

SEND & RIPLEY HISTORY SOCIETY

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FOLK MEMORIES

A Conversation with Mr Tom Faithful

In one of the first interviews by the new Folk Memories Group, Gloria Henson and Barbara Tinkler spoke to Mr Tom Faithful, aged 90 years, of Send.

Tom was born 90 years ago at Warren Farm, Pyrford, where his grandparents lived and worked for the Sheres (there are still Sheres at Ockham). Tom came to Send when he was two years old and lived in Tannery Lane, later moving to Send Road where he still lives. He can remember visiting his grandparents at Pyrford for the summer holidays and going along with the adults to pick peas and beans in the fields. He would have been between five and six years old at the time and received no payment, but thoroughly enjoyed the work.

The children would rise at around 7 am to start a normal day, with an egg and bacon for breakfast, and afterwards do a few small jobs before leaving for school, which started at 9 am. They would cross the muddy lane, which was Send Road, and take a short cut across the fields opposite (there were no houses there then) to the school. The farmer, Mr Charles Baigent, did not like the children in his fields and sometimes hid behind the hedge and chased them. Tom says he started school at three years old and left at 14. The Headmaster at the time was Mr Rawes. Lunchtime was at noon and the children came home for a good meal of bread and cheese, cold brawn or pork. In the evening when their father came home they would have a hot meal with plenty of vegetables, accompanied by pork, bacon, pigs' trotters or liver.

The children had a few jobs to do on Saturday mornings, such as washing the tiled floor, cleaning windows, polishing knives and forks. They did not mind, however, as they knew that they would be given a few coppers as pocket money.

The family kept pigs, chickens and rabbits, as did several of their neighbours. Pigs (sometimes four) were kept in the back garden and partly fed on acorns, which the children collected in a little wooden truck. The piglets were bought from Mr Hoskins at Send Barns Farm at about £2 for three. The pigs were slaughtered by Mr Billy Gunner, a butcher who came from Ripley. The pigs were given a tap on the head to render them unconscious and then the throat was slit and the pig hung up to bleed. It was put into scalding water to get rid of the hair, which was finally burnt off. The innards were cleaned out and the carcass cut up into joints, some of which were sent to Woking to be smoked. A few pieces were sold to friends and the rest kept to feed the family for the rest of the year. This was done by putting the meat down in a big tub of brine; the chitterlings were washed, turned inside out and plated. Lard was made from the fat and some was put into the oven, roasted and eaten as "crisps". The head was boiled for brawn, crow fried, and pigs' trotters and liver were eaten, so nothing was wasted.

Vegetables were grown in large quantities in an allotment at the side of what is now Sandy Lane and a ton of potatoes was sometimes grown from a bushel of seed potatoes sent down from Scotland. A great deal of manure was used, this, of course, being in plentiful supply in Send due to the large number of horses here at that time. Peas, beans and other vegetables were also grown.

Mr Faithful found employment at the printing works at Old Woking for a while, but could not stand being shut up inside, so took a job in the fields for the Spooners (between Send Road and the canal). He picked Brussels sprouts in the snow and had to wrap his legs in old sacking to keep out the cold. He was at this time about 17 years old and earned about 6s a week, which he

gave to his mother, who bought his clothes. He made a few extra coppers by doing odd jobs and beer could be bought for about two pennies a pint. The New Inn was controlled by three breweries; namely Tickners, Castle Brewery and the Friary. (Lascelles, Tickner & Company in 1904).

Tom joined the Terriers (Territorials) in Woking in 1912 when he was 18 and the Army in 1914. He marched from Bordon in Hampshire to Salisbury, sleeping in the hedges on the way. He was later sent to France and marched through Belgium to Ypres and Dombeak, "the worst place there was". At one stage the officer in charge asked Tom to look after his horse and deliver dispatches to the front line. This would entail galloping in the dark between the bomb craters and trenches. Fortunately the horse knew its way so well that Tom only had to hold on and the horse would find its own way back to the stable afterwards. Tom was injured by being kicked by a mule during an air raid in France and was sent back to Colchester Hospital for treatment, and whilst he was there the Armistice was signed.

After the war Tom came home and joined the Fire Brigade in Send (by the side of the Lancaster Hall) for nine years, and when he left them he joined the Specials in Woking for seven years. He was also door keeper at the Working Men's Club at what is now Lancaster Hall when it opened in 1911.

He worked for the Council as roadsman for 26 years and retired at 65 years of age, but continued doing odd jobs, such as gardening, etc, and was to be seen riding his bicycle around the village until quite recently. Tom did beautiful embroidery and won prizes for his cushion covers, tray cloths, etc; he still makes wooden windmills for the garden to amuse the children.

There were very few houses in Send when Tom Faithful was a child; he can remember about 24 starting at Mays Corner with Miss May's sweetshop and the blacksmith's shop at what is now Walnut Tree Garage (the smithy of C H Sex & Sons). The Broomfields came from Send Marsh, where they ran the Saddlers Arms, to Send Road, where their name as cycle makers and repairers can still be read on the side of the chemist's shop. The son had the shoe shop.

The boys went to Sunday School dressed in their best suits, and when they came home put on big overalls, which were smocks made of rough cotton. They were given picture stamps to put in a scrap album. For a Sunday School treat they were taken up the River Wey to Triggs Lock for a picnic of sandwiches, cakes and lemonade. They had a Bible Class taken by Mr Spooner. They sometimes had a good dinner as a treat at his house and were sometimes taken to the Vicarage for a spread with their parents. Tom also attended night school later at the Lancaster Hall to learn carpentry, shoe mending, etc.

Mrs Baigent made soup during the 1914-18 war and children could fetch a canful for one penny. There were split peas in it, bought at Webbs, the bakers and grocers at Cartbridge.

LETTERS TO THE SOCIETY

The first letter is from Mr. Basil Howard.

"Dear Dr Gale

"Many thanks for sending the Newsletter to me, which I have read with all the interest with which I have enjoyed the previous ones.

"I am delighted to hear that the 'Then and Now' book has become a best seller in its first edition so that the demand by the reading public, me included, for a second edition will be eagerly awaited.

"Both the names of Jack Chinn and Joe Leech have revived memories of my British Aircraft Corporation Weybridge days. They may possibly remember me as 'Toby' Howard, 'Toby' being the nickname by which I have always been known. I served in the drawing office, electrical section, from 1945 to 1970 on the Viking, the Viscount, the Vanguard, TSR2, BAC111, and Concorde. Before the war I worked on the shop floor, electrical section, on the Wellesley, and in the experimental department of the Wellington from 1937 to 1939 and at the Chester factory from 1939 to 1945 in charge of electrical production on Wellingtons and Lancasters as electrical foreman and technical representative.

"I recall the Canberra overrunning the runway at Wisley and landing on the Pertsmouth Road, and the consequent suggestion that the warning notices on the road be changed from 'Warning. Sudden aircraft noises.' to 'Warning. Sudden aircraft'.

"I am most interested to hear about Jack Chinn's proposed talk on the History of Brooklands on April 25th. Before the war when I lived at Ripley I never missed a race meeting there, and I knew many of the drivers who were patrons of the Cedar Tea House. The classic 'History of Brooklands Motor Course' has been written by William Boddy, editor of 'Motor Sports' magazine, whom I know personally.

"My memories of Brooklands however go back to the 1920's, with the snarl of aero-engined monsters thundering around the track with the reek of Castrol 'R', and also of Count Louis Zborowski in 'Chitty-Bang-Bang', Sir Malcolm Campbell, Prince Bira and the rest of the Bentley team - George Bedford, B. S. Marshall, Hartshorne Cooper, and all the rest of the top drivers, Seagrave, etc. Wonderful days. The number of times I have been round and round that track, running in and testing Invicta cars when I worked for Invictas - at Fairmile, Cobham, from 1925 to 1928.

"The late Sir Noel Macklin, and his famous lady racing driver Violet Cordery, were regular patrons at the Cedar Tea House at that time, when they were producing the Invicta car. A book is now being written about the history of the Invicta and I have contributed many of my memories to the co-authors. As far as we know there are only three of the original Invicta works force left, myself included, so if anyone in Ripley and Send knows of any more please let us know. One I have in mind, whom I lost track of about 20 years ago, is T. H. Walker, of 15 Send Barns Lane, Send. So if anyone knows of him I would be glad to know.

"I look forward, with interest, to Fred Dixon's memoirs of Ripley C. of E. school. The teacher I recall in my day was Blackland, though I was not a pupil.

"I really must get down to typing out my mother's story of the Tea House in the Twenties. There is a lot of it and the task daunts me, but I am now 78 years old so I had better get down to it before it is too late!

"With best wishes for 1985

"Yours sincerely,

"Toby Howard.

The next letter has been received from Mrs L Haynes of Send Hill.

"Dear Mr Bowerman

"I was very interested in the pound in Tannery Lane being restored as there are not many of them left. You will be very interested to know that there was a pound opposite Stepgates School, Chertsey, which I attended from approximately 1915. I well remember stray animals being in the pound, and Pound Pond opposite was used for watering the animals. The pond is now filled in, and the pound has disappeared.

"The Newsletters are very interesting and I have all of them from June 1976 which is No. 9 with my name inside. I must have joined about then. Unfortunately I cannot attend the meetings now.

Yours sincerely,
L. Haynes."

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- Tuesday, 26 March ... Open meeting at 8 pm in the Red Cross Hall, Sandy Lane, Send, when the film "Tales of Old Guildford" will be shown.
- Thursday, 28 March ... Committee Meeting at 8 pm at Heath Farm, Tannery Lane, Send.
- Saturday, 20 April ... Service of thanks for William of Ockham in All Saints Church at 11 am, including dedication of a new stained glass window and reception of the Works of William of Ockham, presented by the Franciscan Society in the USA. It is anticipated that the church may be full for this occasion.
- Thursday, 25 April ... Open meeting at 8 pm at Ripley Village Hall, when Mr Jack Chinn will give an illustrated talk on the History of Brooklands.
- Monday, 29 April ... Folk Memories Group meeting at 8 pm at 15 Kevan Drive, Send.
- Friday, 3 May ... Buildings Group meeting at 8 pm at 11B Kevan Drive, Send.
- Friday, 24 May ... The Society's 10th anniversary dinner. Meet at 6.30 pm promptly in the Clandon Park car park for a private reception in the Marble Hall; a conducted tour around the house, and a buffet dinner for Society members in the restaurant. It is intended that this will be a very special occasion, which members will always treasure. Subject to the approval of the Society's main Committee, tickets will be £12.50 per person, obtainable from the Chairman, Ken Bourne, or the Secretary, Les Bowerman, and payable to the Secretary by 1 May. The price includes a glass of "bubbly" or fruit juice at the reception, but any drinks with the meal need to be ordered and paid for at the time. Anybody needing transport should inform the Secretary when paying for their tickets.
- Wednesday, 29 May ... A conducted walk around Ripley, organised by the Society as its contribution towards the Guildford "Out and About Week". All welcome. Meet at 7 pm in the Ripley Green car park.
- Sunday, 9 June ... All day outing to Hampshire. Meet at 9 for 9.15 am at Send Marsh Green; or at 10 am at Jane Austen's house at Chawton, near Alton, for a private visit to the Jane Austen Museum. A small entry fee is payable. This will be followed by a walk around the "New" and "Old" towns of Alresford. Lunch may be taken on Old Alresford Green overlooking the pond. Refreshments available at the Horse and Groom. Members then have the option of going their own way or of meeting at 2 pm at the railway station for a nostalgic ride on the "Water Cross Line", the privately owned Mid Hampshire Steam Railway. This will be a round trip in old-fashioned style to Medstead, Four Marks, through delightful scenery. There will be a stop at the engine sheds at Ropley. The train includes a refreshment car

for afternoon tea. The round trip takes approximately two hours and the tickets are £3 for first class and £2.20 for second class.

Saturday/Sunday, 15/16 June ... The camping weekend of the Ripley Section of the Southern Veteran-Cycle Club on Ripley Green. The Saturday ride will commence at noon for lunch at the Bull's Head, West Clandon, and tea at the Camping Club site at East Horsley. The Sunday ride will be 10 for 10.30 am to the Leatherhead area for lunch with intermediate stops for suitable refreshment. Tea at the Manor House, Send Marsh. History Society members are welcome to attend. A loan of a machine can probably be arranged through the Secretary, or members may ride their own bicycles. The pace of the rides will be leisurely.

Wednesday, 19 June ... Evening visit to Brooklands. Meet at Send Marsh Green at 7 pm sharp. There will be a conducted tour around the more interesting parts of the track, some of the buildings and the club house, finishing with a look at some of the intended exhibits in the proposed aircraft, motor and cycle museum. Members will be expected to make a contribution in the region of £1 each towards the setting up of the museum. Names, please, of all those proposing to attend to the Secretary, Les Bowerman, at least ten days beforehand as the party has to be checked in by security staff at the gate.

Saturday, 29 June ... Send Scouts Fete in the Recreation Ground, where the Society will have a stand.

Wednesday, 10 July ... Evening visit to Godalming for a conducted tour round the old town.

Friday, 12, - Sunday, 14 July ... Ockham Festival in connection with the William of Ockham 700th anniversary celebrations.

Wednesday, 18 September ... Open meeting at Ripley Village Hall.

Tuesday, 15 October ... Open meeting at the Red Cross Centre, Send.

Saturday, 16 November ... SLHC Symposium at Surrey University with a theme of transport in Surrey.

Wednesday, 20 November ... Open meeting at Ripley.

Tuesday, 17 December ... Christmas Social at the Red Cross Centre, Send.

Closing Date: Material for the next issue of the Newsletter should be in the hands of the Editor by Monday, 6 May.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Membership

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

- Mrs A Tomsett, Church Gate House, Ockham Road North, Ockham.
- Mr & Mrs N Bradley, Corvara Cottage, Send Marsh Green, Ripley.
- Miss N S K Hamilton, 7 Rose Lane, Ripley.
- Mr & Mrs M Brown, Avon House, The Green, Ripley.

The Annual General Meeting

The AGM, the Society's 10th, was held for the first time in Ripley, and was attended by some 46 members. The chair was taken by Ken Bourne, who in his report observed that each year seems busier than the previous. The flourishing system of specialist working groups means virtually that there are several clubs within the Society with any member being able to attend any group. Folk memories is now well established as a group, and not before time, Natural History had been busy early in the year, but had "fizzled out" - the group needs somebody to lead it, preferably not a Committee member with other calls on his or her time, Ken felt.

The Treasurer's Report, presented by the Chairman on behalf of Janet Hill, shows the Society in a healthy financial position at present, although a reserve has to be built up to finance the next publications. Reporting on the "Then and Now" book of pictures, John Slatford stated that the project had been a gamble which had succeeded beyond imagination; with only 16 of the original 1500 printed copies remaining, a reasonable profit had been made (this is due in no small measure to John's having spent much of his time persuading shops to stock the books and then keeping them supplied - Editor). The surplus is required for a reprint, which should be in the shops for Easter, and there is another very different book in the pipeline. A copy of the Receipts and Payments Account should accompany this Newsletter. The accounts were passed, and subscriptions for the current year fixed at the same rate as last year, ie £2 for individuals and £3 for couples.

In his Secretary's Report Les Bowerman noted that membership at the close of the Society's year was up by 26 on the previous year to 307 (103 double and 101 single). The annual six issues of the Newsletter had been produced with an average of 13 pages, including the title page, but excluding the illustrations which had become a regular feature during the year. He gave thanks to Chris Parker for typing every issue as usual, to Ken Bourne for the use of his tape recorder, and for copying the illustrations, and to no less than 20 members who have submitted contributions during the year.

The three principal officers were re-elected, as were nine of the existing 12 Committee members. Derek Bromley, Ted Goldup and Marie Timmings did not stand for re-election and were thanked for their work in the past. They were replaced by Pam Ellisson and Jan and Sheila Page. The continuing members are Gloria Henson, Duncan Jennings, Mavis Lake, Bob Gale, Patricia and Tony Medlen, Bette and John Slatford and Barbara Tinkler. The principal officers have all indicated that they would not wish to continue in office indefinitely, particularly if there should be volunteers to replace them. Mary Milner said it would be bad for the Society if more than one were to give up in the same year, and Bob Gale suggested that when the time comes potential successors should be "groomed".

Guidelines have been produced for the borrowing and copying of old photographs and postcards. Generally, the policy is that borrowed material should be copied and returned as speedily as possible, the original source of the picture should be acknowledged whenever practicable, and copies other than for the Society's records and for showing in connection with its activities should not be made or provided without the consent of the original owner. It is not possible to cover every contingency in advance, but the overall criterion is that people lending photographs should not find copies appearing in unexpected circumstances.

WILLIAM OF OCKHAM

1985 sees the 700th anniversary of the birth of this locally born mediaeval philosopher and, most appropriately, a service will be held in the ancient parish church of his village on 20 April. However, like many mediaeval figures, the basic facts about his origin are decidedly vague. There is no absolutely firm evidence for his birth in the year 1285, but various evidence points that way. Similarly there is no documentary evidence of his birth in the village of Ockham, except for the important fact that he took its name. Bearing in mind that there is no other place of the same name in the United Kingdom, nor any closely resembling it, the village's connection with him seems fairly well established. The variant spelling of his name as "Occam" is mainly Continental and there is said to be no support for it from early sources.

He appears first in history as a member of the Franciscan Order, studying at the Order's House at Oxford where he was a pupil of the renowned Duns Scotus, the "Subtle Doctor", who, along with William of Ockham, could be argued as Britain's leading contributor to mediaeval learning.

William of Ockham proceeded to the University of Paris, after receiving his degree of BD, and was there associated with Marsilius of Padua, author of "Defensor Pacis", which was written around 1324 and is thought to have been influenced by him.

It was around this time that William of Ockham was involved in what might seem to the 20th century reader as being a foolishly remote controversy, namely the argument over the poverty of Christ and his followers. (Every day, the newspapers are full of information about controversies of far greater folly and remoteness - but that is another story.) Briefly, an assembly of the Franciscan Order had held that the poverty of Christ and his disciples was a matter of faith. The Pope of the day, John XXII, who was resident at Avignon, condemned the doctrine in 1323 and sought the arrest of William of Ockham and his associates. They, however, escaped to the protection of Ludwig, Duke of Bavaria, later Holy Roman Emperor, and it was at Pisa that William of Ockham directed at the Pope his "Opus Nonaginta Dierum" (Work of Ninety Days), in which the Pope was accused of heresy on a number of grounds.

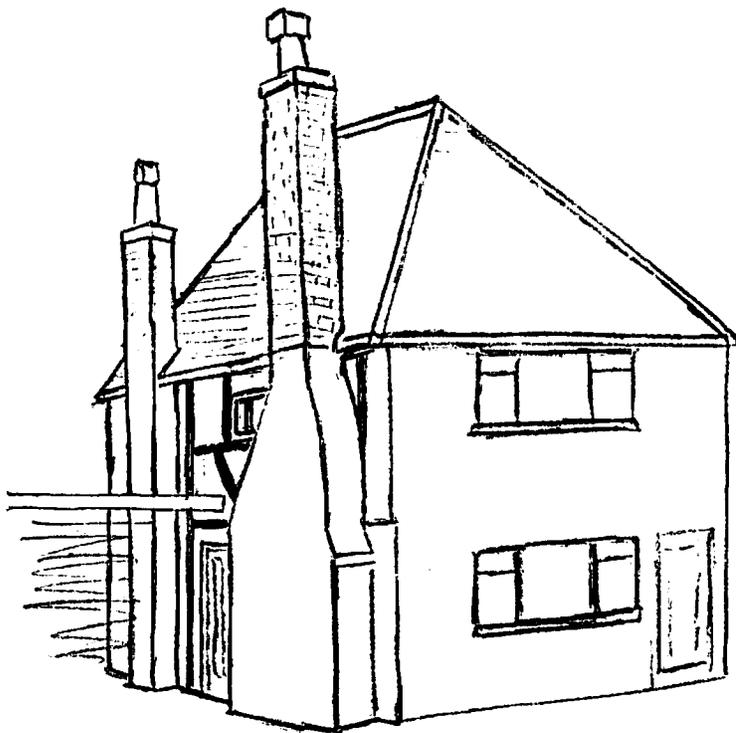
William remained on bad terms with Pope John, and with his successor, Nicholas XII, not only on theological matters, but also on such political questions as the power of the Papacy to confirm the election of Holy Roman Emperor and the question of Papal jurisdiction over the proposed marriage of the son of the Emperor Ludwig with the wife of John of Luxembourg. In this the dispute of Henry VIII of England with the Pope of his day is somehow prefigured. Whether he was in fact reconciled to the Papacy in the year of his death, 1349, remains in doubt.

But these are remarkable barren controversies. William of Ockham's real claim to fame lies in the method of logic associated with his name: the principle that the entities should not, except of necessity, be multiplied. In plain terms this means that in explaining any occurrence or phenomenon, the most simple explanation ought to be examined first, and only if it does not suffice should more remote and unusual explanations be suggested. ("Entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem".) This principle is known as "Ockham's Razor".

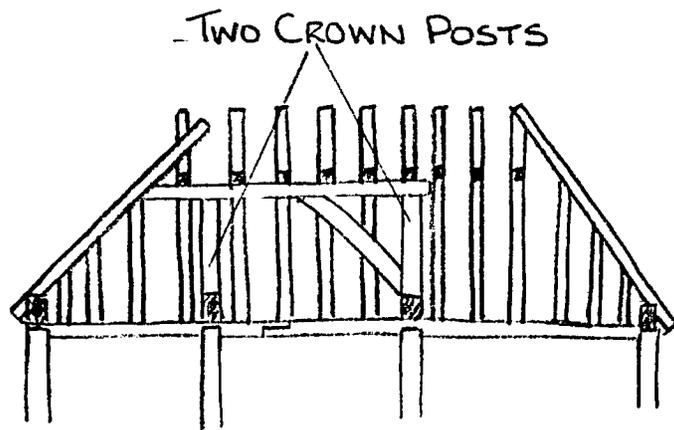
Principles such as this form the basis of scientific thinking. We are fairly well attuned to such a principle, but it must have appeared revolutionary in an age which regarded divine intervention as a probable explanation of so many happenings and of so many of the circumstances of life.

Not that we are exempt - everyone over 50 will remember that some quite sensible people put down bad weather to the flying of barrage balloons in the 1940s and to atomic tests in the 1950s! As to the present day, readers will think of their own examples.

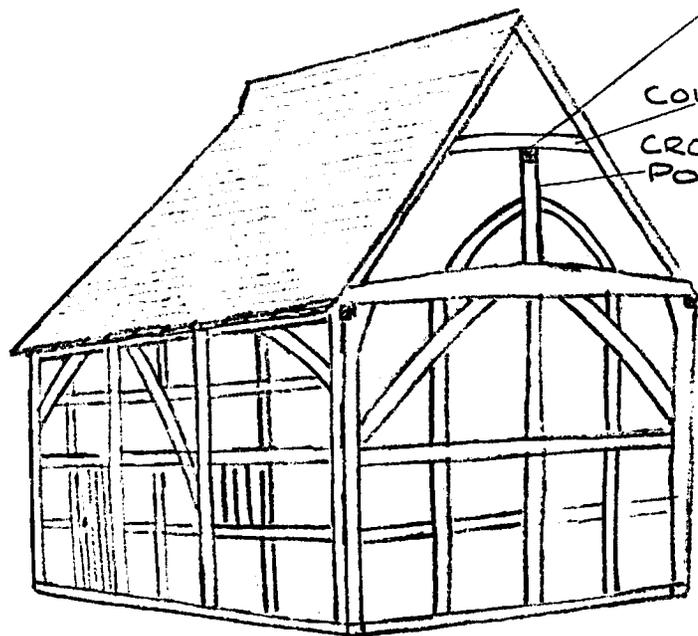
This is only a brief and partial glance at William of Ockham, his times and his thought. Although those times are remote, his thought is apt, no matter how far removed in time, and is still influential. Although his local connections are in no way recorded, the joining of the name of a local village to the name of "Doctor Invincibilis", as he became known, is a source of local interest and pride.



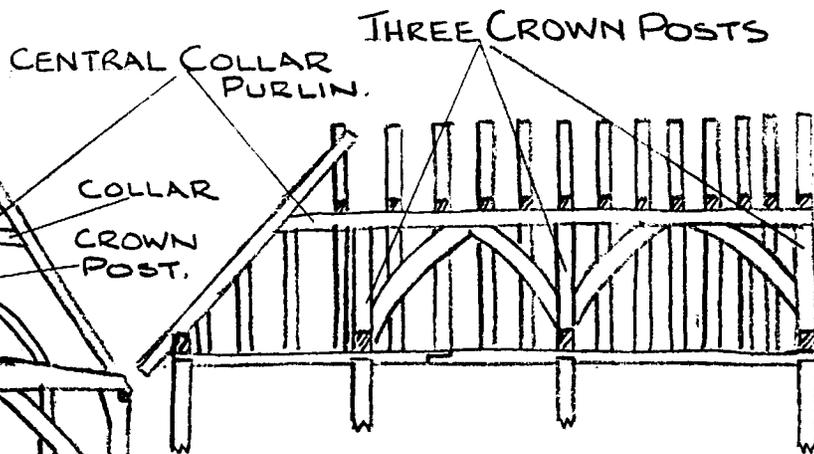
VINTAGE COTTAGE AS IT APPEARS TODAY



SECTION THROUGH PRESENT ROOF



VINTAGE COTTAGE AS IT MIGHT HAVE APPEARED WHEN BUILT



SECTION THROUGH PROBABLE ORIGINAL ROOF

VINTAGE COTTAGE, ROSE LANE, RIPLEY

JOHN SLATFORD
MARCH 85.

VINTAGE COTTAGE, ROSE LANE, RIPLEY

Vintage Cottage, the home of our members Mr and Mrs Alistair MacMillan, is almost certainly the oldest domestic building in the district. Members of the Buildings Group were able to study the house late last year and the results were compared with the findings of two earlier reports. John Baker featured the house in his "Seeing Eye" series in the Surrey Advertiser in January 1975. Miss Joan Harding of the Surrey Domestic Buildings Research Group reported on their inspection in May 1976.

All are agreed upon the basic open hall timber-framed construction with a crown post roof. Although built as an individual house, probably as early as 1400, its subsequent development was closely associated with the adjacent house, which dates from around 1550 and which is now part of the property known as Dowell's Store.

Our findings do not entirely agree with those of the earlier researchers in that we found evidence to show that the house did not always appear as it does today.

Present examination reveals a roof of three bays, but it is possible that a further bay existed at the front of the house. The hipped end at the front is a reconstruction and is the only part of the roof which is not smoke blackened. Close examination shows that the main rafters were cut to receive this new hip and that they carry dovetails securing collars which were removed at that time. There are three possible conclusions from this evidence:

- (1) The original plan was as it is today, but the front had a gable end;
- (2) the original front, either hipped or gabled, was perhaps two or three feet further forward, but fell down and was rebuilt in its present position;
- (3) there was originally a complete bay further forward, which either fell down or had to be demolished.

Unfortunately no further evidence could be found to support any of the above possibilities, and therefore the first conclusion must be assumed to be factual. The drawing shows how the house would probably have appeared originally. The main part of the roof is exactly as built with two braced crown posts supporting the central collar purlin, on which rest the collars associated with each pair of rafters. There would have been at least one other crown post at the front, depending upon the original layout. The tie beams and jowled posts of the two rear bays are clearly in evidence, but nothing can be seen of timber framing at the front.

It was concluded that the present front bay has a later inserted floor, but it is by no means certain that the rear bays were originally floored. It is probable, however, that the latter were the first to be floored, since this part contains the opening for the original ladder access, which can be seen to have been enlarged for the present stairway.

From the roof space it is possible to see that the adjoining house was built with an end smoke bay, which was, and still is, open to the Vintage Cottage roof area, which has the later roof built onto it. Thus the two properties were directly connected to each other, although the actual arrangement is open to conjecture.

Our thanks are due to Mr and Mrs MacMillan for their forbearance in receiving Buildings Group members on three separate occasions during this study.

John Slatford

THE EARL OF LYTTON

Lord of the Manors of Ockham, Wisley, East Clandon

Thames Ditton, Long Ditton and Claygate

On Friday, 18 January 1985, at around midday, my telephone rang and a voice said "Peggy, Dad died at around 11.30 am this morning." "Dad", being Anthony, 4th Earl of Lytton, 17th Baron Wentworth, was one of the most staunch friends of my life.

My first recollection of this friend was at the age of four or five years when I was constantly being told by the staff at Ockham Park "Don't go near the lily-pond. Mr Anthony is reading his bible", which was in fact a breviary.

Anthony Lytton, and his sister Anne (who died six years ago), were the children of Baroness Wentworth. Having been turned out of their home in the early 1920s, they spent many happy times with their dearly revered Great Aunt Mary, Countess of Lovelace, of Ockham Park.

The obituary notices which appeared following Anthony Lytton's death all mention his life as an author, soldier and administrator, his service in the Rifle Brigade, the King's African Rifles, his work in the Samburu and Turkhana districts of Kenya, and later his war service when he was badly injured; and how well I recall my grandparents waiting to hear from his sister, Lady Anne Lytton, of his recovery.

However, I should like to recall Anthony Lytton as a man with great compassion for others less able than himself, his many amusing and witty letters written to me during his busy life, the happy holidays enjoyed with him and his family in Exmoor and later in Sussex, our conversations discussing what he called "the more illustrious members of my family", and his kindness when I earnestly sought his approval to place on deposit family documents and papers in the Guildford Muniment Room for the use of local historians, the hospitality and pleasure of my visits to Parliament's upper house, his integrity when dealing with the problems of others, his joy at giving pleasure to the young, his delight on the marriage of his eldest son, and especially the wedding last year of his youngest daughter.

With his death there passes from my life an era which will be for ever connected with the Ockham Park Estate. He lies buried in the Franciscan Friary at Crawley built by his forebears.

He is succeeded by his eldest son, John 5th Earl, who is blessed with the same compassion as his late father.

I make no apology for writing the preceding paragraphs, not as an obituary, but as a reminiscence of a true friend.

Peggy A Aldridge

ROYAL TALES OF SURREY

The speaker at the open meeting in Send on 29 January was our member Chris Howkins, who is well known by readers of the "Surrey Advertiser" for his excellent drawings and informative articles which appear regularly on

the front page of the Second Section. He is undoubtedly an accomplished artist, having illustrated, researched and published the "Doorstep Book" and the "Towpath Book". Besides being actively interested in history generally and natural history in particular, he also teaches and finds time to use his talents for the benefit of handicapped children.

Chris is currently researching material for his latest book relating to places and stories in West Surrey which have been associated with the Kings and Queens of England since 1066. It was therefore not surprising that this was the theme of his talk and that he invited some of his pupils to assist him by reading extracts from written accounts of important events.

After a short introduction, Chris recalled his university days when he was asked to define history in one word. The answer given by his lecturer was "story", a definition well appreciated by all who attempt to discover facts to support reports of past events. Several examples were given to illustrate this problem and one in particular, recorded here, has all the elements of a fairy story with just a sufficient element of fact to make the story sound credible, but impossible to corroborate.

Once upon a time there was a tall handsome prince, who one fine day rode out alone from his castle on the hill with his thoughts on his true love. He was enjoying his surroundings when he strayed too far from his castle and was challenged by another knight for trespassing on his land. Both were alone and a fight ensued, the young prince emerging as victor. He returned to his castle with his prisoner, who expected nothing better than imprisonment or death. However, the prince, seeing in his captive a brave man with good qualities, recruited him into his service. The prince was Edward, later Edward I, King of England, and his castle was at Guildford. His captive was the outlaw Ralph, who was defending his land outside Farnham Castle.

Among the stories which do have documentary evidence, there is an account of a visit by Henry IV to the Friary at Guildford on 12 February 1403. When the King left, he paid 40s (£2) for damage done by his court to the house, the contents and the gardens.

Chris made a plea for any information relating to King Henry V and Surrey, for apart from the record of a doctor who attended the Battle of Agincourt being buried at Betchworth, very little has been discovered.

The talk concluded with a lively discussion and the opportunity for members to inspect the manuscript of Chris Howkins's proposed new book. In answer to a question from the speaker, our Secretary Les Bowerman and John Slatford confirmed that the site of St Thomas's Watering is shown on John Olgilby's road map of 1675 as being near Stickings's Farm on the Portsmouth Road (old A3).

The Chairman thanked Chris on behalf of all present for a most lively and informative evening, and particular thanks were recorded to the young readers, Robert, Richard, Beverley and Nicholas.

K H Bourne

