

Price 25p (free to members)

April 1982

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Editorial.	2
The Flexmeres of Potters Bar.	H. M. Baker 2
Notes from the Lecture Room.	C. T. Overend 6
Chairman's Report.	G. Pulzer 7
PBHS Library and recent additions.	8
New Books.	9
The Church of St. John the Apostle, Whetstone.	S. Terry 9
Malcolm Tomkins: an appreciation.	H. M. Baker 11
Greater London Record Office and Historiaal Library.	12
Charlton House, Hitchin: letters to the editor.	12
Colliers Lane.	K. Rutherford Davis 13
Another mediaeval coin.	14

Potters Bar and District Historical Society

President: Mrs. Muriel Brittain, MPS. Chairman: Mr. Geoffrey Pulzer.

Hon. Secretary: Mr. C.T. Overend, 30, Deepdene, Potters Bar. Tel. 44493.

Archivist: Mrs. H.M. Baker, 12, Oakroyd Close, Potters Bar. Tel. 53659.

Editorial

As Cyril Overend explained in our last News Letter, PBHS 14, he has found that the dual role of Society Secretary and Editor of the News Letter has imposed too severe a burden on his limited spare time and he has therefore finally resigned from the Editorship. Since February 1969 Cyril has single-handedly edited and produced 14 editions of the News Letter, of steadily increasing quality, and we are sure members and readers alike would wish us to take this opportunity of expressing the Society's appreciation and thanks for all the hard work he has put into the publication, not only as Editor but also as a frequent contributor of interesting and informative articles. We hope he will now be able to relax and enjoy his extra leisure time, with perhaps just the odd article or two for the News Letter to keep his hand in!

Meanwhile, we hope to achieve the same high standards in future issues, but this will depend a great deal on the contributions we receive, so please keep them coming in - no matter how small (or large) they will surely be of interest to someone. Articles for publication can be sent to us or handed to any member of the committee.

Dan & Chris Ruge-Cope,
Hon. Editors, PBHS News Letter
21, ~~Place~~ Avenue, Potters Bar.

The Flexmeres of Potters Bar

This is a continuation of the history of the house that Robert Taylor built upon Cathale or Cattall Grove at Potters Bar, which I started in our News Letter No. 10, in 1977. It traces some of the history of the Flexmere family of Potters Bar, who bought the house and its lands and cottages from Robert Honeywood in 1606.

There were many Flexmeres in our neighbourhood as well as in Barnet and London. The spelling of the name varies from Flexmere to Flexmer, Flexmore or Flaxmere even in records of the same family. This is not unusual in a period when few people could read or write and names passed by word of mouth, depended on the interpretation of the writer.

The first-known record of the Potters Bar family is the will of John Flexmere of Potters Bar in the parish of South Mimms. It was proved in 1471; his son Symon and his wife Johanne were his heirs and executors. One bequest was twelve pence (one shilling) to the Brotherhood of the Holy Trinity of Chipping Barnet.

THE FLEMERE FAMILY OF POTTERS BAR.

John Flexmere = Johane
of Potters Bar
a. 1471
SYMON
a. 1549

John
d. 1561
Thomas = Margaret.
Yeoman.
a. 1569.

Inherited Cattallfield
John = Barbara.
Symon = Barbara.
of Cattallhouse?
a. 1634.

(1) Francis = Mary
of Cattall House
in 1553 gentleman
of Cleverwell
d. 1679
Barrowd
of Northaw.

Thomas

William.
a. 1635

Lucian = Merry
CARY
Barbara CARY

Margaret = Richard
Beard
Thomas = Jane
Charles Beard
Elizabeth

John
[10 Years
old in
1634
d. 1671.]

(II) Francis = Mary
Merchant
Taylor
of London
d. 1674.
Roverscroft
of Hackney

Mary = Francis
Rainsford
William Francis Mary Henry
Rainsfords

Barbara = Stafford
Leventhorpe
William Leventhorpe

Ann = John
Cockroft
of Red
Herts
Ann Francis
Cockrofts.

William
Citizen and
Upholder
of London
d. 1684

Elizabeth = Thomas
Silk
of Stenage
HERTS.

(III) Francis
of London.
d. 1679

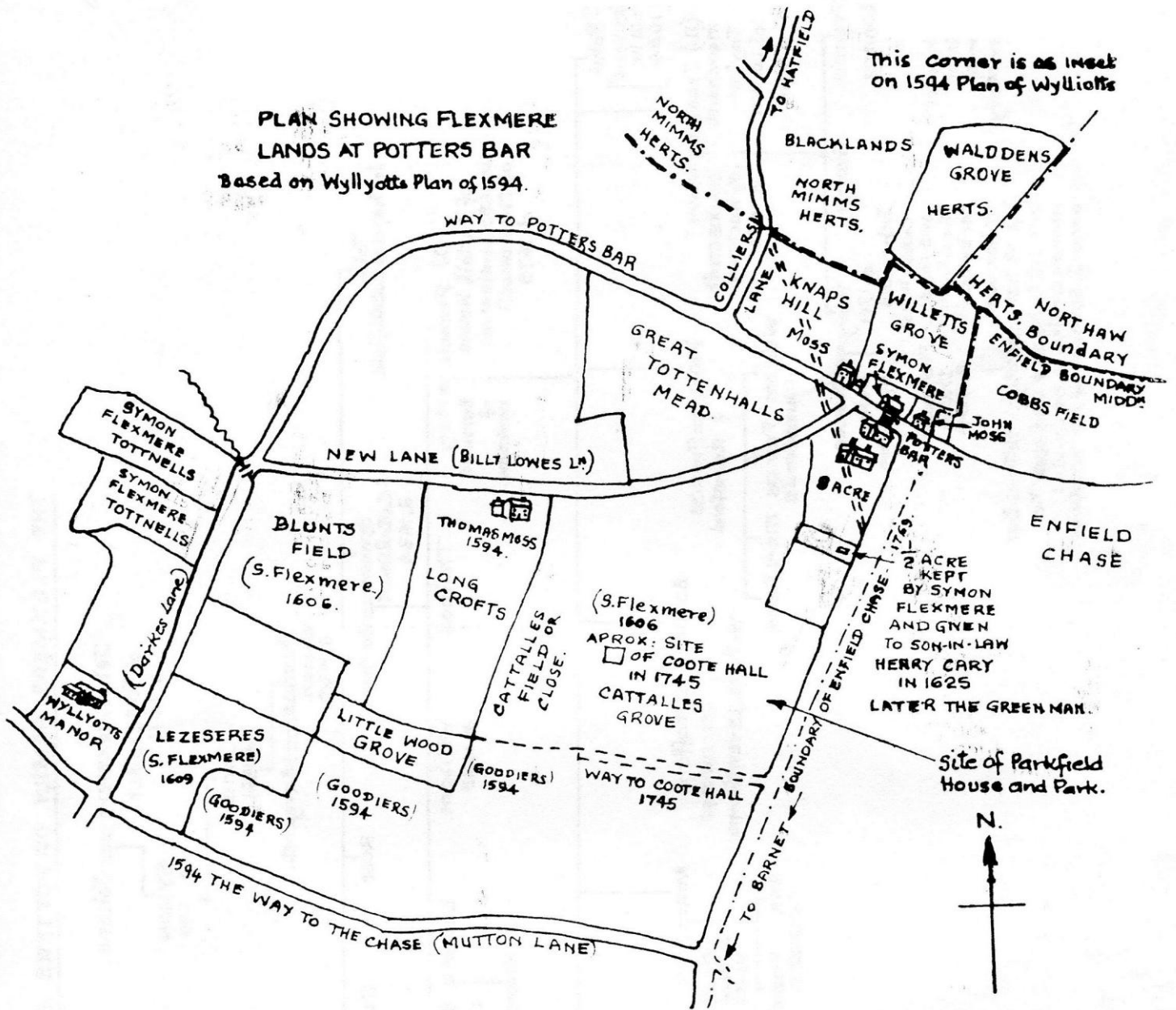
George
d. 1741.
Inherited
Cattall House
and Lands
from Francis
her brother (son)
d. 1734.

left his house
and lands at
Potters Bar to
his sister Mary

Mary = Charles
Dakin
of London
Flexmere
Dakin
d. 1734.
By her will,
left all her property at Potters Bar
in trust to be sold and the
money arising to be divided
among several of her relations

Inherited a Farm at
or near Potters Bar
from his father Francis (I.)
By his will he left his
Farm near Potters Bar
to his niece Mary
Rainsford.
The rest of his land
went to his three
nephews William
Francis & Henry
Rainsford.

The Rainsfords sold all this property
to John Walker of Hadley in 1691.



H.M. BAKER 1982

An index of early court rolls of the Manor of Wyllotts names his successors. Symon the son of the first John died in 1549 and his son, another John, became the new copyholder. In 1561 the second John died and Thomas his son was admitted as his heir. This Thomas Flexmore died in 1569. His will names his wife Margaret and five children. To his son John he left a field called Cattall Field after the death of his mother. This field had been the property of the Guild or Chantry of the same Brotherhood of the Holy Trinity of Barnet, which had been dissolved in 1547 when all its property was sold. Robert Taylor, in 1598, was to buy a small piece of it and a strip of 'bushit ground or bank' from John Flexmere, to add to Cattall Grove which it adjoined on the south and east sides.

Thomas Flexmere's wife Margaret and his eldest son Symon were to be his executors, and Symon inherited the copyhold property at Potters Bar belonging to the Manor of Wyllotts. Its main house was called Great Tottenhalls and is shown on the 1594 plan of the Wyllotts Manor, in an inset at the top right hand corner (see plan above). It was the centre house of the three, in what is now part of the grounds of the National Trust property at Potters Bar. It is shown on the north side of the road with, in front of the house, a gate across the road which connected it to

other houses in an eight acre field belonging to the same property. Potters Bar is written beside the gate. I think this gate may have been the gate which gave its name to Potters Bar; perhaps tolls were collected on pottery carried from Hertfordshire along the road to Barnet. The road shown in the plan in front of Symon Flexmere's house, was a continuation of the road we call Quakers Lane, which at that time cut across the National Trust land to join the road to Barnet. Another 24 acre field called Great Tottenhalls Mead was also part of the copyhold: it was in the triangle where the extended Quakers Lane met Billy Lowes Lane, then known as the New Lane, to the west of Great Tottenhall House.

Symon Flexmere held Great Tottenhalls until 1606 when he bought the house on Cattall Grove and the lands belonging to it and the small houses listed in the sale from Robert Taylor in 1603. He also bought two other freehold pieces of land from Robert Honeywood, Lezesers and Little Wood Grove, and in return sold to Robert Honeywood, two small freehold fields called Great and Little Tottnells, lying to the north of Wyllyotts Manor.

In 1634 Symon Flexmere died. His will, made in 1624, names his wife Barbara, and his three sons Francis, George and William, and his two daughters Lucian, wife of Henry Cary, and Margaret, wife of Richard Beard. His eldest son, Francis, was to inherit Cattall House and its lands at the death of his mother. It was part of a settlement made on his marriage to Mary, daughter of William Barnard of Northaw. It also included the field called Cattall field or close, which Symon Flexmere had bought from his brother John Flexmere, and another field called Blounts Field, purchased from Thomas Hewett, Knt. As some of these lands were held of the king, there was also an Inquisition Post Mortem on Symon's property. My rather rough translation of this document gives interesting information on some of the early freeholds of the estate. The capital house on Cattall Grove with its buildings, was approached by a causeway leading to the house from Enfield Chace. This can be identified with the road known as The Walk which continued beyond the house as a footpath through the fields to Darkes Lane. In Wyllyots Manor survey of 1745 it was named the way to Coot Hall; the site of the house is shown on this survey as some way north of the causeway or way to Coot Hall. There were also an orchard and 24 acres, formerly a warren, which abutted on the east upon Enfield Chace, two of the smaller houses and 80 acres of land, all bought from Robert Honeywood and belonging to the house on Cattall Grove. All these were held by Knights service of the Manor of South Mimmas with service of the court and rent of 11 shillings and two pounds of pepper.

The two closes called Cattall fields or close which Symon Flexmere had bought from John Flexmere, were held by the King as of his Manor of East Greenwich in Kent, by fealty only in free socage, not in chief, with a value of 15 shillings. This puzzled me as East Greenwich seemed a long way from Potters Bar. Then I found that the lands belonging to Guilds and Chantries which had been dissolved and their property transferred to the King, were held of this Manor. This was the land formerly belonging to the Guild of the Brotherhood of Barnet.

Another two closes called Blountes Field, purchased from Thomas Hewitt, Knt, were described as lying on the east side of Wyllyots Lane (now Darkes Lane). They were held of the King as of His Honour of Mandiville ... Knights Service and valued at 10 shillings. Also the field called Lezeres and pasture called Little Wood Grove held of the King as of His Honour of Mandiville by Knights Service and valued at 6 shillings. These illustrate how the tenure of freeholds varied under the feudal system at this period.

All this property was included in the settlement on the marriage of Symon Flexmere's son Francis to Mary Barnard.

Helen M. Baker.

Notes from the lecture room.

We started 1981 with Mr. Eve's lecture on the Great Northern Railway and with an exceptionally large audience of 36. The talk was well received and provoked a lively discussion. Mr. Eve discussed the effect of the railways on the community and the railway fever which followed the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester. He went on to talk about the proposals for the London and York Railway, its eventual construction and subsequent opening as the G.N.R. The company prospered and developed under its first chairman, Edmund Dennison, who later became Lord Grimthorpe. The line opened with a temporary London terminus at Belle Isle in 1850 and was extended to Kings Cross in 1852. He illustrated his talk with some excellent maps and traced the history of the line down to the early 20th century.

Mr. Gillam was our speaker in February, taking as his subject, Death and the Victorians, an apparently macabre topic. However, the 19th century passion for elaborate and expensive funerals and their extended periods of mourning, provide a source of amusement for us today. But, as Mr. Gillam pointed out, they were often a tragedy for the poorer people. Many who could ill afford even the simplest of funerals, beggared themselves to provide the elaborate trappings rather than risk the scorn of their neighbours. A pauper's funeral was considered shameful and was to be avoided at all costs. Many undertakers exploited the bereaved, but today this is a highly respected profession. An interesting sidelight was that nearly half the shops in Regent Street existed solely to provide mourning.

David Pam's series of talks on Enfield at different ages have always been popular. In March he spoke to us on Tudor Enfield, a talk well illustrated with slides and maps. In those days the Lovells were at Elsynge. Lord Lovell was rich and employed 100 men plus servants (including six priests and an organist); on his death in 1525 the estate passed to Lord Rouse. Enfield Town stands where once was the village green and Pearson's store is on the site of the Manor House (known as the Palace). The Grammar School was founded about 1500. There was a Sunday meat market which defied many attempts at closure by the Vicar.

After the Annual General Meeting in April Kenneth Rutherford Davis addressed us on Place Names. He is very knowledgeable on this subject and his talk was much enjoyed. It is a difficult subject to report without it tending to become a mere catalogue. Suffice it to say that Ken managed to explain how the various languages spoken at different times (and sometimes at the same time) in this island, have combined to give us our present day names and to explain also the meaning behind them.

Our Chairman, Geoffrey Pulzer, was the speaker in May, taking as his subject, Hertfordshire Archaeology. He covered the story of the region from about 100,000 years ago down to the late Iron Age. He described the various tools and other implements known to have been in use at different times.

The ever popular, ebullient and entertaining Ron Bayman was our speaker in September. His subject was Antiques in the Home. We were privileged to see a selection of his 'treasures' which he had brought with him. In addition we were shown some excellent Coloured slides of his antiques in the setting of his own home.

Excavating the Chapter House of St. Albans Abbey was the subject at the November meeting. Mrs. Patterson is a brilliant and knowledgeable speaker and her talk was very well received.

The year ended with Lawrence Jones' popular lecture on Church Architecture. His beautiful slides are worth seeing time and again and though his delivery may have lost some of its drive over the years, his humour remains as youthful as ever. His enthusiasm for the Historic Churches Trust and the plugging of its cause never fades of course. It was a vile night with deep snow and freezing temperatures, but the twelve brave souls who turned out to hear him felt that their efforts were well worth-while.

C.T. Overend.

Chairman's Report.

I am pleased to report that, thanks mainly to the dedicated work of our Hon. Secretary and the excellent support of your committee, we have had, within the limited scope of our small society, an exceedingly interesting year.

It is with some regret that, due to unavoidable business commitments, I have been unable to attend many of the lectures myself, but I understand they have achieved the high standards which our audiences rightly expect. This is, indeed, most gratifying because even during the severe weather conditions of December and January, our members were prepared to leave the warmth and comfort of their homes to support this society. I particularly recall our meeting of 18 January when our committee member, Dr. Lynch, spoke on Competition between Road and Rail in the 1830's; this lively meeting was well attended and Dr. Lynch's lecture was of a high order, notwithstanding the fact that we left him high and dry without a slide projector. It is pleasing that our own members volunteer to talk to us, and on behalf of my colleagues on the committee I should certainly welcome any other volunteers from our membership.

On the question of membership, I should take this opportunity to remind everyone that our very existence is in your hands and we urgently need to expand our numbers. Increased overheads, coupled with the fact that county subsidies for accomodation etc. are more difficult to obtain, has already decreed that our subscription must be raised next year. It is also necessary for our well-being that our numbers are increased. I would therefore urge members to make their best endeavours in a recruiting drive.

Best wishes and good luck for the future.

Geoffrey Dulzer.

Dates for your diary.

6 May 1982 Dr. F.A.C. Ward on Clocks and their History. This will be our last meeting until -
12 October 1982 when B. D. Adams will talk to us about the Crystal Palace.

Herts Archaeological Council - Annual Conference.
Saturday 22nd May 1982, Campus West Theatre, Welwyn Garden City.
Full details of this event will be available from the Secretary nearer the day.

PBHS Library

The list below, of acquisitions since 1978, brings up to date the details of books and documents published in PBHS News Letters 11, 1978 and 12, 1979.

All the books, magazines and documents are available to members and can be read, by appointment, at 12 oakroyd Close, Potters Bar, or borrowed for reading at home. I also have a large collection of copies of local maps and plans, notes from my own research and photographs taken by my late husband, some copied from early photos and drawings lent to us.

If any member is an expert at photography and could make copies from old photos and postcards, I should be glad to know, as I have a house full of equipment which I do not know how to use. With the loss of my husband, I am unable to produce the copies and slides for our collection.

Helen M. Baker (Tel. Potters Bar
53659)

Library additions

- London & middlesex Archaeological Society (LAMAS) Transactions vol. 29, 1978
LAMAS Transactions vol. 30 1979
LAMAS Transactions vol. 31 1980 (contains accounts of excavations at Cronwell Green (Palace of Westminster), Goodmans Yard, Tower Hill and Enfield; discussions of artefacts including Roman and Bronze Age items; articles on S.S. Teulon (architect) and his work)
LAMAS Special Papers;
1978 Southwark Excavations 1972-74, vols. 1 and 2.
1978 No.2 Collectanea Londiniensia, studies presented by Ralph Merrifield (36 papers on archaeology and local history of London area, with illustrations, plans etc.)
1980 No.3 Roman and Riverside Wall and Monumental Arch in London
1980 No.4 Excavations at Billingsgate Buildings, Lower Thames Street, London 1974.
LAMAS List of Members, 1981
LAMAS News Letter, Jan. 1982 (contains a London and Middlesex book list)
Hertfordshire Archaeology vol. 5, 1977
Hertfordshire Archaeology vol. 6, 1978
Hertfordshire Archaeology vol. 7, 1979 (contains articles on excavations in Verulamium, Ware, Puckeridge and Braughing; late Bronze Age artefacts from Hertford Heath; Theobalds Park ingot of Roman lead; five mediaeval barns in Hertfordshire; woodland management in late 17th century; decorated small houses in Hertfordshire).
East Herts Archaeological Society News Letter, Autumn 1981.
North Middlesex Journal of North Middlesex Family History Society, vol. 1, No. 4, Summer 1979.
Genealogists Magazine, vol. 20, No.6. June 1981.
(1) Archives: presented by Mr. F.C. Hart of Cranborne Road
Deeds of sale of the White Hart, South Mimms, 22 Feb. 1847
Small Deed from Turnpike Trust, of piece of land in front of White Horse, present site of War Memorial, 23 March 1872.
Letter from GLC Archivist to Mr. Hart, concerning an error in GLC catalogue 1974.
(2) Presented by former gardener to Forbes family -
Volume of large photographs of Mount Grace House and its gardens, when owned by Mr. and Mrs. Forbes in 1927 (includes photos of Highland Regimental band at a garden party, and bananas growing in the hothouse).

The A-Z of Georgian London; published 1982 for the London Topographical Society in association with the Guildhall Library; £12 plus postage and packing, available from Harry Margary, Lympne Castle, Kent.

This book is based on John Roque's Plan of the cities of London and Westminster and the Borough of Southwark dated 1746. The map, which covers an area of approximately 6 miles by 3 miles and includes all the then built-up area of London, was published as a set of 24 sheets, drawn to a scale of 26" to 1 mile.

The book has a hard covered A4 format and contains 96 pages each covering a spread of $16\frac{1}{2}$ " x $11\frac{3}{4}$ " and an index by John Fisher consisting of about 5,000 entries referring to an overlaid numbered and lettered grid system. There is an introductory text by Ralph Hyde.

Life and Death in Kings Langley 1498-1659, edited by Lionel Munby; published 1981 by Kings Langley Local History and Museum Society and the Kings Langley branch of the WEA; £9 plus post and packing, and can be ordered from Mrs Scott Whyte, Hon. Treasurer KLLHMS, 26 Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts. WD4 9HE.

This 200 page book brings together the testamentary documents of 148 People from four record offices. The full texts are reproduced with the exception of the repetitive phrasing.

The Book includes an index of nearly 900 people mentioned in the documents (testators, legatees, witnesses, appraisers etc.) with over 300 different surnames, an index of place names mentioned, and a glossary of over 200 dialect words and obsolete usages.

The Church of St. John the Apostle, Whetstone.

Set a few yards back from the High Road in Whetstone, with flats on one side and a wood on the other, is the church of St. John the Apostle. This is an unusual dedication, for churches dedicated to this particular saint usually describe him as the Evangelist. It is also unusual in not looking too much like a church, at least at a casual glance. Why this should be is not certain, but the fact remains that many are unaware of its existence. Perhaps this is because it is relatively small in scale, betraying its origins as a private chapel.

On January 22 1831, certain householders of Whetstone signed a representation addressed to Charles Blomfield, Bishop of London, stating that church provision in the area was inadequate and that they were desirous of raising, by private subscription, sufficient funds for the erection of a chapel. The land for the building was to be given by one of the signatories to the representation, Joseph Baxendale, who owned the vast Woodside Estate in Whetstone. Bishop Blomfield gave his assent and the completed chapel was consecrated on 9 May 1832. Baxendale was a fascinating character. In many ways he was the archetypal Victorian entrepreneur. He was born in 1785, the son of a Lancaster surgeon. He is reported to have had a good education, though he later described his childhood as 'very wretched'. In 1804 Joseph left Lancaster 'to fight my way through life'.

He reached London in 1806 and began work as a linen draper. In 1809 he returned to Lancashire where he borrowed £4,000 and bought into a calico-printing business. In 1815 he became engaged to Mary Birley. By 1816, when he retired from the calico business, he had a net profit of £6,000, more than enough to pay his way. In the early 1820's Baxendale became a sleeping partner in the then nearly bankrupt firm of Pickfords carriers. Before long, however, he threw his whole energies and talents into the firm, reorganising and extending the agencies throughout the country. He developed a system of fast and slow boats and vans, using canals extensively, which gave him all-year-round carrying. He supervised his employees very closely, having himself a 'flying' boat and carriage in which he overtook and surprised his drivers, checking their punctuality and whether 'their blunderbusses were loaded'. Having established Pickfords as the major firm of carriers in Britain, Baxendale turned his attention to the developing railways. He became a major shareholder in the South Eastern Railway, and, with Sir William Cubitt, was largely responsible for the London-Folkestone-Paris rail connection. He bought the Woodside Estate in 1823/4, borrowing the necessary £6,500 from Pickfords. Although he owned other properties, he spent most of his time in Whetstone and many of his (at least) six children were born there. After his enforced retirement in 1845 Baxendale spent almost all his time at Woodside House. He died on 24 March 1872 and is buried with his wife and several of his descendants in the vault at the back of the church. His sons had all established estates of their own by the time of his death, so the family connection with Whetstone ended in 1872. Joseph Baxendale has been described as a 'confident, self-assured man with a dominant personality, without being domineering ... he was cheerful and witty in conversation ... and universally beloved by those whom he employed. he was, in short, Victorian Christianity and thrift writ large'. However, back to the building. Only the nave of the present church was built in 1832, this was described by a near contemporary source as 'a feeble attempt at the Gothic of a pre-Gothic era' - a description which the present church does not justify at all. Music at this period was provided by a barrel organ standing in the gallery at the west end.

By 1878, however, the church had fallen into disrepair and the bell turret was deemed dangerous. Plans were drawn up for a chancel, vestry, organ case, north and south porches, reflooring and reseating. The work, which cost £2,700, was completed and the church re-dedicated and re-opened on 21 October 1879. The necessary repairs and alterations were carried out largely through the efforts of W.B. Passmore, who was People's Warden at the time. Further alterations were made in 1882, when the doors halfway down the nave on each side were removed and two porches added at the west end of the north and south walls. The gallery was also removed at this time. The last addition to be made was the sacristy, which was built in 1898 in commemoration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Apart from some alteration to the interior decoration and the re-ordering of the sanctuary and chancel in 1948, the church remains virtually unaltered to the present day.

Those of you who are keen on arithmetic will have noticed that St. John's is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. The parish is hoping to mount an exhibition of documents, photographs and other memorabilia in October, to coincide with the dedication festival. If there are any reading this who possess such material, particularly photographs, who would be prepared to lend them to such an exhibition, please let the Vicar, Fr Stephen Terry, know as soon as possible. His address is St. John's Vicarage, 1163 High Road, N20 0PG. Tel. 01-445 - 4569.

Malcolm Tomkins

Those members who came to the November meeting of our society will have heard the sad news that Malcolm Tomkins died on 17 October 1981.

His death will be a great loss to our Historical Society and we shall miss his interesting articles contributed regularly to our News Letters.

Malcolm Tomkins joined the Potters Bar Historical Society in 1969 and almost at once became a member of the Executive Committee. He was already well known for his articles and letters in the Hertfordshire Countryside magazine. Although he lived at Sleeps Hyde near Colney Heath, he took a keen interest in our district as well as many Hertfordshire villages, as the variety of his articles illustrate. I had known him for several years before he joined our society, as he was a member of the Hertfordshire Local History Council, which I had joined in 1963. About that time this Local History Council had started a project to make a land use map of the county, based on the tithe awards and maps made about 1840. Volunteers for each parish were making plans, and Malcolm Tomkins was in charge of collecting them. I sent him a copy of the land use plan I made from South Mimms tithe map and from that time we corresponded regularly, he sending me any notes on South Mimms or Potters Bar which he found in his research and asking questions about our district for his articles. I lent him copies of old maps of North Mimms and Ridge which included parts of Colney Heath, also any notes I found concerning Sleeps Hyde or Colney Heath. My local history files are full of his notes and include two drawings by Luppino of South Mimms Church and the new tollhouse just built in front of the White Hart in 1827 for Telford New Turnpike Road; both these drawings, and one of the South Mimms turnpike gate and a plan of the tollhouse, came from him. His research has enriched the knowledge of our district, and he will be sadly missed.

The Hertfordshire Local History Council are setting up a fund to sponsor an annual lecture in his name, as a memorial to his work.

Helen M. Baker.

Proposed special interest group for those working on population studies in the Greater London area.

It is proposed to form a special interest group, open to those working on, or interested in, the population history of the Greater London area. The Group would aim to provide guidance and encouragement to those researching topics related to the history of population in this area - perhaps typically those working with manor court records, tax assessments, surveys, parish registers, census records etc.

If you would like more details of this proposed Group please write to : Beatrice Shearer, Flat 6, Flaxman House, 1/3 Coleherne Road, London S.W.10.

Greater London Record Office and Historical Library

The two departments are to move to 40 Northampton Road, Clerkenwell, E.C.1. during the autumn of 1982. The new premises will provide improved and enlarged accomodation for readers and the storage of records, books maps, prints and photographs. The task will be a complicated and lengthy one so movement of some of the archives will start early in 1982.

During the move the Archivists will be fully occupied with supervision of the transfer. Search Room duties will be carried out by the Archives Assistants.

If you must consult one of the Archivists please write for an appointment well in advance of your proposed visit and suggest alternative dates,

Researchers Please Note;

From 25th January 1982 the Search Room will be closed all day on Mondays.

From 4th January 1982 the History Library, Map, Print and Photograph collections will be closed on Mondays until 2pm.

There will be complete closure for several weeks during the autumn.

While collections are being prepared, packed and moved they will not be available for consultation. Afterwards they can be brought to County Hall for consultation but five clear days notice will be necessary.

Charlton House, Hitchin.

From the Local Studies Librarian, Herts. County Council.

Dear Sir,

On indexing the current issue of the PBHS News Letter, No.14, I noticed Dr. Lynch's enquiry re Charlton. I suspect you have been inundated with information, but if not, Charlton is a hamlet to the south-west and within the boundaries of Hitchin town.

Yours faithfully,
Shelagh Head.

(Mrs. Head kindly enclosed a photo of Charlton House, where Henry Bessemer was born in 1813.)

From Dr. Lynch.

Dear Sir,

I should like to thank the readers of the News Letter who wrote or telephoned to confirm that Sir Henry Bessemer's birthplace, Charlton, is near Hitchin. This leaves me with another problem; how did Bessemer, living in rural Hertfordshire and then in North London, become interested in metallurgy, and how was he able to invent the new material - mild steel - which was the main basis of British prosperity in the period 1850 - 1900 ?

Yours faithfully,

A.C. Lynch

Colliers Lane

It is time to contest the recent idea that Colliers Lane was not what we now call Quakers Lane.

The map in Mrs Helen Baker's useful article in PBHS 14 (page 11) does not make it clear that before Church Road was laid out, c.1850 Saunders Hill was the western part of Quakers Lane, a road now interrupted by the grounds of Morven but once continuing eastwards as The Causeway. Mrs Baker labels as Colliers Lane, the vanished road that headed north off Quakers Lane and eventually became part of the Great North Road.

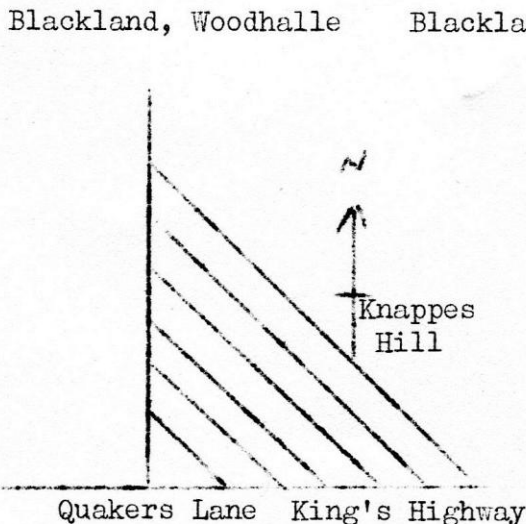
For a start, this presumption is contrary to common sense. Darkes, at the top of Darkes Lane, was named from a fourteenth century holder, John Dark, a collier sentenced to pillory in 1382 (Story of Potters Bar & South Mimms, 56); there can be no doubt that Colliers Lane is a direct reference to the occupation of this man or his family and therefore that Colliers Lane, led to and from his abode; little doubt, in fact, that Colliers Lane was Quakers Lane (including the western stretch called Saunders Hill), a road shown on the manorial survey of 1594 and certainly in existence long before then.

It makes nonsense of this association to identify Colliers Lane as a mere offshoot of Quakers Lane. If that were true, we would be left without an earlier name for Quakers Lane (except the Saunders Hill part), which is obviously older than Billy Lows Lane. Significantly, the latter is called Newe Lane in the 1594 Survey and it partly superseded Quakers Lane as the route from Wyllyots to the Chase.

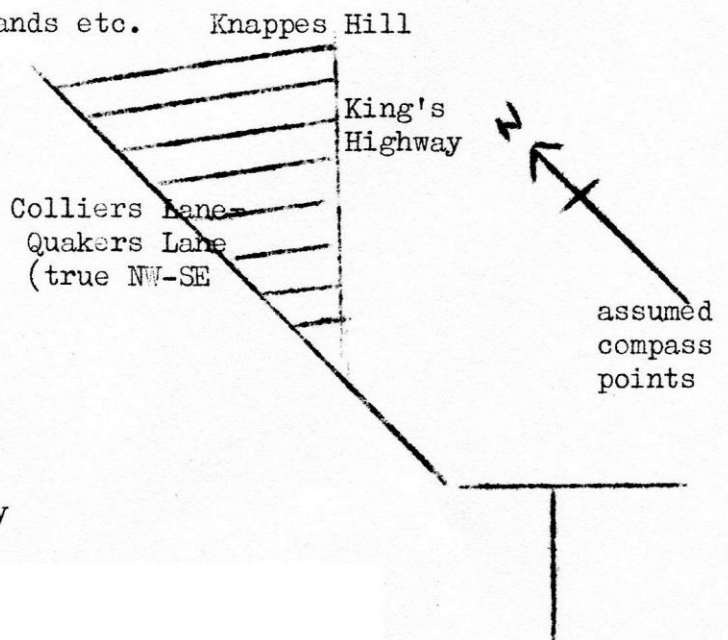
The misapprehension about Colliers Lane rests on an interpretation of an indenture dated May 15 1615 (Midxx CRO Acc 805/1), published by Mrs Baker a few years ago. The deed designates a field bounded on the east by Knappes Hill land (Moss), on the south by the king's highway from Potters Bar to Hatfield, on the west by Collyers Lane and on the north by Blackland and Woodhalle. It is, of course, not always easy to make precise identifications from such given boundaries, especially when the cardinal points are skewed as they must be here.

continued on page 14

Mrs Baker's theory



My alternative



In this case, the problem is to guess what the scribe meant by north, south, east and west, because Quakers Lane runs not east-west but north-west to south-east. Mrs Baker supposed Quakers Lane was taken as running due east-west, so that the king's highway would be its eastern part, and Collyers Lane the northern limb towards Little Heath Hill, with the land described lying in the angle between them.

There is a better solution, if the scribe treated Quakers Lane - just as correctly or incorrectly - as running north-south. In this case Quakers Lane is clearly Colliers Lane, the king's highway very sensibly is the northern limb pointing to Hatfield. This is equally valid, does no violence to the expectation that Quakers Lane should be identified as Colliers Lane and not the northern limb and fits far better with the general picture, particularly the obvious connection of Colliers Lane with the home of John Derk, collier.

K. R. Davis.

Another mediaeval coin.

In June 1981, Mr. John Harrison found a silver penny in his garden at 49, Tiverton Road, Potters Bar. It is of the 'short cross type' minted between 1180 and 1247, and is almost certainly of the time of King John (1199-1216). It is strange that this should turn up on what was once part of Enfield Chase. This is only the second mediaeval coin known in Potters Bar; a thirteenth century Scottish penny found in Byng Drive is reported in *The Story of Potters Bar & South Mimms*.

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.