LOUGHTON AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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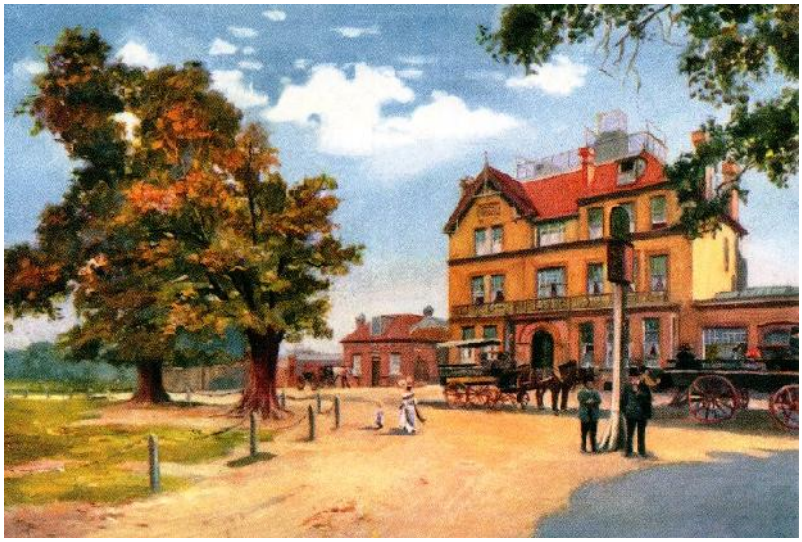

High Beach, 1905

We featured a coloured postcard of the King's Oak on page 16 of *Newsletter 198* which showed the hotel in 1909. In the meantime, this much more attractive view, taken from an anonymous painting, has come to hand.

The King's Oak was opened in 1887 at the highest point in Epping Forest and was once the largest hotel in the Forest. At the rear was was the early speedway racing track, the subject of articles in *Newsletters 192* and *196*.

The parked 'charas' would indicate that their passengers had dispersed to the sylvan delights or were inside enjoying refreshment.

More Loughton (and district) artists

'Early Spring, Epping Forest', at Dick Turpin's Pond, by R S Carter

In the spring, I saw on e-Bay a striking watercolour (above) of Epping Forest dated 1911, signed R S Carter, and after a bit of research, bought it. When it arrived, it was marked on the back 'W C Waller Esq' – and annotated in WCW's distinctive writing with his catalogue number – so we can conclude it probably hung in Ash Green. But the carriers had broken the glass, and rather than make a protracted claim, the seller kindly offered me a rebate, which necessitated taking the picture out of the frame in order to fit new glass. This was a blessing in disguise, because of the markings on the sized paper behind the painting. It had obviously been in an exhibition, as it was marked 'Price £1-1-0; frame extra' and underneath 'W C Waller Esq'. The artist had written on the back of the mount 'Early Spring, Epping Forest', and, in a corner, 'At Dick Turpin's Pond'. Because this writing is the same as that on the outer back, I concluded that Richard Carter, a skilled woodworker, framed it himself and delivered it to Mr Waller once he'd paid his guinea.

The Carters, father and two sons, lived first at Enfield, where Richard, the father, worked as a cabinet and stock maker at the Royal Small Arms Factory (RSAF), which, despite its name, 'Enfield factory', was mostly in Waltham Abbey parish at the time. The family moved to High Beach in the late 1870s. The sons, when grown up, came to Loughton, which the family, like most High Beach people, used as their railhead and shopping centre.

Richard Carter about 1890

Richard Samuel Carter (1835–1917) was a Devonshire man who came to the Lea Valley in search of a steady Government job. He married Emma Elizabeth Littler in 1869. He prospered in the RSAF, becoming a manager and gun inspector. Painting was his abiding passion, and the substantial family house, Torwood, abutted on the Forest at Manor Road, and it was the Forest trees that were his special inspiration.

His two sons were also artists. Herbert Richard (1870–1960), became a banker with Barings, and as a grown-up, always lived in Loughton. He was a talented amateur artist, who signed with a composite 'HRC' device. Sydney (1874–1943), received professional art training at the Buckhurst Hill Art School (not an institution I had heard of) then the Walthamstow School of Art; whence he went on to exhibit at the Royal Academy aged only 20, and in six subsequent years; and won a scholarship to the Royal College of Art, taking the Gilbert Garrett Prize in 1898. He described himself as 'artist, sculptor' in the 1901 census. He later lived in Exeter, and two portraits by him are in the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, one of the Rev S Baring-Gould, and one of his father, Richard.

Sydney earned his living by commercial art – including doing paintings for postcards for makers such as Tuck and Hildesheimer, and also posters. His postcards are generally signed and can be had from postcard dealers for a couple of pounds upwards. Another Loughton artist, John Strevens, of a later age, also made his money by designing greetings cards (see *Newsletters 192* and *194*). In 1923, after marrying, Sydney emigrated to South Africa for the sake of his wife's health, where he became one of that country's leading artists, portraying with great genius in impressionistic style the vivid colours and deep shadows of the southern sun, and the life and work of the people. The strangely titled, but most informative, collective biography of the family by Jane Morgan, *Nettles in the Privy* (published 1995, there is a copy in Loughton Library and it is very well worth reading) records how after H R Carter went to live in Dedham on his retirement in 1930, Sir Alfred Munnings, one of the Dedham circle, noticed one of Richard's paintings (an oil of Epping Forest trees, below) on the wall, upon which he declared expansively 'Amateur? – I don't care what he was. That man was an artist, a great artist.' Fortunately, the painting I bought was not sold at a great artist price!

This was the painting Sir Alfred Munnings thought was by a 'great artist'. To see this picture in its actual colours, go to p. 16.

The scene in the painting depicted above is probably in Loughton, because of the gnarled pollards, possibly Loughton Camp; that of the one we bought, Dick Turpin's Pond, which is the old name for Wake Valley Pond, is entirely in Loughton, but with the boundary with Waltham Abbey adjacent.

Herbert Richard Carter lived first for a year or two at Beverley, later 34 Church Hill, then for 20 years at Briarmains, later 281 High Road, Loughton, a large mid-Victorian house opposite the Methodist Church, where architect James Cubitt would have been his neighbour. Sydney also lived there at some point before his marriage. In all probability they knew many of the other Loughton artists and literary people who lived round and about in the 1900–1925 period.

CHRIS POND

Daphne Howes

We note with great regret the death in Nottingham, on 21 August, of Daphne Howes, longstanding LDHS member and widow of John, our secretary for some years in the late 1990s.

Daphne Howard was born in 1927 and grew up in Highams Park; she attended Woodford County High School. She was interested in fables, all things medieval and concerning manuscripts and religiosity (though herself an atheist).

Buckhurst Hill peace worker: Alice Maud Stacy, 1886–1938

Alice Maud Stacy was born in Hackney in 1886, the second of three daughters of master cutler William King Stacy and his wife Adeline Elizabeth (née Good). The family lived in Hackney for many years. In 1901, when William King Stacy was 50 years old, they moved to Buckhurst Hill. They lived in a large house called Woodthorpe, at the very edge of Buckhurst Hill on the boundary with Woodford, on the west side of the High Road. The house was at some point numbered 2 High Road.

Alice and her older sister Nellie Adeline (born in Hackney in 1883) were both blind, although the youngest sister Elfrida Good, was apparently normally sighted.

The Stacys were regarded as one of Buckhurst Hill's prominent families. Like many ladies of her time who did not have to work to support themselves,

Alice Maud took an active part in many good causes in the area, and was, perhaps surprisingly, politically active for the time. She was particularly interested in the Liberal movement and was on the central committee of the Epping Division Liberal Association, and local supporters of the party often met at Woodthorpe. In addition she was the vice-president of the Buckhurst Hill branch of the League of Nations Union.

The League of Nations Union (LNU) was an organisation formed in October 1918 in the UK to promote international justice and permanent peace between nations based upon the ideals of the League of Nations. The League of Nations was established by the Great Powers as part of the Peace Treaties and the international settlement that followed the Great War. The creation of a general association of nations was the final one of President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points. The LNU became the largest and most influential organisation in the British peace movement. By the mid-1920s, it had over a quarter of a million registered subscribers and its membership eventually peaked at around 407,775 in 1931. It must have been around this time that a branch was established in Buckhurst Hill.

The Stacy family had good cause to be involved in the peace movement as they had personal experience of the horrors of the First World War. For a while they employed as a maid at Woodthorpe a Belgian refugee named Rachel de Baets. She had fled Belgium in 1914 with her husband, Raymond, and her two children, Raoul and Roger, along with her mother Eugenia and her brother Georges. Her father Antonius stayed in Ghent. Raymond joined the Belgian Army in France in 1917 but Rachel and the children stayed in England, eventually moving to Wood Green. Sadly Rachel died in the influenza epidemic in 1918 when she was a patient of the Dispensary for War Refugees in Sheffield Street, near Kingsway. The Stacys kept in touch with Raymond de Baets who took his children back to Belgium after the war. The children had memory of their father working in a sawmill while he was in England; they remembered Woodthorpe as a 'castle' which had a huge cellar and a garden full of frogs.

Alice Stacy, with her interest in peace work, represented the Woodford Union Church at the International Peace Conference in Brussels in 1936. She was also active in the short-lived experimental Woodford Parliament.

She had other interests which were connected with her peace work; for example, she was a fluent speaker of Esperanto. She even conducted services in the language at St Ethelburga's Church in Bishopsgate. She was also described as a strong advocate of the decimal system and proportional representation. Being blind, she used Braille and was able to note down speeches by others using a system of pin dots on a piece of card, reading them back afterwards. She was also very knowledgeable about birds, trees and flowers.

When Alice died, aged only 52 on 27 August 1938, her obituary in the following week's *Woodford Times* was extensive. Her funeral took place at the Church of St John the Baptist, Buckhurst Hill, and floral tributes came from the great and the good of Buckhurst Hill and far beyond, including many from Belgium.

References

Woodford Times for 2 September 1938 courtesy of Loughton Library.
www.wikipedia.co.uk for the League of Nations Union.
www.debaets.be for information on the de Baets family, and the photograph of the Stacy family.
www.rcnarchive.rcn.org.uk for the Dispensary for War Refugees.

LYNN HASELDINE JONES

Accident at Loughton Station: 14 August 1884

YESTERDAY'S INQUESTS

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A SIGNALMAN KILLED AT LOUGHTON STATION

Yesterday an inquest was held at the Crown public-house, Loughton, respecting the death of a signalman named Robert Woolf, who met his death while on duty at Loughton Station on Thursday. It was stated in evidence that Woolf was engaged at the points which are at the entrance to the station, and whilst in conversation with a fellow-workman he observed the 12.40 train from Ongar coming towards the platform. He rushed to the points, but did not get clear of the engine, which caught him and knocked the poor fellow yards away. The wheels of the train then passed over him, with the result that he was shockingly mutilated. After hearing several witnesses, the jury returned a verdict of 'Accidental Death'.

The Times, 17 August 1884

Submitted by CHRIS POND

Back to the future: from old cinemas to new beginnings

I was intrigued by various articles in your society's *Newsletter* on the birth and death of the former Loughton Cinema, later the Century. As a former resident of the Leytonstone area, where I lived until my early 30s, they rang many bells in my memory of cinemas long closed, but not forgotten by those who are old enough to remember when TV was the grey little upstart and Saturday morning pictures was the treat of the week.

Leytonstone and Leyton in the 50s boasted at least seven cinemas, ranging in tone and finish from palace to fleapit. There was my local favourite, the Rialto, which my mother told me had originally been built as a skating rink and had continued to be known as the 'Rink' for many years after the last skater had departed. This thoroughly respectable cinema had, I recall, the fiercest of commissionaires, who took pleasure in ejecting anyone who even mildly distracted the audience during the supporting feature. Then there were the other cinemas I frequented: the Century at Harrow Green, so close to Alfred Hitchcock's childhood home, where I recall seeing 'Vertigo'; the Rex in High Road Leytonstone and its equally plush twin, the Ritz in Leyton which was close to another Century and of course the fleapits, which always seemed to be called the Essoldo for some reason. Of

course they are all gone, mostly demolished to make way for supermarkets, with the occasional housing development thrown in.

However, all is not entirely lost. The contraction of the cinema industry into a relatively small number of multiplex fortresses, where popcorn sales offer a greater profit margin than the films themselves, as well as a tendency towards showing a narrow range of super-violent, CGI-riddled franchises, has left the more mature audience, as well younger free thinkers, with only scraps to feed on and nowhere else to go. This void is deeply felt by many film lovers but in response there has emerged across the country a phenomenon generally known as 'Community Cinema'. Such cinemas have been created in such unlikely places as remote villages in Suffolk as well as towns such as Saffron Walden. In the post-2008 economic environment such enterprises are not easy to sustain, nor is much public money available to help in the necessary purchases of expensive screening and projection equipment. However, most areas have halls which can be hired at reasonable rates and the good news is that there is a now thriving film society near you!

Loughton Film Society was formed in 2011, has enjoyed significant support from the Town Council and shows a film every month, chosen by the members themselves, who vote on the films they want to see. An eclectic mix of screenings has resulted, including recently a French comedy, 'The Fairy', a highly regarded Glenn Close film, 'Albert Nobbs', and, most recently, 'Quartet'. Audiences' average over 40 in number and total membership is about 80. The venues are currently either Lopping Hall or the Loughton Club.

I know all this because I was slowest towards the door when the committee selected a chairman. I would only add that of course we are always looking for new members and, to that end, we have a website, www.filmloughton.co.uk, and also that we are also open to new ventures, including screenings at different venues in the Epping Forest area. So cinemas may be largely departed, but Community Cinema is alive and well nearby, is growing and may even be coming to a venue near you.

DAVID JOHNSON

A penny for their thoughts

This is an advertisement for the school in Albion Hill run by Francis Worrall Stevens, where he and Rowland Hill are supposed to have first discussed universal penny postage.

EDUCATION – REDUCED CHARGES

At ALBION HOUSE, Loughton, Essex, on a beautiful eminence, at the 11th milestone from London, by Mr STEVENS, and proper assistants, YOUNG GENTLEMEN are BOARDED and EDUCATED, at 16 guineas per annum, under 6 years of age: 19, under 8 years: 22, under 10 years: 25 under 12 years: and 28, under 14 years, including every charge but for books and articles of real necessity. Latin, Greek, French, Italian, drawing, merchant's accounts, navigation, and music at 10s per quarter each, in addition. No extras but such as are agreed on. The pupils dine with the family, and are not limited: can remain the vacation if required. For references, &c, apply, or address, post paid, to G S, 2 Northumberland-street, Marylebone: or to J S, 73 Whitechapel-road, or 131 Cheapside.

From *The Times,* 8 January 1823

Submitted by CHRIS POND

Lakes of Epping Forest – vintage multiview postcard

For Sale – cheap at the price!

Loughton Bus Garage, in kit form, 4mm scale: Price £18

This is the building, erected 1923, that is now Homebase.

Is this the first Loughton building to be offered in replica? *Seen on ebay by* CHRIS POND

The Debden Estate

Some interesting if miscellaneous facts about the Estate are contained in files kept in the London Metropolitan Archives.

First item in the file is dated October 1942, when the county valuer, Herbert Westwood, was looking for sites for out-county housing. The Loughton site was described as a most desirable one of 1,085 acres, of which 344 had been designated green belt under the 1938 Act. He reported the district was served by a little-used LNER station (Chigwell Lane) with no workmen's fares,* but he thought the LNER would be willing to extend them to Chigwell Lane at similar prices as from Loughton, a shilling and a halfpenny workmen's return, 1s 9d cheap day, and 2s 11d ordinary return (a weekly season was 8s 4d, a monthly £1 13s 9d, and a quarterly £4 11s). 'It is undesirable', he stated 'that any mention be made to this site in public documents'.

Mr Westwood's report was adopted by the LCC Housing Committee on 4 November 1942, and North Loughton's destiny was sealed. The purchase price was estimated at £136,250 on 6 June 1944 – well under the original estimate, and thereafter Chigwell UDC were authorised to break the seal of secrecy imposed in 1942, which they argued had become absurd, as the fact was well known locally. In fact, details of the purchase had not been finally settled, and, in the end, a compulsory purchase order, the County of London (Loughton, Essex) Housing Order 1945 was issued in relation to the Goulds' land on 9 July 1945 so building could definitely start in October that year. Most of the land, of course, belonged to the Maitlands, who were not unwilling to sell.

In 1947, the LCC adopted 'Oakwood Estate' as the name of their development and this was favoured by Chigwell UDC. It was chosen from a list of three: the others being 'Loughton Hall Estate', which officers thought would be confusing and would be unacceptable to Loughton, and the very curious one of 'Abridge Estate', on the flimsy ground that part of the land abutted the 'now-disused Abridge Aerodrome', and little confusion was anticipated by the minor settlement of Abridge proper. Oakwood was the one strongly favoured by the chairman of the Housing Committee.

Oakwood was adopted and began to be used, but in early 1948, the London Passenger Transport Board objected as they already had a station called Oakwood. So the Chief Housing Officer took it on himself to suggest Debden.

Ian Strugnell reports that further details are emerging, from his extracting the CUDC minutes, as to the relationship between CUDC and LCC, such as the CUDC Clerk's April 1947 letter to a Mr Bacon of Four Ways, Traps Hill, in reply to some bitter (and slightly ill-informed) criticism of CUDC's actions, especially regarding BISF system-built houses and Borders Lane:

'The density of the buildings being erected by London County Council is lower than that permitted by the operative Planning Scheme; the size and value of houses are not matters which the Council has power to control; an extensive area of Green Belt has been secured which it is most unlikely would have been secured from any other developer; and London County Council have been as helpful and considerate with regard to lay-out and amenities as circumstances reasonably permit, more so than in the Council's experience with private developers.'

In 1945, some street names had been adopted, mainly for streets of temporary houses, but in 1947, a long list of now familiar names was adopted, two last-minute changes being Bushfields instead of Hidefields, and Parkmead instead of Pitfields.

Rents were set for the houses (or 'cottages' – the LCC described Debden as a 'cottage estate') in May 1948, depending on situation, size, and outlook – from 8s 9d to 26s a week, so houses next door to each other could have marginally different rents.

There was an ongoing dispute between the LCC and Essex about the B171 (now A1168) road and the number of entrances ECC would permit to it under the Restriction of Ribbon Development Act 1938. This rumbled on for many months. All development in Rectory-Chigwell Lanes is set back on service roads.

*Workmen's fares (and third-class weekly seasons) from Loughton had been resisted by the GER and LNER up to the mid-30s.

Life as a servant in Victorian Buckhurst Hill

Victorian Buckhurst Hill was a rapidly expanding suburb of mostly middle-class families, who wanted to move out of London to the clean air and healthy surroundings of the area. They occupied large houses, often with large gardens to match. Keeping these houses clean and tidy, keeping them warm, cleaning clothes and feeding the large families meant that servants were essential. Most middle-class families employed servants who lived with the family, while many more households had daily charwomen and laundresses.

What was life like for the servants of Buckhurst Hill? How did they get their jobs, and how would they have spent their days? First of all, they would have to obtain a position.

Obtaining a position

Victorian novels often mention 'characters'. When changing jobs, a servant needed to be able to show her next employer the written reference or 'character' from her last. It was most important to explain any gaps in work, to avoid any suspicion that the servant was hiding a spell in prison, for example. The employer could not depend wholly on a written reference, as this could be forged. Sometimes she would write to the last employer directly, or even visit, if it were nearby. A new employer would be interested in the prospective servant's 'morals, honesty, cleanliness, capability, temper and health', in that order. By an Act of 1794 'persons giving characters that are false are liable to a penalty of £20'; but a servant would be very unlucky if a mistress threatened to dismiss her without such an important document, or give her less than she deserved as a character.

The turnover in servants was often high, usually because servants needed to move on to improve their position. The average time spent at any one post was three years, and the households with a single servant experienced the highest turnover. The most mobile were the youngest servants, who, as they acquired skills, changed jobs in order to move up the ladder. We shall see later that most servants in Buckhurst Hill fitted this pattern with the exception of the cook at Oakfield, who stayed for many years.

New servants could be found in various ways. First of all there was the local 'grapevine' – via a friend, another servant who was already doing a good job, and could therefore be trusted to recommend, or the local tradesmen, who often acted as a clearing agency. A householder could also use a registry office. There was a local agency which dealt with the hiring of servants. J Jones and Sons of Woodford Green ran a registry office, which was free for servants to advertise their availability but the charge for 'ladies

requiring servants' was 2s 6d in advance. This paid for an advertisement in the *Woodford Times* and the post would be 'kept on the books until suited'.

Another method was by advertising, or answering an advertisement. The first method was considered the best, because answering advertisements and registry offices cost money and relied on the word of strangers.

The *Woodford Times* published advertisements for servants such as in the issue for 21 March 1890:

'General servant wanted in Buckhurst Hill, must be able to do plain cooking. Another servant kept. Six in the family. Age 20–25, wages £14.

House parlour maid wanted at Buckhurst Hill. From 25 to 30 years of age. Wages £16–17.

General servant wanted in small family in Buckhurst Hill. Aged about 17, wages £8–10.'

Male servants

There were few male indoor servants in Buckhurst Hill in the Victorian period. There were a few reasons for this: first of all, they had to be paid more, and secondly there was a tax[1] on male servants, which was not finally abolished until 1937. There was also the fact that only a very few of the families were wealthy enough to employ male servants in the role of coachman or groom; gardeners were more frequently employed. Only at a very large house such as Knighton would there be the need for an indoor man servant, such as a footman. In fact in 1881 there was only one other footman in Buckhurst Hill besides Knighton; and there were only two boys employed as pages. The majority of men classed as 'servants' in the 1881 census were what we would call apprentices, or assistants, in businesses such as bakeries or butchers' shops.

Female servants

In 1881 in Buckhurst Hill there were:

Dairy keeper	1
Seamstress	1
Kitchenmaid	2
Parlour maid	2
Lady's maid	2
Governess	7
Housekeeper	8
Housemaid	23
Cook	27
Nurse/Nursemaid	30
General domestic	178

So it seems that the vast majority of homes in Buckhurst Hill employed just the one live-in servant, who had a great deal of work to do on her own. However, in the same census were the following women, who would work in the big houses on a daily basis, or 'take in washing':

Charwoman	11
Laundress	25
Governess	5
Nurse	2
Housekeeper	6
Others	25

The work of servants

Some families could employ a large number of servants, but others could afford only a maid-of-all-work. The Buxtons at Knighton, for example, employed 12 servants, including lady's maids, cook, housemaid, nurse, kitchen maid, scullery maid and footman (in 1881). In addition, there were laundry maids, a coachman, gardeners and grooms, who lived on the estate rather than in the house itself. For other better-off families, a normal arrangement was to have a cook and a housemaid who lived in the house. In this instance, the two together performed the function of a maid-of-all-work. They would divide the housework; the cook prepared the meals, looked after the kitchen entirely, cleaned the passages, kitchen, scullery, hall and steps, and answered the bell during the morning (while the housemaid cleaned and when the bell was most likely to indicate tradesmen calling for the cook's orders). The housemaid cleaned the bedrooms and reception rooms, looked after the dining room, waited at dinner, prepared tea, and answered the bell and waited generally on the family.

Housemaids were usually young country girls who initially needed a lot of training to meet the requirements of the mistress of the house in cleaning and polishing. At this time they were often from Norfolk, a county hard hit by the agricultural depression and where there was no work for women. They were always called by their Christian names, Emily, Harriet, and so on.[2] A parlour maid was superior to a housemaid and her status was emphasised by the use of her surname. Her main function was to wait at the table and assist the mistress with other jobs. Only the grandest of houses would employ a lady's maid (such as Knighton). Cooks were generally given the courtesy title of Mrs whether married or not.

A servant has an accident in Buckhurst Hill

'A serious accident occurred at noon on Monday last, to a domestic servant, while cleaning a top storey window at St Helens,[3] Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill. It would seem that the girl, while so engaged, got out upon the inclined roof of a bay window beneath, and slipping, fell some 14 or 16 feet.

In her fall she succeeded in catching hold of the gutter surrounding the roof of the window, where she hung for some time, but her strength giving way before help arrived, she fell heavily to the ground alighting on her feet. When picked up blood was seen flowing freely from the right foot and on being conveyed to the Village Hospital, it was found that she had severely fractured her ankle and sustained other injuries.

We understand that the patient, under the care of Dr Dring, is slowly progressing, and it is hoped that it will not be found necessary to amputate the limb.'

Woodford Times, 18 May 1888

Wages

This table shows the annual wages of permanent servants 1871 and 1907 (as quoted in the book by Lawrence James, see References, below):

	1871	*1907*
Cook	£15 0s 0d	£19 5s 0d
General servant	£12 14s 6d	£18 0s 0d
Housemaid	£10 0s 0d	£15 0s 0d
Nursemaid	£13 0s 0d	£15 16s 0d

Conditions of work

Most servants went home for two weeks' holiday a year, and an afternoon and evening out was allowed once a week. Here in Buckhurst Hill though, they could also look forward to the Servants' Ball as reported in the *Woodford Times* of 24 January 1896:

'A Servants' Ball was given on Tuesday evening last at the Buckhurst Hill Hall[4] by the kindness of Mr and Mrs Charles Crofton Black,[5] when upwards of sixty guests tripped the light fantastic from 8 till 2 o'clock. Master and Miss Black opened the dancing which was well sustained during the rest of the evening. A few songs were interspersed between the dances, a most enjoyable evening being concluded with ringing cheers for Mr and Mrs Black and family. Mr G P Hack very ably supplied the music while Mr R Waterman[6] provided the catering necessities.'

Servants at Oakfield

Let us see what the life of the servants at Oakfield would have been like. Oakfield was the home of the Linder family; Samuel and Susannah and their eight children, born between 1863 and 1877. So at the time of the 1881 census, for much of the year there would have been 10 people for the servants to care for (in 1881 two sons, Henry and Charles, were away at Mill Hill School, and the oldest child, Elizabeth, was also away at school in Bishop's Stortford).

The Linders at Oakfield (Loughton Library). From *Grand Commuters* (LDHS 2013).

The house, built around 1869, was described as a 'Gothic Residence' with an entrance hall, three large reception rooms, 13 bed and dressing rooms, two large box rooms, a bathroom (only one!) and ground floor offices, including a servants' hall and kitchen. By 1907 there was also a stable block, with two stalls, corn store, hay loft and coachman's cottage.

Census records give some details of the servants employed in some of the houses of Victorian and Edwardian Buckhurst Hill. Here are the servants of Samuel Linder of Oakfield in 1881:

Sarah Goddard, unmarried, aged 39, from Lambeth, was the cook;
Emily Dunn, unmarried, aged 22, from Waltham, was the housemaid;
Barbara C Cormie, unmarried, aged 29, from Glasgow, was the nursemaid; and
Emily Walker, unmarried, aged 19, from Chisledon, was the under-nurse.

And in 1891they were:

Sarah Goddard, unmarried, aged 47, from Lambeth, was still the cook;
Blanche Fife, unmarried, aged 27, from Thetford, was the housemaid;
Edith Perry, unmarried, aged 17, from Writtle, was the under-housemaid.

Comparing 1881 and 1891 in the Linder household, the cook, Sarah Goddard, appears in both lists, so one assumes she was happy with her position with the family (note there is a discrepancy in her age, in fact it should read 49 in 1891). Indeed, records show that she was there as early as 1871 and was still there in 1901, so working for the same family for at least thirty years. The Linders must have been impressed by her food! She would have been the senior servant, in charge of the servants' hall and the kitchen. Sarah would have been responsible for keeping clean the tiled stove and the kitchen with its range and dresser, and she had control of the store cupboards, china closet, the larder and the scullery. It is not clear where she would have slept; either in the servants' hall or one of the servants' bedrooms. She would have been in charge of the basement area, too; it was described as well-lit, and had a large wash-house with a copper, two coal cellars, wine and beer cellars, a knife room, a boot room and a servant's wc.

Sarah would have worked closely with housemaid Emily Dunn, and later with Blanche Fife and Edith Perry, who would have had the job of cleaning all the bedrooms and dressing rooms, of which there were 13 (one would be her own), as well as reception rooms. In the case of Oakfield this would have been the morning room with its bay window and window seats looking out onto the terrace, and its marble chimney piece with a polished steel grate; and also the drawing room, which was 20ft by 17ft and had a white marble chimney piece and a tiled hearth. She would also have looked after the dining room, which also had a marble mantelpiece, and waited at dinner, using the serving entrance from the back hall, prepared tea, answered the bell and waited generally on the family. It seems a great deal of work for the two women, but it is possible that they had daily help from local women who came in to do tasks such as laundry. By 1891 the nursemaid and under-nurse who had been there in 1881 (and would most likely have slept in the nursery) were no longer needed with the growing up of the young children, but instead there was a second housemaid, probably much welcomed by the other servants.

I have been unable to find out anything further about Sarah Goddard (other than she *may* have died in Lambeth, aged 68, in 1909). However, rather more is known of the other servants, Emily Dunn, Emily Walker, Barbara Cormie, Blanche Fife and Edith Perry.

Emily Walker

Emily Walker was a 19-year-old under-nurse at Oakfield in 1881. She was born in Chisledon, Wiltshire, in 1861. It is difficult to be certain but it would appear that her parents were William and

Mary, and she had several brothers and sisters. William was an agricultural labourer and the family was based in Wiltshire.

Emily Dunn

Emily Dunn was the housemaid at Oakfield in 1881. She was born in Waltham Abbey in 1859, one of the children of James Dunn and his wife, Ann. James was a beer-house keeper in Sewardstone. Emily's brothers and sisters were Anne Elizabeth, Nathaniel, Frederick, Alice, James and Arthur. While Emily was at Oakfield, her sister Alice was also a servant, at Brighton College, on Eastern Road, Brighton. There she worked for the head of the school, Charles Allum and his wife Laura. The school had 13 boys boarding, from the ages of 14 to 19. Alice was a domestic housemaid, and she was accompanied by another housemaid and a cook. Emily and Alice's brother, Frederick, was an ordinary seaman, based on HMS *Wellington*, which was in Portsmouth Harbour in 1881. When not at sea, he lodged with his cousin, Frederick Hall, and his family. Brother Nathaniel married Emily's fellow servant at Oakfield, Barbara Cormie, in 1890.

Barbara Cormie

Barbara Cormie, the nursemaid to the Linder children in 1881, was born in Glasgow in 1852. She married Emily Dunn's brother Nathaniel in 1890 and they were living in the Lambeth/Stockwell/Kennington area by 1901 and in Wandsworth by 1911.

Edith Perry

Edith Perry, the under-housemaid in 1891, was born in Writtle in 1874. Her parents were James Perry, from Roxwell, who was a farm bailiff, and Mary. Her brothers and sisters were Thomas, a stable boy in 1881, Louis Claude, a shop boy at the age of 12, Annie, Ernest, Jessie Gertrude, William and Frederick Benjamin. The family lived at Warren Cottage, Writtle.

Edith was 17 whilst at Oakfield in 1891; there is no trace of her in the census for 1901 so she may have married by then.

Blanche Fife

Blanche Fife, the housemaid in 1891, was born in Thetford in 1864, the youngest child of James and Louisa. James died at the age of 49 in 1877 and Louisa remained at Well Street, Thetford. Their children all moved away to escape the agricultural depression and all made their way to the London area. Blanche began work as a 17-year-old servant in Norfolk, at the home of Michael Mearsey, a merchant (born in Alderney), his wife Susan and their son David, who was a farmer, having 200 acres, and employing eight men and two boys, at Great Ryburgh. She must have applied for a job with the Linder family at Oakfield in the late 1880s. Meanwhile her siblings also found jobs: her sister, Mary Hannah, worked as a draper's assistant with the Goodland family in Church Street, Walton-on-Thames; brother Francis James was a wheelwright and lived with his wife Elizabeth at 53 Princes Square, Lambeth; and William was a tram car inspector, who in 1881 lodged with a policeman, Charles East, and his family at 18 Torrens Road, Lambeth. Blanche's other sisters, Louisa and Eleanor, were both servants as she was; Louisa was at 19 Stamford Street, Southwark, the home of Henry Knill, a nautical instrument manufacturer, his wife Rebecca and sons Owen (in the same business as his father), Alfred, a stationer's assistant, and William, a commercial clerk. Eleanor worked for Timothy J Brown, a 'continental, fancy biscuit manufacturer' and his family – wife Susannah and children Lillie, 8, Edith, 6, Stanley, 2, and Alfred, 5 months old. Their home was at 60 Spencer Road, Lambeth. One can imagine that, in any time off they had, these very hard-working servants would meet up in the Lambeth area, or perhaps visit Blanche and see Epping Forest and its attractions.

Blanche Fife did not stay long at Oakfield; by 1901 she was a servant in the Tottenham Court Road area, and by 1911 she was in Kensington. She died unmarried, in Evesham in 1951, at the age of 86.

Notes

1. The tax on male servants was introduced by Lord North in 1777 to raise money to meet the cost of the American War of Independence. The tax on hair powder, often insisted upon for footmen by grand employers, was abolished in 1869. The servant tax was finally abolished by the Finance Act of 1937 (Pamela Horn, see below).

2. Emma, Elizabeth, Jane, Sarah, Mary and Kate – 'good eighteenth century names then so out of fashion that they were only used by the lower classes' (Shirley Nicholson, below).

3. This building still exists, on the north side of Palmerston Road, but it is now divided into flats.

4. The building in Queen's Road now used as Buckhurst Hill Library.

5. Charles Crofton Black was the manager of Crewdsons, cotton manufacturers, and lived with his family at Hill House, Palmerston Road, which is now Braeside Junior School.

6. Robert Waterman, furniture dealer, upholsterer and undertaker, of Queen's Road Buckhurst Hill.

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LYNN HASELDINE-JONES

Theydon Bois as I knew it

Earlier this year we received the following:

'My name is Robert (Bob) Farmer and I am the son of John (Jack) Farmer who wrote various books about his adopted village of Theydon Bois and his birthplace of Woodford, among other things. His first book was called *Theydon Bois as I knew it* and I have done a sort of 'Son of Theydon Bois as I knew it'. I do not claim that it reaches the standard my Dad set, but my notes cover a different period and are seen through a different set of eyes so would you like a copy on the grounds that some sort of historical record is better than no historical record at all. You are welcome to have it and to make such use of it as you will. Bob Farmer.'

Space constraints mean that we have edited and used Bob's article in three parts.

Part 1

I was born in a pretty little cottage in Theydon Bois. Its address was 4 Cross Green Cottages and it stood on an unmade road that went from Theydon Park Road to what we called the 'Cow Bridge'. The road started just a bit up from Blackacre Road about where Pakes Way now leaves but it kept somewhat nearer the hedge. It is now a vague memory as the houses were demolished to make way for Pakes Way. The roses round the door were the cottage's main asset as the facilities there were pretty basic and, when I was just a few months old, Mum and Dad must have been quite pleased to move to the living accommodation at Wood and Krailing's, the garage at which Dad had recently become junior partner.

One of my earliest memories is playing with one of the loves of Dad's life and since then mine as well: Labrador retrievers. Dad has usually had a black Labrador retriever dog and with one exception they have always been called 'Jack'. I understand that if you are to be bitten by a dog in anger the two breeds most unlikely to do it are the Golden and Labrador retrievers and I can well believe it.

Alongside our garage was the bake-house of G J Pearce in Forest Drive. I used to get up at a horribly early hour and go round and 'help' the baker. All sorts of goodies were produced including cream doughnuts and I was allowed to eat as many as I wanted. They realised that I could not eat too many and it was easier to give me '*carte blanche*' rather than keep an eye on me. Doughnuts were the second course and the first course was a roll straight out of the oven.

Another trader that used to receive regular visits from me was Roy Pearce (no relation of the baker!) who ran the greengrocers opposite the 'Bull'. Again I used to get up early to go with Roy to Stratford Market to buy the stock for his shop.

As you might appreciate a lot of my life revolved round the garage and I can recall all sorts of happenings. At one time you entered the garage between the house and the 'Cabin' and then had to turn left and right to avoid a large shed. Dad decided that this was very much in the way and the whole shed was bodily moved from the right-hand side of the yard to the left.

On another occasion the main workshop was replaced. I can recall the old wooden shed that was used as the main shop and the new workshop was built over the top. It had a steel girder framework and Frank Gooch arranged for the foundations and the whole thing was built over the top of the old one before it had to be dismantled. I used to run down the old shop and the floor had a spring in it. The new shop was made of sterner stuff as the floor was made of concrete. One problem with the new shop was that it was high and airy. The asbestos cladding kept out the weather well enough but the sheer space took a tremendous amount of heating. Later on we had a stove that was designed to heat as much air as possible and we ran it on the waste oil generated by the service bay. At times we had the bottom section of the stove red-hot and although it probably did very little about the ambient heating of the workshop, it did provide one corner where we could gather for warmth and a cup of tea.

After the war any sort of vehicle was at a premium and Dad was fortunate to be able to buy a Bedford short wheelbase tipper refuse lorry from one of the local councils. The tipper gear was removed and I think sold for not a lot less than the lorry had cost. The object of buying the vehicle was to build a recovery vehicle as it was realised that there was money to be made from accident recovery and hopefully the subsequent repair. It was very much a bits and pieces job. The winch had seen service on the deck of a ship belonging to a New Zealand shipping line. The crane was designed and built by Dad and Bob Day and the bodywork was done by Freddie Ward, one of my many 'Uncle Freds'. It was built on what in my family is known as the 'George Stephenson' principle. George Stephenson built on the principle that if he was unsure whether to put in one bolt or two, he would put in three. The 'Breakdown' was built on those lines and whereas the standard lorry had five chassis cross-members, the 'Breakdown' effectively had 13. I understand the 'Breakdown' is still in use at a breaker's yard at Sticklepath in Devon so we must have got something right.

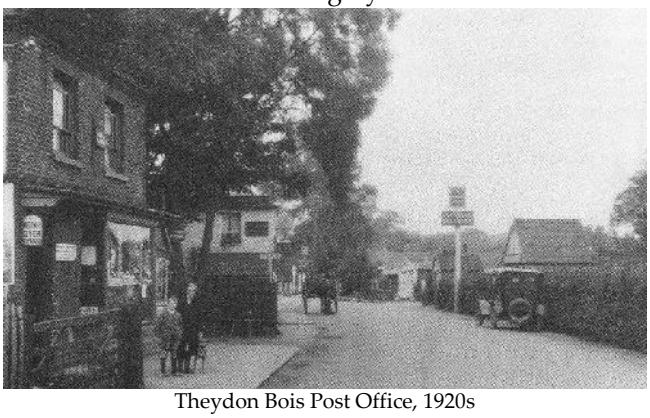
It was not necessary to have the crane checked for a safety certificate (always assuming we had them in those days) as the crane had a built-in safety feature. If you picked up too heavy a load the front wheels of the 'Breakdown' would come off the road. The heaviest load we ever had on it was a bottling machine that had been brought for Draper's Dairy. It needed to be picked up from the railway station and delivered to Pakes Farm. We got it there by having all the garage staff sitting as best they could on the front of the 'Breakdown' but there was very little weight on the front wheels even then.

Over the years there were many changes to the garage. On the corner of Forest Drive there was an area of open ground that Dad decided to develop as a petrol station. One small potential problem was a small clump of poplars, which could have been awkward if someone had got a preservation order put on them, so Dad and I went out one morning and chopped them down. The building of the forecourt also allowed the old access alongside the house to be blocked up. The house was extended with the downstairs part that had been the shop made into a showroom and the upstairs part made into a bedroom. This allowed the original bedroom to be made into a lounge. After that we very largely lived upstairs.

We had rubbish to dispose of and, to aid this, an incinerator was built on what had been our garden. This was brick-built, about 6ft square at the base and tapered to a flue that finished 20ft from the ground. We used to put anything burnable in that and at times things got in which should not have been there. On many occasions we got the fire going and then had lead dripping out of the bottom as someone had put an old car battery in it. The incinerator did not just get

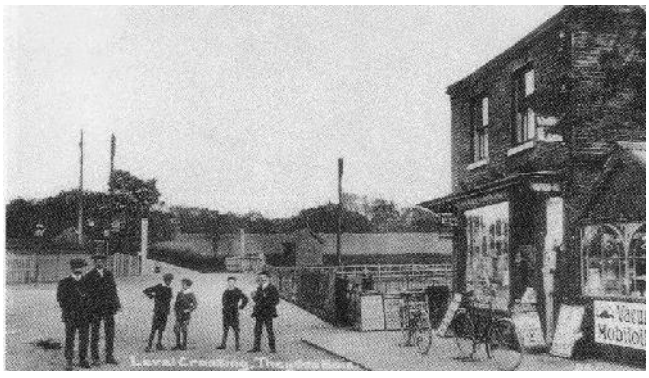
hot enough to melt lead – I have picked out of the ashes what had been molten aluminium.

Let me take you for a trip round the Theydon shops as I first recall them. Starting from Buxton Road the first shop going toward the 'Bull' was Mrs Eakin's wool shop. Then we had Don Thurlwell's (or Donald Duck as he was popularly called) bookshop. Then the fishmongers was followed by the Post Office with a pillar-box outside which is still there and finally G J Pearce's the bakers. The only other building on that side of the road was the surgery.



Theydon Bois Post Office, 1920s

Crossing the road the first shop was Jackman's the butchers followed by Mr Gray the Chemist. Then came Frank Foster's, the hairdressers and on a recent visit to the village I note that these three shops are still carrying on the same trades. Then we had Miss Knottage who ran a sweet shop, which she called the 'Kosette' or 'Cosy Tea', but it was generally pronounced 'Ko set'. Next were Mr Draper's dairy shop and the Clock Stores was run by Mr Bridgeland. The Clock Stores was later taken over by Jack Richardson and renamed 'Rosewood Stores'. Then round the corner for Harry Coventry's greengrocers (later Roy Pearce's) and finally Mr Standon's hardware store. Mr Standon rented a corner of the goods yard for storage and display purposes and one day installed a 'closed-circuit' fountain. Unfortunately he did not put it far enough back from the fence and it was found to be just in range of a squirt of washing-up liquid – the fountain was soon dismantled and put away.



Level crossing, Theydon Bois, early 20th century

Passing the entrance to the goods yard there was a coal order office, run I think, by Simmonds and a building that had been used as a bank but which I never saw open. Then round the corner we had the café. Crossing the road and alongside the railway where Theydon Gate now is, we had a builder's yard run by a firm called Henry J Greenham whose headquarters was in Sidcup. They had a foreman affectionately called 'Nipper'. As I understand it he got the nickname as he would give the drivers their orders on the lines of 'Go to Wimbledon to deliver xxx and then just nip to Canterbury to pick up xxx and then nip down to Brighton . . .' Then there was a sort of Rag, Tag and Bobtail shop which was later used by Mr Lewis an electrician and then a garage of sorts. Next to the garage we had the Railway Arms and then a gap before the Bull.

Into Poplar Row and on the left there was a greengrocer about where the entrance to Bob Daniel's Court now is, and further up was Pake's Farm, which was the main base for Draper's Dairy. Along the frontage to the Green was a small sweet shop run by Mrs Gooch and halfway up Woburn Ave, Tommy Gallant had his shop on the right. The Trimby brothers had their greenhouses along Loughton Lane opposite the road to the Cricket Field and coming back toward the village, just before the corner before the Avenue, was Elm Stores. On the drive to Elm Stores was a shed used by the local postman to store his letters.

Another Post Office building stood facing the Green, in the shape of the very imposing Telephone Exchange. One of my later jobs was to be an Exchange Construction Engineer for British Telecom and I can assure you that, for the size of the village, the exchange is much larger than any exchange I have worked in, so I can only think that at one time there were more extensive plans for it.

BOB FARMER

The 'Woodford Meet'

Harry Gulliver was an amateur photographer in the early 1900s.

He lived in East London and was a newly married man when he began taking an interest in the new hobby of photography. He travelled through London and the home counties taking photographs of people, street scenes, churches and the countryside.

The photograph below is of the 'Woodford Meet'. An annual cycling parade held to raise money for local hospitals. Started in 1882 by the Essex Cycling Club, it continued (with a short break) until 1914, after which it stopped because of the First World War. It was not held again until the year 2000 when a smaller commemorative event was held.

The Woodford Meet started when members of cycling clubs and unattached riders would meet at the Castle Inn at Woodford Green and parade through Snaresbrook, Buckhurst Hill and Chingford. Newspapers of the time reported that its popularity had grown to such an extent that on one day over 2,000 cyclists from 48 cycling clubs took part.

It then was dropped for five years before being revived in 1898, this time with the addition of a fancy-dress carnival. Prizes were awarded for the best-dressed team and individuals.

Meanwhile, helpers armed with collecting boxes collected money from the watching crowds which were numbered in their thousands. The money was donated to local hospitals.

This 1903 photograph by Harry Gulliver appears to have been taken on the route.

The Woodford Meet 1903

The turnpike age – Part 2

The Epping and Ongar Highway Trust

There was anciently no direct road south-west through the forest from Epping to Loughton, on the line of the present road. This road had certainly come into existence by 1678 and was probably made earlier in the 17th century. There is a map of 1634 which shows the London Road passing in front of Winchelsea House in Epping but this does not prove that the main road then went through Loughton. As late as 1640 a road from Epping to Waltham was described as the road to London, and the 'stump road' from Thornwood Common to Coopersale and then on to Abridge was anciently the main highway south.

Towards the end of the 17th century, after the road had been opened up as far as Harlow, traffic increased and in 1721 the Middlesex and Essex Turnpike Trust was created to develop the road from Whitechapel to the end of Woodford and was so successful that in 1736 it was given control over the lower road as well.

The Middlesex and Essex Turnpike Trust built Woodford New Road, from Walthamstow to Woodford Green, in 1828, and this was joined to the Epping New Road, begun by the Epping and Ongar Highway Trust, set up by an Act of 1768. The trustees were responsible for collecting the tolls and to use them to improve and maintain the road. There were gates and tollhouses at Thornwood (near Duck Lane) and near Epping Place, south of Epping (later moved to the junction with the Ivy Chimneys road). In 1783, to stop drovers diverting over Bell Common to avoid payment, a side gate was placed on the Ivy Chimneys road – now marked by the Forest Gate pub. A third tollhouse was built near the Bald Faced stag at Buckhurst Hill in 1794.

Improvements carried out by the trust were:

Epping–Harlow Road: This road was embanked and widened from Epping towards Harlow in the 1770s.

Goldings Hill, Loughton: A completely new piece of road was built here during 1771–75, parallel with the old one (still there as Lower Road), cutting the top of the hill by 16 feet to reduce the severe gradient.

Buckhurst Hill: Another reduction of gradient and straightening by diversion of the road (from its old course now called North End) at Buckhurst Hill in 1781–84.

The original course of the road in Woodford was to the Eagle at Snaresbrook and then via Snaresbrook Road to Whipps Cross; this was supplanted by the Woodford New Road. Mileages on the A121 mileposts are calculated via this route to Shoreditch Church; there are three late 18th century mileposts in Loughton, all of which are periodically maintained by the Town Council. The milepost at Buckhurst Hill is a non-standard one, which may have been the original upended so as to show 'Buckhurst Hill' rather than 'Chigwell' after the creation of the parish in the early 19th century.

The main road from London to Harlow bypassed Loughton and Buckhurst Hill when the Trust completed the Epping New Road in 1834. From 1830–34 gangs worked to clear the forest on a route laid down by John McAdam and his son James[1] (later Sir James) on high ground 300 feet above sea level. The route was now a high-class turnpike road running along the western boundary of Woodford and Loughton to Epping, avoiding the awkward gradients. It reduced the distance from London to Epping by one mile and thereafter 25 coaches per day were passing through Epping.

An Act of 1836 (6 & 7 Will 4, cap xlix) was passed, superseding an earlier Act, for the repair and improvement of the road from the north end of Harlow Bush through Latton, North Weald Bassett, Epping, Waltham Holy Cross, Loughton, Chigwell (i.e., Buckhurst Hill) and Woodford to the junction where the road 'meets the new branch of the Metropolis Road called the Woodford Cut' and then to its north end in Woodford 'near Higham House'. It also covered branch roads to the Wake Arms and other nearby localities. The 1836 Act was to continue for 31 years from May 1836. It expired on 30 June 1870.

The Woodford Turnpike, 1903.

What we know as the Epping New Road was, of course, for many years part of the A11. The government's Roads Board began initial work on road classification in 1913 but the work was interrupted by the First World War and did not resume until the Ministry of Transport was formed in 1919, when it was given authority to classify highways and to allocate funding for road maintenance by section 17 (2) of the Ministry of Transport Act 1919. The Ministry established a classification system for important routes connecting large population centres or for through

traffic, which were designated as Class I roads, and routes of lesser importance, which were designated as Class II roads. The definitive list was published on 1 April 1923.

Road numbers then appeared in road atlases and on signs on the roads, thus helping motorists, they were also used for decisions on funding. The numbers of the roads changed quite frequently in the early years as it was a period of heavy expansion of the network and some numbered routes did not follow the most usual routes. The Trunk Roads Act 1936 gave the Ministry direct control of the major routes and a new classification system was created to identify these routes.

As mentioned above, the Epping New Road, previously the Epping–Ongar Turnpike, became part of the A11, the London–Norwich trunk road. The old (pre-1834) course of the road through Loughton became the A121. The A11 was heavily congested by the 50s and 60s and I well remember traffic jams in Epping High Street on a summer's evening on the way back from the coast. This was relieved by the opening of the M11 in stages from 1975–1980. The A11 still exists south-west of Stratford, entering London. It then becomes the B161 and A1199 to Woodford, where it was redesignated as the A104 (previously the designation for the Lea Bridge Rd) and enters Epping Forest, following the mainly straight course of the Epping turnpike. On reaching the Wake Arms Roundabout it becomes the B1393 and after leaving the forest crosses the M25 motorway (which is in a cut-and-cover tunnel under Bell Common), continuing through Epping. The B1393 ends at junction 7 of the M11, and the route of the A11 goes along the A414 through the eastern suburbs of Harlow, having been rerouted slightly to the west at the end of the 1950s in order to avoid passing through Potter Street. The road then becomes the A1184. All this was doubtless done to persuade traffic that the old A11 was no longer a through route (which of course locals know is not so).

The McAdams

John McAdam was the youngest of 10 children and the second son of the Baron of Waterhead. The family name had been McGregor, but they changed it to McAdam (claiming descent from the Biblical Adam) for political reasons during the reign of James I (James VI of Scotland). McAdam moved to New York in 1770 and was a merchant and prize agent during the American Revolution from which made his fortune working at his uncle's counting house. On return to Scotland in 1783 he purchased an estate at Sauchrie, Ayrshire, and became a trustee of the Ayrshire Turnpike also in 1783 and was increasingly involved in road construction over the next 10 years. In 1802 he moved to Bristol, becoming, in 1804, general surveyor to Bristol Corporation. McAdam put forward his road building ideas to Parliamentary enquiries in 1810, 1819 and 1823 and in two treatises: (*Remarks on the Present System of Road-Making* (1816) and *Practical Essay on the Scientific Repair and Preservation of Roads* (1819)), arguing that roads needed to be raised above the surrounding ground and constructed from layered rocks and gravel in a systematic manner.

McAdam was appointed surveyor to the Bristol Turnpike Trust in 1816, and remade the roads with crushed stone bound with gravel on a firm base of large stones. A camber, making the road slightly convex, ensured that rainwater rapidly drained off the road rather than penetrating and damaging its foundations. This method, the greatest advance in road construction since the Romans, became known as 'macadamisation', or 'macadam'. The method spread quickly across the world – the first one in North America, the National Road, was completed in the 1830s and most of the main roads in Europe were subject to the McAdam process by the end of the 19th century.

McAdam was paid £5,000 for his Bristol Turnpike Trust work and made 'Surveyor-General of Metropolitan Roads' in 1820, but professional jealousy cut a £5,000 grant for expenses from the Parliament of the United Kingdom to £2,000 in 1827. His efficient road-building and management work had revealed corruption and abuse of road tolls by unscrupulous Turnpike Trusts, many of which were run at a deliberate loss despite high toll receipts.

McAdam died in Moffat, Dumfriesshire, while travelling to his home at Hoddesdon, Herts, from his annual summer visit to Scotland. His three sons, and in turn four grandsons, followed him into the profession and assisted with the management of turnpike trusts around the country. His second surviving son, James Nicholl McAdam, the 'Colossus of Roads', was knighted for managing turnpike trusts.

The Metropolitan Turnpike Trust

The Metropolitan Turnpike Trust (officially the Commissioners of the Turnpike Roads in the Neighbourhood of the Metropolis North of the River Thames) was the body responsible for maintaining the main roads in the north of the conurbation of London from 1827 to 1872. The commissioners took over from 14 existing turnpike trusts, and were empowered to levy tolls to meet the costs of road maintenance.

The Metropolitan Trust was created by an Act of Parliament (4 Geo IV, cap 142) following pressure from business interests in north London, who found that the numerous toll gates throughout the area were interfering with the passage of goods and conduct of trade. The 14 trusts consolidated were: Kensington; Brentford; Isleworth; Uxbridge; Marylebone; Harrow; Kilburn; Highgate and Hampstead; City Road; Stamford Hill; Old Street; Hackney; Lea Bridge; and Camden Town.

The total length of roads was 129¼ miles, and Sir James McAdam (see above) was appointed 'General Surveyor of the Metropolis Roads North of the Thames'.

The Commissioners were at first Members of Parliament for the City of London, City of Westminster and County of Middlesex along with 40 peers and gentlemen named in the 1826 Act. Any vacancies occurring after this were to be filled by co-option.

In 1829 the Metropolitan Turnpikes Act, a further public Act, was passed which placed the Commissioners on a statutory basis, and gave them increased powers. They were empowered to construct

three new roads, of which one was the road (the modern Woodford New Road) from Lea Bridge Road in Walthamstow to the main London–Epping Turnpike Road.

Clapton Gate

In 1838 the trust gathered tolls to the value of £83,497. By 1840 the amount had declined to £67,475 as a direct result of the opening of railways in the capital. The Commissioners were forced to look for economies, and in 1841 they announced that they would cease to light the roads, and offered the light fittings to the parish vestries along the roads free of charge. In some parts of the metropolis the vestries refused, or were unable, to take over the lighting. In spite of the declining finances, the Commissioners were given more responsibilities: the New North Road from Highbury to Shoreditch was placed under their care in 1849 and in 1850 the roads of the Marylebone and Finchley Turnpike Trust.

By the 1850s the unpopular tolls were under attack. A parliamentary Toll Reform Committee was formed, and in 1857 it issued a report. It was pointed out that the Commission itself was unrepresentative: it contained four MPs from the City of London, which was untolled, and two from Westminster, which had only one gate. However, the constituencies of Finsbury, Marylebone and Tower Hamlets, which were heavily tolled, had no representation. The campaign eventually led to the enactment of the Metropolis Roads Amendment Act 1863 (cap 78). From 1 July 1864 the tollgates were to be removed from most of the roads, with administration passing to the incorporated vestries and district boards established by the Metropolis Management Act 1855.

The Commissioners retained control of eight arterial roads outside the area of the Metropolitan Board of Works: including Lea Bridge Road from the Hackney boundary to Snaresbrook.

The Commissioners went out of existence on 1 July 1872, when section 13 of the Annual Turnpike Acts Continuance Act 1871 (cap 115) came into effect. The roads under the care of the trust passed to the various parish vestries on that date.

TED MARTIN*

* Thanks are due to Chris Pond who helped greatly in checking facts and providing additions and improvements to the original draft.

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White's *Directory of Essex* 1848 – an extract

LOUGHTON is a large scattered village, on the eastern side of Epping Forest, and the western side of the picturesque vale of the river Roding, 12 miles North East by North of London, and 4 miles South South West of Epping; consisting chiefly of Loughton Street, which extends near two miles along the high road, and has many genteel houses, encompassed by beautiful and picturesque scenery; being in close proximity with the most woody and diversified part of the forest, in the most elevated part of which is seen High Beech, and its new district church. Debden Green and Buckhurst Green are surrounded by first-rate houses, and the prospects from Golden-hill-House are exceedingly rich and extensive, including most of London, and much of the intervening district of suburban villas in Chigwell, Woodford, Wansted, Walthamstow, etc, where, as well as here, many of the residents are connected with the trade and commerce of the metropolis. The parish of Loughton is all within the bounds of Epping Forest, and contains 3,508 acres of land, of which 947 acres are arable, 1,227 pasture and meadow land, and 1,309 open forest and woodland. Its population increased from 681 souls in 1801, to 1,333 in 1841. William Whitaker Maitland, Esq, is lord of the manor, and owner of the greater part of the soil; and the rest belongs to John Williams, Esq, J G Lynde, Esq, John Davison, Esq, and several smaller proprietors. Loughton was one of the seventeen lordships given by Earl Harold to Waltham Abbey. In 1558, Queen Mary attached it to the Duchy of Lancaster, of which it has been held by the Darcy, Stonard, Wroth, and Nassau families. It was purchased in 1745 by William Whitaker, Esq, from whom it descended to its present owner. The Hall, which was a large mansion near the church, was burnt down in 1836.

The ancient parish Church (St Nicholas,) being much decayed and inconveniently situated at the distance of a mile east of the village, was pulled down in 1847, except a small portion fitted up for the performance of the burial service. The New Church, built in 1846, is a handsome cruciform structure in the Norman style, standing on a commanding eminence in a central situation. It was built by subscription at the cost of about £6,000, and has a short tower rising from its centre. The rectory, valued in 1831 at £500, is in the patronage of W W Maitland, Esq, and incumbency of the Venerable Anthony Hamilton, MA, who has 42A, of glebe, and a large old residence, which has recently been much improved, and has handsome pleasure grounds. The tithes were commuted in 1848. The Baptists have a chapel here built in 1813; and in the parish are National and British Schools, liberally supported by subscription. Two boys are sent from Loughton to Chigwell free school. An acre, called the Poor's Piece is let for £3, which is distributed in bread, together with 20s a year from Rampton's Charity. The poor parishioners have also the dividends of £49 17s 3d three per cent Reduced Annuities, left by Nicholas Pearse in 1821. The Garden Allotments comprise 6 acres, which were granted from the waste in 1813 and 1817, for the use of the industrious poor, under the control of the rector and churchwardens. They are divided into 48 gardens, occupied by as many labourers at small rents, amounting to £6 per annum, which is applied in repairing the fences, and in rewards for the best cultivation. The Sunday School was built on the waste in 1815. The

yearly dividends of £2,700 three per cent. Reduced Annuities, left by Ann Whitaker, are applied as follows: £53 10s to the support of the Sunday School, and £19 8s in distributions to the poor.

The foreword to *Royalty in Essex* – can you remember the book?

The foreword to Royalty in Essex, 'a souvenir book for Essex children presented by the County Council of Essex on the occasion of the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, on June 2nd, 1953':

'The present year is one of mark for the nation because in it falls the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second. All will be thinking of the former Queen Elizabeth, whose reign is always regarded as one of the turning points in our history. She was a sovereign of outstanding wisdom. Her reign came at a time when the English people faced a crisis, namely, the great struggle with Spain, which brings to mind such famous folk as Drake and Grenville. Now in 1953, Queen Elizabeth the Second has come to the throne at an equally critical time. Two great wars have been fought when the nation has stood and suffered. It did not flinch when it stood alone. It emerged unbeaten, having drawn together a steadfast family of free peoples who, knowing the issue at stake, are pledged to pay the price of freedom. Today we believe with a great Victorian, Herbert Spencer, that no one can be perfectly free till all are free. If we are loyal and steadfast, history will tell that the reign of our Queen Elizabeth will be worthy to rank with that of the other 'Good Queen Bess'.

This book has been prepared and is given to you as a worthy reminder of this great year of the Coronation of our Queen and as a reminder also of our home county of Essex and its association with kings and queens all through the ages. We have shown pictures of historic places which they visited in different parts of Essex, from Saffron Walden to Tilbury and from Harwich to Waltham Abbey. Some of them are still with us, some have been stolen from us by the passage of time. They are now parts of our county story, not chosen from any one part of the county or for their association with any one period. Some of the portraits of kings and queens have been taken from original documents drawn up during their reigns.

This story of *Royalty in Essex* begins when the Romans were about to invade and conquer this country, and it is continued through the centuries up to the two latest Royal visits. In November, 1952, the new Essex town of Harlow was visited by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, who saw homes, factories and schools, and took away with him for his own children toys which were made and presented by Essex children. In February, this year, Her Majesty came to Purfleet and Tilbury at the time of the great floods and brought encouragement to those who had suffered and those who were engaged in relief work. We end with the prayer that our Queen's reign may be long, happy and glorious and that we may be worthy of our heritage.

H L GREEN *Chairman, Essex Education Committee.*'

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[I had one, but sadly, it disappeared long ago – Ed]

Of a king, Leicester and Loughton

It is somehow typical of Leicester, my home town, that it left for so long a king of England rotting beneath a car park. Leicester has an aversion to anything fancy. J B Priestley found it 'busy and cheerful and industrial and built of red brick and nothing else'. Leicester folk traditionally made socks, the least glamorous item of clothing. There is no 'Leicester sound', unless you count Engelbert Humperdinck. Though C P Snow, Joe Orton and Sue Townsend were all born there, none created what you might call a literary tradition. Leicester did, however, give me a lifelong taste for living quietly and unfashionably, which is why I moved to Loughton, Essex.

Peter Wilby, The New Statesman*, reprinted from* The Week*, 16 February 2013*
Submitted by TED MARTIN

Genesis – Whitehall shrimps, prawns and Woodford Wells

The following is taken from the Woodford Wells Club website:
Founded in 1865, the facilities consist of:

'CRICKET – one of the top clubs in Essex playing league and friendly fixtures. 2 grounds for 5 Saturday, 2 Sunday and Colts teams. There are also tennis, squash and hockey (as Crostyx) of equally high standing.'

The Crimean War had been brought to a conclusion in 1856 but was still a fresh memory in the minds of most people a decade on. Queen Victoria was starting her life of seclusion following the death, in 1862, of the Prince Regent, Albert. In London, just over 12 months earlier, the first train had run on the Metropolitan 'underground' railway.

England was beginning to settle down as an industrialised nation. In the soothing climes of Woodford, a quiet but prosperous village mainly composed of a farming community, social occasions comprised mostly of sedate gatherings in one or other of the large houses. London was fairly near to hand but a visit there was still something of an occasion. Such was the background when nine young men, all fresh out of school, met on that historic Saturday, 13 May 1865, to form their own cricket club.

Used to organised games and unwilling, or unable, to join a village club, a unanimous decision was taken to form their own club. These nine young men thereby founded the 'Woodford Wells Junior Cricket Club' and the father of one, Mr Tozer, was elected president. A young man named H D Carter was appointed captain and H B Cooper, who had two brothers as founding members, was appointed `sub-captain'. Twelve boys, including A H Tozer, were elected members and during the meeting 11 rules were adopted – including the strict prohibition of smoking on the cricket field.

A subscription of one shilling a year was agreed and it was decided that the captain's orders should at

all times be obeyed. Failure to do this would incur a fine of one penny – to be paid within one week or doubled.

No matches were arranged immediately. Members (and a few friends to make up the numbers – so what has changed!) gathered on the green opposite where Bancroft School now stands on Monday and Wednesday evenings and Saturday afternoons to play friendly games.

On 3 June a meeting of the committee was called at which it was agreed to purchase a cricket ball at the cost of 3s and stumps for 7s. A later meeting, specially called, agreed the purchase of a cricket bat priced at 5s 6d.

The first historic challenge match of the club was played against Chigwell Grammar School Club on Saturday, 15 July 1865, the result of which is unrecorded. It was during this first season that the club arranged with a Mr Buxton to play in one of his fields – part of the ground now owned by the club.

Right from the outset the club was a success and there were 24 members by the end of the first season – among them Fred Kaye, the man who was later to make the purchase of the ground from Mr Buxton possible.

One of the decisions which had to be taken was to agree to the repair of the club ball, at the almost prohibitive cost of sixpence.

At the last meeting of that memorable year there was 8s 3d in the kitty and it was decided to double the subscription for the following year. But at a meeting called in the spring of 1866 it was decided to change the name to the 'Whitehall Shrimp Cricket Club'. The change of name is explained in a pamphlet entitled *Twenty Five Years Ago* complied by E Poultney, a member of the club, published in 1891:

'In our youthful bashfulness, not desiring to be confused with the then existing Woodford Cricket Club, which practised in the field at the back of the "Fur Trees", we called our club "The Shrimps", a most unfortunate choice as we were forthwith dubbed "Prawns" by those who were not from our community.'

It was actually in 1867 that the club became the 'Shrimp Cricket Club'. Subscriptions, which had risen to 2s, were promptly reduced to 1s 6d.

The club had by this time been given permission to play in a field belonging to the prosperous Mr Sykes. They promptly left Mr Buxton's field because, explains Mr Poultney: 'There was difficulty in having that before the hay was cut.' This did not prove to be popular as Mr Sykes charged a rent of 2s per annum. Nevertheless by 1869 the club was well-established. Subscriptions were increased to 7s 6d – an indication of the well-to-do members – and a uniform, white with a white cap and seams trimmed with blue, was adopted. Among the new set of rules was a proviso that during games each batsman 'on going out may bowl and then take long stop . . . '

Inevitably, something had to be done about the wicket and this was levelled by a Mr Jessop for 25s. It was at the fifth annual meeting in 1870 that the decision was taken to name the club 'Woodford Wells Cricket Club'. As Mr Poultney states:

'Finding the name of "Shrimps" beneath our dignity, we met at a solemn committee meeting in the summer house in Mr Sykes' garden, our proceedings lighted by a solitary candle which flicked in the wind and after much debate we finally agreed that we would change our name to the Woodford Wells Cricket Club. Think of that, our aristocratic successors.'

At the same meeting the rules of the MCC were adopted – probabably ruling out the automatic promotion to long stop – and A H Tozer was appointed secretary. The club honours were changed to white cap quartered with blue. For the club, 1870 was indeed an important year. The ground was properly levelled at a cost of £6 5s 6d, a groundsman (or `groundman' as he was called) undertook to care for the pitch at a cost of 2s per week and for the first time a fixture card, showing some 15 matches, was printed. Mr J Spicer, JP, became the second president of the club. Perhaps even more significant was the election of a new member – Mr. A E Kemsley, to be joined soon after by Mr Walter Kemsley. An interesting innovation during that year was 'athletic sports' to conclude the season – a very successful one.

In 1872 the sum of £12 was agreed for the erection of a dressing room and scoring box on Mr Sykes' field. Members and visitors had previously changed at the 'Horse and Well' public-house.

Feelings against Buckhurst Hill Cricket Club were running high. During a match played on the Buckhurst Hill ground, the Buckhurst Hill captain had objected to a decision of the Woodford Wells umpire, Mr J Lowe, and had called all his men off the field in protest. The committee subsequently received a letter from the captain wishing to know whether the return match would be played. And, should it be played, they would refuse to have the luckless Mr Lowe as an umpire. A letter was forthwith dispatched to Buckhurst Hill describing the incident as 'an insult . . . breaking through all recognised rules of cricket' and unless an apology was received forthwith 'they cannot think of playing the return match'. Presumably all was settled amicably for no further mention is made of the incident.

A bad start was made in 1874 when it was found that Mr Sykes' sons, who previously had received a football from the club in recognition of their father's kindness, had damaged the club pavilion. After repairs it was found that the club was in debt and subscriptions were raised from 10s to 21s. Gone for ever were the days when the club was for teenagers only.

Later that same year an interesting entry is to be found following the setting up of a sub-committee to look for a new ground: 'The sub-committee reported that they had inspected two fields viz – Mr Buxton's in Monkhams Lane and one situated in Mornington Road. They found that Mr Buxton's would not serve the purpose of the club.'

After a great deal of discussion over a period of months it was finally decided to move to the ground in Mornington Road belonging to a Mr Branscombe. This entailed a rent of £12 10s a year and the capital expenditure of over £30 for preparation and other work. Guarantees of £52 10s, should the club run into

debt – and it did – had to be raised from members. This began what would appear to be a particularly happy era for the club. In 1876, as a result of Mr. Spicer's resignation, Mr Andrew Johnston became the third president of the club. Possibly with an eye to the future, the club invited Mr Buxton to become a vice-president, but he declined.

During 1877 a tennis court was prepared and equipped at the Mornington Road ground and for the first time ladies were able to partake in gentle exercise under the auspices of the Woodford Wells Cricket Club. There was no charge for using the court, which made the Wells one of the first clubs in the country to adopt tennis.

Owing to popularity, a better court was laid in 1878 and the committee discussed the possibility of forming a lawn tennis club. And it was tennis which provided the impetus to actively take steps to attract new members for the first time since the club was formed and a general meeting approved a half-price subscription of 10s 6d for members under 20. It was also found necessary to employ a full-time 'groundman' for the first time and a sum of £15 was set aside as the season's salary for H Ekins. To help raise the money it was agreed that a Mr Mason might graze his sheep and tether two cows on the ground.

The lawn tennis section was officially formed in 1878, with separate membership fees of 10s 6d and for the first time ladies were admitted to membership. It was also in 1878 that the 'Woodford Champion Cup' (valued at 19 guineas, it was presented jointly by the president Mr. Andrew Johnston and Mr H F Barclay, the banker) lawn tennis competition was held (men only).

On the Old Lea, Chingford

One of the last genuine bomb-sites in Britain

In the south-west corner of Walthamstow Marshes, within the cattle enclosure, is a round pond known as 'Bomb Crater Pond'. The crater marks the point of impact of a German V2 missile on Sunday, 11 February 1945.

The resulting explosion blew out windows and showered the Latham Timber Yard with a thick layer of mud, but no one was killed and only one person injured.

Assault by a foreigner

STRATFORD.

ASSAULT BY A FORRIGNER.—*Charles Bluden*, 28, a Frenchman, of the West-end, was charged on remand with violently assaulting William Spackman, by striking him on the head with a stick at Loughton Railway station on the 6th inst.—The prosecutor, an excavator, 45, Coventry-street, Bethnal-green, said on the night of Bank Holiday he was at Loughton, having been to visit some friends. He lost his road on the way back to the station, and passed prisoner and another man. He asked them the road to the station, and they made some reply that he could not understand. He walked on, and then came up to another man and asked him the way to Loughton Station. This man said he did not know, as he had lost his way himself; and witness then said he had, too, adding that they would go on as friends in distress. They got to the station, and while there the prisoner and the other man came up. They spoke to the prosecutor, and he said he did not understand their gibberish. Immediately the prisoner gave him a violent blow on the head with what he supposed to be an umbrella, but which proved to be a thick piece of a tree about three feet in length, and an inch and a half in diameter. Prosecutor had had his wounds dressed, but since had been unable to do any work.—In cross-examination, prosecutor said he was merry, but was not drunk. He denied having asked the prisoner and his friends if they were Germans.—Mr. Willis, who defended, said his client and his friends had been insulted, and he was struck by the prosecutor, whom he did not hit till afterwards, and then not with the weapon produced.—One of the witnesses called, however, proved the use of the stick.—The Bench thought there had been some provocation, and taking into account that he was a foreigner, they decided to deal with him leniently, and only impose a fine of 10s. and costs.

Lloyds, 19August 1883
Submitted by CHRIS POND

Richard Carter's painting of Epping Forest, which Sir Alfred Munnings thought was by a 'great artist', in its actual colours. See the story on page 2.

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