

The Newsletter

January 2010

VOL. 26 No. 2

COVER PICTURE

This is a photo taken from the collection held by Terry Goulding.



A snowy picture in January 1940 of part of the Village of Bentley Heath. Ahead is the building that was a public house called variously:- 'The Drum and Monkey', 'The Prince of Wales' and finally 'The Strafford Arms'. The licence and name was then transferred to the newly built pub in the Cranborne Parade, Potters Bar in c.1937. The wall of the old almshouses is on the right. (Photo by Frederick Cole.)

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

To all our Members.

The Committee and I hope you had a Happy Christmas and we wish you all a Happy New Year.

As I write this in the cold, dark, rainy and windy days of early December, I am reminded of the day in November 1987 when the trees and roofs of buildings all over Potters Bar suffered damage. I cannot help thinking how lucky we were this year that the real wind and rain was north of our area, and I only lost one fence panel. O. K. I thought, I'll just go and get another 6 foot long one and slide it into position between the channels of the concrete posts. Oh dear! I have now discovered that I need to reduce the length of the new panel by 1½ inches. I think I shall wait for the weather to warm up!

Our next meeting in the New Year is on Friday the 29th of January when I will hopefully be giving a talk on *The Toll Road to Hatfield*. I have tried to make the talk more interesting with some old and some new views, many never seen in our talks before. I hope to see you all then.

Terry Goulding

NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome Joan Penson, Maureen Overall, and Mick Cox on joining the Society. We hope they will enjoy the lectures and occasional outings that are part of our yearly programme, and will take an active part in our Society.

MUSEUM STEWARDS REQUIRED

Members are needed to help look after the Museum. Perhaps you could help for just one day a month? It would be of great assistance and you would be on duty with an experienced steward.

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

DELIVERERS REQUIRED

In 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, however at the moment we do have a full complement. If you would like to help in the future, 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 652975.

Richard Lee

SPRING LECTURE

Friday January 29th, 2010

The Toll Road to Hatfield, by Terry Goulding

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

SPRING LECTURE PROGRAMME (PREVIEW)

Friday	February	26 th	<i>Hertfordshire Executions from 1733</i> by Mr. Ken Griffin
Thursday	March	25 th	<i>Story of St. Leonard's Church, Bengeo</i> by Gillian Cordingley
Tuesday	April	27 th	Annual General Meeting, followed by <i>Hold the Front Page – the History of Newspapers</i> by John Lucas
Thursday	May	27 th	<i>De Havilland Aircraft you've never heard of – lesser known products of Stag Lane and Hatfield</i> , by Mr. Robin Webb

OBITUARIES

Hilda Flower (1911 - 2009)

Hilda joined the Society in 1990 and her husband, Leslie, the following year. They came to Potters Bar in 1947 and lived at 6 View Road. Leslie worked for Twymans, but pre-deceased his wife a few years ago. They used to organise a Music Group and were associated with St. Mary's Tennis Club. At St. Mary's Church Hilda organised the flowers for many years, where her funeral was held on the 10th December. The Society was represented.

Their son, Michael, a chorister at St. Mary's, predeceased them but we send our condolences to his wife, Rosina.

Peter Trotman

Peter and his wife were members by 1987 and then lived in Hatherleigh Gardens. It was there that he found the Mesolithic burin, now on display in the Potters Bar Museum. However, it was the beginning of the discovery of further pre-historic finds in the area. Both he and his wife attended meetings but after moving to Hawkshead Road their attendance became less frequent. Peter was a tall, quiet man but always supported the Society.

The Society conveys its very sincere sympathy to his wife and family.

Brian Warren

ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

When writing the first draft I noted that I had not yet received a reply from Warsaw [*The Newsletter* 26.1] and suggested that I might write to the school as *The Barnet Press* had made reference to the 'Prisoner of war memorial school'. Then a letter dated 8th December arrived from Dr. Tadeusz Krawczak, Director of The Central Archive of Modern Records, Warsaw. They had contacted the school principal, Mrs. Ewa Grzankowska, in Dobiegniew and suggested that I write to her. Also she gave me the address of the local Museum of Woldenberczykow, in Dobiegniew.

As a result of correspondence with David Sullivan, since April 2007, concerning the Wireless Telegraph Station, behind the Potters Bar Police Station, we met when he attended the Society's November meeting, having motored from his home at Great Barford, east of Bedford. He showed me his vast index and there it confirmed '*Potters Bar UX Middlesex TL2601 W/T Station Radio Counter Measure Unit*'.

I had previously drawn his attention to the RAF Civilian Wireless Reserve, of which he had no previous knowledge, and information from them locally was sent to '*Box 25 Barnet*' and from there to Bletchley Park. Where was '*Box 25 Barnet*' in Barnet?

Brian Warren

LOCAL HISTORY

Back in October one of our members Joy Sims wrote requesting a copy of one of Brian Warren's books. Joy mentioned parts of her family history of when they lived in Potters Bar. Her grandfather started the Osborne Shoe shop in Church Road. The letter was so interesting I asked for more information. Joy had married the son of Mr. Sims who was the headmaster at Cranborne School from 1937.

I have now heard from Joan Carriett, Joy's sister-in-law, who is the daughter of Mr. Sims. Joan tells us about the interesting life of her father.

I am sure many of our members will remember Mr. Sims from attending Cranborne School.

We hope to be able to produce all these facts in our future publications

Mabel Hammett

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2009/10 ARE OVERDUE

The subscription year runs from April 1st to March 31st at a cost of £3 for adults, and £5 for a family/group. If you are not sure whether you have paid yet for this year, you can check your current membership status by phoning the Membership Secretary, Eileen Field on 01707 653801. Her address is 51 Highview Gardens, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 5PN.

Should you pay by post, be sure to collect your receipt at the subsequent lecture meeting. If you want us to *post* the receipt to you, please enclose a SAE. **Note:** you should make your cheque payable to Potters Bar & District Historical Society, and *not* Mrs. E. Field.

Thank you to those members who have already paid by using the form in the last Newsletter.

VISIT TO THE BRITISH SCHOOLS MUSEUM AT HITCHIN

On November 2nd twenty eight members boarded Welham Coaches who took just 40 minutes before depositing us outside one of the very few surviving early Victorian monitorial schools. Here in 1810, William Wilshere founded a school for the children of Hitchin's 'labouring poor' in a malthouse. His inspiration was Joseph Lancaster who developed the monitorial system of teaching. In 1837 a Lancastrian school-room in which three hundred boys were taught on wooden benches from age five to ten at a penny or less a week was built and it is the only one of its kind to survive. All faiths were accepted. Lessons hung from rails and were imparted by senior pupils to the younger pupils from a series of semi-circles around the perimeter of the room. Masters, of whom William Fitch was the most memorable having a career spanning forty five years in the Hitchin school, imparted reading, writing and general knowledge which were then practised from these tracing their letters in sandtrays at the front to the more advanced at the rear of the hall.



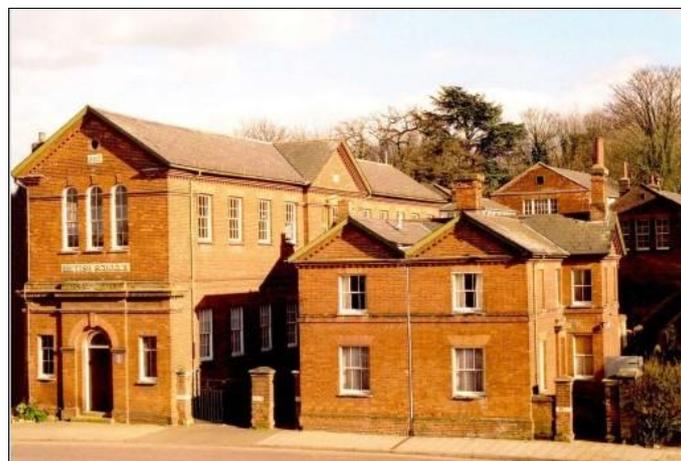
William Wilshere – "He was a handsome man of middle stature, rather bald and inclined to corpency, and very courteous in his manners." (F Lucas)

Slates were used by those able to write and in the Galleried Classroom which was built in 1853 we were given a lesson by a formidable teacher as of that time. Hands were first inspected for cleanliness after a prayer to open the day's lesson lasting from 9 or 10 a.m. to mid-day, then from 2 to 4 p.m. Lunch was not provided. Fanlights let in a welcome breeze to alleviate the stench from one hundred and ten boys sewn into their clothes annually! We practised our reading, writing and basic arithmetic under the stern gaze of our cane-wielding mentor. Inevitably some were chastised for allowing ink on hands and even for writing left-handed and one unfortunate ended up wearing the dunces cap for being unable to recollect Her Majesty Queen Victoria's second daughter!

A visit to the Masters House, beautifully furnished but painfully restrictive for two adults and their five children, the four daughters sleeping alternately head to toe in one bed, brought us back to our spoiled existence with tea and biscuits in the Girls and Infants School built in 1857 to replace the old malthouse which was badly damaged by fire.



A browse around the museum and shop ended a thoroughly enjoyable and instructive visit in which more recent classrooms of the 1930's and 1940s with their familiar desks, inkwells, photos and many artefacts brought back recollections of those not altogether balmy days of our youth. All displayed on this historic site where state education began.



Colin Field

KNIGHTS and GEORGE BYNG'S NEW GREEN DRAGON LANE (1815) [now Dancers Hill Road]

Introduction

When recently working through a small bundle of documents, containing a wide range of dates, at Hatfield House (SM 13/1) I noticed the coloured plan of Mr. Byng's diversion of Green Dragon Lane (see opposite), which has resulted in this article.

KNIGHTS and a three-acre close adjoining

The exact date of the house is unknown but the earliest known reference to a resident was John Adderley, who died in 1651 and was buried at St. Giles, South Mimms. He was a Governor of Queen Elizabeth's Boys' Grammar School, Barnet in 1634. By his Will of 1652 he left a messuage in South Mimms near Enfield Chace to his daughter, Winifred, which was to be sold within two years to raise money for the payment of stated legacies. The Gunton and Rolfe Survey of Enfield Chace (1658) showed Knights as being occupied by Colonel William Webb. In 1661 the trustees of Hester Shaw's Will (1659) bought from William Webb, citizen and grocer, of a Capital Messuage called Knights then in occupation of George Farrington and Dame Elizabeth Bludder, his wife. The Hearth Tax Returns for 1664 record the house as having fourteen hearths, only two other properties in the Parish had more.

The Raworth family occupied Knights in the early Eighteenth Century and by April 1708 Robert had died and Henry inherited, who in his Will dated 1720, left Knights and other property in several counties to his brother, John. Subsequently, he made his Will on the 21st October 1726 leaving everything in his houses in Bedford Row and at South Mimms, at the time of his death, to his dear wife, Ann, as long as she shall remain a widow. If she chooses to live at Knights she can have such goods and furniture in both houses as she thinks fit to move to South Mimms providing that she does not marry. By 1745 Henry Millman occupied the house but the following year Elizabeth Raworth, daughter of the late Sir John Raworth owned Knights. Whether it was her or not I am not sure but in 1759 an Elizabeth Raworth married a William Drake. In 1770 William Drake, Shardeloes, Bucks., (only child of William and Elizabeth) and John Raworth conveyed the property, previously occupied by John Raworth, Elizabeth Byng widow and Culling Smith, to Peter Lascelles, Parish St. George Bloomsbury. By his Will of 20th February 1775 he left Knights and a '14 acre Farm' adjoining, which he had lately purchased from William Drake, to his wife Alice, for life and after her death equally to their children at 21 years or day of marriage, but if they die without heirs to my brother, Robert. In a subsequent Codicil he desired that all messuage, lands and furniture, plate etc. be sold by auction, with his wife having the choice of plate to the value of £200, with £2000 from sale invested in stock and the interest for her life, then to the children (Proved 11th May 1776). The Revd. Robert Lascelles, clerk, Gilling, Yorkshire was admitted 8th May 1779, with Jane and Alice Lascelles (wife of George Blake) as co-heirs. Five years later Jane Lascelles, spinster, conveyed to William Adams, who was admitted to the property in 1789. He (Will 29-7-1797) left the property to his wife, Mary, and after her death to their daughter, Mary. At the South Mimms Court Baron, dated 5th August 1811, Edward Orley Smith, surviving trustee of the Will of the late William Adams, with the consent of his wife, Mary, sold to George Byng for £770.

George Byng's New Road, 1815

The Court Book of 1st April 1815 noted '*the use of the said lane [Green Dragon Lane] as a public highway having been diverted and turned to a new Highway made by the said George Byng.*'

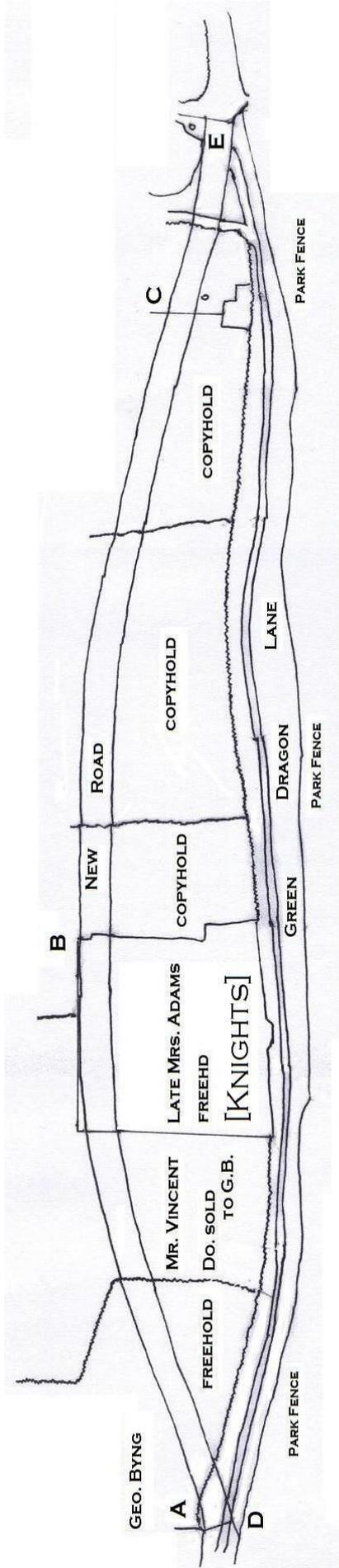
When Knights was demolished perhaps its foundations were used as a base for the Byng Mausoleum, as judging from the available evidence it is very near the location of Knights.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the Marquess of Salisbury for granting me permission to reproduce the plan of the diversion and access to his archives, in particular the South Mimms Manor Court Book One (1702-30). I thank the staff of the London Metropolitan Archive for their assistance with the Middlesex Deeds Register records, the other significant source for this article.

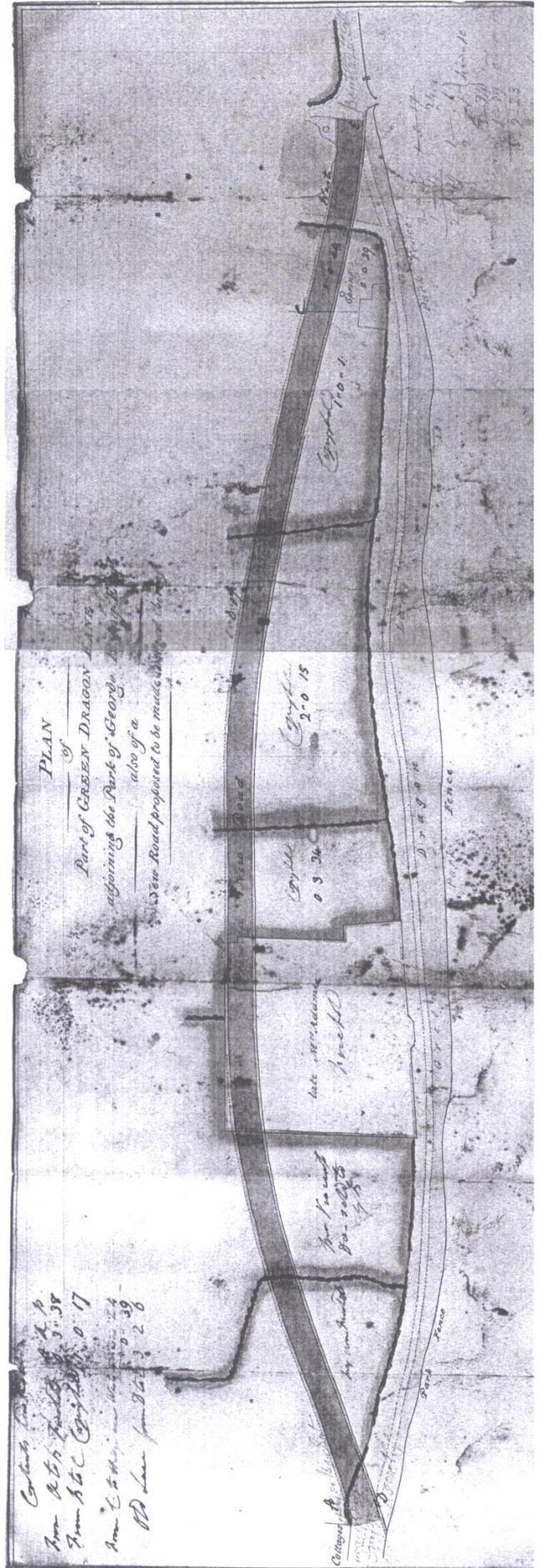
GEORGE BYNG'S NEW ROAD 1815 (NOW DANCERS HILL ROAD)

Explanation of Plan Below



[WROTHAM PARK]

Original Plan



LOCAL TIMBER-FRAMED BUILDINGS (Part 1)

Introduction

Whenever I have lectured on the above subject I have always acknowledged the debt I owed to the late Adrian Gibson (1930-2006), who was only too willing to share his acquired knowledge. In my case he would interpret the information I sent him, whether written, photographic or plans, sometimes all three. In addition he was willing to visit the buildings I was examining to express his opinion, which would enable me to improve my knowledge.

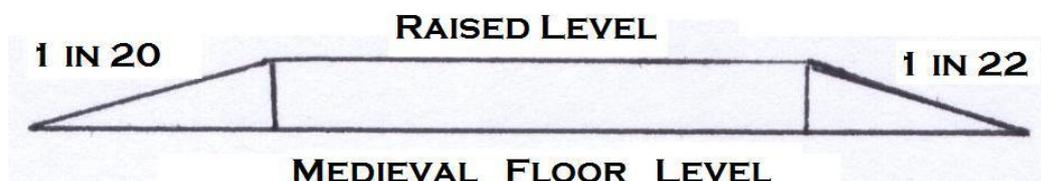
I would like to thank the owners or occupiers of the various properties for allowing me access to make detailed observations and take photographs.

ELM FARM, BENTLEY HEATH LANE NGR TQ2470 9990 SMR 9989

Mr. Butcher (Barclays Bank, Potters Bar 1914 - 1939) and local historian in the 1950s, wrote, "When I was retiring from the Bank, I toyed with the idea of leasing the house from Lord Strafford but I went with my architect on a boiling hot day one August, the walls were reeking with dampness and we found the floors were laid on earth no cement anywhere, so I cried off." In the 1950s a concrete raft was put in.



This was the first timber-framed building I examined and it came about by chance. Mrs. Lang, the tenant, visited the Society's excavation at the junction of Bentley Heath Lane and Baker Street (now the centre lane on the M25), while her husband was filming in Norway. In September 1974 they relinquished the tenancy and moved to The Avenue, Barnet. When calling in 1975 they told me that alterations were taking place, so I gained permission to observe the changes. Between April and August 1975 I visited Elm Farm thirteen times and on twelve occasions I acquired new information. On one occasion when I measured the slope of the first floor rooms, at either end, they were rather similar. J. T. Smith concluded the reason for this was because the medieval floor had been raised in the middle.

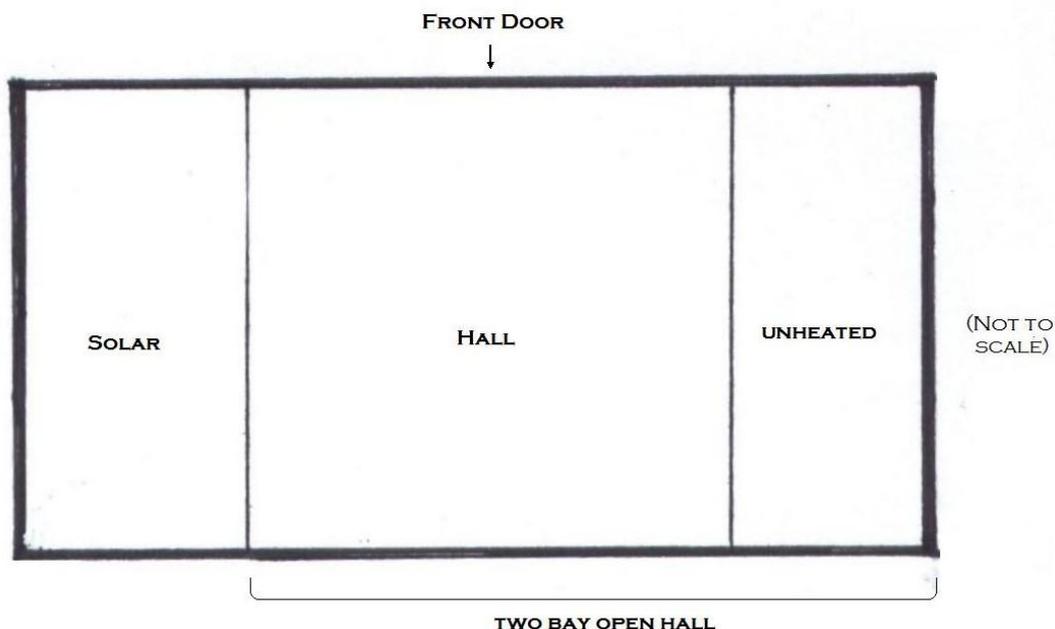


He also suggested that mortice holes in a beam around the upper floor chimney breast indicated a possible shuttered chimney hood.

In the end downstairs rooms I was shown a rectangular mark in the corner of each room. These marked the original access to the upper floors, either by steps or a ladder, prior to the insertion of the Inglebrook fireplace, with its circular staircase at the rear, which I located. There was a fine bread oven in the corner of the Inglebrook fireplace. Above the upper roof rafters there was nothing original except the chimney breast. Half the roof was tiled and the other slate of a later date. Internally there was some evidence of English bond brickwork but in the mid-18th century the original timber-framing was encased in Flemish bond. A similar thing happened to Knightsland Farm, another nearby property belonging to the Byngs.

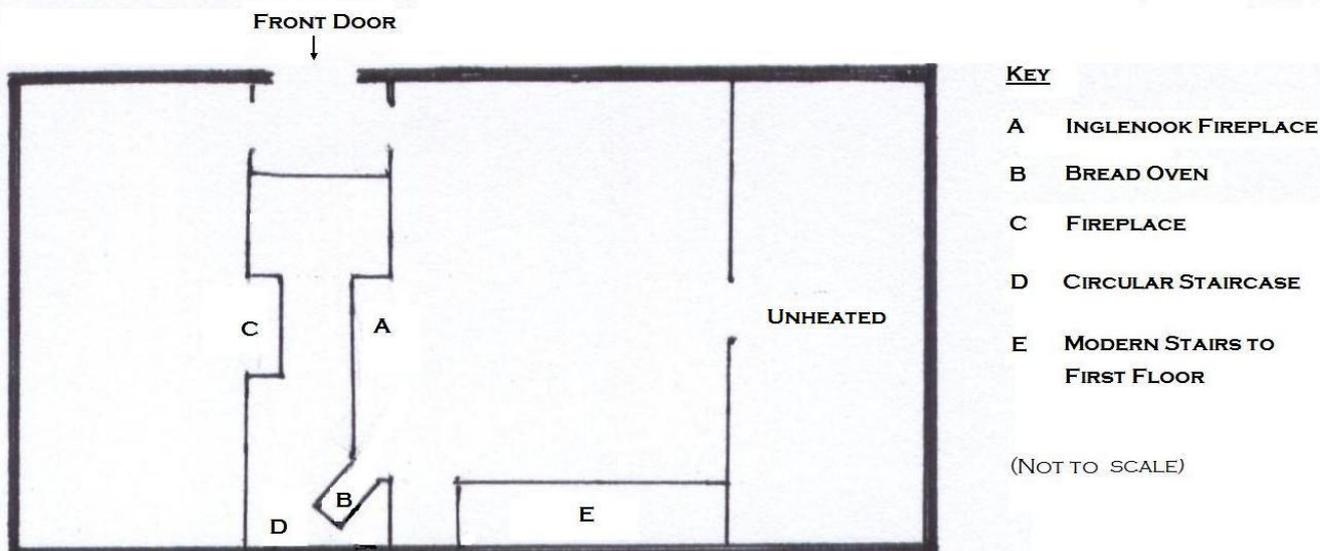
Adrian Gibson's conclusions:-

ORIGINAL HOUSE



INGLENOOK FIREPLACE INSERTED

LATE 16TH OR EARLY 17TH CENTURY



PBHS 50th ANNIVERSARY CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

On December 7th members met in the 60+ centre for our annual social to mark the 50th Anniversary of the society. We had a golden trimmed cake with the society logo in the centre.

As we entered the hall we were served with a drink, this year by Colin Irons and Colin Field. The tablecloths were gold with a gold table decoration from Wendy Davey. The Hall was decked with holly and ivy and golden balloons. The scene was set for us to enjoy ourselves.

We started the evening's entertainment with a chat by Chris Sumner, he had bought along recorded music of old songs from the period before the first world war. After telling us about the words and meanings in the songs and the famous people who had sung them at the time, we were given a song sheet and we had a sing along.

A light supper was prepared by Mabel Hammett and the hot home-made mince pies were made by June Parks. The Chairman Terry Goulding, President Brian Warren, and our Curator Arnold Davey then cut the wonderful golden cake made by Karen of Karen Kakes from Windmore Avenue. The quiz that followed was won by Brian Kolbert's table. The raffle run by Michael Crawley was then drawn plus the draw for the table decorations.



Our President Brian Warren then thanked all the team of helpers for making the evening such a very enjoyable one. Everyone then helped wash up and put the hall back to normal.

The committee would like to wish everyone a VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR for 2010

Mabel Hammett

RECORDER GROUP - HISTORY WHILE IT IS HAPPENING

The Recorder Group monitors changes to Potters Bar on a daily/monthly basis and generally meets twice a year to collate the findings. This work has been going on since 1984. 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.

If you would be interested in helping, please contact the Group's Chairman, John Scivyer, on 01707 657586.

The Recorders continue to take note of changes as they happen in the town. Here are some of the main things which have occurred during the last year. Probably the most interesting historically is the closure of Clarks in Barnet Road. This was a family butcher which has existed for a hundred years. The shop has now been taken over by an art gallery. This is not the only change. In spite of the recession shops which become empty soon seem to be taken by other businesses. Two recent such happenings in the High Street have been a betting shop and an employment exchange. These were soon taken over by another art shop and a men's clothing store respectively. An event involving people is a protest against a building project on an open green site in Chase Avenue. As soon as signs of work became obvious local residents set up a protest camp on the site. It is not known why they did not make their objections known during the planning process.

John Scivyer

The PB&DHS Newsletter is produced in September, January & May of every 'season'. Mabel Hammett looks after photocopying and collation, and Michael Cawrey organises, with volunteers, the distribution of The Newsletter

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.