

LEATHERHEAD  
& DISTRICT  
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



PROCEEDINGS VOL 7 N<sup>o</sup> 1

2007

## SECRETARIAL NOTES

The following Lectures, Visits and Walks were arranged during 2007:

January 19 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: 'Rowhurst' by Lucy Quinnell
February 16 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: 'The Kohler Darwin Collection' by Chris and Michele Kohler
March 14 <sup>th</sup>	Visit to Ripley Museum, followed by a guided walk around Ripley (jointly with the Friends of the Museum), arranged by Fred Meynen
March 16 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: 'The Palace of Nonsuch at Ewell' by Jeremy Harte
April 20 <sup>th</sup>	The Society's 60 <sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting, followed by lecture 'Leatherhead Air Services' by Peter Tarplee
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: 'Esher, Claygate and Oxshott in Old Photographs, and a Short History of Postcards' by Paul Langton
June 20 <sup>th</sup>	Visit to Rowhurst, arranged by Fred Meynen
July 12 <sup>th</sup>	Visit to Down House, arranged by Fred Meynen
August 11 <sup>th</sup>	Visit to Wimbledon Windmill and Museum of Local History, arranged by Linda Heath
September 21 <sup>st</sup>	Lecture: 'The History of Pub Signs and Names' by David Roe
October 19 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: 'The Epsom Riot' by Tim Richardson
November 16 <sup>th</sup>	The Dallaway Lecture: 'The Lushingtons of Cobham' by David Taylor
December 14 <sup>th</sup>	Lecture: 'Preserving the Past for the Future—the Work of the Surrey History Centre' by Matthew Piggott

Members of the Society also led walks around the District, and gave talks to various groups and organizations, during the year.

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Number 10 of Volume 6 of the *Proceedings* was issued in February 2007.

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### 60TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*Held at the Letherhead Institute, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2007*

The Report of the Executive Committee and the Accounts for the year 2006 were adopted. The Officers and Committee members elected to serve until the next AGM are shown below.

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### OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR 2007–2008

<i>President:</i>	GORDON KNOWLES
<i>Past Presidents:</i>	STEPHEN FORTESCUE, DEREK RENN, LINDA HEATH
<i>Vice-President:</i>	PETER TARPLEE
<i>Chairman:</i>	DAVID HARTLEY
<i>Secretary:</i>	VIVIEN HOLLINGSWORTH
<i>Membership Secretary:</i>	JENNY MORRIS
<i>Treasurer:</i>	NORMA ROBERTSON
<i>Editor:</i>	BARRY COX
<i>Museum Curator:</i>	<i>Vacant</i>
<i>Treasurer, Museum Trust Fund:</i>	JOHN MORRIS
<i>Sales Secretary:</i>	GOFF POWELL
<i>Archaeology Secretary:</i>	DAVID HARTLEY
<i>Programme Secretary:</i>	FRED MEYENEN
<i>Librarian:</i>	PETER WELLS
<i>Records Secretary:</i>	BRIAN GODFREY
<i>Newsletter Editor:</i>	JOHN WETTERN
<i>Committee Members:</i>	GWEN HOAD, LINDSAY TRIM

# Leatherhead and District Local History Society

## PROCEEDINGS

Vol. 7, No. 1

2007

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#### Errata for Volume 6, part 10

The Editor very much regrets the following errors relating to the article on *The Cottage*, Church Walk:-  
p. 275 The article was, of course, entirely the work of Mrs Vera Jones, not of our communicating member Alun Roberts. Also, under *Illustrations*, the caption for the illustration on p.300 should have read "Wedding Day of Vera and Neil Collyer" (not Jones).

p. 300 The caption for Fig. 2 should have read "Wedding day of Vera and Neil Collyer" (not Roberts).

There were also the following errors in the text references for James Dixon's article on Abraham Dixon:-  
p. 286, six lines up, for superscript 1, read superscript 11; p. 287, line 15, for superscript 9, read superscript 13, and on line 20, for superscript 10, read superscript 14; p. 288, line 11, for superscript 14 read superscript 10, and the reference should be to p. 184 of the cited journal, *not* to p. 179, as correctly cited in reference 10; p. 291, after 'National Agricultural Labourers' Union', insert superscript 30.

## FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY RECORDS AS SOURCES FOR LOCAL AND FAMILY HISTORY

By Geoffrey Hayward

In the course of my 26 years in London working for the Phoenix Assurance Co. Ltd., I became friendly with the Museum Curator, who looked after artifacts and records going back to the Company's formation in 1782. Knowing that I was interested in local history, he drew my attention to two policy books of fire insurance relating to the period 1822 to 1865, with notes about earlier existing policies. The books were used by the Phoenix agent, Robert Cooke, whose territory was Guildford and Bookham. I came across several Leatherhead insurances, but Cooke does not record any for Ashtead. However, there are many entries for the area towards Guildford and beyond. The Phoenix Assurance Company used J.W. Attlee, the corn millers, as their Dorking agent. Two of their agent's books survive in the Surrey History Centre (ref. 2130). Extracts have been taken of all entries relating to the Leatherhead district, plus any describing the water mills of the area covered, and these extracts (37 typescript pages, containing some 130 entries) are being deposited in the Society's archives. A representative selection is given below to illustrate their usefulness. These extracts relate only to the fire insurances of the Phoenix Assurance Company, whose records are now in the Central Library of Cambridge University. Other Companies existed, and some of their records can be consulted at the Guildhall Library in London, others in the Surrey History Centre or the Museum of London. For the Leatherhead area, the most likely Company records for research are probably those of the Sun Insurance Company and also the Hand in Hand Insurance Company (founded in 1696), which insured the Hankey Estate in Fetcham.

Stephen Fortescue, in his book "*The Story of Two Villages, Great and Little Bookham*" (published by him in 1975), refers to a Samuel Cooke as incumbent of Great Bookham from 1769 to 1820. Jane Austen was the god-daughter of Samuel Cooke, who had married Cassandra, the daughter of the Rev. Theophilus Leigh, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, and first cousin of Mrs George Austen, Jane Austen's mother. The insurance agent, Robert Cooke, although living close by, does not appear to be one of Samuel Cooke's family; his children are shown on the internet. A Robert Cooke, son of John Cooke, was christened at Great Bookham on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1707. One of the policies listed in the fire insurance records was for Robert Cooke, appraiser and later estate agent, living at *Sole Cottage*, Great Bookham in 1830. His occupation sounds very appropriate for an insurance agent, as there would be opportunities to sell insurance when meeting clients. Stephen Fortescue and I, some years ago, investigated the remains of a Phoenix fire mark that was attached to *Gaston Cottage* in Little Bookham, which was one of several properties owned by Robert Cooke in 1832.

The details taken from this Agency record are of great historical value, as they show a good cross-section of who was in the area, and in many cases their occupations, before and between the taking of census information. Because of the large number of people either renting property or living in tied cottages, they are unlikely to have had insurances, so most of these records are of people who owned property. Fortunately, there are many instances of the presence of tenants in these properties, and their names and occupations are shown. The details given in these records are of great value to researchers into the history of buildings, for they give information on the owners, including their movements from one property to another and their development of their property, changes of use, structure of the buildings

etc. It is also interesting that in 1822 the description “yeoman” was still in use alongside “farmer”, and one can only wonder about the activities of Mr Willis the Grocer and Draper, who was prohibited by the Fire Company from keeping excessive quantities of gunpowder on his property!

The description of the construction of these houses and buildings that survive to the present day will be of great help to those studying their development, e.g. buildings that in this fire insurance record were roofed with thatch but are now tiled. For those with comfortable incomes, the description of the property often includes, for example, coach house, stable or lofts over. Watermills are included because of the description of how many stones were in use and the fact that they were still working at the date of the policy.

When warranties appear in the description, it is usually because a lower rate of premium has been charged because the fire risk is lessened, for example by requiring that the pipe from a heating stove ran into a brick chimney rather than through a wooden wall, or that a painter was not allowed to boil up his flammable paint on the premises. The restrictions on the number of mill-stones that could be used at any one time was also important, as their use produced dust that could result in dust explosions and consequent fires.

Against one policy is a reference to a fire, following which the sum insured was paid in full, plus “£10 towards Nos. 1, 2 and 3 Engines”. Presumably the engines were horse-drawn fire engines belonging to other insurance companies, who would have charged for their attendance and services. As there was no public fire brigade in earlier times, insurance companies, and possibly also owners of large buildings such as mansions or factories, would provide their own engines. There was once an engine kept in the tower of Leatherhead Church, but this may have been one of the early hand-pulled type. Fire-fighting equipment was often kept in the local church, both because everyone then knew where it was, and also because the church bells were used to summon the fire-fighters in case of need. The equipment would have been supplied and maintained by the Assurance Company, provided that a sufficient number of policies had been issued in the area, their upkeep then being the responsibility of the local agent.

Fire marks, in the form of distinctive badges or plaques, generally made of metal, were originally issued by the fire insurance offices in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and it was not until 1860 that most offices abandoned the practice of issuing them. They usually bore the emblem or trade sign of the company concerned and were highly coloured. The most common position for them was on the front of the building between the first floor windows, but some companies, notably the Sun, Bristol Fire and Salamander, seemed to favour a position just below the roof guttering. The marks or plaques were stamped with the policy number, and were the means by which individual companies recognized whether they were liable for a particular property that had caught fire. The common practice was for each company to appoint residents to act as their firemen, for which service they were paid a retaining fee. When a fire occurred, the firemen hastened to the scene and, if the mark displayed on the building was issued by their company, they did everything possible to extinguish the fire and carried out any operations necessary to diminish the loss. If there was no plaque, they would often attempt to put out the fire in the hope of reward, rather than just let the building be destroyed.

Insurance policy no. and date commenced	Name, Residence and Profession of person assured	On what Property, with what materials built, situation and occupiers name and business	Sum Assured	Rate	Premium
52764 Mch. 25 <sup>th</sup> 1790	Joseph Hockley Esq., as Attorney for Rt. Hon. Lord Grantley and Thos. Sibthorpe Esq., Attorney.	On dwellinghouse, brick and tiled, High Street, Guildford then occupied by John Tuvey, Vintner, called The Red Lion, now by Wm. Tibbens.	£400	3/-%	
		On Sessions House, now Market House and two adjoining rooms, brick and tiled, New Street.	£600	2/-%	
		On Cock Pit, timber and tiled now the Butchers' Market, New Street.	£80	3/-%	Duty £1-10-0
		On Cock Pens and Barn adjoining, Timber and tiled, New Street. The Barn occupied by I. Turner.	£120	3/-%	£1-16-0 £3-- 6-0
559759 Oct. 6 <sup>th</sup> 1828 For 6 months	Mr. Henry Boxall Builder of Guildford	On the building of the Semaphore or Telegraph at Poyle Hill now erecting. Brick and slate in the Parish of Tongham, County of Surrey.	£600 later increased to £900 by the Admiralty	2/6%	s15-0d Duty <u>9-0</u> £1-4-0
1,009,743 4 <sup>th</sup> Jany. 1851 to Xmas 1852	The Revd. Benjamin Chapman, Clerk, and Churchwardens, Trustees of the Infant School, Leatherhead (for the time being)	On the building of the Infant School, lately built, situate near the Fair field, Leatherhead, standing apart with the Benches and Seats fixed therein, brick and tiled.	£200	2/6%	
		On the dwellinghouse adjoining and used therewith on the north side and domestic offices therein, brick and tiled occupied by Mrs. Louise Bowman, schoolmistress thereof, N.B. a pipe stove allowed in the School room passing into the brick chimney thereof.	£150	2/6%	8/9d plus duty

954113 Lady Day 1848 Additional to 862941	Mr. Geo. Walker Cabinet Maker, Leatherhead (as Proprietor)	On dwellinghouse and Offices under one continuous roof, adjoining brick chapel, South and open yard, North. On coal and wood house adjoining West end of above. On range of buildings across yard consisting of mason's workshop and stores, engine house, cart house and stable, opening to front Street by two wide doorways. All the above brick, timber and tile. No stove or fire used therein. Occupied by Charles Roberts, Stone Mason and bricklayer in North Street, Leatherhead.	£300 £25 £75	2/6% 2/6% 2/6%	Premium 10/- Duty <u>12/-</u> £1-2-0d
460329 Novr. 25 <sup>th</sup> 1820	John Bush of Guildford, Surrey. Miller and Mealman	On stock etc. in Shalford Mill. Warranted not to work more than 3 pair of Stones and not to have any Kiln or Steam Engine in the Mill, or in any building adjoining thereto. Brick, timber and tile.	£400	11/6%	£2-6-0 Duty <u>12-0</u> £2-18-0
5587054 May 18 <sup>th</sup> 1830	Mr. William Willis Grocer and Draper, Great Bookham Street, Surrey	Contents of Private Dwelling House, Shop and Warehouse, brick, timber and tiled at Great Bookham. Quantity of gunpowder not exceeding that allowed by Law to be kept on these Premises.	£800	2/6%	
402385 Jany. 9 <sup>th</sup> 1816	W. Parkin of Effingham, Surrey, Gentleman. Transferred to Thos. Layton, Grocer, 1/1/1827 Transferred to Mary Layton April 1 <sup>st</sup> 1835, widow. Transferred to the Exors. and Trustees of T and M. Layton 1/1/1836. Xmas 1837 transferred to John Gooden, Proprietor and Grocer.	On a dwelling house of brick, lath and plaster occupied by Thos. Layton, Shopkeeper in the Parish of Effingham and later by Mary Layton and later by John Gooden.	£300	3/-%	Duty s9-00d <u>s9-00d</u> s18-00d

592238 Sept. 29 <sup>th</sup> 1830	Mr. James Martin Phoenix Farm, Great Bookham, Surrey	On live and dead farming stock in Barns or other outbuildings and on ricks or stacks including implements of husbandry (except Threshing Machines) on his own farm called Phoenix Farm, Great Bookham.	£500	2/-%
Oct. 29 <sup>th</sup> 1831		Benefit removed to farm called Headley Court in the Parish of Headley.		
615230 Sept. 29 <sup>th</sup> 1832	Mr. James Martin of Headley, nr. Dorking, Farmer	On dwellinghouse and offices under one roof and Butchers shop projecting therefrom brick, timber and tiled occupied by John Drew Colbrook, Butcher.	£450	2/6%
Additional to Policy 592238		On Slaughter House and Stable and Pound adjoining as under one roof, detached, brick and slate occupied by John Drew Colebrook	£50	2/6%
		On Malthouse with two Storerooms adjoining and kiln therein – adjoining above premises brick and tiled and occupied by Thos. Allsop Wilson, Maltster. All above premises in the Street, Great Bookham.	£250	4/6%
642521 Sept. 29 <sup>th</sup> 1833 (Oct. 13 <sup>th</sup> 1836. £500 transferred to Nonsuch Park Farm, Parishes of Ewell and Cuddington, where he is removing to, and £500 remains as before at Headley until finally thrashed out and leaving altogether. 1 <sup>st</sup> July 1837. All removed to Nonsuch Park)	“	On farming stock on his farm called Headley Court. (New farm stock insurance)	£1,000	2/-%
593646 Nov. 18 <sup>th</sup> 1830 (Policy tr	Mrs. Truzan Waterer, Great Bookham	On her dwelling house and offices under one roof – brick and tiled.	£400	2/6%
		On Stable and outbuildings adjoining -- stone and tiled.	£50	2/6%
		On Household Goods, Linen, Printed Books, Wearing Apparel, Plate, Watches, Trinkets, Liquors, Mathematical and Musical Instruments in her now dwelling house, brick and tiled near the above in the Street Gt. Bookham, all occupied by herself.	£150	2/6%



## **CAEN FARM, ASHTEAD KNOWN HISTORICALLY AS DICKS, DICKES OR DYKES**

By BRIAN BOUCHARD

An Ashtead court roll for 1493<sup>1</sup> records that the tenement of Richard Otweye was in need of repair – *nondum sufficienter reparatus cum lapidibus usque le pynning under the sylles* – but the location of his dwelling was not specified. It was also mentioned that John Kemp's house, *nuper* [lately] *Dykkes* was *nimis ruinosus* [very much collapsing].

In a rent roll from Ashtead manor accounts of 1543, however, may be found an entry for two copyhold dwellings, formerly Richard Otway's, in respect of which Edward Glassington was charged a relatively substantial £2 9s 8d.<sup>2</sup> Although these premises are not named there they may be identified, from litigation over rights to his estate following Glassington's death circa 1552, to have been "A messuage or tenement in Ashstead called *Le (The) Howse* [otherwise according to Gollin, *Lee House*] alias *Talworth* and another tenement called *Dicks* with divers land thereto belonging..."<sup>3</sup> The gist of the legal proceedings between 1573 and 1603 can be derived from partial transcripts of photocopied manuscripts of cases in The Court of Requests and records of Chancery Proceedings but there were no less than a further 9 cases (33-37 Eliz.) heard in The Court of Star Chamber, where "Glassington" was named as plaintiff, which remain to be interpreted.<sup>4</sup>

It seems that a Robert Rogers claimed Edward Glassington had been lawfully seized of the estate but the last-mentioned had surrendered his title to Rogers, for payment, subject to the retention of a life tenancy. Although their arrangements were said to have been formalised, "by the acceptance of Richard Sewell and John Rummynge, copyholders", when, much later, an attempt was made to re-sell the premises to William Franke, and he sought to gain entry, James Otway was found to be in occupation having used "untroue and synyster perswacyon and meanes" to take possession. Notwithstanding the alleged impropriety, a court roll of 14 December 1576 reveals that Rogers, Franke and Otway came together to surrender the premises to the Lord of the Manor before the use of this land etc was officially granted to James Otwaie, with reversion to his son, John.

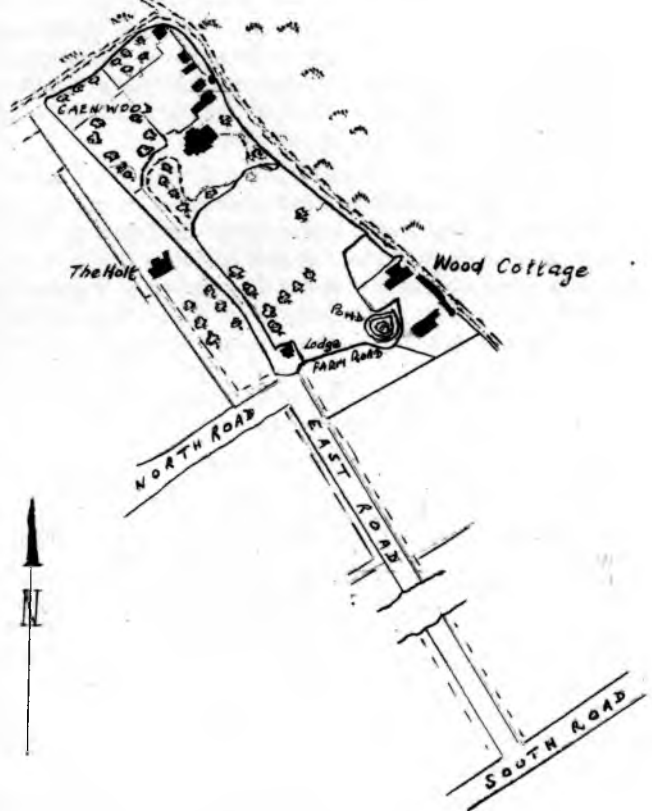
No doubt the immediately forenamed parties thought the matter had been concluded but, in 1587, Thomas Glassington, second son of Edward's brother who had also been called Thomas, embarked upon litigation alleging he had been deprived of rightful inheritance as heir according to the customs of the Manor. Whilst his action proved ineffectual, after Thomas' death, the cause was taken up in the name of his son, Isaac Glassington – involving over time Rogers, Franke, the Otways, William Hillar and others. The Glassingtons' contention that John Otway had gained possession of real estate worth more than £500, through admission "most conningely obteyned" by fraud, had not been substantiated when John Otway, Junior, died in 1603 having paid 50s rent on *Dickes* (which should not, in fact, be confused with *Dukes Hall* on the Rye brook) His copyhold interests then devolved to a brother, Au[gu]stin[e]<sup>5</sup> who continued to defend the status quo against a final assault by Isaac Glassington, successfully judging from later history.

By 1634 the property had passed into the occupation of William and Jane Otway by whom *Talworth, Dickes* and all other holdings were mortgaged for £540 (- they subsequently offered parcels of real estate as security for various loans over the years up to William's

death in 1679 when Richard Wood foreclosed on *Lee House* alias *Taleworth*).<sup>5</sup> The 1656 terrier to John Lawrence's survey of 1638 shows William Otway's tenure of 74 (vocat *Dicks*) with fields 71, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77 ("The Gullet") and 78 ("Tomletts") north of the Rye plus 82 ("Jack Adam's Meadow") on the south side of the brook.<sup>6</sup>

However, a court roll for 29 May 1643 reveals that William Otway had, without permission, "eradicated about an acre of coppice land and ...took and carried away and disposed of to his own use [the roots and timber]". In consequence of his actions, *Dykes* with about 48 acres were then seized by the bailiff and forfeited but, having placed himself "in the mercy of the Lord", Otway was given permission to surrender this holding to John Cowchman. Although a dispute immediately ensued, involving Daniel Peter and John Wilde, the parties negotiated a compromise settlement resulting in Cowchman being admitted "pro virgate". On 11 April 1667, a John Couchman "of the parish of Tooting Graveney... cust. tenant of the manor" surrendered *Dykes* and 80 acres, "recently in the tenure & occupation of Rich Kempson" to the use of persons in the will of John Couchman, presumably his father. *Dykes*, with 48 acres, still occupied by Kempson, was passed on to "the need and use" of John Richardson of Ashted, maltster, on 5 May 1671. Permission was granted in 1680 to Richardson for *Dykes* with 33 acres to be rented out to John Waterman. The later history of *Dykes Farm* to 1798, when it was acquired by Lord of the Manor, Richard Howard, has already been detailed by Geoffrey Gollin.<sup>7</sup>

John Chitty became the tenant of this customary farm to appear in the Wyburd Survey of 1802. Thereafter, one encounters a dearth of information about lessees until the 1839 Tithe Map when Michael Agate may be found occupying the land and working it in conjunction with *New Purchase Farm*. The earliest reference, in an



Map showing *Wood Cottage* (earlier known as *Dykes Farm* and *Caen Farm*) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

original document traced by the writer, to *Caen Farm*, as a re-named *Dicks*, is on an O.S. map produced following the survey over 1866/1867. Various ideas have been advanced for the derivation of the later title but no connection to Normandy has been demonstrated and a more likely, prosaic, idea is that it refers to a family called Cain (Caine or Cane) members of which are known to have farmed in the parish during the eighteenth century, for example, Henry Cain who rented the Keeling estate between 1780 and 1790.<sup>8</sup>

In 1871 the old farmstead was occupied by William Tickner, a shepherd, with his family. Having been sold on after the Howard auction in 1879, within a block of land north of the railway line for the development of a "Caen Farm Estate", the building was enumerated for the 1881 census as *Caens* (sic) *Farm* inhabited by Walter Screen, farm bailiff. Construction of a new villa, *Caenwood*, on the "Home Field" immediately to the north commenced about 1886. The original farmhouse had been altered to create a southerly aspect, gained a west wing in the nineteenth century and another on the east, as *Caen Leys Farm*, about 1904.<sup>9</sup> By 1917 its name had been changed to the one by which it is known today, *Wood Cottage*.

#### NOTES

- 1 Jackson, A. A. (ed.) 1977 *Ashtead, a village transformed*, 38.
- 2 *Op. cit.* App IV.
- 3 Caley, J. & Bayler, J. 1827 – 1832 *Calendar of Proceedings in Chancery in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth I* G.g. 4, No. 47; G.g. 10 No. 49.  
National Archives List and Index, XXI, *Proceedings in the Court of Requests* Bdle. 96 No. 3
- 4 L & D LHS Archives AW 512, 513 & 514  
National Archives STAC 5/G8/13, 5/G11/12, 5/G19/7, 5/G25/27, 5/G26/23, 5/G28/38, 5/G36/10, 5/G40/14 & 5/G46/37
- 5 Lever, R. A. Notes on some Ashtead personalities: 1543-1732. *Proc. L. & D. L.H.Soc.* 4, 10, 287  
L & D LHS Archives AW 507
- 6 Stuttard, J.C. (ed) 1995 *A History of Ashtead*, 32 – 33.
- 7 Gollin, G. 1987 *Bygone Ashtead*, 247
- 8 Gollin, G. *op. cit.* 108.
- 9 Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey) 2001 Recording 4639

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE HAMLET OF WOODFIELD IN THE PARISH OF ASHTEAD

By BRIAN BOUCHARD

Ashtead's "Woodfield" straddles the railway line on the Leatherhead side of the station extending over a glacial outwash deposit of taele gravel. It lies within a field system, conjectured to have been of Roman origin<sup>1</sup> ("centuriation"?) and the 1895 O.S. Map records that a Roman coin was found close to where the path now reaches a steel footbridge. Bounded to the east by line extending from Woodfield Lane (otherwise Station Road, previously Common Lane), there is, running in parallel on the western boundary, another ancient "green way" which originally may have come down from the Village across one of the common fields<sup>2</sup>: this latter track seems to have been provided with a drainage ditch on each side and, passing over the gravel to skirt London clay, it could have been created as an all-weather route. The track continued to a ford across the Rye brook before rising to the 200 feet contour line on the way to Epsom Gap (where, in 1340, stood a Gospel Cross<sup>3</sup> – one of the parish boundary markers) and there joined a road to Kingston.

Another name for this area was the "Mote (or Moat[e]) Field"<sup>4</sup>. Included as "doubtful" in lists of moated sites<sup>5</sup>, it occurs to the writer that "mote" (or "moot") could denote a meeting-place as in "folknote". Sometime used to graze oxen, the field has also been called *Oxmoor*. In the nineteenth century, this open space was the location for livestock auctions<sup>6</sup>.

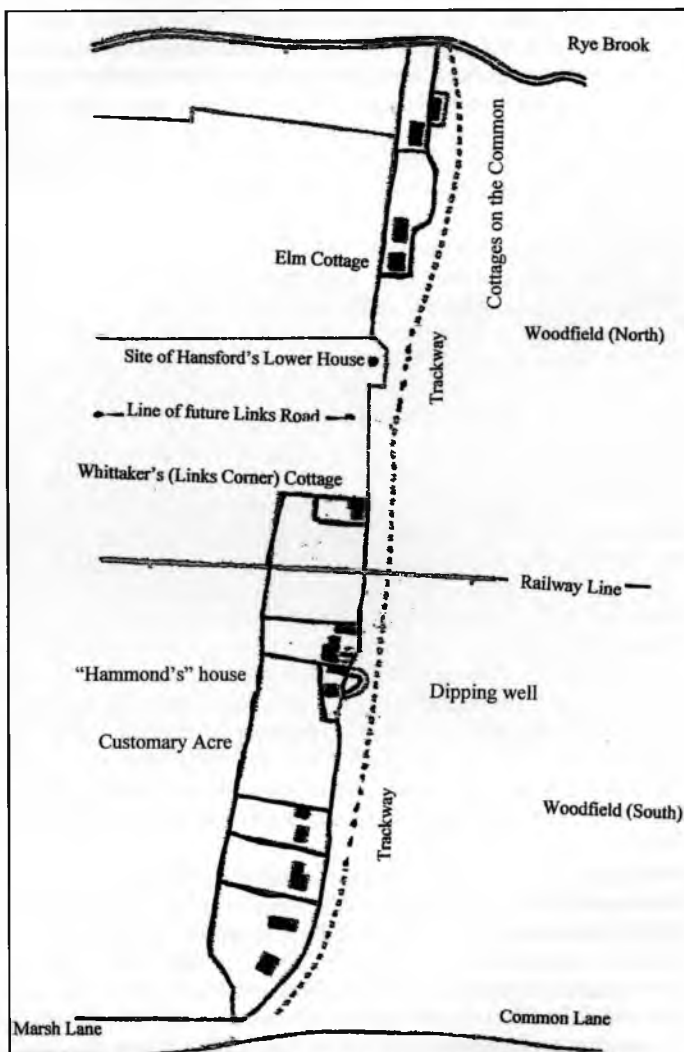
On John Lawrence's 1638 map of Ashtead<sup>7</sup>, the future hamlet appears as only two dwellings, alongside the western track (once, confusingly, also called Woodfield Lane and now the road named simply Woodfield), each in a long narrow "close" backing onto The Marsh. One, nearer to The Rye of 2a 1r 0p, was occupied by Henry Hanford and the other, measuring 2a 2r 14p, by Roger Hammond (presumed to be a successor to Roger Haymond who appears in an Ashtead Manor rent-roll for 1543 as the customary tenant of a "Tenement & 2 acres enclosure...")<sup>8</sup>. Between *Hanford's* and the Rye brook had stood a tenement on land once held by the Gittens family but Lawrence records the area as a field occupied by [Widow] Eliz. Jordan. As a matter of speculation, having regard to their position, the pair of enclosures could have been used to store and process wood brought down from The Forest. Jack Stuttard remarked in *A History of Ashtead* that "The Ashtead woodlands were highly valued for their timber, used for making the many farming needs like poles, rakes, fences, baskets and shepherd's crooks" without mentioning the provision of fuel. In 1797, Richard Howard acquired George Rutter's copyhold estate comprising *Gittin's* and *Hansford Lower House*.<sup>9</sup> A note on a 1656 terrier<sup>10</sup> to the Lawrence survey, apparently written by the Lord of the Manor himself, with reference to Roger Hammond mentioned earlier (although there could have been confusion with Henry Hanford), reads "Mr Finch's timber yard... The house adjoining moat field – now *Rutter's* was Scott's – purchased by me" to indicate clearly that wood-working was being undertaken in the locality during the eighteenth century. Additional evidence may be found in the Manor Court Rolls where, during 1742, John Potterton surrendered "a customary messuage with orchard attached" (which was about an acre within the original southern enclosure) to William Constable, carpenter of Ashtead<sup>11</sup>.

Henry Hanford, who "held in right of his wife", had died in 1640 to be succeeded as tenant by his widow, Ellen. When Ellen herself expired during 1655 the enclosed two acres,

by then with two cottages, passed down to her youngest son, Henry Hanford, junior. The latter divided his inherited real estate equally before, in 1662, surrendering a cottage with roughly an acre as *Handford's* (sic) *Lower House* and *Handford's Upper House*, in "Le Upper Close", to Edward Monger and John Waterman respectively.

By 1802, when Wyburd<sup>12</sup> carried out his survey, the original enclosures had been subdivided to provide plots for an additional five houses. *Handford's Lower House* had been acquired

by Richard Howard with *Rutter's* [W191 & Meadow W192 occupied by John Granger] whilst the next two were owned by Sarah Waters [W193, eventually to become known as *Links Corner Cottage*, with a tenant, John Fleetwood & W194, formerly *Handford's Upper House*, in hand]. Next came the "Customary acre"- 1a 0r 39p- that had passed to Edward Jarman, from the above-mentioned Potterton family, in 1779 [W 195 in hand]. This was followed by one possessed by Joseph Syms [W196, a dwelling, "erected on one rod or thereabouts near Woodfieldside", that had been surrendered by Roger Hamond to his daughter Elizabeth and son in law Henry Luffe in 1639, let to Skinner] and a further two at the southern end owned by the Lord of The Manor [W197 used by Arthur Boxall & W198, with a barn, Robert Cook].



The hamlet of Woodfield in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century

Thus the total was brought to seven with plots 191-194 aggregated at 2a 2r 29p and 195-198 2a 3r 19p (the increased areas seem to be accounted for by intrusion, particularly into the wayside ditch where it passed 191). In addition three outlines appear beside the green way close to the Rye brook: these would be "some cottages on the northern fringes of Woodfield" suggested on page 6 of *A History of Ashted* to have been building encroachments upon the Common. The structure furthest south was constructed as a pair of tiny dwellings, each comprising a living room downstairs and sleeping accommodation in the roof space, facing towards the Village in a position to monitor traffic coming down towards the woods. They are thought to have been provided by Richard (Bagot) Howard to house gamekeepers. Their "lodges" had been taken over, before 1839 (about the time game-bird rearing had become established in Newton Wood), as a single residence apparently occupied by Thomas Granger, to become one of three tenements owned by Charles Brown. In 1811, the Lord of the Manor had granted a licence<sup>13</sup> (held as part a private sequence of deeds) for a parishioner called Goring to build another cottage "on the Waste on Ashted Woodfield" subject to consent by the copyholders.

When one comes to the 1839 Tithe Map<sup>14</sup>, *Hansford's Lower House* has been demolished for its site and associated land to be incorporated in field 177 "Grainger's Meadow", plot 178 is a cottage and paddock owned and occupied by Richard Whittaker, 179 Andrew Padbury's unoccupied cottage, 180 the "customary acre" of Edward Jarman, let to Park Steadman, and 181 to 183 three cottages in which resided respectively John Bluton, Arthur Boxall & Robert Terry. A fourth building 153a, the property mentioned earlier of William Goring, is shown added to the northern group of three tenements 153b established on the green way.

Dramatic changes were to ensue with the advent of a railway link between Epsom and Leatherhead. Richard Whittaker had sold his property to Direct London and Portsmouth Railway for £200 by 14 May 1849<sup>15</sup> before the line was put through the paddock by a successor company and opened in February 1859. During November of the following year, the cottage, with land that had not been used for the tracks, was resold by the London & South Western Railway to Frederick Felton. He set up a bakery next to the old cottage north of the railway and later erected *Whittakers Cottages* on the other side of a level crossing. Examination of the 1881 Census with 1887 tithe records indicates that there were a total of eight dwellings in the immediate area, including a block erected behind those on the road frontage. Two semi-detached pairs of cottages, one behind the other, constructed from wood survived on this site until 1987; after they were taken down, before the development of Whittaker Court, the pair which had fronted the road were re-erected at the Weald and Downland Museum, Singleton, West Sussex. A third pair had been re-built in the 1930's in brick as semi-detached houses, *Devon & Grasmere*, but they too disappeared when Whittaker Court was constructed.

Immediately to the south stood two structures, either side of a "draw" or "dipping" well fed with water from the ditch, of which one could have been the home of Richard Hammond in the seventeenth century. When Job Curwood, who became a prominent local builder, arrived in Ashted from Cullompton, Devon, he lodged at *Whittaker's Cottages* with George Cox, a railway signalman, and his wife Mary. By the end of the nineteenth century, Curwood had acquired back-land abutting the railway and set up Mrs Cox there to manage a temperance refreshment establishment called *The Rosary*. The Manor Steward had banned swings, stalls and so on from the common but excursionists were provided with such amenities, including

roundabouts with mechanical organs, at *The Rosary*. After the tearoom closed down, about 1910, Jesse Swabey and Herbert Saunders established a “skin factory” on the site. They produced “chamois leather” using an oil tanning process followed by sun bleaching<sup>16</sup> but their partnership was dissolved in 1922. James Astridge subsequently began his businesses here; Kelly’s directory for 1927 shows (with a nice reference to the past) wood dealing but he was also a furniture remover and haulage contractor using vehicles in orange livery. During 1926, he had obtained planning permission for a house to be erected on a residual plot from “Hammond’s” to be called *Cliddesden*. This property lasted until 1982 when it was replaced by flats, *St. James’ Court*. Woodfield Close with 39 houses had been established in 1931 and the remnants of tanning pits have been unearthed during the more recent construction of a garage.



Roger Hammond’s Cottage and *Cliddesden* prior to demolition circa 1980.  
(Courtesy Terry Drewitt via Ashtead Residents’ Association)

Beside *Cliddesden* access was retained to an old cottage set a little way back. It is understood to have been called the *Lodge* in Swabey’s time and later *Cairn Cottage*: if it was indeed “Hammond’s” original dwelling that building continued to be occupied until it too was demolished to clear the site for *St James Court* in 1982.

Next in line had been Jarman/Steadman’s “customary acre”, converted to freehold in 1890 under the Copyhold Act. Some of this land was utilised for *Oak Villas*, built by E. Steadman in 1907 followed later by *Cleland*, *Outwood* & *Vinceholme*. Frederick James Steadman sold rather less than half an acre of the original holding to George Astridge on 6

September 1920. The latter established G. Astridge and Sons, a removal business using vehicles painted green, at *Elm Croft* (rebuilt 1971 & now *Elmdon*). Over subsequent years, *Hazeldene*, *Meadow Edge*, and Elmwood Close were developed on *Elm Croft* land. Beyond that was a cottage replaced by the start of the nineteenth century and now re-developed as two modern detached houses. Lastly, where the tip joins Barnett Wood Lane, otherwise Marsh Lane, two plots were sold, as part of *New Purchase Farm*, when the Howard Estate was broken up in 1879<sup>17</sup>.

By 1880, the two parcels last mentioned had been acquired by Captain William FitzHenry, a retired Quartermaster King's Royal Rifle Corps, as "Two [pairs] of semi-detached cottages, gardens and orchards". He arranged for *Oakfield Lodge* to be built and bought more land to extend its grounds to the west. The two cottages behind continued to be rented out - in 1881 to Sparrow Brothers, brick-makers. After FitzHenry got into financial difficulties, all these properties passed, during 1887, to Captain the Hon. Foley C. P. Vereker (a career naval officer, marine surveyor, of independent means) but, soon afterwards, the old cottages were found to be unfit for human habitation and pulled down. Later owners of *Oakfield Lodge* included Patrick Herbert (father of A. P.) 1891, John Garlick, a builder who later donated the altar, organ and bell for a New Church dedicated to St. George, 1901, and Sir Hubert Llewellyn-Smith, KCB. The latter offered part of his back garden as a fresh site for the temporary "Iron Church", when this became redundant during 1905, and it was winched across Barnett Wood Lane to be used as a parish room, subsequently a scout hut for the 1<sup>st</sup> Ashted 'Pelham' Scout Troop. Another house, *Hornbeam*, has recently been erected between the Scout H.Q. and Balquain Close developed on the site of *Oakfield Lodge* in the 1950's.

To consider further the hamlet's northern section, it is necessary to return to what was Felton's Bakery (over a railway bridge erected in 1911 after powers had been exercised, under S16 Railway Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, "to close and divert this ancient roadway"). Farmland around these premises had been acquired in 1880 for the development of "Caen Farm Estate" but difficulties arose over a right of way across the Common to a future Links Road. In 1882, the speculative builder, William Henry Goodwin, arranged with a widowed Eliza Felton to exchange a piece of her garden, in front of the bakery buildings, for a larger plot to the rear of the premises which gave him access in order to erect a new villa next door, *Woodfield House*. Mrs Felton remarried James Weller, 1884, and by 1891 they had entered a partnership, at the bakery, with William Robert Mellish. After that business arrangement was dissolved during 1894 Mellish continued as a sole trader catering for visitors to Ashted Common, especially children on school treats (claiming to be able to seat 2500 people in marquees and the refreshment rooms).

By this time, *Woodfield House* had become occupied by the Hon. D'Arcy Lambton with his 18 years old wife and baby daughter attended by 5 servants. Close beside their home Mellish's playground, equipped with swings, a helter-skelter, coconut shies and so on, was operated in competition with Mrs Cox at *The Rosary*. The rival attractions were advertised by noisy musical organs "maddening" Florence Lambton and resulting in a court injunction following the case of Lambton v Mellish (3Ch 163)<sup>18</sup>. Nevertheless, Mellish prospered to become a substantial landowner, eventually purchasing *Woodfield House* after this name had been transferred to his catering complex. The villa built by Goodwin became simply *Woodfield* and later *Windy Corner*. After his death in 1924, Mellish was succeeded by W. H. Chaney, "The Children's Caterer" but the business had closed by the beginning of World War II,



although the remains of a helter-skelter survived until the 1950's when removed to Chessington Zoo. All the buildings, apart from *Links Corner Cottage*, were replaced during the 1960's by *Birch Court*.

Beyond where *Hansford Lower House* once stood (on the present drive to No. 2 Links Road), were the four "cottages on the Common" of which James Weller purchased three on 5 August 1885. *Elm Cottage*<sup>19</sup>, the former lodges for the Manor's game-keepers discussed earlier, remained in separate ownership and returned to dual occupation as 1 & 1a *The Common* before being pulled down in 1968: a newly built chalet, replacing a bungalow, now stands on its restricted plot. The old structures further north were demolished, under James Weller's directions for a line of brick cottages, currently numbered 2 to 19 *The Common*, to be erected in their place in accordance with planning consents given between 1897 and 1908.

Fragments of the ancient green road continue to exist as unregistered pieces of land through which runs the right of way designated as public footpath 28. Approach to the cottages by motor vehicles is made over a modern road, apparently provided by Lord Barnby on the common itself before the manorial rights passed to The Corporation of the City of London. Finally, where once was a plank-crossing for pedestrians beside the ford which provided access with agricultural vehicles to *Caen Farm*, there may be found a contemporary bridge facilitating passage by horse-riders using Concessionary Ride 5 over Ashted Common.

### Acknowledgements

Beryl Williams née Astridge has been most helpful in providing information from her own extensive research into the Woodfield. As ever, Jack Willis could be relied upon to find relevant material in the Society's archive.

### NOTES

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16. Adcock K.J. circa 1914 *Leather*, frontispiece.
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19. Photographs of *Elm Cottage* are published in the article by Gwen Hoad in this issue of the *Proceedings*, p. 22–23.

**GLASSINGTON V OTWAY AND OTHERS**  
**A DISPUTE OVER TITLE TO ASHTEAD COPYHOLDS**  
**TALWORTH AND DICKS**

By BRIAN BOUCHARD

An introduction to this subject is contained in the preceding article about *Caen Farm*. Unfortunately, the “full report” recorded as having been produced in 1952<sup>1</sup> has not been traced and details do not seem to have been published so that the following outline has had to be regenerated from fragmentary material.

During the fifteenth century, several generations of Otways had occupied a messuage called *Taleswortheslond*, initially with a virgate [30 acres or so] of native land which was enlarged later to a holding of around 60 acres. From 1526, while the manor had been held by tenants, “the court rolls were badly kept, and poorly written, before ceasing entirely for a period from 1546 – 1572”.<sup>2</sup> When King Henry VIII purchased Ashtead Manor from Sir Edward Aston in 1543, however, a rent roll was produced to include Edward Glassington, as successor to Richard Otway, in possession of two copyhold dwellings. Apparently, Edward Glassington, “otherwise Hunt”, died about 1548 and a survey of the Manor of Ashtead, “temp Edward VI” [circa 1549], reports that James Otway, with his son Augustine, had taken up occupation of 1 tenement named as *Talworth*, 7 December 1 Edw. VI, “By copy for term of his life”, having given “the Lord King for a fine 53s. 4d. (last of £13.6.8. formerly paid to Edward Aston Kt., last Lord of the manor)”.<sup>3</sup>

A Court Roll dated 21 May 1573 records that Robert Rogers claimed belatedly [under circumstances outlined in the penultimate paragraph of this piece] to be admitted to the holding, although in the hands of James Otway “by copy of Court Roll thence it is conferred to him for the period of his life”, and he asked for the estate in question to be given to him “for his life and Edward Glassington who held it from (him) without proof”. When Rogers was directed to produce evidence of Glassington’s sub-tenancy, “because such a surrender as the said Roberts supposed, cannot be found, nor is it at all probable”, and notice had been given to Otway to appear and defend his rights, at the next court, the former seems to have decided to go first to the Court of Requests. In the plea on Rogers behalf it was declared “that, whereas one messuage and lxxx acres of land, three acres of meadowe and twelve acres of wood with happurtances ...are and tyme out of mynde have been parte and parcel of the manor of Asshestede... and by all the same tyme have byne demisable and demised by Coppye of Courte Rolles... [by the words] Habend Sibi et Suis ad volentatem D[omin]i sec[un]dum Cons[uetudinem] man[er]ii predicti,” Edward Glassington was lawfully seized of these premises. It was also said that, subsequently, “by the acceptance of Richard Sewell and John Rummyng, copyholders,” [presumably as witnesses representing the homagers] the estate had been surrendered to the “use and behoofe” of Rogers. Coincidentally, the death of John Rummyng of *Penders* was also announced at the Court Baron on 21 May 1573 so that he could not be called upon to testify to the event.

Robert Rogers [possibly one of the Leatherhead family involved in other litigation]<sup>4,5</sup> alleged that he had made payments to Glassington, during the latter’s lifetime to obtain an interest in the copyhold real estate in question. Whilst the Court of Requests determined that Glassington had been granted tenure “sui et suis” [to him and to his] the question remained whether Rogers had acquired any interest “of inheritance or for life”

Over time, it was revealed that, Robert Rogers had attempted to sell on his purported title to William Franke who not only encountered James Otway's occupation of the premises but also learned there was another potential claimant as heir to Edward Glassington, probably a brother called Thomas Glassington, which caused Franke to fear for the security of his investment. It may be inferred that Rogers, Franke and James Otway came to a view that, despite their competing interests, they had better hang together than hang separately bearing in mind the anticipated claim to rightful inheritance. Seemingly, Rogers' petition to the Court of Requests having failed, £100 was paid by James Otway as compensation or an inducement to Franke and Rogers before all three attended a Court Baron held on 14 December 1576 in the names of Francis Newdigate and his wife, Ann, Duchess of Somerset [widow of Edward Seymour late Lord Protector who had been granted reversion of the manor by Philip and Mary during 1556 in full satisfaction of her dower].<sup>6</sup> The court roll documents that the copyhold messuage "in Ashted, called *The Hows* formerly *Talworths*, also a tenement called *Dickes* and all land etc., at an annual rent of 49/8d, at one time the lands etc. of Edward Glassington, were surrendered to the use of James Otewaie, with reversion to John Otewaie," his son.

Any expectations on the part of Thomas Glassington [senior] would have been stymied by this process. Nothing more seems to have been done about the matter until 1587 when Thomas Glassington [junior] addressed a complaint to Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor of England, to commence Chancery Proceedings against Rogers, James Otway and Franke by seeking disclosure of copies of court rolls to clarify Edward Glassington's tenure and the title surrendered to Robert Rogers. Although the second Thomas Glassington, a yeoman from Leatherhead, was described as a "cuzzen" to Edward this term appears to have carried only the general meaning of "kinsman" because he was actually a nephew and "nexte heyre" as the youngest son of Thomas Glassington [senior]. In the action directed at obtaining documentary evidence, Franke averred that such papers as he had held, particularly Edward Glassington's "copy", had been delivered to the Steward of the Manor but never returned and Rogers said there was nothing in his possession available to be produced.

Sir Christopher Hatton, then newly appointed Lord Chancellor, is reputed to have lacked any great knowledge of the law but to have been endowed with sound sense and good judgement. He, with general agreement, decided that the case involved issues of common law to be determined by an indifferent [neutral] jury empanelled by the High Sheriff of Surrey. After evidence had been produced at the eventual hearing, Thomas Glassington declared "non suite" thereby abandoning the case. Nevertheless, he later opened an action for trespass in the court of King's Bench at Westminster Hall when it was alleged William Hillar had committed perjury; again this failed.

Subsequently, Thomas Glassington died leaving a widow and at least two sons to be supported by his brother, John. Nicholas, the youngest son, aged about 12, and his mother both expired shortly afterwards. John Glassington, as guardian of a surviving nephew, Isaac, pursued the family's grievance to the Court of Star Chamber around 1595. There, not only were all the defendants discharged but the case, brought "in forma pauperis", was adjudged to have been initiated by John Glassington vexatiously. Consequently, £20 costs were awarded against him and he is reported to have been committed to the Fleet Prison "with a paper on his head" [in, one imagines, the form of a dunce's cap] bearing the words "For false clamors

and exhibiting untrue complayntes". It was ordered he should be placed in the pillory with the statement specifying his misdemeanours attached to it.

By October 1597, Isaac Glassington had become an adult aged 23. He approached John Otway to plead "on his knees" that he had been reduced to poverty by the behaviour of his uncle, to become worth only "one groate", and to solicit some money "for quietness sake". Following an undertaking to pay, out of compassion, the sum of £10 on condition that Isaac formally relinquished any further claim to have rights over the premises in question, John Otway obtained a "newe grante" at a Court Baron held in December 1597. Notwithstanding the attempt to find some mutual accommodation it took only until 1601 before Isaac Glassington reneged on the arrangement by complaining to the court of Chancery that he had been short-changed by reference to the estate's full value. During these proceedings, in which the all the long sequence of events was detailed time and again, John Otway died. He was succeeded as customary tenant of the copyhold properties by his brother, Augustine, who in turn faced a renewed legal challenge by Isaac Glassington, extending beyond the decease [in 1603] of Queen Elizabeth I. Particulars of the final judgement have not survived but the continued occupation of both *Talworth* and *Dicks* by later generations of Otways implies that the decision was favourable to Augustine.<sup>7</sup>

Reflecting upon the nature of a grievance sufficiently intense to have endured over 30 years, one begins to suspect that the Glassingtons could indeed have been victims of grave injustice. By the sixteenth century, copyholders were as well protected as freeholders with a certified extract from the Court Roll providing effective registration of title. Since customary tenure could be bought and sold, mortgaged, settled, sublet and otherwise conveyed there must be suspicion over Rogers' inability to produce any papers showing what might have been assigned to him. Equally, although the real estate had earlier been Otway land there was no suggestion that it had been passed to Edward Glassington improperly and, because James Otway's father, John, remained alive in 1573, it would not normally have come to the former by reversion. Passing references were made to possible life tenancies, as opposed to holdings in fee simple or fee entail, but documentation to make the distinction was lacking. In fact, as mentioned in the second paragraph above, James Otway had only been recognised, in 1553, as possessing *Talworth* "By copy for term of his life" It is therefore entirely feasible that, following the old adage "possession is nine points of the law", Rogers had attempted to assume control on Edward Glassington's death but James Otway got there first, managing to convince the Lord and his Steward that a grant "sui et suis" merely provided an estate for life and not of inheritance. From 1561, other disputes over copyhold possession had been had been considered by the Court of Requests in *Mathew and Westwood v Newdigate* and the *Duchess of Somerset* [Mr Devon's Calendar Bundle 5 No 387] which involved Augustine Otway, senior, as a successor to Edward Westwood and, together with James Otway, as a witness. They both deposed that if lands had been let to a man "sui et suis" such person only gained an estate for life. A majority of deponents, including Thomas Lovelace, a former Steward, declared, on the contrary, the words gave a tenant estate in fee simple by custom of the Manor. Those proceedings dragged on for twelve years but the Latin words were determined to provide an heritable estate and not, as the Otways had argued, only a life tenancy. In all probability, the trigger for Robert Rogers appearance at the Court Baron on 21 May 1573 was a decree of the council of the Queen's Court, 12 February 15 Eliz., because, by virtue of it, *Mathew and Westwood* were both admitted tenants on that occasion. Edward

Glassington's heirs, who were at some remove in kinship, contended that they had been cheated with collusion between members of prominent families in the district who had better connections and more influence ("beinge men of great welthe and position and greatly allied and friendly wythe all the homagers and tenantes of...the manor and with the freeholders of ... Surrey by whome the sayd tyle should be tried"). For the further payment of £100, James Otway secured the premises for himself plus his heirs and assigns at about one fifth of what the assets were worth, Franke was not left out of pocket and Rogers benefited financially from his very uncertain tenure gained for an unspecified, unproven, amount of cash. The Glassingtons were stonewalled, lacked sufficient evidence to prevail and ended up with nothing but expense and opprobrium.

As a footnote bearing on the Otways' standing in local society, Edward served on the homage jury during 1573 in addition to James and John; a fact which might have helped to influence events.<sup>7</sup> He also figured in a petition by the inhabitants of Ashtead around that time by which the Lord Justice of England was asked to arrange for investigation of the disappearance of Joan Ingate because it was suspected she had been murdered and buried by her master, Edward Otway, and his wife, Agnes.<sup>8</sup>

#### NOTES

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## SOME MEMORIES OF *ELM COTTAGE* AND *WOODFIELD*, ASHTED, AS TOLD BY KATHLEEN WHITEHEAD

By Gwen Hoad

*This article follows on from my two earlier articles<sup>1,2</sup> on the people and personalities of the Woodfield hamlet. All of them knew one another well, of course, and this article could not have been written without Janice Hammond, who introduced me to Kathleen and was a lively third person in our conversations.*

Kathleen Suzanne Woods was born in *Elm Cottage*, on the Woodfield, Ashted in 1921. Her grandmother, Elizabeth Jane Stone née Johnson (born 1855) married William Stone senior in about 1879; he was born in 1821 and was an agricultural worker. Soon after their marriage, they moved to *Elm Cottage*, where they brought up eight children, including her mother Florence May Stone (born 1894). The eldest child was William (born 1880), and the others were James, Charles, Annie, Frederick, Harry and the youngest, Allen (born 1899). The Stones were an old Ashted family, spanning several generations. William Stone senior was eventually sent packing by Kathleen's grandmother, after which he went to live in Taylor Road. Kathleen was sometimes taken to visit the house where her cousin Stanley lived, and thought that the old man there was Stanley's grandfather, but in fact he was her own, a fact that she did not find out until later.

Elizabeth Jane had lived as a child in one of two cottages, originally farm labourers' cottages, which later became *Wood Cottage*. She told of a pig that was kept there; it was fed on mangels and was eventually slaughtered to provide the family with food. She would also talk about the stage-coaches that came through Ashted, stopping at the *Leg of Mutton* to water the horses. They also stopped at *The Star*, Chessington and *The Cock* at Headley. (It is not clear whether she was speaking from her own experience or from hearsay. If the former, she may have witnessed some of the last coaches before the railway became established. Alternatively, she may have been talking about Vanderbilt's coach.) Kathleen remembers there being a model of a coach in the *Leg of Mutton*, but it is no longer there.

*Elm Cottage* had been two separate cottages at first, with one occupied by William and Elizabeth, and the other by Thomas Fox. However, the wall dividing the rooms in the roof had been knocked down at some stage, as Kathleen remembers that there was a curtain across the middle, dividing the room into two smaller rooms. There were two beds in each half, with two sets of stairs coming up in the middle.

Kathleen's mother married James Henry Woods, who was born in Bookham in 1895. They had two children – Kathleen and her brother Kenneth James. Unfortunately their father died in 1927 after a recurrence of malaria that he had contracted in India in the First World War. In the absence of both their grandfather and their father, the two children were brought up by the women i.e. their mother and their grandmother, "Gran". Their Uncle Bill (William Stone jnr), Uncle Harry and Gran lived in one half of the cottage, and the children and their mother in the other. Gran had the side with the lean-to that housed a shallow earthenware sink, a tap and a stone copper. There was a flush toilet outside the back of Mum's half. The children slept in a room downstairs, and Kathleen remembers seeing a ghostly light going past outside their window when Uncle Bill came down early in the morning to use the toilet. There was no electricity or gas in the cottage, only paraffin lamps



*Elm Cottage at the time of the Jubilee, 1935*

and candles. There was an open fire in each half of the cottage, with an oven attached. Cooking was done either in the oven or in a pan on a trivet on the fire. Water was heated in a pan or kettle on the fire. Soot would come down the chimney, so any open pans had to be kept covered. There was a well in the garden, and a water-but. On wash-days, Gran had to light the fire under the copper in the lean-to, using wood gathered on the Common – coal was too expensive at 2/6 a sack. Washing took all day and was a mammoth task – Gran had 2d. worth of gin to help her get through it! Sheets were spread over bushes in the field at the rear to dry. The roof of the cottage leaked, so buckets had to be deployed when it rained. Uncle Bill kept chickens in the garden, and a few vegetables were grown. As with all the Common folk, there was fruit and other products available for picking on the Common. The children could play in the field between the cottage and Ashtead Woods Road, or on the Common.

Money was very tight, so Kathleen's mother had to work charring three hours a day, five days a week – for the kids' dinner, she said. By Friday there was very little money left, so it was "meatless stew day" – 2d. worth of pot-herbs (maybe two carrots, a potato, an onion and perhaps a turnip, boiled in a pan of water with an Oxo cube). Kathleen hated meatless stew day. Many of the cottagers living in Woodfield hamlet, including Gran, Mum, Mrs Rumble and Mrs Field, earned a bit of extra money in the summer serving teas and soft drinks to the many excursionists who came to the Common by train or charabanc, to spend the day there. They also provided wash & brush-up facilities. All those who sold drinks or offered a wash & brush-up had to pay an extra 6d. a week water-tax. Kathleen helped Gran and Mum, who set up a stall outside the cottage railings – but they were not allowed to let the legs stick out beyond a certain point. (The Lord of the Manor was very strict about such



matters.) Gran had a new shed erected on the west side of the cottage, with a window looking down the Common and a door facing the side of the cottage. Ranged around the walls inside were tables and washstands bearing a jug of water from the well, and bowls for wash & brush-ups, the charge being 2d. Use of the toilet was an extra penny. Gran also sold bunches of flowers for 3d. Most of the excursions came at weekends, the Jews on Saturdays, Kathleen says, but parties of schoolchildren might come during the week. Sunday-School treats and school parties were catered for at *Woodfield House*, by Mellish and later Chaney, "the children's caterer". Quite a large amusement park grew up there, with a helter-skelter. After the war came and the excursions ceased, the helter-skelter was eventually taken apart and re-erected at Chessington Zoo. Occasionally, gypsies would come to the Common, probably hoping to cash in on the visitors, but their horses were taken to the pound. The Green Roof Tea-rooms were opened in 1938 by a lady from Oxshott, on railway company

land, selling teas and ice-creams, but it only lasted a year before the war came.

Kathleen's mother had gone to St Giles' School until she was 12, then she was moved to Barnett Wood Lane School, which had just opened. Kathleen, too, went to Barnett Wood Lane where she is still remembered with a gift of flowers at Harvest Festival. When she was 11, she moved to the Central School (later Woodville, now Trinity) in Leatherhead, which she left



Kathleen Whitehead behind refreshment stall outside *Elm Cottage*, c. 1935.

at 14. Stan Paul, from Paul's the bakers, was there at the same time.

There was not much choice of jobs for girls at that time: it was either domestic work or shop work. Kathleen had looked after children after school from time to time. Her first job after she left school was in West Farm Avenue, where she worked from 8.00 to 1.00, six days a week, for 5/- a week (in about 1936).



Refreshments outside *Elm Cottage*, c. 1935

One of her duties was to take a new-born baby out for an hour each day. As she says "Can you imagine anyone trusting a 14 year-old girl with a new-born baby nowadays?" No food was provided for her, so she went home for lunch. A little later, she also worked for the family opposite from 2.00 to 6.00, for another 5/- a week. In later years, she worked for Mr and Mrs Parker at *Merry Hall*, and in various large houses in Ashtead, usually looking after the children. At home, by way of recreation, the family played cards, or her brother's friends came in, or she walked on Epsom Downs with her fiancé Ted Whitehead.

Ted was distantly related to the Astridges, and in his youth lived with Olga and Fred Astridge at Astridge's yard in Woodfield. Later he lodged at 2 *Whittaker's Cottages* (now re-erected at the Weald & Downland Open-Air Museum at Singleton, in Sussex), where he was not treated very well, having all his wages taken from him. While he was there, he suffered a horrendous accident. As he was cycling home carrying a can of petrol on his back, it leaked into his clothes so that, when he later struck a match, his clothes caught fire and he was badly burnt. He had to spend months in hospital, and was scarred for life. When he tried to join up, the army would not take him because of it. He was known locally as "the boy who got burnt". He became very friendly with the Harris family at *Dukes Hall*, so Mrs Harris offered him a home there and gave him some money each week. She was a very kind person and a great character. Her homemade wine was notorious and Ted, not normally a great drinker, once got quite drunk. He worked at *Goblins* for about 40 years until he retired. Most of the local men worked either there or at *Brifex* in The Street. Kathleen remembers going to open days at *Goblins*, when there would be sideshows, including a coconut shy.

She and Ted married in 1941, when Kathleen was 19. She was married from *Elm Cottage*, and had her wedding reception in one of the huts at *Woodfield House*, formerly *Chaney's*. These former tea-rooms had soldiers of the Norfolk Regiment billeted in them during the early part of the war. The soldiers were brought back to their billet in coaches, and Kathleen's mother was ready with a cup of tea for the drivers. Early in the war, Canadian soldiers were billeted at *Caenwood House*, too, and left it in a mess.

After they were married, Ted and Kathleen lived at no. 5 The Common, then at no. 9 when Jim Godwin, who lived there, was away at the war; they had two rooms at the back. During the war, most of the men joined up, including all of Kathleen's uncles except Uncle Harry, who was a baker. When Jim Godwin came back, the young couple moved back into *Elm Cottage* with Gran and Mum for a time. Sadly, they had no children of their own, but adopted two boys, John and Mark.

Towards the end of the war, the offices of the Miners' Welfare Commission moved down from London to escape the bombing and requisitioned *Caenwood House*, *Wood Cottage* and *Ashley Court*. Kathleen says that the work being done in the office was mainly to do with pit-head baths. Her mother went to live in one of the two gardeners' cottages at *Ashley Court*, where she continued to live for several years until she had to quit, but she eventually married again. In 1946, Kathleen and Ted moved into the servants' quarters in the attic at *Caenwood House*, taking baby John with them. Kathleen worked cleaning the offices after the office-workers went home for the night, while her mother did the same at *Ashley Court*. They helped each other out to ensure the work was done. Ted had to work maintaining the boiler in the stoke-hole at *Caenwood*, but was allowed to go on working at *Goblins*. In return they had two bedrooms, a bathroom and a kitchen, but they were only there for a few

months. There were two wells in the garden of *Caenwood*, which was very overgrown but had lots of strawberries. The footpath that runs down the side of *Ashley Court* to the Common was known as "Sleeper Alley" because it was fenced with railway sleepers, which have now all gone and been replaced with conifers.

By the end of 1946 the offices had returned to London and Kathleen and Ted settled in a cottage, where she still lives after 60 years. Not content with adopting two boys, they fostered ten children at different times, the first three being six-weeks old babies. Their mothers came from Ireland to give birth, then returned after six weeks, leaving the babies to be adopted later. The other foster-children were older.

In 1948, Kathleen went to work for Lord and Lady Barnby at *Hillthorpe*. She was paid a retainer of £1 per week so that she could be called upon when they needed her. This was usually to help the cook serve at dinner-parties, then to wash up afterwards. There was no telephone in the house at that time. She also did cleaning and was occasionally sent up into the loft, where there were bats, to clean it out. Sometimes she had to do dusting in the library, where she could read poetry books, which she loved, especially Rudyard Kipling. There were maps going back 400 years in there, part of Lord Barnby's manorial rights of course. Lady Barnby was American. Both she and Lord Barnby are buried in St Giles' churchyard. Gran died in 1948 at about the time that Kathleen went to work at *Hillthorpe*.

Kathleen was always surrounded by children and dogs in her cottage. There were many other children in the cottages and they all loved to play in the Rye Brook. Girl Guides camped up near Ashtead Gap, where there was a tap that they could use.

After Kathleen and her mother left *Elm Cottage*, it reverted to two separate dwellings known as no. 1 and 1A The Common, or occasionally as 1A and 1B. Sarah Hunt was the last occupant of 1A; she was a relative of the Astridges but was taken into care in 1967. Kathleen's Uncle Bill, William Stone, lived in no. 1, where he had lived all his life. He was a familiar figure standing leaning on his gate, but was a bit frightening to children, though quite harmless. He was a bit odd and did not talk to people much. Kathleen did his washing and took him meals from time to time, as no doubt did other neighbours. He was very poor and was trying to live on a low income. He was found dead on the Common in 1968, at the age of 89. Reg Astridge's wife had bought *Elm Cottage* some time before, and it had been declared unfit for habitation so, after William Stone's death, she sold it to a Mr Whipp, who promptly demolished it (in 1968) and built a modern Guildway bungalow on the site. This has recently been demolished, and a new house built in its place. So ends the story of the Stones and *Elm Cottage*.

When she first lived in Woodfield, the cottages were all occupied by blue collar workers, now they are all white collared. Where do they all work, she wonders? Offices and computers, perhaps. With a terrific sense of humour, Kathleen is one of Ashtead's great characters.

#### NOTES

1. Hoad, G. 2004 James Weller – farmer of Ashtead. *Proc. L.H.&D.L.H.Soc.* 6, 216-221.
2. Hoad, G. 2005 The enigma of Duke's Hall, Ashtead. *Proc. L.H.&D.L.H.Soc.* 6, 248-251.

## LEATHERHEAD AVIATION SERVICES

By PETER TARPLEE

### Introduction

Interest in the firm Leatherhead Air Services arose after the Museum was given the propeller from a DH 6, G-EANU, a plane that had belonged to Mr W.G.Chapman. The two-bladed propeller is eight feet long and is made from five laminations of wood glued together and shaped. Around 100,000 wooden propellers would have been made between 1914 and 1919 by some 35 aircraft makers together with another 30 firms who specialised in making wood products. Among the latter was Betjemann & Sons Ltd of 36, Pentonville Road, London, N1 who made the propeller for Chapman's plane. This was donated by Mr Finch of Eastwick Road, Bookham and had been stored in Luff's Garage in Kingston Road, Leatherhead, the successors of Chapman's Leatherhead Motor Company.

Some years earlier Mr Tony Pearce had called at the museum, saying that his grandfather, W. G. Chapman, had run an aviation business in the town. He allowed us to copy some notes he had made of the flying activities of his grandfather, together with licences issued to Mr Chapman for aerodromes at Chessington, Cobham, Tartar Hill and Rifle Range Meadow, Dorking, Long Ditton, Sunbury-on-Thames and Slough. There are also references to use of aerodromes at Croydon, Guildford, Ripley, Epsom, Sonning, Beaconsfield and High Wycombe. We also knew, as reported in the article in the *Newsletter* of February 2002 by Gordon Knowles, that Chapman had flown a new Avro to Cheltenham and Kidderminster from Leatherhead.



Fig. 1. Left, Chapman the valet. Middle, Chapman the cyclist.  
Right, Chapman with his first aircraft, a Deperdussin.



Fig. 2. Chapman's first plane for the Leatherhead Aviation Services Company, the De Havilland DH 6 G-EANU.

### **W.C.Chapman**

William George Chapman was born on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1879 in Aldwinckle, near Thrapston in Northamptonshire. He came to Leatherhead to work as a gentleman's valet, after which he was employed by Thomas Hersey in the cycle trade. Thomas Hersey, who owned Epsom Cycle Works and Epsom Motor Works in South Street, Epsom, also had a branch in Bridge Street, Leatherhead. The shop in Bridge Street was subsequently used by other cycle dealers; when demolished in 1971/2 it was occupied by W G Holland & Co Ltd, florists. Hersey had been an apprentice with Venthams in Leatherhead and he achieved fame in later life by battling for good causes. He defended rights of way over Epsom Common against actions by the railway and he tried to keep the Downs free for both gypsies and cars. He also took an action against the then owner of Randalls Park, Robert Henderson, challenging public rights in Common Meadow. He owned seven houses in Epsom, named Controversy Cottages!

Early in his life, William Chapman won many medals and trophies as a racing cyclist, but he moved on to motor cars and worked for Karn Bros, probably at their works in Lower Fairfield Road. Eventually he ran his own garage and workshop in Kingston Road, Leatherhead (Leatherhead Motor Company) where he also is said to have started the bus route between Kingston and Leatherhead. His house, no. 268 Kingston Road, and his workshop are still there and are at present used by Hardy Engineering who are also motor engineers. Among the papers deposited with the Society by Mr Pearce are photographs of Chapman as a cyclist, valet, motor mechanic (at Karn's and Leatherhead Motor Services) and as a pilot. His first bicycle was a 48inch penny-farthing, his first motorised vehicle was a Beeston 2¼ hp tricycle,

his first motor cycle was a 1¼ hp Werner and his first car was a 3½ hp Gladiator. So he was truly a pioneer of all types of transport even before he took up flying.

In 1913 Chapman bought a Deperdussin aeroplane in which he taught himself to fly. This plane was powered by a 29 hp engine and had a maximum speed of 65 mph. The war interrupted his flying activities, but in 1919 he set up Leatherhead Aviation Services, buying a DH 6 plane. (See below for further details on this type of plane.) It was operated from Byhurst Farm, owned at the time by Prewett's Dairies, in Malden Rushett, on the west of Kingston Road (A 243) just south of Fair Oak Lane. There Chapman erected an RE 8 hangar which he had bought from Brooklands, and the company started operations on 16<sup>th</sup> February 1920, one month before the first commercial flight from Croydon. (Note that the present aviation operations at Rushett Farm Airstrip by John Day Restorations are on a completely different site. Byhurst Farm was purchased by the Crown Estate in 1939 and is at present operated by Balanced Horse Feeds.) The plane, G-EANU, was one of only two civil conversions of a DH6 that had the Curtiss OX-5 90 hp engine fitted. The cockpit was modified into two separate compartments with the passenger being carried in the front cockpit. The plane was used for joy riding and charter work. It was reported in the Times that in one week 1,000 passengers were taken up at Guildford, indicating the demand for this type of operation at the time.

Chapman also bought a number of Avro 504K three-seater biplanes; the first, G-EAHL, obtained its Certificate of Airworthiness (C of A) on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1919 at the Cambridge School of Flying and was sold by Chapman in March 1923 to Manchester Aviation Company but it crashed in Cheshire on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1923. The second, G-EBAV, received its C of A on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1922, but it crashed in the grounds of St Bernard's Convent near Slough, injuring Chapman. The plane was being piloted by Arnold Graham and a friend, Arnold Cude, was a passenger. They

were performing aerobatics at the time; after looping the loop they did an Immelmann turn and the machine went into a spin and nose-dived into a tree. The crash was witnessed by many spectators. After narrowly missing the convent buildings, the plane struck a lime tree, carrying part of it away, and hit the ground. The injured were rescued from the wreckage and taken to King



Fig. 3. Newspaper photo showing "The wreck of the aeroplane which came to grief at Slough in looping the loop. It fell into a tree and then to the ground, and its pilot and two passengers, Messrs Arnold Graham, W.G. Chapman and Bert Cude, were seriously injured."

Edward VII Hospital in Windsor. Chapman had been badly cut and bruised, Cude had a broken leg whilst Graham, the pilot, was more seriously hurt and was not expected to recover. Had they not hit the tree, all three occupants of the plane would probably have been killed instantly.

The third plane, G-EBCQ, received its C of A on 22 May 1922, crashed in Surbiton in July 1922 and passed to Manchester Aviation Company in December of that year. After being rebuilt it crashed in Barrow-in-Furness on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1923. Chapman possibly also owned G-EADU, another Avro 504K, which was certainly owned by two of his colleagues who had flown with him at Leatherhead and went on to Renfrew Flying Services. One of his pilots, R C Knowles, married Chapman's eldest daughter.

Some of the atmosphere of early aviation activities can be gleaned from press reports from the period:

Despite his determination to go out of aviation Mr Chapman keeps on flying. Here are some extracts from a letter of his describing a recent tour on his Avro:-

I thought I would pay a visit to my mother and father in Aldwincle in Northamptonshire, and take a friend of mine, so we got off on the Avro at 11:45, made a good course, Hendon, St Albans, Bedford etc, to Rushden, where we thought we would take lunch, so we landed and were asking where the best hotel was when to our surprise an Avro landed close to our bus. It was the Berkshire Aviation Co who had a field which we did not notice.

After a chat they advised us to hop over to the George Hotel at Kettering and have lunch. They very kindly started us up and we had to promise them we would drop in at their field on our way back. We had a fine lunch at the George, a large crowd of people round the bus, plenty of help to swing the old prop, and we made for our small village (Aldwincle) where we landed in a small field used as a rickyard, 130 yards long and 48 yards wide.

After landing Mr Haynes rather wondered if we could get out as he had not noticed two trees at the end, which was the only way of course to get out, so our farmer friend very soon said "That must not worry him, the tree shall be cut down". Axes and ropes were soon on the spot and in an hour the tree was down, just leaving room to clear the machine, so we stripped her of all loose stuff, started her up, and Mr Haynes took her off and dropped in the next field, which greatly relieved him.

After tea we got away, and at Rushden noticed a large crowd of people in the field and all around. There must have been thousands, and crowds of passengers going up. We did a few stunts and one of Mr Haynes' beautiful sideslip landings into this 'drome, where, by the way, we did not have to pay a 5s landing fee. There we had the greatest hospitality from these three splendid fellows of the Berkshire Co. We spent almost an hour there, and the whole time they were taking 12s 6d passengers.

We got away, cut across London to Wallington, did a few stunts, hopped over hedges, and landed in my 'drome at ten minutes to ten. A very fine trip without a hitch, and at very small cost, as Mr Haynes is very good with a Le Rhone engine.

[When one reads of these weekend tours of Mr Chapman's all done out of the receipts from a country motor works, one is more and more surprised that well-to-do sportsmen as a class so utterly ignore the aeroplane as an instrument of sport and travel. – PT]

In spite of the fact that one hears little of the doings of Mr W G Chapman, he is still actively interested in flying, and contemplates big things in the coming year. He has

recently acquired a new Hewlett and Blondeau-built Avro, and by way of a holiday used it to fly to Kidderminster just before Christmas. He left his aerodrome at Byhurst Farm, Chessington at midday, Saturday and dropped in near the Caversham Bridge Hotel for lunch. Finding it rather late on getting away, it was decided to make for Cheltenham where the night was passed. On the following morning Kidderminster was made in about 45 minutes. On the following day a little stunting was indulged in, and on Thursday a return was made to Leatherhead, the journey being accomplished, non-stop, in 65 minutes. The whole trip was a "no trouble" one and was an excellent example of what can be done in aerial touring with an efficient machine.

Mr Chapman is at present concerned with the pilot question, and he would be pleased to hear from anyone who is willing to assist him conscientiously during the coming season on a profit-sharing basis.

There were, even then, people who were ready to object to other people's activities as instanced by the two extracts of newspaper reports of complaints by Cobham residents to Chapman's activities at Tartar Hill:

**FLYING NUISANCE  
CHIMNEY POTS AND HOUSES IN DANGER  
PROTESTS TO THE PARISH COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the Cobham Parish Council on Tuesday evening Colonel G H Trollope (Chairman) had received complaints of dangerous flying at Cobham. Copy of letters had been sent to him signed by Colonel C P Gordon-Clark, Canon Grane (Vicar of Cobham) and many others had been forwarded to Major Lidley, Civil Aviation Department, RAF and among other things the letter stated that on Sunday January 29<sup>th</sup> a Mr W G Chapman, Motor works, Kingston Road, Leatherhead, or his pilot, to whom the Air Ministry had granted a civil aerodrome licence for three months in respect of a field at Tartar Hill near the Portsmouth Road, half a mile from Cobham parish, which was a populous and extensive parish did the following:- During the whole day until sundown he, or his pilot, took passengers up at intervals of about ten minutes for joy rides, at times flying very low and skimming the tops of houses and hedges; and caused obstruction in the Portsmouth Road as cars collected there to the extent of about a ¼ mile. It was further alleged that he, or his pilot, incessantly flew too low and performed fancy stunts at a low altitude, being a public danger and a nuisance. Every time he flew he disturbed the peace of the neighbourhood by the noise which the aeroplane made, and the Portsmouth Road was given the appearance of a race meeting. Copies of the correspondence had been forwarded to the Chief Constable of Surrey.

A reply had been received from the Air Ministry who referred to the regulations governing the granting of licences. One of the conditions was that any aeroplane flying over a city or town must do so at such an altitude as would enable the aircraft to land outside the city or town should means of propulsion fail or should there be a mechanical breakdown from other causes. It also prohibited trick or exhibition flying over a city, town or populous district, or any flying which by reason of the low altitude or the proximity to persons or dwellings was dangerous to public safety. In the event of contravention of these regulations the police are competent to take proceedings against any air pilot of the aircraft concerned. So far as the Portsmouth Road was concerned that matter did not come within the scope of the Air Ministry.



## **AEROPLANE NUISANCE**

Mr W H Taylor writes from Sun-Trap, Fairmile, Cobham, with reference to the discussion at the Cobham Parish Council last week. "I believe I am right in stating that signatures have been solicited with a view to stopping these flights. This procedure seems very unjust, because it would appear from the report that the majority of the objectors are by no means local as myself to this so-called nuisance. The remarks re chimney pots are, to say the least, a little exaggerated, because the aeroplane is at least 400 to 500 feet high by the time it gets over the village. So far most of the pilot's ascents and landings have passed directly over my garden, which is decidedly the noisiest part, as he is naturally very near to the ground. Personally, I am very loath to be a factor in creating difficulty for anyone who is earning a livelihood."

The crash at Slough and his injuries caused Chapman to give up his aviation business; the company ceased trading in August 1922 and the aerodrome at Malden Rushett reverted to farmland. After the demise of Leatherhead Aviation Services, Chapman and his family moved to a tiny cottage, with no electricity or running water, between Beaconsfield and High Wycombe. In 1930 he moved to Byfleet, where he worked for Hawkers and Brooklands Aviation. In 1943 he moved back to his sister's at Aldwinckle before finally settling in Speen in Buckinghamshire, where he died in 1965.

The DH 6 had been sold to J V Yates of Croydon in May 1922. With all his interest and pioneering work in aviation it is rather sad to read in an article published around 1949 that William Chapman looked back on his life and said "I have almost forgotten it all and I can tell you I often wish I had had nothing to do with any of it".

## **De HAVILLAND –DH 6**

In 1906 Geoffrey de Havilland (1882-1965) was designing some of London's first buses for the Motor Omnibus Construction Company, but his interest in flying meant that he gave this up to design his first aeroplane, as well as its engine. He opened a workshop in Fulham where he built the plane, which he first attempted to fly in 1909; a year later he made an improved version which he successfully flew. At this time he became a designer and test pilot at H. M. Balloon Factory, later to become the Royal Aircraft Factory. He left in 1914 to become Chief Designer with the Aircraft Manufacturing Company Ltd. (Airco) at Hendon, where he was responsible for a series of aircraft used during the war. These ranged from the DH 1 reconnaissance plane to the DH 9A day bomber.

After the war Airco was sold to Birmingham Small Arms Co. Ltd. (BSA) whose directors soon decided to close down the aeroplane making business. Rather than continue with BSA designing cars, de Havilland set up his own company, the de Havilland Aircraft Company Ltd., in 1920 which operated from Stag Lane in Edgware until a new site was acquired in Hatfield in 1930, where de Havilland developed a large modern aircraft factory. His company at first made mainly civil aircraft, and the firm continued until it was absorbed into the Hawker Siddeley Group in 1960.

The DH 6 was a 2-seater trainer, also used for coastal patrols, and was introduced in 1917; a total of about 2,500 were made by a number of different companies. Because of its primary use as a trainer, the DH 6 was designed to be easy to fly — although it was found to be difficult to pull out from dives at over 100 mph. The plane used by Chapman of the Leatherhead Motor Company was G-EANU and its Certificate of Airworthiness was issued

on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1919. It was one of a batch of 150 in Contract A.S. 22909 ordered from the Kingsbury Aviation Company Ltd., Kingsbury, Middlesex, and was one of over 50 that were sold for civil purposes, as being surplus to military requirements. It was powered by a Curtiss OX-5 engine instead of the usual RAF 1A engine. The plane which operated from Chessington was finished in blue livery with polished brass turnbuckles and engine cowling.

### NOTES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have received much help from Doug Hollingsworth and Brooklands Museum, also from the Croydon Airport Society through Peter Skinner, their Archives and Artefacts Co-ordinator, who also provided some useful photographs of G-EANU. Much helpful material was also obtained from the papers deposited with the Society by Mr Tony Pearce of Byfleet, a grandson of Mr Chapman, (LX 1386), who also provided much of the family information and some photographs, and from discussions with Ian Lane, the present occupier of Byhurst Farm.

Reference was also made to the following publications:-

*Byfleet Review*, January 1949

*De Havilland Aircraft Since 1909* by A J Jackson Putnam, 1987

*Those Fabulous Flying Years* by Colin Cruddas Air Britain, 2003

*Surrey Aeronautics and Aviation 1785-1985* by Sir Peter G. Masefield Phillimore, for Surrey Local History Council, 1993

## PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES FOR LEATHERHEAD

By PETER TARPLEE

Before there was a public water supply, how was water obtained for drinking, cooking and washing? We tend to take water for granted, but I would like to consider some aspects of how it was obtained before there was a public supply, and how a public supply came about in our local area.

A lot of water was obtained from streams and ponds and where, there were springs, these would be used. Where water was not on the surface, then wells were dug. Wells may have been for one house or for a group of houses, or even for a whole village. The water then had to be carried from the well or spring to one's home. This, of course, made it a precious commodity which often needed much effort to obtain. In many places people were employed as water carriers, who were paid for carrying water in large cans on their shoulders or in handcarts.

In Haslemere there is a plaque by the old town well which reads

*From Medieval times until the late 19th century, this dipping well and Pilewell in Lower Street were the two principal sources of water for the town's people.*

*Haslemere's last public water carrier Hannah Oakford, who died in 1898, charged a penny ha'penny per bucket to deliver water to houses in the town.*

A footnote adds: *This water is NOT suitable for drinking.*

From an account of life on the Thames islands at Shepperton, it was only as recently as 1950 that they received a mains water supply, and then just to a few standpipes. At Broadmoor, near Abinger, mains water was not provided until 1960, and even then one lady preferred to continue to use water from the stream. We must remember that, once there was mains water, there was a water rate; before that water had been a free commodity for many people.

Water from wells was lifted by a rope on a windlass, or by a pump that could be operated by hand, by animal power or by water- or wind-power. Many villages around, e.g. Brockham, Leigh, Ockley, Holmbury St Mary and Walliswood, still have their communal pumps *in situ*, even if they are not in use. Many large houses have pumps which used to provide their supplies of water, such as Cobham Park, Highlands Farm and Milton Court. A local example of a local water pump driven by wind power was here in Leatherhead. *Flint House*, off Highlands Road, was built largely from flints collected locally. It was owned by a barrister, Clement Swanston, who was also a developer. His house, and others which he built in Reigate Road and Clinton Road, was supplied with water which was pumped into a private reservoir from a deep well by power produced by a windmill. This reservoir (disused) is still there although the windmill has gone, as has *Flint House*, later called *Yarm Court*. Windmill Road, is in the vicinity and this is presumably the reason for its name.

Leatherhead got its first public water supply in 1884 and a report of the opening ceremony appeared in the *Surrey Advertiser and County Times* of 18th October of that year:

*A great boon has just been conferred upon the inhabitants of Leatherhead and the surrounding district, in the shape of an abundant supply of excellent spring water, which the operations of the new Leatherhead & District Water Company have brought right to their doors and which, we are sure, will be more than ever appreciated after the experience*

*of one of the driest summers that has been known for years past. Leatherhead being so near London, and celebrated as it is for the beauty of its surrounding scenery, some of the finest in Surrey, will, now that the desideratum of a good water supply has been obtained, become doubly popular as a residential district, and the surrounding villages through which the new South Western Railway will run, and which will place them in direct communication with the metropolis, will also derive an equal benefit from the increase of residents among them that is sure to follow their opening up. The Company whose works were formally opened by the Right Hon George Cubitt, MP, on Saturday afternoon was authorised by Parliament on May 31 1883, for the purpose of supplying water to 10,000 people in the parishes of Leatherhead, Mickleham, Ashtead, Fetcham, Great and Little Bookham, Stoke D'Abernon, and the Cobhams, with power to supply adjacent districts in bulk, and seeing that it adjoins Greater London, so fast spreading west, it has every prospect of a successful future.*

*The works were commenced last autumn by the sinking of a well 200 feet deep by Mr J W Grover, the engineer of the undertaking, and it resulted in the discovery of one of the most remarkable springs of chalk water in Surrey - a county famous for such supplies. The well is 7 feet in diameter for a depth of 21 feet, and then an artesian boring penetrates down through the chalk beds. The water rose in the well to a height of 3 feet above the adjacent River Mole, and it is estimated that about 1 million gallons a day could be drawn from it by pumps on the surface of the ground in daylight. More could be obtained by lowering the pumps.*

The area of the district to be supplied was upwards of 25 square miles, and the need for water was considerable. The number of houses in the district is 1895.

The account then goes on to give an analysis of the excellent water of that crystalline, brilliant character, with slight blue tint when held up to the light, which is well known to those who have seen the chalk springs in the Surrey hills; and it is softer than that of the Kent company. It points out that the engineer believed that 2-3 million gallons a day could be obtained from his site and, as its level is 100 feet above the Thames, it could easily be made available to feed the metropolis. As the area of supply of the company adjoins that of the Lambeth Water Company at Esher, the parliamentary powers existed for our company to help in supplying London's water, at a considerable financial advantage to Leatherhead. The works which had been carried out, in addition to the sinking of the well, consisted of the construction of a pumping station arranged for duplicate engines, double boilers and pumping machinery, which was capable of lifting 20,000 gallons an hour into a double covered reservoir 210 feet above the well, and situated on the top of a commanding hill at the back of the church.

Continuing with another short quote from the newspaper:-

*The new pumping station of the company is near the South Western Railway, and within a short distance of the River Mole, and it is here that the Company, which is an influential one, met on Saturday afternoon to inspect the work. The peculiarities of the well, the engines and other work were explained to the Rt Hon George Cubitt, M P, Sir Walter Farquar and other gentlemen present by Mr Grover, Engineer, and specimens of the water were handed round and tasted, and being of a clear and sparkling character it was generally pronounced 'excellent'.*

*After inspecting the inside of the works the assembled folk were shown a temporary fountain which had been erected to demonstrate that the pressure in the mains could produce a column of water of up to 100 ft.*

*Brakes and carriages were provided to take the company to the reservoir when the drive through the bright keen air being most invigorating, whilst from the top of the hill one of the most extraordinary views in the county is obtained, extending to Leith Hill, the tower on which is clearly visible, to Windsor, the round tower at the castle being visible on a bright clear day.*

*After inspecting the reservoirs they all returned to the town to see a jet from a stand pipe pouring water on surrounding houses proving that in the event of a fire Leatherhead has no longer to fear the disaster of a want of water in a time of necessity.*

*The luncheon was held at the Swan Hotel at the conclusion of the inspection of the works &c., and a numerous company of invited guests sat down to an excellent repast, provided by Miss Moore.*

We then read of all those present and details of the lunch, speeches and toasts and the financial prospects for the company. Just a couple more quotes:-

*George Cubitt MP:- What they had seen at the works that day showed that they had an abundant water supply. He would rather warn his friends in Leatherhead to take care and get a good supply themselves before some of the populous villages obtained the lion's share.*

*Mr. Grover, the Engineer:- There was no place where water was wanted more than in Leatherhead. He had a foreman working for him who had been in Africa and he said that the want of water in that country was nothing to Leatherhead. Diphtheria had been prevalent but it would all pass away now that they had a good water supply (applause).*

The waterworks to which all this referred was between Waterway Road and Bridge Street and many will remember its demolition in 1992 to enable the building of homes in Wallis Mews. It contained two 30hp steam-driven pumps to lift the water the 210 feet to the reservoir which was at the top of Reigate Road. That reservoir, which was in the garden of *Bush Cottage* and has been disused since 1935, was replaced by a larger one opposite Highlands Farm, which is still operational and is the main service reservoir for the area.

The Engineer of the Leatherhead and District Water Company was John William Grover who was an engineer of some renown. Whilst a pupil of Mr (later Sir) John Fowler, he worked on the construction of Rochester Bridge and the Wiesbaden and Eltville Railway, as well as on the installation of the water tanks at the top of the northern tower of the Crystal Palace. He then carried out preliminary surveys for railways in Spain and Portugal. On returning to England, Grover worked in the office of the Science and Art Department where, among other work, he superintended the erection of the north and south courts of the South Kensington Museum, later to become the V & A. In 1862, aged 26, Grover began to practice on his own account, and one of his first jobs was the construction of 27 miles for the Manchester and Midland Railway and the Hemel Hempstead branch of the Midland Railway. As well as further work at South Kensington, Grover worked on the design of Cleveland Pier. He carried out surveys for a number of railways, including the Mexican Railway and the Westerham branch of the South Eastern Railway. In 1873 he went to Venezuela and laid out the

mountain line from La Guaira to Caracas, as well as producing surveys for the harbour at La Guaira and the lighthouse at Los Roques. When he returned to England, Grover gave up railway work and concentrated on water supply projects. In the next 20 years he designed and built waterworks at Bridgend, Westerham, Newbury, Leatherhead and Rickmansworth. He was an expert in the water supply for London and was also involved in water projects in Austria, Denmark, Italy and Switzerland.

Grover died in 1892, aged 56, having been a prominent member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, the Society of Antiquaries and the British Archaeological Association. Among his patents was that in 1875 for improvement to a machine for making spring washers, which he had designed to prevent the need for constant tightening of permanent-way fishplates. He manufactured these washers in a factory, Grover & Co Ltd, which operated between 1875 and 2001 in Carpenters Road, Stratford, East London. Starting as general engineers, they evolved into manufacturers of perforating machines for stamps, of which they were a leading maker until overtaken by computer technology.

Over time as the demand rose, additional boreholes were sunk at Leatherhead and now only the later ones remain in use. A second pumping station was built in 1935, adjacent to the original one, with diesel-driven pumps. This reinforced concrete building was enlarged in 1940 and now the pumps are electrically-driven with diesel-driven stand-by generators. In 1957 the East Surrey Water Company, who had taken over from the Leatherhead & District Waterworks Company in 1927, purchased the millpond in Fetcham. From 1962 they were allowed to take up to 3 million gallons a day from ten artesian wells which feed the pond — provided that they keep the mill pond full. This water, together with that extracted at Leatherhead pumping station, is pumped to the Elmer Works on Hawks Hill for treatment and softening before being pumped to the reservoirs. In 2004 the network was reinforced by trunk mains connecting the Leatherhead system with the Dorking system, these are principally routed along the verges of the A24 through Mickleham.

The East Surrey Water Company, which had started as the Caterham Spring Water Company in 1862, amalgamated with the Limpsfield and Oxted Water Company and the Chelsham and Warlingham Water Company in 1930, and with the Dorking Water Company in 1959, and finally merged with the Sutton District Water Company in 1996 to form Sutton and East Surrey Water. Its area of operations is now 322 square miles.

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*Propellor of aeroplane that belonged to W.C. Chapman.  
(see p. 26)*