

Ms S. Brown, 12 Wick Ridge

SEND HISTORY SOCIETY

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Newsletter No. 2.

April/May, 1975

THE FIRST OPEN MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

The first Open Meeting of the Send History Society took place on Thursday, 6th March, 1975, at St. Bede's School by kind invitation of the St. Bede's School Association. Mr. Hall, the Headmaster, welcomed our Society to the School and called upon Ken Bourne to introduce the Society to School, parents and potential members. Ken opened by observing that the presence of some 70 people (which grew to about 90 during the evening) was evidence of the considerable interest in local history in the area. At the request of a number of members who were unable to be present, notes are given in the following pages of the main points made by the speakers. Due to lack of space, the notes on Les Bowerman's talk on the early history of Send will appear in a later edition of the Newsletter. On display during the evening were the volumes of Manning & Bray's "Surrey" and the Victoria History of Surrey containing the entries for Send. These were provided by Jim Oliver. A display of photographs of the village in the '20s and '30s was put on by George Ballard, and there were reproductions of the Send parts of John Senex' 1729 1" map, John Rocque's 1770 2" map and the 1816 Ordnance Survey 1" map loaned by Les Bowerman. Also available were Mayford History Society's "And so to Maynford" and a copy of "Victorian & Edwardian Surrey from Old Photographs".

SEND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Notes by Sheila Brown of the Talk Given by Her at the First Open Meeting

As those who were at our first meeting will know, I am compiling a history of the old Send Primary School which is situated at the end of School Lane, Send Hill.

The school was first opened in Sept. 1854. It was built on the area known as the Send Sand or Gravel Pits which belong to Arthur George Onslow, Earl of Clendon, Lord of the Manor of Send and Ripley, who conveyed the land to the Vicar and Churchwardens for the purpose of building a school "for the education of the children of the poor in the principles of the established Church".

The Guildford Architect Henry Peake drew up the plans for the school which included the school house for the Master and Mistress. The cost was about £500 and the money was raised partly by voluntary subscription locally, and by a grant from the Committee of Council (which later became Board of Education) plus a small sum from the National Society.

The school was to accommodate 100 children, and from the old Parish Registers I have made a list of the names of children who would probably have been amongst the first pupils at the school. The first Schoolmaster and Mistress were a Mr. & Mrs. F. T. North.

Various extensions, improvements and additions were made through the 118 years of the life of the school to accommodate the rising population.

This is just a brief outline of the school's history. I hope that people in Send will help me to fill in the details. e.g. which builder built the school? What sort of people were Mr. & Mrs. North? Where were the Dame Schools held that went out of business when the school opened?

I would particularly like to hear from people who remember grandparents talking about the school. I would love to see any photographs of the period 1854-1944 both of children and adults who attended the school. Also if anyone has any books, papers, certificates or prizes associated with the school and does anyone remember the "Children's Pence"?

It would be interesting to have a record of the school before it disappears from sight and memory under the Auctioneer's hammer. Hundreds of children passed through its doors in the pursuit of education and knowledge. Did any former pupils become nationally famous?

I would be most grateful for any scraps of information about the school and those who attended it, and I hope to be able to write a little more in each Newsletter.

GENEALOGY

Notes of the Talk Given by John Slatford at the Open Meeting

The study of genealogy usually involves tracing the male line of a family, but it can equally well be the female line. Genealogy is not just tracing one's family back - it includes finding out more about how people lived and all about them. I began by wondering about my forebears and, passing Somerset House one day, went in to enquire and have now been following it for over two years. It is very satisfying when clues turn up. So far I have got back to 1787 with my family.

The way to begin is to note all one's living relatives and in particular ask the elderly ones for details. They can save a lot of time.

First try to discover your grandfather's full name and date of birth. Then visit Somerset House (in fact St. Catherine's House on the corner of Kingsway and Aldwych). There every birth, death and marriage since 1837 is recorded in quarterly volumes. You get a copy of the original birth certificate for 75p. It will tell you your greatgrandfather's name and occupation and also give details of your greatgrandmother's maiden name and address. Then go back to the indexes and look for greatgrandfather's and mother's marriage certificate. This will give the names and trades of the fathers of the couple. It is possible to go back to 1837 like this.

To trace back further than 1837 there are the Parish Registers. These can be ascertained from the census records of 1841, '51 and '71 which are in Portugal Street, W.C.2. The census of 1841 is of limited value, but the later ones give relationships and people's places of birth. Thus a lead is obtained to the appropriate Parish.

Other sources are trade directories which go back to the early 1800's, and for people who had property to leave there are the wills back to 1838 in Somerset House. Before 1837 the Parish Registers are practically the only source of information. These were started in 1538 when Thomas Cromwell, one of Henry VIII's Ministers, decreed that they should be kept. Most

Parish Registers are now in County Record Offices. Some registers have been lost - eaten by rats, destroyed by enemy action in the War, etc.

The registers are fascinating, but the information varies greatly. Spelling is erratic, particularly when the Parish Clerk made the records. Two hundred years ago he would be one of the few who could read and write. Having arranged to see the registers, you look in the baptisms, and you may find a continuous line for generations. People rarely moved then, and if they did, the name may turn up in the next village.

One entry gives the name followed by the words "a mistake". Sometimes after the name came the words "a bastard". For most people, any hope of noble ancestors is likely to be dashed. The Society of Genealogists has thousands of records in their library, and they can perhaps save you a lot of trouble. The Guildhall Library has records of the old City Livery Companies, and apprenticeship entries going back for 300 years.

The Send registers from 1653 are in the Guildford Muniment Room and are remarkably complete. The register of births gives evidence of a military camp on Send Heath until the late 1750's. (This in itself could be a fertile topic for research. Mr. French of Goodgrove, Sendmarsh Road, says that the row of old cottages at the top of Tannery Lane were the married quarters; and Mr. Goddard of Sedgley Cottages, Potters Lane, says that the latter are reputed to be the Officers' quarters. - Editor.)

N.B. My office is almost opposite to St. Catherines House, so if anybody is interested in obtaining copies of certificates back to 1837, I can easily order them if you give me the necessary details and the fee. My office is, however, due to move in July, after which it would be less convenient. Editor.

OLD BUILDINGS

Some Notes of the Talk Given by Jim Oliver

Send is not rich in old houses. It has perhaps a dozen altogether, whereas places such as Charlwood and Billingshurst have 300 each. We are a very poor pocket in a very rich area of South East England. There are 30,000 timber framed houses in the South East. On the 50 mile ride from Guildford to Haywards Heath no less than 150 can be seen from the main road. One reason why Send is so poor in this respect is that the ground is so poor, being formerly mostly heathland.

The timber frames are typical of S.E. England. In other parts of England early houses are of different structure. There is virtually no natural building material apart from a little bargate stone in Godalming and some sandstone in the Weald - hence the timber frames.

There was little change in the design of houses until the beginning of the Tudors - that was the time from 1485 when Henry VII took up the Crown until the time of Elizabeth - by then houses had more or less taken on their modern plan and way of life. From Saxon times until the beginning of the 13th century little happened. People lived communally in large barn-like structures. St. Mary's Hospital, Chichester, is a good example of 1220 or thereabouts. It was a hospital and then became almshouses after the Reformation. By the beginning of the 14th century things became stylised. This is best shown by Penshurst Place just over the Kent border. It is occupied by the Sidney family which started at Sidney Farm - a timber-framed building at Alfold.

There would be a large open plan with a fire in the middle. The smoke would rise up through the rafters and out through a hole in the roof. The owner had a dais at one end for himself and his family. Behind that were his private apartments - his parlour. The retainers would be in the rest of the hall. In the early stages food would be cooked over an open fire. At the other end, another bay was divided into two for storage of the food and drink - the buttery and the pantry. Later, cooking was done in an independent structure at the back. Some of these still exist; there is one at Shere and another at Chobham. The remains of this set-up still exist in hundreds of buildings in Surrey today.

Apart from Penshurst, they would be timber-framed - panelled and lined with wattle & daub (wattle being the hurdle-like framing on which the daub sticks). The daub might include cow hair, cow dung, etc. (a piece of daub was passed round). Wattle & daub stayed until the re-introduction of brick. Very few houses were made from bricks between about 420 a.d. after the Romans left and the importation of brick by Bishop Wainflete from the Netherlands - his tower at Farnham Castle is of 1470. Then there is brick again at Lambeth Palace, and at Sutton Place built in 1521 by Richard Weston. Small men could not afford brick until later. Brick was then used to fill in between the timber framework instead of wattle & daub. The other use of brick in small houses was to build brick chimneys to take the smoke up through the smoke bay.

In Tudor times farmers used to keep their best farm equipment indoors. This is sometimes shown by the inventories attached to Wills, but is vividly illustrated in a trial for a murder which took place at Cosletts, Broadbridge Heath, which is this side of Horsham. The lady of the house was charged with poisoning her husband with arsenic, after buying it for beauty purposes. The depositions in the trial show the contents and purpose of each room of the farmhouse. Again, in 1550 Shakespeare in "Henry VI" has one of Jack Cade's followers saying "He built a brick chimney in my father's house."

The early bricks are quite narrow - see the Tudor Palace at Old Woking. They were originally called wall tiles, and bricks only later. Taxes were then put on bricks - the customs people would count the bricks, so they made them thicker so that fewer would be needed.

The old hall became the farmhouse kitchen. New houses were being built at the same time with floors at first floor level right through from the start.

The secret of dating houses is invariably in the roof construction. The rest of the house would be altered in the course of time, but not the roof. They were constructed in fashions, and the fashions would take time to travel across the country, so a construction in one place might well be 50 years earlier or later than the same construction in another place.

At Sendmarsh, April Cottage is fairly late - it was built with the smoke bay at the end - a transitional house. The old cottage further down has quite early features.

It is unlikely to be true that there is a vanished village round the Church in Send. Mr. Oliver's own house and the one across the road were farmers' houses. The old timber-framed house in Sendgrove is surely not an early pub. It is a Yeoman's house and entirely intact as it was when it was left in the 1500's. The lodge at the corner of Sendgrove is a hall house with one bay and a chimney added about 1540 or a bit later.

THE UNIQUE NATURAL HISTORY OF SEND

As a village, Send offers one of the most exciting collections of wild life gems in the Southern half of England.

Blessed with several ponds and waterways, many species of waterfowl are attracted, including many rare visitors. During the 27 years I have resided in the village I have seen many passage migrants come in to land for a rest before going on their way. Smews, Red Crested Pochard, Whimbrel, Curlew, Bittern, Osprey, to name but a few, and of course the Little Ringed Plover is now one of the regular breeding species at the gravel pits.

We also get a very good cross section of land birds in the village, and before Sandy Lane was re-surfaced a few years back, it was a regular stopping place for the Hoopoe, who used to walk along the well rutted track picking up titbits from the pot holes. The same lane used to be the breeding ground of the mole cricket, but is now long gone I'm sorry to say.

In 1973 a family of badgers moved into the village, the first ever to do so according to extensive enquiries carried out. The location of the sett is a little worrying because of possible future development, it would be a very encouraging thing if we here in Send could strive towards the preservation of this small nucleus of badgers, and perhaps look upon them as an asset, which they surely are.

Within the bounds of the village we have some wonderful trees and species of wild flowers, the flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) grows in certain places, and a number of orchids have been found.

This then is just a little of what our village offers in the way of natural history, perhaps if we could get enough interested persons together, we could form a section in the Send History Society, to maybe create a library and keep records of all forms of wild life occurring in our village. This obviously could be implemented quite pleasantly by many of our elder residents when out for walks on summer afternoons - in fact it is something in which many people can participate, and at the same time take a pride in the beautiful countryside that surrounds us.

Those wishing to take an active part in this aspect of our village should write to Mr. L. Bowerman.

Edward J. Bartlett

NATURAL HISTORY - THE PAPER COURT GRAVEL PITS

At a meeting of the Surrey Naturalists Trust at Horsell Secondary School on 18th February, Mr. H. Gotts gave an interesting illustrated talk entitled "Winter Visitors to Papercourt Gravel Pits".

In spite of local controversy over the further extension of quarrying in Send, the existing pits at Papercourt provide much of interest to the naturalist, and Mr. Gotts said that the pits have been designated a site of special scientific interest on account of its birds, butterflies and sand wasps. There are five pits of different sizes and depths. The best for birds is the North pit which is the one nearest to Ripley bordering Newark Lane. It is the largest and shallowest and has pits and islands which are attractive to birds such as ducks, swans, waders, rails and gulls. Water is being pumped from the pits being worked into the remaining pits as a result of which the water level in those is unnaturally high. The second best pit for birds is the South West one next to Tannery Lane which attracts deepwater birds such as grebes and sawbill ducks. Cormorants

are to be seen on the jetty in the yachting pit. The best time for rare birds is during migrating time in April to May and late July to early October. At that time black redstarts, black terns, golden plovers and even ospreys are sometimes to be seen.

The great crested grebe and little grebe (or dabchick) are there all the year round. At a count in 1965 there were over 30 pairs of the former breeding in Surrey, of which five or more pairs bred at Papercourt. The latter are very shy and will keep as far away as possible from humans. The horned or Slavonian Grebe is a scarce winter visitor. Kestrels are resident and are there at any time of the year. Sparrow hawks have been reported at Papercourt but not so far seen by Mr. Gotts. The Oceanic Hobby and Peregrines (over Newark Priory in 1973) have also been seen.

The osprey passes through Surrey in April to March on its way to its breeding ground in Scotland and again in autumn on its way back. This was to be observed at Papercourt last April when one rested there for about a week.

The Canada Goose is a resident of Canada introduced here over 200 years ago as an ornamental species. It escaped and there are now several thousands. Flocks of over 100 have been counted at Papercourt.

The moorhen is a member of the rail family as are the Coot and Water Rail all three of which are at Papercourt. The water rail is so shy it is unlikely to be seen. There are ten species of coot but ours is the most common in the world.

The Goosander is the largest duck to be seen regularly at Papercourt. It is a member of the sawbill family. Those wintering in the London area come from North Europe and America.

Mallard are one of the three commonest species at Papercourt, the other two being Pochard and Tufted Duck. The mallard is one of our largest and commonest British ducks. About 300 pairs of pochard breed in this country, which is about three times as many as 20 years ago. The tufted duck is a European species of which 40,000 winter in this country, although most of them breed in Europe, some breed in Surrey.

The Red Crested Pochard is a Continental species brought into wild life collections, and some have since escaped. It is difficult to tell whether they are wild or escapees. It dives, dabbles and grazes.

The Shoveler is the most brightly coloured of the ducks at Papercourt. It probably does not breed in Surrey although it used to breed on Sand watermeadows in the 1940's.

The smallest European duck is the Teal which is grey with a dark head. It can be seen in the surrounding watermeadows but not in the gravel pits. Widgeon have been reported at Papercourt but never seen there by Mr. Gotts.

The Pintail which as the name suggests has a long thin tail breeds in the wild in Kent and East Anglia. It is rather shy in the wild.

The Goldeneye has a white spot below the eye in the male. It is much commoner now than it used to be due to the London reservoirs and gravel pits.

The Mute Swan can be seen all the year at Papercourt where it breeds. It is the largest and heaviest British bird weighing 20 lbs. or more. The Whooper Swan does not breed in Britain and is a scarce winter visitor. The Bewick Swan has increased as a winter visitor since the 1940's.

FORE NATURAL HISTORY NOTES

Edward Bartlett reports that the osprey was in Send again in the middle of March this year. In the last two years it has been here three times. There is also a buzzard which is to be seen high in the sky above Send about every three weeks. It seems to make a day return trip from Cornwall.

On March 17th Sheila Brown saw one stoat or weasel cross the road along the Broadmeads, and another one at Cartbridge. A lizard was found recently in the garden of 15 Orchard Way.

SURREY'S BEST BIRDWATCHING SPOT?

The Spring edition of the Surrey Bird Club quarterly bulletin suggests that the Papercourt Gravel Pits are the second best birdwatching spot in Surrey out of 64 different sites for which record cards have been completed for the British Trust for Ornithology. Papercourt is the habitat for 129 different species, second only to Queen Mary Reservoir which has 164 species recorded.

ATHELSTAN AND SEND

The problem of Athelstan and the date of the sale of his land at Send mentioned in our first Newsletter can lead to some interesting speculation. There are several possibilities which may be worth considering. Firstly, if we assume that the Athelstan who sold the land was King Athelstan, son of Edward the Elder, the discrepancy between the sale and the date of his death seems insuperable. We could account for a difference of one year or at a pinch, two, since for various extremely complex reasons the annalists dated the year from March 1st, or the following September 1st, September 24th, December 25th or January 1st, and in the Parker Chronicle itself, the scribes occasionally "lost" a couple of years. Scribes were often careless, and one possibility which I tentatively suggest is that at some stage a scribe wrote LX (60) for XL (40) in the date.

However, the name Athelstan, is by no means uncommon during the Anglo-Saxon period. The genealogies are very complicated and the same names appear over and over again. They are often distinguished by the addition of a surname or a nickname and sometimes by the words "son of ...". The name Athelstan is no exception and there were several Athelstans who were more or less contemporary with King Athelstan. The most prominent is probably Athelstan, son of Athelfrith, Ealdorman of East Anglia, known as "Half-King" because of his power and the enormous extent of the land which he held. He appeared to control the whole of Danelaw from the Thames to the Welland, and in addition held vast estates outside his ealdorom, including some in Devon and Somerset. It would be tempting to consider this Athelstan as the owner of Send except for the fact that in 956 he retired to a monastery, where presumably he would not have entered into any land deals, unless of course he transferred the land by gift and not by sale, in which case to whom better than the Archbishop of Canterbury?

There were at least two other Athelstans at this period, one of whom first started to witness charters immediately after the retirement of the "Half-King", and was surnamed "Rota" to distinguish him from his predecessor. It would not appear to be very easy to establish positively the identity of "our" Athelstan, unless there is any more evidence to be obtained from the document itself or from other sources if available. Have any of our members examined this document, or does anybody know what language it is in?

H. A. Harvey

SEND POUNDS & THE LAMMAS LANDS

Further to Ken Bourne's notes in Newsletter No. 1 concerning the Pound at the corner of Heath Farm House, Howard Giles tells us that as far as he knows he and the late Jimmy Jackman were the last persons to use the Pound as such. In 1938 or 9 shortly before the last War they found a horse wandering in Tannery Lane. As Special Constables they took charge of it and impounded it, having first replaced the front bar of the Pound. Mr. Borman who owned the farm would charge so much a day plus the cost of fodder and the animal would not be released until its owner had paid up. This horse turned out to belong to gypsies who were working at fruitpicking at the farm.

There used to be another pound in Fell Hill where the wall with broken glass on top now is in the Stud Farm.

Mr. Giles also tells us that a third enclosure for cattle, albeit not a pound as such, was at Papercourt Farm where cattle were penned for branding before being allowed past the lock and on to the Broadmeads for free grazing between September and March. This took place until just before the last War.

The above paragraph would tie in with the information given in the Victoria History of Surrey (published 1911) that Woking Broadmead is the old common pasture of 150 acres along the river, also called Send Mead. It is on the border of the parishes, and Woking and Send have rights in it. The old practice was, after the hay was cut, to close it till 18th September, then to throw it open to pasture for the occupiers till March 1st when it was closed again for the grass to grow.

The land where the above practice took place would be the Lammas Lands (Lammas being a contraction of Low Mass, which would be the date of the beginning of the grazing). Doubtless some of our readers have more information on this subject. Would anybody like to provide further details? If this was an ancient right of Common it will presumably either have come to an end or have been registered with the County Council under the Commons Registration Act, 1965, like the right to dig sand from the ancient sand and gravel pits near May's Corner.

Les Bowerman

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Membership

The following have become members of the Society:

Mrs. Ansell, Send Hill	Mr. I. Miller, Kevan Drive
Mr. G. Ballard, Potters Lane	Miss M. Miller, Farm Lane
Miss M. Bayliss, Potters Lane	Mr. J. Oliver, Sendcourt Farm
Mr. Birrell, Send Barns Lane	Mr. & Mrs. G. Parker, Potters Lane
Mr. & Mrs. K. Bourne, Tannery Lane	Mrs. J. Parker, West Clandon
Mr. & Mrs. L. Bowerman, Orchard Way	Mr. Porter, St. Bede's School
Mrs. S. Brown, Wind's Ridge	Mrs. Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. R. Carter, Cartbridge	Miss & Mrs. Russell, Sendmarsh Green
Mrs. J. Carpenter, Maple Road	Mr. & Mrs. R. Sex, Send Hill
Mrs. Cave, Send Barns Lane	Mrs. S. Shelley, Westfield
Mrs. Challen, Send Road	Mr. & Mrs. J. Slatford, Kevan Drive
Mr. & Miss Cox, Westfield	Miss M. Szasz, Hillside Farm

Mr. P. Crane, Tuckey Grove
Mrs. Hind, Birch Close
Mrs. Hughff, Send Hill
Mr. & Mrs. Jackson, Orchard Way
Mr. Jenkins, Farm Lane
M. Lake
Mr. I. Miller, Kevan Drive

Mr. R. Talbot, Wind's Ridge
Mr. P. Thurbin, Hawthorn Road
Mr. & Mrs. T. Tice, Weyside Road, Guildford
Mrs. L. Wall, Grove Heath North
Mr. Watts, Sendmarsh Road
Mr. R. Wilkinson, Send Hill

We are very pleased to have all of the above as members, and we would welcome applications from anybody else who would like to join the Society. The subscription is 50 pence per family per year. Applications, with subscriptions please, to Pat Thurbin or myself at the addresses as shown at the top of the title page. As with the first edition a copy of this Newsletter will be given to everybody known to be interested in the history of Send. If any persons receiving the Newsletter have not yet paid a subscription will they please do so as soon as possible if they wish to become members of the Society. We are running on a shoestring budget, and although we only pay the cost of materials thanks to the Scout Group, the Newsletter is still not cheap to produce.

Forthcoming Meetings and Events

- Sunday, 20th April Conducted tour by Miss N. Cox, Secretary of Mayford History Society, round the ruins of Woking Palace. Meet at 2.45 p.m. at Send Parade (free lifts available), or at 3 p.m. at Woking Park Farm, Old Woking.
- Wed., 4th June Open Meeting at St. Bede's School Hall at 8 p.m.
(Subject to Confirmation) Mr. Eric Wood, author of "Collins Field Guide to Archaeology", will give a talk on "Moated Sites".
- Wed., 17th Sept. (Subject to Confirmation) Open Meeting at St. Bede's School Hall at 8 p.m. Possibly a visiting speaker to give an illustrated talk on "Industrial Archaeology".
- Wed., 12th Nov. (Subject to Confirmation) Open Meeting at St. Bede's School Hall at 8 p.m. Mr. Edward Bartlett will give an illustrated talk on "The wild life of Send".

It is hoped that the School will be able to be used under the auspices of the Guildford Institute for Further Education. The meetings will be free to members, but it will be necessary to charge 10p per person to non-members to cover expenses.

The Newsletter

Due to lack of space, a number of articles have had to be held over to the next edition. Closing date for the next edition will be Monday, 9th June. All contributions are welcome, whether they be articles, reports, or merely snippets of information.

Les Bowerman

ARE WE IN FOR A REPEAT? 1775. To the end of the first fortnight in March, rain almost every day. To the first week in April, cold winds, with showers of rain and snow. To the end of June, warm, bright weather with frequent showers. The first fortnight in July, almost incessant rains. To the 26th August, sultry weather with frequent showers. To the end of the third week in September, rain, with a few intervals of fine weather. To the end of the year, rain, with intervals of hoar-frost and sunshine.

Taken from WHITE'S NATURAL HISTORY OF SELBORNE

101 NOT OUT

On 20th February my wife's Great-Aunt Kate celebrated her 101st birthday and we as a family went up to Norfolk to pay our respects. Nothing particularly remarkable about that, it may be thought, and nothing to do with Send History anyway. True enough but she is fit and bubbling over with enthusiasm for life and so full of recollections of the village (Scole, near Diss) in which she has lived practically all her life that I cannot let the occasion pass without a brief mention in our Newsletter, particularly as I need an article which will take just one side of paper.

"Auntie" as she is known affectionately to everybody in the area is barely 4'6" tall - about 1" taller than my 7 yearold son and some 3" shorter than my 9 yearold daughter. She is up and about and bustling around all day, and is as happy standing up to talk as she is sitting down. Her brain is still needle sharp and she is in possession of all her faculties - she still reads the newspapers every day and keeps up to date with current affairs - prefers the idea of a man as leader of the Tories, however.

She was delighted to trot outside into the winter sunshine to have her photograph taken and says she does not feel the cold. Still feminine enough to be concerned because one of her photographs in the local papers made her look something approaching her age, one of "Auntie's" favourite activities is talking (gardening is another). She took readily to my suggestion of recording what she had to say about her early life, and I now have over half an hour of her reminiscences on tape. Her voice is as clear and steady as if she were 30 years younger, and the quality of her English is unbelievably good for somebody whose only formal education was in the village school which she left at the age of 12 and who has never lived outside an East Anglian village.

To most of us today, Queen Victoria's reign is as remote as another age, but here was somebody who lived for a quarter of a century during that long reign, and who was aged 40 when the First World War began! "Auntie" remembers not only Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 but still has a very clear picture of the details of the village Golden Jubilee celebrations ten years earlier. She was a young woman of 25 at the start of the Boer War in 1899 and knew men who had been soldiers in the Crimean War of 1854-56.

It clearly gave "Auntie" great pleasure to know that her words were being recorded and I eventually turned off the tape recorder after some 40 minutes when I was becoming exhausted. She was irrepressible and kept up the flow of conversation until we had to leave after a stay of two hours. There is no doubt that although 'only' the daughter of a village carpenter, she has a most remarkable intellect which enables her to keep up so many interests and enjoy every hour of what is now her 102nd year. It is probably largely her intellect which has helped her to live such a long and happy life. Together with first her brother and then her niece, she ran the Greyhound public house in Scole until she was in her nineties and would have been entitled to draw the old age pension for as long as most people spend working.

Les Bowerman.