

ANCIENT IFIELD



Until the furnace pond at Bewbush and hammer pond at Ifield were created by the damming of streams in the 1560s, the water run-off from modern day Broadfield, Bewbush, Pease Pottage, Colgate and Faygate was not stored and simply flowed along Ifield Brook, but this was not the Ifield Brook we know today.

What we now know as the Mill Race was the original, pre Millpond, Ifield Brook and was considerably longer than it is now as recently as a century ago, not joining the brook until the field behind the Old Rectory. Much of the course is still visible to the naked eye, some parts more obvious than others.

The modern brook, from the Millpond to this point behind the Rectory, was dug to act as the race for the Forge, with the banks in the woods behind Rusper Road playing field, which separate the brook from the race, being the spoil from the project, built up to keep the two water courses separate and enable any excess water to leave the area quickly along the lengthy straight channel which shows that the brook is man made. Studying detailed maps of the Brook, you'll see that it consists of mainly straight channels, with the odd change of direction (possibly due to the topography or geology of the land) all the way to the point where the race joined the brook behind the Rectory, from which point it starts to meander in the same manner as the race.

The photographs show what we recently knew as the Mill race, but this was originally Ifield Brook prior to the 1560s.



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