

A POSTCARD COLLECTION  
OF BOOKHAM

By

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Album 2

Pages 61 - 77



## The Bookhams

### Transport - Buses

During the worst floods in the district's history which caused widespread devastation on September 14 and 15, 1968 a further red RT was brought in during the crisis from Peckham garage. The bus is shown here awaiting its driver at Bookham Station terminus of route 418 before collecting waiting passengers and heading for Kingston. This is believed to have been the last instance of red Central Area vehicles being loaned to the Country Area, which practice had been commonplace at weekends in the immediate postwar years, until the advancement of private motoring through the late 1950s and subsequently made this no longer necessary.

The bottom picture taken c1970/80s is the AEC Swift bus operated by London Country (1969-1986.)





## The Bookhams

### Mrs Mary Chrystie

Mary Chrystie was born in 1838 in Marylebone. In 1859 she was living in Bookham with her widowed mother when she married John Alexander Chrystie, possibly a relative. His occupation in the marriage register is Capt, HM 1 Royals. After their marriage they moved to Elie in Fife where they are recorded in the 1861 census as living with his parents Alexander and Ann. It has been suggested that he was killed serving in the Indian army but the 1861 census records his occupation as retired army captain. Notwithstanding that, by 1871 Mary was widowed and living in Bookham with her mother and two unmarried sisters, Catherine and Selina. In 1889 her mother, Catherine, died.

It was after this date that Mary Chrystie embarked on her plans to buy up places selling alcohol and turn them into dwelling houses. Examples were the Saracen and Ring and the Fox alehouse. She also built the Merrylands Hotel and the Victoria Hotel as temperance hostleries only offering non alcoholic beverages. She acquired the land where Maddox Lane and Burnhams Road now stand and built several large properties which were rented out, all with restrictions on the sale of alcohol. These included the houses now known as Foxmead, Oaken Hill and Wolverley. Other land nearby was sold as building plots.

In 1895 Lady Litchfield of Bookham Grove and Mrs Mary Chrystie opened the Mission Hall in Church Road by its junction with Sole Farm Road. The Mission became a constituted Congregational Church in 1911.

The postcard from Frith's of the Merrylands Hotel is dated 1910. The picture dated 1902 is of Fife Lodge which was named after where Mary lived with her husband in Scotland. Fife Lodge stood at the entrance to Fife Way and was occupied by Mrs Chrystie and her widowed mother-in-law for over 40 years.



Fife Lodge, Church Road c 1900



## The Bookhams

### Mrs Mary Chrystie

Mrs Mary Chrystie is remembered as a kind and considerate person, particularly to the poor and underprivileged to whom she would serve hot broth at times of harsh winter weather. In common with her sister-in-law she was an ardent temperance worker and a supporter of the Band of Hope. Her beliefs persuaded her to buy local inns, close them and then convert them to residential properties imposing a condition that they could not be used again to sell alcohol. She was manager of Bookham School, checking registers and paying regular visits to inspect work and to listen to singing and recitations by the children. At times Mrs Chrystie would pay school fees for children of poorer parents.



An unused postcard from Frith's of the Victoria Hotel. The picture shows Fife Lodge on the left hand side, on the right is Bookham Gables. Mr Alfred Stileman Bostock, a civil servant, occupied Fife Lodge from 1920 until the late 1930s when he moved to Park View. During the early part of the war he was Evacuation Officer for Bookham; he died in 1944. Fife Lodge stood derelict for some time until the development of Fife Way in the late 1960s when it was demolished.





## The Bookhams

### Mrs Mary Chrystie

Mrs Chrystie built Victoria Hall in East Street for the young and she organised a Penny Bank in an attempt to encourage people to save what they could from their meagre wages; paying in was made at the Victoria Hotel once a month. Mrs Chrystie was a wealthy woman since in addition to the generous manner in which she helped the less fortunate, she acquired Bookham farmland as it became available on the market and built property on that land. In addition she arranged temperance outings to the seaside by rail from Leatherhead, which was the nearest railway station at the time.

With the coming of the railway Mrs. Chrystie engaged Andrew West to build a large temperance hotel in the same year, 1885 opposite the station calling it Merrylands Hotel. The hotel had 21 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and dining accommodation for 200 people. In separate tea houses they could cater for 1,000 children and 300 adults. There was also stabling for 10 horses as well as 3 double coach houses

The hotel had been built on part of Lonesome Farm. During the summer months Mrs Chrystie would invite people from the east end of London to the hotel grounds where they had tea and enjoyed the swings, roundabouts, donkey rides and the bric-a-brac stall. They would also enjoy walking on the common.

Mrs Mary Chystie was a familiar figure in the village, easily identified by the widow's hat that she always wore, giving the impression of a nun. She lived in Bookham Village and devoted herself, her time, influence and wealth for the good of the community. The postcard dated late 1800s is of the Merrylands Hotel with the stables/Coach Houses on the left hand side.





## The Bookhams

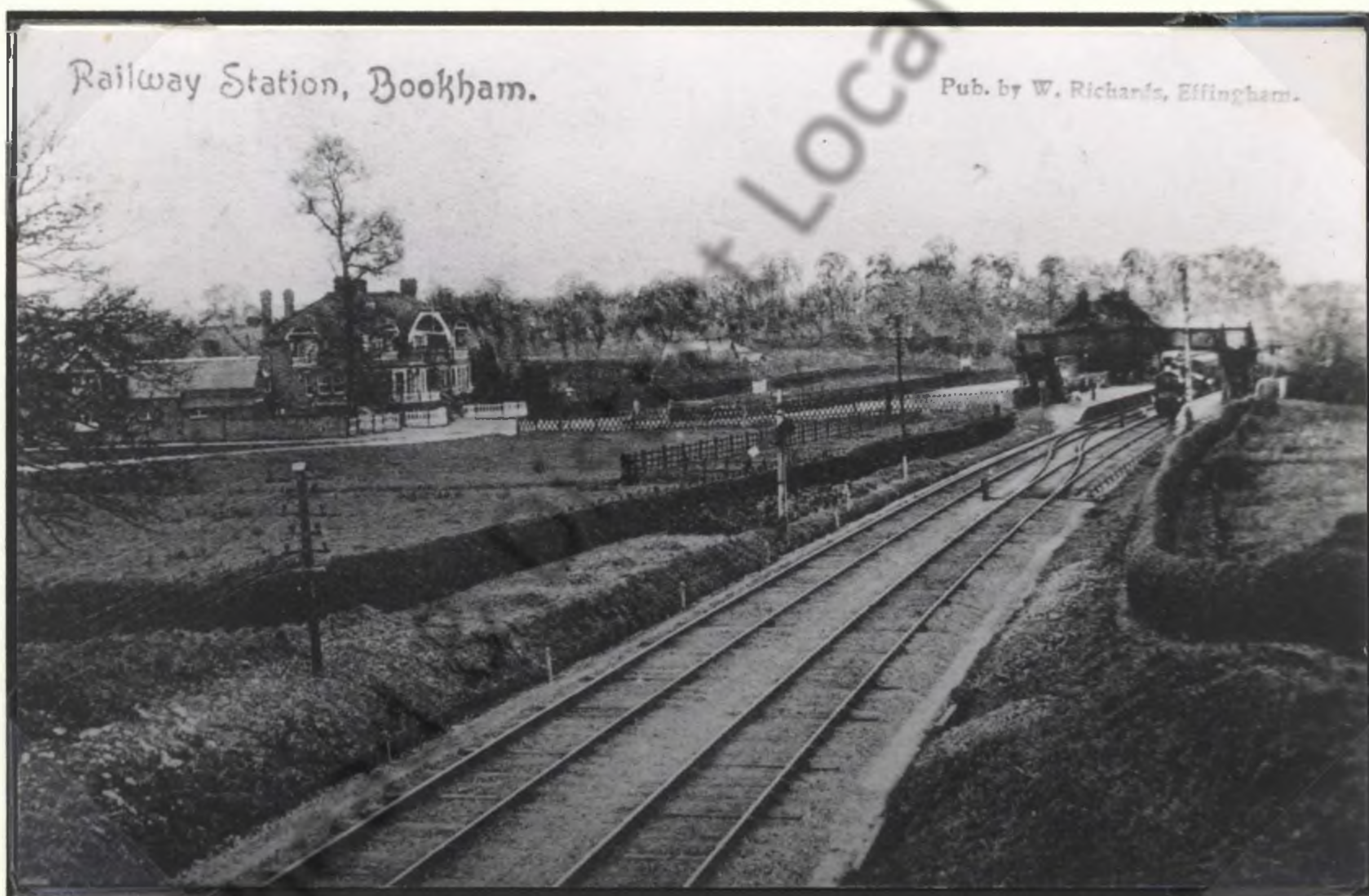
### Mrs Mary Chrystie

With the death of Mrs Chrystie in 1911, the hotel was for sale. In 1917 the owner of the Atlas Works in Little Bookham Street, Thomas Gillett, in partnership with Mr Waring of Waring and Gillow converted the hotel building into offices and built a factory in the hotel grounds, which was known as the New Atlas Works. After the war they continued to manufacture engines for aircraft, motor cars and motor cycles and the company had become Gillett, Stephens. Burney and Blackburne also operated at the works. During WWII government contracts for war products were undertaken again. After the war the factory became known as the Gillett Works and was used by Wildt Mellor Bromley, a part of the Bentley Engineering Group. They manufactured hosiery making machines and hydraulic equipment, including undercarriages for Hawker aircraft. This ended in 1987 when the old hotel building was demolished and the present office block built in its place for Photo-Me International.

The 1917 factory survived and was used for the manufacture and servicing of self operating photo booths until a fire destroyed the premises. The adjoining Bookham Industrial Park was opened about the same time.

Beyond the station Merrylands Road is on the left. Until the 1950s this was a short road with only 5 or 6 houses and in one of these Andrew West, the builder, lived in his early days in Bookham. Mrs Chrystie had Merryland Cottage built to house the staff from her hotel. Just past Merrylands Road in the low lying fields, before sewage works were constructed, the drains appeared to terminate here where, in hot weather, it was customary to pass this area at a brisk pace, with handkerchief held to the nose!

Whilst the railway was being built in Bookham, Mrs Chrystie had a thatched refreshment bar constructed by the station for the rail workers.



A repro postcard of Bookham Railway Station with Merrylands Hotel on the left c1900s. Few houses had been built on the right of the road at this time. The large house seen through the trees was the home of Richard Lee, the architect responsible for the conversion of the Barn Hall in 1906, who later had a house built for himself in Sole Farm Road.



## The Bookhams

### Mrs Mary Chrystie

Mrs Chrystie also bought land in Dorking Road which she gave to the community as a recreation ground, again with a restriction on the sale of alcohol. She was very concerned about the young people of Bookham and built the Victoria Hall in East Street as a venue where they could meet and socialise. She was also a school manager and apparently provided the children with hot soup during a particularly harsh winter.

In the early 1900s Mrs Mary Chrystie, donated a plot of land at the entrance of Burnhams Road with Little Bookham Street. There would seem to have been a 'parish room' of some description on the site at the time which was also bordered by The Fox public house both of which have long since been demolished. On this plot of land, the Little Bookham Village Hall was built in 1906 and recorded with the Charity Commissioners in September 1919. It was run, and still is, by a group of Trustees who are all local residents whose job is to ensure that the Hall is run in a fit and proper manner. It is well used by a good number of local groups ranging from keep fit classes to the Little Bookham WI and to the local Brownie pack.



A postally used Frith series postcard dated 1905 of the Merrylands Hotel. The picture on the left of the Victoria Hall was taken in 1950, before it was due to be demolished. On the right is the Little Bookham Village Hall.

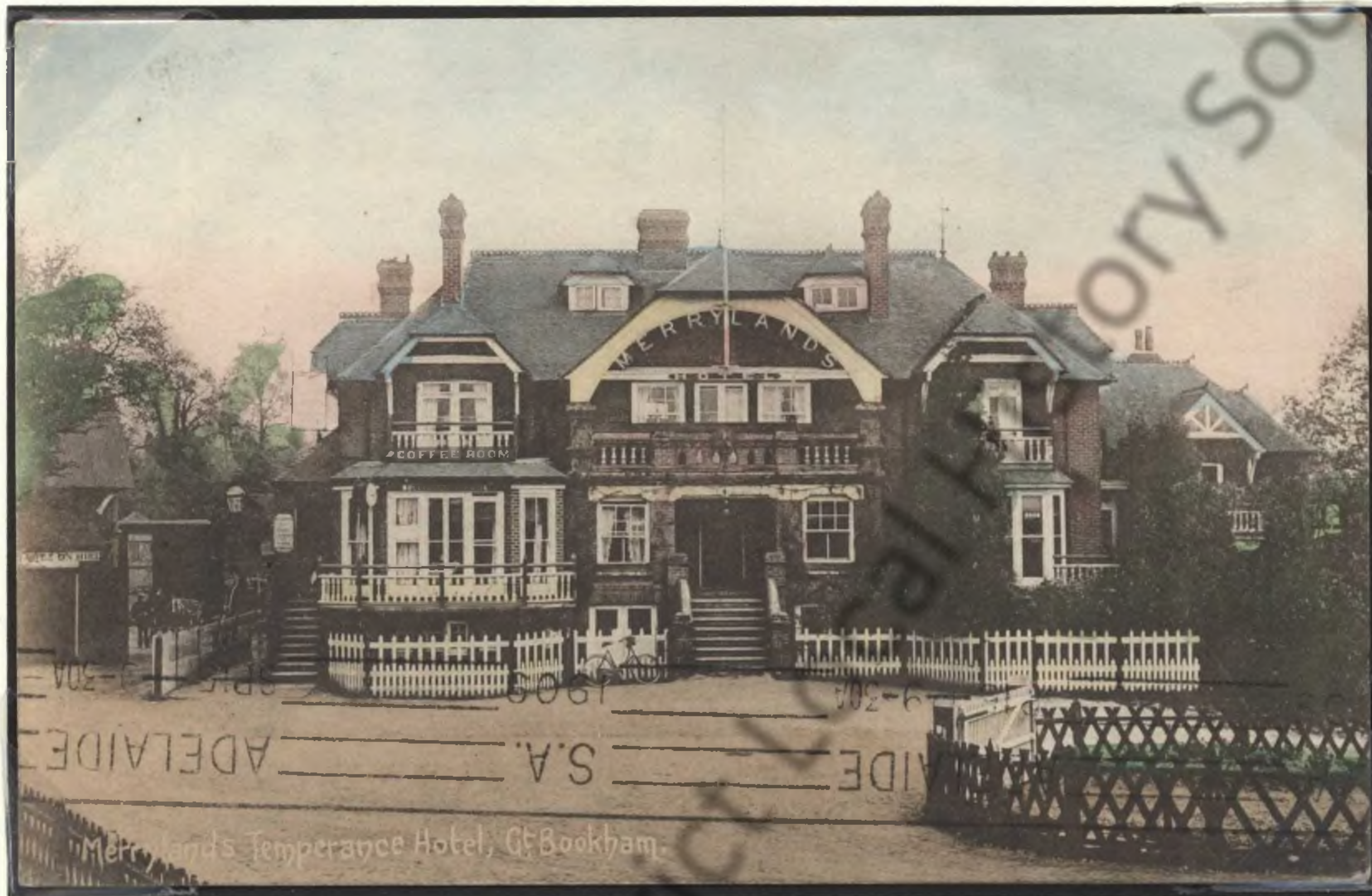


## The Bookhams

### Mrs Mary Chrystie

Mrs Chrystie also owned a house and land called the Paddocks in Leatherhead Road in 1897. The estate then included the Chrystie Recreation Ground in the Dorking Road, which Mrs Chrystie gave to Bookham for the benefit of its inhabitants. Paddocks house was demolished in 1971, replaced by the development called The Paddocks.

When Mrs Chrystie died in 1911 (she is buried in St. Nicolas' churchyard) her estate was valued at £37,808. With inflation this would now equate to about £3.3 million. This was shared between her three brothers except that £1,000 was bequeathed to the Church of England Temperance Society. Her various properties were sold by public auction in 1912 on the instructions of the executors to her will. After Mary's death her sister Selina continued the temperance campaign although she had moved out of the family home in the 1890s. She died in 1926.



A local J F Stevens postcard of the Merrylands Hotel - postally used dated August 1909. The postcard is to South Australia and written on the back is the following:

To show you we are on our holidays!!! I send you this card, it is where we live, Percy, I & Carlo. We spend the whole afternoon under our tree on the common, one minute from here and it is more than delightful; a perfectly quiet country holiday and rest. Willie says she loves being at the balcony. I do wish you were all here.

Best love

Marie.

The picture below of the Paddocks was taken in 1971 just before it was demolished.





## The Bookhams

### Church Road - Bookham Grange Hotel

Situated on the left of the road which goes over the railway at the north end of Little Bookham Street, just west of Bookham Station is the Bookham Grange Hotel. Earlier this had been Burroughs or Burrowes Farm until 1868 when it was up for sale, described in the sale particulars as:

*A small pleasure farm, 14 acres of extremely fertile arable, orchard and meadow land with extensive valuable common rights attached. This small but very desirable and freehold estate is situated on the centre range of Surrey hills intervening between Leatherhead and Guildford, a most salubrious district with excellent roads and many local advantages.*

The farmhouse was developed into a private house named Bayfield in 1888, owned by Robert Turner, who lived there until around 1900. In the 1920s it was occupied but in the 1930s it became a nursing home which practised abortion before WWII, well before this facility was available under the National Health Service. Because of this Bayfield was found to be conducting illegal operations at that time and was closed. During WWII, the building was occupied by the Imperial Bank of India that had evacuated from London. During the 1950s it became the Bookham Grange Hotel.



LB.13 BOOKHAM GRANGE HOTEL, LITTLE BOOKHAM

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Frith's

Two Frith's series postcard c1950s



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FRITH'S  
POSTCARD COLLECTION



**Church Road - Bookham Grange Hotel**

A body found at Leatherhead Golf Course in the summer of 1971 instigated a murder inquiry. The top Scotland Yard investigator at the time was Detective Chief Superintendent Peter Shemming, who had solved 10 East London murders. He stayed and used the Bookham Grange Hotel as his headquarters. DCS Peter Shemming solved the murder and got his man - the husband did it!!

# Golf course horror

*Woman's arm was dug up by foxes*



● An artist's impression of the victim in the murder inquiry

**A** FETCHAM dentist playing golf on the Leatherhead course made an unusual discovery when his ball went into the rough.

In the tufted grass he found a decomposed woman's arm, dug up by foxes.

That was in the late summer of 1971. Following the discovery, one of Surrey's most famous murder inquiries was launched.

Mr O'Flynn and his friend, Michael Fisher, of Little Bookham, reported the find to police. All there was to go on was a badly decayed forearm, hand, and two rings on the fingers.

Top Scotland Yard investigator, Detective Chief Superintendent Peter Shemming, who had solved 10 East London murders, moved to the Bookham Grange Hotel and took over the murder inquiry.

Assisted by Old Bill Churcher, a character who lived in the nearby

woods for many years, he was led to a patch of ground near the ninth hole where the earth had been earlier disturbed.

Here, the torso of a woman was found. The arms, legs and head were missing. Specially-trained collie dogs later found the other parts of the body nearby. The head was wrapped in a copy of the Evening Standard dated December 5th 1968.

Dental records were circulated to trade magazines around the country and incredibly, a dentist in Mansfield recognised the pattern. It led to the arrest in January 1972 of Latvian man, Aleksander Leonard Vanags, of Chiswick.

He admitted killing his wife, Elenor, at their Chiswick flat after a terrible row. The charge was reduced to manslaughter and he was sentenced to three years in prison.

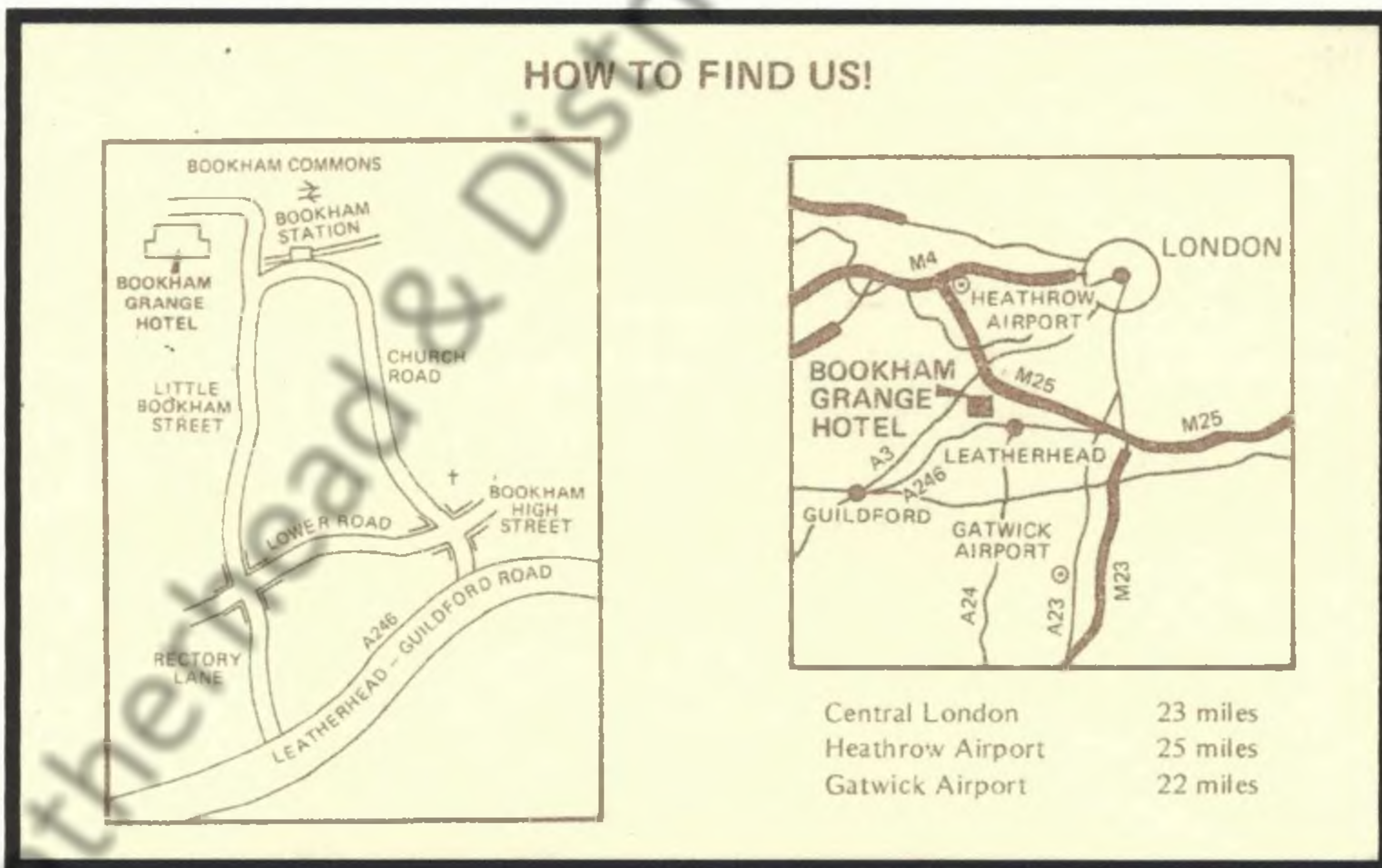
● How the Leatherhead Advertiser reported the arrest of Mr Essens



# The Bookhams

## Church Road - Bookham Grange Hotel

A card of the Bookham Grange Hotel with the directions on the back, probably dated in the 1960s. The address has a post code allotted, but the telephone number is still prefixed with the name.





## The Bookhams

### Little Bookham Street - Old Barn, Maddox Farm

Maddox Farm on the west side of Little Bookham Street has a large black barn fronting the property to the left of the entrance. The original farmhouse was built in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century and takes its name from Sir Benjamin Maddox who once owned a considerable amount of property in this area as well as in London where Maddox Street is also named after him. The house has been restored and carefully modernised, but in the middle part that is the oldest part with low, oak-beamed ceilings, with a height in some cases of less than six feet.

The fine old barns are early 18<sup>th</sup> century; one has the date 1738 carved on a beam. Although this property has been known as Maddox Farm throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it had earlier been known as Petty's Farm. It is some seventy years since the place was worked as a farm on an extensive scale when it occupied about 80 acres. The farmyard was formed by the house on one side and the barns and other outbuildings flanking the other two sides. This area has now been laid out as a garden immediately in front of the house, while between the barns and other outbuildings are gravel pits and lawns allowing an unobstructed view of the whole setting.

In the 1920s and 1930s Mr Leigh Hutchinson who was a Boy Scout District Commissioner occupied the house. Dr Witchalls and his family who came here from Africa after working with Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) the Philosopher, Physician and Humanitarian now occupy it.



A Frith's series postcard dated c1940.



## The Bookhams

### Little Bookham Street - Timber Yard

Further south on the left at the junction with Maddox Lane is what was until a few years ago Wales timber yard. This family operated a sawmill here since the 1880s.



A Frith postally used postcard dated 1914 of the Timber Yard. These carts belonged to a timber yard which was at the northern end of Little Bookham Street opposite Maddox Farm. In 1871 George Wales was a wood cutter here and by 1882 he had established himself as a wood dealer and carter. Below this postcard has another angle of the Timber Yard.





## The Bookhams

### Little Bookham Street - Timber Yard/Foxmead

Probably the largest of the West built houses was that originally named Inglewood in Maddox Lane. It stood in grounds extending to Burnham Road to the south and Maddox Lane to the west. By 1914 it had been renamed West Hill and was later given the name Foxmead. The name may have been associated with Foxglove Cottage nearby in Little Bookham Street and the neighbouring Fox alehouse that was closed by Mrs Chrystie. It is ironic that a Mr Fox lived at the house in the 1930s; however the name Foxmead remained with the house until 1956.

Mrs Chrystie had owned the house and when it was sold in 1912 the accommodation included 10 bedrooms, nursery, servants' hall, library, a wide range of reception rooms and a ballroom of exceptional size. Miss Joce and her sister came to live here in 1950 after they had sold the Spinney School. After six years they moved to the Priory Coachhouse in Leatherhead and the house was divided into two.



A Frith's Series postcard dated c1950s shows what was once the timber yard - a cow was tethered there at that time. The bottom postcard shows Foxmead on the right hand side.





## The Bookhams

### Little Bookham Street - Maddox Park/Foxglove Cottage/Village Hall

A little further on in Maddox Lane is Maddox Park where from 1939 until the 1960s Mr Sikorska and his wife, who were refugees from Poland, lived. To the rear of the house he built a small canned food factory. After his death his widow continued to live there until in the 1970s the factory was demolished and houses built on the site.

On the opposite side of Little Bookham Street is the picturesque scene created by Foxglove Cottage, a 16<sup>th</sup> century house with a brook running through the grounds. The garden on the western side was originally acquired by the ancient rites of squatting and enclosure.

On the southwest corner of Little Bookham Street and Burnhams Road is the Village Hall that was built on a plot of land donated by Mrs Chrystie in 1902. Initially a gymnasium was built by Mrs Chrystie for boys to get fit before the village hall was built in 1906. The gym was built on the side of the Fox alehouse which was in Pleasance Row, but eventually the village hall, as we know it today, stands where Brook Cottages used to be - the Fox was another alehouse Mrs Chrystie bought and closed. During WWII meat pies were made and sold in the Village Hall and continued to be so until about 1947. Also during the war ice cream was available here once a month when it was brought to the station in an insulated container.



A postally used Frith's postcard dated 1913 of the Fox alehouse and Brook Cottages to the right. The bottom local J.F. Stevens postcard dated early 1900s shows at this time Brooks Cottages still surviving with part of the gymnasium just behind, built on the side of the Fox alehouse, which was eventually demolished to make way for the Atlas Works.





## The Bookhams

### Little Bookham Street - Gillett Stephens Factory now Black burn Flats

On the left hand side is Nelson Cottages and on the right Gillett Stephens Factory, which at the time was the only industry in Little Bookham Street. Tom Gillett the son of a Bookham farmer studied engineering and then set up his own engineering works known as the Atlas Works in the 1900s. At this time Graham Gilmour, one of the pioneer aviators, who lived in Little Bookham kept his aeroplane at Brooklands, his engine - a three cylinder Anzani - was maintained by Tom Gillett. Graham Gilmour was killed in an air crash and is buried in Mickleham Churchyard.

In 1912 the business was turned into a limited company, Gillett Stephens & Co. Ltd. At the outbreak of WWI a government contract was obtained for the manufacturing of aircraft parts for the Royal Aircraft Factory at Farnborough including radial engines. In 1917 Tom Gillett also went into a partnership with Waring, of Waring & Gillow, and acquired the Merrylands Hotel opposite Bookham station, and converted it into a factory. This was now called the New Atlas Works.



A Frith's postcard c1920 showing Nelsons Cottages on the left and The Gillett Stephens Factory on the right. Below is a picture of the Gillett Stephens factory employees taken in 1912.





## The Bookhams

### Little Bookham Street - Gillett Stephens Factory now Blackburn Flats

Gillet Stephens & Co Ltd sold what had become the Old Atlas Works in 1947 to the Bookham Engineering Company who carried out mechanical engineering and steelwork fabrication and welding. They operated in Little Bookham for twenty years before the company moved to Kingston Road in Leatherhead. The factory was demolished in 1968 and the site is now occupied by Blackburn Flats.



A local Stevens postcard dated early 1900s shows the Atlas Works and Brook Cottages. The picture below c1960s shows the factory as Bookham Engineering which was demolished in 1968.





## The Bookhams

### Little Bookham Street - Gastons/Grape Vine Cottage

On the opposite side of the road is the site of Gastons, a large Victorian House that had stood well back from the road and was approached via a long curved drive with an entrance in both Little Bookham Street and Sole Farm Road. Earlier it had been Gastons Farm, which extended northwards from Sole Farm Road. Gastons was occupied by Mr Kirkpatrick, a retired headmaster of Lurgan College, and his wife from 1913 until his death; however Mrs Kirkpatrick continued to live there until at least 1927. Mr Kirkpatrick was a great eccentric, well over 6 feet tall, very shabbily dressed, lean and muscular. He was a purely logical entity and believed that the vocal chords should not be used for any purpose other than communicating or discovering the truth. Clive Lewis (C S Lewis) best remembered for his children's books, spent two and a half years with the Kirkpatrick's at the Gastons from 1914. He was tutored by Mr Kirkpatrick, and left very much appreciating that his debt to him was very great and his reverence for him was undiminished. The house was demolished in 1965 when more houses were built on the site, a part of the original drive and an outhouse still remain.

A little further along on the west side of Little Bookham Street is Grape Vine Cottage or, as it used to be known, Vine Cottage. This 16<sup>th</sup> century house originally had no chimneys and smoke would have come out of openings at the apex of the roof. John William Elston, a boot and shoe repairer, lived and worked at Grape Vine Cottage from around 1909 until about 1950.



The postcard is an S & W Series card postally used, dated 1909. This view of Little Bookham Street, then known as Station Road has been taken between Childs Hall Road which is on the right hand side of the card where the wall is, and Sole Farm Road further down on the right - Gastons would have been on that corner. The semi-detached cottages are still there, and on the extreme right are Shaftesbury Cottages. The picture below is of Grape Vine Cottage taken in 1976.









APPENDIX 2

