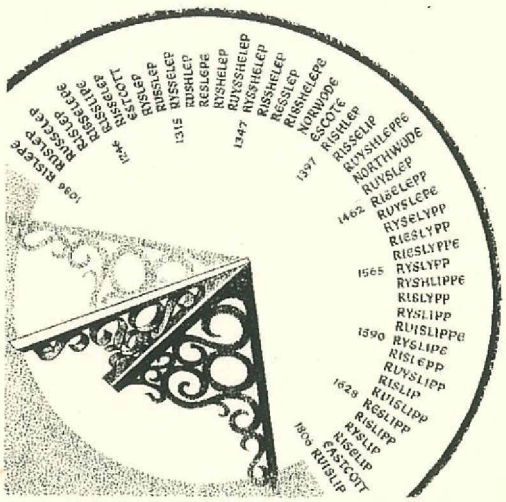

JOURNAL 2005

RUISLIP, NORTHWOOD & EASTCOTE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

RUISLIP, NORTHWOOD AND EASTCOTE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

JOURNAL 2005

Cover picture: The Sigers (Denise Shackell)

Designed and edited by Brian Grisdale

Membership of the Ruislip, Northwood and Eastcote Local History Society is open to all *who are interested in local history. For further information please enquire at* a *meeting of the SOciety* or *contact the Membership Secretary. Meetings are held* on *the third Monday of each month from September to April and are open to visitors.*

An *active Research Group supports those who are enquiring into* or *wishing to increase our understanding of the history of the ancient parish of Ruislip (the present Rulsiip, Northwood and Eastcote). Its members are largely responsible for the papers in this Journal, and for other Society publications that are produced from time to time.*

Ruislip, Northwood and Eastcote Local History Society

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LECTURE PROGRAMME 2005 - 2006

2005		
September 19	Medieval Pinner	Patricia Clarke
October 17	AGM and Lost Elysium? Metroland and its legacy in Ruislip, Eastcote & Ickenham	Richard Piper
November 21	The Life and Work of Sir John Soane	Susan Palmer
December 19	The Gentleman's Magazine in the 18th Century	Alan Ruston
2006		
January 16	'Idle Women' Volunteer Boatwomen of World War 11	Runnalls Davis
February 20	Around Fleet Street: a history	John Garrod
March 20	Church Bellringing	David Rowlands
April 24	The Art of Work: William Morris and Socialism	Roger Huddle

Meetings are held on Mondays at 8.15 pm in St. Martin's Church Hall, Ruislip

ELIZABETH ROGERS OF EASTCOTE HOUSE - HER STORY

by Eileen M. Bowlt

In the 2003 edition of this journal I wrote about James Rogers of Eastcote House, ending the story with his death in July 1738. He left behind a sixteen-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, who had to cope not only with grief and loneliness, but also had to turn her hand to business and run a large estate. This is her story.

Elizabeth Rogers was the daughter of lames Rogers and his wife, lane, granddaughter of Ralph Hawtrey 1626-1725 (See family tree, page 9). Following the deaths of her mother and elder brother who were buried at St Martin's within three weeks of each other in February 1736, Elizabeth was left as her father's sole heir to the former Hawtrey estate in Ruislip. Elizabeth's half sister, Frances, the child of lames Rogers's first marriage to Frances Arundell of Northolt, inherited property in Cleveland Row (by the stable yard of St *lames's* Palace) and a dwelling called Bandon in Ansty, Herts and St Catherine's Farm in Howletts Lanei. She lived in King's Square, Kensington, where she lived with their grandmother Mrs Betty Rogers. When both these women died within days of each other in August 1739 all that property also descended to Elizabeth Rogers and she became administratrix of her grandmother's goods and chattels. In these early years Elizabeth herself was often referred to as Miss Betty Rogers.

The relevant part of *lames* Rogers's will read ... *'I give devise and bequeath all and every my leasehold estates held* of *the Provost and Fellows* of *King's College in Cambridge. And also the Rectory and tythes* of *Ruislip which I hold by lease* of *the Dean and Chapter* of *Windsor unto my daughter Elizabeth Rogers her executors, administrators and assigns. And I give and assign and bequeath all the rest* of *what nature or kind* so *ever unto my said daughter Elizabeth Rogers whom I make Executrix* of *this my last Will and Testament.'*[2] Despite her youth and sex she proved the will herself at Doctors Commons a fortnight after her father's death *'and was informed I was* of *age sufficient to* do *so.'*[3]

The Hawtrey papers at the London Metropolitan Archive include letters relating to Elizabeth's brother, Ralph Rogers, during his childhood and show that he had been at Harrow Schools,' but make no mention of Elizabeth's education. Following her mother's death she may have supervised the running of the household, but one wonders how well versed she could have been in estate management. Her father had prepared her in some measure for future responsibilities, desiring her to seek help from Mr Lynch near Bennet Street near St *lames's* in any affairs of moment! and there was a steward at Eastcote.

When lames Rogers's lease of the rectorial tithes from the Dean and Canons of Windsor came up for renewal in 1740, Richard Lynch advised her that although not yet of age she could renew it, but that if her father had appointed a guardian or trustee his name would have to be joined to hers on the new lease. Elizabeth drafted a reply explaining *'My father making the will* so *sudden as the day* on *which he died its likely occasioned its not having all that necessary* to *one more deliberately made, he therein not having named any Guardian or Trustee for me'*[6]. She decided to pay for the lease *'by drawing a bill* on *Mr Child's bank at Temple Bar.'* Her grandfather, [ohn Rogers had been a goldsmith and a partner of Francis Child at the sign of the Marigold at Temple Bar and she continued to use the bank.

The College leases had come up the same year and by some mistake they had not had seals affixed. Mr Lynch advised her not to worry as she had paid and received a receipt for the money, but to wait for the next College Seal due at Christmas.

Marriage prospects and relatives

Elizabeth Rogers amused herself by buying lottery tickets and her relatives in London searched the books to find out whether she had won any prizes. jl, Kentish, a connection of the Arundells condoled with her in June 1739 on her bad luck, but consoled her with the thought that *'tho* we *have blanks in the lottery* we *won't repine but hope for better luck* in *busbends'?* It is clear that making a good marriage yourself or promoting suitable alliances among your relatives was a major concern of the women in Elizabeth Rogers's circle. Most of the feminine letters in the Hawtrey papers contain gossipy references to weddings - marriages where there was a discrepancy of fortune or age, runaway matches, or potential husbands for someone or other. As an independent woman of property and means Elizabeth Rogers was a desirable catch and many of her relatives and friends make arch references to possible suitors, particularly to a 'Mr B'. *'I think* it an *age since I heard from you but you* are so *taken up playing shuttlecock with* Mr *B that t'is very excusable'* wrote a cousin Mary Needham in April 1740[8].

Elizabeth needed to beware of fortune hunters and a friend to help her repel them. In this she turned to Mr Lynch, treating him very much as a confidant in personal as well as business matters. In June 1739 he offered friendly advice on avoiding too intimate a contact with unwelcome visitors at Eastcote. *'I* am *informed likewise that you have had some late visitors which perhaps you would have been as well without having and that you are* to *be further visited by them* in a *short time. Methinks you may have Mrs Sheppard in some measure with you,* as *particular occasion may require, though* as *your guests are more than* a *few I see not that you will be likely be with anyone* of *them alone more than you may care* for.... [9] He goes on to offer her an escape route by advising her to tell her guests that she needs to see him on business before he goes out of town and invites her to stay at his house in London. He also suggests that she refer *'any discourse broached* to *you on* any *subject'* to him, thus stopping any importunities. He wondered whether her *'eosin Sally'* could come soon or whether she could seek some other person as a companion. Cousin Sally was Sarah Needham, a relation on Elizabeth's father's side.

Elizabeth forwarded Mr Lynch a letter from an unnamed but tiresome suitor in April *1740. 'Having recd the inclosd last Saturday I thought it the best way* to *send it up* to *you and desire you* to *write a letter such* as *he deserves for he never will* a *done tormenting and will always be* a *coming to church which will put the country in an uptoerw.*

The suggestion about a companion was taken up by October 1741 when Mr Lynch wrote *'Mts Lynch and self are pretty well* and *hope your family are* so *too.* Our *service waits* on *you and* Mrs *Needbem'u;* In fact there were two Mrs Needhams, Sarah and Susannah known in the family as Sally and Sukey who lived at Eastcote House, perhaps in turn, as companions for the rest of their lives. They were rather more than twenty years older than Elizabeth, and therefore suitable chaperones and were buried in St Martin's where they are commemorated in the chancel on the south side of the altar. Sarah died in 1775 aged 76 and Susannah in the following year aged 75. It was normal in the eighteenth century for unmarried women to be addressed as Mrs, which like Miss is an abbreviation of Mistress, which accounts for the frequent references to 'Mrs' Rogers and 'Mrs' Needham.

The Needhams, five sisters and a brother, lived in Devizes, Wilts and all seem from the correspondence in the Hawtrey papers to have been particularly close to Elizabeth Rogers. Sarah Needham purchased a close of meadow in Pinner called Souters from Elizabeth's uncle, George Blagrave in 1756, perhaps as an investment.[2] and this piece of meadowland passed in turn by will to Susannah, then to another unmarried sister, Mary and to a married sister, Elizabeth Richards by 1780 and was eventually purchased from her by Elizabeth Rogers herself. The other sister was Ellen Hope of Marlborough and the brother was called

Joseph. Ben Richards, who executed commissions for the ladies at Eastcote, was a cousin. In March 1744 he wrote to Eastcote *'agreeable to your request have procured a fresh cod flsh* of 7s *6d price and a Barrell* of *Oysters green linn'd at* 3s *6d, both which were warranted to be exceeding good. The above were deliverd to the Devizes caravan at the White Horse, Holborn Bridge yesterday evening; they were directed according to your order...*

Your affectionate kinsman,
Ben Richards'13

This was not the first time that such presents had been sent to Devizes. In March 1741, before Sally became her companion, Miss Rogers had sent an exciting box, which elicited an effusive and ill-spelt response from Mary Needham, *'I return you a great many thanks for your kind present* of *the fan which was very acceptable to* me *for I don't know anything I wanted more than a hansome fan and I think I never* se *one* so *pretty as this but you bestow* so *many favours upon* us *that* we *never can return thanks enuff.* Mr *B and* my *brother was by when* we *open'd the box but I wish you had been hear to see the transport* we *was in to see* so *flne a present but* we *all agreed that* we *never saw any china* so *pretty before. ....My brother went last Saturday to take part* of *the fish you was* so *good as to send* my *sister Sukey but the diner was* so *late he was obliged to come away without taking part* of *it which was a very great blow to him.* Mr *John Bott and another gentleman took part* of *it and I don't doubt but thay drank your health as* we *often* do'14.

The long letter continued with general gossip about various prospective marriages and ends with *'Hear was great rejoicing when* Mr *Baynton got his election and* we *have heard since he is going to be married to a lady* of *great fortune and I don't know whear* (whether) *they don't mean you.'* Could this be the mysterious 'Mr B'? Ben Richards, sending her Christmas and New Year greetings at the end of 1743 continues with the hope that *'if you prove a loser in any sense...it may be in nothing more material than the exchange* of *your name which when you* do *I hope will be an addition to your felicity. '15*

Elizabeth received parcels of books, such as Mrs Horwood's novels, from London, through the good offices of Ben Richards, and a playbill for Drury Lane Theatre suggests that she enjoyed the usual social activities available in the capital. She also ordered wine from London, dealing with a woman, Mrs Mareon in Ludgate Street. She used another relation, Rowland Rogers to pay her a bill for £56 8s in 1742,sending him an order upon Child's Bank.i!

When Elizabeth Rogers visited London she sometimes stayed with Mrs Aspin, a Hawtrey connection, in Southampton Row and had letters and packets addressed to her there. Lucy Aspin was older than Elizabeth and commented in April 1743 that *'there is* so *great a difference in your age and mine that I must always be disagreeable to you, but when any business call you to Town, I think my house may be serviceable for you to come to any day any hour... '.* 17 She signed herself *your affectionate cousin',* Like the other cousins she also hinted at interesting and suitable men. She wrote in July 1741 *'I have had a little variety lately, for a cousin* of *ours Ralph Hawtrey is come from Ireland and has been very much with our cousin Blois who brought him to see me, he is a very agreeable young man and in good circumstances. They dined with* me *three times.* We *always drank your health. I told him what a great fortune and what a pretty lady you was. He seemed mighty attentive at the hearing an account* of *you and that he heartily wished you the best lord in the land might be your husband. '18* In November 1742 we find her sending thanks for *'the tlnest pig I ever saw,* so *I had it collared thinking some agreeable friend might come to partake* of *it, and I am sure* of *one that you know it will relish the better being one* of *your breed.'19*

In spite of all this prompting Elizabeth Rogers never married, but lived very comfortably at Eastcote with her companions and gradually as she grew older the hints and light banter on matrimonial affairs disappear from the letters, but the correspondence and visiting between all the cousins continue. Elizabeth's aunt, Philadelphia Blagrave of Bullmarsh near Reading figures prominently and it is upon her direct descendants, the Deanes that Elizabeth Rogers's estates finally devolved.

Business Matters

Judging by the number of letters of complaints from tenants, James Rogers had not been a particularly good landlord, apparently failing to keep his property in good repair.[20] Elizabeth Rogers also received complaints from tenants, the most vociferous of whom was Cat (presumably Catherine) Stevens who had lived in one of the Cleveland Row houses for many years. She was, however, a poor payer and frequently behind with her rent and may have been inclined to exaggerate her grievances about the state of the house as some sort of excuse. Back in June 1736 she had just spent £100 sending two daughters to Boston in New England, and furnishing her house had also set her back. She had assured James Rogers that after September she would *'take care never to be behind again'*.[21] This proved to be a vain hope. In March 1746 she wrote seeking a reduction in rent of £5 per annum to bring it down to the same level as the house next door, which had stood empty half the time since the death of a long-term tenant eight years before and claiming that rents had *'vastly fallen'* since she came in. She complained of the darkness in the back part of the house and lack of closets which meant that she could not sublet it, asserting that *'the house is what nobody likes the new is much better and cheaper.'*[22] Elizabeth Rogers' s reply three months later does not seem to be unreasonable. She had been *'much surprised at the reading* of *it when I found you was* so *very solicitous to have the rent abated, when you know how very much you are in* arrears. *Madam if you will pay them off I then will give* Mr *Keightley orders to act between us.'*

Some of the Cleveland Row houses were leased rather than rented and not necessarily lived in by the lessee. Mrs Ann Twiss, a widow, of St Mary le Bow, nearing the end of a long lease, renewed for 14 years from Michaelmas 1783 at £10 per annum. She had to *'repair, uphold, support, sustain, maintain, amend, paint, pave, scour, glaze, lead tile, purge* and *keep the said messuage and all walls, pavements, pipes, gutters* and *water courses'*. At the end of the term she had to yield up all fixtures and fittings.[23] Elizabeth Rogers's accounts for 1778 show that the rent of two of the Cleveland Row houses were £35 and £30 per annum respectively.>

Mrs Rogers's man of business, Abel Jenkins, checked her title to the Cleveland Row estate in 1779, perhaps fearing some dispute. The six houses had come into her father's possession at the time of his first marriage to Frances Arundel as part of the marriage settlement and had been in the possession of Sir Francis Child, George Jackson and Joseph Rosington before 1709, the date when the Middlesex Deeds Registry had been set up, requiring the registration of all deeds of lands in the county. The Middlesex Deeds Registry now at the London Metropolitan Archive is a great boon to local historians, but searching its indices can be long and unproductive and so it proved for Mr Jenkins. He put in his accounts *'This search took up much time'* and he found nothing. Elizabeth Rogers eventually left the Cleveland Row estate along with much else to Philadelphia and Jane Deane.

Managing the Ruislip estates

When King's College decided to have their Ruislip demesne surveyed in the mid-eighteenth century, they appointed John Doharty of Worcester to carry out the measurements, produce a Terrier and draw a map. This was the first time that the demesne had been mapped and it shows the land leased from the College by Elizabeth Rogers. She took the opportunity of having Mr Doharty produce a second map and *'A Terrier to all the Free Copy* and *Leasehold lands in Ruislip belonging* to Ms *Rogers* of *Eastcott'*. The Terrier survives at the London Metropolitan Archive, and there are copies at Ruislip and Uxbridge libraries, but the map is missing. The Terrier was deposited in the Middlesex County Records in 1958 by Mr Bowlby of Harrow School. No one knows how it came to be there. There was a third map for the church - also missing.

The demesne land amounted to 1460 acres, including the 335 acre Copse Wood and the

407 acre Park Wood. The other 720 acres comprised Ruislip Court (now Manor Farm) with what are now the Pinn Fields and arable land in the common fields of Ruislip: Church Field, Great Windmill Field, Little Windmill Field, Marlpit Field, Bourne Field, Roxbourne and Cognorth. [oseph Goodson from Halton in Buckinghamshire was Elizabeth Rogers's tenant at Manor Farm. He had taken over the tenancy in 1747 for twelve years[25]. He and his wife were obliged to house the College Steward and his servant and stable their horses when they came to hold the manor courts. They also housed John Doharty while he was carrying out his survey.

Elizabeth's personal estate was centred on Eastcote House with its 15 acres of gardens and meadows. One of the meadows was called Dove house Close and may have been the land between the Dovecot and the River Pinn. Attached to Eastcote House were just over 30 acres in the common fields on the Eastcote side of the parish. These were retained in hand by Mrs Rogers and were probably farmed by her servants.

She also owned a number of farms and cottages with 240 acres of land attached to them which were let to tenants. The most important was Field End Farm with 95 acres. (see Fig.l) There were two closes of pasture and a four acre meadow beside the house and two other meadows called Harry Smiths and Little Harry Smiths, which are known to have been near the corner of Field End Road and Cheyney Street. Field End Farm can be tentatively identified as the house called Sigers which was demolished in the 1930s when the Eastcote Park estate was built. The name of the tenant in 1750 is not given in the Terrier, but William Pritchard was there in the 1780s[26]. Widow Ambridge, William Gladman and George Barringer rented only land in the common fields, while Sarah King, Samuel Page and John Lott had enclosed meadow land. John Seymour, Henry Platt, George Woods, John West, Ioseph Philips and Richard Wetherley all had homes tails with either a garden or an orchard and some meadow or pasture. [ames Tilliard simply had a cottage and garden amounting to less than half an acre. No name or street is given except in the case of George Woods who had St Catherine's Farm in Howletts Lane. Park Farm, Eastcote Cottage, Cuckoo Hill Farm, Fore Street Farm and Old Cheyne Cottage (the latter two were demolished in the 1930s) would have been among them as they are known from earlier sources to have been owned by Elizabeth's Hawtrey ancestors and to have remained in the estate until after the Enclosure 1804-14. Elizabeth seems not to have increased the estate during her lifetime and sold one property, The Old House in Bury Street, to the Rev Charles Jacques of Hillingdon in 1739.[27]

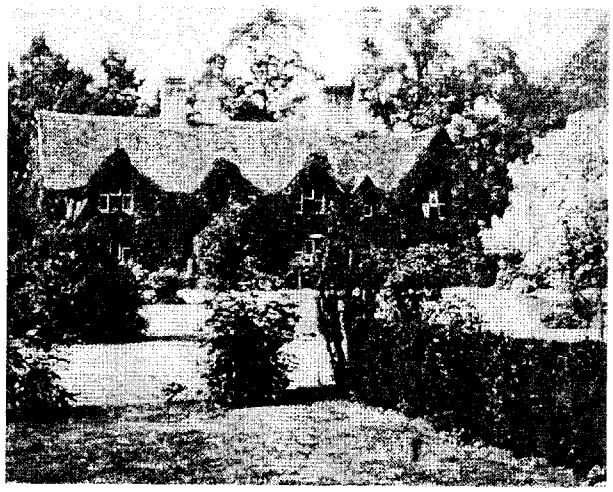

Fig. 1 - Field End Farm
This farmhouse latterly known as Sigers, can be tentatively identified with the chief farm of Elizabeth Rogers's estate, known as Field End Farm in the eighteenth century

She pursued debts owed her. In September 1737 she had desired Mr Ambridge, *'to make a seizure* of *the hay and other effects on the meadows rented by William Heward* of *me in part* of *one years and three quarterly rent due to me from him Midsummer last being the sum* of £49 *lOs.'*[28]

Letters from her steward, John Gregory, in the 1780s suggest that she generally had a good relationship with her servants and tenants. When she was away from Eastcote John Gregory sent her a brace of hares, one pheasant and three and a half brace of birds, having put a ticket on them so that she would know when they were killed and which

needed eating first. The accompanying letter gives us glimpses of the every day life of the estate and its efficient running under his stewardship. Mrs Jordan, a tenant, had given up the keys of her house and barn and entirely quitted the premises. John Gregory had put a man into the barn to thresh the corn and because some of her dung had been left in a heap in a field and was in the way of ploughing he had advised Mr Pritchard of Field End Farm to carry it onto his own fields and plough it in, providing that he paid 40 shillings, the value put upon it by the appraisers. He continued *'Mt and Mrs Ptitcbsrd gives their love* to *Molly and they are all well and they both give their duty to you ... The servants are well and join in duty* to *you and are all very sorry to hear that you have been ill but are* in *hopes that you are still getting better which* is *the sincere wish* of Yr *very hble & obt servt to command, John Gregory'.29*

Whenever her rights were in question Elizabeth Rogers fought vigorously, as when she considered that the Dean and Canons of Windsor were granting away some of the tithes that she leased from them in the 1790s. They had agreed to allow the tithes of coppiced underwood (the hornbeam) to a new vicar, Mr Gibbons, who came to St Martin's in 1794 and died three years later, which would leave their lessee with only the timber tithes, causing a reduction in her income. She therefore threatened that she would not renew her lease when it fell due in 1798 unless she was indemnified against the vicar's right. *'I cannot help complaining that the Dean* and *Canons have used* me *very unhandsomely by making a deed* to *deprive* me of *my property* in *the tythe oi undeiwood'i»*^^ As she had in fact been their tenant for nearly fifty years by that time, the Dean and Canons capitulated and informed the next vicar, Daniel Carter Lewis, that he should surrender any right in the coppice tithes since no confirmation that such a right had ever existed could be found. In fact the first of Elizabeth's leases in 1740[31] had excluded all woods, underwood and timber trees, so the wood tithes must either have been inserted into later leases or merely assumed by the lessee.

The new vicar seems to have been reviving an ancient dispute about the vicar's right to wood for fuel which had last been seriously raised in 1590. The Enclosure Commissioners a few years later settled the matter by granting the vicar of Ruislip part of Park Wood, where St. Vincent's later stood, and more land on Haste Hill.

The Rectory lease was valuable to Elizabeth Rogers. In 1740 she had to pay £20 per annum rent plus £4 at Lady Day (25 March) to provide two fat boars for the Dean and Canons Hospitality Day and a further forty shillings at Lady Day for a quarter of wheat and had to covenant to keep the chancel at St. Martin's in repair. There was also a fine to pay upon each renewal of the lease. The advowson of the vicarage (the right to choose the vicar of Ruislip) was retained by the Dean and Canons.

Her 1778 accounts show her paying the same rent as in 1740 in two half-yearly payments: £10 Is in November and £16 Is in Apnl.vˆ but it rose to £60 by the end of the century. The amount coming in from the tithes varied from year to year, perhaps depending upon weather and growing conditions and the state of the market, for the tithes seem to have been commuted to money payments. The total sum received in 1748-9 was £304 10s 6d, but only £143 16s 6d in 1757.[33] In 1803 the income was £368 4s 4d, but deductions for the Poor Rate, the cost of the dinner provided for the tithe payers on tithe day and various taxes reduced the profit to £225 19s 9d.[34]

Elizabeth Rogers did not renew the lease in 1798 after all. not because of any grievance, but *'being very old and infirm and being deprived* of *her hearing not fit to* do *business.* '[35] Philadelphia and [ane Deane, her successors continued the correspondence with the Dean and Canons, who seem not to have been unduly worried about the renewal„ so long as the rent for the lease was paid. Having dealt with the family at Eastcote House since the sixteenth century, they probably assumed that the renewal fines would eventually be paid, as indeed they were, by Ralph Deane, Elizabeth Rogers's residuary legatee.

Elizabeth Rogers probably maintained the chancel of the church as and when necessary, but no repairs had been carried out for several years before her death in 1803 and work was begun in 1807 at the expense of Philadelphia and *lane* Deane. They had also seen to the repair of the 'Church Bridge' across the River Pinn in Bury Street in 1805.[36]

Last years

Elizabeth Rogers lost her companions, the Needhams when in her late fifties, but correspondence with their nieces continued and shows a still close relationship. Their place at Eastcote may have been taken by Philadelphia and *lane* Deane. Although not actually stated, they seem to have been living at Eastcote in the later years of Elizabeth's life and probably acted as companions, particularly necessary in view of her increasing incapacity. They were buried in 1822 and 1823 respectively in St Martin's, where their commemorative plaque may be seen on the north side of the nave.

She made her will in May 1803, appointing Rev George Deane (nephew of Philadelphia and *lane* Deane) and Charles *lames* of New Inn as trustees of most of her property. Certain annuities were to be paid from the profits and the residue was to go to Philadelphia and *lane* Deane for a time with their nephew, Ralph Deane as residuary legatee.

Elizabeth's closeness to various cousins and their children is shown in her will. An annuity of £50 a year was to be paid to Harriet Love, daughter of her cousin Ann Ackworth deceased and Susannah Hope got a life interest in St. Catherine's Farm which included land in Harefield parish on the corner of New Years Green Lane. Betsy Rogers was left the tithes for a fixed term and Charles lames offered to buy them from her, but the offer he made was not thought adequate to the value and she determined to keep them.[37] Cousin Sarah Elliot was to have two diamond rings *'which by the inscription on them appear to have been bought in remembrance of my cousins Sarah Needham and Susannah Needbem',*. Sarah Needham had left Elizabeth five guineas to buy a ring in 1775 and Mary Needham had left her a diamond ring in 1780.[38] She left her other diamonds to Elizabeth Sarah, daughter of her cousin [ohn Rogers. But Philadelphia and *lane* Deane were the most favoured female cousins. In addition to an interest in her property she gave them *'all my pictures, china and brewing utensils, chariot and horses and harness, cart horses, cattle, wagons, carts, ploughs and all other implements of farming and husbandI}', household goods, effects and furniture, plate and linen,* my *two best sets of apron ruffles and linen handkerchiefs and books'.*[39]

Elizabeth Rogers 1722-1803
- what was she like?

It is difficult to assess Elizabeth Rogers's character from the largely one-sided correspondence in the Hawtrey papers. The letters are mainly written to her, with occasionally a draft reply on the back. Two things, however, stand out: her ability to conduct the business affairs of a large and scattered estate and the importance to her of her extended family. Starting with the proving of her father's will at the age of sixteen and the administration of her Grandmother Rogers's affairs two years later, both of which involved the paying of annuities to family members, she showed herself competent. She was conscious of her duties as the leading lady in the neighbourhood and the need to continue family charities. When about 1740 she desired Mr Lynch to draw up a will, she wanted the £200 that her grandfather (presumably she means her great grandfather, Ralph Hawtrey) had left the parish for the poor, to be mentioned. The result can be seen in the engraved stone above the North door into St. Martin's. Apart from the sale of the Old House in Bury Street, she maintained the estate that she had inherited, including, Bandons in Ansty, Herts and the Cleveland Row houses and had acquired the field Souters in Pinner. The fact that she, at the outset a very young woman,

was accepted by both the Provost and Scholars of King's College and the Dean & Canons of Windsor as a suitable tenant of their leases for the whole of her life, again testifies to her competence in business.

She probably relied fairly heavily upon solicitors, stewards and servants. All the surviving letters show a friendly relationship with these people, especially perhaps with Mr Lynch who advised her in personal as well as business matters. She sought the advice of Mr J. Smith, the bursar of King's College, when the question of the enclosure of St. Catherine's Manor came up in 1768. As owner of St. Catherine's Farm she was a landowner within the little manor, as it was sometimes called, and was consulted about the enclosure. Mr Smith advised that King's College as neighbouring landowners would not object to the enclosure of St. Catherine's, but pointed out that the cost of fencing would have to be borne by the tenants of St. Catherine's and would be considerable.[40] Acting on this hint she strenuously opposed the move, although it went ahead anyway because other tenants wanted it. It is noticeable that there was no attempt to enclose the main manor of Ruislip during her lifetime, but that negotiations to do so were opened up within a year of her death by her trustees. She was probably a little conservative in her approach to land management.

The letters and other documents reveal an enormous number of 'cousins' who cannot readily be fitted into a family tree. There are hints in the Needhams' writings that she was regarded as the lady of fortune within the family and distributor of largesse, but without knowing more about their own financial circumstances it is impossible to judge. Elizabeth Rogers, despite the sad loss of her immediate family was not in fact lonely. Relatives seem to have enjoyed visiting Eastcote and there are several references to the sweet air there. One respondent became quite poetic in 1742, *'... Dull smoaky London not to be named with your sweet and pleasant retirement which will become more* so as *fast as the lazy backward spring will mend its pace at the impulse* of *the warm sun ...* '41.

We know little about her health. There is a reference to at least one illness when she was about 60, and some apothecaries' bills, mainly for purgative draughts (some for Mrs Needham) have survived, but she lived to be 81, possibly with no more than the defects caused by advancing age.

Elizabeth Rogers seems to have been an able girl who developed into a formidable business woman, which was rather unusual in the eighteenth century. In other ways she enjoyed the social and family life typical of the age and her station in life.

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1 National Archive: Prob *11/690* f184
2 !MA: Aee 24911773
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4 !MA:. Ace 249/2386
5 LMA: Ace 24911773
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7 !MA: Ace 249/2279
8 !MA: Ace 249/2662
9 !MA: Ace 24911768
10 !MA:. Ace 249/3843
11 !MA:. Ace 24911776
12 LMA: Ace 249/2278-81
13 !MA:. Ace 249/2661
14 !MA: Ace 249/2664
15 LMA: Ace 249/2659
16 LMA: Ace 249/3847
17 LMA: Ace 249/2366-71
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20 *'Lames Rogers of Eastcote House'*, Eileen M. Bowlt, RNELHS Journal 2003
21 LMA: Ace *249/3834*
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24 LMA: *Acc249/3465-66*
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27 LMA: Ace 538/2nd dep/3662
28 LMA: Ace *249/1749*
29 LMA: Ace *249/3856*
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31 !MA: Ace 249/2570
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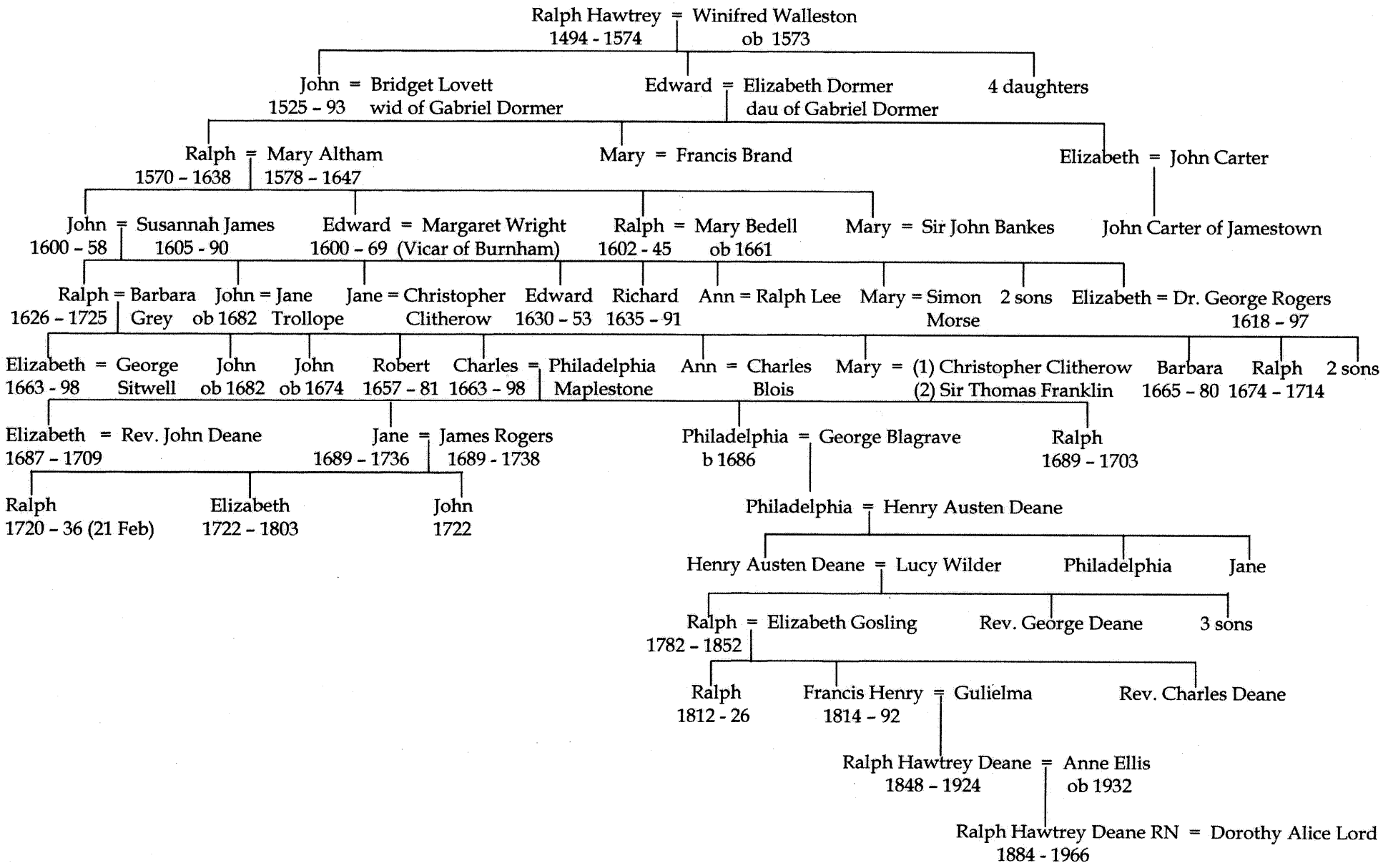
36 Ibid
37 LMA: Ace *249/2698*
38 LMA: Ace *249/2702* and 2700
39 LMA: Ace *2491*
40 LMA:. Ace *249/2344-53*
41 LMA: Ace *249/3843*

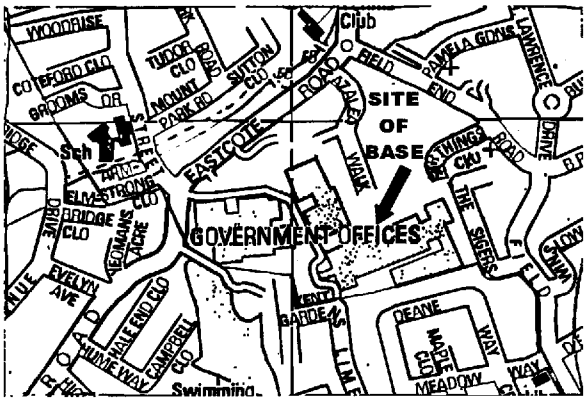
HAWTREY FAMILY TREE SHOWING DESCENT TO ROGERS AND DEANES



ENIGMA AND THE EASTCOTE CONNECTION

by Susan Toms

Many of us are aware now of the code breaking activities at Bletchley Park, which contributed so much to this country's victory in World War II. But how many of us are aware that some of this highly secret work, took place on our doorstep at the now almost empty and derelict Ministry of Defence site, situated between the Eastcote Road and Lime Grove (see below).



MoD Site Location

Originally the decoding activities were based entirely at Bletchley Park and involved the operation of machines called Bombes, which had been developed to identify and break the German codes. These Bombes were run to obtain the daily settings of the drums on the Enigma machine. Altogether over 200 Bombes were built and to accommodate and operate some of these machines outstations or satellites were established. Hence the existence of Eastcote, which along with Stanmore, Wavendon, Adstock and Gayhurst were all outstations. Originally the site at Eastcote had been intended as a war hospital but in 1943 it became an outstation and soon it expanded into the largest outstation accommodating 800 Wrens who operated the 110 Bombes based there. (See photographs page 13). Besides the Wrens there was a small contingent of 100 RAF technicians most of whom had been Post Office engineers in civilian life. Their role was to service the Bombes and repair any faulty wiring. The final group based at Eastcote was a detachment of American personnel, who operated their own machines independently in one bay. They did not live on site like the others, but were transported in each day. Consequently there was very little official contact but there are many mentions of joint dances where the superior food of the Americans was much appreciated by the British personnel who were enduring rationing. Some Wrens can recollect the snacks of ice cream, apple pie and chocolate from the Americans which mitigated the long hours of a night watch.

The site was known as HMS Pembroke and always flew the ensign. It was divided into Block A and Block B. Block A, which was nearest Lime Grove consisted of the living and eating quarters and the other administrative areas, whereas Block B further back on the site was the strictly controlled work station where the Bombes were housed. This Block was protected by a high brick wall and guarded by military police. The two Blocks were separated by a public footpath, which still divides the site today. This separation was physical and social since none of the cooks, stewards and other staff working in Block A had any idea of the true nature of the work happening in Block B. The footpath also caused problems for the Wrens when they were on night watch since they had to cross the path usually singly in pitch darkness to go for a meal break. One girl was attacked and consequently the Wrens 'used to run across at something like Olympic speed'.

The Bombes were housed in separate bays each of whim were named after an allied muntly while the Bombes were named after towns in that country. The bays were enormous with 8 to 12 Bombes in each. The working conditions were noisy, airless, hot and smelly from the use of oil, and stressful with the Wrens being constantly reminded that lives depended on what they were doing. No wonder the arrival of the tea trolley was a keenly awaited event on each

watch. The Bombes had to be loaded in a certain order using 'menus' sent over from Bletchley with the wires at the back of the machines being plugged in according to the 'menu'. Each machine was operated by two Wrens. If the machine stopped the results or settings were checked and relayed to Bletchley since this could indicate they had struck lucky and cracked the German code for that day. The Wrens were always told if any of their 'stops' had been successfuL It was tedious work but it demanded great accuracy and concentration while working under pressure. One said "it was a job for conscientious young women, we had tweezers for tweaking wires". Another, in answer to the question "Was it exciting? always replied "No it was a horrid job".

It was also physically demanding work since the machines had to be operated round the clock. Hence the Wrens were organised into four watches or shifts, namely A, B, C and D, to work the following weekly hours. Week 1 was the day watch from 8am - 4pm, followed by week 2, the evening watch, from 4pm - midnight and then week 3, the night watch, from midnight - 8am. The last week 4 was the relief or split watch. Each watch consisted of *100/200* Wrens with its own complement of officers and petty officers who lived and worked together as one unit. This made it easier for them to cope with the unsocial hours since everyone was on the same shift. Each watch was staffed also by four RAF technicians. The four week rota was followed by four days leave which was much appreciated by the Wrens. Many talk of a stream of girls racing down Lime Grove to reach Eastcote Station as quickly as possible to make the most of their precious time off.

The living conditions were fairly basic also. Many of the early arrivals remember being greeted with "a heap of angle iron, wire bed frames etc. which with a spanner and nuts and bolts we assembled into bunks." To add insult to injury the floor had to be cleared before assembling the bunk beds since the builders had only recently finished their work. Later on a hall was built on the left of the entrance from Lime Grove which was used for dances and showing films. During the summer there was enough space between the wooden accommodation cabins to relax outside. Any local people who saw them would have had no idea of the highly secret work on which they were engaged. They might even have thought it was a Wrens' rest home.

As was common throughout the war whole groups of people who had never mixed before were thrown together.. Several mention the Wrens, who were 'posh' or 'upper crust' who after their weekend leave would appear in 'The Tatler' the following week. One of the Wrens was Audrey Pullen, a professional singer who used to broadcast when her duties permitted. There was also Romany Evens the daughter of 'Romany', who for many years broadcast on the BBC children's programme.

Despite the arduous shift work all the Wrens talk of making the most of their precious free time. Many have memories of travelling into London to attend concerts, films and plays often with free tickets that were issued, to service personnel from a kiosk in Trafalgar Square. There were also the many dances and big band concerts. One Wren remembers obtaining the autograph of Glenn Miller while some mention dancing to Lou Praeger. Many Wrens frequented the various service clubs in London like 'The Nuffield Club,' 'The Queensbury Club' and 'The New Zealand Club' where there would be music and dancing. If none of these appealed one unusual alternative was to go to the Old Bailey to listen to the court cases.

They also enjoyed the local social amenities. There are many references to the 'The Case Is Altered', 'The Woodman' and 'The Black Horse' and local cafes and restaurants like 'Kerswalls' in Eastcote and 'The Orchard' in Ruislip. Several talk of going to a cafe opposite Eastcote Station for a cup of tea and a snack before walking back to Lime Grove. One Wren recalls an ofl:ire using the cafe and noticing a scrap of blank paper on the floor which she recognised as coming from the sheets of paper used in BL<XB. Although it would not have meant anything

to anyone else all the Wrens were given a stern warning to be extra careful. Other venues for refreshments were the WVS canteen in Ruislip and the Toe H club which was used by the Polish air crews from Northolt.

For those who were more energetic there were mixed hockey games with the RAF staff which were played on the fields at Ruislip Manor or Eastcote. The matches usually took place after coming off night watch and were followed by a late breakfast before collapsing into bed. Service personnel had the use of the tennis courts on the corner of Eastcote High Road opposite 'The Black Horse' and the swimming pool owned by Lady Anderson in the grounds of Eastcote Place. Finally they organised their own entertainment with dances, concerts and amateur dramatics. This was when the talents of Wrens Audrey Pullen and Romany Evens were put to good use. One Wren recollects teaming up with the Americans based a short distance away for a production of 'Charley's Aunt.'

Despite all the bombing of London the site only suffered one incident when in 1944 an incendiary bomb landed on the wing of the living quarters. Fortunately the cabins were empty at the time so there were no casualties and the only damage was some flooding from the fractured pipes. However some Wrens mention hearing doodlebugs going over when they were crossing the footpath for a meal break on night watch. One recollects initially being told to get up and stand in the corridor for safety when doodlebugs were heard.

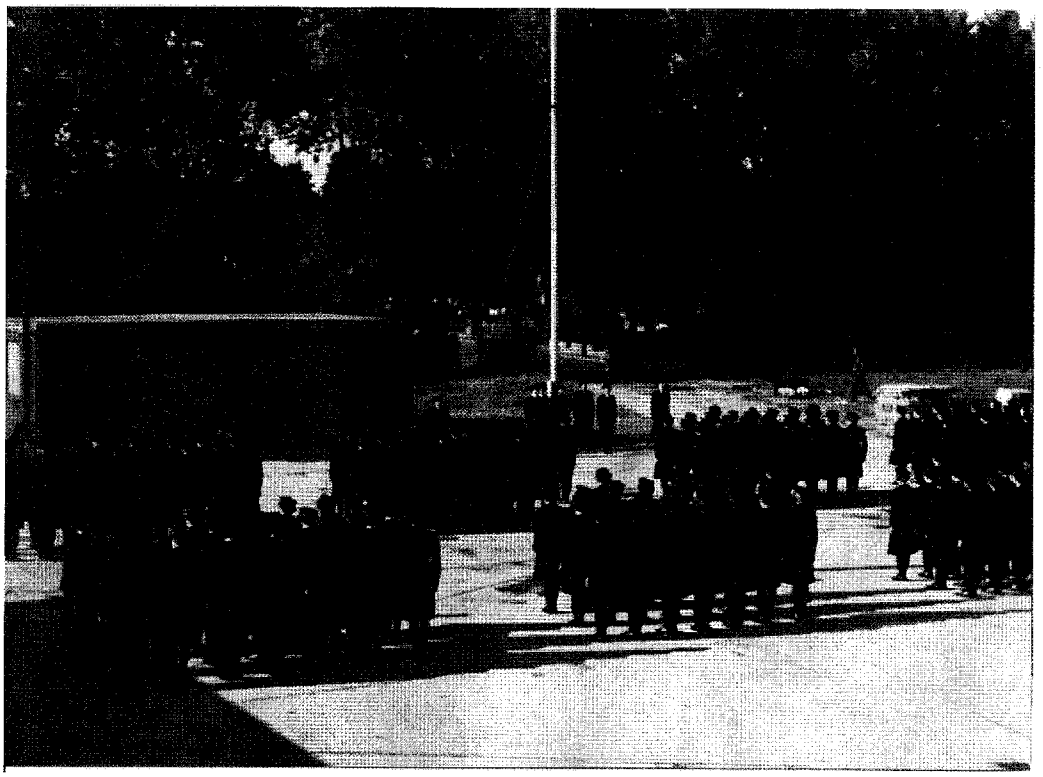
In 1945 the war in Europe ended and many of the Wrens were in London for VE celebrations. One Wren's reminiscences are typicaL "We climbed a lamp post in Downing Street to cheer Churchill and his wife leaving for the Palace, then joined thousands outside the Palace to cheer again and ended up dancing down the Mall. Cannot remember how and when we got back to Eastcote."

But the end of the war meant the Bombes were redundant and the Wrens spent the next few months taking all the machines apart so that all the metal could be recycled and more importantly no one would know about the operation. However in one sense the base at Eastcote continued to play an important role in the security of the country, since Block B became the headquarters of GC&CS - Government Cipher and Code School. It remained there for six years until 1952 when it was renamed GCHQ - Government Communications Headquarters and moved to its present location in Cheltenham.

In conclusion, most of the Wrens looked back on their time at Eastcote with fond memories despite the danger and physical hardships. Most had volunteered with no true idea of the type of work they would be doing, having been told they were suitable for 'Special Duties'. All kept faithfully to the Official Secrets Act they had signed and never disclosed the true nature of their work even to family and close friends. Only after the late 1970s when one or two books were published which told the story of Bletchley Park did some feel able to talk.

One Wren called Eastcote "a soulless place" while another described it as "a place dreamed up and I am sure manufactured and delivered ready made at an inconvenient, unlit distance from the tube station." But all agreed that their war work at Eastcote was an amazing experience, which they felt proud to have performed to the best of their ability.

I would like to thank the many Wrens who contacted 'The Wren Magazine' with their reminiscences of life at Eastcote Outstation and whose letters have formed the basis of this article. I would also like to thank Jean Dixon an ex Wren who first contacted 'The Wren Magazine' to prompt these memories and Karen Spink who liaised for the Society with Jean Dixon.



Divisions on Base

Wings for Victory parade - Pinner 1944

BELL RINGING AT RUISLIP IN THE EARLY 1960s

by David Rowlands

Dr. R. D. Andrews' excellent 'A History of the Bells of St Martin's, Ruislip' (1992), includes some reminiscences, via Charles Poulter, of ringing in the *1920s* and *1930s* with suitable anecdotes. What it fails to capture or to record is the sheer ability of the band they had at St Martin's Church in those years. When I was privileged to know them from about 1960 - 1964 they were no longer active peal ringers in complex methods, but their abilities were still remembered throughout the Middlesex Association and many of the notable peals rang for the Association in the 1920 - 50 period contained Ruislip ringers, as consultation of the Association's Annual Reports will show. William Bunce Sr. had given up ringing due to infirmity as had the Killby family, other than George, whom I met several times at Ruislip; he was possibly the most experienced and knowledgeable of all the Ruislip ringers at the time. Their family hailed from Willesden I believe. the home tower of many of the era's most gifted ringers.

Bill Bunce Charlie Poulter Tom Collins
Wm. Bunce Harry Ive Bill Picthall Albert Hunter

Most of the regular Ruislip ringers of that time were a genuine family, all related to one another; Collins, Bunce, Ive and Hunter.. Tom Collins was Tower Captain at the time, a gentle, lovable man who looked almost too frail to hold a rope. The two Bunce boys (postmen), Jack and Bill, were his cousins, and Harry Ive (a thatcher) was their Uncle, indeed everyone in the tower called Harry 'Uncle', including me! The Hunter brothers were also relatives, though I only met Albert who could no longer ring because of a heart problem. but who used to potter down to the practices on a Wednesday, for a chinwag. (See photographs above and below). Many stories he told me of ringing in the 1920s while we waited in the lychgate for Tom to arrive on his bicycle, to the accompaniment of savoury smells from the nearby restaurant kitchen! Another notable character, not a relative of anyone else was Bill Picthall, always known as Bill P. He was another notable ringer, who did most of the conducting in the more advanced ringing methods. Elsie Savory, a stalwart of the Ladies Guild, was a regular ringer. though a young son cut into the amount of time she could give to ringing. This was even more true of Barbara Wright who had two young daughters and whom I only met on rare occasions. Charlie Poulter proved to be an interesting 'family' link of a sort for me, as he worked at King & Hutchings (the printers in Uxbridge) along with four of my uncles and two of our Iver bellringers. Charlie was a remarkably reliable ringer.. He had a slight 'mal' which caused him not quite to 'black out' occasionally, but to go into a sort of limbo. If this happened while he was ringing, you could see his face go rather blank and his eyes flicker, but he kept on ringing (on 'auto pilot' as it were) without losing his place. When his mind 'returned' he would be exactly in the right place and all but unaware of the 'happening'.

It really was a family club, the pity being that they had become discouraged with teaching youngsters who didn't stick at ringing. From my own fifty years experience of this exasperating waste of effort I can sympathise more nowadays with their unwillingness to train any more youngsters. They could ring just about anything. however complex, but tended to reminisce rather than ring on practice nights. Such learners as were taken

on (including some Girl Guides put forward by Barbara I believe) were taught by Jack and Bill Bunce and Bill P, with a little diffident help from myself (at Bill P's request). Unfortunately once they had achieved their Ringing Badges, there were too many other attractions for the girls and they stopped coming, thus confirming the gloomy predictions of the older ringers ("They'll not stay").

However this state of affairs was extremely lucky for me! I had learned to ring at Iver (my home tower) and was loyal to them on Sundays and Mondays (practice night) but they only rang rounds and call-changes and I wanted to learn change-ringing. I was helped in this by the ringers of St Margaret's, Uxbridge, who were training a new band and I learned my elementary change-ringing under their guidance. One Wednesday I went over to the practice at Ruislip; it involved a two mile walk to the train and thence out to Ruisllp with a walk the entire length of the long high street to St Martin's. Reversed on the return journey of course. However the Ruislip 'old boys' were very welcoming and exerted themselves to ring for me, in fact Bill P remarked that they'd not rung as much for years! They invited me to return on practice nights, whenever I felt like it, which I did. This was too good to miss! Shortly I passed my driving test and was able to borrow my Dad's car to attend on Wednesdays. They taught me everything they knew and I progressed from Stedman (which I'd wanted to learn) to Treble Bob (not wildly interesting) to Double Norwich (wonderful bell-music!) and to Superlative Surprise, which they considered to be the queen of bell methods. I was very lucky indeed, quite spoiled in fact, because I think my learning gave them a 'focus'.

Ruislip bells were not easy to ring in those days. Operating from the ground floor there was a 20ft rope drop from the ceiling above which made them extremely difficult to handle. Rope guides to eliminate this problem were not installed until much later (as Ron details in his history). So it was with some trepidation that I took my part in helping to train the Girl Guides, having never taught anyone before. However Bill P pushed me into it and it gave me a good beginning. They always said that if you could teach someone to handle a bell at Ruislip, they'd be able to ring anywhere and that was true, I think. My biggest disappointment at Ruislip was in losing a three hour peal on these difficult ropes after ringing for 2 hrs 50 minutes. We were in the last part when the tenor rope broke, and that was that!

My most treasured 'ring' after that was being invited to ring in the quarter-peal rung by the local band for Tom and Mrs Collins' Golden Wedding anniversary, which Bill Picthall conducted. {Seelater commemoration record) Another joyous occasion was being asked to help with ringing for a Confirmation service taken by the Bishop of Kensington. The current Ruisllp clergy were not anti-ringing, but they were disinterested and so it was amusing to us when the Bishop appeared, with the clergy in tow, as we were about to start ringing for the service. He was himself a ringer and asked if he might ring with us. Naturally we were delighted and even more so when he asked to ring 'Double Norwich'. He turned to the clergy and said "Youneedn't wait, I'll come and find you when I'm ready". I think he enjoyed it, because he rang right up to the time we stopped, five minutes before the service, and the clergy were hovering around by this time, desperate to get him to robe! It was a bit naughty of him to cut it so fine but even then he insisted on shaking hands with every member of the band.

Harry Ive was a small man, bubbling over with humour. He usually rang the treble (lightest) bell and was an expert at lowering it in peal, leading the other bells down, which he did faster than I've ever encountered in any other tower. He lived in Ladygate Lane and I used to drop him off in the car, after the practice. I was surprised when he told me that as a thatcher he had more work in the Ruislip area than he could cope with! I don't think he was pulling my leg though he might have been.

There was a nationally famous ringer, Wilfrid Wilson, who lived in Ruislip but rang at Ealing. He was well versed in ringing theory and had a gift for written explanations of the complexities of composition. .He had

contributed to several books on ringing and later published his own excellent book 'Change Ringing'. Unfortunately he had no sense of humour (essential at Ruislip) and took himself very seriously. This did not endear him to the Ruislip ringers of the 60s and they gossiped more than ever (Le. little ringing was done). If he turned up to a practice, and was conducting, they used to cleverly switch courses on him, so that his compositions would go wrong. He was clever enough to spot the mistakes and rebuked them but never seemed to grasp that they didn't go wrong when anyone else was conducting. He also disliked their fast lowering of the bells and would try to take the treble from Harry Ive to lead down at a sedate pace. If he did this, Harry would take the second and proceed to lead down at his usual breakneck speed, leaving the treble toiling far behind. I sometimes felt a bit guilty at enjoying this misbehaviour, since I was using Wilfrid's articles in 'The Ringing World' to supply the theory to my learning 'Surprise' methods (very complex) with the Ruislip band.

The years 1960 - 64 were very wonderful to me and I regretted that my studies forced me to give up attending. I was very glad when Elsie Savory asked me circa 1980 to help Ian Rees and Graham Ivory train the new ringers (who included Ron and Audrey Andrews and Patricia Grisdale). Although all the 'old boys' were gone, except for Charlie, Jack and Bill Bunce, it gave me the opportunity to repay just little of the trouble they had taken with my education!, and how pleasing it was that so many of those taught continued with their ringing.

RUISLIP, MIDDLESEX
MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSN. & LONDON DIOCESAN GUILD
On Friday 24 May 1963, in 47 minutes
AT THE CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN
A QUARTER PEAL OF 1264 PLAIN BOB MAJOR
Tenor 12Ih ewt.

HARRY IYE	*Treble*	JOHN BUNCE	5
ELSIE SAVORY	2	WILLIAM BUNCE	6
DAYID ROWLANDS	3	RUSSEL G01HAM	7
CHARLES POULTER	4	WILLIAM PICTHALL	*Tenor*

Conducted by WILLIAM PICTHALL

Rung in honour of the Golden Wedding of Mr. And Mrs. Tom Collins.
with the best wishes of the band and A. Hunter.

Back Row

Bill Bunce
unknown
Wm. Bunce Sr.
Tom Collins
Bill Picthall
Charlie Poulter

Front Row

Norman Genna
(Pinner)
Reg Killby
George Killby
Elsie Savory
Miss Braybrooke
Frank Corke
(Uxbridge)

STARTING FROM SCRATCH

Scratch Dials and St. Martin's Church

by Valery Cowley

In St. Martin's Church, Ruislip, beneath the South Aisle window second from the east, set one inch deep into the plaster, is a stone approximately nine and a half by twelve and a half inches. Beneath an overlay of vertical ridges can be detected a horizontal indented line which has six radiating scratched lines above it and four or five below with a half inch diameter hole in the centre. This is probably a scratch dial, one of about two thousand that survive in Britain.

A circle about five and a half inches in diameter was scratched in stone, probably by the sexton or priest. Their great variety defies classification but their common features are a central hole (average half an inch in diameter) for the wooden or metal gnomon or style, originally a stick inserted at right angles to the face. This would have cast a shadow onto a surface divided into segments by scratched radiating lines. No original gnomon survives, for metal or wood broken off at the wall face may be a plug for a metal style. Like early sundials scratch dials were inaccurate for the *whole* year.

Unlike sundials scratch dials do not mark daylight hours but indicate times of church services, for example 9am Mass, 2 or 3pm Vespers, with occasionally a noon line (Angelus?) and other significant times.

Scratch dials were used in England from the Norman Conquest to the Reformation (when Mass and Vespers were no longer usual) and also found in Normandy. In rebuilding and restoring churches old dials may be reused in odd places, as is evidenced by the mortar adhering to the ridges in the St Martin's example. As there are no noticeable differences between early and late dials, dating by design is impossible.

Scratch dials were Originally located where the sun shone and the priest and public walked, usually near south entrances or on a corner near an approaching footpath. On churches with north doors, dials are usually on the nearest south face. Occasionally they are on porches built later. They should be recorded as part of the church fabric lest they be forgotten. It is curious that the radiating lines in the St Martin's example continue on to the cill above.

Below the westernmost window on the South Aisle wall, set half an inch into the plaster is a stone offering a face seven by seven by seven by five and three-quarter inches, towards the bottom of which is inscribed a circle three inches in diameter. There is a shallow hole in the centre from which wavering lines radiate which suggests an attempt to copy a Mass dial or maybe a mason's mark.

On the cill on the easternmost window of the North Aisle wall is cut a shield with a circle at its centre surrounded by a triangular formation of three crosses. No heraldic interpretation fits. Symbolically a circle denotes perfection and three crosses the Holy Trinity: thus Three in One. Who carved this and when is a mystery. Perhaps it dates from 18or 19Cuse as a school.

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THE RISE AND FALL OF KELVIN HOUSE SCHOOL

by Mary Pache and Christopher Sparks

Kelvin House was one of the more successful private schools which flourished in the district in the first half of the 20th Century. Successful that is, in popularity with parents. There was a 'well-equipped gymnasium' which doubled as a hall for various uses and a rented playing field ten minutes walk away, but inspectors refused official recognition. They found that instruction in English, French and Latin was less than perfect, and unearthed an undercover manipulation of Physiology to serve as sex instruction. They advised the Head to stick to Nature Study, no doubt forgetting the possibilities of the birds and the bees.

The school was founded circa 1914 in King Edward's Road, Ruislip by Canon *lames* Cameron Todd and his wife, Aileen, a qualified Froebel-trained teacher. The Canon was influenced by the personality and learning of his professor at Edinburgh University, Lord Kelvin, and paid him the compliment of naming the school in his honour. When Emily Wilding Davis, a dedicated suffragette, threw herself in the path of the King's horse it is believed that Canon Todd agreed to conduct the funeral service as other clerics were reluctant to be associated with the perceived suicide. Canon and Mrs. Todd's daughter, *lean,* wrote the children's page in the Middlesex Chronicle and was a contributory writer to the Rupert Bear series.

Richard and Patricia Ewer, grandchildren of *lames* Ewer, were pupils at Kelvin House. Richard's daughter recollects that her father's enjoyment of school life may have been tempered by the presence of Ewer aunts who lived in the house opposite and kept a close eye. She has a postcard from Aileen Todd to Patricia dated 1934, an indication that the teacher-pupil relationship became an adult friendship. The next Head, Charis Brophy, was married to [ohn Brophy, the author of a string of popular novels in the 'thirties.

His daughter, Brigid, born in 1929, merits an entry in Margaret Drabble's *Oxford Companion* to *English Literature* as author of five novels and two biographies, but her father does not. I found no entries for father or daughter in biographical dictionaries and no evidence that Charis Brophy was her mother.

Most of the pupils were evacuated at the beginning of the Second World War but the Gateway School was founded by Miss Panter to cater for the ones who stayed in Ruislip. After using the Methodist Church Hall in Ickenham Road and St. Martin's Church Rooms in Bury Street the Gateway settled in the former Kelvin House premises in King Edward's Road. After two changes of ownership it closed in 1977.

Mary Pache

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Christopher Sparks was a *pupil* at *Kelvin* House *School and has written the following account* of *his impressions* of *the school..*

THE LIFE OF A BOY AT A GIRLS SCHOOL

My education started in the early thirties at Kelvin House, King Edward' s Road, Ruislip. This was principally a girls' school but in those days it had a class of mixed infants. I, being a boy, was, of course, a mixed infant.

If you'd asked me at the time whether I liked being a boy at a girls' school, I don't know how I'd have answered. My memories of what went on are very minimal and relate only to the bad things I didn't like. The major one being that the school had a large garden at the back round which there was a running track. The first 'chore' of the day was to take

off our jackets and run round it. This I found very hard going and didn't enjoy it at all. Then there was an incident which sticks out very clearly in my memory. It was a music lesson which was held in a large hall, possibly a gymnasium. I recall I was not allowed to have a decent instrument like a drum or a trumpet, but only a triangle. I suspect that one day I must have created a bit of a scene over this because I was made to sit out the lesson in an adjacent cloakroom. The punishment was aggravated by pupils from other classes coming to taunt me.

Something that rather puzzles me is the means by which I got to school. I recall cycling there from Elm Avenue with my mother, a long way for a four or five-year-old. There was however some reason why I was not allowed to leave my cycle at school while I was there. This is apparently because my mother arranged a deal with the United Dairies shop at the corner of Ickenham Road, the premises now occupied by an estate agent. In the morning she would drop me off at school and then walk the bike to the shop. After school I would have to walk to the shop and retrieve the bike from behind the counter. I don't remember how long this went on for, but think it probably stopped at the first Christmas. I remember we cycled when there were snow flurries coming down and being told on arrival that I looked like a snowman. But when the snow was on the ground I was definitely walking because I recall that one day we passed a horse-drawn milk cart. The horse was having great difficulty in pulling the cart through the snow so the driver was hitting it with a stick. My mother told the man off for being cruel.

Something about which my memory is a bit vague is the school games. I believe that it was while I was at this school that on certain afternoons we decamped and went to a field off Bury Street behind where the Youth Centre is now. I have a suspicion that our class was only there to watch as I don't recall taking part in any games, but just sitting by a large fallen tree stump, sometimes doing handstands to relieve the boredom. It always seemed to be very hot, so it must have only happened in the summer terms. After being released from the school's jurisdiction, life was made more exciting because on the way home we used to go and watch the farrier hammering out horseshoes and if we were lucky there'd be a horse there. The farrier's workshop was where the duck pond is now.

I have been able to locate the six reports covering my time at Kelvin House (September 1932-Augllst 1934, see below). The only additional memories reading these bring back is a short flash of a reading lesson and time spent winding raffia round a piece of cardboard. (Hardly momentous events?) The reports do, however, reveal some interesting facts.

Mrs. A. M. Cameron Todd was the Principal throughout this period and she took the class for writing and reading. In my case I suspect she got some help with the reading from the Daily Mail. I was an ardent reader of the Teddy Tail cartoons and annuals and was a member of the Bear's Club. The other subjects -Scripture, Arithmetic, History, Nature Study, Brushwork and Handwork were taught by various teachers who had the initials H.R./G.B./D.E.M, but I am unable to put a name, face, or sex to any of them.

Another thing the reports show is that the pupils' health was high on the agenda. At the beginning and end of each term we were duly weighed and measured. Apparently when I started school in September '32 I was 3ft. 9114nches tall and weighed 3stone 7lbs. And by the time I left in December '34 I had grown to be 4ft. 2114 inches tall and weighed 4stone 3½ 4lbs. The school reports also had a tear-off strip at the bottom which had to be signed by the parents to certify that their little darling 'has not been exposed to any infection at any time during the Term.' Does this reflect the fact that there weren't any MMR jabs or equivalent in those days?

Were these the 'happiest days of my life'? Well, I don't remember not wanting to go to school and my conduct was always reported to be good or excellent, so perhaps my time as a boy in a girls' school might not have been too bad.

KELVIN HOUSE, RUISLIP.

KINDERGARTEN AND TRANSITION.

Summer Term 1934 .

Name Christopher Speaks

	Height.	Weight.
Beginning of Term	4 ft. 0¾ ins.	4 st. 4 lbs.
End of Term	4 ft. 2¼ ins.	4 st. 3½ lbs.

Position for Term .....

Position for Examination 9.

Average Age 7 years 2 months

Number of Pupils in Form 14.

Attendance { Number of times Absent 5. / Number of times Late 0.

GENERAL REMARKS:

Christopher is rather a slow worker, but he has made good progress this term.

Scale—Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, Weak, Bad. Conduct. Excellent.

SUBJECT.	Term's Work.	REMARKS.	
SCRIPTURE	v.g.	Is most attentive and interested.	[illegible]
ARITHMETIC	v.g.	A slow but careful worker.	H.R.
READING	g.	marked improvement.	A.L.T.
WRITING	g.	Improving.	A.L.T.
HISTORY	v.g.	Remembers his work well.	[illegible]
LITERATURE			
NATURE STUDY	g.		P.R.
BRUSHWORK	f.	Tries hard.	P.R.
DRAWING			
POETRY			
HANDWORK	v.g.	Very satisfactory.	H.R.
MUSIC			
GYMNASTICS			
GAMES			

Next Term will begin :— Sept. 18th

A. M. Cameron Todd Principal.

HEALTH CERTIFICATE (*to be produced on the first day of Term*).

I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief .....

.....*has not been exposed to any infection for the past four weeks, and I promise to give Mrs. Todd notice if he (she) is exposed to infection at any time during the Term.*

Date .....

(*Signature*).....

34 OXFORD DRIVE, EASTCOTE

The Everyday Story of a House

by Roger Smith

Introduction

After my father died in 1984 I was given an envelope that contained all the letters and documents appertaining to my parents home. This is the story of the house as gleaned from the letters and documents I found in that envelope, and is in part a personal pilgrimage as I learnt so much about the house and my parents and the age in which they lived. Number 34 Oxford Drive, Eastcote was my parents' first and only marital home and where my brother and I were born and grew up.

Background

The original centre of Eastcote was about one mile north of the present site of Eastcote Station. It was part of the parish and manor of Ruislip and was situated on the road from there to Pinner. The area in Victorian times was dominated by three large houses, Hayden Hall, Eastcote House and Highgrove House. Following the opening of Eastcote Halt in 1906, suburban development gradually started. By the early 1930s housing both sides of Field End Road had been completed as had the development of the shopping centre to the north of the Station.

The development known as Oxford Drive took place in 1939 in the open space between Whitby Road and the Yeading Brook. It was to this green field site, in an area that had changed from a rural economy to a developing urban conurbation, that Stella Walsh and Arthur Smith came on 29 April 1940 looking for their first home together.

The walk down from Eastcote Station was through an avenue of trees, past open spaces, and modern family houses set back from the road with wide pavements and front gardens. Despite now being an urban area, it must have retained a great deal of its original rural character.

For them Eastcote must have represented a vast improvement when compared to their current homes at either end of Wembley High Road.

Stella lived in a ground floor flat with her parents in Wembley backing onto the cemetery of Wembley Parish Church. Her parents were working class; her father born in Gateshead had served in the Coldstream Guards during the 1914-18 war; outside his army service he worked as a labourer in various industries. Stella's mother, Ellen, was born in a small village in Bedfordshire and had various kinds of domestic work. The houses in Wembley were probably built in the 1860s with a small front yard of about four feet width, the front door leading straight into a passageway with a door on the left. After this room, which was my mother's, came the staircase which gave access to the flat upstairs. Further down the passageway there was another bedroom, followed by a toilet with a hand basin, but no bath or hot water. Under the stairs was the coalhole. The scullery followed with a door giving access to the rear garden. In it was a stone sink, large in area but shallow, with only a cold water tap. A large copper gas boiler alongside the sink provided all the hot water in the flat and a draining board completed the scullery. The back room went across the house with a window overlooking the garden. In here there was a gas cooker, dining table and chairs and two small 'easy' chairs, it was in this room where they cooked, ate and generally lived. The weekly bath was in the tin bath, brought in from the garden and put in front of the fire, the hot water coming from the copper boiler in the scullery. The only entertainment was a radio powered by accumulators, as there was no electricity in the flat. Gas, from a penny pre payment meter, remained the sole source of heating, lighting and cooking whilst my grandparents lived there, my grandmother

leaving in 1956. The family that lived in the upstairs flat used the same front door and had to walk past Stella's bedroom door to get to the staircase. If they wanted to hang their washing out in the garden they had to walk along the passageway and through the scullery. It was a good job that the two families where friends and not the neighbours from hell!

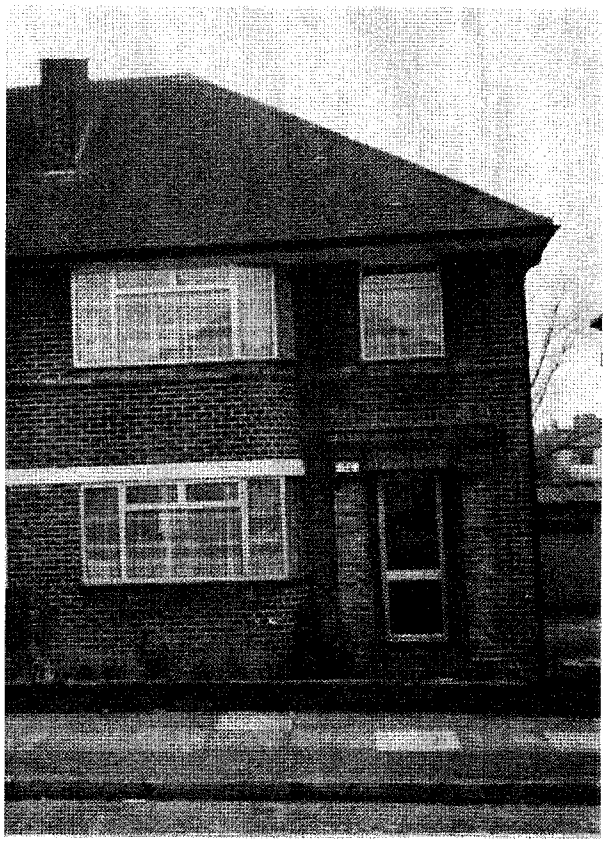
Arthur lived at Wembley Hill in a house built in the early 1920s. Although it was terraced it was relatively modern with all the normal conveniences. The front and back gardens were small, the rear one being overlooked by houses in the parallel road; I remember it was very mature with plenty of trees. Across the rear of the house, supported on three iron columns, was a sloping glass roof; on the ground underneath was an area of black and white tiles laid in a diamond formation, this style of tiling was reflected in the kitchen and hall. Arthur's mother had died when he was very young. During the 1914-18war, whilst his father was away serving in the RFC as a driver, Arthur and his two elder sisters were in a children's home at Wheathampstead. Arthur's aunt, whenever circumstances allowed, acted as a mother to Arthur and his sisters. After the war Arthur's father started a taxi business with his older brother.

The House

It was from Wembley that Stella and Arthur came on that April day. From Field End Road it was a short walk along Whitby Road past more open spaces to Oxford Drive. The original development was, as far as I know, eight pairs of three bedroom semi-detached houses. The road was bounded on the south by Yeading Brook with strips of open land either side making a very pleasant walkway along both sides of the water.. At the time they visited, or shortly after, it would have been growing crops as part of the 'Dig for Victory' campaign.

It would appear thatStella and Arthur were originally inspecting No. 28 Oxford Drive but probably this was the plot number.. They eventually moved into No. 30, which at an unknown date was changed to 34. The house must have impressed them, for a letter from W. C. Estates, the developers, to Arthur the next day, 30 April, informed him of the research they had already conducted with building societies.

It seems that Arthur'swages at this time were insufficient to repay a mortgage of the normal size for a house of this price, £595. He could afford the repayments of £3 2s 6d per month on an advance of £500repaid over a period of 22 years 8 months. Having a deposit of £95 or around 15%, and meeting the other costs involved shows that Arthur and Stella had, for that era, considerable savings. On 29 April Arthur sent a money order to W. C. Estates for £5 as a deposit, which was acknowledged on 1 May with their official receipt. From all the correspondence it is apparent that their original intention was to purchase and not rent the property.



34 Oxford Drive in 1989,as built in 1940 except for the uPVC windows and door. The garage belongs to the neighbour.

However, two days later W. G. Estates wrote to Arthur giving him 14 days to make up his mind about proceeding with the purchase, as they could not retain the house indefinitely. It is not clear why W. G. Estates should, after only two days, resort to such strong measures, although a subsequent letter points out it was the last property to be disposed of in that development. Arthur's reply, of which a pencil draft exists, expressed surprise at the 14 day deadline and said that there would be a delay of a few weeks for a report from the Army Medical Board. Arthur had some years previously suffered an industrial accident in which he lost 3½ fingers on his left hand, and it was for this reason that the Board was reviewing his case. Presumably the Board concluded that Arthur was unfit for active service, as he did not serve in the armed forces during the war, but as a firewatcher in the in City.

By 7 June 1940 the negotiations for the house purchase were back on, but by 18 June this had been replaced by a proposal to rent the house with an option to purchase in six months. Why did they change their minds, having agreed a mortgage with monthly repayments that were less than the rental figure agreed?

June 1940 'was a very unsettling and dangerous time, the threat of a German invasion, the start of the Battle of Britain, and the ever-present threat of bombing. The RAF Station at Northolt was only two miles away and any raid on Northolt could have been dangerous, bomb aiming was an imprecise science. In addition to the war situation the General Depression of the 1930s was probably still fresh in their memories. Although never spoken about in my presence I would have thought the depression would have affected Stella far more than Arthur. However, their change of mind cannot be totally explained by the war situation or memories of the depression, as it would not have been so very different two weeks earlier when they were going to purchase the house. Perhaps it was natural prudence or caution.

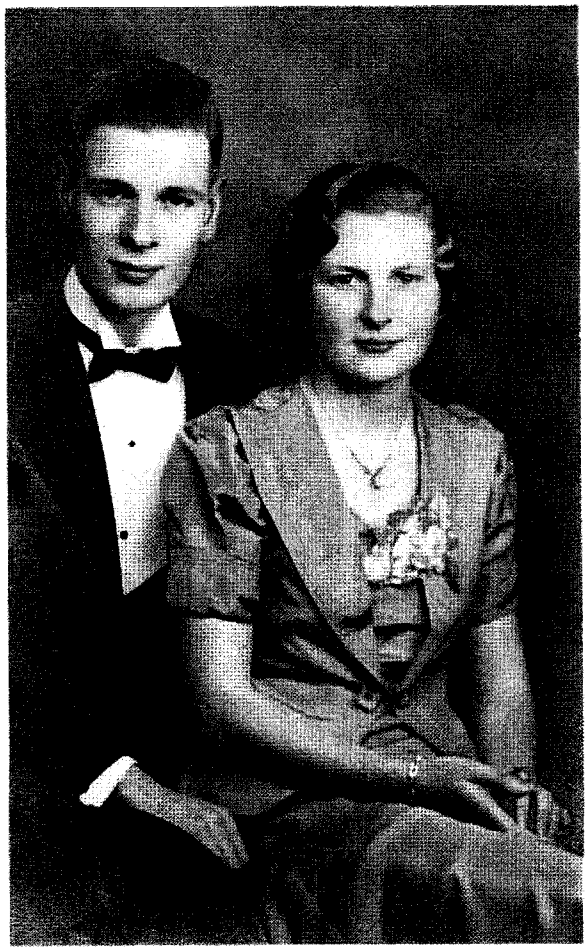
The rental negotiations proceeded quickly. In a letter of 18 June, W. G. Estates detailed the rent, the proposed cost of purchasing the house in six months time (which had risen to £795) and the cost and details of alterations to the kitchen and lounge that Arthur and Stella wanted. Arthur and Stella accepted this agreement. but did not buy the house until over 30 years later. There is no paperwork on file to explain why the property was not sold after six months or why the tenancy 'rolled on' after the stipulated 12 months.

The changes they specified, which cost £20, were to move the rear door of the house from opening onto the shared driveway to opening into the enclosed rear garden, and to brick up the arch between the dining room and lounge to give two separate rooms. Whether these change were their idea or not I cannot say, but I do not remember any house on that development having a door opening onto the shared driveway, so other properties may have already had this alteration.

Renting

The Rental Agreement commenced on the 1 August 1940, and stipulated that for the first four weeks the weekly rental will be 32s 6d, *'provided that after the expiration* of *the first four weeks* of *the said term and* so *long thereafter* as *the present state* of *war between Gt. Britain and Germany shall continue* or *after the first four weeks* of *the said term and during the remainder* of *the first* 12 *months thereof (whichever period will be the longer) the landlord will accept in satisfaction* of *the said weekly rent twenty seven shillings and sixpence.'* The exception to the foregoing would be any increase in General rates, Poor Rates or Water Rates. It came as a surprise to see that in 1940 there was a reference to The Poor Rate and that householders were expected to pay via their rates.

Stella and Arthur were married on the 31 August 1940 at the Parish Church in Wembley. The Rev. Silvester the father of the Dance Band Leader Victor Silvester conducted the ceremony.



Stella and Arthur c1938

The house in Oxford Drive was a semi-detached property, one of eight pairs built. Between each pair of houses was a shared driveway, wide enough for one car, but there were no garages. There was a comparatively large front garden and a 65 feet rear garden, which backed onto the banks of the Yeading Brook. Upstairs there were two large and one small bedroom, a bathroom and separate toilet. On the ground floor there was an area for cloaks, a cupboard under the stairs, separate lounge and dining room and a 'galley' kitchen with a large walk-in larder. A built-in cupboard unit in the kitchen incorporated a fold-down table, which could accommodate three people, but when in use prevented people from getting into or out of the room. As the kitchen had a small boiler used for heating the hot water it was a 'snug' room and I used it for homework in preference to any other room in the house. The kitchen was the only room in the house that would look outdated in the modern house.

Subsequent years saw several rent increases, the first being in April 1945 and later another governed by the 1957 Rent Act. This Act determined the weekly rent at £1-14s-7d plus rates. This rent remained unchanged until 1971 when the Rent Officer of the London Borough of Hillingdon set a new Fair Rent of £5.75, arising out of section 45(2) of the Housing Act 1969, after consulting both parties.

Throughout the rental period there were ongoing discussions with regard to maintenance problems. Some of the animosity that is apparent in the letters is undoubtedly due to the ambiguity of the rental agreement regarding who was responsible for maintenance. The correspondence relates to the garden fence, rainwater gutters, the common driveway and kitchen taps, among other matters.

Buying

Throughout the rental period there were several offers from the landlord for Arthur to buy the property. The rent was presumably not giving a sufficient return on the capital tied up in the property. In 1956, W. G. Investment Trust appeared to be considering selling their whole portfolio, certainly all properties in the Eastcote area. Arthur was probably not able to consider purchasing his home for financial reasons. Around this time Stella started work as a home help, and my brother and I were aware that money was not plentiful but we certainly do not recall going without. We had a television by that date, bought like many for the Coronation in 1953, and a Dansette auto-change record player, bought as a family Christmas present. We also had holidays in Jersey every two years but this was only made possible by the fact that we paid only 10% of the airfare, as Arthur by this date worked for British European Airways.

On the 21 November 1964 W.G. Investments wrote a letter to all their tenants in Eastcote informing them they wanted to sell their properties in the area, preferably to the existing tenants. This proposal met with Arthur's approval and the next letter on file is dated 15 December 1964 from the BEA Welfare Officer, secretary to the House Mortgage Committee. The proposed purchase price of £3000 was later reduced to £2750 less an allowance of £150 for renovations and repairs, but on 10 April 1965 Arthur wrote to his solicitor telling them that he was reluctantly having to pull out of the deal. This was necessary because Stella had been admitted to Mount Vernon Hospital on 15 February with what was thought to be a 'nervous breakdown'. I hope it was only a coincidence that on that Monday, I had announced to my parents that I was getting married, to Jean, whom I had met the previous Christmas morning.

Although Stella was home by the 10 April, Arthur felt he could not take on the extra financial commitment of a mortgage as well as engaging domestic help to ensure Stella made a proper recovery. Financially Arthur was probably better off than in previous years as one of his sons had left home, and the other was working and making a small contribution to the household budget. As a result of the failure to sell the house to Arthur, W. G. Estates sold the property to Seru Investments who became the new landlord in January 1966. The agent acting on behalf of Seru was Douglas Lansdown & Company.

Arthur finally bought the property in 1975 without the complication of a mortgage. He had recently been made redundant from BEA or British Airways as it was by then. Part of his redundancy payment was used to meet the purchase price of £6500.

The first alteration they made as homeowners was to replace the existing wooden front door with a new plastic version. A great deal of work was then carried out inside 34 Oxford Drive including re-wiring, providing hot water to the kitchen sink and replacing the metal Crittall windows with plastic double glazing.

Other changes were made in the house up to my father's death in 1984, but nothing of a structural nature. My parents were content to enjoy their retirement and savings in the comfort of their home, with an annual foreign holiday made possible by the very cheap airfares available to Arthur as a BA pensioner.. In 1989, after a struggle against ill health, my mother decided she could no longer look after herself and went to live temporarily with my brother and his wife at their home in North Wales, but within a week of arriving there she had died.

The house was sold in September 1990 for £92,000, after going on the market in November 1989 for £103,500. This sum still seems vast when compared to the 1940 asking price of £595, the 1964 asking price of £2600 and the 1975 purchase price of £6500.

Conclusions

In writing this story it was my only intention to record the facts about 34 Oxford Drive as shown by the correspondence that had been retained. I realised that the paperwork was not unique but unusual for a property of this type. I hope I have achieved the telling of a story about a suburban semi from being built in such a historic period through to its sale in 1989. What I have learnt about Arthur and Stella in telling this story re-enforces what I always thought of them. They were a cautious couple not prone to taking quick decisions. Always leaning towards caution rather than rashness but with a quiet determination to do right for themselves and their family. Although it does not show in the records Stella was the stronger of the two with a clear picture of the direction they wanted to travel. Arthur was not a weak character: he was quiet but resolute and could always see clearly what he should be doing for the family's benefit.

The house was, when built, a modern family home in a quiet road, ideal for raising a family. It was not designed for every home

having a car let alone multiple car ownership. As children we could safely play on the street only occasionally getting out of the way of a motor vehicle, most of which were used by tradesmen and delivery drivers. On a visit I made to Oxford Drive in 2003, cars were parked down both sides of the road and there was barely enough room for a car to pass through, let alone enough room for a game of football. The shared driveway is now a hindrance. My mother's front garden had been concreted over for car parking! On that visit there was no yearning to have a look inside, as I had no desire to have my childhood memories shattered by seeing somebody else's changes - the front garden was enough! The estate agents' particulars of 1989 called the house a 'golden opportunity'; was it the same in 19407 - I think so!

[1] All documents pertaining to the article are being placed in the local history collection of the Ruislip, Northwood and Eastcote Local History Society, currently stored at Manor Farm Library, Ruislip.

KATHLEEN HOAD - DANCER AND TEACHER OF EASTCOTE

by Mary Pache

Over the years there have been various dancing schools in the neighbourhood for girls, and boys if they could be persuaded to join up. One school in particular was brought to the attention of our Society by the late [im Golland of the Pinner group. He had been approached by an Eastcote resident to discuss a collection of photographs and memorabilia that had come into his possession. It had reached him through his friendship with his recently deceased neighbour, Kathleen Hoad, who had been the proprietor of a dancing school at the Lowlands club for forty years or more. The collection consists of fourteen enlargements on heavy card each measuring 20 x 16 inches, five albums, loose items, show programmes and qualification certificates. The photographs are mostly of pupils in their show costumes but with no identification. There are also a few of Kathleen and her parents. Her brother, William, was the photographer so he is the unseen member of the family.

Come with me to Eastcote in the early nineteen thirties, in spirit, if you have memories of your own, or in imagination if your acquaintance with the neighbourhood is more recent. The schoolboy reminiscences of the late Ron Edwards present a different picture from the one we see today. He enjoyed the freedom of roaming in the fields where The Chase now stands, and remembers being startled by the sudden flight of a covey of partridges rising from the Boldmere Avenue that was still in the future. He and his friends made the most of the ponds in the rural scene, especially the one at the corner of Cheney Street where they watched frogs and newts, and built rafts. The safety culture had not yet developed and the boys made adventure playgrounds of the building sites that were springing up all around the area, and made use of the running boards on the sides of the trains when the vehicle had begun to move off and they were late for school.

Ron Edward's parents, like Kathleen Hoad's and many others came to live in this demi-paradise in the nineteen-twenties. By 1934 when she was twelve Kathleen was a star pupil at Miss Merle Delamere's Pinner Dancing School, and appeared in the local paper with her teacher and a fellow pupil, all gracefully posed. Both girls were high achievers and had just passed examinations that entitled them to put the letters MAOD, Member of the Association of Operatic Dancers, after their names. Kathleen's certificates are part of the source material and show that this Association became the Royal Academy of Dancing in 1935 with Queen Mary as patron.

Kathleen opened her own school in 1940 at the beginning of the war, not a propitious time for such a venture. Bombs were falling; one fell too close for comfort at the corner of Field End Road and Deane Avenue and was powerful enough to demolish a big house. Wartime rationing of clothes and fabrics made it difficult to produce costumes for shows; unrationed blackout material was used with whatever coloured trimmings were available, and even paper, but that was in short supply too. However, the school survived and became prosperous after 1945. An undated business card with a pre 1960air about it states that class lessons cost ten shillings for ten while the same term of private ones was twenty-five shillings. It also adds that Kathleen was, I quote, 'late of the Sokolova School'*. Lydia Sokolova started life as Hilda Munnings of Wanstead but took on Russian identity so wholeheartedly that it was said she could curse in that language. After a brilliant and successful, but often gruelling, life as an international dancer with legendary names such as Pavlova, Nijinsky, Diaghilev and

Massine she became a teacher in her latter years.

An earlier local school, based in the forerunner of St. Martin's Hall, opened in 1931. We know no more about the success or otherwise of this enterprise but there is a snippet of information about the proprietor, Miss Nora Fenwick. She also had prestigious connections as a pupil of Madame [udith Espinosa who was on the council of the Royal Academy of Dancing, mentioned above, along with Ninette de Valois and Anton Dolin.

Kathleen's shows were a shop window for her school, and various charities benefited from the proceeds -RAF Benevolent Funds, the Multiple Sclerosis Society, the Old Contemptibles' Association and Ruislip Manor Residents. They were held in various places -RAF West Ruislip, the Station Cinema at RAF Uxbridge, the Stationery Office canteen at Harrow and local school halls. Apart from the pantomime, 'Babes in the Wood', the shows followed the Palace of Variety pattern with a series of acts by individual performers. One programme indicates that by 1955 Kathleen had opened another school venue at Rayners Lane.

Former pupils have spoken of their affectionate memories of a gentle lady who drew out the talent of her pupils. Most of them enjoyed dancing as a recreational hobby but some won certificates from the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing, one was a Tiller Girl for fourteen years, one became a Bluebell with the famous troupe of tall dancers and another was Petula Clark's understudy. Although talented, Kathleen did not attempt to dance professionally herself. It was suggested to me that she was too tall, although this would have fulfilled the requirement of the Bluebells. One former pupil spoke of Kathleen's reserved personality, which was perhaps the main reason why the prospect of leaving the bosom of the close-knit family for the hazards of professional life did not appeal to her.

Her mother supported the school wholeheartedly and involved herself in the back up activities of playing the piano and helping the mothers in making complicated costumes for the shows. There is a generous tribute to the needlework skill of the mothers on one of the programmes. Mrs. Wallis co-operated with the musical side of the business, she and her orchestra supported the dancers at shows.

Kathleen' s brother, William, was a dedicated and skilled amateur photographer.. He is responsible for the photographs that were passed to [lm Golland through neighbours who, with a former pupil, cared for her in her last years. The pupil relates how William was a self-taught expert in trick photography. He could transpose backgrounds and faces long before computers made such feats simple. She remembers in particular the merging of a photo of herself with one of a cup and saucer so that she appeared to be sitting in the cup. Unfortunately we do not have that one in the collection.

Mother, father and brother died leaving Kathleen on her own from 1989, and there were no relatives. I have tried to identify the dancers in the photographs, with the help of four former pupils who recognized themselves and some others, but most remain anonymous. The selection I displayed at a Society meeting did not reveal any further identities, but the photographs are in the possession of the Society so we can only hope for more information about them and Kathleen Hoad's school.

*Information from *Balletomania* (Circa 1933) and
Ba11etomania - Then and Now
Arnold Haskell (1977)
(supplied by Valery Cowley)

RUISLIP, NORTHWOOD & EASTCOTE

A PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF LIFE IN 2000 - 2001

In order to mark the Millennium, Colleen Cox, Sylvia Ladyman, Denise Shackell and Karen Spink decided to produce a photographic record of life at this period. Consequently, photographs were taken of places of worship, shops, housing, children at school, leisure activities, different methods of transport and communication, and the general environment..

A careful selection was made and the resulting collection contained **in** two photograph albums with a short description next to each photograph. The two albums are presently available for reference **in** the Local History Room at Ruislip Library to RNELHS Members producing a current membership card.

S.L.

SOCIETY OUTINGS 2005

Organised and reported by Sylvia Ladyman

Docklands walk - 21 May

On a very windy day, 25 members met at the Museum in Docklands for a most interesting tour of the area led by Nick Tallentyre, a Blue Badge guide. The museum itself is in the No. 1 Warehouse in the West India Docks that once held vast quantities of rum, sugar, molasses, coffee and cotton from West Indian slave plantations. This building and No. 2 Warehouse are the sole surviving Georgian dock warehouses in any British seaport. Around them huge skyscrapers pierce the skyline. Amazingly some are already due for demolition as they are not high enough! Land is so precious that their footprints become more and more valuable. We were told of the immense care in choice of materials and design of the buildings that took place during the development of the area.

Abbey of Bee churches tour -18June

In the 11C Ernulf de Hesdin gave the Manor of Ruislip to the Norman Abbey of Bec. It was not the only English property owned by the Abbey, there were 26 manors, 17 with a church and seven other churches. Most of the manors were administered by the priories, one at Ruislip, the other at Ogbourne. Later, Ruislip became the only administrative headquarters, so it was not unusual for Ruislip residents to be sent to other properties. The coach outing to six of these was so successful in 1987 that it was decided to organise this similar trip in 2005.

We were welcomed at Swyncombe with a wonderful spread of home made cakes and coffee. The church is small and situated on the Ridgeway surrounded by fields and just one house. It is well worth a visit, especially at Snowdrop Weekend when the churchyard is a carpet of snowdrops. After lunch in Newbury, a quick walk on the heritage trail and a rushed tour of the museum we went to Combe. This is a tiny hamlet in a bowl shaped valley. Here St. Swithin's church was built in 1160of local flint with a timber tower. We travelled through country lanes, with delightful views on all sides to Shalbourne. After a short walk along a grassy path we reached the church for an explanatory talk. Finally we arrived at the Ogbournes. Ogbourne St. Andrew church dates from the early 12C but has later additions. On the wall is a tablet to Samuel Canning who laid the first transatlantic cable in 1857-8. The day ended with tea in the church at Ogbourne St. George. Again the church is of flint and limestone construction, the interior is simple and unadorned for the most part, but there are 20C mosaics in the chancel.

Peterborough Cathedral/Flag Fen - 16July

In July we travelled to Peterborough for a guided tour of the 13C Cathedral, with its magnificent west front. Inside we admired the unique painted wooden ceiling and saw the place where Mary Queen of Scots was first buried. In the afternoon, with the assistance of a guided talk, we explored Flag Fen, a 3000 year old Bronze Age Site, said to be one of the finest in Europe. We saw reconstructed Bronze Age and Iron Age houses, and in the Preservation Hall a portion of the original timbers of the Bronze Age walkway. As an added bonus we saw a flint knapping group making knives and some of us tasted biscuits made according to medieval recipes. A most enjoyable day.

City of London Walk -10 August

Our final outing was in the city of London with a City of London Guide, Yasha Beresiner. He was a most informative enthusiastic and amusing guide. He led us around narrow cobbled lanes to see Leadenhall Market built by Horace Jones in 1881, the first coffee house, the new Stock Exchange and many other landmarks, large and small, including notable churches.

R. G. EDWARDS 1921 - 2005

With the death of Ron Edwards on 5 March 2005, the Society lost one of its founder members. He was born in Ilford and moved to Hillingdon with his family in 1929 and to Eastcote in 1931, where, apart from war service, he remained for the rest of his life. From Ickenham Elementary School he went to Frays College in 1930 and later to Westbourne School in Westbourne Park. After leaving school he worked at Tyresoles and at the Constitutional Club, but war soon broke out and he enlisted in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment in 1940. Having moved to the Royal Corps of Signals he spent four years in India, where he was a radio operator and came back to England in 1945.

He married Doreen Crane, who lived with her parents in Cheney Street, in 1946, and began working at Unilever the following year. In the late 1960s, with two sons growing up, he decided to study for a degree in Sociology at Regent Street Polytechnic, and having obtained it, started lecturing in History and Sociology at Harrow College of Further Education in 1970.

The 1960swas a very bad time for the historic environment in this area and Eastcote suffered in particular with such important and interesting houses as Eastcote House and Haydon Hall being demolished by the local counciL The Ruislip-Northwood Urban District Council had woefully neglected them and the new Borough of Hillingdon set up in 1964 carried out the destruction. Ron Edwards and Cliff Morell were concerned that such buildings were disappearing without record and discussed setting up a local history society to discover and preserve as much of the history of the area as possible.

Ron approached representatives of various local organizations and sent an open letter to The Advertiser and Gazette, which elicited one response from Sir Christopher Cowan of Kiln Farm, Northwood, a former chairman of the Middlesex County Council, who was in favour of the idea. L.E. Morris and D.F.K. Kiddle who were already engaged in local history research had been publishing papers in the Journal of the Ruislip and District Natural History Society for some years. Ron attended a R&DNHS committee meeting and Lawrence Morris in particular encouraged him to start a society devoted entirely to Local History.

An initial meeting was held at 24 Cheney Street, the home of Ron's parents-in-law, on 6 April 1964 with SirChristopher Cowan, W.A.G. Kemp, Cliff Morrell and Miss Pollard, the head librarian at Manor Farm Library present, as well as the Cranes and Doreen and Ron Edwards. Mr. Kemp had published 'The Story of Northwood and Northwood Hills, Middlesex' in 1955 and 'A History of Eastcote' in 1963 and L.E.Morris's 'History of Ruislip' had been printed in 1956.

The group decided to form a society to cover the whole RNUDC area (the old manor and parish of Ruislip) and a public meeting held at Manor Farm Library on 22 May 1964 attracted more than 50 people, 45 of whom joined immediately. Ron and Doreen both played a very large part in the development of the Society. He was Secretary from 1964to 1970 and Doreen edited the thrice yearly Bulletins and later the more substantial annual journal until 1977. Ron served on the committee until 1978.

From the outset Ron tried to involve all the society members in recording the current state of the area, instigating a photographic survey and suggesting one of St. Martin's graveyard. He was also keen to get local historians to exchange ideas on research and to cooperate on major projects. To this end he organized meetings of representatives of the many local history societies of north-west Middlesex and in 1975 ran the first Local History Conference at the College of Further Education at Hatch End. This event proved so popular that it continued to be held for 25 years, being held at Winston Churchill Hall after Ron had retired from the College.

He continued to teach extra-mural classes and to write articles and books. These included one on the Royal Commercial Travellers' School at Hatch End, another on St Andrew's Presbyterian Church of which he was a member and 'Eastcote - from Village to Suburb' for Hillingdon Borough Libraries in 1987. He wrote articles for our Bulletin and Journal until 2001.

Six years after Doreen's death in 1989, Ron married Pauline, whom he had known from his early years in Eastcote and they enjoyed nearly ten years of happiness together.. Local historians, many of whom received encouragement from him, owe him a great debt.

Eileen M. **Bowlt**