CNHSS Bulletin

Issue 175 Spring 2023

Bulletin of the
Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society

For our programme of walks and talks
visit our website on
www.cnhss.co.uk

ISSN 0309-6149
Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society Limited
A company limited by guarantee registered in London No. 922278
Registered Office: 96a Brighton Road, South Croydon, CR2 6AD
Registered charity No. 260739
For ways of contacting the Society online see box on back cover

Your Society Needs You
Interested? – please contact information@cnhss.co.uk

Council
Would you like to serve as a member of our Council? You may have special interests or abilities which would enhance our effectiveness.
Meets seven times per year plus arranged 'strategy' days.

Committees
You may wish to apply your expertise on one of our Committees without necessarily joining Council. Finance, Library, Museum, Premises and Publicity Committees generally meet four times per year.

Investment Advisor
Is there a qualified Investment Advisor willing to give advice to Council?

Membership Secretary
Do you have good communication, organisational and computer skills to support our President and Hon, General Secretary? Do enquire about the duties involved. This role could be within or outside Council.

Publicity Officer
To steer our external presence including Social Media.

Leaders for outings/walks/visits
Open to any member who fancies putting together an event or events – could end at a hostelry. Perhaps something for our 'Celia Bailey Annual Expedition'?

If you are interested in any of the above
Please contact information@cnhss.co.uk

Overdue books
If you have borrowed books from the CNHSS library which are overdue: Please return them at any Society meeting. The lending period is one month.

Subscriptions overdue for 2023?
Subscriptions for 2023 were due on 1 January 2023.
If your subscription is outstanding, please refer to the latest Programme for 'RENEWAL / MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM' for the different categories of membership and how to pay.

COVER IMAGE by Ian Payne – Snowdrops Polesden Lacey, Spring 2023

Copy date for submission of articles for our Autumn Bulletin is 8th August 2023: bulletin@cnhss.co.uk

Members' contributions, letters etc. are welcome.

In this issue ***page***

Your Society Needs You 2

Editorial
Ian Payne 4

150th Anniversary Celebrations – Closing Events
Carole A Roberts (President) 5

Loan of Museum items to Forestdale Primary School
Carole A Roberts 6

Jim Davison – Archaeology and CNHSS Museum – Obituary 8

Paul Rainey 1946 – 2023: Paul's own story 12

Prehistoric flint technology – Part 3, Microliths
Christopher JW Taylor 13

New Council Members, Nicola Hunt, Jorn Cooper
Themselves 19

Overhead Telephone Wires in Croydon in late Victorian times
Ron Brooker 20

How important was Croydon Airport during WW2?
Wilson's School with introduction by Trevor James 27

Baldwin Latham and Sir Joseph Bazalgette
Vaughan Pomeroy 30

1958 Excavation of a Megalithic site at Spring Park
Christopher JW Taylor 33

Introducing Rosie Vizor, Croydon Borough Archivist
John I Hickman 42

Wilfred Thesiger, his two Explorations and his Last Years in Coulsdon
Brian Lancaster 43

100 Open Spaces in Croydon Part 3
Nicola Hunt 51

Saintly Landscapes of South East England
Trevor James 60

Illumination of Croydon Parish Church by electricity in January 1897
Ron Brooker 70

Postcard of East Croydon Station in 2007
Edward Hart 73

Editorial
by Ian Payne

We're all hoping that the pandemic is behind us, and certainly CNHSS is returning to its prime activity, for public benefit, by organising lectures, walks, visits and members' talks and discussions. We were delighted to be able to resume our two-year delayed 150th Anniversary Celebrations. Our Autumn 2022 edition carried articles on the opening event at Old Palace and ongoing programme. On page 5, President Carole Roberts looks back at the closing events, the last of which returned triumphantly to Old Palace.

During the pandemic, we kept members' interests alive by switching to Zoom meetings – and, of course, continuing to publish our Bulletin and Proceedings. We've used Zoom a few times since but we're mostly back to regular talks at East Croydon United Reformed Church in Addiscombe Grove. And we can look forward to more ecology walks to show off the seasons.

We are very pleased to have two new members of Council, Nicola Hunt and Jorn Cooper. They introduce themselves on page 19. We persuaded another member, Raymond Wheeler to join Council, but he then realised he had too many other commitments and had to resign. Unfortunately, Jim Bush stood down from Council for the same reason but maintains the role as Chairman of the Finance Committee. **We're still looking to fill various posts – not necessarily on Council – see 'Your Society Need You' on page 2.**

We have varied contributions to this edition of the Bulletin with popular ongoing series on 'Prehistoric flint technology' by Chris Taylor (who contributes elsewhere as well) and '100 Open Spaces in Croydon' by Nicola Hunt – both these serialisations present their 'Part 3'. Vaughan Pomeroy is a new member contributor (see page 30) – how about you?

We were very sad to hear of the deaths of two friends and former colleagues. Jim Davison, who died in January, worked at CNHSS's museum for many years and was our Archaeological Adviser until a few years ago. Jim's obituary is on page 8. Paul Rainey who died in January was a Director of CNHSS from 2002 to 2020 and our Hon. Treasurer from 2003 to 2018. Paul's own story is on page 12.

Finally, it appears that the Society's literary standards have slipped over the years. Brian Lancaster reports that when in January 2009, he gave the Croydon Advertiser notice of a talk by Ian Scales on 'The Byrons of Coulsdon', they printed notice of the event with an introduction: 'Poetry is the hot topic of conversation for the last in a series of historical talks'.

150th Anniversary Celebrations – Closing Events by Carole A Roberts

Our President, Carole Roberts, reports on the continuing celebrations through September and October.

Our talk of Monday 19th September was postponed as a mark of respect being the date of the Queen's funeral. Her Majesty had died on 8th September and we paid our respects at our visit to Croydon Minster on 13th September. We also remembered Celia Bailey who had arranged the visit and had died in May.

Our Anniversary Celebrations concluded with a 'Focus on Open Spaces' event at the Old Palace Croydon on 29th October with talks and displays on the open spaces of Croydon. This was a Ron Cox Memorial Event at which we remembered Ron's contributions to CNHSS. Talks were given by Tom Oliver, Information Ranger at City of London Corporation (based on Farthing Downs) and Nicola Hunt (see page 19) on visiting 100 Croydon Open spaces in 100 days.

Many societies concerning Open Spaces in Croydon were represented. Exhibitions were mounted by Carole Roberts (Early Public Open Spaces in Croydon from 1865 to the 1930s), Association of Croydon Conservation Societies (Green Map of Croydon), Friends of Farthing Downs & Happy Valley (Nature Trail booklet and details of London South Downs National Nature Reserve and London Green Belt). CNHSS itself ran a book stall. Other groups with posters were The Conservation Volunteers, Friends of South Norwood Lake & Grounds, The Wilderness Conservation Volunteers, Friends of King's Wood and the CNHSS Ornithology Group.

Ron Cox: At the event, our President addressed the meeting with this appreciation of Ron.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is a Ron Cox Memorial event. Ron was born in 1924. He was a teacher and, after he was appointed Head of History at Ashburton Secondary Modern School, the renowned local historian Dr Joan Thirsk suggested local history studies at Leicester university, for which his Master Thesis was 'Some aspects of the development of Croydon 1870-1940' and his Doctorate 'the development of Croydon 1830-1940'. Based on this, Ron contributed a section to the trail-blazing 1973 book, 'Perspectives in English Urban History'. His section was called 'The old centre of Croydon: Victorian decay and redevelopment', and he thus became a major contributor to the study of Croydon's local history.

Ron was a friend to CNHSS in numerous ways, being on our Council for 25 years (to 1997) and President for two of them (1977-1979). He wrote for us two Proceedings: in 1992 'At the going down of the Sun', an account of Croydon's war memorials; and in 2014 'The Happiest Days?' (with a question mark): life as seen through Croydon school log books. He gave us many interesting and perceptive talks, including for our 125th anniversary in 1995 called 'Three black rats, a cuddly cheetah and several persons of distinction'. Over his lifetime to us and others he gave nearly 2,000 talks, actually 1,972, which is close enough for me. His last ever talk was to the society in 2016, on how the study of local history had changed during his lifetime, which was published in our Proceedings of 2017.

He died in 2018.

Ron left us a bequest which has made it possible for us to return here to this wonderful venue where we started our delayed 150th celebrations in April.

Loan of Museum items to Forestdale Primary School by Carole A Roberts

For the second year running we have lent items from our Museum to Forestdale Primary School, which was feasible because the school has glass 'fishbowl' containers for the protection of the items.
This year the items chosen were to support the school's curriculum in the Stone Age to Iron Age (Year 3), The Romans (Year 4), and World War II (Year 6). The items lent were:

From the Stone Age:
- A neolithic axe from Beech House Road Croydon
- A knife found in Croydon
- A leaf arrowhead found in Essendene Road Sanderstead
- A scraper from Godstone
- A blade from Waddon

From the Bronze Age:
- An axe from the Beddlestead hoard near Chelsham

From the Roman period:
- A fragment of Samian ware
- A Roman coin found in Hanover Street Croydon

From World War II:
- A child's gas mask
- An A.R.P. whistle
- A 1942-3 clothing book.

Chris Taylor and Carole Roberts delivered a talk to Year 6 pupils at the school on World War II in Croydon and Forestdale.

Museum items lent to Forestdale Primary School

Thank you for the Stone Age artefacts. It really helped us learn about what they used in the Stone Age. We really enjoyed. We learnt new thing. We just want to say a big Thank you!

Thank you notes from the children

To the museum thank you so much for the artefacts by maple class

To Muesum
We have had a lovely time looking after your Artefacts.

Thank you for lending us the Stone Age artefacts. They really helped us learn about what they used back then.
We love History

Jim Davison – Archaeology and CNHSS Museum Obituary

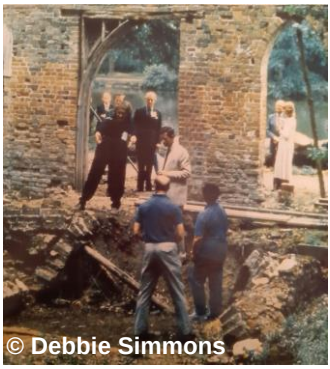
In January we learned, with great sadness, of the death of Jim Davison on January 5th. Jim was a keen archaeologist and for many years was very involved with CNHSS, of which he was a member for 51 years, and with the Surrey Archaeological Society of which he was Director of Excavations from the late 1980s taking over from the late Muriel Shaw.

James was born in Burnopfield, a small mining village in North West County Durham in November 1934. He was the sixth of seven children of Robert, who fought, and was gassed in the First World War and who was a coal miner for 50 years, and his wife Ruth. Jim passed the 11+ and went to the local Grammar School. He left school at 16 and worked in the Grainger Market in Newcastle on Tyne for a year. At 18 he would have been conscripted into the army. On the advice of his father and elder brother Alan, both of whom had served in the Durham Light Infantry, he volunteered for the RAF as soon as he was 17. He trained on Salisbury Plain, close to Stonehenge. Although he entertained hopes of becoming a pilot, he eventually moved into the military police and trained as a police marksman, a skill he retained. He served five years in the RAF during which he was for most of the time stationed on the German/Dutch Border. He was demobbed from Northolt in North West London.

After leaving the RAF he decided to remain in London as unemployment in his native North East was high and he stood a better chance of work in London. He worked at Stanfords the famous map shop in Long Acre. At this time he met his future wife Helen and they married moving to Tooting when his eldest daughter Deborah was born. The family moved to South Norwood in 1963. Their second daughter Andrea was born shortly after they moved. By this time Jim was working at Phillips Electricals on the Purley Way, eventually moving to South Croydon in 1977.

Jim had a lifelong passion for history and was passionate about preserving historical parts of Croydon. Jim took part in archaeological digs all over the south of England. One of the more interesting digs Jim took part in was the restoration of Painshill Park during the 1980s. King Charles, then Prince of Wales visited the site and spoke at length to Jim. He said the King was very interested in what was happening and was very well informed about the history of the site and the work involved in an archaeological dig of this nature.

Some years later Jim, and his partner Liz, went back to visit the restored gardens and Jim introduced himself to one of the staff who in turn introduced Jim to one of the senior staff at Painshill. They made a great fuss of him and some weeks later he was invited to return officially to a reception where he was presented with a framed photograph of him talking to the then Prince of Wales. He was very proud of the photo.



Jim with King (then Prince) Charles

Jim was active in excavations at a time before the introduction of PPG16 in 1990 which largely limited excavation to professional "Units". Richard Savage recalls 'Jim was an enthusiastic member of the team of volunteers for fieldwork throughout the seven years from 1973 to 1978 during which I ran the excavation activities of the Archaeology Section before I moved away from Croydon in 1979. Pam and I remember above all else his cheerfulness, which never wavered however severe the inevitable short timescales involved in the 'rescue archaeology' of the period.' Amongst the numerous excavations in which Jim took part, the most significant were: the important Roman site at 14 Whitgift Street Croydon, which he and Geoff Potter published in the London Archaeologist (1998, 8: 227-232); at "Redcourt" 27 Stanhope Road Croydon, which he wrote a report on for the Surrey Archaeological Society (SyAS) Bulletin (1985, v. 199); the 1972 very muddy excavation of the Medieval double-moated site at South Norwood Sewage farm/Beckenham. Richard Savage remembers of this expedition 'Jim was not in the slightest degree ever downcast by rain, wind or mud; at the excavation of a double-moated site at South Norwood sewage works in 1972 the mud was of World War 1 proportions, yet we excavated at some depth the base timbers of the medieval bridge crossing the moats'.

Richard Savage remembers that on earlier excavations Jim was essentially a 'digger' rather than a finds specialist working on post-excavation analysis, but that 'when push came to shove – as it did after the two-week Lodge Lane training excavation in 1975 – Jim turned out cheerfully that autumn with two other 'invitees' to help Pamela and me undertake a thorough review and re-ordering of the site records of 'contexts' and the artefacts spread across them.'

At the subsequent 1978 excavations at Mere Bank and Violet Lane Croydon, Jim acted as assistant director of the digs and conducted negotiations for permissions to discover any evidence of a Roman road. Richard Savage was very grateful to Jim for taking on the role of Assistant Director and Logistics Manager for the excavations in 1978 at a time when Richard could attend

only on the days of digging. Jim got involved in some very difficult excavations, including that at Addington, with Richard and with Lilian Thornhill, where he was part of the team that excavated a medieval well shaft down to a depth of 25 metres. Jim reported on other excavations in the Society's Archaeology Newsletter: 1981, Whitgift Alms-houses (53); 1984, Duppas Hill Road (60); 1985, 99/101 Park Lane Croydon (63); 1986, 94 Park Lane, Croydon (67); 1991, Coombe Road and St Peter's Road (79). In 1990 he undertook a dig in the front garden of a house in Old Palace Road, directly opposite the Great Hall of the Palace. Here he met Liz Malarkey and a deep friendship was formed which lasted until his death.

His work in archaeology was not confined to excavation. In the 1980s Jim was the CNHSS representative on the SyAS Research Committee for at least one four-year term, and a member of the South-West London Archaeological Liaison Committee. He was also Local Secretary for Croydon for the Surrey Archaeological Society for many years, and was on the Mid-Croydon Conservation Area Advisory Panel, a body which examines proposed developments in Conservation Areas in and around Croydon. He was Chairman of the Panel until 2019 when he retired after his diagnosis for Alzheimer's. His contribution to the Panel was invaluable due to his intimate knowledge of Croydon and its long history. During the 1990s, he conducted numerous history walks around Croydon. These were well attended and very popular. At the same time, together with Liz Malarkey, he visited care homes and schools in the borough giving illustrated talks on the history and archaeology of Croydon.

Jim worked at the CNHSS Museum for many years where he was a very valued expert consultant on any aspect of Croydon's archaeology. He put together a very comprehensive gazetteer of Roman Croydon which is kept at the Society's Museum. He gave talks on archaeology, for example for the Merton Historical Society in April 2000 where he gave an update on Croydon's archaeology. Together with Liz, and other volunteers, a comprehensive catalogue of the Bennett Collection was created and the artefacts reorganised and stored to museum standards, under the expert guidance of Dr. Jill Cook of the British Museum. At the same time the catalogue was computerised. He remained the CNHSS archaeology advisor until 2019. He also represented CNHSS on the London Archaeological Forum.

Richard Savage was pleased when Jim took over leadership of the CNHSS team when he departed for the Midlands, although by then Scott McCracken and his South London unit had become responsible for most 'development' excavations in Croydon. Jim kept in touch with Richard for the rest of his life.

Jim curated a lot of material from excavations in his garage and Chris Taylor

recalls Jim requesting quite recently that the Museum take on the role of looking after this material. A small CNHSS team subsequently moved many boxes from his house in Brantwood Road, South Croydon to the Museum.

In 2008 Jim developed prostate problems for the third time and was admitted to Croydon University Hospital in February 2009. The surgery was not undertaken under general anaesthetic as discussed but, at the last minute, by epidural. We believe an infection was introduced while he was at the hospital. Eventually a crisis point was reached and Jim was readmitted to CUH and finally transferred to St. George's Hospital for emergency spinal surgery. Jim was by now paraplegic and was told by the surgeon the damage to his spine caused by the undiagnosed spinal abscess was so great he would never be able to walk again. However they underestimated Jim who, after several months in The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in Stanmore, was discharged, still wheelchair dependent but with some mobility. Eventually, with absolute determination, and a lot of support from Liz he learnt to walk again. With the support of Liz and his daughters he sued the NHS for negligence and, after three years, was awarded damages and compensation. In later life Jim sadly developed Alzheimer's and moved to James Terry care home in June 2022 where he was very well looked after and settled well. He was able to continue going out and about with Liz which he greatly enjoyed. Shortly before going into James Terry Court, Jim and Liz joined The Magnolia Club at Christ Church in Gipsy Hill. It is club run by Age UK Lambeth especially for people with dementia and their carers. He got a great deal of support, and pleasure from the club and he was very popular, so much so that the club was closed on the day of his funeral so members could attend and indeed they did.

Jim is survived by, his Partner, Liz Malarkey, his two daughters, four grandsons and two great grandsons.

Jim in June 2022 when he visited the CNHSS Museum

With thanks to Chris Taylor, Richard Savage, Liz Malarkey and Jim's daughter Debbie Simmons.

Paul Rainey 1946 – 2023
Paul's own story

Paul was a good friend and colleague, having been a Director of CNHSS from 2002 to 2020 and its Hon. Treasurer from 2003 to 2018. We understand that he had also been the treasurer of eight small charitable groups including Bromley Quaker Meeting. *The Bulletin is about to go to press, so we offer an extract from of Paul's own story written by himself in 2018, and hope to bring a better appreciation of his story in our next edition. Ed.*

From Paul's own memoirs dated 16 November 2018
I was born in Barberton, South Africa. But at the age of eight we came back to England, after my sister died from, and I was recovering from, polio. We then lived in Pinner in Middlesex. I studied for my Geology Degree at Newcastle-Upon-Tyne.

The progress to independence of African Colonies was always of interest to me and my first job on qualifying was as part of the British Overseas Aid Effort. I was in Kenya involved in exploring for lead and zinc. Later, I worked for Balfour Beatty in the design and construction of a hydro-electric project on the Tana River.

Returning to England in 1978, I moved into the Bromley flat in which I still live. However, 1981 saw me crossing the Andes to work on a hydro-electric project close to Santiago in Chile. I was lucky enough to spend a few weeks as a tourist trying to follow as closely as possible the route followed by Charles Darwin during his Voyage on the Beagle. 1982 found me in Peru on another major project but, unfortunately, I contracted leukaemia and was flown back to England for five rounds of quite drastic chemotherapy at Hammersmith Hospital.

In 1986 I was on a small survey ship looking at the geology for the design of the Channel Tunnel. But it was there that I suffered my first epileptic seizure. I believe it was that event which prompted my first visit to a Quaker Meeting in September 1992. I could see others were clearly helped by the worship. There seemed to be a good chance that I might also be helped.

At about this time I joined a group of people to found and run the Ravensbourne Geological Society. The society ran field trips, a lecture programme and Saturday morning children's events.

From 2004 for about 7 years, on the first Saturday of every month, I joined a group of Friends *[Quakers]* at a peace Vigil in Trafalgar Square. The annual Conscientious Objectors Day in Tavistock Square has become a regular point in my diary.

Prehistoric flint technology – Part 3
by Christopher JW Taylor

Part 3 – Microliths

Microliths are artefacts that date to the Mesolithic in the UK. They are small, thin, slithers of flint, typically only a few centimetres long, carefully retouched (or "worked"), on one or more edges to form a tool. They were shaped into a variety of forms shown by Figure 1. The 'slithers' of flint were struck from a microblade core (see Bulletin 173, 15). This produced small blades, the "blanks" from which the microlith was shaped. Their main function seems to have been as arrow tips but other uses are very probable as indicated by their many forms.

Functions

The obliquely blunted point (Figure 1) seems to have been used as the point or barb for arrows. At Lilla, Loshult, Sweden, an almost complete arrowshaft, preserved in a bog, had an obliquely blunted point embedded, with its blunted edge innermost in a strip of resin (Figure 4). At the iconic early Mesolithic site of Star Carr, Yorkshire, a microlith was found with resin still attached, indicating it had been incorporated into something else (Clark, 1954, 103, 161 & plate 20). At Seamer Carr, also Yorkshire, 16 microliths were found possibly arranged along a single (decayed) wooden shaft. Microliths have been found embedded in animal bones (Butler, 88).

Some microliths are very small indeed – sometimes just a few millimetres long – and their working is only visible under a lens. What these and some other types were used for is not clear; it seems from the variety of shapes that not all were used as arrow tips. Other uses may have been for fishing, food processing (grating?), drill bits, cutting, points for piercing, and possibly tattooing (Butler, 88 & British Museum Guide, 1911,126).

Typology and form

There are many forms of microlith and the typology is barely skimmed here. Clark (1933, 52-77) split microliths into two general classes (Figure 1): non-geometric (mainly obliquely blunted points) attributed to the Early Mesolithic, and geometric forms (rods, trapezes, triangles) of the Later Mesolithic (Figure 1). Hollow-based or "basally modified" forms (mainly Horsham Points) are placed towards the middle Mesolithic. The forms were further coded by Jacobi (1978). Work by Reynier (2005) and Conneller (2021 & www) has focused the dating of changes in the types of microliths during the Mesolithic. Some writers see each type as being within a continuously variable pattern or spectrum of shapes (e.g., Finlayson & Mithen, 1997, 113, Figure 4).

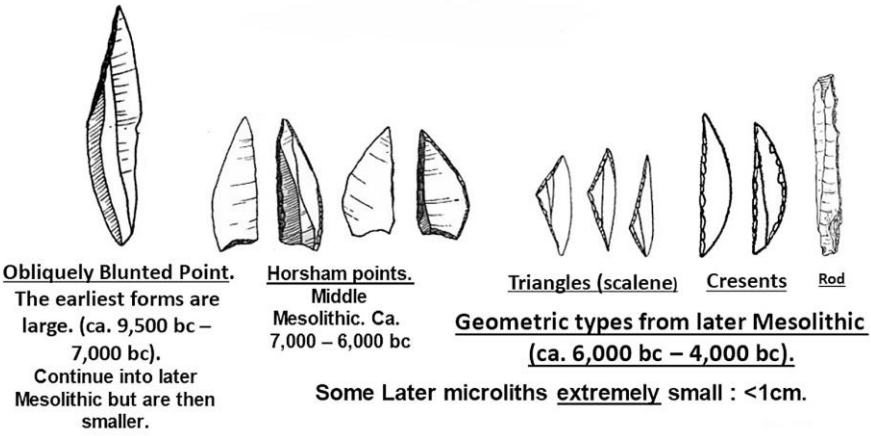
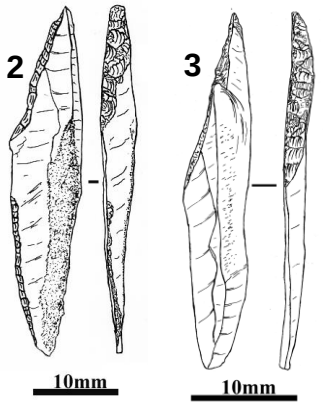


Figure 1: The main forms of microlith in the UK. Dates approximate. All are flint and based on thin blades which have been worked on one or more edges (e.g., top left edge on the obliquely blunted point example). The largest found are usually no longer than ca 7cm, more often 2 – 3cm.
The obliquely blunted point is probably the most ubiquitous.

The reasons for the different sizes and shapes of microliths are debated. In addition to function, factors worth considering are: cultural (new peoples from Europe; isolation of Britain as an island, handed down local techniques), environmental (different, smaller animals due to climate changes) and, important, all of these interwoven. The smallness in size, especially of some extreme examples, raises the question: were they made by children?

Dating



In the UK microliths are only found on Mesolithic sites and then cease in the archaeological record at the end of the period.
Figure 2: Obliquely blunted point (OBP) from Orchard Hill Carshalton. Showing plan (left) and edge view. 42mm long.
(Taylor 2018, 200).

Figure 3: Obliquely blunted point from Wangford Fen Norfolk. Plan and edge view. From the Society's Collection, Accession number 14/6/B423/3. 34mm long.
(Author's illustration).

It should be noted, though, that microliths are dated as early as 25,000 years

ago in parts of Europe. There seems to be a continuity of the working or "blunting" of the edges of blades from Late Upper Palaeolithic when the edges of quite small blades were also worked or "blunted" and various tool shapes were made, some of which are somewhat similar to microliths (see Campbell, 1977, vol 2, 151A & Bulletin 171, 64-74). In the Mesolithic microliths tend to become smaller as the period progresses (Butler 2005, 96), becoming geometric at the end of the period. Some of the longest in Britain are from the early sites in Kennet Valley, near Marlborough (Froom, 2012, 157 & 161).

Microliths are a very good dating artefact because of their disappearance in the late Mesolithic and the changes in typology within the period (Figure 1). Microlith typology has the advantage of being from a period for which there are a large number of radio-carbon dates to back up the association of each type to different phases (e.g., see Reynier, 66, 108 & 113 for lists of radiocarbon dates for sites and Conneller www & Conneller, 2021).

Figure 4: Microliths attached to arrow shaft. Found Loshult, Sweden. (From Kozlowski, 2009, 65)

Formation

Microliths were probably formed from the blade-blank using a variety of techniques. The so-called microburin or snapping technique is illustrated (Figure 5). Not all microliths were produced using this technique. Some blade edges may have simply been scraped across a rock or the whole edge(s) worked directly with the point of an antler tine. Evidence of the microburin technique is from some fascinating finds, which, for some reason, were left in a half-prepared state, often with the notch, but not snapped (see Figure 6). The blade was almost always notched at the thickest, i.e., bulb of percussion (see Bulletin 173, 15-16), end. The reason was possibly to ensure the point was formed at the strongest part of the piece so it could withstand the impact with an animal. The tiny facet (Figures 5 & 7) on the ventral face of the microburin is an almost universal feature on microburins I've seen (many hundreds), although experimentation has shown the special technique does not always produce it (Butler, 89).

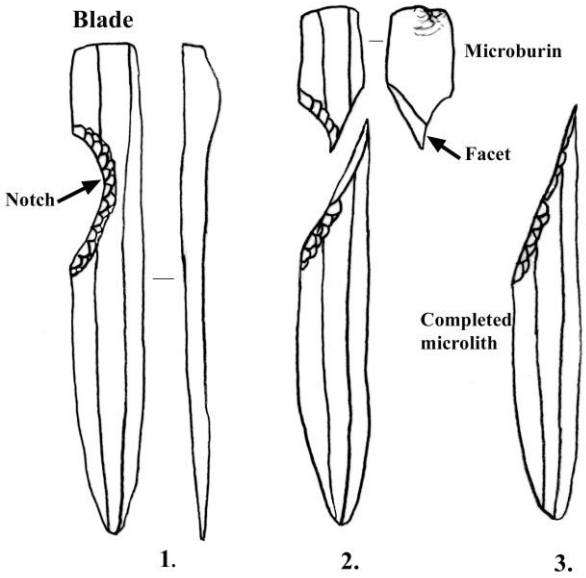


Figure 5: The microburin technique.
1. A blade with bulb of percussion at the top; edge view shown right. It is notched to form a weak point.
2. The top part (the microburin, waste) is snapped off leaving the pointed form, . . .
3. . . . which is further slightly worked along the snapped-edge.
(Based on Wymer, 1991, 49). Compare to Figures 6 and 7.

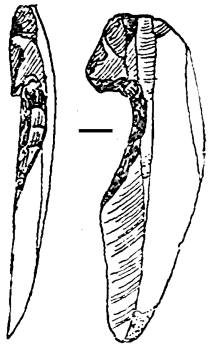


Figure 6: The formation of microliths as exampled by finds that are apparently only partially completed. From Kettlebury (Rankine, 1946, 10, Figure 2/1).

So far there has been nothing to show that the microburin was not simply a waste product of the microburin technique, i.e., it was not used as a tool in its own right. (This is not to overlook "Burins" which were larger pointed tools used to groove antler and are a separate class of lithics in their own right – see CNHSS Bulletin 168, 42-45 for examples.)

Distribution

Studies of find distribution patterns show that lithic assemblages on sandier soils tend to have a higher proportion of microliths to other tools. Microliths are interpreted as an integral part of Mesolithic hunting equipment, i.e. to arm arrows. On that basis it seems, with a greater emphasis on such equipment

in sandier geology and axes on clay soils, that hunting was a more attractive proposition on sandier soils, possibly because of lighter vegetation. Similarly, higher areas seem to have marked concentrations of microliths and are interpreted as summer hunting grounds (Barton, 1992, 253-255).

Over two thousand microliths and microburins have been reported from Surrey alone by Wymer's 1977 Gazetteer of Mesolithic sites in England and Wales. This does not include the numbers from important Surrey sites where finds were so numerous they were not reported in the gazetteer numerically.

Further afield, microliths are not only found in Europe but also in Africa and Asia (Coles et al, 1969).

History of discovery

Microliths were not identified as tools until the 19th century. This is probably because they were just discarded or missed altogether in excavations due to their very small size. Early references are by Sir John Evans, FSA, (1872, 249 & 251, Figure 193) and Thomas Honywood (sic, 1877, 180) although neither actually used the term "microlith". Evans mentions sites at Reigate and Seaford, both now famous for microliths. In particular Evans makes only a passing reference to minute flakes in relation to what is clearly a single-platform microblade core, identified at Weaverthorpe, North Yorkshire. He states, "Such small objects are so liable to escape observation, that though they may exist in considerable numbers, they are but rarely found on the surface of the ground ".

Microliths were included in mainstream literature at least by 1911 when the British Museum Guide provided a full general account and illustrated several types from Lancashire. The relatively early article (1877) by Thomas Honywood in the Sussex Archaeological Collections is interesting because he actually illustrates a microlith. Unfortunately, the illustration lacks the detail to show its worked edge. He ventures the idea that they "might have served as arrow-points being fixed to a shaft of wood." A very good write-up (referred to in this paragraph) of the history of the recognition of microliths in the UK can be found at:
https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/opar-2022-0100/html?lang=en

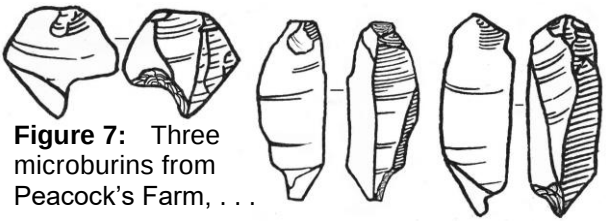


Figure 7: Three microburins from Peacock's Farm, . . . Shippea Hill, Cambridge (Clarke, 1955, 8, Figure 2). Both sides shown of each. The facet is clear in the left view of each.

References

Barton, R.N.E., 1992, Hengistbury Head Dorset. Vol. 2: The Late Upper Palaeolithic and Early Mesolithic sites. Oxford University Committee for Archaeology. Monograph No. 34.

British Museum Trustees, 1911, A Guide to the Antiquities of the Stone Age.

Butler, C., 2005, Prehistoric Flintwork. Tempus.

Campbell, J.B., 1977, The Upper Palaeolithic of Britain. A Study of Man and Nature in the Late Ice Age. Clarendon Press, Oxford. In 2 volumes.

Clark, J.G.D., 1933, The Classification of a microlithic culture: The Tardenoisian of Horsham. The Archaeological Journal, vol. 90.

Clark, J.G.D., 1954, Excavations at Star Carr. CUP.

Clarke, J., 1955, A Microlithic Industry from the Cambridgeshire Fenland and other Industries of Sauveterrian Affinities from Britain. Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society, 21.

Coles, J.M., & Higgs, E.S., The Archaeology of Early Man. Faber and Faber, London.

Conneller, C: https://www.academia.edu/34410201/The_resettlement_of_the_British_landscape_Towards_a_chronology_of_Early_Mesolithic_lithic_assemblage_types (accessed 2023).

Conneller, C., 2021, The Mesolithic in Britain: Landscape and Society in Times of Change. Routledge Archaeology of Northern Europe.

Evans, J., 1872, The Ancient stone implements weapons and ornaments of Great Britain. Longmans, London.

Finlayson, B. & Mithen, S., 1997, The microwear and morphology of microliths from Glenn Mor. In: Projectile Technology, ed. Knecht, H. Chap 4. 107-129.

Froom, R., 2012, The Mesolithic of the Kennet Valley.

Honywood, T., 1877, Discovery of flint implements near Horsham, in St Leonard's Forest. Sussex Archaeological Collections, 27, 176-183

Jacobi, R., 1978, The Mesolithic of Sussex; in: Archaeology in Sussex to AD 1500. CBA Research Report 29. Ed. Drewett, P.

Kozlowski, S.K., 2009, Thinking Mesolithic. Short Run Press, Exeter.

Rankine, W.F., 1946, Some remarkable flints from West Surrey Mesolithic Sites. Surrey Archaeological Collections, 49, 6-19.

Reynier, M., 2005, Early Mesolithic Britain, origins, development and directions. BAR British Series, vol 393.

Taylor, C., English, J, Ellaby, R., 2018, Excavations at Orchard Hill Carshalton 1964-5. Surrey Archaeological Collections, vol. 101, 195-208.

Wymer, J.J., 1991, Mesolithic Britain. Shire Archaeology.

Wymer, J.J., 1977, Gazetteer of Mesolithic sites in England and Wales. CBA Research Report No. 20.

The recognition of microliths in history:- https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/opar-2022-0100/html?lang=en

New Council Members by themselves

Nicola Hunt

I am delighted to have joined the CNHSS Council and look forward to contributing further to the aims and activities of the Society. The borough of Croydon is where I grew up, went to school and have always lived so it is a significant part of who I am. Having spent over 35 years in health care, I retired in 2020 and now enjoy spending more time doing activities very much related to the natural world and conservation. From a young age I was interested in birds and over time this extended to conservation and I joined Croydon Conservation Volunteers over 25 years ago and continue to volunteer regularly with local groups. I participate in Citizen Science recording and monitoring projects relating to birds and insects. I enjoy gardening and together with knowledge I have gained about the natural world I manage an allotment and my garden with wildlife in mind. I hope that my skills learnt though my working career and from my interests will provide value to my role on CNHSS Council.

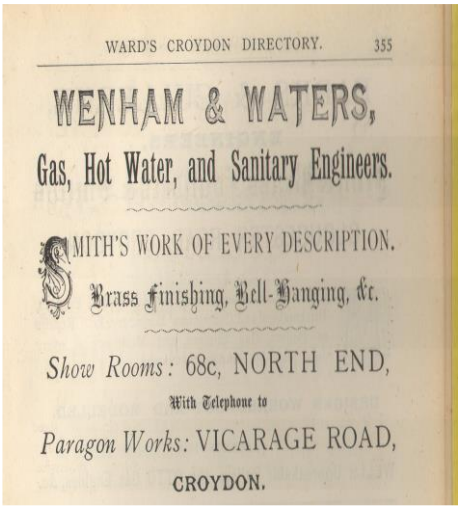
Jorn Cooper

My name is Jorn Cooper, I have been a member of the Society for a few years now and feel honoured to be invited to join the Council.

I have lived in the Borough of Croydon since 1985.

In respect of my interests, currently I am the Honorary Secretary of the Bensham Manor Bowling Club. I am very interested in history, both local and international. As to hobbies, the “Croydon” facebook site is owned and administered by myself, as is The Bensham Manor Bowling Club, Bury St Edmunds and Proud, Ixworth Secondary Modern – student and teachers pages. Also I am doing research in the British Library when I have the time, and visiting my favourite UK museum, The Wallace Collection.

Saga of the Overhead Telephone Wires in Croydon in late Victorian times
by Ron Brooker



WARD'S CROYDON DIRECTORY. 355

WENHAM & WATERS,

Gas, Hot Water, and Sanitary Engineers.

SMITH'S WORK OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.

Brass Finishing, Bell-Hanging, &c.

Show Rooms: 68c, NORTH END,

With Telephone to

Paragon Works: VICARAGE ROAD,

CROYDON.

Ward's Croydon Directory 1887

See 'In 1887 . . . ' on page 25

In my ongoing research into the history of Wenham & Waters[1], a Croydon firm of sanitary, heating, electrical engineers, iron and brass founders, &c., during the late Victorian and Edwardian era, I came across an item in a local newspaper of 1883 regarding their stringing of telephone wires across Croydon from the High Street to Pitlake, that caused me to look further into the matter of the telephone wires at that time.

In late Victorian times businesses and the general public largely relied on communication by letter or by a message sent by telegraph. The advent of the telephone at that time, mainly for use by businesses before it was regulated in its implementation was a cause for concern for the local board of health and the subsequent Croydon council as reports of the council's meetings in the local newspapers was to show.

The use of the telephone was seen as becoming a convenient and rapid mode of communication between places of business, and at a meeting of the Croydon Local Board of Health, reported in the *Croydon Times* of 4 August 1880, the Roads Committee read an application from Messrs. Godson[2] for permission to carry a telephone wire from the chimney stack of their office in George Street to their offices in the Station Yard, the height of the wire being about 50-ft. from the level of the footpath. The recommendation was that the

application be declined. At a subsequent meeting of the Board in September of that year, an application from Messrs. Godson for permission to place an iron pipe with telephone wires underground to connect their offices in George Street and East Croydon Yard, a distance of about 100 feet was recommended to be granted on certain conditions – i.e. 'That the tube was laid to the satisfaction of the road Surveyor, and that all cost of repair of roadway etc., should be paid by the applicant, who should also pay a nominal rent of one shilling per annum, and a proper agreement be entered into.'

The parish of Croydon was created a municipal borough in 1883 and it would appear that the procedure for installing telephone lines in the town had already been established, but that was not to be the case. The *Croydon Chronicle* of 3 November 1883 under its column "Observer's Letters to the Editor" printed *"There seems to be in a great many cases a justifiable outcry against the dangerous practice of fixing telegraph wires overhead. I observe during the past week some of these wires have been fixed in the High Street, not directly across, but traversing the street for a considerable distance in one of the busiest parts, and where tramcars are constantly standing. Where were the eyes of our local authorities at the time these wires were placed in position?"*.

It was at a meeting of the Croydon Corporation on 9 November 1883 that the Road Surveyor reported that Wenham and Waters were fixing telephone wires from 41 High Street, and that he was informed that they intended to carry them across Church and Tamworth Roads to Mr. Ebbutt's[3] stables at Pitlake. Were these telephone wires the telegraph wires referred to in the Observer's letter to the *Croydon Chronicle*? No application had been made to the Council for permission to carry out that work for Mr. Ebbutt and the Committee recommended that the town clerk gave notice that the Council would not sanction any overhead wires in the public streets, and required them and any other persons who had already erected wires to immediately remove them.

Cllr. Cleft objected to the prohibiting of overhead telephone wires, to which there were cries of 'Hear, hear'. He stated that if it was agreed to, Croydon would be looked upon as going back instead of going forward with the times. He did, however, think it was quite right that the wires should be under the control of the engineer and surveyor, but he would not veto them. As to their being unsightly, he was afraid that in that practical age they must not study the beautiful too much, and moved that the paragraph from the report be referred back.

Cllr. Pelton seconded the amendment pointing out that a great feature in the telephone was its economical adaptation, and that if all the wires were

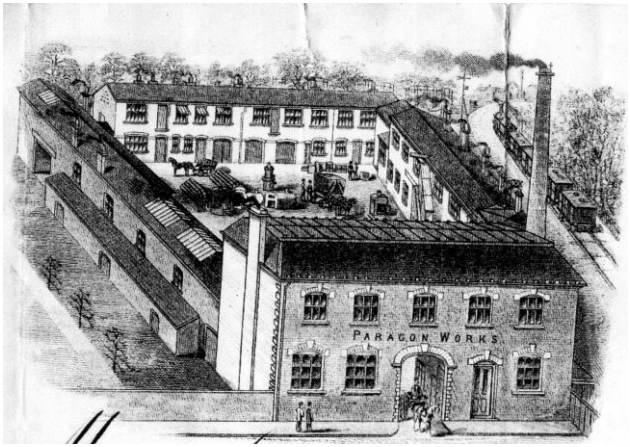
compelled to pass underground, it would be at a great expense and a great hindrance to one of the triumphs of modern science. The mayor, Mr. J. Spencer Balfour suggested that the paragraph was not referred back but be deferred for consideration at the next meeting.

At the 3 December meeting of the Council the matter of telephone wires was again brought up. Alderman Layton moved the adoption of the paragraph at the last meeting which recommended the Council to refuse to sanction any telephone wires being erected over the streets, and to require those persons who had erected such wires to remove them and place them underground. Layton said that his firm at first had a telephone wire erected over the streets, apparently not in Croydon, but were taking steps to have them removed. The Clerk of the Council said that Wenham and Waters had written to say that through the nature of the soil in Croydon it was impossible for telephonic communication to be worked by underground wires, and that if the Council prohibited overhead wires they would prohibit telephonic communication in Croydon altogether.

Alderman Coldwells said that it was an important matter that the Council should consider before any vote was taken on the subject. Evidently the Telephonic Exchange Company proposed bringing one wire to Croydon which would put the whole of the Croydon tradesmen in communication with the 8,000 business firms in London, and through London, it would also put them in communication with the manufacturers of Birmingham, for they now talked from London to Birmingham, and they had talked from London to York. Seeing to the future, he said there was no doubt that before long they would be able to talk from London to America, which brought forth laughter. Evidently the wires at that time were suspended over the Town Hall which he admitted were of a very dangerous character. They were of one entire length without any fastenings for safety, that they were of the worst construction, and if they broke, the consequences might be serious. The accidents that had occurred were due to old-fashioned wires, but new wire was invented, weighing three pounds to the mile, and whilst the old wire over the Town Hall had not been put to any test, every piece of the new telephonic wire had been subjected to a strain of two tons weight, and that the wire that the Council were asking to be taken down would take a strain of two to three tons, also the old wire was galvanised whereas the present wire was not. On the question of necessity for these wires, he had, as he put it, that day talked through a telephonic wire at a foundry that was becoming an important foundry in Croydon.

As the Council were anxious that gentlemen should come to Croydon and establish factories and give permanent employment to the working classes,

if they were to adopt stringent regulations that were proposed, it might keep them away. The foundry he alluded to, not mentioning Wenham & Waters by name, employed more than a hundred that day, and the firm had established a showroom in the centre of the town, but that would be useless to them as they would have to shut it up if they could not have telephonic communication between their showroom and their works and that if Alderman Layton's motion was passed, the Council would practically agree to drive that factory out of the town. As he had been told that the new wires were so sensitive that the electric fluid became less to a large degree if placed underground, he was of the opinion that the matter should be referred to a scientific man in order that the Council had proper information on the subject. Wenham & Waters showroom had been opened in the May of 1883 at 68c North End and their "Paragon Works" were situated in the Vicarage Road at Waddon.



© R. Brooker

The Paragon Works, Vicarage Road, Waddon, Croydon in the 1880s, prior to expansion on adjoining land on its south side

Cllr. Morland was in agreement with Alderman Coldswell and supported the suggestion that further information on the subject was obtained before they decided the question. Alderman Barrow thought that the day was not far distant when they would be a necessity, and become part of everyday life and could see the day when families living in the extreme parts of the borough would have telephonic communications attached to their houses, so that they might speak their orders to tradesmen at their own convenience as had long been the case in America where ladies gave their orders to the tradesmen just as they gave them to their servants. Although it was said that telephone wires darkened the streets, the fatal risk attending the overhead wires was infinitesimal and imaginary, although admitting there were fatal risks, what he saw as important was the fact that if wires were prevented from being carried overhead they would prevent altogether telephonic communication in Croydon.

Alderman Layton admitted that a case had been made for further inquiry as to whether it was possible to take the wires underground, and the mayor remarked that when the committee reconsidered this question they might also consider the question of the telegraph wires in connection with the Post Office. Alderman Layton withdrew his motion, and the recommendation was referred back yet again for reconsideration by the Roads Committee.

Several years before, the inhabitants of Thornton Heath and Broad Green applied to the authorities for better telegraphic facilities, but the former Local Board refused to allow the Postmaster General to carry a wire along the London Road, and the result had been that the district of Broad Green and Thornton Heath was under the inconvenience of having to send a messenger with a telegraph message to Croydon.

Evidently the installation of the telephone wire for Mr. Ebbutt had been completed as at the 17 December meeting of the Council, which were then held fortnightly, the Road Surveyor reported for the Roads Committee that the wire which went from the stables at Pitlake to Mr. Ebbutt's house in London Road had been severed between the Clarendon and Derby roads, and were then lying coiled up in a neighbouring garden. He had not been able to ascertain whether the wire had been cut or broken by wind. He also reported that the telephone wires recently erected for Mr. Brown[4] from Park Lane to his mill at Waddon, had been severed close to the "Hare and Hounds" public house, at Waddon, having as far as could be found out, been cut by someone. The committee considered the subject of the telephone wires proposed to be placed overhead in the Borough, which had been referred to them for reconsideration at the last council meeting, and the Road Surveyor was directed to make several enquiries with regard to the subject.

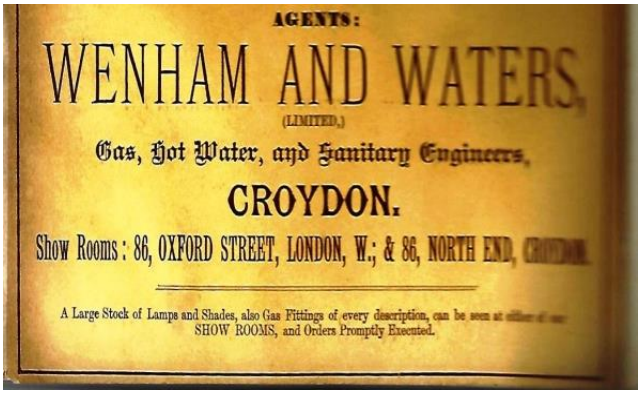
In 1885, C.M. Elborough, the Town Clerk for the Borough of Croydon inserted a notification dated 29th April in local newspapers in respect of '*Bye-Laws as to Overhead Wires'*. *"The Corporation, under and by virtue of the provisions of the Corporation Act 1884, and of every other power enabling them in that behalf have made and adopted Bye-Laws for prevention of danger or obstruction to the public from Posts, Wires, Tubes, or any other appliance or apparatus stretched over, across, under, or in any street, for the purpose of any telegraph, telephone, railway signalling, or any other purpose. And further that the said Corporation is bound at the expiration of one month from this date to apply to the Board of Trade for confirmation of such Bye-Laws."*

That same year, within a report from a Government Select Committee on telephone and telegraph wires, it was seen that the risk of danger from overhead wires had been greatly exaggerated, and that a system of public telephone exchanges whereby persons at a considerable distance apart

could converse freely with the other would be a great public convenience.

At a Council meeting on 11 January 1886, the Town Clerk reported that as arranged at the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee (GPC), the matter of the telephone lines having been transferred to the GPC from the Roads Committee, as requested at the Council meeting 25 February 1884, the chairman, himself and the Borough Engineer had attended at the office of the Board of Trade (BoT), and had met representatives of the Telephone Company[5] with regards to the bye-laws as to overhead wires. The objections raised by the telephone companies that had evidently been discussed at length by the GPC, were discussed and settled and the bye-laws as altered in pursuance of the decision arrived at the conference would be considered by the BoT, and then be sent back to the GPC for final consideration. Subsequently, at a meeting of the Town Council on Monday 5 April 1886, the Town Clerk reported that the BoT had now settled the bye-laws as to overhead wires in the form of which the Board would be prepared to confirm them and the GPC directed that prints should be circulated among the members of the Committees. However, the matter of overhead wires was still the subject of numerous discussions at council meetings for a number of years thereafter.

In 1887, Ward's Croydon Directory carried an advertisement that Wenham & Waters premises in North End had a telephone to its works at Vicarage Road *(see image at beginning of article)*.


AGENTS:

WENHAM AND WATERS,

(LIMITED,)

Gas, Hot Water, and Sanitary Engineers,

CROYDON.

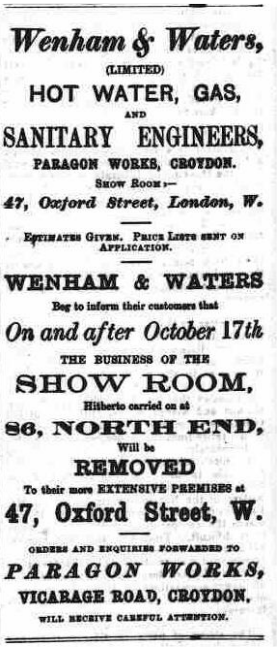
Show Rooms: 86, OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.; & 86, NORTH END, CROYDON.

A Large Stock of Lamps and Shades, also Gas Fittings of every description, can be seen at either of our SHOW ROOMS, and Orders Promptly Executed.

In an advertisement in the *Croydon Review* dated December 1887 as well as having a showroom now at 86 North End, Croydon they had one at 86 Oxford Street, London, W.

In the October of 1891 they notified that the North End showroom would be closed due to moving to newer extensive premises at 47 Oxford Street, London, W. (*see image next page*). Their telephone numbers were Croydon 9311 and Oxford Street 3885 with telegrams "Wenham, Croydon".

***Croydon Advertiser* 24 October 1891 p4**
See final paragraph, previous page


Wenham & Waters,
(LIMITED)
HOT WATER, GAS,
AND
SANITARY ENGINEERS,
PARAGON WORKS, CROYDON.
SHOW ROOM:—
47, Oxford Street, London, W.
ESTIMATES GIVEN. PRICE LISTS SENT ON APPLICATION.
WENHAM & WATERS
Beg to inform their customers that
On and after October 17th
THE BUSINESS OF THE
SHOW ROOM,
Hitherto carried on at
86, NORTH END,
Will be
REMOVED
To their more EXTENSIVE PREMISES at
47, Oxford Street, W.
ORDERS AND ENQUIRIES FORWARDED TO
PARAGON WORKS,
VICARAGE ROAD, CROYDON,
WILL RECEIVE CAREFUL ATTENTION.

Sources:
Croydon Advertiser – 1885 13 June p1; 1886 10 April p2.
Croydon Chronicle – 1883 3 November p5, 10 November p2, 8 December p2; 1884 1 March p2.
Croydon Guardian – 1883 10 November p5, 8 December p2, p5; 1884 1 March p1.
Croydon Times – 1880 4 August p4, 15 September p4; 1883 14 November p8, 28 November p8, 22 December p4; 1884 27 February pp5-6, 7 May p5; 1885 2 May p2, 20 May p6; 1890 11 September p6; 1894 17 October p5, p8, 20 October p6; 1898 20 October p6.

Notes:
[1] William Philipps Wenham originally worked for two years for Hammond & Purrott and commenced trading on his own account in 1857 as a gas engineer, fitter, brass finisher, as well as repairing beer engines and pipes from the Gun Inn, 37 Church Street, his father William being the licensee. He subsequently traded from 44 Church Street as a plumber and gasfitter, moving in 1861 to newly constructed premises at 80 and 81 Church Street, at the corner with Ellis David Road, in addition by 1882 he also had a workshop, the Paragon Works, in Vicarage Road. As well as plumbing and gas-fitting, he also carried out various trades. From 25 December 1882 he leased the Paragon Works and adjoining land of 1818 square yards to Alfred Waters on condition that it was developed. Waters had previously traded as an ironmonger in Torquay, Devon and subsequently at Newport, Monmouthshire as Waters & Arnold, ironmongers, gas and hot water engineers, before coming to Croydon. In 1883 Wenham & Waters commenced trading as a partnership and in the May of that year opened premises at 68c North End as a showroom and office for taking orders. Their special class of work being close and open fire kitcheners, grilles, ranges, baths, lavatories, water closet apparatus, water waste preventive cisterns, ornamental wrought ironwork, gas fittings, electric and wire bells speaking tubes, heating apparatus manufacturers and horticultural builders. One of their special class of goods, as advertised in May 1883 editions of the *Croydon Chronicle* and the *Croydon Advertiser* announcing the opening of their new premises was the telephone. On 10 March 1884 together with five other subscribers they formed the limited company, Wenham & Waters Ltd.
[2] Purnell's Croydon Directory for 1883 records Godson & Dobson, coal, lime and cement merchants at 55 George Street.
[3] 41 High Street was unoccupied at the time Purnell compiled his Croydon Directory for publication in May 1883. It records that the furnishing undertaker business of Thomas Henry Ebbutt & Son was carried out from the then numbered 119 High Street, adjacent to the Green Dragon Hotel and that their funeral carriage depôt was at the Pitlake end of Clarendon Road. His private address was 43 London Road.
[4] Charles Brown, Beech house, Park Lane, Croydon. Charles Brown & Co., Steam Flour Mills, Mill Lane, Waddon.
[5] Raymond Wheeler in his *Images of England, Croydon and Waddon* shows a photograph on page 41 of what is believed to be Croydon's very first telephone exchange, in 1887 accommodated in a room at 6 George Street. He also mentions that the first telephones in the Croydon area were connected to the system run by the United Telephone Co. and the National Telephone Co. and that the wiring hanging from the wall indicated the very limited number of subscribers.

How important was Croydon Airport during WW2? by Wilson's School – introduced by Trevor James

As a Director of the national 'Young Historian Project for Schools and Colleges for Enquiries into Local History', it gives me great pleasure to introduce the Young Historian Award entry in Summer 2022 from Wilson's School in Mollison Drive entitled: 'How Important was Croydon Airport during WW2?'. It is written by a group of Year 10 students and was highly praised by the judging panel, and awarded a special prize by the Spirit of Normandy Trust. As a Director of the Project, it is my role to encourage and celebrate young historians. This article of theirs does so in abundance. **TMJ**

HOW IMPORTANT WAS CROYDON AIRPORT DURING WW2?

Croydon Airport became operational as London Terminal Aerodrome in March of 1920 following the closure of Hounslow Heath's temporary aerodrome and it was Britain's only interwar airport. It was opened on a 1915 World War One airfield, on Plough Lane (now Mollison's Drive) after the RAF had left the area. Croydon Airport was important during World War Two, for a number of reasons, including its role in preparing for war, its role in the Battle of Britain and its role as an RAF Transport Command.

The airport was one of the most important airports of its time as it operated the most routes in the world of any airport and the most frequently. It operated lines from Croydon to Paris, Amsterdam, Cape Town India and other places. The airport itself was the joining together of two separate aerodromes, Waddon and Beddington, on opposite sides of Plough Lane. It was also the place where many record-breaking pilots would take off from and return to such as Amy Johnson on her flight to Australia, and Charles Lindberg's solo flight across the Atlantic, both of which saw immense numbers of people visiting to see these remarkable feats, with famous visitors to the airport including, John F Kennedy, Winston Churchill, who had flying lessons there, and even the King. The airport received many passengers, and each year from 1931 to 1935 this increased with figures of 45,000 in 1931 which increased threefold to 120,500 in 1935, perhaps due to the inevitable outbreak of war and more people wanting to leave mainland Europe. Just before war broke out on the 30th August 1939 Croydon airport reverted back to its original purpose – a military aircraft base. On 1st September, imperial airlines moved its fleet to Whitchurch, Bristol, and RAF Croydon fell under the control of 11 Group, Fighter Command. Over the next few months, during the 'phoney war', many squadrons and aircraft arrived at RAF Croydon or transited through. On the 2nd September, the first arrived with the No.615 Squadron arriving in Gloucester Gladiators followed by the No.17

and No.3 squadrons in Hawker Hurricanes. The No.111 Squadron was the only one to remain at RAF Croydon and was involved in the first major engagement of the Battle of Britain, with the Luftwaffe just off the coast to protect a British shipping convoy. Thus Croydon Airport was a major factor in the start of the Battle of Britain and was to become a key asset in the war effort.

Another reason why Croydon Airport was important during the Second World War was because of the adaptation of civil aviation at the airport. The production of an "Appreciation of the Employment of Civil Aircraft" by the Director-General of Civil Aviation as a method of combating Britain's ill-preparation of war first circulated in October 1938 and was a full review of British aviation, contrasting details on 19 private companies, every available aircraft, pilots, engineers and other related areas. It was seen that civil aviation should not be subsidiary to the RAF and consequently, any civil public flying club was prohibited without a special permit. The evacuation of civil aviation from Croydon airport included that of several major airline companies including Imperial Airlines which was moved to Bristol and this ultimately culminated in the total evacuation of 18,000 people from Croydon on the 4th September 1939. This makes Croydon Airport important as this allowed for the transformation of it into RAF Croydon, a key RAF base during the Battle of Britain. The first saturations arrived at RAF Croydon on the 2nd September 1939 and from then it became a common place for squadrons to stay or transit through. Croydon Airport is further important due to the changes in civil aviation such as the prohibiting of aircraft from flying over Eastern areas of the UK as it allowed for the RAF to be able to manage the skies of the UK in order to better detect enemy aircraft. Therefore, Croydon airport is important as a result of the adaptation of civil aviation to military aviation, providing Britain with a key base for the Second World War.

Croydon Airport was important during WW2 was because of its significant role in the Battle of Britain. After the deadly events of Black Thursday, fighting at Croydon intensified, with 111 squadron being scrambled to meet 200 Dornier aircraft and Me 109 fighter escort planes which were on course to hit Dungeness. Flight Lieutenant Henry H. Ferriss throttled into the leading German plane, causing a massive explosion and debris disrupted the German formation. This goes to show the significance of utilising Croydon as a base for operating flights in the South East of England as it helped to successfully defend major coastal towns as well as London. Another example of this was when Kenley airfield Wing commander Thomas Prickman ordered a "survival scramble" where 111 squadron from Croydon and 64 and 615 squadron from Kenley were scrambled to intercept the incoming Germans. Despite the loss of Flight Lieutenant Stanley Connors

who was hit, the 3 squadrons were largely successful in defending Kenley, so much so that the target was changed to Croydon (which suffered damage although it could have been more severe). This helped defend a key airfield and was significant in reducing the impact of the German Luftwaffe on London's air defences which were in Croydon's, Kenley's and Biggin Hill's hands. This shows how Croydon Airfield was vital to the defence of London. Croydon had played a major role in reducing damage caused during the Battle of Britain.

After the end of the Battle of Britain (October 31st, 1940), Dowding's squadrons were severely depleted, and the surviving pilots were suffering from severe fatigue, with losses increasing per day. The Luftwaffe was concentrating their destructive efforts on Fighter Command's bases, and as such, from 1941, significant building work took place to convert Croydon RAF into a fully operational RAF airfield. Additions include runway extensions, a perimeter track, and air raid sleeping quarters. By March 1943, RAF Transport Command was formed comprising of RAF Ferry Command and the current RAF's aviation. RAF Croydon became a key RAF transport command airfield, transporting thousands of troops to & from mainland Europe. RAF Croydon would go on to be used as a base of many operations, including but not limited to 110 Wing RAF – formed in December 1943, with its main base of operations in RAF Croydon – as well as 147 Squadron, and its sister squadron, 167 Squadron. Thanks to this, the threat from the Luftwaffe had diminished over Britain and Northern France by mid-1944; leading into the end of the war. After the end of WW2, the role of Croydon Airport was overall limited. This was due to the expansion of South and urbanisation around the airport, and there was very little space for the airport to grow. Therefore, Heathrow was designed to replace it, as it was in a much more rural area at the time, and there was more space for it to grow. Croydon Airport still did return back to civil control from the RAF in February 1946; but its declining need and availability led to its eventual formal closure in 1959; after 44 years of continual and respected service throughout both peacetime and war.

It is clear that Croydon Airport was very important during WW2. It played a leading role in aviation developments before the war that helped prepare it and Britain for war. Then during the war it was important during the Battle of Britain and the remaining years of the war. Despite being closed and forgotten by many people locally it deserves more appreciation for the significant role it played during WW2.

Bibliography

https://www.historiccroydonairport.org.uk/
Croydon Airport and the Battle for Britain, 1939-40 by Douglas Cluett
Croydon in the 1940s and 1950s by John B. Gent

Baldwin Latham and Sir Joseph Bazalgette by Vaughan Pomeroy

To commemorate the centenary of the death of Baldwin Latham, in 2017, the Society held a study day on the life of the man who was engineer to the Board of Health for Croydon and was instrumental is the design and construction of the water supply and drainage systems for the borough. An article on Baldwin Latham, by Brian Lancaster, was published in the *CNHSS Bulletin* in September 2017. During the study day a questioner asked whether Mr Latham (1836-1917) knew Sir Joseph Bazalgette (1819-1891) who, as chief engineer to the Metropolitan Board of Works, was responsible for the modernisation of the extensive sewerage system for London at a similar period of time.

Was there any relationship between these two innovative civil engineers through their involvement in similar projects? The records of applications for membership of the Institution of Civil Engineers and the published lists of members are available through Ancestry and are useful in establishing the relationships between individual engineers.

A plaque, dated 1866, remains on the castellated water tower in central Croydon identifying Baldwin Latham CE simply as Engineer.

Baldwin Latham applied for membership of the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1865, stating his occupation as *Engineer for the Public Works of Croydon.* His application was proposed by John Rennie[1] and supported "From personal knowledge" by six other members of the institution. He was admitted to the Institution as an Associate.

Three years later, in 1868, Baldwin Latham applied for the highest grade of membership, that of Member (note, the current membership structure has Fellow as the highest grade and members admitted in the period of interest as Associates are broadly equivalent to the current grade of Member, and Members equivalent to Fellows). By 1868 he was described as practising as

an independent civil engineering consultant with an office at 6 Westminster Chambers.

Application for transfer from Associate to Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers required the signature of at least ten Members of the Institution as seconders. The application of Baldwin Latham shows the required ten signatures as follows, along with the details from the List of Members dated 1867:

- G.W. Hemans[2] (George Willoughby Hemans, elected Member 1845, Member of Council, 1 Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, SW)
- J.W. Bazalgette (Joseph William Bazalgette, elected Member 1846, Metropolitan Board of Works, Spring Gardens, SW)
- John Murray[3] (John Murray, elected Member 1833, Member of Council, 11, Great Queen Street, SW)
- J.O. Butler[4] (John Octavius Butler, elected Member 1857, Kirkstall Forge, near Leeds)
- William Wilson[5] (William Wilson, elected Member 1849, 4 Victoria Street, SW)
- Robert Rawlinson[6] (Robert Rawlinson, CB, elected Member 1866, 2 Victoria Street, SW)
- Marriott O Tarbotton[7] (Marriott Ogle Tarbotton, elected Member 1862, Nottingham)
- Fred D Banister[8] (Frederick Dale Banister, elected Member 1866, Denmark Hill, S)
- J Bailey Denton[9] (John Bailey Denton, elected Member 1860, 22 Whitehall Place, SW)
- H.P. Stephenson[10] (Henry Palfrey Stephenson, elected Member 1864, 14 Abingdon Street, SW)

Baldwin Latham is listed as an Associate elected in 1865 and of Town Hall, Croydon, S.

The list shows some who acted as seconders for the initial application – John Murray, J.O. Butler and H. P. Stephenson. The significant name is, of course, signed as J. W. Bazalgette providing evidence that by 1868 Baldwin Latham was sufficiently familiar to Sir Joseph for him to act as a seconder, from personal knowledge.

It is clear by checking biographies of the signatories on Graces Guide and other online resources that Latham had wide connections by the time he applied for transfer to Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, including other engineers engaged on major sewerage projects for municipalities at a time when public health was high on the political agenda. In 1868 he was still only 32 years old but evidently widely known and regarded. And amongst his connections he could certainly include Sir Joseph Bazalgette.

Notes

[1] Sir John Rennie FRS, John Rennie the younger, was the only person of that name listed, but by the time he signed Baldwin Latham's application he had retired from active work with a long catalogue of major works to his credit. He was elected a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1844 and in the 1865 List of Members is shown as Past President at 32 Charing Cross, SW.

[2] George Hemans was an Irish civil engineer who designed several railways including the East Grinstead to Tunbridge Wells line. He became a vice-president of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

[3] John Murray was a civil engineer with a reputation in hydraulics and dock engineering.

[4] John Octavius Butler was an iron master and engineer, with a well-established family-owned ironworks at Kirkstall. Beecroft, Butler and Co became Kirkstall Forge Co in 1858.

[5] William Wilson was a railway engineer who amongst other projects worked on the Metropolitan District Railway to Tower Hill, running under the new Embankment along with Bazalgette's northern outfall sewer.

[6] Robert Rawlinson began his engineering career under Jesse Hartley in Liverpool Docks and then with Robert Stephenson. He worked for Liverpool corporation and developed a reputation in sanitation and devised the water supply scheme for Liverpool from Bala Lake. He was one of the first inspectors under the Public Health Act and was a member of the sanitary commission sent by Lord Palmerston to the Crimea, for which work he was made CB. By 1866 he was chairman of the Royal Commission on the Pollution of Rivers. He later became KCB and President of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

[7] Marriott Ogle Tarbotton was a civil engineer and borough engineer for Wakefield and later Nottingham from 1859 to 1880. He was actively engaged in drainage and sewerage and constructed the first underground sewerage system outside London for Nottingham.

[8] Fred Banister was a civil engineer involved with the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway.

[9] John Bailey Denton was a civil engineer and surveyor who wrote widely on the disposal of sewage and its use in agriculture.

[10] Henry Palfrey Stephenson was, amongst other things, on the board of the Croydon Gas Company. A Scottish engineer educated in London he worked on a number of railway projects before becoming involved in projects for gas and sewage and serving on the boards of several gas companies in the UK and overseas.

The excavation of a Mesolithic site by The Revd. Peter E. Marden, et al, in 1958 at Spring Park, Addington Road, Addington

by Christopher J.W. Taylor

Introduction

The Rev. Peter Marden contacted the Society on 27th September 2022 with information about a collection of Mesolithic flints from an excavation he had carried out in Spring Park, Addington in 1958.

Peter had offered his collection to a museum in Somerset, near where he currently lives, but they failed to engage and so he looked for it to be taken by an organisation nearer to the excavation. Peter's email was forwarded to the author and it was arranged that he would bring the collection to Coulsdon at the end of November for assessment.

Background and the 1958 excavation

Peter Marden lived nearby in Addiscombe at the time of the dig. In 1958 he was studying at the John Ruskin Grammar School, Shirley and completed his A levels in the summer of that year. He subsequently studied for his first degree in Wales and then read for a Theology degree at Oxford.

From early April to the end of June 1958, mainly on Saturdays, Peter and a friend, excavated a small area of ground in Spring Park, Addington Road, West Wickham.

The excavation spot was chosen because prehistoric struck flints had been noticed on the surface. Also, nearby were two mounds which looked prehistoric. These were on the flat area to the east of the main Spring Park tree line and not far from the excavation. Subsequently they were shown to be natural tree throws.

The excavation site was thinly wooded, on a light sandy soil, with a flat grassed area just to the south. Beyond the flat area was a steep long downward slope at the bottom of which were the grassed fields of Spring Park.

It is clear from the information provided by Peter and the labels found in collection tins that many of the prehistoric flints were from the surface, the reason why the site was noticed.

Peter Marden kindly annotated a map of Spring Park to indicate the most likely area within which the excavation was located. This shows it was on a thin, long strip of ground along the edge of the trees of Spring Park wood, north east of the grassy playing fields area, parallel to the Addington Road (Figures 1 & 2). This coincides almost exactly to the narrow strip of Thanet

Sand (Figure 3) that crosses the Park, SW-NE. It is worth noting that the present tree line has been the same for at least a hundred and fifty years (see Figures 1 & 2).

The excavation was partly around tree roots, and covered a rectangle ca. 4m by 10m. The finds discovered were no deeper than 0.25 m and many were on the surface.

On 24th November 2022 Peter brought the collection from his home in Taunton, Somerset, to Coulsdon for assessment by the author. The next day the opportunity was taken to visit the excavation site. A walking survey was done of the whole of Spring Park and about half a mile to the west, towards the Addington Golf course, including the wooded area above the tree line, to see if Peter could identify precisely where the site had been. Unfortunately, after 64 years, the undergrowth is a lot denser and it was not possible to positively identify the exact spot, probably now obscured by brambles and tree growth.

It was noticed during the survey that a large part of the area north-west of the line of trees running parallel to the Addington Road, on the Woolwich and Reading Beds and Harwich Formation, is covered in pebbles, in places quite densely. These have the same characteristics as beach pebbles showing chatter marks; they are smooth, sub-spherical and mostly less than ca. 60mm in length. In contrast, a thin strip of ground just south of the wood is characterised by sandy soil, coinciding with the Thanet Sand, with no pebbles. The fact that no pebbles were present on the excavation site and that it was on a light sandy soil confirms that it was somewhere on the strip of Thanet Sand. If the flints had lain in the thin chalky soils, immediately south of the Thanet Sand, they would have been patinated white, or near white.

Figure 1. Aerial view of the Spring Park Addington
(from google maps, Satellite view, 2023).

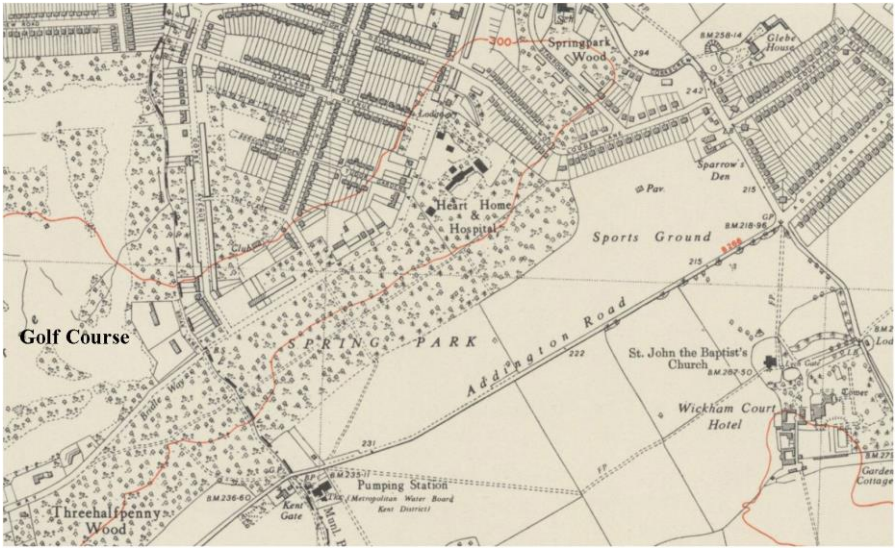


Figure 2. Ordnance Survey, Extract of sheet XV. S.E., Revised 1938, Published 1950. Spring Park area. Cf. Figure 1.

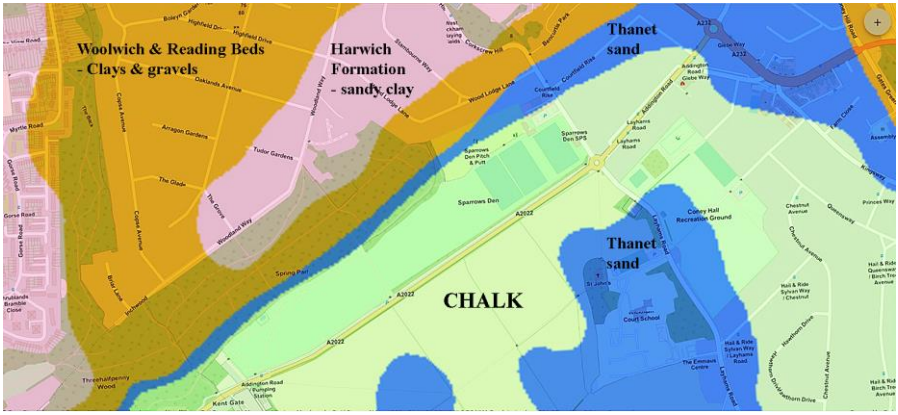


Figure 3. The Geology of Spring Park (from British Geological Survey, Open Government Licence, contains British Geological Survey materials 2023 https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/geology-of-britain-viewer).

In Figure 3 brown and pink are the Woolwich and Reading Beds and Harwich Formations respectively. These beds are characterised, partly, by the presence of sub-spherical small smooth pebbles. The Thanet Sand is blue. The Chalk (light green) is to the south of the thin strip of Thanet Sand. It is within the (blue) strip of Thanet Sand that the excavation was made.

The site is on the south-east facing slope of a valley which presently has regular bourne flows in the winter and has springs nearby at Addington village.

The finds

The artefacts recovered by the excavation is summarised in Table 1. In addition to the flint, intriguingly, a small (ca. 24cm^3) amount of charcoal was recovered. This has not been tested and remains, separately boxed, with the collection of flints.

Lithic type	**Description**	**Number**	**Number**
Microburins (**Figure 5**)			2
Microlith (**Figure 4**)	Straight backed point, Clark's B1. L: 24mm		1
Utilised pieces	Flakes with micro-chipping along edge(s)		15
Core trimming flakes	Plunging flakes (**Figure 7**)	3	
	Core tablets	6	
	Other - flakes	34	43
Waste			31
Fabricator or "strike-a-light" (**Figure 6**)	Broken, L: 28mm, "D" section		1
Flakes - unutilised and unworked	Thin with diffuse bulbs & < 55mm long	117	
	Squatter flakes, with thick bulbs of percussion	33	150
Axe surface-trimming flakes			4
Blade cores	Single platform (**Figure 7**)	5	
	2 platforms	7	12
Flake cores	All multiplatform		13
Scrapers	Notched	1	
	Rough	5	
	With shaped, curved edges (**Figure 8**)	2	8
Blades	Segments	16	
	Complete blades	46	62
Notched flakes			2
Total			**344**

Table 1. Analysis of flint artefacts by type.

The flints are in a fresh, unabraded condition. There are no signs of great age, i.e., no hair-line cracks or “pot-boiler” losses or surface abrasion, so characteristic of Palaeolithic finds. The flint varies from a light to dark grey, often slightly variegated by fossil or small cherty inclusions, but with very little white patination (only three white pieces). There is an absence of axes and Mesolithic axe end-sharpening flakes.

The single microlith (Figure 4; also see *Flint Technology* in this volume which is on microliths and microburins) is a backed point with blunting straight down one side of a blade, Class B1, based on Clark’s system (1933, 56). The apex of the tip, of about 2mm, is missing leaving a remaining length of 24mm. The microlith and the microburins (waste from the production of microliths) are diagnostic of the Mesolithic.

Figure 4. The microlith. The bulb of percussion is at the top of the illustration. Working is only down one (the left in the illustration) side. The top/tip, ca. 2mm, is missing.

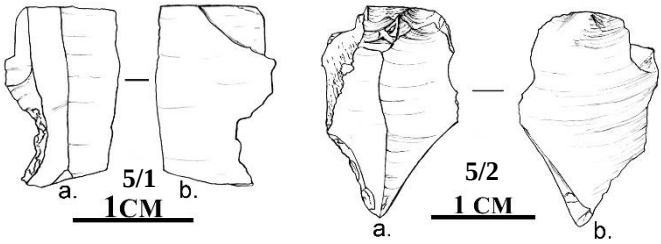


Figure 5. Microburins from Spring Park. a, is the “mis-hit” – see text.

Figure 5/1 illustrates one of the Spring Park microburins. This is a ‘mis-hit’ or has been accidentally broken. Part of the preliminary notch into the side of the blade is evident (5/1a) but the process of snapping off this waste piece resulted in a break at almost 90 degrees to the blade’s long axis, i.e., across it, and not one that followed the oblique line of the notch. Rankine (1934, 36, fig 5, 11 & 12) and Clarke (1955, 8, fig 2, 69-70) illustrate examples.

Figure 5/2 illustrates the second microburin which is typical. The left side of the base of 5/2a shows the remains of the working to make a preliminary notch or weak point along which this piece was snapped away from the blade-blank. The ventral surface (right of 5/2b, with bulb) shows the narrow triangular-shaped facet along the base, typical of microburins.

The D-cross section fabricator or strike-a-light (fragment, Figure 6) with steep working, is typical of such pieces. This example is tiny, a 28mm long, ca. 50% fragment.

Fabricators tend not to feature in early Mesolithic assemblages. Where they are listed as such, for example, by Wymer at Thatcham (1962, 350), they take a different form, being on otherwise unworked blades and have points, possibly for microlith production.

Examples like that from Spring Park are found mainly in late Mesolithic assemblages and after. Rankine (1960, Figure 5-16, 250) illustrates examples from Oakhanger, a late Mesolithic site, which are similar to this one.

Other similar examples, are recorded from the Neolithic sites at Staines (Robertson-Mackay, 1987, Figure 65, F154), Durrington Walls (Wainwright and Longworth, 1971, figure 77, F82 & F83), and Windmill Hill (Keiller, 1965, Figure 48, F145-7).

They also feature frequently among finds dated to the Bronze Age, for example at Amesbury, G70 and 71 round barrows (Saville, 1980, Figure 2, 11; fig 5, 40), Bishop Waltham barrow (Ashbee, 1960, figure 18), and the bell barrow at Deerleap Wood, Wotton, Surrey (Corcoran, 1963, Figure 5, 2). At the primary inhumation bowl barrow at Wimborne St. Giles a flint fabricator very like this one was found together with a bronze dagger and awl (Annable & Simpson, 1964,39).

The use to which fabricators were put is debated. An excellent indication is the find of one next to a marcasite nodule in a Beaker burial dated to ca. 2,300 BC, at Chilbolton, Hampshire, suggesting use as a “strike-a-light” (Display at Andover Museum, Hants, and Russel, et al, 1990).

Figure 6. The fabricator fragment. Cross-section and side view.

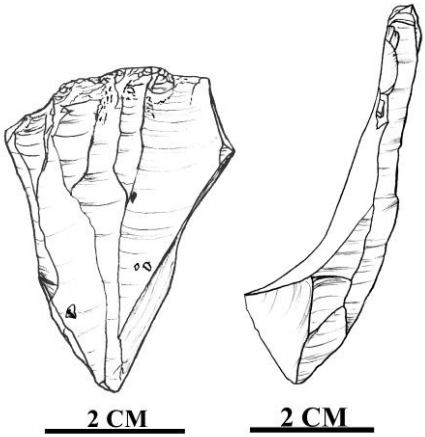


Figure 7. A blade core (left) and plunging flake (right).

Discussion

The presence of the microlith and two microburins, the numerous thin blades with diffuse bulbs, blade segments, and blade cores indicate a Mesolithic presence. The microburins and cores strongly suggest that this was near a flint knapping site.

Microliths of the type here (Clark's B1) have been found from the early Mesolithic (for example at Avington VI, Froom, 2005, 15) through to later sites (at Selmeston, Clark, 1934, 143). Generally, microliths were larger in the early Mesolithic and became smaller towards the end of the period (Butler 2005, 96). However, within assemblages there is some range in sizes with smaller versions also found on early sites. Without other microlith types, for example the small geometrics of the late Mesolithic (Ellaby, 1977, 9 & see Figure 1 of article on microliths in this volume), the Spring Park find is difficult to confidently attribute to a particular phase. Of interest fairly locally are finds of straight backed bladelets at North Park Farm, Bletchingley, which Jones (2013, 33) tabled as being mostly from the Late Mesolithic.

The fabricator form cannot be closely dated but is typical of examples most commonly found from the late Neolithic to early Bronze Age, as are the multi-platform flake cores and the squatter flakes with thick bulbs of percussion.

The scraper types include five expedient tools made on relatively thick, rough flake blanks which are undiagnostic. Of the others, one is notched on a long, thick flake, probably Middle or Late Bronze Age. The remaining two are typical flake scrapers of the Neolithic and Bronze Age with carefully knapped curved edges (Figure 8).

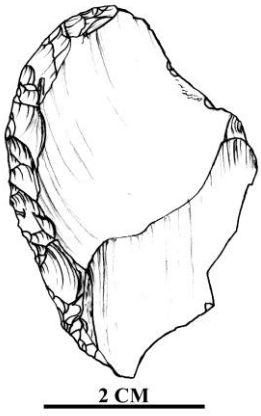


Figure 8. Scraper.

In summary, the site has seen a Mesolithic presence but there is an element of later flintwork dating to the late Neolithic and Bronze Age. The later material may be associated with the first agricultural use of this area of land.

The prehistoric context

No prehistoric lithic finds are recorded by the Greater London Heritage Environment Records ("GLHER") specifically from Spring Park. This is not surprising because it has been wooded and under grass for centuries. Some finds have been made in the wooded areas around the Park. The nearest are "Many Mesolithic flints and a hearth" on Jackson's Common at ca. NGR TQ 374,647, just 500m to the west (GLHER 136513), and "Many worked flints" and a "Lithic implement" from Threehalfpenny Wood at ca. TQ 375,646 (GLHERs 130785 & 78948 respectively); unfortunately the GLHER doesn't date these latter two finds.

The most important finds from this excavation are the microlith and two microburins because they are diagnostic and only two other similar finds have been made in the vicinity. One is an "obliquely blunted point" at Wickham Court, Layhams Road, ca, TQ 3903,6483, the second, described as an "obliquely trimmed flint blade" is from Addington Park ca. TQ 3670,6370 (as per GLHERs 100820 & 148459 respectively).

The Addington Park find above (GLHER 148459) is stated by the GLHER as being in the Society's collection (Accn. 22 Cab.15/1). Unfortunately, after examination, I haven't been able to corroborate the description "obliquely trimmed flint blade" used in the GLHER to any of the Society's Addington lithics. The one specifically quoted is a blade with no retouch. There are several other lithics from the area in the Society's Museum collection (Neolithic-Bronze Age type flakes, scrapers and a core) but regrettably, most of these are widely provenanced as simply "Addington" and so cannot be confidently added into the immediate Spring Park context.

Slightly further afield, a tranchet axe, also diagnostic of the Mesolithic, was found at Wickham Court Farm, Layhams Road (GLHER 90979). Two other flaked axes, described as Mesolithic, were found at Pinewood Close and Devonshire Way Addington (GLHERs 88038 & 87298).

The area has evidently been heavily used in recent prehistory. Two sites stand out in particular. On Fox Hill, just over the other side of the Addington Road valley, at ca. TQ 386,641, a survey revealed flint material covering an area of ten acres with over 6,000 pot-boilers, 5,000 waste flakes and nodules recovered. GLHER 110475 describes this as a Bronze Age occupation and lithic working site. The lithics included flint knives, blades, scrapers, borers, cores and flakes so it is probably multi-period site spanning the late Mesolithic onwards. Slightly further away, ca 2km south east, at Rouse Farm, TQ 403,644, near Nash Lane, Clinch identified thousands of flints in groupings or clusters which were interpreted as the footprints of hut circles (GLHER 110856 & 151509).

Summary
This collection is a very useful addition to the finds of prehistoric lithics from the Spring Park area, especially as it includes a microlith and two microburins, of which, within a two-kilometre radius, only one definite find of the former is known to date.

Acknowledgement
We are very grateful to the Rev. Peter Marden for his donation of the collection. We also thank him for having taken the time and trouble to get in touch with the Society, travelling to Coulsdon and Spring Park from Somerset, facilitating the recording of his collection, and supplying details of the excavation. It was a pleasure to meet him.

The collection will be housed at the Society's Museum with a copy of this article and a copy will also be forwarded to the GLHER at Cannon Bridge House, 25, Dowgate Hill, London, for information and to Peter for his records. Presently the Revd. Peter E. Marden, MA (Oxon), lives at Taunton, Somerset.

References

Annable, B.A., & Simpson, D.D.A., 1964, Guide Catalogue of the Neolithic and Bronze Age collections in Devises Museum. Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, Devizes.
Ashbee, P., 1960, The Bronze Age Round Barrow in Britain. Phoenix House Ltd
Butler, C., 2005, Prehistoric Flintwork. Tempus
Corcoran, J., 1963, Excavation of the bell-barrow in Deerleap Wood, Wotton, Surrey Archaeological Collections, vol 60 1 – 18
Clark, G., 1933, Report on an Early Bronze Age Site in the South-Eastern Fens. The Antiquities Journal, vol. XIII, No. 3
Clark, J., 1934, A Late Mesolithic Settlement Site at Selmeston, Sussex. Antiquaries Journal, London
Clarke, J., 1955, A Microlithic Industry from the Cambridgeshire Fenland and other Industries of Sauveterrian Affinities from Britain. Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society, 21, 3 – 20
Ellaby, R., 1977, A Mesolithic Site at Wonham. Surrey Archaeological Collections, vol. 71
Froom, R., 2005, Late Glacial Long Blade Sites in the Kennet Valley. British Museum Research Publication Number 153
Jones, P., 2013, A Mesolithic 'persistent place' at North Park Farm, Bletchingley, Surrey. Monograph 8, SpoilHeap Publications
Keiller, A., 1965, Windmill Hill and Avebury. Oxford Clarendon Press
Rankine, W.F., 1934, A Mesolithic Site at Farnham. Surrey Archaeological Collections, 44, 25-46
Rankine, W.F., and Rankine WM, 1960, Further Excavations at a Mesolithic Site at Oakhanger, Selborne, Hants. Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society, New Series, vol. XXVI.
Robertson-Macay, R., 1987, The Neolithic Causewayed Enclosure at Staines, Surrey: Excavations 1961 – 63 Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society 53, pp23- 128
Russel, A. D., Boismier W A, Foxon A, Green, FJ, Stirland A, Williams, D, 1990, Two Beaker Burials from Chilbolton Hampshire. Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society vol. 56, 153 – 172
Saville, A, 1980, Five Flint Assemblages from Excavated Sites in Wiltshire. Proceedings of the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine, Vol 72/3, 1 - 27
Wainwright, G.J., and Longworth, I.H., 1971, Durrington Walls: Excavations 1966 – 1968. The Society of Antiquaries.
Wymer, J.J., 1962, Excavations at the Maglemosian Sites at Thatcham, Berkshire, England. Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society, vol. 28.

Introducing Rosie Vizor. Croydon Borough Archivist by John I Hickman, Curator of the John Gent Collection

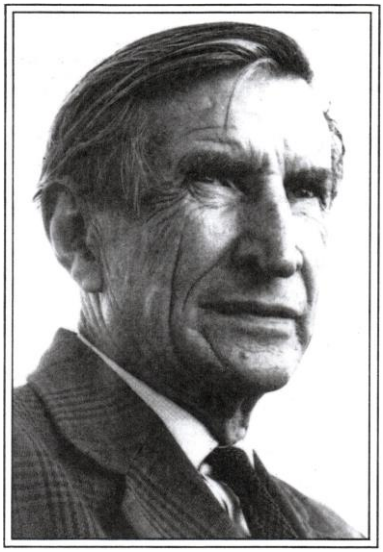
Many readers working in the Research Room in the Clocktower knew Rosie Vizor from the time before she joined Croydon Council in a perhaps more formal role early in 2022. In February last year she embarked on a job share with Lindsay Ould who was due to retire later in the autumn. When Lindsay duly retired at the end of September, she was replaced by Rosie who was appointed to the post of Borough Archivist in mid-October.

Rosie read English and History at the University of Sussex and following this she did an MA in Sexual Dissidence, all her studies required her using archives for research, particularly at The Keep in Falmer. Having enjoyed research using archives Rosie spent time gaining work experience in a variety of archives in London, including the V&A, Natural History Museum, Bishopsgate Institute, National Theatre and Chickenshed Theatre. This experience confirmed her wish to embark on a career in the sector, and she undertook a Post-Graduate Diploma in Archives and Records Management at UCL during 2017-2018. Since qualifying, she has worked as an Assistant Archivist at the V&A Theatre & Performance Archives, Cataloguer and Archivist at the Garden Museum, and Assistant Archivist at Croydon Council.

Rosie grew up on Dartmoor in Devon and includes playing the piano and clarinet, dance, yoga, cycling and reading among her hobbies.

May I on behalf of Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society and the Local Studies Forum welcome Rosie to Croydon. We trust she will find her work here interesting, enjoyable and rewarding, not least as we look towards our Croydon Borough of Culture 2023 events.

Wilfred Thesiger, his two Explorations and his Last Years in Coulsdon
by Brian Lancaster



Wilfred Thesiger

This images and the maps are from his book: '*Desert, Marsh & Mountain*'

© HarperCollins

David Attenborough wrote of Wilfred Thesiger that he was 'One of the very few people who in our time could be put on the pedestal of the great explorers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.' Another writer, Geoffrey Moorhouse, calls him 'one of the greatest travellers that Britain has ever produced'.[1] Thesiger described himself proudly as the last in a long line of overland explorers and travellers, a refugee from the Victorian's Golden Age. Yet he spent his last years, frail and nearly blind, in care homes in Coulsdon, and died in Croydon's Mayday Hospital in August 2003, aged ninety-three.

This article is selective. It is confined to two regions, Ethiopia and Arabia, in which Thesiger was an explorer. The first section, about the region in Ethiopia which Thesiger explored in 1933 and 1934, is more detailed and more vivid as he kept a diary whereas his accounts of his later exploration in Arabia in the immediate post-war years were written some years afterwards. Both explorations merit attention in the Royal Geographical Society's *History of World Exploration.*[2]

Wilfred Patrick Thesiger was born in a thatched mud hut in Addis Ababa, the capital of Abyssinia, renamed Ethiopia in 1926, on Friday, 3 June 1910. His father, Captain Gilbert Thesiger, was the British Minister of the Legation.

Wilfred Thesiger's autobiography, *The Life of My Choice*, centres on Abyssinia, the name he continued to use, and is dedicated to the Emperor, Haile Selassie, who befriended both Thesiger's late father and Wilfred himself whom he personally invited to his coronation in 1930.

The description of Thesiger being an explorer and traveller is correct insofar as it goes but does not exhaust his achievements. He was a distinguished soldier, serving in the Second World War with Orde Wingate to drive out the Italians who had conquered Ethiopia, and then in North Africa with the Special Air Service as an observer. This article will ignore this part of Thesiger's life in order to concentrate on his life as an explorer otherwise this article would be too long.

He was also a distinguished travel writer, author of several books, notably *The Marsh Arabs*, a 'classic of travel writing', and *Arabian Sands* about the 'Empty Quarter', the virtually unexplored desert in Southern Arabia. He was also, until the 1960s, a big game hunter but thereafter he valued conservation. He took thousands of photographs, some of which illustrate his books.

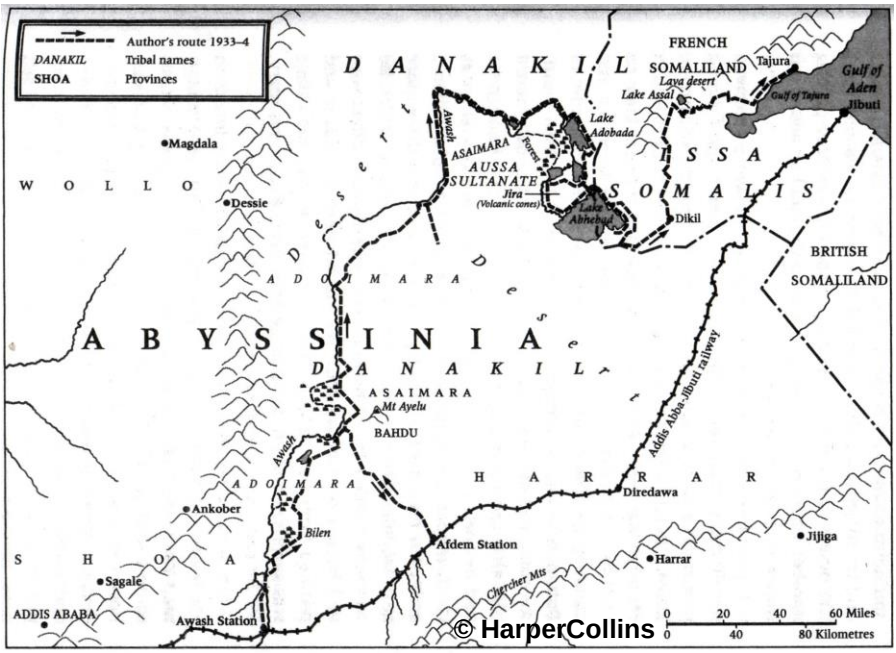
Much as Thesiger saw himself as an explorer, which might imply he was footloose, he liked to share the lives of the tribes among whom he lived. They befriended him and he they, some of whom became close friends.

Although he could drive, he preferred travelling by camel rather than by car. He loathed what might be called the advance of civilisation: cars, aeroplanes, wireless, telephones and tourism. He also objected to missionaries who obliged naked tribesmen to wear clothes.

THE DANAKIL REGION IN ETHIOPIA

By the twentieth century hardly any places remained unexplored. Thesiger told one explorer, Major Robert E. Cheesman, then a consul in Ethiopia, that he wanted to do some exploring and asked where he should go. Cheesman suggested the two Poles but Thesiger did not want to go to cold countries. 'I then reminded him that there was a nice hot spot down in the Danakil desert and that no one had explored it to find out where the Awash river went to.'[3] Thesiger's ambition to explore the Danikil region and find the source of the river was conceived while still at Oxford where he read history.

The Danakil region stretches along the eastern border of Ethiopia. The Arussi mountains in the north of the region were unexplored. Abyssinians avoided the Danakil region because its tribes had a murderous reputation. Egyptian and Italian expeditions had tried to reach the Arussi but they were massacred.



The Danakil Country 1930–34

Thesiger set out in November 1933, having assembled a caravan initially of about twenty men, which then increased to forty, including the headman.

The Danakil tribes prided themselves on the number of people they killed and/or castrated. Thesiger passed two graves of Danakil tribesmen, one having killed thirty two men, the other twenty eight.

Thesiger not only aimed to find the source of the Awash river in the Arussi mountains in the north of the Danakil region but he also wanted to go big game hunting. The Danakil country was rich in game. Elsewhere in Ethiopia much game had been wiped out. The Natural History Museum in London asked him to send back specimens of birds and mammals, the ostensible purpose of the expedition being zoological. The total number of birds he collected was 872, representing 192 species and sub-species. Apart from the usual crocodiles, zebras, jackals and buffalo, Thesiger was intent on seeing and obtaining specimens of rarer mammals such as the oryx, the cuperow or Abyssinian (Ethiopian) wolf, and the mountain nyala, a large antelope which, as with the wolf, was found nowhere else in the world. He saw nyalas and oryx and also kudus. He heard but did not see the wolf.

Mosquitoes, ticks, scorpions, horseflies and four-inch-wide tarantulas were among the ‘beastly things’ he faced on the journey.

Thesiger carried with him some basic medicine but he was unable to treat those Danakil warriors whose flesh was being eaten away by a kind of fungus.

Initially Thesiger was given permission to explore the Danakil region but, because of the risk of being murdered by the nomadic tribesmen, permission was withdrawn. Eventually he succeeded in going but only after he released the Ethiopian government from any responsibility for his safety. However, this had the disadvantage in that it would strengthen the Sultan of Aussi's hand as he had begged the Emperor not to permit any Europeans to enter his territory. Being so hostile to Europeans, he might therefore refuse to let Thesiger continue his search for the source of the river. It was therefore necessary to keep secret the fact that he had begun his search with the Emperor's blessing.

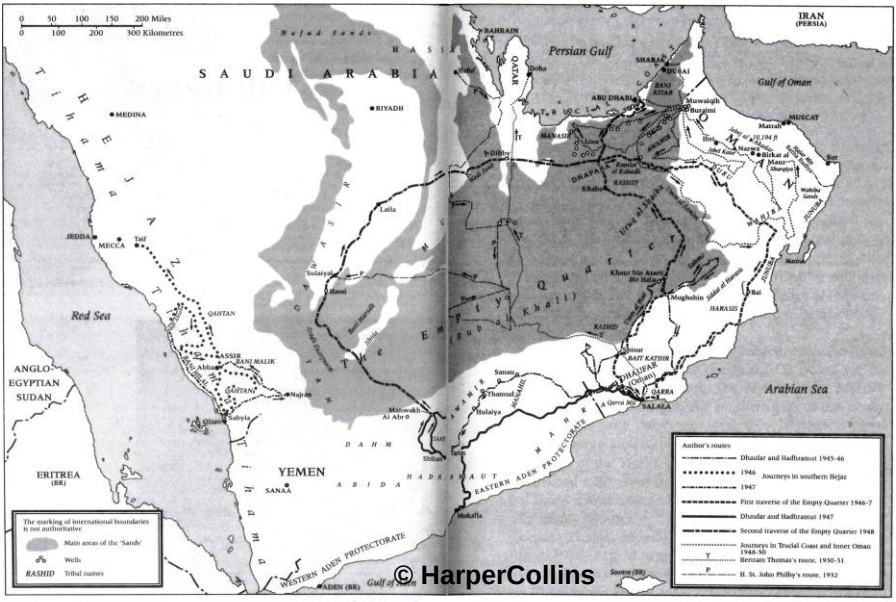
Nevertheless the Sultan, together with his guard of honour, did come to meet him. 'I knew', Thesiger wrote in his diary, 'that this moonlight meeting in unknown Africa with a savage potentate who hated Europeans was the realisation of my boyhood dreams…The knowledge, that somewhere in this neighbourhood three previous expeditions had been exterminated, that we were far beyond any hope of assistance, that even our whereabouts were unknown, I found wholly satisfying'.[4] The Sultan promised to make the necessary arrangements to ensure Thesiger could reach his destination. He had never before given such permission to a European.

Thesiger followed the Awash river to where it ended in Lake Abhedad. The country they passed through was as dead as a lunar landscape. The heat was so fierce as to make him feel sick and giddy.

Despite it being the climax of his journey, the sight itself was something of an anti-climax. Thesiger's diary confirms it as it warrants only one short paragraph ending in the terse observation 'It was satisfactory to have established conclusively that the Awash did end in the Abhedad.'[5] However, the diary concludes by saying that 'I had come far, overcome many difficulties and risked much, but I had achieved what I had set out to do'.[6] The expedition ended in May 1934. He was not yet twenty-four.

The Danakil expedition had given Thesiger a thirst for exploration. A year later, dreading a return to civilisation, he joined the Sudan Political Service. There he began his love of deserts, helping to satisfy his desire for 'colour and savagery, hardship and adventure' [7]. 'In the desert I had found a freedom unobtainable in civilisation; a life unhampered by possessions…found, too, a comradeship inherent in the circumstances, and the belief that tranquillity was to be found there.'[8] He and Guy Moore, the District Commissioner, were the only Europeans among the nomadic Arabs in the Nuer desert.

ARABIA'S EMPTY QUARTER


SAUDI ARABIA
Persian Gulf
Gulf of Oman
Red Sea
Arabian Sea
IRAN (PERSIA)
YEMEN
ANGLO EGYPTIAN SUDAN
ERITREA (ER)
MEDINA
RIYADH
MECCA
JEDDA
SANA'A
MUSCAT
BAHRAIN
QATAR
DUBAI
ABU DHABI
SHARJAH
Nafud Sands
Rub' al Khali
Empty Quarter
Tihama
Asir
Hejaz
Dahm
Hadhramaut
Wadi Hadhramaut
Wahiba Sands
Jebel Akhdar
Jebel Qara
Jebel Samhan
Jebel Qamar
Jebel Natih
Jebel Misht
Jebel Fartak
Jebel Ja'alan
Jebel Hamir
Jebel Hafit
Jebel Dhanna
Jebel Ali
Jebel Dhaid
Jebel Buraimi
Jebel Kawr
Jebel Sumeini
Jebel Ibrahim
Jebel Qihlah
Jebel Qidah
Jebel Qara

he told the nomads he came from Syria. The nomads are commonly called Bedouin but more accurately Bedu. Their lives in the inhospitable desert were harsh and demanding but it did not diminish the value they placed on generosity. They were even willing to slaughter a camel to feed a passing stranger.

As in Ethiopia there were different tribes, frequently raiding each other for their camels. Thesiger found among the Rashid, the Arab tribe he was looking for. They accepted him as a Christian. Among them he found the comradeship he sought. 'I felt affection for them personally, and sympathy for their way of life.'[12] In all he spent five years with them and would have spent many more years with them if circumstances had permitted it.

At that time, before the discovery of oil changed their way of life, the Bedu in the deserts depended on their camels. 'The Bedu sacrificed every consideration to the welfare of their camels.'[13] Sometimes Thesiger's patience was sorely tried because of the delays. He was not a patient man.

The Sands, or Rub' al Khali as the Bedu called the Empty Quarter, could be merciless. Thesiger and his Bedu companions had to endure extreme heat during the day and frost at night, weeks of hunger and punishing thirst, especially in those parts of the Sands which had had no rain for several years. The Bedu could go without food or water for up to seven days but only in cold weather. Their camels could survive twenty days without water.

The Sands could be impressive. 'The colour of these sands was vivid, variable, and unexpected: in places the colour of ground coffee, elsewhere brick-red, or purple, or a curious golden-green'.[14]

Some of the dunes were formidable, so steep that they seemed, and were in places, impossible to surmount. A few were five and even seven hundred feet high. Fortunately, Thesiger and his companions only needed to cross two of the tallest. The camels had to be coaxed, a foot at time, to reach the summits. There they and Thesiger collapsed.

They made not one but two crossings of the Empty Quarter, the first, in the eastern desert, in 1946, the second, in the western desert, in 1948. The King of Saudi Arabia, Ibin Saud, had permitted the first crossing but not the second. He was furious. Consequently, Thesiger and his Rashid companions were arrested and imprisoned. He confessed that he alone was responsible. He feared that his Bedu companions' right hands would be cut off. Fortunately, St John Philby, a regular attendant at the King's court, and by then a Muslim, secured his release the next day. The King said he had released them as a favour to Philby.

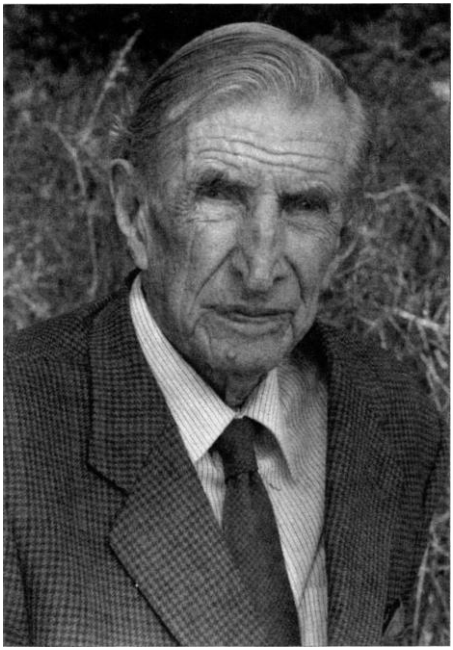
In his autobiography Thesiger is curiously downbeat about the crossings. He

wrote that, though the lure of the unknown was the motive for undertaking the crossings, 'those travels in the Empty Quarter would have been for me a pointless penance but for the comradeship of my Bedu companions'.[15] Yet writing to his mother in February 1947 about the first crossing he wrote 'I have just finished what is I think is the hardest journey yet done in Arabian exploration and one of the longest'.[16]

Thesiger was the third and last of those who crossed the Empty Quarter as it was. 'The last of the great unknown areas of the inhabited globe had been conquered.'[17] Thesiger knew that the conditions under which he made the two crossings were rapidly changing. When Bertram Thomas and St John Philby made their crossings in the early Thirties, oil had not then been found in Saudi Arabia. Oil was first struck in 1938. Thomas and Philby could not have predicted what effect this would have on Saudi Arabia's economy but Thesiger feared it, along with cars and aeroplanes, would open the door to Western civilisation. 'With the discovery of oil the life of the Bedu has now disappeared from Arabia….'[18]

COULSDON

After living for several years in Kenya, Thesiger moved to London in 1978.[19] He had been having problems with his eyesight including flashes of light in front of his eyes. He had surgery on his cornea at Moorfields. In 1994 his eyesight continuing to deteriorate, he had a cataract operation but the flashes of light continued. Soon he was unable to read or write. In 1995, the year he was knighted, his right hand began to shake. Rudimentary Parkinson's disease was the cause.



Thesiger in the gardens of Woodcote Grove House, Coulsdon, July 1999. From Alexander Maitland's book '*Wilfred Thesiger, The Life of the Great Explorer*'. © HarperCollins

'Everyone who made the pilgrimage to Coulsdon carried away a memory of enduring personal significance.'

Because Thesiger lived on his own in his late mother's flat, he felt lonely. Eventually he decided to move to a retirement home where he could be looked after among others. A search for one took him to Charterhouse and to another home in Blackheath. For one reason or another they would not accept him. A search was made for another home and one was found in Coulsdon: Orford House in Meadow Hill. He moved there on 23 June 1998 but then after a few months he moved to another retirement home close by: Woodcote Grove House near the Woodcote Park golf course. That entitled him to lunch there at the Golf Club but as a non-playing member.

He became increasingly frail and he was therefore moved to the adjoining Selkirk Nursing Wing belonging to Woodcote Grove House. When he suffered two falls in 2003, one in April, the other in August, causing him acute pain, he was taken to Mayday Hospital on Sunday 17 August. He died a few days later on Sunday 24 August. The funeral was held at Putney Vale Crematorium on 8 September. This was followed by a memorial service at Eton College, his former school.

So ended the life of a much-honoured man. He received, besides the knighthood, the founder's gold medal of the Royal Geographical Society, the fellowship of the Royal Society of Literature and the fellowship of the British Academy.

---

[1] The quotations are from the back cover of Wilfred Thesiger's *The Life of My Choice* (HarperCollins, 2000)
[2] *The Royal Geographical Society, History of World Exploration* (Guild Publishing, 1991)
[3] Alexander Maitland, Wilfred Thesiger. *The Life of a Great Explorer* (Harper Perennial, 2006)p79
[4] *Ibid*., p146
[5] *Ibid*., p178
[6] *Ibid*., p204
[7] Wilfred Thesiger, *Arabian Sands* (Penguin Books, 1964) p31
[8] *Ibid*., p37
[9] Wilfred Thesiger, *Desert, Marsh & Mountain* (flamingo, 1995) p33
[10] *Arabian Sands*, p18
[11] Maitland, p264
[12] *Arabian Sands*, p13
[13] *Desert, Marsh & Mountain*, p36
[14] *Arabian Sands*, p152
[15] *The Life of My Choice*, p398
[16] Maitland, p278
[17] Sir Percy Sykes*, A History of Exploration, from the earliest times to the present day*, (Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 3rd edition, 1949) p310. Sykes refers to Bertram Thomas and St John Philby but not to Thesiger as the third edition was published before Sykes knew in any detail, if at all, of Thesiger's crossings. *Arabian Sands* had not yet been published.
[18] *Desert, Marsh & Mountain*, p181
[19] This and the succeeding paragraphs are based on the epilogue in Maitland's biography, pp455-464

100 Open Spaces in Croydon in 100 Days Part 3 by Nicola Hunt

Betts Mead

This is the third piece I have written about my challenge of visiting 100 open spaces in Croydon in 100 days. Between the 6th August and 14th November 2021 I ended up visiting over 152 open spaces which between them provide a variety of habitats reflecting the varied geology, flora and fauna and history of Croydon. This article continues to reflect mostly those places less familiar or unknown to me although I am sure to many these are their local special places.

1. Betts Mead Recreation Ground
Kenley
13th August. Cloudy and dry.

Betts Mead is a large area (30 acres) of open meadows and woods lying between Old Lodge Lane and Hayes Lane. Discovering it for the first time in 2019 this was only my second visit. Having been gifted to the council in the 1920's by the eponymous F. Betts Esq it was subsequently used as a refuse tip. However, re-landscaping in the 1970's created the extensive terraced meadows seen today, which give fantastic and dramatic views over the valley towards Dollypers Hill.

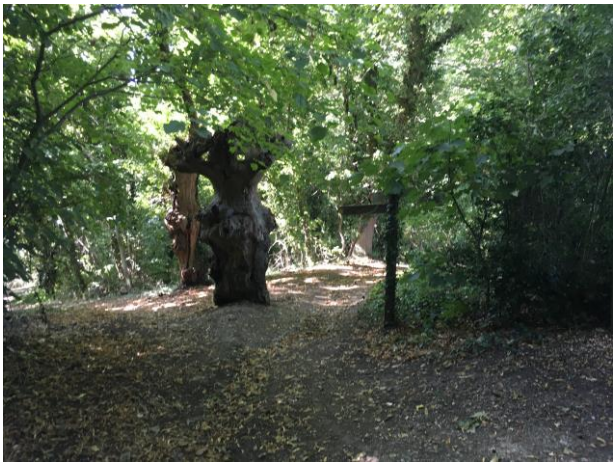
Entering from just off Hayes Lane I found a large area of colourful flower meadows, the bright yellow of ragwort complementing the deep pink of

knapweed. Here I met a local man who told me about the buzzards, red kites and sparrowhawks he often sees. Just on cue a sparrowhawk appeared, the flap-flap-glide flight characteristic. Stories of badgers and foxes followed and later, on one of the terraces I saw a splendid red fox hunting along the field margin, disturbing a green woodpecker which quickly flew away waffling a warning.

The surrounding woodland is a mix of copses, tree-filled gullies and wide wooded boundaries; a mix of planted firs and copper beech with oak, whitebeam, hawthorn, cherry, elder, ash and blackthorn. Narrow paths twist and turn through the woods, the onomatopoeic chiffchaff sang and a bullfinch softly whistled as I explored. As I progressed down the terraces I found large patches of rosebay willow herb and purple thistles – an excellent nectar source, with gatekeeper and meadow brown butterflies and many bumblebees enjoying the bounty.

Birds: In addition blue and great tits, ring-necked parakeets, wood pigeon, stock dove, great spotted woodpecker, wren, dunnock and magpie.
Butterflies: In 2022 on another visit I saw purple hairstreak.

2. Colescroft
Purley
8th September. Sunny and hot.



Intriguingly shown on the Green Croydon for All map, I could find very little further information about Colescroft. A narrow band of woodland, it stretches from just south of Higher Drive Recreation Ground in Purley to Pondfield Road in Kenley linking with the woodlands leading up to Betts Mead. Subsequently, I was told it was probably once part of a much larger woodland extending from Foxley Wood.

A simple network of paths run through the wood which was surprisingly well used as it leads to Hayes Lane Primary school. I had never walked through this strip of woodland despite discovering on this first visit that I used to live in a road that led up to the main path; sometimes you never know what is on

your doorstep.

I visited on a sunny early Autumn afternoon and shafts of sunlight cut through the trees creating multiple spotlights for insects to display. There must have been hundreds of hoverflies, all seemingly of the same species, dancing in the dappled light around ivy flowers. Speckled wood butterflies were everywhere, each defending their personal patch of light.

Largely a broadleaved woodland with a mixture of oak, hazel and holly bordered by gardens which must act like glades for the wildlife, it is a valuable wildlife corridor.

Birds: Nuthatch, wood pigeon, robin.

3. Purley Way West and Roundshaw Downs
Waddon
17th September. Warm and sunny.

Having walked from Waddon across the Purley Way Playing Fields, I risked life and limb crossing the busy road to reach the War Memorial and give it a closer inspection. Then I was on to Purley Way West, the rather unimaginatively named open grassland alongside the west of Purley Way and adjoining Roundshaw Downs. Part of the grassland is being developed as a chalk downland meadow complementing the adjacent London Borough of Sutton nature reserve.

Despite its proximity to a major arterial route, it was a very pleasant space to wander around. The meadow flowers remaining along the edge of the recently cut meadow attracted small white and meadow brown butterflies while a surprisingly interesting scrubby field edge, creating a mosaic of habitats, was full of birds including an extended family of long-tailed tits. Watching two stock doves, I reflected how these once rural birds are now utilising suburbia.

From one of the higher fields there is a fantastic view of London, rival to some

of the best and worth going to see.

Although I did not include Roundshaw Downs in my 152 spaces as it is not in Croydon, I did stop and have a wander around its meadows and scrub and checked out the grazing cattle. Together with the Croydon land it makes quite a substantial wildlife area and well worth exploring. Unexpectedly, I encountered someone flying model planes and discovered an area set out with a mown runway and bays like Kenley Aerodrome, not something I had come across before.

Birds: In addition blue and great tit, blackcap, chiffchaff, robin, jay, feral and wood pigeon and magpie.
Butterflies: Speckled Wood

4. Addington Vale
New Addington
28th September. Sun and showers.

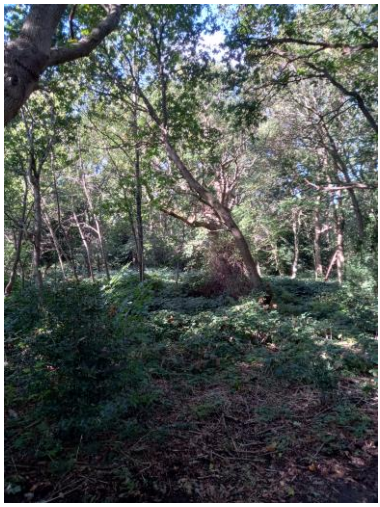
As I was on a conservation workday at Hutchinson's Bank, I decided to include a circular walk around the open spaces of New Addington – I had never explored this area. My walk took me through Addington Vale which extends $^{2}/_{3}$ of a mile from Arnhem Drive in the south to King Henry's Drive in the north, creating a green link between Milne Park and Rowdown Wood.

It is a sloping narrow space between 50-250 yards wide and although there are houses and streets on both sides it felt rather wild and remote perhaps made more so by the heavy downpour of rain. Another site which had been used as a rubbish tip (2500 tons of it) – it was landscaped in the 1970s. Areas of patchy scrub along the length were good for birds despite the torrential rain, as chiffchaff sheltered amongst the hawthorns and bushes. On a better day I think it would be worth looking for more bird life. As I walked along, getting wetter, I was cheered by the chirping of house sparrows and chatter of starlings, something I do not hear at home.

At the Rowdown Wood end there are lovely huge willows running alongside a deep ditch, although no water in it – maybe it fills up in Winter. I thought it would be worth coming back in Spring to see and look for some migrant birds in the shelter of the trees and bushes.

Birds: In addition wood and feral pigeon, magpie, jackdaw and crow.

5. Spring Park Wood
Shirley
6th October. Warm and sunny.



Fortunately good weather returned on my visit to Shirley and Spring Park Wood. Many years ago I did a volunteer task here on a very frosty day but had never been back, so I was looking forward to visit again. The wood was once part of a much larger woodland and is now completely encircled by houses. The three entrances are rather attractively gated with railings at the end of a short access track so it felt as if you were stepping into a secret garden. A path runs the perimeter with several cross paths which were well maintained.

The seven acres are a good stepping-stone for wildlife linking with other open spaces in the area. It was packed with woodland birds, quite vocal despite the late morning hour of my visit. A pair of foraging nuthatches were clinging to an oak tree branch, blackbirds turned over leaf litter, and a wren darted across the path. While I sat on a bench, a shy dunnock came out to search for food. A lovely place to sit and relax and take in woodland life.

Birds: In addition blue and great tit, robin, chiffchaff, ring-necked parakeet, crow and wood pigeon.

6. Coulsdon Coppice and Coulsdon Woods
Coulsdon 9th October.
Warm and sunny.

Coulsdon Coppice was the first place I did a conservation workday back in 1995 and have only been to a couple of times, so was keen to go back. I had noticed on the satellite map that the adjacent Coulsdon Woods estate had a fair amount of wooded open space so explored there as well; starting at Woodhatch Spinney and walking along Stoney Field Shaw to Coulsdon Coppice.

It was a warm, sunny Sunday afternoon and along the footpath very active with birds: mistle thrushes, starlings, several goldfinch and a chaffinch all in

the trees overhanging the path. We spotted a roe deer and a fox on the playing field of the school below.

Reaching Coulsdon Coppice we descended a flight of steps into a wooded dell. A single footpath leads through the middle of the six acre wood, a remnant of ancient mixed woodland with oak, holly, wild cherry, blackthorn and elder found on our exploration. It opens out in the central area to a glade with grasses and flowers. A good mix for wildlife reflected by the bird life heard including nuthatch and great spotted woodpecker, blue and great tits feeding in the trees and understorey, a blackbird alarming and a robin ticking – a small but busy space.

Birds: In addition magpie, crow, wood pigeon.

7. Stambourne Woodland Walk
Upper Norwood 16th October.
Drizzle.

Heading away from South Norwood Lake, accompanied by a friend who had joined me this day, we aimed for Westow Park via Stambourne Woodland Walk. It links Auckland Road to Church Road and designed as a linear wooded path it appeared quite a popular route on our visit. It was created from the remains of old neglected gardens of large Victorian villas and other pockets of land acquired over the years.

The main path is wide and slopes upwards but there are several more narrow paths leading round mature sweet chestnuts, oaks and past a huge fallen hornbeam. This magnificent tree had been left but was still alive with healthy growth reaching upwards and wonderful deeply ridged tactile bark. The ground was covered in rich russet fallen leaves, reminding me of when I was a child and used to construct dens with leaves in Autumn.

We came across a small pond and a couple of great tits chattering in the nearby holly, pleased to get such close views. Further uphill and up some steps and round the corner it eventually opens out into a wider area before leading up to a wide entrance alley to Church Road. An excellent wildlife corridor and habitat which makes a very pleasant walk in an urban area.

Birds: In addition blue tit, blackbird, robin.

8. Wilderness, Hall Grange
Shirley 28th October.
Mild, sun and cloud.

I have known Hall Grange since 1995 when as part of Croydon Conservation Volunteers we helped manage the bog garden under the guidance of Malcolm Jennings. In recent years it has been transformed from an overgrown garden to a new developing wildlife garden, called The Wilderness – named after the concept of its original creator Reverend William Wilks and now open to the public every weekday.

Large specimen trees such as silver birch, eucalyptus, oak, sweet chestnut, yew and other evergreens provide excellent feeding, shelter or lookout posts for great spotted woodpeckers, nuthatches, and goldcrest, all seen on my visit. Tucked away corners and dead hedges give cover for wrens and newly planted fruit trees, wild flowers, and azaleas together with established rhododendrons and heather which provide a food nectar source for hoverflies and bees in Spring and Summer.

Redwing were in the garden resting and chattering in the tall trees reminding me of the season change throughout my challenge and the resident mistle thrush was busy feeding on the ground near the path and on a subsequent visit was seen to defend its mistletoe. All-weather paths make it easy to negotiate around the garden and many benches give you a chance to sit and enjoy the wildlife.

The Wilderness has a very special site of metropolitan importance which is its bog garden. Fed by a spring the garden has sphagnum moss species and lovely bulbs in the Spring followed by orchids later on the year. When I

visited, being at the end of season it was drier, but in Winter and Spring it has pools of water. A very unique habitat for Croydon. (Please note the photo was taken in Spring as I forgot to take one on the day of my visit for 100 Open Spaces.)

Birds: In addition robin, blue tit, grey wagtail (flew over), wood pigeon, ring-necked parakeet, magpie.

9. Brickfields Meadow
Woodside 4th November.
Overcast.

The days had really shortened by the time I visited Brickfields Meadow with a birding friend who knew these places. I had heard about this site but never been and was not expecting the pond to be so big which was a pleasant surprise. This is the site of the former Woodside Brickworks which I have read was a big business. Surrounding it is a development of new homes built in the 1990s and a playground tucked away from and behind the pond in an open grassy area mostly surrounded by trees.

A notice at the site stated it was a “Doorstep Green” which I read are locally owned and run public spaces with funding initially supplied by the New Opportunities Fund which was set up close to the millennium. The pond has some quite steep banks with trees and bushes and other low growing vegetation interspersed around the edges, some benches providing welcome rest points from which to contemplate the scene and count the coots and moorhens and watch argumentative house sparrows dust bathing.

Leading away from the pond is a striking copse of tall mature willows creating a damp wood habitat and alongside is a long valley filled with buddleia. Unfortunately not the time of year to see butterflies but a reason to return in the summer and also to look for summer migrants in the willows.

Birds: In addition blue tit, robin, starling, goldfinch, herring gull, crow.

10. Croydon Cemetery
Thornton Heath
10th November. Overcast.

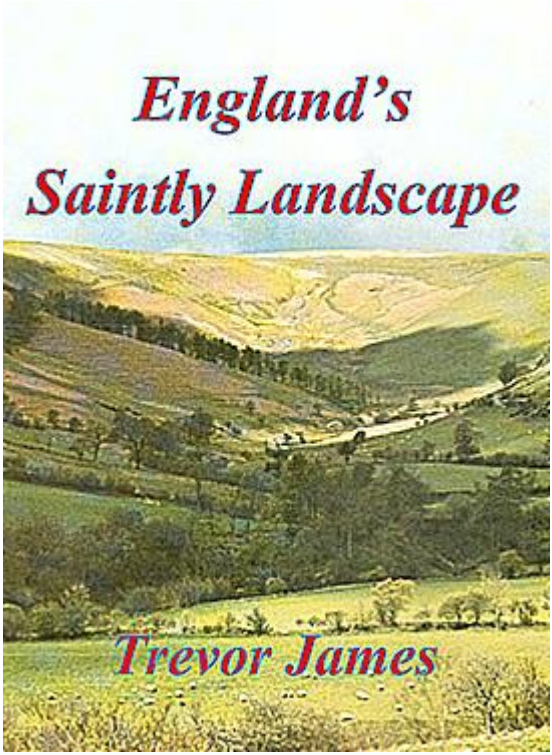
Very nearly at the end of the challenge I went to Croydon Cemetery, a friend kindly coming with me on a long haul walking day to cover the open spaces of Thornton Heath. The cemetery is obviously a large site with the older, quieter and wilder area at the Mitcham Common end. Plenty of space for wildlife here – tall mature broadleaved trees, evergreens, long and short grass and flowers provide a variety of habitats. Ideal for great spotted and green woodpeckers, goldcrest and wrens which we saw easily. A large healthy red fox picked its way through the gravestones eying us up as it went past. A row of tall poplars as if standing to attention, wafted a sweet pleasant scent through the air and along the border goldfinch chatted in the tree tops.

The more formal areas near the crematorium has a pond, well-kept garden with lawned sections and paths around shrubs and a mix of medium sized trees. Partly surrounded by walls it was excellent for blackbirds, redwing and robins while a mistle thrush stood sentinel at the top of a large birch tree. Never overlook a cemetery for wildlife and this was quite a refuge for wildlife, right in the heart of urban Croydon.

Birds: In addition blue and great tit, pied wagtail, magpie, crow, woodpigeon and black-headed and herring gull flew over.

As I have written these articles it reminds me of how much I enjoyed this challenge which introduced me to so many varied green spaces I never knew and some old favourites. I have been back to visit many again and in Spring, I have set myself another challenge of visiting as many as possible in just the 31 days of May and seeing what I can find in this different season.

The Saintly Landscape of South East England by Trevor James



The background to this paper is my *England's Saintly Landscape* which was published in 2020. In it I attempted to demonstrate that England did have a 'saintly landscape' as one would find in Wales or Cornwall but that the English form was potentially more difficult to discern. Whilst Wales and Cornwall have a proliferation of settlements which carry the local church dedication within their place names, the English evidence is more diverse. Inspired by W.G. Hoskins' encouragement to identify patterns in the landscape, the diversity that became apparent was revealed in church dedications, place names, inn names, street names and other possible phenomena.

What I have done for this paper is to explore more deeply the specific evidence of South East England, that is Kent, Surrey, Sussex and London, to continue and quantify what that evidence reveals.

Regional Venerations

St Botolph was a deeply revered saint, with the focus of his veneration being Boston in Lincolnshire, the town that indeed incorporates his name.

The reverence for the memory of St Botolph, however, was carried by Anglo-Saxons throughout South-East England. The remotest location from Boston recorded is possibly the village of Botolphs, just north of Shoreham-by-Sea in Sussex, where the church dedication matches the place name.

At West Hythe in Kent there is a public house known as the Botolph's Bridge, with its sign depicting monks carrying his coffin across the bridge. It is believed, locally, that this was on their way while taking him to his midnight burial. What this can really tell us is complex: it is unlikely that his coffin ever came this way but in Cambridge its St Botolph Church indicates that within the region he was known as a patron saint of travellers. This could suggest that there was a route which was used by Botolph pilgrims *en route* to one of the sites where he was particularly reverenced.

In Kent three dedications to St Botolph can be found at Chevening, Lullingstone and Northfleet.

St Botolph's influence was strong in the city of London where there were four churches carrying his name – in Aldersgate, Aldgate, Billingsgate and Bishopsgate.

At one point St Botolph was definitely reverenced at Croydon. In 1276 Croydon's first fair was chartered for the feast of St Botolph [17 June] and the seven days which followed. This selection is highly significant because it reveals a local interest in his name and cult. However, the evidence that Archbishop Stratford secured, in effect, a replacement fair in 1345 for the feast of St John the Baptist [24 June] rather indicates that the St Botolph Day Fair had not been able, chronologically, to deliver what the townspeople needed. This St John the Baptist Day fair became Croydon's famous 'Cherry Fair' and the scientific view is that the original choice of St Botolph's Day would have been too early and the wild cherries would not have been sufficiently ripened in time. The result of this re-arrangement is, almost certainly, as with other places, the occasion of the principal fair becoming inextricably attached to the dedication adopted by the parish church, setting aside the local enthusiasm for St Botolph.

Another fragmentary link with St Botolph can be found at Merstham in Surrey where its fair was chartered in 1338 for the vigil, feast and morrow of St Botolph.

Another saint revered by the Anglo-Saxons was **St Edmund**, whose shrine is, of course, at Bury St Edmunds but in a remote location on the North Downs at West Kingsdown is a church dedicated to St Edmund – King and Martyr. This structure contains some Saxon work and so it really does stand as an early feature of the saintly landscape.

A national group which adopted a particular saint were the Danes, most conspicuously celebrated with St Clement Danes Church in The Strand in London.

However, **St Clement** was also more widely adopted by the Danes as their patron saint for sailors, although his link with sailors was stretched beyond the Danelaw because the ancient church at the former port of Sandwich is dedicated to St Clement. This certainly confirms that this had been an active port historically, even though it now has limited access to the sea, and it may be a sign that St Clement, who was martyred on an anchor, may have had a much more extensive following amongst sailors. This is confirmed within Kent by a lost dedication to St Clement at Rochester and a St Clement Church at Old Romney. [1] This latter is another example of a port which has become significantly detached from the sea but whose sea links are confirmed by its church dedication.

Significance of St Nicholas Dedications

Ten places in Surrey have **St Nicholas** dedications. All over Europe St Nicholas is celebrated as patron saint of sailors and of merchants. The explanation for this is that one of the miracles attributed to him was saving the lives of some sailors. As a result he was recognised as the patron saint of sailors and, because of their role in trade, by extension he also became the patron of merchants. The result is that in coastal areas St Nicholas, rather more than St Clement, appears as the chosen church dedication in many ports and on some rivers.

The ancient church dedication at Brighton is to St Nicholas, a clear indication that there was historically a community of sailors at that location; and this is mirrored at the ancient port of Pevensey with its St Nicholas dedication.

In Surrey the dedication at Thames Ditton is definitely a reflection of its location on a major navigable river, the Thames. It is possible that Pyrford on the River Wey may owe its selection to being located on a previously navigable stretch of that river.

Godstone, Sutton, Cranleigh, Leatherhead and Great Bookham, however, were all towns which clearly functioned with a market. The judgement must be that the selection of a St Nicholas church dedication is an indication of the pre-eminent influence of the merchant community at that location. The St Nicholas church dedication is an indication that a trading community will have existed. Even though Sutton and Godstone did not have the historic legal status bestowed by a charter, the wider pattern nationally is very strong in support of this hypothesis.

The dedications at Chalwood, Compton and Peper Harrow may also be indicative of a lost trading function from before the era of the Black Death because the selection does have a very powerful link: if another occupation

had been prominent, they would have influenced the selection.

At Weybridge on the banks of the Thames there is a different linkage: its fair on 9 May was awarded for the vigil, feast and morrow of the Translation of St Nicholas, thereby offering this town as fulfilling both of St Nicholas's patronages, as a commercial centre and on the navigable Thames. Frances Arnold-Foster, in her *Studies in English Church Dedications* in 1899, mentioned that a previous St Nicholas church at Weybridge had been demolished.

Having earlier suggested that Croydon may have come close to having a St Botolph dedication, it also has a link with St Nicholas. Inside its ancient parish church, one of the principal chantries was dedicated to St Nicholas. In the event the sheer success of the St John the Baptist Day Fair meant that the selection of the church name was, in a sense, inevitable but the presence of a St Nicholas chantry meant that it had been under consideration.

Pilgrim Routes

Pilgrim routes were another feature of the saintly landscape. Nationally the shrine of **St Thomas Becket** at Canterbury, after his murder in 1170, attracted huge numbers of pilgrims. Famously the route from the Tabard Inn at Southwark, via the Old Kent Road to Canterbury is celebrated within Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

On this famous route St Nicholas Church at Barfreston is believed to have been a stopping point for pilgrims. The link with St Thomas being confirmed by a Becket likeness carved at its south door, said to be the earliest known representation of Thomas Becket in Kent.

A second route existed, proceeding from the west along the alignment of the North Downs, with the St Thomas Church as East Clandon being a testimony to the existence of this route. Whatever debate there might be about which St Thomas was being remembered, in 1899 Frances Arnold-Foster definitely identified it as being St Thomas of Canterbury.

Another pilgrim route in the region is to the shrine of **St Richard of Chichester** is indicated by the fifteenth century Star Inn at Alfriston. Larwood and Hotten argue that this originated as a shelter for pilgrims on that route, with the 'star' being a metaphorical indication of being on the correct route to the ultimate destination at Chichester.

Between Greenwich and Canterbury there was a pilgrim route which memorialised **St Alphege**. St Alphege was an Archbishop of Canterbury who was murdered by the Danes at Greenwich in 1012. He had been held hostage and basically he was killed amidst a drunken brawl. What had

happened had very significant shockwaves. The Danes were crestfallen over what had happened. His body was taken to St Paul's Cathedral where he was buried but in 1016, once Cnut was king, he acted to show his personal concern over what had happened. He arranged for Alphege's remains to be moved to Canterbury Cathedral. The result was that there was an identifiable pilgrim route from London, where there was St Alphege church dedication, via Greenwich where he was similarly celebrated, to Seasalter where he is still celebrated in the church dedication. It was at Seasalter that his body was unloaded from the Thames barge ready for the final journey to Canterbury Cathedral, where he was re-interred, with a church also bearing his name within that city.

Royal Venerations

Every region has its own 'royal' saint, usually a Saxon princess, who has subsequently been venerated for her holiness. Kent's example is St Mildred [660-734] who, whilst she has attracted a specific dedication at Canterbury, is celebrated by local veneration at places such as Minster-in-Thanet where she was the second abbess, having succeeded her mother, Domneva, in c700.

There are two further Saxon princesses who are memorialised in Kent church dedications: St Sexburga at Minster on Sheppey and St Werbergh, Mildred's cousin, on the Hoo peninsula. These are clear local celebrations of these two holy abbesses but St Sexburga is principally celebrated at Ely and St Werbergh's shrine was at Hanbury in Staffordshire before her relics were removed to what is now Chester Cathedral.

Very Local Venerations

Sometimes saints are only celebrated for their spirituality in a very limited area. A strong example would be **St Eanswythe**, who is remembered at Folkestone and at nearby Brenzett in the Romney Marshes. The church at Folkestone is jointly dedicated to St Mary and St Eanswythe. She was the daughter of King Edbald and granddaughter of King Ethelbert of Kent. She is known to have been a nun at Folkestone and died young. Her relics were buried at Folkestone, stored, it has now become apparent, in various church buildings until modern times. In 1885 a lead vessel containing bones was found by workmen and this was assumed to be her mortal remains. In very recent times radio-carbon testing has proved that they were from a young woman who died in the seventh century. In this specific instance it really is possible to confirm that what had been revered as a saintly relic may indeed have been so.

Shrines

Rochester Cathedral contains the shrine of **St William of Perth**, sometimes alternatively known as St William of Rochester. William was a Scotsman, a baker by trade and devoted in his faith. After a spiritual experience, he took a vow to visit the Holy Places in Palestine as a pilgrim. He set out with another traveller and reached Rochester. After a three-day break at Rochester, they set out but straightaway his companion then robbed and murdered him. By tradition, anyone who is killed on a pilgrimage is regarded as a martyr, and locally he was immediately recognised as a saint. In 1256 the Bishop of Rochester secured his canonisation and his shrine was established within the Cathedral, initially in the crypt but later in the north-east transept. Crowds of pilgrims converged on this shrine and many miracles were reported. A chapel was built at the site of his murder and it became known as Palmersdene, in recognition of William's status as a 'palmer' [pilgrim]. At Frindsbury church, near Rochester, a wall painting of St William was discovered in 1885. It is believed to have been painted between 1256 and 1266, really quite soon after the martyrdom.

At Faversham in Kent there is a unique veneration of **St Crispin** and **St Crispinian**, twins, who were martyred there in the third century. Legend has it that they were shoemakers and that they had fled the persecution of Christians in Canterbury under Emperor Diocletian. There are no church dedications anywhere to these two young men, although historically there was an altar in their memory in the parish church, but they are recognised as patron saints of shoemaking, cobblers and leatherworkers. Although what happened to them is regarded as legend, it has a potency because it is paralleled by a similar legend in France at Soissons. Also in East Kent, near to Deal, at Worth there is St Crispin Inn, a further indication of the local memorialisation of their lives.

Occupational Saint Dedications.

St Bartholomew is the patron saint of those who work with leather and skins. His symbol is a butcher's knife because that is how he is believed to have been martyred. Possibly the greatest example in England is St Bartholomew the Great on the edge of London's Smithfield. The legend is that the monk Rahere had a vision in which he was instructed to found a church in honour of St Bartholomew. This is a much-repeated story but logic also indicates that this church, dedicated to the patron saint of leather workers, happened to stand next to what may have been the greatest meat market in Europe, and therefore a place likely to have attracted large numbers of people who earned their living working with leather and skins.

Taking evidence for Surrey there are five historic St Bartholomew dedications at Burstow, Haslemere, Horley, Leigh and Wanborough. Nationally the pattern is that this dedication crops up when there was a particular concentration of leather workers. An extension of this pattern, of course, is recognition that the leather trades were extremely noxious and there is a tendency for such communities to be away from large population centres because of the processing odours. Locational research in these five places may guide us to viable and definite conclusions: at this stage the locational pattern is strong and the religious link with such workers is unimpeachable.

St Dunstan is very strongly associated with goldsmithing because this was his occupation before he began his progression to be Archbishop of Canterbury. The explanation for the solitary historic Surrey example at Cheam may be a clue to an as-yet unidentified group of gold workers.

St Giles has occupational and locational significance. He is frequently associated with fairs and, by extension, with lepers. The latter explanation being that St Giles Fairs tend to be on the fringes of urban areas, beyond which, in reality, lepers were not permitted to proceed. His link with blacksmiths arises from a legend which saw him carry out a miracle on a horse. This means that the choice of site may also be linked to his role as the patron saint of blacksmiths, an occupation likely to have been in great demand on the edge of towns. In certain circumstances, such as St Giles-in-the-Fields, near to modern-day Holborn, this may well explain the origin of its dedication. It also follows that St Giles venerations also occur on major routes or at cross-roads. This may explain the examples in Surrey at Camberwell and Ashtead, both of which are contiguous to the alignment of Stane Street.

St Blaise, the patron saint of woolcombers, was conspicuously celebrated at Bromley where there was historically a St Blaise Well. The link between St Blaise and woolcombers is because he was martyred with a woolcomb. Nationally the link between St Blaise and woolworkers is very strong, more reflected in secular examples than in the religious. This was a chalybeate well. E. L. S. Horsborough, the early local historian of Bromley, confirmed my view that this St Blaise dedication had occurred because the cloth trade was strong in some form or another at that location. Horsborough went on to say that that his view was that there were a further twelve churches in Kent with St Blaise images or altars. To date I have identified a further former St Blaise chapel recorded near to Tonbridge.

Matching Church Dedications and Place Names

In *England's Saintly Landscape* [2020] a considerable portion of the book is devoted to a presentation of an argument to prove that the saintly landscape

can be demonstrated through matching place name and church dedications.

Obviously, there are places which derive their names directly from a local church dedication, but two particular examples in South-East England warrant special attention.

Mickleham in Surrey has a St Michael church dedication. Ekwall insisted that the 'mickle' means large. My view is that this church occupies a typical elevated site of the kind accepted nationally as being associated with St Michael veneration and celebration. The pattern is very strong to support my assertion that the local commitment to St Michael helped to form the place name.

In Sussex, in addition to the matching pair cited at Botolphs, **Wiston** provided another signpost. Ekwall identified the Domesday spelling as 'Wistanestun' but does not accept that this refers to St Wistan, whose shrine was at Repton in Derbyshire, even though he accepted such a definition at various locations in Mercia. For reasons that we cannot yet know, there is likely to have been a local enthusiasm for this martyred boy-king at this location.

Church Dedications as dating Evidence

At Crowhurst and Esher it may well be that the selection of the St George church dedication coincided with the construction or provision of the first church at those locations. Given that St George took the place of Edward the Confessor as patron saint in the early fourteenth century, this may be clear and affirmative evidence of the date of construction. Certainly Crowhurst is a later development because it is a daughter church of another parish; and the suggestion is that Esher church was constructed in about 1540.

Churches yielding locational evidence

St Leonard is frequently associated with health cure and there is some evidence that his dedication occurred at places linked with the possibility of health cures. Chelsham is a remote part of the original Warlingham parish and it may well have been a place especially associated with health cures. Streatham seems unlikely until one remembers that its wells were highly regarded in historic times for their curative qualities.

St Michael elsewhere in England and indeed across Europe is associated with elevated sites because it is believed that St Michael churches were constructed on pagan burial grounds, generally located on high ground. These churches confirmed the Christian victory over the Devil. Surrey only has three historic St Michael church dedications, and it will be for others to confirm whether the locational argument applies at Betchworth or Pirbright, as much as it demonstrably does at Mickleham.

Dedications of significant Antiquity

There are a small number of very significant ancient church dedications such as St Martin and St Helen which are strong indicators of significant antiquity. **St Helen**, the mother of the emperor Constantine, is remembered by her association with the discovery in Palestine of the 'true cross'. This is the reason for her early veneration. **St Martin** of Tours was a very early French bishop who is famously celebrated at St Martin-in-the Field in central London and the Surrey example is to be found at Dorking.

Inns

Despite a tendency to display what are misleading signboards, **George** Inns can trace themselves back into the tradition of the inns which evolved from establishments providing accommodation on pilgrim and other routes. Some can easily be proved to precede the arrival of the first three Georgian kings, who often appear on these signboards, by as much as two or more centuries. In truth they are named in honour of St George, England's patron saint: indeed, occasionally evidence emerges to demonstrate that they were originally named as George and Dragon or George and Pilgrim. They really are indicators of the saintly landscape.

The 1838 Pigot Directory for Surrey identified nine locations which included 'George' establishments. [2] Further research could be undertaken very locally to check the historical antecedents of these premises [3]. However, my focus is on two from historic Surrey, not mentioned by Pigot but for which very conspicuous evidence can readily be provided.

The George Inn [National Trust] at Southwark can be traced back to the time when it was the direct neighbour of what might be labelled as 'Chaucer's Tabard', from where his pilgrims set out for Canterbury. Potentially this inn can be traced back as early as 1543 and is certainly included in John Stowe's *Survey of London* in 1598 [4]. At Croydon the George Inn can be traced back to 1497 but, due to the decline in the inn trade, it had ceased to exist by the 1780s, the reason why it is not mentioned by Pigot. In these two instances the chronological evidence significantly pre-dates the Georgian era and so this is absolutely conclusive confirmation that these names are part of a saintly affiliation.

The **Chequer** in Croydon's North End was demolished in 1597 to enable the Whitgift Hospital to be constructed. When it was demolished to enable John Whitgift's conspicuous gift to his adopted town, it had stood there from as early as 1357. Its name has religious significance because it refers to the period just before Jesus's Crucifixion when the soldiers drew lots to decide

how to share out his clothes. The fact that its name has a strong religious dimension indicates that this is part of the early tradition of inns being an extension of the monastic custom of hospitality.

The **Crossed Keys** in Croydon's High Street had already ceased to be an inn in 1617 when the Whitgift Archives record that it had already become a 'dwelling house'. This establishment with its yard, which became known as Markby's Yard and is basically the alignment of the modern-day Park Street, brings us to the heart of Christian faith. This is because the 'Crossed Keys' are the heraldic symbol of St Peter, the 'rock' on which the church was built.

Angel signs have been noted at Godalming and Guildford in the 1839 Pigot Directory of Surrey. Such a label immediately creates a heavenly perspective and again suggest links with the era when such establishments were closely linked with religious practice.

Street Names

Nationally there are many street names which bear the name of the saint to whom a local church is dedicated. However there are two of special interest which either incorporate a now unfamiliar saint or distort a name previously celebrated.

In Southwark, just south of London Bridge is **Tooley Street**. This is a fragmentary reminder of St Olave to whom a local church was dedicated. This elision of saint and Olave has produced this memorial of a saint who was strongly celebrated locally. St Olave was an eleventh century king of Norway who supported the English in their battles with the Danes.

Within the city of London, **Foster Lane** is a corruption of St Vedast who was a Flemish saint. Vedast died in the sixth century. There is no strong evidence of a direct link between this deeply spiritual figure and London, but it is believed that the very small number of venerations of this man in England may have been brought through the strong trading links with Flanders.

References

[1] The fact that its now inland successor seaport of New Romney has a St Nicholas dedication is a further cultural indicator of how the coastline in this area has continued to expand.
[2] *Pigot and Co's Royal, National and Commercial Directory and Topography of Kent, Surrey and Sussex, 1839* [Facsimile Edition 1993].
[3} These nine were to be found at Chertsey, Cobham, Epsom, Guildford, Mitcham, Oxted, Thames Ditton [two] and Wandsworth.
[4] John Stowe *The Survey of London*, 1598, 367 [in the Everyman edition].

Illumination of Croydon Parish Church of St. John by electricity in January 1897
by Ron Brooker

The Parish Church of St. John (now Croydon Minster) was illuminated by electricity on Sunday 31 January 1897, and to many in the congregation it came as an agreeable surprise, although they knew via the press of its proposed installation, they were not aware of the installation being carried out so promptly. The *Croydon Guardian* in its edition of 5 December 1896 gave that it understood that the Parish Church would be lighted by electricity, and the installation completed by Christmas Day, whereas the *Croydon Advertiser* in its later editions that month reported that it was stated that the lighting was to be carried out shortly, but did not indicate a time.

In the first edition of the *Croydon Society Gossip*, 18 November 1896, a report of an interview held some days before with Mr. A.L.C. Fell, the Engineer in charge of the installation of the electrical supply to the central area of the town, then being carried out by the British Thomson-Houston Company Limited (BT-H) on behalf of Croydon Council, stated in what streets the mains at that time were laid, and that extensions would very shortly be laid down Church Street and up the Addiscombe Road to Park Hill. Although BT-H was in dispute with the Council's Electric Lighting Sub-

Committee during the December as to those extensions being carried out, it appears that the Church Street extension went ahead. Considering it was only on 6 November 1896 that Croydon's electricity supply had been switched on, the church soon took advantage of it for illumination, but why was that so, what did it comprise of and who paid for it?

A beautiful screen at the west end of the chancel contributed in no small way to the introduction of the electric light. The elegantly carved screen was spoiled by the gas fittings, that were considered necessary at that end of the chancel, and it was desirable that they be removed and in some way replaced. The heat from no less than 550 jets required to obtain sufficient light tended to make the air unwholesome at the evening services and made things uncomfortable for the congregation, and especially the preacher, due to his elevated position in the pulpit. The fumes at that time were beginning to make the interior dirty, the effect particularly noticeable on the gilt fabric and pictures of the chancel, together with the oak work of the organ.

With the introduction of the town's electricity supply, the churchwardens with the Vicar saw their opportunity to get rid of the above troubles, the only difficulty being the necessary funds required for the much needed change. It was at that point that Sir Frederick Edridge came forward and cleared up all difficulties in that direction by undertaking to bear the cost of installing the electric light, adding to the many generous gifts which Sir Frederick and Lady Edridge had already made to the church. Sir Frederick Edridge took Messrs. Wenham and Waters, electrical and sanitary engineers, of Vicarage Road, into his confidence. A scheme was prepared by Mr. James Wenham, the firm's electrician, for the lighting of the church by electricity.

With the architecture of the church having to be taken into consideration, Mr. H. Oldrid Scott, architect son of the late Sir Gilbert Scott, who rebuilt the church after the fire of 1867, was called in to decide upon desirable fittings etc. The fittings which were new, had been made entirely at Messrs. Wenham and Waters works, and those modified were altered at the same place. The fittings were seen to suit the building admirably and were quite in keeping with the architecture of the church.

One of the great features of the installation was how the wires had been placed, so as not to interfere with the architecture in any way. It was first feared by many that the church would be disfigured by the fixing of the wires and cables to the walls and roof of the building, but that was not to be. All the conductors had been secreted above the roof of the church, between the ceiling and the lead flat. Another point was that the circuits had been so arranged that the light could be used at three different powers – on third, two thirds, or the whole of the lighting power. In addition, each individual fitting could be

separately controlled, also under the three powers of light. That arrangement had the effect of greatly economising the consumption of energy in the lighting of the church, the churchwardens being desirous of keeping the annual lighting expenses as low as possible, consistent with efficiency, as during many of the services only partial or local lighting was necessary. The whole of the controlling apparatus was neatly arranged in a glass fronted oak case in the west porch of the church, and was entirely under control of the verger.

When the full power was turned on the total lighting represented 3,360 candle power which was a considerable increase on the lighting power of the total number of gas jets. The electric light was obtained from incandescent glow lamps arranged in groups, the number of those lights was in the region of 150, which were of 16 and 32 candle power. In the chancel were some very handsomely polished brass electroliers, designed after the style of Gothic candelabra, and those in the nave of wrought iron with gilt relief. The pulpit had a special arrangement for lighting the books, manuscripts, &c., used by the preacher, and was adjustable to suit the length of the preacher's sight.

Croydon Parish Church today – an electrolier

The appearance of the interior of the church under the new system of lighting had to be seen to be appreciated, giving a much more natural appearance to the church than the old system of gas lighting.

When the church was lighted that Sunday for the first time it was considered by both clergy and congregation to be highly successful; the sermons preached that night and the collection made was on behalf of the Indian Famine Relief Fund. Probably a few people noticed a slight difference in the temperature of the church due to the fact that the gas had been dispensed with, but there was greater purity of the atmosphere. However, it was believed, at that time, that the gas would not be discontinued altogether, but would be used much less than as before.

Sources

Croydon Advertiser, 12 & 16 December 1896, p.5; 6 February 1897, p.2.
Croydon Express, 6 February 1897, p.2.
Croydon Guardian, 5 December 1896 p.5.
Croydon Society Gossip, 18 November 1896, pp.11-12; 3 February 1897, p.16.
Ron Brooker, *The Dawning of a New Age: Croydon and the advent of its Electricity Supply 1881 – 1898,* pp.266-7. Proceedings CNHSS Vol.19(6) 2013.

A Postcard of East Croydon Station in 2007
by Edward Hart

This photograph taken by John Gent in 2007 looking east shows the rebuilt East Croydon station as we know it today, which opened in 1992.

In the 1900s the town of Croydon was served by two railway companies: the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway and the South Eastern Railway. East Croydon station was served by the main line trains of both companies under a traffic sharing arrangement reached in 1848. However the Brighton company as the majority user felt unfairly penalised by this and had opened a separate station in 1862 immediately to the west of East Croydon which they named New Croydon. This was served by the Brighton company's suburban trains. Passengers wishing to travel by local train and perhaps obtain a cheaper fare to London would buy their ticket from New Croydon with its access from Dingwall Road, but main line passengers would use East Croydon which could be accessed from Cherry Orchard Road. This must have confused travellers as it was the same station in all but name and the two stations were connected internally by passageways.

All of this was swept away when the new station in the photograph *(top of next page)* was built in the 1890s with its single booking office accessed from the overbridge and from which three ramps led to the platforms in the form we still have today.

The platforms originally retained their old designations of 'East Croydon' and 'New Croydon' but they were finally renamed as 'East Croydon Local' and

A view of East Croydon c.1912 © John Gent Collection jg-pc-cc-646

'East Croydon Main' from 1 June 1909. In any case passengers now had easy access to all the platforms from the single booking hall. The platforms were also interconnected by a subway.

This subway was extended on the east side and provided with a lift to facilitate the handling of the milk traffic. This reminds us that East Croydon was then not only an important passenger station. On the west side there was an extensive goods yard with a large shed for the loading and unloading of wagons. Cattle pens were provided for the handling of livestock. Beyond this there was a coal yard. These two yards occupied the space between the running tracks and Lansdowne Road/ Dingwall Road. In addition the station handled parcels traffic from an office in the main building.

The contractor for the station buildings was James Longley. One hundred years later Longleys were also the contractor for the present station but unfortunately this firm went into administration in 2000. The elaborately decorated style of the station was similar to others being built in late Victorian days by the Brighton company (locally Purley is a surviving example although considerably less ornate). The lantern roof which helped to provide light to the booking hall was a prominent feature of the station. A few survive elsewhere at stations such as Lewes and Eastbourne.

To the left of the station there was a line of eight small shops. These were built by the Brighton company under a separate contract with Cook & Sons. The one nearest the station was occupied by Cornish, a tobacconist, but the next three were the offices of coal merchants: Rickett, Smith & Co., T S & C Parry, and Moger & Co. Customers could place their orders and settle accounts

in these offices. Such shops survive at stations elsewhere often now repurposed as offices for taxi firms or estate agents, etc. The coal trade was highly competitive and it was difficult for an individual trader to stand out. Parry had put a clock on a bracket extending over the pavement from his premises, no doubt in the hope that a traveller hurrying up the slope to the station would look up to check the time and notice Parry's name over that of the other merchants.

On the opposite side of the road were the offices of Geo. T Hall who not only traded in coal but also in various building materials. George Thomas Hall started out in the family firm of Hall & Co. but decided to strike out on his own in about 1884. He doesn't seem to have been particularly successful. Hall & Co., who had become a limited company in 1898, took over the Purley depot of Geo T Hall in 1910 and the rest of the business during the following year. Hall & Co. had their own head office at Victoria Wharf, on the east side of the tracks with access onto Cherry Orchard Road. They dealt in sand, gravel and other building materials as well as coal and coke.

The ornate electric light standard was intended to project a modern image in the 1900s and contrasts sharply with today's utilitarian designs. It was supplied from Croydon Council's generating station in Factory Lane which also provided power for the trams as well as domestic supplies. The electric tramway, opened in 1902, had its terminus by Everton Road, close to the present Addiscombe tram stop. However, its route was different to that used by today's trams and ran along Cherry Orchard Road and the (Lower) Addiscombe Road.

Beyond the station is Clark's College, opened on this site in 1909. However it had moved out by early 1913 concentrating its Croydon branch on premises in London Road. This helps us to date the photograph to the period just prior to WW1. George E Clark started by providing tuition for the Civil Service examinations. He later extended this to include more general commercial training both by in-person tuition and by correspondence course. A 'modern' school followed taking pupils from the age of 11. The last branch, in Bromley, closed in 1988.

How much of all this survives today? There is a small section of the wall which separated two of the coal offices and which now forms the boundary of the Boxpark but otherwise nothing remains of the earlier scene. The station itself has the original 1890s platforms and ramps as well as some of the ornamental cast iron columns on the platforms which now look out of place supporting the utilitarian roofs which have replaced the original platform roofing. However, apart from the replacement of the subway by a bridge, the traveller from a century ago would recognise the station layout we have today.

Sources

Various documents held at The National Archives in the RAIL 414 series (LB&SCR Board and other minutes).
C G Dobson, A Century and a Quarter (History of Hall & Co), 1949
Ron Brooker, The Dawning of a New Age, (Croydon's early electricity supply), CNHSS Proceedings Vol.19 Part 6, Sept 2013
Clark's College history – Website: www.clarkscollege.co.uk
OS 1:2500 map 2nd edition 1894/5. Available in the Godfrey edition as Surrey Sheet 14.06

CROYDON NATURAL HISTORY and SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY LIMITED

Founded in 1870 as the Croydon Microscopical Club

Registered office: 96a Brighton Road, SOUTH CROYDON, CR2 6AD

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 in our Programme, weekday indoor evening 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 – please contact 'Information' (see below). 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

Contacts

Information	email: information@cnhss.co.uk
Twitter	https://twitter.com/cnhssprogramme
Facebook	http://www.facebook.com/pages/Croydon-Natural-History-Scientific-Society/106522816087133
Programme	email: programme@cnhss.co.uk
Bulletin	email: bulletin@cnhss.co.uk
Membership	email: membership@cnhss.co.uk
Sales	email: sales@cnhss.co.uk
Company Sec.	email: co-secretary@cnhss.co.uk
Website	https://cnhss.co.uk

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.

© Copyright 2023 Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society Ltd

Print code: 2023-175/270