

Inland Revenue Valuation

Survey of 1910-1915

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Introduction

As part of the Budget of 1910, Parliament decided to commission a survey of the use and value of lands and buildings in England and Wales. The government had in mind that property owners should be taxed if the values of their holdings increased as a result of action by the state, such as improved roads, drainage or other public services. The Act was very unpopular with those whom it affected and it was repealed in 1920, although some tax had been collected under its terms.

The initial valuation of each property was to be that which had held sway in 1909 and any increase in the site value between then and the transfer of ownership, or granting of a lease of more than 14 years was to be taxed at 20% in the case of private ownership. In the case of corporate ownership, incremental value duty was to be calculated every 15 years. Farmland was exempt if it had no greater value than its current agricultural market value. House-owners with land less than 50 acres in extent and worth less than £75 an acre were also exempt.¹

A survey was to be conducted that included all property, whether it was later considered exempt or not. After many additional personnel had been recruited by the Inland Revenue to conduct the work, forms were sent to all landowners receiving rent, most of which were returned duly completed. (There were harsh penalties for non-return.)

Each holding was then outlined on an OS map and a physical inspection made. Each holding was given a number unique to the area to which it related, and this was related to paper records in particular in the form of a field book.

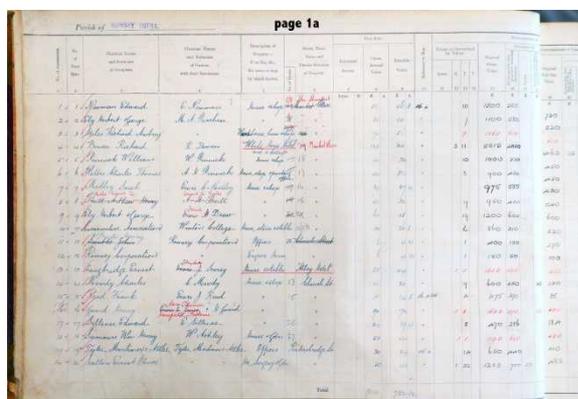


Figure 1: Page from Valuation Book for Romsey Infra

Professor Roger Leech drew the attention of our Monday morning discussion group to the existence of this source, and Roy Romsey photographed both the relevant maps and the 80 pages of the field book for the Borough of Romsey. These are the basis of this talk.

Column Heading	Column Number	Content
Original Gross Value	15	Value of land on open market, unencumbered
Full Site Value	19	Original Gross Value less value of buildings

¹ Geraldine Beech chap 3

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Total Value	29	Original Gross Value less certain deductions
Assessable Site Value	38	Original Gross Value less any work and expenditure made by owner that increases its value

Table 1: Totals Columns found in Field Books

There are four sets of valuation figures for each property. These are the Original Gross Value [15], the Full Site Value [19], the Total Value [29] and the Assessable Site Value [38]. The Gross Value is what the land might be expected to make on the open market, free of any encumbrances, and this is the value that I have used for my calculations. The Full Site Value represents the Gross Value less the value of any buildings upon it. The Total Value is the Gross Value less certain deductions for encumbrances such as rights of way across it and finally the Assessable Site Value is the gross value less any work and expenditure made by the owner that increases its value. Details of the various deductions are itemised for each property. The field books are a summary of the full detailed survey which often ran to four pages per property.

Within the field books, the names of the occupiers and owners of each property are given. There follows the use of the property and then its address. After this there are more than 20 columns devoted to numbers. These include the financial calculations outline above. In the case of larger plots of land its extent is given in acres, rods, poles and yards, and the name of the map on which the holding is shown is also given – most often O.S. 56.4 in the case of Romsey, sometimes with more detail.

Figure 2: Ownership and property details of Edward Newman from page 1.

To give you one property in detail, the first one recorded for Romsey shows Edward Newman as the occupier and owner of a house and shop at 6/8 The Hundred, the address being altered from 1/3 Market Place. For Poor Law purposes, the Gross Annual Value was £58, and the Rateable value was £46 8/-. The extent of the property was 10 poles. The Original Gross Value (the one I use for my calculations) was £1300 but this was reduced by £580 worth of buildings, leaving an Original Full Site Value of £720. There were no other deductions.

There are two principal ways of analysing the data. One of them is based on the property and the other on the owners. I have done both and will start by giving you a run down on the property.

Romsey's Real Estate

There is some difficulty in establishing exact figures, as there are some anomalies in the presentation of the original data. I have reconciled it as I see fit, and don't think the possible alternative interpretations would significantly alter the conclusions, so I shall present the figures as if they were unarguable, rather than spelling out detailed alternatives which would be incredibly tedious.

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The valuers assessed 1351 properties in the Borough of Romsey, based on the list of items used for Poor Law rates and the original value of the town was assessed at £613845. This would appear to give an average worth of a little over £454 per property. Needless to say the actuality is somewhat different.

A detailed spread of values is as follows:

Value £	No of Premises	Value	Aggregate value	% of Whole
>10,000	4	221415	221415	35.6
>6000	1	6410	227825	1.0
>5000	3	16470	244295	2.6
>4000	1	4056	248351	0.7
>3000	3	9258	257609	1.5
>2000	15	32775	294384	5.9
>1000	55	67776	365393	11.4
<1001	1196	255685	621523	41.2
No value	73	-	-	-
Total	1351	621253	621523	100

Table 2: Spread of value of property – detailed

This can be consolidated as follows:

Value £	No of Premises	Value	% of Whole
>10,000	4	221415	36
>1000	78	144153	23
<1001	1196	255685	41
No value	73	-	-
Total	1351	621253	100

Table 3: Spread of value of property: consolidated

The value of Romsey Abbey church is a little over 30% of the whole value of the Borough so seriously distorts the figures.

The top ten properties are:

Name	Individual Value
Romsey Abbey	188425
Strong & Co: Horsefair Brewery	11945
La Sagesse	10820
Congregational Church	10225

Analysis of Inland Revenue Valuation of Romsey 1910

Romsey Corporation: Town Hall	6410
White Horse Hotel (and 2 cottages)	5515
Strong & Co. malthouse	5265
Paper mill in Mill Lane	4056

Table 4: Top Ten Properties by value

There are 1336 properties each of which is worth less than £1000. As Table 7 shows, they are jointly worth only slightly more than the four most valuable properties.

Value £	No. of Properties
900-999	12
800-899	16
700-799	14
600-699	37
500-599	33
400-499	50
300-399	90
200-299	360
100-199	374
1-99	350

Table 5: Full breakdown of low value properties

This can be condensed as follows:

Value £	No of Properties
999-800	28
799-600	51
599-400	83
399-200	450
1-99	350
100-199	374

Table 6: Summary numbers of low-value properties

In addition there were 73 properties for which no individual value was given. Some of these appear to be included in groups, particularly of very modest dwelling houses, and others seem not to be assessed by the Inland Revenue so presumably were not to be taxed, although they were liable to pay Poor Rates.

It is likely that Romsey was similar to other towns with its heavy preponderance of low-value and probably poor quality housing. It is noteworthy that none of the top ten properties are individual

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dwelling houses, although the convent is amongst the top group. It is also necessary to remember that Broadlands was and is in Romsey Extra, so is not included in this part of the survey.

Amongst the ‘properties’ surveyed, there is an eclectic list of items that are not properties in the way we would understand the term. They are divided into two groups, the first consisting of a mixed group of items, namely

	Description
1	Fishing (2 items)
2	Market Tolls
3	Tithe Rent Charges
4	The Southampton Billposting Co.: hoardings
5	Roadside Wastes & Tadburn Stream

Table 7: Non-standard properties - Miscellaneous

It is interesting that none of the items in this list have any Original Gross Value attributed to them. These items are included because they were assessed for Poor Rate. The fishing was attributed to the executors of Mr E.M. Meddings whose address was given as The Causeway and to Frederick Blake, and his address was given as Romsey Infra. It is possible that this latter relates to the stretch of river adjacent to the site of the park which was owned by Romsey Borough Council.

Romsey’s tithe payments were divided into three parts, as this valuation makes clear. The Vicar, as was customary, received the small tithes, and the great tithes which were worth substantially more were divided between the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who had taken them over from the diocese, and the Fleming family of North Stoneham who were, for many years, lords of the manor of Romsey Extra.

The Market Tolls were owned by Wilfrid Ashley, who was lord of the manor of Romsey Infra, and the occupier is given as Romsey Corporation, although Woolley and Wallis were running the market at this date. Ashley also owned the roadside wastes and Tadburn Stream. I know nothing about the Billposting Company and their hoardings.

The second group of non-standard holdings relates to infrastructure and is as follows:

6	Gas Mains, pipes & works
7	National Telephone Co.: Poles, Wires & Income
8	Water Mains, Pipes & appurtenances
9	L.S.W.R.: Line of Railway 1 Mile 1 Furlong 6 Chains: Bishopstoke-Sarum
10	L.S.W.R.: Pt of Romsey Station, Station, Sidings, Bldgs, etc.
11	L.S.W.R.: Line of Railway 2 furlongs 0 chains: Andover-Redbridge

Table 8: Infrastructure Items

The gas works was at the northern end of Love Lane, where part of Alma Road car park is now to be found. It is the only item in either list to have a value attributed to it and that is £5690, which presumably relates to the gasworks itself.

It is interesting to see that the railway holdings are split into three parts: perhaps that is how the railway company filled in the form they were sent. It would be interesting to see what Southampton's railway return would have looked like, but according to Geraldine Beech, one time head of mapping at The National Archives, the Southampton records have been lost.



Figure 3: The International Stores, 1920s

This record confirms that the original telephone exchange was located in The Hundred. It was housed in the upper storey above the International Stores from which the space was rented. The exchange in Alma Road was built in the 1930s, and is a classic building of its era.

The Water Mains, Pipes & appurtenances were the property of the South Hants Water Company which had its reservoir and pumping station at Timsbury. It was later absorbed into the Southampton Corporation Water Works.



Figure 4: South Hants Water Works Co., No 3 Engine House at Timsbury Water Works, 1911

People

The other way of looking at the Romsey property is to consider who owned it. Each person's holdings were gathered together to see who were the major property owners. Again there were difficulties of interpretation in some cases but the ambiguities amount to no more than an insignificant amount so will not be discussed further.

Analysis of Inland Revenue Valuation of Romsey 1910

The 1351 properties that were identified in Romsey for this valuation survey were held by 351 owners. The owners were either private individuals or corporate bodies. As with the properties, the result was heavily skewed by

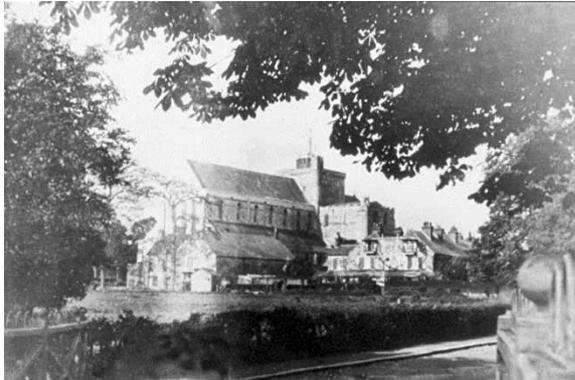


Figure 5: Romsey Abbey from the south-west, early 20th century

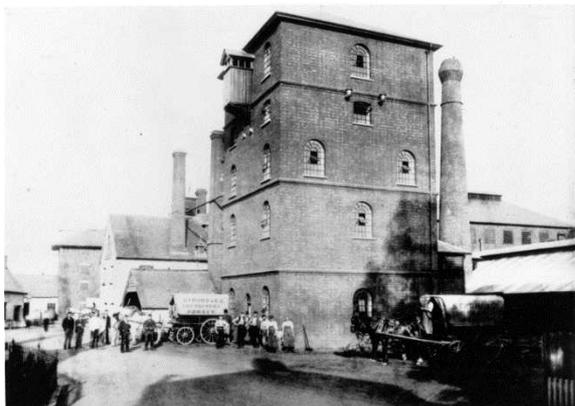


Figure 6: Horsefair Brewery in the 1890s



Figure 7: Congregation Church, early 20th century



Figure 8: Church Street, showing the fire engine shed, 1908

The value of the holdings were divided into deciles and the results are presented in Table 9. In addition there were a few properties whose details were not recorded.

Romsey Abbey which was owned by the Vicar and Churchwardens occupied 30% of the value of property in Romsey, and this is without other Anglican property such as the vicarage and its adjacent field, or the tithes.

Deciles	No of Owners	Names of Owners
Top 30%	1	Romsey Abbey
30-40%	1	Strong & Co
40-50%	7	Ashley; La Sagesse; Congregational Church; R. Corpn., Fleming; Purchase; County Council;
50-60%	19	Gas & Coke Co; Bowen (White Horse); Elcombe; Berthon Boat Co; Wesleyan Church; exors of Harvey (Mill in Mill Lane); T Drew; Pinnick; Exors of Meddings; Newell; Williams (Rivermede); Merrett; Iremonger; Vicar; Winton College
60-70%	27	
70-80%	37	
80-90	67	
90-100	194	

Table 9: Number of owners in value deciles

The holdings of Strong and Co included breweries at the Horsefair, The Hundred and Bell Street, as well as thirteen named pubs and an unnamed beerhouse. Its industrial estate also included offices, store houses, malthouse, stables, carthouse and other buildings. In addition the company owned ten cottages with gardens, three houses and gardens, and 6 houses with shops attached, and some unbuilt land. The whole amounted to 10% of the value of Romsey.

The next 10% of Romsey by value was spread between 7 owners. Wilfrid Ashley, owner of Broadlands, was the foremost of these, and most of his Romsey property was in Romsey Extra so this is only a piece of his estate. Behind him were the Daughters of Wisdom as they are currently known and the Congregational Church.

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Romsey Corporation was sixth. Its estate included the Town Hall, the house for the fire engine, offices possibly not in the Town Hall, some land and cowsheds and the Clock House with its accompanying weighbridge (in Winchester Road near the junction with Southampton Road.). At this time, the Council kept a number of carthorses, though where they were stabled is not apparent.



Figure 9: Girls and Infants National Schools in church Lane

The County Council's Romsey estate consisted of part of the School in Church Lane. This is unexpected as it would be logical to think that it all belonged to the National School committee, as did the boys' school in Station Road. The former British School in Winchester Road stood on two adjacent plots of land and was also owned by the County Council which had only very recently taken it over. Osborne House School in Church Street was not mentioned and its property was recorded as house and garden. There was no identification of any other private school either.

In 1911 the Flemings were in the process of selling much of their Romsey estate. To what extent this was to rationalise their holdings and to what extent it was part of their ongoing attempts to liquidate their debts is not immediately apparent.

The only other private owner in the top 50% of ownership of Romsey is Mrs Purchase. She was the widow of William Overbury Purchase, who had founded the grocery business then at the western end of The Hundred. Mrs Purchase lived at 10 Market Place and was the owner of the large shop in The Hundred, land on the Causeway (i.e. northern Greatbridge Road), one of the mills in Mill Lane with its house and grounds, as well as stables etc. Her daughters lived at Pasadena which was built in the estate grounds next to the stable block. The entrance is from The Abbey. Much of the land between the two buildings now forms the South Garth of Romsey Abbey.



Figure 10: Abbotsford House (to right of picture)

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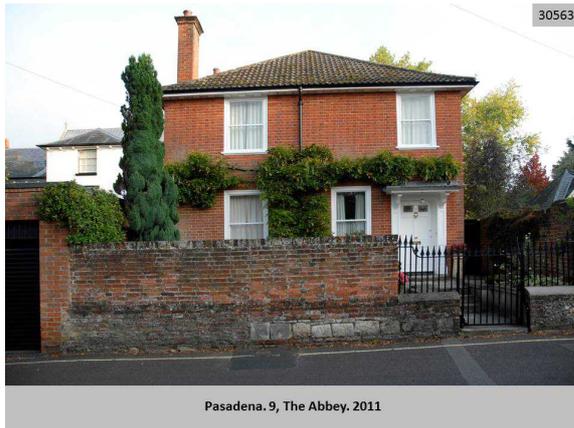


Figure 11: Pasadena, 2011

Thus nine owners account for half the value of property in Romsey and a further 19 the next 10%. Again most of these 19 owners are corporate rather than individual. Finally 194 owners or 55% of owners jointly account for the last 10% of the value of the town.

More properties were rented out than in owner occupation. It appears that only in the latter part of the 20th century has there been a major move towards owner-occupation. It seems that throughout history, most people have lived or carried on their businesses in property that they do not own. It means finding rent, but makes it easier to relocate and avoids capital costs. However if rents become too high, it can be problematic.

It is noticeable the extent to which the smaller owners held terraces or parts of terraces of houses. For example, the executors of James Iremonger owned and rented out numbers 2-16 Alma Road, described as cottages and gardens, and each worth £236.



Figure 12: Alma Road 1944

In particular Banning Street was owned by several landlords. Wilfrid Ashley owned numbers 93-97 and some allotments which were south of the Tadburn. (These were removed to make way for Romsey Bypass around 1930.)

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Figure 13: Banning Street: Houses south of the Tadburn can be seen on the left.

Among the more sizeable owners was Mr J. Edwards, licensee of the Dolphin Hotel, who owned two blocks of houses on the even numbered side of the street. There is a problem in that not all the houses were given their house numbers.

Mr Houguez the china dealer of The Hundred owned the block 45-51 odd. Unusually, one owner, Eliza Marsh who owned odd numbers 21 and 33 to 43, actually lived in Banning Street. The numbering of Banning Street is difficult to follow and not helped by the fact that some plots have been developed so that they contained several dwellings which adds to the confusion.



Figure 14: Banning Street from the north, 1905

The northern end of Botley Road was similarly in the hands of one owner, Mr F.J. Newell, who owned numbers 1 to 15 and 39. I wonder whether he was the developer who had built that terrace. The time would be about right.



Figure 15: Terraced housing in Botley Road, 2004

Cherville Street was similarly owned in blocks of property, although I suspect they were acquired by their 1911 owners as the houses look older than 20th century. More interesting is the description of property further north in what was then called Cherville Street and is now the southern end of Greatbridge Road. By 1909 houses had been built on the western side of the street, as far as the Cottage Hospital but on the eastern side of the road, the map shows that plots have been marked out for building on land known as Sligh Field. Four of these plots (numbers 1294, 1295, 1288 and 1299) are owned by Henry Roles, son of William Roles the builder, and are described respectively as 'Land site of Ivydene'; 'land site of Fern Villa'; 'land part site of Sligh Field'; and 'land site of St Clair'. When you walk along what is now the

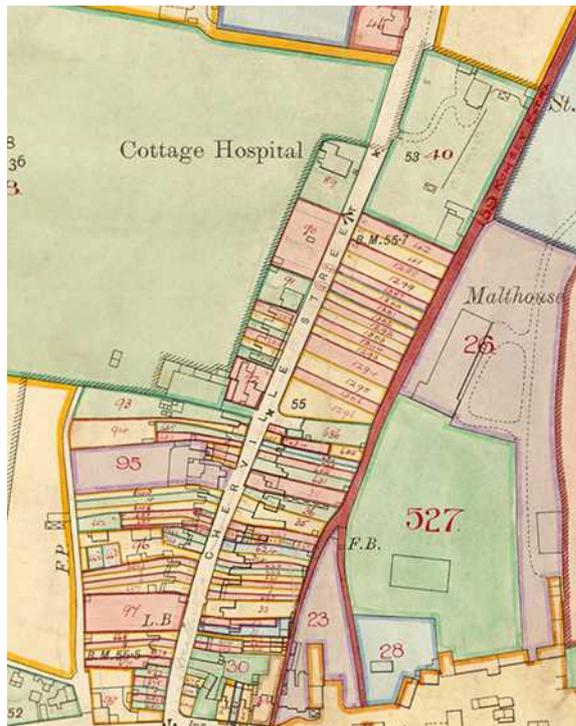


Figure 16: Division of Property in Cherville Street

southern end of Greatbridge Road, you can still see the house names engraved upon them.

Another aspect of ownership to consider is what proportion of the properties was occupied by their owners relative to the proportion rented out. Of the 1351 properties, 221 were occupied by people or corporations with the same surname or corporate name as that of the owner, and 181 were identical in both owner and occupier columns. Thus nearly 13% of the property in the town was occupied by its owner and 16% occupied by owner or a close relation or associate body.

The holdings were further subdivided and classified according to their use. The results are presented in Table 10. The first thing to notice is that very few people live in houses that they own. The owner-occupation of amenity or non-standard property is much higher and nearly half of businesses own their own premises.

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	A	B	C	D
Classification	No of Properties	Percentage of whole	No of Properties in hands of Owner Occupiers	Percentage of Owner Occupiers C/A%
Amenity	16	1.2	11	69
Commercial	77	5.7	36	48
Land	130	9.6	29	22
Mixed residential-commercial	165	12.2	49	29
Residential	947	70.1	47	5
Other	12	0.8	9	75
Not Known	4	0.3	0	0
Total	1351	100	181	13

Table 10: Types of properties and degree of owner-occupation

The buildings classified as ‘Amenity’ include all the churches, each of which was owned by its own congregation. The ground that was formerly the burial ground of the Congregational Church is included in this group. The Primitive Methodists’ holdings in Middlebridge Street were described as their chapel, with the addition of a group of utility buildings. (This site is now occupied by the Elim Church.)

Amongst the oddities encountered, although not in the owner/occupier group, the Wesleyan Methodist church still owned its former premises in Banning Street which was by then a laundry. At one stage the Salvation Army had used the building, presumably as tenants of the Methodists. Later the Salvation Army had moved to Latimer Street but it is not identifiable in this survey.



Figure 17: Romsey Police Station in 1916

The other properties categorised as ‘amenity’ include the Police station and schools owned by the County Council. In addition there were public halls such as the Town Hall, the Oddfellows Hall in

Analysis of Inland Revenue Valuation of Romsey 1910

Middlebridge Street and the Church Hall owned by the Congregationalists in The Abbey. Finally the club premises, owned by the Romsey Rifle Club have been put into this category.



Figure 18: "The Jam Factory" after the fire 1965

37 premises were purely commercial and occupied by their owners. There are those which are clearly industrial, such as the 8 sites owned and occupied by Strongs. In addition there are mills, the Hampshire Preserving Company known locally as 'the jam factory' in The Hundred, Berthon's Boatworks in Portersbridge Street and Test Valley Ironworks in The Hundred.



Figure 19: Berthon's Boatworks seen from Abbey roof c.1905

The commercial group includes railway property and the gas works, the Corn Exchange, and the fire engine shed in Church Street. There were also a number of small business premises such as builders' yards and finally a number of lock-up shops.

Most of the property in the Land group is simply called 'Land', but it includes that part of Broadlands Park that was in the Borough and three places specifically described as 'allotments' one being owned by Ashley in Banning Street and two owned by Fleming in Northgaston and Alma Road respectively. Northgaston was the area later developed to the west of Station Road.



Figure 20: Abbey Mill 2, north of Rivermead House, c.1950

There were 44 properties that were commercial and residential. Many of these were buildings that were homes but part of which had shop space and most of them had gardens attached. William Williams, Aldyth Wellington’s grandfather, is amongst this group. He owned the Abbey Mill north of what is now the park, and the family lived in the adjacent Rivermead House.

Smith at the Old House at Home in Love Lane was still brewing, and his brewery is included here



Figure 21: Christian’s Grocery Shop, Latimer Street, 1930s

A number of other owner occupiers are well known to the town’s historians and we have photographs of their premises, such as the shop and home of Mr Christian the grocer of Latimer Street.

There are some examples of ownership of property by an institution with residential accommodation lived in by employee or members of the institution. The two bank managers were both living in such accommodation, namely that of The Capital and Counties Banking Co in the Market Place and Wilts and Dorset Banking Co in The Hundred. The banks owned the buildings but the manager lived in them. Similarly it is questionable whether the Vicar and the Lady Superior of the Convent could be counted as ‘owner-occupiers’, although described as such in the survey. Both lived in what might be called ‘tied cottages’. However these four examples have been included as part of the group of 51 properties that were purely residential and occupied by their owners. With these caveats, it can be said that only 4% of the 1351 properties in the Borough were lived in by their owners.

The final group of people to consider is the small group of 38 properties which were occupied by persons or corporations that have names similar to that of the owners. In the case of people these have the same surname but different forenames, which suggests either that the records are faulty or these are examples of relations providing accommodation for each other.

Classification	No of Properties
Amenity	0
Commercial	4
Land	7
Mixed residential & commercial	13
Residential	14
Other	0
Not Known	0

Total	
-------	--

Table 11: Number of Properties with names of occupiers similar to that of owners

In order to make sense of this group, it would be necessary to consult the census to find out more about the individuals concerned in these arrangements. It is likely that either the properties are owned by elderly members of the family where younger ones are running the business or that the original owner has died and the heir of the property did not wish to occupy it. To give an example, Frederick Walter Kersey was occupying the house and shop in Bell Street which belonged to his father, C. Kersey. Incidentally, this business has subsequently moved from Bell Street via The Hundred to Latimer Street.

Another example is that of Emily Brown who occupied a house and garden in The Hundred and had a coach house and stables in Love Lane. These properties were owned by the executors of F. Brown, who was presumably her late husband, but as probate had not been granted the will had not been discharged.

Summing Up

Figure 22: Aerial view of Romsey 1923

It is difficult to gauge how wealthy Romsey was for a town of its size without making comparisons with other places, which has not been undertaken. There is no reason to think that Romsey was wealthy because the housing stock was mostly modest and there was a paucity of mansions in the town.

The value put on the abbey church skews the figures considerably. Without that, the town would have a much lower value and it is noticeable that religious establishments contribute very considerably to the value of the town. Other than them, Strong’s Brewery is conspicuous for how much of the town it owns. Because much of the Broadlands estate is in Romsey Extra, this other significant local property plays a relatively marginal role in the value of the town.

It is very noticeable how few owners of the property there are – only 351 owners responsible for the 1351 properties identified in the survey. It is likely that the proportion of owners a century or more later is much higher, but the leasehold arrangements commonly found in apartment blocks would lower this figure. There was no evidence of leasehold in this survey, and there is no reason to think it was a form of land-holding common in Romsey at the beginning of the 20th century.

As already said, this study suffers from a lack of comparison with anywhere else, but it is a starting point about property ownership in a small town in 1909.



Figure 23: Aerial View of Romsey, 1923

Notes

Inland Revenue Valuation Records: These are held by Hampshire Archives and Local Studies and the valuation books are catalogued at 152M82. The maps are catalogued under 47M68, 160M86 or 53M91, but the online catalogue does not enable one to see which of these is relevant.

Beech, Geraldine and Mitchell, Rose, *Maps for Family and Local History: The Records of the Tithe, Valuation Office and National Farm Surveys of England and Wales, 1836*, (The National Archives, 2004)

Photographs: From Romsey Local History Society's collection.

Land Measurement:

1 acre = 4 perches = 0.4 hectare.

1 rod = 40 poles

1 pole = 30.25 square yards