

LOUGHTON AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 166

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Odds and ends

The 44th Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on 12 May 2005. The Society is in good health. Membership has increased and finances are strong.

Heather, Lady Murray of Epping Forest, was elected President of the Society in succession to the late Lord Murray. She is the first lady President of the Society. All the existing officers of the Society were re-elected.

Members will be aware (*Newsletter 163*) of the reduction in ECC funding for the *Victoria County History* (VCH) and the effect this will have on research and the publication of further volumes. An appeal, to which the Society contributed, was made for funds. In the Spring 2005 issue of *Essex Past*, the Essex VCH Newsletter, the Chairman of the Appeal Fund reported on progress.

Nearly £24,000 has been donated or promised from a variety of sources: 47 Essex societies offered support. Substantial contributions were received from Friends of Historic Essex, Essex Heritage Trust and the County History Trust; this enables work on Volume XI (the development of the popular seaside resorts of Clacton-on-Sea, Holland-on-Sea, Walton-on-Naze and Frinton-on-Sea) and Volume XII to continue. It is imperative that new sources of funding are found if the long term future of the VCH in Essex is to be secured.

RICHARD MORRIS

A Harvey letter rediscovered

RICHARD MORRIS

A letter written in October 1812 by Vice-Admiral Thomas Hardy to Vice-Admiral Eliab Harvey of Rolls Park, Chigwell, has been found in the Aston Hall archives at the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. Thomas Hardy was the Captain of Nelson's flagship, the *Victory*, at Trafalgar, and Eliab Harvey commanded the *Temeraire* which followed immediately behind *Victory* in the Weather column of

the line of battle at Trafalgar, the 200th anniversary of which is celebrated this year.

Harvey was one of the heroes of Trafalgar and Admiral Collingwood, who commanded the Lee column at the Battle, wrote to him after the Battle congratulating him 'on the noble and distinguished part the *Temeraire* took in the Battle, nothing could be finer, I have not words in which I can sufficiently express my admiration of it'.

Some of Harvey's fellow Captains were, however, not so enthusiastic, and were critical of Harvey's arrogant behaviour after the battle – he was no shrinking violet when it came to giving his opinion on the part he played in naval matters.

Some years later, in 1812, another attack was made on Harvey's character, possibly when he was again seeking election to Parliament. This led Admiral Thomas Hardy to write a letter to him in which he stated that Nelson had remarked to him that 'he had never been better supported than on that day [21 October 1805] by the *Temeraire*'. Hardy continues: 'Your gallant conduct Sir in passing between the *Redoubtable* and *Fougeux* showed at once your determination to Conquer or fall in the attempt. I am ready to declare that the conduct of the *Temeraire* on the 21st October off Trafalgar was Exemplary.'

The letter is of national interest as it sheds more light on the part played by Harvey and the *Temeraire* in the battle, and attributes a remark to Nelson before he received his fatal wound.

It came to light as part of my continuing research into the history of the Harvey family who lived at Rolls Park, Chigwell, for 300 years. Discovery of the letter came too late for inclusion in my book *The Harveys of Rolls Park, Chigwell*, published recently by the Society. It is one of several thousand written by members of the Harvey family, their relations and friends given to the National Library of Wales in 1949 by Andrew Lloyd, the great-great grandson of Admiral Harvey. A facsimile of the letter will be on display as part of an exhibition on Trafalgar and the Harvey family, to be held in October, organised by the Society in partnership with the Loughton Branch of Essex County Libraries.

Drummaids: a Loughton place-name explained

STEPHEN PEWSEY

The corner of Woodbury Hill known as Drummaids has spawned many theories about the origin of its odd name. The modern house named Drummonds, formerly Drummer Maid, stands on the site as does Loughton Lodge. Centuries ago, this part of Loughton was a gravel pit, but how did it come to be known as Drummaids? The Hills Amenity Society Discovery Trail booklet suggests a derivation either from Drummond May, the owner of a local brickfield, or one Drummer Maynard, who tried, and failed, to enclose part of the adjacent forest. The quaintest explanation is that a drummer boy plighted his troth at the spot to a local maid. When he was killed in battle, the wench committed suicide at the place where they wooed. A 'pagan' web site I saw recently claimed the name was 'obviously' from the Drummer and Maid (Marion) characters who take part in mummer plays, and linked this to the maypole dancing which took place at Drummaids until 1914. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that maypole dancing in Loughton included mumming.

I suggest the origin of the name is much older and much more prosaic. The Anglo-Saxon *Pruh mæd* (pronounced 'thrumade' means a deep trough-like meadow. Meanings of the word *Pruh* have the sense of 'hollowed-out', including water-conduit, trench, trough, and even coffin, while *mæd* is our modern English 'meadow' or 'mead'. *Pruh mæd* is a perfect description of the steep curving valley down to Loughton Brook in front of Drummaids.

Loughton land girl

The *Carmarthen Journal* of 12 May 2005 recounts the story of Diana Thake, a former Loughtonian who volunteered for the Land Army during the Second World War. She was training as a hairdresser in Loughton when she volunteered to join the Land Army. She was sent to Woodredon Farm at Waltham Abbey which was owned by Sir Fowell Buxton who bred pedigree Ayrshires. 'I was really lucky, the people were lovely and the farm was outstanding for its time. We got on so well, we all had the same stupid sense of humour and that carried us through. It was around four miles away from where I lived and I used to cycle there and back every day.'

They produced milk, potatoes and corn: the milk being taken to Kensington six days a week by the estate chauffeur. 'There was one period during the war when we tried to milk the cows three times a day, but it didn't last long it was too much for the cows.' Land girls' days

were long: they used to start at 7.30am when they were given their duties. In the winter they finished at 5.30pm but there was overtime during the summer. They cared for a herd of around 50 cattle as well as food stores.

'We got used to the hard work and had plenty of laughs. We knew instantly we would get on, and that friendship has lasted throughout our lives.

We ploughed and rolled the land, reaped, hoed, hedged and ditched, tossed the hay, pitched, stacked and stooked the sheaves of corn – repeating this performance in the wind and rain was a treat! There were tractors but a lot of the work was done with horse and cart, which was slow.

After horse raking, we would take it in turns to ride the horse home.

We had prisoners of war working on the farm from time to time and, during our third year, we had the help of six very nice strong, wonderful workers, all Austrians and two of them farmers.'

Because it was near North Weald airfield, bombs fell on the farm. 'We often saw air battles and German planes like little dishes in the sky. It was frightening but we had had it for so long.' When they heard that the war was over they

'were terribly relieved. The relief from bombing was a tremendous feeling. We left the hedging and ditching early and came back for a cup of tea. Sir Fowell thanked us so much for our work in helping to keep the farm alive, and there was to be extra in our wage packets.'

A few months later Mrs Thake left the Land Army to return to hairdressing: 'I was loathe to leave it, I just loved the life.'

The Lloyd's Patriotic Fund

RICHARD MORRIS

The long war that began in 1793 and, with the exception of the brief period that followed the Peace of Amiens, continued until the fall of Napoleon, was marked by a series of British naval victories. The greatest of these was of course Trafalgar, the bicentenary of which we celebrate this year. We have our own 'local' link with Trafalgar in Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey of Rolls Park.

The underwriters and merchants at Lloyd's, moved not only by considerations of the importance of the supremacy of the Navy to their shipping interests but also by truly patriotic feelings, organised and generously subscribed to a series of funds raised to provide gratuities for the wounded, for dependants of the killed and to reward merit on the part of officers whose bravery and judgement led to the successes of the Navy.

The first of these funds, in connection with the wars of the French Revolution, was organised in 1794 to assist the wounded and the relatives of the killed in Lord Howe's victory on 'the Glorious First of June', when the sum of £21,282 was collected and distributed. In 1797 funds were raised for both the Battle of St

Vincent and the Battle of Camperdown, the latter distributing £52,609, a very large sum in today's values.

In 1798 Nelson won his great victory over Napoleon's fleet at Aboukir Bay, which became known as the Battle of the Nile, and £38,438 was raised at Lloyd's. This was followed by funds for the battle of Copenhagen, Saumarez's action at Algeciras, and Nelson's ill-fated boat attack on Boulogne.

In 1803 it was decided to place these charitable funds on a more permanent basis and a single and continuous organisation was formed – the Patriotic Fund. Captains and commanders of Squadrons were invited to send in returns of killed and wounded, and the numerous frigate duels and actions that took place in 1803 and 1804 resulted in a continual call on the Fund's resources.

Nelson had the highest opinion of the Patriotic Fund and instructed all captains and commanders under him to send in returns of wounded after every action. Before the Battle of Trafalgar he again issued a general order to this effect.

Lloyd's of London have, over the past 70 years formed a substantial collection of Nelson memorabilia, including letters, ship's logs, swords, medals and silverware. Among the letters are 10 relating to the part played by the *Temeraire* at Trafalgar. One of these is a return signed by Captain Eliab Harvey and the ship's surgeon, Thomas Caird, giving details of the killed and wounded: 47 killed, 31 badly wounded, 45 slightly wounded, 12 lost on *Redoubtable* and 25 lost on *Fougeux*. (The last two cases were French ships that had been captured by the *Temeraire*, who put 'prize crews' on board, but both ships sank in the storms that immediately followed the Battle, with substantial loss of life.)

In a letter from Chigwell of 25 January 1806 (three months after the Battle) Captain Eliab Harvey wrote to J P Welford, Secretary of the Patriotic Fund:

'Sir,

Mr Lewis Oades Carpenter of HM Ship *Temeraire* was as deserving a Man in his Station and as good a Carpenter as any in the Navy. The Certificate annexed to Mrs Oades letter which I inclose I conclude will be sufficient Evidence of her Unfortunate Situation.

I am Sir Your Humble Servant
ELIAB HARVEY
late Captain HMS *Temeraire*'

The Secretary subsequently noted on the letter: '£15 annuity to the mother, if surviving.'

Sea Britain 2005 is an initiative led by the National Maritime Museum for celebrating Britain's links with the sea that has done so much to shape our history. Events include a Nelson and Napoleon exhibition at the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, 7 July–13 November; the Trafalgar Weekend: a nationwide community celebration, 21–23 October, including a Thames procession and a service at St Paul's Cathedral.

Field Marshal Thomas Grosvenor (1764–1851) in Loughton

RICHARD MORRIS

Thomas Grosvenor, born in 1764, was the third son of Thomas and Deborah Grosvenor of Chester and Walthamstow. His father, who died in 1794, was the brother of Richard Grosvenor, first Earl of Grosvenor. His mother, Deborah, was the daughter and co-heiress of Stephen and Mary Skynner of Walthamstow. (Deborah's sister, Emma, married William Harvey (1714-1763) of Rolls Park, Chigwell).

Stephen Skynner owned a house in Hoe Street, Walthamstow that was rebuilt in about 1750 and named Grosvenor House after the marriage of his daughter into the Grosvenor family. Skynner also owned a property called Brittens in Loughton, situated in the angle between York Hill and Pump Hill. This estate became the property of Deborah, his daughter, and later passed into the Harvey family of Chigwell.

Thomas and Deborah's son, Thomas, was educated at Westminster School. He married first Elizabeth Heathcote in 1797 and, following her death, Anne Wilbraham in 1831. He started his army career in 1779 as an ensign in the 1st foot guards and steadily rose to become a Lieutenant-Colonel in 1793 and a Major-General in 1802. He was promoted to Field Marshal in 1846, although he was over 80 years of age by this time and had no active command.¹

Contrary to Addison² there is no evidence that Thomas Grosvenor fought at Waterloo. Grosvenor was Colonel-in-Chief of the 65th foot in 1814 and the details in the *London Gazette* in 1815 of the numbers of men killed and wounded in each regiment at Waterloo shows no members of the 65th foot.

Thomas Grosvenor's father was Master Keeper of Walthamstow Walk in Epping Forest from 1786–1794, but his son had 'no ambition for forest honours'.³

He followed his father (and other members of the Grosvenor family) in representing the city of Chester in Parliament. He was a member of the Whig party and sat in eight successive parliaments, being first returned in 1795 on the death of his father. He vacated the Chester seat in 1825 but was returned for Stockbridge at the same election. He retired from parliamentary life at the general election of 1830.

Thomas Grosvenor had a town house in Grosvenor Square, London, but he rented the Warren House in Loughton from about 1820 until 1830 or longer. He possibly chose the Warren House for two reasons. First, his family links with Walthamstow and the Harveys at Rolls Park at Chigwell, and, secondly, as a convenient house on the road to Newmarket. For Grosvenor was one of the most 'staunch and honourable patrons of the national sport of horseracing'.⁴ He kept horses at The Warren and a track was laid in the grounds for their exercise – as well as no doubt using the forest. Old

maps of The Warren grounds describe the track as a 'race course' but it is doubtful if races were ever held there. It was reported that after Trafalgar in 1805, Grosvenor gave his dogs and horses names such as Nelson, Trafalgar and Temeraire.

In the paddock field at The Warren there is a pillar, which apparently came from the dismantled Wanstead House, as an obelisk to the memory of one of Grosvenor's horses that he rode in battle. Addison⁵ suggests the Battle of Waterloo, but as we have seen Grosvenor was not there, and it is more probably the horse named Lady Caroline that Grosvenor rode at the battle of Copenhagen in 1807. The confusion arises because the Duke of Wellington rode a horse called Copenhagen at Waterloo that is thought to have been a foal of Lady Caroline. It is also suggested that the Duke of Wellington visited Grosvenor at The Warren, and tradition has it that the two of them planned strategy under an oak in the grounds, which became known as the Wellington Oak, although the tree no longer exists.

When the pack of hounds maintained by Long-Pole-Wellesley at Wanstead House was disposed of in about 1822, the hounds were dispersed among the keepers and gentry of the neighbourhood. 'Gamester', the last to survive was given to General Grosvenor, and closed his record by hunting down a sheep-stealer.⁶

In a letter to William Lloyd in December 1825,⁷ Thomas Grosvenor wrote that two of Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey's daughters had ridden over from Rolls Park to see him at his house: 'the which I am always so happy in, that I cannot engage myself to go out of it.'

The well-known landscape designer and architect, Humphry Repton extended and improved the house and grounds at The Warren, c 1815. It had previously been the Reindeer Inn and even earlier a small Tudor hunt standing, but by 1815 had become a private residence. The Grosvenors were the first to benefit from the improvements and Thomas Grosvenor's wife Anne described The Warren as 'this dear old house'.⁸

Field Marshal Thomas Grosvenor died in January 1851 at his house, Mount Ararat, near Richmond in Surrey.

1. Full details of his army career can be found in Thomas Grosvenor's entry in DNB.

2. Addison, Sir W, *Epping Forest: Figures in a Landscape*, 1991.

3. National Library of Wales, Aston Hall Correspondence, No 440, letter 1 October 1830.

4. *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1851, pt I, 312-313.

5. Addison, Sir W, *Epping Forest: Figures in a Landscape*, 1991.

6. Perceval, P J S, *London's Forest*, 1909.

7. National Library of Wales, Aston Hall Correspondence, No 439, letter 24 December 1825.

8. National Library of Wales, Aston Hall Correspondence, No. 273.

Book Review

Not a Soap Opera by Jean Gill (née Cook). Price £9.99

Jean Gill, a member of Woodford Historical Society, has written a family history of interest to local historians. She traces 200 years of the Cook family including memories of her own life in Woodford.

Drawing on fascinating diaries and letters, Jean Gill retraces her family's footsteps from her great-great grandfather Edward Cook's move from East Anglia to London in the early part of the 19th century. Vivid descriptions abound of life lived alongside the family's soap factory in the Minories, its successes and setbacks, and a journey through the generations until her own grandfather and his brother settled in Woodford Green.

One branch of the family lived at Woodford House (now Hurst House), but it was to the The Firs that Harry and Lucilla Cook moved in 1886. The entrance to The Firs lay on the High Road in Woodford Green, and had already had one distinguished resident, Andrew Johnston, the first Chairman of Essex County Council and a cousin of the Buxton family. The large house possibly had little architectural distinction, but the large garden, leading to what today is called Warner's Pond, must have been of special enjoyment. The back of The Firs was its beauty: facing south, with a wide wisteria-covered veranda along the whole length that had French windows leading on to it from the sitting room, a little study and the dining room.

Bernard Cook, Jean's father, was one of the two sons of Harry and Lucilla. Bernard's two special hobbies were gardening and photography, and he was to make his career in the latter. He was appointed a Verderer of Epping Forest in 1943, although not formally elected until 1946 due to the War, and he remained in office for over 20 years.

Life in London and at The Firs during the Second World War is described by Jean Gill, who had qualified as a school teacher shortly before the outbreak of war.

Many other members of the Cook family lived in Loughton and Buckhurst Hill, as well as at Woodford. The book is a worthy addition to the history of Woodford and its residents in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Its only lack is an index, however, there are several detailed pedigree charts which assist the reader to follow the lives of the generations of Cooks recorded. The book also contains photographs of members of the family and their houses.

The book can be purchased from the Loughton Bookshop, and the Village Bookshop at Woodford Green, or direct from the author (Tel 0208 504 5364).

RICHARD MORRIS

Editor's note

Contributions to the *Newsletter* are always welcome and needed. They may cover personal, family or local history or national history with a local or personal connection. If you are unsure how to proceed, please contact Ted Martin at the address or telephone number shown below.

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