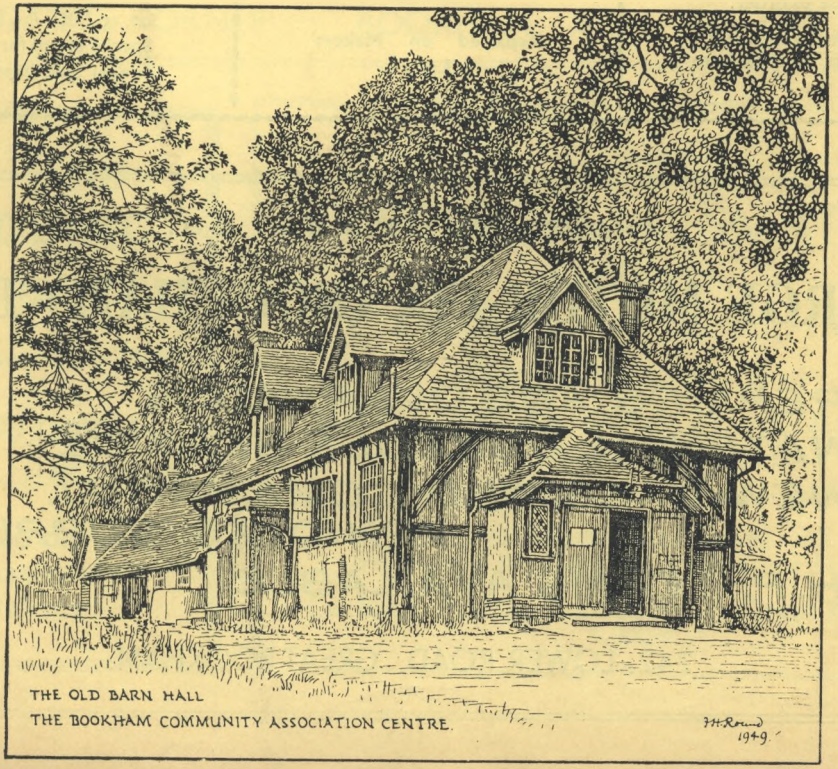
The Bookhams Bulletin

Quarterly Journal of the Bookham Community Association

No. 104 DECEMBER 1959. 27th year



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Quarterly Journal of the Bookham Community Association

No. 104. DECEMBER, 1959 27th year

EDITORIAL

Peace on earth goodwill toward men. This Christian greeting has seldom seemed more poignant than during World Refugee Year, when our attention is being drawn to the plight of so many of our fellow creatures living, through no fault of their own, in the refugee camps of Europe, on the pavements of Hong Kong, or in the deserts of the Middle East.

It is easier to get angry about the world's shameful neglect of the refugees than to do something constructive about it. At the root of our neglect has been our inability or our unwillingness to relate the problems of refugees to ourselves as individual citizens and taxpayers. We have tended to shrug the whole thing off as the responsibility of others, the job of governments and supra-national bodies. Our good intentions have created the machinery for helping the refugees, but a lack of moral stamina has withheld the funds to make it fully effective. This is the fault equally of governments and of individuals.

We shall have our opportunity when Leatherhead holds its World Refugee Week from May 9th to 15th, 1960, to give generous help to those organisations who are working with and for the refugees.

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COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

Bookham Gramophone Club

January 1960

7. Smaller Forces—P. A. Ball.
21. I Like what I Know—G. J. Everett.

February

4. "My" Opera—L. Whitehouse.
18. Members' Requests.

March

3. What's New from Phillips—Miss Quita Chavez.
17. Symphony Concert — H. R. Swetman.
31. Sound and Colour—Members of Epsom G.S.

April

14. Pick of the Bunch — Competition.
28. Schubert—D. G. Gay.

May

12. Annual General Meeting.
26. Au Revoir—J. E. Davies.

The Gramophone Club will welcome visitors.

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Scottish Dancing Group

This Club is having a happy session. During November they had an enjoyable dance, with invited guests, to the music of Skinners Band and hope to arrange others. The Secretary will be pleased to give further information to anyone interested in joining the Group and could arrange for a visit on Friday evenings.

Over Twenties Club

The Over Twenties Club will always be pleased to welcome visitors at their social evenings on Tuesdays at the Barn Hall, 8 p.m., when table tennis, darts, etc. are played.

Bookham Olde Time Dancing

Bookham Olde Time Dancing Club are a lively and successful group and will be holding their 10th Anniversary Party in January. They meet every Wednesday at the Old Barn Hall at 8 p.m. and will welcome visitors and new members.

To those who visited the Village Day Exhibition

copies of the Chart (20 x 21 inches) illustrating Bookham's history can be obtained from Mrs. E. Harrison. Price 2/6

A VISIT TO BUCKINGHAM PALACE

In our last issue of the *Bulletin* we congratulated Mr. Jack Date on the award of the O.B.E. for his work in the Foreign Office. His mother, who is one of Bookham's oldest residents, has described to us the Investiture Ceremony at Buckingham Palace which she and her granddaughter, Susan, attended. From the moment they stepped out of the car and ascended the steps of the main entrance they were impressed by the colour and dignity of the occasion. They walked along the red carpet, up many more steps, and were conducted by stewards, whose uniform and spurs indicated that they were retired Guards' officers, along corridors of red and gold, hung with magnificent paintings, to the State Ballroom, also in crimson and gold. Its fine proportions and furnishings were pure Regency and its cut-glass chandeliers, glinting in the sunshine, were specially admired by Mrs. Date. In the balcony, above, the Guards' Band played soft music.

From their place in the centre of the second row of the guests section Mrs. and Miss Date had an excellent view of the proceedings. Each recipient of an honour was entitled to bring two visitors and among these were quite a number of small children who behaved with all the restraint of adults and sat quite still and chatted quietly while waiting for the entrance of Prince Philip who was deputising for the Queen on this occasion.

A trumpet sounded and conversation died away. Within minutes an escort of the Yeoman of the Guard filed into the room and took up their position by the dais. Their traditional uniforms of scarlet and gold, with white ruffs, made another phalanx of vivid colour. Shortly afterwards Prince Philip, preceded by the Lord Chamberlain, entered. In a quiet, conversational manner the Prince, who stood throughout the hour's ceremony, bade them "Good Morning," asked them to be seated and asked them not to applaud and to converse, if they wished to do so, in whispers.

First the Prince conferred knighthood on three of the company. Taking a sword from the Lord Chamberlain he touched each gentleman first on the right, then on the left shoulder, and finally over the head. The other honours followed. In groups of twenties the recipients came in and stood beside the dais. Each person in turn stepped forward two paces and received the insignia of his Order, those of the higher degrees being suspended round the neck on a broad white ribbon, the others attached by the Prince to the lapel of the coat. To each one the Prince spoke quietly for a few moments

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on his own special interests. He laughed gaily with Bud Flanagan who appeared with a flower in his buttonhole. Richard Dimbleby was amongst those honoured at this Investiture, as well as nurses, members of the Women's Services, the W.V.S., a clergyman, a blind man, soldiers, sailors and many airmen. Nor were the honours confined only to the white races—quite a number of coloured people were warmly received by the Prince. Mrs. Date was surprised to observe an elderly lady, dressed in Edwardian style, walk up for her O.B.E. With lace at her neck, long skirts and a large black hat she appeared to have stepped from another age. It appeared that she was 86 and was still an active member of the Ickleton local council.

As each man or woman received the honour he went on to the Lord Chamberlain who handed him his case and then took a seat reserved for him amongst the guests to watch the remainder of the ceremony.

The Investiture concluded, all stood for the National Anthem, the Prince bowed and, with the Lord Chamberlain, left the room. Excited groups, with one last look at the glittering ballroom, then departed along the stately corridors and dispersed each to celebrate in their own way a proud and memorable occasion.

Have You Joined The Community Association ?

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To Hon. Secretary, COMMONEND, EASTWICK DRIVE.

A SHORT HISTORY OF BOOKHAM, SURREY

(Part 24)

By John Harvey

Time never stands still, and any history is out of date by the time it is published; but there are in any case sound reasons why "recent history" should be separated from that of earlier periods. It is impossible to view objectively, dispassionately, events that have occurred within a century or so, to judge fairly of developments that have occurred in the lifetime of one's own parents and grandparents. Another factor which tells against the writing of modern history is the multiplicity of sources: newspapers, records of local administration, of public undertakings and private business, the letters, diaries and memoranda of individuals, the reminiscences of the elderly.

All these and more would have to be studied and analysed to yield an adequate survey of conditions and events in Bookham since the middle of the nineteenth century. Rather than present a sketchy and unbalanced view it seems better to conclude this short history in 1851, when the population was almost double what it had been at the opening of the nineteenth century: 1,248 against 706. Of these, 1,061 lived in Great Bookham, and 187 in Little Bookham. Many new houses had been built in the half-

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century, mostly small brick boxes with slate roofs, suitable for labourers and artisans, though some were still being put up in the local vernacular style of studding covered with weatherboard or plaster. A new mansion at Polesden had been built in 1824, and Eastwick Park was remodelled after 1833.

Glimpses of parish life appear through the impersonal lines of documents of the period. In 1838 the old almshouses in Church Road were sold by order of the Epsom Union to Joseph Bonsor, Esq., for £150. They were described as "All those two freehold Cottages or Tenements with the Gardens and appurtenances thereto belonging situate in Great Bookham Street," and comprised a cottage on the west side of the road north of the Barn Hall, and another, still existing, on the east side opposite to the end of Sole Farm Road. The operation of the Poor Law still involved the removal of poor persons to their place of settlement, and this is exemplified by a Removal Order of 21 April, 1851, whereby Mary Puttock, aged about 44, wife of William Puttock who has deserted her about 6 years, was to be removed from Epsom to Great Bookham with her legitimate children, Martha (15) and Mary (13).

Another aspect of the life of the poor appears in an Apprenticeship Indenture of 26 December, 1851, in which the Minister and Churchwardens of Great Bookham paid from Charity Monies £15 to apprentice Eliza Rolfe (15), daughter of George Rolfe, labourer, to Caroline Percivall of Great Bookham, "Singlewoman Milliner." Eliza was to be taught the "art, trade and business of a Milliner" for three years, Miss Percivall providing sufficient drink, meat and lodging, and the girl's father her wearing apparel, washing and mending; while he was also "to remove Eliza Rolfe to his own abode in case of sickness or accident" and maintain her for the duration of her sickness or until her recovery. Rolfe signed by mark, but his daughter could write.*

At the time there was no railway station nearer than Dorking (Town), on the Redhill-Reading line of the South-Eastern Railway, opened in 1849, or Epsom (the old L.B. & S.C. station), open since 1847. The London & South-Western line from Wimbledon to Leatherhead, with the joint London Brighton & South Coast extension from Epsom, reached Leatherhead only in 1859 and Horsham via Dorking (North) not until 1867; the New Guildford line through Effingham Junction, with the link to Leatherhead via Bookham, did not come until 1885. Not until after 1900 was Bookham linked to the outside world by mechanized road traffic.

In the middle of the nineteenth century village life still remained in many ways close to that of the Middle Ages, and as a final demonstration of this historical unity may be quoted the list of men qualified to serve on Juries, returned by Great Bookham on 30 August, 1865. Out of a total population of some 1,100, only 14 men were then jurors qualified by law: Sir Walter Rockliffe Farquhar, baronet (of Polesden); Hedworth David Barclay, Esq. (of Eastwick Park); Henry Hansard, Esq.; four farmers (Edward Eggleton, Charles Hatt Hunter, Henry Leach, Thomas Wells); two Victuallers (William Clapshaw, George Door); a Wheelwright (Thomas Balchin); a Baker (William Grantham); a Grocer (James Underwood); a Shoemaker (John Owen); and George Woods, described as a Retired Shopkeeper.*

With this last glimpse of the ancient two-faced principle of privilege linked with responsibility, we leave the ancient history of the two Bookhams, and face modern times.

**Parish papers at Great Bookham Rectory, kindly shown to me by the Rev. Canon A. M. Hughes.*

(CONCLUDED)

[On behalf of our readers we should like to thank Mr. Harvey for the intensive research and work that has resulted in this interesting and informative history of our locality.]

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VILLAGE NEWS

New Youth Club

The Grove Association are to be congratulated on their enterprise in organising a club for their young people which is meeting on alternate Mondays at the Barn Hall. This has been started at the request of the young people themselves and is being given the enthusiastic support of the adult committee. It will undoubtedly meet a real need in the village. Much preliminary work has been done by the Committee and Secretary of the Grove Association, Mr. Ewer, 33 Oveton Way.

Congratulations

Three young people who have grown up in our village have recently married. Mr. Alan Smith, B.Sc. (Eng.), married Miss Pauline Sprackling, B.A., at Tewkesbury Abbey. Both were members of the Leatherhead Parish Church Bellringers and a party travelled to Tewkesbury to ring the Abbey bells. Miss Heather Grainger married Mr. Oliver R. Knightly. She made her own wedding dress, and iced her own cake. She is a former student of the Epsom School of Art. Dr. Keith Markwick married Miss Anne Gibson of St. Mary Cray. The couple met at Kings College where they both trained, he as a doctor and she as a nurse.

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Youth Tennis Club. Miss B. Kay, 13 Nutcroft Grove, Fetcham.

The 1st Bookham Scout Group. Supporters' Association Secretary: Mr. L. King, 6 Allen Road. Bookham 3631.

The Bookham Bowling Club. Secretary: J. H. Saunders, 22 Groveside. Bookham 2827.

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Old Time Dance Club. J. W. Hilder, 247 Lower Rd.

Over Twenties. Mrs. B. Templeman, 33 Merrylands Road. 2921.

Over Sixties. Miss I. Freeman, 28 Merrylands Rd.

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