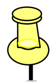
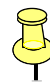
PRESIDENT: J Scott McCracken BA FSA MIFA

VICE PRESIDENTS: Viscountess Hanworth, Lionel Green and William Rudd

BULLETIN NO. 145 CHAIRMAN: Peter Hopkins MARCH 2003



PROGRAMME MARCH-JUNE



Saturday 15 March 2.30pm **Snuff Mill Environmental Centre**

'Worcester Park, Cuddington and Nonsuch'

Historian **David Rymill** is a native of Worcester Park and is fascinated by its history. Three years ago he published *Worcester Park & Cuddington: a walk through the centuries*.

An illustrated lecture.

Saturday 12 April 2.30pm **The Canons, Madeira Road, Mitcham**

'A Demonstration of Anglo-Saxon Arms and Armour'

David McDermott is an experienced re-enactor who has contributed to historical television programmes (including one of Simon Schama's) and has done demonstrations at the Museum of London and elsewhere.

Saturday 17 May 11.00am **Day visit to Dorking**

Meet at Dorking North station for a walking tour of the town, famous in the Middle Ages for its poultry market, and now a commuter town, but with much to see from the past. **Lionel Green**, who has been chairman of both Dorking Museum and the local history group, and is a vice-president of Dorking Preservation Society, will be our guide. Pub (or café) lunch.

Friday 6 June 11.00am

Day visit to see Westminster Abbey Vestments, Library and Muniment Room

Rosemary Turner, who gave us a fascinating talk on the Abbey vestments last year, will be our guide on this part of the visit. There will be a charge of £5 a head for the day.

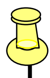
Numbers are limited.

Saturday 5 July **Coach trip to William Morris Gallery and Audley End**

See enclosed information sheet/booking form

(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.

The Canons is walking distance from bus routes to Mitcham, and from the Mitcham Tramlink stop.)



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

Non-members are invited to make a small donation to help with the Society's running costs.

A CORRECTION

In Bulletin No.144 the Merton Priory Chapter House excavation in 1976/78 should not have been included in the list of archaeological investigations by MHS. It was of course directed by Scott McCracken for Surrey Archaeological Society and the Department of the Environment. The finds are with LAARC. The mistake arose when I was trying to reconcile, and select from, different lists of projects from the past, and I apologise to Scott and to readers.

Please add to the list	TQ 2618 6815	(1972)	The Grange, Morden	(19th century)
and	TQ 250 675	(1988)	St Lawrence churchyard	(early 19th century)

JG

'A PHILOLOGICAL DISCIPLINE'

The study of English place-names, as Margaret Gelling points out (*Signposts to the Past* Dent, London 1978), is based mainly on written material. This ranges all the way from the earliest Greek and Latin texts that refer to this country to the first 'modern' maps, in the 19th century. It is not surprising that disputes are common.

JOHN PILE spent his formative years in Morden, and though he has lived for many years in Hampshire, where he is a well-known local historian, he retains a special interest in Merton history. He writes:

I feel that I must take issue with Eric Montague over some of the statements he makes in his article 'The Evidence of Place-Names' in MHS Bulletin No.143 (September 2002). Despite quite properly warning the reader that "the study of place-names is a minefield for the unwary", Eric goes on to tell us that ***burh*** means 'a barrow' when, in fact, it is an Old English word for 'a fortified place'. During the period in which the word was used in the formation of place-names, its sense seems to have gradually changed. These changes are recorded and defined by A H Smith in *English Place-Name Elements*, English Place-Name Society Vol.XXV 1956, and more recently by D N Parsons and T Styles in *The Vocabulary of English Place-Names* fasc.2 (Brace-Caester), Centre for English Name-Studies, Nottingham, 2000, where the following general definition is offered: "***burh*** … 'stronghold' is applied to a range of defended sites, including Iron-Age hill-forts, Roman stations, and Anglo-Saxon and medieval fortifications, towns and manor-houses …". The place-name Ravensbury mentioned by Eric was considered by J E B Gover et al. *The Place-Names of Surrey*, English Place-Name Society Vol.XI p.53 to be a late ***burh*** name and to have the later sense of 'manor-house'.

As for 'Sundridge Ground', a formerly enclosed area on Mitcham Common, I would suggest that we have an example of OE ***sundor*** 'asunder or apart' in the sense of land or property detached from an estate, rather than merely enclosed within an earthwork. My suggestion is that Sundridge Ground originated in the Middle Ages as an 'illegal' enclosure of part of the waste of the manor of Ravensbury by the manor of Bandon and Beddington. There was continual friction between the various manors which claimed rights of common on Mitcham Common, and in the court roll of the manor of Bandon and Beddington for 18 March 1521 we read that Widow Colyn[s] of Mitcham "wrongfully entered a parcel of land on land of the lord called Sundriche and there cut various branches of an oak and also cut down various thornbushes and brambles therein growing, to the prejudice of the lord", *Courts of the Manors of Bandon and Beddington 1498-1552* ed. M Wilks and J Bray, Sutton 1983. Although the offence appears slight, this was probably a test case to establish the ownership of the enclosure.

Fleming Mead and Flemyng Gate in Mitcham probably incorporate personal names, but I cannot agree with Eric that 'gate' in this instance could be the Old Norse ***gata***, a way or street, as this is almost entirely restricted to the north of England and the Danelaw. I would suggest that our Flemyng Gate (unlike Flemingate in Beverley, Humberside) is the OE ***geat*** 'a gap or gate'.

And here is ERIC MONTAGUE's response to John Pile's comments:

John is quite correct in reminding us that the place-name element ***burh*** can be interpreted in a number of ways. Gover *et al.* in *Place-Names of Surrey* also suggested that Ravensbury, or 'Ravesbury', might have a corruption of Raf or Ralph as its first element. Who this character might have been is of course anyone's guess, but Ralph FitzRobert of Rouen and Ralph the Chamberlain of Tankerville, both of whom held land in Mitcham in the 12th century, are possibilities. Recent research by Peter Hopkins has disclosed that the 1250 date usually given for the first documentary mention of the name Ravensbury is due to a misreading by late 18th-century antiquarians, repeated without question by subsequent 'authorities'. 'Ravesbury' occurs as a note in a late 14th- or early 15th-century hand at the foot of a document, itself a 13th-century copy of an agreement of 1225, now in the British Library. This 'first appearance' is therefore of similar date to the 1377-8 use of 'Rasebury', for the previously unnamed estate in Mitcham and Morden, in Surrey Fines, as published by Surrey Archaeological Society in 1894. So, with a gap of two centuries, the case for the name of a Norman landowner being enshrined in the name Ravensbury becomes a little difficult to sustain. As I said in my article, the study of place-names may be fascinating, but contains many traps for the unwary!

The origin of the 'Sundridge Ground' on Mitcham Common has also stirred John to comment, and he cites an interesting example of efforts to curb illicit wood-gathering early in the 16th century. A detached portion of the manor of Beddington and Bandon, the Sundridge Ground was described as enclosed by an "ancient bank and ditch", which prompted me to suggest that it might have been prehistoric. This theory has yet to be tested archaeologically, but there is already ample evidence of settlement and agriculture in the Iron Age and earlier from excavations on the Beddington farmlands immediately south of the Common. The exchange of land in 1535, which I mentioned in my *Mitcham Common* (2001), may have been partly intended to resolve the vexed question of trespass. I would certainly not agree with John's idea that the Sundridge ground was created by a medieval 'illegal enclosure' without further evidence.

Finally, I think John is wrong when he sees a personal name in Fleming Mead and Flemyng Gate. It seems far more likely that this enshrines the memory of a person or persons from the Low Countries, as I suggested in my article. I would also draw his attention to the street names Tungate and Swangate in Guildford – both pointed out to me as likely examples of Norse influence, and far to the south of the Danelaw and northern England, to where John states the ***gata*** place-name element "is almost entirely restricted". In the Mitcham example, however, it may merely have referred to a gate of some sort, as John suggests. On the other hand 'Flemyng Gate' was a field name, and did not, as far as one can tell, apply only to the entrance.

IN BRIEF

- The LAMAS programme includes a lecture on **Recent Discoveries at Saxon Lundenwic** on 16 April and one on the Museum of London's conservation department called **From Flints to Fire Engines**, on 14 May. Lectures are at 6.30pm in the Interpretation Unit of the Museum of London.
- At Merton Heritage Centre at The Canons the main exhibition space downstairs houses a display by Mitcham Camera Club, **Life Through the Lens**, from 11 March to 6 April, followed by **Merton Heroines** from 22 April to 1 June. Upstairs you can see **Planes, Trains and Automobiles** until 11 March, followed by a repeat showing of **The Flickering Screen**, from 8 to 24 April. (tel:020 8640 9387)
- Look out for ***Tooting on the Move*** by Jeff Brooks, a history of Tooting and Mitcham United Football Club at Sandy Lane, and an account of their recent move. Available at £5.95 at the club shop, or for £7.40 (inc. £1.45 p&p) from Jeff Brooks.
- Graham Gower's article in *London Archaeologist* Winter 2002 Vol.10 No.3 on **A suggested Anglo-Saxon signalling system between Chichester and London** is an interesting discussion on the possible significance of the OE *tot* in place-names near Stane Street, and has a mention of Morden Park's mysterious mound.
- Excellent news that the National Trust have been able to acquire William Morris's **Red House** at Bexleyheath. They hope to open it in the summer, and there is to be a study area – and a holiday flat!

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members, and hope they enjoy their membership:

Mrs P Adcock of Morden
Mrs D Boalem of Morden
Mrs S A Brown of Mitcham
Mr and Mrs T Fripp of Merton Park
Mrs M A Hammad of Wallington
Mr T Miles of Raynes Park

WWW. [=We Would Welcome. internet enthusiasts]

In the December Bulletin we asked for volunteers to help set up and manage a website for the Society. We are glad to report that a professional web designer has offered to set this up for us without charge. However, we still need help from enthusiastic surfers.

- We would like to have an e-mail address, but we would need someone willing to monitor messages on a regular basis, and to pass on enquiries to the appropriate person.
- English Heritage are planning a website where archaeological and local history societies will be able to keep up to date with archaeological investigations in the local area. Again, we would need someone to monitor the site on behalf of our society.

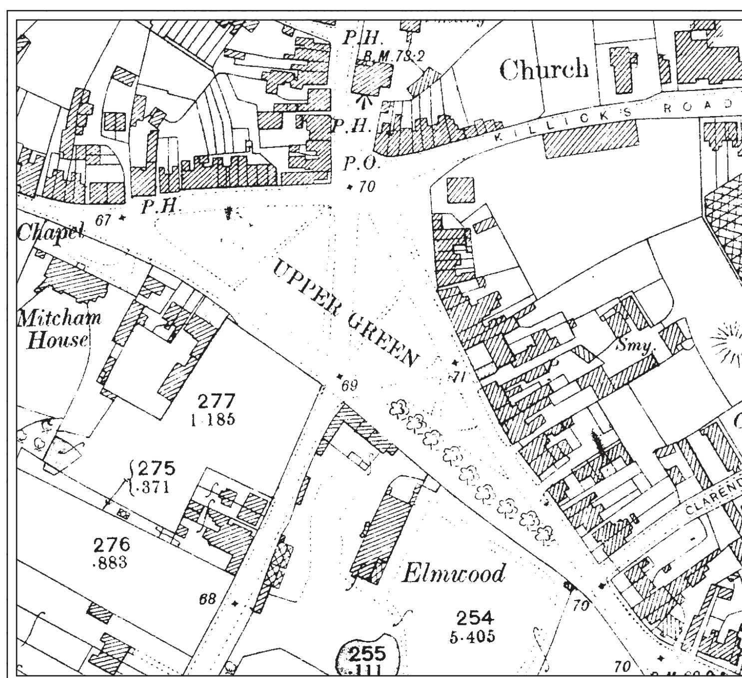
If you can help, please contact Peter Hopkins.

THE UPPER OR FAIR GREEN, MITCHAM

There was a full house at The Canons, on 7 December, as was to be expected for one of Eric Montague's talks on Mitcham. Perhaps with a seasonal nod in the direction of the Lord of Misrule, the first slide shown was of a Mitcham with eucalyptus trees! It was quickly admitted that that particular Mitcham was near Adelaide, South Australia, but, beyond the merely nominal, Monty mentioned another local connection in the form of a Morris & Co church window in that Mitcham.

Any notions of intrepid settlers arriving in the Antipodes with fond memories of their native Surrey village might have been encouraged by some of the slides of watercolours, early photographs and picture postcards that Monty used to present the image of a past environment. More recent developments were illustrated by maps and by later photographs recording the transformation of the Fair Green in the 20th century, and showing just what survives of the historic village green and its surroundings today, in the midst of the modern suburb.

The 1895 Ordnance Survey map shows the roads that still converge on the Fair Green, and these probably originated as Saxon lanes leading to and from the settlements that became Merton, Morden, Croydon, Streatham and Tooting. This map also clearly shows how the northern and eastern sides of the Green were occupied by small, closely packed, properties. By contrast, the southern side had relatively few, and larger, properties, some in spacious grounds and gardens. Evidently the north side of the Green is two feet higher than the south. Excavation has revealed a layer of sand underlying the latter, and this area was named the Washway on older maps. Until means of draining could be applied, building was confined to the north and east sides, where excavation has recovered medieval pottery, while sites on the south side have yielded only indications of post-medieval habitation.



Extract from 1:2500 OS map of 1895, (80% reduction)

The old inns were also on the north side: to the west the *Nag's Head* (its site now under Holborn Way), and the *King's Arms* and the *Buck's Head* (now the *White Lion of Mortimer*), still on either side of the London road, where it leaves the Green. A later arrival, the *Napier's Head*, was established where McDonalds now stands.

Medieval Mitcham was a polynucleated village (having several centres), and this older pattern of settlement can be easily appreciated from the presence of the Lower or Cricket Green to the south. But today the greatest concentration of shops is here, round this more northern open space of 0.6ha (1.5 acres), and it was here that the annual fair was held each August until 1923. This part of the parish of Mitcham was in the manor of Biggin and Tamworth, which had the right to claim tolls and stall rents associated with the holding of the fair. In 1923 responsibility for controlling the conduct of the fair was taken over by Mitcham Urban District Council, and new regulations regarding the movement of traffic resulted in the removal of the fair to Three Kings Piece on Mitcham Common, just beyond the pond to the south-east. Some lively photographs were shown of the fair when still held on the Upper Green.

National developments in technology and social progress were of course reflected in the ever-changing local scene. A tramway had been extended from Tooting to Croydon via the Fair green by 1906, and the rails and rolling-stock are seen crossing the Green in a number of pre-1914 postcards. Later, a trolleybus route once connected Mitcham with Croydon and Hammersmith. The effect of change in building regulations and the availability of materials was pointed out in the details of certain structures. The Education Act of 1870 was intended to ensure the provision of universal elementary education and as a result, in 1884, the rather attractive red-brick and stone-dressed St Mark's School was erected just a few metres to the east of where McDonald's now is. This school stands in what was formerly known as Killick's Lane (now St Mark's Road), and this leads to St Mark's church (built *c.*1900). St Mark's parish was one of several taken out of the ancient parish of St Peter and St Paul to meet the challenge of an ever-increasing local population during the period *c.*1870-1950. The church stands near the point where a gate once led into the East Field. This open field was still worked in

strips until the 1850s, and here was the 'lammas land' (where manorial tenants were allowed to graze their livestock from August till the next sowing time). Mizen's market gardens later covered much of this area (but it might be thought that the open field system of agriculture is still today represented by the use of allotments on the south side of Eastfields Road).

Three Kings Pond still has a somewhat rustic air, and indications of a ford by the roadside. It is also still overlooked by one or two old houses. On the north-east side of Upper Green East a branch of Barclays Bank is the successor to a more picturesque structure that probably dated to the 17th century, and excavation of the site yielded pottery of the 13th and 14th centuries.

The corner of London Road and Langdale Parade is the site of Elmwood (or The Firs). The main block of the house had a flat five-bay front. Perhaps the greatest loss when this property was sold and developed was the grounds, which contained renowned botanical specimens and had been established by Charles du Bois early in the 18th century.

One of the larger houses on the south side of Fair Green was Durham House, built *c.*1702. Photographs show the building in its last years, when a shop or an office had been built over the front garden. It was demolished in the 1960s, when the MHS took the opportunity to excavate the site, revealing the footings of a 'necessary house' and a quantity of (informative) 18th-century rubbish. Somewhere near here stood the so-called Raleigh House. A watercolour shows a weatherboarded structure, possibly 18th-century, when it was a private school for girls. It is a pleasing reminder of the connection between Sir Walter Raleigh and Mitcham, but there is nothing to indicate this property was ever his.

What must have been an interesting building once stood near the Nag's Head. This small house seems to have been faced with, or constructed of, Reigate stone and flint – materials possibly taken from the ruins of Merton priory.

One of the most intriguing structures (and larger than any that survived in this part of the Green in 1895) formerly stood in the north-east corner. Known in the 18th century as 'Old Bedlam' (a name suggesting that it may have been once used to house those regarded as mentally unstable), little is known of it except that in 1789 it was described as being let in tenements to poor people. It was demolished *c.*1850, but wash drawings of the early 19th century indicate late medieval or early Tudor additions to an even earlier core. The site was later used for a relatively modest house called Ravensbury, and then, in 1934, for the Majestic cinema. When that was demolished it was eventually replaced by the present structure, occupied initially by Sainsbury's, but now by smaller shops and a fitness centre.

Among many other images were those of the village pump that preceded the present iron Clock Tower, and of the crowd assembled to witness the inauguration of the Clock Tower, which commemorates Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee of 1897. It was pointed out that the clock's once notoriously bad timekeeping was almost certainly due to the peculiar arrangement whereby its weights hung in the old well from which the pump had once drawn water.

Photographs reveal that the Fair Green itself probably looked prettier in the mid-20th century than ever before – or since. Ornamental trees and flower-beds were then planted and well-maintained. Earlier views show its grass somewhat eroded, no doubt by the feet of many children, whose games were referred to as a nuisance by a lady who lived nearby. Today, if less pretty, the Fair Green is now partly pedestrianised and possibly has more trees than since at least the mid-19th century, and the Clock Tower, on its new site, is currently keeping good time!

These notes refer to just some of the many aspects of Mitcham's Fair Green, past and present, that Monty revealed in his splendid talk.

Ray Ninnis

PS With reference to the report by a member of the audience that a 'copy' of the Clock Tower can be see at far-off Ullapool, I note:

On the iron plinth of the Mitcham example is a rectangular plaque, screwed on and inscribed:

McDOWALL STEVEN & CO./LIMITED/ LONDON & GLASGOW

Presumably this foundry cast the whole 'monument', which is evidently made up of several components. The cast ornament includes: over each of the four clock faces, a royal crown; and on the column, a shield divided into four quarters (but evidently not intended to have proper armorial charges). At the base of the column, and forming a swelling transition to the more massive, rectangular, base, are four separate plates, each moulded to form a dolphin at each corner, and in the four spaces between are shields bearing V.R./1897.

It seems likely that the foundry cast a number of these clock towers to meet demand to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee. None of the ornaments seem peculiar to Mitcham (or any other particular locality). Dolphins might be thought most suitable for the seaside, but as water ran into and out of the base with its two drinking fountains such 'fishy' ornament seems reasonably appropriate.

Perhaps alternative components could be supplied (or omitted) according to the client's wishes. This might be why the Ullapool example seems to be without the base that is included at Mitcham. **RN**

ART OF THE SHAMAN? NEW VIEWS ON STONE AGE CAVE ART

The year got off to an excellent start as we welcomed as our January speaker our President, Scott McCracken. Cave art has been known for some 140 years, though it is only since the beginning of the 20th century that its great age has been recognised. Art seems to have been an invention of *Homo Sapiens*. There is no evidence of any kind of art from the Neanderthal period, apart from a few incised pebbles. But with the appearance of *Homo Sapiens* several new practices are found – burial of the dead; personal adornment in the form of bead necklaces; the use of musical instruments – drums, flutes and whistles; the creation of portable art – realistically carved animals and stylised human female figurines, as well as carved and decorated tools and implements of stone, ivory and bone; and, of course, painting. These examples of symbolic behaviour presuppose complex language skills.

Scott set out to consider the role of cave art, which continues to be discovered at many sites in Europe, dating from around 30,000 to 10,000 years ago, the earliest being found in Northern Spain and Southern France. Bulls, horses, reindeer and other animals are clearly and realistically depicted, but few human figures are found, and they are very crudely drawn.

First, Scott discussed the locations. The artists were not cavemen – no one **lived in** a cave, it would have been too cold and damp. They lived in rock-shelters and cave-mouths. Some large-scale open-air engravings have survived, but paintings were done in dark places, often a mile underground along narrow passageways. The place you put it was as important as the painting itself. The surface might be flat, convex or concave. Sometimes an irregular outcrop was chosen as it suggested the shape of an animal head. By torchlight or lamplight the painted image seemed to be moving.

The pigments used are easier to identify. Modern spectrum analysis can even provide a date. Mineral ores were ground - iron oxide for red, manganese dioxide for black. The colours could be applied by painting, dabbing with a pad, or by spraying from the mouth!

Sometimes a surface held a single image, at other times a complex frieze. Animal figures could be large or small. Images often overlapped, but it is not clear whether these were designed as a single scene or were later additions. No backgrounds are shown – no ground levels – no environmental clues. But among the animal forms can be found various marks – rectangles, dots, straight lines and sinuous shapes.

Why were they done? Although we are members of the same species as the original artists, can we really expect to understand and interpret their work today?

Two friezes from Lascaux (Dordogne)
from Paul G Bahn & Jean Vertut, Images of the Ice Age *(1988)*

In the 1940s, when the paintings were first accepted as being very early, it was assumed that they were produced as **ART FOR ART'S SAKE** – our ancestors were too primitive for original thinking! The paintings were purely decorative.

Later, especially after the discovery of portable art, the idea of **TOTEMISM** was put forward, in comparison with American Indians. Fasting and sensory deprivation was deliberately pursued to induce hypnotic visions of your 'spiritual animal', on which one could call in times of trouble. In America the ultimate was the White Buffalo, but in Prehistoric Europe the desire would be to link oneself and one's clan to the power of the aurochs or the reindeer. The clan would adopt the aurochs or the reindeer as their totem. But this theory met with a major obstacle – why would an Aurochs group allow others to draw a reindeer in their special place? Surely they would have separate places for their totems.

The late 1940s and 1950s saw the theories of the abbé Henri Breuil. He interpreted the cave paintings as **SYMPATHETIC MAGIC**. If you want something to happen you draw an image. You have power over that image, and can cause something to happen. You can manipulate the image – an image of a pregnant animal ensures fertility. Some paintings have several holes in them, as though stabbed by a spear. Could this be evidence for ritual killing? Attacking an image with arrows or spears – real or pictorial – brings good hunting. The painting was strictly functional, to secure a sufficiency of food.

This theory seems to fit many of the paintings, but not all. Many of the paintings show arrows that have missed the intended victim. One shows a stick figure that appears to be lying in front of a wounded bison. The man was presumably dead, gored by the bison. Sympathetic magic would presumably require a more positive image! And what about the geometric and other symbols, unless they are supposed to represent traps?

Again, excavation of animal bones in the cave-entrance living quarters reveal that not all the animals depicted in cave paintings were used as food. Some were good to eat, while others were good to think about.

One theory of the 1960s – **STRUCTURALISM** – was short-lived. It was suggested that certain animals were always painted in specific areas within a cave complex. But the evidence didn't support the theory. The position of the animals seems more random than structured.

More recently **SHAMANISM** has been suggested. The word is of Scandinavian origin, and relates to images in rock carvings there dating from the Bronze Age, but parallels can also be found in Siberian, African and Australian drawings. Individuals, both male and female, induce hallucinations through the use of drugs, rhythmical drumming, hyperventilation, etc. In their trance they move from our world into the spirit world, bringing back benefits to society. In this theory the drawings represent these powerful visions.

Modern research into drug-induced hallucination has identified three stages. Stage 1 is the seeing of geometric markings, both in the mind, but also on walls, etc. This might explain the markings found in cave paintings. In stage 2, the markings become things that you are aware of. Thus hunger might transform the image into something to eat. Cave paintings often show sinuous, moving images, which are perhaps attempts to depict these changes. Stage 3 involves personal transformation, often associated with travelling down a long tunnel into the spirit world. Cave images show figures with both human and animal features, such as the so-called 'sorcerer' of Trois Frères in Ariège *(right)*.

Hand and finger prints are common in cave paintings. In Shamanism they represent a reaching into the tunnel towards the other world. The images are thus seen as being brought **out** of the wall, not as being applied to it.

Another modern approach is that the paintings tell a story or **MYTHOLOGY** about the group. This theory would be the most difficult to prove, as symbolic representation only has meaning to those in the know. What would the seasonal images found on Christmas cards mean to someone from a different culture? They might assume that we eat the robins!

Many of the caves still contain remains of lamps used when painting or viewing the images, and even footprints are preserved. Many of these are of children of around six or seven. Were they brought here to be taught the history of the group? Were they to be trained as shamans? Did they come for an initiation rite – a rite of passage into membership of the group?

No one theory deals with all the evidence. Probably cave paintings served more than one purpose. But they show that our so-called primitive ancestors were as capable as we are of thinking in complex ways.

Thank you, Scott, for a most fascinating lecture!

Peter Hopkins

LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOPS

Friday 29 November – 7 present. Sheila Harris in the chair.

- **Sheila Harris** reported that she had had a query about 'Merton College' in Church House, opposite St Mary's church in Merton. It was a school for boys between *c.*1845 and c.1893.
- **Lionel Green** is interested in the front chimney at Morden Park. It first appears in an illustration of 1873, and was still in existence in 1950. But it was certainly removed by 1964.
- He also spoke about a law book as set out by King Cnut in AD 1019. This is the oldest law book in existence, and was at Merton priory for 350 years, but is now in Lambeth Palace library.
- **Judith Goodman** is 'on the trail' of sculptor Richard James Wyatt, who lived and died in Rome and created the Smith monument in St Mary's church, Merton. She failed to find any of his work in Rome recently, but Chatsworth has one of his statues – the third nymph from the left in the room that is now the shop!
- Judith then spoke about Francis Cribb (not Thomas Cribb), who was Nelson's gardener. Bill Rudd mentioned that he is buried in Morden churchyard. Two descendants of Cribb have recently contacted Judith.
- **Don Fleming** reported on the life of Thomas Bodley who founded the Bodleian Library in Oxford. On 9 November the University celebrated the 400th anniversary of the library. At the age of 19 Bodley became a fellow of Merton College, where he had a distinguished career.
- Don had recently been to the 'London before London' exhibition at the Museum of London, which is worth a visit.
- **Peter Hopkins** has been following up suggestions made by Vanessa Bunton of English Heritage when she came to the October workshop. Vanessa is visiting local archaeological societies in Greater London, so they work to a common cause. Bill Rudd has shown her our 'store'. A lengthy discussion ensued.
- **Bill Rudd** collects things. They include local south London newspapers of the 1960s and '70s, some published by Merton Council. He had brought some along, and they showed us how times have changed in less than 40 years.
- We were pleased to welcome **Sheila Gallagher**, from the East Surrey Family History Society, to the workshop. It has been in existence 25 years and has a membership of 2300 worldwide. Sheila told us of the research they undertake, especially of the late 18th and 19th centuries, appertaining to petty sessions, poor law and parish records.

Friday 17 January - Peter Hopkins in the chair.

- **Sheila Harris** reported on a meeting with an official of the National Trust in reference to our use of the Snuff Mill Environmental Centre in Morden Hall Park. They made it clear that no more than 50 people were allowed upstairs at any one time - not just in the room itself, but the entire upstairs area. Sheila has checked the fire exits!
- **Judith Goodman** continues her interest in R J Wyatt, the neo-classical sculptor who was active in the early 18th century. She has found that there is an unpublished thesis on his life.
- **Eric Montague** has been requested to check the latest Wandle Trail leaflet for errors. Then followed a short discussion on (a) Liberty's and (b) Streatham Race Course, which was in Mitcham.
- **Don Fleming** referred to the visit the Society made a few seasons ago to Old Battersea House, where we viewed some of the paintings of Evelyn De Morgan, probably the most talented woman artist of the Pre-Raphaelite group. An exhibition of her drawings can be seen at the De Morgan Centre, West Hill, Wandsworth, until 1 April. The Centre is closed on Thursdays.
- **Michael Nethersole** had sent an extract from the memoirs of artist George A Storey, published in 1899. Storey was a pupil at Morden Hall Academy, remembered in a chapter to be reproduced in a future Bulletin.
- **Peter Hopkins** has been reading back numbers of the Bourne Society's *Local History Records*, where he read of Charles Langton Lockton, a fine athlete, who lived as a boy at Southey House, 'Merton', and of the cricketing Crawfords, whose father, a chaplain in Coulsdon, 'retired' to become curate of Merton, where he died in 1935.

  Peter then spoke of James Lackington, and was joined by Judith in a discussion of his life. He took the lease of Spring House, Merton, from 1790. Born in 1746, he came to London from Somerset and, after years of poverty, opened a bookshop and rose to prosperity. The Society hopes to publish an abridged version of his Memoirs.
- **Bill Rudd** reported on his experiences during the Time Team dig at Liberty's. (see p.16)

The above is, of course, only the 'bare bones' of a two-hour discussion where I learn so much, and what makes it a 'must' for me is it is done with wit and humour. Why not come along next time? You will be very welcome. **Don Fleming**

Dates of next Workshops: Friday 7 March and Friday 9 May at 7.30pm at Wandle Industrial Museum.

DON FLEMING concludes

A BRIEF HISTORY OF TOWN AND CITY WARDS FROM 1066 TO 2001

So far I have stayed with the history of wards in the City of London for the sake of continuity but there were wards in other medieval cities. Reports on these wards are usually all too brief and not always complete, but they do reflect what the wards had to deal with.

A good description of working wards, their structure, working methodology and everyday problems and annoyances is contained in *The Victoria History of the County of Yorkshire – The City of York"*. 'Ferlings' (this term probably denotes 'divisions' approximating in function to the York wards of later – 11th century),[41] 'divisions' and 'precincts' are all basically wards. (In America the word 'precinct' is used as in 'police precinct' – policing a given area such as a ward.)

Constables arraying troops in York are mentioned in the early 14th century, and in 1321 it is clear that these constables were each in charge of a ward and responsible for levying money in it for the repair of the walls. The constables seem to correspond to the six serjeants in charge of the wards later in the century. In addition, in the 15th century, two aldermen and other wardens (three in the case of Walmgate ward in 1491) were assigned to each ward. The raising of troops and money for the wages, and the inspection of the arms in the hands of citizens were all organised by wards. In 1482 the ward serjeants were responsible for opening and closing the city gates, and the wardens for clearing the walls in their wards of rushes, nettles and weeds.[42]

The jurisdiction of the Wardmote Court lay not only in the inter-mural area but also in the city parishes which extended outside the walls. The Court of Walmgate Ward in 1491, for example, heard presentments of common nuisances perpetrated within the walls; a hosier had emptied urine in the street, a fuller had kept a dangerous dog tethered in the street and causeways in Walmgate and Fossgate were broken down. In addition it heard complaints of encroachments on the highway outside Fishergate Bar. At the end of the middle ages the main importance of the wards seems to have been in the military organisation of the city, the maintenance of its walls and in the management of the common lands.[42]

In 1482 prostitutes and 'misgoverned' women were banished to the suburbs outside the city walls. In 1501 stocks were to be provided in every ward for punishing vagabonds. An order of 1495 forbade anyone to set earthenware pots, tar barrels and dishes of fruit in the gutter outside his shop or to hang ropes, halters and other harness outside his windows. The wardens, who in 1485 were given the oversight of the streets to see that they were 'cleanly kept and weekly swept', no doubt performed their task only with difficulty.[43]

Up to the late 15th century, York was divided into six wards: Monk, Walmgate, Bootham, Coney Street, Castlegate and Micklegate. They administered petty domestic regulations – street cleaning, cleansing of ditches and so on through the Wardmote Courts. By 1530 they were reduced to four: Bootham, Monk, Walmgate and Micklegate. This continued until 1835.[44]

In 1501 every ward in York was to have a dungcart and was allotted a place outside the wall for dumping refuse 'so that husbands of the country may come there to have it away'.[45] By 1530 master beggars had been appointed in each ward to report the advent of strange mendicants and see that they left within 24 hours on pain of scourging.[46] The greatest number of paupers - and the least ability to relieve them - were largely in Monk and Walmgate wards. Complaints against swarms of beggars were characteristic of Tudor York.[47]

In November 1580, it was decided that lanterns should be hung every night throughout the winter outside each house. The next year this was to be done at the discretion of the wardens in each ward.[48] In 1585 each of the four wards was assigned a place for burying carrion.[49]

Between 1638 and 1688 in each of the four wards, three aldermen exercised general supervision and held the Wardmote Courts. These met quarterly to punish such misdemeanours as the illicit keeping of pigs, failure to maintain pavements or to scour sewers and the making of dunghills in the street. The numerous fines levied for non-appearance suggest that the Courts were seriously weakened by this date.[50]

It is known that the aldermen of York looked to London to see how they dealt with the emerging problems which were similar to those of York. But there was no easy answer. Beggars, paupers, migrants, aliens or foreigners (the Irish were the largest group of 'foreigners' who descended on London by several thousand) were an ever increasing strain on the economy of the wards, weakening them to such an extent that by the middle of the 18th century they would be seriously flawed.

Wards were run on a participative rather than a democratic basis. Each ward had between 100 and 300 elected officials. There were 'prickers, benchers, blackbookmen, fewellers, scribes within and scribes without, a haltercutter, introducers, upperspeakers and underspeakers, butlers, porters, inquestmen, scavengers (and rakers), constables, watchmen, a beadle, jurymen and common councilmen, freemen and ratepayers'. The electors of

most of these officials were more than likely to have to take on these jobs, especially the less desirable ones. From time to time they were also answerable to the jurisdiction of the December Ward Court Inquest for immorality or bad behaviour. The key figure in the ward was the alderman's deputy, who would be resident (unlike the alderman) in his ward, and was slowly taking over the Wardmote's Inquest's jurisdiction in matters of vagrancy, delinquency, illegitimacy and dispute resolution. As long as citizens felt that this system of communal self-government and mutual support protected their interests, the chances of social stability were high. However, it is likely that citizens felt a greater loyalty to their parish than to their ward.[51]

Stephen Inwood makes some important points. The ward system could only work successfully providing there was mutual support and trust among the citizens of the ward. There was no machinery within the ward for politics, or for religion, which was the province of the parish. This is one of the main reasons the ward system lasted as long as it did. Aldermen were sometimes suspicious of the parish priest fomenting unrest in the parish. Henry II's alleged remark referring to Thomas Becket: "who will rid me of this turbulent priest?" was sometimes reflected in the parish. Apart from being a house of religion, the church was used as a place of news-gathering and news interpretation channelled through the priest, and so could be considered dangerous. The parish grew more important as the ward weakened.[52]

The Court of Wardmote was still held in each ward, presided over by the alderman and open to ratepayers.[53] In the mid-18th century it elected officers, collected for the poor and policed bawdy houses and alehouses. Its duties began to be whittled away however as authority passed from the rank and file to the common council of the ward (the alderman, his deputy and the resident common councilmen). With the rise of more oligarchic local committees, city wardmotes were in decline. The parish retained its old significance. In some respects the city's writ ranged far beyond its wards and precincts.[54]

In London as many as 12,000 rate-paying householders voted in their respective wards to elect the 26 aldermen and 200 common councillors. These ratepayers of the ward were almost identical with the liverymen of the 89 guilds and companies. In their double capacity they controlled by their votes the antique and complicated machinery of London self-government.[55]

There were continual complaints against the employment of 'foreigners' or non-freemen within the city. In these debates, the common council had moved from a total ban on 'foreigners' (in 1712) to a declaration of commercial freedom (in 1750).[56]

Throughout the century, the policing of London's streets was the task of local magistrates, marshals, beadles and constables, supported at street level by the watch and ward of the parishes and precincts in which, nominally, all citizens played a part.[57]

There were, in the 18th century, over 150 official posts or sinecures, most of them purchasable and lucrative, associated with its multiform activities. But many of these had become obsolete or moribund or were relatively unimportant, so that for simplicity, we may confine our attention to the Lord Mayor and sheriffs and the four courts of outstanding importance over which the Lord Mayor, nominally at least, presided: the Court of Aldermen, the Court of Common Council, the Court of Common Hall and the Court of Wardmote, held within each one of the 26 wards. Between them these discharged all the most important functions of the corporation.[58]

The local Court of Wardmote had played an important local role in city affairs. It was held separately within each of the wards, presided over by the alderman and open to all ward ratepayers, whether they were freemen or not. Its functions were threefold; to elect the ward officers, to nominate the ward's common councilmen (who, if freemen and unopposed, became automatically elected) and, with the Lord Mayor in attendance, to fill aldermanic vacancies as they arose. The ward's responsibility for paving and lighting was taken over from the 1760s by the Court of Common Council, while the Court of Aldermen assumed the direction of the watch, leaving minor delegated powers to the local committees. So the ward motes declined and, by the end of the Napoleonic wars, had become little more than poorly attended debating clubs on public affairs.[59]

The London Encyclopaedia has additional information. The wards used to have responsibilities for the preservation of the peace, supervision of trading, sanitation and local upkeep. The ward beadles were employed full time on these duties. Now the beadles are just ceremonial attendants of the aldermen and the wards are units of election only. Their meetings are still called Wardmotes and these are held annually on the first Friday in September, when they elect a varying number of 'good and discreet citizens' to be their representatives on the Court of Common Council for one year. Each ward also meets when a vacancy occurs to elect its own alderman (whose election must be approved by the Court of Aldermen). The voters are all those who occupy premises as tenants or owners and those who qualify for the parliamentary franchise by residence. The wards vary in size and character and still have such ancient names as Bassishaw, Cordwainer and Portsoken. Most of them have their own clubs and there is also a United Wards Club; all of them hold social events.[35]

The *History Today Companion to British History* looks at wards from a different angle altogether. "WARD – a subdivision supervised by an alderman in the City of London and other early urban centres for administrative purposes. The urban equivalent of the hundred. It was also the usage for hundreds in Northumberland and Cumbria under modern local electoral arrangements. It has become a subdivision which elects councillors in the small area of the City of London. The ward system survives today."[60] The fact that they have existed so long suggests that if not wealthy the wards were at least financially sound.

What sort of people were they who lived in, worked and ran the wards? No observer recorded them, no writer wrote a novel based on the rank and file. Today is no different. We expect 'our town' to be policed properly, and the streets cleaned and kept in good repair. We have no time to consider the people who do these things.

We do, however, have a composite portrait of an Englishman who is still the popular English hero after well nigh 300 years and it is that which makes him very interesting. Jeremy Paxman tells us about him in his book *The English*: John Bull was invented in 1712 by a 'foreigner', a Scot from Kincardineshire named Arbuthnot. His creation John Bull is, as befits a nation of shopkeepers, a tradesman. He is fiercely independent and proud, drinks heavily and possesses a truly bovine stolidity. He is also temperamental, whining, insensitive and sneeringly disdainful of foreigners. He believes in law and order and is instinctively conservative. He is home-loving, reliable, jolly, honest, practical and fiercely attached to his freedoms.[61]

The most famous portrait of a beadle we have is in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist or The Parish Boy's Progress*, which appeared as a serial in 1837-39. Mr Bumble was a parish beadle but could easily be carrying out the traditions of the ward beadle. The problems within the parishes in the early 19th century were much the same as the wards had suffered in the previous century.

The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 proposed that towns of more than 12,000 inhabitants should be divisible into wards, though the Lords reduced the limit to 6,000.[62] This Act had much to recommend it, but was flawed by being rushed through Parliament without full and final discussions. It was impossible to transfer the powers of independent bodies (gas, water, etc) to the newly established Borough Councils because of the opposition and mistrust (of municipal authorities) which then existed.[63] The 1835 Act was superseded by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1882 which had been clearly defined and ratified.

The Acts had an affect, as we find in, for example, Winchester. Under the Act of 1835 the city was re-established, with Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses and it was divided into three wards, each electing six councillors. In 1904 the city was divided into six wards, each returning three councillors.[64]

The implementation of the 1835 Act, and more particularly the 1882 Act, meant that local government was in a state of change throughout the country. Even small 'towns' such as Merton, Wimbledon, Sutton and Croydon were adapting to the new methodology; with Croydon becoming a borough in 1883, Sutton an urban district in 1894, and Wimbledon an urban district in 1895 and a borough ten years later. In 1907 Merton finally achieved urban district status and in 1913 Merton and Morden came together when they were granted permission to amalgamate as Merton and Morden Urban District.[65] During the period from 1894 to 1928 the voting system for local councillors gradually changed from parish boundaries to wards in much the way we have today.

In 1945 a white paper established the Local Government Boundary Commission, which has the responsibility of determining the boundaries of local authorities, and for reviewing the electoral districts within local authorities (called 'divisions' and 'wards'). Ward boundaries are variable. The boundaries in place for the general election of May 1997 were not necessarily the same for the general election of June 2001. The City of London has 24 wards; Croydon has 26, Merton 20 and Sutton 25.

(The police also have wards, which are used for other purposes. Their system is different, and they can change the boundaries at any time. Council wards usually have geographical names. Police wards are numbered.)

From 1066 to today, London like most major cities, has been cosmopolitan. In 1066 apart from Saxons (from Saxony), there were Viking settlements and other groups from various continental countries. Some historians consider that the largest of the groups were Flemings who came from 'Burgundy' which is roughly the area now called Belgium. The Saxon language was most commonly used and many wards had Saxon names.

Some wards were linked to guilds and their names are informative and interesting:-

Farringdon (Within and Without) – Castle Baynard – Aldersgate – Cripplegate – Bread Street - Queenhithe – Bassishaw – Cheap – Cordwainer – Vintry – Coleman Street – Walbrook – Dowgate – Broad Street – Cornhill – Langbourn – Candlewick – Bridge – Bishopsgate – Lime Street – Billingsgate – Aldgate – Tower – Portsoken.

Candlewick = candle makers.

Cheap, a Saxon word *ceap* = to sell or barter.

Aldgate, a Saxon word *aelgate* = ‘freegate’, open to all.

Cordwainer = worker in Spanish leather from Cordoba. Later became shoemakers.

Cripplegate, a Saxon word *crepu*’ = a tunnel-like entrance

Vintry = peculiar to vintners. Preparation or selling of wine, therefore by the riverside.

There is a great deal about wards for which we have no information, especially the procedures for financing. The concept of dividing a town or city into small, self-administered areas was outstanding in its simplicity. It required that the beadle and his staff be decent, honest, sober men of the rank and file, who worked together for the good of the community in mutual support and trust in the policing, cleansing and maintenance of the ward. If this was ever completely realised is not known but the ‘working wards’ system lasted almost 800 years and that is its own proud testimony.

APPENDIX A

I am grateful to Donald W Jennings of St Louis for the following:

Most US cities have wards and precincts which are used mostly for local voting purposes, and for monitoring overspending political organisations, e.g. in Chicago. Each ward has a democratic ward ‘boss’ and each ward has smaller precincts, headed by a ‘captain’ who is responsible for getting out the vote for the alderman, who represents the ward on the Board of Aldermen. There is a similar system in St Louis.

APPENDIX B

The following is supplied by Michelle Seeberger of Paris, to whom I am very grateful:.

The French Revolution abolished the old feudal system and created a new political system. This was when France was divided up into *départements*, which was the basis of the ‘modern’ voting system, with adjustments and additions over the years from the late 18th century, to service population growth. Voting in France is similar to voting in Great Britain. Therefore a modern ‘ward’ in France is a constituency which is based on population. Its borders are regularly altered by the French Home Office before elections. Large towns such as Paris, Lyon and Marseilles have *arrondissements*. They are geographical divisions and not based on population and their boundaries do not alter. Here they vote for the mayor of a municipal town or city council. A c*onseiller générale* is voted for on a smaller basis called a *canton*. There are several *cantons* in a *département* and they are smaller than a constituency. In France local elections are called ‘List Poll’.

41. *The Victoria History of the County of York(shire) – The City of York* by P M Tillott. Published for University of London, Institute of Historical Research by Oxford University Press, London, p.20.
42. Tillott, p.77.
43. Tillott, p.108.
44. Tillott, p.315.
45. Tillott, p.108.
46. Tillott, p.133.
47. Tillott, p.170.
48. Tillott, p.119.
49. Tillott, p.119.
50. Tillott, p.182
51. *A History of London* by Stephen Inwood. MacMillan, 1998, p.180.
52. *London – A Social History* by Roy Porter. Hamish Hamilton, 1994. p.148.
53. Porter, pp.148/149.
54. Porter, p.150.
55. *English Social History* by G M Trevelyan. Longmans, 1944. Quoted in *The Faber Book of London* edited by A N Wilson, pp 94/95. Faber and Faber, 1993.
56. The History of London series – *Hanoverian London 1714-1808*. George Rude. Secker & Warburg, 1971, p.121.
57. Rude, p.141.
58. Rude, pp 119/120.
59. Rude, p.124.
60. *The History Today companion to British History*, Collins and Brown, 1995. Edited by Juliet Gardiner and Neil Wenborn, pp. 787/788.
61. Jeremy Paxman, *The English*. Penguin Books 1999, p/b. First published by Michael Joseph 1998, p.185.
62. *The History of Local Government in England* by Josef Redlich and Francis W Hirst, edited by Bryan Keith-Lucas. MacMillan, 1958, pp.131 and 132.
63. *A History of Local Government* by K B Smellie. George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1946, p.33.
64. *The Victoria History of the Counties of England. A History of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*, Volume V, pv.25. Constable and Co., 1912. Edited by Wm Page, FSA, p.25.
65. *Merton and Morden. A Pictorial History*. Judith Goodman, Phillimore, 1995. No page numbers (opposite photo 164).

LIONEL GREEN concludes

HENRY III AND MERTON PRIORY 1216-72

[In Bulletin No.144 we learned that England was to be governed by a council of 15 advising the king. Oaths were obtained from the justiciar, chancellor and treasurer to act only under the joint council. In particular, the chancellor was sworn not to use the Great Seal (which authenticated public documents) contrary to the provisions of the council.]

The King's Lodgings

At Merton priory both Henry III and his chancellor were accommodated in buildings of stone, which required renovations in December 1258. These involved the garderobes of both chambers and repairs to the chimney including hearth, mantel and flue, suggesting a cosy fireplace.[1] This might have been decorated as at Westminster in 1239. "Command is given to Edward son of Odo, keeper of our works, that he shall cause the fireplace in the queen's chamber there to be made higher, and … he shall cause to be painted and portrayed on the said fireplace a figure of Winter, made more like Winter by its sad countenance and other miserable attitudes of the body".[2]

The Great Seal 1259-61

On 6 July 1259 the chancellor Henry de Wengham withdrew from court on being made bishop of London. The Great Seal was left with Walter de Merton, a clerk in chancery.[3] Three weeks later, the king instructed him to prepare and seal letters of admission for the papal nuncio, Velascus, to enter England.[4] The letter was written on 28 July at Westminster and sealed with the Great Seal. Unlike the chancellor, Walter was not under oath to act only under the council's direction. When Velascus arrived, the council expelled him and demanded to know on whose authority he had been admitted. The blame was settled on the constable of Dover for allowing the nuncio to proceed.

Henry refused to co-operate with the council and went to Paris on 24 November 1259 so that no parliament could be called. On 31 March 1260 the chancellor was with the king in France and the justiciar was at Windsor. The great seal was with Walter de Merton, now effectively head of the chancery and residing at his manor house at Malden.[5] An order was received from the king on Maundy Thursday, 1 April, to issue writs. Chancery clerks worked all that day, perhaps some at the *scriptorium* of Merton priory. The following day was Good Friday and no work was performed, but on the Saturday, immediately after mass and breakfast, the royal messengers were dispatched to the sheriffs in their shires.[6]

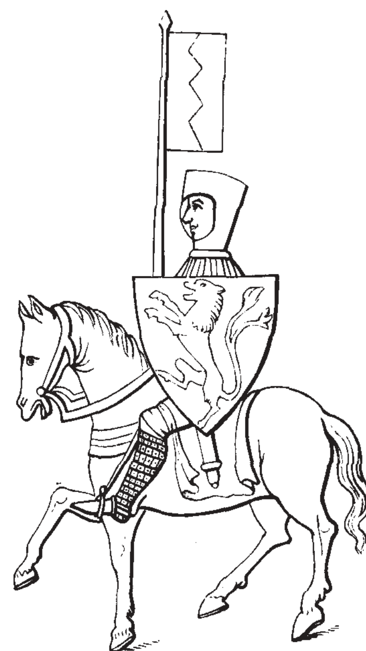
The king finally returned to Dover on 23 April with 300 mercenary knights and resumed full control of government until September, when the council dismissed Walter as chancellor. They appointed their own man, Nicholas of Ely, but on 12 July 1261 he surrendered the Great Seal to the king. Henry at once handed it to Walter, who exercised his office immediately by sealing some letters.[7]

Simon de Montfort

On 30 October 1261, some of the barons under Richard de Clare negotiated the Treaty of Kingston, whereby most of the barons agreed to support the king. Henry left for France in July 1262 and returned on 22 December to find that the prince of Gwynnedd, Llewelyn, had over-run north and mid-Wales. The English barons found it easier to fight each other than the common enemy. When Simon de Montfort learned of the problems he returned from self-imposed exile. He met a large number of barons at Oxford in April 1263, including the young Gilbert de Clare.[8] All were of one mind to restore the Provisions of Oxford (see Bulletin No.144 December 2002 pp.12-13) and plan further reforms. Earl Simon asked the king to support them once more, but he refused.

The barons fought the Welsh, to secure towns in the Severn valley for the realm, without approval of Henry. They then marched down the Thames valley to south-east England. Supporters of de Montfort broke into open revolt, storming the manors of many royalists. On 13 June, men of Ashtead occupied Walter de Merton's manor of Malden for three days. From Malden, Chessington and Cuddington, goods and farm animals were taken. Farleigh was despoiled from 15 July to 15 August.

Without shedding blood, the barons took Dover castle and the Cinque Ports.



Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester. From a window in Chartres Cathedral

The Provisions restored

By 24 June the king accepted the triumph of the barons and agreed to restore the Provisions, but at his suggestion it was decided to submit them to arbitrators who should correct, explain or expunge whatever was prejudicial to royal power and the welfare of the realm. The barons insisted that England was not to be governed by aliens. On 19 July Simon de Montfort dismissed Walter as chancellor, and the council tried to govern the country. This proved impossible while the king's sheriffs were in the shires, and de Montfort appointed Keepers of the Peace in each county to supervise the sheriffs.[9] In November the king agreed to a truce and arbitration by Louis of France on amendments to the Provisions.

Henry then sallied forth to the channel ports, but Dover rejected him. When Earl Simon heard the news he left Kenilworth castle, intending to support the constable of Dover. He reached London whilst the king returned through the Weald and stayed at Croydon to seek assurance of the loyalty of Londoners. Earl Simon crossed the Thames into Southwark and royalists in London closed the gate on the bridge and fixed it with chains. Prince Edward moved to Merton with his mercenary troops,[10] so that the king's forces outnumbered those of the earl. These advanced on Southwark on 11 December, but the citizens of London broke open the bridge-gate to allow Simon to return into the city.

The *Mise* of Amiens 1264

On 23 January Louis IX of France went to Amiens and pronounced his award, which accepted Henry's case and annulled the Provisions. Walter de Merton had put the king's case to the arbitrator and, in anticipation of a favourable decision, on 18 January Henry had granted him a warrant of chase in any royal forest.

Louis further rejected the statute that England be governed by native-born men. This was in contradiction to the agreements made by Henry in June and July 1263.

The king returned from France in February to find the whole country vexed. London rejected the *Mise* (settlement by agreement) and blamed Walter de Merton, whose Finsbury property was taken over and his Surrey properties plundered once more. On 12 March Gilbert de Clare seized the manors of Malden and Farleigh. Goods worth £42 were taken from Malden and Cuddington and £9 from Farleigh. From March to August 1264 Malden was occupied by a mob.

All this led to civil war in April. Simon made London his headquarters and the king kept his forces at Oxford where Walter de Merton was present.

Defeat at Lewes 1264

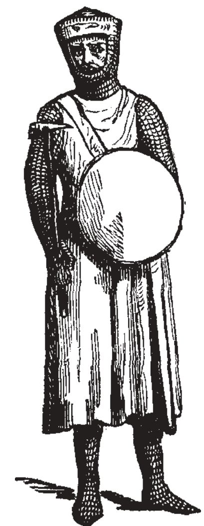
On 14 May the king was defeated in battle at Lewes. Walter secured protection as an ecclesiastic[11] for travelling the country on 26 July, and Farleigh was restored to him on 15 August, with Malden on 8 September.

De Montfort summoned his second 'parliament' in December 1264, which met in Westminster Hall on 20 January. The prior of Merton had been summoned. The earl also called to it "two of the discreet, loyal and honest citizens and burgesses" of every borough. They were not invited to take part in the discussions but to observe, and to express widely plaudits about the new regime. To the disappointment of Simon de Montfort only 23 barons attended, compared with 120 ecclesiastics. Nevertheless the meeting was memorable and significant – inching towards a parliamentary democracy.

Triumph at Evesham 1265

Simon de Montfort was killed at Evesham on 3 August, and there was much resentment that his cause had been lost. This was the signal for renewed attacks on Walter de Merton, a royalist. On 28 April 1267 the men of Ashtead went once more to Malden and drove oxen and horses back to Ashtead.

A special eyre (circuit court) was arranged at Bermondsey on 20 January 1268, to deal with trespass committed during the troubles. Walter's case was heard from 3 February and he was awarded 20 marks (£13.34). He was a skilled negotiator and bought land from the defeated rebel barons whose possessions had been mostly confiscated.



From an effigy of a soldier of the time. He wears chain mail, an innovation from Asia, beneath a surcoat.

Tumult in London 1272

The people of London wished to elect Walter Hervey as mayor, against the wishes of the aldermen of the city. One of the aldermen was the soke-reeve[12] of the prior of Merton [see Bulletin No.144 December 2002 p.9]. The dispute resulted in great commotion in the city, "so that the noise reached the lord king when he lay in bed grievously sick".[13]

The king died on 16 November, and magnates of the realm journeyed to London and met in the Guildhall. The earl of Gloucester observed how strong was the feeling of the people and feared for the peace of the city. He ignored the entreaty of the aldermen and ordered a folk-moot on the following day to elect a mayor.

The folk-moot was an ancient assembly of all citizens of London which normally met three times a year. Following the folk-moot, the magnates, including Walter de Merton, entered old St Paul's chapter house with the aldermen. They counselled them to elect Walter Hervey, but for one year only, and this was agreed. Walter de Merton then went out to meet the people at St Paul's Cross, the site of the folk-moot, and announced the decision.

The king was dead and Walter de Merton, once more chancellor, was virtually regent in England for two years, until Edward I returned from a crusade in August 1274.

1 Close Roll, 41 Hen.III m12 p.168; A Heales The *Records of Merton Priory* Henry Frowde, London 1898 p.136
2 Liberate Roll, 23 Hen.III 14 m20; M Hennings *England under Henry III* 1924 p.262
3 Close Rolls, 74,43 Hen.III m8
4 R F Treharne 'An unauthorized use of the great seal 1259' *English Historical Review* 40 (1925)
5 F M Powicke *The Thirteenth Century 1216-1307* 1962 p.157
6 Close Rolls 1259-61 pp.157-9
7 Cal. Pat. Rolls 1258-66 p.165
8 Richard de Clare had died in July 1262, but the king did not allow the 19-year-old son to take up his inheritance.
9 W Stubbs *Select Charters* 9th ed. 1913 p.399
10 G A Williams *Medieval London from Commune to Capital* 1963 p.223. The king's son had broken open the treasure chests of New Temple, London, in June, in order to pay his mercenary army, then based at Windsor. (Annals of Dunstable p.222)
11 Cal. Pat. Rolls 1258-66 p.328. He also availed himself of a ruling that ecclesiastical persons might reside safely at their benefices. This order encouraged royal clerks to leave their positions in government.
12 The London wards were sometimes also the soke, which was a private jurisdiction exempted from customary obligations.
13 *Lib. De Antique. Legis* p.153

TONY SCOTT has provided a note on:

MITCHAM WINDMILL BASE AND TIMBERS

Mitcham windmill was built on the common waste of the parish in 1806, after permission was given by James Moore to John Blake Parker, on condition that the villagers' grain was ground on two days each week. It was a hollow post mill, which is fairly unusual, but was the same form of construction as the Wimbledon mill.

The windmill was struck by lightning in the mid-1850s and partly destroyed but was presumably repaired. It ceased working in 1860 and in 1878 two sails were destroyed by lightning.

In 1908 the mill was dismantled leaving only the main post and the roundhouse. The remains have had no roof since then and were slowly deteriorating. In 1988 the remains were included on the Statutory List of buildings of architectural or historic interested (ie Listed Grade II).

The miller's house was rebuilt in 1861 and survives today as the Mill House restaurant pub in Windmill Road.

When a planning application to alter Mill House was received in May 2001 the Council sought to extend the scope of the proposals to include consolidation and preservation of the surviving mill structure. The applicants agreed to commission a specialist condition survey report, and as a result planning permission was granted on 15 August 2002 subject to the following conditions:

- Works on the mill structure are completed before the new extension is occupied.
- Timber repairs are carried out in accordance with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings guidelines, and agreed in advance.
- Specialist biennial inspection of the mill structure takes place and also regular local inspections.

We wait to see how effective will be the preservation work.

TIME TEAM COMES TO MERTON

Tony Robinson came to Merton for three days in late September 2002, to re-discover the layout of buildings of the silk printing works of Edmund Littler and Arthur Liberty. The edited version of events was shown on Channel 4 on 9 February.

A 19th-century brick building was soon revealed north of the wheelhouse, containing a north-south culvert. First explanations suggested that it had held a washing-drum, but this was later amended to a drive-shaft channel for the calendering machine, which smoothed the lengths of material. Local historians know this early 19th-century building as Joseph Ancell's print works. Trenches on the west side of the Wandle yielded parts of the iron grates of a furnace, and timber piles which must have supported extensive buildings now vanished.

Perhaps the most instructive scenes were those involving the printing of silks with hand-held wooden blocks. The hatted archaeologist, Phil, was guided by one of your vice-presidents, William Rudd, who once worked at Liberty's, and displayed his skill and knowledge.

There was little mention of the medieval building discovered on the east bank, and the full excavation report is eagerly awaited. This may be the chapel depicted in Malcolm's engraving of 1801.

Lionel Green

BILL RUDD joins the top team and does:

A JOB TO DYE FOR!

It had been blowing on the wind for some time that Time Team were interested in Merton Borough. Eric Montague was wondering what he could suggest in Mitcham. As it turned out what they were really after was the former Liberty site.

Nicholas Hart phoned to ask if I minded sending them a copy of my Liberty booklet. I discovered the TT would be on site from Wednesday 25 to Friday 27 September, and made a mental note.

On Thursday evening a call from Sheila Harris asked why I wasn't on site, as I was expected to attend. So I said I'd be there the following morning.

I arrived at 11am and straightway went to have a look at the two holes they had opened up on the west bank; one was so deep you couldn't see who was in it. Then a look at the hole next to the Colour House, and where there was a large block of stone which looked as though it might have covered a grave; but no inscription.

Finally a good look at the foundations that had been exposed next to the wheelhouse, and a discussion with Dave Saxby. Then I had a stroll across the yard.

Suddenly Mary Hart took my arm and said to come and have a look at what was going on in the Long Shop, and I found they were setting up a block-printing demonstration. At this point Mary told the camera crew, "This is the man you want. He worked here and knows the job." Someone slapped a form down and asked me to sign it. I discovered afterwards it was a release form.

Valerie Bryant, Bill Rudd and Time Team's Phil Harding

I was to act as tierer to a young lady who had been brought in specially. I first thought it was ridiculous, a 77-year-old doing the same job he'd done 62 years ago as a 14-year-old school-leaver.

A table had been set up on which a length of silk (yes, it was!) was taped down round the edges. A swivel chair had been converted to hold the colour trays, and dishes of dyes had been prepared. Some old printing-blocks had been obtained from somewhere. The printer and I were able to begin. I set to work putting dye on the pads in the trays that had been made up. The 'apprentice' was Phil Harding of Time Team, who was to take over the printing once he got the idea.

As you can imagine, the final result was not the perfection I was used to all those years ago. Nevertheless it was a gallant attempt, and the surprise came when a picture on a flat-screen computer showed a girl dressed in the pattern that had just been printed. So it was well worth the effort.

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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