

## **South Ella Part 8**

### **Decay, Demolition and Development**

#### **Introduction**

By the time Thomas Moyes died in 1933, plots around the perimeter of the South Ella estate had already been sold off for housing development and this process gained pace in the years that followed.

South Ella Farm had become a separate entity in 1926 and thrived under the auspices of Messrs l'Anson and Scott for many years. The fields of the farm often accommodated public events as they had done in the past. The farmhouse survived into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but South Ella House itself was crippling expensive to keep up and fell into decline, eventually being demolished in the late 1950s.

Further encroachment of housing and other buildings during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century resulted in wholesale reduction of the green space of the former estate, and what remained became the playing fields of Wolfreton Upper School, built in the late 1960s. With the transfer of the school to a new site in Willerby in 2016, the old school was demolished and plans to build a housing estate on the old school playing fields are to come to fruition during 2021.

Thus, the plot of 100 acres of wooded parkland, bounded by Beverley Road, West Ella Road, Mill Lane and Tranby Lane, that accommodated a single household, has become home for several thousand people.

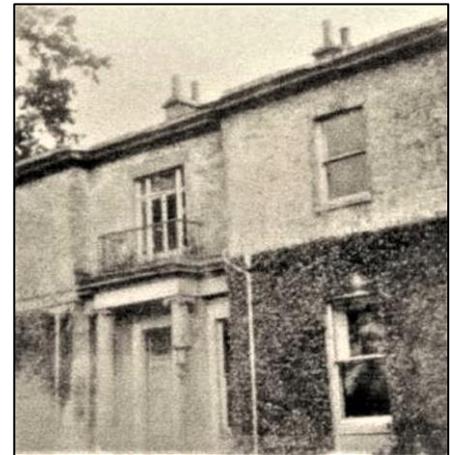
#### **Decline of South Ella Hall**

Following the death of Thomas Moyes in 1933, it is not known whether his wife, Florence, vacated South Ella Hall immediately or remained in the house for a period. As we saw in Part 7, the furniture and other contents of the house were put up for sale at auction in the autumn of 1933. However, the estate of Thomas Moyes was not settled until November 1934, and it was only following this that South Ella Hall was sold.

Some sixty years later, a Mrs. Collins of Kirk Ella recalled being taken, during her courting days, to see the Hall during the 1930s following its sale. Her husband to be, who was working as a joiner at the house, took her "first into the butler's pantry and then into the great hall, which had a gallery at one end. I saw the beautiful big, glass chandeliers breaking and falling to the ground and hens

running around the great hall. There was a large billiard room with glass-covered shelves where the gentlemen could put their glasses between shots. Dr. Moyes' executors sold the house to a builder who started to use it for storing equipment and building materials.”<sup>1</sup>

At the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, South Ella Hall was leased by the Ohlson Steamship Company of Castle Street, Hull, which moved out of the city as a precaution against anticipated German bombing. On 29<sup>th</sup> September 1939<sup>2</sup>, the Hall was occupied by Sir Eric James Ohlson, Bart., the Managing Director, a footman and a domestic servant.



South Ella Hall (undated)

Sir Eric was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Baronet of Scarborough, a title he inherited from his father, Sir Erik Olaf Ohlson, the 1<sup>st</sup> Baronet. Sir Erik Olaf Ohlson was a son of a farmer in the village of Oppeby, Sweden. He spent ten years in the coal importing business in Sweden and, in 1902, he emigrated to Hull, and established the firm of Ohlson & Co, shipowners and brokers, coal exporters, and timber importers. He was Mayor of Hull in 1913 and 1914 and was knighted in 1915. Sir Erik was created Baronet of Scarborough in the 1920 New Year Honours for his efforts to bring Sweden into the British camp during the First World War. He died in 1934 and his son, Sir Eric James, took over as the head of the company.

It is not known whether Sir Eric James Ohlson was a permanent resident at South Ella Hall for the duration of the War, as his family home was 'The Belvedere' on the Esplanade at Scarborough. However, his wife and two young sons were staying in Windermere in 1939 at the time of the National Registration.

South Ella Hall was his company's business address in December 1941 when he placed the following advertisement in the Yorkshire Post:

TIMBER PLANTATIONS wanted. Larch, Fir, Spruce, etc., suitable for pit wood - Offers and particulars to Ohlson and Co. Ltd., Southella Hall, Kirkella, Hull.

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<sup>1</sup> Unpublished oral history, Margaret Bickford, 3 February 1992.

<sup>2</sup> A national register was taken in the United Kingdom on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1939. The information was used to produce identity cards and, once rationing was introduced in January 1940, to issue ration books. Information in the Register was also used to administer conscription and the direction of labour, and to monitor and control the movement of the population caused by military mobilisation and mass evacuation. It contains details of around 40 million people.



Sir Eric James Ohlson

Whilst tenant at South Ella, Sir Eric took the opportunity to engage with the local community. For example, he was the generous donor of two guineas at a charity dance organised by Mr. T.R. Berry MPS, and held at Carr Lane School in Willerby in February 1943. On another occasion, he donated a wireless set to an overseas fund in aid of British forces serving abroad. However, his most documented bequest was the blank cheque he passed to the City of Hull Warplanes Fund:

THREE-FIGURE DONATIONS STILL COME IN HULL WARPLANES FUND Last week Sir Eric Ohlson handed a blank cheque to the City of Hull Warplanes Fund, with instructions that at the end of the week the total number of German planes brought down in in the seven days up to September 14 should be inscribed in pounds on the cheque.<sup>3</sup>

The final value of the cheque and how many German planes were brought down in the week between 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> September 1940 does not seem to be documented.

What may have motivated this patriotic gesture was action by the Luftwaffe two weeks previously, on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1940, when incendiary bombs had been dropped on South Ella Farm and the Mill Lane area. This was probably too close to home for comfort. Further alarm must have been caused when on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1941, a string of bombs, fourteen in total, was dropped across Anlaby from Springhead Waterworks to Woodland Drive. A month later, more incendiary bombs were dropped across Woodland Drive and Willerby. Fortunately, no serious damage, injury or loss of life was reported on any of these occasions, although the action on 8<sup>th</sup> May caused some damage to the stained glass and roof at St. Peter's Church in Anlaby. On 20<sup>th</sup> December 1942, three high explosive bombs fell near South Ella Farm, resulting in little or no damage.<sup>4</sup>

During the tenancy of South Ella Hall by the Ohlson Steamship Company, the security of the building was partially maintained by an Alsatian dog by the name of Pauline. The animal's rather amiable name was somewhat deceptive, as Pauline is reported to have been an extremely aggressive animal. There is some evidence that the dog may have been either neglected or mistreated, although the dog's owner, John Herbert, was acquitted of such charges laid against him:

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<sup>3</sup> Hull Daily Mail, 17<sup>th</sup> September 1940, p3

<sup>4</sup> Heathcote, Renton, *Anlaby – The History of an East Yorkshire Village*, Beagle Publications, 2001, p232-233

CONVICTION QUASHED Hull Councillor's Appeal JOHN D. HERBERT, Laurel Dene, 8 Strathmore Avenue, Hull, seed merchant, and a member of the Hull City Council, appealed at the East Riding Quarter Sessions at Beverley yesterday against a sentence inflicted upon him in February, when he pleaded not guilty to permitting unnecessary suffering to a dog by unreasonably omitting to provide the animal with proper and necessary care and attention between December 16th and 23rd, 1942. He was then fined £15 or alternatively two months' imprisonment, and disqualified from keeping a dog and for holding or obtaining a dog licence for three years. The dog was in some stables at South Ella Hall, the property of the accused, in the care of a Mr and Mrs Warcup and later of a Mrs Hawes.<sup>5</sup>

Mr. and Mrs. Warcup were residents of one of the cottages attached to South Ella Hall. These had been built by John Wilson in 1909. The cottages were situated alongside the wall of the kitchen garden. Another family living in one of the cottages (No.3) at that time were the Officers. They had left their house near East Park in Hull, renting the cottage to escape the bombing of the city. One of the family remembers having a Morrison indoor shelter installed in the cottage: "It almost filled the room and was rectangular, about seven or eight feet wide, rather like a cage. The sides consisted of 2-inch mesh-steel 'fencing'. The whole was painted red. At night, we crawled in and slept there. The principle was that the top would support the weight of a collapsed house and the sides would keep out flying debris."

How long the Ohlson Steamship Company remained as tenants at South Ella Hall is not known, although there is no record of them being there after 1943. However, before we leave the Ohlson family and move on, it is worth recalling some further interesting facts about Sir Eric Ohlson.

In the Hull Times of 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1933, an article appeared reporting that Sir Eric had "swam the Humber". Although not a unique achievement, nevertheless this is evidence that Sir Eric was something of an athlete. He was Romanian and Venezuelan Consul to Hull between 1936 and 1983, the year of his death. No records of any dealings he may have had in either of these diplomatic roles appear to exist.

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<sup>5</sup> Hull Daily Mail, 16<sup>th</sup> June 1943, p3

Sir Eric Ohlson may be remembered amongst racing aficionados as the owner of a famous thoroughbred that, in its prime, was virtually unbeatable. The horse, Dante, trained by Matt Peacock at Ohlson's stables at Middleham in North



Dante winning the 1945 Epsom Derby

Yorkshire, was a regular winner at racecourses across the country, including the Epsom Derby in 1945. At one time, Sir Eric refused an offer of £10,000 to buy the horse, although this is not surprising as in one season alone, Dante ran up £11,000 in prize money. In September 1945, Sir Eric

sold a full brother to Dante, Nearco, to the Gaekwar of Baroda for 28,000 guineas at Newmarket sales.<sup>6</sup> His most famous horse is commemorated in the Dante Festival Meeting at York which takes place every May. The main feature race at the meeting is the Dante Stakes.

Following the departure of the Ohlson & Co. from South Ella, the building fell into disuse and its fabric rapidly deteriorated. The house and grounds became a playground for local children who, in those days had greater opportunity for such adventure than the children of today. As a boy, David Duke remembers playing in the house and grounds:

“[As a child] I liked to wander and play in the woods and fields not far from South Ella, and occasionally stray into its grounds. If my memories are correct, there were stone steps and lots of wild roses leading up to a flat area in front of the house. I think it must have been derelict even then - say the late 1940s and early 1950s - or, at least uninhabited - it must have been magnificent when first built. I don't think I ever got very far in my exploration of the grounds, but can remember once finding a piece of glass which must have been part of a chandelier, and would have sparkled in the light, so I assume they must have done some entertaining. [On one occasion] I remember straying into the grounds and coming across what must have been a Civil Defence Post. The woods and fields must have been part of a farm owned by Mr. l'Anson and were farmed by a family called Dalby. There were wheat fields at the top of Woodland Drive stretching a good way towards Tranby Croft and to Kirkella on either side. Quite different now!”

Other happy recollections are still clear in the minds of many who played there sixty or seventy years ago:

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<sup>6</sup> Hull Daily Mail, 13<sup>th</sup> September 1945, p4

“I remember the house before it was demolished. It became vandalised and people mined parts of the building for their own use. It eventually became a ruin.”

“We called it the ‘old house’ and spent many a happy hour playing in the cellars and grounds. You could get to it via the snicket down South Ella Way.”

“I remember in the mid-60s going down White Walk and playing in the old cellars of the house.”

“In about 1961, I remember going for a very spooky, subterranean walk through a tunnel/cellar in the ruins of the demolished South Ella Hall.”

“I remember lots of rhododendrons surrounding the old ruins. I’m sure there was a walled garden as well.”

South Ella Hall was finally demolished in 1959, although it would appear, from the memories above, that the cellars remained accessible for a number of years afterwards. It was a sad and undignified end to a grand house that had once been alive with the sparkle of high society.

### **South Ella Farm**

The model farm established by Arthur Egginton in the 1880s, continued to function for many years after South Ella Hall went into decline. From the 1920s, the farm had been owned by Robert Maurice l’Anson and Frederick William Scott and, as a partnership, they also owned other farms in the area. Robert l’Anson seems to have had greater oversight of South Ella Farm and he and his wife, Muriel “Emmie”, lived with their family at Red Lodge on Beverley Road. This house was built at a newly created entrance leading from Beverley Road to the farm buildings. After the Second World War, the latter were occupied by the family of Muriel l’Anson’s nephew, David “Dave” Dalby, who managed the farm for many years.<sup>7</sup> Those with long memories refer to it as ‘Dalby’s Farm’.

In 1939, Dave Dalby, aged 22, was employed as a cowman in the village of Swine, near Hull, and living with his parents. His father, James William Dalby, was a joiner, painter and wheelwright. In 1944, Dave Dalby married Enid Roper who was a grocery shop assistant in Swine. At that time, South Ella Dairy Farm was

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<sup>7</sup> It could have been different. James William Dalby, Muriel’s brother and Dave Dalby’s father, emigrated to Canada in 1914 at the age of 25 and settled in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. However, after a few years he returned to East Yorkshire where, in 1917, he married Alice Dawson.

managed by Thomas Laycock, who moved on shortly afterwards, making way for Dave Dalby to take over its day-to-day management.

Milk from the farm was mainly sold to the local consumer market. However, Messrs l'Anson and Scott began an enterprise in 1936, which added value to their liquid asset. They opened the Pioneer Milk Bar in central Hull, on Jameson Street. The Hull Daily Mail of 8<sup>th</sup> May 1936 described the opening ceremony:

HULL'S MILK BAR New Enterprise Opened by the Sheriff. The Sheriff of Hull (Mr J. Cyril Townsley) was called to the Bar yesterday afternoon. It wasn't the bar known the law, nor yet the public bar. It was the only bar of its type Hull — the new Milk Bar in Jameson Street, and the call the Sheriff received was one to open it. Accompanied by the Sheriff's lady, Mr Townsley congratulated the proprietors, Messrs l'Anson and Scott, South Ella Dairies, in enabling Hull to take its place among other big cities. He felt that they were pioneers. It was his first acquaintance with milk probably because, along with other people, he was not milk-minded. Hull's average daily consumption milk was low, half a pint per head. Yet milk was most definitely food, and now Hull people would have an opportunity to improve upon this figure through the introduction of such a bar.



Pioneer Milk Bar, Jameson Street  
Hull. c1960s

The new enterprise proved such a success that, three years later, Messrs l'Anson and Scott opened a second establishment, called the Prompt Corner Milk Bar, in Paragon Square.

The partnership between the two men had begun in the 1920s but came to an end in 1949, as evidenced by the following announcement in The London Gazette:

NOTICE is hereby given that the Partnership heretofore subsisting between the undersigned Robert Maurice l'Anson and Frederick William Scott carrying on business as Farmers, Cattle Dealers, Dairymen and Milk Bar Proprietors at South Ella, West Ella and Tickton, East Yorks. and at Sutton and Kingston-upon-Hull under the style or firm of "l'ANSON & SCOTT" has been dissolved by mutual consent as from the 31st day of March 1949.

The said R. M. l'Anson will in future farm on his own account at South Ella and will also carry on the Prompt Corner Milk Bar, Paragon Square, Hull. The said F. W. Scott will in future farm on his own account at Manor Farm, West Ella and

Noddle Hill Farm, Sutton and will also carry on the Pioneer Milk Bar,<sup>8</sup> Jameson Street, Hull. — Dated 31st March 1949.

After the Second World War, in the 1950s, the fields of South Ella Farm were used to hold an annual gymkhana, with public access to the event being via the old carriage-drive entrance on Beverley Road.

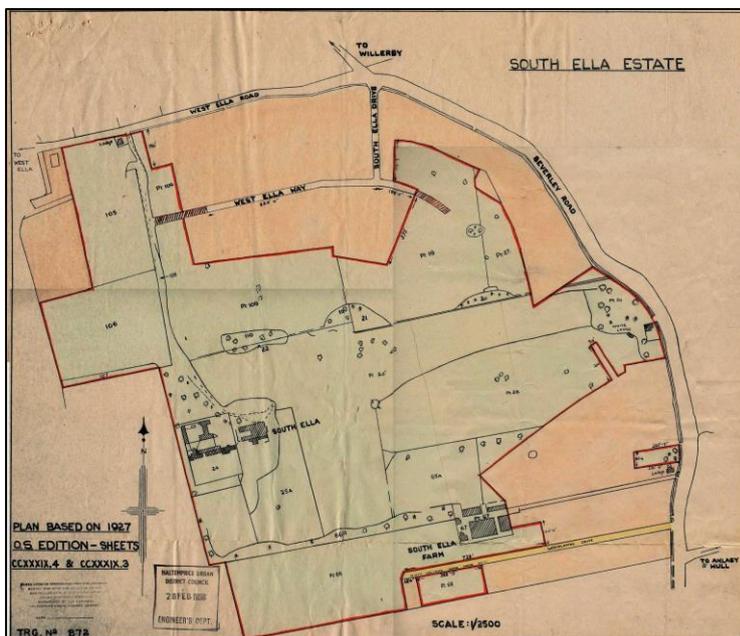
Ownership of South Ella Farm eventually passed to Alma Jordan, perhaps around the time of Robert l'Anson's death in 1978. During the 1980s, it was no longer run as a farm, but a small market garden continued, where vegetables were cultivated and chickens kept.



South Ella Farmhouse, prior to demolition in 2005.

Following the death of Dave Dalby in 2001 and his wife, Enid, in 2004, the house became unoccupied and it was demolished in 2005. A small cul-de-sac of new houses, South Ella Farm Court, now stands on the site.

## Housing Development



South Ella Estate 1927

The map on the left, dated 1927, shows that by that time a number of plots around the perimeter of the South Ella Estate (coloured orange) were earmarked for development.

Building plans for several semi-detached houses along Beverley Road were submitted by James William Jordan in 1928. By the end of the

year, these had been approved and building commenced. A further application was lodged by the same builder the following year to erect a detached house on

<sup>8</sup> The Pioneer Bar continued into the late 1970s and was, initially, run by Mrs Scott. It is well-remembered by many who enjoyed its extensive menu. The cafe was eventually taken over in 1979 by John Science and renamed Yankee Burger, but that's another story.

the same stretch of Beverley Road. In 1932, other applications to build on Beverley Road were lodged by Edward Marsden of Willerby.

By 1932, housing development had begun to take place on West Ella Road with James William Jordan and his son, James Alma (generally known by his second given name), submitting plans to build a number of semi-detached houses on the northern fringes of the estate. The houses in Kirk Ella at that time were mostly only known by their names and amongst those suggested for houses on West Ella Road were *Boynton Villa, Tresco, Ramleh, Alton, Whitewalls* and *Broxholme*. In August 1933 Alma Jordan gained approval to build a detached house on West Ella Road to be called *Tudor House*. He had recently married Freda Mabelle Robinson and their first child, David Alma, had been born in 1932. Tudor House was to be their family home for many years. The house retains its name today and the gates are still adorned with examples the Tudor rose emblem.



OS Map 1937 - South Ella, showing the extent of housing development around the perimeter of the estate. West Ella Road and West Ella Way to the north, Beverley Road to the east and Woodlands Drive to the south.

Later, during the 1930s, building began on West Ella Way. In the first phase, at least seventeen houses had been built before the onset of the Second World War including *Four Wynds, Cheviot, Cotswold, Dudley Lodge, Hylands* and *Karola*. A number of houses were also built on Woodlands Drive. The extent of the pre-war development can be seen on the 1937 map<sup>9</sup> to the left.

After the dust had settled following the end of the Second World War, further development took place, with South Ella Way being laid out, roughly bisecting the former estate from east to west between Beverley Road and Mill Lane. West Ella Way was extended to

<sup>9</sup> One feature on the map worthy of mention, just outside the boundary of the South Ella Estate, is the discovery of a bronze palstave (Bronze Age axe) in 1912 during the tenure of John Wilson. This object has been dated to 1400-1200BC and is now in the care of the Hull and East Riding Museum.

meet South Ella Way and its most well-known house is *Cara Mia*, the former home of local singer and celebrity David Whitfield.<sup>10</sup> Broadley Avenue, with its various offshoots, connected South Ella Way with Woodlands Drive. From Mill Lane, White Walk led down to the vacant plot left by the demolition of South Ella Hall in 1959. Broadley Avenue and Egginton Close recall the names of former residents of the Hall. Alma Close, built around the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is named after Alma Jordan, the local builder.

### **Proposed Civic Centre**

In 1945, Haltemprice Urban District Council was considering allocating land at South Ella for the site of a new Civic Centre.<sup>11</sup> A three-acre plot had been donated by a local landowner for this specific use. However, the plan never fully came to fruition and the proposal generated heated arguments at Council meetings. At least one other site between Willerby and Cottingham was proposed by the councillor for Cottingham and the discussion rumbled on for many years. A parade of shops was eventually built in 1960 (see page 15), but no further development took place. Indeed, a court case resulted when it was finally decided the remaining land was not to be used for civic purposes, and the ownership of the land passed to the Jordan family.<sup>12</sup>

### **Wolfreton School**

The first hint that a school might be built on part of the South Ella estate came on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 1938, when Haltemprice Urban District Council<sup>13</sup> purchased land at South Ella for £2,640, with the proposal that a senior council school be built on the site. The intervention of the Second World War meant that these plans were put on hold. However, at the time, it was not envisaged that three decades would pass before these plans came to fruition.

Nevertheless, the subject was still ‘live’ in November 1945 after the end of the War when a resolution was passed by the Planning Committee of Haltemprice Urban District Council urging the East Riding Education Authority to consider siting a combined grammar and technical school to serve the whole Central

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<sup>10</sup> In the summer of 1985, scenes from the 1986 comedy film, *Clockwise*, starring John Cleese, were shot in the garden of a house in West Ella Way.

<sup>11</sup> Hull Daily Mail, Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June 1945, p3

<sup>12</sup> Heathcote, Renton, *Anlaby – The History of an East Yorkshire Village*, Beagle Publications, 2001, p240. Also, *Haltemprice: Official Guide*, Haltemprice Urban District Council, 1960, p29.

<sup>13</sup> The Urban District of Haltemprice was created in 1935 when under a scheme of local government re-organisation, the Urban Districts of Hessle and Cottingham and part of the Rural District of Sculcoates were amalgamated into one local government unit.

Haltemprice area on the South Ella site. Although not at the proposed location, the situation was resolved when Willerby County Secondary School on Carr Lane, Willerby, was built. It opened on 15 September 1959 and catered for around 400 students.

However, with more houses being built in the area and an expanding population, there was pressure to increase school accommodation for secondary students. In the late 1960s, plans were finally made to build a new school at South Ella to make provision for the senior students of the Willerby school. This would become known as the Upper School. The contract for building the new school was awarded to J. Mather and Son Limited on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1968 and construction began shortly afterwards. As the new school would be located outside Willerby, in September 1969, the two entities were renamed Wolfreton Lower School and Wolfreton Upper School. The latter opened to pupils in September 1970, with the official opening by HRH The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowden, taking place on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1971.



Commemorative plaque at Wolfreton Upper School

A Sixth Form Block was added between 1974 and 1977 and three new laboratories added to the Science Block in 1977. In 2005, a new Science and Humanities block was named 'Rushanje House' in honour of a relationship



Wolfreton Upper School, 1970s

established by Wolfreton staff who travelled over to help develop Rushanje School in Mbarara, Uganda. From this, The Wolfreton Rushanje Community Partnership was formed. As a reciprocal gesture, a new accommodation block at Rushanje School, funded partly with money raised at Wolfreton School, was named 'Wolfreton House'.

In 2014, it was announced that the school buildings on the South Ella and Willerby sites were to be demolished and replaced by new multi-million-pound buildings in the grounds of the Lower



Demolition of Wolfreton Upper School 2018

School in Willerby. The new school opened in September 2016 and the Upper School was demolished in 2018, the site being allocated for housing development. In 2020, approval was given to Lovell Homes to build over two-hundred houses on the site with construction beginning in February 2021.

According to Lovell, “the new development will provide a stunning collection of 224 two, three and four-bedroom homes, with the marketing suite and show homes expected to launch in July 2021.”<sup>14</sup>

### Christ Church, South Ella

The entrance to the original carriageway leading to South Ella was on Beverley Road to the south of the location now occupied by the Haltemprice roundabout.<sup>15</sup>



White Lodge (date unknown) and bridge over Western Drain

The lodge (known as White Lodge) which for over a century had stood at the carriageway entrance was occupied until around 1960. The family renting the property at that time wished to purchase it but were told by the local council, who owned the lodge,

that it was scheduled for demolition. This duly took place sometime between 1960 and 1965. After demolition of the lodge, the site and a parcel of land surrounding it were purchased for the building of a new Congregational church.

It had been agreed that the money required for the building of the new church at South Ella would come from the sale of the plot on Albion Street in Hull where the Albion Congregational Church had once stood. This had been destroyed by

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.lovell.co.uk/news/planning-permission-granted-for-224-new-homes-in-kirk-ella/>

<sup>15</sup> A second carriageway was constructed, probably by the Eggintons, in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The entrance to this was on West Ella Road.

German bombing in 1941 and the remaining shell of the building was demolished in 1949. A new congregation was formed in May 1964 and temporary services began the following month in the Studio, Main Street, Willerby.<sup>16</sup> Initially, the Rev. Alan Wright, a retired minister, took charge on a temporary basis but, on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1965, the induction of his son-in-law, Rev. Wilfred Kievill “Bill” Gathercole, took place. Construction of the new church began on the corner of Beverley Road and South Ella Way in 1966, and the foundation stone was laid on 7<sup>th</sup> May “on behalf of the members of Albion Church, Hull.”



The foundation stone of South Ella Congregational Church, laid on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1966.

The new church building was opened on 29<sup>th</sup> October 1966. Until August 1971, the church shared a minister with Swanland and, in 1972, the congregation became part of the United Reformed Church, which resulted from the union of the Presbyterian Church of England and the Congregational Church in England and Wales.



Christ Church with Trinity United Reformed Church, South Ella

In addition to those already mentioned, ministers recalled by members and former members are Rev. Pamela Ward, Rev. Vernon Openshaw, Rev. Harry Smith, Rev. Derrick Parkinson, Rev. David Coote and Rev. Chris Dowd.

For a period of time, part of the church building was used on Friday evenings by the Jewish community for a service (Erev Shabbat), until they acquired their own building. In 1992, they moved to new, purpose-built premises, Hull Reform Synagogue, also known as Ne've Shalom, on Great Gutter Lane, Willerby.

<sup>16</sup> This is the building now occupied by the Haltemprice and Howden Conservative Association.

## The Rowans

A contract for the erection of a 'house for aged persons' on a plot on the former South Ella estate was granted to J. Mather & Son Ltd. on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1972. This was to be built at the corner of West Ella Way and South Ella Way on land adjacent to where the Beech Tree would later be located. When completed, The Rowans provided accommodation for up to fifty residents. For many years the home was run by the HICA Group, a Hull-based care association, but, in 2017, The Rowans was sold to the National Care Consortium who remain its owners in 2021. Today, "the residency houses younger and elderly adults including those with mental health conditions. The care home also cares for residents with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia."<sup>17</sup>

## The Beech Tree

The Beech Tree Public House opened to its first customers in 1979 and has remained a popular venue ever since. It took its name from an old and very large



The Beech Tree, c1979. The pub took its name from the tree which stood in front of it.

tree which stood in front of it. It is likely that this had been planted by an early resident of South Ella Hall to enhance its parkland. However, shortly after the pub-cum-restaurant opened, the beech tree died and was removed. It is said that a new beech sapling was planted as a replacement but that also died.

During the 1960s, the vacant site, on which Beech Tree would eventually be built, was at the centre of a local controversy when the building of a Woolco supermarket was proposed. This plan failed to materialise but, in 2019, a similar proposal to build a Cooperative convenience store on land next to the Beech Tree met with stiff local opposition. The lead-protestor stated that the proposed development would cause the destruction of the wooded area adjacent to the Beech Tree "that is home to many beautiful trees and plants which in turn provide shelter and homes to

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.carehomes.online/england/yorkshire-and-the-humber/east-riding-of-yorkshire/kirk-ella/the-rowans-care-home/#facility>

wildlife.” A petition against the proposal was raised which attracted the signatures of “hundreds of people”.<sup>18</sup> In March 2021, it appears that no planning application by Cooperative Retail Services had been registered to build on this site.

## Shops



Jordans Garage, c1986

The small parade of shops on South Ella Way, opposite the Beech Tree, was built in 1960 after South Ella Way had been laid out. Initially, the shops included a bank (Barclays), an off-licence (Townend) and a newsagent. There was an adjoining car service station and showroom which was

occupied by Cornelius Parish Ltd for around twenty-five years, during which time it was a British Leyland dealership. When the company was taken over by T.C. Harrison in the mid-1980s, the garage on South Ella Way was surplus to the new owner’s requirements. It was taken over by Jordan’s, a long-established company, who had begun a motor-cycle dealership in Hull in the early 1900s. Jordan’s continued as a filling station and Peugeot dealership into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>19</sup> The business eventually closed and the premises were converted into The Lounge wine-bar.

## Remnants

By 2022, the whole of the 46-acre South Ella Estate established by Robert Copeland Pease in 1808 will be built upon. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century little changed but, after the First World War, the pace of change accelerated and South Ella Hall suffered the fate of many similar large houses, not just locally, but nationwide. Anlaby was particularly unlucky in this respect with Beech Lawn, The Mansion, Grove Lodge, Spring Villa and Field House, as well as South Ella, all succumbing to the bulldozer. In 2021, former residents of South Ella Hall would see little that was familiar on their estate. However, some fragments do remain.

Perhaps the most enduring feature of the estate are the magnificent trees which still survive. Of particular note is the stately oak tree, recently estimated to be about three-hundred years old, standing at the centre of the estate. This will

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<sup>18</sup> Hull Daily Mail, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019

<sup>19</sup> As far as is known, there is no direct family connection with the building form of the same name.

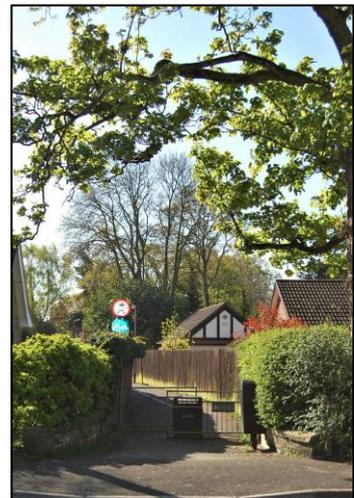


The 300-year-old oak tree, which will form the focal point of the 2021 housing development

form a focal point of the new development by Lovell Homes who have ring-fenced many of the other remaining trees on the estate for preservation. Also of note are a number of mature trees that flank South Ella Way, near the Beech Tree and The Rowans although, as we have already learned, the large tree that gave its name to the pub no longer survives. Other mature trees live on in private

gardens. Such trees would have been planted by successive landowners to be enjoyed by posterity. Today’s residents are the happy inheritors of that legacy.

Trees are easy to spot but there are other tell-tale signs of the former South Ella Hall and estate that are less visible. Both the Beverley Road and West Ella Road lodges have been demolished but the route of the carriage-drive from West Ella Road can still be traced in the form of a snicket that leads through to South Ella Way. A section of iron railings that lined the drive also survives half way along the snicket alongside gardens of houses on West Ella Way and South Ella Way.



Former entrance to carriage drive on West Ella Road.

The stone balustrades that once lined the terrace at South Ella Hall have been repurposed and partially form the front wall of a house on the corner of South Ella Way and Egginton Close, although they are largely obscured by a luxuriant ivy hedge. The remnants of boundary walls also still exist in private gardens on White Walk and Samman Close.

Other tangible reminders of South Ella are recognised in local street names. Former owners of South Ella Hall, John Broadley and Arthur Egginton, are memorialised in this way.



Perhaps there is scope for naming some of the new roads, which will come into being in the Lovell housing development, after other former occupants of South Ella Hall.

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This series of eight articles has covered over two-hundred years of history. One wonders what the next two-hundred years will bring.

*Thanks go to many people, both members of AWAKE U3A and others, in helping to gather information for this final episode in the life of South Ella. The period covered has brought us into the era of living memory and amongst those who have shared their recollections are Maureen Bramall, Shaun Cassidy, David Duke, Paul Eaton, Chris Hankinson, Dave Hind, Philip Jordan, Sasha Jordan, Andrew Lang, Val Lowish, Tony Steele, Trish Stevens, Richard Storey, Michael Taylor, Mary Tunnard, Hilary Vint, Jacqueline Walker, Janet Warrington, and Jonathan Williams. Many of these have contributed, sometimes unknowingly, through the Facebook page 'Anlaby-Willerby-Kirk Ella – 20<sup>th</sup> Century Suburbia'. Finally, grateful thanks from all readers to Harvey Barker who first suggested that a history of South Ella 'might make a worthwhile story'. I am sure that this has proved to be the case.*

Francis Davies  
April 2021