

THE BAILEY BRIDGE AT TESTON WAS DEFINITELY UPSTREAM

Originally published in the Kent Messenger Maidstone, 11th March 2016



The Bailey bridge across the River Medway at Teston was on the upstream, right-hand side of the existing medieval bridge, looking from Tonbridge Road.

Tracey Durling is quite definite. She said: "It was there in 1975. I lived in Barming at the time – I'm in Coxheath now – and I kept a horse in the field where the country park is now.

"Several of us had horses there, including the daughter of Jack Walker who owned the field.

"I remember the access road being driven through the field."

John Day, of Grandshore Lane, Frittenden, wrote to say: "Having owned and farmed land on both sides of the river at Teston, I clearly recall the Bailey Bridge which was upstream of the existing one.

"Drivers were delighted to use it as the view from both sides was very much better. Many people wanted the temporary bridge to remain permanently."

Terrence Towler would know better than anyone. He was foreman stonemason in charge of the team repairing the medieval bridge.

He said: "It was quite a difficult job and took us about six to nine months.

"I had six masons working under me. We were employed by Citadel Stone of Croydon under contract to KCC."

Mr Towler, 78, said the Bailey bridge was definitely upstream of the stone bridge. It was built by the Royal Engineers.

He said: "There were some difficulties with it. The surface was very slippery and I remember several motorbikes went over on the ice."

At the time, Mr Towler lived in London, but he ended up not far away – in Barming.