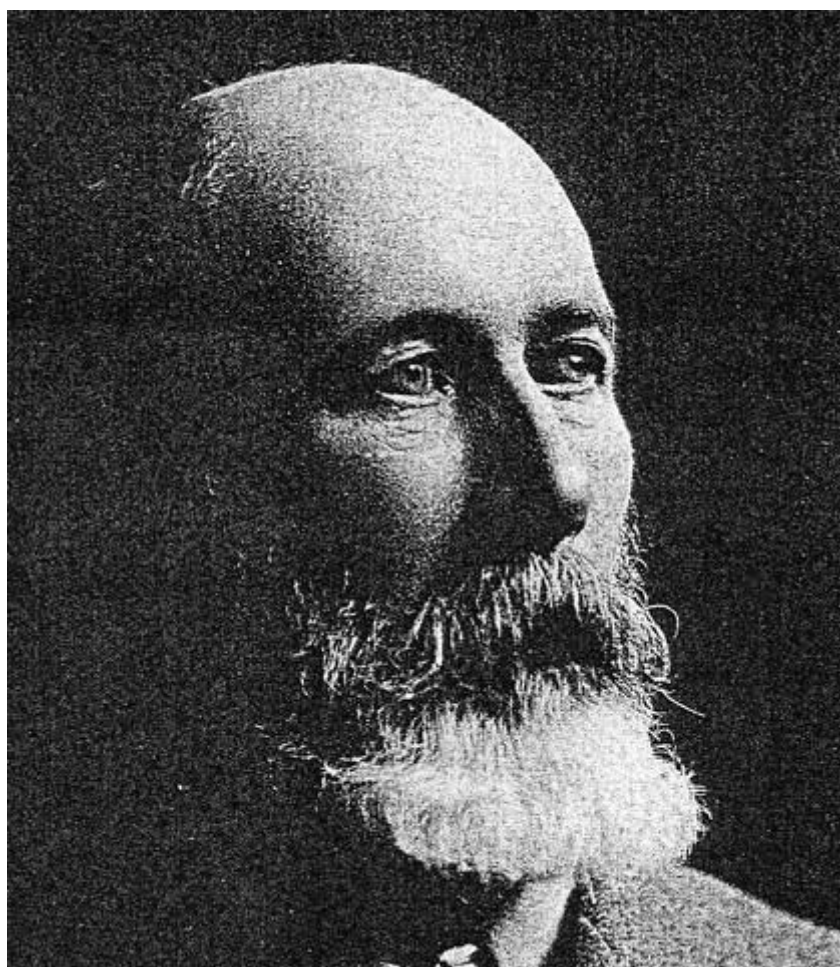


DEVELOPMENT OF CROFT AVENUE

The land where Croft Avenue stands today was part of the Pixham estate owned by the Deverill family. The land was latterly owned by Mr John Croft Deverill, who lived in (amongst other large Pixham houses over the years) *Pixham Firs*. Many large specimen trees seen on the skyline towards Pixham would have been planted by him. He was a man of public spirit and was a JP, Chairman of the Board of Guardians of Dorking Union (Hospital) as well as being Treasurer of the Albany Training Home for Workhouse Girls.



John Croft Deverell

Born in Purbrook, Hampshire on July 14, 1840.

Died in Dorking, Surrey on October 8, 1921

Son of John Deverill and Mary Anne Deverill

Hence, Croft Avenue was named after Mr John Croft Deverill.

With the development of the railway to Dorking, firstly the east-west line (Tonbridge to Reading) in 1849 and then the north-south line (London to Horsham) in 1867, residential housing around the areas of the stations commenced. Dorking main line station building was designed by W J Shearburn who practiced in Dorking and latterly lived in Rose Hill. He also designed the Odd Fellows Hall in the High Street; Myrtle Road in Dorking and various council housing projects in Dorking. Croft Avenue residents may also find on their deeds that W J Shearburn also owned the original building plot.

The London Road at this time was a country lane. Ashcombe Road was built in 1920 and Deepdene Avenue from the petrol station southwards to the roundabout and onwards a few years later.

Only in the 1960's was the present London Road extended to its present day width. In the period leading up to this, part of the front gardens of the houses at the east side of London Road (facing the bottom of Croft Avenue) was taken and on the west side Cubitt and West Estate Agents office building was demolished and *the fields at the bottom of Croft Avenue!*

On the site of the now Ashcombe School was Simpson Nursery. Mr Simpson's lease ended in 1952 and compulsory purchase of the land was made to build the Mowbury County Secondary Modern which opened in September 1959. It later joined with the Dorking County School (built 1931) to become the Ashcombe School in 1975.

From the 1913 Dorking Street Directory "*Crofts Avenue*" is listed with the postal address given as London Road. Three properties are listed:

The Croft, Ivinghoe and Parkhurst (now Orchard Lea).

In the 1920's Paulistana (now Greystones) and Greenacres were added.

By the 1930's Lindens and Kenwood had been built.

Two later extensions were added in the following years:

1966 Greenacres sold land to build numbers 17, 19, 21 and 23.

1975 Lindens sold land to build numbers 26, 28 and 29.

In 1976 Mrs Giles moved from Ivinghoe into a bungalow built in her grounds – now number 11.