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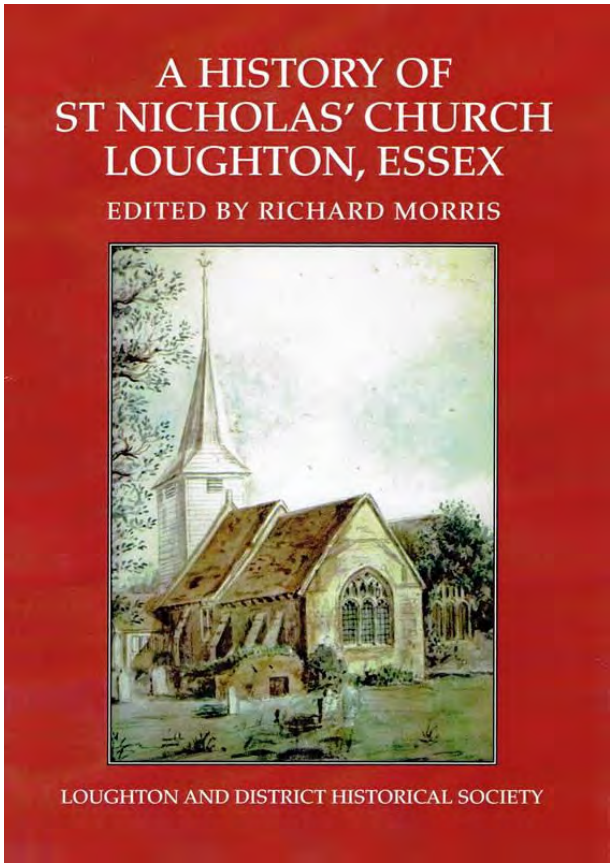
53rd Season

St Nicholas' Church – a new book



Richard Morris has written a new book on the Memorial Chapel of St Nicholas and its ancient churchyard which lie almost hidden in a corner at the south end of Rectory Lane. Richard reminds us how few people today realise how much of Loughton's history started in this corner of the village and continued for almost eight centuries until in 1846, a new larger parish church was built in what was then called Blind Lane.

The medieval parish church of St Nicholas was a small but attractive building, constructed in the 16th century and was probably the second church to be built on the site. As was mostly usual, the manorial hall lay close to the church, for the convenience of the lord of the manor. However, when the ancient Loughton Hall was destroyed by fire in 1836, the Maitlands did not consider building a new one until 1876. The destruction of the old hall, together with the growth in the population of the village a mile to the north, along the High Road from London to Newmarket, were two factors in the decision to demolish the old church in 1847 and build a new one nearer the main centre of population.

The vestry, in an ill-timed spirit of economy, consented to an application for a faculty to demolish the old church, for no other apparent reason than the value of the materials from the demolished church could be used to offset in part the cost of the new one. In the event less than £100 was raised. Many historians have expressed both surprise and regret at this decision, among them William Chapman Waller, Loughton's most distinguished historian, who, writing in 1893, said of the demolition of the medieval church: 'Such an act of Vandalism would, we venture to hope, be impossible nowadays.' But several engravings and drawings of the old church have survived, including two watercolours by David Thomas Powell in 1790 and an engraving of the church and churchyard, used by Elizabeth Ogborne in the chapter on Loughton, in her *History of Essex*, published in 1814 and these are reproduced in the book.

After the demolition in 1847 only the chancel was left, and, after the construction of new north and west walls, this became a mortuary chapel. This chapel was demolished in 1876, when Mrs Maitland, the lord of the manor's mother, decided to have a private chapel built, probably because it was intended to build a new Loughton Hall. The new chapel was completed in 1877.

There has been no comprehensive history of the old church, but Richard has tried to fill this gap by reproducing three articles written by well-known Essex historians, Elizabeth Ogborne, William Chapman Waller and J Perry, in the book, which form a useful record of events during the life of the medieval church. He has transcribed each article in its entirety, and inevitably there is an element of repetition but to edit it out would have destroyed the integrity of the articles. As the articles were written between 100 and 200 years ago, the style of writing is old-fashioned, compared to today. Richard has not attempted to update the style, and spelling and capitalisation have not been changed, but where necessary he has included a correction or explanation in square brackets.

Richard has also contributed chapters on 'The Memorial Chapel of St Nicholas, 1877'; 'The Stonnard and Other Brasses in St Nicholas' Church'; and 'A Survey of the Churchyard of St Nicholas'.

A study of the burial records in the registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, now held in the Essex Record Office at Chelmsford, shows that

between 1674 and 1854 over 800 people were buried in the churchyard, and there are records of some earlier burials in the 15th and 16th centuries, most importantly those of the Stonnard family, for whom the brasses, originally on the graves of two members, survive today.

There is no longer any sight of the vast majority of the 800+ burials, the remains of which lie beneath the ground level of the churchyard. A recent survey of the churchyard identified 74 graves, some complete, and in other cases only fragments of the original tomb chests, slabs, and headstones remain, and research has made it possible to identify the names of most of the persons in these graves. Non-invasive ground-penetrating radar was also used in the survey which identified the outline of the foundations of the old church. Richard has a chapter on the survey and Appendix 1 is a plan of the churchyard, showing the location of visible graves as at November 2014 and Appendix 2 gives details of graves identified in the 2014 survey. Together, all these give an up-to-date interpretation of the churchyard.

In addition, Appendix 3 reproduces a 1947 map showing the location of St Nicholas' Church and Appendix 4 lists the rectors of Loughton up to 1804. There is also a Bibliography.

This short history of the church of St Nicholas from its beginnings in the 12th century to the Memorial Chapel built in 1877 puts together in one volume the story of the church and churchyard, and adds some biographical details of the people who contributed much to the history of the village and town of Loughton. The Stonnard, Wroth and Maitland families each possessed the manor of Loughton for considerable periods. In the case of the Stonnards and the Maitlands, several members of the families are buried in the churchyard. With the departure of the Maitlands from Loughton Hall in 1946, the chapel was renovated and St Nicholas became a 'daughter church' of St John's for public worship.

Richard writes: 'The Memorial Chapel, one of the monuments in the churchyard, and the old red brick west wall of the churchyard are English Heritage Grade II listed buildings/structures. The preservation of a corner of Loughton's history sheltered among the ancient yew, holm oak, willow, and holly trees in the churchyard is important for today and the future.'

A History of St Nicholas Church, Loughton, Essex, (ISBN 978–1–905269–20–4) contains 122 pages plus 16 plates, many in colour, and is available to members at £5 and to others at £6. The book can be purchased at meetings or from the Chairman or from the Loughton Bookshop in the High Road.

Lincoln Hall and the Loughton Brotherhood

In 1904 a Mission was held in Loughton during which two meetings for men were held on two successive Sunday afternoons. These were so successful that it was decided to continue with the meetings once the Mission was over and a committee was formed to take forward the project.

Lincoln Hall

Various names for the society thus formed were suggested and initially it was decided to call themselves Loughton PSA (Pleasant Sunday Afternoon) although the name was changed soon afterwards to the Loughton Brotherhood. The object of the society was to organise and sustain a Sunday afternoon service of a religious, but non-denominational character. Membership was open to men over 17 years of age (later lowered to 16) who contributed one penny a week. The society met originally in Forest Hall, High Beech Road, Loughton, but in 1912 Lincoln Hall, at 125 High Road, Loughton, was built and became their permanent headquarters.

The Lincoln Hall was named after Henry Lincoln, who was a long-standing member of the Loughton Union Church. On his death on 9 February 1912 his will (proved on 3 April 1912) included a sum of money left to the church, not only for the hall, but also for the erection of almshouses to be administered by the minister and deacons. Residence in the homes is not strictly confined to members of the Union Church, although the trust deeds say that preference should be given to those poor elderly people who had been connected to the church for at least 10 years.

Henry Lincoln was born in Sheering, Essex, in 1830. He married in 1854 Sarah Reed. They appear to have had no children. Henry was a dairy farmer, based at The Hardings, which farm he took over on the death of his father Ephraim in 1856. Percy Ambrose wrote 'Henry Lincoln had lived in a house called The Hardings which occupied a large site on the corner of the High Road and Old Station Road, the land originally having extended along the High Road past the Lincoln Hall. Much of the site is today occupied by shops and offices including the offices of Ambrose and Sons on the corner.' Lincoln was active in many good causes in Loughton; he was present at the laying of the foundation stone of the Lopping Hall by the Lord Mayor of London on 18 September 1883, and was the Chairman of the Trustees of Lopping Hall from 1884.

In 1919, a well-known and much liked and respected member of the Loughton Brotherhood, Arthur Bull, died, just eight weeks after returning from India, where he had served in the army for three and a half years, having volunteered in 1914. He was a postman and had worked for the Post Office for 37 years. His funeral was attended by, amongst others, the President of the Brotherhood, Mr W E Stevens, and the Honorary Secretary, Mr L A J Hutchins. The

following extract from a local newspaper indicates the approach of the Brotherhood:

'Brother Bull was a quiet, unassuming unit of our Movement in Loughton and if, in the meetings, he did not take much active part, he always very persistently "did his bit" outside and "ran the boys in" when and wheresoever he could. He gave away no tracts but, believing in the super-influence of the human voice, spoke the right word that made the lads go willingly enough with him to the Lincoln Hall. "Not for a Pleasant Sunday Afternoon", he once said to a small collection of lads near the bus terminus, "but to a spiritual drilling for unsimple ways and the wasting of God's valuable time!" '

The foundation stone of Lincoln Hall

Many people have fond memories of the meetings of the Brotherhood. Joan Francies remembers:

'From the age of three I used to walk with my father to the Brotherhood meetings held at the Lincoln Hall on Sunday afternoons. The hall was rather sombre and large sepia photos of heavily bearded worthies hung on the walls. On the platform sat the chairman, Mr Acland, at least one other man (perhaps the secretary or the speaker) and the guest soloist for the day. The only soloist I remember was Ivy Ives, a contralto, singing *Bless This House*, a very popular ballad of the day.

In front of the platform was the orchestra whose players varied from week to week. Sometimes Uncle Will (Will Francies) was there, other violinists were Eddie Eastes and Mr Popperwill. Sometimes the harmonium was played by Ebenezer Occomore (Dad called him Ebenezer the Ebonizer). At the piano was Mrs Self. The hymns were sung with great gusto and I particularly enjoyed *Eternal Father Strong to Save*.'

Eve Lockington remembers:

'When my mother lived with me I used to take her there for a service. Grace Wilkinson used to be a member of the Red Cross and her parents like my mother used to attend meetings at the hall.'

The British Red Cross bought Lincoln Hall from the Union Church after a big local fundraising effort some 30 years ago but they have now decided to close and sell the Lincoln Hall. As a result the local WI were given sudden notice that they could no longer use the Hall. At the time of writing the property is for sale.

The War Memorial previously at Lincoln Hall has been moved by Loughton Town Council to ensure its preservation.

Lincoln Hall in 2015 – no sign of the photographs of the heavily bearded worthies!

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Compiled by LYNN HASELDINE JONES with thanks to JOAN FRANCIES, CHRIS POND, GRACE WILKINSON and EVE LOCKINGTON.

The Lincoln Hall clock

Lincoln Hall has a fine clock on the wall of the main hall. It is marked A M Austin, watch and clock maker, of Loughton.

Archibald Methley Austin ran his business from the High Road near Forest Road, and lived in the Chalet (which had been converted around 1910 from the ward blocks of the Oriolet fruitarian hospital – this was replaced by 81–105 Staples Road in the 1920s).

Archibald was born in 1879 in Staffordshire; his father Thomas Glase Austin was a chemist and druggist. All his siblings had names beginning with 'A', surely the postman would have had difficulty in delivering post to a family, most of whom had the initials 'AA'! Percy Ambrose, in his *Reminiscences of a*

Loughton Life (1995) wrote that A M Austin repaired clocks and watches, rather than actually make them – perhaps this one at Lincoln Hall was made for Austin, who put his name on it as supplier rather than manufacturer. Percy's brother Cliff served an apprenticeship with Austin. Another of his employees was Frankland, who later opened his own similar business. Austin had the contract for maintaining the Lopping Hall clock opposite. 'This clock was a striking clock in those days, and access to it involved a steep climb up a vertical ladder. Austin also had contracts with many of the large houses of Loughton to go to wind their clocks once a week, and undertake any necessary maintenance.'

A M Austin died aged 69 in 1949.

Looking back – but not in anger

Peter Paisley lived in Eleven Acre Rise, Loughton, from 1965 to 1987. He and his wife Joan then moved briefly to Theydon Bois and later Chigwell. His three sons attended Buckhurst Hill County High School from 1963 to 1978. When he retired from his work as a freelance translator, aged 88, they moved to Somerset, from where he sends this account of his life.

I was born, as Herbert Peiser, in Berlin on Boxing Day, 1921, the son of German non-orthodox Jewish parents, who kept the High Festivals, but otherwise put equal emphasis on being German and Jewish. My maternal grandfather emigrated after the Franco-Prussian War to South Africa, where he eventually founded an open-cast salt mine, which remained in my family's ownership until about 1960. He returned to Germany in 1881 in order to get married. He and his wife had six children, all born in the Orange Free State, but the four girls, including my mother, Elise Michaelis, were sent to Germany for their education before they were 10, where they remained and eventually got married. My grandfather and his two sons were Boer sympathisers, and were interned by the British during the Boer War.

My father, Philipp Peiser, was born in what was then known as Prussia, which became the 'Polish Corridor' after 1918. He married my mother in 1920 (she had lost her first husband in the Great War). I can claim the distinction of having been born, gone to primary school and grammar school all in the same street. The latter was closed down three months after I left, as the majority of pupils were Jewish and had gradually emigrated. A commemorative plaque was unveiled at the school's entrance by the local Mayor in the early 1990s, a ceremony to which I, as one of the few surviving alumni, was also invited.

In 1935 my parents sent me to school in Malmédy, Belgium, where lessons were a mixture of French and German, increasingly tending towards French, which I mastered in about six months, including a Belgian accent, a fact which eventually saved my life. I returned home to Berlin during every school holiday. When I left school in the summer of 1937, I went to live in Verviers, Belgium's industrial wool centre. I moved to Brussels in 1938 to study brewery engineering.

My father as a soldier in the First World War

My parents

My world was shattered early on 10 May 1940, when the Germans began to bomb Brussels, and a few hours later a couple of gendarmes appeared to take me away, as an enemy alien. We (there were hundreds like myself) were taken to a school for two days, and then taken to a railway station on the outskirts of Brussels and put into cattle trucks. Nobody quite knew where we were heading, except in a southerly direction, judged by the sun. The main problem was of course sanitation and dehydration. After I cannot remember how many days, the train stopped. We landed in some camp near Limoges. After a few days 500 of us were taken, this time in proper railway carriages, to another camp guarded by Senegalese soldiers. Then the journey continued for some time, of which I lost count, this time to the south-east to the Mediterranean at the foot of the Pyrenees near the Spanish border. We were still regarded as the 'fifth column' and, when taken by lorry from the station to a camp, we were pelted with stones and rubbish. This was St Cyprien. It consisted of primitive wooden barracks, the ground being sand, and straw to sleep on. Food consisted chiefly of thin soup. Sanitation was primitive and when the wind blew from the wrong direction the air was foul. We spent until October 1940 at this camp and we were then taken to the notorious camp at Gurs, where conditions were much worse. The camp was overcrowded, its entire area was a sea of mud and there was a constant shortage of water, food and clothing. During 1940–41, 800 internees died of contagious diseases, including typhoid fever and dysentery. This was in unoccupied Vichy France.

I was lucky to be transferred in the spring of 1941 to a Foreign Labour Company just south of the Dordogne, where we enjoyed a certain degree of freedom, better accommodation and food. We were kept busy at various tasks, none of them back-breaking. I was employed on translating German

articles into French for the Commandant. I was promoted, and cycled to the nearest town twice a day to collect the mail. It gave me a certain measure of freedom, and the opportunity to make contact with French people, some of whom remained friends and whom I visited with my family until long after the war.

All this went on until August 1942, to be exact, the 19th, the day of the ill-fated Dieppe raid. We heard on the grapevine that we were all to be deported to the east. Together with a few friends, I fled and camped in the woods. We eventually decided to go by rail to Marseille to join the French Foreign Legion. A friend who worked at the organisation's office forged identity papers for himself and me. After a number of adventures, including failing to cross the border into Switzerland, I did join the Legion. You will no doubt have heard of it and perhaps, even read P C Wren's *Beau Geste*, a romantic account of life in the French Foreign Legion. This is nothing but a myth. In reality it was in my time* the largest assembly of fugitives from justice: robbers, thieves, murderers, rapists, even people who did not want to pay alimony to their former wives. During the Second World War this was diluted somewhat by people persecuted on political, racial or religious grounds, like me. But the old guard was still there. Thanks to my perfect Belgian French I enlisted as a Belgian under a false name. I had to sign on for five years. At the end of 1942 a group of us paraded at Marseille docks under the eyes of half a dozen German officers, checking members of the armed forces crossing to North Africa. We duly arrived at Oran in Algeria and were given some tough infantry training. I put up with life as it was, only too glad to have escaped the holocaust. I was extremely lucky to have reached North Africa shortly before the Allied invasion in November 1942 which again saved my skin. For once in my life I was in the right place at the right time. We ceased to be part of Vichy France and came under the Free French of de Gaulle and the Allied command overnight.

In March 1943 after the Casablanca Conference, an agreement was concluded between the Belgian government in exile and the Free French that all Belgian nationals having joined the FFL during the War as refugees on grounds of political or racial persecution were to be taken to England to join the Belgian army there. This of course luckily included me. We embarked on a British ship and made for Gibraltar first, and then, travelling in convoy and zig-zagging through the Atlantic, to Glasgow. This was the moment of truth, and, passing through Immigration, I told the authorities my real identity and was immediately taken away. It was decided to take me to London for further investigation, but not before I was given a meal, the first decent meal for three years! I must say the police were extremely kind and understanding. Of course I hardly spoke a word of English then. I was taken under escort on the night train to Euston and then by taxi through town, where I saw for the first time the devastation caused by German bombing. I was taken to an internment camp (once more) at the Oratory School in Chelsea. However internment there proved to be a kind of holiday, decent food and accommodation and last, but not least, humane treatment. I was interrogated and was able to give references. After a fortnight of this easy going life, I was told officially that I was a free man, and, if willing, able to join HM Forces.

On 1 April 1943 I was taken to an army recruitment office in Euston Road where I swore allegiance to King George VI in French, not knowing any English. I was given a rail warrant and took a train to Bradford. We went into basic military training, something I had already gone through in Algeria, but this was like a Boy Scouts' summer camp compared to the FFL. My main task was to learn English, and I gradually succeeded, at least in understanding what I was told. Having begun in the Pioneer Corps, we 'enemy aliens' were at last allowed, even urged, to join a fighting unit of the British armed forces. I opted for the Armoured Corps and, having passed an aptitude test, was posted to a tank training regiment. I trained as a wireless operator and gunner. We were also taught to drive all sorts of vehicles, which proved useful in later life, as I never had to pass a driving test. Training continued at Catterick. All people like myself were officially advised by the military authorities to change our names, at least those whose names sounded German, a wise precaution in case we were taken prisoner by the Germans. I duly conformed to this and took the name Paisley. Early in 1945 a German prisoner of war camp was set up at Newmarket and the prisoners were employed at our camp to build roads. I was duly enrolled as interpreter.

VE day arrived and the army introduced an education scheme teaching various subjects, I was duly detailed to teach German to a number of NCOs. At the time there was a lot of talk about being sent to the Far East where the war was still raging. In July 1945 I got my marching orders. As I was the only one in the entire brigade to be affected, I assumed I would be sent to Germany on some interpreting job. In fact I was posted to Norway – a group of us would have the job of screening and documenting German POWs all over southern Norway. Each team boarded a Stirling bomber and we flew in formation to Oslo. After a few days we were taken to a place further north, near the Swedish border; we messed with an American unit which proved quite an experience, as we had not eaten so well for years. We worked in a POW camp and documented the prisoners, whilst the screening was done by Norwegian officers. We did the same job in a number of camps in southern Norway. Our relations with the Germans were satisfactory, without being over-friendly. They realised they had lost the war and all they wanted was to return home. The Norwegians made us extremely welcome. They had endured five years of German occupation and, in their eyes, we were their liberators. I personally never fired a shot in anger throughout the entire war. About a year later, having retuned to the UK, I was sent a certificate thanking me for the part I had played in liberating Norway, and signed by Olaf, the then Crown Prince and later King of Norway. I still have it and my children will be able to show it to their

children and tell them what a 'hero' their ancestor had been!

Having completed our task in early December 1945 we returned to Oslo where we embarked on a troop ship for Leith. Most of us were not due for demobilisation for some time and that meant getting back to some service unit to serve the rest of our time. After disembarkation leave over Christmas 1945 I was posted to Catterick, but after a few days I was posted to a POW camp in Lincolnshire as interpreter.

Peter and Joan Paisley in April 2003 (photograph by kind permission of Joan Francies)

It was one of many camps all over the UK, holding about 2,000 Germans, most of whom had volunteered to work in local agriculture. There were a number of satellite camps all over the area and the local farmers had become quite friendly with the prisoners working for them.

My job kept me very busy. While a lot of it was routine work, there were also interesting times, travelling with the camp commandant, a colonel, who made frequent inspections of the satellite camps and billets where POWs were housed. I was also called upon a couple of times to interpret at courts-martial, whenever the defendant was a German POW. The charge was invariably – to use a euphemism – unlawful fraternisation with English girls.

I met my future wife at this time. I was demobilised in May 1947 and granted British nationality in 1948, the year we married. We were married for 62 years, celebrating our Diamond Wed-ding in 2008. H PETER PAISLEY

*Matters have changed a lot and today recruits are only accepted following enquiries with Interpol.

Gardens in Loughton from the 1930s and 1940s

The photo of Debden House which appeared in the recent newsletter ('Bananas in Loughton' *Newsletter 202*) reminded me of some happy childhood days.

I was one of the children who thrilled at the sight of the bananas growing in Mr Stevens's greenhouse. The large border featured in the photo was ablaze in summer with bright red oriental poppies and it led to the picturesque gardener's cottage (later demolished). To the right of that were outbuildings where many swallows nested every year.

Near the outbuildings was a group of small attractive trees which had pretty spring blossom and in the autumn small ornamental apples which were yellow with a slight flush of pink (were they perhaps John Downie?).

Further along the path to the left of Debden House was the home of a lady who drove a smart pony and trap and placed free boxes of apples outside her home.

In the spring I would go upstairs on the bus so that I could get a good view of the lovely front garden at the junction of Pump Hill and Church Hill. It was known as Trotts. The large detached house was black and white mock-Tudor and the rock garden ran down the slope from the house towards the roads. To me it seemed as though all the plants flowered at the same time making a brilliant tapestry of yellows, purple and white. Trotts is long gone; all that group was demolished and a row of town houses took their place.

At the bottom of Church Hill adjoining Bosworth the butcher was a house that also had a fine floral display in spring. The front garden was small but contained beds of huge black tulips. I passed these four times a day on my way to and from school.

A short walk from home in Sedley Rise brought me to a mansion on Ash Green where I recall there was a huge wisteria and a large laburnum flowering together. This house too was demolished and replaced by a cul-de-sac.

The Ash Green house, taken in February 1958 (photo by Joan Francies)

[*There is also a photograph of this house in* The Buildings of Loughton *by Chris Pond (LDHS, 2nd ed, 2010) – the caption is Ashfield Lodge – nothing now remains of perhaps the most exciting house, architecturally speaking, in Loughton: Turner Powell's Ashfield Lodge of 1914 – Ed.)*

From there you could continue towards the Gardener's Arms skirting the boundary holly hedge of Miss Waller's garden. To the right of her house the high hedge was trimmed into a topiary lion couchant. Eventually her garden tapered and the holly hedge ended being replaced by a flimsy wire fence through which you could admire hundreds of naturalised daffodils. JOAN FRANCIES

A lost garden in Loughton

My new abode, only separated from Epping Forest by a narrow, sandy road, was contained in an acre of garden. Smallish, perhaps, after seventy acres of

Sussex fields and woodland, but I had the hope that a five acre plot of undulating land which abutted on my north-eastern boundary was purchasable. A one-time lord of the manor had, some 70 years before, planted a double avenue of elms across the northern part of the five acres in order that, I presume, it might appear to stretch from his gates, for between them and the trees there was but a sunken and, at a short distance, invisible, road.

The owner of the land when I came on the scene was a charming lady with the particular kind of blue eyes which ever held me fascinated. Some 14 years before, misliking the house I had just bought popping into the landscape and punctuating the view of Epping Forest from her windows, she had planted a belt of Conifers by our common boundary to screen the excrescence from sight. I sympathised with her motive, and blessed her for the trees, a mixture of Scotch, Weymouth, Corsican and Mountain Pines, with a sprinkling of Black Spruce. A single specimen of the Maidenhair Tree, *Ginkgo biloba*, was there too, looking very much a stranger in a strange land. It found its environment, no doubt, very different from that it craved – the garden of a Chinese temple. There it finds the atmosphere suitable to its antiquity and there it is held sacred. For the Maidenhair Tree has a direct lineage stretching back three million centuries. It lingers on, the last descendent of a numerous race which flourished in humid Carboniferous woodlands alive with the whirr of wings of Palaeozoic Dragon-flies and, not so pleasant, the home of wood-eating Millipedes.

You suspect me of trespass. Otherwise, how could I have distinguished the trees mentioned? The truth is that I didn't distinguish them until later, but, at the same time, I cannot rebut the accusation of unlawfully wandering beyond my boundary. Not without an excuse, however, at any rate for the first few times. Our semi-Persian cat was a great explorer but wanting in the courage necessary to extricate himself from positions he had, with considerable ingenuity, got himself into. One day he would find difficulty in descending from the house roof; on another, a swaying branch might defy his efforts to regain the trunk from which it sprang. On these occasions he would call for us most piteously. I picked up his SOS one autumn evening and found him hanging on by the skin of his claws to the drooping extremity of an Ash branch, some eight feet from the ground. Similar situations had occurred before. We knew the tech-nique of rescue. It was my part to stand below and Dinkie's to let go the branch when it was nearest my shoulders; according to routine, he dropped with an r-r-r-t of satisfaction.

Once on the desired land, I looked about me. Dinkie, with an air of proprietorship, showed me round. It was evident he had been there before, and thoroughly approved the place. He told me so, indeed, for we had long ago invented a sort of language, which, though we spoke it in different syllables, was perfectly intelligible to both.

Returning to the house, we called a committee meeting at which it was unanimously resolved that the ground already surveyed by Dinkie should be acquired by hook or crook.

To cut a long story short, I bought it a year later.

Nature had anticipated me in making a garden of it. Ancient Hollies, Crabs and Hawthorns were there in groups and single specimens. Clumps of Gorse, thickets of Sloe, tangles of Bramble and agglomerations of these defied penetration by any animals save rabbits, badgers and a varied avifauna. Surface vegetation was of various meadow grasses plentifully mixed with Harebells, Thyme, Sorrel, Hawkweed and other native herbs. A single large patch of Wood Anemone beautified a shady spot. It is there still. Bracken naturally had a place beneath the Pines, but had not shown any aggressive tendency, while Horsetails made free with the moister ground.

The land is undulating, as has been mentioned, but in addition it rises from north, south, east and west to a high central plateau. It actually represents an outlying part of the East Anglian ridge and reaches, at its highest point, about 325 feet above sea-level; at the lowest, some twenty feet less.

You will realise that from the outset we had the great advantage of only having to alter a few of the natural dispositions. No bare, flat field awaited transformation. The garden was already interesting, animated, inspiring.

Line drawing of The Summit, Fred Stoker's house

From: *Dr Fred Stoker and the Lost Garden of Loughton* (see below)

References

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The story of Dr Fred Stoker's garden in Loughton is told in *Dr Fred Stoker and the Lost Garden of Loughton* by Richard Morris and Chris Pond, published by LDHS in 2008 and still available.

An unusual vehicle in Essex!

JOHN HARRISON writes: I know this is not our bit of Essex, but it is quite entertaining:

ROBOT JUMBO: Mr Frank Stuart, a theatrical mask-maker, of Thaxted, has made a mechanical elephant which can carry eight people and 'walk' at a speed of 28 miles per hour. Mr. Stuart has nearly completed the prototype in his Thaxted workshops. The 'elephant', which is driven by an ordinary petrol engine, is claimed actually to walk, lifting each leg off the ground. It will have to carry number plates, and head and rear lights, while on the road.

Chelmsford Chronicle, 13 January 1950

Loughton bus tickets

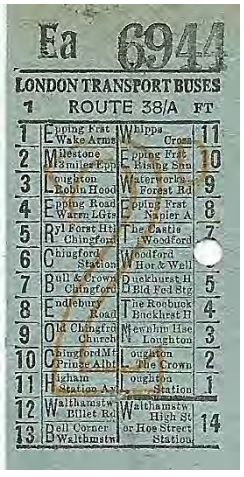
From last year it has been no longer possible to pay for a fare on a London bus by offering cash on board, and thus there is no need for a ticket to be issued as proof of payment for the passenger's journey. Perhaps, then, it is now appropriate to reflect on some of the tickets that could be obtained in the Loughton area in the days when it was standard practice to pay one's fare in cash to a conductor who presented himself to the passenger, once seated on the bus.

Although various forms of mechanised fare collection systems were adopted by many bus operators throughout the country from the 1930s onwards, until the mid-1950s London stuck doggedly to the traditional and simple Bell Punch system, where the conductor carried a rack of brightly coloured tickets of different values to be punched in the Bell Punch when issued to the passenger. Even better for Londoners, until 1952, most routes were provided with a set of tickets unique to that route, listing all the points passed (called 'stages', harking back to an earlier mode of transport) which can sometimes be of interest to the local historian.

The earliest ticket in my collection, relating to Loughton, is A 3215 **(1)**, below, from route 38A, Loughton Crown to Victoria. This dates from the period between the formation of the London Passenger Transport Board in 1933, and the adoption of stage numbers in 1940. It works on the 'fareboard' principle by listing on the ticket all possible journeys along a route for the fare printed on the ticket. The conditions state that it must be punched in the space opposite that to which the passenger is entitled to travel. In this example, the passenger has travelled from St Paul's Road to Loughton Crown, but the 9d fare also applied to all the other pairings on the ticket, for example, for travel from Bloomsbury High Street to Woodford, The Castle. It will be appreciated that the lower the fare, the more combinations were possible, and so the length of the ticket had to be increased to accommodate them. On some London routes a 1d ticket could be up to 5 inches long whereas a 9d, as in this example, was of more modest dimensions.

The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 caused the abandonment of the 'fareboard' system because the quantity of paper required to produce the cheaper values, which represented the majority of ticket sales, was deemed to be wasteful. From 1940, the stages on each route were numbered and listed in order of travel, and the ticket was required to be punched at the point to which the passenger was entitled to travel. Thus as all values of ticket for a route merely listed the stages along the route in order, they could all be the same length, saving both paper and the number of printing blocks required. Nevertheless, it seems strange, considering rationing and the other deprivations suffered during the War, that it was deemed to be important for each London bus route to be supplied with its own individually printed tickets, with all the costs of printing and administration that must have been involved.

(1)



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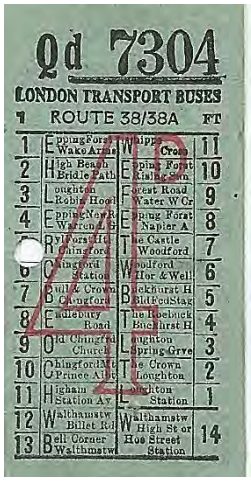


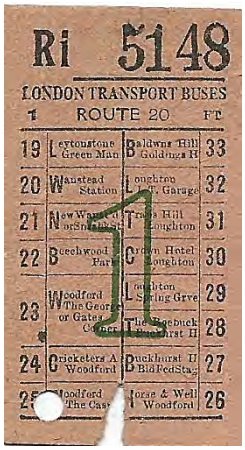
(3)

(4)

Ticket Ea 6944, **(2)**, above, also issued on route 38A, is an example of the new system from the early 1940s. As a further economy, for ticket printing purposes route 38A has been merged with route 38, and the front of the ticket shows the outer London stages for both routes, whilst the inner London stages for the common section of both routes to Victoria appears on the reverse (not illustrated). It is of note how many stages are named after pubs, these and their names being considered a permanent feature of the townscape, unlike today. Compared with the pre-war ticket, on close examination we can see that the route has been extended from Loughton Crown to Loughton Station. The stages for route 38 show the summer Sunday extension from Chingford, along the Epping New Road to the Wake Arms. This touched the fringes of Loughton as is evidenced by fare stage 3, 'Loughton Robin Hood'. As the intention was for all fare stages to be evenly spaced, a name for a location between the Robin Hood and the Wake Arms seems to have been a challenge, and fare stage 2 is 'Milestone 3 miles Epping'. Note also that fare stage 3 on route 38A, mid-way between Loughton Crown and Buckhurst Hill Roebuck is 'Newnham House'.

Now we turn to ticket Qd 7304 **(3)**, above, again from route 38A, issued later in the 1940s. At first glance it looks the same as the previous ticket, apart from the colour and fare value, the printing block looking identical. However, close inspection reveals some subtle differences. Fare stage 2 on route 38 is now 'High Beach Bridle Path'. What happened to the milestone? Was it removed, or was it impossible to see because of road-side mud and dirt? On route 38A, fare stage 3 is now 'Loughton Spring Grove'. Had Newnham House been demolished by then, or was it that the bus stop was sited nearer to Spring Grove, a name which would have been more visible to the public?

Routes 35 and 35A might not be instantly associated with Loughton, but I include ticket Ya 2600 **(4)**, above, dating from around 1950, because it shows the summer Sunday extension of route 35A beyond Chingford to High Beach and this, too, called at Loughton Robin Hood, listed as fare stage 2.



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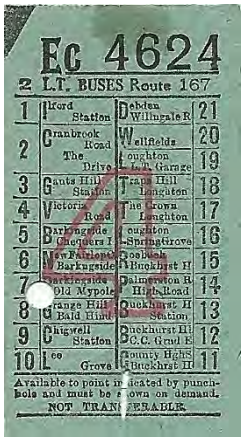


(7)

(8)—>

Route 20, Leytonstone to Epping, is represented by Ri 5148 **(5)**, above, which also dates from around 1950. The stages through Loughton are conveniently on the front of the ticket. Loughton bus garage has opened and is shown as a fare stage. Using different nomenclature from route 38A, it lists the Crown as 'Crown Hotel Loughton'.

Route 167, from Loughton bus garage to Ilford, commenced operation after the War but was not provided with its own named stage tickets until 1 October 1950.

B 9737 **(6)**, above, is an example of this first set, showing yet another variation 'The Crown Loughton'. The date of this ticket is further evidenced by an advertisement on the back for the London Co-op with the slogan 'Make the Festival year a Co-operative trading year'.

On 17 October 1951, reflecting the growth of Debden, the route was extended to a new terminus 'Debden Willingale Road' and a new set of tickets produced showing this terminus and the intermediate stage of 'Wellfields', beyond Loughton bus garage. Ec 4624 **(7)**, above, is an example of this set, which was short-lived as all named stage tickets for every London route were withdrawn a little over four months later on 1 March 1952, being replaced by punch tickets which had stage numbers only, and thus could be used on any route.

To conclude, we must not forget the Green Line services which passed through Loughton. These resumed after the Second World War with extensive sets of beautiful multi-coloured punch tickets. One set combined the routes which ran through Loughton: 718, Epping to Windsor and 720, Bishop's Stortford to Aldgate. An example is Q 9858 **(8)**, above, which dates from 1946, before the stages had been numbered. Because the routes were longer, and did not serve all bus stops, there was a greater distance between fare stages and a new Loughton location found fame. Between the stages of Loughton bus garage and Woodford Horse & Well, we see 'Loughton, The Crescent'.

These are just a few examples of some of the more arcane aspects of Loughton history, as reflected in the humble bus ticket which, sadly, is no longer with us.

PETER HASELDINE

Photo: Green Line classic bus: London Transport RF MLL 806 on route 718 (Ian Roberts)

Miracle cure at Buckhurst Hill

Inhabitants of Buckhurst Hill and Loughton, Essex, have been commenting a good deal lately on the strange circumstances attending the adventures of a Miss Busbridge, residing in Alfred Road, Buckhurst Hill. A reporter on the local paper *The Loughton Advertiser* has obtained a full statement of the case from the young lady herself and the following facts are quoted from this report:

Miss Busbridge, a tall, good-looking lady of 25 years, stated that she had been ill for two weary years, and had been taken up and down to London hospitals, till she had wished at last to be carried instead to her grave. Five different medical men gave up her case as hopeless, for Miss Busbridge's lungs were seriously affected. One of them had almost gone, and the other was affected.

The symptoms pointed unmistakeably to consumption – blood spitting, night sweats, giddiness, headaches, thirst and general weakness of limbs, together with want of interest in anything. She was sent to Devonport for a time, but came back worse, and was literally wasting away. The sight of this helpless girl being lifted out of the train had interested the local public, who saw that the end was not far off.

When matters had assumed their worst for it seemed that life hung merely on a thread, Miss Busbridge's sister was recommended to get a box of Dr Williams's Pink Pills for Pale People. The dying girl laughed, but took a box merely to please her sister. 'The first dose did me good', said Miss Busbridge, and having proved their value, and knowing that consumption is not to be cured in a day, she took the Pills regularly. Six months afterwards, she astonished the neighbours by walking out alone, and came home giving people fresh surprises by stepping out of the train unaided. In that period Miss Busbridge gained thirty pounds in weight, and as the reporter departed, her father stated 'that he hoped to have his daughter for many years to come'. Miss Busbridge is not the only consumptive that has been cured by Dr Williams's Pink Pills, after doctors have done their best and failed, these Pills have also cured many thousands of cases of anaemia, rheumatism, bronchitis and eczema. They are also a splendid nerve and spinal tonic, and have thus cured many cases of paralysis, St Vitus Dance and nervous headache. They are now obtainable of all chemists, and from Dr Williams Medicine Company, 45 Holborn Viaduct, London, at 2s 9d a box, and six for 12s 2d, but are genuine only with full name, Dr Williams's Pink Pills for Pale People. The latter point is important to be observed, there are many worthless imitations sold as 'pink pills' without the name of Dr Williams which distinguishes the only really curative Pills. 1 June 1898

Submitted by CHRIS POND

This article starts off as if it were a real story, but as you read on, you get suspicious that it sounds more like an advertisement. In fact the 'story' was syndicated in dozens of provincial newspapers. The Miss Busbridge was real though – she was Emma, born in Buckhurst Hill in 1873, the daughter of labourer Robert T Busbridge and his wife Margaret. By 1898 she was indeed 25 years old. By the time of the 1901 census her father had died and she was still living in Alfred Road with her mother and brother Charles. She was a housemaid.

The Pink Pills for Pale People originated in Canada. They included iron oxide and magnesium sulphate, and were widely used throughout the world for many years. The illustration is kindly provided by the Science Museum in London (*Ed*).

'Aldreth', 23 Alderton Hill

My father Bertrand Martin Harris bought plot 23 in 1926; I believe the architect was a man called Daniels, probably from Ilford, and the builder was Smith of Abridge, although it may have been French of Abridge. I was born in a nursing home in 1927 in Cambridge Park, Wanstead, and taken home to Aldreth. The house was named after a village in the Fens where Dad spent many happy hours with his uncle, Harry Wilkin. My father had a motor garage in Beehive Lane, Gants Hill, and another in Newbury Park, which was Beehive Engineering Ltd. After the wartime bombing there was compulsory purchase of Beehive Lane, and Dad was very upset about it.

Dad hated the cold and damp of Loughton, so he sold Aldreth to Jacques. He bought Marryatts Lodge in Paradise Row, now The Forest in Snaresbrook, sold off quite a chunk and turned Marryatts Lodge into a four bedroomed house where I spent a very happy childhood. Dad loved that house, which is where he died.

But back to Loughton – my aunt and uncle had Oakhurst, 21 Alderton Hill, built for them, but sadly Robert Hogg died and Auntie Edie moved away in 1938.

Years ago I called on a Saturday morning at 23 Alderton Hill, with my collecting tin for Flag Week. All I wanted to do was just stand on that doorstep. A Mrs Depla opened the door and rushed to get me some money but I stopped her and said that my parents lived in the house when I was born. She immediately said 'Your father was Harris, we have the old plans' but I said that all I wanted to do was stand in the hall. It was then that I noticed that the light switches were exactly the same as those in the garage at Marryatts Lodge. There was a pit in the garage which Mrs Depla said her sons used to repair their cars. I said that it was originally there for a small heater for Dad to put under his car, which had to go out every day.

I married Alan Luton, a builder. We lived at Noel Cottage, Carroll Hill, also built by Smith of Abridge. Alan built the Synagogue in Borders Lane; Lutons rarely built houses. We moved to Surrey when Alan

fell ill, to be near our daughter. ELAINE M LUTON (*née* HARRIS).

More on Loughton in the 1940s and 1950s

Following on from the article in *Newsletter 204*, I was a contemporary of your correspondent, Terry Carter, in Loughton during the 1940s and 1950s. We lived at 8 Lower Park Road and I attended Staples Road School until 1950, when I went to Forest School. We sold the house in 1963 to John Strevens, the artist, known in particular for his paintings which he did for Medici cards.

The toilets in Brook Path, to which Terry refers, were originally brick-built air raid shelters and a base for the Home Guard. They were also used after the war by the Loughton Poultry Club, staffed by volunteers, from which we were able to obtain animal feeds at modest prices.

Although the shop opposite, owned by the redoubtable Mrs Sharp, was known as Roses library, it was primarily a stationery and card shop and did not, to my knowledge, act as a lending library. It is true that there were only a few cafés in the village – the art deco Park Café, with its roof terrace at 118 High Road, had in my day become Charles Woolls the florist; the café at 94 High Road next to Mr Rickett's newsagent and tobacco shop had become Boltons dry cleaners.

The very fine Park Café, as remembered by Philip Shaw

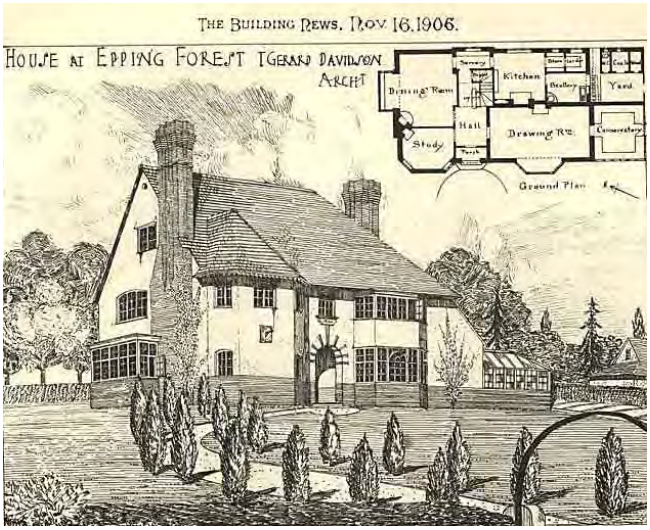
Terry did not mention one café which was undoubtedly the best in the village. This was Robinsons, fitted out in Tudor style in the 1930s, which sold cakes at the front and served lunches and teas at the back, served by waitresses in traditional black dresses with white aprons and caps. This was next door to Durrant's shoe shop and a few doors away from Perry's builders' merchants and Woolworths. Hubbard's, next to the Loughton Cinema, was previously run by a Mrs Wallis and was primarily a sweet shop. The transport café run by Jesse Thomas at 108 High Road was known as the Jubilee Tea Rooms and had pew seating and large tea urns mounted on the counter. The dry cleaners next door was known as Kwick Kleen (I hope that I have got the spelling right!) and on the other side, there was Heywards the greengrocers. Your correspondent, Mike Alston, noted just four shops from those days which survive today. I recall that this is correct, but Bird & Fairley opticians opened up soon after the war; does anyone remember Mr Fairley, with his (almost) handlebar moustache? The construction of the Brooklyn Parade shops was interrupted by the war and they were left as empty shells until the late 1940s. When first occupied, they included Glassons furniture shop, Bewley tobacconists (complete with mock Queen Anne furniture), Bird & Fairley, Freeman Hardy and Willis, shoe retailer, and last at the far end, but certainly not least, W H Jolley, the art shop owned by Mr Jones and there until quite recently.

PHILIP SHAW

TERRY CARTER adds: The art shop was W H Jolly, not Jolley. Sadly, it moved to the other end of Loughton some years ago, and became simply 'The Art Shop'. It closed recently, forced to do so mainly by customers moving to on-line purchases.

Another mystery house

In the last issue we published a photograph of a mystery house in Loughton. In this issue is another unidentified house, as included in the issue of *The Building News* of 16 November 1906.



Submitted by CHRIS POND

LDHS – a member's memories

It occurred to me that I am probably now one of the longest-standing regular attenders and a brief write-up of my experiences of the Society over this period might be appreciated by members. We moved down from the north-east to Loughton in 1988 when I got a job as a town planner with Epping Forest District Council and I got involved with the Society soon after that.

I had no intention of joining a local historical society, having never previously attended such a group. At that time the society met in a lecture room in Loughton Library and I noticed a poster for one talk in the Library. I cannot remember what it was about, but it was no doubt something to do with the area's buildings as I would have attended on the basis

it would help me in my work, especially dealing with listed buildings and conservation areas. Then another poster appeared for a similar talk and I attended that. Soon I was getting sucked in and thought I really ought to become a member.

At that time, as well as having monthly meetings in the library, I think three times a year, the Society had what they called 'members' meetings' in the Lincoln Hall. I could not quite work out why there were two different categories of meeting. The sort of things that happened at the meetings were fairly similar; just fewer people attended the members' meetings. A couple of members' meetings I can recall are one showing old postcards of Loughton and another where the then chairman, Donald Pohl, showed his collection of lantern slides – one looked remarkably like a silhouette of Margaret Thatcher! Presumably at some point the Society's committee recognised there was no real difference between members' meetings and the other ones and they were dropped.

At the time the Society's Secretary was David Wilkinson and he was the leading light of the group. He had been one of the founder members. He was a very energetic man. He organised an annual coach trip for the Society, but we never went on one as it was impractical as we had two quite young children. Sadly David was injured in a car accident on his way to one of the Society's meetings and he never fully recovered from that.

I was aged about 40 when I joined the Society and it struck me that everyone else at the meetings seemed to be at least 20 years older than me. That made me feel slightly uncomfortable as I was 'the odd man out', but I kept attending and am now definitely glad I did. Having a good knowledge of the area's history helps me feel I 'belong' in Loughton.

Soon after I joined, the Society outgrew the Library lecture room and moved to the Wesley Hall at the back of the Methodist Church. That too was eventually outgrown and now we meet in the church itself, of course.

I now seem to have caught up age-wise with the Society's membership. It does seem a bit disappointing that we have few younger people coming to the meetings, but maybe there is something about history which attracts older people – perhaps they see themselves as part of it. The Society has changed quite a bit over the approximately 25 years I have been a member and it is now become what is probably one of the most successful local history societies in the country. JOHN HARRISON

The Festival of Britain

Do any members have memories of the Festival of Britain?

The Festival of Britain was a national exhibition held throughout the UK in the summer of 1951. It was organised by the government to give the British a feeling of recovery in the aftermath of the Second World War and to promote the British contribution to science, technology, industrial design, architecture and the arts. It also commemorated the Great Exhibition of 1851. The Festival's centre was in London on the South Bank. There were also events in Poplar (Architecture), Battersea (The Festival Pleasure Gardens), and other areas of London. Festival celebrations took place in other parts of the country and there were also touring exhibitions. The Festival became associated with the post-war Labour government and the South Bank Exhibition site (with the exception of the Royal Festival Hall) was rapidly demolished by the later Conservative government. Thanks to Margaret Brooks for these photographs taken by her family at the Festival.

More on Theydon Garnon

The article about Theydon Garnon in the last *Newsletter* may usefully be expanded by considering that parish's boundaries.

Anciently, it included some 800 acres more land than it does now – much of what we would consider parts of Epping and Coopersale. That is where most of its population was, and, indeed, Theydon Garnon was sometimes called Coopersale parish.

It should also be noted that Epping Station, for the first 30 years of its existence, was in Theydon Garnon parish. The boundary extended from there up to the Purlieu Bank, the 17th century boundary of the Forest, and the boundary between Waltham and Ongar hundreds. This lay approximately along Hemnall Street. So most of the grand houses in Kendal Avenue and Station Road were in ancient Theydon Garnon. So was the Epping Union Workhouse (now St Margaret's Hospital). The boundary was altered only in 1896, when Epping Town UDC was created.

Hemnall Street has all the appearances of a classic back lane in a burgage-plot town, but in fact, its importance was as a by-pass – as it still is in rush hours today! Epping never had burgage plots, because it has never been a borough.

The grant of market rights to the Abbot of Waltham to hold a market on Epping Heath was in 1253. Market rights involved the levy of tolls for the sale of goods. But because Epping market was conveniently next to a boundary, if you stepped over the boundary, you could avoid the tolls. So the grant some 50 years later of market rights to Theydon Garnon was most probably an attempt by the Lord of that Manor to get his share of the spoils (on which score he was probably encouraged by the Abbot). I do not think there was ever a separate market place in Theydon Garnon.

Long after the manorial owners ceased to apply their market grant, Hemnall Street was still being used as a cut-off for Epping Market. Many of the inns were on the east side, and Sir William Addison recollected that their long plots, up to Hemnall Street, were used for unofficial extra-market transactions, even after the changes of 1896. Some of the innkeepers probably charged half the official toll.

So next time you go along Hemnall Street looking for Lucian Pissarro's cottage, to find a place to park for free, or to avoid the High St traffic, which is even worse nowadays than Loughton's, recollect that you are trying a dodge current since mediaeval times! You may even use some of the inn yards or ancient alleyways that connect Hemnall Street with the High Street – originally, no doubt, for nipping quickly back from any dodgy dealing to the 'legit' side of a transaction.

CHRIS POND

More on articles in *Newsletter 205*

I was interested to receive this *Newsletter* and I have a few points that may be of interest. Chis Pond's note on Pullman coaches reminded me of these attractive vehicles in their attractive pale blue livery alongside the Crown Hotel and they have an interesting history. Mr Parsons, a former Vanguard bus conductor, purchased the chassis of former London Transport STL buses 1627, 1093 and 1110 from Daniels of Rainham, a scrap merchant, who had acquired many such vehicles for dismantling from London Transport when they were withdrawn from service. It was a condition of sale that the chassis would not be re-bodied and re-registered in case they competed in the coaching market. Mr Parsons' son signed an indemnity to this effect, but said later that he thought that this was a pure formality after he had gone ahead with fitting completely new bodies. The vehicles were made available for private hire and I do not know how the dispute with London Transport was settled. They disappeared after a year or two without any apparent notice.

Your front cover sketch of Victor's was H H Sandell, the bakers, when I lived in Loughton and I think they did all their baking at these premises. Round the corner in High Beech Road, but also in the same building, was Howes the greengrocers. Sandell's had another baker's shop in the High Road. This was on the north side and (I think) at number 152, next door to the Ellis Shoe stores, which was, incidentally, owned by my uncle, Mr James Duncan Smith.

PHILIP SHAW

Early Memories of Loughton

I was born on 1 April 1935 at 1 Hatfield Cottage, Rectory Lane, Loughton. This was a tied cottage. The lane has also been called Parsonage, and Pole, which I understand is Old English for pond – and indeed within a quarter of a mile of the cottage we had six ponds. The lane, which is almost certainly the oldest road in Loughton, may also have been a pilgrim way with Barking Abbey to the south and of course Waltham Abbey to the north, and it would seem that some type of religious centre has stood on the site of St Nicholas since the mid-1100s.

My earliest memory of Loughton

One of my parents was holding me, they were standing by the Rectory looking down Pyrles Lane. My mother had a friend, a Mrs Lovelock, in that area and she would accompany my mother occasionally on her trips to see me at Great Ormond Street Hospital – I had been a very sick baby. This may have been as early as just before Christmas 1938 when I had been discharged from hospital after a long stay. I was taught to pronounce the Y in Pyrles – it now seems to be pronounced 'Pearls Lane'. Sometime in the 1200s a man named John le Pyrle had a farm in this area and his father owned land – I would imagine they were of Norman stock.

My second memory of Loughton

This was a fishing trip, in the spring of 1939. I was with other children, I know not who; I had three older siblings. My two older sisters used to play with Maitland's daughter; my sister Pauline can remember going into the lodge where the child had a large book of pressed flowers which impressed her, although she can no longer remember the girl's name. On the north bank of the Roding opposite a farm (Padfield's?) close to Woolston Hall, the river was wide, flat and stony, and on each side the banks had been cut away which formed a shallow slope. A single horse and cart (these were quite heavy with narrow wheels) came down the slope from the farm across the ford and up the slope on our side. The other thing I can remember was on the way home, walking up the hill from Chigwell Lane station, on the north side of the road was a small ditch and we filled our container under a little waterfall.

In front of us was a good-sized grass triangle with a three-way wooden signpost in the middle, this would have been installed before Wellfields came into being. The original lane would have skirted around Hillyfields and headed north (Waltham Abbey). Across the road and to our right stood the Rectory – there had been rectories on the site since the 1400s. The 400 year old hedge is a good clue to the age of the area.

My third memory

In the summer of 1939 my older sister Gwen and I were walking towards Chigwell Lane station. We passed St Nicholas and crossed Borders Lane. I noticed an elderly lady standing inside the gate of a medium-sized cottage somewhere close to where the Churchill pub stood. I always understood that this cottage was called Brickclamps, and Loughton Library has a map dated 1940 which shows the outline of the artillery camp with Brickclamps tucked into the south-west corner. I believe that the photograph supposedly of Brickclamps in *Loughton a Hundred Years Ago* (William Chapman Waller, second edition, edited by Richard Morris and Chris Pond, LDHS, 2006) shows the owner of Brickclamps, standing outside his own house, not Brickclamps itself, which was in Chigwell Lane, not Rectory Lane.

MAURICE DAY

CHRIS POND adds in explanation: Brickclamps House stood on the site of the later Sir Winston Churchill public-house (SWC) car park. It was converted to a temporary pub around 1952 and demolished after the new SWC was opened in 1957. The house, Brickclamps, formerly St Hilda's, formerly Tramway House, was occupied by the Maitland family, and the photo and caption in *Loughton a Hundred Years Ago* were supplied by Angela Coode, an exact contemporary of Mr Day and scion of the Maitlands.

I have always regarded Chigwell Lane as the river side of the Borders Lane junction, but locals at the time may have had other ideas. Mr Day is right that Brickclamps, the fields (presumably where the bricks were originally stored), lay off Chigwell Lane.

Chigwell UDC gave Watney Combe Reid & Co permission for Brickclamps House (address: 'The Broadway') to be converted into a public-house under planning application CHI 53/53.

There is a note on the Development Control Register: 'Permission not executed and house demolished June 1955.' Planning permission was given a few months later for the permanent public-house we knew by CHI 0226/53 but it wasn't finally **o**pened until 1956 or 1957.

IAN STRUGNELL adds more information:

I wouldn't argue about the pronunciation of 'Pyrles', but I wonder if that is how 'Pole' comes into the story. When I was a child, some people used to pronounce Spareleaze as Sparleaze; no doubt there are many other similar variations.

Perhaps Mr Day's sister remembered J F W Maitland's daughter, Sarah Louisa Mary, who was born in July 1932.

St Hilda's/Brickclamps was a bit more than a medium-sized cottage, I think. The owner was of course J F W Maitland, even if the occupier was one of his uncles; the only other photo I have is an Aerofilms oblique dated 4 June 1952 but only the hipped roof and chimneys are visible above the trees so we must trust Angela's provenance for her photo. It was of course where the SWC was, the car park being part of its grounds to the north. It also had a coach house, for which the LCC's contractors Higgs & Hill applied for permission to convert into two flats in August/September 1946 (CUDC minutes).

The point at which Rectory Lane became Chigwell Lane seems to have moved around a bit. In March 1902 LUDC decided to ask ECC 'to take over and maintain the roadway in this parish, known as Rectory Lane, from its junction with the main road near the foot of Goldings Hill to its termination at the parish boundary near Loughton Bridge' (i.e., make it a main road); ECC refused (by December). By May 1914 it had been provisionally arranged that the same stretch would be classified Second Class (the Road Board was by then involved). At the 11 September 1923 meeting it was decided that 'the road sometimes known as Chigwell Lane be named "Rectory Lane" (from Golding's Hill to Borders Lane) and "Chigwell Lane" (from Borders Lane).'

Presumably someone told ECC (who knew it as the B171), but in July 1939 they thought it ran from the High Road to Rolls Corner; they still called it that when the reconstruction of the railway bridge was first mooted in October 1945 (it didn't seem to occur to anyone at County Hall to ask why the station was named Chigwell Lane) and in March 1948 referred to it as 'locally known as Rectory Lane'. When the name boards were first put up at the Borders Lane junction is anyone's guess, but I suspect post-war; some years ago when a water main burst (again) down by Station Approach, Thames Water said it was in Rectory Lane (the contractors must have found it without too much difficulty).

And finally I believe it's quite logical to give the address as The Broadway, as Barrington Green had been made by then (I think the 'service road' question was finally decided in 1949).

Our 15 remembered lives

LDHS member Maggie Brown writes about the research she undertook on the Great War, part of a £10,000 Heritage Lottery funded project, which included an exhibition at Wanstead United Reformed Church in November 2014 and April/May 2015, and the publication of a commemorative booklet.

Wanstead Congregational Church unveiled its War memorial in 1921. Engraved on the stone plaque are the names of 15 young men who worshipped with their families in our church.

At a meeting in February 2014, the church discussed how we should commemorate the centenary of the First World War. It was at this point that we realised that only one of the 15 families still worshipped in our church. Fourteen young men were remembered just as names carved in stone. The passage of time had left us with only their names. We had no collective memory or written record of their families or indeed the lives that they had led in our local community.

The Our 15 Project has been like dropping a stone into water, the ripples have spread far and wide. I have had the pleasure of working and collaborating with many local historians and the First World War history buffs. I have made many new friends who are

working in archival research, as well as librarians and researchers in very specialist libraries and collections. People have been very generous with their time and expertise. Communicating with the extended families of Our 15, in this country and all over the world has been another unexpected pleasure and joy. Who said research was boring!

The only downside has been the emotional fallout of discovering not only how these young men died, but also the myriad of other tragedies within and beyond these families. For example, my pilot, Albert Parks, who died in a training flight at Upwood, was instructing Adam Howie Thompson. Adam had fought his way across the Western Front with the Gordon Highlanders but decided in 1918 to accept a commission with the newly formed RAF. Adam was the younger of two sons. His older brother Alexander had been a passenger on the *Titanic* in 1912 and went down with the ship. As you can imagine, revisiting all their stories again brings back a flood of emotion.

Maggie, fourth from left, at the opening of the exhibition on Sunday 19 April 2015. The event was attended by the Deputy Mayor of Redbridge, Councillor Mrs Linda Huggett.

More importantly, Our 15 are now commemorated and we have truly 'turned the names in stone, however briefly or incompletely, back into remembered lives' (Ian Hislop). The story of their lives has become part of our National Archives. Of course the booklet and exhibition is only a populist 'snap shot'; the hard research, some stories running into 3000 words, will be archived and available for researchers at Redbridge Museum and at the Imperial War Museum. I am also delighted that some of the stories have been shared and are now available at places such as the Thiepval Memorial Visitors Centre. This is part of Pam and Ken Linge's amazing and colossal Thiepval Database Project.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.

MAGGIE BROWN

VE Day in Meadow Road

I was born in 1934 in a cottage in York Hill, Loughton. My parents then moved shortly after to Meadow Road where I lived until 1963. I attended Staples Road Infants School and Loughton Secondary Modern School in Roding Road. I did my National Service in 1952 in the RAF and stayed in for four years.

I remained in contact with Loughton through my parents until 1977 when they moved to Suffolk.

The attached photo was taken of the VE Day Street Party in Meadow Road. I am in the centre of the group, wearing a scout cap and doing a Churchillian V for Victory sign.

I have many happy memories of growing up in Loughton.

TONY MEADOWS

Loughton and its trees – The Community Tree Strategy

In 2013 the Loughton Tree Strategy was launched, and a book was produced by Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) in association with Loughton Town Council, Loughton Residents' Association, the City of London Corporation, the Conservators of Epping Forest, and LDHS.* The volume sets out to be 'an assessment of the trees, hedgerows and woodlands of Loughton Parish, in their historic, physical, social,

aesthetic and cultural context, with guidelines for their care'.

The historic section is of great interest, as this extract shows:

The Domesday Survey gives two snapshots of life in the area, first as it had been in 1066, under Edward the Confessor, and then as it was in 1086 under William I. The entries relevant to Loughton are in the Little Domesday Book, which dealt with Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk. It is actually much larger, and also much more detailed and comprehensive than the greater Domesday Book, which covers much of the remainder of England. The remarkable and invaluable inventory assessed the taxability of every estate in the land and is an extremely useful guide to the population and their taxable resources. From it much can be inferred about the general state of the countryside prior to 1066, including that the manorial system had generally been working well.

At that time Loughton was fragmented into eight separate estates with the land being seemingly well wooded, as it was capable of supporting 1870 pigs, a notional measure of the size of the woodlands containing oaks and beech trees. In addition, there were arable fields and grassy meadows.

The Norman monarchs loved hunting and the woodlands of Essex were ideally placed to provide them with this sport. Moreover, ownership of hunting rights was a valuable perquisite in the gift of the king, which could be offered in return for loyal service. William the Conqueror had introduced many laws to protect such special areas but it was about 1130, during the reign of Henry I, that the Forest Laws became fully established.

Tricia Moxey explaining elements of the Loughton Tree Strategy on a walk held in 2013

Initially these applied to much of the county of Essex, which had become a Royal Hunting Forest around 1100. This meant that the habitats of animals of the chase, the red deer and wild boar, were given special protection, as well as the animals themselves. The Laws covered not just the wooded areas, but also cultivated and common land. Locally the royal hunting parties were provided with accommodation at Waltham Abbey, and later in lodges at Copped Hall, and Buckhurst Hill, riding out across the district in pursuit of the deer.

The active management of these local woods as a resource for timber and fuel seems to have been well established before they became part of the Royal Hunting Forest.

TRICIA MOXEY

**Loughton and its Trees: Community Tree Strategy for Loughton* by Tricia Moxey, edited by Chris Neilan, and with photographs by John Price, is available at the LDHS bookstall.

Henry Lester and the Loughton shipping connection

At the exciting lecture given by Dr Seth Koven of Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA, in May, the question was raised as to exactly what was the source of the wealth of the Lester family.

It would appear that Henry Lester (in partnership with his father until 1868) operated out of the Victoria Docks, Jetty 'E', West Ham, Essex, as shipwrights, mast-makers, joiners, blacksmiths, ship-fitters and chandlers. The father had operated from Pennyfields, Poplar, in his youth.

Henry Edward Lester junior held patents for new types of steering and lifeboat davits, and from 1880 to approximately 1900 was in partnership with a man called Perkins (who was probably an engine maker).

In fact there was a lot of shipbuilding on the Thames, and there were Loughton connections to much of it! Arnold Hills owned the Thames Ironworks (which built many ships including Dreadnoughts) and lived at Woodford (having earlier lived at Devon House, Buckhurst Hill), founding the Oriolet hospital here; Fletcher, owner of the Dragons, built ships at Wapping; John Weir, art connoisseur and family owner of the Blackwall yard, lived in Alderton Hill, and R H Green and Silley Weir (who bought out Weirs) lived at Epping. *HMS Warrior* was also built on the Thames – not to mention Brunel's *Great Eastern*. It was the growing length of ships that ended Thames shipbuilding. Lester's yard was about 200 yards from Robert Hunter's church at Victoria Docks, so they must have known of each other. Hunter was another Christian of the poor (and of course built our house).

CHRIS POND

Some time ago I was asked if Cleopatra's Needle was delivered to London by a ship owned by the Buckhurst Hill Linder family. Some believe that it was brought by the Lester firm, others by Thames Ironworks. However, it got to London in the end (and there were many dramas on the way) and it is likely that a local family was involved.

Editor.

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