

# NEWSLETTER 172

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2007

Price 20p, free to members

[www.loughtonhistoricalsociety.org.uk](http://www.loughtonhistoricalsociety.org.uk)

We hope all our members enjoyed the holiday season and that 2007 is a pleasurable year, both for themselves and those dear to them.

Richard Morris certainly organised an absorbing series of talks for our 2006–2007 programme and we look forward with much anticipation to the remaining ones in the current season, taking us through to Thursday, 10 May.

## 150 years of the Loughton Railway

This event was celebrated at Loughton Station on 19 August 2006 from 10.00 to 16.00. The Society had a stall in the booking hall and brisk business was done all day selling our book, *The Loughton Railway 150 Years On*, as well as many other Society publications. There was lively interest in what the Society does and quite a number of discussions on the railway and other topics.



The photograph shows Richard Morris and Ted Martin in conversation with Julie Mackay who had contributed material to the display featuring her grandfather, Percy William Howes (see *Newsletter 170*).

## Early history of the Friends of Epping Forest

KEN HOY

*[Extracted, with their kind permission, from an article by Ken Hoy in the Friends of Epping Forest Newsletter, Autumn 2006]*

It started on a sunny Sunday afternoon in November 1968 in the car park of the Wake Arms PH and arose from a remark by Sir William Addison. At that time serious damage in the Forest caused by horse-riding was widespread and so many letters had appeared in the local newspapers complaining about the damage that the Conservators were anxious to deal with the problem. They were considering taking powers to license and restrict horse-riding

In response to an approach from Sir John Biggs-Davison, MP for Epping Forest (following representations to him by horse-riders), the Superintendent, Alfred Qvist, arranged for a coach to be at the Wake Arms car park at 2 pm on this Sunday afternoon. The coach was to take The Superintendent, the Verderers, Sir John and the horse-riding representatives and several people who had written complaining letters to the local paper, around the Forest to see whether any damage actually existed and how serious it was. The Superintendent asked me to direct the coach to the places where I knew damage could clearly be seen (as I had written to the local paper and regularly took Waltham Forest schoolchildren out into the Forest).

Among the assembled people there was a strange difference in foot-wear. Many folk were wearing shoes and many others wearing 'wellies' . . . not surprisingly this dichotomy seemed to illustrate whether the wearer believed there was damage to be seen or not! After struggling through several areas of deep mud MP Sir John was 'caught' washing the mud off his shiny black shoes This incident reduced the tension between the two 'sets of opinion' when there was general laughter. He took it well!

However, as we left the woodland, embarrassment and triumph became the two differing emotions experienced among the group, when a young horse-riding appeared riding across Fairmead Bottom in a restricted area well off the designated Ride.

After visiting several other damaged areas the coach finally returned us all to the Wake Arms. In the car park various people congregated around William Addison, the senior Verderer (later Sir William).

In the discussion about what we had seen, William Addison expressed a desire to see the focus of opinion that was concerned about damage in the Forest organised into a body that could eventually represent all the users of the Forest. He privately expressed a view that as the Conservators wished to avoid

becoming involved in any conflict . . . but rather to 'hold the ring', there would initially need to be a counterbalancing pressure group of Forest users to that of the organised horse-riders. Among the several individuals who formed this 'car-park-group' were John Haywood, from Woodford Green Athletic Club, Harold Lee from the Orion Harriers, and John Greenwood (who said he represented 'a person who just walked his dog in the Forest'). Among the others were Misses Arnold and Flack from the Ilford Ramblers, and Colin Lawson, an art teacher who organised a painting group using the Forest and myself – on behalf of the children attending the two Waltham Forest Field Study Centres.

A few evenings later these individuals and a few others, met at the Suntrap Field Study Centre and it was decided to proceed by forming an *ad hoc* committee to call a wider representative meeting. It was proposed to begin by organising a meeting in Lopping Hall, inviting as many people as possible who were secretaries and chairmen (in those days!) of local organisations who used the Forest and were likely to be affected and concerned about the problem of damage to the woodland floor. The Superintendent and the four Verderers were also invited to the meeting. Superintendent Alfred Qvist and Mrs Qvist and Bernard Ward and William Addison (Verderers) accepted the invitation and were present.

Thus a total of 27 people representing eleven organisations met (perhaps appropriately) in the historic Lopping Hall, Loughton, on 11 February 1969.

Among the locally well-known signatures on the 'attendance sheet' were those of Roy McKenzie-Smith, Miss Marjorie M Smith, Julie and Roger Small, Jean Usher, William Nursaw, R A Warren, John Greenwood and Harold Lee.

In the discussion it was thought that an organisation should be formed and initially consist of representatives of various interested societies and amenity bodies such as those present, (and others that were suggested) – and it should be organised in some 'federated' form and called the 'Friends of Epping Forest'.

From this inaugural meeting John Haywood agreed to serve as secretary and Ken Hoy as chairman. A Steering Committee of six was elected to prepare a Constitution, including Aims and Objects and Rules of Membership. It was hardly by coincidence that also in November 1968 the Minister of Education & Science had asked the Eastern Sports Council to comment on the conflict between the horse-riding interests and the Administrators of Epping Forest. The Conservators and the British Horse Society both agreed to accept the help of the Eastern Sports Council in finding a solution. Very soon afterwards, on 19 February 1969, I received a phone call from Miss Bradley, who was Secretary of the Eastern Sports Council. She was organising a meeting between interested parties into the 'problem of damage caused by horse-riding in the Forest' . . . would the newly formed Friends of Epping Forest be prepared to attend?

The Minister's representative appointed to chair the meeting was Colonel Sir Arthur Noble. The meeting took place in the Council Offices in Loughton on 8 May 1969 and included representatives of Essex County Council, the Essex County Sports Association, the Lee Valley Regional Park Association and the 'interested parties'. Following visits to the Forest, the subsequent report from Sir Arthur concluded that excessive damage to the Forest floor was occurring. It recommended that the Conservators continue to construct their system of surfaced rides, and that they take powers to restrict riding where and when necessary to protect the Forest and that a system of licensing and registration, dependent upon accepting a 'code of practice', be introduced to identify riders.

A further recommendation was that future problems should be solved by joint consultation between the Epping Forest Committee (Conservators of the Forest) and the Friends of Epping Forest, representing all users of the Forest.

*[Later, in 1973, the Friends of Epping Forest was reformed on a 'mass basis' – individual membership rather than a federated form.]*

Briefly its aims and objects were:

- (a) To provide a consultative link between the administrators of Epping Forest and members of the public who have at heart the preservation of the Forest as defined in the Epping Forest Act 1878.
- (b) To promote measures likely to be of benefit to Epping Forest and to take action against measures which could be detrimental to it and/or impair the amenities it provides (later these objects were slightly amended and amplified when we became a charity).

*[Lack of space dictates that details in the original article dealing with the controversy and great public concern about the proposed orbital road that was to become the M25 are excluded, but the interested reader can obtain the rest of the article from the Autumn issue of their Newsletter on the FOEF website:*

[www.friendsofeppingforest.org.uk](http://www.friendsofeppingforest.org.uk)]

## The friendly Scots Guards of 1940

CHRIS POND

*[This piece results from a response to Chris Pond's question in Newsletter 171 concerning the Scots Guards]*

After publication of the extract from Willie Whitelaw's memoirs of being stationed in Loughton in 1940 with the Scots Guards, our member, Doug Butterfield, called me to add some details.

Doug grew up in Meadow Road, and was about 11 when the war broke out. He remembers the Scots Guards being stationed in and around Loughton for some 18 months. Their principal centres were Woolston

Hall (which later became the Epping Forest Country Club), which was the HQ, Loughton Hall, and Rolls Park. They also occupied large houses in Palmerston Road, Buckhurst Hill, and, nearby, some brand new houses in Devon Close were also requisitioned.

The soldiers obviously made an impression on south-west Essex, not least among the local womenfolk. Doug remembers his sisters being courted; and several local girls married Scotsmen as a result. He also remembers a rifle being kept under his bed!

Apparently some very good parties apparently took place, at one of which, a big fire was the result. Whether it was this that contributed to the wrecking of Rolls Park, Doug is not sure – but the area was obviously quieter once they'd moved on!

*Our thanks to Doug Butterfield for enlightening us in this way.*

## The Venture – Part II

TED MARTIN

*The story of the ladies of the Literary Circle of the Loughton Women's Institute and their quarterly magazine, launched on 22 April 1941, continues. Its publication was obviously intended to help with morale at a difficult time for Loughton and the whole nation*

The *Venture* was back on schedule for No 9 (December 1943, 102 pages) and the Editor thought that there ought to be news of members' relations who were in the forces. The emphasis had changed from poetry to fiction and several stories are included. There is also a report of another garden party (held in a house) on 7 September. In October the meeting was devoted to *Macbeth* and a book page appears again as does a practical tips section.

Then, a completely new departure: 'Dark Behaviour or Secrets of Loughton's Underworld', an illustrated fictional saga of what appear to be black market activities in the town. There was a competition to write a story around a character chosen from a list and the stories are set out together with the judge's report.

No 10 appeared in April 1944 (94 pages) and started with a poem on the achievement of 10 issues and a lengthy editorial. There was also a 'News Letter' charting the changes that had occurred in the period since the last issue. This related how a member had turned on the radio to hear that Winston Churchill on his way home from the Tehran Conference had fallen ill and that the Director of Pathology in the Middle East was among the doctors attending the Prime Minister. 'Why, that's my brother', she exclaimed. The 'News Letter' also gave news of servicemen, among them Denis Brett who, after the Italian armistice on 8 September 1943, excused himself from prison Campo 49 on hearing that a German detachment was on its way to put everyone on the next train to Germany. The locals helped with civilian clothes and food before he began

his trek 700 miles south to the British lines, undergoing incredible adventures and severe hardship – it took six months.

Poems and stories abound as before but this time a 'Portrait gallery' with portraits of two Literary Circle members and poems to laud them. There are also extracts from letters home from a Lieutenant in the Royal Marines outward bound on a troopship, reports on an afternoon with Longfellow and the Christmas party, Irish verse, etc. The saga of Loughton's (fictional) underworld continued, nicely illustrated. 'Jean's Scrapbook' dilated on equal rights for women and suggested that they should learn to replace fuses and repair the leaking tap to have independence in the running of the home. Book pages and a series of articles on food, responding to a competition to write of a memorable meal, were followed by a bogus 'agony aunt' page – the illustration shows a very masculine and unsympathetic 'Aunt Kate'.

At 112 pages No 11 (October 1944) was the second largest issue so far. The Editor referred to the doodlebugs which 'have disturbed our Summer programme' and the 'News Letter' reported on the night of 14 March 'when eight bombs fell in and around the Cricket Field and an enemy plane was shot [down] in mid-air those of us who live in York Hill, Trapps [sic] Hill, Church Hill, Ticehurst [sic] Hill, had most unpleasant experiences from fire and blast and many were left for days, even weeks, without windows and ceilings and with an incredible amount of debris to clear away'.

Again there are poems and articles (some illustrated) and a further instalment from the troopship; a comparison of Tennyson and *Omar Khayyam* and a report on the rendition of the first act of *Pygmalion*. The subject of the portrait gallery has a report of her 80th birthday party which included charades, nymphs and a cake. After a meeting on John Gay (1685–1732), who was an ancestor of one of the members present, there is a report on the five plays produced as the result of a competition. More on 'Loughton's Underworld' subtitled 'And quiet flows the Roding', again nicely illustrated. 'Jean's Scrapbook' tells of domestic shortages and frustrations and extols the virtues of sage, and there are more poems and stories. Aunt Kate the agony aunt reappears and there is another play competition, the results of which are included.

Number 12 was published in April 1945 and consisted of 104 pages. They had hoped that No 11 would be the last published in wartime but they 'can't wait any longer' for hostilities to finish and No 12 was overdue. The 'News Letter' records the 'slippery 38 days from Christmas Eve to the last day of January when the ground was white with frost and snow without a single break . . . Then the thaw came suddenly, the deep snow vanished in a few hours and the temperature rose to 60° F . . . the average summer temperature of the British Isles.' One of the members had an accident when 'cycling home from Lewin's, the bakers, when a five-ton army lorry crashed into her,

knocked her off her cycle (which miraculously was undamaged), lacerated her arm, wounded her head and literally tore the clothes off her back'. Dr Bell came to the rescue and the victim had to spend a fortnight in the Forest Hospital. It afterwards came out that the lorry driver 'had no business in Loughton and should have been many miles away at Clacton-on-Sea'.

The article records the fall of a V1 in Alderton Way at 5am on 25 September (fortunately, there were no fatalities) and the first V2 also came about this time. On 20 November another V2 landed on a house in the Warren.

The activities of a daughter who joined the WAAFs at Chigwell in June 1939 and two years later went to Cairo in charge of the first party of WAAFs to go overseas are recorded. 'They spent six weeks in a luxury liner wearing life jackets the whole time and eventually reached Sierra Leone. From there they voyaged to Lagos in an awful tramp steamer . . . and finally flew from Lagos to Khartoum.' During her time away she 'made six trips to Palestine . . . spent a month in Kenya . . . seven months in Italy . . . and one night in Malta'. It is also recorded that at one time Algers Road was home to seven army majors, now reduced to five!

A beautifully illustrated poem 'Homage to Botticelli' occupies three pages and amusingly recounts a young man's first encounter with the famous painting of Venus:

...  
Well, off I went, and none too pleased,  
New suit and all, and feeling squeezed,  
'Come in' she says – I little knew  
What joy I was a-coming to,  
I goes to speak – but where's me tongue?  
There, right in front of me, SHE hung!

Down on the horse hair couch I slid,  
Miss Blake calls out 'What ails you Sid?'  
I doesn't answer, all I sees  
Is her a-wafted by the breeze,  
So pretty in her little shell –  
I knows at last what's cast that spell!

Articles on the real Macbeth, fear of spiders, ENSA and the Ballet Guild and 'A Cup of Tea' follow.

The next article recounts how in 1920 Dr Butler Harris set up the Loughton Infant Welfare Centre 'determined that the babies of Loughton should grow up without . . . all the preventable ailments he had found amongst their fathers and uncles during the First World War'. The doctor insisted that the clinic was for all, not just the poor, and it was set up first of all in the Reading Room of the Lopping Hall. At the start, the attendance was between 12 and 20 babies and when this increased the clinic was moved first to the old Wesleyan Hall and then to St Mary's Church Hall and then to the Union Church Hall. Before the war there was an average attendance of well over 100, the largest being 153. On Dr Butler Harris's death in 1936 the clinic was taken over by Dr Bell. During the war the clinic was

subdivided and new clinics established on the Roding Estate and North Loughton.

There are more poems and the third instalment of letters from a troopship sailing to the Middle East.

The Literary Circle discussed 'literary circles', Shakespeare's *Henry V*, Hans Andersen and there is report of their Christmas Party where fancy dress, miming and charades formed part of the entertainment. Papers and meetings on Byron, Shaw, Shelley and Keats, Modern Poetry and *Much Ado about Nothing* also appear.

The murky doings of Loughton's Underworld continue, again nicely illustrated, and Jean's Scrap Book reappears with a recipe for cooking turnips, a recommendation to use stale cheese in artworks and a 'flight of imagination or a pre-war lunch'. There is a cure for insomnia and various culinary tips for picnics.

Aunt Kate's spoof agony column appears again with, it has to be said, a further patronising piece of advice to the cockney Ivy in her relations with her boyfriend, Fred.

The issue is brought to an end by a report on the Essay competition the subject of which was 'The Perfect Holiday'. This time William Addison was not the judge and the task was delegated to a fellow member.

[To be concluded . . . in episode III of Ted's résumé we will see how the end of the Second World War, perhaps inevitably, saw the passing of The Venture.]

## Cambridge Colours

[Suggested by Chris Pond and much condensed from the National Portrait Gallery website]

**Madderton & Co Ltd, 37–39 Baldwins Hill, Loughton, Essex 1890–1939, also 156 King's Road, Chelsea, London 1915–1918. Artists' colours manufacturers.**

The manufactory of artists' colours to medieval recipes was established in 1891 by A P Laurie in the cottages Nos 37–39 Baldwins Hill. The firm was named after one of the pigments, madder, and not after the owner. Its products, known as 'Cambridge' colours, had a high worldwide reputation. Brushes and other accessories were later added to their products list. The factory was gradually extended, though the original cottages can still be identified in the composite structure now existing. It ceased to operate during the Second World War when the managing director retired and the building was taken over for light engineering' (*source: The Hills Amenity Society Discovery Trail, at [www.hillsamenityociety.co.uk/detail/disctrail.htm](http://www.hillsamenityociety.co.uk/detail/disctrail.htm)*).

A P Laurie (1861–1949), Principal of Heriot-Watt College, Edinburgh, and Professor of Chemistry at the Royal Academy 1912–36, was the author of *The Materials of the Painter's Craft in Europe and Egypt from Earliest Times to the End of the 17th Century* (1910), among other publications. He had founded Madderton & Co

by 1890 and he had an account with Roberson, c/o Madderton & Co, in April that year. He was in correspondence with G F Watts 1890–93, concerning his new colours, in 1890 sending the artist a sample of his first colour, a Madder Lake.

Madderton and Co advertised its Cambridge Colours in *The Year's Art 1892–96*, as prepared under the personal supervision of A P Laurie, the outcome of a series of experiments undertaken to increase the durability of paintings, stating that the colours were ground in linseed oil, cold-pressed from pure seed, and sun-refined, and welcoming visits from artists to see the colours in preparation at the laboratory; also referring to a new permanent Lake, the colour of French Marigolds, and a rare quality of Umber, directly imported from Cyprus. The company subsequently advertised its new Flake White (1894).

The business began advertising an extended range including brushes, palettes, knives, paper etc in 1903, and by 1913 was advertising a very wide range of products (*Price List of Cambridge Materials for Artists*, May 1913, 183pp). Cambridge Colours were exported from about 1910. They featured in the trade catalogues of a number of companies in the United States, and by 1913 were stocked in Australia.

The business closed in 1939 but Cambridge Colours continued to be available in the United States, manufactured by Winsor & Newton, suggesting that Winsor & Newton may have bought out the remaining goodwill in Madderton & Co Ltd

**Madderton's links with artists:** John Brett is documented as using 'Laurie's Venetian red' in 1892. Other artists are mentioned in Madderton's publicity material, which included a testimonial from Frederick Leighton, PRA, in 1893, and subsequently from Millais, Burne-Jones, Watts, Holman Hunt and many other artists who are reported as having praised the quality of Cambridge Colours. The extended feature in Madderton's Notes for Artists, *Some Artists' Palettes*, running between 1902 and 1904, specifies the colours, mediums and materials used by more than 100 contemporary artists.

[A half-page photograph of 'The interior of Madderton's artists' colour factory, Baldwins Hill', can be seen in Chris Pond's *The Buildings of Loughton and Notable People of the Town*. The caption to that plate (10) states: 'Founded by A.P. Laurie (V Nello, manager) to make pigments according to mediaeval formulae; and a price list for papers of the company. Artists would often correspond with and visit Madderton's for their paints and papers – it always dealt direct with them, "saving 6s 8d in the £".']

## Memories from Mike Alston

TERRY CARTER

In December 1997 Mike Alston first spoke, and then wrote, to Percy Ambrose (*Reminiscences of a Loughton Life* – 1995). He enclosed a number of typewritten sheets entitled *Memories of Loughton High Road from 1928 to 1940*. These partly comprise two 'journeys' – the first along the west side, from the Union Church and heading north to Church Hill, and the second in the same direction along the east side. There are also pieces called *Characters remembered from the 1930s* and *Other memories of the 1930s*. Unfortunately Percy subsequently became unwell, and was never able to make use of this material which, after several years, was passed to Chris Pond. Recognising that here was excellent subject-matter of general L&DHS interest, Chris passed them on to me when I became the *Newsletter* editor, along with a later piece, *Loughton Railway Station – Memories of 1929 to 1939 – through the eyes of a boy aged 5 to 15* which Mike sent to Chris quite recently.

In view of the length of Mike's notes, which are written in a pleasing mix of remembered places and people, plus often quite sharp comment, I have broken them down into a number of shorter pieces to be included in this and subsequent editions of the *Newsletter*. The first is a verbatim copy of the letter to Percy, plus a few notes Mike gives about his background, before beginning only the few steps (as lack of space precludes more) of 'Journey 1' from the Union Church to the 'Triangle'. I have also included a few extracts from *Characters* and from *Other memories*. Spellings and punctuation in the letter and all the notes are exactly as sent, including everything in numerous brackets. Mike modestly says his memories differ only in small details from Percy's – that is not so; greatly more subjective, they have their own flavour and lead on to many questions which perhaps some of our members can answer.

Maidenhead, Berks  
28 December 1997

Mr Percy Ambrose

It was a great pleasure to speak to you on the 'phone the other day and to thank you for the wonderful memories stirred up by your splendid book *What changes we have witnessed in Loughton "village"*!

As I mentioned, I was born in Church Hill in 1924 and, from 1926 my parents lived in Motts Croft (architect: Horace White) in Traps Hill. They later moved to 68 Brooklyn Avenue (in 1960) and, having talked to my sister – who lent me your book – , Diana, I understand she knows you well.

Many years ago I began to "reconstruct" Loughton High Road as I remembered it as a child – between 1928 and 1940 when I and my school were evacuated. I am enclosing a copy of my memories, which differ only in one or two small details from your own record, and hope you may find them of some interest. They were essentially those of a child, rather than an adult, and I really don't know what my very earliest memories are. Around the age of 4 to 6 they are primarily isolated

recollections. To date these more precisely, one would need to know when the following occurred, e.g:

- Woolworth's opening date
- Ingles' block built
- Shops erected to north of Loughton Cinema (Fish shop, etc)
- Barclays Bank block built
- The Misses Hubbard handed over to Mrs Wallis
- Parrots took over from Bowditch
- Forge beside Peacock's closed
- Shops north of Butler Harris (Rita Page etc) built

I too, had much involvement in local planning, in Windsor and Maidenhead, as I was on the Borough Council from 1975 to 1991, and served on our planning sub-committee (covering Maidenhead and its immediate surroundings) throughout that time. Fascinating, but arduous work!

Again, my thanks for providing me with so much enjoyment. My very good wishes to you, and may you have a healthy 1998.

Mike Alston

By the way, I revisited "Motts Croft" Traps Hill earlier this year, my first time back since 1960. The new owner has stripped it right down and is now rebuilding and extending it. We are keeping in touch, and he has promised to let me see the finished result. While much will have changed, he is retaining the ships' beams which were such a feature of the dining room and lounge. Horace White did a good job!!

### 'Journey 1

*The Union Church* set well back from the road, and conjuring up, in my child mind, visions of Roman or Greek temples

*The Primrose Café* painted, naturally, a pale yellow. Agent for Lyons cakes.

*Ricketts*: newsagent, toy shop – mostly rather cheap and nasty, presided over by squeaky-voiced Mr Ricketts who had a mop of white hair and a flowing white moustache.

*Insurance offices*: the name "Pearl" comes to mind.

*Westminster Bank*: The manager was Mr Cockerill. His son, David, was a schoolmate.

CONNAUGHT AVENUE/ OLLARDS GROVE

*Offices*

*Dry Cleaners*: Perhaps later in the 1930s. Called "Streamline"?

*Ernest A Beckett, Photographer*: A dilapidated wooden building. Mr Beckett was a "grey" man who wore a drooping wide-brimmed felt hat. When the building was demolished it was replaced by *The Jubilee Café*, presumably in 1935 (King George V jubilee). The lettering of the name sign was in "new" neon, in gaudy blue and red.

*Perry, Greengrocer*: Later renamed "Haywards".

*Dairy*: This was set back from the building line. Later it was Radbournes (and may always have had that name).

There were 1 or 2 further cottages, set back as the dairy, and with small front gardens.

*Café, The "Park"*: sign proclaimed that it was also a soda fountain. (As a child this term mystified me as I always expected to see sprays of lemonade shooting skyward!) The floors were all in stone mosaic, and the café itself, to the rear of the front shop had a massive glass domed roof. The man who owned it also owned the little café and tobacco kiosk at Loughton Station.

*Harrison, Grocer*: Mr Harrison was invariably smartly robed in white, complete with crisp white sleeve covers. His daughter, Mary, still lives in Loughton.

Alongside Harrison's there was a very rough pathway.

*Café*: very much a working man's place of refreshment, with an open serving counter.

Just off the High Road, at the corner of Smarts Lane was *Sandall*, a baker.

The Triangle, consisting of a clump of chestnut trees, surrounded by low railings.'

[*Journey 1 will continue in Newsletter 173.*]

### From Characters remembered from the 1930s

*Mr Dalgleish*: The Maitland family's gamekeeper who, appropriately attired and with shotgun over his shoulder, and dog following, regularly walked up and down Traps Hill as he "marched" from his home near the forest to his "work" on the Maitland lands along Borders Lane. I think it was he who maintained "kennels" for housing peoples' dogs when they were away on holiday. One neighbour's dog escaped from there and arrived, shivering, on our doorstep. Because the dog, Toby, was reluctant to return to his owner, let alone Mr Dalgleish, we eventually "adopted" him. A lovely dog! And sensible!

*Mr Green*: A casualty of the Great War, he had one arm. He lived at the top of Queen's Road and, for several years, managed the café and tobacco kiosk at Loughton station. Later, he supplied tobacco, to order, to private houses. He visited us weekly, with a tin of Godfrey Phillips "Plus Twos". This tin, coloured pale pink, contained 50 + 2 cigarettes and cost 2/- (10p).

*Man with one leg*: Another Great War casualty, he used crutches, with a trouser leg folded back over the stump. My mother, quaintly, used to tell me never to run past disabled people as it might make them sad that they couldn't do likewise! And so, whenever I saw him, I would slow down from my trot as I went past. He probably thought, "who is that miserable child who stops to gawp at my disablement?"

*Miss Evelyn Waller*: The Waller family lived beyond the "Gardener's Arms", at the top of St John's Road. Miss Waller was a character, very large, who used to drive around in a small open Austin 7, her whole body bulging over the sides! She was also an amateur actress, her most well-known – and ideal – role was that of King Henry VIII. My parents said she was perfect in the part!

### From *Other memories of the 1930s*

'Tobogganing down the steep field which is now Elevenacre Rise.

Sliding (we had no skates) on the forest gravel pit ponds, even when the thaw had set in and the whole ice surface creaked and dipped.

The yellow "Gatti" steam wagons delivering great blocks of ice to food shops before the age of the refrigerator; and the more modern Gas Light & Coke Company dark green wagons chuffing along the street.

The house at the side of the alley at the top end of The Drive which had, in its conservatory, a miniature red brick house.'

[More from both of these sections next time. I hope readers found them as evocative as I did.]

## Pre-war newspaper snippets

### **Alleged bogus doctor sent for trial**

The allegations against Harold Charles. Edward Harrison (43), dispenser, giving his address as May Villa, [Church Hill], Loughton, Essex, were further investigated at West London Police Court on Saturday. The prisoner was first charged with failing to report himself as a convict on licence, and afterwards with giving false certificates of death whilst, it was alleged, posing as a doctor. On Saturday the accused was further charged with perjury for swearing at the inquests on three patients he had attended that he was a registered medical practitioner. He was also charged with obtaining money by false pretences by receiving in each case a fee of two guineas to which only medical practitioners were entitled. The police stated that the prisoner's correct name was John Cubbin but on his visiting card he was described as 'Sir Harold Harrison, Bart', and 'Surgeon-Major Harrison'. When arrested the accused said: 'I am a doctor. You have made a big mistake, and will have to pay for it. I shall see the police authorities myself about it.' The prisoner was committed for trial at the Old Bailey.

*The Scotsman*, 16 November 1914

### **An Archdeacon's death: coroner's inquiry**

A coroner's inquiry was held yesterday at Loughton into the cause of the death of Archdeacon C A Downie, whose body was found in Epping Forest on Saturday. It terminated in a verdict of death from cyanide poisoning self-administered.

The Vicar of Fordingbridge (the Rev F W Little) said he had known the Archdeacon since 1911, when he came from Barbadoes [*sic*] to be curate at St Mary's Church, Torquay. After two years he returned to the West Indies and became the Archdeacon of St Vincent when 35. In 1923 he came again to England for rest, and became engaged to witness's daughter. He was not well enough

to resume work in the West Indies, and for the last year or more he had been in England undergoing treatment for neurasthenia. So far had he improved that he was about to begin work again at St Mary's, Paddington, the day following his death.

The body was found by Dr Gale, of Stamford Hill, when walking through the forest on Saturday. Deceased was lying on his overcoat, which was spread out, and in his left hand he held a bottle, which Dr Gale gathered at the time contained prussic acid. Death was due to prussic acid poisoning.

The Coroner, in giving his verdict, said it was obvious that deceased was afraid he was not fitted to continue in his profession, and took the law into his own hands.

*The Scotsman*, 7 October 1925

## Are we able to help Robert Barltrop?

### TERRY CARTER

Robert Barltrop was kind enough to allow his pen- and-ink drawing of Staples Road School to be used in our recent publication, *Post-war Loughton 1945-1970*. In return I sent him a complimentary copy of the book. He later telephoned his thanks, and we had a long conversation, during which he told me that another reason for calling was to find out if anybody in the L&DHS knew the whereabouts of, or what had happened to, three old family friends.



But first, a few words about Robert himself. Born in Walthamstow in 1922, he has written a weekly column in the *Newham Recorder* for over 18 years, where he talks about his life and past times in East London. From a long line of blacksmiths, his father was a horse fodder dealer, including operating in Epping, and as a boy Robert used to go all round the East End with him on a horse and cart, delivering fodder. Robert attended Sir George Monoux school from 1933-1939. Robert has been a professional boxer, a labourer, a strip cartoonist, a schoolteacher and a sign-painter - among other things, he says. He has written several books including the trilogy *Bright Summer, Dark Autumn, Growing up in North East London between the Wars*; *Jack London: the Man, the Writer, the Rebel*; *The Muvver Tongue: A Cockney*

*Dictionary.* He is a prolific artist, most of his subjects being people and places of local interest. He is married with three grown-up sons (two are in the circus and one is a policeman), and lives in Stratford.

Some years ago he gave a talk to the L&DHS about the cockney dialect and still, at well over 80, gives talks on different topics – he gave one this November to the Rochford Hundred Historical Society – ‘The Fancy on the Marshes’ – a history of bare-knuckle prizefighting in Essex and Kent.

He very much wants to know if any of our members can give him any information about three interesting Loughton men that Robert knew, but who were mainly friends of his father, Edwin:

**Len Chinnery** – a Loughton undertaker, who was very friendly before the Second World War with both Robert and his father Edwin, until Edwin, in the course of an argument that seems to have escalated, called Mr Chinnery ‘a bodysnatcher’, thus leading to a falling-out that was never repaired.

**Ben Hyde** – a Loughton High Road newsagent, well known before the War, but again, despite Mr Hyde being a flamboyant character, all contact has long been lost. Chris Pond believes that at one time he had a printing works in Epping.

**W C Marshall** – this gentleman worked for a time before the Second World War (and possibly after) as a mechanic in Brown’s garage. He was a notably successful motor cycle racer, winning various championships, and earning a coveted Gold Star in 1936 for lapping Brooklands at well over 100 miles per hour. He lived for some years in Forest Road and, prior to Brown’s, had a workshop at the well-known Hanmer’s garage in Clapton.

*I felt we would like, if possible, to assist Robert, who has led, and still leads, such an interesting life. If any information is forthcoming I shall be pleased to pass it on to him.*

## Invasion precautions

### ROBERT BARLTROP

*Reprinted from Robert Barltrop’s Bright Summer, Dark Autumn (LBWF Libraries and Arts Department, 1986).*

There were preparations for resisting an invasion. If German forces were seen approaching the coast church bells were to be rung – the idea was that they would pick up one from another, village by village and town by town, telling everybody in Britain in a few hours that the invasion had come. Until or unless it happened the bells must never be rung now. The Sunday after this plan was announced an elderly vicar in a lonely parish, somewhere in the east of England, went into his church and rang the bell as usual; he had no radio and seldom read newspapers, and did not know. It caused a panic in the area for a little while. The story was told on the radio and my father, who

strongly disliked the clergy, was indignant. Sitting in his chair, he said in a trumpet voice: ‘There you are – artful parsons! Holding their hand out to Hitler now!’

Another scheme was announced, the organisation of a spare-time corps of cyclists who would go out looking for German parachutists and, possibly, shoot them. The name immediately improvised was ‘Parashots’. Foskett went to enrol on the first evening, on his way home from work. The next day he told me there was a tremendous queue at Forest Road police station, far too many to be coped with; after waiting they were sent away and told that other arrangements would be made. (The corps was formed as the Local Defence Volunteers, the cyclists-only scheme being dropped, and became the Home Guard.)

The idea of German parachutists became a mania of the authorities. They might come down in isolated places to pave the way for an invasion; they would be picked men who spoke fluent English. I saw a Ministry of Information film in which two ladies in a country cottage detected flaws in an English officer’s speech – he was a German parachutist in disguise. Anybody taking photographs or making sketches outdoors risked suspicion of being an enemy agent. Out late at night, or alone round the marshes or the forest, patrolling police would stop you and ask your business; if you were not carrying your identity card you had to report to a police station with it in the next forty-eight hours. Barbed wire was put across open spaces, and obstacles of reinforced concrete – ‘tank traps’ – were built to half-obstruct main roads.

### Tailpiece

This issue has benefited, as in the case of the article ‘The Friendly Scots Guards of 1940’, from membership feedback, thanks to Doug Butterfield. As well as other excellent contributions from regular contributors, it was also a welcome bonus to receive material such as that from Mike Alston, via the Chairman. Perhaps Mike’s memories may evoke other recollections of places or characters in and around Loughton. If any member has other written or photographic memorabilia that can be used for broader L&DHS interest, please pass it on. All contributions are welcome.

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