

SURREY HISTORY



Leisure and Pleasure in Surrey
The Paper Mills of Surrey, Part II
A Mansion made from Matches: Hillcroft College, Surbiton
New Material for Surrey Historians

*John Gent
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The meetings organised by the Council include a one-day Symposium on a local-history topic, the Annual General Meeting, which includes a visit to a place of historical interest, and lectures. The Council produces *Surrey History* annually and other booklets from time to time and these are available from bookshops throughout the county.

Membership on the part of local history societies will help the Council to express with authority the importance of local history in the county. The annual subscription for Societies is £ 10-00, due on April 1st., and in return for this they receive a copy of *Surrey History* and three newsletters a year. Members of Member Societies may attend the Symposium and other meetings at a reduced fee and obtain publications at a special rate from the Hon. Secretary. Member Societies may also exhibit at the Symposium and sell their publications there.

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Cover Illustration: History on the Move! The 1930 Ripley branch of the National Westminster Bank has closed and the bank donated the building to the Send & Ripley History Society for use as a small local history centre and museum. Our view shows the building being moved to its new location beside Ripley Village Hall on Sunday, 26th. April, 1992.

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Fig. 1. Mitcham Fair in 1906. A fair has been held at Mitcham for centuries but there is no record of a charter. Attempts have been made to suppress it from time to time, but despite a short lapse in the 1970s, it still survives.



Fig. 2. A Meet at Caterham. Surrey provided good hunting country and a meet was good entertainment for local people even if they could not afford to participate.

LEISURE AND PLEASURE IN SURREY

John Gent

Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society

The history and development of leisure and pleasure activities is not well documented. The Surrey Local History Council held a Symposium on 4th. November 1989 in an attempt to introduce the subject and give an overview of some of the activities pursued in Surrey, particularly from the early nineteenth century onwards. It is a subject which local historians could well find rewarding to investigate in detail in their own parishes. A very useful general background can be found in *Man at Play - Nine Centuries of Pleasure Making* by John Armitage.¹ The best local sources of information from the mid nineteenth century are local newspapers which sometimes include reports and also advertisements for a wide variety of events. It is also useful to refer to any contemporary accounts which can sometimes be found in Victorian local histories.

In general before the Industrial Revolution if a man held land, he played, if not he did not. In the rural economy when farming needs were small there were occasional opportunities for enjoyment on the holidays associated with pagan, church and political events - May Day, Christmas, Guy Fawkes, Plough Monday, Shrove Tuesday and possibly Oak Apple Day. The local fairs too provide an opportunity for play although their prime function was usually associated with trade. The coming of the railway made the Surrey fairs easily accessible to rough and rowdy Londoners and most ceased during the late nineteenth century. As Col.Vibart² wrote of Croydon Fair - "At one time before the railway era it was usual for the best families to patronise the fair by their presence. The wife of the archbishop used to put in an appearance. But when the railroad practically brought Croydon much nearer to London the place was inundated by a mass of blackguardism which at length became so intolerable that the fair was abolished, not without some attempts at rioting on the part of the unwashed, but with the joyful approval of the respectable inhabitants".

Sport must be mentioned here as Surrey was the setting for many sporting activities. Horse racing seems to have taken place from Tudor times and Epsom has for long been the most famous venue, but Lingfield, Esher, Streatham, Croydon and Gatwick were all well-known in their time. Fox hunting too has long been pursued and Croydon was probably the main centre in the early nineteenth century. The Victorian novelist, R.S.Surtees describes the local scene in 'Jorrocks Jaunts and Jollities' - "... they arrived at the end of the first stage on the road to the the hunt, namely the small town of Croydon, the rendezvous of London sportsmen. The whole place was alive with red coats, green coats, blue coats, black coats, brown coats, in short coats of all colours of the rainbow. Horsemen were mounting, horsemen were dismounting, one horse 'shays' and two horse chaises were discharging their burthens, grooms were buckling their masters spurs and others were pulling on their overalls. Eschewing the

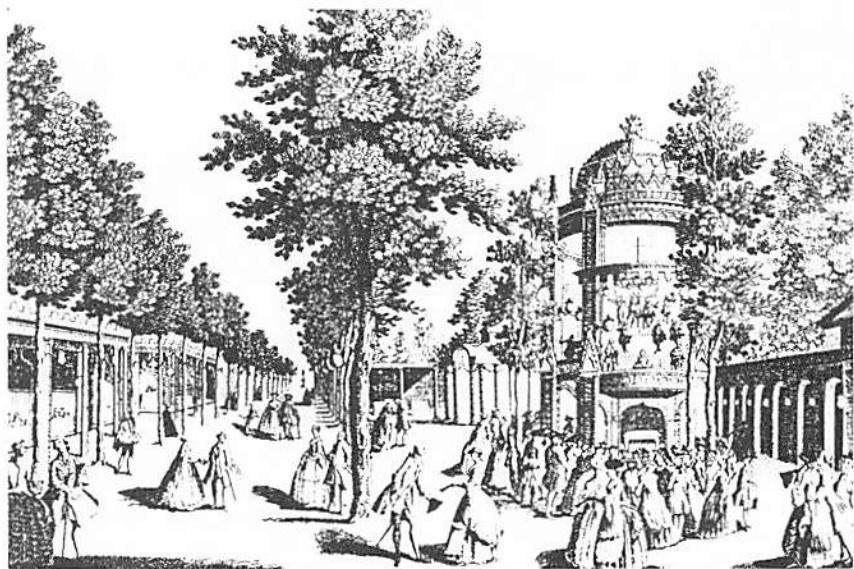


Fig. 3. Vauxhall Gardens. For nearly 200 years the gardens were famous as a pleasure ground for Londoners.

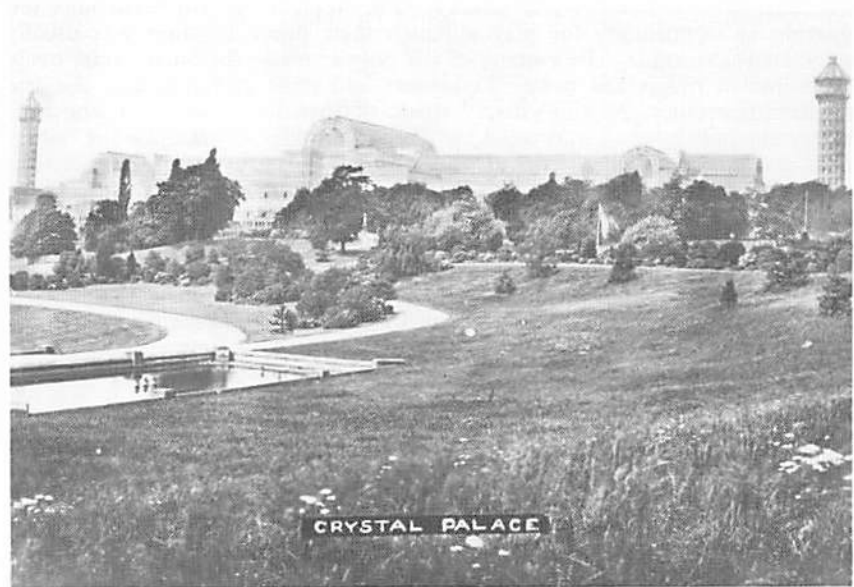


Fig. 4. The Crystal Palace - an early view showing the Palace before the north transept was destroyed by fire in 1865 - a fate that was to befall the rest of the building in 1936.

Fig. 5. Beulah Spa. Opened in 1831, the Spa grounds were designed by Decimus Burton, the famous architect. The Spa enjoyed only a short life, probably because of changing tastes and the opening of the Crystal Palace nearby in 1854. (Courtesy of Croydon Local Studies Library)

ROYAL
BEULAH SPA
WORWOOD.

ANOTHER
GRAND FETE
AT FRESKO,
on Thursday next, Aug. 18, 1836,
to which occasion the following Entertainments will take place, in addition
to the usual Amusements of the Fete:—

THE DELIBERATED

Grotesque Dancers
Mr. GIBSON, Mr. KING, and Mr. HOWE, assisted by Mrs. GIBSON,
Miss DAVIS, and Miss BURTON, will dance, in character,
A Chinese Comic Dance—A Comic
Bedouin Arab Dance, and an
Old English May-pole Morris
Dance, as danced by them at the Theatre of St. Albans
The Chamber, and for which purpose a MAT-FOLLY, beautifully
decorated will be erected in the centre of the Lawn.

A Concert in the Music Orchestra
by Mrs. FITZWILLIAM, the Misses DUNN, Misses
FITZWILLIAM, HOUBS, HAWKINS, and ATRINS.

The Celebrated MR. HARRIS,
'Soldier Fred' upon the Trumpet, and accompany the
Misses DUNN in various Songs.

Duets on the Royal Kent Busto
by Messrs. CALVERT and JONES.

Ramo Game & his Infant Daughter
will exhibit their astonishing Performances.

A Grand ARCHERY MEETING,
when various Prizes will be contended for, and in which
the Victors are invited to participate.

The Rosey and Lawn will be tastefully
included for Public Dancing, under the superintendance
of a Professor of Excellence.

A Full Military Band, under the direction
of Mr. WOOD.

Michael's German Band.
The Surrey Cornmury Band, conducted
by Mr. WATKINS.

**Refreshments may be obtained at the Confectionary
on the Grounds.**

Admission, 2s. 6d. Children, 1s.
DOORS OPEN AT TWELVE.

Printed by G. S. & Co. Stationers, Lambeth, London.

Greyhound, they turn short to the right and make for the Derby Arms' hunting stables." In George Street there is a reminder in the form of a recently erected statue of Mr. Jorrocks on his horse.

At a simpler level the innkeeper sometimes provided entertainment in the form of billiards and bowling greens whilst in the larger towns the inns were the main social centres. *Ad-hoc* games must have been played in most villages and towns and as the population grew these gradually became more organised. Cricket has a long history in the county but there were many others, the popularity of which has sometimes been very ephemeral. However golf has probably had most effect on the landscape and with recent developments in farming this seems set to increase as proposals for new courses arise.

It is doubtful if there was much time for leisure activities before the late nineteenth century, unless, as already mentioned, one was well off. Class comes through the whole spectrum of leisure. If you had money you could participate. If not you could watch. In any case certain activities were considered unsuitable for the poorer classes. As early as 1638 a Guide to J.P.s included the following 'There shall be no meetings, assemblies, or concourse of people for any sports or pastimes out of their own parishes on the Lord's Day, nor Bear Baiting, Bull Baiting, Interludes, Common Playes or other unlawful exercises within their own parishes.' The definition of unlawful exercises depended on the J.P., but did not of course apply to the gentry. Sunday - the only day when most people would have time for leisure was in any case not to be enjoyed. Gideon Mantell, the Surgeon and Geologist, described the scene in Battersea Fields in 1842. 'Tens of thousands of mechanics, little tradesmen and apprentices, and their wives and sweethearts were strolling about the fields: and the Beer shops and inns were filled with them! . . . smoking and drinking were the only amusements - not even a fiddle or a hurdy gurdy - but music would be a profanation of the Englishmen's sabbath! It was a lamentable sight.' In any case Victorian attitudes perceived boredom as a virtue and time better spent in 'improving' pursuits - not actually enjoying oneself. The average sermon would last an hour and Gladstone could and apparently sometimes did, make a speech lasting two or three hours.

In Surrey, the North Downs had gained a reputation as a health resort and place of recreation by the seventeenth century, but more famous were the pleasure grounds close to London of which Vauxhall was best known. Open from 1661 until 1859 it covered eleven acres and in the eighteenth century was a veritable Disneyland with firework displays and splendid attractions. Fanny Burney sent her heroine, Eveline there and 'on the last night of the season there was always a riot and much squealing and squalling.' Many people went by boat. The poet Dibdin wrote the following lines in a poem about a waterman;

"What sights of fine folks he row'd in his wherry
Twas cleaned out so nice and so painted withal
He was always first oars when the fine city ladies
In a party to Ranelagh went or Vauxhall."

And then there were the spas. Epsom was the first town in England to be developed as a spa for taking purgative waters for medicinal purposes.³ By 1640 its fame had spread to Europe and by 1710 it was in its heyday with assembly rooms and an active programme of public breakfasting, mime, dancing, wrestling and cock fighting. Epsom declined later in the century but meanwhile, and particularly for the poorer classes, Streatham and Dulwich spas were an attraction. Nearby Beulah Spa at Norwood enjoyed a short spell of popularity

from 1831 but closed in the 1850s. Water from Streatham could still be obtained into the present century but Surrey spas had been superseded as resorts by other attractions.

Undoubtedly the biggest and most famous was the Crystal Palace which had been erected in Hyde Park to house the Great Exhibition of 1851. It was rebuilt on a greatly enlarged scale at Penge Place. Penge was at that time in Surrey as a detached part of Battersea Parish. The vast building of five storeys was flanked by two water towers, 284ft. high, and included a central transept which could accommodate 4,000 musicians and had an organ with 4,500 pipes. There were courts, galleries, an aquarium and a theatre among other attractions and the beautifully landscaped grounds of some 300 acres included water temples, groves and a system of fountains, the largest of which threw its jets to a height of 150ft. When the water features were all in operation, nearly 12,000 jets used over 7,000,000 gallons of water an hour. The venue for concerts, massive exhibitions and splendid firework displays for some 80 years, its popularity waned in the early years of the twentieth century and the Palace was sadly destroyed by fire in 1936.⁴

For Londoners and those living nearby, the River Thames was long an attraction, both for its scenery and for boating and fishing. Richmond was a resort by the Georgian period. Its splendid scenery, Royal and society patronage, and close proximity to London assured its growing and continuing popularity.

Transport developments from the early nineteenth century really started to open up the Surrey countryside for leisure purposes and especially as a playground for Londoners. In 1809 the Croydon Canal had opened between Deptford and Croydon. Never a commercial success, the canal did attract activities such as fishing, boating and, in winter, skating and may well have been the first canal to be used extensively for leisure. When it was replaced by the London & Croydon Railway in 1839 small handbooks quickly appeared extolling the beauties of the countryside through which the line ran. The Croydon Railway was the first local passenger railway in Surrey. It was soon followed by others allowing the attractions of the county to become easily accessible to the masses so that the river, commons and downs saw many more visitors than ever before.

Meanwhile in the mid-Victorian period great interest developed in science and natural history. Many local societies were formed - the oldest surviving being the Surrey Archaeological Society (1854), The Holmesdale Natural History Club (1857) and The Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society (1870), but there were many others. Photography too was coming in to general use and camera clubs were common. Adult education was developing through Mechanics Institutes and other bodies which combined recreation, reading and lectures. The level of fees indicates that some were designed to attract the working classes whilst others were intended to deter or exclude them. In many villages the community gained a village hall, sometimes through a local benefactor - sometimes by local efforts and subscriptions. Public libraries were made possible by a mid-nineteenth-century Act of Parliament but Surrey was slow to establish free libraries with Wimbledon (1887) and Croydon (1890) being the first.



Fig. 6. Esher Road.The highway could still be enjoyed by pedestrians in the Edwardian period. Children too could enjoy games in the side streets. Such pleasures are no longer possible following the great increase in motor traffic since the 1950s.



Fig. 7. Beverley Brook. Children could more easily find simple pleasures close to their homes before much of northern Surrey was lost to the builder after the First World War.

As the population of the county grew so the number and variety of organisations increased but there is nothing so fickle as popular taste and many lasted for only a short time. As an example, of the many debating societies and local Parliaments that thrived, only Kingston (1886) and Coulsdon & Purley now appear to survive. But from the second half of the nineteenth century, amateur dramatic and operatic societies, choirs and other musical societies have thrived, whilst before the advent of wireless and television, home entertainment with musical evenings was extremely popular.

As Surrey, particularly north of the downs, became more urbanised, so the need for accessible open spaces increased. Some were provided by local authorities or as gifts of landowners. Some were quite large and laid out as formal gardens - others were kept in a more natural state. The City of London bought several quite large areas of downland at Riddlesdown, Kenley and Coulsdon when it was feared the rapid growth of Croydon would completely swamp the district in the 1880s. Some of the old commons nearer London also survived to provide much needed open space but this often happened only as a result of very strong local efforts which saved them from development. But well into the twentieth century it was still easy to take a country walk in the attractive countryside of north Surrey as close to London as Norbury, Streatham, Tooting, Merton and Malden, before the great housing sprawl of the 1920s and 1930s.

Cycling was popular from the 1880s and was even considered suitable as a pastime for ladies. The Brighton and Portsmouth Roads attracted most attention and numerous cycling clubs organised outings and events. Competition walking too had many followers and with the increasing activity on the roads, numerous refreshment places appeared. Larger establishments were to be found at beauty spots such as Riddlesdown, Farthing Downs and Epsom Downs and Ashted where great sheds could accommodate the huge crowds that assembled on fine summer days and Bank Holidays. Gardner's Pleasure Resort at Riddlesdown could serve refreshments to 2,000 people at one time and its attractions included donkeys, a museum, monkey house, aviary, swings, hoop-la, coconut stalls, swing boats, and a miniature railway. Sunday School Treats and outings by wagonette were the mainstay of these places.

The electric tramways made some places on the north Surrey fringes more accessible and the South Metropolitan Electric Tramways advertised 'Fresh Air Rides' from Croydon on their open top cars 'across breezy Mitcham Common' or to Sutton, and the London United Tramways carried thousands to the river at Kingston and Hampton Court on fine days. There was of course a novelty value in this new mode of travel but as the motor bus became more reliable after the First World War so new routes were introduced to popular Surrey beauty spots further afield. Bus trips to the country remained an attraction until the 1960s when the motor car became dominant, but excursions to the country by motor car had been popular from the early days of motoring.

The more important towns had theatres but until the late nineteenth century the theatre was regarded as anything but respectable. The early buildings were sometimes converted barns or temporarily provided at fairs but there was a purpose-built structure at Croydon by 1810. Music Halls too flourished in the larger towns towards the end of the nineteenth century but their popularity waned as that of the cinema grew. The early cinemas were mostly in converted shops, but as the quality of the films improved so did the buildings. In the 1920s and 30s purpose-built super cinemas became common throughout the county.

THE LAST NIGHT BUT ONE
Of the Company's Performing this Season.

THEATRE, CROYDON.

BY PARTICULAR DESIRE.

FOR THE BENEFIT OF

Mr. CATHCART.

Mr. CATHCART most respectfully acquaints his Friends and the Public, that at the request of the Gentlemen under whose Patronage his Benefit takes place, the Night has been postponed from Monday, December 31, 1832, (as at first intended), to

FRIDAY Evening, JANUARY 4, 1833,

When will be acted SHAKESPEARE'S Tragedy of

HAMLET
PRINCE OF DENMARK.

Hamlet, Mr. CATHCART. Claudius, (King of Denmark), Mr. GRIFFITH.
Polonius, Mr. BARNETT. Laertes, Mr. RENAUD. Horatio, Mr. YARNOLD.
Rosencrantz, Mr. MORRIS. Guildenstern, Mr. WYATT. Player King, Mr. RENAUD.
Marcellus, Mr. PAICE. Bernardo, Mr. CLAYTON. Orliv, Mr. MORRIS.
Gravediggers, Mr. WYATT and Mr. PAICE. Ghost of Hamlet's Father, Mr. BARRY.
Gertrude, (Queen of Denmark), Miss GORDON.
Ophelia, Mrs. BARNETT. Player Queen, Mrs. THOMLINSON.

END OF THE TRAGEDY.

A Hornpipe, by Mr. Charles, of the Surrey Theatre.

The Fencing Tailors, by Messrs. Renaud and Wyatt.

A SAILOR'S HORNPIPE, BY AN AMATEUR,

(HIS FIRST APPEARANCE).

The whole to conclude with the favourite Farce, called

PERFECTION;
OR, THE LADY OF MUNSTER.

Sir Lawrence Paragon, Mr. BARNETT. Charles Paragon, Mr. CATHCART.
Sam, Mr. RENAUD. John, Mr. PAICE.

Susan, Miss THOMLINSON.

Kate O'Brien, (the Lady of Munster), Mrs. BARNETT, who will sing

"Oh Men, What Silly Things you are," and "To the Gay Tournament."

Doors to be opened at Half-past Six o'Clock, and the Performance to begin at Seven precisely.

BOXES, 3s.—Half price, 2s. UPPER BOXES, 2s. 6d.—Half-price, 1s. 6d. PIT, 2s.—Half-price, 1s.
GALLERY, 1s.—Half-price, 6d. Half-price, at Half past Eight o'Clock.

Tickets to be had of Mr. CATHCART, at Mr. BEAN's, Tailor, Butcher Row; of Mr. BARNETT, at Mr. Stratton's, North End; and of Mr. ANNAN, Stationer, High Street, where Places for the Boxes may be taken.

The Season will close on Tuesday next.

W. AARAS, Printer, Croydon.

Fig. 8. Croydon Theatre Playbill. A theatre was built at Crown Hill around 1800. It later closed and the building was used by the Croydon Literary and Scientific Institution. In 1873 a new theatre, the Theatre Royal, was built on the site. (Courtesy of Croydon Local Studies Library).

As an illustration of the importance of the cinema at that time, a referendum was held in Croydon in 1932 on the Sunday opening of cinemas. Just over 50% of the electorate voted and a crowd of 8,000 gathered to hear the result at 10.30pm. Again as an example of the ephemeral nature of fashions in public leisure the rise of television in the 1950s led to the closure or conversion to Bingo Halls of most cinemas.

Perhaps the most discernible trend in the pattern of leisure and pleasure has been the gradually increasing opportunity to enjoy activities at a very much greater distance from home, or even without leaving home! The large number of people who would attend local events fifty years ago is not matched today. The simple pleasures of the Edwardian or Victorian period no longer appeal. The street can no longer be enjoyed as it could. If one looks at old photographs it is obvious that the coming of the early motor vehicles, or the electric tram, or a local event or accident created enormous interest, and of course it was free. Local Historians are fortunate that the great popularity of the picture postcard in the first decade of this century, and the collecting hobby it stimulated, have left such a splendid record of that time. Radio, television and the motor car have probably had the greatest subsequent impact on the pattern of leisure and pleasure, much of it not for the better.

Principal Sources:

1. John Armitage, *Man at Play* (Frederick Warne, 1977)
2. H.M.Vibart, *Addiscombe - Its Heroes and Men of Note*. (Constable 1894)
3. Alex Sakula, 'The Waters of Epsom Spa', *Surrey History*, Vol. II (5), 1983, p.229.
4. Patrick Beaver, *The Crystal Palace* (Phillimore, 1986)

Unattributed illustrations are from the author's collection.



Fig. 9. The Ritz Cinema, Woking. This typifies the new cinemas of the 1930s. Opened in 1937, the Ritz had over 1,500 seats and a Compton Organ. Closed in 1972, it was divided into smaller units and reopened, but later closed and demolished - the fate of so many Surrey cinemas. (Courtesy of Tony Moss).



Fig.10. The Terrace, Richmond. In the Edwardian period many of the middle and upper classes would enjoy an afternoon stroll, especially on Sundays, when they could 'see and be seen'. Such perambulations were often known as the 'monkey parade' by others.



Fig.11. Box Hill on Bank Holiday. Long a popular venue for day trippers, donkey rides were an additional attraction.



Fig.12. London Road, Worcester Park. The Queen Victoria Public House, left, was a welcome stopping place for thirsty cyclists and walkers on the way out to Ewell or Epsom.



Fig.13. The Hampton Court Coach at Surbiton. The coming of the railway resulted in the steady decline of stage coaches. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there was however a renewal of interest with special trips and a few regular services to popular resorts.

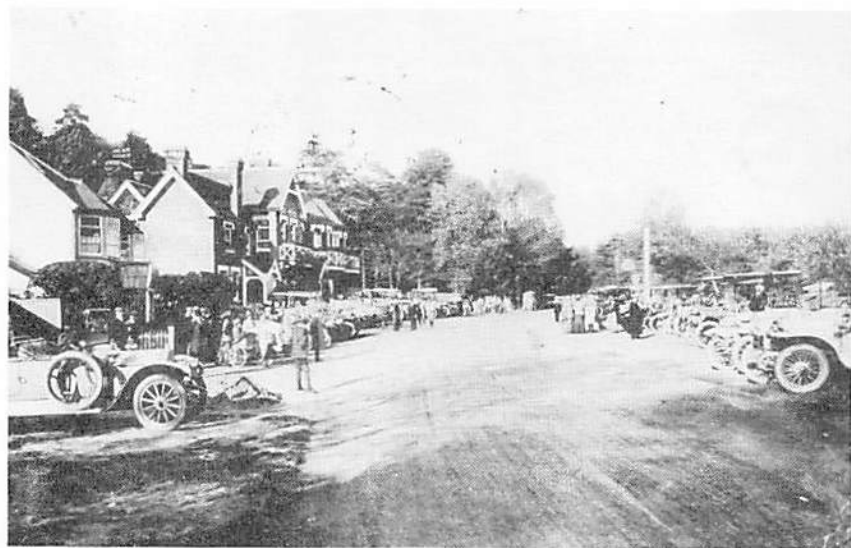


Fig.14. Wisley Hut Hotel. Motoring began to increase rapidly in popularity from the early twentieth century, but much of Surrey has subsequently suffered as a result. The road here is now a dual carriageway and the hotel has disappeared, having been burnt down and not rebuilt.



Fig.15. High Street, Ripley. This 1920s view includes an open char-a-banc, cyclists, motor cars and a 'General' bus, all probably out for day trips.



Fig.16. Caterham Tradesmen. Outings to the Surrey Countryside by brake or wagonette were very popular until the motor vehicle made it feasible to travel further afield, and beyond the county - particularly after the Second World War.



Fig.17. Matten's Tea Gardens, Ashted. One of the once-common tea gardens and pleasure grounds that flourished at popular beauty spots in the county.



Fig.18. Epsom Racecourse. A busy scene at Epsom c. 1907. A few early motor vehicles are there and the old grandstand is in the background.



Fig.19. Derby Day at Morden. The Underground railway reached Morden in 1926. Here vast queues of people wait for buses to Epsom in 1928. A parade of new shops alongside the station faces open farmland, soon to be built over.

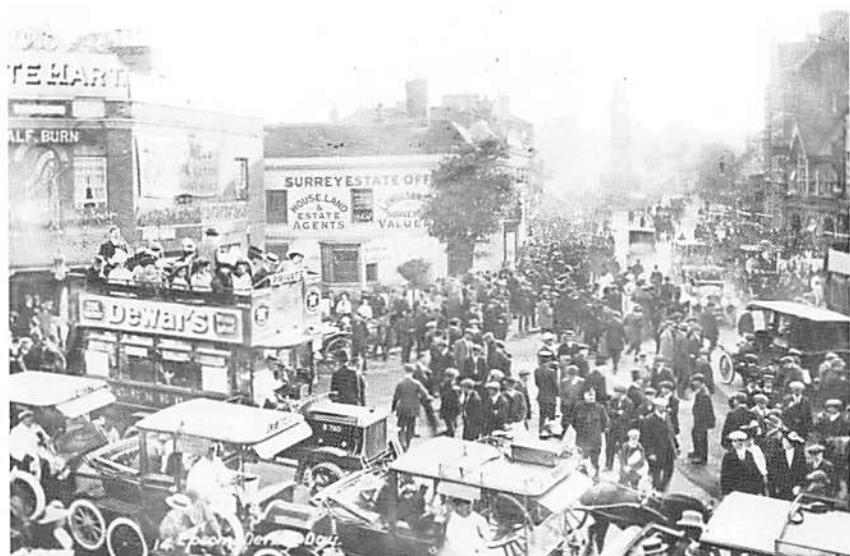


Fig.20. Derby Day in Epsom before the first World War.



Fig.21. Bletchingley. Arriving to set up the fair at the turn of the century.

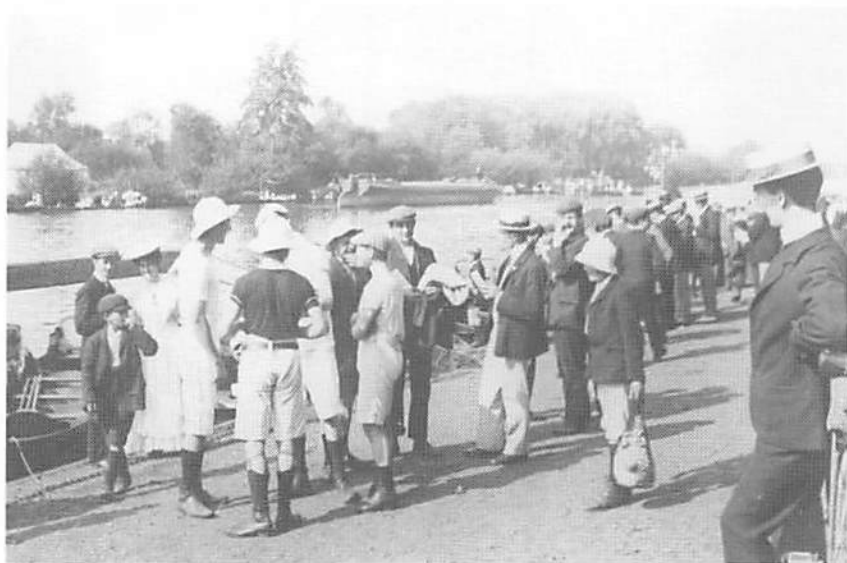


Fig. 22. Walton Town Regatta. Regattas are still popular features on the River Thames as they were in 1908.

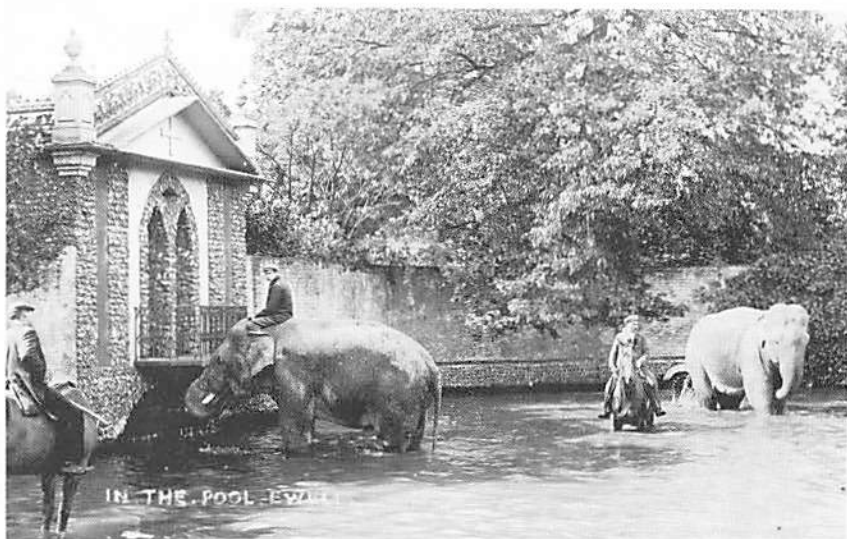


Fig. 23. Elephants at Ewell. The travelling circus was until recent years a very popular attraction wherever it arrived and there was usually a parade of animals through the streets to advertise its presence. In this 1907 postcard view, elephants belonging to Sanger's Circus take a dip in the pond at Ewell.

THE PAPER MILLS OF SURREY, PART II*

Alan Crocker
Surrey Industrial History Group

Introduction

Paper mills were active in Surrey from the early seventeenth century until 1928 when the last mill closed. During this period 38 mills are known to have operated, including 18 whose sites are now in Greater London and three on the County boundaries with Hampshire and Sussex. An account of the growth and decline of the industry in Surrey and of the locations of the mills has already been presented in a previous article, together with brief histories of some of the mills.¹ These were at Stoke near Guildford, which was the earliest, Byfleet, Carshalton, Bermondsey, Haslemere and Catteshall near Godalming, which was the last to close. The main purpose of the present paper is to provide similar notes on the histories of the paper mills at Eashing, Worplesdon, Ewell, Albury, Postford, Esher and Wandsworth. However some relevant background information on the history of the paper industry will be presented first.²

The early paper mills required an ample and regular supply of water to power machinery for making the stuff or pulp from which the paper was made. They also needed an adequate supply of clean water to produce this stuff. A large quantity of rags, which was the raw material, had to be collected and it was an advantage to have a ready market for paper nearby. London had the rags and the stationers but little water power and no clean water. It could not therefore produce paper and had to rely on mills in the surrounding countryside including the towns and villages of Surrey. However at the end of the eighteenth century chlorine was discovered and could be used to bleach the stuff so that clean water was no longer crucial. In addition steam engines were readily available so that paper mills could be located in London. Until that time all paper had been made by hand as individual sheets. This was a very slow process and the mills could not meet the demands for paper arising from the increasingly literate community. This led to the invention of the Fourdrinier papermaking machine which rapidly produces a continuous roll of paper. Increased production meant that the waterpower available at many mills was inadequate and had to be supplemented by steam power, which was expensive in rural Surrey. In addition it resulted in a shortage of rags which therefore had to be imported. However by the 1870s techniques had been developed for making paper from esparto grass, which grows in Tripoli and Spain, and wood, which was imported from Norway and Canada. As a result large new paper mills were built on the coast, particularly in Kent, and the smaller inland mills, such as those in Surrey were unable to compete and closed.^{1,2}

* Part I of this paper was published in 1989.¹ The author would welcome information on any aspect of Surrey paper mills and invites readers to contact him at the Department of Physics, University of Surrey, Guildford GU2 5XH.

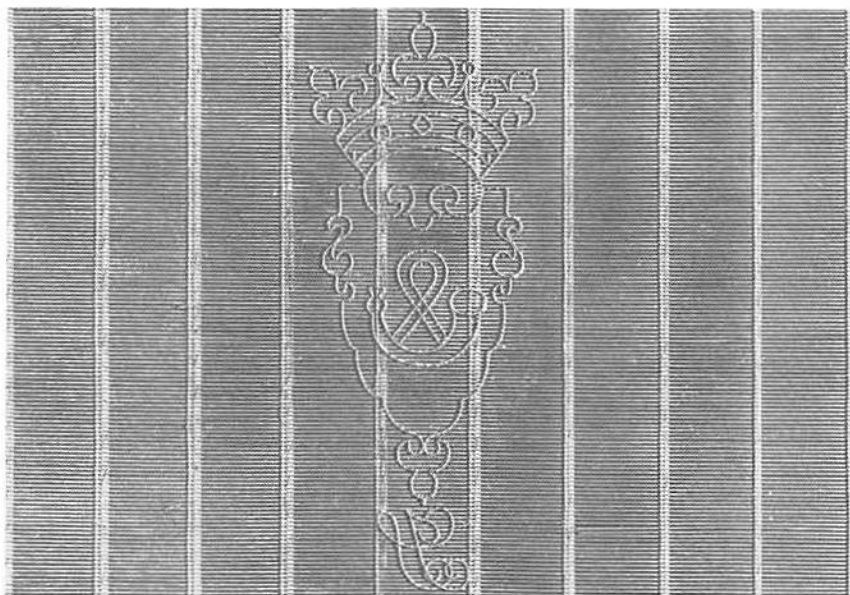


Fig. 1. Photograph of a Post Horn device sewn on to the laid wire cover of a mould of 1812 used by James Simmons, papermaker of Haslemere. The reversed initials 'JS' appear beneath the shield. The vertical chain lines are 24mm. apart. (Courtesy of Haslemere Educational Museum. Photograph by University of Surrey).

The method of making paper by hand has been described and illustrated previously.¹⁻³ Basically the papermaker dips his mould, which is a wooden frame covered with a wire mesh, into a vat of stuff and lifts it out, supporting a very wet sheet of paper, which is dried by being pressed between felts and hung on ropes in a loft. The mould usually has a wire motif fixed to its cover and this gives rise to the watermark in the paper. Recently a mould used by James Simmons, papermaker of Haslemere and dated 1812 was discovered in Haslemere Museum.⁴ A photograph of the watermark design, a posthorn on a shield surmounted by a crown and with the initials JS below, is shown as Fig. 1. A selection of watermarks in Surrey hand-made paper has been published previously³ and a few relevant examples are given in this paper.

The papermaking machine has also been described previously together with an illustration of one installed at Postford Mill, Albury, in about 1830.^{1, 2, 5} It has a large chest from which the stuff flows into a vat and thence on to an endless web of wire which carries a wet continuous sheet of paper, first between rollers covered with felt, then around heated drying cylinders and finally to a reel. Early machine-made paper had no watermarks but in the 1830s a method of pressing a mark into the paper by passing it around a specially constructed cylinder called a dandy roll was developed.² A photograph taken in about 1892 of a papermaking machine at Woking Mill is shown in figure 2.

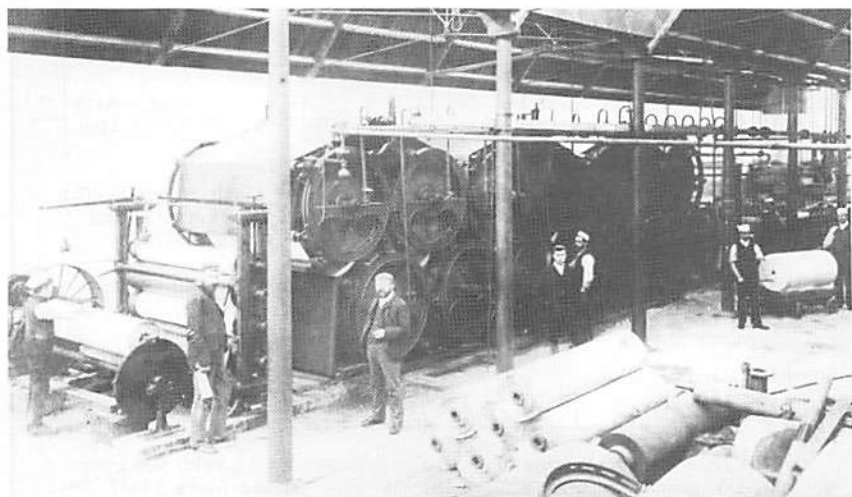


Fig. 2. Papermaking machine with 14 drying cylinders installed at Woking Mill in 1892. The wet-end of the machine is in the background on the right and the stack of four calendar rolls, which smooth the dried paper, is in the foreground on the left. The dismantled rolls on the right foreground suggest that the new equipment had just been commissioned. Five of the workers are wearing characteristic folded paper hats. (*Courtesy of Unwin Brothers*).

Eashing Mill - the second paper mill in Surrey

In 1658 William West a papermaker of Wraysbury in Buckinghamshire purchased the corn mills at Eashing⁶ and established what was probably the second paper mill in Surrey. West died in 1673 but his widow Judith and son John, with their tenants William Alexander and William ffish carried on the papermaking and corn milling business until 1696.^{7, 8} The mills were then bought by Thomas Hall whose family was active there for well over a century. Indeed until 1799 the mills were owned by three generations all named Thomas Hall and, as shown in the family tree of Fig. 3, Richard Boxall and Richard Tickner, papermakers of Chilworth mill and Westbrook mill at Godalming, were also relatives.^{7, 9}

The site is marked as a paper mill on several eighteenth-century County maps and an estate map of 1773 shows the paper mill on the north bank of the River Wey and the corn mill on the south.¹⁰ When Thomas Hall III died in 1799 he left the mills to his housekeeper Mary Furlonger and his adopted daughters Mary Ann and Sarah Furlonger.⁷ They let the paper mills in turn to Thomas Harrison, who also worked at Catteshall and Westbrook Mills, John Smith, and Richard Smith who was bankrupt in 1826.¹¹⁻¹⁴ Richard Whitbourne and John Clerk, the husbands of Mary Ann and Sarah, then ran the mills until 1832 when they were sold to Pewtress, Lowe and Pewtress.^{7, 11-13} The engraving of the mill shown in Fig. 4 is based on a drawing of this period by Waring Kidd, a Godalming naturalist.¹⁵ The characteristic vertical shutters of the drying lofts of the paper mill are clearly represented on the right hand side.

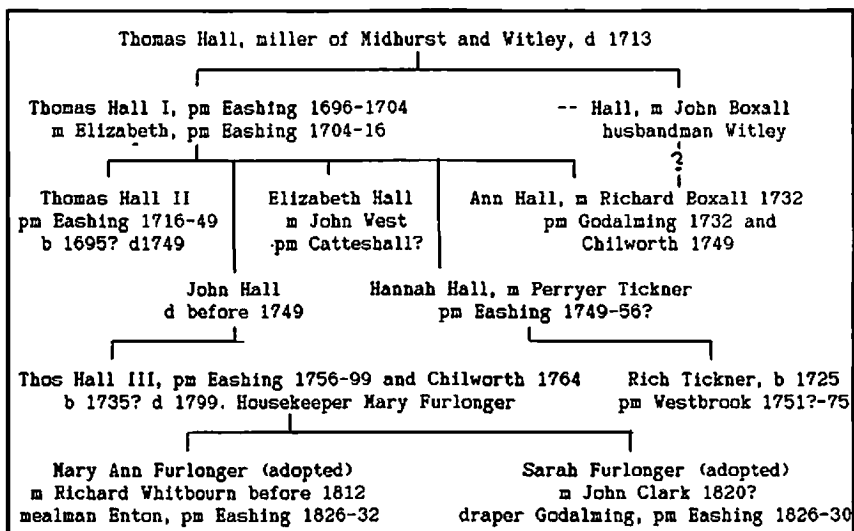


Fig. 3. Selective family tree of the Hall family, papermakers of Eashing, Westbrook, Chilworth and perhaps Catteshall. The abbreviation 'pm' is used for papermaker.

The new owners were already important paper manufacturers at Iping in Sussex and later they also purchased Stoke Mill and Grange Mills in Bermondsey. At Eashing they immediately closed the corn mill and developed the site as a machine paper mill. This was destroyed by a fire in 1852¹⁶ but it was rebuilt and the owners also constructed a terrace of Bargate stone houses, still known as Pewtress Cottages, for their workers. In addition to James Lowe, several generations of the Pewtress family including Benjamin, Thomas, Joseph, Samuel, Edward and Stephen were involved in the business.¹⁷

The census returns of 1851 for Eashing and neighbouring Hurtmore provide interesting information on the mobility of papermakers and their families but also illustrate how the industry had created a very closed community. Thus four of the 13 men recorded as papermakers and the wives of five others were born at Iping or nearby towns and villages in Sussex and had clearly moved to Eashing when Pewtress & Co. purchased the mill. The other workers were all from paper mill localities including Barford, Chilworth, Guildford, Headley, Stoke, Westerham in Kent, and of course Godalming. In addition to the papermakers one man was described as a bleacher. The ages ranged from 15 to 62 and there were two apprentices of 11 and 12.

In 1865 when the mill was offered for sale there were 98 employees.¹³ It contained 15 beating engines, nine driven by two waterwheels and six by an 1854 Easton & Amos steam engine, two revolving rag boilers, two boiling kiers, four steam boilers and two papermaking machines, 60 in. and 48 in. wide. They could produce up to 10 tons of paper a week for *The Times* and other newspapers and journals and also long elephants for paper stainers.¹⁸ The mill does not seem to have been sold immediately but William Bishop took it over in 1869 and with the help of his manager, Thomas Sweetapple, son of the former

owner of Cateshall Mill,^{1, 19} ran the business until 1889. They had two 60 in. machines and produced printings, cartridges, middles and collar papers.²⁰ The works later became a flock mill, suffered a serious fire in 1916,²¹ was restored and until recently was occupied by an engineering firm. The site is now being redeveloped.



Fig. 4. Engraving of Eashing Mills published in 1849, but based on a sketch, which probably dates from about 1832, by Waring Kidd. The paper mill with its drying loft is on the right and the house, rag-house and corn mill are on the left. (*Courtesy of John Janaway*).

Bower's Mill - a mill on the Wey Navigation

Bower's Mill is located near Burpham but is just within the historic parish of Worplesdon at a site where a cut of the Wey Navigation rejoins the River Wey. In 1729 Thomas Hillyer, papermaker of Worplesdon, purchased a messuage called the Cyder House at Shalford, which also features in the history of Stoke and Chilworth paper mills.²² Four years later he took out a fire insurance policy on Bower's Mill.⁹ Hillyer's name also occurs several times in the Shalford parish registers between 1716 and 1733⁹ and in 1728 he devised Down paper mill at Cobham to Richard Hinton.²³ On Senex's 1729 map of Surrey 'paper mill' is written adjacent to Broadoak Bridge, 1 kilometre downstream from Bower's Mill. Although there is a sluice at this bridge there is no record of a mill ever

being situated here and it seems likely that Senex was referring to Bower's Mill.²⁴

Thomas Hillyer appears to have died shortly after taking out the 1733 insurance policy, as in November of that year, Mary Hillyer, widow, of Bower's Mill insured her new paper mill called Down Mill.⁹ Then in 1738 John Hillyer of Bower's Mill papermaker, eldest son and heir of Thomas Hillyer, late of the same place, papermaker deceased, and Mary Hillyer of the same, widow, sold the Cyder House.²² Meanwhile in 1737 John Maidman, papermaker of Worplesdon, was at the marriage of Mary Hillyer of Bower's Mill.⁹ This was presumably John Hillyer's sister and it is also interesting that John Maidman appears in the Shalford parish registers in 1716 and 1722.⁹ Other references include the marriage in 1737 of William Burvell, a papermaker of nearby West Clandon, which did not have a paper mill, and the burial at Shalford in 1740 of William Blackwell, papermaker of Worplesdon.⁹ Robert Sutton and Jonathon Fishlake were papermakers of Worplesdon in 1745, John Edds of Worplesdon was apprenticed at Iping paper mill in Sussex in 1746 and Joseph Neels was a papermaker at Worplesdon in 1751.^{9,25} Then in 1755 Abraham Hillyer, papermaker, insured his timber-built paper mill at Worplesdon and the stock in the separate timber-and-tiled rag houses for £1,000.⁹ This is the last known reference to the Hillyer family at Bower's Mill.

The next papermaker was William Drury who in 1759 insured the household goods in his dwelling house and the utensils and stock in his brick-and-timber paper mill for £1,000. Five years later he took on an apprentice, Leonard Barker, but in 1773 Daniel Eaton, papermaker, insured the contents of the house, mill and raghouses, including his wearing apparel, for £1,100. In a further policy of 1779 Daniel Isaac Eaton of Bower's Mill was described as a papermaker and miller, when he insured the equipment and materials in his paper mill, corn mill, workshops, warehouses, raghouses and dwelling houses for £1,600.⁹ A year later when Eaton purchased the copyhold of the mill he was described as a mealman.²⁶ In addition the land tax for the paper mill which was paid by Eaton decreased from £40 in 1780 to £10 in 1781. Between 1784 and 1789 William King paid the land tax 'for ye paper mill', but in 1790 this was changed to 'for land at ye paper mill' and from 1791 to 1798 it was paid by John Pimm.¹¹ It is interesting that the 1794 Worplesdon land tax records are written on paper with the watermark 'W KING', but this could have been the William King who was at Alton Mill at this time. In addition the Pimms were a well known family of papermakers at Bramshott and Barford and a 'J PIMM' watermark occurs in the Stoke d'Abernon land tax paper of 1800.¹¹ Also a booklet of lottery tickets has been discovered, printed on paper with the watermark 'EM' with the statement that they were used for E. Marter by W. I. Pimm of Bower's Mill in 1794.²⁷ However it appears that papermaking at Bower's Mill died out in the 1790s and an insurance policy of 1793 refers simply to a corn mill at the site.¹³ This was rebuilt in the late nineteenth century and then converted into an attractive house.

Ewell Mill - a remarkable series of insurance policies

There were two mills on the attractive Hogsmill River in the village of Ewell. The Upper Mill, just below the spring which is the source of the river, was a

corn mill until the 1940s. It was gutted and largely rebuilt as offices in 1984. The Lower Mill 300 metres further downstream was also originally a corn mill but in 1733 was insured by William Jubb a papermaker and described as a paper mill and corn mill.⁹ Jubb could have been the same person as the William Tubbs who in 1726 was the proprietor of a paper mill at West Drayton in Middlesex.⁹ His paper must have been of exceptionally high quality as in about 1737 he was one of a group of papermakers who opposed the Bank Bill giving the monopoly of making paper for the Bank of England to Portals of Laverstoke in Hampshire. The case the papermakers made to the House of Commons bears the statement that it was printed on paper made by William Jubb at Ewell Mills.⁹

1738: Timber Buildings Insured for £600
 House 40 X 19 and 8 X 8; Brewhouse 20 X 12; Pantry 27 X 10; Paper mills and rag house over the same 34 X 36; Two water mills and mill house with store rooms over 24 X 12; Corn mill with store rooms over 19 X 22; Drying lofts 22 X 15; Drying house and size house 129 X 15; Finishing rooms 34 X 9.

1766: Timber Buildings Insured for £1200, Brick for £100
 House, 2 storeys, 31 X 19 and 19 X 9; Drying house 22 X 14; Leanto 18 X 10; Do 23 X 18; Paper and flour mill 71 X 24; Wash house 25 X 25; Leanto 8 X 6; Rag house 16 X 14; Stable 12 X 11; Cart house 16 X 11; Wood house 16 X 14; Chalze house 12 X 8; Drying and size house 142 X 15; Leanto 26 X 7.6; Leather house 15 X 30; House 23 X 15.6.

1780: Timber Buildings Insured for £1200, Brick for £200
 As 1766 except House now 27 X 33 and inclusion of Kitchen 17 X 13 and 9 X 8 and Open carthouse 14 X 16.

Fig. 5. Details of Ewell Lower Mills taken from Hand-in-Hand insurance policies. The policies were taken out on 22nd. June every seven years. All dimensions are given in feet. (Courtesy of the late Rowland Baker).

The history of the mills from 1738 to 1794 is covered by a remarkable series of Hand-in-Hand insurance policies which were renewed every seven years.²⁸ These give the names of the owners and the functions and dimensions of the buildings. The details of this information for 1738 and for 1766 and 1780 when there were substantial changes are given in Fig. 5. In the first policy William Jubb of 'Yeovill in Surry' insured the timber group of buildings for £ 600. It is noticeable that the paper and corn mills were separate and that a very large proportion of the space was used for drying the paper. Jubb died in 1739 leaving a widow Sarah and several children including a three-year-old son William.²⁹ Sarah insured the mills in 1745 and a William Wells did so in 1752 and 1759.²⁸ Indeed a plan to make the river navigable which dates from this period refers to Wells's Mill.³⁰ He was described as a papermaker in a court book of 1772³¹ and died in 1785.²⁹

Meanwhile William Jubb II insured the buildings in 1766²⁸ and judging by

the dimensions in Fig. 5 the mills, apart from the drying and size house, had been rebuilt. In particular the paper and corn mills were now in a single building spanning the mill stream. This is confirmed by several insurance policies taken out by tenants of the corn mill which refer to the two mills communicating under one roof, brick timber and tiled.¹³ The land tax records show William Jubb as both the proprietor and occupier of the mills from the first available account in 1780 until his death in 1795.¹¹ He was also the assessor and collector of this tax and in several years kept the records in booklets made from his own paper.

Following Jubb's death there is no evidence of papermaking at Ewell. Indeed when the property of the late William Jubb was insured in 1797 no paper mill was mentioned.³² Later the mill was rebuilt as a three-storey corn mill which eventually closed in 1929. The mill pond was used by Millais in 1881 as the background for the Pre-Raphaelite painting of the mad Ophelia drowning. The model Elizabeth Siddal was painted over a period of four months lying in a heated bath at Worcester Park House four kilometres farther down the Hogsmill River.³³

Albury Park Mill - the Count of Artois and the George and Vulture

The paper mill in the old village of Albury was near the church in what is now Albury Park. It was on the Tillingbourne immediately downstream from the famous pleasure grounds laid out in the 1660s by John Evelyn, the diarist, for his neighbour Henry Howard later sixth Duke of Norfolk.³⁴ The history of the mill has been described in detail elsewhere.⁵ Traditionally it had ground corn but in the early 1790s Charles Ball, a papermaker who was also active at Stoke and Chilworth mills, took a 21-year lease of the site. He built the bank-note paper mill shown in Fig. 6³⁵ and soon received some orders which provide a fascinating insight into an important aspect of European history. The curious story, summarised below, was recorded by his grandson, Charles Ashby Ball.³⁶

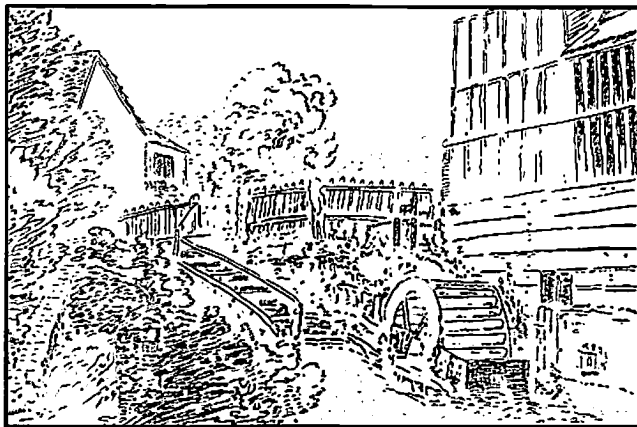


Fig. 6. Albury Park Mill based on an original anonymous drawing of 13th. July 1801, held by the Trustees of the Northumberland Estates. The waterwheel lies alongside the mill, with its drying lofts, on the right and the papermaker's house is on the left. (Courtesy of Bob and Retta Casbard).

In 1793 or 1794 a stranger called at the mill and asked Charles Ball to make some paper containing particular watermarks. The order was repeated frequently but sometimes the watermarks had to be modified. The necessary changes were made to the moulds by a young German named Longhelt and on one occasion the stranger sat by his side to watch. Longhelt, who had been drinking, resented the intrusion, and getting impatient threw the mould at the visitor's head. Eventually the customer departed to be seen no more but later Ball learned that his mysterious patron was no other than the Count of Artois, afterwards Charles X, king of France and Navarre. The paper he had manufactured was for false assignats. These were a form of paper currency issued by the French Republic from 1789 to 1797 and then abandoned as the public refused to accept them. An example, printed in 1991 from a counterfeiter's block, is shown in Fig. 7.³⁷ The frequent changes of the watermark were necessary because when the officers of the Republic discovered the forgeries, they altered the form of the assignats. Hence Charles Ball played a role in the attempt of the French royal family to undermine the Revolution by forging assignats. It is interesting that the Count of Artois is said to have lived at Shalford Rectory Manor during his exile.⁵



Fig. 7. Copy of an assignat printed in 1990 from an English forger's engraved wooden block in the Fuller Collection of the Paleography Library, University of London. The original is 8.3 cm. across. (Courtesy of Peter Bower).

Charles Ball paid the land tax for Albury Park Mill until 1810.¹¹ For much of this period he was the tax assessor and kept the records in booklets made from his own paper. It was a period when many master papermakers were having problems with their workers and Ball was active in meetings of the employers. For example with other local papermakers he signed the following letter³⁸ to Nathaniel Davies, the solicitor employed by The Committee of Master Paper-Makers, which held their meetings at the George and Vulture Tavern in Cornhill, London.³⁹

'Guildford, March 26, 1796

Mr. Davis, Sir

In consequence of what passed at the meeting of the Master Papermakers at the George and Vulture on Tuesday last, We of that Branch in the Neighbourhood have had a Meeting when it was unanimously agreed to give our Men a fortnights warning from this day, unless they comply with all the terms required and agreed to at the Second Meeting namely 'to desist from giving any assistance to those Men who have continued against their Masters for an advance of Wages' and also to 'desist from what is called their Turns to the Journeymen at present out of work' till they return to their Duty. We hope these measures may prove efficacious and beg of you to lay these our resolutions before the Committee.

We remain Sir, Your humble Servants

Edward Hughs, Chas Ball, Smith & Knight, John Groves, Thomas Harrison'

The signatories of this letter were the master papermakers at Chilworth, Albury Park, Westbrook, Stoke and Catteshall mills respectively. Within two months of it being written a Bill which aimed to prevent unlawful combinations of workmen employed in paper manufacture was passed by Parliament.³⁹ However attendance at Committee meetings appears to have been a burden and in 1799 Ball and Edward Hughes represented each other and on one occasion Ball also represented Richard Glover of Morden paper mill.⁹ The print of 'Albury Mill & Paper Mould Manufactory near Guildford in Surry' reproduced on the cover of *Surrey History* 3, [1] represents Albury Park Mill in about 1800. Earlier it was thought to show Postford Lower Mill, also known as Albury Mill and owned by the Ball family.³ However the location of the mill house, the paper mill itself and the watercourses are now known to correspond well with details on contemporary surveys of Albury Park⁵ and the recently discovered drawing from which Fig. 6 has been copied.³⁵ The fact that the mill made moulds is consistent with the manufacture of bank-note paper in general and the above assignat story in particular. Indeed it was engraved by Harry Ashby, a London printer and engraver specialising in bill-heads, banknotes and specimen sheets of calligraphy, who was a business partner of Charles Ball.⁵ The only other known mould makers in Surrey lived at Stoke.¹

Prior to the arrival of Charles Ball at Albury Park Mill the manor was held by Admiral William Clement Finch who harrassed the Albury villagers living near the church and manor house so much that many of them moved to the hamlet of Weston Street 1.5 kilometres to the west.⁵ Finch died in 1794 and during Ball's occupation of the paper mill the village remained stable. In particular from 1800 to 1810 the manor was owned by Samuel Thornton, a governor of the Bank of England, who was a public-spirited landlord.⁵ There is no evidence however that Ball produced paper for the Bank. The next owner was Charles Wall whose arrival coincided with Ball's departure. He demolished most of the remaining cottages. The process was completed by Henry Drummond who built a new church for the villagers in Weston Street which took over the name of Albury from the deserted village in the Park. The mill was replaced in about 1850 by a laundry designed by Pugin in the mock-Tudor style and this still survives.⁵ Ball

died in 1820 and is buried, with other members of his family, in the churchyard at Merrow, where he lived from 1803 to 1816. His obituary states that he was 'eminent as the inventor and manufacturer of superior bankers' note paper, and late of the firm of Ball and Ashby, engravers etc.'⁵

Postford Mills - a series of bankruptcies

In 1809 Charles Ball of Albury Park Mill took out leases of 61 years on two newly constructed paper mills at Postford on the parish boundary between Albury and St. Martha. He installed his eldest son Charles at Postford Lower Mill on Postford Pond and a younger son Edmund Richard at Postford Upper Mill on Waterloo Pond, then called Payne's Pond.⁴⁰ A detailed account of these mills, which were used for gunpowder manufacture in the seventeenth century, has been given elsewhere⁵ and only a summary will be presented here.

When the Chilworth Manor estates were sold in 1813 each of the mills had three vats and 11-ft.-diameter waterwheels, and the combined annual rent was £ 168.⁴⁰ Following the Napoleonic Wars many banks failed so that banknote papermakers were in difficulties. In 1820 Edmund Richard Ball and William May Ashby, who had joined him in 1815, became bankrupt and the Upper Mill described as a banknote paper mill was auctioned.^{5, 13} A poster advertising the sale is reproduced as Fig. 8.⁴¹ It was taken over briefly by Hugh Rowland of Chilworth Mills and then by Charles Francis Hayes, John Hayes and Charles M'Callum.^{11, 13} Meanwhile at the Lower Mill Charles Ball was bankrupt in 1821 and the mill, now with four vats, and Postford House were for sale.^{5, 13} Ball was joined at the mill by Charles Roffe and a year later they were also at Stoke Mill. However in 1824 Roffe became the sole proprietor but he too was bankrupt a year later.¹³ In practice Charles Ball and his young son Charles Ashby emigrated to France and helped to establish a machine paper mill near Dieppe in 1826. Later they founded or bought several other mills in France. They perfected many important improvements in the manufacture of paper especially in the use of bleached straw and esparto grass as raw materials. Charles Ashby died near Le Havre in 1885.⁴²

It was on 30th. November 1822 that William Cobbett visited Chilworth and Albury and recorded his celebrated diatribe against 'two of the most damnable inventions that ever sprang from the minds of man under the influence of the devil ! namely, the making of gunpowder and of banknotes !'³⁴ He exonerated gunpowder but hated paper money, the only redeeming factor being that the same springs had 'assisted in turning rags into Registers'. This refers to his independent Radical journal, the *Political Register*, in which he campaigned for political and financial reform. There are no records of banknote paper being made at Chilworth Mills so Cobbett must have meant Postford. The paper for the Registers could however have been made at Chilworth.

An interesting anecdote about Postford Mill is related by Martin Tupper, the versifier of Albury, who was born in 1810. When a very small child he was taken to the mill and told to amuse himself by making banknote paper. He put a spoonful of pulp into a shallow wire tray, shook it to make a small oblong of paper watermarked with Britannia and dried it on a flannel pad. Later a secret cupboard was discovered at Postford House containing several forged plates for printing banknotes.⁴³

**BANK NOTE PAPER MILL,
ALBURY,** ¹⁴¹

Near Guildford in the County of Surrey.

Particulars

OF
A VALUABLE

Leasehold Estate,

SITUATED AT

Albury, near Guildford:

IN THE COUNTY OF SURREY;

COMPRISING

A Capital and Substantial Three Vat Paper Mill,

CALLED THE

UPPER MILL,

used and expressly arranged with all necessary Offices for the purpose of making

BANK NOTE PAPER,

A SMALL NEAT COTTAGE RESIDENCE,

A New Built Cottage adjoining,

A Foreman's Cottage, Sundry Tenements for Labourers,

A Piece or Parcel of Land and Garden Ground adjoining,

Together with the use of the Pond, called the Upper Pond, and the use of the Rivers, and Streams, &c.

Which will be Sold by Auction,

BY

Mr. ADAMSON,

**On FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1820, at 12 o'Clock,
At the Auction Mart, Bartholomew Lane, London,**

By direction of the Assignees of Messrs. E. S. Ball, and W. M. Ashby, Bank Note Paper Makers

The Conditions of the Sale, and Particulars had on the Premises, at the Mill, of Messrs. Stevens and Wood, Sellers, Lamb St Thomas Apostle, and of
Mr ADAMSON, at, Fenchurch Street.

Fig. 8. Poster advertising the sale of Postford Upper Mill in October 1820. The original is 370 mm. by 307mm. (Courtesy of Guildford Muniment Room).



Fig. 9. Postford Lower Mill based on a lithograph published in 1832. The view is from the south west, looking across Postford Pond, towards the mill with its extensive shuttered drying-lofts. (Courtesy of Bob and Retta Casbard).

In August 1826 Robert Stephenson & Sons of Newcastle upon Tyne, who in 1829 were to become famous for building the 'Rocket' locomotive, received an order from C. Magnay & Sons of London for papermaking machinery for Postford Mill.⁴⁴ The Magnays were a successful family of wholesale stationers and papermakers, owning mills in Buckinghamshire, Norwich and Cork.³⁹ William and James Magnay took over Postford Mills and clearly planned to convert them to the production of machine-made paper. However while they made their preparations they installed William Boyd as the papermaker at the Lower Mill.¹³ Fig. 9 shows the mill as it was at this time.⁴⁵ The shuttered drying lofts are prominent and the cupola makes an attractive architectural feature. The Upper Mill seems to have been unused after 1826.¹³

In 1832 the Magnays took out a new lease of the mills and were already demolishing the Upper Mill and building a new brick and timber mill roofed with slate.⁵ The Lower Mill was already insured for £ 2,000 which was to be increased to £ 3,500 when the new mill was complete. A year later the mill appears to have been in full production as *The Penny Magazine* contained a very detailed account of the way in which the paper on which it was printed was produced at Albury Mill.⁴⁶ It was James Magnay who in practice lived at Postford House and ran the Mill.^{5, 11} Trade must have been flourishing as in 1833 he took over Westbrook Mill and in 1838 Stoke Mill. Then in 1842, aged 42, he died following a fall from his horse.⁵ His elder brother William took over responsibility for the mill.³⁹ He was knighted in 1844 and in the late 1840s Sir William Magnay at Albury was said to be the principal papermaker of Surrey

having two papermaking machines and nine beating engines.^{5, 47} During this period the names of Charles, George and Jane Magnay are also linked to the mill.^{5, 13}

During the 1850s the business affairs of the Magnays ran into difficulties and the mills were leased to George Cowthorpe Green, who a few months later was bankrupt and a prisoner in the Queen's Prison of Surrey. He was followed by Alfred Spence in 1854 but he too was bankrupt a year later. The mills then seem to have been unoccupied. Meanwhile Sir William Magnay was in serious financial difficulties and in 1865 the mills were auctioned under an execution from the Sheriff of Surrey. The advertisements describe Postford Mill as having two 10-hp. steam engines, six rag engines, 60-in. and 52-in. papermaking machines, four stuff chests, two cutting machines and two waterwheels 12 ft. in diameter and 11 ft. 6 in. wide. There was also a 17-ft.-diameter, 6-ft.-wide waterwheel at the new mill site in the grounds of Postford House which housed the washing engines.^{5, 13}

Postford Mill was not included in the *Paper Mills Directory* from its first issue in 1860 up to 1871,²⁰ although B. Lambert was there in 1863-64⁵ and George Adams in 1870.¹³ Then in 1872 it appears as being occupied by Pavy Pretto & Co., who were using a paper machine to make patent, felted, furniture fabric, but by 1876 they were in liquidation.⁴⁸ The buildings were then used as a flock mill but they were largely destroyed by fire in 1886.⁵ In 1909 the site of the original Lower Mill was taken over by the Botting family for their new corn mill. A small waterwheel salvaged by the Surrey Industrial History Group from Clandon Park was re-erected at the site, with the permission of Lord Onslow, in 1985. It was intended that this should be used to operate historic items of milling and agricultural machinery.⁴⁹ However this did not happen and in 1990 corn milling ceased and an application was lodged to redevelop the site as offices.

Esher Mill - a dramatic fire at the largest mill in Surrey

The Royal Paper Mills at Lower Green, Esher, were located on the River Mole 1.5 kilometres north-west of the church. The name 'Royal' could be an allusion to Esher's royal associations. In particular the site was known as Wrexford or King's Ford in the sixteenth century when for a time it was part of the King's Chase of Hampton Court, the palace being only 4 kilometres north-east of the mill. It was originally a corn mill but in 1691 became a brass mill producing about 80 tons annually in the form of rings, wire and especially pins. In 1709 a merger was arranged with mills at Bristol and a new company known as the Societies of Bristol and Esher for Making Brass, Battery and Brass Wire was launched. This lasted until the 1740s when at least part of the site again became a corn mill, although it continued for a century to be variously described as a wire mill, a copper mill and even an iron mill.⁵⁰

In April 1847 a new mill known as the Royal Mill, Lower Green was registered.¹³ It was occupied by William McMurray of Glasgow who with his younger brother James went into business supplying paper mills with machine wires.⁵¹ They moved first to Edinburgh and then acquired the Esher site and built what was easily the largest paper mill in Surrey. In 1851 it had 13 beating engines, compared with 7 at Postford which was previously the leading mill.

On the night of 23rd. December 1853 the mill was destroyed by fire.⁵² A

stoker discovered the blaze at 10 pm., on the second floor of the rag warehouse and soon fire engines from Esher, Claremont Palace, Teddington, Twickenham, Kingston and Richmond arrived at the site. Even the local magistrate, a Mr. Spicer, sent his engine and the whole force was said to have been admirably directed by Mr. Selve, agent of the West of England Fire Insurance Company. However by 4 am. the central building with about 100 windows, a wing over 150 ft. long, a timber machine house stretching over the river, and the devilling house with powerful machinery for tearing rags were completely destroyed. Trains carrying Christmas goods in either direction on the adjacent London and South Western Railway were forced to stop and wait. The fire engines eventually saved a large steam-engine house, boiling houses with several tons of rags in coppers, a rag house at the rear, and a pulp house with eight machines which continued working throughout the disaster. Over 250 people were thrown out of work. Fortunately for McMurrays the buildings and contents were fully insured with several companies⁵² and they were able to rebuild. However they did this, not at Esher, but at Wandsworth and at Loudwater and Scots Bridge in Hertfordshire.⁵¹ The Esher Mill site was later used for the manufacture of linoleum but following several serious fires it was taken over in 1902 by the bookbinding firm James Burn.⁵⁰ In 1980, while the site was being cleared for development as an industrial estate, three inwards-flow, vortex type, water turbines, 8 ft. in diameter and dating from the late nineteenth century, were discovered in separate disused water channels beneath the mills. Unfortunately they were too massive to salvage and have been encased in the new rubble and concrete foundations.⁵³

Wandsworth Mill - playing cards and esparto paper

The main paper mill site at Wandsworth was on the River Wandle 500 metres south of the High Street. A detailed account of its history has been given elsewhere⁵⁴ and only a summary will be presented here. During much of the eighteenth century it had been a copper mill, but by 1790 it had become Henckell's iron works and dramatic descriptions survive of the work carried out there, including casting, wrought iron manufacture, forging, shearing, and boring of cannon.^{55, 56} Then in 1836 it became the paper mill of Thomas Creswick, who described himself as 'Papermaker and Card Maker to His Majesty', and was indeed well known as a manufacturer of playing cards. He died in 1840 and Sarah Creswick, paper and pasteboard maker, took over the mill for a brief period.^{13, 54}

Between 1845 and 1849 George Miller, John Edward Spicer, Cornelius Poulton, John Henry Spicer and Edmund Gimson were all paper or pasteboard manufacturers at Wandsworth and all became bankrupt. Then in 1849 James Easton and Charles Edward Amos acquired the mill, presumably as assignees.¹³ They were engineers who had gone into partnership in 1836 and became important manufacturers of steam engines and other equipment at their works in Southwark. In 1844 they constructed the waterworks for the Trafalgar Square fountains, shortly afterwards supplied a beam engine, which still survives, for Queen Victoria's Osborne House⁵⁷ and in 1854 built a steam engine for Eashing paper mill. They only stayed at Wandsworth for a few years, being last mentioned in an 1852 list of papermakers.⁵⁴ The mills at this time had four

beating engines,¹³ powered by a 16 hp. waterwheel.⁵⁸ The next papermaker appears to have been Robert Blackburn who in 1855 with William Lundi Duncan patented an improvement in bleaching cloths and yarns. In the same year George Stiff was said to be the papermaker at Garratt Lane.¹³ However in practice the mills seem to have been closed by 1854.

It was in this year that William McMurray, following the fire at his Royal Paper Mills at Esher, moved to Wandsworth, taking the title 'Royal' with him.¹³ Although he was nominally in charge his younger brother James supervised the business. At first they had one machine but soon added another and supplied paper for *The Times* and the *Illustrated London News*.⁵¹ From 1860 the *Paper Mills Directory* provides increasingly detailed information about the mill. At first it was making long elephants and printings but later news and plate papers, lithos, cream laids, writings, fine printings and super-calendered were added. It had two machines 76 in. and 84 in. wide and the output increased from about 60 tons per week in 1889 to 90 in 1901.²⁰

Much of the paper was made from esparto grass imported from estates owned by McMurray in Spain and North Africa. It was unloaded from barges at the dock or basin communicating with the Thames at the northern end of the former Surrey Iron Railway which had closed in 1848. McMurray had acquired the dock and it became known as McMurray's Canal.⁵⁵ In 1865 promoters connected with the Wandsworth gasworks company deposited plans for a canal, 4 km. long with two locks linking this basin with Wimbledon. A Bill was introduced but lost in committee due to McMurray's hostility to the scheme, which would have resulted in him losing control over the basin.⁵⁴

William McMurray was certified a lunatic in 1883, shortly after executing a codicil to his will revoking all the interests of his brother James and substituting Herbert Spicer, of Catteshall paper mill at Godalming, who had married McMurray's niece Martha Arnott. William died in 1888; James disputed the will, won the case and received £ 71,000, his sister Anne, Martha's mother, getting £ 50,000. Later that year James was in conflict with Mr. Cadwell, a fireworks manufacturer on the opposite bank of the Wandle. It seems that following an explosion in August three girls had died and a second explosion had caused considerable damage close to the paper mill and McMurray's house. In practice Cadwell was allowed to continue his business.⁵⁴

McMurray's Royal Paper Mills Limited, said to have high repute, was registered in December 1891. A fascinating account of the manufacture of paper at the mills was published in 1898.⁵⁶ The esparto grass was dusted by beating, boiled in caustic soda, passed into washers and breakers to produce a brown pulp, bleached, and strained to make a kind of thick blotting paper termed 'half-made'. This stuff was then again passed through the beaters, washed and broken to give a thin milky fluid, which was passed to the large vats above the paper-making machine, and made into paper in rolls from five to eight miles long and weighing 10 to 15 cwt.

There was a serious fire at the mill in 1903 when 22 of its 39 buildings were gutted or severely damaged.⁵⁹ The reports described it as the largest mill of its type in London and about 160 people were thrown out of work. They received over £ 800, raised and distributed by a local relief committee. Although it was claimed that the works were a major cause of pollution of the Wandle, and therefore should not be rebuilt, they were soon reopened.⁵⁵ However by 1909 they were standing idle¹³ and a year later were demolished. The site was then

used by a varnish works, a gas-mantle factory and the engineering works of Benham & Sons.^{54, 55} It is now occupied by a clothing manufacturer. The present buildings still straddle the millstream but otherwise bear little relation to the former paper mill. Indeed the nearby Esparto Street (see Fig. 10) is a better reminder of Wandsworth's paper industry.



Fig. 10. Street sign near McMurray's Royal Paper Mills, Wandsworth, where paper was made from esparto grass. (Courtesy of Glenys Crocker).

Conclusions

The group of seven paper mills discussed in this article was active over a period of about 250 years starting in the middle of the seventeenth century. The only other Surrey mills which extend this period were Stoke, which opened in about 1635, and Catteshall, which closed in 1928, and these were described in an earlier paper.¹ Elsewhere in England paper was made from 1488 and of course the industry continues to this day.² However the Surrey mills cover the important changes from hand-made to machine-made, from rags to esparto and wood as raw materials and from small family businesses to large factories. The present group of mills was also widely distributed in the County, lying on the Wey, Tillingbourne, Mole, Hogsmill and Wandle. It is intended, in a future article, to discuss a further group, including Westbrook, Woking and Ham Haw on the Wey, Barford on a tributary of the Wey near Hindhead, Chilworth on the Tillingbourne, Downside on the Mole near Cobham and Wallington, Morden and Merton on the Wandle.

It is clear from this study that for much of their time the papermakers had serious difficulties. There were for example large numbers of bankruptcies and many accidents such as fires and injuries to workmen. However, despite these problems, there were striking successes including the use of Ewell paper by a national group of master papermakers in 1737, the installation of advanced equipment at Postford in about 1830, the construction of a very large but short-lived mill at Esher in about 1850 and the use of esparto at Wandsworth at the end of the nineteenth century. After this the Surrey paper industry declined while mills in other areas expanded and took advantage of new technologies. It is now most unlikely that the modern industry will ever return to Surrey. However it is possible that one of the former sites, such as that of Sickle Mill at Haslemere which retains some of its historic buildings, could attract a craftsman making paper using traditional techniques for special uses in the art and conservation markets.

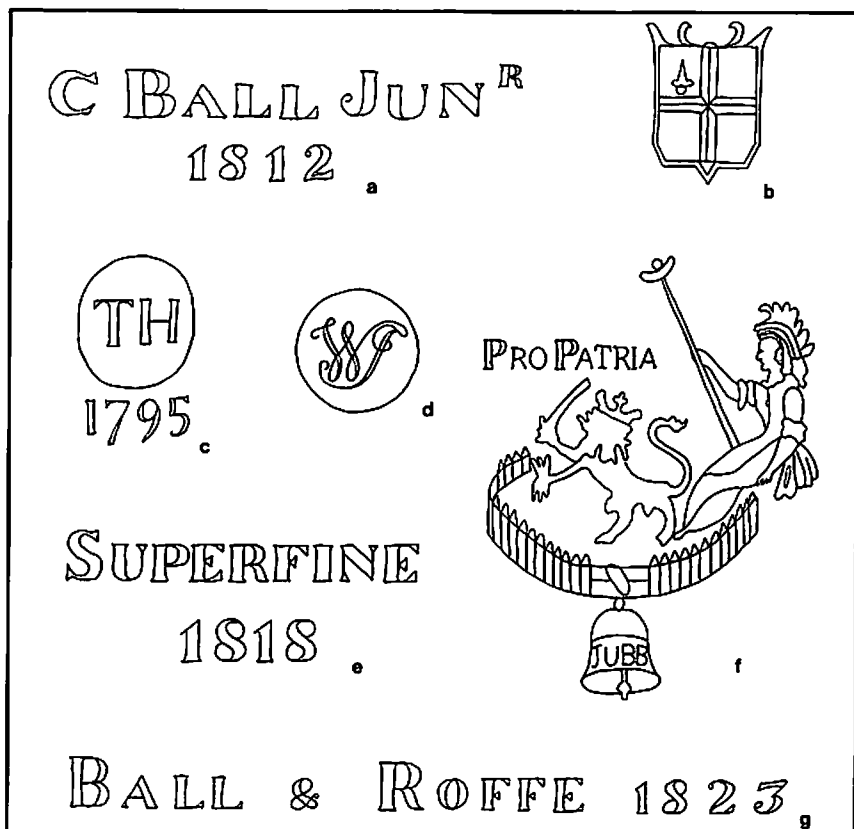


Fig. 11. Watermarks traced from paper made by (a) Charles Ball Junior at Postford Lower⁵, (b) Thomas Hall I at Eashing or Thomas Hillyer at Bower's in 1721³, (c) Thomas Hall III at Eashing or Thomas Harrison at Catteshall³, (d) William Jubb II at Ewell in 1786³, (e) Edmund Richard Ball and William May Ashby at Postford Upper⁶⁰, (f) William Jubb II at Ewell in 1790⁹ and (g) Charles Ball Junior and Charles Roffe at Postford Lower⁵. All of the drawings are to the same scale, the word SUPERFINE in (e) being 115 mm. long in the original.

Acknowledgements

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| Abbreviations: | G.M.R.
Sy.A.S.
S.I.H.G.
S.R.O. | Guildford Muniment Room.
Surrey Archaeological Society.
Surrey Industrial History Group.
Surrey Record Office, Kingston upon Thames. |
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A MANSION MADE FROM MATCHES: HILLCROFT COLLEGE, SURBITON

*Doreen Ehrlich
Hillcroft College*

Hillcroft College is a unique educational institution. It provides residential education for mature women students, grant aided by the Department of Education and Science. The students, who are highly motivated but lack educational qualifications, are enabled, after a year, on gaining the Certificate of Higher Education to achieve access to a wide variety of degree and other courses which would otherwise have been closed to them. The College, founded in 1926 as the College for Working Women, is housed in a handsome Victorian mansion (completed in 1877) with extensive grounds on South Bank, Surbiton. It is one of the more piquant ironies of local history that a building which now houses such students should have been built from the proceeds of the labour of matchgirls and female outworkers at the Bryant and May match factory in the East End of London in the 1870s.

Before examining Wilberforce Bryant's mansion and its history, the economic base on which it and the other Bryant mansions were built, that is the family match-making business of Bryant and May, has also to be examined.

The Bryants and Matchmaking

Wilberforce Bryant was the driving force and longest-serving Chairman of the Company, from June 1884 until his death in February 1906. As the oldest son, he became senior partner on the death of his father in 1874, three years before the Surbiton Mansion was completed. Indeed by 1868, when a new deed of partnership was drawn up between William Bryant and his four sons,¹ the name of May does not appear, and the match works at Fairfield, Bow, were, in all but name, the Bryant family business. May had retired from the business in 1868, not without some bitterness, to farm in Surrey.

From 1868, Wilberforce Bryant's policy was directed towards ever greater mechanisation, a gamble which paid handsome dividends and enabled him to build a quasi-country house in what was then the 'Queen of the Suburbs' at a convenient train's distance from Bow. In the year of the matchgirls' strike (1888) Bryant put an even greater distance between the source of production of his capital and the consumption of it by moving from Surbiton, which was by then past its social peak,² to the grand acreage of Stoke Park, Slough.

Victorian Quakers

The Bryants were Quakers: William Bryant, a Plymouth blacking manufacturer was, according to *The Dictionary of Quaker Biography*, 'in the station of Elder', although within a decade of his death (he is buried at Kingston Meeting House³) three of his five surviving children had resigned membership of the Society of Friends. There is no record of Wilberforce having done likewise, although it would seem that he married out of his religion. While the two marriages (in 1866 and 1871) of his brother Arthur, who resigned membership in 1878 and came to live on an adjoining Surbiton estate in 1880, are recorded in the *Quaker Register*, neither Wilberforce's marriage, nor the birth of his daughter, Leila, who is three in the 1881 census return, are recorded. Wilberforce's obituary⁴ records his having worshipped at Christchurch, Surbiton, and thus it seems likely that Margaret Bryant was Evangelical. Certainly a mixed Quaker/Evangelical lifestyle is compatible with the charitable works carried out by the Bryants (not forgetting Arthur until his death in 1882), which included the establishment, possibly by Mrs. Bryant, of two coffee taverns for working men in the Surbiton area.⁵

Wilberforce Bryant appears to have conformed to the pattern of Victorian Quakerism as analysed by E. Isichei: 'rags to riches stories are as rare in Quakerism as elsewhere. Most of the great Quaker entrepreneurs were sons of small manufacturers or well-to-do tradesmen. Fry, Rowntree and Cadbury . . . took existing businesses and transformed them partly with the aid of inherited capital.'⁶ Indeed Isichei goes on to argue a persuasive case for a special relationship between Quakerism and capitalism 'Victorian Quakerism sanctioned and indeed encouraged the pursuit of wealth . . . available evidence suggests that it is attributable less to specifically puritan traits of character than to the prosperity and internal cohesion of the Quaker community'.⁷

William Bryant and Francis May, also a Quaker, were first partners in a Plymouth blacking business. In 1855 May took out the British patent for safety matches, having purchased the patent rights of the process in 1852 from Johan Lundstrom, the Swedish inventor for the modest sum of £ 100. As May wrote to Lundstrom at Christmas 1855 'it is a practical illustration of Free Trade cementing a kindly feeling between brethren of other nations and other creeds'.⁸

The Fairfield Works

The 'practical illustration' proved hugely profitable. Lundstrom had supplied Bryant and May with matches since 1850 and the change brought about by the switch to British manufacture after the purchase of the patent can be seen in the sales figures from 1,780,550 boxes in 1851 to 27,922,788 in 1860.⁹ The Fairfield works at Bow were built in 1861, on the model of Lundstrom's works at Jonkoping. The 1862 Commission on the Employment of Children in Industry compared Fairfield favourably with all other match factories dealt with, summing up that it was 'remarkable for the excellence of most of its arrangements both for health and comfort of its workpeople.'¹⁰ The report also revealed the plight of the outworker matchbox makers, women like the mother of Arthur Harding who was paid at the rate of 2½d. a gross, 1s. 6d. a day, 'she was fagged out when she made her eight gross, poor old dear.'¹¹ The profits the

company was making when Wilberforce Bryant took over as Chairman on his father's death in 1874 can be gauged from the fact that at the factory there was a daily output of 1,128 million boxes of wooden matches selling retail at 7½d. a dozen boxes.¹²

In 1889, the year after the matchgirls' strike, Charles Booth, in *Life and Labour of the People in London*, comments on factory conditions at the Fairfield Works. 'The excessive quantity of phosphorus, which was formerly used in the manufacture of matches, rendered the operatives liable to a terrible disease, necrosis. Experience has reduced the use of phosphorus to a minimum and necrosis, when it occurs, is due either to want of ventilation in the factories or of cleanliness in the operatives. Both in the Fairfield Works and those of an employer on the outskirts of the East End, whose factory was visited, the ventilation seemed good. The danger makes the enforcement of strict rules regarding cleanliness and carefulness absolutely necessary. The superabundant energy displayed by the matchgirls when their work is over, although they have to stand all day long at it, is inexplicable and in striking contrast to the tired appearance of machinists.'

The matchgirls' strike of 1888 is the most notorious chapter in the history of Bryant and May and although it appears that conditions for the factory workers improved, conditions among the outworkers continued to be such that, two years before Wilberforce Bryant's death, the *Hackney Gazette* of February 5th. 1904 gives an account of the inquest on matchbox maker Sarah Ann Young, who with her daughter earned 1s. 3½d. when they had made seven gross of matchboxes . . . cause of death was recorded as exhaustion resulting from disease and lack of food.¹³

Mr. Bryant's Mansion: One House, Two Communities

'The idea which underlies all is simply this. The family constitute one community; the servants another . . . it becomes the foremost of all maxims, therefore, that the servants' department shall be separated from the main house, so that what passes on either side of the boundary shall be both invisible and inaudible to the other.'

Robert Kerr, *The Gentleman's House*, (1864).

'In every household there must be the hands to do the work, the hand to guide and to control the workers.'

Mrs. Henry Reeve, *Mistress and Maids*, *London Magazine*, (1893).

The 1881 Census Return reveals Kerr's two communities living at 89 South Bank, Surbiton. The one community comprised Wilberforce Bryant, described as Merchant (aged 44), together with his Scottish-born wife Margaret (35) and three-year-old daughter, Leila. The other was made up of Charles and Fanny Hall, Butler and Parlour Maid (both 29); Elizabeth Bradley, House Servant (28); Harriet Hinton, Cook (28); Christina Robertson, Laundress (27); Ellen Fry (32), Nurse; Charlotte Sand (19) and Sarah Long (16) both Domestic Servants. This in-house staff was quite separate from the servants who lived above the Stables: James Scott (45), Coachman, his wife, Hannah (46) and their children, Harriet (15), James (11) and Hannah (6).

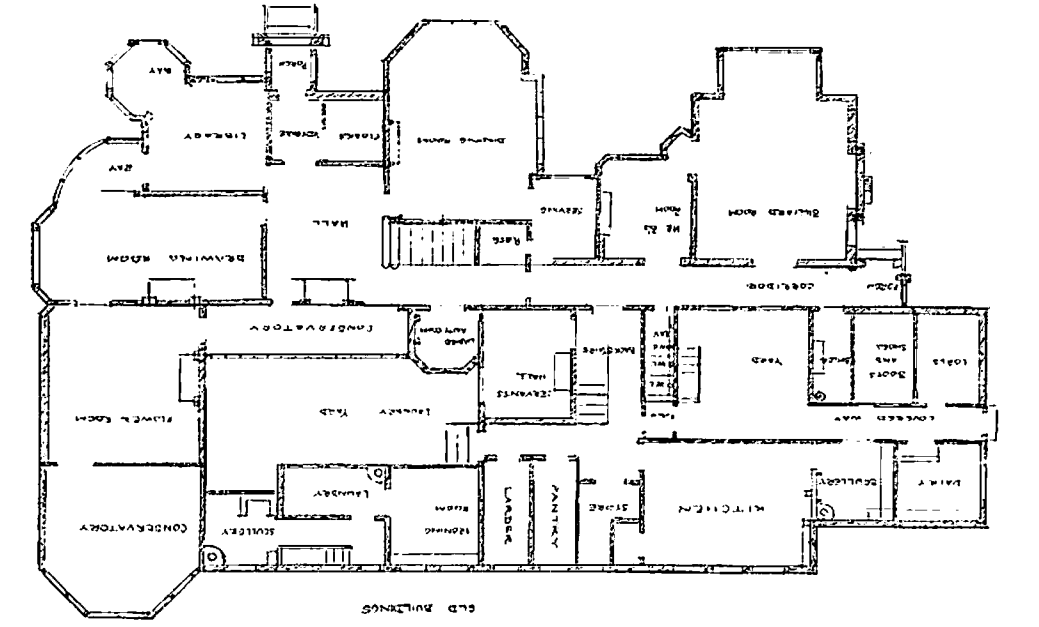


Fig. 1. Hillcroft College. The main facade and entrance porch in 1926.

The plan of the house also reveals Kerr's two segregated communities: a corridor runs almost the entire length of the house, reached at one end by its own side entrance. Backstairs lead from the servants' hall (past four w.c.s) to the upper rooms, in contrast to the access afforded family and guests through porch, main door, vestibule, 'baronial hall' on a two-storey elevation and the grand oak staircase. A further buffer zone is provided by the covered way, running parallel to the corridor with the kitchen, scullery, dairy, ironing room and laundry beyond. As the house was built on a slope, a sunken semi-basement for the servants on the garden side becomes the ground floor in other parts of the house, a solution to the problems of the site, which, commented *The Building News* of May 1877, 'rendered it necessary to arrange the principal rooms looking towards the west, with a short return towards the south'.

The realm of the house servants was divided into three zones: one male and two female. The Butler's zone: plate/strong room containing a tall, double-door safe with intricate Chubb locks (one of the few fixtures left in the building to retain its original function); butler's pantry; cellars - not shown on the plan but 'under the back staircase wing' according to the invaluable *Building News*. The fact that the Bryant household employed Charles Hall as a male indoor servant in a staff of eight denotes considerable status, the 1881 Census indicates that nationally such a ratio was in a minority of 1 in 22.¹⁴

The feature that places Bryant's house firmly into the quasi-country house category is the main hall. From the 1840s a great hall had become a popular feature of country house building.¹⁵ Anthony Salvin built Keele Hall, Staffordshire between 1855 and 1861 for Ralph Sneyd, who bore the £ 62,000 cost of Keele's reconstruction (there were earlier buildings on the site as at Surbiton) with the help of the coal and iron found on his estate.¹⁶ The hall at



SCALE OF FEET

GROUND PLAN PROPOSED MANSION AT SOUTH BANK, SUDBURY
 for Wilberforce Bryant Esq.
 Roland Plunbe FRIBA Architect.
 from The Building News - May 18th 1877.
 Galsien Clagg
 Microfil 1970.

Fig. 2. Hillcroft College, plan of the proposed ground floor in 1877.



Fig. 3. Hillcroft College. The entrance hall in 1926, showing the fireplace, with the conservatory beyond.

Keele (more imposing if as ill-lit as Bryant's) had galleries at both ends. At Bryant's mansion the straight flight of the oak staircase leads to broad galleries on three sides with access to bedrooms and corridors off. The hall contained a large fireplace with a leather-covered, club-fender seat facing the entrance vestibule. Alone of all the spaces in the house it was open-plan, unsegregated and unspecific in its use - a species of domestic 'no man's land'. Baronial in its associations and two storeys in height it is domestic in feeling, perhaps because of the traffic it carried and its key position in the plan: certainly Kerr's objections to the typical hall's air of a 'grand vestibule'¹⁷ are not apparent in this case.

When Rowland Plumbe, who built both public and private buildings (including parts of the London Hospital) and stated in a *Builders' Journal* interview in 1896¹⁸ that he had 'carried out buildings to the amount of two millions', came in 1886 to design Woodlands Park, Stoke d'Abernon, Surrey for F.C. Bryant - one of the younger Bryant brothers, also on the board of Bryant and May - the 'saloon hall' became a major feature of the plan. This, too has a gallery on three sides at first-floor level, supported by 'richly moulded arches carried on a number of rectangular Oak columns... the lantern ceiling is designed in squares of stained glass and plaster moulding'.¹⁹ Both halls were approached from the drive under an ornate porch, through heavy oak main doors into an entrance hall, with leaded lights and mosaic floors, and another set of doors, against draughts, for security and also to reveal the hall as the dramatic and imposing centrepiece of each house.

The Bryant brothers' houses are remarkably similar in other respects. This is particularly evident in their plans, so far as can be distinguished from the house itself and the very indistinct groundplan reproduced in *The Builder* of November 20th. 1886. The same builder, Mr Messom of Twickenham, was employed for both houses by Plumbe, who was however faced at Woodlands with the problem of incorporating the original farmhouse still on the 86-acre site. This is indistinguishable from drawings and photographs of the exterior yet is apparent in the house itself by an otherwise inexplicable change of floor level. Woodlands is also eclectic in style, although in elevation it closely resembles Rousdon, Devon (1874-83) (built - from biscuits! - for Sir H. Peek), the style of which is described as 'Franco-Flemish' in *The Building News* of 1883. Both Bryant houses - and indeed that of a third brother, Arthur who moved to Surbiton in 1880 to build Oaklands Lodge, a small-scale Osborne in Italianate stucco, now subdivided into an office complex - seem to epitomise Martin Wiener's thesis on 'The EnglishWay of Life' in *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit*. He argues that, by the eighteen-sixties, Gothic was exhibiting several drawbacks to architects and patrons alike who "were seeking a style that was pre-industrial and 'national' yet harmonised with its increasingly secular outlook . . . a style not corrupted by urban industrial capitalism, a style that spoke forth of other values." Ironically, the Bryant style may have been projected as pre-industrial but the Surbiton house was lit by gas (the workings for the main gasoliers are still apparent according to the present maintenance engineer) and the plumbing was complex. Much of it still survives: there is a particularly handsome gilded phoenix watercloset from Bryant's time.



Fig. 4. Woodlands Park, Stoke d'Abernon, from *The Builder*, 1886.

According to Girouard,²⁰ Woodlands Park was one of only eleven country houses to have electric light in the eighties, sharing this distinction with Richard Norman Shaw's Cragside, Northumbria. It is thought that the Surbiton house had its own generator by the turn of the century.²¹ The generator is remembered by Elizabeth de Fries, who was born in the house in 1919.

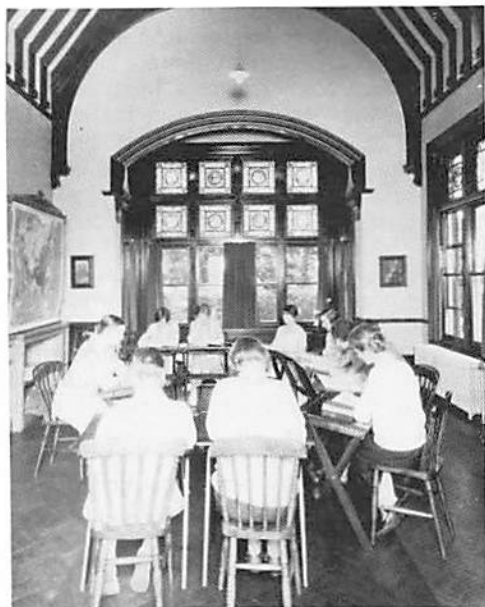


Fig. 5. Hillcroft College. The Billiard Room in 1926.

However it is the 'other values' that 'speak forth' so loudly and with such nationalistic emphasis in Bryant's mansion. The very materials of the house: brick, oak, plaster, as well as the multi-chimneyed skyline echoing nearby Hampton Court, reflect Bryant's aspirations. This can also be seen in the commanding position occupied by that *sine qua non* of the gentleman's house of the period, the billiard room. This juts nearest of all the main rooms to the entrance gate, a 'one-storey building having an open roof'.²² To add to its dominance it had eight lights of its sixteen-light main window filled with stained glass. This room and 'Mr. B's. room' of Plumbe's plan (Bryant's study) formed virtually a 'gentleman's suite' and could be reached by a separate side entrance with its own small porch and stained-glass windows. The billiard room - which is by far the largest of the ground-floor rooms: its dominance now emphasised by its function as College Common Room - also contains the finest surviving fireplace with tiles decorated with sunflower motifs and the early date 1876. On the chimney breast to the outside is inscribed M.B. 1877 (for Margaret Bryant) and this is presumably the year in which the house was completed as *The Builder* notices that the house 'is in course of erection'. Apart from the hall, the one area common to both male and female family members and guests was the dining room, now much altered, although retaining its function in the early years of the Working Women's College.

The drawing room can be seen in the turn-of-the-century photographs and again in the early student photographs, but the taste in both periods is not of the Bryant's time, although the function of the room as an 'emphatically female'²³ preserve is apparent in the earlier photograph. In the early years of the College

Monday afternoon 'At homes' were held in this room as they must have been in Margaret Bryant's day. Both Kerr and J.J. Stevenson²⁴ stress the importance of sunlight and a good view in drawing rooms, and the windows here face south-east with fine views across the upper lawns and trees beyond. However the early photographs show the windows heavily draped in thick cotton lace, and the exterior photographs show striped awnings. The interior seems remarkably dim and it is noticeable that the awnings and indeed the heavy growth of creeper have been cleared in its first years as a college.

The furniture of the room in the earliest photographs is French, the piano and harp belonged to the Boret daughters (the mother and aunts of Mrs. de Fries) and would not have formed part of that earlier Quaker/Evangelical household. However the elaborate stucco and gilt frieze, with its playful sailing putti, must have formed part of the 1870s house and is in keeping with the delicate stained glass throughout the house, with its zodiac motifs and pale-toned birds and flowers. Unfortunately none of the original contracts for such work remain but a decided South Kensington influence would seem to be apparent in some of the decorative detail of the interior if not in the architecture, although *The Builder's Journal* interview with Rowland Plumbe at his Fitzroy Square house already quoted notes his taste 'for the dainty and ethereally tinted Dutch glass for such domestic uses.' The bird and flower motifs are echoed in the parquetry of both the main facade and the area above the drawing-room windows. This curious device is not repeated at Woodlands where the detail throughout is coarser. By this period Plumbe's office was heavily involved in the 1200 dwellings on the Noel Park Estate, Wood Green for the Artisans, Labourers' and General Dwellings Company's estate.

The library, with a window seat in the bay and very little in the way of built-in shelving for books, intercommunicated with the considerably larger drawing room, but as Kerr, that invaluable arbiter of taste, observes 'the library of an average gentleman's house . . . is not a library in the sole sense of a depository for books . . . it is rather a Morning Room for Gentlemen' and thus part of the male domain. The conservatory was usually considered to be part of the female domain and the equation of women and flowers is a common enough feature of the period. However the extensive area given to the activity seemed puzzling, but study of Bryant's obituary revealed that "although he cared little for sport he was an enthusiastic gardener". His enthusiasm may well have extended, as Herbert Boret's did to the growing of orchids. Elizabeth de Fries, Boret's grand-daughter, remembers orchids, pools of carp and the dovescots around the glass roof of the wintergarden.

The House and the Surbiton Community

Wilberforce and Arthur Bryant (of neighbouring Oak Hill Lodge) financed and organised two coffee taverns in the Surbiton area, The Spread Eagle and The Anchor, where 'men could find the fellowship of a pub without the alcohol²⁵ . . . and enjoy hot baths, freshly cooked meals and other comforts'. In 1884 Wilberforce built a private meeting house at the bottom of South Bank overlooking the station and at some distance from the house. It was known as The Gables, from its many-gabled facade and was built for the use, free of charge 'by any useful or religious body'. Surbiton was notably lacking in public

amenities at this date. There was no library and the Assembly Rooms took, to quote June Sampson²⁶ "thirty years of argument and procrastination" before their opening in 1889 (the year after the Bryants' departure). Indeed *The Surbiton Review* of June 1888, in its notice of Wilberforce Bryant's departure, is concerned at the possible loss of such an amenity. "It is said that 'The Gables' goes with the house, so we hope it may still be available for the many charitable and social purposes for which Mr Bryant so kindly lent it." It is interesting to note that at this time the house is simply 'Mr Bryant's', and that only in Cooper's time does the house take on the name of its by then more famous subsidiary building. But one account of a concert at The Gables survives from Bryant's time. In a programme of 'reasonable length' a Miss Edgcombe, 'together with her friends and pupils' gave a mixed programme of vocal and instrumental music, which, according to the anonymous critic of the April 9th. 1888 edition of the *Surbiton Review*, ranged from a 'duet from Rigoletto for harp and pianoforte (sic) in which 'the instruments were not of the same opinion with regard to harmony' to one of two renderings in Surbiton that evening of *The Jewel Song* from Faust . . . an exceedingly difficult song and suited to very few voices indeed'.

1888 was the year of the matchgirls' strike at the Bryant works, and in June the Bryants departed from Surbiton for Stoke Park, Bucks, 'regretted', according to the *Surrey Comet's* obituary notice on Wilberforce's death in 1906 'by rich and poor alike'. There seem to have been several reasons for Wilberforce Bryant's departure - not least the fact that the district had changed: the population had risen from 7,642 in 1871 to 9,466 in 1881 and by 1882, when the railways had become an established fact, the Surbiton mansions were no longer seized upon by what had been described by local estate agents as 'capitalists, noblemen, bankers and others'. Bryant's mansion was typical of the type described by A.A. Jackson: 'the fine villas of the First-Class-season-ticket holders were hidden in the elaborate nests of evergreen trees and shrubs . . . privacy and seclusion were at a premium'.²⁷ But privacy and seclusion, together with Surbiton's social status was not what they had been when the house was first built.

The business was by now being run by Wilberforce Bryant alone. Frederick retired from the board in 1888 and Theodore, Frederick's twin, had left in 1884, the year of Arthur's death. Frederick pursued his country gentleman's aspirations at Woodlands - these reached their apogee by the 1890s with the kennelling of the Surrey Farmers' Staghounds on his estate.²⁸ Wilberforce Bryant's move from Surbiton to Stoke Park may be considered against the background of Surbiton's social decline and his surviving brother's lifestyle, in a similar house to his own but one that stood in a large estate at a greater distance from London. The *Surrey Comet's* account of Wilberforce's funeral is in no doubt as to the status of Stoke Park and the standing attained by its former denizen, by then J.P. and High Sheriff of the County. Bryant's 'wreaths and coffin were carried by the deceased's gardeners, keepers, coachman and butler'. The reflected glory shines twenty years after Wilberforce's departure from Surbiton. 'The estate at Stoke Park is one of the finest in the country and before Mr. Bryant purchased it, Queen Victoria inspected it with a view to making it the home of the Duke of Albany', her haemophilic son.²⁹ Bryant bought Stoke Park from the wealthy stockbroker, E.J. Coleman (died 1885), who commissioned several major paintings from Sir Edwin Landseer, including 'Man

Proposes and God Disposes' (1863/4), Landseer's macabre rendering of Franklin's Arctic expedition. Coleman, who 'lived stylishly' at Stoke Park, had a building on his estate converted into a studio for Landseer's use and the artist, whose 'extensive surviving correspondence with Coleman reveals a close reciprocal friendship' used often to work there in his last years.³⁰ Thus, in purchasing Stoke Park, Bryant was buying not only a large country estate, but the kudos of a deer park where a famous painter with close associations with royalty had painted. Deer parks and their royal associations appear to be a status symbol for capitalists of the time. For instance, Thomas Fairbairn of Manchester had Holman Hunt paint his at Burton Park, Sussex as background to the dynastic portrait of his family 'The Children's Holiday' (1864/5). Bryant's tastes at Stoke Park reflected his semi-retired position. In Bryant's later years the day-to-day management of Bryant and May was handled by his deputy, Gilbert Bartholomew. Unlike his father, Bryant had no sons to carry on the family business. On Wilberforce Bryant's death all that remained in the company was the name.

1888-1908 From Matches to Tea and a Knighthood

Bryant's mansion was bought in 1888 by Alfred Cooper (1846-1916) chairman of Ridgways Tea,³¹ who used his purchase as a springboard to a knighthood and Highcliffe Castle, Hampshire. Cooper's reasons for buying the property seem to have been connected with the opportunities The Gables theatre in the grounds offered for amateur dramatics and the display of his own conjuring skills. Both he and his wife were founder members of the local Genesta Amateur Dramatic Club, and Cooper himself, 'a very wealthy man . . . also enjoyed the reputation of being one of the most gifted prestidigitators in the country.'³²

During the Boer War (1899-1902) Cooper maintained the theatre, which was large enough to seat some 200 people,³³ at his own cost as a private military hospital, as an adjunct to the *Princess of Wales* hospital ship. The *Surrey Comet* of April 3rd. 1900 records the visit of their highnesses, 'accompanied by Princess Victoria . . . who made an inspection of the building and presented each of the inmates . . . with . . . an illustrated soldiers' testament . . . a handsome green morocco leather pocket case . . . and among other useful articles a neat silver pencil in the shape of a Lee-Metford [*sic*] cartridge. The royal visitors expressed themselves highly pleased with everything they saw. Subsequently they took tea at The Gables.' The headline reads 'At the Gables Private Military Hospital', and it is clear that by this time the house was known by the name of its more famous theatre. What is understandably omitted from the newspaper account is the fact that many of the men were suffering from venereal disease and the theatre offered an easily accessible location for their treatment. The Princess of Wales and Princess Victoria paid a return visit in August 1900 to The Gables Hospital. The 'warm hearted interest that Alexandra displayed in the work of her ship was in the eyes of the nation another tribute to her royal qualities, and it was only in the natural order of things that their Royal benefactress should desire to see "her men" as they were affectionately termed, during their stay at The Gables.' Cooper was knighted in 1901.

Cooper's residence of The Gables continued until 1906, and is thus longer than Bryant's, although he too moved to a house more commensurate with his

status: Highcliffe Castle, near Christchurch, Hampshire. When he died in 1916 at Ossemsley Manor, Christchurch, he left an estate valued at £ 258,951 gross, according to the *Surrey Comet*.

The theatre reverted to its theatrical use after Cooper's departure and was the venue in which R.C. Sherriff learnt his stage craft when he wrote and presented plays for the Kingston Adventurers' Dramatic Society. In 1927 a professional repertory company took up residence and the name of the theatre changed to The Hillcroft Theatre after the College.³⁴ In 1934 the College sold the land on which the theatre was built as 'altogether a good riddance'.³⁵ There is now a block of flats on the site. No plans survive unfortunately, although there are still the workings of the tunnel which led from the main house to the theatre box.



Fig. 6. Hillcroft College: Netball in 1926 with the Gables Theatre in the background.

1906-1926 The Gables' Last Years as a Private Residence

Cooper sold the house in 1906 to Herbert Boret who lived there with his wife and seven children. Boret was a partner in a shipbroking firm. As a German with a French partner he lost much of his capital during the First World War and the period that followed. Elizabeth de Fries who was born and brought up in the house provides much of the information on this period. The eight members of the family were maintained by four house servants, all of whom were female: cook, kitchen maid, parlour maid and housemaid. All four had living accommodation in the house, while the cook's brother had a cottage in the grounds and worked as general handyman. His wife acted as an occasional servant helping out at parties.³⁶

The chauffeur and his wife lived over the stables and there was a head gardener and two assistant gardeners, all of whom lived out. Female staff were married from the house, given a bolt of cloth as a wedding present and driven to their marriage in the family Napier.

Elizabeth de Fries assures the writer that the house was powered by its own electricity generator housed near the stable block. There was also a primitive form of central heating in addition to the coal fires in each room, including the bathrooms and nursery. The interior photographs from her family negatives are identified as the drawing room around 1908 with its 'curio tables, Louis Quinze chairs, and my mother's harp'. Sliding doors opened into the winter garden (Bryant's conservatory) with pools containing carp and glass roof encircled with doves. Although she was a child when the family had to leave the house she has vivid memories of such sounds as the doves, and the peacocks screeching on the lawns, as well as the rides she was given on the butcher's pony when it came to pull the lawnmower. She has memories too of the painted ceiling in her grandparents' bedroom (cherubs, swags and blue skies): this has long since disappeared. Such decoration would not have appealed to the Bloomsbury taste of the first staff of the Working Women's College. Indeed, confirmation of this can be read in the tone of Margaret Powell's account of the house as she discovered it when looking for suitable premises for the Working Women's College.

'In his (Boret's) time it presented a completely Victorian appearance, with heavily embossed and gilded lincrusta wall-papers in hall and drawing room, statues, palms in pots, and ornate mantelpieces. Later two of the mantelpieces were sold' (including the one from the hall) 'and the lincrusta panted cream'.³⁷

The hall mantelpiece is remembered by Mrs. de Fries as 'gigantic . . . with a padded leather club fender, two matching leather wing chairs . . . there was also a red Turkey carpet and a stick telephone in the recess by the main window.' The hall appears to have retained its function as a no-man's land with the 'homecoming' hearth as its focus. The theatre was used for occasional concerts: Mrs. de Fries remembers her mother telling her of performing for the troops at concerts during the First World War. Herbert Boret's financial losses forced the family to disperse and the daughters to train for careers. Elizabeth, at seven, went to live with her mother and grandparents at a much smaller house in Hatch End. The house was on the market by 1925 at £ 14,000. However, on the advice of Thomas Wall, Treasurer and Financial Adviser to the Working Women's College an offer of £ 10,000 was made and accepted. 'It was' according to Powell 'rather a slow business to get Mr. Boret to vacate the house'.³⁸

As a postscript to the house's change of use from a private domestic function to a public, educational one, it is worth noting that the sausage-maker, Thomas Wall, like Bryant, was a Quaker. The £ 10,000 paid for The Gables, its six acres and theatre (a price considered a bargain by the founders of Hillcroft) is reminiscent of the £ 100 paid by Bryant and May for the patent of the safety match. The *leitmotiv* of common domestic commodities - matches, tea and sausages - funding the house (for Wall gave money as well as financial advice) is also noteworthy. However, the most significant fact about Hillcroft's change of function is that the 'Mansion made from Matches' has provided since 1926 the resources to transform the lives of the growing number of women who live and learn within it by offering them a second chance of education beyond the dreams of their nineteenth century forebears.

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NEW MATERIAL FOR SURREY HISTORIANS

Accessions of Records in Surrey Record Office, 1991

David Robinson
County Archivist

For Surrey Record Office 1991 was a year marked by new developments. Conversion of the Victorian Ewell National School into our Ewell Grove Processing Centre, referred to in last year's *Surrey History*, was completed. This provides additional archive storage space and much-needed space and facilities for sorting, cleaning and packaging newly received archives. The documents we receive can be dirty, damp, mould-affected and infested with insect eggs. We have equipped the archive reception rooms with ventilated work stations so that documents can be cleaned without the dust, grit and mould spores remaining in the room to the detriment of documents and staff alike. We have also acquired a blast freezer to eradicate insect infestation. By cleaning and wrapping our new accessions to high standards we reduce the need for repair work in the future. For the first time, our archivists enjoy sufficient space to spread out new accessions for sorting, without needing to use the County Hall search room on Thursdays and then to clear everything away to prepare the room for Friday's searchers. This greatly increases our efficiency in listing the records.

Among the earliest parish registers

Few early parish records remain to be brought into the record office, but one outstanding deposit was made during the year. The registers of Bletchingley date back to 1538, the year in which the Royal Injunction for the keeping of parish registers was issued. What is more, the Bletchingley register is the original paper register compiled at the time, whereas what survives for other parishes where entries begin in 1538 is usually a late-sixteenth-century copy made following the Canterbury Provincial constitution of 1597.

Thomas Cromwell's injunction was issued on 5th. September 1538 and the first page of the register is inscribed "Thys is the bowke or regystre of the paryshe church of Blechynglygh in the cowntie of Surrey in the dyeowsis of Wynchester for the Regystreng off all such names as schall be crystyned buryed and wedded wythin the said paryshe accordyng to the commaundement and Injunctyons off our most noble and excellent prynce Henry by the grace of god kyng off Englande and Fraunce defensour of the faythe lorde of Ireland and in erthe supreme hed under cryste off the churche of Englande exibyt to us the xxvth daye of octobre in the xxx yere off the raegne off our said souveraine by Gryffyn Leyson comyssyoner under Thomas Lorde Crumwell lorde privie seale

Two illustrations from *Souvenir of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the World's First Vacuum Cleaner*. This Booklet was produced by the British Vacuum Cleaner and Engineering Company, the makers of the 'Goblin' vacuum cleaner, in 1951. (S.R.O. 3934/1)



Fig. 1. Picture by Douglas Relf, showing a vacuum cleaner being used in the days of Edward VII. Vacuum cleaning was an occasional event. The company's men cleaned the house and the dust was sucked through long hoses into a machine standing in the street.

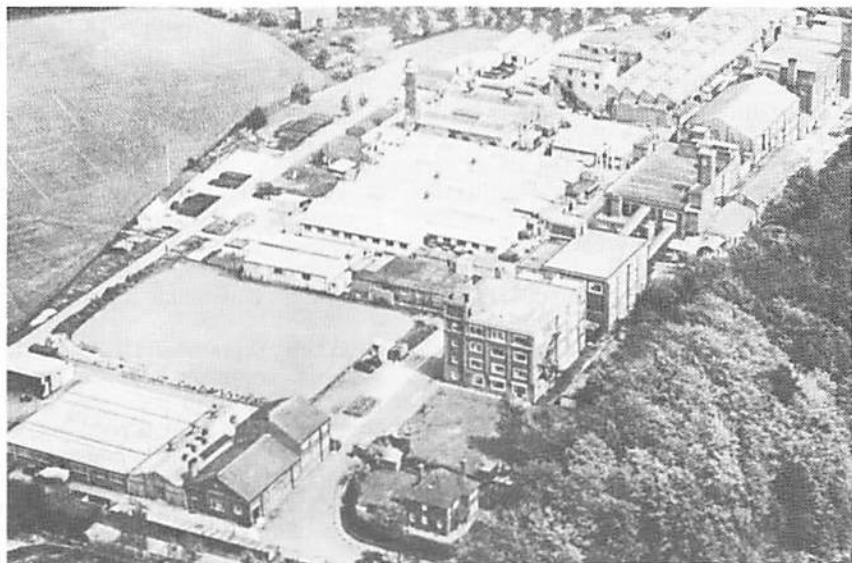


Fig. 2. An Aerial View of the Company's Works at Leatherhead, 1951.

vycegerent to the Kynges said highness for all his Jurysdyctyon Ecclesiasticall wythin thys realme." The first entry was the marriage of Christopher Kylylke and Johanna Welles on 10th. November. At the back of this register are a list of householders of the parish and an inventory of church goods. The second register contains a list of the poor people of Bletchingley, including Joan Genyns 'wydowe blynde', Ales Benett 'wydowe impotent' and John Myless 'charged with many chyl dren'. The third register, beginning in 1653, records the choice of Thomas Chapman of Bletchingley, mason and parish clerk, as 'Register' of the parish under the Commonwealth. He was sworn in by Robert Holman of Pendell, one of the justices.

Churchwardens' accounts from 1665, service registers from 1895 and Parochial Church Council minute books from 1920 are among other records deposited. The churchwardens' accounts include a seventeenth-century agreement with Brian Eldridge, of the Chertsey bellfounding family, for the casting of a 'tenor or great bell', with provision for it to be recast if it 'brea ke, cracke or prove untunable to the rest of the bells in the steeple.' The communicants of Bletchingley seem to have enjoyed a variety of communion wine in 1665/6. The churchwardens provided three quarts of white wine and bread for 2s. 8d. for the 1665 Whitsun communion. The following year they provided three quarts of claret and bread for 3s. 2d. and then two quarts of sack (sherry) and bread for 3s. 6d.

Papers of the late Uvedale Lambert

Uvedale Lambert of South Park, Bletchingley, who died in 1983, will have been well-known to many readers of *Surrey History* as the first Vice-Chairman of Surrey Local History Council and author of publications on the history of Bletchingley and Godstone: his father, also Uvedale Lambert, had written the standard histories of those parishes. We have received papers of the two men which include their transcripts and notes together with a small number of original documents. The oldest of these documents is a mid-thirteenth-century conveyance of two acres of land in Bursted (Oxted) by Roger de Berghstede to Stephen Rufus of Bursted. There is also an order issued by Edward III in 1337 to William Vaughan, sheriff of Surrey, to send a list of debts owed to the Crown by Hugh D'Audley, earl of Gloucester and lord of the manor of Bletchingley, and meanwhile not to distrain on his property.

Yet more early Bletchingley material !

An additional deposit of records of the Barrow Green estate, Oxted, includes a charter of about 1220-30 granting one acre of land in Bletchingley called Heremites Aker for an 11s. entry fine and a consideration of 4d. a year. The list of witnesses includes Randolf Portireve, a name which, meaning 'borough reeve' or 'borough bailiff', confirms the earliest evidence, dating from about this period, of Bletchingley's borough status. There is also a grant of a burgage plot on the north side of Bletchingley High Street in 1333. The deposit also includes a grant of custody of the manor of Oxted in 1617 to Lady Dorothy Hoskins, widow, and Thomas Coventry during the minority of the heir, Charles Hoskins,

and documents relating to Westerham, Edenbridge and the manor of Hendon in Kent.



Fig. 3. Thirteenth-century Grant of an acre in Bletchingley called Hermit's Acre. One of the Witnesses is Randolf Portireve. (S.R.O. 3920/1)

A medieval Leatherhead rental

We were able to purchase at auction, with the aid of a Government Purchase Grant, a rental of lands in Leatherhead held by the Prioress of Kilburn, Middlesex, 1446. The property had been granted to the priory in 1365 by Roger de Apperdele and lay in the north of the parish bordering Leatherhead Common. It acquired the name of 'manor of Minchin' from the Middle English word for a nun, 'minchin'. Twenty-three separate properties in the hands of thirteen named tenants are listed and their rents, ranging from $\frac{1}{2}$ acre called Longhalfacre for 1d. to William Wymelton's holdings worth 7s., totalled 13s. $\frac{33}{4}$ d. for 16 acres 1 rood, five 'pieces' of land, two messuages with curtilages, one cottage, part of a house, and two meadows. The names of many of the plots indicate that they were in common field and many of the tenants held by military service as well as annual rent. This rental seems to be the only surviving record deriving from the priory's administration of the manor and provides a detailed picture of the house's Leatherhead estate and tenants. Many of the tenants' surnames also appear in the records of the manor of Pachesham and Leatherhead.

Chertsey Industrial School

Chertsey Industrial School for Boys was founded by the philanthropist Dr. Thomas Hawksley after a public meeting held at the Society of Arts on 11th.

November 1885 'for the purpose of Inaugurating an Industrial School on self-supporting principles, with the double object of turning out thoroughly efficient workmen and of maintaining the School as far as possible by the productive value of the industries taught, carried out on a business scale'. The Committee included John Ruskin and the purpose of the school was to make provision for boys, particularly from London, who were unable to benefit from education because they were starving or because their parents were profligate. They were to be educated as pupils from eight to thirteen and thereafter trained as craftsmen able to use tools and machinery. As the Earl of Meath said in opening one of the school houses: 'If we were to hold our own as a nation in the competition of the world, our youth must be trained more thoroughly than they were at present in the use of tools. . . . A great deal of the pauperism of this country was caused because workmen had not in their early youth been trained as steadily and as carefully as they ought to be in the use of tools of all descriptions'.

The first requirement was a site of 25-30 acres 'in a healthy situation, near a railway station and within twenty miles of London.' Beomunds, with 26 acres between Guildford Street and Eastworth Road, Chertsey, was purchased for £ 5,000 and the houses for the boys were built in the grounds. The first house was opened in 1887. The later houses were fitted out by the boys themselves. Those who were trained as carpenters, smiths, bricklayers, painters, cabinet-makers and plumbers did the internal woodwork, painting, glazing and finishing. Shoemaking and printing, market-gardening, dairying and agriculture were also taught.

The first minute book of the Committee, now transferred to us by Surrey Local Studies Library, records the growth, funding and running of the school, including appointments of master, matron and staff, and also, where necessary, their dismissal. The minutes reveal various problems with staff. For example, one matron was found unsuitable: 'When the Superintendent examined, as he did last week, the state of the boys' clothes it was found to be deplorable, the socks were so full of large holes that the marvel was how did the wearers get them on for the rents were larger than the proper opening. The jackets and trousers were equally neglected as to buttons and rents. This together with the complaints of the boys as to food and some inquiries which had been made as to this point left a very decided inference on the minds of those who were witnesses as to the unsuitability of Mrs. Smith for a Matron.' The minutes also record a treat at Crystal Palace in 1892 for 82 boys and as many old boys as could obtain leave from their masters. The cost was £ 14, including railway fare 1s. 8d. and teas 9d. each.'

The first minute book is a useful supplement to our existing holding of four minute books and many other records transferred some years ago by Chertsey Museum, and to the records of Princess Mary Village Homes for Girls, Addlestone, which were deposited some years ago. This part of Surrey was described in 1891 as a 'very nest of philanthropy', with the School of Handicrafts, the Princess Mary Village Homes and the Ministering Children's League Homes at Brox, near Ottershaw, all within the original parish of Chertsey.

A nineteenth-century election

We have received from Surrey Local Studies Library a canvassers' book for the Dorking polling station at the West Surrey election of 1852 when W.J. Evelyn of Wotton and Henry Drummond of Albury were elected. One reason for the book, which lists the electors and states how they voted, being of particular interest is that in the parish of Dorking at this time there were lively debates on ecclesiastical matters and, in particular, parish poll books survive for the election of churchwardens and for different levels of church rate between 1854 and 1861. It would be an interesting exercise to compare the names in the canvassers' book and parliamentary and church poll books to discover whether, at a time when party and church allegiances often ran in parallel, the way in which people voted politically can be correlated with the way they voted ecclesiastically.

Plan of Merton Priory estate

By the late eighteenth century, the Merton Priory estate was the site of a copper mill and two calico print factories. Wimbledon Society have presented us with an 1866 copy, apparently made in connexion with legal proceedings, of an 1805 map of the estate. The estate shows the various works and also the former Meadows' Thread Field: Jonathon Meadows had been a thread 'whitster' (bleacher). Readers of *Surrey History* will remember the 1808 plan of the Hackbridge calico printers' works on the river Wandle which we acquired in 1989 and illustrated in *Surrey History* vol. IV no. 2. This present plan, showing works two miles downstream on the same river, provides an interesting comparison.

Business records



Fig. 4. Group of Unwin Brothers' Employees at Chilworth, c. 1876. (S.R.O. 3949/3).

Two of our most important deposits of business records are those of Dennis Brothers of Guildford and Unwin Brothers, printers, of Woking. We have received further deposits from both firms. The Dennis material comprises a

photograph and press cuttings album of 1919-22 and brochures of the 1920s. From Unwin Brothers we have received commemorative items from the golden jubilee in 1876 of Jacob Unwin's commencing business in White Lion Court, London. The deposit includes a tribute signed by members of his family, a printed commemorative letter to his sons, who were managing the firm, from employees and a group photograph taken at the Chilworth works. There are also two attractive copies of *Ephemerides*, old-style almanacks printed by the firm in 1883 and 1889.

Wimbledon Y.M.C.A.

The Young Men's Christian Association has grown from its Victorian roots to become a worldwide organisation. Wimbledon Y.M.C.A. was founded in 1875, and minute books from 1901 have been deposited, together with photographs and tapes and films. These were deposited through the initiative of the local manager and we are now in contact with the central organisation, hoping to encourage the more widespread deposit of Y.M.C.A. records.

Newark Mill and the Talbot Inn, Ripley

We have purchased the cash book of the tenant (probably John Mildred) of Newark Mill, Ripley, 1745-49. It includes payments and receipts at Clandon, Ockham, Guildford, Chertsey and Horsell, usually naming the person to whom payment was made or from whom payment was received but only occasionally giving the reason (e.g. land tax, 'per hog', 'per horse', 'per rent'). It is clear that incomings and outgoings were considerable and further analysis might yield useful results.

More interesting in some respects is the back of the book which was used as a letter book between 1751 and 1758, probably by a member of Mildred's family. The writer drafted in it a variety of letters, some of them flowery love letters, signed 'Stephonius'; we do not know whether these were written as practice exercises or were actually sent. Other letters give a good reflection of eighteenth-century Surrey society. The position of the innkeeper in society and the patronage relationship with local families is shown by a letter to Arthur Onslow, Speaker of the House of Commons, asking him to 'favour me with the Votes of the House as they come no nigher to me than Guildford and as they would be of particular service to me as severall of the neighbouring Gentlemen would be glad to peruse them at my house which would oblige them and would in particular confer an Obligation on your humble servant.' Another letter, to Lord Onslow, asks, after an advertisement had appeared in 'the Publick Papers' for a meeting of freeholders at Epsom, whether he wants 'his friends the freeholders at Ripley' to wait on him there. There is a letter apparently seeking to get a woman into one of the London hospitals. In one letter the writer is trying to buy cocks for a cock fight between Sir John Elwill and Admiral Boscawen; in another he observes: 'As for hunting I have had but very little this season - was out last week with Sir John Elwill and found at Box Hill and run for near 2 hours and killed.' The writer arrives home one night to find 'a freight of money waggons just arrived before me with a Cargo of Officers and sailors

etc. so that we are very full' and in other letters he refers to a petition of the inn-keepers and publicans of Surrey and neighbouring counties seeking redress from the 'multitude' of soldiers quartered on them. These letters require further study to elucidate many of the characters, but they give an insight into aspects of life in mid-eighteenth century Surrey from the viewpoint of a tenant of an important coaching inn - the kind of central figure in the life of the period whose experiences are not generally well documented.

School records

We have received two major deposits of school records. St. Matthew's Church of England First School, Downside, Cobham, was established in 1902 as a girls and infants school and was reorganised in 1931 as a junior mixed and infants school. The Headmistress has deposited the first log book, plans, photographs (1902-15) and examples of work of two early pupils, Minnie Seury and May Jarvis, including essays and sketches. We have also received records of Raynes Park High School from its foundation in 1935, including minute books, correspondence, magazines and photographs.

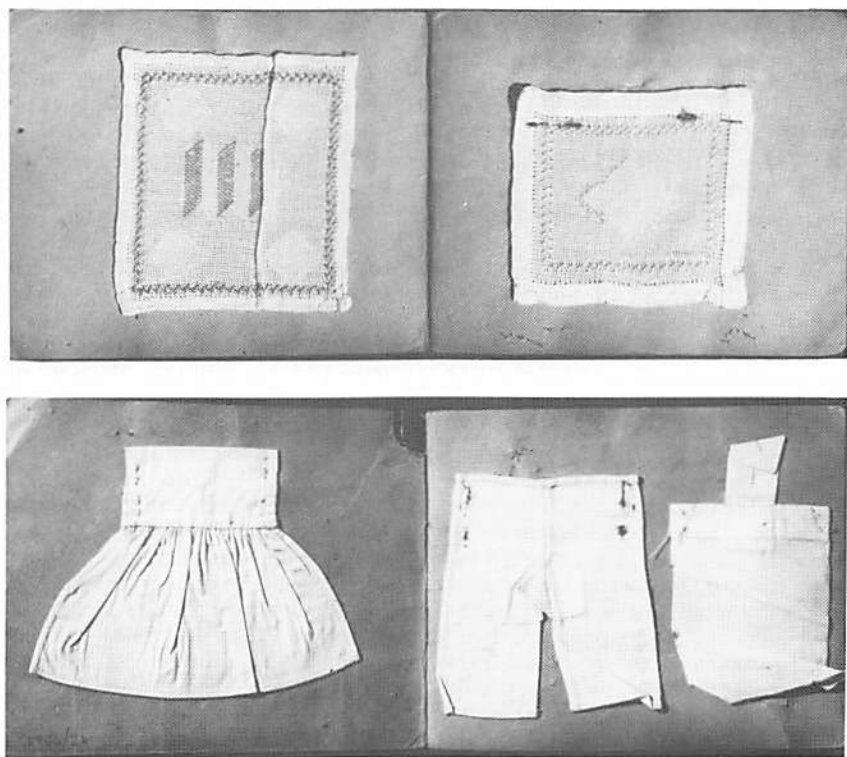


Fig. 5. Four Pages from a Specimen Book of Needlework, 1903 or 1904, of Minnie Seury, aged 10, a pupil of St. Matthew's School, Downside, Cobham. (S.R.O. 3966/26)



Fig. 6. St. Matthew's School, Downside - a Postcard sent in 1908. (S.R.O. 3966/10)



Fig. 7. Pupils at St. Matthew's School, Downside in the early twentieth century. (S.R.O. 3966/12)

From all parts of the county

As always, there has been a constant flow of small accessions throughout the year: additional deposits from parishes, title deeds from solicitors, transfer of documents from County Council departments. In particular, Surrey and central London firms of solicitors continue to send us parcels of deeds for which they can no longer locate the owner, property companies transfer non-current title deeds and, in the case of modern conveyances, new purchasers agree to deposit their deeds after registration of title.

In these ways, for example, we have acquired deeds of the site of the 'Brown Bear', at the Quadrant (formerly 'World's End'), Richmond, one of which contains a plan of 1892 which shows the lay-out of the public house, including the skittle alley. These complement deeds of the same public house which we received fifteen years ago. We have received from Ind Coope Retail deeds, papers and photographs of Surrey public houses and properties, including deeds of Woking Brewery.

A firm of solicitors in Powys have sent us deeds, papers and sale particulars of 'Poundfield', Old Woking, 1804-1913. We have also received deeds of Compton House, Cobham, built in 1868 as one of the first properties to be erected on the Fairmile Park Estate. The deeds begin in 1857 when Henry Jupp acquired Knipp Hill Farm, part of the Fairmile Farm Estate. Jupp began developing the estate in the 1860s. The property was purchased in 1914 by Thomas Sopwith the aviation pioneer, and we have photocopies of his purchase and mortgage deeds, and of the deed of sale by Sopwith in 1920. In 1889, the owner of Compton House, which was at that time named Ordsal, purchased Eaton Farm Estate land on the opposite side of Fairmile Park Road, and the conveyance shows how that estate was divided into lots for sale at the end of the nineteenth century. The break-up of Surrey estates and farms for building, as railways and then roads improved communications with London, is an important element in the history of the county, and the more material there is for researchers to trace these developments, the fuller our picture of changing Surrey will be.

Surrey photographs



Fig. 8. Gems Brothers' Shop, Church Street, Weybridge, probably 1890s. (S.R.O. 3903/9)

We have received some interesting photograph albums relating to Surrey. One, produced apparently by T. Griffin, photographer, of High Street, Weybridge, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, covers Weybridge, Chertsey, Addlestone and Shepperton. Most of the photographs are local views. One set shows Weybridge Carnival held on 28th. June 1900, the anniversary of Queen Victoria's coronation. The theme of the carnival procession seems to have been the Boer War, and one float represents Mafeking fort. Other photographs show Thames Lock on the Wey, with a barge being sailed into the lock, the River Thames with Dunton's Boathouse and the Weybridge Foot Ferry, and the exterior of Gems Bros.' cabinet makers' and upholsterers' shop in Church Street, Weybridge, with many of their wares, including furniture, mirrors, pictures and two suits of armour, laid out on the pavement. John Pulford and Bernard Pardoe gave us considerable help in identifying the photographs. Two other albums are of photographs taken by W. Noel Jackson, of Essex. There are 91 photographs, two from 1940 but most of the others taken between 1947 and 1951. They are mostly views of beauty spots, such as the Devil's Punch Bowl, Leith Hill and Newlands Corner, Surrey villages and churches and landscape views.

District Council records

We have received records from a number of district councils. Reigate and Banstead Planning Department have sent a number of documents which include plans drawn up by a Tadworth architect for a Walton Downs Garden City. The plans are dated August 1939 and the scheme did not come to fruition. Guildford Borough Council have deposited plans of Guildford R.D.C., 1929-30. Wimbledon Library have deposited Wimbledon and Merton and Morden valuation lists and rate books, 1899-1934; Mitcham lighting rate book, 1879; and Wimbledon overseers' minute book, 1900-21. Surrey Local Studies Library have transferred Haslemere U.D.C. copy-minutes, 1969-74; and Surrey County Libraries, Woking, have transferred copy-minutes of Woking U.D.C. and Borough Council, 1951-84.

Political papers

Mole Valley Conservative Association have deposited minute books and other records of the Dorking Conservative Association from 1885. The Association was concerned, particularly in the early years, with registration of electors following the widening of the franchise. The minutes are concerned primarily with organisational rather than policy matters. They include, however, the refusal by the committee in 1899 of a request from the (Protestant) Church Association to support a Church Discipline Bill to outlaw High Church practices and to oppose the establishment of a Roman Catholic University in Ireland as matters 'outside the scope of this Association as a purely political body' with no wish to interfere in church matters. There are a number of returns of election expenses, including one in 1885 for Reigate division, which then included Dorking, and there are campaign leaflets and other publicity material, 1901-49.

Records of local history

Local history and preservation societies have influenced the development of Surrey by campaigns to preserve threatened buildings and threatened landscapes and interest in local history is itself a phenomenon in the social history of the modern world. We have received records of a number of local-history societies, most recently Merton and Morden Historical Society, who have deposited minutes and correspondence from their foundation in 1951. They include, for example, the Society's efforts in 1964 to save the manor house, Dorset Hall and almshouses from demolition when the widening of Kingston Road, Merton, was proposed.

Parish records

Parish records continue to arrive from all parts. Several of the larger deposits at present are coming from parishes in the diocese of Southwark which are being surveyed under the Parochial Registers and Records Measure. These have included Wimbledon, St. Luke, 1908-90; New Malden, Christ Church, 1857-1988, including records of Kingston Ruri-Decanal Chapter and Conference, 1920-70; and additional deposits from South Wimbledon, Holy Trinity and St. Peter, Belmont, St. John and Cheam Common, St. Philip. We have also received additional deposits from Kingston, St. Luke; Felbridge; Lingfield; Surbiton Hill, Christ Church; Croydon, St. Peter; Limpsfield; Titsey; Haslemere; Guildford, St. Saviour; Chiddingfold; Wrecclesham; Cranleigh; Witley; Stoke next Guildford; Hambledon; Rowledge; Ockley and Send.

We have received further deposits from Kingston, Sutton, and Woking and Walton Methodist circuits.

What of the future ?

By the time this is published, changes in County Hall which were delayed from last year should be complete, and our visitors should be able to enjoy an attractive reception area and a microform reading room (taking over the room in which I am writing this article !) which will provide more space in the search room. In the longer term, the proposed new Surrey Record Office has passed its justification phase and we are hoping that it will achieve a place in the County Council's capital programme. I am, together with John Janaway, Surrey Local Studies Librarian, and an Area Library Manager, examining ways in which local studies material can be made more widely available throughout the county while ensuring the preservation of unique and rare original material in Surrey Record Office and Surrey Local Studies Library.

But, important as these developments are, they are overshadowed in our daily work by the receipt of 250-300 accessions a year of new material for Surrey historians and the 4,000 visitors to our search rooms.

Publications

The Surrey Local History Council has produced *Surrey History* for many years and the majority of the back numbers are still available. In addition the following extra publications are in print:

Pastors, Parishes and People in Surrey
by *David Robinson*
1989 £ 2.95

Views of Surrey Churches
by *C. T. Cracklow*
(reprint of 1826 views)
1979 £ 7.50 (hardback)

Kingston's Past Rediscovered
by *Joan Wakeford*
1990 £ 6.95
(published jointly with Kingston upon Thames
Archaeological Society)

Old Surrey Receipts
and Food for Thought
compiled by *Daphne Grimm*
1991 £ 3.95

The Sheriffs of Surrey
by *David Burns*
1992 £ 4.95
(Published jointly with the Under Sheriff of Surrey)

These books are published for the Surrey Local History Council by Phillimore & Co., Ltd., of Chichester. They are available from many bookshops in the County. Members are invited to obtain their copies from the Hon. Secretary, c/o The Guildford Institute of the University of Surrey, Ward Street, Guildford, Surrey. GU1 4LH.

OTHER BOOKS OF RELATED INTEREST FROM

PHILLIMORE

A HISTORY OF SURREY by *Peter Brandon*

The standard introduction, in one remarkably comprehensive and concise yet highly readable volume. Profusely illustrated and excellent value.

DOMESDAY BOOK: SURREY Gen. Ed. *John Morris*

A volume in the highly acclaimed county-by-county edition, providing the original Latin in parallel text with a brilliant new English translation.

SURREY INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY by *Gordon Payne*

This practical little field guide describes more than 200 sites in the county.

GUILDFORD by *E. Russell Chamberlin*

A portrait of the town, past and present, by a well-known local author.

A HISTORY OF WOKING by *Alan Crosby*

A full and well illustrated account of Surrey's largest town.

FARNHAM IN WAR AND PEACE by *W. Eubank-Smith*

A full account of the town during and between the world wars.

ADDINGTON: A HISTORY by *Frank Warren*

The first history of this Croydon suburb with two Domesday manors.

A HISTORY OF EWELL by *Charles Abdy*

A very readable and splendidly illustrated account, from its time as a large Roman settlement in Stane Street.

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