

THE HOOKS IN EASTCOTE

by John William Hook

Earlier this year, John Hook wrote to the Society with recollections of his family's and his own times living in our area, and we are pleased to publish them here. These have been compiled from his own knowledge and observations over the years, plus information received through family experience and folklore. Some further information has been added by the RNELHS for clarification.

I was born at Hillingdon Hospital on the 11 December 1937 to Mrs Lillian Hook, née Buckle, and Mr William Joseph Hook of Wiltshire Lane, Eastcote. I lived with them until 1942 when my parents divorced, and I was then raised by one of my father's sisters and her husband in Ruislip Manor. During that time I attended Lady Bankes Primary School and took my secondary education at Pinner County Grammar School. I remained with my uncle and aunt until 1958 when I married. My wife and I lived in South Ruislip and then Northwood Hills before moving subsequently to Gerrards Cross. I joined the Metropolitan Police and initially served at Ruislip, Northwood and Uxbridge. I continued to serve in that area for about 12 years before moving on to other parts of the Metropolis.

The first Hook in Eastcote was, as far as I am aware, my great-grandmother, Louisa, known respectfully and affectionately as 'Granny Hook'. No mention was ever made of a Grandfather Hook. Granny Hook lived in a semi-detached cottage on the west corner of Field End Road at the junction with Bridle Road. These cottages were on a piece of land next to Field End Lodge, now the Tudor Lodge Hotel. Granny Hook lived in the left-hand house of the pair as viewed from the road (Fig. 1). I don't know if she originated from that area and I don't know the composition of her family, except that one of her sons was my grandfather, William James Hook [see caption to Fig. 1, below, for further information].

William James Hook enlisted as a soldier in the Royal Hussars but was later discharged, medically unfit, with rheumatic fever. I don't know if it was his army career which took him there, but he was living in the Ham Common area of Richmond when he married Lydia Grace Boxshall (my grandmother). Their eldest child, William Joseph Hook (my father), was born in Ham about 1906 and suffered with pleurisy. His parents noticed that their son's health seemed to



Fig. 1 – Mount Pleasant cottages, Field End (built c.1847, demolished 1968)

Louisa 'Granny' Hook, husband George and four of their children were living here at the time of the 1911 census, which shows her to be from Colnbrook and George from Tetsworth, Oxfordshire. At the time of the 1901 census, the family was in Thorpe, Chertsey, with nine of their children living at home, including William James. George is entered as a stockman on a farm in 1901 and as a dairy cowman in 1911 (RNELHS, 1929)

JOHN MILLICHIP, A RUISLIP ARTIST

by Colin Bowlt

In February of this year (2013) the Society was given a painting from the estate of Mrs. Margaret Ward-Dyer who had died in June 2012.

She had inherited it from her parents, Margaret and George Hinman who had lived at Fyvie in Cheney Street from 1919 until moving to the West Country in 1945. As a memento they had commissioned a painting of their house from a John Millichip. The picture, Figure 1, is a view from the meadow east of Cheney Street, across the River Pinn to their house called Fyvie and that of their friends the Philips (of map specialist fame), Hornend, among the trees. Both of these houses are still standing, though Fyvie is now named High Trees. Figure 2 shows the same view in 2013. During their time at Eastcote Mrs Hinman was active in local matters, including establishing a school in Fore Street for Eastcote children to relieve them of the long walk to the National School and back, at Ruislip, as can be read in an article by Karen Spink in the 2012 Journal of this Society.

Attempting to find out more about the artist, I came across a painting for sale on e-bay of a 'farmhouse in Ruislip' by one John Millichip. Fortunately a photograph was shown, from which it was possible to identify the building in the picture as Primrose Hill Farm, Figure 3. This stood near, and to the south-west of the White Bear public house, but was destroyed to build the large Wimpey estate on the west side of Wood Lane in the mid-1960s. Figure 4 shows the site in 2013. It was the 'old farmhouse' on the site; a larger house was built to the east of it in 1910. The building in the painting appears to have been a timber-framed lobby entrance house of c.1600, similar to Bury Street Farm.

However, almost half the building had been demolished and replaced with a single story add-on covering the same footprint by the time of the painting. A larger adjoining building is shown at the other end of the building, presumably of later date. The vendor of the picture from whom I purchased it, said that her grandparents had bought it in the West Country.

After some misleading information that John Millichip was an American, Karen Spink contacted the professional artist, Paul Millichip, who replied that John Felix Millichip was his father. The family had moved to Ruislip from Harrow in 1931 and remained there until going to Leeds in 1947. His father never gave up his day job with the civil service and died at the age of 61, by which time he had moved to Tonbridge Wells, Kent. He founded the Society of Ruislip Artists after the war, when the local Home Guard was disbanded, (the connection between the two events is not clear) and became a keen, and clearly talented, weekend painter, who enjoyed working out of doors. He was also a conjurer and puppet maker, appearing at children's events and parties. He encouraged his son, Paul, in his art studies, who became a full time painter as a result.

I have since learned that Mrs Lesley Crowcroft, Chair of the Eastcote Conservation Panel was given a John Millichip painting of Crows Nest farm, Breakspear Road (fortunately still standing), by Margaret Ward-Dyer, which she hopes will be displayed at the Eastcote House Stables when they are restored.

I am grateful to Paul Millichip for providing information about his father.



Fig 1
John Millichip's painting showing Fyvie (now High Trees), on the left
and Hornend to the right
 (picture gifted to the RNELHS)



Fig 2
The same view looking across the River Pinn in January 2013
Hornend is hidden among the trees



Fig 3
John Millichip's painting of Primrose Hill Farm in 1945



Fig 4
The site of Primrose Hill Farm in 2013

