

CHAPTER 17 (UPDATE)
PEBMARSH NEW WOOD -PRIVATE PROPERTY



1960 Map of Pebmarsh

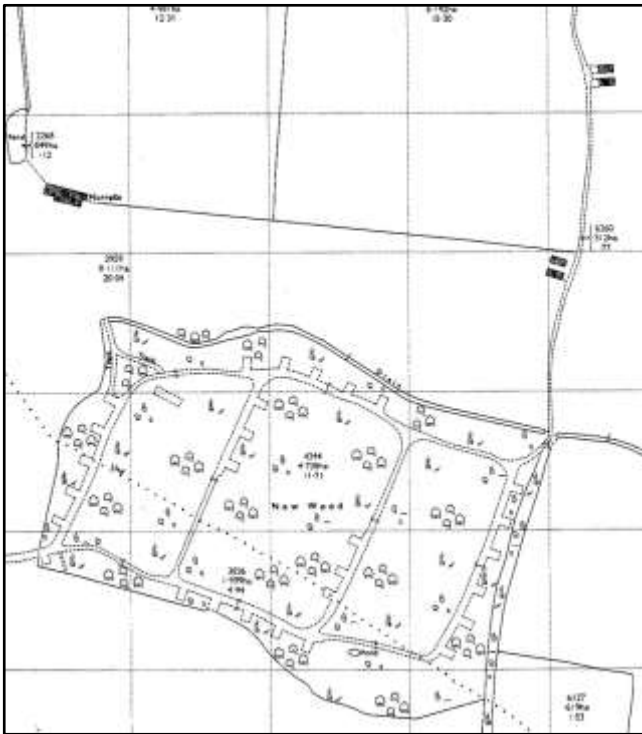


2005 Ordnance map still showing
internal road system
OS MAP No168/TL864 335 2005

Access was via the Bures to Pebmarsh
main road and protected by one of
three Guard Posts.

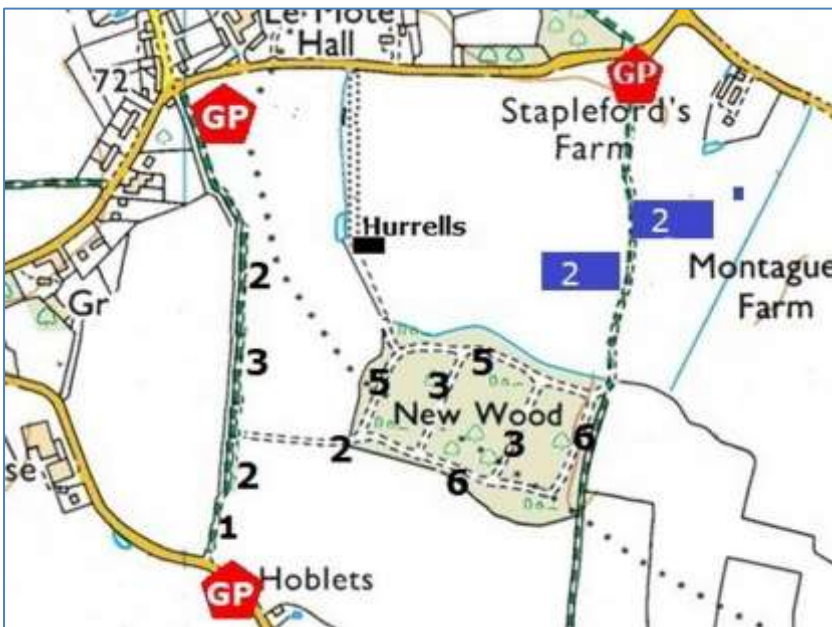


Top right on the next page map.



OS Map 1956

This map clearly shows road network and individual bomb bays.



BLUE = Number of Huts

GP = Guard Post NUMERALS =
Number of individual storage bays.

Four huts described as "Component Stores" were constructed at the entrance to the wood. They were 36ft x 18ft with a curved asbestos roof, presumably of a Nissen Hut type construction.



The access into the wood from the Pebmarsh main road



Photographs, indicating the internal road system with storage bays.

Numerous access roads were constructed inside the wood, to a width of 9ft, with a minimum distance of 100yds between each bomb dump.



After much research, I could find no explanation for these concrete blocks.

However, Ian Perry from Colne Engaine writes:

The mysterious concrete blocks were from about 2003/4, when the company I worked for, Airwave Solutions Ltd, were building the

Emergency Services Radio Network.

We used to call this a "Commando build", a quick containerised temporary radio site with a portable mast. The blocks were the anchor points for guys ropes. The term "Commando" was used as the sites were usually erected often overnight. They were only ever temporary, but they always concerned local people, hence the speedy and discrete erection.



Google Satellite imagery, taken during 2020, clearly indicates the internal road network.

The Guard Room along the Colne Rd/Lawshalls Hill was located by the halfway between Great House Farm and Hoblets

The New Wood bomb dump was part of my childhood play area in the 1950s and early 60s.

The roads to the wood are still visible, but the huts and their foundations have long gone.

It was of the design on the bottom of page 36, I am reasonably sure the outer was curved and corrugated asbestos, but it could have been crinkly tin. The inner lining was definitely asbestos but with a smooth floorboarding. There was a 2x2 ft square base for a stove in the centre.

Inside, all over the walls, were little notes, names and drawings, written in charcoal/coke from the fire, probably a Pot Belly stove similar to, if not actually, one made in the Foundry in Halstead.

One of the drawings, I can picture it now, in the far-left hand corner as you entered from the door at the front, about three feet from the floor (possibly bed height), held a particular fascination for us. It was of an ocean liner, but not the usual side-on, simplistic angle, this was in perspective from the quayside looking up under the bow. I can't describe it, except the quality of those charcoal sketches you see in galleries, with such skilful use of perspective as to hold the fascination of ten-year-old boys. It probably reflected one GI's thoughts of his way home.

We never even contemplated drawing over it or vandalising it, something that unfortunately would happen today.

The road from Great House Farm was paved right across to Cross End Cottage, with a junction in the middle leading up to the wood. I always felt there was another Nissen hut at Cross End, but if there was, it disappeared very early on (the early 1950s).

The Guard Room at the junction of the Pebmarsh and Alphamstone Rd



This was a similar Hut to that on Colne Road, on the right just up the slope. On the opposite side of the road there is a small piece of wood, with a water tower, which has been suggested supplied water for Le Mote Hall. From my perspective, it looks relatively small for that.

In my Army days, I spent quite a lot of time in camps with either wooden huts or Nissen huts and the style seems that of the water towers on the ends of ablutions huts and I think I recall huts at that location at one time. Left: Blue arrow

The four Huts on the approach road across the field to the wood were of the style top of page 36 with wider doors and slightly larger than the guard

huts.

The road to the wood runs behind Stapleforde and across an open field. The map on page 77 shows the huts, two pairs. They were larger than the guardrooms and had double doors, and in my time, they were always in the open field and often had straw bales in them. I don't recall any building actually within New Wood.

The footpath across the Stapleforde side was, to my knowledge, only a concrete road up to the wood and was not paved right across to Valiants.

Traffic Route

With the concrete roadway so narrow, it's unlikely it could accommodate two-way traffic.

I would suggest they entered by the Pebmarsh road and exited at Great House Farm or vice versa.

The road by Peyton Hall and Fishpits was obviously widened on the junction. Just past Le Mote there is a slight S bend, I can remember it having these "extra" sections of concrete, not initially covered in tarmac, which seemed added to straighten the road out.

Peter Harding, who passed away a few years ago, used to talk about an Ack Ack gun-based up by Rafe Hall, possibly opposite Great House Farm

Text by Ian Perry, Colne Engaine

Finally, One resident recalls how a P51 Mustang fighter took off from Wormingford airfield, which appeared to have difficulty reaching sufficient flying altitude. It carried 75gallon external fuel tanks made of similar material to paper mache, which they would release over the sea when they were empty. In this case, the pilot jettisoned the tanks immediately over New Wood, where they crashed onto the stacks of bombs splitting open and showering the area with 120 octane aviation fuel.

These bombs were not fitted with fuses, so no damage occurred.

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Research with Ian Perry on hold due to Covid restrictions :- December 2020