



PRESIDENT: J Scott McCracken BA FSA MIFA

VICE PRESIDENTS: Viscountess Hanworth, Lionel Green and William Rudd

BULLETIN NO. 140

CHAIRMAN: Lionel Green

DECEMBER 2001



## PROGRAMME DECEMBER-MARCH



**Saturday 1 December 2.30pm**

**Snuff Mill Environmental Centre**

### **'Reigate Priory'**

Like Merton Priory, the one at Reigate was an Augustinian foundation, but its career since the Dissolution has been very different. **Audrey Ward**, founder of the Reigate Priory School Museum, has published a book about the Priory, and will outline its history in this illustrated lecture.

**Saturday 26 January 2.30pm**

**Snuff Mill Environmental Centre**

### **'The Vestments of Westminster Abbey'**

**Rosemary Turner**, of this Society, is also a member of the Guild of St Faith, who restore and conserve the Abbey's vestments and furnishings, and make new ones when required. Her illustrated talk will describe this important work.

**Saturday 23 February 2.30pm**

**Snuff Mill Environmental Centre**

### **'The Great Exhibition of 1851'**

**Richard Milward** of the Wimbledon Society is always a popular speaker. He has recently been researching a landmark event of the 19th century, and we expect an entertaining and informative talk. Illustrated with slides.

(The Snuff Mill Centre, in Morden Hall Park, is on bus routes 93,118,157 and 164. Drivers use the garden centre car-park. Take the path across the bridge; go through the gateway and turn right. The Snuff Mill is straight ahead.)

**Thursday 28 February 7pm**

**Annual Dinner at Morden Hall**

So successful was the dinner on 28 February 2001 to mark 50 years of the Society that the Committee has decided it should become an annual event. Cost will be at the (reasonable) set menu price, with several choices. Numbers are needed, so please ring Sheila on 020 8540 6656 by 7 February.

**Thursday 14 March 2pm**

**Visit to Surrey History Centre**

The Centre is at 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, about 15 minutes walk from the station. Local buses pass the centre. You can park at the centre, access from Kingsway. There is a group charge for the visit of £20; numbers limited to 24.



**The Society's events are open to the general public, unless otherwise stated.**

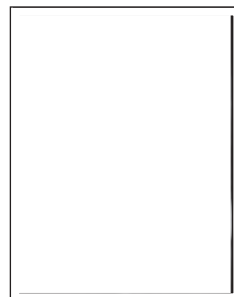


## LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOP

Friday 24 August 2001 – 9 Members present

- ◆ **Sheila Harris** spoke about a possible visit to Morden Park House and had written to that end. In response Sheila had a reply from the Registrar, Gemma Cox, saying that Merton may take part in London Open House next year and could the Society provide tour guides. The event could be combined with the launch of the book about the house, with which Bill Rudd is associated.
- ◆ Surrey Archaeology Society is producing a book on the Archaeology of Surrey. **Peter Hopkins** had been asked to provide details of relevant societies, museums and sites of interest within the Merton area. The information to include, *inter alia*, a brief description of the organization or site, location, accessibility by road and public transport. Peter had prepared a draft, which he passed round for comment and suggestions.
- ◆ As a footnote to Eric Montague's book about Park Place **Judith Goodman** showed us a picture of General Sir Josiah Champagné who was the brother and executor of General Forbes Champagné of Park Place, Mitcham.

An article entitled 'A 'New' Set of Saxon Bounds for Wandsworth' by Nicholas Fuentes had been published in the *Wandsworth Historian*; within the piece Mr Fuentes had re-located the bounds of Merton as given in the charter of AD 967. Judith corresponded with Dr Keith Bailey concerning this and been advised that he would be writing an article refuting the first.



- ◆ **Don Fleming** told us that he enjoys reading published diaries and letters. He gave an extract referring to Morden Hall, from *Ancestral Voices and Prophesying Peace* by James Lees-Milne, an inspector for the National Trust. On page 393, the entry for Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 1944, says: "*The shortest day – Eardley and I went to Morden by Tube. The House is nothing, a comfortable Victorian Mansion. It is the Park and Grounds in this horrid suburban area that count. There are some 120 acres, it will be useful to the local people, and I think on the whole the National Trust are right to hold it, although it's aesthetic value is slight*".

Don has completed his investigations into Wards. Briefly he told us that they were in existence in 1066 and probably from the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Originally they were named for the alderman who had jurisdiction, so when the alderman changed so did the name, later the wards were named for places, for example, Tower and Portsoken in the City of London. Don's script will be published in future Bulletins.

- ◆ Following the visit to Merton College, Oxford, **Lionel Green** referred us to page 37 of *History and Heroes of Old Merton* by Kathleen Denbigh, wherein she suggests that the building shown on the seal of the Priory indicates that the tower of the Priory would have a finial at each corner, like the College tower. This writer and others in attendance were unable to see any correlation between the two. Lionel passed round pictures of a number of other ancient seals for our perusal, the representation of the buildings on all of them were similar.



- ◆ Referring to adverts on the walls of buildings **Bill Rudd** said that Herrington's and Foster Bros. are in Sutton. He had seen another on the corner of Hamilton Road and High Street, Merton, which although partly obscured could be interpreted as 'Townsend & Son, Gents Outfitters and Hatters' who were in the premises, according to directories, from the 1900s to the 1940s. There is another one on the side of a hostelry further along the road, this one advises of 'The Beer House, [Arena] Bar'. It is now the Kilkenny Tavern, previously the Dark House.

When a postman, Bill had to deliver telephone directories and collect the old ones for return. He had managed to retain one for Kent and showed us a copy of the dialling codes before we went to all numbers. We remember some such as FAIrlands, CHerrywood, LIBerty, VIGilant.

- ◆ **Madeline Healey** said that she had heard that Anglo-Saxon swords had been discovered during the work being carried out at Morden First School. No one present knew about this and thought that it was probably a rumour, although a watch was being kept, as the site is in an archaeological sensitive area being close to the route of Stane Street.

**Stephen Turner**

Friday 19 October 2001: Judith Goodman in the chair.

◆ **Bill Rudd** and Judith Goodman have been going through the Evelyn Jowett bequest to the Libraries Department. He had brought along some items, including a photograph of Gilliat Hatfeild, who bought the Garths' Morden estate in the 1880s. He also showed us aerial photos from about 1929 to the early 1950s. Clearly shown was Morden station and shops *c.* 1929, the Rose Hill development in 1949 and Hatfeild Mead in the early 1950s.

◆ **Peter Hopkins** showed us a picture of London Road, Morden, about 1760, that Canon Livermore had used in the original version of *The Story of Morden and its Churches*, and an extract from the 6" Ordnance Survey map of 1867 for comparison. (*see p.15 of this Bulletin*)

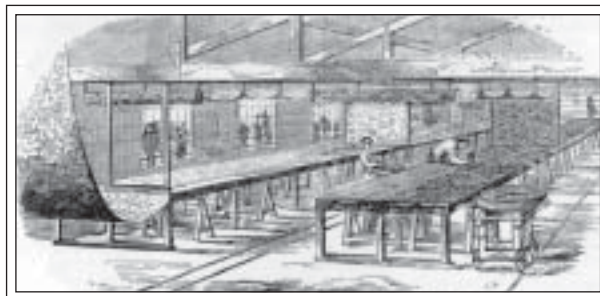
Peter showed a newspaper article which reported that the original lamp used in William Holman Hunt's painting *The Light of the World* (which has a Malden setting) had been found. It was among the possessions of his patron, Thomas Combe.

◆ **Don Fleming** spoke about the *Victoria County History* series which was begun in 1899. The most comprehensive ever undertaken - too comprehensive - it even included flora and fauna. In 1933 London University took it under its wing. This year work begins to put *VCH* on-line, and to bring the volumes out in paperback. But we may have to wait some years yet before Surrey appears.

◆ **Judith Goodman** spoke about James Hudson (d.1889), said, by local newspapers and by Chamberlain, to have been son-in-law to Thomas Crib, Nelson's gardener. He is likely to have been the source of some of the stories about Nelson at Merton Place. In fact Crib's wife was Mary, not Emma as Chamberlain says, was born in Wimbledon, not Merton, and seems to have been the wrong age for one of the Crib daughters.

Judith also spoke about two indentures for the Merton Abbey printworks: one from 1846 relating to Thomas Welch of Mitcham (probably Love Lane) who printed tablecloths shown at the Great Exhibition; and one from 1881 when William Morris took the site.

◆ **Madeline Healey** had brought along a family copy of the centenary booklet published by the Wandsworth Gas Company in 1934. It was very well produced, on good paper, with interesting photographs. She will provide photocopies for the Local Studies Centre, the Wandle Industrial Museum and the Society.



Merton: Mr T Welch's Table-cloth Printing Works  
*The Illustrated Exhibitor and Magazine of Art* 1852

**Don Fleming**

**Date of next workshop: Friday 11 January 2002 at 7.30 pm at Wandle Industrial Museum**

## NEW FOR CHRISTMAS

The second in our series of *Mitcham Histories* is now available. Written by our own Eric Montague, *North Mitcham* will be a welcome addition to the collections of members and friends alike.

North Mitcham included an estate belonging to Merton Priory in medieval times, and later became the centre for the production of the world-famous Mitcham Lavender. This 160-page book traces the history of the area, from its Saxon origins to the present day.

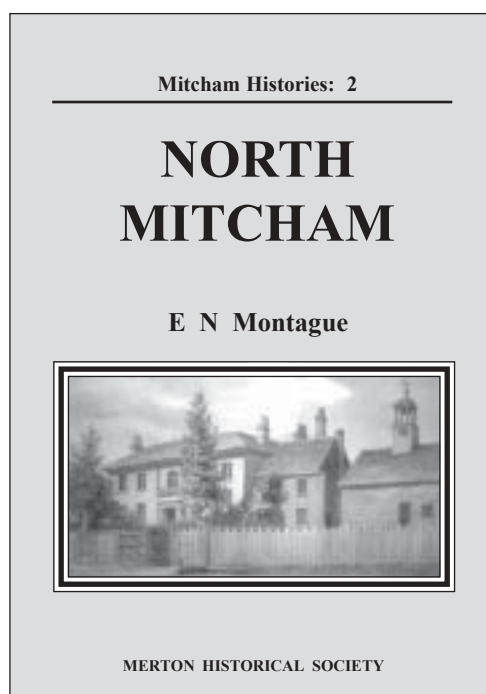
At a special members' price of £4.80 (full price £5.95), it is ideal for that extra Christmas present!

Copies of *Mitcham Histories 1: The Cricket Green*, are still available at the same price. Or buy the two for just £9.50!

Both titles will be available at meetings or from our Publications Secretary.

Postage is an extra 80p for each book, or ring Peter to arrange collection.

Volume 3 is in preparation. The sooner we sell volumes 1 and 2, the sooner we can publish the rest of the series.

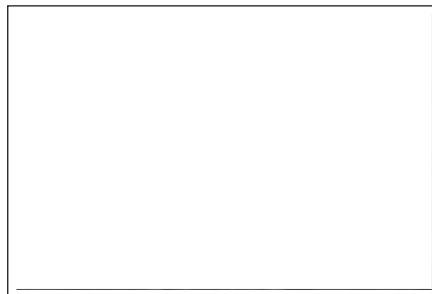


## RAVENSBURY PARK WALK – Saturday 18 August

A short stroll along the Wandle from Mitcham Bridge to Ravensbury Mill – a familiar walk, but there was so much to discover under the guidance of our own 'Mr Mitcham', Eric Montague.

At Mitcham Bridge we were shown the 1882 boundary plaque on the parapet, with Mitcham to the north and Morden to the south. On the far bank is 'Happy Valley', two acres bought in 1915 by Richardson Evans (founder of the Wimbledon Society, then called the John Evelyn Society) and given to the National Trust in memory of Octavia Hill. The main channel of the Wandle is 11 miles (19 kilometres) from its source to its mouth. In the short distance we were walking it falls five feet.

We stopped next on the footbridge by the lake, and saw a cedar of Lebanon on what had been the lawn of Mitcham Grove, the mansion of banker Henry Hoare from 1786 to 1828. The site was excavated by Surrey Archaeological Society in 1974/75, and evidence was found of a medieval house as well as Roman potsherds. Owned by Thomas Smythe, a high-ranking Elizabethan civil servant, his descendants remained for 200 years. In 1773 it became the home of Alexander Wedderburn KC, later Lord Loughborough, who had conducted Lord Clive's defence. The house was demolished around 1845, and the site was used by early film-makers, before being taken over by Hovis Ltd as a cricket field. The present Watermeads Housing Estate, which won a Civic Trust Award for its design, was built between 1975 and 1977. The lake was created for flood control.



Moving on to the entrance to Ravensbury Park itself, we heard that the manor of Ravensbury extended from Beddington Corner to the edge of Morden Hall Park, in both Mitcham and Morden parishes. The name is thought to refer to a former owner, perhaps Ralph Fitz Robert of Rouen (c.1180) or his contemporary Ralph de Tankerville. In the 13th and 14th centuries the manor was held by the de Mara or de la Mare family, and from the 16th to 19th centuries it belonged to the Carews of Beddington. In the 17th century much of the present park was used as crofting grounds for bleaching cloth, and the ridges can still be seen, as can the branch of the river which supplied the water. On the break-up of the Carew estate, Ravensbury House and the surrounding parkland was purchased by George Parker Bidder of Mitcham Hall. In 1912 Harold Bidder, who in 1951 became the first President of our Society, built a 'Queen Anne' style house near what today is the junction of Morton Road with Wandle Road. The house was demolished in the 1930s, but the former coach-house and part of the wall still survive. Between 1888 and 1922 Colonel Bidder had excavated the nearby Anglo-Saxon cemetery, where 238 Romano-British and Saxon graves have been discovered, dating from AD 450–600.

Our next stop was by the interpretation panel, where we admired the variety of exotic trees – Ginkgo, Swamp Cypress, Indian Bean, Californian Laurel, Chinese Cow Tail Pine, massive 200-year-old London Plane, and also the Gunnera ('giant rhubarb'). A total of 16¼ acres of the former parkland, part in Morden but most in Mitcham, was bought by the two councils in 1929, and opened by George Lansbury MP. The park has become run-down since 1965. The pleasure-boats have gone because the river was said to be too polluted at the time.

At the site of the old Manor house, we saw the scanty remains of the bow-fronted porch of the 18th-century façade added to an earlier house. Merton Historical Society organised a dig here in 1973 and 13th- and 14th-century pottery was found. In 1753 the tenant, John Arbuthnot, a gentleman farmer and a friend of Wimbledon's Lord Rockingham (Prime Minister in 1766), was responsible for diverting the road from Morden to its present route, though the old lane survives within the park.



By the entrance to Hengelo Gardens, named after Merton's twinned town of Hengelo in Holland, we saw the red-brick wall of the former Ravensbury Print Works, founded around 1690 by Peter Mauvillain, a calico and silk printer of Huguenot extraction. The works flourished in the 18th century, but was bankrupt by the 1850s. Our final stop was by the millstone set up behind the Ravensbury mills, used as the logo for the Wandle Industrial Museum who are still hoping to obtain funding to move to their Ravensbury Mill site. Built about 1805, this Grade II building, with two wheels still intact, was occupied by the firm founded by John Rutter, tobacco and snuff manufacturer, until 1925, and then by Whitely Products until the 1980s. The first mill buildings on this site were built around 1680.

Thank you, Monty, for yet another interesting and informative afternoon. And it didn't rain!

**Peter Hopkins**

A copy of Monty's detailed notes on five Wandle walks are held by the Wandle Industrial Museum for the use of guides.



## VISIT TO ADDINGTON

Still essentially a tiny village, separated from Croydon by open and wooded greenery, Addington has an attractive church, one or two typical Surrey flint-and-brick cottages, a picturesque early 19th-century working forge and a one-time palace. On 13 September a large party of members and friends travelled there by Tramlink and was met at the church by local historian Pat Tongue. She talked to us about the history of the building and about Addington in the 19th century, when it was the country home of the Archbishops of Canterbury. She then encouraged us to wander around the church and ask questions.

The chancel dates from the 12th century, and its stepped triplet windows are unusual and original. The narrow 13th-century south aisle has three bays, with alternating round and octagonal piers. However, the north aisle, most of the exterior and the rebuilding of the 18th-century tower all date from the 19th century. Much of this work was paid for by William Howley, the second Archbishop to live at Addington. He was the last of the 'Prince-Archbishops'; after his death the revenues of the see came under the control of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

There are some handsome monuments to local families. The Leighs are commemorated in 16th-century engraved brass and 17th-century stone. A striking marble urn (by Robert Mylne, c.1775), once described as a "pickle jar" by Sydney Smith, wit and cleric, is the memorial to Lord Mayor of London Barlow Trecothick; that to his first wife Grizzel ("who to an elegant form and mind united a virtuous and religious disposition") is a finely carved inscription plate.

Six Archbishops of Canterbury lived at Addington between 1808 and 1896, and the first five are buried here and commemorated by an ornate cross on a pedestal in the churchyard. Within the church can be seen a window to Tait (1868-82), brasses to Howley (1828-48) and Longley (1862-68), and stone memorials to Sutton (1805-28) and Sumner (1848-62). Archbishop Benson (1882-96, and father of E F Benson of 'Mapp and Lucia' fame), who chose to be buried at Canterbury, is remembered in the painted decoration of the chancel.



*Addington Churchyard and Archbishop Tait's Grave  
E Walford Greater London (1883-4)*

The palace, where we assembled in the afternoon, was bought by Act of Parliament in 1807 as a summer residence for the Archbishops, replacing the 'Old Palace' in Croydon, whose low-lying site had become unhealthy. Our guide was the enthusiastic building manager and curator. Addington Palace was built 1773-9 as Addington Lodge or Place, for Barlow Trecothick. The architect was Robert Mylne (to whom, incidentally, Wandle House in Riverside Drive, Mitcham, is sometimes attributed). It is of Portland stone, in Palladian style, and was built originally as a 3-storeyed balustraded block, with wings and end pavilions. Additions in similar style were by Henry Harrison in 1829-30, for Archbishop Howley, and then, at the end of the 19th century, Norman Shaw remodelled the interior and added a floor, for F A English, a South African diamond merchant who bought the house when Archbishop Temple decided to dispense with it.

The palace's later history includes use as a Red Cross hospital, a golf clubhouse, a hotel and from 1953 to 1996 the headquarters of the Royal School of Church Music. Owned by Croydon Corporation, it is now managed as a banqueting and conference centre, and country club. The attractive stables serve as the clubhouse for the golf course, which is separately run. The RSCM has moved to Box Hill.

After an introductory talk in the imposing 'great hall' drawing-room, we were shown over the other main rooms of the ground floor, which have had changing uses over the years. Dining, breakfast, morning and music rooms, under whatever names, are all handsomely fitted, with stone fireplaces, decorative plasterwork ceilings and lavish woodwork. Archbishop Sutton and his household always worshipped at the village church, but Howley's additions on this floor included not only a chapel but a library. The choirboys' robing-room was converted by Norman Shaw into a striking games room for the diamond merchant, and the main staircase and domed skylight above it also date from this period. The present decor of the house includes many (untitled) reproductions of familiar portraits, ranging from pre-Tudor to Edwardian, and some of our party (naming no names) became quite distracted during the tour, trying to identify the subjects!

Behind the house stands an enormous cedar of Lebanon, a reminder that 'Capability' Brown worked here for James Trecothick in 1781-2. The landscaped grounds drop away towards the village, giving an unspoilt view of the church tower framed by trees.

As we ate a lavish tea in this agreeable setting at the end of our tour, we all felt we had had a particularly interesting and enjoyable visit. Our thanks to our two local guides and to Sheila Harris for making the arrangements.

**Judith Goodman**

## MITCHAM COMMON WALK

On Saturday 29 September five intrepid explorers under the leadership of Martin Boyle, Warden at Mitcham Common, set off to explore. This was the visit originally scheduled for 16 June, but rained off.

We heard that the Common is run by a Board of Conservators drawn from Merton, Sutton and Croydon, and one from the City of London, while finance comes from the three boroughs, together with rent from the golf club, who use a sizeable area of the Common. In contrast to Wimbledon Common the Conservators cannot levy a local rate.

We set off along paths through wooded areas, passing sites of rare plants, across the acid grassland (for which the Common is known), to Seven Islands Pond. Here we heard the sad story of the avian botulism of a few weeks earlier. Notices were posted to keep dogs away, but little could be done for the birds.

Martin explained that, from time to time, trees that were healthy, but in the wrong place, had to be felled in order to preserve the Common's important habitats. The grassland was cut to keep scrub at bay, but late in the season, after the flowers had set seed. Some garden escapes such as Michaelmas daisies could be a nuisance, but others were easy to control.

On then to the Bidder memorial, to pay our respects to the man who, in the late 19th century, was instrumental in saving the Common from being built over, or dug up for gravel.

We plodded up Mill Hill (created by tipping), but then disaster struck. A rumble of thunder, and the heavens opened. Instead of the view from London round to the Surrey hills - just sheets of rain. We slithered down the other side and fled for hot cups of tea in the Mill House.

**Margaret Carr**

## THE VILLAGES STUDY GROUP

As a Millennium project Surrey Archaeological Society set up what has evolved into its Villages Study Group, whose brief is to investigate the origin and growth of villages in the historic county. The main emphasis is on maps. Members of the group meet regularly for day workshops at different venues, and on Saturday 20 October they came to The Canons. Anyone interested was welcome to attend during the day.

Two of our Society's members gave presentations, but this reporter could only attend after lunch, and therefore missed Eric Montague's talk about 'Mitcham and Wicford', which was followed by an illustrative walk. However, Peter Hopkins had an afternoon slot in which he briskly surveyed various techniques for producing maps on computer, including effective use of colour and hatching.

Graham Gower, who works at Lambeth Archives, spoke about 'Settlements in the Parish of Streatham' and illustrated his talk with his own illuminating 'activity' maps. And the final speaker was Alan Crocker, a paper mill specialist, on some 'Merton Mills'.

**JG**

## IN BRIEF

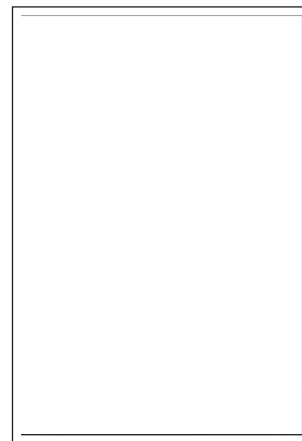
- ◆ **Surrey History Centre** in Woking will be closed for stockchecking from Monday 3 December to Saturday 15 December inclusive, re-opening on Tuesday 18 December. Holiday closures are 22-26 December, 31 December and 1 January, with normal openings again from Wednesday 2 January 2002.
- ◆ John Pile has sent a striking reference, which he came across recently, to the industrial development of the Wandle in the 18th century. The Hon. John Byng (1743-1813) used to amuse himself by spending many weeks of each summer from about 1781 to 1792 touring round different parts of this country, and writing down his observations and adventures. His journals were published in the 1920s. On a visit to Cromford, Derbyshire he inspected and was impressed by Arkwright's mills there (the Old Mill of 1771, and the Massons Mill of 1783). However he commented, "... these vales have lost their beauties ... [and] every rural sound is sunk in the clamours of cotton works". And he went on to regret that "the quiet and wild scenery ... [would] ... quickly become **as noisy as Carshalton or Merton in Surrey**".
- ◆ In press accounts of the newly refurbished BA Concorde which has begun to fly to New York again, fittings in "blue **Connolly** hide" have been mentioned. Sadly Connolly's have now moved all their operations to their main site in Kent, but for the better part of a century Wandlebank SW19 was their address. Rolls Royce, the Palace of Westminster, the QE2 and the new British Library are past and present customers.

## “SINGING NELSON’S PRAISE”

The Evelyn Jowett Memorial Lecture was held on Wednesday the 17th October 2001 in St Mary’s parish church, Merton, a very appropriate venue on two counts - Evelyn Jowett was a member of the congregation for many years, and the subject was Nelson. We are grateful to the Vicar for use of the church, and he welcomed members of the Society. Our Chairman, Lionel Green, then introduced Joan Walpole Reilly and Bernard Winter, who were to entertain us, and confessed that, though he moved away long ago, St Mary’s was his spiritual home, as he had been a choirboy here many years ago.

Joan Walpole Reilly told us that John Braham was the greatest tenor of his time. He was the composer and author of the hugely popular song *The Death of Nelson*, although it was not entirely original. He sang it, dressed as a sailor, in 1805, just after Trafalgar - a grieving Britannia pictured at the back of the stage. The audience was overwhelmed, and there were many encores. The popularity of this song continued for many years. When it was sung in 1811 at the Lyceum theatre a “large lady” in a box called for water and smelling-salts - this was Emma Hamilton. It seems strange to us that such songs were sung in the middle of opera performances, such as *Guy Mannering*, taken from the novel of Sir Walter Scott.

There have been patriotic songs since late in the 18th century, of which *Heart of Oak* was a good example. Charles Dibdin wrote 90 sea songs, of which the best known is *Tom Bowling*. These two were beautifully sung for us, unaccompanied, by Bernard Winter.



John Braham as a young man

After the Battle of the Nile in 1798 Nelson became the national hero of the sea. Lloyds and the East India Company rewarded him, as the Napoleonic Wars damaged their trade. Nelson was so great a hero that he was loved and admired even in the occasional defeat (such as Boulogne). We know that at this time John Braham visited Abraham Goldsmid at Morden Lodge, and most probably Emma Hamilton sang a duet with him to the tune of *God Save the King*.



John Braham as Orlando in The Cabinet by Thomas Dibdin 1802

The darker side of the picture was that there was no help for those sailors injured in the war. They had to beg on the streets, and there were Cockney songs telling of this. Pamphlets were sold on the streets giving the words of these songs.

In the 1840s John Braham went to America, but *The Death of Nelson* did not go down well there. It was too patriotic. There audiences preferred *The Bay of Biscay*. The fame of *The Death of Nelson* did not diminish in the Victorian era. In 1885 it was sung by a boy tenor at the Olympic theatre in Dublin, and this was quoted by James Joyce in *Ulysses*.

In 1905 it was sung at the Proms conducted by Sir Henry Wood in the centenary year of the Battle of Trafalgar. Subsequently Wood composed his famous *Fantasia on British Sea Songs*.

We all enjoyed the excellent singing of Bernard Winter, and in order not to be too melancholy at the end of the recital he regaled us with a song recounting the loss of the sailors’ pigtailed in 1820, when the Navy scrapped the wearing of these.

So ended an unusual and enjoyable meeting.

Lorna Cowell

## MORE ABOUT MOSES AND AARON

Ray Ninnis, whose exceptional study of St Olave, Mitcham, appeared in the last issue of the Bulletin, has been in touch with Dr Stephen Porter of English Heritage about the 3-dimensional figures of Moses and Aaron, once in the Tooley Street church, and since lost. Ray noted that the only other such pair which he knew of in a London church was at St Michael Paternoster Royal, but he can now add that there is another pair in the chapel cloister at the Charterhouse (*The Buildings of England, London 4: North* 1998 p.619).

Dr Porter tells him that these figures are of alabaster and were carved for the Charterhouse by John Colt the younger in 1636. They formed part of the chapel reredos. Dr Porter has recently co-written an article which discusses the work of John Colt at the Charterhouse chapel. This is S.Porter and A.White ‘John Colt and the Charterhouse Chapel’, *Architectural History* 44 (2001) pp.228-36. Members who know the Hospital of the Holy Trinity, or Whitgift almshouses, in Croydon (Society visit in May 1999) will probably recall the wooden commandment table there, of c.1601, with painted figures of Moses and Aaron. This example is cited in the article.

JG



## VISIT TO MERTON

What more appropriate way to mark the 500th anniversary of Merton College, Oxford? Ray and Pat Kilsby kindly provided pleasant summer weather for us.

The coach travellers had a coffee stop at Blackwell, where some of the stone for Merton College - this was brought from all over the world. In the churchyard at Blackwell, Winston, Clementine his wife, his parents, John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough, and Martin, Bladon-with Woodstock. The church at Blackwell, 19th-century ditto, is not as interesting as the church at Merton.



THE COLLEGE FROM THE MEADOWS

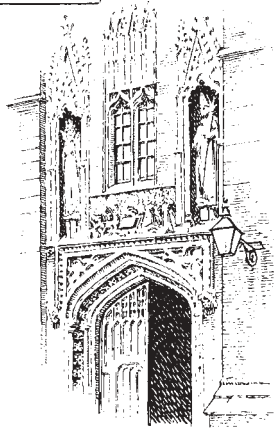
Then on to our main destination. Merton College is fortunate in its setting. Close to Merton Street are nevertheless sheltered from traffic noise by those of University College. Here, from the raised walk along the southern limit, there are peaceful views across the quadrangle. Divided into two groups to take turns seeing the buildings and the gardens, our walk through Merton College was, as we know, founded by Walter de Merton (c. 1205-1277), who took the college to be properly constituted as a college, its statutes of 1264 (finally revised in 1274) and the college was handsomely endowed by its founder, who is described by one modern writer as having 15 advowsons, all of which he bestowed on his *collegium*. Initially it was from the first that Walter acquired five properties on the south side of St John Street (present Merton Street) and land to the east, west and north of the first purchases.

Though a few of the buildings date in essence from the 13th century it is unlikely that the door of the Hall? The Hall itself was drastically remodelled by James Wyatt in the 18th century. The Quadrangle, in which also stands the mainly 15th-century gatehouse, ornamented on the Hall, now the Middle Common Room, has a roof of c. 1300. The late 15th-century Fitzwilliam Room survived two World Wars. Queen Henrietta Maria lodged in the room above in 1643/4. The Ray Visitor, Archbishop Warham, because he had "spoiled the college of land and rents ..."

The early 17th-century Fellows' Quadrangle was a project of the then Warden Sir Thomas Bodley, displaying the four orders of architecture, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and Composite. Under the Mob Quad, Oxford's oldest quadrangle, was built over a period of nearly a century, the behaviour among its residents. In one corner is the 13th-century Treasury, still with a stone roof and its 14th-century Library. This originally held lecterns and chained manuscripts, but, in the 19th century, was reorganised as Oxford's first stalled library. Medieval levels of lighting, heating and ventilation were replaced by globes replaces a much earlier pair (the first in Oxford) that was swapped for the chandelier. The chapel, which also served as a parish church till 1891, consists only of a choir, tower and transept, disposed of by Warden Rawlins to the builders of Corpus Christi College. Nonetheless, the chapel is at the crossing, a fine Wren screen, many interesting monuments.

In the College gardens it was hard to believe that the long hedge, the 250-year-old lime avenue had come to the end also in the last century. It does not appear. This is a tribute to the vision and hard work of the gardeners who have the grass that sets off the trees and beds. At the far end is a charming music room. And by way of contrast close by is the Warden's Lodgings. (The present Warden is a woman - the first.)

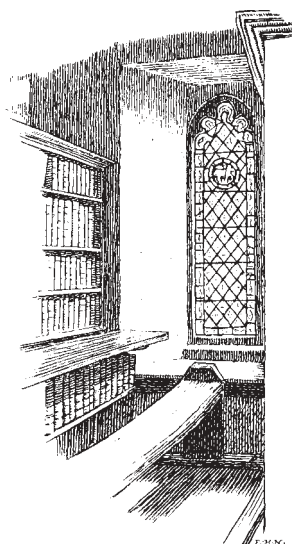
Former members of the college include, Sir Max Beerbohm, Thomas Cardinal Manning, Airey Neave MP, Sir Richard Steele and many others. There was a little time after our tour for a quick dash to the Ashmolean Museum with a cup of tea before the return journey. Most of the party enjoyed an excellent day altogether, and many thanks to the Kilsbys - with love in 2002.



THE COLLEGE GATE



Patey's Quad



A RECESS IN THE LIBRARY

Illustrations by Edmund H New from H J White Merton College Oxford



# N COLLEGE ON 21 JULY

10th anniversary of our Society than a visit to Merton  
 ally arranged this treat, and efficiently booked some

don. Once a quarry village - which indeed has provided  
 is still a small place, though accustomed to visitors  
 lie members of the Churchill family, including Sir  
 his son and two of his daughters. Since the time of  
 h, the family has been the patron of the living of St  
 ch however, as a late Victorian re-build of an early  
 ne monuments in and around it.

the centre of the city, its buildings on both sides of  
 ege, and at the back its boundary is that of the old city.  
 eadman's Walk to Christchurch Meadow and beyond.  
 ledgeable guides made us most welcome.

ook his name from Merton priory. It was the first establishment in Oxford or Cambridge  
 its *regula Mertonensis* establishing a pattern followed by subsequent foundations. The  
 ter as a "superb conveyancer", and whose lifetime acquisitions included 15 manors and  
 rst of these, Malden, that the college estates were administered.

et) which formed the site for the first college buildings. In later years the college added

t Walter de Merton would now recognise much - perhaps the splendid iron-bound oak  
 1790s and gothicised by Scott in the 1870s. It occupies the south side of the Front  
 the street side with statues of Edward I and Walter de Merton himself. The Warden's  
 james Arch bears the arms of Henry VII and serves as the college war memorial for the  
 vllins Arch commemorates (surprisingly?) a Warden who was dismissed by the college  
 [and was] useless to the college and not only useless, but damnably so".

Henry Savile. Its most striking feature is a monumental gateway on the south side,  
 ndergraduates have been known to scale the façade and pose in the niches.

from the 1280s to the 1380s, and its name may be a facetious one, and refer to bad  
 stone roof, as a fire precaution. On the south is one of Merton's chief glories,  
 with the development of printed books, new storage was built and it was  
 ventilation, having been assessed, are still observed. A pair of 18th-century  
 pel organ!

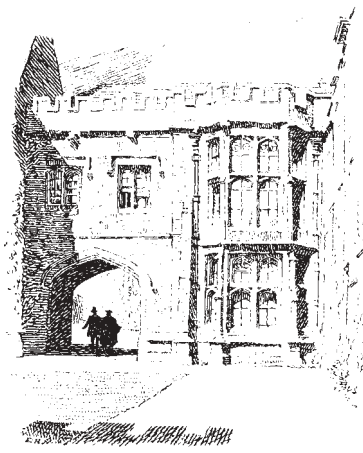
ver and transepts, the land on which the nave would have stood having been  
 s it is an impressive building, with a beautiful east window, splendid arches  
 ts and a tower that is one of Oxford's landmarks.

erbaraceous border was a new feature, and that a  
 te 1990s - so established and planned did it all  
 very small) gardening team - as is the velvety  
 nning early 18th-century summer-house used as  
 n's house, a nondescript product of the 1960s.

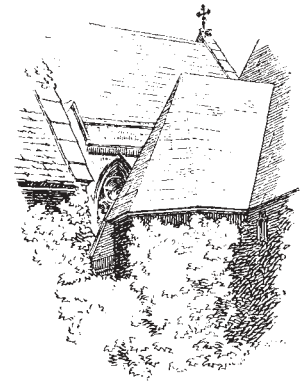
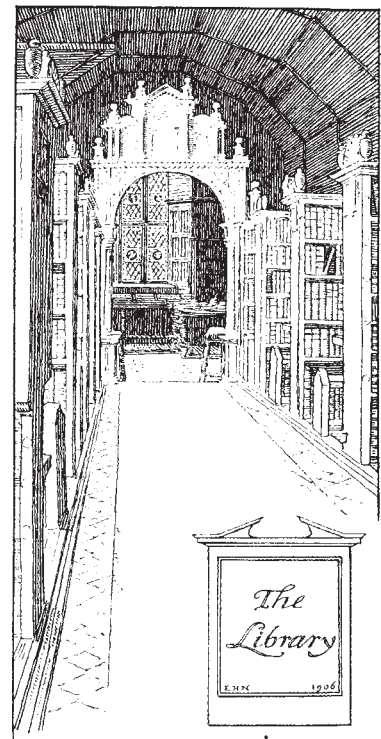
S Eliot, William Harvey, Sir Thomas Lawrence,  
 Lord Randolph Churchill.

shmolean, or one of the churches, or a sit-down  
 arty then dined together at Morden Hall. An  
 ho have offered to put on another coach visit in

**Judith Goodman**



THE QUEEN'S ROOM



NORTH-EAST CORNER OF MOB QUAD, SHOWING THE STONE ROOF OF THE TREASURY



PLAN OF MERTON COLLEGE



The College Chapel from Merton St

Oxford (1906)

## LIONEL GREEN has another instalment of the Merton Priory story to tell in THE POMEROY BENEFICENCE

A previous article recounted the beneficence of the Keynes family to Merton (Bulletin No.138 'Ralph de Cahaigns'). Mention was made of the gift to Merton Priory of the church of Kahaynes or Cahaigns in Normandy about 1172. The church or cell, or perhaps a grange at Cahaigns, was 18km from Falaise, Normandy, south of the Vire road. There had been problems over the right of patronage, and about 1180 the priory sought to exchange properties with the Benedictine monastery of St Fromond near Vire. This would have given Merton Stamford Castle plus five churches in the town and other property, but for some unknown reason the exchange never took place.

In 1266 negotiations took place for a revised exchange of properties with the Augustinian abbey of St Mary du Val in Normandy, whereby each gave up a cell to the other "by the will of the patrons of both places".<sup>1</sup>

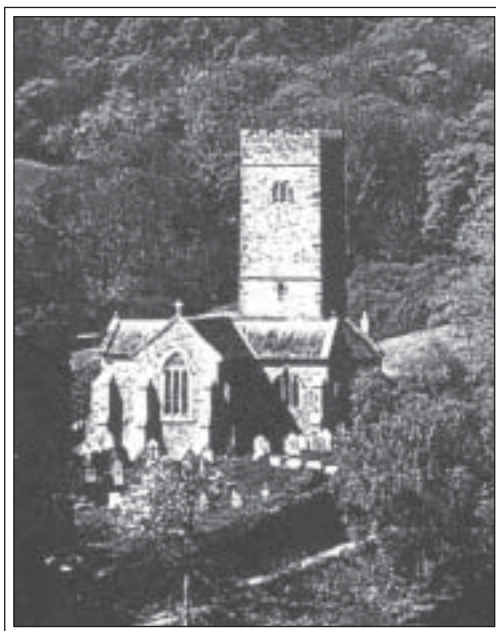
The patron of Val abbey was Henry de Pomeroy (1235-80), and it was an ancestor of his, Gosselin de la Pomeraï (d. c.1139) who "so largely endowed the house of Austin canons of St Mary du Val, that he may be regarded as its true founder" in 1125.<sup>2</sup>

Ralph de la Pomeraï, Gosselin's father, fought at Hastings and had been a childhood friend of William the Conqueror in Falaise. He took his name from La Pommeraye, 16km west of the town. William rewarded Ralph with 59 manors, mostly in Devon, and it was some of these possessions that Gosselin gave to St Mary du Val. He also founded a small priory at Tregony, Cornwall, before 1125, which became part of the endowment of Val.<sup>3</sup>

In exchange for the cell of Cahaigns, Normandy, owned by Merton, Val abbey offered theirs of Tregony, Cornwall, and all other Pomeroy estates in England. These included the churches of Berry Pomeroy, Stockleigh Pomeroy, Ashcombe, Buckerell, Clyst St George, Upottery, and St Lawrence, Exeter, all in Devon; the churches of Tregony and Hissy in Cornwall, and the church of Oare in Somerset. There were also the important manors of Berry Pomeroy with demesne lands in Worthy Berry, of Teyne in Christow and the lesser tithes of Smallridge.

Some of these possessions may have been leased to Merton previously, for on 29 August 1259 the priory presented a clergyman to Clyst St George.<sup>4</sup>

The bishop involved with the estates in Devon and Cornwall was Walter Bronescombe, and on 28 June 1266 he issued a licence for the exchange to take place.<sup>5</sup> Merton made arrangements with the patron of the living of the Pomeroy properties on 22 January 1267. Henry de Pomeroye was granted a charter to hold the demesne lands of Berry at Worthy Berry by the concession of the priory, and the patron was given the right of presenting a clerk to the canonry at Merton.<sup>6</sup>



*St Nectan, Ashcombe*

On 16 March 1267, the abbot of du Val sent his proctor to effect the exchange. The patron of the Merton cell and all the French possessions involved in the exchange was the Keynes family.<sup>7</sup> On the part of Merton, the prior granted and confirmed "all land which they possessed in lay fee at Kahaynes and elsewhere in Normandy as well of wood as of plain, and in corn-land, pasturages and commons, but subject to due and accustomed fees and services".<sup>8</sup> The Merton Cartulary records that on 14 July "it was agreed that for equality of partition the Priory should pay the Abbey thirteen marks sterling per annum at Merton on the feast of St John the Baptist".<sup>9</sup> An agreement of 16 August 1267 gave the manor of Teyne Canonicorum to Merton in frankalmoign, "but is to admit a fit person presented by the family of Pomeroy to pray for their souls etc. and he is to give them [the Merton canons] three acres in Berry to store their fruits [of the field] on".<sup>10</sup> The bishop issued a decree pointing out that the priory had the undertaking to find suitable clergy for the cures of St James and St Kybi<sup>11</sup> in Tregony. He ordered that "they shall be entitled to receive for their own use the greater tithes of corn and hay, and all returns and pensions and all tithes of mills".<sup>12</sup>

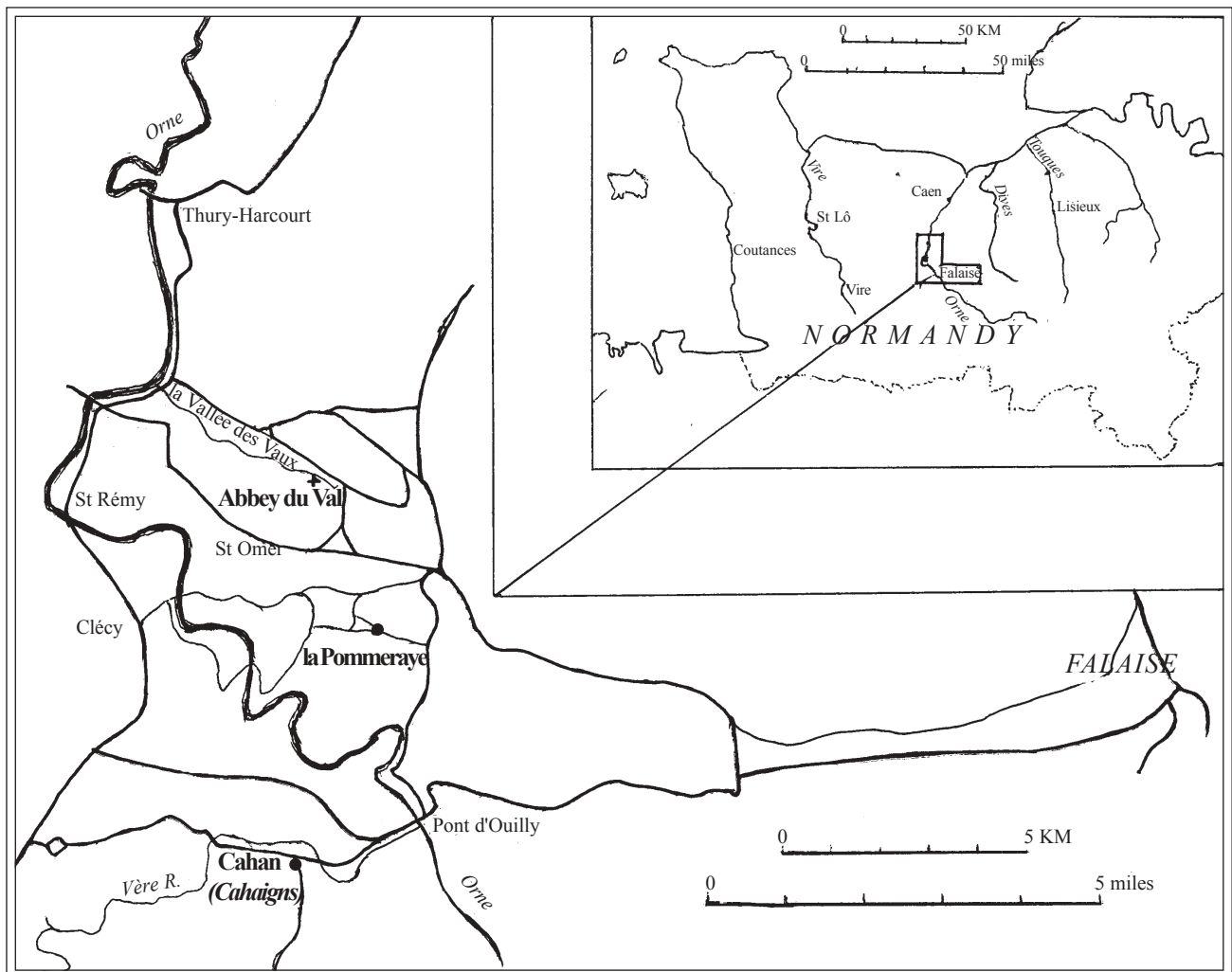
Although called a priory, Tregony was not a true monastery, but became designated an 'alien' priory because the revenues were sent abroad to the mother house. The buildings often consisted of just a church with no claustral buildings. Accommodation for the few priests would consist of a dormitory and dining area on the upper floor of a two-storied house.

A separate deed provided for three priests to be retained at Tregony to keep up divine services.<sup>13</sup> Conventual life proved difficult, and on 26 April 1282 bishop Quivil of Exeter agreed that the priory be reduced to a grange and staffed by a single canon.<sup>14</sup>

A Nicholas de Tregony became a canon of Merton, and when Gilbert de Ashe died in 1292, he became prior, elected on 28 April and installed on 1 June 1292. He died on 26 September 1295.

On 14 March 1534 Merton priory decided to lease the rectory and lordship of Tregony-Merton to Nicholas Prideaux (d.1560) for 40 years,<sup>15</sup> and later that year, on the feast of the Holy Cross (14 September), he purchased the lordship.

1. *Register of W.Bronescombe* (bishop of Exeter 1258-80) 1889 p.275; A Heales *The Records of Merton Priory* London 1898 p.146
2. E B Powley *The House of de la Pomeroy* 1944 pp.1,9,14
3. *Archives de la France Monastique* xvii 1914 p.133
4. *Register of W.Bronescombe* 1889 s.a.1259 p.125
5. Heales 1898 p.149. Bronescombe was no stranger to Merton. He had been archdeacon of Surrey 1247-57 and stayed at the priory on 15 March 1258 (Heales 1898 p.132) and 25 March 1260 (Heales 1898 p.137)
6. Heales 1898 p.156
7. Ralph de Cahaigne (Kaines, Keynes) was a great benefactor of Merton. He and his wife Alice gave land in Peckham, Kent, and the churches of Coombe Keynes, Dorset, and Somerford Kaynes, Gloucestershire. Both his mother and his wife were buried at Merton Priory, and when he died in 1174 his name was entered in the Annals of Merton. *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 36 (1925) p.42
8. Heales 1898 p.148
9. Heales 1898 p.147
10. *Devon Assoc.: Record and Trans.* 15 (1883) p.440
11. St Kybi was a Cornishman, a cousin of St David, and founded a Celtic monastery in the Roman fort at Holyhead c.540. Cuby (Cornish), Gybi (Welsh), Kebii (Latin)
12. Heales 1898 p.149
13. *Register Collegii Exoniensis* (ed. C W Boase) p.321
14. D Knowles and R N Hadcock *Medieval Religious Houses. England and Wales* 1953 p.161n. The grange was situated on the hill near the castle.
15. *Ancient Deeds* D1226 vol 3 p.552





## JOHN PILE raises some points relating to THE MITCHAM VIRGATE:

In an attempt to arrive at some estimate of the size of the de Redvers' estate in Mitcham during the 12th and 13th centuries, Eric Montague, in his recent book *The Cricket Green* (p.19), says that "the extent of the de Redvers lands in Mitcham is of course difficult to determine precisely, but if we take a virgate to represent very roughly 15 acres (6 ha), the average for Surrey, we arrive at an estate of roughly two and a half hides, or some 300 acres (120 ha)".<sup>1</sup> These calculations are either based on the mistaken assumption that the hide contains eight virgates, or Eric has made a simple arithmetical error. At the period under consideration the hide was generally reckoned to be 120 acres (48 ha), usually of arable land, and there were four virgates to the hide. A virgate, also known as a yardland, was nominally 30 acres (12 ha), and this was reckoned to be the normal villein holding on a medieval manor, upon which the tenant's rents, labour services and other dues were based, but in practice neither the hide nor the virgate was of a consistent size from one manor to another.

If it is accepted that the Mitcham virgate may have been 15 acres (6 ha), then Eric has erroneously based his calculations on an eight-virgate hide. If, on the other hand, it is assumed that Eric has correctly reckoned four virgates to the hide, then his Mitcham virgate would be equivalent to 30 acres (12 ha). In the absence of any documentary proof for the size of the Mitcham virgate, it can only be guessed at, and it is not very helpful to adopt an average figure. John Blair has performed the useful service of collecting from various sources the sizes of 16 Surrey virgates, and these are found to vary from 32 acres (13 ha) at Farleigh to 10 acres (4 ha) at Petersham.<sup>2</sup> Assuming that the Mitcham virgate did not lie outside this range, the de Redvers estate could have been anywhere between 100 acres (40 ha) and 320 acres (128 ha) in extent. Although I do not believe that an 'average' virgate is a very helpful concept, it may be of interest to note that for the 16 manors for which Blair has definite data the average virgate is 17.7 acres (7 ha).

Another assumption that must be questioned is that the total area of a mediaeval estate may be calculated from the number of virgates it contained. As a measure of arable land the hide and the virgate were applied to both demesne and tenant ploughlands, and only occasionally in Domesday Book do we find pasture and woodland measured and assessed in these units. Throughout the Middle Ages the virgate or yardland is the unit of measurement and assessment for a villein's holding of arable land in the open fields, and a typical entry in the court rolls might record the admittance of a tenant in villeinage to "a messuage and a yardland of bondland with appurtenances". The messuage was the villein's house and the land immediately surrounding it; the use of the term bondland signified that the holding was subject to the labour services and other dues appropriate to the condition of villeinage; and the term 'appurtenances' would have covered the villein's share in the meadow, rights of common in the manorial waste, and other resources available to the tenant according to the 'custom of the manor', although not specifically mentioned in his copyhold title. As the proportion of virgated to non-virgated land could vary considerably from one manor to another, it must be concluded that the number of virgates on a manor really tells us little about its total area. Neither does it tell us how many villeins there were. As Barbara Harvey found when she analysed the Westminster Abbey estates in Middlesex in Domesday Book (Table 1), less than a quarter of the virgated tenants actually held a virgate; the majority held less than a half-virgate.<sup>3</sup>

No. of tenants	Holding in virgates	% of Tenants
13	> 1	4.7
65	1	23.6
55	½	19.9
143	< ½	51.8
276		100.0

Table 1. Size of villein holdings on the Middlesex estates of Westminster Abbey in 1086. (Source: Harvey 1977)

A number of interesting questions arise from this discussion, but I shall refer briefly to only one of them, having already wandered far enough from the original purpose of this note. Why does the virgate vary in size between one manor and another? One explanation is that the size of the virgate was related to the fertility of the soil - the poorer the soil the larger the virgate required to support the tenant and his family. Although this may appear to be a reasonable supposition, a direct relationship is difficult to demonstrate in all cases. However, in Northamptonshire, where David Hall has investigated the question, there does appear to be a broad correlation between yardland size and soil type, but it is clear that the quality of the soil was not the only factor involved.<sup>4</sup> Another possible explanation which may be worth exploring is that on manors with a high population, but relatively little arable land, the allowance per tenant would be necessarily smaller than on a manor with extensive ploughlands and fewer tenants to provide for. A third possible reason for the wide variety of virgates is variation in the size of the acre. Throughout the Middle Ages, and indeed until the early 19th century, there was a wide variety of acres in use. The Statute Acre of 4840 square yards (0.4 ha) was fixed by the Assize of Measures in 1196, but the Customary Acre, which might vary from one manor to another, persisted until an Act of Parliament of 1824 largely removed them. In Sussex, for example, the customary acre varied in size from 3,226.6 square

yards (0.27 ha) to 7853.58 square yards (0.65 ha).<sup>5</sup> Is it possible that the Petersham virgate contained only 10 acres (4 ha) because the acres were large, whilst the Farleigh virgate contained 32 acres (13 ha) of a smaller size? These are not the only possible explanations for variation in virgate size, and it should be said that no satisfactory explanation for the customary acre has been offered since Frederic Seebohm opened the debate in 1914.<sup>6</sup> The origin of the variable virgate is equally obscure and there is considerable scope for new research. One of the problems standing in the way of progress in this field at present is the lack of adequate data. Blair<sup>7</sup> has collected reliable figures for the virgate in early mediaeval Surrey, but, as far as I am aware, there are no comparable figures for the customary acre.

1. *E N Montague* Mitcham Histories: 1 The Cricket Green *Merton Historical Society* 2001 p.19
2. *J Blair* Early Medieval Surrey *Stroud* 1991 p.72
3. *B Harvey* Westminster Abbey and its Estates in the Middle Ages *Oxford* 1997 p.203 n.3
4. *D Hall* The Open Fields of Northamptonshire *Northamptonshire Record Society, Northampton* 1995 ch.6
5. *A E Nash* 'Perch and Acre Sizes in Medieval Sussex' *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 116 (1978) pp.57-67
6. *F Seebohm* Customary Acres and their Historical Importance 1914
7. *Blair* op.cit.

**A Mitcham character, by ERIC MONTAGUE:**

## **THE REV HENRY JAMES WHARTON MA**

### **Vicar of Mitcham (1846-59) and Schoolmaster**

(This note is prompted by a reference to Henry Wharton, vicar of Mitcham, in Desmond and Moore's *Darwin*,<sup>1</sup> kindly brought to my notice recently by Judith Goodman.)

The Rev Wharton was formally instituted in December 1846, following the resignation of Richard Simpson. His arrival at Mitcham must have presaged a dramatic change in life at the hitherto sedate early Victorian vicarage, for whereas his immediate predecessors were either single, or newly married men without families, Wharton's household comprised his wife Mary and their four young sons, together with a domestic staff of footman, cook, two nurses, two housemaids and a kitchenmaid.

Furthermore, by 1851 (and probably before) Wharton was running a boarding school for boys at the vicarage, the census return for that year listing eight resident pupils aged between 12 and 14. Whether previous incumbents had also taken pupils - a not uncommon practice amongst parish clergy where the living was not particularly well endowed - is not clear. On cartographical evidence the eastern end of the present vicarage was extended and what might originally have been a schoolroom was added after 1847, but whether this can be attributed to Wharton or his successor, the Rev Wilson, is not known.

One of Wharton's pupils was William Darwin, born in 1839, and the eldest son of the great Charles Darwin. The fee of £75 a term paid for drilling 'Willy' in "nothing but Latin grammar" seems high, but was presumably acceptable. William, to his credit, did well, and his father, not one to under-rate the value of a good education and well able to pay for it, held to the view that "a boy who can conquer Latin can conquer anything" and wisely resolved not to disrupt the process. With his Mitcham schooling behind him, in February 1852 young William proceeded to Rugby, where at £120 all-in, the cost was surprisingly far less than at the Rev Wharton's establishment. It was not merely Latin however that William learned at Mitcham, for while there he overcame an adolescent awkwardness, and, putting away "grave and gruff manners" (his father's words), acquired an ability to "please everybody".

The fees charged by the Rev Wharton (presumably they were the same for all his pupils) contrast strangely with the remuneration of the organist, Joseph Barnby (later Sir Joseph Barnby, and a close friend of Sir Arthur Sullivan). As a young man, desperately in need of a post, he accepted the position of organist at Mitcham in the mid-1850s. The salary was small - £18 per annum - and he held the position for a bare three years, leaving in 1857 when his mother died. Barnby lived in a house on the far side of the Common, walking to and from the church across the heath, then the haunt of gypsies and, reputedly of 'garrotters'.<sup>2</sup>

Recalling his early childhood memories of Mitcham church, Robert Masters Chart (who was born in 1850) wrote, "I well recollect the Rev Henry James Wharton, the Vicar, who died in 1859, as a tall upright man, usually dressed in a tight frock coat and a white cravat; he was considered a very excellent reader. As a child, he taught me patience by the length of the service and the Sermons".<sup>3</sup> (The latter generally lasted for 40-45 minutes!)

Wharton was succeeded in August 1859 by the Rev Daniel Frederick Wilson MA, newly graduated from Wadham College, Oxford, who was to remain vicar of Mitcham for 59 years.

1. A Desmond and J Moore *Darwin* Penguin Books, London 1992 (1991) p.400
2. Information supplied by Canon Barnby (descendant) in a telephone conversation in April 1996
3. R M Chart 'Mitcham Parish Church' in *Old Mitcham Part I* (gen. ed. H F Bidder) 1923

This contribution arose out of a Workshop session last year.

## ERIC MONTAGUE tells THE STORY OF No.70 CHRISTCHURCH ROAD.

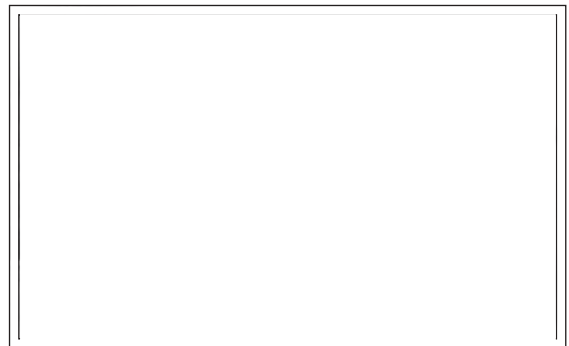
A number of people who, like me, passed through Colliers Wood fairly regularly during the summer of 1979 may have been dismayed to see what at first seemed to be the end of No.70 Christchurch Road, one of the last surviving examples of a pantiled and weatherboarded house in this part of the Borough. Although listed since 1976 as a Grade II building of architectural or historic interest, the little cottage at the corner of Fortescue Road had been looking rather woebegone for some time, and then suddenly the roof was off, and the next day only a few pieces of the 4"x2" timber framing remained.

In too much of a hurry to stop, I consoled myself with the thought that I was at least witnessing part of Mitcham's history, even if it was a rather sad episode. It was in this frame of mind that a few days later I was rather puzzled (but encouraged) to see new timber-framing in position, bright green with preservative. A week later, weatherboarding was in place, and a new pantiled roof. Amazing! Here was a brand-new No.70 Christchurch Road, looking very much as it must have appeared when first built, some time early in the 19th century!

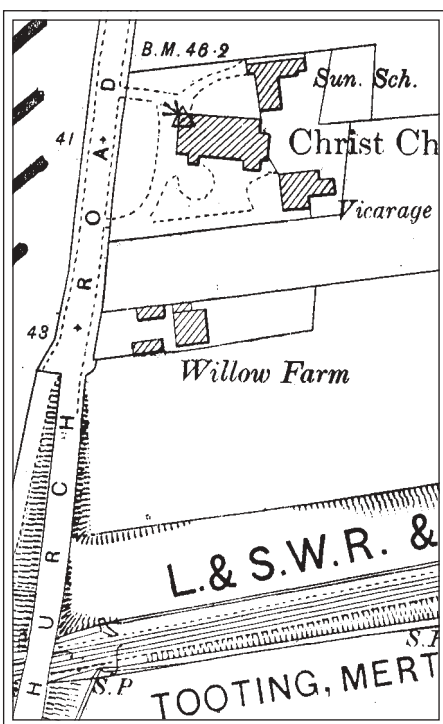
I had photographed the original cottage in the 1960s, but always regretted not having recorded its remarkable resurrection. I was delighted therefore when about a year ago I received a call from Mr Lionel A Ebdon of 3 Lucien Road, Wimbledon Park asking me if I knew anyone who might be interested in some slides he had taken whilst "the old wooden cottage in Christchurch Road was being rebuilt". I invited him to attend a workshop meeting (see Bulletin No.134 June 2000), when those present were shown the 11 transparencies he had taken between August 1979 and March 1980 of the work in progress and the final result. We all congratulated Lionel on his initiative, and he kindly offered the slides to the Society for retention. I have them in my possession at the present time, but feel they ought to go eventually to Surrey History Centre, together with a copy of this Bulletin, as a permanent record.

This note affords me the opportunity of recounting something of the history of the cottage, illustrated with a photograph of it with its former companions, both of which have long vanished.

The first documentary records of the cottage seem to be in the tithe survey of 1838, the register of 1846 and the accompanying map of 1847. It was then one of a pair, standing either side of a large barn-like building of similar construction to the rear. The premises were owned by James Moore, the noted grower of aromatic and medicinal herbs, and principal of the firm of Potter and Moore. The cottages were tenanted by John Pool and John Willett, and the third building was a textile printing shop occupied by a George Anderson (see Bulletin No.135 Sept. 2000). The land on which the buildings stood was tithe-free, suggesting it might originally have been owned by Merton priory.



*Willow Farm, Christchurch Road, c.1914*



In 1853, following Moore's death two years previously, his estate was auctioned, the cottages and print shop being offered as Lot 51, which included six perches of land fronting the road acquired only a few years before from the, by then defunct, Surrey Iron Railway. The premises were on lease to Thomas and John Leach Bennett of Merton Abbey, and the central building was in use as a silk and holland printing shop. One of the cottages was occupied by Maria Poole [*sic*]. What had happened to John has not been ascertained, but it seems a reasonable assumption that it was the Pools or their family who were remembered in 'Pool's Corner', the name by which the junction of Western Road and Church Road was invariably known in the 1940s and '50s.

The 25-inch OS map of 1894-6 marks the same group of three buildings as 'Willow Farm', but it must have ceased life as a working farm soon afterwards, for a local directory published a few years later shows the barn being used by a lath renderer, and one of the cottages tenanted by Robert Coombes, a 'carman', and his wife Mary. Ownership of the property eventually passed into the hands of the Metropolitan Water Board.

No.70 Christchurch Road SW19 (NGR TQ 2681 7008) remains on the current statutory list as a Grade II building.

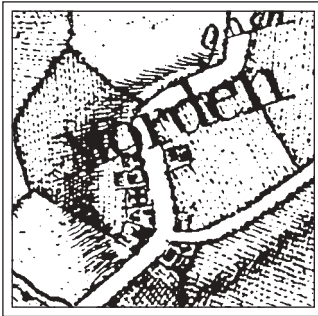
*Detail from the 1894-6 Second Edition 25" to 1 mile OS map (pub.1897)*



## PETER HOPKINS has been trying to identify A VIEW OF LONDON ROAD MORDEN c.1760

In the first edition of Canon Livermore's *The Story of Morden and its Churches*, since revised by Bill Rudd, there is a tiny photograph of an engraving, captioned *London Road, about 1760*. St Lawrence Church is visible in the background, but in the foreground are other buildings, on both sides of the road.

My sense of direction is poor, so I took an enlarged photocopy of the picture to the October Workshop. With the aid of some aerial photographs of the area around the church, which Bill had brought as part of his contribution to the evening, we decided that the artist must have been to the north of the church, where the old road undergoes a double bend.



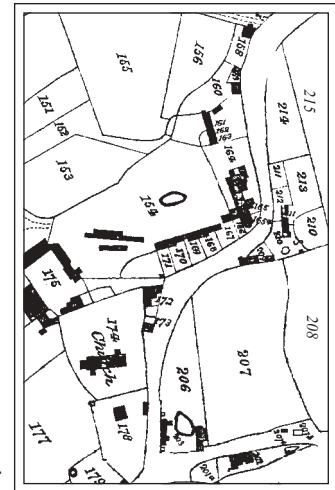
John Rocque's *Map of Surrey*, also dating from the 1760s, shows five properties near the church. Two to the south of the church probably represent the *George* inn and the property now misnamed Manor House. One immediately to the north of the church probably represents the farm soon to be known as Morden Park Farm. The one to the north of that, and the one facing it on the eastern side of the road are probably the two properties shown in the painting. We do not know the name of the occupiers in the 1760s, but evidence from 1745 suggests that at that time the western property was in the occupation of Michael Churcher or Crutcher and the eastern one of Henry Webb.

Within a few years a number of cottages were built on the western side of the road, first appearing in extant records around 1770. They may have been built as part of the new Morden Park estate as, in 1783, Richard Garth, lord of the manor, granted to Thomas Conway of Morden Park an 84-year lease of various cottages and a blacksmith's shop 'all situate between the church and the Great Gate leading from the turnpike to the messuage of Thomas Conway'.<sup>1</sup> On the Tithe Apportionment map of 1838 these are plots 157-166, 169a-171, in the possession of George Cooper Ridge of Morden Park. Three others (167-169), were not in Ridge's possession, but were held directly from Rev. Richard Garth by their individual tenants.

When Richard Garth V came of age in 1745 a document listed all his properties.<sup>2</sup> These included a 'messuage and tenement with orchard, yards, outhouses, edifices and buildings and 5 acres in Churchfield, adjoining the highway leading to the Parish church', leased to Michael Churcher or Crutcher. These appear in the 1769 lease<sup>3</sup> of the Morden Park estate to John Ewart: 'two parcels of land in Church Field adjoining the highway behind two messuages and an orchard over against the pound containing 4½ acres'; and 'two cottages belonging to the above'. We know, from references from 1797 onwards,<sup>4</sup> that the pound was by the Churchyard, on 'a parcel of waste' later occupied by a wheelwright's shop (plots 172-173), so the farmstead would have been on or near plots 170-171.

The land on the eastern side of the road seems to have been the ten acres known for centuries as Newbury. In 1745 part was held by Henry Webb and part by John Major, a blacksmith whose family also held the *George* inn (plot 179).<sup>5</sup> John Major leased 'a messuage with outhouse sheds and orchard and one lower room or shop with Tyle Shed adjoining shop and coal shed and one other messuage with orchard yards gardens outhouses edifices and buildings', together with 'Great Waterdons' containing 10 acres (adjoining the Crown site) and 'Newberys' containing 4 acres. In 1838 the landlord of the *George* held a 3½-acre paddock in the former Newbury (plot 215), so John Major's 'Newberys' may also have been associated with the *George* rather than with his shop.

Two adjoining paddocks – plots 207 (1½ acres) and 208 (4 acres) – were held by a James Peat and probably represent part of Henry Webb's former holding, described as 'a messuage or tenement with orchards barns stables yards outhouses offices and buildings', plus 'a pightle adjoining his messuage containing 1 acre 3 roods', plus 'a parcel of land called Newberry Close containing 4 acres 1 rood', and 'two closes commonly called by the name of Little Hobald containing 14 acres'. If plot 207 is to be identified with the 'pightle', which adjoined his messuage, Henry's farmstead would probably have been on plots 209-214.



1. Surrey History Centre K85/2/115.

2. K85/2/51.

3. K85/2/73; K85/2/303.

4. K85/21/3; K85/2/178-192.

5. Surrey History Centre K85/8/1; Surrey Quarter Sessions records; Abstracts of wills published by West Surrey Family History Society.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2001-2002

The minutes of the AGM are enclosed with this Bulletin.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

**Subscriptions became due on 1 October. If you do not pay by banker's order and have not already paid direct, your subscription is now overdue. Please use the form which was enclosed with the September Bulletin. Membership is £6 for one person, £3 for any additional member of the household. Cheques are payable to Merton Historical Society and should be sent to our new Membership Secretary.**

### AN APOLOGY

In some copies of the last Bulletin there were pages on which the printing was rather faint. This was caused by a mysterious fault in the printing process, which has not recurred. We apologise to those members affected and hope that they were not seriously inconvenienced.

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.

*Printed by Peter Hopkins*