

Origins of the Street Names of the Sid Valley

Street names in the Sid Valley come from a wide variety of sources, but five common themes can be identified:

- Old English names dating from the settlement of the valley in the dark ages. These include the ...ton names, which typically give the family name of the settlers, as in Bulverton and Ascerton, but also features of the landscape, such as Bickwell, Woolbrook and Boughmore.
- Names of the medieval manors, such as Radway (some of these come from the previous set)
- Old names of the fields such as Bartlands, Sidlands, Peaslands, PathWhorlands on which they were built.
- Names of principal buildings alongside the road, mainly dating from the 19th century, such as Fortescue, Vicarage, Livonia, Temple, Primley, Malden, and the churches and chapels.
- Landowners
- Builders and council officials.

While there are well documented origins for many roads and it is possible to draw firm conclusions about others, the origin of the name Sidmouth itself has been the subject of controversy since at least the mid 19th century. It is recorded as Sedemuda at the time of Domesday. The most common attribution is of the river name “Sede” to the old English word meaning wide – but everyone agrees that the River Sid has never been wide. Many other suggestions have been made but all lack conviction. As a contribution to the debate, I suggest that it is the complete word Sedemuda that comes from Old English “Wide Mouth” and refers not to the river but to the sheltered anchorage that is thought to have existed between the Connaught Gardens / Chit Rock headland and the Pennington Point / Mussel Rocks headland.

Abbeyfield Court: Named after the Abbeyfield Society. Previously called the Torbay Hotel, and before that Denby Terrace, two lodging houses built in 1813 by Mr Denby.

Albert Terrace: Named after Albert, Prince Consort to Queen Victoria.

Alexandria Road: Renamed 1882 from Coombe Lane when it was remade to link the station to Woolbrook. Named after the British bombardment of Alexandria on July 11, 1882, to quell an uprising against the Pasha, followed by occupation of Alexandria on Aug 10 and subsequently the whole of Egypt.

All Saints Road: Named after All Saints Church, built in 1837 as All Saints Chapel. Previously called Mill Lane.

Alma Bridge, Lane, Terrace: Named after the battle of Alma, 1854. Alma Bridge was built in 1855.

Amyatts Terrace: Named after Mr John Amyatt who built it in 1815 for his cousin, Sir John Kennaway, Sidmouth’s first MP, to shield Fort House from the view over the churchyard.

Ansteys Court: Named after Ansteys Butchers, who owned the land.

Arcot Gardens, Park, Road: Development built in 1927. Named after Arcot House.

Ascerton Close, Road: Named after Ascerton Manor, derived from Old English *Æsher's tun* (or camp).

Ashley Crescent: Named after Mr. Chris Ashley, surveyor for EDDC in the late 20th century

Baker Close: Named after Stan Baker, town & district councillor.

Balfour Manor, Mews, Balfours: Named after Col. Balfour, last Lord of the Manor of Sidmouth.

Barn Hayes: Hayes is Old English for an enclosure or a farm.

Barrington Mead: named after Barrington Villa in Salcombe Road. Mead is Old English for a meadow.

Barton Close, Court: Barton is Old English for a farmstead.

Beatlands Road: Named after the old house, Beatlands, a corruption of Bartlands, the old name for the fields here.

Bedford Lawn, Square: named after the Bedford Hotel.

Bennetts Hill, formerly Lower Bennetts Hill (52) – old name for the land in this area

Bickwell Lane: Named after the Bickwell Valley, derived from Old English *beke welle* = Beocca's Spring.

Blackmore Drive, Gardens, View: Named after Blackmore House, itself named after the Blackmoor, the old name for the fields here.

Blackthorn Close: Named after the blackthorn tree.

Bowd: Named after the bowed shape of the valley.

Boughmore Lane, Road: Derived from Old English *bog more* = curved (or bowed) moor (or marsh)

Brewery Lane: Named after Vallance's brewery.

Broadway: Named after the old house called Broadway, which was demolished to make way for the manor.

Brook Close, Lane, Lower Brook Meadow, Higher Brook Meadow: Named after the brook which flows down from Burscombe Farm into the Sid at Sidford.

Brookside: Named after the Wool Brook

Brownlands Close, Road: Named after the Brownlands estate, originally home of Sir Norman Lockyer

Buckley Cross, Road: Derived from Old English boug cleve = curved hill or cliff

Bulverton Lane, Road: Named after Bulverton hamlet, derived from Old English Buller's tun (or camp).

Burscombe Lane: Named after Burscombe farm

Byes Close, Lane, Byeside Road: Named after the Byes, local dialect for the edge of the field which cannot be ploughed.

Castle Hill View: Named after Sidbury castle, an iron age fort.

Chambers Close – named after Mr Chambers, surveyor for the Sidmouth Urban District Council in the mid 20th century.

Chapel Road: Named after the United Reformed Church, originally congregational, built to replace Marsh Chapel in 1846. Previously called Western Town Lane and before that Silva Street.

Chapel Street, Sidbury: Named after Sidbury Independent Chapel

Cheese Lane – originally went from Cotmaton Road to Broad Lane and hence to the Bickwell Dairy, so was the road down which the dairy cheeses were brought to town

Church Lane, Path, Street: Named for proximity to Sidmouth parish church.

Church Street, Sidbury: named for proximity Sidbury parish church.

Church Street, Sidford: Named for proximity to Sidford Church, built 1867 as chapel of ease to Sidbury.

Clapps Hill: Named after Roger Clappe (14th century).

Cliff Rd: Named for proximity to the cliff on Salcombe Hill.

Clifton Place: Named for proximity to the cliffs at the west end of Sidmouth.

Coburg Rd, Terrace: Coburg Terrace built 1815 (L) for Sir John Kennaway by Mr John Amyatt. Named after the family of Queen Victoria's mother.

Connaught Close, Gardens, Road: Named after the Duke of Connaught, 3rd son of Queen Victoria, who visited Sidmouth regularly in the early part of the 20th century

Convent Fields, Road: Named after the Convent of the Assumption, built 1883, which is now St John's school

Coombe Hayes: From cumb hayes, Old English for the enclosure in the valley.

Core Hill Road: Named after Core Hill, the main hill at the north end of Sidmouth.

Cotford Close, Road: Derived from Old English cote ford = Cotta's ford

Cotlands: Named after Cotlands house built 1820 by John Carslake.

Cotmaton Road: Named after Cotmaton house, a medieval house dating back to 1520, owned by the Carslake family in the late 18th C. Name dates back to the 13th century and is derived from Old English Cottam's tun.

Cottingham Mead: Named after Cottingham House, built as Liberty Hall in 1820 and demolished in the 20th century.

Coulsdon Road: Named by the builder who laid out the road who was born in Coulsdon

Counters Court: Named after Gerald Counter, Water Engineer with the old Water Board in Sidmouth.

Cunningham's Lane – James Cunningham lived at Witheby, at the end of Cunningham's Lane, in the mid 19th century

Cross Lane: Crosses between Fore St & Old Fore St.

Culver Gardens: Named after Culverpark, part of the parish church glebe lands.

Dark Lane: Named after its character arising from the high Devon banks and overhanging trees.

Darnell Close – Darnell Close is built in the grounds of Stanhope, owned by Lieut. Col. Thomas Charles Darnell, JP, in the late 19th Century subsequently by the Misses Darnell until the mid 20th century

Dean's Mead: Named after Peter Dean, Sidmouth architect. Mead is Old English for meadow.

Dove Lane: Named after the Dove Inn.

Drakes Ave: Named after the landowner, Mr. Drake

East St: Runs east from Fore St into Eastern Town, previously called Theatre Lane from the presence of a theatre in the early 19th century.

Ebdons Court: Named after Ebdon Farm, derived from Old English Ibba's tun (or camp).

Elysian Fields: Built in 1826. Named after Elysium, "a place of ideal happiness", from Greek Mythology: the abode of the blest after death.

Esplanade: Derived from Latin ex-planade = make level. It was described as a rolled earth bank in 1805 but was replaced by a permanent structure in 1873. This was rebuilt in 1926.

Fairlawn Court – named after Fairlawn, old house in Elysian Fields

Farrant Court – named after Mr Farrant a local builder who developed the site

Faulkners Hotel: Now part of the Royal York & Faulkner Hotel, originally owned by the Faulkners.

Fire Beacon Lane: Named after Fire Beacon Hill, the ridge W from Core Hill on which an Armada beacon was sited.

Fleming Ave: Named after Sir Alexander Fleming, pioneer in valves, who retired to Sidmouth.

Fore St: Named because it comes “before” the High Street. Previously called Cheapside in the early 19th century.

Fortescue Road: Named after Fortescue farm, owned in the 19th century by a member of the Fortescue family, one of the premier families of Devon.

Fortfield Gardens, place , Terrace: Named after the fort situated in front of the Belmont Hotel, which was dismantled after the Napoleonic wars in 1815. Fortfield Terrace was built 1790-95 for Thomas Jenkins, Lord of the Manor.

Furzehill: Furze is an alternative common name for gorse

Glebelands: Built on church glebe land.

Glen Close, Road: Named after the small valley called Glen Goyle which runs through here. Little Glen was presented to the town by Balfour in 1905, as a through track from Manor Road to Seaford Road.

Griggs Lane, Lower Griggs: Named after Griggs Farm, owned by the Griggs family.

The Grove: named after Grove Cottage.

Ham Lane: Named after the Ham, the originally marshy area at the east end of the Esplanade.

Harcombe Cross, Fields, Lane, Lane East: Named after the village of Harcombe, derived from Old English hara cumb = hare valley

Harpford Common: Named after the village of Harpford

Hawthorn Drive: Named after the Hawthorn tree.

Heritage Way: Built in the year the Heritage coast was designated.

High St: The main business street.

Hillside Road: named after Salcombe Hill which it ascends. Previously called School Lane from when Salcombe Hill House was a school in the early 20th C.

Howarth Close: Named after E.G.Howarth, first town clerk of Sidmouth Town Council 1974-84

Ice House lane: Named after the manor ice house, in which ice was stored for use in summer.

Ivy Close – from nearby Ivy Cottage, which dates back to the 17th century

Kestell Road: Named after the Sarah Kestell who inherited the Clapp family lands in Salcombe, and then passed them to her husband, George Cornish who became Lord of the Manor of Salcombe Regis.

Knapp Hill: A knapp is a small hill.

The Knowle, Knowle Drive, Gardens, Grange Knowle House: Knowle dates back to the 13th century and is derived from knoll, Old English for a small hill.

Lakes Court: named after Tom Lake, ironmonger in Old Fore St who owned the land. In the 19th century, John Lake & Sons owned London Hotel and later owned Lakes omnibus Office in Fore St.

Land Part: Old name for the suburb of Sidmouth built inland from the sea.

Laskeys Lane: named after Thomas Laskey who farmed Salcombe Hill Farm in the late 19th Century

Laundry Lane: named after the old Laundry in Sidmouth

Le Locle Close: Named after the Sidmouth twin town of Le Locle in Switzerland.

Livonia Road: Named after Livonia Cottage, built in the early 19th century.

Lock Close: Named after Cllr. Frank Lock, who worked for the provision of affordable homes in Sidmouth.

Lockyer Ave: Named after Sir Norman Lockyer, who founded the Norman Lockyer Observatory on Salcombe Hill.

Lower Wheathill: Named after WheatHill, to the west of Station Road.

Lymebourne Ave, Lane, Park: Named after Lymebourne House.

Malden Close, Lane, Road: Named after Malden House

Manor Close, Park: developments within Sidmouth Manor

Manor Road: Named after Manor Hall built for Lord Balfour, the last Lord of the Manor.

Manstone Av, Close, Lane, Mead, Meadow: Named after Manstone Old House which dates back to 1589, derived from Old English Mann's tun (or camp).

The Marino: Original name of the Georgian house on this site, later called Pauntley.

Market Lane, Place: Location of the market.

May Terrace: Named after May Cottage.

Mill Street: Road to the mill beside the ford.

Millford Road, Av: Road to the Mill beside the ford.

Milltown Lane: Ancient track from Salcombe Regis to the old ford at Mill Town, now known as Sid, where the town mill was situated.

Muttersmoor Road: Track up to Muttersmoor, the main hill dividing Sid Vale from the Otter valley on the W. Named after Abraham Mutter, a 19th C turf and wood cutter who became a contraband distributor for the infamous smuggler John Rattenbury.

Newtown: Called Radway Row in mid 19th century. Renamed when the northern part of central Sidmouth was developed in the late 19th Century.

Old Church Corner – site of the old tin tabernacle

Old Fore St: Fore Street is a common street name in Devon, invariably referring to a street that comes “before” the High Street. The “old” distinguishes it from Fore St. It was previously called Back Street.

Packhorse Close: Near the old pack horse bridge over the R Sid at Sidford.

PathWhorlands: named after the field in which it was built, amongst several called Whorlands

Pauntley Garden: Named after the house Pauntley (originally the Marino) renamed by the Whittington family in 1923 after the Gloucestershire village of that name.

Peak Hill Road: From Old English peac = hill

Peaslands Road: old name for the fields on which it was built

Powys: Middle name of Mrs Powys Floyd who built the house.

Primley Gardens, Mead, Paddock, Road: Named after Primley cottage, now Primley Lodge.

Radway, Place: Named after Radway manor, by the old Mill Cross, dating back to the 12th century.

Raleigh Close: Named after Sir Walter Raleigh, born in East Budleigh

Redwood Road: Named after redwood trees that were planted here as part of the Brownlands estate

Roncombe Lane: Named after the Roncombe Stream, a tributary of the Sid, from Old English ran cumb = boundary valley.

Royal London Court: Named after Royal London Hotel

Russell St: Named after Mr Russell, who owned Russell’s bakers & confectioners in the 19th C on the corner opposite Winchester.

Salcombe Court, Hill, Rd: From Sealt Cumbe, Old English for Salt Valley.

Salters Meadow: Named after Thomas Salter who owned Brickfields Meadow on this site in the mid 19th century. Built in 1914.

Saltways Lane: Part of the old ridgeway path along which the salt was carried.

Seafield Lane, Rd: Named after the seafields, one of the old strip field areas.

Sedemuda Rd: Named after the Old English name for Sidmouth in Domesday

Selleys Yard: Named after Mr Selley

Sidcliffe: Named after Sidcliffe House

Sidford High St: Named after the position of this road on the hillside above Sidmouth.

Sidholme Cottages: Named after Sidholme in Elysian Fields.

Sidlands: Named after Sidlands Lodge (now the Conservative Club) on the corner of All Saints Rd & Radway, itself named after the Sidlands, fields that were part of the church glebe.

Sidmount Gdns: Named after Sidmount

Sid Meadow, Park, Rd: Named after R. Sid from Old English sid = wide, referring to the width of the valley as compared to the size of the river.

Skinnners Close: Named after Skinnners Yard

Snodbrook Cross: Named after the Snod Brook, a tributary of the Sid.

St Peters Court: Named after St Peter's chapel of ease, linked to the priory at Otterton. demolished in 1805, and replaced by Duke's.

Stanhope Drive – named after Stanhope, the house to which it was the drive. The house was previously called Mount Edgar, but was changed to Stanhope by 1879

Station Rd: Built in the 1870s to link the station with the sea front. Bulverton Road was realigned at the same time and joined to the A3052 at its northern end. The railway opened in 1874.

Stowford Ct, Gate, Rise – Ford marked by staves or posts (Place names of Devon) – but marked Stopford on the 1839 tithe map at the location of the turnpike gate near the junction of Woolbrook Road and the Exeter Road, where the Wool Brook crossed the main road.

Temple St, Gdns – named after Temple Cottage (now Fairlawn) which was built in ~1819 (Butcher 1820)

Three Cornered Plot: Presented to the town by Col. Balfour in 1899. Remaining triangular shaped piece of the old allotment land that covered the Fort Field.

The Triangle: shortened bus company name for the three cornered plot.

Trow Hill: The A3052 east of Sidford past Trow Hall in Salcombe Regis. Derived from Old English trewe = tree

Trumps Court: Named after Trumps who owned it.

Tully Gardens: Named after Councillor Mrs Tully, Sidmouth Urban District Council

Turners Court: named after Malcolm Turner, butcher.

Tyrell Mead – built in an orchard formerly part of the grounds of Ivy Cottage, owned by the Tyrell family from the mid 19th century (John Tyrell) to the mid 20th century (Miss Tyrell).

Upper Highfield: The high field above Peaslands

Vicarage Rd: Named after parish church vicarage, which was near here, built on parish glebe land.

Victoria Rd: Named after Queen Victoria

Water Lane: Runs down to a ford over the R. Sid.

Waterloo Bridge: Built 1817 with toll house/gate crossing of Salcombe Road over R. Sid. Named after battle of Waterloo in 1815

Western Ct: Named after Western town, the old name for this part of Sidmouth

Whitethorn Cl: Named after the Whitethorn tree.

Whitton Ct: Named after Councillor Ernie E Whitton, 1981-2 Chairman of Sidmouth Town Council

Winslade Rd: Named after Winslades, the name of the field on which it was built. Called Turnpike Lane prior to 1903.

Witheby: Named after Witheby, the house built in the first decade of the 19th century by Mrs Floyd.

Woolbrook Cl, Mead, Meadow, Pk, Rise, Rd: Named after the Wool Brook which runs down from Fire Beacon Hill through Stowford Gate to join the Sid. From Old English Ulle's brook.

Woolcombe Lane: Named after Woolcombe House, for which records date back to 1698 – same root as Woolbrook.

Yarde Cl, Hill, Orchard, Mead, Yardlands, Cl: Named from the old name for the fields here.

York St: Behind the York Hotel

York Terrace: Built 1810 on site of shipyard for Newfoundland fishing boats. Named after the York hotel on the end. No.4 York Terrace was Marsh's Assembly Room in 1851. No.5 York Terrace was Butters' Baths. Remainder were lodging houses.