

ISSN 0140-7090

**LEATHERHEAD  
& DISTRICT  
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**



**PROCEEDINGS VOL 7 N<sup>o</sup> 10**

**2016**

## SECRETARIAL NOTES

The following lectures and events were arranged during 2016.

Friday, 15th January: “The Anglo-Saxon Minster at Leatherhead” by Nigel Bond.

Friday 19th February: “Four Local Personalities, from Domesday to Modern Times” presented by four members of the Society.

Friday 18th March: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

followed by a talk by our Proceedings Secretary, Bill Whitman, on his hopes for the Proceedings.

Friday 15 April 2016: “The Archaeology of Bookham” by Lyn Spencer.

Friday 20th May: “Protecting our Built Local Heritage” by Peter Mills.

Saturday 25th June 2016: L&DLHS Coffee Morning in the Kirby (LCA) Library, Letherhead Institute.

Friday 16th September: David Graham, a former president of the Surrey Archaeological Society, described Farnham and its unique castle to us.

Friday 21st October - Sally Todd, Archivist at St John's School, Leatherhead: talk on “St John's School in WW1”.

Friday 18th November: “The 70th Anniversary of the foundation of the Society”.

Friday 2nd December With regret, the Christmas Quiz Event had to be cancelled.

The following lectures and events were arranged during the first quarter of 2017.

Friday 20 January, 2017: Professor Patricia Wiltshire presented “How Science can tell us about the Use of Land”.

Friday 17 February, 2017: Professor Richard Selley presented “The Birth, Life and Death of the River Mole”.

Friday 17 March, 2017: Annual General Meeting, followed by a short talk by Nigel Bond on “My Work as Archaeology Secretary”.

# **Leatherhead and District Local History Society**

## **PROCEEDINGS**

**VOL. 7, NO. 10**

**2016**

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## **EDITORIAL**

This is Number 10 of Volume 7 of our Proceedings, the last in this Volume, which forms an unbroken series since the Society was founded in 1946.

In this Number, we have added the Society's new Logo, a swan based on the letters LHS, to our front cover.

The articles include a timely and moving piece about one of the PSU battalions, that was billeted in Ashted at the beginning of the 1914-18 War, largely in the words of the serving volunteers. We also have pieces which cover events since 1950, some written by authors new to the Proceedings.

After seventy years of writing about local history there is still more to write; articles are even now being prepared for Volume 8. I hope to join these writers and to pass the role of Editor to someone younger.

William E Whitman, Jan 2017.



**21st (4th PUBLIC SCHOOLS) BATTALION,  
The *Royal Fusiliers* (City of London Regiment)  
at Ashted, 24 September 1914 to early April 1915.**

**By Brian Bouchard**



*Cardboard badge of the UPS*

## **Summary**

The Public Schools Battalions were a unique example of PALS battalions raised to fight in the 1914-18 War. This article describes the early life of the 21st Battalion which was billeted for some months in Ashted, largely in the words of the young men who served in the battalion.

## **Introduction**

In his foreword to *The History of the Royal Fusiliers, " U. P. S.", University and Public Schools Brigade (Formation and Training), 1917*, The Honourable Arthur Stanley, C.B., M.V.O., M.P., remarked: -

“...the Brigade had selected the County Club of the Royal Automobile Club at Epsom as a suitable place for a camp, and, as I was the chairman of the Royal Automobile Club, they thought I might be of use to them.

I duly received official notice from the Army Council that I was 'authorized to raise a Brigade of Infantry to consist of four Battalions and to make such arrangements as may be necessary for the same' - an authorization which left a good deal to the imagination and which could only have been given to an ordinary civilian in very peculiar times. The next performance of the Brigade was to march itself down to Epsom and billet itself - 3,200 men - in the neighbouring villages of Epsom, Leatherhead, and Ashted. This operation it carried through without a hitch and without officers. These were not appointed until some days afterwards.”

Later in this book, the anonymous author explains: -

“... it was finally decided to mobilize on two dates, Friday, September 18<sup>1</sup>, for men living in London and within easy train journey, and for a first contingent of from 200 to 300 from Manchester, and Thursday, September 24, for men enlisted in the provinces. Notices were sent to every man by post, telling him what to bring with him, the date, time, and place of mobilization, and also a label bearing a letter and number to be attached to his bag. The time decided on was 12 noon, and the place Hyde Park, opposite Knightsbridge Barracks. On the parade ground stakes were placed at intervals, each bearing a letter and number corresponding to those on the labels which had been issued to the recruits. Each man, as he arrived on the ground, deposited his bag at its corresponding letter and number on the stake, and then fell in on a marker bearing the same label. As a fixed number of labels with each letter had been issued, the whole of the contingent was in this way soon paraded in approximately equal companies. Roll-calls had been prepared previously to correspond, and the roll was called. Absentees were thus easily checked; the number was remarkably small. Motor-buses labelled with the same letters were lined up, and the correspondingly

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<sup>1</sup> War was declared on 4 Aug 1914.

lettered bags were loaded up inside and on top. Thus, the column started for Epsom...

The second portion was mobilized in much the same way, but more expeditiously, as the first attempt had taught its lessons. In many ways, however, the second mobilization was more difficult, as the men came from all parts of the British Isles, and were strangers to their bodies and to each other. This detachment proceeded to Ashted and formed later the 21st Battalion. [A total of 2000 men had arrived in Ashted and Leatherhead on 24 September 1914.]

### **Billets in Ashted**

A sketch of conditions in Ashted and Leatherhead appeared in *The Standard* of October 1, 1914, from which we make the following extracts:

Ashted is one of the most picturesque of Surrey's many pretty villages. The shopping centre is about a mile away from the station, the road leading thereto being lined on either side by large villa residences, standing in their own grounds and well back from the roadway. As a matter of fact, about 80 per cent, of the houses in Ashted are occupied by London business men and well-to-do tradesmen, and it will be easily realised that the young public school men when they reached the village a week ago, found that they had fallen into extremely comfortable billeting arrangements. The residents gave them a cordial welcome, and as a result their hard work in the field has been very largely compensated by the generous hospitality of their enforced hosts. The men stationed at Ashted are from public schools in the Midland provinces, with a sprinkling of men wearing the blue-grey uniform of the Cambridge University O.T.C. There is also a sprinkling of men from Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

Life at Ashted was described by Private William M. Home in a letter to *The Whitby Gazette*:

. . . Roughly speaking, we commence at seven, and have section drill or physical drill; breakfast at 8; to resume drill again at 9.30; dinner at about 12.15, after which we get a good rest until 2.30, when the whole Battalion 'fall in' on the battalion parade ground - Ashted Common - for a route- march, which lasts nominally until 5 o'clock, though usually it is a little later, which, considering

our object here is to get out of the chrysalis stage of soldiers into real useful 'Tommys', does not matter at all, for when we dismiss we are free until the next morning. . . . All the drill is reminiscent of school days and days of the North-Eastern County Schools Officers' Training Corps; but then, at times, we were ready to shirk a little; now, however, there is an object in view, and we are not drilling for drilling's sake, we are drilling to become ready, as soon as possible, to go where the tactics of the Huns necessitate new forces - going in order to make England, when peace is sighted, a better and happier home. The real enjoyment, though, is in the route- marching; in itself, as something to look at, it is 'great' .... We extend, when marching four abreast, over a quarter of a mile comfortably. When my own Company - Company A - some 220 of us- marched past the 'billet' last week, it was thought we were never going to end, but, when there are 1,200 of us marching in companies, and each company about twenty yards apart, it is easy to imagine we seem a long time in getting past anywhere. ... It is glorious marching along these lovely lanes of Surrey, with their lofty trees, and high, overhanging hedges off which we manage to gather brambles as we pass...

A writer in *The Standard* gave an interesting account, which is worth preserving, of the 'uniform' of the period:

The Public Schools Corps is a strange-looking lot of men. They are all at Epsom in 'their old things'. Some wear old public-school scarves and college sweaters. The popular fancy in head-covering is the golf-cap, usually worn well over the left ear. The rest of the raiment is nondescript, being mostly grey or brown shooting or riding outfit. But the boots-they were made heavy, and they clatter well on the pavements. Each 'man' of these boys is denoted by a cardboard badge which he wears in the lapel of his coat, bearing the letters in blue, U.P.S. The officers are distinguished by a red sign. . . . The U.P.S. was in one sense the most democratic Brigade in the Army. Nearly all the men started level, and were promoted according to their ability. On October 11, the first lot of rifles were received - 200 to each battalion.

[Lieut.-Colonel J. Stuart-Wortley appointed on 1st September 1914 to command 4th Public Schools, which became the 21st Battalion, had transferred to the

regular army in January 1903, joining The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) & reverting to the rank of Second-Lieutenant. John Stuart-Wortley was seconded to The North Nigeria Regiment, and was in charge of the transport in the Anglo-French Boundary Expedition to Lake Chad in 1903. He was later posted to the 11th Sudanese Regiment, and served in the Sudan, latterly as a civil administrator, until 1912. He was conferred with the Order of the Medjidieh by the Khedive of Egypt in December 1910. In April 1912, Stuart-Wortley retired on half-pay. With the **21st (Service) Battalion, The Royal Fusiliers** he served in France November 1915 until in February 1916 the 21st Battalion was placed under the direct control of General Headquarters as GHQ Troops. Lieutenant-Colonel John Stuart-Wortley then of the 2/6th South Staffords was killed at Bullecourt on 21st March 1918.]

On October 13, 1914, the King inspected the Brigade. By His Majesty's request no review movements were arranged, the 4,500 men being seen under ordinary training conditions. The 18th and 19th Battalions paraded on Epsom Downs near the Grand Stand. The King, who was accompanied by Major Clive Wigram, inspected each company, walking down the ranks. After a visit to Woodcote Park, where two companies were busy helping to erect the huts, the King went on to Ashted, where he saw the 21st Battalion. Then the journey was continued to Leatherhead, where the 20th Battalion was inspected. In conversation with the officers after the inspection, the King said he had inspected 200,000 recruits, and the members of the Public-School Brigade were the finest he had seen. His Majesty also expressed surprise at the advanced stage of the training in so short a time.

### **Officers for the Brigade**

In the London Gazette on October 26, the following list of appointments made to the Brigade appeared:

... 4th Battalion. - Lieut. Sir Robert J. M. Walker, Bt., Coldstream Guards, Special Reserve, to be Adj. and temp. Capt. To be temp. Majors: Herbert F. Fenn and John C. Hartley. To be temp. Capts.: George F. Beal, Russell P. Gould, Phipps E. Stanley, and John V. Betts. To be temp. Lieuts.: Guy Goldthorp, Henry Franklin, Richard H. Whittington, Alfred G. Revill,

Christopher G. Rathbone, Guy C. N. Mackarness. To be temp. Sec. Lieuts.: Herbert W. Ling, Harold W. Smith, Allen Harris, Richard V. Hart-Davis, Douglas Hoole, Gilbert E. R. Meakin, Edwin R. Wilmshurst, and Lewis J. Cooke. Frederick Spearing to be temp. Quartermaster with the hon. rank of Lieut.

By the beginning of November several hundred men had left the Brigade to take up commissions, and it had been announced that 150 members of the Brigade between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five would be given a three months' course of training, free at Sandhurst, if they were ready to take up permanent commissions...

[Reportedly, whilst C.O. of 4th Public Schools, Lieut. Col. Stuart-Wortley made any recommendation by him of an enlisted man for a commission conditional upon the candidate introducing a replacement recruit for the Royal Fusiliers.]

About this time the controversy regarding commissions came to a head and during the following months letters continually appeared in the Press on the subject, urging the country's need for officers and indicating the U.P.S. Brigade as the evident source of supply. Many men were applying for commissions, but these applications did not in all cases meet with encouragement from the commanding officers. One correspondent writing for *The Morning Post* on March 31, 1915, stated that the War Office had issued an order that the veto used so sternly by C.O.'s would be withdrawn for the moment, but that this order had been contemptuously ignored by the C.O.'s of the U.P.S. Brigade. The letter continued: 'is it to the general good of the Army that, at a time when officers are urgently needed, men who should be officers should be kept in the ranks as privates, who should fill the vacant places?' Men of university and public school training; men who have been for years in the O.T.C.- men who have handled men, men who have made great sacrifice, to serve? Certainly not. They are in the ranks, and in the ranks, they must remain. Their C.O.'s must be considered first. Neither War Office orders, nor men, nor the highest interests of the nation in peril count.

During the second week in January the following Brigade order appeared: 'The G.O.C. is authorized by the Secretary of State for War to state that the Brigade

is not to be utilized as an O.T.C., and that nothing is further from Lord Kitchener's intention than that this should be so.'

About this time over 1,000 men had left to take up commissions, and no doubt this order from the War Office was intended to check the tendency of so many of the men to apply for commissions...

### **Camp at Woodcote Park**

On April 2 two and a half battalions were in camp. One of the attractions at the camp was the playing of the retreat by the little drum and fife band of the 21st Battalion. As one member stated, 'The band follows the call that is blown each evening at sunset, by giving us one or two selections as it marches up and down the street, for I suppose I may call our only road 'the Street'. We used to see (and hear) the same thing in Ashtead, but what a difference there is between lolling out of a billet window to see the band and standing, one amongst some 2,000, more or less at attention, to see the same band, and hear the same tunes up here in camp!

By April 15 the whole Brigade was in camp [at Woodcote Park]."

In *Pow-Wow*, the brigade magazine, one finds the Public Schools Battalion's role as an OTC expressed in a doggerel: -

'Eight little P.S.U.'s feeling fit for heaven,  
One joined the Flying Corps, and then there were seven;  
Six little P.S.U.'s tired of being alive,  
One applied for Sandhurst, and then there were five;  
Five little P.S.U.'s found the ranks a bore,  
The worst got gazetted, and then there were four."

### **The Billets at Ashtead – a cushy number, 'luck of the draw'!**

1) Amongst a collection of letters written to The Rev Henry Wynter Blathwayt, Rector of St Peter's Church, Dyrham, appears: -

"No 1 Company 4th Public Schools Battalion Royal Fusiliers, Ashtead, Surrey.  
Oct. 14, 1914

Dear Sir, I feel I must let you know how I am getting along in the army. I like the life immensely, although the work is fairly hard. We get up at 5:45 every

morning, we are due on the parade ground at 6:30, from 6:30 until 8:30 we have some ?? drill etc., from 9:30 until 12:30 we have some more drill. In the afternoons, we have the long route march & return about 5:30. We have to be in our rooms at 10 p.m. The King inspected our battalion last Monday & was very pleased with our progress. There is a rumour about that we are going to the South of France shortly to complete our training. They pay us 7/- a week & out of that we have to pay for our washing & many other incidental expenses. We are all billeted in private houses & I have been fortunate in having a very kind landlady. I shall write you again & report the progress we have made Please accept my most sincere thanks for your great kindness to me.

I am, Yours respectfully (Private) J L Jones”

2) Noel Downing of A Company, writing to his sister from Ashtead in 1914, mentions that he and 5 others had been billeted on Mr & Mrs William Drew, in Ashtead Lodge on Parker's Hill. He mentions that: -

“There are a large garden & two motors & they do us very well. We have cocoa & biscuits in the early morning, a large breakfast, an enormous lunch, a vast tea and a cold supper. Today [Sunday] our host came in with a large decanter of port!! I really have been lucky to get here as we hear of other men who have onions and cheese for breakfast & nothing else until night. Some have to cook their own breakfasts and have a rotten time.”

3) From “The Abingdonian” December 1914

“Mr [Henry Frederick Edgecumbe] Edwardes [Member of Staff, Abingdon School, Summer term 1914] has also enlisted, but we hope to welcome him back again when the war is over.

**Letter from Private H F E Edwards, 4th Co. 4th Battn Royal Fusiliers, Ashtead, Surrey:**

I am billeted with some 60 others in a sort of tin shed arrangement. All my Battalion are billeted on this village of Ashtead and most of them are very well off, as most of the houses belong to prosperous retired London merchants who treat their billetees very well. My own billet however is more Spartan in character, more like camp life – we have to sleep in our blankets and overcoats and do our washing in the open air and the old woman who runs the show has a

keen eye for business. I am not sorry to be here rather than in more luxurious quarters, as the change will not be so great when we do go into camp. They are building a hundred huts, each holding a platoon, on Epsom Downs, and part of our fatigue duties consist in going up there and assisting in the building operations. I spent one day in carting timber from Epsom Goods yard and another in sawing up wood, and now we have to go and dig the trenches for the drain pipes. When we happen to be the Company in waiting we have to provide a night guard which means 16 hours' sentry go – not too attractive a job on a wet night with the wind whistling over the Downs. However, we all remain merry and bright and extract a great deal of fun out of most unpromising situations. They are a sporting lot of fellows here. I am just recovering from vaccination. They give us an extra strong dose – just to make certain I suppose – and most of us have had arms about three times the size of Sandow's. The latest rumour is that we are going to France early in January, but there are so many rumours about that one does not know what to believe.”

4) *Andrew ('Curly') Richard Buxton*, a local director of Barclay & Co., Limited, at 95, Victoria-street, S.W., enlisted as a private in the Public Schools and University Battalion, Royal Fusiliers on September 24, 1914. His mother recorded that in his first billet he drew lots with two other 'Tommies' as to which of the three should have the two beds in a tiny room - and the lot fell to him to sleep on the floor. He was accommodated at *The Croft*, Greville Park Road, Ashtead.

Extracts from his letters appear in *Andrew R. Buxton, the Rifle brigade, a memoir*, 1918, -

The Croft, Ashtead, October 10, 1914.

"This is a strange life, and I feel I am back at both Harrow and Cambridge mixed up in one, with drills corresponding to 'schools' at various times, and more or less a Cambridge life with others in this house. One sore toe is the extent of my ailments so far, though this becomes a big thing with long road grinds!"

From Billet, The Croft, Ashtead, October 12, 1914, he writes of the idea of building a sufficient number of huts to accommodate the whole Brigade of between 5,000 and 6,000 men, and goes on to say 'The King came down to-day and walked round informally'.

Billet, November 12, 1914.

"... We fall in at 7.50 (after breakfast), which makes the day with the same work all the time seem a long one! You will, though, be glad to know that we knock off at 10.45 for a quarter of an hour to get what we want from the Canteen arranged in one of the huts. My military efforts I still put in terms of other experiences, especially in the matter of marching with rifles in which the feeling is that of going up a Scotch hill to get to the moor to shoot. And of digging trenches to the inevitable digging-out while ferreting. A military nature will no doubt soon occur."

December 13, 1914.

"No uniforms yet except cap and puttees, which latter are useful for wet days, and a pair of boots which seem to fit well and to be good ones in spite of simply 'drawing' them by size only. It would have tickled you too when drawing boots, when of course the record of doing so is kept, to have just the two questions asked - 1<sup>st</sup>, what religion you are - then size of boots, as it did me, but I am getting used to the many strange ways of conducting things here. They ask us every few weeks what religion we are, and I hope will soon have the record. Atheists and agnostics are apparently classified as Church of England!"  
The Croft, Ashtead, December 29, 1914.

" I shall value them (the socks) immensely, both for what they are, and then for the remembrance each time I wear them of you and your love and interest, especially in this war life in which I am occupied. We have had such a nice Christmas at Easneye, though of course more or less quiet. We appear to be in for digging trenches all this week."

Billet, January 2, 1915.

" The feeling I have is entirely like being back at school... We had a rotten day going early to W[oodcote] with an inevitable full half-hour wait at Ashtead Station first-and about 11.30 knocked off owing to the rain and marched to the station, where we waited from 12.30 till 3.30 for a special train. It was driving rain all the time and a very great number of men had to stand on the uncovered part of the platform. I was very fortunate being under cover and having a Times to read. I always have something of this sort with me in view of frequent waits

to which we are subjected. All day was very cold and draughty and I was so grateful for your present. If you really intend to give me the pair of long mittens someday which I shall wear under M.'s mittens (which have no fingers) I shall be provided for till I get to Berlin! The wait yesterday and this afternoon free seem very strange when I think of what my life would, in the ordinary way, be at the Bank these few days at the end of the year! "

January 12, 1915.

"As I told you I now possess a uniform as outward and visible sign of being a full 'private! I am told that my hat does not fit and I look like a 'bus driver!'"

Another aspect to these arrangements is recorded in *A History of Ashtead*, 1995, - 'One cottager wryly remembered two young men coming from an exercise digging trenches on the Common, flinging themselves with their dirty boots on the white counter panes of the beds prepared for them'.

### **Kitting Out.**

The following image shows a Company of the Battalion marching in mufti up West Hill from The Brewery Inn heading towards Victoria Works which contained an army clothing store.



What appears to be the same group of men are then depicted outside the Victoria Works, clustered round a signpost indicating a footpath to the Railway Station. This has become the corner into Greville Park Road.



## **Woodcote Park, Epsom**

*An article by Graham Deeprise which first appeared in the January 2007 issue of Pell-Mell & Woodcote, the journal of the Royal Automobile Club explains: -*

“The Woodcote Park Estate” had been purchased by the Royal Automobile Club in 1913 and it was therefore an obvious place to train the new recruits.

In February 1915... they were to move into the brand-new camp. This was divided into two parts. ‘The Farm Camp’, situated near to the present entrance to the estate, and ‘The Ridge Camp’ which created the line for ‘The Ridge’ residential road today.

Situated within the camp were all the usual facilities of a military base. One hundred huts each housing fifty men had been built by Humphreys Ltd. of Knightsbridge, ably assisted by members of the UPS, also Cook-houses, Mess

Halls, Ablutions, an indoor Rifle Range, a large Recreation Hall, Barbers, a Church, a shop and a Post Office. The whole camp was supplied with electricity, mains water, telephone lines and a regular bus service to Epsom. They were a self-contained military unit able to train on the 338 acres of club property and all the while the golf course still stayed open! Once they had entered camp the men of the UPS became Royal Fusiliers forming the 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st service battalions. As well as exercising in Woodcote Park, they also used Epsom Downs, Headley Heath and the surrounding countryside in order to attain a level of efficiency that would allow them to go to war.

The weather during that first winter at Woodcote Park Camp [had been] severe, delaying the erection of the huts. On 22 January 1915, an inspection by Lord Kitchener was held in blizzard conditions. This parade was held on Epsom Downs and, in total, over 20,000 troops were drawn up for inspection, the UPS having been joined by soldiers who were encamped all over the district. Reveille was at 0400hrs to allow for the march to the Downs. Lord Kitchener, who arrived at 1030 hrs, stayed only five minutes before going to inspect even more men of his eponymous Army.”

As indicated earlier, in the UPS history, the move from local billets into Woodcote Camp accommodation was organised progressively, not to be completed until April 1915.

### **Completion of Training**

In June 1915, the Public Schools and University Men's Force of four battalions was transferred to Clipstone Camp, Nottinghamshire, and assigned to 98th Brigade in 33rd Division. On 1 July 1915, in common with other locally raised units, they were taken over by the War Office. In August 1915, these troops moved on to Tidworth, Wiltshire and by 10 August the concentration of the Division on Salisbury Plain was complete. On 4 November, the Division was ordered to prepare to move to France. Four days later Her Majesty the Queen inspected the Division at Figheldean Down. Entrainment began on 12 November 1915 when the Division embarked for France and Flanders. The 21st Royal Fusiliers left camp at Perham Down for Folkestone, 14 November 1915,

to embarked on SS Princess Victoria for Calais and proceed to Boulogne by rail.

## **Trench Warfare**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Royal Fusiliers were assigned on 21 November 1915 to the trenches immediately south of La Bassee Canal to be attached to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Worcestershire Regiment for training purposes.

On 24 November 1915, a German rifle-grenade burst upon a trench where a party was working on repairs and improvements, killing three men – Pte 6260 Donald Morton Bunting, Pte 2689 John Felix Frith, & Pte 2984 William Trevor Morgan – who were interred at Woburn Abbey Cemetery, Cuinchy.

Following the Battle of Loos, at least seven battalions of Royal Fusiliers were deployed in an area about the La Bassee Canal, including the four Public School Battalions with the 8<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. The 21<sup>st</sup> did not 'go over the top' other than in small raiding parties and suffered only a few fatalities whilst in the trenches. The men spent some periods out of the line in rest billets at L'Eoleme, Annequin and Annezin, occasionally being provided with hot baths at the Ecole de Jeune Filles, Bethune.

Their dead appear to have been buried in various military cemeteries, including as mentioned earlier at Woburn Abbey Cemetery, Cuinchy; there may also be found Private 4088 Arthur Hutchinson, aged 19, killed on 30 December 1915. Pte. 4065 James Gresty, who died having been *buried in the collapse of a dug-out hit by an enemy shell* whilst the Battalion was returning to reserve billets under German bombardment of the La Bassee - Bethune road, was interred at Cambrin Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, on 23 January 1916.

On 30 January 1916, Lt. Col. Wortley-Stuart left his Battalion for 10 days leave of absence in England. His place was, however, taken by Lt. Col. E B Denison,

1<sup>st</sup> KRR, from 7 February 1916 followed by a farewell letter from Wortley-Stuart which was published as a Special Order on 16 February.

In the Battalion's War Diary for 2 January 1916 it had been reported that heavy enemy shelling had killed a number in the sister battalion, 19<sup>th</sup> R F, including 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Henry Wood [from South Pool, Devon]. He was described as the first officer to lose his life from the two Public Schools Battalions remaining in the 98<sup>th</sup> Brigade. In relation to the 21<sup>st</sup> R F itself, the parapet of a 'sap' came to be blown down by enemy shell-fire on 5 February 1916. Private 6258 George Percy Adams was killed outright and Corporal 3027 Nathaniel Clarke Neilson severely wounded. In 'an act of considerable merit', a stretcher bearer Private 3259 C H Smith cut his way through to the entrance to the 'sap', dressed the Corporal's wounds and carried him back to safety – 'being exposed to considerable fire all the time'. Pte. Smith was not wounded but sadly the Corporal 'died an hour or so afterwards'. Both of the deceased were interred at Cambrin Military Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France.

## **Disbandment**

On 29 February 1916, the 21<sup>st</sup> Battalion left Bethune by train for GHQ at Wardreques, Pas de Calais. It was broken up on 1 March to provide 400 candidates for commissioned rank.

The 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Battalions, Royal Fusiliers made up the three which were disbanded, the bulk of the men going to various cadet schools, to provide 3,000 new officers for other regiments and battalions, and the remainder sent as drafts to other Royal Fusilier battalions.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Battalion\* stayed with 33<sup>rd</sup> Division and saw action with the Division in mid-July at High Wood, where they had a battalion memorial erected after the war. This wooden memorial disintegrated in time and was not replaced. However, a tiny oak tree had been planted in their memory during 1988 and was thriving.

Innumerable former members of the Royal Fusiliers UPS force sacrificed their young lives with other units, often as junior commissioned officers leading an assault.

## **Supplement**

### **20th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (3rd Public Schools)**

Ulula, The Manchester Grammar School Magazine, October 1914, reported that: -

“A draft of 300 left Manchester at 1 a.m. on Thursday morning, the 17<sup>th</sup> [September 1914], and the main body on Thursday, the 24<sup>th</sup>. The latter had an enthusiastic send-off. The assembly was on the old Infirmary flags, and a great crowd gathered. The Lord Mayor, who was accompanied by the High Master, addressed the Battalion. He expressed his pride in the way in which Manchester had responded to the appeal for recruits, wished the Battalion every success, and hoped to be able to welcome them all home again. After singing the National Anthem, the men moved to Mayfield Station and entrained for Leatherhead. The Manchester Battalion is doing good work down at Epsom, where all the men are billeted. When their quarters are ready, the whole Brigade, which numbers over 5,000 men, will move to Woodcote Park for training. The War Office has decided to have this Brigade attached to the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regt.). Many of these men are old boys of our School. Some are already acting officers in the Brigade, and it is extremely likely that M.G.S. will be well represented in the Officers' Mess when the final appointments are made.”

The 3rd Public Schools underwent early training at Leatherhead on Randall's Farm.

20 July 1917 War Diary “19th Brigade attacks at 3.25am on HIGH WOOD. Attack by 1st Cameronians and 5th Scottish Rifles. 20th Royal Fusiliers in support. 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers in reserve. North corner & North west corner of wood not taken. Rest taken and consolidated. 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers came up about 12 noon. A front & support line consolidated across wood from East to West. Held onto position until relieved by 100th

brigade at midnight then withdrew to old bivouacking ground at Mametz wood. Casualties, Lt Col Bennett - wounded. Killed: Lt Rawson, Lt Palmer, 2nd Lt Price, 2nd Lt Coventry Missing believed killed: Capt Toller, Lt Wallworth, Lt Evans Wounded: Capt Hollingworth, 2nd Lt Bell, 2nd Lt Cooke, 2nd Lt Brooke, 2nd Lt Fabricius, 2nd Lt Ives, 2nd Lt Herbert Other Ranks killed, wounded or missing: 375.”

Further reading:

<http://susancrawfordvintage.com/portfolio/herberts-story/>

<https://pastonglass.wordpress.com>.

3<sup>rd</sup> University and Public Schools Battalion / 20<sup>th</sup> Royal Fusiliers sometimes pejoratively called 'Chocolate Soldiers'.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goodbye\\_to\\_All\\_That](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goodbye_to_All_That).

<http://www.yourlocalguardian.co.uk/news/local/Epsomnews/11428104>.

WWI Blast from the Past Why did young recruits have to wear cardboard badges

Editor's Note. In the Society's Newsletter, Aug 2016, p 22, there is an article by Goff Powell, "Royal Fusiliers Public Schools Regiment 1914-1918."

This article includes a report of a football match between B Company, 20<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Leatherhead), and C Company, 21<sup>st</sup> Battalion (Ashted) on February 6<sup>th</sup> 1915 for a cup presented by Brigadier Gilmour.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Battalion suffered very severe casualties at High Wood 20 July 1916.



# **ALFRED J. NEWARK, BUILDERS OF ASHTEAD**

**By Stephanie Newark & Gwen Hoad**

## **Summary**

Alfred J Newark was a family owned building firm, building houses and smaller public buildings in Ashtead and the neighbourhood from 1946. Alfred retired in 1981 and his brother ran the business until it closed in 1991.

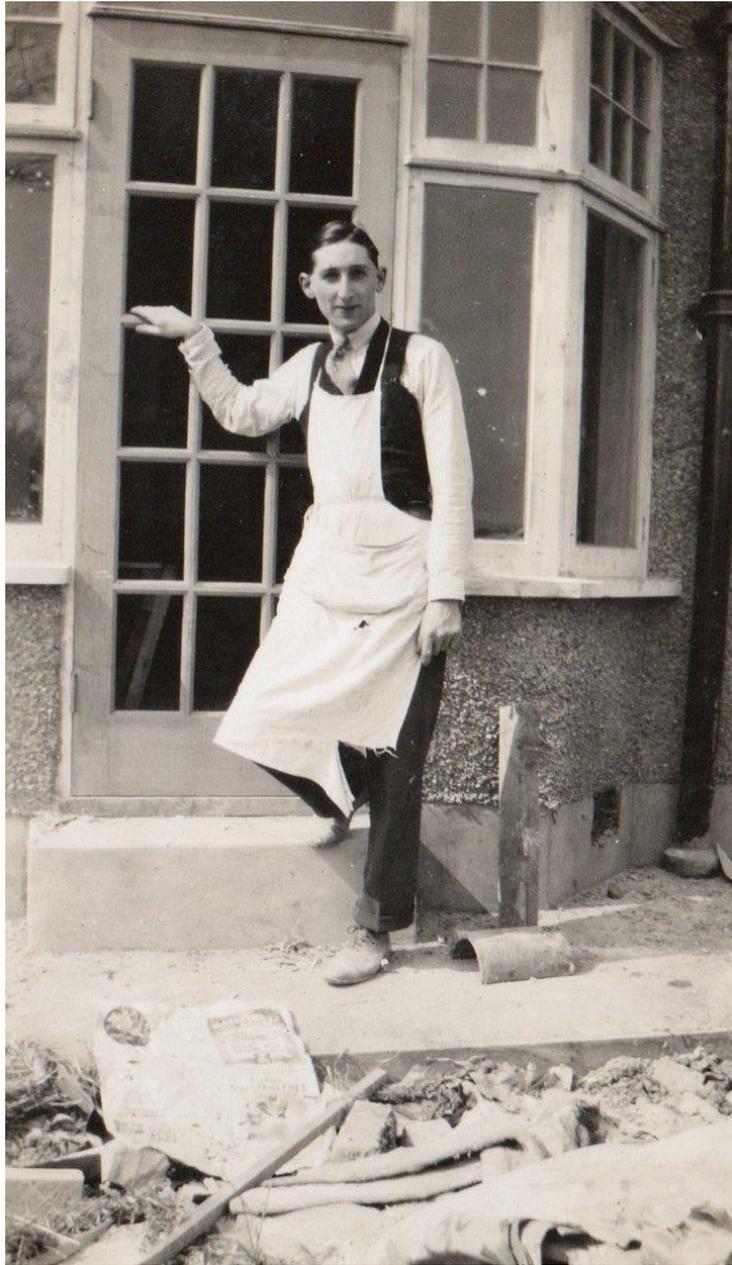
Alfred's memorial is mainly the number of houses and other buildings his firm constructed but he also left a considerable record of the earlier years of his business, kept in meticulous detail. The firm's records will be preserved, and they can be made available for later research by arrangement with his daughter. This paper outlines the building work that his firm carried out, mostly on greenfield sites during this period.

## **Introduction**

Aleck Albert Newark, born on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1883 in Acton, was a builder. He and his wife, Edith, moved to Ashtead from 101 Clitherow Ave., Hanwell, in 1935/6. He bought land in Craddocks Avenue, and built 162 Craddocks Avenue<sup>1</sup> in 1936. His son, Alec Alfred James Newark, known as Alfred or Alf, born in 1911, came with them and 162 was the first house he built working for his father. It was the family home until Aleck and Edith moved to 106 Newton Wood Road in 1947. Alfred studied and became a Licentiate of the Institute of Builders in 1938 and a Member of the Federation of Master Builders.

Alfred bought a piece of land for 3 houses in Craddocks Avenue in 1939 (167, 169, 171), but as there was little building during the war, it remained undeveloped until 1946. During the war, he worked in Teddington for Grundy<sup>2</sup>, and was also a firewatcher there. He could not enlist as he had flat feet. He married Olive in 1941 and they lived in Strawberry Hill. Aleck his father had retired early on the proceeds of his business, but he came out of retirement after

the war to help his son set up his own business. The firm was known as ‘Alfred J Newark’.



*Alfred Newark, in 1933 working for Wimpey @ Perivale.*

Alfred's brother, Geoffrey William Newark, known as Bill, who was Alfred's right hand man, was brought into the firm in 1945 and worked alongside him. Bill took over the business in 1981 when Alfred retired, aged 70, and ran it until he too retired in 1991, when it closed.

Bill's wife, still living in the house which the firm built in Newton Wood Road, remembers cows grazing on fields on the other side of the railway line after the war, near Howard's Crossing and the old crossing keeper's cottage, occupied by Mr and Mrs Racey and their son.



*Alfred, in 1963*



*Bill in 1962*

## **Early Buildings**

Following the sale of most of the fields belonging to the former Woodfield Farm, many plots of land became available for development in Ashted both before and after the war. Houses Aleck and Alfred built on land they acquired in Craddocks Avenue before or during the war were 158 to 184 and 159 to 177. These houses would have been built largely on a speculative basis with the funds from early sales used to finance later construction. Alfred built his own house at No. 167 and occupied it from 1947 until his death in 2014. Most of the houses

were sold but 175, 182 and 184 were rented out. There are details of rent arrears for No. 175. Before the houses were built there was a field ditch running diagonally across the land, passing underneath the garage at the back of no. 177, across 175, and past 167. The first garage at 177 had to be rebuilt because of subsidence. Numbers 182 and 184 were not built until 1965-6. Until then Alfred used to store his bricks on the site. Alfred's daughter remembers playing there.

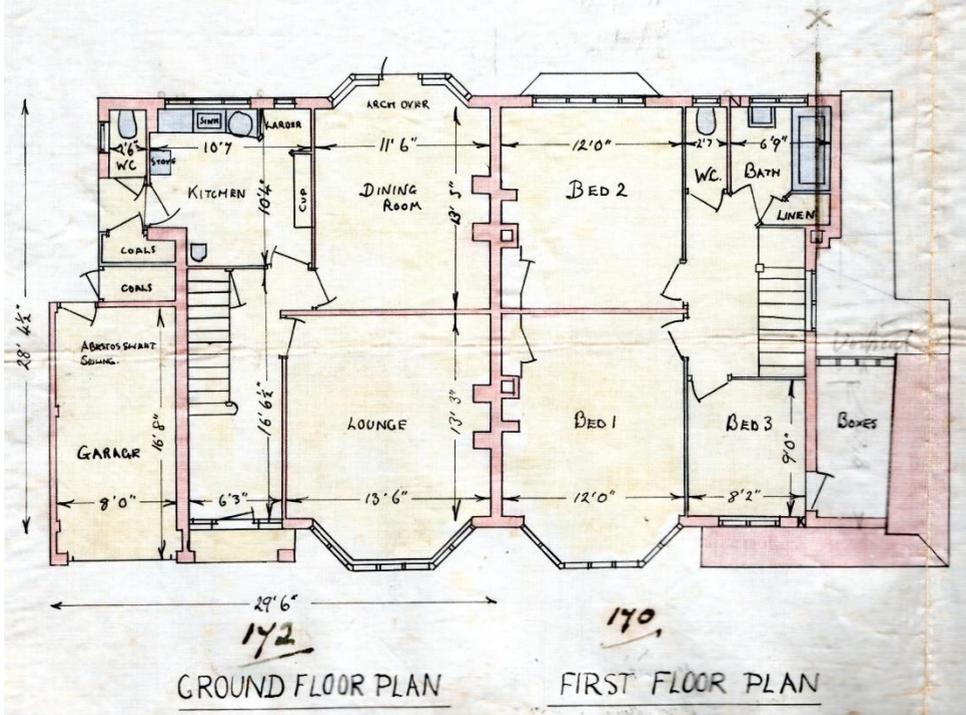


*Photograph of No.168 (was 174) Craddocks Ave, 1938*

Before Forest Way was built, there was a hedge and stream with fields beyond in the gap between the houses where the new road was later built. Before the 1950's houses in Craddocks Avenue had different numbers; some were renumbered twice. No. 158 became 168 and is now 162. Very confusing for researchers!



FRONT ELEVATION



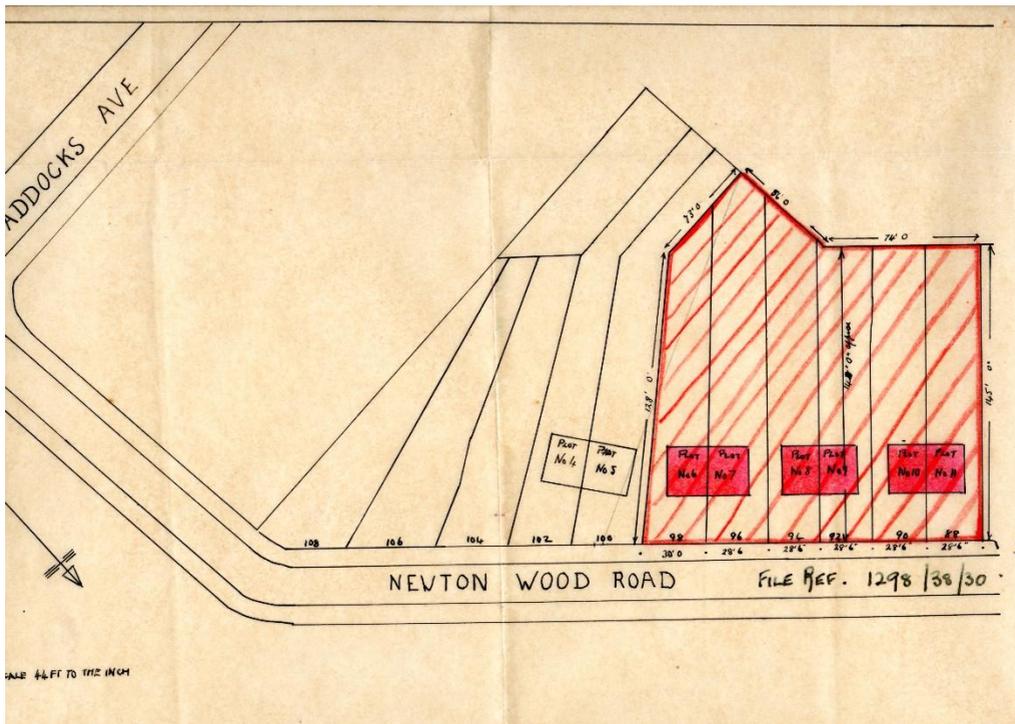
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Proposal plan, 1937

Alfred bought land in Newton Wood Road in 2 tranches in 1946, where he built numbers 88 to 108. His parents lived at number 106 from 1947 until they died, Aleck in 1972 aged 89, Edith in 1980, aged 96. Some of the other houses were built for family and friends.

The purchase price in 1946 for 5 plots of land (100 to 108) in Newton Wood Road was £1163. The houses there sold for between £1054 (104 in 1947) and £2595 (88 in 1954).



*Proposal plan for houses in Newton Wood Road, 1946.*

At this time, and until about 1955, there were severe restrictions on the use of timber for house building. The licence for 157 Craddocks Ave (now 167) illustrates the limitations on the use of timber. Wood was needed for roof structures, floors, doors and window frames. A 1953 letter refers to difficulty in obtaining bricks.

C. 1138

MINISTRY OF WORKS

CONTROL OF CIVIL BUILDING

Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, Regulation 56A

LICENCE

To M r. A.J. Newark  
of 168 Craddocks Avenue  
Ashtead.

LICENCE No. 85/NWDH/341

Subject to the Conditions hereafter set out Licence is hereby granted  
to build two-storey brick house in accordance with  
plan No.A.2260 deposited and approved by the Council on  
the 13.9.45

at (address) 157 Craddocks Avenue,

at a total cost not exceeding £ 1055. ( One thousand and Fifty-five pounds)

Timber required

- A. Softwood 2 standards
- B. Hardwood 4 cut ft
- C. Plywood 300 sq. ft.

Dated this 21st day of Sept. 1945

CONDITIONS

1. Special conditions or limitations :-

This licence is granted on condition that the licensee does not  
sell the house the erection of which is hereby authorised at a price  
in excess of £1068. or if he lets the house that the rent of same  
shall not exceed £78. per annum exclusive of rates.

Contractors Mr. A.J. Newark, 168 Craddocks Avenue, Ashtead.

*on behalf of the Minister of Works*

**ENGINEER & SURVEYOR**

**LEATHERHEAD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

For further conditions and notes—see overleaf

Wt. 9194/L1504 1000m. 4/45 A.W. & Co. 51-6945

*Licence No. 85/NWDH/341 for 157 (167) Craddocks Ave.*

## Later Building

Alfred's firm, Alfred J Newark, built hundreds of houses in and around the area. They did not buy any more land, but instead built for Leatherhead Urban District Council and also for architects, who designed individual houses for particular clients. They built in Ashtead, Leatherhead, Bookham, Fetcham, Horsley, Oxshott and Esher. Alfred said it was a juggling act having houses at different

stages of completion, but that he found it a challenge and got great enjoyment from it. He said he preferred working for the council as architects' clients could often change their minds and cause hold ups in the chain of events. He said his bank balance would fluctuate greatly as the firm met building costs in advance of receiving payments. Some architects' clients were not good at paying on time.

### **Buildings for Leatherhead Urban District Council**

The Council would put jobs out to tender, and their specifications were extremely detailed. Competing for each job involved a lot of work. The author holds bound copies of the extensive paperwork required for some of these contracts. Here are some examples of Council housing that the firm built in the following areas:

Bramley Way, Darcy Rd and Darcy Place, Ashted, between 1946 and 1948.

Oakenwood Housing Estate, Great Bookham, 1948.

Barnett Wood Farm Estate, 1949.

Kingston Road Housing Estate, Leatherhead, 1949/50.

Bookham Grove Estate and Pound Farm 1951/2.



*Stoney Croft, 1958.*

A 33 house estate in Stonny Croft in 1958 (was Stoney Croft):

The Youth Centres in Kingston Road, Leatherhead (1964) and Barnett Wood Lane, Ashted.

South End, Great Bookham, 1957, 16 dwellings for £24,356.

The toilets on the main road at Bookham.

Poplar Road and Leach Grove, Leatherhead, 1959-60. 42 dwellings: 16 flats, 8 bungalows and 18 Old People's Bungalows, for £41,860.

Rye Brook area in North Leatherhead, 1967

The Old Atlas Works Housing Development in Great Bookham, 1968, 10 flats, garages and external works for £32,827.

A local newspaper<sup>3</sup> in 1948 reported on a ceremony held at the Bramley Way Estate to commemorate the 300<sup>th</sup> council house built by Leatherhead Council since the end of the war. The Council said they were proud of their record and aimed for one house for one family.

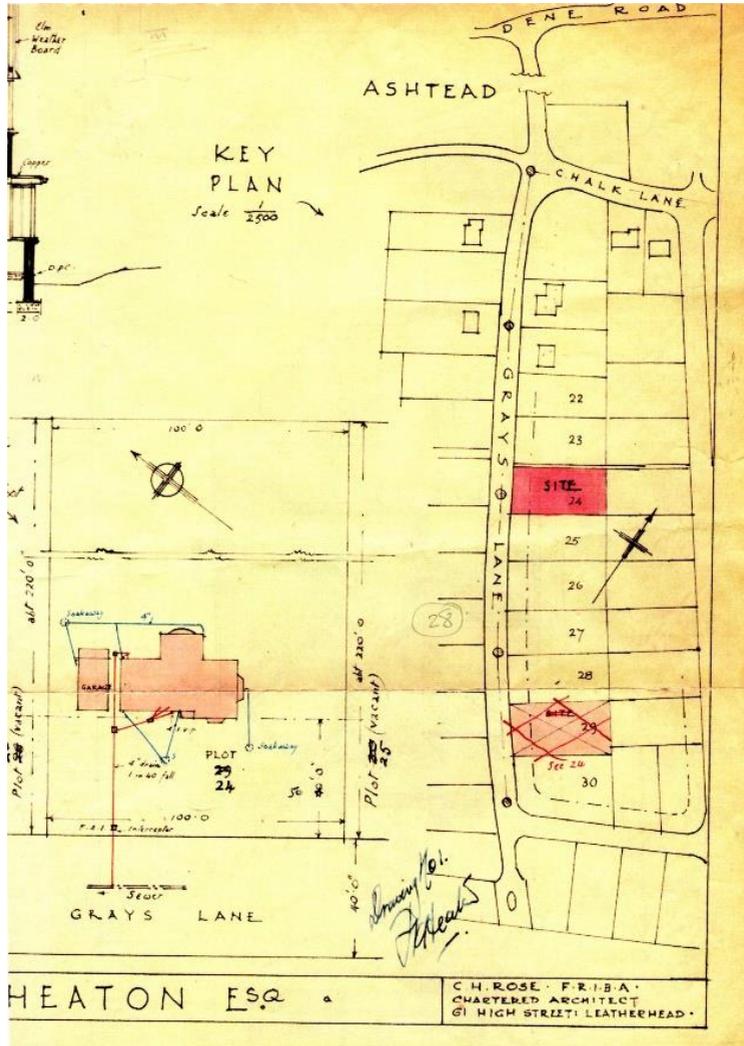
### **Architect Designed Houses, and Other Private Work**

The firm built houses in Grays Lane and Ralliwood Road, Ashted, and in Leatherhead, including a house near a quarry on Hawk's Hill. They built a number of houses in Bookham, Fetcham, Horsley, Sandy Lane, Oxshott and in



*An architect designed house built in the 1950s*

the area between Oxshott and Esher. They did work notably for Mr Simmons, a Cobham architect. They built an old people's home and a house for an Arab near Esher. Bill's son remembers them building a house for a member of the Band 'Yes'. They did work also at Epsom College and Reed's School in Cobham. The architect designed house at No. 24 (now 21) Grays Lane was built for £3275 in 1953. No 28 (now 29) was built for £3,033, also in 1953.

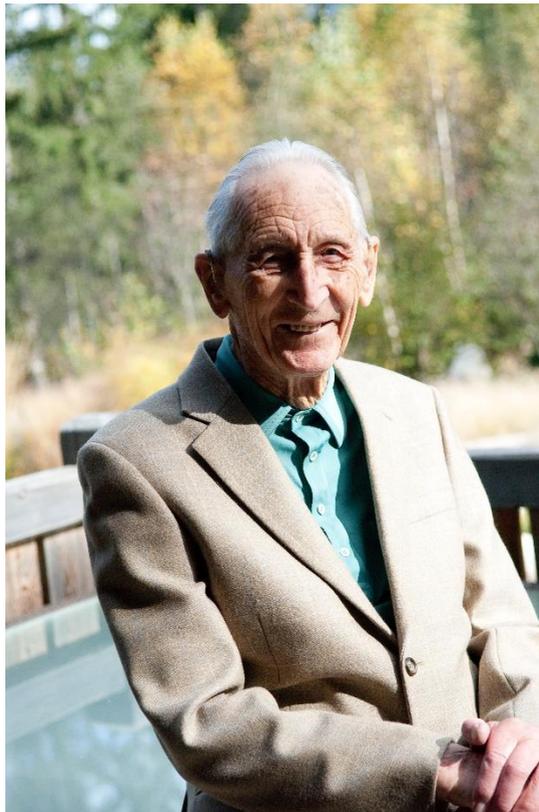


Extract from a plan for No 21 (site 24), Grays Lane, Ashtead, 1953.

## Later Years

In later years, there was less new land for development and fewer new Council houses were built in the area, and so more of their work was on adaptations and extensions to existing properties.

After he retired in 1981, Alfred continued to live in his house at 167 Craddocks Avenue until he died at the age of 103 in 2014. He had made various improvements to the house over the years and it had become a lovely, large, living space. He loved working in the garden, especially growing vegetables for the family. He worked it until a few days before he died. He was obviously a builder who took pride in his workmanship, and was much respected. He and Olive loved dancing and rambling. Alf would plan out and lead rambles for their friends. After he died, his daughters arranged for a bench to be put up in their memory at Sheeples, inscribed with: 'for Alf and Olive and all the happy rambles'.



*Alfred aged 101*

## **Conclusion**

Father and son, along with other builders, built many houses before and after WW2 in the area around London. They were part of the building boom, as the suburbs extended out from the inner city. Their legacy is the provision of shelter and security for many people, past, present, and into the future. Part of their legacy, also, is the paper and photographic record of the work of this modest firm of builders.

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<sup>1</sup> Map Ref. TQ 05/15 191 592. It was originally 158, then 168, now 162.

<sup>2</sup> Manufacturers of metal work for the food industry.

<sup>3</sup> Dorking & Leatherhead Advertiser, 'Yesteryear, 68 years ago,' 1<sup>st</sup> Dec 2016.

# LEATHERHEAD FOOD RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

By Alan Holmes & William Whitman

## Summary

The Leatherhead Food Research Association was one of a group of Research Associations which came to Randalls Park at the end of the war. It flourished and grew with international demand for information and high quality scientific knowledge. In changing circumstances the business model failed and it went into administration. The business continues to trade in a different location and under changed ownership.

## Introduction

At the end of the 39-45 war Leatherhead Urban District Council, with government encouragement, made available a site on the north side of Randalls Road, quite close to the railway station, to be developed by Research Associations, hereafter R As. The first occupants of the site were B C U R A [British Coal Utilisation R A] followed by P A T R A [Printing, Packaging & Allied Trades R A] and B F M I R A [British Food Manufacturing Industries R A. All these organisations were located on the eastern side of what became Randalls Way. Between Randalls Way and Cleeve Road there was a playing field with a cricket pitch, sports pavilion and allotments, owned by BCURA. On the western side of Cleeve Road there was a group of Electrical Research organisations: Central Electricity Research Laboratories [CERL}, The Electricity Council Appliance Testing

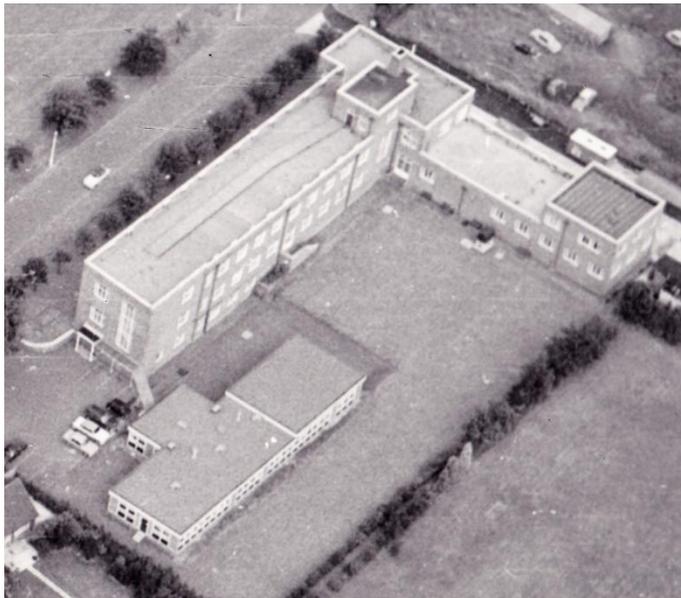


*Dalmeny Avenue*

Laboratories, and the Electrical Research Association [ERA]<sup>1</sup>.

Research Associations had been set up by the government when deficiencies in the application of science by British industry became apparent during the 1914-18 war. In 1919 the Research Association for the Chocolate, Jam, Confectionery and Allied Trades was set up, with substantial government funding, in a building in Dalmeny Avenue, Holloway. Later they were joined in the same premises by the British Association for Food Research, with the same director, Tom Macara, but as a separate organisation with separate accounts.<sup>2</sup> The organisation proved its worth during the '39-'45 war by carrying out work aimed at making best use of available food supplies. Among their publications were two concerned with the effect of war gases on foods<sup>3,4</sup>.

After the war the Councils of the two Research Associations [R A s] made the decision to merge as B F M I R A [British Food Manufacturing Industries R A] to meet the need for larger premises, they moved to a Science Park on the site of Randalls Farm in Leatherhead. The site had been purchased by BCURA, who had sold the front part of the site to PATRA, later P I R A, who in turn sold the rear part of their site to BFMIRA. They occupied their first building along the line of the service road in 1950.<sup>5</sup>



*First building in Leatherhead, 1969*

## The Food Research Association

The organisation was very successful under Dr Banfield and carried out useful



Dr A W Holmes O B E

work on a wide range of topics such as chocolate bloom, and the production of low acid pickles but there was a marked lack of investment in well qualified staff and in equipment. When Dr A. Holmes became Director in 1967 the R A was at a low ebb lacking modern equipment, money, reputation and a clear purpose. The R.A.s [Research

Associations] were funded by their owners, the firms manufacturing in the industrial sectors they covered. They decided their own subscriptions and the research work to be carried out. In practice, the main role of the staff was to provide a reservoir of skilled staff, who could provide expert confidential advice when required, with scientific back-up, to the firms' own resources in an emergency. The element of government funding allowed breadth and continuity to the research programme. Expansion of the team and resources in Leatherhead was needed to meet the changing demands of the industry. This was secured in part by increasing subscriptions but also by recruiting into membership food manufacturers from overseas as our food supply chain became increasingly globalised. More emphasis was placed on the role of the R A in providing information, not only about the relatively small amount of research which was carried out 'in-house' but about all the published research throughout the world, as well as about legal requirements and market trends.

This change in emphasis made possible a considerable expansion of the R A, so that in course of time the available site was completely filled to provide state of the art research and experimental facilities covering a wide range of food products.



*Food RA fully developed*

## The CAIRS System

Central to this development was a system for storing and efficiently retrieving published information. It is relatively simple to put information into a filing system; the art lies in extracting only the information needed to answer a specific query without missing anything which might be useful and without retrieving too much that is not useful.



*CAIRS system*

The CAIRS [Computer Aided Information Retrieval System] that was developed at the R A was years ahead of its time and was limited only by the speed and storage capacity of the computers then available. This was developed to provide for industry a number of data bases covering food research, legislation worldwide and food marketing.

The CAIRS system was not confined to applications in the food industry and was marketed to other organisations also e.g. at the Barcelona Olympic Games, 1992, the CAIRS system at the BBC record library was used for quick retrieval of records that were played for medal winners at the end of their post-event interviews. The CAIRS system was also used to catalogue the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle.

This efficient information system, which permitted multi-user access, was one factor which assisted in selling membership of the R A overseas. A substantial and effective sales drive resulted in a significant increase in membership worldwide.

The growth of the R A during the period from 1960 to 2000 is indicated by the approximated figures in the table:

	1951	1973	1978	1983	1987	1994	2000	2012
T/Over[K]	37	593	1300	3000	5854	8735	8364	9800
ExcInc/Exp	1.3	45.4	200	120	161	96	11	650
Subs Staff Sals	23.6	357	500	750	1287	3500	3750	
Members	450	560	700	700	750	850	950	
Reports	20	52	70	64	40	n/a		



In 1991 extensive discussions were held with the other two U K Food Research Associations about a possible merger. Leatherhead Food R A strongly favoured a merger but this was not then favoured by the other two organisations. [They subsequently merged and in 2008 they also joined with the Brewing Research

Association.] In 1993 a subsidiary, Leatherhead Information Technology, [LIT] was set up to provide computer software and in the next year the R A acquired the business of the Technical Division Laboratories of the Milk Marketing Board [TDL] and a 50% holding in Food Micromodel Ltd. In 1996 LIT was merged to form a new company CAIRS Ltd in which the RA had a 50% holding. By 1998 TDL was trading profitably as was CAIRS Ltd.

In 1999 it was reported that the traditional system of panel meetings for reporting was to be replaced by internet group presentations with electronic discussions, obviating the need for travel. It was also proposed to fund directly research at universities and institutes reducing the need to invest in special equipment. Alliances were negotiated with NIZO in Holland and with the American Institute of Baking in Manhattan, Kansas.

In 2010 the R A entered a partnership with Mintel a leader in publishing information on marketing data but financial pressure was being felt from a deficit in the pension fund and difficulties in further improving income sources. One wing of the buildings was let-off to Surrey Police and several other tenants

### **Some Science Projects**

Expansion of the R A through the 1980s was slowed down by the steady restriction of government funding for research, as it proved difficult to obtain a compensating increase in industrial funding but a major expansion of the programme of training courses and conferences helped to raise the profile of the organisation and induced member firms to commission confidential projects, the results of which could not be immediately released to the membership.

An example of this was work undertaken for a consortium of manufacturers of dairy products. This work showed that a great increase in product shelf life could be secured by close control of the temperature of these products during distribution and sale. This revolutionised the distribution chain for chilled products both in vehicles and in stores.

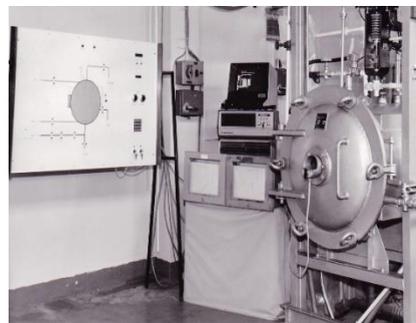
In another project, research work on rates of cooling of cooked meats<sup>6</sup> was used as the basis for the design of an effective semi-continuous cooler. The equipment based on this design was subsequently evaluated by R A staff<sup>7</sup> and shown to be working to the design parameters. It achieved an improvement of the shelf life of the product from two days to close to two weeks.

Special funding was provided by the government to improve standards of instrumentation and control in the industry. The work concentrated on the measurement of temperature and of moisture in factory environments. One very successful device measured the temperature of boiling jam to a higher level of accuracy than was previously possible so that batches of jam could be boiled more consistently than was previously possible. Once the principle was established, commercial instrumentation firms could meet the industrial need.

A more difficult problem was that of measuring in real time the temperature within cans, for example of soup, while they were being sterilised in a large continuous cooker. A radio device was made which could pick up the signal sent from a special can travelling inside the cooker<sup>8</sup>. This provided reassurance that sterilisation requirements were being met, and led to increased efficiency.

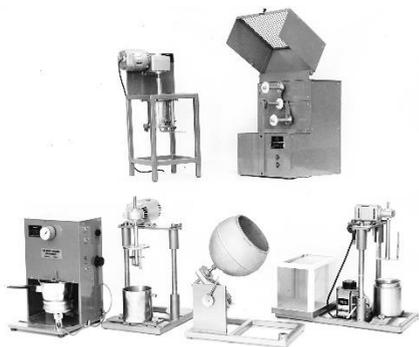


*RF Temperature Sensor*



*Computerised Retort Control*

Another project, in the late 1970s was the computer controlled automation of the operation of a batch retort [an industrial scale pressure cooker], this involved development of new techniques of digital regulation of valves.<sup>9</sup> A similar retort was installed in the pilot plant of a progressive canner and the industry became more confident in adopting computers for control in batch food processing operations.



*Small scale confectionery equipment*

In the field of confectionery manufacture an entirely novel process was developed for the manufacture of chocolate that was much quicker and more flexible than the traditional technique and yielded a product that was indistinguishable from standard chocolate.

The very large scale manufacturers were reluctant to depart from their large investment in traditional production but it was very attractive to manufacturers starting production on new sites.

The RA also demonstrated the use of alternative ingredients in a wide variety of food products such as new gelling and foaming agents, alternative proteins and calorie sparing formulations. In the course of such work in confectionery manufacture a range of small scale equipment was developed to reproduce standard manufacturing techniques but using much smaller quantities of raw materials. These aroused such attention from industry that their manufacture was adopted commercially.

The ultimate test of any food is in its consumption. Taste, appearance and texture all play a part. In order to assess these characteristics a specialised laboratory made use of people under carefully controlled conditions to measure responses to these variables. In some cases, a panel of non-specialists was recruited to eliminate bias. This facility was used extensively by commercial firms.



*Preparing taste samples*

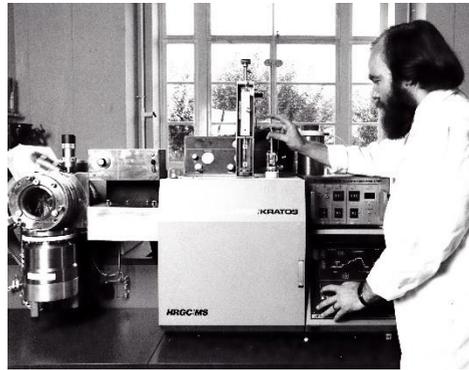


*Blind tasting*

A very important contribution was made by the RA in the field of food contamination. This is a very wide subject covering both deliberate contamination: such as adding cheapening or even dangerous ingredients [anti-freeze in wines, soya or horsemeat in beef-burgers], and accidental problems such as glass, plastic or metal fragments, and chemical fouling. Microscopy methods were developed to establish the source of even very small glass fragments and chemical contamination could be tracked and identified using the technique of gas-chromatography/mass spectrometry which makes possible the identification at low levels of severely contaminating chemicals.

One example of this was when the production, from a whole shift, of potato chips was returned to the manufacturer. A low level of a very strong tasting chemical was isolated from the product and enquiries established that the contaminant matched a spill at a chemical manufacturer's premises more than a mile away. The GC/MS evidence was decisive in resolving an insurance claim. As part of the research programme, a search was made for chemicals that were common to cheese, chocolate and orange. All these foods are known to set off migraines in some patients. A likely common chemical was identified by GC/MS and its activity was confirmed by careful tests by a medical team on some brave volunteer sufferers.<sup>10 11</sup>

When the R A was first established in Leatherhead many smaller food manufacturers did not have laboratories. In response to an anticipated need a mobile microbiological laboratory was purchased that could be used on site in the event of a factory related food poisoning outbreak. This was used at two factories but the need reduced as standards in industry improved and it ceased to be an economic resource. But emergencies did occur when it was necessary to send several members of staff from different disciplines to augment factory resources in order to overcome problems.



These examples of the application of specific skills and disciplines within the R A serve to illustrate the way in which they could be applied at need to the solution of specific problems. More important than this was the role of the R A in providing to industry relevant information. Every day countless telephoned enquiries were received and answered, visitors were welcomed for more detailed discussions, letters, publications, photocopies and books were sent out to members in a constant flow. Over the years, symposia and training courses became very important channels of communicating new ideas and providing instruction in both basic and new techniques. Symposia were a powerful tool in exploring new developments, both technical and academic. Academic and industrial experts would be brought in as appropriate to supplement the skills and knowledge of R A staff. This exchange of ideas was to the benefit of all concerned and could on occasion lead to new research initiatives.

The outcome, in part due to the work of the R A, was a better informed, more international food industry with more uniform standards able and willing to innovate in a cost-effective framework.

A very important contribution to the food industry was as a source of scientists. Good younger scientists were well trained in the broad food science atmosphere of the Research Association to take on responsible posts in industry, government and university. More experienced scientists were also in demand for more senior posts as they became available.

Scientists with experience acquired at the R A became increasingly common at Director and Head of Department level. The wide dissemination of experience of the resources of the Research Association also benefitted the R A itself by increasing the use of its integral resources.

## **Decline of the Research Association**

Despite a number of successful and profitable years income growth could not be sustained to meet the ever increasing financial pressure from a Pension Fund deficit. Despite renting out spare office and laboratory space to various tenants, including part of one wing to Surrey Police there was little prospect of growth and investment being available to meet the future financial requirements.

In 2015 with no prospect of extending bank borrowing and a shortage of cash the business was placed in administration. Leatherhead Food Research was bankrupt. The business, but not the site, was purchased by Science Group plc (AIM:SAG,L), a major global science and technology advisory and product development organisation. The business was moved to a location in Epsom, the site of the former Beecham Research Laboratories.

In many food manufacturing sites around the world, the words ‘Leatherhead Food Research’ are recognised as a very high quality consultancy and information provider. Despite leaving Leatherhead, the brand ‘Leatherhead Food Research’ lives on in the very capable hands of the Science Group.

Acknowledgment: with thanks for his contributions to Professor Tony Hines MBE FIFST who has enjoyed 45 years of employment at Leatherhead Food Research from Dark Room Assistant to Director of Crisis Management.

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<sup>1</sup> The Official Guide to Leatherhead and District, 1970/72 edition, p 165.

<sup>2</sup> ‘A history of Leatherhead Food R A’, A W Holmes, Sep 1994

<sup>3</sup> FIRA, Res Rec 90, 1943, ‘Mustard Gases in Foodstuffs. Report 2.’

<sup>4</sup> B A R, 1940, ‘The Identification and Determination of War Gases in Foodstuffs.’

<sup>5</sup> Food Trade Review, Sep 1960, p

<sup>6</sup> T N Salvidge & C R Elson, LFRA Res Rep 300, 1979

<sup>7</sup> R Darlington, LFRA Res Rep 582, 1987

<sup>8</sup> D J Steele, LFRA Res Rep 216, 1975

<sup>9</sup> R D Neil & D J Steele, LFRA Res Rep 307, 1979.

<sup>10</sup> R G Reid & M J Saxby, LFRA T Circ 599, 1975

<sup>11</sup> M J Saxby, LFRA T Circ 614, 1976.

# THE LOST PARSONAGE OF GREAT BOOKHAM

By Terence Staff

## Introduction

Since the Reformation five buildings have housed the Parish Priests of Great Bookham. Of these four still remain: Gothic House [now the Post Office], Flushing Farm, 36, Church Road and the present Rectory at 2a Fife Way.

When Cooke was appointed vicar by Admiral Geary in 1769 he lived in Gothic House but it was probably he who had built a new parsonage, next door; a building that became the Vicarage and then the Rectory for about 130 years but of which no trace now remains.

This study seeks to record the information that still exists about the missing building, whilst some living memories of it remain.

## The Cooke Parsonage

The imposing 3 storey Georgian style building stood on the West side of The Street, later called Church Street, then Church Road. It was set back from the road between Gothic House and The Gables. The eastern boundary of the parsonage had a close boarded high oak fence with shrubs and trees to provide even greater privacy. The main entrance was on the north side of Gothic House. By the side of The Gables was a separate entrance from The Street to the stables.

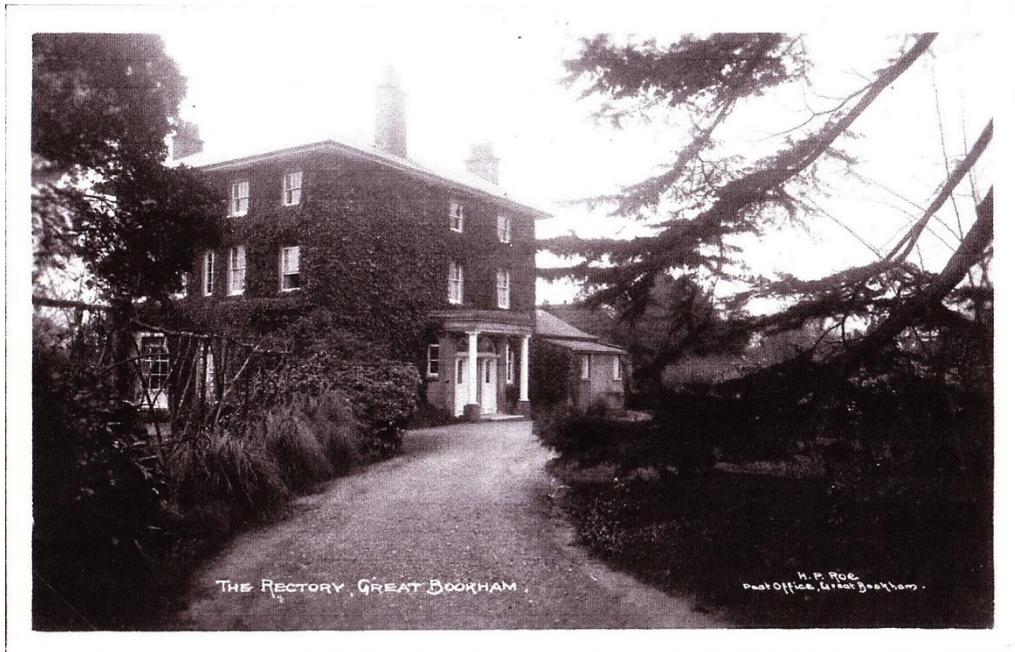
The rear gardens of 21-31 Posthouse Lane mark the western boundary of The Parsonage. This boundary is just short of the present footpath that runs between Vicarage Close and Lower Road, which is part of the ancient footpath to Little Bookham Church and Effingham Church. The exact date of the construction of the new parsonage is still uncertain, despite exhaustive research. The description in 'History of Surrey' written by Manning and Bray<sup>1</sup>, published in 1804, states that 'the property consists of orchard, gardens and courtyard in which stands the house, barn, stable, dunghole and pond.' Manning died in 1801, so it would seem that the description predates his death.

A map held by the Surrey History Centre (K 177/1) is not clear as to the date but it does show the parsonage in its new location set well back from the road. A copy of this map made some years ago, by John Harvey<sup>2</sup> has, on the reverse, 1798. I suggest that the building was constructed between 1795 and 1805.

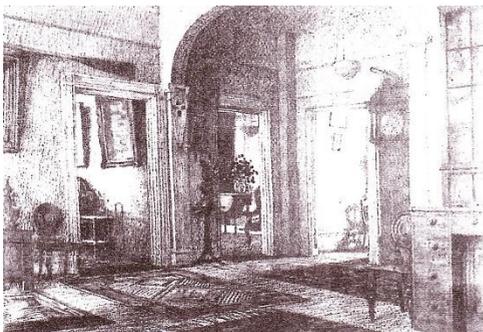


Map 1, K177/1, courtesy of SHC.

In the Census of 1911 the property is stated as having 15 rooms, plus landing, lobby, closet and bathrooms and cellar. Very little is known about the precise configuration of the rooms<sup>3</sup> and floor plans have not emerged in the course of the research. Visually there are few images; just a Hassell watercolour of 1822<sup>4</sup> and, to date, 4 postcard views, all the same elevation of the property, taken between 1900 and 1926.



*The Rectory, Great Bookham'*



*Interior*



*Porch*

The first occupants of the new building were the Rev'd Samuel Cooke and his family. He had started his ministry at St Nicolas in 1769. Six incumbents occupied the building during its time as a parsonage. A detailed record of the families, researched over a period of twenty years, by the late Ted Lindley, is held in the archives of St Nicolas Church.

Samuel Cooke baptised Alexander, son of General D'Arbly and Fanny Burney at St Nicolas on April 11<sup>th</sup> 1795. Fanny Burney and her husband had moved to Fairfield Place, now The Hermitage, shortly after their marriage at Mickleham in 1793. In 1795 her novel 'Camilla' was published. No doubt the D'Arblays visited the Cookes in their new home.

In 1798 there began the first of the visits to the Cooke family by Jane Austen. The Cookes were related to the Austens through the Leigh family as cousins, Cassandra, daughter of Theophilus Leigh, marrying Samuel in 1768. Jane was baptised by Rev'd George Austen on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1776 and the Rev'd Samuel Cooke stood as her godfather. Her visits to Great Bookham continued until at least 1814, having spent some time in Great Bookham refining her novel, 'Emma'.

Samuel Cooke died on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1820. The Rev'd Gerrard Andrewes then served as Vicar for a short time in 1820 to 1821 to assist a close friend and relative by marriage, Dr William Heberden. William Heberden, a distinguished Royal Physician, described later as 'William the Father' had purchased the Advowson<sup>5</sup> of St Nicolas so that he could present his son, also William, later described as 'William the Vicar' when the living became vacant. Samuel Cooke being nearly 80, it was thought that a vacancy would shortly arise.

Samuel Cooke died soon after 'William the Vicar' had graduated but before he was a priest. Gerrard Andrewes acted as vicar until Dr Heberden's son had obtained his M.A. and been ordained. Gerrard Andrewes relinquished his temporary appointment in 1821; then 'William the Vicar began his incumbency which continued until 1880 (or 1879).

The census of 1851 records 15 people living in the parsonage: 8 members of the Heberden family plus 7 servants including a footman. In the 1861 Census, there was the Rev'd Heberden and 6 family members living in the house plus a housekeeper, ladies' maid, housemaid, kitchen maid, indoor servant and a nurse. By the time of the 1871 census the servants had been reduced in number to five.

When Rev'd Heberden was appointed Vicar, he received the half tithe which had been bequeathed to the Vicars of Bookham by Francis Rous. He inherited the other half of the tithe from his father in 1845 and thus became the first Rector of St Nicolas since 1292. He also inherited the Advowson [right to appoint the next Rector] but in 1855 he sold this to Viscount Downe.

After the death of the Rev'd William Heberden in December 1879, Viscount Downe presented the Rev'd Edward Malleon to be Rector of Great Bookham. In the 1881 Census Edward Malleon is recorded as living in The Rectory with his wife Lucy, 2 of their children and 2 servants.

In 1885 with the completion of the re-ordering of the fabric of St Nicolas<sup>6</sup> under the architect William Butterfield, the Bishop of Winchester re-opened the church<sup>7</sup>, having processed with the choir robed in cassocks and surplices from The Rectory. After the service, the clergy and the Bishop returned to The Rectory where the Rector and Mrs Malleon entertained a large company to luncheon. The guests included the Viscountess Chewton, the Honourable Mrs & Rev'd Noel Waldegrave, Lady & Sir Edward Moon, Mrs Barnard Hankey (Fetcham Park), Miss Pratt Barlow, Mrs & Miss Coombe (Cobham Park), Major & Miss Pontifex (Chilworth Manor) and Miss Trotter (Horton Park).

Edward Malleon resigned from his duties as Rector at the beginning of 1905 having held office for 25 years. This decision was taken by him owing to his failing health and he died in the same year.

On 9<sup>th</sup> June 1905 George Bird (son of Arthur Bird) was inducted as the new Rector. It is interesting to note that the population of Great Bookham was 1281

and it was recorded that it was a quiet country village. On 28<sup>th</sup> July 1905 William Keswick entered into a bond to secure the sum of £470 from Queen Anne's Bounty to meet the cost of 'additions/alterations/sanitary and other improvements to the parsonage house and offices upon the said glebe'. This document<sup>8</sup> was signed and sealed by Arthur Bird and witnessed by Frederick Charles Skinner, a footman at The Grange. The work was carried out by Cummins and Sons of Dorking and supervised by Richard Lee, architect.

The Enabling Act of 1919 authorised the Parish to elect a Parochial Church Council. The first meeting was held on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1920. In January 1922, the PCC Meeting discussed improvements that were needed to the Church, as little work, other than essential repairs, had been done since 1885. There was need for a choir vestry and replacement of the 100 year old heating system. To raise the likely cost of £1,000 it was agreed that a Gigantic Fete and Country Fair be held on 19, 20 and 21<sup>st</sup> June 1922 in the grounds of Bookham Grove and in The Rectory garden. A full account of the event is contained in Stephen Fortescue's pamphlet<sup>9</sup> published in 1971. As a direct result of the financial success of the fete, the foundation stone of the vestry was laid by Mrs Ronald Greville on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1923. Immediately following that ceremony, a garden fete was held in the Rectory grounds. Admission was free with money being raised in various ways.

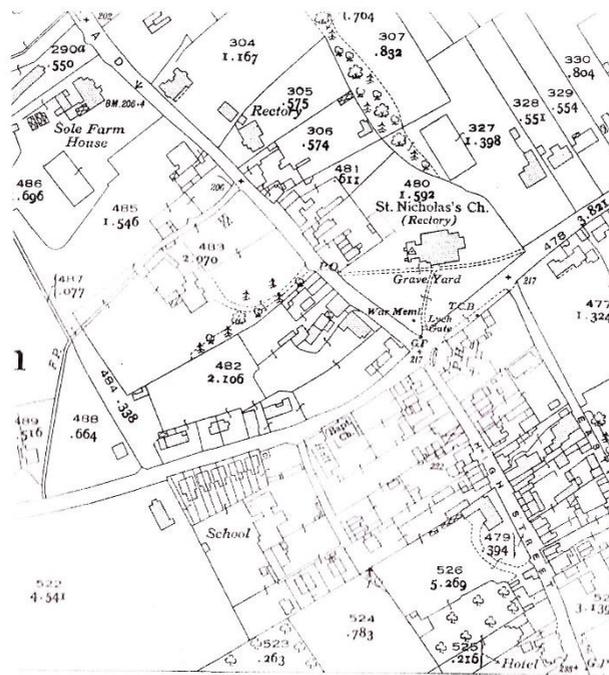
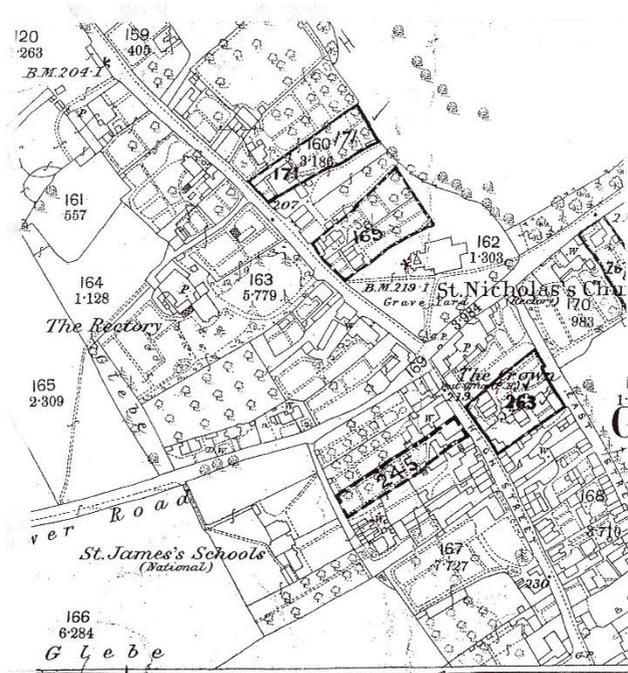
Once inside the gates, tea was served on the lawn beneath the shade of the great spreading cedars and in full sight of the famous magnolia. Very welcome indeed were the ices and strawberries and cream in the heat of the summer day. A band played during the afternoon and evening and there were concerts performed indoors by the open French doors and windows with the audience seated in the garden outside. There were a few side shows including an Aunt Sally, a corner for kiddies with a dolls' house and an ever-popular swing and see-saw. In the evening, there was dancing on the lawn. At 10.30 the fete closed and visitors and workers alike went home to bed (St Nicolas Parish Magazine 1923).

As late as 25<sup>th</sup> April 1922 George Bird applied to the Queen Anne's Bounty for a mortgage of £49 for making improvements to the house. In 1926 he moved to Rowledge near Farnham only to resign in 1934 due to failing health.

1926 saw Walter Norman Higgins take up the office of Rector and occupy The Rectory. On the 25<sup>th</sup> November 1929 Higgins reported to the PCC<sup>10</sup> that he thought that the building was to be sold and that he would have to find a replacement property. It is probably appropriate to mention that, in simplified terms, the Church of England divides the responsibility between the Church building and a Parsonage. The former is the responsibility of the Churchwardens reporting to the Archdeacon, the Diocesan Advisory Committee and the Bishop. The latter is the responsibility of the Incumbent in liaison with the Parsonages Board and the Bishop. Both buildings are subject to periodical inspection and report as to their condition by architects or surveyors appointed by the Diocese.

At the Annual Parish Meeting of 1930 the Rector reported the likely sale of the Parsonage by the Diocese, owing to the heavy cost of upkeep in relation to the stipend. On 29<sup>th</sup> October 1930 Walter Higgins agreed to rent a property known as The Cottage for a period of 7 years with break-clauses at the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year. It seems that Higgins soon realised that The Cottage had the potential to be the new Rectory, so plans were produced for the necessary alterations and additions. Kelly's Directory and the Telephone Directory at that time indicate that Higgins was living at Flushing Farm – I suggest that this was simply a short-term measure whilst alterations were being carried out at The Cottage, soon to become The Rectory and later numbered 36, Church Road.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1931 John, Lord Bishop of Guildford signed the approval of the sale of the old Parsonage for a sum of £3,250 and the purchase of the new Rectory for £1,500. In January 1932, the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty approved<sup>11</sup> and the tender was accepted for the alteration works to be carried out by a Leatherhead firm of builders. The altered building became the new Rectory and was occupied by successive incumbents until 1985. Interestingly the property had been owned by John Heberden, son of 'William the Vicar', when John was curate at St Nicolas.



GREAT BOOKHAM PH.  
 OS maps of 1869 & 1935 showing The Rectory<sup>12</sup>

## **The Parsonage in Private Hands**

Thus, the old Rectory passed into private hands with the sale in the latter part of 1930 to W D Hooper. In 1935 it was sold to William and Ida Briggs. In the 1939 National Registration return it is recorded that the building is occupied by Captain William H Briggs, his mother Mary Briggs, Louisa Green, domestic servant, William Cowles, gardener, Ellen Cowles, unpaid domestic servant, Trevor Cowles, errand boy and Ronald Cowles at school. Ida Briggs and son Cedric were at the time in Yorkshire. William Briggs died on 5<sup>th</sup> September 1952. Ida remained in occupation until the beginning of 1957 when she is recorded as living at Pinecroft, Highlands Road, Leatherhead. Ida Briggs died on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1975 and is buried in the churchyard of St Nicolas with Major Briggs and son Cedric.

During the Briggs time at The Old Rectory the building continued to be hidden from view<sup>13</sup> and Bernard Alexander recalled that as a schoolboy, he and his friends would rattle sticks along the edges of the palings of the oak fence until the Briggs' gardener shouted at them to go away. Similarly, Tom Casselden would lean his bicycle against the earth mound at the foot of the high fence and peer through the knot holes of the fence and try to see through the vegetation to get a glimpse of the house.



*Postcard of Gothic House & Rectory fence*

A major change occurred when on 1st March 1957 Leatherhead Urban District Council granted planning permission for the construction of 8 shops and maisonettes on part of the front garden of the Old Rectory. The units were in two blocks of four with a gap to accommodate branches of the very large Cedar of Lebanon tree that was to be preserved in the old front garden. The units on either side of the branches were just single storey. This situation continued until 1996, by which time the branches had been reduced to such an extent that it was decided that they be removed altogether thus enabling the space to be developed linking the shops and forming a substantial central block of offices and flats known as 'Church Court'. Tom Casselden remembers having to temporarily move his shoe shop, that had been next to the tree, across to 30, Church Road to enable the work to be done. He was then able to move back to the completed unit in 1999.



*Church Road Shops*

Towards the end of 1957 W J M Heslop and Mrs Heslop and their family purchased the 'Old Rectory' and continued to live there until 1962. William

(known as John) and Anez were known for their lavish hospitality and being part of the summer tennis party set. At the time, there was not only a tennis court at that house but also at Slinfold Cottage, Sole Farm House and The Gables. Despite the sale of the Sole Farm estate and the loss of land from The Gables the two remaining courts continued to be enjoyed until 1960. The social activities also continued and Joan Hatcher and Mary Easun recall the late-night dance parties and generous suppers held in the large drawing room of the Old Rectory. Jean Preston also remembers the Old Rectory being the last stop for carol singing by the Bookham Branch of the NSPCC. The singing in the entrance hall was followed by mince pies and wine.

During the Heslops' time, a small preparatory school, run by a Miss Delaney, was held in the cottage, which had been formed from the old stables. The pupils, usually not more than 6 at a time, included the Heslop children as well as those of Mike and Mary Easun. By this time the address had changed to Posthouse Lane as it was no longer possible to access the property from Church Road.

In 1962 the Heslops moved (they now live in Canada). Mr Frederick Oak became the last owner. He applied to the Leatherhead Urban District Council for permission to demolish the building (using the earlier name 'Vicarage'), and for the erection of town houses and flats. On the 21<sup>st</sup> September 1962, the application was refused. Subsequently two further applications were submitted until finally, in September 1965, the whole development of 14 town houses with garages was finally approved. It would seem that, as the delay in the full approval had been with the form of the new town houses, the demolition of the Old Rectory had been allowed to proceed. An aerial photograph<sup>14</sup>, taken on 8<sup>th</sup> April 1964 at 7300 ft., appears to show a pile of rubble on the site and the remains of part of the stable block.

Nothing now remains of the Parsonage and its quintessentially English Garden; only memories in the minds of the very few people who are left and had the pleasure of seeing it.

## **Acknowledgements**

*Terence Staff expresses his thanks to the many people and organisations who have helped in this research. In particular: Mary and Mike Easun, Veronica Taylor, Tom Casselden, Joan Hatcher, Jean Preston, Mavis Alexander, Jenny*

*Cameron, Stephen Fortescue, Roy Mellick, Margaret Griffiths, Surrey History Centre (Woking), Simon Sheppard, Church of England Record Centre (Bermondsey), Mole Valley District Council, London Metropolitan Archives, Guildford and Winchester Diocesan Offices, Hampshire County Record Office, North Yorkshire County Record Office, The Buckingham Society and National Archives (Kew).*

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<sup>1</sup> 'History of Surrey', 1974 Ed'n, Vol 2, 687, Manning & Bray.

<sup>2</sup> L&DLHS Procs, Vol 3, pp79ff.

<sup>3</sup> 'People and Places, Great & Little Bookham', S E D Fortescue, self-published

<sup>4</sup> St Nicolas Church Guide p 22.

<sup>5</sup> See also LDLHS Proc's, 1979, 198. Cannon A Hughes. 'Adventures of an Advowson.'

<sup>6</sup> The Faculty for the reordering of 1885 is in the parish archives.

<sup>7</sup> Surrey Advertiser 1885.

<sup>8</sup> Church of England Record Centre, Ref: QAB/7/5/K 10293.

<sup>9</sup> 'The gigantic Church Fete, Bazaar & Country Fair, Great Bookham 1922', 1971 - SED Fortescue.

<sup>10</sup> PCC records held @ Surrey History Centre.

<sup>11</sup> Ecclesiastical Commission, 17/4/31 Church of England Record Centre.  
Queen Anne's Bounty, Purchases & Sales Committee 19 June 1931.  
Church of England Record Centre.  
Copies held in Parish Archives.

<sup>12</sup> O.S. maps in author's possession.

<sup>13</sup> 'Great Bookham Post Office', shows Gothic House with the Rectory fence beyond.  
P/C property of author

<sup>14</sup> National Monuments Record Office. '05/64011 frame number 045/8/4/64.

# SECRETARIAL NOTES

Continued.

69<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting was held @ Letherhead Institute on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

70<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting was held @ Letherhead Institute on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Number 7 of Volume 8/9 of the Proceedings was published in early 2016.

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