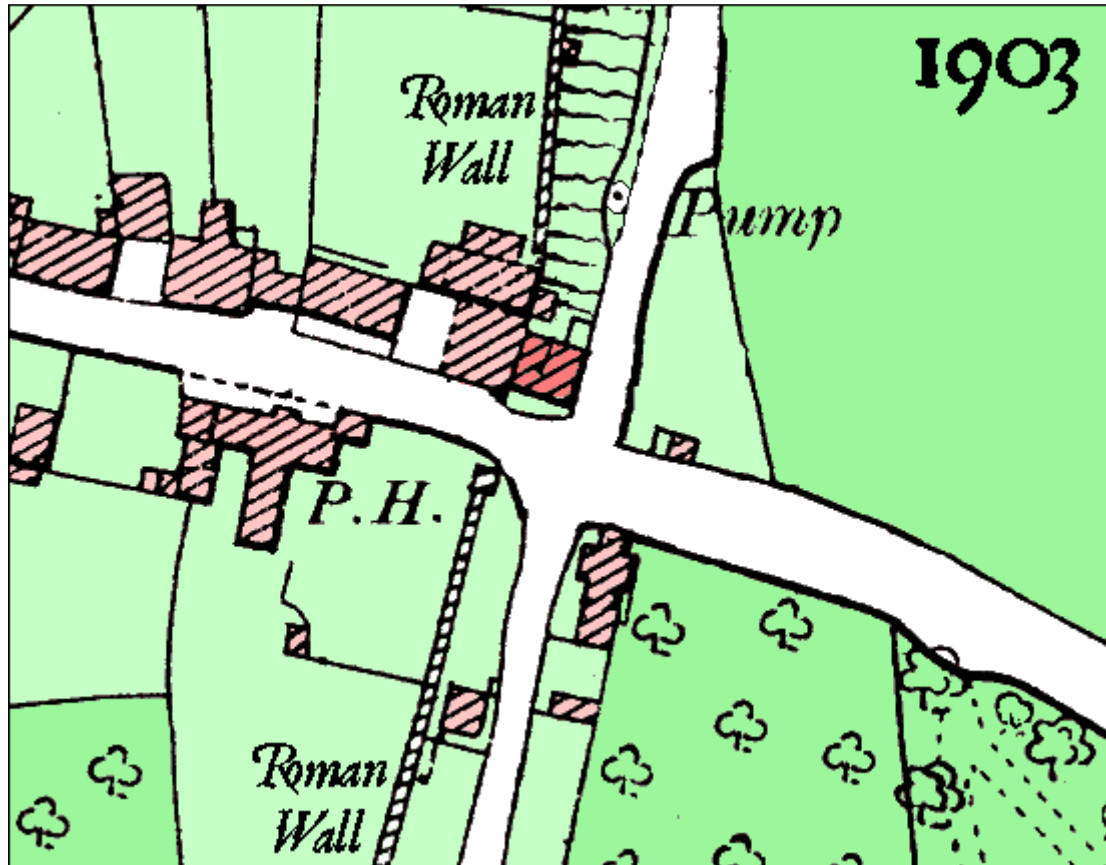


A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY AT THE CROSSROADS

by
John Nettleship

The recent changes at the crossroads have directed my mind to things before my time. First the Memorial Bench: this tasteful addition to the village reminds us of Chris, but has also brought a reminder that a house once stood there.



'The Corner' as it was in 1903 - before the Burtonn Homes were built, and showing the plan of house that once stood on the north side of the corner.

Traces of it were observed in the shallow trench excavated to provide the foundation for the bench. It was only when looking at the 1903 map given to me by Bryan Morgan that I realised how close to the corner this house, built onto the outside of the Roman Wall, must have been.

The house was demolished soon after the Second World War and there seems to be only one photo of it, which can be seen on the 'PHOTOGRAPHS' page of this website.

Secondly it seems a long time ago that Jesse Hillier, amongst others, was complaining to me that it was safer to walk up Eastgate in the middle of the road than on the pavement. At last, after years of lobbying by the Community Council and the efforts of two successive County Councillors, we have gained a real improvement:

But did you ever used to trip over a large concrete block, part buried in the pavement near the corner? The block was the plinth of a very early Automobile Association phone box, built on to the end wall of 'Maybury'.

The box was removed in the early 1930s. When in the 1970s a pavement was constructed, the concrete block was treated with such reverence that it was left standing 2 or 3 inches higher than the surrounding tarmac. I remember insisting at a site meeting last year that it must go. But now it's gone I feel a bit guilty - should I have put in an application for it to have 'Listed Building' status? Bryan has not turned up a photo of the AA box yet, but he can supply a post card of his grandfather standing with P C Moore in front of the vestiges of it.

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