



FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to this edition of the CHS newsletter as we look forward to spring with our upcoming monthly talks, attendance at events and a guided visit (tba).

A small team of the committee led by David Boote are busy sifting and cataloguing our archives at the hub in readiness for digitising. The aim is to give access to our archives to members and the wider community.

Thank you for your continued support - Gary Stone

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Chingford Historical Society



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Forthcoming Talks

See a full list at www.chingfordhistory.org.uk

23rd March – **Underground guide to London place names** - *Talk by Nick Dobson.*

Followed by AGM

20th April – **Crowning Glory (The Coronation)** - *Talk by Julie Chandler*

18th May - **Commonwealth War Graves Commission** – *Talk by Brian Wingate*

15th June – **Medical Officer of Health Reports (Chingford)** - *Talk by Ross*

MacFarlane

20th July – **Memories of The Windmill Theatre** - *Talk by Jill Millard Shapiro*

21st September – **The River Roding** - *Talk by Janet Seward*

The Lost Farm - by John Conen

Folly Farm does not appear in the society's book on Chingford Farms, possibly because it was thought to be in Walthamstow, but also because it had a rather short existence. I've managed to unearth some information about Folly Farm, mainly from local newspapers, and as can be seen it's not a very pleasant tale!



Until 1927, Hall Lane, once called Chingford Hall Lane or Chingfordhall Lane, was a quiet country road leading to Chingford Hall and the toll bridge over the Lea, which was only made free of toll in 1878. Folly Lane, then largely uninhabited, branched off and went south to Higham Hill but neither this nor Hall Lane itself were anything other than minor roads. Folly Farm was situated on the west side of Folly Lane, but within the Chingford boundary. When the Lea Valley Viaduct and the North Circular Road were constructed in 1927, Folly Farm was left on the edge of the new road, and Folly Lane between Hall Lane and the North Circular Road was incorporated into Hall Lane. The redundant stretch of Hall Lane leading to Chingford Hall and the toll bridge was renamed Lower Hall Lane in 1934.

Folly Farm does not seem to be of ancient origin and was probably built around 1900. It is not shown on the 1896 Ordnance Survey map and it does not appear in trade directories or in censuses before 1911. There are no local newspaper references before 1904, although in August 1903 there is a reference to 'The Piggeries' when John Allum had instructed sale by auction of livestock and equipment because he was going abroad. However, in 1910 Mr Allum was again auctioning livestock and equipment, because he was disposing of his milk business – the Chingford Hall Dairy. Some stock belonging to Mr F W Brown was also included,



as well as various items of equipment and transport. This and the location given ('between Chingford Mill and Higham Hill') indicates that the dairy was at Folly Farm.

In 1904, Chingford Urban District Council's sanitary inspector visited Folly Farm, which was said to be used for pig rearing. The farm had been flooded, and the overflow from the piggeries had polluted two wells on the farm and rendered the water totally unfit for domestic use. Harris & Bull of Walthamstow, estate/property agents, were summoned before the magistrates, so it appears they were handling the renting out of the farm. It is not known who the owner was at this time. In 1903 there was widespread flooding in the London area following a period of exceptionally heavy rain in June that year.

Frank William Brown was born in Salisbury, Wiltshire, in 1861. He is first mentioned in January 1907 when he was described as a cattle dealer living at Folly Farm. He is not listed in the census locally in 1901. His connection to Folly Farm

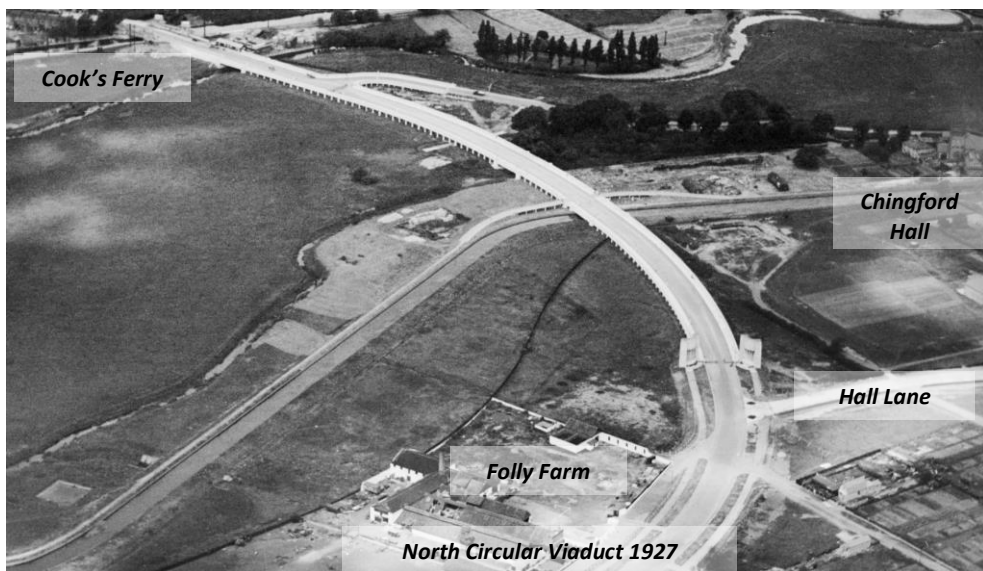


is complicated and it is not clear if he ever owned the farm. He was somewhat troublesome to the authorities; under his stewardship the farm suffered outbreaks of swine fever in 1907 and 1910, and he was fined for unlicensed slaughter of cattle in 1919. The farm was often the subject of complaints about foul smells. In 1923 Chingford UDC had to take action in the High Court to stop the 'offensive trade' of bone boiling carried out at Folly Farm. Mr Brown also carried out fat boiling which also must have been pretty offensive and was raised as a concern by the council's Medical Officer of Health in 1918. In 1908 there was an appalling case of child neglect taken to court by the NSPCC. A family with five children was found in filthy conditions in a disused cattle shed near Folly Farm. Mr Brown had permitted the family to use the derelict building.

There are no entries in the 1921 Census for Folly Lane, Chingford. Mr Brown was not actually resident at the farm until 1923; prior to that he was on the electoral register at Bulls Farm in Billet Road and/or at 6 Manor Road, Higham Hill. In

1920/1921 he was on the electoral register at Folly Farm but his 'abode' was stated to be Bulls Farm, Higham Hill.

Frank Brown died 15 February 1926 when resident at Folly Farm. His effects came to £7,287 and he left a widow, Mary. Folly Farm is not listed in the electoral register after Brown's death. It seems it was later renamed Viaduct Farm, and its address was given as the North Circular Road. Lea Valley Products Ltd (waste products merchants) were established in the Viaduct works, with a cottage attached which may have been once part of Folly Farm – it was inhabited according to the electoral roll of 1931 and the 1939 Kelly's but not the 1939 Register. The site was later occupied by Shadbolt's (Veneers) from 1947, and it seems that by then all the old buildings including the cottage had gone.



The address of the Viaduct works and cottage was North Circular Road, so as far as Chingford was concerned, Folly Lane no longer existed as an address. No good photographs of Folly Farm can be traced but the farm can be partially seen on Aerofilms footage in 1927 and in photographs of the viaduct construction the same year. Folly Lane was a rather lonely and desolate place after World War 2. I remember that it was blocked off so traffic could no longer go through to Higham Hill, as is the case to this day.

If anyone can add anything to this research, John would like to hear from you via CHS.

Life & Times of Clara Culpin - Extracts by Dave Branchflower

The name **Culpin** is unusual, and its origin is obscure. There may be a possible Huguenot link. However, it appears in several Chingford Historical Society's publications, especially those about Chingford Hall, the mill and the pumping station.

Times could be hard for our ancestors as they tried to improve their lives. This led to considerable movements from rural populations to urban areas in the 1800s and 1900s. Agriculture as an occupation was becoming insecure as it was rapidly changing to part time as mechanisation was adopted. Towns and cities seemed to be more attractive with better housing and more jobs as the industrial revolution advanced. Transport was also rapidly developing via the canals, then the railways followed by motorised vehicles. However, many families found this not to be the answer to their problems and finished in worse conditions.

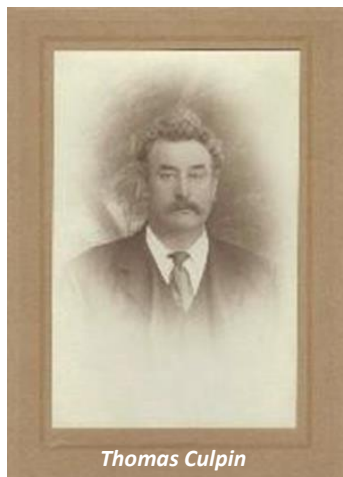


In the 1891 census a **Henry Culpin**, aged 67, appears as a water sluice man at Chingford Hall mill. He controlled the sluice gates to make certain the mill had a good regular supply of water. However, the mill had been demolished in 1886 by the East London Water Board, who now owned it. They had sunk a well and deepened and widened the mill race to accommodate a pump house. In 1896 a brick pumping station was built. This was to accommodate the greater need for water as the population grew in East London.

Clara Culpin was **Henry's** daughter-in-law. Born in Marylebone in 1861, she was the 3rd child, all daughters, of Elizabeth Sutton and Henry Walker. Sadly her father was to die before she was 10 years old. However, her mother quickly remarried a James Wilson. The family moved across London to Bromley-by-Bow.

Here she met the young **Thomas Culpin**, born 1859, the son of the aforementioned, **Henry Culpin**. In about 1850 the **Culpins** had originally come to London (Deptford) from a small hamlet, Castor, in Northants.

Thomas and Clara married at St. Peter's Church, Walthamstow on the 7th August 1887, before living in Apsley Road, Walthamstow. He was working for the ELWB in Coppermill Lane, but in the 1901 census is shown as the stationary engine driver now at Chingford Hall.



At this time, Chingford was three small settlements mostly relying on domestic work and farming as sources of income. However, there were a few wealthy families living there. The settlements were around The Green, the Hatch and along Low Street. These were probably on a pilgrim track from Waltham Abbey to other abbeys at Stratford and at Barking. At this time Chingford's population of less than a thousand, being in Essex, looked more to rural Waltham Abbey and Epping than to Walthamstow. This was to change firstly in 1878 when trains started running to Chingford. Despite the low population it was an ideal region for money to be made in transporting workers to the City during weekdays and in bringing visitors to Epping Forest at weekends. This accessibility increased in 1905 when trams started to terminate at the Prince Albert Pub.

As the developers quickly became interested the farmers were prepared to sell to them. The population started to shoot up. Most of the new houses were terraced, some were semi-detached and a few were detached. Much of this development was between the two world wars, in the thirties. The 1930s saw the biggest increase in building and hence the population quickly grew. The peak being in 1934. By 1939, some 40 years since Clara had come to Chingford, its population had grown to over forty thousand. The village was now a town!

Clara was to give birth to seven offspring, but sadly one child did not survive. The first living offspring was Minnie Elizabeth born in 1884. At that time Chingford's population was just 1387, and was spread along the edge of Epping Forest's lower slopes leading to the flood plain of the River Lea. The nearest school was across the Lea in Raynham Road, Edmonton. Chingford's School, which opened in 1876, was in King's Road in the northern part of the village. Minnie became a student teacher at Raynham Road, and then a qualified teacher, before gaining various headships in Norfolk.

Clara was then to give birth to four boys between 1887 and 1897. World War 1 was to be devastating to the family, especially Clara, who was to suffer much pain. All four sons volunteered, and all of them would be involved in the Great War of 1914-1918. My mother was Clara's last child, born in 1905.

The first boy was Thomas Henry born in 1887. He worked as a financial sub-editor for the Glasgow Herald at 33, Old Broad Street. It was 1916 when he enlisted. In June 1917 he was sent to Passchendaele with the Royal Garrison Artillery. Within 2 months he received shrapnel wounds to both legs and whilst at the casualty clearing station was gassed. He was returned home to be hospitalised for 2 years. He had had one leg completely amputated and the ankle of the other removed. Despite his poor health, due to his atrocious disability, he returned to work on the Glasgow Herald until his death in 1926 from pulmonary tuberculosis. His widow applied for a widow's pension on the grounds that his illness had been caused by his war service. It was rejected.



Clara's second son was Albert Edward, born in 1890. Since leaving school, he had been an employee at Messrs. Waterlows and Sons Ltd., printers. He was an active member of their sports club opposite the Crooked Billet P. H. being awarded a cricket bat as their player of the year. He enlisted on the 14th September 1914 in the 7th Battalion, the London Regiment. It landed in France in March 1915, and first saw action in May 1915. In September of the same year it took part in the major battles at Loos. This was one of the biggest confrontations of the War, in which 16,000 died and

25,000 were wounded among British troops alone. Albert was wounded on September 25th as the British advanced. He was to die 3 days later in a field hospital and is buried in Noeux-les-Mines Cemetery. He is remembered on the War Memorial opposite the Parish Church in The Ridgeway.



Stanley John was the next born in 1894. He was just twenty, when he enlisted in the Royal Army Service Corps, which was responsible for keeping the British Army supplied with provisions, except weapons and ammunitions. He saw service in Thessalonika, Greece, in 1917. His war area was fought mainly in Serbia,



Northern Greece and Bulgaria. He survived uninjured but it was believed his breathing had been affected as he was prone to fainting later in life. He died in 1942 at the Sun Hotel Hitchin, where he was the manager.

Then in 1897 the last boy was Frederick Corbett. He was the first one to be born at the Chingford waterworks. He was just 17 when the war started, and he enlisted in March 1915. He was put in a Cycling Corps active in the European sphere. Its job was reconnaissance and communication. It was not a combat unit, but only intended for home defence. Like many Fred volunteered for overseas duty. Fred was to be shot in the chest, by a sniper, with the bullet finishing lodged close to his heart.



In those days it was impossible to operate without causing the victim's death, so Fred was to lie for 12 months without moving so that the bullet became firmly embedded in tissue without touching his heart. He and the bullet remained together for evermore! Active sport was a no go area so he became a cricket umpire to become well known

across the cricket communities of Essex and the surrounding areas. Late in life he emigrated to America to live with two of his daughters, one married to an American service man, where he died.



Another death, this time by suicide, was the verdict of a jury at the coroner's office on James Wilson, Clara's step-father. Death was due to hemorrhage caused by a wound to the throat, which was evidently self-inflicted.

James Wilson, who had helped with Clara's upbringing, and was living with Clara's sister and husband, and his wife. His suicide must have been a great shock to her. Clara's mother had died in 1908.

At the time of the armistice in WW1, rumour has it that during a fire in the pumping station Clara's father, Thomas, fell through the floor badly injuring his legs. This was an injury from which he never recovered and was forced to retire. He died a few years later in 1921.

Clara was left a widow with a 16 year old daughter, Dorothy, living in a rented property in Hampton Road. Dorothy had just left school and was about to go to work. They remained here until Dorothy married in 1930. Then she went to live with Dorothy and her husband in a newly built semi-detached house near Chingford Station, ideal for commuting to the City for Dorothy and her husband, along with many others.



1939 was to see another change in Clara's life. Panic ensued when war with Germany was declared.

There was a mass exodus from London to the countryside as everyone feared a German air attack on London. Dorothy and family along with Clara went to stay with Minnie, who was living in Cambridge. Nothing happened, so they returned home. However, in September 1940, one night from Chingford, a bright red sky could be seen over the London docks, due to the results of the persistent German bombing. Clara and family immediately evacuated to Swavesey in Cambridgeshire. Clara was to die here in September 1944, not knowing whether a grandson, who fought at Arnhem in the Parachute Regiment, had survived. Likewise, a second grandson was in Burma fighting the Japanese. He too came home safely.

Her final years had been quite peaceful after a life with many tragedies, but if she had returned in 1946, Chingford was very much the same, having only suffered minor damage due to the Blitz. Most of the farms had been built on. Clara had seen Chingford given borough status in 1938, so becoming more of a town than village. In 1965 this was lost as Chingford became part of the new London Borough of Waltham Forest and was no longer part of Essex but stretched into the East End of London. Its population became ethnically very diverse as emigration came from much further afield than the home counties, and the rest of England or the British Isles. None of Clara's family remain in Chingford in the 21st century. Some of her descendants can still be found in England, but others have migrated further and can be discovered overseas in Canada, the United States and Australia.

Woodman Arms - by Gary Stone

The Woodman was a very old inn near Woodman Lane in Sewardstonebury. It had adjoining cottages.



A picture of the pub from c1890 shows a large semi-circular sign over the front gate leading to the pub and the buildings on the side. It is thought that the pub served the local farming community at the time as well as travelers and day trippers to the forest.

Operating by 1841, its first known occupant was Jemima Lane (widow), 44, Beer House Keeper in 1851. However, the most notable landlord was John Wicks who in October 1877, was fined one pound 19 shillings for serving deficient measures to his customers.

By October 1893, John Wicks was successful in an application for a wine licence. (See article below)

When the pub closed around 1901, the West Essex golf club opposite, were able to obtain a drinks licence.

The pub disappears from maps in the early 20th century and Woodman Lane is the only surviving reference to the pub.

THE WOODMAN INN, SEWARDSTONE.—Mr. J. W. Atkinson asked for a wine licence for John Wicks, of the Woodman beerhouse, Sewardstone. He pointed out that the nearest fully-licensed house to this was the Forest Hotel, Chingford, three quarters of a mile away. A large number of excursionists visited Epping Forest and this inn, and the landlord was frequently being asked for wine.—The Chairman: The excursionists will drink champagne and the poachers beer, I suppose? Your client won't sell spirits for light wines as they do in Norway if this is granted?—Mr. Atkinson: Oh, certainly not, sir, he is a most respectable man, and will undertake not to do that.—The licence was granted.

Sewardstonebury is in the postal area of London E4 for Royal Mail, but is in fact in the county of Essex with rates payable to Epping Forest District Council.

The map below in the 1890s shows the pub on Bury Road before Woodman Lane was made up. The satellite view on the right shows that the pub was close to the corner of Woodman Lane and Bury Road. A large house stands on the former site.



The First Chingford Hall Estate – by John Conen

Today's Chingford Hall Estate occupies the site of what was once a sewage farm. It is actually quite a way from where Chingford Hall stood but they could hardly have called it the Sewage Farm Estate! It was originally planned by Chingford Borough Council to provide 800 homes in a housing complex of three 22-storey tower blocks and twelve 6-storey maisonette blocks. The initiative was continued by the new London Borough of Waltham Forest after 1965.

Construction began in 1967 and was completed in 1969. The dreadful London-wide commitment to high-rise housing was already under scrutiny and by the turn of the century the estate had deteriorated to the extent that renewal was initiated in 1995



and was completed by the spectacular demolition of the three tower blocks in 2000-2002. A new low-rise estate has taken its place.



However back in the 1880s the Chingford Hall Estate was the name given to the farmlands attached to Chingford Hall, the original manor of Chingford St Paul's. The estate covered most of the south-western part of South Chingford, from Hall Lane down to the border with Walthamstow, and from Chingford Hall across to Chingford Mount Road, although some of the estate lay on the east side of Chingford Mount Road from the future site of the Memorial Park down to the boundary with Walthamstow. This could explain why Ainslie Wood Road was one of the

first roads to be developed locally.

Barbara Ray relates how after the Snell family sold off the Manor of Chingford St. Paul's, Chingford Hall and surrounding lands were bought by Enoch Clarke of Watlington, Norfolk. After the death of Mr Clarke and his wife the estate was once again up for auction in 1886. In the press on Friday 25 June 1886, it was reported that the Chingford Hall Estate had been sold by Messrs. Edwin Fox and Bousfield (agents) for £10,450. It consisted of 212 acres and a 'comfortable farmhouse and building'. The Hall and the estate were sold to Henry Michell and Eli Wilson.

Also in 1886, Messrs. Edwin Fox and Bousfield offered the rural sanitary authority a piece of land, comprising 42 acres, on the Chingford Hall Estate, for the Chingford sewage works. It is not clear if this was part of the land bought by Michell and Wilson.

Henry Bateman Michell was born in 1847 in Yorkshire and married Annie Norton Titley in 1875 at St George's Hanover Square, but they divorced in 1888.



In the 1911 census he is living with his second wife and family in Romford. He gives his occupation as surveyor. He lived at 'Eastbury' in London Road, Romford, and was obviously quite well-to-do, having three servants.

In October 1912, an application in court was made for confirmation of a Justices' certificate for diverting a footpath on the Chingford Hall Estate, Chingford. It was stated that some twenty years previously, Eli Wilson and Henry B Michell had bought the estate with a view to laying it out as a building estate. The footpath which was the subject of the court application was Chase Lane.

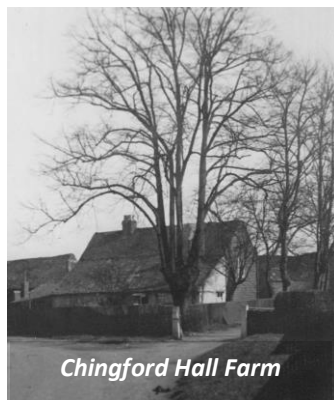
Progress in developing the estate was slow. By World War 1 Hampton Road, Sinclair Road, Burnham Road and Westward Road were laid out but very few houses had been built. Sewers were authorised for these roads in 1911 and in May 1912 Chingford UDC awarded a contract to provide sewerage facilities to W & C French for £4,426. Even in 1910 the roads of the estate were said to be a quagmire in winter and all the roads were not made up until the 1920s.

It seems plausible that Mr Michell gave his second name to Bateman Road. His wife Annie Norton Titley also could be a source of street names but Henry and Annie Michell were divorced in 1888, so this is probably just a coincidence, and in any case Titley Close, built in 1962, was named after a Chingford councillor of the 1950s.

Eli Wilson died in 1913. Who owned the estate by the time Michell died in 1928 is not known - however, most of it must have been sold on to developers or local builders by the time of Michell's death.

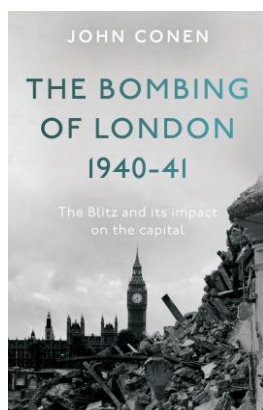
Chingford Hall and Chingford Hall Farm were separate buildings on the same site, but there were also two farm cottages. How much of a farm business it was after the sale in 1886 is not known.

Frederick Tollworthy leased the farm from 1887. In October 1888, Mr Tollworthy gave instructions for crops of savoys, collards, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, sprouting broccoli, and white turnips, on 45 acres, to be sold at auction. There was still some farming activity in World War 1 – a few cattle and horses - one farmer, one horseman and one stockman are listed but who these men were is not known. During the war the government sought to increase food production and land usage hence this mention in the war agricultural census researched by Len Davis.



Frederick Tollworthy became primarily a contractor, in 1911 being awarded a contract for refuse collection in Chingford. There is no evidence that he ever owned the Hall or any of the estate, and he had retired and moved on by the time World War 2 began. By this time most of the estate was covered by housing, although a few horticultural nurseries remained.

Sources: Barbara Ray *Chingford Past*, Len Davis CHS Notes vol 7 Extra 54.



CHS member John Conen has written a new history of the London Blitz of 1940-41, focussing on the enormous human cost and material destruction that occurred. His book describes how the Blitz progressed from the daylight attacks of the summer of 1940 through to the major raids of the spring of 1941. A chronology of the London Blitz forms the centrepiece of this account.

John's book is of particular interest to members as he grew up in Chingford and features it in his book. The death and destruction in Chingford is tragic as it was as now largely residential. By the end of the war, over 100 citizens had lost their lives as a result of air attacks, and virtually all properties in the borough had been damaged. John says 'Chingford is fortunate to have its civil defence organisation in World War 2 and bombing incidents detailed in *Chingford at War* by Stanley Warburton.

Memories of Chingford brickworks - By Georgina Green

The southern slopes of Pole Hill, Chingford, were enclosed from the forest many years ago and a small brickworks was established there in the mid-19th century. The railway came to Chingford in 1873 with the original station at Bull Lane (by Larkshall Road) but this was extended to the present station site in 1878, the year the Epping Forest Act was passed. This made the area more suitable for commuter development so roads were planned and houses started to be built in what became North Chingford.

By the turn of the century the brickworks covered an area of 15 acres, with six kilns, an engine house, drying house which was 30 feet by 100 feet, several outbuildings and brickmaking plant and machinery. This was located on land to the west of the pathway which leads up to Pole Hill from the top of Kings Head Hill, by Chingford Police Station.



Dick Richards (who was born in 1907) played around the brickfield area where the houses of Woodberry Way are now.



Speaking in 1985 he recalled: "There were all these kilns which smoked as they baked the bricks - which were then laid out in rows. In those days Mornington Road was only two-thirds built, with just a lane up to the forest fenced in between the fields, and Pole Hill was open ground.

"We used to walk up the lane beside the police station at the top of Kings Head Hill through to the top, where it met the footpath from the end of Mornington Road.

At the top there used to be a lime pit worked by a blind horse. (The lime was brought in for the manufacture of the bricks.) My sister and I used to feel so sorry for this horse, he had to walk round and round the pit to keep the lime stirred with a huge shovel affair.

“The pit would have been where the houses are now on the south side of Woodberry Way, right at the top. Over to the west were the brick kilns operated by the Hastings family who lived in Connaught Road.”

Mrs Lily Chiswell (née Divall) was born in 1915 and moved to Hawksmouth Cottage when she was five. One of her earliest memories was visiting the site of the old brickworks with her younger brother in 1924/5. The claypit was there but the brickworks were not operating. She remembers that they picked red flowers, like delphiniums (rose bay willowherb?)

At that time there were no houses between Hawksmouth and the corner of what is now Woodberry Way, where there was a lodge for the big house behind the Police Station.



The scar on the side of the hill where they took clay was still visible in the 1950s and older readers may remember sliding down the clay surface on tin trays in the summer, or on toboggans when it snowed. Since then it has grassed over and is now becoming hidden in woodland. Indeed the whole hillside which was open grassland is gradually being encroached by bushes. However visible evidence of the old brickworks can still be seen in some of the garden walls in the district. They were made of the mis-fired bricks and have quite a distinctive appearance.

During the First World War Pole Hill was used for an anti-aircraft gun emplacement and the thick concrete base of the ammunition store can still be seen if you know where to look. An Army hut was constructed for the soldiers who manned the gun.

Vyvyan Richards, a teacher from Bancroft’s School, also had a wooden hut further round the hill and in the 1920s his friend T.E. Lawrence (of Arabia) purchased the land of Pole Hill – but that’s another story.

Chingford Police – A History (Pt5)

On December 6th 1958 P.C.148J George Dorsett GM was resting at his home in Hampton Road, Chingford when his wife woke him and told him that the girl next door was being threatened by a boyfriend who was suitably equipped with a shotgun! As George got up there was a loud explosion as a round from the gun pushed in next doors window. George went out to the man, later confirmed as a mental case, and disarmed him. The police officers' extreme luck was confirmed when, after claims by the gunman were heeded the gun was found to have been fired at George, but although indented by the firing pin, the cartridge had fortunately not gone off! This incident earned George a bar to his GM at that time only one of twenty five ever issued. The first award having been presented as a result of another armed incident at Hackney in February 1953 where shots were again fired and a fellow officer was slightly wounded.

A follow up to this story of George Dorsett's unique (to the Metropolitan Police) George Medal and bar is that long after his retirement George chose to sell all his medals in order to finance an operation for his wife in November 1988. The collection included the GM and Bar with allied correspondence, a 1939-45 Star, Africa Star, Italy Star, Defence and War Medals along with some photographs, certificates and other papers. The sale at Christie's brought the amount he needed for the operation and, as hoped, the medal went to the M.P. Museum collection.



A further increase in mobility took place with the introduction of the Velocette light motorbike in 1960, which took the patrolling constables off their feet and bicycles to a limited extent.

A further re-organisation took place on 1st April 1965 (P.O. 6.8.1964) with a change in boundaries to those of the London Borough of Waltham Forest which saw the ceding of Sewardstone and Sewardstonebury back to the operational Control of the police in Waltham Abbey.

The structure of the police station at Chingford was again extended in 1971-72, but with ever increasing rises in the population a new plan was evolved for policing the area. It was decided that the existing station should be demolished towards the end of February 1975, and a new station erected upon the same site.



Meanwhile one prisoner took it in her mind to assist in the rebuilding process by setting the CID office, a prefabricated single storey building, on fire. In the event the fire was largely confined to paperwork – with some cases having to restart their documentation.

The old station, by then 87 years old, was demolished. In its place a single storey temporary building was erected in the area previously the station yard. A tyre company to the rear and a house to the east side were demolished, enabling the new building to be constructed. It was planned as the new sub-divisional station to replace Walthamstow that had become overcrowded. Costain Construction was awarded the contract for the new station which was worth £700,000. When the new building was completed, towards the end of 1976, the price had soared to £900,000, but this included the additional parcels of land. As soon as the main building was fit for occupation the men moved out of the temporary building, and this in turn was demolished to make way for the completion of the yard and garages.



The new sub-Divisional station became operational on 10th January 1977, and was officially opened on Friday 23rd September 1977 by Lord Harris of Greenwich, Minister of State at the Home Office. The following two days saw the building opened to the public, and in excess of 10,000 people from Chingford and the surrounding area visited the new station.



In 1986 the Metropolitan Police underwent another, Force wide, major re-organisation which, locally, abolished the previous 'N', 'Y' and 'J' Divisions into 2 Area (North) Chingford. (JC) Division was formed at the same time, with Walthamstow and Waltham Abbey as its two sectional stations.

Under two years later and shortly before Waltham Abbey was transferred to the Barkingside (JB) Division, Chingford police station was thrust into the national public lime-light. In late January 1988 Stephen Dowthwaite, a 31 year old constable stationed at the King's Head Hill station went missing from his post as station officer in the early hours of night duty. More ominously, one of the station hand guns in his charge also went missing. The officer was eventually traced to Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire and the gun found to be merely hidden in the pipework ducting of a toilet in the station. The officer was retired on a generous ill health pension some months later.



Shortly after midnight in the early hours of Friday 29th November 1991 Chingford based Sergeant Alan King responded alone to a call from a member of the public in Higham Hill, Walthamstow. The 41 year old married sergeant pulled his Astra police car across the road to block the exit of two men loading a Ford Cortina. One of the two men stabbed the policeman repeatedly and cut his radio aerial before making off. The sergeant staggered down the road and managed to stop a passing motorist who took him to the Forest Road police station, in spite of the best efforts of the surgeons, Sergeant King died in Whipps Cross Hospital later. Five hours later two more policemen were attacked in Thornton Heath, South London and wounded. Later two men were arrested in connection with both attacks and charges preferred.

PLEASE NOTE

CHS is growing and we are looking for enthusiastic people to join our committee to help with the general running of the society. A very rewarding position for someone interested in local history, meeting new people and being part of a motivated team. Please contact Gary on 07970 524553 or enquiries@chingfordhistory.org.uk

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CHS will be attending the Village Festival on the green on Saturday 10th June and look forward to seeing you there. Further event announcements to be made.

<p>President – Peter Uglow Chairman – Gary Stone Vice Chairman – Joanna Moncrieff Secretary – Angela Wagstaff Treasurer – Simon Goulter Membership – Frances Pick Committee Member – Alison Goulter Committee Member – David Boote Committee Member – Marion Fox Committee Member – Stephen Pick Committee Member – Alan White</p>

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter or have any historical material to donate or share, please contact Gary Stone on 07970 524553 or enquiries@chingfordhistory.org.uk

All other enquiries to: Angela Wagstaff
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