

BRIDGE VILLAGE

The village of Bridge, if you have time and inclination, is worth further study. A small distance to the south of the church is the house built by Sir Arnold Braems of which only the wing remains of the original structure; recently drawings of the original house were discovered in Amsterdam museum and after Chilham Castle it was the largest country house in East Kent in the 17th century and had a large deer park and aviary. At a later date it belonged to the Reverend Edward Taylor of Bifrons who was a friend of George IV and Jane Austen. Much of the house is built with hand-made Dutch brick which was brought over from Holland and landed at Sandwich. A little further up the road from the church towards Dover lies "Englands Old Hole" which is reputed to be the place where the seventh Roman legion captured and slew the Britons in their last attempt to stem off the Roman invasion. In 1829 when excavations were made, a number of Roman arms and skulls were discovered at a depth of five feet. The circular earthwork of the redoubt still remains in very good preservation after a lapse of more than 1900 years. The village main street has not changed a great deal since the middle of the 19th century. There is a fine example of a Tudor cottage in the middle and the White Horse public house is the scene of the famous brawl of Christopher Applegate, a friend of Christopher Marlowe who became famous in the English army in the early 16th century. This incident is mentioned in the Canterbury Court records of 1598. Further up the street at the post office is the place where Field Marshal Lord Kitchener sent his first despatches at the beginning of the First World War. A little further up the road is Dering Road named after Colonel Dering who raised the Duke of York's own Regiment in 1794. He subsequently bought Howletts, a fine palladian villa between Bridge and Littlebourne which was sold in 1816 to George Gipps a founder of the Canterbury Bank. In Union Road is an old workhouse founded in 1835 now maintained by the Kent County Council as an old age home. In 1793 Zechariah Cozens wrote: "the parish of Bridge is but small and the soil in general is but chalky and barren, producing a several places heath and coppice wood, though throughout the whole extent of the parish there is a beautiful variety of hill and dale. From the woods around Bridge we have a most delightful view of the Vales which are adorned with many gentleman's seats" and in 1815 Mr. Haddy James Assistant Surgeon to the 1st Life Guards returning from the Battle of Waterloo wrote that "The neatness of the farms and the mode of agriculture much impressed him between Dover and Canterbury".

The Dover Road	Charles H. Harper	Chapman & Hall 1885
Canterbury under the Angevin Kings		Dr.W.Urry Cathedral Archivist
Kent	Marcus Crouch	
History of Kent 1793	Zechariah Cozens	
Topographical Survey of Kent 1792	Hasted	
England	Arthur Mee 1936	
Surgeon James Journal 1815	Joan Vasittart	