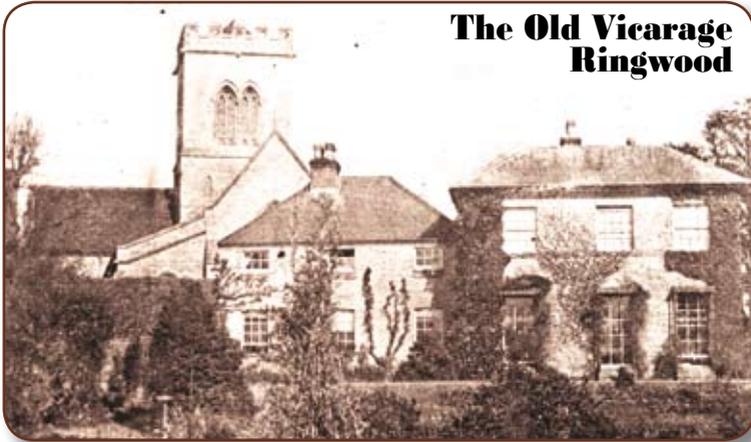


ROUNABOUT RINGWOOD & SURROUNDING VILLAGES

NOW and THEN



**The Old Vicarage
Ringwood**

The old photograph c1930 shows the old vicarage which once stood very close to the Parish Church. It was situated just off the Market Place on the narrow road which led to Fordingbridge, immediately opposite the west end of the Church. The steps down from the churchyard, which are still there today, gave very easy access for the vicar to get straight from the church to his vicarage.

There had been a vicarage on this site going back to medieval times and probably earlier. Its structure must have been rebuilt several times. One of Ringwood's vicars John Maule was the maternal grandfather of John Keble (1792-1866), the eminent theologian and promoter of the Victorian High Church movement. After a visit to Ringwood in his later years, Keble noted that the parsonage where his mother had been born in 1758 had been pulled down and only one person in Ringwood remembered her.

The house shown in the old photograph was the last to be built on the site. It appears to consist of two separate buildings attached to each other. The left-hand side seems the earlier of the two with the right-hand side dating from about 1800.

During the early 20th century the Rev William Bodkin and his family were in residence there. A lady who grew up next door at the Ringwood Mill in Edwardian days recalled that at that time one of the rooms was turned into a lending library which Mrs Bodkin opened up to the townsfolk on Saturday mornings. She remembered the books were all covered in a kind of black canvas.

The vicarage gardens, which extended on both sides of the Millstream, were described by many as the most beautiful in Ringwood. They were often used for Church fetes and Sunday School treats. All that remains today is a part by the Millstream now Jubilee Gardens.

The house and gardens were all swept away in the early 1930s to make way for the first by-pass. The vicarage was relocated to a large old house in Old Salisbury Road, until about twenty-five years ago when a new one

was built in Southampton Road. The site of the old vicarage now lies under the A31 and a photographer would have to stand in the middle of the dual carriageway to recreate the scene – a highly dangerous and illegal task! Unless he uses a zoom lens of course!

