LOUGHTON AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 207

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53rd Season

Last call for the Maid of the Mountains

I am a recent member of the Loughton & District Historical Society and I have enjoyed downloading and reading back numbers of the *Newsletter*. In *Newsletter 145*, October/November 2000, you featured an article by Dr Donald Pohl, based on a talk that he gave to the Society on José Collins and her husband, Dr Gerald Kirkland, who were neighbours of ours in Lower Park Road.

The blue plaque, placed subsequently on the wall of their property, St Olave's, 107 High Road, and replaced after rebuilding, describing her as a music hall artiste, would not have pleased José; she was a star, indeed *the* star of musical comedy and nothing less. I have clear memories of the Kirklands and indeed Gerald was, for a short period, our family practitioner until my mother discovered that he had published a study on *Witchcraft and Magic of Africa* in 1947. Thereafter, we transferred our allegiance to Dr Bell.

St Olave's, as Dr Pohl records, had been a surgery for many years. Dr George Holloway practised there in 1937 and by the time we arrived in 1943 Dr Hammil was in residence. The Kirklands arrived from Chobham in or about 1946, with José's former dresser, Christine Croft, who acted as a general factotum. They had been married (he for the second time, she for the third) on 11 December 1939, apparently regularising an earlier ceremony in Edinburgh in 1935.

The early years at St Olave's were both eventful and colourful. The house had an upstairs balcony facing the long rear garden and from this, on long summer evenings, José and Gerald could be heard singing the songs of their youth to an imaginary audience below. On at least one occasion they hosted a huge party for all of José's contemporaries from the days of musical comedy, with fairy lights hung all down the garden. On most days the couple would lunch at the Royal Standard in the High Road, José always immaculately made-up, dressed in her fur coat and accompanied by their beloved black Labrador.

As the money ran out, so did their fortunes. Gerald had always suffered badly from bronchitis and as this worsened, it was painful to watch him as he gasped for breath when he came out to make his calls of the day. For several years they had a Lanchester car, but this was later disposed of and he relied on taxis to visit his patients – I doubt if the taxi company ever got paid! Christine Croft died of cancer in 1957 at the early age of 53, and thereafter, the house and garden, which she had so carefully tended, quickly went to rack and ruin.

My Mother recalled seeing José at the counter of Barclays Bank begging the Manager, Mr Hollis, to give her an advance on her annuity. Perhaps I may correct an error by Dr Pohl in his article in which he attributes José's annuity to a 'Lord Curzon'. This was probably a story told over the bar at the Royal Standard to an incredulous audience, as there never was a Lord Curzon. The annuity, dating from 1927, was the income from £20,000 from the estate of Mr Frank Curzon, the theatre proprietor and racehorse owner. Curzon always had a soft spot for José, who had returned from New York to London in 1916, where she was earning £200 a week, for less money to appear for Curzon at Daly's in *The Maid of the Mountains* out of loyalty to the impresario, the late George Edwardes. Curzon, who had the unenviable task of managing Edwardes' almost bankrupt affairs, did exceptionally well out of this and so indeed did José, for it is the show for which she was best loved and is remembered.

José died of a stroke in St Margaret's Hospital, Epping, in December 1958 at the age of 71. Gerald, who was by then virtually destitute, committed suicide by placing a gas poker between the bed clothes six weeks later. At the inquest on his death his brother described him as being 'ludicrously generous'.

The house and surgery being unoccupied, quickly became derelict and I can recall seeing pharmaceutical jars and medicines strewn over the garden as a result of action by vandals. The curtain had dropped for the very last time on the affairs of José and Gerald Kirkland, but the memory lingers on! PHILIP SHAW

Buying tickets well before Oyster Cards

Peter Haseldine's article in *Newsletter 206*, with its illustration of old local bus tickets, led to a discussion about tickets in general. Peter does not specialise in railway tickets, but many years ago, he acquired a number of excess fare stubs which had been found in Buckhurst Hill Station, which are illustrated here (Fig 1).

Figure 1. Excess fare stubs

These interested me a great deal, because they throw light upon travelling practices in the Edwardian era.

At that time, the London to Ongar railway was a line of the Great Eastern Railway, operated by steam locomotives and trains of wooden carriages, divided into compartments seating 6, 8 or 10, in three classes. Third class travel cost at most a penny a mile in fairly Spartan accommodation; second class was about three-halfpence a mile, with the seats covered in cloth, and first class, with velour and plush, at 2d a mile. The fares from Fenchurch Street or Liverpool Street to Buckhurst Hill were given in the 1914 *Official Guide to the Great Eastern Railway* as follows:

> 3rd, 11d; 2nd, 1/5; 1st 1/10. Returns were 1/6, 2/1, and 2/4, respectively.
> (Incidentally, in the index to this guide, Buckhurst Hill is next to Budapest.)

However, the GER actually discounted fares in the London area and the timetable corrects these: singles from Liverpool Street to Buckhurst Hill were in fact: 3rd, 9d; 2nd, 11½d; and 1st, 1/6. Returns were: 3rd, 1/2; 2nd, 1/8; and 1st, 2/3. Fares from Fenchurch Street were the same except that the 2nd single was ½d cheaper at 11d.

The system of ticketing was the Edmondson card, named after its inventor, Thomas Edmondson, which lasted to the 1980s. You went to the booking office, ordering (e.g.), 'Second return, Stratford'. (If you didn't specify, you would get a third class ticket.) The clerk would issue you a preprinted piece of pasteboard (see Fig 2); for a return, divided into two halves, the outward half was given up at Stratford; you kept the return half for when you came back. It would be inspected by the barrier collector at Stratford and collected and retained by his counterpart at Buckhurst Hill when you got home. Singles were undivided.

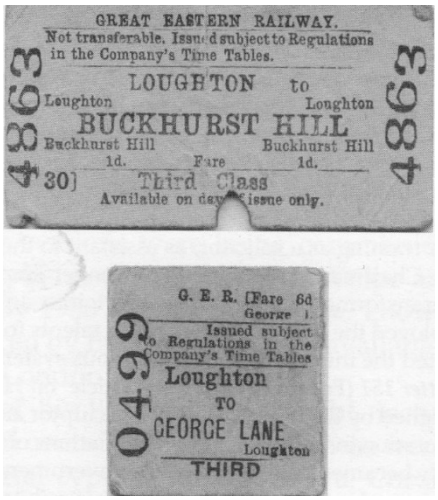


Figure 2. Single ticket (top); return half (bottom)

Of course, travellers were not all that straightforward. When you returned, you might want to travel on to Loughton to visit friends or attend a concert. Or you might have visited someone in Stratford who returned with you and wanted to travel first class. So how did you manage this? You visited the booking office at Stratford and asked for an extra ticket from Buckhurst Hill to Loughton. But the clerk there had no preprinted tickets from Buckhurst Hill to Loughton, so he had to refer to a fare table, and issue a handwritten one. Because he had to account for the money he took, the excess fare ticket had a counterfoil for when the books were made up, and to submit to the auditors.

Or you could chance it, and hope the Loughton ticket collector didn't notice (but if he did, you might end up in a row or even in court) or you could say to the man at Loughton 'excess second from Buckhurst Hill, please' but then there'd be a delay while he calculated, counted out pennies and issued an excess fare receipt.

I think that Peter's counterfoils are most likely to be from excess fare tickets issued at the booking office before the travel being excessed, rather than by a collector after the travel being excessed. This is

supported by the fact that some are filled out in pen and ink. Only one is fully dated, and that indicates the year of issue is 1907. The '1' in the dateline indicates the blanks were actually printed in the late 1890s, so 8 did not have to be crossed out after 31.12.1899.

I suspect Peter's stubs were used in the following sorts of circumstances:

Stub 31's passenger (Fig 1) bought a 2nd class return to Liverpool Street in advance (possibly a day or two before, which was quite a common practice) or held a season ticket. He then decided to upgrade to 1st before actually travelling and so paid 7d (2/3 less 1/8). The ticket itself will have shown Buckhurst Hill on the 'From' line and 'Liverpool St & Return' on the 'To' line, the return indication not being necessary on the counterfoil.

Stub 32's passenger with a 2nd class return half, Buckhurst Hill to Coborn Road,[1] wants to travel on to Bishopsgate Low Level and has to pay 3d. Or this may have covered two passengers.

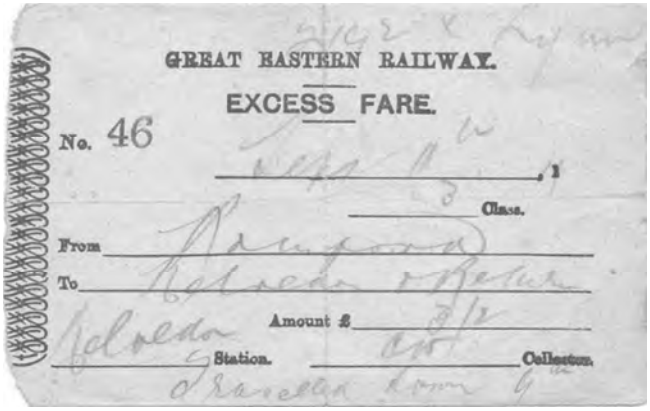
The person with stub 33 with a 2nd class return half, Buckhurst Hill to Stepney, wants to travel on to Fenchurch Street and pays 3d.

Stub 34 is as 31, or a person with a 2nd class return half, Buckhurst Hill to Stratford, who wants to travel 1st class and has to pay 5d.

Stub 35 is as 32 but wants to return to Liverpool Street and has to pay 5d.

Stub 36 is person with 3rd class return to Liverpool Street wants to travel 2nd and has to pay 3d.

Stub 37 is a person with a 3rd class return from Woodford who wants to return to George Lane, the extra fare is 1d.[2]


GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY.

EXCESS FARE.

No. 46

Class.

From

To

Amount £

Station. Collector.

Figure 3. Ticket (rather than a stub) issued in 1911 to cover a journey from Romford to Kelvedon

Notes

1. Coborn Road, Bow (near Mile End), and Bishopsgate Low Level (on the corner of Commercial Street) stations were closed in 1916. Coborn Road reopened in 1919 and lasted till 1946, but Bishopsgate never reopened.

2. We are very grateful to David Geldard of the Transport Ticket Society for reading a draft of this article and suggesting amendments. David also supplied the copy (Fig 3) of an actual ticket (rather than a stub) issued in 1911 to cover a journey from Romford to Kelvedon (above). That was the piece of paper the passenger had to retain.

CHRIS POND

The British Newspaper Archive

In the past I have written in this *Newsletter* about *The Times* Digital Archive as a tool for history research. This is an article about using the British Newspaper Archive. Other digital newspaper archives also exist and they can all facilitate research. If you are researching a topic, you can do a sort of 'Google' search and see what articles come up featuring the word or name you are using as a search term. I am interested in vehicle registrations as a hobby and have been searching using terms such as 'number plate' and 'trade plate', but you can use any search term which will facilitate your research, e.g. if you are doing family history and have a relatively uncommon surname you can input that.

Like Google, the British Newspaper Archive has an advanced search facility. This enables you to search in particular papers, look for articles in a particular range of dates, look up your term in news articles rather than advertisements, etc. The archive runs from 1700 to 1955. As number plates were introduced in Britain from 1 January 1904 and the term 'number plate' seems to have derived from the use of the term for railway locomotives, there is no point in my researching on 'number plates' pre-1903.

The British Newspaper Archive covers a wide range of local papers and the range is being extended as new publications are added. You do not just find local news featured, however. Until the war and to some extent afterwards, local papers would frequently report national and even international news and some of the papers available like the *Hull Daily Mail* and *Newcastle Journal* are national papers with a regional emphasis. To demonstrate what interesting and perhaps surprising finds you can make, here is an amusing oddity I found from the *Lincolnshire Echo* of 20 May 1949:

> WRONG NUMBER PLATE – A driver whose lorry was carrying 27,000 licence places was stopped at Birmingham (Alabama) by licence inspectors and charged with operating a lorry with a wrong plate.

You can use the British Newspaper Archive online at home, but the disadvantage is that you have to pay to use it. It is free to use in Essex Libraries or the British Library. In Loughton Library I have found the facility appallingly slow, however. It took about two minutes for an article to come up and after that long wait you would often find the article was of no great consequence, e.g., a lot of articles I have found on my 'number plate' search have been reports of people being fined for a minor offence like not having their rear plate illuminated. Thus, I have been using the facility in the British Library. I recently made a chance discovery, however, when I needed to get a photocopy of something I had found in the British Library. In Loughton Library – if you access the Archive through Google Chrome on the computer desktop, you do not experience these delays. Using this you keep getting error messages coming up, but just cancel them and the article you are looking for will come up.

Some of my recent contributions to the LDHS *Newsletter* have been the result of discoveries in the British Newspaper Archive. Thus, if you find something in your researches that you think might be of interest to Society members, please do pass it on to the Editor. Happy researching! JOHN HARRISON

Ted's war – a Loughton man's wartime travels

Robert Day remembers his father and Maurice Day remembers his brother, Edward (Ted), who was born on 17 October 1924.

My father Ted Day joined the Home Guard in Loughton and received training in anticipation of the invasion, so his platoon was trained by the Coldstream Guards on the latest kit. His platoon commander was the bank manager, and they had a number of Boer War veterans in the platoon. I always remember him telling the story that these old boys went on exercise and were mocked by some of the younger members of the platoon saying: 'You old blokes are too old to run!' to which the reply was 'We joined up to fight, not to run!' Ted earned his first stripe in the Home Guard.

Ted's mate, Siddy Bond, was a bit older than he was, and he went as soon as he was old enough to join the Navy. Ted might have done the same had he been old enough; but instead he went down to the Army recruiting office as soon as he was able. He and a couple of others turned up, only to find the recruiting sergeant in his shorts, ironing his trousers; he told them to come back in 10 minutes when the office opened. They duly trooped in, only for the sergeant to ask them: 'Well, lads, what do you want to do?' 'Join the Army.' 'Yes, but what do you want to DO in the Army?' He then explained that there were a lot of different jobs and roles in the Army, and he ran down the list. 'Here you are lads', he said, 'Mechanised Infantry – ride everywhere!' so they signed up for that. As Ted said 'Mechanised Infantry? We did nothing but square bashing for the first six weeks!'

Ted's reporting instructions were for him to join the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (KOYLI), and so he made the journey north by train to Pocklington Barracks, just outside York. In due course he was inducted into the mysteries of driving the Bren gun carrier, including a series of exercises in the Peak District. He also got his second stripe.

When the order came for the regiment to go into action, Ted was sent to Liverpool, where he embarked on a convoy. This convoy went out into mid-Atlantic to avoid the U-Boat packs working out of the Bay of Biscay. They went close to the coast of Newfoundland, and then turned back and eventually landed at Tangiers.

They were then put onto a train and taken all the way from Tangiers to Cairo. From Cairo, Ted was directed to Gaza. There he was hospitalised after an accident when he and his mate were digging a trench. The other bloke started digging head-to-head with Ted, and managed to take one of Ted's knuckles off with a pickaxe.

Whilst in hospital, the regiment moved on without him. He was therefore transferred to the Rifle Brigade, and was sent from Gaza up to Beirut, and from there to the School of Mountain Warfare in the Bekaa Valley. It was anticipated that he would be part of the force fighting its way up Italy, then into Austria to attack the Nazi 'Mountain Redoubt' that, the propaganda said, was being prepared for the Nazis to retreat to and continue to prosecute the war from, even if Germany fell. Of course, this was all fantasy, but no-one knew that at the time. Ted always told the story that they were billeted in Nissen huts at the School of Mountain Warfare, and the local tribesmen would give them a wake-up call in the morning by whanging a few rifle rounds off the hut roofs. They'd all turn out to return fire, but by then the locals had melted back into the hillsides. Of course, later on in the day, they'd come across locals herding sheep or goats when they were out on exercise, and they would greet each other politely ('Maht'sood, Tommy') when in all likelihood they were the same blokes who'd been shooting at them in the early morning but it was all a good-natured game.

Eventually Ted was shipped to Italy, and then landed at Anzio in the second wave. Fighting at Anzio got bogged down in the breakout, and Ted ended up in an area on the north-western side of the town, an area of deep gullies, called 'The Fortress'. At one point, he and his CO had a close encounter with a German sniper who, I suspect, was having a bit of fun with them. At one point, his CO for a couple of weeks was Nicholas Mosley, son of Oswald Mosley the British Fascist leader. They eventually broke out of the Anzio beach-head – this was when he got mentioned in dispatches – and he would have had a medal but for the fact that his CO, who would have made the recommendation, got killed a few days before he could write up any reports.

They fought up to the outskirts of Rome, but then were held outside the city for a fortnight so that it could be officially liberated by the Americans for sound political reasons.

By now, D-Day had come and gone, so with the fall of Italy he was rotated out of the line and sent to a holding battalion at Hunstanton in Norfolk in anticipation of the formation of Tiger Force, the expeditionary force to invade Japan.

Fortunately, the atom bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki put a stop to that. By now, as a sergeant with a sound war record, he was sent to become a drill instructor at various camps in Nottinghamshire; the one I remember was Ranby which is now a prison. Whilst there he trained many intakes of new squaddies and some other intakes, including the first officer intake for the re-formed Dutch army.

Ted was offered a commission when his stint was up, but he declined thinking that the atomic bomb had rendered infantry warfare obsolete. He declined (a good thing, too, as he was certainly wrong about infantry not being needed) though he did get reserve stand-by papers for Korea. Fortunately, that never came to pass.

Ted's wedding to Dorothy Wright in Nottingham, 1946

That's the gist of what I remember, though there were plenty more stories which I wish I had written down. ROBERT DAY

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My own memory of this is that someone came to the cottage and told my mother that her son Ted was in *The Gazette* so I was sent post-haste up to Hicks (it is still a newsagent to this day) to buy a copy. I seem to remember that it was a small article that stated Edward Day had been mentioned in dispatches.

The other memory I have is that when Ted went off to war he left behind his BSA racing bike with 3-speed Sturmey Archer gearing and dynamo lighting. However, having two older sisters I never managed to get my hands on it until the end of the war.

My eldest sister, Gwen, also did her bit towards the war effort. On 12 November 1943 the teacher said to her: 'You are 14 tomorrow, Gwen, I don't want to see you anymore. You must go to the Labour Exchange and sign on', which she duly did. She was sent to a factory in the Baldwins Hill area to do war work, which she hated. She also had to do fire-watching duties, which were from St John's Church tower, accompanied by an elderly gent (warden?). One night they heard a noise, but it was too dark to make out what it was. Dawn revealed a small parachute with flare attached hanging on one of the corner parapets. MAURICE DAY

Ashley Laminates

John Harrison submitted articles on Ashley Laminates back in 2006, Newsletters 163, 164, 169. *A new website has been launched giving more details about the company – it can be found at http://ashleysportiva.weebly.com/.*
Here is a taste of the information available on the website:

After the war, there was a shortage of cars and the priority was the export market. One way to get a new-looking vehicle was to buy an old Austin 7 or small Ford, remove the body and put a new fibreglass sporting one on it and you had your own sports car, generally referred to as a special. Glass fibre was obviously a new material then and the specials industry exploited its lightness and suitability for low-volume car body manufacture. A large number of small companies were set up specialising in making such bodies and several were based in north London or the nearby Home Counties. Eventually the bottom fell out of the market due to a combination of factors, particularly changes to purchase tax making these cars more expensive, the switch to cars with monocoque construction and the advent of cheap sports cars, particularly the Austin Healey Sprite and MG Midget. The industry had largely died out by the early 1960s, though one name survives from the companies established in this area. This is Lotus. This company started in Hornsey in 1952, moving to Cheshunt in 1959 and finally to Norfolk in 1966. Other marques that started out as specials manufacturers elsewhere in the country that still operate or which survived till quite recently are Ginetta, Lola, Marcos and TVR.

This article looks at the story of one company making bodies for specials, Ashley Laminates. Ashley Laminates was founded by Keith Waddington and Peter Pellandine in 1955. The name Ashley was chosen as it was derived from the name of Peter Pellandine's house Ashleigh in Woodford Green. Their first premises was a small garage adjacent to the Robin Hood public house on the Epping New Road. Despite the Loughton address, the premises were actually located about a mile from the town within Epping Forest. The building was located on the north side of the pub. It was demolished in the late 1960s so the Robin Hood car park could be enlarged. In late 1956 Peter Pellandine split from the partnership by amicable agreement and set up Falcon Shells, another specials company. Peter had wanted to own and grow his own company which he could eventually sell to emigrate. Falcon Shells was originally based at 23 Highbridge Street, Waltham Abbey, adjacent to the town hall, premises which still remain. The company also had a showroom at 52 High Street, Epping, a building which has subsequently been demolished. Falcon later moved to 150 Great North Road, Hatfield. Peter Pellandine took with him the rights and tooling to manufacture the short wheelbase bodyshell for the Ashley 750 which he continued in production as the Falcon Mark 1 and the Sports Racer which became the Falcon Mark II. The company subsequently produced other bodies until it ceased production in 1964.

After approximately two years, Ashley Laminates moved their body manufacture to the Potteries, Woodgreen Road, Upshire, retaining the Robin Hood premises as a showroom. Bert Miller who worked for Ashley Laminates whilst they occupied the premises adjacent to the Robin Hood says that, when they were based there, the first task of each day was to move completed shells outside to the front so they had room to do other work. The bodies then had to be returned at the end of the day. It is not surprising, therefore, that the company moved to the larger premises in Upshire! According to Bert, when the company was first based in Upshire it had around nine employees. Towards the end of its time there, according to another worker, Vic McDonald, it had grown to about 20 employees including the two or three normally based in the showroom. There were three parts to the Upshire premises, the large mould shop where bodies were made, the small mould shop

where smaller parts were produced and an assembly shop. In addition there was also a freestanding toilet similar to a portaloo which on one occasion was knocked over by a reversing BRS lorry which had called to collect some finished bodies to deliver to customers. Fortunately there was nobody in it at the time! There was also an open area where bodies could be stored. Sometimes, if there were no customer orders to fulfil, staff would produce models on spec and these would be left here. If a body had been left outside for a while, it required a lot of cleaning before it could be delivered.

On 1 January 1961 the company opened new premises at Bush Fair, Harlow, but the following year production of bodies ceased. The company, however, continued to manufacture fibreglass hardtops and bonnets for sports cars. Keith Waddington died a premature death in the mid-1960s and around 1972 the company was wound up.

ROBERT DANIELS AND JOHN HARRISON

The Loughton Union Church Cub-Scout Group

This is the Union Church Scouts Group taken in about 1941/1942.
Left to right:
Top back row: two sisters who ran the group and lived in Meadow Road
3rd row down: Paul —; John Walden; Barry Hammersley; Roy Garnier; ? —; ? —
2nd row down: Keith —; ? Waller; Brian Flack; Tony Meadows; David Holst
Bottom row: ?—; Johnny Holst; Billy Walker; —Holst; ?—

Can anyone identify the other members of the group?

TONY MEADOWS

The *Victoria County History* – Newport

In *Newsletter 205*, there was an update on the *Victoria County History* (VCH). The book on Newport mentioned in that article has now been published, and the following note describes its contents:

The parish of Newport lies in the valley of the River Cam in north-west Essex. It is about three and a half miles south west of the market town of Saffron Walden, and is a short distance from the Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire borders. It probably originnated in the early 10th century as a royal foundation, and it early developed some urban features such as a market. Its position on an important through route between London and East Anglia gave it a more varied character than some of its neigh-bouring villages, and the coming of the railway in the 19th century led to the establishment of a gas works and maltings. Even so, it remained a largely agricultural community until the mid-20th century, but thereafter its position as a thoroughfare village tended to enhance its character as a dormitory village, with most of its adult population finding employment elsewhere, some in London.

The book explores the varying character of the village over eleven centuries. It looks at the pattern of land ownership, the social structure and agricultural economy of the village, and its institutions, not least its 16th century grammar school. It also discusses the part played, especially in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, by the owners of Shortgrove Hall, within the parish, and Quendon Hall, a few miles to the south.

The book is available from: *Victoria County History of Essex Trust*, Pentlow Hall, Pentlow, Essex, CO10 7SP, for £15.00, including postage.

The Festival of Britain

Following the article on the Festival in Newsletter 206, TED MARTIN *writes:*

I was 12 at the time and an uncle and aunt took me and my brother to the main site. I was captivated by the Dome of Discovery: a main memory being the latest BR standard class steam engine, in green, and displayed leaning backwards at an angle so that its wheels and motion were easily visible. Of course, at that time steam traction was being phased out in other parts of the world but we had to continue as we had coal, but oil had to be imported. But just 17 years later steam had almost gone from Britain's railways.

Other memories were: the Skylon which was an unusual cigar-shaped aluminium-clad steel tower supported by cables: the 'Vertical Feature' that became a symbol of the Festival. The base was nearly 15 metres (50ft) from the ground, with the top nearly 90 metres (300ft) high, pointing skywards. I also remember the shot tower, which was original to the site, and had been used for making lead shot, by rolling it down from the top of the tower. Later our whole family, us, uncles and aunts and cousins, visited the Battersea Pleasure Gardens to delight in the Guinness clock and Rowland Emett's crazy miniature railway which ran for 500 yards along the south of the gardens.

Where I live now there is a permanent reminder of the Festival, as many villages in Bedfordshire have 'Festival of Britain' village signs (complete with the festival logo), first erected in 1951 and renewed regularly since.

Sir Charles Raymond of Valentines and the East India Company

LDHS member Georgina Green has published a new book, which members might be interested to read. She writes:

This is a detailed biography of a successful 18th century sea captain whose oriental fortune laid the foundations for domestic comfort and commercial achievement at home in Georgian Essex.

Raymond's later life in the City of London, managing ships for the East India Company, as a director of the Sun Fire Office and later as a banker, earned him respect, and a baronetcy. Living at Valentines in Ilford, his success attracted other retired captains, both relations and business colleagues, to live nearby, in Ilford and Woodford.

Ilford in the 18th century was a small village in the parish of Barking. It has been considered a poor relation of the affluent communities which flouted their success with prestigious houses in Woodford and Wanstead. My work challenges that perception, revealing new evidence of Ilford's importance in the Georgian era. It also highlights the careers of several men who later lived at Woodford and are buried at St Mary's – their adventures included sea battles and capture by the French.

Sir Charles Raymond of Valentines

Without these captains who carried their cargo, the East India Company would never have become a major force in India. In the book I have included new material about voyages at sea, the risks and rewards, backed up with statistical information.

I have tried to show Georgian Britain in the round. Trade, politics, marriage, culture, business, sociability, neighbourhood and material life all appear in the life of Sir Charles Raymond. GEORGINA GREEN

The book is available from Amazon, or direct from Georgina, at 24 Henry's Walk, Hainault, Ilford, Essex, IG6 2NR (enclose a cheque payable to 'Georgina Green' for £15 which includes postage).

Loughton Field 197 – an archaeological opportunity?

In 1976 a Loughton man reported that he thought he had found evidence for a Roman villa whilst conducting searches for a lost Second World War aircraft. This was in Debden, at Loughton Hall Farm, noted as Field 197 on the County Series Map, to the west of the Central Line, at the end of Theydon Park Road, Theydon Bois.

With the permission of the farmer, John Padfield, local archaeologist Terry Betts, accompanied by Frank Clark, visited the site on Sunday 24 October 1976, and the following report was completed:

> The field is at the summit of a local area of high ground which forms a fairly level plateau running through the fields 197 and that adjoining to the south-west. Almost all the field boundaries are now removed. The height of this plateau estimated from the nearest contour line is about 45m. To the north-west the ground falls away steeply to field 194 which is on flat ground at the bottom of a small valley with a stream and a pond. To the south east the land has a shallow slope down to the flood plain of the River Roding about 1km away. The geological map suggests some boulder clay probably confined to the high ground overlying the London clay. There is a noticeable stony area to the south-western half of the plateau which is probably geological.
>
> The field had been ploughed prior to drilling for winter wheat, there had previously been heavy rain and the winter sunshine made the looking good. An area of tile scatter and pottery sherds was found straddling the south-west field boundary and covering an area of about 100m by 70m although pottery was found outside this area for a further 100m to the north-east. The north-east end of the area was on the highest ground from which it spread on the shallow south-easterly slope. The site of the crashed wartime aircraft was noted on the high ground at one end of the scatter and the irregular excavation trench now backfilled could be seen.
>
> Surface finds – about 8 kg of tile was collected. The majority was tegulae with a few imbrices[1] and one building tile. A large amount of Romano-British pottery was picked up plus an iron-age rim/shoulder sherd in flint gritted ware and another sherd in similar fabric. There were two pieces of niedermendig quern.[2] Unexpected finds were four flakes of worked flint in fresh condition and a very fine prismatic core, probably Mesolithic.
>
> The area was declared a scheduled ancient monument, which means unauthorised excavations are not permitted.

Notes

1. The imbrex and tegula (plurals imbrices and tegulae) were overlapping roof tiles used in ancient Greek and Roman architecture as a waterproof and durable roof covering.

2. *Lava* from the *Niedermendig*–Andernach–Eifel region of the Rhineland was widely used in making *querns* and grinding stones from the later Neolithic onwards.

—

West Essex Archaeological Group (WEAG) member Ralph Potter would like to research the plane crash site and investigate the possibility of a Roman building being somewhere in the vicinity.

(Historic England have expressed their willingness to allow work to be done on this Scheduled Ancient Monument site.) He writes:

Most of the evidence we have is from field-walking finds but it does not seem to have been mapped so that we can identify any concentrations or drifts. It's probably been given a good going over by metal detectorists but nevertheless it might be worth

doing our own systematic metal detecting survey. I'm not averse to using metal detecting. It's just another tool in the geophysics arsenal provided it's done responsibly. The technology available today, even to amateur groups, has improved enormously over the past 35 years and WEAG intend to survey the scheduled site with the latest magnetometer which is able to detect buried walls, ditches and artefacts associated with a Roman site as well as detecting any metal objects associated with the crashed plane.

The precise location of the plane crash is still unknown and the débris may have spread over a considerable area depending on the angle of impact. It is a very unusual circumstance where the location of an aircraft crash could lead to the discovery of a Roman site – archaeology separated by nearly 2,000 years. The aircraft was reported to have crashed near a field boundary hedge which has long since been grubbed up. It's now one enormous field but thankfully the scheduled area is nowhere as big. I anticipate Historic England will be interested in learning more about the site which was scheduled on very thin evidence. You could probably find a background scatter of Roman building material in many fields bordering the River Roding. 8kg of Roman of tile sounds like a lot, but it depends on how large an area was covered.

To do a geophysical survey on a scheduled site requires an application to Historic England for a Section 42 licence. We will need a director or manager to lead the project, write the report and eventually archive it. This person must be an archaeologist who can write an archaeological report. What an opportunity to get the people of Loughton involved in our own archaeological dig!

RALPH POTTER and TERRY BETTS

Buckhurst Hill and international relations, 1949

I came across this in the Chigwell UDC Minutes, Volume 26; it's part of the Chigwell Road Safety Council's (CRSC) report of their meeting 15 February 1949 to the Highways Committee on 2 March. The CRSC chairman was Captain R F J Smith, JP.

> The Honorary Secretary of the Forest Hospitality Committee for German Children wrote stating that 20 German children would be the guests of local families at Buckhurst Hill for three months from the beginning of March, and suggested that they should have instruction in road safety by a policeman, speaking in German if possible.
>
> It was resolved that the letter be passed on to Sergeant Kent to see if such instruction could be arranged . . .

At the meeting of the CRSC on 15 March 1949 it was 'confirmed that instruction had been given by a policeman who spoke the German language, and a demonstration with comments in German had been given to the 20 children in the grounds of Roding Road School'.

Captain Smith would be Reginald Frederick Jermyn Smith, who served in the Inns of Court Officers Training Corps in the Great War, and who lived at The Cottage, 53 Russell Road. He served as a Buckhurst Hill Ward Councillor on Chigwell UDC from its inception (amalgamation of BHUD, Chigwell Parish and Loughton UD) in October 1933 to March 1947, being Vice-Chairman 1938–39 (April to March in those days).

He also wore several other hats, including from time to time as member of various committees, an examiner of the Finance Department's books, chairman of the Highways Committee, Council's representative on Waltham Joint Hospital Board, a governor of Buckhurst Hill County High School and from July 1945 to December 1946 a consumer member of the Chigwell UD Food Control Committee. He had a long association with road safety matters (one of the founding members of CRSC in March 1946): definitely one of Buckhurst Hill's worthy citizens (appointed JP in late 1946).

IAN STRUGNELL

Four-in-hand:
My memories of the horse-drawn brakes of the early 1900s

What wondrous, happy memories this horsey team conjures up. Recollections of many a thrilling ride over the traffic-free (and dusty!) roads of pre-1914 days in the gaily painted brakes (or charabancs as they were sometimes called). These roomy, windswept vehicles carried twenty to thirty passengers and were in great demand for the beanfeasts (whatever *they* were!), race meetings, outings and get-togethers of those days. A load of punters to the races one day might be followed next day by ladies of a Mothers' Union journeying to take tea on the lawn with the great lady of a neighbouring parish.

On any Sunday morning in summer the *Golden Eagle* or the *Morning Star* might be seen taking aboard a cheery company of working men, wearing their Sunday best, with flowers in their rakish caps, and gleams in their eyes as they watched over the safe stowage of those precious crates. The rendezvous would, needless to say, be the public-house honoured with their patronage.

A favoured few would climb up to seats beside and immediately behind the driver, who, if he were my father, Bob Francies (of happy memory), would have been resplendent in grey topper, with a flower in his buttonhole and smoking the inevitable 'penny whiff'. The remaining men would climb the steps at the rear and seat themselves in the body of the brake, while the cornet player would perch on the rear step, where he had elbow room the better to brandish his glistening instrument and send a brassy blare of popular songs echoing over the countryside, assisted in his music-making by the raucous voices of his happy companions 'back-stage'.

For nearly half a century the horse-drawn brakes of Messrs Askew and Son of Loughton were known throughout west Essex, until ousted in the early twenties by the motor charabanc. Loughton, in those days a village cradled in the verdant folds of Epping Forest and the rich pasture land of the Roding valley, attracted East Londoners by the thousand. On summer weekends they arrived by train from Liverpool Street or cycled from the smelly streets of Bow or Bethnal Green, all heading for the forest. The horse brakes of Messrs Askew and other jobmasters were well in the picture, however, for they plied from the Rising Sun public-house at Whipps Cross (Leyton) to the King's Oak hotel, High Beech. This beautiful drive through the heart of Epping Forest cost one modest shilling – good value even in those penurious days.

On summer weekdays there were excursions to interesting places, organised by my father for his employer. These were sedate outings to the annual fairs and flower shows and (a triumph of organisation, surely!) a trip to Epping in 1912 (I think) to watch the intrepid aeronauts in the Aerial Derby uncertainly circling the church tower, followed by a visit to nearby Copt Hall and a conducted tour of its beautiful gardens.

My happiest memory of these outings is of a trip to Rye House in about 1909. I watched the harnessing of the horses to the speckless brake, its huge brass lamps and burnished hub caps glinting in the early morning sunshine, and, proudly perched beside my father as he drove the spirited four-in-hand, saw much to interest me as the brake journeyed through the forest to Waltham Abbey and on over the border into Hertfordshire, through the Lea valley villages to Rye House with its spine-chilling dungeons and strange mutterings about the Gunpowder Plot. We viewed the Great Bed of Ware (3d), admired the peacocks and voyaged up-river in a smelly little steam-boat to see the famous watercress beds and take light refreshment at the Fish and Eels.

As the brake jogged homeward through the dusk, those great brass lamps were lit and a tired little boy was handed down from his chilly seat on the 'box' to mother in the body of the brake, to be lulled to sleep by the clip-clopping of the horses' hooves on the dusty macadam road home.

Another well-patronised outing was the 'Long Drive' (25 miles!). The shopkeepers of Walthamstow were its principal supporters, and on summer Thursday afternoons (early closing day of course) they would join the *Golden Eagle* (or the *Morning Star*) at the Rising Sun, Whipps Cross, and jog-trot through the quiet Essex countryside to Lambourne End, where they would take tea at the Beehive, and return by way of Abridge and Theydon Bois, and the pleasant road through the forest to the Wake Arms public-house, where they would stay awhile for a convivial drink in the company of travellers on the main London–Norwich road.

Now my father would head the brake Londonwards through the forest to Woodford, there to join the noisy trams for the last lap to the Rising Sun and the end of a pleasant day in the country. The Walthamstow men, with a cheery 'Goodnight, Bob' would leave to catch their tram home, or linger for a last drink in the crowded bar.

'Bob' died in 1915, at the age of 57 and Askew and Sons, jobmasters, are no longer with us either. Their enterprises seem modest in comparison with the travel extravaganzas of today. They were men dedicated to the care of the noble horse and their primitive vehicles brought the thrill of travel on the open road and a love of the countryside to thousands.

WILL FRANCIES

Essex Countryside, July 1965

Commission of Lunacy

Yesterday a commission *de lunatico inquirendo* was opened before E Winslow Esq, one of the commissioners in lunacy, and a special jury, at Gray's Inn Coffee House, to inquire as to the state of mind of Mrs Susan Adams, a widow lady, aged 56, formerly of Loughton, Essex, but now of Warner-place, Hackney-road.

Mr Wright, of the firm of Purvier and Wright, solicitors, appeared in support of the commission, which was issued at the instance of Mr Miles, the lady's brother, and from his statement, and the medical and other evidence adduced, it appeared that the unfortunate lady was the widow of a saddler at Loughton, Essex, who died about twenty five years since, and from that period her mind had declined. She had been left annuities amounting to £50 a year by her mother and Henry Nottage Esq of Chigwell, one of the executors of the latter being Mr Windus, solicitor, of Epping. It was in consequence of Mrs Adams having refused to receive the latter annuity, or in fact to give any receipt for the same, and there being some years' arrears, that the commission had issued. She was some time since an inmate of St Luke's Hospital, from whence she was discharged as incurable. About five years since, where she lodged, she would put no clothes on, made large fires in the middle of the night, etc, and had often at twelve o'clock at night gone into the fields in a state of nudity. In 1835 she was offered £24 7s 6d which belonged to her; it was four £5 notes, four sovereigns, and 7s 6d in silver. She said the notes were forged, and would not sign a receipt, because she said it was a false stamp; indeed she would sign no paper, for fear she should make away with her property, in respect of which she laboured under delusions that it was immense, both funded and landed, the latter consisting of nearly the whole of the land, as well as houses, of Loughton, for which she looked to other people's wills. Other delusions were that she had a vast quantity of jewels, and that she was highly accomplished, and acquainted with several languages, that she ought only to wear old clothes, and no shoes or stockings, although she had good clothes, but these she said came from her relations, and therefore refused to wear them; and this feeling she carried so far as to refuse to walk in the garden with any shoes but those of her own make, which were of a most fanciful description, in the making of which, cutting to pieces, and sewing together again, her chief amusement consisted. When not so engaged she would sit for hours looking out of a window, at the same time singing and talking to herself. Although she can both read and write, she will do neither, nor ever listened to any other person reading. She fancied she had a large sum of money in the hands of Truman and Hanbury as well as at the Bank, and also considered herself as a lady of title.

At the conclusion of the evidence Mrs Adams was introduced; she presented a singular and rather grotesque appearance. Her bonnet being rather antiquated, a sort of flattened teapot shape, and being made of green silk, it at first appeared like a huge cabbage leaf, tied with dingy red ribbons, and behind was a very long lock of grey hair, reaching nearly to the waist. On her feet were shoes of various coloured silks, the soles being formed of paste-board. On taking her seat by the side of the Commissioner she answered his questions, and those of the Jury, as follows:

> 'My present residence is at Loughton. I came here to meet Mr Wright. I can take care of myself and property, of course. I look up to the wills of my forefathers for property. I mean the wills of my husband, mother and Mr Nottage. My father was proprietor of the Cambridge coach.'

The unfortunate lady repeated her objection to sign receipts or to take money from any person, because she was independent. Her answers generally were incoherent, and satisfied the Jury as to the state of her mind, and a verdict was returned dating the unsoundness of mind from 19th August 1836. *The Morning Post*, Saturday, 15 July 1843

Where can you find a stone piano?

The answer, perhaps surprisingly, is in the City of London Cemetery. This was just one of the fascinating memorials pointed out to a small group of us who took advantage of the offer of a free tour of the cemetery one Sunday morning in the summer. We met at 10am, and the Superintendent, Gary Burks, himself showed us round in a tour lasting just over two hours. He explained the establishment of the cemetery in 1856, arising from the need to close the churchyards of the City of London, which were just becoming too full with the rising population. The Corporation purchased the land and appointed surveyor William Haywood to design the layout and the buildings. It is now a Grade I listed landscape, containing several Grade II listed buildings in an area of 200 acres.

The cemetery is one of the largest municipal cemeteries in Europe and anyone can be buried there, regardless of City connections or religious beliefs. The whole range of burial practices are covered – burial in a grave, of course, but also cremation or, what I found most fascinating, retention in a 'filing system' by the use of a catacomb. Gary explained that some people find the idea of a catacomb somewhat disturbing, but someone on our tour was rather taken by the idea of a bed of her own! This form of burial is more expensive than a normal grave because it is for single occupation – once the coffin has been inserted into the slot, it is hermetically sealed and never opened again.

The piano memorial in the photograph was in respect of pianist Gladys Spencer, a local music and dancing teacher, who died of pneumonia, aged 34 in 1931. We were shown the grave of footballer Bobby Moore, and the memorials to two of the victims of Jack the Ripper. We found it interesting that these are often decorated with flowers, and occasionally with 5p coins – the nearest looking coin to the old sixpence, which is how much it would have cost the woman for a bed for the night, which could have saved her life.

There are two VCs buried there, many fine traditional and modern memorials, and all surrounded by lawns, trees and flowerbeds kept immaculate by the team of gardeners. A visit to the City of London cemetery is recommended – check the website for the dates of tours.

LYNN HASELDINE JONES

Determined suicide: the tragedy of the Todman family

On Wednesday afternoon, Mr C C Lewis, Coroner, held an inquest at the Railway Tavern, Buckhurst Hill, on the body of Mrs Todman, wife of the late Inspector Todman – who mysteriously disappeared some months since – who committed suicide on Tuesday in a most determined manner. Robert Todman deposed – the deceased was my wife, and was 45 years of age. She had for a long time been in a very desponding state of mind. I left my house on Monday morning by the 9.40 train for London; returned in the afternoon at 2.50. Not seeing my wife downstairs, I went to the bed-room, where I found her lying on her back on the floor, with a piece of tape twined three or four times round her neck and fastened to the bed post; she was quite dead. She has for some time been despondent and suicidally disposed and attempted her life once before; she has told me lately more than once that she would destroy herself; I found an open razor on the bed-room dressing table, but I did not observe that it was stained with blood. The Coroner – it was not prudent to put a razor in her way. Witness – I placed it in the kitchen drawer. Hannah, the wife of George Nash, of Princes Road, a neighbour of the last witness, corroborated as to the position of the body of the deceased and the despondency of the deceased. Margaret, wife of Joseph White, another neighbour, also corroborated. Frederick Charles Corry* MD proved that death was caused by strangulation. William Wells, letter carrier, said he delivered a letter to the deceased at 10.30am on Monday. The Coroner, in summing up, said the deceased ought to have been taken care of when it was known that she was suicidally disposed. Great neglect had been shown in not having the deceased taken care of. Mr Todman – I tried my very best to take care of her, poor soul. The Coroner – It was the duty of the policeman, the clergyman of the parish, or any neighbour, or Magistrate acquainted with the circumstances of the case to have interfered in the case and had her taken to an Asylum. I am surprised that the deceased should have been released by the Bench without any provision having been made for her safety. The Jury at once found that the deceased committed suicide while of unsound mind.

Essex Standard, West Suffolk Gazette and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties
Saturday, 5 November, 1881

The Todmans lived at 2 Holly Villas, Princes Road. Robert Todman, Inspector of Police, was from Ireland, his wife Hannah was from Hampstead. They had a son Robert William, born in Buckhurst Hill in 1874, and the family employed one female general servant.

The article concerning the suicide of Mrs Todman refers to her husband as the *late* Inspector Todman, who 'mysteriously disappeared some time since' – this is explained by BRYN ELLIOTT below:

Robert Todman joined the Metropolitan Police on 12 September 1864; he was then aged 28, having spent some years as a tailor and eight years working in the General Post

Office. Nothing is known of his early service but he was clearly a person with a high ability, as within nine years he held the rank of Sub-Divisional Inspector (SDI).

Dublin born Robert Todman was the SDI in charge of the Woodford Sub-Division of the 'N' Division from 1873 to 1881. The then new police station at Woodford and its sub-division included the stations of Chigwell, Loughton, Waltham Abbey and Woodford itself. At the time Chingford was without its own station house and remained under Waltham Abbey.

The Woodford SDI was by 1881 aged about 45 years and had 18 years' police service. As might be assumed of a senior officer almost at the top of his profession he had conducted his duties without any cause for concern throughout.

Throughout the whole of the 19th Century and most of the 20th it was incumbent upon the Sub-Divisional Inspector in charge of the subdivision to pay each of his men in cash (mainly gold coin originally) each Wednesday his earnings up to the previous Sunday. Any fines incurred by the individual officer would be deducted before payment was made. Pay parades required attendance of the officers regardless of whether they were on duty or off.

The weekly pay on Wednesday, 20 April 1881, was somewhat delayed, under bizarre circumstances, for the men of the Woodford sub-division.

On this particular Wednesday, Todman attended the head police station in Kingsland Road, Islington, and was handed £154 12s 0½d, in coin by Superintendent Green. It was just another day, similar to those that had seen a total of £50,000 handed over in similar circumstances over the years.

Robert Todman left Kingsland Road and set off for Woodford. He did not reappear at the station, although it was later discovered that he had returned to his rooms and exchanged his uniform for civilian attire. When the pay parades failed to materialise, men started to look for him, initially upon the assumption that he had been attacked and robbed. The alarm was eventually raised by the most senior officer in the locality affected by the non-appearance of Todman. Chief Inspector Charles Goble of the Royal Gunpowder Factory, who outranked all others in the immediate area, may well have been the only one to dare suggest that Todman was being tardy in his delivery of the money.

As it became clear that the only foul deed was that undertaken by the missing SDI, his description was circulated in the *Police Gazette*. In the meantime, other money was obtained from Kingsland Road to pay the men their delayed dues.

It fell to Constable Bardsley, stationed at Lostock Junction, two miles from Bolton, Lancashire, to unearth the identity of the stranger in their midst on Tuesday, 10 May. Two days later Robert Todman was held in the cells at the Waltham Abbey police station, prior to a preliminary hearing at the local Petty Sessions.

It seems that, because of the recovery of £135 and suggestions of mental imbalance, Robert Todman was found to be 'not guilty' by the subsequent jury trial.

The Metropolitan Police were made of far sterner stuff than the jurors, paying no heed to excuses like the 'stress' suggested in court by a whole host of witnesses.

Robert Todman was dismissed from the Metropolitan Police without back pay or pension, on 13 July 1881. There is no record of any attempt at an appeal. He was undoubtedly extremely lucky that the jury took the view it did.

So, a family with considerable difficulties. Was the stress of his wife's mental illness the cause of Inspector Todman's disappearance? Or was the loss of his job and pension a factor in the death of his wife? We shall never know. Robert Todman died aged 49 in 1886.

Bryn Elliott, who has kindly allowed work from his website to be published here, is giving a talk to LDHS on 14 April 2016 on 'The Story of Aviation in West Essex since 1909' – not to be missed!

Note and references

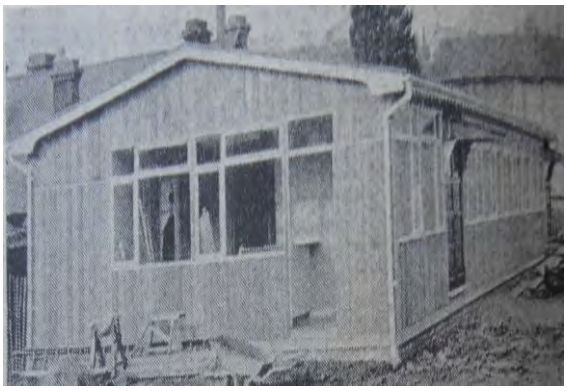
* Actually Frederic Charles Cory (1822–1906) who lived at The Elms, Queen's Road (demolished).

www.brynelliott.host-ed.me/1881**RobertTodman**.pdf

www.brynelliott.co.uk is full of information about both policing and aviation in Essex.

LYNN HASELDINE JONES and BRYN ELLIOTT

Loughton Police Station



Mr Todman mentioned in the above article would have been familiar with the old Loughton police station. In 1963 the following appeared in the local *Gazette:*

Within a few days policemen at Loughton will be moving out of their century old station in to this prefab headquarters nearby while the old station is pulled down and a new one is built. The new station will have a recreation room for constables, and a canteen will replace the present meal room, part of the station's old stables. Instead of the present single cell there will be three cells – two male and one female, and a male detention room.

EDITOR

Another view of the 1866-built police station of the standard Metropolitan Police pattern. The scene is about 1900. One of Loughton's grocery shops is next door.

Loughton railway station in the 1960s

The photo of Loughton Station (*below left*) was taken in 1965 by a German student, Heribert Menzel, who was lodging with a family in Harlow.

The scene is instantly recognisable half a century on. A couple of points of interest however; the train in the siding to the left will be the spare set for the Ongar-Epping shuttle, and behind the signal on the right, is the footbridge over the goods lines (then still in use to and from Loughton coal depot) leading from Algers Road to Finlaison Path/Great Eastern Path.

Until 1970, two early morning Sunday trains along our branch were provided by Eastern Region diesel multiple units (DMU). Peter Haseldine took this photograph (*above right*) in 1967, which shows a 2-car DMU, one car in the new blue livery, and one in the old green, en route from Loughton to Liverpool Street main line station. These trains used the original line, now lifted, between Leyton Station Junction and Loughton Branch Junction to get to platform 11 at Stratford. Note the Algers Road bridge (as above) in the right background.

Entering Loughton in the cab of a Derby lightweight DMU, photographed by Peter Haseldine in 1967. The strange signal, LT 123A, is a calling-on disc, to allow trains to couple or uncouple in the centre road of Loughton station. This was to facilitate the Loughton-Epping 2-car or 4-car shuttle service that lasted in various guises till 1957. Epping was then thought of as a little-used country terminus, that most of the day got only 3 trains an hour. Most of the trains to London turned at Debden. Below, the station in 1971. CHRIS POND

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