

COSSEY COTTAGE, 9 PILGRIMS LANE, HAMPSTEAD

HISTORICAL STUDY AND HERITAGE STATEMENT



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This report is prepared as part of an application to carry out improvements to this property. It sets out what is known about the development of the building, and indicates its main claims to significance.

CONTENTS

1	Designation Status	3
2	Historical Development	
2.1	Historical Background	
2.2	Pilgrim's Lane: History	4
2.3	Sidney House and Cossey Cottage	
2.4	A Distinguished Occupant: Simon Wilkin (1790-1862)	6
2.5	Mid 19 th Century Changes	8
2.6	20 th Century	11
3	Phases of Development	
3.1	Sequence of Phases	12
3.2	Evidence of Phases	
4	Summary of Significance	13
5	Assessment of Proposals	
6	Justification	
7	Impact	
8	Expertise	
	Appendix: Residents of Cossey Cottage	14

1 Designation Status

No 9 Pilgrims Lane, also known as Cossey Cottage was listed as a Grade II building of special architectural and historic interest in May 1974. The list entry on the National Heritage List for England [NHLE] is as follows:

TQ2685NE PILGRIMS LANE 798-1/27/1316 (West side) 14/05/74 No.9 Cossey Cottage

GV II

Service wing to No.7, Sidney House (qv), now private residence. Late C18, partly refaced early C19. Yellow stock brick. 2 storeys and semi-basement. 1 window plus 3-window canted bay to right. Plain segmental-arched doorway on east return. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed 2-pane sashes; those to canted bay enlarged mid C19. Parapet. INTERIOR: not inspected.

The building lies within the Hampstead Conservation Area, and is the subject of an Article 4 Direction.

2 Historical Development



John Rocque: *An Exact Survey of the City's of London and Westminster* (1741-45). Pilgrim's Lane does not yet exist.

2.1 Historical Background

Cossey Cottage forms part of a late Georgian house, built on the southern slopes of Hampstead. It dates from the post-1815 period of rapid expansion in this area, when the land between Pond Street and the High Street was laid out for housing. The best-known part of this period of expansion was Downshire Hill, a short distance to the south. The Hampstead slopes were ripe for residential development, and the parish rate books for the period are full of references to houses being built. Hampstead was already acquiring its reputation as a place of genteel retirement, and as a place with strong literary connections. Cossey Cottage would embody both of these aspects in its early years.

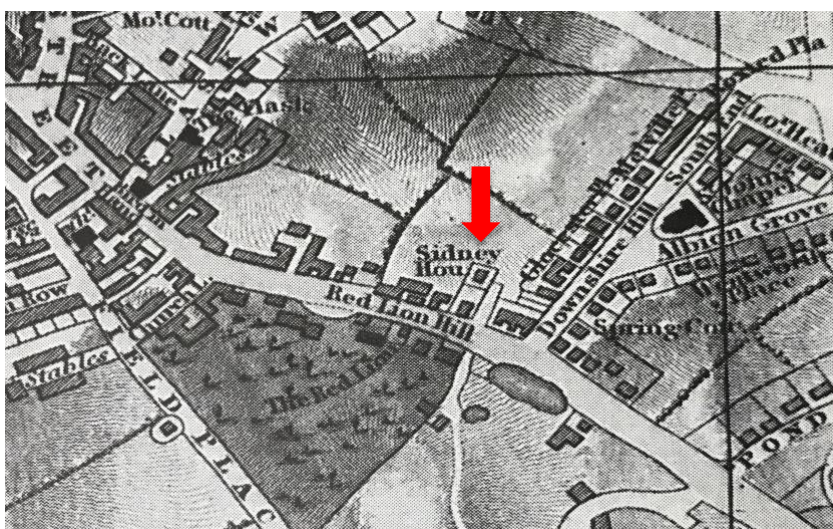
2.2 Pilgrims Lane: history

Pilgrims Lane takes its name not from a pub or an ancient religious connection, but from the name of landowners in this area from Georgian times onwards. Members of the Pilgrim family are recorded as owning property in the vicinity up to the early 1860s in the parish Rate Books; James and Charles Pilgrim lived in Vane House nearby in Georgian times. Pilgrim's Place (rather than Lane) was the name initially given to the short cul-de-sac leading off Rosslyn Hill in late Georgian times; in the early 1880s this was extended to connect with the new developments of Kemplay Road, Carlingford Road, etc running up to Christchurch Hill. Pilgrim's Lane is now the name given to the whole length of the street connecting Rosslyn Hill with Christchurch Hill: originally, however, the

new extension of Pilgrim's Lane was called Worsley Road. Pilgrim's Lane is thus not an ancient thoroughfare through the fields of Hampstead, but is an extended Late Georgian cul-de-sac.

2.3 Sidney House and Cossey Cottage

These two adjacent properties have a distinctly entwined history. Cossey Cottage is attached to the north-eastern flank a larger listed building: Sidney House, dated in the National Heritage List for England to the late 18th century (but which is probably slightly later). This large house is not yet shown on the detailed *Map of Hampstead* which accompanied John James Park's *The Topography and Natural History of Hampstead* (1814). Cruchley's *New Plan of London* (1829) does however show (and name) the house, which was set back from Rosslyn Hill (or Red Lion Hill, as then named), standing in isolation within an enclosed plot. The exterior of Sidney House has more of a later Georgian character than a late 18th century one, particularly in terms of its first floor balcony and cast-iron railings, and it is thus quite possible that the house dates from between these two maps.



Cruchley's *Map of London* (1829): the first map to show Sidney House.

Further evidence for this comes from the rate books for St John's, Hampstead. Tracing back the occupants of Cossey Cottage is not straightforward, as the rate books do not always provide the street address of the buildings being assessed, let alone the house numbers. The key finding of research into the rate books reveals that the house is first listed in the assessment carried out in June 1821, when it was described as a "new house" in the occupation of Mr Rowley, with a rateable value of £30.¹ A recital of occupants is provided at appendix 1.

¹ Holborn Local Studies Library, St John's Hampstead parish rate books.



Sidney House, seen from Pilgrim's Lane (2018). The house is first shown on a map of 1828.

The relationship between Cossey Cottage and Sidney House (which is first so-named in the 1845 rate book) is a close one. The List entries for each property note that Cossey Cottage was originally a service wing to the larger house, and that a matching wing (long since demolished) formerly stood to the south. Whether this is true is unclear: Cossey Cottage could also have been an attached but separate residence from the outset, which is the implication of the rate book entries. What is certain is that for much of the 19th century there was an overlap between the occupants of Sidney House and of Cossey Cottage: both were owned by the Currey family, and for considerable periods one or both were occupied by members of the Wilkin family.

The name “Cossey” alludes to the Norfolk origins of the Wilkin family:² Cossey is a contraction of Costessy, the name of a village 4 miles west of Norwich; it is also how the village’s name is pronounced. The name derives from the place of origin of the house’s most distinguished occupant: a 19th century man of letters named Simon Wilkin.

2.4 A Distinguished Occupant: Simon Wilkin (1790-1862)

Cossey Cottage was for much of the 19th century occupied by Wilkinses. Simon Wilkin³ is recorded in the Rate Book for 1840⁴, and was a figure of literary interest. Born at Costessey in 1790, he moved from Norwich to London after a failed business investment in 1834 and died at Cossey Cottage in 1862. He was a

² Martin Hood Wilkin is recorded in the 1861 Census in Sidney House, and is stated to have been born in Norwich.

³ Wilkin has an entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*: see <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-29415?rskey=CIOfZN&result=1>

⁴ Wilkin is recorded as being in residence at Holly Place in the 1841 Census, however.

publisher and respected man of letters, and is best known as the first editor of the works of Sir Thomas Browne (1605-82), the noted 17th century Norfolk doctor, antiquary and mystic best known for *Religio Medici* and *Urne Buriall*. Wilkin's edition was first published in 1836, after his move to Hampstead, but re-issued in 1852. Wilkin was also expert in natural history, and was a member of the Linnaean Society. He is recorded as living at Cossey Cottage in the 1851 Census, aged 60, and was described as manufacturer of coach lace and trimmings, and cloth merchant; his son Martin, aged 18, was his assistant; living there also were his wife Emma (aged 53), their daughter Mary (20) and Mary Ann Wiggins, a Worcestershire-born servant (43). His later life was less productive: "once he left Norwich, much of his energy seems to have faded".⁵ The sheer fact that he has an entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography* testifies to his standing as a man of letters, however.

In 1865 only Mrs Emma Wilkin, his widow, is listed. The 1873 local directory gives Mrs Wilkin as the occupant of both Sidney House and Cossey Cottage.⁶ Her name is scored through in the 1880 Rate Book entry for Cossey Cottage, suggesting her departure or death; for the rest of the century, Miss Mary Jacob Wilkin was in residence. Sidney House and Cossey Cottage were for a considerable period in the ownership of Currey family. In 1849 Anna Currey entered into an agreement with William Spencer, 7th Duke of Devonshire and it was from the Duke that Martin Hood Wilkin bought the freehold, in 1888. An obituary notice in 1904 for Martin Hood Wilkin, stated to be of Sidmouth, shows the family connection with Cossey Cottage had come to an end.⁷

Here is the entry on Wilkin from the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004):

⁵ ODNB.

⁶ *The Hampstead and Highgate Express Directory for 1873* (1873), 119.

⁷ *The Times*, 17 May 1904, p1.

Wilkin, Simon Wilkin (1790–1862), publisher and literary scholar, was born at Costessey (Cossey), Norfolk, on 27 July 1790, the second of the three children of William Wilkin Wilkin (1762–1799), a Norfolk flour miller, and his wife, Cecilia Lucy (*d.* 1796), daughter of William Jacomb of London. On his father's death Wilkin moved to Norwich to live with his guardian, [Joseph Kinghorn](#), who educated him at home. At twenty-one Wilkin was an expert entomologist, a fellow of the Linnean Society, and a member of the Wernerian Society of Edinburgh. His niece Cecilia Lucy Brightwell quotes her father's description of him as 'a good scholar ... attractive in manner, and agreeable in personal appearance'.

Two major crises affected Wilkin's life: having inherited substantially in 1811, he lost everything in 1816, when the paper mill in which he was a partner failed, and in 1832 his guardian's death was a severe blow. Bankruptcy compelled him to sell his outstanding entomological collection, which was purchased by the Zoological Society. Soon after, however, he established a well-respected printing and publishing business in Norwich, his authors including Harriet Martineau, Amelia Opie, George Borrow, and William Taylor. On 18 July 1825 he married Emma, daughter of John Culley of Costessey, and they had two daughters and a son.

In 1834 Wilkin moved with his family to London, increasingly estranged from the Baptist church to which he had been a generous benefactor, through disagreement with its policy on communion. He had played a major role in the development of the Norfolk and Norwich Literary Institution and Norwich Museum, but once he left Norwich, much of his energy seems to have faded.

Wilkin's greatest achievement was his four-volume edition of the works of the seventeenth-century physician and author Sir Thomas Browne (1836; reissued 1852). He collated manuscripts and early editions meticulously so as to produce the best possible text, exhaustively researching Browne's vast correspondence in the British Museum and Bodleian Library. Geoffrey Keynes saw his work as the foundation of all subsequent editions, praising him as 'the ideal editor for Browne' (*Works*). Wilkin also wrote a textbook on the use of the globes (1823–6), and contributed to his son Martin Hood Wilkin's biography of his guardian, *Joseph Kinghorn of Norwich* (1855).

Wilkin's London years, spent at Cossey Cottage, Pilgrim Lane, Hampstead, were saddened by doctrinal disputes with the Norwich Baptists. He died at home on 28 July 1862, and was buried in his native village of Costessey.

2.5 Mid 19th Century Changes

It is probable that Simon Wilkin's death in 1862 led to improvements to Cossey Cottage: it soon became a more valuable property. The rate books⁸ show a marked increase in the rateable value of the house, from £26 in 1865 to £36 in 1866: this increase is not echoed in the entries for other neighbouring properties, showing that this was not the result of a general increase in parish rates, but referred specifically to improvements to the house itself; Sidney House remained steady at a rateable value of £48. This is clear evidence of a marked

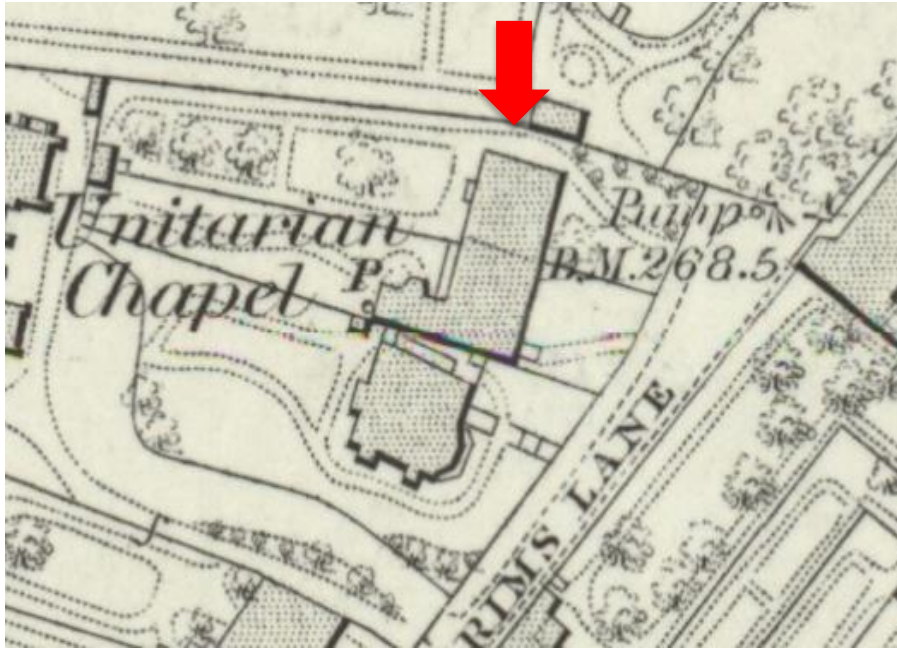
⁸ Camden Local Studies and Archive Centre, Holborn Library: Rate Books for St John at Hampstead Parish.

improvement to the property in the mid-1860s, something which is corroborated by the evidence of the Ordnance Survey maps.

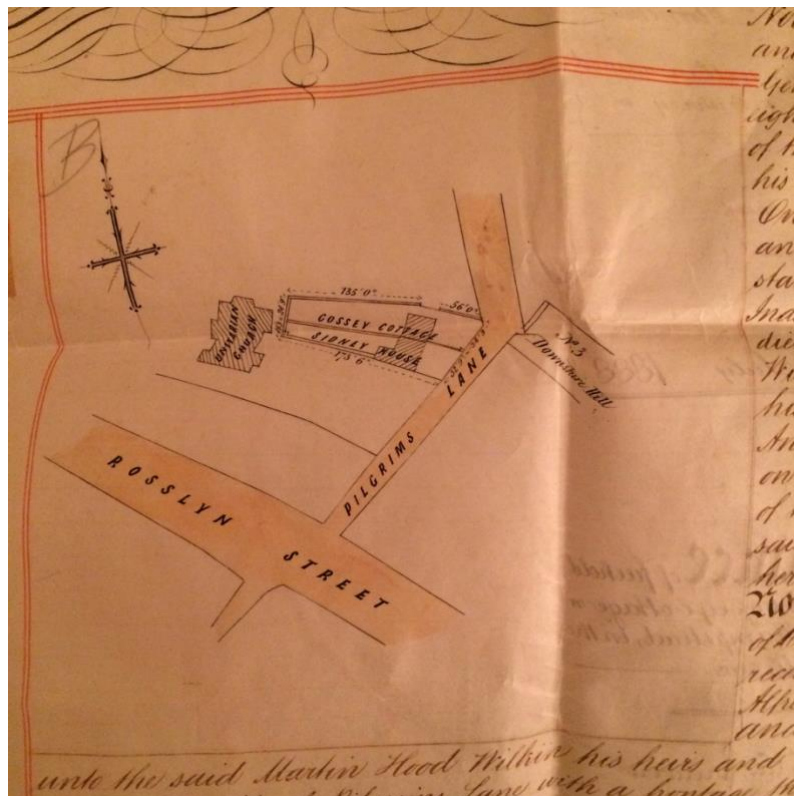
The First Edition 25" map was surveyed in 1866, the very same year in which the Rate Books (for Michaelmas) first record the increase. This extremely detailed survey shows the house with a flat front: just before the bay extension was added to the front. Cossey Cottage was extended to the front, and a canted bay added which ran from basement to first floor levels. The character of the house inside is late Regency, but it is hard to distinguish between Late Georgian survival and mid-Victorian revivalism.



Ordnance Survey first edition 25" map: Middlesex Sheet VII (surveyed 1866, published 1870). Cossey Cottage was extended to the front in the year this survey took place; the added bay isn't yet shown.



Detail of the above.



Location plan attached to the deed, dated 13th July 1888: this does not show the front extension, being more concerned with the size of the ground plot.



Ordnance Survey 1:1,056 (5 ft to one mile): London, sheet II:100 (published 1895). By this date, Cossey Cottage has gained its front bay. Pilgrim's Lane had been extended to the north-east, off which newly constructed housing had been built.



Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 25" map: London sheet I.16, (surveyed 1912, published 1915)

2.5 20th Century

Cossey Cottage has not changed greatly in recent times. The basement appears to have been lowered, to turn the cellar into a floor capable of being used for living: some parts of the floor are higher than others, and the footings of the wall are visible. The insertion of a large French liver-coloured marble chimneypiece in the basement bedroom (formerly a dining room) is another legacy from this phase. Otherwise, very little has happened to the house.



Ordnance Survey 3rd ed. 25" map: Sheet London I.16 (surveyed 1934-36, published 1938)

Among recent occupants of the house have been Dr Humphrey Wine, sometime curator of 17th and 18th century French paintings at the National Gallery.

3 Phases of Development

3.1 Sequence of Phases

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Phase 1 | c.1820: Cossey Cottage is built along with Sidney House, probably as a separate residence. |
| Phase 2 | 1866: the property was extended to the east, and a canted bay added to the front. |
| Phase 3 | late C20: the basement is lowered to create living rooms in the former cellar. |
| Phase 4 | Early C21: various internal alterations were carried out, primarily to upstairs rooms. |

3.2 Evidence of Phases

Phase 1: the clearest evidence of the house's late Georgian origins is in the plan form, the decorative plasterwork, joinery, chimneypieces and staircase from ground to first floors which cumulatively create the impression of an impressively intact Regency interior. The staircase is particularly fine. The exposed rafters in the basement bedroom are roughly sawn, which is typical for a Georgian house (but very rare for a Victorian one). The cast iron fire grates in the basement kitchen, ground floor and first floor rooms are consistent with a late Georgian date. One door in the basement, leading into the bedroom, has L-shaped hinges.

Phase 2: the Victorian phase involved a major re-fronting of the house, and required considerable adjustment to the interior. While the front elevation is Georgian in character and uses similar bricks to the rest of the house, its plate glass sash windows are clearly post-Georgian. The canted bay is Palladian in character, rather than Regency, which is a further pointer to this Victorian phase of work. The ceiling to the basement bedroom has different rafters in front of the bressumer beam, showing a different phase of construction. The moulded plasterwork in the sitting room has been carried across into the eastern extension, as have the skirting boards: this phase took care to link the additions to earlier fabric. The roof-light over the stairs has large panes of clouded glass which are mid-Victorian in appearance. There is also some evidence of re-arrangement in the entrance hall arrangement.

Phase 3: the basement floor was lowered, and the ceiling rafters exposed in the bedroom (formerly the dining room); the large French marble chimneypiece probably dates from this period. Work may have been carried out to the stairs from ground to basement level.

Phase 4: extensive work was carried out to the interior, principally upstairs, leaving the chimneypieces and doors *in situ*.

4 Summary of Significance

The significance of Cossey Cottage can be summarized as follows:

- 1 **Architectural:** although considerably altered in the 1860s, the house retains its essential character as a Regency residence, most strongly evident on the ground floor.
- 2 **Interior:** the ground floor retains some of its characteristic Regency fittings, although these are in part the result of contextual additions from the 1860s. The elegant staircase is a particularly pleasing survival. The plan form is conventional for a building of this date.
- 3 **Historical:** Cossey Cottage was for nearly 30 years the home of a noted literary scholar, Simon Wilkin, who died here in 1862.
- 4 **Group Value:** Cossey Cottage is attached to Grade II-Sidney House and has been associated with it through shared ownership and occasional linked occupancy.

5 Assessment

Cossey Cottage is a handsome property, retaining much of its original Regency character and embodying the late Georgian development which characterises this part of Hampstead. However, it has undergone more alteration than is at first apparent. The canted bay front is Palladian in character, rather than Regency, and is a mid-Victorian addition. This phase of works took pains to ensure that the Regency character of the interior was retained and that new work was carried out in a similar style; but the fact remains that this is no longer a wholly Georgian house. Cossey Cottage has undergone little serious alteration since then.

6 Justification

The proposals for Cossey Cottage aim to create a modern, flexible living area while upholding the heritage values of the house. Care has been taken to understand the house's historical development, and to identify (with some precision) its significance. The addition is to be designed in a contemporary idiom which is readily distinguishable from the main house. This new living area will replace a kitchen which is in the basement, on a different floor from the dining area and which is only connected by a tight staircase which makes for awkward movement between the two. A further advantage of the extension is the ability to leave undisturbed the period fabric of the principal floor.

7 Impact

The low profile of the proposed extension will have minimal impact on the adjoining Grade II-listed Sidney House (which has itself been considerably extended to the rear). Careful design will ensure that the breach in the rear of Cossey Cottage minimizes its impact on the fabric of the wall. The proposals will avoid any harm to the Regency fabric, and will be invisible from the street. Overall, therefore, the impact of these proposals on the heritage significance of Cossey Cottage is completely neutral.

8 Expertise

This statement has been prepared by a suitably qualified heritage professional with 30 years of experience in assessing historic buildings in London and beyond, following a thorough inspection of the building in question. Roger Bowdler joined English Heritage in 1989 and his final position was Director of Listing at Historic England. He has been a member of the Heath and Hampstead Society for 30 years, and has a close knowledge of Hampstead's historic buildings.

APPENDIX 1: RESIDENTS OF COSSEY COTTAGE, 9 PILGRIMS LANE

Electoral Registers

1961	Jessie F & Wilfred H Meadows
1950	Elizabeth & William H.G. Etheridge
1939	as above
1930	as above, plus Jessie Etheridge

1920 Mabel Wilhelmina & Patrick James Robertson

Rate Books

<u>Date</u>	<u>Occupants</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Rateable value</u>
1900	Miss Mary Jacob Wilkin No 7: Martin Hood Wilkin	Martin Hood Wilkin Martin Hood Wilkin	£42 £67
1890	Miss Mary Jacob Wilkin No 7: as above	William Currey William Currey	£42 £59
1880	Mrs Emma Wilkin Miss Mary Jacob Wilkin No 7: as above	as above as above	£42 £57
1870	Mrs Emma Wilkin No 7: Alexander Rankin	as above as above	£36 £48
1866	as above No 7: as above	as above as above	£36 £48
1865	as above No 7: as above	as above as above	£26 £48
1860	Simon Wilkin No 7: Francis Lowe	as above as above	£26 £48
1850	as above No 7: James Smyth Jackson	representatives of Benjamin Currey	£26 £48
1845	as above No 7: late Prance	Benjamin Currey as above	£26 £48
1840	John Akers No 7: Robert Prance	as above as above	£26 £48
1830	Francis Rowley No 7: Robert Prance		£20 £30
1824	Francis Rowley No 7: Richard Allen (late White)		£30 £30
1823	Francis Rowley "new house" Capt White "new house"		£36 £30
1821	Rowley "new house" William Henry Dobson		£30 £36

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