

Littlecott/Littlecot/Little Cott

The Wells family had been living in Rowhills Estate since 1907. It is worth doing a recap before discussing the 1930s, to remind ourselves of the complications with the relevant land.



An 1870 map shows the main road being the turnpike highway. Hallimore Hill was part of the 1856 purchase of land for the Army.

The only side road shown here, was a small section for the Army and then at a gate, it became a track into Rowhills Copse.

Early dwellings were Rowhills Cottages, which were on an 1841 tithe map.



The track continued into the Copse. (Heavy black dots are War department boundary stones.)

In 1877, in the High Court of Justice, the case Drover v Drover had an outcome with the court requiring the land surveyor and auctioneer Mr J Alfred Eggar of Farnham, to sell Rowhills Coppice in one lot, since it was ring-fenced. The outcome is not known other than looking at other later transactions.

In the High Court of Justice, Chancery Division.—Rowhills Estate.—Drover v. Drover, 1877, D No. 26. In the County of Surrey, on the borders of Hants.—A very valuable and finely timbered Estate, situate in the parish of Farnham, known as “Rowhills Coppice,” containing about 89 acres, two enclosures of arable land, and five cottages, the whole embracing an area of about 103 acres, which lies in a ring fence, together with the valuable timber and underwood growing

The Land has a Southern aspect, and being well studded with fine oak trees, might readily be converted into a finely timbered park, is situate on rising ground, commanding a magnificent view of many miles in extent of the surrounding picturesque country, and lies in the midst of a favourite hunting district. The meets of the H.H., Mr. Garth’s, and Mr. Coombe’s fox hounds are within easy reach.

What followed next was a sale in 1885 with the vendor being John Knight of Weybourne House.

12th January 1885	AGREEMENT between John Knight of the one part and Berdce Amherst Wilkinson and Wilkinson Jocelyn Shaw of the or part.
1st December 1886	AGREEMENT between John Knight of the one part and sd Wilkinson Jocelyn Shaw of the or pt.

The 1885 transaction was with Berdoe Amherst Wilkinson and Colonel Wilkinson Jocelyn Shaw jointly purchasing land from John Knight, in order to build an Army College. A separate transaction between Mr Knight and Colonel Shaw was for building The Warren, a large Victorian mansion.



A new road built from Weybourne Lane to The Warren later becoming known as Warren Road. What is now known as Rowhills, was then an army road at one end (gated) and a road to the mansion The Warren as the other end, with a dirt track between. Much later, the lower end was also fenced off.



At an 1888 auction, Rowhills Estate was initially for 103 acres, then some weeks later, 99 acres, indicating Colonel Shaw had purchased another four acres.

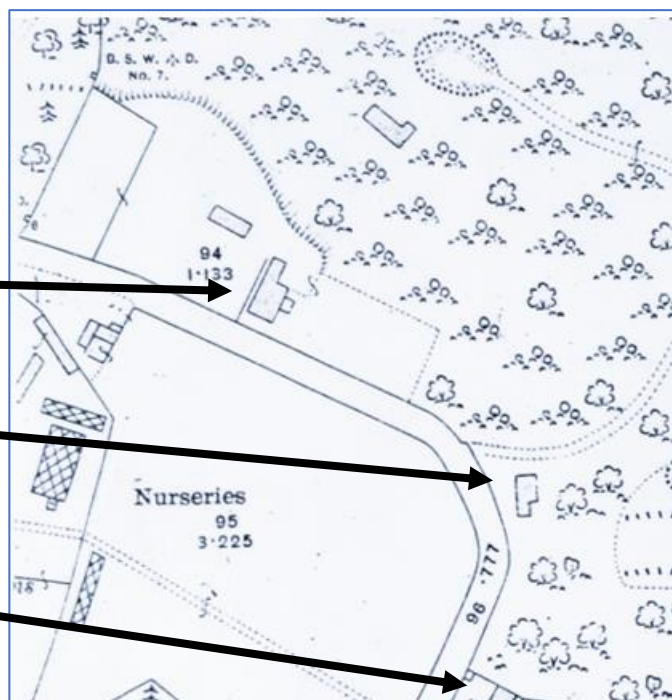
In 1902, Henry Wells purchased 87 acres of land of Rowhill Copse for £7500 (Wells Copse). The plan after the purchase was to join up the roads at separate ends. It was called "new road", in the sense that the previous dirt track could be made into one road.

The map showed only The Warren and the Army College that were built around 1887.

In 1907, John Henry Wells, son of Henry Wells built Woodlands. This date was derived from the March 1908 baptism record of the tenth child Maurice Dennis Wells.

The family decided to rent out Woodlands and about 1919, built Littlecott. They moved there in 1920.

Littlecott's only neighbour was the 1887 house The Warren.



Henry Wells (1835-1908), the father of John Henry Wells, died in 1908. He had made a will in 1895 with witnesses being Henry's brother John Wells (1832-1915) and his daughter-in-law Florence Rebecca Short, who was married to Samuel Wells.

The sons and daughters of Henry's will were to be paid proportionate sums yearly. From Henry Well's will, his son Alfred was to inherit £3. 00 a week from a codicil added in 1905. (Alfred gave up the annuity after his father's death, to take instead a share of the estate with his brothers.)

We need to look at the beneficiaries of Henry Well's will because this impacts onto the ownership of the road Rowhills, still to this day.

His estate of about £58,000 consisted of the 85 acres of Rowhill Copse plus building businesses and properties. The total estate was shared amongst Henry's children and the estate became controlled by the Trustees of Henry Well's will.

ESTATE OF THE LATE MR. H. WELLS, J. P.

PROBATE GRANTED.

Probate of the will, with two codicils, of the late Mr. Henry Wells, J.P., of Llanover House, Aldershot, contractor, and Councillor for the County of Southampton, who died on November 6, 1908, was granted on December 29, 1908, to John Henry Wells, of Woodland, Heath End, Farnham, contractor, and Percy Harold Edward Wells, 10a, Grosvenor-road, Aldershot, architect, sons and executors. The value of the estate is placed at £57,961 10s. gross, and £838 15s. 8d. net personalty.

The testator's last will is dated October 10, 1895, and the executors and trustees named therein are his three sons, Alfred, Samuel, Griffiths, and John Henry, the witnesses being John Wells, 14, Steelbrook-street, Earlsfield, S.W., and Florence Short, Llanover House, Aldershot. His son Samuel is appointed to act as solicitor to his estate, which is absolutely left to the trustees to deal with as they like, after carrying out certain provisions concerning the family. There are no bequests outside the immediate family, and there are directions for all his sons and daughters to be paid proportionate sums yearly.

The codicils vary these provisions somewhat, and appoint Percy Harold Edward Wells as a trustee.

Probate was granted to two executors of the will who were Henry's sons, John Henry Wells of Woodlands, Heath End and Percy Harold Edward Wells whose architect's office was in Grosvenor Road, Aldershot.

(Percy had married Catherine Priest in 1903. Initially their home address was Hollington, Church Lane West, Aldershot then in 1921 they moved to Weywood in Weybourne.)

Trustees of the estate were sons Alfred Wells, Samuel Griffiths Wells (solicitor and partner in Foster and Wells, Aldershot) and John Henry Wells (building contractor).

When writing about John Henry Well's family in Chapter3 Part 3, it was thought Maurice was the youngest child of ten but in fact there were eleven children. A daughter Eunice Peggy Wells was born in May 1911 and was baptised at St John the Evangelist, Hale that month.

1911	Eunice Peggy	John Henry + Estrade	Wells	Hale	Knutts	Rev. Watson Vicar
May 21st						
No. 681						

Eunice's mother Gertrude Wells died in May that year and Eunice died a few months later in August 1911. Unbearable tragedy for John Henry Wells, his children and the Wells relatives.



John's daughter Winifred Muriel Wells born 1897 was not included in any legal documents.

In 1921, she was a patient at Brookwood Mental Hospital and presumably, her family assisted in her care. Nothing more is known about her.

By 1931, John Henry Wells was 66, Dorothy was 40, Marjorie was 34, Raymond was 25 and Maurice was 23. Their brother Leslie Wells had died in South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia in 1931. He was 28 and left a widow and three children. Another brother Percy was also in Australia.

Surrey, England, Electoral Registers, 1832-1962 for John Henry Wells	
Farnham > 1931	
Wells, John Henry—J	Little Cot, Heath End
Wells, Raymond Lionel	Littlecot, Heath End
Wells, Dorothy Gertrude	Littlecot, Heath End
Wells, Marjery May	Littlecot, Heath End
Wells, Maurice Dennis	Littlecot, Heath End

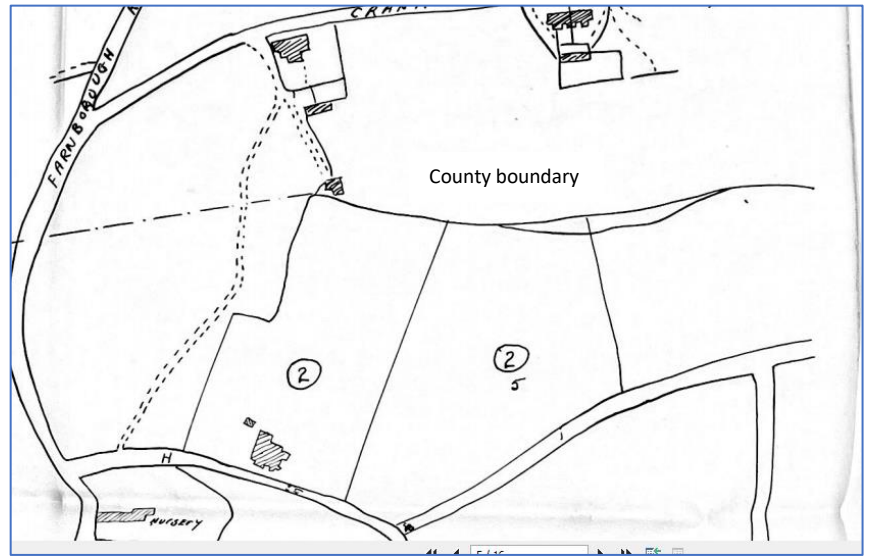
Unlike their tenants in Woodlands, the Wells family in Littlecott apparently never had live-in servants. It is highly likely that they had some form of domestic and gardening help, with Dorothy and Marjorie taking on the main running of the home for a widowed father and four single adults.

Raymond Wells was a surveyor and architect. In 1930, he advertised in the Sussex Express:

A YOUNG ARCHITECT requires situation in Bexhill or district, either with architects or estate agents; nine years' experience. — Reply to **Raymond L. Wells**, 1, South-street, Farnham, Surrey. a12b

In 1931 John Henry Wells took out a mortgage of £700 with a Building Society to build houses in Rowhills. Up until this point, the only properties were the two joined Rowhills cottages (which had been shown on the 1841 tithe map), the 1887 Victorian mansion The Warren, the Wells rented family home Woodlands and their new home Littlecott. 1931 represented major changes to the road.

Raymond Wells and John Well's brother Percy Harold Edward Wells (1879-1970) both as architects had plans for new properties, that were to be owned by the Wells family and rented out. Names chosen for these properties were Four Oaks, Chestnuts, Hazelwood, Firbank, The Coppins and Abbotswood.



There was no need for land to be purchased because in 1912, the Trustees of Henry Wells estate made a Deed of Partition. In this deed, John Wells was allocated two large portions of Rowhill Copse from his father's will. So, the £700 loan was purely for the cost of house building.

The mortgage taken out in 1931 stated:

Mortgage taken out by John Henry Wells of Littlecott, Heath End, Farnham with Farnham Benefit Building Society of 98 East Street to build Chestnuts and other houses in Rowhills. Loan was **£700**, advanced by the Society to the borrower thereby covenanted with the Society to pay the subscriptions in respect of the shares held by him and the **interest** to become due upon the advanced sums of £700 at the rate of **£5 ten shillings per annum**.

On 16 May 1932, John Henry Wells died; he was 67 years old. Administrators of the will of John Henry Wells were his daughters Dorothy Gertrude Wells and Marjorie May Wells.

WELLS John Henry of Littlecot Heath End Farnham Surrey died 16 May 1932 Administration (with Will) **London** 18 June to Dorothy Gertrude Wells and Marjorie May Wells spinsters. Effects £6536 15s. 6d.

We DOROTHY GERTRUDE WELLS and MARJORIE MAY WELLS both of "Littlecot" Heath End Farnham in the County of Surrey Spinsters as Administratrices of the Will of John Henry Wells late of "Littlecot" Heath End Farnham aforesaid who died on the Sixteenth May One thousand nine hundred and thirty-two and to whose estate Letters of Administration (with the Will annexed) were granted to us out of the Principal Probate

The estate of John Henry Wells went as one third to Dorothy Gertrude Wells, one third to Marjorie May Wells and one third equally divided between his four sons Albert John, Percy Douglas, Raymond Lionel and Maurice Dennis Wells. Of these sons, only Raymond Lionel and Maurice Dennis were single and living at Littlecott.

Albert John Wells, motor engineer had been living at Littlecott when he married Dorothy Helen Povey in 1927 at Holy Trinity, Aldershot. (Albert used Woodlands as his address in 1928 for the electoral register.)

Albert and Dorothy had three children, and were living at Perowne Street, Aldershot, the previous home of Dorothy's parents. Later Albert and family moved to Petersfield, Hampshire.

Percy Douglas Wells had adventured to Australia in 1922 and by 1931 was a farmer, living at Treslove, Dundas, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia.

Wells Percy H. E., Archt, Rowhill copse Weywd Weybrne Ernhm Aldershot	335
Wells P. & G. Ltd, Booksellers, Stars, Charterhouse.....	Godalming 465
Wells & Philpot, Solrs, 100 High st.....	Guildford 239
Wells P. H. E. & Partners, Archts, Arcade chambers Victoria st.....	Aldershot 60
Wells Raymond L, Littlecott Heath End..	Aldershot 833

In 1934 brothers Percy, Albert and Raymond Wells purchased land from their sisters Dorothy and Marjorie Wells, for which they paid £200. Then Raymond paid off to the building society the £700 loan and his brothers released their entitlements.

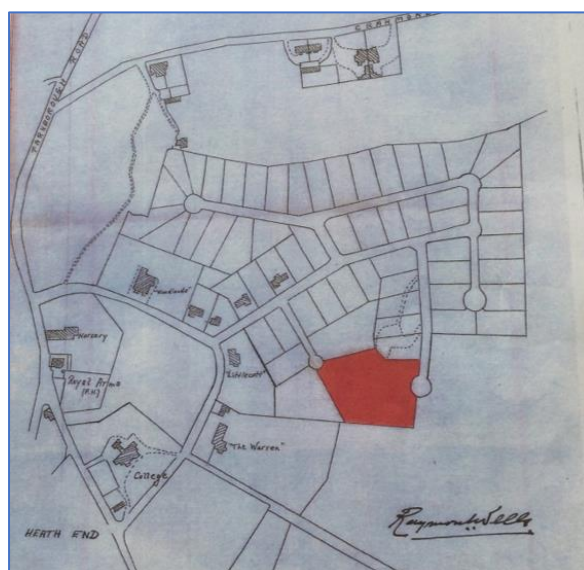
Once the new houses Four Oaks, Chestnuts, Hazelwood, Firbank and Abbottswood were built, tenants were successfully found. These houses plus Woodlands resulted in income to the Wells family.



The next stage was in 1935 when Raymond Lionel Wells and his architect uncle Percy Harold Edward Wells created a grand scheme, planning about 50 plots to develop Rowhills Estate. The north border was the Blackwater River, used as the county border between Hampshire and Surrey.

The land was a giant bog which had not been drained. This needed financial backing because Henry Wells money of £58,000 had been dispersed amongst offspring.

(The plan showed a plot marked in orange for a house to be called Abbottswood.)



Further plans were submitted to both Aldershot and Farnham Urban Councils in 1935 which referred to Rowhills Estate on the Weybourne Road. (This had the properties Rokeby, Rowhills, Weywood and The Copse House, all large plots.) The Council chose to disapprove the plan.

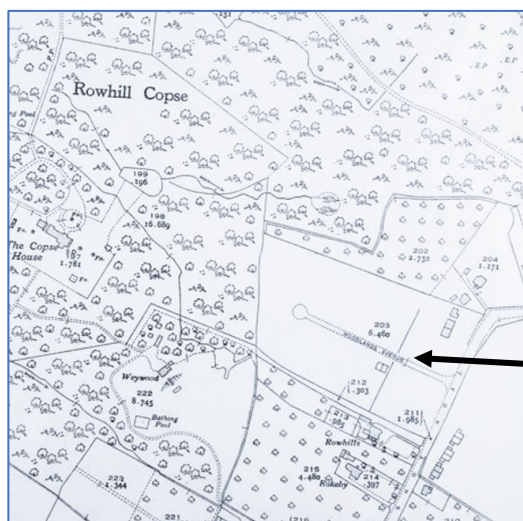
TOWN PLANNING.
 The Town Planning Committee submitted a plan of the proposed lay-out of the lower part of Rowhills Estate, Weybourne, for Mr. P. H. E. Wells. The proposals did not conform with the density zoning for that area, and the plan did not comply in certain other respects.
 It was agreed that the plan be disapproved.

ZONING OF ROWHILLS ESTATE.
 Messrs. Wells and Partners, the developers of Rowhills Estate on the Weybourne-road, have made representations to Farnham Urban Council relative to the Council's disapproval of the plan and lay-out of the lower part of the estate.
 At the meeting of the Council on Tuesday the Town Planning Committee reported that they were prepared to recommend the Council to amend the zoning to permit of development of the lower part of the estate at a density of not exceeding six houses to the acre, and to recommend the approval of an amended plan showing the allocation of plots in conformity with such zoning.

In May 1939, the Trustees of Henry Wells estate and Percy Harold Edward Wells had another attempt at selling part of Rowhills Copse. This time it was 30 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres of freehold building land, scheduled at 6 plots to the acre. The land over the Blackwater River bog was far from being building land however the estate land in Weybourne was much more suitable for building.

Aldershot Office Announcements.
 By Order of Trustees and of Mr. P. H. E. Wells.
BETWEEN ALDERSHOT AND FARNHAM.
 Freehold Building Estate, being a portion of the ROWHILLS COPSE, and comprising about 30 $\frac{3}{4}$ ACRES.
 Scheduled at 6 to the acre and ripe for immediate development.
MESSRS. ALFRED PEARSON & SON
 will offer the above for Sale by Auction at the VICTORIA HOTEL, ALDERSHOT

Aldershot Office Announcements.
MESSRS. ALFRED PEARSON & SON
 beg to announce the result of Tuesday's Property Sale as follows:—
 233, HIGH STREET—SOLD by private treaty.
 167, HIGH STREET—for sale by private treaty.
 ROWHILLS COPSE—for sale by private treaty.
 Auction and Estate Offices: 136, Victoria-road, Aldershot. Tel.: 17. a237



Woodlands Avenue, Weybourne was built around 1934 so it was known that all this area was suitable for building.

Even in May 1939, there was an increasing possibility of war. With war looming, building materials might be allocated towards war work and if there was to be bombing, then houses would have to be re-built. So Rowhills Estate development went onto the back burner for the time being.

Back to the family in Littlecott, Rowhills Estate.

In 1933 Maurice Dennis Wells married Eileen Cherry Simmonds and they set up home at Squirrels, Southmead Road, Aldershot.



This was followed in 1938 with another Wells marriage. Raymond Lionel Wells married Mabel Lavinia Mitchell in the Uckfield district. She was from Forest Row, Ashurst Wood, Sussex.

The two Wells spinster sisters were now left in very quiet surroundings after all the years of caring for others. On 15th September 1939 at Littlecott, Dorothy Gertrude Wells died, age 48.

MISS D. G. WELLS.
We regret to record the death of Miss Dorothy Gertrude Wells, which took place on Friday at her residence, "Little Cott," Heath End, at the age of 48, after a long and painful illness. Miss Wells belonged to a well-known Aldershot family, and was born in the town. She was the daughter of the late Mr. John Henry Wells, and until the family went to live at "Rowhills," Heath End, about 30 years ago, she lived at "Penryn," St. Michael's-road. Until her illness Miss Wells was an active church worker and member of the Heath End Women's Fellowship.

The funeral took place on Tuesday at the Woking Crematorium and the Aldershot Town Cemetery, where the ashes were interred in the family grave. The Rev. A. M. Watson (Vicar of Cove) took the committal service. Members of the family present were Miss Marjorie Wells (sister), Mr. A. J. Wells, Mr. M. D. Wells and Mr. R. L. Wells (brothers), Mrs. F. Lloyd and Mrs. H. Lloyd (nieces), Mrs. N. P. Bennett Snell (cousin), Miss Hughes, Mrs. J. Parsons and Mrs. Foote.

WELLS Dorothy Gertrude of Little Cott Heath End Farnham Surrey spinster died 15 September 1939 Probate London 21 February to Marjorie May Wells spinster and Raymond Lionel Wells architect. Effects £1703 6s. 6d.

The loss to Marjorie Wells will have been enormous and suddenly the 9 roomed house had just one occupant. When war was declared, Marjorie went to live in Torquay, at Sheddon Hall, a large Victorian mansion.

186 30 Wells Marjorie L - F 31st Jan 1965 private house

It is not known if her house Littlecott was requisitioned for Canadian soldiers during their time in this area. When the 1939 register was first taken, Littlecott on Rowhills Estate was empty.

Littlecott.
Rowhills Estate 302

We now know of the existence of new properties built in the road in the 1930s. It is time to visit Four Oaks and The Chestnuts, just a few paces from Littlecott. Who will be living there?