



How did Kane Hythe Road get its name?

Kane Hythe Road aka the Battle end of the B2096 runs from the Ashburnham Gate at the junction of the A271/B2096 in a north-westerly direction to join Netherfield Road. It cuts directly across part of the former very large Ashburnham estate and it is often asked how this road came by its name. As nearly always the answer lies in history – unless you are a housing developer seeking to make that brand new estate as attractive as possible by using a barely recognisable neologism having little connection with locality, reality or history.

Not far from its junction with the A271 is Wadhurst Lane, which is now no more than a restricted byway to Great Beech Barn and Beech Mill Farm and beyond these a bridle path. This comes off on the eastern side and meanders towards the mid-point of Netherfield Hill near the golf club. Just beyond Wadhurst Lane Kane Hythe Road then crosses what was the Ashburnham's private road from Ashburnham Place to Vinehall and the London road. This is now mainly a footpath apart from a small bit of road through Mountfield.

The 1858 tithe maps of the area show a slight kink in the road about a quarter of the way to Netherfield with an apportionment number, '*Battle 478*', given to a small building and piece of land to the west of this kink, associated with a small pond and surrounded by fields with neighbouring apportionment numbers. This is clearly a small ridge top farm, with its fields extending around it to the north, west and south, with its eastern boundary at the road. On the OS 6 inch map of 1878 (excerpt below) and the 25 inch map of 1898 it is labelled '*Kamehithe*'. It is still there on the 1909 25 inch map and in 1930 and in 1947 (on the TQ71 1:25000 map) – the last two times as '*Kemhide*'.

Going back to 1858 the tithe apportionment details read: 'Plot: 478. Land Owner Surname: Ashburnham. Land Owner Firstname: Bertram, Lord. Occupier Surname: Honeysett. Occupier Firstname: James. Land Description: Kamehithe Lodge. Cultivation: No data. Acres / Roods / Perches: 0 / 0 / 27. Page No: 2. Date: 27 May 1858'.



Extract from tithe map

An un-named building and its fields are also marked in the same position on Yeakell and Gardner's Sussex 1778-1783 2inch to 1 mile map, the 1831 first one inch OS map, and the 1842 Estate map of Ashburnham. The building's last appearance on a map is on the 1960 OS one inch map. No building

is there today, but the fields and their boundaries persist. Presumably the land was sold off to help pay the estate death duties in the late 1950s and the building has since been demolished.

But just to confuse the name 'issue' – on the 1851 census a man called Trayton Christmas (b.1810 at Wartling) was a farmer of 105 acres on a farm called 'Canuhide'. He died later in the census year, so presumably the tenancy passed to James Honeysett after that. Trayton Christmas had married Mary Ann Sargent in 1833. The family had previously lived at Great Beech Farm and Trayton Christmas aged 30 was on the 1841 Battle Census at that address, with wife Mary, five children and James Christmas aged 25, an agricultural labourer, presumably his brother.

So we have an evolving name : 1842: Kamehide; 1851: Canuhide; 1858: Kamehithe; 1898: Kamehithe; 1930: Kemhide; 1947: Kemhide; 2017: Kane Hythe

The farm appears well established prior to 1778 and it may well have provided the viewpoint from which the great JMW Turner painted his picture of 'The Vale of Ashburnham' in 1816.

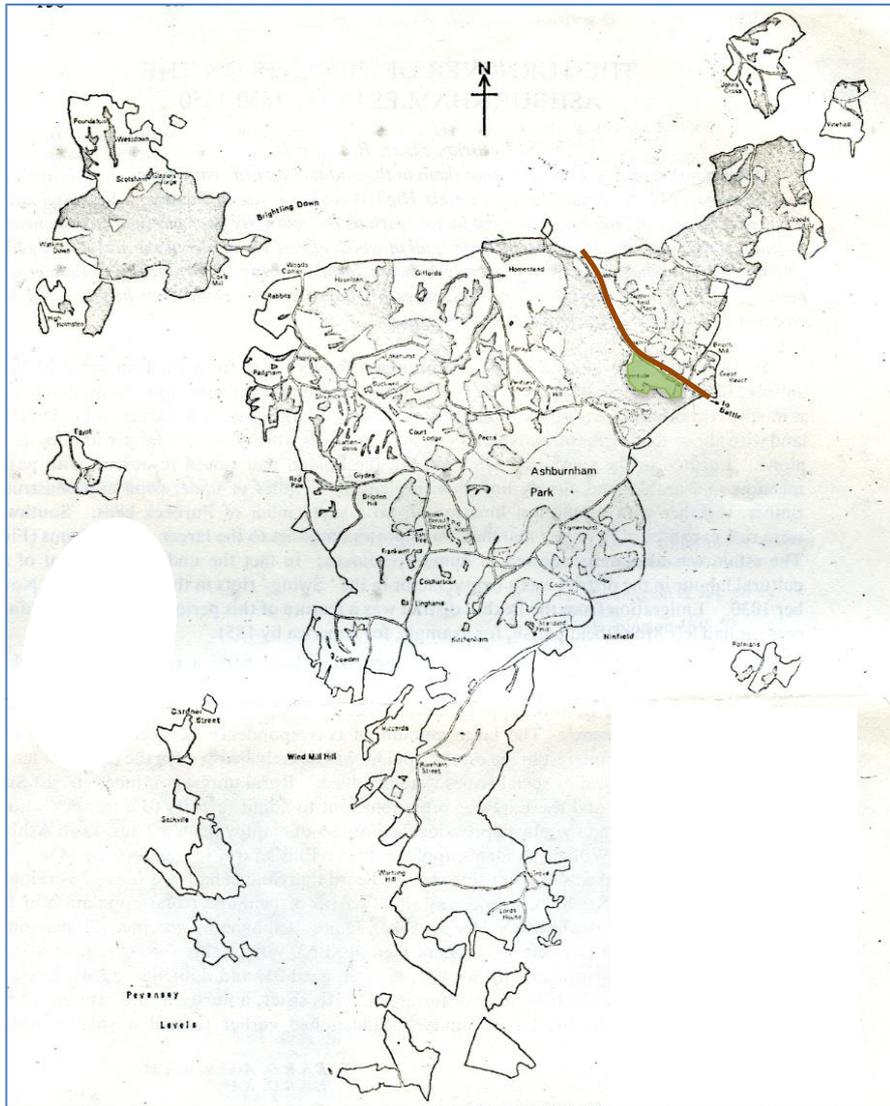


The Vale of Ashburnham JMW Turner 1816

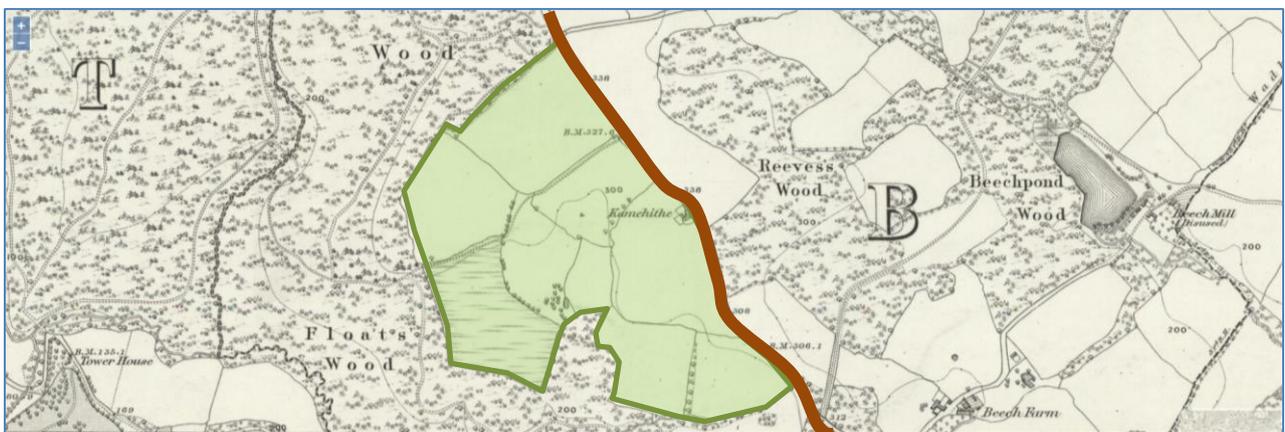
 Public domain. This view may well have been painted using Kamehide as a view point

Quite how the farm came to have such a strange name is uncertain. Was the name first given to a farm, a road or a game hide? At one time it was a tenanted farm of the old Ashburnham estate and below is a copy of the 1842 Estate map, with the road and farm outlined. As the modern name does appear to be a corrupted version of Kamehide or Kamehithe, the author suspects the 'hide' version was original with a possible function originally related to game hunting. 'Hithe/hythe/hyð' meant a small port in Old English, a name not likely to be given to a place on top of a sandstone ridge.

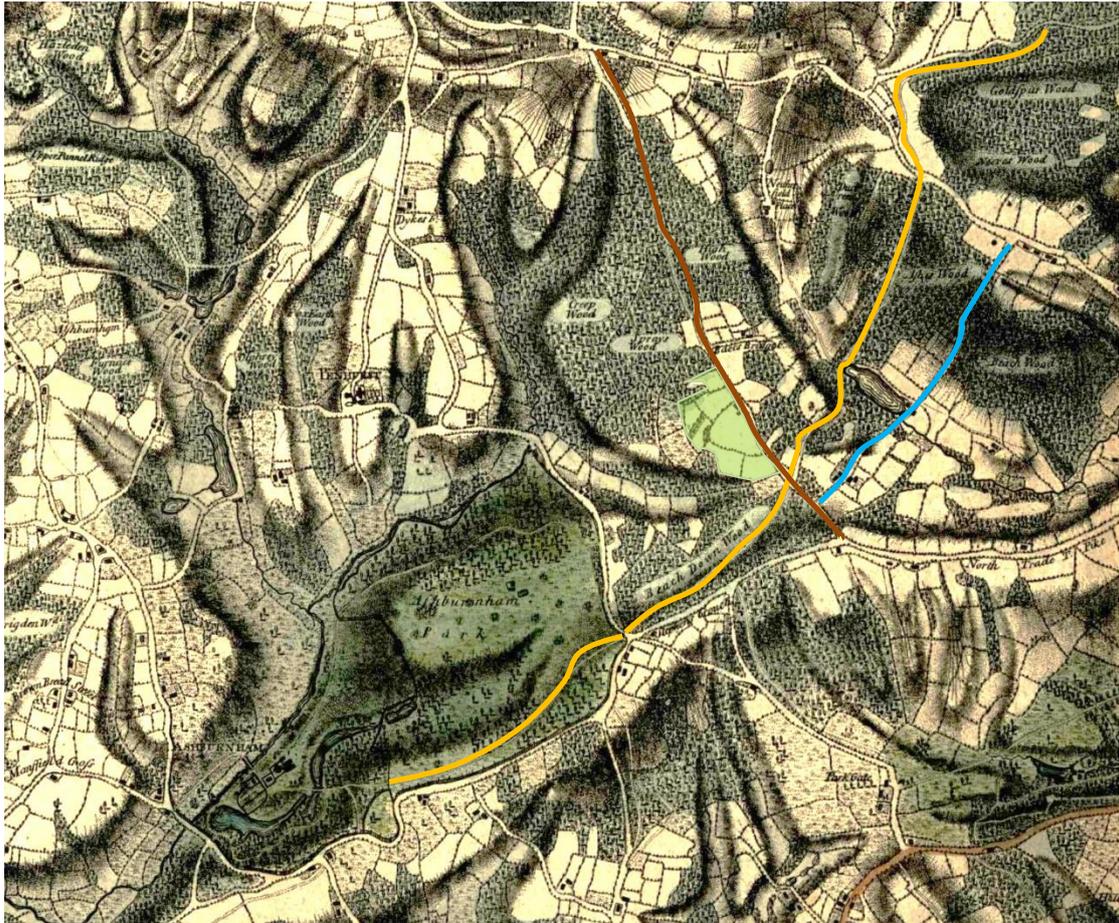
Clearly Kemhide must have been an OS error, but quite when after 1947 and before the present day an 'm' became an 'n' and an 'l' a 'y' and the name split in two is still uncertain. Perhaps a reader knows?



On this map of the Ashburnham Estate in 1842 and on the two below Kamehithe Farm is highlighted in light green and the road in brown: Image above is from the BDHS Archive.



Extract from OS Six inch map of 1878 showing 'Kamehithe' : 'Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland' <http://maps.nls.uk/index.html>



Extract from Yeakell and Gardner's 'Sussex 1778-1783, 2 inch to 1 mile' with overlays. The early draft OS map of 1806 is similar

From: <http://www.envf.port.ac.uk/geo/research/historical/webmap/sussexmap/Yeakelllarge41.htm>

Kane Hythe road is brown, Lord Ashburnham's private coach road yellow and Wadhurst Lane is blue

Keith Foord
September 2017 ©BDHS