

MERTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LOCAL HISTORY NOTES - 11

Memories of Lower Morden

By Lilian Grumbridge - 1990

I have lived in Morden ever since I was born here in 1915. What was Morden like in those early days? Picture a very quiet, sleepy, peaceful village. The tiny cottage in Lower Morden Lane where I was born, was one of eight, called "New Cottages" which were built in 1907. My parents rented it for the sum of 5 shillings per week. There was no electricity or gas, our lighting was oil lamps downstairs, and candlelight upstairs.

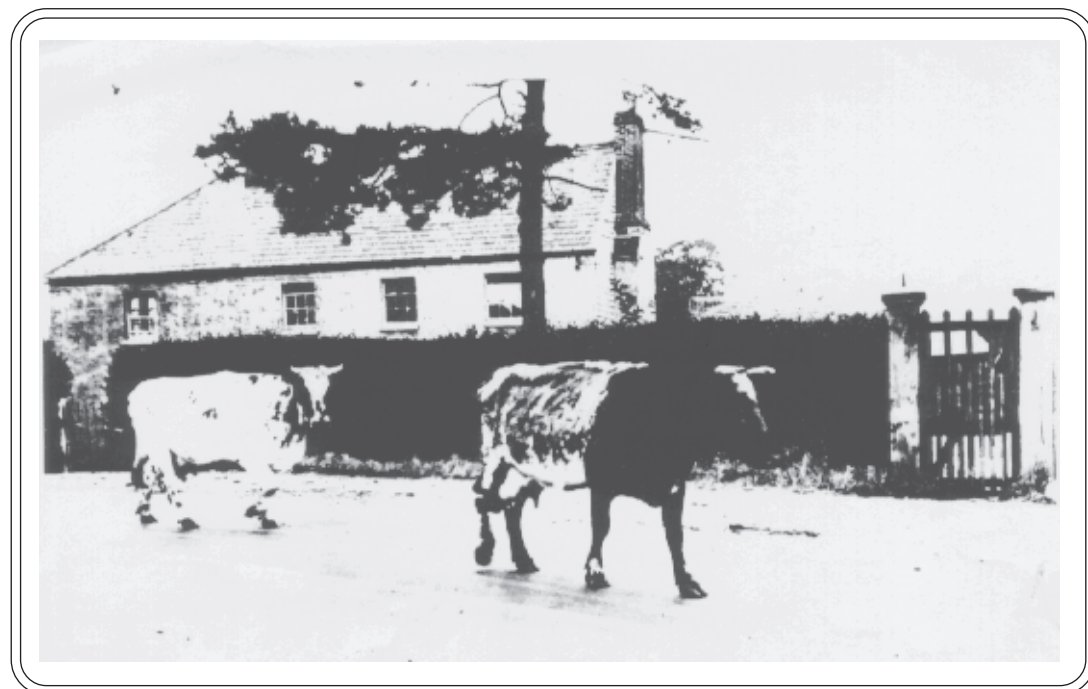
The tiny kitchen boasted three cupboards on the outside wall, one of which housed the coal that fed the open range which was our only means of warmth and cooking facilities. In the corner of the kitchen was a brick built copper, which once a week was filled with water, and the fire lit. From out in the back garden my parents would bring in a long tin bath, which was put in front of the kitchen range. The water was transferred in saucepans to the bath, and one by one my sister and three brothers were bathed. The last one to be given the bath had an extra cuddle for waiting patiently. This event we looked forward to, as on other nights we were stood in the old butler's sink for our ablutions.

Our large garden overlooked open fields, front and back, and I spent many happy hours there with my family and friends.



Children living in Lower Morden Lane 1st December 1920, photographed outside Morden School. Lilian, aged 5, is second from the left in the front row. Her eldest brother and sister are second and third from the right in the back row, one twin brother is standing third from left in the second to back row, the other is sitting fourth from left in the second row from the front.

The dawn chorus of the birds heralded each new day, the ducks on the pond had a language of their own, the cows padded their way twice daily past our little house to the fields from the dairy farm, providing milk for the local inhabitants.



Lower Morden Farm, home of Mr & Mrs Marden, then Mr & Mrs Woodland, later replaced by Hatfeild School

Of the three farms in our road, the site of one is now a Baptist Church, another has given place to a school, and the third has become a Garden Centre.



Kennels Farm, Lower Morden Lane, was a piggery. It has now been replaced by the Assembly Rooms and Morden Park Baptist Church (Hanson's Library Postcard)

The only traffic to pass our door was an occasional funeral cortege, which in those days was solemnly drawn by two, or sometimes four, beautiful shining black horses, down the lane which led to what was then Battersea Cemetery.

My schooldays were spent at Morden Council School, which was built in 1910, having outgrown the old school built in 1731 which is now Morden Parish Hall.



Morden School - Class 7 - November 1926

Sundays were always reserved for attendance at St. Lawrence parish church, opposite the school. The highlight of summer was the Sunday School Outing to the sea by charabanc, so called in the early years.

Another very happy occasion was when, once a year, Morden School pupils were allowed the privilege of going to Morden Hall Park, the home of Gilliat Hatfeild, the local squire. We were taken, in punts, on the River Wandle, which still runs through the estate - now National Trust property. On leaving, after tea had been served from the Marquee, we were each given a bun and an orange to take home.

Another treat was watching, with great interest, racegoers passing by the end of our lane as they travelled in their finery, in open deck buses, to and from the Derby at Epsom, whilst others, not so fortunate, walked the five miles each way.

So, what of Morden now? So much has changed. The hill we climbed as children is now part of Hillcross Avenue, boasting over 400 houses, in one of which I have lived with my husband for over 50 years. A bus route passes our door leading through to Morden's shopping and new civic centre and tube station at the end of the Northern Line.

A far cry from bygone days. Time marches on.



View across the fields in 1926, with Bow Lane and Morden Park boundary, now Hillcross Avenue.



*The Rick Yard, Lower Morden Farm in 1929, now replaced by Hatfeild School.
The line of the present Hillcross Avenue is in the background.
Lilian is shown here aged 13½.*



*Lower Morden Lane from the corner of Elm Road and Epsom Road, Sutton
(Stonecot Library Postcard)*

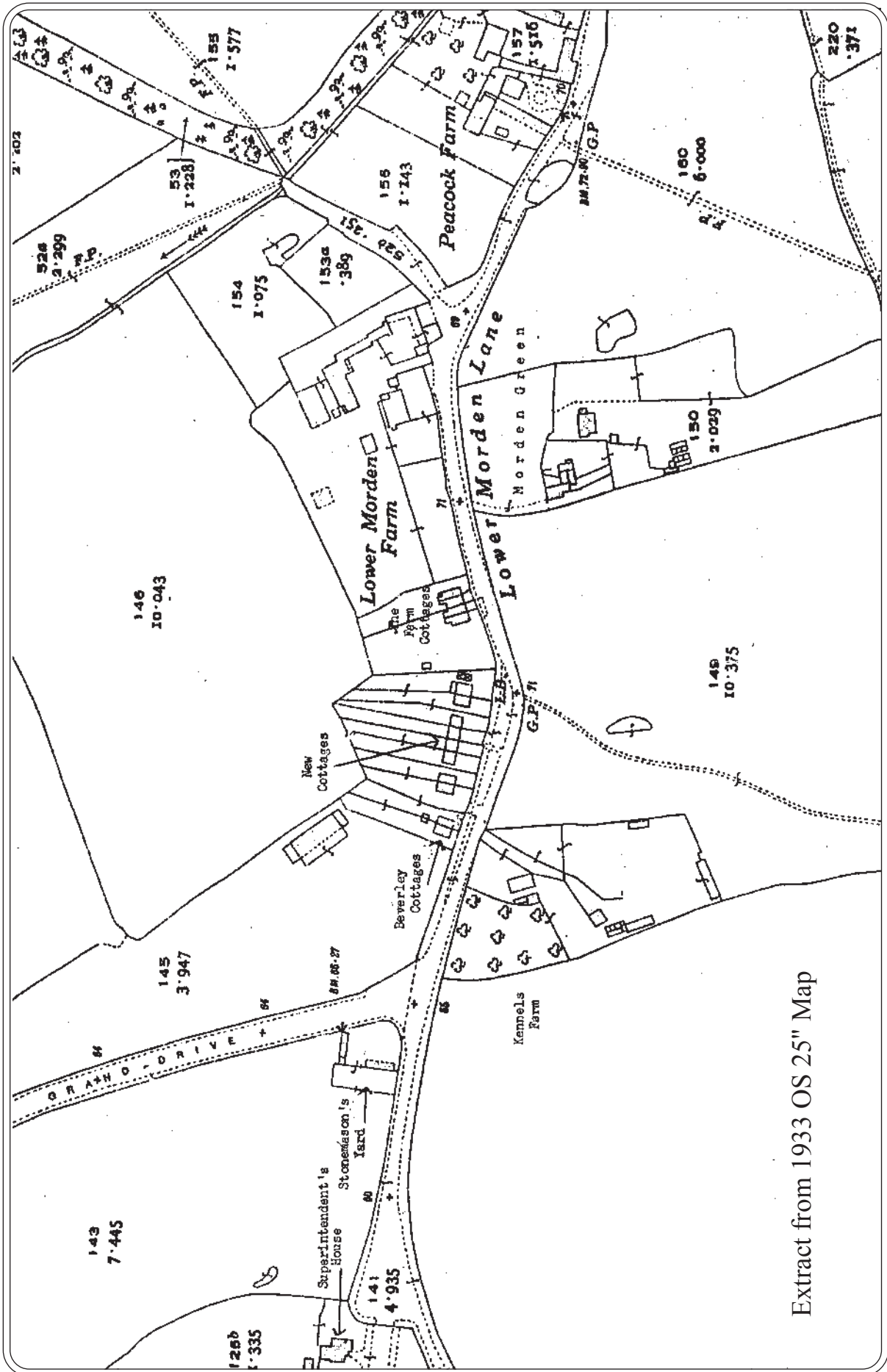
Residents of Lower Morden 1927 - from Register of the Electors (W J Rudd)

BURGOYNE, Ada & Sidney Thomas	Superintendent's House, Battersea Cemetery
EVANS, Alfred George & Sarah Jane (of 11, Freke Road, Battersea, SW.11)	Stonemasons Yard
BURRAGE, Edgar Edward, Helen Kate & Gordon Ewart	Kennels Farm
BRIGHT, George, Kate & Alfred Edwin	1, Beverley Cottages
LAMBERT, Alfred Joseph	2, Beverley Cottages
GROVE, Harriet Whitelaw & Sidney William Leopold	8, New Cottages
GROVE, Stanley Septimus	7, New Cottages
LAWSON, Elizabeth, LEMON, George & HOWLETT, Harold Robert	6, New Cottages
LAMBERT, Ernest	5, New Cottages
LATIMER, Henry William & Jane	4, New Cottages
WELLDON, Dennis & Francis	3, New Cottages
BONNEWELL, Charles William & Esther	2, New Cottages
SARGANT, May Alice & Walter Garfield	1, New Cottages
VINCENT, Ellen & William	4, The Farm Cottages *
REED, Jane Olive & Leolin	3, The Farm Cottages *
AYLING, Kate & William	1, The Farm Cottages *
MARDEN, Frederick & Mabel	Lower Morden Farm
HUNT, Catherine & Walter Salisbury &	
GORDON, Robert John & Margaret Ann	5, The Green
LAMBERT, Ernest	4, The Green
BATTEN, Walter Edward & Nellie Esther	3, The Green
BRIGHT, Constance Grace & Frederick George	2, The Green
SEARLE, Frances & George	1, The Green
EDGAR, Ellen Martha & Reginald George	Peacock Farm
GREENWOOD, Ernest Joseph (of "Warwick House", Chestnut Road, Merton, SW.20)	Land

* later called Bishop's Cottages
No. 2 was presumably vacant

*Two haywains being
pulled by tractor
eastward along Lower
Morden Lane, towards
what is now Cardinal
Avenue*





Extract from 1933 OS 25" Map



*The Stile, Lower Morden Lane, with the footpath leading to Epsom Road opposite Rutland Parade
(Hanson's Library Postcard)*



*The view from New Cottages, Lower Morden Lane, looking towards what is now
Cardinal Avenue, with Tudor Drive in the background.
The large tree on the right continued to grow on the green in Cardinal Avenue until recent years.*

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