

Hambledon Vineyard – Premises Licence Application Information Document

Hambledon Vineyard – Resurrection of England's Oldest Commercial Vineyard

Hambledon Vineyard- History

Hambledon is a village of ca. 800 inhabitants situated 55 miles south west of London in Hampshire. Hambledon is known as both the "Cradle of Cricket" and as the birthplace of English commercial wine making. Hambledon Vineyard was the first commercial vineyard to be planted in England since the Dissolution of the monasteries by Henry the VIII in 1537.

Hambledon Vineyard was first planted by Sir Guy and Lady Salisbury-Jones in 1951 with the assistance of Pol-Roger (a relationship developed by the general and his family during and following WW2 and being re-kindled by the present owner). Major-General Sir Guy Salisbury Jones was His Majesty's and then Her Majesty's Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps (Chef de Keep of the Diplomatic Corps) from 1950 to 1961. He acquired his love of French wine in the 'Great War' when the French soldiers shared their wines with the General (then a young subaltern). Following retirement from his post as Military Attaché at the British Embassy in Paris during 1946 - 1949, Major General Sir Guy Salisbury Jones returned to Hambledon and established the first commercial vineyard in England. Through the 1950's and 1960's the French Champagne house of Pol Roger took an interest in the Hambledon Vineyard and one of their viticulturist paid several visits to give practical help and advice. Odette Pol Roger shortly became a good friend of the family and some of the vintages include the name of Pol Roger on their back label. Combined sales and marketing events were undertaken (eg the launch of the Maestro by British Leyland was a joint marketing event at Liberty's in London for Pol Roger and Hambledon Vineyard).



These important historical elements are at the centre of the creation of a now thriving UK wine industry, and a chapter on Hambledon Vineyard and its role in the English Wine industry is related in most books on the subject (eg by Stephen Skelton, MW). At this point, Hambledon as with most all other succeeding English Vineyards of the day, were producing still white wines largely from hybrid grapes varieties such as Seyval Blanc.

Hambledon Vineyard was opened to the public in 1955 (see photograph of queue outside winery). In 1967 the number of coaches visiting the site, and the difficulty with HGV access up and down vineyard lane, required the installation of a new road access by Sir Guy Salisbury-Jones, to the East of the vineyard. This planning application clearly refers to the creation of a new road for the purpose of bringing coaches (ie a commercial, non agricultural vehicle) to the site. Planning permission was duly granted to Sir Guy Salisbury-Jones for the building of this new 'road'. During the 1970's and 1980's over 100 coach loads of people visited the site each year, via this route. Annual visitor numbers including coaches, cars, adults and children, were in the range of 8,000 – 11,000 pa during a period from July to October each year. The vineyard would regularly receive 300-500 visitors per day, with a peak of 831 visitors in one day. It is not the intention of the present owners to receive visitors in nearly such large numbers, however it does demonstrate that the business has been capable of this in the past and the site and local amenities coped with even this high volume without substantial difficulties or safety risks, and all the residential houses around the vineyard were in existence and occupied at this time. Very few of the present inhabitants of houses around the vineyard were in residence here at this time. Mr William Carcary, the nearest resident to the winery / license premises, was in Hambledon at that time.

The business produced up to 30,000 bottles of wine pa at this time, depending upon growing conditions and harvest.

The new road installed has been used for HGVs too large to pass along vineyard lane safely (eg coaches), for over 40 years now. Inbound and outbound deliveries by HGV were all moved into and out of the site by this route throughout the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's. During the period 1999 – 2011 under the ownership of the present owner, around 70 HGVs from 8T fixed wheel base vehicles, up to 40T articulated lorries have all used the route. During the mid 1980's even sea containers were brought into and out of the site using this route – some 30,000 bottles of wine were shipped to the USA in this way.

In 1984 the Vineyard changed hands. John Paterson, the new owner, led a big expansion project adding a new winery and a substantial underground wine cellar and planting substantial numbers of new vines. In 1993 the vineyard changed hands again and was acquired by Jim LaRock. Jim reduced the planted acreage of the vineyard and had the wines made by contract winemakers, off site, with the last vintage being produced in 1996 (we still have several cases of the 1995 and 1996 vintages). When Ian Kellett bought the vineyard in 1999, Jim LaRock was still continuing to sell the wine made from the 1995 and 1996 harvests – indeed a substantial parcel was offered to Mr Kellett as part of the sale. From 1997 to 2003 the vineyard continued to grow grapes as a business under Mr Peter Crabtree, with the grapes being sold to other wineries. In 2004 Mr Kellett instigated a plan to restore Hambledon Vineyard to its erstwhile position at the centre of the English wine industry. The strategy involved an expensive and long term investment to switch the business to sparkling wine production, because the quality of English sparkling wines being produced are now beginning to win international reputations with sparkling wines of very high quality.

Hambledon Vineyard has an ideal South facing slope from 60-100m altitude above sea level, which along with the hill formations surrounding the vineyard and the shelter from trees and other factors, provides an ideal micro-climate for the production of high quality grapes for sparkling wine production. (During Summer the temperature within the vineyard is generally 2-3 ° C higher than the surrounding area). In 2004 the vineyards were replanted with the 3 classic Champagne grapes (Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier). The vineyard was planted with 25 carefully selected combinations of French Champagne clones of Chardonnay (65%), Pinot Noir (25%) and Pinot Meunier (15%) on different rootstocks (SO4 and 41B). This mix was selected to provide the highest quality fruit and also to create opportunity for the winemaker to carefully blend the resulting different base wines, at assemblage, to create a leading cuvee of subtle complexity, in a light crisp sparkling wine with excellent mousse (hence the preponderance of Chardonnay). This 2004 replanting should see Hambledon Vineyard producing between 30,000-40,000 bottles pa of the finest English sparkling wine – aiming for the highest prizes in competitions both in the UK and internationally.



Once these vines had grown and proven the viability of the site for high quality sparkling wine production, Mr Kellett turned to the question of re-equipping the winery. In 2009 plans were developed for the winery investment requiring several million pounds to complete, including premier French champagne presses and wine tanks. After extensive work on the business plan incorporating leading French wine makers, construction permits, securing additional vineyard land and a range of other detailed issues, a substantial grant was awarded by the EU and UK Governments as RDPE (rural development) via SEEDA. This is the largest grant ever given to a UK winery. In 2010 the business was converted to a plc and shares were offered to members of the public so that a broader participation in the joys of developing this business could be achieved. The offer was fully taken up with a very substantial proportion of the money being funded by private individuals living within 6 miles of Hambledon Vineyard – that is to say the development of the vineyard has strong support both from local private individuals who have invested their own hard earned money, and from government via SEEDA.

Having constructed and equipped the winery extension, in 2011 we made wine in Hambledon on site for the first time in 15 years. Hambledon Wineries Ltd now requires an alcohol licence to begin selling the wine it is now making. We presently have 30,000L of wine in tanks (from 2010 and 2011 harvests) which need bottling and maturation, though some wine shall be released early and sold as a young non-vintage wine subject to licensing approval.

It is extremely difficult to forecast future volumes and routes to market. The route to market shall be the subject of a large amount of effort over coming years by the directors and employees of Hambledon Vineyard, but is expected to include major UK food retailers, hotels, restaurants, and a series of export markets. Historically, Hambledon wines have been sold on QE2, at London hotels and restaurants, and exported to a range of countries. However, we have endeavoured to give some forecasts as best we can. In a break with the past we do not intend to market the vineyard to coach tours, preferring instead much smaller numbers of visitors to the site.

It is envisaged by the directors that over the coming 7 years or so, sale volumes might take something approaching the following shape. However, we emphasise that the future is uncertain and we cannot be sure that this is how the volume development will evolve, so it is indicative and a present best estimate only.

BPA	Total forecast sales volume	Volume forecast sales on site to visitors
2012	5,000	2,000
2013	10,000	3,000
2014-2018	30-40,000	7,000

In 2009 Hambledon Vineyard Ltd was separately constituted. In April 2010 Hambledon Vineyard Ltd was awarded a grant by SEEDA (South East England Development Agency) of £514,000 for winery expansion, being the largest grant ever given to a UK winery. In March 2011 Hambledon Vineyard plc completed a private investor fund raising. We are aiming to build the UK's only totally gravity fed winery, which should provide a substantial quality advantage. We have ordered the best quality Champagne presses available (Coquard PAI) and wine tanks from a leading French producer.

The present owners envisage a business with a relatively small proportion of volume sold directly to visitors at site. However, the site acts as an important component in the brand building of the business. Wine tasting events and organised tours are a very important aspect of part of a successful vineyard and, with the added advantage of the history of Hambledon Vineyard, we would wish to promote this element of the business. With this in mind and subject to licensing approval to permit on-sales, we intend to renovate the existing office building next to the new winery (which is at the rear of Mill Down House) as a visitor reception and wine-tasting room.

With regard to site visits by potential consumers, we do not envisage numbers of visitors coming to the site to represent any increase on historical levels, and furthermore our current expectation is that those numbers are likely to be significantly lower.

It is our intention to sell the vast majority of the wine via major food retailers in the UK (eg Waitrose), and also to hotels and restaurants. Further, we expect to build an international market for the wine. We expect this volume to leave the site via the road built by our predecessors in 1967 for access to Mill Down House and the vineyard. We do not expect the number of HGVs leaving the vineyard to exceed one per week on average within the next 10 years (ie as far as we can be reasonably expected to foresee). In our view, especially in comparison with the past, this does not represent a significant amount of traffic.

The distance from the winery building to the nearest residential accommodation (apart from the vineyard owners at Mill Down House) is approximately 300 metres. This house is owned by Mr. Carcary who supports our licence application. Compared with other licensed premises in the village (ie the Vine public house) this distance shall act to substantially mitigate any noise effect. However, perhaps more importantly, the nature of any wine tasting which shall occur is most likely to be quiet, calm and considered. No music is expected to be played. We do not expect large numbers of loud people to be leaving the premises late at night, nor come to that during the day. Further, staff and visitors shall all be instructed to run operations and conduct themselves in a manner which mitigates noise. It is also worth pointing out that the proposed licensed premises sit immediately behind Mill Down House, Mr. Kellett's home. This is a substantial building which shall further act to mitigate any noise from departing visitors / wine tasters.

As regards light, we expect visitors to the vineyard to be most likely during summer months when evenings are lighter longer. We already have a series of ornate lamp-posts which switch on for a period of 3-5 minutes at night time if required, with movement detectors controlling the lights. If necessary this system shall be moderately expanded. The new winery building has external floodlighting for working in October during harvest during the evening hours. The lights on the north side are the most likely to be used where grapes are delivered into the building -- these cannot be seen from any neighbours as they are North of the building and completely shielded by it. It is possible on occasion during the year that these worklights shall be used outside of October, though not on a planned or frequent basis. It is expected that this lighting far exceeds any needed for visitors to safely reach their cars. This work lighting has planning approval already as part of our prior notification and permitted development. So we do not envisage lighting for visitors during winter months to safely reach their cars of an evening, to be any nuisance at all to residents, over and above that already residentially used by Mill Down House.

**Park House
East Street
Hambleton
PO7 4SB**

Ian Kellett, Esq.
Hambleton Wineries PLC
The Vineyard
Hambleton

16th January 2012

Dear Ian

Planning Application for an alcohol licence

I was very disappointed to hear that there have been a number of objections to your submission for an alcohol licence and am writing to express my support for your application. Aside from the obvious and legitimate concern of those living on the lane by which people will access your premises, I can see no reasonable objection to granting a licence. Indeed it would seem perverse to deny a vineyard the opportunity to sell its produce.

It may be that a number of the objectors were not resident in the village when the vineyard was in its heyday. As I recall it was a popular enterprise, which was widely supported by the community. I understand (and am relieved) that it is not your intention to develop it as a visitor attraction as it used to be, complete with coach parties at weekends.

I fully endorse the redevelopment, which is long overdue. The investment and commitment you have made to developing a business, which already provides employment and may in time do more to benefit the local economy, should be supported. I am sure that in time, as people see the success, their opinions will change. UK PLC desperately needs entrepreneurs who will invest in small businesses and create employment: these businesses will be the foundation of any recovery we may enjoy in years to come.

If I can help in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Guy Stanford

Telephone: 07790 907597

Email: Guy.Stanford@tennysoninsurance.co.uk

Peter Webber

Bethel

Vineyard Lane

Hambledon

PO7 4RY

Mr Ian Kellett

Hambledon Wineries Ltd

13th January 2012

The Vineyard

Hambledon

Re: Premises Licence application for the Vineyard

Dear Ian

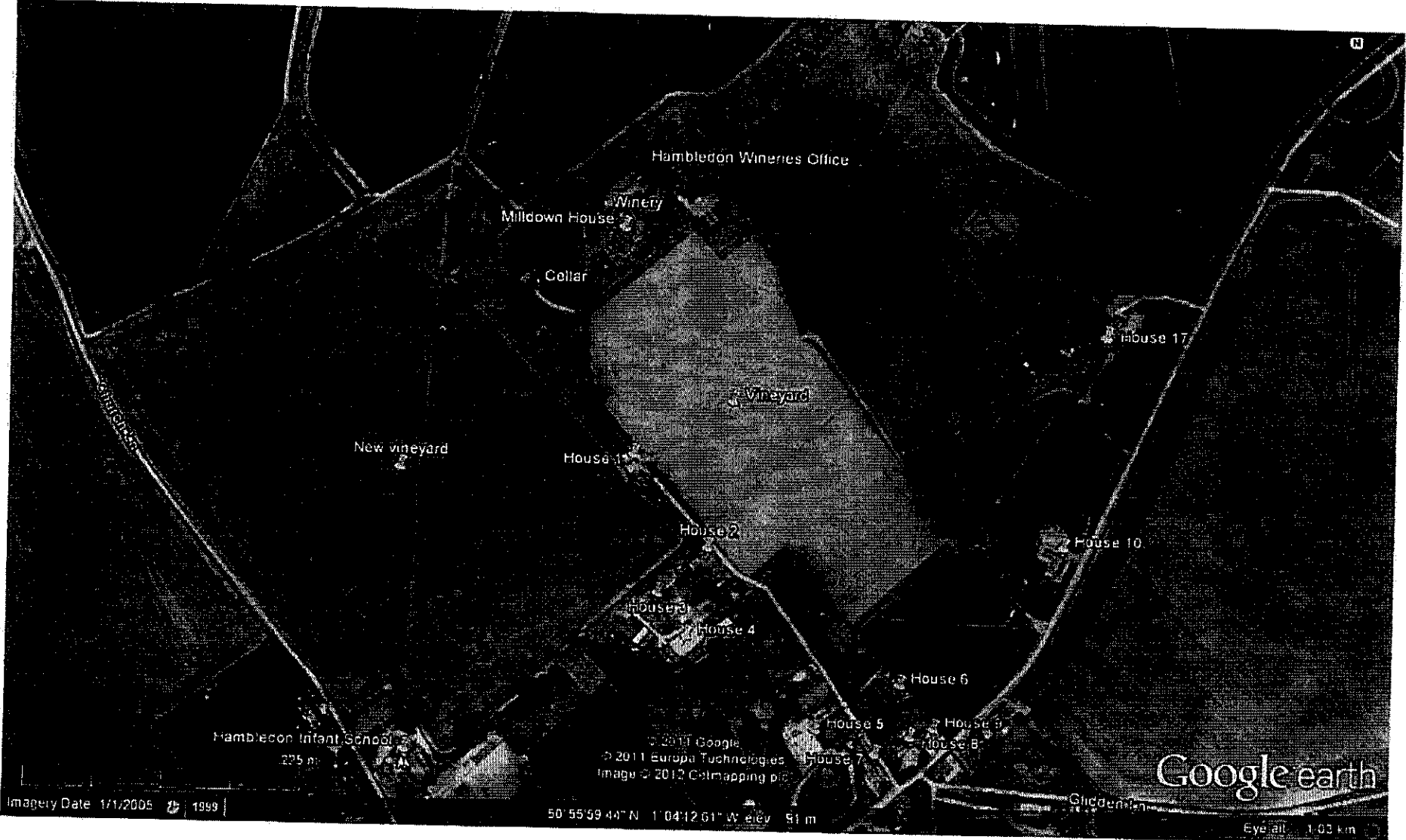
I confirm that Jan and I have no objection to the above application and hope that you will succeed in obtaining the necessary licence. I have mentioned the future wine tastings to friends and business acquaintances and have received quite a lot of interest.

Will there also be educational courses as originally envisaged? This aspect has also elicited interest, not least from ourselves!

Kind regards



Peter Webber



Hambleton Wineries Office

Winery
Mildown House

Cellar

House 17

Vineyard

New vineyard

House 11

House 2

House 10

House 3

House 4

House 6

Hambleton Infant School
275 m

© 2011 Google
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House 5

House 8
160 SE B

House 7

Google earth

Imagery Date 1/1/2005 1999

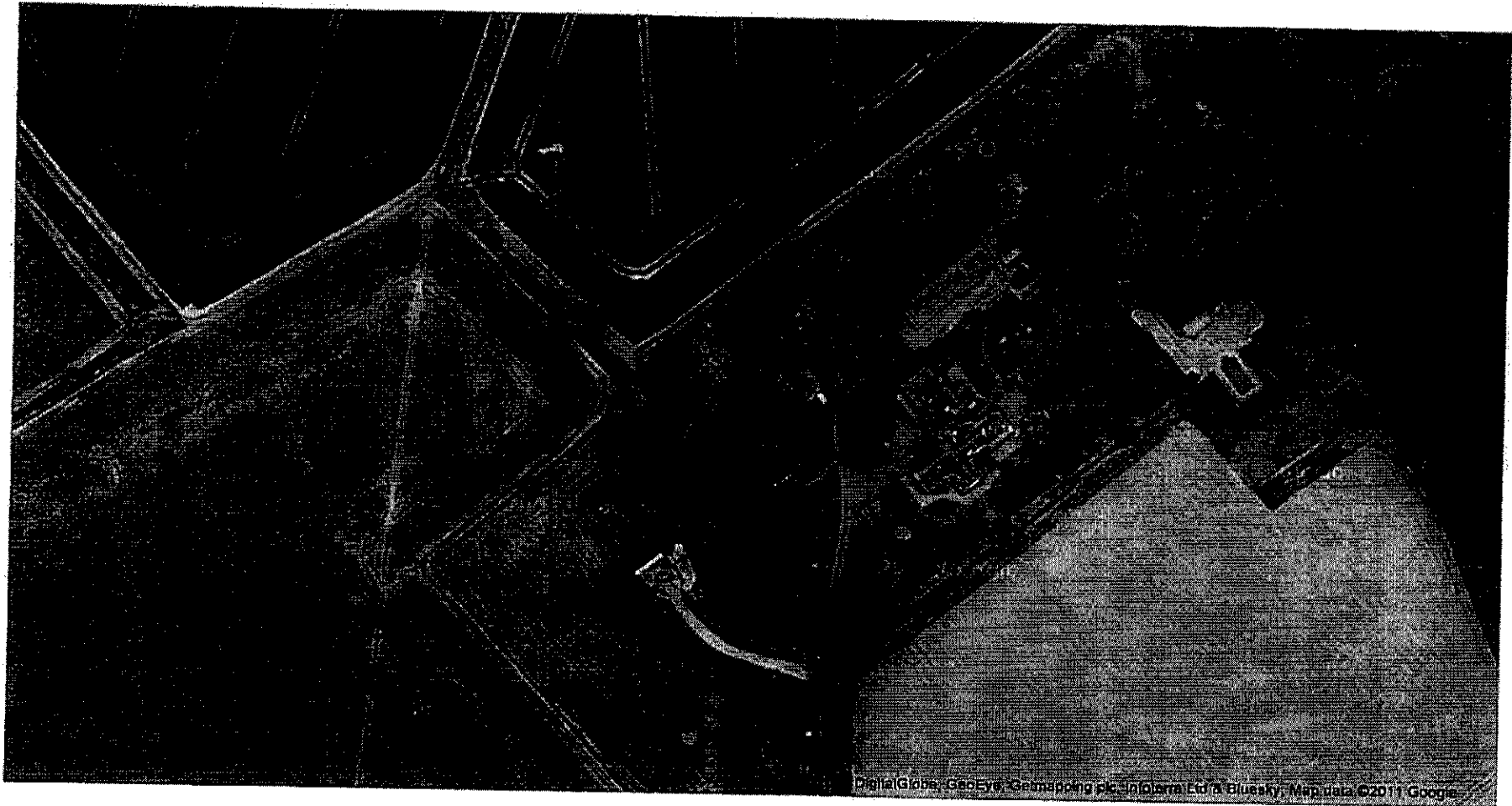
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Gladden

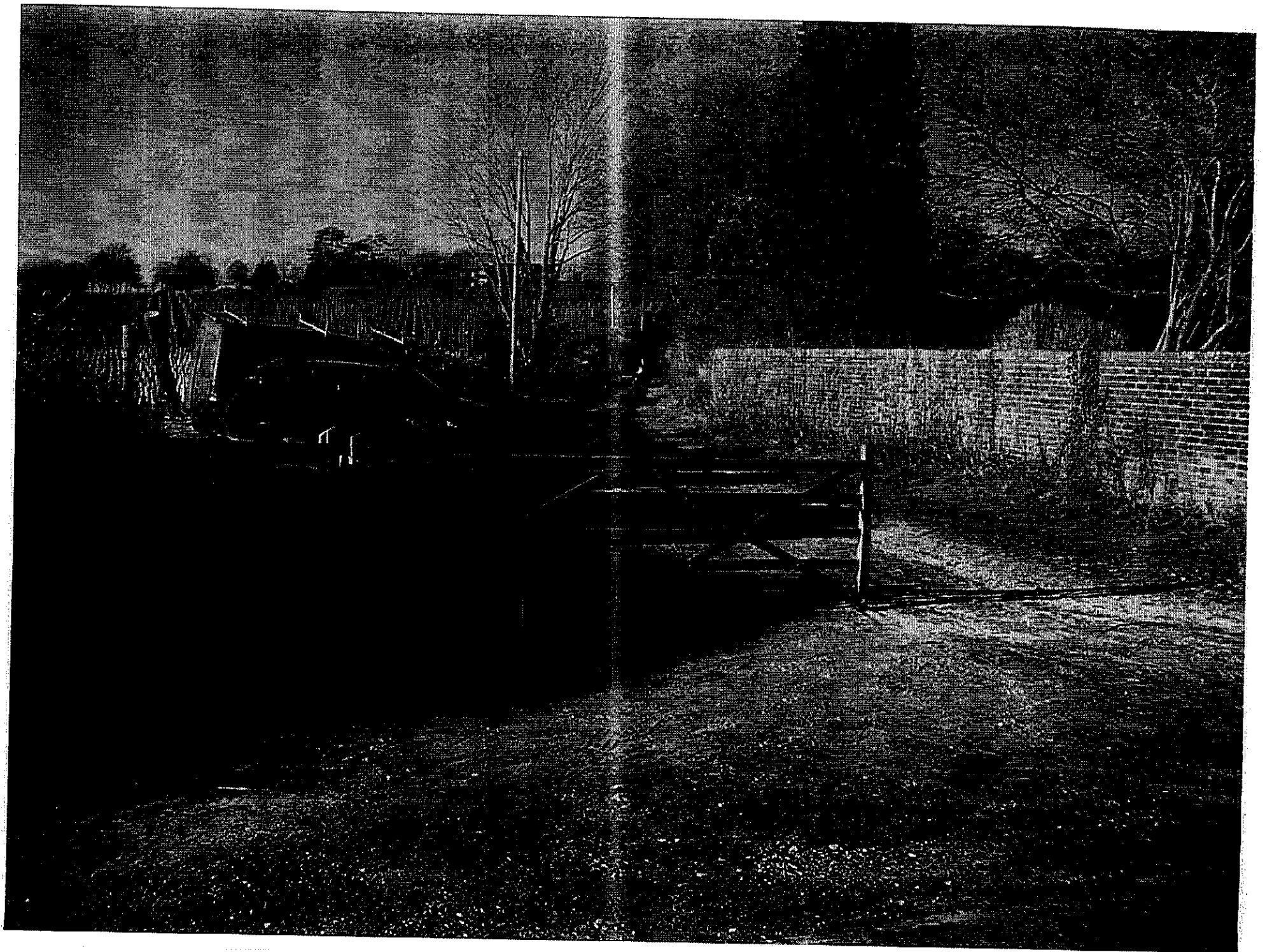
Eye alt 1.03 km

Google

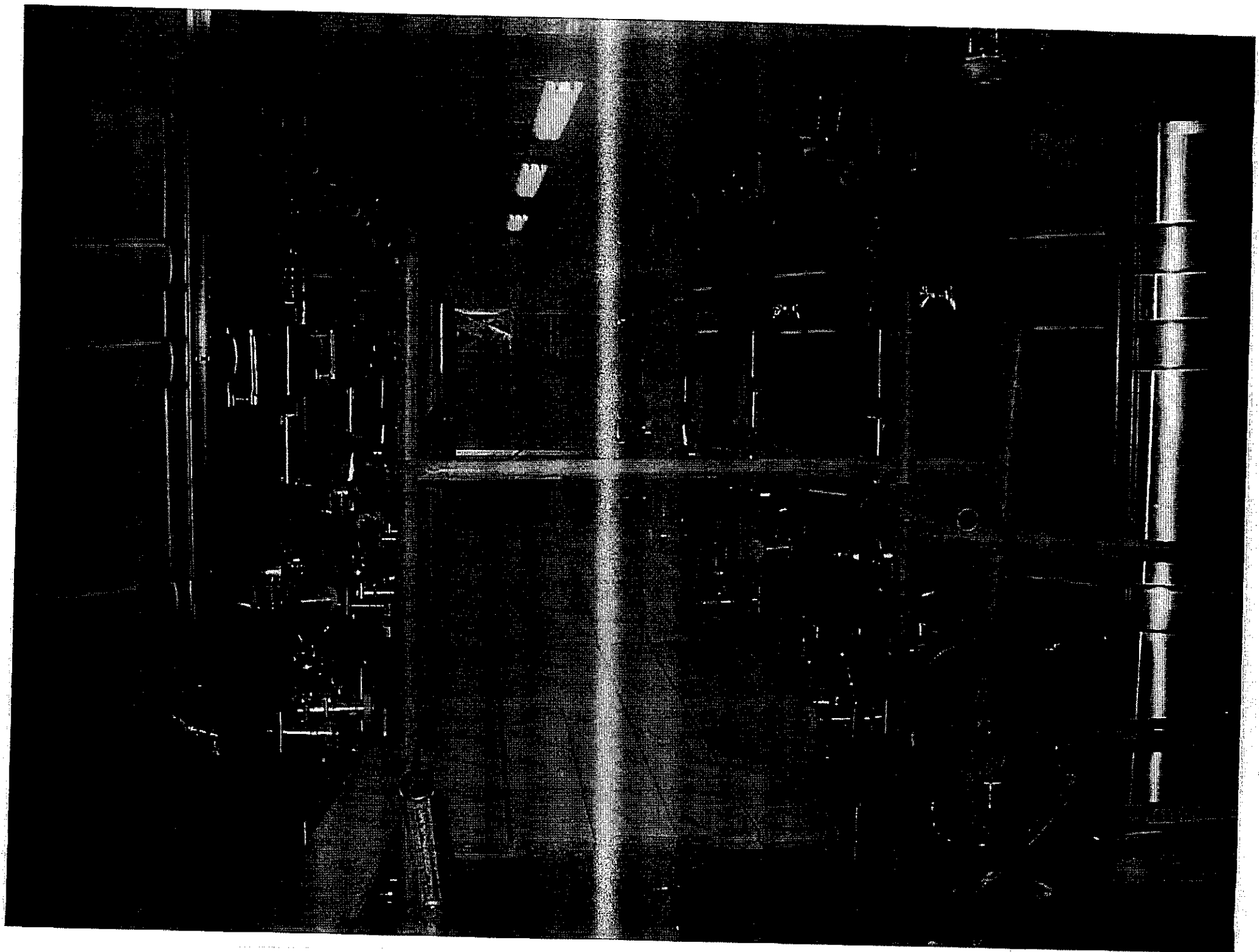
To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the Print link next to the map.





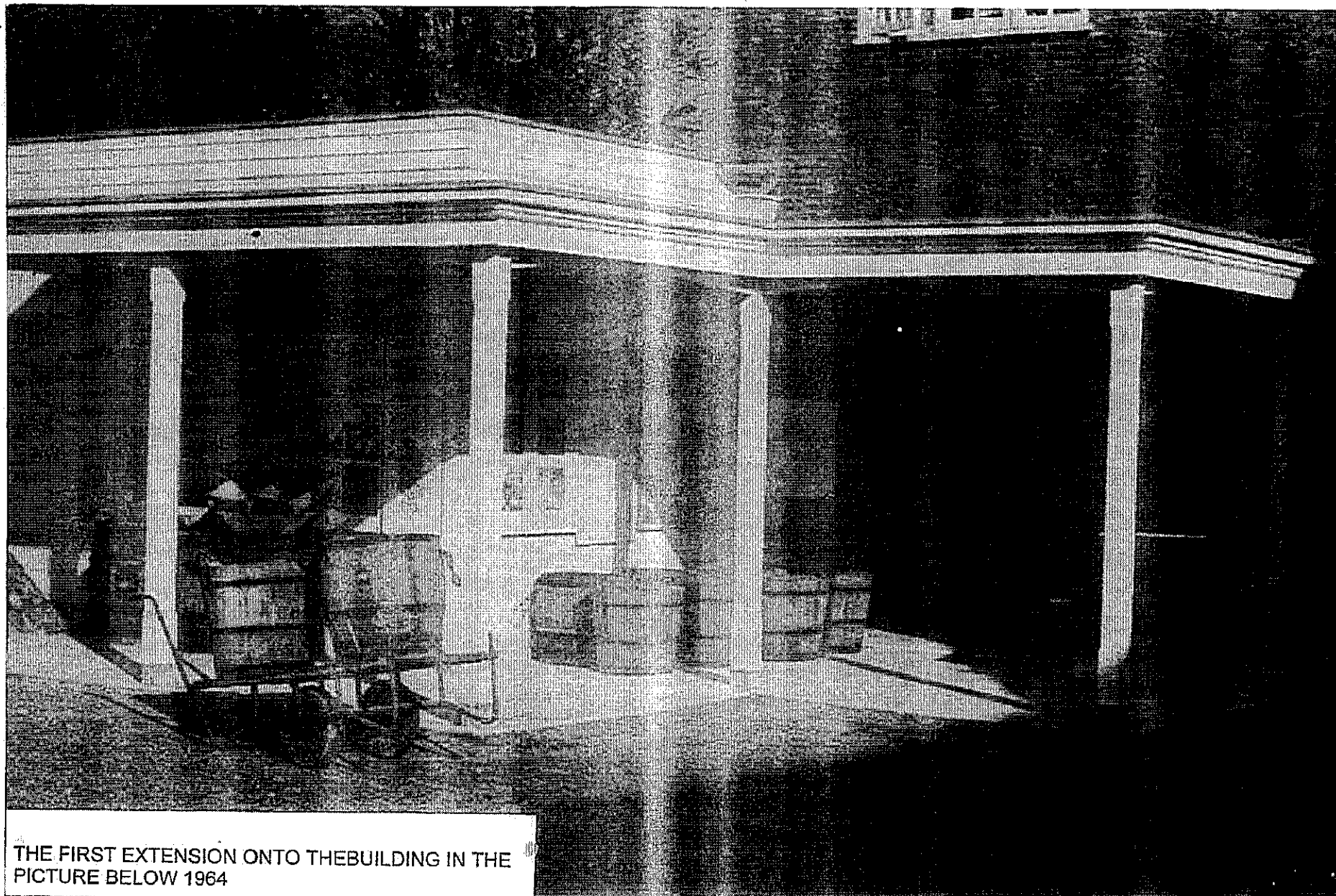




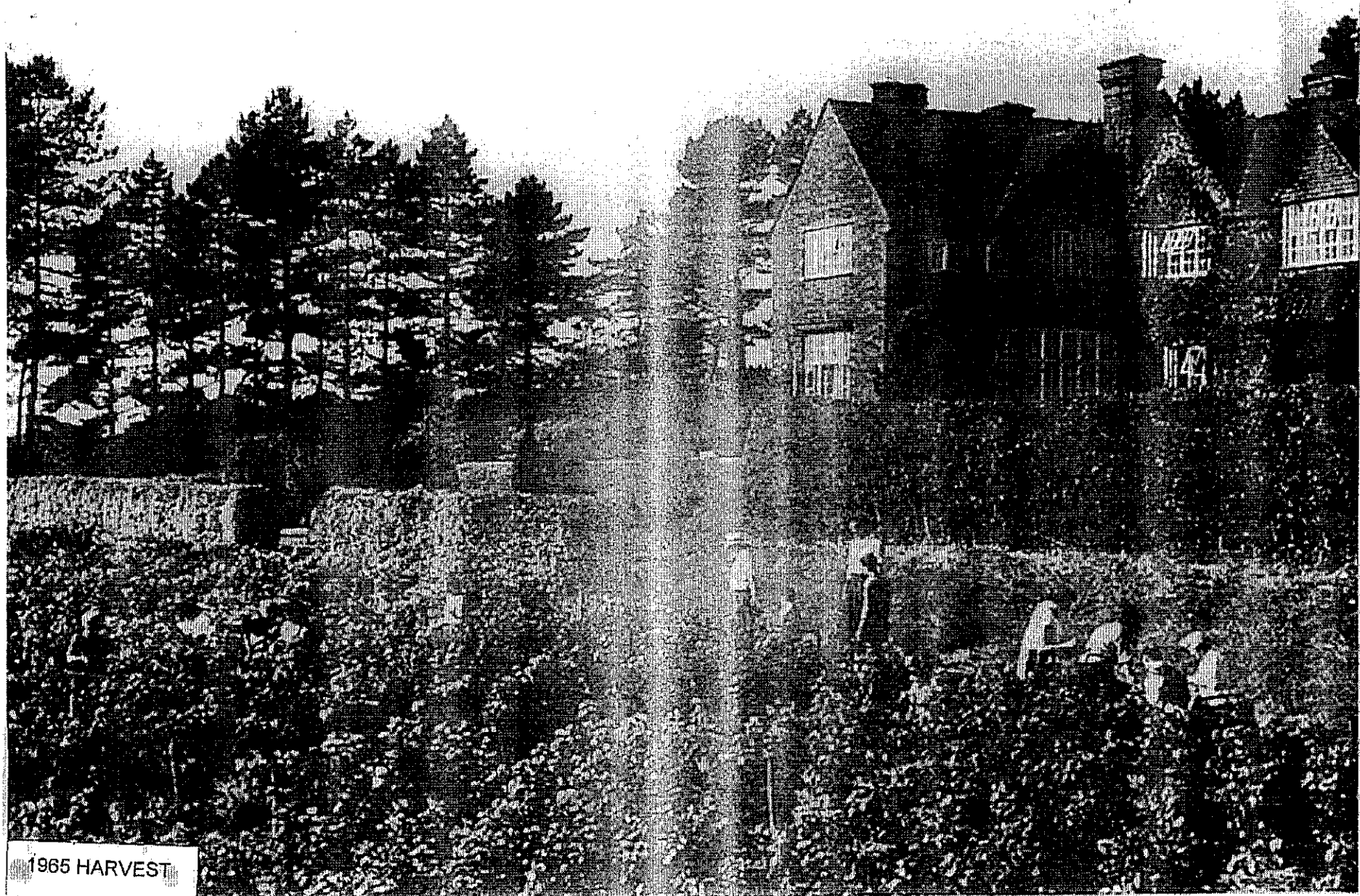




©PENDAY 1957 – The first open day for the Red Cross



THE FIRST EXTENSION ONTO THE BUILDING IN THE
PICTURE BELOW 1964



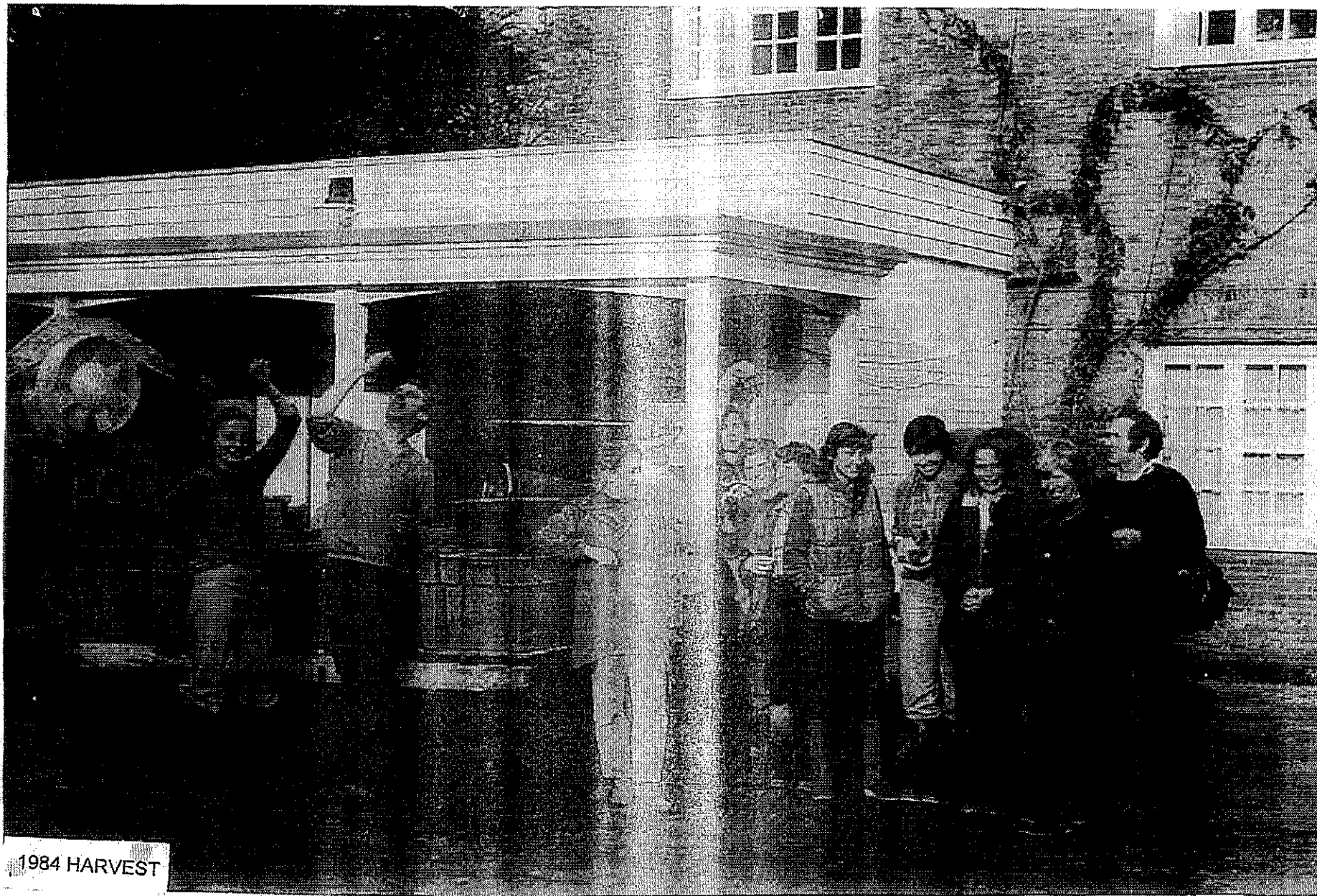
1965 HARVEST



1966 HARVEST – Mr Carcary in the foreground of the picture and Mr Blackman behind in the hat



PICKERS OF 1979



1984 HARVEST