

The Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2005

VOL. 22 No. 1

COVER PICTURE

Since we have now used up all the black and white photographs of Potters Bar, taken between 1969 and 1972 by Mr. Bartlett, a former Secretary of the Society, we shall run a new series of photos supplied by Terry Goulding.



This is the first of a short series of wartime photos by Frederick Cole of Barnet. The Close, just off The Broadway, was bombed in November 1940. No.10 in the foreground was demolished and No.9 was badly damaged. This view is from the garden of No.11, towards The Broadway. The rear of the shops may be seen at the top right of the picture.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

To all our Members.

Welcome back to our new season of lectures. Writing this in early August, I feel I am taking a chance by saying how dry and sunny this year has been - so far, and my apple trees have 'showered' me with little unset apples during the normal 'June drop'. There are still enough left on the trees to give a generous crop though, so the winter visiting fieldfares and blackbirds will have food to last until the end of March next year.

Have you noticed the growth of trees and hedges in our area? By that I mean that when we were young, the roadsides were never as green as they are now, with long grass and vegetation, and hedges so thick and tall that they are now completely impenetrable. Is it the result of the excess carbon dioxide, which is providing the plants etc. with 'food'?

A sign of the times I have seen when travelling towards Hatfield, are the two fields of 'set-aside' land on the left after Welham Green, both of them at this moment are in bright yellow bloom with common ragwort. There are also clumps of this growing beside the road. Farmers in earlier days would never allow this plant to grow in their fields because it is poisonous to livestock. Have the new landowners just given up their responsibility for the land and the weeds? It is particularly odd, because it is not long ago that the field by the railway was used as a horse paddock.

What a turmoil the Darkes Lane /Mutton Lane road changes and new lamp standards are making, but it does make it easier to cross the road with the traffic at a standstill. - I knew that there was a bright side to life somewhere!

Our new lecture programme starts with the 'History of Panshanger Airfield', and is an illustrated talk by Mr. Mike Packham. This is on Friday the 30th of September 2005 at 8pm, I hope to see you all then.

Terry Goulding

NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome to the Society, Mr. & Mrs. Cook. We trust they will enjoy the lectures, walks and outings that are part of our yearly programme, and we hope that they will take an active part in the life of the Society.

SMOKERS PARADISE

This is the story that won't lie down! I suggested that the article in the previous issue of the Newsletter should be the last, but I have received two more snippets. Brian Warren says that, during WWII folk would queue outside the *Buyansave* in Hampden Square on a Friday morning awaiting the arrival of their weekly delivery (which included sausages). Ron Kingdon mentions that the owners of *Payantake* were Harvey and Shillingford. Mr. Shillingford lived in Wain House (now Wain Close) off Hawkshead Road. Now, please, no more snippets.

ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

A member of the Society, Mr. Plowman, made a request concerning Capt. Philip Burge, R.F.C., a World War 1 flying ace, who shot down eleven enemy aircraft. Unfortunately he was shot down himself in 1918. He was born in Potters Bar and Mr. Plowman wondered where. In the 1891 Census William A. Burge, stockbroker, lived at Salisbury House, High Road, Potters Bar. His wife, Grace was 30 and there were three children, Norah, Winifred and Harold (?), aged 7, 5 and 1, respectively. There were three servants - cook, nurse and page - from Over, Cambridgeshire, and the page was from Northaw.

A look at the 1901 Census might tell one if Philip was related to the above family.

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I possess a copy of the Ordnance Survey's reference plan for the 1866 25" map. At the rear there is an index to places, which make interesting reading as to the status of local properties as follows:

MANSION	GENTLEMEN'S RESIDENCES	VILLA RESIDENCES	DWELLING HOUSES
Wrotham Park	Bridgefoot House	Darkes Lodge	Parkfield
Mount Grace	Dancers Hill House	Laurel Lodge	Bedford Villas
Dyrham Park	Oakmere	Norfolk Lodge	Bentley Heath Cottage
		Pymlico House	Chase Cottage
		The Elms	Clock House
		Windsor House	Holly Cottage
			Milton Cottage

I wonder if each group had the same number of servants ?

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In "The Railway Magazine" for December 1973 I spotted the following good advice for all local, historians, "In whatever medium history is recorded no effort should be spared to get the facts correct."

South Mimms and Ridge Parish Paper

The Society has an extensive collection of this magazine largely due, in recent years, to Muriel Brittain. However, during her illness the system broke down and we lack the following copies:

November	2002	March 2003
Dec/Jan	2002/3	April 2003
February	2003	Sept. 2003

As we did once before if any member could provide the necessary copies or loan them for me to photocopy I would be very grateful.

Brian Warren

WINTER LECTURE PROGRAMME

Friday, September 30th 2005 "*The History of Panshanger Airfield*", by Mr. Mike Packam.

How the airfield developed both during World War II and after, including the plan to use Panshanger as a decoy to lure the Luftwaffe away from deHavilland's (Hatfield) by building dummy hangars on the site.

Tuesday, October 25th 2005 "*Nonconformity in Hertfordshire*", by Mr. Alan Ruston

An outline of the history of Non-conformity across Hertfordshire over the last 300 years, and how it can be used by those doing their Family History to trace their non-conformist ancestors.

Thursday, November 17th 2005 "*The History of Northaw Place*", by Mr. Brian Warren.

Northaw Place was of a similar status to other properties in Coopers Lane and not so important as Northaw House, with which it is often confused. Though inhabited by some important people they were not of the same status as the Leman and Le Blanc families in the history of Northaw. The talk will examine the building as a private house, a prestigious school and a children's home of the 1950s.

Tuesday, December 6th 2005 The Christmas Social. Includes refreshments and quizzes.

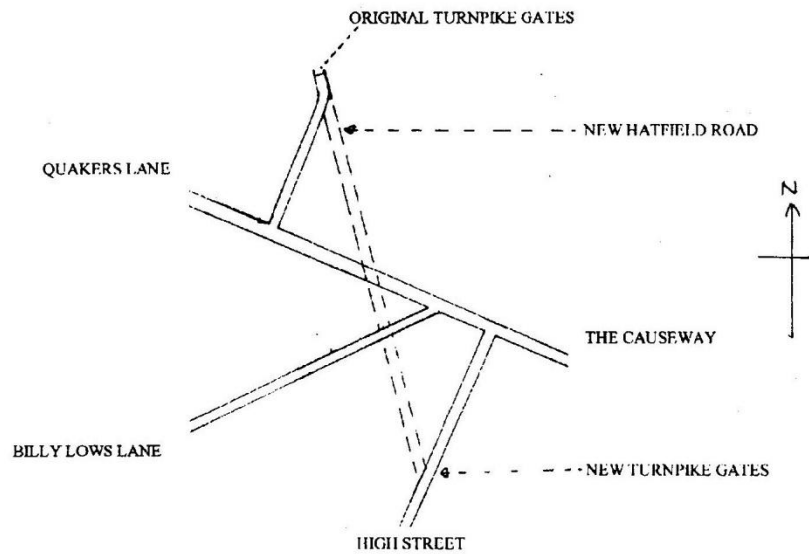
THE MEETINGS START AT 8PM PROMPTLY IN THE 60 PLUS CENTRE, WYLLYOTTS CENTRE. EVERYONE WELCOME.

AGM SPEAKERS

To follow the next AGM (Tuesday April 25th 2006) we propose to have several short 'talks', to be given by members. If you would like to offer such a talk please contact Arnold Davey (01707 654 179).

THE TOLL HOUSE AT POTTERS BAR

Toll houses, for economic reasons, were usually small with several windows from which the toll collector could view the approaching traffic. The houses were used as living accommodation for the collector. The Galley Corner Turnpike Trust (from Gannick Corner to Lemsford Mill) was established from June 1730¹, with a local gate at the Little Heath boundary. Following the construction of the Hatfield Road from the present High Street to Little Heath in 1802, two years later the toll bar was moved to the north end of the High Street not far from the top of Cotton Road.



TOLL COLLECTORS²

1841	James Ellis	aged 30	born Middlesex
	James Holmes	aged 75 Assistant Toll Collector	born Middlesex
1851	William Kite	aged 51	born in Shoreditch
1861	George Burr unmarried	aged 37	born in Bengoe
	Sarah Burr unmarried	aged 60	born in Bengoe

Mr. Butcher stated³ that, "the last toll collector was a cheery old soul named George Burr." It would seem that the Toll House ceased to be used in 1866, as a Bill⁴ exists dated 14th January 1867 from Messrs. Page, Harding and Eve, auctioneers and surveyors from St. Albans. It is for their commission, expenses and use of the sale room, at Salisbury Arms, Hatfield, for the sale of the toll houses at Potters Bar and Mount Pleasant for £82 5s 9d. Mount Pleasant was a gate north of Hatfield at Mount Pleasant Lane.



THE TOLL HOUSE AT POTTERS BAR AFTER 1866

According to Mr. Butcher⁵ following the removal of the toll gates the cottage became the property of the Lord of the Manor, which is not specified, and it was sold to Mr. Ross. A letter published in the Barnet Press, 1898⁶ from a resident noted the former toll bar had been sold for £40 twenty years ago and the land was purchased by a Scotsman, who received 5s a week rent for it. These statements do agree as Mr. Ross was born in Scotland, and purchased Morven Park in 1873.⁷



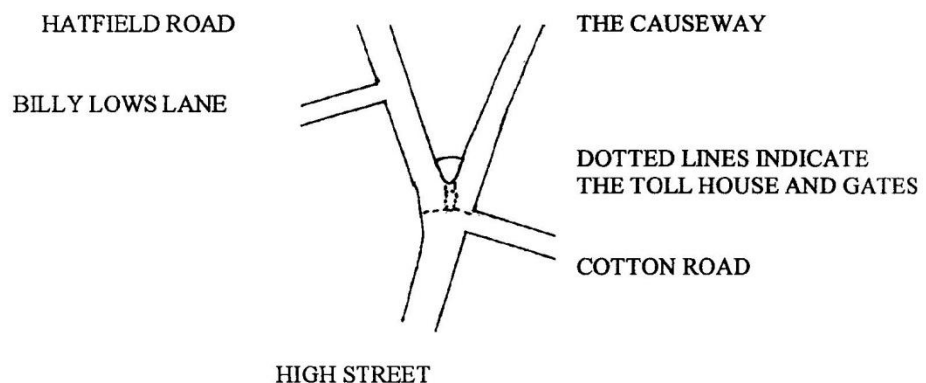
THE OLD TOLL HOUSE before 1897, when all signs of the gates and posts had been removed.

In 1871 John Gourrill, presumably the same person as Mr. Butcher recorded as “Govill (a coloured man)” resided in the former toll house and was a stationer, born in St. Pancras. Ten years later Mr, Ross was still at Morven Park, with his wife and four children but it is not possible to find whether the toll house was occupied. However, in 1891 Joseph Holton, a wheelwright, lived there with Sarah, his wife. In the 1930s Councillor H.F. Halsey remembered, ‘the old Toll House where as a boy, he and his schoolmates used to visit Mr. & Mrs. Holtum the keepers of the gate for a hot drink when they had a penny to spare.’⁸ Then it became ‘The Bicyclists Rest’ and finally a general shop run by Mr. Curd.



‘THE BICYCLISTS REST’

Mr. Ellis, a South Mimms councillor and owner of Morven Park pulled down the old toll house between August and November 1898 and erected on the site a four feet high fence. A year later Mr. Ellis had sold Morven Park and resigned from the council.¹⁰ In July 1900 the Open-Air Mission Band held their usual concert at the Toll Bar Corner and there was a good attendance.¹¹ The following plan shows that the former Toll Bar was situated nearly opposite the top of Cotton Road and not at the site of the former War Memorial, erected in 1920 and moved in 1973.



The South Mimms Rural District Council were awaiting the decision of the Middlesex County Council as to whether they would undertake to improve the spot of the old Tollhouse, in 1904. The

improvement did take place and early in 1906 Cr. Mott was thanked for his persistency in the matter, while Mr. Sanderson, of Morven Park, handed a cheque for £50 to the Cottage Hospital for the piece of land acquired for the improvement.¹²

References

- 1 Act of Parliament 3Geo II c10
- 2 Census Returns for South Mimms
- 3 The Journal No.6 Potters Bar & District Historical Society 1991
- 4 HALS TP10/7
- 5 The Journal No.6 Potters Bar & District Historical Society 1991
- 6 Barnet Press 3-8-1898
- 7 London Metropolitan Archive Acc 1178
- 8 Potters Bar Gazette 8-2-1935
- 9 Barnet Press 26-11-1898
- 10 Barnet Press 11- 2-1899 & 6-5-1899
- 11 Barnet Press 28- 7-1900
- 12 Barnet Press 13-11-1904 & 17-2-1906

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MUSEUM NEWS - PRESS NOTICE – NELSON’S NAVY

October 21st 2005 is the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar, which ended Napoleon’s ideas of invading Britain. Potters Bar Museum is commemorating this event with a new exhibition called “Nelson’s Navy”, which will run until the end of the year.

The exhibition looks beyond the battle to examine how the Royal Navy operated in the early 19th century; how the crews lived and how the ships were sailed and fought. Finally, it shows the events that led up to the battle and the outcome.

Potters Bar Museum is in the Wyllyotts Centre and is open from 2.30 to 4.30pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and from 11 am to 1 pm on Saturdays. Once a month, when the antiques fairs are held, it is open all day Sunday. Further details from the Curator (01707 654 179). *AD*.

READER’S QUERIES

* John Scivyer recently received some material from the Railway and Canal Historical Society. It mentioned ‘Pilot’s Notes’ which was a guide to airfields in the 1920s and 1930s. One of these was at St. Albans, which he’d never heard of. The authority was given as V. R. Dickinson. Has any member heard of him or the airfield? Please send any information to John (657 586). .

WHEN DID THE POTTERS BAR ZEPPELIN COME DOWN?

Further to my article in ‘The Newsletter’ of May 2004 I have not had the time to research in more school logbooks but read the following information in, ‘The History of the Ancient Parish of Tottenham’ by Fred Fisk. It was the Second Series, which was published in 1923.

“The people of Tottenham, and the neighbouring districts, had brought home to them in a most vivid and nerve shattering manner, the horrors of a murdering system of warfare unprecedented in the world’s history - a system where all rules of warfare gave place to one of “frightfulness,” in the form of Zeppelins of immense types, and aeroplanes, coming over in the dark, and dropping prodigious bombs on helpless and innocent sleepers! killing men, women, and children, and devastating property.”

“After each air-raid in North or East London, I visited the scenes of devastation, and wrote accounts of what I saw. On referring to those notes, I find there were twenty-eight raids in London and around Tottenham, which aroused the inhabitants by the noises of the guns, and the falling of the bombs not far off, and made one feel how uncertain life was. The following are brief accounts of the most noted.”

Fred Fisk then notes nineteen accounts which he witnessed including,

“Oct.1, 1916. Out of ten Zepps several got to North London one was set on fire and fell at Potter's Bar; again all Tottenham was illuminated. As this fell the searchlights caught another over our High Road. Cheshunt had bombs.”

Brian Warren

HELP REQUIRED

Stewards to help look after the Museum. If you could help just one day a month it would be of great assistance. You will be on duty with an experienced steward and you will be assured of a pleasant afternoon.

Tuesdays 2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Ian Cumming on 01707 642 296.

Wednesdays 2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Arnold Davey on 01707 654 179

Saturdays 11.00am – 1.00pm, contact Denis Lore on 01707 656 833

Recorder Group. Volunteers are still needed to help record the everyday changes taking place in Potters Bar, details from John Scivyer 01707 657 586.

POTTERS BAR SOCIETY, SOCIAL EVENINGS

The following illustrated lectures will take place this autumn. These will be held at the Tilbury Hall, Darkes Lane, commencing at 8pm, admission £1.50 (incl. refreshments), payable at the door. Non-members are welcome. Dates as follows:

Thursday	September 22 nd	<i>The development of local newspapers.</i> Mr. Terry Mitchamson
Thursday,	October 20 th	<i>Shoplifting – how it is done.</i> Mr. D. B. Wass
Thursday,	November 24 th	<i>A murder mystery – a whodunit for you to solve.</i> Mr Mick Dobson.

For further details (tickets, lifts, mailing list) contact Mr. A. Maclean, 01707 653 636

FOLLOW-UP TO HOW LONG STEAM ENGINES CAN LAST

As a follow-up to the information concerning the length of service by various steam engines in my Archivist's Report, in March 2004, I recently read an article on the same subject.¹ However, when considering the length of service of a locomotive it must be borne in mind that boilers were renewed, tenders changed and frames most likely repaired over time, So it was very unlikely that a long-serving engine contained much of the original. The average working time of a steam locomotive was fifty years, while that of A3 Pacifics was about ten years less.

The author classified the steam engines into three groups:

- 1) passenger tender engines,
- 2) freight tender engines and
- 3) tank locomotives.

In the first category were No.41A, 4-4-0, of the Great North of Scotland Railway, which lasted for 59 years 4 months, then No.62225, D41, which was virtually in original condition when withdrawn in 1953. However, with over 60 years was the LNER E4, once Great Eastern. The freight tender engines all lasted over eighty years, with eighty of the original 120 Johnson 2F, 0-6-0s achieving that age. Of that class Nos.58143, 58148 and 58182 attained between 87-88 years, being scrapped in 1963, 1963 and 1964 respectively.

Lastly, the tank locomotives lasted the longest, No.41708 (ex Midland railway) Johnson IF 0-6-0T was in service from 1880 to 1966. It was still in active passenger service on the Swanage Railway in 1990. The record for longevity is held by engines known as "Terriers" among British mainline locomotives, with those on the Kent and East Sussex and Bluebell Railways now well over 110 years old. The author suggested that some of the Terriers might reach 150 years! *BW*

¹ Railway Magazine March 1990 "Which locos lasted the longest" by Ralph Savage.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2004/2005
ARE NOW OVERDUE

Adults £3, Family/Group £5

Please pay at the September meeting, or to the
Membership Secretary, Mrs. Eileen Field,
51 Highview Gardens, Potters Bar, Herts., EN6 5PN
If you do not intend to renew your subscription,
kindly inform the Membership Secretary (653801).

FINALLY

Thanks go to our team of volunteers, without whose help we should not be able to distribute the Newsletter and to Michael Cawrey, who organises the volunteers.

The PB&DHS Newsletter is produced in September, January & May of every 'season.'
If you wish to submit an item for inclusion (preferably of a 'local-history' nature),
please phone the Editor, John Donovan (01707 642 886) at least one month
before the publication month (i.e. August, December or April).
Note; inclusion of such items is at the Editor's discretion.
