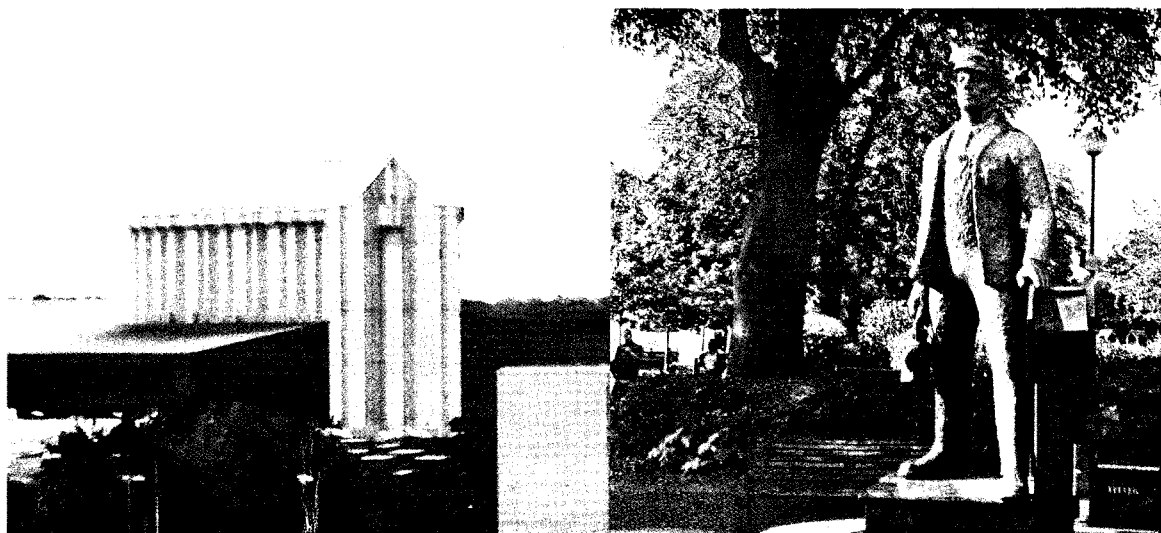
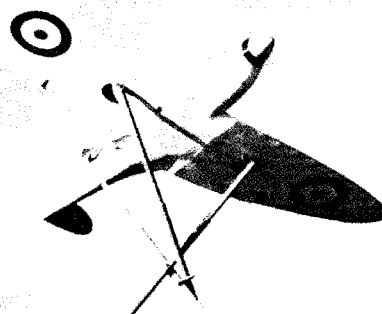
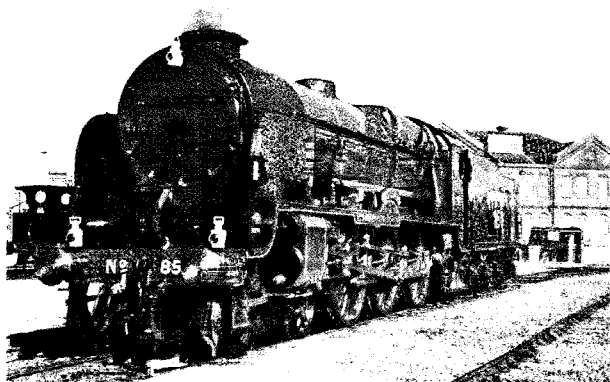


EASTLEIGH & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



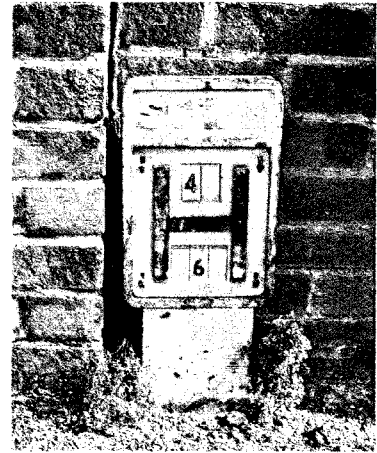
STATIC WATER TANKS



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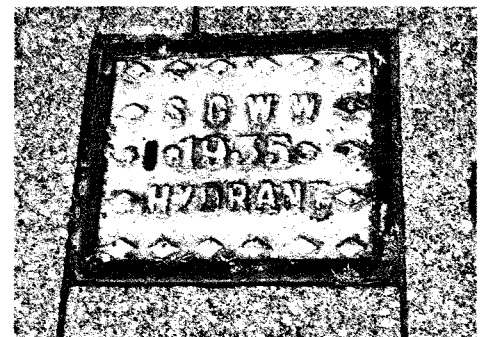
STATIC WATER TANKS

Eastleigh has a large number of Water Hydrants, with markers painted yellow or yellow and black. They were there during the war ready for use to put out fires. However, the hydrants were dependant on the mains being intact. The signs were not updated when the metric system was introduced as the figures were not ambiguous.



The top figure is the pipe size in inches and the lower figure the distance from the sign in feet.

2012



S C W W
Southampton Corporation
Water Works

The hydrant sign was missing in 1948 so the house and wall of 118, Cranbury Road were marked with an H.

One of the lessons learnt from the London blitz was the value of having water supplies available for fire fighting after the water mains had been damaged by bombs. In Eastleigh on 19th January 1941 a water main in Southampton Road was hit and the road blocked for a month but this being on the outskirts of the Town did not disrupt water supplies. The rescue squad vehicle drove into the crater hidden by the cloudy water, but the damaged railway line was repaired within hours.

The positions of fire hydrants had been prominently marked, but the Borough Council Fire Service decided that water should be stored in suitable places around the Borough in case it was required to fight fires if mains water was cut off.

The first seven tanks were each to contain 100,000 gallons of water and sites were chosen or requisitioned as follows:

72. STATIC WATER SUPPLIES.—The Town Clerk reported that under Powers delegated to him by the Secretary of State, he had requisitioned on 28/10/41 land, particulars of which are as under :—

	<i>Situation.</i>	<i>Description.</i>	<i>Owner.</i>	<i>Occupier.</i>	<i>Area.</i>
(1)	Rear of First-Aid Post, Leigh Road, Eastleigh, Part of Home Farm.	Rough Pasture Land.	Eastleigh Corporation.	F. G. Atkins Home Farm, Eastleigh.	.41 of an acre.
(2)	North-west corner at junction of Blenheim and Nutbeam Rds.	Vacant building plots.	N. T. McCormack Montrea, Havant Road, Farlington, Portsmouth.	—	.23 of an acre.
(3)	East of Pirelli-General Sports Ground	Part of Sports Ground	Pirelli-General Cable Works Co. Ltd.	Pirelli-General Cable Works Co. Ltd.	.50 of an acre.
(4)	South-West corner junction of Derby Rd. and High St.	Allotments.	Wm. Elliott, 245, High St. Eastleigh.	Wm. Elliott, 245, High St. Eastleigh.	.29 of an acre.

Other land in the ownership of the Corporation, particulars of which are as under, has been taken by the Secretary of State :—

	<i>Situation.</i>	<i>Description.</i>	<i>Owner.</i>	<i>Occupier.</i>	<i>Area.</i>
(1)	North side of Derby Road Recreation Ground on south side of Grantham Road.	Wasteland.	Eastleigh Corporation	—	.50 of an acre.
(2)	East of Bandstand, The Park, Leigh Rd.	Recreation Ground.	Eastleigh Corporation.	—	.50 of an acre.
(3)	South West corner of Lawn Road Recreation Ground.	Recreation Ground.	Eastleigh Corporation.	—	.50 of an acre.

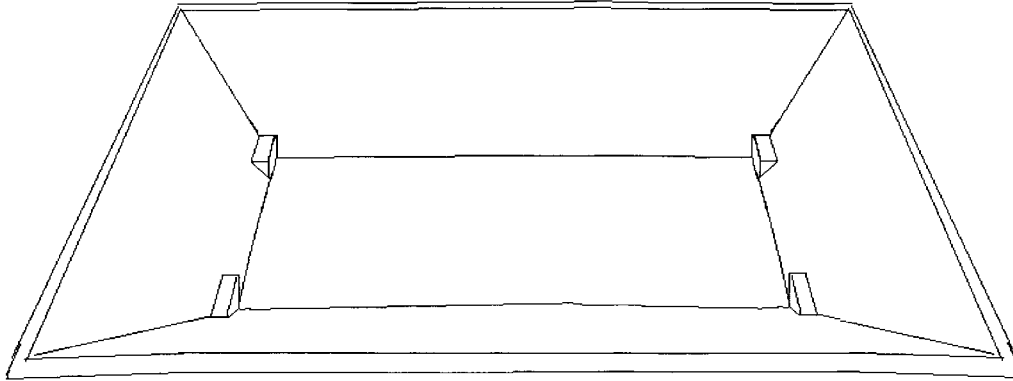
All the above sites are required for the construction of 100,000 gallon Dams.

The Town Clerk enquired if the Committee desired to make any claim under Section 2(1) (a) of the Compensation (Defence) Act, 1939. **We recommend :**

That no claim for rental be made under the provisions of the above Act but that the Secretary of State be informed that the Council reserves the right to make a claim in respect of reinstatement after the cessation of hostilities.

The Chairman reported upon the progress being made in the construction of the Dams.

These large tanks were originally surrounded with Chestnut Fencing as their design made them very dangerous. They were constructed from concrete with joints filled with bitumen, They were truncated, inverted, hollow, rectangular pyramids eight to ten feet deep.



Concrete static water tank, when empty.
About 8 feet deep and rectangular 84ft by 52 ft.
Sides sloped at 45° . As built in Eastleigh.

Before I (Barry Chinchin) was aware that such tanks existed, one day, I noticed that a (possibly eight inch or six inch) black steel pipe had appeared running in the gutter in Blenheim Road alongside our house. I had not seen it being laid, but as it went underground at the road crossing there must have been some noisy activity close to our house. I did not know what the pipe was for, but later concluded that it was to get water out of the tank on the corner of Blenheim and Nutbeem Roads. It was decades later that I realised that in fact it used to fill the tank and explained why there were fish in the water.

Not everyone took any notice of these pipes, but children of Primary School age and younger, especially boys, found that tightrope walking along the pipe was irresistible and much preferable to using the pavement. Those ten or so years older than myself could remember where some of these pipes went. Norman Kitchen told me that a pump was mounted on a concrete platform at the side of the Itchen Navigation at a point at the end of the muddy track leading past Baseley's Nurseries to Twyford Road. The pipe ran along this track and along the gutter of Twyford Road.

At Shakespeare Road the pipe branched towards the Lawn Road Tank, and the other branch continued over the Salisbury Arch Bridge. We are unsure what routes were taken from this point. It is assumed that a branch went down Romsey Road to the Recreation Ground Tank and pipes probably took routes along High Street towards Derby Road, Grantham Road and Blenheim Road. Although I was only aged two at the time I loved balancing on the pipe.

The pipe-line did not seem to stay long as, to my disappointment, it vanished as quickly and mysteriously as it had appeared.

From the *Eastleigh Weekly News* - 7th December 1944.

CHILD DROWNED IN STATIC WATER TANK

Colin George Lush, aged 3 years, son of Mrs. Amy Alice Lush, a widow, of 13, Wilmer Road, Eastleigh, was found drowned in an N.F.S. static water tank in Nutbeem Road on Monday afternoon. Colin went into the garden to play at about 1.20 p.m., and when the mother missed the child a search was first instituted. About two hours later he was found floating in the water tank, to which he had apparently gained access by pushing himself through a hole in the 6-ft. fence surrounding the tank.

The inquest was held at the Town Hall on Tuesday before the Southampton County Coroner (Mr. Percy H. Ingoldsby).

Dr. A. G. Proverbs stated that at 3.30 p.m. he was called to Wilmer Road and found the boy to be dead. The death was consistent with drowning, and there were no other injuries.

Mrs. Annie Lush, the mother of the child, a widow, said her husband had been a leading seaman in the Royal Navy. Her son left the house about 1.20 p.m. to play in the garden, about 1.25 she discovered he was missing. She made a search with a friend and they discovered a body floating in the static water tank. He must have got away while left alone for the few minutes.

Mrs. M. Kingston said when she was walking along Nutbeem Road she met Mrs. Lush and a friend, both were crying and Mrs. Lush said her boy was in the water tank. She climbed over the fence, got into the tank and caught hold of the boy. Just then the N.F.S. came along and helped to get her and the boy out. She was complimented by the Coroner on her action.

Section Leader Stratton, of the N. F. S. stated a woman came running into the N.F.S. station and stated a boy was in the water tank. The boy was on the verge by the side of the tank when he arrived, and he immediately commenced artificial respiration, which he continued until the doctor arrived. He did not know of any hole in the fence.

Company Officer A. W. Lyall said there was no mention in reports of the hole being reported.



Police Sergt. Harris said he went to the scene of the accident on receiving a report, and the tank was partly surrounded by chestnut fencing and the other part and the other part weather board. One corner of the fence was broken, and that was on the weather board, the hole was 7½ inches wide and 1-ft. 10-in. high, and it was possible for a child to crawl through the hole.

Column Officer Thackeray, of the N.F.S., stated there was another hole in the fencing about 18 inches high and 6 inches wide, access to which could only be obtained through a private garden. He did not know of the holes prior to the incident.

The fencing was inspected last on the 21· November this year.

P. S. Harris, recalled, stated that the hole in the fence did not appear to have been recently broken. The fence appeared to be very old.

The Coroner said this was a sad accident. It was not completely proved that the fence around the tank was in perfect order, and more care should be taken in inspection of tanks. Holes should be repaired at once and regulations for inspecting tanks should be tightened up at once.

The sympathy of the N. F. S. was extended to the mother of the child by Company Officer A. W. Lyall.

The verdict of misadventure was passed by the Coroner.

After the tank was filled in Jack Walkden had a 'Do it Yourself' shop on the site.

Later the site was used for housing.

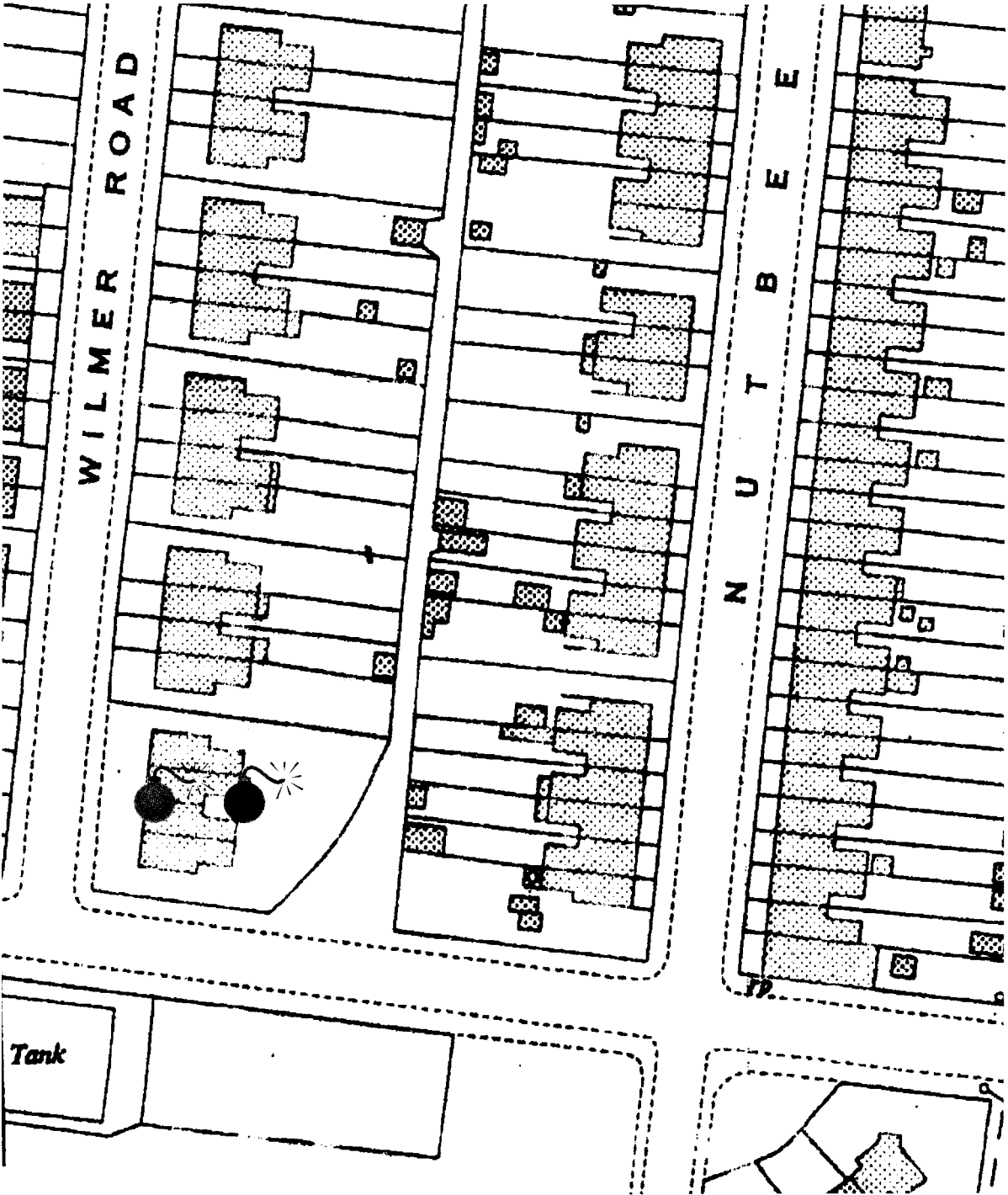


The site of this tank was originally a very well-kept allotment but during the first air-raid on Eastleigh on 2nd September 1940, one of three bombs fell on it. The first bomb fell on houses in Chamberlayne Road, killing Mr Charles Gray and Mrs Ellen Louisa Gray his wife and fatally injuring the Mayoress, Mrs Ada Dorcas West. The second bomb exploded on the allotment, breaking windows in All Saints' Church. The third bomb fell in gardens in Market Street severely damaging a row of houses next to Hockey's Shop and Post Office.

The site of the tank has now been used for housing.



The position of Tank 5. – Grantham Green



This tank leaked after the end block of houses on the east side of Wilmer Road was destroyed by a bomb on 18th April 1942.

It proved difficult to repair.

[102/244]

Your ref:-
FES/PMB.

1st October, 1942.

The Divisional Officer,
National Fire Service,
Divisional Headquarters, "A" Division,
No. 16 Fire Force,
Hillfield Gate,
Burgess Road,
SOUTHAMPTON.

Dear Sir,

re:- Concrete water basin.

With reference to your letter of the 29th ultimo, the concrete water basin in Grantham Road was damaged by enemy action, and it would appear that the floor has lifted and the bitumen joints become loosened. The basin was emptied and new joints run, but it does not appear to be satisfactory.

I would suggest that I have the basin emptied again and provide a new floor.

Yours faithfully,

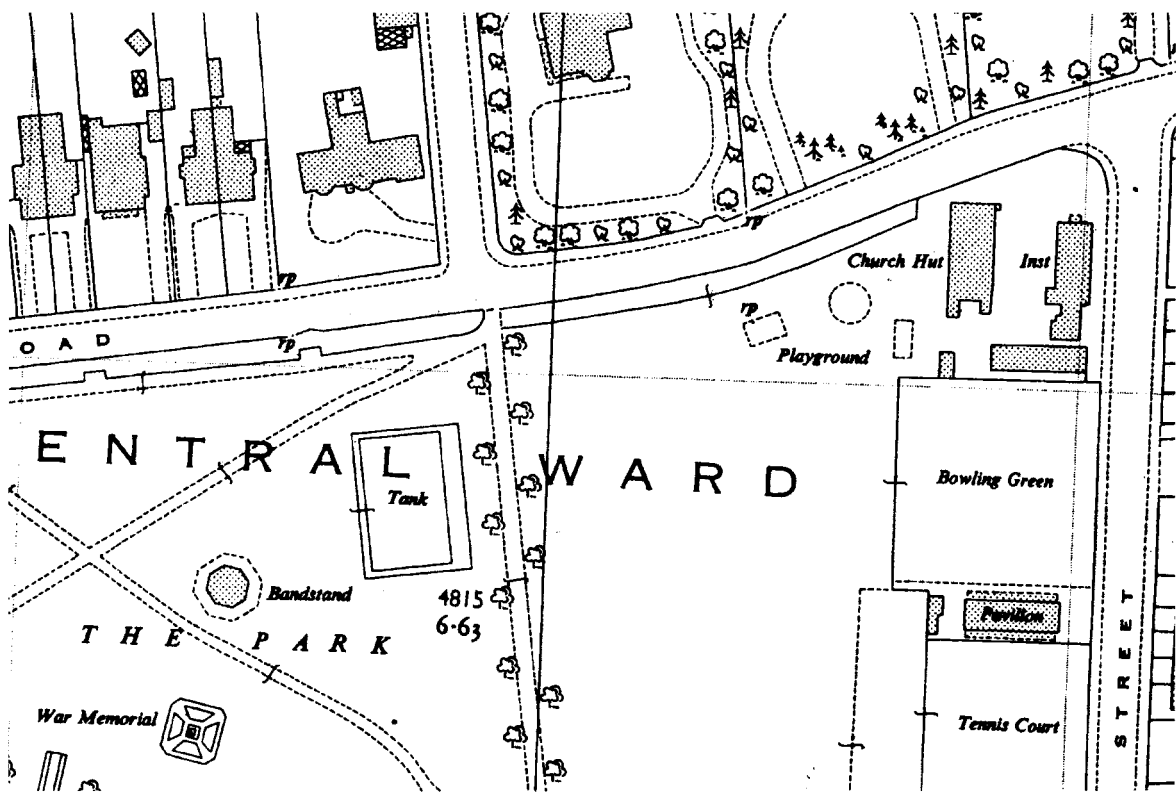
Borough Engineer & Surveyor.

The Tank was filled in after the War but its outline can clearly be seen in dry weather

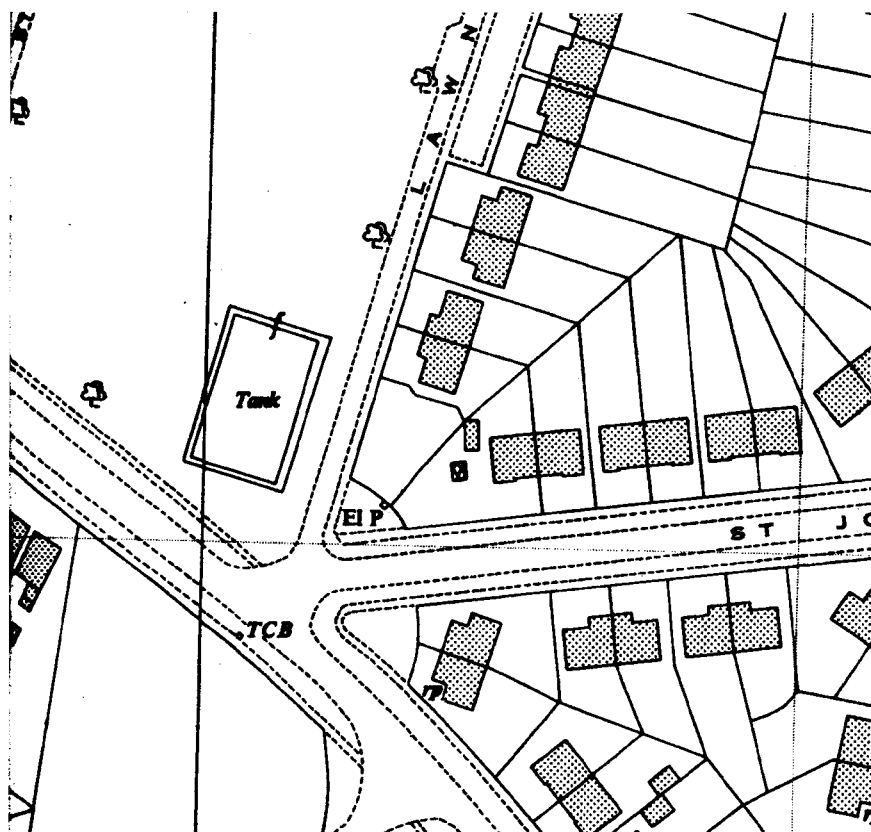




The position of Tank 6. – Recreation Ground.



The position of Tank 7.- Lawn Road.



Steel Static Water Tanks.

A report of 28th July 1942 [Ref. 101/936] records that five circular steel water tanks had been erected. I did not see any of these, and being constructed of steel, they would have been scrapped at the earliest opportunity.

They were coded as Tanks H, I, K, L & M.

H: At the Junction of Tennyson Road and Scott Road. 10,000 gallon capacity.

I: On the North-west side of the 'Wide-a-wake' Cafe in Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford.
20,000 gallons.

K: At the Junction of Bournemouth and Westfield Roads. 10,000 gallons.

L: Between High Street and Market Street, at the rear of the public shelter in Grantham Road.
10,000 gallons.

M: East of the Church Hall in Stoke Park Road. 20,000 gallons.

The sites of 10,000 gallon tanks – April 1943.

[102/986]

6T/SNC/1
CED/HJM.

22nd April, 1943.

G. H. Denning Esq.,
Asst. Regional Technical Adviser,
Marlborough House,
Parkside Road,
READING.

Dear Sir,

Supplementary Water Supplies, Eastleigh.

As requested in your letter of the 26th March, 1943, I enclose herewith estimated cost of materials etc., to be supplied to the N.F.S. for the purpose of constructing ten 10,000 gallon dams in the Borough of Eastleigh in accordance with the requirements of Divisional Officer Sullivan.

The sites selected are :-

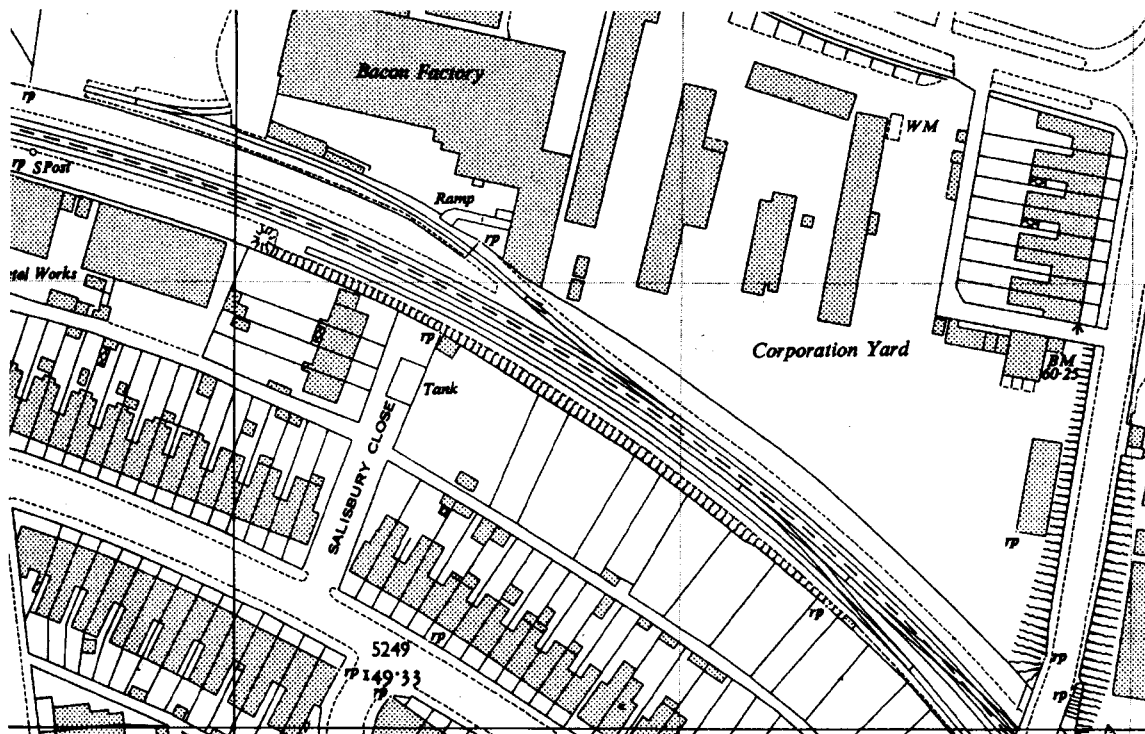
- A. South end of Salisbury Close.
- B. West of No. 3 Laburnum Grove.
- C. Junction of O'Connell Road and Scott Road.
- D. Junction of Northdene Road and Southdene Road.
- E. Junction of Longhead Avenue and White Road.
- F. Junction of Cherbourg Road and Geldsmith Road.
- G. Site of Nos. 370 and 372 Southampton Road.
- H. Adjacent to No. 58 Hursley Road.
- J. Opposite No. 254 Leigh Road.
- K. East side of High Street between Confectionery and Butchery Departments of the Eastleigh Co-operative Society.

I also enclose drawing No. 301 showing details of the proposed construction. Arrangements to requisition the necessary sites will be put in hand immediately your sanction to proceed is received.

Yours faithfully,

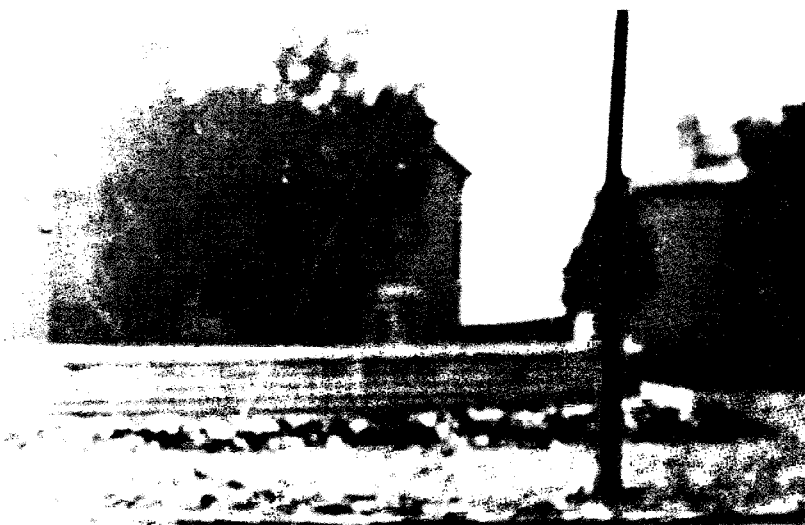
Borough Engineer & Surveyor.

Tank A: At the South end of Salisbury Close.



Tank B: West of No. 3 Laburnum Grove.

Tank C: At the Junction of O'Connell Road and Scott Road.



Tank D: Junction of Northdene Road and Southdene Road. – ready 18th May 1944.

Tank E: At the Junction of Longmead Avenue and White Road.

This was to have been the site of the Longmead Arms, but building was postponed for the duration of the War.

Tank F: At the Junction of Cherbourg Road and Goldsmith Road.

I spoke to the workmen who demolished this tank who revealed that it was part above ground and part below.

Tank G: On the site of Nos. 370 and 372 Southampton Road.

These houses a few doors north of York Road had been destroyed by a bomb on 19th January 1941.



Tank H: Adjacent to No. 58 Hursley Road, Chandler's Ford.

Tank J: Opposite No. 254 Leigh Road.

Tank K.: On the East side of High Street between the Confectionery and Butchery Departments of the Eastleigh Co-operative Society.

The site after the bombing, before it had been cleared.



The tank was built by Jurd, the builder, but I was told by a local inhabitant that it did not last long.

Water is heavy, especially 10,000 gallons of the stuff, and the above-ground wall on the west side of the tank gave way when it was filled and the water flooded the houses in High Street opposite. The tank was never re-built.

[Proof 103/852 - 20th March 1944]

~~7-1-44~~

W. Clementson, Esq., 20th March, 1944.
~~Mr. M. Buchanan Brown,~~ *Reg. Technical Adviser*
~~Regional Officer,~~
Ministry of Home Security,
Southern Regional Office,
Marlborough House,
Parkside Road,
READING.

Dear Sir,

Collapse of water basin, High Street, Eastleigh, (near The Eastleigh Co-operative premises).

.... As promised I enclose copy of a
.... letter from the contractor (Mr. Jurd)
.... and copies of statements made by his
two workmen in connection with the
above.

I understand that Officer Sage of the National Fire Service has already sent you copies of statements made by his men, together with a copy of his report.

Yours faithfully,

Borough Engineer & Surveyor, *W*

852

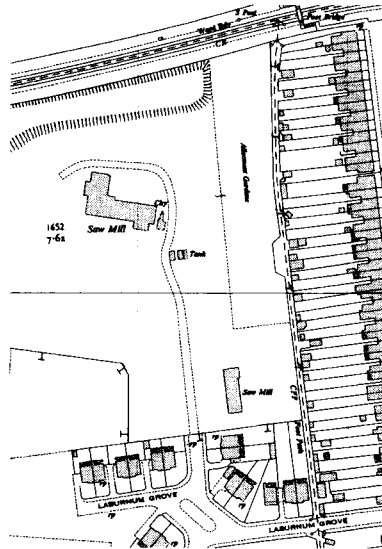
The site of this debacle is now in the High Street aisle of the Swan Centre.

More 10,000 gallon tanks were constructed in 1944.

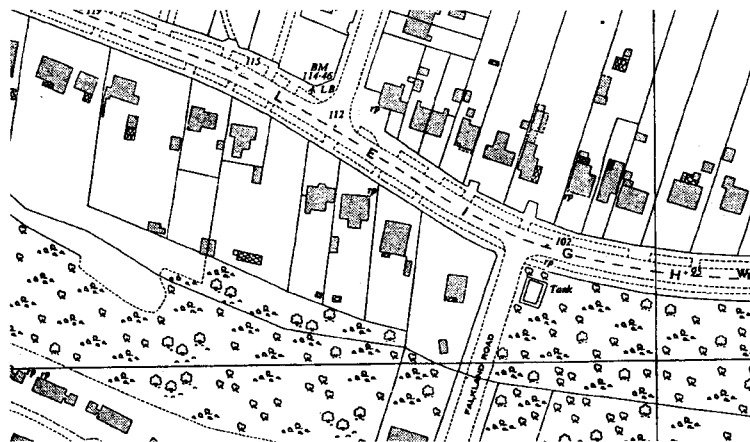
There was one in Ruskin Road which was ready on 20th March 1944. I was told of a cat being rescued from this.

Southampton Road/Market Street – ready 4th April 1944.

There were ground-work problems with a tank west of Toynbee Road, but something was constructed in Coombes' yard.



There was a tank at the Junction of Leigh Road and Falkland Road – ready on 1st May 1944. which was mapped.



There was probably a tank in Campbell Road as one was mentioned in 1949.

Things became complicated when portable static drinking-water tanks were ordered, as there was a fear that if the Chandler's Ford main was breached, there would be a shortage of fresh water. There were also orders for 'wheelbarrow' pumps which seem to be involved in some way.

Static water tanks were an important feature of Wartime Eastleigh which have almost been forgotten. The six large tanks which, when empty, were clearly visible in aerial photographs were major landmarks in the town during the nineteen forties and fifties.

Aerial views of six of the original tanks



Lawn Road



Blenheim Road and Leigh Road Recreation Ground.



Blenheim Road, Grantham Green and Derby Road



Fleming Park