

# Radnor Road, Twickenham

## A SHRA Street History by Mike Cherry

### Introduction

Radnor Road is one of many residential roads in Strawberry Hill, Twickenham but unlike most it is not a product of the Victorian, Edwardian or inter-war phases of housing development. A closer look at the buildings along its route provides some clues that it is not a typical suburban street with housing of a similar date on both sides, and that it may therefore have had an earlier existence. Indeed it can claim to be one of the oldest roads in the area, albeit as nothing more than a track for much of its life. Like many old roads it has had more than one name and these will be mentioned but the name Radnor Road will be used generally to avoid confusion. The name derives from John Robartes, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Radnor, who lived at what became known as Radnor House in Cross Deep, Twickenham from 1722 until his death in 1757. His house stood in today's riverside Radnor Gardens, and the grounds of his estate were adjacent to part of the southern end of Radnor Road.

### Early History

To try to identify the origins of Radnor Road it is necessary to look at early maps of Twickenham. The earliest date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century: Ralph Treswell's of 1607 and Moses Glover's of 1635, both maps of the Manor of Sion which



included Twickenham. These clearly show the three medieval fields that largely surrounded the village of Twickenham: the South Field, the Town or North Field, and the East Field. Radnor Road and much of Strawberry Hill lie in the South Field. This is shown on the detail from Glover's map (left). (Note: the orientation of the original map

has been retained with north to the south east.) This shows 'Ye Hither South Fielde', and 'Ye Further South Fielde' towards Teddington, separated by a narrow meadow on either side of a stream known as Sparksmead Brook. Heath Road (then Lane) is at the bottom of the image with some enclosed areas of land adjoining it, and Cross Deep (the road) runs alongside the River Thames on the left with enclosed areas between the road and the river. The unenclosed area of the Hither South Field is described as 'arable' and would have been divided into strips grouped into large areas called furlongs. Ploughing of adjacent strips would produce a 'head' at the end of the strips: a narrow raised ribbon of uncultivated soil that provided a pathway between the furlongs.

The open fields were subject to gradual enclosure and John Rocque's map of the Environs of London c 1746 (detail below), shows the extent of the changes in the century after Glover's map. (North is at the top.) Heath Lane runs along

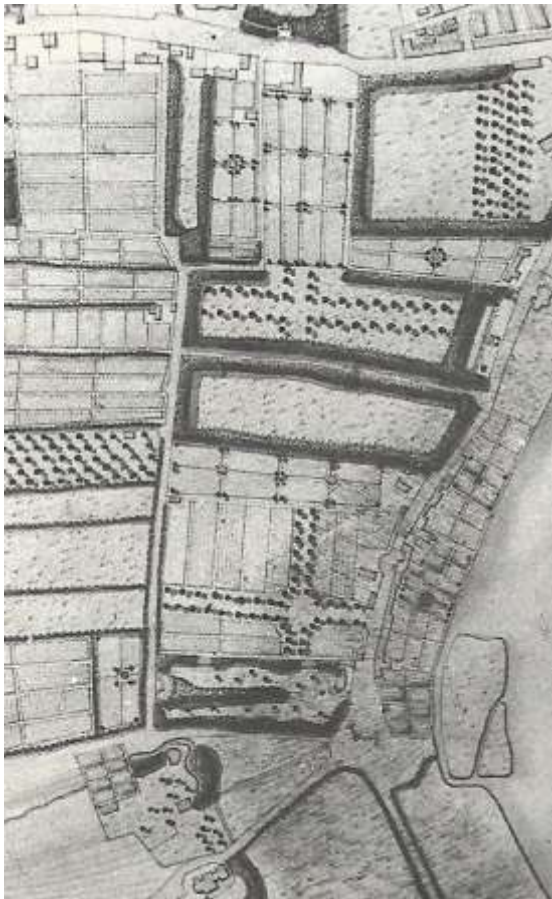


the top, Cross Deep down the right-hand side, and Radnor Road can be clearly seen on the left-hand side providing a trackway from south of the South Field to Heath Lane. To the right of Radnor Road lie a number of enclosed gardens, principally those of Cross Deep House at the bottom, Radnor House, Pope's Villa, and Countess Ferrers. These gardens were in Thames furlong. To the left of Radnor Road was Hart furlong. The boundary between the furlongs would have been the head or ribbon of land, at the end of the cultivated strips, that ran from the meadow in the south to Heath Lane in the

north. As cultivation of Thames furlong as an open field clearly pre-dated

Rocque's map, Radnor Road, known at this time as Worple Way, must also have been in existence prior to 1746, and possibly back to the much earlier period when the South Field was first cultivated.

A later 18<sup>th</sup> century map by C J Sauthier of 1786/7 (detail below) shows the extent to which the South Field has been enclosed to the west of Radnor Road. What is now Tower Road appears along the southern end of the South Field and



and Waldegrave Road (previously Fry's Lane) can be seen at the bottom heading south west past Strawberry Hill House.

Two features are notable on the Rocque and Sauthier maps: first, there is a kink at the northern end of Radnor Road which is approximately where Radnor Gardens now joins Radnor Road. Here the track narrows, turns right and then left and continues north to the Heath Road. This may have been to accommodate the boundaries of properties adjoining the southern side of Heath Road at the point where those estates abutted the gardens of properties along Cross Deep. If the track pre-dates the enclosures along the Heath

Road, some of which were there in 1635, then it is possible that Radnor Road was originally straight and the kink was forced by later enclosures. Nonetheless the track of Radnor Road provided a continuous route from south of the South Field to Heath Lane and it was to follow this exact route until 1930 when land at the northern end of Radnor Road was developed.

The second feature is that there is only one significant property along the length of Radnor Road. It is on the west side of the road opposite a narrow lane running west to east to Cross Deep. This is Grotto Road, previously Fox Lane, and its gentle curve reflects the slight curving of the strips in Thames furlong. The building is now Radnor Lodge, no 29 Radnor Road.

## Radnor Lodge in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century

The precise date of the construction of Radnor Lodge isn't known but it clearly pre-dates Rocque's map of c 1746. At that time the cottage and land were owned by Ann Adams who had inherited the land from relatives so it is possible that the buildings date from at least the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1747/8 Adams let the property to Henry Fielding. A playwright, lawyer, magistrate and law reformer, Fielding is best known for his novels, in particular *Tom Jones* which he was just finishing writing at the time he came to stay in Twickenham with his second wife Mary, who was pregnant. Their son, William, was baptised at St Mary's Church Twickenham on 25 February 1748. The Fieldings stayed only briefly. By 1750 Ann Adams had sold the house to John Winde (or Wynde). Horace Walpole later reported that '*Mr Wynde shot himself Oct. 29 1759 in the house in the back lane behind Pope's; Fielding formerly lived there.*' Alexander Pope's garden was diagonally opposite Radnor Lodge; his garden was bounded by Grotto Road to the north and by Radnor Road to the west to approximately where it now meets Pope's Grove (a much later road).

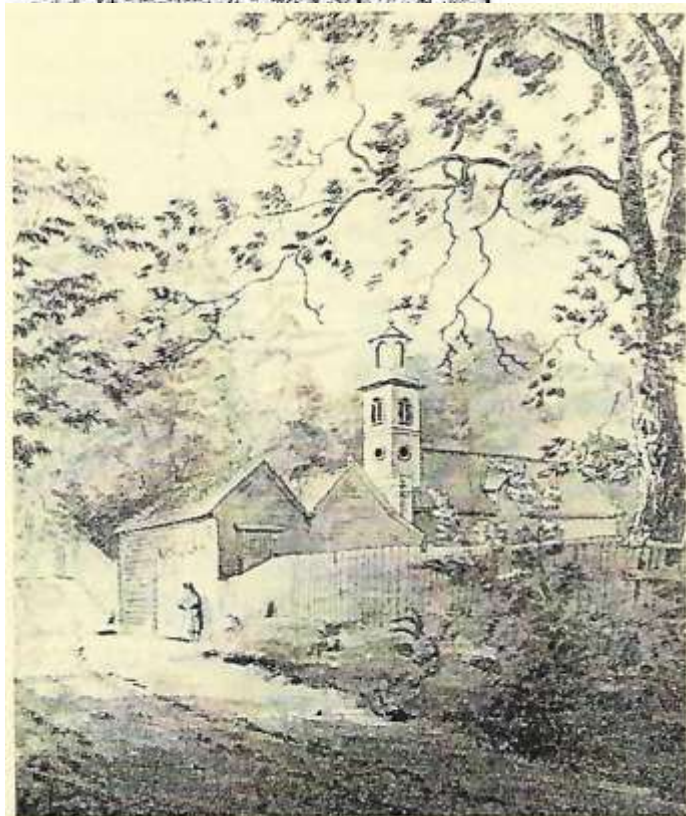
Radnor Lodge was bought in 1761 by Sir William Stanhope who had bought Pope's villa and gardens in 1745. Stanhope connected the Lodge to the rest of his estate by creating a tunnel diagonally under Radnor Road with grotto-like entrances at either end. The tunnel, decorated with shells and other materials, still runs much of the way under the road but is blocked up at the east end. The small grotto at the entrance to the tunnel in what was Pope's garden (now land owned by Radnor House School Twickenham) became known as Stanhope's Cave and was restored in XXXX (photo). Pope's garden had been



bounded only by dense planting and one of the changes made by Stanhope was to replace the planting with a boundary wall. This would have fronted Radnor Road.

Stanhope died in 1772 and Radnor Lodge and the rest of the estate were inherited by Welbore Ellis, his son-in-law. Ellis later became Lord Mendip.

A plan of Twickenham of 1786 by Samuel



Lewis (detail left) clearly shows the line of Radnor Road with Radnor Lodge marked as 'Mr Ellis's Stables'. Both Lewis and Sauthier show two detached structures, the one adjacent to the road presumably being the extant building. A drawing by J C Barrow (left) shows the buildings in 1790 with a modern photo, below, for comparison. There is a clear similarity to Radnor Lodge in the building next to the road, with a more substantial building with a tower standing

behind. A marked hump in Radnor Road can be seen on the far left of the

drawing where the tunnel runs under the road and this is still visible, if less prominent, today.



**The 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

**The Twickenham Enclosure Award**

The Twickenham Enclosure Award of 1818 provides a detailed plan (below) of Radnor Road with the familiar zigzag shape, and the land along its route. Tower



Road can be seen at the bottom just above Sparksmead Brook (by this time partly culverted). Heath Road is at the top. Radnor Lodge is shown just above the junction with Grotto Road. At this time Radnor Lodge was owned by Sir Wathen Waller (who was married to Baroness Howe, the infamous destroyer of Pope's Villa). He also owned Pope's estate and other property locally. The Award describes Radnor Lodge as *'gardener's house and garden'*. A much smaller building can be seen immediately to the south (it also appears on the Sauthier map) which is described in the Award as *'orchard and gardener's cottage'*. This was also owner by Sir Wathen Waller.

The ownership of land adjacent to Radnor Road on the eastern side is shown as:

Viscount Clifden (all the land from Heath Road to Grotto Road)

Sir Wathen Waller (Pope's estate) Trustees of Rev Thomas Vialls (Radnor House estate)

John Ivatt Briscoe (Cross Deep House along the boundary with Tower Road).

Ownership on the west side south of the zigzag is as follows:

Late Thomas Ingram Esq, Meadow

Viscount Clifden, Meadow

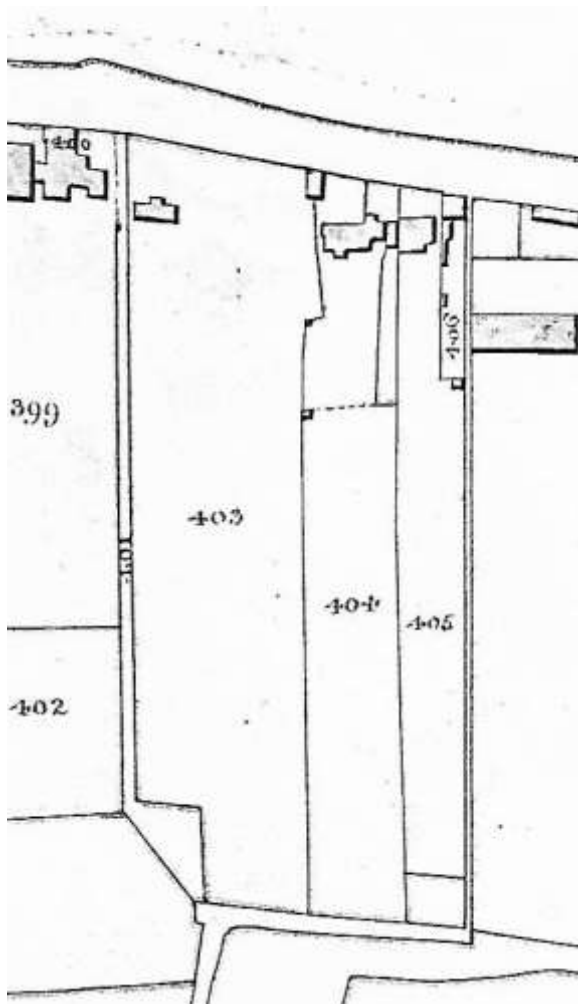
Sir Wathen Waller (Radnor lodge, with gardens and orchard)

Trustees of the Rev Thomas Vials, Meadow

John Ivatt Briscoe, Inclosure.

As can be seen, the land owners to the east of Radnor Road have extended their holdings to the western side. (It is interesting to note that a narrow strip of land immediately south of Radnor Lodge may mark the point where Upper Grotto Road was later created.)

It is worth taking a closer look at the area of land at the north end of Radnor



Road as shown in the detail below. The parcels of land numbered 401 (the very narrow piece on the left), 403, 404, 405 and 406 comprise the area that was eventually developed in 1930 to house numbers 67 to xx Radnor Road. The Enclosure Award lists the landowners as follows:

401 – John Davies, garden

403 – Anne Gray and her representative, meadow

404 – Robert Shurlock and John Manwaring, trustees of George Soaper and wife – dwelling house and gardens

405 – as 404, house and garden

406 – James Wilkie, house and garden.

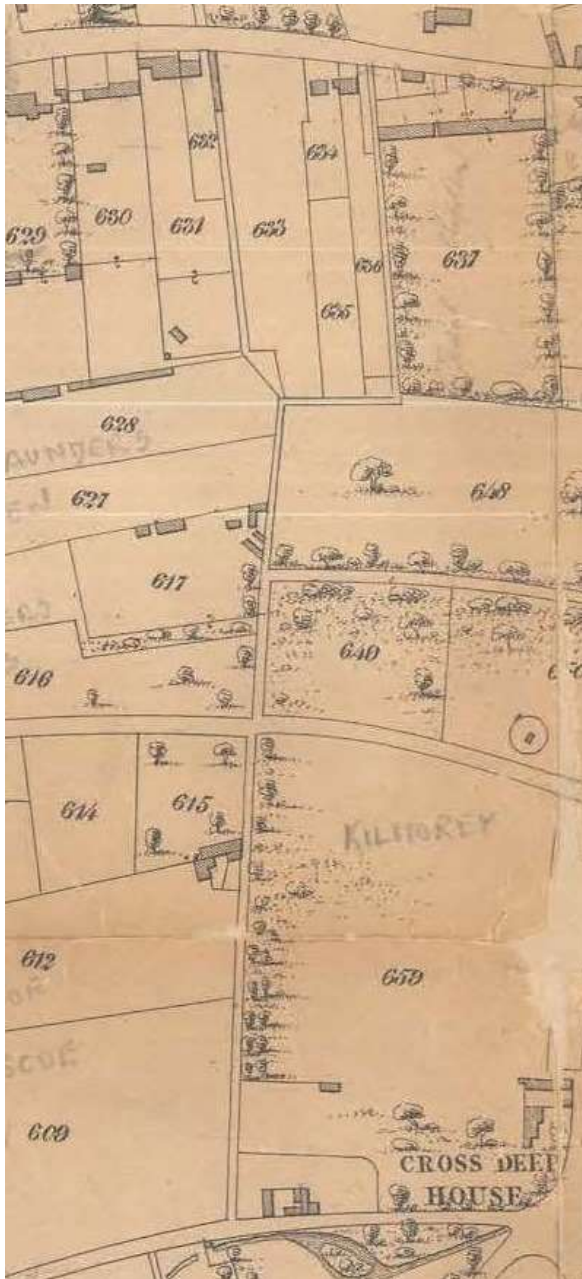
The narrow pathway of Radnor Road to Heath Road can be seen immediately to the right of parcels 405 and 406. As will be shown later, the very narrow



strip of land on the left, 401, remained in separate ownership after development for housing in 1930.

### The later 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The history of the road can continue to be traced through maps with the



Warren Plan of the Parish of Twickenham of 1845. The detail, left, shows the familiar route of the road from the junction with Tower Road in the south via the zigzag to Heath Road at the northern end. Radnor Lodge is shown, at this date owned by the Executors of the late J Travers, Esq, and a sizeable building further south apparently straddling the boundary between land owned by J Wright Nokes, Esq, and John Ivatt Briscoe. The most notable change is that Pope's Grove now puts in its first appearance, cutting across Radnor Road. At this time Pope's Grove was almost entirely undeveloped, and housing was to appear in a slow and piecemeal fashion over the following decades. Certainly the increased access to Cross Deep provided by this new road does not seem to have created any immediate appetite for building in Radnor Road.

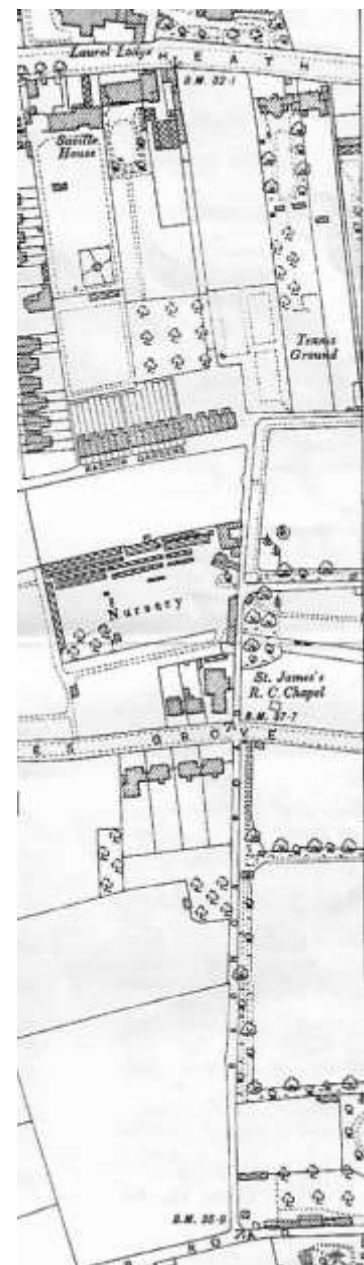
The 1863 OS map (below) shows little change from the Warren map of 20 years earlier apart from the increased number of buildings in the grounds of Radnor Lodge. Information is also



available in Census returns from 1841 and in the Twickenham Rate Books. In the early returns locations can be imprecise particularly as the names of minor roads can vary and the locations of properties within roads are not given. The early Census's show Radnor Road as variously Back Lane, Narrow Lane, Chestnut Lane and Pope's Villa Gardens. The name 'Radnor Road' was defined by the Twickenham Local Board in 1878 as 'commences at Tower Road and ends at Heath Road' and it was agreed that the name should be recorded twice in the road by being painted on walls. However it isn't until 1891 that the name is used in a census return. Details of the entries are given in Appendix 1 but in

summary the returns from 1841 to 1881 include only 2 or 3 entries which can be ascribed to roads believed to be Radnor Road, and 1891 has only 2 entries under Radnor Road itself. The 1901 Census has 4 entries and the latest available, 1911, has 5 entries. **INCLUDE 2021 CENSUS** This shows that the road stayed largely undeveloped until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The 1894 OS map (right) shows Radnor Road little changed itself from 1863, except for the addition of St James's Church, at the junction of Pope's Grove and Radnor Road, which had been opened in 1885, and the construction of Radnor Gardens (the road) opposite to the zig-zag which can just be seen as a narrow pathway. It enters Heath Road immediately to the east of Havelock House, an 18<sup>th</sup> century building. The outline of the roof-line can still be seen on the flank wall of Luxor Mansions. Adjoining Havelock House was Red House occupied by Albert Lusty, a licensed victualler, and his family. Part of the land that later became the northern section of Radnor Road is shown as 'Tennis Ground' with what appear to be 3 tennis courts laid out. It is also noticeable that much of Radnor Road is still very narrow. It seems likely that the current passage immediately south of the junction with Pope's Grove, was the original width of the road.

Building development in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century was as always influenced by demand and by the availability of land. Twickenham had been a highly fashionable place to live in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and so there were a lot of large houses with large grounds. This limited the area of land for other uses. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century many of these houses had become difficult to sell or let - their upkeep and maintenance were too expensive and Twickenham, although a desirable place to live, was not attracting the rich and famous as it had once done. Radnor House is a typical example. It had been gothicized in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and remodelled in the Italianate style in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but the core of the house dated from the 1670s so by 1900 it was well over 200 years old. Like several other riverside house in Cross



Deep, the main gardens were across the road from the house and extended west to Radnor Road. After the death of the last private owner, Laura Stearns, the house was put up for auction in 1900 and the auctioneers emphasized *that 'the property has important frontages to FOUR ROADS and possesses exceptional value for BUILDING PURPOSES...'* It didn't sell but its fate was sealed as the house and riverside grounds only were offered to and eventually bought by Twickenham Urban District Council. The main grounds west of Cross Deep thus became available for building purposes.

### **The 20<sup>th</sup> Century – to the 1940s**

The first sign of a change from the purely horticultural heritage of Radnor Road comes with the development of houses along part of the land that formed Pope's garden adjoining Radnor Road. The 1911 Census gives details of 4 houses: nos 1,2,3,4 in addition to the existing Radnor Lodge.

Curiously the 1901 Census has 4 houses listed under Radnor Road – nos 21,22,23, and 24 - but these are in fact the last 4 houses in Radnor Gardens on the north east side (excluding the modern addition).

Thus begins the residential development of Radnor Road, a process that would accelerate in the 1920s and 1930s. But there was also an industrial interlude that has left almost no trace. Between about 1912 and 1928 there was a foundry on part of the land that was later to form the northern section of Radnor Road.

The 1912 Kelly's Street Directory has an entry under Radnor Gardens after no 24 for 'Dinnage and Claydon – Brass Founders'. The 1913 OS map (below)



shows a building on the site of the 'Tennis Ground' shown on the 1894 map. This encompassed the ground on which nos 69 to 79 Radnor Road were later built. This must be the foundry. In subsequent directories it was called 'Claydon and Co Iron and Brass Founders' (1913), and 'A T Lusty Iron founder' (from 1921). As previously mentioned Albert Lusty lived at 'Red House' in Heath Road. (In the 1901 and 1911 Census returns he is described as a licensed victualler.) There are references in the Twickenham Urban District Council minutes for

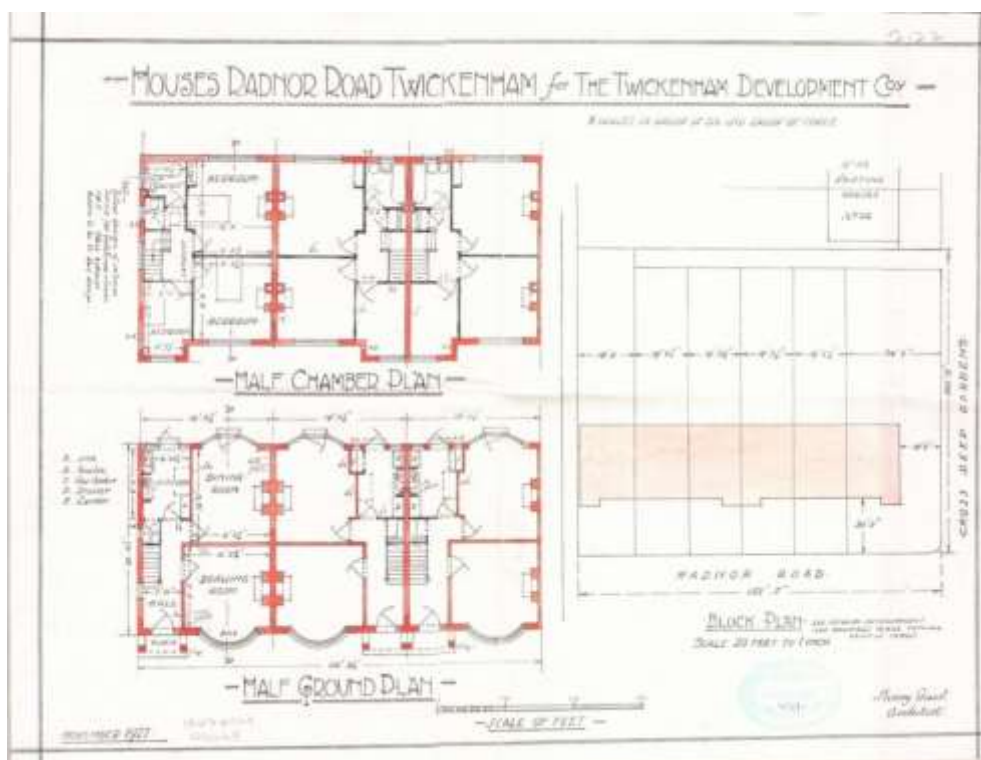
applications by Lusty for additions to an iron foundry at the rear of Red House. The foundry had gone by 1928 and Red House by 1929 leaving the way clear for housing development. All that remains, from the author's perspective, is the frequent unearthing of small metal objects and small pieces of furnace slag when digging the garden of no 75. (For more detail on the foundry see the article 'A Foundry Found' in BOTLHS Newsletter no. 160 September 2012.)

The 1915 OS map also shows the row of new houses, now numbers 28 to 38 Radnor Road, and the extensive development off Radnor Road with the creation of Upper Grotto, Holmes and Bonser Roads, Chillingworth Gardens, and the beginnings of Riverside Gardens.

The 'Borough Plans' held by the Richmond Borough Local Studies Collection contain a number of planning applications for Radnor Road. These show some but not all the developments that took place in the 1920s and 30s and also include a few that were approved but not built.

The plan below of November 1927 shows numbers 50 to 60 Radnor Road built by the Twickenham Development Company. The plan proposes '9 houses in group of 6 and group of 3'. The group of 6 was built but not the group of 3 and

there's no indication of where the latter group were to be built.



The plan below shows a detail from an application, approved by

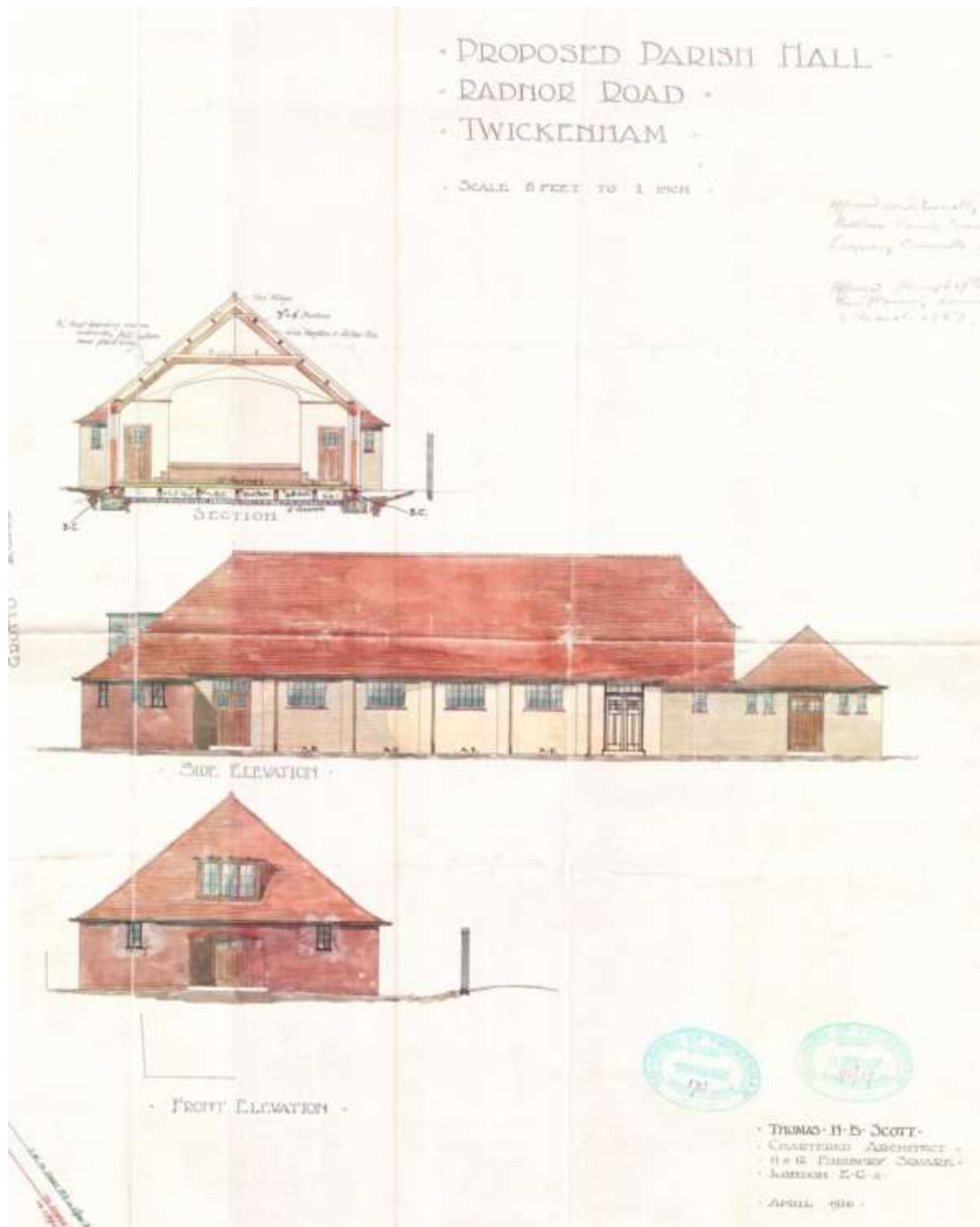
the council on 8 March 1928, for a pair of houses, now numbers 1 and 3. The

same year saw plans approved (below right) for more houses in Radnor Road as part of the Orford Estate. The elevations match those of nos 13 and 15.



Plans dated April 1926 for a proposed parish hall (below) were submitted to the Twickenham Urban District Council and were approved by Twickenham

Borough Council in March 1927, borough status having been achieved in



September 1926.

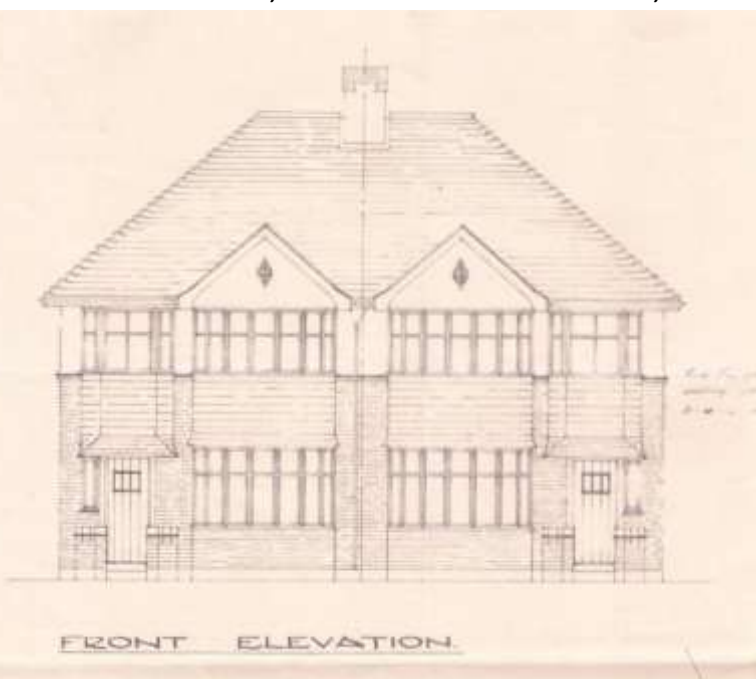
Further plans (below) for housing were approved in March 1929 for semi-detached houses on the 'Red House Estate'; this must have been on land



owned by Albert Lusty who had been living at Red House in Heath Road. The elevation (below) matches numbers 94 and 96 Radnor Road.

The plan at the bottom shows the proposal for a pair of houses for the Cranmer Land and Real Estate Co. Ltd. The plans were approved on 9 April 1936 and the

houses, now numbers 67 and 69, were built in the triangular space where the 1930s section of Radnor Road curves slightly as it joins the original road.



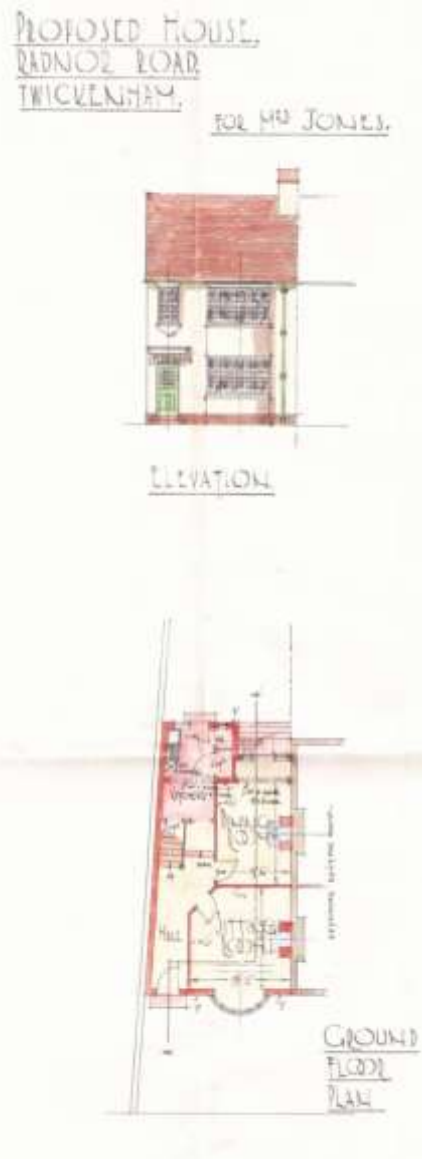


Not all the plans seem to have been acted upon; there are several that appear not to have been built. Examples include the plan (left) which was approved on

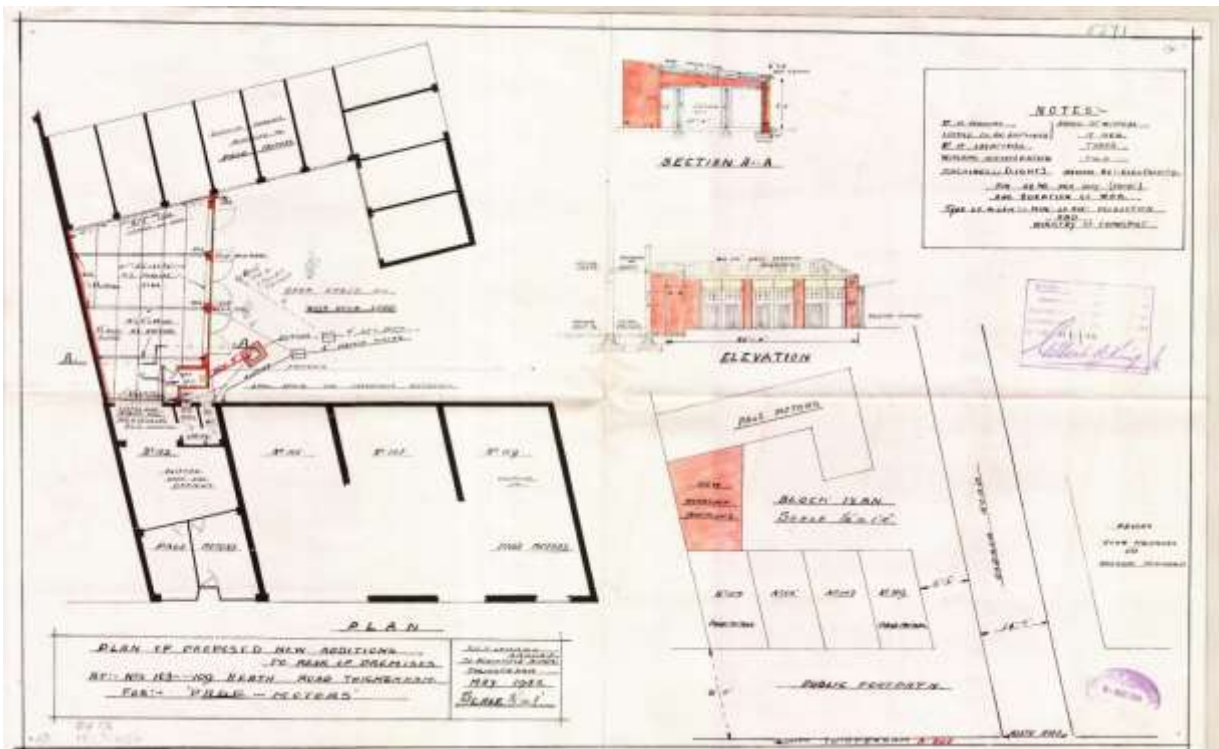
28 October 1926 for 3 pairs of semi-detached houses in Radnor Road, designed by a local architect H Langford Moyle of 47 London Road, Twickenham. However houses to this design appear not to have been built in the road.



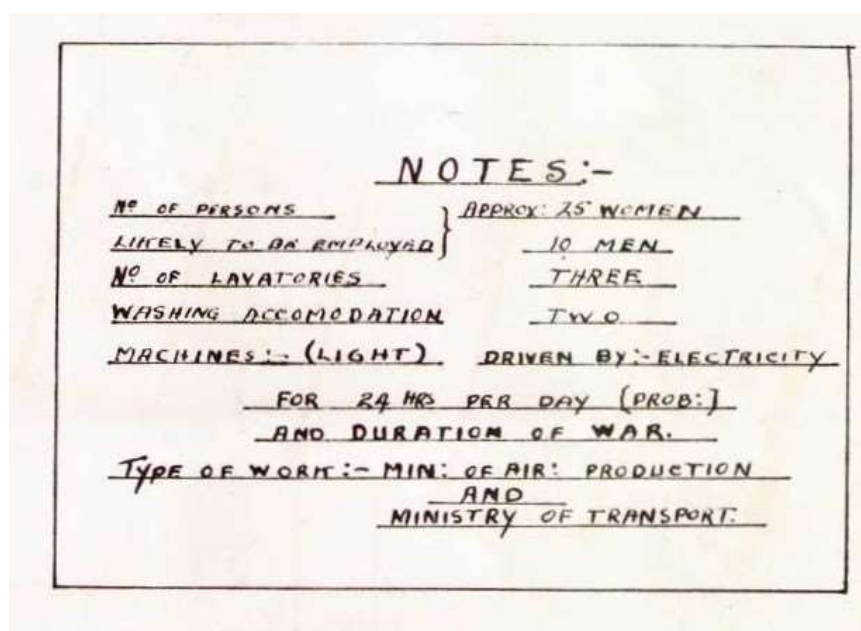
An equally confusing plan exists for a single house (below). Called 'Proposed House, Radnor road, Twickenham for Mrs Jones' the plan was approved on 7 July 1932 and shows a house added to an existing building with a slightly angled side. With its round bays and oriel window it most resembles modern numbers 28 to 38 but it isn't clear where it was intended to be built.



In 1942 Radnor Road played a small part in the war effort. The document below is the 'Plan of Proposed New Additions to Rear of Premises at 103-109 Heath Road Twickenham for Pages Motors'. It shows, on the left, the floor plan of 'Pages Motors', which occupied the ground floor of Luxor Mansions, 103-109 Heath Road, and the yard and garages behind; on the right is a plan of the



junction of Heath Road and Radnor Road with elevations of the 'proposed new additions'. The box on the top right is shown below left in more detail and



makes the purpose clear. Using predominantly female workers, light, electric powered machines, were to be used 'for 24 hours a day for the duration of the war' on work for the Ministry of Air Production and the Ministry of

Transport. It isn't known what items the works were producing but the

operation would seem to be either a shadow factory, or part of a dispersal scheme designed to split production into small units rather than concentrate it in a single factory, thus avoiding a collapse of production if the factory were bombed. Shadow factories tended to be sited near existing engineering facilities to take advantage of the skills available. Perhaps the siting at Page's Motors was designed to utilise the skills of the car mechanics.

Speed was clearly of the essence: the proposal was dated May 1942 and approval by the Borough of Twickenham was given on 21 May 1942.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Census Entries for Radnor Road**

*Note: the original census entries can be very difficult to read and there isn't always consistency from one census to the next. Because Radnor Road was a minor road known by various names until 1878, and the exact locations of properties are not given in census returns, it is difficult to be precise about who lived there.*

#### **1841**

Back Lane: James Hopwood, age 65, florist, Jesse (?) age 60, Charlotte age 20, milliner.

Heath Lane: Stephen Warr/Wurr, age 50, gardener, Elizabeth age 60, Lydia age 8.

#### **1851**

Narrow Lane, Cross Deep: Henry Howlett, age 39, Coachman, Jemima, age 39, son and daughter.

Back Lane, Cross Deep: J (?) Swannell, age 45, Labourer, Charlotte, wife age 40, one son and three daughters.

Back Lane: Stephen Winn/Wurr, age 70, market gardener, Elizabeth age 70, Lydia (daughter) age 17 (sic).

#### **1861**

Chestnut Lane: Richard Clark(e), age 40, market gardener, Isabella, wife, age 25, William Elkin, age 25, 'garden-man' (live-in employee?), plus 2 visitors.

William Baldry, age 43, cattle dealer, Sophia, wife, age 39, plus nephew and servant.

### **1871**

Narrow Lane, Pope's Grove: Richard Clarke, age 49, market gardener, Isabella, wife, and 3 nieces.

Pope's Grove Farm: Thomas Bates, age 58, farm bailiff, Ann, age 59, wife, David, son, carpenter, Emma, daughter, age 14, dressmaker.

### **1881**

Pope's Villa Gardens: Richard Clarke age 59, market gardener, Isabella, 2 nieces.

Pope's Grove Farm: Ann Bates, age 70, Harry, grandson, market gardener, Thomas Gray, lodger, also market gardener.

### **1891**

Cottage, Radnor Road: Robert Baillie age 42, gardener, Sarah, wife age 39 plus 9 children and mother-in-law.

House, Radnor Road: Richard Clarke, age 69, market gardener, Isabella, wife, Sarah Baillie, niece. (Perhaps related to Robert Baillie?)

### **1901**

CHECK THE ENTRY – 4 HOUSES SHOWN ARE IN RADNOR GARDENS

### **1911**

Radnor Road:

1. 'The Chantry' (?), William Morrell, motor engineer
2. Percy Wise, builder and decorator
3. Charlotte Tuiollier, private means (the 1891 census gives her husband as Eugene Tuiollier, French, agent for silk manufacturer, then living in Victoria Road, Twickenham)
4. Frederick Kelly, Civil Servant.

Radnor Lodge: Hugh Temple Powell, Nurseryman.

## 1921

### Radnor Road

2. Percy Henry Wise, builder and decorator, Francis Elizabeth, wife, Vera Frances, daughter, Gerald Spencer, son, Violet May Edridge, servant.
  3. Lucie E Tuiollier (possibly Thiollier or, in the census transcript, Thiollins) age 55, organist, Charlesetta (Charlotte) Tuiollier, age 76, mother.
  4. Edwin John Elliott, age 46 company secretary, Constance Maud, age 41 wife, Eric Edwin Ewins, age 13 son.
  5. Walter Arthur Miller, age 49 railway clerk, Amelia Elizabeth, age 49 wife, William Edward Miller, age 77 visitor, Anne Margaret Miller, age 71 visitor, Jessie Duff, age 48 visitor.
- Radnor Lodge. Temple Powell, age 56 nurseryman, L M Powell, age 53 wife, Sulfied Myhill, age 56 brother-in-law, Valerie Powell, age 12 niece.