

THE RUISLIP, NORTHWOOD AND EASTCOTE
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
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BULLETIN

APRIL 1977

The end of the Winter season approaches and we are back with our April Bulletin again. I am glad to welcome new contributors and also thank all those who have given up their time to write the articles for this bumper issue. I am sure that all members will find something to their liking - it covers a very wide scope.

The outings so far arranged by Mrs. Katie Clark have been successful, and I include a list of those that are to come so that all members will know about them and I hope, participate. Mrs. Clark has worked very hard to provide these outings so I do hope that members will support them as far as is able.

The new financial year commences in April and the Treasurer, Mr. George Craven will be pleased to relieve you of your money at your earliest opportunity. His address is 3 Cheney Street, Eastcote, Pinner, Middx. Tel. 866-6749. The subscription is still at a very reasonable rate, 75p for adults and 25p for junior members.

I am glad to report that attendance at meetings has improved and it seems as if a new surge of interest has been shown - do keep it up. I have a few spare old Bulletins if any newer members would care to purchase any. Contact me on 866-4288, 11 Pamela Gardens, Eastcote.

On March 5th the 3rd Local History Conference was held at the Harrow College of Further Education at Hatch End. Mr. L. Krause and Mr. K.J. McBean had taken many photos and plus other items put up an excellent exhibition on behalf of the Society. Eight members of the Society attended the Conference. Coffee was served at 10.0 a.m. and then Councillor D.B.I. Clark - Chairman of the Education Committee of the London Borough of Harrow welcomed the delegates and opened the Conference. The Lecturer in the morning was Mr. T.G. Hassell, M.A.F.S.A., Director of Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit who spoke on the Origin and Growth of Medieval English Towns. Question and discussions followed and then we broke up for lunch at 12.15 p.m. During the lunch period Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper gave two showings of slides of Harrow Town. The afternoon session commenced with an excellent film entitled "Building the Industrial Revolution", followed by Dr. D.A. Reeder, M.A.Ph.D from Leicester University, who gave a talk on Suburban Developments. After tea, there was a period for questions and discussions, and ideas were asked for next year's Conference. The Conference closed with a vote of thanks at 5.0 p.m.

DOREEN L. EDWARDS

(Hon.Editor)

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Members of our Society set up a supporting exhibit relating to the theme of the above Conference on March 5th from our own area. This comprised the map of the first statutory town planning scheme to be approved in the country and estate maps, brochures and layouts such as St. Catherine's Estate in Ruislip and Coteford Close Estate in Eastcote. Members photographs illustrated various aspects including the decorative side of housing in Victorian Northwood. We are indebted to Mrs. E. Frost, Mr. Page, Mrs. King and the Uxbridge Library for the loan of material.

The Conference was both stimulating and friendly and we look forward to the next.

L.K.

K.M.

SUMMER OUTINGS. - 1977
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At the meeting in September, it was generally agreed by the members present that coach outings were becoming rather too expensive and the Committee has, therefore, tried to keep visits fairly localised. Details of proposed outings are as follows:

Saturday 26th March 11.00 a.m.	Swakeleys Manor, Ickenham. Guide: Mr. Chenery of Uxbridge Local History Society.	Meet at main entrance to house at 10.55 a.m.
Saturday 23rd April 3.00 p.m.	Old Workhouse, Ruislip.	Meet at Ducks Hill Car Park at 2.30 p.m. (if you come by car) otherwise at Old Workhouse at 3.00 p.m.
Monday 16th May 7.15 p.m.	Eastcote Walkabout Guide: Mr. R.G. Edwards	Meet at Haydon Hall Car Park at 7.10 p.m.
Thursday 2nd June 7.30 p.m.	Battle of Britain House, Ducks Hill. Guide: Mr. Seal, Principal of Ruislip College. Afterwards walk through Mad Bess Wood. Guide: Mrs. E. Bowlt	Meet outside entrance to house at 6.25 p.m.
Saturday 2nd July 3.00 p.m.	Chenies Manor House, Chenies, Nr. Rickmansworth.	Meet at Manor House at 2.55 p.m.

If any member of the Society has any specific suggestions for outings, do please put these to the Committee who can then find out what kind of response we would get from other members.

EASTCOTE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE by E.W. CRANE
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Prior to 1924, Eastcote, being a small village with a few large houses had a Girl's Friendly Society largely held for the domestic members of these homes. The Society began to dwindle badly and Mrs. George Philip of Hornend, Cheney Street asked Mrs. Ernest Hinman also of Cheney Street to form a Women's Institute in its place. This was accomplished and a committee of 15 with Mrs. Vivian as President was formed. Mrs. Vivian lived at Field End House, the site now occupied by the Roman Catholic Church, and committee meetings were held there regularly. The first monthly meeting was held at St. Lawrence's Church on 5th May 1924. By 1925 a choir had been formed of 13 singers, a pianist and a conductor. They entered for the competition arranged by the Federation of Women's Institutes held at Lady Stafford's London home, in the Autumn. The choir travelled to London from Eastcote Halt by train and had a rehearsal on the journey. They won the Banner and on their return to Eastcote sang all the way home to the beginning of Bridle Road where members broke up to go to their respective homes. I might add that there were no footpaths or lights, only trees on each side of the road which met in the middle forming a lovely canopy. In 1950 Eastcote and Field End Choirs joined in the mass production of The Four Seasons by Dr. Vaughan Williams, the

orchestra being the London Symphony Orchestra and the conductors were Dr. Vaughan Williams and Sir Adrian Boult. This again was arranged by the Federation and held at the Albert Hall. The choir entered many competitions and flourished for about 30 years, the conductor being Mrs. Enid Crane. During this period they sang at W.I. meetings, various plays and at Christmas visited Pinner and Northwood Cottage Hospital to sing carols in the wards. They also went carols singing throughout the district with the menfolk carrying lanterns lit by candles, the only light available. The singers ended up in later years at Coteford School really ready for the Christmas pudding, mince pies and a special Stilton Cheese given by Mrs. Hinman, plus a cup of hot coffee which was much appreciated.

Very soon after the W.I. was formed, folk dancing, drama and handicraft classes were arranged and well attended. The drama class provided the actors, the choir, the music and the handicraft members made all the clothes for the many plays performed through the years. The excerpt 'Fools and Fairies' from the Midsummer Night's Dream was first performed at Hornend, the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Philip, and the second time in the gardens of Highmead, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Crane, both beautiful settings. Lady Precious Stream was also produced at Highmead with beautiful authentic costumes lent by a friend of Mrs. Hinman's. Later on, when Coteford School was in use for the Institute, other plays such as the Little Plays of Assissi, excerpts from Romeo and Juliet, The Importance of Being Earnest, to name but a few gave much pleasure to many. At one time the Thunbail Sketches from Dickens were given at monthly meetings.

Handicraft classes continued to improve and now included Glove making, Basketry, Handbag making, Dressmaking, Toymaking and many others and were well attended. Several members have attended various Courses at Denman College near Abingdon. Handicraft, Fruit and Vegetable Shows were well supported, the first being held in a tent in the garden of Highmead in Cheney Street. On one occasion an afternoon and an evening Show was held with stalls and entertainments and teas and suppers were also provided. Mr. Crane was able to obtain the services of two Irish Pipers in full dress to pipe up and down the garden, much to the delight of the audience.

May Day was kept with the singing of the special May Day Song, with garlands of flowers made from their own gardens being worn by members and, of course, the traditional Maypole Dance. In 1933 at Christmas time, the Mummers were revived, those taking part being: Father Christmas, Mrs. Farley; Bold Turkish Knight, Mrs. Lockey; King George, Mrs. Nicholls; Doctor, Mrs. Coulson; Jack Vinney, Mrs. Hinman; Jack the Sweep, Mrs. Mills; Tom Tucker, Mrs. Golden. They were all dressed in the traditional dress and it was a great success. The last performance in the village had been by the village boys in 1908. There is a rumour that they are trying to revive this old custom.

In 1926 the Village Hall in Fore Street was suggested by Mr. George Philip and many fund raising functions were arranged, including buying a brick. The W.I. helped in various capacities in raising the necessary funds. The Men's Club met there, it was used as an infants' school and also as a library. Miss Wingrove, the first headmistress was very interested in the W.I. and co-operated in many events. In 1927 the W.I. were able to have their own accommodation in the hall for many years to come. In 1932 the Hall was taken over by the M.C.C. and Coteford School was opened.

In 1937 Field End, an afternoon W.I. was formed and a year later South Eastcote and Southbourne W.Is were formed to supply the need on the other side of Eastcote Station. Later on, Chapel Hill W.I. was started and lasted for just over ten years before being disbanded. Eastcote W.I. helped form these other W.Is and are very proud of their daughters which are still flourishing except for Chapel Hill. During the war the W.I. helped at the Dig for Victory Shows,

not only in showing but helping give lunches and teas. One show was held at Eastcote House Grounds and Mr. Middleton of radio fame was present. Another big show was held in King's College Field, Ruislip and was arranged by the local Council. At these shows the W.I. was much in evidence. An Exhibition of preservation was taken by some members round the Ruislip/Northwood District showing people how to preserve the fruit and vegetables from their own gardens. The Council lent part of a house in Lowlands Road as a Preserving Centre. The Ministry of Food supplied all the sugar and the public were invited to bring fruit from their own gardens and also to pick fruit from the hedgerows. The response was great. W.I. members went two or three times a week according to the arrival of the fruit to prepare and make jam. Every ounce of sugar had to be accounted for and the Ministry despatched the finished articles to the shops. Quite a lot went to Howard Roberts in Field End Road. All jam was inspected by the Ministry and if not up to 60% standard was sent to the hospitals for immediate use. At one sitting a cwt. of crab apple jelly was made. Mrs. Lockey and Mrs. Holder were in charge.

In the early 1930's there was a rumour about pulling down Eastcote House and Haydon Hall and Mrs. Hinman and others contacted the M.C.C. and the local Council and were able to prevent this happening. Finally the houses were saved with several acres of ground and both houses were invaluable during the war. Unfortunately Eastcote House was pulled down in 1964 and Haydon Hall in 1960, but we still have the open spaces as parkland. Sometime before 1962 the W.I. were able to arrange with the Dickensian Society from London to perform some of Dickens' plays in the grounds of Eastcote House. The house was used for dressing rooms and the audience were accommodated on the slopes of the park to watch the plays taking place on the level part of the garden.

As time has gone on the W.I. has changed somewhat, partly due to television, the choir, folk dancing and drama have suffered, but new activities have been started. Painting classes have been arranged, a link with St. Bernard's Hospital has been formed with members visiting and sending Christmas cards and gifts to the patients. A strong sense of public affairs with a sub-committee dealing with the conservation of the district, and in co-operation with the Parks Department of the Borough the planting of bulbs and trees, especially in the Jubilee Year of 1977. Of course, there are many activities of the W.I. other than cookery and handicrafts that are carried on successfully. This is just a peep into what the W.I. has achieved between 1924 and 1977.

VISIT TO THE PIANO MUSEUM AND THE STEAM ENGINE MUSEUM by J.R.S.

The outing on 30th October was a double feature as we visited the Piano Museum in Kew Bridge Road during the morning and travelled a quarter of a mile along the same road after lunch to go into the Steam Engine Museum.

After a break for lunch we met at the Steam Engine Museum about 2 o'clock. Here, through the foresight of the outings organiser, Mrs. Clark, we were conducted by one of the volunteer workers. The main items were two enormous beam engines towering high above us. These were driven by steam and pumped hundreds of gallons of water at each stroke. The engines looked even more impressive when we climbed up to the galleries on a level with the moving beams and looked down at the pumping action. These engines are over one hundred years old and were out of commission for a long time until they were brought back into working order by a band of dedicated volunteers, working at week ends.

Although not now used for operational pumping the beam engines are as efficient as they ever were, but are only used as working exhibits.

A few of the more adventurous members of the party went down into the condenser room, under the beam engines, while others looking down through the trap door and seeing the steep iron ladder half obscured by clouds of steam, decided that this part of the visit was not a "must"!

THE MUSICAL MUSEUM by L.K.
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For the first of our out-of-season excursions Katie Clark had happily chosen the Music Museum. And so it was on the last day of October we presented ourselves at the Old Church in Brentford which houses "A Menagerie of Mechanical Instruments" as the poster has it. Museum? Menagerie? - as we entered by a small side door the first impression was of a giant junk shop crammed with a variety of shapes and sizes which defied description. But as our guide brought us into line and the tour began order and fascination were quickly established for self playing musical instruments are exciting to watch as well as listen to.

The music is encoded in the form of pegs on rotating discs or cylinders or as holes in a band of paper or card. It is reproduced again by systems of the most delicate and ingenious levers, bellows and springs, wheels and belts operating the keys of pianos or organs so that the sounds we hear are the direct true tones of these instruments. The Music Museum has a large selection ranging from the relatively crude mechanical pianos of the 1830's to the sophisticated Ampico roll made by Rachmaninoff on a magnificent Eward grand in 1926. The influence of these player pianos was immense and they took mechanical music in the house right into the 1930's and they are the one instrument which educated more people into musical appreciation than any other before or since. At the beginning of the century Edward MacDowell achieved an amazing international popularity because of the tens of thousands of rolls of his music which were sold. In recent years interest in the player piano has revived and record transcriptions have been issued from rolls made by famous pianists on the Ampico, Duo-Art and Welte systems, all of which were claimed to reproduce every nuance of touch and tone of the masters who played them. This year has seen a further stage. In 1920 George Gershwin made a piano duet role (with himself) of his famous "Rhapsody in Blue". Now CBS have issued a record which has abstracted his solo part and combined it with a live jazz orchestra so we can hear his interpretation as he played it in 1977 sound.

Although the mechanical pianos may be regarded as the most musically satisfying parts of the Museum, the collection does include other instruments which are more visually exciting. There are the remarkable Violano and Violina for example, the one with one violin and the other with four violins operated with a circular 'bow'. Each had mechanical piano accompaniment and was remarkable, more for the vigour of the music than its finesse.

Then there were the Orchestrelle and the Orchestrion immortalised by P.G. Wodehouse in a characteristic Wooster story where the hero, groping his way downstairs in the middle of the night in a strange house, presses not the drawing room light switch but sets off the Orchestrion in a rousing version of Tosti's 'Goodbye!'. The Orchestrions are complete happenings with flutes and trumpets, bells and drums, cymbals clashed in time by carved figures and round the back the belts and pulleys working industriously away for our delight.

I was reminded of the late summers of my childhood when the Wakes came to our small Derbyshire town on their way to Nottingham Goose Fair. The Great Roundabout had a large mechanical organ and on the Sunday afternoon played the overtures to Maritana and Poet and Peasant for local charities. They were the first music from the Opera House I was ever able to hear.

Finally the Music Museum has two fine organs. A Welte Philharmonic reproducing pipe organ of 1910 which unfortunately was not working but caused our affable martinet of a guide (who at times gave the impression that he also was operated by a punched tape!) to turn aside and tell us that the Welte family, so long pioneers in mechanically produced music, was still represented by two octagenarian ladies who lived in the same house in Bavaria but did not speak to each other. Secondly, the mighty Wurlitzer organ from a cinema in Kingston. This can often be heard with a live performer in the organ programme broadcast by Radio 2 on Tuesday evenings and reminds us that the Museum is a real live place with its own society meeting regularly and caring for its treasures.

Nor are the techniques of the mechanical instruments dead. As I write these notes in February 1977, a hundred years after Robert Browning spoke his immortal words 'I sprang to the stirrup' into an Edison phonograph, RCA have re-issued a Caruso record with a difference. The disco he made at the beginning of the century have been digitally analysed and the results - yes - punched into a computer paper tape from which the extraneous record noises and distortions have been removed leaving the famous voice clearer than ever before. A distinguished monthly magazine for HiFi buffs has published this month also details of a build-it-yourself 'Polyphon' whose rotating disc operates not through mechanical pegs but electronic synthesisers. Even more fascinating and completely true to the traditions of the Music Museum the circuit issued with the construction kit plays 'Silent Night' and Mike Oldfield's latest record of himself as a human Orchestra playing a dozen of his keyboards and synthesisers on to one tape gives us the Overture to William Tell! Back to my old Wakes organ!!

EDWARD PRIOR: 1852-1933 by K.J. McBean
ARCHITECT OF HIGH GROVE, EASTCOTE
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The owners of High Grove, Eastcote, Sir Hugh Hume Campbell and Lady Campbell were away at their country estate, Marchmont, Berwickshire, on the night of 16th November 1879 when fire broke out at the house. In spite of the efforts of the Uxbridge Volunteer Fire Brigade and the private pumps brought from Pinner Hall, the building was gutted and from the appearance of the present High Grove it seems clear that almost an entirely new building must have replaced the old. The architect of the rebuilding was Edward Prior.

Edward Schroder Prior was born in 1852, the son of John Venn Prior, a Chancery Division barrister. He was educated at Harrow School and Caius College Cambridge. Portraits of Prior show him as a scholarly figure but he was a good athlete and he represented his University against Oxford in several events. After University he became a highly thought of pupil of the distinguished Victorian architect, Norman Shaw, who designed Grimsdyke House at Harrow Weald, at one time occupied by W.S. Gilbert and now a Country Hotel. Shaw is perhaps best known for his adoption of a Queen Anne style of architecture of which the immensely tall red brick flats by the Albert Hall are a good example.

High Grove, which was completed in 1881, was one of Edward Prior's early commissions and the influence of Norman Shaw is very much in evidence. The building is in red brickwork of good quality with a high pitched tiled roof and tall narrow "fly-away" dormer windows and tall decorated chimney stacks. The window arches on the ground floor are of gauged brickwork and there is a pronounced modillioned eaves course except over the two canted bays on the west elevation. The porch is something of a surprise. It is a full two-storey with architectural decoration, including fluted brick columns flanking the upper windows with the modillions set diagonally over. Carved initials in brickwork are enclosed in circlets in the panels under the windows and the same decoration comprising intertwined Cs for Campbell and a representation of the family crest is on the south elevation. The porch is set at an angle to the rest of the house and this seems to be the first indication of an idiosyncrasy of Priors which was to loom large in his later work.

Inside, the hall has a shallow decorated alcove and there is plaster decoration under the stairs and in the small domed ceiling over the stair well. The ceiling of the principal ground floor room is similarly decorated with ornate plaster work and there are wall panels.

Drawings of Priors High Grove were exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1882.

The New Music School at Harrow (1891) is by Prior and is said by Ian Nairn to be the only Victorian building at the school worth seeing.

Writing in the Architectural Review in 1952, Christopher Grillet says that buildings designed by Prior are among the most original of their time. He tells us that Prior, while firmly believing in symmetry detested straight lines and right angles. The Barn, a house at Exmouth, and Home Place, another large house in Norfolk, both included various canted shapes and the ground plan of The Barn is very nearly an X. His most outstanding work is probably St. Andrew's Church at Rokker in County Durham (1906) which received high praise. Here again diagonally placed arches joined nave to chancel - at the east end the angles of the chancel itself are canted.

After acting as architect to Harrow School, Winchester and Cambridge, Prior spent the last 25 years of his life as an educationalist and wrote his first and best book on Gothic Art in England. He wrote 'Cathedral Builders in England' and other works. He was a founder member of the Art Workers Guild and died in 1932 while holding the position of Slade Professor of Fine Art at Cambridge.

Acknowledgments:

1. Mrs. Margaret Cleverley, Hillingdon Borough Council, Principal Housing Officer.
2. Bucks. Advertiser, 22 November 1878. The first person to spot the fire at High Grove was Police Inspector Bromford, stationed at Ruislip, who happened to be riding through Eastcote at the time and who galloped to the Lodge to raise the alarm.
3. The Builder, 1933: p.328.
4. Victorian Churches by Peter Howell, R.I.B.A., Drawing Series.

NOTE: High Grove is the last of the three large houses of Eastcote left standing. It is an interesting building both architecturally and historically and it was designed by an important Victorian architect. It is much to be hoped that long-term plans for High Grove will include the restoration both of the house and grounds and access by the public.

INVENTORY OF RUISLIP WORKHOUSE - 1795 by EILEEN M. BOWLE

OLD WORKHOUSE ... Two years ago the Old Workhouse in Ducks Hill, Ruislip, was in a dilapidated state, an application for demolition threatening its very existence. Today it is being enthusiastically renovated by its new owners, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Reed, who are eager to unearth its early history when it served the Poor of the Parish of Ruislip from 1789 to 1838. (Bulletin R. N. & E. Loc. Hist. Soc. 1975).

INVENTORY ... Upon the death of the first Governor, John Burbridge, the maintenance of the poor was let for one year to Ralph Weatherley for £206 on 12th October 1795. The Vestry ordered that all the goods at the Workhouse should be valued and an agreement signed with the new Governor. This document (1) is entitled "Inventory of household goods and wearing apparel at Ruislip Workhouse taken on Oct. 23rd."

INMATES ... There were twenty-two inmates, five men, four lads, twelve women and one girl. The imbalance suggests that men were better able to support themselves. Labouring jobs such as digging gravel and chalk or mending the roads (2) were more readily available than the lighter service work suitable for women.

Two of the lads, James and John Hill, were presumably the sons of Edward Hill, one of the men. Another lad, Joseph Yates, appears to be in the Workhouse with his mother, Ann Yates. The girl was called Charlotte Cook and there was a Mary Cook among the women. No adult had the same surname as the remaining lad, Thomas Richardson, but the goods of Eliza Richardson are included among the effects of poor people stored at the Workhouse.

The total population of the Parish of Ruislip was about 1000 (1012 at the 1801 Census). Therefore 2.2% of them were poor enough to require indoor relief in the Workhouse.

CLOTHES ... Every inmate had a pair of shoes. Overseers of the Poor seem to have paid particular attention to footwear for their accounts in the years prior to the opening of the Workhouse make constant references to "Shoes for the poor" and the "Mending of the Poores' shoes".

Headgear must have been considered very important too, for practically everyone had at least one hat, the women having a multiplicity of headcoverings. For example, Ann Weatherley has three "handkercheafs" (sic), five caps and a bonnet. The handkerchieves were almost certainly for the head and not the nose! Do the many hats reflect fashion? Nowadays if money were scarce surely a hat is the last thing that would be purchased.

Although the extremities were provided for, there is a strange lack of outdoor apparel for men and no mention of any underwear for them at all, though linen small - clothes were to be found in wealthy households of the time.

Edward Hill's wardrobe is typical - "2 wascotes 1 pr. breeches 1 hatt 3 pr. stockings 1 pr. shoes 2 shirts".

The women fared better with cloaks, shifts and stays. Ann Weatherley had - "2 gowns 3 potticotes 2 aprons 3 handkercheafs 5 caps 3 shifts 2 pr. stockings 1 pr. shoes bonnet cloak pr. stays".

To modern eyes, certain essential undergarments appear to be missing!

There is no suggestion that the inmates wore a uniform. Clothing was apparently handed out at need.

BEDROOMS ... Eighteen rooms are mentioned. Seven are bedrooms furnished with stump bedsteads, flock beds, bolsters, quilts, blankets and sheets. There were fourteen bedsteads and forty-four blankets, which meant that no more than two people need share any one bed and there were at least three blankets per bed. The only other objects in these seven rooms were "4 old chares", "2 chares", four boxes and one chest.

GOVERNOR'S ROOM ... The Governor's room was provided with two feather beds and two bolsters. Ralph Weatherley would bring his own belongings with him when he took office.

BEDLAM ... A Bedlam containing one stump bedstead, a flock bed, bolster and four blankets and a coverlet, is an interesting feature. We must hope that if a lunatic were confined there he would be given some occupation, but in 1795 it is more likely that he was simply locked out of harm's way and left to vegetate.

OCCUPATIONS ... Ordinary inmates certainly worked in the garden attached to the Workhouse and in the kitchen. Mention of a Brewhouse and Wash house and of a Work Room equipped with a kneading trough suggests that brewing, baking and laundry work was undertaken for outsiders.

Perhaps John Durbridge, the first Governor had tried to introduce cotton spinning for 12 Welland Runners Cotton Frames are valued separately and said to be part of his effects.

LIVING ROOMS ... The Parlour had only a deal dresser with three shelves and three drawers, a stone grate, mantle shelves and a horn lanthorn, so perhaps it was reserved for the Governor.

The kitchen with its benches, forms, long dining table, dresser and cupboards must have been the main living room. Its range would make it the warmest place in Winter, for the Parlour is the only other room said to have a fire place.

Cooking utensils which included skimmers and tea kettles were mainly kept in the Scullery, which also had a copper and a sink. The Pantry housed the "2 dozen and 9 trenchers 13 wood dishes 3 hand bowles 2 wood plates" used for eating. Whatever did they use for drinking? There were "4 old pint pots" and "4 Half-pint ditto" in the kitchen. Did all twenty-two inmates have to share them? Perhaps others had been broken in the "dish tub" while being washed, a fate which would not overtake the sensible treen articles.

GOODS BELONGING TO THE POOR ... The total value of goods listed in the Inventory is £53, of which £7.6s. worth of goods did not belong to the parish, but constituted the worldly goods of poor people who entered the Workhouse and were kept for them until they were able to leave it again. They make pitiful reading. The longest list is Eliza Richardson's - "Fether bed bolster bedstead 2 blanketts 2 tables pottage pot and cover copper sausepan tea kettle flatt iron candle stick".

Ralph Weatherley failed to make a living out of the Workhouse. A Vestry Minute (3) of 16th October 1796 notes that he is to quit his appointment at the end of his year on the 26th October, having expended £47.11s more than the £286 paid him by the Parish.

- Notes: (1) M.C.R.O. DRO 19/E5/1 "Inventory of Household Goods, Wearing Apparel taken at Ruislip Workhouse."
(2) M.C.R.O. DRO 19/G1/1 Overseers of Highway Acts 1792-1803.
(3) M.C.R.O. DRO 19/C1/1 Vestry Minutes 1787-1820.
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A WORKHOUSE MENU by A.C.

In the September 1976 Bulletin I quoted the amount 2/2d. per week, which the manager of the Coxheath Workhouse received for each inmate in January 1823.

While visiting relatives in Kent last Autumn, I came across the following details about the workhouse in Speldhurst in the year 1819.

In June of that year the workhouse had 23 inmates, aged between 8 and 78. The record lists their names, ages, state of health and prescribed occupations or abilities. For example, two children under the age of 11 went to school; a 13 year old girl worked in the house; a deranged person "assisted the weaver"; one in poor health worked on the farm; a pregnant lady was "not able to do much work"; one lame and infirm person could "do no work"; two ladies, aged 75 and 78, did needlework.

They received three meals a day. Breakfast consisted of broth, bread and cheese, and supper of bread, cheese and beer. Dinner, however, varied as the menu for the week ending 15th September shows.

Wednesday:	soup
Thursday:	boiled meat and butter (sic) pudding
Friday:	cold meat (allowance)
Saturday:	rice and milk
Sunday:	boiled beef and suet pudding
Monday:	cold meat (allowance)
Tuesday:	meat pudding and potatoes

The sizes of the helpings no doubt varied with the age and occupation of the eater, that it was limited is suggested by the "allowance" after the cold meat. One must assume, I think, that bread was given with the soup and cold meat, and probably some cheap vegetable as well.

How typical these meals are I do not know, but as Coxheath and Speldhurst are both in Kent and only four years separate the two records it seems reasonable to link them.

Speldhurst seems to have had its own farm, even the weaver may have been part of the establishment, and without knowledge of the circumstances at Coxheath any conclusion drawn must be a bit tentative.

Last Autumn the Hillingdon Council painted the old sign-post at the corner of Bridle Road and Field End Road, in Eastcote, having previously allowed it to deteriorate almost to the condition for scrapping. I wrote thanking them and saying that I thought the money well spent. They expressed pleasure at my having noticed it.

What a boon the sign-post is to the traveller, especially those indicating distances as well as directions.

In Roman times roads were relatively few and well defined, so milestones provided the answers required. With the departure of the Romans the roads in many cases disappeared and so did the milestones. With the coming of Turnpike roads, milestones again made their appearance under the Acts.

In the middle ages most villagers would know the direction to the next village, or the market town, and might even know the reputed distance to it, though Celia Fiennes when travelling in the north of England found that, when asked, villagers would give the distance from one place to another, but made no allowance for their own location when asked. It was not easy to find someone free and able to act as a guide.

Even along main routes it was wise to employ a guide if one could be found. Samuel Pepys was lost on two occasions at least, in spite of employing guides; once when crossing Salisbury Plain and for two hours at Cobham when travelling between Guildford and London. As he had a hired coach he could not call on the services of a Post Office guide, the best available. If he had been travelling 'post', he would have been obliged to employ horses supplied by postmasters along his route at 2½d. (later 3d.) a mile, and a guide at 4d. a stage. An expensive journey but fast and sure, highwaymen permitting.

You may wonder whether the coming of sign-posts and Turnpikes made the guide superfluous. To some extent they may have done, but the main purpose of the Post Office guide was to ensure that the horses were not ridden too hard, and were returned to their owner. Guards eventually took the place of guides on the stage coach and mail coach routes.

King William III was primarily responsible for erection of sign-posts in Britain. He may have feared that he would be lost on his way to Harwich en route to Holland. They were probably already in use on the Continent but in any case they were a good idea and surveyors were instructed to erect them at all major cross roads, under pain of a fine.

William came to the throne in 1689. In 1697 the already mentioned Celia, on her northwards travel wrote "I Came to Cross wayes where was a Latterworth hand, pointing 4 wayes to Coventry, Leicester, London and Litchfield." Of Lancashire she wrote "They have one good thing in most parts of this principality, or County palatine its rather Call'd, that at all Cross wayes there are posts with hands pointing to each road with ye names of ye great town or market towns that it Leads to, which does make up for ye Length of ye miles yt strangers may not Loose their Road and have it to goe back againe." That she commented in this way suggests that sign-posts were not yet common throughout the country, and in fact it was found necessary to cover their provision in the Turnpike acts of 1766 and 1773.

The early reference to these sign-posts call them "hands" or "handing posts", the ends of the arms being in the form of a hand with the forefinger extended. The more recent term "finger post" seems to be used to distinguish posts of this form from the more usual ones with square or rounded ends and is still in use.

Edith Brill and Peter Turner in their book "The Minor Pleasures of the Cotswolds" have a chapter on sign-posts and illustrate some old ones still existing. Before they were provided officially they were sometimes erected by local benefactors. One, which must surely be the oldest still existing, was erected by the Izods of Campden in 1669. It once had an iron spike at the top and traditionally this was used for impaling sheep stealers and other robbers. The A.A. Illustrated Handbook (1962 Edition) pictures it and lists it under Broadway, locating it at Cross Hands on Fishhill. The arms point in four directions but the inscriptions cover the whole of one side; for instance one reads "XXIII MILES 1669 THE WAY TO WOSTER". To find the distance to Oxford one must view the same pair of arms from the other side. The distances are claimed to be accurate to a mile or two which is remarkable as I hope to show in a future article. Another handing post mentioned is the one at Teddington Hands, where the Evesham road meets the A.438. The arms are fitted into a stone pillar which carries the inscription

Edward Attwood of the Vine Tree
At the first time erected me
And freely he did this bestow
Strange travellers the way to show.

It would have been in the spirit of the age if he had added another line or two asking the strange traveller to pray for his soul.

These old posts are worth looking for. There is one at Brownhills at the junction of the A.5 and A.452 roads which was erected originally in 1777. It is rather plain in appearance. By contrast there is a very ornate iron handing-post at the junction known as Three Lamps, in Bristol, where the Bath and Wells road join. The carefully cast hands are mounted at the end of open brackets, the letters of the Towns' names being held, forming an open fret, between the top and bottom edges of the brackets. The post itself is a finely fluted column with, above the fixing points of the brackets, an elaborate finial. The date? probably late 18th century, though it looks late Victorian, and not to my taste.

More modern posts can look quite attractive, such as the one in Flitcham, Norfolk, where the arms are attached to the village sign. It is dated A.D.1912. Tom Long's Post on Minchinhampton common, which replaces an earlier one, is supposed to mark the burial place of a highwayman who committed suicide in order to avoid capture.

Sign-posts can entertain the traveller who avoids the motor-ways. How else, as we pass swiftly by, would we know of the existence of BOTANY BAY (in Monmouthshire), TIPTOE, WIDE OPEN, WIG WIG, YELLING, COLD CHRISTMAS, COME TO GOOD (in Cornwall), HELIOUS BUMSTEAD and STEEPLE BUMSTEAD, the CLAYDONS in all their variety, the many strange ENDS and BOTTOMS, and many more. Even the LAND OF NOD in Yorkshire, which I am assured, though unsignposted, can also be found in Ruislip.

Good night!

EXCAVATIONS OF AN EARTHWORK AT MANOR FARM, RUISLIP

by ROBERT BEDFORD and COLIN BOWLT
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The Manor Farm at Ruislip is a moated site near the parish church now occupied by a brick and timber building parts of which are thought to date from the early 16th century. A mound in the southern part of the moated enclosure and flint foundations which are said to have been turned up from time to time point to yet earlier occupation and therefore there are many reasons for thinking that this has been the site of the administrative centre of the Manor of Ruislip from at least the time of the Domesday Survey when it is recorded as previously held by Wulward Wight a Saxon Thane.

On the north the ground drops rapidly to the flood plain of the River Pinn, a small stream. At the bottom of the slope 30 metres from the moated site a large ditch 12 metres wide and 2 metres deep with an embankment on its northern side runs east-west for 190 metres. At its eastern end it is now terminated by houses and gardens but the 1866 OS 25 inch map shows it to have continued for a further 200 metres. Any water in the ditch runs from east to west and the western end has a considerable amount of water present throughout most seasons. The 1966 map shows a pond at its junction with Bury Street but this is now built upon. Nothing is known about the structure but it has frequently been assumed to be part of a mill leat though the last record of a water mill at Ruislip is in an Extent of the Manor in 1324. It has not escaped notice that the line of the earthwork continues halfway round the village in the form of field boundaries.

Its length has been considerably reduced during the last hundred years and several metres in the middle were obliterated in 1967 to make an access road. In 1976 the Borough of Hillingdon kindly gave permission for the Ruislip Northwood and Eastcote Local History Society to dig an exploratory trench across the earthwork under our direction to try to establish the age of the ditch and embankment and their functions.

EXCAVATION ... Initially a trench was dug across the ditch and into the raised embankment. The spoil was searched and sieved and this produced a few sherds of early Tudor ware, coarse grey Roman ware and a few fragments of Roman white ware and a number of worked flints. A skeleton of a piglet was discovered in the waterlogged clay at the bottom of the ditch and also one piece of saturated wood (possibly the end of a stake). At the time of the "dig", April 1976, the water table was close to the surface of the bottom of the ditch and work at that point was greatly hampered by flooding. Digging was continued until a stony layer was struck which was considered to be undisturbed stratum. The wet conditions prevented the strata here being determined with certainty.

Layer by layer excavating was extended westward along the top of the embankment. Four different strata were clearly visible, the top layer of brownish clay containing white pottery and a few animal teeth. The third layer down contained coarse grey ware and worked flints occurred throughout this layer and extended down for about 25 cm into the lowest strata of brown streaked yellow clay. Three small 1 cm diameter pieces of indistinguishable rusted iron were also recovered. Bits of fired daub were found sporadically throughout the third layer but a distinct band 27 cm in thickness occurred at a depth of 106 cm from the top of the bank.

Four distinct strata were also apparent on the south side of the ditch which would seem to relate to those in the embankment. Stratified digging here revealed several worked flints in layers 2 and 3 but no pottery.

RESULTS

FLINTS ... Thirty-three pieces of worked flint were recovered. Flints do not occur naturally near the surface in the Ruislip area but do outcrop in the chalk escarpment at Harefield three miles away. A number of pieces were obviously tools but many others appeared to be only waste flakes. The discovery of a core as well was taken to indicate tool manufacture on the site. Since the flints occurred in the same layers as the Roman grey ware it seems clear that they were accidentally incorporated into the embankment long after being discarded. However, their sharp edges and fresh looking condition indicates their infrequent disturbance.

The assemblage of worked flints resemble mesolithic/neolithic types. At least some of the flints show similarities to material excavated $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles due north of Ruislip at Bathend Clump on Moor Park Golf Course during 1958 to 1961 (1).

POTTERY ... The finds were all small fragments. Three distinct types occurred.

1. Grey ware: Unglazed coarse ware of medium to dark grey colour but with some pieces having reddish parts. This has been typed as Roman by both Mr. H. Sheldon and Mr. C. Orton. The rim of a mortarium has been seen by Mrs. R.F. Hartley, who considered it to have been made in the Verulamium region c A.D.90-130. She also noticed that it had been burned.
2. White ware: Unglazed coarse ware of whitish colour throughout. This has been identified by the Department of Urban Archaeology as coming from Roman potteries at Brockley Hill, Stanmore.
3. Unglazed red ware: On the limited amount of material available this is thought to date from the early Tudor period.

DAUB ... The pieces of daub are fired red throughout resembling brick, but are distinguished by all having irregular shapes and some pieces bearing the imprint of wattles. One or two pieces are blackened by what appears to be smoke. Such firing is unlikely to have been produced during the burning down of a wattle and daub structure and is more likely to have formed part of a fireplace.

CONCLUSIONS ... Apart from a few surface finds which are always open to suspicion the worked flints recovered during this excavation are the first indication that Ruislip was inhabited during the mesolithic/neolithic period. Although they were incorporated into a later structure they are unlikely to have been moved far from their place of origin.

In the LAMAS Transactions for 1933 Mr. H. Braun stated that the remains of an apparently Romano-British building had been exposed by building operations at Manor Farm and that fragments of pottery of the period had also been recovered. No details were published and the whereabouts of the finds are unknown. The Roman pottery excavated from the embankment provides the first corroborative evidence of Roman occupation of Ruislip.

The evidence so far is insufficient to suggest a date for the earthwork but the presence of flints and Roman sherds together in the embankment establishes that part of the structure at least is post 1st century A.D. The absence of medieval finds from the ditch was somewhat surprising but might indicate clearance at some later period.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ... Our thanks are due to those staff of the Museum of London and of the Department of Urban Archaeology who gave of their expertise and also to the Parks Division of the Borough of Hillingdon who provided facilities and materials for our use, and to the numerous members of the Society who gave so generously of their time and energy. We hope the foregoing conclusions indicate that this was well spent.

- (1) D.M. Collins and D.W. Phillipson. Reports in the Journal of the Ruislip and District Nat. Hist. Socy. 1959 1961-2.

THE ROMAN GLASS MYSTERY
AN ARCHEOLOGICAL DIG AT 6 SHARP'S LANE, RUISLIP
by R. BEDFORD and COLIN BOWLT
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At the Bury Street end of Sharp's Lane is a group of slate roofed, yellow brick cottages (Nos. 6-12) which high up on their front proudly announce that they were built in 1886. They were in fact built in the garden of the Old House, the long 16th Century dwelling opposite the Village pond. The 1866 25" Ordnance Survey map shows the area as orchard with paths running round it and a pond where the cottages now stand. A feature of the site is an old red brick wall now forming the boundary at the bottom of the garden of the cottages, but which the 1866 map indicates as a dividing wall between the two residences in the Old House.

During the Autumn of 1976 Mr. & Mrs. R. Publicover found in the garden of 6 Sharp's Lane a piece of deep, sky blue glass, covered with a thick layer of irridescent patina. This layer which builds up on glass with time is characteristic of great age. The glass was subsequently identified by the Museum of London as a piece from what must have been a rather fine Roman ribbed bowl of probable Mediterranean manufacture. Since Romano British occupation in Ruislip had been confirmed during the excavation of the Manor Farm "leat" in the Spring of 1976, Mr. & Mrs. Publicover kindly consented to a "dig" in their back garden on the 5th and 12th February 1977.

The garden contained very dark occupation soil with much waste matter. An area 4.75m x 1.0m at a distance of 5.7m away from the old wall was excavated to a depth of 30 cm. A quantity (approx. 2 bucketfuls) of broken glass and pottery was unearthed. As expected, much of this ante-dated the building of the cottages. Interesting finds included a complete cheap glass ink well, several china dolls' ears and part of a body with the words "Germany 1894", a fragment of a mug showing Edwardian New Brighton, piece of an advertisement plate and several types of blue and white pottery and an 1806 George III halfpenny. A quarter of a bucketful of bones (no skulls) was also recovered. Most of these appeared to derive from the butchers but there were two small jaw bones, probably from cats. Shells of one mussel, one oyster and a few winkles also turned up.

Although all the foregoing finds were of recent origin two pieces of coarse grey pottery (probably Romano British) were also found and encouraged the belief that the dark top layer had accumulated during the last hundred years or so and overlay a Romano British occupation strata. At this stage a hole was dug in the North-West corner of the excavation to determine the full thickness of the dark.

top layer. It was found to be 82 cm thick but somewhat to our surprise some of the pieces of pottery at the bottom of the hole were younger than those less deep. The puzzle was resolved when the height of the old wall was measured on both its sides and it was found that the ground level in the garden of 6 Sharp's Lane is some 75 cm higher than the original orchard surface on the other side of the wall.

It now seems clear that prior to building the cottages, the pond was filled in and the whole site bounded by the old wall, was covered to a depth of about 80 cm with what appears to have been largely domestic refuse. Because of this the origin of all the finds in this site is dubious, particularly the Roman objects. However, since it seems unlikely that a hundred years ago, with horse drawn transport, material to level a building site would have been brought a great distance, all the finds, both ancient and modern, probably relate to the Ruislip area.

Our thanks are due to the members of the Society who dug so enthusiastically and even though our efforts were somewhat abortive we did at least gain experience and knowledge of what our Victorian forebears discarded.