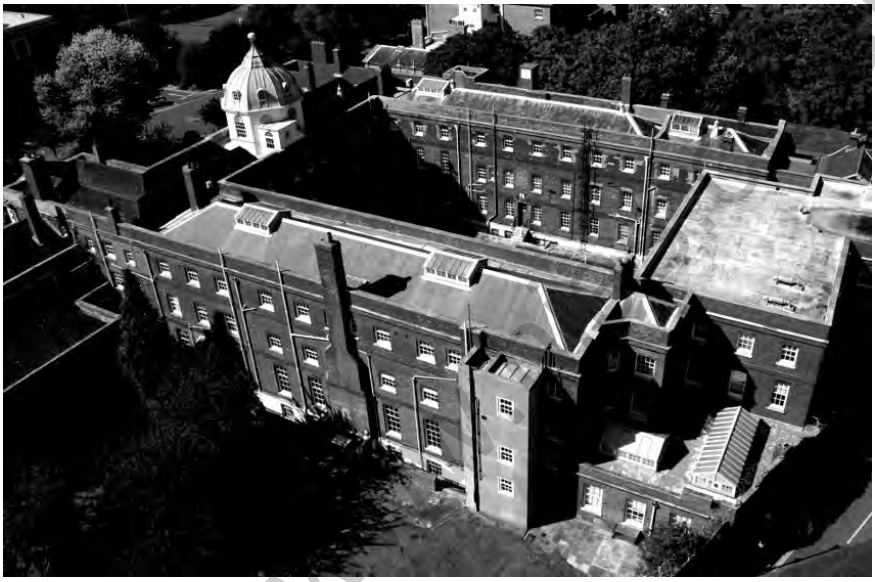


Figure 22. The Old Naval Academy from Admiralty Quarter point block, 2013

Our book records the widespread disappointment when the proposal to create a new Museum of the Dockyard, part of the Naval Base Property Trust's millennium bid for funding, failed. The harbour's many defence-related museums don't yet include a major part of our local history: the development of the dockyard and its workforce. The PRDHS's publications recording the dockyard's physical and social history are a welcome contribution to filling this large gap. The PNBPT put on several dockyard-related temporary exhibitions as well as acquiring vessels that contribute to the civilian story: *Vic 56* and *HDL 49*. Brian Patterson, also a member of the Fort Cumberland Guard, historian of the dockyard and author of publications about its history served as PNBPT's Curator and Keeper of Historic Boats for nineteen years. He was largely responsible for building up the trust's collection of historic boats. He is commemorated in Boathouse 4, for which he was the catalyst to efforts to save it. He proposed that the Trust's boat collection should be professionalised and enhanced by establishing a traditional boatbuilding college and the creation of an exhibition telling the story of small craft in the navy's operations. In 2010 the International College of Traditional Boatbuilding was established in Boathouse 4, to recreate generations of shipwright's skills. The PRDHT's welcome move into the safe haven on Storehouse 10 and the restoration of the building's cupola is mentioned.

Portsmouth Harbour as a World Heritage Site – innovation and research

In 2004 David Michelmore, an expert on world heritage sites asked Celia Clark why Portsmouth Harbour was not a World Heritage site, while they were both working on preparation of a bid to inscribe Xingcheng, a Ming dynasty walled city in Liaoning Province in China, onto the World Heritage List. Proposed bids supported by the local authority have first to be accepted by the cultural ministry onto the country's Tentative List, from which one per year can be put forward by the national government for consideration to UNESCO's World Heritage Committee. Because each place has to be unique, Michelmore proposed that the focus should be on water: Portsmouth Harbour, Spithead and the surrounding defence installations and the associated technical innovation over centuries - as a "cultural seascape", which had not been proposed before.

As Ray Riley said, over the centuries the presence of the dockyard and its associated establishments stimulated research and technological development in many different fields. An extraordinary range of inventions have been developed around the harbour. James Lind (1716-1794) Chief Physician at Haslar Royal Naval Hospital

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from 1762-1772 published 'A treatise of the scurvy' in 1753 based on comparative clinical trials; he also proposed distilling fresh water from seawater. As well as mass production of pulley blocks in Block Mills, Samuel Bentham devised the first working caissons to close dry docks; the first use of circular saws also occurred in the dockyard. There were also architectural and engineering innovations in building such as the early use of large span prefabricated cast iron in the sadly lost No. 3 Ship Shop. The Whitehead torpedo was developed in the diving lake at Horsea Island. In the twentieth century new techniques including freeze-drying, refrigeration and experimental methods of food preservation were pioneered in the Royal Clarence Victualling Yard. During WWII degaussing of ships was developed at HMS Vernon, and shipborne radar to detect aircraft at Eastney Fort East.



Figure 23. No. 3 Ship Shop, (National Monuments Record, Swindon) Another major loss in national terms was the destruction of the iconic Nos. 3 and 4 Ship Shops, shipbuilding slips that, according to Ray Riley, briefly had the widest span in the world. They were the largest structures on the harbour until the new ship halls and fleet headquarters were built. Their 1845 specialised cast iron roof by Messrs. Baker & Son of Lambeth pre-dated the famous railway station sheds.

New discoveries and innovation – even without including research by the university - are still major local activities. The ship-testing tanks in Haslar, Gosport built by William Froude and his son in the 1880s are still in operation by the privatised QinetiQ organisation, while underwater and electronic communication research and the development and testing of new weapons systems and war games continue on the crest of Portsdown Hill.

Research into futures for the past also continue. Specialist conservation experts and land and marine archaeologists in Historic England's Fort Cumberland, conserve and repair objects, research archaeological digs, and write conservation policies. The Centre for Marine Archaeology there researches marine archaeology and trains marine archaeologists.

To progress the World Heritage Site bid, a steering group chaired by Peter Goodship of the PNBPT was set up, with Portsmouth City conservation officer John Pike, Chris Dobbs of the Mary Rose Trust and others, with Celia Clark working on the bid. The PNBPT hosted a conference of over 100 potential stakeholders in Action Stations in 2006 to launch the bid, which, among other things, would have established Portsmouth Harbour and Spithead as a destination in its own right. But despite assurances that UNESCO respected the concept of history being a continuum and thus would accept change to accommodate the changing needs of the modern Royal Navy, these assurances were not accepted by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation or by the City Council politicians - and thus the bid failed after six years' work.

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The dockyard's historic buildings

There have been examples of the reuse of dockyard buildings such as No. 2 Ship Shop, the former Steam Factory of 1847-9 alongside No. 2 Basin, which was converted in the 1990s into offices, and the main building of the Iron Foundry (1/140) into offices for BAE Systems.

Historic England lists both 5 & 6 Docks as at risk because of their poor condition. An ingenious idea to reverse the MOD's progressive abandonment of unneeded structures is designer Sarah Robert's 2018 proposal for reinventing No. 6 Dock as a multifunctional innovative hub for joint use with the PNBPT, in order to redress the absence of the future dimension currently missing (or outdated) from the dockyard's interpretation. Apart from the navy's ships coming and going, the only place where current service experience is visible to visitors is in Action Stations in Boathouse 6 where proxy experiences are offered to children and adults, partly as a recruitment tool. Despite the abolition of the Crown Exemption in 2006 which meant that the MOD now has to apply to local authorities for planning permission, it can still construct new buildings 'in time of national emergency' without it. In addition, perhaps the MOD prefers newbuild and is not of a mind to reuse existing structures, especially if they are listed or scheduled, because they require complex and time-consuming planning applications and funding. Roberts suggests that if these regulations were somewhat relaxed for the MOD, there might be an incentive to consider reuse, although the VAT on repair as opposed to zero on newbuild would still be a deterrent. No. 6 Dock first built in 1698 and later reconstructed, is currently in a very poor state, its northern wall bulging inwards and the caisson leaking badly. Repairing it and reusing it in a creative way by inserting conference facilities into it as she proposes would serve the navy as a place for planning the future. There are precedents for infilling a dock with new facilities, for example in Copenhagen.



Figure 24. The interior of the Block Mills, showing an area which still has its overhead line-shafting.



Figure 25. Women working in the Block Mills during WWI.

Important protected buildings and structures outside the heritage area have remained empty for many years; unoccupied, their condition has deteriorated significantly, in some cases close to the point of no return. There

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continues to be serious concern about the decay or 'vandalism by neglect' including Block Mills, No. 6 Dock and the Old Naval Academy – all no longer of use to the navy. The book records the campaigning by the Naval Dockyards Society [NDS] about the poor condition of many of the dockyard's buildings. After years of neglect the MOD at last responded to the calls for action and is carrying out repairs and reactivation of four buildings – the Old Naval Academy (1729), The Parade (1717), the Old Iron and Brass Foundry (1854) and Storehouse No 25 (1782) in 2019. Dr Paul Brown, secretary of the NDS said: 'We applaud the work that the Ministry of Defence is now undertaking to safeguard the future of these structures. They are part of not only Portsmouth's heritage but also the Nation's. Within their walls lie hundreds of years of history.' In response, the Naval Secretariat replied that: 'The Royal Navy (RN) acknowledges that we are in a period of particular challenge in balancing available funding investment between the operational infrastructure, improving the outcomes for the ships and our people, and preservation of our heritage.' The NDS looks forward to work on the tidal cofferdam around No. 6 Dock Gates, and restoration and reuse of the Old Naval Academy. The MOD's letter continued: 'The arrival of *HMS Prince of Wales…* with her berth only 100 metres from *HMS Victory*, herself under long term restoration, is a clear symbol both the RN's pride in its heritage, and a real optimism for the long-term future use of this historic site.' The NDS has called several times for a collaboration of stakeholders in Portsmouth Dockyard to set up a MOD Conservation Group or a Heritage Partnership Agreement to accomplish what had not been achieved by the MOD in the last ten years, starting with a site meeting with interested parties. This was recommended in an MOD leaflet of 2010.



Figure 26. Gunners' Row, Eastney Barracks, once the home of the Royal Marines.

Defence Museums

Portsmouth and Gosport are particularly rich in museums focused on defence, and there are other defence-oriented museums in southern Hampshire: Calshot Castle, Fort Nelson, Southampton Hall of Aviation. These are run by a variety of organisations: English Heritage, the Royal Armouries and by local authorities; while volunteers set up and run No. 6 Cinema in the dockyard's No. 6 Boathouse, the Hovercraft Museum at Lee on the Solent, the Diving Museum in Browndown, and the WW1 Remembrance Centre. But all museums, whether national, local authority or voluntary, face continual fund-raising challenges and the need to produce new initiatives to maintain both their precious collections and visitor numbers.

The restoration and conversion of Southsea Castle, Portsmouth's City Museum, the design and construction of the D-Day Museum in ten months for the 50th anniversary, to house the Overlord Embroidery, the restoration of LCT7074 in the dockyard and its arrival in August 2020 to its land berth in front of the D-Day Museum are all documented. The development of the Submarine Museum, HMS Sultan Marine Engineering Museum, Aspex Gallery in Gunwharf, the Round Tower and the Square Tower, the conversion of the Hot Walls to artists' studios in Broad Street, Old Portsmouth are outlined. The story of Fort Nelson's long association with the Palmerston Forts Society, which spent many years clearing Fort Nelson's Moat and restoring the building, is brought up to date with repairs after storm damage to the glazed roof of the atrium which houses Saddam Hussein's supergun. The WWI Remembrance Centre moved from Fort Purbrook to Bastion No.6 in Hilsea Lines to house the private collection of WWI artefacts, exhibits, a walk-through trench system and memorabilia. Extensive restoration of its derelict structure had to be undertaken. Professional divers are restoring No. 2 Battery in Stokes Bay into the Diving Museum, helped by Historic England's Portsmouth Harbour project which introduced them to potential funders and help in applying for grants. The museum's

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accreditation as a museum and the loan of the John Deane helmet from the Science Museum is a tribute to their impressive professionalism.

Redevelopment contrasted with conservation

In the chapter about defence sites repurposed as housing, we explore how both local and national developers have taken on large military complexes around the harbour to convert them to housing, raising substantial funds to do so - and thereby considerably increasing their value. Residential conversion might seem the obvious way of reusing the harbour's legacy of army, navy and marine barracks, but in the earlier redevelopments of defence complexes around the harbour the standing buildings did not always survive and they were demolished. Several surviving barracks and industrial buildings have been adapted for civilians to live in. Key factors are the degrees of intervention: how much of the original fabric and layout remains after conversion, given the need to insert complex new services, internal communications: lifts, stairs and subdivisions for kitchens and bathrooms.



Figure 27. No. 6 Bastion, Hilsea Lines

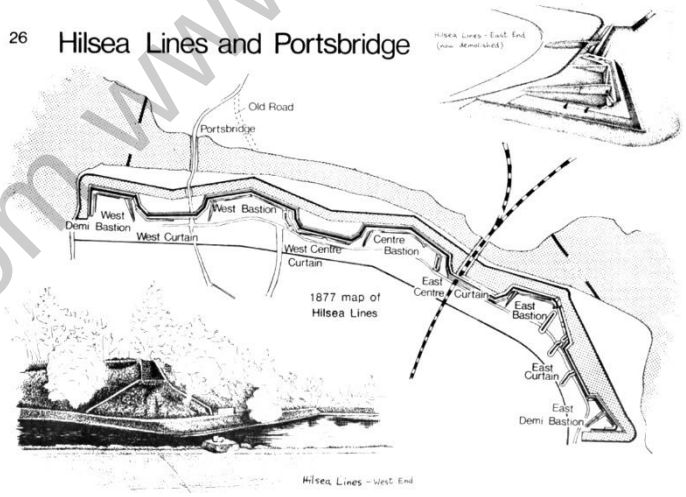


Figure 28. Hilsea Lines. Portsmouth City and Fortress Unit 2. Portsmouth Teachers' Local Studies Group 1980.

Perhaps surprisingly, barracks' austere utilitarian design and surroundings do not deter new owner-occupiers and tenants. Where once twenty soldiers or Royal Marines were billeted in an Eastney barrack room, perhaps a couple of small families now live, revelling in the space, period features and high ceilings of these still gated communities. Given their military associations, not surprisingly, ex-service people enjoy living in former military buildings. Civilian or military, the new residents share the cost of maintaining the surviving perimeter walls and of the new landscaping which may be very different from the large expanses of tarmac or gravel of the parade grounds. Examples are Eastney Barracks, St. George Barracks as well as at Royal Clarence Victualling Yard. Schools, colleges and the university are established in other barracks.

The almost complete redevelopment of HMS Vernon into Gunwharf, a shopping and residential development is contrasted with the conservation-led scheme under way at Priddy's Hard by the PNBPT, the Explosion Museum (NMRN) and developers Elite Homes.

Attachment to the armed forces and local identity

The book explores local people's strong attachment to the armed forces, to their historic defence establishments and to commemoration of their role in national history. Gosport people's eloquent campaign against the government's proposal to close the historic Haslar Naval Hospital in 2002 attracted over 20,000 demonstrators in 1999. Public meetings, vigils and deputations ensured that the hospital remained open until 2009. Our Tale

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of Two Hospitals chapter documents the campaign in detail. The developers' failure to implement the entirely appropriate Veterans Village at Haslar is the most severe disappointment recorded in the book.

However, impressively, in 2019 Gosport Borough Council planned to rebuild the vanished ramparts around the town with a public walkway on top. These once stood 20 to 30 feet high, extending from the surviving No. 1 Battery to the ramparts around Royal Clarence Yard. This is possibly the most innovative and exciting part of the Local Plan. Working with Historic England, Gosport is also innovating with their Heritage Action Zones, the first of which is focused on regeneration of defence sites at risk. Hilsea Lines, Southsea Common and Stokes Bay are welcome public open space.



Figure 29. Cold War Civil Defence Control Centre, Fort Widley.

Forts, batteries and military lines

Two chapters ask "What can you do with the harbour's legacy of military lines, batteries and forts?" Fort Elson inside HMS Sultan is being left to decay – a process labelled 'controlled ruination'. Fort Blockhouse – which is on the MOD's disposal list - is a particular concern. Its deteriorating seawall needs urgent work. If it is breached, there is a danger that the whole harbour will be damaged by the scouring of the tide. The four forts in the sea present particular challenges – not least in reconstruction of their access landing stages and the delivery of building materials. The first owner of Spitbank Fort, Sean Maguire mortgaged his house to buy it from the MOD, but it was not until the long pockets of John Clare, who made his money in Dream Beds, enabled Spitbank and No Man's Land Forts to be converted into luxury event venues and hotels. They and Horse Sands Fort which was to become a museum about the forts and their construction were up for sale in 2020. Forts Wallington and Fareham were partly destroyed when they were used for industrial purposes. Forts Widley and Purbrook, bought by Portsmouth City Council in the 1970s are well used for physical activities including riding horses in the military stables, a hostel for language groups, archery, a climbing wall. In Fort Widley is Portsmouth's Cold War Civil Defence HQ – a spooky underground base with 'estimated casualties' and radiation spread if a nuclear war broke out. The problem for the Peter Ashley Activities Centre which runs the two forts is that they require at least a 25-year lease in order to apply for the very large grants required to restore these two huge structures. This is also a problem for the Hovercraft museum at HMS Daedalus. University conservation students are working on proposals to bring Fort Brockhurst back to more active use.

Recommendations and further research

The book ends with recommendations for more community friendly procedures for the government's disposal and regeneration of former defence property, and a research agenda exploring international experience and good practice for bringing these important parts of our heritage to new life. Celia Clark is delighted to report that Portsmouth School of Architecture has taken up this gauntlet and established a Futures for Defence Heritage group of conservation architects and surveyors and academics with dual aims: to research international experience of defence disposals and reuses of historic military sites in order to strengthen the case for changing the Treasury dominated UK defence site disposal towards a more community friendly system which benefits the locals in environmental, economic and social ways.

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Publications

Published by Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group

Adrian Rance (ed), *Seaplanes and Flying Boats of the Solent*
(1981) **£6.00**

Monica Ellis, *Ice and Icehouses Through the Ages* (with Hampshire gazetteer)
(1982) **£6.00**

Pam Moore (ed), *A Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*
(1984) (with supplement) **£3.00**

Edwin Course & Pam Moore, *The Changing Railway Scene in Hampshire*
(1991) **£5.00**

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(1999) **£5.00**

Edwin Course (editor), *Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group Journal*
No. 1 (1992); *No. 2* (1993); *No. 3* (1994); *No. 4* (1995); *No. 5* (1996);
No. 6 (1997); *No.7* (1998); *No. 8* (1999); *No. 9* (2000/2001)
£5.00 each to non-members

Published by Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society

Edwin Course, *The Itchen Navigation*
New Edition, (2011) **£8.50** + postage

Martin Gregory (editor), *Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society Journal*
No.10 (2002); *No. 11* (2003); *No. 12* (2004); *No. 13* (2005); *No. 14* (2006); *No. 15* (2007*);*
No. 16 (2008); *No. 17* (2009); *No.18* (2010); *No. 19* (2011); *No. 20* (2012); *No. 21* (2013);
No. 22 (2014); *No. 23* (2015); *No. 24* (2016); *No. 25* (2017); *No. 26* (2018); *No. 27* (2019),
No. 28 (2020).
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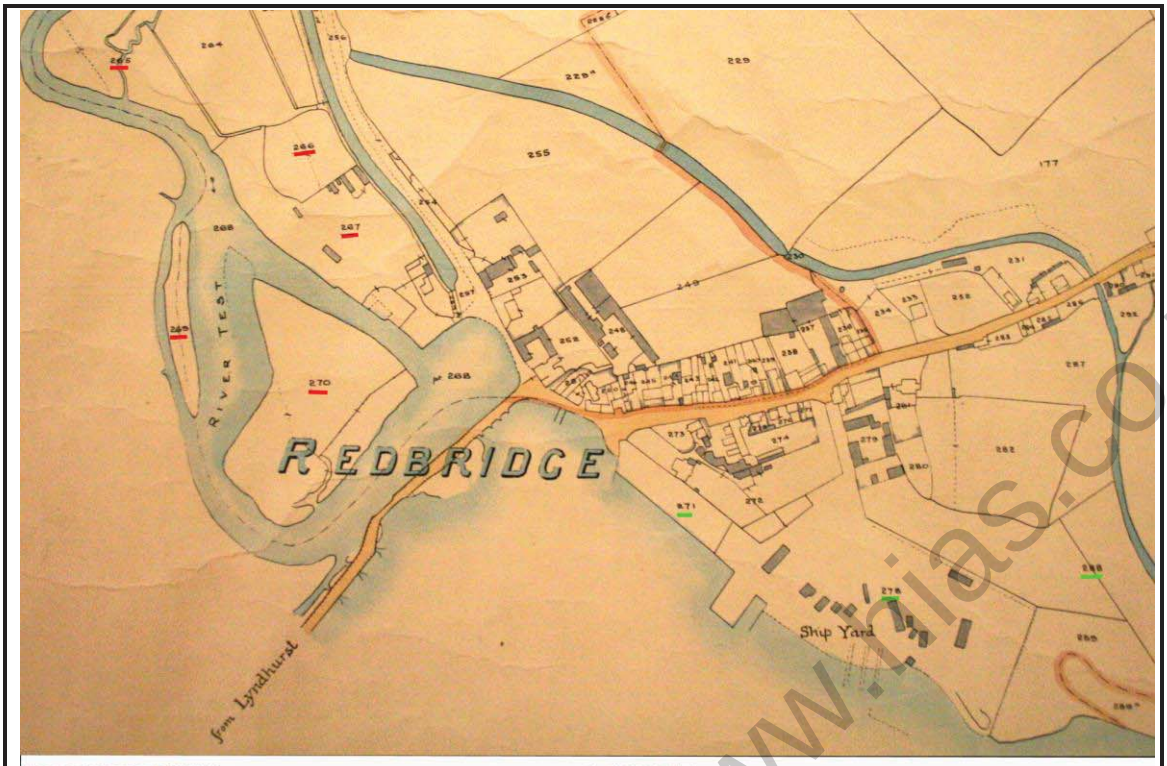
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Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society

Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society was founded as the Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group in the 1960s from members of the University Extra-Mural classes who wished to continue their studies in industrial archaeology. Recording has included surveys of mills, breweries, brickworks, roads and farm buildings. Restoration work is undertaken by associated groups such as the Tram 57 Project, the Hampshire Mills Group and the Twyford Waterworks Trust. In addition to the *Journal*, the Society publishes a newsletter (*Focus*) twice a year and lecture meetings are held every month throughout the year.

To join, contact the Membership Secretary:
Keith Andrews, 13 Ashley Close, Winchester, Hampshire, SO22 6LR.

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