

Woodside, Sandyford

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I live on Slate Cabin Lane, just outside Sandyford. At the corner with the Enniskerry Road stands the beautiful old Woodside House. I wanted to find out a little bit more about it. This article is about its location, about the people who lived in the house and how the city slowly crept up on the estate.

The Road

If you travelled from Dundrum in the direction of Enniskerry 200 years ago the road would have taken you down Sandyford Road, through the village, along Kilgobbin Road (through the village of Kilgobbin which no longer exists) to Stepside and then further south along the Enniskerry Road. The road would thus make a loop to the east.



This loop took the road around the townland of Woodside which was also the name of an estate centred on Woodside House. The owners of the estate must not have wanted the road to go through their property. In those days the house was a farmhouse, not the beautiful building we can see now. To get to it, you would have had to follow a road (probably more a path) from Kilgobbin Road, which ran parallel but more to the south of the current Hillcrest Road and continued to the west partly along the current Slate Cabin Lane. There was no Blackglen Road coming downhill from Lamb Doyle's.



Estate and Townland

At some stage the estate probably would have covered most if not all of the townland (as per the red lines on the map above, with the main road in blue and the house in green). The borders of the estate would roughly have been:

To the west: Woodside Road.

To the north: the Glaslower stream. This stream runs down alongside Slate Cabin Lane, curves behind the old Lamb Doyle house opposite the shops at Lamb's Cross, and flows through Sandyford. It is joined by the culverted Kilmacud stream and flows down to Blackrock where it is now known as Carysfort-Maretime Stream. It is now mostly culverted. The estate stretched all the way into Sandyford Village.

To the east: The old Sandyford Road/Kilgobbin Road.

To the south: the Ballyogan or Kilgobbin Stream. This stream comes down Three Rock Mountain and flows through Belarmino and Ballyogan, where it merges with the Racecourse River and becomes the Carrickmines River. After several other mergers it reaches the sea at Killiney

Growth and Traffic

In the 19th century Dublin city was growing. With increasing wealth came an increased interest in health (probably because the city had become a very unhealthy place to live in). The areas around Carrickmines and Dundrum were considered healthy because of their higher altitude. This led to the construction of many country houses for the wealthy in the area and also to health tourism. Enniskerry became an increasingly popular tourist destination.

Improvements had to be made to accommodate the increasing traffic, especially carriage traffic. For the latter it was important that the gradient was not too steep and many roads had to be adjusted or newly built for that reason. Up until then traffic had been mostly on foot or on horseback.

Big Changes

The owners of the estate must have had a change of heart as the Sandyford bypass was constructed over the estate, from the north of Sandyford Village, going alongside Woodside House, to Glencullen. This probably happened in the late 1830s. The dotted road on the map from 1837 shows it to be planned or under construction. A school was built in 1841, where St. Mary's National School is now (the original building was replaced - the current one dates from 1936). Also built in the 19th century were Blackglen Road (outside the estate) and Hillcrest Road (inside the estate). The original Woodside Estate would thus have been cut in three parts by the new roads.

The Hastings Family

Woodside House is said to date back to the 17th century. Despite the new developments, the estate remained intact. In Griffith's Valuation - carried out between 1848 and 1864 - the owner of Woodside House and estate was a John Hastings. All three of John's children were born in Co. Louth, so presumably the family hailed from there. If this is correct, they moved to Woodside after 1836 but before 1858. So it is possible, but by no means certain, that it was John Hastings who made the construction of the new road possible.

John's eldest child, Isabella married Charles Daniel Stuart (who was twice her age) on 4 February 1852 in London; Isabella was apparently living in London at that time. They had four children, but Isabella died between 1871 and 1881.

John's elder son William Cranitch Hastings was born on 7 September 1831 and baptised on 28 September in Kilsaran & Gernonstown, Co. Louth. On 14 April 1858 William Cranitch married Emily Dempsey. At that stage the family was living in Woodside House. Their daughter, Mary Harriet, was born around 1865. Emily died in 1871.

When his father John died at Woodside in 1872, William inherited the house and estate, but his mother had the use of the house until her death in 1884, after which William took over full control of both house and estate. In 1873 he married Charlotte Wellington - it was William who built the beautiful house so we could imagine him developing it for his new bride. However, the marriage was not a happy one and they later separated. His daughter Mary Harriet died in September 1896 and his brother John Devereaux (born in 1836) died in 1898. So only his sister-in-law remained as a close relative.

In 1901 he was living in Woodside House with just a gardener and a servant. The servant is Annie Stritch, aged 30, of whom more later.

Sometime between 1903 and 1908 he sold Woodside House to John Charlton Spinks.

End of the Hastings Line

In 1911 William was living in Bray with William John Miller, his adopted son. They had a 16 year old servant girl living with them. William Hastings died on 2 October 1914 in Willmount House, Athenry, Co. Galway. Under the terms of his will his adopted son William received an inheritance worth almost £800 pounds, in trust until he reached the age of 23. William left £10 to his wife who was not living with him and was 'otherwise provided for' and £5 to the widow of his brother John. Surprisingly, he left £25 to Annie Stritch - 'because she had been a faithful servant'. It is not certain however if she benefited from the will - around the same time that William drew up his will in 1912 an Annie Stritch of the right age died in Rathdown. But there was more: he wanted to be buried in Mount Jerome and wished that William John Miller and Annie Stritch would be buried there as well. I have found no record that any of them are actually buried there. It appears he had no one else left.

The Spinks Family

The next occupier of the house was John Charlton Spinks, a retired Chief Inspector of the English Police. He was born on 10 June 1845 in Cavan. In 1871 he was a constable living with his mother and brother-in-law in Warrington. He married Emma Birch on 7 April 1875 in Manchester and in 1881 he was a Police Inspector in Latchford. In 1901 he was back in Ireland living as a farmer in Downing, Tankard's Town, Carlow. *Thom's Directory* in 1908 lists Spinks as living in Woodside House. In 1911 he was living in the house with his wife Emma and grandson Nugent. Nugent was the son of William Henry Spinks, who was born on 5 January 1876 in England. William Henry married Anna Sophia Murphy in 1903 in Carlow. On 15 May 1904 he arrived in Canada from Liverpool. Anna must have been heavily pregnant as she gave birth to Nugent Watson on 20 June. Sadly she died on 26 June from an infection following childbirth. Probably the grandparents helped with the upbringing of the baby back in Ireland. The family was re-united on 11 August 1911 when all three arrived in Quebec, on the vessel *Victorian*, headed for Calgary. Emma died in 1929 and John Charlton died on 5 February 1936; they are buried in Ross Bay Cemetery in the City of Victoria.

Also of note is John's other son, Charlton Watson Spinks, born around 1878 in Latchford. He pursued a military career: he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Royal Artillery on 17 March 1900, promoted to lieutenant on 3 April 1901 and in March 1902 was seconded for service under the Colonial Office, where he was attached to the Northern Nigeria Regiment. He took part in operations in the Kano-Sokoto Campaign in 1903 and operations against the Okpotos in Bassa Province in 1904. After World War I he became Sirdar of Egypt serving from 1924 to 1937. He was the last British occupant of the Sirdaria, and was better known as El Ferik Spinks Pasha, General Inspector of the Army. He was relieved of this function on 12 January 1937 following the signing of the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty which dispensed with the services of British officers in the Egyptian army. The ex-Ferik and Lady Spinks together with their three daughters moved into a fourth floor apartment at 'Nile View', No. 18 Saraya al Gezira, Zamalek. Among other honours, he was appointed Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire, Grand Cordon of the Order of the Nile, Companion of the Distinguished Service Order and Grand Officer of the Order of the Crown of Italy

Robert Edward Lazenby

In 1915 the occupant of Woodside House was Robert Edward Lazenby, born on 20 May 1871. He came from a family of well-to-do dairy farmers/traders from Blackrock. His father was William Lazenby (born 1832, died 1912), and his mother was Ellen Byrne (died before 1901). They had married in 1854. His siblings were William (born 1857), James (born 1858, died 1873), Mary Ellen (born 1865), Matthew (born 1869), and Helena (born 1876). In the 1911 census return, both William and Matthew are recorded in the milk business. I have found no record of Robert in Ireland. Perhaps he returned after his father's death in 1912 and decided to follow his brothers' example. This may have been why he established himself on the Woodside estate. He lived there until his death in 1926.

John Montgomery

I know that in 1931 John Montgomery, Esq. lived in the house, but I have not been able to find out anything specific about him – there are simply too many John Montgomerys!

Daniel Joseph Delaney

Superintendent D.J. Delaney lived in the house in 1933 but it seems unlikely that he was farming the estate. He was the first Bandmaster of the Garda Band which is a public relations branch of the Garda Síochána formed shortly after the foundation of the force. It gave its first public performance on Dún Laoghaire Pier on Easter Monday 1923. Daniel also formed a céilí and pipe band within the Garda Band.

He was born on 7 February 1882 in Mountrath, Co. Laois. His father was Joseph and his mother was Mary Bennett. In 1911 he lived with his wife Mary and two year-old daughter Josephine in Aurora, Wicklow; his profession was given as Professor of Music and he was aged 29! I have not been able to find out how this professor ended up as a Superintendent in the new Irish state.

The Lenehans

Members of the Lenehan family were already mentioned in Griffith's Valuation as land owners in Ballybrack. A James Lenehan was born in 1830 and died in 1898. He had three children, James (born 1867), Lawrence (born 1869) and Julia (born 1873) with his wife Catherine who died on 18 May 1894 aged 60. There might have been another child, Anne, born in 1868. James Jr. was a very successful cattle trader. He married Anne (born 1869) and had a large family: another James (born 1899), Catherine (born 1900), Mary (born 1902), John (born 1903), Patrick (born 1905), Angela/Eliza/Elisabeth (born 1907) and Bridget (born 1908). James died on 30 April 1944.

He wanted to leave each of his sons a property and bought Woodside House for John. John died in 1977 and left the house and estate to the current owner Frank.

End of the Estate but not the House

It is in the modern age that the estate was finally swallowed up by the growing city, 150 years after it was first bisected by the new roads. At different times parts were sold off for housing development. The main one was Aiken's Village which was developed just after the turn of the century, on the site of a pitch and putt course that was started by Frank Lenehan. When Aiken's Village was developed, Frank build a new pitch and putt course, this time around the house. The old house still survives though, and is the headquarters of a transport company.



Woodside House in 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Many thanks to Frank Lenehan for showing me around his house and property.