

'Camdens – Worldwide'

Bath, UK.



The stimulus for this potted history of Camden - Bath came from the *Camden History Society* in London who wished to mark the 400th Anniversary of the death of William Camden, whose name has spread the name of 'Camden' around the world. Globally, there are about fifty places called Camden. Almost all of them derive their names – *ultimately* – from this Elizabethan scholar.

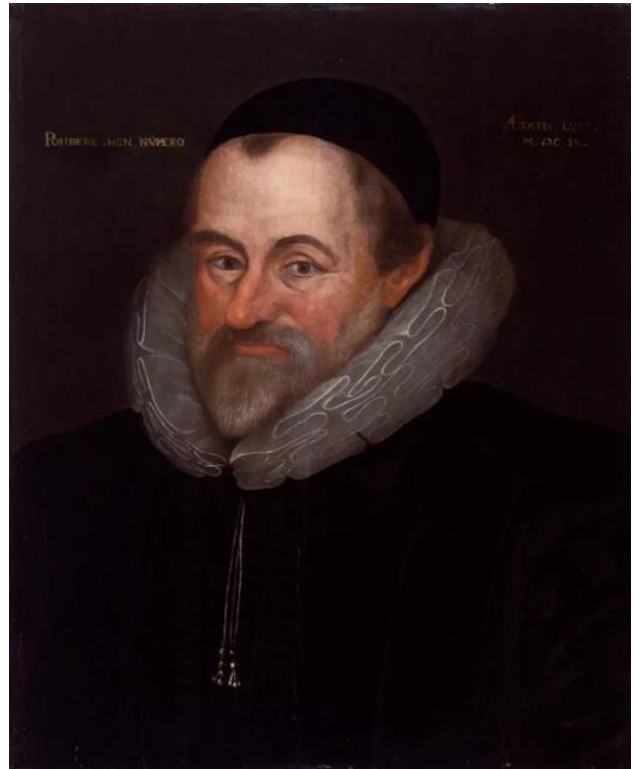
Further details of **'Camdens – Worldwide'** can be found in a free PDF compiled by David A Hayes of the *Camden History Society* – see last page of this booklet. The following details on William and the two Lords Camden have been taken from this PDF together with the chapter on 'Elephant's heads'. The information on Bath's Camden has been researched and put together by Nigel Pollard of the *History of Bath Research Group* and member of the *Camden (Bath) Resident's Association*.

1 – WILLIAM CAMDEN (1551-1623)

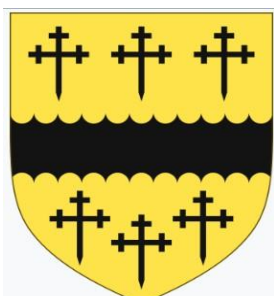
Born in London on 1 May 1551, William Camden was educated at Christ's Hospital and St Paul's School, and then at Magdalen College, Oxford. At the age of 24 he was appointed second master at Westminster School, and concurrently with his teaching duties he began ten years' work on a county-by-county topographical and historical survey of the British Isles. *Britannia*, in Latin, was published in 1586, dedicated to Burghley, the Lord Treasurer; it was first translated into English in 1610. Camden succeeded in 1593 to the position of headmaster of Westminster. The statutes of the school laid down that the headmaster should be a Master of Arts and in holy orders, but it is doubtful whether Camden took a degree at Oxford, and certainly he was a layman all his life; however, through the

intervention of Elizabeth I the rules were disregarded. He had acquired a reputation as a historian and traveller; he had learnt Welsh and Anglo-Saxon, and he published a Greek grammar.

He was also Librarian of Westminster Abbey (1587-97) and had sung in the Choir there (1584-85).



William Camden
by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger. 1609
(National Portrait Gallery, London)

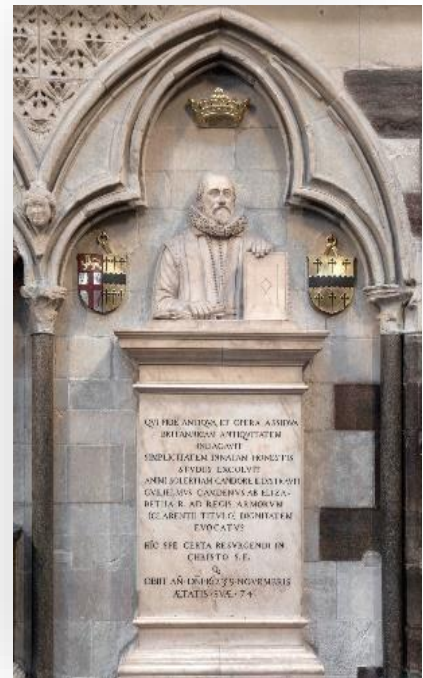


Arms of William Camden

Elizabeth appointed a commission to reform the College of Heralds, and one of their first steps was to choose Camden to be Clarenceux King of Arms in 1597, over which there was some resentment. At this period and for a long time afterwards there were disputes between the College of Heralds and the Worshipful Company of Painters-Stainers as to the right to execute armorial paintings, the Heralds contending that the monopoly granted in the Painters' charter referred to house painting, not coats of arms.

William, like his father Sampson Camden, was a member of the Painters' Company and was instrumental in settling these disputes. William Camden left the Company a legacy for the purchase of a silver cup, which is still in their possession, as is a portrait of him dating from 1676.

Camden had caught the plague when a boy, and his health was never very good. Partly to escape the threat of further infection, he left London in 1609 to live at Chislehurst in Kent. It was there that he wrote *The Annals of Queen Elizabeth*, the first part published in 1615; this was also in Latin and later translated into English. He was a sincere Protestant, and most of his books were censured by the Roman church, including his account of the Gunpowder Plot, again in Latin and published in 1607 by order of James I. In 1622 Camden founded a history lectureship at Oxford, and endowed it with Manor of Bexley, Kent, which he had purchased with money he had earned as a schoolmaster. The chair still exists as the Camden Professorship of Ancient History. Camden's academic activities were not always beyond reproach: there was a medieval tradition that Oxford University was founded by Alfred the Great, and Camden corroborated with this forgery.



*Monument to William Camden
in Westminster Abbey*

Excerpt from John Winter-Lotimer, 'The Chislehurst connection: Camden Town & Camden Place', Camden History Review 23 (1999)

William Camden died at Chislehurst on 9 November 1623 and is buried in Westminster Abbey.

2 – CHARLES PRATT, 1st Earl Camden (1713-1794)

Eponym of place names in England and North America

Charles Pratt was born in 1713, the fifth son of Lord Chief Justice Sir John Pratt. He was only eleven when his father died at their house in Great Ormond Street, Bloomsbury. Charles was educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge, then destined for a legal career, entered the Inner Temple in 1728. Called to the Bar ten years later, he became a barrister in the Middle Temple.

In 1749 he followed his brother in marrying into the Jeffreys family, and with Elizabeth Jeffreys had four daughters and one son, named John Jeffreys Pratt who became a King's Counsel in 1755. Two years later, with the support of Lord Henley, later Lord Chancellor, and his Eton school-friend William Pitt (the Elder), shortly to be Prime Minister, he entered Parliament as Whig MP for Downton, Wiltshire. In July 1757

he was made Attorney-General and from 1759 he also followed Lord Henley as Recorder of the City of Bath. In 1762, the new King George III sought to remove Pratt from the political field by promoting him to Chief Justice of the Common Pleas and appointing him to the Privy Council.

In 1763, as Chief Justice, Pratt freed John Wilkes, a radical journalist and MP who had been arrested for seditious libel, over an article he had written criticising a speech made by George III. He also supported the awarding of damages to victims of unlawful arrest and condemned the increased use of search warrants. As a result, he was very popular both in radical circles and among the wider public, regarded as a champion of civil liberties and idolised almost as much as Wilkes. Pratt received the Freedom of the City of London, and Joshua Reynolds was commissioned to paint his portrait, which was hung in the Guildhall; similarly, William Hoare painted his full-length portrait for the Guildhall in Bath, on his being granted the Freedom of that City.



Sir Charles Pratt, by William Hoare (1765)
Victoria Art Gallery
(Bath & North East Somerset Council)

Pratt's town house from 1758 to 1775, was at No.34 Lincoln's Inn Fields, which, but for demolition and a 1900 boundary change, would now lie in the modern borough of Camden. The Pratt family owned two properties in Kent that had been purchased by his father, Bayham Abbey near Lamberhurst, and Wildernesse at Seal near Sevenoaks. In 1760 Charles acquired Camden Place at Chislehurst of which he became very fond, and when ennobled in 1765 he took as his title 'Baron Camden of Camden Place in the county of Kent'.

The champion of civil liberties was not so respectful of the rights of his Chislehurst neighbours, causing resentment by his enclosure of common land. A local folk tale is believed to allude to his lordship's actions: 'Tis bad enough in man or woman / To steal a goose from off the common / But surely he's without excuse / Who steals the common from the goose?' Appointed Lord Chancellor within Pitt's administration in 1766, he was Speaker of the House of Lords until 1770, resigning after Pitt's ministry had fallen. Following a speech to Parliament, that he published in the *London Magazine* in 1768, under the title 'No taxation without representation', Lord Camden was a constant critic of Britain's North American policies, including military intervention, although he did not support full independence. It increased his reputation, gained in the Wilkes judgement, for individual rights, and made him popular with the colonists, resulting in the naming after him, directly or indirectly, of some thirty places in America.

In 1782, aged almost 70, Lord Camden returned to the cabinet, now under William Pitt the Younger, as President of the Council. Then in 1786 he was granted an earldom, an honour he accepted, he said, to please his children. He was also granted a further peerage as Viscount Bayham (after Bayham Abbey), for use as a courtesy title by his son.

Through his marriage to Elizabeth Jeffreys, Pratt had inherited property farmland, the demesne of Cantlowes near Kentish Town, just north of London, and in 1788 he obtained an Act of Parliament allowing him to grant leases for house building on the land. Building work began from 1790 on the new suburb that would soon be known as Camden Town.

Earl Camden has been described as short but handsome, with fine grey eyes and a genial smile. He was fond of the theatre, and enjoyed and played music, and was an avid reader of romantic novels. His social circle included David Garrick, Joshua Reynolds and Samuel Johnson, but he was blackballed when he tried to be elected to the Literary Club.

He died in London on 18 April 1794 at his town house in Mayfair, and was buried in Kent in Seal Church near Wildernesse. He was succeeded by his son, John Jeffreys Pratt.

Taken from John Campbell's 'Lives of the Lord Chancellors and Keepers of the Great Seal of England, from the Earliest Times Till the Reign of King George IV'. (1848)

3 – JOHN JEFFREYS PRATT, 2nd Earl Camden & 1st Marquess (1759-1840)

Eponym of places in Ireland, Alaska and Australia

John Jeffreys Pratt was born on 11 February 1759 in London, the fourth of five children and only son of Charles and Elizabeth Pratt. Educated at Eton and Cambridge University, in 1780 he was elected Member of Parliament for Bath under the organisation of his father. Between 1782 and 1792 he held junior ministerial positions in the government of William Pitt, his father's childhood friend.

In 1785 he married Frances Molesworth, an orphan heiress of Wembury, Devon, and they were given the Pratt family house at Wildernesse in Kent by Lord Camden's elder brother John. In 1786 when his father was granted an earldom, John Jeffreys was styled Viscount Bayham.

When his Father died in 1794, he succeeded as 2nd Earl Camden. In 1806 he inherited Bayham Abbey near Tunbridge Wells, and sold his father's house, Camden Place and his wife's manor at Wembury. He and his wife Frances also leased a grand town house in London at 22 Arlington Street, St James's.

In 1795 he was appointed by William Pitt as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. His term of office came at a very turbulent time. He was politically unsuccessful because of his government's opposition to Roman Catholic emancipation and the policies adopted to quell the unrest, including the suspension of *habeas corpus* and the imposition of martial law, culminating in the Irish Rebellion. He was withdrawn in 1798 and was followed by the ex-military Lord Cornwallis.

Returning to England, he was made Knight of the Garter in 1799 and was briefly, again under Pitt, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies. His War work consisted mainly of managing home defence volunteers, while in his colonial role he assisted an Australian settler, John Macarthur, in gaining land for sheep farming – which resulted in the naming of Camden, New South Wales. John Jeffreys remained in Pitt's cabinet until 1812, with two spells as Lord President of the Council. That year he was granted two further peerages, as Earl of Brecknock (after his mother's ancestral inheritance) and Marquess of Camden.



Through his father, in 1780, he had obtained the Tellership of the Exchequer, a lucrative position for life involving no work and worth £2,500 annually. Parliament had capped payment for new sinecures in 1783, but high taxes and expenditure during the Napoleonic War raised the uncapped Exchequer Tellership's payment tenfold and it was not until 1817 that the Marquess, under public criticism, volunteered to limit himself to the basic sum. Over the sixty years he received more than £1m of public money, much of which he put into buying farms and land around the two properties in Kent.

In later life John Jeffreys held positions as Lord Lieutenant of Kent and Chancellor of Cambridge University. He died at Wildernesse on 8 October 1840 and was buried, like his father, in nearby Seal Church. He was succeeded by his son George Charles Pratt, the 2nd Marquess, who married Harriet Murray, daughter of the Bishop of Rochester (and coincidentally a younger sister of the Rector of Chislehurst.)

Contributions from Camden History Society, London

4 – CAMDEN’S WORLDWIDE-

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1717 Camden House, Chislehurst | 1830 Camden, Indiana |
| → Camden Place 1760 | 1831 Camden, Illinois |
| c.1767 Streets in north and east London | 1835 Camden, Ohio |
| 1768 Camden, South Carolina | 1837 Camden Point, Missouri |
| 1773 Camden, New Jersey | 1838 Camden, Ray County, Missouri |
| 1777 Camden County, Georgia | 1840 Camden, Michigan |
| 1777 Camden County, North Carolina | 1840 Camden, New South Wales |
| 1785 Camden, Virginia | ← Camden Park 1805 |
| 1787 Camden (Crescent), Bath | 1841 Camden, Alabama |
| 1787 East Camden, Ontario | 1842 Camden, Arkansas |
| 1788 Camden, Delaware | 1843 Camden County, Missouri |
| 1790 Camden Town, London | 1844 Camden County, New Jersey |
| 1791 Camden, Maine | 1844 Camden, Camberwell, London |
| ← Cambden Plantation | 1852 Camden (Place), Minneapolis |
| 1794 Camden Township, Ontario | 1856 Camden Station, Baltimore |
| 1794 Port Camden, Alaska | 1859 Camden, Carver Co., Minnesota |
| 1795 Fort Camden, Co. Cork, Ireland | 1862 Camden, Nebraska |
| 1799 Camden, New York | 1862 Camden, S. Island, New Zealand |
| 1818 Camden Haven, New South Wales | c.1898 Camden, Polk County, Texas |
| 1821 Camden Bay, Western Australia | 1931 Camdenton, Missouri |
| 1826 Camden Bay, Alaska | 1965 London Borough of Camden |
| By 1830s Camden, Tennessee | |

5 CAMDEN, BATH, UK

Neighbourhood in Walcot Ward, Bath & North East Somerset.

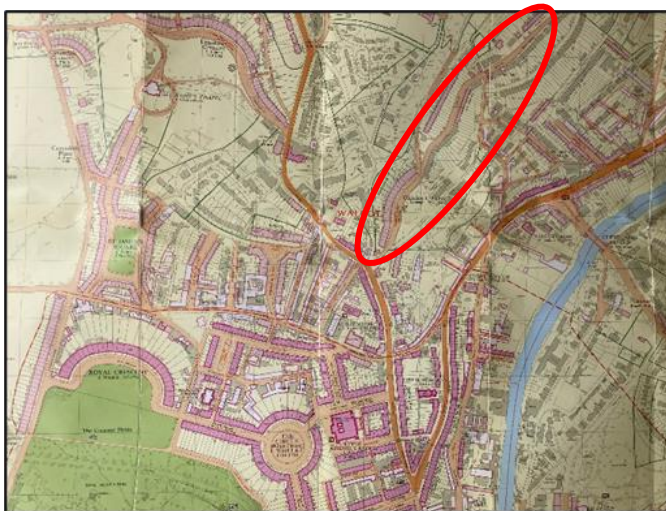
Contributions from:

History of Bath Research Group - <https://historyofbath.org/>

Camden Residents' Association – <https://camdenresidentsbath.org>



Until the latter part of the 18th century the area of Bath, now known as Camden, remained largely open countryside with various orchards and market gardens now supplying the growing city. However, it was no less a man than John Wood, the architect of the Circus and the Royal Crescent, who fixed “preliminary articles” with Robert Gay the local landowner in 1725, to develop further his ideas for the north of the city. Nevertheless, it took over fifty years until his fellow architect John Eveleigh built Camden Crescent (1787-1794) at what is now the western end of Camden Road. It was named after Charles Pratt, the first Earl of Camden, who had become the ‘Recorder of Bath’ in 1759.



Location of ‘Camden’ Area

within the City of Bath

Base map OS/RCHM 1989

showing Georgian Buildings
coloured mauve



Camden Crescent built 1787-88

However, as can be seen from a developer's map dated 1793, the original 'Upper Camden Place', i.e. Camden Crescent, was initially planned to be much grander than it ended up and was to have included a sloping garden running down to a terrace called 'Lower Camden Place'.



*Talyor & Meyler 1793
Bath Record Office, B&NES Council*

It was planned as a crescent of 22 houses with terraces of 5 houses at either end. The reasons why this grand development of the Upper and Lower Camden Places did not happen was due to the ground conditions at the eastern end that led to a series of landslips during construction which was immediately halted, and to this day remains quite noticeably truncated with only 18 houses together with the south west wing. What was intended as the centre is pedimented and bears the arms of Charles Pratt, first Earl of Camden, while the keystones of each house bear his crest, an elephant's head.



The original 'Upper Camden Place' was then called simply 'Camden Place' and later renamed 'Camden Crescent' and the names Upper and Lower Camden Place transferred to terraces built further east, along the Camden Road.



*Watts: Camden Place 1794
Victoria Art Gallery, B&NES Council*

In its time as 'Camden Place' it gained, in 1817, literary fame as the home of Sir Walter Elliot in Jane Austin's last novel 'Persuasion':

"Sir Walter. had taken a very good house in Camden Place, a lofty, dignified situation, such as becomes a man of consequence; and both he and Elizabeth were settled there, much to their satisfaction. Anne entered it with a sinking heart, anticipating an imprisonment of many months..."



Travelling east down the Camden Road on the north side, set back from the road, is the new **Upper Camden Place**, an assortment of large late 18th and early 19th century houses, some by the architect John Eveleigh for the local attorney John Jelly.

On the southern side are the mid-Victorian terraces of City View and Berkeley Place.

These are followed by the re-sited **Lower Camden Place**, a picturesque terrace of early 19th century houses, possibly by John Pinch the Elder.

These have banded ground floor rustication as seen in the adjacent photo.



Further on and set back high above the road on the north side is **Camden Terrace**, a row of 6 elegant early 19th century houses again, possibly by Pinch the Elder. They are of single window width with thin reeded porches. The two in the centre project slightly and have ground floor banded rustication and a further pediment with the arms of Charles Pratt, the first Earl of Camden.



Further along still, on the north side is Prospect Place, a long terrace of pretty cottages, mostly built in 1810 by Abraham Chubb. Prospect Place seems to have been built on what had been a

botanic garden set up in 1793 by the previously mentioned attorney and amateur botanist John Jelly. Some distance further on again is Claremont Place, four pairs of elegant regency villas, built in 1817, probably by Pinch the Elder. Opposite is Frankley Buildings, the steep row of Georgian houses at right angles to Camden Road.

On the south side of the road are the late Victorian houses of Belgrave Place and Belgrave Terrace and Belgrave Crescent, and back on the north side, Stanley Villas and Coburg Villas.

The **Camden Road** ends with the few shops of Claremont Buildings, once a vibrant community centre, but still providing a hairdresser, a couple of estate agents and a pub. It was here that the **Camden Residents' Association** held a Street party on the occasion of our late Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022.



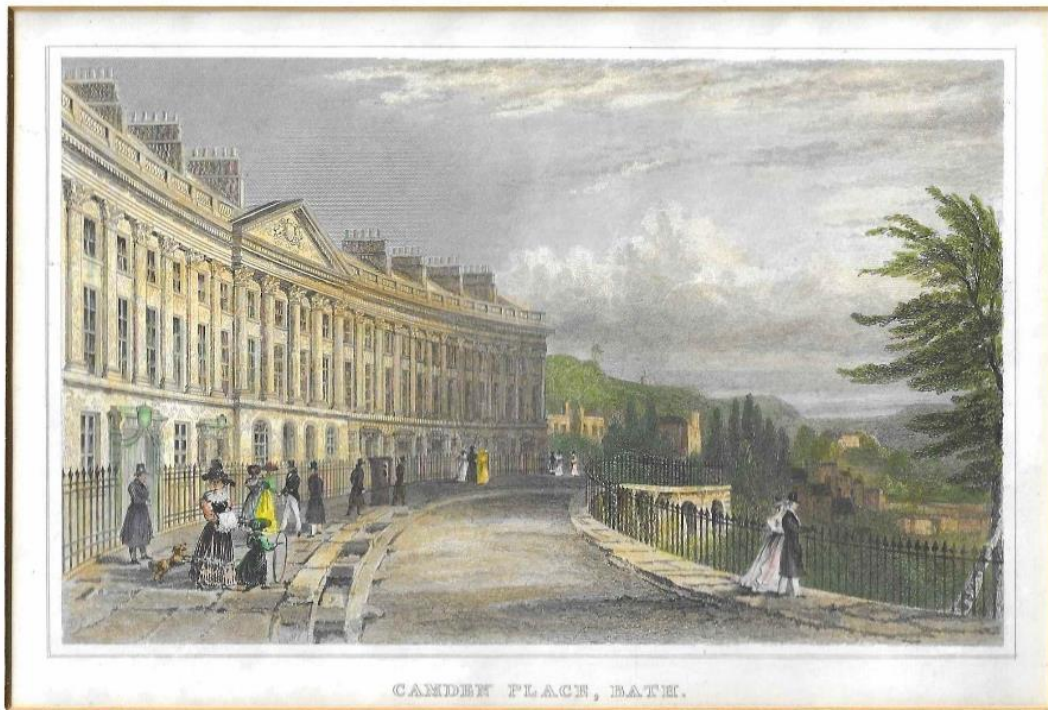
Returning to the western end of Camden Road, the piece of land in front of the Crescent directly above Hedgemoor Park, has been recently cleared and renamed '**Camden Meadow**' an initiative by a sub-group of the *Camden Residents' Association*. Together with the help of the occasional visits by both pigs and goats to help keep the vegetation under control, this year (2022) has also seen the result of some busy bees whose hives can be seen in the photo below.



'Camden' Porcelain: Worcester- First Period (1751-1783) Private Collection



Pure Honey, 2022 Camden Meadow, Bath



*Britton: Camden Place, Bath, 1829
Private Collection*



*Samuel Poole: Camden Crescent from Hedgemoor Park, c.1910
Victoria Art Gallery, B&NES Council*

As a Post script to this story should be added 'Camden Mill', down on the Bath riverside and part of the new 'Bath Quays South' redevelopment.



*Camden Mill (1879-81) from the River Avon
Bath Quays South*

A former steam-powered flour mill built in 1879-80, by Henry Williams, it was extended by F.W. Gardiner in 1892. It is a large rectangular block with similar frontages to river and road, intended for shipment of grain in and onward distribution of flour.

The building is constructed from coursed squared limestone, tightly jointed, under a Welsh slate roof with overhanging timber hoists. The interior structure has timber beams supported on cast iron columns with some brick fireproofing. It was originally converted to office use in 1974-5 and later in 2021 renovated by the TCN Group into a state-of-the-art commercial development within the new Bath Quays Development.

It has been listed by *Historic England* as Grade II as a good example of an increasingly rare survival, a large-scale Victorian flour mill designed by a recognised regional architect together being one of the few remaining buildings which demonstrate the importance that river traffic had for Bath, beginning with the opening of the Avon Improvement in 1727. It is a valuable reminder of Bath's former importance as the centre of an agricultural area, although any links to The Earl of Camden remain unknown.

6 – ELEPHANTS' HEADS

In deference to William Camden, as Clarenceux King of Arms, we should not overlook Lord Camden's heraldry which, like the Camden name, has travelled. Usually symbolising great strength or wisdom, the Pratt family emblem is an elephant's head.



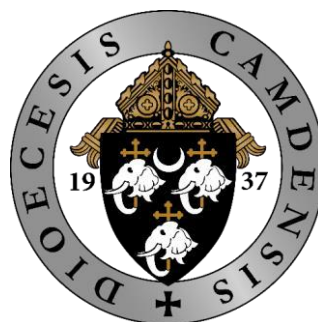
Along with a white bar and three stars, three such heads appeared in the arms of both the 1st Earl Camden (left) and his son, the 1st Marquess (right).



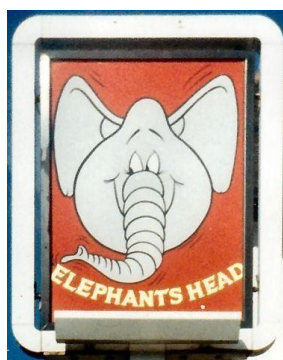
In 1900 the motif was included in the arms of the new Metropolitan Borough of St Pancras, and today serves more strikingly as the crest in the little-used coat of arms of the London Borough of Camden (Latin motto meaning 'not for oneself but for all').



Elephants' heads have also crossed the Atlantic, featuring both in the arms of Camden County, New Jersey (left), and in the badge of the local Roman Catholic diocese:



Back in England, in Camden Crescent, Bath, the doorcase keystones are embellished with elephants' heads in relief. (See previous page). Similarly adorned in Camden Town, London, is the doorway of 'Elephant House', the former bottling store of the erstwhile Camden Brewery (brewers of Elephant Ale). Still trading nearby in Camden High Street, and first opened in 1869, is an Elephant's Head public house; and a namesake at Hook Green, Kent, near Bayham Abbey, has been recorded by the Sevenoaks Society.



The Hook Green inn sign in Kent

Many thanks are credited to all the contributors who responded so enthusiastically to the invitation to participate in CAMDENS WORLDWIDE.

Organised by David Hayes, others including Steve Denford, John Cottrell and Mark McCarthy of Camden History Society who also gave help and advice together with Angela Hatton, whose planned William Camden quatercentenary commemorations at Chislehurst were the inspiration for this project.

**CAMDEN
HISTORY
SOCIETY**

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<http://www.camdenhistorysociety.org/>