



PRESIDENT:  
VICE PRESIDENT: Judith Goodman  
CHAIR: Keith Penny

BULLETIN No. 207

SEPTEMBER 2018



*The White House, Motspur Park. Anyone we know? (see p.12)*

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## PROGRAMME SEPTEMBER 2018 – JANUARY 2019

**Saturday 13 October 2018 2.30pm**      **St James' Church Hall, Merton**  
**'Update on the Chapter House'**

An illustrated talk by **John Hawks**

*Please note the change to our advertised programme*

**Saturday 10 November 2018 2.30pm**      **St James' Church Hall, Merton**  
**AGM followed by**

**'The History of Ely's Store'**

An illustrated talk by **Michael Norman Smith**

**Saturday 8 December 2018 2.30pm**      **St James' Church Hall, Merton**  
**'Puppetry'**

An illustrated talk by **Dr Chris Abbott**

**Saturday 12 January 2019 2.30pm**      **St James' Church Hall, Merton**  
**Members' Meeting** – short talks by several members

**Note also our Local History Workshops at Wandle Industrial Museum, London Road**  
**2.30pm on Fridays 19 October, 30 November. All Members are welcome**

*St James' Church Hall is in Martin Way, next to the church (officially in Beaford Grove). Buses 164 and 413 stop in Martin Way (in both directions) immediately outside. The church has a tiny car park, but parking in adjacent streets is free.*



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

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

A membership renewal form is included with this *Bulletin*. Only paid-up members may vote at the AGM. From 1 October 2018 rates are:

Single membership £12

Additional member of same household £5

Full-time student £5

Overseas members £15

**If you already pay by Standing Order, please ignore this reminder.**

The AGM agenda is also enclosed.

***MHS is bound by the EU General Data Protection Regulation. Please see the MHS website regarding how this concerns your personal data.***

## TALKS FOR JANUARY

Members are invited to contribute short presentations (10–20 minutes) on a local history subject to the meeting on 12 January. Talks can be with or without slides, and don't need to be full of facts – personal interest and enthusiasm are just as valuable. If you have something to offer, but aren't sure how to go about it, please get in touch with Bea Oliver or Keith Penny. If you don't feel up to speaking in person, you can provide the script and ask someone else to talk for you. We should like to publish the list of talks in advance, so that members can see the titles in the December issue of the *Bulletin*.

## ‘MERTON’S VCs’

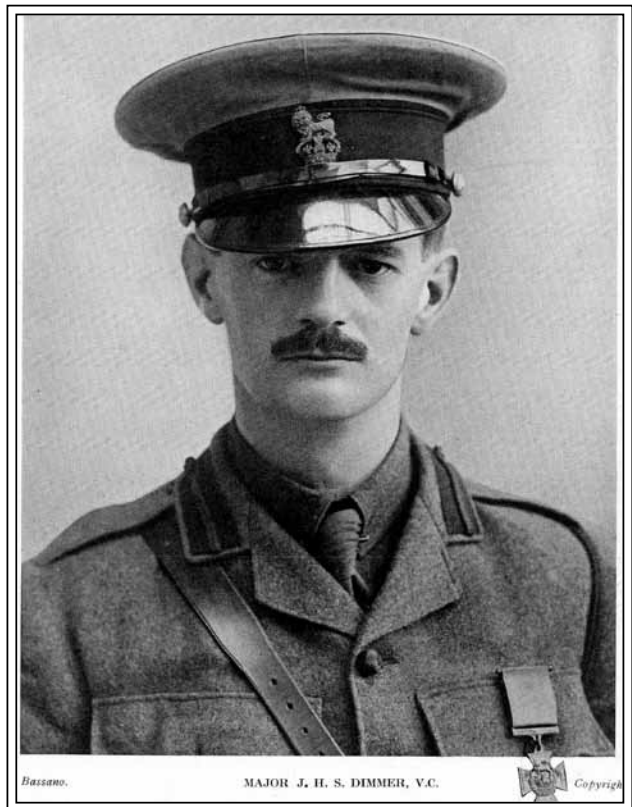
A smallish turnout on a Spring day listened to Sarah Gould deliver a plentifully illustrated talk on the history of the Victoria Cross and on the lives (and often the deaths) of those men with Merton connections who have been awarded this highest award by the British Crown for valour. Sarah explained that much of the research had been done in connection with the Heritage Service’s project *Carved in Stone*. The demand for a medal came out of William Russell’s reporting of the Crimean War. The design and production was entrusted to the firm of Charles Hancock, jewellers to the Crown, and Queen Victoria both took an active interest in the design and chose the inscription ‘For Valour’. Since 1856 up to the present day some 1,355 medals have been produced, using metal from captured Russian and, later, Chinese guns. King Edward VII began the awarding of posthumous medals in 1902, and thus 411 crosses were awarded during the Great War of 1914–8.

Of the total number, Sarah had found fifteen men with Merton connections of birth, residence or burial. The earliest was Philip Salkeld, who attended the Army college in Edge Hill, Wimbledon, and won his medal in 1857 during an assault on the Kashmir Gate, Delhi, during the Indian Mutiny. Fenton Aylmer, a product of Woolwich Royal Military Academy, saved the life of a soldier while engaged in bridge construction in 1886–7 in the Black Mountains of India (now in Bhutan). Later he lived in Wimbledon and died following a road accident in 1935. African colonial wars accounted for medals to Mark Bell, in charge of a working party in the Ashanti war of 1874, and Henry Lysons (a grandson of the topographical writer), born at Morden Lodge and fighting in the Zulu wars in 1879, after education at Wellington and Sandhurst. Gustavus Coulson lived in Denmark Hill, Wimbledon, and rescued a comrade from enemy fire in the South African wars.

In the First World War Maurice Dease, another product of the college in Wimbledon, was an early casualty at Mons; Gerald O’Sullivan lived for some time in Wimbledon and was killed at Gallipoli; Lt Col Henry Greenwood gained his VC at Ovillers in 1918 and survived to live years later in Wimbledon. Several of Sarah’s illustrations were from coloured cigarette cards – series were produced of gallant soldiers, who increasingly included Other Ranks (Douglas Belcher) and officers who had risen from the ranks (William Boulter, George Cates and William White). The only naval award was to Arthur Harrison, a rugby player of high standard from Durham Road, Wimbledon; he died in action during the raid on Zeebrugge in 1918.

Two RAF pilots earned the award in World War II, Ian Bazalgette (a relative of the Victorian civil engineer) over France and one, Arthur Scarf, in a hopeless fightback against the Japanese in Malaya.

Several of these men are commemorated in the borough today, George Cates by a memorial plaque at the Parkside memorial (and the market gardener’s son, William White, will be honoured in Mitcham later this year) and John (‘Jack’) Dimmer by a plaque inside the Civic Centre and by a road on a housing estate in Longthornton. The Chairman had admitted in his introduction to the talk to some disgruntlement when local suggestions for road names on the estate were all ignored and this unknown name appeared. Jack Dimmer (*right*) lived at various addresses in Wimbledon and attended Rutlish School, where he acquired skills that were useful later on, as well as a liking for the Cadet Corps. He too rose from the ranks, a rare thing in his regiment (the King’s Royal Rifle Corps), and resistance to such a thing had to be overruled by Lord Haldane. The details of his Army career can be read in full on the *Carved in Stone* website: he won his VC at First Ypres in 1914 and went on to fly aircraft in Salonika. He modestly declined the offer of the Freedom of Wimbledon, and, while convalescing at Southend, he deterred residents angry after a Zeppelin raid from attacking German-owned shops.



Sarah read out many of the citations, which led several of those present to a sombre recollection of their own good fortune, as well as an admiration for young men who did extraordinary things.

**Keith Penny**



## THE WANDLE MILLS WALK (PART 2)

On Thursday 7 May, Mick Taylor met a group of ten members and visitors by the entrance to the Watermeads in London Road, for a continuation of last year's Wandle mills walk. As we viewed the sites of mills, Mick showed us pictures of the mills as they had been, which was very helpful, especially when there was nothing visible remaining on the site.

Only 25 yards from the London Road bridge were the sites of Richard Glover's snuff mill and paper mill, built in the 1780s. Called 'the deserted mill' in *On the Wandle* (1889), the snuff mill building, closed after Richard Glover's bankruptcy in 1846, survived to 1924, whilst the paper mill closed at an unknown date, though it is recalled by the 'Paper Mill Cut' within the Watermeads. Mick explained that making cuts to supply water to mills, and thereby effectively widening the river, often led to disputes or litigation, because of the decreased flow for other river users.

Beyond the Tooting and Mitcham Football Ground, on the opposite bank, had lain the Willow Calico Works, established around 1593/4. It remained a print works until the 1870s when it was taken over and turned into a pig and watercress farm. The bleaching channels from the calico works were utilised to grow the watercress. On the way towards Mill Green were two leather mills that discharged foul waste into the river. One, the Deeds mill, began as a logwood mill. New housing overlooks the site of the Beddington Corner Calico Works, gone by 1871.

The walk entered a small industrial estate where, to the slight bemusement of workers there, Mick showed us the mill house called 'Riverside', of early- to mid-19th-century date and listed Grade II. (*detail, right*) At Goat Bridge there had been three mills, for corn, dyes (later drugs) and leather, one from as early as 1644. Two channels formed Culvers Island, on which stood The Culvers, a calico works from the early 1700s until the 1840s, first established by an unknown whitster (bleacher) and mostly leased by the Reynolds family. A leather mill from 1894, it closed in 1927 and was taken over by the Mullard Radio Valve Company until 1994, when the present housing estate was built. From Culvers Avenue to Hackbridge Road was the largest bleaching field along the river, around 50 acres (20 hectares).



After seeing the confluence of the Croydon and Carshalton sources of the river Wandle, we passed Shepley Mill, named after the owner from 1819; one of the mill buildings still remains and can be seen in Killburns Mill Close, off London Road. After the entrance to Wilderness Island, managed by London Wildlife Trust, we saw Strawberry Lodge, constructed in 1685, and one of Carshalton's oldest buildings. The owner, Josias Dewye, produced gunpowder, reputedly of poor quality, at Hackbridge. At Butter Hill there used to be a cloth mill and a calico printing works, and on the west bank south of Butter Hill bridge from 1782 there was a snuff mill, though later it processed madder (for dyeing) and parchment. Still standing, it is probably the oldest industrial building in Carshalton. Not so fortunate was the Lower Mill, demolished in 1995; it ended up with an internal waterwheel yet retained its external wheel. The paper mill building lasted until 1991.

Beside the recreation ground is the Upper Mill (*detail, right*), for which in 1780 John Smeaton designed new wheels – two low breast-shot ones, and two overshot wheels of his own invention. Mick pointed out the mill pond, an essential part in the management of the flow of water to the wheel, powerful enough to drive several grindstones. From the Italianate Leoni Bridge we saw the last mill site, in the High Street at Carshalton, the site now occupied by the *Coach and Horses* pub. After a group photograph several participants adjourned to Honeywood for refreshments, after a walk full of reflections on the past and present of the Wandle,



not least the quality and quantity of the water; today's clarity contrasted with the refuse from leather-making processes, and Mick suggested that modern water companies extracted so much water upstream that the river no longer had the force that once enabled it to be such an industrial powerhouse.

For more information, see Peter McGow's notes on the Wandle Industrial Museum website, <http://www.wandle.org/mills/millsindex.html>.

**Keith Penny & Mick Taylor, photos David Luff**

## VISIT TO HAM HOUSE

On Wednesday 18 July, our own Charlotte Morrison conducted a party round this interesting residence. Built 1608-1610 (a date announced by widely spaced figures on the front door) by naval captain Thomas Vavasour, it is formal, symmetrical and a typically Jacobean H-shaped design. Modified inside in the 1630s in the latest French style by William Murray and extended in the 1670s by Murray's daughter Elizabeth and her second husband, the politician John Maitland, Earl of Lauderdale, it has remained remarkably untouched since. The property is now in the care of the National Trust, with whom Charlotte is a volunteer guide.

Our inspection started in front of the formal entrance on the north side, facing the Thames. The front of the house and the curved side walls to the forecourt feature many niches, within which are lead busts of a fine series of 'noble Romans' (incongruously incorporating both Charles I and Charles II), originally painted white. The original stone mullions were replaced in the 1740s by the much more fashionable sash windows, while the brick front wall was replaced by railings, to display the full façade. (The large Coade Stone statue of Old Father Thames was added during the early nineteenth century.)

On the east side of the house, Charlotte pointed out the contrast between the materials and techniques used for the 1672 extensions (fine Portland stone, brickwork in Flemish bond) and the original construction (Reigate stone, English bond). We admired the beautiful south front, with its mid-section raised to three storeys and incorporating the first-floor Queen's Apartments (built in the hope of a visit by Queen Catherine of Braganza – but she never came) and the two-storey outer extensions. The whole scheme cost the equivalent of about £10 million today.

By contrast, the west side was the service side with a small (but busy at the time) courtyard, with dairy, bakery, brewery, laundry, ice-house and a very long orangery within easy reach, and the stables some distance away. The still-room is unusual, being inside the house, and featuring a tiled floor, presumably because a lady of the house herself took an interest in the distillation of medicinal and flavouring herbs.

In the basement were the servants' quarters and the vaulted beer cellar; but how the barrels got in is a mystery, as the existing doorways are too narrow and there is no sign of a slope in. The kitchen has a huge table (5 two-inch thick planks, 24 feet long) which must have been constructed within the room as the house was built. Real carpentry! Most unusually for the 17th century, there was a bathroom, with a Dutch bath, used by Elizabeth Lauderdale, now containing a reproduction bath (circular, vertical wooden sides, three feet high), and next door was a room with a day-bed upon which she could recover after the exhausting business of bathing.

Moving to the formal rooms upstairs, the Great Hall lies immediately behind the front door, with statues of William Murray and his wife. At one end, they built a large and showy spiral staircase ornamented with much carving and large candle-holders on the newel posts, leading towards the State Apartment, and into the Round Gallery of the Great Hall, converted from a room. The central space of the original floor was removed, leaving an area around which guests could circulate, and allowing much more light into the lower part of the Hall.

The house was built as a show-piece, to display the fortune and taste of the owners, and as such has many rooms with similar decoration, which I found difficult to distinguish from each other. The decoration is mostly composed of ornate heavy mouldings and gilding, and wooden panelling which has darkened with age, perhaps giving a gloomier view nowadays than originally. Ceilings usually feature some moulding, but the rooms most designed to impress are lightened by ceiling paintings by Italian artists such as Verrio.

The astonishing range and number of objects accumulated by the Murrays and Lauderdale include many tapestries and a considerable library of books. The Long Gallery holds several Chinese lacquered cabinets, which were intended to be placed on the floor of Chinese houses, but are here displayed on heavy 17th-century stands. The Music Room features a large contemporary (ie. 17th-century) Indian carpet, still showing its bright colours. The Duchess's Private Closet is much more domestic, though of course the tea-pot and cups were then in the latest style. Large paintings are everywhere, many being portraits by Peter Lely (the Duchess was a patron). Interestingly, the range of ground-floor rooms on the south side of the house was originally allocated between one suite for the Duchess (on the east) and one for the Duke (on the west), but at some point the two swapped bedrooms, while retaining the others in their own suite. An indication of most friendly terms between husband and wife?

But this was still a life lived in public – everywhere there are 'jib-doors' (disguised and flush with the wall, giving onto separate passages for access by servants), so privacy was by no means assured. However, you could always admire the extensive formal gardens on three sides of the house (themselves well worth a visit).

At the end of our tour, Charlotte was roundly thanked, with applause, for a most knowledgeable and entertaining introduction to Ham House.

**David Haunton**

## LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOP

Friday 1 June 2018 – seven present, Peter Hopkins in the chair.

- ◆ **Norma Cox** had tried to trace something of the Pitter Gauge and Precision Tool Co, of which George Blay had been Managing Director. The firm was making slip gauges in 1914, at a factory in Woolwich; other premises were in Leatherhead, but no further details seem to be available in books such as Glenys Crocker's *Surrey's Industrial Past* and Peter Tarplee's *A Guide to the Industrial History of the Mole Valley District*. Furthermore, Leatherhead Museum and the *Proceedings* of the Leatherhead and District LHS had no information. When Norma visited the site, called King's Court, it did seem to be an industrial area, rather than offices, but she wonders if any secrecy had to do with wartime contracts.

She has written a paper on Wimbledon village pharmacies in the Victorian age. This has been expanded and information about trade directories added by Dr Stuart Anderson, co-author, which may be read on <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/bshp/ph>.

Norma was troubled that her full name and private address was printed in another publication; we suggested that in future she gives an affiliation such as 'c/o Merton Historical Society' at the *Bulletin* editor's address, which is in the public domain.

- ◆ We welcomed **Hannah Shimko**, Public Engagement Officer for the HLF development of The Canons (building and area), who discussed with us the current proposals, both physical and for future use, and was assured of MHS assistance on historical points (and proof-reading!) once she has 'read all the literature on The Canons' (ie. mostly *Mitcham Histories*), which she thought 'may well take her some time'. An archaeological dig on the lawn, to look for pre-Canons buildings, is scheduled for August, and Hannah will keep us updated on progress. She noted two serious Health and Safety points on disabled access, raised by David Luff, that the architects may not have considered.
- ◆ **David Luff** has been attempting to trace the names of his former work colleagues at the Liberty print works in Merton Abbey for his forthcoming book *Design to Dress*, as his memory after some forty-plus years cannot be relied on. Fortunately David does have documents for the works in his possession, including a TGWU minute book, which has a complete list of every one working there on 11 December 1975, due to a union / management meeting on that day. Other sources include a TGWU members' payments book and the names recorded on photographs taken at the time. David instanced from the minutes book problems over the equal pay and safety Acts when these became law in the early 1970s; he also mentioned a very serious event that occurred in October 1975 where he suspects there may have been some form of a cover-up (more details of this in a much later book). He also confirmed that back then TGWU members were actually referred to as brothers and sisters. Times have changed.
- ◆ **Keith Penny** had been examining the Minute Book of the 1890s of Mitcham Parish Church. Entries showed that the present Vestry Hall was an afterthought; the initial proposal in 1880 was for a one-storey building, to contain a hall, muniment closet (for the safe storage of documents) and fire engine room. Funds were available from the Poor Law Board after the Vestries Act of 1850 that authorised new buildings for Vestry meetings, to avoid the need to use the buildings of the established Church of England. Financial issues delayed progress, and when the proposal surfaced again in 1884 it was for the present building facing the Cricket Green, at three times the cost of the 1880 one. Finance was by Government loan, the sale of two cottages at Figges Marsh and the Lighting Rate that would pay for the engine house. George Parker Bidder, Churchwarden, made an interest-free loan of £300 to cover the deficit, to be repaid by hiring out two of the ground floor offices. In the Minute Book Keith had noticed a Charity Commission review of Mitcham's endowed charities, which he thought would be worth further investigation.

After a conversation at the Merton Heritage Discovery Day about Surrey History Centre's First World War project Keith had asked himself what signs there now were of Surrey County Council's administration of Merton. His answer was 'schools': the Council became responsible for the construction of all schools within the county after the 1902 Education Act. The majority, if not all, of the schools built were from the practice of Jarvis and Richards, whose office was in Westminster. Keith showed his own photos of some single-storey elementary schools (*right*: Gorrington Elementary





School 1906) and two-storey schools for older pupils (*right*: Cranmer (Mitcham Girls) School 1929). The latter often have a central gable, rusticated corners and pilasters, and characteristic covered ways to the pupils' toilets. They were disliked by modern historians of architecture for being 'Queen Anne' and thus not inventive or progressive, but they were highly practical and well designed, being also, in the words of one headmaster, 'boy-proof'.



- ◆ **Rosemary Turner** had passed Mick Taylor a link to St Saviour's Church, Raynes Park. They are recording their war memorial and they have details of names that are no longer readable.

She was given an article on William Rutlish, the embroiderer to Charles II, from *Parish Matters*, the parish magazine of St Mary, Merton. As none of the vestments made by William are in existence, the vicar who wrote the article recommended a visit to the Charles II exhibition at the Queen's Galleries. Unfortunately it is a collection of paintings owned by Charles, and the only piece with possible embroidery was on a bust.

She had been given a Lidar ('light detection and ranging') scan of Morden Recreation Ground, including the woodland which may house the foundations of the mansion house of the Hoare family (itself containing the medieval house originally on the site). Alas it shows insufficient detail in the area. Rosemary wondered if she can get a close up just of the woodland.

Rosemary had been invited by CNHSS (Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society) to inspect the post cards associated with Merton (10), Morden (22) and Mitcham (69) in the John Gent collection, left to them in a legacy. Most are undated, but some can be given an *ante quem* date by their postmark. Many views depict the Wandle or Mitcham Common (most unidentified at present), but a few show named views such as the *Buck's Head* pub (with a Hoare's Brewery sign), and Chart's shop. Most were from photographs, but a few were reproductions of water-colour paintings – again featuring the Wandle and the Common. One of the artists was A W Head, about whom Rosemary has been unable to find any information. One card showed *The Green and the Curved Rapier*, a pub which Eric Montague called the *Lord Napier*, or *Roaring Cow*!

- ◆ **Dave Haunton** had been looking at the Merton Park area in the 1931 Kelly's Directory, and was struck by the qualifications publically announced by residents. These include the obviously professional people (doctors, dentists, solicitors and ministers) but also unexpected ones such as surveyors and insurance specialists. Three individuals give a degree (BA, BSc, MA) with no profession, so are proclaiming their right to vote for the University seats in parliament, as well as possessing a local vote (see *Bulletin* 206, p.15). The Captain and the Major are out-ranked by two Colonels. One of these, Edmund Locock Hughes (1880-1945), possessed an OBE and a DSO and had no fewer than four Mentions in Despatches from service with Canadian troops in France during WW1, as well as the Order of St Maurice and St Lazarus from the king of Italy for serving as base commandant of Taranto for a period in 1918. In 1931 he was the Librarian of the Royal United Services Institute, engaged in writing a Catalogue of their historical holdings. (So one of us?) Throughout the period 1936-1944 he was in correspondence with Basil Liddell Hart, the influential Army theorist.

- ◆ **Peter Hopkins** had recently given David Bird, former Surrey County Archaeologist and *the* authority on Romano-British Surrey, a copy of our recent report on the Short Batsworth excavation. At the same time he mentioned that we have been having difficulty finding a home for our archaeological items, including those found during the Mitcham Grove excavations that David directed in 1974/5. David has now arranged for these items to be studied by the Surrey Medieval Pottery Group, with a view to publication of a full archaeological report. Peter showed us (on Keith's laptop) photos of a small selection of the finds – unwashed, unsorted, unloved – ranging from medieval to 19th-century items (*right*: *Cheamware jug – 14th-century??*).

**David Haunton**



**Friday 13 July 2018 Four present – Dave Haunton in the chair.**

- ♦ **Peter Hopkins** showed illustrations from an email the Society had received (*see p.13*). They showed a stone, discovered in a garden, engraved 'M R', initials that were presumed to indicate Merton Rectory, since the site was indeed that of the former Rectory. We discussed what such a stone might have been for; it could not have been to mark a carriage entry, since the site of the stone was in the back garden of the present property, which would have been the paddock, not the front entrance. Opinions varied on the quality of the engraving. Peter read extracts from his draft introduction to the Society's forthcoming publication of a translation of documents concerning Gilbert and the founding of Merton priory. Several queries about details were raised, relating to the nature of the king's grant and to the value of the initial endowment – was it especially generous, or in line with contemporary practice? Was Merton in itself a valuable vill? There was some discussion of how to interpret the writer's description of Gilbert's generosity, which seemed to exist alongside his dislike of excessive displays of wealth.

- ♦ **Keith Penny** had remarked in an earlier workshop that a comparison of the attitudes of the local authorities towards the immense growth of private housing in the latter part of the 1920s would be worthwhile. Mitcham Urban District Council agreed after very little discussion, and even though few other authorities had done so, to make use of the provisions in the 1923 Housing Act to advance money up to 85% of a property price of £800 to help private borrowers to buy their own houses. The terms offered would be better than those offered by a building society. One councillor disagreed, because he did not see how such a scheme would benefit the 'working man'; otherwise approval was unanimous. Keith also showed some plans provided by Government committee in 1920 to guide local authorities who wanted to build for rent. The outline elevations showed the sort of garden village style to be seen on the LCC estates at Norbury: two sizes were offered, parlour (*right*) and non-parlour. Room sizes compared favourably with privately built houses lived in by some of those present at the workshop, and modern plumbing both in scullery and bathrooms was obligatory.

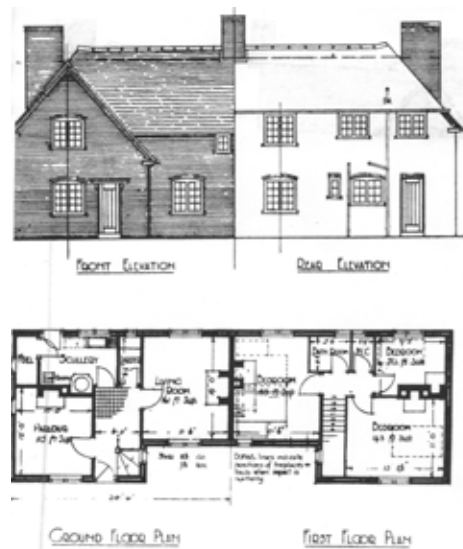


Figure 25 Type Plans and Elevations (1920): typical L-shaped plan with broken eaves-lines (south aspect)

- ♦ **Judith Goodman** revealed more of her reading of Havelock Ellis's autobiography. After he had attended the de Chastelaine school in Merton, his mother searched for a weekly boarding place. After rejecting an ill-ventilated establishment in Mitcham, mother and son settled on The Poplars, sited in a former workhouse building in Lavender Avenue, North Mitcham. The house and the headmaster in Ellis's time, Albert Grover, are described in *Mitcham Histories*, Volume 2; according to Ellis the education was adequate if not distinguished, and he found that among Mr Grover's eccentricities was a dislike of Charles Darwin that showed itself in the writing of near-obscene anti-Darwin doggerel. At home for the weekends, Ellis attended Merton Parish Church and was stirred by the preaching there of Revd Erck, whom he described as 'a lion in the pulpit'.
- ♦ **Dave Haunton** had noticed an oval plate attached to the bridge where Morden Road crosses the Tramlink track, and hoped it indicated a resurgence of his 'miles and chains' notices. Alas not, it merely contained some form of technical designation (*right*), though the notice below does refer to 'Trains' and not 'Trams'.

After nearly 20 years, Joe Thubron was reluctantly closing Copperfield's in Hartfield Road, the only second-hand bookshop for miles around, notable for its annual 'punch and nibbles' Sunday in early December. The interior sales space had been extended several times, and the resulting steps and doorways could result in unwary customers becoming completely lost. One of his closing notices demonstrates Joe's dry sense of humour – 'Shop Early for Christmas'!



Finally, Dave showed some items from a package he had received, relating to Betty Beal of Morden (1927-2014), from one of her nephews in Canada. These include a diary for 1940 (when she was 12), and notes about her time in Valve Section, Engineering Division, BBC, at The White House in Motspur Park. These will be offered to Surrey History Centre, but first we have an article about Betty's life in this issue (*see p.10*).

**Keith Penny**

**Dates of next Workshops: Fridays 19 October, 30 November.  
2.30pm at Wandle Industrial Museum. All are welcome.**



## MERTON HERITAGE DISCOVERY DAY – 12 MAY 2018

For this, by now traditional, event, MHS occupied our by now traditional corner site on the second floor of Crown House – which became very warm as time went on. In the heat of the afternoon, we were very grateful for the tea/coffee/juice/water supplied by Sarah Gould's team of volunteers (free in theory, but most customers gave a small donation by way of thanks). Our stand featured our monitor screen, displaying a sequence of photographs and occasional adverts for publications, and a pin-board of photos and postcards compiled by David Luff. Both attracted much attention and comment for the entire afternoon. As at previous Discovery Days, at least one of us was talking to a visitor at any one moment. Sarah reported that there were 1780 visitors this year, not quite as many as last year, but still enough to make for a worthwhile and successful event. Our limited selection of publications achieved useful sales (more than £45), and we even managed to recruit a new member. However, we completely forgot to take any photographs.

### In Memoriam

We were saddened to hear of the death of long-time member, **Sheila Gallagher**. Although for many years severely crippled, she continued her historical researches almost to the end. She was an active member of East Surrey Family History Society, and was particularly interested in transcribing records concerning past residents of Merton, Mitcham and Morden. Her many contributions to our own Local History Workshops can be found on our website by typing "Sheila Gallagher" into the Search box or by using this quick link: <http://mertonhistoricalsociety.org.uk/?s=%22Sheila+Gallagher%22>. Sheila was always generous with her research, wanting to share it with fellow-enthusiasts. She graciously deposited in our archives copies of several unpublished transcripts of local interest produced for ESFHS, which have already proved useful. She will be missed by family, friends and the general community of local and family historians.

We were also sorry to learn of the death of **Alan Crocker**, for many years a stalwart of Surrey Archaeological Society and Surrey Industrial History Group. His most important contribution to the local history of our area was his 1994 study of the paper-making industry in Merton and Morden, in the third of a series of articles published in *Surrey History* titled 'The Paper Mills of Surrey'.

### AN ENQUIRY WE MAY NOT HAVE HELPED

Perhaps the oddest enquiry we have had! On 9 June 2018 Lorna Stone, an Assistant Producer with HDP Productions, emailed: 'We are producing a television documentary entitled *Afterlife*: during the discussions the subject of Past Lives came up and on-camera our presenter Jayne underwent Past Life Regression. Some information came forth which none of us were expecting and we wondered if you may be able to shed light?

'Jayne lives in Shropshire but during the regression she spoke of a place called "Mitcham House" or "Mitcham Hall" which she described as a large Georgian building, white in colour, with a lake in the grounds. She said it was her home, and that she had turned it into a school or home for children in the mid-1700s. She also felt her name was Anna, or that Anna was important. We would very much like to know if any of this rings true. Any help would be very much appreciated.'

After much learned discussion, Keith Penny replied for us all: Mitcham had quite a few gentry houses in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and of course not everything is known about them, and we can't be sure that Jayne has provided exactly the right information. 'Georgian', for example, covers a wide range of ideas about architectural style. We don't know, either, whether the 'regression' is straightforwardly chronological? Can it cover more than one period of time, even different centuries? Anyway:

**Mitcham Hall** (at the corner Barons Grove/London Road) had an L-shaped water feature, and an elderly lady named Ann was living there in 1841, so possibly also there at an earlier date. The style of the building was late C17 rather than Georgian, and added to in the C19. There is no sign that it was white. There was a school there, but not until the 1890s. **Mitcham House**, near the present Raleigh Gardens, had a school in the 1780s/1790s, but nothing is known of its appearance, and it did not have a conspicuous water feature. **Mitcham Grove** at Ravensbury had water and was possibly white stucco in finish, and could be seen as Georgian, but it was occupied by a succession of known individuals, and there is no suggestion of a school or orphanage.

All the information comes from the *Mitcham Histories*, Volumes 4, 7 & 10, by E N Montague, © MHS.

## BETTY BEAL – SOME DOCUMENTS

Betty Eileen Beal (1927-2014) lived and worked for most of her life within the London Borough of Merton. In 2018 Robin Barfoot, her nephew and the last interested family member, offered MHS a small collection of documents associated with Betty, with the hope that ‘someone somewhere’ might be interested in preserving some or all of them. We publish here the main outline of her life story, using those documents, augmented with information from Robin. We intend to offer the whole collection to Surrey History Centre.

The *Merton Church Calendar* for April 1894 lists the baptism of Betty’s mother, Ethel Lane, though why Betty should have preserved part (pp.75-94) of an undated (c.1895?) but very Victorian issue of *The Church Monthly* is unknown. Perhaps the writer of one of the stories was related or known to a Beal or a Lane? A War Savings Card with four National War Savings stamps belonging to Albert H Beal of 11 Morden Road, Merton, (*below*) seems to have been opened in the early 1920s for her brother Albert Henry (always known as Robert, Bob or Nobby!), born in 1920. Presumably the writing is that of her father. No.11 was re-numbered no.5 some time after 1926, when South Wimbledon station was being built.



Betty was the youngest of five siblings – George (called John) who married May Light in 1935, Elsie who married George Barfoot in 1936, ‘Robert’ (see above) who may have married Sally in Ireland in 1940, and Joan (married 1941) – and they also had a stepsister, Edith Beal. Robin Barfoot relates that Betty grew up with her parents, Ethel and George, at 5 Morden Road, next to South Wimbledon Underground station, in one of a pair of old farm cottages (long since demolished) made of wood. The cottages had no electricity and the downstairs was lit by gas. Upstairs it was lit with candles. There were some remains of a pump and a well in the garden, long since defunct. If Robin remembers correctly the loo was outside. Betty’s father (Robin’s grandfather) in his early days used to drag a coffee stall up to Wimbledon Station to sell snack food. There is a picture of it in a small book about Merton and Morden called *Throw Out Your Mouldies* (Manpower Services Commission, 1984). You can just see the top of the coffee stall in Picture 16 on p.11 (which, confusingly, shows the site of South Wimbledon Station just before construction began).

With Robin’s father off fighting in North Africa, his mother Elsie took her family to live at the cottage. They were there for about three years but visited it later up to the 1950s when his grandmother finally moved to Tudor Drive in Morden. Robin’s grandfather recalled how, early in WW2, if he had been sitting up in bed he would have been hit by a stray bullet from a plane strafing the area.

A school report for the year ending 29 July 1936 (when Betty is only nine!) from Merton Abbey Council School says she is ‘a very good worker’, being sixth in class F(III), which contains 44 children. From here, Betty moved up to Merton C of E Girls Central School, from where she kept complimentary termly reports for July 1938 (15th out of 44), February (top of the class), July 1939 (top), and Easter 1940 (top again).

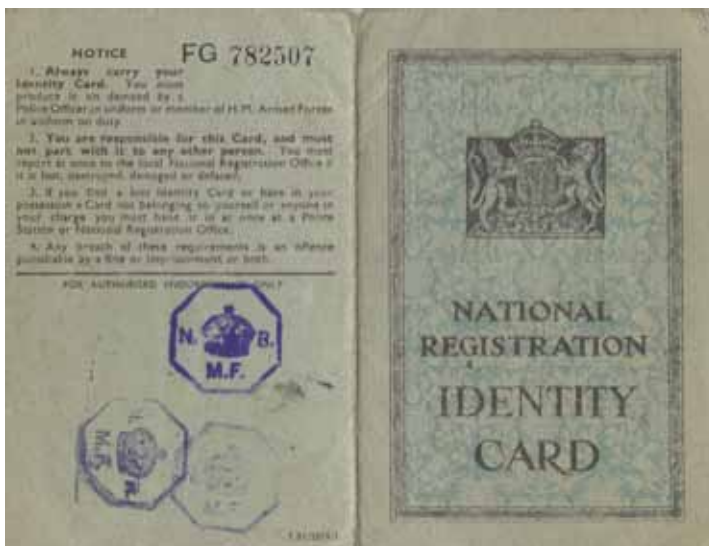
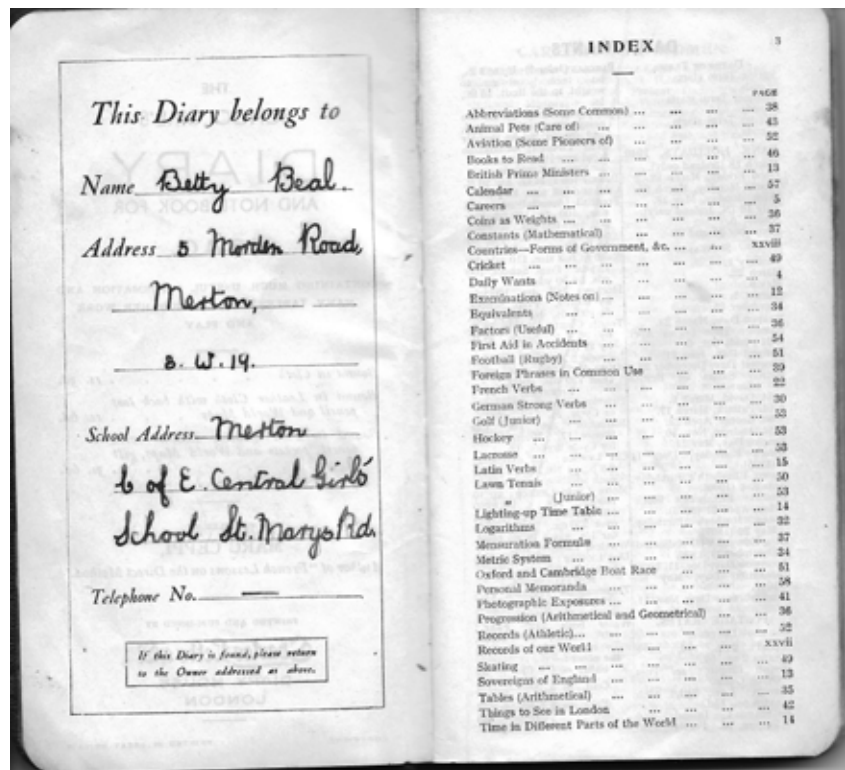
Betty kept a diary for 1940: she turned 13 on 22 April. This was in *Charles Letts’s School-Girl’s Diary*, an imposing volume with a stamped leather cover and no fewer than 58 pages of useful knowledge (including French, German and Latin verbs) (*opposite, top*). School events – tests, exams, results, wireless talks, air-raid practices – are frequent, though mournfully on 14 May ‘Had to go to school as Whitsun holidays have been cancelled’. However on Saturday 25 May ‘Did not have to go to school this morning’, confirming other entries that Betty sometimes did go to school on Saturday mornings. 29 July ‘Started holidays. Have only a week this year when we generally have month. (Swizzle)’.

The weather features occasionally (26/27/28 January 'snowed heavily', Monday 29 January 'did not have to go to school as the weather was so bad', 30 'still no school') as does illness. Far more often there are mentions of visits to friends, often staying all night, of relatives visiting, of shopping in Wimbledon and Tooting, and going to the pictures (some 87 films during the year) with Mum or with friends.

War does not impinge until 16 June 'went to visit Nob's pal in hospital as he is slightly wounded', 25 June 'Had air-raid alarm early this morning from 1-4. I slept all through it and knew nothing of it till the 8 o'clock news', 5 July 'Heard that Terry Maloney (R.A.F.) had been killed in action.

Very dreadful news indeed', 15 August 'Had air-raid alarm. German bombers bombed Croydon', 16 August 'Had air-raid alarm about 12:30pm. Had air-raid. Bombs dropped on Merton. People killed. Had very narrow escape ourselves. Very terrible indeed. Never want to experience such a terrible happening again', 26 August 'Mum, Elsie and I were caught in air-raid while walking for bus. Went in shelter in Church Path'. There are numerous references to warnings and air-raids over the next three months, with only a few details, such as 16 September 'Bombs dropped very near. One dropped in County School playground. No one hurt', 26 September 'Raids throughout day ... Had raid at night. Heard many bombs drop including incendiary'. However, 8 September 'Learnt this morning that Germany had tried to invade us. Had bath'. Finally, in December there is a succession of 'Quite a quiet night'. On 2 January 1941, the family moved to a cottage in Prestatyn in North Wales, and the diary ends.

Betty's National Registration ID card (YZMF 338 908) (*below*) is presumably a replacement, as it was issued on 24 May 1943, and then notes her subsequent changes of address: from 5 Morden Road, to 82 Cambridge Road, Great Shelford, Cambs, from 1 Aug 1943 to 17 Sep 1943 (evacuation or holiday?), then back to 5 Morden Road, then to 195 Tudor Drive, Morden, probably in 1949. (Though we also have an envelope, marked 'On Active Service', so presumably in war-time, sent to Miss B Beal at 17 Botsford Road, Raynes Park, London SW20.) An earlier National ID card would have recorded moves to Prestatyn and Raynes Park.





Betty kept a string of brief wartime letters, from four different male correspondents. She had an Airgraph (a reduced photograph of a one-page letter) from brother-in-law George Barfoot, Signals Regt, with Christmas greetings (with palm trees and camels), and also a card for Christmas 1943 when he was with HM Middle East Forces. Non-family members included Signalman John L George, who sent Christmas Greetings 1943; one of Betty's to him, written 3 January 1945 [*sic*], was returned to her, stamped 'It is regretted that this item could not be delivered as the addressee is reported Prisoner of War'; another of hers to John as a PoW was captured by Allied forces and returned to her; but finally they get through and John writes from M.-Stammlager VII A, in pencil and capitals, on 6 January 1944, and on 29 October (from Stalag IV G-104) (*one in each direction, right*) and again on 26 November 1944. John George is probably the 'Johnny' mentioned in her diary as a friend of her brother Nobby, as she addresses him as 'Johnny' in both her surviving letters. More romantically, Betty received an Airgraph from Gunner A Palmer, 57th A/T [ie. Anti-Tank] Regt, RA, with 'lots of love and kisses, yours forever, Art' (possibly, as handwriting is indistinct), who also sent a postcard on 16 July 1942, a humorous 'Springbok Letter Card' with a South African stamp, while 'Jack' sent Christmas greetings 1943 'At Sea', and Airgraphs in March and May 1944, c/o District Commissioner, Moshi, Tanganyika. We don't know anything more of Art (if Art he be) or Jack. Can anyone help?



Betty kept some random official documents – a Post Office Stamp Savings Books and a few National Savings stamps of her own (*left*), a 1944–45 Junior Clothing [ration] Book (*right*), and a 1953–1954 Ministry of Food Ration Book. This last lists Cater Bros (Provisions) Ltd, 22 London Road, Morden, as the favoured supplier of Fats, Cheese, Bacon and Sugar, but H D A Cook, 608 Kingston Road, Raynes Park, SW20, as the supplier for Meat.



In 1951 Betty joined Valve Section, Engineering Division, BBC, as secretary to the Section head, at The White House, Motspur Park, which was also the site of the BBC Sports Ground (*see p.1*). In June 1955 the BBC Club held a Summer Festival there, with a large glossy programme (*right*). Advertisements inside are for nationally-known products, including *Illustrated* magazine, SR toothpaste, Electrolux consumer goods, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and TV sets from Ferguson's, Marconiphone and His Master's Voice, but the only nearly-local firm is C Nielson & Son, who supply marquees (and awnings, and sails) from East Molesey. In December 1955, Betty earned a Pitman's Shorthand Speed certificate at the rate of 110 words per minute. In March 1956 she passed her (BBC) Proficiency Test for Junior Secretaries, with marks in the top brackets. The accompanying letter reveals 'You will now be designated Secretary ... As you are already Grade B2W this re-designation involves no change in your grade or salary.' In other words, her formal status has at last caught up with her pay and abilities. She obviously took a continuous interest in honing her skills, as in February 1963 she passed a Pitman's Shorthand four minutes speed test at 100 words per minute 'with distinction' at an evening class at Morden Farm Evening Institute.



In March 1975 came the publication of the first (and only?) issue of *The White House News*. It is a light-hearted attempt to create a 'family atmosphere', and contains the personal attitudes of 29 of the 31 staff of the Valve Section. Betty Beal is single and 'over 21', and has been in Valve Section 24 years. (It is worth noting that seven people in the Section have been there for 10 years or more, two of them for more than 30 years.) Betty's favourite colour is blue, her pet hate snobbery, and her interests lie in music (except 'pop'), reading, especially historical novels, and country walks to look at old churches. Her favourite TV programmes (this is the BBC) include Benny Hill, Nana Mouskouri, discussions and documentaries. She would have liked to have been a musical comedy actress, but now would like to meet a rich man, retire and be happy. The person she would most like to meet is Dirk Bogarde.

In May 1976, on completion of 25 years service, Betty received a commendatory personal letter from Charles Curran, Director-General, praising her 'consistently high standard' of work, and her 'understanding of various staff problems' (about which we are told nothing more). Valve Section was responsible for procurement of valves and semiconductors needed at transmitting stations. Many of the valves were very large, fragile, technically advanced and expensive. An obituary in a BBC staff publication tells us that Betty was not only a secretary, but took care of staff files, correspondence files covering all the different manufacturers and BBC departments, managed the 10-line telephone exchange, while (after 1980) assisting in data input for the new Data General minicomputer. For a few months she also managed the buying duties of the Section when two members of staff were away simultaneously. She had completed 37 years service by the time the BBC Valve Section at Motspur Park closed, so she finally retired in 1988 at the age of 61.



**David Haunton**

## WHAT DID I FIND IN MY GARDEN?

A lady wrote to us from Blanchland Road, Morden: 'I was digging out some ancient stubborn sucker weed roots over the weekend and unearthed this. I called the Police, who looked and said it was unlikely to be a grave stone and could be a boundary marker or milestone. ... The site of this house and garden was a Rectory c.1885. ... I have dug down about 18 inches now and it's not moving and even if I do get to the bottom then what? ... Furthermore, if it does turn out to be a grave marker I don't want to wake anyone up!'

The stone is 9 inches (23cm) across, nearly 4 inches (9cm) thick, and at least 17 inches (42cm) deep.

After discussion, we concluded that the suggestion that it is a grave stone is most unlikely. The parish boundary is too far away for it to be a parish boundary marker. We agree that it is most likely a boundary marker, as her garden is on the boundary between the former Rectory grounds and the adjoining field which belonged to the owner of the building now occupied by Central Autos, which was for a century or more a bakery. It may display someone's initials,



though none of the clergy over the centuries had those initials. We conclude that the MR stands for Morden Rectory. We wonder if any other such stones survive along the boundary line towards Abbotsbury Road,

One of us noted that the initials MR are a symbol of the Virgin Mary (*Maria Regina* = Mary Queen [of Heaven]), and wondered if it had religious significance, having been deliberately buried when Catholicism was out of favour, but its position along the Rectory boundary seems to rule that out.

The Committee were unanimous in recommending that the stone be kept in place if at all possible. We also felt that the find should be reported to English Heritage so that it can be included on the Greater London Historic Environment Record – a database of all archaeological features. Our Chairman has offered to contact English Heritage with all the information. He has also offered to contact a local professional archaeologist he knows, to ask for his advice. A different suggestion was to contact Merton Council to investigate the possibility of Local Listing, which doesn't provide the same level of protection that National Listing gives, but it would ensure that future developers are aware of the stone's existence. Again, our Chairman would be happy to make the initial contact there.



Have we instituted a new occasional series here ?...

### HELP WANTED (3) WINDSOR FLOORS LTD

Neil Hepple recently sent us this interesting photograph. It depicts his grandfather Charles Sidney Holyer (at the back, on the left), and Neil thinks it probably dates between 1933 and 1937, at which date Mr Holyer was living in the Greenwich area. The occasion for the photo is unknown.



Does anyone know anything about Windsor Floors Ltd? The firm may have been so named from being situated in or near Windsor Avenue in the Colliers Wood area of Mitcham. The houses there now were only built in the late 1930s, but the roadway itself seems to have been made up

long before that, with gravel extraction happening on both sides of it. However, Kelly's Directory 1938 lists Windsor Floors Ltd, 'fireproof flooring manufacturers' at 98 London Road, Mitcham. The telephone number, Mitcham 3000, must mean the firm had been in operation quite early on.

Fireproof flooring bricks were made of terra-cotta, and were a great saving in strength of materials. The hollow bricks that surround the workmen in the photo are of two, or even three, different designs. These are most intriguing, as they seem more suited to walls rather than floors, though they could be specialist items for conservatories or hot-houses. Or boiler rooms? They may of course be components for the building in the right background, which seems to be under construction. Were they made and fired on site? If the firm had their own kilns, Mick Taylor surmises that these could have been situated on some of the land that was previously occupied by Tamworth Farm.

Neil's mother has told him the following:

'Windsor Floors started off in London but gradually spread across the country with a substantial operation in the North East of England. We think it may have changed it's name to Windsor Construction after the war and benefited from the need to build new houses.

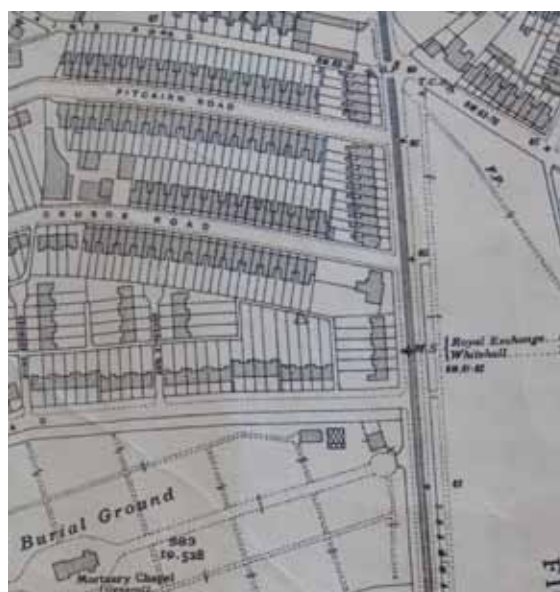
'Her father was asked to go to Newcastle around 1935 to help set up the new operation, where he met her mother. At this time the company expanded to include building factories and office blocks and her father became a skilled steel fixer – to such an extent his occupation was reserved in the war and he travelled around the country repairing runways and essential infrastructure.

'After the war he returned to Windsor Floors. The boss for a number of years was a Mr Phillips but we do not know his Christian name. Her father remained with the company for approximately 25 years, when we think the company stopped trading in the North East.'

Mick Taylor adds:

'98 London Road occupies a large building in the large plot just south of Crusoe Road (1934 OS map, *right*). The current 98 London Road looks like a new build and is occupied by Marsh House Orthodontics. I looked at the address in other Kelly's Directories that cover Mitcham, and some Voters Registers (VR). In the 1932–3 VR the address was occupied by three families: William, Charlotte and Ruby Lewin, Ernest and Mabel Philbroke, Frank and Lily Eaton. In the 1934–35 VR only one family is shown and they are at 98A: Philip and Annie Sharp (I wonder if this couple worked for the firm – 'Mr Phillips' perhaps?). This would suggest that the firm occupied 98 or the lower floor. There is nothing in the 1933–34 or 1935–36 VRs for the address which would suggest the occupiers were a business, perhaps Windsor Floors.'

Mick also checked some 1938 issues of the Mitcham Herald for any advertisements by the company but did not find any. Companies House, Grace's Guide and *The Times* archive have no record of the firm. Help!





**PETER HOPKINS reports on some new discoveries relating to**

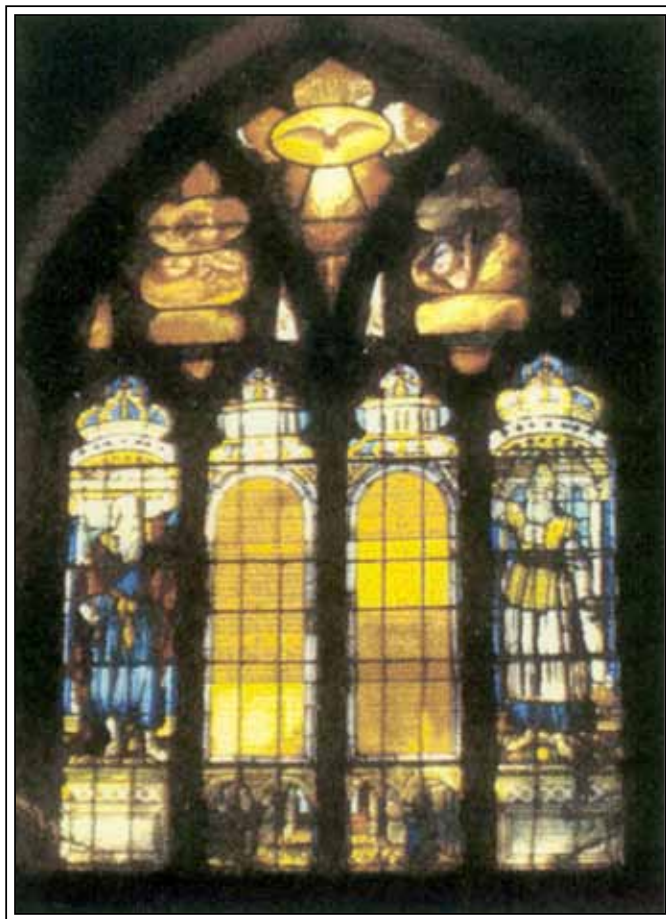
**THE EAST WINDOW AT ST LAWRENCE CHURCH, MORDEN**

The churchwarden of St Lawrence has kindly sent me a copy of a recent report on the east window of the church, which attempts to date the various sections of glass. I knew that the glass in the tracery at the top dated from 1828, and that some repairs had been made to the 17th-century glass, but I was surprised to read that only one section of the centre panels, containing the Ten Commandments, was original, the rest having been replaced in 1828.

I hadn't been able to trace any record of the 1828 work, but am now delighted to have discovered the original invoices and receipts among a collection of documents in the church archives deposited at Surrey History Centre:

<i>SHC 2269/10/1 (4)</i>		67 Frith Street Soho Square London 1828	
Lancelot Chambers Esq To Thos Wards			
For Works done to the Window of the Chancel of Morden Church			
To painting on Glass with vitreous colours from Drawings made by Mrs Chambers, a descending Dove &c in ancient Grey relief – by agreement		12	0 0
To staining the ground of this subject citron colour yellow – by agreement (with Mr Hoare)		1	16 0
To painting 2 other lights of the same Window Heads of Cherubim &c from Drawings also by Mrs Chambers on similar stained yellow grounds – by agreement		30	0 0
To 4 small pieces of similar painted Glass to fill the tracery of the Stone work on each side the subjects		1	5 0
To making 3 Metal Frames for the large lights and paint <sup>g</sup> the same 3co. oil paint inside and out		6	1 0
To Packing Cases and packing the Metal Frames & the Glass, labour & use only, the Cases being returned		1	1 4
To Carriage and Turnpikes by a spring van			18 6
To 2 men setting and glazing the same lights in the Window at Morden, time and materials		1	13 0
Coach hire of Self and Men outside Fares			12 0
Jul 10	Self and 1 man by Coach to Morden to make some alterations in Mr Dimsdale's Work		16 0
Aug 1	To a Workman putting in the 4 small pieces, his time & Coach hire		10 6
		£56	13 4
Re East Window Top Lights Etc			
<i>SHC 2269/10/1 (5)</i>		London Sep <sup>er</sup> 24 <sup>th</sup> 1828	
Received of Launcelot Chambers Esq by payment of Messrs Stevenson & Salt the sum of fifty six pounds thirteen shillings for Stained Glass Works done for the Window of Morden Church.			
£56 13 0		Thomas Ward	
<i>SHC 2269/10/1 (6)</i>		G M Hoare Esq, Morden	
The Gentlemen Subscribers to Morden Church Window's Restoration &c			
1828		Jo Dimsdale & Co	
		£	s d
To 4 Gothic head lights over Moses & Aaron, commandments, &c, new leading & cementing		} 8	15 -
Restoring 2 figures of Moses & Aaron to their original state, sundry new pieces in D <sup>o</sup> , new leading & cementing		} 18	- -
1 new light under D <sup>o</sup> complete, 1 D <sup>o</sup> part new & sundry repairs, writing Texts, &c		} 5	5 -
Writing the Commandments as before on 8 large Squares of Glass stain'd yellow, 20 pieces of D <sup>o</sup> for borders, 2 new Angel's heads at Corner, repair hands &c, new leading & cementing		} 17	- -
2 figur'd lights under the Commandments restored as before, new top pieces to D <sup>o</sup> (the whole very much damag'd), new leading & cementing		} 8	- -
4 pieces of Blue Glass for Angles		} 1	10 -
Dec 1827	Taking out 2 lights containing the Commandments &c & bring D <sup>o</sup> home 2 men 1 day & carriage for D <sup>o</sup> .	}	
July 1828	D <sup>o</sup> D <sup>o</sup> remainder of Glass work & carriage to town	}	6 16 8
July	Taking the whole down to Morden & fixing D <sup>o</sup> as before 3 men 1 day & carriage D <sup>o</sup> , use of packing cases &c	}	
		£65	6 8
Mr Dimsdale. West place [?] City road			
<i>SHC 2269/10/1 (7)</i>			
Received October 11 1828 of L Chambers Esq Sixty five pounds Six Shillings <del>&amp; 8 pence</del> as for Am <sup>t</sup> deliv <sup>d</sup> for Stain'd Glass &c			
£65 6 8		J Dimsdale	

Clearly the work was done, not in Utrecht as suggested in the church guide, but in London! Accepting the Utrecht origins, the report author, Léonie Seliger ACR, Director of Stained Glass at Canterbury Cathedral, suggested that the poor balance of light and colour between the new and old work might have due to the tracery glass having been painted by someone far away who hadn't seen the original, but that excuse will no longer stand. We can only be grateful that the church authorities did not decide to replace all the 17th-century glass! The original glass containing the Commandments was removed and transported to London, but is not entirely clear if they were rewritten onto the original 8 panes of glass or on replacement panes – the originals merely being used as templates. No doubt that will be discovered if and when the recommended conservation work on the window is undertaken. Léonie states that fragments of glass from the tracery are only 1mm thick, which was normal for late-Georgian work. She also suggests that the panels below the Commandments depict Moses and Pharaoh, which seems more likely than some of the other suggestions noted in my 2011 article in *Bulletin* 178. She writes, 'The message of the window as a whole, taking into account the lost scenes in the tracery, seems to be about the consequences of man's response to God's Word, with the Word quite literally taking centre stage'.



*Photograph: Rev Ray Skinner*

In 2011, I reported that the 17th-century glass was thought to be by Abraham van Linge, and Katharina Mayer Haunton subsequently passed to me some information about his work. The author of the new report agrees with this ascription, though she observes that the faces of Moses and Aaron are not of the same artistic quality as other work by Abraham, such as the heads of prophets in Lincoln College Chapel, Oxford. This might indicate that the original faces were damaged by 17th-century Puritan iconoclasts, and were replaced in 1828, along with the angels' heads specifically mentioned in the second invoice.

I passed to Katharina a copy of the report and she has now given me even more information, including part of an essay she had written which has helped answer another of my questions – why was the gothic style of window retained when the church was modernised by being encased in brick in 1636? The stonework of the windows is thought to be 17th-century, so I would have expected a contemporary style for the windows. Katharina explains that there was a Gothic Revival – more commonly described as a Gothic Survival – in the 1630s.

## **CHAPTER HOUSE OF MERTON PRIORY REOPENS**

Following recent work to add a new glazed frontage facing towards Merton Abbey Mills, the Chapter House will be open on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd September between 11am and 5pm for *London Open House*, and thereafter on Sundays only during September and October between 11 and 4.

The foundations of the Chapter House have been much enhanced, and other areas exposed, revealing more of the layout of the claustral buildings. Much of the stonework and other finds uncovered during the various excavations are now on display, together with explanatory material. It is certainly worth a visit.

**Letters and contributions for the *Bulletin* should be sent to  
[editor@mertonhistoricalsociety.org.uk](mailto:editor@mertonhistoricalsociety.org.uk). 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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