LOUGHTON AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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53rd Season

William Harvey (1578–1657) and a portrait of Charles II (1630–85), when Prince of Wales

Portrait of Charles II (1630–85) when Prince of Wales
Artist: William Dobson (1611–1646)
Oil on canvas, 153.6cm x 129.8cm.

Introduction

The collection of art formed by members of the Harvey family who lived at Rolls Park, Chigwell, Essex, for over 200 years, has interested students and academics for more than a century. The family amassed considerable wealth through their business activeities as merchants in the City of London, trading mainly with Turkey and the Levant, which allowed them to purchase more than one substantial mansion in the country as well as having town houses in London. Another member of the first generation of Harveys was Dr William Harvey who discovered the correct theory for the circulation of the blood in 1628.

The marriages of members of various generations of the family also produced more wealth, including a marvellous collection of pictures with which they could decorate their houses.

Following the death of Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey in February 1830, a valuation of the pictures at Rolls Park was made by William Seguier (the first Keeper of the National Gallery). The valuation did not include the family portraits, presumably as the intention was that they should descend with members of the family. However, there were still 90 pictures by Italian and Flemish masters of the Renaissance period which Seguier valued.

These pictures had been inherited by the Admiral's mother, whose great uncle was Thomas Walker (1688–1748). On the death of Walker the pictures came into the Harvey family together with Walker's London house at Clifford Street, near the bottom of Bond Street. The Harveys let the house in Clifford Street in 1770 to George Fermor, Earl of Pomfret, and the lease included a schedule of all the pictures in the house. Shortly before the Admiral's death in 1830, the pictures were moved to Rolls Park.

The Admiral's will did not make it clear as to who should inherit each picture and the result was an acrimonious exchange of correspondence between several of his daughters, who each claimed various pictures, and their husbands were also drawn into the arguments.

Today, over 50 years after the demolition of the house at Rolls Park, the important collection of pictures and portraits has in part descended with members of the Harvey family. Other pictures are now in national collections at the National Portrait Gallery (London), the Scottish National Portrait Gallery (Edinburgh), the Tate Gallery, the National Maritime Museum (Greenwich), and in galleries and private collections in the UK and around the world.[1]

One of the first pictures believed to have come into the Harvey collection in 1643, was a portrait of Charles II, as the Prince of Wales, aged 12 years. This portrait is of both historical interest and illustrative of the work of the artist William Dobson.

The portrait shows Charles, Prince of Wales, aged 12, in 1642, portrayed in buff jerkin and breast-plate, white sleeves, and gold-striped red breeches, the Garter 'George' round his neck and a crimson sash round his waist. His sword is at his side; a military baton in his right hand.

A boy stands beside him, said to be his page, holding out the Prince's helmet. In the lower left corner of the picture is the dreadful head of the Gorgon Medusa, with axes and banners, symbolising

the discord of war. In the background is a distant battle scene, with a column in the centre and a brocade curtain to the right.

The portrait is considered Dobson's most important royal commission, painted in the extreme of his highly individual version of the baroque style. It is dramatically conceived, sumptuously coloured and richly painted, with the greatest attention to detail.[2] The Prince's page is traditionally identified as 'Mr Windham', perhaps the son of his nurse, Christabella Windham.

Historical background

Dr William Harvey (1578–1657), was an ardent royalist who in 1631 was appointed by Charles I as Physician in Ordinary. By the beginning of the next decade Harvey had become involved with the political problems facing the King.

When the King and his family fled from London in January 1642, Harvey joined them soon afterwards. By the autumn the King's wanderings had taken him westwards to Shropshire and the Welsh Marches, while assembling troops for the expected clash of armies, and by the middle of October he was starting on his march towards London.

On 22 October the cavalry in the Royalist army, under Prince Rupert, was occupying the steep escarpment of Edgehill, overlooking Kineton and the main road from Warwick to Banbury, with the Avon valley away to the west. Rather surprisingly, the King had kept with him up to this point two of the Royal children, the Prince of Wales, aged 12, and the Duke of York, aged 9.

On the morning of 23 October the boys were in Dr Harvey's charge. The primary authority for knowledge of this fact is John Aubrey who had been told the story by Harvey himself:

'When Charles I by reason of the tumults left London, he attended him, and was at the fight of Edge-hill with him; and during the fight, the Prince and Duke of York were committed to his care. He told me that he withdrew them under a hedge, and tooke out of his pockett a booke and read; but he had not read very long before a Bullet of a great Gun grazed on the ground near them; which made him remove his station.' [3]

After the battle was over, both the tired armies camped on the field. Harvey certainly remained in the vicinity and took a hand in attending to the wounded. The battle was inconclusive, and the King decided to march to Oxford, where he set up his headquarters.

If further confirmation is wanted of the part taken by Harvey at Edgehill, it is found in the picture given to him by the King and clearly intended as a memento of the occasion.[4]

Provenance

Soon after the battle of Edgehill the King summoned the artist William Dobson to Oxford. One of the pictures that he painted while he was there is the portrait of Charles II, as the Prince of Wales. There is no specific evidence that the portrait was given to William Harvey although this has been assumed to be true for many centuries. He no longer had his own house in London, and now led a peripatetic life often staying with his brother Eliab, at Cockaine House in the City of London, at Winchlow Hall, in north Essex, or at Roehampton in Surrey, where he was to die in 1657.

The will of William Harvey refers to '. . . my books and household stuffe Pictures and apparel of which I have not already disposed I give to the Colledge [*sic*] of Physicians all my books and papers and my best Persia long Carpet . . .', but no reference is made to individual pictures. It is more likely that he had already given the portrait of Charles II to his brother Eliab.

Geoffrey Keynes, in his biography of William Harvey, suggests that the picture was inherited by William's brother Eliab (1589–1661) and thereafter by descent through this branch of the family, but this has to be questioned.

In his book associated with the William Dobson exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in London in 1984, Malcolm Rogers has identified a reference to the sale of the portrait by Grinling Gibbons in his sale of 15 November 1722, lot 24.[5] How long Gibbons had owned the portrait or from whom he had purchased it, are not known. The purchaser of the portrait in 1722 was Thomas Walker, who was advised on his collection by the Virtuosi Club.

George Vertue in his *Note Books of Paintings Relating to Artists and Collections in England*,[6] describes seeing the portrait in the collection of Thomas Walker, when he visited his house in Clifford Street, at the bottom of Bond Street, London. This would have been at some time between 1736 and 1741:

'A fine collection of pictures of Thomas Walker Esq., of Vande Velde – I think 14 capital pictures, big & small – many history pieces, Landscapes &c.

Dobson a picture of Prince Charles II, standing with a Truncheon in his hand – youth presenting a helmet – Mr Windham – at bottom trophies of standards colours Armes. Tumbled down the face of Envy appears. It is a large Square over a chimney excellently painted by Dobson, after 1638 [obviously after 1642] when he was made Kt Garter – about 14.'

When Thomas Walker died in 1748, he left his house in Clifford Street together with the collection of pictures, to his nephew Stephen Skynner, and in turn to his great niece Emma, who in 1750 married William Harvey (1714–1763). William was succeeded by his fourth son Eliab, who was later to become Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey (1758–1830), one of the heroes of Trafalgar when he commanded the *Temeraire.*

A portrait appears in the inventory of the contents of the house at Clifford Street when in 1770 the Earl of Pomfret took a lease on the house. The lease provides a description of each picture including the name of the artist and the precise position of the pictures in each room. The last item in the list of pictures refers to 'A Portrait of a young man holding a helmet' with the location stated to be 'Over the Chimney'. While the

description is somewhat brief, and there is the added confusion that the artist's name is given as Walker, the location is consistent with George Vertue's *Notes*.

The collection of pictures at Clifford Street had by the time of Admiral Harvey's death in 1830 been transferred to Rolls Park at Chigwell. The portrait of Charles II by Dobson appears in the Sequier 1830 valuation of pictures at Rolls Park and is shown as in the Library and valued at £80. The Admiral's two sons had predeceased him and the pictures were divided among his six daughters.

The Charles II portrait was allocated to Georgiana who married John Drummond. Their daughter, Henrietta, Lady Munro of Lindertis, inherited the picture which descended to her grandson Sir Torquil Munro (5th Baronet) who sold it to the National Portrait Gallery of Scotland in 1935 (for £8,000), where it can be seen today.

Conclusion

It appears that at some time in the late 17th or early 18th century the portrait of Charles II by Dobson left the ownership of the Harvey family and was acquired by Grinling Gibbons, and in 1722 came into the collection of Thomas Walker. Almost by pure chance the portrait returned to the Harveys through the marriage of Walker's great niece, Emma Skynner, to William Harvey in 1750. It remained with descendants of the Harvey family until 1935 when it became part of a public collection. However, the enigma still remains: why would the Harvey family have ever wished to dispose of such an iconic portrait presented to them by the King? Malcolm Rogers has even gone as far as saying that, with the evidence of the portrait's provenance in the 18th century, it now seems unlikely that the portrait was presented to William Harvey in 1643.[7]

Peter Drummond-Murray, a descendant of Georgiana Drummond (née Harvey), has commented that the Harveys would have never sold the portrait – they were rich merchants and never short of money. Much more likely is that it was lost or sold during the Commonwealth.[8] However, the subject of the portrait, William Harvey's presence at both the battle of Edgehill, and subsequently in Oxford where Dobson painted the portrait, must on balance still make it at least a good possibility that the portrait was presented to Dr William Harvey.

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Notes

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2. Rogers, M, *William Dobson 1611–46* (1983).

3. Aubrey, John, *Brief Lives*: Dr William Harvey (2000).

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

5. Houlditch, MSS transcripts of sales catalogues 1711–1759, vol I, pp 539-54. [Copy in NAL at V&A.]

6. The Note Books of George Vertue Relating to Artists and Collections in England, vol IV, in Walpole Society, vol XXIV (1936).

7. Rogers, M, *William Dobson 1611–46* (1983).

8. Correspondence between P Drummond-Murray and the author.

RICHARD MORRIS

Archie McDowall: Loughton hero

Second Lieutenant Archie McDowall died when his observation balloon collapsed during a practice on 12 January 1918. His fellow officer had a parachute and survived. Archie was the son of George McDowall, the auctioneer at Loughton. He attended Chigwell School from 1906 to 1909 and volunteered for the Royal Flying Corps. From the School's archives we find out that he was a 'stylish cricketer'; he came to the School from the City of London School; achieved his Oxford and Cambridge Certificates and was studying to become a surveyor. His Report shows him as vigorous, hardworking and charming. The School went into mourning for him, as indeed it did for the 78 other young men who were killed in their prime during the Great War. There were only 80 boys at School at that time.

THE SCHOOL ROLL ENTRY

Archie McDowall, after serving in the Infantry, and being seriously wounded, was transferred to the Flying Corps, and had just started training for his new service. It was one of his earliest balloon flights, and something went wrong. He failed to get out his parachute, and came down clinging to the side of the car. He was killed by the fall, but his companion flier, by means of his parachute, escaped with a

severe shaking. McDowall came to the School in 1906, but left for business too early, for he had considerable ability, and would have made for himself a good reputation in the course of a longer School career, or at the University. He was moreover an expert in football and cricket, and of a charming personality, popular alike among masters and boys. During his short business career he had won respect for unflagging energy, and straightforward dealing. In Loughton, where he lived lately, he was popular, and highly regarded.

MARIAN DELFGOU

The mention of his living lately in Loughton refers to the fact that the family had lived in Buckhurst Hill for a while, at the grand house in Powell Road called Lugano. Archie's funeral was arranged by Waterman's of Queen's Road, Buckhurst Hill. EDITOR

CHRIS POND adds: The McDowalls lived at St Margaret's, High Road (which was demolished around 1984; this is where Homecherry House now is). George wasn't actually an auctioneer at Loughton, he operated out of the Barking Road, Canning Town, where his firm still is, he only lived here (and at Buckhurst Hill).

The Chigwell UDC Ambulance Service: part 1

Edited by JOHN HARRISON

This article represents a coming together of three people's contributions. I (John Harrison) am a member of the Enfield and District Veteran Vehicle Society (EDVVS) which meets at the Whitewebbs Museum, Enfield. One of the EDVVS members, Mark Bailey (the second person), has recently restored a Middlesex ambulance and he gave a talk to that Society about the vehicle. During his talk he showed some pictures of a Chigwell UDC (CUDC) ambulance. Being keen to find out more about local history, particularly of an automotive nature, I spoke to him afterwards. He kindly supplied me with copies of the photos which had come from an album kept by the Epping Forest District Museum. Thinking these could be used in the LDHS Newsletter, *I contacted some society members to see if we could find out more about the CUDC Ambulance Service. I found that Ian Strugnell (the third person) had researched the CUDC minutes and abstracted information about the Ambulance Service and sent me what he had written about it together with some extracts from the minutes. Ian's is a good summary of the history, so it is set out below:*

On the formation of CUDC in October 1933, it seems that there was no Council-run ambulance service inherited from the previous Councils; apparently there was an arrangement with the St John's Ambulance Service at Walthamstow.

Towards the end of 1933, the Ministry of Health asked what ambulance services there were; enquiries were made of some neighbouring Councils to see if they would enter into temporary agreements for the use of their respective ambulances. Replies were not encouraging, so inevitably, with the County Council also taking an interest, a conference was suggested. This eventually took place at Epping on 10 December 1934 but negotiations still continued.

Meanwhile, CUDC was making plans for its own new Public Offices, and decided in March 1934 that the fire and ambulance stations would be separate from such offices on adjoining land.

In May 1935 it was decided to take action for CUDC to have its own ambulance service, and a month later tenders were invited for a six-cylinder motor-ambulance with the necessary equipment and accommodation for two stretcher-cases. Eleven tenders were received, which were referred to Doctors Pendred (a Councillor), Harris (part-time Medical Officer of Health) and Dykes (part-time Assistant MOH) for report to the next Council meeting as to their suitability. The Clerk and the Engineer & Surveyor also produced a report for the Council to consider at that meeting on 10 July, covering staffing and other arrangements. The Council decided that the Public Health Committee should inspect three vehicles for which Patmore Bros had tendered (Bedford, Morris and Austin), apply to the Ministry of Health for loan sanction, place a contract if one of the vehicles was thought suitable, and make arrangements to provide a service. The Committee met after the Council meeting and decided a date for the inspection (16 July); on that date they first decided on more detailed arrangements as to how the service would operate, then inspected the 'Bedford de Luxe' (Patmore Bros could not arrange for the Morris and Austin to be available then). The meeting adjourned until 23 July, when the Morris and Austin vehicles were inspected. They settled on the Morris de Luxe at £396 painted Deep Brunswick Green with black wings, and also ordered 'Extras' – 1 sponge rubber bed with cover (£5 16s); 2 pillows to match (at £1 16s);

1 gong (£3 5s); lettering (£3 10s); 4 brown wool blankets, Army type, J & A Carters Ltd (at 15s) – (total with discount £17 4s 9d). The Clerk was to apply to the Ministry of Health for loan sanction (£425 maximum repayable within 10 years) and, on receiving such, and getting Patmore Bros' firm quotation for the 'Extras', place a contract (delivery was likely to be about eight weeks); also to apply for registration of the vehicle (Licence Duty nil) and to cover it with Municipal Mutual Insurance Ltd against the usual risks. The Medical Officer of Health was to obtain first-aid medical requisites for use in the ambulance (splints, bandages, scissors, etc; including brandy or whisky or sal volatile 8oz and oxygen, CO_2 Sparklet outfit) at a maximum cost of £6. The Clerk reported to the Public Health Committee on 2 September that the Ministry had sanctioned the loan and the contract had been placed; medical requisites would be obtained when delivery was expected.

The question of reciprocal arrangements with neighbouring authorities was raised again in late September, but it was decided not to proceed with discussions until Chigwell's service was established. The new ambulance was delivered in early November, and the Clerk reported to the Public Health Committee on 2 December that it would be available for use by the 16th. Initially, Patmore Bros supplied drivers 'on call' from their own staff. The Highways & Fire Committee arranged to advertise for an Ambulance-Driver/Yardman to assist in the service, but the Public Health Committee chairman and the relevant officers made the appointment, effective from 27 January 1936. Various other arrangements were made as experience was gained, and at the 15 April 1936 Council Annual Meeting it was decided that a Fire Brigade and Ambulance Committee should be formed. The Engineer & Surveyor was responsible for the day-to-day running, and, from September, regularly reported statistics to the Committee: from 25 April to 25 August there had been 33 accident calls and 19 medical cases; 471 miles were travelled and the average turn-out time was 3·3 minutes. The Medical Officer of Health was responsible for some equipment. The service was available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but only for accident and urgent medical cases; it was found advantageous to have two men in the ambulance, especially at night. If a call was received while the ambulance was out on another one, there was an arrangement with Mr Flack of Epping to cover if possible with his ambulance.

On the outbreak of war in September 1939, the Council ambulance remained as a 'civilian' service, the Civil Defence organisation having other vehicles for emergency use which could also be used to help as needed. In February 1944 the Engineer & Surveyor reported that the vehicle had covered 19,000 miles, and was by then used more due to the greater scope of the service given; he was authorised to have it thoroughly overhauled. In September 1945 he reported that the vehicle would have to be out of service for one week for repairs, and he had arranged with Flack of Epping for the maximum possible night and day cover and readiness; Woodford and Chingford Councils had also agreed to help.

Post-war reorganisation resulted in a decision in June 1946 to retain five Council employees for the Ambulance Service, to work on average 68 hours per week. It would be possible to make do with only four working on average 84 hours but having five available meant a full service was maintainable with one absent through sickness or holiday. Agreement on a 48-hour working week resulted in seven men being required to provide two on duty at all times from 1 April 1947. Under the National Health Service Act 1946, Essex County Council would become responsible for the ambulance service as from July 1948. IAN STRUGNELL

In part 2 I will write more about the CUDC Ambulance Service, but for the moment I will add just one point of information to Ian's article: Patmore's Garage was situated in the High Road where Marks and Spencer's is now located. It was taken over by Lambs in 1969. JOHN HARRISON

A tribute to *Essex Countryside* magazine

In a number of issues of the *Newsletter* I have used articles first published in the now-defunct magazine *Essex Countryside*. I thought it would be of interest to show a few short extracts and photographs on various local subjects, taken from a range of issues from the 1960s and 1970s.

Dick Turpin

The photograph below shows Turpin's Cave at High Beech, 'reputed to be a hideout of the highwayman. Inside are a long-barrelled pistol and some spurs which are said to have belonged to Turpin'. The photographer was Alexander Puck (Vol 15, No 121, February 1967).

Another building with a supposed connection to Dick Turpin was the Wake Arms, where again his belongings were on display for many years. This photograph was by Rudolph Robert (Vol 15, No 124, May 1967).

Global warming – a new theory?

Major the Rev Philip Wright, MBE, had this to say about the weather in Essex in 1966:

The weather as I write is stormy and very wet, and this always causes somebody to ask whether atomic and space interference is the cause. Before we make such bold statements we should study the evidence of those who have kept diaries. In 1828 and 1829 there was a period of deluge throughout each summer; two years later drought hit Essex; and in 1860 there were floods! My own records reveal that in 1939 Essex had nine inches of rain in October alone; I was a curate in Liverpool at the time and the month there was dry. In 1946 thunderstorms predominated and it was not the warm weather that caused them. June that year had only one day where the temperature reached seventy, and there were nineteen wet days. July was not much better, and the only warm day in August was the bank holiday. October that year produced fog, frost and heavy rains. The following year had cold weather with severe frost for the first three months.

I write this to contradict those who say that the seasons are changing, for in 1959 we had indeed what is called an old-fashioned summer. In favour of the atomic theory, however, I did learn something in my army days down at Salisbury Plain. We were told that the firing of heavy artillery could cause local rain. The process is 'aqueous precipitation', and we were told that whatever lowered the temperature of the air below dew-point caused rain. The continued discharge of heavy artillery raises the temperature of the air lying on the earth surface and sends it higher, where it expands and lowers the temperature. Now if this applies to localised shell fire, could it apply far more in atomic spheres? I leave the question for readers to think about. (Vol 15, No 117, October 1966.)

House prices

Woodford Green: detached modern three-bedroom residence, extremely popular position, keenly sought-after estate immediately off High Road. Well built by reputable contractors, includes two reception rooms, kitchenette and bathroom, separate wc, attached garage, fair-sized garden – £5,950.

Buckhurst Hill: particularly well-favoured quiet residential position, immediately off High Road, close to forest and excellent travel services. Well-built, well-maintained modern residence, including four bedrooms, tiled bathroom, separate wc, with additional toilet ground floor, two spacious reception rooms and particularly good-sized kitchen; an attractive house set between well-stocked gardens and including incorporated garage – £8,250.

Buckhurst Hill: good quality detached residence, well maintained in good order throughout. Fully equipped gas-fired central heating. Quiet residential position close Epping Forest. Particularly good hall with cloakroom off, two good-sized reception rooms, well-fitted kitchenette, three bedrooms, tiled bathroom with matching wc, attached garage; side entrance, well-stocked gardens – £8,600.

F W Baldwin, FAI, 174 High Road (Salway Hill), Woodford Green. Tel BUC0131. (Vol 14, No 116, September 1966.)

Local advertising

This shows the latest tableware available at Fords of Loughton, 171 High Road (Tel 4158): 'all the new 1967 bone china patterns in stock'. (Vol 15, No 124, May 1967.)

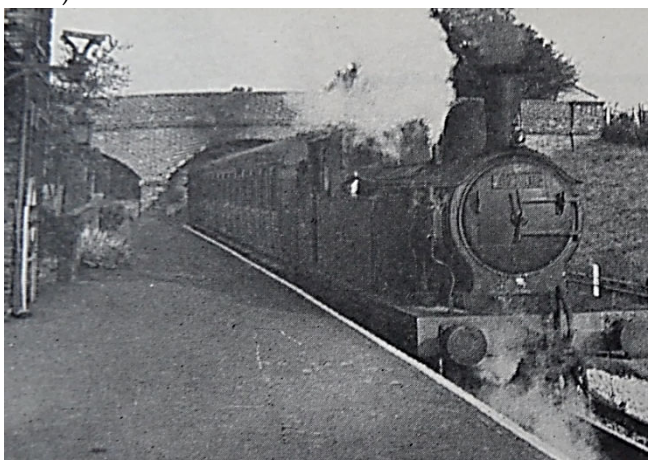
The issue of February 1967 (Vol 15, No 121) shows the rather crowded interior of the shop:

'Indigroid – design and install kitchen and bathroom interiors for the discerning who require something special as featured in *House and Garden* and the *Daily Mail Book of Kitchens*. Call at our new showroom or telephone to arrange a free consultation. Indigroid Interiors Limited, 49 Queen's Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex.'

(Vol 23, No 219, April 1975.)

Transport

'This photograph, taken in September 1957, just two months before the steam operation finally ceased, shows an Ongar to Epping push-and-pull train entering North Weald station hauled by an old Great Eastern F5 class 2-4-2 tank locomotive, No 67218. Photograph by J A Fleming.' (Vol 16, No 139, August 1968.)



Essex Countryside was first published in 1952, Vol 1, No 1, being that of Autumn 1952. In 1977, the same year as the Jubilee of HM The Queen, the magazine celebrated its Silver Jubilee. Many notable figures congratulated the publication on this achievement, including the MP for Harlow, Mr Stan Newens, who had this to say:

Since the end of the Second World War, there has been a most welcome development of public interest in our architectural and historical heritage in Britain, and in issues affecting the environment and quality of life in our country.

This has undoubtedly been greatly encouraged and expanded both by the stimulation and satisfaction of the demand for information about our own towns and villages or other places with which we are personally familiar.

In the county of Essex, in this respect, the *Essex Countryside* magazine has performed an inestimable service. It has not only provided untold pleasure to an enormous number of people, who have been thrilled to discover fascinating details about people or places of which they were previously ignorant, but it has whetted appetites for further knowledge.

Some of this has been reflected in its correspondence columns, but in addition it has put many people in contact by letter, telephone and in person, of which no record exists. I have personally benefited in this regard.

The magazine has thus greatly widened the circle of those interested in local history. Not only has this increased the appreciation of our rich Essex heritage, but it has promoted a living and growing concern with the preservation and improvement of the landscape at the present time.

The campaign to defend the countryside, its flora and fauna, its ancient buildings, its hedges and trees, depends upon an awareness of values which the *Essex Countryside* has undoubtedly helped to foster.

As one who has taken the magazine for many years and possesses an almost complete run of its numbers, I congratulate both publishers and contributors on its 25th anniversary. I hope that it will in the future continue to flourish and to provide education and enjoyment both to those who are conscious and those who need to be made conscious of how much our beautiful Essex countryside has to offer.

(Vol 25, No 249, October 1977.)

Sadly the magazine no longer exists, having been subsumed into another publication. With the internet and social media being able to provide almost instant answers to many questions which may occur to a visitor to a town or landscape, the well-known letters page of the magazine would serve little purpose these days. But in its day it was a useful publication and its value remains today – just see how much people try to sell them for on ebay – roughly £5 an issue!

Compiled by LYNN HASELDINE JONES

The Wanstead Spa

In the Newsletter 208 *we read William Addison's account of the spas of North London, in which he mentioned Wanstead. Here is Miller Christy's more detailed account of that mineral source from* A History of the Mineral Waters and Medicinal Springs of the County of Essex.*

The earliest Essex Mineral Well of which we have been able to discover any record is the Wanstead Spring, which was discovered early in the seventeenth century. John Chamberlain, the news-letter writer, writing from London to Sir Dudley Carleton, on 23 August 1619 says:

> 'we have great noise here of a new Spaa, or spring of that nature, found lately about Wansted; and much running there is to yt dayly, both by Lords and Ladies and other great companie, so that they have almost drawne yt drie already; and, yf yt should hold on, yt wold put downe the waters at Tunbridge; wch, for these three or foure yeares, have ben much frequented, specially this summer, by many great persons; insomuch that they wch have seene both say that yt (ie Tunbridge) is not inferior to the Spaa (in Belgium) for goode companie, numbers of people, and other appurtenances.'

We have been quite unable to ascertain anything as to the part of Wanstead parish in which this spring was

situated. In all probability, it was quite a small spring. One may infer as much from Chamberlain's statement that, within a short time of its discovery the company resorting to it had 'almost drawn it dry'. If such was the case, the spring was, no doubt, soon deserted and ultimately forgotten.

Mr Walter Crouch, FZS, of Wanstead, whose knowledge of the history of the parish is unequalled, writes to us –'I have always had the idea that this Mineral Spring was not at the Park end of our parish, which abuts on Bushwood and Wanstead Flats, but in the vicinity of Snaresbrook and on the road which leads to Walthamstow; but it is possible that it was in the grounds of 'The Grove' (now cut up and built over). The spring is not marked on Kip's *View* (1710) nor on Rocque's large *Map* (1735), nor on Rocque's still larger map of a few years later.'

Under the guidance of Mr W Ping, FCS, of Wanstead, Mr Christy has visited two springs at Snaresbrook – namely that known as the 'Birch Well', in the Forest, near the Eagle Pond, and a spring in the grounds of 'The Hermitage'; but neither of these is credited locally with being a mineral spring and neither has any appearance of being such. Since then, Mr Ping has written as follows – 'I have spoken with the oldest inhabitant of Wanstead, a Mr Merryman, whose knowledge, both local and national, is remarkable and accurate. He tells me that the only Mineral Spring he ever heard of in Wanstead was in the grass bordering the roadside nearly opposite the house, in the Blake Hall Road, formerly occupied by Lord Mayor Finnis, and now by Sir John Bethell, MP. This spring he remembers well. Its water was chalybeate and left considerable reddish deposit. People came and drank it to give them an appetite. They used to kneel down and drink it from their hands, and also took it away in bottles. Others used to bathe their ankles in it to make them strong. Mr Merryman adds that, about 1870, drainage operations deprived the spring of its water. The fountain, which has since been put up near its site, supplies waterworks water only.' Mr Ping adds that, recently when deeper drainage operations were in progress at the spot, water of a very markedly ferruginous character was encountered. There is no evidence that this spring was identical with that which came into prominence in 1619, but very likely it was.

Mr Dalton expresses the opinion that, if either surmise as to the position is correct, seeing that the comparison with the Tunbridge Wells chalybeate water was sound, the well in question probably yielded a ferruginous water from the Glacial gravels of the Snaresbrook plateau at their contact with the pyritous London Clay.

*By Miller Christy and Miss May Thresh, published by the Essex Field Club in 1910.

The Birch Well, above (photographed in 2014), is still there in the forest, and in the vicinity are three boundary markers.

The property mentioned, the Hermitage, was destroyed by bombs during the Second World War.

EDITOR

One of the markers noting the boundary between the parishes of Walthamstow and Wanstead, the photograph was taken in 2014. Unfortunately the inscription is too worn to read now, but Chris Pond advised that the inscription is 'Ld Maynard's Manor of Walthamstow Toney'.

Loughton in old newspapers

Marylebone Office – A Dialogue

A countryman from Loughton, in Essex, applied for a search warrant – 'What have you lost?' said Mr Rawlinson. 'My wife, Sir', replied the countryman. Mr Rawlinson – 'Who has run away with her?' Countryman – 'Mr Adams, Sir, a rich man'. Mr Rawlinson – 'If you belong to Loughton why do you come here?' Countryman – 'She is in this parish, Sir.' Mr Rawlinson – 'It's a rascally thing of this Mr Adams; but I have no power to interfere. You must go to an attorney.'

Royal Cornwall Gazette, Falmouth Packet and Plymouth Journal, Saturday, 4 September 1830

Melancholy Death

A most melancholy and fatal instance of the danger of seeking shelter under a tree during a thunderstorm occurred on Tuesday last, at Loughton in this county, in the death of David Powell, Esq, of that place. During the violent storm which came on in the afternoon of that day, the deceased, who had been walking in his grounds, was observed to go under a high elm, and place himself close against the body of the tree. Within a minute succeeded a most vivid flash of lightning, followed, or it might be said, accompanied, by a tremendous burst of thunder, and the electric fluid striking the tree under which Mr Powell had taken refuge, reached him in its descent, and his instantaneous death was the consequence. Some labourers in his employ, who happened to be near the spot, on going up, found their master a lifeless corpse. It appeared that the fatal fluid had gone completely down the body, from the head to the feet of the deceased. His right side from his face downwards was much discoloured; his shirt, particularly at the neck, was very much scorched; and his boots were literally shivered into small fragments. His watch and eye-glass are uninjured. The deceased, who was a magistrate of this

county, and most deservedly esteemed and respected, has left a disconsolate widow and thirteen children to lament their irreparable loss. Mrs Powell and several of her daughters had that morning gone to London, and little anticipating the melancholy and overwhelming spectacle which awaited them on their return. The regret evinced by all classes on this melancholy event, served to show the estimation in which Mr Powell was held in his circle and neighbourhood.

The Essex Standard and Colchester and County Advertiser, Saturday, 19 May 1832

Missing Sovereigns

James Murrell, aged 24, and Mary Monk, 21, were indicted for having broken and entered the dwelling house of William Welden, at Loughton, and stolen a bag containing 92 sovereigns and two half-sovereigns, his property. The female prisoner had lived as servant with the prosecutor, who is a person retired from business, and living on his property, for three years and a half; and James Murrell was a shoemaker and 'suitor', in a double capacity, to Mary Monk. He rented a small cottage belonging to the prosecutor, close adjoining his own residence. Mr and Mrs Welden having occasion to go to London, and thinking it unsafe to leave the house in the care of Mary Monk alone, permitted her to have her sweetheart, the other prisoner, to stay with her. They returned, however, at night, and upon Mr Welden wishing for some spirits, Mrs Welden went upstairs into her bedroom to the iron safe, to get the key of the cellar, which she kept there. While she was about to lock the iron safe she turned suddenly round, and there saw Mary Monk standing close behind her; but she vanished so quickly out of the room upon finding herself discovered that she had not time to speak to her. This took place on Saturday, 22nd April, and on the following Monday Mr Welden having occasion to go to London, Mrs Welden took breakfast in the kitchen with her servant, Mary Monk, who, in the course of the breakfast, said that she had several times dreamt that the house had been robbed and the iron safe broken open, and that James Murrell had told her that there were several people in Chigwell who would rob the house if they knew her master kept so much money in the iron safe as he did. Mrs Welden, however, not having had her suspicions awakened, paid little attention to what she said, but shortly afterwards went out to call upon a friend, telling Mary Monk, who had requested permission to go and wash up James Murrell's house, to lock all the doors. Shortly after she was gone, a little boy, a cousin of Mary Monk's, heard a violent knocking, and Mary Monk herself came very much agitated to a Mrs Grout, who lived close by, and told her that she had come to look over the house. Mrs Grout was about to go out, but at the female prisoner's request she returned into the house. She then looked several times very anxiously out at the window, and Mr Grout noticing it, she, after staying about twenty minutes, left, and went into the house of James Murrell, and commenced washing the floor. In the meantime Mrs Welden returned home, and finding the street door open she went after Mary Monk to ask her if she had locked all up. She replied she had, and then afterwards she (Mrs Grout) and Mrs Welden went over the house, and upon going upstairs they discovered that the iron safe had literally been broken to pieces, and the bag, with the sovereigns in question, extracted. Mary Monk seemed confused, and said she should not care how soon her master knew all about it; but that he could not do anything to her unless he found some of the property upon her. Mr Welden was immediately sent for from town, and upon his coming he got a constable, who naturally imagining that the violence had been effected with some heavy instrument, asked if Mrs Welden had any such. She stated that she had only an iron coal hammer, and which, upon being looked at, appeared to have been just used, and on the face of it there was some red paint, with which the iron safe was painted in the inside; and it was also scratched as if it had been knocked against sharp edges. The male prisoner, shortly after the robbery took place, was seen with a horse and cart on the road to Chigwell, extremely heated, and he told a person, in a pointed way, that it was then half past ten o'clock, and he also pointed out a wound on his fingers which he stated he had done with a hammer. On being apprehended, on the following day, he accounted to the constable for the wound in a very different manner. Both prisoners asserted their innocence, and after the Learned Judge summed up, the Jury begged to retire, and were absent for half an hour, when they returned with a verdict finding the male prisoner GUILTY, but ACQUITTING the female prisoner. James Murrell was then sentenced to be transported for life.

The Essex Standard and Colchester and County Advertiser, Saturday, 28 July 1832

Sophocles Xenophon Pantcheff, kite-maker, of Buckhurst Hill

Sophocles Xenophon Pantcheff (who was Greek in origin) was my paternal grandfather, and an electrical engineer by training. Even though the family was Greek, they lived in one of the (then) large Greek communities around the Black Sea, at Varna in Bulgaria.

Sophocles Xenophon Pantcheff and his wife Eliot Jesse Pantcheva (née Ramsbotham) shortly after their marriage in 1913

His son, Theodore (known as Bunny) was my father. Sophocles' wife was Eliot Jesse Ramsbotham, from Leeds (she was a doctor of medicine). They must have bought the house Rowantree, 152 Queen's Road, in the early 1920s, moving there from 16 Victoria Road, Buckhurst Hill.

My father, Bunny, was born at Victoria Road, and moved to Rowantree in the early years of his life. He had an elder sister, Marika, my aunt. Sophocles and Ella must have bought the Victoria Road house after they were married in 1913. They had a double-wedding, because he was Greek Orthodox and Ella was Church of England. They were married in the

Charterhouse, in the City of London, by Ella's elder brother, Alexander (Ramsbotham), who was the Chaplain there. They then went to the Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Bayswater (a magnificent church, still very much alive and working) and were married there according to the Orthodox rites.

Both Marika (his sister) and Bunny were born in the Victoria Road house, and my recollection of what my father told me was that they moved to Rowantree when he was about 3 or 4, so in 1923–4 ish.

Rowantree was the left hand half of what later became Daneley Court Nursing Home. It has been demolished and replaced by flats known as Ivydene Court, using the name of what was the right hand property. The two houses were joined together when the nursing home was created in the 1970s.

Sophocles died in 1949, and his wife, Ella in 1955. My father, Bunny, married my mother, Patricia, in 1954, and they set up the family home in Rowantree. This was the house that I and my older brother regarded as 'home' through all our early lives. Our family finally sold the house and moved away in 1972. So Rowantree was in our family for three generations. It was a most wonderful house to grow up in, and Buckhurst Hill a lovely area (which I believe it still is!). Both my father and I in turn went to the Daiglen School, and my brother to St. Ignatius (now known as Loyola), on the same road as the Daiglen.

I am fairly sure that Marika (my aunt) went to Loughton High School as a girl, and I am not sure if she later went back to teach there. If she did, it would have been for a short period only. I think Marika married in about 1946. She married Eric Kelsey, and they moved to the north of England (Ormskirk, I think initially). Then they moved to Ripon, where Eric taught Maths and Science at the Grammar School for many years, and Marika was a JP. They lived there for the rest of their lives. Marika died in 1986, and Eric in about 1998. They had two children (my cousins), Margaret, who lives in Scotland, and Xenophon, who still lives in Ripon and is a very prominent musician (orchestral conductor).

Sophocles was a designer and builder of kites. His most famous model was the Atalanta (note spelling). He had a large workshop at the back of the garden at Rowantree, and this backed onto the road that runs parallel to Queen's Road (Princes Road). As regards the kites, to the best of my knowledge they were not used for military purposes. In fact, very much the opposite, because during the wars, restrictions were placed upon the recreational flying of kites (because they interfered with the barrage balloons). So in fact, the war periods were very lean years for my grandfather's kites, as he could not sell them. I can find no reference to any military uses at all from that time.

Time has marched on, and there are now very few people alive who would have known Sophocles. He, and his remarkable wife, Ella (my grandmother), died before I was born, so I have no first-hand recollection of them.

Ella in later life

Even my cousins would not remember him, because Margaret was born in 1947 (two years before Sophocles died), and Xen in 1949 (the same year as Sophocles died).

The number 152 was painted onto the brickwork over a window; it was the original door to the house.

I am not sure when I last saw Rowantree. It was many years ago. Probably 20 or 25 years. The 152 over the window in the photo was there when I last saw the house, and my recollection was that it was where the original front door to Rowantree had been. It had a fabulous back garden. Sophocles planted fruit bushes (redcurrant and blackcurrant) all along the fence with the adjoining house (down the hill). They were still very abundant when I was growing up there: it was the first time I had ever tasted redcurrants!

It was undoubtedly a very large and difficult house to keep up, but it was our home for all those years, and it is sad to think it has gone. It had been transformed into a nursing home, called Daneley Court, along with the house next door, which was called Ivydene. On the site now is a development of flats called Ivydene Court.

My brother and I have very fond memories of growing up in Buckhurst Hill, although we both now live further afield. RICHARD PANTCHEFF

Jane Manley has recently told me that her grandmother knew Mr Pantcheff. During the Second World War Hilda Perry worked for him with Mrs Gardner and Mrs Aino and all three of them lived in Heathway off Hillside Avenue, which is where the Perry family moved to in 1940 after being bombed in Stratford. Hilda knew him strictly as Mr Pantcheff. She did not know he was married or had children. She knew all about the kites though, as Hilda apparently worked in the workshop at the rear, and spoke also of the large garden. It is interesting, however, that she said they were not just making kites, but some sort of

brass fittings, which were believed to be used in armaments. EDITOR

More on the Loughton Union Church Cub Scout Group

Tony Meadows sent in a photo of the scout group, which appeared in Newsletter 207. *Philip Shaw has more to add:*

The Loughton Union Church Cub Scout photo was of interest to me. Please note, however, we were wolf cubs in those days and not cub scouts. I joined the Union Church cubs in or about 1946 and none of the cubs in the picture were my contemporaries. The meetings were held in the church hall adjacent to the church and we wore green jerseys and caps and red scarves secured with woggles. The Butterfield sisters shown in the photograph ran the meetings. I think that they may have taken them alternately. We called them 'Akela' – the Big Wolf, although they were not really wolf like at all. We used to say, in the best tradition of the movement, 'Akela we will do our best'. The evenings always concluded with readings by Akela from Kipling's Jungle books. For me, this was the highlight of the evening. I was never very good at practical things, like tying knots. In fact, I usually had to get someone to untangle me from yards of rope. Tony Meadows correctly identifies the two Holste brothers, John and David but there is not a third member of the family in the picture. Richard Holste, the third brother, was much younger and joined the cubs later. The family lived at Plymouth House at the top of Lower Park Road (recently demolished) and I am still in touch with Richard although both John and David are sadly deceased.

PHILIP SHAW

Carlingford School

Three former pupils of Carlingford share their memories of this small private school.

To Carlingford because I was sickly

I attended Carlingford School. It was during the War. I was only about five years old at the time of my entry there; this makes it 1943. The school was situated in Lower Park Road, Loughton; in the cul-de-sac beyond Lower Park Road's junction with Algers Road. It's not there now and the road extends considerably beyond where it did at the time of my recollection. I think that my time there was quite brief – a year or so maybe – and I then moved on to Staples Road School – a place of mixed memories!

I'm advised by family members that I was sent to Carlingford because I was a sickly child and that it was therefore thought the rough and tumble of a state school might be too much for me. I have no memory of sickliness to support that theory. Obviously Carlingford was a private school – my parents Kitty and Ted had very little disposable income, so it must have been a considerable sacrifice for them, although I'm given to believe that an uncle (or two) did help out.

My memories of the school are minimal. I do recall that I started to learn French, as well as the three Rs. I'm ashamed to admit that after leaving Carlingford I never had another French lesson, furthermore, nothing of those lessons stayed with me. I am sans French! We wore a uniform (more expense), typical of the period. It was a short walk from home in Crescent View, down The Crescent, along The Avenue, into Algers Road then, turn right and you were there. Some years later those roads, plus Spring Grove and Hillcrest Road formed the core territory of my paper rounds for Charlton's newsagents in the High Road, and later for W H Smith at Loughton Station – Mr Sales!

My sojourn at Carlingford was soon over, and it was off to the rough and tumble of state school life for the next 10 years! Staples Road School had been attended by my mother and her two brothers, Will and Henry Francies, so we had form, as it were. I recall it as a generally happy time: a time when Epping Forest became my 'garden'. We played in the forest from dawn to dusk during my years at Staples Road, and many good friendships were made. Whilst I cannot recall any names from my short experience of one of Loughton's lesser known seats of learning, I do remember Carlingford School. Does anyone else? If you do, perhaps you might know why it was called by that name, because Carlingford Lough is on the border between Northern Ireland and Eire!

JOHN CURRY

A year or two at Carlingford

I was born at Barclay Oval in Woodford in July 1939 and in 1943 we moved to 8 Lower Park Road when the house, a rented property, suddenly became available. In 1945 my parents sent me to Carlingford, a small preparatory school at the bottom of the road, where it intersects with Algers Road. The Principal was a Miss J Scott, who lived in an adjacent house with her father. I remember the school premises, which had obviously quite clearly been a private house at one stage. On the ground floor to the front was Miss Scott's study (where you had your leg smacked if you were naughty!) and a large assembly room, known as the music room. To the rear, there were the usual offices and a cloakroom area where we had to change our shoes each day before going into the main part of the house. The classrooms were on the two upstairs floors and there was a playground to the rear of the premises which ran parallel to the railway line. There was also a garden, tended by Mr Scott, on to which we were not permitted to stray. I think that there would have been around 30 pupils altogether.

Miss Scott was assisted by several lady teachers; Mrs O'Meara who originally owned her own school 'Holmcroft' at the north end of the High Road near to Albion Hill; Miss Horne; Miss Harfoot and Shirley White, a young girl who subsequently went to work at Loughton Library when it was in Brook Road and remembered me when I used the library as a teenager many years later. For some reason, my parents

thought the standard of education at Carlingford inadequate and after a year or two, much to Miss Scott's annoyance, I was sent to Staples Road Primary. Here I found myself rather in advance of my contemporary pupils, so perhaps the move had been a mistake. Latterly I learned from my mother that Miss Scott had thought that I would be brilliant, but had changed her mind because I was too fussy. This was probably an early diagnosis of natural anxiety, with which I have had to live all my life.

I enjoyed my brief stay at Carlingford, the premises have long gone. I wonder what happened to Miss Scott, does anyone else remember her?

PHILIP SHAW

Church of England primary school not suitable

When we moved to Buckhurst Hill in 1956 I was aged nearly eight, and my parents had to find a school for me to attend. Indoctrination at the local Church of England primary school was not considered suitable, and so my parents investigated private schools in the local area. Why they chose Carlingford I have no idea. I can only assume because it was cheap.

When I arrived it was certainly past its best. The proprietor, Miss Joyce Scott, constantly harked back to the achievements (as she regarded them) of former pupils, while not investing any money in the building, new books, or any other form of teaching aid that made any impact on me. She relied heavily on broadcasts by the BBC Schools Service on such matters as History, Geography ande General Science, thus ensuring that she did not have to buy any books, or employ teachers with any knowledge of these subjects.

However, it was not all bad and, for the time, some of her techniques could be regarded as quite advanced. She made sure that French was taught to all but the very youngest. Her teaching of mathematics was inspired and she gave preference to teaching the metric system over Imperial measurements as she considered that the latter would not survive in use for much longer. In their last year at school, when aged 11, she gave each pupil in turn a well-thumbed book in a plain brown cover, with strict instructions not to show it to any of the younger pupils. It explained, in a very genteel manner, the sort of thing you would expect a book in a plain brown cover to explain, the sort of thing that most parents would then have been too embarrassed to deal with at home.

What other memories? The fact that Miss Scott always brought her smelly corgi dog into the classroom with her, how she became quite cheerful when her man-friend Mr Faffy (?) came to stay for a few days, the jolly Friday afternoon sing-songs when Mrs Adams came to play the piano (and I could watch the steam engine shunting in Loughton goods yard out of the back window), teacher Cynthia Harfoot who taught me a lot about the local area and its history, and teacher Wendy Barlow who accused me of making the classroom smell because I had eaten fish and chips for lunch.

The three teachers when I left in July 1960: L to R: Cynthia Harfoot, Joyce Scott (Principal), Wendy Barlow

By today's standards, such a school would rightly not be allowed, but I consider that I passed the 11+ thanks to Miss Scott. She must have retired a few years after I left in 1960, and the site was sold for new housing. PETER HASELDINE

NOTE: Planning permission for flats, etc, on this site was evidently given July 1962. CHRIS POND

Capability Brown 2016

Lancelot 'Capabilty' Brown (1716–1783) designed more than 200 landscapes for, and with, the very rich. Today they can be enjoyed by us all: with our families, or as walkers, historians, photographers. During summer 2016 a Capability Brown Festival will be held, which will be well publicised.

An internet search for CB300, or for the Capability Brown website, www.capabilitybrown.org, will produce information about events being held all over England. Several of his most beautiful landscapes are open to the public and within easy reach of Loughton.

The website introduction says:

2016 marks the 300th anniversary of the birth of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, a designer who changed the national landscape and created a style which has shaped people's picture of the quintessential English countryside. As the first ever celebration of Brown's extensive works, the Capability Brown Festival 2016 brings together a huge range of events, openings and exhibitions. New research and a full listing of his sites will help build knowledge about Brown and fix him

at the forefront of modern thinking on design and management of the natural environment.

Brown's sites will be made accessible for families, adults and urban audiences, and volunteers supported to increase their skills in site interpretation, guiding and writing. Artist, inventor, genius: Brown's work has already influenced many at home and abroad. The Festival will inspire new generations of visitors, participants and experts to leave a legacy of new information, skills and enthusiasm for landscape.

The Capability Brown Festival is managed by the Landscape Institute on behalf of the Festival Partnership. It has been funded by a £911,100 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund with the wider project worth in the region of £1.7million. Much of this represents match funding, and funding in kind, from the Festival's partners and supporters.

The nearest site to Loughton associated with Brown is Copped Hall. The parkland there was designed by William Kent in the 1740s but:

> Later Capability Brown designed great lakes with gently curved edges and lawns with clumps of specimen trees. He made the house the focal point in the landscape, with a long, curving drive so that one came upon the splendid view of the house, in its rural setting, around a bend in the road, and this arrangement can still be appreciated as one approaches Copped Hall today.
>
> (Sylvia Keith, *Nine Centuries at Copped Hall*, 2014)

Further afield, Stowe Landscape Gardens (National Trust) are where he laid the foundations of his career in the 1740s. He developed the Grecian Valley and was Clerk of Works for some spectacular buildings there. In 2016 the Temple of Concord and Victory will be open as a visitor hub and there will be a programme of talks and entertainments.

Jemima, Marchioness Grey and Capability Brown were friends for many years. He modified her gardens at Wrest Park in Central Bedfordshire (English Heritage) but left the majority of the gardens as they were, and did not alter the long formal canal or the side canals. There is a monument to the creators of the gardens which notes the 'professional assistance' of Lancelot Brown, one of only three monuments to him in the country.

He developed the park north of her house at Wimpole, too (National Trust). At Wimpole in 2016 you will be able to enjoy new Capability Brown displays and events, stroll through the shelter-belts and around the lakes which he designed, or enjoy the views from the Folly which he built.

National Trust owns about 15 landscapes attributed to him. An important early example of his work is Croome in Worcestershire. A later example is Berrington Hall in Herefordshire, where he worked with his architect son-in-law, Henry Holland. Information about special Capability Brown events at National Trust properties can be found on the National Trust website.

The Essex Gardens Trust has produced a book entitled *Lancelet Brown and His Essex Clients* which covers Brown's involvement in the shaping of the landscape of his eight known Essex commissions. The book is priced £10 including postage and can be ordered from Jill Plater at 5 Wakelin Close, Ingatestone, CM4 9HH. Please make cheques payable to Essex Gardens Trust. DOROTHY JAMIESON/EDITOR

More on José Collins

Reading the article by Philip Shaw in *Newsletter 207*, 'Last Call for the Maid of the Mountains', reminded me of an incident when I was young.

One winter evening in the early 50s there was a commotion in Highland Avenue. My dad, Bert Parish, went out to see what was happening and returned to the house with a distraught José Collins, lacy handkerchief in hand and her heavy make-up smudged by tears. Apparently her dog had escaped when her car had stopped in Valley Hill to allow it a comfort break! Her driver chased after the animal which was heading towards the LNER sports field and the footpath to Loughton Station. Dad went back out to join the chase after assuring her that they would find the dog.

Having been settled in an armchair with a glass of brandy, still wearing her fur coat, José began to calm down. I recall her asking if mum and I were sisters and feigning complete surprise when told no, I was her daughter. Obviously this ploy delighted my mum even though it was completely nonsensical given that she was about 35 when I was born.

I don't remember how long it was before my dad returned with the good news that the dog had been found and her driver had it safely back in the car. After profuse thanks she was escorted back to her vehicle, to be greeted no doubt by a rather muddy dog. LINDA PARISH

More on Lucy Askew

Following the article about Lucy Askew in *Newsletter 208*, as an aside, I was mayor of Loughton in 1997–98, and when Lucy died, was asked by BBC Radio to be interviewed about her.

The interview was carried live from the BBC Parliament studio at Westminster. Amongst other things, I was asked what I thought it was about Loughton that was so conducive to longevity. Rather stumped for a reply, I hazarded, 'Oh, it's the steep hills. We have seven of them, and very good they are for the heart!'

I should have added, of course, that Lucy, being the daughter of Loughton's foremost cab proprietor, probably rode up them more than she walked!

CHRIS POND

To Southend by steamer, part 1

Some members may remember cruising to Southend by Thames steamer, and my memory was jogged about this when PS *Waverley* appeared in a recent television programme. About 10 years ago I had the privilege of a trip on *Waverley* from Tower Pier to Tilbury. Apart from the ship itself and the gleaming

engine room, there were two other tremendous memories: sailing under Tower Bridge with the enormous bascules open above and, just before the end of our trip, the height of the Dartford Bridge as we sailed beneath.

Waverley approaching Dartford Bridge

These thoughts dredged up earlier memories of an outing with parents on, I believe, the *Golden Eagle* and, a few years later, as a teenager with a party of friends, a cruise on another steamer. After a lovely day at Southend we teenagers returned to the ship and, seeking shelter from a chilly evening, went below to fall in with a party of London dockers who called themselves the Farouk Club (after the then Egyptian king who was something of a playboy). Each docker wore a fez to prove this very unlikely allegiance. They were very welcoming and the outcome of that evening is probably best left to my memory and your imagination! However, these memories prompted me to find out more about the history of Thames cruising to Southend and Margate and Ramsgate.

Early ships and routes

London to Margate was the third major route on the Thames after London to Gravesend and London to Richmond and was heavily used by passengers from the Continent as well as pleasure trips to the Kent coast by Londoners. These three routes had been in use since at least the 17th century, with sailing boats (hoys) and large rowing boats (tilt-boats) of a minimum 15 tons which carried up to 40 passengers. There were also eight or nine passage packets of 80–100 tons which, during the summer season, ran every day and in 1802 carried some 20,000 people between London and Margate.

These sailing and rowing boats tried to resist the coming of the steamers but by 1826 steamships were taking over and new jetties were being built for them.

Steamboat services had started on the Thames about 1815 and for nearly 25 years they carried most passengers until railways were built in the south. At least 80 steamers were recorded using the Thames and the Steamboat Act of 1819 was the first statute passed to regulate steamers for the safety of the public. They were wooden boats driven by paddle-wheels and they quickly established themselves as faster and more reliable than the sailing and rowing boats used previously.

Early paddle steamers

James Watt had improved the steam engine by 1776 which led to William Symington's *Charlotte Dundas* in Scotland in 1803 and the building on the Clyde of the PS *Comet* by Henry Bell in 1812.

The first steamboat passenger service was started in the United States in 1807 by Robert Fulton on the Hudson River with his *North River* steamboat, using an engine built in Birmingham.

The first service on the Thames was probably the *Margery* in 1815. The *Margery* was launched at Dumbarton in June 1814. She sailed for a few months on the Clyde until bought by Cortis & Co of London, steaming down the east coast to arrive at Gravesend in January 1815, then entering service on the 'Long Ferry' from Gravesend to London on 23 January.

Other vessels which might have been the first steamboat on the Thames are the *Richmond* which was brought from Bristol by a Mr Dawson in 1813, but it was not successful; or a ship also named *Richmond,* ordered by George Dodd, a civil engineer, from the Lepinghall Company of Yarmouth in 1814, which went into service from London to Richmond that year, or, possibly, in 1815; Dodd then bought the *Duke of Argyll* in Scotland, which arrived in London on 12 June 1815, covering 756 miles at sea, and was renamed the *Thames* when it began sailing between London and Margate.

The first shipping company on the river was the Margate Steam Packet Company in 1815, followed by the Gravesend Steam Packet Company in 1817.

Major incidents soon happened, as when the first steam passenger boat to be built on the Thames by Henry Maudsley, the *Regent* (designed by I K Brunel), caught fire and was totally destroyed near Whitstable on 2 July 1817, but no lives were lost. This was because it did not have a fireproof lining between the funnel and the wooden deck beams. At 112 feet long it was larger than previous boats.

The boiler on the *Richmond* exploded in 1817 and, as with railway engines a few years later, these explosions were quite common. A Select Committee was established in 1817 to enquire into the steamship business and this led to the Steamboat Act 1819, requiring all steam vessels carrying passengers to be registered and to have an annual inspection by a competent engineer.

In 1821 the General Steam Navigation Company (GSN) was established (incorporated in 1824) and their paddle steamer *Eagle* provided a service between London and Margate. By 1825 GSN had a fleet of 15 steam vessels, built and serviced at Deptford.

Other vessels operating then were the *Majestic* and *Defiance* and the *Hero* (1821) built locally. In 1822, the Margate Steam Packet Co carried over 27,000 passengers to and from Margate in a time of brisk competition. In the 1830s good business continued and the Star, Diamond and Woolwich Steam Packet Companies were established, which provided many more new boats. The Thames Commissioners boasted in 1834 that they 'had made the Thames navigation one of the most perfect in the Kingdom'. In 1835, the

Diamond Steam Packet Company carried over 250,000 passengers.

From passenger to pleasure steamers

The opening of the London and Greenwich Railway in 1838 and later the South Eastern Railway to Dover in 1844 ate into Thames passenger traffic but the 1849 line to Gravesend ended the heyday of Thames passenger craft. From 1851, the railways provided a quicker, cheaper and safer service, but the steamers still carried large numbers on summer holidays and at weekends, but the market available could not justify such a large number of vessels.

Excursion traffic and a disaster

In summer, cruising round the estuary and in the Thames was very popular, but in 1878 SS *Princess Alice* sank with the loss of over 650 lives.

SS *Princess Alice*, formerly PS *Bute*, was sunk in a collision on the Thames with the collier *Bywell Castle* off Tripcock Point in 1878 with the loss of over 650 lives, the greatest loss of life in any Thames shipping disaster. On 3 September 1878, she was making what was advertised as a 'Moonlight Trip' to Gravesend and back. It was a routine trip from Swan Pier, near London Bridge, to Gravesend and Sheerness. Tickets were 2s. Hundreds of Londoners were on the ship, many visiting Rosherville Gardens in Gravesend. By 7.40pm, the *Princess Alice* was on her return journey. Within sight of the North Woolwich Pier, where many passengers were to disembark, she sighted the Newcastle-bound vessel SS *Bywell Castle*. *Bywell Castle* displaced 904 tons, much more than *Princess Alice*. On the bridge of the *Bywell Castle*, the captain observed the port light of the *Princess Alice* and set a course to pass to starboard. The master of the *Princess Alice*, labouring up river against the tide, followed the normal watermen's practice of seeking slack water on the south side and altered *Princess Alice*'s course to port, bringing her into the path of *Bywell Castle* whose captain ordered his ship's engines reversed, but too late. *Princess Alice* was struck on the starboard side; she split in two and sank within four minutes.

Excursion traffic developed further in the mid-19th century. A large city population increasingly wanted holidays in the developing resorts on the north and south banks of the estuary, the coasts of Essex and Kent.

From 1880 up until the end of the century there was active competition and optimism in the industry. The Woolwich Steam Packet Company, GSN and the London, Woolwich and Clacton-on-Sea Steamboat Company dominated the market. The Clacton-on-Sea Steamboat Company was established to serve Clacton from 1888. It became better known as Belle Steamers Ltd and dominated sailings on the East Anglian coast for 30 years. The Belle Steamers fleet carried on against financial pressures with various owners until 1931. But financial pressures forced all the others out except GSN.

GSN of 1824 survived longer than the others because it also had worldwide shipping interests and great strength on the Kent services to France and Belgium. After the Second World War, the GSN service was provided by PS *Golden Eagle* and PS *Royal Eagle.* MV *Royal Daffodil*, MV *Royal Sovereign* and MV *Queen of the Channel* were built to replace wartime losses of ships of the same name. GSN's traditional excursions from London continued until the end of the 1966 season. In the next part of this article I will give the histories of some of the ships used.

The end of cruising?

After the withdrawal of the GSN from the trade in 1966, an unsuccessful effort was made by private firms to revive the sailings with the Clyde steamer PS *Jeanie Deans*, built in 1931. The Thames did not have a regular paddle steamer again until the 1980s when the *Waverley* came for a two-week visit each Autumn. The world's last sea-going paddle steamer leaves the Clyde each year to maintain the tradition of coastal cruising in the United Kingdom (see page 16).

The Medway, the largest estuary flowing into the Thames, had excursion services on a smaller scale, but sailed across the estuary to Southend. The New Medway Steam Packet Co had a successful business after the First World War and also cruised to France. It built PS *Medway Queen*, a Dunkirk veteran. She was a favourite of the public from 1924 to 1963. GSN bought the company in 1937, but it remained independent for operational purposes. *Medway Queen* returned to the Medway and preservationists are working to restore her to steam.

PS *Kingswear Castle* (1924), a small former River Dart steamer, was the first vessel restored by the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society, and eventually returned to service and now sails from Rochester and Chatham Historic Dockyard.

Iron boats

'Citizen' boats built of iron by Thames Ironworks were introduced in 1845 by the City Steamboat Company. The Westminster Company opened a service using iron boats, on the south bank, taking businessmen from the City to Waterloo Station in 1848 – a service eventually superseded by the Waterloo and City Line. These were known as 'penny boats' from their standard fare. The *Cricket*, a short-lived competing 'ha'penny boat', retired after a burst boiler caused loss of life.

Ferries

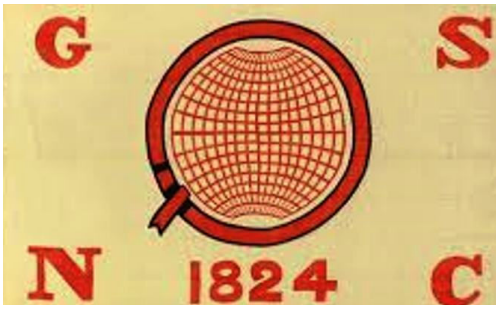
Shorter steam ferry services started on the Thames as longer distance passenger services began to fail. The London County Council ran a fleet of paddle steamers for a 'river-bus' service within London, and the London, Tilbury & Southend Railway had started a Tilbury–Gravesend ferry in 1852 just for its own passengers. In 1862, it purchased two other ferries in the area and the railways operated the general ferry service until 1984.

In the pre-grouping era of railway competition, the London, Tilbury and Southend Railway Company offered cheap tickets, inclusive of the Gravesend ferry

crossing, from Fenchurch Street to Gravesend Town Pier, via Tilbury Riverside. This offered competition to the South Eastern Railway, which had opened its station at Gravesend in 1849, and the offer was carried on by the LTSR's successors, the Midland Railway and later the LMS.

The Woolwich Free Ferry opened on 23 March 1889. The original fleet had three side-loading paddle steamers, *Duncan*, *Gordon* and *Hutton*. In the early 1900s they were using *Squires*, *Gordon*, *John Benn* and *Will Crooks*. The Tilbury ferry used *Catherine*, *Edith*, *Gertrude* and *Rose*. Both ferries still operate under different owners. Dartford had a car ferry serviced by *Mimie* and *Tessa*.

Ferry SS *Gertrude*, built 1906, on the Gravesend-Tilbury ferry, c1924 or 1925



GSN House flag

The ships we knew (or might have known)

In part 2 of this article I will tell the stories of the ships we knew, or might have known, which were involved in the Thames cruising trade in the 30s and the mid-20th century, sailing to Southend, the Kent resorts of Margate or Ramsgate or cruising the Channel (to allow all-day drinking) and, later, day trips to France. These are: *Crested Eagle*, *Golden Eagle*, the two *Queens of the Channel*, and the two *Royal Daffodils*. Also, the *Royal Eagle* and the two *Royal Sovereigns*. Some of them were involved in war service, most notably at the Dunkirk evacuation and the first *Royal Daffodil* was so renamed by Royal command after the Zeebrugge raid in 1918 when she was HMS *Vindictive*.

Sources

Internet.

Further reading

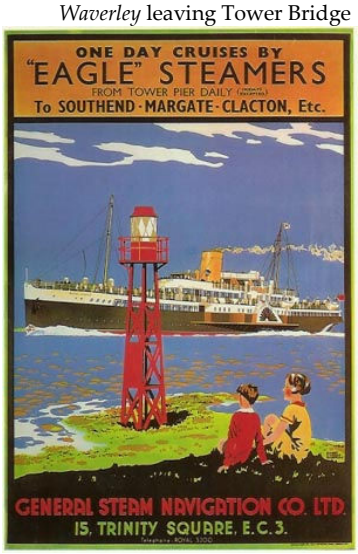
Thames Pleasure Steamers from 1945, by Andrew Gladwell (Tempus Publishing Ltd, 2001).

Pleasure Steamers, by Bernard Cox (David & Charles, 1983).

Royal Eagle lying off Tower Pier c1950s

Waverley entering Tower Bridge

Waverley leaving Tower Bridge



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