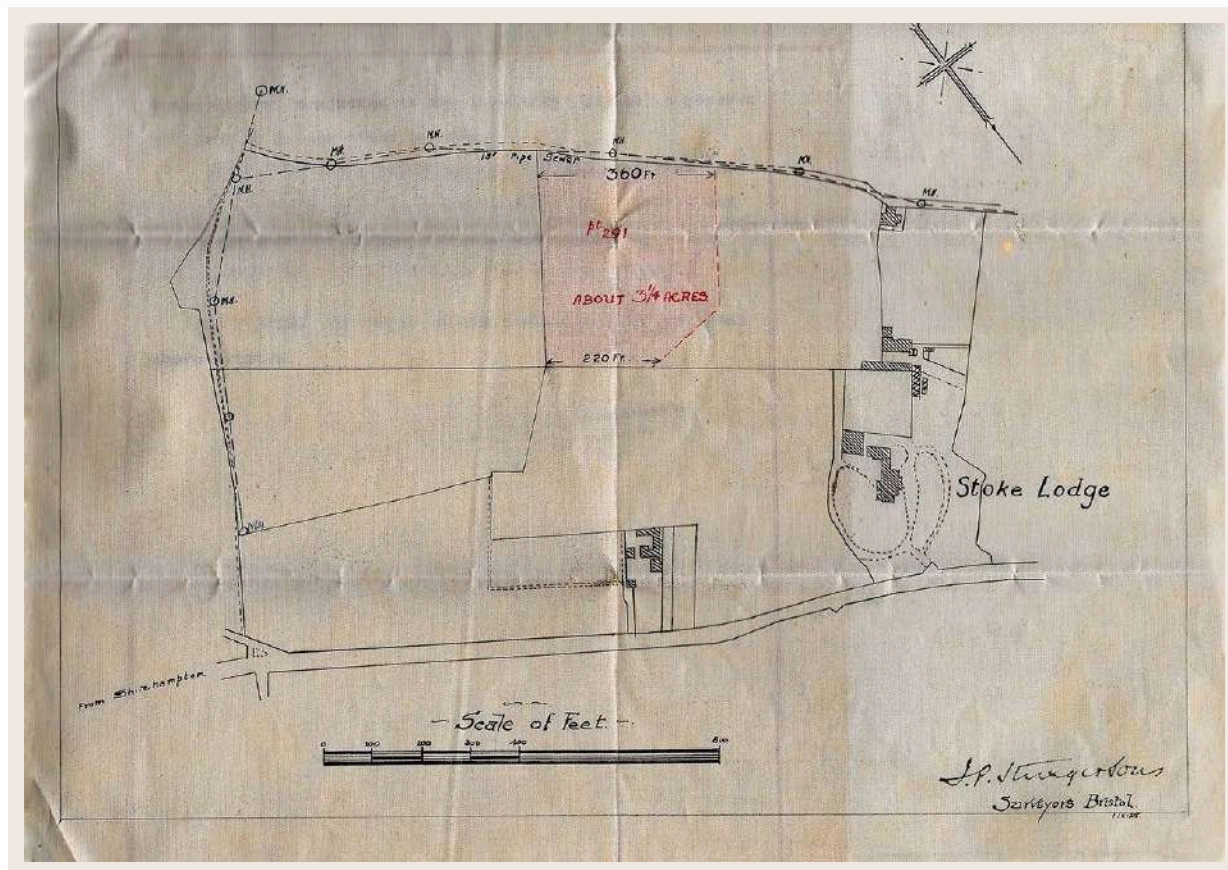


Cotham SoC Appendix 81



Stoke Lodge Lease Map 1928

Stoke Bishop CC has never had the luxury of its own ground and clubhouse and has been on the move since its inception in 1889.

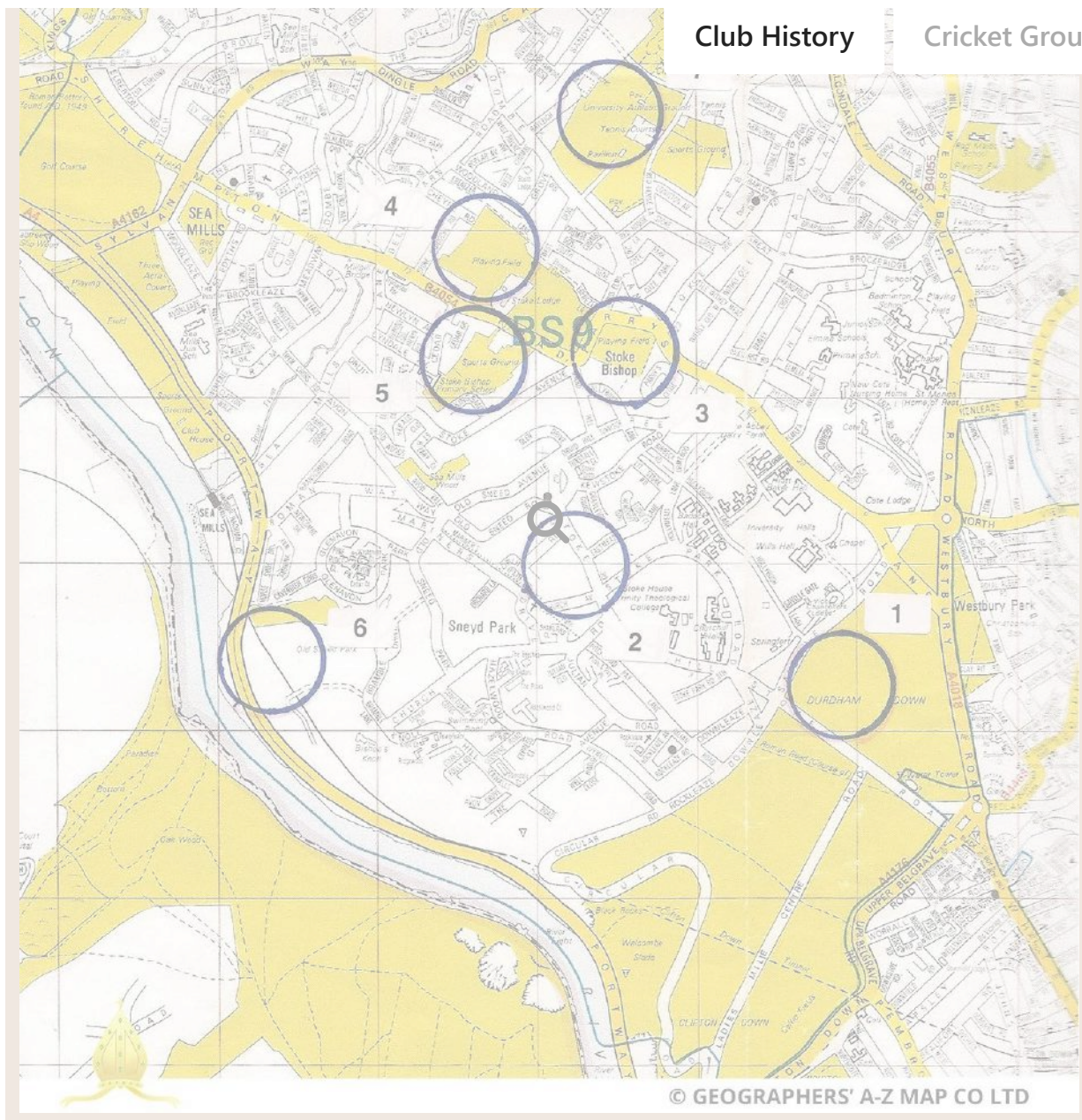
Its first home, as shown on the [George Bacon 1900 map of Bristol](#), was on Durdham Downs between Saville Road, Stoke Road (known in 1900 as Stoke Bishop Road) and the Seven Sisters group of trees. The ground was shared with other clubs and does not appear to have had a pavilion. There is no mention of any rent payments in the early accounts book.

A booklet titled [Clifton and Durdham Downs: A place of Public Resort and Recreation](#) by Gerry Nichols and published by the Bristol Branch of the Historical Association gives details of early sports and recreation on the Downs including a photograph of a Clifton Cricket Club match on the Saville Road pitch around 1852.

Group and the Bristol Know Your Place website it has now **Club History** < **Cricket Grounds** and not close to St. Mary's Church, as originally thought. This ground may have previously been used by Rockleaze Cricket Club, which was active in the late 1800's but seems to have disappeared by 1910.

The early SBCC account book shows that rent money between 1911 and 1919 was paid (initially £5 per half year) to 'W E Budgett'.

The Budgett family were wealthy wholesale grocers who had lived in Stoke House, now Trinity Theological College from 1874 to the early 1890's. They owned other land and property in the area including Stoke Lodge between 1889 and 1897. During WW1 the Stoke Hill ground was probably neglected, although the rent was still paid until the end of 1919; this was partly offset by sub-letting for grazing.



1. Durdham Downs
2. Stoke Hill
3. The Grove
4. Stoke Lodge
5. National Smelting Co.
6. Bristol & West
7. University Ground

Cricket did not restart until 1920 and by then the Club had moved to The Grove at the top of Druid Hill, courtesy of Colonel Joseph Butler. Again, the exact position of the playing surface is unknown but there are some clues from a couple of old photographs. These show the distinctive

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The Club moved again in 1929 and the [lease to rent Stoke Lodge](#) from the Butlin Sisters records the details, including permission to graze livestock, if desired. Stoke Lodge is the ground most associated with the cricket club in the 20th Century and was occupied continuously until 1972, 44 years.

The Stoke Lodge or West Dene ground was unusual (maybe unique in the Bristol area) in that a large tree was located within the boundary. During a match, if a ball hit any part of the tree it was declared 4 runs.

After the Butlin Sisters died, the house and grounds were sold to the City Education Committee. Towards the end of the Butlin's tenure the Club was famously offered the chance to buy its section of the playing field, but unfortunately and regrettably the funds were not available.

The ground and square were initially well looked after by the Council but from the late sixties they were progressively neglected and this with regular vandalism, including 2 fires to the already outdated pavilion and tea hut, forced another move to the National Smelting Company in 1973.

Here the facilities were luxurious compared with West Dene. This attracted more talent and success and culminated in the Centenary Year celebrations in 1989. Unfortunately the smelting industry at Avonmouth declined at this time and eventually closed, which prompted the sale of the Sports and Social Club in Shirehampton Road.

The Club moved to the Bristol & West ground (formerly BOCM) on The Portway in 1995, until that clubhouse was also demolished and the playing area abandoned in 2001.

The Club currently resides at the University Ground, Coombe Lane, and is still, after 130 years, located in or very near Stoke Bishop, albeit, still without a ground to call its own.