Alresford Articles No.5

Succeeding 'Alresford Displayed'

Alresford Historical and Literary Society

2015

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About the Alresford Historical and Literary Society

The Society was formed in 1966 to bring together members of the local community and encourage interest in the history, literature and archaeology of Alresford and the surrounding areas. It has been instrumental in recording the area's history and events as evidenced by the publication of the original twenty-two original *Alresford Displayed* booklets. Many of our members have played a pivotal role in the ongoing social and commercial life of our attractive town.

The Alresford Historical and Literary Society holds its monthly meetings in the Methodist Church, Jacklyns Lane, where a balanced programme of talks and presentations takes place in a friendly atmosphere. Meetings are normally held on the third Wednesday of the month, and it is not necessary to be a member to attend – visitors are welcome at the door for a small fee (refreshments are provided).

Selected topics give an insight into the influence that the political, social and industrial heritage has had on our community and Hampshire. To stimulate the literary interests of the members, lectures are chosen to illustrate the work of authors and artistic personalities.

We also organise occasional group visits to interesting places.

For further information, please visit our website www.alresfordhistandlit.co.uk

Front cover:

West Street 1910 by kind permission of Godfrey Andrews (www.alresfordheritage.co.uk)

2014 photograph © Glenn Gilbertson

Coat of Arms of Henry V.

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Editor,

Glenn Gilbertson

Editorial Team

Nick Denbow

Robert Fowler

Brian Rothwell

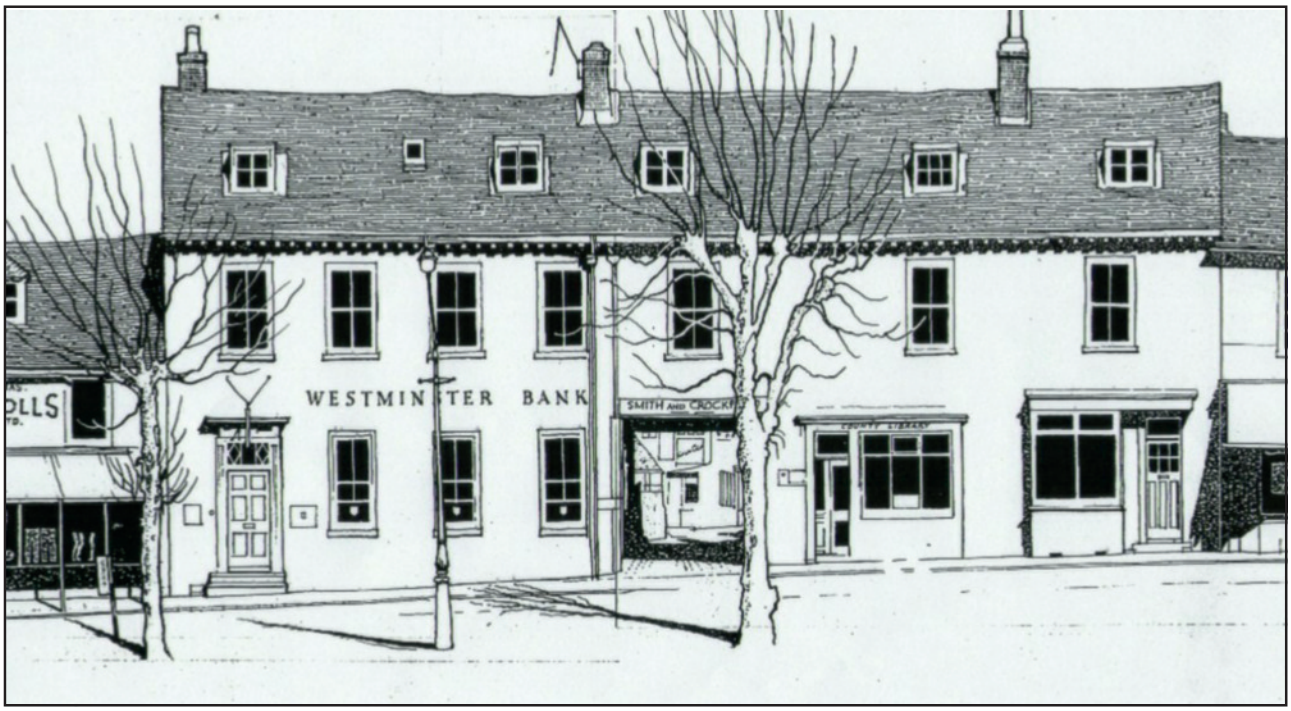
Brian Tippett

Welcome

Welcome to the fifth edition of *Alresford Articles,* the successor to the *Alresford Displayed* series that was produced from 1976 to 1997. The aim is to produce a similar set of eclectic publications containing articles of varying lengths, largely related to Alresford and the local area's past, or written by Alresford people. Of course, the opinions expressed herein are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial team.

If you missed *Alresford Articles nos. 1,2,3 or 4,* all of them should now be available from the Hampshire Library Service; an index of the contents can be found on the inside back cover and at www.alresfordhistandlit.co.uk/publications.

So, we present our latest mixture, with more articles than ever before - achieved by choosing narrower page margins for some items; we trust that the book will still read well. We have pieces inspired by Agincourt (1415), Waterloo (1815), Gallipoli, Loos (both 1915) and the dark days of 1940, with some interesting sidelights on history. As in previous issues we have an item about the English language. We have stories of local history and people , and we are pleased to print a new poem from a Perins pupil. The old *Alresford Articles* contained many newly-written poems - have people stopped writing verse? If you can offer anything then please send it in for consideration.



Broad Street East, the old George Inn - Drawing by Lawrence Wright (1960's)

We hope that you enjoy our latest, packed offering – please give us your feedback, and we welcome contributions or suggestions for topics to be covered in the future - there are an astonishing number of stories to be told. We offer an advice document on how to style any contribution to make life easier for authors, so don't be shy - share what you know!

‘MR ALRESFORD’, ALFRED HENRY WHITE, 1900-1991

by

Brian Rothwell

Forty-three years of continuous public service to the town, 1946-1989

Parish Councillor, 1946-1959, Chairman, 1951/2, 1956/7
Town Trustee, 1946-1959
Clerk to New Alresford Parish Council, 1959-1976
Clerk to New Alresford Town Trust, 1959-1989

Illustration 1: Mr & Mrs A.H. White on their golden wedding anniversary in 1977.[1]

Introduction

According to the St John’s baptism register, Alfred Henry White was born on 1 April 1900. He was the second son of Martha and Alfred White; his brother John being eight years older. His father, who came originally from Itchen Abbas, told the registrar that he earned his living as an assistant baker.[2]

At the time of Alf’s birth, and at the 1901 census, the family lived on Jacklyns Lane.[3] Home was one of the terraced cottages close to what is now the Methodist Hall, nestling under the shadow of the railway bridge. Alf’s childhood upbringing was not privileged; the 1911 census shows that his father’s occupation was that of a ‘coach painter’ and that the family had taken in two ‘boarders’ in order to make their financial ends meet in the black rather than the red.[4]

After attendance at The Board School on The Dean, situated opposite the town’s Gas Works, and at the tender age of just thirteen, Alf started work as a messenger boy with the GPO in New Alresford. With a gap of five years, 1916-21, caused by his service in the army, the Post Office remained his employer until he retired in 1960. During his later years Alf was in charge of the ‘outdoor staff’, which presumably meant the postmen who delivered letters and parcels from door to door around the town.

[1] *East Hampshire Post*, 3 March 1977.
[2] Hampshire Record Office (HRO), New Alresford Parish Register, Baptisms.
[3] 1901 census returns.
[4] 1911 census returns.

Illustration 2: 15-17, West Street. This was Alf White's place of work for the whole of his working life, 1913-1960. The GPO moved to this site in 1904 and did not leave it until the town's Post Office was transferred to the rear of The Co-operative, 47, West Street, more than a century later.[5] Photograph by Glenn Gilbertson

During the First World War, in January 1916, Alf volunteered to join the Royal Engineers even though he was under age. He subsequently served as a dispatch rider in France and Italy, rising to the rank of sergeant. For two more years, 1919-21, he was part of the Allied forces that occupied the Turkish capital of Constantinople. This was under the terms of the armistice signed on the Greek Island of Mudros after the Ottoman Empire had been defeated. The last Allied soldiers did not leave Turkey until 1923.

There is evidence that Alf lived for a time at Prospect Cottage on The Brook in Old Alresford. This was certainly the address from which he undertook a correspondence course in Motor Engineering with the Bennett College in Sheffield.[6] Some of his marked papers have survived but as they do not include dates, it is not possible to judge the years when he was studying or whether this was before or after his marriage.

Alf married Bertha (Betty) Hawkins on 19 February 1927 at St Peter's Church in Ropley, where the bride's father had been a verger for many years. It was through the church that the couple met. They celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1977. The house in which they spent most of their long and seemingly happy married life was (and still is) called 'Lulworth'. It is situated towards the northern end of New Farm Road, not far from its junction with The Avenue.

Illustration 4: 'Lulworth', New Farm Road, in 2013. Photograph by the author.

[5] Reg Sanders, 'Alresford's Post, 2', *Alresford Displayed,* Issue 11 (New Alresford, 1986).

[6] The earliest advertisement that can be found on the internet for The Bennett College, Sheffield is June 1922 and the latest September 1960.

Public Life

The Whites were active on some of their home town's committees before the Second World War. They served on the board of governors for The Dean School and on the first Chamber of Trade committee. They were particularly busy during the 1939-45 conflict when they ran New Alresford's Cinema in Station Road. At a time when entertainment was scarce, screenings at 'The Civic' were so popular that Alf and Betty had to take advance bookings.

However, Alf first really arrived in public life when he became a parish councillor in 1946. Elections were suspended during the 1939-45 hostilities and afterwards a new parish council was elected. Perhaps unsurprisingly, after serving unchanged throughout seven years, only two of the old council members decided to stand for re-election. Alf was, therefore, one of nine new councillors who attended their first council meeting on 25 April 1946.

That same year, he also volunteered to become one of the five nominated parish councillors to serve on the board of New Alresford Town Trust, was appointed a manager of The Dean School and a trustee of the town's United Charities organisation.[7] He served as chairman of the council in 1951/2 and again in 1956/7, indicating that he was a trusted colleague amongst his fellow councillors.[8]

In 1959, and with a full civil service pension looming at the age of sixty, Alf put his retirement plan into operation. On 25 February, he applied to become clerk to the parish council. He was the only applicant who was resident in the town – a factor that the council deemed important and ensured that he was given the job. He started his new employment on 3 March 1959. The 1933 Local Government Act ensured that he was not paid during his first year:

> Section 122: A person shall, so long as he is, and for twelve months after he ceases to be, a member of the council, be disqualified from being appointed by that authority to any paid office.

In March 1960 Alf was awarded a salary of £45 per annum. By 1967 this had risen to £125 and 'as from April 1968 it became one third of one penny (to the nearest ten pounds) when applied to the rate raised from the parish'.[9] This calculation determined his salary until he retired from this post in 1976.

In that same year, 1959, Alf also applied for and succeeded in obtaining another clerk position with New Alresford Town Trust. In this role he was paid £15 per annum. By the time he retired from this position, due to ill-health, thirty years later in 1989, his salary had risen to £175 a year.[10] He was by no means well paid for his community efforts but it was in these two roles that he became known as 'Mr Alresford'.

As clerk to both organisations, Alf took upon himself the role of the town's odd-job man. If a public asset needed maintenance or repair, Alf would either quickly and efficiently ensure it was done or alternatively he would do it himself. He was regularly seen mowing the grass on The Avenue and the town's playing fields during the summer months. He would routinely whisk items for repair into his workshop at Lulworth. He attended to broken playground equipment, damaged bus shelters, rotting notice boards and the renovation of gates to public areas. Woodwork was his hobby and he had made most of the furniture in his own home.

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[7] HRO, 108M82/PX4, New Alresford Parish Council, Minute Book, 1937-48.
[8] HRO, 108M82/PX5, New Alresford Parish Council, Minute Book, 1948-57.
[9] HRO, 108M82/PX8, New Alresford Parish Council, Minute Book, 1965-69.
[10] HRO, 7M50/B9, New Alresford Town Trust: Trustees Minute Book, 1974-2000.

Lasting Achievements

Alf had many achievements to his credit but some were remarkable. One of them was the installation of the Victorian lamps on Broad Street in 1973. A county council proposal to install modern lamp standards throughout the town had an electrifying effect on some members of The Alresford Society. They found the prospect of concrete posts sprouting in Broad Street too awful to contemplate. They resolved that 'an olde-world street needed olde-world lighting' and they purchased fifteen Victorian gas lamps and standards from Reading Corporation for £300. They were, however, dirty, corroded and incapable of providing electric lighting.

It was Alf White who personally restored them to their original condition and converted them to take modern electricity-powered units. He had to fabricate glass fibre to replace parts that were missing and take a crash course in copper spinning to make the decorative tops for the lamp houses. On 1 September 1973, the lights in Broad Street were officially turned on by Brian Gush, Chairman of The Alresford Society, and Alf declared that he had found the eight-month restoration task to be 'a very satisfying job'.[11] These lamps and their standards are still in position today.

Shortly after the lamp lighting ceremony, the Ambassador for Sri Lanka was passing through the town and he noted the new lamps. On his return to his embassy in London, he contacted Hampshire County Council requesting the purchase of a similar lamp. The council put him in touch with Alf White. The result is that today, in a museum somewhere in Sri Lanka, there stands a Victorian street lamp standard restored by 'Mr Alresford'. More admiration came in 1976 from the King Edward VII Hospital for Officers at Midhurst, who asked if they could buy four lamps to sit outside a restored wing. Alf obtained the necessary lamps and renovated them just in time for the Queen's visit to reopen the Site.[12]

A second task for which Alf White will be remembered is his making of the replica of the wooden baton, emblazoned with the town's coat of arms, which was the symbol of office used by the Bailiff of the town before the ancient Borough Corporation of the Burgesses of New Alresford was abolished by statute in 1886. This is usually on display in the town's Public Library.

Illustration 5: The Victorian lamp standard in the island in the middle of the road at the southern end of Broad Street in 2013. Photograph by the author.

Illustration 6: Two original eighteenth century Town Bailiff staffs (left and right) with the Alf White replica in the centre. Photograph by Roy Gentry in 2009.

[11] *Southern Evening Echo*, Saturday 1 September, 1973.
[12] *East Hampshire Post*, Thursday 3 March 1977.

Alf was a keen local historian and he probably knew more about Alresford and its ancient rights than any of his contemporaries. At his retirement ceremony in 1976, parish council chairman, David Thornton, commented 'Alf's particular interest in the history of the town has proved useful to the council on more than one occasion'.[13] It was Alf who uncovered the existence of and studied the 1572 charter awarded to the Bailiff and Burgesses of the town by the Bishop of Winchester.[14] This granted the burgesses the right to hold a weekly market in Broad Street.

Alf used this charter to re-establish the tradition of holding a weekly town market in 1975. There is evidence that this practice had ceased a century beforehand in the 1870s. This reflection of our market-town history still takes place every Thursday today. It is run by the town trustees and fittingly enough it is held underneath Alf's restored Victorian lamp standards.

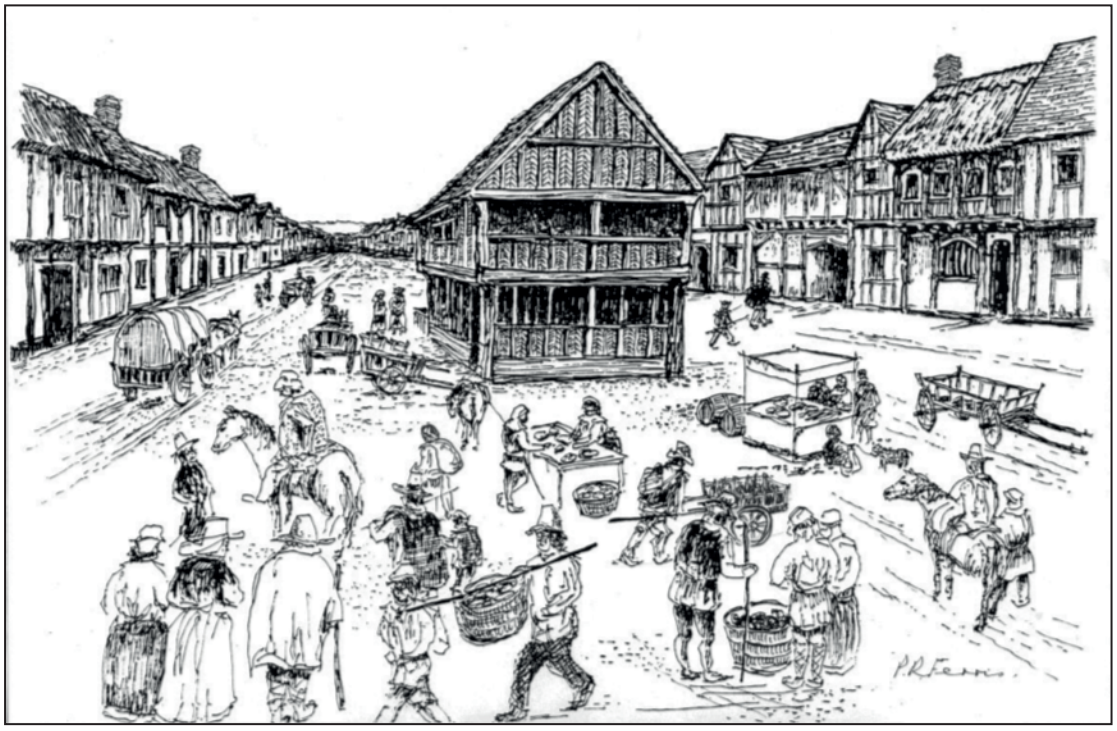

Illustration 7: Artist Philip Ferris' impression of The Broad Street Market at the time of the 1572 charter.

The other right that Alf fought for tenaciously was to have the Old Pinglestone Road ford recognised as an official highway by Hampshire County Council. He took this five-year long dispute to the Local Ombudsman and it was with great delight that in July 1985 that he was photographed being driven along the ancient highway through the ford in a pony and trap.[15]

Conclusion

Although he was 90 years old when he died on 30 January 1991, Alf was still working for his parish. During the last calendar year of his life he had renovated several of his lamps in Broad Street, painted the notice boards on The Avenue and refurbished the Dean School War Memorial hanging in Sun Hill School.[16]

There are individuals who have been given the honour of having had a road, a street, or a building in the town of New Alresford named after them. Ostensibly, for many of them this has been in return for the perceived public service they have given to the locality. However, many of those who have been so recognised did not give as much service to the community as Alfred Henry White, who it is hoped will be long remembered in the town as 'Mr Alresford'.

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13 *East Hampshire Post*, Thursday 16 December 1976.

14 New Alresford Borough: English translation of charter dated 10 December 1572, 7M50/A4.

15 For the full story of this five-year dispute see, Brian Rothwell, 'The Old Pinglestone Road', *Alresford Articles*, Issue 2 (New Alresford, 2013)

16 *Hampshire Chronicle* obituary, 14 February 1991.

THE GEORGE INN, BROAD STREET

by

Brian Rothwell

The George Inn in the centre c.1900. Picture by courtesy of Godfrey Andrews (alresfordheritage.co.uk)

This year (2015) is the six-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Agincourt. This was a major English victory In the Hundred Years' War and it occurred on St Crispian's Day, 25 October 1415, in northern France. King Henry V and his long bowmen, with much luck and a considerable 'assist' from the weather, inflicted a severe defeat on a fresher, numerically superior and a seemingly better equipped French army.

According to William Shakespeare, Henry V's speech to his troops before the battle was inspirational in providing them with hope of victory. It has rung down the centuries:

> *He that shall live today and see old age, will yearly on this vigil feast his neighbours and say tomorrow is St Crispian. Then shall he strip his sleeve and show his scars and say, 'these wounds I had on Crispian's Day.' Old men forget, yet all shall be forgot. But he'll remember with advantages what feats he did that day.*

Agincourt also had an impact on New Alresford, albeit a small one. The alleyway today labelled 'The George Yard' and its emergence on to Broad Street marks the position of the town's most historic inn, 'The George'. This site, 24-28, Broad Street, used to be owned by Winchester College (founded 1382) and in 1415 it was chosen to become a new inn that was due to be named 'The Angel'. Christina Totterne was the designated innkeeper, Thomas Wolfrow the carpenter and Thomas Draycott the sign writer.

However, before the sign could be erected, Christina asked if the name could be changed to 'The George' in recognition of the support that the saint had given to Henry V and his men at Agincourt. Permission for the change was granted and the name of the inn remained unchanged for more than five hundred years – until 1927 when Winchester College sold the site without a licence.[1]

The link between the Battle of Agincourt and the support of St George may, however, have been misplaced. When Shakespeare penned his 'Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood' speech which ends with the line 'Cry God for Harry, England and St George', he placed it in history at the site of the siege of Harfleur which occurred earlier in Henry V's campaign.

ANOTHER HAMPSHIRE INN WITH AN AGINCOURT CONNECTION

by

Glenn Gilbertson

In the summer of 1415 Alresford would, like the most of Hampshire, have been witness to the armies assembling for the campaign to place Henry V on the throne of France as well as England. The departure of a king traditionally gave hope to potential usurpers, and this time was no exception.

On 31 July 1415, just days before the army's departure, a distant cousin, Sir Edmund Mortimer, the Earl of March, contacted the King at Porchester Castle to reveal a secret conspiracy. He told him the details of a plot to declare Henry a usurper and make himself, the Earl of March, King instead. Those conspiring against the King were Richard Earl of Cambridge, Henry Lord Scrope of Masham and Sir Thomas Grey of Heton, all of whom were related by blood or marriage.

The reasons for the plot are unclear. Shakespeare (in Henry V scene 2) suggested that it was financed by France, and Cambridge was certainly landless and heavily in debt. The Lollards were always under suspicion at the time, but no evidence has been put forward that religion was a factor. The dynastic claims and counter-claims of the Plantagenets were convoluted, and were to lead to the War of the Roses. The plot failed, but ironically Richard Duke of York, the Earl of Cambridge's son and his sons did depose the last Lancastrian monarch, Henry VI, son of Henry V and took the throne.

King Henry immediately established a commission which heard the case at the Red Lion Inn in Southampton. The commission condemned the conspirators to death. Despite pleas for clemency, Cambridge along with Scrope, was executed on Southampton Green, just outside Bargate, on 5 August 1415. Grey was killed on 3 August. The army sailed from Southampton on 11 August.

The Red Lion Inn (left) in Southampton High Street is still trading, though externally much rebuilt after World War 2 bombing. The bar (pictured right) is signed as the site of the trial, but the vault might be the actual venue.

[1] Digby Grist, 'The Lost Inns of Alresford', *Alresford Displayed,* Volume 5 (New Alresford, 1980).

A.E. WADE: AN ARTIST IN ALRESFORD

by

Nick Denbow, Publisher of www.alresfordmemories.wordpress.com

'Albert Edward Wade studied at Birmingham in 1911, and was resident in London in 1917, and Dover in 1919. He was working at the Sheffield School of Art in 1921, and from there joined the staff of the Grimsby School of Art in 1924. He became Principal of this School in 1927. As well as being an accomplished artist in oils and watercolours, he was also an excellent musician, playing the cello with great skill. He retired from the Grimsby School of Art in 1953, and moved to Alresford.'

The first photo above is a self-portrait, dated 1950, which states it is an image of him at age 61, and is held in the Grimsby collection: this was provided by Louise Bowen, of the NE Lincolnshire Council Museum Collections department, in 2014. A dry-point image, apparently a self portrait from 1930, was also found in his collection, and is shown on the right: most of the rest of the dry-points in the Alresford Museum collection date from the 1960s.

Louise provided the description of his early life quoted above, and adds that 'Examples of his woodcraft can be seen in Humberston Church (near Grimsby) in the form of the chancel screen and the pulpit. He was an authority on antiques and archaeology.'

Albert was born on 17 October 1889, in Kinver, Staffordshire, and had parents Josiah and Mary Ann (née Newell). In the 1911 Census records he is listed as a Draughtsman with a Furniture Manufacturer, then aged 21, living at 3 Marlborough Road, Smallheath, near Birmingham, with his parents (aged 54 and 60) and brothers Sydney George aged 27, and Walker Charles aged 19. All of the rest of them were employed in the family Bakery.

The move to Alresford

Albert Wade retired to Alresford in 1953: he chose Alresford 'because his family had originated here' - the only record of any family connection is that his mother had been born in Farringdon, Hampshire. Here, he made his home at Ivern, in Salisbury Road, where he lived for over 20 years: he died in 1976.

George Watson, then working in Laurence Oxley's shop, became a good friend of Wade: George also assisted him by printing the Christmas cards on the press in Oxley's. Wade used the dry-point technique to create these cards, scratching the image on a copper plate, in reverse, copied from his own original sketches. Later, George passed some of these plates and prints to Roy Robins and his colleagues who were starting the Alresford Museum. Also included were some oil paintings: one of these, showing the dismantling of the water tower, on its site near the top of Jacklyn's Lane in around 1953, now hangs in Alresford Library.

Further copies of these cards were given by Mrs Mary Horner, of Grimsby, to Peter Chapman, a reporter on the Grimsby Evening Telegraph. Since most of these images related to Alresford, he felt these would be better kept in Alresford, and passed them back, via the Historical and Literary Society, to the town Museum, to add to their collection.

Biography by Peter Chapman

Peter Chapman also included his assessment and biographical notes on A E Wade, covering his time in Grimsby.

He wrote:

'When 1950 dawned, Mr A E Wade ha been Principal of Grimsby School of Art for 23 years. When he retired three years later, to Alresford, from which his family originated, his tenure of office was, and has subsequently proved, a record. But he left an ineradicable mark – not only on the thousands of students who had sat at his feet – but on the town to which he had come in 1923 after a spell at Birmingham School of Art.

Albert Wade was a man of many parts. He was first a devoted husband to Florence (née Hames). He was father to two daughters, Athena and Gabriel, to whom he passed many of his enthusiasms. He was a highly competent artist, in oils and watercolours, a master of the portrait, the landscape and specific studies. He was a sculptor and a highly skilled woodworker and carver. In addition to these many accomplishments he was a most useful cellist and an inveterate collector.

His knowledge of, for instance, Chinese porcelain was encyclopaedic, and he amassed a still extant collection of Egyptian items which remains in Grimsby. Mr Wade was both a man of his time and a connoisseur, and he passed on his wide range of knowledge to his pupils, many of whom owe the awakening of many interests to his passions. At the Silver Street Art School in Grimsby he both instructed and entertained, before making his way home to St. Giles' Avenue, Scartho. He inherited the mantle of the late Mr Jennison as the Mayoral portrait painter - for the Mayor's immortality, hung in the Town Hall - and became an associate member of the Royal Miniature Society. He also did endless 'jobs' for the corporation – among them designing the Borough boundary signs and numerous official brochures, and the town still has many of his paintings – several showing the aftermath of the war.'

The Christmas Cards

The Christmas cards we have, printed using the dry-point technique, date from 1958 through to 1972. Over this period the subjects change from Roman and classical images, through pictures of Alresford scenes, to sketches of Ovington Mill and the Grange at Northington. The Alresford scenes include images of the Fulling Mill, the De Lucy Bridge, St John's Church, and the view 'Between the weirs'. A view of Alresford from the Southwest was drawn in 1962, but used as a card in 1972, and was also used as a header for the Alresford Society. The complete set of cards is shown on a website, http://tinyurl.com/kxfr4aa, which is an album of the Alresford Museum Wade images. The only year for which we have no card available is 1964.

In a letter to a friend dated 22 October 1959, Wade explains "Dry-point" as being engraved with a point (similar To an engraver's burin) on the copper plate, and then printed – with no acid used, therefore it is a drypoint. But other descriptions of the technique highlight that it is the burr thrown up on the furrow of the line which is crucial to the final result, the angle of the dry point changing the characteristics of the burr, and hence the amount of ink taken up. It should be stressed that Wade personally engraved these images on the copper plates, in reverse, i.e. mirrored images, compared to his own sketched original, and this included the words!

Some of the original plates used to print the images on the Christmas cards have been passed on, and are in the Museum, covered in varnish. The 1960 Winchester history plate was still wrapped in a newspaper dated 1960. In better condition are the plates for the De Lucy Bridge, the Fulling Mill, Alresford Churchyard and 'Between the weirs': other plates are also present showing a portrait of Dr Meryon, and part of the Buttercross in Winchester. A 1968 newspaper protects another picture plate of Alresford Church, as viewed from Broad Street.

Other Wade prints in the collection

Also in the collection are two small drypoint prints, one mentioned above and titled as a 1930 self-portrait, and one of Alresford church tower and churchyard from the South. A few larger prints are also included, as follows:

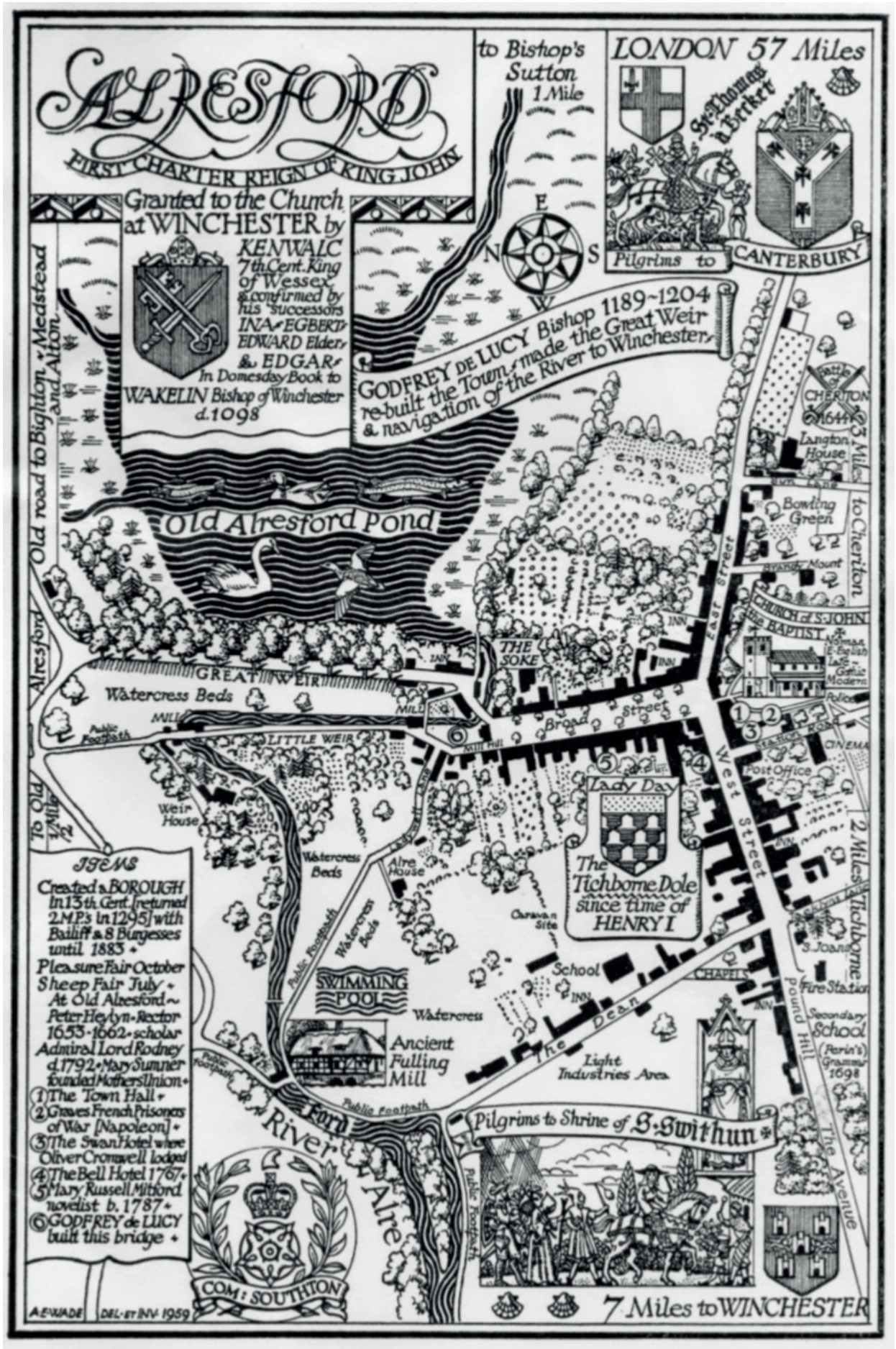
1. Five composers: Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, Mozart. Feb 1970 (8" diagonal)
2. Alresford Centre: a view of the Community Centre, Lloyds Bank and The Swan Hotel. Dated 21 May 1958. (13.5" diagonal)
3. A larger print of the De Lucy Bridge, July 1968. (13.5" diagonal)
4. A larger print of the above Fulling Mill picture, June 1958. (13.5" diagonal)

His best-known Alresford picture

Possibly the best known of the Wade pictures will be the town plan of Alresford, a coloured copy of which is a relatively every-day sight in Alresford, situated at the alleyway entrance to the Churchyard, between Barclays Bank and the Opticians. This is shown on the next page.

Inside St John's Church, on the West wall, above the entrance door, there is a screen displaying the Royal Coat of Arms: this was designed and painted by Albert Wade in memory of Arthur John Pearson MC, Rector from 1949 to 1970, who died suddenly in Church during Sunday worship.

The Wade version of the town plan of Alresford :

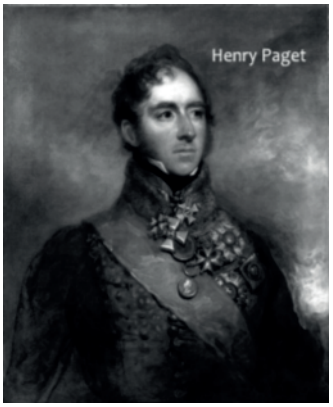


A version of this story was first published on the "AlresfordMemories" website, for the Alresford Museum.

THE 'STIFF UPPER LIP' - STAUNCH STOICISM OR DODGY DENTITION?

by

Glenn Gilbertson



Portrait by George Dawe

Is there anything more stereotypically English than keeping a 'stiff upper lip' in times of crisis? For instance, at the Battle of Waterloo Henry Paget, Earl of Uxbridge (1768-1864) led the spectacular charge of the British heavy cavalry against Comte d'Erlon's column which checked and in part routed the French Army. One of the last cannon shots fired that day hit Paget in the right leg, necessitating its amputation. According to anecdote, he was close to Wellington when his leg was hit, and exclaimed, "By God, sir, I've lost my leg!" — to which Wellington replied, "By God, sir, so you have!" His aide-de-camp, Thomas Wildman, said that during the amputation Paget smiled and said, "I have had a pretty long run. I have been a beau these 47 years and it would not be fair to cut the young men out any longer." [1] (He had had many affairs, including one with Wellington's sister-in-law, to the General's displeasure).

Oddly, it seems that the origin of the expression may be American. The first printed reference to the expression ' Stiff upper lip' is in the Massachusetts Spy, June 1815:

'I kept a stiff upper lip, and bought [a] license to sell my goods.'[2]

The Duke of Wellington (1769-1852) "The Iron Duke" sent a dispatch from the battlefield of Waterloo, including his opinions that 'Nothing except a battle lost can be half as melancholy as a battle won' and 'It has been a damned nice thing - the nearest run thing you ever saw in your life'.[3]

A generation before, George Washington (1732-1799) was famous for his grim determination - 'Discipline is the soul of an army'[4].

Two leaders, then, with similar characters, and similar expressions in portraits:

(Left) Wellington 1815 (age 45) by Sir Thomas Lawrence

(Right) Washington c.1778 (age 46) by Charles Willson

There is more than character and fashion that gives these men similarly stern expressions. Their upper lips were stiff because they were holding their mouths shut against the force of the springs keeping their ill-fitting dentures in place.

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[1] "Obituary: The 7th Marquis of Anglesey". The Telegraph. 22 February 2014.

[2] http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/keep-a-stiff-upper-lip.html

[3] http://www.napoleonguide.com/aquotes_welli.htm

[4] http://www.worldofquotes.com/author/George+Washington/2/index.html

Some of George Washington's dentures:

Pictures from http://www.mountvernon.org/research-collections/digital-encyclopedia/article/false-teeth/

Amongst his many illnesses, George Washington had been a martyr to toothache throughout his adult life, and by the time of his inauguration had only one remaining tooth - which was soon extracted. Close examination of the Peale 1778 portrait reveals a scar on the left cheek from an operation to drain a dental abscess. There is a persistent myth that Washington wore wooden teeth, but that is untrue. He had a series of dentures, made from such materials as hand-carved hippopotamus ivory, seahorse ivory, and lead. Other sets used the teeth of pigs, cows, elks, and humans.[1] The ivory bases stained badly, giving the appearance of wood. Washington's clumsy,ill-fitting dentures distorted his lips, contributing to the dour expression Washington has in various portraits.[1] Painter Gilbert Stuart disliked Washington and did not hide the distortion in what became the most famous of all Washington portraits (painted 1795) [2]; the President was wearing oiled cloth in his mouth to relieve the pressure pain of his false teeth. Reversed, the painting is the basis of the image on the US dollar bill:

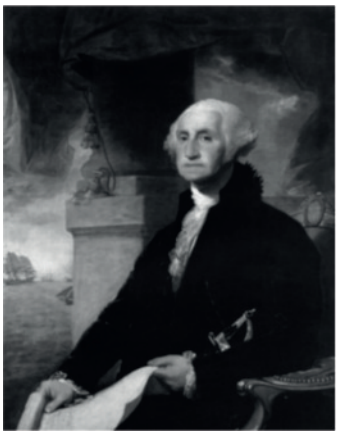

Photo: https://pearlsofprofundity.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/george-washington-dollar-bill.jpg

The Duke of Wellington's Dentures:[3]

This set is exhibited in Apsley House, London, and is more advanced than Washington's. The upper denture has a gold base with natural teeth at the front (two incisors, one canine, one first premolar each side) and molar blocks in ivory at the back. The lower denture base is carved from ivory with natural teeth set in sockets at the front (same teeth as the upper) with ivory molar blocks inset at the back. The ivory is from a walrus as opposed to elephant or hippopotamus as this takes up stain less readily.

The dentures shown have two particular features in common: the springs to keep the poorly-fitting bases against the soft tissues and the use of rivetted human front teeth.

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[1] Bumgarner, John R. The Health of the Presidents: The 41 United States Presidents Through 1993 from a Physician's Point of View. Jefferson, NC: MacFarland & Company, 1994.

[2] Boller, Paul F. Jr. Presidential Anecdotes. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

[3] http://www.lucyworsley.com/new-radio-3-series-lucy-worsleys-kensington-and-false-teeth/

Although porcelain artificial teeth had become available in the 1780s they made a grating noise and were prone to chipping and breaking, so human front teeth were preferred for a long time. These could be purchased and extracted from poor people (in Washington's case, he paid some of his slaves). In 1783, a dentist advertised In a New York newspaper, offering 2 guineas each for sound teeth.[1] They could also be obtained from executed criminals or bought from grave-robbers. There was a problem obtaining teeth that were not themselves rotten and/or carrying diseases.

It's an ill wind … The battlefield of Waterloo yielded a huge harvest of teeth taken from healthy , young soldiers. J.M.W. Turner's painting 'The Field of Waterloo' (to be found in the Tate Britain Gallery, London) shows flares in the night sky, vainly fired to discourage robbers, while in the foreground families seek their relatives (or are they thieves?) :

There were so many spare teeth, known and sold as 'Waterloo Teeth', that they were shipped abroad by the barrel. In 1819, American dentist Levi Spear Parmly, the inventor of floss, wrote that he had 'in his possession thousands of teeth extracted from bodies of all ages that have fallen in battle'. [1]

By 1837, London denture maker Claudius Ash, driven by his hatred of handling dead men's teeth, perfected porcelain dentures and began to manufacture them commercially. Even so, trade in the real thing continued well into the second half of the century. Supplies increased during the Crimean War of the 1850s and in 1865 the *Pall Mall Gazette* reported that some London dentists still refused to switch to porcelain. They now had a whole new source: on the other side of the Atlantic the tooth robbers were hard at work, cleaning up behind the armies of the American Civil War.[1]

In the 1840s vulcanite, (a modified rubber) was developed, and could be moulded to fit the mouth; the day of the springs was over. Porcelain teeth were riveted to the base. In the 1940s acrylic bases became available, and hard-wearing, non-clacking, realistic acrylic teeth from the 1970s. Now implants are often suitable for tooth replacement - how happy the President and the Duke would have been to have had access to such technology.

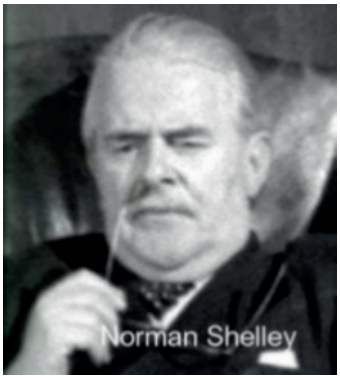
The Duke of Wellington by Alfred, Count d'Orsay

[1] http://www.historyhome.co.uk/c-eight/france/teeth.htm

WINSTON CHURCHILL OR WINNIE THE POOH?

by

Glenn Gilbertson



Seventy five years ago years ago, on June 4 1940, the House of Commons listened in awe to the Prime Minister as he delivered one of the most famous speeches of all time:

Even though large tracts of Europe and many old and famous States have fallen or may fall into the grip of the Gestapo and all the odious apparatus of Nazi rule, we shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender, and even if, which I do not for a moment believe, this island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Fleet, would carry on the struggle, until, in God's good time, the new world, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old.[1]

It has been a common misperception (including that of the author) that the nation huddled around wireless sets to hear the speech broadcast live. In fact recordings were to be broadcast later, and sold by the BBC in later years. A story has been circulating since 1987 that the radio audience was not hearing Churchill at all:

David Irving in his *Churchill's War, Volume I*, published in 1987, p. 313:
'That evening the BBC broadcast his speech after the News. The whole nation thrilled, not knowing that Churchill had refused to repeat it before the microphone. A BBC actor -- 'Larry the Lamb' of the Children's Hour -- had agreed to mimic the prime minister before the microphone, and nobody was any the wiser.' Irving quoted Norman Shelley as his source. As ever, the reader must consider whether a historian is unbiased when weighing evidence, and though a thorough archivist, Irving is notorious as a Nazi sympathiser and denigrator of Churchill.

From another source: *'Churchill delivered his "We shall fight on the beaches ..." speech to the House of Commons. Afterwards the Prime Minister went to the BBC studio at Shepherd's Bush to deliver the same address, which would be beamed to the Commonwealth nations and the United States. Unfortunately, the transcription apparatus broke down at the BBC. Although it went out live, the BBC did not have an oral recording. They asked Churchill to come back and deliver it again. Churchill refused. So Norman Shelley, the voice of Winnie-the-Pooh on the BBC, who was known for his clever mimicking of Churchill, delivered -- unbeknownst to Churchill -- the address. The Shelley rendition was for excerpts in later news and for records to be played at bond rallies and patriotic events.'*[2]

In 1990 a Cambridge, Massachusetts, speech-research group named Sensimetrics tested twenty of the BBC broadcasts sold on long-playing records under Churchill's name. They reported that the voice patterns were different in three speeches: 'Fight on the Beaches', 'Finest Hour' and 'Blood, Toil, Tears, and Sweat'. Ten years later Norman Shelley's son found an LP of his father delivering the "Fight on the Beaches" oration, which was verified by a professional sound engineer and also by the presence of Shelley's own voice at the end of the recording.

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[1] http://www.winstonchurchill.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=130:an-actor-read-churchills-wartime-speeches-over- the-wireless&catid=2:myths&Itemid=102

[2] James C. Humes, Ryals Professor of Language and Leadership, University of Southern Colorado, Pueblo, Colo. http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/07/letters-to-the-editor/302543/

There is now only a dispute about when, and how often, Shelley (who did also play Winnie-the-Pooh for the BBC) acted as 'His Master's Voice' in live broadcasts or when and if the recordings were used[1]

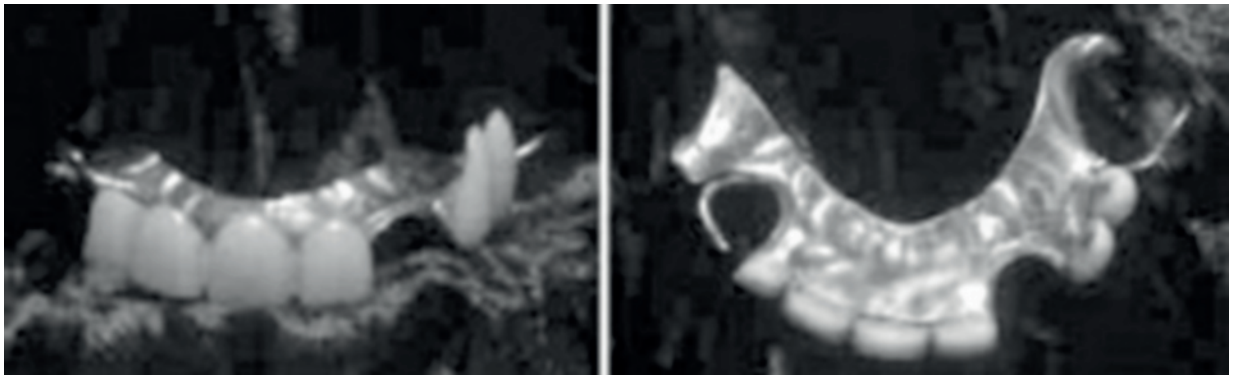
Sir Robert Rhodes James, however, writes for the Churchill Centre:

'Did Norman Shelley ever record the "fight on the beaches" speech? In Finest Hour 112, Stephen Bungay notes that "Churchill was asked by the British Council later in the war to make a recording for the U.S., and having rather a lot on his plate, he suggested they use an actor instead. Shelley did the recording, Churchill heard it, was much amused and gave his approval. Its subsequent fate is unknown, but there is no evidence of its having been used in Britain." Or anywhere else, as far as we can determine.' [2]

Among the speech patterns being analysed would be Churchill's famous speech impediment. This has variously been described as a stutter or a lisp. Experts are divided ; the Stuttering Foundation points out that Churchill's personal physician described the stutter in his diary. However, The Churchill Centre denies that he had a stutter, insisting that he had a lateral lisp.. The Churchill Centre also points out that some have said Winston's pauses during speeches are due to careful stagecraft, not because he was trying to avoid stuttering.[3] The Centre also insists that the lisp was reduced when delivering a carefully-prepared speech, so that his increased slurring in ordinary conversation led many to assume that he was more drunk than he really was. Both organisations have their own biases, of course.

Churchill had several sets of dentures (his mother had complained about high dentists' bills when Winston was a schoolboy). During World War Two Churchill's dentures were designed by the dentist Wilfred Fish to preserve Churchill's characteristic diction, and his dental technician Derek Cudlipp was exempted from military service on the Prime Minister's order. Technical repairs were constantly necessary - when agitated, Churchill would often flick out his denture, even throwing it across the room.[4] No wonder he always carried a spare; he had a well-known fear of toothlessness preventing him speaking in public.

If you visit the fascinating (and free) Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons in London you can see one of the dentures on display:



The denture is made from a cast gold plate, with platinum clasps holding porcelain teeth facings. There were unavoidable weaknesses with this design. The short porcelain teeth with tube retention were prone to fracture because of the pressure on them from the lower natural front teeth. In addition the load on the metal clasps made them stress hardened and also more likely to break. A plentiful supply of porcelain facings was obtained from the US and kept in stock.[4]

A guide at the Hunterian museum assured the author that he had seen a metal denture specially made for Norman Shelley that incorporated a slit to reproduce Churchill's lisp, but the item was not on display. Whatever the truth, it is difficult to think of an orator today who can inspire as much as Churchill did with those those wartime speeches. Perhaps when listening to the recordings a little willing suspension of disbelief does not go amiss; the words matter more than voice analysis.

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1 http://www.fpp.co.uk/History/Churchill/Hitchens_replies.html

2 http://www.winstonchurchill.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=130:an-actor-read-churchills-wartime-speeches-over- the-wireless&catid=2:myths&Itemid=102

3 http://www.speechbuddy.com/blog/speech-disorders/winston-churchills-dentures/

4 https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/museums/hunterian/exhibitions/archive/churchills-dentures/churchills-dentures

THE COLD WAR IN NEW ALRESFORD

by

Robert Fowler

This is a tale of mystery and intrigue connecting a public toilet block in Station Road, New Alresford and a local antiquarian bookshop with Russian spies and Britain's most closely guarded naval secrets during the Cold War.

Public toilets, Station Road, New Alresford.
Photographs taken by Robert Fowler in 2014

Submarine arms race in the Cold War

During the Cold War of the early 1960s Britain was developing the technology for its latest nuclear submarines at the Admiralty Underwater Weapons Research Establishment at Portland using equipment developed in the UK, USA, Canada and other NATO countries. The Russians, who had an enormous fleet of submarines, were itching to get their hands on the details of our vessels as were other communist bloc countries. They needed in particular to obtain performance data of the British ASDIC system of underwater detection, now regularly referred to as SONAR. This equipment and its processes were highly secret as the listening devices would eventually enable our crews to detect and identify enemy submarines in the cat and mouse game that was being played out in the depths of the oceans. Specifications of other equipment such as the noiseless Borg Warner torque converter were also sought by the communist bloc.

The story begins in April 1959 when a Soviet mole, Michael Goleniewski, a Polish intelligence officer, told the CIA that he knew two Soviet agents were operating in Britain because British submarine secrets were finding their way to the Russians.[1] Goleniewski was also able to identify that one of these agents was working in the naval base Portland.[2] The CIA subsequently passed the information on to British Intelligence and in the next year MI5 eventually came to the conclusion that the suspected agent was Harry Houghton, an ex naval Petty Officer then working as a civilian clerk.

Petty Officer Harry Houghton. Photo via http://spymuseum.com/major-events/spy-rings/the-portland-spy-ring/

The Russians targeted Houghton because of his past involvement in black market activities in Warsaw where in 1951, after he was demobbed, he was given a married posting to the British Embassy as a civilian clerk.[3] He had enjoyed a long career in the Royal Navy which he joined in 1922 and in which he served until 1945. He was awarded the Navy's long service medal and after demobilisation he continued to work for the Royal Navy in Portsmouth Dockyard for a short while. During WW2 he served on HMS Excellent as Master at Arms, a post in which he became skilled at wheeling and dealing.

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[1] Peter Wright, Spycatcher, *The Candid Autobiography of a Senior Intelligence Officer*, (Stoddart, 1987), 128.
[2] *Ibid.*, 129.
[3] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Houghton

Later in post war Warsaw, when everyday items were very scarce, Houghton sold commodities such as Coffee and lipstick on the black market enabling him to build up cash reserves and finance an extravagant lifestyle. It was during that time his marriage became unsustainable and he become very friendly with his female Polish black market contact. Houghton was also reportedly a heavy drinker, although he denies this in his autobiography[4]. It is the reason given in the Romer Report as to why he was sent back to the UK in November 1952.[5] Unbelievably, Houghton was re-assigned to a position handling sensitive information at The Naval Underwater Weapons Research Establishment in Portland, Dorset. As soon as Harry was settled at Portland he was approached by unknown Communist bloc agents asking for information and he duly obliged albeit after some violent threats were made.[6]

After a while Houghton was introduced to a man who claimed he was an American Naval Commander who had come to Britain to find out if the testing of the equipment was being carried out correctly. It is probable that Houghton believed this story at first but it must have become obvious very quickly that this story was false. Houghton knew the American as Alex Johnson, but we now know that his other alias was Gordon Lonsdale. (It was not until later that his real name was revealed).

About this time Houghton became estranged from his wife and he started to see another female clerk at the Portland base called Ethel Gee, who was working as a filing clerk handling documents with an even higher security classification. Gee was a spinster, 14 years his junior and living with her parents. Under the influence of Houghton, she obtained classified documents from the strong room at the close of a day's business and returned them the following morning.

Under surveillance by MI5, it was discovered that the suspect was making frequent trips to London meeting strangers in various places in and around the capital and probably handing over secret documents. Houghton's suspicious behaviour, his reported heavy drinking and relatively expensive lifestyle aroused the suspicion of the Secret Services once they had been officially alerted.[7]

Gordon Lonsdale was also posing elsewhere as a Canadian business man, allegedly selling juke boxes and bubble gum machines which enabled him to travel around without suspicion. He was certainly unknown to the security services at this time. He had an apartment in London and drove an American Studebaker car. It was Lonsdale that Houghton met on many occasions handing over classified documents and photographs obtained by him and his girlfriend Ethel Gee. It was later in the investigation that Lonsdale was connected with an antiquarian bookseller and his wife, Helen and Peter Kroger. The Krogers ran an antiquarian book store in northwest London and lived an apparently normal life in a suburban bungalow in Ruislip. Peter Kroger was well known in the book trade and travelled the country searching for specialist books which he then exported to numerous destinations.

New Alresford involvement

Oxley's Bookshop, Broad Street, New Alresford today. Photograph by Robert Fowler.

So, why was the sleepy market town of New Alresford Implicated? Well, it was Kroger's cover as an antiquarian bookseller that enabled him to visit Oxley's similar bookshop in Broad Street in search of old books that made the town an ideal destination. Peter Kroger had opened a rare-book shop opposite St Clement Danes Church in London and Kroger could easily visit Oxley's bookshop on the pretence of searching for specimens for his own shop.

[4] Harry Houghton, *Operation Portland: The Autobiography of a Spy* (Hart Davis, 1972), 8.
[5] John Bulloch and Henry Miller, *Spy Ring: The Full Story of the Naval Secrets case.* (Secker & Warburg, 1961).
[6] Houghton, *op cit.*, 8.
[7] Hansard: NAVAL SECURITY: ROMER COMMITTEE'S REPORT, HL Deb 13 June 1961 vol 232 cc125-9

In New Alresford it would be easy to place packages in a 'dead letter box' for collection by Houghton or similarly to collect items from him. During his visit to the town, his route to Oxley's ensured he had to walk down Station Road from the railway station, having travelled from London via Alton. (This was when the Alton to Winchester railway line was still open). As most people know, there is a public toilet in Station Road and this is where the documents were left and collected by Houghton, in of one of the cubicles, right opposite the Police Station!

Houghton wrote in his biography:

> I was to go to the gents' lavatory at New Alresford on my next trip to London at 2pm precisely. There were two WCs inside this public convenience. Going in at 2pm on the dot, I was to enter the one on my left, take out a package which I would find behind the door, put it in my pocket and proceed to London. This package, never much larger than a 2-oz tobacco tin, was always sealed with sellotape and I was never able to satisfy my curiosity about it. Whoever selected this pick up point did so with total disregard for my nerves: the lavatory was in a cul-de-sac, slap bang opposite the New Alresford Police Station.

It should be remembered that in 1961 the cinema was almost next door to the public toilet and Station Road would have been busy during the day with rail travellers. Houghton wonders why such a sleepy place as New Alresford should have been chosen and what was of interest to the Russians. Houghton took the package to London and handed it over to an unknown man in the *Bunch of Grapes* pub in the Brompton Road. In fact this pub is less than a mile from the Russian Embassy in Kensington Gardens.

The former police station in Station Road, New Alresford. The photograph was taken by Glenn Gilbertson in 2013.

Entrapment

On 5 November 1960 Houghton drove his Renault Dauphine car from his home in Dorset towards London via Ringwood followed by two Special Branch officers. They observed that he carried with him a large cardboard box and a leather briefcase.[8] On route Houghton stopped at New Alresford and went into the Station Road toilets at 2 pm. He had 'material' to collect for Gordon Londsdale and although seen by the Special Branch Officers, neither of them stopped him to intervene. Obviously they had bigger fish to fry. Later on, Houghton travelled to the *Bunch of Grapes* in London and handed over the package at 7:30 pm.[9] Again the officers did not intervene. Tietjen reports that Houghton then drove to the *Maypole* pub in Tolworth, London where he exchanged briefcases with Lonsdale. Later Lonsdale and Houghton left at 7:55 pm and drove along the Kingston by-pass and at 8:10 pm Lonsdale was seen in a Studebaker car which was eventually followed to a road near the Krogers' bungalow in Ruislip. Up to this point, MI5 had no idea that the Krogers were involved.

[8] Arthur Tietjen, *Soviet Spy Ring* (Pan, 1961).
[9] Harry Houghton, Operation Portland: The Autobiography of a Spy (Hart Davis, 1972), 8.

The next day, Sunday 6 November, Special Branch observed Lonsdale entering the Krogers' bungalow at Cranley Drive, Ruislip.[10] Shortly afterwards the Krogers were arrested and their bungalow searched, where documents and spying equipment were found. It was there that the spy ring leaders communicated with Moscow by radio and produced microdots for inclusion in antiquarian books subsequently posted to overseas addresses.

Laying the Trap

Houghton, Gee and Lonsdale were arrested on Saturday 7 January 1961 after being followed from Waterloo Station. When stopped, Gee's shopping bag contained large amounts of film and photographs of classified material, including details of *HMSDreadnought*, Britain's first nuclear submarine, and the stalling speed specifications of the Borg Warner torque converter.[11] Submariners who served during the cold war have reported that the key advantage of the Borg Warner Torque converter was its reduction in noise. This low level of noise and vibration was a vital factor which enabled the NATO fleets to stalk the Russian subs with minimum detection.[12] The Krogers' were also arrested later on the same day.

The Trial

What is unexplained in the various reports of the trial and his autobiography is why Houghton states he collected packages from the New Alresford toilets dead letter box rather that placing something there. It is pretty obvious that Houghton was stealing the secret documents for ongoing photography and delivery to the Russian agents. So why does Houghton state in his autobiography that he collected packages from the New Alresford toilets and handed them over to an agent in London? It would make sense if he was collecting packages to be returned to Portland after being photographed by the Krogers and returned to New Alresford by Peter Kroger on one of his visits to Oxley's bookshop. This implies that Houghton was more involved in the spy ring's activities than he was prepared to admit. Houghton always maintained that there were other agents at work but MI5 and the Intelligence Services officially refused to allow him to identify them in exchange for leniency in sentencing.

At the trial it was reported that Houghton appeared to have made frequent trips to London on his own many years prior to his arrest, while Gee had only accompanied him from the middle of 1960. Houghton and Ethel Gee were followed to London in April 1960.[13] (The Romer Committee report summary states that he was twice brought to the notice of the Admiralty for removing documents in 1956 but the internal report was inconclusive and not given the right priority.[14]) In those early days he may have been supplying information to the communist authorities in Poland using the rendezvous at the Toby Jug Pub on the Kingston by-pass. Houghton claimed at his trial that he had been threatened and beaten up by shadowy figures in 1957 at his caravan near Portland. He further claimed that the information he gave them were newspaper cuttings and matters already in the public domain and were of little value. What is undoubtedly clear is that he was selling secrets from as early as 1956, if not earlier.

At their trial Houghton and Gee were found guilty and sentenced to fifteen years in prison. They served ten years and after their release in 1970 they changed their names, got married and disappeared into obscurity. A search on various family history web sites such as *Ancestry* to find the birth and death entry for Harry Frederick Houghton has proven difficult as he changed his name. One reference in public records gives his date of death as May 1985 in Poole, Dorset.

Peter and Helen Kroger were found guilty of spying and were sentenced to twenty years in prison. The Krogers' real names were later revealed to be Morris and Lona Cohen and deeply involved in passing atomic secrets in the USA. They were released in 1969 in exchange for Gerald Brooke, a British lecturer who had been arrested by the Russians for distributing subversive pamphlets. Gordon Arnold Lonsdale (1924-1970), the mastermind, was sentenced to twenty-five years. In 1964 he was exchanged for the British spy Greville Wynne who had been arrested in Russia. Lonsdale's real name was later revealed to have been Konon Trofimovich Molody. John Vassal, a British naval spy who passed thousands of classified submarine secrets to the Russians over a decade and was finally caught in September 1962, was given only ten years.

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[10] Arthur Tietjen *Soviet Spy Ring* (Pan, 1961).

[11] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Houghton

[12] Conversation with David Otley and Martin Gilveray at the Alresford Royal Naval Association 10th Feb 2015.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] Hansard: NAVAL SECURITY: ROMER COMMITTEE'S REPORT, HL Deb 13 June 1961 vol 232 cc125-9

Postscript

It is sobering to note that Houghton came from a humble working class family and was a member of the choir at Lincoln Cathedral before joining the Navy at sixteen. Although it cannot be denied that he was a traitor, his actions were treated more severely than, say, the educated scientist Klaus Fuchs who gave away greater atomic secrets yet was only sentenced to fourteen years or even the renowned Antony Blunt, Surveyor of the royal art collection. One must spare a thought for the naive Ethel Gee who was given the same sentence as Houghton despite playing a lesser role in the affair. She also lost all her personal savings as these were considered to be the proceeds of crime.

Harry Houghton and Ethel Gee soon after their release from prison.

It is commonly thought that Houghton's version of events was utterly unsatisfactory, with many of his stories being unreliable or products of self-deception with a vivid imagination. This may be true but Houghton's Offer to identify other clandestine contacts in exchange for a reduced sentence was refused by the authorities. The conjecture after his trial suggested that Russian spying activities in the UK were much greater than was admitted but there was no known follow up. Even now, after 55 years, it is difficult to give a proper analysis of the Portland Spy Ring because classified documents associated with the case are still unavailable for examination. This period of history was cluttered with spying activities of which the British authorities had not been aware until after the secrets had been lost. We may never know the damage done to our National Security.

The other members of the Portland Spy Ring:

Gordon Lonsdale

Peter Kroger

Helen Kroger

Pictures on this page via http://spymuseum.com/major-events/spy-rings/the-portland-spy-ring/

HUDSON'S SUMMER IN THE ITCHEN VALLEY in 1900

by

Brian Tippett

W.H.Hudson (1895)

Sir Edward Grey (1895)

W H Hudson (1841-1922) was born in Argentina and his career as a writer and naturalist originated there. His experiences in South America and his studies of its wildlife provided rich material for later writings in fiction, natural history and autobiography. But it was only after he emigrated to England in 1874 at the age of thirty-two that his career could begin, very slowly, to move to its fulfilment. On first arriving, having no first-hand knowledge of even the commonest English birds, he had much to learn as a naturalist and, with no books to his credit, many difficulties to overcome as an aspiring author. It was a long struggle but by the time he died in 1922 he was recognised as an outstanding English ornithologist, as an environmental campaigner and founding father of the RSPB, and as one of this country's leading writers, much respected by his peers and renowned for the much-celebrated *Green Mansions* and a series of books which capture the very essence of the English countryside and its wildlife. Of these *A Shepherd's Life*, written in his late sixties and largely based upon the oral reminiscences of Wiltshire country folk, is his masterpiece. Another notable achievement, written earlier, is *Hampshire Days*, which stands alongside Gilbert White's *The Natural History of Selborne* as a classic description of rural Hampshire and its wildlife. This book was in gestation when he came to the Itchen valley in 1900.

Hudson's connection with Hampshire began in boyhood when he first read White's *Selborne* — an author, a book and a place he revered for the rest of his life. It continued with his arrival in England, for his ship from Buenos Aires docked at Southampton early in May 1874 just at the time when everyone seemed to be talking about the Tichborne claimant. Hudson lost no time in walking out into the Hampshire countryside heading immediately for Winchester to get his first sight of an ancient English cathedral. Many years were to pass before Hudson could return to make a sustained study of the county and when he did his method differed from Gilbert White's. Instead of a lifelong absorption with a single parish he came to know Hampshire through a series of excursions covering the whole county. Even in his later years of greater prosperity, Hudson's home base remained the drab boarding house in Bayswater which his wife ran. He would pack a few belongings in a Gladstone bag and take the train with bike on board to a chosen point and there find inexpensive lodgings for a few days or weeks, preferably in a country cottage. He would then rise early every morning and set out day after day, whatever the weather, to explore the countryside on foot or on his bicycle.

A different opportunity presented itself in 1900. It was one that fitted in with his current project. Having completed *Nature in Downland,* based on his Sussex walks, Hudson was now beginning to gather material for the book that came to be called *Hampshire Days*. He had already spent time in the New Forest lodging at places near Fawley and Brockenhurst when he received an invitation. Sir Edward Grey and his wife Dorothy decided that year to return home to Northumberland during the parliamentary recess and invited the Hudsons to stay for the summer at their fishing cottage at Itchen Abbas. It was here that Sir Edward, a leading Liberal politician (now famous as Britain's Foreign Secretary in the lead-up to the First World War), sought refreshment from Westminster politics with his wife, indulging their shared passion for fishing and bird watching. For the Greys it was a sacred place,

an idyllic sanctuary of extraordinary spiritual significance where they could fulfil the profound Wordsworthian love of nature they shared with Hudson. As a friend wrote after Dorothy's death, 'the best part of their happiness seemed bound up with the Cottage.'[1] For the Hudsons the opportunity to stay there was a dream come true — for once in their lives William and Emily could be together in a country cottage, not as paying guests at someone else's meal table but doing their own housekeeping far from the pressures of London life in a place of perfect rural beauty. He told one friend 'we are quite alone, our own servants, etc., and when we go lock up the cottage and leave it to the wild creatures'[2]. To another he wrote, 'We have been living a solitary life … seeing no person unless we go to the village which is near but out of sight and sound.'[3] If they chose not to go out 'it was pleasure enough to sit in the shade of the limes most of the day; there was coolness, silence, melody, fragrance; and always before me, the sight of that moist green valley, which made one cool simply to look at it …'.[4] The contrast with London is expressed even more forcibly in another letter: 'Even here in the cool of the big lime trees I sit under most of the day it is hot — what must it be in loathsome London!'[5] Meanwhile, far away, the Boer war raged on and everyone was anxious about the Europeans caught up in the Boxer Rebellion.

The Cottage as described by Hudson (L. Creighton, *Dorothy Grey* (1907))

The cottage no longer stands but the brick foundations are still clearly visible a few yards from the river. The building was similar in construction to the 'colonial' bungalows that were later to become common in this part of Hampshire — timber-framed and roofed with corrugated iron and in external appearance curiously similar to the house on the *estancia* where Hudson lived as a boy. Lady Grey called it her 'tin cottage'. By 1900 'great green Masses of ivy, honeysuckle, Virginia creeper, rose, and wild clematis … covered the trellised walls and part of the red roof.[6] The site, now owned by Winchester College, Sir Edward's old school, is maintained for public access, and is easily found at the intersection of the avenue of limes which Hudson mentions and the public footpath from Itchen Abbas church to Chilland. There is a commemorative notice by the entrance (see picture on back cover) and the chalk pit, which gave Hudson and the Greys such delight, is close by.

'A long field's length away from the cottage is the little ancient, rustic, tree-hidden village'. [7] That was how Hudson pictured Itchen Abbas. The village then clustered around the church and 'The Plough' and the road to Winchester was not then lined with houses. The village had its own railway station on the Alton to Winchester line but this did not detract from Hudson's vision of it as one of any number of Hampshire villages as yet untouched

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[1] Louise Creighton, *Dorothy Grey* (London 1907).

[2] Morley Roberts (ed.), *Men, Books and Birds by W H Hudson* (London, 1925), p.24.

[3] Dennis Shrubsall, *The Unpublished Letters of W H Hudson* (Lampeter, 2006), p.183.

[4] W H Hudson, *Hampshire Days* (London, 1903), p.271.

[5] Roberts, p.24.

[6] *Hampshire Days*, p.270.

[7] ibid., p.269.

and unspoilt by the modern world — 'villages that look as natural and one with the scene as chalk down and trees and green meadows, and have an air of immemorial quiet and a human life that is part of nature's life, unstrenuous, slow and sweet.'[8]

Wherever he was staying Hudson always liked to get as close as possible to the local community, conversing with villagers and listening to their stories of long ago. On Sundays he would join worshippers in the local church. In *Hampshire Days* he recalls attending the Harvest Festival service on 17th September 1900 and, fascinated by the profusion of wild mimulus growing nearby at Ovington, weighs the relative merits of wild and cultivated flowers for church decoration. A long conversation with an old woman (probably Mrs Harriet Shefferd) gives us a wonderful glimpse of ancient times:

> *Nothing's good enough now unless you buys it in a public-house or a shop. It wasn't so when I were a girl. We did everything for ourselves then, and it were better, I tell'e. We kep' a pig then - so did everyone; and the pork and bacon it were good, not like what we buy now. We put it mostly in brine, and let it be for months; and when we took it out and biled it, it were red as a cherry and white as milk, and it melted just like butter in your mouth. That's what we ate in my time. But you can't keep a pig now – oh dear, no! You don't have him more'n a day or two before the sanitary man looks in. … And we didn't drink no tea then. Eight shillings a pound, or maybe seven- and-six — dear, dear, how was we to buy it! We had beer for breakfast and it did us good. It were better than all these nasty cocoa stuffs we drink now. We didn't buy it at the public-house — we brewed it ourselves. And we had a brick oven then, and could put a pie in, and a loaf, and whatever we wanted, and it were proper vitals. We baked barley bread, and black bread, and all sorts of bread, and it did us good and made us strong. These iron ranges and stoves we have now — what's the good o' they? You can't bake bread in 'em. And the wheat bread you gits from the shop, what's it good for? Tisn't proper vitals — it fills 'e with wind.*[9]

One of Hudson's most interesting encounters, recorded not in *Hampshire Days* but in *Adventures Among Birds*, was with the parish clerk of Itchen Abbas (this was probably the old woman's husband, John Shefferd). When Hudson met him 'he was a small thin old man with black alert hawk-like eyes, white beard, and a skull-cap on his grey head'. In church he always chanted the psalms in his high-pitched voice much more slowly than the rest of the congregation. His week-day employment as odd-job man and small-holder was quite different: 'dressed in his frayed and discoloured old clothes that hung like sacks about him and rusty shapeless hat, he was the most familiar figure in the village, in appearance an animated scarecrow'. Just across the river from Itchen Abbas is Avington Park. Hudson was famous for his campaigns to protect birds and to preserve threatened species from extinction and the Park was of particular interest to him because it was here that the last inland-breeding ravens had existed until about 1885. As a young man the old parish clerk, then a great tree climber, had been instructed by Avington's owner, Sir Charles Shelley, to retrieve the fledgling ravens from a nest in one of the tallest trees in the park. A few years later his tree climbing came to a disastrous end when, trying to catch a squirrel, he fell from the topmost branches of a very tall tree and crashed down to the ground. He was taken senseless and terribly injured to Winchester hospital and lay there on his back for a full year before he was discharged with the warning that he would never be fit for hard work and would probably not live long. Half a century later he was still busy mowing, digging and wood-cutting.[10]

There was plenty to detain Hudson in and around the village, observing the abundant bird life around the cottage and along the river, talking to the villagers, wandering through Avington Park and meeting Sir Charles and his son, Captain Shelley. The captain was a young officer just back from the Boer war. He would soon inherit the estate and introduce enlightened innovations for its employees.[11] But much as he enjoyed restful moments Hudson always loved to roam. In earlier days he and his wife (who was a dozen years older) might have explored together (and indeed they did manage to walk to Ovington together) but quite often Hudson now had to limit himself to short excursions alone. We find him making a little pilgrimage to Swarraton because Gilbert White had been curate there, only to discover that the ancient little church had been demolished and superseded by the much larger church at Northington. In Hudson's view this was, like the church at Privett, on a scale and in an urban style entirely out of keeping with its setting. He visited other nearby villages — the Candovers, the Worthys and Itchen Stoke - thus adding to his personal score of Hampshire villages (he eventually claimed to know almost all of them).

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8 *Hampshire Days,* p.267

9 *ibid. p.*330-31.

10 W H Hudson, *Adventures Among Birds* (1913, repr. 1928), pp.248-56.

11 Charles's obituary in the *Hampshire Observer,* 24 February 1951.

12 Roberts, p.24

But of Alresford he is strangely silent. Even though the diary-like letters he wrote at the cottage are headed 'Fishing Cottage, Itchen Abbas, Alresford, Hants', he records only one visit to Alresford. Much as they loved the country life the contrast between London shops and what was available locally must have been very striking. Early every morning Hudson bought milk from the farm, 'the first house of the village', but there was 'next to nothing to buy' at the Post Office and little general shop.[12] They decided to try the obvious alternative: 'Last evening we went to Alresford in quest of a piece of meat; it is a poor-looking little town, old but not picturesque nor interesting. The next time we want anything we shall go to Winchester. But we found in one shop a London paper — the ha'penny *Leader,* and it was the first paper we had seen since last Saturday. There was not much satisfaction to be got out of the news it contained.'[13] This negative first impression — even the news (of the War and the Boxer Rebellion) was disappointing — may be partly explained by circumstances. Throughout their stay Hudson had been constrained by the fact that his wife was no longer able to walk far; on this occasion they seem to have undertaken more than Mrs Hudson should have attempted and then, having arrived footsore and weary, they achieved much less than they had expected. Moreover (as the contrasting photographs on the front cover suggest) Alresford was not in those days the fashionable Georgian show-piece with boutiques and cafés that is nowadays so enthusiastically promoted by estate agents, but a plain working town with all the associated smells and sounds of smithy, brewery and gasworks. If they approached via Pound Hill they may not even have got as far as Broad Street before turning tail. It seems their negative reaction deterred them from going there again. Hudson often sounds grumpy in his letters and could certainly take against a place: he headed one of his letters 'Havant (*a beastly hole),* Hants, April 15th' and he disliked Lyndhurst as 'the spot on which London vomits Its annual crowd of collectors' (i.e., collectors of birds' eggs and butterflies).[14] It is a pity that first impressions seem to have led him to ignore Alresford: the wildlife of the Pond, the older houses in Broad Street, the Mary Russell Mitford connection and the French graves in the churchyard are exactly the kind of topics about which he would usually have found interesting things to say.

Hampshire Days was published by Longmans in May 1903. It carried the affectionate dedication 'To Sir Edward and Lady Grey, Northumbrians with Hampshire written in their hearts'. Memories of the Itchen valley dominate the last three chapters and the book ends at the cottage in late September with an evocation of an autumn sunset. Three years on and with the book published, it was time for Hudson to pay a valedictory visit. Unaccompanied by his wife, he came to Winchester where he witnessed the wild excitement of the townsfolk at the parade of troops now returning from the war that depressed him three years before. He then cycled out to visit friends in the Itchen valley — the flamboyant writer R B Cunninghame Graham, staying with his mother at Kingsworthy Rectory, Louise Creighton (author of *Dorothy Grey*) at Itchen Abbas and the Conybeares at Itchen Stoke. He was disappointed to find none of them at home and in a letter that strikes a distinctly elegiac note he records how he then went to the cottage and, briefly reliving the pleasure of the summer three years before, found a folding chair and sat on the lawn looking across the valley to Avington Woods. In a moment that echoes the conclusion of *Hampshire Days* he again noted signs of autumn. He then spent an hour with old John Shefferd. 'He was very feeble and in pain, and won't live long I think', wrote Hudson.[15] The old man died later that year.

.Further Reading

Ruth Tomalin's *W H Hudson: A Biography* (London, 1982) remains the best full account of his life. My own short study outlines his career but concentrates upon his writings about Hampshire: Brian Tippett, *W H Hudson in Hampshire* (Hampshire Record Office, Winchester, 2004). G M Trevelyan's *Grey of Fallodon* (London, 1937) deals fully and appreciatively with the Fishing Cottage and its important place in the Greys' lives. It reprints extracts from the diary they kept. *The Cottage Book by Sir Edward and Lady Grey* edited by Michael Waterhouse (London, 1999) reprints the diary and is richly illustrated with local photographs and maps. Local author Pat Brockway's well illustrated brief biography, *Sir Edward Grey: More than a Politician* (Winchester, 2010), focuses upon Grey's life beyond politics and contains a very useful section on the Fishing Cottage (pp.23 ff.). Michael Waterhouse's important new biography, *Edwardian Requiem: A Life of Sir Edward Grey*, was published in 2013. In addition to his memoirs and writings on foreign policy, Grey himself wrote books such as *Fly Fishing* (1899) and *The Charm of Birds* (1927) and gave an academic address on Wordsworth's poetry to the English Association (1923).

13 Shrubsall, p.184.

14 Hampshire Days, p.169.

15 Shrubsall, p.323.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN HAMPSHIRE

by

Christopher Mulvey

The story of the English language in Hampshire is central to the story of the English language itself so it is necessary to start with the story of English. The first thing to say is that it has no real beginning. If we went back to the year 400, just as the Romans were about to leave Britannia, we would already find a few Germanic people speaking the earliest form of what we might call English English rather that what we might call Continental English. The proper name for that is West Germanic, the language from which modern Dutch, modern German and modern English have all descended. Cousin languages of West Germanic were North Germanic and East Germanic. East Germanic has died out altogether, but North Germanic has become Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, and Icelandic. (Robinson, O. 248) The original of all of these languages is called Proto- Germanic, a language spoken by a people who Proto-Germanic gives us what we might call the basic English word set. It included words like father, mother, head, foot, winter, sun, moon, honey, apple, wolf, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. The quite amazing fact is that forms of these words can be found in Gaelic to Gujarati, in Albanian to Yagnobi, in several hundreds of ancient and modern European and Indian languages. All those languages, including English, are derived from a much guessed at original language called Proto-Indo-European. It was, some say, the language of a tribe living on the Caspian steppes six thousand years ago.

(Fortson 46) The real starting point of English is the starting point of language itself, and a possible date for that is 100,000 years ago. (Johansson 85) But in order to focus on the English language in Hampshire today, we need a more concrete starting point, and that might best be the year 410 AD. In 410, the Romans withdrew altogether from the province that they called Britannia, and Germanics began crossing the North Sea in increasing numbers.

(Ertl 253) The tribal names for these people are Angles, Saxons and Jutes. By the year 500, there were at a lower estimate 10,000 and at a higher 200,000 of them inhabiting the land not yet called England (Thomas).

The popular name for the language of these people is Anglo-Saxon, but that is misleading since it leaves out the Jutes. So Old English is the name preferred by linguists for the language from the fifth century to about 1100. Middle English is the name for the language from that date up to the late-fifteenth century. Modern English is the name for the language from about 1500 to the present day. (Horobin 1) Old English had four major dialects: Kentish, West Saxon, Mercian and Northumbrian.

Using the modern county names, we can say that the Jutes invaded Kent. The Saxons invaded Sussex and Essex. The Angles invaded north and south of the River Humber, creating two separate kingdoms that reached from the Thames to the Forth: from London to Edinburgh in modern terms. (Cheyney 37-38) If you can picture all that, you can see that the Jutes had got themselves bottled up in Kent. They could not move west through the Weald because of the South Saxons nor north across the Thames because of the East Saxons. But, they could go by sea to the Isle of Wight, and from there, they moved into Hampshire before being forced back by Saxons who, moving west from Sussex, came to be called the West Saxons. Hampshire was, then, a point of political conflict as it is, now, a place of dialect contention. Hampshire was and is fairly in the middle of things. It needs to be said that the Hampshire under discussion is the old Hampshire, Hampshire the Ceremonial County, the Hampshire that includes Portsmouth, Southampton, Christchurch and Bournemouth.

From 500 AD for three hundred years, English evolved in a commonplace way. It took on board a large number of words so that people could talk about Christianity. Those words came from Latin. But that particular increase in vocabulary made change in Old English. The first real change came with the influence of the Norse language spoken by Danish invaders in the eighth and ninth centuries, but the Danes settled down and became North Country men and women. The Danes' was a Germanic language, and it blended with the merging forms of the English language used by the former Angles, the men and women now living in Mercia and Northumberland.

It was in 1066 that something linguistically profound began to take place. Invaders arrived in sufficient numbers with sufficient military power and they stayed for a sufficiently long time to bring about major changes in the grammar of English. These invaders produced a blend of Old English with Norman French. Grammatical gender was replaced by logical gender; most noun en dings were lost; word order was affected. English ceased to be a typical Germanic language. The overall change was so great that, as Peter Strevens says, 'English first came into existence in roughly the form in which we know it today around 1350, when the influence of 300 years of Norman French occupation had been assimilated into a basis of Germanic dialects.' (Strevens 29) That level of impact of one language upon another is a linguistically rare event. Languages change their vocabularies easily; they change their pronunciations slowly; they change their grammars grudgingly.

So what about Hampshire: what kind of English is spoken in Hampshire? Before we look at modern Hampshire, we need to look again at old Hampshire. Hampshire was one of the first districts to be organized as a 'shire'. It took its name from the town of Hammtun, a name that means 'farmstead on flatland by a river". In 962, it came to be called Southampton, in 962, to distinguish it from the Hampton in the Kingdom of Mercia, a hundred miles to the north (Cameron 56). Hammtun or Hamtun was in Ham-shire, a part of the Saxon Kingdom of Wessex, where the form of English then spoken was West Saxon. Wessex eventually included the counties of Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorset, Devon, Somerset, and Gloucestershire. Those are now the counties of the West Country, and the English spoken in the West Country is no longer called West Saxon English; we call it simply West Country English. But it was once the language of King Alfred. His court translators produced the first Standard English, the first classical English (Crystal, Stories 52, 56). Alfred died in 899, and, Alfred's Court English, at its zenith at his death, was replaced as the prestige language by Norman-French in 1066. After that the English of Wessex, and that of Hampshire with it, became a rural dialect. The story of West Saxon is like the story of the D'Urbervilles – once noble but later peasant. Tess Durbeyfield is always given a broad West Country accent, as she should be. However, had Winchester remained the capital of England, Tess's English would now be the Queen's English.

The rural, shire accents of England have not been lost, but they have been overlaid in the last sixty years by the development of modern dialects, created by population movements and the arrival of English-speaking immigrant groups. Present-day Hampshire is in 'a tricky situation as it would have been described as a West Country dialect area until relatively recently, but most commentators now put it in a "transitional area" between the West and the South East.' (Robinson, J.) Hampshire lies in the middle of new dialects.

West Hampshire English is a version of what is now called Central Southwest English. That includes not only the old West-Country counties but also Oxfordshire, West Berkshire, and some of Bedfordshire. East Hampshire English is a version of Home Counties English which includes Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Essex, Hertfordshire, and east Bedfordshire (Crystal, Encyclopedia of English 325). Dominating the Home Counties is London, and London is the main modern dialectal force. In 1944, two small places in Hampshire - Andover and Basingstoke - were selected by the war-time government as sites for expanded towns to take the 'overspill' of London's population in the expansion expected after the war. (See the County of London Plan prepared by John Henry Forshaw and Sir Patrick Abercrombie in 1943.) That expansion duly came, and, then, in due course, came the M3, built between 1971 and 1995. The motorway has ensured a continuous streaming of London English into Hampshire.

A further factor has to be taken into account in the description of Hampshire English. In England, we not only have regional accents, we also have class accents. These are called sociolects rather than dialects. The dominant, non-regional English accent is called Received Pronunciation or RP. The number of people who learn RP at home, that is, as children, is about 5 per cent of the population, roughly coinciding with the percentage of people getting private education. That is why RP was initially called Public-School English.

It is also called a BBC accent because once upon a time the BBC would only employ people who spoke like public-school boys and girls. The RP accent is heard a great deal in Hampshire, and it is heard a very great deal in Winchester because of its Cathedral, Law Court, College, and wealth. RP has its upper end; people who say 'hice' for 'house' and 'ite' for 'out'; it has its lower end in the world of the professions.

Upper-class English is a matter of vocabulary and accent, not grammar and syntax. Upper-class pronunciation produces many differences: fórmidable not formídable; int'resting not interesting; marse not mass and Cartholic not Catholic; jest not just as in 'jest in time'; cetch not catch; forrid not fore-head; tortoise not tortoys; clart not claret. And upper-class vocabulary produces an equally long list: lunch not dinner; sick not ill; wireless not radio; rich not wealthy; lavatory-paper not toilet-paper; note-paper not writing paper; pudding not sweet …

In 1954, Professor Alan Ross used the shorthand 'U' and 'non-U' to distinguish these differences, and Nancy Mitford caused a storm with this material in 1956. She set the English middle-classes on a witch-hunt for non-U indicators. The U accent is one that many of its users assert is the right one; and, for them, it is the only proper English accent.

That is an unusual linguistic claim. The Yorkshire man does not expect others to speak like him nor the Cockney women that others should speak like her. They are proud of their accents, but they do not say that it is proper English, only that it is their English.

Nancy Mitford, Evelyn Waugh, and John Betjeman not only embraced Alan Ross's findings, they insisted that non-U speakers spoke badly. They also insisted that non-U speakers could never learn to speak properly. As Mitford said: 'one U-speaker recognizes another U-speaker almost as soon as he opens his mouth.' (Mitford: 40) That is true of any accent, but it had a particular implication for Mitford.

The upper-class accent or RP has come under an unusual kind of linguistic attack since the 1950s. It is not, for instance, the accent of the abusive Jonathan Ross even though he was employed by the BBC and is very wealthy, or should that be rich? Jonathan Ross – no son of Alan Ross - represents the opposite of the RP phenomenon, and he is said to speak Estuary English or Estuarian. This is the accent of the younger people in Eastenders.

London regional speech patterns have spread into Essex and Kent, and are now pervasive. It is an accent which deliberately talks down not up. It is a modified form of Cockney, wide-spread, inclusive, embracing. Estuarian contradicts the elitist assumptions of RP. The Times calls this kind of English mock Cockney or 'Mockney'. In 2008, it claimed that George Osborne was taking Mockney lessons to cure his 'irritable vowel syndrome'.

(Whitworth) In additional to dialects and sociolects, there are also ethnolects in Hampshire, the English of ethnic groups. Southampton has a British-Indian Sikh community of 8000. (Mead 5) Portsmouth has a British-Bangladeshi community of 3500. (Hantsweb) These speakers have distinct modern dialects, versions of the urban Asian dialects of London and Birmingham. British-Asian English is much influenced by the world's largest community of English speakers, the 330,000,000 people of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh who use English. Of these, 60,000,000 are fluent English speakers. Influences of Indian English are to be found in the Estuarian of Jonathan Ross. 'Innit' as a sentence ending is an example. The future of English may be Indian, innit.

Hampshire is also the location of some very special kinds of Englishes. Winchester College's Notions and the New Forest's Commoners' English are two examples. The first is perhaps 600 year old, and it is the language that a new boy to the school has to learn before Christmas, or else. At the beginning of their first term the Notions book is sent to New Men.' Both 'Notions' (to mean words and phrases) and 'men' (to mean boys) are examples of this language. (Coleman 186-87) New Forest Commoners' Language is also restricted to a very small group. It is used by the Agisters, Commoners, and Verderers who live in the New Forest and who maintain its many ancient customs. (Bamber 145) It is a rich mixture of old West Country English to which has been added a vocabulary taken from Romani, Old French and Anglo-Norman. Both Notions and Commoners preserve words that are hundreds of years old and are now used nowhere else.

To end this discussion of Hampshire English, it would be appropriate to say something about the place names of the county. There are some 300 of them, and, they contain a wealth of linguistics and history and, indeed, romance. All 300 are worth exploring, but a few examples will have to do. In the west of the county and near the beginning of the alphabet is Broughton. According to The Complete Atlas of the British Isles, England has thirteen villages called Broughton in counties all the way from Hampshire to Cumberland.

The name means either 'Brook Farm' or 'The Farm by the Fort'. In the case of the Hampshire Broughton, it is glossed as'Brook Farm'. The first part of the name, 'Brough', comes from the Saxon word broc, which then meant fast flowing stream, and has become our modern word 'brook'. (Reader's Digest Association 169) The second part of the name comes from the Saxon word tun which gives us our modern word 'town'. The Oxford English Dictionary says of the word 'town' that it comes from the Old English word tuun or tun. That initially had the meaning of an 'enclosed place or piece of ground, an enclosure; a field'. It goes on to say that the modern sense developed after 'the Norman Conquest, and corresponds to F. ville 'town, city', as similarly developed from L. villa 'farm, countryhouse'. Old English tun progressively meant a farm, a hamlet, a village and finally a town. (OED). The word grew in meaning as the tuns grew in size.

In the middle of the Hampshire is the village of Micheldever on the River Dever. In the ninth century the name was recorded as Mycendefr. Linguists think that this is a Celtic name, a remnant of the Britonnic language, a language for which there is surprisingly little evidence in Old English. The meaning appears to be 'boggy waters'. The second part of the name, defr, means 'stream' in Britonnic. River Dever means then River River. That is not uncommon. Avon and Ouse are also Britonnic words meaning 'river' so the River Avon is etymologically also the River River as is the River Ouse. The first part of the name Micheldever, from mycen, Britonnic for bog or dark, later became confused with the Old English word michel meaning great or big. (Ayto 755) The Oxford English Dictionary provides 167 variant spellings of the word between the seventh and the twentieth centuries. A single spelling of the name Micheldever would not have been agreed until the nineteenth century.

To the east of the county, and towards the end of the alphabet, is the village of Sheet. It is on the River Rother and the name comes from the Old English word sciete, meaning a 'projecting piece of land, corner, or nook'. It was so named because it is located on the angle between two streams. The larger stream is called the Rother, an interesting name in itself. It is a backformation from the name of a bridge that once went over it. 'Rother' comes from Old English hrythe, meaning cattle. So it was once simply the cattle bridge.

When the meaning of the Old English word became forgotten, people must have thought that Rother was the name of the stream over which the bridge passed. This loss of folk knowledge of old meanings is a constant force in the reshaping of place names. In fact the stream had been given a name by the Saxons; they called it the Shire from the Old English word scir, meaning bright or clear. (Ayto 936, 996) The Bright Stream at Sheet contrasts with the Muddy Stream at Micheldever, but we have to dig into Celtic and Germanic to discover that.

To the south of the county, we have already looked at the name of the city of Southampton so we can box the compass bylooking to the north and to Basingstoke. This name has three Old English elements: Basa + inga + stoc. Basa is the name of a Saxon leader. Inga is an element that appears in many English place names, and it commonly denotes possession of a place by the people led by the named person. Stoc means 'outlying farmstead'. So put together Basingstoke means the place where you will find the isolated farm owned by the people once led by Basa. John Arlott, that most famous of West Country speakers, called his autobiography, Basingstoke Boy, because he was brought up in the then pretty market town in the first decades of the twentieth century. (Ayto 80-81, 568) The fact that Arlott was born so far to the north of the county shows the range and strength of the West-Country accent before the arrival of Basingstoke's London overspill population in the 1960s.

A final Hampshire name - Winchester, the city at the centre of the county and the centre of its history. In Winchester, we have a linguistic treasure. The Romans named the settlement that they found there 'Venta Belgarum'. That means 'Chief Place of the Belgae'. (Ayto 1209) Belgae was the name that the Romans gave to the Britons living in the area now called Hampshire, having previously met these people in what is now called Belgium.

The Romans set up military fortifications at the Chief Place of the Belgae, and the Roman word for those fortifications was castra--camps. After the Romans left in 410, the arriving Saxons called the city Wintanceastre. The Saxons palatalized and fronted the Roman castra to pronounce it as 'chester'. We find 'chesters' all over England-- Manchester, Colchester, Dorchester, Chichester, Winchester, Portchester, Rochester. They were all once Roman fortifications. The Saxons did not have a 'v' sound, and they pronounced the Roman 'v' as 'w' so 'Venta Castra' became 'Winta-chester'. And through many forms and many spellings, it evolved into present-day Winchester.

The story of the English language in Hampshire is the story of but one county, and there are seventy-seven counties in the United Kingdom. The history of the English language shows that in all of them there is much that is common but that there is also much that is different. The English language is, in fact, extraordinarily varied throughout the British Isles. Hampshire's story shows both how rich a county's story can be, and it also shows that there has never been a greater diversity of forms of the English language in the county than there are now in the twenty-first century. Varied as the language is through time and varied as it in space, the fact that the English language has carried unfailingly the meanings of its speakers through all the changes and through all the years of sixteen hundred centuries shows the resilience and the power of human speech. That pattern of constancy in and through change is a source of wonder for linguists, and it should be a source of reassurance for those who fear that the English language might, today, be in a state of decline.

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In 2009 Christopher Mulvey, Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Winchester, entertained Alresford Historical and Literary Society by recounting the work then in progress for the University's English Language Project. Now that the work has borne fruit (see http://www.englishproject.co.uk) we are grateful to Professor Mulvey and the University of Winchester for permission to print the above article. (Ed.)

The English Project also reveals that 2015 is the 500th anniversary of the death of the 'world's greatest punctuator' Aldus Manutius the Elder (Aldus Manuzio), who was born in 1449.[1]

Manutius was a Venetian humanist, who became a printer, publisher and founder of the Aldine Press. He is remembered for the invention of italic type, the establishment of the modern use of the semicolon, the development of the modern appearance of the comma, and the introduction of inexpensive books in small formats (octavos) bound in vellum that were read in much the same way as modern paperbacks.[2]

Manutius' Dolphin & Anchor printer's device [3]

[1] http://www.englishproject.org/february-and-semicolon
[2] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aldus_Manutius
[3] http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/firstimpressions/Pioneers-of-Print/Aldus-Manutius/

THE DISTRICT NURSE AND THE ROPLEY COFFEE ROOMS

by

Nick Denbow and Una Yeates

On June 6, 1926, Nurse Janet Johnson arrived in Ropley to take up the position of District Nurse, covering the Ropley and Alresford areas. Initially, with only a bicycle for transport, the area was restricted to Ropley, Bishop's Sutton, Four Marks, Medstead and Privett. Nurse Johnson was often to be seen on her bicycle, pedalling away energetically to the next call. Over the next thirty years Nurse Johnson - district nurse, midwife and friend to all in these villages - had assisted at the birth of most of the children born in the area, and became one of its best known and best loved residents. Anyone born in Ropley and the surrounding district who is over 60 years of age this year, was likely to have been one of "Nurse Johnson's babies".

Nurse Johnson is presented with flowers by Jane Goode

Nurse Johnson was also an active member of the Good Companions Club, the Church, the WI, and the Horticultural Society - all in between playing whist! She lived in a bungalow, known as Kingsley, on the corner of Church Lane and School Lane, very close to the Church. In her retirement, she did not cease her previous work, volunteering to help by running the baby clinic and the chiropody sessions in the Ropley Coffee Rooms. This Parish run facility was perhaps her foremost interest in her retirement, and in 1976, fifty years after arriving in Ropley, she donated the money to build the new cloakroom extension, and complete necessary roof repairs. The Rev Anthony Wilmont opened the new facilities, and as guest of honour, Nurse Johnson was presented with a large scroll of appreciation signed by all her friends in the village, and a bouquet of flowers from Jane Goode, the daughter of Doreen Goode of Ropley: Doreen had been one of "Nurse Johnson's babies" in the 1930s, and Jane had attended the baby clinics held in the Coffee Rooms.

In one of the many speeches made that day, in appreciation of her work, and of the donation to the Coffee Rooms, Health Visitor Mrs Jean Laidlaw spoke of the many grateful mothers and babies who had attended the health clinic, established 40 years before by Nurse Johnson and Miss Henderson. All this was faithfully reported in the local newspapers published in that era. Jean Laidlaw had arrived as a District Nurse covering the adjacent Four Marks, Selborne and East Tisted areas in 1965. Later, Jean found herself also covering Ropley, and having to 'assist' at the monthly baby clinic, effectively often 'run' by Retired Nurse Johnson. Jean remembers that Mrs Potter was also there, and made the tea. There were some things that modern nursing practice would not have liked about these clinics, such as the special blanket with the hand-made fringing used to cover the scales, but Nurse Johnson was generally regarded as 'forthright', not afraid to say what she thought, and not too tolerant of younger people with 'new' ideas!

Nurse Johnson's early life

Janet Johnson was born on 17 January 1896, in Derby: her father Thomas J Johnson is recorded in the 1911 Census as a Sergeant Major in the Royal Engineers, attached to the Ordnance Survey in Southampton as an Instructor in Surveying: Janet, then aged 15, had three younger brothers. In 1916 Janet was around 20 years old, and hearing of the horrors of WW1 she was one of the many young women who volunteered to work in the VAD, Voluntary Aid Detachment, as nurses, cooks and house-maids. Janet joined up as a VAD Housemaid, and served at the Sister's Quarters in the Hursley Camp Military Hospital, at Hursley Park near Winchester, until January 1918. Then she transferred to the Bath War Hospital as a 'Special Service Probationer' – in other words, someone Being trained 'on the job' as a nurse. Her record card at Bath, in August 1919, records her as being a 'Nurse' in their Hospital. Following WW1 Nurse Johnson took up her first appointment as a District Nurse; this was in Mottisfont, Hampshire, and when she left in 1926, the many friends she had made there presented her with a carriage clock.

The 'Kingsley' bungalow in Ropley

Nurses Johnson & Mace 1927

William Ford and his family lived at Forde House, next to the Church in Ropley. He had two sons, Phillip and Reg: in 1912, Phillip Ford married Bessie Triggs [1] of West Meon: before the wedding, Phillip had lived at 3 Church Cottages, opposite Ropley Church, but for his new married life he bought the bungalow known as Kingsley, on Church Lane. Here Bessie and Phillip had sons John, born 1915, and Robert, born 1917. Phil Ford was a painter and decorator, but also was a chorister and enjoyed gardening: he won various horticultural medals. While the boys were still young, Bessie Ford developed cancer, and was one of the people in the care of Nurse Johnson, when she arrived in around 1926. Since Nurse Johnson needed lodgings in Ropley, it seems she took a room at Kingsley and effectively became a live-in nurse to help Bessie. The relationship developed as she took over the rôle of house-keeper too, but since she was still working in the daytimes with other patients locally, another nurse, Nurse Mace, also helped with the daytime nursing of Bessie. In June 1929, Bessie died, aged 44. Janet's commitment to the family was such that her parents, Major and Mrs Johnson, sent flowers to Bessie's funeral, to support their daughter, as was recorded in the newspaper reports.

Nurse Johnson stayed on after Bessie died, continuing to look after the boys, as a live-in lodger and house- keeper at Kingsley. This bungalow stood on a corner plot with a large garden: Una Yeates, now living in Alresford, and the daughter of one of Bessie's sisters, can remember cycling to Ropley from her home in West Meon, to visit "Aunt Johnnie" and Uncle Phil and the boys in the 1940s. Later, when pregnant, Una asked Aunt Johnnie what to do about her severe heartburn: the response was that she should drink Lucozade (which worked). Johnnie predicted that her baby would be born with long hair (which was the case). Phillip and his brother Reg, who lived in a similar bungalow in Ropley, worked together erecting bungalows in the locality for the returning soldiers after WW1. Some of these were possibly based on the surplus army huts from the WW1 camps around Winchester and Aldershot, which were sold off for the purpose[2], others were known as 'Colonial' Bungalows, apparently imported as a sort of flat-pack from Canada, with a corrugated metal outer skin and internal walls from wood, plus a characteristic verandah.

[1] Bessie Triggs had a brother John, whose story has also been published on the AlresfordMemories website.

[2] In Alresford, the "Kingsley" bungalows on New Farm Road were donated by Mr Henry Baker, a draper of Broad St, in memory of his son, Lt Kingsley Baker, MC (See another AlresfordMemories website story). There is No known connection between Kingsley Baker and the Ropley bungalow, known as 'Kingsley' from 1912.

Doreen Goode still lives in one of these Canadian bungalows in Ropley. She remembers Nurse Johnson working with Dr Gillies, a Scot who suffered a hip wound in WW1: he had a surgery at Ropley Lodge from 1938, but Dr Happel transferred this to Little Barton after Dr Gillies died in 1952. Doreen came from a large family, the Rutter family of Monkwood, who had lots of babies, and spent a lot of time with Nurse Johnson as a result! Plus they treated Kingsley as their local A+E department, going there to always get a welcome and immediate treatment – once for example for wood splinters in Jane's toe. Doreen sums this up by saying "Her heart was in her job", and this particularly applied when Nurse Johnson cycled every day one winter up Stapley Lane to administer injections to help her father's pleurisy.

Nurse Johnson

Defence Medal

For her work in Ropley in WW2, Nurse Johnson was awarded the Defence Medal. Phil's sons John and Robert had both been serving abroad during the War, and afterwards established their own families. Nurse Johnson was Godmother to Andrea, one of John's daughters. Robert also had two daughters, Brenda and Shirley: Shirley remembers visits to see her Grandad and Nurse Johnson, whom she knew as "Jinx", and comments that she had an old, experienced face – which inspired confidence: presumably this was true also of her patients - unless they were frightened of course!

After the war Nurse Johnson continued working as the district nurse, and served on various local committees associated with the Church and the Coffee Rooms, while also acting as pseudo-grandmother to Phil's grandchildren. To help her travels around the area, a car was provided – from funds raised by local public subscription. Shirley reports that Jinx was said to drive this car very badly, down the local lanes, but this was only based on gossip. Then on Christmas Day in 1954 Phil died, while attending a Church service[3]. Nurse Johnson 'officially' Retired in 1956, and continued living in Kingsley, alone, but carried on working in the Community, for the various health clinics and committees. Kingsley was sold in 1976, when Nurse Johnson moved to a "neat" bungalow in Town Close, Ropley, and she used her money as a donation to enable the refurbishment of the Coffee Rooms: subsequently Kingsley was demolished to make way for a modern house, which retains the name.

Nurse Johnson died two years later, in 1978, aged 82.

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[3] Phil's son John also died while attending a Church service on Christmas Day, but 30 years later, in 1984

The Ropley Coffee Rooms

1904

The Coffee Rooms Today

The donation made by Nurse Johnson to update the Ropley Coffee Rooms appears to be far more significant than might be assumed. Frederick Mason, in his book "Ropley, Past and Present"[4] explains the background, which judged by modern legal standards sounds rather irregular.

Basically the Coffee Rooms formed part of a larger property purchased by Miss Hagen, of Ropley House. Miss Hagen dedicated the Rooms to the Parish in memory of her parents, as a meeting place, for the Mother's Union and the Band of Hope, as well as for the men of the Parish, as an alternative to the ale houses – there were three such 'terrible places' in Ropley village at the time. The room was opened in October 1883, and during the week it was used as a men's club: from 1906 it was used as the HQ for a troop of Boy Scouts. On Sundays Miss Hagen conducted hymn singing and organised afternoon tea there. The Coffee Rooms still have a thinly boarded-up doorway to the rest of the house, which is known as Meadowside, much to the consternation of the later babysitter for Dr Thorpe, who has lived there since around 1960. The sound of the cues on the billiard balls, and footsteps around the table, late at night, were most disconcerting to a stranger!

Miss Hagen died in 1932, and bequeathed the house, stables and paddock, and Coffee Rooms to the Church of England Winchester Diocese. A 'Deed of Trust' associated with this bequest left the Coffee Rooms to the Parish, to be maintained by the income from the rents arising from the house, the stables and the paddock. In 1956, these rents were said not to meet the maintenance costs: as a result Meadowside was sold to a private buyer, and the paddock sold to the County Education Authority – it now houses the Ropley School. There was no apparent benefit from the cash inflow from these sales, as the next year the Trustees proposed to sell the Coffee Rooms and rebuild a hall on the site of the stables. At a Parish meeting this was rejected, and an alternative proposal to modernise and renovate the Coffee Rooms was adopted. Nurse Johnson later made the substantial cash gift which financed the re-roofing of the building and the addition of new, modern cloakroom and toilet facilities. Nurse Johnson specified that Johnnie Knight and his brother should carry out the building works, and he thinks that the total bill for the work was around £5000.

The Coffee Rooms, which will hold 120 people, are now the responsibility of a management committee appointed by the Parochial Church Council, and are still in use today as a meeting room, popular for birthday parties, as was originally intended by Miss Hagen.

[4] Sir Frederick Mason, "Ropley, Past and Present", Scriptmate Editions, for the Ropley Society, 1989, ISBN 0 9513766

SHEEP FAIRS

by

Brian Rothwell

Introduction

The bishopric of Winchester was one of the richest in Europe during the Middle Ages; it owned more than sixty estates across seven counties. Henri de Blois, brother of King Stephen and bishop of Winchester (1129-71), is credited with the twin ambitions of building the weir to form Old Alresford Pond and of designing the layout of New Alresford as a marketplace on land near to his palace at Bishops Sutton. Henri died before the completion of his projects and it was left to one of his successors, Godfrey de Lucy (1189-1204), to finish the construction of the weir and the town.[1]

One of the principal trades in the town's markets during the Middle Ages was wool. Alresford's wide streets made it an ideal place to trade livestock and sheep fairs became established as an integral part of the local economy and continued to be so for hundreds of years. In the eighteenth century, title deeds referred to East Street as 'Ram Alley' and West Street as 'Sheepcoop Street',[2] a reference to the necessity of separating the animals for sale by gender. The town was home to some of the largest sheep fairs in Hampshire in the early nineteenth century. Its only rivals were the big events held at Weyhill, near Andover, and Overton.[3]

The sheep fairs in Alresford always started on a Thursday. This day of the week had been designated as the town's market day by one of the twelfth-century bishops mentioned above.[4] The two biggest annual events were scheduled for late July after fleeces had been sheared and at Michaelmas when ewes were purchased for breeding.[5] John Duthy described the scene at an Alresford sheep fair in the early 1830s:

> On these occasions the main streets of the town through which passes the public highway to the metropolis, must present an extraordinary spectacle to the passing stranger, being converted into one great sheepfold, formed by wattles, and divided into compartments for the accommodation of its woolly inmates, which are congregated immediately beneath the windows of houses, or separated from them merely by a narrow space, barely sufficient to admit a single foot passenger. The width of the streets allow many thousands of sheep to be penned within their precincts and, from custom, the inhabitants seem to be reconciled to the inconvenience of being cooped up by a bleating multitude that invade their premises, and to the noise and the bustle of buyers, sellers and drovers who attend upon them.[6]

Illustration 1: Two hundred sheep being shepherded through East Street towards the Fair Field on the Bishops Sutton Road during the 1910s.[7] Whilst this was well after the fairs had ceased to be held in the town centre, the photograph does give some indication of the chaos that John Duthy described in the 1830s.

The gathering of thousands of ewes, rams and lambs, with their attendant dogs, shepherds, and auctioneers would have made for incessant noise, bad language, appalling smells and a huge mess in the town centre that had to be cleaned up after every event. This represented extremely poor town hygiene, even by 1830s standards!

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1 Edward Roberts, 'The History of Old Alresford Pond – A Re-assessment', *Alresford Displayed*, Issue 10 (New Alresford, 1985).

2 Raymond Elliott, 'The Alresford Hurdle Houses', *Alresford Displayed,* Issue 6 (New Alresford, 1981).

3 Isabel Sanderson, *Dwellings in Alresford,* Booklet 2 (New Alresford, 1975), 48.

4 Hampshire Record Office (HRO), 7M50/A4, English translation of charter dated 10 December 1572 issued to the borough by the Bishop of Winchester.

5 HRO, 7M50/A1, Court Book of the Bailiff & Burgesses of New Alresford, 1615-1890.

6 John Duthy, *Sketches of Hampshire, Embracing the Architectural Antiquities, Topography and Country adjacent to the River Itchen* (Winchester, 1839).

7 Edward Roberts, *In and Around Alresford in Old Photographs,* Volume 1 (New Alresford, 1975), plate 50.

The Borough Corporation of the Bailiff and Burgesses of New Alresford managed the sheep fairs. They had been granted that right in the thirteenth century and it had been confirmed by a Bishop of Winchester charter in 1572. The corporation provided a cage attached to a weighbridge and hundreds of hurdles. Constructed on a rectangular wooden frame, a sheep hurdle measured approximately two metres long by one metre wide and was made of interlaced hazel or wattle. These were hammered into the ground to form temporary sheep pens. They had iron hoops or hasps placed over the end poles to link them together. The burgesses made money from the fairs; it was big business as they were able to charge tolls to all of the sheep dealers.[8]

The burgesses had been asked by some of the residents to move the fairs out of the town centre in 1831. The minutes in their court book of 18 September record a resolution that, 'this would be deemed inexpedient, in that the trade of the town would suffer from the alteration'.[9] However, four years later, in 1835, they apparently changed their minds when they were approached by a particularly persuasive franchisee.

Henry Dancaster

That individual was named Henry Dancaster. Born in 1802, he was a man of ideas with a finger in many pies. If he had lived in the twenty-first century he might have been dubbed a social entrepreneur. He had his own cabinet making and upholstery business on Broad Street and according to an advertisement in the *Hampshire Chronicle* in 1825, he was also an auctioneer. He invested his money in land and built blocks of cottages for his workers. Both Churchyard Cottages and what were Ivy Cottages in Brandy Mount were built by Dancaster.[10] In 1835, he paid the burgesses £120 in two instalments for the right to manage all of the sheep fairs in the town that year.[11]

The burgesses had available to them a four-acre field to the east of Sun Lane known as 'The Poor's Land'. It had been purchased by the corporation members with funds that had been left to them in the wills of local benefactors who wanted to do something for the benefit of the poor. The field was normally let out to farmers for grazing and the rent the burgesses received was distributed as alms on specific days of the year.

It is not certain who suggested that this field be used but it is far more likely to have been Henry Dancaster rather than the burgesses. Having turned down the notion of moving the sheep fairs out of the town centre in 1831, it would be logical to assume that they would have had to record a reversing decision in 1835. However, nothing to this effect appears in their minutes. All that is mentioned is their decision to franchise the management of the fairs to Dancaster.[12]

Running a successful sheep fair in the 1830s was a considerable leadership challenge. It involved planning and marketing beforehand together with organisation and 'people handling' skills on the day. It would appear that Dancaster possessed all of these abilities. On Thursday 30 July 1835, the annual July Sheep Fair was moved to 'The Poor's Land'. This move was an immediate success; not only were 42,000 sheep penned at the fair, but also the town was kept free of noise and pollution for the first time. 'Much praise is due to Mr Dancaster for the very judicious arrangements on the Fair Ground', reported the *Hampshire Chronicle* the following Saturday.[13]

The sheep fairs never returned to the centre of town. Henceforward, all of them were held on 'The Poor's Land' with ever increasing numbers of both sheep penned and sales completed. Prizes were awarded for the best penned sheep and as a nice touch, Dancaster gave the winning shepherds new top hats. In 1837, the *Hampshire Chronicle* reported that, '140,000 sheep were penned at the Alresford Fair and that yeomanry and farmers had subscribed liberally to present Mr Dancaster with a handsome piece of plate for his exertions in promoting the Fair'.[14] So successful had the fairs become that the 1843 tithe map shows that 'The Poor's Land' had become known as 'The Fair Field'.[15]

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[8] HRO, 7M50/A1, Court Book of the Bailiff and Burgesses of New Alresford 1615-1890.
[9] *Ibid.*[10] Sanderson, *op cit.,* Booklet 5 (1979), 26-8.
[11] HRO, 7M74/DB1, The Book of Accounts belonging to the Bailiff and Burgesses of New Alresford, 1745-1890. £120 in 1835 equates to £12,500 at today's (2011) values.
[12] HRO, 7M50/A1, Court Book of the Bailiff and Burgesses of New Alresford 1615-1890.
[13] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 2 August 1835.
[14] A.J. Robertson, *History of Alresford* (New Alresford, 1937), 63.
[15] Sanderson, *op cit.,* Booklet 4 (1978), 37.

The four-acre site was bordered to the north by the gardens and paddocks of the Langton Estate. In 1862, this estate was purchased by William Benson, a barrister who for a time practised at Lincoln's Inn.[16] He and his wife, Elizabeth, produced three sons and the youngest of them, Francis Robert, after schooling at Winchester and taking a degree from New College, Oxford, went on to become a famous Shakespearean actor and theatre manager.[17] In his memoirs, written in 1930, Frank Benson (1858-1939) recounted some of the events of his childhood at Langtons.

> From a mound in our garden, my brother and I could watch the activities of the Sheep Fair. Thousands of sheep, a few cattle and a never ending chorus of bleats and baas, shepherds and peasants in smock frocks, dark skinned gypsies and their picturesque caravans, well-to-do farmers in breaches and gaiters and a surging melee of barking dogs of every size driving owners and flocks to distraction. There were butchers and buyers, drovers, tramps and beggars jostling, bargaining and shouting. What fun for two small boys![18]

Henry Dancaster was a showman and he must have been superb at marketing. He based his post-fair activities at the Swan Inn. There, in 1841, he persuaded a committee of twelve eminent local men, including Lord Ashburton and Sir Edward Tichborne, to donate trophies that would be awarded to the future winners of the 'best in show' categories. The following July a post-fair formal dinner was arranged at the Swan. After speeches and toasts, the silver cups, some worth up to £10, were unveiled and awarded to the winning owners. Dancaster succeeded in establishing a local tradition; throughout his lifetime these prizes were always awarded after a formal dinner at the Swan that was graced by the gentlemen, farmers and dealers who had attended the sheep fair.[19]

The coming of the railway

The burgesses must have been pleased with the success of their town's sheep fairs for the quarter of a century that followed Dancaster's inspired 'out of town' move in 1835. In 1861, however, they were jolted out of their complacency by the announcement of the route of the railway that would join the town to Alton and Winchester. The proposed line ran diagonally through 'The Fair Field'. Frank Benson remembered the arrival of the railway navvies in his memoirs. 'The felling of woods, delving and digging in fields and building of white chalk embankments', during the construction of the very deep cutting that bisected the field to the south of his home at Langtons.[20]

Illustration 2: The steep railway embankment bisected theFair Field, looking east from the Sun Lane railway bridge in December 2012. Photograph by the author.

[16] Sanderson, *op cit.,* Booklet 4 (1978), 33.
[17] Ann Pennington, 'Sir Frank Benson', *Alresford Displayed,* Issue 13 (New Alresford, 1988)
[18] Sir Frank Benson, *My Memoirs,* (London, 1930), 29.
[19] Sanderson, *op cit.,* Booklet 3 (1976), 15.
[20] Benson, *op cit.,* 29.

In all, it took more than 400 labourers four years to prepare the ground for the seventeen miles of new railway track that was laid between Alton and Winchester. The hilly terrain necessitated the building of twenty- two deep cuttings that led to under- bridges and twenty steep embankments that provided access to over- bridges. There were at least four deaths and numerous injuries amongst the workforce. The line did not finally open for business until Monday 2 October 1865.[21]

The work of the railway navvies ensured that the Fair Field became unfit for its intended purpose soon after the 1862 sheep fairs had closed for business. In order to hold the July sheep fair in 1863, the town burgesses were forced, at short notice, to find an alternative venue. They found one, known as Sheeplands Paddock, that was owned by Winchester College and which lay (and still lies) to the north of the Bishops Sutton Road. The desperation of the burgesses is shown in the fact that that they paid a lease premium of £300 for the use of this new field for only two years. A long term lease was not signed until 1865 for a one-off fee of £23 6s 0d and an annual rent of two guineas.[22]

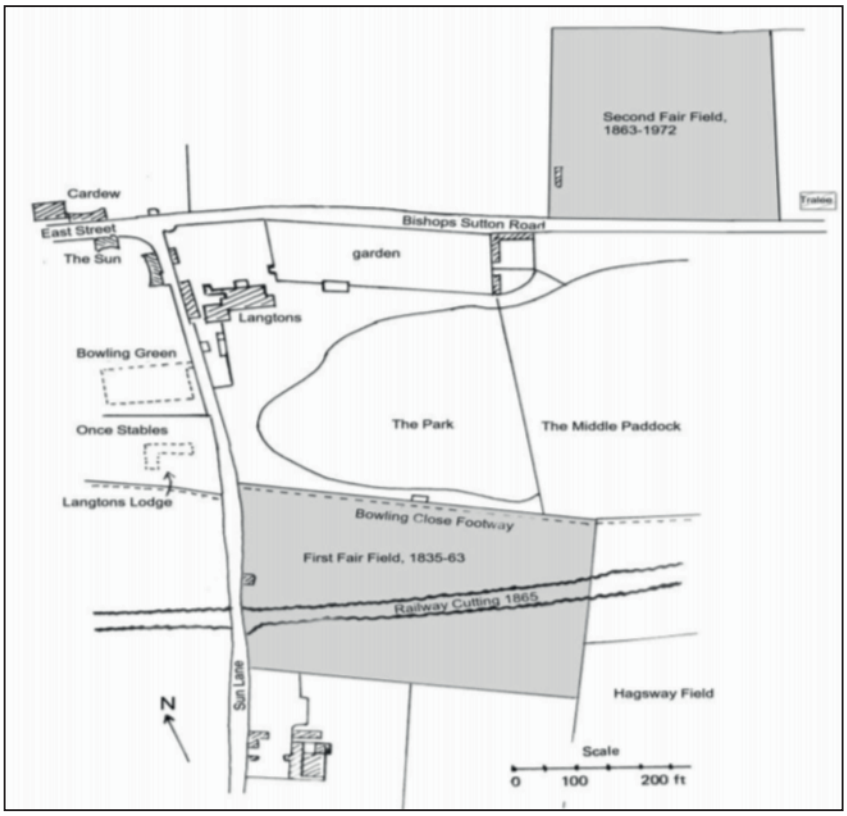

Illustration 3: Map showing the location of the Sheep Fair Fields of Alresford.[23]

On 26 December 1864, the burgesses sold 'The Old Fair Field' with the railway embankment running through the middle to the Langton Estate owner, William Benson, for £331-17s-6d. This money was used to buy consolidated shares and the yearly dividends were then distributed to the poor. A bonus was that the railway company also paid an annual rental of £14-12s 6d for the use of 'The Old Fair Field' and this was added to the total available for alms distribution.[24] With former site rendered useless for penning sheep by the railway cutting, Sheeplands Paddock soon became known as 'The New Fair Field'.

The decline of the sheep fairs

The heady days of the 1830s and 40s, with Henry Dancaster in charge of the town's sheep fairs, did not last forever. Dancaster died in 1858 at the age of fifty-six [25] and thirty years later, the number of sheep penned at the July fair had dropped from hundreds of thousands to a mere 16,000 in 1887.[26]

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[21] Roger Hardingham, *The Mid-Hants Railway, from Construction to Closure, 1865-1973* (Basingstoke, 1995), 5-12.

[22] HRO, 7M74/DB1, The Book of Accounts belonging to the Bailiff and Burgesses of New Alresford, 1745-1890. £300 in 1863 equates to £30,000 at today's (2011) values.

[23] The base information for this map comes from the 1843 Tithe Map (HRO). Additions pertaining to the railway and the dotted line features were made by Isabel Sanderson in 1978 (Booklet 4), 37 and those pertaining to the Second Fair Field by Glenn Gilbertson in 2012.

[24] HRO, 7M50/A18, The Conveyance of the Fair Field. The sale price equates to £30,000 at 2011 values. William Benson became a

[25] corporation burgess in 1865 and remained in position until his death in 1887. Sanderson, *op cit.*, Booklet 5 (1979), 28.

[26] HRO, 7M50/A1, Court Book of the Bailiff and Burgesses of New Alresford 1615-1890.

Sheep were being taken by rail to bigger animal trading centres with better facilities than Alresford could provide. The animals lost much less weight when transported this way than they had done in the times when they were driven by shepherds and dogs along Hampshire drove roads on the hoof.

This reduction in animal numbers was reflected in the fee that the burgesses could command for franchising out the right to manage the fairs. From Dancaster's height of £120 in 1835, the franchise price had fallen, in spite of inflation, to £80 per annum when Henry Baker and Arthur Stubbs won the closed tender bid for organising the fairs in 1887.[27] This franchise fee was further reduced to £50 per year in 1923. In the 1930s, an average of only 8,000 animals was penned at the July fair, half the number of fifty years previously and a small fraction (5 per cent) of the totals that Henry Dancaster managed to attract in the 1840s.[28]

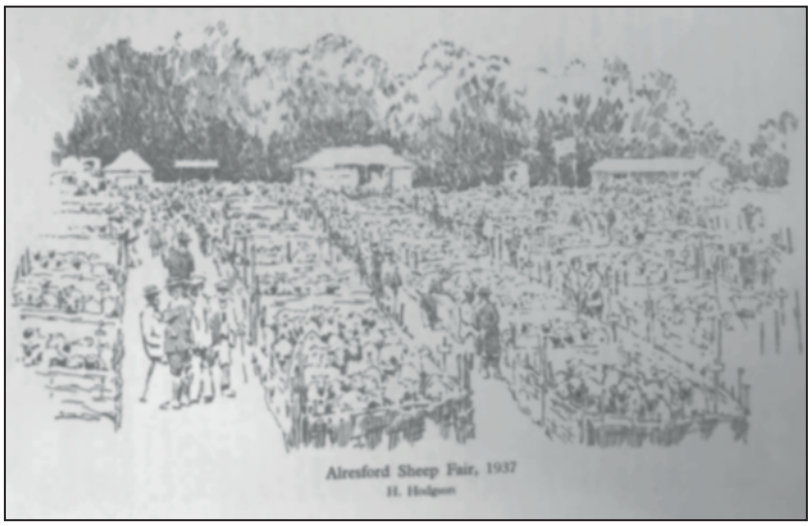


Illustration 4: A sketch of the 1937 Sheep Fair by Dr Harold Hodgson.[29]

By the late 1960s, it was obvious that the decline of the sheep fair business was irreversible. The one remaining fair in the town was a small and insignificant event. In 1971, New Alresford Town Trustees, who had taken over the right to run the fairs from the abolished burgess corporation in 1890, laconically recorded in their minutes the fact that, 'there was no sheep fair this year owing to a lack of entries'. The last ever sheep fair was held in 1972.

Illustration 5: The last sheep fair held on 'The Fair Field' in New Alresford, 1972.[31]

[26] HRO, 7M50/A1, Court Book of the Bailiff and Burgesses of New Alresford 1615-1890.
[27] HRO, 7M50/A1, New Alresford Borough: Court Book of the Bailiff and Burgesses of the Borough of New Alresford 1615-1890.
[28] HRO, 7M50/B1, New Alresford Town Trust: Trustees Minute Book, 1890-1948.
[29] Robertson, *op cit.*, 64. Dr Hodgson ran his medical practice from 'The Lindens', 6, East Street. He also served as a town trustee for forty- three years (1906-49).
[30] HRO, 7M50/B3, New Alresford Town Trust: Trustees Minute Book, 1961-1974.
[31] HRO, 81M91/14/2, Grist of Alresford, Annual Sheep Fair in 1972.

In what with hindsight looks like a futile attempt to hold back the tides of time, also in 1972 the town trustees tried to revive the custom of holding an annual Sheep Fair Dinner at the Swan Hotel. John Adams, a trustee with a keen sense of local history organised a successful event on 6 September.[32] The menu, as far as possible, reflected what might have been eaten when Henry Dancaster was responsible for penning 140,000 animals in the 1830s.[33]

There was, however, only one more annual Sheep Fair Dinner and that was held across the road at the Bell rather than at the Swan on 19 September 1973. At this event, which was poorly attended, one of the guests, Mr R. Lalonde, representing James Harris & Sons Auctioneers Limited, rose to announce to his audience:

> *It was with sincere regret that I have had to tell you this year that my firm has been unable to arrange a Sheep Fair in New Alresford owing to insufficient entries … I know that Sheep Fairs have been held here for a great number of years but I am afraid that this latest failure means the end of that era.*[34]

On 11 September 1974, the trustees decided that it would be incongruous to attempt to organise annual Sheep Fair Dinners when it was obvious that that there would be no more sheep fairs.[35]

In April 1980, the New Alresford Town Trust lease on 'The Fair Field' expired and, with no further sheep fairs in prospect, the trustees opted not to renew. The land was returned to its owner, Winchester College. With no obvious use for it, the school sold the plot to a private buyer, a Mr W.H. Willis, the owner of Ropley Motors Limited on 13 October. Willis also owned the house named Tralee, which still occupies the neighbouring site to the east of the fair ground.[36]

In 2009, Long Barn, a firm specialising in growing lavender and distilling products from their crops opened up for business on 'The Old Fair Field'. Lavender now grows where thousands of sheep used to be penned for inspection and sale. As the sign below shows, the new users of the land have a sense of the history. They have found dozens of the iron hoops or hasps that were used to hold the sheep hurdles together[37] – a small reminder of times past when the biggest businesses in town were all associated with the wool trade.

Illustration 6: Business sign on the site of the second Fair Field in December 2012. Photograph by the author.

Illustration 7: The Long Barn. Photograph by Glenn Gilbertson

[32] Jean Shaw, New Alresford Town Trustee, 1969-79. Interview with the author, 17 August 2009.
[33] HRO, 81M91/14/3, Grist of Alresford, programme and menu for the dinner to mark the occasion of the annual sheep fair at the Swan Hotel, New Alresford, 6 September 1972.
[34] The papers of A.H. (Alf) White, clerk to the Town Trust, 1959-89.
[35] HRO, 7M50/B3, New Alresford Town Trust: Trustees Minute Book, 1961-1974.
[36] Elliott, *op cit.*
[37] Jane Marsden, Director, Long Barn Growers and Distillers, interview with the author, 19 September, 2009.

ANOTHER GREAT WAR CASUALTY BORN IN ALRESFORD

by

Glenn Gilbertson

Despite prolonged research to identify as many Alresford District war casualties as possible for inclusion in *Not Just a Name,* ISBN 978-0-9538607-1-5, it was almost inevitable that further information would become available after publication. This is the story of another Great War victim, whose name is not on our war memorial, presumably because he had moved to London:

BENSON, ERIC WILLIAM, MC, Lieutenant Colonel, 9th Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps. Died 15.09.1916. Commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France, Pier and Face 13 A and 13 B. (CWGC)

Photo by kind permission of Winchester College

Born 08.05.1887, Eric was the only son of Sir Frank Benson, the distinguished actor and manager who lived at The Langtons, Alresford, and his wife Gertrude Constance Cockburn, only daughter of Captain Morshead Samwell, also of Alresford. (For a biography of Sir Frank Benson, see Alresford Displayed Issue No.13- 1988 article 52 - SIR FRANK BENSON by Ann Pennington).[1]

He was educated at Winchester College, then Magdalen College, Oxford where he read Classics.

On 17th June 1916[2] he married Muriel Anna Taylor, daughter of Richard Taylor, at St George, Hanover Square, London. (GRO Marriage Index). They lived at 25, Berkeley Square, Middlesex (Probate Calendar).

After Oxford he joined the Foreign Service and was dispatched to India. He served for a time after leaving school in the Jersey Militia, from which he was afterwards transferred with a commission to the Cheshire Regiment. With them he spent four years in India, and captained the regimental hockey team when they won the Calcutta Cup at Bombay. He retired from the army just before the war broke out, but in August 1914 applied for and was granted a commission in the Rifle Brigade.

Later he was transferred to the 9th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps and served with them to his death. He was wounded at Hooge in the Ypres Salient on 30 July 1915, when his regiment launched a counter-attack to retake some trenches lost to the Germans in the first ever flame-thrower attack. He was awarded the M.C. for his role that day and Mentioned in Despatches, eventually rising to command his battalion. He had been promoted to Lieutenant Colonel (the youngest in the British Army) by the time of his death. He was killed at the head of his men by machine gun fire at Delville Wood during an attack in the Battle of Flers-Courcelette of September 15 1916.[2]

He was not the only Wykehamist to die that day on the Somme; ten others were killed or mortally wounded, including Lieutenant Raymond Asquith, 3rd Grenadier Guards, the son of the Prime Minister.

A soldier's letter published in September 1915 about 9 KRRC at Hooge:

> *'You will have read about the terrible experience our Battalion had in ..... in the paper. … we lost heavily in a charge last week .... our Captain was wounded and Colonel is dead. Those two were gentlemen every inch but we are pleased to hear our captain has got the Military Cross … I would like to tell you about our charge but I think it is forebidden* [sic]'.

[1] Available from Hampshire Libraries or to read at http://www.alresfordhistandlit.co.uk/alresforddisplayed2.html

[2] http://www.winchestercollegeatwar.com/archive/eric-william-benson/

TWO GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN POEMS

1915 - the ill-fated campaign by Britain & France to seize the Gallipoli Peninsula, knock the Ottoman Empire out of the war and open a supply route to Russia. Necmettin's poem is as well known in Turkey as a hymn of patriotic praise to the ordinary Turkish soldier – Mehmet –who defended Turkey from the invaders of 1915 as Rupert Brook's 'The Soldier' was to former generations of British Empire and Dominion schoolchildren. [1]

The Soldier

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Sub/Lt. Rupert Brooke,
Hood Bn. RN Division.
Died from an infection, aged 27, 23 April 1915 on his way to fight in Gallipoli. His 'corner of a foreign field' is on the Greek island of Skyros.

Dur yolcu! (Stop, Wayfarer!)[1]

Stop wayfarer! Unbeknownst to you this ground
You come and tread on, is where an epoch lies;
Bend down and lend your ear, for this silent mound
Is the place where the heart of a nation sighs.

To the left of this deserted shadeless lane
The Anatolian slope now observe you well;
For liberty and honour, it is, in pain,
Where wounded Mehmet laid down his life and fell.

This very mound, when violently shook the land,
When the last bit of earth passed from hand to hand,
And when Mehmet drowned the enemy in flood,
Is the spot where he added his own pure blood.

Think, the consecrated blood and flesh and bone
That make up this mound, is where a whole nation,
After a harsh and pitiless war, alone
Tasted the joy of freedom with elation.

Dur yolcu! Bilmeden gelip bastığın
Bu toprak, bir devrin battığı yerdir.
Eğil de kulak ver, bu sessiz yığın
Bir vatan kalbinin attığı yerdir.

Bu ıssız, gölgesiz yolun sonunda
Gördüğün bu tümsek Anadolu'nda,
İstiklal uğrunda, namus yolunda
Can veren Mehmed'in yattığı yerdir.

Bu tümsek, koparken büyük zelzele,
Son vatan parçası geçerken ele,
Mehmed'in düşmanı boğdugu sele
Mübarek kanını kattığı yerdir.

Düşün ki, haşrolan kan, kemik, etin
Yaptığı bu tümsek, amansız, çetin
Bir harbin sonunda bütün milletin
Hürriyet zevkini tattığı yerdir.

Necmettin
Halil Onan
1902-1968

The Dur Yolcu Memorial on the hillside above Kilitbahir, Gallipoli. Photo 2014 by the author.

[1] http://www.anzacsite.gov.au/2visiting/turkish_stop.html

A SURPRISING GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN POET

by
Glenn Gilbertson

The author was surprised to learn that the famously taciturn prime minister wrote poetry.

Lemnos[1]

Many a time I've longest these ways to go,
To Wander where each little rugged isle
Lifts from the blue Aegean's sparkling isle
Its golden rocks or peaks of silent snow.
The land of magic tales of long ago,
Ulysses' wandering and Circe's wile,
Achilles and his armour, Helen's smile,
Dear won delight that set tall Troy aglow.
Happy the traveller whose eye may range
O'er Lemnos, Samothrace and Helles' strait,
Who smells the sweet thyme-scented breezes... Nay!
Right Willingly all these would I exchange
To see the buses throng by Mile End Gate
And smell the fried fish shops down Limehouse way.

Captain Clement Attlee, South Lancashire Regiment. The penultimate soldier to be evacuated from Suvla Bay.

Previously, in 1909, he had written this poem about the area he served as MP for 27 years until 1950:

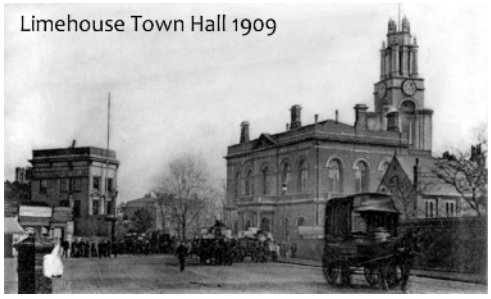
Limehouse[2]

In Limehouse, in Limehouse, before the break of day,
I hear the feet of many men who go upon their way,
Who wander through the City,
The grey and cruel City,
Through streets that have no pity
The streets where men decay.

In Limehouse, in Limehouse, by night as well as day,
I hear the feet of children who go to work or play,
Of children born of sorrow,
The workers of tomorrow
How shall they work tomorrow
Who get no bread today?

In Limehouse, in Limehouse, today and every day
I see the weary mothers who sweat their souls away:
Poor, tired mothers, trying
To hush the feeble crying
Of little babies dying
For want of bread today.

In Limehouse, in Limehouse, I'm dreaming of the day
When evil time shall perish and be driven clean away,
When father, child and mother
Shall live and love each other,
And brother help his brother
In happy work and play.



Limehouse
early 20th Century[3]

His own 1955 limerick to celebrate twenty years as party leader:

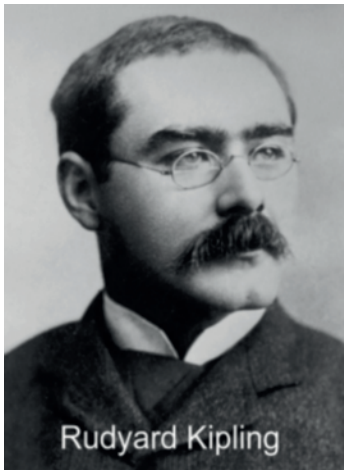
There were few who thought him a starter,
Many who thought themselves smarter.
But he ended PM,
CH and OM,
An Earl and a Knight of the Garter.

[1] http://attleecentre.tumblr.com/post/23099135326
[2] https://anthillel.wordpress.com/2013/01/22/clement-attlee-a-politician-with-a-poetic-heart/
[3] http://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/article/1622895/chinese-britain-charting-diasporas-journey-new-land

KIPLING'S LOST SON: JOHN KIPLING (1897-1915)

by

Brian Tippett



On 27th September 1915 Rudyard Kipling's son John, an eighteen-year-old officer only recently assigned to the front, was killed on the battlefield at Loos. His story is typical of many thousands of others, but it has a special interest and poignancy because of his father's leading role in rallying the nation for war, as in the lines: 'For all we have and are,/ For all our children's fate,/ Stand up and take the war./ The Hun is at the gate.' John Kipling's story has attracted much attention in recent years. It has been the subject of David Haig's play (1997) and Tonie and Valmai Holt's carefully researched study (1998). The play re-interprets the known facts by depicting Kipling as an over-dominant father who pushes his son into the army to serve the national cause and then endures bitter recriminations from his wife and daughter. There are inaccuracies (in calling John 'Jack' and in setting John's army [1]'medical' before the war) and the family quarrels are suppositions, but the play is very effective theatrically and as televised in 2007 has been influential, so much so that the Wikipedia account seems to owe much to it.

By background and education John was certainly eligible to become a subaltern but he was twice turned down for poor eyesight. He succeeded only after his father requested Lord Roberts ('Bobs' of the Kipling poem), titular colonel of the regiment, to 'nominate' John for the Irish Guards. Having in 1899 lost their daughter Josephine, the news that John was lost in battle overwhelmed the Kiplings. The play goes further, suggesting that by intervening, Kipling was responsible for his death and was thereafter racked by guilt. In fact, John was, as the Holts say,' itching to enlist' — to join most of his contemporaries in the rush to don uniform. He would no doubt have felt humiliated if he had been excluded. Indeed, he insisted that he would enlist as a private soldier if he could not be commissioned. And it appears that, putting his undistinguished school record behind him, he came into his own as an officer. Kipling found him, home on leave, 'A changed John …a grave and serious John with an adorable smile and many stories of 'his' men.' Later, on receiving the dreadful news, Kipling told a friend:

> Our boy was reported 'wounded and missing' since Sep. 27 — the battle of Loos and we've heard nothing official since that date. But all we can pick up from the men points to the fact that he is dead and probably wiped out by shell fire. However, he had his heart's desire and he didn't have a long time in trenches. …He was reported on as one of the best of the subalterns and was gym instructor and signaller. It was a short life.I'm sorry that all the years work ended in that one afternoon but — lots of people are in our position and it's something to have bred a man. The wife is standing it wonderfully tho' she of course clings to the bare hope of his being a prisoner. I've seen what shells can do and I don't. (*The Letters of Rudyard Kipling* ed. T. Pinney, IV, 257 and 344-45)

[1] Pictures on this page via Wikicommons

Like other bereaved parents Kipling never really gotover his son's death and it is from private letters such as this (never intended for publication) that we can most accurately gauge what he actually felt. In his published writings direct expressions of grief or guilt are surprisingly difficult to find. We glimpse his grief in 'A recantation': 'But he — but he, of whom bereft/I suffer vacant days'. But he realised that thousands were grieving in the same way; so he chose not to write directly of himself but to select situations which typified this shared pain. In this way he could voice a nation's grief. The prime example of this is the poem 'My Boy Jack', which captures so movingly the yearning Kipling knew so well for definite news of the boy's fate. A mother asks:

Have you news of my boy, Jack?
When d'you think that he'll be back?
Has anyone else had word of him?
Oh,dear, what comfort can I find?

Finally the answer comes:

None this tide
Nor any tide,
Except he did not shame his kind —
Not even with that wind blowing, and that tide.

The son will never return but just as Kipling was proud to 'have bred a man' so the mother will know that 'the son you bore' 'did not shame his kind', both sons conforming to the standards of manhood embodied in Kipling's poem 'If'. Jack is the archetypal 'Jack Tar' and John was never 'Jack' to his family, but although the details differ the poem captures what Kipling and his wife felt in their long and desolating search for news of John's fate. It speaks figuratively for all in a similar situation. Another example, in which Kipling again identifies with a mother, is the deeply moving story 'The Gardener' about a woman's visit to her son's grave in a Flemish war cemetery. Different but equally Impressive are Kipling's 'Epitaphs of the War 1914-18', a group of short poems which look back at the war through a kaleidoscopic series of reflections by or about different participants — an only son, an RAF pilot, an ex-clerk, a Hindu sepoy, a sleepy sentinel, a coward, an unknown female corpse and others. It is here that we find this couplet: 'If any question why we died,/Tell them, because our fathers lied.' Is this self-recrimination for a lie about John's eyesight? Its title, 'Common Form' and its context suggest instead that it is part of Kipling's indictment of the collective dishonesty and incompetence of a whole generation which misled and sacrificed its young. So in the next poem a dead statesman admits,

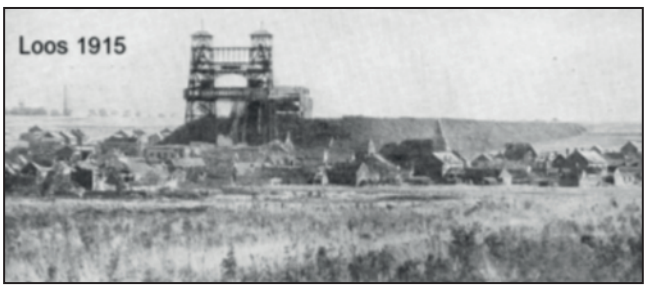
I could not dig: I dared not rob:
Therefore I lied to please the mob.

John's remains were not discovered in his parents' lifetime and he was commemorated on the Loos Memorial as one of the many 'Missing with no known grave'. More recently what were believed to be John's remains were identified (*disputed – Ed.*) and a personal headstone erected. After the war Kipling worked energetically for the War Graves Commission, the body responsible for such matters. In this he was honouring the memory of his son and thousands of others. It is typical of Kipling that he should have been mindful both of his own and the nation's sorrow.

Photo via http://www.findagrave.com/cgi

The Battle of Loos 1915

…the British Army on the Western Front - not ready for a major offensive in terms of manpower or munitions - was being committed by their Allies to a battle not of its choosing, in an area utterly unsuited to an attack, without clear objectives.[1]



The attack failed, with 59,247 British lost - over 20,000 with no known grave. Robert Graves gave a memorable account in *Goodbye to All That* (1929).

[1] The Long, Long Trail http://www.1914-1918.net/bat13.htm

POETRY CORNER

CONFLICTING OPINIONS

by

Heather Cairns

War is the only way.
It is just not the truth that
Peaceful talks might get us somewhere;
Maybe if we weren't so ruthless
We could deal quietly with our problems.
If only we were not programmed for battle.
Yet, we are all human,
Designed to destroy,
To wipe out the opposition,
Indoctrinated, trained
How is it that we are
Trying to find new ways of keeping peace
When we should be protecting our country
(The only way we know how)?
Why are we always fighting
Well, the answer is never simple - but
There are other effective options:
That is the greatest lie.
War is the only way...

Now read from the bottom up

This poem was written by Heather Cairns, a year 10 pupil at Perins School, and read at the school's Commemoration Service on 10 July 2014.

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The Battlefield of Waterloo Tate Britain

The Old Post Office (Item 1)

The Red Lion (Item 2)

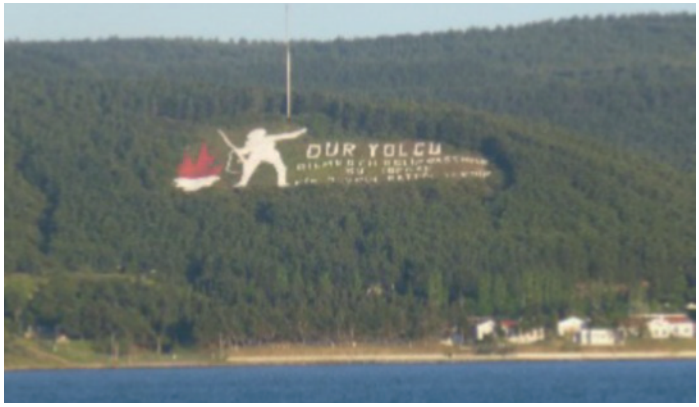
The George (Item 2)

The Field of Waterloo (Item 4)

The Alresford Conveniences (Item 6)

The Ropley Coffee Rooms (Item 9)

Site of Edward Grey's Cottage (Item 7)



Gallipoli (Items 12 & 13)