

Part 2 - Stock's Historic Buildings, continued.

Continuing along the road one comes to Stock Lodge, in itself not a very old building, but the site of an old Inn called the "Rose". The "Rose" is referred to in Parish Registers of 1676, which mention that a man died in the highway near the "Rose". Apparently, it stood behind a green, like the "Ship" Inn towards Chelmsford, but apart from that nothing is known of its history.

On the other side of the road is the Congregational Church, built with bricks made in Stock. This was erected in 1889, to replace the old meeting house in Mill Road, which was erected in 1812 and demolished in 1910, since it was in a bad state of repair and was no longer required for purposes of religious worship. The present Congregational Church seats 200 persons.

A little further north the High Street is joined by Swan Lane to the west and Mill Road to the east. Swan Lane takes its name from the "Swan" Inn, which has long disappeared. It is mentioned in old documents as early as 1519.

Standing near the junction of Swan Lane and the High Street is the "Cock" Inn, a large building of Tudor date, with exposed beams. It has been altered and extended since it was first erected, but it still remains one of the most architecturally interesting buildings in the village. The earliest mention of the "Cock" in old records is in 1527, when the Innholder, John Ponder, bequeathed his feather bed to his daughter. During the Commonwealth period George Weale, licensee of the "Cock", issued a Tradesmen's Token. These were stamped pieces of lead or brass issued by tradesmen because of the shortage of small coinage. They were merely tokens or pledges for money, and could only be exchanged at the premises of the issuers, which meant that they were often more of a hindrance than a help. The Weale token bore a Cock on one side, and the other side had the inscription "At the Cock in Stock - G.A.W." stamped upon it. The old parish boundary between Stock and Buttsbury ran through the "Cock". Perambulations of the parish bounds began; "Began at the Cock in the middle of the Tap Room window and proceeded towards the Workhouse" and ended "to the corner of the "Cock" brewhouse through, and the Cock Tap Room to the window where we began." This boundary was liable to lead to some confusion. Once when a stranger died in the "Cock" it was found that the boundary line ran across his body, and there was a heated argument as to which Parish was responsible for his burial. Eventually it was decided that the Parish in which his head lay was responsible.

Continuing along the High Street we come to Stock Post Office, another building built of local brick. On the Village Green opposite is the War Memorial, erected in 1920 at a cost of £400, the money being raised by public subscription.

Continuing along the Post Office side of the road the next building of interest we come to is Copt Hall. The deeds of this property date back to 1637, but the present building is of 18th century date. On the opposite side of the road is the "Hoop" Inn, the deeds of which date back to 1733.

The last building of interest in the High Street is "Greenwoods", with its fine gardens, now the country centre of the West Ham Central Mission, but until fairly recently a farm. Deeds date back to 1633, but it is doubtful if the present building is as old as that.

Turning right into the lane leading towards the Common, we come to the "Bakers Arms", probably of late 18th century date. This was originally the "Jolly Millers" beershop, next to which a post mill once stood.

The road now bends sharply, and runs through the tiny remnant of Stock Common. The portion to the right **is** utilised as a cricket pitch, and that to the left is the only part of the Common still in existence - a tiny triangle of land. When we compare this area with that shown on Chapman & Andres' Map of 1777 (see Page 6) we can see that the Common once occupied a far larger area than the village.

This road runs into Mill Road, and turning left, and after two hundred yards turning left again, we come to Stock Mill. As I have mentioned earlier Stock once had three mills, and the tower mill is the only one to survive. Its condition is reasonable, but only continual vigilance can prevent its eventual decay.