

Fascinating history of school site continued

By [Mike Dewey](#)



THIS article continues to trace the history of the site in Hollybush Hill, Stoke Poges, which is currently occupied by the Khalsa Secondary Academy.

In March 1908 Mr Alfred S Albert sold what was then called Carton Tower to Mr Walter Judd, who immediately set about improving the accommodation offered there.

Extensive alterations were carried out under the direction of the architect Mr Orlando Law and the house was renamed Holly Hill. These included the addition of three new bedrooms. The Judd family moved-in in July 1908 and in October gave a dinner for the workmen at “the Sefton Arms, the local hostelry”.

Further modifications were carried out in 1912 and in November of that year “Mr Judd of Holly Hill, Stoke Poges, entertained for supper about fifty employees of Mr W Hartley, builder, Wexham. They had been working for the past six months in constructing a new addition and making other alterations under the direction of the architect Mr Wimperis.” After the supper, which was again held at the Sefton Arms, “An excellent concert was then given, with Mr Cripps presiding at the piano”.

Walter Judd was a publisher in the city of London. Early in his career he lived in the USA, where he established the first American edition of the “Illustrated London News” in 1888. He then returned to England and founded the publishing firm of Heywood &

Co Ltd, becoming Chairman and Managing Director. This company owned a large number of important trade journals, such as “The “Watchmaker and Jeweller”, “The Confectioners Union”, “The Dyer” and “Grocery”. He also had interests in Berlin, New York and in South Africa.

In 1891 he established Walter Judd Limited, which had the distinction of being the first contractor to H M Government for the Board of Trade Journal and other publications. Walter also founded and published the “Royal Academy Illustrated”. The company continued to operate until 2011.

He was an authority on the law of libel and published the book “Newspapers and The Law of Libel”.

His altruistic nature meant that “advertising charities found in him a generous supporter, and he took an active part in the clubs and social organisations connected with the profession”.

Walter married Flora A Sharp in Bradford in 1888 and the couple went on to have two sons and three daughters. In 1911, when they were living at Holly Hill, the household included a Nurse, Cook and four domestic servants.

At Holly Hill Walter made a major contribution to the local community in the village of Stoke Poges for over 20 years. He was a churchwarden and a keen supporter of the village hall.. He endowed a fund for apprenticing boys from the village to different trades.

He is particularly remembered for an act of great generosity when in 1921 he and Sir Bernard Oppenheimer “bought the monument to the poet Thomas Gray and some acres of adjacent land, known as Church Fields, in Stoke Poges in order to preserve for all time the surroundings of the famous ‘Country Churchyard’ “. In 1925 this was given to the National Trust.

Sir Bernard, who was a member of the South Africa-British family of diamond merchants, died only a few months later on June 13 1921 at his country home Sefton Park in Stoke Poges. Another philanthropist, his best known charity work was with the disabled. In 1917 he established works for training and then employing disabled soldiers in diamond-cutting, initially in Brighton. Branches were then opened in Cambridge,

Wrexham and Fort William, and by the time of his death about 2,000 men were employed.

Walter died at Holly Hill on March 23, 1931, at the age of 69, and was buried at Stoke Poges on March 26. He left an estate of the gross value of £113,509 (today's value £8M).

The Judd family continued to live at Holly Hill after Walter's death. In 1939, just before the outbreak of WW2, the house was occupied by Walter's widow Flora, their daughter, also called Flora, and Florence Judd aged 80, who was an unmarried sister of Walter.

There were also two members of their extended family George Martin and his wife Barbara. He was a retired Army Major who had been disabled as a result of wounds received in WWI and Barbara acted as his carer. There were also at least 5 servants, some of whom lived in other buildings on the site.

Daughter Flora, aged 50 and unmarried, was the 'Secretary of Stoke Poges Evacuees [Committee] and Evacuees Children'.

It is known that part of the house was requisitioned during WW2 and used by the military authorities.

This was probably as some sort of convalescence home for wounded Officers, as it is known that "Dental people" and "three NAAFI girls" were in occupation at the end of the war in 1945: NAAFI being the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes, a company created by the British government to run recreational establishments needed by the British Armed Forces.

Holly Hill was now to go through another change of ownership, and a total change of use to research laboratories.....

[*Part 3 – Colonel Devereux buys the site*](#)