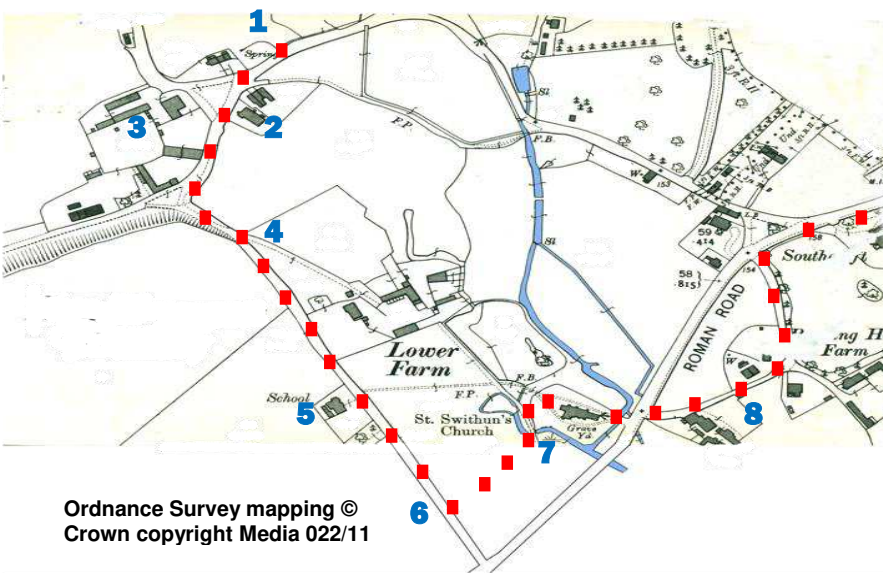
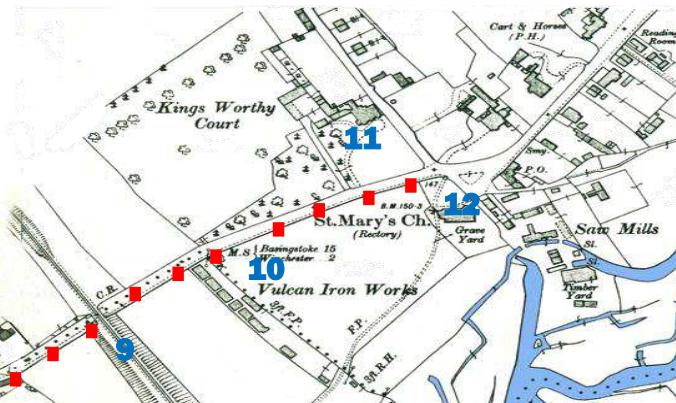


Worthy Walk 2 : A stroll through time in Headbourne Worthy & old Kings Worthy



1. Our walk begins on the pavement outside the Goodlife Farm Shop – an area formerly much lower and more prone to flooding than now, it was nothing more than a seasonal farm track, often impassable. But, with the development of Springvale the roads and drainage were much improved. Watercress, whilst gathered by local people for centuries, was not systematically farmed here before the 1950's.



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2. The Old Rectory: this timber-framed building with brick infill is a good example of a C14th Hall House. It was home to the parish priest till the latter part of the C19th when it became too damp and dilapidated. Then it was converted into 3 dwellings for the deserving poor and became known as the almshouses, coming into private ownership in the 1960's.
3. Over the road, behind the signpost, is Headbourne Worthy Manor House formerly Manor Farm, one of the 4 village farms that employed the bulk of the population into the 1900's. It dates from the early C18th – one of its claims to fame being the riding stables which trained the 1946 Grand National winner.
4. Turn left into School Lane - you soon pass the entrance to Lower Farm, home of the Chisnell family, associated with the King Alfred Bus Service and the watercress beds. On the right is a private drive with a sign, 'Headlands'—where Sir Laurence Olivier lived when he was stationed at Worthy Down during WW2.
5. Further along on the right is the unmistakable architecture of a school. HW had its own school 1873-1952 when the pupils moved to the new Kings Worthy School.
6. Further still on the right is Headbourne Worthy Grange, built in the 1870's to replace the damp old rectory. It gradually became apparent that the upkeep of the new building would be too great & later the viability of HW as a separate parish was questioned. Cross the road & walk down through the churchyard.
7. This part of the churchyard dates from the early 1900's - prior to that all burials were in the area beside the church: often waterlogged and unsuitable! You will notice a path that comes from the Worthy Road towards where you are standing (7)— this is part of an ancient route that passed through KW & on to Basingstoke & London. Walk through the churchyard and cross the road (please be very careful). to Pudding Lane (8), noting names of houses that indicate former uses of buildings and ownership of land, and emerge on to London Road.
9. As you walk along you pass under the road bridge that replaced the railway bridge known as South Arch on the Didcot, Newbury and Southampton Line. Just to the right of the bridge was the Kings Worthy Railway Station & to the left (currently Worthy Sand and Ballast) was the goods yard. The station opened in 1909 and closed in 1960 and the track later formed the route of the A34. On the right now, is the Foundry Business Park which occupies the site of the Vulcan Iron Foundry (1882-1982), which became well known for the production of hydraulic rams – a means of pumping water uphill using only the power of the water, hence their popularity with landowners on the dry chalk downlands and in parts of the British Empire.
10. We enter Kings Worthy just past the Hall that commemorates the Jubilee of King George 5 and Queen Mary in 1935. Note the Ram on the corner of Church Green which was installed as a community effort to commemorate the historic link with the Foundry – there is information about this on the parish website and there's often a leaflet in the church porch. At the bottom of Church Green runs the Nuns Walk; part of the ancient pilgrims' route from Winchester to Canterbury.
11. On the other side of the road is Kings Worthy Court, first mentioned in 1788, it has had various uses since then – gentlemen's residence, Hampshire Fire Service in WW2, Condors in 1970's and now the Home Office for DNA testing etc.
12. Both St. Swithun's & St. Mary's churches are beyond the scope of this little walk each has a guide & St. Mary's a history by the late David Johnston (usually on sale inside). Standing by the lych gate & looking towards the end of the church & war memorial, you'll see a gravel drive next to the white house – this was the approach to the sawmills. Water powered & producing more than sawn planks (eg wooden shovels, children's toys, cricket bats, wickets, brush backs and handles) it ceased production early in the C20th & was demolished in 1938 when the Winchester by pass was built. The white house was the home of the mill owner. Next door is the thatched Tavern Cottage but, sadly, there is no evidence that pints were ever served here. Next on the left is the Old Post Office – a building with mid C16th origins, once a farm. It could be one of the oldest PO's in the country, opening for business in 1845 (penny post started 1840) and continued in use till 1966.

With thanks to Derek Brockway and Peter Finn of Worthy's Local History Group for this text