

The Newsletter

September 2007

Vol. 24 No. 1

COVER PICTURE

This is the seventh of a short series of Potters Bar wartime photos taken by Frederick Cole of Barnet, supplied by Terry Goulding.



Children were made up by the Ambulance Services as casualties and bomb victims at Elm Court, with bandages, arm slings and mock tourniquets etc. and then distributed around the area for the Rescue Service to practice their skills on. Terry was one of the two victims lowered from the old Gas Board offices in Darkes Lane, and he lived to tell the tale! (1939)

Effra Sales and Service in Cranborne Road, Potters Bar, employed local housewives to make parts for tanks, aircraft and munitions during the war (c.1944). Do you know the names of these ladies?



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

To all our Members.

Well, what a change a year makes! Looking at my contribution for our newsletter for last September on the weather, I remarked that we had had a 100 year drought and the fields had 2 inch cracks in them. I also said that perhaps we should not wish for too much of a downpour in case we got it. So which of us did the wishing?

I have just returned from a pocket emptying visit to the dentist, where I was charged £180.90 for three 'bonded' fillings and a 'polish and brush-up'. Wow! I thought, that is £55 per filling, and then I remembered a 1919 report by the 'Lord President of the Council' on his enquiry into: - 'THE EXTENT AND GRAVITY OF THE EVILS OF DENTAL PRACTICE BY PERSONS NOT QUALIFIED UNDER THE DENTIST'S ACT.' In this report it quotes treatment charges for a group of benevolent Scottish Dentists in Glasgow and I reprint it here.

The Scottish Dentists' Association is a company limited by guarantee of its members and no profit is divisible among the members."

"The initial funds amounting to £400 were subscribed by guarantee of members. The membership to-day is 142.

The Clinics are fitted and furnished on a common plan and the premises include in each case a surgery, waiting room, and lady attendant's office.

The evening being the most suitable time to get in touch with the class for whom the service is intended the rooms are open from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. From 5 to 7 the attendant interviews patients and makes appointments and from 7 to 9 the operators are in attendance.

The present Clinics are open at 181, Crown Street, South Side, Glasgow, and 2, Cranston Place, Anderston, Glasgow, two of the most densely populated districts in the City. The staff of operators consists of eleven dentists. Almost 4,000 patients have received treatment, but since the commencement of the war the natural development of the Association has been checked. Many of the operators are on active service. The shortage of dentists in the district made the hours of attendance a heavy tax on the dentists left, and the alteration of the hours of employment of patients together with the lighting restrictions have all tended to check progress.

The Association is the only body at present carrying on this public dental service in Scotland, and the idea, which would have been persevered in but for the war, was to extend its operations throughout the Kingdom of Scotland."

"The scale of fees which are charged to patients are:—

					per tooth.
1. Extractions.	(a) Without anaesthetic	..	..	..	6d.
	(b) With local anaesthetic	..	..	..	1s.
	(c) With gas 3s. 6d. and	..	..	..	1s.
					per filling.
2. Fillings.	(a) Amalgam, &c.	..	..	..	3s. 6d.
	(b) Sythetic porcelain	..	..	..	4s. 6d.
	(c) Gold	..	..	..	£1 1s.
	(d) Crowns	..	..	..	£1 1s. each.
	(e) Inlays	..	..	..	£1 1s. "
3. Dentures.	(a) Full upper or lower with extractions	5s. extra			£2 10s.
	(b) Partial upper or lower	..	..	..	3s. 11d. p. tooth.
	(c) Single tooth	..	..	..	5s.
	(d) Remodels	..	..	..	£1 ; 3s. 6d. p. tooth.

"These fees compare very favourably with the amounts charged by unqualified persons and in addition the highest dental skill is available to the patient."

I know it quotes the prices they charged 88 years ago, and probably compares well with the wages of the working people of the time, so maybe I should not complain about present prices, except that our retirement pensions have not kept up with current wages. I had better get off this 'hobby horse' now, since we are not a political society.

Have you noticed the rapid building of the new house near the Dreams bedding shop and next to 197 Darkes Lane ('St. John's Cottage')? There were some new techniques of building being used that I have not seen before: 1. The foundations used were some 36 off, 10 metre deep concrete and steel piles bored into the London clay, which is now normal for our area. 2. Rectangular steel tubing 100mm x 50mm was then bolted to the tops of the piles. 3. 25mm chip board was then fixed to the steel work to hold the c.180 mm reinforced concrete floor of the house. Then the double walls were built on this, one wall at a time with foamed concrete blocks, and fibre glass insulation added when the outer wall blocks were being built. It should be a warm house, but let us see what happens when the roof is put on.

Our new season of lectures look rather interesting and I particularly like the look of the one on 'Local Public Houses' by our President Brian Warren in November. Before that, we open up on Friday the 21st of September with Mr. John Cotton and his talk on 'Prehistoric London'. I hope to see you all then.

Terry Goulding

NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome Mrs. Celia Healy, Mr. & Mrs. Holt, and Mr. Chris Dixon to the Society. We trust they will enjoy the lectures, walks and outings that are part of our yearly programme, and we hope that they will take an active part in the life of the Society.

John Donovan

OBITUARIES

Since the last Newsletter I have heard of the passing of Norman Bletsoe, a member for about ten years, and of George Hollis, whose family once ran the South Mimms' Post Office for many years. Extracts from his great aunt's diary (Sarah Ann Hollis) for 1874-75, formed an article in the May 2006, Newsletter.

On behalf of the Society I express our sincere condolences to the members of their families and to all who knew them.

Brian Warren

AUTUMN LECTURE

Friday September 21st, 2007

London before London: Prehistoric London by John Cotton.

This is a presentation scheduled previously; the speaker being unable to attend through illness. John Cotton is the Pre-History Curator, Museum of London. This will look at the Prehistoric background to the London region and earliest settlement in the London region.

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

AUTUMN LECTURE PROGRAMME (PREVIEW)

- | | | | |
|----------|----------|------------------|---|
| Tuesday | October | 30 th | <i>'Great Northern Railway through Hertfordshire'</i> , by George Howe.
George Howe is the Chairman of the Great Northern Society. This talk will involve a quick look at the movement of people and goods through Hertfordshire before the Great Northern Railway was born, how it came about, and why the route it takes to this day was chosen. The difference the GNR main line, and its branches made to the eastern side of England, and in particular through Hertfordshire. |
| Thursday | November | 22 nd | <i>'The History of local Public Houses'</i> , by Brian Warren and Terry Goulding.
The inspiration for this lecture arose from my visit to the Waltham Abbey Historical Society about a year ago, when they had a talk on the same subject. It was the largest attendance I had ever seen at that Society and everyone reckoned that all the pubs were empty. A selection of slides from Terry's vast collection will be used to illustrate the features of the buildings and their occupants. When there was no central heating and TV the public houses were the centre of activity in earlier centuries. <i>Brian Warren</i> |
| Tuesday | December | 4 th | <i>Christmas Social</i> with quiz and light refreshments. |

HELP REQUIRED

Stewards to help look after the Museum. If you could help just one day a month it would be of great assistance. You will be on duty with an experienced steward and you will be assured of a pleasant afternoon.

Tuesdays 2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Ian Cumming on 01707 642296

Wednesdays 2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Arnold Davey on 01707 654179

Saturdays 11.00am – 1.00pm, contact Mabel Hammett on 01707 657120

RECORDER GROUP

We still need volunteers for our Recorder Group, which monitors changes to Potters Bar on a daily/monthly basis (we meet twice a year to collate our findings). The work has been going on since 1985. Reports are sent in from all over the County and stored in the Hertfordshire Archives, County Hall, where they form a valuable record for the use of future historians and researchers.

It is interesting and worthwhile work, and it need not take up much of your time; you would be allocated a small area, in which you would note road works, changes to shops and houses, and anything else that changes the appearance of Potters Bar.

If you would like to help, please contact the Chairman, John Scivyer, on 01707 657586 for details now.

John Donovan

DELIVERERS REQUIRED

At the end of each issue we pay tribute to Michael Cawrey and his band of helpers, who save the Society pounds in postage by delivering your copy by hand. Naturally, our volunteers do come and go, and we now need some more deliverers. Three times per year you would be required to push a Newsletter through the letterbox of half-a-dozen or so of your neighbours' front doors. If you can help, please ring me on 01707 642 886.

John Donovan

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2007/2008 ARE NOW OVERDUE

Adults £3, Family/Group £5

Please pay at the September meeting, or to the Membership Secretary, Mrs. Eileen Field,
51 Highview Gardens, Potters Bar, Herts., EN6 5PN

If you do *not* intend to renew your subscription, kindly inform the Membership Secretary (653801).

I wish to thank those members who send more money than the required membership fee.

THE MUSEUM OF DOMESTIC DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE

Middlesex University, Junction of the Cockfosters Road and Cat Hill.

EXHIBITION:

THE SUBURBAN LANDSCAPE (Two Hundred Years of Gardens & Gardening)

19th June 2007 to
24th February 2008

Opening times:
Tue. to Sat. 10am-5pm
Sunday 2pm-5pm

Gardening is one of Britain's most consuming passions. From gardening magazines to TV makeovers, the garden is a never-ending source of fascination. Over the last two hundred years, the nation's passion for the private suburban garden has contributed to the development of the suburban landscape as a whole, including the development of parks and open spaces, as well as the evolution of the smaller, 'private' sphere of gardens and gardening.

Supported by English Heritage.

Brian Warren

ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

In the last Newsletter I asked if anyone knew of the location of the Potters Bar Wireless Telegraph Station, for the answer see page 8.

Please add to the list of apprentices in the last Newsletter p.5 Blacksmiths' Co. 1605-1800.
15-12-1637 Marshall Wm. son of Christopher Hadley, Husbandman to Nicholas Fledger.

On my last visit to Hatfield House I found a human touch of history in the Court record for South Mimms, on the 21st April 1677 (General 121/4).

"Item wee present the Lord of the Mann^r. for not providinge the Jury Men a dinner according to custom and for this cause wee have omitted to fine any tenants for not appeareinge at the Cort today."

The above had been crossed out with a big cross and in the same ink underneath had been written.

"Item we fine all tenants for not appeareinge vizt the Gentle 12d and others 4d"

I thank Lord Salisbury for permission to reproduce the document.

Last year, via the Reverend Peter Bevan, I received a request to locate the grave of Mike Day's grandparents (Sept.2006 Newsletter) in Mutton Lane Cemetery. I was able to do this and the relatives came over from the USA to view the grave. Recently, I had a further request from Steve, at Nethercott's, to provide him the information concerning the grave, as they now wish to have the large, edged grave restored.

In the Potters Bar Cricket Club's pavilion there hangs not far from the bar, a framed list of the original subscribers to the 'New Ground Fund Appeal' c.1929. There one can see the signatures of the upper and lower classes of Potters Bar in those days.

THE GUILDHALL LIBRARY, LONDON

LONDON APPRENTICES (South Mimms and Potters Bar)

In the following extracts to local people, the person on the left was apprenticed to the London master on the right, † indicates the father has died.

VOLUME 4 VINTNERS' COMPANY 1609-1800

5-3-1660/1	Avis Abraham son of Thos. SMs yeoman †	to Richd. Dermer
2-4-1611	Birchmore Francis son of Francis SMs. yeoman	to Jn. Kinge
2-5-1688	Flint Jn. son of Richd. SMs cordwainer	to Edw. Robinson
6-10-1668	Francis Richd. son of Mathew innholder †	to Edw. Bellew
6-7-1669	Gibson Jn. son of Jn. yeoman	to Chris. Harris
6-3-1744/5	Herbert Jn. son of Wm. baker	to Jn. Bayly
3-3-1629/30	Johnson Thos. son of --- butcher	to Hy. Collins
6-4-1616	Mosse Wm. son of Jn. yeoman	to Brian Kynaston
4-2-1661/2	Pickering Jn. son of Thos. innholder	to Cornelius Cage
7-4-1663	Croxtan Edmund son of Edmund Mimms gent	to Edw. Bellew
3-3-1673/4	Clarke Ralph son of Wm. Potters Bar victualler	to George Staesmore

I express my thanks to the author, Clifford Webb, and The Society of Genealogists, as there are now 44 published books:

Brian Warren

DR. F. BRITTAIN'S LIBRARY

Following the death of Muriel Brittain, her executor, Stephen Barton, the then Senior Bursar of Jesus College, arranged for all the books he was able to find relating to South Mimms, Middlesex and Hertfordshire, to be transferred to the Society and to be known as, 'Dr. F. Brittain's Library'. The books are not to be sold but remain with the Society forever. In the event of the Society being dissolved the collection is to be disposed of according to the Society's present Constitution, 6th Edition, April 2000.

PERSONAL and PRINTED BOOKS

- F.B.1 South Mymms Records - Early Times to 1799
F.B.2 South Mymms Record - 1800-1898
F.B.3 South Mymms Records - 1898-1912
F.B.4 South Mymms Records - May 1928-Apr.1929 Newspaper cuttings
F.B.5 South Mymms Records - May 1929-Dec.1930 Newspaper cuttings
F.B.6 South Mymms Records - Jan.1931-Aug.1932 Newspaper cuttings
F.B.7 South Mymms Records - Sept.1932-Sept.1933 Newspaper cuttings
F.B.8 South Mymms News Vol.1 Jan. 1913 to July 1921 Parish Magazine
F.B.9 South Mymms News. Vol.2 July 1921 to Apr. 1923 Newspaper cuttings
F.B.10 South Mymms News Vol.3 May 1923 to Jan. 1926 Newspaper cuttings
F.B.11 South Mymms News Vol.4 Feb. 1926 to Apr. 1928 Newspaper cuttings
F.B.12 A complete copy of the South Mymms Parish Magazine for 1913
F.B.13 South Mymms Illustrated 1 The Church photographs
F.B.14 South Mymms Illustrated 2 The Parish photographs
F.B.15 South Mymms Illustrated 3 photographs
F.B.16 South Mymms Illustrated 4 photographs
F.B.17 The Archdeacon's Horse (Newspaper cuttings & photographs relating to the incident in South Mymms, 1926)
F.B.18 South Mymms The Story of a Parish by F. Brittain, 1928
F.B.19 South Mymms The Story of a Parish by F. Brittain, 1928
(with notes by H. J. Butcher died 1966)
F.B.20 South Mymms The Story of a Parish by F. Brittain, 1928
(F. O. Cunnington's copy Ingham Lodge)
F.B.21 Saint Giles By F. Brittain, M.A., 1928
F.B.22 Mostly Mymms by Frederick Brittain, Litt.D. 1953
F.B.23 Mostly Mymms by Frederick Brittain, Litt.D. 1953
F.B.24 Mostly Mymms by Frederick Brittain, Litt.D. 1953
F.B.25 Tales of South Mymms & Elsewhere by Frederick Brittain 1953
F.B.26 Tales of South Mymms & Elsewhere by Frederick Brittain 1953
F.B.27 Tales of South Mymms by Frederick Brittain 1953
(pencil corrections on inside page)
F.B.28 Tales of South Mymms by Frederick Brittain 1953
F.B.29 It's a Don's Life Frederick Brittain 1972
F.B.30 It's a Don's Life Frederick Brittain 1972

If any member wishes to see any of the books then contact the Hon. Archivist.

Brian Warren

MYSTERY OF MANY YEARS IS SOLVED AT LAST!

In my last Archivist's Report I stated that I had received a request for the location of the Potters Bar Wireless Telegraph Station during World War Two. After asking one or two members and further telephone calls from the enquirer, David Sullivan, he recommended reading "Royal Air Force Beam Benders No.80 (Signals) Wing 1940-1945" by Laurie Brettingham, 1997 Midland Publishing Ltd. On borrowing it from the library I found it a most fascinating book. I would certainly recommend it to any members who wish to know more about the subject.

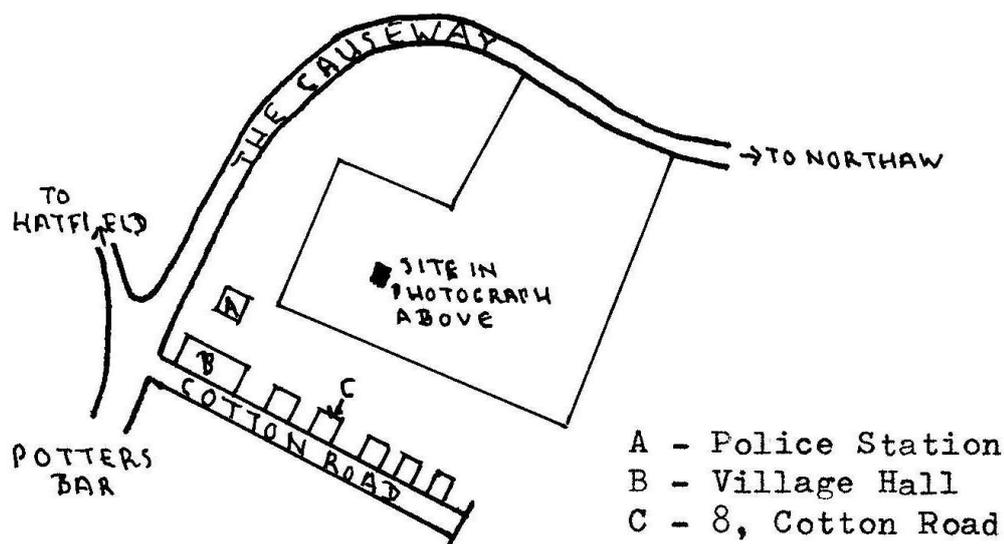
In David's last letter, dated 24th June 2007, he explained the system and I now quote," During the early stages of the Second World War the Luftwaffe had a navigation system based on the use of directional radio beams sent from two separate transmitters, located on the continent, some hundreds of miles apart. Each transmitter was directed at a given target in Great Britain and where both beams intersected, an enemy bomber knew that it had reached its target. The system proved very accurate and effective. For example the raid on the centre of Coventry. To overcome the beam problem R.A.F. No.80 Signals Squadron, with its headquarters in Aldenham House, Radlett, was set up. The idea behind it was to have numerous wireless counter-measure locations sited throughout the country which, when needed, would switch on their transmitters and send out a uni-directional signal, on the same wireless frequency as the enemies. These signals were designed to create the maximum of confusion to navigators inside the invading aircraft.

The early locations often used modified hospital electrical equipment to provide a signal of the right frequency." As stated above the nerve-centre of the operations was at Radlett. It was so secret and important that all the roads into the village had armed posts.

In the Beam Benders book (p.157), a certain Cyril Lester, who served at the Potters Bar station, recounts that he was billeted in Cotton Road and used to go to work either through the local Police station yard and over a brick wall or by hopping over a fence into the field to the signals caravan and stand-by generator. He also mentioned that he was married in Potters Bar, so I checked my records from St. Mary's and found he was married on the 18th June 1942, to a Barbara Camm, aged 18, who came from Sunningdale. He lodged at No. 8 Cotton Road. Further enquiries revealed that other houses were used by military personnel in the War. Subsequently I discovered that two people lodged at No.8 and used to go into the field at night-time to operate the equipment.

The structure below has stood in the field for many years and been the cause for speculation, as to its use; it appears on a 1946 aerial photograph.





As noted at the beginning of paragraph three, hospital electrical equipment might be used and the Potters Bar Hospital was not far away, if required. When a site had been located the authorities would liaise with the local telephone exchange for cabling, again in the case of Potters Bar the local telephone exchange was very near, also the local Northmet Power Company's transformer station was in the Hatfield Road. It seems that the field near the police station was an ideal situation.

In the course of this research I have discovered there was a brick air-raid shelter, similar to the one still in Billy Lows Lane, in the middle of Cotton Road, at the Village Hall end. Also beyond the hedge at the end of Cotton Road there was an anti-aircraft gun.

I wish to express my thanks to David Sullivan for his initial enquiry and permission to reproduce part of his letter. Also, I acknowledge assistance from Hugh Wiggins, Cynthia Meadows and Dolly Amos.

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CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

DANCERS HILL HOUSE

The estate agent wrote in a glossy superior brochure:-

“The house has a fascinating history it is thought that Geoffrey de Mandeville, the Earl of Essex, built a Motte and Bailey castle on the site of Dancers Hill House in the early 12th Century. Although there are no records to confirm this, the location consequently became known as Mandeville Hill. A manor house is the first recorded building on the site in 1558 and prior to becoming Queen, Princess Elizabeth would stay at this home to break the ‘insufferable’ carriage journey between Hatfield House and London. It is thought that the Princess took her afternoon tea under the old yew tree, which still stands at the front of the house.”

I contacted the estate agent and suggested that he should have written:-

“The original house and lands in the vicinity were known as Mandevyle, which formed the core of the medieval Manor of Mandevyle. The name of the house was changed to Dancers Hill, about 1542, and it was built on or near the former manor house. In 1768 the property was acquired by George Byng, of Wrotham Park. The house was altered and improved using

old bricks and materials from earlier buildings that were being pulled down in 1856. Marshall of the Royal Air Force, Lord Trenchard, resided at the House before the Second World War; he then moved to London. After the War Major-General Naylor lived there until his death. His widow, Lady Mary Naylor, younger daughter of Edmund, 6th Earl of Strafford, continued to live there until her death in 1985. Major-General Naylor and his wife are both buried in Ridge churchyard.”

I thank Pat. Kent, widow of the late Dr. John Kent, for drawing my attention to the article.

Brian Warren

POTTERS BAR MUSEUM

It is just 100 years since Robert Baden-Powell’s first camp on Brownsea Island led to the formation of the Scout Movement, which has grown to have 28 million members worldwide today. The latest exhibition in the museum traces this story with illustrations of the key stages in the movement’s development, not forgetting the Guides, of course.

Accompanying the Scouts exhibition is another on geology, as 2007 is the bicentenary of the founding of the Geological Society in London. This exhibition concentrates on the local area, with part devoted to the geology of Potters Bar and another dedicated to the late Professor Kirkaldy, a Potters Bar resident, who single handedly set up the geology department at Queen Mary College, London and wrote a number of best selling textbooks on geology which were translated into numerous languages.

On tables in the museum are local rock samples, some of which are unidentified and visitors are invited to identify those not already labelled (or to disagree with those that are).

The exhibitions will run until the end of December and admission is free.

Opening hours are 2.30 to 4.30 pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11am to 1 pm on Saturdays and all day Sundays when the Antiques Fairs are held (Second Sundays from September.9th on.)

Arnold Davey

FINALLY

Thanks go to Mabel Hammett for photocopying the Newsletter, our team of volunteers (without whose help we should not be able to distribute it), and Michael Cawrey, who organises the volunteers.

The PB&DHS Newsletter is produced in September, January & May of every ‘season.’

If you wish to submit an item for inclusion (preferably of a ‘local-history’ nature), please phone the Editor, Richard Lee (01707 652975) at least one month before the publication month (i.e. August, December or April).

Note; inclusion of such items is at the Editor’s discretion.