

SURREY HISTORY



PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

Those Tiny Cottages	<i>Leni Grosset</i>
The Accident at Broadmead Bridge	<i>C. G. Mileham</i>
New Material for Surrey Historians	<i>D. B. Robinson</i>
A Deceptively Dated Ashted Terrier of 1656	<i>R. A. Lever</i>
Holy Wells and Magical Waters of Surrey	<i>Rowland G. M. Baker</i>

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SURREY LOCAL HISTORY COUNCIL

Chairman: Kenneth Gravett, M.Sc. (Eng.), F.S.A.

The Surrey Local History Council exists to foster an interest in the history of Surrey by encouraging local history societies within the county, by the organisation of a one-day Symposium on Local History at Dorking and an Annual General Meeting, which includes a visit to a place of historical interest, and also by co-operating with other bodies in order to discover the past and to maintain the heritage of Surrey in history, in architecture and in landscape.

Annual Subscription to the Council for local history societies £6.50
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Membership on the part of local history societies will help the Council to express with authority the importance of local history in the county.

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SURREY HISTORY

Vol. 2

No. 4

Advisory Committee

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Those Tiny Cottages	151
by <i>Leni Grosset</i>	
The Accident at Broadmead Bridge	161
by <i>C. G. Mileham</i>	
New Material for Surrey Historians	170
by <i>D. B. Robinson</i>	
A Deceptively Dated Ashtead Terrier of 1656	182
by <i>R. A. Lever</i>	
Holy Wells and Magical Waters of Surrey	186
by <i>Rowland G. M. Baker</i>	
The Victorians at Home: The 1981 Symposium ...	193

Cover Illustration: The engines in the river (see 'The Accident at Broadmead Bridge').

Tailpieces: Extracts from the writings of H. G. Wells which illustrate life in Surrey in 1895-96

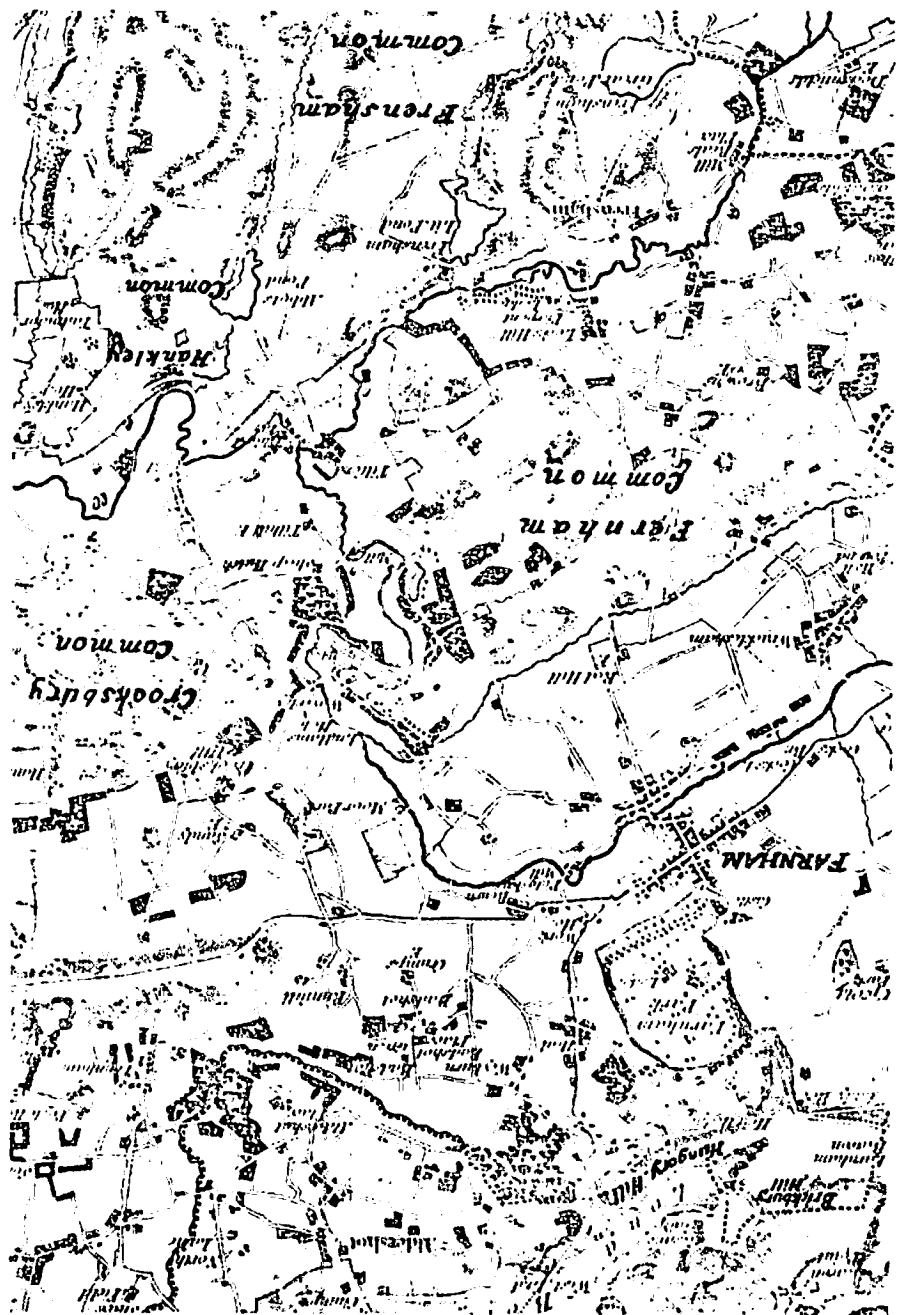
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PHILLIMORE

Fig. 1. A section from Sheet 8 of the old series of Ordnance Survey maps, published in 1816 by Col. Mudge. Scale 1 in. = 1 mile.



THOSE TINY COTTAGES

Leni Grosset

Farnham & District Museum Society

'We was all borned there—twelve of us, but five of us died as little-uns. It was a real struggle for my father and mother with so many mouths to feed, and all of us cramped up in that little two-roomed cottage tucked into the hill-side on the edge of the common.'

These words might have been spoken by any of the older members of quite a number of families now living in England, but in order to avoid generalisations, the buildings referred to are taken from the area around Farnham, Surrey, where they are fairly typical and reflect national as well as local influences. The development will be traced of these little two-roomed cottages before and after the enclosure of the commons.

The fact that these particular small cottages are not within the boundaries of any long-established village is partly explained by the invidious Act of Settlement of the late 17th century. This excluded folk from settling in any parish except in the one in which they were born, lest newcomers should become a burden on those who contributed to the ever-increasing poor-rate. This forced some folk who for various reasons had left or been expelled from their native village to try to maintain themselves in some out of the way and often inhospitable place in which they could throw up some sort of a dwelling where they would not be noticed or resented.

At first these settlers probably lived in turf or stone huts dotted here and there on what were waste lands until the enclosure between 1857 and 1861 of the commons around Farnham. The principal of these were Farnham Common (covering what is now known as Upper, Middle and Lower Bourne, and the area south of this as far as Frensham), Crooksbury Common, Shortheath Common, and the heathland incorporating Bricksbury Hill, Sandy Hill and Hungry Hill. Many squatters succeeded in finding a spot where the Parish Overseers would not see them, or at any rate not until they had thrown up a bank or fence round a small plot of land, and set up a hut made of tree branches and turves. 'There used to be one of 'em [turf huts] over there on Moorways Common. Ol' Snugsey Crawford put it up, an' then when he wanted to take in a bit more common, he used to throw the 'ouse down an' put up another 'long side o't. Reg'lar set-to there used to be there. He'd throw up a bank an' then th' overseers 'd come an' throw it down agen! An' the 'ouse—he 'ad a winder-hole both sides o' the door, and a old butter-tub for a chimley. One room 'twas, just built up wi' turfs'.¹

It is said that squatters and their friends often worked throughout a moonlight night to set up some sort of a dwelling with a hearth; and if by morning smoke was already coming out of the chimney, they were unlikely to be turned out. This might have been an accepted practice, but legally the encroachments of squatters were considered to be theirs only if they had occupied them for 20 years.

One family referred to by George Sturt in his Journals 'dwelt in a hut—a turfin' hut, which stood in what was then part of the common. And this was only a few years before the Enclosure, when Trusler was a boy of seven [c. 1858] sent out on to the common to mind the cows. This hut was made up of turfs—walled, roofed with them, even floored with them, laid close like paving bricks. It was said by Trusler to be warm and dry—perhaps even having a brick fire-place'.²

Such primitive shelters have long ago disappeared from this area—perhaps the last being that of Robert Warren, known as the Hermit of Frensham, who (until he died in the 1930s) had lived as a recluse on the Common overlooking the Little Pond, in a simple hut made of boughs of fir-trees interwoven with bracken. As one shelter decayed he would build another, and latterly he had two, one for sleeping and the other as a living room. He cooked his food in a hole in the ground. He was never known to do anything more laborious than supplying picnic parties with hot water.³

In time, some of these huts were rebuilt in more durable materials, and similar in plan to Saxon and medieval huts which fulfilled simple needs. Throughout Britain, on common land or on what formerly was common land, and in mining and quarrying districts, numbers of this crofter type of cottage have survived, although they are not always recognised because of more recent structural additions and alterations.

There are today many quite substantial houses on the outskirts of Farnham, which began as two-roomed cots, built in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, their humble origins now almost completely obscured. They were generally sited near a stream or spring for their water supply, and on or close to common land where they could take advantage of commoners' rights. These were common of turbary—the right to cut turf for fuel; common of pannage—the right to turn out pigs to eat acorns and beech mast; common of estovers—the right to gather timber and stones for repairs; common of piscary—the right to fish in another's waters; and most important of all, common of pasturage—the right to allow cows, sheep, donkeys and geese to graze. The fact that turves were used as fuel meant that the hearth had to be of the open type with a wide chimney in the gable end, and here the bacon could be hung and smoked. By one side of the chimney piece was the bread-oven which was pre-heated with a quick internal fire of dry faggot-wood or furze; when the fire died down the ash was quickly raked out and the bread and pies put in and baked in the diminishing heat. This oven was visible on the outside wall as a bulging half-cylinder of masonry with a sloping roof of tiles or stone slates. The wheat and rye for this bread was generally gleaned, or it was grown on the little cultivated plots, in area about four roods (one acre).

Mr. J. H. Knight, of Weybourne House, Farnham, recalls that when he was a boy in the 1850s 'many of the cottagers in the neighbourhood of heaths and commons burnt almost nothing but peat—this was the peaty roots of grass and heath. It was cut in spits in spring or early summer and turned over and piled up with spaces to let the air pass through. I often saw these peat fires when a boy'.⁴

Not only did the cottagers get their fuel for nothing, but they often sold the residual ash to farmers who valued the potash as manure for their fields.



Fig. 2. The Willows, Old Church Lane, Lower Bourne, Farnham. Cottage built before the enclosure.

Fig. 3. Cottage built after the enclosure. Now the garage for Vine Cottage, Old Church Lane, Lower Bourne, Farnham.



The walls of the cottages were generally of brick, or timber-framed with brick infilling, sparingly set, as there was a tax on bricks between 1784 and 1850. Local ironstone was often used in the Farnham area, with bricks at the quoins and for straightening up the sides of door and window openings. There might be a sty for the pig; and a shed for the donkey and donkey cart, necessary for collecting turves for the cottagers' own use, and often for sale.

George Sturt's handy-man, Fred Grover, born c. 1840, recalls his early life in the Lower Bourne: '... we always had a pig. You couldn't pass a cottage at that time that hadn't got a pig-sty . . . an' milk too. Why, of a morning there used to be as many as 50 cows go off up the valley right into the Holt, and back again at night. That was before the enclosure of the common. Boys 'd go with them to look after them, but they didn't need no lookin' after. They'd part o' theirselves and find their way 'ome'.⁵

These simple cottages were generally built by the folk who were to live in them, two rooms, with perhaps a lean-to scullery at the back being all that they could afford. With wages at about 10s. a week in the early 19th century it must have been difficult to find around £50 for building materials. One room was the kitchen-living room, and the other, separated from it by a wooden partition, was the bedroom. The rooms were open to the roof, though in some cases there was a ceiling which provided loft space over one of the rooms, and was approached by a ladder. The door in the middle of the front wall opened directly into the living room; on either side of this door was a small casement window, set close to the eaves, in walls barely six and a half feet high. The cottages were generally situated in a sheltered position, on a slope to help drainage, and many of them faced north-east as there was a prevalent idea that the south wind brought the infectious diseases which carried off so many of the family.

William Cobbett describes his grandmother's cottage as it was in the 1770s when Cobbett was a lad: '... a little thatched cottage with a garden before the door. It had but two windows; a damson tree shaded one and a clump of filberts the other. Here I and my brothers went every Christmas and Whitsuntide to spend a week or two, and torment the poor old woman with our noise and dilapidations. She used to give us milk and bread for breakfast, an apple pudding for our dinner, and a piece of bread and cheese for supper. Her fire was made of turf cut from the neighbouring heath, and her evening light was a rush dipped in grease'.⁶

Cobbett's grandfather had been a labourer who had worked for one farmer from the day of his marriage to that of his death, upwards of 40 years, but those who lived off the commons developed a self-sufficient attitude, resulting in a reluctance to become regular hired labourers in conformity with those who lived in villages. They preferred to maintain themselves by quarrying and gravel digging, by working as navvies on canals or railways, by doing seasonal jobs, such as harvesting and hop-picking; and by poaching and snaring for the family pot, which was suspended over the turf fire.

This is how Sturt describes the heath at Upper Hale, and the folk who encroached upon it: 'The great wastes of heath . . . lie far spread and level on the long ridge: then, on this side—just under the brow and out of the worst of the north-east wind,



Fig. 4. The Bungalow, Little Green Lane, Shorth Heath, Farnham. Cottage built c. 1800 before the enclosure of Farnham Common. The part on the left is a 20th-century extension.

an exposed road divides the heaths from an upland hamlet scattered higgledy-piggledy along the upper slopes of the descent. It is a place of poverty and sordid ugliness, the home of a rough race of gravel-diggers and masterless men, many of whose ancestors were travelling folk and squatters attracted by the amplitude of the uncultivated heaths'.⁷

Though many lived roughly by choice, some of the menfolk developed skills in tinkering and in country crafts such as making hurdles, baskets and besoms: in fact the 'Broom Squires' from the Devil's Punch Bowl on Hindhead Common captured the local broom market. The women, as well as doing the spinning and all the household chores, would gather wild berries and herbs; also rushes to be dipped in grease, for lighting the dark winter evenings. The children, when young, acted as bird-scarers, herded the animals on the commons, carried wood and water and so on, until they were old enough to undertake more remunerative jobs.

George Sumner, Bishop of Winchester from 1827 until 1869, and his wife Mary, concerned themselves actively with the welfare of families living in this way around Upper Hale and Rowledge. Shortly after the Army Garrison came to Aldershot in 1855, Bishop Sumner gave permission for the heath around Caesar's Camp to be used as a rifle range, but he took pity on those families who were to be turned off the Common, and compensated each with an allotment of an acre of land and a pig, in the Hog Hatch area of Hale; he also established their rights to their plots. Mary Sumner describes the lot of their womenfolk: 'Woman's toil in the fields was almost necessary to the maintenance of the family. She was consequently roughened and hardened . . . More commonly wives had to go through their work like dumb, driven cattle. Up betimes to snatch a poor breakfast, then leave the eldest child to guard those too small for school, whilst she was picking stones, weeding with stiff fingers in frosty mornings, cutting turnips . . . Haytime and harvest were like holiday times, hard as was the work. Generally one day reserved for washing and cleaning, and when work was lacking 'going out t'wood' and coming back laden with sticks . . . The family food was almost entirely bread with potatoes for those who had gardens or allotments, a scrap of bacon for Sunday, and tea of the thinnest always ready. The mother fared worst of all for she fed her husband and children before she ate herself . . . It is no wonder she aged prematurely, and that it is often difficult to guess whether she was thirty or fifty years old . . . Sometimes on winter evenings the family went to bed at five or six o'clock to save fire and candle'.⁸

As early as the beginning of the 18th century agricultural writers were denouncing the commons as 'seminaries of a lazy thieving sort of people, whose sheep were "poor, tattered and poisoned with rot" and whose heath-fed cattle were "starved, tod-bellied runts, neither fit for dairy nor yoke"'.⁹ Nevertheless the general movement towards the enclosure of the commons did not gather momentum till towards the end of the 18th century, and it went on apace in the 19th century, stimulated by the General Enclosure Act of 1845. One may well ask why there was this sudden insatiable hunger for land, even for poor, sandy heathland generally considered to be waste. It was because of the sharp increase in population towards the end of the 18th century when for the first time the birth rate began to exceed the death rate owing to advance in science and medicine. This increase in population called for

more food production and stimulated the introduction of improved methods of farming and cattle breeding, which could not be carried out successfully under the open-field system. By the end of the 19th century most of the strips had been consolidated into fields and enclosed by hedges, reducing the small holders, and the rural population resolved itself into three categories—land-lord, tenant farmer and hired labourer.

The big land-owners, having consolidated their estates, now began, with the sanction of Parliament, the fencing in and the cultivation of commons and waste lands, those around Farnham being enclosed between 1857 and 1861. Although the soil of the heathland was poor, it was suitable for growing the conifers much in demand for hop-poles; and on the edges of these plantations, desirable residences were built, the sandy soil being considered healthy.

Where the small holders in their tumble-down cottages and scattered parcels of land were obstacles to consolidation, the Parliamentary Commissioners compelled them to accept what compensation was considered suitable for loss of common rights. This usually amounted to a few guineas, or an allotment of land in some place not wanted by the wealthy landowner. Many sold their allotment and soon frittered away the proceeds on beer. Others, more thrifty, somehow managed to find the £60 or £70 needed to buy building materials and set up a new home on their plots.

It is interesting to note how the cottages that were built after the enclosure of the commons were significantly different from the ones that were traditional before. In general they suggest a need for haste in their construction and strict economy in the materials used. This was a period of low wages and long hours of work, so the cottage had to be run up by the family, working sometimes late into the night by the light of a lantern. The owner of Strawberry Cottage, Dockenfield, said that her aunt had helped build the cottage, and much of it had to be done by candle light.

The walls of post-enclosure cottages were now entirely of brick (the tax on bricks having been repealed in 1850) but still sparingly used, often only one brick thick (about 4 inches), laid in stretcher bond. Dingy-coloured slates replaced thatch or clay tiles, as the network of canals made it possible for slates to be transported cheaply from Wales. The floors were roughly levelled and compacted with stones and sand; where the site was on a slope, to save labour in excavating soil, each room was on a different level with a step to be negotiated at each door. Ready-made sash windows could be bought in the town and could be quickly inserted, one on each side of the front door, giving the only touch of style to the otherwise featureless, little brick box. Two rooms, each not more than 12 ft. square, and separated by a flimsy wooden partition were all that could be afforded. The fire-place could no longer be fed by turves cut from the common, so the chimney had to be narrower to suit the burning of coal in a raised grate with iron bars. George Sturt, writing of the Bourne in the late 19th century tells how a woman who had recently given birth to a child and was alone in her cottage during the day 'was worried by thinking of the fire in the next room—the living room, . . . lest it should set fire to the cottage while she lay helpless. It seems that the hearth was so narrow and the grate so high that the coals were a little apt to fall on to the floor'.¹⁰



Fig. 5. Rose Cottage, Boundstone, Farnham. Built c. 1875, after the enclosure of Farnham Common.

The narrow chimney was unsuitable for smoking the bacon, but now the cottagers had no bacon to be smoked, as bye-laws prohibited the keeping of pigs near dwellings: there was no need for a bread oven, what with corn prices soaring, and potatoes being their staple diet; nor was there a need for a donkey and cart where it was often a losing battle to maintain even the family in a period of pauperisation and extreme hunger among labourers. The flimsy structure of the walls, often resting on sand, meant that soon they required buttressing. The garden was about a quarter of an acre, as the long hours of work left little time for cultivation. A well or rain-water tank was still essential; and the earth-closet, as usual, was at the end of the garden; the yew-tree, providing shelter in winter and shade in summer, sometimes survives to this day marking the spot where the closet once stood.

In a few words, George Sturt conveys his disgust with 'the new, harsh-looking red-brick place . . . You could not dignify it with the name of cottage—where we should see only bare floors and discomfort'.¹¹

'Flo was one of the last of the old Bourne stock. Dirty, sometimes drunk, not over honest, thriftless in the depths of poverty, and mother of one or more children before she was married'.¹² No wonder Flo took to drink; the majority, however, battled bravely on in the face of deprivation.

By contrast, there is a warmth about Sturt's description of the cottages built before the enclosures. For instance, Old Sally's cottage and garden: 'In a most

picturesque and sunny spot is this garden, set back against a sandy hillside, with a path swooping down outside the hedge to a bridge over the stream-bed, and at once uprising again for the next hill. The valley is narrow here . . . You see her pig-stye, and her tumble-down shed where the donkey-cart and donkey used to stand near together'.¹³ This cottage in Lower Bourne still exists though it is scarcely recognisable because of structural additions.

Then there is Lucy's cottage: (Lucy was the wife of Sturt's handy-man, Fred Grover). 'Her own cottage cannot have made great demands on her care. It was a little one-storeyed place of three rooms, built so closely into the side of the hill as to allow of no back-door or even back-window, and from the doorway of the living room one stepped out immediately into the lane itself; but the cramped space of the interior was more than compensated for by the sheltered, sunny garden which sloped up beside the cottage'. 'Every evening Lucy would see the cows come slowly down the valley, each to its own stall—for in those days half the cottagers kept cows, which a boy herded on the common all day. And of evenings the air would grow fragrant with the smoke of turf-fires lit for the evening meal, and the valley would look full of peace'.¹⁴

Fortunately the movement for enclosure of common land was halted between 1865 and 1875, not out of pity for the rural peasantry, but because the townspeople objected to being excluded from rural breathing spaces.

Now over a hundred years have passed since many of these little post-enclosure cottages were built, yet numbers of them have survived, those in the Farnham area being mostly in the older parts of Hale; in Upper, Middle and Lower Bourne; in Boundstone; in Rowledge and in Dockenfield. Many have been bought by well-to-do people who have had the buildings extended horizontally and a second storey added; sometimes two adjacent cottages have been made into a single dwelling; and so on, until the original cottages are scarcely identifiable. Many are being pulled down with the passing on of elderly occupants who clung to the homes where they, their parents and their grand-parents were brought up.

We may regret the disappearance of these little cottages because of the social history associated with them, but the story of the families who lived in them cannot have been altogether romantic, in spite of the honeysuckle and roses round the door.

NOTES

1. George Bourne (George Sturt) *The Bettesworth Book* (1901) p. 209.
2. *The Journals of George Sturt, 1890-1927* (1967) p. 670. Journal of 1912.
3. Harry Baker, *Frensham Then and Now* (1938) p. 163.
4. J. H. Knight, *Reminiscences of a Country Town (Farnham)* (1909) p. 24.
5. *The Journals of George Sturt 1890-1927* (1967) p. 429, Journal of 1904.
6. William Cobbett, *Life and Adventures of Peter Porcupine* (1796).
7. George Bourne (George Sturt), *Lucy Bettesworth* (1913) p. 246.
8. Joyce Combs, *George and Mary Sumner, Their Life and Times* (1965) p. 61.
9. G. M. Trevelyan, *English Social History* (1945) p. 300.

10. George Bourne (George Sturt) *Change in the Village* (1912) p. 39.
 11. George Bourne (George Sturt) *Lucy Bettesworth* (1913) p. 76.
 12. *The Journals of George Sturt, 1890-1927* (1967) p. 835.
 13. George Bourne (George Sturt), *Lucy Bettesworth* (1913) p. 70.
 14. *Ibid* pp. 9, 13.
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We remained at Weybridge until mid-day, and at that hour we found ourselves at the place near Shepperton Lock where the Wey and Thames join. Part of the time we spent helping two old women to pack a little cart. The Wey has a treble mouth, and at this point boats are to be hired, and there was a ferry across the river. On the Shepperton side was an inn, with a lawn, and beyond that the tower of Shepperton Church—it has been replaced by a spire—rose above the trees.

(The War of the Worlds, 1898)

THE ACCIDENT AT BROADMEAD BRIDGE

C. G. Mileham

*Mayford History Society
Send and Ripley History Society*

Broadmead Bridge spans the river Wey at Old Woking and carries the Woking to Send road, A247, over the river about 100 metres south of its junction with Old Woking High Street (O.S. Reference TQ 019578). At this point the river forms the boundary between the Boroughs of Woking and Guildford, the parishes of Woking and Send, and also forms the boundary between the areas covered by the two local History Societies named above.

For many years prior to 1914 this bridge was the property of the Earl of Onslow and consisted of a timber structure of six unequal spans, on timber piles, with a total length of some 50 ft., and was only 11 ft. 6 ins. wide with no pathway for pedestrians.

On Wednesday 15 January 1873 at about 4.15 p.m. a spectacular accident occurred, when the piles supporting the first and second spans on the Woking side of the bridge gave way as a traction engine, owned by Thomas Miskin, drawing a threshing machine was crossing. The rear wheels of the traction engine and the front of the threshing machine ended up on the bed of the river. Fig. 1 shows the havoc caused by this collapse.

This incident was recorded by Edward Ryde of Poundfield House, (Old) Woking, by the 4th Earl of Onslow, and in both the Local and National Press. Edward Ryde, who was at his London house in Warwick Square, recorded in his diary on 17 January that all the papers reported 'that Miskin's traction engine broke through Broadmead Bridge and killed three men who were on it'. On the following day he mentions his sons going to Woking to see the engine in the river, and that Royal Engineers from Aldershot had constructed a pontoon bridge. *The Times* of 16 January 1873, under the headline FEARFUL ACCIDENT, reported that a shocking accident occurred at Woking, two and a half miles from Woking Station, yesterday evening, etc., and in subsequent issues gave further details.

The 4th Earl of Onslow in his Estate History gave the following account of this incident:

'On the 15th January a traction engine belonging to a Mr. Miskin was crossing the bridge on the River Wey adjoining Woking village when it broke down the bridge. The engine and threshing machine following it falling in through the centre of the bridge. It remained fixed in the shape of the letter V. Three men, Reene, Bird and Darling were killed. The Jury returned a verdict that the deceased met their deaths from the breaking of Broadmead bridge while in charge of a traction engine, and after hearing the evidence of Mr. Smallpeice, they are of opinion that the bridge was not safe even for ordinary traffic.

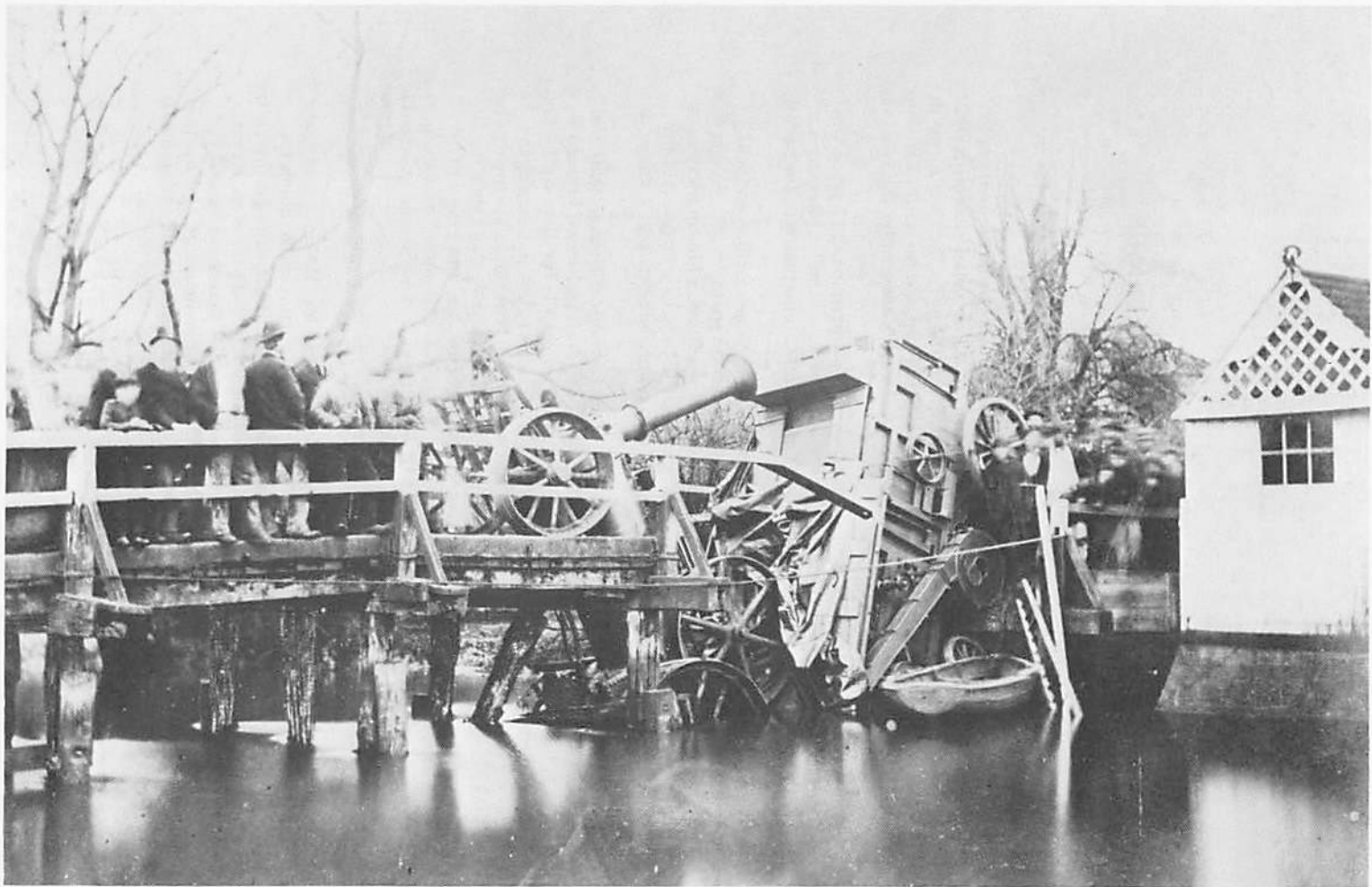


Fig. 1. The vehicles in the river.

During the temporary interruption caused by the breaking of the bridge, a pontoon was erected by Engineers from Aldershot, and after this event notices, in accordance with the Locomotive Act, were affixed to all my Manorial bridges.

£120 was spent in repairing Broadmead bridge, and £142 on Rickford bridge.'

The *Surrey Advertiser* devoted considerable space to the report of this accident and the inquest which followed.

It appears that the threshing tackle had been at work somewhere on the Woking side of the river and, on completion of this job, it was being moved during the afternoon to carry out some threshing for Mr. Dawes of Papercourt Farm at Send. (It was common practice for threshing sets to move to the next location at the end of the day and set-up, even after dark, so that threshing could begin immediately at the start of the next day's work.)

There were 12 men in the threshing gang and on the way to Broadmead bridge, after the engine took on water at a Mr. Shears', some of the men who lived in Woking went home, but as they approached the bridge there were at least seven still with the tackle. These were John Saunders, of Woking, the red flag man, walking some 40 to 50 yards ahead of the engine; Edward Butler, of Bedford, Middlesex, was on the forecarriage seated at the steering wheel with John Darling of Send beside him; George Reene, the driver and William Bird, the stoker were both on the tender; William Darling (the brother of John) was riding on the drawbar between the engine and threshing machine; and William Robinson, a straw pitcher, riding on the step and who jumped off the engine just before they reached the bridge.

When the bridge collapsed the two men on the forecarriage were apparently thrown clear, but Reene and Bird on the tender were injured and fell into the river. A visitor from New Zealand, Alfred John Chapman, who was staying in Woking with a Mr. Ross, dived into the water and rescued both these men from drowning. He then attempted to save William Darling but this could not be achieved as he was jammed underwater between the two vehicles.

Mr. Fletcher and Mr. Eager, two local surgeons, and some ladies attended to the two rescued men, but they were so badly injured and scalded that both died within a few hours, and were buried at Woking on 19 January, after the cause of their deaths had been established.

Police Sergeant Baker and Police Constables Ellis and Butt appeared on the scene and directed pedestrians over the bridge, but it was impossible for vehicles to get across. Later Deputy Chief Constable Barker arrived and directed that a watch was to be kept overnight.

In order to re-establish the vehicle route between Woking and Send the assistance of the Army was sought. A detachment of Royal Engineers consisting of one sergeant, two corporals and 14 men, under the command of Lieutenant Jelf R.A. (sic) came from Aldershot, bringing with them bridging equipment. After some difficulties in getting their equipment to the river, in the space of 1½ hours they built a pontoon bridge suitable for a load of 5 tons. Fig. 2 shows the soldiers and the pontoon bridge, but the photograph must have been taken some days after the bridge was constructed as the engine is being hoisted in the background.

The access to the temporary bridge on the Woking side was 'through a meadow belonging to Mr. Charrington, the well-known brewer' and this was very badly cut up by the horse-drawn vehicles passing through it. (The 'Old Brew House' is still in existence in Old Woking High Street.)

On both Thursday and Friday 16 and 17 January Lord Onslow was present at the scene of the accident.

On Saturday 18 January the Coroner for Surrey, G. H. Hull, Esq., opened the inquest on Reene and Bird at the *White Horse Inn* at Woking. A Mr. Rastrick appeared for Mr. Miskin and Mr. F. F. Smallpeice of Guildford watched on behalf of Lord Onslow. After hearing evidence from members of the threshing gang concerning the events leading up to the accident, the Coroner then heard technical evidence from Mr. William Smallpeice, A.M.I.C.E., a civil engineer of 7 Grays Inn Place, London, who had examined the bridge in detail. The Jury's verdict was that Reene and Bird lost their lives due to the collapse of the bridge as the traction engine was crossing it. The inquest was then adjourned pending the recovery of William Darling's body from the river.

On Sunday thousands of people (according to the Press) came to view the scene of the accident despite the bad weather. The majority arrived by train at Woking Station and walked the 2½ miles to the bridge; other sightseers from Guildford, Chertsey and Weybridge drove to the spot, where a collection box for the widow of Reene had been placed.

It was impossible to remove the vehicles from the river without the use of heavy lifting tackle, and as none was available in the Woking area, this was obtained from the London and South Western Railway, from the locomotive works at Nine Elms. This was conveyed from Woking Station to the site on Tuesday 21 January by Mr. Hilder, a local farmer. Mr. William Smallpeice directed the operations and on the following morning the threshing machine was removed and William Darling's body was recovered. Later, the traction engine was hoisted out. This can be seen in Fig. 2 minus its chimney, suspended by block and tackle from the shear legs.

The inquest was resumed and concluded after the verdict that William Darling was drowned after the accident, although he had apparently sustained no other injury. He was buried at Woking on 24 January.

During the inquest Mr. Hilder stated that he had a traction engine which the manufacturers told him weighed 11½ to 12 tons in working order and that he had taken it across Broadmead bridge on 26 November 1872, only seven weeks before this accident had occurred.

Mr. William Smallpeice who had thoroughly inspected the bridge said that it was in six spans, varying in length from 7 ft. 8 ins. to 9 ft. and each pier consisted of three timber piles, originally 10 ins. x 10 ins., but many were very wasted around water level. The tops of the piles were connected by tressel (sic) heads which supported joists carrying the deck planks. He estimated that the bridge was about fifty years old and originally was suitable for a load of 5 tons, and it was established that it had been built by Mr. Carman and his son, who had inspected it periodically for some years. It had been thoroughly repaired in 1851 and little more had been done since, except that some two years before this accident short spur

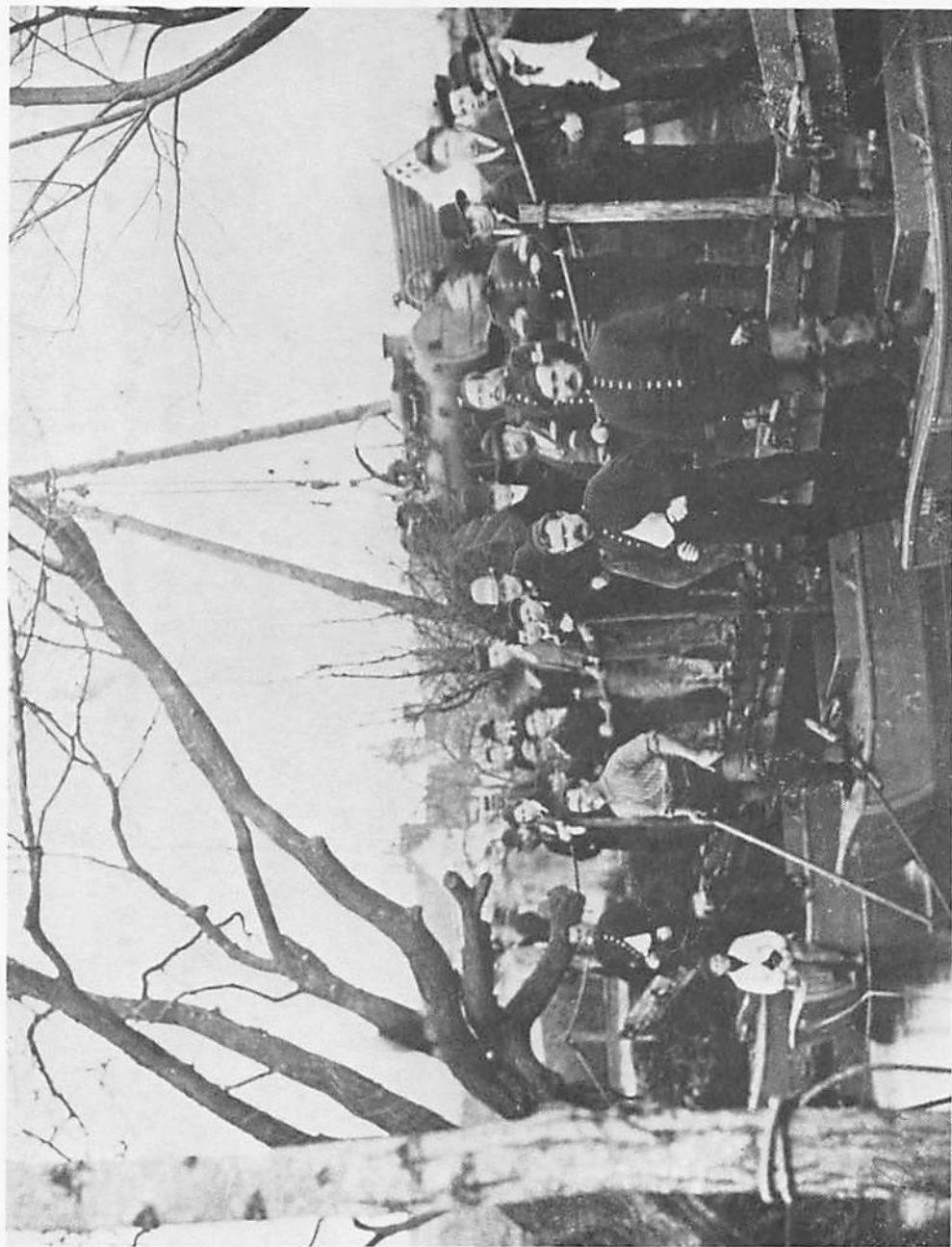


Fig. 2. The pontoon bridge, and traction engine being recovered.

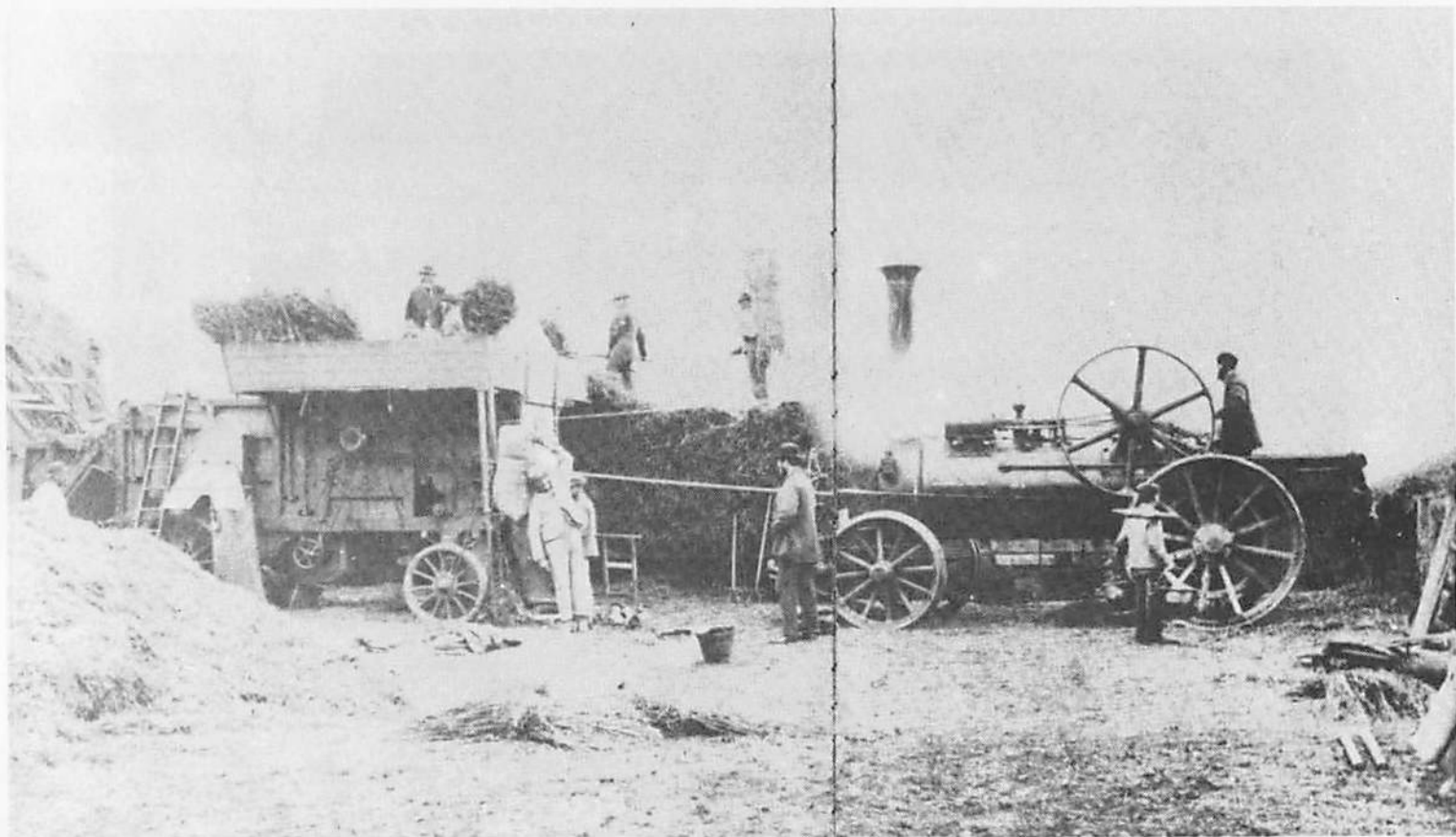


Fig. 3. Clayton & Shuttleworth threshing set at work about 1890.

piles had been added in some places. These were of little use as they were too short and had been bolted to the wasted piles at their weakest points.

Mr. Smallpeice said that 'the bridge may have been constructed according to the rules of art, but not to the rules of science', it was unsafe and it was 'not fit for a load of corn to cross'. About nine months previously Mr. Appleby, Lord Onslow's agent, had instructed James Whitburn, a builder, to repair the bridge if he saw anything wrong with it. He had seen a hole in the decking which he had repaired, but made no other inspection.

Thomas Miskin was a farmer and threshing contractor who farmed land at Hersham and Walton. He owned three traction engines built by Clayton and Shuttleworth of Stamp End Works, Lincoln; two were new in 1868, Works Nos. 8263 and 8678, and the third in 1872, Works No. 11930. They were of a type first introduced in 1865, and during the next 25 years or so, several hundred similar machines were constructed by this firm.

These engines had double cylinders $7\frac{1}{2}$ ins. dia. x 12 ins. stroke, flywheels of 5 ft. dia., front wheels 3 ft. 6 ins. dia. x 9 ins. wide and rear wheels 5 ft 9 ins dia. x 1 ft. 6 ins. wide; they were of 10 Nominal Horse Power and weighed approximately 10 tons. The engine involved in this accident was one of the earlier two, as John Saunders in his evidence stated that he had worked for Mr. Miskin for $3\frac{1}{2}$ years with this machine.

Fig. 3 shows an identical set of Clayton and Shuttleworth threshing tackle at work about 1890 in the Midlands. The engine was either No. 8864 (1868) or 9338 (1869) both of which were bought new by Henry Smith of Cropwell Bishop, near Nottingham.

It is of interest to note that one of Thomas Miskin's sons, George, looked after the maintenance work on his father's farm, and he used one of the traction engines to power a circular sawbench, cutting timber for fencing and barn repairs, etc. In 1885 he started his own English timber business in Walton, later including imported timber. In 1921 his firm amalgamated with J. & F. Gridley of Weybridge and Kingston to form Gridley Miskin & Co. Ltd. which is still in existence 61 years later.

As stated earlier, Broadmead bridge was one of Lord Onslow's Manorial bridges, and after being repaired in 1873 it continued to carry all the traffic between Woking and Send for another 42 years. However, about 1914 it was taken over by Guildford Rural District Council with a view to its replacement by a bridge suitable to meet the then modern traffic requirements, and the Surveyor and Engineer to the Council was instructed to call for designs for a new structure.

The scheme submitted by Messrs. L. G. Mouchel & Partners of Victoria Street, Westminster was selected, which provided for a reinforced concrete arch bridge with a clear span of 50 ft. and a width of 22 ft. between parapets. This was not only an improvement from the road traffic point of view, but the new arch caused no obstruction to the flow of the river, particularly in times of flood, whereas the many timber supports of the old bridge impeded the flow considerably.

The new bridge, built by Messrs. Garrett & Sons of London, was tested officially on 4 March 1915, in the presence of Lt. Col. W. H. Sykes, R.E. and Mr. T. G. Lucas, members of Guildford Rural District Council; Mr. S. Booreman, J.P., Chairman of

the Send and Ripley Parish Council; Mr. S. Spooner, member of the Send and Ripley Parish Council; Mr. Alfred Dryland, M.Inst.C.E., the County Surveyor; Mr. Wooldridge, Surveyor to the Woking Urban District Council; Mr. John Anstee, C.E., Surveyor and Engineer to the Guildford Rural District Council; Mr. Alfred Robinson, representing Messrs. L. G. Mouchel & Partners; Mr. William Garrett of Messrs. Garrett & Sons; and Mr. B. H. Mallinson, Clerk of Works to the various Councils concerned.

Three steam rollers, one of 10 tons and two of 12 tons, were used as test loads, and deflectometers were placed under the centre of the arch and 12 ft each side of the centre. The 10 ton and one 12 ton roller were driven across the bridge, first abreast and then in tandem. This was followed by two rollers driven from opposite ends of the bridge, passing at the centre. For the next test two rollers were driven across abreast with the third roller immediately behind, all stopping at the centre; and finally, the three rollers were ranged in line on the roadway and left stationary.

The deflections measured at the centre ranged between three sixty-fourths and five sixty-fourths of an inch, while those at the sides were between one sixty-fourth and four sixty-fourths of an inch. The report on these tests states 'The small amounts of deflection were considered by the engineers present to be eminently satisfactory as a practical demonstration of the large factor of safety provided by the designs of Messrs. Mouchel & Partners, and of the excellence of the work done by the contractors'.

Now, 67 years after these tests were carried out, Broadmead bridge continues to carry all the traffic between Woking and Send, although gross vehicle and individual axle loads are both considerably greater today than would have been envisaged at the time it was constructed.

Concerning its predecessor, presumably it was built to take horse-drawn vehicles only, as no viable form of mechanical road transport had yet made its appearance so early in the 19th century.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks are due to Send and Ripley History Society for providing the photographs of the accident, Figs. 1 and 2, and for permission to reproduce them; also to Mr. Harold Bonnett and Shire Publications for allowing me to include Fig. 3 showing similar threshing tackle at work.

Starting with the two photographs, about which virtually nothing was known, the facts recorded above have been gathered from a number of sources, and I am grateful for the assistance so readily given by Mrs. Shirley Corke of Guildford Muniment Room; the Editorial Staff of the Surrey Advertiser; Mr. Alan Duke, Records Officer of the Road Locomotive Society; Mr. G. B. Greenwood, of Walton-on-Thames; Mr. Frank Miskin, of Thame; and Dr. Richard Christophers, of Woking.

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There were four or five boys sitting on the edge of the pit, with their feet dangling, and amusing themselves—until I stopped them—by throwing stones at the giant mass. After I had spoken to them about it, they began playing at ‘touch’ in and out of the group of bystanders.

Among these were a couple of cyclists, a jobbing gardener I employed sometimes, a girl carrying a baby, Gregg the butcher and his little boy, and two or three loafers and golf caddies who were accustomed to hang about the railway-station.

In the afternoon . . .

There were half a dozen flies or more from the Woking station standing in the road by the sand-pits, a basket chaise from Chobham, and a rather lordly carriage. Besides that, there was quite a heap of bicycles. In addition, a large number of people must have walked, in spite of the heat of the day, from Woking and Chertsey, so that there was altogether quite a considerable crowd—one or two gaily dressed ladies among the others.

It was glaringly hot, not a cloud in the sky, nor a breath of wind, and the only shadow was that of the few scattered pine-trees. The burning heather had been extinguished, but the level ground towards Ottershaw was blackened as far as one could see, and still giving off vertical streamers of smoke. An enterprising sweet-stuff dealer in the Chobham Road had sent up his son with a barrow-load of green apples and ginger-beer.

(*The War of the Worlds*, 1898)

NEW MATERIAL FOR SURREY HISTORIANS, 1981

D. B. Robinson

County Archivist, Surrey Record Office

The most gratifying trend in 1981 has been the number of accessions of records of Surrey businesses.

Historians and archivists must feel considerable concern at the comparatively poor rate of survival of the records of business activity. Firms tend to be ruthless about the preservation of 'old papers' until the firm itself reaches a significant age and wishes to celebrate a jubilee or centenary. Where records survive their preservation has often depended on the action of a single interested member of the firm. We have been fortunate in the past year to receive several good series of records of small businesses.

Papers of a bicycle dealer and manufacturer working in Woking from 1895 until 1903 or 1904 demonstrate the success of a local teacher who recognised the trading potential of a new invention. At Oatlands Park, Walton, where he was Headmaster of the Board School, Jesse Colman in 1880 set up the Teachers' and Tricycle Company to supply these new and immensely popular machines to teachers. The business diversified to include cameras, prams, washing machines and sewing machines, but the major part of Colman's trade remained in cycles, and in 1895/6 Colman left Oatlands (and teaching) and set up his Cycle Depot at 'Woking Station'. Here he had ready access to his suppliers in the Midlands—their decorated letter-heads, depicting their works and wares, form a large part of each year's correspondence—and also to his clients, who sent orders from all over the country. The master at Huntley school, near Gloucester, for example, paid 3s. 9d. in 1895 for carriage to him by passenger train of his new machine. Colman advertised widely in National Union of Teachers' publications and professional journals and many of his clients shared the sentiments of the master at the church school in Sudbury, Suffolk: 'I prefer dealing with a firm which is well known in our profession'. Colman's system of payment by instalments was particularly suited to the meagre but secure salary of the elementary school teacher. A school master from Burnley could, for example, hope realistically for one of Colman's own patented 'Fairy' models, assembled at the Depot and retailing at £10 10s., even though he earned only £60 a year, and was paying 15s. a week for his 'diggings'. Colman's personal and friendly manner of dealing with orders and queries no doubt greatly added to his reputation in a period when new technical innovations, such as the 'safety' model itself, the pneumatic tyre and the free wheel, made bicycle purchase a complicated matter. Would pneumatic or cushion tyres be best on Hertfordshire roads, one enquirer wonders—'At times there are a good many loose stones about—then again thorns etc abound when hedges are being trimmed'. The 'terribly greasy condition of the Manchester streets' and 'the seemingly mad endeavours to avoid catastrophe [sic]

+ ORDER FORM. +

(INSTALMENT SYSTEM.)

To the Manager, Teachers' Bicycle and Tricycle Company,
Oatlands Park, Surrey.

Machine (description and price)	£	s.	d.
<i>Swift</i> Popular Road Racer.....	12	12	0
Extras and accessories, with prices..... <i>Ramp, Bell, Bag</i>		8	0
TOTAL VALUE £ <u>12 0 0</u>			

Full Address to which Machine is to be sent:—

58 Hanson Terrace
Todmorden Road Burnley

Age, Height, and Weight of Rider *Age 20*..... *5ft 5in*..... *130lbs*

How long in present situation *April 1st*.....

If a Member of N.U.T. *No joining next term*

References.....

Signed *Charles Lynam*

School, and position in same *Misses at Fuldean West:*

Date *April 24th 95*..... *Burnley*

Fig. 1. Ordering a bicycle from Jesse Colman's Cycle Depot, Woking, 1895.

on the part of a few free wheelers' made a Salford schoolmaster who rode a fixed wheel anxious about purchasing a free wheel model for his wife. Like most, however, he was happy to leave the decision 'to your good judgement'. Colman seems to have sold motor bicycles and motor cars almost as soon as they became available commercially. In this, however, he probably acted only as agent, rather than holding 'stock' himself, and he clearly survived to some extent on the credit afforded him by the dealers.

Colman's papers, which were kindly drawn to our attention by the Mayford History Society, survive in good series, and comprise business correspondence and financial papers, with some personal letters intermixed, from 1895 to 1903. Only his instalment books survive from the previous decade, the earlier correspondence having not, presumably, survived the transfer from Oatlands to Woking.

The records transferred on the closure of Holloway Sanatorium, Virginia Water, comprise annual reports and minutes of Governors' and committee meetings from the beginning of formal organisation in 1885 until 1947, when the Sanatorium passed under the control of the National Health Service, two case registers, giving details of some of the patients admitted, 1894-1907, and a number of staff registers and other administrative papers. They also include a number of books and papers of the Sanatorium's founder, Thomas Holloway, of patent medicine fame: travel diaries 1848-1877, his stocks and shares ledger, 1876-1881, and two letter books, covering the last 12 years of his life (1869-1881). These last illustrate well his firm control of his business. In a letter to the proprietor of one of the firms which manufactured his pill-boxes, he writes (28 August 1871) 'I have told you from time to time, for years past that boxes you have sent me, have always been deficient in some particular, either in size or quality, and although you have on many occasions assured me that the next lot would be all that I could wish, yet on their coming to hand I always found that although one defect might have been remedied, another had taken its place, and so I have been precluded from giving you a good order, as I really wished to do. I found too that I could not depend upon you for regular deliveries, the quantities being at one time excessive, and another next to nil, such as almost to bring my business to a standstill, did I not have other quarters I can look to for a supply . . . If you can show me that you can do my work in a satisfactory manner both as regards the size of the box, the quality, and the regularity of delivery I shall be very pleased to continue to do business with you.' Holloway's business methods also emerge in the ledgers for the building of the Sanatorium. Although the work was financed entirely from his private fortune and was on the most lavish scale, the ledgers were meticulously kept to record every detail, and show that Holloway took care that he and not his contractor had the advantage of any discount that could be negotiated.

Two minute books of the Income Tax Commissioners for Kingston and Elmbridge provide a different kind of source-material for the history of local businesses. The second of the books, covering 1889-1906, contains only the barest records of the Commissioners' decisions, but the earlier one, for 1867-1889, gives, although in the form of brief and often tantalising notes, an indication of the financial circumstances of the tradesmen and others who appealed against their assessments.

On 12 December 1870, for example, the appellants included Thomas Dawes, a Claygate brickmaker ('makes 400,000 bricks—I have only one kiln—no other business'), Thomas Henry Hawkes of Thames Ditton, soda water manufacturer, ('Keeps 1 man and 2 boys and 2 horses. Returns £700'), Daniel Dallen of Cobham, miller and baker ('Return £200. Profits £664 gross'), and Thomas Dukes of Kingston, surgeon ('commenced business about 9 months. Has about 30 or 40 patients'). John Monk of Walton-on-Thames, selling groceries, crockery, boots and shoes, commented, 'I keep an account of my daily takings in a Memoranda Book', and a Kingston bootmaker named Girling is noted (1 June 1871) as 'Cannot tell what his gross receipts are—may be about £4 a week—keep one man and an apprentice. Rent £26. Stock worth £30. 4 years in business. Keeps books'. His case was adjourned for a week for him to produce an account, but does not recur later: perhaps he found that his account books presented a healthier picture of his finances than he had painted to the Commissioners. The books also include appeals against assessments for other taxes, including taxes on property, servants, dogs and horses.

The records of the political parties at local level, like business records, do not have a good rate of survival and in many cases have strayed or been lost or destroyed. The first minute book of Caterham Conservative Association, 1874-92, which was at Cheltenham in the possession of the widow of the grandson of the first Secretary, has reached us through the good offices of a Surrey architectural historian, Nigel Temple (author of *Farnham Inheritance* and *Farnham Buildings and People*) who is now himself living in Cheltenham. The Association was founded in 1874 when Caterham, Warlingham, Chelsham, Farleigh and Woldingham were separated from Croydon polling district and formed into a new district based on Caterham.

Our most important purchase of the year consisted of two lots purchased at a Sotheby's sale of documents collected by the great Victorian antiquary Sir Thomas Phillipps. The lots comprised more than eighty deeds relating to properties in various parts of Surrey including five 13th century deeds for Newdigate and Wimbledon and 10 14th century deeds for Abinger, Burstow, Chiddingfold, Kingston, Oxted, Ockham and Peper Harow. These documents help to build up our knowledge of medieval Surrey and are a valuable addition to our rather scanty records for the period. Among a number of later deeds is a particularly interesting lease dating from 1516 by which William Major, prior, and the monastery of Reigate let lands called Crooksfield, amounting to 50 acres, to John Skyunner of Reigate. The lease reveals that by this time the medieval common fields of Reigate were partly enclosed: it refers to 'the upper part adjoining to the way between Reigate Hill and Crooksfield lying in open field and the lower part thereof lying fenced and enclosed along the west part of the lane from Croydon Way into Reigate town'. Skyunner was a leading townsman who in 1513 had paid for the building of the church vestry. His descendants later acquired much of the priory lands at the Dissolution of Monasteries. About one-third of the 15th century and later deeds relate to estates in Merton and Morden, especially those of the Garth family of Morden.

TO THE ELECTORS OF EAST SURREY.

GENTLEMEN,

At the earnest and frequently renewed solicitation of large numbers of the Electors, representing all classes and all districts in East Surrey, I beg to offer myself as a Candidate for your suffrages, and ask, in conjunction with my friend Mr. WATNEY, for your earnest support in this the greatest political crisis of our time.

To many of you I am well known, and to such it is needless to proclaim my political principles; but to those whose friendship or acquaintance I cannot yet claim, I unhesitatingly state that those principles are Conservative.

Gentlemen,—By Conservative principles, I understand principles which have been enunciated by the greatest statesmen that ever governed England—by Pitt, by Peel, by Lord Derby, and by many other illustrious men—principles which, having preserved the integrity of the Empire during those great political convulsions that revolutionized almost every other country in Europe, belong rather to the nation than to the individual; principles that are the first to suggest reforms where abuses have crept in, but which, appreciating the liberties and freedom that we possess, and the material advantages that we enjoy, lead me to consider it the first duty of a statesman to uphold that constitution which has given us, and under the protection of which we have enjoyed, those blessings.

In an address it is impossible to give you in detail my particular views on the varied but important subjects of the day, and I can only most briefly now refer to a few of them, but I hope soon to meet you face to face, and to discuss fully, and I trust in a friendly spirit, whatever political questions are uppermost in your minds.

There is the Income-Tax, which Mr. Gladstone as a political conjuror now proposes to abolish, but I am sure each of you has already asked himself for what purpose except to bribe the electors on the eve of an election he continued it till now, and sometimes almost at a war price, when the elasticity of our revenue has been such that he could, had he wished it, have “re-adjusted it,” as he calls it before.

Then, the great question of Education, in which I have endeavoured to bear my part, and, as a member of the School Board of Croydon, have, in conjunction with most of my colleagues, introduced a system of undenominational religious instruction which has stood successfully the most bitter opposition from the Radical Dissenters and opponents of religious education, and the most searching enquiry of Her Majesty's Educational Department.

And last, but not least, is this (if possible) still greater question of the threatened motion to disestablish the National Church, a motion which will receive my most determined opposition, for though I am quite ready to admit that some reforms may be necessary to make the Church more in harmony with the altered times and circumstances under which we live, and though I have always respected and endeavoured to act in harmony with those who are Dissenters only from religious conviction, yet I am convinced that these attacks, made, as they are, almost exclusively by the political Dissenters, are not the effect of any wrongs from which Dissenters are now suffering, but are the effects of the irritation from former grievances which time has not yet healed.

I appeal, then, not only to you who have already rallied round the Conservative cause, to support Mr. Watney and myself, but to you who (prejudiced as you may have been against Conservatives in years gone by, owing to the narrow views of many of the Tory party in the decade preceding the Reform Bill of 1832) must now see, call yourselves Whigs, Moderate Liberals, or what you please, that the broad and enlightened views of Lord Derby, Mr. Disraeli, and the other Conservative statesmen of the day, are much more akin to your own than those of the motley crew composing the Liberal Government, who have so often shown how easily Mr. Gladstone has, at their dictation, given up, one by one, the principles he once loved so well.

Join, then, the banner of those who can and will carry out improvements in our domestic laws without confiscation, and in our municipal institutions without destruction. Progress, but progress with stability, is my motto, and I ask you to aid me in carrying it out.

I have the honour to remain, GENTLEMEN,

Faithfully yours,

WILLIAM GRANTHAM.

SUSSEX PLACE, SOUTH NORWOOD,
January 26th, 1874.

Fig. 2. Conservative Party election address, General Election, 1874.

The purchase also included another important medieval document, a subsidy roll (tax list) for the hundred of Tandridge (an area almost exactly identical with the present District) in 1334. This lists the richer inhabitants of each village and their possessions, for example:

Bletchingley. Goods of John le Tannere: 3 quarters of rye 12s; 3 quarters of barley 10s; horse 6s; cow 8s; 11 ewes 11s; 12 hogs 10s; pig 3s; tannery 40s; total 100s, of which one-fifteenth is 6s 8d.

The roll covers every parish in the Hundred except Limpsfield, although the Lingfield return is incomplete. It is a fine record of the economy of eastern Surrey and the sources of wealth of its inhabitants.

Our understanding of the county in this period is further amplified by court rolls, 1318-1327, for the manors of Windlesham and Broomhall, then in the possession of the Prioress and convent of Broomhall, Berks.

During 1981 we have been carrying out surveys of Baptist Church records in the county and deposits have now been received from Dormansland and Epsom. Dormansland Church was founded in 1792 and the first minute book is a vivid reflection of life in a small Baptist community at the time. The minutes testify to the great concern of the chapel members for the maintenance of high standards of conduct by their fellow-members and the considerable efforts they made to investigate allegations against them and to bring back the lapsed.

Methodist records have been deposited by three circuits: Kingston-upon-Thames, Dorking and Horsham, and Redhill and East Grinstead. These were all additions to earlier deposits.

Mr. E. Montague, of Merton Historical Society, kindly drew our attention to parish records of Mitcham, including churchwardens' and overseers' accounts, 1655-79, held by the Borough of Merton, and these were later deposited. The accounts include lists of individual rate-payers and their assessments as well as the items of expenditure. They include a set of surveyors' accounts for team work carried out on the highways as well as cash payments and a list of contributors to a collection in 1678 for rebuilding St Paul's cathedral. Richard Ferrand, churchwarden, included in his accounts an item which may evoke some sympathy from those of use who find difficulty in remembering minor items of expenditure for which reimbursement could be claimed: 'Disburst for goeing about the parish busynesse and to maymed Souldyers and pore people in the tyme I was churchwarden for the yere 1651 and 1652 att severall tymes which I cannot sett downe the particulers but I am confident it is about the Some of 50 but I set downe but 40s . . . £02..00..00'. His accounts including this item were accepted by the parishioners. The records also include the enumerator's book for the 1811 Census. This is a list, house by house, giving name of family, numbers of males and females and a breakdown by employment 'in Trade, Manufactories, Agriculture and Others'.

Parish records have also been deposited in Kingston from St Nicholas, Thames Ditton, St Peter, West Molesey, and Christ Church, Epsom. The Thames Ditton records include parish registers, 1663-1888, service registers, 1897-1971, account books of the overseers of the poor, 1704-1824, poor rate books, 1728-1836, and

vestry minutes, 1810-1837. The parish seems to have been unfortunate at times in its incumbents. In the late 18th century the churchwardens and inhabitants submitted a 'Memorial and Petition' to the Bishop of Winchester in which they complained that 'The Reverend Mr Harding hath been for a Year and half past and is now Vicar of this parish and during all that time hath been and is now resident at Kingston upon Thames . . . he hath only performed Divine Service on Sunday Mornings and hath omitted performing Divine Service on any other Days or times in the year . . . by means of the Non Residence of the Vicar your Memorialists may oftentimes labour under great inconveniences as Infants may Die unbaptized, Funerals may be delayed and persons being Ill and desirous of the Assistance of the Minister may be deprived thereof . . . many of your Memorialists and Petitioners being Farmers and their Servants and others who cannot conveniently attend Divine Service in the Morning, by reason of the Non Attendance of the Minister on Sundays in the Afternoon are wholly prevented from attending their Duty as Christians'. The result of their protests is not known. In 1841 the incumbent Wilfred Speer was suspended for three years 'for being an habitual Drunkard, and for having been repeatedly guilty of the crime of Drunkenness, and also for having been frequently guilty of indecent conduct, demeanour and language in the Church'. Additional deposits have been made by a number of parishes which had already deposited some of their records: Charlwood, Walton-on-the-Hill, Nutfield, Esher and St Martin, Epsom.

In my account of our accessions for 1978 (*Surrey History* vol. II no. 2) I quoted from a report of Farnham Rural Sanitary Authority on the sanitary condition of Camberley in 1875. Records deposited in 1981 by Runnymede Borough Council include a consultant's report in 1877 to Chertsey Rural Sanitary Authority on the sanitary condition of Chobham. The report observes that some of the houses drew their water from streams into which sewage was discharged but that most of them had wells. 'All of the wells are shallow and many of them are near the cesspools, privy pits, drains or pigstyes. I have lately analysed samples of the water from fourteen wells in different parts of the village and have not found one which can be pronounced fairly good and wholesome. Nearly all of them were of a deep yellow colour and all of them contained such large quantities of Common Salt, Ammonia Nitrites and organic matter as to indicate extensive sewage contamination'. The main drain had recently burst and covered the High Street 'for several yards with thick black sewage and filth smelling very offensive in the neighbourhood'. The inhabitants were presumably used to offensive smells because, as the report also states, 'I believe that few of [the closets] are cleansed oftner than once a year and some only at still longer intervals of time'. The records also include minutes of Chertsey parish Highway Board, 1870-1876 and 1881-1894, of Chertsey Urban District Council committees, 1895-1923, and of ward meetings in Egham, 1894-1906, together with highway surveyors' accounts for Thorpe, 1823-1837, and churchwardens' accounts for Thorpe, 1835-1884. A later deposit from Runnymede includes Egham Urban District Council committee minutes, 1906-1927, and records of Egham parish council, Rural District Council, Highway Board and gas inspectors. It also contains a fine series of valuation and rating books for Egham



Fig. 3. Gipsies, probably taken between the Wars. (Photograph from the scrap-book of a Ewell resident)

parish (later Rural District) 1853-1962, and Thorpe parish, 1905-1932. These are of great value for the history of the development of Egham, enabling the researcher to establish the date at which streets were developed and houses built. They give the names of the owners and occupiers, a description of the properties and, of course, their value.

I began my 1978 article with a description of the agreements for the building of the first Hampton Court Bridge in 1752 and 1753, and included photographs of the plans attached to the agreements. We have now received from the County Engineer a most attractive coloured perspective drawing of the present bridge designed in 1928 by the then County Engineer and Surveyor, W. P. Robinson, in collaboration with Sir Edwin Lutyens. The watercolour, by the noted architectural draughtsman Cyril A. Farey, shows the bridge as originally proposed with lodges at each end. It was displayed at the Lutyens exhibition mounted by the Arts Council at the Hayward Gallery, London, an exhibition in which Lutyens' early country houses in south-western Surrey featured prominently.

Two important series of records relating to Ashtead and Leatherhead have been deposited through the good offices of members of the Leatherhead and District Local History Society. Lord Barnby, Lord of the Manor of Ashtead, has deposited court rolls, 1691-1785 and 1866-1924, deeds of title, 1619-1924, a map of about 1838 and a number of other records. The first historical records deposited with the County Council, when in 1926 it expressed interest in collecting private and especially manorial records, were 17th century court rolls of Ashtead, and other Ashtead manorial records have been deposited on various occasions since then. The other deposit of Ashtead and Leatherhead records was made by a London firm of solicitors and comprised deeds, leases and mortgages of the Hackblock family estates, from 1801 to 1926.

Two important additions have been made to accumulations of estate records held in Guildford Muniment Room. Members of the Bray and Warren family have deposited during the past 50 years large quantities of papers of the Bray family of Shere, including Shere deeds and court rolls from the 14th century onwards and also papers relating to all parts of Surrey collected by the antiquary William Bray (1736-1832), co-author of Manning and Bray's *History and Antiquities of Surrey*. A further deposit of Bray estate papers from the 18th century to the 20th century includes correspondence between local landowners in 1804 and 1805 when the West Horsley enclosure commissioners awarded part of the road up Green Dene between Shere and Effingham to a private landowner. There is also a copy of a grant of land in 1825 for an Independent chapel and schoolroom at Felday.

The large accumulation of papers of the Earls of Lovelace, of Ockham Park, has been increased by papers of Mary Countess of Lovelace, widow of the Second Earl, who ran the family estates from 1906 to 1941. In 1917 Lady Mary resisted the Guildford Rural District Council's plans for housing at Ripley ('It appears to be assumed to be necessary to spend public money and take land forcibly in order to build cottages at Ripley, and it has not occurred to anybody to ask whether . . . the landowner might not be willing to build them, and all burdens on the public purse be therefore avoided'). She founded her own firm, Ockham Building

JERRY BUILDING AND UNMADE ROADS



Fig. 4. Cul-de-sac sold as 'right of way'; leading out of Cox Lane, Ewell.



Fig. 5. Dowlans Road, Great Bookham, looking eastward, 10 February 1930. The house on the left had been unfinished for four years.

Industries, to provide the houses. She was also concerned for the preservation of commons on the family estates: '[My Common Keeper at Wisley] has had to deal with hundreds of cases of people who think they are doing no harm by picking wild flowers, ferns, etc. If we did not prevent it the Common would long ago have been completely devastated'.

Guildford Muniment Room has received deposits of parish records from Great Bookham, Dorking St Paul, Godalming, Hindhead and East Horsley and additional deposits from Bisley, Chiddingfold, Chobham, Ewhurst, Frimley, Guildford Holy Trinity, Horsell, West Horsley, Ockley, Peper Harow, Shalford, Wotton and from Hawley Holy Trinity (Hants).

The Ockley records include two books of weekly reports, 1836-41, from the keeper of the parish workhouse to Dorking Board of Guardians. The parish workhouse apparently continued in use until the Union workhouse was built at Dorking. The keeper sent in requisitions for supplies, submitted inmates' requests for leave of absence, and reported breaches of discipline: 'I sent John Pullinger To The Doctors on Friday and He Returned between 7 and 8 o'clock and Was Very Drunk and about 12 o'clock in the Night He Swore at John Elsey and Made a great Disturbance and Called John Elsey Everything He Coulede Except a Gentleman . . . Ann Ansell Hit Ann Young in the Face and Black her Eye and then ran out in The Road and I sent for her to Come back and then She Had Fitts.' Some entries show a more humane side of the workhouse keeper: he asked for 'a Large Loose Bed Gown' for Dame Dewdenay as 'Shee Canot Gett her Gown On She is So Stiff in her Arms', and 'a pr. of Lambs Wooll Stockings for Thomas Bax as Leg is Very Bad'.

The range and quantity of records received continues to be considerable. Even apparently routine modern records can be of considerable importance. In 1976 the County Planning Department transferred to us photographs taken in support of planning powers included in the Surrey County Council Bill, 1931, and the Clerk's Department transferred files relating to the preparation and passing of the Bill. Surrey County Council was a pioneer in the preservation of the countryside and in obtaining powers to control development in the inter-War years. Public acceptance of the Surrey County Council Act, 1931, with its revolutionary extension of public control over the environment, encouraged the Government to bring forward its own Town and Country Planning Act and Control of Ribbon Development Act and later to designate the Metropolitan Green Belt. Dr. John Sheail of Monks Wood Experimental Station (Institute of Terrestrial Ecology) used these records extensively in research for a chapter of his recently-published book *Rural Conservation in Inter-War Britain* (Oxford, 1981). His conclusions are a testimony to the vigour of Surrey County Council and to the value of preserving the records which bear testimony to that vigour: 'Surrey exploited the scope for autonomy in local government to the full, and retained a reputation for independent action throughout the 1930s. The value of its head start in rural conservation became even more obvious in the post-War years.' Dr. Sheail's conclusion is of great importance for the archivist in deciding which records to preserve, as well as for the historian in deciding which records to research: 'So far the planning historian has tended to concentrate on the literature

of such voluntary bodies as the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, and on the proceedings of the various professional bodies. The Surrey example may suggest that the time has come to quarry further into the archives of local and central government in order to gain new perspectives on the activities of the voluntary, professional and official bodies, as well as on such well-worked themes as the Garden City. No doubt the records of Surrey's many conservation societies, both inter-War and post-War will help to broaden that picture: it is important that they should be preserved.

Our withdrawal to Woking was a fairly cheerful adventure. . . . We borrowed £100 by a mortgage on my mother-in-law's house in Putney, and with that £100, believe it or not, we furnished a small resolute semi-detached villa with a minute greenhouse in the Maybury Road [No. 141].

It was facing the railway line, where all night long the goods trains shunted and bumped and clattered—without serious effect on our healthy slumbers. Close at hand in those days was a pretty and rarely used canal [the Basingstoke] amidst pine woods, a weedy canal beset with forget-me-nots and yellow water lillies [sic], upon which one could be happy for hours in a hired canoe. In all directions stretched open and undeveloped heathland, so that we could walk and presently learn to ride bicycles, and restore our broken contact with the open air.

There I planned and wrote the *War of the Worlds* and *The Invisible Man*. I learned to ride my bicycle upon sandy tracks with none but God to help me . . . Later on I wheeled about the district marking down suitable places and people for destruction by Martians in *War of the Worlds*.

(*Woking News & Mail*, 4 August 1939).

A DECEPTIVELY DATED ASHTEAD TERRIER OF 1656

R. A. Lever

Leatherhead & District Local History Society

The local historian often takes for granted the total dependability of the documents on which he works, but there are dangers in too uncritical a trust. Documents may be inaccurate or misleading or they may reflect a situation already out of date at the time when they are drawn up. This essay illustrates one such pitfall.

The Surrey Record Office has in book form what is described as a survey of Ashtead manor (SRO 203/1/1) which is referred to in the local parish history by Galbraith¹ who includes, as an appendix, the names of the rate-paying tenants and their acreages.

While extracting further details of the main rate-payers with the sums due and the place-names involved, the writer found proof that the items enumerated in the terrier must be older than the date given as 1656. This information comes from examination of the title page which names the then lord of the manor as being Henry Lord Matravers (Maltravers), who is known to have died in 1652.² Among the 49 rent-payers is the name of the rector, Robert Quennell, whose monumental inscription in St Giles' church was noted by Aubrey³ as recording his burial on 10 September 1643.

In order to see if the particulars in the terrier were even earlier than the minimum 13 years indicated above, the Ashtead court rolls for the period 1636-45 were examined (SRO 10/3). It was found that the earliest showing Henry Maltravers as lord of the manor as well as a list of the tenants was dated 3 November 1637. On comparing the names in the roll with those of the terrier it was established that a number of both copyhold and freehold tenants listed in the former tallied with those given in the terrier. Finally, the acreages rented were found to be identical with those given in John Lawrence's well-known map of the manorial holdings of Henry Lord Maltravers drawn in September 1638. From this agreement, it was considered that one is justified in concluding that the items entered in the terrier in 1656 dealt in fact with rent collections made 20 years earlier and were probably associated with the Lawrence survey prepared when the manor was leased by Richard Newdegate to Maltravers. This map is the one erroneously referred to by Tate⁴ as an early tithe map of Ashtead but such did not appear till 1838/39.

The problem remains of why the terrier came to be compiled four years after Henry Maltravers had been succeeded by his son Thomas who is known from the Victoria County History⁵ to have settled Ashtead estate on Henry Earl of Kingston and others in trust for Henry's wife. The matter was referred to Mr. J. M. Robinson, Librarian at the Duke of Norfolk, who confirmed that he knew of no special reason for the year 1656 being chosen. In fact, we know that Thomas was in that same year confined as a lunatic in Padua as a result of brain damage due to a fever. The

reason why the scribe who entered the items for the period 1637-38 failed to indicate that they were not current remains a mystery, as the wording on the title page states it to be 'A Survey of the Mannor of Ashted . . . taken in the year of our Lord 1656'.

The title page has been examined carefully to ensure there were no erasures or other alterations, that it matches the following pages and that the original stitching is still in place. All pages have seven vertical wire lines without water mark. As the terrier is of some intrinsic interest, the following account has been prepared of the numbered holdings of the lord of the manor and the main rent-payers in the parish. Starting with the manor house, its gardens, orchards, courts, yards, barns, stables and outhouses, there is a blank space for the acreage followed by a rental of £13 6s. 8d. The great variations in the value of different types of land are seen from such items as £14 rent for 112 acres of pasture on the Sheep Walk; £13 for only 13 acres (Marl Meadow) and £21 7s. 0d. for 42½ acres of pasture (Renams). Out of the entire parish acreage of 2241 acres, the lord of the manor held about 1345 acres comprising the demesne of 766 acres, a copse (probably Newton Wood) of 97 acres and 'the Waste of Ashtead Common' of 479 acres. The demesne was valued at £336 18s. 4d.

The largest tenant was a Mr. Cole whose 190 acres were composed of 100 acres in the common field (freehold) and 90 acres of enclosed copyhold; these were rented respectively at £41 14s. 0d. and £42 13s. 8d. Besides two houses in the central part of the parish and a 'panhandle' block of 15 acres called the Horse Close, he had a 27 acre coppice (Addlestead Wood) of which a portion still exists in the south of the parish.

Of more interest to the general reader is an entry for John Peepe, Gent., easily recognisable as the cousin of the diarist Samuel Pepys with whom he often stayed in Ashtead. For a total acreage of 40 acres the rent payable was £32 3s. 11d. of which £6 5s. 0d. was due for his house and tenement with £11 4s. 0d. for 'a parcel of land adjoining to the orchard called Perrycroft'. The Lawrence map shows three adjoining blocks marked with this name—their extent being 10, 8 and 8 acres. The court rolls for 14 January 1638 supply the same details as those in the terrier.

The details given for the rector, Robert Quennell, are of particular interest with a rent of £45 17s. 3d. for 55 acres of which the glebe and parsonage accounted for nearly 25 acres. We know that he actually lived at a dwelling house called Penders and owned a freehold of 18½ acres called Seamers rented at £1 per acre; it is described as a pitchell, a variant spelling of pightle, a small field or enclosure. Much of this area exists today as a pasture in the Marsh portion of the common. A certain John Quennell, renting 3 acres in the common field for £1 19s. 7d, is doubtless a poor relation of the rector.

Despite the small size of most of the shots or furlongs, it is clear from the occurrence of the same names among several persons that they were shared; examples are Long Foreland, Mill Gate, Scrubs, Marl Pit and Gravel shots. Many of these can still be located but Berkhambury and Babblers Corner seem untraceable.

Two titled persons well known from Surrey documents occur in the terrier, viz. Lady Darcy who rented 106 acres for £60 3s. 3d., no less than 41 acres being

copyhold in the common field. The other tenant was Sir Francis Stydolph with nearly 38 acres of freehold rented for £13 1s. 8d. A close with the unusual name of Cocox can be located from Lawrence as the extreme south-eastern corner of the parish.

As many as 17 of the 49 tenants rented under four acres, five persons had between five and 10 acres and four paid on less than one acre. Names entered in the terrier feature in the homage of the court baron up to the time of George III—examples are Ottway (William and Edward), Hilder, King, Lucas, Glassington and Richbell.

The fly leaf of the terrier bears a note by the steward, Thomas Mathews, dated 1 August 1706 testifying that one John Tetley of 89 years recalls fencing part of a particular house then lived in by William Beckford. He observed that he was aware that it encroached on the highway and that this occurred about twenty years previously, i.e. about 1685, when the house was built by a George Rouse (Rous). This man was known as the Queen's tailor who at the Hearth Tax of 1664 was living in a house with 10 hearths. The house with which Tetley was dealing is now used by the headmaster of the City of London Freeman's School and it is interesting to have this note proving that the house was contemporary with that of the old manor house where Sir Robert Howard 'entertained very civilly' John Evelyn on 10 May 1684.

There are also some brief marginal and other notes of 1717 and, more often, of 1722 suggesting that the steward at the time of the joint lordship of William Feilding and Lady Diana Feilding (formerly Howard) had utilised the terrier for the purpose of rent collection. Opposite the entry for Mr. Cole is the modern note 'Now Hackblock 1863' which refers to a developer most active 12 years earlier.

It is rare to find a document of Stuart times bearing one date but giving data referring to 20 years earlier without the discrepancy being noticed. As it is, we are now given particulars dating back prior to the Civil War rather than to the last four years of the Protectorate, as hitherto assumed.

Presumably Thomas Lord Maltravers felt in 1656 a need to have his Ashtead leases placed on record and so was not concerned that the name of his deceased father Henry appeared on the title page of the terrier concerned. This would in fact have strengthened his claim as showing an extra generation of tenure.

It is hoped that this article has shown the historical interest of this terrier and the value and reliability of the information it contains when it is studied critically and in the light of other related source-material.

The writer's thanks are due to the staff at the Surrey Record Office for their ever-ready assistance and to Mr. Robinson for kindly examining documents in the Muniment Room at Arundel Castle.

POSTSCRIPT

This dating problem was later submitted to the writer's former tutor, Dr. Jane Sayers, who was kind enough to state that 'both surveys and terriers were copied and re-copied no matter how out of date the details, for centuries. I know of an Oxfordshire 13th-century glebe terrier being copied *verbatim* in the 16th and 17th

century . . . Such surveys were brought out at courts time after time but one can be reasonably sure that the given date of the copying is likely to be right. These documents should be regarded as statements of claims rather than as accurate details of current holdings.'

NOTES

1. I. G. Galbraith, *Ashted, A Village Transformed*, ed. by Alan A. Jackson, (1979).
2. *The Complete Peerage*, Vol. 9, Pedigree of the Howard Dukes of Norfolk, (1936).
3. John Aubrey, *The Natural History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey*, Vol. 2, (1718) pp. 247-248.
4. W. E. Tate, *The Parish Chest*, 3rd edn., (1969) p. 143.
5. *Victoria County History. A History of the County of Surrey*, Vol. 3, (1967) p. 249.

The time then must have been somewhere about six-o'clock. . . . when he saw Henderson, the London journalist, in his garden, he called over the palings and made himself understood. . . . The two men hurried back at once to the common, and found the cylinder still lying in the same position. . . . Of course [they] were quite unable to do anything . . . and went off back to the town to get help. One can imagine them, covered with sand, excited and disordered, running up the little street in the bright sunlight, just as the shop folks were taking down their shutters and people were opening their bedroom windows. Henderson went into the railway-station at once, in order to telegraph the news to London.

(*The War of the Worlds*, 1898)

HOLY WELLS AND MAGICAL WATERS OF SURREY

Rowland G. M. Baker

Esher District Local History Society

A well-known authority has said 'Our sense of continuity with the beliefs of the ancient Britons is never stronger than when we stand by one of the holy wells which are to be found near many churches. The saint whose name the well now bears was almost certainly first associated with it in the role of a sentinel, to defend Christianity against the stealthy persistence of the old nature worship'.¹

Water is one of the prime necessities of life, and to early man the sight of a spring of crystal liquid bubbling out of the ground, or gushing from some crevice in the rock, must have appeared nothing short of miraculous. Surely it had been placed there by the gods for man's particular refreshment; even to be the very dwelling place of the deity himself; in any case a domain of great sanctity, a place where the sick could be brought to be healed by the magical curative properties of the sacred waters. Shrines were erected around these springs, where the great water spirit was worshipped, and placated by the offering of abundant sacrifice.

The Christian missionaries, when first they came to this country, would never be so foolish or so reckless as to destroy entirely the aura which surrounded these ancient retreats. Wells which had built up a great reputation and had been dedicated to the honour of a pagan divinity were re-consecrated to the protection of a Christian saint. A canon, issued by Archbishop Anselm after the Westminster Council of 1102, ordered that no one should attribute reverence or sanctity to a fountain without the authority of a bishop.

Surrey, with the filtering effect of its sandy and chalky soils, possesses a number of limpid wells and streams, to which history and legend ascribe great reverence and astounding remedial properties.

Not far from the little parish church at Bisley, for instance, is a spring, now sadly neglected, but which was once the 'Holy Well of St John the Baptist'. For many centuries this well was highly recommended for the medicinal power of its waters. There is a legend in the locality which reports that Bisley church owes its foundation to the presence of this spring: the monks from the great Benedictine Abbey of Chertsey, after receiving refreshing comfort from drinking the water, built a shrine close by as a thanksgiving, and out of this the present church has grown.²

Not so very long ago the local people affirmed that the water of the well was sanctified, and would have their children baptised with no other. The present writer's wife's grandmother, who was born at Bisley in 1876, was christened with this water, and said that folks thought it to be 'holy'. Her mother used to send her down to the spring with a bottle to get water 'to wash the babies in'. It continued to be used for baptisms up to about the year 1900.

At one time the well was protected by a wooden cover, but this was replaced by a brick and cement surround, out of which the water now gushes. It maintains a steady annual temperature, and so appears cold in summer and warm in winter, and it has a high concentration of iron. The late Mr. H. P. Lawson, who owned the field in which the spring is situated, and who erected the present surround, is reported to have drunk a cupful of the water every day—and he lived to his 90th year.³

On St Anne's Hill, near Chertsey, by the ruins of an ancient chapel dedicated to that saint, stands what Aubrey described as 'a fine clear spring',⁴ which is known as *St Anne's Well*, or *The Nun's Well*. The water is seldom frozen even in the deepest winter, and was considered by the locals to be wonderfully effective as a lotion for the cure of diseases of the eye.⁵

The ability to cure sore eyes was, in fact, attributed to a number of Surrey springs and wells. One was at the foot of St Catherine's Hill, close to where the old trackway known as the Pilgrim's Way crosses the River Wey.⁶ Around 1894 companies of school-children used to take bottles, into which sugar or treacle had been put, to fill them from the spring, and drink.⁷

At the bottom of Gimcrack Hill, Leatherhead, beside the entrance to Thorncroft Manor, a stream of beautifully clear water, which was another noted eye-curer, discharges into the River Mole. Similar properties were attributed to a spring which breaks out from a peaty bank by the side of the road running downhill from Hook Heath at Woking, and from which, so the legend says, King George III used to send for supplies of water whenever he was in residence at Windsor.⁸

A lane leading down from the church at Dunsfold brings one to the holy well of St Mary the Virgin, over which the local people have erected an elaborate oak canopy (see Fig. 1). Designed by W. D. Caroe, the canopy was funded by the Dunsfold Amateur Dramatic Society, and dedicated by the Bishop of Guildford in October 1933.⁹ Its waters were also alleged to be beneficial for eye ailments. Tradition has it that the Blessed Virgin has disclosed herself at times to those who sought relief at the well.¹⁰ In fact, its proximity may well provide the explanation of the church's erection on this site, nearly a mile away from the body of the village.

The water from a well called 'Bon-spring' at Witley was supposed to be effective not only as an eye lotion, but if taken internally, as a cure for ulcers. The antiquity of this well may be evidenced by the numbers of archaeological finds which have been made in the immediate vicinity.¹¹

At the foot of Tilburstow Hill, near to where Godstone railway station now stands, there used to be an old ale-house which was called *The Iron Pear Tree*. It received this name because of a pear tree which grew in the garden and which every year bore a prolific crop of fruit but all of which were so hard and unfit for eating that they were called 'iron pears'.

This house was bought by a man named Bonwick, who suffered extremely with the gout, and who, it appears, decided to brew his own beer on the premises. As the nearest well was some way off and necessitated a considerable amount of carrying of water, he resolved to sink a well in his own garden, which he did, and brewed a quantity of beer from the water. The beer, however, had such an unpleasant taste that none of his customers would drink it. Bonwick, having all the liquor left on

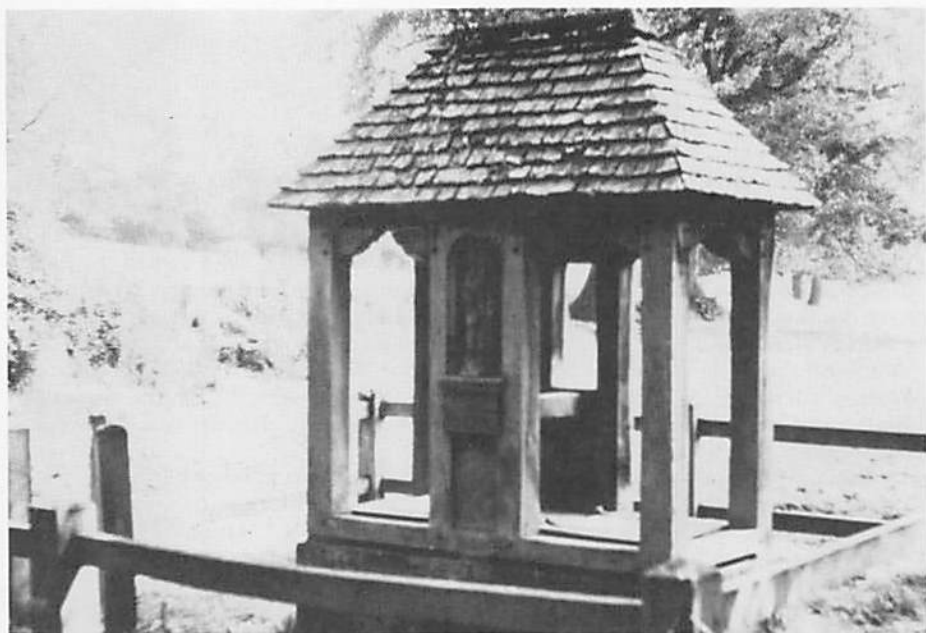


Fig. 1. Dunsfold, the Holy Well of St. Mary the Virgin.



Fig. 2. Carshalton, Anne Boleyn's Well.

his hands, was faced with the problem of pouring it all away or drinking it himself. As the beverage did not taste unpalatable to him, he decided to drink it all, and after some time of so doing, lo and behold, found himself cured of the gout.

After that the reputation of the well-water swiftly spread over a wide area, and eventually reached London. A jockey called Prentice, who had married the widow of the owner, was largely responsible for sending great quantities to London, where it was sold at the rate of 6d. a quart, for the treatment of gout and constipation, in the cure of which complaints it was thought to be most efficacious.

After some years the fame of the water declined and for a long time the well lay neglected, until about the year 1784, when a man who 'had had the gout every year since the age of 12' heard of the miraculous cures which were claimed to have been formerly accomplished and decided to try it for himself. He had the well re-opened, and drank the water. In a short time he was cured of the malady. This restoration immediately began to be talked about, and the reputation of the well again became firmly established. Its new owner erected a small 'pump-room' over it. The enterprise was short-lived, however, for less than thirty years later it was reported to be 'little used'.¹²

In the Haslemere Educational Museum is a stone-ware water bowl, about 14 ins. high and 10 ins. in diameter, which is inscribed 'IRON PEARTREE WATER NEAR GODSTONE, SURREY'. Over the inscription are two oval panels, one of which is decorated with a representation of a man hobbling lamely on a pair of crutches and bears the words: 'OH THE GOUT'; the other depicts the same man holding a cup in his hand from which he has apparently been drinking and is now walking energetically, this panel is entitled: 'DRINK AND BE WELL'.¹³ It seems probable that this bowl was used at the well during the 18th century.

A well near Dorking, called *Meg's Well* or *Mag's Well*, was deemed equally effective in the relief of rheumatism, scurvy, dermatitis, leprosy, scabs, itch, and scrofula; and if drunk, as both an emetic and a laxative.¹⁴ Aubrey states that 'The reason why it is called Mag-well, was because a poor Wench, whose name was Meg, that was troubled with the Itch, and lived hereabout, first cured herself with washing'.¹⁵ A more credible explanation, however, is that its name is a corruption of St Margaret, to whom doubtless it was originally consecrated.

The spotlessly clear pools and springs which form naturally where water is allowed to percolate through the soil have always suggested to the minds of men a pervasion of purity, a subtle air of maidenly virtue. This in former times frequently led to these wells being dedicated to the various virgin saints. St Margaret, the patron saint of women; St Mary the Virgin; and St Anne, her mother; these were all very popular tutelary saints for springs.

Besides those wells and springs already mentioned as being dedicated to these saints, St Margaret was the patroness of a spring at Coldharbour on Lingfield Common, the stone stoup of which is now incorporated into St Peter's Cross at Lingfield;¹⁶ and probably also of Lady Margaret's Well at Carshalton.

Carshalton has another, and perhaps more famous, well. This still stands near the old churchyard, where Church Hill joins the High Street, now walled and railed in (see Fig. 2). It is known either as *Queen Anne's Well* or *Anne Boleyn's Well*,

although it is almost certain that it was originally named for St Anne. Tradition, however, has it that one day Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, his second wife, were on their way on horseback from the palace of Nonesuch to visit Sir Nicholas Carew at Beddington Park, when on this spot the queen's horse suddenly pranced up and struck its hoof into the ground, causing a spring to spurt forth where none had been before. To perpetuate the memory of this event the villagers erected a stone around it, and christened it after their royal visitor with the name it carries to this day. They also chained a bowl to it, in order that weary travellers could assuage their thirst with the cool refreshing water.¹⁷

At one time a local, but not very accomplished, poet wrote a ditty extolling its virtues:

'There is a well at Carshalton,
A neater one never was seen;
And there's not a maid of Carshalton,
But has heard of the well of Boleyn.

'It stands near the rustic churchyard,
Not far from the village green;
And the villagers show with rustic pride,
The quaint old well of Boleyn.'¹⁸

This association of pure clear water with unsullied virginity often found expression in delightful legends and stories, which were woven to explain to credulous minds the unadulterated limpidity of the water.

The A25 road from Dorking to Reigate passes through the village of Buckland, and although nowadays the scene appears as a never ceasing procession of motor vehicles, earlier in this century it was a rather pleasant but lonely lane. It was crossed in one of its most secluded parts by a rivulet of extraordinarily beautiful transparent water, by the side of which lay a stone. The two, stream and stone, formed the basis of a very charming legend, the origin of which is not known, but probably goes back a very long time.

'Once upon a time', the legend (like all good legends) begins, 'a lovely blue-eyed girl, whose father was a substantial yeoman in the neighbourhood, was wooed and won by the subtle arts of the opulent owner of the mansion house of Buckland. In the silence of the evening the lane was their accustomed walk—the scene of her devoted love and his deceitful vows. Here he swore eternal fidelity; and the gentle unsuspecting maid heard his earnest protestations with all the confiding affection of the female heart in its native simplicity, and confessed the power of his eloquence while her soul was absorbed in tenderness. At such a moment as this, how often has the guileless mind of youth been led astray from the path of virtue! It was now for the first time the wily seducer cautiously communicated to the yeoman's daughter the real nature of his designs. The lovely moon was the witness of his perfidy and of her distress. She heard the avowal in tremulous silence—but her deadly paleness, and her expressive look of mingled reproach and terror—while still on her fair countenance the lineaments of tenderness lingered—created alarm even in the mind of the villain; and he hastily endeavoured to recall the fatal declaration; but it was

too late—the stricken deer was already too deeply wounded—she sprang from his agitated grasp, and with a sigh of agony her pure spirit escaped—she fell dead at his feet! When the wretch beheld the work of his iniquity, he was seized with distraction—and, drawing a dagger from his bosom, he plunged it into his own false heart, and lay stretched by the side of the lovely blossom he had so basely destroyed. On the morrow the traveller through the lane passed over a beautiful little stream, the emblem of innocence—and saw a dark stone, the appropriate symbol of hardened wickedness, with drops of blood trickling from its heart into the bosom of that pure limpid stream. From that day the little stream has lived in its untainted purity, and the stone has still continued its sacrifice of blood.¹⁹

In the 18th century the lord of the manor is said to have removed the stone to the manor house, where for many years 'it oozed forth its crimson drops'.²⁰

This same theme has grown up comparatively recently around the lake called *Shirebourne Pond* or more famously *The Silent Pool*, near Albury. Mainly through the publicity given to it by Martin Tupper in his romance *Stephan Langton*.

In this pool, the story recalls, a beautiful peasant maiden, just budding into womanhood, used daily to take a bathe in the deep clear water, isolated in the depth of a thicket of box trees, which almost arch above its peaceful waters. One morning the girl arriving at the spot divested herself of her simple garments and proceeded, as was her usual custom, to take her bathe, accompanied, so she thought only by the silver trout which abound in the lake. This unfortunate day, however, prying eyes watched the unsuspecting maiden as she dipped in the waters, and before long she heard the sound of crushing in the undergrowth; before she could reach her clothes a stranger on horseback appeared and drove his mount to where the quivering maiden stood in the water. Further and further into the middle of the lake the guileless girl retreated, to hide her unclothed body from the stranger's gaze, and further into the pool the horseman drove, until the girl could go no further; before her lay a precipitous descent of some twenty feet or more. She could not swim. Therefore she had quickly to make a decision. To stay where she was meant that the callous pursuer must reach her and drag her to the bank. With one last unavailing shout for assistance the poor distracted lass hurled herself into oblivion in the tranquil depths of the pool, the stranger, seeing his prey escape him, turned his horse around and galloped away. 'The unrippled surface is all smooth once more; and you may see the trout shoaling among the still green weeds around that naked raven-haired Sabrina'.

This was not enough for Tupper, he had to make the pursuer into King John, and let the girl's brother try to rescue her and to suffer the same fate as his sister in the attempt.²¹

A tale of somewhat similar character attaches to a small lake on the Fetcham side of Leatherhead, which, being fed by several springs bubbling through the chalk, is extremely clear and placid. After Eric Parker visited the scene in Edwardian times, he wrote: 'There is a strong spell of magic over all that strange pool. Some naiad Circe combs her hair far below the weeds, and has bewitched the wild fowl and the green cold water'.²² This lake is now used as a source of supply by the local water authority.

In this age the phenomenon of crystal springs and transparent pools which form in many parts of the county can be accounted for in a more mundane fashion by natural laws. Yet one can still stroll by the calm serenity of a little mere, or watch pure spring water issuing from a quiet hillside, and be enmeshed in an ambience of mystic beauty, accompanied only by romantic thoughts of untainted chastity.

NOTES

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4. John Aubrey, *Natural History and Antiquities of Surrey* (1719), vol. 3, p. 185.
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6. F. C. Elliston-Erwood, *The Pilgrims Road* (1923), 2nd edn. p. 116.
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8. *Ibid.*
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13. *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, (1934), vol. 42, p. 138.
14. J. and S. Russell, *The History of Guildford* (1801), p. 301; J. S. Bright, *A History of Dorking and the Neighbouring Parishes* (1884), p. 327.
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16. A. B. Hayward and S. Hazell, *A History of Lingfield* (1933), p. 35.
17. G. B. Brightling, *History and Antiquities of Carshalton* (1872), p. 49.
18. E. Walford, *Greater London* (1895), vol. 2, p. 201.
19. *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1827), vol. 2, pp. 483-486.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Martin Tupper, *Stephan Langton; or the Days of King John* (first published 1858).
22. Eric Parker, *Highways and Byways of Surrey* (1908), p. 282.

THE VICTORIANS AT HOME

The 1981 Symposium

At its Symposium in Dorking Halls on Saturday 31 October 1981 the Surrey Local History Council took 'The Victorians at Home' as its theme.

In the morning Mr. Nicholas Cooper spoke on 'The Plan and Decoration of the Victorian House' and the afternoon speaker was Mrs. Daphne Grimm, whose subject was 'Inside the Victorian Cottage'. Three hundred people attended during the day, and around the Hall the exhibits of 23 societies, including two new-comers, illustrated the main theme in a variety of enterprising displays.

The Bourne Society recreated a Victorian nursery from sources at their disposal.

The Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society. The Society is a product of the Victorian period, having been formed in 1870. The exhibit included details and photographs of semi-detached houses of cement slab construction by W. K. Lascelles to designs by Norman Shaw. Erected in Sydenham Road in 1882, one has been occupied by its present resident for 69 years. Other photographs showed local Victorians and their homes, and Croydon itself.

The Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey) had on show from their records some exuberant Victorian houses including Burley Orchard at Chertsey, and houses in Farnham, Compton and East Horsley. The latter showed the unmistakable stamp of the designs of William, Earl of Lovelace (1805-1893), in the usual flint with bands of brick quatrefoils and polychrome round-headed windows.

Dorking and Leith Hill District Preservation Society—Local History Group. The exhibit highlighted two everyday aspects of Victorian life. *Needlework*. Various stitches used to make and mend Victorian clothes were displayed, both as samples and as finished articles. Much of the stitchery was by Florence Sherlock, a member of a long-standing Dorking family. Other exhibits included an early sewing machine and a book published in 1883 which contained dreadful warnings about 'the restrictive forms of ladies' clothing' then in use. *Household accounts*. Amongst other associated items was a selection of bill-heads of Dorking businesses, indicating the cost of some everyday articles in the Victorian home. Most of the material shown was from another prominent Dorking family, the Attlees.

We welcomed the East Surrey Museum, Caterham, to the Symposium this year. For its first Christmas display, December 1980 to January 1981, the Museum devoted one room to 'A Victorian Christmas Dinner'. Part of this display, 'the Victorian Kitchen Dresser', was featured at this Symposium.

Egham-by-Runnymede Historical Society display featured the West end of Egham area, Victorian high life at Portnall House and Virginia Water National School, the school for the 'labouring poor'. A small display featured H.M. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's visit to Egham Museum on December 5, 1980.

Esher District Local History Society exhibit had been compiled to show the extremes of conditions of Victorians at home. To give some indication of the variety of conditions, three representative models were produced showing the home environment of the 'upper class', the farm labourer and a destitute town dweller. In addition various contemporary artifacts ranging from pictures to a very rare 'Pedlar Man' were used to dress the stand.

John Evelyn Society. In the Victorian period, Wimbledon was transformed from a country village into a suburban town. The population increased hugely from 2,600 to about 46,000. The exhibit was of photographs of the new Victorian architecture, portraits of some of the new types of residents, their home interests, and hobbies and two Victorian toys: a Zoetrope and a stereoscope of 1860.

The Hassell Project. Some 1,800 drawings of Surrey in the 1820s by the Hassells, Father and Son, have been discovered and photographed in the last 10 years. The results of the project, sponsored by the Surrey Archaeological Society, covering virtually every parish in Surrey from London Bridge to Haslemere (and some exciting views of pre-railway Dorking), are now available to historians as microfilm or En-prints.

Farnham and District Museum Society. A small collection of Victorian inventories, sale catalogues and bills from Farnham parish were on display chosen to show what it then cost—or did not cost—the middle classes to live in some degree of comfort.

The Guildford Museum exhibit displayed Sunday evening in a Guildford home 100 years ago: the husband reads through back numbers of the Parish Magazine, while the wife sews; she has several projects in hand—tattooing with the help of Mlle. Riego's famous book, knitting lace, and making a *broderie anglaise* trimming. She has recently finished the maroon felt table cloth in the fashionable 'art needlework' style.

The Holmesdale Natural History Club Local History Section showed types of Victorian houses in Reigate, Victorian shopping, extracts from the Army and Navy Stores Catalogue, Francis Frith who lived and worked in Reigate and some examples of his post-cards of Reigate, household and toiletry goods and some examples of 19th century books.

Kingston Museum and Art Gallery—Heritage Unit. They showed some aspects of life in the present Royal Borough in Victorian times. The rise of Surbiton, due to the advent of the railway, provided a local stimulus for the latest ideas and fashions. The work of Eadweard Muybridge, a local man working in America, demonstrated the advance of photographic technology and scientific curiosity.

Leatherhead and District Local History Society. Ashted Potters Ltd., which flourished from 1923 to 1935, was a charitable organisation designed to employ disabled ex-servicemen from the First World War. It produced a wide range of pottery, including figurines designed by leading sculptors of the day. The scope of the potters' output was illustrated by photographs in the exhibition, which also included specimens of their work.

Mayford History Society. Woking is a town of the 19th century, built round the railway, attracting new development of both large and small houses on the previously barren heathlands. The exhibit showed some of the factors in Woking's growth: trains, houses, people, prisons and a house for 'decayed actors'.

Send History Society. Their exhibit represented a late Victorian working class kitchen. The cast-iron kitchener was of a type fitted in small houses in Surrey and elsewhere after the Great Exhibition of 1851. It gradually replaced the open range used previously.

Shere and Gomshall History Society. They showed a Victorian parlour. The mistress of the house sews, and sitting by her is her companion.

Surrey County Library—Local Studies Library. The exhibit consisted of a display of advertisements for products in everyday use in many Victorian homes, including examples of the packaging (e.g. bottles) which contained these products.

Surrey Record Office. Their display drew from estate, business and personal papers deposited in the Office to illustrate selected aspects of Victorian housing and domestic life, from building a home and furnishing it upon marriage, to bequests of house and possessions at death. Items chosen contrasted the quality of life in large mansions like Nutfield Priory, Lyne House, Englefield Lodge and Abinger Hall, 'above' and 'below' stairs, with that in cottages and gardens built or improved by institutions such as the Wimbledon Cottage Improvement Society. They also illustrated the development of a post-railway town, Surbiton, and of the semi-detached villa in Guildford; whilst the less savoury aspects of Victorian housing were represented by references, in the minutes of the Surbiton Improvement Commissioners, to smallpox and inadequate water supplies. Items chosen illustrated the sort of information a student of the period might expect to find in the Record Office.

Surrey Industrial History Group. Their display at the Symposium this year consisted of items from Charles Brooking's collection of architectural features, 1700-1940, but with emphasis on the Victorian domestic scene, including an assortment of iron firegrates, tiles, door-knockers, brackets, locks, door-knobs etc. The evolution of the sash pulley as a means of dating building developments was a special feature, and also 'before and after' treatment of gesso panels and wooden newel posts. Charles Brooking is a member of the Surrey Industrial History Group and also of the Building Conservation Trust recently established at Hampton Court Palace.

Sutton Library. Sutton Libraries and Arts Services again presented a display in conjunction with the Wandle Group, drawing on material from two other member libraries, Croydon and Lambeth as well as Sutton. The display included photographs of Broad Green Lodge, Coombe Hill House and other Victorian houses in Croydon with their occupants, a miscellany of Victorian people in and around their houses in the Sutton area; photographs from the Family Album of the Aitkens of Carshalton House and the Potts of Wallington Manor (who were inter-married).

Walton and Weybridge Local History Society showed a Victorian pantry with items from the Weybridge Museum.

West Surrey Family History Society. We welcomed this Society to the Symposium this year. The Society displayed how they work: on show was their computer indexing with photographs. They are concerned with family history as opposed to genealogy, and are currently tracing the growth of towns, for instance Chobham.

In London . . . on Saturday night . . . my brother reached Waterloo in a cab. . . There was very little excitement in the station, as the officials, failing to realize that anything further than a breakdown between Byfleet and Woking Junction had occurred, were running the theatre trains, which usually passed through Woking, round by Virginia Water and Guildford. They were busy making the necessary arrangements to alter the route of the Southampton and Portsmouth Sunday League excursions. . . . [On Sunday a] vague feeling of alarm had spread to the clients of the underground railway, and . . . excursionists began to return from all the South-Western 'lungs'—Barnes, Wimbledon, Richmond Park, Kew, and so forth—at unnaturally early hours . . .

(The War of the Worlds, 1898)

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