Origins of Kingsbridge Street Names

Kingsbridge Estuary University of the Third Age: Local History Group

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bowringsleigh Place</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookworthy Road</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embankment Road</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilbert Road</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilton Way</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyte Lane</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manor Park</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mill Street</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montagu Road</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norton Brook</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince of Wales Road</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ropewalk</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacket Wood</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Road</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Index as at March 2013, to be updated as more Street names researched.

Ilbert Road

The Ilberts were a local family who during the 19th century had achieved recognition at home and in Britain’s empire.

In 1696 the family "came down from the Moors" and acquired Bowringsleigh (near West Alvington), one of the area's ancient estates, previously held by since 1332, by the Bowring family. They later became connected with two other large houses: Horsewell House and Quay House.

The Ilbert family grew in size, and in importance also - through marriages with, for example, in 1712, the Courtenays of Powderham. By 1772 one branch was living in Horsewell House, South Milton - from where a Mrs Ilbert is recorded as intervening in events following the shipwreck of a vessel called "Chantiloupe", and in 1789, Lt. Colonel Wm Ilbert built Quay House in Kingsbridge.

Family members served in the Devon Militia and the army, some sons went into the Church: for example one was Rector of Thurlestone for many years in the 19th century. They served the local community as, for example, High Sheriff of Devon, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, the Magistrates' Court, and committee members of philanthropic associations....One Ilbert served in
India as the legal member of the Viceroy's council and on returning to England he became in 1903, clerk to the House of Commons. 19th century family members had academic connections with Oxford Colleges and with certain well known professors: H.A.L. Fisher and Prof Froude.

The history of the family rather demands a detailed study, because there is a discrepancy in the above quickly gleaned facts. This information comes from Anne Born's book "The history of Salcombe and Kingsbridge" (2002) and from the index of the microfilm files held at the Kingsbridge Resource Centre. In the latter I read that in 1809 William Roope Ilbert died without any heirs and in his will he stated that he wished the tenant of Bowringsleigh to take the name and the coat of arms of the Ilberts of West Alvington. And in 1862 the death of a Miss Ilbert, the last family member is recorded.

So was it another branch of the family that won recognition in India and served in the local community, or were the Tenants who had adopted the Ilbert Name?

Whichever it was, the Ilberts were honoured when the road to West Alvington was made and named in 1881.

**Tacket or Ticket Wood**

- Tacket Wood is located in the parish of West Alvington and a continuation of the Ropewalk. It was described by Daniel Lyons in his "Topographical & Historical Account of Devonshire (1822)", as the site of a capacious slate quarry.
- Originally a wood, it produced large coarse slates and good stone for general purposes. Since its last workings in the 19th C., it has reverted to thick woodland.
- Being on the creek side of the old road to Salcombe and away from the sea (e.g. Beesands), ships found it easy to berth and take on their loads.
- Stone from the quarry was used for very many years for new build and, too, for much of the re-build of deteriorating churches, warehouses, houses and walls around Kingsbridge in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- In the mid-17th C. it was also one of four local venues for meetings led by John Hicks, the non-conformist preacher – the others being Sorley Green, the top of Lincombe Hill/Linkham Hill-head and Saltstone Rock.
- The site became known as Ticket Wood because those attending the meetings had to prove their adherence to non-conformist faiths.
- The preachers became victims of the Conventicles Act of 1664 which forbade religious assemblies of more than five people outside the auspices of the Church of England. They were avidly prosecuted by two local magistrates, brutally supported by their town constable – John Lucas.
- Two other magistrates were more merciful but ended up by being prosecuted themselves for not suppressing religious assemblies.
- It was not until 1689, when the Act of Toleration was passed, that people – excluding Catholics and Unitarians – were permitted to practice their religion and build meeting houses and churches.
A website dedicated to the Francis Frith photo collection features Memories of Tacket Wood Cottages 1896. The contributor, M. Fairclough, wrote:

My grandmother, Mary Honor Parsley, was born here in Ticket Wood in 1900, my mother Jacqueline Oldman too in 1925. Honor’s mother was born Elizabeth Ford, sister to Philip, the house owner I believe. The big house is now gone and replaced with something much more contemporary.

Tacket Wood was/is the local Deb’n vernacular for the area.

Could it have been Thicket wood originally?

By Anthony Barlow - barlowanthony@aol.com

Montagu Road, Kingsbridge: an explanation of its name

George Montagu was born in Lackham House, Wiltshire, in 1753. As the younger son, he first of all followed a career in the army. He fought in a foot regiment in the American War of Independence and then, as his elder brother died, he returned home in 1788 to manage the family estate. He became a Lieutenant Colonel in the Wiltshire Militia but very soon, as a result of becoming romantically involved with Eliza D’Orville, he left his wife, resigned his commission and came to Kingsbridge to live with her. In 1789 he built Knowle House at the top of Fore Street. This no longer exists but the place name remains in Knowle Gardens and Knowle House Close.

Both George Montagu and Eliza D’Orville became very well known. He became passionately interested in Ornithology and Conchology. He identified many new species, corresponded with other naturalists and maintained a small wildlife pond in his garden. Here he kept ducks, swans, a cormorant and the first black stork to be seen in England. Montagu had a Harrier named after him and was involved in the first British record of several birds including the cattle egret and the cirl bunting. In his house he had a collection of shells and stuffed birds which were ultimately presented to the British Museum but are now displayed at Tring Museum. Montagu published several books including an Ornithological Dictionary and Eliza helped by providing very well executed engravings.

In June 1815 Montagu died as a result of blood poisoning which he got through stepping onto a rusty nail. He is buried in Kingsbridge Parish Churchyard.
Manor Park, Kingsbridge

Manor Park is a group of houses situated at the top of the town which in the 18th century was the site of a Manor House called Knowle House. The area was known as Manor Grounds. It was occupied by Colonel Montagu, the local ornithologist. He died in 1815 from lockjaw induced by stepping on a rusty nail.

Various Victorian additions were made to the house and during the first World War it was occupied by John Square Hurrell JP a local ship owner. He died in 1918.

The house was demolished in 1978 and replaced by Kingsbridge Rural District Council. Around 2005 affordable houses were built on the land.

Pauline Taylor

Prince of Wales Road

This is a short road in front of Boots from Mill Street, via Ilbert Road to Fore Street.

The road was constructed in the 19th century in the days when the water from the estuary came up to Mill Street. On the eastern side of the estuary was Dodbrooke Quay and on the western side was Squares Quay.

To quote Sarah Prideaux Fox writing in 1846: “There used to be a creek at right angles with these two quays, but a year or two ago it was covered in and superseded by the “Prince of Wales’s Road” to the manifest improvement of the sanitary condition of that portion of the town, when the receding tide left anything but a fragrant perfume.”

Celia Strong

Ilton Way

At the top end of Rack Park between Kenwith Drive and Henacre Road is Ilton Way.

Ilton is between Batson Creek and Blanksmill Creek in the parish of Malborough. Ilton Manor was Saxon and recorded in the Domesday Book.

In 1335 it was built as a fortified manor house with crenellated square towers. It became known as Ilton Castle and noted for its gardens and two fishponds.

In the 16th and 17th centuries Ilton Castle passed into the ownership of successive Earls of Devon, the Courtenays.

By the mid-18th century little remained of the castle. Today there is a farm with a camp site and still bears the name.
Additional notes

In 1588 a ship of the Spanish Armada was wrecked off Hope Cove and 8 of its officers were lodged at Ilton Castle in the custody of Sir William Courtenay.

In March 1646 during the Civil War, the castle was used by Parliamentarians to imprison Royalist supporters.

Also in the 17th century pirates sailed up the estuary and stole plate and household possessions from the castle escaping out to sea without hindrance.

Celia Strong

Cookworthy Road

Named after William Cookworthy (born Kingsbridge 1705, died Plymouth 1780)

His father was a weaver and in 1718 his father dies. It is possible that William was attending Kingsbridge Grammar School – he was a bright boy.

In 1720 Silvanus Bevan a young Quaker apothecary from London, visited Kingsbridge and met William, he offered him an apprenticeship in his business.

In 1726 William returned to Devon and set up as a manufactory chemist (partnership with Silvanus) in Plymouth – Bevan and Cookworthy.

In 1735 he married Sarah Berry (from Looe) and had 5 children. Sarah died 10 years later.

He discovered for himself, Petonse and Caolin in the side of Tregonnin Hill, a few miles east of Penzance – which resulted in the making of porcelain (unknown how to make it in England before this time).

He was a Quaker and a minister of the Society of Friends.

William Cookworthy is well known as the discoverer of true porcelain in England.

Bowringsleigh Place

Named after Bowringsleigh House in West Alvington.

Bowringsleigh, once called Leigh was built in 1303. The Bowrings were here by 1332 but unfortunately died out in the male line by the 15th Century. After some changes in ownership, the Ilberts bought Bowringsleigh in 1696 where they remained until the death of Miss Margery Ilbert in 1984. They lived and thrived by dealing in chief commodity of the England period, wool. At the time the Ilberts were joint Lord of the Manor with the nearby Bastard family. In
the 17th Century the estate of Bowringsleigh was some 1200 acres.

At the bottom of the hill where the roundabout is now, stood one of the Lodges to Bowringsleigh.

**Mill Street**

There are records of transactions relating to houses in Mill Street, in the first half of the fourteenth century: one such is dated 1337. The mill was there at that time, for the north boundary of the said property is “the mill-stream of the Abbot of Buckfast”. In a Feoffee deed of 1601, it is called Mill Street, but the name is doubtless older than that.

**Lyte Lane, West Charleton**

Lyte Lane was named after Henry Frances Lyte (1793 – 1847). He was a Scottish Anglican divine and hymn writer. Born near Kelso in Scotland but educated in Enniskillen, Ireland, his father deserted the family and his mother and younger brother died in London. Henry was virtually adopted by the headmaster at his school.

Henry continued his education at Trinity College, Dublin and later, in 1815, took Anglican holy orders. He became a curate in Marazion, Cornwall, in 1817 where he met and married Anne Maxwell who was 7 years older than him and a Methodist. They had a happy marriage, two daughters and three sons.

They lived in Sway, Hampshire, between 1820 and 1822, and then moved to Dittisham and later to Charleton, hence the use of his name for Lyte Lane. They left Charleton in 1824 for Lower Brixham. There Lyte established the first Sunday school in the area and created a Sailor’s Sunday school.

Lyte lived in a former military hospital at Berry Head which is now the Berry Head Hotel. It was built in 1803 in support of three Napoleonic war forts on Berry Head. In 1823 it became surplus to requirements of the military and was leased to the builder. The Rev. Lyte came to live there while he was the incumbent of All-Saints Church, Brixham.

Legend has it that, following the successful visit of King William 3rd to celebrate the arrival in England of his predecessor William of Orange in 1686, the King was so impressed with arrangements made by Reverend Lyte together with the work in the area that he gave the Berry Head and estate to him. The property remained in his family until 1949.

Lyte had poor health throughout his life and spent much of his time in the warmer climates of France and Italy. He was in Nice when he died in 1847 and it was there that he was buried.

He was probably most famous for two of the hymns which he wrote; “Abide with me fast falls the eventide” and “Praise my soul, the King of Heaven”. He composed the original tune for “Abide with me” but William H. Monk, the editor of Hymns Ancient and Modern composed the
tune which is used now for this well known hymn. Incidentally the hymn is sung at FA cup final matches and has been since 1927. Before that “Alexander’s Ragtime band” was played!

(Researched via the internet – Keith Tomlinson)

**Embankment Road**

Saltmill Quay was about ¼ mile from the head of the estuary and Dodbrooke Quay (approximately where the War Memorial stands today). In the 18th century the quay was owned by Edward Hodges. According to Sarah Prideaux Fox he commenced the building of an embankment wall “in order to form a public walk, to be planted with trees, which would make a pleasant communication, secure from the flowing tide between the wharf and Dodbrooke Quay; but when the design was partially effected, a dispute arose as to the freehold right and the work remained unfinished till 1816, when it was completed by a public subscription”.

Today this embankment remains a pleasant area to walk and sit. A landing place was provided for the Kingsbridge/Salcombe steamers and is used today by the Rivermaid when the tide is high.

Embankment Road is now a busy thoroughfare and part of the A379.

Celia Strong

**Norton Brook Medical Centre**

In Medieval times the Manor of Norton was acquired by Buckfast Abbey incorporating Churchstow and Kingsbridge. After the Dissolution the land called Norton passed to Sir John Petre.

Norton is the hill which commands the town on the north and Norden is the dene or valley below.

In 1912 Fairweather describes the approach to Kingsbridge along the old Plymouth Road: In the mid 19th century a person coming from Plymouth would be very likely to get out of the wagon and walk down Norton Hill, then much steeper than now as the lower part has been considerably improved by carrying the road over the railway bridge. As he ascended on the Kingsbridge side where is now the Vicar’s garden, he would have found an old orchard and field. This field was often full of people witnessing a wrestling match.”

Today Norton Farm is marked on the OS map. Norton Brook flows down the valley past the Medical Centre and into a culvert (under Tesco), finally draining into the estuary.

Celia Strong
Ropewalk

**Background.** Boat and shipbuilding from the 14th C. For many years, Portlemouth was the centre for construction of warships, fishing vessels and barges, but it was overtaken by Salcombe in late 16th C. There, ships were supplied to counter the threat of the Armada. In later times boats were built for coastal fishing and crabbing or for expeditions to the cod banks of Newfoundland. Evans’ Shipyards in Salcombe was prominent but later there came Wm Date’s Yard in Kingsbridge where schooners, smacks, brigs, brigantines, barques and barquentines of up to 500 tonnes were constructed.

Fruit imports required ships to accommodate this new trade – from the Azores for oranges and lemons and the Bahamas for pineapples, coconuts and shaddocks -- a large, orange-type fruit named after a Capt. Shaddock who introduced them. Pips from these fruits were sown and grown at Combe Royal.

**Rope.** All of these craft needed rope. Kingsbridge had two Ropewalks – one, for a while, running along Ebrington Street, which lost its prominence when the Embankment was developed, and the other where we know it today. The hessian was dried out in Rack Park – hence the name – and later taken down to Ropewalk where it was converted into the finished rope.

Ropewalk and adjacent South Devon Ropery was established in about 1775 by a Mr John Bonker. It was positioned in the lower quarter of the Western Backway and stretched up the Gerston Road as far as Tacket/Ticket Wood meadows. In later years it passed into the ownership of a Mr John Thomas. It was burned down in 1868 (August 14th), uninsured, and re-built at a cost to him of £500 the following year. It was considerably expanded due to increased demand from the North of England and rope was also sent off to Labrador and Quebec for the fisheries. Some 51 men and boys were employed there including experienced riggers. A descendant of Mr Thomas claimed that his grandfather had served some 600 fishing smacks trading out of Kingsbridge and that the firm had supplied the rigging for the Royal Yacht “Victoria and Albert” and, possibly, had fitted the rigging on that ship. The range of ropery offered to seafarers and farmers included “Rope, Twine, Line, Whips and Bags”. Four generations of the Thomas family operated the Ropery but finally the land and properties were bought at auction in 1901 by Mr T.M. Lidstone.

Submitted: 1) Map of the areas included in the 1901 Auction (plots 354, 704, 705, 706 and 707, comprising about 10½ acres, and 2) Report in the Kingsbridge Gazette of the Ropewalk fire dated August 22, 1868.

*Anthony Barlow March 20th, 2013*
Union Road

Union Road runs up to what was the Union Work House, which now houses various businesses including Palladium.

Prior 1834, there were parish poor houses operated largely by the church, but in 1834 the Poor Law was amended following a commissioned report. The report took the view that poverty was essentially caused by the indulgence of individuals rather than economic and social conditions, and work houses were harsh places to be, in order to discourage people from entering them.

The Kingsbridge Poor Law Union was formed on 22nd June 1836. Its operation was overseen by an elected Board of Guardians representing its 26 constituent parishes.

The Kingsbridge Union workhouse was built in 1837 at the west of Kingsbridge. It was designed by Thomas Ponsford who was also the architect of the Totnes Union workhouse.

A two-storey entrance block at the south would probably have contained the Guardians' board-room and porters's lodge.

The workhouse was situated directly to the west of the Kingsbridge Town Hall. Local legend has it that the Town Hall clock deliberately had no face showing towards the workhouse so that the inmates could never be "clock-watching".

After 1930, the workhouse was redesignated as a Public Assistance Institution under the control of the Devonshire County Council, becoming known as Homelands.