



Historical Notes compiled by
the Western Wards History Group

ASH VALE

TONGHAM & ASH GREEN

Historical
walks of
Time
through



Trail
VALE TRAIL (ASH VALE)
(2 miles) Will take approximately 2 hours

Start at the car park at Ash Hill Recreation Ground, turn right along Ash Hill Road to the mini-roundabout. Cross over to the road bridge.

1 Ash Wharf – at the turn of the century Ash Wharf was still busy with pleasure boats operating from Charles Knowles' Boathouse, situated on the bank, on the site of the present parade of shops. Behind the boathouse, in Wharf Road, was the George and Dragon Pub; and the Bridge House Pub was on the corner now occupied by Vale Furnishers, with William Instone's smithy and the Standard of England behind it. Although the canal went into decline when railway transport became available, it was still occasionally used to transport heavy goods. In 1906 the bricks for the building of St Mary's Church in Ash Vale were unloaded at Ash Wharf.

Cross over the bridge and access the canal towpath down the ramp. Continue along towpath:

2 The Basingstoke Canal was built in 1794 and restored in 1991. Now a designated conservation area it runs for 32 miles from Greywell to Woodham. It was originally 37 miles long and built to transport agricultural goods from central Hampshire to London. Exhibitions at the Basingstoke Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, show how barges lived and worked. Telephone 01252 370073.



Basingstoke Canal

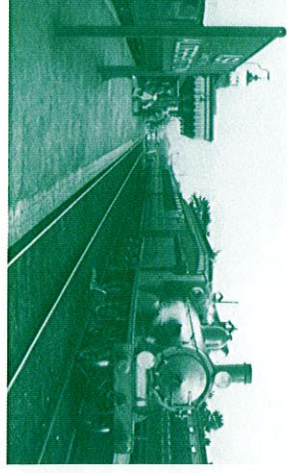
Continue for approx. three quarters of a mile along canal until you see the Swan Public House to your right:

3 The Swan – this is where John Tupper opened a free house in Ash Vale c1857 called the Swan but better known as Tupper's Tavern. It had a rat pit, and entertainment also included cock fighting, pigeon shooting and bare knuckle boxing matches. By the early 1900s the Swan Hotel had become a local social centre with a maze, bowling green, dances on the lawn and regular musical performances by the Salvation Army and Mr Rowlings String Orchestra.

You will by now have passed Hereford House on Vale Road. If you wish to see the house, go up the steps at the bridge, turn left and left again at the main road.

4 Hereford House (at the corner of Firacre Road) was designed and built by James Payne in 1898. He was a florist and a trustee of the Victoria Hall. In more recent years the house was occupied by Miss Winifred Massey who ran a private school of art from her home, charging pupils 2/6d per week. Following Miss Massey's death in 1973 the house became a squat for 12 years. It was then sold, with the proceeds being split between Dr Barnado's charity and the James Payne Memorial Fund. The original chimneys now form part of the side porch.

Cross the railway line and continue along Ash Church Road. On your right you will see:



Ash Station c.1934

7 Ash Railway Station opened in 1849 by the Reading Guildford and Reigate Railway Company. A spur was added to the line north of Ash Station in 1879 to join the London to Aldershot line which had been opened in 1870. Sadly most of the original buildings have been demolished, but we still have the wonderful old original engine shed, now a car hire office.

Retrace your steps and take the small path to your left, beside Pine Cottages. Continue along this path to the A323. Turn left, on your right you will see Ash Railway Station:

6 York House dating from the 16th century and Grade II listed. The building became the Duke of York in 1858, when it was leased by Thomas Taunton's Guildford Brewery. This brewery was taken over by the Friary Brewery in 1874 and in 1904 the Duke of York offered bread, cheese, minerals and stabling. By 1906-7 the establishment had acquired a reputation as a rowdy house, and this resulted in the loss of its licence.

Walk back to Harpers Road and turn left to see:

5 At this point, the boundary between Ash and Wyke crosses the corner of a field called Shortlands. Before maps were commonly available, it was the custom for the Rector and parishioners to walk the bounds of the parish annually. This was known as beating the parish bounds. In 1704, during a boundary dispute with George Woodroffe of Poyle, three large stones were taken from the churchyard to mark the boundary. In winter, when the vegetation dies back, the boundary stone which marked the point where Shortlands was divided can still be seen.

Turn right past the pub down Harpers Road. If you wish to see the boundary stone turn left after the recreation ground along the rough lane to the gate at the end. Over the gate you will see the stone:

4 The Lion Brewery was built on former common land enclosed in 1856. The original owner was Robert Waters, who inherited land in this part of Ash in 1855, and it was run by members of his family for more than 40 years. Formerly a freehouse, by 1904 it had become tied to Hodgsons Kingston Brewery Company which was taken over by Courage in 1943.

Turn right at the end of the black railings – this lane will lead you to Guildford Rd (A323) Turn left and walk to the Lion Brewery:

3 Ash Workhouse – From 1790 many burials of workhouse inmates are recorded in the Ash Parish Registers. From 1870 Ash poor were sent to the Farnham Union Workhouse and the buildings in Ash were sold.

Turn right. Carry on to the road – cross over past Abbeywood and down Wharf Road. You will pass the old Methodist Church on your left:

9 The foundation stone of the Methodist Church in Wharf Road was laid in 1878, the original church building and school hall remain. Electric lighting was installed in the early 1930s to replace wrought iron chandeliers suspended from the roof beams. During World War II the school hall was used as a forces canteen.

Carry on down to the mini-roundabout and turn left back to the car park.

Nearby:

Florence Nightingale

10 The Army Medical Services Museum at Keogh Barracks houses 2500 artefacts, including surgical instruments dating back as far as the 18th century, medals awarded to members of the RAMC and exhibits relating to the story of the Florence Nightingale's service in the Queen Alexandra's Nursing Corps. Overlooking the entrance is Mytchett Place, the house where Rudolf Hess was held during World War II. 01252 868612

11 Basingstoke Canal Visitor Centre at Mytchett, formerly the Robert Haining School.

RAIL TRAIL (ASH)
(2 miles) will take approx. 2 hours

Start at the car park at Coronation Gardens on Ash Hill Road. Opposite you will see:

1 Ash Victoria Hall – built in 1897 to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. The clock tower and its deep well were added in 1900, and the halls at the side in 1906.

There are two foundation stones, either side of the front entrance, commemorating those involved in raising the hall. There are two inscriptions cut into the brickwork. 'DEEDS NOT WORDS PROVE MANS WORTH' and 'WORK WINS'.

Turn left out of the car park and walk up Ash Hill Road. On your right you will notice:



Victoria Hall

2 The Ash War Memorial erected in 1921. Look for the memorial to Sister Constance Manfield, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, who was lost at sea in World War II, and after whom Manfield School, now closed, was named.

Continue along Ash Hill Road and take a left into Fox Hills Lane. Continue along this lane, on the right hand side you will see some black iron railings. These and some parts of Hunters Lodge are all that remain of Ash Workhouse.



St. Peter's Church

8 St Peter's Church is recorded in the Domesday Book. The current flint building is 12th century, with a Norman south door. 15th century tower and 16th century porch. The church boasts a rare wooden font and local legend says that the bones of Thomas Paine were brought to Ash by William Cobbett and buried in the churchyard. Holy Angels Roman Catholic Church (opposite) dates from 1934.



Hartshorn

9 Hartshorn – originally a fourteenth Century four bay medieval open hall house. It was originally a Church house, for the Rector and Chaplain, and served as a meeting hall. After the dissolution the building became an inn called the White Hart, part of the Poyle estate, and was the haunt of a highwayman called Jeremiah Abershaw. In 1795 Abershaw was found guilty of felonious assault on the Kings Highway and stealing a gold watch. He was hanged on Kennington Common. Hartshorn is a Grade II listed building.

Carry on along Ash Church Road and you will see to your right:

10 Ash Cemetery Chapel – this chapel of remembrance was built in 1889. The fine stained glass windows commemorate parishioners lost in World War I and were donated by Dr Chester of Poyle Park. This Grade II listed building is now Ash Museum. 01252 542341

Either walk through the cemetery and follow the path round the edge of the school grounds – turning right over the bridge DB continue along Ash Church Road until the corner. Turn right along a tarmac path (Love Lane) and over the bridge at the end. Turn left and continue past the houses. Turn right up some steps to the railway bridge. On the other side continue over the grass to College Road. Turn right and then left into Ash Hill Road. Turn left to the car park and the start of the trail.

Further Reading:

Ash and Ash Vale by Sally Jenkinson
Ghosts of Surrey by John Janaway (Chapter 13 – The Prisoner)
The Breweries and Public Houses of Guildford Part 2 by Mark Sturley
A Guide to St Peters Church Ash by Rev Harry Jackson
The Tongham Railway by Peter A Harding
A Surrey Village and its church: St Pauls in Tongham by Howard Cole

To find out more:

Visit Ash Museum: 01252 542341
Look in the Local History Section at Ash Library.
Visit the Surrey History Centre: 01483 518737.
Ring Ash Parish Council: 01252 328287.

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No responsibility shall be taken by AHC for people undertaking the walk. The leader and map is for guidance purposes only. Some of the paths may be uneven in places - it is advisable to wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Most of the places of interest are private dwellings, please therefore give them some consideration while on the walk.



Trail Through Time

Until the mid 19th century this corner of Surrey was sparsely populated and rural. Change began with the opening of the Basingstoke Canal, then the building of the railways, and finally the arrival of the military Camp at Aldershot. The area has a long and interesting history. Some buildings of historic interest are included in these trails, along with sites associated with notable village characters.

TREACLE TRAIL (ASH GREEN & TONGHAM) (3 miles) Will take approx. 2 hours

Start at the car park at Tongham Recreation Ground. Turn left out of the car park into Poyle Road and continue to:

- 1 St Paul's Church** (Grade II listed), consecrated in 1866 has an unusual separate bell tower. Its first Vicar was Charles Garbett, whose son became Archbishop of York and Primate of All England. The organ came from St Mary Abbot Kensington where it had been played by Mozart. The Ionic cross east of the church marks the grave of Lt General Sir Peregrine Maitland, Commander of the footguards at the battle of Waterloo, Governor of Upper Canada and Nova Scotia, Commander of the Madras Army and Governor of the Cape of Good Hope. Also that of his wife Lady Sarah Lennox, daughter of the 4th Duke of Richmond.



Post the church you will see:

- 2 The Old School at Tongham**, designed and built at the same time as St Paul's Church, is constructed of similar materials. The graceful arched windows in the wall nearest the church match those in the church itself. When first built it comprised just one school room and a tiny cottage for the Mistresses. The school closed in 1959.



Continue to the junction - turn left - on one of the planters on the corner you will see:

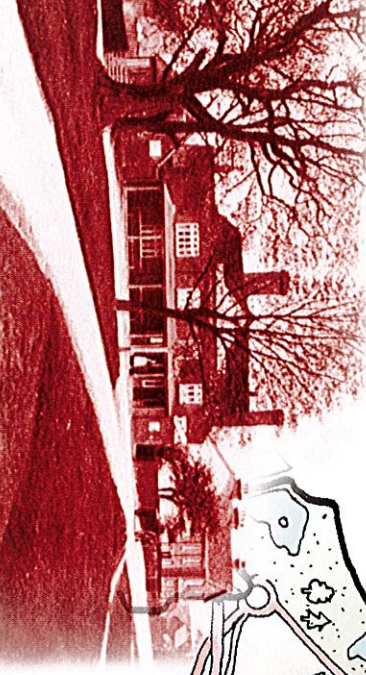
- 3 A brass plaque** commemorates the award of the George Medal to George Keen and George Leach. The two Tongham railwaymen separated a burning wagon from a bombed ammunition train, thus saving Tongham from a major catastrophe. The hop kiln opposite has been converted for business use, other buildings in the area are decorated with designs of hops, which used to be grown in the area.



Turn right and continue past the shops on The Street. Near the power cables to your right you will be at

- 4 Tongham has long been known for its Treacle Mines.** During World War I large quantities of army supply molasses escaped from split barrels and saturated the ground in the station yard. Carry on and turn right up Manor Road. Continue until you reach a roundabout at the top of the road. Opposite you will see:

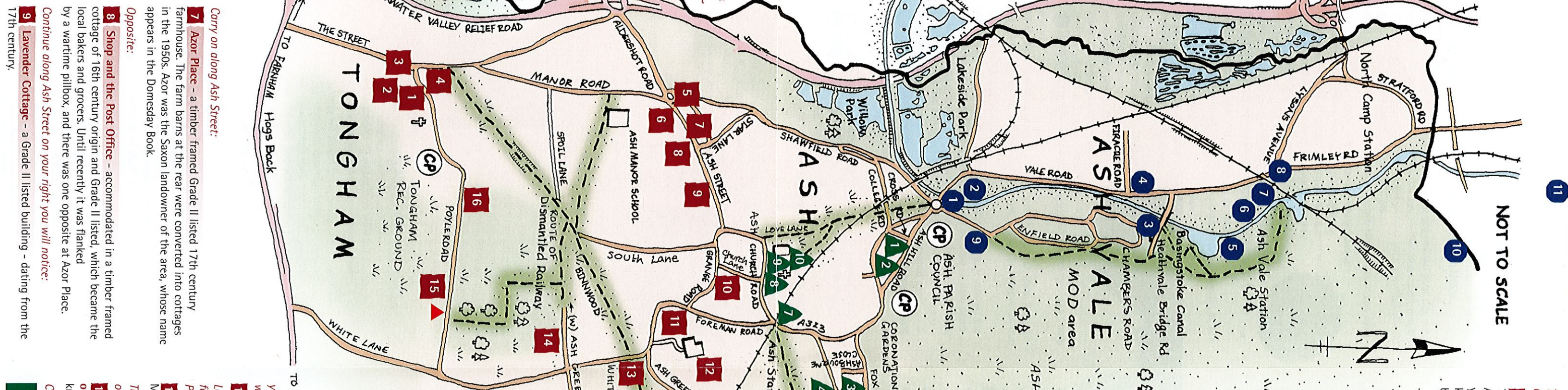
- 5 The Greyhound pub**, a late medieval building, once the only public house in the village. Its name came from the greyhounds on the Coat of Arms of the Gaynesford family of Poyle Manor. Village fairs were once held on the green outside Merryworth (1510), a timber framed, jettied yeoman farmer's house of flint and brick construction, and one time home of the 'Merryworth' bred of cocker spaniels.



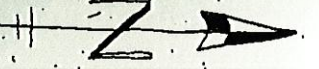
Greyhound Public House

Turn right at the roundabout along Ash Street. On your right is:

- 6 Crookes Cottages** were built next to the Bricklayers' Arms public house, which was opened in 1855 by Messrs. Crooke, Brewers of Guildford. The pub name commemorated the brickfields to the south, where bricks were made for the building of the Army Camp at Aldershot. A railway line ran from the track between Ash Green and Tongham, crossing Ash Street where Crookes Cottages stand today. It continued across North Lane into the Camp at Aldershot, and was used to transport building materials to the Camp. The line became redundant when Aldershot got its own railway station in 1870.



NOT TO SCALE



- Turn right at Lime Crescent and follow the road into Grange Road. Continue - on your left on Church Lane is:

- 10 The Old Rectory** was the home of successive Rectors from the 16th century, the front having been modernised in the 18th century. A ghostly coach and horses is said to travel past the Old Rectory every year. On Christmas Eve 1884 it pulled up at the Rectory and someone knocked at the door. When the Rector answered there was nothing to be seen, and the villagers, who knew of such happenings in the past, told the Rector that the problem would cease after a child was born.

Continue along Grange Road until you reach the T junction with Foreman Road. Opposite you will see Ashe Grange:

- 11 Ashe Grange** (Grade II listed), was the home of William Spode of the Staffordshire pottery family who retired to Ash c1811. A small cottage formerly occupying the site, was completely enclosed within the current building. It was an ideal spot, near to the village centre and Church, and overlooking Ash Green and its ponds. Spode mysteriously changed his name to Hammesley. He died in 1832, and his memorial can be seen in St Peter's Church, along with his funeral hatchment, on which you can see the Coats of Arms of both Spode and Hammesley.

Turn right along Foreman Road - round the corner - you will notice a lane to your left which leads to Ash Manor. This is a private road but you will be able to see the Manor from the road in winter months:

- 12 Moated Manor House** - In medieval times the most important person in Ash would have lived here. A 13th century coin was once discovered under the foundations and it is thought that there has been a house on the site since that time. The moat which partly encircles the house would have been a fashionable status symbol in those days. In 1630 Nicholas Stevens leased the 'Scyre of the Manor of Ashe'. Nicholas Stevens did some major building work and added a plaque inscribed 'SN1657'. He died in 1683 and left a legacy of £1 for a 'dwail' for the church, but his family remained at Ash Manor until Thomas Stevens died in 1847.

In 1934 Maurice Kelly, a member of the family well known for the directories they have published since the 1840s, moved into the house with his family. The ghost of a man imprisoned, starved and tortured in the house for over 30 years caused the family so much disturbance that they called in an American medium to rid the house of the groans and faltering footsteps. Though she is said to have succeeded in restoring peace and tranquility to the Kelly household, in 1950 Maurice Kelly was found dead on the front lawn, having taken his own life. The Moated Manor House is a Grade II listed building.

Carry on along White Lane, on your left is:

- 13 Ash Green Station** opened in 1849 by the London and South Western Railway Company. The line then ran as far as Farnham, and was extended to Alton in 1852 and Winchester in 1865. The line was much used to transport materials for the development of Aldershot Camp in the 1850s, and Queen Victoria is said to have once alighted at Ash Green when visiting the Camp. Passenger services ended in 1937, but goods traffic continued mainly to take coal to the Aldershot Gas Works via a spur at Tongham. The last of the rails were lifted in 1960 and Ash Junction was closed. The station building is now a private house and the track is a recreational route.

Continue over the bridge until you reach a cross-roads. Turn right down Ash Green Lane West - walk along the path, on part of the Christmas Pie Trail, on:

- 14 Ancient Green Lane** running from Farnham to Guildford.

Look out for a farm gate on your left. Cross over the stile and follow the path. Through another gate and stile before you reach Poyle Road. Here is:

- 15 The Coach-House of Poyle House**, the home of two Lord Mayors of London

Turn right along Poyle Road - Take Care - there is no pavement on Poyle Road

- 16 This area was the boundary of the Royal Hunting Forest of Windsor** which used to be marked by the Kings Stone. It is still known as Kingston.

Carry on along Poyle Road until you reach the car park on your left.

See Reverse side for VALE TRAIL and RAIL TRAIL WALKS

KEY

- VALE TRAIL
- RAIL TRAIL
- TREACLE TRAIL
- FOOTPATH TRACK
- CHURCH
- ▲ DANGER: NO PAVEMENT
- CP CAR PARK