

Where was Farnhill Wood Cafe and Cyclists Rest ? - a mystery resolved (we hope)

Introduction

In August 2013 we posted a short piece in our “Mysteries” section asking if anyone knew where the building known as Farnhill Wood Cafe and Cyclists Rest used to be located. It has taken us a long time and has involved assessing information from numerous sources, but we think we’ve finally got the mystery resolved – well, hopefully.

How we got started

We started by posting the two photographs below and asking if anyone recognised them.



From the angle these photographs were taken, and looking at the way the ground seems to rise up behind the building, we were always confident that the cafe must have been on the main Skipton-Keighley road rather than actually in Farnhill Wood.

Ruling out "Winifred's Cafe" - 1

The earliest suggestion made was that the building could have been "Winifred's Cafe", perhaps using an earlier name. Winifred's was the building, set slightly back from the main Skipton-Keighley road, that later became Craven Forge and is now a much redeveloped private house.

We ruled this out when we discovered that the Farnhill Wood cafe was listed on the 1911 census as being in Farnhill, whereas Craven Forge is very definitely over the parish boundary – in Bradley.

12

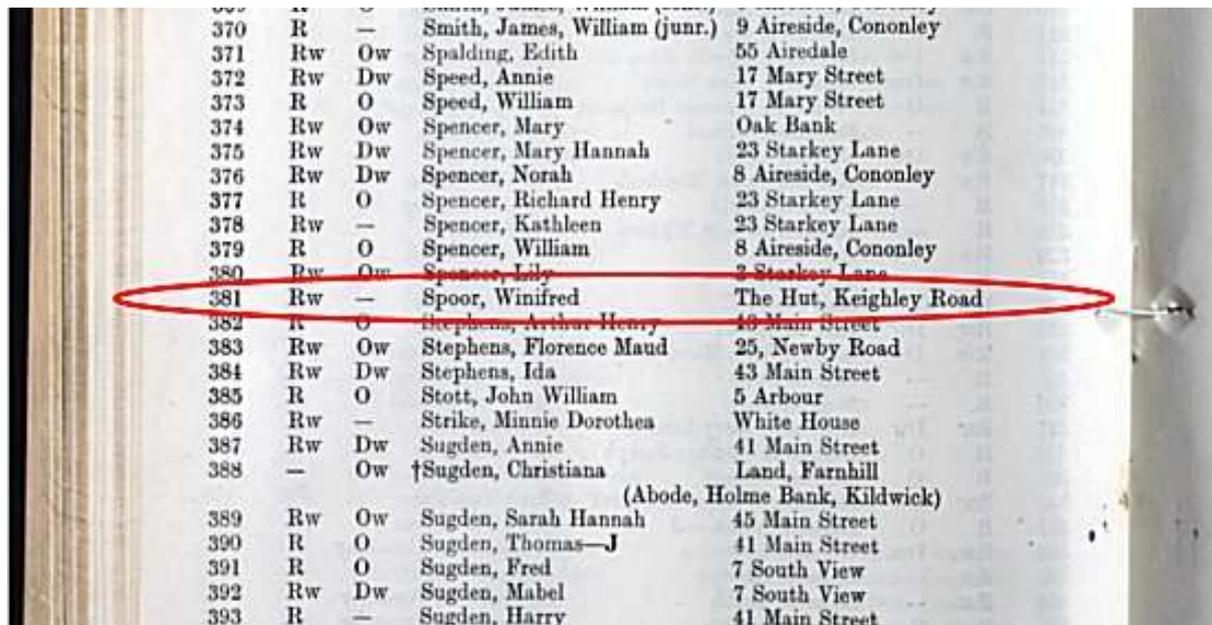
Civil Parish.		Ecclesiastical Parish. Part of.		Borough or Urban District.						
Farnhill Entire		St Andrews Keldwick								
Ward of Borough or Urban District.		Rural District.		Parliamentary Borough or Division.						
		Skipton Part of.		Skipton Part of.						
No. of Schedule.	Address.	Kind of Building. (For Blocks of Flats and Model Dwellings the Numbers of separate Flats or Tenements must be stated.)	Name of Occupier.	Dwellings or Tenements.			Population.			
				Inhabited.	Uninhabited.	Buildings not used as dwellings.	Males.	Females.	Persons.	
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
	Red Lane } Slaughter House } Skipton Road } Cartwright's Shop }		Mr W. Green Mr Rhodes.				1 1			
	Farnhill Wood } Refreshment Rooms }		Mr Kearns.							
209	146 High Farnhill	Moorgate Farm	Mr Whitehead	1				1	1	
210	144 High Croft	Private House	Geo Bottomley	1				1	1	2
211	148 South View	" "	Geo Holliday	1				1	1	2

Not only does this entry locate the "Farnhill Wood Refreshment Rooms" quite clearly in Farnhill but it groups it with other buildings on the main Skipton Road, such as Red Lane slaughter-house.

A small complication – which Winifred ?

So, we were confident that the Farnhill Wood cafe wasn't the same as "Winifred's Cafe". But then the water got muddied somewhat when we looked at the electoral roll and for a while we thought we might have got it wrong.

In 1935, there was a Winifred Spoor living in "The Hut" on Keighley Road, Farnhill.



370	R	-	Smith, James, William (junr.)	9 Aireside, Cononley
371	Rw	Ow	Spalding, Edith	55 Airedale
372	Rw	Dw	Speed, Annie	17 Mary Street
373	R	O	Speed, William	17 Mary Street
374	Rw	Ow	Spencer, Mary	Oak Bank
375	Rw	Dw	Spencer, Mary Hannah	23 Starkey Lane
376	Rw	Dw	Spencer, Norah	8 Aireside, Cononley
377	R	O	Spencer, Richard Henry	23 Starkey Lane
378	Rw	-	Spencer, Kathleen	23 Starkey Lane
379	R	O	Spencer, William	8 Aireside, Cononley
380	Rw	Ow	Spencer, Lily	3 Starkey Lane
381	Rw	-	Spoor, Winifred	The Hut, Keighley Road
382	R	O	Stephens, Arthur Henry	46 Main Street
383	Rw	Ow	Stephens, Florence Maud	25, Newby Road
384	Rw	Dw	Stephens, Ida	43 Main Street
385	R	O	Stott, John William	5 Arbour
386	Rw	-	Strike, Minnie Dorothea	White House
387	Rw	Dw	Sugden, Annie	41 Main Street
388	-	Ow	†Sugden, Christiana	Land, Farnhill (Abode, Holme Bank, Kildwick)
389	Rw	Ow	Sugden, Sarah Hannah	45 Main Street
390	R	O	Sugden, Thomas—J	41 Main Street
391	R	O	Sugden, Fred	7 South View
392	Rw	Dw	Sugden, Mabel	7 South View
393	R	-	Sugden, Harry	41 Main Street

How common was the name Winifred ? Was it possible that there could be a Winifred living in a "hut" on Keighley Road Farnhill, and another running a cafe called Winifred's just a few hundred yards long the same road, in Bradley ?

What if the Farnhill "hut" was really Winifred's Cafe which, although physically in Bradley, was counted on the Farnhill electoral roll ? Then might not Winifred's have previously been called the Farnhill Wood cafe ?

Ruling out "Winifred's Cafe" – 2

It took an excellent piece of research by Malcolm Slater, a good friend of the History Group, to prove that Winifred Spoor wasn't connected with Winifred's cafe; and to show definitively that Winifred's wasn't the Farnhill Wood cafe.

The "1939 Register" (a survey taken at the start of WW2 to enable the issuing of Identity Cards) clearly indicates that Winifred's Cafe must have been close to Rock Royd and Lane End, and that it was occupied by Fred and Lois Peel and their daughter Winifred.

A little bit more digging, and an article about the Bradley air crash published by the Keighley News (11/1/2012), has revealed that the Peels bought the cafe during WW2 and moved there from Halifax, where Winifred had been born in 1930.

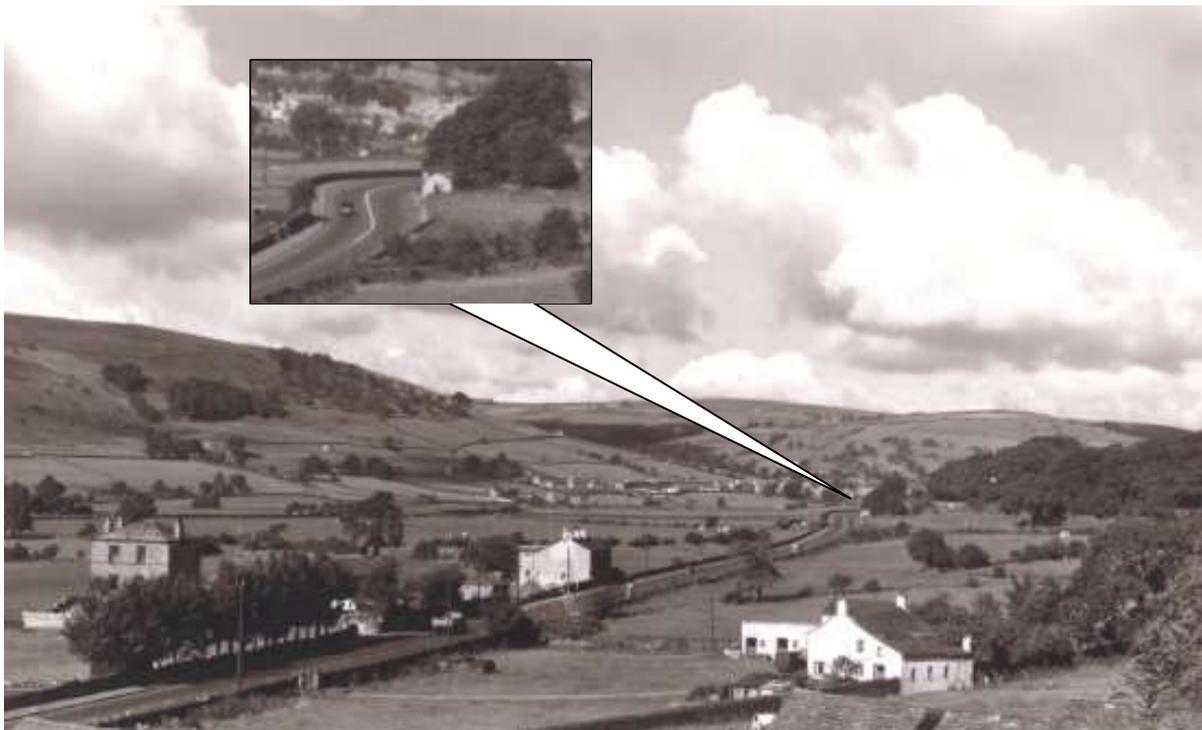
So, that settled it. The Farnhill Wood cafe appears on the 1911 census, located close to the Redman Lane slaughter house; Winifred's was named after a young girl born in 1930 and was in Bradley, near Rock Royd and Lane End. They are not the same place.

So where was the Farnhill Wood cafe ?

When we showed our two photographs of the Farnhill Wood cafe at the History Group's exhibition, in October 2013, most people said they thought it was Winifred's. Someone said there was another cafe, on the same stretch of road, called "Trudy's"; and someone else said he thought there had actually been a cafe on Bradley Lane, on the very edge of the wood.

But a few people, most particularly Derek Roberts and Dennis Laycock, thought that it had been on a patch of land between the canal and the main road, on the Keighley side of Cononley Lane End bridge, just beyond the long bend. Derek Roberts could even recall children's rides, including swing-boats.

This fits in with the 1911 census return and for a while we thought that we might even have a photograph of the building on a photograph of Keighley Road given to us by Keighley and District Digital Archive.



Mike Scarfe, of Farnhill Parish Council, drew our attention to this view of the Keighley Road; looking towards Skipton; probably dating from the 1940s, or thereabouts. The white farmhouse in the foreground is on the site of the old Red Lane slaughter-house.

What caught Mike's attention was the small building in the far distance, long-since demolished; near the bend in the road; surrounded by trees.

Of course we put two and two together and, as always happens, came up with the wrong answer when we suggested that this might actually have been the Farnhill Wood cafe building.

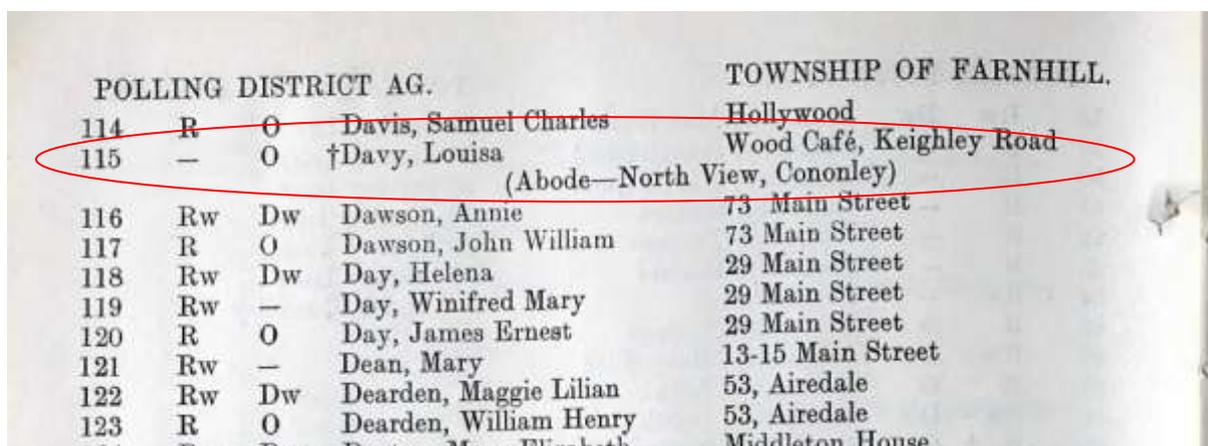
Our error was noted by Edward Preston, who pointed out that the our two photographs of the cafe show a building made of wood and corrugated iron; whereas the long-range blow-up showed a stone shed which he recalled as being near to the lime kiln (now demolished), between the canal and the road.

Now although the photograph doesn't show the cafe, we're still pretty sure that it does provide the location.

In October 2016 members of the History Group were able to spend some time talking with Sydney Maude, who has sadly since died. He was able to confirm what we had been told by Dennis Laycock and Derek Roberts. When shown our photographs of Farnhill Wood Cafe, he immediately placed it as close to the old lime kiln, which he could remember, on the Keighley side of Cononley Lane End.

Who ran the cafe ?

Between 1935 and 1937, there is an entry in the Farnhill electoral roll for Wood Cafe on Keighley Road.



POLLING DISTRICT AG.			TOWNSHIP OF FARNHILL.	
114	R	O	Davis, Samuel Charles	Hollywood
115	—	O	†Davy, Louisa (Abode—North View, Cononley)	Wood Café, Keighley Road
116	Rw	Dw	Dawson, Annie	73 Main Street
117	R	O	Dawson, John William	73 Main Street
118	Rw	Dw	Day, Helena	29 Main Street
119	Rw	—	Day, Winifred Mary	29 Main Street
120	R	O	Day, James Ernest	29 Main Street
121	Rw	—	Dean, Mary	13-15 Main Street
122	Rw	Dw	Dearden, Maggie Lilian	53, Airedale
123	R	O	Dearden, William Henry	53, Airedale
124	Rw	Dw	Denton, Mary Elizabeth	Middleton House

Throughout the 1930s, Louisa Davy lived at 2 North View, Cononley, with her two sisters Ada and Edith.

Perhaps two of them appear in our photographs of the cafe ?