

NEWSLETTER 223

DECEMBER 2019/JANUARY 2020

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57th Season

The Francies family and transport part 5: Francies Motor Services (FMS)

In 1935 Will Francies founded Francies Motor Services with premises at 220a High Road, Loughton. From December 1937 to February 1941 he kept a meticulous scrapbook of the monthly advertisements he placed in the *West Essex Gazette* and the *Loughton Advertiser*. It makes interesting reading now – in May 1938 you could book a 25-mile 'Country Tour' by Austin Saloon (4 passengers) for 12s 6d or Daimler Limousine (7 passengers) for £1.

In April 1939 the tone of the adverts changed, with reference to National Service.

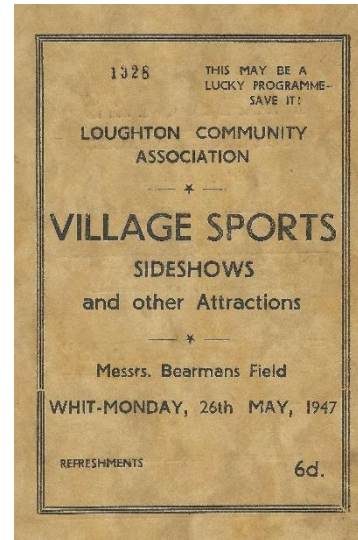


In February 1940 there was mention of evacuation.



During the war Will once drove Jacob Epstein up to London during a raid.

After service in the Merchant Navy (see *Newsletters* 200 and 201 for his wartime diary) Will came back to his car hire firm in 1944 which now occupied The Old Forge next to Diggen's. In May 1947 he had a full-page advert in the programme produced by Loughton Community Association for their Village Sports, sideshows, etc, held on Bearman's Field.



The photo below from 1949 shows, left to right, an Austin 12/6 of 1936, a Daimler probably from 1931, a Daimler 1936/7 and a third Daimler 1935 model. The two right-hand cars I'm told are 'Junk-Head' Daimlers notorious for their trail of blue smoke. Will's daughter Valerie tells me that FMS also shared a hearse with Diggen's. The figure on the right is the owner, Will Francies, and, on the left, one of his two driver/mechanics, either Dick Boon or Max (surname unknown).



In 1952 Will took his wife Gladys down to Rye driving a 1926 Humber Tourer 12/25. This same car won 1st Prize in the Loughton carnival that year and its occupants dressed in what we could find of approximately 1926 costume. On the next page, pictured from the left are Will Francies, Joan Francies (his niece), Valerie Francies (his elder daughter), and Brian Astley (future son-in-law). The photo was taken outside Will's home, 22 Brooklyn Avenue. Valerie recently reminded me that in the carnival procession

we were followed by the Dagenham Girl Pipers. I do remember driving round the cricket field as part of a procession.



At some point Will was a member of the Chigwell Road Safety Council and the Loughton Chamber of Trade.

It was hard being on call 24 hours a day, and in 1952 Will sold Francies Motor Services to Thomas Lloyd.

Grateful thanks to John Harrison for identifying and dating the cars and to Valerie Lightfoot, Carol Warren and Maureen Farrent for providing photos and information. Above all to Sue Golding for searching attics, family albums and diaries, scrapbooks and local archives.

Joan Francies

A few memories of my beloved Buckhurst Hill (or Haddock v Eggs and Bacon), part 2

Those reading this may not know that, at the southern end of Kings Place, just inside the forest where the children's playground is now, under their feet is an underground air-raid shelter, and when the war was over the entrance was filled in. Also, on the green opposite St John's church between the top of Russell Road and St John's Terrace is another shelter.

During the war at Buckhurst Hill, and I suppose all over the country, different days were set aside to collect money for the war effort, for example, War Weapons Week, National Savings Week, Spitfire Week, Dig For Victory Week, etc. During one of these weeks at St Stephen's some members of the church assisted by the local British Legion began to organise a pantomime in St Stephen's church hall to help the war effort – this was around Christmas 1944. The show was to be called *Dick Whittington*. I can remember some of the cast, Miss Bennington, who lived at 79 Albert Road, played the part of Dick, and the cat was played by Arthur Willis who was butler and general dogsbody to Miss Read,* who lived in a big house halfway between Buckhurst Hill station and Swinn's Corner.

An incident occurred in Lower Queen's Road at the house of Mr Dickie Pegrum, an event which, I believe, illustrates the life and times that we lived in. The Pegrums were a good hardworking family and

they lived in the same insanitary conditions that we did. The houses were condemned even before the Second World War, and this was in the late 1940s. A man by the name of Duckworth used to collect the rents every week and this particular night knocked on Mr Pegrum's door. The door opened partly and there was a bang and Mr Pegrum disappeared through the floorboards which were rotten with dry rot. Anyway, you could imagine the scene; after that Mr Duckworth promised to repair the damaged floor and, behold, he came one day with, guess what, a venetian blind, which he tore apart and patched up the big hole.

Oh, yes, times were hard during and after the war. and I would like to illustrate, if I can, just how hard. I left school on 28 March 1945 and went to work as tea boy and labourer for Donald Heard, whose brother Harry ran a small builder's firm opposite the 'British Queen' in Queen's Road. The wages were £1 3s 6d a week for 44 hours, and after about two months I got a rise of 1s 4d which made it up to £1 4s 10d a week. To save my 2d a day fare to Loughton I used to walk there and back.

E G Perry ran the builder's yard at what is known locally as Perry's Corner; he was a councillor and also a school governor. I shall never forget when, around 1941, he came to Princes Road school and asked Johnnie Walker, who was headmaster there, if there was a boy who lived near him who could take his son Brian to and from school. For this I got the princely sum of 6d a week. My mother soon stopped this because I was wearing out my shoes doing it. Perry said to me one day, whilst I was sitting in his house waiting for his son to finish his dinner, 'Goodey, would you like some fruit?' I said, 'Yes, please, sir.' He led me out into the back garden, looked up at a winter apple tree and said: 'If you can find one that is edible, you can have it.' He finished up as the head of Essex County Council [actually a county councillor]. I believe, looking back to that incident, my politics were determined on that day.

One man who comes to my mind was a parasite. His name was Jack Haley, who every Sunday ran the crown and anchor board down the 'Black Gate'. He made many hundreds of pounds from the local boys' gratuity pay after fighting for their country. Most of their money finished up in this man's bank account. He bought himself a house out of the proceeds down Tuttlebee Lane (Pig Shit Alley) and was found dead there one day in the late 40s. He left over £4,000 which in those days was a fortune.

Before the war it was very rare to see any motorised transport on the roads in this part of Buckhurst Hill. I believe W C French, the local civil engineers, had some primitive-looking lorries but mainly horses and tip-bucket carts. Also I remember the Gas Light and Coke Company had an even more strange-looking lorry that was driven by steam. We could in those days play quite safely in the road, games like 'hot rice', 'jump polly wagtail' or, as sometimes called, 'high jimmy knacker', plus hopscotch – even bicycles were rare: one I remember was that of the lamplighter: who also carried a ladder with him.

Buckhurst Hill did not change a lot during the war. I can recall, all the street lights were turned out, of course, and black-out curtains put up. Car head lights had an attachment fitted to them to subdue the light, even hand torches had a filter on them. I used to go with my Gran at that time to George Lane on Saturday mornings. We would jump on the steam train and her first stop was the 'Railway Bell' for a drink, come out of there and then call in the butcher's who was at that time Norwood's. Next stop, the 'George', next to the Majestic, and so home. I used to love it, those memories are still vivid in my mind. Gran had a large family and originally came from Woodbridge, Suffolk. She died in 1945 and the last I saw of her was lying in her coffin in the middle room at number 65 Albert Road, sadly no more.

It's strange, how a boundary railway line or parallel, determines class. Buckhurst Hill was no exception. We lived 'below the line', those 'up the hill' lived well because they were the cream of society! I shall never forget in the mid-late forties, delivering meat from Piggott's to these people, always over the top with their rations because they had the money, which of course speaks all languages. I had to always go to the back door – the servants' entrance. There was always on Saturday mornings a smell of stale haddock coming from their kitchens. Funny enough when I delivered amongst our people, there was always a smell of fried bread and eggs and bacon. These people often invited me to have a taste, especially Florrie Wragg's mother.

Buckhurst Hill is in the county of Essex and lies roughly 10–11 miles NE of Charing Cross. It was and I suppose still is to a degree a sleepy old place. But alas most of the originals that I knew have either passed on or moved away. The shops are mainly situated on the main road, Queen's Road, running from west to east down the heart of Buckhurst Hill. This area along with other towns and villages has become commercialised in recent years. I would like to recall some shops that I can remember as a boy. A few doors below the 'Prince [of Wales]' on the southern side of Lower Queen's Road we had a general store run by a Mrs Clark assisted by her daughter, Mrs Cousins, who later married George Durham. Next door was Mr and Mrs Hibbert who also ran a general shop. Over the road from the 'Prince', we had a fish and chip shop, ran by Mr Shuttlewood; it was closed during the war because of bomb damage. We cross over the railway line, which in those days had level crossing gates, before electrification in 1947. Just above there we had the coal wharf where Mr Hales and Freddie Wood (Bottles) worked.

At the bottom of Princes Road we had Murray's the bakers, he was a Scotsman. Next door we had the paper shop ran by Mr P A Moore. Next to that, we had Woollard's the chemist; next door to that we had a shoe shop run by Mr Wedge. Next door was a tobacconist's run by Mr and Mrs Laurie Rorke; next to that was the International Stores. Next to that was Mounfield's the ironmongers; next to that was Kruger Richards, the greengrocer; next door was the barber's owned by Mr Bob Judd; beyond him was Toone's the newsagents – he also had a shop in front of Roding

Valley station. Next to him was Phelps the printers; next door was Collier's the drapers.



Murray's and Moore's at the bottom of Queen's Road

Going up was a sweetshop run by a Mrs Wilson; there was a little shop next door, I believe, though to be honest I'm a little vague on this. Next a Mr Dadd, optician. Next, there was Yeowell's the butchers; next to that his brother ran an ironmonger's. Then there was John Metson, clothiers, Pelly House Club, Ellis's the shoe shop, Underwood's the undertakers and Tommie Heard the builder. In a small house was Mr Dawson, who was a milkman; next to that was a UD depot with a shop in front run at that time by Miss Florrie Wragg. Crossing over Kings Place (Sweep Street) we had Digby's the greengrocer; next door was Ely's the radio shop; next to that we had Mrs Tucker running a draper's shop; next to that was either Sandy Harris or Mr Wild, the butchers; a hundred yards up, the Co-op had their two shops, a butcher's run by Ken Searle and a grocer's. Opposite was, and still is, a parade of shops that I don't know too much about.

Then there was Sorrell's the greengrocer. Mr Gander kept the fishmongers; he was a warden in the warden's post at the eastern side at the top of Forest Edge. Then there was Green's Stores run by Miss Greaves and Hobley's the bakers. Over Kings Avenue we come to the 'British Queen' run then by Mr Palmer. Down to Awty's, the watch and clock dealer; next the cobbler's and a clothes shop ran by Madame Bette. Gould's the corn chandlers and Matthews the chemist; back over Victoria Road was Swinn's the clothiers, known as Swinn's Corner.



The Railway Tavern

Next door, was Harrison's the grocers; next to that was a furniture shop run by Mrs Nichols; next to that was Bonsall's the butchers, later to be run by Reg Piggott. Mr Clements had the sweet shop next to the [Railway] tavern run by Mrs Annie Owen.

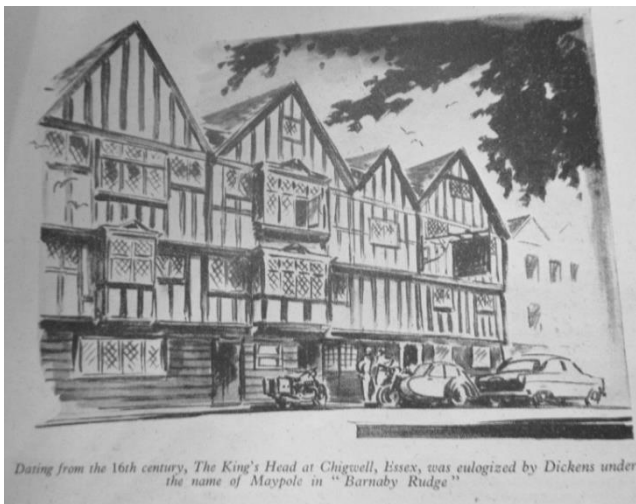
Over the level crossing, was a sweet shop run by Mr Shuttlewood, whose brother ran the fish and chip shop. Next to that was another cobbler's run by Mr Stevens; next door was Wilson's the butcher's, before

that it was a baker's run by Mrs Sapsford who lived on the railway bridge on Palmerston Road. Someone can fault this by naming others, but, as I said this is how I saw it. **Jim Goodey**

*Elizabeth Catherine Read (1860 –1955), daughter of builder John Read, of Suffolk House, 11 Victoria Road (demolished).

Motorcycle medley

Motorcycle and sidecar in Chigwell



At the King's Head, Chigwell. The caption says: 'Dating from the 16th century, The King's Head, Chigwell, Essex, was eulogised by Dickens under the name of [The] Maypole in Barnaby Rudge.'

From The Motorcycle of 21 August 1958.

Motor Cycling during the Great War

CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE MOTOR BUS – The Epping Rural District Council have decided to lodge an appeal with the Local Government Board, urging that a restriction be placed upon the invasion of the country by motor omnibuses. It was stated that hundreds of motor buses visited the district one Sunday recently, and some unseemly scenes outside public houses were the result. The excessive petrol consumption of these vehicles and their shocking effect upon the roads were also urged. Motorists who have been told for months past that petrol will be unobtainable will be interested to hear the fate of the thirsty pleasure bus. *Motor Cycling* – 6 June 1916

THE LITTLE THAT COUNTS – In an inquest at Loughton recently the coroner remarked that 'proof of exceeding the 20-mile limit would *prima facie* be evidence of recklessness.' At 19¼ mph, presumably, the evidence would be unacceptable. *Motor Cycling* – 14 September 1915.

Submitted by **John Harrison**

Accident in Loughton

An inquest was held a few days ago at the Three Kings' Heads [sic], Loughton, Essex, before Hugh Lewis, Esq, Coroner, on the body of Deborah Cain.

Mr John Davies, of Woodford, surgeon, was called to attend the deceased at the Plume of Feathers public-house in Loughton; her right arm was fractured and there were various bruises in other parts of her body, which in witness's opinion occasioned her death.

William Hicks, a labourer, saw the coach on which the deceased was seated, coming at a gentle pace down the hill, heading into Loughton; it had not passed him many yards before he heard someone call out 'hold fast', which he supposed was the coachman; on turning round witness saw

the coach overturned; witness assisted in conveying the deceased to the Plume of Feathers.

William Higgins gave the same testimony as the preceding witness, and added that the horses appeared very unmanageable, although the coachman had prevented them from going fast down the hill, which, in his opinion, caused the coach to run on the bank and overturn.

Charles Hinde, of Brickwall House, Esq, stated, that the deceased's husband was his gardener, and that on hearing of the accident he had written to Mrs Nelson, the proprietor of the coach, and received an answer, expressive of deep regret at the unfortunate circumstance, with an intimation that every thing should be done by herself and her partner, as far as possible, to make reparation for it, by paying every expence [sic] attendant on it.

Verdict – Accidental Death, Deodand on the horses, 30s and on the coach 30s

From the *Morning Chronicle*,
11 February 1823

A couple of points of interest - this was 10 years before the Loughton by-pass (the Epping New Road) was opened, so coaches were still descending Goldings Hill, through the horse pond probably. The Plume of Feathers was still in its old position, at the corner of Englands Lane and Lower Road; it had not moved up the hill to its present position. The 'Three Kings' Heads' is a bit of a mystery. Coroners' investigations in Loughton always took place at the Kings Head, so perhaps this was a temporary renaming. And the deodand was a sum of money forfeited by whatever had been the cause of a human death, assessed on the value of the instrument, in this case the coach and horses drawing it. **Chris Pond**

Christmas fare on the Eastern Counties Railway

The following is the bill of Christmas fare delivered at the London station of the Eastern Counties Railway from the 18 to 25 December 1861 – oxen, 1,498; sheep 9,247; pigs, 620; calves, 181; turkeys, 6,641; geese, 3,468; ducks, 1,561; hares and pheasants, 884; oysters, barrels of, 2,308; oysters in bags, 25 tons; meat, 357 tons; poultry, 350 tons; fish, 329 tons; Stilton and other cheeses, 495; boxes of oranges, 1,268; bags of nuts, 685; boxes of dried fruit, 2,053; boxes of almonds, 150; sacks of flour, 15,103; quarts of milk, 57,583; casks of beer, 4,129.

From *The Youth's Magazine* (slogan – 'upward and onward') of 1862, published at 56 Old Bailey, page 64.

Mary Cotton

Cotton is a somewhat unusual surname, but what is most unusual is that two Mary Cottons were living at the same time. One a notorious ne'er-do-well, and the other, of whom I am writing this short biography, not so well-known, but one of the most generous people living in Buckhurst Hill at the time.

Mary, daughter of the Reverend N Cotton of the Rectory, Thornsby, Northamptonshire, was born in 1820 and after the death of her father came to live in Buckhurst Hill in 1853. She lived with her cousin, Nathanael Powell and his large family in his house Luctons, which stood on the High Road.

The second half of the 19th century was a time of much public concern about the welfare of the poorer

members of society, made destitute by the Industrial Revolution in the cities of England. Having inherited the princely sum of £6000, Mary used the money for many good causes, both in the Buckhurst Hill community and the East End of London. At a time when the NSPCC was founded, General Booth had started the Salvation Army and Barnardo was working with homeless children in the East End, four local institutions were founded by Mary Cotton:

The Buckhurst Hill Mothers' Meeting – held for 20 years, this provided the labouring poor with cheap underclothing and sheeting on easy economical terms.

A boarding school for girls over 14 – this establishment gave them a domestic training in the hope of finding employment.

Penny readings at the assembly rooms in the Roebuck – these were held monthly, at a cost of one penny to hear the 'aristocracy' read uplifting literature.

The Maternity Society – for all the poor of the parish.

Mary Cotton was a great benefactor to the local Anglican community. Some of Mary's relatives were instrumental in getting St John's church built in the 1830s and in 1890 Mary paid for the small hall to be erected which is now called the Mary Cotton Hall.

She also helped with the cost of the Memorial Mission Chapel, now St Stephen's Church, and paid off the debt on the Church Restoration Fund.

When the Prince of Wales married Princess Alexandra, Mary helped to organise a dinner on the green in front of the Roebuck, for 100 adults and 200 children of the local district. The day ended with a bonfire, fireworks and music.

In association with the Buxton family, Mary invited 250 women and their children from Bethnal Green to travel to Buckhurst Hill by train, being met at the station by the Yeomanry Band, and marched up the hill to the Buxtons' home, Knighton, for dinner and fairground amusements.

After many years of deteriorating health, Mary died on 26 November 1898. Her friends in St John's Church installed a stained-glass window in loving memory of a most generous benefactor to the church. She is buried in St John's churchyard.

Barbara Blossom

Barbara was a much-loved resident of Buckhurst Hill and retired teacher at Woodford County High School. She passed away in 2018 (Ed).

An easy way to remember...?

Genealogy of the Royal Family of England – Queen Victoria is the niece of William the fourth, who was the brother of George the fourth, who was the son of George the third, who was the grandson of George the second, who was the son of George the first, who was the cousin of Anne, who was the sister-in-law of William the third, who was the son-in-law of James the second, who was the brother of Charles the second, who was the son of Charles the first, who was the son of James the first, who was the cousin of Elizabeth, who was the sister of Mary, who was the sister of Edward the sixth, who was the son of Henry the eighth, who was the son of Henry the seventh, who was the cousin of Richard the third, who was the uncle of Edward the fifth, who was the son of Edward the fourth, who was the cousin of Henry

the sixth, who was the son of Henry the fifth, who was the son of Henry the fourth, who was the cousin of Richard the second, who was the grandson of Edward the third, who was the son of Edward the second, who was the son of Edward the first, who was the son of Henry the third, who was the son of John, who was the brother of Richard the first, who was the son of Henry the second, who was the cousin of Stephen, who was the cousin of Henry the first, who was the brother of William Rufus, who was the son of William the Conqueror.

Easy, isn't it?

From *The Youth's Magazine* (slogan – 'upward and onward') of 1862, page 80, published at 56 Old Bailey.

Police trap in Essex

There will probably be a police trap between Passingford Bridge (near Abridge) and Stapleford Tawney, in Essex on Bank Holidays, for the future; there is a good, straight road, and police have been observed measuring the distance.

There was one in the vicinity on Easter Monday. 'A FRIEND.'

From *Motor Cycling* of 2 June 1914
Submitted by **John Harrison**

A rural idyll?

The road from Chipping Ongar for its entire length runs in close contiguity to the river Roding, and in not a few places the views upon this pretty little stream are attractive, particularly between Chigwell and Chigwell Lane Station, where from the bridge the stream appears fringed with willow trees of considerable growth, and with its banks edged with a tangle of rushes and reeds. A little backwater here – how formed it is difficult to say – runs back a short distance into the meadow. Through the trees we have the bright level verdure of the meadows, with well-timbered hedge-rows here and there, and in the distance the low, swelling, tree-clad hills. But at Chigwell the nearness to London is manifest, for barbed wire fences appear, and notices that trespassers will be prosecuted on many a trunk abound, but do not adorn. Chigwell village is in these days chiefly celebrated as being the spot described by Dickens in *Barnaby Rudge*...

From *Essex: Highways, Byways and Waterways* second series, by Charles Raymond Booth Barrett, published by Lawrence and Bullen, 1893

Common or Garden Cows

What would you do if you found a cow in your front garden? Woodford-born artist Karen Humpage recalls the days when cows wandered around the suburban streets adjoining Epping Forest. See how the cows munched their way through people's gardens. Find out how they brought traffic to a standstill, look at what they left behind on the pavement. See how their antics would cause no end of consternation for homeowners and shopkeepers, frustration for motorists, wonderment and fun for children, and something to bark at for dogs. With the help of local people's recollections, Karen's gently humorous writing paints pictures of cow/human interactions, upsets to the suburban idyll and the occasional far-fetched flight of fancy. All this is accompanied by Karen's gloriously colourful paintings complementing the text.

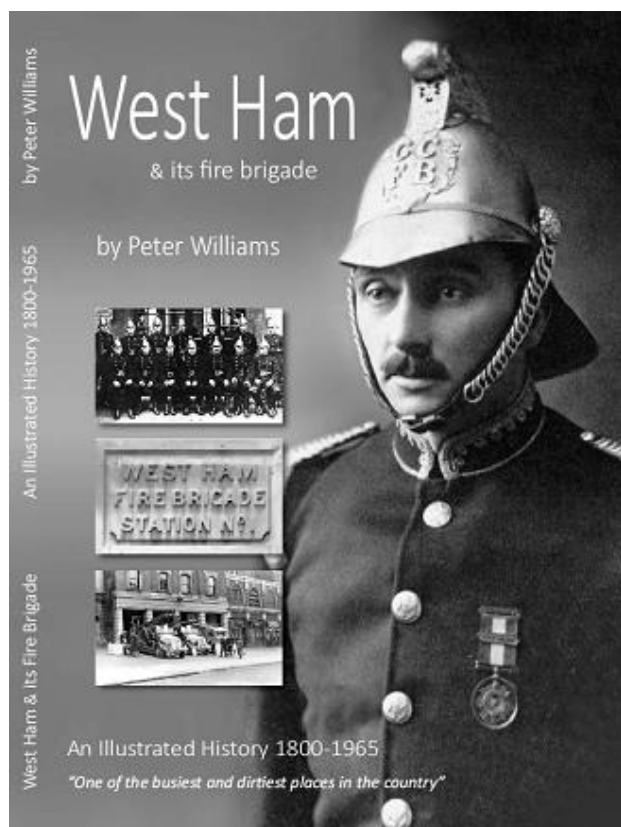
Not just a book for the people of Epping Forest, this book will resonate with anyone who lives near to an area of common land where cattle are grazed. And two of your editor's photos of Buckhurst Hill are included.



Defending the garden – Ardmore Lane in 1987
Common or Garden Cows by Karen Humpage is published by Matador/Troubador Publishing Ltd (ISBN 978-1-83859-017-8) for £12.99 and is available from the Loughton Bookshop or The View.

The Editor

West Ham & its Fire Brigade



This book looks at the development of West Ham as part of the wider East London area, and how West Ham's position influenced the development of its fire brigade.

From haphazard arrangements under the old parish vestry system in the 1850s, the book tells the story of the development of systematic public services, such as the fire brigade, during the period of rapid industrialisation and development after the coming of the railways in the late 1830s.

Many new industries were located in West Ham including those smelly, offensive and dangerous

trades no longer permitted in London proper after the mid-1840s. The area east of the River Lea saw many industrial innovations in petrol, chemicals and early plastics as well as the refining of products in the docks from the trade of the Empire, most notably rubber and sugar.

All this had an impact on the fire brigade, which had to professionalise rapidly to meet all the risks in the borough. West Ham Fire Brigade became known as an innovator in equipment and techniques – and faced its greatest challenge ever in the 1940s with the Blitz on the London docks.

After the period of the National Fire Service in the War, the Brigade returned to West Ham Council control and survived until April 1965 when it became part of the London Fire Brigade.

The author, Peter Williams, was born in Shropshire, moved to Merseyside as a teenager and then studied at Cambridge specialising in Historical Geography. Moving to London he embarked on a long career in public housing in Newham in the East End. He has had a passion for all things to do with the fire service since early childhood. He also loves anything to do with London history. Retiring in 2015, he now writes and lectures extensively on local and family history. He has also published numerous articles over 30 years on the history of the British fire service in specialist journals and is a member of the Strategic Board of the Fire Brigade Society. This is his first full-length book. He lives in Forest Gate.

About 140 pages, about 150 black and white and 15 colour photographs. ISBN 978-0-9934684-4-5.

The book is available for £14.99 + £2.95 UK postage (£17.94).

Contact Peter at pows.wanstead@gmail.com or send a cheque to Peter Williams, at 71 Lorne Road, London E7 0LL or Paypal to: petros.williams@btinternet.com

Charcoal Burners in Epping Forest

There is an article in the latest (Autumn 2019) issue of *Forest Focus* about the history of charcoal burning in Epping Forest. Sophie Lillington, Museum and Heritage Manager, gives an account of exactly what charcoal is, and its uses through time. *Forest Focus* is the free magazine for Epping Forest, available from Epping Forest Visitor Centres, libraries and forest tea huts. This subject was also covered in our *Newsletter* 184, January/February, 2010.

A useful website

Members might like to look at the website www.ianvisits.co.uk which has information about events on in London. One can sign up for a weekly e-mail which gives details of forthcoming talks, guided walks, etc, within London which could well be of interest to LDHS members.

John Harrison

Loughton Buses in 1952

I had my 80th birthday in June 2019 and among the family presents I received was a book from my niece who is very aware of my interests. She very cleverly chose from a secondhand transport bookshop a volume called *London 1952, Buses Trams and Trolleybuses*, by Philip Wallis, published by Ian Allan in 2001.

This hit the spot – it showed the London Transport vehicles that my 13-year-old self had ridden on and remembered so well. Most of the book is a record, supplemented by photographs, of six visits to London Transport operations by two transport enthusiasts in 1952.

Imagine my surprise when a chapter called 'Down the Spout' told of their ride on a 33 tram from Manor House to the embankment via the Kingsway Subway, exactly as my exciting Sunday afternoon jaunts with my brother and a friend in those days.

This was marvellous stuff and the book became very interesting, showing many pictures and telling the stories of the motor buses and trolleybuses from that far-off time, among them the pre-war, single-deck Q type with the underfloor engine on which I used to travel to Alexandra Palace on route 233.

But there were still more delights to come. On page 99 there was a photo I recognised. It was Church Hill in Loughton, showing the bus garage with an STD class Leyland Titan PD1 passing on its way to Leytonstone on route 20. The scene looks very different from today, but all the buildings are still there. The garage, built by London General shortly after the First World War (and soon to be a Lidl), had a maximum weekly complement of 41 buses, all Leyland Titan PD1s.



Church Hill 1952. Photo C Carter

I turned the page to be confronted with even more nostalgia: buses at High Beach. These included RTL1222 on route 35A, taking 1hr 45mins to travel from Clapham Common to High Beach, and two private hire coaches, RF7 and RF25 having brought excursions to the Forest.

On the next page, there was a crammed Wake Arms forecourt with a Cravens bodied RT and another bodied by Park Royal on the summer Sundays route 38 extension. Next to them is Loughton's Leyland STD on route 20 and poking round the corner a single deck Leyland Tiger on route 242 to Enfield with another unidentified single deck bus in the background.

This is a book I will keep going back to. It tells of a time when we had an intensive, varied and very interesting transport system, 67 years ago. Oh Happy Days!



RTL1222 on route 35A at High Beach. Photo C Carter.

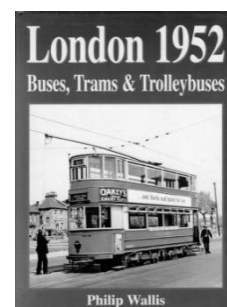


Private hire coaches, RF7 and RF25 at High Beach. Having brought excursions to the Forest, one seems to be in trouble. Photo C Carter



A crammed Wake Arms forecourt: from left, a Cravens bodied RT; another bodied by Park Royal, both on the summer Sundays route 38 extension; next, is Loughton's Leyland STD on route 20 and, poking round the corner, a single deck Leyland Tiger on route 242; with another unidentified single decker in the background. Photo C Carter.

I am very grateful to Crecy Publishing for permission to reproduce the photographs in this article. But sadly *London 1952, Buses Trams and Trolleybuses*, by Philip Wallis, originally published by Ian Allan in 2001 (ISBN 0-7110-2806-0) at 128pp, is now out of print but you might be able to find a copy in a secondhand bookshop, online or through your local library and it will be well worthwhile.



Ted Martin

Extensions, extensions...

Below is a picture of number 26 The Drive, built 1939, shown when the house was to be auctioned in 1951.

The second picture shows it today, after about half a dozen additions. Well, the chimney cowl and the garden wall look the same!



Photo courtesy of Barbara Martin

Chris Pond

Loughton in 1929

Loughton is a parish, on the borders of Epping Forest, amid rural and picturesque scenery, with two stations on the Woodford and Chipping Ongar branch of the London and North Eastern Railway, 11 ½ miles from Shoreditch and Whitechapel church, 5 south-east from Waltham Abbey, 8 north-west from Romford and 4 south-west from Epping, in the Epping division of the county, Ongar hundred, Waltham Abbey county court district, Epping union, and in the rural deanery of Chigwell, archdeaconry of Southend and Chelmsford diocese, and is within the Metropolitan police district. The parish consists of one long street, diverging off the high road from Woodford to Epping, and includes Debden Green, Upper and Lower Parks and York Hill, together with several other roads. The sewerage of the northern portion of this parish was carried out by the

Epping Rural District Council in 1890, from plans by Edmund Egan, esq, ARIBA at a cost of £6,500.

The parish is governed by an Urban District Council of twelve members, formed in April 1900, under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1895 (56 and 57 Vict c 73).

Gas is supplied by the Gas Light and Coke Co and water by the Metropolitan Water Board, Eastern District.

The church of St John the Baptist, erected in 1846, is a cruciform edifice of brick in the Norman style, consisting of chancel, nave, transepts, north porch and a low central tower containing a clock and 8 bells, of which the tenor weighs 20cwt; these date from 1866 to 1874, the 5th bell having been recast in the former year from two bells dated 1621 and 1655 respectively; the third was given by Mrs John Gott of Armley House, Leeds, Yorks, and the fourth in memory of Rev Felix Palmer MA; the sixth is a memorial to William Whitaker Maitland, esq and the seventh to Emma, wife of J C Rohweger, esq; the building was enlarged and partly reseated in 1877 and some of the windows are stained: the sacrarium is embellished with glass mosaic, known as 'opus sectile': there are 500 sittings. The church contains a list of rectors. The register of baptisms dates from 1673, marriages from 1675 and deaths from 1674. The living is a rectory, net yearly value £307, with 43 acres of glebe and residence, in the gift of Lt John Whitaker Maitland RN and held since 1915 by the Rev Peregrine Neave Maitland MA of Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

The church of St Nicholas, standing partly on the site of the original church, and erected in 1877 by Mrs Whitaker Maitland, in memory of William Whitaker Maitland, esq, her sons and all those who lie in the churchyard, is a building of rubble faced with stone, in the Early English style, and consists of chancel, rebuilt as a memorial chapel, nave, porch and a bellcot containing one bell: the brasses taken from the old church are now placed here, and include effigies to John Stonard, ob 1541, and his wives Joan and Catharine; another brass with the effigy of a man with a ruff round his neck, in the costume of the sixteenth century, and an inscription to William Nodes, gent, ob 1594, and six sons: the church is now a chapel of ease to the parish church: it will seat about 80 persons.

St Mary the Virgin is an ecclesiastical parish formed in 1887; the church, erected in 1871 and consecrated June 5 1872, is a building of stone in the Early English style, consisting of chancel, nave, aisles, south porch and a bellcot containing one bell: the north aisle was added in 1883 at a cost of £1000: the church will seat 500 persons, 350 sittings being free. The register dates from the year 1887. The living is a vicarage, gross yearly value £575, including an endowment of £50 yearly from the tithes of the parish church, in the gift of the rector of Loughton, and held since 1918 by the Rev Cyril Annesley Gell.

The Roman Catholic church of St Edmund of Canterbury, in Trap's hill, was erected in 1926-1927.

The Mission hall at Goldings Hill, erected in October 1889, is an iron building, seating 150 persons, and there are also Union and Wesleyan chapels and a Mission hall in High Road.

Lincoln Hall, in High Road, holding 300 persons, was erected in 1912 and presented to the Loughton Brotherhood by the late Henry Lincoln.

A Cemetery of two acres was formed in 1887 at a cost of about £800; it has a mortuary chapel, and is under the control of the Urban District Council.

The Public Hall, known as 'The Lopping Hall', erected in 1883 at a cost of about £3000, from the designs of Edmund Egan, esq, ARIBA of Loughton, with money paid over by the Corporation of London on the extinction of the lopping rights in the Forest, previously held by the inhabitants of the parish, is an edifice of brick in the Gothic style, with a

tower, and contains an assembly room, reading room and a library of over 3000 volumes; the building has been extended and now includes the offices of the Urban District Council and also a bank.

The Loughton Club, built in 1901, is a structure of red brick, erected by the Rev W Dawson MA for the benefit of the village, and consists of reading and billiard rooms and a large room used as a gymnasium and for concerts, etc.

The Metropolitan Police Station here, which stands on the High Road, is occupied by a section of the J division, who are in charge of Loughton and part of Buckhurst Hill.

There are six almshouses, founded in 1827 by Mrs Whitaker, for aged and infirm poor, and charities producing £30 yearly, left by various persons in small bequests, the interest amounting to sums of £1 and upwards.

Loughton formed a portion of the endowments bestowed by King Harold on Waltham Abbey and contained a part of the abbey lands until the dissolution of that monastery.

Queen Elizabeth is said to have visited the Stonards at this place in 1561.

The soil is clay; subsoil, sand. The chief crops are wheat, oats, peas and roots, but the land is chiefly pasture. The area is 3961 acres of land and inland water; the population in 1921 was 5749.

From Kelly's *Directory of Essex*, 1929

Early days of the cinema in Walthamstow

Various people carried out experiments with strips of photographs, to give the impression of movement on the screen, during the second half of the nineteenth century, and many readers will doubtless recall Robert Donat playing the part of William Friese-Green in one film of the 1940s. However, it is generally acknowledged that Thomas Edison, the American inventor, produced film strips in 1889 and that W K L Dickson demonstrated a projection apparatus called a Kinetoscope on 6 October of that year. Subsequently they made the first commercial showing of moving pictures in the world in New York on 14 April 1894.

At the same time, four other pioneers were experimenting – Lathan in New York with a Pantoptikon; the Lumiere brothers in Lyon, France, with their own film; Armat in Washington with the Vitascope, and R W Paul, who was an instrument maker in Hatton Garden, opened a studio in Muswell Hill. He was the first to sell apparatus and films, and made fifty films a year in the period 1900–1905.

The first commercial showing of motion pictures in Britain was by a Frenchman, Monsieur Trewey, using a Lumiere machine at the Polytechnic on 20 February 1896. R W Paul charged admission to his film show at Olympia in March 1896 and on 25 March transferred to the former Alhambra Theatre. These shows set the pattern for some years, for they were presented as part of the music hall programme.

So it was that the motion picture came to Walthamstow and very early in the period, too, for the first show was presented at the Victoria Hall on 10 June 1896, using a machine called a Vitagraphe. This was the result of the enthusiasm of an important pioneer in the film world called Edward George Turner (1872–1961) and his fee for the performance was two guineas. At the time he was apprenticed to a hairdresser but he gave this up to go into partnership with J D Walker to exhibit moving pictures.

In 1897 he began hiring out films and so became the first film renter. He also produced short films shot in the Walthamstow area, an activity he described as follows – ‘In those days we used to make a film in a day or so; if the

weather was fine perhaps in one day. We used to pay 7s 6d for our scenario and for these 200 feet films we used to pay actors perhaps ten shillings a day.’

The Walturdaw Company, with offices in Wardour Street, W1, was formed by Edward Turner, J D Walker and G Dawson in 1904 as the first film renting company in Britain. Edward Turner's enthusiasm and skill led him to invent (with W Holmes) the fire-proof gate, automatic shutters and spool boxes on film projectors, and to design and use the first iron operating box with automatic shutters. Later, Turner became the managing director of the Perforated Front Projection Screen Co Ltd, and of the Patent Fireproof Rear Projection Screen Co Ltd, both of which were Walthamstow firms.

Films in 1896 were made with static cameras and were generally of actual movement, news items and comedy. Trick photography and interest films appeared in 1898. The first film to tell a story was Edwin S Porter's *The Great Train Robbery* (1903). The length of films gradually increased from 40 feet (lasting forty seconds) in 1898, to 650 feet (lasting eleven minutes) in 1906, but of the thousands which must have been produced, only a very few exist today. The makers used to sell them to the showmen at 6d or 8d a foot and this probably explains why so few survive today. It illustrates also the importance of Edward Turner's scheme for hiring out films to showmen – a scheme which spread rapidly after 1906 so that by 1915 there were 242 renters in the country.

The period from 1906 to 1914 was one of consolidation for motion pictures. By 1912 there were 464 companies registered owning small cinemas or converted halls all over the country. The new cinemas catered for the people who patronised the music hall and the weekly, or even twice-weekly, film habit grew. The public loved it, queued for it, whistled when the film broke down, and leaned close to their sweethearts.

Besides the establishment of several cinemas, Walthamstow became important for the production side of films. The first film studio was built at Whipps Cross in 1910 and was used up to 1915. It was owned by the Precision Film Company of which little is known except that it made a film called *East Lynne* in 1915.

The second company was set up in what had been a roller skating rink in Hoe Street where the telephone exchange now stands near Grove Road. In 1913 the British and Colonial Kinematograph Co took over the rink with J B McDowell as director. He had worked with the Walturdaw Company before starting B and C in 1909 in East Finchley. In 1912 they produced the first feature film made on a distant location – *Tragedy off the Cornish Coast*. They introduced many other new production ideas such as using aeroplanes, making a series (five films on Dick Turpin), and were the first to produce a British film with hundreds of extras – *The Battle of Waterloo* (1913). The company started several famous stars on their careers including Jack Buchanan and Lilian Braithwaite.

The company's premises included a stage 150 feet by 60 feet by 12 feet and a part glass roof. They did their own processing at Endell Street, Long Acre, and films made at Hoe Street included *Another Man's Wife* (1915), *Auld Lang Syne* (1918) with Jack Buchanan, *Beautiful Jim* (1914), *Florence Nightingale* (1915), *From Shopgirl to Duchess* (1915), *Her Luck in London* (1917), with Violet Hopson, Chrissie White and Stewart Rome, *Midshipman Easy* (1915), and *Motherhood* (1916) with Lilian Braithwaite, Fay Temple and A V Bramble. These films were all between 1000 and 5000 feet in length.

One famous movie shot by J B McDowell early in 1916 and shown at the end of the year was *The Battle of the Somme*. Apparently stunt men were paid £4 10s a week and

sometimes received £30 for a difficult trick. After World War One, American companies dominated the market and British companies found it difficult to compete. B and C went into liquidation in 1924.

Another important studio was purpose-built in Wood Street in 1914 for the Cunard Film Co Ltd. Walleth Waller was producer and several films were made, but when Waller died in 1915 the company ceased. Next year, the studios were taken over by the Broadwest Film Company which had been formed in 1914 at Esher by Walter West and G T Broadbridge.

The first Walthamstow film was *The Hard Way* with Muriel Martin Harvey. Broadwest Films specialised in films of novels and successful stage plays and their two most popular stars, Matheson Lang and Violet Hopson, were engaged as a result of this policy. The former came with the entire West End cast for the filming of *The Merchant of Venice* and Miss Hopson joined Broadwest for the filming of Bancroft's play *The Ware Case*.

Ivy Close was another popular star and her first film with Broadwest was *The House Opposite* (1917). Other artists who worked for Broadwest included Cameron Carr, Gregory Scott, Adelaide Hayden Coffin, Clive Brook, Arthur Walcott and Poppy Wyndham. So popular were they that in 1920 Broadwest advertised that they could no longer distribute postcards of the players free of charge because of the tremendous demand and greatly increased cost of producing them.

Films produced by Broadwest included *The Adventures of Dick Dolan* (1918) with Violet Hopson, Gerald Ames and T Beaumont, *Honour in Pawn* (1917) with Helen Hayes and George Bellamy, *A Son of David* (1919) with Ronald Coleman, and *In Full Cry* (1919) with Stewart Rome and Pauline Peters. In an interview given in 1948, Walter West, the film producer, said that he gave Ronald Coleman his first part (as an extra) in the Broadwest studio. Subsequently, Coleman made three films for Broadwest – *Vi of Smith's Alley*, *Snow in the Desert* and *Son of David*. They were all released through E G Turner and were up to seven reels long and cost as much as £10,000 each. Walter West directed over 100 films and for the film making in Wood Street, extras were rounded up from nearby houses. A favourite spot for staging 'coach and horse' dramas was the cobbled yard of Carter Paterson's depot opposite the studio (now a milk depot).

The Broadwest studio stood in half an acre and had a studio stage on the first floor measuring 115ft by 45ft with workshops and laboratory underneath where films were processed. Soon after coming to Walthamstow, Broadwest decided to rent films to cinemas instead of selling them, and opened offices in Wardour Street, W1, for this purpose. Like B and C, Broadwest found things difficult after World War One, and was declared bankrupt in 1924. However, British Filmcraft Ltd took over the studio in 1926 and many films were shot locally in Epping Forest, Lloyd Park and nearby streets. Stars in this company included Matheson Lang, Isobel Jeans, Bromley Davenport and Kenneth McLaglen, younger brother of Victor McLaglen.

Two other companies occupied the Wood Street studio between 1931 and 1933, and then it became a factory, being burnt down in 1959. Another factory occupies the site now at 245 Wood Street.

We have all got our own tiny screen at home nowadays, but in the early days of films, Walthamstow had an important part to play in the industry's development.

By Gregory Tonkin from *The Best of Essex – an Anthology of Memory Articles and Photographs* compiled by E Scott and published by Egon Publishers Ltd, 1988.

For more details of cinemas see *Showtime in Walthamstow* by Gregory Tonkin, published by Walthamstow Historical Society in 1983, and *The Cinema in Leyton and Leytonstone* compiled by David Boote and published by Leyton and Leytonstone Historical Society in 2010.



Sadly, the Wanstead Kinema (shown here in 1961) has recently been demolished. Through the years it had many other uses, but flats now fill the site.

Submitted by Lynn Haseldine Jones

The Luckings of Loughton

From about 1905 to 1920, William Charles Lucking was in business with his father (Charles) as 'Suppliers of Eggs and Poultry'. The business was known as C Lucking and Son, and operated from Loughton. The business was carried on from the stables of Exel Lodge (later number 86) Church Hill. Both men were married, William being the only child of Charles and Catherine Sarah Lucking. William Charles and his wife Anna Jane had two children – Charles William Henry Lucking and Catherine Annie Lucking. CWHL was 12 years older than his sister. It was not unusual for several generations to live together at the same address, especially if it was a largish house, as Exel Lodge was. The 1911 census listed there all five of them living together.

The wholesale business was based on collecting, presumably under contract, of eggs and poultry from farms and smallholdings in Loughton's rural hinterland around and beyond Epping and Ongar, processing them, presumably in the stables behind Exel Lodge, and then selling them on to butchers and fishmongers in Loughton and district. Butchers in Loughton, though they brought in live animals by train in those pre-refrigeration days, and slaughtered them on their premises (in separate sheds, sometimes quite elaborate; the slaughterhouse of Bosworth's at number 2 Church Hill is extant), did not generally bring in live poultry; this was the preserve of middlemen like the Luckings. Fishmongers, of which

Loughton had three, also dealt in poultry and eggs. The Luckings certainly ran a horse and cart before the First World War; possibly converting to collection by van after, but for local delivery they used the rather splendid bicycle shown below. Note the unfortunate rabbit, also for delivery to a butcher's; the dog on the basket was presumably not for sale.



William Charles Lucking was killed in a road accident in 1920, and buried, after an inquest, in Loughton Town Cemetery. Charles the father followed in 1921. The grandson of Charles, Charles William Henry, did not continue the business after this double loss. He moved in as a lodger with Mrs Lena Freeman, who also lived in Church Hill. She was the proprietor of the Anglo-French Laundry, which occupied the site of what is now Brancaster Place (and pre-1996 was the Domextra water-softener works). He worked as a van man with the laundry, and eventually became a jobbing gardener. His sister was actually reported as missing, with her mother, in 1923, and went to live at White Notley, where she married William Ashby in 1942, having acted as companion to his mother previously. Descendants ended up in Australia.

Exel Lodge is extant, with little change externally.

Chris Pond and Andrew Turner

Correspondence

I really enjoyed reading the booklet about Alfred Russel Wallace's connection with the area. Thank you.



I live down the end of Forest Side, a cul-de-sac in Buckhurst Hill off the top of the High Road near

where the Roebuck used to be. I have a very old mulberry tree in my back garden which I am going to register on the *Morus Londinium* website – they are a historic rarity apparently and this conservation group aim to record each one within the M25. As part of the submission I have to provide any history about the site. I have a feeling that the houses on our cul-de-sac were built in the 1920s on a site previously occupied by a large house/mansion/stately home? But that's all I know. Can you help with a few extra little details for my background history perhaps? I have been told that mulberries were found on the perimeter of large country houses and so this would make sense.

Andrew Wakefield

Forest Side was built, I believe, in the 1930s. Before that time the area was occupied by a building known as Ormonde House (hence Ormonde Rise which is behind). The earliest trace I have found of the house is 1866 and I have seen a document of it being for sale in 1932 as 'one of the few remaining eligible sites in the popular residential neighbourhood ripe for immediate development of good class houses'.

It was quite a big house, with portico, dining room on the lower ground floor, vaulted wine cellar, two staircases and six bedrooms. The grounds were two acres, with stable, heated greenhouse, two summerhouses, *kitchen and fruit gardens*. There was access to the house not only from the High Road, but also a little alley from Gladstone Road, used by the gardener who lived in Gladstone Road (a Mr Root in the 1930s, would you believe!) – this alley was still visible until very recently; no doubt no-one knew why it was there. There is a plan of the house and gardens in the Essex Record Office. LDHS *Newsletter* 212 has a photo of the house, and details of its life as a hospital in the Great War.

I think your tree must have been planted in the 1860s, perhaps by the gardener for the occupant, who at that time was solicitor Alfred Henry Clapham (1831–1892) who is buried in the churchyard of St John the Baptist, Buckhurst Hill.

Editor

In the context of my search for information on Count Hans Moritz von Brühl (1736–1809), a friendly collaborator detected your article on his son George in your *Newsletter* 215, which was very interesting for me . . . By the way, the year of birth 1775 seems to be a misprint. [It should be] 1768, which is in accordance with the death announcement of 1855 in the *Spectator*, saying that George was in his 87th year.

May I add that I was also very pleased to find – completely unexpected – the article on 'The Loughton Declaration'. I am a Sudetenlander (born 1936) and it is rare to see such a short, well-balanced account, plus the details (new for me) of what has happened in Loughton in critical times.

Prof Dr P Brosche, Germany

The story of a Christmas postcard



The postcard says: 'With love and all good wishes for Christmas from E Donovan, The Red House, Buckhurst Hill, Essex.' (For more about the Red House, see *Newsletter* 205.) It is postmarked 21 December 1907 and sent to Miss E G Malton at 14 Jeffreys Road, Clapham. (The road still exists, but Victorian houses remain only on the odd-numbered side of the road, the even side has been redeveloped.)

Edith Mary Donovan was born in the St Pancras area at the end of 1873. Her father was James Donovan, railway porter, and her mother was Harriet Elizabeth (Cowtan; they married in 1865). It was a big family; older than Edith was Theresa (1866), Catherine Alice (1868), Henry James (1870–1874), and younger were Louisa Harriet (1875), Frederick William (1878), Arthur (1881), George Francis (1885) and Emmeline (1887). There may have been other children who died in infancy.

At the time of the 1881 census Edith was with her family in St Pancras. Her father was a railway porter; already her older sister was a servant at the age of 14. In 1891 at the age of 17, Edith was described as an 'envelop' worker, and her younger sister Louisa was a general domestic servant at 15. By 1901 I think I have traced her to Hunstanton in Norfolk, where she was a domestic laundry maid. No doubt her experience in such work enabled her to train young women and so she took up a position at the Red House in Buckhurst Hill. She was the Matron in 1909. Sadly she died at the age of 41 in 1915.

The postcard was sent to Elvin Gertrude Malton. She was born in Hull on 18 April 1870, the daughter of grocer/china dealer Henry Malton and his wife Jane. They were based at Church Street, Sculcoates. By

1901 Elvin was in Lambeth, as an assistant in a Home. By 1911 she was the Assistant Matron of the Anchorage Mission of Hope and Help, at Jeffreys Road, the role of which was 'To receive and assist penitent young women who have gone astray, otherwise of good character and lately fallen, whether pregnant or not. Especial provision for better class cases.' The 1911 census shows the Matron as Harriett Pye, Assistant Matrons Gertrude Malton and Lilian Normans, with 14 'inmates' from 17 to 31 years of age, with two babies.



It is not possible to say how the two ladies met, but Edith and Elvin would have had much in common, given their modest backgrounds and their shared experience of being Matron in such an establishment.

As mentioned above, Edith died at the age of 41 in 1915; Elvin had a much longer life. She died in 1970 reaching the age of 100 – she died in Yorkshire.

With many thanks to Paul Buckley for sharing the postcard, which he acquired on e-bay for £1.

Lynn Haseldine Jones



Keeping the cows at bay: see page 6

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