



PRESIDENT: Lionel Green

VICE PRESIDENTS: Viscountess Hanworth, Eric Montague and William Rudd

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CHAIR: Dr Tony Scott

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Littler's Cottages, Phipps Bridge Road, by S Rowles 1901 (see page 10)

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PROGRAMME JUNE–SEPTEMBER

Thursday 17 June 11am

Guided visit to some Wren churches

Tony Tucker who gave us an excellent talk in January on Wren and his City churches, will lead this visit to some of the City's most interesting churches. £6 per head.

This visit is fully booked.

Saturday 19 July 2pm

Guided visit to Lord's Cricket Ground

£12 (£7 concessions) per head.

Wednesday 11 August 2 for 2.30pm

Guided tour of Brompton Cemetery

£5 per head.

Thursday 16 September 11am

Guided visit to Foundling Museum

£6 per head.



‘THE HISTORY OF TOOTING’

About 60 members and visitors came to this talk on 13 February given by Rex Osborn, chair of Tooting Local History Group, at a venue new to the Society – the hall of Christchurch, in Colliers Wood. Rex is a ward councillor in Tooting, and a tour guide, with a background in international history. The talk focused on four aspects of Tooting's history: the significance of the location in the Roman and pre-Norman era; the old Saxon church; the manorial history and Salvador House; and the sad story of Surrey House, the ‘pauper's academy’.

The main road (A24) through Tooting follows the line of the Roman Stane Street, which took this course as it had to pass through two hills midway between what is now Tooting Broadway and Tooting Bec. There are several theories as to the origin of the name ‘Tooting’, but results of a joint research project by the Universities of London and Nottingham point to the Old English *tote* (a look-out), and *ingas* (people of). The district on the top of the eastern hill, Totterdown, takes its name from *tote* and *dun* (a hill). During the wars between the English and the Danes in the early 10th century Edward the Elder had roads built at right angles to Stane Street, to intercept the Danish armies, who used these old Roman roads. One of these new roads was on the route of what is now Garratt Lane and Mitcham Road, at Tooting Broadway. A road could not cross Stane Street further north, where it went through a pass, nor further south, where the land was marshy, near the Rivers Graveney and Wandle respectively. A village – Tooting – grew up at the road crossing.

There was a 1000-year-old Saxon church in Tooting that was replaced in 1834 by the present, much larger, St Nicholas church. The old church had a round tower, the last one in Surrey. Rex Osborn noted that round towers were cheaper to build than square ones in Saxon times, and they were not unusual on churches, particularly in East Anglia. He did not accept the theory that the tower could have been built by the Romans for military purposes long before a church was established alongside. There is still uncertainty about the exact site of the old church. In the 1820s a church school was erected close to the church, on the site of an old moat. The building started to fall down in the 1840s, so the rubble from the demolished old church was stuffed into the foundations; it is now a Shiite mosque.

The first lords of the manor in Tooting were in the Norman era, from the de Gravenell family (whence the Graveney district and river take their name). Their manor house is believed to have been close to the church. By the 18th century the manorial lands were south-east of Tooting Broadway, when they were acquired by a merchant prince, Joseph Salvador, who built Salvador House in 1744. One of his sons, Francis, was a hero of the American Revolution, and the politics of the time caused Joseph to sell his home in 1783. The house then became a school for young gentlemen. The estate was sold between 1827 and 1844, and the building (then known as Eldon House) was demolished c.1900. Rex Osborn and the Tooting History Group had investigated fragments of old walls still standing alongside, or incorporated into, industrial premises and backyards, and studied traces of foundations in car-parks, to determine the exact location of Salvador House, which was just

behind where the Granada is today. The Granada replaced a row of 19th-century cottages built on the estate. Investigations also suggested that the alley-way from Mitcham Road to the *Tramshed* pub was the location of the grand entrance to the manorial estate.

Another large house in Tooting was Surrey Hall, on the west side of Tooting High Street, just north of the present junction with Garratt Lane. This was the location of a 19th-century tragedy and scandal, publicised by Charles Dickens. Surrey Hall was acquired in 1825 by the family of Bartholomew Peter Drouet, who set up the Infant Pauper Asylum, an 'Establishment for Pauper Children of the Metropolitan Parishes' (nicknamed the 'pauper's academy'). At first 600 children from ages four to 14 were crammed in. Meals were eaten standing up; there were no toilets – all used the backyard; and there were open sewers along the boundaries.



Surrey Hall, Tooting – Drouet's 'Pauper's Academy'

By 1848 numbers had grown to 1700, and a shirt factory had been added to the rudimentary teaching and accommodation facilities. At the end of December 1848 there was one case of cholera, and two to three weeks later 250 children had died in an epidemic, and the premises had to be evacuated. A proper medical investigation revealed that before the epidemic children had been covered with sores, and were malnourished, and standards of hygiene were appalling. The site was shut down and cleared by 1850. Drouet went on trial but was acquitted. Charles Dickens, who had published *Oliver Twist* ten years earlier, denounced Drouet in *The Examiner* as a 'baby farmer', and his asylum as 'a disgrace to a Christian community'. Because of the publicity and hounding by the press Drouet abandoned plans to open another infant pauper asylum in premises he had bought in Streatham.

This was an interesting and entertaining talk. Rex Osborn was a good speaker, not using notes, and was supported by a digital presentation to a high standard operated by his daughter.

David Roe

'THE ST HELIER ESTATE: A HOME IN THE COUNTRY'

St Theresa's church hall was packed on Saturday 13 March for this presentation by Margaret Thomas, librarian at the Borough of Sutton's new The Circle Library in Middleton Road, which was due to open the following Friday. Margaret had been instrumental in securing a £40,000 lottery grant to fund a Memory Bank Project to record oral histories from residents past and present, and much of what she shared with us was based on these recordings, combined with photographs and other items in the archives.

She started by reminding us that the estate really was built 'in the country'. The library itself stands on what was Batts Farm in Carshalton. (The Batt/Batts family also held properties in Morden, Merton and Mitcham from the late 17th to the early 19th centuries. In 1828 Batts Farm was one of the many properties owned by Henry Hoare of Mitcham Grove.) By the 1860s it was held by the Pimm family, who continued to farm there until the early 20th century. They specialised in poultry farming, but later diversified into other areas of employment to supplement their incomes as farming declined.

Hoare had also owned the adjoining Hill House Farm in Carshalton, named on the earliest Ordnance Survey 2-inch maps as 'Pig Farm'. The farmhouse has long gone, but the adjoining Victorian house called Hill House, built in the 1840s or 1850s, still stands in Bishopsford Road. According to the 1911 census, 11 workers, described as 'threshing machine minders', were living in the barn. All were middle-aged, but only one was married. One had been born in Carshalton, six in Croydon, one in Sanderstead, and the others outside Surrey.

Until destroyed by fire a few years ago, Bishopsford House, built in the 1860s, still stood in Poulter Park. Sales particulars of 1909 describe it as having four handsome reception rooms, two staircases leading to 12 bedrooms and (the height of luxury!) two bathrooms. It stood in 35 acres of gardens, woodland and a small farmery.

Across the parish boundary in Morden was The Lodge, another property owned by the Hoare family, who in the 1850s also purchased the adjoining Ravensbury farmlands.

By the early years of the 20th century these farms and estates were struggling to remain profitable, and it was probably with some relief that the owners found a ready buyer in the London County Council.

After the First World War there was a growing demand for better housing to relieve the appalling overcrowding in London by building 'Homes for Heroes'. The St Helier estate – named after Lady St Helier, a London alderman who died as it was being built – was one of three large estates built on the outskirts of London, to provide good homes for the poorest Londoners, the others being Becontree and Downham.

Building took place from 1929 to 1934. The contractors were C J Wills, who had their own football team in the Sunday Seniors League. They installed a site railway to move building materials around, and after it was removed, some gardens were extended over its former route.

The houses were well-planned for the period, and seemed luxurious to the new residents, many of whom were used to sharing facilities. Although some houses, especially on the Morden side, had bathrooms from the beginning, many started with a bath in the kitchen covered with a board that doubled as a kitchen table; separate bathrooms were not added until the 1970s. Cold water was on tap, but hot water was provided by a wood- or coal-fired copper, though geysers were fitted later. For many, cooking was done in a range in the living room, though kitchen cookers were later installed. There was only one electric socket per house, and electric fires and irons could be hired from the Council at a penny a week.

The new residents were conscious of 'moving up a notch' socially, and happily accepted various restrictions enforced to 'keep things nice'. Thus there were railings around the greens to stop children playing on them. Hedges were kept at a regulation height, though this was because they were all cut by the Council.

At first there were few local amenities. There were no local shops at first, though bread and milk were delivered – by horse and cart. Many residents grew their own vegetables in their small gardens. The hospital was not built until 1938. This was pre-National Health, and each family had to pay 6d a week to be on a doctor's books.

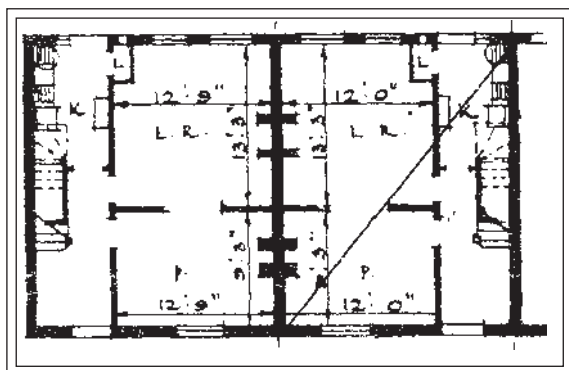
Community spirit developed slowly, the new occupants being somewhat self-conscious at first. But churches and other organisations soon formed clubs and societies and organised outings. The Gaumont cinema was built, and other forms of entertainment developed. Cycling was especially popular.

Then came the War. Fortunately mortality from bombing was not great, due to the spaced-out nature of the estate, most bombs falling in gardens and open spaces. School log books record constant disruption from air-raid warnings, pupils spending long periods in the school shelters, even taking exams in them! The hospital was hit, in spite of its coat of whitewash.

After the War there was a proliferation of clubs for football, cricket and other activities. Coach outings remained popular, as summer holidays by the sea were still a novelty for many. In 1977 many roads organised street parties to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee, the many greens being ideal for this purpose.

Margaret concluded by saying that the library will be putting on a number of exhibitions over the coming months, focusing on various aspects of the history of the estate. She is also planning an historical section on the library's website.

Merton Historical Society is about to publish the memoirs of a boy who grew up on the Morden part of the estate in the 1930s and 1940s. *Memories of a Morden Lad: 1932–1957* by Ronald Read will be the thirtieth of our *Local History Notes*, and should be ready by the summer. Mr Read recounts his childhood and wartime memories of growing up on the estate, and then takes us to post-war Europe following his call-up to the army



ground floor plan of Mr Read's house (on the right), reproduced by courtesy of Merton Library & Heritage Service

in 1945. His returned to civilian life in Morden in 1948 was interrupted by 18 months spent in sanatoria in Waddon, Southbourne and Cheam, after he was diagnosed with TB in 1952. Mr Read expresses himself bluntly, and some readers might be offended by his language, but his account is a valuable, and fascinating, record of his life and experiences at home in Morden and further away. At 72 pages, this will be our most substantial *Note*, and will sell at £5 (£4 to members) plus 85p postage. Available at lectures.

Peter Hopkins

‘LITERARY WIMBLEDON’

The audience at St Mary’s church hall, Merton Park, on 10 April were treated to an entertaining afternoon by four members of the Wimbledon Society – Michael Norman-Smith, Monica Ellison, Janet Koss and Sheila Dunman. Technical back-up (sound and vision) was efficiently provided by Asif Malik.

A virtual walk, for which we were given a helpful map, was the framework for this account of an assortment of literary (in the broadest sense) figures associated with Wimbledon. The numbers are legion, and there was not time to include, for instance, Emile Zola, who enjoyed Wimbledon’s shops in 1898, or Nigel Williams, whose *They Came From SW19* and *The Wimbledon Poisoner* have proved popular more recently.

The earliest literary figure we met was **Robert Knox** (1641-1720), who knew Wimbledon in his childhood and returned there in 1703 (he owned land near the Wandle). In between he had spent 20 years as a prisoner in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). His *Historical Relation of the Island of Ceylon ...* was a bestseller in 1681, and he also wrote an autobiography.

Dr Arthur Malan took over as headmaster at the school at Wimbledon’s Eagle House in 1874. An all-round talented man and gifted teacher, he found time to write stories and serials for *The Boys’ Own Paper*.

Another occupant of Eagle House (from 1887 to 1924), but as owner and restorer, was architect **Sir Thomas Graham Jackson** (1835-1924), who designed many buildings at Oxford, helped rescue Winchester cathedral from collapse, and travelled extensively in the Mediterranean. He published his very readable *Recollections*, as well as his rather tame (M R James he wasn’t!) *Six Ghost Stories*, one of which is set in Eagle House.

William Thomas Stead (1849-1912) lived at Cambridge House, on the site of today’s Welford Place. He edited the *Pall Mall Gazette* from 1883 to 1888. Best known for his article ‘Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon’ (1885), which led to Parliament’s raising the age of consent to 16, he was later derided for his support of spiritualism, and he died on the *Titanic*.

Ethel Mannin (1900-1984), born in Clapham, left school at 15 and became a stenographer, but soon established herself at the centre of the world of ‘modern’ writing. Her sympathies were left-wing and feminist, and she published about 100 books, fiction and non-fiction. Her autobiographical *Confessions and Impressions* came out in 1930. She lived for more than 40 years at Oak Cottage in Burleigh Road, before moving to Devon.



Ethel Mannin in 1930

Poet, essayist and editor James Henry **Leigh Hunt** (1784-1859), when a schoolboy, spent a summer at Spring House in Merton and visited Wimbledon. As an adult he occasionally patronised the *Rose & Crown*, as did later the poet **Algernon Charles Swinburne** (1837-1909), who spent the last 30 years of his life in retirement at the foot of Putney Hill.

The Hermitage in Common West Side was the home towards the end of her life of novelist **Margaret Oliphant** (1828-1897). Widowed early, she wrote prolifically in her struggles to support her children and other family members. Of her nearly 100 novels the best-known today are the *Chronicles of Carlingford* series.

Sir Thomas Henry **Hall Caine** (1853-1931) lived for a while in a house at Crooked Billet. He wrote popular novels, such as *The Manxman*, moved in celebrity circles, and took on the role of secretary and companion to D G Rossetti in the latter’s decline.

In Dunstall Road nearby, at least at weekends in the 1930s and 1840s, was **Marie Adelaide Belloc Lowndes** (1868-1947), a sister of Hilaire Belloc. She published a number of novels, often based on real incidents, with *The Lodger* (1912) being inspired by Jack The Ripper.

Pretty Gothic Lodge in Woodhayes Road was the home for a while of **Lady Anne Barnard** (née Lindsay) (1750-1825), who wrote the ballad *Auld Robin Gray*. However she is best known for her diaries and letters written in South Africa where her husband served as colonial secretary.

Captain Frederick Marryat (1792-1848) leased Gothic Lodge from 1820 to 1827. It was close to his parents at Wimbledon House and was a pleasant place for his large family while he was at sea. We know him today for *Masterman Ready* and *The Children of The New Forest*.

Axel Munthe (1857-1949), author of the international best-seller *The Story of San Michele* (1929), was at Southside House, with his second wife, whose family owned the house. He was a Swedish psychiatrist who became a naturalised Briton.

The Firs, now gone, off Copse Hill, was the home of **Thomas Hughes** (1822-1896), who wrote *Tom Brown's Schooldays* here (1857). Hughes was a barrister, Liberal MP, Christian Socialist, and supporter of Working Men's Education and the Co-operative movement. At The Firs he and his friend John Ludlow, with their families, tried the experiment of communal living, but the household broke up soon after 11-year-old Maurice Hughes, for whom the bestseller was written, died.

Anne Thackeray Ritchie (1837-1919), elder daughter of W M Thackeray, lived at End House, Berkeley Place. She married a much younger cousin, while her sister Minny married Leslie Stephen. Anne was a notable literary hostess, her circle including the Tennysons, Brownings and Carlyles, and she published several novels herself, including *Old Kensington* (1873), *Mrs Dymond* (1885) and *The Village On The Cliff*. Her writing influenced that of Virginia Woolf, a daughter of Stephen by his second marriage.

The birthplace of **Robert Graves** (1895-1985), novelist and poet, at 1, Lauriston Road is marked by an English Heritage plaque. After unhappy spells at Rokeby and King's College School he went away to Charterhouse (also not a success). His first poetry was published while he served with the Welch Fusiliers in the First World War, and his autobiographical *Goodbye To All That*, which caused a sensation, came out in 1929. He is best known now for some of his poetry and for the *Claudius* books.

Popular novelist **Georgette Heyer** (1902-1974) was born in Woodside, the daughter of George Heyer, a French master at King's. She attended The Study in Wimbledon before finishing her education in France and in London. A precocious talent, her first book, *The Black Moth*, was published when she was 17, and she went on to write nearly 60 novels, mostly historical romances, but including some contemporary detective stories. She took Jane Austen for her model and her historical research was meticulous.

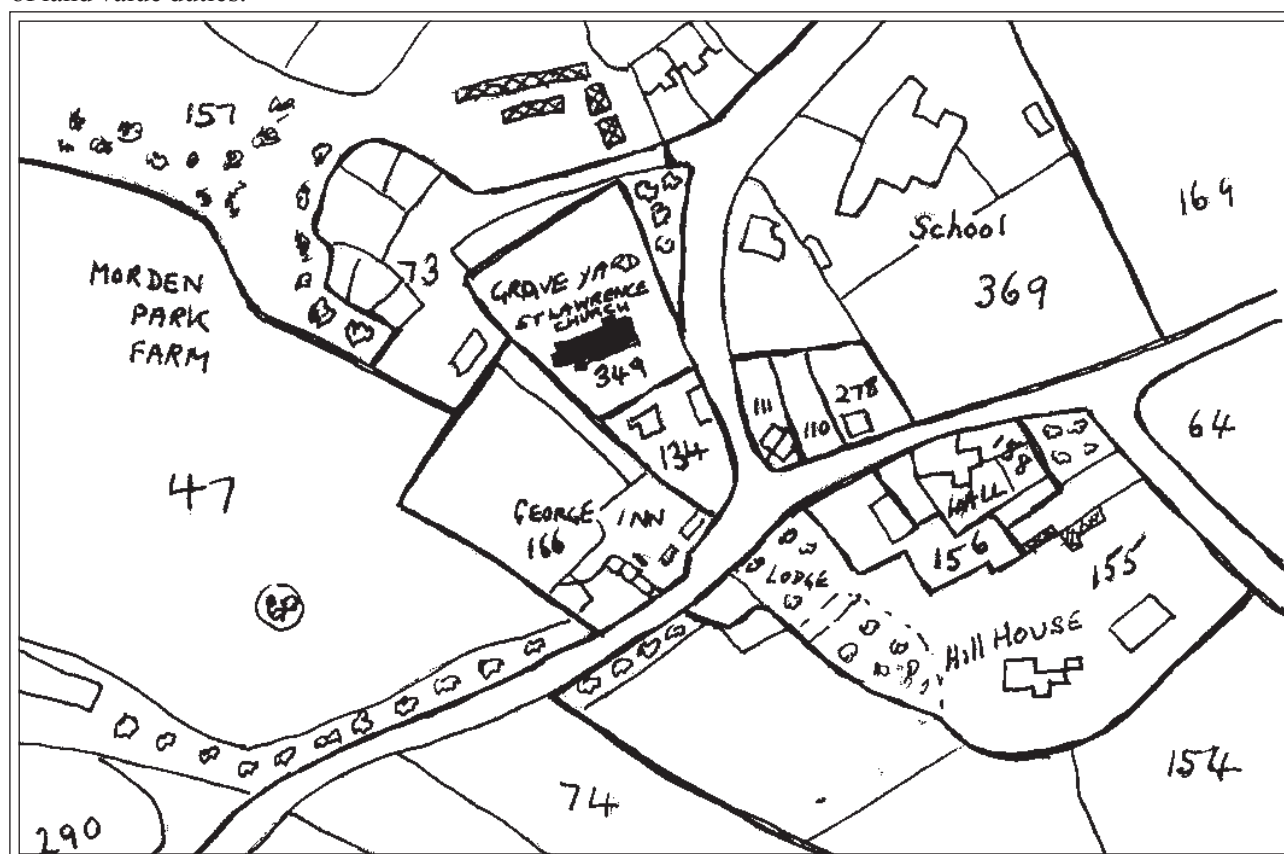
The presenters of this collection of literary figures had studied their subjects well, and put over their material in a lively way. Their audience were both amused and instructed, and I, for one, intend to track down some of Ethel Mannin's works...

Judith Goodman

ROSEMARY TURNER is exploring

THE 1910 VALUATION RECORDS FOR MORDEN

The Valuation Office originated in 1909, as a branch of the Estate Duty Office. In 1910 it undertook a general valuation of land in Great Britain. Its purpose was to assess the value of property to assist with the collection of land value duties.



Area around St Lawrence Church, Morden, from 1910 valuation map

At first sight the records would seem to be too modern for local historians, but Morden at the time was still mostly agricultural, and its buildings often of a great age. The Valuation includes very detailed information about the fabric of the buildings, and the sizes and functions of their rooms. Its closeness in date to the 1911 census enables us to obtain an insight into how many people were living in the buildings at that time.

The Valuation was divided into regions. London is IR121, and includes Morden. This reference is to the Ordnance Survey maps, which have plot numbers marked on them. They are mostly 1886-1912 25-inch OS maps, except for more remote areas. The maps and field books are at The National Archives, Kew. Unfortunately all but one of the maps referring to Morden IR121/1/110, equivalent to XIII.7, have gone missing.

The field books also have an IR prefix, and their full reference is found in a set of books which lists places alphabetically by civil parish, within each registration district. The field books contain entries which correspond with the numbers on the maps. For Morden there are 500 entries. The amount of detail in each valuation varies, and some entries are linked to plans within other valuations. They all include a description of the plot and its situation, acreage where appropriate, occupier and owner, whether it is freehold or rented, and the term of the tenancy.

There then follow details of the residential and working buildings, and also land usage. There are sometimes extra notes, where relevant, and finally a breakdown of the value of the property. Some entries have a detailed plan.

The valuations could be disputed, and notes about the outcome are written in red on the pages.

The numbers are not sequential, and do not seem to relate to landownership or usage of the property. I have included a section of the OS map covering the land around St Lawrence church. This shows the range of numbers within an area. Nos 110 and 111 are 1 and 2 Church Cottages and are described together at 110:



*Nos. 1 & 2 Church Cottages, London Road, Morden – May 1962
Reproduced by courtesy of W J Rudd*

Semi-detached cottages: 110 occupied by Mrs W Stockbridge. On the 1st floor 2 beds and on the ground floor, sitting room, kitchen, scullery, WC and front and back gardens. It was built of yeo [*sic*] stocks, with tiled roof, and a back addition built of timber, roughcast and pantiled. No.111 was unoccupied.

Both properties were owned by G Hatfeild.

The 1911 census lists Church Cottages, London Road; head of household was Rachel Stockbridge, a widow aged 63 born at Woodcote. Also in the house were James Mansfield, her son-in-law, who was a bricklayer on the railway; his wife Lily; Mildred Stockbridge, another daughter; and Harold Stockbridge her grandson. In the 1901 census her husband was named as William Stockbridge, builder.

No.158 is the parish hall and schoolhouse:

School House, Central Road, described as cottage and garden, buildings used for parochial purposes; occupant Alex McLean; owner school trustees per the Rector George Preston Kelsall Winlaw. Occupier: tenancy weekly 7/6.

Description cottage: built of stocks and tiled roof. 1st floor: 3 beds, one of which is small. Ground floor: 2 sitting rooms, kitchen, outside coals, wc, small garden.

Parish Hall: built of brick, part old building & part cement-faced & tile roof, comprising large hall, side hall divided by rolling shutters & classroom; 2 cloakrooms, lavatory and stoke hole.

Caretaker's apartment above comprising 2 attics, living room, scullery, wc, yard and plot of vacant building land. There is an added note: 'rifle range erected Jan 1914'.

Total value of property £1410.

I could not find this entry in the 1911 census, but in 1901 Alex McLean is living at Hill House Lodge.

It always amazes me when looking at the census entries that people with large families possibly living in one room often find space for a lodger. It conjures up scenes from medieval times when people slept on the floor of the hall or kitchen. In the case of some houses in the census one room served as kitchen, hall and bedroom.

I found these records extremely interesting, and well worth a second look.

LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOPS

Friday 5 March Seven present – David Haunton in the chair

- ◆ **Madeline Healey** showed us photographs of bygone days of the Phipps Bridge area and Garth Road. They came from her family album, and showed landscapes long since gone.
- ◆ **Judith Goodman** had copies of old newspaper cuttings relating to Merton. They had been sent to her by David Saxby. Messrs Skinner & Dyke were advertising Merton Place for sale in December 1800. (Emma Hamilton purchased it on behalf of Nelson in 1801.) There were two adverts for salvaged building material from Merton Place, which confirmed that it had been pulled down by 1817. The last time the house had been offered for sale seemed to have been in 1815. Another cutting, from 1767, announced the expiry of the leases of a number of houses and works at Merton Abbey. There was also a poem from 1811 about Merton Abbey.
- ◆ **Rosemary Turner** recounted the trials and tribulations of her attempts to research the 1910 Valuation Records for Morden.

She has been invited to attend the opening of Middleton Library. They will have a small exhibition relating the agriculture of the St Helier Estate. A larger exhibition is to come.

A building covered in ivy in one of Madeline's photos reminded Rosemary of a house on the St Helier Estate when she was growing up. It was empty and covered with ivy, with holes in the brickwork and woodwork. When some scouts knocked at their door in Bob-a-Job Week her father said he had a bit of gardening for them. They took one look and could not get away quick enough.

- ◆ **Peter Hopkins**'s ten-year project translating Morden medieval documents is nearing completion, although he says there is still more information to find. Barbara Harvey, the Westminster Abbey historian, is preparing transcripts of States of the Manor accounts for the British Academy. She is going to let us have copies of the Morden sections.

He has permission from the Abbey, the British Library, and other archives, to publish images of the documents on our website alongside the translations, but he is still waiting for permission from TNA. Simon Neil is using the UV light at TNA to reveal writing too faint to read on the document mentioned in the last workshop report. Peter had produced a detailed booklet to accompany the CD-ROM of his translations. He passed copies to members for comment.

Irene Bain has sent Peter her memoir of working at Tower Creameries of Mitcham.

The second instalment of Simon's translation of the priory's foundation document starts by saying that St Mary's church was knocked down by its founder, Gilbert, soon after the priory moved to the Wandle site. A rumour that the north door of the present church has been dendro-dated to 1130 has not been substantiated.

- ◆ **Bill Rudd** began by suggesting that the Romans known to have been in Morden were probably workers on the Roman road (Stane Street).

He had photographs from an exhibition he had once put together for Morden Park Library. They were of Morden buildings mostly long gone.

- ◆ **Keith Penny** had been continuing his research into 'where people came from'. From the St Olave's baptism register he had recorded the fathers' occupations. There were a large number of clerks. He had also looked in the voters' register for unusual forenames and surnames, to check against the GRO birth indexes, to see where they were born. The vast majority came from the LCC, i.e. Southwark, Wandsworth and Lambeth. The age profile was mostly young marrieds. There were only 20 marriages at St Olave's in 1931/2.

Keith has a book which belonged to his father, called *London Transport in Wartime*, which includes an eye-witness account of the Balham Underground station bombing that Dave Haunton had written about [*Bulletin* 173].

- ◆ **Dave Haunton** has been continuing his research into World War II at TNA. He had found references to the difficulties encountered when recruiting Mitcham people into the Civil Defence Units. There was a detailed report from 1939 which found the CDU very unsatisfactory, and a later one with high praise. Both articles were extremely non-politically correct, showing how much things had changed over the years. Dave was asked to write an article about his findings.

In a folder marked Supplementary Blitz Papers Dave found only one air raid incident report. It related to the bombing of the Tower Creameries, which was destroyed. The air raid lasted from 10pm to 5am, and 3000 people were evacuated from their homes.

Rosemary said the husband of one of her church members was injured in the raid.

Rosemary Turner

Friday 16 April 2010 Four present – Rosemary Turner in the chair

- ◆ **Dave Haunton** had brought along his catalogue from the Schoolboy's Own Exhibition held at the Horticultural Halls, Westminster, for a fortnight from 31 December 1955. Lines Bros of Merton, makers of Tri-Ang toys, displayed the largest exhibit – a pond on which scale-model ocean liners and other vessels were operated by remote control.

He then showed us a mysterious unlabelled photograph, from his family collection, of St James's Street looking north towards Piccadilly. Apparently Edwardian in date, it showed sober crowds dispersing perhaps after a procession or cortege, and we made some guesses as to the occasion. Any ideas?

- ◆ Radio 4's *Film Programme* broadcast on Good Friday had attracted **Judith Goodman**'s attention, and she had brought along a recording. It had looked at some of the smaller film studios of the past, and the first ten minutes were devoted to Merton Park Film Studios. Michael Winner was amusing about the parsimonious and surly producer Jack Greenwood who ruled the place. Other speakers, including a woman who worked as an editor there 50 years ago, also recalled the cramped conditions. The workshops and stages have long gone, but Long Lodge (269 Kingston Road), which housed the office, is still there, and is now occupied by an insurance firm. One not bad feature film was made there – *The Criminal* (1960), starring Stanley Baker (as The Criminal) and Jill Bennett (as The Blonde) – in which Greenwood made sure his name was right next to that of the rather better-known Joseph Losey on the credits. But most of the work was in commercial or training films. Apart, that is, from the popular *Scotland Yard* and *Edgar Lustgarten* 'second features'. The police in these series were only ever seen to use the same two Wolseleys (one of Greenwood's little economies); their number plates were VON and UML, and aficionados watched out for these familiar vehicles every single time.
- ◆ There was some discussion about the Willows School site, where Barratts are building and want to install a 'time capsule'. **Peter Hopkins** pointed out that only the roadside frontage of the school site was part of the former Ducketts Farm, where Joseph Bazalgette had his house, later known as The Willows.


With reference to the early history of Merton church, Peter reported Lionel Green's suggestion that the building knocked down by Gilbert may have been only a wooden one. Gilbert's motive in destroying it might have been to make the estate, a royal gift, less desirable to the king. The church must have been soon rebuilt (in stone).

- ◆ **Rosemary Turner** had brought along some photographs of work being done on the Wimbledon windmill in 1959 and 1960, by Charles Hugh Hill and his son Ronald Charles Hill, who were CH Hill Builders, Decorators and Plumbers of 26 West Place, Wimbledon. It has to be said, there was little evidence in the pictures of health and safety concerns 50 years ago! It was agreed that the collection, donated by the family, should be passed to the Wimbledon Society Museum, or the Windmill Museum, so that they could be displayed.

She reported that the Committee had offered to pay for photocopies of the Morden 1910 Valuation records [see pages 6-7].

Judith Goodman

Next Workshops: Fridays 4 June and 23 July at 2.30 at Wandle Industrial Museum. All are welcome.



Tri-ang RADIO CONTROL IN ACTION...
RADIO CONTROLLED TOYS OF THE FUTURE...

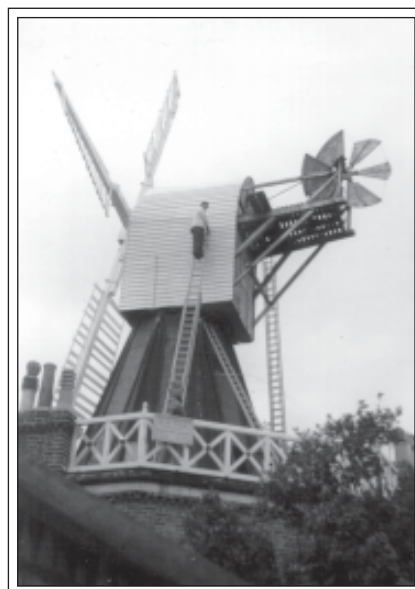
Explore this new world of electronic marvels. See scaled ocean liners in a full sized pond, operated by remote control—as simple in operation as your home radio. See the world's first ready-to-sail radio controlled ship. Watch her sailing, turning to port or starboard or going astern—at any speed.

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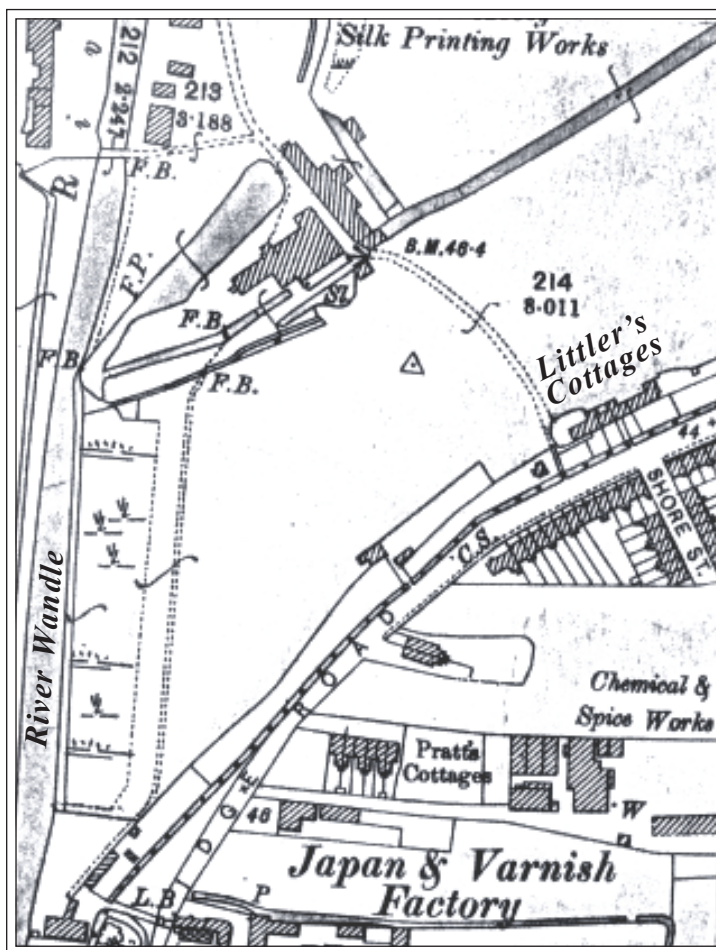
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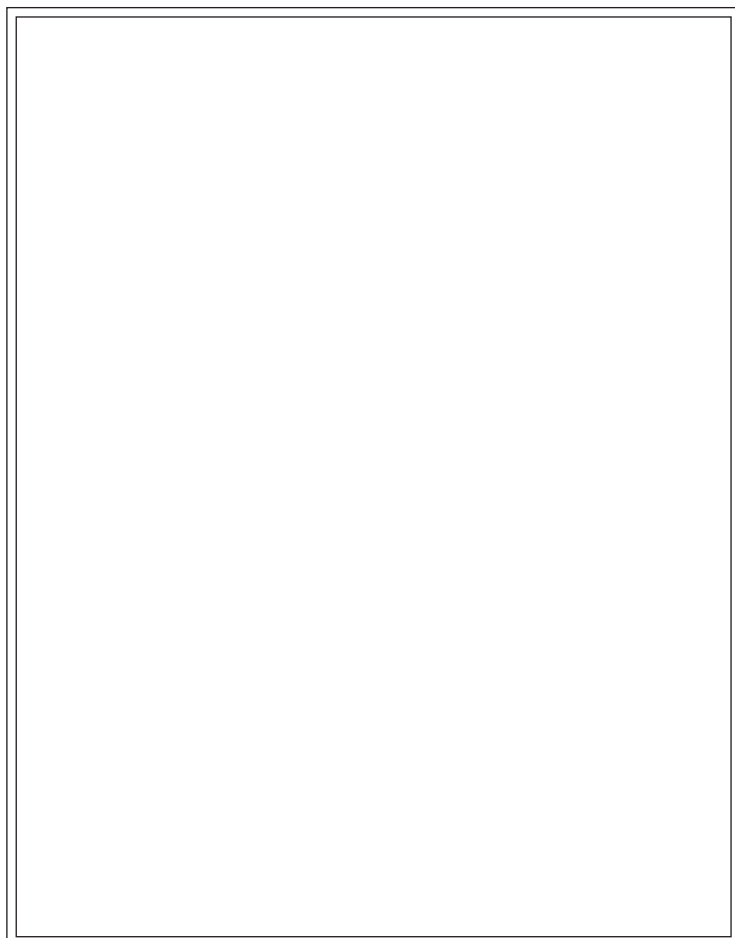
LITTLER'S COTTAGES

Recently we were interested to receive emails from Deborah Cuttriss Sherman, who lives in Canada. She tells us that her grandmother, Gwendolyn Gladys West, grew up in Littler's Cottages in Phipps Bridge Road, Merton Abbey. Gwendolyn, we are told, was a nurse at the London Police Institute (not traced), but in 1901 emigrated to Hamilton, Ontario, where she married and settled. Deborah has a pen-and-ink drawing of two of the row of cottages [see page 1], of which the one with the open door is presumed to be Gwendolyn's home. The drawing is signed and dated 'S Rowles 6.11.1901' and may well have been a farewell gift to Gwendolyn. Stan Rowles was her cousin, and something of an artist. Deborah also has a number of Edwardian postcards of the Phipps Bridge area that have come down to her from her grandmother.

This row of weatherboard cottages was owned and rented out by Edmund Littler, silk printer at the site that was taken over by Liberty's in 1904. In the foreground is a small footbridge over the ditch that ran in front of the cottages (clearly visible apparently in the original picture, which is slightly too large to scan completely). The circular feature is possibly a hedge. The



extracts from 25-inch to 1-mile OS maps of 1898 (above) and 1933 (left)



sign, up on end, that reads 'Batey's' suggests that the cottage may have housed a small shop. Batey's was a popular brand of lemonade.

Unfortunately no one by the name of West appears here in the 1901 census. Nor have I found the name in the directories of the time.

The cottages, perhaps early 19th-century in date and unlikely to have had running water, gas, electricity, or modern drainage (or damp courses!), survived a long time. They are still shown on the 25-inch OS map for 1931, but have gone by the time of the 1933 revision. Merton Heritage and Local Studies Centre has a postcard view of the cottages, which was used on page 40 of Eric Montague's *Colliers Wood or Merton Singlegate*, and on page 22 of *Beating the Bounds*, both published by this Society. The stretch of Phipps Bridge Road on which they stood is now Liberty Avenue.

Judith Goodman

DAVID HAUNTON concludes his survey

V-1s ON MITCHAM PART 2: THE DETAILS

This article aims to record all the V-1s known to have fallen on Mitcham in 1944/1945. In what follows, [X] refers to V-1 no.X in the accompanying list.

Sources

The basic information is taken from files in The National Archives (TNA) (HO 198/79 – HO 198/94) which contain the original forms completed by the reporting RAF technical officers, usually accompanied by a small sketch map. Occasionally only the sketch map survives, but these indicators have been cross-checked in the summaries held in other TNA files (HO 198/161 – HO 198/172).¹ The Borough of Mitcham Incident Map, compiled after the war and now held at Merton Heritage & Local Studies Centre, plots all the high explosive (HE) bombs and V-1s ('Fly Bombs') which fell on the area. It wrongly classifies [10] as an HE bomb, but correctly plots [7] as HE, not as V-1. It also includes a further three 'V-1' plots which are not supported by any evidence at TNA, and are thus probably mis-classified HE bombs.²

The numbers of deaths have been compiled from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's List of Civilian War Dead for Surrey, where they are recorded by name, address and date and place of death and/or fatal injury.

In the accompanying list, K = number of people killed, DH = Direct Hit, 'Front' or 'Rear' = Front or rear of the premises, N,E,S,W = Compass directions, and 'Nearest Feature' is a more or less permanent feature of the landscape from which a measurement was taken – usually a road junction. Damage to dwellings was recorded in categories: A = completely demolished, B = not repairable, may need attention to make safe, C = repairable, but possibly not inhabitable at present.

The Effects

The V-1 inflicted damage and destruction by the power of its explosive blast, but did not by itself cause fires. In very general terms, Mitcham buildings were completely destroyed if within 70 feet of the point of impact. They were not repairable up to 100-150 feet away, heavily damaged up to 300-400 feet away and lightly damaged as much as 900 or even 1800 feet from the explosion. There is much variation within these figures. Almost all the houses destroyed or damaged were two-storey terraced dwellings. The phrase 'general blast damage over a wide area' (covering the effects on glass, plaster and roofs) is very common, and in many of the later reports is omitted as understood. Only in two cases are there any comments on the houses: [1] hit 'old cottage terrace houses', while the 24 terrace houses reduced to rubble by [27] were of 'very poor construction'.

By contrast, any damage to factories is usually noted. Thus we have [4] Wandle Valley Sewerage Works in Bygrove Road 'blast damage to brick outbuildings'; [11] RACS milk supply depot in Sandy Lane 'light steel structure buildings mostly affected'; [16] T Palmer & Co, constructional engineers, Church Road, 'main shed 150 x 80 feet demolished, extensive damage to works buildings of steel frames with corrugated iron sides and asbestos roofs'; [31] Southern Cylinder Services³ in Fortescue Road 'on war production, out of commission'; [32] Whitely Products works at Ravensbury Mill 'severe blast damage ... factory out of action for the time being' (Whitely made a wide range of

*The
draughtsman
has mis-spelt
both Belgrave
Road and
Vickers-
Armstrongs
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HO192/509*



★ off map

- ★ V-Is (45)
- ◆ Mapped, but no report (3)

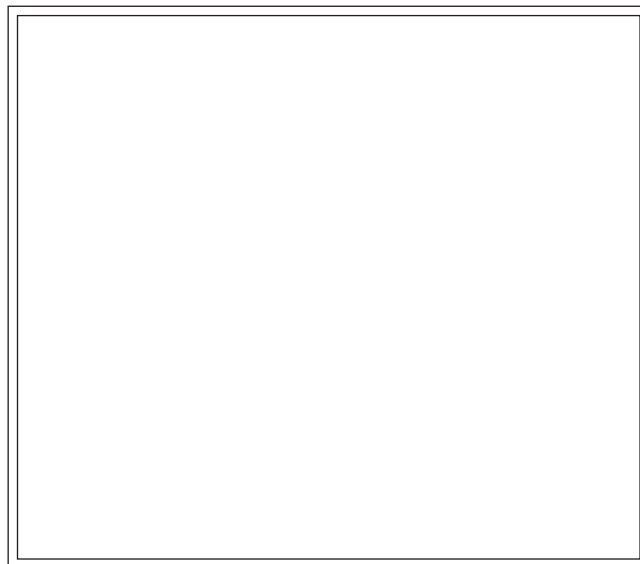
Sites superimposed on a 1930s map issued with The Official Guide to Mitcham by the Homeland Association Ltd, London WC2
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V-1 Flying Bombs reported in Mitcham 1944-45

N	Date	Time	Street or Area		Nearest Feature	K	A	B
1	18 Jun 44	01:17	30 Homewood Road	DH	Belgrave Road	18	20	30
2	" "	04:35	King's College School	Rear	Lavender Avenue	0	-	-
3	19 June	07:35	Mitcham Common		Between Watneys and Croydon Roads	0	-	-
4	22 June	06:20	Wandle Valley Sewerage Works	N sect'n	Byegrove Road	0	-	-
5	" "	07:55	26/28 Rowan Road	Road	Sunnymede Avenue	7	11	10
6	" "	09:10	308 London Road	DH	Elmwood Road	3	5	5
7	23 June	02:03	(Mitcham Common)		(** NOT a V-1 **)	-	-	-
8	" "	08:07	32 Greenwood Road	DH		6	5	4
9	" "	17:05	142 Sherwood Park Road	Front	Hadley Road	7	14	10
10	24 June	??	Mitcham Common		Commonside East, S of Sherwood School	0	-	-
11	25 June	01:55	Sandy Lane	Pavem't	Fernlea Road, E of Mitcham Stadium	0	-	1
12	27 June	18:36	34/36 Oxtoby Way	DH	Hassocks Road	1	4	2
13	29 June	18:25	Sewage Farm		Beddington Lane	0	-	-
14	30 June	04:15	Mitcham Common		Near Croydon Road and Beddington Lane	0	-	-
15	" "	06:56	Wilson Cottage Hospital	Front	Cranmer Road and Caesar's Walk	0	-	-
16	" "	19:55	T.Palmer & Co Church Road	DH	Hazlemere Avenue	0	-	-
17	1 July	09:27	Mitcham Common		Between Croydon and Windmill Roads	0	-	-
18	3 July	02:22	School playground		Vicarage Gardens and Church Road	0	-	2
19	" "	08:02	Rustic Avenue	Rear	Streatham Road	2	2	6
20	" "	15:50	New Close		HT cable pylon	6	-	-
21	" "	19:40	Mitcham Common		Cramer, Willow, Carshalton Roads jctn	0	-	-
22	4 July	15:32	423/5 Commonside East	DH	Castleton Road	1	2	2
23	7 July	13:05	Mitcham Common		Between Carshalton Road and Mitcham Junction Station Approach	0	-	-
24	" "	15:40	Peckham & Sutton railway line		SE of jctn of Park Avenue and Hill Road	0	-	-
25	" "	17:31	Mitcham Common		Near [14]	0	-	-
26	8 July	05:14	Between Vectis and Links Roads		Streatham Road	5	9	6
27	11 July	10:11	80 Fleming Mead	Rear	Taylor Road	3	13	11
28	" "	12:59	Queens Road		Belgrave Road and Bath Road	0	-	9
29	" "	14:46	Pollards Hill Golf Course		100 yds from Galpin Road garden fences	0	-	-
30	12 July	16:26	c.15/17 Glebe Avenue	DH	Lewis Road	1	6	10
31	14 July	09:49	Christchurch Close		E of Christchurch Road	0	1	7
32	" "	15:43	SE of Morden Road		Jctn of Wandle Road and Boxley Road	0	-	-
33	19 July	00:26	Hadfield Paints, Western Road		Mount Road	0	-	-
34	20 July	10:03	Aberdeen Road		Church Road	0	3	4
35	21 July	07:47	HAA battery, Mitcham Common		Mitcham Golf Clubhouse	0	-	-
36	23 July	00:24	60 Lavender Avenue	Rear	Biggin Avenue	0	-	4
37	27 July	21:26	Pollards Hill Golf Course		South of Club House	0	-	-
38	29 July	00:33	Mitcham Common		Near [17]	0	-	-
39	" "	14:20	Mitcham Common		Madeira Road and Commonside West	0	-	-
40	3 Aug	00:59	Eastfield Road	Rear	Garden adjoining football stadium	0	2	8
41	" "	05:00	Ravensbury Cottages	Rear	Ravensbury Grove	1	3	3
42	" "	08:14	Mitcham Common		Railway bridge at Willow Lane	0	-	-
43	5 Aug	16:33	8 Beverley Road	DH	Sherwood Park Road	1	4	1
44	9 Aug	06:46	Tennis Ground Hawkes Road		Victoria Road	0	-	-
45	19 Sept	04:20	Avenue Road	DH	Northborough Road	1	14	10
46	14 Jan 45	01:56	Railway Embankment S of Caesar's Walk		Hatton Gardens	0	-	-

sports and keep-fit goods; their main wartime products were elastic – cords for parachutes, and ropes for the sturdy arrester wires and crash barriers used on aircraft carriers); [33] Hadfield Paints in Western Road ‘blast and fire damage to bridge and steel-framed buildings with laboratories, transport shed, paint storage warehouse and Lissen (sic) type steel huts’. The local papers add that the intense blaze threatened nearby council houses, but the NFS (National Fire Service) prevented the fire from spreading, and had it under control within an hour.

A special investigation was made (TNA file HO 192/509) when [1] damaged the Vickers Armstrongs works on Belgrave Road, as aircraft components formed its entire output. Employing 230 people on night and day shifts, all production was lost for two days, due to the corrugated asbestos roofs having been demolished. There was no other damage to structure or machinery.⁴ There was another investigation (TNA file HO 192/586) when [34] fell near the Bryant Cartons factory in Church Road, opposite Aberdeen Road, which made ‘cardboard packing cartons for MoS and MAP’ (ie. the Ministry of Supply and the Ministry of Aircraft Production). With about 200 employees, ‘there were no casualties to staff, who were in shelters, having received an “Immediate Danger” warning from the roof spotter’ (who must then have moved pretty smartly to reach a shelter in time). The main damage was to the roof, where all the asbestos and much glazing had gone. There was some slight structural damage, but ‘the majority will not require replacement until after the war’, and the machines were not damaged.



*Bryant Cartons factory showing roof damage
Crown copyright The National Archives ref. HO192/586*

Damage or worse to (public) surface shelters and (private) Anderson shelters was always noted. Thus we have the stark litany of [8] ‘surface shelter collapsed’, [9] ‘surface shelter demolished’, [20] ‘Anderson shelter demolished’ (six people were killed), [22] ‘Anderson and surface shelters damaged’ and [26] ‘surface shelter demolished, [all five] occupants killed’, lightened by [19] ‘superficial damage to Anderson shelter’ and [31] ‘surface shelter roof fractured but otherwise intact’. It should be noted that by 1944 Mitcham Borough Council had provided more than 100 public shelters ‘for the use of passers-by’ capable of accommodating 7000 persons (TNA file HO 207/772). It is a tribute to the Council’s careful provision that so few people died in public shelters or on the street.

Notes on some individual V-1s

[1] The number of damaged houses given is the total for categories B and C. Almost all the casualties occurred in five adjacent houses in Homewood Road – nos.24(1), 26(2), 28(7), 30(3) and 32(2).

[2] landed on the sports ground at the rear of the school, causing ‘blast damage only’.

[5] hit a street tree and thus left no crater. Constable J G Dunn, Metropolitan Police, was fatally injured on duty, while directing people to shelters.

[6] Mr Herbert Smee, Air Raid Warden, died while on duty.

[7] is listed here because it was originally reported as a V-1. After technical inspection, the crater on Mitcham Common by Seven Islands Pond was re-classified as caused by an HE bomb, and the TNA record was marked ‘deleted’ from the list of V-1s.

[10] The report is missing, but this V-1 is included in the summary file at TNA. I have estimated its position from the TNA sketch map. The Borough Map erroneously shows it as an HE bomb.

[11] also damaged 4 houses (category C), and ‘wrecked’ the east side of Mitcham Stadium (see [40]).

[12] also damaged 14 blocks, each of four maisonettes, (category C) in Hassocks Road.

[15] landed in the hospital grounds east of the main building, causing blast damage mainly to the roof and windows. Local papers reported that two people were killed, nine seriously injured, and five had minor injuries. They added that the ‘boiler, kitchen and ward blocks were damaged’, but ‘blast walls prevented greater damage’.

[18] caused category B damage to the end of one wing of the school building, and lesser damage to a warden’s post nearby.

[21] The report is missing, but the point of impact is plotted on both the TNA sketch map and the Borough Map.

[24] fell between the down line of the South London, Peckham & Sutton line, displacing both conductor rails, and the Eardley Carriage Sidings (which were not electrified). The lines were re-opened at 17:23 using Time Interval Working, until 18:45 when signalling was restored. There was much damage to rolling stock in the Sidings, and three of the Engineers staff were injured.

[25] on Mitcham Common fell 'north of small lake on map'. This was One Island Pond.

[27] Unusually the report records the numbers of the demolished houses, as 74-84 and '31-43'. Alas, the second range is wrong. Fleming Mead runs in an oval, with the even numbers on the inside and the odd ones on the outside. The missile fell in the rear garden of no.80. Inspection of the re-built houses shows that '31-43' should actually be 28-40.

[28] Unfortunate Queens Road, hit by this V-1, is described as 'open ground due to previous bombing', though a corner shop was heavily damaged. Three serious injuries are noted, together with 'killed: nil'.

[29] is recorded with relief as 'fell in centre of small stream: casualties nil'.

[30] The house numbers are my estimate, as the report mentions only the street name, and the distance from Lewis Road.

[31] caused nine people to be taken to hospital, according to a local paper.

[32] 'detonated on trees', so there was no crater.

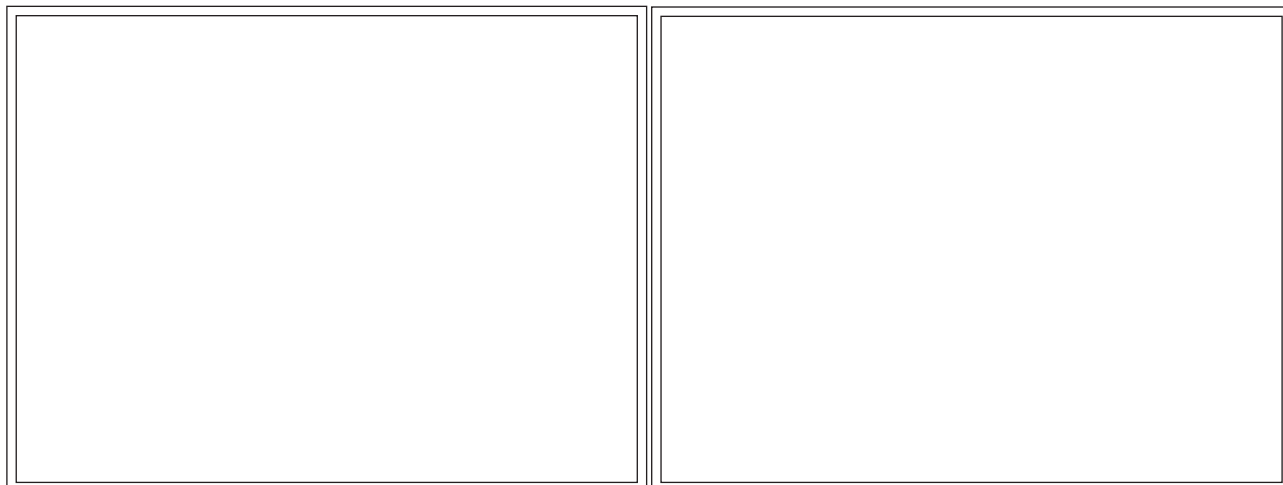
[35] hit the wooden barrack huts of the anti-aircraft battery. These may have been vacant, as the battery, in common with many anti-aircraft units, may have moved to the south coast shortly beforehand.

[36] fell on allotments, according to a local paper, and put an iron foundry out of action.

[40] damaged the west side of Mitcham Stadium (see [11]), as well as the houses.

[42] blocked both lines of the Croydon & Wimbledon railway with debris, cut all communications and damaged Mitcham Junction Station. Both lines were re-opened at 08:55, using Time Interval Working until 10:38, when the phones were restored (so signalmen could arrange schedules and priorities with one another) and full signalling was restored at 16:20.

[45] did so much damage to Avenue Road that special documentation was required: photographs were taken by an American 'Pictorial Unit' (TNA file HO 192/636). The local paper reported that at least three people were taken to hospital, and nine treated for minor injuries at a first-aid post, but at least half the houses were empty, as many residents had been evacuated. However, some evacuees had returned, following Mr Duncan Sandys'⁵ ill-judged announcement on 7 September that 'apart from a last few shots, the Battle for London is over'. He was confident in this announcement because, by that date, the Allied armies in Europe had captured almost all the fixed V-1 launching sites operated by the German Army. Subsequently, however, the German Air Force aimed many V-1s at London, launched from Heinkel He 111 bombers flying over the North Sea. They were operated initially by III *Gruppe* 'Wing' of *Kampfgeschwader* 'Bomber Group' KG3, which was later expanded and re-numbered KG53. This V-1 had been launched from a III/KG3 aircraft on the third such raid.

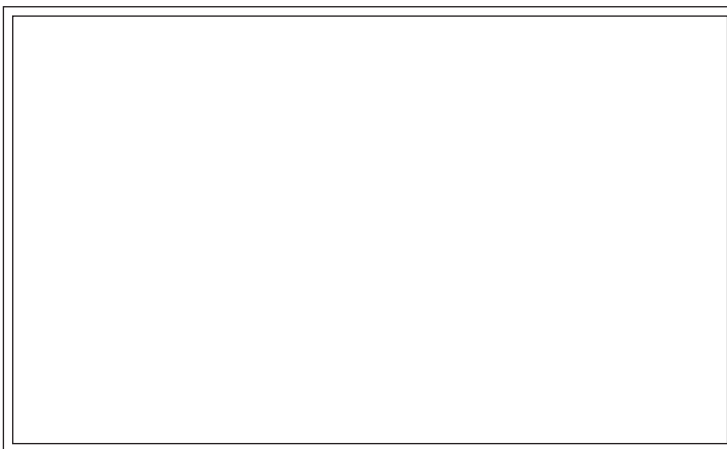


Avenue Road 19 September 1944 Crown copyright The National Archives ref. HO192/636

[46] cut both tracks of the Croydon & Wimbledon railway line and the adjacent telephone wires. Trains operated to either side of the obstruction and were linked by buses. Telecoms were restored at 13:36, and normal working resumed at 16:20. Local papers added that three people were taken to hospital, that repaired roofs were blown off again, and that windows were damaged over a wide area. The Wilson Cottage Hospital suffered (slightly) again. KG53 had air-launched this V-1, on the last such raid.

The Toll

The V-1 barrage is known to have killed 63 people in Mitcham – 18 men, 36 women and nine children. The fathers of three of the children were away, serving in the Army and Navy. The official numbers of people injured by the V-1 campaign were released in early September 1944. In Mitcham, 239 people had been seriously injured (ie. taken to hospital), while 479 had received minor injuries, usually treated at local first-aid posts. The same numbers were being quoted in the local press in late January 1945, and thus took no account of injuries inflicted by [45] and [46].



Test drop of a V-1 from a Heinkel 111 (from Air-launched Doodlebugs)

By early September 13,713 houses had been damaged (or destroyed) and 11,355 had received first-aid repairs to make them minimally habitable (eg. tarpaulins over the roof until tiles could be replaced). 21 builders were under contract to the Corporation, the Ministry of Works had supplied a labour force of 410 men, and the Royal Marines had sent 120 men to help. Presumably [45] and [46] accounted for a further 500 damaged houses.

Finally, we note that, of the 45 Mitcham V-1s, no fewer than 16 (about one-third) fell on open ground – ten on Mitcham Common, two on Pollards Hill Golf Course, two on sewage farms and two on sports grounds – implying that about two-thirds of the Borough was essentially built-up at the time.

- 1 As always, *London Main Line War Damage* by B W L Brooksbank (Capital Transport, 2007) has been invaluable for incidents affecting the railways. I have also used *The Doodlebugs* by Norman Longmate (Hutchinson, 1981) and *Air-Launched Doodlebugs* by Peter J C Smith (Pen and Sword, 2006). It has been possible to glean some additional details from the various local papers (at least three of which covered all or parts of Mitcham) despite the efforts of wartime censors.
- 2 One is plotted on the same spot in Avenue Road as [45], one on the Bank Sports Ground north of Stanford Road, and the third not far from [13] on open ground (? sewage works) on the Borough boundary, midway between Beddington Lane and the railway line to Peckham and Sutton.
- 3 Does anyone know what sort of cylinders ? Hydraulic, car engine, compressed air, other ? There is no connection with the modern firm of the same name in Fareham, Hampshire, who supply and test scuba-diving kit.
- 4 Postwar, the whole area between Phipps Bridge Road and Church Road, south of Haslemere Avenue, has been comprehensively re-developed. Though some street names are preserved – Batsworth Road, Belgrave Walk and Road, Benedict Road, Queens Road – the streets themselves are now in different places or run in different directions from previously.
- 5 As Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Supply, he was Chairman of the Flying Bomb Counter Measures Committee.

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