

## **“HIGHFIELD” or “GAINSBOROUGH HOUSE”**

“Highfield” first appeared in Alpha Road in Kelly’s Directory for 1897-1898. It was built on the plot immediately to the west of the level crossing at the end of Albion Road and backing onto the railway. It was not shown in the 1884-5 version so was possibly built about 1890-94. When it first appeared, the occupant was the Rev. Arthur Thomas Bannister M A. His name appeared again in 1898-9, but by 1906-7, we find Frank Honeyball was living there. He was a staunch member of the Parish Church of All Saints.

“Highfield” was not listed in the 1911-12 Kelly’s, but by 1915-16 we find Col. N S Lewin as its occupant. In 1920, Mrs Bradshaw and her daughter were living there and continued together until 1933, when only Miss C M Bradshaw’s name appeared. Presumably her mother had died (between 1930 and 1933). Miss Bradshaw was still there at the outbreak of W.W. 2, but immediately after the war, the house had become “Highfield Guest House” and was being run by Mr and Mrs W. O. Franklin (Ossie Franklin’s parents?) and continued under their care until about 1952.

By 1953 the house had been renamed “Gainsborough House School” and was in the hands of Major and Mrs L. C. Morton M. A., the Principals. At this stage it was also labeled 53 Alpha Road, as the grounds went right up the level crossing. By 1957, the part of the plot nearest to the crossing had been sold to George Sewell, the Margate Borough Planning Officer and he built a new Chalet-bungalow type of property on it, designated 53 Alpha Road, so “Gainsborough House School” then became 51 Alpha Road. The school continued to flourish until about 1958, but by 1959 it was no longer listed and the building was omitted from the list of properties. (See also "Gainsborough House")

In 1961 the house had reverted to its original name and was called “Highfield Rest Home for the Elderly”. Mrs C Dowler was listed as its Matron, and she continued in that capacity at least until about 1969-70. From 1965 till 1969, her husband Mr Arthur Dowler also appeared as resident at “51 Alpha Road”. From 1971 until the directories ceased in 1974 the place was simply listed as “Highfield Rest Home”, but with no additional information.

Now, in 2010, it is still a Residential Home for the elderly, operating under the name of “Highfield”, and its staff have an excellent reputation for their regard and concern for all those in their care.