LOUGHTON AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER 214

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55th Season

## The Alderseys of Chigwell

I was e-mailed by Paul and Sue Laycock, who live 'in Melbourne at the south-east corner of the continent, just "above" Tasmania'. Paul and Sue have on their wall a 19th century oil painting entitled (or marked in contemporary script) on the back 'Farm, Chigwell, Essex' and the name S Bellin. They wondered if I could identify the farm. The Laycocks had assumed the farm had been subsumed by suburban development in Chigwell.

Paul's mother's ancestors, the Alderseys, left Sheepcote House, Chigwell Row, in 1849 for South Australia, where they settled not far from Adelaide in McLaren Vale (which is now famous as a wine district).

Fortunately, I could identify the Chigwell farm. It was clearly the ancient building still extant in Pudding Lane, called Patsalls or Pettits, which has been painted many times in its career, not least by Octavius Dixie Deacon – it appears as Plate 36 in *The Life and Art of Octavius Dixie Deacon* (LDHS, 2010).

Samuel Bellin (who appears in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*), the Laycocks told me, was born in 1799 and grew up at Burnt House in Chigwell, also in Pudding Lane. He was a celebrated print maker and engraver, who trained under James Basire (or Bazire), also of Chigwell; the family had also lived in Loughton (see *Newsletter 190*). He was a friend in Rome of J M W Turner and Bertel Thorvaldsen, the Danish sculptor.

The coincidence of the name, Bellin, and the Pudding Lane location (Burnt House is just round that notorious bend) make it, I think, a reasonable supposition that this may be an early work by Bellin.

The doubtful date 1424 appears on the building, but it is thought to be a much altered medieval two-bay hall house with later additions. The cross-wing in Deacon's 1885 painting does not appear in the earlier one, so, assuming that Bellin painted the scene c1820, that dates the cross-wing to 1820–1880.

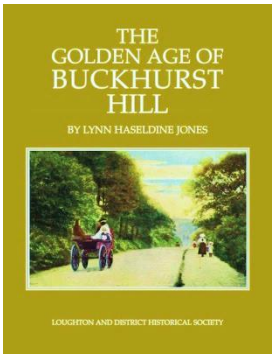
Anyone who knows anything of the Bellin or Aldersey family in this area, or of the painting, please contact me. CHRIS POND

## Buckhurst Hill postcards

The Society has just published *The Golden Age of Buckhurst Hill*, edited by our *Newsletter* editor, Lynn Haseldine Jones. The book is mainly from the postcard collection of Helen Kay, the wife of former LDHS chairman, John Kay. She specialised in collecting cards featuring the towns and villages of south-west Essex. Some of her collection was made available to the LDHS for *Loughton a Hundred Years Ago* (2002). Her family sold the Buckhurst Hill section, but retain the Loughton cards, which we have digitised, and hope to publish in the future.

The images in this book include examples from Lynn's own cards, as well as those collected by Helen Kay.

They are a remarkable collection, which puts flesh on the bones of the Buckhurst Hill of over 100 years ago.




They embody a great deal of detailed research by Lynn, whose knowledge of Buckhurst Hill is second to none. Lynn says:

> The opportunity to purchase the Buckhurst Hill section of the Helen Kay postcard collection was impossible to resist. I have collected a very small number of cards over the years, but a collection on this scale was something special.

She noticed immediately that the value was not just in the images, but also in the messages which they contained. Some of the senders were known to her through her researches into the history of the town. She had come across families such as the Linders and the Hicks, and teachers like the Gardners, while studying the history of their houses.

But other characters became evident when looking at the messages and their recipients; servants writing to their relatives reporting on how they were settling in to their 'positions' in the big houses in Buckhurst Hill; a man collecting views of the place where he had been billeted during the Great War; and others

sending cards to add to the recipients' collections of cards.

There were also the images of buildings long gone, tree-lined streets, shops which have disappeared, lack of traffic and parked cars, and children (and adults) standing in the road watching the photographer – all of great interest today.

The first ever postcard was issued in Austria in 1869 and a year later the idea arrived in Britain. Originally a Post Office monopoly, they were issued by private firms from 1875 but not sold to the public. This changed in 1894, and around this time photographs began to be used. Until 1902 it was the rule that only the address could appear on one side, and so the message had to be written on the same side as the image. When the card with the divided back came into use, the craze of postcard collecting began. It is said that by 1903 600 million postcards were sent annually, and this had risen to 880 million by 1914. In 1918 the cost of sending a postcard doubled to one penny, which affected sales, and the craze faded as more people acquired cameras and telephones. So the golden age of the postcard was from 1902 to 1918, and these of Buckhurst Hill date from around 1902 to 1930.

The Post Office gave a splendid service in those days – Buckhurst Hill had four deliveries a day, at 7 and 8.45 in the morning and at 1.45 and 6.35 in the afternoon. The four letterboxes in the parish were emptied four times a day. It is no myth that it was possible to send a postcard in the morning to arrange to meet someone later in the day; the card would be delivered very quickly.

Lynn has selected the best of the cards from the collection, and added captions describing not just the image, but the message where appropriate. Not all the cards were actually posted and so are not dated; others have had the stamps removed (more collectors!) and if the date stamp has gone, then these too are undated. However, it has sometimes been possible to set a range of dates when the card must have been sent, based on the shops photographed, using local directories to establish which shop was in operation at any one time. In one case the recipient's year of death is known, so the card must be before that date.

*The Golden Age of Buckhurst Hill* will be available to purchase at our meetings at the members' discounted price of £6.00 or elsewhere at the full price of £7.50.

# Bertram the Clown on Clacton Pier

In the 1920s, probably until the 1970s, Southend and Clacton were very popular seaside towns, especially for day trippers. They certainly were for most of my family's friends and neighbours in Loughton. My parents and grandparents could not afford more than day trips, and those two resorts, whether by train or coach, were the places they visited most often. As local history covers what people did in their immediate area, as well as further afield, LDHS members may find this article interesting.

I can't recall where I first read or heard of Bertram the Clown, but when I did, I tried to find out a little more about him.

Bertram's real name was Albert Edward Harvey, and his wife was Ruby. He arrived in Clacton in 1918, but waited until 1922 for a one-week trial as a pier entertainer. He stayed continuously until the outbreak of the war. He captivated both children and adults, initially performing in the open air, his shows and talent competitions becoming so popular that the owners built him his own Children's Theatre, and later he took over the Pavilion and renamed it the Jollity, part of the Jolly Roger pier theatre complex. From 1922 to 1939, Bertram entertained children and adults, with comedy, magic, music and ventriloquism with his doll, Filbert.

It was because of him that many children insisted that the family summer holidays, including, no doubt, some from our own local area, were spent in Clacton, so that they could see him and participate in the daily talent shows he ran. Ruby, Bertram's wife, helped him by playing the piano and looking after the hundreds of children competing in the contests.

It was accepted by the Pier owners that Bertram was probably responsible for half the summer holidaymakers that visited the pier. People used to queue for hours to see the shows. Sometimes they started queueing in the afternoon while the afternoon show was still on, to make sure of seeing the evening performance.

Old company records show that, for most of the years Bertram performed, his summer audiences included at least 80,000 children, plus many parents who laughed at, or with him. Some of those children may well be alive still, some probably in the Loughton district.

During the winter months the couple toured all over the country with their highly popular show.

Although he was incredibly popular, and much loved, having delighted both children and adults on Clacton Pier for 18 years, the outbreak of war put an end to Bertram the Clown's regular performances in front of many thousands of holidaymakers.


After the pier was damaged by a floating mine in 1939, the Jolly Roger Theatre was closed, forcing Bertram and his wife Ruby to 'semi-retire' to venues in the district of Bradwell-by-Braintree. Uncle

Bertram, as he was still known to his young fans, still put on a smile to entertain children and adults alike, during the grim years, putting on shows here and there in the county.

The *Essex Chronicle* reported in the summer of 1941 that Bertram had put on a show at Witham during War Weapons Week. They reported:

Bertram started on Clacton Pier in 1922 with just a small platform on a table, before moving to the Children's Theatre, which held 500 people, then the Jolly Roger, which housed over 1000.

Bertram is a Londoner, he is 54, but looks younger and has a nice Cockney wit which the children like.

When interviewed, Bertram remarked:

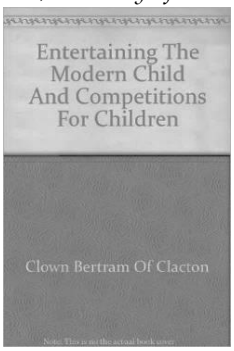
The children simply wouldn't put up with a sham. I treated them as you would at a family party at home, a kind of real Uncle Bertram to them, then the shows went well. I cut out all the artificial and was just natural – otherwise I would have had to do all my own clapping. Woe betide the ham-fisted fellow who thinks anything is good enough for children. It just isn't.

Albert/Bertram and Ruby had moved to Clacton from Ilford in 1918, and lived there until 1946 when they moved to Little Clacton. By then, Bertram had become too ill to carry on, and he died in March, 1953, aged 65. His funeral service was held at Ipswich, on the 19th.

To have seen and be able to remember Bertram who ended his 18 year career on Clacton Pier in 1939, when WW2 broke out, you would probably now have to be in your mid-eighties. There can't be many entertainers who had a theatre especially built to host their show.

Bertram's life was featured in the 1972 BBC programme, *Number one North Sea, the story of Clacton Pier.* Ruby was then 79.

Bertram also wrote a book *Entertaining the Modern Child and Competitions for Children – Clown Bertram of Clacton* which was a hardcover book, now no longer available and published after his death.




It would be nice if any members recall anything else about him – if so, please let us know.

TERRY CARTER

# Beatrice Playne mural painter and art historian

Miss Playne is known in Buckhurst Hill for the mural above the west door in the Church of St John the Baptist. She was one of the children of Herbert Clement Playne, the Head Master of Bancroft's School from 1906 to 1931. He was born in Gloucestershire in 1870 and in Stroud in 1904 he married Mabel Bryans. Their children were Elizabeth (1904, born in Bristol), Edward (1907, born in Woodford, as were all the later children), Beatrice (1908), John H (1910), Pamela (1914) and George C M (1917). Throughout the time Herbert was Head Master, the family would have lived in the house in the grounds of Bancroft's.

Beatrice was a mural painter, who learnt the technique of fresco painting in Mexico before the Second World War, when she studied with Diego Rivera. Returning to England on the outbreak of war, she worked in a hospital for head injuries; later she worked for the British Council in London, but was keen to work 'in the field'. She had hoped to go back to Mexico, but, on attending a talk on the Council's work in Ethiopia, she was impressed by the speaker, whom she later on the same evening bumped into in the blackout. Henry Littler invited her to join his staff, and in December 1945 she arrived in Addis Ababa.

Her job in Addis was to teach English to the royal princesses, army officers and government officials. She also taught at the Evening Institute and the General Wingate School.

Shortly after her arrival, she was asked to do some special work in the National Library, as a French website explains:

The National Library was one of the institutional tools conceived to elevate Ethiopia, and its Emperor, to the same rank as the industrialised and free nations, at a time when most of African and Southern countries were still under colonial domination. This, at least, can be inferred from the monumental mural painting covering one of the walls of the Public Division main reading room . . . In the centre sits enthroned Haile Selassie, wearing a crown and holding a sceptre and an imperial globe, with three lions at his feet and the Trinity church in the background. Allegorical scenes are depicted all around. At the left of the Emperor, one can see dead bodies of traditional warriors, women and children fleeing in terror, a column of horsemen holding spears and small tanks on the top of a hill. Two statuesque women, holding books but not reading, mourn and condemn this scene. Between sky and earth, heavy black birds glide over this desolation . . . this very symbolic painting could be a representation of the final eschatological battle leading to the advent of the messiah incarnated here by the Ethiopian Emperor. The political meaning of the whole could be therefore, when related to the context of a National Library, a praise of modernisation and enlightenment, and a condemnation of the kind of backwardness which would not allow Ethiopia to stand on equal footing with the industrialised countries. Books and education are here compared to weapons and are designated as one of the main strengths of a Nation.

In spite of its monumental size and strong symbolic message, none of the articles mentioning the National Library has ever paid attention to this painting. [There are] only two published photos, both of them black and white. According to Richard Pankhurst,* the painter was Beatrice Playne, a British artist who lived in Ethiopia at the end of the 1940s and beginning of the 1950s.

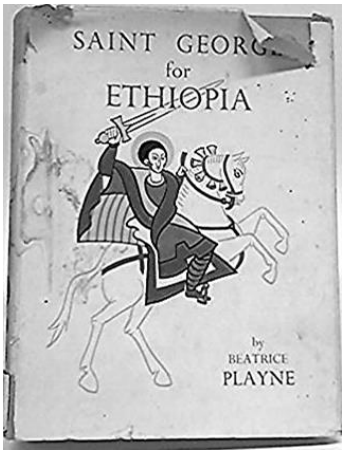
Her work in the Library allowed her to become familiar with illuminated manuscripts. She took great interest in the miniatures and did copies of them.

This view of the mural in the Reading Room of the National Library in Addis Ababa was published in *The Rotarian* in 1965

She had for some time wanted to visit the rock churches of Lalibela, and was able to make a journey there in December 1946. She writes:

The combination of these illuminated MSS in the capital with the frescoes and panel paintings which I had seen in Lalibela convinced me that Ethiopia had had its own religious art, derived from early Eastern sources, long before the coming of any European. I felt an absolute necessity to go off to the Northern and most ancient parts of the Empire in order to find out what yet remained of her mediaeval paintings. That was the reason for my second journey.

Beatrice Payne visited Lalibela by mule in December 1946. She planned to see more of the country, and was concerned that, after being there for three years, in 1948 the British Council proposed that she transfer to Malaya. However, violence there caused the headquarters to hesitate, and being told to take some local leave, she rushed off to make a much longer journey around the country to examine fresco decoration. Her book, *Saint George for Ethiopia* was published by Constable in 1954. In it, she described the hardships of the journey, and in so doing allows us a glimpse of Beatrice herself – she says she has green eyes, and is six feet tall.




John Gardner, who served in Ethiopia during the 1940s, remembers:

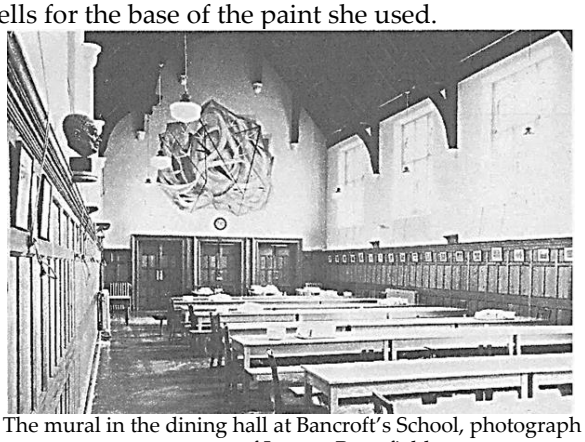
The iconography of the paintings found everywhere on the walls, or on canvas, in Ethiopian churches has now been extensively researched; one of the pioneers has been a friend, Beatrice Playne, whose determination to achieve results when most encumbered by local hindrance made her a memorable figure all over the country.

Beatrice left Ethiopia shortly after the completion of this long excursion, finishing off her notes and sketches in the British Legation compound before being recalled to London. She wrote:

I left Ethiopia by the same plane which carried General Cottam and because he had been in the country for eight years and had been so much beloved, not only did the Emperor himself come to the airport to see him off, but all the Ethiopian army and quite half the civilian population of Addis Ababa came too.

Her book also mentions the fact that at some time she visited Mosul, perhaps also in conjunction with the British Council.

Beatrice continued her studies into Ethiopian art and lectured extensively during the 1960s. She is known to have painted a mural at St Mary's Church, Thorpe, in Surrey, where local people collected egg shells for the base of the paint she used.



The mural in the dining hall at Bancroft's School, photograph courtesy of Jeremy Bromfield

Beatrice painted another local mural besides the work at St John's. The archivist at Bancroft's School confirms:

Beatrice did paint a mural which was on the wall of the school dining hall. I am not sure when it was painted but I do remember her coming back in the late 1970s to touch it up – the wall on which it was painted had boys' washrooms on the other side and there were problems with damp. Sadly about 1990 the damp hit again and the plaster had to be completely replaced and so the mural was lost.

Beatrice Playne died on 16 October 2000, peacefully, in Malvern, and a service of thanksgiving was held at Malvern Priory on 23 October.

* Richard Pankhurst (born in 1927), son of suffragette Sylvia, attended Bancroft's School from 1938 and so, although Mr Playne was no longer Head Master when he was there, he would certainly have recognised the name of Playne from his days in Woodford.

**References**

With thanks to Christabel Ames-Lewis for the photograph of Beatrice Playne.
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Pankhurst, Richard: *Sylvia Pankhurst Artist and Crusader* (Paddington Press Ltd, 1979).
Playne, Beatrice: *Saint George for Ethiopia* (Constable, 1954).
*The Times* online, courtesy of Essex Libraries.
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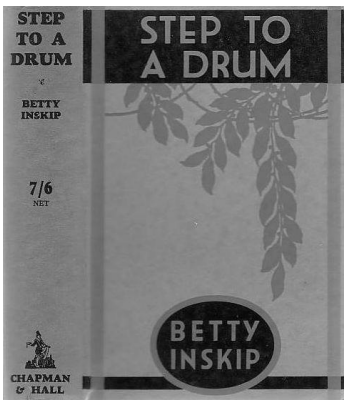
LYNN HASELDINE JONES

# Another Loughton novelist

Number 7 Albion Hill is now a block of apartments, but before that, it was an old folks' home, and around the period 1935–86, the residence of the Bishop of Barking. The current building is new behind retained façades.

Among the bishops was James Theodore Inskip (1868–1949); he married Lilian Hamilton Ker and they had five children, including Constance Elizabeth Hamilton, born in 1905, his youngest daughter.

Betty, as she was known, published three novels, *The Ravelled Sleeve*, 1929, *Step to a Drum*, 1931, and *Pink Faces*, 1939. She was a regular visitor to Austria, where she met the man who later became her husband in 1940, Dr Ernst Fellner. He was an anti-Nazi scholar from Gmunden in Upper Austria. After the Anschluss he came to England, and with him, she also translated three German works. They lived at Loughton until after their marriage, when they took a flat in Putney. She was also a journalist on the London *Evening News* and a musician and music teacher 'associated with the Royal College of Music'.




The art-deco dust wrapper of *Step to a Drum*

*Pink Faces* was described by *The Observer* as a *roman soufflé*, and by the *Manchester Guardian* as a 'humming-bird of a novel'.

Betty died suddenly in 1945, after giving birth to a daughter, and was afforded an obituary in *The Times*, which stated that her novels 'if deficient in plot, were strong in delineation of character and descriptive power'. The little girl died two weeks after her mother, and both are interred in the churchyard at High Beech.

James Inskip himself wrote an autobiography, *A Man's Job* (1949), but it does not add significantly to our knowledge of Loughton or his time here.

CHRIS POND

**Postscript**

Coincidentally, as I received this, I noted a mention of James Inskip, Bishop of Barking, in a booklet I have just acquired, *The Parachuting Parson – the Story of Reverend George Edward Maule Parry*, recently published by author John Wilson. Inskip wrote the obituary in *The Times* of Parry, who was an army chaplain killed on 6 June 1944. He had served at St John's, Leytonstone and Emmanuel, Forest Gate. The book is available from St John's, with all proceeds to church funds, or for £4 from Amazon (ISBN 978–1–326–64504–5).

EDITOR

# More local doctors

In the last *Newsletter* the entries for doctors in Loughton were given as shown in the *Kelly's Medical Directory* of 1897. In this issue we reprint the entries for the doctors of Buckhurst Hill:

**Barnardo, Thomas John FRCS**, Ardmore and 18 Stepney Causeway, E (London Hospital, Edinburgh and Paris). LRCS Ed and LM 1876; FRCS Ed 1879. Member British Medical Association. Consultant Surgeon HM Hospital for Sick Children. Author of *Something Attempted – Something Done* (Shaw and Co) 1889; Editor of *Night and Day* (Shaw and Co) 1875–1895. Gold Medal Société Nationale d'Encouragement au Bien, France 1885.

**Dring, William Ernest MRCS**, Willesden (Guy's). LRCP Edinburgh and LM 1876; MRCS England 1876; LSA London 1876. Fellow Obstetrical and Gynaecological Societies. Surgeon Buckhurst Hill Village Hospital and to Rescue Homes. Physician Home of Rest for City Work Girls, Medical Referee Provident Life Association and Prudential, ordinary branch. Formerly Medical Officer of Health Faversham Union; Surgeon Colonial Royal Mail Line.

**Smith, Thomas MRCS,** 4 Knighton Villas (London Hospital). MRCS England, LRCP London 1894. Formerly Surgeon Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen. Preliminary Science Examiner, London University.

**Ambrose, Alexander MD,** Tramore (University Dublin, Sir P Dun's, Rotunda and National Eye and Ear Infirmary). MD Dublin 1883, MB and BCh 1883, LLB Dublin 1879, BA Dublin 1879, LM Rotunda 1882, DPH Cambridge 1889. Member British Medical Association, Bournemouth Society Natural Science and Metropolitan Police Officers Association. Honorary Physician Medical Provident Home Hospital, Buckhurst Hill. District Medical Officer and Public Vaccinator, Epping Union. Medical Officer Foresters, Oddfellows and Hearts of Oak. Surgeon J Division Metropolitan Police, Medical Officer of Health Buckhurst Hill Urban District, Medical Officer, Buckhurst Hill Medical Provident Society. Formerly Medical Officer Shaftesbury House, Bournemouth, Medical Officer Bournemouth Dispensary. Silver Medallist Medical University Dublin 1883; Double first place in MB and BCh examination.

**Chambers John MRCS,** The Lodge, High Road (London Hospital). LSA London 1844; MRCS England 1850.

**Adams, Charles Edward MRCS,** West Lodge, Palmerston Road (University College). MB London 1885, BSc 1884, MRCS England 1886. Member British Medical Association. Surgeon Great Eastern Railway Provident Society, Druids and Oddfellows. Honorary Surgeon Rescue Society. Fellowes Senior Medal in Clinical Medicine 1885.

Of the above-named doctors, the world-famous Barnardo needs no further comment, except to say that the house he lived in, Ardmore, was demolished in the 1990s but there is a plaque commemorating him on the entrance to the gated development known as Ardmore Place. Dr Dring lived at Willesden, which was first called Elizabeth Villa, and later was known as Charnwood. It has been replaced by flats called Charnwood. Dr Thomas Smith's premises at 4 Knighton Villas is still there, but split up into flats.

Alexander Ambrose was at Tramore, only the ground floor of which remains, as a row of shops on the High Road, next to the petrol station, and opposite Holly House (now The Holly Hospital). The entry on John Chambers is brief, presumably because he had retired by 1897; he died in 1905 aged 89. His house was demolished many years ago and there are now town houses on the site, opposite St John's Church. Dr Adams' premises at West Lodge were sadly demolished only last year. More about him is in *Newsletter 193*. EDITOR

# Suspicious death at Chigwell

*The article above mentions Dr Ambrose, and below is one of the cases he was involved with in his capacity as police surgeon.*

Mr Lewis concluded his inquiry at Chigwell yesterday, concerning the death of Emma Jane Heywood, or Giles, aged 28, who was found dead in a field on the Grange farm, Chigwell, on Sunday last.

The evidence showed that she had been living with a labourer named William Pond for several years, they having first become acquainted whilst pea-picking at Romford. They had led a roving life all over the country, sleeping in sheds, and more frequently in the open fields. They came to Chigwell in search of work, but failed to find any. On Saturday night they were both seen drunk, the woman smoking a clay pipe. 'She liked her pipe', Pond told the coroner.

Dr Alexander Ambrose, divisional surgeon of police, deposed that when he first saw the body all the appearances were consistent with a death from drowning. He had since made a post-mortem examination. The only marks of violence were a few scratches on the right knee. All the organs showed that the deceased had been addicted to drink. The cause of death was apoplexy, and no doubt accelerated by the rough kind of life the deceased had led. The coroner's officer stated that it rained very heavily on the Saturday night which accounted probably for the opinion the doctor first formed.

Other facts showed that the deceased had led a somewhat romantic career. She was formerly in service, and, being seduced by the son of the house, subsequently married him. At his death she was left fairly well provided for, and eventually went to law over some property, losing about £1,800. She married a person named Heywood, from whom she ran away. There are two children, the eldest being thirteen years of age; but the deceased told Pond that she did not know where they were.

The coroner remarked that it was a sad story. At one time the deceased was evidently rather an attractive woman. It was also painful to see a young man like Pond leading such a vagabond life.

The jury returned a verdict of 'Death from natural causes'.

*Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper,* Sunday, 28 July 1895

I could not resist trying to find out a bit more about this story, and using census and BMD (birth, marriage and death) records, I found the following:

Emma Jane Eaves was born in Darsham, Suffolk in 1866. In 1881 she was the 15-year-old servant in the household of the Jeacocks family in Blything, Yoxford, Suffolk. At some time she must have moved to the household of the Giles family (a Sophia Giles was a visitor in the Jeacocks' home in 1881). Here she must have met Henry Giles, who was born in 1850. The above newspaper reports she was 'seduced' but married the son of the house, and there is a record of the marriage of Emma Jane Eaves and Henry Giles in Brentford in 1883. He died aged 37 in 1887, and she was sole executrix of his will (*Ipswich Journal,* Friday, 31 August 1888). By 1891 Emma Jane Giles was living in Bethnal Green, a widow living on her own means with her two children, Henry T born in 1885 and Sidney born in 1886.

She later married Joseph Haywood [*sic*] in Poplar in 1893. The story is quite a rise and fall, from being in service, to being a relatively comfortably off widow, marrying again, but ending pea-picking, pipe smoking and drinking herself to death! EDITOR

# Loughton bus garage

The London General Omnibus Company (LGOC), who had first run buses to Loughton in 1915, decided to buy land at the country end of their routes on which to build garages, it being much cheaper than in inner London. Harwaters house and land was bought in 1922, and the new garage built amid fields in 1923. The garage (whose code was 'L') covered just over a quarter-acre, had room for some 20 buses, and a petrol tank for 4,000 gallons of fuel. The noted architects Wallis Gilbert and Partners did much work for the LGOC, but it is uncertain if they designed 'L'.

18 acres of the estate was left, and the old house demolished sometime in the 20s. The LGOC hung onto the land, and only when they were absorbed into the London Passenger Transport Board (LPTB) was it sold for development. Rectory Court, Harwater Drive, Millsmead Way, and Sedley Rise were built (with associated shops on the main road) by Gale Estates from 1934.

The garage remained in use till 1953, when it was replaced by a much larger building opposite. It became the LCS central bakery, then Sankey's builder's merchants, then Texas, now Homebase, and shortly to be Bunnings. The new garage was demolished after privatisation of its routes in 1986.

But the old garage remains, and when the centenary of the first bus in Loughton was marked in 2015, the enthusiasts who participated suggested to the then Mayor, Sharon Weston, that a blue plaque be installed. This took place on 11 July 2017.The old garage is the only Loughton building for which you can buy a kit (advertisement below) in OO model railway scale!

CHRIS POND

**More about Loughton bus garage**

On the south side of the junction of Rectory Lane and Hillyfields stands this short concrete post. Close inspection reveals the wording 'London Transport Private Property'. This was one of the boundary markers of the second Loughton bus garage, which stood on a site to the south of Rectory Lane and the east of Church Hill from 1954 to 1986.

PETER HASELDINE

# Staples Road School, c1954

I thought you might like this for the *Newsletter*. We think it was taken in about 1954. Diane Robinson, now my wife, and her friend Christine Snell, née Freeman, have identified the following in the picture:

*Back row, from the left*: 1 unknown, 2 unknown, 3 Vivien Woods, 4 Janice Franklin, 5 unknown, 6 Gwyn Walker, 7 Diane Robinson; all others in that row unknown.

*2nd row down:*1 Mary Prentice, 2 Howard Eastwood, 3 and 4 unknown, 5 Christine Freeman, 6 Barbara Rankin, 7–10 unknown, 11 Sandra Clifford.

*3rd Row down*: 1–6 unknown, 7 Terrance Ratty, 8 unknown, 9 Carol Boyton.

*Bottom row:* All unknown.

Can anyone identify any more? ANDY IMMS

# The Great Epping sausage scandal

James William Greenwood was a pioneering investigative journalist of the high Victorian period. He broke some sensational stories, most notably by spending a night in the workhouse to document the appallingly squalid conditions of the poor in Victorian London. He also wrote of 'Veiled Mysteries', including one of a sausage scandal centred on Epping.

In *Odd People in Odd Places* (1883) Greenwood tells of 'The Great Epping Sausage Scandal'. Epping, in the middle of the 19th century was justly famous for its sausages. People in London sought them out, and they were often in short supply: ideal conditions for creating counterfeits, which were given an extra veil of authenticity by seeming to be delivered direct from Epping itself.

Greenwood wrote:

True, they were expensive, but then they were genuine – or were they always? They were forwarded to London daily by waggon [*sic*] – a broad-wheeled wain, with a russet-coloured awning, a pair of farm horses in the shafts, and, for a teamster, a pippin-faced countryman, in a snowy smock-frock, and with turnpike tickets stuck in the band of his battered old beaver hat.

So matters continued, until it occurred to an individual of an inquiring turn of mind to go down to Epping and view the famous factory from which the sausages came. No one in the village, however, could give him any information on the subject. It was a mystery, and the man with the inquiring mind resolved to sift it. He took lodgings within a mile or so of rural Epping, and he waited for the waggon. At last it appeared, jogging Londonward; but when the inquisitive one peeped in over the tailboard, lo! the vehicle was empty!

He kept it in sight for a few miles, until it halted at a wayside inn where there was a stable-yard, and already there awaiting was a London cart. There was the load in the cart, packed in scrupulously clean wicker baskets, each one lettered on the lid 'Warranted genuine Epping sausages'. While the waggoner and the cart-driver were busy transferring the freight from one vehicle to the other, the inquirer glanced at the name on the shaft of the London cart, and made it out to be that of a notorious cheap sausage-maker whose business premises were situated in Smithfield.

In *Odd People in Odd Places,* he stated in the preface that the book contained pen portraits of the 'homes, haunts, and habits of some of the lower grade of the great community' of London. Greenwood later became involved in philanthropy and established two funds for children, one to provide outings to the countryside (possibly to Epping Forest?) and the other to supply Christmas hampers. Greenwood also published books about his experiences as an observer in the London police courts. His final book, published in 1905, included interviews with the inmates of lunatic asylums.

James Greenwood found it difficult to find work in the last 30 years of his life and endured the kind of poverty he described in his earlier writings. He died at the home of his daughter in Catford on 11 August 1927, at the age of 96. TERRY CARTER

# Plant a tree in '73

Entering into the spirit of 'Plant a tree in 1973' are the two Buckhurst Hill Townswomen's Guilds, who, independently, made their own contribution to tree planting year on Friday. In the morning, founder member and chairman of the Evening TWG, Mrs K Robson planted three trees at the junction of Princes Road and Forest Edge, Buckhurst Hill to

replace diseased elm trees. Later, in the afternoon, chairman Mrs Gladys Mitchell planted two trees at Russell Road, near the junction with Roebuck Lane, on behalf of the Afternoon TWG. To recoup the £10 cost of buying and planting the trees, the Afternoon Guild are hoping to hold a 'bring and buy' sale. Later on they hope to have a plaque placed on the trees to commemorate the tree planting.

The Buckhurst Hill Evening Townswomen's Guild planting a tree on Forest Edge

The Buckhurst Hill Afternoon Townswomen's Guild plant a tree on what is now known as the Donkey Field. Joyce Clarke, who provided these images, is on the far right of the photograph. She lived in Ardmore Lane for 40 years

*Gazette and Independent,* 23 March 1973, courtesy of the late Joyce Clarke, a member of the Afternoon Townswomen's Guild for many years.
LYNN HASELDINE JONES

# The village of 'London's Forest'

*We have reprinted some of the work of Will Francies in earlier* Newsletters. *Here is another example of his romantic writing:*

In a brave new world Loughton has changed. The village, flanked by Epping Forest on the west, lies in a hollow of the hills, steep ways abound, and from a hundred vantage points the forest displays its beauty. 'Typical' Essex 'flatness' is not here apparent.

London is but twelve miles distant, so change was inevitable, and a vast, new London County Council housing estate has brought shops, commerce and industry. The one-time quiet forest village now sprawls over the hills and the pleasant fields by the River Roding, and teems with the London folk whose home it now is.

The knowledgeable traveller will pass quickly through the shopping crowds and cinema queues in the High Road, will pass the pleasant cricket ground and the war memorial, and ascend York Hill – steeply climbing to the Gardeners' Arms, a pleasant enough little pub, wherein Sir Jacob Epstein quaffed his ale, the nearby village pump and charming old cottages proclaiming the existence of a Loughton old, unchanged.

Follow the pleasant little road opposite, bordered by an orchard where in springtime a host of daffodils will nod and dance for your delight – a road that loses itself on a high ridge overlooking the forest. Tarry a while at this lovely vantage point and 'stand and stare' at London's forest as it rises fold upon green fold to the horizon, pierced by the spire of High Beach church, and with the Robin Hood cradled in its green depths. It is beautiful at all seasons, but in autumn presents a riot of colours that defies description.

Steps are retraced to join Baldwins Hill, that high ridge of a road from which, eastwards, beyond the myriad homes of Loughton's vast new family, the Essex countryside stretches away to a flat skyline. Westwards, steep gorse-starred slopes fall away to a tiny valley and a meandering brook, while steeply rising to the horizon a leafy ridge stretches away to Epping.

In winter the north wind roars unchecked through the gaunt trees and Baldwins Hill is bleak indeed, but the summer sun, rising warmly through the sweet-scented pearly dawn, brings life and colour to this green expanse, the great trees whisper to gentle breezes and the forest awakens to simple beauty incomparable – a rich heritage of loveliness so nearly lost to us but for the Willingale family, whose home is on this very hill, and whose ancestors fought the powers that be when lopping rights were threatened, thereby saving the forest for the people for all time.

For centuries the sylvan glades resounded to the clamour of royal hunting parties, but in later years the great forest slept, and the fine herd of native deer multiplied and went their ways in peace. Today, sounds of distant traffic and the aeroplane's noisy passage disturb the silence and the fine herd of deer is sadly depleted.

Loughton has indeed changed, but her enchanting forest offers tranquillity in a world of noise and conflict. Always there is the song of birds, the earthy tang of leaf-mould and the babbling of little brooks to please the wanderer in this unique corner of the Essex countryside. WILL FRANCIES
*Essex Countryside,* Vol 3, No 10, Winter 1954–55.

# Witchcraft in Tudor Loughton

Around 300 unfortunate women (and a few men) were put to death by the notorious Witchfinder-General, Matthew Hopkins, during his 1644-47 witch-hunt around East Anglia. The victims were mostly poor, elderly and isolated, and Hopkins' campaign took place during the turmoil of the English Civil War.

However, this was not England's first witch-hunt. Between 1560 and 1675 there are good court records of around 760 people from Essex accused of witchcraft. Three of them were from Loughton.

The witch craze in medieval Europe has been well documented. Around 50,000 people were executed across Europe between 1450 and 1750. Although the popular image is of witches being burnt at the stake, in England, the punishment for witchcraft was hanging.

The reasons for the witch craze were various, but were closely associated with religious conflict within the Christian church. The Catholic Church was increasingly seen as monolithic and corrupt and, as the protest spread, the church clamped down on all forms of heresy. The publication of *Malleus*

*Maleficarum* (the *Hammer of the Witches*) in 1485 marked a turning point. The Devil was said to be roaming the earth, possessing weak and gullible souls with demonic powers. Scapegoats were sought for the diseases, famine and war which were ravaging Europe. The folk remedies and half-pagan medications traditionally given by the village 'wise woman' or 'cunning man' which had been previously tolerated by the church were now classed as malevolent sorcery.

The relationship between church and state was changing too. In England, the Reformation meant that ecclesiastical courts no longer had the power they previously enjoyed. The civil courts took on much of their authority, and in some cases made the penalties harsher. Witchcraft had previously been a relatively minor ecclesiastical offence, but under an Act passed in 1563 it became a criminal offence punishable by hanging. Essex was a very Protestant county, full of Puritan zeal, and the very first hangings under the new law were in Chelmsford in 1566.

There were economic forces too behind the witch craze. Tudor England was a melting pot undergoing huge social changes. Women enjoyed considerably more rights than their medieval ancestors, owning their own businesses and passing on property and possessions to their descendants. This was a threat to the male hierarchy. A new middle class of merchants, craftsmen and yeomen threatened long-established feudal power structures. In Essex, there was a housebuilding boom as newly-wealthy tradesmen built themselves timber-framed moated mansions, many of which survive today.

But while the wealthy few were thriving, in the villages of Essex there was fear and envy. Fear of the marginalised, fear of plague, fear of being denounced as a heretic, fear that the wise woman might curse as well as bless, envy of a neighbour's property, their cattle or their horses.

Loughton was a very small village in Tudor times, with a population of no more than a couple of hundred. It was literally a dead end as the through road had not yet been built and the only way in or out of the village was a lane to Woodford.

In the winter of 1590 came the first of the accusations of witchcraft. On 28 January, Joan Mose and Agnes Mose were accused. Joan Mose, spinster of *Lucton* (i.e., Loughton), was said to have murdered Richard, son of Thomas Stace by 'witchcrafte and sorcerie'. Agnes was accused of bewitching a person, presumably Richard Stace, to death. The details of the events have been lost to history. The Staces or Stacys were, however, a prominent Loughton family still present in the village in the 18th century. Agnes and Joan are otherwise unknown; Joan, described as a spinster, is likely to have been Agnes's daughter. It is clear from records of the Mathew Hopkins witch-hunts that the wealthy used their influence to get rid of troublesome neighbours or eccentrics and loners through accusations of witchcraft, and this may have been what happened here.

Agnes and Joan pleaded not guilty, but were both found guilty. The trial was held at Chelmsford Assizes. Both were sentenced to death and imprisoned to await execution. Tudor jails were inhumanly harsh and Agnes Mose succumbed to the plague. She died in prison on 15 February 1590. Joan was hanged soon after.

The outcome of the third trial is unknown. John Monday of Loughton was tried for witchcraft in 1592, one of 19 witch trials across the county in that year. The late Elizabethan witch-craze was beginning to die down and there were only a dozen or so trials a year in Essex over the next decade, and they almost disappeared during the reign of Charles I.

Accusing men of witchcraft was not as rare as might be expected. Although there is a stereotype of a village hag as easy prey for the witch hunter, out of 760 accused in Essex between 1560 and 1675, over 100 were men. Some of these were heretics of various kinds who were called witches to get them out of the way. The details of John Monday's case are lost.

However, an earlier incident hints at a dispute between neighbours which got out of hand. On 15 January 1592 an ecclesiastical court sat in Romford to try various cases concerning church matters. The Archdeacon of Essex presided. One Richard Fynson of Loughton appeared, charged with striking John Monday in Loughton churchyard on 26 September 1591. Richard Fynson pleaded guilty, admitting that 'in gest and sport and not upon any collor or anger, he did tripp vpp his heeles, as he was sytting vpon the Church rayles'. Fynson was convicted of having 'vnorderly behaued himselfe', fined a shilling and ordered to publicly confess his wrongdoing in front of the vicar and the whole congregation.

Did this petty confrontation spark off a more serious turn of events? Richard Fynson, fuming with rage at his public humiliation, perhaps plotting a deadly counter-accusation against his victim?

The harsh Tudor witchcraft laws were repealed in 1735, and replaced by a more lenient Act which emphasised the prevention of fraud by con-merchants. The fake medium Helen Duncan, who spouted cheesecloth ectoplasm during wartime séances and unwisely dabbled in naval secrets, was the last person to be convicted under the Witchcraft Act, which was finally repealed in 1944.

**Sources**

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STEPHEN PEWSEY

# Feedback on earlier *Newsletters*

***Newsletter 207*: concerning Field 197**

I remember a plane crashing. It was most likely during the school holidays in 1940. The Battle of Britain was raging overhead, one could hear planes diving and climbing and distant machine guns; my attention was drawn to something clattering in the trees across the drive. Next thing Mother and sister Pauline were disappearing through the side gate and running off down the farm drive (Westall Road)

towards the Dell hole (almost certainly Roman workings).

Anyway, off I trundled, I hadn't even reached the pillbox (opposite Paley Gardens) when Mum and sis had turned back. A Spitfire had been downed, we were told that the pilot, a Pole, had been shot through the head, and his plane fell just south of the Dell hole (Rochford/Sandford Avenue) area, and of course burst into flames. I could hear muffled explosions – the cannon shells were going off in the heat.

Very soon after, a large long open-back RAF lorry stopped outside our side gate piled high with débris (I think it was normal procedure for respect and of course metal was in short supply, and it could be recycled in one way or another).

Note, Loughton Hall farm was under the control of the Goulds from the turn of the century until the end of the war; Padfields farm was on the south bank of the Roding close to Woolston Hall and I think all their land was south of the railway, their house being just behind Chigwell Lane station. MAURICE DAY

***Newsletter 212:*** **Goldings Hill Air Raid Shelter**
I was contacted by Brenda Bowtle, who lived in Lower Road through the War, as three generations of her family had. She says there was never a shelter under the embankment of the A121, but there was an oblong concrete-built shelter to accommodate perhaps 20 people on Arewater Green on the west side of the A121. It was near the steps that rise from Lower Road onto the main carriageway.

Brenda says her memory is very clear and she would stake her life on there being nothing under the embankment. She also says nobody in Lower Road used the communal shelter, as they all had their own Andersons! CHRIS POND

See also *Newsletter 189* for more on air raid shelters. EDITOR

# The fire at Copped Hall

Below is an extract from a letter published in *Essex Countryside*, April 1963. The correspondent, F Macefield of Woodford Green, referred to information received from two eye-witnesses of the fire at Copped Hall who were Mrs Alice Grimber and Miss N Deery, of Holland-on-Sea and Loughton, respectively.

Both ladies were employed as land girls by the owner of Copped Hall. Apparently the fire started on a Sunday morning in March 1917 [*sic:* actually 5 May 1917]. Mrs Grimber was milking the pedigree cows when a farm worker came running through the shed shouting 'the Hall's on fire'. They both ran out to see and already the glass from the windows was melting and running down the walls in great globules like tears. They were told to go to the library and save the rare and valuable books. Mrs Grimber was young and agile at that time and able to climb from shelf to shelf and throw the books down into baskets. They then went to the bedroom of the owner Mr Wythe [*sic:* Edward James Wythes, 1868–1949] and found him standing at his wall safe taking out the valuables. They saved what they could and went on to another room where they were eventually shut in. The firemen had not seen them so they had to bang on the door to get out.

Apparently the fire hose was full of holes as it had not been used for many years, and in order to improve the flow of water, they had to tie it up in places with handkerchiefs and cloths. The water supply was from a water tank with a pole operated by six on each side which was used for the purpose of pumping up and down so as to obtain what water pressure they could. Unfortunately the fire had too great a hold before useful help arrived and the Hall in consequence burnt out.

Mrs Grimber also states that she remembers that there were several rooms furnished to represent different countries, namely Indian room, Japanese room, etc, and the total number of valuables lost was dreadful.

Miss Deery was employed to look after the gardens . . . and the information she gave me in her letter more or less confirms the details I am now quoting.

*Submitted by* TED MARTIN

# The poor children's motor holiday in Epping Forest

I have previously reported this event in the *Newsletter* after reading about it in *The Car Illustrated*, but I have now found a much more detailed report of it in *Motoring Illustrated* (MI) (confusingly there were two magazines with very similar names). It seems MI took the lead in organising and promoting the event. It took place on Monday, 24 July 1905, and involved taking poor and crippled children to the Shaftesbury Home, in Staples Road. The event was reported in MI of 29 July and again on 5 August 1905 when a letter of thanks from John Kirk, the 'energetic' Secretary of the Ragged School Union, was published along with accounts for the event. There was regular publicity for the event in MI leading up to it, for example, this from MI of 27 May 1905:

CHILDREN'S MOTOR DAY – Miss Annesley Kenealy is receiving the utmost sympathy [she had been unwell] and practical assistance from several leading and influential members of the Automobile Club in her scheme for taking a large number of poor children for a motor-run and picnic to Epping Forest, or some similar happy holiday resort, on some date early in July, the event to be known as Children's Motor Day.

Annesley Kenealy (1861–1926) had proposed the event and seems to have been the leading light in its organisation. Internet research revealed she was MI's assistant editor. Her entry on the *Grace's Guide* website states,

A well-known writer and journalist. Is a motor and balloon enthusiast, and contributes articles on these subjects to various technical newspapers both in England and America.

It also states: 'While disapproving of feminine athletes, she regards motoring as an ideal sport for women'! One article I have encountered in my researches on her was one on 'Jujitsu for Ladies' in *Woman's Realm* in 1905. In the end Annesley Kenealy's illness precluded her from attending the event and she was represented by Mr Edward Kenealy. This was not her father, Edward Kenealy (1819–1880) who Wikipedia describes as, 'an Irish barrister and writer. He is best remembered as counsel for the Tichborne claimant and the eccentric and disturbed conduct of the trial that led to his ruin.' (The rest of his Wikipedia

entry makes for very interesting reading, if sad as he does not seem to have lived a very happy life, ending up being disbarred and becoming MP for Stoke-on-Trent, though seemingly not a very successful one.)

The Edward Kenealy who represented Annesley was her brother – Edward and Annesley were from a family of 11 children.

Having got diverted down an interesting byway, let us now return to the main event. 300 children took part in it including 100 'cripples'. The 'cripples' were described as 'helpless units of humanity', an expression which probably appears uncomfortable to modern readers. They came from the City of London, Bermondsey, Hoxton and Hackney with the journey starting out from Finsbury Circus. Not enough cars were available to take all the children, so some horse brakes had to be hired (at a cost of 4 guineas) to take the remainder.

Dinner comprised a 'substantial' meat pie and fruit tart (not a very balanced diet) 'with large mugs of lemonade'. After dinner all the children were taken on a 10-mile drive through the forest (so presumably those who came by horse brake did not miss out on a motor-car ride) and donkey rides were given. It seems children were given an opportunity to explore the forest but they were reluctant to do so, for 'fear of gipsies'. Tea comprised 'thick slices of well-buttered bread and two kinds of cake'. There was then a Punch and Judy show – 'when the "copper" was knocked down and beaten mercilessly by Mr Punch, the joy of the youngsters knew no bounds'. At six o'clock, after three cheers were given for Annesley Kenealy, the return journey was begun, arriving back at Finsbury Circus around 7pm. 'Many [children] were very tired, but all happy in the recollection of a good day's outing.'

Each child was given a gift; the boys a pocket knife and the girls 'a useful pair of scissors'. I suspect a gift of a pocket knife to children would not go down well nowadays! The cost of these gifts was £20 18s 9d. 'Bunches of sweet flowers' were also given to the children to take to their homes. Money donations of £43 19s 0d had been given to fund the event and £3 1s 2d was left over at the end which was donated to the Ragged School Union.

The list of those who provided cars was almost a 'who's who' of early motorists. Some notable names were:

Harvey du Cros junior – founder of the Coventry-based Swift Motor Co and deputy chairman of the Austin Motor Co.

S F Edge – a businessman and racing driver, associated with the Napier and AC companies among others.

(Sir) Charles Friswell – owner of a large London garage business and later to become the chairman of the Standard Motor Co.

C S Rolls – I do not think he requires any introduction!

F R Simms – an eminent motor engineer, inventor and businessman. He was a passenger on the reputedly first long motor journey in Britain and founder of the RAC.

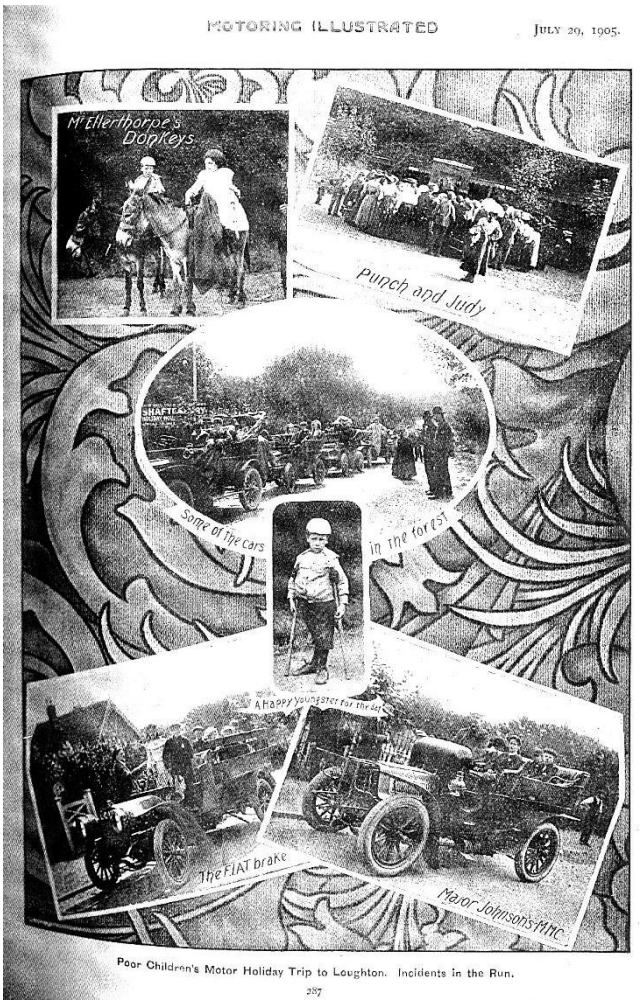
Charles Jarrott – a racing driver and businessman and a founder member of the AA.

F S Bennett – a racing driver and vehicle importer. Noted for having the London Cadillac franchise.

It would have been nice to have been able to attend the event and have met all these famous motoring pioneers.

In the 5 August report MI floated the possibility of a similar event in the following year with the hope of entertaining 'at least 1,000 cripples', but there is no reference to it in subsequent MIs, so I presume it never took place.

Finally, I must report that preparing this article had an unintended consequence. I showed the photo of the event from MI to Chris Pond whose house is almost adjacent to the site of the Shaftesbury Retreat. He told me that his neighbour had been wanting to put up a new front gate and had asked Chris what the original gate would have been like. Chris noticed the photo showed his neighbour's house, so he could now show him a picture of the original gate!




JOHN HARRISON

# No 51 High Road Loughton

*Chris Pond prepared a short heritage dossier on No 51 High Road in connection with a planning application, reprinted here as a matter of historical record.*

No 51 High Road, known as Spring Grove House, was erected in 1911–12. It was the keynote house for the Newnham House Estate, which the Goulds were laying out at that time, and consisted of the new street, Spring Grove, and streets off, and which was not completed till 1955.

The Goulds were the leading nonconformist family in Loughton, which was heavily polarised between Baptist and Church of England. The family kept ownership of the three houses until the Second World War.

At the same time (the plans were submitted together on the same date) two semi-detached villas were erected to its rear (Wilton and Dalecroft, now Nos 2 and 4 Spring Grove).

The three houses were to similar designs by the same architect, Horace White of Loughton (1872–


1953), whose accomplishments as an arts and craft architect are chronicled in Pevsner's book *The Buildings of England – Essex* (2007 edition) and in *The Buildings of Loughton and Notable People of the Town* (2nd edition, 2011). The three houses should therefore be seen as an ensemble, and 2 Spring Grove is also of interest because it was the home of Harold Curwen, the eminent typographer [see *Newsletters* 151, 174, 175 and 192 on Harold Curwen].The builder of all three was Duncan Davey of Loughton.

The house was let out to tenants until around 1930, when it became the Baptist Manse, inhabited by the Rev Harry Pewtress (1900–1945). The Baptist (Union) Church was noted for its vibrant and charismatic pastors, of which Samuel Brawn (in the 19th century) and Harry Pewtress are the most renowned. Pewtress, himself a young minister, engaged the youth of Loughton in a major way, and the Manse became, for some years, a cultural centre for Loughton, and especially for its young people. It is this phase in its life that is most remembered; after then, it reverted to being a family home.

Spring Grove House is an attractive arts and crafts house in typical White style, imaginatively planned on its corner site. It embodies a great deal of Loughton style and Loughton culture, and is without doubt a significant heritage asset. CHRIS POND

# Kings Place – the slum I loved

Before I attempt to describe Kings Place, which was popularly known as 'Sweep Street' – the slum I loved, which was my second home between the years 1945 and 1965, I considered it important to delve into its historic past – how did this slum come to pass?

First, I checked the map produced by Chapman and André in 1777 and discovered that the town, now known as Buckhurst Hill, didn't exist then and that this area was just a rural space monopolised by one rather grand house 'Kings Place', later known by its alias 'Langfords'. As kids we knew this house, situated in the then completely built-up Kings Avenue, but were unaware of its history. I remember my fascination regarding the bay-leaf tree in its roadside hedgerow. The house was later demolished and replaced by the existing small estate of modern homes.

Kings Place/Langfords was connected to the High Road, of ancient origin, then the main coaching route that connected London with Newmarket and beyond by a winding narrow lane, now named Westbury Lane. It descended the hillside from the Bald Faced Stag, a public-house with coaching facilities and stables which culminated at Langfords. This map also clearly shows one other short piece of 'track' that connected Langfords with the forest (Lords Bushes) no doubt to allow access to the woods for pannage and other purposes. Pigs were once the main source of revenue hereabouts and of course these largely oak woods produced crops of acorns beloved of pigs.

Lords Bushes was also a source of timber for fires and for construction purposes. And no doubt much more besides. We can presume that this short piece of road now known as Kings Place which ends in a cul-de-sac at the opening to the forest beyond The Three Colts public house was where the working poor lived – those who laboured on the farming estate, served the gentry at Langfords and helped maintain the gentry's property with their various maintenance and building skills and, of course, these 'cottages' would have been primitive in every modern respect with little space to accommodate what were in those days large families.

The 20th century slum I got to know consisted of terraced rows of, basically, two-up, two-down roomed cottages, with small sculleries at their rear. They were certainly crammed together – large families packed into the smallest possible space. But, even smaller dwellings, past the road crossing with Princes Road leading to the forest's edge, are single storied dwellings. In recent times several have been merged as one to create quite attractive residences.

I further researched by reading the *Victoria History of the County of Essex*, volume IV. The manor of Kings Place, later known by its alias Langfords, at Buckhurst Hill probably originated when King Edward III (through his son John of Gaunt) purchased 92 acres of land there in 1360. In 1476 King Edward IV enlarged this estate by purchasing further acres from Robert Langford and others. Subsequently Edward IV granted the whole estate to Sir John Risley for life. A successive parade of aristocratic and land-owning dignitaries proceeded to command events in this part of Essex including, of course, at Kings Place over the many centuries to follow.

The advent of the railway to Loughton in 1856 heralded a building boom in Buckhurst Hill. It became a suitable suburban residential area allowing business people to easily commute to their City of London places of employment. And, of course, there was a parallel increase in the number of working-class families moving in to work on the railway and in construction that included the local brick and tile producers. In addition many more service workers (servants) were required to work in the increasing number of large houses being built throughout the district.

In the *Victoria County History* there is a monopoly of information regarding the activities of the establishment class with little or no mention or regard to the servile masses, to their lives, to their interests and to their fortunes. A great deal of space, however, is given to the clergy with regard to their power and influence, their wealth and property in the county of Essex. The Church was one of the strong arms of the aristocratic, land-owning establishment and, as the industrial revolution developed, the *nouveau riche* joined and reinvigorated the ruling establishment which to this day is a factor to consider.

And now, fast forward to a more recent epoch, my personal trip down Memory Lane to describe my fond memories of Sweep Street (Kings Place) during those years 1945 to 1965 based on many happy hours frequenting this street and making long-term friends with those who actually lived in that so called 'slum'.

My first vivid memory is when the local citizens celebrated Victory for Europe Day. My family had recently moved to Princes Road, just around the corner, and, of course, to reach the shops in Queen's Road we had to walk through the rather notorious Sweep Street. My mother was intrigued with the inhabitants there. No front gardens, their front doors opened onto the public pavement. The sociable women (most of the men were at work in those full employment years) did many of their chores sitting outside their homes on the pavement – peeling potatoes, preparing veg, knitting, etc, and, of course, enjoying a 'good ole gossip' at the same time.

The menfolk, many recently returned from the war, were Bolshie and in high spirits. They pillaged the local area for wood and built an immense bonfire to celebrate the end of the war in the middle of the road. I thought it was marvellous and to Hell with the rulebook. It was all so exciting. The Macadam was severely damaged but no charges were made.

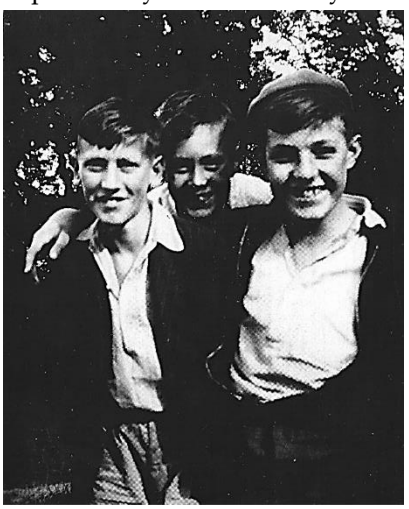
Regarding the women who knitted: my mother, a literary and well educated lady likened the 'knitters' to the women that did likewise as the guillotine descended and despatched the bourgeoisie during the French Revolution. In retrospect there's no doubt my mother liked and certainly respected the women who lived in Sweep Street. In addition, I believe my Mum held rather romantic notions regarding the sociability of this community (as I did) which fitted her own social and socialist beliefs.

Mum, was a great fan of Charles Dickens – and she ensured I became bookish at an early age: I learnt to read before I went to school. The Children's Library at the top of Queen's Road furnished many of the books I read. My eternal thanks to Buckhurst Hill Library – may it remain for posterity. It has become too part-time for my liking and there's a danger it might close entirely. Appertaining to the above, the first novel my mother blandished me to read, was *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens when I was 7 years old – the two cities being London and Paris and it was set in those immortal revolutionary times.

To return to the delights of Sweep Street and the subject of bonfires. Oh how us lads enjoyed building the massive fires, great pyramids of branches and boughs we hauled out of the forest (illegally as per the forest bylaws) for our annual Guy Fawkes celebrations. Apart from collecting wood we collected sweet chestnuts from the forest and scrounged large potatoes from our mums to bake them in the hot embers on the outer edge of the main blaze. And a great time was had by all. Now an update: bonfires as above are now illegal due to the present regime of over-zealous health and safety rules. Our youth is now denied their right to express themselves in such adventurous and active pursuits.

These bonfires were built just inside Lords Bushes, where the children's playground now resides. It was then an open, extensive grassy plain, where local lads played cricket – then more popular than now. Below the surface was an underground shelter where many people took refuge from the German bombing raids. I remember my mother saying, 'we'll take a chance and stay in the comfort of our own beds at home'. So, we *never* used a bomb shelter and luckily survived the war intact. But, I enjoyed exploring them, there was still access for some years after the war for adventurous boys and girls to explore and fantasise in their dark depths. On the way to Princes Road primary school one day I diverted and explored on my own in the darkness of the shelter and ended up smashing my skull against the concrete structure. One big swollen egg head! 'How did it happen?' the teacher asked, I kept shtum.

My personal take on Sweep Street: it was a tough, rough and ready, friendly working class community and I took to it like a duck to water. Sweep Street was so named, I'm told, because a family of that name (Street) lived there and were chimney sweeps, a very necessary profession during those years when burning coal, usually with forest wood as a free extra, meant fireplaces and chimneys had to be regularly cleaned. Lots of local stories about cheap do it yourself schemes including setting fire to the chimney or pulling a tight bunch of holly down the chimney by rope. Have you heard of any other bright ideas?



Pete Relph, on the left, with his good friend, the late Bill Bradford, on the right. This photograph was taken in Lords Bushes, behind the Three Colts – Pete was 12 or 13 years old at the time.

One of my closest friends in Sweep Street was Bill Bradford, taller than me at some 6' 2" plus, slim, wiry and gangly – why, because he had suffered rickets when a youngster and had to wear iron braces for a lengthy period. We had this in common. I was adopted from an orphanage by my wonderful mother and likewise had rickets. I was lucky to receive the more expensive and sympathetic sunray treatment that did the job. We both survived and spent much of our young lives energetically enjoying the close by forest particularly

Lords Bushes and Knighton Woods – known to us as 'Buxtons'. Edward North Buxton was the former owner of Knighton Woods which was in effect his garden and he was certainly an asset to the local community as history records. Knighton Wood used to be opened to the public on certain high days. It was later returned to the forest for everybody's enjoyment, when the Corporation of London took over.

Bill was a bright lad, passed his eleven plus and attended Buckhurst Hill High School, a grammar school. I got to know his parents well and Sarah, Bill's Mum, always welcomed me into their home. The *pièce de résistance,* which was Sarah's pride and joy, was the always clean, blackened and polished old fashioned kitchen range. Their pet parrot particularly enjoyed perching up its chimney for warmth but one sad day the villainous and well fed rat that considered it had squatter's rights, so I was told – they were great story tellers – who lived in the upholstery of the battered armchair, killed and ate the parrot. Certainly they respected wildlife. A large resident spider wove its web across the living room window which was protected and remained undisturbed. They named it Samuel. However, the spider gave a very good service and kept the pesky flies under control.

Sarah, an intelligent woman, enjoyed her daily habit which was to complete *The Times* crossword. Interestingly, a number of my later communist comrades also bought *The Times* for that same purpose. Bill's dad also named Bill, was a survivor and before the Second World War, during the slump, travelled the country Romany Gypsy style in a horse-drawn caravan bird-catching – gold finches and linnets being two of the popular caged birds favoured at that time. Yes, cruel by today's standards but it allowed Bill's father to earn a living. As a young man I used to visit Club Row on a regular basis, a lively exciting market where one could trade dogs, ferrets, wild birds *et al.* Of course it's now completely closed, for, we could argue, good reasons, but life is becoming increasingly monotone and, I believe, less exciting. He also, later worked as a scaffolder and proudly informed me how he'd helped build the Art Deco designed Loughton Railway Station. I note that recently architects borrowed this idea when they built today's Art Deco Sainsbury's nearby and matched it with the station.

Bill senior also made his own nets; I was beginning to learn how to make rabbit nets at the time. I had entered my many a long year poaching phase – oh happy days! He showed me a net he'd made and used in the past – a triangular one that was placed low over gaps in the holly thickets which were then beaten to catch blackbirds. Which they did, actually, bake in the proverbial pie. So, the long and the short of it was that their home became my second home. Eternal thanks.

A few more reminiscences that stand out in my fond memories of Sweep Street. Pat, an Irishman and Liz also opened their home to some of us lads who were mates with Liz's nephew Fred, who was very fond of his Aunt. No doubt they enjoyed having younger people in their home because they had no children of their own. We used their front room as a gambling den and played three card and nine card brag – two popular card games at the time. I also used to knit my rabbit nets there. I used a 'needle' that I'd bought at the shipmongers in Leigh-on-Sea near Southend. Dear Pat who always cycled to work was sadly knocked down by a vehicle and died at a comparatively young age. Life, unfortunately, always has its sadder moments.

Another of my closest friends was Alec who had a brother Ken and two sisters, Connie and June Anne. Alec and Kenny both passed their eleven plus exams, but only Alec attended Buckhurst Hill grammar school in Chigwell. Their family suffered from another disease that flourished in poverty stricken areas – not rickets but consumption, better known more recently as TB. Alec lost his mum at an early age to this complaint and I also lost my mum at an early age to cancer a few years later. We both loved our books – had literary interests, devoured all of John Steinbeck's works and later Alec named his lurcher bitch 'Darling', the dog that Steinbeck immortalised in one of his novels. Like Bill, Alec loved the local forest and fields and was a well versed naturalist with a very keen eye and often pointed out things I had missed. All the family, as far as I know, fully recovered from the TB they'd encountered earlier in their lives.

Another character, older than me, was Albie Jennings, the leader of the so called Jennings gang. Us younger lads looked up to him. He always carried a grin on his face, a Jennings family trait, and was never a bully but he was tough when needs must. He and his gang once 'captured' me and stood me against an oak tree just inside Lords Bushes and then threw knives around me to quiver in the trunk. For some reason I had no fear and didn't panic and that was the last of that and we respected each other for many a long year. At that time Albie's gang used to leap on the rear of the horse-drawn United Dairies milk floats and catch rides down the hill to the dairy in Lower Queen's Road and, of course, I and others followed suit. Great fun!

An interesting postscript. Over the years we (Bill, Alec, Albie and myself) all managed to survive and eventually obtain a reasonable education and satisfactory employment. Alec became a district engineer for the London Electricity Board (LEB); I became a teacher/lecturer; Bill, a high tension fitter on the LEB and Albie, a responsible and skilled position in a light fitting company. An actual common denominator was that over the years we all joined the Communist Party of Great Britain. Why? I suppose with our backgrounds we had no other logical option, it was part of a natural sequence of events.


The Three Colts receiving a delivery in 2009

On a last and final note, I must mention The Three Colts, the pub Bill Bradford, Bill's dad, couldn't walk past on his way home from work. I understand Sarah, his wife, tried a new tactic one evening and took his awaiting dinner down to the pub and threw the lot at him, plate and all. Thereby hangs a tale. John was the governor there when we were only 17 and managing to imbibe our first beers in his pub (below the permissible age). I used to wear a trilby hat with a long cock pheasant's feather stuck in it – very bohemian and we used my hat to collect mushrooms by the riverside fields. John an Eastender, loved wild mushrooms and we used to barter with him. A few beers for the whole hatfull!

The final postscript. This pub remains (2017) and long may it do so. So many pubs are now being redeveloped for profitable housing projects. The Three Colts is now a very popular pub and deserves a visit. I recommend it. PETE RELPH

# The history of Langfords

## Part 1: Lyson on Langfords of Buckhurst Hill

*Pete Relph in the article above mentioned the history of Langfords. This is part one of the history of the house; more will follow in later* Newsletters.

The house known as Langfords stood alone in Buckhurst Hill as of ancient origin and must have been of great interest to anyone concerned about both local and national history. Unfortunately it did not survive beyond the 1950s. If it had lasted until the present time it would probably have been a listed building. It was replaced by a development of homes known as Langfords, just off King's Avenue. In this series of three articles I look at the history of the house from its earliest days to its demolition. Let's begin with what Lysons had to say about it at the end of the 18th century:

Within this parish [of Chigwell], in the forest, was an ancient palace, called Potteles, alias Langford's. A purchase was made by the crown in this parish as early as the year 1350, and another purchase of a house and lands, by Edward IV, of Robert Langford, in 1477. It is probable that the King granted this house and lands to his brother the Duke of Clarence; for it appears upon record, that Potteles-place, alias Langford's, came to the crown on the death of that prince. Henry VII appointed Sir John Risley keeper of his palace at Chigwell; and on his death, Sir William Compton had a grant of that place, anno 1513. William Lord Compton obtained a renewed grant from Queen Elizabeth in 1596. Sir Thomas Perient was possessed of the fee of this estate in 1650. It was then called the manor or reputed manor of King's-place, alias Langford's, etc. Henry Goodricke, Esquire, having married Mary Ernle, a relation of Lady Perient, this estate was settled on her; and, in 1658, was conveyed by the said Henry Goodricke and his wife Mary to William Livesaye, Gent. In 1679, William Livesaye the elder, and William Livesaye the younger, aliened it to Mrs Elizabeth Collwall, widow. Thomas Gibson and John Jacob, trustees under the will of Daniel Collwall, Esq, who died in 1707, conveyed it, in 1716, to Percival Chandler, whose son Thomas, in 1741, sold it to Oliver Marton Esq. In 1759, it was purchased of the Rev. Oliver Marton, (brother and heir of Edward Marton, Esq, who was son and heir of Oliver), by Robert Jones, Esq. It is now the property of his grandson, R Jones Adeane Esq.

An estate of this parish and Woodford, called Buckhurst, alias Monkenhill [now Monkhams], belonged to the abbot and convent of Stratford Langthorn, and was granted, anno 1547, to John Lyon and his heirs. Henry Lyon died seised of it anno 1590. It is now the property of Lady Hughes.

There was an estate also (in the parishes of Chigwell and Barking) called Buckhurst, alias Goldhurst, which Sir Walter Goldyngham settled on Robert Writtle. Walter Writtle died seised of it in 1476. It is most probable that it descended, with the manors of Chigwell-hall and West-hatch, which were also in the Goldynghams and the Writtles.

From *The Environs of London being an historical account of the towns, villagesand hamlets within 12 miles of that capital,* by Rev Daniel Lysons, published in 1792.

Chris Johnson, in unpublished notes in possession of the author, wrote:

1810 saw the death of Robert Jones Adeane; the property passed to Henry John Adeane (18 June 1789–11 May 1847). With the death of Henry J Adeane in 1847 the end was in sight for the continuous history of the property of mediaeval origin. Things were moving on rapidly, and the railway was about to change Buckhurst Hill for ever. In 1853 the executors of H J Adeane sold the property to the National Freehold Land Society for development. Much of the land was built on over the next few years, although the building itself lasted until the mid-twentieth century.

*To be continued*

LYNN HASELDINE JONES

# New book on Essex history

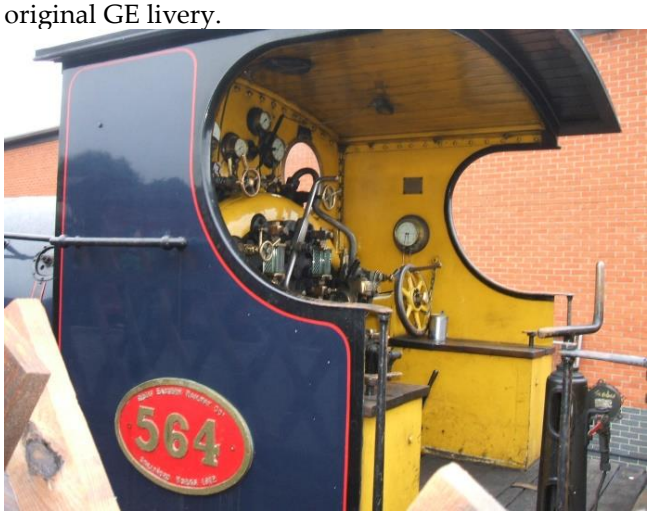
The University of Hertfordshire Press has recently launched the second in its new series of Essex local history books under the imprint Essex Publications – *The Fighting Essex Soldier: Recruitment, war and society in the fourteenth century* by Christopher Thornton, Jennifer Ward and Neil Wiffen (Eds).

The wars of the 14th-century English kings with France and Scotland resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of men involved in warfare on land and sea. This book draws upon new research to identify and analyse these soldiers at all social levels in the specific context of the county of Essex.

From the raising of forces to serve the king, through a study of aristocratic lawlessness which may have been linked to violent experiences on the battlefield, to new ways of analysing data to give insights into men recruited as archers and mariners, and a consideration of military aspects of the Peasants' Revolt, this is a rewarding examination of medieval fighting men which affords much new insight into Essex history. It is available from the University website. CHRISTOPHER DUNKLEY

# GE engine No 564

At the 40s weekend on the North Norfolk Railway in September 2016 I found, parked very quietly in a siding at Weybourne, the restored Great Eastern 0-6-0 goods engine No 564. I have a partiality for these 0-6-0 goods engines because my great grandfather used to drive one – an Aspinall A class on the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway. These GE maids of all work used to pull coal and goods trains with the occasional outing on a passenger train at peak periods and would have come to Loughton on many occasions. No 564 has been beautifully restored by the railway into original GE livery.




The angle for photography was difficult, as I was restricted by a fence and it was in a very narrow siding, but I hope these pictures can give some idea of the excellent restoration of this engine, now the last remaining one of its class.

It was designed by T W Worsdell* and built at Stratford in 1912 and was one of GE class Y14 (later LNER class J15).

On 10–11 December 1891, at Stratford, the GER built one of these engines and had it in steam, and in grey primer in 9 hours 47 minutes from the start, which is still a world record. That engine then ran 36,000 miles on Peterborough to London coal trains before coming back to the works for the final coat of paint. It lasted 40 years and ran a total of 1,127,750 miles. Because they were light these engines were given the Route Availability (RA) number 1, indicating that they could work over nearly all routes.

The GER built 189 Y14s mainly for light to medium goods trains, but it was not uncommon to see them on a local passenger train. No 564 spent most of its life in East Anglia, and often worked on the Waveney Valley line between Tivetshall and Beccles in Suffolk. It was purchased in 1963 by the Society, and went into storage at March before being moved in 1966 to the North Norfolk Railway. 564 was first steamed again in 1977, and worked for many years between Sheringham and Weybourne. It also hauled the first train from Weybourne to Holt, when the line was reopened in 1989. It was withdrawn from service shortly after but returned in 2002 after a 12-year restoration.


*Thomas William Worsdell was born in Liverpool on 14 January 1838, the eldest son of Nathaniel and Mary Worsdell. Thomas's grandfather, the coachbuilder Thomas Clarke Worsdell (1788–1862), had become a Quaker by 1816 so his descendants were all brought up in the Quaker faith.

Thomas began school at the age of two, and in 1847 was sent as a boarder to Ackworth, a Quaker school in Yorkshire until 1852.

Thomas gained early experience at Crewe. In 1865 he went to the US for six years, which included a time as Master Mechanic at the Pennsylvania Railroad's Altoona Works. In 1871, he became the Crewe Works Manager for F W Webb, in his 10 years at Crewe overseeing large extensions to the works. In 1882 he became Locomotive Superintendent of the GER but stayed just three years, as, in 1885, he was offered the post of Locomotive Superintendent of the North Eastern Railway (NER). His brother Wilson Worsdell was already there as Assistant Mechanical Engineer and continued to serve as an assistant to his brother.

Thomas's early 2-cylinder compound engines for the GER were not particularly successful. His 0-6-0 tender and 2-4-2 tank engine designs were characterised by an austere lack of external fittings which would define the outline of GER and NER designs for the next 20 years. He retired from the NER in 1890 due to ill-health to be replaced by his brother.But Thomas Worsdell lived another 26 years and died on 26 June 1916, aged 78.

TED MARTIN

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