

A POSTCARD COLLECTION
OF BOOKHAM

By

Barry Feltham

Album 3
(Pages 41 - 60)

The Bookhams

Arthur Bird - The Grange/School of Stitchery

In 1938 The School of Stitchery and Lace came to The Grange. They trained disabled people in needlework skills as well as providing sheltered workshops and accommodation. It is now the Grange Training Centre for the Disabled but the aim is still to encourage maximum independence and personal fulfilment through the mastery of a variety of skills.

The School of Stitchery and Lace was founded in Leicester in 1927 by Miss Julia Sweet with just a few girls. Within ten years she had acquired the Grange in Rectory Lane and by 1960 about 50 girls could be accommodated. In 1964 the school changed its name to the School of Stitchery, with additional sheltered workshops.



GBK.90 The School of Stitchery, Great Bookham.

The top postcard shows The School of Stitchery's accommodation c1950/60s. The bottom Tuck postcard c1950s show the girls and a teacher working in one of the elegant rooms inside The Grange. On the right beside the wall is a beautiful lace canopy over a baby's cot.



BK 22

INTERIOR OF WORKROOM, SCHOOL OF STITCHERY AND LACE, BOOKHAM

A TUCK CARD

The Bookhams

Rectory Lane - The Old Rectory

Further along the lane is the 18th century house that had been the Rectory until 1900. Elizabeth Barrett Browning is supposed to have resided here. The Barrett family lived in Wimpole Street, London and Elizabeth was born in 1806 and died in 1861. Her father disapproved of her association with Browning. He rented the Old Rectory in 1846 so that Elizabeth could spend her time in the country air and forget Browning. Elizabeth married Browning on the 12th September 1846 and the eleven months during which her father rented the property were mostly after the date of her marriage. Therefore, it may be assumed that she never resided at the Old Rectory.



This Real Photo postcard has been postally used and is dated 1915. The picture of the Old Rectory was taken in 1965.



The Bookhams

Rectory Lane - The Old Rectory

The date of the postcard is unknown.

The pictures of the Old Rectory's staircase and library were taken in 1965.

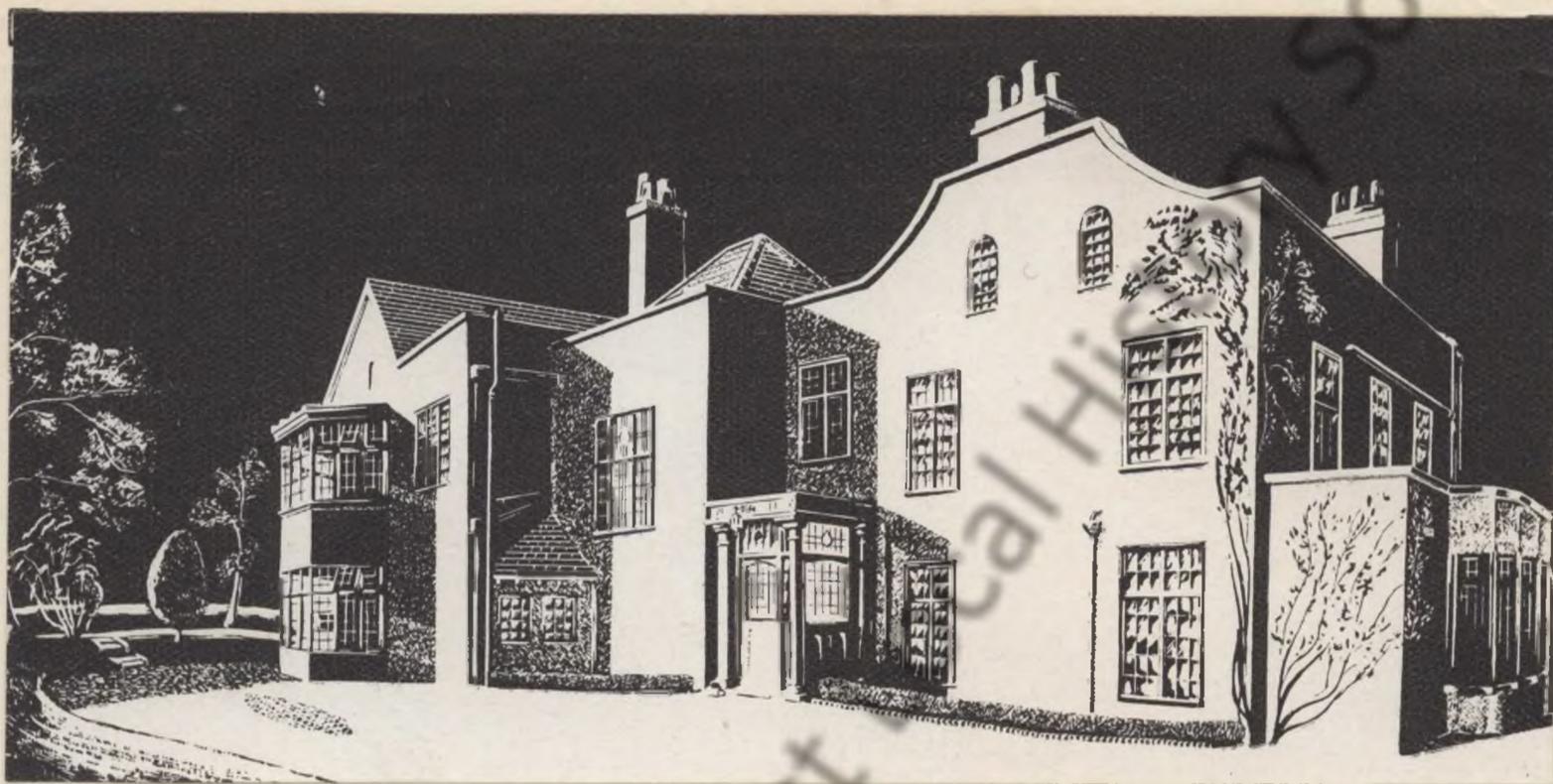


The Bookhams

Rectory Lane - The Old Rectory

During WW11 Queen Marie of Yugoslavia, who was a war refugee, occupied the house. Two military policemen maintained guard outside the house throughout the war years and until 1947 when she decided to move.

Then Sam Eckman Junior, an American who was the Head of Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer (MGM) in Great Britain lived in the house until 1958. The property then fell into a state of neglect, but is now occupied.



The Old Rectory - Little Bookham - Surrey

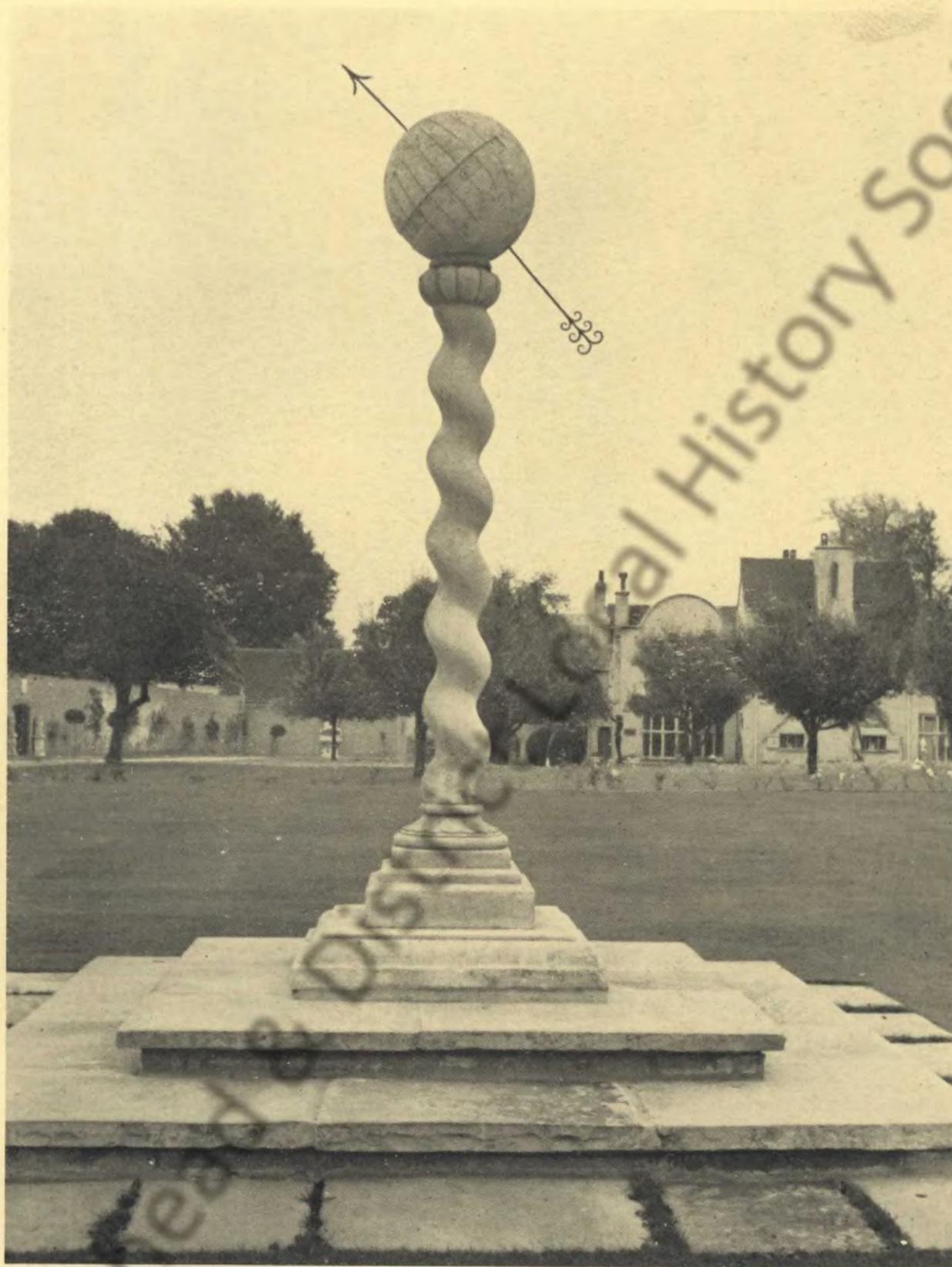
A Christmas card from Rae & Sam Eckman to the British film producer Sir Michael Balcon who was knighted in 1948 and is best known for his work with the Ealing Studios. The picture is of Sam Eckman.



*The
Season's Greetings
From
Rae & Sam Eckman*

Rectory Lane - The Old Rectory

Another Christmas card from the Eckman's sent to Sir Michael Balcon.



The Old Rectory, Little Bookham, Surrey

All the Best
Year in and Year out
Rae & Sam Eckman

The Bookhams

Rectory Lane - The Old Rectory

This postcard has been postally used and is dated 1941. The view is looking towards Preston Cross from near the Old Rectory. The barn is still there.

A notice of a stray horse in December 1838.



MANOR OF LITTLE BOOKHAM IN THE COUNTY OF SURREY.

Strayed into the above Manor, an aged Black Gelding, of the Light Cart Breed, short ears, a blaze down the forehead, both hind legs white, and in very low condition. Upon satisfactory proof of ownership, and upon payment of the expenses incurred, he will be delivered up.

But should no claim be made before THURSDAY next, the 20th of DECEMBER, he will be sold by Public Auction, in the Market Place, Dorking. Application to be made to JAMES STOVELL, at the Rectory, *Little Bookham*.

December 13th, 1838.

R. D. EDE, PRINTER, DORKING.

The Bookhams

Lower Road/Halfway House

Back in Lower Road and turning right towards Great Bookham there are three properties on the left. Until around the 1970s, this plot had been occupied by a smithy since the latter part of the 19th century. This was held by three generations of the Hamshar family; Edward, Thomas and Percy who lived at the 16th century Halfway House that is on the corner of Lower Road and Childs Hall Road - the entrance to Halfway House was originally at the front but is now in Childs Hall Road.

Earlier the house had been divided into two with Edward Hamshar and his family occupying the left hand or west side of the house and the right hand or east side was used by a man named Stedman where he ran his building business.

Early in the 20th century David McFarlane ran a diary in the right hand part before he moved to Phoenix Farm in Dorking Road. The diary was taken over by Albert Farrow in 1911 until he moved to the High Street, near the Royal Oak, in 1916.

Towards the end of the 19th century Edward Hamshar opened an alehouse in his part of the house; he died in 1893 and his son, Thomas took over the blacksmith's business. After the death of Edward's widow in 1902 Mrs Chrystie bought the property and closed the alehouse. In the 1930s the blacksmith's business passed to Thomas's son Percy but as demand for the shoeing of horses diminished the business ended as a knife grinding service until the 1970s.



A Judges postcard of Preston Cross looking along Lower Road towards Great Bookham with Half Moon Cottage on the left and then the start of the three properties mentioned above. The picture below is of Halfway House taken in 1895 as an alehouse, with its brewing chimney. The sign over the door is advertising 'Fine Ales and London Porter.'



The Bookhams

Lower Road/Halfway House

An unknown postcard of Preston Cross c1900s with Preston Farm Cottages on the left, then Half Moon Cottage and then the white building is just before Halfway House on the corner with Childs Hall Road.



The pictures below are all of Halfway House - On the left is McFarlane's dairy and milk cart, 1904. Halfway House was used for many trades. At this time the right hand side of the house was used as a dairy by David McFarlane, seen here with his horse and cart. He moved later to Phoenix Farm in Dorking Road where he ran the dairy farm until it was taken over by Mr Marden in about 1929. On the right taken in 1906. Before 1902 a builder called Thomas Stedman had run his business from this side of the house. The young woman in the doorway is probably Mrs McFarlane who was twenty-four years old at the time. The last picture was taken in 1870. Edward Hamshar, the blacksmith lived here at that time so it could be him in the doorway with the three children. He also sold beer, assisted by his wife, Jane. When Edward died in 1893, his son, Thomas took over the blacksmith trade.



The Bookhams

Lower Road - Buggs Farm/Middlemead Estate/Garstons

On the opposite corner of the Childs Hall Road is a house named Childs, the original, eastern part of which dates from the 16th or 17th century. This was Bugg's Farm, occupying 10 acres, until at least 1926 and was owned by The Oaken Wood Co. Ltd, but in more recent times, it became known as Childs Haugh. A track known as Ducks Hole ran from the Lower Road at the east end of the garden of this house into Childs Hall Road, on which 4 wooden cottages fronted. A spring rose in Ducks Hole. There is a legend that some locals having enjoyed a few pints of ale in Leatherhead were walking home across the Mill Pond at Fetcham, when they convinced one of their naïve and somewhat inebriated number that an underground channel ran from the Mill Pond to the spring at Ducks Hole. Secretly a duck was captured from the Mill Pond and placed in the Ducks Holes spring. The legend of the underground stream still has some support!

Just to the east of Childs on the opposite side of Lower Road there is an underground spring known as Earborne, which flooded the road every few years. In 1947 this flowed for two weeks and on many occasions buses have had to be diverted when the road was flooded.

Moving towards the centre of the village there are some post-war houses built on fields on which Preston Farm grazed cattle.

The next houses date from the mid 1930s and were built by Metcalfe similar to some he built in Little Bookham Street. Middlemead Estate was built by Leatherhead Urban District Council in the early 1960s. At about the same time The Garstons and the surrounding private development took place.



The Bookhams

Lower Road - Church House/White's Garage

On the corner of the Garstons and Lower Road is the site of Church House that was built for the parish church in 1928. The late Queen Mother opened it when she was Duchess of York. It was demolished in 1978 to make way for the present flats, known as Church House. Since the Hall was paid for by local public subscriptions extreme disappointment was voiced when it was known that the public was to have no say in the future of the hall. The building had all the functions of a church hall, jumble sales, wedding receptions, dances, whist drives, concerts etc. In 1935 it cost £2 and 2 shillings (£2.2.0) per night to hire, with 'good lighting, ventilation and central heating provided.' The hall was used as a First Aid Post during the war years when it was surrounded by a wall of sandbags. In 1947 the Leatherhead Urban District Council set up the Bookham Pie Centre at the Hall where meat pies were made and sold, to assist families with their meat ration.

White's Garage on Lower Road was built in the early 1920s for Mr Armstrong who had it until the mid 1930s. He called it simply, the Bookham Garage but it has been extended several times and had several names.

In 1971 Ken Barrington, the former Surrey and England cricketer who lived in Burnley Close, Great Bookham owned it. He put most of his life savings into the garage and arranged a gala opening on the 22 May 1971, which was attended by 20 stars from sport and show business. Harry Secombe (the comedian) officially opened the garage, and so began Ken Barrington's new career. The garage retained its name - Bookham Garage.



An R A P postcard dated c1940s. Bookham Garage is now White's and on the left of the garage is Church House, which was demolished in 1978. The picture on the left was taken c1930 with Bookham Garage in the background - who are the two women in the foreground?



The Bookhams

Lower Road - Hawkwood House/Yelverton Court

On the south side of Lower Road until about 1950 was a large field that embraced what is now, the recreation ground, the Lorne and adjacent houses. The field was known as 'Madge's Field' as Mr Madge, the butcher, used it for growing crops. In the 1950s and 1960s the development of Lower Road, The Lorne, Glebe Close, Swann's Meadow, Hawkwood Rise and Hawkwood Dell took place. At the junction of Hawkwood Rise and Guildford Road stands Hawkwood House. This was built at the beginning of the 20th century and Mrs Swann occupied it from 1904 until the early 1920s when the Westondarp family moved there until around 1940; until 1925 the house was called Ballinveny. In the 1950s the house was divided into apartments at the same time as the grounds were developed for housing. One of the residents of Hawkwood House is Mr Winter-son whose father was stationmaster at Bookham from 1916 until 1932 and he went to school at St James and was a choirboy at St Nicolas Church.

Turning left on Guildford Road there are two blocks of flats called Yelverton Court. They were named after Admiral Yelverton, a retired gentleman who lived in Mead House until his death in 1959, aged 96. He is remembered as a gentleman who often walked down the High Street wearing a brown trilby hat, a tweed overcoat and highly polished brown shoes. He bade everyone that he passed the time of day, always raising his hat to the ladies. Mead House was demolished in 1962 and Yelverton Court built on the site. Mr Pickering-Pick, who earlier was on the committees of the village silver band and the Barn Hall, lived at Grove Farm Cottages next door to Mead House.



A Frith's series postcard postally used dated 1906. The view is looking west towards the village. The nearer house on the right is Hawkwood House. The picture below is of Hawkwood House today, which is now divided into apartments.



The Bookhams

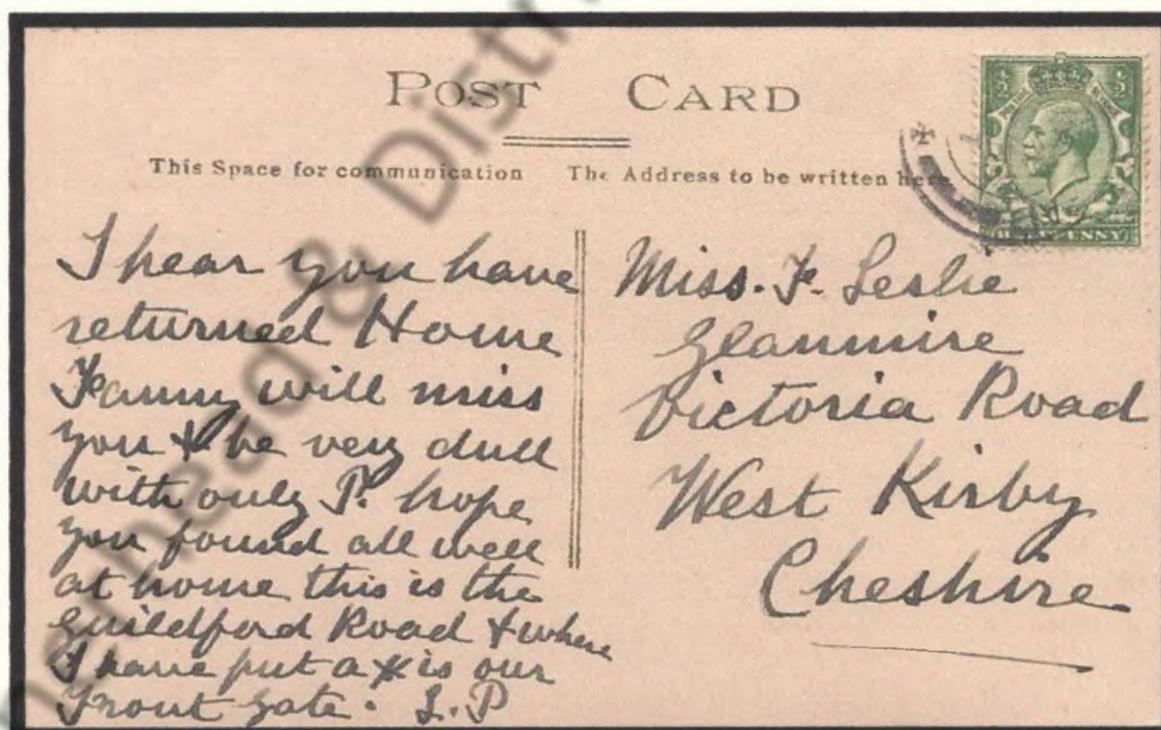
Lower Road - Hawkwood House

A local J.F Stevens postcard postally used of the Guildford Road dated early 1900s with Hawkwood House in the background on the right.

The postcard is going to West Kirby in Cheshire, and on the back of the postcard the writer states:

"I hear that you have returned home. Jenny will miss you & be very dull with only P. Hope you found all well at home. This is Guildford Road & where I have put a cross is our front gate."

L.P.



The Bookhams

Lower Road - Rose Cottage/Slinfold Cottage

On the left hand side of Lower Road was the Scout Hut built in the 1930s with a later hall adjacent to it but is now the Doctor's Surgery.

Broseley Cottages are a row of semi-detached houses built in 1904, which were owned, by the Davis family of the Mill in Church Road. Just opposite in Lower Road is Rose Cottage, another 16th century house.

At no. 220 Lower Road is Slinfold Cottage, another 16th century property. At the turn of the 20th century this was the home of Mr Simpson who was a blacksmith, who also sold, hired and repaired bicycles and stabled horses in the adjacent buildings. The business continued into the 1930s under various names.



The Real Photo postcard is dated early 1900s looking towards the village. The row of Broseley Cottages can be seen along with the old school to the right, now the library. Below is a picture of Simpson's Forge c1892. There are iron wagon tyres by the door on the right and a tyring platform on the ground to the right of them. A similar tyring platform from Hamshar's forge, further along the road, is on display at the Leatherhead Museum.



The Bookhams

Lower Road - Townshott Close

Townshott Close (which was named School Lane until about 1913) follows the route of an ancient road that continued southwards across Guildford Road, to what is now White Way. The school and the headmaster's house were given by the Dawnay family in 1856. Originally the school consisted of one large room in which boys sat on one side and girls on the other but it was extended in 1910 when the school in Eastwick Road was closed. An idea of school life at the time may be gained from these extracts: -

Absenteeism from school was often excused because of the lack of boots or shoes; a very dirty neglected child that lived in a tent on the Common came to school, whose family was removed to the workhouse. In February 1895, the weather was extremely cold, such that the ink in the inkwells froze. Mrs Chrystie, Miss Dyer and other ladies in the Parish gave 24 of the poorest boys dinner at the Coffee Tavern every day this week.

William Charles Vellender had been schoolmaster at Bookham School since 1890 and remained so until his sudden death in 1913 after becoming ill while taking a class. Henry Francis Griffin who remained at the school until the mid 1930s succeeded him. He has been reported as being an extremely good headmaster, strict but kind and respected by the children. Mr Griffin was followed by Mr Richards who was headmaster for 20 years retiring in 1951 and was replaced by Arthur Browning.

The school had been a church school until it was taken over by the Surrey County Council following the Education Act of 1902 when it became an Elementary School. In 1982 the school moved to its present site and was renamed the Dawnay School.

The library that had been at Lower Shott for 30 years, housed in the stable buildings of Bookham Grove, was moved into part of the school building in December 1988. The remainder of the school building was converted for residential use.



The library. Townshott Close has an enamel street name which is relatively rare and the survival of such should be retained



The Bookhams

Lower Road - Bookham Baptist Church

Bookham Baptist Church is on the corner of Townshott Close and Lower Road. The original, eastern, part was built in 1911 in memory of Mrs Chrystie and called the Peace Memorial Hall. This provided all the usual functions of a village hall. Mrs Swann of Hawkwood House had raised the mortgage for the building of the hall but at her death the Hall was still in debt. George Cook of Sole Farm House, a Baptist lay preacher and organiser of the Boys Brigade, hired the hall for Sunday evening services from 1925 until he acquired the hall and it became the Baptist Church in the early 1930s. Later the hall and Sunday school buildings were added to the right of the church.



A postally used Real Photo postcard dated August 1917. The pictures are of the stone-laying ceremony in 1929. The first service in the new church was held in January 1928 with Mr Cook as the pastor. New premises for youth work and a Sunday school were soon needed and a site on the west side of the church was acquired. A large crowd of men, women and children are seen here at the stone laying ceremony on the site, with the scaffold poles bedecked with flags for the occasion. The other picture is the opening address.



The Bookhams

Lower Road - Bookham Baptist Church

On the back of this unused postcard, which is taken in front of Broseley Cottages are some of the names of the people in the picture. The card is unfortunately unsigned. The message reads as follows:

In background Memorial Hall now Baptist Church Gt. Bookham.

From left to right

Uncle Bill (H Bostock) Mother (Mrs Burton) Mrs Grant-Murray, H. C. Willock-Pollen JR in plus fours, behind him Mrs Madge, Mrs Lindman with fur, Walter Rand in hat.

Not sure of the occasion, but almost certainly some time in the 1920s.



In background **POST CARD.**

Memorial Hall ^{now Baptist Church}
COMMUNICATION Gt Bookham ADDRESS

From left to right-

Uncle Bill (H. Bostock) Mother (Mrs Burton) Mrs Grant-Murray,
H.C. Willock-Pollen J.R. in plus fours; behind him Mrs Madge,
Mrs Lindman with fur, Walter Rand in hat.

Not sure of the occasion, ~~possibly~~ but
almost certainly some time in the 1920s.

The Bookhams

East Street - Graham Lodge/Victoria Hall

Past the Crown is East Street, formerly known as Back Lane until around 1906 and before that Fair Lane. At the corner there was an air raid siren on a metal post, which remained in place until the 1970s. There had been a horse trough here but this was removed before WWII.

The first house on the right is Graham Lodge, which was built before 1914. Harold Bostock lived here from 1918 until he moved to Fife Lodge in Church Road, in about 1922. Until the early 1940s Alan Fenn lived at Graham Lodge. He had been a racing motorist who raced at the Isle of Man before the motorcycle TT races began.

Next door are two semi-detached modern houses, which were built on the site of Victoria Hall. The hall was the village hall that had been built for Mrs Chrystie on the site of a house called Toppetts. It was made largely of corrugated iron and was known as 'The Tabernacle' or 'The Iron Room.' Mrs Chrystie held her temperance meetings in the hall which had a stage, gallery and seating for about 200. At the rear there were two large recreation rooms, a store and a miniature rifle range. A solid fuel stove was the only source of heating for the hall. Oliver Goldsmith, of Church Road, ran a club in the hall for young men and boys where table tennis, pool, bagatelle, and other games were played. Mrs Chrystie was a great supporter of the village silver band, which rehearsed and played in the Victoria Hall in the early part of the 20th century until 1914, and then in the 1930s.

The Temperance Club met in the hall, where there was a nigger minstrel troupe composed of members of the local football and cricket clubs that gave concerts with Mr Bates, the postmaster, as the regular comedian. The Working Men's Club used the hall until they moved to the Old Barn Hall. In 1905 Mrs Chrystie sold the hall to Richard Lee who retained it until the mid 1920s.



The pictures are of the Victoria Hall, above in its dilapidated state in 1950.



The Bookhams

East Street - Victoria Hall/‘Captain’ Lewer/Brass Band

‘Captain’ Lewer was kind hearted and active in organising every year the Torchlight Procession on the 5th/6th November down the lampless Great Bookham High Street, carrying his collection box. He led the procession of the Bookham Brass or Silver Band followed by others all wearing fancy dress and masks. They carried flaming torches and on one occasion rolled a burning tar barrel down the High Street, though legend has it the ‘Village Bobby’ put an end to this hilarious occasion - Health and Safety! The collections were given to the local hospitals.

The brass Band met in the Victoria Hall in East Street, for practice, and held Promenades in the Recreation Ground by the Paddocks, where all the village swains and their ladies danced. It put life into the church and village parades. The villages enjoyed dancing to the band every week during the summer months on the lawns of the big houses such as The Grove, Eastwick Park, Ballenvenny and The Gables. Dances were also held at the Recreation Grounds, admission 3d. The Band members paid a halfpenny per week to a fund to buy instruments for the Silver Band. New silver instruments were acquired but with WWII they fell into disuse. An attempt was made to reform the Band in June 1953, but of the surviving old instruments only a bass drum and bass baritone and tenor horns were salvageable. With inadequate instruments and nowhere to practice, the venture collapsed. Another attempt to reform the band was made in April 1973, and the reformed Band made its first outside public engagement on the 8th September 1973 at Village Day.

A rural village welcomed any excuses for a celebration and at the Relief of Mafeking (Anglo Boer War) on the 17th May 1900 Alfred Lewer got all the children out of school, made up a band with saucepan lids and tin cans, and marched round the village.



Above the band pose for a picture taken in c1905. Below a picture of the Band's procession down Lower Road in c1900.



The Bookhams

East Street - Victoria Hall/The Woolpack

The Victoria Hall was not used publicly after WWI and with disuse its condition deteriorated. In 1924, with the acute shortage of living accommodation, two families were moved into the Hall, one occupied the theatre while the other lived in the recreation rooms. There was no washing or drinking water available in the building and water was drawn from an outside tap in nearby Stents Alley. George White, who lived here as a boy, recalled in some detail the operation in which his tonsils were removed by Dr Ede on the kitchen table under only a local anaesthetic. He also recalls taking the rent for his mother for the accommodation in the Victoria Hall to Mr Lee at his office in the High Street. Happily, in 1928, the two families were transferred to the newly built council houses nearby, known as Fairfield Cottages.

The Victoria Hall was used in the early 1930s by Shepherd and Rogers, fruiterer and greengrocer. In the 1950s and 60s, Raynolds Furnishings used it for furniture repairs and Bookham Granaries used it as a store. The hall was finally demolished in 1975 and the present houses were built in its place.

Further along East Street there is a small bungalow called The Woolpack (no.3) which may date from the 16th century was a store for a farm in the High Street. At the time of the WWI, Richard Lee, the architect, used it as an office. It has been residential for at least 60 years.

Moving further south no.8 used to have a large window and door at the front. This presumably had been a butcher's shop as there was a steel bar that was fixed for hanging meat, which has now gone. This is the only house in East Street to have a cellar. Arthur Sayer had a shop in East Street until 1905 when he moved to the crossroads; Mellor then occupied his shop in East Street until Harry Edser took it over until at least 1925. The property remains in private occupation with the front door moved to the side of the house.



The picture above is the west side of East Street with no.3 the first house in the picture on the right. The other picture below is of no.8, which now has its front door on the side, left side in the picture.



The Bookhams

East Street - Fairfield Terrace

A more recent but startling piece of history occurred early one morning at Stoneleigh, no.1 Fairfield Terrace, which is owned and occupied by Mr and Mrs Kemp. On the morning of 5th March 1986 Mrs Kemp and her son were upstairs whilst Mr Kemp was in the kitchen having put the kettle on. He became aware of a strong smell of gas and immediately phoned British Gas who told him to turn off the supply at the main. He had just done this and opened the windows when there was an enormous explosion that removed the front and most of the upper floor of the house. Fire then followed the explosion and the street was sealed off and neighbours were evacuated from their homes as gas engineers desperately tried to find the source of the leak. Mr Kemp had his face and hands very badly burned, Mrs Kemp, physically unhurt, managed to jump down from what was left of the landing to the ground and their son was blown to the opposite side of the road, but miraculously he also was unhurt. After treatment in Epsom Hospital for burns and shock they returned to Bookham later that afternoon to stay with relatives. Two cars were crushed by falling masonry. Firemen from four stations fought the blaze and had it under control in less than an hour. Some residents had to stay away from their homes until late afternoon when all danger from gas had gone and the houses had been well ventilated. A fractured gas main outside the front of the house was believed to be the cause of the explosion. The road was cleared by early evening. Eventually two houses of a similar style to the original property replaced the house.

Walking back down East Street towards Lower Road, on the right hand side are the houses that are part of the estate built in the 1920s by the Epsom Urban District Council. Between these houses and the later houses on this side there is a path, which leads to Eastwick Road, and this path is the route of the original 3-inch main laid in the 1880s to bring gas from Leatherhead to Bookham. The remaining houses in the street were built in what was the garden of the Hermitage in Lower Road and many will remember the whole plot north of the path being surrounded by a corrugated iron fence.

