

WOKING HISTORY JOURNAL

Volume 3

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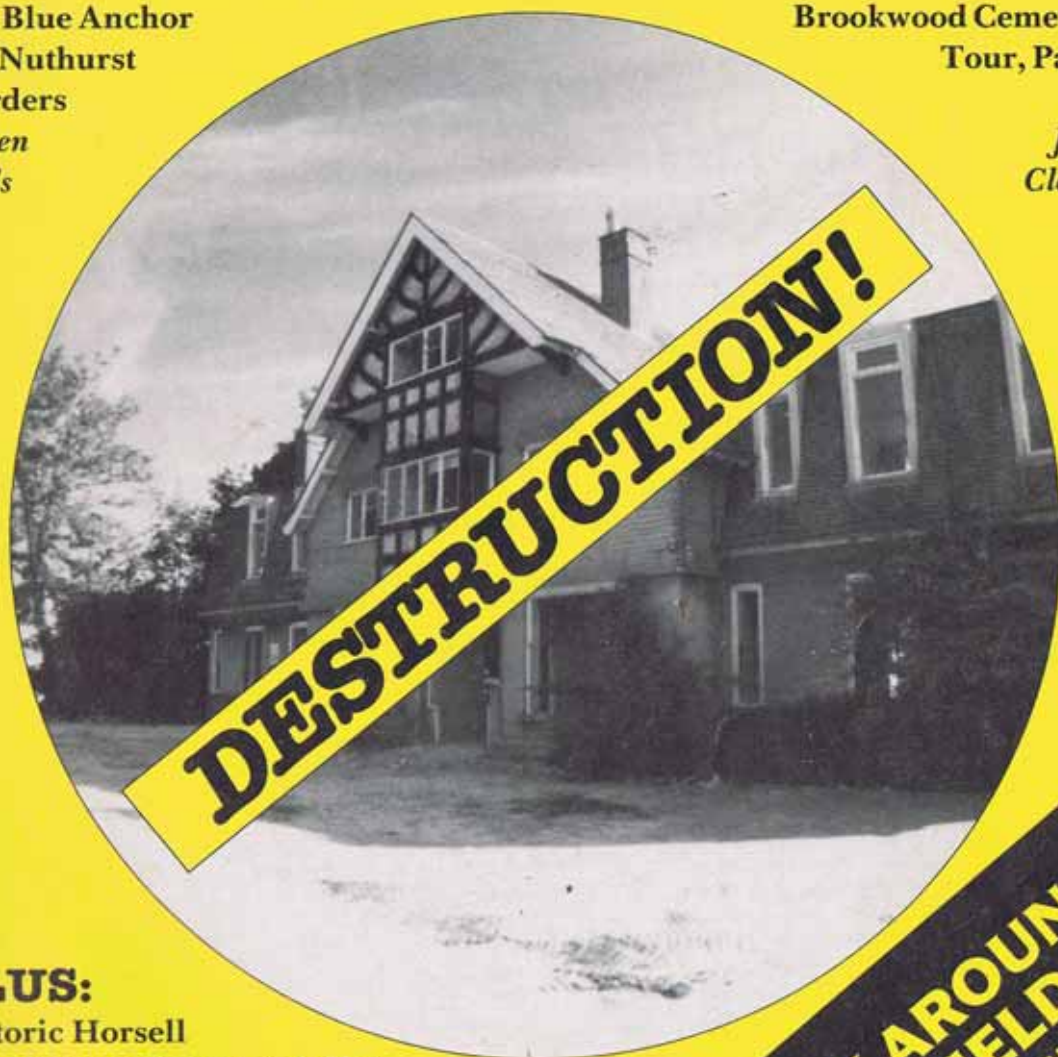
Summer 1990

MURDER!

The Blue Anchor
and Nuthurst
Murders
by Ken
Halls

DEATH!

Brookwood Cemetery
Tour, Part 2
by
John
Clarke



PLUS:

Historic Horsell
The History of Skeet & Jeffes
Local History Diary
Festival News
Readers Requests

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WOKING HISTORY JOURNAL

Volume 3 Summer 1990

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In this issue we have the second part of John Clarke's guide to Brookwood Cemetery, in which he details some of the interesting features of the north-western portion of the Cemetery. The first part of the guide appeared in issue number one last December. A few copies are still available for those who missed it, unlike our Spring edition which sold out almost immediately! Unfortunately we cannot reprint the second edition, although we will no doubt, reproduce some of the articles at some time in the future – especially the 'War of the Worlds' feature which proved so popular.

Talking of the 'War of the Worlds' article, we would like to thank all those involved in the Woking History Festival at Easter. Although the 'War of the Worlds' walk had to be postponed because of rain, all the other events went very well indeed, and a lot of interest was created by the various displays and lectures. More details of the festival are contained in our 'Festival News' section on page seven.

Also in this edition we have an investigation by Ken Halls (the well known policeman and local historian of St. Johns), into the Blue Anchor and Nuthurst Murders – both linked by the famous Home Office Pathologist, Sir Bernard Spilsbury. Ken has used his powers of investigation to reveal more facts about these two 'headline' cases from the 1920s.

The History of Skeet & Jeffes is recalled by Mr Arthur Skeet and illustrated by items from old catalogues. The firm, keen supporters of this Journal and the local community, are one hundred years old next year, so this article acts as the starter to their Centenary year.

Continuing our series of pictorial village views we turn to 'Historic Horsell', with pictures taken from our collection of over 4,000 slides of old postcards and photographs and items from our collection of old invoices and advertisements.

We have also included a short walk around Kingfield for you to try one sunny summer evening and finally there is our 'Readers Requests' and 'Diary' sections to bring you up to date with what is going on locally.

The cover illustration this quarter is of Woking Victoria Hospital, just days before its final destruction. As many of our readers will know, there were attempts to save the building, possibly to be used as a canal-side interpretation centre or even a borough museum, but these attempts failed. The Council refused to grant a preservation order and so the way was clear for the developers to demolish the old hospital in preparation for a new office block that they hope to build on the site. We have lost the battle over preserving the building, but the war may still be won as regards the museum. The council could, if they wished, persuade the developers to include in their scheme room for such a building – a fitting memorial perhaps to the people of Woking who paid for the hospital to be built in the first place. It was, after all, supposed to be Woking's lasting tribute to Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee of 1897, and the extension of 1922 part of our memorial to those who fell during the First World War.

We would like to apologise for the late publication of this edition. Financial and technical problems prevented it being produced on time. The next edition will be on sale in the Autumn.

KEN HALLS, local historian and Woking policeman, investigates two Woking murders of the 1920's, both of which were investigated originally by Superintendent Boshier of Woking Police and the famous Home Office pathologist, Sir Bernard Spilsbury.

THE BLUE ANCHOR & NUTHURST MURDERS

Prior to his death in 1947, Sir Bernard Spilsbury was a household name. Born in Leamington Spa in 1877 the son of a medical wholesaler, he was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, before graduating to St. Mary's Medical School. He soon became noted for his first class records and was in demand by police forces throughout the country.

The Blue Anchor Murder is well recorded elsewhere (in Leonard Stevens 'A Village in England' and John Janaway's 'Surrey Murders'), but the Nuthurst Murder is not so well known. KEN HALLS now takes a look at both murders and invites our readers to tell us their memories of these two murderous events.



THE 'BLUE ANCHOR' HOTEL, BYFLEET, SURREY

In August 1923, Alfred Jones purchased with his wife's money, the Blue Anchor Hotel at Byfleet. His business-minded wife had already run several businesses, although not all were successful. By the November, she was being threatened with bankruptcy and in early January went on holiday to the Hotel Victoria in Biarritz.

The Hotel employed a 45 year inventive mechanic, Jean-Pierre Vaquier, to operate his own wireless set for guests in the hotel's drawing room. He was small, volatile, very vain and excitable. He had a spade-shaped beard and bushy moustache. Although he spoke only French and Mrs Jones only English, they fell in love and moved into a cheaper hotel until early February when she received a telegram asking her to return to Byfleet. She did so, via nights in Bordeaux and Paris with Vaquier. Vaquier returned with her and moved to a small hotel in the Bloomsbury area, hoping to sell the patents for some of his inventions.

Alfred Jones felt he also needed a rest from his financial problems and went to Margate for a few days. Mrs Jones took full advantage and spent the night in Vaquier's hotel, before moving him to the Blue Anchor. She also paid his hotel bill. Alfred Jones returned from Margate at the end of February, but had to spend nearly three weeks in bed with influenza and congestion.

By 24 March 1924, he had recovered and held a party at the hotel which went on until midnight. Vaquier had gone to bed much earlier and next morning insisted on having his coffee in the bar parlour and would not move for the cleaners. Alfred Jones appeared some time after 9 am for a dose of his 'Bromo salts' which he kept on the bar mantle shelf to take after a bout of heavy drinking. Vaquier sat and watched as Mr Jones took a dose and almost immediately was violently ill. He was put to bed, terrified and suffering from convulsions. He died shortly afterwards of asphyxia.

Dr Carle attended and suspected strychnine poisoning. He took the 'Bromo salts' bottle and some crystals which had spilt onto the floor. His post mortem, two days later, found traces of strychnine in the stomach, the small intestine and also in the seized bottle and crystals. The doctor called the police and Superintendent Boshier of Woking Police led the enquiries.

Vaquier seemed to enjoy the fame and posed for press photographs. He made four statements to the police. He was recognised from a newspaper photograph by Mr Bland, a partner in a chemist shop near Vaquier's London hotel. He remembered practicing his French and knew him as 'Vanker'. He went to the Police as he had sold amongst other things, strychnine hydrochloride to Vaquier, which he had been told was needed for radio experiments. This was repudiated at his trial by a radio expert.

Vaquier was charged with murder, made another statement, and was sent for trial to Guildford Assizes. Mr Jones' body was exhumed from

Byfleet cemetery and Sir Bernard Spilsbury carried out a second post mortem. The trial started on 2 July and Spilsbury's evidence not only confirmed Dr Carle's but gave a detailed account of the conditions of the body, the effects of strychnine, and the constituents of 'Bromo salts'.

Taking the witness stand, Vaquier was his usual vain, confident self. In spite of only having a few shillings to his name, he spoke of lending Mr Jones £150 and buying 25 grammes of strychnine on behalf of Mr Jones' lawyer who wanted to destroy a dog. He called no witnesses in his defence and after the judge's summing up, the jury returned a verdict of guilty. He was dragged from the court shouting abuse.

Vaquier was taken to Wandsworth Prison and, within a few hours, granted an interview with the governor. His new story was that he had seen a woman who could have been either the hotel manageress or Mrs Jones, go to the garden shed in the hotel's garden. He said he went later to see what the woman had been doing in the shed. He found a bottle

of strychnine hidden behind a loose brick and had no idea why it was there. Police checked and found two bottles containing enough strychnine to kill 700 adults.

Vaquier's appeal against the death sentence was rejected and he was hanged at Wandsworth Prison.

THE NUTHURST MURDER

Following his involvement in the murder at the Blue Anchor Hotel in Byfleet, Sir Bernard Spilsbury had one more case in the Woking area. This concerned a Guernsey man, Hilary Rougier, who died on 14 August 1926, but it was not until one and a half years later that Superintendent Boshier required Spilsbury's expertise as a pathologist.

Rougier made his will in 1919 leaving his estate of between £5,000 and £6,000 to a married sister and a niece. He lodged at 'Nuthurst' Robin Hood Road, Lower Knaphill (near the Royal Oak Public House), with Mr and Mrs William Lerwill, paying four and a half guineas a week for his board.

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The house was owned by the daughter of Dr Hope. She retained the key of a locked cupboard in the house which contained some of her father's medicines, including Laudanum. This is a tincture of Opium and an alkaloid of this is Morphine.

On 23 July 1926, Dr Brewer was called and told by Mrs Lerwill that Rougier's voice had become weak and he had developed a cough. Aged 77, he appeared healthy apart from being very subdued and having a slight bronchial infection. Dr Brewer gave him some cough medicine and found his condition about the same on his next two visits, although Mr Lerwill said the cough had improved.

At about 8 am on 14 August, Dr Brewer received an urgent call. Rougier was unconscious in bed, his pulse weak and very feeble, his complexion livid and he was breathing quietly. Mrs Lerwill told the Doctor he had been alright the evening before. He died later that morning, the cause of death given as 'severe cerebral haemorrhage' and 'senile decay'.

The landlady wished for the body to be cremated, but he was buried in the churchyard of St Johns Church. All that was left of his estate was £80. No cheque book was found, but his passbook showed payments to the

Lerwills of sums between £40 and £950. A bearer cheque for £1,850 was also in their account. There was nothing left in his Guernsey account. The Rougier family approached the Home Office but authorisation for



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exhumation was refused. Eighteen months later, however, they had a change of mind and although the reason is not recorded, it could be that the cheques were forged.

The exhumation took place and Spilsbury's notes described in detail the soil, coffin and fittings, and diagnosed that death was not due to severe cerebral haemorrhage. He found no disease of the brain present. There were some signs of senile decay in arteries and kidneys but no obvious cause of death.

Various organs were sent for analysis and Morphine was found to be present in all organs, in the form of Oxydi-Morphine. The amount was too small for an accurate estimate. Traces showed, however, that a considerable amount had been present shortly before death.

Evidence was given at an inquest that the medicine cupboard at 'Nuthurst' could be opened by a faulty hinge and the bottle of Laudanum was more than half empty. The bearer cheque was found to have Rougier's signature on it; the rest had been written by someone else.

Both Mr and Mrs Lerwill denied all knowledge of the Laudanum bottle. Mrs Lerwill also denied any knowledge of the money, although William openly admitted that the total gifts were between £5,000 and £6,000.

The inquest jury retired and returned the verdict half an hour later the Hilary Rougier had died of a dose of Morphine which was not self-administered.

The Lerwills were not brought to trial and William successfully sued two newspapers for libel, to the sum of £5,000. He abandoned his wife and child, went to Canada, but returned to England in 1933. In 1934, almost penniless, he was arrested by a police constable in Coombe Martin, Devon, for a series of cheque frauds.

Spilsbury's case card on the poisoning of Hilary Rougier states "William Knight Lerwill poisoned himself March 1934 HCN (Prussic Acid) when about to be charged by police with fraud."

We leave you to draw your own conclusions on the case of the "Nuthurst Murder"!

WOKING HISTORY FESTIVAL NEWS

The Woking History Festival could not have got off to a worse start than it did on Good Friday (Friday 13th - we should have known better!). The 'War of the Worlds' walk, had to be abandoned due to heavy rain. Only a dozen or so walkers braved the bad weather, so it was agreed that the walk should be postponed. The walk finally took place on Sunday 6th May, when about thirty walkers enjoyed a lovely day out in brilliant sunshine. The walk will be arranged again for those of you who missed it.

After Fridays bad start, things soon improved and the Festival exhibition at the Memorial Halls in St. Johns opened its doors to the public at 10 o'clock on the Saturday morning. The exhibition included displays by the Mayford & Woking District History Society, the West Surrey Family History Society, Surrey Heath Archaeological Trust, Send & Ripley History Society, Horsell High School, St. Johns Middle School and the National Childbirth Trust. There was also an exhibition on nine hundred years of St. Peters Church, Old Woking; a display by Mrs Rosemary Metz of her 'War of the Worlds' mural for Woking town centre and to complement this, a new display (based on the last edition of the Journal) detailing the story of the H.G. Wells' novel and its relationship with the Woking area.

Also on Saturday, Tom Harding lead his 'pilgrimage' from Old Woking Church across the meadows to Woking Palace and Newark Priory. The walk was attended by about 120 people who picnicked in the grounds of the priory before returning to Old Woking via St. Nicholas Church at Pyrford.

The third festival walk, around Brookwood Cemetery, again attracted over 150 visitors. They were

shown the sights by John Clarke whose second tour around the cemetery is included elsewhere in this Journal.

The Exhibition at St. Johns, visited by an estimated 700 people, included several slide shows and talks on a variety of local history subjects. Amongst the most popular shows were David Chapman's History of West Hall; Martin Humphrey's talk on The Hermitage at St. Johns; Peter Donnerly's talk on Woking's Literary Heritage and Les Bowerman's show on the History of Send & Ripley.

John Clarke gave a number of lectures on Brookwood Cemetery; Ken Halls spoke of the history of the Canal and St Johns, and Tom Harding showed slide of 'Old Woking as it was' and spoke of the history of St. Peter's Church at Old Woking. Iain Wakeford, the director of the festival, gave slide shows based on his three books.

Another popular feature of the exhibition at St. Johns was the festival tea shop run by Mrs Hodge.

The whole event was a tremendous success, thanks to all the helpers, the sponsors and last, but not least, the visitors who gave £200 in donations over the festival weekend. Already preparations are underway for next years festival, with more sponsors being sought to make it even bigger and better than this years.

The 1990 Woking History Festival was organised by Iain Wakeford with the help of Tom Harding, Les Harris, John Clarke, John Myall, Alfred Wakeford, and especially Glenda Wakeford.

It was sponsored by the publishers of the Woking History Journal in association with B.A.T. (U.K. and Export) Ltd; The Letterbox Co (Woking) Ltd; and the owner of Brookwood Cemetery.

HISTORIC HORSELL



In our first edition we looked at some old postcards of Byfleet and West Byfleet. Last quarter we saw some views of Knaphill in the past. Now it is the turn of 'Historic Horsell', with the added interest of a few old advertisements (not to be confused with the modern one from Ashley Cooks) mixed in amongst the photos.

Above we have a view of Horsell's main shopping area in the mid 1960's, with the tower of St. Mary's church in the distance. The present Post Office is on the right, and the corner of Meadow Drive is on the left.

Below is an advertisement from May 1935 for the 'Horsell High Street Estate', built by H.W. Crane on the former Cobbett's Nursery. The houses advertised are those between Ormonde Road and Buttercup Corner, although which 'four main road frontages' were left we do not know. Perhaps one of our readers might be able to help!

On the opposite page can be found a view of Horsell Moor, showing the Basingstoke Canal (complete with resident swans) and the common land now occupied by the Brewery Road Car Park. The flats of

Kingswood Court are in the distance, with the houses of Boundary Lane (now demolished and replaced by Victoria Way) on the right. The peace and quiet of this tranquil scene has been shattered.

With Ashley Cook's advert below, it seems appropriate to include above an old business card for their one-time neighbours, Brewsters. Timber for the mills was brought by canal to a wharf between Arthurs Bridge and Step Bridge, now lost since the construction of Lockfield Drive.

Over the page is a group of old advertisements, invoices and photographs of the village. The invoice from Benstead's 'Horsell Petrol and Service Station' dates from 1929 and shows the price paid for a racing cycle frame (£8.14s). The two postcards show the High Street at various dates, the top one from the 1950s, the other of what is now the Gift Box (then the Post Office) from before the First World War. Mr Hart, whose advertisement from a local Parish Magazine of May 1911 is at the bottom, lived in the house on the right of the top photograph, and kept his cattle in the fields where the Queen Elizabeth Gardens are now.

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In the next issue of the Woking History Journal we look at 'Horsell's Windmill', the 19th century sawmill on Horsell Birch ran by the Steer family. Although the windmill no longer stands its site is still recorded by the name of the house that replaced it - 'Mill End'.

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... also in the next edition of the Journal we will feature:

The Great Fire of 1870

— Old Woking saved by the Guildford Volunteer Brigade
A Walk Around Lower Knaphill

The Place Names of Pyrford Changing Woking

— A Pictorial View of Woking Town Centre in the 1950s, 60s and 70s.

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BROOKWOOD CEMETERY

(Part Two)

by John Clarke

In the second of his series of tours around Brookwood Cemetery, John Clarke guides us through more of the Nonconformist Section in the north-west of the cemetery.

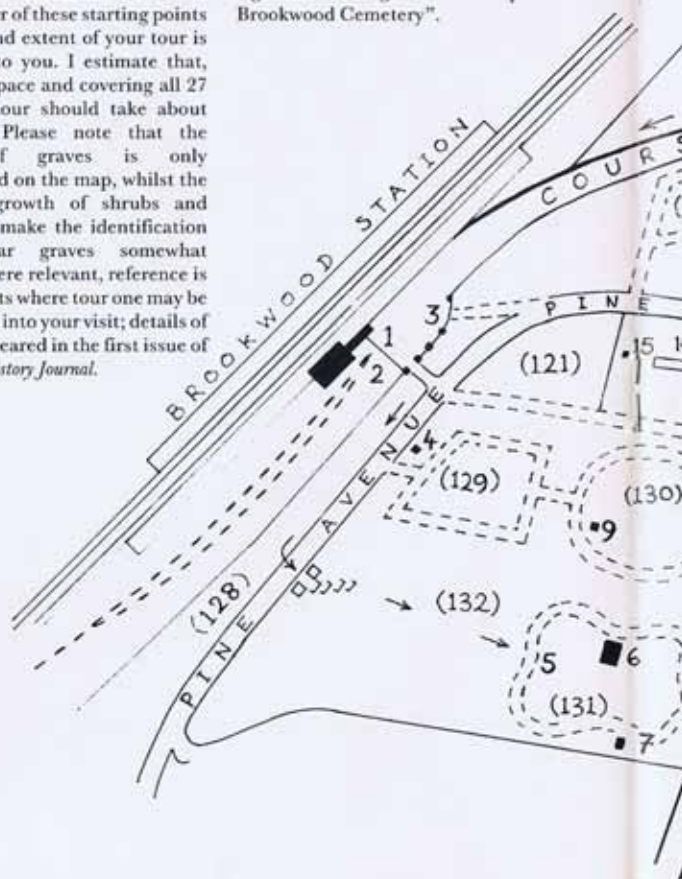
Background notes to this series appeared with the first article which may be found in the first issue of the Woking History Journal.

Brookwood Cemetery is divided into two parts by Cemetery Pales (adjacent to number 25 on the accompanying map). The southern half is the consecrated portion, originally reserved for Anglican funerals, whilst the northern part remained unconsecrated and was reserved for the burial of members of other religious denominations. This article concentrates on the western part of the northern or unconsecrated area of the cemetery.

The approximate route of this tour of the cemetery is shown by numbered points on the map. Each item is more fully explained in the text. I suggest that your walk starts and ends at Brookwood Station (number 1 on the map). Alternatively, begin at the offices of Wooton Jeffreys by the entrance to the cemetery off Cemetery Pales (number 25 on the map). Car parking is available at both sites.

From either of these starting points the nature and extent of your tour is entirely up to you. I estimate that, with a brisk pace and covering all 27 items, this tour should take about 2½ hours. Please note that the location of graves is only approximated on the map, whilst the inexorable growth of shrubs and bushes may make the identification of particular graves somewhat difficult. Where relevant, reference is made to points where tour one may be incorporated into your visit; details of this walk appeared in the first issue of the *Woking History Journal*.

1. Site of the cemetery railway: After emerging from the subway of Brookwood Station you are standing on the trackbed of the former cemetery railway. When the cemetery was opened, on 13 November 1854, it was not served by a station on the main line. Access was limited to the daily funeral train, or by hiring transport from Woking Station. In 1863 the London & South Western Railway (LSWR) agreed to provide a station, the costs of which were largely borne by the the London Necropolis Company (LNC) – then owners of the cemetery. The LNC also provided the land for the station and its approaches. Brookwood (Necropolis) Station was opened on 1 June 1864. It was subsequently enlarged in 1890 and was rebuilt between 1898 – 1902 when the LSWR quadrupled its main line. The railway platforms used to display prominent signs stating: "Necropolis: Brookwood Cemetery".

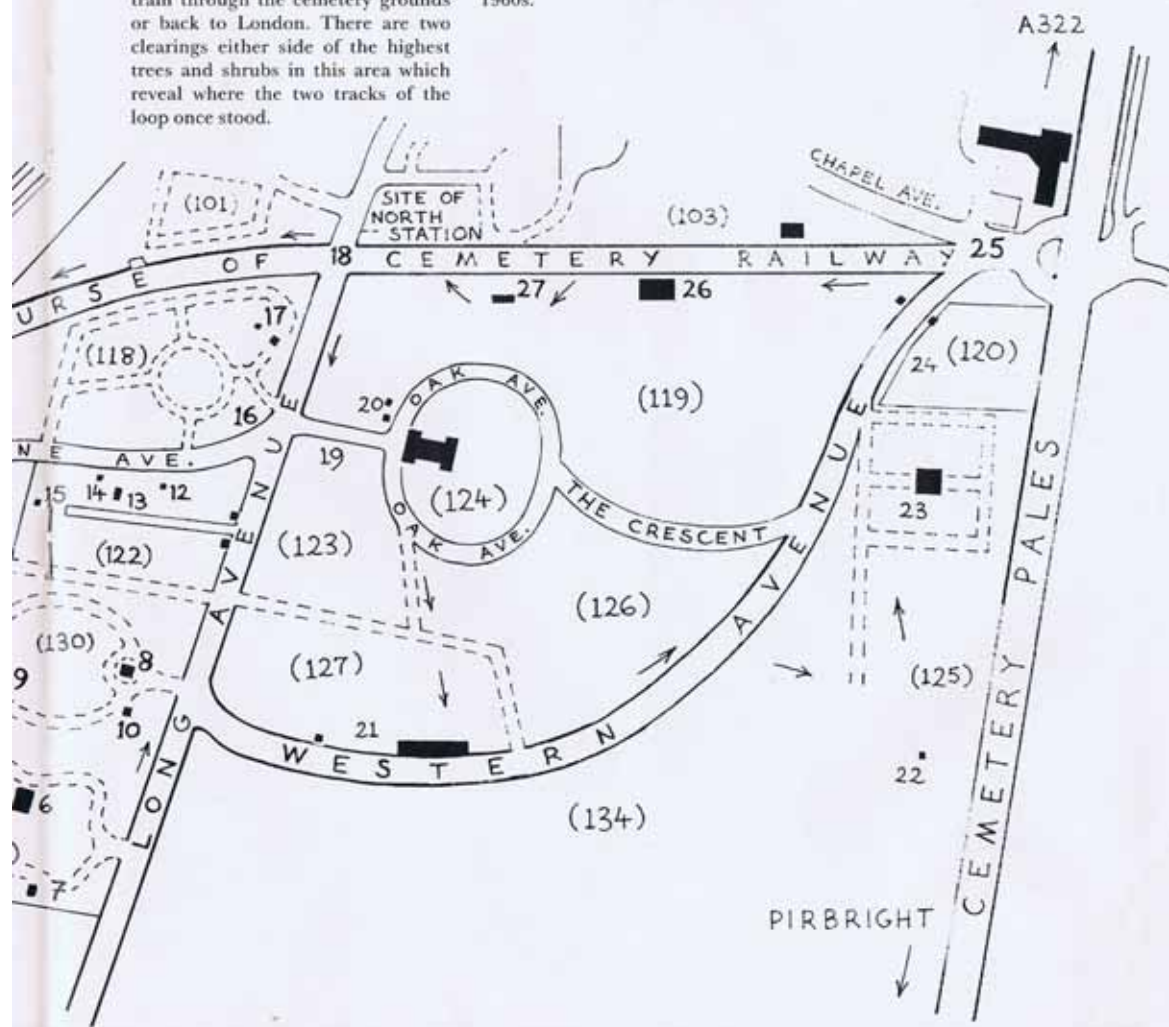


If you look to your left, note the stone wall which forms the foundations of the Down platform of Brookwood Station. This wall was always covered with foliage by the railway company at the express wish of the LNC. Note also the path leading away to the left, which follows the course of the cemetery railway. If you follow this path you can join the first cemetery tour at item 21.

2. Site of the run-round loop: To the right of the station, through the wire fence, is the site of the run-round loop, provided to allow the engine of the funeral train to 'run-round' its train and thus be ready to haul the train through the cemetery grounds or back to London. There are two clearings either side of the highest trees and shrubs in this area which reveal where the two tracks of the loop once stood.

The precise site of the loop changed over the years. In 1854 no loop was provided, just a single line running back into the cemetery from the main line. The first loop was constructed when Brookwood Station opened in 1864; this stretched away beyond the Down (i.e.: cemetery side) platform. This loop was re-arranged when the main line was quadrupled (1898-1902), which resulted in the loop being located behind the Down platform of the new station. The loop remained thus until the cemetery railway was removed (c. 1947-48), but part of it was retained by British Railways for use as sidings; these two lines were not removed until the late 1960s.

3. Cemetery entrance: The stone walls which form the main entrance to the cemetery were erected after the Great War (1914-18), at the expense of the War Office, to form a fitting prelude to the Military Cemeteries. The large gateway with "BROOKWOOD CEMETERY" cut in the stone beneath the railings allowed access to and from the station area, but this has not been used for many years. The usual entrance to the cemetery is through the smaller gateway directly in front of the station.



4. Moslem burial grounds (plots 128, 129, 132): After leaving the station area turn right, along Pine Avenue, following the signs pointing towards the Military Cemeteries.

Plots 128, 129 and 132 have for many years been used for Moslem burials.

Many of the graves consist of large plots enclosed by low brick walls (e.g.: Emir Karagan, 1978-1984, whose grave is to the left of Pine Avenue in plot 129) and many have photographic likenesses of the deceased on the headstones.

If you look across the cemetery from Pine Avenue you get excellent views of the other sections covered in this walk.

Continue along Pine Avenue until you see a series of white stone steps between two graves with low brick walls. The steps lead to a gravel path which runs through plot 132. Aim for the mausoleum in plot 131.

5. Original Roman Catholic ground (plot 131): A feature of this part of the cemetery is the number of plots reserved for the use of particular groups, by special agreement with the LNC. Other examples of these plots follow under items 8, 11, 16, 21, 22, 23 and 24.

Plot 131 was reserved for the use of Catholics by an agreement between the Bishop of Southwark and the LNC dated 27 April 1859. This one acre plot proved sufficient until the end of the nineteenth century when a new plot (with chapel) was also allotted (see item 19 below). However, burials still take place in this section.

6. Nicols' mausoleum: One of the few mausolea in this half of the cemetery. It contains the remains of Daniel T. Nicols (8 February 1833 – 28 February 1897, aged 64), his wife Celestine de Nicols (died 25 September 1916, aged 85), and their daughter Emma Josephine Pilet (died 23 April 1912, aged 56). The doorway and windows have been bricked up in an attempt to prevent further vandalism.

7. Grave of Royant: On the other side of the Catholic plot, against the rhododendron hedge, is an early grave of (?) Royant (1809-1860). The inscription is in French, and the memorial consists of a headstone with a decorative cast iron railing around the plot.

Continue onto Long Avenue and turn left, away from the Military section.

8. Oddfellows' burial ground (plot 130): The Independent Order of Oddfellows, a secret benevolent and fraternal association founded in the eighteenth century, also reserved a plot in the cemetery under an agreement dated 20 April 1859. This allowed for the burial of deceased members of the various lodges of the Pimlico (i.e.: Metropolitan) District of the Society. The large monument to the left of the path through this plot records this, and that the burial ground was inaugurated on 14 October 1861. The monument includes the arms of the Order and inverted torches (symbols of mortality) on each corner.

Few memorials survive in this section, but those of interest are described in the following two items.

9. Memorial to the Rev. R. Lemaire: This white stone memorial is at the rear of the plot. Unfortunately the inscription is badly weathered and almost illegible. Lemaire died in 1872(?).

10. Memorial to Burgess: This is the tall memorial near the entrance to the plot. Vincent Robert Burgess (14 February 1815 – 17 March 1870) was a past Grand Master of the Society.



Above: Nicol's Mausoleum (No. 6).



Right: Detail of the Monument at the entrance to the Oddfellows' Burial Ground.

Return to Long Avenue and continue walking away from the Military section.

11. Burial ground of the Swedish Congregation in London (plot 122): Probably the best preserved private ground in this section. The plot is screened from Long Avenue by huge rhododendrons. Two obelisks mark the entrance to the plot: the left hand one has the name of the section in Swedish, whilst the right hand one has the English translation. The interior is delightful: the plot remains well screened from other areas, giving a feeling of privacy and seclusion. There is an avenue of silver birches running through the centre of the ground.

There are many fascinating graves in this section, four of which are described in the items that follow:

12. Grave of Fris Freienbergs (16 April 1892 – 2 November 1941): This is on the right hand side of the plot. The memorial is shaped like a lighthouse. Freienbergs was captain of the S.S. "Katvaldis" and he died on the North Sea in 1941.

13. Dr Per Jacobsson: Probably the most distinguished person buried in this part of the cemetery. Jacobsson (5 February 1894 – 5 May 1963) was an eminent economist and worked in the Economic & Financial Section of the League of Nations, Geneva (1920-1928); was Economic Advisor & Head of the Monetary & Economic Department, Bank for International Settlements, Basle (1931-1956); and was Chairman of the Board of the International Monetary Fund (1956-1963). He is buried next to his wife, Violet Mary (13 April 1889 – 24 May 1979).

14. Grave of Prof. Carl Wahlbom (1810-1858): Another early grave, also on the right hand side of this plot. Wahlbom was a Professor at Konsterna, Stockholm.

15. Memorial to Baron von Nolcken: This memorial is at the end of the plot. Baron von Nolcken was Swedish Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Court of St James.

16. The "Actors' Acre" (plot 118): Another exclusive plot in this part of the cemetery, reserved for deceased members of the Dramatic, Equestrian and Musical Sick Fund. It was formed subsequent to an agreement dated 2 June 1858. The plot is bounded on the right hand side by the course of the cemetery railway, and on the left by the start of Pine Avenue.

Whether any deceased inmates of the Royal Dramatic College are buried here is not known. Few memorials remain, the best being grouped around the large rhododendrons near Long Avenue.

17. Graves of Johnson and Walcot: Few of the surviving inscriptions refer to the profession of the deceased. An exception is the memorial to Samuel Johnson (died 15 February 1900, aged 69) described as 'Comedian of the Lyceum, Haymarket, etc.'.

Nearby is the larger memorial, with shrouded urn, to Martha Walcot (died 29 January 1861, aged 65) and Mary Anne Robinson (died 13 February 1861, aged 66).

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18. Long Avenue: We have now reached the end of Long Avenue. From this point it is possible to move onto the first walk in this series, at item 19. The significance of the view back along this Avenue is also described in that article.

To continue with tour two, retrace your steps along Long Avenue to Oak Avenue.

19. New Roman Catholic burial ground (plots 119, 123, 124, 126): This area was formed as an extension to the original Catholic ground in the cemetery (plot 131 – see item 5 above). Its focus was the small Catholic chapel dedicated to the Holy Souls. This was built in 1899 by Harris & Co. at a cost of £715 plus £44 for seating. The architect may have been Cyril B. Tubbs, then General Manager of the LNC, who ran a local architectural practice.

The chapel was consecrated on 6 November 1899 with a special service conducted by Francis Bourne, Bishop of Southwark, and others. Unfortunately the chapel was unused for many years before it was largely

destroyed by fire sometime in March 1989. This is a disturbing trend as several buildings and memorials have suffered in this way and have subsequently been demolished. At present only the chapel walls remain.



The small Catholic Chapel, dedicated to the Holy Souls c. 1899.

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20. Graves of Beales and McClelland: Near to the chapel entrance are two interesting graves. That of Colonel William Lear Beales OBE (died 20 February 1949) has a bust of a weeping woman on top of an octagonal bell-shaped pedestal. The memorial to Peter Hannay McClelland KBE (died 14 January 1924, aged 67) includes a mourning figure.

To get to the next section, either cut through plots 123 and 127; or rejoin Long Avenue, turn towards the Military section and then turn left into Western Avenue; or continue along Oak Avenue into The Crescent, and turn right into Western Avenue. Aim for the large stone gateway in plot 127.

21. Latvian burial ground (plot 127): This large section was opened in 1952 (note the small monument at the left hand entrance to the plot). The left hand part of the ground contains a large central monument with inscription and cross. To the right of the section is a prominent gateway erected in memory of Ilze Rotbachs and the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church. The plot contains many graves and is well looked after.

Continue along Western Avenue, walking away from Long Avenue.

22. London & South Western Railway burial ground (off plot 125): The LSWR operated the funeral trains that ran between Waterloo and into the cemetery, and it was doubtless inevitable that the company should subsequently choose Brookwood as a burying ground for its deceased employees. Under the terms of an agreement between the LNC and the LSWR, the LNC set aside three areas in the cemetery for the exclusive use of the LSWR. Only one of these sections was in the Nonconformist part covered by this walk.

I have only located one memorial in this plot, that of William Phillips, a Locomotive Inspector, who died on 22 November 1888(?), aged 58.

It should be noted that many deceased employees had chosen to be buried elsewhere in the cemetery (this is especially true in the Anglican section, yet to be described), whilst

others preferred not to be buried at Brookwood at all, probably choosing instead their local parish churchyard.

23. The Corps of Commissionaires (plot 125): This Society was founded by Captain Sir Edward Walter KCB (9 December 1823 – 26 February 1904) in 1859 for the employment of ex-soldiers and sailors. It was subsequently extended to include the air and police forces, the fire service, and the merchant navy. It currently comprises over 3,500 members worldwide.

The fine granite obelisk in the ground commemorates Walter and his life. However, Walter is not buried here but at Bearwood, Berkshire. The burial ground was opened in 1906 in memory of Walter and other departed comrades, some of whom rest in the neat graves around the obelisk.

24. Private ground (plot 120): The extensive walled area opposite the offices of Wooton Jeffries is a private ground, formed about ten years ago.

It stands almost exactly on the unconsecrated portion of the parish plot of St Anne's Soho. This plot, which lay just inside the entrance to this part of the cemetery (like its counterpart in the Anglican section), contained the unmarked pauper graves from the parish.

Under the Metropolitan Internment Act (1852) Vestries of the London parishes were enabled to elect their own Burial Boards empowered to either open and manage their own cemeteries or to contract with cemetery companies for the burial of their dead. St Anne's Soho claimed to be the first metropolitan parish to elect a Burial Board under the terms of this Act. It met in July 1854 and in 1855 acquired two acres at Brookwood (one acre in each half of the cemetery) reserved for the burial of its deceased parishioners.

The entrance to this plot was marked by two cast iron obelisks which stood either side of Western Avenue at this point. These were removed when the private plot was being formed. The St Anne's plot may be compared with the plot of St

Margaret & St John Westminster, which was described in the first cemetery tour (item 9).

25. Cemetery Pales entrance: This point, outside the offices of Wooton Jeffries, allows you to join the first walk described in the first issue of this journal.

To continue with walk two, turn left at the end of Western Avenue, and start walking away from Cemetery Pales and towards Brookwood Station. The path follows the course of the cemetery railway through this part of the grounds.

26. Private graves (plot 119): In recent years a number of private graves have been made on each side of this pathway, conspicuous by their use of red brick walls, decorative concrete screen panels, wrought ironwork, and similar features. One of these, on the left, commemorates Dr Reza Fallah (1909-1982) and includes his bust on top of a black marble pedestal.

27. Graves facing the new Catholic plot: Just beyond item 26, cut through the shrubs on your left and locate the series of graves which flank the course of the railway and which face the new Catholic area.

There are several interesting graves here, including a low granite memorial of James Beattie KBE (11 April 1861 – 15 September 1933).

Return to the path on the old trackbed of the cemetery railway near to the site of North Station. Continue following this path walking away from Cemetery Pales. Shortly you will reach the entrance to Brookwood Station.

Further Reading

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Polson, C.J. and Marshall, T.K. *The Disposal of the Dead* 3rd ed. English Universities Press, 1975.
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READERS REQUESTS

DO YOU RECOGNISE THESE VIEWS?

A couple of our readers, both collectors of postcards, would like information on some cards they have purchased recently. One shows the showroom of the Woking District Gas Company Ltd, with a postmark on the back dated April 22nd 1907. The Company's works were in Boundary Road, but where were the showrooms at that time? One clue might be in the treescape reflected in the windows, or the woodwork on either side of the shopfront. We think it might be The Broadway, but we are open to any suggestion.

As far as the second view is concerned we are totally baffled. There is not even a postmark on the back to give us a date, but the photographer is recorded as "EMBERSON & SONS, studio, Chobham Road, Woking", so

presumably the view is of an hotel somewhere in the area – but where? Do you recognise the people (or the dog), or even the small amount of the building shown?



INFORMATION ON 'LEITNERS OF WOKING' SOUGHT.

Mrs Nickson of London, who is researching her ancestors, wants any information on the firm her grandfather worked for at the turn of the century. She writes:- "One of my grandfathers was employed by Leitners of Woking as an electrical engineer in the early nineteen hundreds, certainly before the Great War. I have been able to locate the firm and I was wondering if any of your readers could throw any light on the subject. My Grandfathers name was Mr H.W. TWICHEN."

The firm she refers to was probably the Woking Accumulator Supply Company, run by Henry Leitner, the son of the founder of the Oriental Institute. Has any of our older readers any memories of the works or does anybody know where the Company's records went?

Answer please to the editor at 166 High Street, Old Woking, Surrey, GU22 9JH.





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THE HISTORY OF SKEET & JEFFES

by Mr. A.G. Skeet

The history of Skeet & Jeffes Ltd. falls naturally into four periods of approximately 20/23 years: 1891-1914, 1918-1939, 1945-1968 and 1968-1988. Broken by two World Wars and culminating in the move to the present premises in 1988, their story is a fascinating one, as Mr. A.G. Skeet records.



IN THE BEGINNING 1891-1914

The story starts with W.R. Skeet's father who moved from a farming family in East Anglia to Aldershot to open an ironmonger's shop around 1863/5. At that time, following on the experience of the Crimean War, Aldershot was being established as a main army base and training centre and the building industry was flourishing. W.R. Skeet was born in Aldershot, and in 1883 joined his father's business at Aldershot until 1891. By that time the Army and surrounding development had slowed down, while nearer London, Woking with its strategic railway junction and Necropolis Company land sales had begun to grow rapidly. Accordingly he decided that the future lay in Woking and in 1891 moved to premises opposite Woking Station, where the National Westminster Bank now stands.

At first the staff consisted of just himself and one errand boy, but in due course the business and staff expanded to include a workshop with blacksmith's forge, which gave employment to four men. Materials sold had a slant towards the building trade, and the present company has a flushing cistern in its possession with the name W.R. SKEET IRONMONGER, cast on it.

During 1907, with the lease expiring in 1908, the premises were

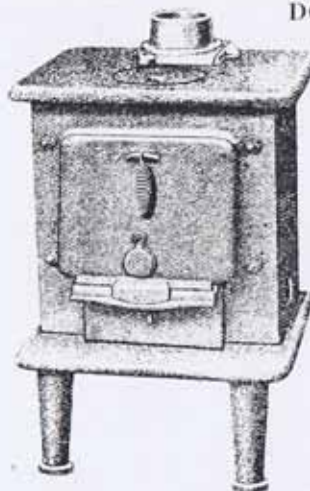
put up for auction, with the London County & Westminster Bank being the successful purchasers (at a cost of £3,300). At that time, however, there was a vacant plot of land at the junction of Chobham Road and Church Street (where Crown House now stands), which had been used for grazing horses. W.R. Skeet mortgaged all his resources, bought the plot of land and rented the stables behind it to house delivery horses. On this site the substantial square corner premises, three storeys high with basement below, were built. It remained a familiar landmark to Woking shoppers until 1968.

During the same period another young man, H.D. Jeffes had been growing up in Newport (South Wales). In the early part of the century he moved to London to join Pryke and Palmer, the London City Builders Merchants. At first he was the junior of some eight representatives but rapidly rose to first position. One of his customers was W.R. Skeet, and with the move to the new site in 1908, H.D. Jeffes saw at once the possibilities for expansion. He also saw that by joining Mr. Skeet he could provide the extra customers to sustain the enterprise. Accordingly they entered into partnership, with 80% of H.D. Jeffes customers continuing to give him business with the result that the firm prospered.



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The increase in the Builders Merchants operation, which included business being done in the Isle of Wight and the Channel Isles, placed considerable strain on the internal administration. H.D. Jeffes, recalling his former days, invited A.W. Sharpe, a young man of energy and ability at Pryke & Palmer, to come and manage the purchase and supply of builder's materials.

Expanding trade inevitably created problems of storage and delivery, the latter being mainly by horse drawn van. Goods took quite a time to arrive and breakages of castings travelling by rail were frequent and frustrating, so stock had to be ample to enable a good service to be given. Pressure on space was acute. In early 1914 a timber store and workshop belonging to W.J. Drowley (a Woking builder) came on to the market and was purchased by Skeet & Jeffes. Access from Church Street was by a narrow roadway only 9'6" wide between two cottage walls. Later that year war broke out and the next four years were a struggle for survival with depleted staff. Much depended on getting business from firms engaged in the war effort, and then solving the problem of supplying their needs. One stroke of good fortune at this time was the engagement of Alfred Short who was slightly lame and thus excused from war service. He was to prove a tower of strength for many years to come.

BOOM YEARS & BAD TIMES

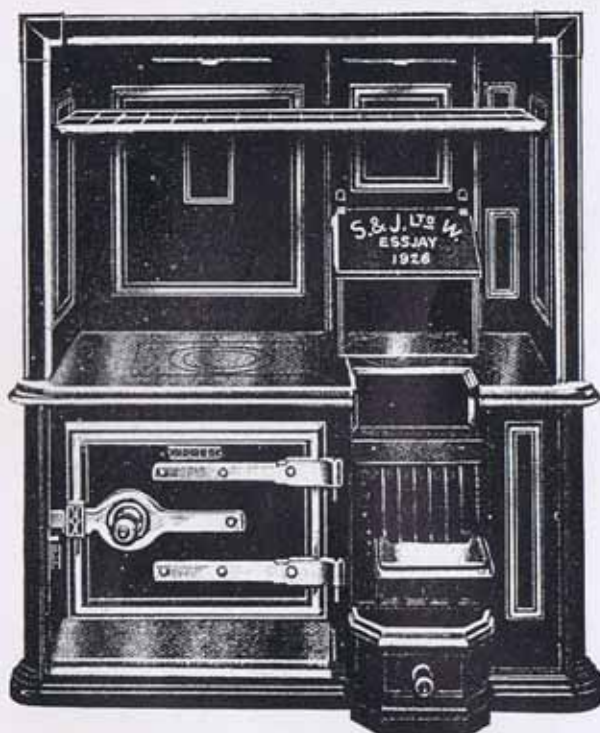
After the war, for ten years, demand from the building industry was intense. Builders Merchants were under pressure to give good service and had to expand to do so. Alterations and repairs were relatively inexpensive and this fact, coupled with the comparatively long working hours for the community, meant that most of the work was carried out by the 'Trade' rather than by 'D.I.Y.' as we would now call it.

By 1928 all existing sales and storage accommodation was fully used and some needed replacement. The entrance to the Church Street premises was widened at this time by the purchase of a cottage to one side of the narrow passage.

During 1929-1931 business was slack, intensified by the depression in the United States, but this soon increased again, accelerated by re-armament up to 1939.

During the period 1924-26 D.H. Jeffes, S.A. Sharpe and A.G. Skeet joined the firm after leaving school and working their way through various departments gained a good basic knowledge of the trade.

In 1930 a significant decision was made to take up an agency over a considerable area and become a stocker of "HOPES" steel windows. To do this properly land was purchased in Board School Road and a workshop and warehouse were



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Oven and Side Boiler	10	0	0	10	16	8 "
Without 2" Round Corners and Jamb Mouldings	0	12	6	0	12	6 Less
With Hobs 1" thick	0	12	6	0	12	6 Extra
With Hobs 18" wide x 1" thick	1	1	3	1	1	3 "

built. A garage was also provided to accommodate eight lorries with space to the rear, where a substantial two floor warehouse was later built. All these buildings have recently been demolished.

Other alterations in the early 1930s included the erection of an office block on the first floor level over the year behind the Chobham Road premises and the construction of display windows along the Church Street side of the building, replacing the previous blank wall.

At this time the advent of the motor lorry greatly expanded possibilities of increasing territory and the opportunity was firmly taken by Skeet & Jeffes, so much so that by 1935 deliveries were being made to places as far afield as Dover, Brighton, Weymouth, Gloucester,

Oxford and Luton, as well as the Isle of Wight and the Channel Isles. This extreme expansion, however, proved uneconomic and in 1936 with a reduced area of approximately 50 miles radius the profits increased significantly.

Finally, in 1938 two thirds of the old warehouse in Church Street was rebuilt and plans made for the rebuilding of the remainder, coming forward to Church Street with new offices and showrooms. The realisation of this plan was cut short by the Second World War, and together with many of the staff the three sons of Mr. Skeet, Mr. Jeffes and Mr. Sharpe went on active service, whilst their fathers once more faced similar problems to those faced during the First World War.

CONTINUED EXPANSION

In 1945-6 a considerable number of staff returned, together with the three sons, to rebuild the fortunes of the firm. The policy of expansion in Church Street was continued through the gradual purchase of cottage property in that street and also in Boundary Road which ran parallel with and at the rear of Church Street – thus giving entry and exit from the site from two roads. By 1960 it was apparent that before long increasing traffic congestion, expanding trade and the widening of Church Street would make new building imperative. Accordingly the final purchases of cottages in Church Street and Boundary Road were completed and in the summer of 1963 Messrs Scott Brownrigg and Turner were appointed to design new offices, showrooms and warehouses. The sale of the Chobham Road site paid for the construction, whilst at the same time releasing key land for the town centre's reconstruction.

ON THE MOVE AGAIN

As the town centre expanded so did Skeet & Jeffes, so much so that by the mid 1980s it became clear that a town centre site was no longer appropriate for their kind of trade. The firm started to look for other accommodation, and after lengthy negotiations with Woking Borough Council they agreed upon a scheme whereby Skeet & Jeffes would move to part of the former council depot in Monument Way East, whilst the Church Street site would be made available for redevelopment. In 1988 Skeet & Jeffes moved out of Church Street, and in the summer of 1989 Woking's Library moved in, a temporary measure until the new library opens in the Peacocks development in a couple of years time.

With their new premises in Monument Way East, Skeet & Jeffes can offer a much better service, with room to expand and meet the demands of the builders of the 21st Century. The firm has come a long way since their humble beginnings in Aldershot, but it is still a family concern and the staff are always both friendly and helpful.

WOKING HISTORY JOURNAL

LOCAL HISTORY DIARY

A couple of years ago Woking Borough Council's Countryside Service organised a series of conservation and historical walks around the borough. These were advertised in a leaflet called 'Woking's Countryside Walks', published by the Borough Council. Unfortunately, due to financial restrictions, the Countryside Service can no longer organise and advertise their countryside walks so we have stepped in and arranged a series of walks ourselves. They are listed below in bold letters.

Added to our list we have included in our diary some of the Surrey County Council sponsored walks in and around the area.

We hope you enjoy the walks.

FRIDAY 3rd AUGUST, 7.15pm
A WALK AROUND KINGFIELD
Starting outside the shops in Kingfield Road (opposite the Kingfield Arms) this short evening stroll will look at some of the historic buildings in the Kingfield area.

SUNDAY 12th AUGUST, 10.00am
ROWTOWN & WOODHAM
Starting from the Car Park near the Harvester Public House at Ottershaw this five mile walk will feature the River Bourne, farms and nurseries so typical of this part of Surrey.

MONDAY 13th AUGUST, 7.15pm
WOKING'S WET & DRY
HEATHLANDS

Meeting in Chapel Lane at Pirbright, this pleasant evening stroll will look at Brookwood Heath, once part of Brookwood Cemetery, which has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by the Government.

TUESDAY 21st AUGUST, 7.15pm
LOWER KNAPHILL

From the bottom of Waterers Park (at the junction with Barrs Lane) this walk will look at the historic farms, nurseries and houses of Lower Knaphill.

SUNDAY 26th AUGUST, 2.00pm
FEN MANAGEMENT

(No dogs please)
Start at the Fishpool Car Park, Graciouspond Road, Chobham, to find out more about the wetland complex at Gracious Ponds.

SUNDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER, 2.00pm
CHANGING HEATHLAND
Meet at the Car Park in Salt Box Road, to see Whitmoor Common in its changing aspects.

SUNDAY 9th SEPTEMBER, 2.30pm
SAVING OUR HEATHS
Meeting at the Car Park at Burma Road, Chobham to take part in some practical conservation work on saving one of the rarest habitats in the world. Bring boots and wear old clothes.

SUNDAY 16th SEPTEMBER, 2.15pm
BROOKWOOD CEMETERY TOUR
John Clarke will lead a shortened version of his popular walk around the Cemetery. Starting at the Wootton Jeffrey's entrance the walk will cover both the northern and southern sections, looking at the historic features of this area.

THURSDAY 20th SEPTEMBER, 7.15pm
WOKING TOWN TOUR
Meet outside the Albion Hotel, opposite Woking Station. This walk will look at what remains of the older buildings of Woking town centre and the Walton Road area of the town. A good chance to learn more about the history of the towns development at first hand. You will be surprised at what remains.

TUESDAY 25th SEPTEMBER, 7.15pm
DANESFIELD A.E.I., GRANGE
ROAD, HORSELL

Start of a five week course studying the early history of Woking. Each lesson lasts two hours and will look at a different stage or subject in Woking's development. The first week deals with 'Prehistoric Woking'. Week two studies 'Medieval and Manorial Woking', whilst week three concentrates on the 'Ecclesiastical History of Woking'. The 'Commons, Canal and Local Industries' form the theme for the penultimate evening, and the course finishes with 'The coming of the railway in 1838'. More details of the course can be obtained from Danesfield. The fee is £13.50

SUNDAY 14th OCTOBER, 2.15pm
MORE HEATHS & HISTORIC
HOUSES

Starting from the car park at Mayford Village Hall, Saunders Lane, this walk will look at some of the historic buildings of the Mayford area as well as visit two very important local heathlands - Prey Heath and Smarts Heath.

SATURDAY 17th NOVEMBER,
9.00am-5.00pm
MIDDLE WALK, WOLSEY PLACE,
SHOPPING CENTRE, WOKING
Another chance to see the highly acclaimed Woking History Festival display on 'H.G. Wells, Woking and War of the Worlds'. Based on the article in the spring edition of this Journal, the display guides you through the novel, showing the Woking of the 1890's.

STOP PRESS ... STOP PRESS ... STOP PRESS

JANUARY 1991
Dates to be advised -
DANESFIELD A.E.I., GRANGE
ROAD, HORSELL
Following on from the Autumn course on the 'Early History of Woking' will be a Winter series of lessons on 'Woking's Later History', including the London Necropolis Company; Land Sales and Development; The work of the Council; Woking Between the Wars; and finally, Post War Woking.
More details of the course can be obtained from Danesfield nearer the time. The fee is expected to be £13.50.

More walks for the autumn and winter will be arranged and advertised in later editions of The Woking History Journal.

Published by The Woking History Journal, 166 High Street, Old Woking, Surrey GU22 9JH

WOKING HISTORY JOURNAL WALK – SPECIAL FEATURE Summer 1990

In order to make our guided walks easier to follow, and save you the trouble of carrying a whole copy of the Journal around with you, we have decided to print each walk as a special pull-out feature.

As an added bonus for subscribers to the Journal we have included a free polythene carry-folder with zip to store your walks in. If you have not already subscribed, but would like a folder, please send a cheque now for the Autumn and Winter editions (£2 plus 50p p&p) and we will send you your folder by return.

The next edition of the Journal will include a walk around Lower Knaphill and Anchor Hill. If you run a business in that area, and you would like to advertise in the pull-out feature, please contact us now.

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**THE
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A Community Play for Woking, a major event for the area, is in the initial planning stages and will be produced by the Community in association with the highly acclaimed Colway Theatre Trust – the pioneers of the modern Community Play movement.

Written with your help and performed by members of your community, it is a

celebration of the towns past and present and could pose vital questions for its future.

If you wish to get involved in any way – especially in the research for the play – please contact us or David Vince, Arts Development Officer, **QEII Theatre, Woking.**

A public meeting will be arranged for the autumn. More details in the next edition of this journal and the local press and radio.

A WALK AROUND KINGFIELD

Continuing our series of walks around Woking we will now take a look at Kingfield and discover that, despite modern developments, it too has a lot of history.

A WALK AROUND KINGFIELD

The name Kingfield was first recorded in 1548 when it was called 'Kynfeld', and although no earlier reference can be found it appears to have derived from the old english word 'Kyne' or 'Cyne' meaning 'Royal'. In 1680 it was recorded as 'Kenvil' and in 1765 the small green was first recorded as 'Kenvil Green'. Kingfield was one of the seven tithing of Woking and originally extended as far as the present town centre.

Kingfield was also the name given to one of the three 'common' fields of Woking. It originally extended from Elmbridge (where it joined the 'Lower' West-Field) across what is now the Elmbridge Estate, to the western limits of the Town Field (where Ryden's Way is now). It was the smallest of the three fields and by the turn of the 19th century had disappeared.

Kingfield was a poor area and in May 1819 there were 57 people from the tithing eligible for Poor Relief. The total requiring relief from the whole parish of Woking was 164 (out of a population of about 1,750), so the proportion of poor in Kingfield was clearly much higher than elsewhere.

1. KINGFIELD GREEN.

Kingfield Green, first mentioned in 1765, was originally much larger than it is today. In 1800 it covered about 9 acres, linking to 'Elmbridge Green' (by the Park entrance), and to the south with the roadside waste along what is now called Loop Road.

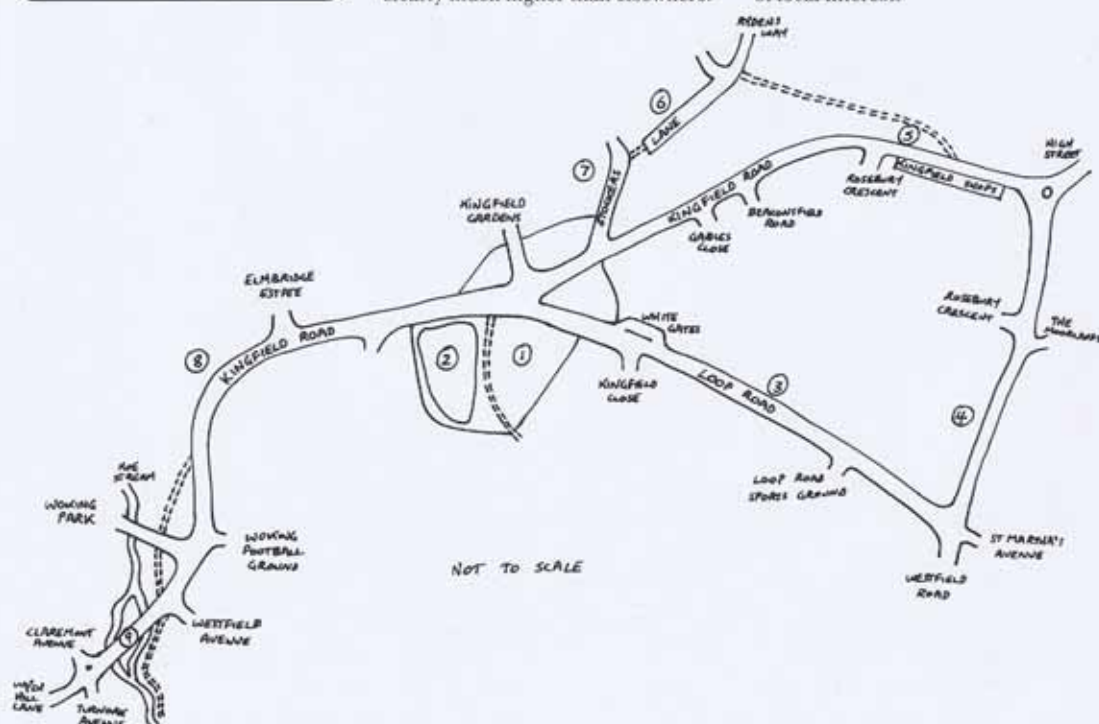
2. KINGFIELD POND.

The Pond is supposedly fed by an underground spring, and even in dry weather never dries out. At one time (when Kingfield House was demolished) it is said that a local builder tried to fill in the pond, but despite several loads of rubble the pond managed to survive intact. Once there were two islands in the pond, but now only one remains.

3. LOOP ROAD.

Before the road was made up and houses built, there used to be four small ponds or 'splashes' in the lane, with a roadside waste acting as an extension to Kingfield Green.

There are several Victorian and Edwardian properties in the road, many with date stones. Although not of any historical significance they are of local interest.



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4. THE OLD OAK COTTAGE, 17 Vicarage Road.

The Old Oak Cottages dates from the 16th century, although the brick front is of the 19th century. It is timber framed, with the sides displaying whitewashed brick infill. It consists of one storey and an attic (of two rooms) with hipped dormers under a half hipped, plain tiled roof. The Old Oak Cottage is a grade II listed building.

5. KINGFIELD ARMS, (right), Kingfield Road.

The Kingfield Arms dates from the 16th century with many later additions, as can be seen by the variety of roofs. The front is now roughcast, but to the side and rear the old timber framing still shows, and although no longer listed the building is of local interest.

6. LAUREL COTTAGE, (below left) 6 Stockers Lane.

Laurel Cottage is a two storey, three bay, timber framed building of the 16th century. The walls are of whitewashed brick infill, the roof is plain tiled with a ridge stack to the left and the door (to the left) is under a tiled gable porch on wooden supports, standing on a 2ft high brick wall. Laurel Cottage is a grade II listed building.

7. HOWARDS FARM HOUSE, Stocker Lane.

Howards Farm is a 16th century two-storey timber framed building, of four bays with brick infill. The plain tiled roof is half hipped to the left, with a ridge stack to the left of centre.



The Queen post construction is still visible. To the back, on the left, is a 19th century 'catslide' extension with a late roof. Inside there is a blocked fireplace and some mullion windows. Howards Farm is a grade II listed building.

8. ELMBRIDGE COTTAGE, (below right), Kingfield Road.

Elmbridge Cottage dates from the 17th century, although the front was altered in the 18th century. It is a two-storey timber framed building with the framing still visible to the front and side. The whitewashed brick infilled walls stand on a rendered plinth and there is a brick band over the ground floor. The roof

is thatched with a ridge stack to the left of the centre. A two storey wing to the back is a modern addition. Elmbridge Cottage is a grade II listed building.

9. ELM BRIDGE, Kingfield Road.

There was a bridge on this site as early as 1294, when it was recorded as 'Thelebrugge', but as a major crossing of the Hoe Stream it seems likely that there was a bridge on this site even earlier than that. The name means 'Plank Bridge', and was recorded in 1332 as 'Thelebrug' and again in 1548 as 'Elbridge'. The present bridges were built in 1892.





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