

NEWSLETTER 208

JANUARY/MARCH 2016

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53rd Season

Charles Ashton Loughton's silent film actor

Charles Ashton, an actor in silent films, had our house, 'Cappers', built between 1917, when he purchased the plot of land just off Blind Lane (now Church Lane), and 1920. He and his wife Julia called their home Hedgeside Cottage, and their neighbour Katie Barton remembered them watching wedding parties coming up from Loughton to St John's along the farm lane and 'many brides' being lifted over the stile between our houses. Katie knew the housekeeper for Captain T Sanderson Angus, who, during the Great War, was reputed to climb out onto his roof gallery to report on Zeppelins. Katie, with the housekeeper, used to hire a trap to go to Abridge for fresh eggs.



Charles ran out of timber for his black-beamed cottage, and Katie and Bob, newly settling in at their house, which they called 'Rokosan' (meaning 'happy man') on their return from Japan, helped him out with wood from their great packing cases!

He and Julia moved to Arkesden near Saffron Walden and when she died he moved to secluded Romany Cottage.

I wish I had met him! Our old neighbours told us stories about him (and of course about old Loughton, too). 'He was', said Katie, 'an ebullient, lively man'. He acted in the first film of *The Monkey's Paw* in 1923 (this was acted as a school play at Chigwell School in 1919), and in 22 films between 1920 and 1929. These included: *A Will and a Way* and *The Head of the Family*, written by W W Jacobs (also a Loughton resident), and also in *We Women* by Countess Helene Barcynska in 1925 and in *Kitty* with Estelle Brody in 1929, which later had sound added to it. His film employers were Artistic Films, Stoll and British International.



Charles Ashton in the film *A Will and a Way* in 1922

The Marshes, Durrells and Frasers followed him to this home, and we came in to this 'cottage full of surprises' 48 years ago, renaming it after my great grandmother's family home in Suffolk. At one time the parish of St John's wanted to buy it as a clergy home and it is a coincidence that my husband John is a clergyman.

MARIAN DELFGOU

CHARLES HENRY ASHTON was born in Leyton in 1884, and served in the Great War, being invalided out in 1917. He married Julia Wells in 1913. Besides the films mentioned above, he also appeared in *Sweeney Todd* in 1928, with Moore Marriott, who later starred in a series of films with Will Hay. After sound changed the film world forever, Ashton became a

crime novelist, publishing a number of volumes, including *Stone Dead*, featuring his main character, Jack Atherley. He died in 1968. *Ed*.

Central Line train crash, 1953: a message from Transport for London

A memorial plaque will be unveiled on 8 April 2016 at Stratford station to commemorate victims of the Central Line train crash between Stratford and Leyton on 8 April 1953.

We are looking to contact relatives of the victims ahead of the event. If you have any information that could be helpful to us please contact:

CatherineWestoby@tfl.gov.uk Tel 0203 054 8626.

Teddy's visit to the Epping area: the King meets the Loughton Fairies

In *Newsletter 197* John Harrison submitted an extract from the *Motor-Car Journal* of 28 October 1905, concerning the forthcoming visit of the King, Edward VII, to this area. Below is a report of that visit.

One of the many exhibits at a recent historical exhibition, 'Epping Through the Ages', held at Centre Point, Epping, was a souvenir issue of the *Epping Gazette and Loughton and Ongar Record*. Printed in gold-coloured ink and published on Saturday November 4, 1905, it was devoted entirely to accounts of a memorable visit to south-west Essex by King Edward VII ('Teddy') on Monday and Tuesday, October 30 and 31, 1905, when His Majesty was the guest of his close friend, Colonel A R M Lockwood, MP (later Lord Lambourne), at Bishops Hall, Lambourne.



Colonel Lockwood, MP, returning thanks for his unopposed election in 1895 From *Leaves from a Hunting Diary in Essex* by H Beauchamp Yerburch (1900)

'Piloted' by his host, the King set off from Buckingham Palace at 9am on October 30. Driving through heavy rain, and travelling via Finsbury Park, Tottenham, Walthamstow, Woodford, Buckhurst Hill and Chigwell, he entered the grounds of Bishops Hall some two hours later. At the Royal Infant Orphanage, Wanstead, of which His Majesty was patron, his car slowed down to enable the assembled children to obtain a glimpse of him through the misted windows. Large crowds greeted him everywhere on the route, and at times his rate of progress was only 10mph. says the *Gazette*, although the visit to Lambourne was a private one, 'the hamlets which cluster around Hainault Forest haven't been so lively since the gypsies went away!'

Most of Teddy's first day in south-west Essex was spent at a shooting party on the Bishops Hall estate in company with Colonel Lockwood and other personal friends, of which one 'Touchstone' gave an amusing account. Fortunately, the rain eased off and the sun peeped out before the King arrived at Bishops Hall, and, says 'Touchstone', though the clouds were sneaking round the whole day long, they had not the courage to be disagreeable.

The shoot began almost immediately, and 'Touchstone' joined in as a beater. He writes in mock disparagement of 'those wild, wild woods on the Lambourne estate', where 'the trees lashed me across the face with whips and thongs, and stretched their great long feet across the path to throw me down'. When he saw his fellow beaters 'set about those churlish trees, and thrash them with their sticks', he 'seized the opportunity for revenge and followed suit'. Up rose the pheasants and partridges, bang went the guns, and in a little glade in Crane's Wood he saw 'the King Sportsman as well as of England' bring down at least a dozen birds, one after another. With the other beaters, 'Touchstone' could not resist rushing forward and plucking the feathers 'as souvenirs of a day never to be forgotten'.

The King drove from cover to cover in a horse-drawn carriage, and was one of the most successful shots. He seems to have been something of a hero to 'Touchstone', who describes His Majesty as having 'a noble, frank face' and looking 'every inch the King and gentleman that he was'. By lunchtime more than 590 birds had been killed.

For luncheon the beaters and other helpers were regaled with a cold collation laid on by a local publican, Mr Radford, of the Blue Boar, Abridge. For the King and a small company of his friends, Colonel and Mrs Lockwood provided a more elegant meal at Bishops Hall.

The King rejoined the shooting party in the afternoon, and the day closed with a total bag of about 1,100 birds. Says 'Touchstone', 'Doubtless there were loud lamentations among the feathered populace of Lambourne, and the consternation was as great as the coming Russian Revolution. You should have seen the hares, one after another, rush past the King without saluting . . . It was disloyal, but I put it down to ignorance . . .'

That evening His Majesty invested Colonel Lockwood with a personal honour, the Royal Victorian Order. (The Colonel was later to be given a peerage by King George V, also a personal friend, and to take the title of Lord Lambourne.)

The next day, after planting a young oak tree in the grounds of Bishops Hall, the King took his departure and, with the gallant Colonel again acting as pilot, made his way to Newmarket for the races, at first passing through Abridge, gaily bedecked with flags and bunting, where the villagers accorded him a warm welcome. At the level crossing on the railway line at Theydon Bois the 10.50am up train was stopped, and the passengers alighted to give the royal traveller a cheer as his car sped by.

The newspaper scribe becomes quite lyrical at this point. Says he: 'The King spun through the loveliest region in all Essex . . . though he had not time to realise fully the grandeur of the Forest . . . he could not fail to be aware that he was flying through an earthly paradise.' On entering the forest, the King stopped for a short time to speak to Mr W R Horncastle, chairman of the Epping Forest Committee of the Corporation of London (the Conservators). Forest keepers attired in their traditional uniform of brown velveteen jackets, Bedford cord breeches, and black leather gaiters (as they still are today) provided a guard of honour; the superintendent of the forest, Mr F F Mackenzie, well

remembered by many present-day forest folk, was also in attendance, together with 'a thousand little Forest fairies' (girls from Loughton schools), who had gathered at the corner near the Wake Arms public-house cheering 'as only little Loughton girls can cheer'. But where were the boys? The *Gazette* reporter bemoans their absence, and one can only guess the reasons for their exclusion from the party.

Ambresbury Banks, the ancient British encampment near Bell Common, Epping, was pointed out to Teddy as he passed along the Epping Road. We wonder if he was told that these Iron Age earthworks, which can clearly be seen from the A11, were associated with a former monarch, Queen Boudicca (Boadicea) of the Iceni, who rebelled against the Romans and, tradition has it, ended her life by taking poison nearby.

It was now Epping's turn to welcome the King. 'There is not a town in all Essex', quoth the enthusiastic reporter, 'so capable of rising to great occasions as Epping is.' Epping indeed 'made a gallant show, but it was nothing to what she was capable of doing. Her reticence was not due to any lack of loyalty – oh, dear, no! – on the contrary, it was due to the very sincerity and to the sweet reasonableness of her loyalty'. Still in the same dubious rhetorical vein, the newspaper scribe explains that Epping knew that the King's visit to Lambourne was a private one, and that 'with a delicate sense of etiquette that did credit to her heart and to her breeding, she shrank from intruding on that privacy'.

The council, not really so backward in coming forward, had asked the townspeople to decorate their homes and business premises, and, to give them credit, 'the High Street looked really beautiful'. Epping personalities were well to the fore. They included Mr Whiffen, whose residence, Granville House, was adorned with royal purple, Mr J Kirby, Mr Archie Farrer, and Dr Denning, whose combination of flags and flowers was 'something quite unique'. Nor were the ordinary townsfolk and people from nearby villages and hamlets slow in demonstrating their loyalty. 'Apart from the children', says the newspaper account, 'there was an enormous crowd of people from all parts of the compass.'

Epping had put on a brave show, after all. The children were ready to sing to their Sovereign; but, alas! The royal car quickly 'flashed across our line of vision and vanished in the distance'. It was over so quickly that even the *Gazette* photographer could only manage a blurred impression of the royal car as it sped through the High Street. The children waved their flags and shouted; but, poor mites, their hero sat on the opposite side to that on which the children were grouped, and 'not one saw him at all . . . their disappointment was pathetic'. There they were, 'poor little boys and girls sitting on the market rails, and still waiting – waiting, for they did not realise that the King had gone – the King for whom they prayed and of whom they sang, and of whom they had heard so much . . .' The reporter adds a somewhat bitter comment: 'It is . . . presumptuous to describe his conduct as an insult to Epping. No! No! It is not that; but, oh, I do wish those boys and girls had seen him . . . Never mind, my little dears. Your King will come again some day, and then you will see him.'

The inmates of the 'Union House' (the former Poor Law Institution, now part of St Margaret's Hospital, Epping) were rather more fortunate. They were gathered at the junction of the A11 and the North Weald Road, and, perhaps contritely after his scant treatment of the townspeople, the King graciously asked for his car to slow up a little as he passed them. He must also have seen the decorations at Thornwood, where the Blacksmith's Arms set

an outstanding example. There were also flags and bunting at Potter Street, where the children were gathered on the Common under the watchful eye of the Vicar. Harlow, too, was 'exceedingly gay and pretty'.

Colonel Lockwood soon afterwards bade farewell to His Majesty, and the King continued his journey to Newmarket, no doubt eager to get to the races as soon as possible.

A A RUMBLE
Essex Countryside, Vol 23, No 219, April 1975

Memories of the Ongar Railway

After the absorbing talk by Rodger Green (September 2015) on the locomotives used and preserved by the Ongar Railway Society, memories came flooding back.

The line did not just serve Blake Hall and Ongar village but provided from 1859 for the agricultural hinterland to send produce directly to Liverpool Street and to the London markets. Although the line was never extended to Dunmow the goods trains were busy with milk churns, vegetables, hay bales, and sometimes sheep and pigs. The train from Ongar must have fed Epping Market very well. I remember a little calf sucking my finger through the bars of its pen, and pink piglets tipped into another pen nearby.

The line was much needed to ferry airmen to North Weald during both World Wars and was vital during the Battle of Britain. The stations were camouflaged. I wonder if the line itself was sheltered as German bombers targeted our railways or if the valiant fighters at North Weald and Matching held them off?

Blake Hall itself was a vital meeting place for the Government during the War years and the Secret Nuclear Bunker, built in 1952 at Kelvedon Hatch, is still there.*

The preservation society have made a run between North Weald to Ongar, through the fields, a rare pleasure. To get off the train at Ongar, walk around the castle, have tea or lunch at the station or the Castle Café is to step back into an easier time, and the grandchildren love it!

MARIAN DELFGOU

*See *Newsletter* 198, September 2013, for more about this. *Ed.*

Under Fire: Essex and the Second World War

Paul Rusiecki gave a talk to LDHS in 2013 on Essex and the Blitz. He has now followed his excellent book *The Impact of Catastrophe: the People of Essex and the First World War* (2008) with another very interesting volume, this time on the Second World War. He covers the period of the Phoney War, the Blitz and air raid shelters, and there are some splendid illustrations; one which caught my eye was of the Home Guard erecting road barriers at Woodford Wells.

The experiences of women are included – working in factories, shopping, rationing and fashion are all discussed. Schoolchildren are not forgotten; they suffered disruption to their education and problems with evacuation.

Later sections of the book cover politics, in particular the Maldon by-election of 1942 which saw Tom Driberg achieve a sensational victory; fund-raising for Russia; the arrival of the American forces into the county; crime, religion and opposition to the war. Apparently crime increased during the war – not so much more criminals around, but more laws, fiercely enforced, for people to break! There is also a section on entertainment – theatre, music, sport and so on. I was not aware of war-time disruption to golf: apparently Chelmsford Golf Club introduced war rules which included members being encouraged to collect bomb and shell splinters to prevent damage to the club's mowers. During air raids players were allowed to take shelter without being penalised; if the ball was moved by a bomb explosion, it was to be returned as near as possible to the correct spot, and if a ball was destroyed, a new ball was not to be positioned any further forward. All members of the Forces were regarded as honorary members for the duration of the war.

From doodlebugs to Women's Institutes and from baseball to the wireless, the range of topics is considerable, and I am sure the book will appeal to anyone interested in the war and its impact on Essex.

Under Fire: Essex and the Second World War 1935–1945 by Paul Rusiecki is published by the University of Hertfordshire Press, 2015, ISBN 978–1–909291–28–7, price £18.99 and is available from the Loughton bookshop. *Ed.*

Looking for Zeppelins at Leyton

This is the subtitle of a recently published book called *Air Raids on South-West Essex in the Great War*. Local historian Alan Simpson has undertaken research into the aerial bombardment over our part of Essex during the First World War, and he includes much information about the attacks, not just by the dreaded Zeppelins, but also the later Gothas and Giants. He writes:

'a quarter of a century before the Blitz of 1940, the inhabitants of south-west Essex were terrorised by another aerial menace – gigantic airships. For nearly three years, German Zeppelins flew above their homes en-route to unleashing hundreds of high explosive and incendiary bombs on London. In three of those raids, bombs were dropped on Leyton and many others fell elsewhere in south-west Essex. These early raids are now largely forgotten in local memory, perhaps because of the much greater death toll and damage in the Second World War, but for the inhabitants of the time the attacks were unprecedented, unexpected and lethal.'

Alan describes the development of the airships, the civil defence plans for London, the effects of the raids on the public, and includes much interesting information on other aspects of the bombing, for example, the disruption of schooling for many children. The book includes a wealth of illustrations, many from his own private collection. I was pleased to see that Loughton and Buckhurst Hill get a mention: a searchlight was apparently positioned in Buckhurst

Hill, and there was an observation post at the top of the tower of the Congregational Church in Palmerston Road.

This book is highly recommended for anyone interested in the Great War and its effects on our local people.

Air Raids on South-West Essex in the Great War – Looking for Zeppelins at Leyton by Alan Simpson, published by Pen and Sword Aviation, 2015, ISBN 978–1–47383–412–5, price £19.99, is available from the Loughton Bookshop.

Another book on the Great War recently published has great local interest. *Redbridge and the First World War* is the product of a project by the Redbridge Museum, covering Ilford, Woodford and Wanstead, examining many aspects of the effect of the war on local people. Sections include, amongst many others, conscription, women and children's experiences, rationing, refugees and war memorials. Support by the Heritage Lottery Fund has allowed the production of a substantial volume with many splendid illustrations, and it is very reasonably priced.

Redbridge and the First World War by Gerard Greene, published by Redbridge Museum, 2015, price £5, is available from the Redbridge Museum and Library, Clements Road, Ilford. It is also available in all Redbridge libraries. *Ed.*

Death for Mr Death (and others)

John Bacon and James Wright were capitally convicted for stealing a ewe sheep, the property of David Powell esq of Loughton on 18 May last – DEATH

William Nayler, Ambrose Death senior, Ambrose Death junior and Edward Smith were indicted for burglariously breaking and entering the dwelling house of William Noak, of Stanford Rivers, on the 12th May last, and stealing therein a quantity of Bank of England notes, and other money, numerous articles of wearing apparel, and other goods, his property. The facts of this atrocious case were briefly these: on the night of the day stated in the indictment, the prisoners, with others, including a person named Ward, the principal evidence on the present occasion, determined upon robbing the house of the prosecutor, and for this purpose they set out from Ilford, a distance of about fourteen miles. Having arrived there between eleven and twelve o'clock, they knocked at the door and in a short time the prosecutor, who is an aged man, came to a window, and asked what they wanted. Nayler, who stood in front of the house, presented a gun, and desired he would deliver his money. The prosecutor instantly retired, and in a short time returned with £4, which he threw out of the window. Nayler, who still stood in front, said he would shoot if more money was not given. In the meantime the remainder of the party went round to the rear of the house, and by means of an instrument, taken from a plough as they came along, broke in the doors, and then unfastened the front door for their companions. They then proceeded to rifle the house, and having got at the chest of the prosecutor, plundered it of all the cash it contained. Upon examining some bank notes, however, 30 of a particular bank were selected and left behind, in consequence of the establishment to which they belonged being reported to have stopped payment. Beside the money, they also carried away wearing apparel,

household articles, and other property to a considerable amount. They also plundered an elderly lady, the house-keeper of the prosecutor, whom they pursued to a loft, whither she had gone to conceal herself, and caused her to deliver them up £11 in notes, which she had in her possession. The faces of all were disguised. The discovery of the robbery was made in consequence of the apprehension of Ward, the accomplice, who offered to turn evidence on the occasion. From him it was ascertained, that the property stolen from the prosecutor was chiefly lodged beneath the floor of old Death's house, where it was found. The evidence of the accomplice was confirmed in many particulars by persons who had seen the parties together on the night of the robbery, on the road, drinking, &c; of their having a gun, which together with the fact of the stolen property being found in the house of old Death, was conclusive of the fact against them.

Lord Ellenborough having summed up the evidence, the Jury found all the prisoners GUILTY – DEATH.

His Lordship immediately took occasion to animadvert upon the atrocity of their crime, but as it appeared to him there were some shades of difference in the part each took in their guilty project, he would consider how far mercy could be extended towards those who were least criminal. The case of Death, senior and of Nayler called for full retribution. The former had added to his crime, the offence of harbouring desperate characters beneath his roof, and of leading on his own son by an example to an atrocious system of robbery; and the latter had not only planned the infamous outrage in question, but was about to add to its iniquity the more dreadful act of bloodshed. To these two persons he would most earnestly recommend repentance, and a speedy preparation for a future state.

The Morning Chronicle, Monday, 5 August 1816

'Dunsley' or 'Jesmond' – how a house gets a name

Number 93 Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill, has been occupied by the Palmerston Group Veterinary Hospital since 1968. But before that it was a large and no doubt comfortable private house. Palmerston Road was numbered in the 1920s and before that houses had to have names to distinguish them. Many house occupants chose names from nature – Oak Villa, or Rose Cottage, for example, and some chose exotic names – there was a Camelot in Scotland Road, and an Olafdene on King's Avenue. So how did this house get its name?

From the time of the 1891 census and up to at least 1909, the occupant was shown as Sidney Hough.

Sidney George Hough was born in Islington in 1864 and was married to Edith (née Yeoman), born in Whitby in 1867. They married in Whitby in 1890 and had three children, all born in Buckhurst Hill, Sidney Harold in 1891, Alan Dudley in 1894 and Cecil Wilfred in 1896. Sidney G Hough was a paper merchant. It is possible that his wife chose the name for the house; there is a Victorian country house near Whitby called Dunsley – it is known as Dunsley Hall Hotel, and was a private house, but is now a popular hotel for weddings. Sidney Hough died aged 60 in 1923; his wife Edith died in 1948 aged 81.



Dunsley or Jesmond

At this address at the time of the 1911 census and in directories up to 1923 the occupant was shown as Alexander McCabe, who renamed the house 'Jesmond'. Again probably his wife was responsible for the name as she came from Newcastle. Alexander John Murray McCabe was born in St Helier, Jersey, in 1866. He married Anna Maria Laidlaw (née Rowell) in Newcastle in 1905 and they had two children, both born in Buckhurst Hill – Norah Blair in 1907 and Margaret Joan in 1909. A J M McCabe died in Bishop's Stortford in 1933 aged 67. A later occupant was Edward Huskisson.

LYNN HASELDINE JONES

Motor disguises – 'Dad's Army' escapades in 1909

AMUSING INCIDENTS OF BLOCKADE TEST

There was an amusing battle of wits on the Essex roads on Saturday. The opponents were a contingent of Territorial officers and men and members of the Essex Automobile Club.

Chelmsford was supposed to be in an enemy's hands. This 'enemy', represented by the Territorials, drew a cordon completely round the town, occupying roads and lanes, and utilising for quick movement nearly fifty motor-cars. Then seven members of the club started from Brentford as blockade-runners. Their aim was to pierce the cordon, and carry despatches to the beleaguered town.

Five of the seven got through, although one was afterwards declared technically caught. Two evaded capture simply by speed and a judicious choice of unfrequented roads; three completely outwitted the Territorial officers by clever disguises.

TRANSFORMED INTO A MOTOR-CAB

The neatest scheme was that of Mr Lomax, of Woodford. His car started out as a private landaulette. Two miles out it ran into the yard of a roadside inn and transformed. The side steps were removed, a dummy taximeter and a faked Scotland Yard number-plate were affixed; and it started out again masquerading as a London motor-cab. The chauffeur had donned the attire of a motor-cab driver. Those inside pretended to be Press photographers.

As the car neared the cordon, the bogus photographers sprang up and pretended to take photographs. The ruse succeeded completely. The officers failed to recognise the car or its occupants, and it passed through.

Mr Bryant, another member of the club, deceived the 'enemy' in a somewhat similar way. His party, all in

motoring attire, transformed themselves into tennis players, carrying racquets.

The secretary of the club, Mr Lindus Forge, had the chief adventure of an exciting afternoon. His plan was to run his car on to a barge and steal into town by water. When he was preparing to board the barge the 'enemy' appeared. Mr Forge backed his car into a field and set off across it. Two of the 'enemy's cars tried to follow him, but stuck in a ditch. Across two fields he motored, bumping and rocking on the rough ground. Then he joined the road further down, and reached the town uncaught.

From the *Daily Mail*, Monday, 28 June 1909

Submitted by JOHN HARRISON

House deeds

Do you have your house deeds? If you do, please let us know. They can contain a wealth of information about the area, and depending on where you are, one of us will visit, extract the information, and write it up. A packet of 50 deeds can often be reduced to a cogent story on a side or two of A4.



House deeds can sometimes look magnificent, as well as proving much valuable information about a house, its owners, occupants and history.

CHRIS POND

The Woodford and Loughton Races

THE WOODFORD AND LOUGHTON RACES

Will take place over the New Course, in the rear of the ROEBUCK INN, BUCKHURST HILL, near Woodford, Essex, on Tuesday, August 30th, 1859.

FIRST RACE

WOODFORD AND LOUGHTON STAKES of 2 sovs each, with 10 sovs added. Three yr olds to carry 7st 10lbs, four yr olds to carry 8st 10lbs, five yr olds to carry 9st 3lbs, six yrs and aged to carry 9st 6lbs. The winner to be sold for £80; if for £60 allowed 7lb; if for £10 allowed 10lb, if claimed in the usual way, and the surplus, if any, to go to the Race Fund. Entrance 10s each. The winner to pay £1 towards expenses. Heats twice round and a distance. Three to start, or the money added will not be given.

SECOND RACE

TALLY HO STAKES of 3 sovs each, with 15 sovs added, 3 yr olds to carry 8st 7lbs; 4 yr olds to carry 9st 7lbs; 5 and aged to carry 11st. Entrance ten shillings each, to go to the Race Fund, the winner to pay £2 towards expenses; three to start, or the money added will not be

given. Heats twice round, and a distance of four flights of hurdles.

THIRD RACE

THE LADIES PLATE of 1 sov each, with 5 sovs added. The weights and conditions the same as for the first race.

CONDITIONS

All horses to be entered at the Roebuck Inn the evening prior to the race, between the hours of 7 and 10 o'clock, and the colours to be declared at the time of entry.

No jockey to be allowed to ride except in racing costume.

Each jockey to pay 2s 6d for the use of weights and scales for each race.

All disputes to be settled by the Steward, whose decision shall be final.

O HILLS, Treasurer.

NB.—Trains leave the Bishopsgate-street station at 9.35, 10.0, 12.0, 1.45, 2.50; and from Fenchurch-street at 8.50, 10.10, 12.10, 4.



A view of the Roebuck; it is no more, replaced by flats known as 'Roebuck Heights'.

Evening News, 11 November 1893

Submitted by CHRIS POND

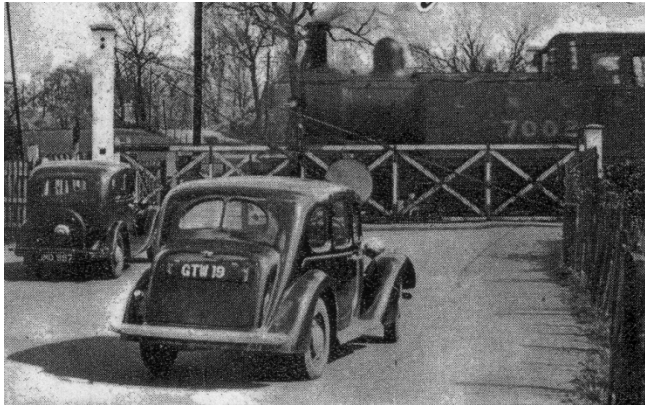
Loughton Amateur Cricket Club

An entertainment, in aid of the funds of the above club, was given in the large room, National Schools, Loughton, on Friday last, the 19th inst, The Rev J W Maitland presiding. The long programme provided was carried out most satisfactorily, without a hitch. The audience showed their appreciation of it by hearty and frequent applause. Miss Fuller effectively rendered *Saved from the Storm*, Miss Shary, with *The Children's Home* scored a success, while the duet *One Word* was most charmingly rendered by this lady, with Mr Sharp. Miss Fawcett's contributions were *Tit for Tat* and *Two's Company*, *Three's None* and her interpretation of these was much appreciated by the audience. Miss Hartnoll delighted the audience with *Some Day* and *Golden Love*. Messrs Tobin, Sharp, Clinch, and Humm are now so well known in the neighbourhood that it goes without saying that they scored each a great success. Mr Wastell fairly convulsed the audience by his humorous recitation *The Collection for Ballysloughguthery Chapel*. Miss Tuck was seen to great advantage in her two pianoforte solos and her brilliant execution was much appreciated. The glees could not have been more perfectly done. The programme concluded with a cantata *Wanted – a Parlour Maid* and Miss Fuller was again to the fore as the 'parlour maid', ably seconded by Misses Teverson and Winney. The chorus of servants was exquisitely rendered and was evidently

regarded as the gem of the evening. A cordial vote of thanks to the chairman terminated the proceedings.

Woodford Times, 26 May 1882

Theydon Bois level crossing



The article on page 2 concerning the visit of King Edward VII refers to the level crossing at Theydon Bois. This view shows the level crossing, with the caption that it 'is to go when the LNER branch line to Epping is electrified. A bridge will be built over the line.' It comes from the May 1939 edition of *Practical Motorist*. The cars are an Austin 10 or 12 (GTW 19 – Essex – August 1938) and a Morris 8 (JMD 987? – Middlesex – ca August 1938).

The locomotive is an ex-GER 2-4-2 tank, class F6, built at Stratford and designed by Stephen Holden of Wanstead, completed in 1911, and withdrawn in 1958. These engines were the mainstay of traffic on the Loughton-Epping-Ongar lines in the 1930s. Number 7002 survived, working out of Lowestoft shed, until 1958.

CHRIS HAYWARD/JOHN HARRISON/CHRIS POND

Lucy Askew – the oldest woman in England

In *Newsletter 194*, in an article about the Askew family, Chris Pond mentioned Lucy Askew, who was at one time the oldest woman in England. Browsing in a bookshop recently I came across a local history book with a newspaper cutting tucked inside. The newspaper is not named or dated, but it must have been in 1997.



Britain's oldest woman, Lucy Askew, died yesterday, aged 114.

Miss Askew, who was also the oldest person in Europe, was born at Loughton, Essex, in September 1883, when Queen Victoria was in the 46th year of her 64-year reign, the Liberal leader William Gladstone was Prime Minister and the British Empire was at the height of its power.

It was the year when the

Brooklyn Bridge – at the time, the world's longest suspension bridge – was opened in New York, and the Krakatoa volcano erupted in Java, killing more than 30,000 people.

In the photos above and right Lucy Askew is pictured as a bridesmaid in 1924 and on her 110th birthday in 1993.

By the time Miss Askew died peacefully in her sleep, she had lived through the reigns of four kings and two queens, experienced two World Wars, seen women gain the right to vote and witnessed the first Moon landing.

However, although the world around her changed dramatically – with such inventions as the telephone, the vacuum cleaner and the transistor radio becoming part of everyday life – Miss Askew's own life changed little over the years.

She never married and never moved away from her birthplace of Loughton. She was a resident at a nursing home in the town when she died.

Her friends say that she had enjoyed relatively good health until very recently and attributed her longevity to her modest lifestyle. She was a committed member of her local Baptist Church, the Loughton Union Church, and greatly enjoyed knitting.

The Rev Nigel Howarth, who was Miss Askew's vicar, said 'She passed away peacefully. She was a very gentle woman of deep faith.'

The vicar of St Mary's Church in Loughton, the Rev David Broomfield, said: 'I understand that she was very much with it right up until the end. She used to knit and knit and knit.'

Miss Askew celebrated her 114th birthday in September, sitting up in bed surrounded by members of her family and cards from well-wishers.

Her younger brother Frank died earlier this year aged 100.

Miss Askew's name had been in the *Guinness Book of Records* since April 1996.

Submitted by LYNN HASELDINE JONES

More about Dragons

The same bookshop as mentioned above had another local book with, pasted into the front cover, the newsletter of the Chigwell Local History Society, number 70, of 1981. It too contained much of interest, including this section, with more information about the house, Dragons (see our *Newsletter 204*), the home of Henry Marshall Fletcher. The author is not indicated.

It was built on a seven acre plot on the corner of Nursery Road and Upper Park Road, Loughton. The architect was Mr Egan, ARIBA, a Loughton architect, who had designed Lopping Hall. He was contracted to check the work and the materials used to ensure that the specifications were carried out – 'level trenches and bail out any water that may be found in same before filling in the concrete. No concrete to

be filled in until foundations are examined by the Architect and passed by him in writing.'

An exact specification of type of concrete and mixture then followed – 'the component parts to be measured with a proper measure provided by the contractors for that purpose'.

Mr Fletcher supplied much of the material – the ranges for the kitchen, ironmongery and boarding. He specified that the oak was to be purchased from Loughton Station and he incorporated many ingenious devices into his house and garden. He planned a rainwater well six feet in diameter and eight feet deep. Outside his garage was a home-made car turntable, the design for which can be seen at Loughton Library. He owned the first car in Loughton and he and his wife drove off to start their honeymoon in great style.

Whilst in the Navy he had learnt to carve and the house was filled with carved wood decorated with the entwined initials of his wife and himself. Cupboards, furniture, the staircase, were all carved, many with his favourite dragon motif. He had a large workshop with a solid work bench running the whole length of one wall. It was a great hardship to him to be unable to carve after he had lost his arm in 1894.

The house was filled with beautiful furniture. The hall and drawing room were papered with William Morris Lincrusta wallpaper. Dragons abounded – in candle snuffers, as wall lights, on a china dinner service, on the gates and on the roof top. Some were gifts and many were collected by Mr and Mrs Fletcher on their visits abroad.

In the hall is a large picture of the French poodle they owned: 'He through his friendship had but one thought overpowering, knew but one God, his mistress. Her he did love and honour, more than man's mind can grasp and yielding up his faithful soul did pray some future state might hold them both. October 7 1904.'

Besides several dogs the Fletchers housed two monkeys in their conservatory. During the war a landmine fell on the garden and demolished many of the glass houses but here grew grapes and peaches and many exotic plants. Outside there were alpenes and a sleeping beauty garden and large lawns.

The house still stands but Mr Fletcher died in 1923 and Mrs Fletcher in 1953. What is the future for Dragons?

Submitted by LYNN HASELDINE JONES

Spas of North London

The eastern group began at Hackney with springs on the downs, and found a patron saint at Tottenham, where St Eloy's Well and Bishop's Well were in high repute for the purity of their water. On the western edge of the parish there was a well dedicated to St Dunstan. These have been swept away by the tide of London streets that now cover them. But north east of them, in the ancient forest of Waltham, now surviving in Epping and Hainault forests, Woodford Wells and Chigwell preserve in their names, if little else, the memory of wells that were spas for a short time at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Little is known about the Woodford wells. There were several of them. The Essex historian, Philip Morant, writing in 1768, says: 'Woodford Wells were formerly in repute as purgative and good for many illnesses.' Like Barnet, Woodford was an easy ride from the city, and what could have been pleasanter than a stroll on the green, with its wide prospects across the Roding valley, after breakfasting,

in the manner of the day, on almond cheese cakes, tarts, seed or plum cakes, baked with fresh Epping butter? The most important well was near the inn called the *Horse and Groom*, which in consequence became the *Horse and Well*. It is now at the rear of a weather-boarded shop nearby. Hood's reference to 'the Wells' in his rollicking *Epping Hunt* is to the inn, not the spring:

Now many a sign at Woodford Town
Its Inn-vitation tells;
But Huggins, full of ills, of course,
Betook him to the Wells.

Lysons describes this well as being 'near the nine-mile stone, in the Forest'. It is on high ground, and springs from a bank of gravel between the Roding and the Ching. The well at Chigwell Row, now lost, described as being 'behind the windmill, among the trees', was warmly praised by a Dr Frewin, a native of the parish, who returned regularly to drink the water. Apparently it enabled him to survive three wives.

The one well in this forest neighbourhood that did bid fair to becoming an important spa was at Wanstead. It was close to the Blake Hall Road, and though a fountain was put up near the site, and serves to mark the spot, this never supplied water from the original well, which gave out as the result of draining operations in the vicinity. It was probably the inadequacy of the water supply that prevented Wanstead, then a fashionable village, with everything else in its favour, from developing into another Hampstead or Tunbridge even, particularly as it was one of the first in the field. John Chamberlain, the letter writer wrote to Sir Dudley Carleton on the 23rd August 1619: 'We have great noise here of a new Spa or spring of that nature, found lately about Wanstead; and much running there is to it daily, by both lords and ladies and other great company, so that they have almost drawn it dry already; and, if it should hold on, it would put down the waters at Tunbridge; which for these three or four years have been much frequented, especially this summer, by many great persons; insomuch that they have seen both say that it (i.e. Tunbridge) is not inferior to the Spa (in Belgium) for good company, numbers of people, and other appurtenances.'



Old and new views of the Horse and Well at Woodford
William Addison, *English Spas* (B T Batsford Ltd 1951).

Mystery cottage



This photo entitled 'In Epping Forest' was recently for sale. Does anyone know where it is, or was?

CHRIS POND

Loughton Station 1959

The picture below shows ex-Great Eastern Railway J15 class engine No 65476 (built at Stratford, 1913) on an excursion train in the centre platform at Loughton station in 1959. The train was double-headed; part of the leading engine's tender can be seen in front of the smokebox. The LT stationmaster is talking to the excursion train's guard.



Steam engines regularly worked over the Loughton line until about 1962. Note the original elegant 1940 lamp standards on the platform; these were removed in the 1980s.

CHRIS POND

Staples Road Pond, 1903

The Chairman proposed that a letter be sent to the Epping Forest Committee, asking them to fill up the Staples Road pond or reservoir. He said, as they knew, in the summer-time there was not a great deal of water in the pond, and excursionists from London made a nice mess of it. His

opinion was that it would be better filled up than in its present state. Of course this year they had had too much water, and the result was that the road had been partly washed away. In the summer-time a horrible smell arose from the pond, which was a great nuisance.

Mr Chilton said that he had much pleasure in seconding, though in years gone by it was one of the most picturesque spots in Loughton. He had spoken to a good many of the inhabitants about the pond, and he thought that, with only one exception, they would like it done away with.

Mr Francis asked the chairman whether he had had any communication with the Forest authorities about the pond.

Woodford Times, October 1903

Submitted by JANE MANLEY

CHRIS POND *adds*: the committee obviously did not appreciate the reason for the pond – flood retention!

In the same newspaper could also be found:

More on the Buckhurst Hill Athenaeum

The Buckhurst Hill Athenaeum was described in Newsletter 203.

The Palmerston Road Schoolroom was crowded at the meeting of the Buckhurst Hill Athenaeum on Monday, when Mr WE Church gave an extremely interesting lecture on 'Dickens'. Mr W Vincent, of Loughton, presided. Mr Church is a man who was personally acquainted with the times, the men, the London, of Dickens, and, indeed, with all things Dickensian, and speaks with the delightful ease of first-hand, familiar knowledge. He has evidently not only read Dickens, but studied him with intense pleasure, and the ease with which he illustrated his remarks on Dickens as a novelist by giving scenes, characters, and incidents, and repeating bits of dialogue, all from memory, and all of rare humour or pathos, made a great impression on his audience, who thoroughly enjoyed the lecture. His personal reminiscences of Dickens, his visit to him at Gadd's Hill, and conversation with him, made one envy him who had the honour of shaking hands with the great novelist. Mr Church closed with a powerful eulogy of Dickens, as 'one who loved his fellow men'.

The Chairman proposed, and Mr Shadbolt seconded, a vote of thanks to the lecturer, which was heartily accorded.

Woodford Times, October 1903

Submitted by JANE MANLEY

Bonhams at the Beaulieu National Motor Museum

AUCTION 20144: THE BEAULIEU SALE
COLLECTORS' MOTOR CARS, MOTORCYCLES AND
AUTOMOBILIA FEATURING THE EXMOOR CLASSIC
CAR MUSEUM COLLECTION: 8 SEPTEMBER, 2012

There is a local connection with the vehicle shown on page 10: LOT 550, a 1930 Austin Seven Van, Chassis No B6704103932, Engine No 116869: Sold for £12,650 including premium.

This Austin Seven delivery van was purchased at auction in 2003 having previously belonged to Mr R C Moriarty, a butcher from Theydon Bois, Essex, hence the sign-written livery.



The introduction of the Seven light car in 1922 marked a change of direction for Austin. Faced with an economic downturn and consequent slackening of demand for the company's larger models, Sir Herbert Austin had begun planning a smaller and more affordable car in 1920, assisted by a young draughtsman employed at Austin's Longbridge factory, Stanley Edge. The company was in receivership at the time, so Herbert Austin financed the project himself and as a result received a royalty on every car sold. Edge's design featured a water-cooled four-cylinder engine, initially of 696cc but enlarged to 747cc early in 1923. Driving via a three-speed gearbox, this all-new power unit was carried in a simple A-frame chassis boasting transverse-leaf front suspension, quarter-elliptic springing at the rear and uncoupled four-wheel brakes.

Sales were disappointing at first but soon picked up and within a few years the Seven had transformed Austin's fortunes, wiping out the British cyclecar industry in the process. There was soon a commercial version available: the light delivery van, shown above, for the sum of £180. Invoices and other documentation on file suggest that 'PG 5492' was restored circa 1980 by Austineers, including a change of engine, while further refurbishment has been carried out during the current ownership. The vehicle was offered with parts lists, a quantity of old tax discs and MoTs (most recent expired June 2007), Swansea V5C document and a hand-written summary of extensive mechanical works undertaken by Waterrow Service Station of Wiveliscombe, Devon.

The long-established R C Moriarty traded, until 2003, from 12, Forest Drive, Theydon Bois. The premises are now occupied by Quality and Excellence Family Butchers.

TERRY CARTER

Air crash in field 197

The Times for 26 May 1937 reported the crash of an aircraft the day before.

Two men were killed last night when the aeroplane in which they had been taking a pleasure trip crashed in flames near the railway line between Theydon Bois and Chigwell.

They were Pilot Officer A T B Campling, of North Weald Aerodrome, and Peter Scott, a medical student, who was his passenger. Pilot Officer Campling was

attached to No 151 (Fighter) Squadron, No 11 (Fighter) Group, North Weald.

Arthur Thomas Blomvill Campling was born on 29 December 1910, in Maida Vale, the son of Arthur Bert-ram Campling and his wife Nellie May (Blunderfield). On 23 February 1937, the *London Gazette* announced the appointment of A T B Campling to the rank of Pilot Officer, following a period of service as a Probationary Pilot Officer.

As a pilot with 151 squadron at North Weald, he would have flown Gloster Gauntlets, the fastest aircraft used by the RAF at the time, but on the fateful day of 25 May he was flying a De Havilland Gipsy Moth biplane. It is believed that he was performing an aerobatic manoeuvre when the plane broke up and crashed, killing him and his passenger, Peter Avison Scott, who was a 24-year-old medical student.

A T B Campling was buried in Bexley, Kent.

Ralph Potter, who has looked into the crash in connection with archaeology (see *Newsletter* 207) says: 'The Gipsy Moth was a popular training aircraft built from wood and canvas for the most part. It's likely that it crashed on a training flight. Most of our fighter pilots would have had their first flying experience in a Moth or kite as they were sometimes called.'



Amy Johnson flew a gipsy moth biplane (Wikipedia)

RALPH POTTER/THE EDITOR with thanks to
www.ww2talk.com

The Noel Park Estate: an early garden suburb

The Noel Park Estate in Wood Green, North London, N22, was where I grew up – not far from Loughton but a world away in other respects. It was built in the 19th century as a green field development and became a predominantly working class area. Noel Park is 6.4 miles north of Charing Cross, near the centre of the modern London Borough of Haringey, of which it is a ward.

It was planned as a community of 2,200 model dwellings to be built by the Artisans, Labourers & General Dwellings Company. The Artisans Company was established in 1867 by William Austin. Austin was illiterate and had begun his working life on a farm as a scarecrow paid 1d per day, working his way up to become a drainage contractor. The company was established as a 'for-profit' joint stock company, to build new houses for the working classes 'in consequence of the destruction of houses by railroads

and other improvements'. It aimed to combine rural planned suburbs, such as Bedford Park, with high-quality homes for the lower classes as pioneered at Saltaire in Yorkshire by Josiah Salt. Earlier philanthropic housing companies – the Peabody Trust and the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company – built blocks of flats in inner cities, but the Artisans Company wanted to build low-rise housing in open countryside near existing railway lines so workers could live in the countryside and commute to the city.

In 1619 the area was almost uninhabited and formed Duckett's (or Dovecote) Manor, the land being mainly woodland and pasture. The only building was Dovecote House which dated from 1254 with the village of Wood Green nearby to the north-east. The manor was on the ancient main road of Green Lanes, and was last occupied in 1881, shortly before the site was cleared for Noel Park to be built.



Ducketts Farm House in 1881

The manor was broken up into 15 small farms by 1880. Northern meadows close to the Moselle River were used for beef farming and the southern fields were grazing land.

The western border of the planned estate was the Great Eastern Railway (GER)'s Palace Gates line and Green Lanes. (The railway opened in 1878 to compete with the Great Northern Railway (GNR) for the crowds expected to come to the new Alexandra Palace.)

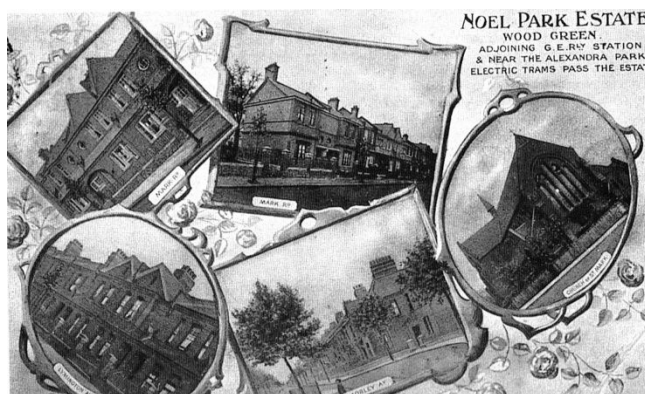
Appointed consulting architect on 14 February 1881, Rowland Plumbe had designed hospitals (the London Hospital and Poplar Hospital) and was President of the Architectural Association in 1871–72 and a Council Member of the Royal Institute of British Architects since 1876.

The Company bid for the site of 100 acres because it was well served by railways. In June 1881 it was purchased for £56,345 (about £5 million today).

So it became one of the earliest garden suburbs in the world, designed to provide affordable housing for working-class families. In this respect it beat Letchworth, usually regarded as the earliest garden city, by some 20 years, though of course Noel Park is a suburb rather than a city and did not have the green spaces of Letchworth but it did have Alexandra Palace not far away, Russell Park (see p 13) and plenty of trees.

It was to be a self-contained community: close enough to railway stations for residents to commute.

To accord with the principles of the Artisans Company's founder, William Austin, no public-houses were built on it, and there are still none – but three or four were available just on its borders.



Advertising post card for the Estate

Five classes of houses were built in the Gothic Revival style. Each street had a distinct design and ornament. All houses had front and rear gardens. The estate layout followed traditional Victorian town planning: larger first- and second-class houses were built in the centre, close to the church and school, while the more numerous third-, fourth- and fifth-class houses were built on the outskirts.



A fifth-class house similar to the first home I can remember

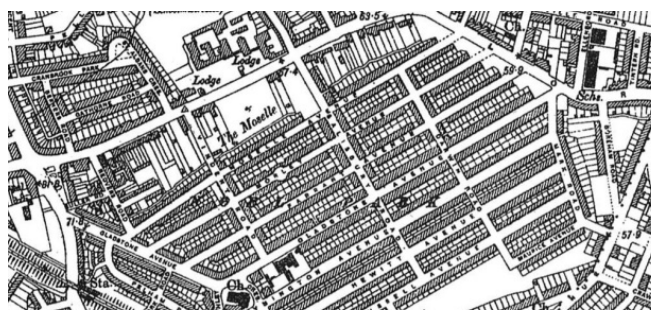
This was not Plumbe's intention. He said in 1896 that: 'I regret that it is necessary to separate the richer and more cultured classes from the poorer, owing to the prejudices which exist; and these prejudices exist on the part of the poor as well as on the part of the other class.'

The houses had one parlour with the kitchen and scullery, in separate rooms at the rear of the house. In the lower class houses the toilet was in the garden, the first-class houses also had toilets upstairs. They were

not fitted with bathrooms: baths were taken in a movable bath, stored in the kitchen or in the garden. Houses had marble mantelpieces, fireplaces and flues and kitchen ranges and were supplied with running water. Not all were supplied with gas or mains electricity from the outset, being lit by candles or oil or paraffin lamps.

They were designed to be small, for cheapness and to discourage taking in lodgers. Also to discourage this, flats were built maintaining the terraced façade, but splitting the house into upper and lower flats, each flat having a separate front door onto the street.

The streets were laid out on a grid plan of broad avenues running on a south-west to north-east axis with narrower roads running north-west to south-east. They were named after prominent members of the Artisans Company and leading political figures of the time, with the exception of Darwin Road, named for Charles Darwin, an early investor in the Company, and Moselle Avenue, which followed the course of the (later) culverted River Moselle.



Layout of the Estate

In 1883 the estate was named 'Noel Park', honouring Ernest Noel (1831–1931), a Liberal Member of Parliament and chairman of the Artisans Company since 1880.

On 4 May 1883, the Artisans Company sold land near to the railway line to the GER for construction of a goods yard, and a siding was built into the development site. The company considered making bricks on the site, but the goods yard allowed the wholesale purchase of raw materials which were then cheaply transported to it. Large warehouses and workshops were constructed for the manufacture of doors, flooring and other necessary materials. In 1884 the *Pall Mall Gazette* reported that 'in a shed 330ft long by 50ft broad are stored a million superficial feet of flooring boards'.

On 4 August 1883, with approximately 200 houses built, Noel Park was formally opened. Noel gave a speech at the opening ceremony describing the development as: '... what, out of the metropolis, would be called a town, which would eventually ... be larger than the Royal Borough of Windsor and nearly as large as ... Canterbury. But this town ... would be built for the express purpose of meeting the wants of the artisan classes, so that they whose resources are limited should be enabled to reside amid pleasant surroundings.' Lord Shaftesbury then laid the memorial stone, praising Noel Park as 'the furtherance of a plan which has proved to be most beneficial, and would, if carried out to its full extent,

completely alter for the better the domiciliary habits of the people of the metropolis'.

Heavily marketed as a 'Suburban Workman's Colony', ads stressed the transport links and the GER renamed Green Lanes railway station as 'Green Lanes (Noel Park)'. It was also less than half a mile from Wood Green station (now Alexandra Palace) on the GNR. By 1886 Noel Park had over 7,000 residents.

But, they couldn't afford railway tickets. Cheap early morning workmen's fares on the Tottenham, Stamford Hill and Walthamstow GER lines had led to overcrowded trains. Large numbers of poor workers moved there (many displaced by the construction of the GER's Liverpool Street station and rehoused by the railway).

The GER, was strongly against extending workmen's fares, stating 'it would do us a very large amount of injury, and would cause the same public annoyance and inconvenience as exists already upon the Stamford Hill and Walthamstow lines' and that 'no one living in Noel Park could desire to possess the same class of neighbours as the residents of Stamford Hill have in the neighbourhood of St Ann's Road'!



Noel Park station c 1906

In 1884, a deputation to the GER and GNR proposed that trains arriving in London prior to 8am should have third-class tickets available at a fare of 3d provided the return journey was not made before 4pm and, by May 1885, both railways adopted this.

The fares dispute discouraged prospective tenants, and large numbers of properties were vacant and building work slowed. In 1887, construction was suspended temporarily, with a large number of properties unlet.

At the 1894 Ordnance Survey, about 50% of the estate was complete. The entire southern half remained open fields.

Terraces of shops were built around the fringes of the estate to cater for the residents of Noel Park, the expanding suburb of Wood Green and the users of the nearby railway station. The designs of the terraces varied, from short terraces of small shops on the north-west side of the less-visited north-west to south east roads of the estate, to parades of large shops on Wood Green High Road near the railway station.

In 1911 a group of mid-Victorian houses on the High Road, immediately south of the railway station, was demolished by the Artisans Company to make way for the Cheapside shopping parade.



Cheapside shopping parade showing the Empire (centre)

The centre of this development was the Wood Green Empire, a 3,000-capacity theatre designed by Frank Matcham, a noted architect of theatres and opera houses. It soon became one of London's leading entertainment venues. In its heyday queues for the 'Gods', balcony seats, stretched from the side entrance in Lymington Avenue right down the side access path, the length of the theatre. These queues were worked by some Noel Park kids (including me) prior to Guy Fawkes for a 'penny for the guy'. To enter by the front entrance on Cheapside was an occasion and usually for the Christmas panto: a treat from Grandad! After the war the theatre declined and closed on 31 January 1955. At that point the balcony staircases were still lit by gas! After it closed it was used by ATV as a studio until 1963. The interior was demolished in 1970, but the building is now used as a shop and offices.

Although Plumbe's original plans had envisaged a recreational area in the centre, this never happened – the land reserved for it was built over during early development. In 1929 a long, thin strip of land near the south of the estate was designated as parkland and given the name 'Russell Park'. In 2003, following consultation with residents, the park was renamed 'Noel Park' by Haringey Council. Its name has since been changed back again to Russell Park.

A church site was reserved from the beginning, and in 1884 Plumbe submitted designs for a church and mission hall. The mission hall opened in March 1885 with room for 350, and soon began to suffer from overcrowding. The people of Noel Park started a fund to pay for the church, which was consecrated on 1 November 1889 as St Mark's. It is a large church, seating 850, built in the Venetian Gothic style, and divided into a five-bay nave, transepts, chancel, morning chapel and organ chamber. Although Plumbe's original design envisaged a tower, it was never built. By 1900, St Mark's was reported as having a congregation twice that of any other church in Wood Green.

In 1905, G J Earle, the Artisans Company's surveyor, made plans for the rest of the site following experience from the completed northern half of the estate. Buildings were designed to a modified version of Plumbe's third-class house plan in the Arts and Crafts style, with white-rendered brickwork, regular low gables, and curved ground floor windows. The toilets were now designed with connecting doors to

the sculleries, and in some cases the staircases repositioned to the front of the house. They were no longer described or marketed as 'third-class' houses.

By October 1906, 1,999 properties were let, including 88 shops and 4 stables. The estate was nearly complete by then, but construction was not entirely finished until 1929.

In the early days Noel Park and Wood Green was the nearest railway station on the GER's Palace Gates line. It was located on the north-east side of the High Road near Pelham Road which was part of the estate. The Palace Gates railway was under-used for some of its life but had some glory in the war when a spur was put into it from the East Coast main line at Palace Gates thus connecting the main line to the docks and east London. The Palace Gates line closed in 1963 and the goods yard became a housing development while part of the site of the railway is now occupied by Wood Green Shopping City.



View of the High Road and Shopping City 2015

London expanded rapidly during the early 20th century, and after the area was connected to the London Underground in 1932, Noel Park became completely surrounded by later developments.

The underground opened in 1904 from the City to Finsbury Park, followed in 1906 by what became the Piccadilly Line from the western suburbs through central London also to Finsbury Park, about two miles south of Noel Park. After the GNR were forced to do away with an agreement that prevented the underground from expanding further north, the Government provided direct subsidy enabling, in 1930, work on extending the Piccadilly Line. The Cockfosters extension opened in stages, with stations at Wood Green and Turnpike Lane – both on the western side of Noel Park – opening on 19 September 1932.

With the area connected to west and central London by clean, rapid and frequent electric trains, the population of the surrounding areas rose rapidly.

There had been a coach service providing a direct service to Southend serving the towns and villages which were off the Arterial Road, since 27 May 1927 (*Newsletters* 201, 202). The brown and cream Leyland coaches operated by City were an integral part of the Wood Green transport scene. The service continued to 1991, latterly by Eastern National. Trolleybuses at the end of their routes turned in Buller Road and Redvers

Road near the then coach station as motor buses still do today: a remarkable transport hub with buses and coaches continuously laying over and turning near to Wood Green underground station.

In 1965, the Estate was incorporated into the newly created London Borough of Haringey (Wood Green, Tottenham and Hornsey), and in 1966 it was bought by that local authority and taken into public ownership. Houses on it are now reported as being sold for £300,000 plus!

Damage was sustained during the Second World War (at least three major bombing incidents) and there was some demolition work during the building of Wood Green Shopping City in the 1970s, but Noel Park is still mainly architecturally intact. In 1982, the majority of the area was granted Conservation Area and Article Four Direction status by the Secretary of State for the Environment in recognition of its significance in the development of suburban and philanthropic housing and in the history of the modern housing estate.

A 20th century commentator (Michael Robbins) called the estate's architecture 'mild and depressing'!

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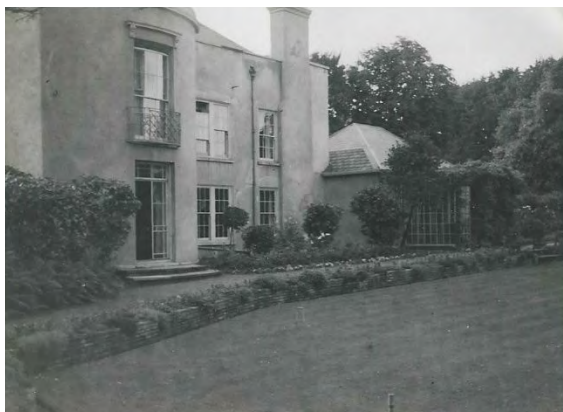
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TED MARTIN

White Lodge

Former Loughton resident Elaine Luton wrote in Newsletter 206 about the house she lived in at Alderton Hill. Her husband Alan has now kindly submitted his memories of a fine house in Snaresbrook, the history of which deserves to be recorded.



White Lodge was built in four parts, the oldest being the centre, square section, and thought to be nearly four hundred years old. At some stage the front section, with rounded ends, was added. The orangery was then built on to the front by Sir Christopher Musgrave in the 20th century, and this orangery was extended by my father (Albert Gordon Luton) to make a billiard room, where he put his father-in-law's billiard table which had a Morrison shelter under it when we had bombing practically every night.

If you were to scrape the paint off the columns to the front door you would find polished marble. They,

and the front path of marble chippings, were added by the Hitchcocks (Funeral Directors of West Ham), who sold White Lodge to my father in 1937. In the 1960s the garage with a room over the top was converted into a flat, incorporating the old coach house and laundry.

In the 1980s a new house was erected on the area of land behind White Lodge; planning permission was obtained by Geoff Luton, working as a domestic architect.

The Second World War

The first bomb that fell on White Lodge was in December 1941. It fell right on top of a working well in the yew trees in the garden, exposing a beautiful brick construction (quite close to the boundary with Woodford Road). The bomb blew down the summer house that contained the croquet set. Several of the balls from that set were returned from the far end of Eagle Lane! Fortunately the first bomb did not do much damage to the house, breaking a few windows; we were remarkably lucky.

Major damage was done to the house by the second bomb in July 1944. A flying bomb fell on a Ford 8 in the main road, killing the driver and his passenger (a naval officer and his fiancée) outright. The car's petrol tank was blown onto the roof of White Lodge and started a fire. There had previously been a flying bomb that landed a little further away, demolishing a block of flats on the corner of Eagle Lane.

At White Lodge, both roofs collapsed and bricks to part of the rounded end facing the Eagle fell away. My father had a gang of men there first thing the following morning to prop up and repair timbers in the roof and cover them with felt. They timbered and felted the rounded end as well. The house looked quite satisfactory to the passer-by. His action saved the house. All windows were then boarded up until eventually repair works were done.

The house was left in that condition for two to three years. Eventually the War Damage Commission came to assess the damage to White Lodge, when my father, and Reg Slater, a local architect, asserted that the house could be satisfactorily repaired and that it should not be pulled down. The War Damage Assessor argued with them but in the end agreed that if a well-known local architect and builder had said the house could be repaired, who was he to argue? He agreed that repairs could be started.

In carrying out the repair, the front wall was completely demolished, due in part to the bombing and to some sort of settlement. When the front wall was rebuilt, the dummy window on the first floor (previously a dummy with shutters) was replaced with a real window. After the second bomb the family rented a house at 57 Hollybush Hill and lived there until White Lodge was repaired in 1950.

ALAN LUTON

On page 151 of *Epping Forest Then and Now* (Winston G Ramsey and Reginald L Fowkes, published by

Battle of Britain Prints International Limited in 1986, and still available in some bookshops) there is a photograph of the damage caused to the buildings on the corner of Snaresbrook Road and Woodford Road, near the Eagle public-house, and there is reference to the flying bomb mentioned by Mr Luton, as falling on 19 July 1944, 'causing two fatalities and injuring eight others'. Kenneth Neale was impressed by White Lodge, and in his book *Discovering Essex in London* (Essex Countryside, 1969) he refers to the 'quiet charm of this exquisite little Georgian house' and describes it as 'engagingly prim'. *Ed.*



White Lodge today is a fine house granted Grade II listing in 1954.

Queensbury a lost mansion of Buckhurst Hill

Queensbury was for sale in August 1927, according to a brief document held in the Essex Record Office. A man called John Avery, of Croft Lodge, Snakes Lane, Woodford Green, was interested in the property, and Kemsley's, the land agents, described it as:

'Inner hall with galleried landing; dining room 27ft 6in by 18ft, magnificent circular drawing room, library and conservatory. There are about ten bedrooms and dressing rooms, two bathrooms, etc and some useful outbuildings including stabling, laundry and garage. The gardens and woodland which are of rare beauty extend to an area of nearly six acres, and include kitchen garden and tennis lawns, rose garden, large ornamental pond and swimming bath. The price we are instructed to ask is £6,000 for the freehold, but we have reason to believe a little less will be taken.'

A local man remembers the house as being 'probably late Victorian but of Queen Anne style'. The next house in Ardmore Lane, Oakfield, was of Gothic style, which would have been the fashionable style in the 1860s when it was built. Queensbury on the other hand may have been built a little later, by which time Queen Anne style was fashionable.

The difference would only have been two or three years, however, as Queensbury was definitely occupied by 1870.

An 1870 directory gives the occupant of Queensberry Villa, as it was then spelt, as John W Morris. John Warrington Morris was born in 1829 in

Poplar. He was an architect and surveyor. His wife at that time was Louisa, the daughter of John Howkins, who was a civil engineer. She was born in Leeds in 1836. A website dealing with the history of the docks in Edinburgh indicates that John Howkins worked there, and lived at a house called Queensberry from 1850 so it is possible that Louisa spent some time there and named the house in Buckhurst Hill after her family home. John Warrington Morris designed the Danish Church, Ming Street, Poplar and St Michael and All Angels, Bromley by Bow.

Queensberry was sold at auction on Tuesday, 20 August 1872. It was then described as a freehold detached residence, standing on high ground, a little over half a mile from the railway station, commanding very extensive and picturesque views. It contained seven bedrooms, a bathroom with hot and cold water supply, a good entrance hall, dining room and circular drawing room. In addition there was a breakfast room, kitchens, scullery, usual domestic offices and cellarage, and it had a kitchen garden, flower garden and paddock. Gas and water were laid on.

The photo below shows the lake at Queensbury at the time of the Davies family (courtesy of Sue Davies).



The next trace of the house is in the 1881 census, and it and the *Kelly's Directories* of Essex for many years show William Tudor as the occupant of Queensbury, as it appears it was then spelt. He had moved to Buckhurst Hill from Kensington

William Scripps Tudor (1838–1908) was one of the sons of Samuel Tudor (1799–1864) of Dowgate Hill in the City of London. Samuel married Mary Heriot Scripps (1798–1859, whose sister married Samuel Deacon, and whose son was Loughton-based artist Octavius Dixie Deacon). Samuel was originally a druggist, and in 1834 converted a brewery in Hull into a white lead manufactory. The business developed as a family concern, operating under the title of Samuel and William Tudor and Company, and after the death of the founder the firm was managed by three of his

sons, Edward Scripps Tudor (1830–1918), our William Scripps Tudor, and Fredrick Sidney Scripps Tudor (1839–1882). In 1862 the eldest son, Edward, was granted a patent for an invention for the improvement of the process of purifying lead. Further property was purchased in Hull in the 1860s and 1870s and premises were also leased at College Hill and College Street in the City of London.

William Scripps Tudor was educated at Charterhouse School and in Stuttgart, Germany between May 1853 and December 1854. He was married to Alice Punch (1844–1912). They had no children. William and Alice Tudor are buried in the churchyard at St John the Baptist, Buckhurst Hill.

Owen Scripps Tudor (1836–1933), another son of Samuel Tudor followed a separate line of business and built up a firm trading in general merchandise, with premises at Leadenhall Street and Buenos Aires in Argentina. The firm traded under the name of Tudor Moore and Co in London, and Moore and Tudor in Buenos Aires. The business in South America was developed in the 1860s and 1870s and specialised in trade with the River Plate and Montevideo, Uruguay. The partnerships were dissolved in 1905 on Owen Scripps Tudor's retirement from business, and he returned to live in Fernhurst, West Sussex, residing until March 1918 at Friday's Hill House. Owen Scripps Tudor was married to Elizabeth Punch (1837–1901). The link with South America was continued by various members of the extended Tudor and Guy families. There was also a strong link with Forest School.

It appears that Queensbury was sold on the death of William Scripps Tudor in 1908. Alice had moved by 1911 to Fairlawn, Queen's Road. She lived there with two servants. Staying with her, either as a visitor or companion, was Horatia Frances Deborah Carrington, who had been born in 1860, like Alice, in Barbados. Alice died in 1912.

The sale involved Geoffrey William Tudor, the late owner's nephew, Owen Scripps Tudor, the late owner's brother (and father of the previously mentioned Geoffrey William Tudor), and Jesse Thomas Charlesworth, who had married William and Owen's sister, Harriet Anne, and so was the late owner's brother-in-law. Queensbury was sold to Ernest Scott, whose business address was 2 Talbot Court, Gracechurch Street, in the City of London. His company, Ernest Scott & Co. was listed as an associate member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers in 1901.

In 1927 Queensbury was sold by Ernest Scott to Joseph William Davies.

In 1935 Joseph William Davies gave up a small strip of land to Essex County Council for the improvement of the main road (Epping New Road), described as being 'dedication to the public as part of the highway repairable by the inhabitants at large'.

Having bought Queensbury from Ernest Scott in 1927 for £5000, Joseph William Davies sold it to his wife, Florence Emma, in 1945 for £2000. She made a will in 1956 and appointed her son and two others to

be her executors. She died on 16 September 1960, and probate was obtained in 1961. Queensbury was sold in 1963 to Farsown Limited, for £147,400. Demolition and the building of the block of flats called Queensbury and other houses in Ardmore Lane soon followed.



A hand-tinted view of Queensbury, showing the circular drawing room, by Arthur Hands of Wanstead (photograph courtesy of Ann Pearsons)

A newspaper article for 19 July 1963 stated:

New proposals for the development of Queensbury estate, Ardmore Lane, Buckhurst Hill, have been made to the Chigwell Council.

Following plans for skyscraper flats there comes an outline application from Mr W C Stock for houses and flats.

His plans provide for the layout of a new road and the building of 79 houses with a garage to each, and 17 flats with 24 garages.

While deferring consideration of the application the council says that no objection will be made to the proposed form of development – mainly by terraced houses.

References

Sale document A 810 of 1927 in the Essex Record Office.
With many thanks to Sue Davies and Ann Pearsons.

LYNN HASELDINE JONES

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