

BROMLEAGE

THE JOURNAL OF THE BROMLEY BOROUGH LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

March 2001

Price 60p Free to members



MAISON CHARLES

77, Penge High Street, near Penge West Station
1890-1900?

From the Bill Morton Collection

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Editorial

Firstly a reminder to anyone who has forgotten to renew their subscription that this will be the last newsletter you will receive.

Our AGM will be held at the April meeting. As always the committee will be delighted to welcome any new members who may wish to serve the society. (see notice on page 2)

We especially need a new **Secretary** and **Minutes Secretary**. Patricia has gallantly filled these posts since the sudden death of our previous secretary, Nancy Tonkins in 1995, and would like to pass the mantel on to someone else. Considering that Patricia has undertaken most posts within the Society during most of the last 25 years, you will surely agree that this is not an unreasonable request!

2000 facts

Our Chairman, Tony Allnutt is still awaiting your contributions for this. Many months ago a notice was included with Bromleage but there has been little response. It said:

We need your help to find hitherto little known or recorded information/facts about the towns, villages, people, houses, streets, schools, woods, parks etc. in the different parts of the borough. This Encyclopaedia of local information can only be produced if you assist by supplying the information.

An Armchair Tour of EC3

Lastly please note the change of speaker at the June meeting. Allan Burnett, for many years a City of London Guide, will talk about the city centre from London Bridge past the Monument to the Tower of London and all around this historical area.

PARAMOUNT PLASTICS

When writing articles about local history, one must be fairly sure of ones facts. In the recently published book edited by Muriel Mudie titled "Memories of Bromley" I came across an error regarding Paramount Plastics.

Page 103 shows a photo of their premises in Anerley Station Road being their original factory. This is not correct as the first one was situated at 36/38 Hawthorn Grove, Penge.

The premises of LP products were where I started work in the little engineering shop situated on the left-hand side of the building, just after WW2. The main rear of the building contained supplies of lead which was melted in machinery from which issued the soft lead piping, being caught by the operator with a sling and led to a drum and wound on. The required length was cut by the very technical means! Of slicing with a saw on which the teeth had been ground to a knife-edge.

Opposite the engineering shop was Paramount Plastics. Things being slack on the engineering side I was asked if I would like to work for them. Various items were cut from sheet plastic and I seem to remember an early form of injection moulding.

Returning home covered in plastic dust I soon realised it was not my scene. Little did I know that I would be, later in the early 1950's, very familiar with the area being stationed at the old Beckenham Fire Station opposite St George's Road, the majority of our shouts or calls being to the Penge area.

The proprietor of Paramount Plastics was a Mr Frankel and his foreman whose surname I forget was named Harry.

Many local girls (now grandmothers) worked there. I seem to remember there being a laundry and pub nearby. I'm sure some knowledgeable Penge historians will refresh my memory.

Alan Hills

Bromley Central School 1925 -1929 by H.J.Belsey

Bromley Central School was opened in September 1925 and was closed, for reasons not now known in 1939. It was a selective school giving a basic secondary education to 40 boys and 40 girls each year.. Selective Central Schools were relatively new then and were strongly encouraged by the Ministry of Education. At the time Bromley must have had a forward-looking Education Committee. I was one of the original intake in September 1925 and I completed my four years course in July 1929. These notes only cover that period.

Bromley Education Committee had been considering a scheme of educational reconstruction for some four or five years and the establishment of the Central School was one outcome. When the plan for the school was announced there was considerable opposition from the Church of England establishment, led by the Vicar of Bromley.

It must be remembered that at this period the great majority of elementary schools were "Church" schools grant-aided by the local Education Committee but with a management body having a majority of Church nominees. The Vicar of Bromley took a very active part in the management of the National School and the syllabus had a strong religious bias. What worried the clergy was the prospect of the removal of the brightest pupils from the influence of the Church at an "impressionable age", something that could only be "viewed with concern" by the managers of the Church schools. For the Central School would be under secular control. The dispute was still continuing when the school opened.

The school building was in Wharton Road formerly the Wharton Road Elementary School. It was a typical, turn-of-the-century Council School building, solid and squares in brick with a slated roof. It was planned in two symmetrical wings, with boys on one side and girls on the other. Each part had a small tarmac "playground" and a six feet high wall separated the two. The only way to see into one from the other was to climb on to the heavy wooden gates in one section of the wall, gates that never opened, and climbing on to them was firmly discouraged. But they were frequently used, especially by the fifteen-year-olds for making amorous assignations.

The building (now the School of Vocational Studies) was substantially altered when rebuilt following damage by a flying bomb in 1944, and is now hardly recognisable to those who

knew it in its earlier form. Then it was on three floors, with a large Assembly Hall on the ground floor together with the boiler room, storage etc. The classrooms were on the two floors above. The stairs and corridors were of bare concrete and very noisy when pupils entered or left the school en masse. The Headmaster's study was isolated on a half-landing of the top floor.

The building was heated by large-bore black cast iron hot water pipes which gave quite inadequate heating in really cold weather and only those who sat in the back row, right against the pipes, could hope to be comfortably warm. Whenever a teacher was absent from the room all who could find space sat on the pipes.

There were no internal lavatories; to reach these one had to cross the playground to the furthest corner. The fittings were unprotected and frequently froze in cold weather. A standpipe on the wall provided drinking water with a long queue forming at "playtime" in hot weather. In the Boys' part there was an outbuilding, with the woodwork room on the first floor (under the control of the redoubtable Mr. Smith) with an open-fronted shelter below. This had a bench round three sides and the available space was in much demand during bad weather. A similar building at the Girls' end provided a Domestic Science room. Woodwork and Domestic Science were strictly single-sex subjects.

The main entrance to the school was in Wharton Road and by the entrance gate stood the caretaker's cottage occupied by Joe Russell and his wife. Joe was an ex-soldier of the South African and First World wars. He was always neatly dressed in a suit and trilby hat, and was never seen hatless. He was a taciturn but not disagreeable man. Among his many jobs he stoked the boilers and was usually blamed by the pupils for the inadequate heating. No doubt he was strictly controlled on fuel, for heating was only permitted from October 1st to March

31st whatever the weather. In spite of his very long hours, his small garden was always beautifully maintained with vegetable rows and a fine display of flowers, especially dahlias, in late summer. This building and the Domestic Science room were destroyed in the bombing and never rebuilt.

Pupils coming as they did from ordinary elementary schools found many changes on entering the Central School. At that time elementary school teachers taught all subjects to a single class, which meant teaching the same age-group year in and year out. It was different at the Central School, where each teacher taught only one or two main subjects sometimes with a subsidiary one as well. Each form had a form-master or mistress. Because of the total sex segregation, each form was duplicated. Only men could be boys' form-masters, with women teachers for the girls. Apart from this both men and women teachers taught boys and girls. Another change was that the Headmaster was largely freed from teaching duties, normally taking each form for one period each week teaching English, which he did remarkably well. The senior girls' teacher acted as deputy head. Something else quite new was to have such facilities as a science laboratory, an art room, organised games (one period per week) in school hours and physical training periods with proper equipment. Also new were French, Algebra and Geometry lessons.

Classroom furniture was much better than that in the elementary schools, where bench desks and backless forms were still common. The desks were of light oak, each desk for two pupils only, with chairs to sit on, a great comfort to those used to the primitive furnishings of the elementary schools.

The school had an exceptionally good staff but above all it was fortunate in its first and only headmaster, John James Webber, M.A. He had all the qualities that make a good teacher - competence, efficiency, learning and a real ability to teach. As with so many first-class teachers much of his time was taken up with administration, but he gave English lessons to all pupils once a week, and even the least imaginative child could not fail to be influenced by his real enthusiasm for the English language and its literature. He must have been an exceptionally busy man and always seemed to

be in a hurry as he swept along the corridors with his gown fluttering out behind him like a somewhat flustered rook. His voice, rather high-pitched, was pleasant to listen to, and his enunciation perfect. He was more than a good teacher; he was a true educationalist and it is known that he was held in high regard by the H.M.I.'s who came into contact with him.

School started every morning with an assembly in the hall, presided over by Mr. Webber. Hymns were sung and Mr. Webber gave a short talk, not usually on a directly religious subject, made announcements and denounced any bad behaviour that had come to his notice. Assembly ended with the forms marching out in order, girls first, while Mr. Lake, music and art master, pumped out popular tunes on the piano to march time.

The school covered a very wide catchment area, the whole of the then Borough of Bromley, which meant that some pupils had to travel quite long distances morning and evening. One boy walked from a cottage at Pickhurst Green, then completely rural and surrounded by meadows. He walked the Public footpath across a long stretch of arable land to a point in Hayes Road (now the junction with Beadon Road) and then through the central part of Bromley to Wharton Road, a total distance of some 2½ miles, an unpleasant journey in snow or even heavy rain. Another boy walked from the Downham Estate, almost at the Lewisham boundary.

As the playground areas were very small, there was little room for organised games during the break periods. Boys occupied themselves largely with the usual rough and tumble and minor scraps sometimes developed into more serious fights. These were quickly suppressed by the duty master, but if the matter was considered to be of sufficient importance, with honour at stake, the two antagonists would reach an agreement to settle the fight elsewhere, away from school promises and school time, rather reminiscent of formal duelling.

In wet weather the entire boys school tried to find shelter in the space below the woodwork room and from this a curious game frequently developed formal but unorganised. Boys would climb on to the benches round the walls, some starting at each end, and run towards each other

Bromley Central School cont.

in an endless procession meeting somewhere in the middle. At that point a struggle followed until one boy was thrown off the bench. The victor would then tackle the next bay. Every defeated boy had to return to the tail end of his side and start the circuit again. Not that there were any organised sides as no one organised the game. It just developed but the rules never changed.

There was another wet weather game played in this shelter but this was normally organised by a senior boy. It was called "Sailor's Lost His Kitbag" and was played by two teams. The organiser asked each team in turn the question "So what will you give him?" and one had to reply immediately with a relevant item until someone failed to come up with an answer and his team had then lost.

A ferocious and more dangerous game was called "Dumps" or "Sevens". This was a team game for seven players, and each player was given a number. The first boy then threw a ball (usually a tennis ball) as hard and as high as he could against the school wall. Immediately after impact he called a number and the nominated boy had to catch the ball as it came down. This may sound easy, but boys quickly learned how to make the ball behave unpredictably so that speed and accuracy were essential to secure and hold the ball. Anyone who failed to make a catch had to stand up against the wall and every other player then threw the ball at him from short range and as hard as possible. This could cause painful bruising especially to the face and head.

Sometimes in the PT. period we played a game called "Centrall" invented by one of the masters. It was a kind of rugby but players were forbidden to throw an opponent on the very hard tarmac.

Girls played more peaceful games. Skipping was very popular and a netball goal was kept permanently in position for enthusiasts to practice aiming goals.

In the afternoon games period boys played football and cricket. Girls played netball and hockey. Selected school teams played a group of neighbouring schools on Saturday mornings.

One unofficial activity was very popular. As so many pupils had to travel a long distance to school it was impossible for them to go home to dinner at midday. No school meals were provided (many years were to pass before these were even considered) so they had to bring sandwiches.

The school hall was made available for this purpose. As the dinner break was long - two hours - the spare time was usually filled in with an informal dance, the only occasion when physical contact between boys and girls was possible and tolerated.

The school course lasted for four years with entry at the age of eleven and the curriculum comprised English, French, Mathematics (Arithmetic, algebra, geometry), Geography, History, Chemistry and Physics, Drawing, Needlework, Domestic Science, Woodwork and Physical Education. They are shown here in the order as listed on the standard school term report form which may have some significance, with English first and Physical Training last. But why did Geography take precedence over History and why was Needlework above Woodwork? One wanders who decided on this order which is not alphabetical and seems to lack any logic. Following the principle of sex segregation, woodwork was taught only to boys and needlework and domestic science to girls.

At the end of the four year course a certificate was issued by the Bromley Education Committee to every pupil who "satisfactorily" completed the course and setting out the credits in the Final Term Examination, though the pass mark for credits is not known now.

Discipline in the school was generally good, largely due to the quality of the teachers but also to the fact that good behaviour was accepted as normal by most children, especially when under observation and there were few times when all pupils were not under direct supervision. The large classes - forty - must have made life difficult for the teachers but such class sizes were also accepted as normal. Very occasionally discipline collapsed and in the first year there was a young woman teacher who failed completely to cope with boys and was often reduced to tears. If a teacher was temporarily absent from a classroom there was an immediate outburst of noise quickly

suppressed by any teacher who happened to pass the door. Once a near riot broke out in the art room with chalk and crayon as ammunition. There were always a few boys (and probably girls) who would defy a teacher, but defiance never lasted long and the occasional "rebel" was very firmly dealt with, expulsion being the final sanction.

Punishments varied. For a minor indiscipline, such as talking in class one was made to leave the room and stand outside in the corridor. But anyone so placed stood a very good chance of being seen by Mr. Webber in his peregrinations, so it was customary to hide in the cloakrooms. Teachers could punish by giving detention or 'lines'. Detention was normally for half an hour, with one hour for more serious offences. 'Lines' meant writing some simple statement for a given number of times (minimum twenty) and usually one hundred. A French master gave his in French - "Il ne faut pas parler en classe, with "manger" as an alternative.

An art master with a passion for bible readings set chapters from the Old Testament and once, in a fit of rage, ordered a boy to copy out the whole book of Isaiah, and actually checked his progress for quite a long time. Formal caning was reserved to the Headmaster and took place privately in his study. There was no prohibition on minor physical punishment by other teachers and this usually meant a box on the ears or a bang on the head but one master used to resort to vicious punching.

Another punishment was to inflict a "no games" penalty on an offender, but this came to an end when a games master, considering this an unjustified interference in his work, started giving out "No French" or "No Science" punishments.

Bearing in mind the size of the classes, teaching generally was of a high standard and the teachers invariably showed an enthusiasm for their subjects. This led to a good relationship between teachers and pupils, a friendly relationship on the whole. The school day was long, from 9 a.m. until noon, and from 2 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. Apart from the morning assembly there were three teaching periods in the morning and three in the afternoon with one fifteen minute break during each session. Teachers had

very few free periods. The staff room was rather dark and cramped with very poor facilities.

Homework was another innovation for those joining the school. It was supposed to take one hour, but frequently took longer. Failure to produce the required amount involved punishment. Very few pupils would have had access to a private room in which to do this work, the usual place being the kitchen table, with other activities going on at the same time. Fortunately there was never any shortage of textbooks and sharing was never necessary.

In addition to the long school day, most teachers had substantial after-school duties, especially those who trained and coached the school games teams, organised clubs, or produced plays. Inter-school matches were always played on Saturday mornings, involving several hours work for the teachers in charge, as well as evening sessions. One never heard complaints from teachers about these extra duties which were always accepted as a normal part of the day's work.

Reference has been made to the English teaching of Mr. Webber. The English syllabus was advanced for its day, particularly in the amount of dramatic activity included. Apart from the routine reading of Shakespeare texts, there were annual performances of form plays at Christmas. These were usually read and prepared as ordinary lessons but rehearsals of those selected for parts took place after school. On one occasion there was a special performance for a Prize Day. It was a scene from "David Copperfield" ("David runs away") and was the only dramatic performance where the cast was drawn from both sexes.

Following the custom of the County schools (later Grammar Schools) which had in turn borrowed the system from the Public Schools, the school was divided into four houses named presumably by Mr. Webber, Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta. House membership was divided equally among the members of each form and each house had a Captain and Vice-Captain, elected by an assembly of all members from pupils in the senior form. These positions carried considerable prestige and the holders were usually those whose popularity was

Bromley Central School cont.

founded on prowess in games. As the main function of the houses was inter-house games, this was hardly surprising and as a result the captains, who seemed near-adult, had an almost heroic stature in the eyes of the juniors. The school itself had no playing field and the principal venue for house matches was the King's Meadow at Sundridge Park. Matches were usually well-attended by both pupils and staff and the games accompanied by the usual shouting and cheering.

Each house had its own tie of coloured stripes on a white ground in the typical 'school' style of the period - Green for Alpha, Yellow for Beta, Red for Gamma and Blue for Delta. Each house had a Housemaster or Mistress, but the post was largely nominal as every encouragement was given to the Captains to take as much responsibility as possible. At the end of each year a cup was awarded to the champion house.

Unfortunately there is no record in the archives of Bromley Dept. of Education as to the actual date when the school closed or the reason for its closures but it was probably in 1939. There is nothing to suggest that it was due to the outbreak of war because it was quickly occupied by another school. That it was closed is surprising for the school was undoubtedly a success and its closure left a gap that was not to be filled for many years. Experiments in education were rare in those days and the overwhelming majority of working class children had no prospect of any education beyond that provided by the Elementary Schools where the leaving age was fourteen. I have always been fully aware of the advantages I gained from this small extension to my education even though I must admit, looking back, I did not always take full advantage of what was offered. I shall always remember with respect and affection the work of Mr. Webber and most of the staff who taught me. A few of them I prefer to forget. *H.J.Belsey, March 1986.*

In December 2000 Mr Belsey writes:

This was an interesting experiment, which closed at the outbreak of war in 1939, but when I set out to write about it and asked Bromley council for access to the records, I was told they had been destroyed on the creation of the London Borough of Bromley,

which seems a great pity. As no one who has written about Bromley Schools in the 1920s and 30s, has mentioned the Central School, I thought you might like to see it.

NB. Fortunately the school Log Book has survived and is in the Local Studies Archives.

It starts on the Sept 2nd 1925 and the number on the Roll for the first week was 239.

No children's names are mentioned although there are regular mentions of teachers absences through illness:

'1935 Sept. 9th. Miss Mansell returned to school this morning, having been unavoidably detained in Spain by her own and her friend's illness due to food poisoning.'

There were regular fire drills giving the time it took to clear the school - usually between 1¼ & 1¾ minutes. Some time before the beginning of the War they became Air Raid Drills.

In 1936 there was a 8 page report by HMI G.Buckle. It was generally favourable but said they needed more staff and smaller classes (which should be 20 instead of 40) and more room for some of the activities. It recommended that a teacher was needed to take overall charge of English. In the girls' French classes 'teaching not nearly stimulating enough'.

The school closed on July 26th 1940. The weekly no. on roll was then 103. "The school closed today but the staff will be in attendance until the July 31st"

**Western Front Association -
North West Kent Branch**

Royal British Legion Club, Petts Wood
(next to Safeways, near Petts Wood Station)

29th March 2001 at 7.30pm
Indian armies on the Ypres Salient
Dominiek Dendooven

26th April 2001 at 7.30pm
The Khaki Chums

**In & Around Bromley
at the turn of the Century**

is still available, at meetings, from the Local Studies library, Mister Print at Green Street Green and from the sub-Post Office at Keston.

It can also be obtained by post from John Clarke at 41, Sandiland Crescent, Hayes, Kent BR2 7DP. Cheques payable to BBLHS at £3 plus 50p postage and packing.

Museum Musings

The Museum got an early Christmas present when in December we were informed that we had been awarded a grant of £19,600 by the Heritage Lottery Fund for the conservation of three "bomb maps". These plans were made during World War II and plot the bombs which fell in the Borough. Their delicate condition means that they have been in storage in Local Studies. Once conserved the maps will be an invaluable source to both researchers and school children, who study World War II as part of their curriculum. We hope the work will be completed over the next 18 months.

If you haven't yet been to our latest exhibition, Portraits, you have until March 15th to do so. There's over 40 portraits on display, many from our fine art collection, which are not normally on show, as well as reproductions of photographs held by Local Studies.

Orpington Photographic Society will be holding their annual show from 17th March and to celebrate National Science Week we will be having a Family Photo' Funday on Saturday 24th March. There will be a children's talk about early photography at 11am and a slide show in the afternoon, besides a display of old cameras on show all week.

During the past half-term I have been working with the after-school sewing club at Midfield Primary School on a samplers project. The children investigated the Museum's collection of samplers and have taken inspiration from them in making their own samplers. This will culminate in an exhibition at the Museum in April featuring the Museum's samplers and those produced by the children. The children have been very enthusiastic about the project and certainly changed my preconception that modern children are only interested in watching TV! Do come and see their work for yourselves.

Melanie Parker, assistant curator

Local Studies Corner

I hope you enjoyed our open evening on 6th February. We have had a number of interesting additions to the archives over recent months, the most important of which, is the Marsham-Townshend collection. The Marsham-Townshends were Lords of the manor of Chislehurst and this large archive contains much of interest to the Chislehurst historian. A few of the most interesting items have been identified but there is still much work to be done.

Plans are afoot for changes to the layout of the Local Studies Room. Some of you will have noticed the first of these, the arrival on the second floor of the Victoria County History series from the reference library; part of an attempt to make the layout of the building more logical. We hope that when finished you will find the department easier to use.

Sadly it has been necessary to advertise for a full time assistant again. The last one left after only a few days. We hope to be able to make an appointment very soon.

A couple of years ago I told you of our plans to discard the bound volumes of the local newspapers which we have on microfilm in order to create better storage for our unique rate books. This has been progressing and any volumes remaining will be sold at £1 each at our Central Library book sale on Saturday 10th March. It will be in the large hall on the 4th floor from 9.30 to 4. The volumes are very large, dirty and in many cases disintegrating. You will need to arrange your own transport to remove them but we will keep them for you until Tuesday 13th. We can advise on the best way of getting them home. At present only the Bromley Times and the Beckenham Journal are going but as we add to our microfilm collection other titles should become available.

Simon Finch

NEW ADDITIONS TO LOCAL STUDIES AND ARCHIVES: A Visit by the Local history Society 6.2.2001

Marsham Townshend Archive

This is the most extensive addition to the archives in the past year. Acquired from Christies it covers the family's estates in Chislehurst, where they were Lords of the manor and St. Paul's Cray.

Items included are:

1785 Court Roll and rental for Chislehurst and Scadbury including a mention of Pett's Wood.

Court Roll and Rental St. Paul's Cray 1787 and 1795.

Minute book and accounts of Chislehurst windmill 1796-1855.

Inventory of Frognal.

Sales particulars of Frognal and Scadbury estates 1915

Philip Daniell Collection

Philip Daniell was the founder of Environment Bromley. His wide ranging interests are reflected in the collection which includes information on the High Elms Ice Well, the Croydon Canal and much more.

George Clinch's Antiquarian Jottings - annotated version

The book is fairly well known. This grangerised version, formerly the property of Penge historian Sidney Hodgson contains letters newscuttings and notes adding extra information not available elsewhere.

John Edwards Collection

Mainly news and directory cuttings. Their main value is a short cut to finding and indexing recent newspaper articles but some items from more obscure sources are unique

Alan Day Bequest

Mainly artefacts which have gone to the museum but a small number of documents including hand drawn maps of Bromley market square and the surrounding area were included too. These were used in the 1000 years exhibition last year.

Bernard Davis Collection

Discoverer of the London-Lewis roman road and transcriber of many important local documents, these are further of his notes recently acquired from the family.

Muriel Mudic (Searle) Postcards

A couple of years ago we acquired the major part of Muriel's collection. She has now offered us the remaining two volumes which are seen here. We are in the process of having them valued prior to purchase.

Records in Print

1851 religious census of Kent and Surrey.

Survey of Archbishop Becham's Kentish Manors.

A medieval capital and its grain supply.

Geoffrey Tookey Albums

A little known part of the Tookey collection, the albums are mainly photographs of early maps, plans and documents relating to Beckenham from various sources.

Simon Finch & Elizabeth Silverthorne

This was an interesting evening and members became deeply engrossed with the items produced, so much so that at one point it was so quiet that (tucked around the corner on the map tables looking at some of John Edwards' albums) I began to wonder if everyone had gone home.

Simon mentioned that very little is known about some of the people whose collections are now in the Local Studies library, such as Bernard Davis. He would welcome any information, as would we for the Journal. Our local historians should be a very important part of our local history. Knowledge about their lives could add to a greater understanding and appreciation of their collections.

See the article about George Clinch by Patricia Knowlden elsewhere in this journal. DR

Our Local Antiquarian : George Clinch, FGS, FSA (Scotland), 1860-1921

As a boy young George Clinch ranged the fields of Rouse Farm picking up flints and stones from the chalk soils, and over the years he built up a collection of prehistoric flint tools of which he kept meticulous sketches and notes. This sparked a life-long interest in the country around him and its history. He also came to appreciate the value of talking to older people with memories of things long past. Flints were not the only things he discovered, but a Saxon spear head in a field, and in his roaming he found and explored an ancient gravel pit in the corner of Cooper's Wood, dene holes in Well Wood, and a small disused chalk quarry by North Pole Lane that was reputed to have been once used as a dwelling. (Local information has it that the gravel pit was later used as a dump for wasters from a button fact". It has since been filled in).

George was sent to school at Morley's Academy in Bromley High Street, where the famous author H.G.Wells was educated. After leaving school he took up an appointment in the library at the British Museum. While working there he wrote several articles on prehistoric finds " in the neighbourhood of the Kent - Surrey border for antiquarian journals and his Antiquarian Jottings relating to Bromley, Hayes, Keston and West Wickham, in Kent from the notes and drawings he had been making since his boyhood, which was published in 1889. Shortly afterwards he wrote several Guides to London parishes, presumably stimulated by his work in the library.

In 1888 George married Alice Molland and they settled in Addiscombe. Their elder daughter, Nora, was born the following summer, followed some four years later by Olive. in about 1905 the family moved to Sutton. George continued writing, producing a number of articles for the Home Counties' Magazine a further book on the history of Bromley and a Guide to Kent for Methuen, and was joint editor of Bygone Surrey.

He left the British Library in 1995 for the post of Clerk to the Library of the Society of

Antiquaries in Burlington House, where the members were so pleased with his "thorough knowledge of the Library and of the subject matter of its contents ... always at the service of enquirers" that in 1910 they created the position of Librarian specially for him.

Having moved into Surrey he became very interested in visible remains of the past both of Sutton and of Carshalton, exhorting fellow townfolk to be alert and to keep their eyes open when, for instance, the bed of the stream in the Park was cleaned out. He lectured to local societies and encouraged the formation of new ones. Not neglecting the county of his birth he acted as Hon. librarian for the Society of Men of Kent and Kentish Men in 1908-9 and as Chairman of its Council 1913-14. In 1908 he was invited to join Bromley's committee to produce the history we now know as Horsbrugh's Bromley, though this was to be delayed by the war in 1914.

A few days before his 61st birthday in February 1921 George Clinch set out for his morning train at about half past nine as usual. On the way to the station he collapsed, a doctor called an ambulance and he was taken home, where died without regaining consciousness. His elder daughter Nora had not long before sailed for India with her little son Peter to join her husband, Captain Hugh Hind, but there was Olive at home to help her mother bear the shock.

Obituaries written for George Clinch sound sincere, regrets for the loss of a somewhat shy, but warm hearted, kind and gentle man, ever ready to help. His writings, of which the Antiquarian Jottings is the most significant for us in the Bromley area but a list of which nearly fills a sheet of A4 paper, must surely have inspired many to investigate further. And if with the hindsight of a hundred years some of his conclusions seem a bit odd, his factual notes are an invaluable record, often of things now long gone. We are all his heirs and his beneficiaries.

Patricia Knowlden 2000

THE BERTIES OF BROMLEY

It is said that the Berties came from Bertiland in Prussia and came to England with the Saxons. The town of Bertiestad (now Bersted) near Maidstone was perhaps a gift to them from the Saxon kings. However that may be, their notability certainly began when Richard Bertie married Catherine Willoughsby de Eresby in 1553.

Their eldest son was named Peregrine because he was born in Lower Wesel, Cleves when his parents were fleeing persecution in England but in the course of time they returned and Peregrine became Lord Willoughby de Eresby.

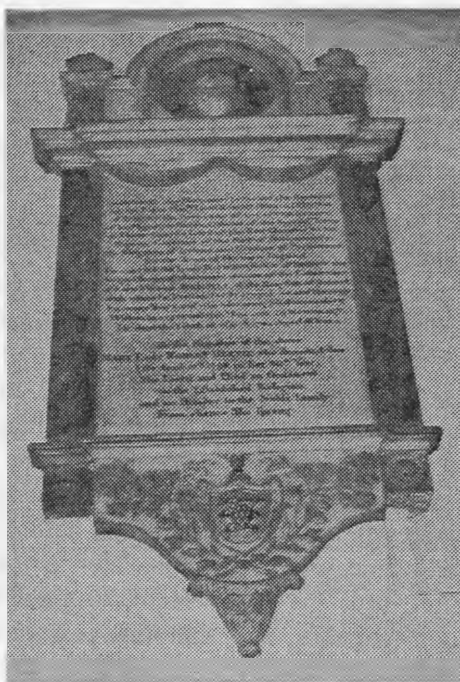
By the time Peregrine had married Mary de Vere, daughter of John Vere, Earl of Oxford, they were moving in high society and Queen Elizabeth was godmother to their eldest son, Robert, born December 16th 1572. He became a loyal subject of King Charles I, General of the King's Forces and Admiral of the ship-money fleet. He was created the 1st Earl of Lindsey in 1626 for his services to the Crown. When the civil war broke out, the regard of the gentlemen of Lincoln for the Robert, Earl of Lindsey, enabled him to raise a strong force for the King who appointed him Commander in Chief of the Royal Forces. However Prince Rupert was General of the Horse and the King began to listen to Rupert in preference to Robert. At the Battle of Edgehill in 1642, Prince Rupert set off without consulting Robert who declared that if he were not fit to be a general he would die as a colonel leading his men. While marching forward, pike in hand, he received a mortal blow and died in a nearby cottage.

The 2nd Earl of Lindsey was Montague born about 1608 to Robert and his wife Elizabeth

Montague the only daughter of Edward, Lord Montague of Boughton, Northants. Montague married Martha the widow of John Earl of Holderness and daughter of Sir William Cockaine. Their son, Robert, 3rd Earl of Lindsey, is where Bromley enters the story.

Robert, born October 20th 1660, was created 1st Duke of Ancaster and Kesteven in 1715, thus bringing yet another title to the Berties. He married twice and both marriages are of importance. His first marriage was to Mary Wyne, daughter of Baronet Gwydir. Robert and Mary had two sons, Robert and Peregrine but Robert died underage in 1704 leaving Peregrine to take over the title of the 2nd Duke of Ancaster and Kesteven in 1723.

Robert's second marriage was to Albinia Farrington, daughter of Thomas Farrington and Theodosia Bettensen, both Chislehurst families. Theodosia's grandfather, Sir Richard Bettensen, Bart, had purchased the Manors of Scadbury and Chislehurst which passed to Theodosia's dissolute brother, Edward. He gambled away the family fortunes, even losing the oak trees of Scadbury. When he died in 1733 he left the Manor saddled with debt. The family sold the estates outside Scadbury but managed to keep the Manor.



The memorial to Lord Robert Bertie and his wife on the North wall of the North aisle. The Bertie arms can be seen on the shield at the base of the memorial. They consist of three battering rams (including heads!).

Robert and Albinia had six children, Vere 1714-1769, Norris who died young, Montague c1720-1753, Thomas c1720-1749, Louisa and Robert c1721-1782. Robert married late to Mary Raymond in 1762 and in Chislehurst today, the private school Farringtons, which was opened in 1911, stands near the site of their graceful Jacobean house. He was known as Lord Robert Bertie and the house was Bertie Place. It was left to him by Thomas

Farrington, who, having no children of his own, passed the house to his sister Albinia's youngest son, Lord Robert.

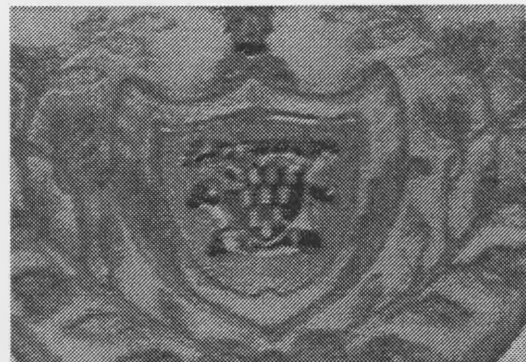
Robert's white marble memorial can be seen on the wall of the North aisle of St Nicholas church at Chislehurst. It reads as follows: Underneath this monument be buried the remains of the Right Honble Lord Robert Bertie 5th son of the 1st Duke of Ancaster and Kesteven, General of His Majesty's Forces, Colonel of the 2nd Troop of Horse Guards, Lord of the Bedchamber to His Majesty, Governor of the Fort of Duncannon in the Kingdom of Ireland and Member of Parliament. From the town of Boston in England he married the Lady Raymond Relict of Robert the 2nd Baron of that name and one of the coheiresses of Lord Viscount Blundell of the Kingdom of Ireland with whom he lived in the freest love and harmony for many years and who now being his disconsolate widow has erected this monument to his memory. He died 10th March 1782 aged 61 years.

Near to Lord Robert's memorial is that of his brother, Lord Thomas Bertie, Captain of the Royal Navy. It is ornamented with an urn inscribed with a festoon of flowers between the trophies and naval ensigns of war. He died at Portsmouth 29th July 1749 and was brought in solemn procession to Chislehurst for his burial on 9th August.

We go back to Peregrine, 2nd Duke of Ancaster and Kesteven, who married Jane Brownlow in June 1711. Between 1712 and 1729 they had four sons and three daughters. Their second son, Peregrine, succeeded to the title and became the 3rd Duke. From his second marriage, which was to Mary Panton, he had two sons and three daughters. The elder son, Peregrine Thomas, died young and his brother Robert died of scarlet fever soon after his accession to the Dukedom in 1779. One of the daughters died young, Mary Catherine, leaving her sisters Lady Priscilla Barbara Elizabeth and Lady Georgiana Charlotte joint holders of the family title of Lord Great Chamberlain of England. The Dukedom passed back to their uncle, Brownlow Bertie, who became the 5th and last Duke of Ancaster and Kesteven.

When only 17, Lady Priscilla had married the young cricketer and landed gentleman, Peter Burrell, MP for Haslemere. His inherited estates at Beckenham stretched over 3,202 acres from Monk's Orchard and Ham Farm in the South to Elmers End in the West to Beckenham High St in the North and Bromley in the East. Peter was created Baron Gwydir in 1796 as befitted the husband of the Lady Priscilla.

The story is not quite finished, as the most interesting part is still to come. Peregrine Bertie, the 2nd Duke of Ancaster had seven children, the youngest being Albemarle Bertie c1724-1765. Albemarle had five daughters and one son between 1750 and 1759 by Mary Colebatch, probably without the benefit of marriage. The girls were Jane, Mary, Susannah, Diana and Anne while the only son was another Albemarle. Albemarle junior became a famous admiral and his sister Diana married the rich merchant Joseph Cator, brother of John Cator, Lord of the Manor of Beckenham. Joseph and Diana had seven sons, John Barwell, Albemarle (who died at the age of 12), William, Charles, Bertie Cornelius, Thomas and Peter. Diana's sisters, Jane and Mary both married and all these family names can be seen inscribed on the Joseph Cator tomb in the churchyard of St George's church, Beckenham. The name Albemarle is commemorated in Albemarle Rd beside Beckenham Green and as for Bertie, this was used as a forename by as many as 10 of the Cator descendants.



References:

The wills of Sir Albemarle Bertie d.1765 and Admiral Sir Albemarle Bertie d.1824

Webb's History of Chislehurst
The Bertie Legend from www.baronage.co.uk
The National Biographies

LETTERS PAGE

Dear Editors

In response to your appeal for more information about the bomb crater on Chislehurst Common on page 6, Dec. Bromleage), I have three references for you which seem to answer all your questions.

First: from Tom Bushell's 'Imperial Chislehurst', 1974 and later editions, page 110-111: "Early in 1918 Chislehurst suffered from German "taube" raids, but as aeroplanes could not yet carry heavy weights, the bombs were relatively small. One fell near the Tiger's Head and, rather curiously the hole was fenced in for some years, later to be the site of the planting of a Coronation tree in 1937."

Clifford Platt, in his 'In Trust for Chislehurst', 1995 2nd ed., page 23, is rather more acid in his tone: "South of the Cockpit and opposite the Tiger a horse chestnut grows which has a curious story behind it. A small shell hole (sic) made by Chislehurst's one and only bomb of the First World War which fell on Whit Sunday 1918, had a tree planted in it. This was surrounded by a railing with a notice to record the event. Men coming home from the Army, free at last from the bombardments of the Western Front, treated this object with the ridicule it so justly deserved. The tree itself had the good sense to die, and a few years later the railings were removed. It was not until 1937 that the present tree near the site was planted to celebrate the coronation of King George VI."

Thirdly, from the same author, in the section on trees in "Chislehurst and St Pauls Cray Commons", 1970 (published by the Commons Conservators, and co-authored by Tom Bushell), also on page 23: "The horse chestnut opposite Delamere next door to the Tiger was planted in 1937 to mark the coronation of George VI. It replaced a tree planted in the small crater made by a German bomb of the First World War - an object of ridicule to men returning from the Western Front. The tree had the good sense to die."

Roy Hopper, Sidcup

Dear Editors

re the item on the back page of last Bromleage concerning Thomas Crapper. T.C. did not invent the flush lavatory. He was a remarkable marketing man who interested royalty in his improvements to the efficiency and reliability of the flushing mechanism and fitted out several of the Royal residences. Incidentally his company still exists though now based in Stratford upon Avon. I have persuaded the managing director to pay for the grave in Elmers End cemetery to be cleaned and a plaque attached detailing his achievements.

*Regards
Eric Inman*

Dear Mr & Mrs Rason

Re. **Mr C.A. Richards** Dec.2000 Bromleage page 13

I first met Mr Richards in September 1929 on leaving Bromley Central School and was employed by Carter, Law and Leach, Estate Agents, 58 East Street, Bromley as office junior. Mr Richards was also employed as a clerk there. He was certainly not an auctioneer, no one could have been less suitable - a nervous, shy, retiring man. His main duty was as Rent Collector, but he had a sound knowledge of furniture etc. and prepared inventories.

He lived at 29 Hammelton Road, Bromley, a large semi-detached Victorian house converted into 3 flats. He lived alone on the ground floor and the two upper ones were let. He was a bachelor. He also owned at least one other property converted into flats and I imagine he had other private means.

He was a knowledgeable antiquarian and I knew that he possessed a large collection and was still adding to it, but I never saw it. He was an expert photographer and he liked working in the Tatsfield area, where I believe he had relations. He also collected antique porcelain, which could still be purchased cheaply.

He was a friendly man and a good conversationalist. I last met him, quite by chance, on his 80th birthday. He was enjoying excellent health and still enjoyed walking, carrying his silver-mounted walking stick. So far as I can remember he had a sister who taught Latin at the Girls County Grammar School in Beaverwood Road, Chislehurst. He also had connections with the Wain family, well known in Chislehurst in the 19th and early 20th centuries as builders.

Yours sincerely, H.J. Belsey

Dear Paul & Denise,

The first edition of the illustrated history of Beckenham which I wrote with the late Nancy Tonkin in 1993 has now virtually sold out and Messrs Phillimore have asked me to prepare a new edition with a revised and up-dated text and a substantial proportion of new illustrations. I have been fortunate in obtaining the collaboration of Nancy's husband Bill so this new edition will still be by Inman & Tonkin. I am aware of very few errors in the original text but it is remarkable what changes have taken place in the last eight years, the demise of industry and the proliferation of restaurants, to mention but two.

To ensure this new edition is equally popular and useful, may I invite your readers to get in touch with me regarding any improvements, corrections and additions they would like to see incorporated in the new edition. Comments by phone, post or e-mail will be welcomed and acknowledged before our deadline in June.

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William Osborn(e) born circa 1779. Where?

Known facts - he was sworn in as a gamekeeper for Sir Samuel Scott of Sundridge Park, - "I Samuel Scott Esq. do authorise and empower William Osborn of Bromley to be my gamekeeper with power to kill game for my use. To seize all guns, bows, greyhounds, ferrets, fishing nets etc."

Dated 11 February 1815.

His wife Mrs Ann Osborn was Gatekeeper on Mr Scots Estate. ref. Vestry Minute Book 27. November 1816.

In 1841 the census of this year showed William now aged 60 employed as an Ag. Lab living at Hollow Bottom (Plaistow area near Plaistow Lane and Nicol Lane) together with son Robert age 15 also an Ag. Lab and daughter Harriett age 10. William is shown as being born out of the county.

William & Ann's other children were William born June 1815, Ann Maria born Sept. 1817, Charlotte born July 1829. All of the children were baptised in Bromley. We have searched the Bromley registers for a marriage without success.

William died at Plaistow, 12 April 1849, his Death Certificate shows his age as about 70 years, Cause of death - Found in a field, natural causes. His death was registered by the Coroner (possibly CHAS J? CARTTAR or CARLLER), coroner for Kent and Greenwich, on 30th or 13th of June 1849.

Sundridge Park papers in Bromley Archives have been checked and there is no trace of the Coroner's report on William's death, but of course he was retired by then. Two Indentures were found concerning a cottage in Nichol Lane, Plaistow, one dated 4 September 1826 when William was a gamekeeper, the other dated 1832 when he was a retailer. His name is spelt Osborn on these.

I did find out that Claude Scott originated in Walthamstow. He bought Sundridge Park c1797 and his son Samuel Scott 1772 - 1849, lived there and ran the estate. Claude Scott also owned Lytchett Manor in Dorset. So I wondered if William had moved to Bromley from Dorset to work for the young Scott - but there is no trace of William in the Lytchett Manor area.

There is a marriage in the IGI on 13 Jul 1814 at Godalming, Surrey of William Osborn and Ann Tickner. The date and ages seem to fit but I can't find a link.

Does any one know where William was born and where he married?

Alan Osborn, 45 Long View, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 1BY. e-mail aosborn@ntlworld.com

John Henry BUNTING

I have found through my own family research, a poem about a soldier who died in 1914. This man was killed in France and his death meant that others lived. Do you know of anyone connected with the name John Henry Bunting. His parents lived at 32 Chancery Lane, Beckenham, Kent.

I live in Nottingham and have no knowledge of Kent and no connection so I appreciate your help in maybe contacting someone who would be interested in the information I have.

I have contacted BBC radio Kent, they are very interested as part of their 'the search' campaign and I have put an appeal on the British Legion Website. This is all the info I have to go on at the moment.....

John Henry Bunting (Jack).

Son of Mr and Mrs Bunting of 32 Chancery Lane, Beckenham Kent.

Private in the West Yorkshire regiment (Prince of Wales Own).

Killed in action 20th Sept 1914 aged 27.

Previously served in the North-West Frontier Campaign.

It would be so lovely to find someone with a connection to this man, I know that I would be very proud to discover such a hero in my family.

He is commemorated on a memorial in France for soldiers whose bodies were never found, but in the poem it states where he was buried by his pals. This man died a hero and I have a true and graphic account of how he died. I would love to give his family a copy of this poem.

Barbara Kirk. Email kirk@classicfm.net telephone number is 01623-799390

NB. J.H. Bunting is mentioned on the Beckenham War Memorial as is an H.C. Bunting.

For H.C Bunting, the CWGC website does not give any information on parent's names and address but 'Soldiers Who Died' says that he enlisted at Beckenham.

Perhaps he was a brother of J.H.? Ed.

Mystery Photo

This stamp-size photograph was found on the floor after our January meeting. Was it lost by one of our members? If so we would love to know who the soldiers were.



"Does anyone remember the King Edward VII memorial in St George's Churchyard, Beckenham?"

I am preparing a talk about St George's churchyard memorials. I came across a photo of a large table tomb to King Edward VII in Beckenham library but there is no sign of it today.

I've looked through the Parish magazines for 1911-1913 with no mention and the 17 boxes of records recently handed over to the library have not yet been indexed. I am hoping that the vestry minutes may have something but they are not yet forthcoming.



Beckenham Churchyard
Monument to King Edward

The vestry minute book of May 1939 to May 1950 has three references to the churchyard during this time. A plaque in appreciation to Mr Walker who organised the extensive repairs is on the South wall just inside the south door.

2.7.1940 Disposal of iron in the churchyard

A list of owners of graves was kindly supplied by Miss Vian. The borough surveyor had undertaken to bear the cost of removal of railings around graves. A quote from the minutes reads "all neglected railings and ironwork round tombs in the churchyard and their gift to the Government as scrap metal for war purposes."

5.3.1948 Faculty to clear the churchyard

The Rector moved a resolution referring to the necessity of clearing the churchyard of the broken memorial stones caused by War Damage.

June 1949 Progress of church repairs

Messrs Holloway were doing repairs in the churchyard making a new path to St George's with the broken gravestones.

One of the memorials which disappeared was to King Edward VII. A photograph F5/10 in Beckenham library shows the large flat stone surrounded by high railings near the vestry door on the north side of the church.

Does anyone remember it?

Pat Manning

29 Birchwood Ave, BR3 3PY

THE BROMLEY RECORD June 1910.

Death of King Edward VII

From the great majority of the pulpits in Bromley and district on Sunday, May 8th, reference was made to the great loss which the nation had sustained by the death of the King. In almost every case allusion was made to the great influence which his majesty had quietly and unostentatiously exercised in the affairs of the nation

At nearly every church some portion of the edifice was draped, or the service altered to give expression to the national sorrow.....

On May 20th, the day of the funeral of his late Majesty, an impressive memorial service, conducted by the Vicar (Rev. Donald Tait, M.A.) was held in the Bromley Parish church. There was a crowded congregation which included the Mayor and Corporation, and the local Territorials.

For the Free Churches a united Memorial Service was held at the Central Hall, which was packed to its utmost capacity. The Rev. G. H. Shafto conducted, and eloquent and moving addresses were given by the Rev. Mackenzie, M.A., B.D. (Presbyterian) and Rev. W. Justin Evans (Congregational). Special music was feelingly rendered by the Central Hall Orchestra and the choir of the Bromley Congregational church.