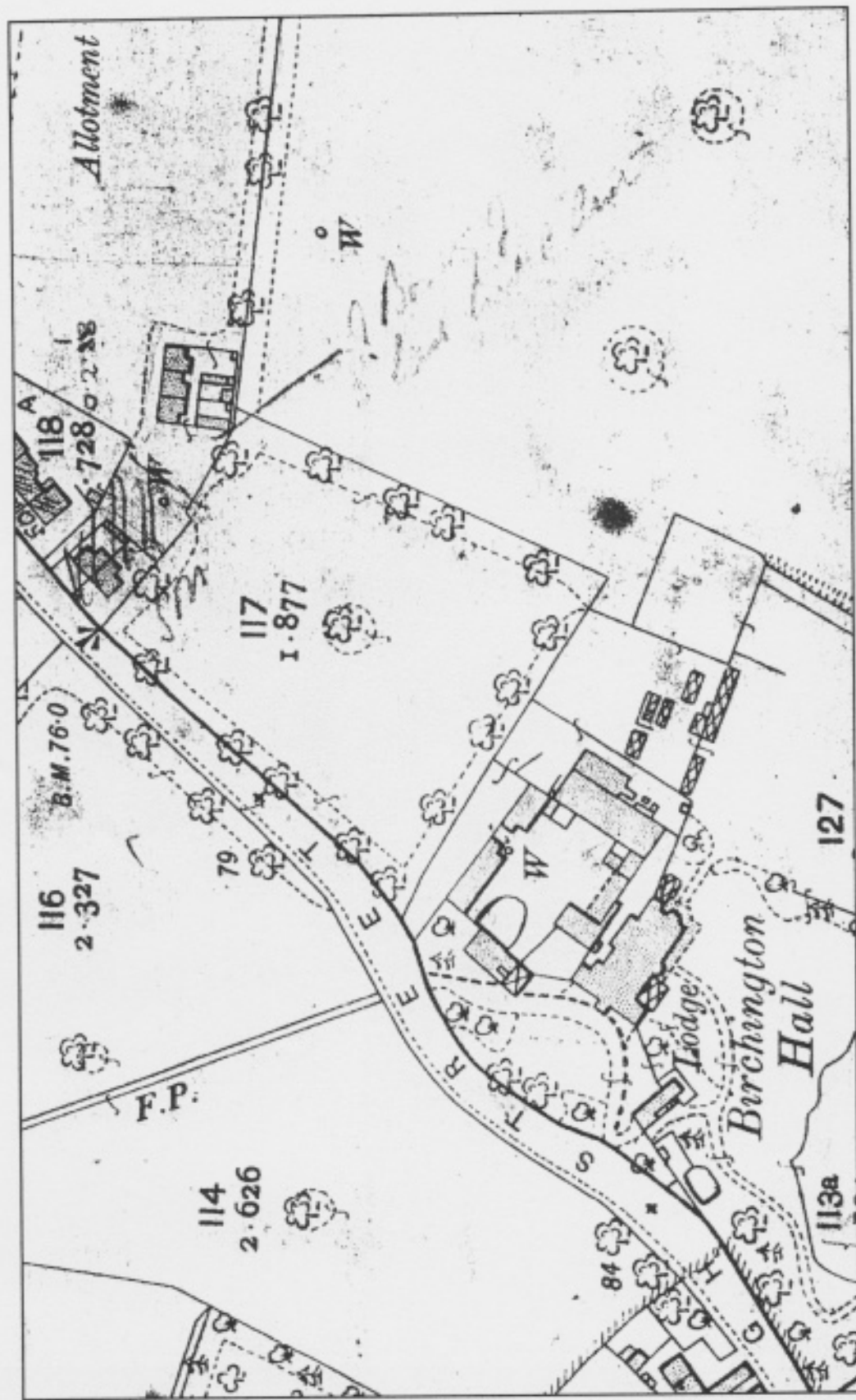


## The Homestead Farm

The farm stood along the Canterbury Road and was originally the farm for Birchington Hall. It was being worked to capacity during the Second World War. At one time Mrs Hart, Derek Hart's mother, was working on it as part of her war-service. Her children used to come across from Park Lane School at the end of the school day and into Park Road. They met up with her and waited until she had finished work for the day, before all walking back down to their home in Minnis Bay.

In the 1948 edition of Kelly's Directory, we find Homestead Farm Cottage (occupied by Henry Wilson) and Homestead Farm, being worked by the farmer Ernest Philpott. Both properties stood on the Canterbury Road between Miss Samuels' Boarding Kennels and Spurgeon's Children's Homes (Seaside Branch).

In 1951 John D. Wilson is listed as the farmer of Homestead Farm, with no mention of Homestead Cottage. By 1957 there is no longer any mention of the farm and the entrance to Spurgeon's Homes has now been moved round into Park Road. The Homes had been completely rebuilt between 1951 and 1954 to house all the children from Stockwell in Birchington on a permanent basis. In doing this, the Directors of the Trust incorporated most of the farm into playing fields for the children or else let the remainder of the land out to nearby farmers.

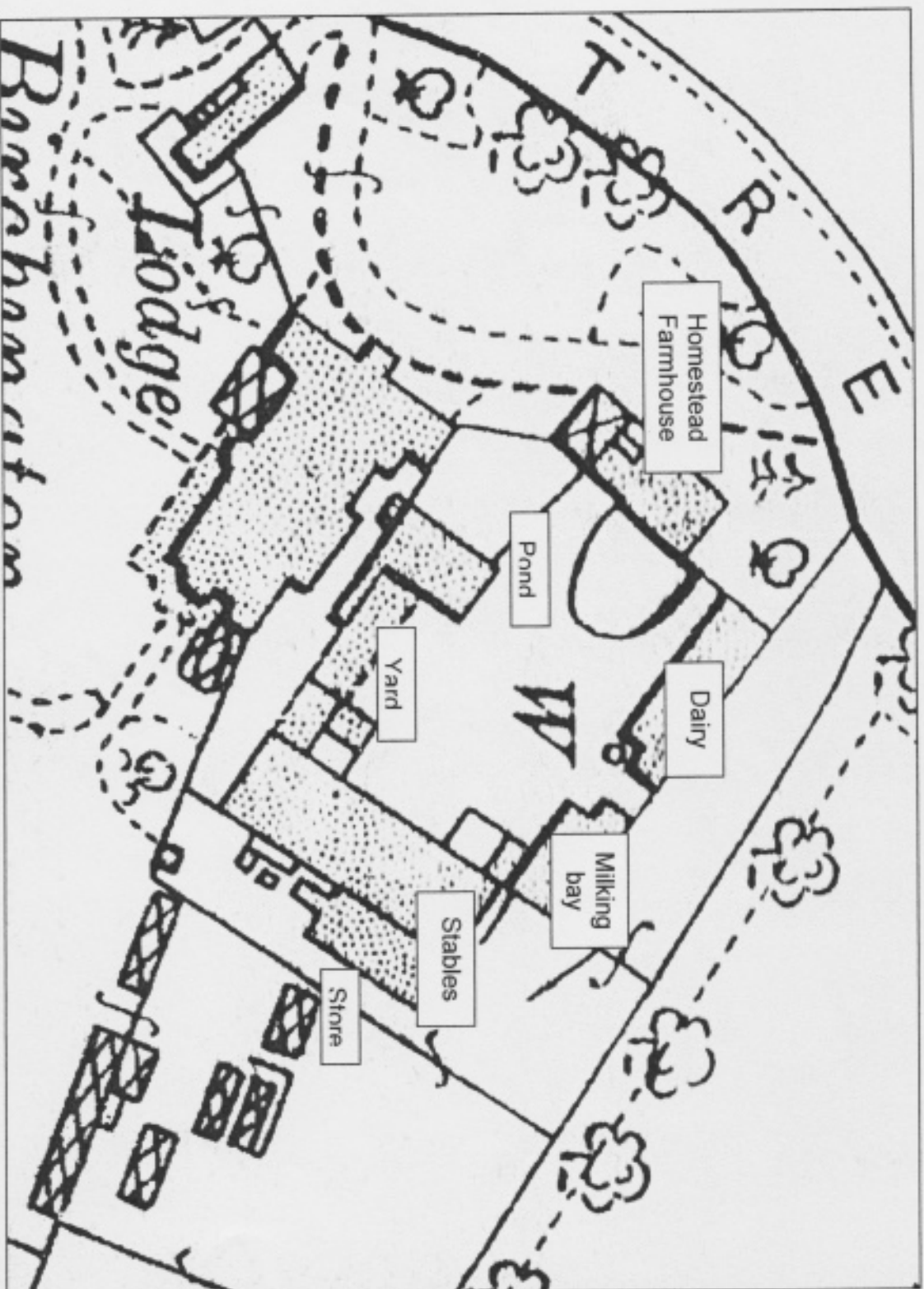


Birchington Hall and Homestead Farm, owned by Susan Gray - 1907  
 By 1926, The Hall was owned by Spurgeon's Children's Homes and the farm was owned by Palmer's dairy

## **Homestead Farm Cottage**

There was a small white bungalow on the road to the left of Birchington Hall, which went under the name of Homestead Farm Cottage. It had a flat roof and a castellated front elevation.

From this description, sounds very like the left hand 'gatehouse', shown in the 1832 drawing of Birchington Place (as it was then called). In the 1939 Kelly's Directory the Farmhouse is listed immediately to the left of the big house, with Homestead Farm Cottage listed next door. There is a note in the Churchwardens' account books for 1861 where a "road diversion at Birchington Place" is listed. This was soon after the property was sold - possibly to the Gray family - after the sale plans were drawn up in 1851 (see the plan / map in the Smuggler's Restaurant).



Peter Stokes lived in Homestead Farmhouse 1926-1936, when the farm was owned by Palmer's Dairy. The Surgeon's Children's Home owned and occupied the old Birchington Hall, SW of the farm. When charabancs on the main road were held up in traffic near the farmhouse, the trippers tossed pennies to Peter and his family thinking they were orphans - the children did not disillusion them!