

The Newsletter

September 2010

VOL. 27 No. 1

COVER PICTURE

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



It was 70 years ago in the autumn of 1940 and spring of 1941 that was the worst period for the local bombings. In Barnet, Bruce Road (bottom right) and Stapylton Road (across) were devastated by a huge explosion (believed to be a parachute mine) that blasted the area rather than impacting on a smaller spot like a normal bomb. This is now the area behind 'The Spires' that includes the shops, car park and library. The photographer's son Ronald is in the foreground of the picture. Photograph by Frederick Cole.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

To all our Members.

Welcome back to our new season of lectures, although some of our members and Museum stewards have continued working all through the year - thanks to all of them.

We had a very hot '*Fun Day*' in Oakmere Park in June this year that helped in advertising our Museum to others in Potters Bar, and there were often remarks of, 'I've been there', from Brownies and Guides who had visited our Museum for the splendid Guide Centenary exhibition presented by Janet Reid. Guides of every age and from other areas came to see the logbooks and displays and were fascinated like me to see the 'live' cooking stove in the model camp site. Thank you Janet.

Perhaps you noted the Barnet bombing picture on the front cover. This is to introduce our new lecture programme with a talk by Mr. John Heathfield entitled '*Barnet at War 1939 -1945*' on Tuesday September the 28th. I hope to see you all then.

Terry Goulding

NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome Megan Young on joining and Anne Hoose on re-joining the Society. We hope they will enjoy the lectures and occasional outings that are part of our yearly programme, and take an active part in our Society.

MEMBERS' NEWS

It is with great pleasure to inform members that David Almond celebrates his 80th birthday with a memorable family gathering at the end of July.

In the Newsletter May 2009 Joan Charlton was sent congratulation on reaching 90, this November 24th John Gamby will celebrate his ninetieth birthday, to which the Society adds its congratulations.

Gordon Eve, after a six-week stay in hospital, is now a resident in Greenhill, Waggon Road, with his name down for Mayfair Lodge, The Walk. His brain is as alert as ever and medically quite well but he can no longer live on his own. I visit him regularly and perhaps other members would care to visit, as he needs to keep his alert mind active. His room number is 16, on the second floor, where I usually see him. The phone number of Greenhill is 020 8449 8849.

Brian Warren

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2010/11

The subscription year runs from April 1st to March 31st at a cost of £3 for adults, and £5 for a family/group.

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.

RECORDER GROUP

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. The next meeting is at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 8th December. Traditional mince pies will be provided!

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

AUTUMN LECTURE

Tuesday September 28th, 2010

Barnet at War 1939-45, by Mr. John Heathfield.

THE MEETING WILL START **PROMPTLY** AT 8PM IN THE 60 PLUS CENTRE, WYLLYOTTS CENTRE. EVERYONE WELCOME. COPIES OF THE SOCIETY'S LATEST PUBLICATION *ADMIRAL BYNG AND WROTHAM PARK* WILL BE AVAILABLE AT £2 EACH.

AUTUMN LECTURE PROGRAMME

Friday	October	29 th	<i>Thomas Telford: engineer and visionary</i> , by Mr. Runnalls Davis
Thursday	November	25 th	<i>Queen Elizabeth Girls' School, Barnet</i> , by Mrs. Jennifer Johnson
Tuesday	December	7 th	Christmas Social with a Quiz and light Refreshments.

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

FUN DAY

We had a very successful time at the Potters Bar Rotary Club Fun Day on July 10th in Oakmere Park. It was extremely hot so we were surprised at how many visitors came to see us. The first visitors arrived at our stand sharp on 11 o'clock and continued all day, we did not record how many visitors, but more people now know we have a Museum in Potters Bar. It was a very busy but worthwhile day. It was interesting to see Guides or Brownies who had visited the museum for the '100 years of Guides' exhibition came across to show their families what they had seen on their visit to the museum. Once again we would like to thank Stan and Margaret Stanbrook for the loan of their tent and gazebo. Last year it protected us from the rain, this year we sheltered from the hot sun. We would also like to thank all the members who came to help. Sorry we were all so busy this year we forgot to take any photo's.

Mabel Hammett

VISIT TO HERTFORD AND BENGEO

It was a perfect summer evening in June when a small group met Gillian Cordingley in Hertford Car Park. She had spoken about St. Leonard's Church at our March meeting. We entered the Castle grounds and stopped by the Norman motte, which dates back to around 1066. Originally there would have been a watch tower at the summit, long since gone. We also saw the remains of the 12th century curtain wall, but nothing remains of the original castle, although the gateway survives. This has been considerably altered and extended over the years and now houses the Council Offices. During the 100 Years War, the King of France was imprisoned in the Castle, but it was a very gentlemanly arrangement, as apparently he went hunting and was free to pursue country activities.

We walked into the town where Gillian pointed out many interesting old buildings with a wide variety of architectural styles. Then on to Bull Plain, where Hertford Museum is housed and on to Folly Bridge, which spans the River Lea Navigation. In former times, Adams Wharf was the hub of freight movement. Cargo was taken by barge to and from London, especially materials associated with the malting industry. It was hard to believe this, when we regarded the tranquility of the river and peaceful surroundings, beautiful in the evening light.

After this, we drove up Port Hill and on to Bengoe. We were greeted and treated to a very interesting tour of this tiny Saxon Church. The history is fascinating, too much to relate here. However, several very interesting features were pointed out - the medieval mass dial in the doorway, the thirteenth century wall painting, the funeral hatchments and the remains of the Anchorite's cell (a type of hermit). We also saw a very valuable Jacobean chalice and paten - in fact, some of our party actually handled them. So many interesting things - but do go to St. Leonard's and see it all for yourself.

The church is open every Saturday and Sunday, from 2.30 p.m. - 5.00 p.m. until the end of September. In addition services take place every Sunday at 6.30 p.m. from April to September. There is no heating in the church, hence it is closed during the winter months. Our visit was very enjoyable.



Very many thanks to our two extremely knowledgeable guides, also to Colin Field for organizing the evening.

Mary Cook

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

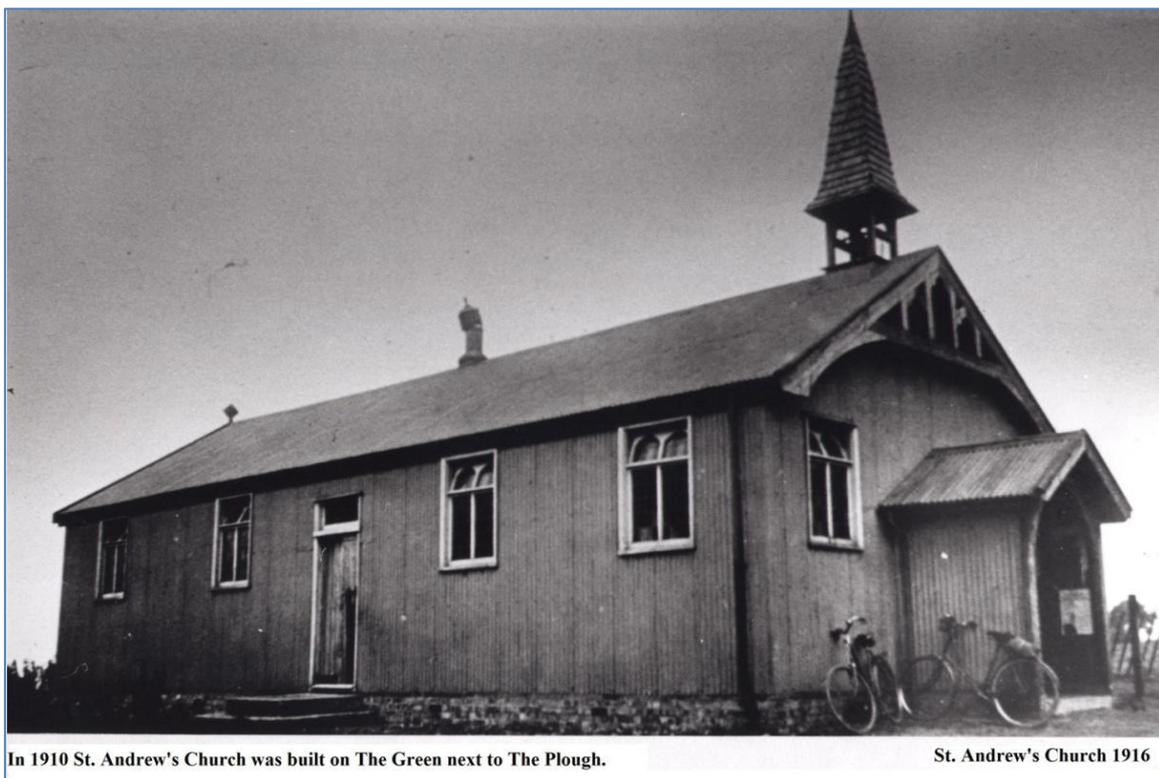
ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

In the last Newsletter I noted that two items had continued to occupy this column for some time. When Dr. Richard Ciezak was in contact with Mrs. Ewa Grzankowska he mentioned that I had published the two photographs of her School, which she had sent to me. As a result I sent her a copy of the last Newsletter.

Also, I sent the two articles from *The Barnet Press*, which started this search, along with all the other information, to Rachael Sharp, the General Editor of the *Barnet and Potters Bar Times*. I requested that perhaps an article could be published asking if anyone had known the Polish officer when he lived in Barnet, or were there any of his possible children still alive. As far as I am aware nothing has been published.

Though a communication was sent to Ian Valentine, who wrote '*Static Audley End House and SOE's Polish Section*' nothing further has been discovered about Abdale House, as a Polish Air Force Radio Station.

The centenary of the coming of the railway to Cuffley was celebrated with the unveiling of a plaque above the booking office at Cuffley Station on the 6th April, at 10.30 am. Half-an-hour later an exhibition was unveiled at Cuffley Library, later this became part of a larger display at Forty Hall. Preparations are now being made for an exhibition at St. Andrew's Church, Cuffley, in October/November, to celebrate the centenary of the 'old' St. Andrew's tin church, at the top of Plough Hill, near '*The Plough*' public house. There are a dozen items from the tin church surviving in the present St. Andrew's, including the harmonium, a Cradle Roll, a painting of the inside of the church by Mrs. Emma Hardman and two large candlesticks.



Following a request from Father Peter Bevan I have supplied him with a history of St. Michael's and All Angel's Church and Mission Hall, which stood on the triangular piece of ground now bounded by Church Road, St. Michael's Way and Osborne Road. They were both destroyed at different times in the 2 World Wars and not due to enemy action.

If any of our members can recollect the names of the property next to Orchard House, other than Dorplan or Philips Electrical Warehouse, please would they inform Arnold Davey.

Brian Warren

LOCAL TIMBER-FRAMD BUILDINGS (Part 3)

Nos. 62-68 BLANCHE LANE, SOUTH MIMMS NGR TL2220 0097 SMR 9990

Introduction

The owner in late 1977 undertook a comprehensive renovation of the property. Mary Weir, who lived at 4 Blanche Lane and was a qualified architect, observed and recorded the changes. One day in late December 1977 Helen Baker (a former archivist of our Society) and I visited the building at the invitation of Mary Weir. I remember that one had to be very careful as one moved about on the beams, there were clouds of dust, exposed beams and one massive beam fourteen inches square. In June 1978 Mary Weir wrote a letter to J. T. Smith (see foot note 1) with a copy of her latest survey drawings and relevant comments.

History

There was mention of a messuage on the site in 1630 but the earliest known reference to '*The Princes Arms*' dates to the 20th March 1662 when Robert Hicks, citizen and woollen draper of London sold to Richard Tims. In 1759 it had become two properties formerly one called the '*Princes Arms*' near the Turnpike in South Mimms. More detail was provided in 1775 when it was leased to George Hatch, a shopkeeper. There was a messuage, yard and garden, with a cellar and one shop. There were three rooms on the ground floor, four chambers and two closets. Also included there was a stable, hayloft, coalhouse, woodhouse and a bakehouse. In 1814 the property comprised of three tenements. Reference is made ten years later to one messuage and Inn called the '*Princes Arms*' subsequently converted into four tenements and since many years ago into three messuages and two cottages. A member of the Hollis' family was a grocer and general dealer in 1861 and the family ran the shop and Post Office until well into the Twentieth Century. Numbers 62-68 are now occupied by William Masterton, who recently had the front plaster removed to reveal the bricks.

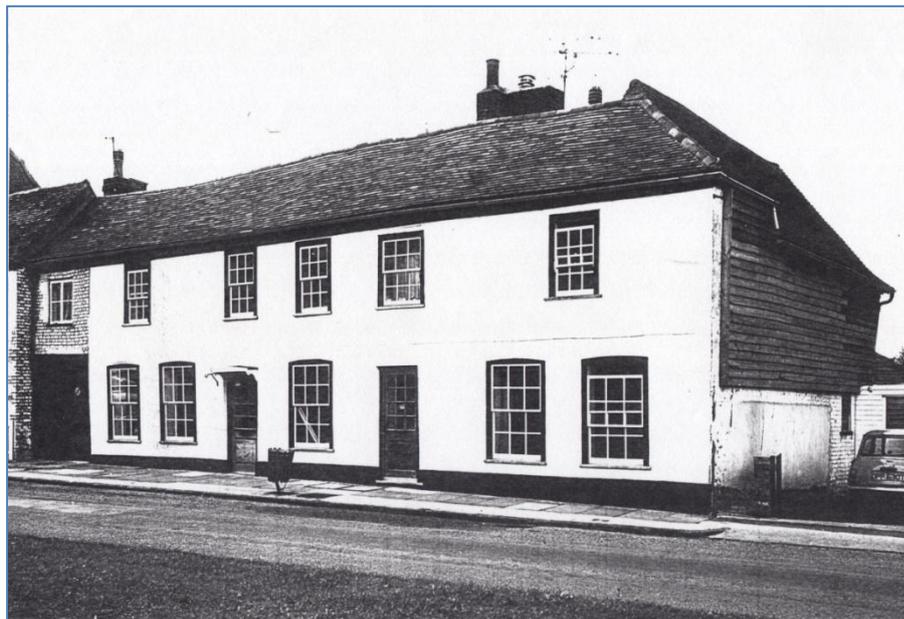
The Building

It is mainly of the mid-17th century, with some earlier work. There is an internal chimney-stack with a lobby entrance and the service bay to the south. At the northern end there is a cross-wing jettied to the east and west. The first floor framing of the wing is of the mid-17th century (see photograph below). This is unusually late for jetties and may be part of an earlier building.

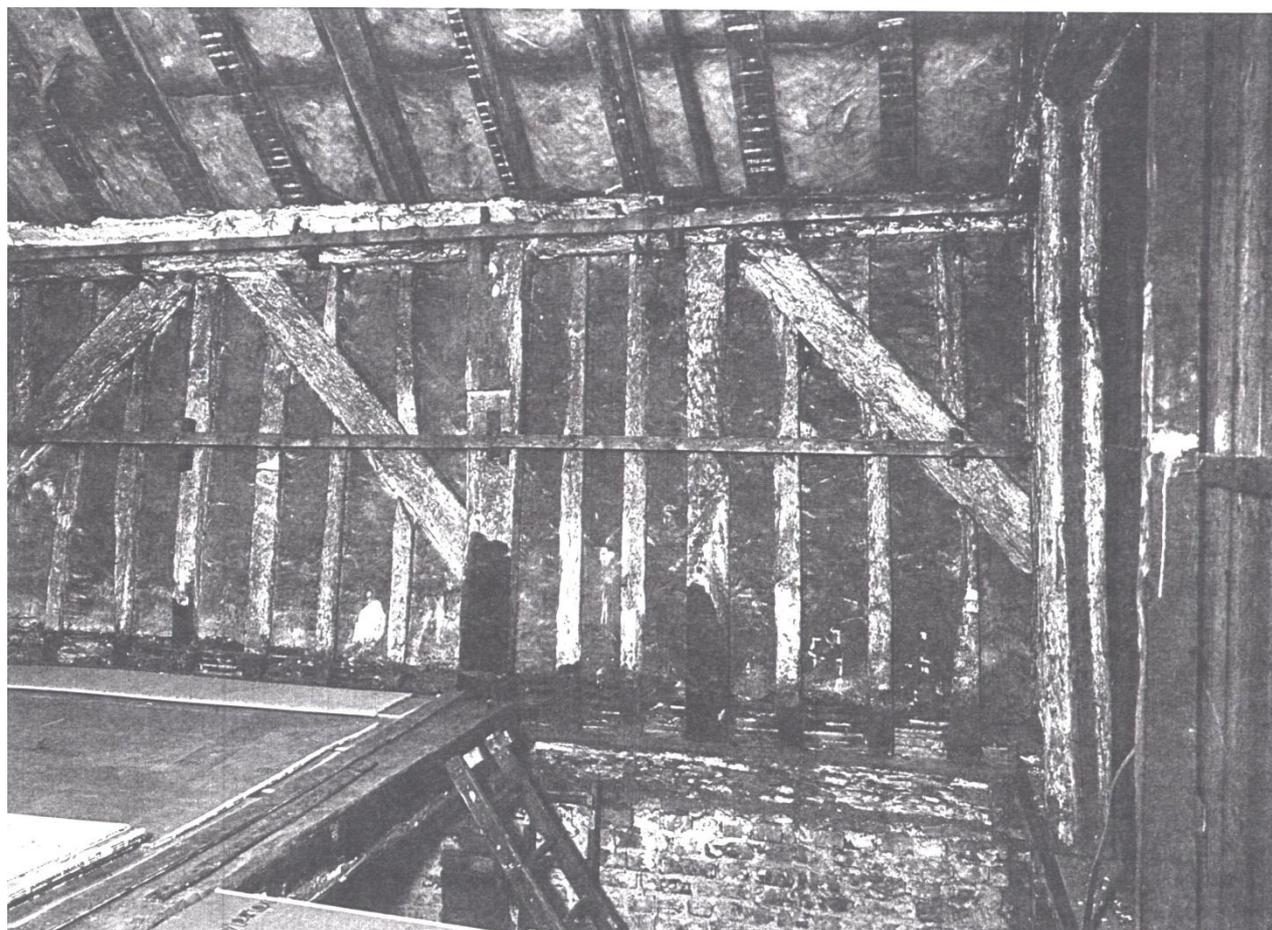


Photo taken by the author on July 28th, 2010.

FRONT VIEW OF NOS. 62-68 BLANCHE LANE



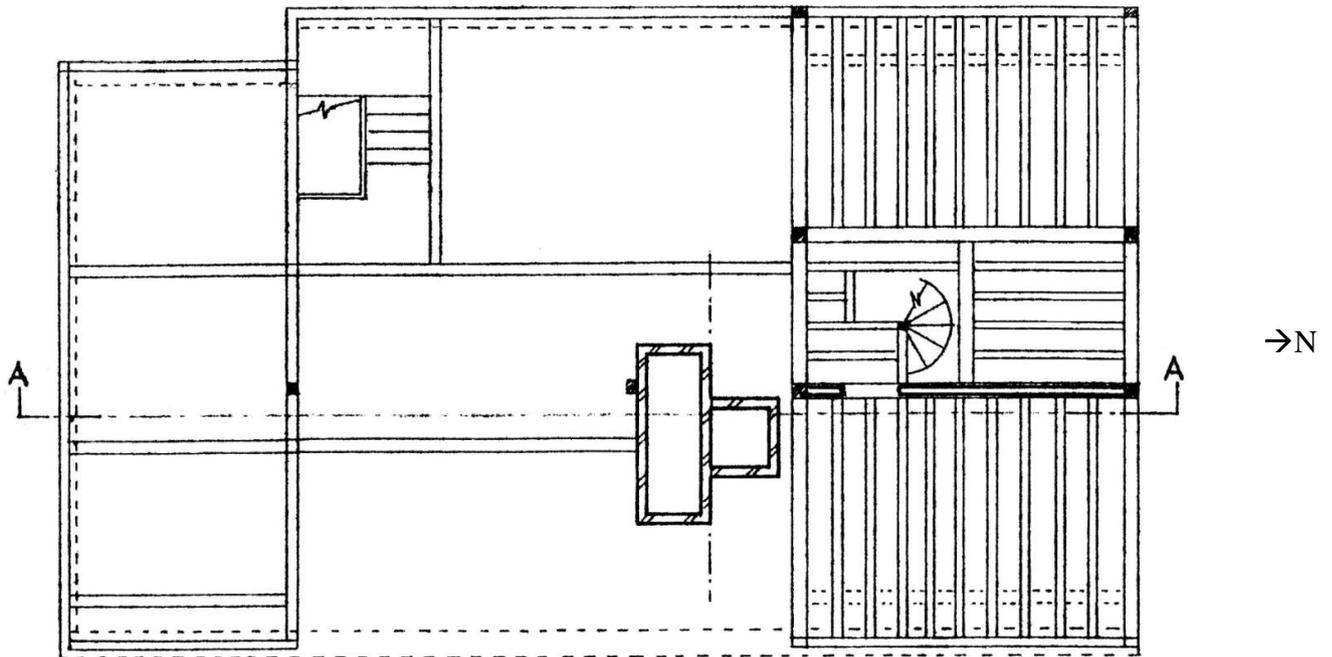
↑
NORTH CROSS-WING ABOVE



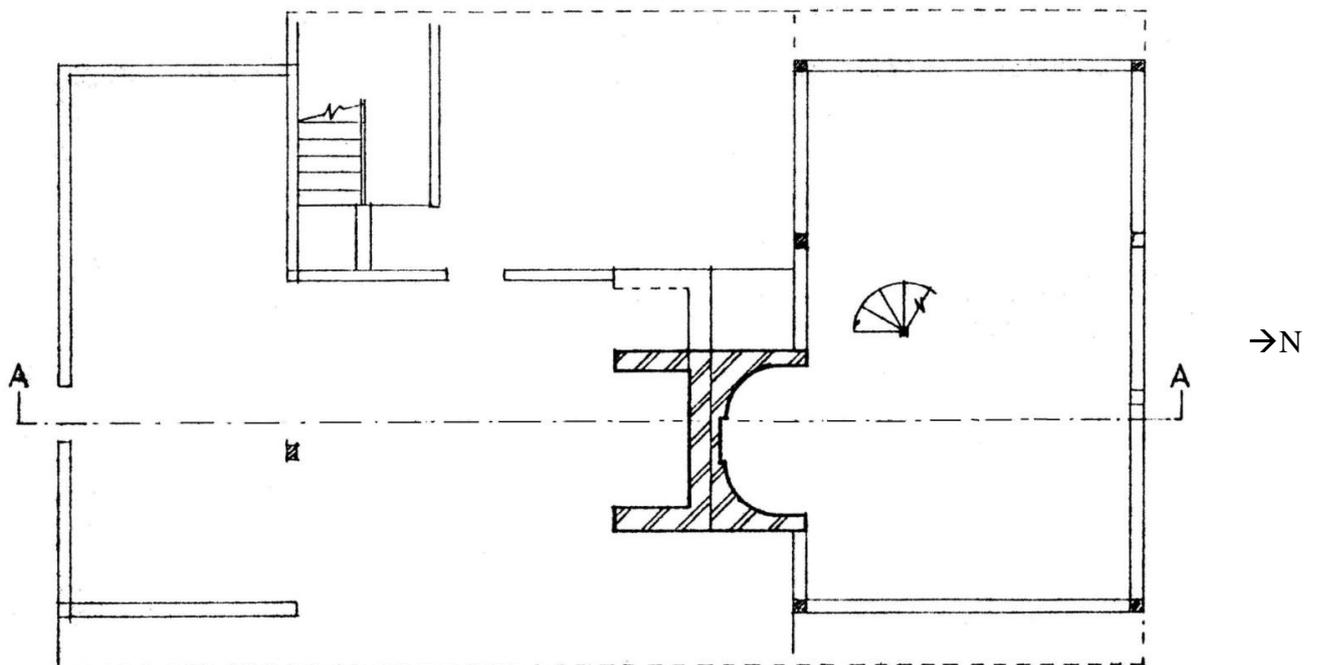
PART OF THE NORTH CROSS-WING ON THE FIRST FLOOR
(Taken by Richard Baker, March 1979).

MARY WEIR'S DRAWINGS

(i) FIRST FLOOR PLAN, showing main beams and floor joists where known.



(ii) GROUND FLOOR PLAN



SOURCES

Mary Weir's drawings and letter to J. T. Smith.
Mrs. Helen Baker's notes on the history and Richard Baker's photograph.
Hertfordshire's Sites and Monuments Record

FOOT NOTES

1. J. T. Smith retired in 1987 as the Principal Architectural Investigator, Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England.

Brian Warren

PARKFIELD LAKE - ANOTHER VIEW

In the last Newsletter (May 2010) Brian Kolbert suggested the original lake excavation was carried out by the Britons during the latter part of the first century. He noted that he had found no writings that said it was dug as a new garden feature for either the 18th or 19th century. I have studied the Middlesex Register of Deeds, which lists property at the point of sale, in Middlesex, since 1709.

The purchaser of the estate, which later became Parkfield.

Lt. Gen. Richard Plaistow, Baron de Gesves, Chamberlain to his Highness the Elector of Cologne in his Army and formerly of the City of London was born c.1725 of a Huguenot descent. He was a money-lender, in particular, to the Duke of St. Albans, which resulted in Chancery Proceedings. Richard was abroad from 1756-60 but the Duke of St. Albans supported his application for a Grand Tour. In March 1762 Richard was in Turin and Florence from April to May. His wife came from the Chabot family, who were the Marquis de Maurice, one of the best houses in Savoy (the Turin area).

Apart from Easy Lodge (later Parkfield) Richard owned other property. The Duke of St. Albans regarded him as 'very generous' and gave him Oakley Estate, Brill, Buckinghamshire. In England he held an estate at Lee, near Wendover and as a result of his title had property at Gesves, near Namur, in modern Belgium.

His Will was written on the 16th July 1788 and proved 18th February 1791, in which he left everything to his son, Francis Plaistow (later known as Francis Plaistow Trapaud). He was called to the Bar in 1801 and served as a magistrate in Middlesex.

Richard Plaistow was a very wealthy man and much travelled.

EVIDENCE FROM THE MIDDLESEX REGISTER OF DEEDS.

Deed number 1776-1-127 dated 29th January 1776

'All that new erected Capital Messuage or Mansion House with backhouses, stables and other pieces there adjoining three acres. All which are now in tenure of said Richard Plaistow.'

'Two parcels land lately converted into gardens.'

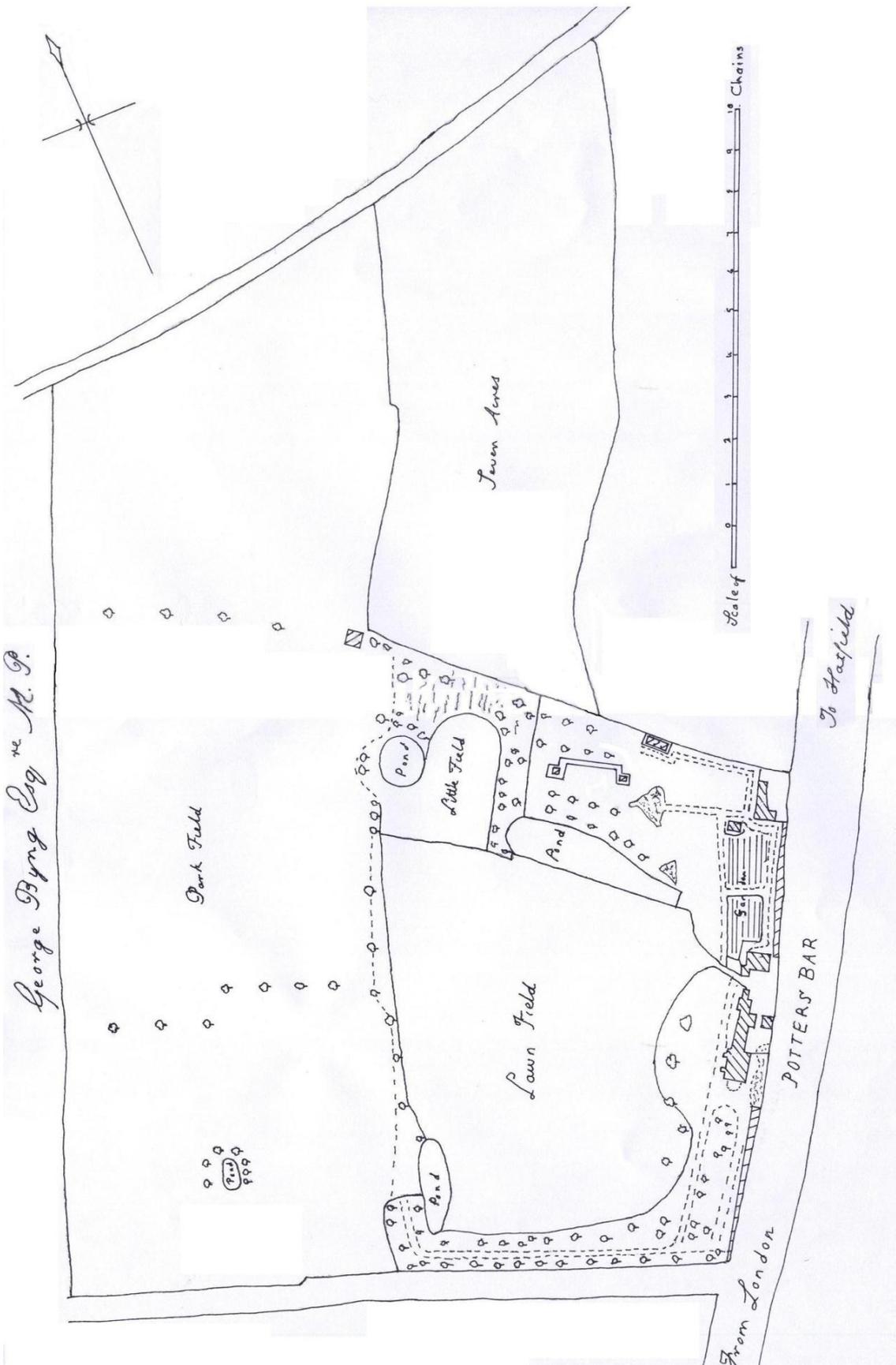
'one other tenement heretofore divided into two dwelling houses now pulled down and in tenure of Richard Plaistow.' Were they pulled down to make way for further improvements?

Deed number 1837-2-411 dated 8th March 1837

'All that Capital Messuage or tenement and coach house, stable, outbuildings, yards, gardens, hothouse and shrubbery, fishponds and appurtenances thereto belonging situated at Potters Bar commonly called Easy Lodge now intended to be called Cedar Lodge.'

Though there are earlier references to Richard Plaistow in 1769 and 1773 but the above two deeds are important. Richard Plaistow, a wealthy and much travelled man, bought a property in Potters Bar. He had built a substantial Georgian house and then in 1776 converted two parcels of land into gardens and demolished a tenement.

Information is only contained in the deeds when a property is sold, so there is a gap of sixty-one years before Francis Plaistow Trapaud sold to Charles Marryat. The 1837 Deed indicated many of the additions since 1776 but it is hard to know exactly when those improvements took place. Four ponds are recorded on the following map (MRD1837-2-412 dated 9-3-1837).



Map drawn from original by Brian Warren. (Reduced by about 50%).

CONCLUSION

Though Brian Kolbert has assumed the clay was dug out for use in the Potter Bar Roman kiln, I feel it is much more likely to have been part of Richard Plaistow's grandiose plans for his Georgian estate, which was common in Eighteenth Century landed properties.

Brian Warren

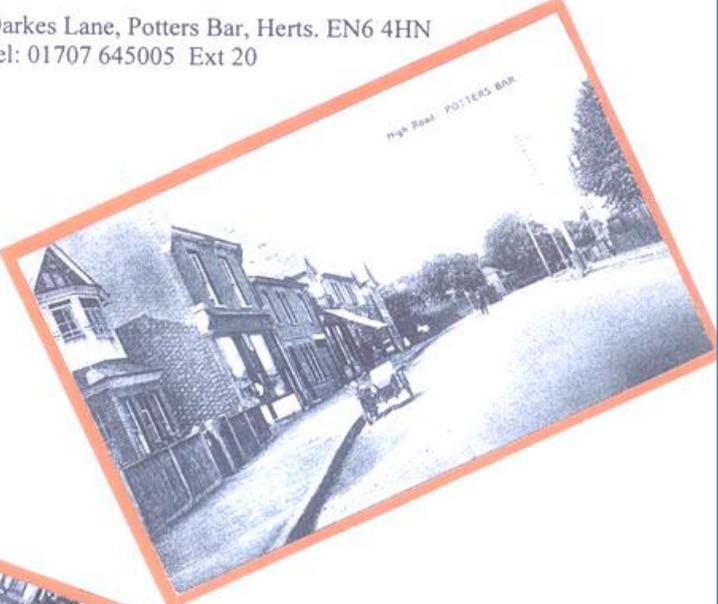
POTTERS BAR TRAIN STATION ADVERTISEMENT

From November 2010, there will be a new advertisement on Potters Bar Train Station Platform 2. Arnold and Wendy Davey have designed the following, to be shown in A3 size and including 3 pictures.

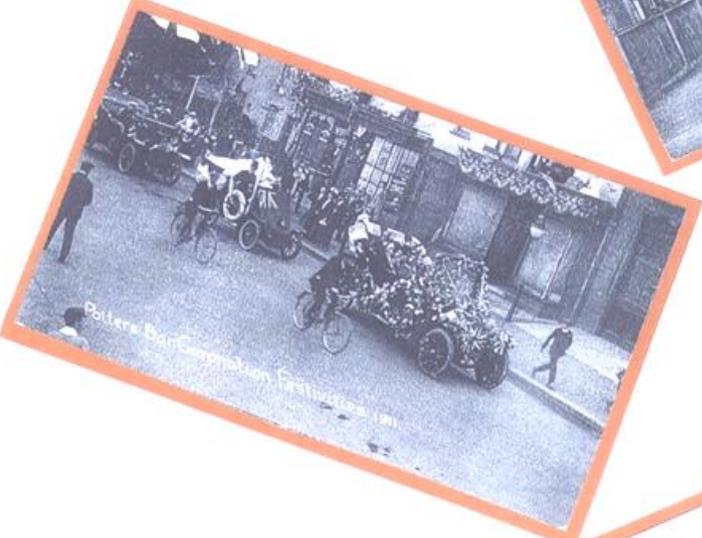
POTTERS BAR MUSEUM

Wyllyotts Centre, Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 4HN
Tel: 01707 645005 Ext 20

See your town
as it was

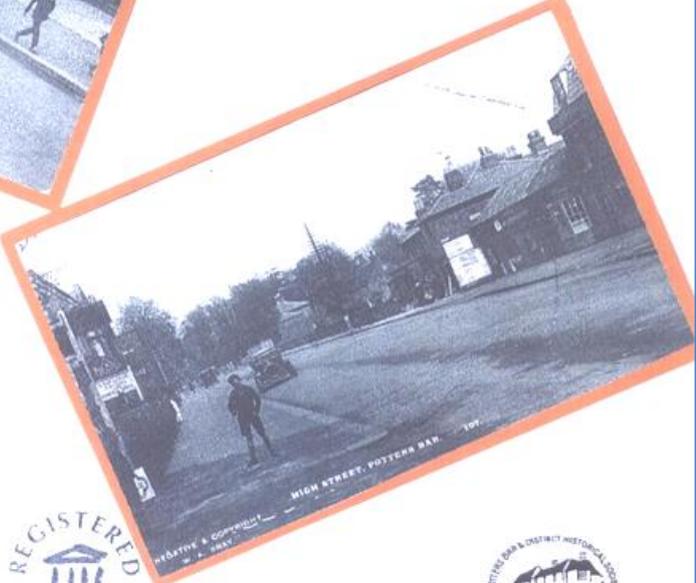


In Grandad's day

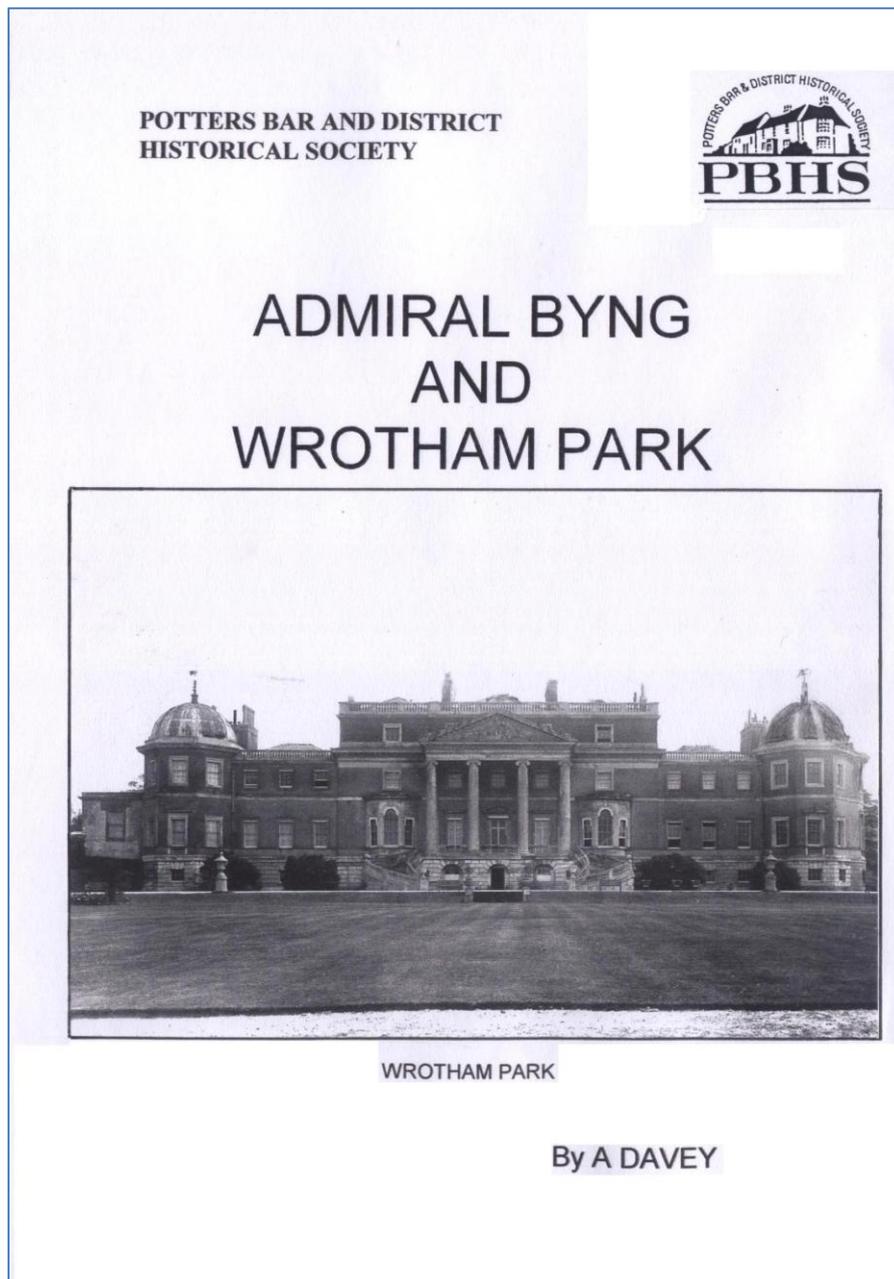


Free admission

Opening Times
Tuesdays & Wednesdays 2.30 to 4.30 pm
Saturdays 11am to 1 pm
Sundays, when the Antiques Fair is held,
11am to 4 pm.



NEW PUBLICATION



Arnold Davey, the Museum Curator and vice-chairman of the committee has recently completed a 60 page book entitled *ADMIRAL BYNG AND WROTHAM PARK*.

A gathering of PBHS members came to an inaugural book launch at the Museum on Monday September 20th 2010 in the evening.

As well as all the committee, there was also the Mayor of Hertsmere, representatives from the Welwyn and Hatfield Times, and other members. Although invited, Robert Byng was unable to attend.

The booklet is available from the Health Food Shop in Darkes Lane, Brays in the High Street, Little Heath Stores in Church Road, Elaines in Darkes Lane, or the Potters Bar Museum in the Wyllyotts Centre,

It can be obtained by post from Mabel Hammett, 4 Heath Cottages, Heath Road, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 4LS. With post and packing, the cost is £3. Please make cheques payable to *Potters Bar and District Historical Society*.

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.