

# *The Newsletter*

September 2012

VOL. 29 No. 1

## COVER PICTURE



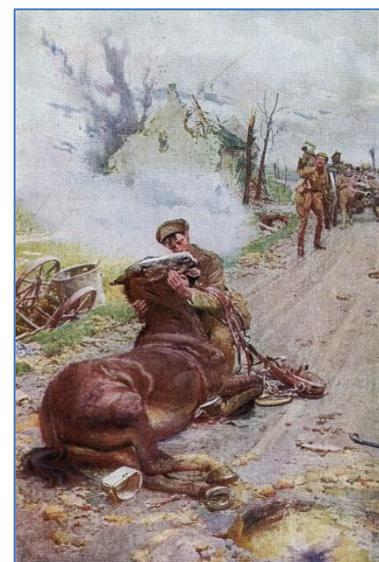
The sinking of the *Titanic* in 1912 can be regarded as the moment when the Victorian belief that money and technology could overcome every natural obstacle finally came to grief, with enormous loss of life. The latest exhibition in the Museum examines how the combination of designers venturing into unknown territory and operators' complacency led to the disaster and the effect it had on maritime safety. The exhibition is on now until January 2013.

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

To all our Members.

The Committee and I hope you had a restful summer break and welcome you all back to a new year of lectures, but what a year this one has been! What with the weather and the Olympics it has given us all something to think about what comes next? As I write this, I have one leg cocked in the air for drainage! I have just had my second knee replacement. I was in Chase Farm for only 3 days and the efficiency of the new 'Surgicentre' is quite astounding as everything is catered for, although the ward was a bit noisy overnight.

Earlier this year I was spreading some compost at the bottom of my garden in an area that had not been touched for ages, when I picked up a 20 Centimes Swiss coin of 1907. It was much decayed but very readable in a nickel and iron alloy. This made me think of where this could have come from. I know that there were nursery gardens between this area of Darkes Lane and the bit of Mount Grace Road where I am, but next to this and 'Buggs Alley' was a big old house that had a super apple orchard in front of it. The United Reformed Church is now on the site. During WWI there were a number of foreign refugees staying in the house that included a famous Italian artist Frederico Matania, and just think what non-spendable coins they may have had in their pockets, and they may have worked at the nursery during the war period.



*Good-bye, Old Man*  
Frederico Matania (1881-1963)

I was sorry to hear about the loss of *The Bridge House* public house, not that I ever attended any 'prayer meetings' or 'bridge' card games there, but it is still the loss of one more older Potters Bar building. I hope the new residents soon get used to their 125 MPH noisy neighbours on the railway. My wife's old family home of *The Lion* is also planning a change or two with a larger restaurant area, but at least it will still be around now after 165 years as a brewery to a pub.

Just to end with this reassuring note that all is well with our part of the world. I know that the harvests are in and ploughing has begun because wafting across our gardens is the smell of pig slurry that has been spread across the land. It is the same every year and reminds me that the nights are drawing in and it used to be time for night school or in our case now, our next lecture night. I hope to see you all then on Thursday September 27<sup>th</sup> with Brian Warren's lecture.

*Terry Goulding*

---

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO THE COVER PICTURE (May 2012)

Boxer Johnny Wright was born 19<sup>th</sup> May 1929 and died 12<sup>th</sup> July 2001, aged 72.

---

## NEW SECRETARY

After serving as Honorary Secretary for 4 years, Richard Lee requested someone else take on the role. Sarah Bulling has agreed to step into this role. Richard will be staying on as a member of the committee and will continue to edit the Newsletters.

## NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome Ms. Jenni Pegley on joining the Society. Although living in Derbyshire, we hope she will enjoy the Newsletters and make an occasional visit down here.

*Richard Lee*

---

## OBITUARY - HYWEL MORRIS

It is with great regret to note the passing of Hywel Morris (1925-2012), who had been a member since 1993/94. He had joined the Society as a result of the last course on the history of the local area. His main interest was walking and preserving local footpaths, in particular, '*The Hertfordshire Way*'.

Sincere condolences are extended to Cynthia, his wife, and her two sons.

*Brian Warren*

---

## AUTUMN LECTURE

**Thursday September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

***The Development of Potters Bar in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, by Brian Warren.**

At the beginning of the Twentieth Century Potters Bar was centred on the High Street in an agricultural area. For the rest of the century it expanded, mainly to the west of the High Street towards Darkes Lane, which became a rival shopping centre. As a result of an increased population there was a growth in the ancillary services. By the 1930s it became a commuter settlement.

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

### AUTUMN LECTURE PROGRAMME

Tuesday	October	23 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>Theobalds House</i> , by Mr. Mike Dewbrey
Tuesday	November	27 <sup>th</sup>	<i>The Life of Edward Wilson. Scott's Friend</i> , by Dr. Isabel Williams
Thursday	December	6 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Social with Light Refreshments. <i>Christmas Readings</i> by Mr. Geoff Hales.

---

### ***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.

<b>Tuesdays</b>	2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Ian Cumming on	01707 642296
<b>Wednesdays</b>	2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Arnold Davey on	01707 654179
<b>Saturdays</b>	11.00am – 1.00pm, contact Mabel Hammett on	01707 657120

## **SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2012/13**

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

---

## **NEWSLETTER DELIVERERS**

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.

Mabel Hammett has been the deliverer around Little Heath for some years, and we thank her for that. Janice Gunther has taken over most of Mabel's round. Maureen Overall will now be delivering to the Sunnybank Road.

*Richard Lee*

---

## **THE POTTERS BAR BUS GARAGE**

On Saturday 7th July, the Society took a stall at the Bus Garage Open Day.

It was a spur of the moment decision. It was enjoyable and we sold quite a few of our Potters Bar Historical Series No 4 booklet *The Motor Bus in Potters Bar before 1939*.

I would like to thank the members who helped: Phil Hardiment, Dan & Chris Ruge-Cope, Brian Kolbert, Rod Williams, Mick Cox, Roy Hammett and Ian Cumming.



*Mabel Hammett*

---

## **LEARNING BY LOOKING**

Following the above article in the previous Newsletter (May 2012) with a request for other drain covers by builders in Potters Bar, the following photograph arrived in the Museum. It is of a drain-cover in Kingsmead, New Barnet, but Neville Reid did build property in Potters Bar.



*Brian Warren*

---

## **NORTH NORFOLK RAILWAY**

They are proposing to hold an exhibition to complement the already restored and in-service Quad Articulated Set and the current refurbishment of four designs of the BR Mk1 ex-Kings Cross suburban coaches. If you have any memories of these suburban services, in particular, as commuters or staff on the LNER/British Railways Eastern Region then send your thoughts to Clive Morris, Chairman North Norfolk Railway, 28 Quartermile Road, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1TJ ([clivemorris@btinternet.com](mailto:clivemorris@btinternet.com)).

*Brian Warren*

## **THE BRIDGE HOUSE AND LIMERICK HOUSE, MUTTON LANE**

In the Newsletter a year ago (Sept. 2011, Vol. 28 No. 1) I wrote about the history of *The Bridge House* and considered writing about *Limerick House* for this Newsletter. Though Mr. Butcher (footnote 1) undertook extensive research on the *Williotts Manor Court* records it would appear that he had not referred to the Edward Vickers' survey of Williotts Manor in 1745 (Guildhall Library V SOU) or the Tithe Map of South Mimms (London Metropolitan Archive TA/S South Mimms, 1842). When drawn to the same scale and overlain one with the other *The Bridge House* in area 580 and *Limerick House* in area 585, on the Tithe Map. Further research seemed to indicate *The Bridge House* was once the *Pilot Engine Beer Shop*, while *Limerick House* was *The Railroad Inn*.

In the article on the '*History of The Bridge House*' the first three paragraphs and the plan from the Tithe Map do not refer to that premise but the rest of the article on pages 10 and 11 is correct.

Further extensive research is required before the article on *Limerick House* will appear in the Newsletter and a corrected piece on *The Bridge House*.

Footnote 1 Mr. W J Butcher came to Barclays Bank, Potters Bar, in 1914 and retired as manager in 1939. In the 1950s he wrote up his historical researches on the local area, which are now held by the Society.

*Brian Warren*

---

## **ROTARY FUN DAY**

On a *very* rainy day on July 14<sup>th</sup> the museum stall was erected in Oakmere Park for the Rotary Fun Day. We were very pleased with the amount of visitors that called to see the display of articles from our museum. The wonderful collection of novelty telephones was an attraction to the many families with children and the members who helped on the stall were able to talk about the museum and sell our Local History booklets.

This is certainly an occasion when we can publicise we have a museum in Potters Bar. We would like to thank Stan and Margaret Stanbrook for the loan of their tent and Gazebo and the members who helped on the day.

*Mabel Hammett*

---

## **ARCHIVIST'S REPORT**

Members might be interested in visiting Enfield Museum's exhibition '*Our Sporting Life*' at the Dugdale Centre, Thomas Hardy House, 39 London Road, Enfield EN2 6DS. This exhibition covers the sporting life of Enfield looking at sporting clubs, teams and individuals who have helped shape Enfield's social, cultural and environmental landscape.

Open until 24<sup>th</sup> February 2013, Mon-Sat 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

In the June 2012 edition of *Hertfordshire Countryside* I read interesting articles on '*Herts Wartime Secrets*', '*Commemorative Trees*', '*Roadside Relics with Tales to Tell*' and '*Stanmore Woods and Commons*' where I now watch cricket.

*Brian Warren*

## TWO GRANDFATHERS

I received a letter from a John Terry requesting several of our books. John lives in Gloucestershire but had lived in Potters Bar when he was younger. John had told me in a phone call earlier that his grandfather had guarded the Zeppelin when it came down in Oakmere Park in 1916. I asked if he could tell me more.

This is a copy of John's letter. I felt it showed a good look into an older period of Potters Bar's past. He has kindly given us permission to reprint it.

Dear Mabel,

Thank you for sending the publications to me, please find payment enclosed.

I was brought up in Potters Bar between 1949 and 1969. My grandfather, Bildad Terry, was moved to Potters Bar with the Metropolitan Police in 1914. He worked from Potters Bar Police Station and lived at 2 Osborne Cottages for the rest of his life. He had six children, his eldest son worked at Mount Grace House as a gardener, Edward, the next son ran the A1 Dairies at Oakmere and his wife ran the dairy shop, he was called Eric and then there was my father who worked at Twyman's Garage in the High Street.

My mum came to Potters Bar with the Land Army based at Howgate, they lived in a caravan at Dancers Hill, then Lake View in the Prefabs and then Park View in the "new" council houses. I went to St. John's Infant School, Ladbrook Infant school, Parkfield Junior School, Oakmere Junior School, Parkfield Secondary school and eventually Mount Grace School.

I seem to remember being part of the Life Boys at the Baptist Church and at the Congregational Church and then being a Boy Scout in the 10<sup>th</sup> Potters Bar. I remember playing in Parkfield and Oakmere Park and doing a milk round for the United Dairies in the winter of 1963. This paid for a school based walking holiday that gave me skills I have used for the rest of my life.

My wife and I visited Friedrichshafen whilst on a walking holiday last year and we visited the Zeppelin museum. This brought back memories of my Grandfather. This summer I visited Potters Bar cemetery to find the Zeppelin graves that I knew from my childhood exploitations. I could not find them and this led me to read the PBHS booklet on Potters Bar Zeppelin and find out where the graves had been moved to.

Many thanks, John Terry.

About a month before we had a German visitor to the museum, Christian Schwertel. Christian is a pilot for Lufthansa. He had flown into Heathrow in the morning and as he was not to fly out until the next day he decided to visit Potters Bar Museum. Christian's grandfather had help build the Zeppelins and he wanted to see our exhibition plus where the Zeppelin had come down in Oakmere Park. He was also very interested in Heinrich Mathy, the pilot who was flying the L31 when it was shot down. Mathy was loved by his crew who all died with him. His wife was 19 years old, with a daughter of 10 months. (How sad.)

If Mathy had achieved two more London raids, the Kaiser would have awarded him the "*Pour le Merite*", the highest German decoration of WW1.

The Zeppelin was a great engineering design, that it was used as a war machine is history. It is a strange world where two generations ago we were trying to kill each other and in 2012 we enjoyed one another's company walking round the lake in Oakmere Park to read the information plaque about the place where the Zeppelin came down.

*Mabel Hammett*



Bildad Terry



Hans Hellmann, the grandfather of Christian Schwertel

## THE PRICE OF MEAT

A recent acquisition in the museum, courtesy of Terry Goulding, is a little hardback account book, eight inches by three (20 x 8 cm), in which the butcher in Hawkshead Road kept his accounts from March 1914 to May 1926, the last date, by coincidence, being the week of the General Strike. He wasn't particularly affected by that event, just got to the last page in the book.

It is fascinating to track the rises and falls of meat prices over this period, encompassing peacetime, World War 1, galloping inflation and then a slowing of the economy. Before the war started and at its beginning, his average takings were around £140 a week, with a little boost from a two-day sale every couple of months. The week the war was declared (which was also a Bank Holiday), takings were down to £36 and he wrote in the margin "War declared, a black week for my orders". It is difficult to see why people would stop eating for this reason. Sales continued to be lower until around October 1914, when they picked up to pre-war levels again. As you would expect, Christmas saw a big jump, with £334 taken for the week ending 19<sup>th</sup> December.

On 8<sup>th</sup> September 1915 he remarks on a Zeppelin raid but curiously does not remark on the October 1916 shooting down of L31 and its crashing in the village. Christmas 1916 was exceptionally profitable for our man, taking in £507 in the week 18<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

Into 1917 and food was beginning to be short as the U-boat campaign strengthened and in the absence of any rationing, price rises inevitably followed. The average takings now were in the region of £200 and frequently more. In September there was a note "*Air raids daily*". These would have been the Gotha bombers, Zeppelins having been abandoned as useless as weapons by now.

Food was not rationed until early 1918 and then almost by accident and not planned. What happened was that an unfounded rumour swept the land that food was shortly to be rationed, whereupon everybody rushed out and bought a month's supplies. As a result there was a sudden grave shortage, an outcry and rationing had to be brought in to sort things out. Once in, people insisted on buying their complete ration, whether they needed it or not ("It's me rights"). So food consumption actually went up, not down. A classic of unintended consequences. As ever with government controls, it lasted far longer than necessary, staying in force until 1921, three years after the war ended.

By the summer of 1918 £300 a week was common but the return of peace saw a slow drop back to the £200s by the end of the year. Into 1919 and we are back to pre-war levels by September, when he comments on a rail strike. But late 1919 and 1920 was a period of galloping inflation almost everywhere, worst in Germany of course, and the weekly take was back in the £300s by the end of 1919 and peaked at £443 in August 1920. Things calmed down again in 1921 and by March the £140 regime returned and was more or less normal for the next five years, fluctuating between that figure and £200, with the predictable bonanza at Christmas and the occasional two-day sale. The very last entry in the book showed the worst week ever, due to the strike, at £74.

One has to assume throughout that the population served remained more or less constant during this 12 year period and their requirements each week only varied with the seasons. During the war many of the men would have been in the forces, but there would have been an influx of wounded in the local temporary hospitals set up in the larger houses, so the total population may have remained virtually unchanged. It is a shame we do not know the butcher's name; it is not recorded in the book, but I hope that a member with a long memory or family connection can tell us who he was.

*Arnold Davey*

**SOUTH MIMMS CASTLE OBSERVATIONS 1977-79 A1(M) CECIL ROAD – ROESTOCK GREEN**

**(PART 2)**

**POTTERY**

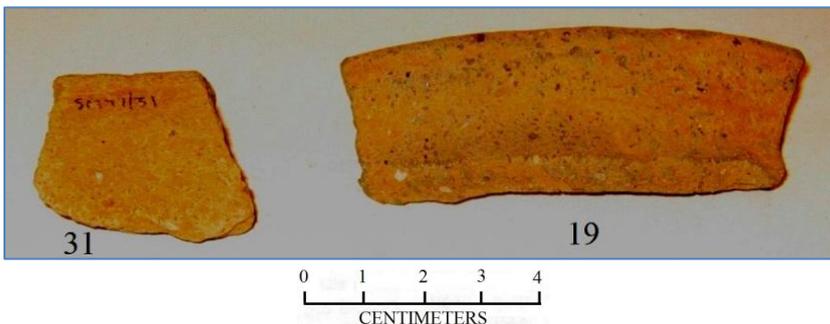
A characteristic of the pottery found at South Mimms Castle (1977-79) was its small size, perhaps indicative of the vessels having been thrown down.

**Early South Hertfordshire Coarseware (Esher) 1050-1200**



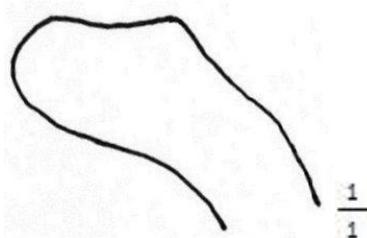
In all the twenty-three sherds were recovered, the largest of which are illustrated. Ten of the sherds were no larger than 3.5 x 3.0 cm, and a further nine were only 3.0 x 2.0 cm. These sherds plus the three from Arkley (see later) weighed 260 g.

**Rims**

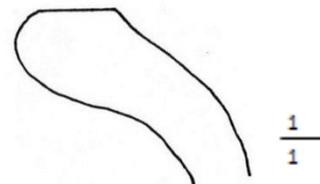


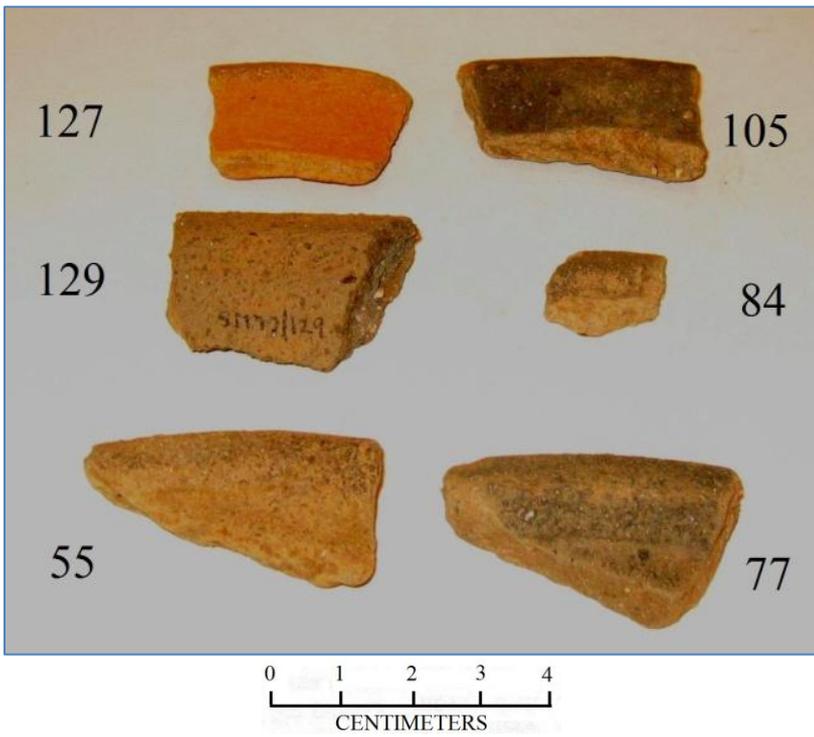
The two rims (SM77/31 and SM77/19) were identified as similar to pottery found in the vicinity of St. Albans.

SM77/31 is from a jar of local Unglazed Reduced ware (11/12<sup>th</sup> century) with a thickening internally bevelled rim.



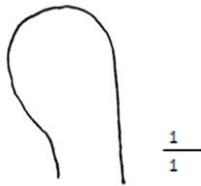
SM77/19 is from a cooking pot and the rim is everted externally thickening bevelled.



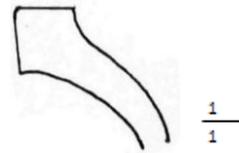


All these rims were too small for additional information but typical of the finds in the ditch. Four sherds (SM77/55, SM77/84, SM77/77 and SM77/129) were probably Local Unglazed Reduced wares dating to the 11/12<sup>th</sup> centuries, all rims were everted thickened externally.

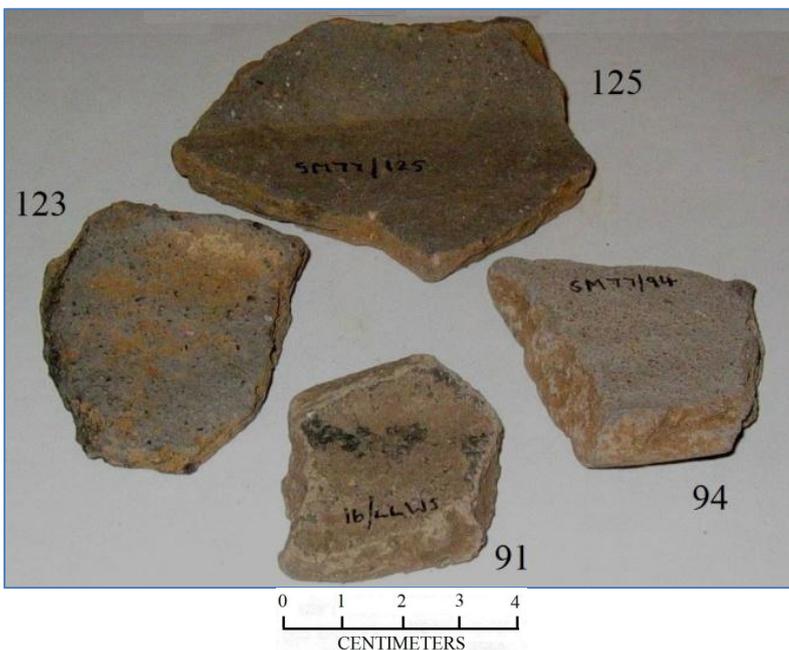
SM77/129 contained flint intrusions.



SM77/127 has a rim everted thickened externally from a small cooking pot and is a typical greyware, with possibly an oxidised type shape.

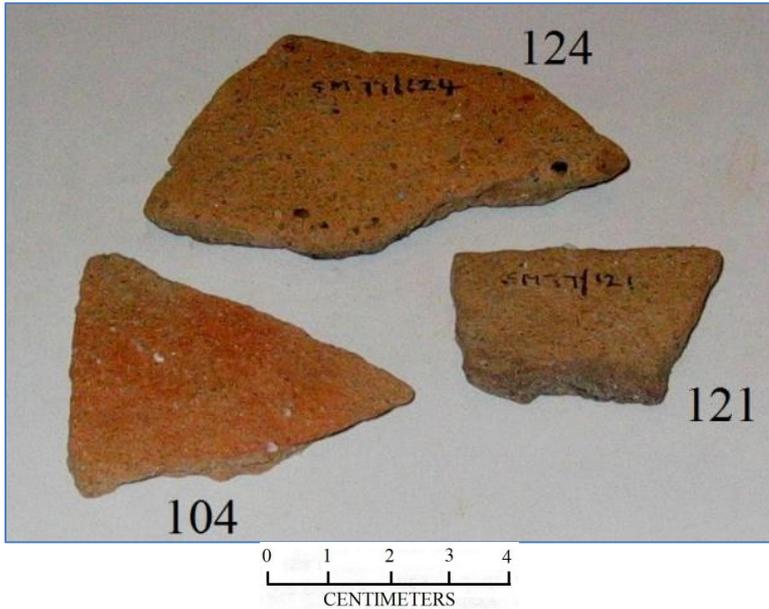


Bases



Only the four bases shown were found and little information obtained, except SM77/125 (7.5 x 5.5 cm) was thought to be similar to a Pinner type, all are greywares.

## Arkley



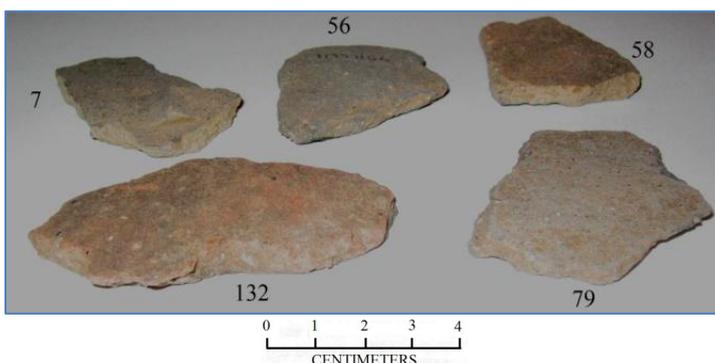
Three sherds were considered to be of a similar type found at Arkley but finer and sandier in texture, though possibly from an unglazed 13<sup>th</sup> century jug. The 1959 excavations were fully reported and a reference was made to, “*examples may be paralleled from medieval house sites at Cheshunt, Elstree and Welham Green.*” (D F Renn 1964, p9)

## Northolt ‘j’ and ‘k’



Pottery from Northolt Manor (Hurst, 1961) resulted in the establishment of the first pottery type for Middlesex. Two types of rims were identified at South Mimms, type ‘j’ a rough medieval ware (SM77/89) dated to c. 1150-1250 and type ‘k’ hard medieval greyware (SM77/67, SM77/2) dated to c. 1225-1325. Type ‘j’ has been found at Ashwell (Hurst, 1967), Elstree Hill South (Blackmore, 1985), St. Albans (Turner-Rugg 1995) etc. Type ‘k’ occurred at Berkhamsted Castle (Moorhouse, 1970), Chequer Street, St. Albans (Renn, 1973), Kings Langley (Hurst 1977) and other sites.

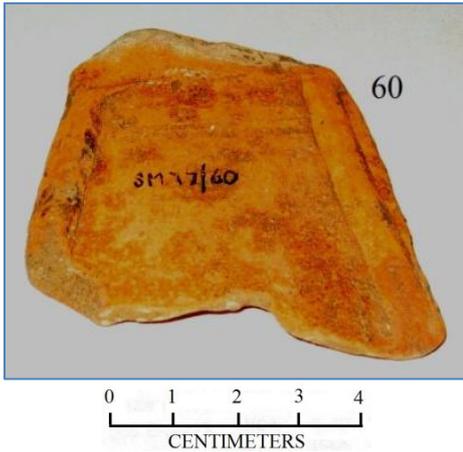
## South Hertfordshire-Type Greyware (Sher) 1170-1350



A total of twenty-five sherds dated to this period, the largest being illustrated here. Seven were no larger than 3.5 x 3.0 cm, and eleven were within 3.0 x 2.0 cm. Even when two groups of three were fitted together they only measured 4.2 x 2.0 cm and 3.9 x 2.6 cm respectively. Twenty-five sherds weighed 210g.

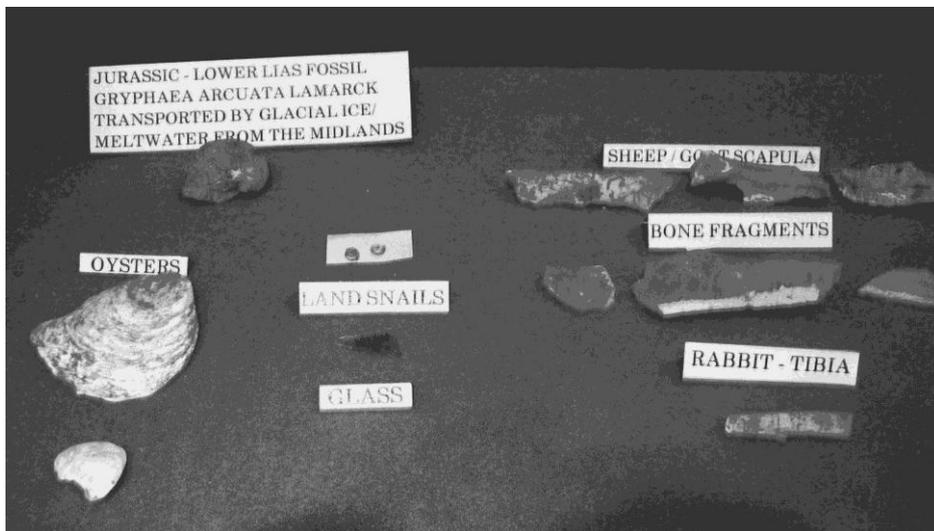
The top left sherd (SM77/7) has applied thumbed strips decoration and the largest below (SM77/132) is 7.0 x 3.8 cm.

c.f. Oxfordware



This sherd (SM77/60) was the only one of its type to be found and unlike anything else, measuring 7.0 x 7.0 cm. It is part of a huge pitcher of the twelfth century.

Other finds now in Potters Bar Museum



Gryphaea fossil  
Jurassic to Eocene  
ages

Land Snails  
Helicella sp recent

Sheep/goat scapula  
Three bone fragments

Oyster and a  
fragment

Small piece of  
glass

Large rabbit tibia

The final part will be produced in the January 2013 Newsletter.

© Brian Warren

## WALKS ALONG THE RIVER STORT

What a delightful way to spend a Sunday. On May 20<sup>th</sup> a small group of members went for the second walk arranged by Colin Field.

We started by the last remaining Lock Keeper's cottage at Sheering Mill on the River Stort. The photo shows the name plate showing "GD" for George Duckworth, the principal shareholder of the Commission that canalised the river.



Carrying on walking, we went along the tow path with a water meadow on one side and a very attractive development of apartments on the other side.

We continued on with Colin telling us the history of the area until we reached the second lock. We then retraced our footsteps back to the *Maltings* at Sawbridgeworth where we were ready for our first break at a wooden café called *The Shed* which sold wonderful home-made food.

Refreshed we set off again, this time across a boardwalk that was over a water meadow. We all thought we saw two Water Buffalo in the next field, no one wanted to go so near to see if we were correct. A crane flew overhead, the sky was blue, we crossed a dried up river bed, through a mystical looking wood, keeping to the side of the field fence, we saw a beautiful sloping field full of buttercups and wild flowers.



As we reached the top of the hill a passer-by told us that to the right Queen Elizabeth I had walked down through the avenue of trees when she had stayed in the area. Suddenly through the trees we saw Pishiobury Park Hall. This was built in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century as a Tudor house.

We finished our walk at Nettlewell House in Bishop Stortford, where Cecil Rhodes was born, and is now part of Bishop Stortford's Museum. The ladies in the civic centre opened the museum especially for us as we were members of Potters Bar Museum, and what a wonderful display they have. Mostly the history of Cecil Rhodes but on the second floor the more general history of the area was equally well displayed. I pinched some ideas to use in our museum.



*Mabel Hammett*

---

**The PB&DHS Newsletter is produced in September, January & May of every 'season'. Richard Lee and 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.**

Regd. Charity No.299475