



VICE PRESIDENTS: Arthur Turner, Lionel Green and William Rudd

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PROGRAMME SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER



Saturday 19 September 2.30 pm **'A Walk Around West Barnes'**

led by **Pat Nicolaysen**

Pat gave the Society's 1997 Evelyn Jowett Memorial Lecture under this title. The walk will illustrate some aspects of the history of this perhaps little-known district, whose name dates from the days of Merton Priory.

Meet outside Motspur Park station (*Earl Beatty* and Library side)

(Trains from Wimbledon and Raynes Park)

Wednesday 21 October (Trafalgar Day) 8.00 pm Church of St Mary the Virgin, Merton

'The History of St Mary's Church' by **Graham Hawkes**

Evelyn Jowett Memorial Lecture

Graham Hawkes has been closely involved with the life of St Mary's for many years, and has made its history his special study. He has lectured many times on the subject, and has now kindly agreed to speak to the Society's members and visitors about this ancient church.

(The church is in Church Path, Merton Park, near bus routes 152, 163 and 164.)

Saturday 7 November 2.30 pm **Snuff Mill Environmental Centre**

Annual General Meeting

After the business is concluded **Pat Elliott** will give a talk on **'Christmas Customs'**.

Saturday 5 December 2.30 pm **Snuff Mill Environmental Centre**

'The Archaeological History of Carshalton House and Water Tower'

Andrew Skelton

Archaeology continues to shed light on the history of two of the most distinguished buildings in our near neighbourhood.

(For the Snuff Mill Centre drivers should park in the Morden Hall Garden Centre car-park and take the path across the bridge, go through the gateway and turn right towards Morden Cottage. Buses 118, 154, 157, 164.)



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



LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOPS

FRIDAY 12 JUNE 1998 - Lionel Green in the Chair

- ◆ Session opened by Bill Rudd, on the family history trail, explaining the difficulties of finding more about the Revd. White, master of the Morden Hall Academy. White is not in the Oxford or Cambridge *Alumni*, nor in Crockford's Clerical Directory of c.1838. Neither is he in the NGI. The 1841 census records him, his wife and household at the Hall, but in 1851 he was not mentioned. Had he died? Son Thomas was born in Lambeth, and this leads Bill to Camberwell, where the hunt continues.

In Morden churchyard Bill is puzzled by the inscription on a tombstone of an Edwin Austin Rudd (no relation) "Agent and Musician", who died in 1929 answering "The Last Call" and is buried in a very deep grave with others of his family. He seems to have been a ?music hall ?artiste of some renown. There is also the mystery of an Arthur Thomas and his phono-fiddle, still to be resolved - watch this space ...

Finally, Bill is continuing his pursuit of Randalls, the sugar confectionery manufacturers of Wimbledon and Merton (hunt started by loan of old sweet tin to Sarah Gould for her high street exhibition at The Canons). Bill has discovered photocopies of hitherto unknown business registrations at the Heritage Centre, which have led him to Bourne Hall in search of information about Nellie and Edward Randall of Epsom. He is not stuck yet, and we shall hear more!

- ◆ Bill Sole produced photocopies of item 'Traces of Roman road found on Crown site' in *Merton & Morden News* of 3 June 1960. A significant layer of chalk and flints lay precisely on the projected line of Stane Street from Newington Butts. This is not on the SMR, so Bill has notified English Heritage (NGR ref TQ 26500 68500).

He recalled seeing another layer ("slab") of chalk, also on the line of the road, between Morden and Ewell, in the back garden of Morden vicarage. This was viewed by a representative from the Museum of London, who dismissed it as possibly from a cowshed. Bill is not convinced.

- ◆ Judith Goodman next, on the Nelson trail. Young (nephew) George Matcham's diary still eludes her, as do Cockerell's original survey notes on Merton Place (cf. Jack Russell's book). Search in the Haslewood papers at National Maritime Museum at Greenwich not helpful in this particular line of enquiry, but the same place yielded some of (niece) Charlotte Nelson's letters to her mother - delightful reading. One includes description of reception planned for Nelson's arrival at Merton Place. (C. was taken under Lady Hamilton's wing, and spent school holidays at Merton.) Another mentioned Dr Parrott from Mitcham being called to extract one of Charlotte's teeth. Quest next led Judith to home of former MP Sir Nicholas Bonsor at Liscombe Park. Most helpful and enthusiastic, a direct descendant of Charlotte, he also has some of her letters, including one dated 1802 which mentions a projected visit to see Mr Goldsmid's hot houses at Morden. Clearly there is much more to be discovered.
- ◆ Peter Hopkins has been supplied by correspondent (and member) John Pile of Havant with photocopies of a survey of Morden conducted in 1312, and now in Cambridge University Library. The survey lists fieldnames, acreages and land use of the demesne lands, plus names of freeholders and customary tenants - all invaluable in piecing together a picture of medieval Morden, when it was an estate held by Westminster Abbey. In Surrey Record Office Peter has seen a tithe survey of Morden dated 1583, recording acreages and occupiers of farms and landholdings. Yet another piece in the jigsaw!
- ◆ ENM reported completion of work on the history of North Mitcham, copiously illustrated, fully referenced, indexed and bound. Two more - Pollards Hill/Commonside East, and the Upper (Fair) Green nearly finished, completing the set of 16 similar volumes, covering the whole of Mitcham. All in typescript and on disc, but will they ever be published?? Work on the Fair Green book has highlighted the origins of the settlement, and raised the thought that "Old Bedlam", a multi-period house incorporating a medieval first floor hall above an undercroft (well recorded by topographical artists before demolition c.1853) could have been the "capital messuage with houses over" belonging to William Mareys in 1362 (cf. *Victoria County History* IV 233).
He had received a letter from Peter McGow of Croydon with sale particulars of Merton copper mills in 1832 giving new details of the premises (see page 6).
- ◆ Sheila Harris described two recent visits, one to Arundel Cathedral to view the annual Corpus Christi "carpet of flowers"; and the other to Bletchley Park, which she knew from her teacher-training college days. Unknown to most of us at the time, the latter was the highly 'hush-hush' wartime code-breaking establishment ("Britain's Best-kept Secret"). It is now in the hands of a trust and being developed as a complex of museums. Open to the public, it sounds a very interesting place to visit. (For details ring 01908 640 404.)

- ◆ Workshop was concluded by Lionel Green, who outlined a paper (to be published in a later Bulletin) explaining the difference(s) between an Abbey and a Priory - all very complex, but hopefully all will become clear when we can take it in slowly.

E N Montague

FRIDAY 24 JULY 1998 - Judith Goodman in the chair

- ◆ Eric Montague told us of the 'Ghost Town of Longthornton' (Mitcham). 'Squire' Blake of Bluehouse Farm, West Barnes in Merton, bought up the old strip field of Longthornton in the 1850s to build six detached villas. Meanwhile a chemical factory was being set up on nearby Lonesome Farm. The awful smells emanating from this ensured that the villas would not sell, and they were never completed, though the skeletons of the buildings survived until 1914. The unusual width of present day Longthornton Road is the only evidence of 'Blake's Folly'.
- ◆ Peter Hopkins demonstrated some work in 'electronic publishing', whereby maps can be displayed on a computer screen, and any area selected to 'zoom in'. Hyperlinks can be added to the map, allowing one to view maps of the same area at different periods of history, and to display information about the individual properties and estates. These can be further linked to detailed summaries of the history of each property, and additional links can be made to source documents, illustrations, biographical notes, family trees, and anything else the author wishes to include!
- ◆ Lionel Green talked about Adrian IV, the English Pope, and his links with Merton Priory. This will appear as an article in a future Bulletin. He is soon to visit a friend whose father worked with William Morris at Merton. Lionel also reported that the service in the Chapter House on 3 May had been written up in the parish magazine of St Mary's Merton. He also brought along a publication for Savacentre staff on the excavations of the Priory site, and a recent publication by Michael Palmer called *Tudor Investigations in Surrey*.
- ◆ Ian Aldridge mentioned a bishop's mark that can still be seen on the priest's door at St Mary's Merton. He has promised to point it out when we visit St Mary's for the Evelyn Jowett Memorial Lecture on 21 October.
- ◆ Peter Harris showed some recent acquisitions by the Wandle Industrial Museum. A photo of a horse-drawn van belonging to Turner's Bakery at Fair Green, Mitcham; some photographs sent from Australia of a silk commemorative handkerchief presented in April 1843 by his workers to Mr Aitken who ran a drugs (textile dyestuffs, not pharmaceuticals!) mill at Mill Green, Beddington Corner; and a photocopy of Gilliat Edward Hatfeild's will of 1941, whereby he left the Morden Hall estate and £30,000 to the National Trust.
- ◆ Bill Sole braved the topic of 'Prominent Women of Merton'. *Pears Cyclopaedia* only mentions Emma Hamilton for the parish of Merton, though there are three possible contenders for Wimbledon - Dorothea Douglas, nine-times Wimbledon tennis champion between 1903 and 1914; actress Margaret Rutherford, who went to school in Wimbledon, and author George Eliot, who lived over the border in Wandsworth. Bill proposed Evelyn Jowett should be included, and other suggestions were made by his audience. Who do **you** think should be included?
- ◆ Bill Rudd referred to the various sources he uses for researching the history of the St Helier Estate - registers of electors, LCC minutes, and, most valuable of all, local newspapers. Adverts give details of local shops, and local events are reported, such as Bill's school production of *The Mikado* in 1935, and the spontaneous street party, organised in just one day by residents of Evesham Green and Neath Gardens for George V's Jubilee, and copied the next day by Bill and his neighbours in Easby Crescent.
- ◆ Judy Goodman referred to the works of Edward Thomas, essayist and poet, born in Lambeth in 1878, raised in Clapham, and killed at Arras in 1917. In his last published prose work, *In Pursuit of Spring* he describes a cycle journey which took in a route through our territory. (See page 12 of the Bulletin).

Peter Hopkins

Next Workshop dates: Fridays 25 September and 13 November at 7.30 pm at Wandle Industrial Museum.

<p>Everyone is welcome at Workshop meetings. You don't have to be actively engaged in research - just come along and listen, talk and enquire.</p>

MARJORIE LEDGERTON welcomed some members to West Sussex:

A VISIT TO HORSHAM

The Horsham visit was arranged for 20 June so that the parish church would be a climax to the walk through the Causeway, as it was the annual flower festival. The 12 members (some familiar faces as well as new ones) had the added bonus of a beautiful sunny day. They had been free to explore the market town and its museum in the morning, and we met at 2.15 pm.

The name "Causeway" emerged c.1870. The earliest list of residents, made for tax purposes, dates from 1524, with 31 names. The following year saw a further seven added. The road was then called South Street.

The 1841 census is the first source listing properties and occupiers, and the first Post Office directory with house numbers appeared in 1878.

Ten examples of medieval dwellings survive wholly or in part. All are now plastered over, encased with brick, weatherboarded or tile-hung. There are five post-medieval timber-frame houses, and four of essentially modern construction (earliest 1704). The latest is Bishop's Court flats of 1980, between Minstrels and The Chantry.

The Museum (Nos 8-9, medieval) devotes a section to the history of the two houses. Next door is No.7, post-medieval, with its pillared porch. Almost opposite is The Manor House (1704), the only Queen Anne house in Horsham. The southern end of its land was sold to the church, and now The Barn houses the church offices and various halls. Next door is post-medieval No.31, timber framed, with a pretty front garden. One of only three gardens, as most houses open straight onto the pavement. Opposite are Nos 11 and 12 with distinctive medieval frontages and tile-hung backs. On to No.17, medieval but re-faced and with a raised parapet and fine doorcase (1703). This faces The Minstrels, two medieval houses joined together. Brick casings and Horsham stone roof - much photographed. The Minstrels was once owned by Grants of Croydon.

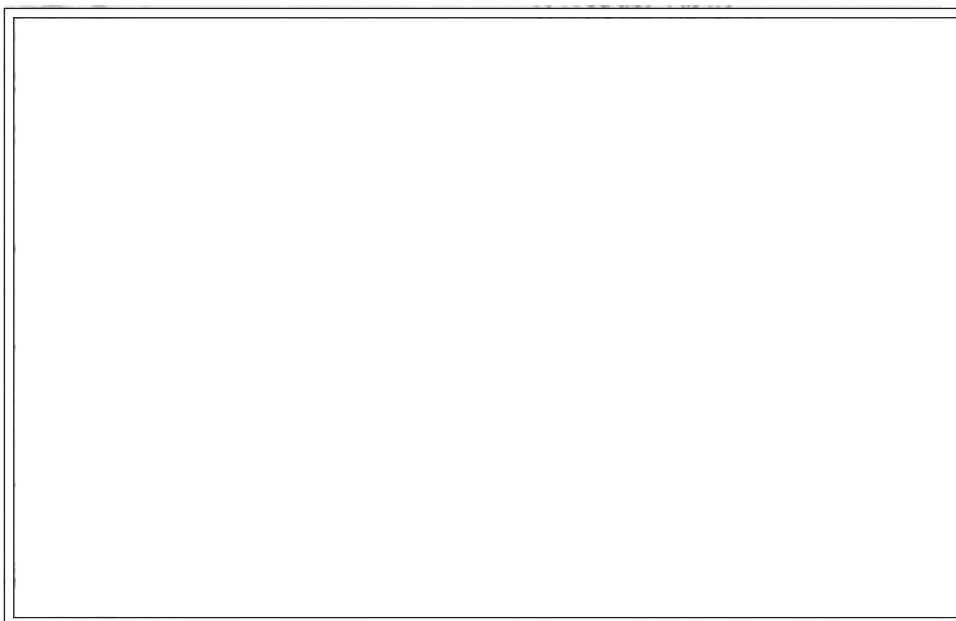
No.18 was once owned by the Shelley family. Nos 19 and 20, both weatherboarded, were described in a deed of 1658 as a house in two parts. There are two front doors; it is the only house so divided. Next door is the vicarage which was rebuilt c.1841 and reduced in size in 1938, from six reception rooms and seven bedrooms. A "manse" stood on the site in 1235. The Chantry, almost opposite, has a Horsham stone roof (recovered from another building), and its brick front hides a 3-bay medieval barn converted into a house. It was once home to Hartley Shawcross, barrister.

Flagstones next door has a medieval frontage and post-medieval additions. Originally it was a timber-frame, open-hall house. An upper floor was inserted and a chimney built c.1615, and cross-wings added. Local word has it that stone was "found" in the 1950s and incorporated!

Finally the church of 1247 on the site of a Norman church. The tombs of the grandfather and father of Percy Bysshe Shelley are here.

I have only commented on some of the 36 historic houses in the town. I have found the whole subject fascinating, but only reluctantly led the walk, after some persuasion from Sheila Harris, when the guide recommended was found to be rather expensive!

*HORSHAM
THE
MUSEUM
on the left*



VISIT TO WESTMINSTER

Nineteen members and friends went to the Palace of Westminster on 9 July on a visit arranged by Siobhain McDonagh MP, which seems to have been thoroughly enjoyable. (One latecomer, who can remain anonymous, apparently had to be escorted to the group, by not one but two policemen, and formally vouched for before being allowed to proceed!) Though the Mitcham & Morden MP could not be present herself, some famous figures were glimpsed, including the Rev Ian Paisley. The Bulletin for September 1997 included a detailed report on last year's visit.

VISIT TO SURBITON

On the hottest day (so far) of the year 13 intrepid members and visitors met at Surbiton's handsome (and freshly repainted) 1937 station. Our route took us first on a wide loop through leafy 'upper' Surbiton past Hillcroft College, a handsome Norman Shaw-influenced house of c.1880 built for Wilberforce May, of the match family; Italianate villas of the 1850s; the more ornate Oak Hill villas of the 1860s; an imposing terrace from the 1870s now occupied by the Police Federation; through the Southborough Conservation Area with varied houses of the 1890s onwards to Southborough House itself. Built in 1808 by John Nash for Thomas Langley, who farmed 200 acres of surrounding land, it once commanded a splendid view from its 7-bay pedimented garden front across to Hampton Court.

Down again from the heights we took in Cottage Grove, modest dwellings of the 1850s, now very smart, and Victoria Road, which includes some of the earliest buildings of Kingston on Railway. This was what Surbiton was called when it began to boom with the opening in 1838 of the first part of the London to Southampton railway.

Seven of us had had enough of walking in the heat and departed at this point. The remaining six (all members!) took in St James's Road, with the Surbiton Club and the old cottage hospital (now a development site); handsome Maple Road, laid out by the water company in 1855, and still with three (listed) houses of that date; and St Andrew's Square (Conservation Area) and church. These last are on land developed in the 1870s. Polychromatic brickwork on the tall terraces and on Blomfield's striking church (closed alas) are a feature here. Back towards the station past Claremont and Adelaide Roads and The Crescent. These still retain some of the villas put up by Thomas Pooley c.1840, Surbiton's first (and unluckiest) developer.

The constraints of time and temperature meant that on this occasion we did not see The Elms (1777) in Surbiton Road, or walk along Queen's Promenade (1856) beside the river.

The walk was based on a Surbiton trail sheet brought out in 1986 by Surbiton Rotary Club, Kingston Upon Thames Society and Surbiton Historical Society, which now seems to be out of print. For the gripping story of Surbiton in the 19th century June Sampson's *All Change* (1985) is essential reading. Merton's libraries have it on the shelves.

JG

As Editor, Judy is too modest to mention that she organised and led the walk around Surbiton. She had put in a great deal of effort in planning the route, entailing two preparatory walks. All who went on the walk would like to thank Judy for a fascinating afternoon.

Peter Hopkins

St Andrew's Church, Surbiton

Late Regency cottage in Ewell Road

FOOTNOTES TO A MERTON MURDER STORY

JOHN PILE, once of Morden but a long-term resident in Hampshire, has some interesting comments on some of the location-names in the article in the last Bulletin about the murder of Harriet Haggerstone in 1836.

Mud Cottage This was probably built with mud, and, judging by the position of the Merton Mud Cottage in the narrow neck of the exit-funnel from Merton Common, it was probably a squatter's cottage built next to the driveway on a slip of common land. There are references to mud construction in R W Brunskill's *Traditional Buildings of Britain*, 1981 (and later editions), and *Houses* (in 'Collins' Archaeology' series), 1982, and in M W Barley's *The English Farmhouse and Cottage*, 1961.

Mud-walled cottages from Brunskill's
Traditional Buildings of Britain

Blind Lane Normally a cul-de-sac. The term survives in the phrase 'a blind alley'. However the Merton Blind Lane was not blind at all, at least not from c.1745 when it is shown on Rocque's London map.

The Windingshot field This name appears to refer not simply to a field with curved or 'winding' boundaries, but to a shot or furlong in the open arable field to the south of Merton village before it was enclosed. The addition of 'field' to what was probably the pre-enclosure name suggests that by 1836 the original name was no longer applicable.

The open-field Windingshot would have comprised a number of strips or selions which may well have included the long narrow plot at the northern head of which was built Merton Cottage. This strip of land, as it is shown on early editions of the 6-inch and 25-inch OS maps, has the typical reversed S-shaped sides which were produced only by the action of the medieval plough. This strip had a width of about 21 yards and was approximately 323 yards in length (scaled from the maps). The survival of a selion was not unusual in areas of piecemeal enclosure by agreement rather than general Parliamentary enclosure.

The entire shot would probably have had its long edges more or less parallel to those of the surviving selion, and would therefore also have been 'winding'. I have based my reconstruction of Windingshot on the field-boundary features shown on the large scale maps, but it is really no more than guesswork.

Watery Lane is quite a common name which was probably applied only to lanes which were frequently under water, or over which water quite regularly flowed. This was certainly true of Watery Lane in the village of Funtington, West Sussex (SU 803083).

One of the advantages Peter Hopkins has in preparing this Bulletin for publication is that he gets to read it before it is printed, and can sneak in an early response to an article:

I was interested to read John Pile's comments on Windingshot. It is strange that no other occurrence of this fieldname has so far been found among the surviving Merton records. The name Winding Shot also occurs once in Morden, in the 1838 Tithe Apportionment (plots 219-222), though the two northernmost of these fields had been part of land known as Great and Little Parklands from at least 1458 until 1804.

The acre strip belonging to the copyhold known as Merton Cottage was actually in Berefurlong, a name that can be found in the Merton manorial court rolls from 1492 until 1869. This copyhold was enfranchised in 1870.

PETER McGOW has kindly allowed us to publish the following letter about the Merton copper mills:

Dear Mr Montague

I have read with interest your pamphlet on the copper mills, etc., at Merton Abbey. I note that it was published in June 1997, but I have only recently acquired a copy.

I have a snippet of information about the mills which may be of interest. It is in the form of an advertisement in the "County Chronicle" for 3 January 1832 and succeeding issues, which announced the forthcoming sale by auction on 24 January of "The Capital Copper Mills on the River Wandle at Merton Bridge ... by direction of the Executors of Henry Taylor, Esq. deceased".

The property was described as follows:-

“All those Capital and very extensive Copper Mills on that well-known and powerful stream the river Wandle, with three large water wheels, driving several pairs of rollers, large hammers, shears, &c; five heating furnaces, three refinery furnaces, two pairs of blast cylinders, a steam engine of 36-horse power, and every other requisite for conducting a concern of the very first consequence, with superintendent’s dwelling, counting house, stabling, smith’s and millwright’s shops, yards, garden and two workmen’s cottages, held for nearly eleven years, at a low rent.”

I find this rather puzzling. My initial thought was that, following this notice, the lease was taken up by the Shears, but there are earlier references to the Shears being in occupation; the first of which I have found is in “Picturesque Rides and Walks” by John Hassell, published in 1817. But on the other hand it seems unlikely that a sale of the freehold was being advertised. Perhaps there was an arrangement of tenants and sub-tenants. Do you have any information which might throw light on this matter?

Another point of interest is the association of Shears with the promotion of the Tooting, Merton & Wimbledon Railway, authorised on 29 July 1864 (27 & 28 Vict.cap.325). The Act names the four leading promoters, who were appointed to be among the first directors of the company. These were: John Smith Mansfield, Charles Robert Smith, John Leach Bennett, and William Shears.

Moreover, Section 31 of the Act specifically authorised the building of “a proper siding from the said Railway No.1 [i.e. the Merton Abbey loop] to the Copper Mills in the Parish of Merton in the Occupation of Messieurs Shears and Sons”.

The Railway was opened on 1 January 1869, but apparently the siding was not constructed until some years later. It is not shown on the early Ordnance Survey maps, and first appears on that of 1894-96, whereon it is noted as “Mill Siding”. This began from the northernmost of two sidings parallel to the main line to the east of Merton Abbey station, and ran on a curved course to the site of the copper mills, which by that date had been replaced by “Merton Abbey Mills (Paper)”. The siding is also shown on the 1933 O.S. map, curtailed to run into the “New Merton Board Mills”, sited south of the former mills. The siding had been taken up by the 1960s, perhaps when the board mills were rebuilt after the war.

Yours sincerely,

Peter McGow

Mr McGow hopes that his contribution may elicit more information. As a small start I can offer the following notes:

In 1889 Dewey-Bates, the artist, published an account of the Wandle¹, though, as he doesn’t mention William Morris, it is possible that the article was written some years earlier. In any case he refers to “the disused copper-mill² in the High Street of Merton, now a flock-mill”. In a directory for 1881³ Smith and Company’s flock and wool carding mills are listed as at Merton bridge. In 1882⁴ they appear as Merton Flock & Wool Co. (J Smith & Co). There are no more entries for the flock mills.

I believe that it was in these former copper-mill premises that Morris’s friend and colleague William De Morgan⁵ set up his pottery kiln. Though it is known that De Morgan was working at Merton c.1882 to the end of 1887, the site has never been identified. However, an article dated 24 November 1883⁶ includes the following sentence:

“Turning out of the garden [at the Morris site] again, a few minutes along the high road bring us to the building where Mr De Morgan’s pottery is already manufactured, though the whole of the building is not yet finished...” (De Morgan had ambitious ideas for his new kiln.)

It is clear from this that De Morgan was established in the High Street, and it seems that he must have been between Morris’s works and the Wandle, as there is no trace on the OS map of 1894-6 of a suitable building in the western stretch of the High Street.

1. Dewey-Bates, ‘On the Wandle’, *The English Illustrated Magazine*, June 1889 pp636-644
2. The last directory reference to Shears’ copper works that I have noted is in the PO directory for 1868
3. Trim’s Wimbledon & Merton Directory 1881 p66
4. Kelly’s Directory for Surrey 1882 p1247
5. Stirling, A M W *William De Morgan and his Wife* 1922
6. *The Spectator*, 24 November 1883

JG

LIONEL GREEN sets out Merton Priory's connections to the stirring events of 1066 and all that: TO RUNNYMEDE VIA MERTON

In medieval times monasteries acted as the news media by recording national events of their time. Such annals provide narrative historians with details not recorded elsewhere. The Annals of Merton Priory still exist at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (MS No 59 ff 151b-173a), with details of events to 1242. The most important section of the Annals refers to those of 1216 and 1217¹, which covers the period following the signing of Magna Carta, the death of King John and the Peace Conference at Kingston and Merton.

On 13 July 1205 Hubert Walter, archbishop of Canterbury and canon of Merton Priory, died. The king was triumphant, for the primate had prevented him from launching an expedition to recover his lost lands on the continent. He chose the bishop of Norwich to be the new archbishop and assembled an army at Portsmouth. But the pope's choice as archbishop was Stephen Langton. King John was outraged that his choice had been rejected and refused Langton entry into England as well as seizing church property. In 1207 England was laid under interdict by Innocent III and subsequently the king was excommunicated. For seven years the churches in England were closed and silent. Philip Augustus of France denounced the English king and threatened to invade. In 1213 John repented, accepted the pope's desires and was absolved at Winchester. On 1 August Stephen Langton, the new primate, arrived at Merton Priory accompanied by the bishops of London, Ely and Lincoln.² In the following year the interdict was lifted and John surrendered the kingdom to the pope and received it back as a papal fief.

The king now wished to reclaim lost lands in France, but the barons in England and his Poitevin vassals had no wish to fight against the French king. German and English armies were defeated by the French at Bouvines in July 1214. The barons then sought guarantees that the king would govern more moderately and predictably. On 17 May 1215 the rebel barons took control of London, and the king found himself restricted mainly to territory south of the Thames. He based the court at Windsor, and on 28 May safely received the royal regalia at Odiham. This had been in the custody of the Templars in London. On 5 June the king made a royal progress through friendly communities from Windsor to Winchester, returning via Merton. John arrived at the priory on Monday 8 June,³ and issued letters of safe conduct for a baronial deputation to "make and secure" peace. These were for a limited period until midnight on the 11th, which anticipated an early settlement.⁴ The king left Merton the next day and travelled to Odiham and thence to Windsor by nightfall for a conference with Langton. The king's first business on the morning of the 10th was to dictate letters to his military agents in the southern counties informing them that the truce had been extended to 15 June.

The barons were based at Staines, and between the two towns was the island of Runnymede with an access from each direction. A meeting with the baronial deputation went ahead and draft heads of agreement were drawn up. This was the *Magna Carta* and dated 15 June, but this was because the truce would have ended and the baronial garrison in London was to give up control on this date.

On 19 June the contracting parties pledged oaths of agreement, and all renewed their homage to the king. Between 19 and 24 June 40 copies of the charter were prepared and sent out from Windsor. The Merton chronicler records the accord as 23 June, which is also the day that the king finally left Runnymede for Windsor.³

Innocent III thought he was supporting John by annulling the charter, and in France the court announced that John had been deposed. John himself was now contemplating a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the following year⁵ and began accumulating articles which he had deposited at various monasteries. On 27 June Adam the cellarer of Merton travelled to Winchester to return to the king three ceremonial staffs - one with 45 rubies, another 22 sapphires, and the third 27 sapphires. Seven silver cups (weighing 20 marks and 8 ounces) had also been deposited at the priory.⁶ Similar items were lodged by others in the Treasury at Marlborough on 4 July, and at Woodstock on 25 July 1215.⁷

In France the king finally decided to send the dauphin Louis to claim the throne of England. Some of the Anglo-Norman barons backed the French dauphin when he landed in Kent on 2 June 1216. Louis captured Rochester on 6 June and entered London, where he was received by William Hardel, mayor of London, Robert fitzWalter and others. There were "ceremonial acts of homage, first at Westminster and later in St Paul's churchyard".⁸ Louis captured Reigate castle on 18 June and moved on to Guildford the next day.

John spent the summer and autumn leading an army of mercenaries marching and counter-marching the rest of the country. In October 1216 he succumbed to sickness and died at Newark.

Henry III was only nine when he ascended the English throne. Some of the more chivalrous of the barons supported the young king, and the pope found himself guardian of a child. Louis was defeated at the Battle of Lincoln which he was besieging in May 1217, and was unable to advance far from London. Reinforcements were denied with the defeat in August of Eustace the Monk.⁹ Through the mediation of the pope's legate, Gualo, a peace conference was called for 12 September 1217 and took place on an island on the Thames near Kingston. The Queen mother and the young king, together with the legate and William the Marshal arrived first on the Middlesex shore and rowed out to the island, whilst Louis's men were on the Surrey shore.

The dauphin was offered generous terms for the cessation of fighting. All debts due to him were to be paid together with an indemnity of 10,000 marks¹⁰ to finance his withdrawal from England. Even the barons who supported Louis were to receive back their lands. In return the Channel Islands, which had been annexed to France (with Normandy) in 1204, were restored to the English crown. Gualo stayed at Merton priory from 17 to 23 September and was joined by Louis, the Queen mother and many nobles of England and France.¹¹ All was settled by 18 September, and on the 22nd the dauphin returned to Merton to hear the injunctions re his penance. He was escorted from Merton to Dover and thence to France. London had still to be won over, and according to the chronicles of Merton it was not until 29 October 1217 that the king entered the city.¹²

1. *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 36 (1925) p43 The article compares the Annals of Southwark and Merton.
2. *Annals of Merton SAC* 36 (1925) pp42, 48. They were William of London, Eustace of Ely and Hugh of Lincoln.
3. Hardy, T D *Itinerary of King John from the Patent Rolls* 1835 (Record Commission) p108
4. Patent Rolls (Rot. Litt. 1201-16) 17 John m.24, p142b-3
5. Hardy 1835 *Ibid.* p149
6. Patent Rolls *Ibid.* p145
7. Hardy 1835 *Ibid.* p149
8. *Annals Ibid.* p50
9. *Annals Ibid.* p52 "*Eustachius falsus monachus*"
10. The Annals of Merton record 7,000 marks, p51
11. *Annals Ibid.* p53
12. *Annals Ibid.* p53

BRIEF REPORTS

The Standing Conference On London Archaeology, known as SCOLA, of which this Society is a member, has its Annual Conference on Saturday 17 October at the Museum of London. Under the title **LONDON UNDER THE MICROSCOPE** speakers will examine the use of modern scientific techniques as applied to archaeology. A conference leaflet is enclosed with this Bulletin for Society members in the London area.

Book 4 in the **Merton in Pictures** series by Merton Library & Heritage Services has recently come out. This one deals with the **St Helier Estate** and features some excellent photographs, mainly from the collection at Merton Local Studies Centre but including some from our own Bill Rudd's family albums. There is a brief history of the estate as introduction and the pictures have captions. Unfortunately no-one saw fit to ask Bill to check the text. He has already spotted many errors and written to the compilers accordingly. The book costs £4.95 from libraries. Enjoy the pictures but don't believe all you read!

The **Surrey Record Office**, as most members will know, is moving to purpose-built premises in Woking, where the collections from County Hall in Kingston, Guildford Muniment Room and Surrey Local Studies Library will be amalgamated. All is so far on schedule for the opening in the autumn.

However not quite everything from Kingston will be going to Woking. Sutton Heritage have announced that the **London Borough of Sutton Archives** has been appointed Diocesan Record Office for the Borough, and SRO has transferred back to Sutton all the parish registers and records for the parishes within Sutton.

ERIC MONTAGUE has a remarkable story from Mitcham:

In March 1997 the Society's Hon Secretary received a letter from Martin Hagen MA of Heidelberg, seeking information about Robert Simpson (1820-76), son of Emily Cranmer and William Simpson of Lichfield.¹ I was able to give him a little information and to suggest further lines of enquiry. Few people in Mitcham today have heard of Richard Simpson, which is regrettable, for his story is a poignant one and deserves to be better known. The following notes (compiled in 1989) are offered to the Bulletin in the hope that others may be inspired to pursue the research further.

RICHARD SIMPSON
Vicar of Mitcham 1844-46

Emily Simpson, the daughter of James Cranmer, squire of Mitcham, inherited the manor of Mitcham and patronage of the living in 1828 on the death of the vicar, her brother, the Rev Richard Cranmer. She took pride in the family's distant relationship with Archbishop Cranmer who, for his steadfast adherence to the reformed Church of England, died in the flames of martyrdom at Oxford in 1556. A devout Anglican all her life, Emily raised her four children, William, Richard, Robert and Emily, in the faith of the Established Church. It was therefore all the more extraordinary, and a source of great distress to her, that within the space of five years between 1843 and 1848 all four should renounce the Church of England and become Roman Catholic. The first was her eldest son, William, who was converted to Catholicism in 1843. Her second son Richard, turned Catholic three years later. He received his first formal education at Merchant Taylors' School, where he proved to be an outstanding pupil, matriculated at Oxford in 1839 at the age of 18, and obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree at Oriel in 1843, reading theology and metaphysics.²

This was a period of great religious ferment at Oxford. The efforts of the Tractarians and the influence of the Oxford Movement in the 1830s and '40s were largely instrumental in bringing about an Anglican revival, and the teaching of Anglo-Catholics like John Henry Newman and Edward Pusey,³ both fellows of Oriel, on the solemnity of worship and the sacred mystery of the Church, made a great impression on many undergraduates of the time. Richard Simpson was much influenced whilst at Oxford by the High Church sentiments then being expounded by followers of Keble and Pusey, and his correspondence shows his deepening conviction of the sacred principle of the Mass, and the Transubstantiation of the elements of the Eucharist.⁴

In 1844 the Rev James Cowles Prichard, who had been the incumbent at Mitcham since 1841, resigned the living. A fellow of Oriel from 1838-42, he was probably High, rather than Broad, Church. The reason for his leaving does not appear in local records, but it seems likely to have been on the grounds of health. Prichard signed the vestry minutes for the last time as chairman in January 1844, and died in September 1848, aged 34.

In the autumn of the same year Richard Simpson, aged 24, was ordained as an Anglican priest at Salisbury.⁵ The vacancy at Mitcham could not have occurred at a more opportune time, and, newly married to his cousin Elizabeth Mary Cranmer, he was presented to the living, worth £265 p.a. and in the gift of his parents. There was some apprehension amongst the congregation at the extent of the influence Tractarianism may have had over their new vicar, but Richard had been able to convince his father and mother that his inclinations were High Church and not Roman.⁶ Within two years however he felt compelled to resign the benefice at Mitcham and, following the example of his elder brother William and that of Newman, left the Church of England to become a Catholic. It is evident from Richard Simpson's notebooks and sermons of this period that at the heart of this decision lay his conviction as to the true significance of the Eucharist.

For many of the members of the congregation of the parish church at Mitcham the resignation of their young vicar, and his subsequent conversion to Roman Catholicism, was little short of scandalous, and there was much resentment. In the village as a whole the influence of prominent Evangelicals like the late Henry Hoare of Mitcham Grove was undoubtedly still strong, particularly amongst the older churchgoers who, essentially conservative and accustomed to the simpler forms of worship, would have looked askance at any innovation which, in their eyes, signified a move towards the ritual favoured by the High Church movement. Anything remotely approaching the practices of the Roman church would have been regarded by many with incomprehension and even abhorrence. Richard Simpson's decision must therefore have been a particularly distressing experience for his mother, in whose right (exercised by her husband William Simpson) he had been presented to the living barely two years previously. She is said to have bitterly opposed his action, remaining estranged from him for the rest of her life.

The precise date of Richard Simpson's resignation is not clear from the vestry minutes. As was the custom, he took the chair at the annual Easter meeting in April 1846, but thereafter the minutes are not helpful. His last formal act as vicar seems to have been the appointment of Edwin Chart as parish clerk at the beginning of May.

(Chart had in fact been deputising for his father since 1840.) The Revd John Hurnall, principal of a small boarding academy for the sons of gentlemen at The Glebelands, was re-appointed vicar's warden by Richard Simpson that April, but it is not known if he conducted services later in the year. By December 1846 the new vicar, the Revd Henry James Wharton MA, had been installed, and we find him signing the minutes as chairman at the meeting on the 10th, and being appointed by the vestry as a trustee of the Tate bequests.

Since it was no longer possible for Richard Simpson and his wife, who was also received into the Roman Catholic church, to remain resident in the parish, they left Mitcham for the Continent, where Richard acquired a notable command of the major European languages. Barred from priesthood in the Catholic church by his marital status, he took to work as a translator and as a tutor, and finally, on his return to England, in journalism. He died in Rome in 1876.² Robert Simpson, the youngest of the three brothers, was ordained as a priest in 1848 and took an active part in the establishment of the Roman Catholic mission and schools in Mitcham. He became seriously deranged mentally after his mother's death of a stroke in 1858, and died a lunatic. Emily Simpson, the sister, became a Catholic in 1848, and entered a convent in 1852.

One can attempt to imagine the turmoil and anguish these events caused the Simpson family, but attitudes have of course changed greatly in the century and a half separating us from Mitcham in the 1840s, and it is impossible really to comprehend the depth of local feeling at the time. Richard Simpson was undoubtedly a gifted young man. The acrimony surrounding his departure from the village of his youth must be a factor behind so little being said of him in published reminiscences of the period. It is certain that the loss of his talents could never have been fully appreciated locally when he felt obliged by social ostracism to leave the country.

In March this year it came as a pleasant surprise to receive another letter from Martin Hagen (still at Heidelberg), expressing thanks for the slight assistance I had been able to give last year, and outlining the results of research on Richard Simpson's musical work. Apologising (quite unnecessarily) for not responding earlier to my letter, Martin describes how

“Aside from his numerous publications on literary, religious and historical subject, Richard Simpson was also a prolific composer, a fact which is not (yet) widely known. Not only did he set the complete cycle of Shakespeare's sonnets to music - a task never again achieved by any other composer, before or after, he also composed musical versions of all the songs in Shakespeare's plays, and set music to texts of many other poets of the 17th and 18th century, for instance Herrick, Donne, Carew, Shelley etc. The autographs of Simpson's musical achievements are stored in five large volumes at the British Library manuscript department.

“The first three volumes contain 163 musical versions of Shakespeare's sonnets (for 9 of the sonnets Simpson devised two versions, thus the higher number), most of them for voice and piano, with a considerable number of part songs as well. As a basis for my forthcoming dissertation on settings of Shakespeare's sonnets in general, and especially Simpson's compositions, I have now prepared a complete edition of Shakespeare's sonnet-songs, only 13 of which have been published previously (1879). With the aid of musical notation software (and tedious hours of work, I might add) the edition has now a volume of 900+ pages. At present I am completing the musicological part of my study, ie the commentary for the edition, before turning to the main body, ie literary criticism, where I shall attempt to point out interdependencies between Simpson's sonnet-settings and his 1867 publication *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Shakespeare's Sonnets*.”

Martin included with his letter a copy of Simpson's setting of Sonnet 16, dated January 15 1865, and is now hoping to find a publisher for the complete work.

1. “The Simpsons were only slightly less prosperous and prominent in Lichfield than the Cranmers in Mitcham. Richard Simpson's father, William, was the eldest of five children of Stephen Simpson of Coventry, who, in turn, was the son of Joseph Simpson, the barrister-at-law mentioned in Boswell's *Life of Johnson* ... As far back as 1764 the Simpsons had been town clerks of Lichfield.”
McElrath, D *Richard Simpson 1820-1876. A Study in XIXth Century English Liberal Catholicism*, 1972, quoting Parker, A D *A Sentimental Journey in and about the Ancient and Loyal City of Lichfield*, 1925, 158
2. *Alumni Oxonienses 1715-1886* IV, 1888
Further biographical details are in
Altholz, J and McElrath, D *The Correspondence of Lord Acton and Richard Simpson* 1971 and
Notes: The Simpson Family in Mitcham, filed at L2 (920)SIM at Merton Local Studies Centre
3. Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-1882), Regius Professor of Hebrew and canon of Christ Church, Oxford, had by coincidence received his early education at Mitcham, where he attended the preparatory boarding academy conducted by the Revd Richard Roberts at Glebelands.
4. Altholz and McElrath
5. Information from Dr R A M Scott in a personal communication
6. McElrath

‘IN PURSUIT OF SPRING’

Edward Thomas was born in Lambeth in 1878 and died in the Arras offensive on Easter Day 1917¹. Until 1914 when he discovered himself as a poet² he was best known as an essayist and writer about the countryside (“norfolk jacket writing” he called it). Though he was always proud of his Welsh inheritance it was the commons and parks of south-west London and the easily accessible bits of what was then still Surrey that he first learnt to love. As a boy he explored Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common, walked to Croydon over Mitcham Common, and gathered conkers at Cannon Hill, Merton³. At one stage of his life he was working on a paper about Merton, but, if ever completed, it does not seem to have been published⁴.

Thomas’s last published prose work was In Pursuit of Spring⁵, ostensibly the account of a cycling trip at Easter, from London to the Quantocks. In fact he did not carry out this project in full at the time, though the whole route was familiar to him from many expeditions. The book is rather a ‘mood’ piece than a travel diary - subjective and discursive. There is a strange character, later called The Other, who appears from time to time on the journey, and can be identified as Thomas’s alter ego. The Other makes his first appearance in Merton, buying a caged bird.

What follows is Thomas’s description, slightly shortened, of the route that took him on 21 March through part of the present London Borough of Merton. I believe the year to have been 1913, as Easter Day that year was the 23rd. He went by Plough Lane, Haydons Road, Merton High Street, Morden Road, London Road and Epsom Road.

“[From Summerstown] my road led up to the Wandel⁶ and a mean bridge. The river here is broadened for a hundred yards between the bridge and the chamois-leather mill or Copper Mill⁷. The buildings extend across and along one side of the water; a meadow comes to the sedgy side opposite. The mill looks old, has tarred boards where it might have had corrugated iron, and its neighbours are elms and two chimneys. It is approached at one side by a lane called Copper Mill Lane, where the mud is of a sort clearly denoting a town edge or a coal district. Above the bridge the back-yards of new houses have only a narrow waste between them and the Wandel ...

“... It was raining hard when ... I turned to the right along Merton Road⁸. Rather than be soaked thus early, I took the shelter offered by a bird-shop⁹ on the left hand. This was not a cheerful or pretty place ... [It] was perhaps more cheerless to look at than to live in, but in a short time three more persons took shelter by it, and after glancing at the birds, stood looking out at the rain, at the dull street, the tobacconist’s, news-agent’s, and confectioner’s shops alone being unshuttered¹⁰. Presently one of the three shelterers entered the bird-shop, which I had supposed shut; the proprietor came out for a chaffinch; and in a minute or two the customer left with an uncomfortable air and something fluttering in a paper bag ... He mounted a bicycle, and I after him, for the rain had forgotten to fall. He turned up to the left towards Morden Station¹¹, which was my way also. Not far up the road he was apparently unable to bear the fluttering in the paper bag any longer; he got down, and with an awkward air, as if he knew how many great men had done it before, released the flutterer. A dingy cock chaffinch flew off among the lilacs of a garden ...

“For some distance yet the land was level. The only hill was made by the necessity of crossing a railway at Morden [Road] station. At that point rows of houses were discontinued; shops and public-houses with a lot of plate-glass had already ceased. The open stretches were wider and wider, of dark earth, of vegetables in squares, or florists’ plantations¹², divided by hedges low and few, or by lines of tall elm trees or Lombardy poplars¹³. Not quite rustic men and women stooped or moved to and fro among the vegetables: carts were waiting under the elms. A new house, a gasometer¹⁴, an old house and its trees, lay on the farther side of the big field: behind them the Crystal Palace. On my right, in the opposite direction, the trees massed themselves together into one wood.

“It is so easy to make this flat land sordid. The roads, hedges, and fences on it have hardly a reason for being anything but straight. More and more the kind of estate disappears that might preserve trees and various wasteful and pretty things: it is replaced by small villas and market gardens. If any waste be left under the new order, it will be used for conspicuously depositing rubbish ...

“I welcomed the fences for the sake of what lay behind them. Now it was a shrubbery, now a copse, and perhaps a rookery, or a field running up mysteriously to the curved edge of a wood, and at Morden Hall it was a herd of deer among the trees. The hedges were good in themselves, and for the lush grass, the cuckoo-pint, goose-grass, and celandine upon their banks. Walking up all the slightest hills because of the south-west wind, I could see everything, from the celandines one by one and the crowding new chestnut leaves, to the genial red brick tower of St. Laurence’s Church at Morden and the inns one after another - the “George”, the “Lord Nelson” ...

1. Thomas, R George *Edward Thomas - a Portrait* OUP 1985 (1987 paperback edition consulted)
2. From *Oxford Companion to English Literature* ed M. Drabble 1985: "His work shows a loving and accurate observation of the English countryside, combined with a bleak and scrupulous honesty and clarity... [H]is work is now highly regarded". Thomas's most popular poem now is probably 'Adlestrop'.
3. Thomas, R George p143
4. Thomas, R George p74
5. Thomas, Edward *In Pursuit of Spring* 1914 (1981 reprint consulted)
6. Ruskin too favoured this 'archaic' spelling.
7. This was Chuter's leather-dressing works, which occupied the old copper mill site from c.1890 to 1960. Except for one warehouse, the site has since been taken over by the electricity works.
8. Now Merton High Street
9. Kelly's directory for 1910/11 lists Edward Henry Smith as a bird dealer at 57 Merton High Street, which would indeed have been on the left after turning right from Haydons Road. He had gone by the following year. Thomas may have been using artistic licence.
10. It was Good Friday
11. Morden Halt till 1951, when it became Morden Road station. The station is in Merton.
12. Nursery Road, off Morden Road, is a reminder that both market gardening and nursery gardening were important to the local economy.
13. The poplars of Poplar Road (by 1998 only one survives) would have been clearly visible from Morden Road, as would those which then stood at the Morris & Co site by the Wandle.
14. This refers to the Mitcham gasworks in Western Road.

(I am grateful to John Pile for directing my attention to Edward Thomas.)

JG

EDWARD BURNE-JONES

A hundred years ago this year William Morris's oldest and dearest friend died.

Until 27 September (Wed. to Sun. 2-5 pm) an exhibition called **Burne-Jones of Fulham** is on at **Fulham Palace** to celebrate this great Victorian artist. The display includes a small but varied range of Burne-Jones's work, plus family photographs and drawings, views of old Fulham, memorabilia of Morris and some William De Morgan ceramics. For the admission charge of £1 (50p concessions) you can also visit the Palace museum, housed in the two rooms so far restored. The grounds cost nothing to visit and contain some superb trees.

*Edward Burne-Jones's 'stained glass' caricatures
of himself (left) and William Morris (right).*

JG

SOME MERTON FIELD NAMES

Prompted by the 'Windingshot' discussion on page 6 here are some further field names used in Merton, with possible meanings:

The Slipe	small narrow strip of land (which it was)
Black Meadow	dark soil
Walk Field	often land where cloth fulling had taken place, but unlikely here, adjacent to Church Lane
Roundabout Piece	land enclosed by, probably in this case, trees
Shoulder of Mutton Piece	description (here accurate) of shape

Toppins Four Acre and **Sculy Meadow** perhaps commemorate farmers of earlier times. But **Thorofare Meadow** seems a rather grand name for a small plot off Watery Lane, and how could any land in Merton be called **Hilly Field**?

Definitions from John Field, *English Field Names* 1972 and 1989

Field names from Peter Hopkins's analysis of the Merton Tithe Map of 1844, recently published by the Society at 75p (60p for members). Morden Tithe Map of 1838 is also available at £1. (80p for members).

JG

EDITOR reports:

A VISIT TO DAVID EVANS AT CRAYFORD

As mentioned in the March Bulletin David Evans World of Silk in Bourne Road, Crayford, is holding four block-printing demonstration days this year. I had booked a place on 4 April, and found my visit full of interest.

The Crayford textile industry began at the end of the 17th century, with calico bleaching on the River Cray, much as happened on the Wandle. By the 1770s textile printing was established there, apparently using the copper plate process first introduced from Ireland at Merton Abbey. The site taken over from a man called Applegath by David Evans and his brother (both London merchants) in 1843 had been used for a number of different printing processes. Its history since then has been mostly concerned with fine silks.

Block printing was carried out here until the 1970s, but all commercial work is now done by screen-printing. David Evans produce their silks to order, and mostly for the top end of the market, including Liberty's and other West End shops, and designers such as Margaret Howell. These days, though, Next and Tie Rack are also among their clients.

There is a shop at the works, selling both 'seconds' and perfect goods (and there is a café). But for anyone interested in textile history the star attraction is the excellent little museum. Here, as well as temporary displays on relevant topics (William Morris in 1996), there is a lot to see on the growing, harvesting and spinning of silk; on the development of silk printing and the technology of dyeing; and on the history of the industry in the London area and specifically at Crayford and Bexley.

Not surprisingly there are all kinds of links between the industry on the Cray (and elsewhere) and on the Wandle. Individual designers, craftsmen, and owners moved about as businesses grew or shrank in this seemingly always precarious field. It was interesting to see that David Evans's famous Derby silk squares, printed to a new design each year immediately after the race, were produced from the mid-19th century to 1969 for Welch, Margetson & Co. This firm was printing silks at Phipps Bridge, Mitcham, for perhaps 20 years in the middle of the last century. (It is still listed in the London telephone directory, as menswear manufacturers.)

The block-printing demonstration was performed by John, now retired, who had originally learnt his craft (six years apprenticeship) in the north. Having heard, and read, our own Bill Rudd's description of the process, I knew more or less what to expect, but as ever there is nothing like seeing it done in front of you. It was truly exciting to see a complicated pattern meshing together with absolutely no detectable joins. John was using a block dating from about 1900.

This was followed by a screen-printing demonstration, which was also interesting. Though much more mechanised one could see that there was still some scope for mishaps of various kinds (leading to nicely discounted 'seconds' in the shop!).

Hall Place, about a mile away, houses Bexley's interesting local history collection, and is a fine building in its own right (the Society visited in 1994).

Sources include:

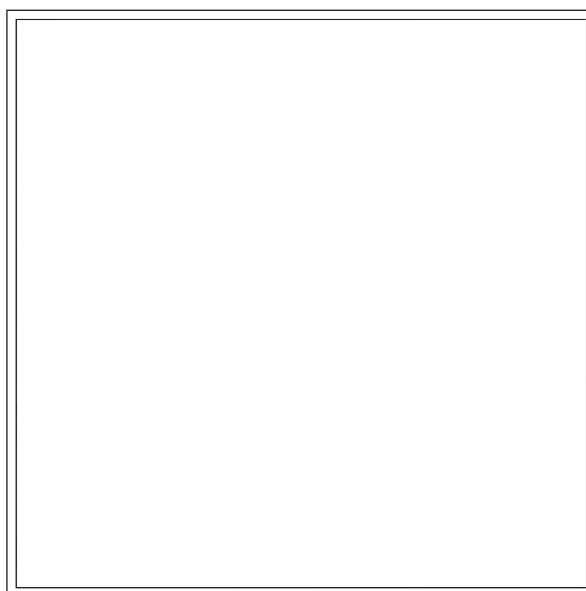
S D Chapman, 'David Evans & Co, The Last of the Old London Textile Printers', *Textile History*, 14 (1), 29-56, 1983

'The Crayford Textile Industry', London Borough of Bexley information sheet, 1979

E N Montague, *Textile Bleaching and Printing in Mitcham and Merton 1590-1870*, 1992

There is one more demonstration day on 3 October. Book on 01322 559401. (Charge £2.50/£2). David Evans World of Silk is open Monday-Saturday. Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays.

A textile block printer assisted by his helper, the 'tierer', who provides a continuous supply of colour from which the block is recharged after each application.



(A David Evans photograph from *Textile Printing*, Shire Books)

MRS MARGARET VANDERVLIES (née Rook), now 81, lived in Wandle Road, Morden for part of her childhood. Her parents' house was the first bungalow after the junction with The Drive, opposite what was the farm. The following account is an extract from her recollections of her childhood, written for her grandchildren:

The first thing that I can really remember is walking beside Mum who was pushing a pushchair and going to a new bungalow which Dad had built in Morden in Surrey. (Mum told me that I must have been about four years old.*) There was a lane on either side of the bungalow and lovely fields all around.

Nearby was a gypsy caravan and I used to go and talk to the gypsy who would sit at the top of the steps. There was a large mirror behind her and a neat bed on the side. It always looked spotlessly clean and I was fascinated by it. Further up the lane were two railway carriages and people also lived there.

The road was called Wandle Road and the river Wandle ran nearby. It was so lovely as the bungalow was the only building on a new site. The situation was perfect as it was on a corner of two lanes and open fields all around. Opposite was a farm and once Dick and I were allowed to go into the farmyard as a film was being made, starting from there. I think the title was either "In a Covered Wagon" or "Covered Wagon". There was a wagon and chickens flew out of the back of it. Years later I went back to look at the bungalow. It was unrecognisable and the farm was a park.

When I started school I had to walk a mile and a quarter to get there. I used to take sandwiches and milk in a metal container. The milkman used to come with a little pony and cart which was open at the back; it was something like a Roman chariot. It had two large metal urns with the milk in them. There were taps on the urns through which the milk would come.

Dad had a large workshop and sawmill at the side of the bungalow. He also had horses and carts, and a pony and trap. I can remember going for a ride in it to either Wimbledon or Tooting. Mum had a baby in her arms, so that must have been in 1921, when my brother Jack was born. Dad used to fell trees and these were sawn up into logs. When Guy Fawkes night was approaching my parents used to send invitations to my school and the children and their parents would come to a huge bonfire, made by wood shavings and chippings from the workshop.

Being near to Epsom Dad took us to the Derby in a horse and wagon. I remember a curtain shutting off the driving seat, and there were two armchairs in the wagon for the ladies to sit on. (No doubt they were there for the occasion.) I don't remember seeing anything of the race of course, in fact I suspect we were kept away from it. However I do remember there were lots of side shows and caravans.

Opposite our school was a church wall and peacocks used to sit on it and let their lovely tail feathers hang down. Once a year our school treat was held on the Hatfeild estate. Trestles were put up and we were given a nice tea and as the river Wandle ran through the estate we were also able to have boat rides.

On one occasion I came home from school (it must have been my birthday because we only had presents on our birthday and at Christmas) and there was a doll for me which Mum had dressed up as a fairy, and she had a wand! It was my cherished possession for a long while. Another present I well remember was a real blackboard and easel which Dad made for me one Christmas. It was big enough for me to have to really stretch to clean the board just like our teacher, so that made it super.

We also had Easter Eggs and my favourite was a marzipan one and the marzipan was in colours. I am sorry they no longer make these because I still like marzipan very much.

Dad had a car which was called a "Studebaker". It seemed to have a long body, big mudguards and a running board which you don't see on cars these days. I also seem to remember brass headlamps. However what intrigued me most were two little seats that used to pull up out of the floor. We also had a telephone. They were very happy days.

Eventually we moved to Norfolk.

* that is 1920

© Margaret Vandervlies

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

48th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SNUFF MILL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE, MORDEN HALL PARK
SATURDAY 7 NOVEMBER 1998 at 2.30 pm

AGENDA

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Minutes of the 47th AGM held on 8 November 1997**
- 3 **Matters arising from the Minutes**
- 4 **Duration of Presidential Tenure of office:-**

Following a suggestion at the last AGM, the Committee has considered this matter and submits the following motions to the members:-

- a) That the term of office of the President should be three years, when he/she could stand for re-election
- b) That the maximum period of office should be three terms (nine consecutive years)

5 **Chairman's Report**

6 **Membership Secretary's Report**

- 7 **Treasurer's Report**; reception and approval of the financial statement for the year, copies of which will be available at the meeting

8 **Appointment of President and a Vice-President. Election of Life Members.**

Under its Constitution and Rules the Society is empowered to invite such persons as it deems fit to serve as President, Vice-President, or to become Honorary members of the Society.

- a) Members will recall that at the Annual General Meeting in 1996 Viscountess Hanworth FSA, who had been the Society's President since 1969, resigned the position for personal reasons. Lady Hanworth has however indicated her wish to remain associated with the Society's work, and, when approached by the Chairman, expressed her readiness to serve as Vice-President if that is the wish of the members.

The Committee, having carefully considered the question of a successor to Lady Hanworth, wish to recommend to the members J Scott McCracken BA FSA MIFA as President of the Society. Scott McCracken has signified that, if it is the wish of the members that he be invited to serve, he would be pleased to accept.

- b) The Committee wish to recommend to the membership that Viscountess Hanworth be invited to serve as a Vice-President of the Society.
- c) Finally the Committee wishes to recommend to the members that our former Hon Treasurer Miss Winifred Mould and Mrs Jess Bailey become Honorary Members of the Society.

9 **Election of Officers for the coming year**

- a) Chairman
- b) Vice Chairman
- c) Hon. Secretary
- d) Hon. Treasurer
- e) Hon. Auditor(s)

10 **Election of a Committee for the coming year**

11 **Motions of which due notice has been given**

12 **Any other business**

At the conclusion of the business part of the Meeting Pat Elliott will give a talk called '**Christmas Customs**'.

NOMINATIONS for Officers and Committee members should reach the Hon. Secretary 14 days before the AGM, though additional nominations may be received at the AGM with the consent of members.

MOTIONS for the AGM must be sent to the Hon. Secretary in writing at least 14 days before the meeting.

The MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY wishes to remind members that subscriptions are due on 1st October:-

Single member	£6
Additional member in same household	£3
Student Member	£1

A renewal form is enclosed with this Bulletin. Please return forms by post, with subscription, to the membership Secretary, Mr C E Sole, or in person at a meeting.

Members who pay their subscriptions by Banker's Standing Order please ignore renewal form.