

TOWER BUNGALOWS in COLEMAN'S STAIRS ROAD

Corby Tower This first appears in Kelly's in 1885-6 and is listed as 'Furnished House'. F. J. Bobby owned the property during much of the 1920s, when it is listed under Spenser Road. It was owned by Edward Campbell-Salmon from 1956 (though not shown in Kelly's until 1959). In 1965 the house was still listed under Coleman's Stairs Road but by 1967, Corby Tower was listed under Epple Bay Avenue. Edward is also listed as being in 'Flat 2' Corby Tower in 1974.

He and his wife had four children – he was in law up in London. (He now has 10 grandchildren and is 83)

When Edward first came here, Coleman's Stairs Road and Epple Bay Avenue were unmade roads. The lady who owned Birce Bungalow at that time

Swiss Chalet was built in about 1883. It is shown in Kelly's in 1885-6 under Spenser Road as 'Swiss Bungalow', with George Cousins (of the Seabreeze Ladies' Bicycle Factory) living there. By 1897-8, William Winder is there, calling it 'Swiss Cottage' and by 1906-7 Mrs Hughes is living there, still listed under Spenser Road. Campbell-Salmon was its occupant in 1969.

It would appear from the stable doors at the southern end of the building that it was once the stable to Corby Tower, built on similar lines to the ancillary building at the other side of the footpath in what is now known as the Tower Bungalows area in Spenser Road.

In 1959 the house was owned by Alfred C. Hoare.

Basketts was owned by Mrs Reece. Her husband had died by 1956. The property was later owned by Benjamin and Ellie Hampshire, who renamed the property 'Beneley' in honour of their two names.

Birce Bungalow first appears in Kelly's in 1911-12, with Mrs Cooper living there. This may be misleading, as quite a number of properties drop in and out of the listings, depending on whether the owner was in residence when the listing returns had to be filled in. During the 1950s and early 60s, Mr W. Layfield lived there. When he left, the house lay empty, getting more and more derelict over the time. Eventually, around 1972, Margate Council gave permission for the new owners to demolish the property and build three blocks of flats. As soon as Mr Campbell-Salmon discovered this, he began to try and stop the plans. His argument was that the road (which at this date was still not made up) was totally unsuitable for such a huge increase in traffic.

During the negotiations about the building of the three blocks of flats, Mr Campbell-Salmon pointed out to the Council that they *did* have a responsibility to maintain Coleman's Stairs Road (they claimed it was a private road and therefore up to the householders to maintain it.) Mr Salmon pointed out that the road is on the 1688 map of the village as 'The Way to the Sea' and has therefore been an ancient highway from time immemorial. He suggested that it would cost the council less to compensate the builders than to make up the existing Coleman's

Stairs Road. At the first part of the hearing, the Councilors decided they ought to visit the site. They were made all too aware of the narrowness of the lane, and the plans for the flats were eventually rejected.

The original **Birce Bungalow** had already been demolished by this date and the site became a dumping ground for some time. The new property, again called Birce Bungalow, was built by David Brent, who became its first new occupant. Since then, it was then owned by the Lovetts, followed by the present occupants, Mr & Mrs Banks. The plans for the old Birce Bungalow were recently rediscovered and a copy is now in the hands of the present owners of the new Birce Bungalow.

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The Wigwam first appears in Kelly's in 1911-12 with Mr John B. Mulholland as its owner and occupant. It continued in his family, eventually going to his daughter. She was still living there in 1963, by which time it was in a very sorry state. G. E. Martin was there in 1969 but had gone soon after this. David Brent repaired the property and sold it, but without the large plot of land on the north side. He then built several properties on this land including flats and houses, much to the chagrin of some of the local residents.

(See the Isle of Thanet Gazette: 12 Sept. 1986 – p. 7)

One of the Leadbeater family has lived in the Wigwam, and it is now occupied by a family from Eastern Europe.

David Brent (Builder)

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