

PBHS NEWS LETTER

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PUBLISHED BY POTTERS BAR HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

POTTERS BAR HISTORICAL SOCIETYCHAIRMAN

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Formed in 1959 to encourage the preservation of things of local interest and to study both local and general historical matters. Meetings are held throughout the winter months at intervals of approximately three to four weeks, details are exhibited on the public library notice boards or may be obtained from the secretary. Membership is open to all interested people. Subscriptions are 50p. for those over twenty-one years of age and 25p. for those under twenty-one.

All members of the public are welcome to attend our meetings whether members of the Society or not.

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EDITORIAL

Since our last issue the fate of Wylllyotts Manor has been decided. At the meeting of the full council on July 26th last it was agreed that the building should be leased as a licensed restaurant to Goodhews Ltd. According to the Potters Bar Press of July 28th Messrs. Goodhews are to spend more than £60,000 on renovating and converting the property. Potters Bar Council has thus rid itself of a burden while preserving the building for the use of the people of Potters Bar - that is those of them who can afford to eat there.

In the Potters Bar Press of July 14th it is stated that "..... because of its age thousands of pounds will have to be spent on its restoration and maintenance." It is suggested that some of this money could have been saved if the council had not consistently failed in its own avowed intention to preserve the building.

Readers will remember that this Society in conjunction with the Potters Bar Society put forward proposals for the restoration of Wylllyotts and its conversion to an Arts Centre. One of the attractions of this scheme was that it would provide a number of badly needed small meeting rooms as well as a small hall. Further more its central position makes it easily accessible. The council tells us that there will be a new hall at Oakmere (large) and that in the mid 1970's Lower Mountgrace School will be available for community activities. This is excellent, but neither are centrally situated and we hear that there will only be one small committee room at Oakmere. Both of these alternatives lack the charm of Wylllyotts.

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Members will note that much of this issue has been contributed by Mrs. H.M. Baker, our indefatigable researcher into old records. We thank her not only for the excellent work she is doing in this direction but also for giving us the privilege of publishing some of her work. Contributions from others would however be most welcome, whether members of this society or not. Letters, queries, personal reminiscences of the past and any information of an historical nature will be welcomed. Brief notes will do, they can be easily written up into an acceptable form.

Hon. Editor: C.T. Overend, 30 Deepdene, Potters Bar.

WYLLYOTTS MANOR HOUSE

Some notes on recent research in the Manor Records

With the recent interest that has been aroused in the Manor House of Wylllyotts by the discussions on its preservation and future use it is perhaps a good time to look at some of the other records of the house which are to be found among the collection of deeds and Manor records which were deposited at the London Guildhall Library by the Brewers Company who were Lords of the Manor of Wylllyotts from 1689 to 1937.

"The Story of Potters Bar and South Mimms" published by the Potters Bar Council in 1966 gives the background history of the Manor and an architectural description of the Manor House so these are only additional notes from records which had not been studied at that date, which may add a little to our knowledge of the house and clear up one or two points.

The deeds of sale of the Manor from the first sale by Thomas Lewkenor to William Dodd in 1562, through ten subsequent changes of ownership to James Hickson's bequest of the Manor to the Brewers Company in 1689 are all among the records. In some of the early deeds the ink has faded and the parchment is cracked and creased so that they are difficult to read, but the chief Manor House or Mansion House as it is sometimes called appears in each of them from the sale in 1594 by Robert Stamford to Robert Taylor, the year when the earliest known plan of the Manor was made, to its purchase in 1651 by James Hickson.

Two leases of the Manor House and its farm lands have appeared in a set of deeds found after the publication of the history in 1966. The first of these was made in 1581. Robert Stamford, Lord of the Manor leased the Manor House to Edmond Burr, Yeoman of South Mimms who was to take over the house on the death of Dynnys Hall, widow who held it on a 40 year lease from Thomas Lewkenor. Edmond Burr was to pay 100 marks and a rent of £20 a year and at his own expense repair and maintain the Manor House and all the buildings, hedges, ditches and fences as required. Dynnys Hall died in 1587 and Edmond Burr's lease was for 21 years.

The plan of the Manor made in 1594 shows a front view of the Manor House with a long building in the background with a chimney at the east end and a second building in front overlapping the west side. It is a pity that this was incorrectly copied on the copy in the 1966 History. It is named the Manor House on this plan. These pictorial views of houses on early plans do not always portray the actual buildings but if this was the Manor House at that time, the long building in the background could be the long building which remains today with its fireplace at the east end. There is a photographic copy of the 1594 plan at the Cranborne Library which can be seen on request, for you to check the original with the 1966 copy.

The second lease of the Manor House is dated 1675 when James Hickson had been owner for over 20 years. It appears to be a renewal of an earlier lease as the tenant in occupation when he bought the Manor had the same name. It is a lease for 21 years at a rent of £40 to John Robinson, gentleman of South Mimms and it shows that some additions had been made to the house by the previous

owner, Walter Lee. After setting out the Mansion House and describing it in detail all the lands to be leased with the house the lease states that certain rooms, which had been erected by the previous owner, Walter Lee, were to be reserved for the use of James Hickson and his heirs. The rooms are described as a hall and a buttery, two chambers over the hall with a closet and a garret over the chambers. There was also eight poles of ground adjoining the rooms which had been enclosed out of the yard of the Manor House and stabling for two horses and liberty of ingress, egress and regress to and from the reserved premises, and use of the great yard of the Manor for mending and repairing these rooms. This gives us a definite date for additions to the earlier buildings. Walter Lee bought the Manor in 1623, it was settled on his nephew, also Walter Lee in 1629. This Walter Lee went bankrupt in 1650 and the next year it was sold to James Hickson.

When the Manor was taken over by the Brewers company in 1689, as the endowment for the upkeep of James Hickson's almshouses, the accounts for the first two years show that the Master Brewers and wardens, on their visit to South Mimms, were given dinner at the Manor House. John Robinson had died and his son Benjamin and his widow Mrs. Robinson occupied the Manor.

The Robinsons remained tenants of the Manor for many years, another Benjamin and then a John appear in later accounts and finally another widow, Mary Robinson, who died some time between 1724 and 1725. She had fallen behind with her rent and in 1722 an attorney of the company had been sent to seize property of Mrs. Robinson. After the report of her death there is a note of expenses spent on going to distrain at Wyllyotts. Valuers were sent at this time and various repairs to the barn and other property are mentioned. Details are given of arrangements for re-letting. An advertisement was put in the London Evening Post of July 17th 1725 stating that the farmhouse and lands called Wyllyotts Farm were to be let by the Brewers Company of London. Printed bills were also prepared and the criers at Barnet, Hatfield and St. Albans were instructed to advertise the intended lease.

The accounts for 1726 show that William Roberts who at that time was also farming Mimms Hall Farm, had taken the lease of Wyllyotts Manor. There is nothing to show if he was living at Mimms Hall or at Wyllyotts, he seems to have had the same trouble in finding his rent of £50 a year. In 1737 the beadle of the Brewers company was sent to South Mimms to see if there was any of Mr. Roberts' stock at the farm with which to make distress.

In 1747 he again appears to be in arrears and a note suggests that he has been forgiven two years rent. Unfortunately the account book ends in 1751 and no other account books appear until 1893. I have so far not been able to trace what happens to the Manor House in the period between except that John Logsdon is given as tenant in 1842 in the Tithe Map schedule. From 1767 to 1796 John Halsey was listed as occupier of property belonging to the Brewers company in the Land Tax assessments, and Thomas Vass is shown at Wyllyotts Manor in a plan made for the overseer of the poor in 1817.

The later account book shows that John Dickinson was tenant of the Manor Farm by 1893 at rent of £140. A cattle shed for

the farm cost £10 in the same year. In 1895 Dickinson's executors were paying off his arrears of rent. Repairs to the roof cost £10 in 1896 and by the end of the year Alfred Hammett was in occupation of the farm.

In 1907 Samuel Warboys was paid for painting and for notice boards for the Manor House, and a valuation and survey of the property was made in 1908. Thomas Woodrow is listed as paying the rent in that year. From 1919 I.J. Peart is listed as paying the rent and halfway through 1923 Mr. Seabrook took over the lease.

The rest of the history is told by Mr. Seabrook in an article in the Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society (New Series Vol.5. 1929 pp 289/296) which describes his purchase of the Manor House and his efforts to restore the building, with photographs of the Manor during his restoration. There is a copy of these Transactions at the Barnet Museum Library.

One other note is perhaps worth adding. It concerns a plan of a house at Potters Bar which appears in a book of plans by John Thorpe the Elizabethan Architect. In the appendix to "The Story of Potters Bar" (page 134) and also on page 4 of the "Case for Preserving Wylllyotts Manor" it is suggested that this was a plan for rebuilding Wylllyotts Manor. From evidence which I have collected and is set out below I think this assumption is incorrect.

The plan is marked "Mr. Taylor at Potters Bar 1596". In 1594 when Robert Taylor bought Wylllyotts Manor from Robert Stamford it was occupied by Edmond Burr on a 21 year lease. Two years later in 1596 Robert Taylor completed the purchase of about 30 acres of land called Cathall Grove from Henry Goodere, which he added to the Manor lands. In 1603 when he sold the Manor to Sir Roger Aston, the deed of sale as well as listing Wylllyotts Manor House in occupation of Edmond Burr, also includes all that Mansion House lately built upon Cathall Grove of Robert Taylor now called Cathall Grove. Sir Roger Aston sold Cathall Grove and the Manor to Robert Honeywood in 1605, but two years later when Honeywood sold Wylllyotts Manor, the house on Cathall Grove was not included. We know that Robert Honeywood sold several pieces of the Wylllyotts estate during his ownership. Simon Flexmere was in 1603 copyholder of Tottenhalls at Potters Bar. In 1606 this was transferred to a new owner and Simon Flexmere next appears as owner of Cathall.

It seems to me that John Thorpe's plan is of Cathall which he built for Robert Taylor in 1596.

H.M. Baker
(November 1972)

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BLANCHE FARM

Readers will be interested to know that when Blanche Farm was demolished in 1969 the Greater London Council sent an architect to make a survey and to report on the structure of the building as it was demolished. As the building was dismantled this architect, by name Malcolm Airs, and a photographer made notes, drawings and photographs of each part of the building as it was taken down and from these he had made a most interesting report

which includes notes on all the known owners from John Durham in 1420 through at least a dozen changes to the Trotters of Durham Park who bought it in 1912 and then sold it along with the rest of their property in South Mimms to the Middlesex County Council as part of the Green Belt. From this history of the ownership he has tried to relate the periods at which the different parts of the house were built.

The remaining part of the staircase and some early windows have been rescued and are in store at the Historic Buildings Division of the Greater London Council. There are also some fragments of a small chest dated 1663 which had been used as in-filling in one of the walls.

It is hoped we will be able to get Mr. Airs to come and give us an illustrated talk on his finds some time next year.

H.M. Baker

(A letter has been sent to Mr. Airs asking him to address the Society during the next session - Ed.)

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SOCIETY NEWS

Deeds and Photographs

A set of old deeds on the Ledbrooke frontage has been presented to the society by Messrs. Male & Wagland. We thank them most heartily for this gift.

We also wish to express our gratitude to Mr. Nethercott for the loan of deeds and photographs of South Mimms for copying purposes. Readers are reminded once again that the society will be grateful for the loan (or gift) of old documents and photographs. After copying the originals will be returned to the lender and we will of course take good care of them while in our possession.

Archaeology

In the spring it is intended to hold a series of informal lectures on archaeology followed by practical experience with one of the neighbouring societies. Volunteers from amongst members and the general public should get in touch with the secretary (name, address and telephone number on page 2). Willing helpers from among the younger generation are particularly welcome and it is hoped that some at least will become sufficiently interested to become members of the society and to take an active part in its affairs.

Membership

Due to removals and other causes the current membership is down on what it has been in recent years. Since subscriptions account for at least 95% of our income and the cost of hiring halls is rising the only way in which we can keep our subscription down to its present low level is by increasing the number of members. Why not bring a friend or neighbour to our next meeting? We make no charge for visitors to our meetings but hope that they will prove sufficiently interested to want to join us, in particular the society needs more younger members.

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Notes on Deeds and other Documents from
SOUTH MIMMS PARISH CHEST

These notes are from documents which the Vicar of South Mimms kindly allowed me to copy. They have now been deposited with the other South Mimms records at the Middlesex section of the Greater London Record Office, 1 Queen Anne Buildings, Dartmouth St. S.W.1.

The first three are concerned with the Poor House at South Mimms.

1. 1637. Purchase of a house and garden at the north end of South Mimms street from Abell and Henry Ewer by the Trustees of the poor of the parish, for £85 described as the "poores money". The profits and rent of the house were to be used for the benefit of the poor. The boundaries of the property are given.

2. 1724. Transfer of the above house to new Trustees by Rebecca Niccolls widow and John Niccoll son of the last surviving Trustee.

3. 1724. Report of Vestry Meeting on the conversion of the poor house into a common workhouse. It sets out the intents and purposes and the arrangements made for running the work-house and also the appointment of a master and mistress and an accountant to look after the affairs of the house.

4. 1719. A mortgage on a house and shop at the north end of South Mimms belonging to Thomas Ellis.

5. 1731. Agreement signed by the prisoners of South Mimms of their refusal to pay a claim for a debt of £40 made by John Jacob who had lately been Vicar of the parish.

The next five documents are grants of a yearly rent charged on pieces of waste land which have been enclosed. These charges had been agreed at the suggestion of John Bocket who felt that some compensation should be made for the loss of rights of pasture on the waste enclosed. The rent so collected was for the benefit of the poor of the parish. The land enclosed is described in each.

6. 1767. from Thomas Nuthall annuity of £4. for the enclosure of 5 acres on Kicks End Green. (part of New Lodge property).

7. 1769. from William Cooper annuity of 12/- for enclosure of 3 roods 26 poles at Bentley Heath. (now part of the footpath field to west of Bentley Heath Farm.)

8. 1772. from Nicholas Moseley annuity of 5/- for 20 poles next the Dog and Badger on South Mimms Green (later the Greyhound).

9. 1775. from John Griffiths annuity of 16/- for $\frac{1}{2}$ acre at Galley Corner. (now part of the site of the Duke of York.)

10. 1778. from Stephen Roberts annuity of 8/- for $\frac{1}{4}$ acre of South Mimms Green. (part of land of Cedar House or Red House, both were built by Stephen Roberts on Mimms Green.)

I have a full copy of each if anyone wishes to look at them.

H.M. Baker (1972).

We would like to call members attention to the following books of historical interest which have been published in recent months. It is regretted that space does not permit us to review any of these.

"English Delftware" by F.H. Garner and Michael Archer - Faber and Faber 7.50. This is the second (revised) edition of this work.

"Introducing Archaeology" by Magnus Magnusson - Bodley Head £1.95.

"An Economic History of England: The 18th Century" by T.S. Ashton - University Press £1.10.

"An Economic History of England: 1870-1939" by William Ashworth - University Press £1.60.

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ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

None of the meetings held so far this session have been well attended. The first two have attracted only a dozen members each. This is particularly disturbing to those responsible for compiling the programme.

Are the days chosen unsuitable for the majority? Most dates are fixed by the speaker, it being only fair that since he is giving his services entirely free of charge he should have the right to say when he will come. For this reason also it is just a little bit discourteous when we stay away simply because it is too much trouble to turn out.

There may be other reasons for poor attendances. Perhaps members do not care for some of the subjects chosen for lectures? The remedy for this is in their own hands, the Committee would be highly delighted to receive suggestions for future talks and will make every effort to engage suitable speakers.

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CLAY PIPES

The dating of archaeological finds may sometimes be fixed by the presence of associated ~~of~~ finds which can be readily dated. One useful method is of course by means of known pottery styles, another is by clay tobacco pipes, the shape and style of which varied over the years, and the years in which any particular shape was produced are well known. On the facing page is shown the various shapes of tobacco pipe bowls produced during the years 1580 to 1840. Many members will no doubt find this illustration interesting and informative, it is hoped that they will also find it useful. The illustration first appeared in the archaeological news letter from which it has been reproduced.

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CORRESPONDANCE

Sir,

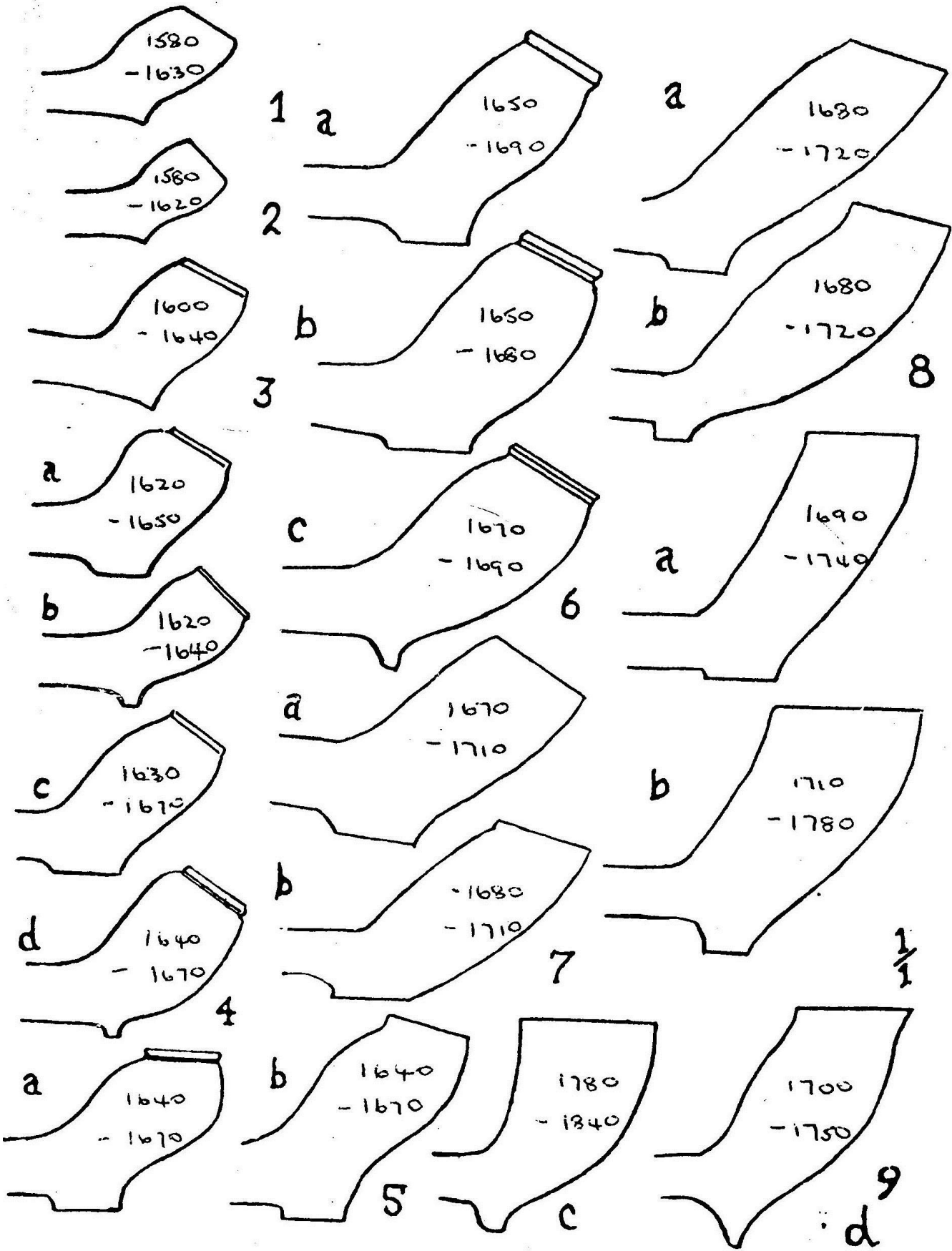
Does any member know what has happened to the vestry minute book of South Mimms for 1750 to 1788 with an additional volume of extracts from the vestry meetings up to 1806?

It is quoted extensively in Dr. Brittain's book on South Mimms and pages from it have been photographed and used as illustrations in his book.

It was not sent to the Middlesex Record Office with remaining parish records.

Perhaps someone borrowed it for some purpose and has forgotten to return it. If anyone knows anything about it perhaps they could let me know. It is a serious loss to anyone trying to trace the parish history at this period.

Helen M. Baker, 12 Oakroyd Close
Tele. Potters Row 53659.



TYPE SEQUENCES IN TOBACCO PIPES.