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Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society

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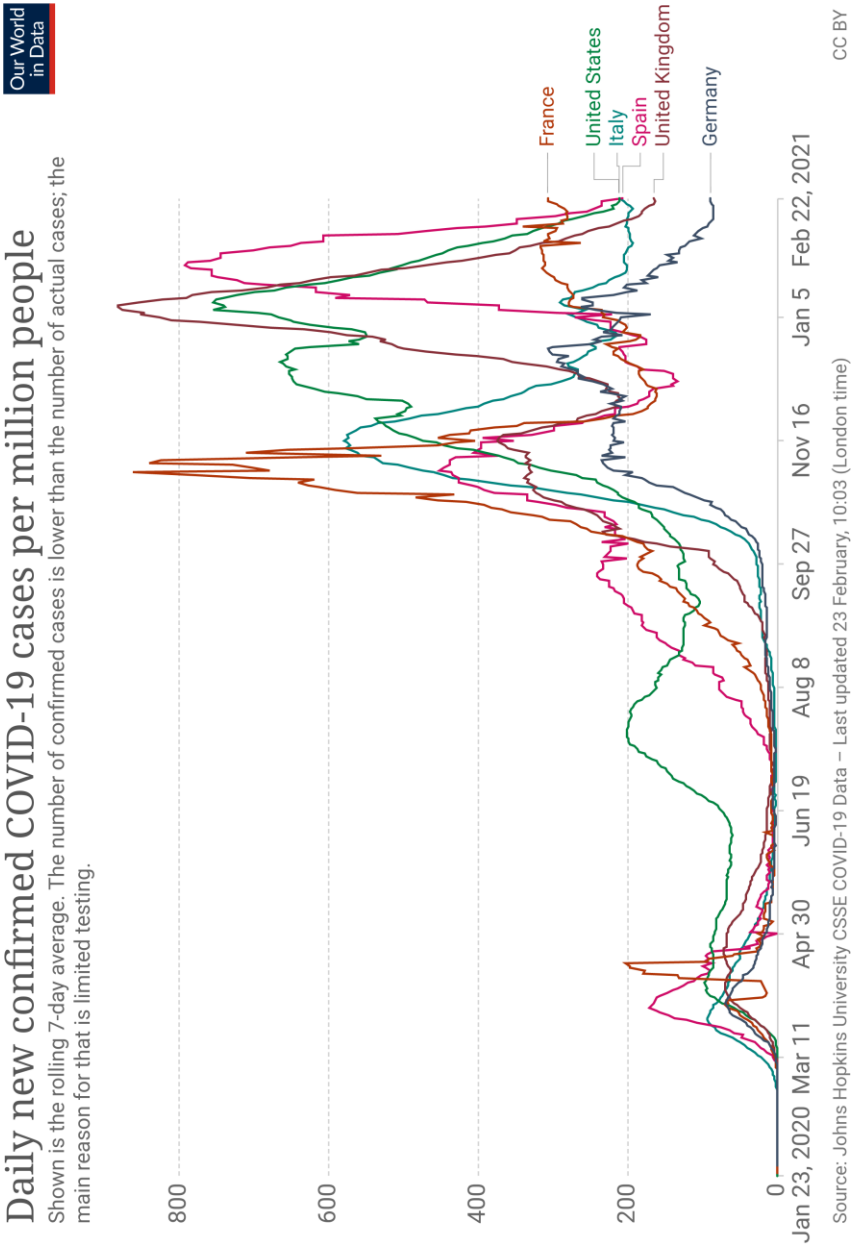
Our World in Data
Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases per million people
Shown is the rolling 7-day average. The number of confirmed cases is lower than the number of actual cases; the main reason for that is limited testing.
800
600
400
200
0
Jan 23, 2020
Mar 11
Apr 30
Jun 19
Aug 8
Sep 27
Nov 16
Jan 5
Feb 22, 2021
France
United States
Italy
Spain
United Kingdom
Germany
Source: Johns Hopkins University CSSE COVID-19 Data – Last updated 23 February, 10:03 (London time)
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CNHSS Announcements

Colour Edition
This is our first edition of the Bulletin to have colour throughout. We hope that you enjoy it.

Book offer
The offer in Programme 448 of four free books with free postage to paid-up members as at the end of 2020 is extended to 30th April 2021.

Job Vacancy
There is a CNHSS vacancy for 'Programme Events Co-ordinator'. This role, working within the Programme Team, identifies and invites speakers to CNHSS meetings – about nineteen a year – notifies the Programme Editor and arranges speaker fees. Anyone interested should contact the General Secretary at information@cnhss.co.uk or phone 020 8406 4676.

Editorial
by Ian Payne

Covid-19 has continued to blight our programme and cause devastation throughout the country and worldwide. Our thoughts are with all those who have been affected. Our 150th Anniversary celebrations scheduled for 2020 had to be cancelled, however we hope to resume the programme when it becomes possible. Our walks, talks and events programme has also been abandoned but we are about to hold some talks via Zoom. CNHSS Council has been having the occasional Zoom meeting over the last year and, of course, communicating by email.

This year's AGM will again be held electronically and by post. Please see the Directors' Report and voting procedures in Bulletin 170.

I've just seen a 2011 film called Contagion. It built on the MERS epidemic, but was much worse. However, it seemed to fit our current pandemic in many ways. It started in Hong Kong, spread rapidly to America and the UK and the familiar ideas of isolation, wearing masks, test and trace and searching for a vaccine were all present. Of course, being a disaster movie, we first met all our heroes and a profiteering villain and we followed their successes and failures to the end. The film's pandemic had people foaming at the mouth and dying in much greater numbers than ours. But as with Covid-19, we hope, a vaccine came to the rescue.

Those who are afficionados of Star Trek will recall that there were several episodes where the crew were infected with a virus of one sort or another. Bones was rushing to find an antidote and as soon as he found one either Spock or Bones would immediately inject themselves because of the urgency. Sometimes the dose turned out to be more than needed and it was touch and go but it always worked and everyone was saved (except for the baddies). The wonderful thing about Bones's cures is that they also reversed all the degeneration. In one episode Kirk, Spock, Bones and the rest were ageing rapidly and were all extremely old and near the point of death. The antidote not only stopped the aging but reversed it, and we saw their faces return to their prior age and health within a few minutes.

Oh that we could be so lucky with an instant cure. But the likelihood is that Covid-19 (or whatever we will learn to call it) will be with us for ever with new varieties arising each year for which the vaccine will have to be adapted. Each year, as well as our annual flu vaccine, we will also need an annual Covid vaccine. It may be, however, that we've learned how to avoid infecting others. Social distancing, weirdly avoiding others in the streets and shops, elbow touching and mask wearing could be lasting legacies.

Infections, epidemics and a pandemic at Cane Hill Asylum by Pam Buttrey

Cane Hill, called an asylum until 1919, and then a hospital, was, like other institutions, vulnerable to serious infections, most of which are now rare or unknown in modern Britain. Mainly caused by bacteria also known as bacilli, they were not easily treated, apart from skilled nursing care, until the use of antibiotics began in World War Two, although vaccinations were available earlier to protect against some infections.

The front building, through which all patients were admitted, probably just before World War One

When the asylum was built, good ventilation was seen as essential. Its first patients, originally from parishes in East Surrey but transferred from other asylums, arrived in December 1883, but it was soon overcrowded needing additional beds in wards, its nurses and attendants having little formal training. Those seen as needing admission were referred by a medical officer employed by the Poor Law Union, who obtained signed approval from a local magistrate who saw the person and either agreed to admission, or refused the application. Because of incubation, a new admission could have an unknown infection.

In the early decades, when there was smallpox in the asylum in 1885 and scarlet fever in 1887, or contagious infections in the community, visitors

were refused permission to visit. Despite precautions, in 1887 with scarlet fever on the male side, 13 women were immediately transferred from the cottage hospital to sleep in dressing rooms attached to ward bathrooms, so that infected male patients could be looked after in isolation. In 1904, Southwark Infirmary wrote that a female patient's child had measles and was on the danger list. Her child had died by the time she visited, but she saw the body, and went into isolation on returning to Cane Hill.

The male and female sides each had an infirmary, as well as the cottage hospital. There were always patients with pulmonary TB. In 1885, 19 out of 123 deaths at Cane Hill, or 15.5%, resulted from 'pulmonary consumption'.

In August 1888, a case of diphtheria, a bacterium spread by an infected person coughing or sneezing or by contact with contaminated objects, first identified as bacterial in 1883, was found in one of its Pumping House Cottages. The medical staff appear not to have known that it was bacterial. The engineer thought it was caused by the earth closet being only 2 foot and 10 inches from the sitting room door, so the smell entered the sitting room. The earth closet was to be cleaned and disinfected daily and, in September, the hospital committee decided it was not caused by being close to the scullery.

Information is found about infections in committee minutes: enteric fever, encompassing typhoid and paratyphoid, was often mentioned from 1890 onwards. Often called enteric fever in the minutes, it was probably typhoid. In 1890, 5 female patients had typhoid, of which 2 died, found to be caused by 'locally contaminated water'.

Cane Hill was taken over by London County Council in 1889. Now, patients came from all over urban London, many from overcrowded areas with bad sanitation and most in poor physical health. Building work to enlarge the asylum was completed in 1892, to hold 2,000 patients (860 males and 1,140 females), but it was soon overcrowded again, with ongoing staff shortages. Despite this, there was no mention of epidemics in the 1890s.

From 1900, regular influenza epidemics were recorded: that year about 40 staff were ill. In October 1904, 33 patients had influenza, the annual report showing 13.7% of patients' deaths from pulmonary TB, and 4.1% from dysentery which gradually increased in the asylum over several years, reaching a peak in 1904 when 29 had it. It gradually reduced in following years until only 2 in 1912 but, that year, 4 had scabies, caused by a mite and easily spread through contact or contaminated objects.

In 1914, soon after war was declared, thirteen attendants enlisted,

expecting to be back soon.

More enlisted, so retired male attendants returned as temporary staff, and female nurses were allowed to remain after marriage. With compulsory conscription from 1916, being an attendant was no reason for exemption. It was necessary to employ temporary men and women with no previous experience. Some asylums became military hospitals, so 121 male and 148 female patients came from Horton Asylum in 1915 and, in 1916, 46 men from an epileptic colony and 72 women from the Manor Asylum, a total of 387. In 1917, there were 2,408 patients in Cane Hill, which was supposed to have only 2,000 beds.

Under wartime conditions, with rising food prices and rationing, new patients, mainly female, arrived in a poor physical state to be looked after by overworked staff, many temporary and untrained. Staff complained frequently about their meals. Both staff and patients had a limited variety of food, although better fed than at some other of London's asylums. At Bexley Asylum, patients were found to have died of starvation.

In 1915, two patients died of dysentery, but the main infection was typhoid, both caused by bacilli. With no typhoid since 1900, there were 90 cases in 1915 on the male side, including one attendant, of which 5 died. The following year, 17 male patients were infected, with one death. In 1917, 11 male, 13 female and 1 nurse had typhoid. Two died, but it was worse in 1918. Cane Hill had the worst outbreak of any asylum in England and Wales: 22 male and 57 female patients and 6 staff. Two male and 9 female patients died.

Typhoid usually develops insidiously, with an incubation period of ten to fifteen days, a gradually increasing fever, generally with abdominal pain and diarrhoea. From the eighth day onwards, rose coloured spots may appear, usually on the stomach area, flanks and back, frequently with delirium at night, and the infected person muttering. Sometimes ulcers form in the small intestine in the third week resulting in haemorrhages and perforation.

No effective treatment was available until antibiotics in the 1940s although, in 1935, all patients at Cane Hill were vaccinated against getting enteric fever including typhoid. There are some technical differences between inoculation and vaccination. As the two terms are often used synonymously, in this article only the term 'vaccination' is used.

Treating a patient with typhoid required constant skilled nursing, the patient being helpless, not even able to turn in bed, and needing bed baths once or

twice a day and careful disposal of excreta. Plenty of liquids were essential, the main diet being milk, and liberally salted beef tea if there was no diarrhoea. As the morning temperature reduced, boiled bread and milk, or thin porridge was given, then steamed fish and, later, chicken, both not always available in wartime. The infection was mainly spread by dust, dried stools on bed sheets, flies, soiled bed linen, blankets and clothes, and excreta from typhoid carriers.[1]

Dr Littlejohn, acting medical superintendent from 1915-8, could not find the cause, but was concerned that the asylum's sewerage was spread on its fields. All patients working on the land had to wash and disinfect in Lysol on re-entering the building, as well as staff in ward kitchens and patients handling food, but he could not understand why it was limited to a particular group of patients, namely 'nearly all those [who] will not or cannot work' who had 'sunk to a state of helplessness'. He stressed personal and general cleanliness on the wards, including food handling and soiled bed linen. In 1918, the outbreak was thought to have passed to the female side through imperfectly disinfected clothing sent to the needle-room for repair.

Many staff had Spanish influenza in 1918-9, but Cane Hill was less affected than other asylums. Two young female nurses died in 1918, probably of influenza, and were buried in its cemetery. A number of staff would develop TB, thought possibly to result from poor health following influenza, and working with many patients who had TB. There were 29 notifications of unknown infections in 1919, and 4 died.

Typhoid outbreaks continued. In late 1920, cases on a male ward were thought to be caused by sanitary conditions. Existing water closets, with a valve that flushed when the patient rose from the seat, were replaced by flushing cisterns while the one waste pipe common to all the lavatories on a ward was replaced by a separate one from each lavatory which discharged over an open channel. Waste bath water was to be discharged into open channels at the outer wall of the bathroom. Ventilation was improved by replacing small windows in washrooms and toilet areas of wards by large sash windows. Conditions seem to have improved, and skilled attendants returned from war but, in 1922, 10 female patients developed typhoid. Two died, and four 'carriers' were identified, isolated and kept under permanent observation.

When the Commissioners visited in 1926, one male patient had dysentery, one female enteric fever, probably typhoid, and 27 patients had TB. They were mainly treated in the cottage hospital or the male and female infirmaries. Two male and one female sick patients were treated on verandas built onto ground floor wards, the Commissioners approving, 'provided sufficient clothing [is] supplied, verandas should be in continual

use day and night to the great benefit of patients', an increasingly popular method of treatment between the two world wars.

Called Cane Hill Hospital from 1919, it remained overcrowded, particularly on the female side. In 1929, 29 patients had active TB, one had dysentery on admission, and 18 were known enteric fever carriers. Two probationary nurses became infected while working on a 'typhoid ward'.

Former male wards, with verandas

In 1935, with all patients vaccinated against enteric fever, Cane Hill was free of typhoid for years, while 18 with TB were treated on open verandas. All patients were vaccinated against TB on admission, and the medical superintendent, Dr Lilly kept it free from epidemics by giving all patients a 'polyvalent vaccine' on any ward where there was diarrhoea on consecutive days.

In late 1939, after war was declared, an Emergency Hospital with 268 beds was set up in four male wards in the main building, which meant 6,000 to 8,000 extra items weekly for the laundry. Many heaps of soiled clothing awaited sorting, on which flies settled. 344 patients were transferred from Horton Hospital. There were now 2,405 patients: at night an excess of 126 male and 323 female patients. 40 patients came from Gibraltar. All continued to be vaccinated against TB on admission.

Infection had remained low until October 1940, when 204 female patients had dysentery and in November 69 male patients: 2 male and 6 female patients died. In August 1941, when the Commissioners visited, 2 male and 10 female patients had enteric fever. One died, and 13 male and 7 females died of TB. In 1942, the number of patients reduced to 2,316, with vacancies for 95 male patients and 77 female patients. That year, 27 patients died of TB. 27 were being treated, while 32 men and 59 females had dysentery, 4 having died. It was found throughout the hospital, with 17 out of 20 wards affected, and 9 out of 11 villas, but had reduced with treatment including sulphaguanidine.

As war continued, and despite shortages of medical staff and qualified nurses, infections reduced, with no typhoid. Although 36 died of TB in 1942 which was higher than average, the mortality rate was 6.3% compared with 8% for all mental hospitals. In September the Commissioners were informed that running water would not be installed in wash basins on dormitories where infections were treated until after the war.

The following year, with a good varied diet, there was no dysentery or typhoid but a large number of dysentery carriers were scattered through the hospital, including a few of the 60 men working in the laundry. Now, 54 patients and 3 staff had TB, including 22 men among those transferred from Banstead Hospital. In early 1944, female dysentery carriers stopped working in the laundry. That summer, 158 patients came from St Bernard's Hospital in Southall but, in October 1945, the numbers of patients had fallen to 2,248, cared for by 127 male and 252 female nursing staff.

Two men had enteric fever in 1944, of which one died, and just 2 women had dysentery in 1945, but 21 patients died from TB, with 30 male and 16 female patients treated for TB, over half of the men having come from Banstead Hospital. There were up to 50 suspected cases, while 4 nurses were treated. Dr Campbell, the local TB Officer, visited monthly. In 1945, the Emergency Hospital closed, releasing wards. Two women had typhoid, and there were plans to treat several paratyphoid carriers. Later that year, there was one case of dysentery, one of paratyphoid and one patient contracted poliomyelitis. 44 patients had TB, of which 22 died.

In 1947, the Commissioners noted that, as elsewhere, there was a serious shortage of female nurses, who worked in poor conditions which could not be improved at that time, together with overcrowding, a lack of hot water in basins and a shortage of lavatories. Nine female typhoid carriers were segregated at the end of a ward, together with seven who had dysentery in the past, although sulphur drugs had greatly reduced the spread of dysentery in recent years. With post-war restrictions into the early 1950s,

there were difficulties getting bed linen and female underwear, and continuing food shortages.

When the National Health Service took over in 1948, Cane Hill Hospital admitted patients from south and southeast London down to Camberwell and Beckenham.

The female side remained overcrowded: 7 had dysentery, one having died, and 6 contracted typhoid, with one death, none being on the wards where 14 typhoid carriers lived, kept apart from others as much as possible. Over 40 patients had TB, most looked after on verandas, and some men in the cottage hospital. Renovations began from 1949; there was damp in the walls due to leaking roofs and gutters, and they awaited permission from the Treasury in Whitehall to replace the boiler.

Nurses on a female ward, date unknown (colourised)

In 1952, the Commissioners described Cane Hill as 'an old Hospital, and it suffers from years of past neglect'. Needed repairs during World War One could not be done, and the UK's economy in the 1920s and 1930s prevented large repairs, followed by World War Two. With new psychiatric treatments, medications and rehabilitation projects, the number of beds reduced to 1,686 in 1960. The introduction of antibiotics during World War Two, continuing use of vaccines, public health campaigns and better housing in London led to dramatic reductions in these contagious infections. It is not known when they were eliminated at Cane Hill, but there is no mention in its committee minutes after 1951.

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Taken from Pam Buttrey, *Cane Hill Hospital: The Tower on the Hill*, 2010

[1] Claude B Ker, Claude Rendle (rev.) *Ker's Manual of Fevers*, (Oxford, 1911, 1927 ed.), pp177-235

Then and Now: comparing past and present
by Carole Roberts

At the junction of South End, Lower Coombe Street,
High Street and Coombe Road Croydon

Then

© The John Gent Collection jg-pc-cc-754

This view in the John Gent Postcard Collection around 1908 looks north at the junction of South End and High Street, where joined by Lower Coombe Street on the left and Coombe Road on the right. The tracks and overhead equipment of the Croydon Corporation electric tram from Norbury to Purley which had opened in 1901 can be seen. In the left foreground at the junction of South End and Lower Coombe Street is the New Inn which opened about 1843, its interior featuring carved mahogany woodwork and gilded glass. The buildings beyond on the left are the King's Parade of shops built in 1904. The distant tall building with a row of chimneypots had formerly been the chemist and dentist shop of Henry Long, who in 1870 placed a newspaper advertisement that led to the foundation of our society.

On the right side of the road the dome marks the Grand Theatre built in 1896. Beside it and out of sight is Nalder & Collyer's Brewery. The tall chimney further down the street is of another brewery, A., C.S. & H. Crowley, which had opened by 1818. On the right at the corner of Coombe Road are Georgian buildings, which were originally residences of well-to-do occupants such as doctors and were now commercial premises.

At the junction of South End, Lower Coombe Street,
High Street and Coombe Road Croydon

Now

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In this modern view the roads have been widened and altered by road markings, bollards and traffic lights. On the left the New Inn was by 1934 replaced by Carr's Motor Garage, and more recently was the location of former Direct Line Insurance offices which have now been converted into the Central Cross residential apartments. King's Parade out of sight behind has survived the High Street's road widening schemes through being set back from the road.

In 1959 the Grand Theatre was replaced by the Grosvenor House office block, out of sight in this image. Nalder & Collyer's Brewery closed in 1936 and the 22-storey Leon House office block was built on its site in the 1960s. During its recent conversion to apartments a concrete mural by sculptor and artist William Mitchell was rediscovered. In World War Two the upper floor of the low white 1930s building on the site of A., C.S. & H Crowley's Brewery served as a British Restaurant, offering affordable meals to conserve the fuel that would have been used in home cooking. It later housed Collins, The Glass House for ironmongery and china, and is now mostly occupied by restaurants. On the right the Georgian houses were by 1934 replaced by the Thanet House flats which extend round into Coombe Road.

50 Years of Decimalisation
by Ian Payne

For those of you too young to remember, decimalisation of our currency took place on 15th February 1971. Prior to that there were 12 pence (12d) in 1 shilling (1/-) and 20 shillings in 1 pound (£1). We called our money '£sd' (pronounced 'l-s-d') short for pounds, shillings and pence or simply 'sterling'. We'll see later why 'd' stands for 'penny' or 'pence' or 'pennies'. This article is based on my presidential address to CNHSS on 24th April 2014.

I started work in the Actuarial department of an insurance company in 1963 for one year and then had a three-year break at university, but I had a readymade holiday job. The accountant may have had £sd accounting machines, but in Actuarial we had manual Walthers or, for the managers, electric 'Monroes'. We did all our calculations (premiums, surrenders, valuations) on decimal calculating machines – so how did we do it?

Decimal calculating machines

← Manual Walther calculator

Electric Monroe calculator→

Answer: we converted in our heads.
1/– = £0.05 (5p in today's money)
2/– = £0.1 etc – just divide the shillings by 20
(because 20 shillings = one pound).
There were only eleven possible values for the pence (1, 2, . . . 11) and in pounds these were:

1d = £0.004167	5d = £0.020833	9d = £0.0375
2d = £0.008333	6d = £0.025	10d= £0.041667
3d = £0.0125	7d = £0.029167	11d= £0.045833
4d = £0.016667	8d = £0.033333	12d= £0.05 (1/-)

So all one had to do was to learn by heart eleven values, then
£51 7s 4d = 51 + 0.35 + 0.016667 = which is £51.36667 which can be done in one's head and entered directly into the calculator. When the premium is calculated, the reverse mental process turns it back into £sd which is then written down.

But the general public just knew 12d = 1/-, so 18d = 1/6 (one and sixpence or one and six) and 20/- = £1, so 35/6 = £1 15s 6d (one pound fifteen and six).

All reverses: ONE PENNY and various images of Britannia

1885: **Victoria** D:G: Britt: Reg: F:D:	Bun Head	Left
Victoria silver coinage 1887	Jubilee Head (50th)	
1901: **Victoria** Dei Gra Britt Regina Fid Def Ind Imp	Old Head + 'Ind Imp'	
1902: **Edwardus VII** Dei Gra: Britt: Omn: Rex Fid:Def:Ind:Imp:	+'Omn'	Right
1927: **Georgius V** Dei Gra: Britt: Omn: Rex Fid:Def:Ind:Imp:		Left
1936: **Georgius V** Dei Gra: Britt: Omn: Rex Fid:Def:Ind:Imp:	Modified effigy (**Edward VIII** Right)	
1940: **Georgius VI** D:G: Br: Omn: Rex F:D:Ind:Imp.		Left
1949: **Georgius VI** D:G: Br: Omn: Rex Fidei:Def.	– 'Ind Imp'	
1953: **Elizabeth II** Dei Gra: Britt: Omn: Regina F:D:	Young Head	Right
1965: **Elizabeth II** Dei Gratia Regina F:D:	– 'Britt Omn'	

Dei Gratia
By the grace of God
Britanniarum Omnium
of all the Britains (Britain and British territories overseas)
Rex / Regina
King / Queen
Fidei Defensor
Defender or the Faith
India Imperator
Emperor of India

This talk is based on my own collection of coins which includes a lot of decimalisation era paraphernalia including the only time when I resorted to theft – but more of that later. But we'll also look at the history of English coinage.

I started collecting coins at the age of ten. The history in the coins fascinated me – pennies in everyday circulation could have the head of Victoria, Edward VII, George V, George VI or Elizabeth II and each sovereign had different heads (obverses) during their reign showing how they aged and were depicted on the coinage.

At first, I only collected pennies – it's all my pocket money would allow. But after a few years I gradually moved to collecting one of each coin every year and, of course, filling in back dates whenever possible. People who knew I was collecting often looked out for something special. My superb condition 1885 penny came from the milkman.

Pre-decimalisation pennies of this size had been in circulation since 1860 which is when the then current size, metal (bronze) and weight was established – and stayed unchanged until decimalisation. The oldest pennies were worn very thin but were still plentiful.

To see where our coins and symbols came from we need to go back to Roman times.

Roman follis: Constantine the Great (Constantine I)

[diameter 18mm/0.71"]

Æ Follis, struck 314-315 AD: Æ = bronze: Follis = denomination
Obverse: IMP CONSTANTINVS PF AVG: Laureate, draped & cuirassed bust right
Imperator Constantinus Pius Felix Augustus
[Emperor Constantine: Pious, Happy and August (majestic, emperor)]
Reverse: SOLI INVICTO COMITI, R (Roman Mint) above X, F right, RT in exergue
Soli Invicto Comiti: Sol standing left with orb and raising right hand
[To Sol (the Sun), my (the Emperor's) invincible (unconquered) companion]

The old symbols of '£', 's' and 'd' stood for libra, solidus and denarius. Libra is Latin for pound weight (of silver) – hence the pound weight abbreviation lb. Solidus and denarius are two Roman coin denominations which became our shilling and penny with symbols 's' and 'd'.

The silver denarii (240 to the pound) continued to circulate in England after the Romans left and were copied by the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms. The name penny is derived from the Anglo-Saxon penig and has a root similar to the German pfennig (one hundredth of the old German mark). It quickly spread throughout the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms as a small hammered silver coin.

I don't possess a Roman penny, but I do have a Roman follis (above). We had acquired an old wooden-frame piano for our sons to learn on. I had to repair several of the hammers, felts and springs, and when I removed the movement, there was the Roman coin.

In September 2013, CNHSS had an outing to Canterbury where the museum displayed an Anglo-Saxon Silver Penny/Denarius of King Egberht of about A.D. 830 found in Canterbury, one of the few places to mint the new coin. Canterbury pennies bore the names of Egberht or Heaberht, kings of Kent under the lordship of King Offa of Mercia. Canterbury became the country's most important mint, supplying incoming foreign traders with English money in exchange for their coins which were not legal. After the 970s it became common to cut whole pennies into halves and quarters.

King Offa of Mercia adopted the Frankish silver standard of *libra, solidi* and *denarii*; although the silver penny was the only coin minted. The solidus/*scilling*, understood to be the value of a cow in Kent or a sheep elsewhere, was a unit account equal to 12 denarii. This continued through medieval times, the first shilling being minted in 1550 equal to 12 pennies.

Elizabeth I: Silver Sixpence 1578

[diameter 25mm/0.98"]

The inscription reads:
ELIZABETH D G ANG FR ET HI REGINA
ELIZABETH DEI GRATIA ANGLIAE, FRANCIAE ET HIBERNIAE REGINA
Elizabeth by the Grace of God of England, France and Ireland Queen
POSVI DEV ADIVTOREM MEV
POSUI DEUM ADJUTOREM MEUM
I have made God my helper

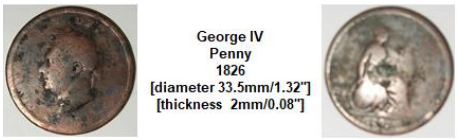
Apart from my Roman coin, the only other hammered coin in my collection is this Elizabeth I silver sixpence of 1578.

Hammered coinage gave way to milled coinage (machine made) during the Commonwealth. The new coins bearing the image of Oliver Cromwell look remarkably regal.

First copper penny and twopence

The first copper penny and twopence were issued in 1797. It was known as the 'cartwheel' penny due to its thickness. The time was not yet right for a token coinage, so they actually had to contain one or two pence worth of copper, i.e. they weighed one and two ounces each. The two pence coin had a diameter of 41mm/1.5" and a thickness of 5mm/0.2".

Copper Penny 1806



By 1806, the copper penny, halfpenny and farthing had been standardised and would remain the same size and weight until 1860 – slightly bigger and thicker than the bronze (an alloy of copper and tin) issues of 1860 which were, after then, to remain unchanged until decimalisation. *[Example: George IV Penny 1826]*.

Silver coinage 1820 – Maundy Money

Maundy Money: on Maundy Thursday, the day before Good Friday the Queen distributes Maundy money as symbolic alms to elderly recipients

Before 1971, 1d, 2d, 3d, 4d silver coins, now deemed to be 1p, 2p, 3p, 4p
The 3p is the same size and reverse design
as the circulation silver 3d of George V and earlier.

The silver coinage was standardised at its 1970 pre-decimal size and weight in 1820, so in theory these could have been in circulation when I first started collecting.

However, the silver content was reduced from 0.925 (sterling silver) to 0.500 fine in 1920 hence the earlier coins were few in circulation.

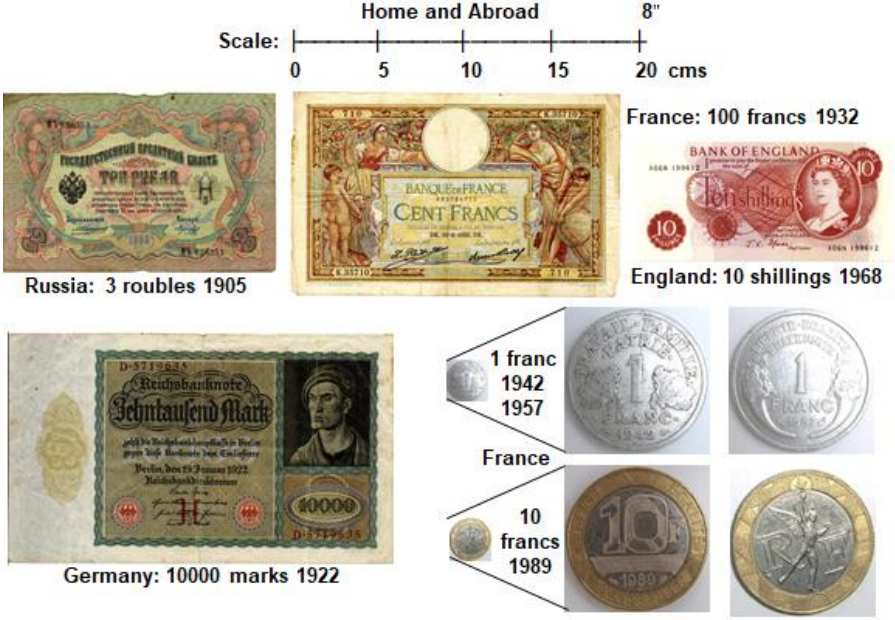
From 1947 onwards all the "silver" coins were made in cupro-nickel (75% copper, 25% nickel), an alloy of copper and nickel.

The maundy coins (illustration above), distributed as alms on Maundy Thursday, had been debased to 0.500 fine from 1921 along with other silver coins, but were subsequently increased back to sterling silver, and are still struck in silver even today. Today's maundy 3p coin has the same size and reverse design as the George V silver three pence (3d) coin but the coins have been redesignated as 1p, 2p, 3p and 4p.

Obverse: Victoria d: g: britt: reg: f: d: mdccclxxii [1872]
Reverse: One florin – one tenth of a pound
The Florin: Issued in 1849 to test public opinion

The earliest British parliamentary motion in favour of decimalisation had been in 1824, and in 1841 a committee considering weights and measures invited the Government's attention to "the advantage and facility of establishing in this country a decimal system of coinage." This prompted a motion in parliament which resulted in the introduction of a two shilling coin in 1849 to test public opinion. They called it a Florin.

The reverse of this 1872 coin is inscribed 'One florin – one tenth of a pound'. The coin is also interesting in that the date is in Roman numerals and the script is Old English (Gothic). Decimalisation did not follow, but the florin itself became popular and remained alongside the half-crown (2/6) until 1967.



Russia adopted the gold standard in 1897, but they seem to have had a mix of old and new values running side by side for some years. This 1905 three rouble note (given to me as a present in my youth) states:
1 Rouble = $^{1}/_{15}$ Imperial, which includes 17,424 shares of pure gold.

In 1793 the French abandoned the livre, sous and deniers in favour of francs and centîmes. The 1932 100 franc note (see previous page) is in the typical French arty style, but I particlarly like the pre-Euro 10 franc coin with the torch from the Génie de la Liberté (Spirit of Freedom) extending into the 'gold' of this bi-metallic coin. The original surmounts the **Colonne de Juillet (July Column**) in the Place de la Bastille and is clearly reflected in the design of our first £2 coin.

The French 1942 aluminium 1 franc coin is interesting in that it shows the wartime occupation motto 'Travail, Famille, Patrie' which reverted to 'Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité' after the war.

The German 10000 marks note was issued in 1922 in the middle of the Weimar inflationary era just before it went exponential. I have a 1923 200 mark stamp overstamped 2 million and also a 50 million mark stamp.

Decimalisation was in the air. In England there were several international, colonial and imperial conferences and commissions in the later 19th and early 20th centuries all recommending against decimalisation.

In 1853 a Select Committee of the House of Commons recommended in favour of decimalisation on the grounds of:
1. Saving of unnecessary labour in account-keeping, calculation and primary education;
2. Avoidance of error;
3. Greater facility for comparison of prices home and foreign.

The Commission expected strong opposition from the less educated classes and great practical difficulties arising out of legal obligations expressed in terms of pence etc., but these difficulties were not seen as insuperable. Any departure from the pound as a unit of value was regarded as likely to lead to "infinite complications and embarrassment in our commercial dealings".They proposed four denominations: Pound Sterling (1000 Mils), Florin (1/10th – 100 Mils), Cent (1/100th – 10 Mils), Mil (1/1000th). The 6d was to be retained as 25 mils.

However, the Royal Commission in 1857 recommended against decmalisation. In the meantime, after France in 1793, Belgium, Switzerland and Italy decimalised in 1865, Germany in 1873, Holland and Scadinavia in 1875, Austro-Hungary in 1892 and Russia in 1897.

The 1917 Committee on Commercial and Industrial Policy after the War considered the £-mil system and rejected it on the grounds of too great a disturbance "in the lives of the great body of wage earners, retail shopkeepers and their customers". They also rejected a 100 penny (new unit 8/4) system on many grounds including uniformity in the British Empire and the "abandonment of the sovereign as the standard and working unit of international exchange".

Despite the 1917 Committee, two bills were introduced in the House of Lords in 1918 proposing alternative bases for decimalisation. The matter was considered by a Royal Commission on Decimal Coinage, of which the majority Report in 1920 accepted the view that “the abolition of the £ as the unit of value would endanger the position of London as the financial centre of the world”. The £-mil and other systems were also rejected on the grounds of inflation, penny-operated machines and the necessary re-writing of legal contracts.

This more or less scotched debate until 1951 when the Committee on Weights and Measures drew attention to decimalisation. It was outside their terms of reference but they noted that abandonment of the imperial system of weights and measures, if undertaken, should be accompanied or preceded by decimalisation of the coinage.

Pre-Decimalisation Coins

Churchill commemorative Crown = 5/–

Half-crown = 2/6

Florin = 2/–

Shilling = 1/– (English & Scottish)

Sixpence = 6d

Threepence = 3d (12 sided brass)

Penny = 1d

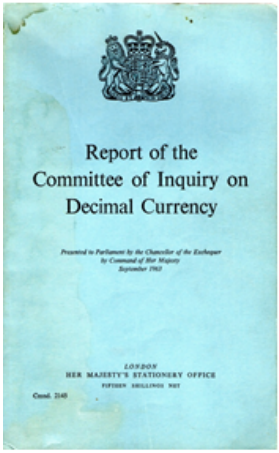
Halfpenny = ½d

This 1965 year set contains the full range of coins in circulation immediately prior to decimalisation

Everyone has a Churchill Crown. I have 32 inherited from my father who thought they would become valuable. But today they are only worth their face value due to the huge numbers that were minted.

Monarch	Year	Minted	Crown (five shillings)	Composition
George VI	1937	418,699	Coronation	0.500 silver
	1951	1,983,540	Festival of Britain	Cu/Ni
Elizabeth II	1953	5,962,621	Coronation	Cu/Ni
	1960	1,024,038	British Exhibition in New York	Cu/Ni
	1965	19,640,000	Death of Sir Winston Churchill	Cu/Ni

The Committee of Inquiry on Decimal Currency was set up in 1961 and duly reported in 1963. The chapter headings indicate the thoroughness of the report.



Chapter headings	number of pages
I Introduction	6
II General Principles	9
III Possible Decimal Systems	11
IV The Halfpenny	7
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XII Changeover Problems	19
XIII Timing and Phasing of Decimalisation	7
XIV The Cost	12
XV Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations	6
Memorandum of Dissent *[10s-cent system]*	11
Appendices 1 to 17	90

Before looking at the results of this report, it's worth noting decimalisation events in other Commonwealth countries:

Cyprus	1955	£-mil
British West Indies	1955	4s. 2d.-cent system (100 old ½d) *[4/2 note already in use]*
South Africa	1961	10s-cent system (with ½ cent) – Rand-cent-½
Australia	1966	10s-cent system (without ½ cent) – Dollar-cent

The chapter headings speak for themselves but it's worth looking at the possible systems considered and the final recommendation.

The Field of Choice: Possible Decimal Systems

( ) = Supporting letters from the public

Mil Systems	*Cent Systems*	*Value of Minor Unit*
—	£1 5s. 0d. (15)	3d.
—	£1 (88)	2·4d.
—	16s. 8d. (1)	2d.
£5 (36)	10s. 0d. (93)	1·2d.
£4 3s. 4d. (7)	8s. 4d. (49)	1d.
£4 (1)	8s. 0d. (0)	0·96d.
£2 10s. 0d. (3)	5s. 0d. (43)	0·6d.
£2 1s. 8d. (4)	4s. 2d. (5)	0·5d. (½d.)
£2 (0)	4s. 0d. (6)	0·48d.
£1 5s. 0d. (0)	2s. 6d. (0)	0·3d.
£1 1s. 0d. (1)	–	0·252d.
£1 0s. 10d. (3)	–	0·25d. (¼d.)
£1 (77)	2s. 0d. (18)	0·24d.
16s. 8d. (0)	1s. 8d. (2)	0·2d.
10s. 0d. (0)	1s. 0d. (15)	0·12d.
132	335	

The four most popular systems were (value of minor unit in parentheses):

10s-cent (1.2d), £1-cent (2.4d), £1-mil (0.24d), 8s.4d.-cent (1d)

A duo-decimal (twelve-based) system was addressed and dismissed.

I admire the 3 people who chose the £1–10p system based on 1000 farthings (£1 = 960 farthings) and one person chose a guinea-cent system.

Of course, we went for the £-cent-½ system retaining the 6d coin as 2½p.

The first Decimal Currency Act was passed in July 1967 and set up the Decimal Currency Board to oversee the process. A second 'Changeover Act' was passed in May 1969.

Britain's New Coins 1968

Britain's first decimal coins

1968: first decimal coins issued – ½p, 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p in a blue folder. The bronze coins were for familiarisation only, . . .

. . . but the 5p and 10p coins went into circulation in 1968 with values of 1/- and 2/- (florin) with which they were identical in size and weight.

The 50p coin was introduced in 1969 replacing the 10/- note

5p, 10p, 50p for 1968 / 69 / 70

In 1969 the 50p piece was issued to replace the old ten shilling (10/-) note. This was the first equi-curve heptagon coin. The corners are curved, unlike the old twelve-sided threepenny piece, so that the diameter is constant. This facilitates its use in machines.

From 1968 and 1970, the Decimal Currency Board issued a series of pamphlets.

PAMPHLETS Decimal Currency Board

1968 March: "Decimal Currency: Expressions of Amounts in printing, writing and in speech"
1968 April: "Decimal Currency: Three years to go"
1968 September: "Britain's new coins"
1969: "Cash transactions during the changeover"; "Points for businessmen"; "Conversion of accounting records"; "Legislation"; "Banking"
1970: "Payrolling"; "More points for businessmen"; "Temporary adaptations of machines"; "New money in your shop"

Other organisations issued their own pamphlets.
"Your Bank Account and Decimal Currency": British Bankers' Association
"Stocks & Shares & the change to Decimal Currency": The Stock Exchange
"Your Guide to decimal currency in the Post Office": The Post Office
"Decimalisation and National Savings": Department for National Savings
"Going Decimal – for school children (and their parents)": London Transport

J Sainsbury was founded in London in 1869 but their first self-service store was in Croydon in 1950. Like all businesses, it had to be ready for decimalisation in 1971.

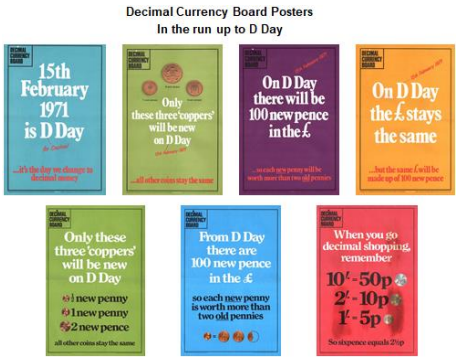
In March 1970 the 'House Magazine' of J Sainsbury fronted with an article on "Decimalisation: J Sainsbury – Preparations in Croydon". It started:
"On Tuesday, February 10, our branch at 9/11 London Road, Croydon became the first Decimal Shop in Britain. To the opening came Mrs Roy Jenkins, wife of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Chairman of the Consumers' Council, Lord Fiske Chairman of the Decimal Currency Board, representatives of the press and of all the important women's organisations of the country."

The main reasons for the decimal shop were to 'train staff', to give customers the opportunity to try out the currency and to assess their plans for the changeover.

The Future of the Sixpence

The sixpence became a 2½p coin and many wanted it to continue although it fitted uncomfortably with a decimal system. In March 1970, the Decimal Currency Board issued a 'report on the Future of the Sixpence'. It was considered very thoroughly (43 pages) and recommended that the sixpence should be withdrawn at the end of the changeover period.

There's a quote at the front of the report:
'Oh; who would fight and march and countermarch
Be shot for sixpence in a battlefield,
And shovell'd up into a bloody trench
Where no one knows? but let me live my life'
Lord Tennyson ***Audley Court***



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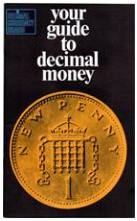
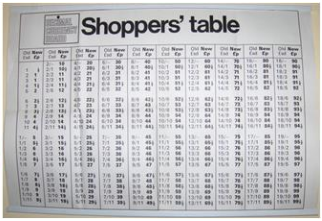
Posters in the run up to D Day

Everybody had to get ready for D Day. Posters were issued, coins were minted, industry geared up, new machines were produced and businesses had to get ready to support the public.





'Your guide to decimal money' was distributed to every household in the country. It explained the new currency and how to use it and introduced the **'Shoppers Table**' which converted old money to the nearer (up or down) ½ new penny.

The shoppers table rounded down as well as up where there was no exact equivalence, but the tendancy was for prices to be rounded up and many were convinced that decimalisation exacerbated the then inflationary era despite the new ½p coin which was supposed to mitigate against this. There was a separate Banker's and Accountant's table which converted old money to the nearer 1p and was used to convert bank accounts and accounting transactions.

Cardboard cut-outs: These were displayed on counters in the banks giving withdrawal dates for the various old coins. I sneaked into various banks and emerged with these treasures under my jacket.

The changeover period was expected to last up to one year, with different businesses changing as they were ready with equipment and processes. But in fact, it was all over within a few months and the old money was withdrawn. The old halfpenny had been withdrawn before decimalisation in August 1969, as had the halfcrown in January 1970. The old penny and threepenny pieces were withdrawn at the end of August 1971.

Nostalgia

The loss of the old coins meant the loss of many old traditions.
Did you get a sixpence from the tooth fairy?
Was a lucky silver threepence in your Christmas pudding?
The farthing (a quarter of a penny) had been demonetised 31 December 1960.

We've also lost many colloquialisms, idioms and sayings:

halfpenny, hapenny, ha'penny, hapny */hāp'ni/*
halfpennyworth, hap'orth */hāp'ni-wûrth/*, */hā'pərth/*
halfpence, halfpennies, ha'pennies */hā'pəns/*, */hāp'niz/*
penny, penny-piece, pennyworth, pennorth, pennies, pence
penny ha'penny (1½d), three ha'pence (also 1½d) – my bus fare to school and Eliza Dolittle's (My Fair Lady) price for a flower

Mr Micawber's famous, and oft-quoted, recipe for happiness:
"Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen [pounds] nineteen [shillings] and six [pence], result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery."
– Charles Dickens, David Copperfield

Penny-farthing bicycle – Penny for your thoughts
Penny wise pound foolish – A penny saved is a penny gained
Take care of the pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves
Pennies from heaven – Penny Black – Penny-dreadful
Penny for your thoughts – Penny whistle – Spend a penny (toilet coin slot)

two pence – tuppence I don't care tuppence; Not worth tuppence
tuppenny-ha'penny (*tupni-hāpni*) said of something cheap and tawdry
twopence (not worth *tuppence*) often used slightingly of things of little value
two pennyworth
tuppence worth put in one's tupp'orth (get a word in)
The Tuppenny Tube: The Central London Railway after its opening in 1900 being the fare (2d.) between any two stations.

We still have a penny, but we say 'p' instead of 'penny' – 'two ps' instead of 'two pennies' or 'two pence', or 'tuppence'.

And all the slang has gone – copper (*penny*), tanner (*sixpence*), bob (*shilling*), as in bob-a-job, it's worth a bob or two, half a dollar (*half-a crown*).

Sing a song of sixpence
Not the full shilling
The mayor o' Dunoon sold the toon for half-a-croon, but we dinnae want Polaris!
Songs: I've got sixpence, Tuppence in the bank, Feed the birds (tuppence a bag).

What's happened since decimalisation
On the coins the pre-decimalisation young laureate-headed Queen was updated in 1968 (Arnold Machin) with the first decimal coins and again in 1985 (Raphael David Maklouf) and 1998 (Ian Rank-Broadley) although there have been several other portraits on commemorative issues. (Designer's initials on truncation.)

What's hapenned since decimalisation

The Queen had new portraits in 1968, 1985 and 1998
The twenty piece coin was introduced in 1982
The pound coin was introduced in April 1983
The half penny was withdrawn in 1984
The crown face value went from 25p to £5 in 1990
5p, 10p, 50p coins reduced size in 1990, 1992, 1997
George VI, Elizabeth II 1/–, 2/– no longer legal tender
1p, 2p from bronze to copper-plated steel in 1992
Bi-metalic cupro-nickel / nickel-brass £2 coin in 1997
New reverse designs (Royal Shield & segments) 2008
5p, 10p from cupro-nickel to nickel-plated steel 2011
The first £20 coin issued in silver in 2013
Plastic notes introduced in 2016
Twelve-sided bi-metallic £1 coin 2017

1982: new 20p

1997: new £2

2008: Royal Shield designs

The twenty pence coin was introduced in 1982. Like the 50p, an equi-curve heptagon, but unlike other coins in circulation its inscription is in counter-relief. When it first came out, many said that because of this it would attract and retain dirt – but it seems to have been ok.
The pound coin was introduced in April 1983.
The half penny was withdrawn in 1984.

The crown worth 5/-, which due to its large size had long been a commemorative coin only, became worth 25p on decimalisation and a few commemoratives were issues, but its size made it too expensive to make. So in 1990 the crown was issued as a £5 coin (same size, same metal 'cupro-nickel' and same weight). £5 commemoratives continue to be issued to this day, often more than one each year.

The 5p, 10p and 50p coins were reduced in size in 1990, 1992 and 1997 respectively. This meant the final demise of the old George VI and Elizabeth II 1/- and 2/- coins. The 1p and 2p coins changed from bronze to copper-plated steel (magnetic) in 1992. The 5p and 10p coins changed from cupro-nickel to nickel-plated steel (again magnetic) in 2011.

Commemorative £2 coins were issued in one-metal nickel-brass from 1986 to 1996 and in 1997, the circulation bi-metalic cupro-nickel and nickel-brass £2 coin was introduced. *[Idea from the French 10 franc – see earlier]*
The first £20 coin was issued in silver in 2013.

The standard coin reverses were changed in 2008 to the royal shield and segments thereof from the beautiful first decimal designs by Christopher Ironside.

Nowadays, as well as the standard circulation coins, the Royal Mint issue many commemorative coins in the 50p, £1, £2 and £5 (crown) series. For collectors, as well as the standard issues, many are also issued in silver and gold and some in platinum. Also there are proof and piedfort issues and year sets and many other special presentation packs. It makes collecting a nightmare.

Happy Hunting

Finally, I want to get you all searching your pockets for the rarities which are occasionally issued.

Every year since decimalisation the Mint have issued a year set with all the year's coins, but sometimes a coin is not issued into circulation because there are too many around.

The 2p coins for 1982, 83 and 84 were such. In 1982 all the coins were reworded from 'new pence' to 'one penny', two pence', 'five pence' etc. However in 1983 some 2p coins in year sets were issued in error with the old reverse 'new pence'. Supposedly they were all in year sets, but I found one in circulation (perhaps from a broken-up year set). It's worth £750.

A coin where the obverse and reverse don't match is called a mule. In 2008 when the coin reverses were re-designed, the year date on the 20p coin moved from the reverse to the obverse. Some 20p mule coins were accidentally issued with the 2008 reverse but the 2007 obverse. The result is a coin without a date – worth about £50.

Another valuable error is the 2011 Olympic Aquatics 50p coin. It shows an unshaded swimmer in shaded water. A variant has the head of the swimmer also shaded – worth about £750.

Also worth searching for is the 2009 50p piece celebrating the 250th anniversary of Kew Gardens. I bought two year sets at the time but it now turns out to be very rare. I'm still waiting to find one from circulation. It's worth about £40 now but is has previously been as high as £120.

Coin Specifications

Pre-decimalisation

Denomination	Diameter (mm)	(inch)	Weight (grams)	Alloy
Crown	38.61	1.52	28.28	Cupro-nickel
Halfcrown	32.31	1.27	14.14	Cupro-nickel
Florin - Two Shillings	28.50	0.51	11.31	Cupro-nickel
Shilling	23.59	0.93	5.65	Cupro-nickel
Sixpence	19.41	0.76	2.83	Cupro-nickel
Threepence	16.20	0.64	1.20	Silver
Threepence*	21.00	0.83	6.80	Brass
Penny	30.86	1.21	9.45	Bronze
Halfpenny	25.48	1.00	5.66	Bronze
Farthing	20.32	0.80	3.56	Bronze
* diameter – flat surface to flat surface				

Decimal Coins

Denomination	Diameter (mm)	(inch)	Edge (mm)	Weight (grams)	Alloy
Crown	38.61	1.52	3.20	28.28	Cupro-nickel
Two Pounds	28.40	1.12	2.50	12.00	Cupro-nickel; 75% Cooper, 25% Nickel Nickel-brass; outer circle: 76% Copper, 4% Nickel, 20% Zinc
One Pound	22.50	0.89	3.15	9.50	Nickel-brass; 70% Copper, 5.5% Nickel, 24.5% Zinc
Fifty Pence 1	30.00	1.18	2.50	13.5	Cupro-nickel
Fifty Pence 2	27.30	1.07	1.78	8.00	Cupro-nickel
Twenty Pence	21.40	0.84	1.70	5.00	Cupro-nickel; 84% Cooper, 16% Nickel
Ten Pence 1	28.50	1.12	2.10	11.31	Cupro-nickel; 75% Cooper, 25% Nickel
Ten Pence 2	24.50	0.96	1.85	6.50	Cupro-nickel; 75% Cooper, 25% Nickel
Ten Pence 3	24.50	0.96	2.05	6.50	Nickel-plated steel
Five Pence 1	23.59	0.93	1.90	5.65	Cupro-nickel
Five Pence 2	18.00	0.71	1.70	3.25	Cupro-nickel
Five Pence 3	18.00	0.71	1.89	3.25	Nickel-plated steel
Two Pence	25.90	1.02	1.85	7.12	Bronze; 97% copper, 2.5% zinc, 0.5% tin
Two Pence	25.90	1.02	2.03	7.12	Copper-plated steel
One Penny	20.30	0.80	1.53	3.56	Bronze
One Penny	20.30	0.80	1.65	3.56	Copper-plated steel
Half Penny	17.14	0.67	1.00	1.78	Bronze

Croydon in 1934
by Keith Neiles

Whilst researching into some of the more macabre events occurring in Addiscombe during the last few centuries, I had cause to visit the National Archives at Kew. Here I was able to examine some of the historic Metropolitan Police files. One of the files dealt with the murder of Mrs Eliza Ray in 1934, an aged widow of Handcroft Road, West Croydon. Not surprisingly the files' contents were predominantly concerned with the evidence and investigations of the local police force. However, I was pleasantly surprised to find, secreted away amongst the official statements, a significant amount of detail covering the day-to-day life of the average working men, and women, in the West Croydon and Surrey Street areas, during the inter-war years.

Financial Climate

Although Britain avoided the worst effects of the Great Depression at the beginning of the decade, unemployment and poverty were still a significant factor amongst the working classes in 1934. Any opportunity to avail themselves of a pecuniary advantage was always gratefully received, no matter how it was obtained, legally or illegally. It was during such an unlawful episode that Mrs. Ray lost her life to three villains who were intent on robbing her of her savings. In the end the villains failed to locate her modest hoard and fled the crime scene with nothing more than a few pence to show for their misdemeanours.

Public Houses

This being a time before the advent of television and the internet, the public house played an important role within the community. According to Ward's Croydon Directory of 1934, there were 160 pubs scattered about the borough to whet the appetite of the 240,000 inhabitants. However, in these times, the licencing laws were far more restrictive than even those that we are currently experiencing during the pandemic. On a Saturday evening, the typical Croydon pub would not open until 6 p.m., closing again at 10 p.m., by which time all customers had to be off the premises.
On the evening of the murder "Fairy" Jones ordered either three or four half pints of ale, and tendered either a shilling or a two-shilling piece, from which he got change. At this time, ale cost about 9d. to 10d. a pint.

As opposed to the modern-day fashion of ordering beer in pints, in the 1930s it was regularly drunk in half pints. *William Knowles admitted that during the evening he had some twelve or fifteen half pints of mild and bitter but did not feel the effect of them at all, boasting that he was quite*

sober. Drinking a pint of beer from two half pint glasses, as all drinkers know, results in a quicker overall consumption than if those same two halves had been served in, and drunk from, a pint glass. This was certainly a method of becoming intoxicated at a more rapid pace. *During their hour playing darts in the "Black Boy", Jones, Ansell and Ross each had seven drinks. They were drinking ale.* Presumably they were drinking halves, for had they been drinking pints they would not have been able to stand up when it was time for them to leave the pub.

Pubs, as is inferred by the name "Public House", were where the public would go to participate in all sorts of activities, both for business and for pleasure. *After George Goulder and Billy Holden had finished packing up their flower stall in Surrey Street, they went into the private bar of the nearby "Royal Oak". Here they got a drink and counted over the money they had taken during the day.* Similarly, after finishing a long Saturday shift on his Surrey Street stall, *William Knowles and his three staff retired to the "Britannia". It is here that they too counted the days takings on a table inside the pub. They counted out about £12 in silver and copper. From this Knowles payed each of his three assistants their wages. Being one of the larger pubs in the area, the "Britannia" had a Billiards room, with a full-sized Billiards table installed. It was here that John Knowles stood and watched billiards being played.*

Irrespective of the size of the pub, darts was always a popular pastime. Sometimes in formal matches, but more frequently on a "Winner Stays On" basis where good players, or pairs of players, could achieve a lengthy spell at the oche. *Jones and Ross played nine consecutive games of doubles in the "Derby Arms" on the evening of the murder, winning the first eight and only leaving the board when they eventually lost their ninth game.*

Most of the information recorded by the police was taken during the cold winter month of February. Descriptions of people in pubs invariably referred to their heavy winter coats, implying that it was not at all warm inside many of these establishments. It was also noticeable that it was the fashion for most men to wear a hat and to do so, indoors.

Although there were Public Conveniences at various points around the town, it was not unusual for those in need to make use of the toilets of a public house, the Gents of which were quite often accessible from the street, removing the need to go inside the premises. *Ross left his comrades in Church Street to use to the urinal of "The Gun".*

All of the pubs mentioned above no longer exist under their original name and most have been consumed by major redevelopments in the area.

- The “Black Boy” was originally at the junction of Mitcham Road, Handcroft Road and Factory Lane. This site has completely disappeared and is now occupied by the tarmac of the northern end of the Roman Way flyover.
- The “Britannia” was on the corner of Bell Hill and Surrey Street. It was for many years a Jim Thompson’s oriental restaurant and is now a Mr. Fox cocktail pub.
- The “Derby Arms”, being almost opposite the “Black Boy”, has also been completely lost to the concrete and steel of the modern road.
- The “Gun” was located on the corner of Church street and Old Palace Road. The building still exists, but now houses a restaurant.
- The “Royal Oak” was situated just to the north of the steps from Surrey Street up to the High Street. At one time it was the next-door neighbour to the Surrey Street side of the “Horn and Trumpet” but is now replaced by part of the new Grants development.

Surrey Street Market

Saturday was the busiest day of the week with the traders setting out their stalls at about 9:00 in the morning and not closing up until 9:30 in the evening.

William Knowles remembered selling tomatoes when they came in peat dust. These were “foreign” tomatoes. On the day of the murder he was selling rhubarb, celery, beetroot and tomatoes from his stall. This stall was wheeled away each night to the safety of Overton’s Yard, along with the

stalls of many other street traders. Overton's Yard was a relic of the days when the brewery to the south of the Yard was owned by Page & Overton Ltd., and was called the Shirley Brewery. It later became the Royal Oak Brewery, hence the name of the pub of the same name in Surrey Street. It then reverted to the Shirley Brewery. By 1934 the brewery was the property of Charrington & Co. who closed it down in the same year.

To the north end of Surrey Street and four properties up from the "Dog & Bull" was the Croydon Covered Market, consisting of sixty-nine stalls, twenty of which were unoccupied.

Property

Mrs. Ray had five smallish properties in Mitcham, and received about £13 per month, nett of expenses, for their rental. According to Thomas Yates, who was a relative of hers and the rent collector, they realised a total of £3. 8s. 2d. per week. He forwarded a cheque to Mrs. Ray once a month, even though she did not have a banking account. Mrs. Ray, in turn, passed the cheque to her lodger, who cashed the cheque for her at the shop of the baker, Miss Cox, at 25, Pitlake, Croydon. Mrs. Ray did not own her own property but rented 47, Handcroft Road, a small three-bedroomed terraced house for 9s. a week. She had lived at the property for 49 years which may explain the low rent.

Robert Pennefather also resided at 47, Handcroft Road, and paid Mrs. Ray £1 a week for board and lodging from his weekly pension of £1 18s. 6d. He shared the facilities of the house, including meals, with her and had his own bedroom. In addition to the weekly rent, Pennefather also assisted Mrs. Ray in the domestic duties in and around the house.

Mrs. Phyllis Sumner and her husband rented their house at 322, Mitcham Road. They sub-let three rooms, one downstairs and two upstairs, to "Fairy" Jones, his wife and three children, for £1 per week, including gas and light.

It was not unusual for the landlady of a rented property to act as an unpaid childminder while the husband was out socialising and/or the wife was out at work.

Sports and Pastimes

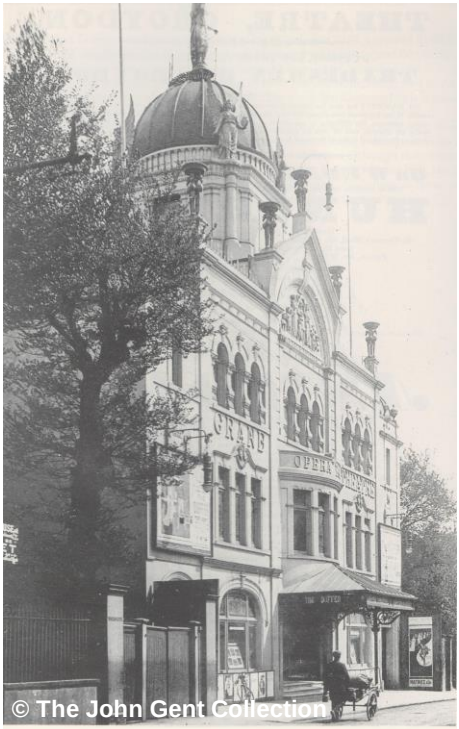
Apart from the darts and billiards, which were so prevalent in the local pubs, there were other popular spectator sports. None more so that the football at Selhurst Park. When giving his alibi, *John Goulder stated how he went there with his business partner to watch the home match against Cardiff City, which the Palace won 3-2.* Sadly, there were only 6,290

spectators to witness the event. This was a good result for the home team as they were still licking their wounds after being recently walloped, 7-0 by Arsenal in the FA. Cup a few weeks previously. The end of the season saw Crystal Palace achieve mid-table mediocracy in the Third Division (South) whilst the Arsenal went on to win the First Division title.

Socialising

It was not uncommon for the local men to leave their wives at home to look after the children whilst they went down the pub for the evening on their own. Sometimes they would stay out all night at a club or party.

On the night of the murder, *William Smith left his wife at home and went to the Excelsior Club at 29a London Road. He stayed there from 7:40 p.m. until midnight, when the club closed. After that he went to a party in Derby Road with some of the club staff and friends. He stayed there until 7:30 p.m. the following evening, before returning home*.



116. The Grand Theatre and Opera House, pictured *c.*1905, was opened in 1896 by Herbert Beerbohm Tree. It stood in the High Street adjacent to Wrencote (left) and opposite Whitgift Street. In the same year the National Hall and Grand Theatre of Varieties (later the Empire) opened in the former premises of the North End Circus. The Grand closed finally in 1959.

Grand Theatre, Croydon

Similarly, *Jones, Ross and Ansell, all married men, stayed out all Saturday night at the Alexandra Club, Walworth. When Ross left the Alexandra Club at 6 a.m. on the Sunday morning he noticed that there were still 15 to 20 men in the Billiard hall downstairs, and that there may have been some more upstairs.*

For the more artistically minded, there were plenty of other entertainments in Croydon town centre. *John Goulder and his wife went to the Grand Theatre, Croydon, for the first house*. It was not revealed what performance they saw that evening but at that time the theatre was considered as being a touring house. The theatre certainly kept up with the times, as it had its own car park at the rear, at a time when only the most wealthy could afford to run a private motor car. Mr. and Mrs Goulder were probably not that well off as

they *chose to stand in the balcony and, during the interval, went to the balcony bar and ordered a Guinness and a brown ale from the barmaid. Some of the clientele were obviously better fortuned, as Mr. Goulder sees a sixpence lying on the counter which was presumably a tip for the bar staff. The show lasted for two hours from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. The Grand Theatre was not only the providence of the more elderly of the area, as Mr. and Mrs. Goulder saw their daughter, Susan, aged 18, and her young man, George Payne, standing in the queue waiting to go into the second house. Mrs. Goulder gave her daughter their programme. After the theatre, the Goulders got a 'bus to the "Crescent" public house, Whitehorse Road, and spent the remainder of the Saturday evening in their local hostelry.* The Grand Theatre has long since been replaced by Grosvenor House which is opposite the junction of the High Street and Laud Street.

Gramophones and records (the brittle 78-style) were widely available and used by the working classes. *Mrs. Sumner lent a gramophone to her lodgers along with some records, and later borrowed another one from her brother-in-law. "Fairy" Jones' children were handing records to Wally Ross. The youngest child broke one of the records and her mother scolded her.*

Shopping

Money being a scarce commodity, more expensive goods were frequently bought on the hire system, or the "never-never", as some folk called it. A deposit was made initially, followed by a number of weekly instalments until the agreed amount had been fully paid. *Micky Goodridge and his wife went into Reeve's Complete House Furnisher and Furniture Dealer shop, at 5-9, Lower Church Street, to pay an instalment on a bed settee which they had on the hire system. Mrs. Goodridge paid 5s. in cash, in return the woman at the cash desk gave her a receipt.* This transaction took place at about 7:30 p.m. on Saturday evening.

Mrs. Goodridge later bought two pairs of shoes for her children. This was at Rose Brothers, Bootmakers, at 69, Church Street (now the site of McDonald's Burger Restaurant), *where there was a stall with shoes alongside. She paid 2s. 6d for the shoes. One of the children was six and the other nine. The size of the shoes was 10 and 12, in childrens sizes. The Goodridges then bought some meat at A.T. Hart, Butcher, 51, Church Street,* (now part of Hewitts school outfitters) *before crossing over the road to the Woolworths Stores, at 54 & 56 Church Street.* (now Poundstretcher) *Here, Micky Goodridge bought a big piece of chocolate, paid for it, and asked the girl to weigh it up.* Chocolate and, presumably other confectionery, was not pre-weighed and packaged as it is today, but sold loose. It was 8:00 p.m. when the Goodridges left the Woolworths Stores.

Broomfield, the bakers, had multiple shops throughout the Borough. *Mrs. Goulder went to a grocer's shop opposite Broomfields at 322 Whitehorse Road* (on the southerly corner of Saxon Road)*, to buy some cheese.* The grocer's shop would probably have been that of F. Upfield of 309, Whitehorse Road.

About the time the murder was committed, *Mrs. Esther Schulman went shopping in her nearby Sainsburys at 9-11 London Road, West Croydon*. This was the first suburban branch of the chain which opened over fifty years earlier in 1882 and is still occupied by a Sainsbury's outlet, despite housing other traders in the past forty or fifty years.

Wally Ross helped Mrs. Jones by taking her 8-year-old son off her hands. She gave her youngster a shilling with which to get some milk.

Domestic Services

In these days, the introduction of washing machines to the average domestic household was a long way off, especially in the poor West Croydon area. To meet the washing requirements of the local populace, Laundries were set up by entrepreneurs to meet the needs of the housewife*. One such concern was White Services Laundries Ltd. of Canterbury Road. They supplied what was known as a Bag Wash Service. A bag was supplied to a customer, or group of customers, who filled it with soiled linen. The bag was then tied and taken to the Laundry. A charge was made according to the weight of the articles in the bag.*

Coal was the prime source of domestic heating and was delivered to each property by the local coalman. This was a filthy job normally performed by the poorer members of the community whose own houses were unlikely to have had a bathroom. *George Plested and Reg Merredew were two young men employed as coalmen by the South Suburban Co-operative Society. On the afternoon of the murder were delivering coal to various addresses in Thornton Heath. They got off the lorry on which they had been working at about 4.30 p.m. and caught a 'bus which took them to the "Gloucester" in Windmill Road. They both went into the washing baths, which were next door. They were there for about half an hour before they both caught a 'bus home.*

Newspapers and magazines were available to all for perusal at Croydon Town Hall in the Reading Rooms. Their entrance was to the right-hand side of the main entrance of the Central Library in Katherine Street. According to Ward's Croydon Directory of 1934: "The Reading Rooms are well provided with the leading daily and weekly journals, and monthly magazines and reviews." *About five evenings a week Robert Pennefather visited the Reading Room at the Public Library, Croydon Town Hall.*

Expressions of the Day

"A couple of bob" literally meant two shillings. However, in these times it had a less specific meaning, referring to any comparatively small amount of money. *Jones said to Ross "How much have you got?" Ross replied: "A couple of bob". Ross himself had 4s. 6d. in his pocket when he made that remark.*

Transport

Buses were a popular and frequent form of public transport. On a Saturday evening the 58 route from Chipstead Valley to Campden Town had five services per hour, whereas the 59A route, which ran from Coulsdon to Camden Town, boasted ten 'buses each hour, at six-minute intervals. Both services ran from West Croydon Station to Gresham Road, Brixton. The fare was 5d. *Ross and Ansell got a 59 or 59a from Gresham Road, Brixton but alighted at Thornton Heath Pond, and so Ross only paid the fare of 4d. each. On their return, Ansell gave Ross a shilling for his 'bus fares from Croydon to Gresham Road, Brixton, and from Brixton to Walworth.*

Jumping on and off moving 'buses and trams was a common activity. *When Ansell was asked where they went to after they left the "Derby Arms", he replied: "Jones crossed the road and jumped onto a moving tramcar going in the direction of his home". He also said to Ross that: "Jones would break his neck one of these days".* 'Bus Conductor James Black witnessed: *"…. that after his 'bus had started from the 'bus stop, and whilst they were picking up speed, three men ran from the corner of the "Fox and Hounds" and boarded the 'bus in motion."* 'Bus Conductor Thomas Johnson witnessed: *"…. The 'bus was just moving away when two men, one in front of the other, ran from the direction of Derby Road. They jumped on the 'bus and sat upstairs".*

Trams were a popular alternative to 'buses, there being six routes running across the borough. "Fairy" Jones frequently caught one, his house being in Mitcham Road and on the number 30 route. *When Jones, Ross and Ansell left the "Black Boy" on the afternoon of the murder, they boarded a tram from the pub to Jones's house* – near to what we now call the Lombard Roundabout. Their journey was a distance of approximately one mile, and the single fare was 1d. each.

In 1934 Croydon's tram services were:

5: West Croydon – South Norwood – Crystal Palace
7: West Croydon – Croydon – Wallington – Sutton
16: Victoria Embankment – [Blackfriars Bridge – Elephant & Castle] [back: Westminster Bridge] – Kennington – Brixton – Streatham – Norbury – Croydon – Purley

18: Victoria Embankment – [Westminster Bridge] [back: Elephant & Castle – Blackfriars Bridge] – Kennington – Brixton – Streatham – Norbury – Croydon – Purley
30: West Croydon – Mitcham – Tooting Junction – Tooting – Wandsworth – Putney – Putney Bridge – Hammersmith – Shepherd's Bush – Harrow Road
42: South Croydon – Croydon – Thornton Heath

Emergency Services

There were many Police Officers simply out on the streets, "pounding their beat", awaiting the call from a citizen in distress. Private telephones were available but only to those who could afford them, and public call boxes were few and far between. When an incident occurred a victim or witness would simply go out onto the street and find the nearest "bobby on the beat". Robert Pennefather, in his statement, told how he *"went to a policeman in Handcroft Road and he came back with me".* The local "Copper" was a respected and friendly connection between the public and the law, as was shown when *Micky Goodridge saw Detective Sergeant Wyman standing talking with two other officers near West Croydon Station. Goodridge saluted Wyman, and Wyman returned the salute*.

In the days before the advent of the NHS, an Ambulance Service was available for "*the private removal of cases of a non-infectious nature to or from the hospital, residences, railway stations and other places…. for private purposes, and upon payment of the prescribed charges*". Attendance at an accident and subsequent transfer to a hospital within the Borough was free of charge. Other private cases and removal to or from a Nursing Home, were charged at between 5s. and 10s. 6d. per journey.

The chief fire station in Croydon was at the junction of Park Lane and Park Street (on the site of the modern-day St. George's House). This was home to the Fire and Ambulance services, with both fire engines and ambulances being housed in the same building. *P.C., 101 "Z" Division, John Stinchcombe's request for an Ambulance to attend at Handcroft Road, was directed to the Fire Station, and a Fireman, William Hillman, drove the Ambulance there and back.*

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Overlapping Lives
by Brian Lancaster

BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH:
A Journey With My Grandfather by Robert Nurden.

Published as a paperback by Amazon in 2020 at £10.01 (ISBN 9798666160022)

Robert Nurden's grandfather, Stanley Broomfield James, attended Whitgift School with his brother Norman when their father, Daniel, was minister of Christ Church, a Congregational church, in Canning Road, Addiscombe, from 1883 to 1887.

Many, if not most, family historians, are content with the Internet to trace their ancestors. Not so here. Though Nurden did, of course, use the Internet, he travelled far and wide. He followed his grandfather to his origins in Wales, to several counties in England, to three or four London boroughs including Croydon and to Alberta in Canada. Each chapter of the book narrates the author's own discoveries and therefore lends immediacy to people and places.

When Stanley left Whitgift School in 1886, he began but did not finish college courses which would have given him formal qualifications as a Congregational minister. Instead, in 1893, he and Norman emigrated to Canada.

The author's account of Stanley's varied life in Canada is one of the highlights of the book. The brothers settled in Alberta where Stanley found employment as a cowboy on a ranch near Jumping Pond. One photograph included in the book shows him kneeling beside a cow about to be branded. Stanley also diversified into journalism for the *Calgary Herald*. The author, having been a journalist, devotes several pages to Stanley's first efforts as a writer.

Stanley's work as a rancher and as a journalist ending, he took a train to Toronto but by 'riding the rods', meaning he held on to the gearing under the tracks. In Toronto he became a hobo, mixing with tramps, earning no money and sometimes depending on the Salvation Army for food.

Faced with the prospect of near starvation, Stanley enrolled in the US army and saw service in the Spanish-American war in Cuba in 1898. Returning to England – but without Norman who stayed in Canada – Stanley joined his fatally ill father at Wimbledon where he had become minister of another

Congregational Church, Christ Church. Stanley stood in for him. Such was his eloquence as a preacher that when his father died in June 1900 the congregation appointed him as minister regardless of his lacking formal qualifications.

In 1906 Stanley was offered a vacancy at Trinity Congregational Church in Leytonstone. By this time he was married to Jess. The marriage lasted till Stanley's death in 1951. However, he was neither a model nor a faithful husband. He and Jess had little in common. Before he left Trinity, he had become a socialist and an ardent pacifist. This did not endear himself to the senior members of the church, the deacons, especially as the First World War had begun. Moreover, his religious opinions became unsettled. He resigned in 1916.

What will specially interest readers is the ardent friendship he formed with three young women who attended his church, exchanged letters and kept diaries which the author found in ten boxes in the Women's Library at the London School of Economics. Among them are Stanley's own eloquent letters. The women were his soulmates and he was theirs. He was handsome. Both he and the three women were passionate. 'I love him with my mind, soul and body utterly', one wrote. The physical attraction was mutual and on one occasion led to sex. Yet the women were not uncritical of him. His convictions were too fluid.

Some of the same letters had been published before by Tierl Thompson in *Dear Girl*. She, a feminist, regarded Stanley as a manipulator of women. Readers may wish to dissent.

Having resigned Stanley lost his regular income. He earned a little from his time writing for a pacifist newspaper, *The New Crusader*, till he was fired by its proprietor.

His religious view, previously unsettled, became firm and lasting but as a Roman Catholic. He was received into the Church in 1923. His prolific journalism led him to work for the *Catholic Herald* and become its assistant editor, an offer that 'came out of the blue in 1941'. His religion had a mystical side, influenced by St Francis and William Langland.

When the editor decided to widen the appeal of the Catholic Herald, Stanley lost his position. He and his family were obliged to live in cottages without running water or electricity, and to grow their own food, raise chickens and keep a cow. Such was the poverty that he had to ask money from his grown-up children. The last chapter in the book is about them.

Needing money, Stanley's journalism became ever more prolific, sending

articles to the Catholic press in Ireland and the United States. Robert Nurden finds it hard to separate Stanley's own religious convictions from the persona he adopts in his journalism. Speaking from his own experience as a journalist, Nurden writes 'one manufactures a voice that fits the circumstance'.

Besides Stanley's journalism, he wrote books. Nurden admires *Becoming a Man* and *Franciscan Tables*. They are long out of print and virtually unobtainable in this country. When he died, *The Times* printed an obituary as did the *Catholic Herald*. Nurden's own book should revive interest in Stanley.

N.B. Robert Nurden's offer to give a talk to the Society has been accepted.

University of Calgary Archives and Special Collections

The Byrons of Coulsdon: Abroad and At Home by Nigel Elliott,

Published as a paperback by the Bourne Society in 2020 (978-0-900992-81-0) available from Paul Redington, the Society's Sales Co-ordinator, 13 Crewes Avenue, Warlingham, Surrey, CR6 9NZ at £16 plus £4 p&p.

The author's purpose is clear. He writes about three generations of the

Byron family and about Coulsdon Court. The book is not intended as a complete family history. Nigel, as I shall call him, gave one talk to the CNHSS about Tom Byron in Canada in 2017 and was due to give another about Coulsdon estate in March 2020 which was cancelled due to Covid-19. The talk was unillustrated whereas the book has over a hundred.

The squire of Coulsdon, the mid-Victorian Edmund Byron, and his wife, Charlotte, take centre stage as the first generation. The second are their two sons, Tom and Cecil. The third jumps a generation and is about the writer, Robert Byron. What they have in common is their extensive travels. Eric Byron, Edmund and Charlotte's other son, preferred to stay in Britain. The same may be true of Edmund's two daughters, Lucy and Eva, but evidence is lacking. Cecil having already died, Eric and Tom chose not to inherit Coulsdon Court when their widowed father died in 1921 and the estate was put up for sale. As a youth, if not later, Robert regretted that his father (let alone his unmarried uncle) chose not to inherit the estate.

The collection of documents donated by Eric Byron's granddaughter, the late Setitia Simmonds, in 2010 and 2012, is vast. Four of us, Gwyneth Fookes, Roger Packham, Nigel and myself volunteered to catalogue them for the Museum of Croydon where they are held. We thought it would take two years. It lasted four or five years but Nigel has continued, including amplifying them by using those donated by Eric Byron in 1934, plus a later memoir, and by documents held abroad, accessed online. Access to the collection was limited as the numerous boxes had to be brought down on Wednesday afternoons to the room adjoining the Search Room which was in use by staff and others at other times. When we started we shared out the work. I was fortunate to have the bulk of the correspondence.

Nigel worked on the management of the Byron estate and on Edmund's business affairs. Additionally, he chose to explore Tom and Cecil's lives in Canada and, more briefly, Cecil's in Tenerife. In total, there are too many documents for any one of us to have a complete overview.

Neither Nigel nor Robert Nurden knows of each other's existence. Such, though, are the tricks of coincidence that Nigel's Tom and Cecil and Robert's Stanley and Norman all went to Canada to begin a new life. The coincidence doesn't stop there as they all went to Alberta. Both authors mention Jumping Pound or Pond as it was first called, and both reproduce the same photograph of two men kneeling and one standing about to brand a cow. Nigel could not know that one of the men kneeling is Robert's grandfather. Tom and Cecil were 'remittance men'. They received regular sums of money from Edmund Byron whereas Stanley and Norman seem to have had to rely on their own resources. None lived out of reach of

Calgary. Tom emigrated in 1892, Cecil followed nine years later. Stanley and Tom may well have met in Calgary, Alberta's principal town. Norman could have met both Tom and Cecil as Norman remained in Alberta.

Tom was a rancher and a successful one at that, allowing him to retire in comfort to Vancouver whereas Stanley was a cowboy on a ranch whose life included and ended in poverty. Yet another difference is that Cecil was married. Katherine was nine years older than Cecil but both suffered from ill health, Cecil died in Canada in 1911 from tuberculosis. His wife and son returned to England. Tom remained a bachelor. Men vastly outnumbered women in Alberta.

Nigel's research is impressive. He has found out much about Tom's assets and about the people he knew, especially the Wyndhams as Colonel Wyndham's wife was a relative of the Byrons. I knew very little about Tom's life in Vancouver, the subject of the fourth chapter, only that he died in a shooting accident in 1940. The chapter includes the inscription on his grave.

Part 2 which is mainly about Edmund Byron's estate and (Old) Coulsdon village is also impressively researched. Two of the four chapters are about the indoor servants and outdoor estate staff he employed and the last of the chapters covers the village itself, the church and its rectors, the school, Cane Hill asylum and Coulsdon Court. A table gives the impression of a rapid turnover of staff as the average length of service did not exceed two years but averages are delusive as a few servants stayed much longer such as John Gilbert who, appointed by Edmund's father, was bailiff from 1839 to 1880. Some of the text is about their duties and their pay and some about particular incidents: the butler, David Hewitt, returning drunk from the races is one such incident.

What makes the information about the management of the estate even more valuable than the chapters about individuals is that, while there have been studies of aristocratic estates, there have been fewer about squires. Nigel's research into the Byron estate would be a contribution to any comparative study of the squirearchy.

John Bateman's fourth edition of *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland*, published in 1883, draws upon the Return of Owners of Land, or New Domesday Book as it is popularly called, compiled in the 1870s. It includes squires owning between 2,000 and 3,000 acres, above which are the great landowners. Bateman lists Edmund Byron as having 2,196 acres. (As Nigel points out the acreage was greater in 1866: 2,500 acres.) Approximately seven squires in Surrey, out of a total of forty-one, owned

more than 2,000 acres. That would make Edmund Byron a leading figure in Surrey. The gross average annual value, though, was £2,496, implying a modest income. Old Coulsdon was a downland village, less fertile and consequently poorer than lowland villages. As a county Surrey had less fertile land than, say, Kent. For example, in Kent, J. F. Billington owned 2,069 acres worth a gross annual value of £3,345.

Edmund's wealth was not just derived from the value of his estate. He invested shrewdly and wisely at a time when land values were in decline because of the agricultural depression. The income from the tenants' rent diminished. Nigel states that rents had to be remitted on one or more occasions. Eric Byron's memoir only gives rental income from 1900 but Nigel had access to a tax return for 1918 which shows that, though the income from property was £2,218, that from dividends and investments was £4,540. Before the war it may well have been more.

What Nigel makes abundantly clear is that it was Edmund Byron's lifestyle which counted. He owned a manor house, Coulsdon Court; he was Master of the Old Surrey Foxhounds; a Justice of the Peace and he was elected to the Surrey County Council. He maintained the school and the almshouses. His estate included several tenant farms. Within the village his social influence was patriarchal. Apart from the Rector, no one came near to matching him. Coulsdon was what is called a close parish: Edmund owned most of it and, as Eric Byron wrote in his memoir 'could determine the number of cottages and the number of inhabitants'. (An appendix quotes Eric Byron's 'memory' or memoir about the village, written in 1962.)

Nigel writes that Edmund was a progressive landlord. How far this was true is, I believe, open to question. Undoubtedly he was a conscientious landlord but was he an improving landlord in the sense that he encouraged his tenants to adopt modern farming methods? My subjective impression is that he left his tenants to decide for themselves how best to farm.

The publication is not arranged chronologically so the next two chapters are on Edmund and Charlotte's travels in Europe and South Africa, many of which took place early in their marriage when they were more physically active, resourceful and willing to rough it as in South Africa. In contrast, in later years, they appear to be staid. An obituary of Edmund stated that he was a typical mid-Victorian, giving the false impression that he might have been narrow-minded and even philistine. The contrast should occasion some further reassessment of Edmund's character.

What also occasions some reassessment is not so much the extent of or the frequency of their travels that Edmund and Charlotte undertook but

their interest in art. Nigel writes of a visit in 1871 to Nuremberg where 'they bought pictures and *objects d'art* that elevate them into the ranks of modest connoisseur collectors'. Their most valuable purchase was a devotional painting of the Madonna and Child by the artist Lucas Cranach (most probably the Elder). At Dresden they bought engravings and in Rome a copy of Titian's *Sacred and Profane'* and a 'handsome Italian mosaic-top hall table'. Their itinerary had included Belgium but not France because of the Franco-Prussian war the previous year.

When they went abroad, their children, no more than five or six years old, were left in the care of nurses or relatives, a custom common among the upper classes.

Artistic in taste or not, the typical pursuits of squires and noblemen were hunting, shooting and fishing. In Coulsdon Edmund went hunting and not just with the Old Surrey Foxhounds. Rearing game birds features more frequently in the correspondence than an interest in farming.

For fishing the Byrons went to Norway and stayed seemingly every summer from 1871 to fish for salmon. They stayed at Olden, a village on a fjord near Bergen. They invited relatives and family friends to accompany them. When their daughter, Eva, went, she was reluctant to return home so much did she love Olden.

Another visitor to Olden fjord was the German emperor, Wilhelm II. He came on his own yacht. He and Edmund seem to have hit it off as Edmund was invited to Berlin as the Emperor's personal guest and thence to Potsdam for hunting game: boar, stags, pheasants, hares and rabbits. Nigel gives an extended account of the visit.

Yet another royal visitor to the fjord was the King of Norway and Sweden, King Oscar II, but there was no invitation, just a chat.

When the Byrons were abroad, usually for months rather than weeks, they rented out Coulsdon Court. However, the Byron archives do not appear to identify the tenants.

Nigel, here and elsewhere in his book, places travel in context. It was not mass tourism nor for the Byrons the aristocratic Grand Tour. He mentions the extensive development of continental railways and the appearance of guidebooks.

Whereas the chapter on Europe takes in many places and years, the second of the two chapters on travel is about one year and one country. In 1873, between March and December, Edmund and Charlotte went to South

Africa. Nigel has the advantage of being able to access online Edmund's privately printed *What we did in South Africa in 1873.* Judging from the number of pages Nigel devotes to it, it must have been a substantial journal. Again, he places it all in its historical and social context: Cape Colony's devolved government; the discovery of diamonds and gold transforming South Africa's economy; the background to the Anglo-Boer War at the end of the century and the subjugation of the black population.

Sightseeing was not the purpose of the journey to South Africa but big game hunting. The Byrons bought supplies in Cape Town before sailing to Durban. From there, accompanied by John Kemp Edmund's manservant for eleven years, they travelled inland to (Pieter)Maritzburg where they bought two covered wagons, thirty oxen, four donkeys and a grey mare besides provisions for themselves and their bearers. A further journey inland brought them by mid-June to Lyndenburg in the Transvaal, a Boer Republic, having covered 400 miles in 37 days. They shot various kinds of antelope for food and they were aware of the presence of lions. Yet it was not the big game country they were aiming for. This they reached early in August when they arrived within sight of the 11,000 ft high Drackensberg. Big game was abundant. They saw twenty-five different species including rhinoceros, giraffe, hippopotamus, leopard, lion and alligator. A nice detail Edmund gives is that the Africans showed them how to slow bake hippo foot.

The conditions they had to endure included not only the arduous journey in wagons but also on foot. Edmund's shoes wore out, his feet were swollen and he had to make sandals from buffalo hide.

At Coulsdon Court the heads of zebra, buffalo and kudu were hung up for display. They joined the heads of bison and wapiti that Edmund had shot in North America, a journey he had made before he was married.

The subject of Part Four is Robert Byron whose *The Road to Oxiana* is sometimes described as the best travel book of the 20th century. I don't feel obliged to summarise his career in full. Nigel has used the three main published works about him: *Four Studies in Loyalty* by his friend. Christopher Sykes, published in 1946; *A Biography of Robert Byron* by James Knox, published in 2004 and *Robert Byron: Letters Home*, a collection of 175 letters Robert wrote to his mother Margaret, Eric's wife, edited by Lucy Butler, Edmund's daughter, published in 1991. Butler excludes some letters including juvenilia, business letters and those dealing with family affairs. The archives, including all these letters, are now, however, at Yale University's Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscript Library, which was still adding to his archives even as late as last year.

That makes Knox's biography out-of-date and a new one is needed.

Nigel has read four of Robert's nine books and consulted secondary works about his fields of interest, especially in Byzantine, Islamic and Persian art and architecture. He travelled extensively even as far as Tibet and China. All this has been written about before.

What lends originality to Nigel's treatment is his decision to devote several pages to Robert as a campaigner. He wrote to me that 'many people will be surprised at this side of Robert'. He was an activist who observed the damage caused by racism in India and the threat of western materialism to 'the eastern pervasive sense of the transcendental and spiritual themes'. He detested Fascism in Spain and Germany and was no admirer of Soviet Russia. He wrote articles for the press and broadcast, advised the government prior to the war and planned to drop leaflets over Germany.

He was a co-founder of the Georgian Group formed in 1937 to save historic buildings of that period from demolition such as the Duke of Norfolk's palatial home in St James's Square. The Group was unsuccessful but successful in saving two Palladium villas. Robert was elected deputy chairman. John Betjeman was a prominent supporter.

He was elected president of the London branch of the Federal Union, an organisation, formed in 1938, committed to a post-war European supra-national federation. Its meetings were suspended when war broke out.

At the outset of war, having failed to secure a prestigious job in government or the BBC which could be a platform for him to promote world peace, Robert felt compensated by being appointed as a newspaper correspondent at Mashad, a key location in oil rich Persia, now Iran.

Lucy Butler, in *Robert Byron: Letters Home*, adds that Robert's boat was torpedoed off Stornoway on 24 February 1941. He was on his way to Cairo.

The last chapter is entitled Epilogue, perhaps misleadingly if readers assume it adds nothing substantial. In the Epilogue Nigel gives balanced assessments of Edmund, Charlotte, Tom and Cecil and Robert.

The book concludes with three Appendices: Eric Byron's 'A Memory of Coulsdon' – one wishes he had written more – and two listing the Byron documents held in the Museum of Croydon.

The Byrons of Coulsdon: Abroad and at Home is a substantial, scholarly and lucidly written book which cannot fail to interest and inform.

Interim Report on 'Deadboard' or 'Graveboard' Research by Trevor James – Research Report 1 : 22 November 2020

Grave memorials in English churchyards can provide rich source material for economic and social historians. Such memorials are important for several distinct reasons. They can act as a record of a community's past; they refer to family histories and relationships; to infant mortality; to longevity; to epidemics; to occupations; and to the mobility of the population. In short, they can serve as an introduction to the history of a parish. Observed in large numbers, their styles and inscriptions can reveal the craftsmanship and feeling of the people at different eras of the past, and the materials utilised can provide an indication of the relative prosperity and economy of the locality.

The phraseology and factual content of memorial inscriptions are often peculiarly local in their significance, in that the ideas expressed and information provided are frequently products of deep-rooted local traditions and history. Obviously, they are also part of a national pattern because events such as the Great Plague outbreak of 1665-6 or the social mobility caused by agrarian changes, such as enclosure, which will have been reflected in almost every locality. By contrast with phraseology and factual detail, the style and materials had, historically, a very distinct regional pattern. The research that is reported below focuses on these two aspects of churchyard monuments and memorials.

Timber grave memorials were a familiar and distinctive feature of churchyards throughout the Home Counties until the middle of the nineteenth century.

It is important, however, to stress that regional distribution has been subject to two forms of distortion which have tended to disguise the patterns. The advent of the Railway Age in the nineteenth century had its effect in creating a relative uniformity in style and materials. Regional differences were blurred, if not totally obliterated, by the capacity of the railway system to distribute cheap, durable stone or slate to areas where it had previously been prohibitively expensive and, therefore, largely unavailable. Any attempt at identifying a regional pattern therefore needs to be directed towards the memorials which pre-date the arrival of the railway. The other element of the distortion in the pattern arises from the fact that the memorials are vulnerable to the elements and, by their very design, may be easily damaged. They do not, therefore, always survive intact. Modern grass cutting technology and the need for churchyard clearance have tended to exacerbate this process of deterioration.

These two photographs were taken of a deadboard in Ewhurst Churchyard in the North Downs in West Surrey. The second photograph demonstrates the way that they may deteriorate, sometimes because of emergent vegetation.

This photograph of the other deadboard in Ewhurst churchyard demonstrates how easily deterioration may set in, leading to their disappearance.

There are two conflicting interpretations of this phenomenon. When he first learned of my interest in this feature of the churchyard landscape, the late Professor Jack Simmons was very encouraging and indicated that he remembered seeing examples in churchyards to the west of London in his youth. His view was that the emergence of the railway had removed the demand for this naturally-sourced form of graveyard memorial. He believed that this was a topographical and cultural phenomenon worthy of further research. This positivity was shared by his friend and fellow railway enthusiast, Sir John Betjeman in his **English Parish Churches** [1968] who stated:

In counties like Surrey and Sussex, where stone was rare, there were many wooden graveyard monuments, two posts with a board between them running down the length of the grave and painted in the way an old waggon is painted. But most of the wooden monuments have perished or decayed out of recognition.[1]

The entirely contrary posture is the one espoused by Jeffrey W. Whitelaw in his **Hertfordshire Churches** [1990] where he observed that:

These graveboards were a cheap wooden substitute for stone and so, accordingly, were liable to crumble away unless looked after and preserved.[2]

This view is supported by the author of the website of St Mary the Virgin Church at East Barnet who describes their present-day wooden grave markers as being 'peculiar to Hertfordshire' and 'which were for families who could not afford a stone memorial and originally had the names of the deceased written on them'.

Apart from the erroneous notion that these timber memorials were a local phenomenon, this rather dismissive attitude was to a degree mirrored in the plaque on the very first deadboard that I ever saw in the ancient churchyard of St John the Baptist Church at Croydon where it asserted that this type of memorial was for poorer people who could not afford stone.

Specialist writers on churchyards have tended to show little interest in this form of grave marker. Frederick Burgess was a very generally dependable commentator on graveyard monuments but in his very substantial **English Churchyard Memorials** [1963] he devoted only a single page to this topic [3]. This lack of emphasis is mirrored by Roger Bowdler in his well-received **Churchyards** [2019] [4]. Brian Bailey in his **Churchyards of England and Wales** [1987] was very positive about this cultural phenomenon but still only devoted half a page and one illustration to this topic [5].

This form of graveyard monument or memorial has various labels. In Surrey they tend to be described as 'deadboards' or 'graveboards'; or just occasionally 'bedsteads' or 'bedheads', whereas in Hertfordshire they are generally described as 'graveboards'. In Berkshire and Buckinghamshire they are sometimes labelled as 'leaping boards', which may hint at a wider form of customary behaviour in that region. In the solitary literary source of John Aubrey, they are described as 'rails'. The three that have been identified as having listed status are all described as 'graveboards'. This inconsistency and variation in labelling may itself have contributed to the lack of wider awareness that this was, in effect, one cultural phenomenon.

The apparent region where these monuments can be traced now embraces eleven counties – Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Middlesex, Oxfordshire, Surrey and Sussex. To the north it is, in effect, defined as being south of the 'stone belt'. The zone at present stretches from Turvey on the border between

Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire, to Baldock where Hertfordshire comes close to Cambridgeshire, to the south of Oxfordshire through the Home Counties to the Hampshire and Sussex Downs. The cultural boundary for these memorials may not stretch entirely across Sussex because there is a church at Lewes which has a series of iron memorials, a sign that the Wealden iron industry might well have been an alternative source from timber in this region.

Although few in number now, they were once a common feature of churchyards across the zone defined above. Perusals of late eighteenth-century prints will yield considerable evidence of the existence of these memorials. For example the *Farnham Castle Books,* which contain an exhaustive collection of early nineteenth-century prints of Surrey churches, yields 66 positive examples from Surrey churchyards [6]. The earliest example of a print showing deadboards, seen by the present writer, is one of Croydon Church, dated 20 June 1775, and this shows several to have been located near to the present west doorway. Another valuable source of such illustrations are plates in the volumes of the great descriptive writers on the London area at the end of the eighteenth century. Daniel Lysons in his **Environs of London**, published during the 1790s, includes plates of Harrow and Harmondsworth churches in Middlesex [7]. A few years later in 1808 David Hughson, in his **London**, provided plates of Stanmore and Edgeware in Middlesex, and Leatherhead, Mitcham and Sutton in Surrey [8]. In all of these examples deadboards can clearly be discerned in the illustrations.

Early photographs are also a source of such information. Croydon Church was photographed in 1867 at the time of a disastrous fire which severely damaged the fabric of the building. In the aftermath one photograph of the damaged church that was taken reveals, quite incidentally, the presence of a number of white-painted deadboards to the south of the church.

Croydon's St John the Baptist Church, photographed immediately after the disastrous fire of 5 January 1867, revealing several white-painted graveboards [Photo provided by Croydon Museum and Archive Service]

See full-page photo on next page

Croydon's St John the Baptist Church – see previous page

Examination of early volumes of the Victoria County History reveal significant numbers of photographs of churches with deadboards in their

churchyards at the beginning of the twentieth century. [See Appendix for detailed chart]

Using historic photographs is not a straightforward exercise in observation and interpretation. The photographs were not taken to illustrate deadboards, the deadboards are merely part of the surroundings. A good example of how this is challenging can be illustrated from the photograph of Luton Parish Church which appears in Dr J. C. Cox, *The English Parish Church* [1914]. Initially from this Frith print, it is only possible with the use of a magnifying glass that it becomes evident that a deadboard can be discerned in this black and white image. This experience is quite commonplace amongst early photographic evidence, thereby, in a sense, reducing public awareness of the widespread existence of this phenomenon.

Having established the extent of the distribution of these deadboards and being able to trace them back to the beginning of the eighteenth century, there needs to be an explanation for the use of this material. Various theories have been put forward. It has been argued that wood was used because it would last for about three generations, which is about the length of time that a person was likely to be remembered. To accept this is to believe that the people of the Home Counties had a different attitude to the dead from the people of other regions: there is certainly no sign of such a belief elsewhere.

Others argue that timber was utilised because it was inexpensive. To a degree this is correct but, without further interpretation, this would be misleading assumption.

My general conclusion is quite straightforward. Due to the absence of suitable stone throughout the London Clay Basin and its perimeter of chalk downs, and before the emergence of the railway, it was quite usual, except for the most notable of local figures, for this type of timber memorial to be used. Settlements on navigable waterways such as the River Thames and its principal tributaries, the Rivers Mole and the Wey in Surrey and the River Lea to Hertford may have been the exception because of the possibility of transporting appropriate stone. However, whilst there was a general paucity of stone throughout this region, along with difficulties over transport, there was a plentiful and abundant supply of timber in such areas as the North Downs. Using this locally available material was a matter of good economics.

Although other chronological assertions have been made, the demonstrable time frame can be traced to the later Stuart period, with

literary references in John Aubrey's **Natural History and Antiquities of Surrey** [1718] [9] and a museum exhibit at Guildford which bears the date of 1708. This records the death of Ino Brooks on 29 October 1708, aged 49. This has survived because the board was re-used as a shelf in the cellar of Abbot's Hospital at Guildford and, quite fortuitously, the inscription was on the underside and so remained legible. Local speculation is that it 'came' from the Trinity Church which stands opposite to the Hospital. This latter exhibit is a most fortunate survival and is culturally significant in its own right because at this stage its lettering was incised rather than painted on the wood, as was to happen later.

A single literary source provides very helpful background to the use of deadboards at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The anonymous editor of John Aubrey's **Natural History and Antiquities of Surrey** [1718] included several references to the use of deadboards [10]. The phrasing of the entries demonstrates in the context of the recording of detail that a difference between wood and stone in grave memorials was being reported.

Ockley is a particularly important point of reference. Several times the writer refers to 'free-stone grave-stones' but he also identifies another quite separately.

On a Rail on the North Side of the church-yard, in capitals is this inscription: Here under lyeth the Body of Jane the wife of John Parsons, who departed this life the 14 day of January 1713. Aged 33 Years.

It is this juxtaposition of 'free-stone' and 'rail' that enables further interpretation of examples at six other locations identified in this work.

It should be added that in J. L. Nevinson's edition of Aubrey's book in 1974 [11], he revealed some additional material not previously published where there is an additional observation about the situation at Ockley:

they use no gravestones but only boards of wood over the graves.

In one sense this seems to be a contradiction of the wider description which embraced stone as well as wood but the underlying intention was to convey that, in what was a contemporary context, timber had replaced stone.

Further examples reveal that timber grave memorials – 'rails' – were identified at the six further locations of Mickleham, Farley, Esher, Ripley, Shalford and Gatton.

At Mickleham there were two deadboards

On some Rails, on the North Side of the Church-yard, is this inscription; Here lyeth the Body of Edward Briggs, who departed this life, June the 1 1706, in the 36.Year of his Age.

On some other Rails is the following Inscription: Here lyeth the Body of Elizabeth Cook, who dyed Nov. the 26 1716 .aged 86 Years.

At Farley

On a Rail, at the West End of the Cæmitery, is this Inscription: Here lies the Body of Anthony Fowle, who departed this life the 4th daye of September, and left a Widdowe.
At Esher there was rail dated 1704

At Ripley there was a

Rail to Mr John Farley, Ensign, died in Catalonia 17th Nov 1711 aged 21 – erected by his sister in memory.

At Shalford there was a 'raised Rail' to George Nye who died on 12 October 1707, aged 57.

At Gatton J. Walker, who died on 21 August 1712 aged 58, was buried under 'a Rail in Gold letters on a black Ground'.

We are naturally dependent on Aubrey's observations but they are sufficient to provide a pattern. What they tell us goes beyond basic detail. In terms of social class, one at least could be described as upper class – an ensign – and the example at Gatton is a description of an elaborate memorial, an indication that the family involved had a degree of prosperity.

The emergence of the deadboard can, therefore, firmly be traced back to the beginning of the eighteenth century. The earliest positive dating is on the memorial at Mickleham, described by John Aubrey, which records the death of Edward Briggs on 1 June 1706.

At a later stage, almost as an act of Romanticism for the past, there have been occasional examples of deadboards being commissioned in relatively recent times. For example, it must have been a deliberate choice which led Dr George Alfred Carpenter, who died on 27 March 1910, to be buried under a very elaborate deadboard in Sanderstead Churchyard, a memorial out of character with the general pattern of contemporary design and material. A choice had been made, against the trend of the times, to utilise this older style of memorial. Cost was not an issue: because of the

individualised design, it may well have been more expensive than stone, slate or marble.

Very little evidence in the form of inscriptions survives to tell us about the people whose graves were marked in this manner. The substantial volume of evidence in eighteenth and nineteenth century prints does not provide sufficient detail and very few photographs were taken when deadboards were a common feature of churchyards. The use of deadboards was not merely a custom of the established church. Certainly at Lingfield and Outwood in Surrey deadboards were used in Baptist burial grounds. The very best deadboards were very expensive and elaborately designed and so it is possible to conclude that they were used by all classes of people, although, contrary to the views expressed by other commentators, naturally the poorest people, as in any area, would not have been able to afford any form of grave marker. Evidence from a deadboard at All Saints Church, in Upper Norwood, has shown that Joseph Daw, who died on 25 July 1854 and who had been a coachman, was remembered in this way. This solitary piece of evidence may be an indicator of the minimum social levels that might be expected to have such a memorial.

Another area of enquiry is to establish the background to the manufacture of these 'deadboards'. Many years ago a firm of undertakers in Croydon, with clear nineteenth-century origins, deflected my enquiry by advising me that they would only have used stone and that therefore the manufacture of the memorials would have been 'carpenters' work'. A solitary documentary source demonstrates that this assertion is incorrect. In the Surrey Archives at Guildford some crucial evidence is provided in accounts from a firm of undertakers up in the Downs at Ashtead [12]. These accounts relate to the years 1872-1890. They were clearly using timber in their work in Ashtead. Various references to cleaning, re-lettering and painting the timber memorials occur, together with some evidence of the use of timber for new memorials. On 11 July 1873, for example, there is a reference to 'cleaning and relettering and painting of rails' and on 21 March 1874 there is a record of the manufacture of a rail at a cost of 16 shillings. However a very useful entry for 26 November 1887 has provided a very detailed and helpful list of the component parts of a deadboard, together with some suggestions as to the degree of preparation such a monument would receive. The 'grave rail' for William Corbett required:

5 feet of good 11 x 1 ¼ ins	*2 oak posts [6feet long and 4 ½ x 4 ins]*
1 foot 6 ins of 7 x 1 ¼ ins	*11/2 lb of priming*
5 feet of good 3 x 2 ins	*1 ½ lbs of paint*
5 feet of good 3 ½ x 2 ins	*Pins and glue*

The specification records that the memorial was to be primed and have four

coats of paint, and the capping and moulding were to be 'black'd'. This may not be definitive evidence, but these documents therefore provide a clear indication that the manufacture and repair of timber memorials of this design was still being carried out by undertakers in the second half of the nineteenth century in at least one Surrey village.

The specifications for William Corbett's memorial, however, match the shape and design of 'deadboards' throughout the region. It also has the extra contribution of revealing that oak specifically was used for the supporting posts. In all respects this can be taken as a template for what can be seen, and has existed, elsewhere.

Just to re-enforce this point of comparison, the record in my notebook, from 1972, of the specifications of the now-lost solitary memorial in Croydon's Churchyard is as follows.

> *The board was 71 inches long and 12 ½ inches high; it was topped by an additional timber 3 ½ inches high which overhung the board, thereby providing protection for the original inscription; and the memorial is supported on two posts, three feet in height, 4 ¾ inches square, with globular finials on top.*

In general terms all 'deadboards' seen in the region come close to matching the measurements and form described at Ashtead or Croydon.

Whilst there has been no concerted attempt at conserving such monuments as a wider phenomenon to celebrate their social significance, there is evidence that examples have been celebrated and conserved at various locations.

Three timber memorials specifically described as graveboards are listed monuments. At St Margaret Church, Darenth Hill, in Kent the descriptor records that it is a 'long horizontal board, probably oak, morticed into wooden square section posts with moulded waisted pyramidal finials' for a memorial dated 1859. At St Peter's Church at Cassington in Oxfordshire, it is described as eighteenth-century, with the graveboard morticed into a heavy post, and slotted and pegged through slender post'; and elsewhere in Oxfordshire at St Giles' Church at Hampton Gay their example is defined as being 'wood, morticed through posts', with an inscription for 1914.

At Reading in Berkshire the extremely well-kept deadboard to commemorate the life of Henry West, who died in a freak accident in 1840 when he was carried from the construction of the roof of Reading Station by a whirlwind, has been maintained in his memory in St Laurence's churchyard until the present day. It was maintained by family members in his memory until as late as 1924 but, when no more family members could

be identified, subsequently it's been kept in good restorative order by Reading Council.

At Baldock the churchyard contains a deadboard, to a degree deliberately protected from the elements to the memory of Henry George Brown, son of Henry and Harriat Brown, who died on 20 March 1861, aged 10 years and 10 months.

At St Bartholomew's Church at Fingest in Buckinghamshire, they celebrate the memory of ten of what they describe as 'leaping boards', the earliest dating from 1817, with three replica replacements of the last three to perish, installed in 2005. The lettering, originally to be seen on all ten 'leaping boards', is reported in detail on their website.

At St Martin's Church in Ruislip, for example, the parish website celebrates the survival of two deadboards which they recognise as 'rare but once common in Middlesex'.

The potential interest to the local historian of the churchyard is not limited to grave memorials as the 'churchyard archaeology' also includes such features as Saxon crosses and redundant market crosses. In some places the churchyard contains buildings of particular significance and in others the location, shape and size of the churchyard also provide fruitful areas of enquiry. Nonetheless grave memorials are the predominant feature of a traditional churchyard and, therefore, present a formidable body of evidence for the local historian. As a phenomenon which has virtually disappeared, the timber memorials of the Home Counties and the South East have an importance in the context of the history and economy of that region. They have no greater claim to significance than early memorials from any other region, except insofar as their survival is rare. Conservation of a representative cross-section of these wooden memorials is an urgent necessity if we are to provide future generations of historians with some insight into the nature of churchyard furnishing from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. A high priority in such a programme of conservation should be the deadboards of the Home Counties and South East because these have now reached such a degree of scarcity that their total disappearance could easily occur.

This variety of evidence indicates that their survival and what they represent means that they do provide a link with a previous world where timber memorials were a regular feature of churchyards. What is needed is a collective recognition that the variety of locations specifically identified in this research – about two hundred at the time of the composition of this commentary – actually represent a coherent body of evidence, to be seen

as one phenomenon rather than a series of local experiences.

There are three essentials to apply in any extensions of this research. There is a need to contradict the locally-held notions that these memorials are a narrow local phenomenon, rather than part of a cultural reflection of a region. There is a continued need to verify evidence to confirm the validity and authenticity of the evidential resource. Alongside this is a need to counteract the variety of local explanations, to help re-enforce the wider analytical perspective.

Appendix 1
Deadboards: non-photographic Visual Evidence in historic Prints

Bedfordshire
- Dunstable: St Peter – 1830 [website]

Berkshire
- Barkham: St James – nd [VCH III, p240]
- Cookham – nd [VCH III, p131]
- Hampstead Norris – nd [VCH IV, p79]

Buckinghamshire
- Fingest: St Bartholomew – [website]
- Stewkley: St Michael and All Angels – 1806 [MB I p633]; 1845 [Chas Knight, 1845]
- Stoke Poges: St Giles – nd [Bailey, p41]; James Thorne, The Environs of London, 1876, [opposite] p574 [Geoffrey Cave reprint 1983]

Hampshire
- Crondall: All Saints – nd [VCH Hampshire IV, p10]

Hertfordshire
- Aspenden: St Mary – nd [VCH 4 p24]
- Aston: St Mary – nd [VCH 3 p57]
- Ayot St Lawrence – nd [VCH 3 p62]
- Datchworth: All Saints – nd [VCH 3 p80]
- Frien Barnet: St James – 1800 [website]
- Gilston: St Mary – nd [VCH 3 p322]
- Graveley: St Mary – nd [VCH 3 p89]
- King's Walden: St Mary – nd [VCH 3 p36]
- Little Gaddesden: St Michael -1840 [website 2013]
- Rodwell – nd [VCH 3 p246]
- Walkern: St Mary the Virgin – nd [VCH 3 p157]
- Wallington – nd [VCH 3 p287]
- Willian: All Saints – nd [VCH 3 p180]

Middlesex
- Edgware – 1808 [Hughson, p414]
- Edmonton – 1790 [website]
- Harmondsworth – 1800 [Lysons V, p142]
- Harrow – 1795 [Lysons II, p570]
- Highgate – 1851 [Tallis p176]
- Northwood – 1795 [Lysons 3 p322]
- Paddington – 1750 [Lysons 2, p332]
- Stanmore – 1808 [Hughson p421]
- Willesden – 1795 [Lysons 3, p618]

Oxfordshire
- Watlington -1822 [VCH 8, p272/3]

Surrey

[All the Surrey entries are from the Farnham Castle Books, unless otherwise indicated]
- Abinger: St James
- Addington: St Mary
- Albury: St Peter and St Paul
- Alford: St Nicholas

- Ash: St Peter
- Ashtead: St Giles
- Banstead: All Saints
- Beddington: St Mary – 1827 [Cracklow]
- Betchworth: St Michael
- Bisley: St John Baptist
- Bletchingley: St Mary
- Bramley: Holy Trinity
- Great Bookham: St Nicholas
- Byfleet: St Mary
- Capel: St John Baptist
- Caterham: St Lawrence
- Cheam: St Dunstan – 1964 [C.J. Marshall, History of Cheam and Sutton, 1936, p22]
- Chessington: St Mary
- Chobham: St Laurence
- Cobham: St Andrew
- Cranleigh: St Nicholas
- Chipstead: St Margaret – 1809 [Manning and Bray II, p247]
- Coulsdon: St John the Evangelist – 1827 [Cracklow]
- Croydon: St John Baptist -1776 [Francis Grose print]
- Dorking: St Martin
- Effingham: St Laurence
- Epsom: St Martin
- Ewell: St Mary
- Ewhurst: St Peter and St Paul
- Farleigh: St Mary
- Farnham: St Andrew
- Fetcham: St Mary
- Guildford: St Mary
- Headley: St Mary
- Horley: St Bartholomew
- Horne: St Mary
- Leatherhead: St Mary and St Nicholas – 1808 [Hughson p317]
- Leigh: St Bartholomew
- Lingfield: St Peter and St Paul
- Long Ditton: St Mary
- Malden: St John
- Merrow: St John
- Merton: St Mary – 1792 [Lysons, p346]; 1851 [Illustrated News]
- Mickleham: St Michael
- Mitcham: St Peter and St Paul - 1806 [Hughson, p289]
- Morden: St Laurence
- Newdigate: St Peter
- Nutfield: St Peter and St Paul
- Oakwood: St John Baptist
- Ockham: All Saints
- Oxted: St Mary
- Pirbright: St Michael
- Seale: St Laurence
- Send: St Mary
- Shere: St John – 1804 [Manning and Bray I, p522]
- Stoke D'Abernon: St Mary
- Stoke, near Guildford: St John the Evangelist
- Sutton: St Nicholas – 1806 [Hughson p297]
- Tandridge: St Peter
- Tatsfield: St Mary
- Thames Ditton: St Nicholas
- Thorpe: St Mary
- Titsey: St James
- Walton-on-the Hill: St Peter
- Walton-on-Thames: St Mary
- Warlingham: All Saints
- West Horsley: St Mary
- Windlesham: St John Baptist
- Woking
- Wonersh: St John Baptist
- Wotton: St John
- Worplesdon: St Mary

Sussex

- Chithurst: St Mary – 1791 [VCH 4, p10/11
- Compton -1791 [VCH 4, p90/91]
- Easebourne: St Mary - 1798 [VCH 4 p48/49]
- Fernhurst: St Margaret - 1790 [VCH 4, p60/61]

Appendix 2
Deadboards: Fieldwork Observations

Buckinghamshire
- Long Crendon: St Mary the Virgin [1990] [*]
- Stoke Poges: St Giles [1995]

Hertfordshire
- Baldock: St Mary the Virgin [12 April 1996]
- St Albans: St Michael's Church [6 August 1975, 17 September 1982, 9 April 1996]

Middlesex
- Harmondsworth: St Mary [1994]
- Great Stanmore: St John the Evangelist [6 August 1975]

Surrey
- Addington: St Mary [20 May 1972] [*]
- Caterham: St Lawrence [2 April 1972]
- Chaldon: SS Peter and Paul [2 April 1972]
- Chelsham: St Leonard [20 May 1972]
- Croydon: St John the Baptist [14 April 1972]
- Croydon: St James Croydon Common [1965]
- Ewhurst: St Peter and St Paul [October2011]
- Guildford Museum exhibit [1972]
- Headley [28 October 1995]
- Limpsfield: St Peter [1 July 1994] [*]
- Mickleham: St Michael [28 October 1995]
- Sanderstead: All Saints [15 April 1972] [*]
- Upper Norwood: All Saints [18 April 1972]

[*] Examples of Twentieth-Century remembrances.

Appendix 3
Deadboards Photographic Directory

Bedfordshire
- Elstow: St Mary and St Helena – 1898 [Frith Print 40866]
- Luton – 1914 [Cox, The English Parish Church, 1914, p110]
- Turvey: All Saints – 1861 [website]

Berkshire
- Bray: St Michael – 1923 [VCH 3 p104/5]
- Bucklebury – 1923 [VCH 3 p288/9]
- Sonning: St Andrew -1861-64 [website]
- Worfield – 1923 [VCH 3, p192/3]

Buckinghamshire
- Edgcott: St Michael – 1927 [VCH 4, p170/1]
- Marsworth: All Saints [website 2013]
- Turville: St Mary – [website]

Essex
- East Horndon: All Saints 1901 [Frith Print 57588]

Hampshire
- Boldre: St John Baptist – 1911 [VCH 4 pp622/3]
- Odiham: All Saints – 1914 [Cox op.cit, p201]
- Heckfield: Mattingley Chapel – 1911 [VCH 4 p50/51]

Hertfordshire
- Ayot St Lawrence – 1905 [postcard]
- Baldock: St Mary – 1907 [postcard]
- Codicote: St Giles [website]
- Great Hormead: St Nicholas [website]

- King's Langley: All Saints -1911 [VCH 2 p240/1]
- North Mimms: St Mary – 1911 [VCH 2 p256/7]
- Ridge: St Margaret – 1911 [VCH 2 p390/1]
- Sarratt: Holy Cross – 1911 [VCH 2 p436/7]
- St Albans: St Michael – 1911 [VCH 2 p402/3]
- St Albans: St Stephen – 1911 [VCH 2 p424/5]
- Wheathampstead: St Helen - 1911 [VCH 2, p316/7

Surrey

- Croydon: St John the Baptist – 1867 [CPL Collection]
- Mickleham: St Michael – nd [Brian Bailey, Churchyards of England, 1987 p117]

Sussex

- Woolbeding: All Hallows – 1914 [Cox, op.cit p139]

Appendix 4
Deadboards: Reliable Reports

Berkshire
Horton: St Michael – website discussion
Reading: St Laurence –1840 [and regularly restored] observed by Cynthia Clamp
Essex
High Easter - Brian Bailey, Churches etc, 1987 p116
Hertfordshire
East Barnet: St Mary the Virgin – website discussion
Hatfield: St Etheldreda -1801 – observed by Cynthia Clamp 4 July 2009 [Photograph in Photographic Supplement]
Kent
Darenth Hill: St Margaret – dated 1859 - listed monument report 2009

Middlesex
Ruislip: St Martin – website records two

Oxfordshire
Cassington: St Peter – listed monument report 1988
Hampton Gay: St Giles – listed monument report 1988
Surrey
Dunsfold: St Mary and All Saints – reported by Dee Cornwallis-Doran – 18 April 2006 [letter in file]
Lingfield: Salem Baptist Church – observed by Herbert Shaw – August 1972 [letter in file]
Sussex
Cuckfield: Holy Trinity – website records one restored 19th century deadboard
Ditchling: St Margaret – Brian Bailey, op.cit., p116
Sidlesham: St Mary Our Lady – Brian Bailey, op.cit., p116
Slaugham: St Mary - website reference to wooden deadboards
Walberton: St Mary – website reference to deadboards

Footnotes

[1] John Betjeman, English Parish Churches: The North, 1968.
[2] Jefferey W. Whitelaw, Hertfordshire Churches, 1990, 62.
[3] Frederick Burgess, English Churchyard Memorials, 1963.
[4] Roger Bowdler, Churchyards, 2019.

[5] Brian Bailey, Churchyards of England and Wales, 1987, p116.
[6] Guildford Museum, Farnham Castle Books – TG758
[7] Daniel Lysons, Environs of London, Vol II, 1795, p570 [Harrow], Vol V, 1800, p42 [Harmonsworth]
[8] David Hughson, London, Vol. V, 1808.
[9] John Aubrey died in 1697. Much of his Surrey material had been prepared for use by John Ogilby [1600-1676], the cartographer and the earliest compiler of road atlases but, in the event, the latter did not use it. The deadboard references have been added by his anonymous editor since they date from after his death.
[10] John Aubrey, The Natural History and Antiquities of Surrey, Vol. IV, 1718, pp179-186.
[11] John Aubrey's Natural History and Antiquities of Surrey, [ed] J. L. Nevison, 1974, p xi.
[12] Surrey History Centre, Guildford Muniment Room – PSH/ATD/GIL/9/4-5

Photographic Supplement

This photograph is contemporaneous with the other included in the text but it is slightly earlier because it pre-dates the 1867 destructive fire at Croydon Church with better representation of at least twelve deadboards. [Croydon Museum and Archive Service]

Deadboard in Turvey Churchyard on the Bedfordshire/ Northamptonshire border. Photo taken by Naimh Lynch of Bedford Modern School and a prize winner in this year's Young Historian Awards

Deadboard dated 1801 at St Etheldreda's Church in Hatfield. Photographed by Cynthia Clamp on 4 July 2009

From the Society's Museum collection – www.cnhss.co.uk/museum
by Christopher J.W. Taylor, Museum Curator

Migrating reindeer and an Upper Palaeolithic flint implement in Whitgift Street, Croydon.

In our museum collection are some bones of prehistoric ice age fauna, including reindeer and mammoth, found in Whyteleafe at the end of the 19th century. These are the Springall Collection.

Another find, made relatively recently, now held by the Museum of London, was of a particularly rare and interesting flint blade found in plough soil in Whitgift Street Croydon.

Although seemingly unrelated, the above finds, the bones and the blade are, in a fascinating way, possibly "entangled" in their prehistory. The following relates the detail.

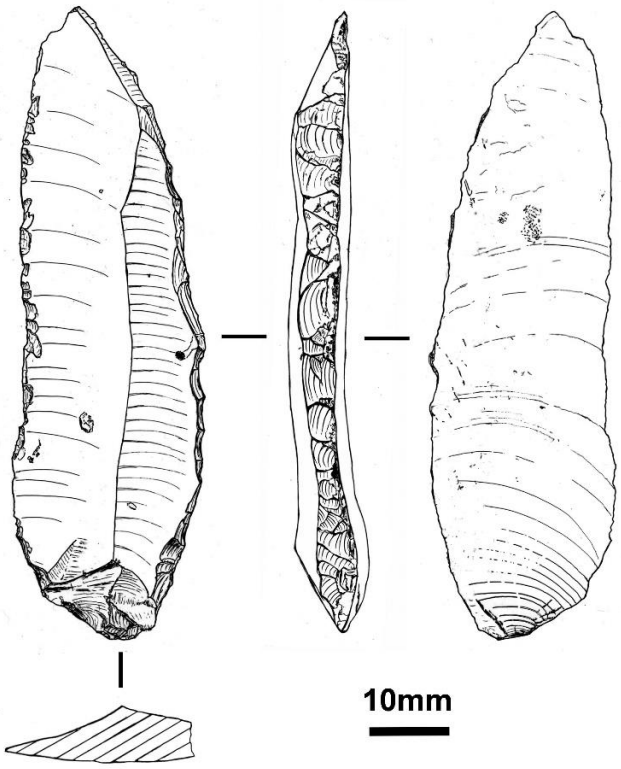

Figure 1. Upper Palaeolithic curved backed blade from Whitgift Street, Croydon. (Illustration by author).

In 2006 the Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) excavated a cleared, open plot site at 2 – 14, Whitgift Street, Croydon. The numerous finds dated from the Upper Palaeolithic to post-Medieval and were reported in the London Archaeologist by Portia Askew (2010, 259 - 266).

One of the finds was a flint curved backed blade, the earliest, dating to the Upper Palaeolithic (Figure 1).

I visited the archive store of the Museum of London where the blade is kept to record, draw and study it. In her article, mentioned above, Portia Askew was only able to devote a few words on this find which is detailed more fully below.

The blade is 82mm long and has steep retouch (has been “backed”) on the right lateral edge (middle view, Figure 1). It is in fresh condition and is patinated white with some small spots of very light grey on the ventral (right hand view in Figure 1.) surface. It is unlikely that it had moved very far from where it was originally discarded. Possibly, solifluxion, and certainly ploughing, will have been the main agents of transport, perhaps moving it a few tens of metres over the millennia.

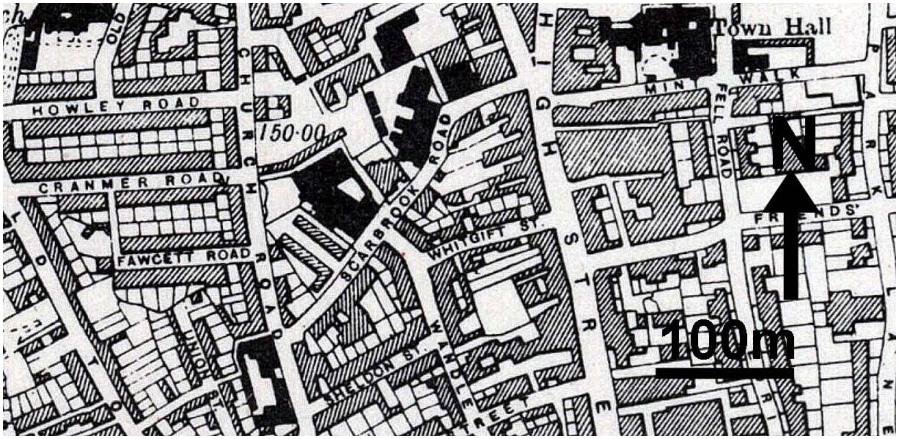

Figure 2. Location of Whitgift Street, Croydon (at the centre of the map). Ordnance Survey, Surrey XIV S.W., 1938.

Retouch, or “backing”, is the deliberate chipping away and blunting of an otherwise razor-sharp edge of the flint so as to shape it into the required tool (Whittaker, 2007, 19, Butler, 2005, 44). This retouch can be by antler billet or sometimes by scraping the edge of a piece across a stone anvil. This latter method is relatively rare and is indicated by bidirectional

conchoidal retouch flake scars (Barton, 1992, 124) which are not evident (Figure 1) on the Whitgift Street piece. The amount of the original blade to have been removed by retouch/backing may be as much as a third of its original width (Barton, 1992, 124). The uses of finished curved backed points probably varied; small forms may be weapon tips, some bearing impact damage (Pettitt and White, 485). Barton (1992, 167) suggests various uses including as bone-grooving tools, plant and meat knives, and saws.

Curved backed blades (also called curve-back or convex backed blades or points, with or without the hyphen) are just one of a spectrum of artefact types formed by so-called "backing" a blade to form a usable tool. Campbell (1977) established a classification system for Upper Palaeolithic types and this blade falls into category AB1 which has continuous backing on one edge. AB2s are straight backed blades, AB5s with continuous backing on one edge with retouch near the point on the other edge, and so on, with many forms (Campbell, 1977, vol. 2, 3 & 151).

This blade dates to the last part of the Upper Palaeolithic, in the second half of the Late Glacial Interstadial, between 12,000 and 11,000 BP (Before Present) radiocarbon date (RC), or 14,010 – 12,890 BP calendrical date (calibrated or cal.) (Pettitt & White 2012, 477 and Pettitt 2011, 23). During this time Britain appears to have been re-occupied by groups of humans using this tool type (Pettitt, 2011, 45, Pettitt & White, 2012, 437 & 479). The period is very slightly later than the Late Magdalenian cultures of Les Eyzies France I dealt with in Bulletin 168.

Dating is problematic for this period. The calibration needed to get from an RC date to a calendrical date at around 11,000 BP is material but unfortunately not fully agreed by archaeologists (Pettitt, 2011, 51). Both radiocarbon and calendrical dates are given here for this reason. For dates around 11,000 BP the difference between radiocarbon (RC) dates and the basic calendrical dates (cal.), can be as much as 2,000 – 3,000 years, RC dates being later i.e., younger.

This tool type is extremely rare, certainly in Croydon and the south east. In the UK and Europe it is found almost exclusively in cave sites. Examples of AB1 find spots in the UK are Gough's Cave Somerset, Robin Hood's Cave, Creswell Crags and Pin Hole, Derbyshire. All of these are dated to ca. 12,300 BP (RC), ca. 14,700 BP (cal.). One notable, well-known exception, is at Hengisbury Head, Dorset, which is an open-air site (Campbell, 1977, vol. II, figs. 121, 142, 151, & 153). I reported a possible Upper Palaeolithic end scraper (Campbell type CB1, 1977, 151) found in nearby Waddon Caves in Bulletin 169.

Askew (2010, 261) made the interesting observation that the find spot in Croydon is in a *"gap in the North Downs likely to have acted as a seasonal corridor for herds of migrating animals moving between the Wandle valley and the high ground on the Downs to the south."* making the point, of course, that this would have been, not just a wildlife event, but also a convenient hunting opportunity for the users of the blade. She does not however further elaborate on which "*migrating animals*" could have been involved and this is considered in what follows, i.e.: what species were these "migrating animals", what migration routes may have been possible at the time and what evidence is there remaining in the area?

The finds spot was only ca. 300 metres east of the Wandle. How this river manifested itself at the time is unclear. The find spot probably presented at least two possible advantages to hunter gathers: passing game and a water supply.

In this period, within the last ice age, the tundra and steppe environment over large areas of Western Europe, including Britain, provided ideal conditions for numerous cold adapted species of fauna such as reindeer and mammoth (Cunliffe, 1994, 44). Human groups would have followed migrations of animals like the reindeer into Britain so they had presumably learnt to deal with all but the most severe cold conditions; seasonal warming, of course, would also have provided important windows of opportunity when hunting trips would be practicable (Cotton, 2004, 23).

The only animal which was definitely migratory in Europe at this time was the reindeer (Anderson, 1865-75, 144). However there are two other species which are interesting just to look at in this context: mammoth, and horse. Migration is classically defined as a yearly movement, greater than that made daily, between breeding and overwintering sites, although there are many variations to this general description.

Reindeer (Rangifer tarandus) migrate seasonally in a defined, bi-annual event, for example, from low tundra in winter, to high tundra in summer for calving; a major migration motivator is also to escape torture by summer mosquitos (Wragg Sykes, 2020, 212, Anderson, 1865-1875, 154). Migrations sometimes involved travelling many hundreds of miles, often following stream and river beds; this would have provided opportunities for intercepts by man at bottlenecks (Campbell, 1977, 114, Pettit, 2011, 49). Some ecotypes of reindeer, the woodland type, remain in small groups throughout the year with limited migrations, contrasting with the long distance migrations by immense herds of the barren-ground type (Smith, 1992, 67). Wragg Sykes (2020, 222) gives an example of definitely

migratory prehistoric reindeer being the subject of hunting kills, albeit at an earlier period, in south-west France.

Like modern day elephants, mammoth probably progressed, over the course of the year, along familiar routes between well used, known, places. Mammoth may have migrated in a sense, by journeying south to search for new feeding grounds, taking advantage of spring and summer plant growth (Fuller, 2004, 14).

However, whether considered migratory or not (probably not), the mammoth is generally agreed to have become almost extinct in Britain around the period of this blade. The maximum habitation range of the woolly mammoth (Mammuthus primigenius), was colossal, stretching from Siberia to Spain, and across to the Americas (Davis, 61) including Britain. Its heyday was probably ca. 40,000 BP (cal.) (Lister, 2014, 98-99). Around 12,000 BP (RC) there was a sudden and dramatic withdrawal from most of its range (Stuart, 2012, 130).

In 1987 (Coope & Lister, 1987, 472; The Times, 3/12/87, 3, & The Shropshire County Museum) the remains of four mammoths were discovered in Condover, Shropshire, in a post glacial kettle hole infilled just before the period of this blade find, around 12,375 BP (RC), 14,700 BP (cal.). These are thought to be some of the last mammoths in Britain, if not all of Western Europe (Smith 1992, 62; Pettitt and White, 2012, 431). Perhaps a slightly younger dated find may be considered from Pin Hole cave in Cresswell Crags Derbyshire where undated mammoth ivory was found with other bones dated to ca. 12,175 BP (cal.) (Pettitt and White, 442) although this may, of course, have been historical ivory. It is unlikely mammoth survived much after the end of the Late Glacial Interstadial dated to ca. 13,000 BP (cal.) (Smith 1992, 62/3) and were certainly extremely rare this far south about the date of this blade.

Interestingly, despite many modern depictions of mammoth being butchered by attacking groups of spear-holding man and speculation of its extinction being partly due to man, Smith says it is unlikely mammoths were *regularly* (my italics) preyed upon by man (1992, 62/3). This view seems to be supported by Pettitt and White (2012, 433) who say there is little evidence of the direct exploitation of mammoth by human groups. A more pro-hunting stance is taken by Schreve (et al, 2012, 202) who considers cut marks on mammoth bone at the famous Neanderthal butchery site at Lynford, Norfolk, to be fairly persuasive of hunting. She does however also say that the site, with handaxes found nearby, can also be interpreted as evidence of scavenging (Schreve et al, 2012, 197). Wragg Sykes puts the case well when she says (2020, 145-147), also in

the context of Neanderthal hunting, it is difficult to “prove to a legal standard” that true hunting was often involved with these giant beasts although Neanderthals did take on large animals like rhino and massive horses. It is likely that it took place only rarely, perhaps for baby mammoth or disadvantaged (injured?) individuals.

So it seems that we can probably rule out the mammoth as being a migratory prey species: firstly, not really being a migratory animal in the terms of the general definition, secondly, probably rare and near extinction at the time in question, and lastly there being little definite evidence of being commonly or regularly a prey species.

Horse were abundant during the period to which this blade is dated, being part of the cohort of animals that lived on the rich steppe (Pettitt, 22) and was possibly the most dominant exploited species by man. Its remains are often found in the same places as reindeer, including Gough’s cave and Mother Grundy’s Parlour, as listed above (Pettitt and White, 2012, 441, Pettitt, 25, 39). However horse migrate only in a very restricted sense. In late spring/summer horses do move to come together for breeding (Wragg Sykes, 2020, 206) but otherwise they tend to stay where they are and just survive the conditions. Generally, horse are not considered a migratory species and are not included in the list of species of migratory animals in Eurasia (Wikipedia, reference.)

For interest, perhaps we can look at this the other way around though: man may have moved activities or used extended hunting journeys seasonally to maximise exploitation of the horse at places where it congregated. Pettitt (41, 43) suggests that the clustering of archaeological find sites dated to the Late Glacial Interstadial around the Seven and Trent rivers represents spring exploitation of, say, reindeer calving near the Trent and winter hunting of horse on the borders of the Seven. This sort of activity, to move hunting grounds to where concentrations of horse were, may have happened locally in Surrey too; on this assumption horse may have been a reason why man might have come to the area, in contrast to being opportunistically present near passing herds of migrating reindeer.

In contrast, there is ample evidence that the migratory reindeer was a major prey species at the time of this blade. Perhaps the best examples are the remains found in the French abri around Les Eyzies, which I wrote about in our recent Bulletin (168). There, Upper Palaeolithic reindeer remains abound in cave shelters and were an invaluable resource, used, not just as food, but for their pelts and bone for clothing, tents and tools. This must have been the case here too.

Reindeer probably survived until the end of the last glaciation and into the very early post glacial Mesolithic period and are abundant on sites dating to as late as ca. 9,000 BP (RC), ca. 11,000 BP (cal.) (Campbell, 1977, 2-3). The species will therefore have been present in Britain until after the date of the curved backed blade.

Reindeer are a distinctly cold loving animal that moved on if the cold conditions of open arctic tundra, with its surrounding coniferous forests, disappeared. This species is in fact probably the best indicator of very cold conditions excepting the lemming (Davis, 61-2). Because of its adaptation to cold, with specialised footpads and noses, the presence of reindeer in the archaeological record is a good indicator of the micro-conditions at the time. This animal has low-crowned teeth adapted to the lichens, mosses and sedges found in tundra, not to temperate climate tough grasses, and is adept at digging food out from under snow (Lister, 2014, 58-59). It scrapes away even deep snow with its front hooves to gain access to food sources on frozen ground beneath.

Prehistoric reindeer remains are commonly found in most parts of the UK; bones and antler, have, for example, been found in many parts of London, including Kew, Greenwich, Twickenham, Feltham, Battersea, and Isleworth, to name a few (Juby, 2011). Evidence of their presence has also come to light in most of the caves mentioned above, for example, Robin Hood's Cave, Creswell Crags and Pin Hole, Derbyshire (Smith, 1992, 83 – 87). Bones were recovered from the excavation at Three Ways Wharf in Uxbridge and dated to ca. 11,600 BP (cal.) (Juby, 2011, 402, Pettitt and White, 2012, 492).

The migration routes suggested by Askew between the Wandle valley and higher ground of the Downs to the south are a distinct possibility for herds of reindeer. However we should also consider more extended pathways given that reindeer are highly migratory and can move 300 km or more between summer and winter pastures. Pettitt and White (2012, fig. 8.3, 439 & Pettitt, 2011, 43) map the points of connection for Upper Palaeolithic human groups moving between the Netherlands and British cave sites mentioned above in the period in question. Both these areas were part of a continuous continental land mass at this time, so migrations of animals and humans was possible. They point out, in example, that a mere 200 km of overland route separates an archaeological site in Oare Kent from the Cheddar Gorge cave sites, the same distance from Oare to the Low Countries. It is possible that reindeer too may have migrated from the continuation of the North Downs in Europe around Calais, across the still present land bridge, what is now the Dover Straight, and followed the high ground, a journey of a mere 100 miles, passing through Croydon.

Another point to consider is simply how the migratory habits of reindeer were relevant to the Croydon hunters. Reindeer move and gather seasonally for autumn breeding and spring birthing often taking different routes for each chosen site. Example remains of fawns found in caves in the UK Midlands show there was calving there. Hunters may have waited where they knew animals would finally gather or along the routes taken during the migration (Wragg Sykes, 2020, 222-3). Perhaps, given the topography in the Croydon area, it was the latter. Assuming the Whitgift Street site was near one or the other, it was possibly a hunting camp specially selected for its proximity to the herds. The blade would have been an excellent part of a toolbox to butcher a reindeer, so it is not a stretch to imagine this general scenario.

We have looked at the finds over the wider UK and in Greater London of reindeer remains but, as mentioned at the beginning of this article, there is also significant evidence of Pleistocene animals, particularly reindeer, in the area very local to this Croydon find.

This is where we come to the way that the blade find and the reindeer bones in the Springall Collection are prehistorically “entangled”.

In 1896, a CNHSS member, George Hinde reported finds (1896, 223 for both those in 1889 and 1895) of prehistoric animal remains in Mitcham and Whyteleafe valley. In 1889, in gravel pits between Mitcham railway station and the church, faunal remains were discovered including reindeer, mammoth, horse and rhinoceros. (Hinde, 1896, 229).

Another such find was made in November 1895 when gravel was being worked at the bottom of the Whyteleafe valley, on the east side of the main road to Caterham. The gravels were about 10 to 15 feet thick resting on Chalk. In one of the pits were discovered the bones of Pleistocene fauna which were examined by Arthur Smith Woodward, then assistant keeper of geology at the Natural History Museum. Woodward found the bones to be the basal portions of reindeer (Rangifer tarandus) antler, fragments of the limb bones and pelvis of woolly mammoth (Hinde reported Elephas primigenius which is the equivalent term today to woolly mammoth, Mammoth primigenius: Evans, 1876, 5), two molars of the narrow-nosed rhinoceros (Rhinoceros leptorhinus), and bones of a prehistoric ox (Bos primigenius) and horse (Hinde, 1896, 223). In the late 1860s rhinoceros species were lumped together with other pre-glacial fauna and designated Rhinoceros leptorhinus (O’Connor, 2007, 28-9) so we cannot be precise about the species. It seems most of these remains were collected by Springall (I have no further details) and then donated to our museum (accession nos. OS Cab. 24/3 (17/7), 1,1A, 374-383). The Springall

Whyteleafe collection includes a tooth labelled Woolly Rhinoceros, (more specific than the list given by Hinde) and Woolly Mammoth, see Figure 3 below.

Figure 3. Tooth of Woolly Rhinoceros (left) and Woolly Mammoth (right) found in Whyteleafe Valley and reported by Hinde. *From Springall Collection. Museum collection no. OS 24/3/377 & 1.*

These finds were a bit of a mixed bag. The ox favoured open temperate grassland conditions whilst the mammoth and reindeer (and rhinoceros if Coelodonta antiquitatis – the woolly variant) were mainly cold climate animals although mammoth could also tolerate slightly warmer climes. We don't know from such a jumbled deposit how the rhino and mammoth were associated but it is worth noting that in life they are considered to have been cold climate prehistoric fellow-travellers (Stuart, 2012, 130).

The mixed finds point to the deposit being derived and jumbled by geological processes. It is interesting to envisage that the remains of reindeer and other animals left on the tops of the local Downs (on possible migration routes) above Caterham may have been washed down the Whyteleafe valley along with gravels and mud, transported by the torrents of the final melt waters from snow and ice fields on the local peaks. This would have occurred when the amelioration in climate finally took hold after the Loch Lomond stade, at the end of the Devensian ice age. This mode of transport and deposition is considered a likely scenario by a number of writers (for example: Hinde, 1896, 233; Dines, 1933, 25 & 152, 165; Jukes-Browne, 1906, 160).

We can assert with reasonable grounds, therefore, that migrating reindeer, using the North Downs as a corridor, moved across country to the Croydon

area. Perhaps it was there that hunters using the curved backed blade were encamped near or in Whitgift Street ca. 14,000 years ago and took the opportunity for the kill.

In conclusion, the reindeer is the most likely to have been the preeminent migrating prey animal at the time of this blade. It survived this far south so as to be a contemporary of the curved back blade users and its remains have been commonly found not only in the UK generally, but very locally.

Acknowledgements

The blade is curated (site code WHZ06, Context 272) in the Museum of London store at Mortimer Wheeler House, Eagle Wharf Road, Hoxton, London, N1 7ED. My thanks to Karen Thomas, Head of MOLA Archives, James Andrews and Sarah Matthews of the Museum, who allowed me to study this rare artefact and for suitable accommodation for drawing the illustration.

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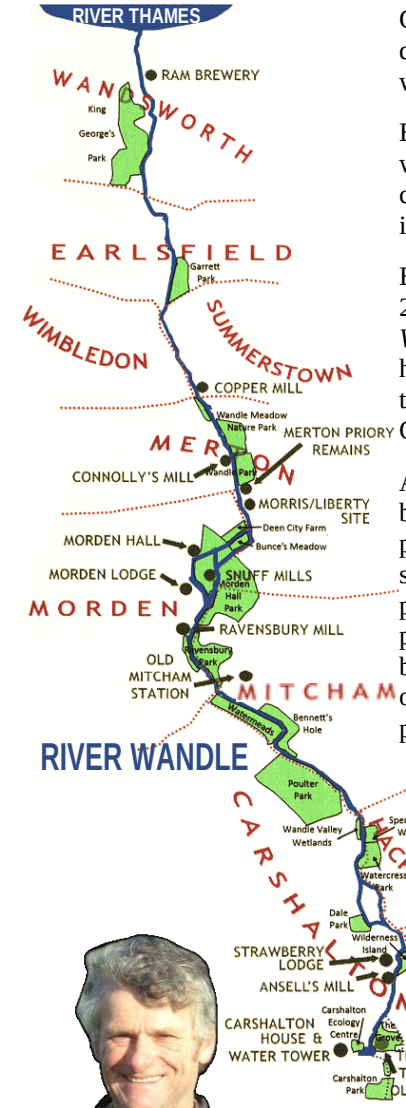
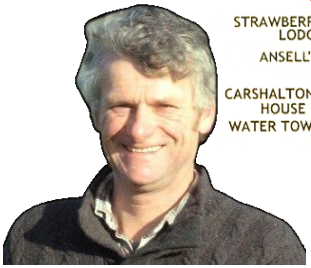
Robert (Bob) Steel 1955-2020
by Carole Roberts





CNHSS has been honoured to have received a donation of £1,000 in memory of Bob Steel, who passed away in 2020.

Bob lived in Carshalton for most of his life. He was a geography teacher and a keen rambler, cyclist, conservationist and supporter of green issues.

Bob was the author with Derek Coleman of the 2012 book *The River Wandle Companion and Wandle Trail Guide (whence map)* on the history, wildlife and restoration of the Wandle together with maps and walking guides from Croydon to the Thames.

As a long-term member of Croydon and Sutton branch of CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale) he produced books of pub walks and was a supporter of the preservation and heritage of public houses. In 2010 he played an important part in saving The Hope at Carshalton from becoming a restaurant, and later, as a part owner, supported improvements that led to prizes including Greater London Pub of the Year.

A campaigner for environmental issues, in the late 1970s he joined the Ecology Party, which later became the Green Party.

In 2015 Bob retired with his wife to Downton near Salisbury.

We are grateful to the Friends of Carshalton Water Tower for facilitating the donation.

A Postcard of Old Town, Croydon about 1905
by Carole Roberts

Images
Postcard of Old Town, Croydon about 1905
East side of Old Town: 1930s housing (2012)
Old Town Fire Station opened 1961 (1963)

See page 79

The CNHSS postcard pictured on the inside back cover shows Old Town in the early twentieth century. It was reproduced from a postcard of between 1902 and 1910 – an original card in the John Gent Postcard Collection has a divided back, permissible under England's Post Office rules from 1902, and another example found was posted in 1910. The original postcard was published by the London View Co. and was printed in Saxony, most coloured postcards of the early twentieth century being printed in Germany. The scene was copied by Evacustes Phipson in his painting 'Old Town, cor. Union Street, 1890', as shown in Proceedings vol. 21, Part 1, April 2020, p36: *Evacustes Phipson: his life and utopian views and an introduction to the Croydon paintings*. It is shown from a similar viewpoint in his painting 'Old Town, c1905' on page 44 of the same publication.

Old Town is the area of Croydon in the Wandle Valley which includes the Old Palace, the Parish Church of St John (now Minster) and Surrey Street. It was a centre of Croydon in medieval times when Croydon Palace was a residence of the Archbishops of Canterbury. Its valley location brought flooding and disease during the periodic rising of the Bourne which also runs through the valley. The area was described as 'Le Eldetoun' in the thirteenth century suggesting that settlement was then already moving uphill to the higher and drier High Street and surrounding area.

The postcard shows the street called Old Town, which runs south of the Minster and Old Palace on the A236 between Mitcham and South Croydon. We are looking north with the Minster and Old Palace being out of sight on the right, and behind us on the left Duppas Hill Lane leading up to Duppas Hill Recreation Ground.

On the left we glimpse part of numbers approximately 72-82 Old Town. The signboard is for The Roebuck beer house. The Roebuck was also a lodging house, an arrangement that caused disquiet amongst Croydon Corporation who felt 'there was nothing to prevent the inmates of the lodging house obtaining liquor after closing hours'.

On the right of the postcard are shown approximately numbers 85-107 Old Town, and part of number 109 on the far right. The building with the

wooden canopy, number 107, was a commercial premises – in 1894 of a wardrobe dealer, in 1898 of a fishmonger and in 1901 of a general dealer. Between numbers 107 and 109 was one of the two narrow entrances to the rather isolated Union Street. This contained the Jolly Bleachers public house, its name a reminder of the former bleaching trade at the nearby Old Palace after it was sold in 1780. Other licensed premises in Old Town were the George, the Globe and the Running Horse Inn. The last recalled the horse racing that formerly took place perhaps at Duppas Hill which then stretched as far as the land overlooking the grounds of the Old Palace, or perhaps in nearby woods.

The postcard portrays a clean and tidy scene but much of the Old Town housing suffered from the recurring flooding. When the Bourne rose the street was inundated and residents had to cross the road on planks for usually five or six weeks. Improvements were overlooked until the Housing Act, 1930 required local councils to clear any remaining slum housing, defined as where a local authority was satisfied that:

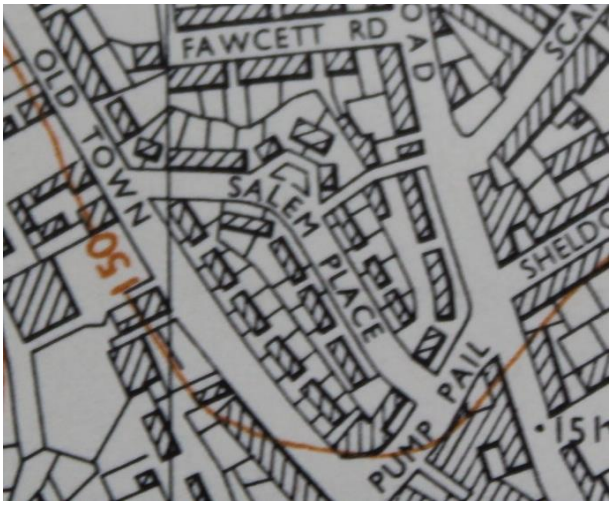
(i) the dwelling-houses in that area are by reason of disrepair or sanitary defects unfit for human habitation, or are by reason of their bad arrangement, or the narrowness or bad arrangement of the streets, dangerous or injurious to the health of the inhabitants of the area, and that the other buildings, if any, in the area are for a like reason dangerous or injurious to the health of the said inhabitants; and

(ii) the most satisfactory method of dealing with the conditions in the area is the demolition of all the buildings in the area.

Old Town was identified as a clearance area. There was some resistance within Croydon Corporation to such a major redevelopment in the economic slump of the 1930s with one Councillor considering that of the sixty houses he had visited ‘only fifteen houses were hopelessly insanitary’. However 91 houses were marked for demolition including numbers 97 to 107 on the right of the postcard and Union Street behind them. They were to be replaced by 56 houses and 36 flats, in and in front of a new road which was later named Salem Place.

In 1939, in a climate of increasing fear of incendiary devices being dropped from aeroplanes in the event of war, the land on the left of the postcard was purchased by Croydon Corporation to clear the way for demolition for a new fire station at the corner of Old Town and Duppas Hill Lane and for road widening. As with other construction plans in Croydon, World War Two intervened and some of the buildings remained until all were swept away for the Old Town Fire Station which opened in 1961.

Old Town in 1898, with a narrow passage through to Union Street. Ordnance Survey (1898) Surrey, Sheet XIV.10 1:2500, Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton



Old Town in 1958, when the houses on the right had been replaced by the 1930s housing in and in front of Salem Place and housing density is much lower. Ordnance Survey (1958) Surrey, Sheet TQ 36 NW 1:10,560, Ordnance Survey Office, Chessington.

Courtesy of Tony Skrzypczyk

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Postcard of Old Town, Croydon, about 1905 (see page 76)

East side of Old Town showing 1930s housing that replaced the wooden cottages shown in the postcard

Image capture: May 2012
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Old Town Fire Station, opened in 1961 on the west side of Old Town, pictured in 1963.

From a collection of 1963 slides on the Members' Page of the website provided by
Tony Skrzypczyk

CROYDON NATURAL HISTORY and SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY LIMITED

Founded in 1870 as the Croydon Microscopical Club

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SOCIETY OBJECTIVES

For the public benefit, to encourage the study of the sciences, especially the natural and local history and archaeology of the Croydon area, by organising lectures, members' talks, discussions, exhibitions, field meetings and surveys, by issuing publications, and by maintaining a library and a museum. The Society is concerned with original investigation, conservation, recording, curation, education, and incidental recreation.

MEETINGS

Unless otherwise stated, indoor meetings are held in the Small Hall of the East Croydon United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove, almost opposite East Croydon Station, at 19:45.

MUSEUM AND LIBRARY

The Society's own museum and library may be visited by arrangement with the curator and librarian respectively. Volunteers willing to help with cataloguing the geological and archaeological collection are welcome.

PROGRAMME

For further information and our full programme which includes a list of publications and directory, please go to our website www.cnhss.co.uk

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The Society's emblem is based on a bronze openwork disc found in 1893 in a Saxon cemetery in Edridge Road, between Croydon High Street and Park Lane. It is a rare example of a 5th- or 6th-century girdle ornament or amulet and can be seen at the Riesco Gallery of the Museum of Croydon.

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