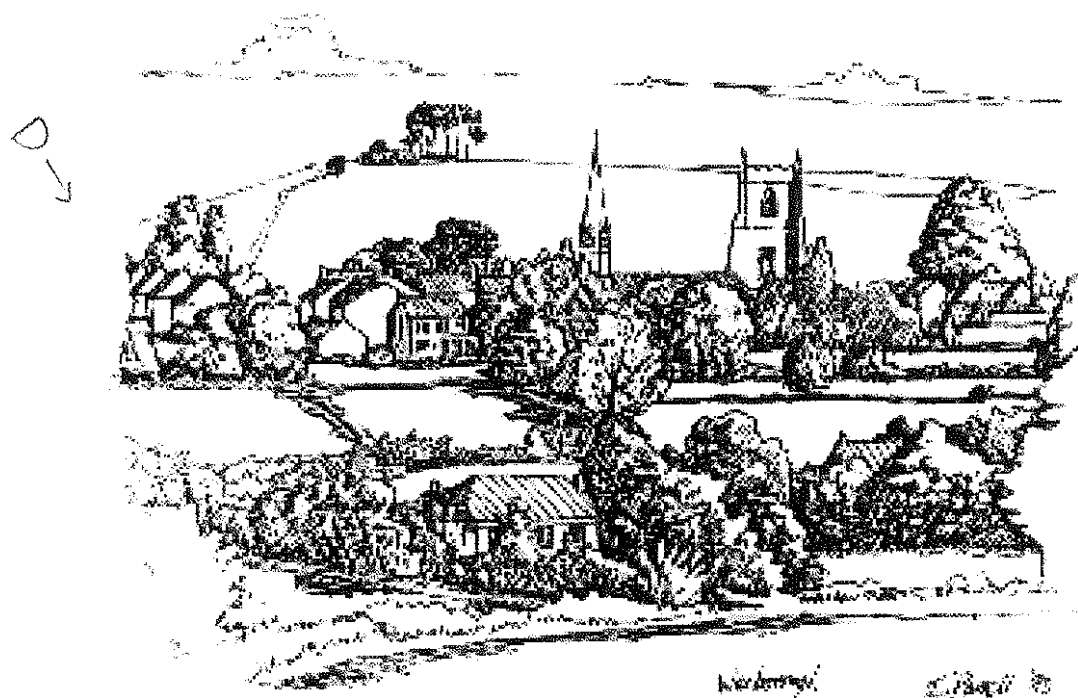


# A WALK AROUND LOWER WANBOROUGH

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## Foreword

This is the second 'Walk around Wanborough'. It covers part of lower Wanborough and is about 4 kilometres long. Much of the walk is on tracks and wooded footpaths or crossing fields. It is more likely to be wet than not, we are going to the Marsh after all! Wet weather footwear is needed.

The numbers in the text refer to the map on the back cover of this booklet. The line drawings are by Ian Parnell.

Thanks to

Borough of Thamesdown, Ridgeway Book 2: Buildings of Special Architectural or Historical Interest.

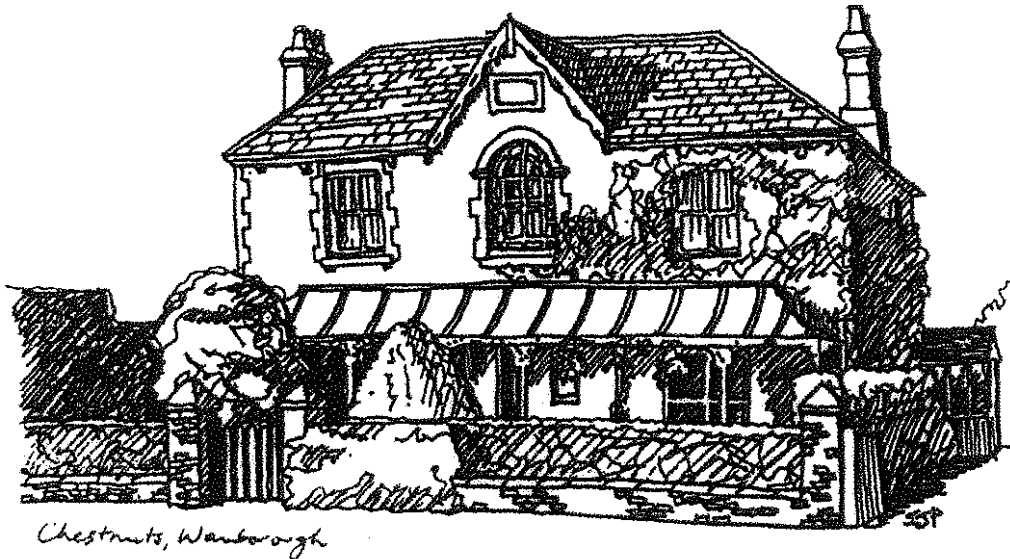
David W Backhouse, Home Brewed: A history of the Breweries and Public Houses of the Swindon Area

Elizabeth Wilson Wanborough in Pictures

Members of the History group who came on the walks and added their memories

Barbara Parnell and Brian Clarke.  
July 1994, revised March 2012

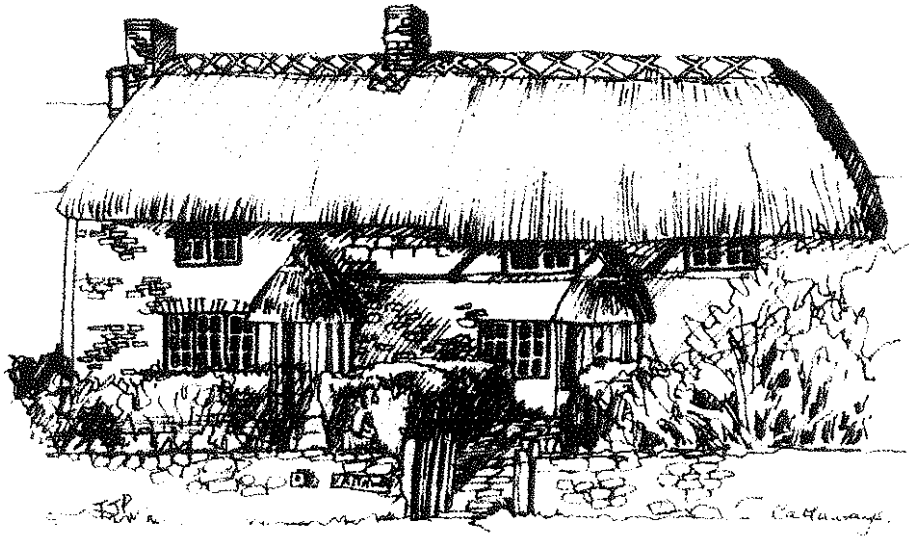
Look further along the High Street is **The Chestnuts**<sup>(4)</sup>, built in 1894 with a splendid canopy, which adds to the elegance of the Villa. Next is **York Cottage**<sup>(5)</sup>, once a pair of cottages. To your left is a large commercial building replacing what was once Hewer's bakery<sup>(6)</sup>: a family concern for over three generations.



Continue walking across the field to the gap in the hedge, Go through the kissing gate and cross the bridge into the sports area of the village known as **Hooper's Field**<sup>(7)</sup>. Football, cricket, tennis and bowls are played here, with clubs for all sports. On two sides of Hooper's Field is **Warneage Wood**, managed by the Woodland Trust with a substantial number of the trees planted by the villagers nearly 20 years ago.

In medieval times the common land where the villagers were able to graze their few animals occupied this area. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the land was enclosed, and made into separate fields under private ownership. It is very pleasing that this land between Rotten Row and Burycroft is now open for public use and managed for the benefit of the community.

**Cattaways**<sup>(11)</sup> next door is a listed thatched cottage, believed to be 18<sup>th</sup> century, the walls a mixture of chalk and brick but now rendered. Both these houses have been recently refurbished.



Further on **Ducksbridge**<sup>(12)</sup> replaced a squatter's cottage fronting a narrow part of the road which often flooded. Just beside Ducksbridge is a public footpath which we will take. It cuts off the corner and leads to the driveway of Wrightsbridge, cross the driveway and over the stile to the footpath between two open fences.



To your right is **Wrightsbridge**<sup>(13)</sup>, a handsome farmhouse which, with the coach house just behind, is listed. They are dated W.S. 1831. The farmhouse has very fine windows and a central lattice porch. The coach house is built of blue and red brick.

Continue along the fenced path with a pond to your right. You will come to a 'crossroads', take the path to the left and walk beside the ditch towards the two listed cottages you can see ahead. Go through 2 gates and cross the field to climb over the stile opposite. Moat and Lake cottages are two of the oldest houses in the village. Much altered they are dated as late 17<sup>th</sup> century but could be much earlier. **Lake Cottage**<sup>(14)</sup> was remodelled in the 19<sup>th</sup> century using red and blue bricks on a rubble base. **Moat Cottage**<sup>(15)</sup> is a one and a half thatch extended in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Both have had further alterations in the last 10 years.



It is believed that in this area of Wanborough **St Katherine's Chapel** once stood. Built and endowed in 1270 by Lady Emeline Longespee it was probably closed and demolished in the late 1540's during Edward VI's suppression of the minor religious houses and chantries.

Follow the drive away from the cottages to **The Marsh**. Directly opposite is a public footpath across the fields to the central part of the village passing Sharps Farm<sup>(16)</sup>. Go ahead through the gate. At present the usual path though way marked is not useable being too overgrown in the first field and a quagmire in the second. Instead once through the gate turn left and cross 4 stiles in total through 3 small fields till you come to gate at the entrance to **Green Lane**<sup>(17)</sup>, part of a drovers road and the only bridle path in the village.



Turn right into Green Lane. With ditches either side of the lane and old hedges there are plenty of birds to be heard and seen. As you walk down Green lane you will see a bridge over the ditch on your left to get into Warneage Wood. Keep straight on till you are more than half way along the lane and then go through a wooden kissing gate on your right. You are now in another part of Warneage Wood . Follow the path across the wood till you come to 3 fine lime trees beside a ditch. Bear left away from the on-going path. Walk along the new path leading towards Upper Wanborough, woodland and blackberries on your left.

This is a very interesting area of the village. Over to the west are tall trees and hedges where **Warneage Manor**<sup>(18)</sup> once stood. All that is left are wet areas to remind us of the medieval fish ponds. As we near another junction in the path we can see an isolated lilac tree. These were often planted near outside privies and in the early nineteen hundreds a row of cottages stood here and looked up Kite Hill.

Take the path towards Rotten Row and the new housing area. On your right near the path is a small orchard planted by the Woodland Trust.

Take the track to the bottom of Kite Hill where it meets Green Lane and Rotten Row. Continue along Rotten Row, past Kite Hill Cottages<sup>(19)</sup> and turn right up the narrow pathway between the cottages and the gardens of College Green.

Follow the path and cross **Magdalen Road**, reminder of the Oxford College who used to own this part of the village. Walk along the path that runs between the houses, parallel to Magdalen Road, and then continue along **Avenell Road**. To your right across the open space you can see the modern primary school.

