



PRESIDENT:

VICE PRESIDENTS: Viscountess Hanworth, Eric Montague and William Rudd

BULLETIN NO. 176

CHAIR: Dr Tony Scott

DECEMBER 2010

BILL RUDD'S MORDEN



No. 48 Central Road, photographed by Bill in 1969.

The Morgans were there from at least 1934. The building, rather changed, is now a convenience store.

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PROGRAMME DECEMBER – APRIL

Saturday 4 December 2.30pm **Raynes Park Library Hall**

‘The Princess and the Brewer: Their Duel for Richmond Park’

An illustrated talk by **Max Lankester** from the Friends of Richmond Park.

Saturday 8 January 2.30pm **Raynes Park Library Hall**

‘Spas in Surrey’

An illustrated talk by **Judith Goodman** about a long-vanished feature of life in the historic county of Surrey.

Saturday 12 February 2.30pm **Raynes Park Library Hall**

‘Wimbledon Theatre – Then and Now’

A speaker from New Wimbledon Theatre will give this illustrated talk.

We hope to tour the theatre at a later date.

Thursday 3 March **Restaurant in the Park**

Annual Lunch

See enclosed booking form

Saturday 12 March 2.30pm **Raynes Park Library Hall**

‘Here Yesterday - Gone Tomorrow’

A talk by **David Roe** with photos from the Society’s Photographic Record Project that capture the historical significance and changing nature of Merton, Morden and Mitcham today.

David is the project’s leader.

Saturday 16 April 2.30pm **Raynes Park Library Hall**

‘The Croydon Canal’

A welcome return by **Paul Sowan** of the Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society.

Raynes Park Library Hall is in Aston Road, off Approach Road, on or close to several bus routes, and near to Raynes Park station. Very limited parking.

Please use the hall entrance in Aston Road.



Visitors are welcome to attend our talks. Entry £2.



AMY SHUARD – MEMORIES

Reading Bill Rudd’s contribution about the time capsule for the Willows site (*Bulletin* 175 p.4), and seeing the name Amy Shuard, I was reminded of the time in the 1970s when Amy was a neighbour of mine. I was living, with my parents, in a flat at Highgate. Amy and her husband Peter lived in a flat across the gardens, almost opposite us.

Amy had the most wonderful soprano voice; she often practised in the flat, or sometimes on the balcony, especially in the summer. It was a delight to hear her. I got to know Amy and Peter quite well. Sometimes they would take me to the Royal Opera House when Amy was performing; this was a real privilege.

Amy was born in Southwark in July 1924. She studied at the Trinity College of Music and was one of the finest British dramatic sopranos of the 1960s. She was also one of the early stalwarts of the Covent Garden Opera Company.

Her untimely death in April 1975 was a great loss to the opera world. I lost touch with Peter after I got married in September 1975 and moved to south-west London.

I would love to find out more about her early life, and especially when and where she lived in the Morden area.

Lesly Trodd

Bill Rudd reports that Amy lived at 49 Canterbury Road, Morden. She was a year older than Bill’s sister, who used to come home from school complaining that they had to sit and listen to ‘that girl singing’ yet again!!



from google.co.uk

VISIT TO LORD'S CRICKET GROUND

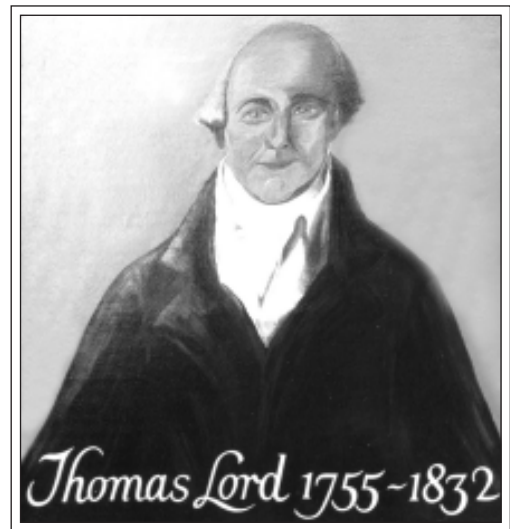
On 19 July 11 members met at Lord's Cricket Ground in St John's Wood, for a guided tour. Lord's is owned by Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) and is one of the prime locations for international (Test) matches. It is also the home ground of Middlesex County Cricket Club. The MCC, which now has about 22000 members, and numerous teams, are the custodians of the laws of cricket, and play a leading role in the development of cricket in the UK, and in promoting the spirit of the game.

To our surprise the tour started at the royal tennis court. Such a court has been at Lord's since 1838. MCC advised on the first rules for the new game of lawn tennis, but declined to host the game at Lord's – a short-sighted decision, as they lost an opportunity to become the home of the championships that later became established in Wimbledon.

We then moved to the museum. Our guide told the story of the small (10cm high) urn on display, containing the 'Ashes', which are permanently housed at Lord's but 'held' by the winners of the England v Australia series. In 1882 Australia's first victory on English soil was followed by a mock obituary for the death of English cricket in the *Sporting Times*, which said, 'The body will be cremated and the ashes taken to Australia'. When the teams next met in Australia Lady Clarke, wife of the sponsor of the tour, presented the English captain Ivo Bligh (later Lord Darnley) with a small urn containing the ashes of a bail that had been burned. Darnley kept the urn at his home, Cobham Hall in Kent, until his death in 1927, when it was presented to the MCC. Our guide said that recent scientific investigations had supported the story that at Cobham Hall a maid had knocked over and broken the urn, and the contents were mainly floor sweepings.

The tour then moved on to the visiting team's dressing-room, with a view from the balcony over the ground. The changing-room had several honours boards recording the exploits of visiting international batsmen and bowlers in Test matches against England. A new board had just been added after a Pakistan v Australia Test that had ended the day before, the first Test match at Lord's not involving England (it was not played in Pakistan for security reasons).

The next stop was the famous Long Room, with portraits of MCC dignitaries, England teams and captains lining the walls, except for one long side where members sit in tall chairs watching the match. The players pass down the length of the room on their way to and from the pitch. In a cabinet were impressive trophies, including the 1999 Waterford Crystal Ashes Trophy – this, unlike the Ashes urn, is physically held by the winners of the Ashes series. Here our guide explained more of the history. In 1786 Thomas Lord, a cricketer and businessman, was approached by the earl of Winchilsea, to find a ground for cricket not too far from central London. Lord chose the site of today's Dorset Square and founded the MCC there. After a move to another site in St John's Wood he finally, in 1814, settled on the present one. In the early days sheep were used to keep the grass short. After the MCC acquired the freehold in 1864 they built the first grandstand and rebuilt the Lord's Tavern (replaced in 1967). The MCC colours of red and gold came from the label on Nicholson's gin bottles. Mr Nicholson was a benefactor to the club, and its president in 1879.



*Thomas Lord, from an old Tavern sign
photo: David Roe*

Finally we were allowed to take photographs when we went outside, where we saw a statue of W G Grace, one of the greatest players of all time, who played his last first-class game aged 60 in 1908. We made our way round the stands, first viewing the fine exterior of the Grade II listed Pavilion by Thomas Verity (1890), which houses the Long Room, players' dressing-rooms, other rooms and restaurants for players and members. The rebuilding of the impressive Mound stand in 1987, with a canopy resembling a row of tents, was made possible by a £12 million gift from Sir Paul Getty, who became an enthusiast when taken to a Lord's match by Mick Jagger. The two stands opposite the Pavilion were left uncovered in 1991, so that members could still see the trees beyond.

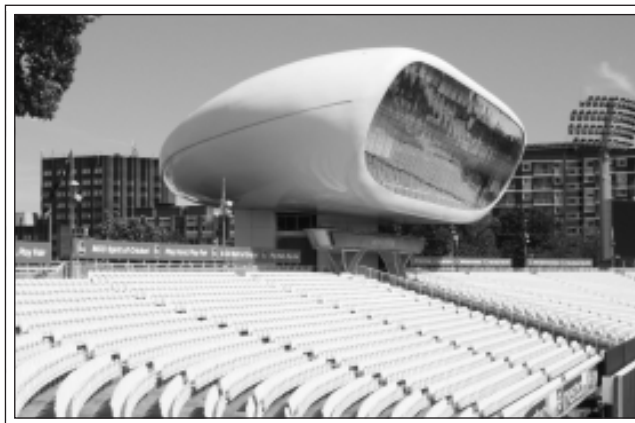
Between them is the Investec Media Centre, the first all-aluminium semi-monocoque building in the world, by Future Systems Ltd in 1999, who used boat-building technology. The view from inside was stunning,

through the glass frontage comprised of a single pane of glass. It has only one window – installed in the box for the BBC Test Match Special team, at the request of commentator Henry Blofield.

In all a most interesting tour, enlivened by the anecdotes of our enthusiastic guide, who praised us for asking so many questions, which he answered at length.

David Roe

*Investec media centre
photo: David Roe*



BROMPTON CEMETERY

Our August visit was to one of London's great Victorian cemeteries. Our booked guide had withdrawn at the last minute but we did not lose by the change. Nick Halbritter, an active Friend of the cemetery, proved not only fluent and amusing, but apparently omniscient – though he slightly alarmed us when he said his previous tour had lasted five hours.

It was surprising to learn that Brompton Cemetery is managed by The Royal Parks under contract from the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, and is the only Crown Cemetery. This circumstance arises from its history.

The West of London and Westminster Cemetery Company was established in 1836. The promoter and first chairman was the architect Stephen Geary, founder of both Highgate and Nunhead Cemeteries. He acquired the site in 1838 – an unprepossessing flat rectangular plot of 39 acres (16ha), treeless and sterile, previously in use as market gardens and a brickfield. The decision was taken to compete with the arcadian landscapes of its rivals by means of spectacular architecture. Sir Jeffrey Wyattville (a relation of the Wyatts of Merton), the best-known architect of the time, was called in to head the judges of an architectural competition – which was won (strangely?) by his own assistant, Benjamin Baud. Geary was forced to resign. The design, which was reminiscent of others by Wyattville, proved to be his last major project.

The plan was essentially classical, and completely symmetrical. Buildings and paths were laid out in the shape of an immense basilica, with the Anglican chapel as 'high altar', an arcaded 'nave', a circle of 300ft (91m) diameter, based on the Piazza at St Peter's, Rome, and the 600m ceremonial drive bisecting the entire plot. Catacombs were built beneath the arcades, but plans for 'transept' chapels were never carried out. The splendid domed chapel and all the other structures were built of honey-coloured Bath stone. Trees, in avenues and groves, were planted, and there was a vantage point from which to enjoy a picturesque view of the Kensington canal which ran alongside one boundary. Unfortunately however this would soon be replaced by a railway line.

The cemetery opened in 1840, with building still going on, but business was slow and many of the shareholders were becoming anxious. They were not seeing a return from the expensive buildings they had financed. Finally, in 1852, under a short-lived Act the cemetery was purchased by the Government. It was the first company anywhere to be nationalised.

There have been more than 200,000 burials at Brompton, and there are estimated to be about 35,000 monuments. Some of the archives are kept in the Chapel building, others are at The National Archives, Kew, and all have now been computerised. At present seven of the monuments are listed. The cemetery's Friends have submitted a list of a further 104 for consideration, but may have to be satisfied with 24 new ones. After closure for new burials in the late 1950s Brompton reopened in 1996. An important feature of the cemetery is that it is, and has been from the beginning, open to people of all faiths.

Today the cemetery is a green 'island' in busy west London. At least 50 species of tree can be found here, providing ideal haunts for all kinds of wild life.

As we perambulated with our guide he showed us monuments that were striking in themselves, and monuments of interesting people, of which the following are only a small selection.

The tomb of Robert Coombes (1808-1860), waterman, and winner in seven consecutive years of Doggett's Coat & Badge, bears the figure of Coombes in his Doggett's regalia, and is surmounted by an upturned skiff.

Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928) Suffragette leader, lies beneath a Celtic cross.

The grave of Dr John Snow (1813-1858), discoverer of the cause of cholera, and a pioneer in anaesthesia has a monument bearing a draped urn (typical Victorian symbol of death).

The massive tomb of 'Gentleman' John Jackson (1769-1845), prize-fighter and boxing coach to the nobility (Lord Byron, the Prince Regent etc), was paid for by public subscription and is surmounted by a lion.

The grave of Frederick Richards Leyland (1831-1892), a patron of the pre-Raphaelites, is marked by a shrine-shaped monument of Carrara marble with a copper roof and bronze decoration. It is the only funerary design by Edward Burne-Jones.



*Tomb of F. R. LEYLAND designed by Edward Burne-Jones
Photo: Desmond Bazley*

We also saw the graves of singer Richard Tauber; designer Sir Henry Cole; John Wisden, cricketer and publisher; ship-owner Sir Samuel Cunard; Admiral Robert Fitzroy of the *Beagle*; musician Constant Lambert; and playwright Brandon (*Charley's Aunt*) Thomas.

No fewer than 13 holders of the Victoria Cross are buried here, one of them beneath a most unusual monument. Sub Lieutenant Reginald Alexander John Warneford, in a tiny monoplane, armed with a pistol and five hand-grenades, brought down and destroyed an enormous and heavily armed Zeppelin. The encounter is shown in low relief on the front of the monument.

Altogether this was a most absorbing visit, with an excellent guide.

The cemetery is open every day. It is next door to West Brompton station, and is also served by buses along Old Brompton Road and Fulham Road.

Judith Goodman

THE FOUNDLING MUSEUM

In the event it was only a small group who visited the Foundling Museum, in Bloomsbury, on 16 September – too small to justify a guided tour. So, after coffee in the pleasant little café, we dispersed to explore independently.

The museum tells the story of the Foundling Hospital, London's first home for abandoned children. It was established in 1742 by mariner and philanthropist Thomas Coram, and supported by, among others, William Hogarth and George Frideric Handel. The hospital stood on the site of today's Coram Fields, and the museum occupies a restored and refurbished building next door. There are fine interiors and paintings, including Hogarth's splendid portrait of Coram himself, as well as fascinating records of the hospital. And there is a particularly touching display of little mementoes left with the infants by their mothers when parting with them. There are regular temporary exhibitions as well.

The museum, at 40 Brunswick Square, is open Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 5pm, and Sunday 11am to 5pm. Closed on Mondays.

Tel: 020 7841 3600. enquiries@foundlingmuseum.org.uk

Admission £7.50/ conc. £5/ children free

JG

‘LIBERTY’S AT MERTON’

Around 50 members and visitors attended our Evelyn Jowett Memorial Lecture at Christchurch Hall, Colliers Wood, on 16 October. Chairman Tony Scott reminded us that Miss Jowett (as she was always called) was the driving force behind the foundation of Merton & Morden Historical Society in 1951, and served as its first secretary for many years. Her books and articles on the history of Merton and Morden are still well known and of great value to the local historian. She encouraged our late President, Lionel Green, in his early studies and in his membership of the original committee.

Tony pointed out how appropriate that this, the 20th memorial lecture, should be by a long-standing member of the Society, and an active member of its Committee for over 20 years. David Luff has an encyclopaedic knowledge of Liberty’s, having worked at the Merton printworks from 1965 until its closure in 1982. David began his talk by acknowledging his debt to Harry Fairman, who worked there for 50 years, and to his brother-in-law, David Reeves, who worked there for 20 years. Their recollections, combined with David’s own vivid memories, formed the basis of the talk, and of David’s book that the Society published in 2002, *Trouble at Mill*.

David traced the history back to 1904, when Liberty’s bought the printworks at Merton Abbey, established in the early 18th century. They soon began to replace the old wooden buildings, which posed a fire risk, with the buildings known and loved to this day. Three buildings date from before WWI, including that now known as The Show House, a name devised in the 1980s. More buildings were erected in the inter-war years, including The 1926 Shop, later dubbed the Apprentice Shop, and The 1929 Shop. The Sports Ground, to the west of the Wandle, was established in 1923, the Sports Club remaining active until WWII. Screen printing was introduced in the 1930s during the recession, and new screen shops, fabric washing facilities, etc, were planned in 1937, but halted on the outbreak of war in 1939. In 1940 part of the site was used by Parnall Aircraft Components, with new works designed by architect Adrian Powell, and these buildings were taken over by Liberty’s when Parnall’s moved away after the war.



David Luff (on left) and Terry Amos on Tuesday 27 June 1972

David also recounted changes in techniques and technologies. The earliest printing screens were etched onto copper gauze, but from 1946 all patterns were engraved onto nylon screens. This took a few years to achieve. The pre-cast concrete screen-printing tables were introduced in the 1950s. New printing carriages were designed, based on sketches made on a visit to factories in Lyon. By 1957 block-printing had ceased, and in the 1960s a huge flatbed-printing machine was purchased, the Mecnatesselle from Italy, followed by a Swiss-built Buser, each customised to suit the requirements of Liberty’s. Unfortunately the new machine shop was not suited to the work, and the air-conditioning system, which sucked out dust as well as hot air during the summer, blew it all back in during the winter!

The 1960s was also a time of changes in management, leading to a lot of waste, as the print output exceeded processing capacity. In 1972 Liberty’s decided to sell the works, though they continued to place their orders with the new purchasers of the works, the Vita Tex group (1972-77), and their successors, Riselime Ltd (1977-81), and Merton Fabrics Ltd (1981-82). But a suspicious fire in July 1982 brought an end to printing, David himself completing the very last order.

David brought along several samples of patterns and printed items, together with some small items of equipment. He finished by showing slides of buildings, equipment, processes, patterns and people for, as David pointed out, it is the people who make a workplace.

This was a fascinating account by a very knowledgeable speaker, and we are grateful to David, not only for an excellent talk, but also for assembling such a valuable archive. His published account is available from 57 Templecombe Way, Morden, Surrey SM4 4JF, at £2.40 to members, plus 85p postage, or ring me on 020 8543 8471 to arrange collection.

Peter Hopkins

LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOPS

Friday 23 July 2010 – 5 present – David Haunton in the chair

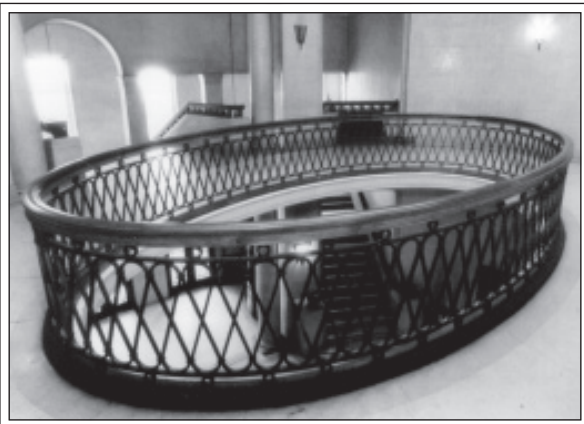
- ◆ **Judith Goodman** reported that a file of Lionel Green's research papers had been passed to her, as they contain biographical notes of various people connected with Merton. These include: Emma Hamilton, members of the inter-related Smith, Wyatt and Cook families, William Baynes (land surveyor of the Customs in reigns of William III and George I), members of the Meriton, Chitty and Bond families (lay rectors of Merton), Sir Robert Burnett of Morden Hall, the Dorrell lords of the manor of Merton, fabric printers Francis Nixon and William Morris, the Wilson and Crisp family, the Villiers family (c. 1703), the Ormes of Dorset Hall (c. 1827), John Innes, Canon Jagger (vicar of Merton 1904-36), A N Disney (headmaster of Rutlish School 1897-1921), William Rutlish, and Thomas Sargent (d. 1648, who held several small properties in Merton and Wimbledon). The file also contained a newspaper article dated 28 June 1985, on the anniversary of Rutlish School, stating that the school had been 'founded on compost', together with Lionel's letter correcting this statement!

- ◆ **Peter Hopkins** brought along a number of items from Lionel's archives, and asked advice as to the best place for them to be deposited. It was suggested that a photocopy of an 1867 plan of Merton Abbey Station, from the Chief Engineer's Office at Waterloo, should be offered to Surrey History Centre; an 1897 edition of *Wimbledon & Putney Post* to Wimbledon Museum; and the rest to Merton Heritage and Local Studies Centre, including: a local section from an 'official railway map of London and Environs' published at the Railway Clearing House in 1915 (which omits all roads and buildings and, apart from railway lines and stations, only shows contour hatchings and outlines of parks and commons!); a large plan of Merton priory drawn by Bill Rudd in 1976; an aerial photo of the priory site in 1988; and Col. Bidder's report on his excavations at the priory in 1927, published by the Society of Antiquaries in 1927.

Peter also reported an email from Paul Sedgwick with an aerial map of Morden Park, on which he had marked the results of his dowsing survey last year along the line of Stane Street.



- ◆ **Cyril Maidment** brought photos of items in Wimbledon Museum's collections, including Abbey Gate House, the nearby mosque (originally built as a billiard hall, and later used as a clothing factory), and a 1913 photo, labelled 'Nelson's Nile', of a bridge in High Path, Merton, over a stream leading from three fishponds opposite Abbey Road. He also reported that the museum has recently obtained building plans of the underground toilets outside Wimbledon Town Hall, Pelham Road School, and other sites in Wimbledon. He also brought photos contrasting the original balustrade around the elliptical light well in Wimbledon Civic Hall in 1931 (below left) and its far less attractive replacement in Centre Court (below right).

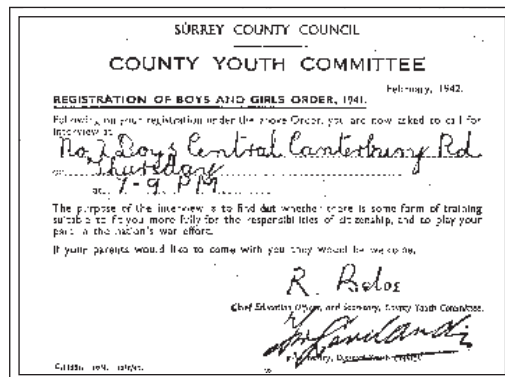


- ◆ **David Haunton** reported on an email from Mavis Priestley about Blue House Cottages in Church Road, Mitcham (see her article in *Bulletin* 175 pp.15-16). He also recounted the sad tale of Terry Rosewell, aged 14, of Graham Road, Wimbledon, who, returning home from accompanying visitors to the bus stop when the siren went, was killed while running back to his house.

Peter Hopkins

Friday 17 September 2010 – 5 present – Peter Hopkins in the chair

◆ After mentioning the ‘River and Cloth’ exhibition at Merton Abbey Mills, **Bill Rudd** produced an envelope of wartime papers, relating to his appointment as a Civil Defence messenger (‘must have own bike’), and some Civil Defence post layouts, together with a letter requesting volunteers for service in the mines (‘if you do not reply within four days, I shall assume you do NOT wish to volunteer...’). We hope Bill will publish this collection. Bill also showed us his genuine 1940 bike pump, some authentic ‘shrapnel’, and an ARP pin.



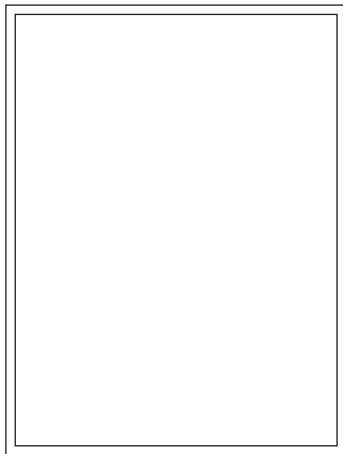
◆ **Cyril Maidment** brought a photo of a wartime defence pill-box, appropriately disguised as a half-timbered addition to the half-timbered ‘Tudor’ villa at 93 Toynbee Road, Wimbledon, and a note of the ‘horrible murder’ at 54 Parkside in 1917, when Captain Edward Tighe was killed by a burglar who stole two silver watches and a mackintosh. Cyril has been trying to reconstruct the layout of West Barnes Farm onto a modern OS map, as given in John Harding’s map of 1723, but has encountered some geographical oddities, notably on the eastern boundaries. He has also been looking at maps of the area round Nelson’s house at Merton Place, and has concluded that the sales particulars include a real measured map, and that High Path is not an old street.

◆ **Judy Goodman** regaled us with highlights from a Ledger Book of the Rutlish Charity, happily recently re-acquired by the Rutlish Trustees. This lists the income (from rents) and disbursements etc for 1753-1840 and is full of fascinating items, mentioning many familiar Merton names. The Charity was mostly concerned with the placement of boys as apprentices, overwhelmingly as shoemakers or cordwainers, though tallow maker, jack maker, sawyer, barbers, calico printer and copper plate engraver (in Tooting) are all mentioned. The few girls have fewer possibilities – mostly mantua maker (dressmaker) or bed quilter. Apprentices are mainly placed locally, but Clapham, Croydon and Fenchurch Street appear.

◆ **David Haunton** has found a reproduction of a pastel portrait of Axel Munthe, the Swedish physician who built Villa San Michele on Capri and who later lived in Wimbledon. This is by Countess Feodora Gleichen (1861-1922), a half grand-niece of Queen Victoria. She was an acknowledged sculptor of portrait busts, with a studio in St James’s Palace, but is not known for her drawing. She was the first woman elected to the Royal British Society of Sculptors – alas, just posthumously. David



has also found a very early lithograph by Vincent Lines (see *Bulletins* 167-171), drawn in 1927, the year he turned 18. **Mavis Priestley** has clarified for David that the Blue Cottages in Church Road, Mitcham, where her grandparents lived, were the four northernmost ones (immediately opposite the Box Factory) on the plan included with her article in *Bulletin* 175. **Bert Sweet** tells David he has been looking into the Balham Tunnel deep shelter mentioned in *Wimbledon Time and Leisure*, (article forthcoming). He has found a photo of a steam-powered traction engine delivering a new Underground carriage to the new Morden Depot in 1925. The engine was built by Taskers of Andover c. 1890, and registered in Kent (KT6702), the first county to issue number-plates to vehicles following the Motor Car Act of 1903.



◆ **Peter Hopkins** has been looking at Lionel Green’s papers on Turgot, the prior of Durham Cathedral. Lionel’s family would like these to be published, so Peter has undertaken the considerable labour of sorting and arranging the notes. This will eventually give us *Building Durham Cathedral – the Life and Times of Turgot, Prior of Durham (1087-1109), Bishop of St Andrews (1109-1115)*.

David Haunton

Friday 29 October 2010 – seven present – David Haunton in the chair

- ◆ **Claire Tracey**, from the Acacia Intergenerational Centre at Mitcham Eastfields, was looking for help in recording how different generations have contributed to local history – in particular transport, family history and travellers' history, from 1920 to 2010. Initially there will be a six-week project, starting at the Acacia IGC on 11 November from 3.30 to 4.30. David Haunton kindly agreed to contribute to the first meeting.
- ◆ **Cyril Maidment** had prepared an article for the Wimbledon Society's quarterly *Newsletter* about Merton priory and its consideration as a World Heritage Site. It had been included in a total of 39 sites, of which ten will eventually be proposed by the United Kingdom. The priory has a strong case for consideration as an 'intangible event'. In 1215 King John signed the Magna Carta, and fundamental freedoms for all subjects were agreed, but written parliamentary law had to wait for Parliament, the bishops and the barons to meet at Merton priory from 10 to 27 January 1236, to agree the very first statute, the Statute of Merton. This remained on the statute book for over 700 years, until it was finally repealed in 1948. With respect to the freedom of the individual it is said to have proved significant to half the world's population.

Cyril said he was continuing to prepare a legible version of the John Harding (1723) West Barnes map. Peter Hopkins had brought along a copy (illegible), and two other Harding maps: Rolles Farm, Shere (1723) and Sutton Place Farm (1724).

- ◆ **Judy Goodman** spoke about the notebook used by Mitcham's Revd Herbert Randolph in 1837/8, which is in Merton Heritage and Local Studies collection. It had been used by someone else, much earlier, to record 'lectures' on chemistry, and included symbols for some 'elements'.
- ◆ **Peter Hopkins** had been excited to discover that hundreds of rare out-of-copyright volumes can be accessed and downloaded from *Internet Archive* (www.archive.org), including two copies of Heales's *Records of Merton Priory* (1898). Whilst many errors can be found in Heales it is an incredible compilation of the history of the priory. Peter has added links on the priory page of our website, and would like to add an index that he made some years ago, Heales's index being rather sparse.

He had had an enquiry about a recently-discovered badge thought to have been awarded at a Sunday school in Morden between 1915 and 1920. He is planning an article for the next *Bulletin*.

- ◆ **Rosemary Turner** had been tracing a lace-maker, Hilda Blanche Goad, with local connections.

Rosemary also showed us photographs of some of her own attractive watercolour drawings of local scenes, including this view of the priory arch reconstructed in St Mary's churchyard, Merton Park.

- ◆ **Bill Rudd** had brought in some of his invaluable photographs of Morden taken decades ago, including houses, schools and shops (see page 1).
- ◆ **David Haunton** provided more WW2 memories – someone who was in his Anderson shelter in Rutlish Road (Station Road then) on 11 July 1944, when many houses were damaged and the Rutlish School science building was destroyed. David said that by mid-January 1941 about 500 houses in Merton and Morden had been destroyed, and about two thirds damaged in total.

Cyril Maidment



Next Workshops: Fridays 14 January and 25 March at 2.30pm at Wandle Industrial Museum

MERTON PARK REMEMBRANCE SOCIETY

This new Society was formed in July 2009 with the following objectives:

1. To promote activities consistent with the purpose of Remembrance Sunday within Merton Park
2. To take care of the War Memorial on the North East corner of the churchyard
3. To raise money to help fund repairs and to liaise with other organisations in arranging for the necessary work to be carried out
4. To raise awareness of the Official War Graves contained within the churchyard and seek to ensure they are maintained to a proper standard
5. To promote an understanding of the history of the individuals buried in the War Graves within the local community.

Annual subscription is £5 a year, payable by standing order. Application forms may be downloaded from the Society's website at www.mertonparkremembers.org.uk or obtained from Peter Smith, Hon Treasurer, phone 020 8879 0076. The 26 graves in the churchyard hold the servicemen listed below.

From the First World War:

John C ATTEWELL, Lieutenant, Royal Air Force, d.1918, age 19

G COLLINGS, Colour Serjeant, Royal Marine Light Infantry, d.1914, age 66

G A COX, Sapper, Royal Engineers, d.1918, age 36

Arthur W ELEY, Private, Royal Army Service Corps, d.1919, age 42

E J HOPPER, Able Seaman, Royal Navy (HMS *Vivid*), d.1919, age unknown

Samuel A KING, Able Seaman, Royal Navy, d.1918, age 31

J C PEGLEY, Private, Royal Army Service Corps, d.1919, age 30

Lewis J POTTER, AC2, Royal Flying Corps, d.1917, age 41

A E ROSE, Private, East Surrey Regiment, d.1915, age 19

Henry E SIMMONS, QM Serjeant, Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), d.1916, age 34

William J SMITH, Private, East Surrey Regiment, d.1918, age 37

A W SPENCER, Serjeant, East Surrey Regiment, d.1917, age unknown

Alfred R STEEL, Private, Labour Corps, d.1918, age 32

Walter H TUBB, Private, Royal Sussex Regiment, d.1918, age 18

Harry A S WHITE, Engineer, Mercantile Marine Reserve, d.1917, age 29

From the Second World War:

Charles A BLACKWELL, Sergeant Pilot, Royal Air Force V R, d.1942, age 25

Geoffrey DAVENPORT, Corporal, Royal Corps of Signals, d.1942, age 28

Richard J FULLER, Sergeant (WO/AG), Royal Air Force V R, d.1944, age 21

Leonard C HALES, Gunner, Royal Artillery, d.1940, age 20

Sidney LANCASTER, Signaller, Royal Corps of Signals, d.1941, age 23

Dennis B O'BRIEN, Private, East Surrey Regiment, d.1940, age 24

Raymond D ORCHARD, Sapper, Royal Engineers, d.1940, age 18

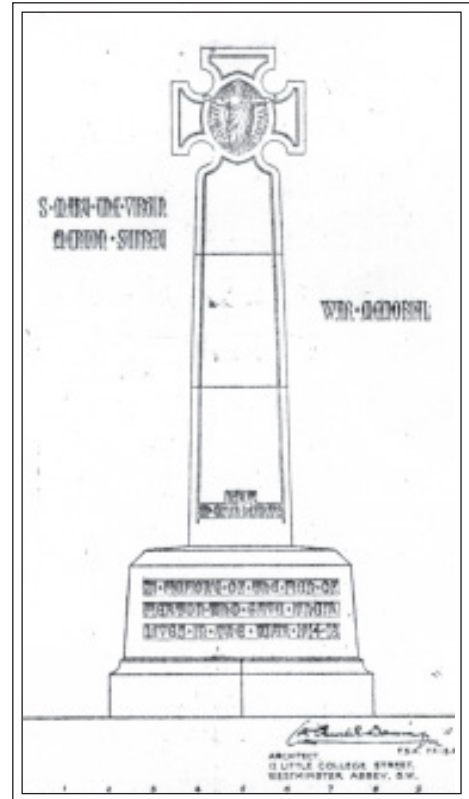
James W PENDERGREST, Lance Bombardier, Royal Artillery, d.1940, age 25

Michael H PRATT, Private, Somerset Light Infantry, d.1945, age 19

William B WEBB, Petty Officer, Royal Navy, d.1942, age 56

Thomas A WILLIAMS, Corporal, Royal Fusiliers, d.1942, age 24

Very little is known at present of their individual histories. If you are a relative or were a friend of any of them, or know of any such, please contact me on 020 8542 7079 or at 11 Melrose Road, Merton Park, SW19 3HF.



*Merton War Memorial by H.P.BURKE
DOWNING, the architect*

David Haunton

In our last issue we included an account by Geoffrey Wilson of the station arch at Raynes Park. It is a pleasure to follow it by an article that was found among the papers of our late president, LIONEL GREEN. He called it

RAYNES PARK (RAILWAY) SKEW ARCH

A cursory examination of the history of Raynes Park might result in a conclusion ‘no known history’. The site of the railway station does not feature as any part of the history. There was no settlement of people, no main river. No turnpiked road existed in the area. But through the district ran Kingston Lane, the main road from Merton. When the engineers surveyed a possible route from London (Nine Elms) to Southampton, they encountered this lane, but it was not suitable for a level crossing, as the line was to be built on a bank to reduce gradients. The line crossed the tree-lined Kingston Lane at an acute angle, and to avoid a difficult bridge construction as well as reducing the number of crossings, the engineers planned to divert the road and continue it south of the railway until it met the private access road to Edward Rayne’s family farmhouse at West Barnes Park. There the two roads would pass under the railway line at an angle of 45°. The vestry met to discuss the proposals, but did not accept the solution, and requested the builders to provide two arches and to keep the same alignment of Kingston Lane. This was in 1834 and there was no necessity for access to the railway at this point.

The original railway consisted of two railway lines, and the building of a brick skew arch with an access width of 18 feet presented no construction problem. In 1859 it was found necessary to provide two additional tracks to serve the Epsom line, and this involved doubling the length of the connecting arches. The extension of the skew arch gave opportunity to increase the headroom, but the rounded configuration of the original arch meant that vehicles went to the middle of the road, often with dire consequences to oncoming traffic. Foot passengers had no footpath.



An Edwardian postcard (courtesy JG)

The station arch to the west was never intended for two lanes of traffic, and Approach Road (completed by 1913)¹ was built along the south side of the railway to serve this access, and the original arch restricted to foot passengers. Gates remained for special use. This was the access from Kingston Road (Coombe Lane) to what is now Grand Drive.

When Sir Richard Garth wished to develop Rayne’s farm in the 1860s he requested a passenger station from the LSWR. In 1864 the *Junction Tavern*² was built, but it was not until 1871 that a station was provided, with platforms serving the Kingston and Epsom trains. In 1884 a new ‘island’ platform was built on the north side for up ‘local’ trains, including the Epsom and Kingston services. When Worple Road, Wimbledon, was extended to Raynes Park in 1891 it gave great relief to the Kingston Road bottleneck at the skew arch.

In 1896 the local authorities (both Wimbledon and Merton) asked the Croydon Rural District Council to provide better pedestrian protection. There was still no footpath, and a separate subway was proposed, at an estimated cost of about £2000. This cost was considered out of proportion to the benefit, and the RDC considered that provision of a widened arch was the responsibility of the railway company.

A narrow footpath was provided on the south-west side of the arch, which did nothing to improve the traffic flow, and it was not until 1973¹ that a new cut was made under the railway line between the two archways, and Wimbledon and Merton were connected with an adequate road. The skew arch is now restricted to foot passengers.

1. Lionel left these dates blank. They have been filled in by consulting E M Jowett *Raynes Park: a social history* (1987) Merton Historical Society. [JG]
2. At present, and it is hoped temporarily, renamed *The Funktion* [JG]

THE WANDLE IN LITERATURE – an occasional series

7. John Betjeman

It came as a surprise to me to learn that the River Wandle was known to John Betjeman (1906-1984). Born in Highgate, he was educated at Marlborough, and at Oxford, which he left without a degree, and began to make his way in poetry and journalism. He became the best-loved poet of his generation, won the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry in 1960, was knighted in 1969, and in 1972 succeeded Cecil Day Lewis as Poet Laureate ('Lucky old England to have him' wrote Philip Larkin). The tone of most of his very approachable verse was bittersweet, affectionately mocking or elegiac, but he always found it hard to produce poems for great occasions. His enthusiasms included churches, railways and life in suburbia.

South London Sketch, 1944 is a mournful little poem (there was also a 'prequel', called *South London Sketch, 1844*), mainly in fact about churches. Copyright rules prevent me from reproducing more than 12 lines, but here are the beginning, the middle and the end from the three stanzas:

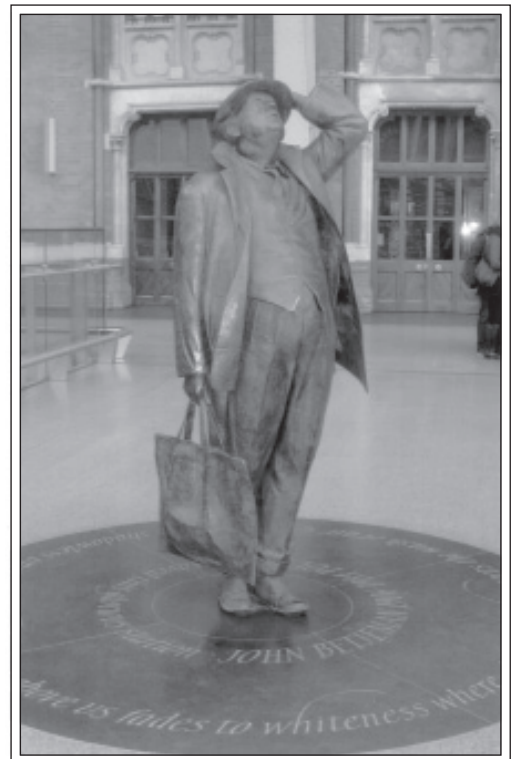
From Bermondsey to Wandsworth
So many churches are,
.....

Oh, in among the houses,
The viaduct below,
Stood the Coffee Essence Factory
Of Robinson and Co.
Burnt and brown and tumbled down
And done with years ago
Where the waters of the **Wandle** do
Lugubriously flow.
.....

The Nonconformist spirelets
And the Church of England spires.*

So, whereabouts on the Wandle did Betjeman glimpse the lugubrious flow? I hoped to find Robinson & Co, coffee essence manufacturers, in the old trade directories, but though I went right back from the 1940s to the 1880s, and though there were coffee essence businesses in plenty, there were none in Wandsworth, or anywhere in south-west London. I was driven to conclude that this picturesque and plausible enterprise was entirely a fiction of the poetic imagination.

* From *John Betjeman's Collected Poems* (1979 edition) pp148-9, copyright the estate of John Betjeman, reproduced by permission of John Murray (Publishers)



*The bronze sculpture of Sir John Betjeman at St Pancras station. Martin Jennings 2007
Photo:JG*

Judith Goodman

WANDSWORTH MUSEUM

Good news! The new Wandsworth Museum was formally opened on 1 September. It is housed in the attractive ex-library building at 38 West Hill SW18 1RZ. Tel: 020 8870 6060

When the much-loved council-run museum in the old Court House was axed by Wandsworth council it was not long before an enthusiastic and energetic Friends of Wandsworth Museum was set up. A generous grant from the Hintze family, who are Wandsworth residents, has enabled the new museum to get off the ground. Its director is David Barbour, a respected professional, and there is a dedicated team of volunteers. The displays are excellent.

The museum is open 10am - 5pm Tuesday - Sunday. Admission £3 for a single visit, £8 for one year. Concessions available. Buses stop outside, and it is a short walk from Wandsworth High Street.

We have been pleased and very interested to receive a contribution from overseas.

LUCIO B MIR is Professor of Medieval History at the National University of La Pampa in the Province of La Pampa, Argentina.

JUAN CRUZ LÓPEZ RASCH is an advanced student of history at the National University of La Pampa for academic tasks in Medieval History, 'Programa de Apoyo Económico Especial para la Comunidad Universitaria', financed and supported by Santander Río Bank and the National University of La Pampa (2008-2009 and 2009-2010).

The authors have surveyed, and here comment on, the literature about the Statute of Merton.

COLLECTIVE RIGHTS AND ENCLOSURES IN 13TH- CENTURY ENGLAND: an interpretative approach around the Statute of Merton (1236)

The Statute of Merton (1236) reflects political and economic trends that were inseparable from the social system. Thus, to study this problem is to understand processes of transformation of crucial importance to feudal England.

The 13th century was, in Western Europe, the period of full stabilisation of feudal structures and, to a large extent, the crowning point of a process of economic growth that was not going to come to a halt until 1270-1280. A phenomenon of widespread reach, the feudal expansion adopted peculiar features according to the different regions in which its dynamic continuity flowed. In England's case, the economic development and its social consequences were accompanied by certain imbalances, some of which reflected the rise of change factors in society.

Within this context, we notice the importance of the Statute of Merton (1236) in England. Such a statute would represent a legal-political expression of the early presence of enclosures. Indeed, this document reports on an authorisation mechanism to create spaces for collective use, anticipating the long privatisation process of its use and control.¹

The problem offers fertile territory for studying the approach in depth whenever a specialist in agricultural history rejects the influence of the Assembly of Merton, and maintains only that enclosures achieved limited progress in the English countryside during the 15th century.² This perception of the concentration process is endemic in thinkers as renowned as Weber,³ for whom the communal fence phenomenon is identified with that century.

Academic research on the agrarian implications of the Statute of Merton does not seem to have received the systematic attention it deserves. Researcher Abel and other distinguished scholars who have investigated the rural environment of the Old World, such as Slicher van Bath and Rösener, have made no room for the aforementioned research in their thorough analyses.⁴ The same is true of Hilton, who ignores the Assembly of Merton in his main research on agrarian structures in England.⁵

Nonetheless, the statute deserves to be considered as regards some specific matters, since the process of economic change that affected England in the 13th century cannot be separated from the institutional mechanism that was entailed in the phenomenon of *enclosure*. This phenomenon involved the total or partial reduction of *open fields* and the freeing of individual peasants from communal control.⁶

From the legal-historical viewpoint, several authors chronicle the relevance of the Statute. Some of them interpret it as an empowering factor in feudal enclosures in the 13th century;⁷ others see its influence even in the enclosure process of the 17th and 18th centuries.⁸ Likewise, there are those who propose that the Assembly of Merton was a sign of several social phenomena of the 13th century and of certain political interactions between royalty and barons.⁹ These are aspects whose backgrounds recall *Magna Carta* and that turn the Statute into the first comprehensive body after it.¹⁰

The interpretation of Merton rules acquires greater weight when a fundamental fact is emphasised: if the lord could prove that peasants had enough pasture and regular access to it, then his enclosing measures would be protected.¹¹ Powicke took this view, holding that the Statute only allowed the enclosure of communal pastures where the open space was extensive enough to exercise peasants' common law.¹²

As regards studies at the end of the 19th century, Pollock and Maitland¹³ presented a broader treatment and agreed that the Statute of Merton established the restriction of communal rights and the use of waste lands by the lords. Likewise, the Assembly may have confirmed a trend that existed before the approval of the Statute; this last approach accords with an idea already outlined by Scrutton.¹⁴

Similarly, it is necessary to take into account other relevant aspects. First of all, the idea of 'enough' pastures should be understood in relation to the livestock economy at the beginning of the 13th century. Given the socio-economic level of development, it is possible to conjecture that the pasturing of animals was the deciding factor from which the land and its uses were assessed. It is worth pointing out that the change towards sheep rearing was partly underpinned by the expansion of foreign trade,¹⁵ with wool exports to Flanders and Italy playing a significant role in the finances of the monarchy. This fact could explain the interest on the part of the monarchy in favouring the enclosure process.

Again Neilson and Nabholz take up aspects of this conjecture when they propose that the Statute of Merton may have given licence to the lords to enclose plots of land and use them for agricultural and livestock purposes, or cede them to a lessee.¹⁶ Their enquiry outlines a significant link with the expanding framework of feudalism, which is given importance in other publications, though here it benefits from analytical weight. Indeed, these authors' proposal links the increase in sheep rearing with foreign trade, the expansion of pastures and the interest of certain groups in taking advantage of that expansive movement. A similar idea pervades the work of one of the greatest specialists in agrarian history, Genicot, who pointed out how the Statute of Merton allowed the lords to enclose plots of land if they showed that peasants had enough wasteland and space for their cattle.¹⁷

It is also interesting to observe Le Goff's viewpoint as regards the implications of the Statute. He maintains that the Statute inaugurated the period of enclosed fields, a period that resulted from the 'economic choice' of wealthy agricultural producers to turn arable lands into pastures, which is a phenomenon that originated in the demand for wool.¹⁷ The importance of such interpretation is somehow underestimated, because it comes from an author who is not a specialist in rural history. However, it is strengthened by the overall importance of his work in historiography.

Similar ideas to those of Le Goff were outlined by Duby. This author held that agreements between lords and peasants for livestock farming often legalised the construction of permanent fences. This legalisation reserved the use of land to individual farming, a process that lords encouraged and from which they benefited. In this respect, Duby asserted that the authorisation to erect fences was also acquired by considerable numbers of non-noble landowners, the city bourgeoisie or prosperous villagers, with the purpose of freeing them from joint obligations.¹⁸

Moreover, it is important to bear in mind that Duby's and Le Goff's formulations are taken up again, from a different viewpoint, in Coss's work. This author considers the Statute as the instrument used by lords to increase their benefits and productivity.¹⁹ The fact that a historian from the end of the 20th century endorses this viewpoint highlights that the hypothesis of the economic influence of Merton on enclosures preserves its validity.

On the other hand, although Fossier shares the viewpoint that links enclosures with the economic changes of the time, he claims that it consisted of an order of the English monarch to regulate the seizure of communal lands executed by feudal lords through arbitrary enclosures. This last idea at some point diverges from what has been clearly specified by most authors, and entails some reformulation to understand the problem; according to Fossier the Statute was not just a simple instrument of manorial compulsion but a strategy of the monarchical power to counterbalance pressure from the nobility on the rights of the peasant population.²⁰

An author who anticipated this viewpoint was Beresford, who considered that the Statute of Merton represented a petition to set a limit, though modest, to ploughing of pasture areas.²¹ Subsequently, Birrell assessed this royal regulation as an instrument through which peasants tried to defend their rights in face of the lords' advance.²²

It is also interesting to assess the historian Dyer's contribution; he proposes that it was permitted to fence plots of wasteland under certain conditions. However, he suggests that communities could recover those plots of wasteland in exchange for income, or the payment of a fine.²³ In subsequent work the author held that the Statute, besides regulating certain relationships between the monarch and the lords, would not have

made great changes in the enclosure process because, even though it authorised certain actions by the nobility, it also granted some margin to restrict the concentration of farming plots.²⁴

It is appropriate to conclude that the Statute of Merton and its legal and socio-economic implications depict a complex and dynamic profile prompting numerous interpretations for historical analysis. Gay's work was already oriented towards this direction at the beginning of the 20th century, when he held that the Statute was part of the plurisecular history of manorial enclosure on wastelands and communal lands, a phenomenon which did not culminate until the end of the 18th century.²⁵

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- 13 Frederick Pollock and Frederick W. Maitland. *The History of English Law. Before the time of Edward I*, London: Cambridge University Press, [1895/1911] 1968, Volume 1, pp. XII-XIV, 627, 622
- 14 Thomas Edward Scrutton (1887)
- 15 Max Weber, [1923] 1956, p. 183
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HOT OFF THE PRESS!!

By the time this *Bulletin* reaches you, Eric Montague's next *Mitcham History – 11: The Cranmers, The Canons and Park Place* – should be at the printers. At 240 A5 pages with 40 monochrome photos, drawings and maps, it will retail at £5.95 but is just £4.80 to members, plus £1.00 for postage (cheques payable to Merton Historical Society). An ideal Christmas present, it can be ordered from our Publications Secretary, Peter Hopkins, at 57 Templecombe Way, Morden, Surrey SM4 4JF, or ring Peter on 020 8543 8471 to arrange collection. It will also be on sale at lectures from January.

CORRECTION FROM BILL RUDD

Bulletin no.175, page 4, paragraph 4: ‘George [Cole]’s first performance before a paying audience was at the Wesleyan Methodist Hall in Green Lane, Morden’.

Letters and contributions for the *Bulletin* should be sent to the Hon. Editor

. The views expressed in this *Bulletin* are those of the contributors concerned and not necessarily those of the Society or its Officers.

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