



Sutton Abbas

The Abbey of Chertsey claimed they had owned Sutton from 675 AD when Frithwald, the subregulus of Surrey, gave the land to the Abbot. That's only 78 years after St Augustine had formally reintroduced Christianity to England.



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Normans invade

Domesday survey of 1086 taken 12 years after King William's conquest found that Sutton had two churches. One certainly stood on the site of this building. The Normans spread the cult of St Nicholas during the following century and name of Sutton's church goes back to this time.



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The first priest

Nicholas de Heddesham was the first named priest to be linked to Sutton in 1291. This was at a time when many parishes in England started to get named resident priests or vicars.



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The black death

The plague that killed 1 in 3 people reached England in 1348. Sutton's priest in 1343 was called Oslacus. He had been sent to Sutton by the abbot of Chertsey to manage building projects. It is not known whether Oslacus and any of his parishioners were killed by the Black Death.



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The long war

From 1337 to 1453 the English kings and the French kings fought for the control of France. The government needed money for the war. The king made Chertsey Abbey give him the right to appoint the new vicars of Sutton so he didn't have to find salaries for his servants.



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Kill the lawyers!

William Barnet like many of the medieval vicars of Sutton was a lawyer. 1450 was the year of Jack Cade's rebellion. "The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers", is a quote from Shakespeare about the rebellion. William Barnet was not killed but he made his will just in case!



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Warwick the King-maker was killed in 1471. The vicar was lucky only to lose his Royal jobs.

A game of thrones

William Morland was made vicar of Sutton during the wars of the roses. He was a lawyer as well as a priest. He was a client of the powerful Richard Neville, the Earl of Warwick. He became briefly Master of the Rolls before his patron was killed in the battle of Barnet.



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A royal diplomat

Making a royal servant the vicar of Sutton was a very good idea. Because the parish gave a good income the King didn't have to pay his servant out of his own money. The vicar of Sutton in the early 1500s was, Dr John Grygge, who was sent as a diplomat to Rome.



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Always try to make a
good first impression.

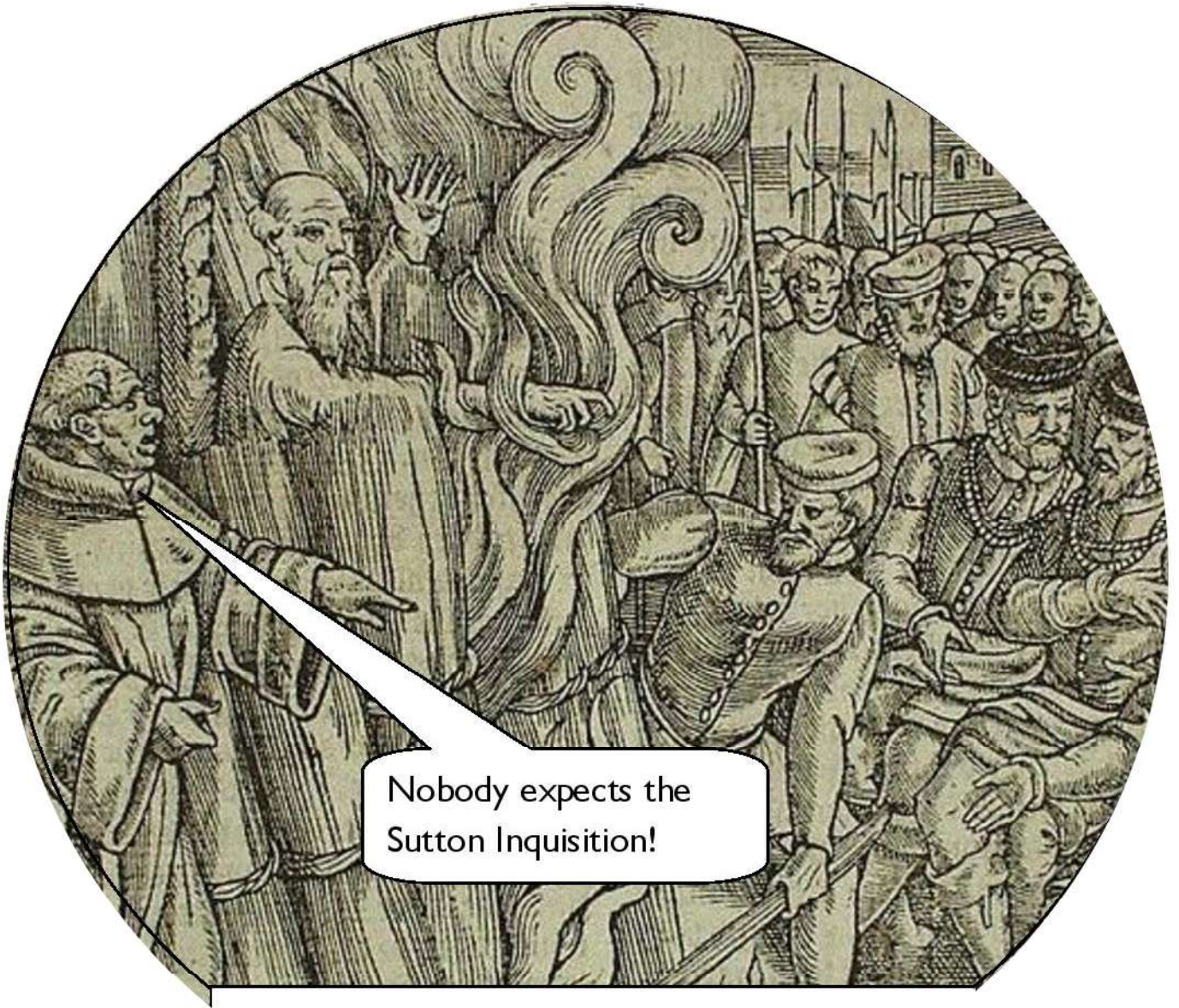


The great divorce

Dr Benet was appointed vicar in 1527. He was a diplomat in Rome when King Henry VIII was trying to divorce Catherine of Aragon. Once the Pope refused to see him and the King raged against him in a letter as an “Englishman papisticate”. He died on the way home from Rome.



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Bloody Mary

After Mary Tudor became Queen the new rector of Sutton was Edmund Marvyn in 1554. He was also Archdeacon of Surrey and in charge of enforcing Catholicism. We don't know if he had anyone burnt alive.



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Singing the blues

It isn't easy being a parish priest. About 1610 when Robert Cordell was rector he had to take one of his parishioners Daniel Steward to court to stop him singing very rude songs about his wife. For many people back then a priest being married didn't seem right.



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There is a letter in Trinity College from Ralph Skynner sent from Sutton to Archbishop Ussher correcting his Hebrew.

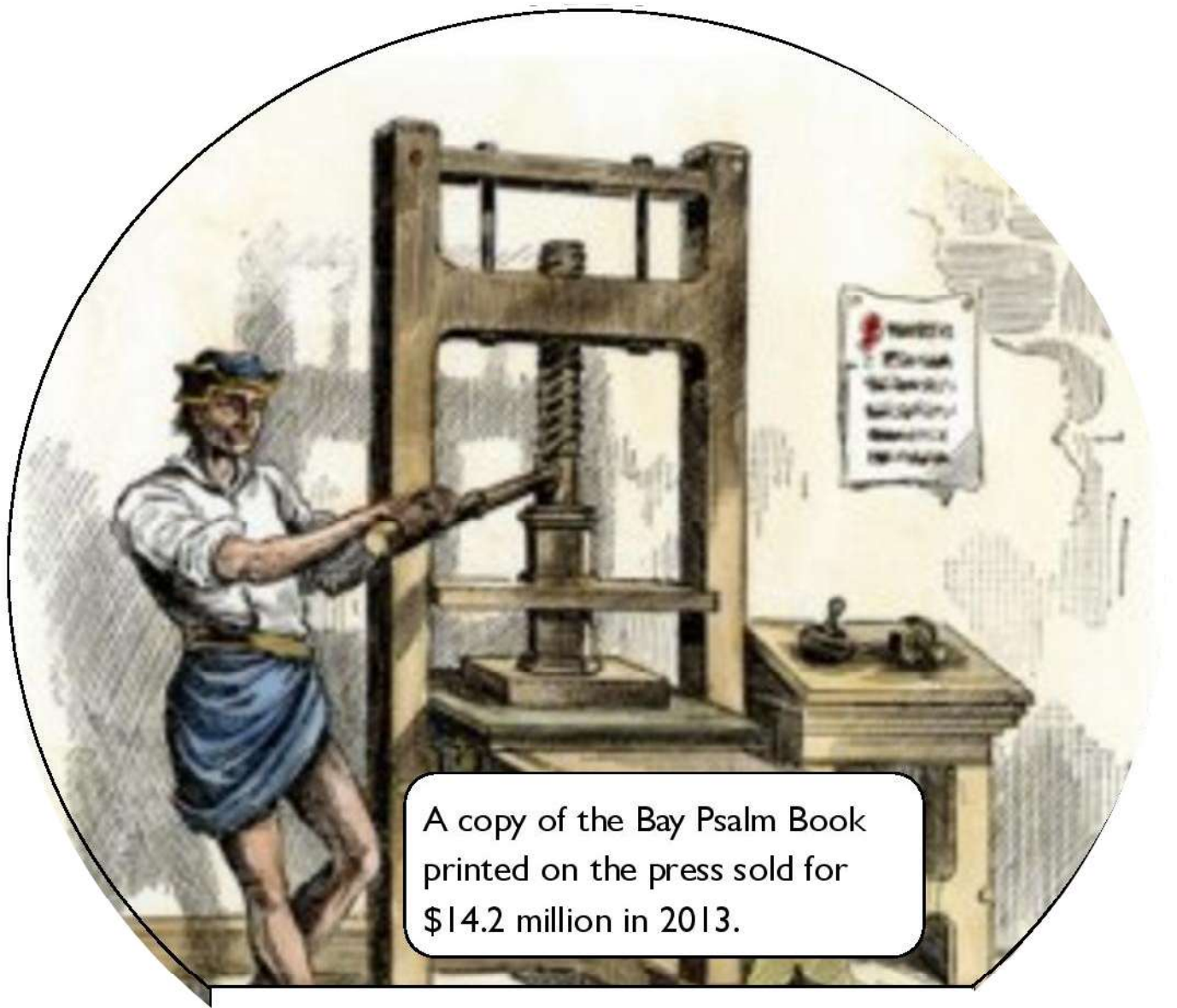
He's a very cheeky curate!

He knows you know

In 1624 Ralph Skynner was a curate in Sutton. He was a scholar of Hebrew and he wrote letters to other scholars. These included Archbishop Ussher who famously worked out that the world was created on the night preceding Sunday, 23 October 4004 BC.



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A copy of the Bay Psalm Book printed on the press sold for \$14.2 million in 2013.

Puritans and printers

The rector Josse Glover was a puritan and didn't like the way in which the church was run. He made several journeys to the Massachusetts colony planning to emigrate. He died on a voyage to America in 1636. The printing press that he took with him was then used by Harvard university.



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There were several wealth families that had houses in Sutton during the 17th Century.

Born free

John Sango was baptised in 1677 by the rector Henry Wyche . John Sango had been brought to Sutton as a slave probably from west Africa. Henry Wyche was rector from 1636 until his death in 1678. One of Henry Wyche's sons became a slave owner in America.



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Mind your words

William Stephen became rector in 1690. Rev Stephen wrote very rude and angry sermons that eventually got him into trouble. He was sentenced by a court to twice stand in the pillory in London. He was very relieved when the court just made him pay a fine.



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A refugee made good

James Sanxay became rector in 1745. His father (Daniel) was 6 when he arrived in 1685 with his parents as a refugee fleeing religious persecution in France. James Sanxay inherited Cheam school from his father but gave it up to be rector of Sutton instead.



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A plot is Hatched

Giles Hatch became rector in 1767. Sutton was owned by a very young Margaret Cliffe. Her mother was Susannah. Rev Hatch used his influence over the widowed Mrs Cliffe to arrange for his son Thomas to wed Margaret. After marriage Thomas became lord of the manor.



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Rise of Empire

As Britain's empire grew in the 1700s many merchants became very rich. James Gibson's family is one of those and they left a big tomb in the churchyard. The Gibson family left money to charity and gave instructions that their tomb is inspected annually.

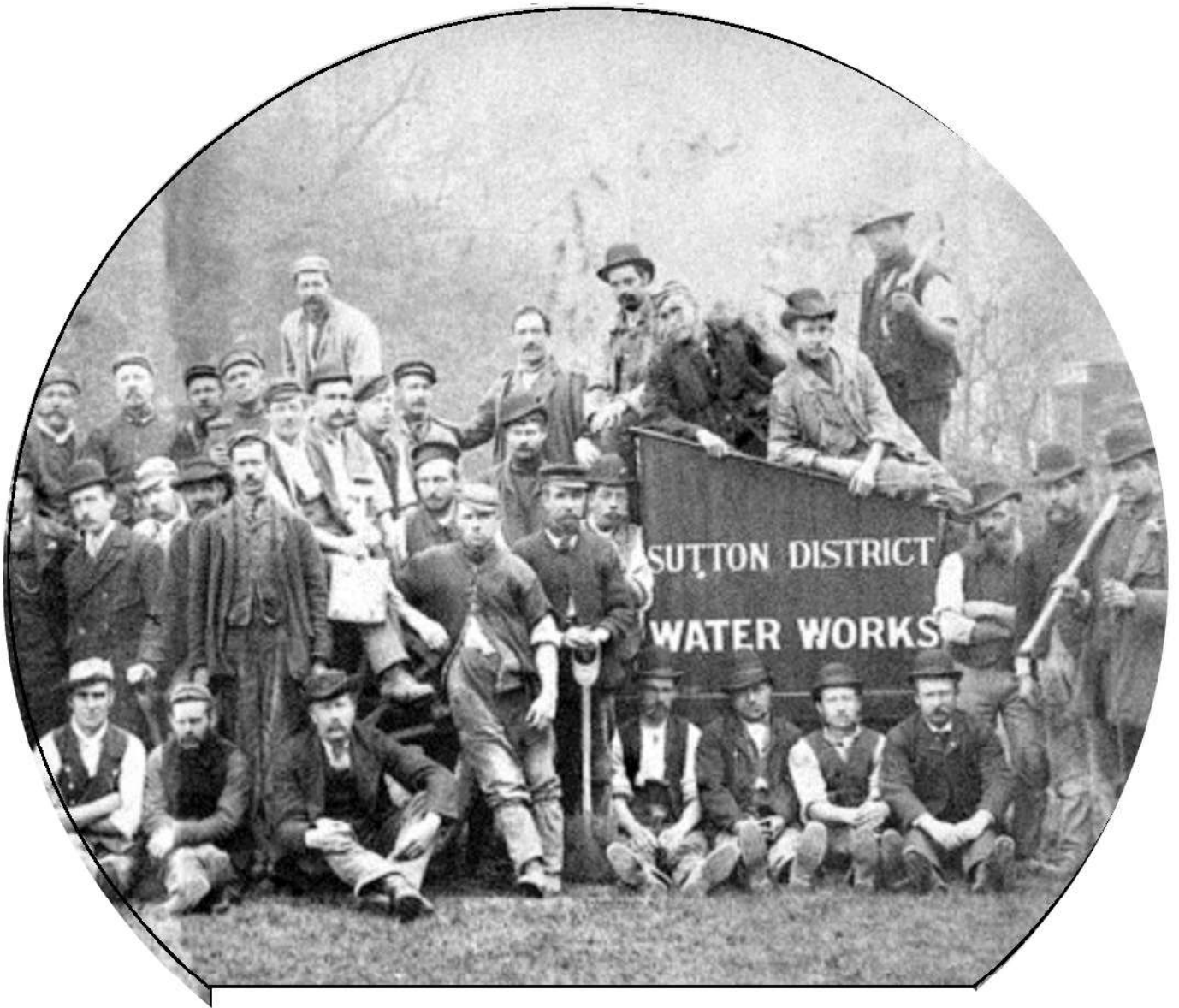


Down the Hatch

Henry Hatch was made rector in 1831. He got into debt and borrowed money against the church land, took money from the poor box and overcharged people for burials. The bishop had to send him away and for a long time Sutton only had curates.



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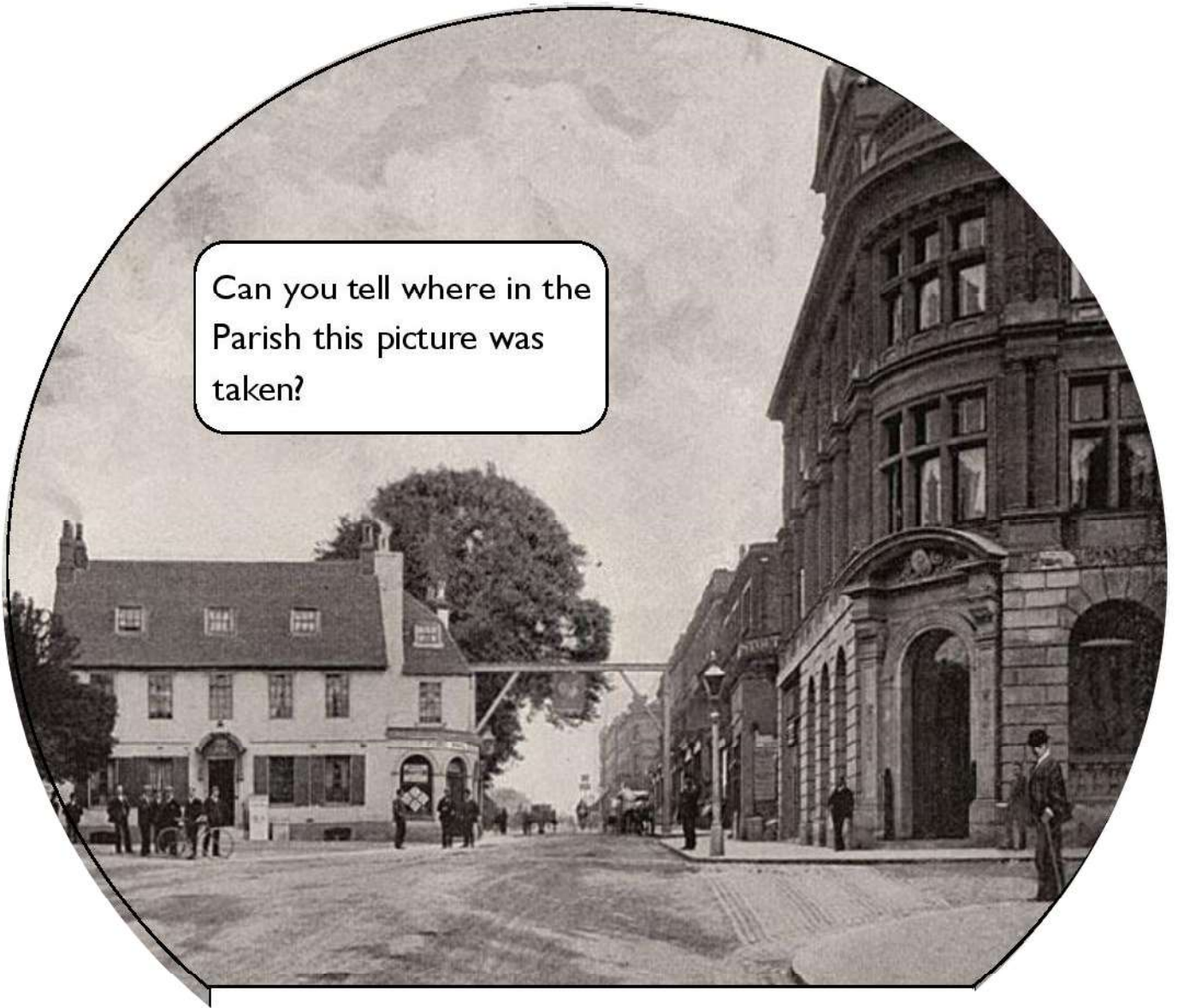
Flushed with success

Many people came to live in Sutton after the railway way was built 1847 and even more came when water was piped to houses south of the Carshalton and Cheam Roads (1863). In 1851 1,387 people lived in Sutton, but in 10 year this increased to 3,186 people.



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Can you tell where in the Parish this picture was taken?



A new parish?

Because so many people came to live in Sutton, the old medieval building couldn't hold everyone who wanted to come to church. In 1864 a new St Nicholas church was built. The old parish of Sutton was divided up and other new churches in Sutton were built.



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The great war

Many men from Sutton went to fight all over the world during the Great War that started 100 years ago. There are 27 men remembered on memorials in this church. Have you read their stories?



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The Blitz

German planes dropped bombs on Sutton in the early part of the war and rockets landed later in the war. St Nicholas had a bomb drop in the churchyard during the blitz which blew in the windows on the north side.



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Women Ordained!

Rev Sara Goatcher was appointed in 1996 as the first woman rector of Sutton. This was 2 years after women were ordained as priests. The first woman priest at St Nicholas was Julia Popp who was a curate. This year the Church of England has voted to allow women to become bishops.



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