

The Newsletter

January 2009

VOL. 25 No. 2

COVER PICTURE

This is a photo taken from the collection held by Terry Goulding.



A motorcycle accident at the T-junction of Baker Street and Dancers Hill Road, by Norfolk Lodge, in the summer of c.1936. (Motorcycle No.UJ5042) Although in a quiet road, it is amazing how soon a crowd appeared to see the motorcyclist with a broken leg being hoisted into an ambulance. From the direction of the motorcycle you can almost guess who did not see who, as they turned right from Baker Street. Frederick Cole the photographer was luckily a special constable, and recorded a number of crashes in our area.



2009



This year is an important date in the Society's history, as it marks the fiftieth anniversary since its foundation. The inaugural meeting and the first Committee meeting, which immediately followed it, were both held at Oakmere House on 14th July 1959. The Committee has already been considering certain events to make it a memorable year, worthy of the occasion. Suggestions from any member would be welcome and should be communicated to a Committee member.

Two thousand and nine is also the twenty-fifth anniversary since the Publications' sub-committee first met on 22nd November 1984. It saw as its first task the production of a Journal to replace the duplicated PBHS Newsletter. The first issue appeared in April 1985 with five articles. A new Newsletter was produced and has improved with time. Gordon Eve's *The Railway Through Potters Bar* was the first in the Potters Bar Historical Series and published in 1986. The Committee has considered three publications for 2009.

Brian Warren, President.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

To all our Members.

The Committee and I hope you had a Happy Christmas and we wish you all a Happy New Year.

I am just working on a talk for the North Mymms Green Belt Society on the Toll Road to Hatfield. This will be on similar lines to that given by Dr. Arnold Lynch and his booklet, but with more recent pictures etc. While looking to include a slide of the South Entrance Lodges to the long carriageway to Hatfield House like the one Arnold's wife took many years ago in the booklet, I discovered that there was a Victorian wall post box mounted on a brick 'pillar' just a few yards to the left of the entrance lodges. Are there any more we do not know about?



The wall mounted post box by the Woodside Lodge Gates.

Our next meeting in the New Year is on Friday 23rd of January 2009, with a talk by Mrs. Pamela Wright on *The Development of the English Country House (from Medieval to the 20th Century, based on National Trust Properties)*. I hope to see you all then.

Terry Goulding

NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome Nita Brewer, Bob Crawley, Janice Gunther, and Andrew & Sarah-Jane Hull. We hope you will enjoy the lectures and occasional outings that are part of our yearly programme, and that you will take an active part in our Society.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Doris Minchinton has been ill in recent weeks and is now making progress.

WINTER LECTURE

Friday January 23rd, 2009

The Development of the English Country House (from Medieval to the 20th Century based on National Trust Properties) by Mrs Pamela Wright.

THE MEETING WILL START **PROMPTLY** AT 8PM IN THE 60 PLUS ROOM, WYLLYOTTS CENTRE. EVERYONE WELCOME.

WINTER LECTURE PROGRAMME (PREVIEW)

Friday	February	27 th	<i>Recent work in Waltham Abbey (Gunpowder Factory and local churches)</i> by Mr Peter Huggins
Thursday	March	26 th	<i>Tradition and Innovation: a modern Blacksmith's craft</i> by Mr Stephen Rook
Tuesday	April	28 th	Annual General Meeting, followed by <i>Pictures and Postcards from World War I</i> by Terry Goulding
Thursday	May	28 th	<i>Revolting Councillors – East London, 1921</i> by Mr Chris Sumner

MUSEUM STEWARDS REQUIRED

Members are needed to help look after the Museum. Perhaps you could help for just one day a month? It would be of great assistance and you would be on duty with an experienced steward.

Tuesdays	2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Ian Cumming on	01707 642296
Wednesdays	2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Arnold Davey on	01707 654179
Saturdays	11.00am – 1.00pm, contact Mabel Hammett on	01707 657120

RECORDER GROUP

The Recorder Group monitors changes to Potters Bar on a daily/monthly basis and generally meets twice a year to collate the findings. This work has been going on since 1984. Reports are sent in from all over the County and stored in the Hertfordshire Archives, County Hall, where they form a valuable record for the use of future historians and researchers.

If you would be interested in helping, please contact the Group's Chairman, John Scivyer, on 01707 657586.

DELIVERERS REQUIRED

In each issue we pay tribute to Michael Cawrey and his band of helpers, who save the Society pounds in postage by delivering your copy by hand. Naturally, our volunteers do come and go, however at the moment we do have a full complement. If you would like to help in the future, three times per year you would be required to push a Newsletter through the letterbox of half-a-dozen or so of your neighbours' front doors. If you can help, please ring me on 01707 652975.

Richard Lee

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2008/09 ARE OVERDUE

The subscription year runs from April 1st to March 31st at a cost of £3 for adults, and £5 for a family/group. It is important that you keep your receipt in a safe place, to avoid confusion. Should you pay by post, be sure to collect your receipt at the subsequent lecture meeting. If you want us to *post* the receipt to you, please enclose a SAE. You can check your current membership status by phoning the Membership Secretary, Eileen Field on 01707 653801. Her address is 51 Highview Gardens, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 5PN.

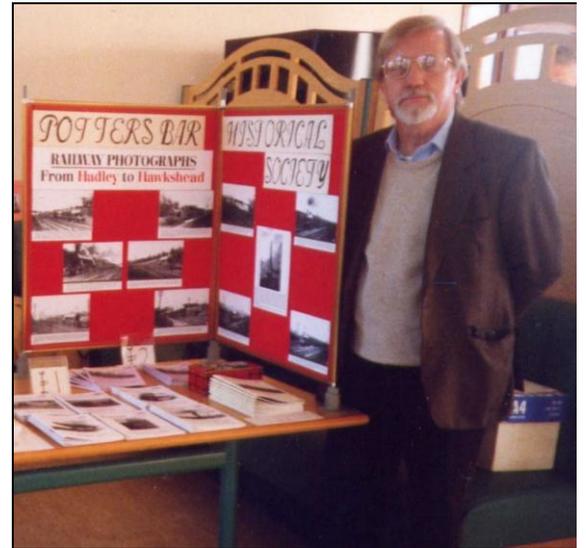
Note: you should make your cheque payable to Potters Bar & District Historical Society, and *not* Mrs. E. Field.

Thank you to those members who send more money than the required membership fee.

OBITUARY

John Donovan (1935-2008)

John was one of those people who through his enthusiasm and willingness gave a tremendous input into his current project. Then after a relative short period of time he moved on to something else with the same ardent zeal. He joined our Society in 1995 and subsequently used the knowledge he had gained to inaugurate the Friern Barnet and District Local History Society (1999) and in a relatively short time became its President. John's interests were varied as is shown by some of the societies to which he belonged, namely, the Cuffley Concert Club, The Milestone Society, the Boys Brigade Old Boys' Association and on becoming ill he withdrew from the Hertfordshire Association for Local History as its Secretary. For over ten years John and I were the National Trust volunteers for Morven and I know he really enjoyed taking Alex, his grandson, round those fields. There he introduced Alex to natural history or anything else that caught his eye, during their wanderings.



John Donovan at the 22nd Symposium on Hertfordshire History held on 3rd November 2001. The event was hosted by the North Mimms Local History Society.

John was a life-long member of the Boys Brigade and still continued to attend their annual reunions at Appledore, in Devon, Though he said to me on more than one occasion that he wished he had been a Boy Scout as they did things which really interested him.

As a member of the Society's Recorder Group he will be sorely missed, as his reports were always well presented. Also, as he always carried a camera he was able to record the situation as he came across it, be it a damaged milestone or a derelict building. He has left over two thousand photographs with the Friern Barnet and District Local History Society, taken over a period of nine years.

John was born in Ladbrooke Grove and went to a grammar school but admitted later he had not received a good education. He subsequently gained a B.A. (Hons.) in 1995. When he lived at Woking (1952) he had his first guitar and joined a band in 1956. Two years later he attended the Central School of Dance and Music. As far as one could gather he spent his life dashing here and there to play at various venues. In recent years he made contact with those former friends and musicians.

The Society was well represented at the funeral and those who went on for the refreshments saw a small display of some of John's other activities and charming photographs of him with his grandchildren.

John made friends easily, so I trust that all who knew him will remember the good times.

Brian Warren

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SOCIAL EVENING

On Tuesday December 8th forty six members met in the 60+ centre for the Annual Christmas Social Evening. It was good to see several new faces who had joined in the last year.

As we entered the hall Ian Cummings was there to pour out a welcome drink. We sat at tables covered with red Christmas table cloths and decorated by Wendy Davey with red poinsettias. Terry Goulding had arranged several of his unusual objects on each table and we were all invited to guess what they were. This caused lots of discussion at each table.

Terry then started a picture quiz; the old photos were of local places and we had to guess A - Where it was. B - How old it was, or C - Its name. The photos were passed from table to table. The noise grew louder and louder as we all talked about the answers and when the quiz was judged at the end, if you did not know the answer, you were able to learn more about Old Potters Bar. Heather Rae and June Parks were the winners and both are Museum stewards. Does this mean they have picked up local knowledge that helped with the answers?

Michael Cawrey ran a successful raffle that helped fund the evening. A light supper was prepared by Mabel Hammett, and with home made mince pies made by June Parks and a cup of coffee we said we had really enjoyed this very social evening.

The clearing up was done in no time as so many folk helped. The final thing was to all stand up and look under our chairs. The lucky person who had a sticker on the bottom was able to take home the Poinsettia that was decorating their table.

The committee would like to wish everyone a "HAPPY NEW YEAR FOR 2009"

Mabel Hammett



OBSOLETE SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

My brother-in-law in Australia is writing a book on his and my sister's family history, for his grandchildren. He recently sent me a copy of a chapter on the 20th century. The bit about him starting school in Scotland in about 1933 really surprised me. He described using a slate for his early writing. I started school about the same time in rural Hertfordshire and slates seemed ancient history.

I was even more surprised when I mentioned this to my daughter and her partner, also a Scotsman. He said he had started school about twenty years later and had still used a slate for his early writing. When were slates finally phased out? It would be interesting to hear from other members when and where they started school and if they used slates.

While not using slates for our early reading we used something called String Cards. These were a rectangle of card, about A4 size, with other small squares of card attached round the edges with pieces of string. Doreen, who started school about the same time in Yorkshire, had never heard of them. Again does any member remember these used as a device to teach early reading?

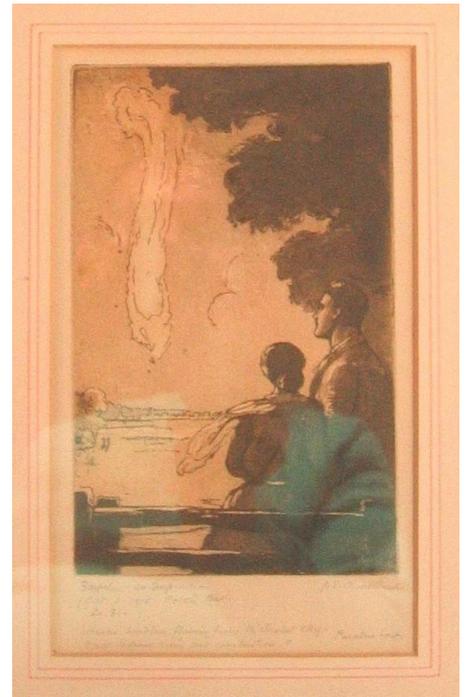
John Scivyer

POTTERS BAR MUSEUM

The following are the current exhibitions in the Museum. They are due for replacement in January 2009.

After the closure of Sunny Bank School, various items of interest were donated to the Museum. Some of these are being exhibited in a display case near the entrance. Items on show are uniforms (blazer, cap and tie), the school bell, and a commemorative closure medal.

The story of canals is shown around the back wall. Their history is described from their first beginnings, the large expansion in the 18th and 19th centuries, through to today and into the future. Included are pictures and diagrams showing, for example, how locks are used and how tunnels are built. There are also engravings of some of the famous names involved, for example Thomas Telford.



The picture to the top right is a recent acquisition by the Museum. It is a coloured engraving by J E Clutterbuck, and represents an impression of the Zeppelin L31 falling from the sky on October 1st, 1916.

The script below the picture includes a quotation from *Paradise Lost*:

“Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky with hideous ruin and combustion.”

Richard Lee

HANDLEY PAGE AIR CRASH

Following the article in the last Newsletter covering the Flying Fortress crash behind Park Avenue (*End of Fools Luck*), reproduced here is a Frederick Cole photograph of a Handley Page four-engined plane that crashed near Radlett on 2nd December 1945, shortly after take-off. Chief Test Pilot Flight-Lieutenant J. Talbot and the Engineer “Ginger” Wright lost their lives.

Brian Warren



MYSTERY OF MANY YEARS IS SOLVED AT LAST! (Continued from PBHS Newsletter
September 2007 Vol.24 No.1)

Royal Air Force Beam Benders No.80 (Signals) Wing 1940-1945 by Laurie Brettingham.

Laurie was born in 1930. As a young man he joined the Met. Police and was stationed at Wimbledon. In 1961 he was transferred to Potters Bar and was a sergeant at both Potters Bar and South Mimms (now defunct) stations. During this time Laurie lived in Potters Bar, first in Abingdon Place and then in Morven Close. After 25 years service Laurie retired from the Police and trained to be a teacher; he taught at Borehamwood for some years. His second retirement took him to Welwyn Garden City and gave him the opportunity to research his books. The first was *Beam Benders* (1997); to coincide with the publication of this book an exhibition was held in (appropriately) Radlett library in July 1997. His second book *Even When The Sparrows are walking* about No 100 (Bomber Support) Group of the RAF was published in 2001. Laurie and his wife now live in Wymondham, Norfolk. His sister still lives in Little Heath.

Robert Johns

A POLISH PRISONER OF WAR

In *The Barnet Press* for the 23rd December 1960 there was an appeal for contributions towards the building of a classroom in Poland to commemorate prisoners of war who lost their lives in the notorious Oflag IIC, Woldenberg, Pomerania. Of the 11,000 Polish officers who were taken there, only 5,000 survived. The person (not named) who was appealing for the required £1,000 was one of those Polish officers. He spent five and a half years in the camp and was then living in Barnet.

The article noted he fought in the defence of Warsaw, his men with only rifles lured the German tanks into a tank-trap street. Clambering on the leading tank he set them on fire by hand. For this gallantry he was decorated on the field by a Polish general, who pinned to his tunic the *Virtuli Militari* - the Polish V.C.; this was the first V.C. of WWII. The Poles were overwhelmed and he along with many others was captured.

More than five years later, with the Russians advancing, all 5,000 prisoners were rounded up and marched west. For three weeks the half-starved men stumbled through snow until the Russians caught up with them, they turned them round and marched them east. The Polish V.C. and two companions escaped and after many adventures reached Warsaw. He met four British soldiers who gave him a British Army tunic and gave him English lessons to answer questions of rank, number, unit and a supposed Wimbledon address. The British soldiers piloted him through control points and half-carried him up a rope ladder to the safety of a British ship bound for Liverpool. On deck he collapsed from exhaustion and terror.

At the time of the article he had been living in Barnet for eight years and he was quoted as saying "A plaque in a classroom of the new Polish school will tell the children in Woldenberg they have good friends in Barnet, England. I like Barnet. I do not want to live anywhere else."

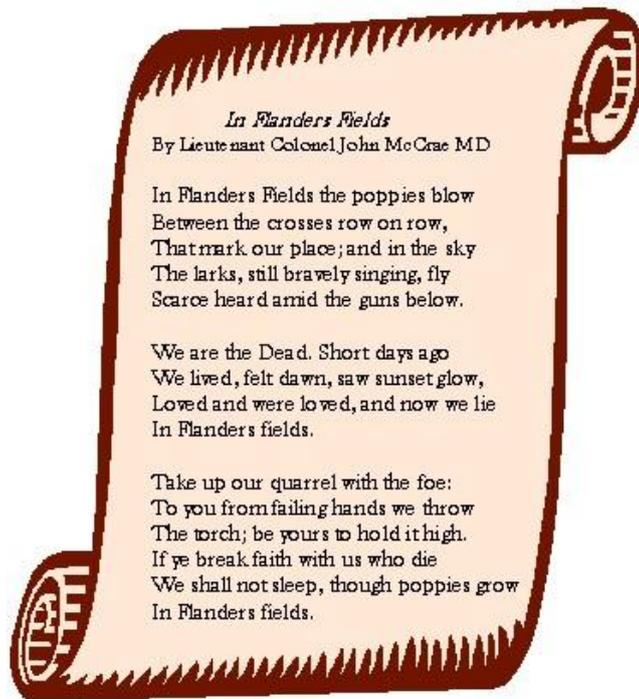
It would be of interest to know if any of his descendants were still living in Barnet.

Brian Warren

POPPY FACTORY VISIT



On 6th November, 37 of us visited the British Legion Poppy Factory in Richmond. John Brassel was our tour guide, and he started off by giving an interesting talk on his own family's experiences. After lunch, John then went on to describe the relevance of poppies and a history of the factory.



Some ¼ million had come back from WWI with one or more limbs missing. With no Welfare State, these men joined into different groups for mutual support. Eventually, these groups combined under one banner as the Royal British Legion.

Poppies were first associated with the Fallen in WWI from the poem *In Flanders Fields* written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD of the Canadian Army.

In 1921, real poppies were brought over from France for the first official Poppy Day.

In 1922 Major George Howson MC, who had founded the Disabled Society, needed to find a factory for eventually 150 men. He wanted to help create employment for those with disabilities. In 1922 he suggested to Earl Haig that a factory be set up to make poppies. He was given the go-ahead and £2,000 start-up money.

The first premises opened 1922 in the Old Kent Road. In 1924 the factory was visited by the Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII) who laid the first Royal wreath of poppies on the 11th November 1924.

In 1925, the factory moved to an old Watney's warehouse in Richmond, and the present factory was built in 1933.

This year 38 million poppies and 100,000 wreaths have been made. In addition, 800,000 wooden crosses have been finished off at factory; also Stars of David, Half-moon crescents, and simple non-religious ones.

All in all, a thoroughly interesting trip organised by Colin Field. Thanks to him and Mabel Hammett, and to all the staff at The Royal British Legion Poppy Factory.

More pictures from the trip are shown on the next page.



An original poppy issued on the first Poppy Day held in Britain on 11th November 1921.



Stephen Sinclair and Ian Lindsay making poppies.
The design of the poppies allows them to be finished
with one hand with the appropriate tool.



Pat Kirk posing with Sam Russo
from the factory. Pat went
previously as a teenager with her
parents.

Richard Lee

ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

I have received notification that our member, Judy Almond, has completed her third and last book *Laughter and Tears*. So far her first two books, including donations, have raised £40,000 (all spent!) to assist Romanian orphans with AIDS/HIV, especially in Ashitanoie Home. The death rate is down to one or less a year, so all the money raised will give them a chance of life. The book costs £7.99 plus £1.25 p & p.

I trust that our members will support Judy; contact her at 1 The Forge, Coopers Lane, Northaw, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 4NF. e-mail:judyalmond@btinternet.com. Tel. 01707 .655222 for further details.

On the 14th December 1999 I received a letter from Harry Green, who lives at Coleford, near Bath. He requested information concerning a Lancaster bomber which crashed at Colney Heath, on Friday 22nd October 1943, as his cousin, Sergeant Harry Green was one of the seven killed. Over the years I have corresponded with him and now the story is told in *Lost in Training* published by Woodfield Publishing Ltd. (ISBN 1-84683-066-4) or www.woodfieldpublishing.co.uk or from Waterstones in Enfield. It is a 160 paged paperback of A5 size, priced at £9.95. I might add that we almost proved that the official RAF report was incorrect in every detail, but then it was wartime.

In the last Newsletter (Vol.25 No.1) I wrote an article on *Arnot fryers* and asked if anyone found another reference to let me know. Imagine my surprise when I read on p.14 of Ruby Galili's book *Arnos Grove and the Walker family* "However the Victoria County History states that it was called Armholt, and was woodland owned by the monks of Charterhouse." Though a long shot I have consulted the three references given in the VCH and will report any future positive developments.

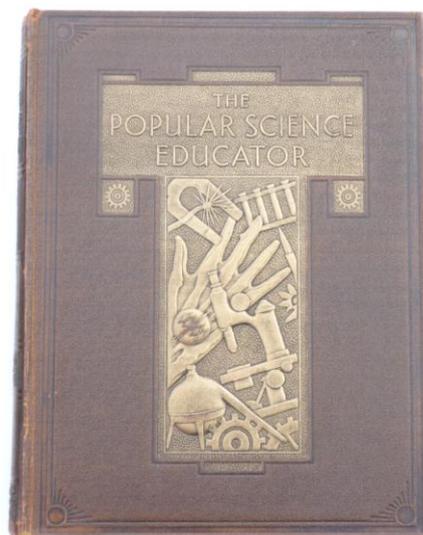
The other evening I was looking through my 1999 diary for something when I read that on the 14th March I had written "A move for peace in Afghanistan after twenty years of war."

Brian Warren

A TALE OF TWO VOLUMES

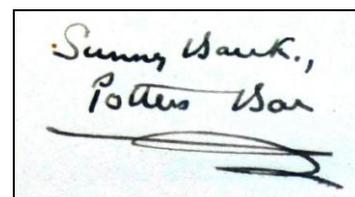
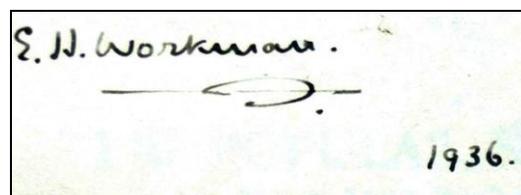
I have known the two Lucas brothers for very many years - John, a member of our Society, still lives in Potters Bar, but his younger brother Ray moved to Manchester several years ago. I still keep in contact with both of them.

A year or so ago on a visit “down south” to Potters Bar, Ray showed me a pair of books, *The Popular Science Educator* published in the early 1930s, which he had bought through an auction on eBay. As youngsters he and his brother had enjoyed reading about the marvels of the advances in science and engineering over seventy years ago and Ray was pleased to have acquired the volumes. I too found the text and illustrations within the 1460 pages very interesting browsing and reading, but in addition, as a keen bookbinder, I was very impressed by the raised bronze-effect of the front covers of the volumes. Lucky Ray, I thought, to have found copies of the volumes in very good condition.



Then, a few months ago while scanning eBooks to trace a rare engineering treatise, I casually typed in “The Popular Science Educator” to see what would happen. Surprise, surprise, I found one pair of the volumes available on auction, with the closure time just twenty-six hours to go. There were no bids, and the vendor from the Midlands indicated a minimum starting bid of £8.99 for the matching pair. The following day, with just five minute to closure, I checked the auction site again. Still no bids! Without checking my bank balance and casting caution aside, I immediately lashed out and put in a bid of £9.00 and crossed my fingers. My bid was successful. Ten days later I received the two volumes safely from the vendor in Wolverhampton. Both books were in excellent condition.

On opening Volume 1, imagine my astonishment to find the name of the original owner on the front end-paper: “E. H. Workman, Sunnybank, Potters Bar, 1936”. Sunnybank was the name of Mr. Workman’s house in Quakers Lane, now number 118. So after over seventy years the volumes had returned to Potters Bar to within a couple of hundred yards (sorry, metres!) of their original home. Where, one wonders, had the books been in the meantime?



In our January 2008 Newsletter (Volume 24, № 3) a paragraph was inserted inviting members to contact me if they had any memories of E. H. Workman. As a result, I had contact from at least three people who provided me with photographs, information and their recollections: John Gamby who still resides in Potters Bar, Philip Bridge now from Romford, and Betty Wilson now from Warrington. In the group photos, shown on the next page, taken in the early thirties of the choir and servers of Potters Bar Parish Church (St Mary’s) Ernie Workman can be identified (circled).

Ernie Workman taught mathematics and science at Potters Bar schools, so it is not surprising that he had the two volumes of *The Popular Science Educator* on his bookshelf. As a member of the parish church choir, music and singing were also among the subjects he taught. Some of his pupils remember that the somewhat less-academic subject of “gardening” was among his expertise, and he cultivated plots in the school grounds with the help of his pupils.



The choir and servers of Potters Bar Parish Church (St Mary's) taken in the early 1930s.



Ernie Workman can be identified (circled).



Beyond the walls of his schools, he played cricket for the Potters Bar Cricket Club and was a founder member of the Potters Bar Bowling Club, so he was keen to encourage out-of-school sporting activities, including football, cricket and swimming. Many of his pupils recall that he was “fairly strict” and one would not “mess about” in Mr. Workman’s classes whatever the subject. In 1950 he retired at the age of 56 due to failing eyesight, after thirty-seven years teaching at Ladbrooke School, and then at Parkfield School. At the time of his retirement he lived at 111 Billy Lows Lane, but he moved to Cheltenham in the mid-fifties.

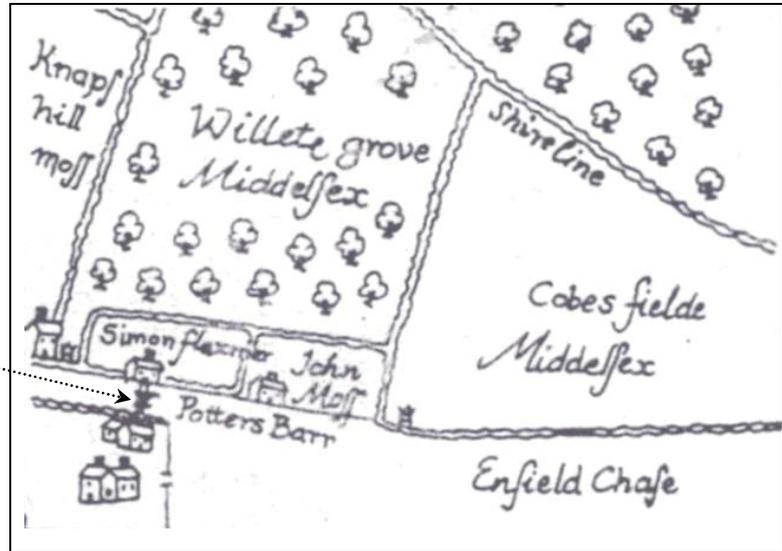
I would imagine that the chances of buying books at random (and without competition!) through an internet auction, and then to find such a remarkable coincidence, would be somewhat remote. With his expertise in mathematics, no doubt Ernie would have been able to work out the odds without the help of a computer.

Colin Davies

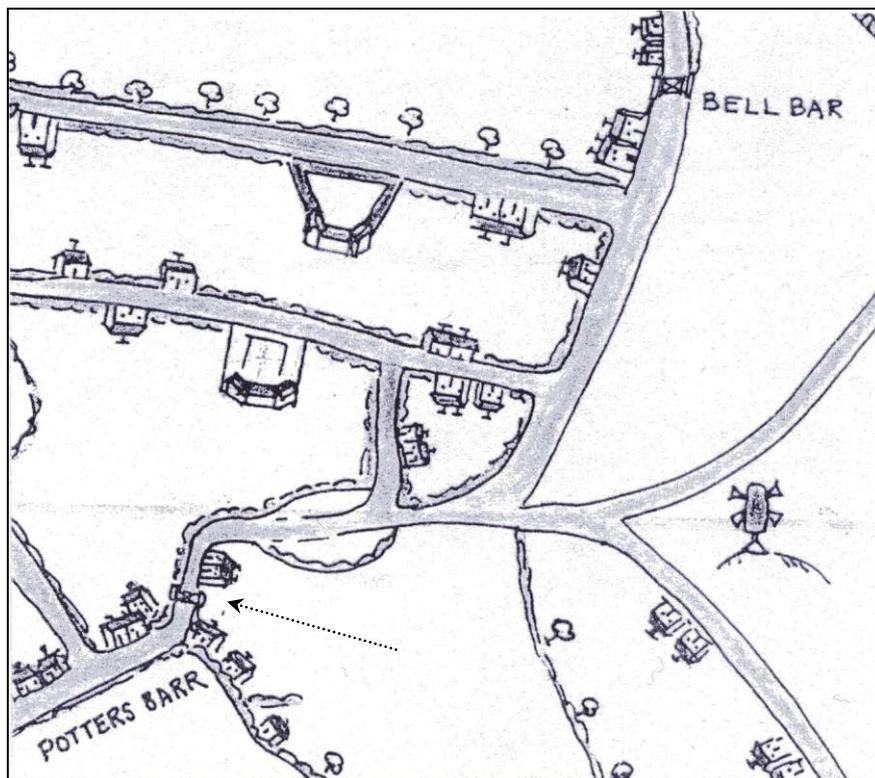
THE SITE OF POTTERS BAR

In a recent edition of *The Newsletter* (Jan. 2007 Vol. 24 No 2) I wrote an article under the same heading and now I am able to add to that information. Though as you will read I have possessed the knowledge for many years, without recognising its significance.

Since Helen Baker was given permission to reproduce (1976) the *Plan of Wylllyotts Manor in the Parish of South Mimms, Midx. with its lands and woods*, drawn by Ralph Treswell, in 1594 (Guildhall Library. Case 66). An inset (see right) showed a gate, which we now know was located in a field in Morven.



Helen traced (1967) from the original at Hatfield House (CPM Supp 21) a part of the *Plan of Hatfield Manor and Palace* made before 1608. I have had a copy of Helen's tracing, yet it is only recently that I noticed it supports the evidence of Treswell's plan by showing the existence of a gate at Potters Bar. It can be seen that the gate at Potters Bar was not a gate to Enfield Chace and never has been. Note there is a similar gate marked at Bell Bar.



THE SITE OF POTTERS BAR (contd.)

There is no doubt the plans show gates which acted as barriers and could be referred to as bars. In medieval times there are other known bars in North Mymms e.g. Swanley Bar, Nevylesbarre and Sternesbarre.

I express my thanks to the Brewers' Company and the Guildhall Library to reproduce part of Treswell's map and to the Marquess of Salisbury for permission to use part of CPM Supp.21.

Brian Warren

LOCAL RAILWAYMEN who received gold watches for serving 45 years on the LNER and British Railways as extracted from *The Barnet Press*.

14-9-1962	Mr F Moisey	43 Coopers Road	signalman New Barnet
	Mr E C Nightingale	3 Deepdene	yard foreman Harringay
15-3-1963	Mr W Desborough	49 Ladbrooke Drive	clerk Kings X
	Mr W G Case	46 Laurel Ave	passenger guard Kings X
	Mr J C Surridge	47 Oakroyd Ave	chief clerk Finsbury Pk depot
	Mr H E Fitzgerald	18 Cambridge Drive	yard foreman Haringay
?exact date	Mr A J Rawlings	93 Wroxham Gdns	supervising foreman Kings X
	Mr H J Baxter	8 Elmscroft Gdns	Townsman Kings X
	Mr J Lubrani	45 Torrington Drive	driver Kings X
6-9-1963	Mr A W Pettitt	32 Cambridge Drive	checker Kings X goods
	Mr G Foster	472 Mutton Lane	chief supervisor Kings X goods
	Mr A Cumner	34 Beechwood Ave	checker Kings X goods
16-10-1964	Mr L E Knight	37 Brackendale	superintendent foreman Kings X
30-7-1965	Mr A Farnham	19 Suffolk Rd	foreman Kings X
	Mr F J Freer	88 Deepdene	signalman Oakleigh Park

Brian Warren

The PB&DHS Newsletter is produced in September, January & May of every 'season'. Mabel Hammett looks after photocopying and collation, and Michael Cawrey organises, with volunteers, the distribution of The Newsletter

If you wish to submit an item for inclusion (preferably of a 'local-history' nature), please phone the Editor, Richard Lee (01707 652975) 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.