

Panoramic Photograph of Ellesmere and Sandwich Roads

by John Rabbitt

Recently I was very kindly sent a most unusual Victorian panoramic photograph of the junction of Ellesmere Road and Sandwich Road with 6 Ellesmere Road (which is now Elmsleigh) in the background.



No. 6 Ellesmere Road panoramic photograph circa 1890



Sandwich Road Map 1880

I would guess this panoramic photograph was taken between 1880 and 1890. You can see that the plot of ground opposite to 6 Ellesmere Road is vacant with what looks like a 'For Sale' notice by the boundary fence. If you look carefully behind the young man you can see the driveway to Walton House, a very large property which was on the corner of Ellesmere Road and Sandwich Road.

I have looked closely at the photograph and there is no doubt that it was taken as a single image rather than a number of photographs exposed separately and then joined together.



At the time this photograph was taken there is every likelihood that the camera used to take this photograph was a Sutton panoramic camera. It had a very wide angle field of view (140deg) and the image was exposed onto a curved glass plate. The very wide angle lens would have created the slight distortion you can see in this image. Sutton panoramic cameras are extremely rare. One sold at Christie's in 2005 for £33,600, the box of 13 curved glass plates, only four of which had images, sold for £7,200. Details of the Sutton panoramic camera can be found using the link below.

<https://collections.museumvictoria.com.au/items/407437>

My grandson Alexander, very kindly used his smart camera and Photoshop software to reproduce a panoramic photograph of the same view as seen today.



No. 6 Ellesmere Road panoramic photograph 2020

You will notice that the top attic window has been rebuilt as two Victorian style windows when this property was converted into apartments in the mid 1990s. That particular window has gone through a number of changes in the last 140 years. A photograph taken in 1990 (below) shows a completely different style of window, possibly installed in the 1960s/70s. The 1990 photograph does appear to show the original gate post which unfortunately was removed during the redevelopment of the site.



No. 6 Ellesmere Road 1990