

NEWSLETTER 216

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55th Season

The Tumbleweeds and Les Corbeaux

Does anybody remember skiffle and a group called Les Corbeaux in the mid- to late-1950s? We played at the Dick Turpin in High Beech, at a Buckhurst Hill Rotary Club 'Tarts and Tramps' do, with a sausage and mash supper. We also played at the King's Oak, High Beech, for a works' dinner and dance.



Les Corbeaux



The Tumbleweeds

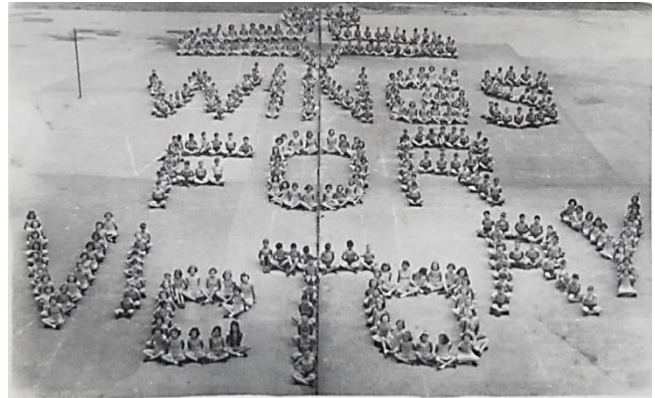


Another place at which we played was the Royal British Legion on Church Hill, when the entrance was round the north side, on a Saturday afternoon, and also at Loughton Hall. Certainly, at the first three of these venues, I played a tea-chest bass. A certain Tony Lee, one time town councillor of not so long ago, played rhythm guitar and his father was on the snare drum.

Also, does anyone remember a rhythm and blues group called the Tumbleweeds? They played at the Pyrles Lane school in the early 1960s – this could have been a weekday, perhaps for a school youth club?

MAURICE DAY

Loughton postcards



This postcard was not posted, but is labelled on the reverse 'Loughton Senior School Wings For Victory Week, June 1943'. Loughton Senior School was the one in Roding Road, later the Brook School, opened in 1938.

The postcard below was posted on 12 August 1910 to Miss E Gale of 18 Stevenage Road, Southend Road, East Ham. The message was: 'Dear Edie, Are you on your holidays yet, I am, I went to Loughton last Wednesday, it was beautiful. Hope you are well, with love from Maud.' The view is taken at the Smarts Lane/Staples/Forest Roads junction, and shows children walking up from the station to the Shaftesbury Retreat. The most prominent house, Fern Villa, was demolished around 1968, but all the others are extant. The backs of those in The Drive look very clean and thus brand new.



LYNN HASELDINE JONES AND CHRIS POND

Henry B Norman – can you help?

A diary for 1944, written by Henry B Norman of the Home Guard, who lived at 23 The Crescent, Loughton, has been discovered.

Will anyone who knows anything about this house, family, or Home Guard unit, please get in touch with Chris Pond?

1944 Miscellany

I recently read through the whole of the 1944 editions of the local paper to cross-check with the Home Guard diary, mentioned above.

In so doing, I came across the following items -

An account of the funeral on 25 February of Hugh Byron, FRIBA, ex councillor of Buckhurst Hill Urban District Council, who designed Harrow Green Baptist church. He was a staunch nonconformist, and was formerly the estate manager/architect of Port Sunlight. Hugh Byron was born in Cheshire in 1873. His wife was Alice Emma (née Sharpen; they married in Mile End in 1896). Their children were Ethel Maude (1897), Donald Hugh (1899) and Phyllis (1904). In 1911 they were in the Wirral; Hugh was an architect and surveyor. In directories of 1923, 1929 and 1935 Hugh Byron was at Brook House, 60 Lower Queen's Road (demolished and replaced by a Nursing Home).

In the edition of 3 March on page 3 was a report that Flight Lieutenant Ken Lusty had been killed in action in Italy. The Lusty family lived in Warren Hill, Loughton, for 12 years, before that 14 years at Salway House, Woodford, before that at Snaresbrook. His brother Ralph was in the Army in North Africa.

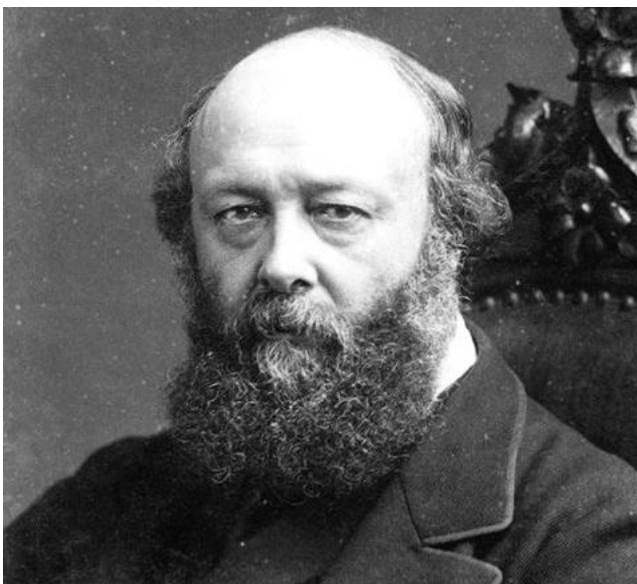
Ken, Ralph, Zena, Sylvia and Jeanette were the children of William John Lusty of Warren House (who was himself a son of John of Snaresbrook House). Their mother was Felicité Eugénie Jeanne Pecriaux (whose family were the French arm of the turtle soup business). Zena Lusty taught at Chingford County High School, with her dog, Caesar accompanying her (who we are told was very fond of licking schoolgirls' legs); this was in the early 1960s. There is a sizable Lusty tomb outside St John's church in Loughton.

In the edition of 5 May on page 3 was an account of the Bedden family of Loughton, formerly of Buckhurst Hill (109 Princes Road), killed in a Little Blitz incident (referred to as 'tragic incident') and buried in the churchyard of St John the Baptist, Buckhurst Hill. William Joseph Bedden was an LPTB bus driver at Loughton garage. His wife was Hilda Doris. Peter, the 11 year old (born 1933) was a friend of Tom Gilbert, who wrote it up in *Newsletter 188* (Jan/Feb 2011). *The Chronicle* of the Buckhurst Hill British Legion mentions this incident in its edition of July 2017, however, it is incorrectly stated that their house was hit by a bomb on 19 April 1944. It was in fact the air raid shelter at the bottom of the garden that was hit. Number 38 Habgood Road is still there. It was pretty much undamaged and had the Beddens slept in their beds, they wouldn't have died.

On 30 June there is mention of Vera Friedlaender (actually Violet Helen Friedlaender, see *Newsletter*

213), Buckhurst Hill authoress, resident 29 years, who had published a short story, 'A Flat for Love', in *John O'London's Weekly* (a weekly literary magazine that was published by George Newnes Ltd of London between 1919 and 1954). CHRIS POND

Lord Salisbury and the GER



The Marquess of Salisbury, KG, GCVO, PC, FRS, DL¹

Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil, 3rd Marquess of Salisbury, KG, GCVO, PC, FRS, DL, was born at Hatfield House² on 3 February 1830 and died on 22 August 1903. Because he was the second son of the 2nd Marquess of Salisbury he was known as Lord Robert Cecil before 1865 and after the death of his elder brother and as the heir of the then current Marquess, he became Viscount Cranborne (Lord Cranborne) from June 1865 until April 1868, when, on the death of his father, he became the 3rd Marquess of Salisbury.

The Cecils had been for 400 years members of the aristocracy and Robert Cecil eventually became a Conservative Party statesman and served as Prime Minister three times for a total of over 13 years. He was the last Prime Minister to head a government from the House of Lords.

Lord Robert Cecil was first elected to the House of Commons in 1854 from Cecil kinsman Lord Burleigh's seat of Stamford. MPs did not get paid in those days, which tended to limit representation in Parliament to those of independent means and the landed aristocracy.

Having fallen out with his father and living on a limited allowance from him, he supported himself and later his family by very trenchant journalism in the *Saturday Review* and other papers.

He served as Secretary of State for India in Lord Derby's Conservative government from 1866 until his resignation in 1867 over Benjamin Disraeli's Reform Bill which was going to give the vote to a limited number of working-class men. His ministerial appointment had temporarily relieved his financial worries because he had a ministerial salary of £5,000 (which, strangely, remained at the same level till the 1960s!).

However, in 1868, his worries over finance brought about by his resignation abated upon the death of his father, because he went to the House of Lords as Lord Salisbury.

On 25 February 1868, Lord Derby resigned because of a serious attack of gout. The Queen sent for Disraeli who offered Cecil (who was then still Lord Cranborne) the India Office once again. He informed the messenger that he had great respect for every member of the Government except Disraeli and did not feel his honour would be safe in Disraeli's hands. His dislike and distrust of Disraeli did not lessen for some years.

It was during this period that Cecil, or Cranborne as we shall now call him, worked to bring the GER, which was at that time the railway serving Loughton, to financial stability.

As mentioned above, his resignation from the India Office hit him hard financially, when he could least afford it. In May 1866 he lost his investments in the bankers Overend and Gurney which suddenly became bankrupt. He could probably have survived this, but in 1864 he had had to pay part of the promotion costs of the Adelaide Railway Company of which he was a director, and he had more unreachable capital in the National Provincial Aerated Bread Company. He had to ask his father for £1,500, but thought it would be repaid from his ministerial salary which was lost on his resignation. In July 1867 a major investment in the Imperial Mercantile Credit Company was lost when it also went into liquidation.

Cranborne not having his £5,000 per annum ministerial salary, had to go back to his father for a further £1,250. He said: 'It's a horrid mess.'

In January 1868, and partly to repay his father, he accepted an offer from Sir Edward Watkin to become Executive Chairman of the Great Eastern Railway.³

Parliament had refused the GER's application to borrow £1.5m and it was facing bankruptcy. Cranborne soon showed greater commercial skill in managing the railway than managing his own financial speculations. He put in his own accountants and found two Board of Trade auditors for the job. He refused Watkin's salary offer of £1,400, and took £700 because 'a highly paid chairman is a luxury which should be reserved for the return of a good shareholders' dividend'. The GER had not paid a good dividend for some years – perhaps modern business men should try to work to the same high principles!

Cranborne quickly got to grips with the nuts and bolts of railways. He learned about arbitrations, interlocking compromises, their enormous ambitions and regular bankruptcies. In February 1868 he asked Gladstone to arbitrate in a dispute over the Bishop's Stortford Railway. He explained the difficulties thus: 'The Great Eastern is forbidden by Act of Parliament to distribute any dividend till that line is opened. The contractor refuses to open it until his bill is paid, and the Great Eastern is forbidden by Act to pay his bill.'

Cranborne, who was once very critical of the 'slowness, unpunctuality and discomfort' of the Great Eastern in an article for the *Saturday Review*, started to reform the railway. Workers were made redundant,

plans for lines which might have been unprofitable were abandoned, bankers' support was obtained and he petitioned Parliament. He sacked the managing director, made arrangements with other companies for through freight and on 15 July 1868 successfully issued debenture stock of £1m, persuading larger debtors to hold preference shares instead of cash.

When the Official Receiver was discharged, he could at long last remove the labels from engines which indicated which one would go to which creditor on liquidation of the GER.

Cranborne constantly warned his shareholders not to listen to 'engineers . . . solicitors, . . . persons whose minds are strung to a very sanguine degree', – this showed his pessimistic nature and great suspicion of experts.

His distrust of engineers' estimates led him to refuse to sign an address to Napoleon III asking him to support the building of a railway tunnel under the English Channel, which, he suspected, would probably cost much more and take far more time than the experts had estimated.

When he resigned from the Great Eastern in 1872 he had put it on a sound financial footing and it was paying a reasonable dividend. The grateful shareholders presented him with a vast silver gilt *épergne* which had the arms of the Cecil family and the GER engraved on it.

In 1874, when Disraeli formed an administration, the then Lord Salisbury returned as Secretary of State for India after much dithering and thought because of his distrust of the Prime Minister. In 1878 he became Foreign Secretary, and played a leading part in the Congress of Berlin, despite doubts over Disraeli's pro-Ottoman policy.

When the Conservatives lost the 1880 general election and when Disraeli died in 1881, Salisbury emerged as Conservative leader in the Lords, with Sir Stafford Northcote leading the party in the Commons. Salisbury became Prime Minister in June 1885, when the Liberal leader Gladstone resigned, until January 1886. When Gladstone favoured Home Rule for Ireland, Salisbury opposed him and formed an alliance with the breakaway Liberal Unionists, winning the subsequent general election.

He remained as Prime Minister until Gladstone's Liberals formed a government with the support of the Irish Nationalist Party, despite the Unionists gaining the largest number of votes and seats at the 1892 general election. The Liberals, however, lost the 1895 general election, and Salisbury once again became Prime Minister, leading Britain to war against the Boers, and the Unionists to another electoral victory in 1900 before relinquishing the premiership to his nephew Arthur Balfour. This transfer of power is said to have given rise to the ironic comment on the shoo-in: 'Bob's your uncle!' Salisbury died a year later, in 1903.

Historians agree that Salisbury was a strong and effective leader in foreign affairs with a good grasp of the issues. His personality has been described as 'deeply neurotic, depressive, agitated, introverted, fearful of change and loss of control, and self-effacing but capable of extraordinary competitiveness'. A

representative of the landed aristocracy, he was said to follow the reactionary credo: 'Whatever happens will be for the worse, and therefore it is in our interest that as little should happen as possible.' He did not see his party's victory in 1886 as a forerunner of a new and more popular Conservatism, but longed to return to the stability of the past, when his party's main function was to 'restrain demagogic liberalism and democratic excess' by not extending the franchise. Lord Salisbury made a great if reactionary contribution to British political life but the residents of Loughton and East Anglia generally had cause to be grateful to him for sorting out the GER, in those days their only means of distance transport.

References

The GER story was found in Andrew Roberts' magisterial biography, *Salisbury: A Victorian Titan* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999), a long and engrossing read if you are interested in the middle to late Victorian period. Other material was found from the extensive detail of Lord Salisbury's life on Wikipedia.

Notes

1. Photo credit: The Marquess of Salisbury, KG, GCVO, PC, FRS, DL, by Elliot & Fry. Uploaded by Connormah - http://images.npg.org.uk/790_500/9/2/mw121392.jpg transferred from English Wikipedia, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=10530917>

2. Hatfield House is a country house in a large park, the Great Park, on the eastern side of Hatfield, Hertfordshire. The Jacobean house was built in 1611 by Robert Cecil, First Earl of Salisbury and Chief Minister to King James I and has been the home of the Cecil family ever since. The estate has extensive grounds and surviving parts of an earlier royal palace. The house is open to the public.

3. See my article on the corruption in the Eastern Counties Railway, the GER's predecessor, and John Viret Gooch, which 12 years later might still have had an impact, in *Newsletters* 212, 213.

TED MARTIN

The Tooley and Foster Partnership celebrates 125 years

For two days in June 2017, as part of the London Festival of Architecture, and in celebration of their 125th anniversary, the Tooley and Foster Partnership opened their archives to showcase a selection of over 5,000 projects from across the decades.



Warwick House was formerly known as Fairview

The 'Memories' exhibition was set in their office, a Victorian house, formerly known as Fairview, where they have been based since 1962, only a stone's throw from their original premises in Queen's Road, Buckhurst Hill.

Visitors were able to browse through drawings, photographs, ledgers and more from the time of the founding partners (Herbert Tooley and Rex C Foster) through to the present day, with many local projects including pumping stations, private houses, housing estates, offices, schools and hospitals. Also on display were drawing and surveying tools from the 1950s to the early 1990s.



Residents keenly examining the documents on display at the exhibition

There was also the opportunity to look at some of their recent award-winning work including 'Passivhaus' ultra-low energy buildings.



Many of the houses in Kings Avenue, Buckhurst Hill were designed by Herbert Tooley; he also designed many in Loughton.

THE EDITOR

Her spirit lives on

The spirit of romance haunts Lady Mary's path.
A male nightingale sings its lines of love,
Loud and clear it cheers the night,
This spirit vocal but out of sight.

Lady Mary Wroth, a poet too,
Expressed herself in words so true.
A romantic novel she produced,
Brave lines then, her heroine seduced!
A first for women, so I believe,
Lady Wroth had power, she could deceive.
Her book, 'Urania' hard to gain,
The British Library did obtain
And so I read between her lines
About her illicit, unfaithful times.

Her dalliance with poets of some fame,
I'll be diplomatic, will not name.
So, she lived her life in honest fashion
And enjoyed the meadows with a passion.
And oft, accompanied by literary man
Heard the nightingale's orchestral span.

Today her spirit lingers on
In the lilting notes of this bird's song.

Mary Wroth (1587–1651) was particularly close to Ben Jonson (1572–1637), famed for his comedies and poetry. The two 'were on terms of scarcely qualified intimacy' – that's a polite way of putting it. 'Ben had a sturdy independence of speech and did not hesitate to remind his ladies of their virtues.' Mary and Ben enjoyed strolling together 'through the sunny Chigwell meadows golden with buttercups'. Oh! so romantic. She rejoiced in poetic favours but 'had too much wit to wed one' – Ben Jonson being her favourite. (Largely quoted from William Addison's

book, *Epping Forest, its Literary and Historical Associations* (J M Dent and Sons Ltd, 1945).

We Forest Creative Writers, based in Loughton Central Library should be proud of the fact that a literary heroine once graced Loughton village. Lady Mary Wroth resided at Loughton Hall – the traditional seat of the lord of the manor. She has been correctly described as an important literary figure – a woman no less – who was active in the latter part of the English Renaissance – a period well known for producing the likes of William Shakespeare and many other male playwrights and poets. Mary Wroth published the first novel (*Urania, a Romance*) ever written by a woman in this country. She also produced *Love's Victory*, a dramatic comedy which was staged, and *Pamphilia and Amphilanthus*, a published sequence of sonnets written in rhyming couplets.

It could be argued that Forest Creative Writers along with myriad other writing groups across the land are actually effecting a contemporary literary 'renaissance' More power to our pens! PETE RELPH

For more about Lady Mary, see Sue Taylor, *Lady Mary Wroth* (LDHS, 2005, £2.50).

Closure of a famous store



The people of Loughton may not shop frequently in Ilford, but I am sure there are many who have been saddened to see the closure of Bodgers in February 2018. Following the earlier closures of Harrison Gibson and Fairheads, Bodgers was a reason to visit Ilford in itself. The distinctive blue and yellow bags will no more be seen all over east London and Essex.

Bodgers as a business was proud of its history. In June 1890 Mr John Bodger and his wife announced to the citizens of Ilford that they had taken over premises on the High Street, originally occupied by The Manchester Drapery Establishment. Mr and Mrs Bodger reopened their doors on 14 June with a 10-day clearance sale, which started at 6pm! They commenced to build up a large and flourishing business which was to become a household word in Ilford and an integral part of the Ilford scene. Further expansion was soon needed and two more shops were added to the existing premises to house dress materials, curtains and rugs. Years of sound trading resulted in steady progress being made and, in 1927, a bold venture was decided upon. Six shops in the station were demolished and an imposing building erected on this site as part of a comprehensive scheme to develop Station Road as a shopping centre. The

continuation of this scheme allowed opportunity years later to redecorate a vacated showroom as a modern tea lounge, which proved a popular meeting point for friends. Plans and projects for further improvements to the store's facilities came to a standstill on the outbreak of war, and the store itself did not go unscathed. Over the next few years the shops opposite the station were rebuilt in conjunction with a road widening scheme, giving Bodgers a new, modern front.



Morleys Stores Group acquired the business in 1959, carrying out further building extensions in the 70s and 80s.

Bodgers was at the centre of the community for 125 years as Ilford's favourite discount department store and prided itself on the best service and unbeatable prices.

A challenging trading time, and the competition of Westfield has finally seen off Bodgers, and Ilford will not be the same. With thanks to the firm's website, www.bodgersilford.co.uk

On the subject of buildings in Ilford, Redbridge Museum currently has an exhibition worth seeing – *Building Ilford, 150 Years of building the town centre*. The exhibition covers Edwardian expansion, post-war rebuilding and current plans for new homes and rail links, and will feature historic views, building plans and architectural models. It is at the Central Library, Clements Road, Ilford, and open Tuesday to Friday, 10–5, Saturday 10–4, with free admission, and runs until 9 June 2018.

THE EDITOR

More on 7 Albion Hill

I was interested to see the reference in *Newsletter 214* ('Another Loughton Novelist', page 5) to 7 Albion Hill. One of the girls at work (May and Baker's horticultural research station near Ongar) and I shared a flat there from 1959.

I see that in the article it says No 7 was the residence of the Bishop of Barking up to about 1986. I have a feeling that Mr and Mrs Buck must have bought the house not long before 1959 when Mary and I moved in: I think we may have been the first tenants but I don't know for sure. The Bishop must have been living somewhere else by then. Mr and Mrs Buck had bought the house and partitioned one wing into split accommodation, part for Mrs Buck senior and part for us, and part of the huge kitchen had been made into a main kitchen for the Bucks and Mrs Buck and we had half each of the remainder; our part happily included the walk-in larder with marble

shelves. The rooms were spacious, I even had my piano in our living room, which had French windows. We had been looking at some really terrible flats; we were really lucky to find Number 7.

BRENDA BRYANT

How Long Meg used the angry miller of Epping

I came across the following in the standard book on English windmills, where it is quoted as the first ever account of a sack hoist.

Long Meg of Westminster is a folk heroine in the mould of Chaucer, a very strong, tall Amazon of a woman, who enjoys a bit of a joke. The story dates from about 1600, but is set in the past and is supposed to be 'from the times of Henry VIII'. I have modernised and paraphrased the text.

Meg went one day with sundry of her neighbours to make merry in Essex on foot, because the weather was cold, and there was a great Frost. There was no-one with them but a young stripling 14 years old, as their husbands were about business elsewhere.

It chanced that they went by Epping Mill; the Miller was looking out, the wind was fair, and the sails were turning merrily. The youth thought to be merry with the Miller, and therefore called to him and teased him . . . The Miller, in great rage, came running down and began to cuff the boy, so Meg went up to the miller and stayed his fists, and the Miller then dealt her three or four hard blows on the shoulder.

She felt the hurt, and got inside the Miller's guard, grabbed the stick out of his hand, and duffed him up well: and when she had done that, she sent the boy up the mill for an empty sack. They put the Miller in the sack, all but the head, and then bound him to the rope wherewith the sacks were pulled up the mill, hauled him half way up the mill, and left him hanging there. The poor miller cried out for dear life, and had his wife not been coming, he himself would almost have been killed, and the Mill would have been set on fire, through lack of corn being fed between the stones.

Thus did Meg plague the Miller of Epping.

So – where was Epping Mill?

CHRIS POND

The history of Langfords: Part 3

The courts of the Tudors hunted and hawked from Havering-atte-Bower, and from the palace at Chigwell, which stood at the foot of what is now Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill, and which appears to have been built solely for the use as a royal hunting lodge. A house bearing the same name now stands on the site, and traces of the original house may be seen in the cellars.

When William Addison wrote these words in 1945, the house of Langfords still existed. When it was for sale in 1927 the sale documents quoted an entry from Elizabeth Ogborne's *History of Essex* (1814):

'Potteles' or 'Langfords', an ancient palace or lodge, now King's Place Farm.

A purchase was made by the Crown in this parish (Chigwell) as early as 1350; and another of house and lands by King Edward IV of Robert Langford in 1477. Afterwards it came into the possession of the Duke of Clarence. On his decease it came to the Crown.

In 1512 King Henry VIII granted the keeping of his palace called 'Potteles' to the care of Sir John Risley; at his decease it was granted to William Compton and his heirs. Lord Compton obtained a renewed grant of it from Queen Elizabeth in 1596 in the names of Spence and Atkinson; since that time it has passed through a number of families.

It is sometimes quoted that the building was the one of the places where Henry VIII courted Anne Boleyn. It was not shown on the map of 1603 but does appear on that of 1640 and also on the Chapman and André map of 1777, marked as King's Place. Ken Hoy wrote:

On the site of the Buckhurst Hill Lodge, as shown on the 1772–4 map, was a Georgian fronted house called 'Langfords'. When it was demolished in the late 1950s this house was found to contain, apparently buried within it, an older structure; 'internally there were some massive ancient timbers – they were decayed and crumbly and there was a lot of large beetle damage. The walls were comparatively thin, infilled with wattle and daub between upright exposed beams (about 4ins by 4ins). There was a huge chimney, in which you could stand, made of small red bricks . . .'

The occupant of King's Place in the 1841 census was George Woollatt, who was a woollen draper. He was there with his wife Elizabeth and their daughters Harriot, Fanny and Jane.

By 1851 the occupant was Anthony Etheridge with his wife Susan. He listed himself as a farmer of 157 acres, employing 6 men. He was from Stoke Ferry in Norfolk, probably a member of the family who were grocers, wine and spirit dealers and seed merchants. He and his wife died in Easthampstead, Berkshire, Susan in 1861 and Anthony in 1868, aged 71.

A local directory for 1870 calls the house King's Place House, with the occupant being Christopher Robins (1807–1879). He and his family are shown as the occupiers of King's Place in the 1861 census. He was a hat and cap manufacturer.

The 1881 census shows the occupant as Thomas Puzey, aged 37, who was born in 1844 in St John's Wood. He was described as a wine merchant. His wife was Julia Mary Ann (née Sadler), born in Shoreditch in 1846. Also living with them was his mother Frances Puzey, who was 73 years old, and came from Southampton. Their children were Julia, 12, Emily, 9, Jessie, 8, Fanny, 5, Helen, 3 and George Frederick, who was only 2 months old. All the children's births were registered in St George in the East.

They had four servants, a cook, a housemaid and two nursemaids. Although Thomas described himself rather grandly as a wine merchant, the family had been based in the public-house the George Tavern at 373 Commercial Road, where they are shown on the census of 1871, with Thomas Puzey as licensed victualler.

It seems that the Puzey family stayed in Buckhurst Hill for only five years, during which time their daughter Helen died, aged 4, in 1882. In 1886 Puzey sold Langfords to Charles Brittain Bond.

Charles Brittain Bond was born in Ixworth, Suffolk, in 1847 (and was christened on 21 November 1847), the son of Henry and Betsy Bond. In 1881, before he came to Buckhurst Hill he was a 'dining room keeper' at 87 London Wall. His first wife Ellen

Mary Ann (née Millard; they married at St George's Hanover Square in 1872) who was born in St Pancras, was with him at that address, along with three assistants, his sister Sabina Bond, who was 18 at the time, his niece Agnes, who was 13, and another relative, 29-year-old Ellen Bond, all three of whom were described as domestic servants, presumably working in the dining room. His wife Ellen Mary Ann died on 15 August 1897, 'called suddenly to the better life' at the age of 48.

Following the death of his first wife, Charles B Bond married a second time in Hackney in 1898, this time to Ellen Rebecca (née Bidwell), born in Islington in 1867. They had two sons, Henry Charles Bond and Edward John Bond, born in Buckhurst Hill in 1899 and 1901, respectively.

Charles Brittain Bond died on 14 November 1919 at the age of 72 and was buried in the churchyard of St John the Baptist, Buckhurst Hill, where his first wife had been buried.

Following the death of Charles Brittain Bond, the property was sold, on 20 February 1922, to Dr Oswald Silberrad, who was later to live in Loughton. Mrs Bond continued to live in King's Avenue, moving to Glenellen (was this named after her?), where directories show her as living in 1923 and 1929. She died aged 86 in the first quarter of 1954.

The Silberrads sold the property in four lots in 1927, offering the garden in three sections, each 'for the erection of a good-class residence'. At that time the house was described as picturesque, with a Georgian porch entrance, and seven bedrooms, an entrance hall with Roman tiled floor (using original Roman tiles), and a dining room with a beamed ceiling. There was a library and workshop and the domestic offices included two large arched cellars, with brickwork wine bins, 'probably installed by Henry VIII'.

The grounds were described as delightful, old-world gardens, nicely timbered, with two ornamental lawns, herbaceous borders, flower beds, a double tennis court and a shady walk.

In 1929, 1933 and 1935 directories the occupant of Langfords, which by then was numbered 13 King's Avenue, was Mr Herbert James Vincent, who died aged 62 on 4 February 1940 (*The Times*, 6 February 1940 – death: 'on February 4 1940, Herbert Vincent, solicitor, of Langfords, Buckhurst Hill, Essex, and 20 Budge Row, Canon Street, EC4 . . .') He was a solicitor of the firm Vincent and Vincent. He was born in late 1877, the son of solicitor and clerk to school boards Ralph Vincent of Fairlop Road, Leyton. He had three sisters and three brothers.

Langfords was for sale again in 1945 and it was considered as a possible location for the establishment of Buckhurst Hill library, which until that time had been situated in rented rooms at Pelly House, Queen's Road. Unfortunately protracted negotiations failed to achieve a sale and eventually the library was to take over Buckhurst Hill Hall in Queen's Road.

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Woodford Times 1933, Loughton Library

www.ancestry.com for some of the information concerning

Christopher Robins, www.deadpubs.co.uk,

www.familysearch.org, www.freebmd.org.uk,

www.wikipedia.co.uk and www.essexfieldclub.org.uk



Buckhurst Hill in 1937, showing the extent of the grounds of Langfords

LYNN HASELDINE JONES

Early cars in Loughton

25 October 1901

There are now, I think, six automobiles or motorcars kept in Loughton; viz: Dr Butler Harris's, Dr Astin's, Mr H M Fletcher's, Mr H Baring's, Liddell at Brackenhurst [later 217 High Road] and a butcher's tricycle in Smarts Lane. It will be interesting to make a similar observation later on. Bicycles have now ceased to be 'the mode' . . .

William Chapman Waller, *Notes on Loughton II* (LDHS, 2002) Submitted by CHRIS POND

Earthquakes in Essex

The most severe earthquake to hit Britain in modern times was that of 1884 which had its epicentre at Wivenhoe near Colchester. Structural damage was caused over a fairly wide area of Essex and Suffolk. The earthquake pre-dated most of the existing water towers in the area although Colchester's Balmerne tower (Jumbo) had only just been completed. It seems to have survived almost unscathed and its massive bulk must have been to its considerable advantage, although a contemporary witness reported that, 'I staggered against the side of a shop but I couldn't keep my eyes off Jumbo. It seemed to sway several times on its legs . . . if the earthquake had gone on a moment longer I'm sure it would have fallen.' It is of course possible that it was the observer who was swaying, not Jumbo . . .



There are no reports of the towers at Braintree, Halstead and Clacton being affected though, unlike Jumbo, they were all some distance from the epicentre. The earthquake was certainly powerful enough to crack the concrete rendering inside the service reservoir at Sudbury, 15 miles northwest of

Colchester, and to reduce significantly the yield of the town's public supply borehole.

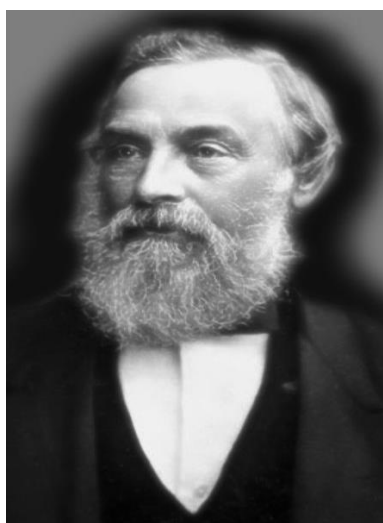
The extract above is from a book I obtained at the Essex Industrial Heritage Fair, held at the Wat Tyler

Country Park on 7 October 2017 (well worth the visit). The book, *Water Towers of Britain* by Barry Barton (The Newcomen Society, 2003, ISBN 0-904685-12-8) is a surprisingly fascinating read and can be obtained from (really!) the British Water Tower Appreciation Society (www.bwtas.blogspot.co.uk) With thanks to Ferrers Young of the BWTAS. THE EDITOR

Mr Coxwell's famous balloon ascent to Woodford

In 1869 aeronaut Henry Tracey Coxwell (1819–1900) took off from Hornsey on a foggy November afternoon. The original press report from *The Potted History of Hornsey Gas Works* is set out below:

Mr Coxwell made a balloon ascent from the Hornsey Gas Works shortly before the commencement of the fog on Wednesday afternoon. Soon after three o'clock the fog presented a strongly defined line of vapour stretching for miles in an easterly direction. Over the Forest, near Woodford, Mr Coxwell and his companion were unable to see the earth at a height of only fifty feet, and it was only by the aid of a rope trailing on the ground that a level course could be regulated so as to select an open spot on which to alight. Whilst holding conversation with some men who were following the balloon, and could only hear the rustling of a rope among the bushes and trees, the aeronauts were supposed to be poachers. So dense was the fog that the balloon could not be seen, and the voyagers were supposed to be running along the ground, although Mr Coxwell proclaimed his balloon, but this was thought to be a ruse to draw off the keeper's attention. A safe descent was made near Woodford at 5.30.



Henry Coxwell was very well-known in his time. As a boy, he became interested in balloons, and he spared no efforts to witness as many ascents as possible, but it was not until 19 August 1844, at Pentonville, that he had an opportunity of making an ascent. In the autumn of 1845 he founded and edited *The Balloon, or Aerostatic Magazine*, of which

twelve numbers appeared at irregular intervals.

He became a professional balloonist in 1848, when he was entrusted with the management of a balloon, the *Sylph*, in Brussels, and subsequently made ascents at Antwerp, Elberfeld, Cologne and Johannisberg in Prussia. At Hanover, in the summer of 1850, he had a narrow escape, owing to the proximity of lofty trees. In 1852 he returned to London and made ascents from Cremorne Gardens, the New Globe Gardens in the Mile End Road and the Pavilion Gardens in Woolwich.

In 1862 the British Association for the Advancement of Science determined to make investigations of the upper atmosphere using balloons. Dr James Glaisher, FRS, was chosen to carry out the

experiments, and Coxwell was employed to fly the balloons. He constructed a 93,000 cubic feet capacity balloon named the *Mammoth*, and on 5 September 1862, took off from Wolverhampton, Coxwell and Glaisher reached 35,000 feet, the greatest height achieved to date.

On 17 June 1885, he made his last ascent in a large balloon, the *City of York*. He gave an annual display at York for several years, and there he bade farewell to a profession of which he had been one of the most daring exponents. After his retirement he lived for a time at Tottenham. TERRY CARTER

My father-in-law: an unsung hero

I would like to nominate my father-in-law, Stan Brewster, as one of the many unsung heroes of the Second World War.

He was born in Smarts Lane in September 1920. As a child he knew the man who owned the tea wagon, near Fairmead Bottom, and used to run errands for him. One of these was to collect a Shire horse from the Ongar area. So, being a poor lad, off he set on foot; in those days people were still walking great distances. On reaching his destination, the seller plonked him on top of the horse, and he started his return trip. However, soon he decided he needed a pee, so off he got to attend to the matter, only to find that, Stan being a small lad, and the horse being large and obstinate, he could not get on again and so had to walk the rest of the way home!

When the war came, Stan joined the Commandos. One of his missions was a night visit to Nazi-held Norway, where he managed to lose part of his ear to a bullet. Incidentally, he was a boxing champion, and fought at the Albert Hall. Stan liked adventure, so when the Commandos formed a parachute section, he volunteered, and he did his first jump from a balloon at the Chigwell balloon camp. He admitted that was a bit hairy. On D Day minus one, after all that training, he was put into a glider – he said that he was heavily weighted down with equipment, and that some of the poor b...rs who did go by chute fell into deep water and went straight to the bottom. His mission was to silence an artillery site called Melville. One the way down he received a bullet through the knee, so he was left with the dead and the dying and, of course, was taken prisoner, so that was the end of his war.

One of the things he told me was that his father, Ernest, had dug a well on the Ripley Grange estate – I am not sure if it was just this one, or it is the case with wells in general, but apparently when you look up from the bottom you can see the stars!

Stan could remember seeing the children from London's East End being marched along Smarts Lane, up to the forest, some having no shoes on their feet. As a young lad he learnt to swim in the Gravels second pond (west) from Earl's Path – I think it's called skinny dipping now.

By the way, I once helped our milkman deliver at the Grange, it was the latter part of the war and I was 8 or 9 at the time. I can remember going around the north side of the house to the rear of the property, I

think there was an outbuilding. The lady took 2 gold tops, and gave me a glass of milk. MAURICE DAY

A man in woman's clothing: evading service of a writ

William Chapman Waller wrote in *Loughton a Hundred Years Ago*, edited by Richard Morris and Chris Pond (LDHS 2006, pp 4–5):

In the third house dwells the Murch family – also non-conformists. He (Spencer Harris Murch) was at one time an ardent cyclist . . . now he drives, and once I saw him on horseback. At one time, when he was about twenty, his head went a bit funny, and I was told he went up to London in a woman's dress. He isn't very imposing.

A strange comment to make, but the following newspaper article explains what happened:

At the Dalston police-court, yesterday. Spencer Harris Hope Murch, aged 38, giving his address at Oakhurst House, Golding's-hill, Loughton, and his occupation as a clerk, was charged before Mr Haden Corser with being a male person found in a public place dressed in female attire, supposed for an unlawful purpose. Prisoner entered the dock wearing a large green felt directoire hat, trimmed fashionably with a lighter shade of ribbon. He also wore a black lace fall, a dark green cloth ulster, UNDER WHICH WAS A DRESS IMPROVER. He had on woman's boots, and, when subsequently ordered to take off the outer garments, was found to be wearing a red flannel petticoat. Beneath this, however, he was dressed in ordinary man's attire, a coat being wound about the loins, and representing the bustle. The evidence of Detective-Sergeant Nursey, J Division, was that he had information of a supposed man going about in woman's clothing, and that morning, at ten o'clock, he stopped the prisoner at Mildmay-road, Islington, and told him he was a police-officer, and had doubts as to defendant's sex. Murch replied, 'Am I bound to explain myself?' and witness answered, 'Yes I see you have been shaving.' Prisoner then said, 'I will explain to you later on.' At the police-station HE ADMITTED HE WAS A MAN, and added, 'I expected to have had a writ served upon me, so I got out of the way.' Prisoner afterwards said, 'I have been employed as a clerk to the P and O Company, Leadenhall-street.' Witness had made enquiries and found this to be correct. A few days ago some money (£28) was missed, and prisoner was suspended. Inquiries were made, and Murch had not been seen since. The P and O Company declined to charge him. By the Magistrate – Prisoner gave a correct address, and I find he is well connected at Loughton. My impression is that he so disguised himself because of the fear of being arrested. Mr Haden Corser – And for no other purpose? Detective Nursey – I have no reason to believe otherwise. The officer made a private communication to the magistrate, and Mr Haden Corser told prisoner he was discharged. Prisoner – Thank you, sir. The man then went into the gaoler's room, and soon afterwards EMERGED IN MALE ATTIRE, with a small double-peaked cloth cap upon his head, and carrying his bundle of female clothing tied round with string. The news of the arrest caused a good many people to assemble in court.

(*South Wales Echo*, 28 November 1889)

Spencer Harris Hope Murch was born in Suffolk in 1851, the son of Baptist Minister Spencer Murch and his wife Catherine Hope Murch. He was living in Loughton by 1881 with his wife Ellen Ann (Freeman, they married in 1878). They had five children, Spencer

Harris (1879), Eleanor Hope (1882), Grace Alicia (1883), Angus Hope (1885) and Charles Hope (1888–1889). All the children were born in Loughton.

It is interesting that Chapman Waller knew about the incident of the woman's clothing, but by the time he was writing, some years later, it had come to be remembered as an event in Murch's 20s, when he was in fact 38, married and a father of five children. It may be that the basis of the attempted prosecution was an implicit allegation under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 which outlawed male homosexuality, of which transvestism was regarded as a branch (and male transvestite prostitution was known). Nothing further came to light in the newspapers concerning the P and O financial irregularity. Spencer H H Murch died aged 70 in 1921.

With thanks to the very useful website of Welsh Newspapers Online, courtesy of the National Library of Wales.

LYNN HASELDINE JONES

North Weald Airfield Museum

The latest issue of *The Hurricane*, the newsletter of the North Weald Airfield Museum is now available online on the museum website:

<http://www.nwamuseum.co.uk/HurricaneNovember2017.pdf>

In it we hope you will find a variety of recent news and stories from the past, people and places and mainly to do with aircraft and North Weald.

You are welcome to call in on the airfield seven days a week and make use of the cafés at Wings and The Squadron; we know they will be pleased to see you.

BRYN ELLIOTT

Smarts Lane and butchers' shops

I was interested to read the article in *Newsletter 215* on Smarts Lane written by the late Will Francies in 1971. Will was a prolific writer on Loughton's history, including many articles in the *West Essex Gazette*. His family had a car-hire business based in the old forge at King's Green, adjacent to A J Diggins, the builder's yard and Lily Peacock's sweet shop, which I recall, as a child, was rarely open and had next to nothing in the window!

Loughton was well endowed with butchers' shops in the 1940s and 1950s. In addition to George Grimsley & Son in Smarts Lane, which my Mother always patronised, there was F C H Lane in Forest Road and A G Dennis, Charles Wilson and Dewhurst in the High Road.

Apart from Bosworth's, Dennis's was the last of the independent butchers to go and it had been around for many years before the war. The shop itself was quite period in style to the end and included a long glass panel with the corporate name in etched glass right across the rear inside wall as well as a similar one as the outside fascia. You will note that it was a limited company, quite unusual as most High Road traders traded as individuals. It was next to the Holly Bush pub.

At King's Green there was Friday's and in Church Hill, Bosworth. I recall that Smarts Lane did not have as many shops as Forest Road, although some of the

houses did look as though they might have been retail premises before the War. Business premises were dominated by Charles S Foster & Sons, the premier Loughton builders (who eventually became insolvent), T Wall & Sons, the ice cream manufacturer, who had a depot there, and A Street's dairy.

PHILIP SHAW

For an image of A J Diggins and Sons Ltd, see *Newsletter 203*, p 8. A G Dennis of Wanstead closed for the last time at the end of 2015 (Ed).

And of course Loughton now has a new butcher's shop (photo taken 26 December 2017).



More on Askew of Smarts Lane

Newsletter 215 (December 2017/January 2018) included a reprint of an article by Will Francies which had appeared in the *Essex Countryside* in 1971. In his reminiscences of Smarts Lane in the period 1902–24, he refers to Askew's yard and 'the sounds of horsemen as they harnessed their teams to the gaily painted brakes . . . [which] cantered to race meetings and excursions all over East Anglia'. By coincidence, the December 2017 issue of the *Journal of the Transport Ticket Society* carries an article by David Harman which sheds light on the subsequent transport activities of George Ellis Askew, who was managing the Askew business at that time.

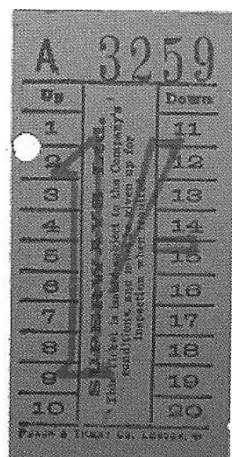
By the mid-1920s, Askew had graduated from horse-drawn brakes to motor coaches and in late 1925 established the Majestic Omnibus Co Ltd to acquire the goodwill of the bus interests of a small partnership which had been established by one Arthur Peggram of Finchley in 1923. The relationship between Majestic Omnibus and the former partnership, with which Askew had not been involved, remained somewhat complicated but the Loughton interest is that, under the terms of the transfer of ownership, Askew acquired one bus personally and this he used for a while on route 100A, Elephant & Castle–Epping. However, this enterprise would appear to have been not entirely successful because the bus was sold to the London Public Omnibus Co on 30 July 1927.

Thereafter, Askew concentrated on his coaching activities but in January 1929 he took the now dormant Majestic Omnibus Co Ltd, of which he retained sole ownership, and renamed it Superways Ltd. This company took over all his coaching activities. Soon after, he began a regular service from London (Bush House) to Exeter and Torquay via

Salisbury. This was operated with two six-wheel Gilford coaches which were equipped with couriers and automatic machines on the bulkhead dispensing chocolate, cigarettes and matches. A second service was started between London (Woburn Place) and Cambridge.

Sadly, neither proved successful, and Superways Ltd ceased trading in 1930 and was wound up on 15 November 1932.

A one shilling ticket of the short-lived period of Superways Ltd operation has survived, and is illustrated (left).



The assistance of David Harman of the Transport Ticket Society is gratefully acknowledged.

Source: Blacker, K, Lunn, R, Westgate, R: *London's Buses Volume One* (HJ Publications, 1977).

PETER HASELDINE

The Fazekas family in Buckhurst Hill



Buckhurst Way, 1966

I had an aunt who lived with her husband in your district in 281 Buckhurst Way – Helen Fazekas (1901–1976). Her husband, Stephen Fazekas (1898–1967) was a physician and had his practice also in this house. They lived there since 1939 (my guess) and in the sixties my mum (Aunt Helen's sister), my sister and me visited them several times. In the years before it was not allowed to travel abroad from 'socialist' Czechoslovakia – we lived in Prague.

Recently I found some postcards from the beautiful Buckhurst Hill area in my cupboard written by our aunt and one by my mother. I wonder if they could be of any interest for you, maybe for your archive?

I would be pleased very much if these pictures wouldn't be just thrown away, as they for sure would be after my time on our wonderful Earth will be over . . .

The above letter was received by Buckhurst Hill Parish Council in mid-2017 and the letter and the included postcards were passed to me as representative of the LDHS. The writer was Mrs Eva

Curdova, of Heilbronn, Germany. I wrote to Mrs Curdova in the hope of finding more about the family. She kindly replied, and sent a selection of newspaper cuttings which shed much light on a rather fascinating family.

World mourns a 'king' of the chessboard

With hundreds of letters of sympathy still pouring into his Buckhurst Hill home, chess players the world over were this week mourning the death of one of Britain's few international chess masters Dr Steven Fazekas.

Czechoslovakian born Dr Fazekas died suddenly from a heart attack at the home of friend and fellow practitioner Dr Eric Frankel of Wanstead. He was 69 and one of the district's best-loved doctors.

By his masterly chess playing he achieved world fame. News of his death was carried far and wide by the world's press and tributes have come pouring into his Buckhurst Way home from the United States to Russia. But death robbed Dr Fazekas of reaching his greatest achievement in the game he loved. As part of a British team, he was engaged on a three-year mammoth world-wide postal chess game. The tournament was due to end at Christmas this year and Dr Fazekas, with only two or three games left to play, was in a good position to win the title of grand master of chess.

He already held the title of chess master – a distinction awarded to him in 1953 for his achievements in international events in Czechoslovakia before the war. A second place at the international tournament of Kosice in 1929 was followed by two excellent results the next year, equal third at Prague and third at Brno.



It was in Budapest in 1918 while Dr Fazekas was a student of medicine that he met his wife, Helen. She too was a student of medicine but gave up her studies to marry the doctor in 1923.

Dr Fazekas, left, in his garden with an unidentified friend

The couple came to England in 1939 when Hitler was over-running Europe. Dr Fazekas was among 50 Czech* doctors selected by the Home Office to come to England because their political activities put them in danger . . .

Once he had acquired British nationality, Dr Fazekas played with distinction in a number of British championship tournaments culminating by his winning the title at Plymouth in 1957. He was also 11 times champion chess player in Essex.

Taking over the doctor's practice will be Dr G Duffy, of Snakes Lane, Woodford Green. Mrs Fazekas will stay in Buckhurst Hill helping the new doctor as she did her husband, as secretary and receptionist.

The above newspaper extract is unidentified, but similar tributes appeared in newspapers as varied as *The Times* and the *Morning Star*. *The Times* referred to his 'almost impish sense of fun, he was rather like a character from one of Bernard Shaw's early plays'. Another journalist, who knew him personally, wrote 'Dr Fazekas was a personal friend as well as a tireless doctor; such a sad loss. A surprising man in many

respects, one measure of his character was a great love of children . . . his surgery was never short of sweets and toys.' Other cuttings indicate that Dr Fazekas came to Buckhurst Hill in 1947, after studying at Oxford, and acting as a locum for a British doctor in Notting Hill Gate.

Do any readers have memories of the doctor?

**Sic*, but should read 'Czechoslovakian', as some were from Slovakia.

LYNN HASELDINE JONES

Staples Road School

The LDHS *Newsletter* 214 arrived today and the photograph of Staples Road School on page 7 has got me going . . . When I found all the names that were mentioned were all familiar, I got the magnifying glass out and had a look. I can spot a few. I think this is Mrs Broadbridge's class taken in the first half of 1952, NOT 1954 as stated in the magazine, as I left Staples Road in July 1952 and started at White Bridge School on 15 September 1952.

I am number 1 in the third row down. I have to laugh at being labelled as Unknown! The most important bit to remember is all of these people would have been born between 1 September 1944 and 31 August 1945.

KEITH RANN

Keith Rann and Andy Imms together have so far identified:

Back Row: 1 Linda Parish, 2 Patricia Lily, 3 Vivien Woods, 4 Janice Franklin, 5 unknown, 6 Gwyn Walker, 7 Diane Robinson, 8 Coralie Wright, 9 Janice Wright, 10, 11 and 12 unknown

Second Row: 1 Mary Prentice, 2 Howard Eastwood, 3 and 4 unknown, 5 Christine Freeman, 6 Barbara Rankin, 7, 8, 9 unknown, 10 Raymond Abery, 11 Sandra Clifford, 12 unknown

Third Row: 1 Keith Rann, 2 unknown, 3 Clifford Newell, 4 Jean Doble, 5 Ian Porter, 6 Arthur Bicker, 7 Terrance Ratke, 8 unknown, 9 Carol Boyton

Bottom Row: 1 and 2 unknown, 3 Billy ?, 4 David Taylor, 5, 6, 7 and 8 unknown

Brown's no longer of Loughton

I thought the LDHS had missed an opportunity. Brown's of Loughton used to have a history of their company on their website and nobody had 'captured' it, but 'Googling' led me to the January to March 2012 issue of our *Newsletter* 192 and most of it was there.

The showroom in the High Road closed around the time when the *Newsletter* was published and the workshop premises in Oakwood Hill about 18 months later. The company was wound up in 2014. I do not want to repeat all the website history, but will give you some of it, augmented by information from the Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) planning records.

The company was established by Frank Brown in 1932 in the former premises of Wilson's Coachworks, subsequently occupied by Clements and Moore and now developed for new housing. They acquired 250 High Road, formerly Gould's premises and now, of course, Morrisons supermarket in 1950. There is no

record of planning permission being granted for their occupation of the property, but they might not have been doing something that needed permission.

According to the website history, they purchased 199 High Road in 1952, but the planning records indicate they were in occupation of the site by 1949 as three applications were made in that year, but possibly they were just tenants then. Permission for the showroom behind 199 was granted in March 1957. When we moved to Loughton in 1988 they were still selling Esso petrol from the site (the website history indicates it was one of the first Esso petrol stations in the United Kingdom), but one of the first applications I dealt with at EFDC was for use of the petrol station area for car sales, approved in July 1988.

The company also had a separate garden machinery business at the Triangle, Smarts Lane, when we moved to Loughton. Brown's had occupied these premises by 1949 according to the planning records, but the first mention of the garden machinery business comes in 1984. This at some point became a separate business unconnected with Brown's and that site has now been redeveloped and is occupied by Savills' estate agents.

In 1982 Brown's workshop business was moved to Oakwood Hill, according to the website history, 'Under pressure from Epping Forest District Council who were trying to separate off industry from shopping and residential areas'.

I have an amusing anecdote relating to Brown's. When I started working for EFDC they had an advantageous leased car scheme for staff who needed to use a car for their work and I took delivery of a Vauxhall Astra from Brown's. The salesman I dealt with at Brown's was called John Harrison. I used to wind up the switchboard people when I had a query about my car with conversations such as, 'Can I speak to John Harrison, please?'; 'Who's calling?'; 'John Harrison! You get the picture!'

What has caused me to pen (well type actually) this article is discovering a series of advertisements for Brown's in *The Motor* magazine in 1951. One is reproduced here, from 14 March 1951, but the company seems to have advertised weekly in *The Motor* at this time. There used to be a picture of Brown's premises at 199 High Road on display in Morrisons and this would have been

taken roughly when this advert appeared.

The cars offered in the advert are generally ordinary family saloons; the 12 and 14hp models would be a bit more upmarket. The Riley 1½-litre Saloon at the top of the advert would be a rather desirable car, being a luxury model with sporting abilities, perhaps something a bit like a BMW today.

Interestingly, the page from which I copied the advert had a list of prices of British cars and the price of the Riley is given as £959, so a four-year-old car attracted a premium of £36 – this shows how difficult it was to buy cars in these 'export or die' times. Normally secondhand car adverts mention their 'features'. Nowadays this would be things like automatic emergency braking or leather upholstery, but in those days things we now take for granted like heaters and radios would have been considered as significant luxuries, but these are not mentioned here. Other used car adverts from this era mention such accessories – I cannot account for Brown's marketing strategy in this respect.

The most interesting car in the advert is the Marendaz Special listed at the end – I chose this particular week's advert because this was featured. The Marendaz Company was founded by Captain Marendaz who built cars in Brixton Road, London SW9 from 1926 to 1932 and then Maidenhead from 1932 to 1936. They were high-quality sports cars produced in limited numbers and several examples survive.

They were campaigned in motor sport, drivers including Captain Marendaz himself and Alfred Moss, father of Stirling and Pat Moss. Having heard a talk about Captain Marendaz, he seems to have been one of life's characters and probably not an easy person to get on with. He was somewhat litigious if his cars were criticised. He was an Oswald Mosley supporter and was jailed for a short time during the war on security charges.

Another car warrants a special mention, the 1942 10hp Hillman. This would have been a Hillman Minx. I thought it surprising that a car was manufactured in 1942. *Wikipedia*, however, revealed the circumstances: 'During the Second World War, British car companies produced simple Utility load carriers, the light utility or "tilly". For Hillman it was the Hillman 10hp, a Minx chassis with two-person cab and covered load area behind. The basic saloon was also produced for military and essential civilian use from 1940 to 1944.' I am somewhat surprised that this should be described as being 'de luxe', though this description seems to be applied to almost all vehicles offered in the advert.

One legacy of Brown's still remains – the neon sign on 199 High Road. This sign seems to have received advertisement consent in 1950. JOHN HARRISON

Another local railwayman

Vernon Alec Murray Robertson is known to have lived at a number of addresses in Loughton and Buckhurst Hill in the 1920s and 1930s. He was at 5 High Beech Road (now number 67) before 1920, and for six years, 1920 to 1926, lived at St Helena Villa (91



3 MONTHS GUARANTEE

1947 RILEY 1½-litre Saloon de luxe	£995
1946/7 FORD 10 Saloon de luxe	£565
1942 HILLMAN 10 h.p. Saloon de luxe	£495
1940 ROVER 10 h.p. Saloon de luxe	£625
1940 Model WOLSELEY 12 h.p. Saloon de luxe	£595
1939 JAGUAR 1½-litre Saloon de luxe	£595
1939 WOLSELEY 12 Saloon de luxe	£525
1938 LANCHESTER 14 h.p. Sports Saloon	£525
1938 MORRIS 8 h.p. Saloon de luxe	£295
1938 AUSTIN Big 7 Saloon de luxe	£275
1937 AUSTIN 10 Saloon de luxe	£395
1936 AUSTIN 10 Saloon de luxe	£295
1936 MORRIS 14, low mileage	£395
1935 MORRIS 8 Saloon de luxe	£195
1935 MARENDAZ Special Sports 4-seater Tourer	£295

BROWN'S GARAGE HIGH RD., LOUGHTON ESSEX

Hours of Business—9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Telephone : Loughton 4119, 3038 (5 lines).
3 minutes Tube Central Line.

Queen's Road Buckhurst Hill)), later moving to Kings Avenue.

The following is an extract from the *London and North Eastern Railway Magazine* (April 1928), reprinted by permission of the Great Eastern Railway Society.



Mr V A M Robertson, the District Engineer at Stratford, left on March 19 to take up the position of Civil Engineer to the Underground Railways.

Mr Robertson was born in 1890* and educated at Dover College from 1900 to 1906, and at the Crystal Palace School of Engineering from 1907 to 1909. He then became an articled pupil to Mr D Gravell, M Inst CE, with whom he served for three years, and was employed

mainly on work for the London and North Western Railway, most of his time being spent on the Euston to Watford widening and electrification. From 1912 to 1919 Mr Robertson was an assistant in the New Works Department of the South Eastern and Chatham Railway, and in the latter year he joined the service of the Great Eastern Railway as Assistant to the District Engineer at Stratford. In January 1920 he was appointed Assistant District Engineer, and in July 1921 Acting District Engineer, and finally in January 1922, the Great Eastern Board confirmed his appointment as District Engineer in succession to Mr E A Wilson, who had been appointed Engineer to the Metropolitan Railway.

In September 1914 Mr Robertson joined the 14th London Regiment (London Scottish) as a private. He was gazetted to a commission in the Royal Engineers in October 1915, and went overseas in February 1916. He was awarded the MC and bar, both immediate awards, for bridge work in July 1917, at Nieuport (where he was gassed), and in the final advance in October 1918. He was mentioned in the final dispatch of Field Marshal Sir Douglas (afterwards Earl) Haig.

Mr Robertson was wounded on the Somme in 1916, and was demobilised in May 1919, with the rank of Major, RE, his last command in France being No 87 Field Company, RE, 12th Division.

Towards the end of 1924 a beginning was made with the organisation of the Supplementary Reserve, and in November of that year Mr Robertson was gazetted as a Major, RE, and given the command of No 1 Railway Platelaying Company, RE, which unit he successfully raised from the staff of the London and North Eastern Railway.

Since his appointment as District Engineer at Stratford, Mr Robertson has been responsible for approximately 125 miles of re-laying. He had carried out the renewal of bridges Nos 650 and 652 over the River Lea and Bridge No 60 at Stratford Station, also the new arterial road bridges carrying the railway over the new Southend road at George Lane and Gidea Park, and over the Cambridge Road at Bullsmore Lane [Enfield].

He was closely associated in 1920 with the alterations at Liverpool Street, Enfield Town, Palace Gates, and Chingford and intermediate stations, which resulted in the intensive train service.

Mr Robertson is an associate member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, a Member of the Institute of Transport, and a Fellow of the Permanent Way Institution.

*He was born in Calcutta.

V A M Robertson went on to receive the CBE in 1943. As part of the Territorial Army, he was commanding

officer of the Engineer and Railway Staff Corps until January 1956, having been appointed Colonel in 1940. He was Chief Civil Engineer to the London Passenger Transport Board during the 1935–40 New Works Programme (which included the Central Line extensions) although he didn't see its final completion (he went back to the Southern in 1944). He retired in 1951 and went on to act as partner and consultant to Sir William Halcrow and Partners until 1964. He died on 12 February 1971.

With thanks to Bill King, Chairman of the Great Eastern Railway Society, Chris Pond, Ian Strugnell, and Wikipedia. LYNN HASELDINE JONES

The Shrubby, Ida Butler Harris, and the o'Meagher family

In 2015, I received a call from a gentleman called Luthfi o'Meagher, who lives in Wales. As a boy, he and his father, Dennis (*below*, in 1937), lived with Dr



Butler Harris, and later with his widow, Ida, in The Shrubby, a large house in the High Road, on whose site Centric Parade now stands.

The Shrubby is one of Loughton's forgotten houses. It was of 18th century origin, bought in the late Victorian period by the Goulds, who developed part of its rear garden as 23 cottages (21 extant) named Clifton Road. Then it came into the possession of Arthur Butler Harris, when appointed as Medical Officer of Health by the Loughton Urban District Council on its formation in 1900. The house had an acre and half of land, and was later numbered as 200 High Road.

Dr Harris (born in 1865) was a remarkable man, whose obituary in the *British Medical Journal* for 15 August 1936 appears below.

We announce with regret the death at the age of 71, at his home in Loughton, Essex of DR ARTHUR BUTLER HARRIS, TD. He studied medicine at Oxford; at University College, London where he won the Lister gold medal; and later at Leipzig. He graduated MA, BM, and BCh at Oxford in 1892 and was for some time senior medical officer at Stamford Hill Dispensary. In 1900 he was appointed medical officer of health for Loughton, later becoming medical officer to the Post Office and the Board of Education. After the war he retired from the MAMCT with the rank of lieutenant-colonel and became county controller for the Essex VAD. A man of wide interests Dr Harris had been in his earlier years president of the Oxford University Junior Science Club and he was a prominent Freemason achieving finally the Assistant Provincial Grand Mastership of Essex. He had been chairman of the local branch of the British Red Cross and was for many years a member of the British Medical Association. He contributed several articles to this and other journals on the use of tuberculosis and bacterial vaccines, especially pneumococcal vaccine as applied to the treatment of acute pneumonia. In October 1931 he was appointed Deputy Lieutenant for the County of Essex.

William Waller observed he was a 'love him or loathe him' character with a wide practice. He was also a keen musician. After Dr Harris's death, The Shrubby was sold to the London Co-operative Society, who used it as a furniture storage facility for some years before demolishing it and building their

big supermarket in 1962. In 1950, they were refused permission for conversion to a milk depot. I am indebted to Ian Strugnell for the following from CUDC minutes in 1950:

The Shrubberies, 200 High Road, Loughton, proposal to use rear part of site, including existing house, as milk bottling and distributing depot for London Co-operative Society Ltd (access from Clifton Road). Recommend Engineer and Surveyor tell Local Planning Authority this Council thinks it should be refused.



The Shrubbery Pocket Park 1961

In the meantime and up to 1961, the garden, with its magnificent cedar, had been open for the public as a pocket park.

Ida, who was actually the daughter of a Colchester innkeeper, and by no means a debutante, kept a high-class dress shop, called *Forestier*, at 217 High Road, opposite The Shrubbery, and also owned the Victorian house behind it (Rosebank).

Michael Chater, in his *Loughton Lodge Years 1928–39* wrote:

There was also a chic dress shop, *Forestier*. This was owned by the formidable Ida Butler Harris, wife of the local doctor. Ida exploited her status in the village to her own profit, and young wives who wanted to get on in Loughton society were well advised to buy their clothes in *Forestier*.

Certainly, everyone who was anyone (and female – perhaps *Forestier* should have been *Forestiere*) in Loughton and district went there, to be measured for frocks and gowns for presentation as debutantes, garden parties, and balls, so Ida Butler Harris knew everyone in society Loughton. There was not much in the way of off-the-peg sales. I declare an interest, in that my mother was a bespoke dressmaker, who worked for Gumpright's in Clapton Square, typical of the small inner London concerns that supplied fashionable shops like Ida Butler Harris's.

After The Shrubbery was sold, Ida and her nephew and grand-nephew lived in the large house behind the shop (half of this house is still there). The nephew, Dennis senior, living there at the time of the national registration in 1939, gave his occupation as 'writer of fiction', but I strongly suspect that in itself was fiction, as his son says he was later (and possibly was even then) an MI6 agent, parachuted into Vichy France to assist the Resistance, and later still, an interrogator of supposed collaborators in liberated Paris.



The Shrubbery, road frontage, 1930

The grand-nephew (also named Dennis – he changed it to Luthfi later) grew up in Loughton, and remembers playing in and around the two gardens, going to children's parties at Loughton Lodge and other big houses, and being taught to ride at Gerard van der Gucht's riding stables behind the Wake Arms (lately the Epping Forest Motel). He remembers the Forest with great affection, and particularly during the leaf fall. He also remembers the entertaining of Loughton grandees at The Shrubbery, including the reclusive widow, Emma Fletcher, of The Dragons.



The Shrubbery, rear garden, 1937 (L o' Meagher)

Her Ibach grand piano was then sold, and the buyers were Michael Flanders and Donald Swann.

So next time you listen to *The Slow Train* or *Have some Madeira, m'dear*, there may be a little bit of Loughton in it!

CHRIS POND

My favourite seaside place

Terry Carter's article on 'Bertram the Clown on Clacton Pier' (*Newsletter* 214) sent my mind racing back to the seaside holidays of my childhood. In 1946, just after the war, we children had our first seaside holiday which was at the Butlins holiday camp at Clacton (actually Jaywick). As I was only 7, I don't have many memories of this apart from ghastly Brown Windsor Soup in the vast dining hall and my father taking very early morning swims in the freezing open-air pool.

Things vastly improved in 1947. My father was a telephone engineer and one of his colleagues had transferred to Kent. His wife had opened a boarding house in Broadstairs and we were to go there for our summer holiday! And we did so every year for the next six years. It seems that my parents had known

Broadstairs quite well in their courting days which probably helped with the decision.

So began my lifetime love of this small seaside town, sandwiched between Margate and Ramsgate with, in those days, some pretensions to gentility and historic associations with Charles Dickens who spent his summers there in the early part of his career.

Our boarding house was at the top of the town, near the station, so with full board in the early days we flew down the hill to the beach in the morning, reluctantly trudging up at lunchtime and, after rushing down in the afternoon, crawled up in the evening. The beach was paradise. Beautiful sand, safe bathing and my brother and I helped one of the elderly boatmen who rowed visitors round the bay for 6d. Our reward was a free ride, but we had to row! Photographers from Sunbeam Photos roamed the beach taking photos which were displayed for purchase at a kiosk on the beach the following day. All the photos in our albums from those years come from Sunbeam – few could afford a camera in those days.

After dinner and refreshed we would look for entertainment and if we fancied a bus ride on one of East Kent's unusual to us low-bridge Guys or Leylands, with the four on one side seating upstairs, we could sample the delights of Dreamland at Margate or Merry England at Ramsgate.

Merry England was all that remained of the old SECR Ramsgate Sands Railway station and a spin off from this was a ride on a small electric railway from the village of Dumpton in the old railway tunnel down to the sands.

In Broadstairs we were just in time to see a local legend whose life is still remembered by a memorial plaque in a cliff-top garden.

Henry Summerson was born in London in 1876 and started his career as an entertainer at 7 years of age. In those days black-face minstrel troupes were very popular, their performances based on the songs of Stephen Foster, using ukuleles, banjos and harmoniums for musical accompaniment. They are quite rightly seen now as insensitive but you cannot judge the past by the standards of today and they were then a legitimate form of entertainment and I doubt if Summerson or any of the hundreds of other minstrel troupes thought they were doing anything other than entertaining the public.

However, in 1895 Henry Summerson arrived in Broadstairs with Uncle Godfrey's Minstrel Troupe and played there for every season until 1900. From 1901 he had his own troupe, 'Uncle Mack and His Minstrels'. He became so popular that he gained permission to erect a small stage by the main steps in the main bay and also had performances on the sands. In 1916 he volunteered for the army and although he was 40 was accepted. In the Second World War he left the sands, giving concerts to help war charities and National Savings.

He came back to Broadstairs in 1947 to cheering crowds and pouring rain and performed on the pier with the sides of his stage being tarpaulins which shook and rattled in the wind. But it was memorable as being very musical and colourful with all the male

cast wearing bright red costumes and mortar boards. But this was his last season and the following year it was announced in the local press that he would not be returning. On 4 January 1949 his wife died and he followed her a month later on 5 February. So I was just in time to see Uncle Mack, Broadstairs' favourite entertainer for 52 years.

We always called the pier the 'jetty'. In truth it is nothing like a pier because it has no water under it and is a solid structure protecting the harbour. Dickens called it a 'queer old wooden pier'. It was built originally in 1490 and destroyed three times in 1763, 1767 and 1774 by storms. The wooden one I remember from 1947 has been rebuilt and encased in concrete, but looks very similar.

Other entertainment facilities in Broadstairs were the Bohemia Theatre in the High Street (now a car park) with traditional seaside shows and two cinemas that I remember and, of course, the bandstand. There was the Garden on the Sands, later the Pavilion, where in previous times frigates for Nelson's navy had been built, and the Albion Hotel which was too exclusive and expensive for us.

An excursion on a 49 bus to Ramsgate allowed visits to the aforementioned Merry England funfair and also to what was at first the intriguing HMS *Bounty*, no less, tied up alongside the harbour wall. We didn't know then that *Bounty*, made of wood, had been burnt by the mutineers long ago off Pitcairn Island. This iron vessel with three masts seemed just the thing but, on boarding it, we found that it was just another (floating) amusement arcade!

We could visit the North Foreland lighthouse on a little Dennis Ace bus which happily started its journey from right outside our 'digs'. Dad would ask the driver if we could sit up front with him on what was I suppose a tool box! The bus negotiated the High Street fairly easily then threaded through the very narrow Albion Street to head out towards Kingsgate and the North Foreland on an exciting undulating cliff-top road. We would climb up to the lamp at the top of the lighthouse or, if the trip was taken in the evening, sit outside the Captain Digby pub with our crisps and lemonade. I always drive this route on my visits to recapture the thrill of those first bus rides.



July 1949 saw the arrival of the Viking ship in the main bay (quickly renamed Viking Bay), after sailing all the way from Norway. This was to remember the legend of the landing of Hengist and Horsa in Kent 1,000 years before. The council had the advantage of the great increase in visitors brought by the event, but then decided that they had nowhere to to display the

ship so it went to Pegwell Bay near Ramsgate where it can still be seen.

With Bleak House (renamed from Fort House because Charles Dickens used it for summer holidays) lowering over the harbour on the northern side of the bay and the Tartar Frigate pub nestling below near the Jetty with its crooked look-out station, very little has changed over 70 years. The jetty was rebuilt but in a way very similar to the previous one and coastal defences have taken away the cave under the southern cliff that we used to row into at high tide, but, unlike all the places in which I worked in London, which have all been totally redeveloped, Broadstairs remains mostly unchanged and I love to revisit almost every year.



Bleak House and the pier, September 2017

Most of the south coast holiday places no longer call themselves seaside resorts but 'coastal towns', but Broadstairs remains very popular during the summer. It is a shorter season now because children have to be back in school at the beginning of September. In my day we often holidayed there in September. So, in September 2017, my brother, sister and I celebrated 70 years since first going there with a short break, rediscovering old haunts and retelling the stories of those long-past holidays.

TED MARTIN

Members' meeting December 2017

At the December Members' Meeting, the talk on how the shops in Loughton had changed generated a lot of discussion. Obviously change in the High Road is an ongoing process and members might like to look at the website <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4018692/What-death-high-street-shops-says-Britain-today.html> which examines recent shop closures in the High Road.

JOHN HARRISON

New on the High Road

The Standard has returned!



Fireplaces revealed in the Wagon Patisserie

Photographs taken by the Editor, 26 December 2017

Low's Estate



Twenty years after the publication of Alison Whiting's book *The Loughton Roding Estate – from cattle-grazing to double-glazing* (LDHS 1998) it is good to see that the brickwork indicating 'Low's Estate' can still be seen on Roding Road (photograph taken in August 2017).

THE EDITOR

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