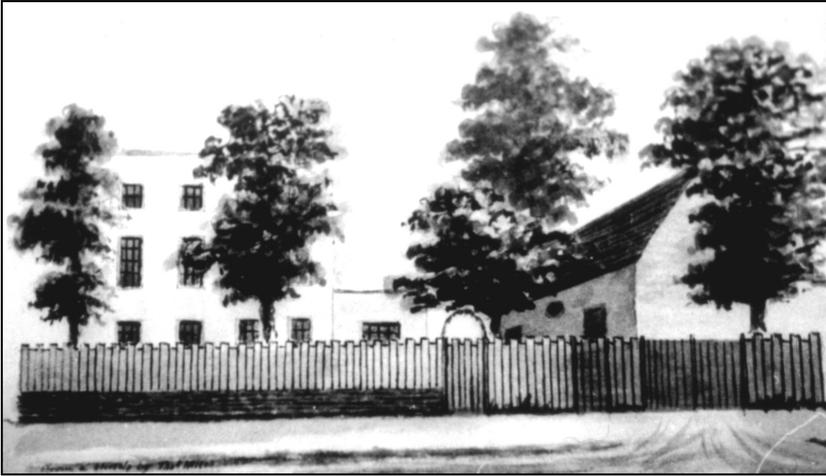


Window on West Wickham

The Manor House

This was at the bottom of the High Street facing south opposite Sainsburys, but it was not a real manor house, as the Lord of the Manor lived at Wickham Court. The house was built around 1800. The estate was sold in 1922. Part of the grounds were retained for a catholic church and a new road — Manor Park Road. The house stood where we find Sherwood Court today and was demolished in 1927.



Manor House West Wickham

The Croft



The Croft Parade in the High Street is named after another large property The Croft which was pulled down in the 1930's. It is the location of the Church of St. Francis.

The building in the foreground is a bank.

A Window on West Wickham

Ravenswood

This house stood near The Swan public house on a large site that spread down as far as Wickham Green, and can be traced back to the 1480s. Rebuilt in the 18th century it was owned by Gilbert West a friend of William Pitt. It was called Grove House and lent to Pitt while Hayes Place was being rebuilt for him. No real road existed at that time.

In 1842 the Hall family came to live there. Two daughters Emily and Ellen remained spinsters and kept diaries about West Wickham. The two sisters wrote of unsettling days when railways were threatening the peace of the village and the breaking up of the common and the woods.

Eventually Ravenswood became an unsuccessful hotel and was later sold to George Spencer. The house was divided with the Spencers living in one half and the other half becoming a private school (Wickham College) In 1932 the Spencer home was demolished for a cinema. George Spencer had built two houses in the grounds and moved into one which he named Ravenscroft.

This house was used by various dignitaries including Cosmo Lang the Archbishop of Canterbury who attended when the foundation stone of St. Francis' church was laid. George was a very keen gardener and a patron of the West Wickham Horticultural Society. Dying in 1962 he was spared the knowledge that his house would be pulled down for a public car park.

Boots and Sainsbury now occupy the spot where Ravenswood had once stood.

