LOUGHTON AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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54th Season

Violet Helen Friedlaender

Buckhurst Hill Poet and Suffragette

Violet Helen Friedlaender's death was announced in the Essex press and in *The Times* in 1950:

Suffragette Worker
A keen worker in the Suffragette movement with Mrs Pankhurst, Miss Violet Helen Friedlaender, died at her home in Loughton Way, Buckhurst Hill, on Friday.

This would have been on Friday, 23 June 1950.

She had an interesting life. Violet Helen was born in Jerusalem in 1879. She was one of the children of the Reverend Herman Friedlaender and his wife Julia. Herman was born in Schneidemühl, then in Prussia (and now Piła in Western Poland). He was born into a pious Jewish family, but at the age of 22 in 1852 he converted to Christianity. He studied literature, mathematics and science at various German universities, before deciding in 1863 to devote his life to converting other Jews to Christianity. He joined the London Missionary Society (LMS) and held to the view that Jews did not need to give up the Hebrew language or Jewish holidays on conversion, as neither Jesus nor St Paul had insisted on this. This difference of opinion led him to leave the LMS in 1868. In 1867 he married in Manchester Julia Bower: she was born there in 1845.

Their children were all born in Palestine: Albert Herbert in 1870, Percy Reginald in 1875 and Violet Helen in 1879 (there may have been others). At some point the family moved to the United States:

During the last decades of the 19th century, when thousands of European Jews fled to the United States to escape religious persecution, Christian evangelical groups intensified their missionary efforts to convert Jews to Christianity. Among the religious periodicals founded to show the Jew 'his need of repentance and of a saviour' was *The Peculiar People*, founded in New York City by the Reverend Herman Friedlaender as a weekly newspaper in 1888. On his sudden death four months later the magazine was taken over by [another clergyman], backed by a group of Seventh Day Baptists… The paper closed in 1898.

On the death of her husband, Julia moved back to England. She was, of course, English, having been born in Manchester: Percy and Violet were not naturalised until 1921. At the time of the 1891 census Violet was away at boarding school in Brighton (for the daughters of clergy) and her brothers Albert and Percy were living with their mother in Islington. Percy studied at Finsbury Technical College for two years, and, after working for Cromptons in Chelmsford for a while, he became a lecturer at the West Ham Municipal Technical Institute in 1904, where he was head of the electrical engineering department from 1906 to 1918.

It is in this period, when the family were in West Ham (they lived at 129 Earlham Grove, Forest Gate), that Violet and her mother became involved in the Suffragette movement.

Violet joined the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in 1908, and became the honorary secretary of the Forest Gate branch in the summer of 1909. By that year the Women's Movement had split into two factions, but Violet continued to promote the WSPU, organising a camp at Lowestoft with her mother. In 1910 there were two general elections, and she was busy organising publicity for the cause. The WSPU became increasingly militant and in 1912 she took part in a window-smashing campaign, ending up in gaol for four months (she was sent to Winson Green Prison in Birmingham, as Holloway was already full of suffragettes).

In March 1909 the weekly paper, *Votes for Women*, published the words of a song Violet had written to the tune of 'Marching through Georgia':

Hurrah! Hurrah! We battle for the right,
Hurrah! Hurrah! For peace with honour fight,
Prisoners of war, we greet you!
Victory is in sight;
March with the Women's Army.

The Women's Press, which was the publishing section of the WSPU, produced calendars for 1910, one of which was designed by Sylvia Pankhurst, with a motto for each day by Violet Friedlaender. It is likely that both Sylvia and Violet were members of the Women Writers' Suffrage League. Violet wrote novels and poetry and was a contributor to many magazines and periodicals. Her books include the novel *Mainspring*, published by Putnam in 1923 and *Mirrors and Angles*, a collection of poetry, published in 1931 by *Country Life*.

This book was reviewed by *Welsh Outlook* as follows:

Many are the themes of Miss Friedlaender's poems – impressions of nature, the wonder of childhood, regret for lost youth, the love of distant adventure, the resentment of the un-ending daily routine and the reactions of the demobilised soldier on resuming his former mode of life. These are but a few examples, and the manner of their treatment is varied and appropriate. Miss Friedlaender writes with great sincerity and freshness, and we feel that we are being brought into contact with an attractive

personality as well as with a skilful artist. In these poems wit and humour are mingled with a subtle sense of the emotional associations of words. They show also a rare gift for the interpretation of nature's moods and of the spirit of a locality, while the beauty of all wild creatures is conveyed with tenderness and sympathy. In short, this is true poetry. The pencil sketches of Miss Margaret Dobson, which illustrate admirably some of Miss Friedlaender's lines, are distinguished by their charm and, where it is required, by their energy. Altogether this is a fine volume to which one will return again and again. Those who possess the book will want to retain it; those who have not, will certainly wish they might call it their own. H G W

The banner, in the suffragette colours of purple, white and green, designed and made by the West Ham branch of the Women's Social and Political Union, based at 49 Junction Road. The trumpeting angel design in the central medallion was adapted from Sylvia Pankhurst's 'angel of freedom' motif by branch members Misses M A and E Brice (presumably sisters). The letters were made by Helen Friedlaender and her brother, also members of the West Ham branch. Banners carried in demonstrations brought the 'votes for women' message to a mass audience. See more at: http://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/Online/object.aspx?objectID=object-91885#sthash.F6mSWYiI.dpuf

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Her work is included in the category of women poets of the Great War. Her brother Albert had fought for the British against the Boers and during the Great War. He was killed in action on 25 October 1916 serving in the 4th South African Horse; he is buried in what is now Tanzania. The poem 'For Jetty (in East Africa)' commemorates her brother.

In the early 1920s, after a time working in Derby, Percy Friedlaender was appointed chief designer at W Mackie and Company, based in Lambeth Road, and by 1924 the family lived in Princes Road, Buckhurst Hill, at the house called Arley (now number 181). By 1927 they had moved to Byfield, No 16 Hurst Road, where Julia died on 14 October 1930, aged 85. Following her brother Percy's death on 25 March 1938, aged 63, Violet moved to 16 Loughton Way. She died there aged 71 on 23 June 1950; she and her mother and brother are buried in the churchyard of St John the Baptist, Buckhurst Hill.

Another obituary stated:

> Helen Friedlaender . . . was a poet harassed by circumstances but not overcome by them, maintaining indeed a lovely integrity . . . Helen threw herself into the Suffragette Movement, was imprisoned and endured the indignity of forcible feeding, only to find that the vote when given did not prove the expected panacea.

Stand Alone was her rule of life, not only the title of her latest book of poems. This book was of carefully selected poems, lovingly polished and full of individuality, but although many loved it, it had no popular appeal, for the taste for the traditional in poetry has temporarily disappeared.

She was in her youth a grand and valiant hockey player, and was notable at tennis until middle age.

In some measure she gained success, in a way it eluded her. She was a writer of three novels, three books of poems, a book of essays, and reviewer for years for *Country Life*. She was the soul of hospitality and loved by hosts of friends. On the other side was the loneliness caused by the untimely death of a loved brother, and a lonely death.

LYNN HASELDINE JONES

with many thanks to CHRIS POND

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1938 pilgrimage to Ongar

Another local woman poet, but of a totally different era and style of writing, was Jane Taylor, one of a family known as the Taylors of Ongar. She is only known today for 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star', but in her day both she and her elder sister Ann were recognised poets.

On a summer afternoon in the year 1810 Jane Taylor, on a picnic in Epping Forest, read a sign-post –'To Ongar'. It was but a name to her.

In the year 1811 her father, the Reverend Isaac Taylor, walked from Brentwood to Ongar; and resting against a gate as he viewed the pretty little town across the fields thought, 'I could be content to live and die in that spot'.

He lived and died there, spending more than eighteen years as the 'assiduous and beloved pastor' of its little Meeting House.

To Jane, his second child – 'not forgotten, nor shall be', said the late Sir Edmund Gosse 'so long as the English language is in use' – it was the perfect setting for the remaining years of her short life.

On a summer afternoon in 1938 two descendants of Isaac Taylor visited Ongar. We went first to the Meeting House tucked away behind the village street: 'Ongar Congregational Church, 1662' reads the notice on a neighbouring small house where, training for the ministry under Mr Taylor's successor, once dwelt David Livingstone. In the vestry is a little picture gallery: Mr Taylor as a youngish man; the aged and thoughtful face of his son Isaac; his daughter Jane in a silhouette; his grandson Josiah Gilbert, son of his eldest daughter, Ann.

The three Taylor graves are now enclosed, and the custodian must raise the floorboards to show the well-

preserved stones where lie all that is mortal of Isaac and Ann Taylor, and of Jane 'their gifted child'.

In the nearby fields stands their first Ongar home, the Castle House, tall and dignified with its deep moat 'once navigated by Martin, Jeffreys and Jane in a brewing tub, when they unluckily lost one of the fire shovels used as an oar'.

The Peaked Farm, their second home (it has another name today), lies just outside the little town; and here another kind owner showed rooms inhabited for us by friendly ghosts. From that oak panelled parlour with its huge fireplace – scene on winter evenings of the reading 'mid a running fire of comment, of the latest verse or essay – leads the dark oak staircase up which, wind howling in the poplars outside, 'it became impossible to go, except well accompanied, and with a candle left in the room till sleep should come'.

The pleasant bedrooms still look out over fields; and Mrs Taylor and Jane (Ann had married from the Castle House), each in her little sanctum, might court her peaceful muse today as a hundred years ago. Another staircase leads to the attics, private and particular boltholes of sons engaged on literary or mechanical works as yet unacknowledged…

A mile or two from Ongar lies Stanford Rivers and the serene old house where, for forty years, Isaac Taylor, brother of Ann and Jane, worked out his inventions, wrote his books, and thought his long thoughts. Not for him the little town's activity, the coming and going of neighbours. In the chosen company of wife and children and those fellow-thinkers his name had gathered around him from far and near, he paced his garden paths and lanes the most secluded, and sought peace with his Maker. Today the house stands empty, but surely peace inhabits there.

And so across the fields in the soft evening light to the little church amidst its whispering trees where, in the quietness so dear to him in life, sleeps the recluse of Stanford Rivers.

From: *The Taylors of Ongar (Portrait of an English family of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Drawn from family records by the great-great-niece of Ann and Jane Taylor),* by Doris Mary Armitage, published by W Heffer and Sons Limited, 1939.

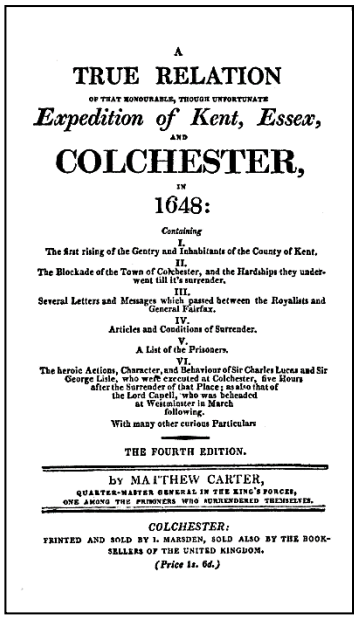
The Epping Skirmish, 1648

The Siege of Colchester in 1648 must be one of the most famous events in the history of Essex, but what led up to the blockade is much less well-known. One such episode was the Epping Skirmish, the only recorded clash of arms in this part of Essex during the Civil War.

By the summer of 1648, Cromwell and the Roundhead forces must have felt secure in their control of England. The royalist armies had been defeated, King Charles had been captured and imprisoned, and Parliament's authority was largely unquestioned. However, from his prison in Carisbrooke Castle, Charles continued plotting his restoration to power through a secret correspondence with the Scots. A Scottish invasion of England was agreed which would put Charles back on the throne in return for religious privileges. The invasion would be accompanied by risings of Cavalier gentry across the country.

As with all the best-laid plans, things did not work out as expected. Hot-heads amongst the royalist gentry rose in Kent in May 1648 before the Scottish army was ready to march. Canterbury, Faversham, Rochester, Sandwich and Sittingbourne fell. Some naval contingents declared for the king, and the coastal forts at Deal, Dover, Sandown and Walmer surrendered. Rumours swirled of a vast Royalist army assembling on Blackheath to attack London, and the capital's Trained Bands made hurried preparations for a defensive battle. Under their leader, Lord Norwich, the royalist levies, comprising about 10,000 men, gathered at Maidstone on 1 June ready for the march on London.

Parliament hastily despatched Lord Fairfax and his 8,000 soldiers from their camp on Hounslow Heath to confront the threat. In a brilliant and decisive manoeuvre, Fairfax's troops smashed their way into Maidstone and destroyed the rebels street by street. Norwich escaped with 3,000 men, and headed towards London, still intent on an attack. There was a stand-off at Blackheath where most of his levies deserted, followed by a desperate flight across the Thames and through the marshes of the Isle of Dogs to escape Fairfax, who was in hot pursuit. Now left with only 500 men, Norwich made a final half-hearted assault on Bow Bridge but was repulsed, and camped at Stratford to ponder his situation. With the Kentish rebellion crushed, his only hope was to join up with royalist forces further north and await the Scottish invasion.



A

TRUE RELATION

OF THAT HONOURABLE, THOUGH UNFORTUNATE

Expedition of Kent, Essex,

AND

COLCHESTER,

IN

1648:

Containing

I.
The first rising of the Gentry and Inhabitants of the County of Kent.

II.
The Blockade of the Town of Colchester, and the Hardships they underwent till it's surrender.

III.
Several Letters and Messages which passed between the Royalists and General Fairfax.

IV.
Articles and Conditions of Surrender.

V.
A List of the Prisoners.

VI.
The heroic Actions, Character, and Behaviour of Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle, who were executed at Colchester, five Hours after the Surrender of that Place; as also that of the Lord Capell, who was beheaded at Westminster in March following.

With many other curious Particulars

THE FOURTH EDITION.

by MATTHEW CARTER,

QUARTER-MASTER GENERAL IN THE KING'S FORCES, ONE AMONG THE PRISONERS WHO SURRENDERED THEMSELVES.

COLCHESTER:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY I. MARSDEN, SOLD ALSO BY THE BOOKSELLERS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

(Price 1s. 6d.)

Between 6–7 June, Norwich's men marched up the old Roman road, now the A12, through Ilford and Romford to Brentwood, pursued by Colonel Whalley's Roundheads. Whalley's troops comprised some of the most fanatical Puritan soldiers, psalm-singing zealots who found a warm welcome in Essex, that most Protestant of counties. At Brentwood the Cavaliers were strengthened by a detachment of Essex royalists under Sir Charles Lucas, and again at Chelmsford, a party of Hertfordshire royalists joined them on 9 June.

In London, small groups of royalists had waited in vain for the capture of London in the name of the king

and, seeing that the game was up, made plans to head out of the city and join the swelling army of Lord Norwich. Fairfax and his Parliamentarian army had, meanwhile, crossed the Thames from Kent at Tilbury and were heading up through south Essex to engage the Cavaliers as soon as possible.

A contemporary journal takes up the account,

> There also came in a party of about fifty gentlemen, who signing their combination in London, made their rendez-vous at Hyde Park Corner, and marching all the night before [i.e. the night of 7-8 June], intended to beat up a quarter of the enemy's at Epping, their way, but a party was drawn out near the town upon some other design, which disappointed them of their stratagem; so they marched on, and being well mounted, charged through the enemy, and the next day joined us [i.e. the rest of the royalist forces in Chelmsford], having lost only one man and a horse; which horse, being taken by a countryman was recovered again, as was afterwards the rider.

From this brief account, how much can be reconstructed of this small-scale mêlée, the Epping Skirmish? We can imagine the secret gathering of royalist supporters late on the evening of 7 June close to the Tyburn gallows, at that time some way out of London's built-up area. Then the fraught ride through the night to try and reach the main body of Cavaliers at Chelmsford.

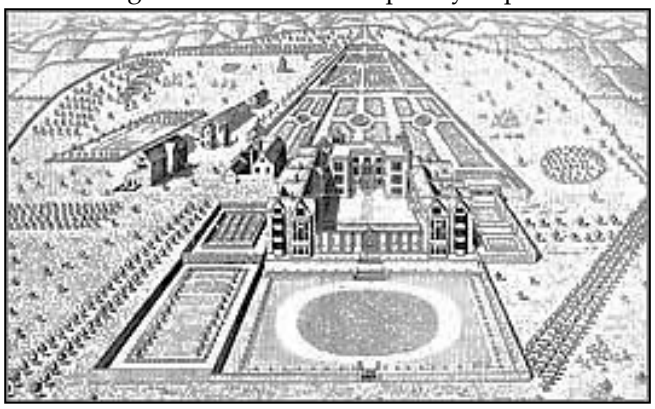
Which route did they take? The main road, the present-day A12, would have been too dangerous. There was a strong Parliamentarian guard at Bow Bridge, which was blocked by cannons. And further into Essex, between London and Chelmsford, Colonel Whalley's fanatical Puritan troops were roaming the countryside looking for royalist sympathisers. A new road had been built between 1611–22 providing a direct link between London and East Anglia, which ran from Woodford to Epping through Buckhurst Hill and Loughton (the present-day High Roads and Goldings Hill). If the royalist party had headed north from Tyburn, then turned east to cross the Lea by one of the ferries, at Leyton or Chingford, or even swum their horses over, then they could have travelled along the new road. Alternatively, and probably safest, they could have ridden due north, following the Great North Road (the present-day A10) up to Waltham Cross, then crossed the river at Waltham Abbey, on to Epping from there, and then taking the Ongar road straight to Chelmsford.

Ogilby and Morgan's 1678 map of Essex, showing routes between London and Chelmsford

And who was the enemy quartered at Epping whom the party of 50 gentlemen hoped to beat up? The owners of the large houses in the area had varying loyalties. At Eppingbury, William Grey, Lord Grey of Warke, had impeccably royalist credentials, as did the occupant of Winchelsea House (later Epping Place), Heneage Finch, 3rd Earl of Winchelsea. The owner of Campions, Thomas Wynch, was more suspect. His will, dated 1653, is laden with evangelical references which strongly imply a Presbyterian if not downright Puritan sympathy. But more likely still is the owner of Copped Hall, James Cranfield, 2nd Earl

of Middlesex. Before inheriting the earldom, Lord Middlesex had served as an MP in the Short Parliament of 1640, which had been fiercely critical of Charles I. He was appointed a Lord Lieutenant during the subsequent Long Parliament, which was republican in outlook, and was then appointed by Parliament to be one of its commissioners negotiating the Treaty of Newport. This was a last-ditch attempt to come to terms with Charles I, and when Charles' stubbornness led to the treaty's failure, this was the pretext for Cromwell to purge Parliament and put Charles on trial.

So the charge of the 50 gentlemen may have been against the retainers of Lord Middlesex. We can imagine the scene, on 8 June 1648, the cavaliers crossing Bell Common in a determined onslaught against a posse of armed men from Copped Hall. The intention to attack a rival's home en-route may seem like an unnecessary diversion but had good precedent. The main body of Lord Norwich's men making their way up towards Chelmsford, had attacked Marks, the home of Parliamentarian Carew Mildmay outside Romford. Mildmay had a narrow escape, having to swim across his own moat to get away. The 50 gentlemen had the best of the encounter near Epping, charging through the enemy cordon with the loss of only one rider, temporarily dismounted but later recovered safely as was his horse. There is no record of an assault on Copped Hall, however. Our 50 gentlemen were deep in enemy territory and no doubt anxious to get to Chelmsford as quickly as possible.



Copped Hall

They had also been distracted 'upon some other design' as the contemporary account notes, 'which disappointed them of their stratagem', because 'a party was drawn out near the town'. So as they approached Epping, with the intention of attacking an enemy base, there was some kind of distraction. A company of the Cavaliers had to go off and investigate, leaving the force divided and unable to carry out the planned onslaught.

Although the diversion may have been a ruse by the men of Copped Hall, it could equally have been local Clubmen from Epping or, just possibly, from Loughton. Clubmen – village militias armed with clubs and farm tools – were widespread in Civil War England but have been poorly studied because they left few records. They wore white ribbons in their hats and were pledged neither to king nor Parliament but to defend their homes, their crops and families from plunder and rape, not to mention forcible conscription. Such local vigilantes may well have taken our 50 gentlemen unawares. The scouting party of Cavaliers sent off to deal with this distraction would have been plainly told to stay on the move and to leave the area as quickly as possible.

The final drama of this story is well known. The royalist levies entered Colchester on 12 June 1648, intending to take on provisions before moving into East Anglia. However, Fairfax caught up with them a day later and the Siege of Colchester began. The siege lasted for 12 weeks, the royalists surrendering after the Battle of Preston. The defeat of the invading pro-Charles Scots army marked the end of any hope of a royalist victory. Two of the Cavalier leaders at Colchester were shot by firing squad, and the unfortunate shattered and starving residents of the town, Parliamentarians almost to a man, were forced to find £14,000 to buy off the Roundhead besiegers intent on pillage. On 30 January 1649, Charles I was beheaded and England became a republic.

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Victoria County History of Essex, Volumes 4 and 5.

STEPHEN PEWSEY

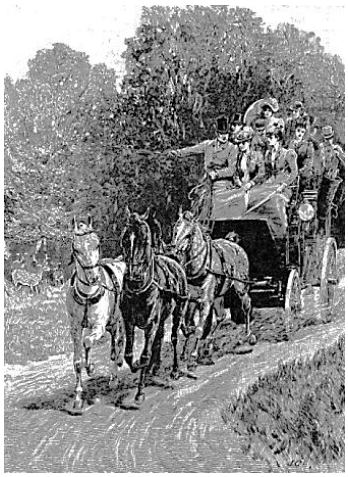
Old Buckwellians cricket team 1962

Carol Warren has sent in this photograph of the Old Buckwellians cricket team, which is dated on the back as August 1962. Carol, with the help of Terry Carter, has been able to identify all the men in the group. They are:

Back row, left to right: Richard Pingree, Chesney Warren, Charlie Summers, Mick Cooper, Bob Partridge, Leslie Cordez.

Front row: Billy Roberts, Terry Carter, Doug Clarke, Alan Blackall, Stuart Low.

Holidays near London:
coaching in Essex on the road to Chigwell

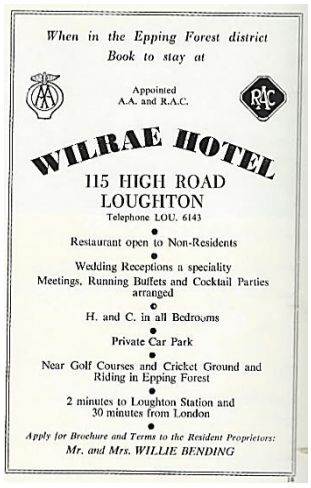


'Chigwell, my dear fellow, is the greatest place in the world. Name your day for going. Such a delicious old inn facing the church! Such a lovely ride! Such forest scenery! Such an out-of-the-way rural place! Such a sexton! I say, again, name your day.' *Charles Dickens's Letters.*

Print in *The Graphic,* Saturday, 10 September 1892

Hotels in Loughton

The Official Guide for Chigwell Urban District, covering Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell and Loughton, published for the period 1966 – 67 contained a number of advertisements which may be of interest. The first is of St Olave's Private Hotel, 107 High Road, Loughton. With central heating, hot and cold water in all bedrooms, and a comfortable lounge, with television, it must have seemed very modern and up-to-date. It even had a private car park, but the advertising included reference to public transport, including the Green Line (720 London Aldgate to Bishop's Stortford and 718 Windsor to Harlow) services (although the reference to LPTB buses is out-of-date, as the board ceased to exist in 1948). The St Olave's building was music hall star José Collins' old house, a semi-detached Victorian villa, on the corner of Lower Park Road (for more about José Collins, see *Newsletter 207*). It was demolished 2003–4. The blue plaque was placed there in 1999 and a planning condition was that the developer of the new building would provide a new one with revised wording.



The other hotel listed for Loughton was the Wilrae Hotel, at 115 High Road. This was AA and RAC appointed, and its restaurant was open to non-residents, and specialised in wedding receptions. The proprietor was William Frederick Bending, born in late 1905, who married Rachel Barnett in Stepney in 1928, hence Wilrae. Mr Bending died in 1968. The building is now the Loughton Clinic.

Other advertisements in the *Official Guide* include Quirk and Partners, corporate surveyors, auctioneers and estate agents at 141 High Road; Vivienne Co-ordinates Ltd, for ladies' continental wear, at 73 The Broadway; Frank A Holdom, estate agent and valuer, of 3 High Beech Road; Bennetts of Loughton, complete home furnishers, of 68 – 72 The Broadway; Margrie and Son, the carpet centre, of 276 High Road; J H Murray, bakers and confectioners, of 156 Loughton Way; Cerdep Ltd, development and production engineers, of 11 Forest Road; and Townsends, wet, dry and fried fishmonger, of 28 The Broadway.

Engineer or profiteer? –
John Viret Gooch (1812–1900): part 2

Goodbye to the ECR: Gooch and others

In January 1856 Gooch's bonuses were ended and this put him into dispute about them with the ECR. His bonuses were stated to be £6,581 9s 8d in March but on 2 October he settled for £600! He did not attend the half-yearly meeting, giving his address as Barrogill Castle, near Thurso, as guest of the Earl of Caithness! Gooch's contract was terminated on 26 June 1856 with effect from the 30th. So he missed the opening of the Loughton branch, admittedly a small event in terms of the turmoil that was engulfing the ECR at the time. Waddington, who had aided Gooch in his money-making schemes had also to leave the company, so by the end of 1856 the ECR chairman, David Waddington and Sir Morton Peto had given up their posts with the ECR. Robert Sinclair from the Caledonian Railway succeeded Gooch in August 1856.

Gooch had put up a tough defence and asked for arbitration of his case by Robert Stephenson, but, knowing of his and his family's connections with the Stephensons, the Board demurred. No charges were brought against Gooch, though Baker (see below) thinks that the business culture of the time had not developed enough to find his actions reprehensible and the 'freemasonry' of the Stephensons, Locke, brother Daniel, etc, 'threw barricades around him'.

Four months after his departure Gooch was presented with an *épergne* and a sumptuous set of Victorian table silver. The donors were those who had profited from his schemes; those who did not contribute were the new directors of the company!

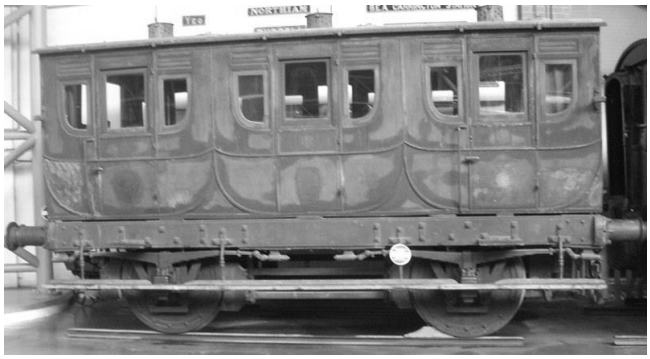
The Loughton branch

While all this was going on the Loughton branch line was surveyed in 1852. On the deposited plans[12] C F Cheffins, Surveyor, London, is named. Charles Frederick Cheffins (10 September 1807–23 October 1861) was a mechanical draughtsman, cartographer and consulting engineer, who had been assistant to George Stephenson and a surveyor of many British railway routes and believed to be the same Cheffins who surveyed the ECR system in the late 1840s.[13]

George Parker Bidder was the engineer of the line. Bidder (13 June 1806–20 September 1878) was an engineer and calculating prodigy. Born in Moreton-hampstead, Devon, he had a flair for calculation from an early age. In 1824 he joined Ordnance Survey, but then moved to engineering. In 1834 he worked with Robert Stephenson on the London & Birmingham Railway, and later assisted George Stephenson in promoting schemes for railways in Parliament, learning engineering and parliamentary practice when the main principles governing English railway construction were established. Known as the best witness that ever went into a committee-room, he discovered and took advantage of the weak points in an opponent's case, using his powers of mental calculation.[14]

George Berkley[15] is also named on the plans. Both he and Bidder were then engineers of some repute so it seems that the ECR paid for a first class job.

The contractor was Thomas Brassey (7 November 1805–8 December 1870) a civil engineering contractor and manufacturer of building materials who built many of the world's railways in the 19th century.[16] His tender was not the lowest tender, but he was willing to take debentures in part-payment and was well known for reliability and there appear to have been few difficulties in constructing the line. As the branch neared completion, on 4 June 1856 James Robertson, the newly appointed (April 1856) Superintendent of all the ECR Lines was asked to join the Chairman Waddington on his inspection of it. Robertson's remarks regarding the apparent paucity of facilities went unheeded. The line was opened on 22 August 1856 and ran from Loughton Branch junction, north of Stratford to a station at Loughton (the first of three) roughly on the site of the Lopping Hall.



An unrestored Eastern Counties Railway first-class coach of 1851 in the National Railway Museum, York. This type of vehicle would have formed the 1st-class sections of Loughton trains when the line first opened in 1856. Photo: Chris Pond.

Gooch's later life

Not a lot is known about John Gooch's later life but with the wealth he had accumulated and his other business interests he probably lived very comfortably to his 88th year at his last residence, Cooper's Hill, House, Easthampstead, Berkshire. Using the National Archive Converter of 2005 it would seem that he had amassed in 1861 wealth in excess of £863,000 in today's values.

In 1861, age 48, he was staying at the Great Western Railway Hotel, Paddington, probably because of his marital problems. It is feasible that this was organised by his brother, Daniel, with his GWR connections. It was also convenient for visiting Daniel who lived nearby in still rural Paddington. In 1862 his address was Great George Street, Westminster. His formidable mother died on 24 November 1863, 30 years after her husband, at the age of 80 – an indication of from where John's longevity came.

In 1873 it seems that he visited South Africa with an address in Durban but for what purpose is not known. Durban was the site of the first short public railway in South Africa, but this was 13 years before John's visit.

His first wife died in 1874 and in 1876 he married Emily Mary Stonhouse. He would have been in his 64th year and his wife in her 36th. In 1881 they were living at Terrace Cottage, Richmond, Surrey, and John also gave an address at the Reform Club and his occupation as 'civil engineer'.

His wife, aged 40 in 1881, had given him a daughter, Mabel Barbara (age 4) and a son Edward Sinclair (age 2). Was Edward's middle name chosen to honour Robert Sinclair who succeeded him as locomotive superintendent of the ECR in August 1856? Both men were pupils of Locke and worked on the Grand Junction Railway and would surely have been known to one another and both pioneered outside cylinder engines but Sinclair did not follow the trend for light engines at the time and was not worried by heavier locomotives. Both of John's first two children were born in Richmond. So at age 68 he was the father of two young children, with a wife 28 years his junior and they had five servants.

It seems that about 1882 the family moved to Coopers Hill House, Easthampstead, Berks, because in 1891 the census recorded John, now 78, civil engineer, living with his wife Emily Mary now 50, and daughters Mabel Barbara (age 16) and Ethel Mary (age 9) who was born at Easthampstead. Edward would probably have been at school – Winchester.

John's son Major Edward Sinclair Gooch of the Berkshire Yeomanry (previously a lieutenant in the 7th Queen's Own Hussars in the South African War), was born on 26 February 1879 and died on 21 September 1915 of wounds received while 'gallantly leading his regiment in the Yeomanry charge [on Hill 70] at Suvla Bay' in the Gallipoli Campaign on 21 August 1916.

Major E S Gooch

He was mentioned in despatches. He took command of the regiment when his colonel was invalided out the night before the attack and led the regiment skilfully over difficult country. With his revolver in hand he was first into the enemy's trenches but at that

moment he received a bullet wound to the head and died a month later from his injuries.

Edward married Miss Eva Conway Everard Jones, of Torcastle, Banavie, Inverness-shire, and left one daughter. There is a plaque to his memory within St Andrew's Episcopal Church, High Street, Fort William, where he was buried with full military honours. Had he not been killed and had a similar life-span as his father, father and son would have covered more than 150 years of British history.

John's elder daughter Mabel married Francis Bland in 1899 a year before John's death. Mrs Gooch was still living at Coopers Hill House in 1914, 102 years after her husband's birth. Easthampstead is now a southern suburb of Bracknell New Town.

Conclusion

In his lifetime John Gooch had seen the total development of our railways from their earliest days to a national rail system but had only contributed for the first part of his very long life. He kept in contact with his brothers and attended Daniel's funeral and that of Daniel's first wife.

One wonders if he sat at Coopers Hill thinking that, if he had not been so keen to profit, he might leave a reputation, similar to those of his grandfather, or younger brother, Daniel, or older brother, Thomas, as 'a truly upright and honest man'.

But the mists of time hid his peculations and his dismissal from the ECR, so much so that the Institute of Civil Engineers gave him a glowing obituary which reads in part as follows:

John Viret Gooch, who died on the 8th June, 1900 . . . was one of the last two or three remaining pioneers in railway locomotive engineering.

Mr Gooch had reached the ripe age of 88, and had retired from active business quite forty years ago, so that to all but a few of the present generation of engineers he was unknown, except for the excellent work he did and the influence he exerted in the evolution of the locomotive of today. In this connection, indeed, he deserves to be remembered with Trevithick, the Stephensons, his brother – Sir Daniel Gooch – Brunel, Locke, Sinclair, Ramsbottom, Allan, and others who need not be named. It was under Locke, when at his years of greatest energy and initiative, that Gooch served his pupillage, and during part of the time, away back in the thirties, he was engaged in the construction of the Grand Junction Railway, for which Locke was Engineer.

In view of Mr Gooch's practice in later years, it is worth recalling that it was while he was with Locke that the latter reintroduced into favour the outside cylinder arrangement. The Grand Junction Railway was opened in 1837, and the first locomotives had inside cylinders; but when it became necessary to refit the engines, the cylinders were placed outside, so that by 1851 this type became the standard locomotive of the line. Gooch was occupied on this work, and continued it during the three years he held the position of Resident Engineer on the Grand Junction Railway.

Early in the forties he became Resident Engineer on the London and South Western Railway, and for ten years had entire charge of the Locomotive Department. He resigned this position to serve in a similar capacity for the Eastern Counties . . . , retiring, as has been said, over forty years ago.

It is scarcely necessary to recall that during his later years on the South-Western Railway and the earlier years of his service on the Eastern Counties Railway, controversy was active as to inside and outside cylinders, and as to the relative advantages of great dead-weight, as compared with light, locomotives.

Most of the heavy railway haulage was done . . . – about 1849 – by engines having inside cylinders, and 30 tons was by no means an uncommon weight; but Gooch held the view that engines with large driving wheels, and of which the weight was moderate and about equally distributed on all the wheels, gave results as good, both as regards economy and speed, as could be realised with the heavier locomotives . . .

The original South-Western locomotives made in 1838 had inside cylinders, the first outside cylinders being applied by Gooch in 1843, and his first engine of this type had 6 feet 6-inch driving wheels – the first locomotive with drivers over 6 feet (except Dr Church's 6 feet 2.5 inches), to be run on [the standard] gauge.

. . . Gooch increased the size of his express-engine driving-wheels to 7 feet. Their success was marked, for they 'struck a mean' between the very light locomotives . . . and the much heavier types . . . Gooch's design, especially as embodied in the 'Snake' class, and subsequently developed in the tank engines built by him when on the Eastern Counties Railway, for working the Tilbury traffic, had a permanent influence on later locomotive practice . . .

Mr Gooch afforded *another instance of commercial success* prematurely robbing engineering science of an able and experienced worker, for he did little practical work during the past forty years, enjoying country life in his Berkshire home.

While engaged in the work of railway locomotion he *applied himself diligently to his business*, and although he was elected a Member of this Institution on the 2nd May, 1854, he only spoke on two occasions, once on the treatment of water to suit it for locomotive use, giving results of the experimental use of many chemical solvents, and again on his favourite subject of light versus heavy engines. By those who knew him his memory will be *cherished*, and for his services to locomotive engineering he will always be respected.[17] [*My italics*.]

At his death on 8 June 1900 John Viret Gooch left £84,000 (about £4 million today). Although Daniel Gooch was sometimes subject to some criticism for a few of his business dealings, they were not in the same league as John's and Daniel in fact wrote: 'I am sure few need fail to do well if they will win for themselves a character of strict honesty . . . that in their dealings with men they will act with honour.'

Notes

NB Notes 1–11 appeared in Part 1 of this article in *Newsletter 212*.

12. ERO: Q/RUm 2/92. I am very grateful to Ian Strugnell for supplying the names of the line's surveyor, engineer and contractor in this section.

13. Cheffins is also known for *Cheffins's Map of English & Scotch Railways* (1850) and other maps.

14. In 1837 Bidder worked with Robert Stephenson on the Blackwall Railway, designing an unusual method of disconnecting a carriage at each station while the rest of the train did not stop, when that line was cable-worked. He was involved in those eastern counties railways which were later to become the Great Eastern Railway and advised on the construction of Belgian railways. Robert Stephenson and George Bidder built the first railway in Norway and George was engineer-in-chief of Danish railways, and concerned with railways in India. He described himself as a 'railway-engineer', but he took an interest in all branches of engineering. Chris Pond has an article about the Epping Railways Company 1861 deed, which concerned the extension to Ongar, and which involved Bidder in *Newsletter 187*, November/December 2010. I am grateful to Chris Pond for supplying a research tip which yielded more addresses for John Gooch.

15. Sir George Berkley (died 20 December 1893) was a civil engineer born in London. He designed the Colesberg Bridge, a 390m bridge built in 1885 over the Orange River in South Africa, was a consulting engineer for the Indian Midland Railway and, with Sir Charles Fox, built the 19-mile-long Indian Tramway light railway from Arconum to Conjeverum. He was president of the Institution of Civil Engineers, May 1891–May 1892, and was made a KCMG in Queen Victoria's 1893 Birthday Honours.

16. Brassey had built about one-third of the railways in Britain by 1847, and at his death in 1870 he had built one mile of every 20 railway miles in the world. He also built docks, bridges, viaducts, stations, tunnels and drainage works. Brassey was also involved in developing steamships, mines, locomotive factories, marine telegraphy and water supply and sewerage systems. He built part of the London sewerage system, still in operation, and was a major shareholder in Brunel's *Great Eastern*, the only ship large enough to lay the first transatlantic telegraph cable across the North Atlantic, in 1864 which was bought by Daniel Gooch for the work.

17. The full obituary goes into more locomotive engineering detail and is available online at:
http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/index.php?title=John_Viret_Gooch&oldid=711453

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TED MARTIN

Loughton in 1941

Positions

Essex Education Committee: County High School for Girls, Loughton

Required – assistant cook (female) to assist also with cleaning. Wages £1 per week, paid monthly, plus war bonus, increase after short period of satisfactory service. Meals provided.

Required – school cleaner (female), to assist also in kitchen. Wages £1 per week paid monthly, plus temporary war bonus. Apply immediately to School Caretaker.

House parlourmaid between 30 and 50 wanted, for Loughton, Essex, one widower. Frequent holidays, one bedroom and sitting room. Daily cook and housemaid kept. Write full particulars and salary required to ZN635, c/o Deacons, 5 St Mary Axe, EC3.

Wanted – capable woman, three days a week, preferably over 30. Mrs Gordon, Bordersmead, Trapps Hill, Loughton.

Head Gardener wanted, cottage provided. Full particulars – Mrs Boake, High Standing, Albion Hill, Loughton.

Woman wanted for sorting sacks and bags and to mend van sheets. Goulds, Loughton.

For sale: 1935 Morris 8 Saloon De Luxe. Excellent condition throughout. £70. Apply 15 Meadow Road, Loughton, after 7 or Saturday afternoon.

Cars without lights: Laurence H Drake, of 15, Marjorams Avenue, Loughton, was fined 10s for parking his car without lights. Similarly Florence R Chilton, of The Lodge, High Beech, was fined 10s for a like offence.

Loughton Women's Institute: On Wednesday last the October meeting of the Loughton Women's Institute took place in the Methodist Church Hall. Mrs Brunsdon (President) occupied the chair. Mrs Cane (Hon Secretary) read the minutes of the last meeting. The proceedings began with the singing of *Jerusalem.*

The President said the jam making had been a great success. 700lbs of jam and jelly had been made, and 103lbs of fruit bottled. All of this was for sale, and 366lbs had been sold. Miss Zimmerman now had seeds for next year's orders. 10 new members were enrolled. The literary circle will in future meet in the Small Lopping Hall, commencing on October 14th, for the period from October to March.

Voting for the new committee took place, the result to be announced next month. Mrs Brunsdon will continue as President. Mrs Cane needing a rest will resign from the position as Hon Secretary, Mrs Willcock taking her place.

Mrs A Gould then explained the Bring and Buy Sale, to take place in that hall on Saturday October 11th, from 2 to 5pm. The object was to raise money for the Troops Comfort Fund. There would be a white elephant stall, exchange bookstall, and various other stalls. Everyone was asked to bring something and buy something, however small. There would be entertainments, with a mandolin band, under the direction of Mrs Evans. It was hoped that everyone would do their best to help such a good cause.

After the business a very charming song recital was given by Mrs Dorothy D'Orsay, of which the audience showed full appreciation. The singer was accompanied at the piano by Miss Joyce Riddell, who in an interval gave a selection of pianoforte pieces, showing great skill. Later Miss D'Orsay gave a selection of folk songs, which was also greatly appreciated, concluding with the well-known negro spiritual, *My Lord, what a Morning*. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to both by Mrs Baker.

Following tea, the Social Half Hour was given, arranged by Mrs Rains. This was a community fairy tale, *Red Riding Hood.* The reading was by Mrs Brunsdon, the gaps being filled in by the audience, and the acting parts taken by various members. This proved good entertainment, and was much enjoyed. Rounds of applause concluded a very pleasant afternoon.

Loughton Man Victimised: The story of how a Loughton man was victimised was told at Stratford Police Court on Monday, when Gerald John Gordon, tobacconist and bookseller, Hoe Street, Walthamstow, was summoned 'for feloniously stealing the sum of ten shillings, under a mistake made by Harry Avery, with knowledge of that mistake'.

Harry Avery, of Habgood Road, Loughton, said that he called at the defendant's shop and bought some books for 5d. He was given change for a £1 note. As he was leaving the shop he realised his change was short so he told Gordon, who had served him, and asked him if he had given a note in his change. Gordon said no, as only 10s had been tendered. Avery gave him the note's number, and defendant admitted that a note of that number was in the till, but refused to tender change.

Avery, cross-examined, said that he always noted the numbers of his notes in his diary.

The hearing was adjourned for the luncheon recess, and on recommencement, it was stated that, subject to the approval of the bench, a settlement had been arrived at, and the summons was allowed to be withdrawn, with Gordon paying Avery the 10s change and 34s costs.

Councillor Casey's Resignation Demanded: At the meeting held by the Loughton Residents' Protection Association this week a reply to the Association's letter to the Prime Minister was read by the Secretary. After a lengthy discussion those present agreed that a noticeable improvement in one direction had been shown at a recent meeting of the Chigwell UDC, thanks mainly to the efforts of Councillors Leach and Weaver. These two gentlemen had no doubt been inspired to action by the indignation felt by the majority of those electors who are at all interested in local affairs, at the way the Council have attempted to conduct all business in camera except the most trivial proceedings. Although promised many times, the local Press have not received even a bare statement of these happenings behind closed doors. Other points raised by members present were that it would be interesting to know who is responsible for deciding which business is to be put on the agenda for hearing in committee. Judging by the four items that were heard in public after Councillor Leach's proposal it was quite unnecessary to ever have put these down for hearing in committee as the information disclosed in the evening discussion did not appear to be of any value to the Nazis. Of whom then are the Council afraid? The answer of course is the Electors.

It was unanimously agreed that the excuse given by one of the two Councillors who have failed to attend Council meetings and are otherwise neglecting those they have {been} elected to serve, was not good enough. It was decided to press for Councillor Casey's resignation; this case could not be treated in the same category as one in which an individual had been called to the Colours, or had had to undertake work of National Importance away from the district for reasons other than those of a private nature or purely self-interestedness.

Members stated that they were searching for some signs of self-sacrifice and public spiritedness coupled with a sense of responsibility from some of those who advocate it so often for others. Further discussion and viewpoints on this very important matter of Local Government through the usual channels would be welcomed by the Association.

Training: Civil Defence – programme for the week ending 12 October 1941 –

Anti-gas. Lecture 2.30 on 6th at ECC Clinic, Buckhurst Way, Buckhurst Hill

Lecture no 3, 7pm on 8th at Roding Road First Aid Post, Loughton

Lecture no 4, 7pm on 10th at Roding Road First Aid Post

Fire-fighting. Lecture and demonstration 11am on 12th at Demonstration Hut, Roding Road, Loughton

From the *Buckhurst Hill and Chingford Advertiser*, Saturday, 4 October 1941

Still reforming

2017 marks 500 years since Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the church door in Germany (or so the legend goes). The Reformation which eventually resulted changed Europe for ever, in ways Luther could probably never have envisaged.

'In 2017, twelve parishes across London will welcome each other, fellow Londoners, and visitors on their doorsteps, inviting them to experience for themselves the diverse heritage of the Reformation. Each month, a different congregation will host an event beginning at its open door, in the hope that all those involved will learn something new, exchange ideas and perspectives, and attempt to understand together what the relevance of the Reformation is for us today.'

Some of the churches involved are the Dutch Church in London (7 Austin Friars EC2) in May, the French Protestant Church (8–9 Soho Square W1) in June, St Katherine's Danish Church (4 St Katherine's Precinct NW1) in July and the Norwegian Church (Albion Street SE16) in November.

Full details of the events, which range from a concert, services and meals, can be found in the leaflet *Still Reforming* which can be obtained from the participating churches (suggested donation £1) and more information is available on the website www.reformation500.uk THE EDITOR

Archaeology at the Holy Family Catholic School, Walthamstow

The site, which consists of school buildings, playing fields and a car park, was originally developed as housing in the mid to late 18th century, a time of great development for Walthamstow. By 1850 the house was occupied by the St Nicholas Industrial School for Boys, after which it was renamed a few times before becoming Holy Family Technology College and now Holy Family Catholic School.

In 2009 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd was commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation of the site, which uncovered various Roman and prehistoric (Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age) finds. In February 2017 PCA returned for a full-scale excavation and for a two hour window on 13 February members of the public were invited to look at the site and see some of the finds.

At work on site, February 2017

The finds uncovered offer the first evidence of Roman occupation found in the area near Walthamstow. Along with Roman and prehistoric artefacts, also uncovered were the remains of a high status Roman structure, possibly a villa, which unfortunately had been looted in the past.

Left: A Roman coin found on the site, dated around AD300

L H J

Epping's motor industry

Sorting out my bookshelves recently I rediscovered a couple of copies of *Car Mechanics* from June and July 1960 featuring a two-part article, *This Modern Estate Car – You can build it for £250*. To the contemporary reader this might have sounded too good to be true –

when it was introduced in 1959 a new Mini cost £497. I had put these magazines aside with a view to doing something more with them and now I have got round to doing it.

I have previously written about Ashley Laminates in *Newsletters 163*, *164*, *169* and *207*. Ashley Laminates built glass fibre bodies to produce a 'special', a sports car built on the chassis of an older car, normally an old Austin 7 or small Ford such as an 8, 10 or Popular. There was a small industry of builders of glass fibre bodies for 'specials' (as such cars were known) based in north London and the adjacent Home Counties around this time. These were sporty vehicles, often looking something like a small Jaguar E-type. This 'modern estate car' was a similar product but of a more utilitarian rather than sporting nature. These estate bodies were produced by Conversion Car Bodies Ltd (CCB) who were based at Naco Works, Lindsey Street, Epping (now the site of Brian Shilton's coachworks, 73 Lindsey Street). Although the company was referred to as CCB and their premises as Naco Works, in my researches on them it has become apparent the vehicles have sometimes been referred to as Nacos.

The company was formed by Laurie Salmon in 1959. Laurie had been manager of Falcon Shells from 1957. Ashley Laminates had been set up in 1955 by Keith Waddington and Peter Peladine in a garage (now demolished) adjacent to the Robin Hood pub on Epping New Road, but subsequently moved to the Potteries, Upshire, and then Harlow. In 1957 the partners separated and Peter Peladine established Falcon Shells with premises at 23 High Bridge Street, Waltham Abbey and a showroom at 52 High Street, Epping. They later moved to 150 Great North Road, Hatfield. It will be seen that there is almost a 'family tree' of body building companies, though Ashley and Falcon produced sports car bodies. I am not sure when CCB ceased trading, but I doubt it lasted long into the 1960s as changes to purchase tax rules meant special building ceased to be worthwhile.

'If it's too good to be true, it probably is' runs the maxim and in this case the £250 estate car might look modern on the outside but underneath would have been the chassis and mechanicals of an older car. The donor chassis for the CCB estate was a side-valve Ford one, ranging from a 1937 Ford 8 or 10 to the Ford Popular last made in 1959, basically what would be described as a 'sit-up-and-beg' Ford. In the course of my researches, however, I have learnt of CCB estate bodies being mounted on Standard 10 and Buckler chassis. Buckler were another firm making specials which traded from 1947 to 1965 and was based in the Reading area. Although a CCB conversion was not really a bargain car, if one had the time and necessary skills to accomplish the task, it presumably was a way to get your own vehicle at a reasonable price. The article costed the work:

Bodyshell	£156
Donor car (though this term would not have been used at the time)	£25
Reconditioning mechanical parts and making the interior good	£50
Boxing in chassis and softening road springs	£10-12

The project required the chassis to be boxed in to make it more rigid as the fibre glass body was more flexible than a steel one and also lengthened to accommodate the body. The original Ford radiator would have been set too high to fit inside the new body and in the *Car Mechanics* build this was replaced with one from a crashed Morris Minor 1000. The writer of the articles, John Mills, seemed to advocate finding any replacement parts required for the job from scrapyards. Fitting the body needed a friend to help lift it on and careful measurement was needed to ensure it was correctly aligned. The seats from the donor car were to be reused or, if they were in poor condition, replacements could, of course, be obtained from a scrapyard. To me a prerequisite of an estate car is a folding rear seat, but seats of a Ford Popular or similar did not fold. The advice for lining the interior seems somewhat amazing. This 'is a matter for the individual, but quite the easiest way of doing the job is to rub any protruding nibs of plastic down with ordinary wire wool, then cover the sides with sheets of Fablon of whatever colour appeals most.' Fablon is also referred to as 'sticky backed plastic' in case you were a *Blue Peter* watcher!

It is advisable to search the net when writing articles these days and there I have managed to find copies of contemporary advertisements for CCB's products (Contemporary motoring magazines regularly featured advertisements for bodies and other products supplied by special builders and indeed a CCB advert appeared in the July 1960 *Car Mechanics*). Some of these feature the car converted in the *Car Mechanics* article, EYT 657, a number issued by London around July 1938 showing how old donor vehicles could be. Fitting a new body onto an existing chassis did not require the re-registration of the vehicle. The adverts also feature a saloon version of

the body with a design echoing the style of the Ford Anglia 105E and Triumph Herald of that era. CCB initially produced the estate car and the saloon followed later. The moulds for these two bodies were identical except the estate was squared off at the rear whereas the saloon had a conventional boot. Interestingly a saloon in one of the adverts also sports the number plate EYT 657, so one wonders whether the original chassis bore two different bodies (well actually three if you include the Ford body it had when new) or for some reason the number plates were switched from one car to another for the photoshoot. I suspect the former was the case as, once a conversion had taken place, switching bodies would have been relatively easy. The company seemed to have a kind of 'open house' on Saturdays and Sundays between 10am and 1pm when an example of a converted vehicle (one suspects one of the incarnations of EYT 657) could be inspected. One advert directs 'Irish inquiries' to Easy-Built Cars Ltd of Belfast.

As a child I remember seeing a 'mystery estate car' a couple of times. It did not match anything featuring in the incredibly comprehensive *Observer's Book of Automobiles* then available. My car-spotting friend, Howard, suggested it might have been an Israeli Autocar, but I think that would have been most unlikely on the Cheshire lanes where I saw it, especially with British number plates. With hindsight I strongly suspect it was a vehicle with one of these Car Conversion Bodies estates, but I will never be sure.

My searches on the internet revealed something completely remarkable – one of these estate car conversions still survives! As far as the Ford Sidevalve Owners Club (FSOC) is aware, no saloons remain. It is registered DMP 10 (a Middlesex number) and is still taxed. It was first registered in October 1939, so would have been actually registered during the Second World War. Through the FSOC I was able to contact the owner who has helpfully given me much useful information about the car. The car is nicknamed 'Dump' because of its registration. As an estate car it has had just three owners all who have used it for hillclimb trialling. This is a form of motorsport where the objective is to get the vehicle as far as possible up a steep and normally muddy incline with points being awarded on the basis of how far the driver gets up the hill. The car was converted by David Hilliard of Cornwall in the early 1960s. The owner describes him as 'a meticulous aeronautical engineer'. Following David's death it was sold to Mike Furze and the present owner (who wishes to remain anonymous) acquired it 21 years ago.

The car now has a Ford sidevalve 1172cc engine from a Ford 10 or newer Ford with a gearbox from a Wolseley Hornet, though originally it would have had a 933cc engine. Twin carburettors have been fitted. Before the present engine was fitted it had an unusual one, with a Ford 1172cc block and an Alta overhead engine inside it – Alta was a company that made engines for racing cars. The present owner writes: 'The engines were apparently very similar dimensionally and with a degree of ingenuity they could be made to fit.' This would seem to demonstrate the engineering abilities of David Hilliard, who built the car. Like the *Car Mechanics* conversion, DMP 10 was fitted with a radiator from a Morris Minor. The cooling system seems to have required vents in the side of the wings to improve airflow, an item not seen on other CCB vehicles of which I have seen photos.

The owner had to carry out major repairs to the car a few years ago as otherwise it would have had to be scrapped. He writes:

> I used the car until about 2010 when it was getting difficult to get it through the MOT because of chassis rot on the boxed chassis. It was not possible to weld it properly with the glass fibre body *in situ* because the heat would cause it to distort and I was left with the option of either scrapping the car or replacing the chassis. I bought a second-hand chassis and very carefully removed the old one by supporting the body and dropping the chassis from it. I was very wary of doing this as I did not know how flexible the body was – in fact it is surprisingly stiff and it did not deflect significantly. When I inspected the old chassis I realised that it was not realistically possible to replicate and get it to fit the body as there was already a degree of twist. I decided to mend the original chassis which was blasted and welded as necessary. This was done and the car reassembled without too much trouble . . . The body is surprisingly strong but I do not think ever very well finished. At some time in it life it appears that the car was left partially outside and the driver's side has deformed causing the door to misfit, the door is fine, the body is slightly distorted. Realistically it cannot be straightened, but in practice it does not really matter.

When the present owner acquired the car it had front seats from a 1950s Volkswagen Beetle, but he has replaced them. The rear seats do fold down – he describes them as 'well-made homemade ones.'

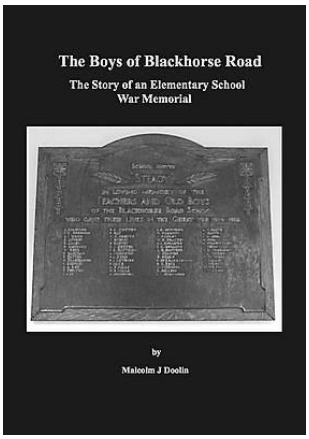
In one advertisement Car Conversion Bodies described themselves as 'The "Four Seater" Specialists'. As I have said, most builders of 1950s/60s specials produced sports car bodies, so this company did have a niche market. One website suggests these conversions would need 'flexible passengers who had to get out at steep hills'. I suspect this is rather unfair, especially as the one surviving example has a long history of trialling. The conversion involved replacing the car's original steel body with a lighter fibre glass one so they would have had reasonable power. The 933cc 8hp version would not have been particularly quick, but the 1172cc version would have had reasonable performance. An advertisement describes the estate as 'Large enough to carry four adults, yet light enough to give a sporty performance.' Nevertheless, the vehicle was designed to be a carthorse rather than a racehorse.

My thanks are due to Ian Woodrow and David Heard of the FSOC and the owner of DMP 10 (who provided the photo of his car) for help with this article.

JOHN HARRISON

The Boys of Blackhorse Road –

The story of an elementary school war memorial



The motto of Blackhorse Road Boys' School was a modest 'Steady'. Public Schools often have lengthy memorial publications about their losses in war, but a recently published book covers the history of the Great War memorial at a Walthamstow elementary school, going into fascinating detail about the history of the memorial and the research into all the names mentioned upon it.

As author Malcolm J Doolin writes:

'no-one expected the lives of these 52 boys and 3 teachers to be extraordinary but, when war came, they joined the thousands who marched away and never returned. This is the story of each of the men named on the memorial to the Boys of Blackhorse Road Elementary School, Walthamstow. It is also the story of their school, the London they lived in and the war itself. It is a tribute to them and to the forgotten stories of all the ordinary, working class men who fought and died in the Great War.'

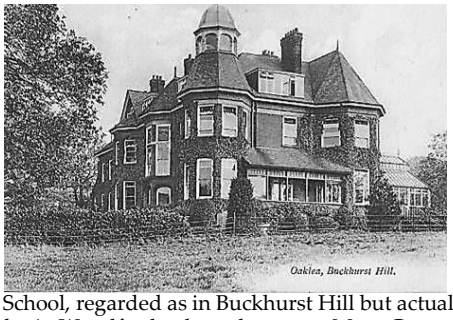
The book is recommended to anyone interested in local history, and in particular the Great War's effect on the ordinary families living in ordinary streets. This country was never the same again.

The Boys of Blackhorse Road by Malcolm J Doolin was published by Astra Publications in 2015, ISBN 978-0-9935012-0-3, price £7.99

LYNN HASELDINE JONES

Memories of two World Wars

I can clearly remember the last day of the First World War. I was a pupil, aged 7, at Oaklea School, when the sirens sounded signifying the end of the war. I was swinging on a gate in the drive and unfortunately Mary Coxall's hand was in the gate and she lost the top of her little finger (I suppose she was one of the last casualties of the war!). I can remember lorries on the Epping New Road with gas balloons on top of them.



Oaklea School, regarded as in Buckhurst Hill but actually just over the border in Woodford, where the young Mary Grant was a pupil

My uncle, Sir Frank Morgan MC served in Turkey. One of my paternal uncles was killed on the first day he was in the trenches of Flanders.

Years elapsed and we came to 1939, I was by then 28 and in the throes of getting married. Neville Chamberlain had returned from seeing Hitler with a piece of paper in his hand saying 'peace in our time'; it was not to be.

At the beginning of the war my brother Ken had already been called up and with 12 other Old Chigwellians was ordered to dig trenches in the gardens at Dover. Ken got tired of digging so he told all his buddies to climb aboard his lorry, as he knew a very good pub quite near. Unfortunately the Colonel of the 4th Essex Regiment came into the pub and demanded to see the driver of the unmanned lorry. As a result Ken was peeling a lot of potatoes in Colchester barracks – he hated potatoes for the rest of his life!

Ken had a dreadful war. He was fighting the Japanese in Burma as a Chindit. He started the war weighing 14 stone and ended it weighing 7 stone. My brother-in-law was in the RAF and was flying sorties over Europe. One night in brilliant moonlight, his plane was shot down over Stetin. I should also like to mention John Huskinson, who lived in Palmerston Road. John was killed in Cassino in Italy. My sister worked in the Land Army and I joined the Home Guard. I vividly remember biking to Hainault Road, Chigwell, with blacked out lamps on the bike. Only a small slit helped me to keep on the road.

MARY E CLARK (Mrs), September 2002

The late Mary Enid Clark (1911–2002) was a well-known character in Buckhurst Hill; she was always known as 'Mary The Hat' because of her choice of extravagant headgear. She was born in Leytonstone in 1911 as Mary E Grant, the daughter of Robert Josiah Grant and Lucy Emily Morgan. Her first husband, whom she married in 1939, was Ernest C W Stapleton. Her second husband, Henry A Mahood, she married in 1955; he died in 1960. Mr Clark became her third husband in 1965.

Left: Mary 'The Hat' Clark as many remember her

The uncle she refers to, Sir Frank Morgan, was her mother's brother; he was Chairman of the Prudential Assurance Company. The other uncle, who died in the Great War, was her father's brother, Albert Edward Grant, who died on 13 November 1916; he was in the Royal Fusiliers and is commemorated an the Thiepval Memorial. The John Huskinson she mentions was actually Major John Huskisson of the King's Royal Rifle Corps, who died on 27 May 1941, aged 28. His parents were Edward and Catherine, and he is commemorated on the Athens Memorial.

'Mary The Hat' is herself commemorated on a bench set up at the junction of Victoria Road and Queen's Road Buckhurst Hill.

THE EDITOR (*with thanks to* BARBARA BLOSSOM)

Victoria County History of Essex Trust: update

Martin Stuchfield, chairman of the Trust, issued an update on progress in December 2016. Here is a brief summary of his report:

Volume XII, *St Osyth to the Naze: North Essex Coastal Parishes* is nearing completion, and it is hoped it will be ready by the end of 2017. Drafts for the parishes of Frinton, Great Holland, Little Holland, Kirby-le-Soken, Thorpe-le-Soken and Walton-le-Soken have been completed, and work on the parish of St Osyth is at an advanced stage. The architectural reports relating to churches, chapels, schools and other institutional buildings have been done. Much of the cartography is complete and a large number of images, mono and colour, have been obtained.

Meanwhile, for Volume XIII, *Harwich and Dovercourt*, research is continuing into 19th century Harwich. It is hoped it will be possible to publish this as a sequel to the short publication on Newport, which was successfully launched in April 2015, and has broken even. The volunteer groups continue to be active. The Southend group has identified a number of subjects for a volume of essays, not previously covered in published works on Southend, such as the boundaries of parishes and manors, windmills in the economy of south-east Essex, the part played by private enterprise and local government in the development of the resort, and the effect on Southend of the coming of the railway.

Lord Petre, the President of the Trust, was appointed a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order (KCVO) for his service as Lord-Lieutenant of Essex in the 2016 Queen's Birthday Honours.

The Butler Harrises of Loughton

The photograph of the Loughton Volunteers on page 14 of the *Newsletter 211* showing Dr Butler Harris reminded me of the doctor and his wife Ida who lived at The Shrubbery, No 200 High Road. Dr Arthur Butler Harris was a distinguished Harley Street practitioner, who became Medical Officer of Health for Loughton in 1900 and was, for many years, a member of the British Medical Council. He was a member of the Royal Army Medical Corps in the First World War, retiring with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

The couple, who had not lived in Loughton prior to their marriage in 1892, were probably attracted to the relatively rural location combined with easy access to the station and a good rail link to London for Dr Butler Harris's practice.

Dr Butler Harris died in 1936 at the age of 71. I remember Ida, who was very much part of the local social scene. She owned a ladies' gown and fur shop, known as Forestier at 219 High Road, immediately opposite The Shrubbery, and next to Warne's, the men's and boy's outfitters. The shop was a mysterious establishment, dimly-lit and with a few dresses and furs in the window, all unpriced. My Mother said that she relied on her wide circle of friends for customers, but I never saw anyone enter the door!

The Shrubbery was by far the most interesting house in the High Road. It had a large long garden facing the thoroughfare, hidden by a high fence, although with little land at the rear. It was occasionally opened for garden parties in aid of charity – I went to one with my mother.

Ida Butler Harris died on 6 June 1951 and the whole of the residue of her estate, which amounted to £57,329, was left to the Royal Masonic Benevolent Association, of which her late husband had been a prominent member. The high value reflected the development potential of the land and, amidst much local opposition, the site was sold to the London Co-operative Society for the building of Loughton's first supermarket (but not the first self-service grocer's which was Radbourne's, next to Charles Woolls, Florist). The Co-op did not plan immediate re-development and for a number of years the garden was opened up for public enjoyment, with seats provided by the Council and with the house fenced off.

The Co-operative supermarket, officially opened by actor Kenneth More in November 1962, was a truly hideous structure, and with only around 15 car parking spaces, on a roof area, was outdated as soon as it was built. It was closed in September 1983 and the shell of the building was subsequently re-developed into smaller units. PHILIP SHAW

The entry for Arthur Butler Harris in *Kelly's London Medical Directory* of 1897 is as follows:

Harris, Arthur Butler, The Shrubbery, Loughton, Essex. (Oxford University, Leipzig and University College). MA Oxon 1892; MB and BS Oxon 1892. Fellow Hunterian Society – Surgeon Oddfellows. MU Loughton. Contributed 'On a New Micro-organism of Spreading Oedema' to the *Journal of Pathology,* Vol 1, No 2. Formerly Senior Res Medical Officer Stamford Hill, Stoke Newington, etc. Charit. Disp. – Second Class Final Hon School of National Science (Physiology) Oxford 1888; Liston Gold Medal Clinical Surgery University College 1891–2.

The same volume gives details of two other doctors in Loughton:

Astin, Wilson, Glendale, High Road, Loughton. (University and Royal Infirmary, Aberdeen). MB and CM Aberdeen 1894. Member of General Council, University of Aberdeen. Member British Medical Association, Honorary Medical Officer, Uplands Convalescent Home, Loughton. Medical Officer Oriolet Cottage Hospital for Cancer, Loughton, and the Loughton Medical Provident Club. Formerly House Surgeon, Huddersfield Infirmary.

Owgan, Francis Alleyn, Clifton House, High Road, Loughton. St Bartholomew's. LKQCP* Ireland 1880. MRCS England 1874. Medical Officer and Public Vaccinator Loughton District, Epping Union.

* Licentiate King and Queen's College of Physicians, Ireland.

THE EDITOR

800th Anniversary of the Charter of the Forest 1217

Two years ago there were many events celebrating the 800th Anniversary of Magna Carta ('The Great Charter' of 1215). Although two clauses in Magna Carta refer to 'forests' much that had been promised in the negotiations was omitted. Subsequent pressure about the harsh forest law led to a separate charter being issued in November 1217. This Charter of the Forest is considered by historians to have as much importance as Magna Carta, certainly as far as the rights of the commoners and freemen of England were concerned.

In Anglo-Saxon times every freeman could still hunt on his own land, and it is probable that many serfs suffered no rebuke in taking game off the limitless waste. All this was to change with the arrival of William the Conqueror from Normandy. He claimed suzerainty over all the soil of England by right of conquest: accordingly, the Norman kings imposed upon their English subjects an iron rule of unprecedented severity.

None of William's innovations was more hated and resented than his application of the Norman Forest system to his English Kingdom. This involved the creation of royal forests in areas of woodland, heathland and grassland in which the king had the exclusive right to hunt deer. The areas included not only the king's own demesne lands but lands in which the soil was owned by barons, local lords of the manor, and freeholders.

A comprehensive administrative and judicial system was set up to enforce strict laws, with severe penalties for breaking them. For example, until the Charter of the Forest, the penalty for poaching 'the king's deer' was hanging, although the Assize of 1198 set the penalty for killing deer as mutilation by removal of the offender's eyes and testicles. Landowners had to seek approval from the forest authorities to make clearings and fell trees. Any illegal clearings or felling would result in the offender being brought before the forest courts and fined – an important source of income for the king.

By the time of King John's accession to the throne in 1199, there were 69 royal forests, and it has been estimated that the legal limits within which the forest laws applied covered one-fourth of the land of England. Initially most of Essex was declared a royal forest, but in 1204 the De Vere family and other barons in the north of the county agreed to pay the king a fine of 500 marks and five palfreys to have all the land north of Stanestreet, the old Roman road from St Albans to Colchester disafforested, that is excluded from the forest laws. The Hundred of Tendring was also excluded from the forest.

The barons led the protests against the scope and severity of the forest laws but although many promises were made to reduce the areas subject to forest law, few were honoured other than when exemptions were agreed on payment of a substantial fine. Many foresters in charge of the day-to-day management of the forest were accused of abusing their powers to the detriment of the commoners.

When opposition to King John's misrule came to a head in 1215, the forest figured prominently among the grievances which the barons presented to him. Probably warned of trouble brewing over his forest policy, John backed off from the harshness that had characterised the sentences passed down in the forest courts, and attempted to bring the minor tyrannies of the royal foresters under control. Clause 48 of Magna Carta provided that:

> 'All evil customs, of forests . . . are immediately to be investigated in each and every county by twelve sworn knights . . . and within forty days of the inquiry are to be entirely abolished …. '

Little, however, happened and it took another two years of negotiation with both King John, and the Earl Marshal, the Earl of Pembroke, acting on behalf of Henry III before an acceptable separate charter for the forest would be published.

The head of the effigy of Henry III, by William Torel, commissioned in 1291 in the north ambulatory of Westminster Abbey

The Charter of the Forest, which has 17 clauses, reined in the forests that had been created since the accession of Henry II. The commoners' rights to graze their cattle on the forest waste between Michaelmas and Martinmas each year, and to put their pigs into the forest to eat acorns and beechmast, were codified, along with the right to take wood for their own use out of the forest. No man was to lose life or limb for taking venison. He was to be fined, unless he could not pay, in which case he was to be imprisoned for a year and a day. He could then be released if he could find sureties. If not, he was banished from the country.

Under the final clause, the king granted to all persons the liberties of all the forest and free customs they previously had within forests and without. All must observe the liberties and customs granted in this charter.

The Charter of the Forest was re-issued in 1225 with one important addition that, in return for the king granting the liberties contained in the charter, the barons, knights and freeholders would pay a fine of a fifteenth part of all their movables.

The Charter was seen as legitimising customary rights and over centuries was cited in campaigns to uphold these rights. The alienation of so huge an area of land from national uses and national liberties remained for hundreds of years a source of constant bickering between the king and his subjects. However, as the complicated medieval system of land tenure gave way to more modern notions of private

property, and access to common land was threatened by so-called enclosure, more areas were taken out of the royal forests in the 17th and 18th centuries by sale of the forestal rights to the local gentry and noble families, and the administrative and judicial system began to crumble. The royal forest of Essex had become limited to the south-west of the county, together with some small outliers at Writtle and Kingswood (Colchester) and was now known as Waltham Forest.

The Charter of the Forest ceased to have effect in this country when the Wild Creatures and Forest Laws Act was passed in 1971. The only remaining vestige of the royal forest system is the office of verderer which continues in the New Forest, Forest of Dean and Epping Forest, although their role today is much changed.

Original copies of the 1217 Charter of the Forest still exist, one in the archives of Lincoln Cathedral, the other in Durham Cathedral. The Charter was issued by the Earl Marshal and the Papal Legate, on behalf of Henry III, who had succeeded his father, John, in 1216, but was only 10 years old.

RICHARD MORRIS

The end of an era – Willow Cottage

Willow Cottage, surrounded by wonderful gardens, on an open day in May 2016

2016 marked the end of an era – the sale of Willow Cottage, Curtis Mill Green. For over 50 years, occasional plays and performances have for many visitors, marked the summer, in the specially constructed open-air theatre formed out of an old marl pit. The cottage, which dates back to the mid-17th century, was first discovered by the children of the Williams family in 1950, when they were out picking blackberries. Finding it empty a year later, Dick and Freda Williams bought the property and set about making it their own very special place.

Dick (Richard L) Williams was born in Walthamstow on 29 January 1916. He studied piano at the Royal Academy of Music and gained a scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He was a much-loved teacher who ran a drama school in Orford Road, Walthamstow, and an evening class in Greenleaf Road, Walthamstow.

Dick married Wilfreda (always known as Freda) in 1939; she was the daughter of Edward Horsey, a butcher and shopkeeper from Blandford in Dorset. Freda's older sister was Dorothy Violet Horsey, later known as Dorothy D'Orsay, opera singer and wife of Buckhurst Hill painter Walter Spradbery. Dick and Freda had four children.

The theatre on a fine summer's day

Sadly, Freda died in 1975. A few years later Dick married Christine, and the family continued to put on plays and concerts attracting a loyal and enthusiastic audience.

Dick died in 2007, and Walter Spradbery's son John had this to say in his obituary :

I remember his huge road safety pageant for the borough of Wanstead & Woodford in 1947 or thereabouts, his open-air productions of Shakespearean plays in my parents' open-air theatre, the Wilderness, in the forties and early fifties, and ever since, drawing huge crowds over many decades to the lovely Willow Cottage. As an actor, his professional career was born in the seaside concert party traditions of the late twenties and early thirties – his performances as Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are in my mind as fine an interpretation of the role as I will probably ever witness. A great performer of monologues, to see him stand up and recite from memory at his 90th anniversary celebrations brought wonder and tears to my eyes.

Local artist Fran Colomb produced a commemorative tea towel to mark the 65 years of occupation of Willow Cottage by the Williams family. This sold out quickly and has become a collectors' item. It is finally time to say goodbye to the open-air theatre but who knows – the new owners may also be tempted to continue the tradition.

LYNN HASELDINE JONES *with many thanks to* CHRISTINE WILLIAMS and CHRISTINE HARVEY

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