LOUGHTON AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 173

MARCH/APRIL 2007 Price 20p, free to members

www.loughtonhistoricalsociety.org.uk

William Harvey, MD, and Rolls Park, Chigwell

RICHARD MORRIS

The first member of the Harvey family to come to live at Rolls Park was Eliab (1589–1661) in about 1658. He was the brother of William (1578–1657) the famous doctor who in 1628 published the correct theory for the circulation of the blood. William rarely if ever visited Rolls Park although he was a frequent visitor to the Harvey town house at Broad Street in the City. However, a portrait of him was among the collection which decorated the walls at Rolls Park during the time that a further six generations of Harveys lived there.

Rolls Park contained a number of the earliest portraits of the Harvey family. A tableau on the wall of the large dining room (later the rococo Music room) consisted of portraits painted in about 1622 (artist unknown, but possibly by Joachim von Sandrart) of Thomas Harvey, his seven sons (William, Thomas, John, Daniel, Eliab, Matthew and Michael) and one of his daughters, possibly Ameye.

In 1928 Geoffrey Keynes visited Rolls Park at Chigwell, with Sir D'Arcy Power, when Lady Lloyd was still living there. Keynes later recalled that he had a dim memory of an ornate room lined with portraits of the Harvey family to which no one seemed to attach much importance. In his *Life of Harvey* (1897), Sir D'Arcy Power made a cursory reference to pictures at Rolls Park but had apparently not thought them worthy of investigation, although he reproduced in his *Portraits of Harvey* (1913), a picture of a gentleman in a falling ruff which had formerly been at Rolls Park and was supposed to represent William Harvey, MD. This portrait was subsequently removed from Rolls Park by Richard Lloyd, and Keynes later identified it as a portrait of William Harvey's brother Eliab. The portrait is now believed to be in private possession in America.

Geoffrey Keynes again visited Rolls Park in 1948, having established contact with the then owner, Andrew Lloyd. The house was unoccupied having suffered from bombing and from military occupation during the Second World War, and all the contents of the house had been removed except the pictures in the room that Keynes remembered from his previous visit. These had been left because they were all fixed in the walls with the plaster surrounds and had perhaps been thought to be irremovable.

On his visit in 1948 Keynes found that two of the seven oval portraits had been recently hacked out and stolen by vandalistic intruders (those of Eliab and Matthew). At the time of this visit the light was fading and the great shutters on the tall windows could mostly not be opened, so that no opinion could be formed of the paintings. Keynes returned two days later and with the help of a ladder and a candle was able to satisfy himself that the portrait near the ceiling was certainly a contemporary image of William Harvey, MD, as a comparatively young man.

The portrait shows the head and shoulders, facing half left. Harvey is wearing a doublet and half ruff. The face is that of a much younger man than in any other known portrait of him. He has a heavy moustache and a small pointed beard and the eyes and hair are dark.

Soon afterwards the five remaining oval portraits, and that of Thomas Harvey (Senior), were removed for safe keeping to the National Portrait Gallery. Examination established their authenticity and was helped as each bears the name of the subject. The portraits were restored, and then hung for 10 years in the Royal College of Physicians, London. They were then returned to their owner Mr Andrew Lloyd (Admiral Sir Eliab and Lady Louisa Harvey's great-great grandson).

The portrait of William Harvey, MD, was sold in 1959 by Mr Lloyd to Dr Myron Prinzmetal of Los Angeles for £2,200, and illegally exported to America in 1960. The dealers concerned and others were fined but attempts to have the portrait returned to the UK failed, and it was not until after Dr Prinzmetal's death that in January 1977 it was purchased by the trustees of the National Portrait Gallery from Zeitlin and Ver Brugge, Los Angeles, acting on behalf of the Prinzmetal Estate. However, the price demanded was now £40,000. Fortunately a generous donation from a Canadian University together with a substantial part of the National Portrait Gallery's annual grant was used to secure the return to the UK of the portrait. It is now on display at the National Portrait Gallery in London. Portraits of four of the other brothers: Thomas, John, Daniel and Michael are in the collection of Susan, Lady Newborough, the younger daughter of Andrew Lloyd and a great-great-great granddaughter of Admiral Sir

Eliab Harvey who commanded the *Temeraire* at Trafalgar and lived at Rolls Park until his death in 1830.

In June this year the 350th anniversary of the death of Doctor William Harvey will be celebrated.

Sources:

Keynes, Sir G, *The Life of William Harvey* (1966).

Keynes, Sir G (Ed James, G), *The Portraiture of William Harvey* (1985).

Morris, R S, *The Harveys of Rolls Park, Chigwell* (LDHS, 2005).

The Times, 23 February, 1977.

The Daily Telegraph, 23 February 1977.

Loughton's Glyndebourne: The Pollards Operas 1935–1939

STEPHEN PEWSEY

The first Loughton Festival in 2007 celebrates the artistic heritage of Loughton. Quite properly, the focus is on the town's rich literary legacy. However, Loughton also has a considerable musical history, thanks mainly to the existence of Lopping Hall as the focus for the town's social life during much of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Loughton Operatic Society is claimed as the oldest in Essex, founded in 1894, and a glance at the columns of local newspapers or directories for the period 1890–1940 will reveal a wide range of musical entertainment at Lopping Hall and elsewhere in the town.

For a brief period in the 1930s Loughton rose to national prominence as the venue for the Pollards Opera, an opera festival which rivalled Glyndebourne. The venue was 'Pollards', No 30 Albion Hill, since demolished and now occupied by Pollards Close (see also the article on The Venture, page 4, below). This was the home of Mrs and Mrs Bernard F Howard. A member of the Howard dynasty of chemical manufacturers, Bernard Howard (1880–1960) was the great-grandson of Luke Howard, who devised the classification of clouds. He was a prominent member of the community, not only serving as a Verderer but also as a JP and Chairman of Loughton Urban District Council in 1929–30 and 1932–33. He was in fact the Urban District Council's last Chairman, as Loughton merged with two other local authorities in 1933 to form Chigwell UDC.

Mrs Howard, born Elizabeth Jane Fox, seems to have been the driving force behind the Pollards Operas. They were planned from the start to be outdoor performances 'in Mrs Howard's delightful terraced garden'. This is where they differed from the Glyndebourne Festival which, though famous for its outdoor picnics, actually takes place indoors in the purpose-built opera house (even the Loughton Town Council web site gets this wrong!).

Pollards was a very large house at the top of Albion Hill with commanding views across the forest. The house was already in existence by 1880, but was completely rebuilt c.1900 by Buckhurst Hill businessman James Dietrichsen. The Dietrichsens also restored the spectacular gardens, and opened them to the public (for a one shilling contribution to charity). These comprised three 150-metre wide terraces, with lawns and ornamental trees closest to the house, then rose gardens and a sunken pond, and finally a wilderness garden which merged with the forest. The stable block was converted into a house – Greengates – in 1928 and the Dietrichsens moved there after selling the main house to the Howards. James Dietrichsen died in 1929, and it was after his wife Elizabeth died in 1934 that the Howards began planning the Pollards Operas.

The musical muse behind the Pollards performances was Iris Lemare (1902–1997), Britain's first professional female conductor and the first woman guest conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra. She had been running a music festival in London since 1931, where she was an early champion of English composers Benjamin Britten and Alan Rawsthorne. While Iris Lemare conducted and directed, Geoffrey Dunn (b. 1903) was the producer, and also translator, since Pollards Operas were performed in English. Geoffrey Dunn's theatrical career spanned many decades and he appeared on stage and screen on both side of the Atlantic, with cameo roles in many major films including *Quo Vadis*.

The first Pollards Opera took place on 15 June 1935, and included the first British performance of Handel's comic opera *Serse* (Xerxes) since 1728, the year it was written. It had been the intention to perform the piece in the garden, but torrential rain meant the performance took place indoors. There was a core of professional performers, including Iris Lemare (who conducted a small orchestra), singers Lesley Duff and Jan van der Gucht (a Loughton resident at the time), as well as Geoffrey Dunn, but the Howard family filled many roles too. The five Howard daughters all performed on stage, and another family member, Deborah Carter, designed the costumes. The *Musical Times* review was equivocal, commenting that it was well sung but that the opera had 'dramatic weaknesses', and hoped that the Howards would make another attempt to stage the performance.

Operatic performances were interspersed with other music. Local historian Will Francies recalled, 'the fine music room, large entrance hall, even the main staircase, served as stage and auditorium . . . the incomparable Schubert D minor quartet ("Death and the Maiden") is an unforgettable memory, albeit listened to from an uncomfortable seat on the main staircase!' In fact *Serse* was performed three more times that season, and when it was finally staged outdoors, the first aria *Ombra mai fù* made quite an impression. It was partly the success of the Pollards Opera which helped Iris Lemare gain the conductorship of the BBC Orchestra, an appointment that was controversial at the time.

The next opera festival was two years later in 1937. Unlike the 1935 season, the summer of 1937 was kind and the performances took place outdoors as intended.

Once again there was innovation, with the first British performance of Scarlatti's *The Triumph of Virtue*.

The final festival took place during the summer of 1939 as war loomed. The *Triumph of Virtue* was revived again but the highlight was the first British production of Gluck's comic opera *La Rencontre imprévue*, translated as *The Pilgrims of Mecca*. This was 'warmly received by critics and public alike', although as in 1935 'the disastrous weather . . . made it impossible to use the natural advantages of an exceptionally lovely garden'. However, lessons had been learnt from 1935, and the performers and audience retreated to a marquee built especially against the possibility of rain. The *Musical Times* was gushing: 'Scarlatti's opera was a delightful experience, partly because the music is a treasure-house of pure and inexhaustibly original melody, partly because Geoffrey Dunn's translation is a tour de force of joinery and wit. There can never, one felt, have been an English version of any opera that hit so many bull's-eyes without once betraying incongruity.'

The outbreak of war ended the Pollards Operas. Pollards became a home for refugees. Family tragedy was to follow. The Howards' eldest son James was killed in October 1940 when the family's chemical works in Ilford was bombed, and Jane Howard was herself killed a month later. With the moving spirit gone, the Pollards Operas did not resume after the war.

Sources

B W, 'Opera at Pollards', *The Musical Times*, August 1939.

Bradbury, Ernest, 'Iris Lemare', *The Musical Times*, October 1952.

F H, 'Handel's *Xerxes*', *The Musical Times*, July 1935.

Francies, Will, 'More Memories of Some Loughton folk', *Essex Countryside*, No 264 (January 1979).

Lemare, Iris, 'Handel's *Ombra mai fù*', letter in *The Musical Times*, July 1939.

Morris, Richard, *From Clouds to Quinine: The Howard Family of Tottenham, Buckhurst Hill and Loughton* (LDHS, 2004).

R M, 'The Pollards, Loughton – late 19th century to 1934', *Chigwell & Loughton History Society Newsletter*, No 136 (April 1997).

The Loughton Removal Orders

CHRIS POND

In researching the sources for my additional chapter to the forthcoming new edition of Donald Pohl's *Loughton 1851*, I referred in the Essex Record Office to removal orders to Loughton during the period 1712 to 1819. Removal orders are not such good indicators of migration as the companion documentation of the Old Poor Law, the settlement certificates and examinations, but they are nevertheless very interesting.

If you moved to another parish from the one in which your legal settlement was; that is, the parish that for poor relief purposes was obliged to maintain you and your family if you fell into need, the chances are that you would be examined there by the magistrates, and unless your home parish agreed to provide you with a certificate acknowledging you as their responsibility, then you were liable to be deported back to that place. You could gain a settlement by birth, by serving an apprenticeship or as an indentured servant, by paying parish rates, or by serving office.

If you were caught begging, you were likely to be treated under other legislation as a rogue and vagabond, and you could also be sent back to the place of your settlement.

There are 35 removal orders to Loughton in the 107 years that have survived. 22 are from places in Essex, a mixture of neighbouring parishes and market towns, such as Harlow and Thaxted; 7 from London, and one each from Yorkshire, Sussex and Hampshire.

Four of the removal orders are for rogues and vagabonds, and two relate to the same person, Elizabeth Tongue. She was deported on 21 November 1818 from Pontefract, a market town in the West Riding, and on 21 December 1819 from the parish of St John sub-Castro in Lewes, in Sussex. The examination subjoined to the Lewes documentation states that she was born in Loughton and married William Tongue 36 years before, also in Loughton. Quite what this middle-aged woman was doing begging in different parts of the country is unknown. After the Lewes incident, when she was discharged from the House of Correction there, she was escorted by the constable to Godstone in Surrey, thence to London Bridge, thence to West Ham and Loughton. Tongue is a name that subsisted in Loughton for some generations thereafter.

James Tongue, his wife Margaret, and their children Mary-Anne 12, Elizabeth-Jane 9, Daniel 6 and Sarah 6 months, were removed (not as vagrants) from Alverstoke, Hants in 1818. So perhaps members of this family had a built-in wanderlust.

Another familiar Loughton name, Burling, comes next. Ann Burling was begging in St Luke's, Middlesex (around Old Street), in 1780. She was the widow of Michael Burling, who had been a farmer in Loughton, renting at the quite considerable cost of £40 p.a. So she had definitely fallen upon hard times.

An ordinary (non-vagrant) removal concerned William Madel in 1811. Here the removal was from Norton Mandeville, that tiny parish just east of High Ongar. Madel had been born thereabouts, but he had gained a settlement in Loughton because he had served as a covenant servant to Joseph Philby, farmer of Loughton, in 1808. He had been hired by Philby at the Ongar Old Michaelmas Statute Fair, at the wage of 5 guineas a year (£5.25).

From Thaxted in 1817 came a single woman with the curious name of Wade Greenwood.

By far the most interesting document concerns Charles Wroth and his wife, Margaret, in 1712, and records, in very faded and hardly legible handwriting, a dispute between Loughton and St Botolph, Aldgate, about their settlement. When I am next in the ERO I will attempt to transcribe this, which William Waller had seen, as it is annotated 'He was a ne'er-do-well half brother of Sir Robert Wroth – WCW'. Even the gentry, fallen on hard times, could come within the ambit of the settlement laws.

Route 38A: Loughton – Crown Hotel

Thanks to the courtesy of Derrick Martin we are able to reproduce this photograph of The Crown at Loughton as it was about 1936. This was the terminus of the 38A route from Victoria before it was transferred to Loughton Station forecourt in the 1940s. It was obviously summer time as the driver in the foreground is wearing the white top to his cap and his light-weight jacket.

The bus is one of the open staircase AEC Renown six-wheelers of the LT class which were on this route until almost their final withdrawal in the late 1940s. These vehicles were based at Loughton (L) and Leyton (T) garages.

Derrick Martin's father, conductor Arthur Martin of Southview Road with his driver, Frank Hopkins of Sedley Rise, worked the 38A route from Loughton Garage for many years, also occasionally working the 10A, Green Man, Leytonstone, to Epping Town. Derrick comments that 'it must have been a long walk from Southview Road to The Crown to take the 10A to Loughton Garage for an early start on a winter's morning'.

On a quaint nostalgic note, one of Derrick's jobs, in his early working life, was to put the Christmas lights onto Brown's tree in the High Road.

We are also grateful to Garry Thorpe, Editor of the *CHT Bulletin* (the newsletter of Craven's Heritage Trains), where this material first appeared, for permission to reproduce it.

The Venture – III: conclusion

TED MARTIN

How the end of WWII, perhaps inevitably, saw the passing of The Venture

The 13th issue (112 pages) was published in January 1946 to rejoicing at the end of the war and lamentations that the final part of the long-running series on Loughton's Underworld was published in this issue.

The 'News Letter' recounts the doings, awards and homecomings of those on active service. One of the members' husbands was a Lieutenant-Colonel who was OC South-East Ports; a member's son had been mentioned in dispatches for bravery at Walcheren Island; another son received the MBE 'for outstanding services and devotion to duty during the assault on Northern Europe'. A member of the circle had received a medal from the King but a name was not allowed to be mentioned. There are notes of husbands, daughters and sons returning from the war; of members who were rendered homeless being rehoused, and also of other members who had been temporarily living in Loughton returning to their homes in Surrey. There was also the first mention of 'the new town that is to be built in Loughton'.

The immediate past-president formed the subject of an excellent portrait and adulatory poems at the beginning of this issue, followed by a report of a visit to a past member in the village of Moreton. Two poems on *Macbeth* and Christmas Night are followed by suggestion of special retirement homes for elderly women – an idea certainly in advance of its time.

There are reports on a reading of Trollope's *Barchester Towers* and a debate which had as its subject 'That a creative genius, even if his private life does not conform to accepted moral standards, is of more value than two normal law-abiding citizens'. After discussion a vote was taken and opinion was evenly divided: 11 votes for the motion, 11 votes against.

A reading of *Much Ado About Nothing* took place in the garden of 'Pollards'. (See Loughton's Glyndebourne', above, page 2.) The Literary Circle had a VE Day of its own on 18 July 1945 when members read pieces on the subject of victory. At a subsequent meeting on 25 September five short playlets written by members were acted. On 9 October proposals of marriage taken from literature, covering the range from Congreve to Chekov via Dickens and Shaw, were discussed. On 30 October the subject was literary characters, where each member had to write and present a three-minute paper on a chosen character: from Father Brown to the White Knight in *Alice*.

Further meetings concentrated on Shaw's *The Doctor's Dilemma*, and Robert Browning. The Christmas Party was held at 'Pemberley' on 18 December. As mentioned above the final adventure of Miss Maltby in the Loughton Underworld follows with a riot of illustration. A version of 'Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes' written at a Temperance Hotel(!) in 1902 is followed by a story allegedly about the life of St Heligan, a Cornish saint.

After a poem on King Canute and an account of a Scottish holiday, Jean's Scrap Book dilates on the changing fashion in dressing children (the number of layers required in summer and winter) and gives an American recipe for 'Shoo-fly pie' – treacle tart – and this is followed by an article recommending that you feed the cat on macaroni and dried egg!

The report on a play-writing competition and the five plays submitted follows, with the plays reproduced, and this concludes issue 13.

There is perhaps a clue to why No 14 (94 pages, published in August 1946) was the last issue of the *Venture* in the editorial. The editor apologises for the lack of a play-writing festival in their programme and states: 'Activities that closed down during the war have started again, there are all sorts of arrears to be made up and housewives have no spare time whatever.'

Algers Road is now home to nine army majors and reunions with loved ones are reported. One member travelled to Liverpool to meet her daughter and grandchildren travelling home from Africa where she spent 'three interminable days and uncomfortable nights'. No facilities were provided and she had to 'sit like a stray cat' on a porter's barrow. All the returnees were herded onto a special train and the unfortunate lady was only able to wave to her loved ones as they passed through. However, they had a grand Christmas reunion. Two poems are followed by 'A Tour in BAOR in 1945'. This recounts the adventures of a member of the ENSA Ballet Guild Company dancing in Paris, Brussels and Berlin. She witnessed the devastation of Berlin at first hand, visiting the chancellery and noting that only four months before Hitler had been living there.

An article on living in Sweden is followed by a report of a talk on 'Hymns as Literature' which 'strode through centuries of hymnology' including a 17th century author named Schmolk who was responsible for 1,188 hymns! On 12 February 1946 the circle formed its own 'Brains Trust' and on 26 February the group listened to William Addison talking on 'Modern Poetry'. A reading of *Persuasion* by Jane Austen took place on 12 March.

The 'Rise of the English Novel', Anton Chekov and 'The Parson in Literature' were the subjects of later meetings and there was 'Platform Practice' where members took the floor to play various parts and give talks.

As You Like It was performed in costume at the Summer picnic on 18 June but the big event was on the evening of 22 June when the gardens of 'Pemberley' were host to the female students of Morley College who gave a recital of works for voice and recorders by sixteenth and seventeenth century composers and the weather was perfect, too.

On 23 July the members entertained their friends from Westerham WI with readings from past issues of the *Venture*.

Jean's Scrap Book appears again with recipes and a 'Song of Constant Hunger'. Referring to the kitchen, part of this is:

> The rice is there,
> The spice is there,
> The cake they long to slice is there,
> The fruit is there,
> And loot is there
> To haunt them through the night.

After a poem on Rottingdean the short story competition is reported upon. No less than 18 possible subjects ranging from Mr Pecksniff to Charles II and from a ghost to a hawthorn tree were provided and the best stories are reproduced.

This concludes the last *Venture*. We may speculate why it did not appear again, but the real reason is probably that, with the resumption of 'normal' life, husbands and families returning, the ladies involved found it more and more difficult to spare the time for their literary pursuits and that the special bond which had held them together through the difficult war years was weakened.

As mentioned before, one is struck by the skill, education and depth of knowledge of these ladies and the author rather ruefully wishes that he had had such a reservoir of talent to draw on when he was editor of this *Newsletter*. I am sure that the WI will take steps to ensure that this invaluable archive, which acts as a unique window on to a section of the home front during the War, is preserved for posterity, perhaps at the Essex Record Office?

The ladies of the Literary Circle of the Loughton Women's Institute, surviving or passed on, would have appreciated not only Ted's assiduous revival of their efforts in our Newsletter, but also Eve Lockington's original suggestion to undertake the task.

The Violet Powder Case

STEPHEN PEWSEY

In late 1877 there were 13 unexplained infant deaths in Loughton, then a small village of just 2,500 souls. There were 14 further cases of agonising illness among the parish's children. All from the poor parts of Loughton, they suffered from swollen joints and painful skin eruptions.

In February 1878, Mrs Louisa Deacon of Goldings Park Road (now Goldings Road) bought a penny packet of 'King's Superfine Violet Powder' – a Victorian version of talc – for her new baby, Eleanor Deacon. Soon, little Eleanor was showing the same distressing symptoms that had affected the other children, with open inflamed sores on her body. Mrs Deacon realised that the powder had caused the problem, and threw it away. Fortunately the child recovered, but that was not the end of the matter. The child's father, Octavius Deacon (1836–1916) suspected that the powder had been adulterated, and bought some more, which he sent away for analysis. Octavius and Louisa already had four other children: Elgiva, then aged 8, Dora, 7, Mary, 4, and Willoughby, just 1 year old. Octavius was a successful local businessman, described as 'Advertising Agent and Publisher' in the 1891 census, though best remembered today for his humorous paintings of daily life in Victorian Loughton.

The analysis of the powder confirmed their suspicions. It was 25% arsenic (some reports put the

arsenic content as high as 38%). The Home Office was informed and a criminal investigation begun. All the dead and sick children had been 'treated' with violet powder, bought from two groceries, run by long-established Loughton families, the Nottages and the Grouts.

There were Nottages in Loughton as early as 1720, when Henry Nottage was a witness to the will of Knightly Wroth (another famous Loughton name!). The Nottage grocery in Forest Road served a poor community mainly comprising labourers and servants.

Emma Grout, then 47, ran a tiny grocer's shop behind the Foresters Arms, at the top of what is now Stony Path. This shop served the tightly-knit Baldwins Hill 'rookery' which was home to many Higginses and Willingales, the relatives of the loppers who had 'saved' Epping Forest. Living with Emma Grout was her son, Arthur Grout, 28, a house decorator, and his wife, also Emma. The Grouts were a big family, with another shop at the top of York Hill next to the Gardeners Arms, and they were soon to take over the licences of both the Foresters Arms and the Gardeners Arms; York Hill Green is still known locally as Grout's Corner.

A Local Government Board inspector searched out the source of the powder; the trail led back to the supplier, Henry George King of Kingsland Green, Dalston. He denied all knowledge of the arsenic, but was charged with manslaughter. The trial was held in May 1878 at Epping Magistrates' Court. It was something of a sensation; there were so many witnesses against the accused it took three days to hear all their statements. There were tragic tales of newborn babies covered in blisters after being dusted with the powder; one family lost two children. Loughton's three doctors were cross-examined and had to admit they had not recognised arsenic poisoning in any of the cases of sickness and death. Death certificates had recorded a variety of causes, including erysipelas and inflammation, and no doubt infectious diseases of all kinds caused a higher than usual mortality rate among Loughton's poor.

Mr King told the court that his proprietary mix was supposed to contain potato starch, iris root (which provided the smell of violets that characterised the powder), sulphate of lime, magnesia, and a little violet perfume and rose essence. He claimed to know nothing of the arsenic and angrily rejected suggestions that he had substituted white arsenic powder for starch because it was cheaper. Although it has been known to be a dangerous poison since antiquity, arsenic has also had a long history of cosmetic use, and even in Victorian times was a common ingredient in many household items. However, King appeared genuinely shocked and remorseful about the poisonings and had paid for his own analysis of the powder, which confirmed the official findings. He had gone around all the shops he supplied to try and recover the tainted powder. The court also heard of other deaths and illnesses among children in a wide area around east London and west Essex; all had used King's violet powder.

In the light of the many witness statements and clear evidence of poisoning, the Epping hearings could only have one outcome. King was to be sent for trial at the Chelmsford Assizes. However, fearing a repetition of the angry scenes at Epping, King called for the case to be heard at the Old Bailey, where he claimed he would get a fairer hearing. At considerable cost, he secured legal representation and made an application for the trial to be transferred. This application was heard by no less a person than the Lord Chief Justice who, sitting with two other senior judges, decided that public outrage was not sufficient cause to move the trial. However, they did agree that the trial could move, on grounds of convenience: central London was easier to get to for witnesses and legal staff.

The trial opened on 7 August 1878 in a blaze of publicity; there was intense newspaper interest in what they called 'The Violet Powder Case'. To a specimen charge of the manslaughter of one baby (not one of the Loughton victims) George King repeated his earlier defence that he had never bought arsenic in his life. He explained that the compound making up the powder was supplied to him in bulk by chemical manufacturers; he merely packaged and sold it on, at a profit. Summing up, the judge strongly hinted that unless they were certain Mr King had intended to harm the children, he could not be convicted.

Accordingly, the jury found George King not guilty. The verdict shocked the nation, and caused international headlines. French newspapers saw it as confirmation that in Britain the free market had gone mad, with commerce considered more important than human life. The real mystery though, of how the arsenic got into the violet powder, was never solved. It seems likely that one of the chemical companies supplying Mr King had made a ghastly mistake which was then covered up. The children who died were tragic losses, but some good came of the case. Arsenic was never again seen as a beneficial cosmetic, and its use in household products was soon eliminated.

Sources

Bartrip, P W J (1994), 'How Green was my Valance? Environmental Arsenic Poisoning and the Victorian Domestic Ideal', *The English Historical Review*, September 1994, p 905.

Bentley, Ronald, and Chasteen, Thomas G (2001), 'Arsenic Curiosa and Humanity', *The Chemical Educator*, Vol 7, No 2.

Higgins, Alan (1979), 'The Unsolved Case of the Loughton Poisonings, *Essex Countryside*, No 264, p 43.

Millership, Sally, *et al.* (2001), 'Outbreaks and Incidents in Essex', *Community Infection Control Team Annual Report 2001*, North Essex Health Authority, p 5.

'Poisonous Face Powders', *British Medical Journal*, Vol ii, 1896, p 1662.

Pond, Chris, 'The Deacon Collection', in LDHS *Newsletter 141* (April/May 1999).

Waller, William Chapman (1900), *Loughton in Essex*, Part ii, p 43.

1891 census of Loughton.

Jacob Epstein (1880–1959) and Loughton

TONY HOLDEN

'Deerhurst, a pleasant and spacious house, just across the lane from the cottage where he continued with his sculpture, was faced with a close-up of the beech forest, as dense as a hedge, down the slope at the end of the garden. The scene is as unexpected as Epping Forest is unexpected.' (Stephen Gardiner *Epstein* (1992), pp 329, 347, 379).

Wikipedia has:

'Many of Epstein's works were sculpted at his two cottages in Loughton, Essex, where he lived first at No 49 then 50 [blue plaque], Baldwin's Hill; for photographs of his work Richard Cork, *Jacob Epstein* (Tate, 1999); and as for 'the Rock Drill' Tate Britain has the torso but I saw a reconstruction at the Whitechapel Art Gallery and see Richard Cork, p 37, 'and upon this [actual drill] I made and mounted a machine-like robot, visored, menacing and carrying within itself its progeny, protectively ensconced'.

There are no ghosts, just the hard steep climb from our house to his house
With a view from the bench, on this clear day, across some twenty-odd miles of London
To the skyscrapers of Canary Wharf and the Thames,
Then you walk along a hedged-path and left onto the house-lined road
And you come to the plaque (marking his years in residence): nearby there's a pub
But before that the grass falls away to another seat and the green-roof of Epping Forest

Here for a time he lived and worked, here
He wrestled (as did his biblical namesake Jacob) with angels, and
In his sculpting and painting you see
Images – icons if you prefer – of stone and metal and paper,
Strong enough to withstand the most ignorant and virulent criticism
Massive in ambition, in scale, in energy –

There are friezes for public commissions, statues of the famous, details from nature
There are primitive archetypes; Judeo-Christian stories; and, there's 'the Rock Drill' –
Look you can see it there in this ancient forest: the figure stands high on a rock drill,
It is fierce and strong, with its gentle hidden embryo, made in a time of war
It rises up now part industrial machine and part robot
Part modernist or futurist art-work; part science-fiction monster; part sign and symbol:
Timeless, sublime, and somehow (astonishingly) humane.

(See also LDHS Newsletter 147.) *December 2006*

Memories from Mike Alston – Journey 1 continues

TERRY CARTER

In Newsletter 172 *Mike reached The Triangle. He now continues to the Loughton House Stores, only a short step but, as we have received so much excellent material for this* Newsletter, *space is limited. The journeys will resume later in the year. As mentioned last time, these notes about Loughton High Road from 1928 to 1940, and of his additional memories, appear* exactly *as Mike wrote them.*

Journey 1 (along the west side)

The Standard public-house: tiled cream and green.

Achille Serre, dry cleaners: painted yellow, black and white.

Pie shop: a very thin shop which we would today call a delicatessen. In my memory it was so narrow that there was barely room for the man to carve ham!

Barton, ironmonger: always bustling, with all the staff in pale brown coats. Packed with mowers and other garden implements and reeking of oil and paraffin.

Dennis, butcher: smart, clean, and tiled.

The Hollybush, public-house: McMullens. Looked just like a nice gabled home. Alongside was an alley, with a sort of verandah where people could sit outside, although I never saw anyone there. At the entrance to the alley was Mr *Johnson's newspaper shack*, from which he later moved to a'proper' shop.

Wilson, butcher: Mr Wilson wore a straw boater and a blue and white striped apron. For the first few years we always bought our meat there, but my father regularly complained, when carving the Sunday joint, that the meat was 'tough'. And so later we moved to WG Bell (*qv*).

Austin, jeweller: Mr Wilson was large, wore a waistcoated dark suit and wore pince-nez.

Ellis, shoe shop.

Loughton Stores, grocer: had a row of biscuit tins outside, with sample biscuits under glass on top of each. When we first came to Loughton my mother placed a large order with them, for which they were obviously surprised and delighted. Soon after, she found that she should have gone to the Loughton *House* Stores, to which she had originally been recommended!

Peniston's Man's Shop: from which my mother purchased my first adult felt hat when I was 13 (a 'must' for all boys on the first day of each term they returned to Felsted after the 'hols'!).

Ramsey's, china and toys: for boys this was the toy shop 'par excellence' as it was the agent for Meccano and Hornby Trains. Run by the two Miss Ramseys, who invariably wore smocks and were always referred to as 'the fat one and the tall thin one'. (The 'fat one' was the most knowledgeable on Meccano!)

Loughton Police Station: a formidable place, and the only time I entered it was annually with my mother when she dutifully informed them of the dates our house would be empty during our seaside holiday.

Loughton House Stores: grocers, presided over by Mr Lockyer himself. A fascinating place, full of wonderful aromas – from the bacon counter, with great sides of bacon much in evidence, to the groceries section, backed by vast containers of tea, and where so many items – dried fruit and the like, were packed into cones of bright orange paper before your very eyes! There were also enormous slabs of butter from which small chunks were cut and deftly patted into shape with little brown boards. And the lard was in the form of bladders, looking like greyish white rugger balls. And then there was the wine and spirits section – W & A Gilbey no less – where fathers placed furtive orders. And . . . and . . . No money was exchanged over the counters: instead one took one's bill to a kiosk in the middle of the shop. As an alternative to visiting the Stores one could place an order by phone, to be delivered

promptly by an errand boy. And, in the earlier years, a man came, weekly, to our house to take an order and would regale my mother with details of the specialties on offer, 'We have a very nice line in gammon hams…'

From *Characters remembered from the 1930s*

'Don' the bus conductor: the jolliest of men. Kids loved him as he would often 'forget' to collect their fares. He was also a brave man as, on one occasion, he saw a man being attacked. He stopped the bus and ran over to help the victim. He was rewarded with an engraved watch.

Mr Rann, the sweep: a familiar sight as he drove his little horse-drawn cart. He had an assistant, a man who must have been in his forties, who he always referred to as 'the boy'. When they swept our chimneys I was told to go into the garden and shout when I saw the brush emerge from the top of the chimney. Perhaps this (welcome) task was to get me out of the way!

'Penny bananas': for several years a young man had a fruit stall at the top of the alley beside Cuthbert the ironmonger. He wore a cap on the back of his head, had a blotchy complexion, and constantly shouted 'penny bananas' at the top of his voice – no doubt undercutting the other greengrocers.

From *Other memories of the 1930s*

The sickly sweet odour of dusty horse droppings on dry summer days.

The lamplighter doing his rounds at dusk.

The large horizontal tree trunk on the green at the top of York Hill.

The annual flower shows variously on the 'Elevenacre' field and off the top end of The Drive – and the intriguing fair stalls. One, I remember, showed the body of an 'elephant boy' – it looked like a blackened doll with a long dark bandaged appendage from its nose . . . ugh!"

Tailpieces

At the end of Jonathan Evans' excellent talk on The Royal London Hospital, demand for the leaflet with details of the Museum far exceeded supply. Here are the relevant details:

'The story of the The London (founded 1740) is told in the crypt of the former hospital church. Newly arranged exhibits feature health care over three centuries and include surgical instruments, nursing equipment and uniforms, four MPEG films, and memorabilia of Edith Cavell, Frederick Treves and Joseph Merrick.'

The museum is open Monday to Friday 10.00–16.30. Closed on public holidays.

Address: The Royal London Hospital, St Augustine with St Philip's Church, Newark Street, London E1 2AA. Tel: 020 7377 7608.

Web: www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk

Nearest Tube: Whitechapel. Admission: free. Wheelchair access.

Chairman-chef

Our Chairman obviously has aspirations as a chef and has tried a recipe from the *Debden House Cookery Book* (c. 1850), mentioned in the Newsletter in 1994! He writes:

'Looking at the cookery book again yesterday, I was inspired to try one – which is easy and you might like:

Lemon-bread pudding

1 lemon, 1 egg, 4oz bread, 2oz suet (I used vegetarian), 2oz sugar.

Squeeze lemon and remove pips but use juice and flesh. Peel the lemon very thinly and cut up its skin into small shreds, add to mixture. Discard the white pith.

Break up the bread without crusts into small pieces. Add sugar and suet.

Beat egg and add lemon juice and flesh plus about a dessertspoonful of water.

Mix only roughly.

Turn into a buttered pudding basin and steam for 1 hour 15 min [or (CCP's 2007 alternative) microwave for 4 minutes].

Serves 2 and serve with sweet sauce (custard).'

Very tasty!

The March/April edition of the Newsletter is, as is usual, the final one of the season, so No 174 will appear in September. We already have various articles in the pipeline and some of the on-running features, such as Mike Alston's memories, will reach their conclusion. Arising from L&DHS publications, I have also received some entertaining memories of Loughton from three Staples Road School contemporaries, Stuart Low and Peter Hitchcock, both now in Australia, and Jennifer Hill (née Vitler), some of which I hope to include later. Peter Cook, one of our members, another SRS pupil, as well as an old Forest Road football opponent of mine from the late 40s/early 50s, has taken the trouble to make contact with W C Marshall's (see *Newsletter 172*) son, Tony, and has provided a photo of the late WCM taken in a group of Loughton Cage Bird Society members, probably around 1947, which we hope to use later. Tony has also promised to pass on some interesting photos of 'Old Loughton'. There has also been some excellent feedback from other members, including Mr Keep of King's Green, in response to requests in recent Newsletters, for which many thanks. Please keep your excellent material flowing.

LOUGHTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY (Registered Charity 287274) www.loughtonhistoricalsociety.org.uk
President: Heather, Lady Murray of Epping Forest
Chairman: Dr Chris Pond, Forest Villa, Staples Road, Loughton IG10 1HP (020 8508 2361)
Secretary: Richard Morris, 6 High Gables, Loughton IG10 4EZ (020 8508 4974)
Treasurer: Mrs Eve Lockington, 19 Spring Grove, Loughton IG10 4QB (020 8508 4995)
Membership Secretary: Ian Strugnell, 22 Hatfields, Loughton IG10 1TJ
Newsletter Editor: Terry Carter, 43 Hillcrest Road, Loughton IG10 4QH (020 8508 0867)
Newsletter Production: Ted Martin

Printed in Great Britain by Riverside Press, Ipswich