

# THE BARGEWAY

FROM  
KINGSTON BRIDGE  
TO  
HAMPTON COURT BRIDGE

Ray Elmitt

FOREWORD BY  
JOHN PREVITE



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## Foreword



ROBERT FINLAY MCINTYRE 1890

In 1967 Phyllida and I were looking for a new home in SW London; we wanted to move out of central London with our two sons.

We visited many houses but could not find the right one. One day, looking through the house advertisements in a back number of *Country Life*, I saw advertised an ugly looking house, *The Wilderness*, on the river bank at Kingston. I could not believe that any sane person would advertise a Kingston house in *Country Life*! What has Kingston to do with the Countryside?

Nevertheless we hurried down to see the house. It was in a dreadful state. It had been damaged by a flying bomb which fell in the river and had been "restored" (!) by a Kingston builder who removed many of the original features from inside and outside. Since then the house had been neglected - not decorated since the 1940s and now with dry rot in two places. Despite these setbacks we saw that there was great potential for the house and garden. Scared that we might lose it at auction we offered the asking price. I dare not say what a paltry sum that was by today's prices.

Within a few years of moving in I became interested in the history of the house and of The Bargeway. I found some interesting maps and records at The Public Record Office and obtained copies of them. I thought they would be of interest to other people who frequented The Bargeway and always had in mind that I should share the information

After 50 years of cogitation I thought I really must get to grips with this so I got in touch with The Friends of Bushy and

Home Parks and asked them if they would like me to give a talk entitled *The History of The Bargeway*. They were keen on the idea and supportive. It was at that moment that I got to know Ray Elmitt, the very well known historian of Hampton Wick and author of many books on local people. Very fortunately Ray offered to help with my talk, in particular with displaying the maps and images. I welcomed his assistance.

As we prepared the talk Ray came up with many more ideas of what might be included and illustrated. The consequence was that we amassed so much of interest that we could not possibly include it all in one talk. Ray offered to put the material into a book. What could be better than that and who could possibly be better than him at doing it? Without his knowledge and expertise the talk would not have been the success that it was and this book would never have been written. I am extremely grateful to Ray for completing the story and turning it into such an attractive and interesting publication.

John Previte  
*The Wilderness*  
29 February 2020

## Preface

This book is about the tow path and track between Kingston Bridge and Hampton Court Bridge on the Middlesex bank of The River Thames, originally known as The Bargeway and now known as Barge Walk\*. It runs for nearly three miles and occupies the land between the river's edge and the boundary of the Home Park of Hampton Court Palace. Its purpose was to provide a route for horses engaged in towing barges along the river and the close of land - which covers 18 acres - was known as the Bargeway. The route had been maintained and operated since the end of the twelfth century by the Corporation of the City of London.

The arrival of railways brought about a steady decline in barge traffic whilst the invention of the steam and later diesel-powered tugboats finally obviated the need for horses. Thus the Bargeway lost its purpose and eventually it also lost its name. *Kelly's Directory* referred to it as *Riverbank, or Barge Walk* from 1892 but in 1923 this became just *Barge Walk*.

The obvious way to organise a book about a route is to start at one end and travel to the other. This account makes the journey twice: firstly to acquaint the reader with what exists today and then to explain how it all came to be.

\* However, as a local historian with a penchant for preserving associations with the past, I shall ignore directories, electoral registers and even street signs - and simply refer throughout this book to **The Bargeway!**



An aerial View of the Bargeway courtesy of Google Earth Pro. All the named locations are mentioned in the next section *A Walk along the Bargeway*. In addition, those locations shown in CAPITAL LETTERS have their own chapter(s) describing the history behind their existence.

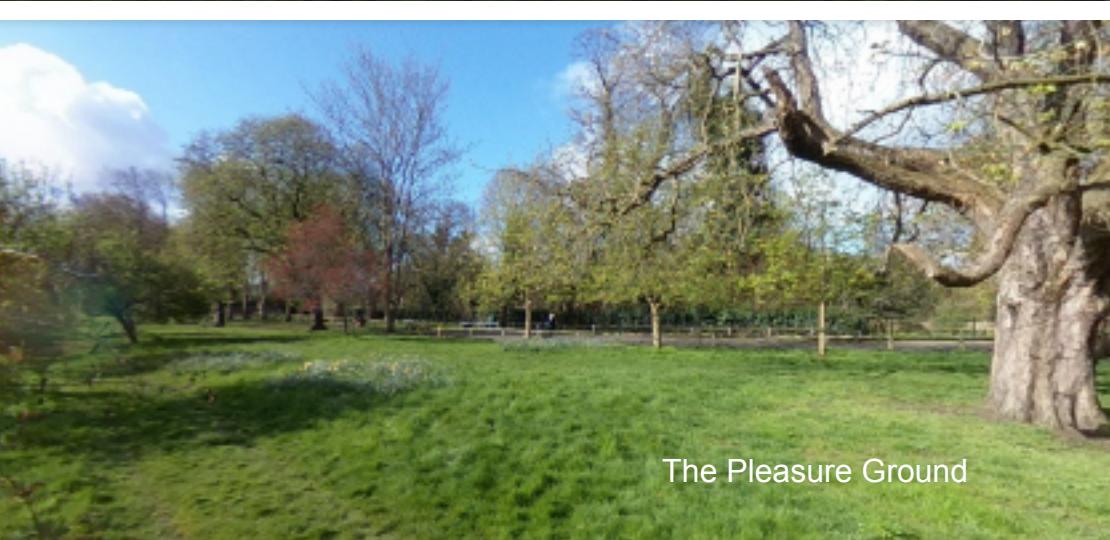
By pure serendipity this photograph was taken on the eve of the 2019 Hampton Court Flower Festival with all installations in place but as yet no cars in the spectator car park.



Old Bridge Street



Coal Wharf/Kingston Bridge Boatyard



The Pleasure Ground

## Pre-ramble: A Walk along the Bargeway

The real start (or finish) of the Bargeway is at the bottom of Old Bridge Street, Hampton Wick at the point where the original wooden bridge brought the towing path across the river from the Surrey to the Middlesex bank. Here teams of fresh horses from a farm in Petersham would await the arrival of laden barges ready to haul them on their continued journey upstream towards Staines and beyond. It was here too that the toll-collector employed by the Corporation of the City of London would collect the fee from the barge operator which was based on the distance to the final destination.

The route of the Bargeway then passes under the three distinctly identifiable generations of Kingston Bridge and out into an open area which has a fence separating it from the neighbouring meadow. The cobbled area by the river marks the site of the coal wharf (page 35) now occupied by the Kingston Bridge Boatyard (page 39). The section between the fence and the river running 400 yards upstream was the site of a former pleasure ground (page 43) created by the village to celebrate the wedding of the Duke of York, the future King Edward VII. Most of the original chestnut trees planted 120 years ago are still flourishing. Access to the area for pedestrians and horses (and later for vehicles) is also provided by a road known as York Terrace which slopes down to the river from bridge level.



New Barge Walk Cottages



Minima Dinghy Park



Approaching Wilderness Estate

The area between the fence and the park boundary, once known as Little Meadow, was the site of an Allotment Ground (page 51) which ran the full length of the pleasure ground and passing behind the *New Bargeway Cottages* and their predecessor *Wilderness Cottage* (page 65) ...

... as far as the Minima Sailing Club boat park (page 57).

From here to a point opposite the Italianate church of St Raphael on the opposite bank, the nature of the changes significantly. Track and towing path are now combined and run along the river's edge. In place of open space on the landward side of this route are the houses and private gardens of The Wilderness Estate (page 75).



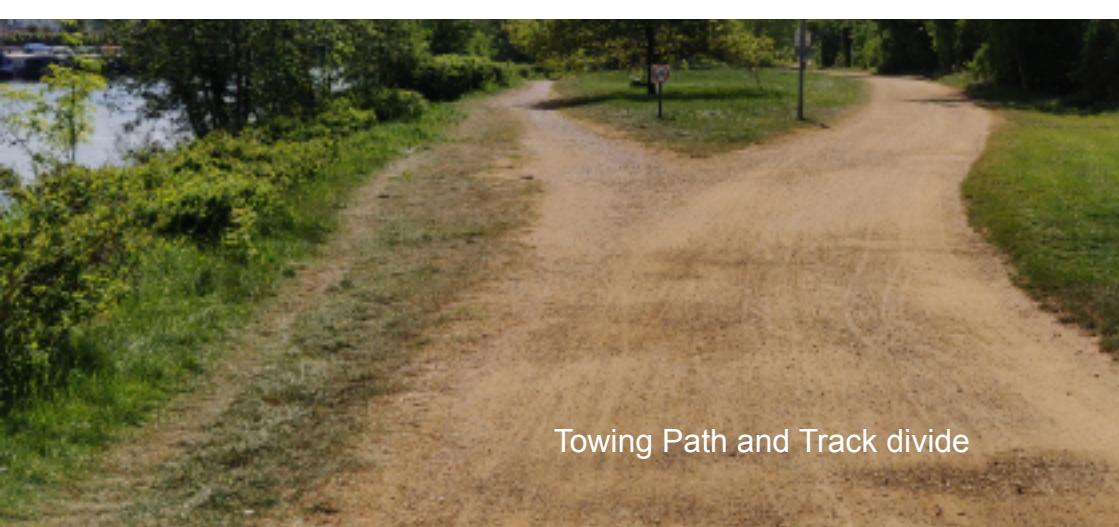
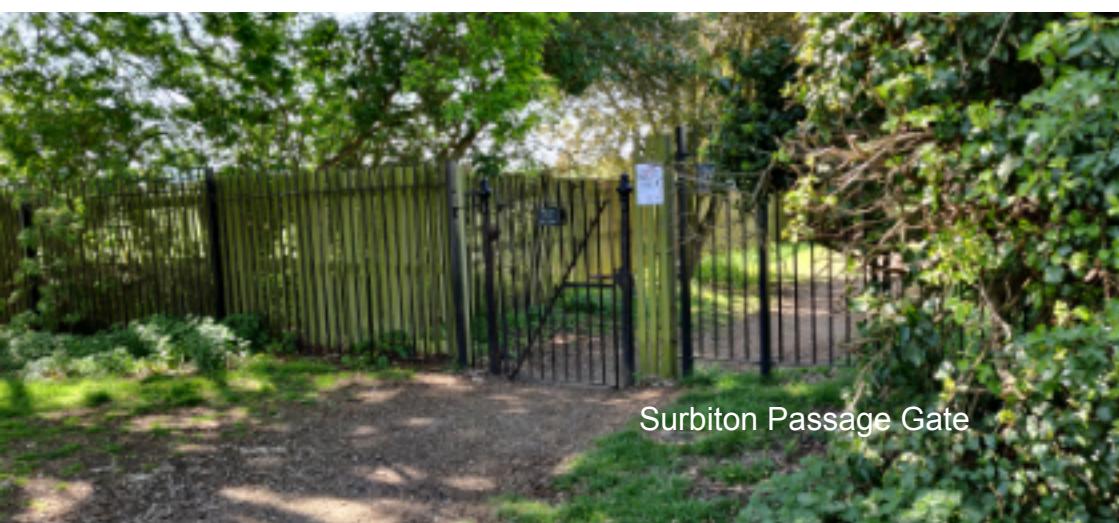
The Wilderness Estate was owned until WWII by the Corporation of the City of London and its successor as the river management authority Thames Conservancy. The two principal houses are *The Wilderness* (page 83) and *Parkfield* (page 85). Between them are the original twinned coach houses/stables that later became staff cottages. One is almost unchanged whilst the other has now morphed into a five-bedroom house.



Beyond *Parkfield*'s impressively large 21-room Victorian house lay a considerable estate the first part of which, hidden behind a high fence, is a formal garden with a large greenhouse. Beyond this is the former fruit and vegetable garden complete with fig house now beautifully restored/recreated by its current owners. The final section, originally a meadow some 350 yards long though only a few yards deep, was used for grazing horses.



A coach-house serving the original *Parkfield* residents was located towards the northern end of the meadow and this is now the site of the only completely new property - *Llanover* - in the former *Wilderness Estate*. Here there is a locked barrier across the road to prevent unauthorised onward vehicle access.



Beyond this, the former meadow has become completely overgrown with a few major trees and widespread scrub. Eventually, near the beginning of the large island known as Raven's Ait, the meadow finally ends and the Bargeway begins to slowly open out again.

At this point there are two interesting features associated with the palace at Hampton Court which go almost unnoticed by the uninitiated visitor. Firstly, at a particular point marked by a flat slab of concrete and otherwise discernible only by a small area of turbulence in the water by the river bank is the conduit located at the end of the Longford River. This artificial waterway diverts waters from the River Colne at Longford near Heathrow Airport some 12 miles away. It was built for King Charles I in 1638/39 as a water supply for the garden fountains at Hampton Court Palace and cost £4,000 (now around £175m). The original bed of the Longford River through Home Park is still visible for several hundred yards near the north-west corner of the Stud House garden, its direction suggesting that it originally flowed into the Thames close to the Minima Sailing Club boat park. However Charles II diverted the water from his father's river to supply his new 3,800 foot Grand Canal - now known as the Long Water - from where it flowed through the Lower Wilderness and out into the river at its current position<sup>1</sup>.

The second palace-related feature is the rather more evident gate into Surbiton Passage which was created to provide a direct route into the park for visitors coming over from the Kingston side of the river via the Westfield Ferry. It was installed when Home Park was opened to the public in the 1890s<sup>2</sup>.

The layout now reverts to its previous arrangement with the track and towpath again occupying their own separate routes with increasingly spacious grass verges either side of them.

<sup>1</sup> An avenue of limes was planted along the canal as a gift to Charles II's wife Catherine of Braganza. The story is told that Charles II had planned that Catherine's first visit to the palace would have her arrive gently and romantically in a row barge propelled up the Long Water - which was aligned on her own personal drawing room on the east side of the palace. In the event she arrived by coach at the original gate on the west side ... along with a large and noisy group of her Spanish courtiers.

<sup>2</sup> The meadows at the eastern end of the park - i.e. between the park itself and the Bargeway - were acquired by William III as grazing for the royal stud and have been grazed by the Monarch's horses ever since. The boundary was set in the early eighteenth century and has remained unchanged. The lower land beyond the Long Water has always been prone to flooding, which has ensured the continuing fertility of the meadow.

The Bargeway ends at Hampton Court Bridge. Constructed of reinforced concrete, faced with red bricks and white Portland Stone to reflect the style of Wren's portions of Hampton Court Palace, the bridge was designed by the Surrey county engineer W. P. Robinson and the architect Sir Edwin Lutyens. It was opened by the Prince of Wales on 3 July 1933<sup>6</sup>. The bridge is the fourth road crossing to have been constructed here although the previous three bridges were located slightly further upstream.

<sup>6</sup> The Prince also opened both Chiswick and Twickenham Bridges on the same day. The construction of the latest Hampton Court Bridge required the permanent diversion of the flow of the River Mole into the River Ember.

*This aerial view of Hampton Court in 1920 showing the earlier 1865 bridge a few yards upstream of the Lutyens bridge that replaced it.*



## Introduction

### Historic Context

At 215 miles from source to estuary, the Thames is the longest river entirely in England. Its strategic value in providing a fast route to reach and subdue dissenting tribes in central southern England was recognised and exploited by invaders including the Romans, Vikings and Normans. Likewise its commercial value in supporting two-way trade between London and major towns like Richmond, Kingston, Reading and Oxford was used to the full by barge operators<sup>7</sup>.

In 1197 Richard I, who had previously held all rights on the Thames, sold them to the Corporation of the City of London to raise funds for his crusades in Palestine. In practice the City did not choose to exercise their newly-acquired rights beyond the limit of the tidal reach at Staines and in 1285 they marked the de facto boundary of their jurisdiction by erecting the City of London Stone<sup>8</sup>.

Competition for the use of the river created the centuries-old conflict between those who wanted to dam the river to build millraces and to install fish traps and those who wanted obstacle-free passage along which to travel and carry goods. Although an Act of Parliament of 1350 prohibited the obstruction of the river,

<sup>7</sup> Two canals flow directly into the non-tidal River Thames: the Kennet and Avon canal (opened 1810) connecting Bristol and Bath to London via Reading and the Oxford canal (opened 1790) connecting the Midlands to London via Oxford.

<sup>8</sup> In Victorian times an annual expedition took place which saw the Lord Mayor of the City of London rowed upriver in his State Barge to touch the London Stone with his sword and re-affirm the City's rights to charge tolls on river traffic and levy taxes on structures such as fish traps. The practice continued until 1857.

there was no effective body to enforce its observance. Weirs were used on the upper, non-tidal stretches to dam the river with flash locks<sup>9a</sup> to allow the passage of boats. The formation of the Oxford-Burford Commission in 1624 led to the installation of three pound locks<sup>9b</sup> on the upper reaches during the 1630s which provided an effective compromise by maintaining a good head of water for the miller whilst allowing boats to pass relatively easily from one river level to the next with minimal loss of water. Although these installations proved the viability of pound locks, no similar Commissions were created to provide them on other stretches so flash locks remained the predominant installations for the next 70 years.

Finally a new body, the Thames Navigation Commissioners, was appointed in 1751 with similar powers to their 1624 predecessors. However, with a membership of over 600, the body proved too unwieldy to operate effectively. The 1770 Thames Act cleared this log-jam by allowing a quorum of just 11 Commissioners to conduct its business and, now armed with the power of compulsory purchase to acquire land for locks, weirs and the like, the Commissioners succeeded in installing 22 pound locks over the next 20 years. In 1811 the City of London built Teddington Lock<sup>10</sup> which added a further 25 miles to the length of non-tidal navigation on the Thames.

A dispute arose in 1840 (at the time the Victoria Embankment was first mooted) between the Crown and the City of London as to the ownership of the bed and soil of the River Thames. The Crown advanced the argument that as the Thames was a navigable river it was an arm of the sea and consequently there was a *prima facie* case that the bed and soil, as far as it ebbed and flowed, belonged to The Crown by virtue of prerogative. This dispute lasted for 17 years, but the City of London finally agreed in December 1856 to withdraw all claims to the bed and soil of the River and admitted the claim of The Crown. The Crown's land rights were then re-conveyed to the newly-formed Thames Conservancy

<sup>9a</sup> Flash locks were commonly built into small dams or weirs where a head of water was used for powering a mill. The lock enabled boats to pass through the weir while still allowing the mill to operate when the gate was closed. However it could take up to a day or even more to restore the water levels after a boat had passed, so their use was unpopular with the millers.

<sup>9b</sup> A lock where the water is impounded between gates at both ends of the lock.

<sup>10</sup> Followed by a further five locks below Staines (Penton Hook, Chertsey, Shepperton, Sunbury and Molesey) between 1812 and 1815.

*except in places immediately adjacent to a Royal Palace.*

As will become apparent, this exception as it applies to the Bargeway has had a significant historical effect on the relationship between the Local Board of Hampton Wick and The Crown authorities at Hampton Court Palace.

\*

## Geographic Context

The Bargeway runs from Kingston Bridge to Hampton Court Bridge, a distance of nearly three miles.

The total area enclosed by the Bargeway and Hampton Court Road is in excess of 800 acres comprising Hampton Court Palace along with its formal and informal gardens and paddocks together with Home Park<sup>11</sup> both of which are Crown Property under the management of Historic Royal Palaces. The Palace with its formal and informal gardens is situated at the west end of the Park from which it is separated by metal railings. There are similar railings along the south-west boundary of the Park with the Bargeway. The northern boundary is adjacent to Hampton Court Road, from which it is separated by a handsome high brick wall built for Henry VIII. The eastern boundary is slightly more complex since there is a large 100-acre area of grassland divided into three meadows and belonging to the Royal Stud, lying between the formal parkland and the Bargeway itself and separated from each of them by picket fence and metal railings respectively.

<sup>11</sup> Although Bushy Park had been open to the public from the 1830s, the local populace were excluded from entering Home Park under the explicit instruction of Queen Victoria. She eventually relented and, from Whit Monday 1893, two thirds of the land was open to the public. The following year, the Royal Stud operations in Home Park were moved to Sandringham and almost the whole park area made publicly available.



Above:  
The old bridge in the early 1800s. The shallowness of the river indicates that the artist Thomas Rowlandson created his picture before Teddington Lock had been completed in 1811.

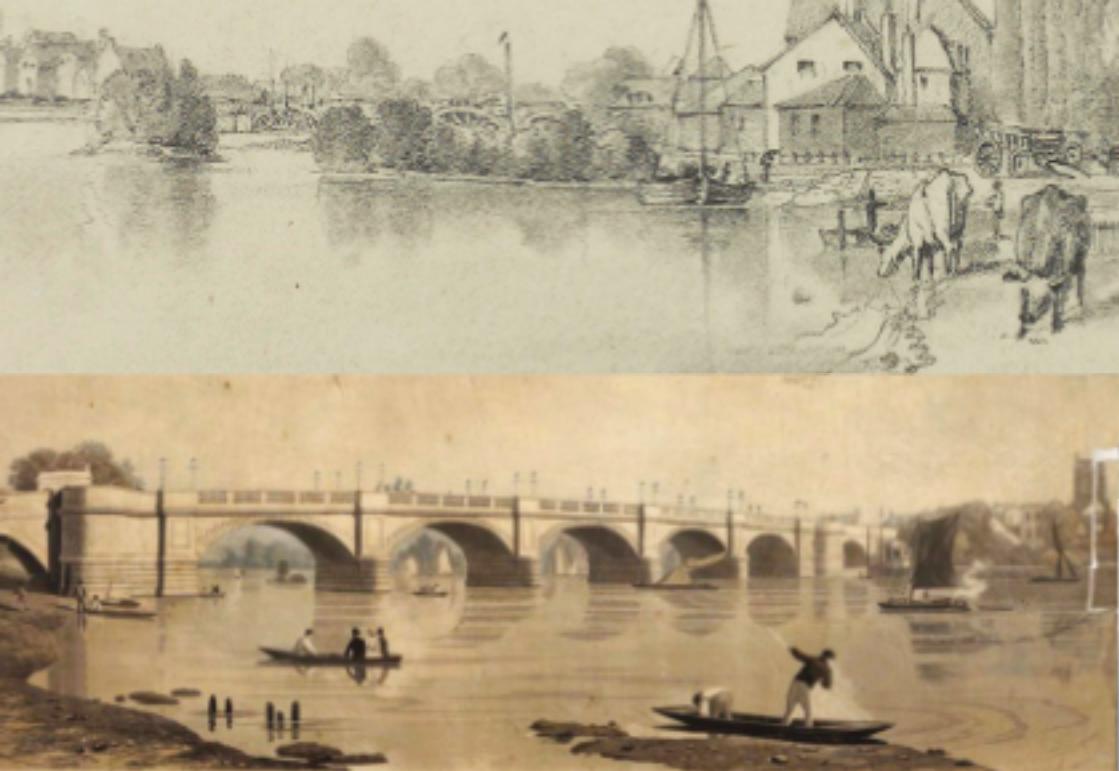
Below:  
The bridge was made impassable to force would-be toll evaders to use the new bridge.



## Kingston Bridge

The first documented reference to a bridge at Kingston was in 1193 though an earlier structure further downstream may have existed in Saxon times. The wooden structure of this first bridge was narrow and carried the bridge deck on 22 piers each consisting of four piles with additional cross-bracing for strength. The two spans in the centre of the river were higher and wider than the others to ease the passage of barges. The construction was relatively flimsy and prone to damage and tolls were imposed to pay for the ongoing repairs. Robert Hammond, a prosperous London brewer, had properties in both Kingston and Hampton and was therefore a frequent user of the bridge. On his death in 1557, he left the revenues from some of his land investments to the Kingston authorities on condition that they be used to maintain the bridge free of tolls in perpetuity ("free for evermore").

The bridge's state of repair became increasingly problematic by the early 19th century. It had become dilapidated and its restricted dimensions made passage difficult both for river and road traffic. Pressure mounted for it to be rebuilt but no agreement could be reached as to who should be responsible - or who would pay for it. The courts became involved in 1813 but they were overtaken by events in January 1814 when the river froze over completely and part of the bridge collapsed. The court ordered Kingston to repair the bridge from its own resources but a complete replacement had by that time become a clear necessity.



*Top: Construction of Kingston Bridge nearing completion in 1827.*

*Above: Lapidge's own watercolour of the completed bridge which he displayed at the Royal Academy before presenting it to Kingston Council.*

*Below: The bridge around 1900.*



In 1825 Kingston Corporation notified the Navigation Committee of the City of London that it intended to build a new bridge. An Act of Parliament was passed in the same year to authorise construction and the Trustees applied to the Exchequer Bill Loan Commissioners<sup>12</sup> for £45,000 funding (almost £200m at today's values).

The Corporation originally planned to erect a cast-iron bridge but concerns over the rising cost of iron led to the abandonment of the scheme. It was decided instead to build a stone bridge in the classical style to a design by Edward Lapidge, the Surrey County Surveyor. The plans had to be inspected by Thomas Telford, one of the Loan Commissioners, before funding could be released. Telford's own estimate for the total work including land acquisition and approach roads was £47,457. It was then found that the Act limited the amount that could be raised to £40,000. A reduction in the scale of construction work was proposed by Lapidge and approved by Telford and this allowed the project to proceed on a reduced scale. The first stone was laid by the Earl of Liverpool (who was then Prime Minister) at a ceremony on 7 November 1825 and the bridge was opened by the Duchess of Clarence (the future Queen Adelaide) on 17 July 1828. The work exceeded the budget by a mere £100<sup>13</sup>.

With the need to repay their loan, Kingston Corporation had reimposed tolls on the new bridge. Some of the local population sought to circumvent this charge by continuing to use the old wooden bridge but the Trustees reacted quickly by removing some of the timber deck to render the bridge impassable. The remaining structure was then sold for the scrap value of its materials which the purchasers were required to remove as quickly as possible.

There can be no doubt that the needs of those wishing to cross the river were served well by the handsome new bridge which, at 25 feet, was over twice the width of its wooden predecessor. However having to pay a toll to cross it continued to grate with its users and was to have a lasting effect on the design of the transport infrastructure of the area.

<sup>12</sup> The Exchequer Bill Loan Commission was created in 1817 to provide Government funding for public works in order to create employment for soldiers returning from the Napoleonic Wars.

<sup>13</sup> When the bridge-widening work was underway in the late 1990's it was discovered that the original bridge foundations did not conform to Lapidge's specified design with the use of inferior materials suggesting that the building

## *The Pavilion(s)*



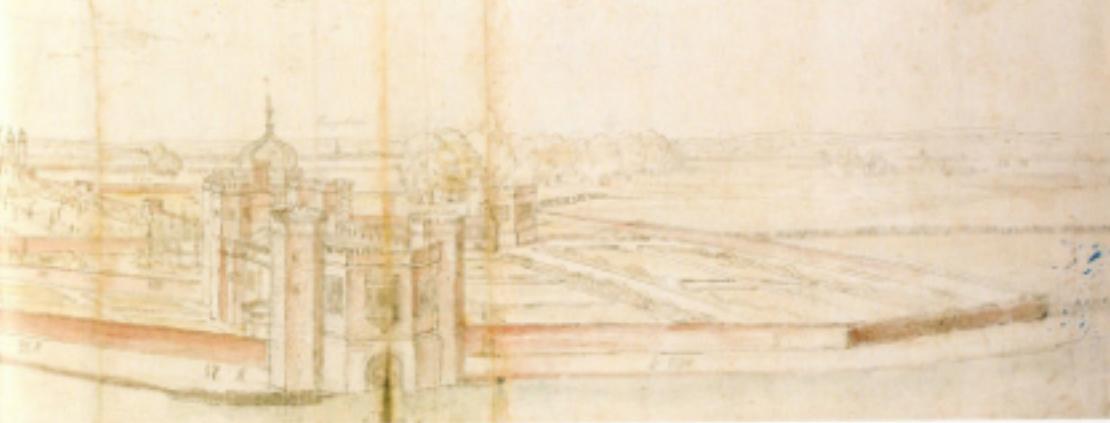
The (original) Pavilion closest to the Bargeway arguably owes its origins to the changing fashions in royal palace design in late C17. After Cardinal Thomas Wolsey had gifted him Hampton Court Palace in 1528, Henry VIII immediately set about greatly expanding the original palace into a place where he could entertain his court of over 1,000 people.<sup>52</sup> In so doing he created what was to prove the epitome of Tudor taste and grandeur using a hybrid of perpendicular Gothic-inspired architecture with restrained Renaissance ornament.

However, few significant changes were undertaken after Henry's death in 1547, so that by the time of the accession of William III and his co-monarch Mary II in 1689, Hampton Court Palace would have been considered distinctly old-fashioned especially when compared with the French King Louis XIV's magnificent enlarged palace and gardens now under construction at Versailles. This would normally have been of no consequence since traditionally the British monarchs' main residence was Whitehall Palace which, by 1689, had become the largest palace in Europe, with more than 1,500 rooms. However William was a chronic asthmatic and the smoke from the plethora of chimneys in central London along with the fog from the Thames made Whitehall untenable as the location of his court.

The new British monarchs bought Nottingham House (now Kensington Palace) to be their stop-gap home whilst they implemented their permanent solution based on demolishing the old Tudor palace at Hampton Court a section at a time and replacing it with a huge modern palace in the French Baroque style to be designed by Sir Christopher Wren.

The demolition programme started in 1700 with the Water

<sup>52</sup> Henry VIII owned over 60 palaces and houses but few had the capacity to accommodate the whole court. His first addition at Hampton Court Palace after acquiring it from Cardinal Wolsey was the vast kitchens needed to feed a court of this size.



Henry VIII's Water Gallery was recycled by William III to provide the fixtures and fittings for the four pavilions (below) and the material for The Pavilion Terrace.

Gallery originally built by Henry to impress the many visitors who arrived at his palace by river. Removal of the Gallery would generate large quantities of rubble<sup>53</sup> and it was ordered that all the reusable building and decorative material from the Water Gallery should be carefully removed and stored. The stone and brickwork was then used to create a terrace almost 650 yards long running alongside the Bargeway parallel with the river. At the south-east end of the terrace a bowling green and four pavilions were constructed, the latter using the

<sup>53</sup> Later huge volumes of earth would also have to be removed to accommodate William's insistence on his having a clear line of sight from his first-floor royal apartment windows over the new privy garden to the river beyond. To achieve this, the whole of the five-acre garden site was reduced in height by an



The Bowling Green Pavilions c1744

material recycled from the original Water Gallery. The demolition and subsequent construction of the terrace and bowling green pavilions was completed in just a year.

The four pavilions were originally conceived as withdrawing rooms, where tea and coffee could be served, card games could be played and conversation enjoyed and this usage was initially enjoyed by the Prince of Wales and his friends. But the growing animosity between the King George I and his eldest son put an end to this short-lived tradition and *the Pavilions* began to be used as permanent grace-and-favour residences by various members of the Hanoverian Royal Family. Princess Amelia - the youngest of George III and Queen Charlotte's 15 children - was in residence 1748-61 and installed bay windows in the two easternmost Pavilions whilst Prince William Henry, Duke of Gloucester, a grandson of King George II and a younger brother of King George III (in residence 1764-1805), constructed a lath and plaster building (later rebuilt in brick) to join these two Pavilions and provide additional accommodation. The last Royal occupant of *the Pavilions* (1805-16) was Edward, Duke of Kent, the fourth son of King George III and Queen Charlotte and father of the future Queen Victoria. Soon after he left, it was decided that the two Pavilions west of the bowling green were in such a poor state of repair that they were demolished in 1822.

The remaining two Pavilions were then occupied by Major General John Moore as a reward for saving the Duke of Kent's life during a naval mutiny provoked by the Duke when he was Governor of Gibraltar. Moore died in 1840 and his widow remained in residence till her death in 1852.

By this time, Queen Victoria had decided she had no personal use for Hampton Court and the palace accommodation was converted into grace-and-favour apartments to be awarded to individuals (frequently widows) in return for past services rendered to Queen and Country.

This change resulted in further demolition in 1855 leaving the south east pavilion as the only survivor of the four and it was then completely renovated before being awarded in succession to two military widows.

The house was significantly enlarged in 1896 when permission was given for the new tenant to build a library and

bedrooms over the kitchen. Even more controversially, he was then allowed to enclose three acres of Home Park comprising the area originally occupied by the other Pavilions and bowling green for his own use.

The perpetrator of these unpopular changes was Ernest Law a 42-year-old bachelor who had spent his boyhood at the Palace, where his mother and her sister had been granted an apartment in 1833. He was called to the Bar in 1878, but did not practise for long because of ill health. Following his move to *The Pavilion* in March 1895, Law lived the life of a Victorian polymath.<sup>54</sup> As an expert on Tudor history, he had already completed his three-volume 1,323-page History of Hampton Court Palace (1885-1891) but now published a Short History (1897) in a 416 page version of the full work for a

*"more extended class of readers".*

This was immediately followed by A Historical Catalogue of the Pictures in the Royal Collection at Hampton Court (1898).

Law was an incurable self-promoter.<sup>55</sup> As related by Gerald Heath in his definitive 1985 paper *The Bowling-Green Pavilions at Hampton Court*

*In April 1894 [Edward Law] wrote a long letter to the Lord Chamberlain proposing that he should be appointed Curator or Surveyor of the Palace and Pictures ... As the Lord Chamberlain ... was slow to react, he then wrote to Queen Victoria's Private Secretary proposing that he should be appointed Curator of the Palace. Again there, was no immediate reaction and nearly seven weeks passed before the Queen's Private Secretary wrote to the Lord Chamberlain, "the Queen does not think there is any necessity for appointing Mr Law Curator of Hampton Court Palace. The Queen is not keen on Mr Law."*<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> He was also a Shakespeare scholar and a practician in the design and recreation of historic gardens. He authored at least 16 titles.

<sup>55</sup> A senior officer of the Office of Works was once quoted as saying that Ernest Law was "coming to believe that he had built Hampton Court himself."

<sup>56</sup> In March 1901, just two months after Queen Victoria died, Edward Law was appointed Surveyor of Pictures at Hampton Court.

After Law's death in 1930, George V granted *The Pavilion* to Sir Francis Morgan Bryant<sup>57</sup> who had given long service to the King and previously to his father Edward VII. Retiring from the position of Secretary to the King's Private Secretary's Office, a post which he had held from 1910, Bryant remained in *The Pavilion* until his death in September 1938. He was followed by Capt. Charles J H O'Hara Moore who had just retired as manager of the Royal Thoroughbred Stud. Moore remained until 1962 when ownership of *The Pavilion* was transferred to The Crown Estate Commissioners. The last grace-and-favour tenants included Cecil Harmsworth King, chairman of the International Publishing Corporation and a director at the Bank of England (in residence 1965-75) and WW2 atomic scientist Erwin Ludwig Klinge (1975-86).<sup>58</sup>

The present owners bought the property in 1997 and, having

<sup>57</sup> Bryant, who was father of historian Arthur Bryant, did not move in until more than a year later, on 8 April 1931. Meanwhile he had had *The Pavilion* connected up to the electricity supply, as he did not wish to live in a house lit by paraffin lamps.

<sup>58</sup> Klinge was a young German scientist recruited to assist in the production of an atomic bomb for Hitler's Germany. Sent to a factory in Frankfurt to learn how to produce uranium, his boss was concealing most of the output to prevent the scientists from getting sufficient material to start bomb-making. An Allied air raid on central Frankfurt in March 1944 destroyed the factory and ended the threat. At the end of the war Klinge avoided falling into the hands of the Russians who were desperate to seize scientists who had worked in uranium production. He came to England and became a pastor before a visit to India inspired him to do charity work. When he left *The Pavilion* in 1986 he moved to Scotland.

*2010 proposal involved adding a replica of an original pavilion.*



negotiated a new 150 year lease, made huge improvements, installing a modern kitchen and bathrooms whilst faithfully renovating the historic interior. They put the refurbished *Pavilion* on the market in 2007 when according to a description in *Country Life* the accommodation comprised four reception rooms, a study, a kitchen/breakfast room, four bedrooms, three bathrooms and a staff flat. It appears that the property did not sell so, in 2010 the owners obtained planning permission to demolish the staff accommodation and replace it with a replica of one of the original (small) Pavilions.

Once again it did not sell so the owners returned to the planning authority and successfully argued that the new Pavilion should be modelled on the existing design rather than the much smaller original. They got permission for this in 2014 with further additions being agreed in 2017. It went back on the market but was then withdrawn as the owners decided to redevelop it themselves. At the time of writing the entire project is now nearing completion (*below*).



The replica Pavilion nearing completion

## The River: Freezes and Floods

For centuries man has attempted to control the river, from the construction of the earliest locks and weirs to the mighty Thames Barrier project. But one element has remained outside his ultimate control: climate. Whilst the river normally has sufficient capacity to drain the land, excessive rainfall inevitably causes flooding. Similarly excessive cold, especially when combined with heavy snowfall, not only causes the river to freeze but the resultant build-up of solid ice and snow inevitably gives rise to floods when the melt eventually arrives.

The medieval London Bridge (*the central section of which is pictured below in 1632*) had 19 narrow arches and each was equipped with starlings.<sup>59</sup> This combination impeded the flow of the river to such an extent that river freezes were not uncommon in

<sup>59</sup> Starlings were protective structures placed around the leg of each arch and shaped to ease the flow of the water around the bridge and so reducing the damage caused by erosion or collisions with flood-borne debris.



The central section of London Bridge in 1632



Above: A severe winter in 1894/95 caused the river to freeze at Kingston Bridge. Large numbers of local residents also took advantage of the excellent skating conditions on the Long Water in Home Park which had been opened to the public just the year before.

Below: This 1947 aerial photo shows that all the Barge Walk allotment ground and much of the Great Meadow are under water. Also clearly visible (and arrowed) are the still-intact WWII RAF Camp in Bushy Park and the horse paddock that was used for additional allotments to support the Dig for Victory campaign.



central London. From 1400 until the removal of the bridge in 1831, there were 24 winters in which the tidal Thames was recorded to have frozen over. The removal eliminated this quasi-barrage effect whilst the construction of the Albert, Victoria and Chelsea Embankments (1866 - 1874) meant the river now flowed faster through its significantly narrowed channel and it became still more difficult for ice to form. The last time the tidal Thames froze over completely was in 1814.

By contrast, there have been two occasions in the last century where the river bordering the Bargeway has frozen and subsequently caused serious flooding. In January 1947, the country - particularly the southeast - had been hit by blizzards, which were severe enough to freeze the upper reaches of the River Thames. Winter storms continued into February with several inches of snow and rain falling onto frozen ground. This was followed by a period of relatively warm weather which caused the snow to quickly melt on top of the still-frozen ground, which meant it had nowhere to drain and gave rise wide-spread flooding.

History repeated itself during the winter of 1962 - 1963, one of the coldest on record,<sup>60</sup> when heavy snow started falling on Boxing Day and was followed by blizzards through January and February. 6 March was the first morning of the year without frost in

<sup>60</sup> Only the winters of 1683–84 and 1739–40 were colder.

Below: The frozen river by the Minima Dinghy Park





Above: Frozen solid at Kingston Bridge Boatyard in the winter of 1963/64.

Britain. Temperatures rose rapidly and the sudden thaw caused the river to overflow. Similar flooding has occurred since, notably in September 1968 when the River Mole and its tributaries dumped huge quantities of water into the Thames at Hampton Court and in 2014 when the Jubilee River caused serious flooding in Shepperton and the stretches below.

Below: Feeding the ducks outside The Wilderness in September 1968



## APPENDIX

### *List of Occupiers and Dates*

	The Pavilions	Parkfield (1890) /Swiss Cottage (1861) /Italian Villa (1836)	The Wilderness	Wilderness Cottage
1700	BUILT			
1710	non-residential			
1720				
1730	Christopher Tilson	Major-General James Moore	Henry Marriott	
1740				
1750		Mrs Moore	Tench Esq	William Twist
1760	Princess Amelia	Mrs Eliza Shadforth	Mrs Marriott	
1770		Alexander John Baylis		William Marriott
1780	Duke of Gloucester	Walter John Coulson		Mrs Marriott Jr
1790		Mrs Fanny Wyatt	Frank Walters Bond	George Cox Bailey
1800			Henry Cock	
			Ernest Law	Frank Walters Bond
				George Neale
1900				

	The Pavilion(s)	The Coach House	Parkfield	The Lodge	Wilderness Flat	The Wilderness	Thames Cottage
1900			Leopold Loewenthal			George Cox Bailey Hester Bailey	George Neale
1910	Ernest Law					Harry Kerby	2 Barge Walk Cottages 1 Barge Walk Cottages
1920						James Henry Purbrick	
1930	Sir Francis Morgan Bryant			John Wills Martin Fry		Matthew Clark Robert Fleming Lionel George Humphreys Karl Osten Schauman	John Newman Charles Banford
1940	Capt. Charles J H O'Hara Moore	Florence Pethick			Albert James Litten	Frank Goodall	
1950		Frank & Doris Hurley				Harry Vincent Marnot Benjamin A Kendrew	Edwin Cliffin
1960		Anthony J Peyton				Malcolm T Walker	Herbert Hunt
1970	Cecil Harmsworth King	Michael Udate		Converted into 5 flats	Philip & Janet Gliss	Francis Beer	Kenneth Rixon
1980	Erwin Ludwig Klinge	David Leon			Arthur Rabbets	Thomas Sanders	
1990		Joan Leon	Michael Apted		Violet Green	Andrew Collins	Andrea Rixon
2000		Max de Kment	Joan Apted	Present Occupiers	Jean Kelly	Ian Tate	
2010	Present Occupiers		Present Occupiers		Matt Spink & Becky Harryman	Present Occupiers	Present Occupiers