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55th Season

The Loughton Declaration

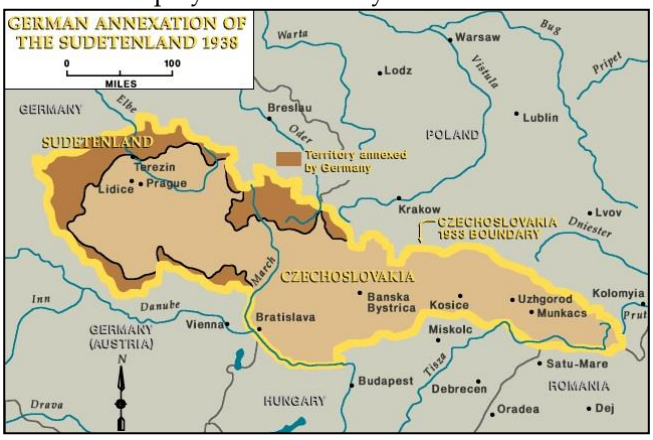
The Congress of Vienna, the Treaty of Versailles, and the Loughton Declaration. The first two are instantly recognisable as milestones in military and diplomatic history, while the Loughton Declaration is rather less famous. It is, however, the key to an intriguing tale which deserves to be better known.

One of the abiding collective memories of the Second World War is that of Neville Chamberlain waving his famous piece of paper and declaring 'peace for our time'. Hitler's Third Reich had been stepping up its rhetoric and military preparations for war since coming to power in 1933. Early in 1938, Nazi stormtroopers had marched into Austria and incorporated it into Germany. Next, Hitler turned to Czechoslovakia and demanded the annexation of the Sudetenland, the Czech lands bordering Germany where over three million ethnic Germans lived. This created a European crisis, resulting in Neville Chamberlain's visits to Hitler and a deal in which the Sudetenland was sacrificed for the sake of a wider European peace; the policy, in fact, of appeasement. Hitler's subsequent occupation of Czech lands and invasion of Poland showed his contempt for such negotiated settlements.

The roots of the Sudetenland crisis lie deep in history. Ethnic Germans had been settling and trading in Slavic lands for at least a millennium, and while first the Holy Roman Empire and then its successor the Austro-Hungarian Empire had comprised many nationalities, both were dominated by German speakers. The abolition of Austria-Hungary in the wake of the First World War and the creation of Czechoslovakia left millions of Germans as a troublesome minority within the new Slav-governed republic. Czech nationalists had the ear of the American president at the Versailles peace talks, and consequently were dealt with generously by the treaty, but it left the new country with dubious Slovaks, and reluctant Poles, Hungarians, and Ukrainians within its frontiers, not to mention a huge German bloc. Following the 1918 Armistice, the European expectation was that the newly-created Austria would include an arc of German-majority areas in what later became known as Sudetenland, and provincial councils were established in preparation. However, the new Czechoslovak army was sent in to forcibly incorporate German-speaking areas into the Czech state.

Following Hitler's rise to power, Nazi sympathisers outside the Third Reich were ordered to stir up trouble from the Baltic to the Alps. In Czechoslovakia, the *Sudetendeutsche Partei* (SdP) was created in 1933 under the leadership of Konrad Henlein. Feeding on discontent over unemployment, it quickly became one of Europe's largest fascist parties, with over a million members. The annexation of Austria made Hitler's territorial intentions plain; in April 1938, the SdP demanded Sudeten autonomy.

As the crisis deepened, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain made several visits to Germany and attempted to appease Hitler. The famous 'Munich Agreement' carved up Czechoslovakia; the Prague government was not consulted. Sudetenland was swallowed up by Nazi Germany on 1 October.



Although the annexation was greeted enthusiastically by most Sudeteners, many fled. Around 3,000 members of what had been the Social Democratic Party went into exile, mostly to Britain, with a few making their way to Canada. In London, the exiles formed the *Treugemeinschaft sudetendeutscher Sozialdemokraten* (TsS), the Sudeten German Social Democratic Alliance, led by Wenzel Jaksch. Their difficult task was to represent the voice of moderate Sudeten Germans. The Nazi occupation of Czech lands in 1939 made the struggle even tougher, and after war broke out in September, few in Britain were prepared to hear the views of the TsS.

Nevertheless, Jaksch and his *Treugemeinschaft* continued to organise aid for Sudeten refugees, and maintained relatively cordial relationships with the Czech Refugee Trust Fund and even the Czech government-in-exile. However, their mission – to represent the non-Nazi German perspective on Sudetenland and its future – was being overtaken by worldwide revulsion at the barbarity of the Third Reich as it set about creating *lebensraum* by

extermination. Czech exiles had already hinted at the need to expel ethnic Germans once Nazism was defeated. The TsS issued a string of pamphlets pointing out the ghastly consequences of such population transfers in the Greco-Turkish War of 1919–22, which had resulted in over two million refugees, many still living in tents over a decade later. The TsS still lacked a definitive policy, however.

So in March 1940, in the midst of the Phoney War, members of the *Treugemeinschaft* assembled to agree a programme for the future of Sudetenland. The unlikely venue for the meeting was the rather sleepy village of Loughton, Essex, in the large house called Holmehurst which lies on the corner of Manor Road and Epping New Road, on the edge of Forest land.

Holmehurst had been built as one of the grandest mansions in the area in 1865 for Theophilus Westhorp, a shipping magnate originally from Harwich. The Gothic-style house had grounds of 16 acres, including a boating lake and a vinery. Between the wars, Holmehurst was occupied by William Arthur Workman, the Managing Director of the Legal & General. He sold the estate in 1937 to Oscar Ivar Andren, an enigmatic Swedish-born business magnate who, amongst other achievements, had a virtual monopoly of the British match industry at this time. He was also a local property developer, having built Ashley Grove in Loughton. Andren's intention was to demolish Holmehurst and redevelop the site, but the war intervened.

Holmehurst was then let, at first to Czech exiles, which accounts for the presence of the TsS there in 1940, and indeed at the time of the meeting Wenzel Jaksch and his colleagues may well having been living there under the protection of the government. As German opponents of Hitler, the TsS may have had some propaganda value to Britain and, later in the war, Holmehurst continued in use as a rather secret 'safe house' for important enemies of the Nazi regime, with an armed guard at the gate. In 1945 it was being used by the Red Cross for evacuees, and after the war ended Holmehurst was turned into a hostel and used by the Committee for the Care of the Children from the Concentration Camps to bring respite to child survivors of the Nazi death camps. By 1949, the house was back in residential use.

Holmehurst survives, but is no longer in Loughton. The parish boundary was moved northwards in 1996 to follow Manor Road, so Holmehurst is now in Buckhurst Hill.

On 10 March 1940 the TsS adopted its 'Loughton Declaration', setting out its proposals for a post-war settlement of the Sudetenland question. The central feature of the Loughton Declaration was that Czechoslovakia should be re-established as a federal state, with Sudetenland as a nation within the federation. The leaders of the Czech government-in-exile, in London, were at best lukewarm to the idea. The dominant allied thinking at this stage in the war was that post-war Europe would have to comprise several large federations as the small nation states created after 1918 would never be able to stand up to Germany or Russia. The mood of the exiled Czechs was, however, fuelled by plentiful reports by partisans of atrocities back home. The TsS would not give unconditional allegiance to the *Staatsrat*, the government-in-exile, so it was not allowed to join this body.

Despite their waning power, after the Loughton Declaration the TsS continued to press for a post-war compromise in central Europe. The Czech underground had already begun making demands for the expulsion of Germans from within pre-war Czech borders. The TsS issued a stream of pamphlets arguing for a federal Europe of cantons along Swiss lines, and against forced population transfers. They highlighted the fact that Sudetenlanders comprised the bulk of Czech skilled industrial workers, and highlighted how disastrous the forced transfer of Greek and Turkish populations had been after the First World War.

However, after the daring assassination of the SS leader Reinhard Heydrich in Prague, Nazi reprisal atrocities in Czech lands shocked the allied public, as did the deportation and murder of the Jewish population. The British Government formally abrogated the Munich Agreement which had handed Sudetenland to Germany, and public horror at German brutality meant the end of meaningful influence of the TsS. The allies began planning actively for the expulsion of all Germans from Czechoslovakia.

From August 1944, the liberation of Czechoslovakia was under way. Soviet troops from the east and American troops from the west fought alongside partisans to remove the Nazis. Early in 1945, Sudetenland was freed from occupation, and a chaotic expulsion of ethnic Germans began, known in Czech as the *divoký odsun*, the 'wild transfer'. Following the Potsdam Conference in August 1945, a more orderly 'organised transfer' began. Around 2½ million were deported between 1945 and 1948, with around 250,000 remaining; these were Sudentenlanders considered vital to industrial output or who had married Czechs. Around 25,000 died during the expulsions.

Wenzel Jaksch, the TsS leader who had presided over the Holmehurst conference which led to the Loughton Declaration, left Britain to settle in West Germany in 1949. He rose to prominence in Social Democratic politics in Germany, and continued to agitate for an autonomous Sudetenland until his death in 1966. The Loughton Declaration cast a long shadow into the future. It was not until 1997 that the

Joint Czech-German Declaration on the Mutual Relations and their Future Development formally acknowledged the present-day frontier, and it was as recently as 2013 that a Czech Prime Minister formally apologised to Germany for the expulsion of Sudeten Germans.

Acknowledgements
Very sincere thanks to Margaretha Pollitt Brown for permission to use the photograph of Holmehurst and for much background detail on the history of the house.

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STEPHEN PEWSEY

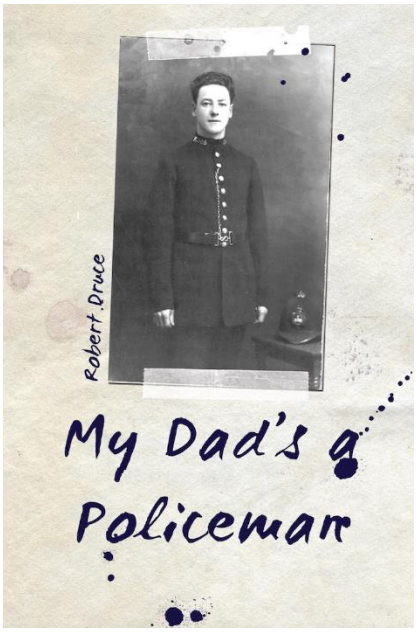
Charge of stealing hay

In Newsletter 212 *we read that in 1868 John Tuttlebee was in trouble about the sale of a cow – but in 1856 he was accused of stealing hay . . .*

Henry Pocock surrendered to take his trial, charged with stealing hay from his master the Rev J Smith, on the 10th July at Chigwell. Mr Walford, for prosecution, said the prisoner was indicted under Act of Parliament which allows prisoners to be indicted for several offences in one indictment. The prosecutor, who is Incumbent, Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell, said his vocation called him to London daily, and he missed the hay, but did not say anything about it; the prisoner was a general servant, and some of his hay had been sold to Mr Blackburn, who had seen it weighed; had given authority to Pocock to sell hay to Mr Blackburn through a man called Mills, servant to him. In the sale of hay to Mr Blackburn prosecutor did not directly communicate with Mills or Blackburn; could not say how long after the authority to Pocock to sell to Mr Blackburn that this occurred. On Pocock saying that Mr Blackburn sent Mills to know if he could have a load of hay, prosecutor said he could, and Tuttleby might cut it; prisoner managed a little farm for him; knew Tuttleby as a hay binder; prisoner did not buy for him. Mr Thomas Toll, dairyman, purchased a load of hay of Pocock; it was brought in on Mr Smith's cart, and he paid him for it; lived above half a mile from Mr Smith's. William Goldsmith, at Woodford Wells, said he conducted a horse letting business for his mother; in latter end of June the prisoner went to him and said 'why don't you have some of our hay?' Witness asked him the price and he said £3; he then ordered half a load to try it; when it was brought in he offered to pay for it but prisoner said Mr Smith was not at home, and no bill was made out; he afterwards brought another ¾ load, and he paid him for it; he brought it in with his own master's horse and cart; witness lived about a mile from prosecutor's; prisoner gave a receipt in his mother's name. It was brought to his house about half past 7. Ephraim Salter, landlord of the Bald Face Stag, at Chigwell, also proved buying a ¼ load of hay, at the rate of £4 per load. Mr Chambers addressed the jury for the prisoner; and the Court considering that there was no proof of felonious intention, the prisoner was acquitted. John Tuttleby, hay binder, was charged with stealing on the 10th July last a quantity of hay, the property the same prosecutor. Mr Walford for prosecution; and Mr Woollett for the defence. The Bench considered, as in the last case, that the evidence did not bear out the felony, and directed a verdict of acquittal.

The Essex Standard and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties, Wednesday, 22 October 1856

My Dad's a Policeman: An Essex childhood



My Dad's a Policeman is a remarkable autobiography with a strong local interest. The author, Robert Druce, grew up in Loughton during the decade leading to the outbreak of the Second World War. The story covers his childhood and teenage years, continuing into his early adult life.

I was lucky to be given the chance to publish the book. Robert had begun looking for a publisher, but died suddenly in 2005. Earlier, he had sent me a large chunk of the story relating to his experiences at Staples Road Primary School and Buckhurst Hill County High School (BHCHS). I had met him as a result of my eccentric preoccupation in tracing all the former pupils of BHCHS.

After Robert Druce's death, I kept in contact with his widow, Elizabeth, and in 2016 I agreed with her that I would publish *My Dad's a Policeman* initially as an e-book. The response to this was very positive, but I realised that many of the potential readers would only be interested in a 'real' book.

By the end of 2016, I had decided to publish *My Dad* as a paperback. After further consultation with Elizabeth, we agreed that Robert would have approved of the inclusion of some authentic photographs. Apart from adding the photos, my editing was minimal, providing background information on the author and some of the key characters. The paperback edition duly appeared in August 2017.

The power of Robert Druce's writing is in his fascination with language and the detail of his observation. He holds the reader's attention from the outset, and the pace never drops, creating a strong sense of growing up in wartime with a domineering father.

The local areas where the author lived and went to school will be easily recognisable to those familiar with Loughton, despite the fact that almost all the names of places and characters have been changed. It will soon be obvious why Robert took the decision to provide this thin disguise of fiction to what is a totally accurate story. He is very outspoken, describing events with bold and uncompromising honesty. When the book was written many of the characters he describes were still alive.

My Dad's a Policeman provides a number of absorbing insights: the tricky passage through childhood and adolescence, the pressures of family life during wartime, and the difficulties faced by a rebellious pupil who also had an insatiable thirst for knowledge. Robert's story will be of interest to a much wider audience than those who lived in Loughton.

The book can be ordered directly from me (post free to UK addresses) and is also available from the publisher, Matador, and Amazon.

Book details: ISBN 9781788036030 Paperback 234x156 mm, 514pp, £8.99.

For more information and background please visit: mydadsapoliceman.wordpress.com

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GRAHAM FRANKEL

Loughton's Smarts Lane

Among the upper and middle class people of Loughton in the first two decades of this century Smarts Lane was considered the humblest road in the village. It was certainly the poorest. Today glossy motor cars line its narrow length and television screens flicker in the tiny front parlours. The grinding poverty of my youth (spent in 'the Lane' from 1902 to 1924) is remembered only by the old folk.

Shop in Smarts Lane (photograph by C Johnson)

Architecturally it is a hotch-potch. Boarded cottages adjoin rows of small dwellings which by their 'cockney' appearance might have been transplanted from Bow's narrow streets, and homely brick cottages in a variety of shapes, shades and dimensions crowd in beside the Lane as it rises in a gentle curve from the Triangle (off the High Road) to the forest by Nursery Road.

In less than forty years Loughton has grown from a village into a vast sprawl of housing estates, industrial areas and several large shopping centres. It is in fact a busy, 'swinging' London suburb. There are splendid schools and libraries and a super swimming pool. But in 1801 there were only 119 houses within its boundaries!

A Chapman and André map dated 1777 includes Smarts Lane, thus indicating its importance in the village and confusing those purists who believe the name is derived from 'St Mark's'. From the Lane's residents in those early years came the domestic servants, gardeners, grooms, coachmen and chauffeurs to serve the gentry and the comfortable middle class commuters who formed a large proportion of Loughton's residents.

Before 1888, when the large Staples Road boys' school was built (it is still in use), there were but two 'public' schools in Loughton, the National School (girls) in Staples Road (demolished when the Ashley Grove flats were built) and the British School (boys), with headmaster's house attached, in Smarts Lane. These modest scholastic buildings still stand. They are constructed in locally made red bricks. For many years a few craftsmen (local men) produced thousands of tennis racquets in this old school building for Messrs FA Davis Ltd of High Holborn, who exported them to many parts of the world. The building is still in industrial use, and the headmaster's house is occupied. It is a measure of Loughton's growth during this century that twelve or more schools from primary to higher education grades now serve its needs. The one time forest village has grown up!

In the early years of the century Smarts Lane housed a varied community. Artisan and labourer, horseman and forest lopper, railwayman and cab driver, domestic servant and groom rubbed shoulders. There were two bakeries, and in a narrow shed between them type was set for the now defunct *Loughton and District Advertiser*. Three general stores sold everything from paraffin to peanuts, and there were as many public houses. The village's taxidermist plied his grisly trade in a terrace cottage at the lower end.

On fine Sunday mornings, tough characters wearing gaudy chokers and corduroys tied at the knees made their way to the forest, skinny whippets at their heels, returning an hour or two later with a panting dog and a poached rabbit. There were the bird fanciers, too, similarly attired, who returned from their forest mission with a caged, gay-plumaged, chaffinch, lured to his tiny prison by a singing decoy bird and bird-lime, to be shown off in the public bar of the Carpenter's Arms as they swigged their Sunday pints.

There were a few wife-beaters and drunks, and barefoot urchins and squalid homes were not unknown, but, as I remember it, poverty rested lightly on the Lane's community, and if during hard times the comparison with life in Loughton's many sumptuous homes was 'odious' we had a sharp reminder every summer that our lot was heavenly compared with that of the several hundred poor children from London's East End slums who were brought on a day trip to Loughton's lovely forest through the generosity of the Ragged School Union (a branch of the Shaftesbury Society). After eating a hot meal at the society's headquarters in Staples Road they were turned loose in the forest, to be tantalised by the local boys and tortured by mosquitoes and wasps. But it was their day of days, nevertheless, and in the evening they returned to Loughton station by way of Smarts Lane, a singing, raggle-taggle procession, clutching drooping wild flowers, sticky rock and jars containing tadpoles, newts and frogs. Many were barefooted and ragged, and after their passage the council's water cart sprayed the road with disinfectant.

Crowds from east London enlivened Loughton on the bank holidays I remember from my youth, the forest naturally being the main attraction. They came by train, bicycle, tandem, motorcycle and horse-brake, and seemed to the locals strange, noisy, boisterous folk, easily parted from their hard-won cash. Enterprising cottagers in neighbouring Forest Road did a brisk trade in 'teas with watercress 9d', 'wash and brush up 2d', 'lemonade 1d a glass' and other snares.

At the end of their perfect day they stampeded the bars of the Lane's three public houses, overflowing into the road, capering and cavorting, drinking and singing to a barrel-organ's pizzicato twanging, and eating fried fish and chips from a nearby stall to sustain them during that last exuberant fling before returning to their dreary East End streets. The landlords of the Carpenter's Arms, the Victoria Tavern and the Royal Oak (since demolished and rebuilt in Forest Road) never had it so good!

World War I ended those jolly bank holiday orgies for all time. During those trying years many of the less fit men of the Lane worked in the gunpowder factory at nearby Waltham Abbey, where they were at great risk from Zeppelin raids.

Loughton folk saw two of these monster airships meet their doom, one falling at Cuffley, only a few miles from the Waltham Abbey powder mills. They plunged like giant flaming torches out of the night sky.

In spite of today's changes and sophistication Smarts Lane appears very much as it was in the days of my boyhood. The old taxidermist long ago went the way of his specimens. The rabbit poachers and bird fanciers, the coster selling winkles and grapes from his little barrow, the muffin man and the singing lavender sellers have all vanished from the scene. Askew's yard no longer resounds to the shouts of horsemen as they harnessed their teams to the gaily painted brakes. Many years have passed since they cantered to race meetings and excursions all over East Anglia. But the modest butcher's shop from which, around 1909, the enterprising Leonard Wilson and his delivery boy Ethelbert Blissett departed into the exciting new world of the motor car (after making Smarts Lane history with sausages that 'tasted of electricity'!) still stands. In Loughton's ever-changing and ambitious development Smarts Lane appears to have been left to itself.

WILL FRANCIES, *Essex Countryside*,
Vol 19, No 169, February 1971

Ridgeway Park Model Railway

The only miniature train railway in London

The Chingford and District Model Engineering Club is based in Ridgeway Park, Coleman's Moor Lane, Chingford. It seeks to promote all forms of model engineering and model making such as boats, planes, trains and static models. The Club is 72 years old. Virtually every Sunday morning throughout the year you will find a group of members at the track finding something to do, even if it's only having a cup of tea and a friendly chat.

The club is best known for the miniature railway, which is open on Sunday afternoons from April to September and helps attract extremely large visitor numbers to the park in the summer months.

In 1954, it attracted a very famous visitor. Disney founder Walt Disney was a very keen miniature railway enthusiast and had his own 7 inch miniature railway at his home in the USA.

One day while visiting London on business, and as he had completed his work, he asked his chauffeur if he knew of any miniature railways in London. The chauffeur brought Walt Disney to Ridgeway Park, and he drove trains around the track, allowed the press to take some photographs and had a good time.

When the public heard that Walt Disney was visiting the railway everybody rushed over to see him, just as the Mayor of Chingford was about to open the celebration of 1954's Chingford Day.

TERRY CARTER

Did your ancestors powder their hair?

In the reign of George III Parliament levied a special tax on all persons using hair powder. In Essex between 1795 and 1797 the number of people who were liable to pay the Hair Powder Tax amounted to 3000…

Early in Tudor times barbers and surgeons were combined by Royal Charter into one profession, so making the barber-surgeon unusually busy, as to him went those who wanted a haircut, a wound dressed or a tooth extracted.

Tudor gentlemen of fashion took lodgings over barbers' shops in The Strand, in order that they could receive frequent attention . . .

The style of short hair and trim beards was introduced by Henry VIII and continued through to the end of Elizabeth I's reign. Particular attention was paid to beards – they were perfumed, starched, curled with hot irons and kept tidy between two pieces of cardboard while sleeping.

Women wore their hair mainly in a heart shape and encrusted with jewels and pearls.

At the court of Charles I curls and ringlets were the fashion with periwigs on which the menfolk often wore lovelocks tied with silk ribbon.

In the eighteenth century ladies' hairstyles grew taller than ever before. Moulded stiff with grease and stuffed with wadding to keep them in shape for weeks at a time, the hair was built up on a frame often as high as three feet. Perched on top were miniature windmills, ships, gardens, toy soldiers, birds of paradise etc (in fact everything bar the kitchen sink). Over all was shaken white powder. Some declare the powder was to keep the lice down for, once dressed, the hair remained untouched for weeks on end. Unfortunately for the wearer, as the powder was made from wheat and rice, this, combined with the grease, made a pleasant rendezvous for rats, mice and other vermin on the lookout for a home. As there seemed no solution to the problem of getting a good night's sleep without these visitors jumping around among one's hair all night long, the Royal Society of Arts in 1777 offered a prize for 'the neatest and most effective invention of bedside mousetraps' and the following year an enterprising tradesman advertised 'rat-proof night caps of wire gauze'.

In the reign of George III Parliament levied a special tax on all persons using hair powder; this amounted to one guinea per annum. Those exempt from payment of this tax were non-commissioned officers of the Army, and clergy ('unless wealthy'). In Essex, the Clerk of the Peace at Chelmsford sent a written directive to 'The Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor, Constables, Tything men or other peace officers of the town, parish or place' to affix to the church and chapel door and market cross a list of persons who had taken out certificates for using hair powder.

The Hair Powder Tax records for Essex, and parochial returns between 1795–97 contain 3,000 names in each annual list, chiefly those of the upper classes, a few army officers and clergy – the remainder being head butlers and footmen in service in the larger houses of the county. The names are arranged under parishes in each Hundred against which is a brief description 'Householder, wife, daughter, lodger, butler, footman', etc.

The list for Rochford Hundred claims special interest as many direct descendants are today living in the villages named: Great Stambridge, Mary Hughes (wife of Rev Hughes) exempt from tax. He was incidentally the only gent in Essex who volunteered for the Corps of Sharpshooters raised by the Lord Lieutenant to combat Napoleon. Little Stambridge, David and Anne Harridge; they lived at Little Stambridge Hall. Sutton – William and Judith Cockerton; James and Judith Scratton at Sutton Hall. Great Wakering – George Grimber, Thomas Miller, Eliza Wiggins; Little Wakering – Francis and Mary Asplin (Little Wakering Hall), William and Mary Meeking (Barling), Mr F V Bannister (Bannisters House).

The present day fashion of men wearing long flowing hair is not new for that is how the ancient Britons looked when Caesar invaded the country in 55BC with the added accompaniment of moustaches which they died blue or green. By contrast the Normans in 1066 had it cut unusually short, well above the ears, but by the twelfth century the men had it shoulder length again while women at that time had two long plaits often died yellow with saffron to which they added false hair to lengthen it until it touched the ground.

It is not generally realised that 'perms' were the fashion 4,000 years ago. Those who lived in countries around the Mediterranean Sea first arranged their hair into the preferred style, enveloped it in wet clay and sat firmly in the sun. When the clay was quite dry, it was removed from the hair and the perm was complete.

The first permanent waving machine was invented in Edward VII's time. In that year (1906) only twenty women in the whole of England, including Queen Alexandra, had their hair permed. (You will have noticed how tightly curled is the hair of Her Late Majesty in all her photographs and television serials.) Whether the operation of permanent waving in Edwardian times was regarded as too great a risk, too pricey or too time-consuming is not known, but certain it is that each perm cost over £200 and took about twelve hours to complete.

L E JERRAM-BURROWS

Essex Countryside,
Vol 27, No 269, June 1979

Railways, *Alice in Wonderland* and steamships: another Loughton worthy

Ian Strugnell found in the *LNER Magazine* for 1944 an obituary of Archibald Leslie Gibson, who had been a senior manager with the Great Eastern Railway and its successor, the London and North Eastern Railway. He was of 'an Anglo-Indian family of Scots descent'. This set me off on a line of enquiry about someone who had connections with several parts of SW Essex, and who was active in several fields.

In fact, I found that Archibald Gibson was born to Emmeline and William Gibson, a merchant clerk, born in Peshawar, Punjab, a British subject; in 1891, they were living at 23 Albert Road, Walthamstow.

There had been a sizeable railway employee contingent in our area, both 'wages grades' – signalmen, guards, drivers, shed workers, and one or two senior officers, too. Similarly in adjacent areas – for instance, locomotive engineers, James Holden, and his son and successor, S D Holden, both lived at Wanstead, and Alfred Hill, the Great Eastern's last locomotive supremo, designer of the N7 locomotive, lived at Pynes (later number 4) Glengall Road, Woodford – later occupied by John Miller, another senior LNER officer. William Birt, general manager, was there, too. Mr Harry Oswald Tubby, of Woodside, Albion Hill, Loughton, was another

Loughton senior railway officer; he worked as accountant for a 'foreign railway company'. This concentration of senior officers may explain why the Loughton line always got the best and newest rolling stock.

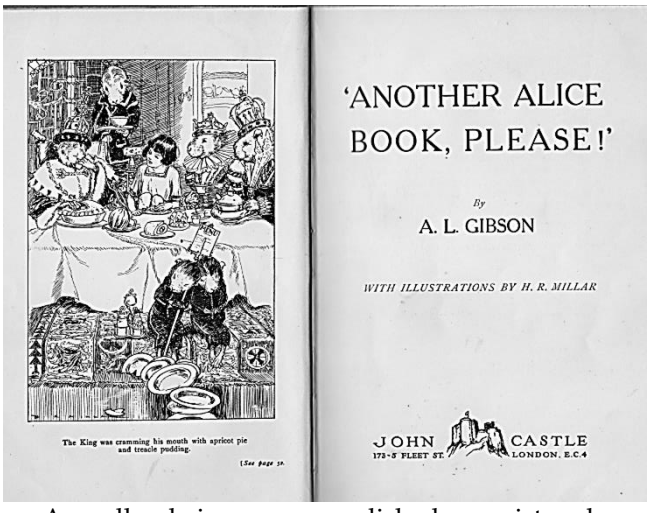
A L Gibson had joined the GER aged 15 in 1899, and distinguished himself professionally in his early years in the GER's most important suburban passenger department. In the 1901 census, still in Albert Road, he was described as 'railway clerk', but then rose through the ranks. He travelled extensively for the GER on the Continent in the post-war years, establishing contacts and dealing with through traffic. From 1927, he was in charge of all the LNER's steamship services, including the Harwich, Immingham and Newcastle services to the Continent, and in his last few years also took responsibility for all its London suburban services.

Gibson married Margaret Lilian Davis (born in 1885) at Walthamstow in 1910 and then moved to a rented house in Queen's Road, Loughton, where he lived next door to George Pearson, headmaster of Staples Road school, later to become the pre-eminent British film producer. He became (1912–16) a director, with Pearson, of the Union Film Publishing Company of Wardour Street (presumably alongside his railway career).

He had been involved in the First World War in the huge traffic of Belgian refugees in 1914:

… the scenes I had witnessed on No 10 platform as a Midland train brought in a load of Belgian refugees from Tilbury; they had been conveyed thither from Antwerp by a GER steamer. What excitement on the part of women and children as the long-awaited train made its appearance and the heads of friends protruded from the windows along with flags of yellow-black-red ! . . .

People were giving refugee children pennies and chocolate, the youngsters politely bowing and shaking hands all round . . . Difficult was the attempt to make a small boy understand in terms of Belgian currency the value of sixpence; nor was this surprising, for the French of the donor [probably ALG himself?] was Anglo-French at best and the small boy spoke *vlaamsch* [Flemish] only—but he stuck to the sixpence.



As well as being an accomplished organist and pianist, and an expert on Handel and Bach, Archibald Gibson was a writer – his children's book *Another Alice Book, Please*, written originally for his daughter, Pauline Mary, went through two editions in 1924 and 1934. This is a fascinating little volume, a story largely based on the little girl's pet guinea pig, Alexander, with music by the author. Some of the anecdotes are repeated from *Great Eastern Railway Magazine* articles, including that on the Chingford line: 'where I once heard a passenger tell another that a certain train ran fast from Liverpuddle Street to Jane Street, Joe Street, Wooden Street, Tail End and Li Hung Chang'.

He also wrote the text for the GER travel booklet 'GE Joys for Girls and Boys' and widely in the railway's magazine under the pseudonym *Autolycus*. He was 'a devout member of the Church', and the *LNER Magazine* obituary says he was a possibly unique blend of staid Victorianism and progressive modernity.

He seems to have had a special fondness for Loughton, which he mentions in a piece he wrote (1919) on St Cloud near Paris, where it seems he may once have lived:

[It . . .] may be described as a French Loughton, with the *Pavillon Bleu* [this was a grand dance hall, compared with which the Lopping Hall would have been paltry; it featured in a notorious murder case in the 30s], a few cafés and the river Seine thrown in. There is the same wondrous forest (albeit the *parc* contains a terrace, with statuary, ornamental ponds and fountains), the same feast of roses and lilies, a variety of the same ancient and modern villas, the same wooden cottages, the same country lanes. At night there is a deadly stillness; at day-break, a delightful chorus of blackbirds and thrushes, starlings and sparrows from the lawn, from the ivy, from a thousand trees. At 7 am arrives the milk—sealed in bottles; an hour later the postman, wearing a kind of straw sun-bonnet and reading, as he walks up your pebbly path . . .

Gibson lived in several places in and around our area. As a senior manager, he was no doubt furnished with a gold pass enabling free travel on all LNER services, and it can be seen, usually took up residence near a station! A piece he wrote in the *GERM* in January 1918 states that he often missed his train when living on the station's doorstep, but never did when living further away.

1911: Estcourt (later 24) Queen's Road, Loughton;

1920: not listed (he may have been living abroad for the GER);

1923: 58 Marlborough Road, South Woodford;

1927: The Haven, Ollards Grove, Loughton;

1929: The Haven, 16 Ollards Grove (this was a substantial house with a rateable value of £62; he was owner-occupier);

1935: 113 High Road, Buckhurst Hill (this was a new house);

1939: Sherwood, 26 Glengall Road, Woodford Green.

Archibald Gibson died in 1943 aged 59, and was buried in the Loughton Town Cemetery. His widow received a letter from the King and Queen, expressing their appreciation of ALG's personal services to them as a railway manager. The *LNER Magazine* reported the funeral thus:

When those who had been closely associated with him, British and Continentals alike, stood at his graveside and said 'good-bye' it was with a feeling of irreparable loss, for it could truly be said 'we shall not look upon his like again'—*son souvenir vivra toujours dans l'âme de ceux qui l'aimaient.*

The *Woodford Times* had an extensive report of the funeral on page 1 (it had been reduced to 4 pages by paper shortages) of its edition of 7 January 1944, listing some 20 relations and perhaps 150 attendees from the LNER and other railway companies.

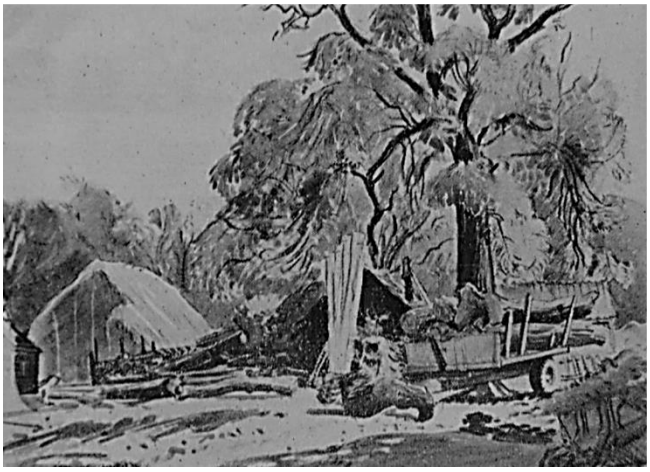
His first wife (Margaret Lilian) had died in 1938. The next year, ALG was remarried, to his sister-in-law, Elsie Violet. She outlived him and moved to Bexhill. His daughter-in-law, another Violet, was interred in the same grave in 1955. ALG's sister, Constance, had married Cllr Dr Berthon Pendred of Loughton in 1931, just after his first wife had died.

Archibald's parents, William and Emmeline, are also buried in Loughton Cemetery. They had moved to 2 Stanhope Gardens (now 3 The Avenue) in Loughton – the first listing there being 1920 – and William's gravestone is proudly inscribed 'William Gibson of Loughton'.

Many thanks to Ian for setting the ball rolling on this, and to Mr King of the Great Eastern Railway Society for permission to use images from their collections of the GERM and LNERM.

CHRIS POND

The Log Yard at the Warren



This attractive drawing in charcoal and watercolour is reproduced by kind permission of the Editor of the *Midbank Chronicle*, the staff magazine of the Midland Bank Limited. It is entitled *The Log-yard at the Warren* and depicts a scene at the local headquarters of the Epping Forest Conservators. The artist is Bernard Bowerman, the well-known art teacher, who has exhibited at the Royal Academy as well as at many of the provincial galleries.

Essex Countryside, Vol 6, No 21, August/September 1957

For more about Bernard Bowerman, see *Newsletter 202*.

THE EDITOR

Christmas Day travel

Those of you who need to get around on Christmas Day might find this interesting – below is the timetable for tram services in the Highgate area on Christmas Day 1916. The earliest car listed was 04.30; the last as late as 12.28 – and the night service 'will run as usual'!

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL TRAMWAYS

CHRISTMAS DAY, 1916

HIGHGATE ROUTES

From	To	First Cars	Last Cars
North Finchley	Moorgate	7.52, 8.0	11.30 p.m.
Highgate Village (Via New North Rd.)	,,	7.30, 7.42	11.52 ,,
Highgate (Archway Road)	,, (via Upper Street)	7.0, 7.20	11.58 ,,
,, ,,	Smithfield	4.30	—
,, ,,	Aldersgate	9.0	11.28 ,,
,, ,,	Farringdon St. Stn.	8.0, 8.20, 8.40	12.1 a.m.
,, ,,	Euston Road	8.0, 8.20	12.4 ,,
,, ,,	Southampton Row	2.27, 3.27, 4.27, 5.57, 6.57	—
Barnet	Euston	8.42, 9.6	11.20 p.m.
Moorgate	North Finchley	7.29, 7.49	12.24 a.m.
,,	Highgate Village (Via New North Road)	8.7	11.37 p.m. (12.28 r.r. to Highgate)
Euston Road	Highgate (Archway Road)	8.21, 8.41	12.25 a.m.
Aldersgate	,, ,,	9.28	11.56 p.m.
Farringdon St. Stn.	,, ,,	8.28, 8.48, 9.6	12.28 a.m.
Southampton Row	,, ,,	2.55, 3.55, 4.55, 6.27, 7.27	—
Euston	Barnet	8.21, 8.41	11.5 p.m.
,,	North Finchley	—	12.25 a.m.

ALL NIGHT SERVICE WILL RUN AS USUAL

62 Finsbury Pavement, E.C. A. L. C. FELL, Chief Officer.

Timetable kindly supplied by CURLY CROSS.

Buckhurst Hill Community Association celebrates 70 Years

Archive material was on display throughout the summer exhibition of the Buckhurst Hill Community Association, which celebrated 70 years in 2017. Artist-in-Residence Oonagh Dawson prepared a detailed installation covering many aspects of the history of the Association, and the occasion was marked by the official opening of BHCA's 70th Anniversary flower border by Maureen Briggs of Buckhurst Hill Horticultural Society. BHCA also greatly appreciated the generous support of Victoria Robertson, the gardeners at Copped Hall and Epping Rotary in the preparation and planting of the border.

A novel way to mark the occasion was the invitation to sign, and then embroider, your name on the Needlework Group's 70th Anniversary Memorial Project (or, for a small sum, a member of the group would embroider it for you) – your editor just about remembered how to do a basic stitch, not having done embroidery since at school!

The 2017–2018 Programme of classes and workshops is now available from BHCA, Bedford

House, 4 Westbury Road, IG9 5NW (Registered Charity Number 301268).

THE EDITOR

The Theydon Bois Spanish reconnection

Articles appeared in Newsletters 181 and 194 *about the Basque children evacuated to Theydon Bois because of the Spanish Civil War. Here is the account of another child with memories of those difficult times.*

My name is Flori Diaz and I was one of the 'Basque girls of the war' sent to England in 1937. I was born in Barakaldo, a town in the Bizkaia [Biscay Province] of Spain, on 17 January 1927, in a working class family consisting of my parents, Maria and Emilio, and my two brothers, Emilio three years older than me, and Maria Luisa, eight years younger.

Besides, there was my Uncle Alberto who, although he did not live in our house, was always very special to me because he gave me all the affection that a 10-year-old girl can receive. He actively participated in the war as a member of the CNT and it was he who advised and encouraged my parents to send my brother and me to England.

Our life was the normal one of a family of our class and there were no problems with anyone. But when the war broke out everything changed because my father went to war just like my uncles and my cousins.

The bombings began and when the planes approached a siren sounded to warn us. Each one got in where he could, in tunnels, cellars or any other place that served to take refuge. I was so scared when the siren sounded that it made me tremble and bite my tongue, and my father to prevent this prepared a round stick that I bit while the bombings lasted. What we felt is not describable. We only knew that we had to live through it.

When they told me that they would send us to England, I was very happy because they told me that they were not bombing there, and my brother, whom I adored, was going with me. At that time and at age 10 I did not know where England was and I did not think or worry about that. At least I would not see the planes. The important thing for me was that I would be separating from my parents.

The boat trip was very bad. My brother and I had to go in the last shift and everything was already busy and also many children became dizzy and vomited and others cried because they wanted to go home to their parents. But on arrival in England everything changed.

First we were taken to a camp where we stayed in tents that we had to keep clean and we had blankets and sheets that were collected during the day. The doctor and the nurses came every day and we were very well taken care of.

I had a great time at the camp and I was very happy that every day we were awakened with music. I remember that at the camp one day there was a very big storm and flooding so we wore water boots we call 'katiuskas' [Wellington boots]. I had asked my mother many times to buy me some katiuskas, but she never bought them for me, what a sadness I got! And now I came to England and they gave me a dream. I couldn't believe it. I've never forgotten it.

The neighbours of the village where the camp was were very affectionate with us. They visited us and brought us chocolates, cookies, candies. The truth is that the English people filled us with love.

The worst was while at this camp, we were told that Franco's army had entered Bilbao. The older people were crying and the older boys and girls, who already understood what was happening, too. It made me very sad to see the whole camp screaming and crying. I was10 years old and did not realise what was going to happen with the fall of Bilbao.

What I do not remember well is how we got from the camp to Theydon Bois, but I'm 90 years old and I have not forgotten how happy we were. Woodberry [later Wansfell College] was like a grand house in English films and we were given the best treatment, we were very well fed in the English style, well dressed and were given English classes. On weekends, visitors arrived, and among them a group of explorers who took us to a large swimming pool and to London. I have no words to say for the love and education they gave us.

There was a Spanish man from Valencia who lived in Theydon Bois and had a restaurant and with whom my brother and I made friends. After so long I think we were very lucky to be in the village of Theydon Bois and thanks to Mrs Manning. The village was wonderful. Mrs Manning was a wonderful lady who, when she came and hugged us, seemed like the hen that hides and protects her chicks.

Flori and her brother (Emilio) – the woman in the middle is Miss Cary (Spanish Teacher)

When my brother told me that we had to go back to Barakaldo where we lived how sad we were, and how many tears! To leave all this and the people that took so much care of us as if we were their own children. My brother told me 'do not cry because it's just that they send you to see the family temporarily and then you will again come to England'. How innocent I was, I believed it!

The return home was very sad. When we returned, those who remained in Theydon Bois had given me the addresses of their parents to visit them and tell them how well they were there. I was only 11 years old and I accompanied my mother, but what we

found was that many parents were imprisoned and others were shot so I could barely fulfil the assignment.

At the age of 22 I got married, I had two children and little by little my life improved. One of my granddaughters is 34 years old, a grandson of 29 years and a great granddaughter of 5 months and my other two grandchildren are 28 and 21 years old. My daughters-in-law are sisters, so we are a family that I am very proud of.

For many years I did not know anything more about England or the 'children' who were with me there and I always felt very sorry for it, until a cousin of mine called me one day and said: 'I know you have so much desire to know something of England. They are going to have a meeting of the children who were there during the war.' I became part of the Children's War Association and ended up being part of the Board and participating very actively in everything that could help. We organized in Euba (Bizkaia) the celebration of the 50th anniversary and two buses came from England with the 'children' who stayed there after the end of the war. What great joy after 50 years to see some of those who had been with me.

With the Association I went three times to England, I met a group of children who stayed and spent a few days living in their houses, shopping, seeing places I did not know. I received a lot of affection from all and they made me very happy. On one of the trips was Miguel San Sebastian, also a 'Child of the War', and we stayed in the house of a friend Luis Sanz and his wife Marie whom I had met with my brother. Luis took me to see the village of Theydon Bois again, but I had to tell him what the Woodberry villa was like because he did not remember and he told me he was surprised I could remember after 60 years.

I would have liked to have had occasion to tell these and other memories personally in a last trip to London and Theydon Bois, but the occasion has not arisen and instead I give you these notes.

FLORI DIAZ

This is a much shortened version of the full story, which can be read in the *Theydon Bois Village News* and on their website:

www.theydon.org.uk/Pages/news.htm

With many thanks to Flori Diaz; Jim Watts, editor of the website; and Tony Ames, editor of the *Village News*.

The history of Langfords: Part 2

It is believed that from 1808 to 1828 the house was occupied by George Brühl. George had a very interesting background – his father was a German diplomat and astronomer; his mother was the daughter of the second baron Carpenter.

George Brühl was born in London in 1775, the son of Hans Moritz von Brühl and his first wife Alicia Maria.

The article concerning the court-martial was published in 1800; in 1803 (*The Aberdeen Journal*, 12 October 1803) George was promoted captain in the 3rd Foot Guards. He married Caroline Jennings at St James's on 11 November 1830; she died in 1841.

COURT-MARTIAL

Copy of the sentence of the General Court-Martial that sat upon Captain George Brühl:

The Court-Martial having duly weighed and considered the whole matter, is of opinion that Lieutenant and Captain George Brühl is not guilty of the charge preferred against him, viz being drunk on Thursday afternoon, the 17th day of July last, when on duty on the King's guard, at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Great Park, and doth therefore acquit him.

The letter of Sir Charles Morgan, giving the King's approbation of the decision of the Court, expresses at the same time his Majesty's persuasion that the testimony in support of the charge was positive, and the result of personal observation made at the moment – by witnesses who are above all suspicion of wilful misrepresentation, or of a wish to exaggerate, and whose opinion, so formed, receives no small degree of confirmation from the circumstance of Captain Brühl not having then remonstrated against the imputation, nor offered a negation thereto. His Majesty is, however, disposed to acquiesce in the decision of the Court-Martial, who have inclined to the lenient side of the question, and is pleased to direct that Captain Brühl be released from his arrest, and restored to the functions of his commission.

The Caledonian Mercury, Monday, 25 August 1800

Brühl left the Army and took up farming. He was at King's Place Farm, Buckhurst Hill, between 1808 and 1828, leasing from the Adeane family. The Essex Field Club archive contains the following comment about George Brühl's occupancy of the property:

In 1809 and again in 1810 and 1813 George Brühl (son of the Ambassador Extraordinary of Saxony) who farmed Kings Place farm was presented before the court for hedging and ditching across Kings Place Lane, near Lords Bushes, obstructing the then well used lane. This lane in one direction connected with a route to Woodford and in the other (via Squirrels Lane, over a ford on the Roding and up Luxborough Lane) led to Chigwell and Woodford Bridge and was then a main thoroughfare [the B170 Roding Lane used today was not built until 1890]. The court roll states the lane had been 'free to passengers time out of mind' and the fact that neither horse nor cart could pass the obstruction must have been a great inconvenience to local people, and as the court pointed out was hindering the keepers in the execution of their duty, but they had to agree that it was in no way infringing forest law, and reluctantly they could make no order. Brühl, a few months after his second presentment for hedging and ditching, was presented for felling an oak pollard and four other trees adjoining his land on the edge of Lords Bushes, but apparently again no order was made.

Count Brühl then moved to Chingford. At the time of the 1851 census he was at Cherry Down Farm, and the entry reads 'formerly an officer in the guards and now farmer 127 acres, 4 labourers'. His housekeeper was widow Mary Henderson, who had her two sons living with her, George who was 22 and listed as having no occupation, and James, a 21-year-old dentist. Visiting was Mrs Henderson's daughter Caroline, Mrs Douglas Clarkson. There was also another elderly servant, Sarah Hallifield, and John Bussey, who was the groom. John Bussey's death was reported on 10 April 1855 when he was described

(*Essex Standard and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties*, Friday, 20 April 1855) as 'many years faithful servant to the late George Brühl esq of Chingford'. Cherry Down Farm has been built over; there is a Cherrydown Close and a Cherrydown Avenue in Chingford, north of the crossroads at Chingford Mount.

Count George Brühl died on 7 February 1855, aged 80, and was buried at All Saints Church, Chingford.

The grave of George, Count Brühl at Chingford

To be continued

LYNN HASELDINE JONES

Victory Road Council Houses

I received an e-mail from Mary Lawton, who is Loughton born, but moved some years ago to Barnstaple. She kindly gave me a tenancy agreement between the Loughton Urban District Council and William Arthur Davey dated 19 May 1921, for number 49 Victory Way, a newly built council house. Victory Way, of course, was renamed Woodland Road in 1926.

Thanks to Ian Strugnell's researches, I was able to find the corresponding information in the Loughton UDC Housing Committee minutes. On 16 November 1920, W A Davey was allocated to List A of tenants qualifying to have a Victory Way house. He is stated to have lived at 172 Forest Road and was ranked number 16 out of the 17 on the list. List B were the reserve. There had been 158 applicants altogether. The minutes state that the successful applicants were all Loughton residents of over six years, married, with families, and no separate house of their own. All save one were 'overseas ex-servicemen' (the 'homes for heroes' part of the whole Victory Way idea).

Smaller houses were let at 10s per week and the larger (which had a parlour as well as a living room) at 12s 6d. This followed extensive correspondence with the Government about appropriate rent levels. The houses were numbered 18–32 and 42–51 in the street.

The conditions of the tenancy were various. Rent was to be paid on Mondays a week in advance, and was collected by J H Hayward of Staples Road, who took a poundage of 5 per cent on the rents collected. These were not tenancies for life; they were only from week to week, and either party could give notice without cause. Gardens and houses had to be kept in a clean and orderly condition, and any infraction of the rules could lead to eviction. The lower floors could not be covered with lino or any other 'airproof' substance within eighteen inches of any wall (this was to allow circulation of air and prevent damp).

The LUDC made provision for its tenants to buy the houses 'on the instalment plan' in due course. This was not an advanced iteration of Mrs Thatcher's right to buy; it was commonly done in our area (Chingford UDC followed suit). However, none of the 17 houses had been sold by 1924, when council house sales were stopped by the incoming Labour Government.

LOUGHTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

HOUSING ACTS.

REGULATIONS.

1.—The Rents are due in advance on Monday in each week. The authorised Collector of the Council will collect the rents weekly and give receipts therefor in a Rent Book. The tenant should see that all sums paid to the Collector are entered in the book. The Tenant must produce his Rent Book to the Collector or to any other person authorised by the Council whenever required to do so. If the Rent is in arrear at any time, the Council may at once give the defaulting Tenant notice to quit the dwelling.

The Tenancy is determinable by one week's notice to quit, to be given in writing by either side by 12 o'clock (noon) on Mondays.

2.—Fencing, paving or any other part of the premises, or the fittings therein, damaged by the Tenant or through his negligence, will be repaired by the Council at the cost of the Tenant. Cracked or broken glass must be immediately replaced by the tenant. Chimneys in use must be swept once at least every six months at the expense of the tenant.

3.—No tenant is to sublet any part of the premises or to take in lodgers without the previous written consent of the Council.

4.—The placing of any obstruction in the water closet or drain, is strictly prohibited. In case of violation of the Regulation the expense of clearing the drain or W.C. will be charged to the Tenant.

5.—Ashes and dry house refuse only are to be thrown into the dust bins. All liquid refuse must be thrown down the water closet or sink, according to the nature of the fluid.

6.—After 48 hours' notice in writing has been given, the Council shall be at liberty, by their agents or workmen, to enter and inspect the state of repair and cleanliness of any dwelling at all reasonable hours of the day, and to execute any repairs therein.

7.—No trees or shrubs on the premises shall be cut down or removed without the consent of the Council.

8.—Tenants must agree not to cover any of the boarded floors on the ground floor with an airproof material such as linoleum, oilcloth, etc., unless a border 18 inches wide on all sides is left uncovered by any such airproof material as aforesaid. They will be liable for any expense if this prohibition is disregarded.

NB: The above is a typeset impression of the original document (now in the ERO) which could not be reproduced here in a legible form.

CHRIS POND

Retrogression in Essex

A resolution by Mr R W Puddicombe, suggesting that the Essex County Councils Association oppose the alarming growth of steam and motor traffic on our main roads, and prevent them from travelling on the road a distance of three miles, except where there is no available railway or canal. It, needless to say, was characterised by other speakers as 'perfectly ridiculous' and 'futile'.

From *Commercial Motor*, 5 November 1914

Submitted by JOHN HARRISON

May Morris: Art and Life, New Perspectives

In connection with an exhibition of the same name at the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow (7 October 2017 to 28 January 2018), the Friends of the William Morris Gallery have produced a book on various aspects of the life of May Morris, one of the daughters of William Morris. The book

as well as presenting a breadth of new archival evidence, all the speakers have contributed a more rigorous and nuanced interpretation of well-known sources. This collection of essays offers new insights into the business practices of the Morris and Co embroidery department under May's management, her intellectual and artistic response to medieval embroidery, her career as a teacher and educator, her support for other female artists through the Women's Guild of Arts and the reception of her lecture tour in the United States. New perspectives are also offered on her family relationships, political outlook and the active and influential role she played in preserving and shaping William Morris's legacy.

This beautifully produced and illustrated book is available from the Gallery, priced £20 (ISBN 9781910885529): *May Morris: Art and Life, New Perspectives* (Friends of the William Morris Gallery, 2017).

THE EDITOR

Kwick Klean in Loughton

The fine Art Deco frontage of Kwick Klean, High Road, Loughton, which was taken by Peter Haseldine in July 1987

Alfred Hitchcock in Leytonstone

The film director Alfred Hitchcock was born in Leytonstone in 1899. A set of mosaics was commissioned by the London Borough of Waltham Forest to commemorate his centenary, and they, the work of the Greenwich Mural Workshop, were unveiled in 2001. A few of them show local landmarks; the mosaic, representing the film *Rebecca,* has an image of the local church, St John's, in the background (although the church does not appear in the film). At a petrol station there is a Waltham Forest Heritage plaque which reads – 'Alfred Joseph Hitchcock the famous film director was born near this site at 517 High Road, Leytonstone, on August 13 1899. Died April 24 1980'. Nearby is a splendid decorated wall and pavement marking his famous film *The Birds*.

527–529 High Road Leytonstone with bird decoration

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