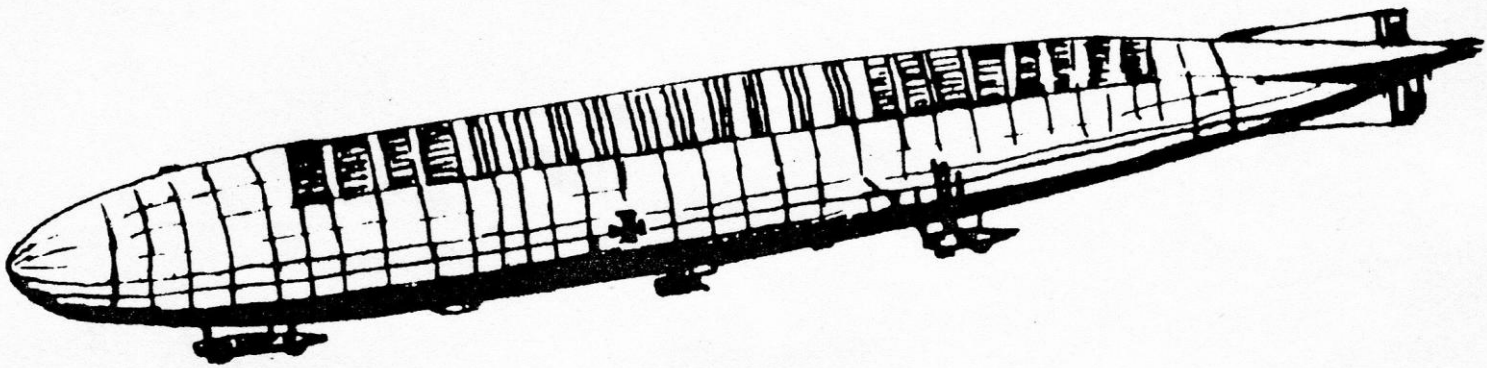


ZEPPELINS (see page 3)



L32 - Sister ship to the L31.

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POTTERS BAR AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESIDENT: Mrs. Muriel Brittain, M.P.S. CHAIRMAN: G. Pulzer.
 HON. SECRETARY: C.T.Overend, 30 Deepdene, Potters Bar. Tel. 44493

* * * * *

EDITORIAL

The first Zeppelin raid on these shores took place on 19th. January 1915 when two airships dropped bombs on Great Yarmouth and other places in Norfolk. In total four people were killed and several houses and other buildings were either damaged or destroyed. The immediate reaction of the local people was probably as much a feeling of surprise as of fear. But, as the raids became more frequent, the public became both frightened and angry and the Government was stirred to almost frantic efforts to improve the air defences, especially around London.

To-day, with our knowledge of the vulnerability of the airship and of the obvious superiority of the aeroplane, it seems incredible that the Zeppelins should have terrorised the country for so long. But fighter aircraft of the First World War took a long time to climb to the heights at which a Zeppelin flew and when they did get up there the airships had no difficulty in out climbing them. Furthermore the anti-aircraft guns in the early days had difficulty in hitting these high flying targets. Ordinary machine gun bullets having proved ineffective the pilots were expected to climb above the Zeppelins to drop bombs and incendiaries upon them. - It was not until the advent of the Buckingham and other explosive bullets that the Zeppelin menace was finally defeated.

We are privileged, in this issue, to publish an eye-witness account of the shooting down of two of these Zeppelins, the SL 11 at Cuffley and the L 31 at Potters Bar, in the autumn of 1916. This article has been contributed by Mrs. Kathleen E. Scharff who, as Miss Burn, lived with her parents at Rydal Mount, Baker Street during those fateful years. We are also indebted to her brother, Mr. M. Burn, for sending this article to us and for obtaining her permission for us to publish it in our journal.

I am indebted to Mrs. H.M.Baker for the sketch of L 32 on the front cover.

Much of the information in this editorial has been obtained from the following sources:-

David R. Woodward, Ph.D., Zeppelins Over London in British History Illustrated, Vol.1 No.5, 1975.

Kenneth Poolman, Zeppelins Over England, 1975.

Most members will have heard by now of the death last autumn of Dick Baker. A familiar figure about the town he is perhaps best remembered by our members for the slides he showed at his wife's lectures. They were a good team and it may not be widely known, for he was a modest man, that many of the slide used to illustrate Mrs. Baker's talks were taken by Dick. It was not solely within the narrow confines of the Historical Society that he was, but also in the wider fields of amenity work. His work for the Footpath Group of the Potters Bar Society has been of immense value to the people of Potters Bar as a whole. A much loved man, he will be sadly missed.

ZEPPELINS

In 1916 the fear of shelling from German ships was growing into a panic in some seaside towns on the east and south-east coasts. Even away from the coast one could not escape the risk of bombardment since Zeppelins were now making nightly raids over England. The bombs they dropped were not big and did not do a great deal of damage, but they terrified and infuriated the people and made them more wild than ever to fight the Hun.

In my home town of Potters Bar we all found that looking for Zeppelins each night was most entertaining. When the sirens went searchlights flashed on, lighting up the sky and making it look quite wonderful. Sometimes a Zeppelin could be seen to be caught in the beams of light and then the booming of guns in the distance made us all feel we were being protected.

On one particular night as we were all looking out of the window in my mother's bedroom, a Zeppelin, lit up by the searchlights, looked so close that my mother cried out in alarm; 'If it comes any nearer I really think I shall have to put my head in and shut the window!' The next moment there sounded an extra loud bang and my father said 'My God! they've got her!'

The Zeppelin then began to shine as if it had suddenly been electrified. It looked huge and brilliant and began to quiver and shake about in the sky. It was burning furiously and far away in the distance there came the sound of an immense crowd of people cheering.

As we watched we thought of the men in it who must be burning too. It was terrible and it was beautiful. It came down in a trail of flames which lit up the whole sky. After that we couldn't see it, but the whole horizon was brilliantly alight from the great blazing mass which fell a few miles sway at Cuffley.

Hardly had it fallen than crowds came rushing out from London in cars, in buses, on bicycles or in anything which could carry them to see and gloat over the first Zeppelin brought down.

Soon after this, in October of the same year, another Zeppelin came down, actually in my own village of Potters Bar. It fell in the grounds of Oakmere where old Mrs. Forbes and her two spinster daughters lived. When told that there was a Zeppelin in the garden they replied, 'Alright, we will see to it in the morning'. Their grand indifference was not, however, shared by others who came pouring out of London in thousands to see the remains of the enemy.

It so happened that where the Zeppelin had actually fallen was in the Forbes' park which at that time was rented by a farmer. He quickly siezed his chance to make a fortune by posting men at the gate before the crowds arrived and then charging the eager spectators an admission fee. Inside the park he organised the sale of souvenirs, tiny pieces from the mountain of twisted metal which was all that remained of the great airship.

In the days which followed the farmer got wounded soldiers from the nearby hospital to act as salesmen and gatekeepers in order to give the enterprise a respectable flavour like that of a charitable organisation. When finally the military authorities arrived on the scene and said that the wreck of the Zeppelin was

theirs, he made them pay for the damage done to the park including the tree on which it had landed!

Even after the army had taken over, crowds still kept coming to see the smashed up mound of metal. It was said later that the advantages of residence in the village of Potters Bar were first realised in those famous days when all London, or so it seemed, came rushing to see the Zeppelin and that its future rapid development from country village to suburban town, was entirely due to the Zeppelin. What is certain is, that before it came down in Potters Bar, few people had heard of the place.

When the army eventually recovered the charred and burned remains of the Zeppelin's crew, public feeling was so bitter that the army didn't know what to do with the bodies. The Cuffley people had refused to have Germans in their cemetery and the remains of the crew of the airship brought down there, had to be disposed of in some way.

The Potters Bar people at first refused, but finally agreed, to allow the bodies of both crews to be interred in their village, but not in their cemetery. So a piece of ground adjoining it was prepared for them.

On the day of the funeral the excitement in Potters Bar reached its peak. The crowds were enormous. Men were shouting:-

"Kaiser's arrival in 'ell; Dirty dog the Kaiser!"

"Kaiser Bill and little Willie, got 'em on the run! "

There were hawkers selling all manner of things, including toys with a mechanical devil popping-up and seizing the German Emperor.

Other vendors shouted: "Our V.C. 'ero....the 'ansom pilot what shot down the Zeppelin...buy a postcard of our V.C. 'ero!"

Toy balloons and flags were seen everywhere and people shook their fists at the sky and shouted "We done for the Hun! We brought him down! We done for him and his dirty bombs dropping down on our children.....!"

The noise was deafening and the shouting went on and on until down the road, amid the howling mob, came a line of gun carriages carrying the coffins, each one covered with the Union Jack. As the people made way for them to pass they became suddenly silent and an almost deathly hush descended upon them. Coffin after coffin was then carried on the shoulders of English soldiers, across the cemetery and lowered one by one into a long trench dug in a piece of unconsecrated ground; those who had done most of the shouting were so ashamed that they knelt down and prayed.

Many years later German ladies dressed in black, were sometimes to be seen beside the grave and the piece of unconsecrated ground was eventually taken into the cemetery. Later still (in 1964) the bodies were removed, taken to the German War Cemetery at Cannock Chase and re-buried there.

Kathleen E. Scharff (nee Burn).

MURDER WILL OUT

In a history of a Shropshire village, unlikely as it seems, there is an account of an incident which took place in South Mimms and is probably elsewhere unrecorded. It befell - probably in the late seventeenth century - one Thomas Elks, a journeyman-shoemaker of Knockin in Shropshire. He had been his mother's favourite and she spoilt him 'by supplying him with money to feed his extravagances.' Consequently, when she became guardian to an orphan child left by his elder brother, Thomas saw the child as a rival standing 'between him and the estate' which he counted on inheriting. He therefore 'hired a poor boy of Knockin, to entice the child into the corn fields to gather flowers,' choosing a time when the corn was 'at its highest.'

'Elks,' writes the chronicler, 'met the two children in the fields; sent the poor boy home and took the child in his arms into the lower end of the field, where he had provided a pail of water and putting the child's head into the pail of water, he stifled him to death and left him in the corn.'

In the evening 'much enquiry was made for him,' and the poor boy confessed how the child's uncle 'had hired him to entice the child into the corn fields and there took him away in his arms.' The cornfield was searched and the child's body was discovered. Whether or not his uncle had planned to bury him that night, he now fled. His neighbours soon discovered that he had 'taken the road directly to London' - no doubt the Holyhead Road - evidently on horseback, for two of them who road off in pursuit, had to track him 'almost to London.' It was 'as they were passing on the road near Mimms' that they noticed two ravens sitting 'upon a cock of hay, pulling the hay with their beaks and making a hideous and unusual noise,' something prompted them to dismount and investigate....

What should they find in the hay but 'Elks fast asleep'? Apprehending him, they learnt from the wretched man that 'these two ravens had followed him continually from the time of the murder, haunting him all the way from Shropshire. 'Tormented with the horror of a guilty conscience,' did he imagine this, seeing them as birds of ill omen?

So, at any rate they proved, for if it had not been for them he might soon have escaped into the anonymity of London. As it was, 'he was brought back to Shrewsbury and there tried, condemned and hanged on a gibbet on Knockin Heath.'

You may credit this story or not, as you choose. The discovery of the culprit seems providential, the migration of the ravens inexplicable, but the placing of the incident in South Mymms looks circumstantial evidence of at least a basis of truth.

M. Tomkins.

Source: Richard Gough : The History of Myddle (1701)
(reprinted by Caliban Books, 1979)

EXTRACT FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The society has now been in existence for over 20 years and I think it is fair to say that over this period we have maintained a watchful eye over the developments of the district. We are conscious of our environment and of the few remaining scheduled properties around Potters Bar. In preceding years we have had our say in the refurbishing of Wylliyots Manor and Salisbury House and the outcome has been relatively satisfactory.

Moreover we have kept abreast of the local building construction developments to ensure that possible archaeological sites are not destroyed. Here we have particularly watched the construction of the A.L. loop at North Myms and the later construction of the M,25 Potters Bar ring road, with our members contending with the inevitable mud and chalk during their field observations. No archaeological sites were found and I can be reasonably confident in saying that none were destroyed.

Our Society has formulated in no mean manner an archive of local history in relation to the tenure of land and property in the district from the 16th. century onwards and, to this end, various articles and maps have been produced. We are members of the larger neighbour societies of East Herts, St. Albans and the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society and endeavour to keep in touch with the wider aspects of our historical and archaeological heritage.

I would like to say a few words about Mr. Ken Rutherford Davis, a past Chairman of this Society and a present member of the committee. Ken has worked extremely hard for the Society over these many years and it gives me great pleasure to announce two events which are the apparent culmination of his hard work and expertise.

Firstly, I am very pleased to tell you that his book "BRITONS AND SAXONS - The Chiltern Region 400-700" is to be published in October this year. This book I am sure deserves and will get all our support. Secondly, Ken has been proposed as the new Chairman of the East Herts Archaeological Society. This is a new appointment following some restructuring within the Society and I am sure everyone will agree he is an excellent choice.

G. Pulzer.

* * * * *
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From Dr. Lynch.

Dear Sir,

According to the Dictionary of National Biography and other sources, the metallurgist Sir Henry Bessemer was born in 1813 at Charlton in Hertfordshire. I know of no village of that name and I assume that it was the name of a large house. Can anyone tell me where it was?

Yours faithfully,

A.C. Lynch.

H.L.H.C. SYMPOSIUM ON LOCAL HISTORY

On 22nd. November the Hertfordshire Local History Council held its first symposium. This was at St. Albans school and most of those present hoped that this would prove to be the first of many.

The day's programme commenced with the opening address by the President, Sir John Hanbury and the introductory remarks of the Chairman, Peter Walne (the County Archivist). Speakers included such notable local historians as Lionel Munby, Dr. Eileen Roberts, Dr. Peter Kingsford and Dr. Doris Jones-Baker, but the most encouraging lecture of the day came from an unknown speaker, Mrs. Wendy Chapman, a school teacher from Hertford.

Mrs. Chapman is not a historian nor is she particularly interested in history. Her class at Morgan's Walk School happened to be chosen to take part in an experiment jointly sponsored by Herts. County Council and the H.L.H.C. This was to provide money for the children to carry out a project in local history. For this purpose her pupils had chosen 19th. Century Fore Street (Hertford). Her talk though short, explained in detail how the children had set about their project and the results were shown amongst the displays. The important point, however, was that the children had enjoyed themselves immensely and learned a great deal about their town at the same time.

Mr. Munby discussed the changing ownership of Gorhambury in the 17th. century. An erudite lecture entitled "The Social Cement of North Mymms" was given by Dr. Kingsford and Dr. Roberts followed with a discussion of two Norman stones depicting a sculptured lion which had been found at St. Albans. The morning session concluded with a potted history of the school by Mr. I. Kilvington, the Headmaster, who also conducted parties round the Abbey Gateway during the lunch interval.

The afternoon session began with a discussion: "Local History in Hertfordshire" - The Way Forward - which produced some useful and enlightening information. This was followed by Dr. Jones-Baker speaking on a subject she has made peculiarly her own - "History in Graffiti". Arthur Jones introduced his talk somewhat tongue in cheek when he said that it smacked of the Old Straight Track! He discussed briefly the curious fact of a line of churches (not quite straight!) dedicated to St. Leonard and extending from Essex, through Hertfordshire and into Bedfordshire.

A wonderful day both with regard to the displays and the quality of the lectures. One eagerly awaits the second of these events (promised for the autumn).

C.T.O.

* * * * *

PUBLICATION RECEIVED

Excavations at Billingsgate Buildings 'Triangle', Lower Thames Street 1974. By David M. Jones with finds reports edited by Michael Rhodes. Special Paper No. 4, London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, 1980.

The copy has been placed in the Society's library and may be consulted on application to the Archivist, Mrs. H.M. Baker.

THE HONARY EDITOR OF THE NEWS LETTER

This is the fourteenth issue of the News Letter since the first one appeared in 1969. For all of these issues I have been the Honary Editor, a job which I have enjoyed doing very much. Since I became your Honary Secretary in 1977 I have found it increasingly difficult to combine the two jobs, particularly when taken in association with my other interests and activities. For this reason I resigned the editorship last year hoping that someone would be found to take my place. Alas, that someone has not materialised and I find myself acting as Editor once more, a situation which cannot continue and one which is largely responsible for PBHS 14 being two to three months late.

Our News Letter may be only a modest journal but it does need someone to get it together in some semblance of order. So what about it? Will one of you volunteer? The job in itself, is not arduous, nor is it time consuming, (except for a few mad weeks each year). It will be even easier in the future for we have volunteers to help with the typing, collating etc. I will also be available for guidance and assistance if needed.

Of course if one of you would like to take over the Secretary's job.....

C.T. Overend.

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NEW BOOKS

We have received news of two new volumes from Hertfordshire Publications. Drury and Andrews map, 'A TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP OF HERTFORDSHIRE FROM AN ACTUAL SURVEY OF 1766' was the first large scale map of the county and was originally published in ten sheets. In this new publication, the scale has been slightly reduced from the original 1.95" to 1 mile. The publication price is £3.00 (£2.00 to HLHC members). 'HERTFORDSHIRE YEOMANRY AND ARTILLERY UNIFORMS, ARMS AND EQUIPMENT, Vol.1 - YEOMANRY AND LIGHT HORSE' by Major John Sainsbury contains more than 120 illustrations. Price £5.00 (HLHC members £4.00). Also currently available is 'HERTFORDSHIRE SAMPLER' at £4.00, a most readable and entertaining volume. All the above may be obtained from Publica Libraries or, by post from Carol Gentle, Publica Library, Stevenage, SG1 3HD. (postage extra).

Our former Chairman, Mr. K. Rutherford Davis, has spent some considerable time since his retirement researching and writing his book 'BRITONS AND SAXONS - THE CHILTERN REGION 400-700'. The foreword has been written by Professor Martin Biddle, M.A., F.S.A. and the work is expected to be published by Phillimore in October when the price will be £9.95. Publication is dependant on obtaining 500 subscribers by 31st May. Subscription price £7.50 plus £1.10 postage.

The Camden History Society has published 'THE DIARY OF A LONDON SCHOOLBOY 1826-1830' by John Thomas Pocock. The author was the son of a builder and grew up on the borders of Kilburn and St. Marylebone. Humorously and graphically he describes his life and times. Interesting as both local and social history and gives a boys view of life in the early 19th century London. The book is available from CHS Publications, 28 Willoughby Road, London NW3 1BA, price £3.00 plus 28p postage.

BAKER STREET AND SOME OTHER OLD STREETS IN OUR DISTRICT

Dr. Lynch in his article in last year's News Letter suggested that where the name of a street was not written along the road, as some are in Moll's map of Hertfordshire of 1700, the street indicated a village rather than a road.

This may have become true of some places where the original houses along the road have spread into the land around, forming a village which adopted the name of the street. Colney Street, Park Street and Markyate were all pieces of the Roman Watling Street marking areas where the road crossed the Colne, passed through the Manor or Park and crossed the county boundary. Each of these villages or hamlets has its oldest houses along the old road and Markyate only rarely added the Street.

Besides the Hertfordshire streets Dr. Lynch mentions our own Baker Street and suggests it was a village round Wyllyots Manor. From the evidence of our local records I think this is very unlikely.

For one thing Moll's map shows the name Baker Street on the south of Mutton Lane. The road itself is not shown so the name could not be written along it. Being a map of Hertfordshire the areas of Middlesex and other adjoining counties are not shown in any detail as the Hertfordshire surveyors would not have done a special survey outside their own county. Moll's map, although a finer engraving, is almost an exact copy of Robert Morden's map of Hertfordshire made in 1695. Both John Rocque's map of Middlesex of 1754 and the Wyllyots Manor survey of 1745 show Baker Street written along the road. They also show the houses along the road.

Baker Street was not its original name; it was Old Street in a survey of the Manor of South Mimms made about 1600. It is the only one of nine streets named in the records of the two manors of South Mimms and Wyllyots between 1452 and 1600 to retain its name of street to this day.

The 1600 survey lists the various properties along the road; many were only fields but two farms and several cottages are included in the south part that is still called Baker Street today. There was a farm on the site of Norfolk Lodge at the corner of Dancers Hill Road. At the corner of Bentley Heath Lane was a cottage belonging to the Manor of Wyllyots which by 1745 was reported as having been pulled down and moved to a new site further up the lane. Brian Warren organised an excavation of the site just before the new Ringroad (M25) was built across it. Further north beyond the flyover, as the hill begins to rise, another cottage had been built on the roadside waste. Its records are clear from 1640 as 'the Cottage near or under Herts Wells Hedge' but I think it was one of the cottages listed in 1600 as newly built upon the waste. It still existed in the early 19th. century and is shown on the South Mimms Tithe Map of 1842. On the other side of the road, further north, was a large farm called Salmons; it is mentioned in the South Manor Court Roll of 1479, when Walter Salmon was Bailiff of the Manor. Its site is now part of Owens School playing field just south of Rydal Mount barn field. In 1592 another cottage was built on an acre of land to the north. Salmons Farm is shown on the first Ordnance Survey map of 1868.

On the Rydal Mount site was another farm belonging to the Manor of Wyllyots, to which William Longborough had been admitted as copyhold tenant in 1503.

Further north, about where Elmfield Road is, was a freehold house on 15 acres of land named Plomes, it was first listed in the South Mimms Manor rental of 1567. Only one other building is shown on the 1745 map on land belonging to a farm called Worthylands, which adjoined the land occupied by Pound Farm. Pound Farm house itself is not such an early building, according to a sale plan of 1838 the older farm building was round the corner in Mutton Lane.

Beyond Mutton Lane the part we know as Darkes Lane was also named Baker Street in the 1745 Wyllyots map. The houses along it were almost the same as in the first Wyllyots map of 1594. There was the Manor House itself with a small cottage built on a small encroachment on the waste in front of it. At the top of the hill was Darkes House, moated in the earlier map and opposite, about where the United Reform Church stands today, was a farm called Denhams whose farm house was recorded as pulled down in 1745. One could hardly call these scattered buildings a village.

The other eight named streets which appear in the records of our two manors are interesting, as several of them connect in some way with Baker Street and most of them can be traced to existing lanes. The earliest come from South Mimms Manor records from 1542 onwards: they are Redyngstrete, Grenestrete, Sayer or Sawyer Strete, Alangestrete or Ailingstrete, Revestrete or Reeve Street, Mymms Street, Hyfeldsstrete and Incole Street, the last appearing only as a former freehold in the Wyllyots Manor rental for 1623.

Of these Sawyer Street was to become Sawyers Lane, it had two cottages up to the 1960's near Owen's School entrance. Reeve Street became Green Dragen Lane after the original Green Dragon Inn was built opposite the end of Kitts End Road about 1634. It is now called Dancers Hill Road. It had a number of houses and cottages on both sides before an enlargement of Wrotham Park in 1815 diverted the road further north and the buildings then in the park were pulled down.

Ailing Street became Bentley Heath Lane, it also had several cottages on the south side, shown on the 1745 map, their sites are still marked by the bricks which appear along the edges of the fields after ploughing. In addition to the village cottages, Gannock Farm (now Bentley Heath Farm) and Elm Farm. Hyfeldstrete was apparently Dugdale Hill Lane, its position is given in a lease of lands belonging to Dugdale Hill Farm granted by one of the Lewkenores to Thomas Hartswell in 1464.

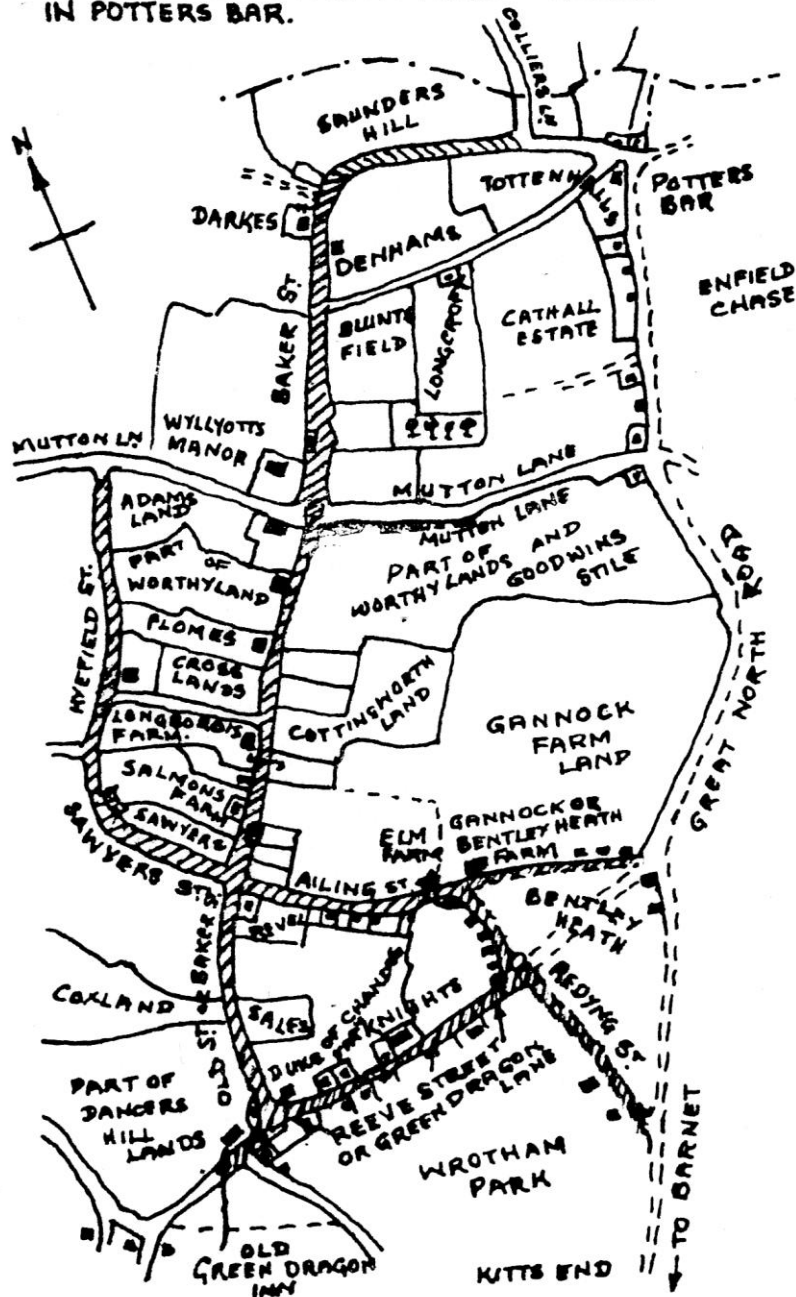
Redyngstrete I think may have been an old road up the side of Bentley Heath, between it and Wrotham Park, which became a footpath in 1780 when the common was enclosed. The name of Redings Corner appears at the enclosure of about an acre of land lying in front of a house called Pinchbanke in 1619 and later described as a passage to the house. This house was south of Wrotham Park house and with its lands was Admiral Byngs first purchase in his plan for Wrotham Park.

Mymms Street was the main street through South Mimms village. I have not been able to trace either Grenestrete or Incole Street. You will have seen that Bentley Heath Lane and Sawyers Lane met at

Baker Street and Hyefeldstrete continues Sawyers Lane to Mutton Lane while Redyngstrete continues Bentley Heath Lane towards Barnet. The old Green Dragon Lane crossed the south end of Baker Street and also connected with Redyngstrete and Bentley Heath Lane. Here is a mystery still to solve. Why were there so many streets in our small parish so many of which connected with the street called Old Street?

H. M. Baker.

PLAN SHOWING OLD STREETS WHICH
CONNECT WITH BAKER STREET
IN POTTERS BAR.



All opinions expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Potters Bar and District Historical Society either as a body or as individual members.
Acting Honorary Editors: J. B. Overend, 30 Beppes Lane, Potters Bar.



VILLAS IN REGENT'S PARK
AT
THE HOLME

AN EXHIBITION ON THE
John Nash Villas
AND THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED IN THEM
TO BE OPENED BY
SIR HUGH CASSON PRA.

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BRITONS AND SAXONS - The Chiltern
Region 45-700

by K. Rutherford *et al*

with a foreword by Professor Martin
Biddle, F.A., F.S.A.

To be published by Phillimore in
October 1981 at a retail price of
not less than £9.95.

Subscribers may obtain copies at
the special pre-publication price
of £7.50 per copy plus £1.10 per
copy towards postage and packing.
Applications to the publisher by
31st. May 1981, details from K.
Rutherford Davis, 22 Osborne
Road, Potters Bar, Herts. Tel.
Potters Bar 54640.

HOLIDAYS WITH A DIFFERENCE

AT THE PEAK NATIONAL PARK STUDY
CENTRE, LOSEHILL HALL.

The following courses may be of
interest to members:

Industrial Archaeology.
22nd - 25th. August 1981
Cost: £35.00 (+ V.A.T.)

Practical Field Archaeology.
22nd. - 25th. August 1981
Cost: £35.00 (+ V.A.T.)

Practical Industrial Archaeology.
16th. - 19th. October 1981
Cost: £41.00 (fully inclusive)

Details of these and other courses
may be obtained from:

The Principal,
Peak National Park Study Centre,
Losehill Hall,
Castleton,
Derbyshire, S30 2WB.

The Early History of the Area

The discovery of a Mesolithic burin in Hatherleigh Gardens,¹ and an assemblage of blades in Tiverton Road,² provide evidence of the earliest occupation in the area. The physical setting of the site strongly suggests that it was a winter occupation settlement of Mesolithic man.

For over six hundred years the area surrounding the School was part of Enfield Chace, which was most likely created about 1136³. It was a private hunting ground used by Elizabeth I, James I and other royalty. This aspect of its history conjures up a wonderful picture of a hunting party with the monarch riding in splendour and surrounded by a retinue of ladies, yeomen and archers.⁴

To the local community around the Chace e.g. Potters Bar, it was a vast tract of common land vital to the daily life of ordinary men and women. The inhabitants of these settlements jealously guarded their rights, even to the

extent of fighting for them; yet they encroached, poached and stole from the royal preserve, for which they were severely punished, if caught.

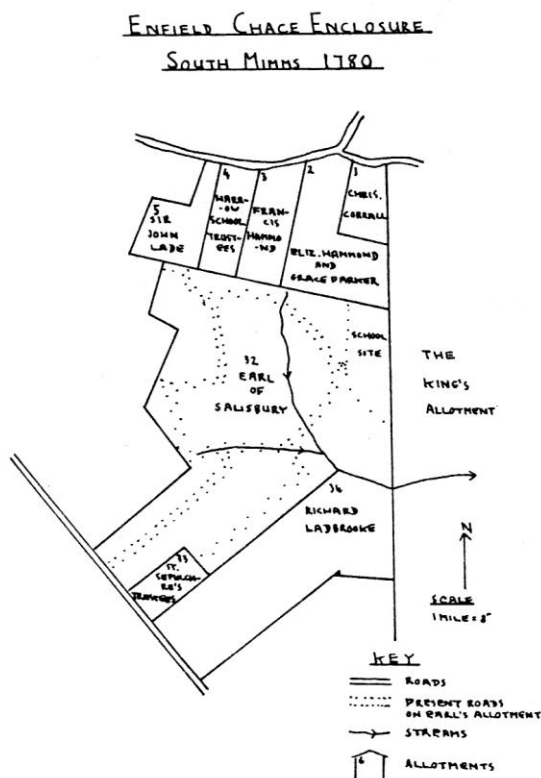
The map of Enfield Chace, dated 1658,⁵ records the present piped stream under Carpenter Way, as Hunts Bottom and the stream behind Coningsby Drive, as Mosses Bottom. Ralph Treswell's map of Wylliotts Manor,⁶ dated 1594, shows that a John Moss held a house near the present Morver gate. About this time the Moss family appears to have been quite an important family in the local community of Potters Bar. The name Mosses Bottom appears to have been altered and re-located as the School site is recorded on modern Ordnance maps as Moses Hill. The area in the vicinity of the Trewenna estate is marked as 'Ravens Hill Nest' in 1658.

The Enfield Chace Enclosure

In 1776 a survey of the Chace was made by the Duchy of Lancaster, followed by an Act for dividing the Chace of Enfield the next year. The parishes, whose inhabitants had rights on the Chace, i.e. South Mimms, Hadley, Edmonton and Enfield, were given allotments in lieu of their rights. These rights included herbage for swine, green boughs to garnish their houses, browse wood, cut and fell bushes and thorns to maintain hedges and fences, gathering crabbes and at mast time to feed hogs and swine within the Chace. The "Survey and Plan of part of Enfield Chace allotted to the Parish of South Mimms . . .", dated 1780, shows that allotment 32, of 108a, 2r, 28p, was given to the Earl of Salisbury.⁷ Part of the northern and eastern boundaries of this allotment is still the School's field boundaries.

The Act of Parliament, dated 1777,⁸ was very precise in its instruction for the construction of the School's boundary with the King's Allotment. The ditch was to be dug on the owner's side and not more than six feet wide, whilst the soil was to be heaped into a bank and set with a quickset hedge, guarded with a substantial fence of posts and a double rail at a suitable distance, not more than three feet from the ditch. The present hedge-line proves that the Act was implemented to the letter.

The purpose of the enclosure was to make the vast waste area of Enfield Chace more productive. The present farms appeared as the woodland was cleared and the land turned to the plough.



OAKMERE ESTATE

James, the 7th Earl of Salisbury and 1st Marquess, sold his allotment to John Hunter of Gobions, Brookmans Park, in 1787. On the marriage of his niece, Amelia Chauncy, to Col. W.L. Carpenter, it was given to them as a wedding present. After his retirement he built the first Oakmere House in 1816 and lived there until his death in 1861. His daughter, Margaret, and Horatio Kemble, her husband, inherited the estate. They began to rebuild the mansion but it was destroyed by fire in 1864. The present house was then built and Horatio Kemble and later his son, Lt-Col. Horace Kemble, lived there for many years.⁹

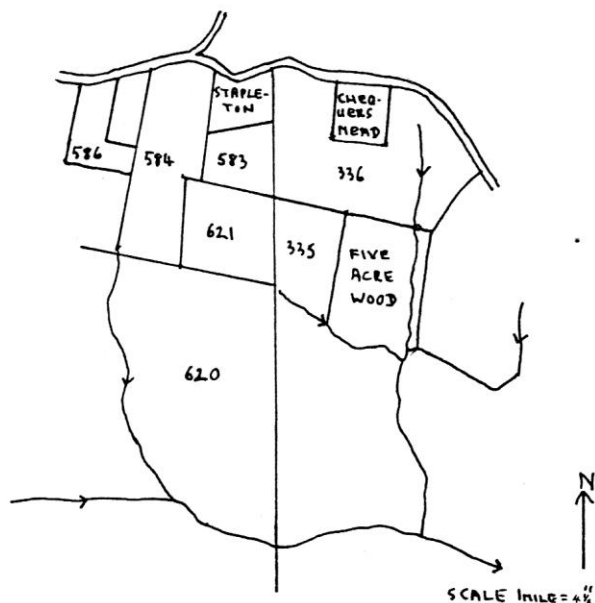
THE SALE OF THE ESTATE

On Thursday, 22nd July, 1920¹⁰, the Oakmere Estate, consisting of a dairy farm and some 300a, was auctioned in 33 lots by Fairbrother, Ellis and Co., in London. Lot 1 consisted of Oakmere Dairy Farm, (149a Or 37p), of which 140a was meadow land including the School site. The tenant was Mr. M.W. Bird. Lt-Col. Kemble retained the house and grounds until his death in 1935. Mrs. William Forbes was tenant for a number of years until her death in 1936 and, the following year, the Potters Bar U.D.C. bought the House and grounds for public use.

AFTER 1945

Whereas most of the School's catchment area remained as meadow land for Oakmere Dairy Farm, the large field of 31.424a, on which the Schools are sited, became part of Furze Spinney Farm. It was farmed by Mr. R. Hollington and then, on his death, it was purchased by Mrs. Donaldson in 1949. They kept a Jersey herd of twenty-four and built their milking parlour at the present riding stables in Coopers Lane Road.

FURZE SPINNEY FARM



586, 584, 583, 621, 620 - OWNED
335, 336 - RENTED FROM MIDDX. C.C.

Mrs. Donaldson held the farm then the Tottenham Council won a compulsory purchase order, following a public enquiry in 1953. The Farm was auctioned by Harland and Son, 69 High St., Barnet, on the 4th October 1955.¹¹

THE GROWTH OF THE ESTATE

The open meadow land, where cows grazed until less than thirty years ago, soon became bricks and mortar. From 1953-58 the Potters Bar and Tottenham Councils, with private developers built more than 800 houses to the east of the High Street.¹² The local paper dated 1st December¹³ 1956, had a picture of the houses in Chace Avenue headed, "What the Tottenham Houses look like". It noted that three-bedroom houses in the block paid 39s per week rent, with an extra 10d for end houses. Whereas two-bedroom houses of the terrace type paid 32s per week and end houses 32s 10d. Many of the houses were not finished by 1958, roads and footpaths were unmade and amenity features, such as grass verges, greens and tree planting still had to be completed.¹⁴ The local shops were not completed until 1961.

The plans for the School, with amendments, were dated 17th October 1956¹⁵ but the purchase of about 10.25a of land was not approved until the 31st October 1956. By the 2nd January, 1957 the erection of the School had been approved.¹⁶ Three days later it was reported that Ald. Ross had complained about the bad state of the roads on the Tottenham estate. The erection of the School would commence in the near future and no contractor could think of using the roads.¹⁷

The notice circulated to applicants in August 1957,¹⁸ for the post of Headteacher, described the School thus:—

"Oakmere Junior School is a new school being built on attractive modern lines, and is expected to be ready for occupation by January 1958. It is situated in self-contained premises adjoining the green belt and pupils will be drawn mainly from new housing estates. A separate new Infant's School is being erected on the same site.

The premises of Oakmere Junior School include an Assembly Hall, Head Teachers Room, a Staff Room and eight classrooms on two floors, with provision for extensions. In addition, there will be a Clerical Assistant room which will also serve as a Medical Inspection room.

The School Meals kitchen attached to the junior school will serve both junior and infant schools, and the children will dine in their respective Assembly Halls — the infants' school will be provided with a separate servery."

It was not until as late as December 1957 that it was suggested the School should be opened on Wednesday 26th February, 1958 and not January.

