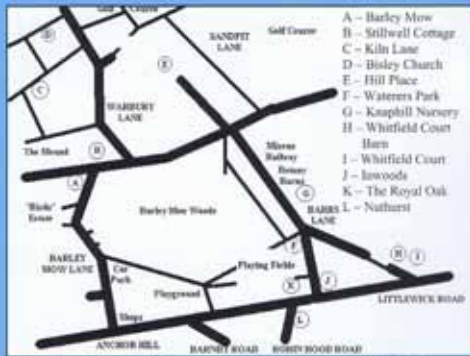


A HERITAGE WALK AROUND KNAPHILL  
FROM WATERER'S PARK  
TO BISLEY CHURCH and BARRS LANE



This walk should take up two hours as a gentle afternoon or evening stroll and, although some of the footpaths may be a little muddy in wet weather, the walk should be accessible most of the year. In the summer some of the paths may become overgrown with nettles, so wear suitable clothing. Unfortunately there are a number of stiles on this walk – one of which is particularly steep – and with narrow paths and a couple of hills, the walk may be unsuitable for the less able-bodied. Please follow the Countryside Code, respect the privacy of the owners and occupants of properties on the route and enjoy your walk. For a copy of the current programme of guided Heritage Walks, or a list of other Heritage Walks publications, please send a S.A.E. to the publisher, or e-mail heritage-walks@mfworld.com

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# KNAPHILL

A SELF-GUIDED HERITAGE WALK  
FROM WATERER'S PARK  
TO BISLEY CHURCH and BARRS LANE



WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS  
ON THE HISTORY OF THE AREA

By Iain Wakeford

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KNAPHILL  
FROM WATERER'S PARK  
TO BISLEY CHURCH and BARRS LANE



*An Introduction to the  
History of Knaphill*

Knaphill, as a name, was first recorded in 1225 as 'La Cnappe', the name referring to the area at the top of the hill where the village centre is today. 'Cnappe' or 'Knap' means 'the top of a hill' in Old English, so that the addition (by the 15th century) of the second part of the name is, in fact, a partial tautology! It is possible that the 'hill' part is a corruption of the Old English 'haga' meaning an 'enclosure'. This would certainly fit in with the known origin of the area as a squatter

settlement on the edge of Woking Common. Indeed, much of what we now consider to be 'Knaphill' was, in ancient times, part of the parish of 'Horsell' - the boundary between Knaphill (Woking) and Horsell running parallel to Anchor Hill and the High Street, so that Waterers Park and half of Highclere Road are, technically, in Horsell! Over the years the name 'Knaphill' has been spelt in various ways – sometimes without the 'K', sometimes as two words, such as 'Nap Hill' in 1765.

*The area of this walk in the early 18th century*



Waterer's Park car park.

The 'Barley Mow'.

Leave the car park and turn right, into Barley Mow Lane, following the road down the hill to Chobham Road. At the junction, on the left, is Barley Mow House.

**The 'Barley Mow'**

The 'Barley Mow' is a timber-framed, Grade II listed building, dating from the 17th century, but with 19th- and 20th-century additions.

**The Walk**

The walk starts at the car park at the top of Waterer's Park.



The 'Barley Mow' - in the days when it was still a public house.

It has been claimed that the house was once a royal hunting lodge to Windsor Forest. A fire-back in an Inglenook Fireplace bears the coat of arms of Charles I and the date 1635 - one of the only other known examples being at Windsor Castle itself! In the early 19th century, when it was a public house, it was valued, together with the 'Sun Inn' at Chobham and 340 acres of land, at £350. The pub closed in 1921 and the property was converted back into a

private residence. There are said to be a number of ghosts associated with the 'Barley Mow', including a gentleman who was killed in a drunken brawl outside the Inn. In an attempt to prevent identification of the body, his head had been cut off - hence the ghost walking along the road with his head tucked underneath his arm! Another ghost is of a lady, dressed in brown, who disappears whenever anybody stops to talk to her.



Chobham Road.

Stillwell Cottage.

Lane. Please be very careful, as there is no footpath along this busy road and cars tend regularly to exceed the speed limit! As you walk along the road, glance across at Stillwell Cottage.

**Stillwell Cottage**

This Grade II, timber-framed, listed building is situated almost opposite the 'Barley Mow' and, like its neighbour, it too is tile-hung and 16th century in date.

At the junction with Chobham Road, turn right and, facing the traffic, walk along the side of the road to the junction with Warbury Lane.



Junction with Warbury Lane.

Cross Chobham Road at the junction with Warbury Lane and walk along the lane to the point where it becomes a one-way road.



The footpath on the left of Warbury Lane (before Ringstone Farm).

On your left, beside the entrance to Ringstone Farm, is a footpath. Take this path, up the hill, until you see a stile on your right. Cross the stile (or walk around the side, by the



The stile into the field.

The stile and gate into Kile Lane.



The 'worst stile on the walk'.

tree) and enter the field. Walk along the side of the field with the hedge immediately on your right, until you reach the bottom corner where you will find one of the worst stiles on the walk! It might not look too difficult from this angle, but wait until you try to get down the other side! Continue along the path at the bottom of the field until you reach the gate and stile that take you into Kile Lane.





*Kiln Lane*

The name Kiln Lane refers to the lime kilns that were once in the lane (up the hill nearer to the Bagshot Road). The kilns were probably last used in the 19th century, burning chalk to produce lime for the local fields.

Turn right into the lane and, after a short while, look for a gate on your

*Kiln Lane*

left into the fields on the left of the lane. By now you have entered the parish of Bisley.

**Bisley**

The name 'Bisley' was first recorded in the 10th century as 'Busseleghe' and comes from the Old English words 'byse' meaning bushes and 'leah' a clearing – the 'clearing where bushes grow'. The village was not recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, but was almost certainly included in the area of Chobham. The survey records both a church and a chapel there and for many years it has been debated whether the 'chapel' was here at Bisley or at Chobham. Not surprisingly, both claim the 'church' to be theirs, with Bisley using a



*Gate from Kiln Lane into the field by Bisley Church (right).*

13th-century reference to a 'church yard' here to buck up their claim.



Walk around the gate, into the field, and follow the hedge on the right to Bisley Church. There are two gates into the churchyard, either of which can be used to make your way around to the entrance porch.



*The porch of Bisley Church*

**Bisley Church**

The oldest part of the present church is 13th century (the nave), with the porch (above) dating from the 14th century along with the belfry. The north aisle and chancel are Victorian, dating from the 'restoration' of the church in 1873, with the vestry added in stages throughout the 20th century. The walls are over three feet thick in places and

*The first gate (top) and the second gate (bottom) into the churchyard*



*Bisley Church before 1873.*

are made of various local stones – including 'sarson stones' (a hard sandstone found on the local heaths) and 'pudding-stone' (which looks like dark brown concrete, but is a natural material sometimes found at the base of deposits of sand as a kind of 'pan').

*Below left – the path from the porch to Church Lane.*

*Below right – the stile from Church Lane into the field.*

Leave the churchyard by the 'drive' down to Church Lane. At Church Lane, turn right and then cross the road to the stile into the fields on the left. Cross over the stile and, with the hedge on your right, cross the field to the next stile.



*The stile on to the Golf Course.*

This stile takes you on to the Chobham Golf Course. Follow the marked path around the edge of the course to Sandpit Lane which is an ancient bridleway.



*Sandpit Lane.*

*The path along the edge of the Golf Course.*

*Sandpit Lane, running between the Golf Course and Hill Place.*



The fields on the right belong to Hill Place, one of two 'sub-manors' of Horsell.

Turn right into the lane and then immediately left (away from where the 'Bridleway' sign is pointing).



*The Bridleway sign – pointing away from the direction you need to go!*





Hill Place in the mid-18th century.

**Hill Place**  
There was never a 'Manor of Horsell', the area forming part of the Manor of Pyrford, but there were two large farms in the area which by the 16th century had assumed semi-manorial status. They were 'Twitchen', to the north of Horsell Common, and 'Hill Place', here. In the 16th century, Hill Place was owned by a gentleman called John Danaster, who also owned land in Chobham. He died

in 1540 and the manor then passed to his wife, before passing to their daughter, Anne (wife of Christopher Hennege), in 1571. For most of the 17th and early 18th centuries the property belonged to the Collyer family.

**After a short distance there is a path on the right. Take this path, with Hill Place on your right and the Golf Course on your left. This path eventually**



Sandybit Lane, looking down the hill towards Chobham Road.

goes down the hill to Chobham Road. Turn right and walk along the side of the road (facing the traffic) to the junction with Barrs Lane.



Chobham Road

Once again, be careful along the road, as there is no footpath. Cross the road to the corner of Barrs Lane and take the footpath, through the woods, parallel to Barrs Lane.

The entrance to the 'Woodland Trust' land off Barrs Lane.

These woods are now in the care of the Woodland Trust, whose sign can be seen on the



fence as you enter the wood. After the first part of the woodland you enter a small opening and the footpath forks. Take the left-hand path (keeping Barrs Lane on your left) and walk through the woods to Waterer's Park.



Waterer's Park, named after Anthony Waterer, who bequeathed the land to Woking Council in 1924.



**Waterer's Park**

The woodland and the park were originally part of Knaphill Nursery, owned by the Waterer family. When Anthony Waterer the second died in 1924, he left some of his land (known as Blue Gates Field) to Woking Council to be turned into a public park. The 14.5 acres of land were very 'soggy, uneven and infested with moles', but between 1925-8 the Council turned them into 'Waterer's Park'.

**Knaphill Nursery**

The first nursery in the Knaphill area was probably founded by John

Waterer at Ryde Heron in the 1760s. He died in 1780, leaving his land to his sister, Ruth, and upon her death it passed to his nephew, Michael Waterer. His eldest son, also called Michael, became a partner in the firm in 1809 when the nursery started specialising in growing rhododendrons. In the 1820s the family bought more land at Bagshot, but when Michael died in 1842 the Bagshot land was left to one son (John), whilst his other son (Horsea) inherited Knaphill. In 1853 Anthony Waterer inherited the nursery from his uncle and by the



1870s he had developed the estate to cover over 200 acres. Anthony Waterer died in 1896, leaving the nursery to his son - also called Anthony. It was this Anthony who left Blue Gate Field to the Council in 1924. The total amount in Anthony Waterer's will was £72,000, including legacies to a number of friends, relatives and employees. The nursery was owned by the Waterer family until 1976, when it was sold to a member of another local nursery dynasty - Martin Slocock

(whose ancestor, Walter Charles Slocock, had served his apprenticeship at Knaphill in the 1850s, before buying the Goldsworth Nursery - now the site of Goldsworth Park).

Anthony Waterer, pictured in the Rhododendron Walk in the early 20th century.



The triangle of Barrs Lane, at the bottom of Waterer's Park.

**At Waterer's Park, turn left and cross Barrs Lane by the 'triangle' and then turn right down the left-hand spur of the lane, to Whitfield Court.**



Whitfield Court Barn.

**Whitfield Court Barn**  
Whitfield Court Barn dates from the 18th century, with 19th-century brick extensions to the south and north. Together with the house, it is a Grade II listed building.

**Whitfield Court**  
Although the front part of Whitfield Court dates from the 18th century, the back is much earlier, with extensive timber framing (still visible on the inside) dating from the early 16th century.



Whitfield Court.

**Cross over Littlewick Road (be careful, as it is a busy road) and turn right, walking along the pavement towards Anchor Hill.**



Inwoods, on the corner of Barrs Lane and Littlewick Road.

**Inwoods**  
On the corner of Barrs Lane is Inwoods, a 16th-century Grade II listed building with an 18th-century gable on the left-hand side.



Blugates.

**Behind the high yellow-brick wall is another listed building – Blugates – but unless the gate happens to be open as you pass, there is little chance of seeing this 16th-century timber-framed building. Continue around the**

**corner by Blugates and cross Robin Hood Road to the 'green' opposite the 'Royal Oak' public house.**

**The 'Royal Oak'**  
The 'Royal Oak' is the last of three public houses which once served the lower slopes of Knaphill. The 'Royal Standard' (on the opposite side of the road, just behind the village forge) closed in the 1920s, whilst the 'Queens Head', in Robin Hood Road, closed in the 1980s. The 'Royal Oak' dates from the 17th century.

**On Robin Hood Road, opposite the car park of 'The Forge', is a locally listed house called Nuthurst.**

The Royal Oak.



Nuthurst.

The house dates from the mid-18th century, the rear part apparently being built in the 1740s.

The house is, however, best known for the murder that occurred there in the 1920s.

On 14th August, 1926, Mr. Hilary Rougier died there in suspicious circumstances. When he wrote his will in 1919 he was to leave £6,000 to his sister and niece, but seven years later he had just £800 in his bank. In the last few months leading up to his death, payments of between £40 and £950 were made to Mr. & Mrs. Lerwell (the couple with whom he was lodging at Nuthurst), and when his body was examined by the Home Office Coroner,

Bernard Spilsby, small traces of morphine were discovered. Although a jury returned a verdict of 'unlawful death', however, nobody was ever tried for the murder.

Nuthurst.

Junction of Robin Hood Road and Anchor Hill.



**Return to Anchor Hill and, crossing the road at a convenient position, walk up the hill to almost opposite the junction with Barnby Road.**

The footpath to Waterer's Park.



**A footpath on the right leads to the children's playground on Waterer's Park and so back to the car park at the top of the hill.**