

*Potters Bar & District
Historical Society*

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The Newsletter

January 1988

Vol.4 No.2

The Chairman wishes to thank those members who were kind enough to send him Christmas cards and for other much appreciated thoughtful acts over the festive season. Whilst extending a message of good health and happiness to everyone this year, may it also see the continued growth of the Society.

The first three monthly meetings showed an average attendance of fifty-four, which is larger than the Society's membership four years ago. Not only has the attendance been good but the introduction of a tea/coffee interval has resulted in a better social atmosphere at meetings. Thanks are expressed to those ladies who have organised this so efficiently, and long may they continue the good work.

As a further improvement it is proposed to display some of the items of local interest at present held in members' houses. It is hoped this will provide an added focus point at the meetings.

After the good news, the not so good. As you all realise the Society has relied on Terry Goulding for his expertise in reproducing photographs/slides and the production of our publications. What is probably not so well-known is that he has had access to photocopying facilities, including enlarging and reducing. The latter has been very useful for our exhibitions.

Unfortunately, Terry was forced to change his work last year and no longer has these facilities, so is there anyone else willing to:-

- a) photocopy small quantities, say a dozen copies at a time
- b) have access to an enlarging/reducing machine
- c) access to a screen printing machine.

If you can assist the Society in these matters please inform the Chairman, as soon as possible.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Whilst the Society has an ever expanding collection of photographs and slides, there are some places of which we have no record. If anyone has, or knows of someone who possesses a copy of the following, please inform Terry Goulding, or any member of the Committee. First ascertain if they would be willing to loan their photographs/negatives for copying.

The Laundry, Heath Rd.	Powis Court
Prospect House, Heath Rd.	Hillside
Wain House, Hawkeshead Rd.	Elmfield, Baker Str.
The Elms, High Street	The Limes, Baker Str.
The Hollies, High Street	Salmons Farm, Baker Street
Darke Lodge & Farm	Dugdale Hill Farm
Inglefield	Railway Hotel -early one
Rosary Court	
Water pumping station, Station Close.	

SUBSCRIPTIONS

As with last year there are about twenty members who have not renewed their subscriptions.

A reminder is enclosed and its prompt return to Terry Goulding would be appreciated, as it saves time and energy in making personal calls.

Those twenty renewals would mean the Society would reach the magic figure of 150.

IT IS UP TO YOU!

THE GREAT STORM 3-4 a.m. FRIDAY 16th OCTOBER, 1703

What better than to compile a Society record of that unusual event for the use of future local historians. It is known that some members write daily diaries and one member, at least, visited Northaw Great Wood before it was closed to the public.

If members would write down their memories of that day and give them to Brian Warren, it would provide an invaluable record. Photographs would be an additional asset.

Just to inspire your effort someone wrote the following about the Great Storm, on the 26th November 1703, based on Daniel Defoe's account.

"It had blown exceeding hard for fourteen days before, insomuch that it was thought terrible weather: stacks of chimnies were blown down, several ships lost, the tiles in many places blown off the houses; but the nearer it approached the fatal 26th of November, the tempestuous weather increased."

"Damages in London

The city was a dreadful spectacle indeed, the morning after the storm! As soon as people could put their heads out of doors, they met with nothing but unexpected ruin and destruction: Though great desolation was imagined, no one expected the hundred part of what he saw.

The streets were covered with slates and tiles from the tops of the houses, which were universally stripped

"Something may be guessed herein from the sudden rise of the price of tile, from twenty-one shillings to six pounds per thousand for plain tiles; from fifty shillings to ten pounds a thousand for pan tiles. Bricklayer's labour rose to five shillings a day.

Those who found it absolutely necessary to cover their houses, made use of wood, as a present expedient, till the time for making tiles should come-on, and the extravagant price abate."

The nearest local reference was to Hatfield:-

"The church, which was tiled, was so shattered, that the body was obliged to be entirely ripped. Two barns and a stable were blown down.About twenty large trees were blown down in the regular walks in the park.A summer-house, which stood on the east side of the bowling-green at Hatfield-house; was blown against the wall, and broken, and a large part carried over the wall, beyond a cart way, into the ploughed ground. Great part of the south-wall, belonging to one of the gardens, was levelled with the ground Part of the fine painted glass in lord Salisbury's chapel window was broken, though it looked toward the east."

Hatfield House estate did not suffer much damage in 1987.

Finally, in 1703, at least eight thousand people were killed and above 800 houses blown down, over 100 churches lead was removed and 7 steeples, were quite blown down, 400 windmills were broken to pieces and in 25 parks more than a 1000 trees were blown down.

There were other violent storms in 1095, 1360, 1362, 1566, 1607, 1626, 1658, 1661 and 1665 prior to 1703. 1661 and 1703 were the worst, but in 1665 there were several storms. What with the plague in 1665 the inhabitants of England must certainly have thought the world was coming to an end!

NOW TAKE UP THY PEN AND WRITE!

REMINDER

23rd April Herts.Archaeological Conference at
St.Albans Schoo1. More details later.

SPRING LECTURE PROGRAMME - Monthly Meetings

THURSDAY 28 JANUARY

'The Restoration of Dudman's Clock, New Barnet'
by D.Ruge-Cope

When Gillian Gear spoke to the Society a few years ago she mentioned the clock was not working and likely to be scrapped. Dan volunteered to restore it.

The Turret clock, which is 200-250 years old, originally stood on Dudman's House, in East Barnet village, but the house was demolished in the 1920s, and the clock transferred to Clockhouse Parade opposite.

Dan has been engaged in restoring the clock since June 1985, but the removal of the clock from its present building was not an easy task in itself. In July 1986, the members of the East Barnet Parish Residents' Association were the first to see the rejuvenated clock for which they raised £300.

Dan is currently having problems with the strike, it has to be loud enough to be heard above the traffic but must not disturb the residents.

MONDAY 22 FEBRUARY

'Medieval Crafts and Industries in London' by
J.Clark

John Clark is the Senior Assistant Keeper, in the Dept. of Medieval Antiquities, at The Museum of London.

'The skills and techniques of London's medieval craftsmen can be illustrated in several ways. Many of their products survive - some of the finest items in the current 'Age of Chivalry' exhibition at the Royal Academy are the products of London workshops; archaeology in London has provided examples of their tools, their part-finished products, their waste materials and traces of their work-places, enabling us in some cases to reconstruct the processes they employed; the City of London's records throw intriguing sidelights on their work as well as providing more direct evidence of how the crafts were organised; and though few medieval illustrations can claim to represent London craftsmen, there are many illustrations of their contemporaries elsewhere to fill out the picture. All these sources of evidence combine to give a picture of a busy, productive city, the major industrial centre of medieval England.'

FRIDAY 18 MARCH

'Church Life in the 18th Century England' by
Mr.A.Harding

'Sandwiched between the religious conflicts of the 17th Century and the Victorian age of faith; the 18th Century is often thought of as a low point in the history of religion in England - strong on anecdotes of absentee clergy and indifference to worship, but lacking much real commitment to the spiritual or social needs of the people. How representative a picture is this? And how does it square with an age that produced Christian scholars of the stature of Bishop Butler, devout laymen like Dr.Johnson, the evangelising zeal of the Wesleys, or a great piece of religious art like Handel's Messiah? '

This lecture will trace the principal elements in the religious life of 18th Century England, from their roots in the turbulent years that preceded it, and will consider the foundation which the century laid for the changes which lay ahead in the Victorian age.

REMINDER:- THURSDAY 21 APRIL - A.G.M. and talks by members.

ALL MEETINGS IN OAKMERE HOUSE, at 8 p.m.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Members will be pleased to know that our vice-Chairman, Joan Groves, is now recovering from a short stay in Moorfields Hospital.

By the time you receive this Newsletter Dick Harris, our Secretary, will be recovering from an operation. We all wish him a speedy return to good health and our thoughts to Shirley and his family during this period.

A letter has been received from Reg. and Nan Crook sending their best wishes to everyone and to the Society's continued improvement. They are going to join their local historical society.

Joan Andrews has presented sixteen slides of the Society's visit to Spains Hall and Vivian Murphy fifteen slides, in connection with her work as Recorder for Area 4. Thanks are expressed to them for their donations.

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:-

Andrew Lefever, John Lucas, Mr & Mrs D.B.Green, Mr & Mrs J.Watson, Mr & Mrs E.Ovenden and Mrs.R.D.Roberts. It is hoped they will make the most of their membership and support us for many years to come.

There have been twenty-two new members from April-December, 1987.

GEORGE W.STURGES

It is with regret I have to inform members of the death of George Sturges, on 4th August 1987. He was the first chairman of the Society, who spent all his life as a teacher in Edmonton schools, where he took a keen and active interest in local history, and was a founder member of the Edmonton Hundred Historical Society.

He was a lively personality, a good speaker and writer. In this latter connection, whilst Geography Master at Montagu Senior Boys' School in 1938, he produced 'Edmonton Past & Present', and in 1941 'Schools of Edmonton Hundred'. The first volume was printed at the school using a Caxton-like press, which had been constructed from a second-hand copying press costing five shillings. This was a very slow process but even with a later acquisition of a hand platen machine the first volume of 150 copies took more than three years to print.

In the late 1920s his observations led to the discovery of the Roman Churchfield site, at Enfield, then whilst living in Potters Bar in the 1950s his observant eye noticed the Roman tile, in the construction of the path across Parkfield to Byng Drive, and this led to the discovery and excavation of the 1st Century Roman Tile kiln site.

Some members might remember his work with the No.57(Potters Bar) Squadron of the Air Training Corps.

Those who were fortunate enough to have known or met George will not find it easy to forget such a personality.

B.Warren.

REPORTSPOTTERS BAR IN THE THIRTIES

This was an unqualified success in many ways, not least, in the financial benefit of £133 for one night's work. The speakers, helpers, members who came and those who encouraged their friends to come are all to be congratulated for their efforts on such an atrocious evening.

Dr. Lynch explained how the railway was not inclined to modernise, so there was room for the bus operators to improve the road transport, which enabled the residents of Potters Bar to travel to nearby towns looking for work.

Brian Warren used the Census information of 1921 and 31 to show how there was great expansion from London across Middlesex during that period, and Potters Bar was part of that movement. Yet, there were particular local reasons for the development of each of the villages. A graphic account was given of the local expansion which revealed the large number of active builders in the area.

Finally, Terry Goulding, provided a light-hearted look at the leisure activities of the period, which was much appreciated by the audience.

Joan Groves chaired the meeting and thanked the speakers.

PBHS No4, 'The Motor-Bus in Potters Bar Before 1939', by Maurice Lynch, was given a splendid start with the sale of 51 copies.

1988/89 LECTURE PROGRAMME

Suggestions for speakers to Barbara Clinton,
59, Dugdale Hill Lane,
(58730)

1988 SUMMER OUTINGS

Bruce Chanter is already planning these activities but if you have any ideas please let him know.

WINTER PROGRAMME REPORTSOCTOBER "The Growth and Development of Little Heath" by Mr.B.Warren.

The first meeting of the season was given a splendid start when seventy-six people attended.

Little Heath was part of the parish of North Mymms, consisting of heavy, stony clays, which were difficult to cultivate. There was very little settlement in the area in 1718 and even on the Tithe Map of 1843.

In 1855 two speculators, Singer and Vickery, acquired the block of land from Billy Lows Lane to Hawkeshead Road, but very little development actually took place. From 1884 until 1911 the problem of sewage disposal occupied the local councils. Samuel Gurney Sheppard was instrumental in the development of Little Heath in the 1880s.

The lecture was illustrated with a large number of slides and a vote of thanks was given by Dr.Landers.

NOVEMBER "Hannibal" by Mr.D.Alderson.

Using only a blackboard and chalk Mr. Alderson brought to life the stories of Hannibal. To be leader of all the people inhabiting the Spanish Peninsular in the year 210 BC at the age of 22 and to spend the next twenty-two years waging war successfully against the Roman Legions in battle after battle certainly earned him the title of 'Great'. Yet with all that almost total success he never captured a sizeable town outside the present area of Spain.

Mr.Alderson showed that had Hannibal been successful in destroying the Roman State, the course of western history would have been totally different.

Cyril Overend gave a vote of thanks.

DECEMBER "The New River" by Dr.D.Smith.

As water was one of man's most fundamental needs even the Romans had built some remarkable water supply systems.

The construction of the New River to bring water from the springs at Amwell, in Hertfordshire,

to a reservoir near Sadlers Wells was simply a matter of urgent need in 17th-century London. It was fully operational by 1613 and the New River Company operated for almost 350 years until it became part of a present day water authority.

Dr. Smith traced its history of continuous service to Londoners and indicated with a series of excellent slides the many older buildings and items of equipment still visible and often still in service.

Finally, with a look at future prospects for the New River, he discussed the prospects for a 24-mile long water channel with an ecological life of its own.

Mr. G. Eve offered a vote of thanks to the speaker.

OTHER MEETINGS

NORTH MYMMS Society - meet at the United Reform Church, Brookmans Park, 8 pm. 50p for visitors.

23 February "History of St. Albans Abbey" by Muriel Thresher.

22 March "North Mymms Pumping Station by Jenny Rackstraw and "Archives of the Society" by Marian Benton.

LAMAS (Ldn & Middx Arch. Soc.)

Lecture Theatre, Museum of London at 6.30
6.00 coffee in Lecture Theatre Foyer.

Wed. 20 January "Revising Pevsner: Changing North London" by Bridget Cherry

Wed. 26 February A.G.M. 6.15 Coffee 5.30
"Coinage & Currency in the City of London & Middx Records -Pt3" by Dr. John Kent

Wed. 23 March "The Road from Tyburn to Uxbridge" by Dr. T. Harper Smith.

HAVE YOU READ?

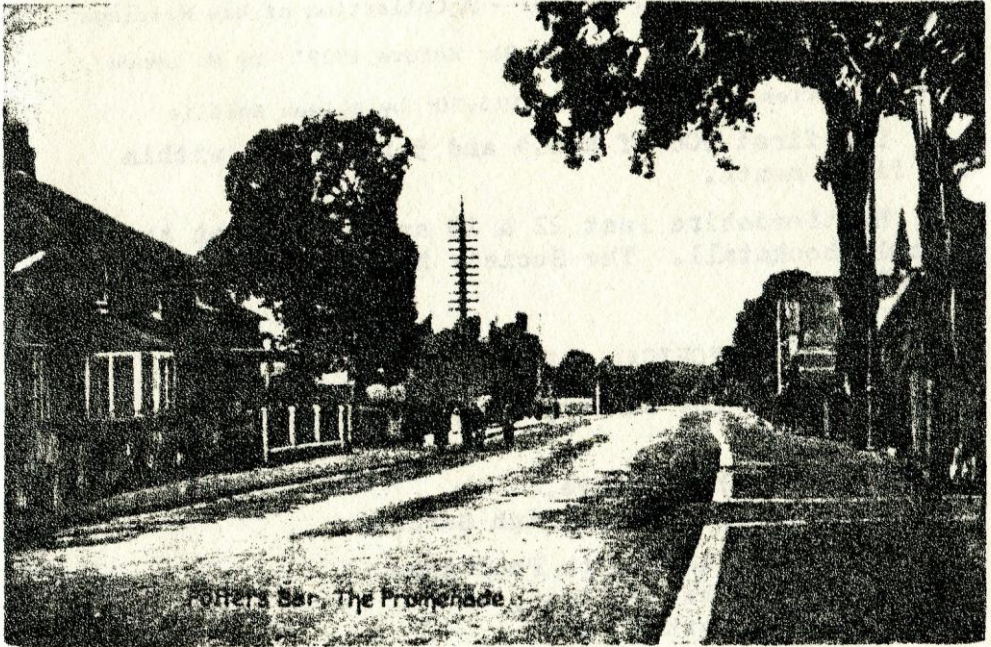
Eric Daw has written a series of articles in, 'Hertfordshire Countryside' editions November, December 1987 and January 1988, on "Barnet- The High Street 70 years ago".

Copies should be in the local libraries.

PB

Potters Bar Historical Series

No. 5



The Promenade (High Street) looking South.

Memories of Potters Bar

1913-20

by Eileen Baillie

CUFFLEY and NORTHAW PAST by Gerald Millington & John Higgs, published by J.Edwards c1981.

If anyone has a spare copy or knows where one can be obtained, contact Gordon Eve, 34, Hatherleigh Gardens, as he has received a request for one.

ON SALE AT THE SOCIETY'S MONTHLY MEETINGS

Potters Bar Historical Series:- 7Op to members

- No. 1 'The Railway Through Potters Bar' by G.H. Eve
- No. 2 'The Turnpike Road to Hatfield' by A.C. Lynch
- No. 3 'Malcolm Tomkins 1930-1981 - A Collection of his Writings'
- No. 4 'The Motor Bus in Potters Bar Before 1939' by M. Lynch
- No. 5 'Memories of Potters Bar 1913-20' by Eileen Baillie

The first 200 of Nos.4 and 5 both sold within the first month.

Hertfordshire Past 22 & 23 are on sale at the monthly bookstall. The Society has sixteen copies to sell.

POTTERS BAR HISTORICAL SERIES

ON SALE AT :- The Society's stall at monthly meetings.

- a) Mr.H.G.Eve,
34 Hatherleigh Gardens
- b) The Health Food shop,
The Broadway,
Darkes Lane
- c) Mrs.Goulding,
Housing enquiries,
Williotts Manor.

APRIL NEWSLETTER

Any items for inclusion in the next Newsletter are to be handed to the Chairman by Easter.

THANKS

It is with gratitude that we thank Dan Ruge-Cope for his time spent in duplicating The Newsletter.