

# FRIENDS OF BUSHEY MUSEUM

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# THE JOURNAL OF THE OF BUSHEY MUSEUM

**W**elcome to the latest edition of the Friends of Bushey Museum's *Journal*. It contains its usual collection of articles and illustrations on a wide range of topics and I hope that there is something of interest for everyone. Although there are no articles about the First World War, it gets a mention in several of the articles.

Bushey has a long history of drama, but it has not featured in the *Journal*, with the exception of Jane Parker's article about *The Bushey Story* in the very first issue of this series of the *Journal* fifteen years ago! Does anyone

have memories about one of the various drama groups that they can share with the readers of the *Journal*. I'm still waiting for something on the history of music in Bushey as well.

Ian Read has been helpful in finding photographs to illustrate the articles and Nick Overhead is responsible for the layout and design of the *Journal*. Thank you.

Thank you to all the contributors. Please keep the articles coming in, without your support there will be no *Journal*.

**Janet Murphy**

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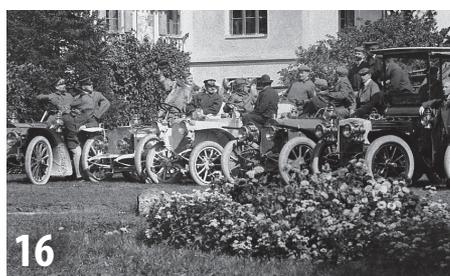
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# The Chewett Diaries

Dianne Payne

**M**ore than a hundred years ago, Albert Ranney Chewett, who later owned Reveley Lodge in Bushey Heath, kept a series of pocket diaries covering the years 1898 to 1903 when he was a student at the Herkomer Art School in Bushey. Written in small, spidery handwriting, they provide a fascinating insight into his personality and experiences at that time.

The first diary begins on 3 October 1898, when Albert, born into a wealthy family in Toronto, set sail on the *Parisian* from Canada to Liverpool. Albert was twenty, the youngest son of William Cameron Chewett, who had died the previous year. His parents both had English ancestors and Albert had probably visited England previously but this time he had come for a specific reason. He makes no mention of his mother on the voyage, but she and a small family group are referred to later in the diary, and must have travelled with him.

On arrival in Liverpool, the party set out for London and then went straight to Bushey to find a suitable house to rent. After a few days' sight-seeing in the capital and a short visit to Ongar in Essex, they settled in at The Red House

in Bushey High Street. Albert was already an art student, but needed to improve his skills to enter the Herkomer Art School in the village. He had arranged to receive tuition from Edward Bent Walker, one of Herkomer's talented students, a versatile flower, figure and portrait artist and an experienced coach.<sup>1</sup> Over the next seven months Albert took classes in sketching, painting and life drawing at Walker's studio, for which he paid him £2/8/- a month (£137 at today's value). He posed for his tutor a couple of times and, in June 1899, Walker, gave him a pencil sketch. Albert kept it, the only image we have of him during his student days.

A typical student, Albert recorded very little in his diaries about work and study but a great deal about social activities. Afternoon tea, a regular pastime of the wealthy, was an ideal venue for introductions and, by Christmas, he had entertained a number of Art School students, including several young ladies. Albert played the clarinet and, after attending an

orchestral rehearsal in the village, he set off to London to buy a new B flat instrument and case for which he paid £14/5/- (£810 at today's values). He later noted that 'R.H.H. Co', the Rossin House Hotel Company, which his father had owned,<sup>2</sup> contributed a third of the cost. Over the next four years Albert played regularly with the orchestra on Tuesday evenings and took part in their concerts.

Every month Albert received an allowance of £2/1/2d (£115) from his mother. Even though he was wealthy, he was obsessive about recording his expenditure, noting every purchase in his diary, a practice he continued throughout his life. His early diaries are littered with the prices of a wide range of items:

**Railway ticket to London 1/9d,  
tip for the porter 2d  
Brushes and paint 5/7d,  
canvas 3/6d,  
fee for life model 2/-  
Boots 16/8d,  
stockings 4/6d, shirt 7/6d,**



Pictures Bushey Museum Archive

tie 1/6d

Hair-cut and shave 9d

Mouth organ 1/-,

bicycle bell 3/-, fireworks 1/-,

brandy 6d

Orchestra fee 14/6d

Prices of entrance tickets for art exhibitions and money lent or borrowed were all diligently documented. £5 notes were valuable (£285) so Albert noted down the number of any note he received or passed on. On 30 December 1898 he paid 1/- for a new diary for the following year.

As the months passed, his circle of friends increased and he met Clement Flower, William Bennett, Henry Kortwright and Frank Heath, all students at the Herkomer School. He took walks and bicycle rides with friends and at weekends made regular trips to London to visit art exhibitions or the theatre. In July 1899 Albert took his first long break from study and he and his family spent five months back home in Toronto. When they returned to Bushey in December they rented 2 Grey Villas in Falconer Road.

On 1 January 1900 Albert began work as a student at the Herkomer School and his next diary took the form of a notebook, continuing through to June 1901. Herkomer gave his tuition free but Albert paid six guineas a term (£360) towards the running of the Art School. On Sundays he often attended 'Herk's receptions', where 'the Boss' displayed and discussed his own art works. On 11 February, Herkomer showed *The Lady in Black*, one of the outstanding portraits he painted during his visit to America in 1887. The young lady had impressed Herkomer by her particular beauty and the portrait was notable for its simplicity of setting and the confrontational gaze of the subject.<sup>3</sup> In later years Albert painted several portraits of young women of a serious disposition in the more elaborate but homely setting of Reveley Lodge.

Herkomer's students were required to work hard in the studio all day with a break for lunch and were then encouraged to draw or paint in the neighbourhood or at home in the evenings. It was a rigorous regime and Albert was required to present his work at the Boss's 'show-ups', some of which were 'for men only'. Albert's diary records sketching and painting interspersed with walks, tea parties and social gatherings at the Bushey Coffee Tavern. Heavy snowfall in February occasioned 'a snowball fight', the purchase of skates for 2/- and several days tobogganing. Orchestral activities continued, Albert bought a C clarinet and a piano arrived at the family lodgings. He played croquet and tennis, enjoyed 'Spook' and bonfire celebrations and late night gatherings, including one at the home of Lucy Kemp-Welch, which ended at 2am. He attended London theatres and concerts and as his art training was essentially practical, he had time for private reading including Malory's romantic tale *Morte D'Arthur*, Goethe's *Faust* and the Victorian poetry of Robert Browning and Edgar Allan Poe. In May 1900 Albert was present when the Duke of Connaught opened the Royal Masonic School for Boys in Bushey. His diary recorded events on the wider stage, such as the relief of Ladysmith and the siege of Mafeking, in passing.

Albert and his family left Bushey again in late June to spend the summer in Canada. As usual on the voyage, Albert noted the fees he paid for the services of the ship's dining, bedroom and bath stewards.



**Two Herkomer students believed to be (left) Lewis John Mason Grant and (right) A R Chewett**

In Toronto he made five appointments with his dentist, running up a bill of over £37 for the treatment (more than £2,000). Returning to Bushey in October, the family rented Tyncote in Bournehall Road and Albert brought back a generous supply of tobacco to share with his friends. In November 1900 photography was mentioned in his diary for the first time, when he and two friends exchanged prints, photographed each other nude for study purposes and took photographs to paint or use as studies. The following February Albert bought a Brownie camera for 5/- and four rolls of film for 2/4d. His art studies continued but photography took on new significance and he spent whole days producing prints and enlargements.

Herkomer had painted portraits of members of the British royal family and when Queen Victoria died on 22 January 1901 he was summoned to her deathbed at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight to paint a memorial portrait. 'He showed the dead Queen lying in a sea of white tulle sprinkled with

lilies and other flowers, resembling a floating Ophelia and he took the portrait back to his Bushey studio for a few days to further refine the floral detail and to show it to his students'.<sup>4</sup> Albert noted in his diary on 25 January that he was one of the students who saw this portrait.

The Chewett family spent the early summer months of 1901 in Devon, where they visited the village of Topsham, the home of their Ranney ancestors. Albert was clearly interested in his predecessors and copied the names of William Ranney, his wife Elizabeth and their four children into his new black notebook. William Ranney, a consul for Sweden and agent to Lloyd's,<sup>5</sup> and his wife were buried in a family vault at Topsham church, where Albert noted down other family members from the tablets of ancestry. A holiday in Yorkshire followed where Albert did some sketching and when they all returned to Bushey, they rented Bournemead in Herkomer Road. As the new term began, Albert 'primed a yard of canvas, and developed films in the evening', an indication of his dual interests.

Albert's period of study at the Herkomer School was due to end in the summer of 1902 but in March entries in his notebook suddenly stopped. On 1 June he wrote, 'I have not written anything in this book since March 3rd. Just after that date something happened which I won't put down but which I won't forget'. A little further on in the notebook, Albert carefully cut two horizontal slits in one of the pages and threaded through a tress of gingery-brown hair. The next entry on 12 June records his arrival in Quebec and his return to Toronto and the remainder of the notebook records his expenditure and makes brief reference to family travels in France, Belgium and Holland in 1903.

It is clear that Albert enjoyed the period he spent in Bushey because in 1910 he returned with his mother and sisters and made it his

home. The family rented Reveley Lodge, a house on Bushey Heath that provided generous accommodation and a four-acre garden. A self-portrait Albert completed in 1904 shows that at that time he was of striking appearance, with dark eyes, a dark brown beard and waxed moustache.

Pictures Bushey Museum Archive



Albert's four early diaries had travelled with him back and forth to Canada and he stored them safely at Reveley Lodge with other treasured possessions. He was very fond of his mother and painted several portraits of her over the years. When she died at the age of 82 he carefully kept eight copies of *The West Herts & Watford Observer* of Saturday 28 December 1918 containing her death notice.

In 1921 Albert purchased Reveley Lodge and ten years later, at the age of 53, he married Violet Georgiana Eila Baillie on her nineteenth birthday and it became their permanent home. Albert died in 1965 and in 2003 Eila bequeathed Reveley Lodge to Bushey Museum.

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4. Lee MacCormick Edwards, *Herkomer: A Victorian Artist* (1999), p.93-4
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# That reminds me (Bushey Heath in the 1930's)

## Mollie Thomas

**T**hat's Dad chopping the wood for the copper.' My sister and I lay there in the large double bed, which we shared, listening to the sounds which came up the cottage stairs. It was dark: it was Monday, and Monday was wash-day, everyone knew that. We listened as we heard the bucket being filled up with cold water from the only tap we had, and then the splash as the water was tipped into the old stone copper in the corner of the kitchen. Then a loud 'plonk' as the wooden top was placed over the boiler, followed by the crackling sound below as the fire took hold. Soon Dad's steady tread would be heard on the stairs as he brought up Mum's early morning cup of tea; no tea for us though, just a kiss on the forehead and the rejoinder to be good girls and help Mum; then the sound of the front door closing and the tinkling of the bell as he cycled



off to work in the darkness. Who would have thought that twenty years later I would be going through the same kitchen copper routine in a remote and very old cottage far away in Dorset, much to my mother's horror. She, by now, had graduated to a smart and very efficient gas boiler. She still had her copper stick though, and I soon had one of my own, treasured for many years.

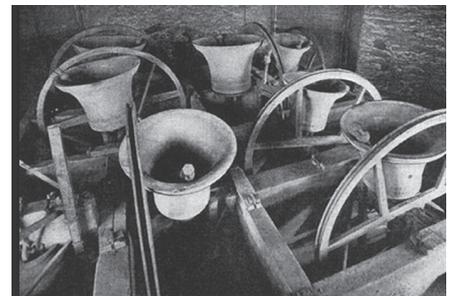
Strangely enough there are sounds I can always recall, hearing them in the memory as clearly as when one first heard them, and one is transported back in time.

*'Your name's not Mollie, it's Muriel.'* I can hear the voice, see the face, the hazel eyes behind the tortoise shell spectacles. I was six years old, almost seven, and due to leave the Infants' School in The Rutts, and move on to Merry Hill Junior School. But whatever was Miss Coe talking about? She gave me a card with my name printed on it in

real school teacher writing; Muriel Norcutt. *'Now you must learn to write your proper name before you can go to the big school.'* Well, you did not argue with authority, so while the others did jigsaws and drew pictures and thumped lumps of plasticine, I had to sit writing my name over and over again until I could do it without looking at the card. So, I passed the test, but from that time onwards, even now, I have had the problem of two names.

At least I could move on to the big school, and a new sound became important – the school bell. It rang at twenty to nine and again at ten to nine, and, if you were still on Clay Hill when you heard the second ringing, then you jolly well had to hurry or you'd be late and hear the dreaded sentence: *'You're late this morning; lose your playtime!'* and you would sit in the classroom listening to your classmates in the playground, hearing the sounds of the milk-crates being moved about the school, and waiting for the shrill

blast of the whistle which told you that your isolation would soon be over.



We lived not far from St Peter's Church on Bushey Heath and the pealing of the bells was clearly audible. I loved to hear them, and wished I could become a ringer. Both my uncles were regular members of the team, but they said I wouldn't be able to manage the sally ropes. There was a particularly moving sound and that was the muffled peal. I remember walking past the church with my mother on a foggy winter's afternoon, and I asked her why they were ringing this special peal just then. She told me that the bells had been given to the

church by Sir David Rutherford, who lived in a big house in The Rutts, in memory of his son who had been killed in Ireland in 1920, on condition that they rang a half-muffled peal on the anniversary of his death. The story has always stayed with me.

When war broke out in 1939, the ringing of church bells was no longer allowed, except as a sign of invasion. We missed the sound, so when somebody had the inspired idea that to mark the victory at El Alamein the bells should be rung, we were overjoyed, and glad that the ringers had not lost their skill.

Also connected with the bells, on one Christmas Day when I was about ten-years-old, the ringing of the bells of Bethlehem was played on the wireless and we stood spell-bound in the kitchen. Really from Bethlehem? I still hope after all these years that it was not a recording!

The coming of the war in 1939 brought many new sounds. Even now I cannot hear the wail of the air-raid siren on radio, television or film without a sharp intake of breath. And we became familiar with the engine tones of various types of aircraft, and no doubt for many of us, the flypasts of Spitfires and Lancasters on ceremonial occasions touches a chord and provokes many an 'Oh!' Aeroplanes? Yes we look up as these modern beautiful jet-liners cross the sky, and we wish them well, especially when we know a family member may be on board. Is that my grandson on his way back to Houston, which is now his place

of work and his home? One of my great joys when visiting my aunt in Watford was to see and hear the beautiful Concorde fly over.

I was sitting in the garden a few days ago when a low airborne growling sound met my ears. It was vaguely familiar, and as it drew nearer I saw a small two winged aeroplane approaching, quite slowly but there was bit of wing wobble. A biplane? Surely not after all these years. They belonged to my childhood when the sound of one overhead would make us all rush out into the garden and gaze up at this amazing contraption, which would be flying quite low, low enough for the pilot in his open cockpit to return our waves. But that was long ago. What was this one doing? I soon found out. Much to my alarm it began to swoop noisily, rapidly and erratically. It seems that such displays by aeroplanes are becoming 'The Thing' at local events, great crowd pullers apparently, though I must confess that I feel anxious when such carryings-on take place nearly over my house. Another plane belonging to our childhood was the autogiro. We did not call it a helicopter in those days. As with biplanes, we used to dash out into the garden and stare up – and no doubt wave – at this amazing flying machine. My father once took us to the Hendon Air Pageant where we heard lots of bangs and saw parachutes and huge balloons – forerunners of the barrage balloon. One burst into flames, very scary for a small girl, and enough to put her off flying for life, which it did!

As a small girl I loved roundabouts, so you can imagine how excited I became each August Bank Holiday Monday when we went to the Flower Show in Bushey. It was always held in what was then called Lord Bethell's Field, and my sister and I could hardly wait to get inside the gate, accompanied by our parents, to see if they, or we, had won any prizes for our needlework



or cooking or fruit and veg, and then go off to enjoy all the fun of the fair. How we loved those roundabouts; perched on the galloping horses, we clung tightly to the brass poles as we whirled around. Did we perhaps show off and risk waving to an admiring audience? I can never hear the sound without going back to those heady spins and hear my mother shouting frantically: 'Hold tight.' I could never understand why years later my son didn't share my passion; he would turn green even on the smallest roundabout at a village fete.

For a while I had an aunt who lived in an upstairs flat in Rudolph Road, about half-way down I think. My sister and I, living in a quiet and almost traffic-free lane on the Heath were fascinated by the cars and vans, but what really excited us was the appearance of the fire-engine and the firemen, and we would watch spellbound as the brilliant red machine left the garage and the men clambered aboard, wearing their traditional uniforms and metal helmets.



Then off they went, the bell clanging madly. It was not such an exciting sound to hear at night when we lay in bed, and imagined the engine racing along Elstree Road. I still recall the fear I felt and the muttered prayer: 'Please don't let our house catch fire.' And do today's children still chant the rhyme: 'Hold your collar, never swallow, until an ambulance is out of sight?' Goodness knows what dreadful malady we stood to succumb to if we broke this golden rule!

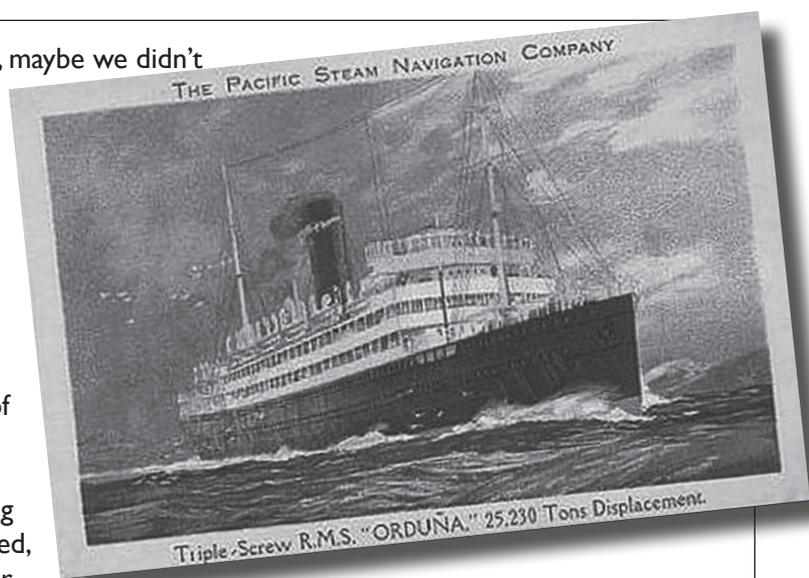
My father was a Berkshire boy, born and bred in Maidenhead; and like so many of his generation, on the outbreak of the 1914-18 war, he couldn't wait to join up, and enlisted in the 4th Battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment. Despite being wounded in Italy, his loyalty to his Regiment remained, and he never missed the annual reunions in Reading. One result was his passion for all things military and we grew up knowing all the military marches and bugle calls. We had an old wind-up gramophone and records, which even now, when I hear them, bring back memories of a cold front room and flickering gas light. Despite the acquired familiarity, I still cannot hear the Last Post or Reveille without a sense of sympathy for all those caught up in wars and battles which are none of their making. And the first stroke of 11 o'clock on Armistice Day, echoing from Big Ben is still almost unbearably sad. What a pity guns have to be fired on these occasions.

Every summer we have a Steam Engine Rally locally, very popular even among the younger generation. To me, the puffing and chuffing and hooting recall the days when my Mother sent my sister and me to stand by the roadside whenever a steam-roller was in the area doing some repairs and there would be a glorious smell of steam and tar which we were told to inhale. It was a common thing for mothers to send their children to do this, telling us that it would cure our coughs

and colds. Well, maybe we didn't have any to cure, but who would pass up the chance of watching the massive machine, polished within an inch of its life, and of exchanging a polite and friendly greeting with the bearded, red-faced driver, who would sound the hooter for our delight?

And do you ever hear the cuckoo now? I don't, and it's not because my very old ears are wearing out. Can you remember that first magical call which meant that spring is here? At first we would imitate him and try to fool our friends, but soon we had no need, for the bird himself would call all day long until night brought a relief from the monotony of his cry. Didn't he know any other songs? We may not have approved of his treatment of our much loved garden birds, but I suppose every spring we forgave him when again we heard that unmistakable call, now all too rare: another of nature's balances tipped.

I suppose the 1939-45 war tipped many other balances too as many humans decided it was time to move and seek a new life, and hopefully a better one elsewhere. A blare of a ship's siren is one of those happy/sad sounds, equally moving on any occasion. It was a happy sound when I stood on the dockside at Liverpool one bitter December afternoon, and watched the sea-battered liner *Orduna* with my sister on board, arrive from Singapore, after a journey which was to change her life. And I recall the journey back to London in the cold, noisy, unlit and distinctly scruffy train, where conversation suddenly became so difficult. Was there really so little to say after



such a long separation? On another occasion I stood on the dockside at Southampton, watching as the final preparations were made for the beautiful lilac-coloured liner of the Union Castle Line to leave on its voyage to Cape Town and Durban. I had been on board to say goodbye to my closest childhood friend, her husband and small daughter as they left to seek a better life in South Africa. I think there is nothing more moving than the final blast on the siren as the last ropes and chains and gangplanks are withdrawn. There is no turning back as the huge vessel makes its first move. A train can shunt back and forth before it finally leaves the terminus, but for a ship, that first inch is so final. I watched, unashamedly in tears, as the great vessel sailed down Southampton Water. We waved until we could no longer see each other. And we never did see each other again. I think that possibility was no doubt in our minds on that afternoon. There was little civilian flying in those days: now it is commonplace and taken for granted. Trips back to the Old Country were unlikely.

So many memories of sounds, especially of music and people's voices! As I move into old age with its attendant hearing problems, frequently struggling to hear what is happening around me, at least I can recall those sounds remembered, which have enriched my life, and which still remind me of so much.

# A Remarkable Coincidence

Dianne Payne

**W**hen the Bushey First World War Exhibition, *A Village Remembers*, was over in August 2014, Roger and I went on holiday to the Lake District. We stayed in a small guest house in Borrowdale at the foot of the Honister Pass, seven miles south of Keswick. Seatoller House, originally a small farm house, is over 300 years old and has been a guest house for more than 100 years. Its long tradition of warm hospitality and a friendly, informal atmosphere make it popular with walkers, artists, and those who want immediate access to the fells.

Seatoller House has visitors' books dating back to 1900, which record the names of participants in the Man Hunts, created by a Cambridge undergraduate, G M Trevelyan, in 1898. Inspired by the great man hunt in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, this is a game of hare and hounds played out in the fells above Seatoller. On each of the three days of hunting, several members of the hunt, the 'hares', leave the house at 8 am, carrying scarlet sashes and hunting horns. The remainder of the party, the 'hounds', leave half an hour later. 'Tally-ho!' rings across the fells and the 'hounds' are expected to make full use of their hunting horns to attract attention and can be caught by touching. In 1901 the Hunt split in two – one organised from Trinity College, Cambridge, the other by C P Trevelyan. With a break for the two world wars, both Hunts continue from Seatoller House today.<sup>1</sup>



Seatoller House

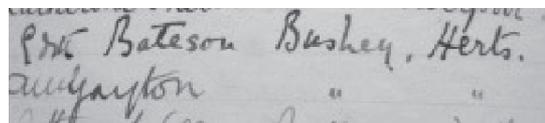
Intrigued by details of these Hunts in the visitors' books, I could not resist looking further. On 22 July 1914, two weeks before Britain declared war, Leo Burley, a British diamond merchant living in Antwerp, stayed at Seatoller House with his wife, Anna, who was the niece of Professor Ludwig Knaus, a celebrated German artist (1829–1910). Leo Burley signed the visitors' book and made this poignant entry:

*'Returned after an absence of more than 20 years to find the same unostentatious comfort and the same hospitable care, the same beauty of hill and valley, of rivulet and lake. The European capitals are seething with the violence of men's passions; by the Danube the roar of Austrian artillery has already been heard – and the dark, silent fells around us remain in imperturbable calm.'*

In 1914 Antwerp was ringed by Belgian forts and after the German invasion of Belgium in August that

year, German troops besieged the city. Leo and Anna Burley's house and all its contents were destroyed during the bombardment. They decided to make their home in England and never returned to Antwerp. During the war Leo served as a Special Constable and they both worked for Quaker Charities to relieve the sufferings of war victims. Leo died in Finchley in 1921 at the age of 48. During his life he had enjoyed many walking tours with his wife in the Black Forest, in Switzerland and in the Lake District, perhaps his favourite haunt.<sup>2</sup>

A few visitors stayed at Seatoller House during the First World War and as I turned the pages of the visitors' book to July 1915, I spotted two signatures from Bushey.



Ancestry.com revealed that Edith Bateson and Anna Gayton were



Water Colour Drawing.  
Edith Bateson,  
Nightingale Road  
Bushey,  
"Lambing Time." £3. 3. 0.

both artists and, as I later discovered, were on Bushey Museum's list of Artists and Students resident in Bushey in 1915.

Edith Bateson, born in 1867, was the youngest daughter of William H Bateson, the Master of St John's College, Cambridge. From 1891 she studied at the Royal Academy Schools, where she won three silver medals for sculpture. She was one of a group of women artists encouraged to take up sculpture at a time when modelling was done in clay before being cast in bronze. Prior to this, sculpture had been thought too physically demanding for women. One of Edith Bateson's statues now stands in the library of Lady Margaret Hall at Oxford University. Later, she moved on to painting and by the time she came to Bushey in 1915, she was established as a professional artist at Robin Hood's Bay in Yorkshire, part of the Fylingdale group. She exhibited four times at the Royal Academy, at many provincial

galleries and at the International Society of Sculptors.

Her vibrant watercolour, *Lambing Time*, was painted while she was living in Nightingale Road, Bushey in 1918. It depicts the onset of an English Spring, with lambs and newly shooting willows under a blustery sky. The 'modern' feel and positive atmosphere perhaps accords with the imminent ending of the First World War. While in Bushey, Edith Bateson became part of the artistic colony and befriended Winifred, the younger sister of the artist, Kate Cowderoy, who lived at The Retreat, 5 Hillside Road. In 1919 Edith exhibited a sculpture of Winifred Cowderoy at the Autumn Exhibition of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers in London.<sup>3</sup>

Anna Maria Gayton, about six years older than Edith, also studied at the Royal Academy Schools, where she too won prizes for sculpture in 1888 and 1890.<sup>4</sup>

The youngest daughter of a solicitor, she lived in Much Hadham in Hertfordshire and the 1901 census shows Edith living with her there. Anna later acted as housekeeper for her older brother, a doctor and surgeon, who was Medical Superintendent of Surrey County Asylum.

Entries in the visitors' book at Seatoller House produced some fascinating stories. As Roger and I signed our names, I mentioned Edith Bateson and Anna Gayton from the unique artists' colony who stayed there in 1915 and added a link to Bushey Museum and Art Gallery.

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# Sporting Bushey

*Bushey is not usually regarded as a hotbed of sporting talent, but it has connections with several famous sportsmen, some of whom were featured in an exhibition at the Museum*

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## Audrey Adams

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### **Frank Chester (1895-1957)**

In the spring of 1914, cricketer Frank Chester had the world at his feet. At the age of 18, he was in his second season as a professional with Worcestershire, and had already been identified as an England all-rounder of the future. That summer he recorded his top score of 178 not out against Essex, and his best bowling figures of 6 for 43. His progress was halted by the outbreak of the First World War and his call-up to the Royal Field Artillery. In July 1917, while on active service in Salonika, he lost his right arm. He was fitted with an artificial limb, but had to accept that his career as a cricketer was over. Instead he became an outstanding umpire, rated by Sir Donald Bradman as *'the greatest umpire under whom I played'*. Chester stood in a record 48 Tests, a total subsequently overtaken by Dickie Bird. He lived all his life in Bushey, and counted the balls of each over with six pebbles taken from his mother's garden in Coldharbour Lane.

### **Godfrey Rampling (1909-2009)**

Godfrey Rampling was a professional soldier and an amateur athlete who refused to take his sport too seriously. His idea of training was a couple of laps round the cricket field at his army camp twice a week. Despite this casual approach, Rampling twice represented Great Britain at the Olympics and ran the race of his life at the 1936 Games in Berlin, best remembered for Adolf Hitler's attempt to hijack the Games as a propaganda vehicle for Nazi

ideology. Rampling, an outstanding relay runner, ran the second leg in the 4x400 metres relay and made up nine metres to inspire the team to victory and a gold medal. *'On that day in Berlin'*, Rampling recalled 50 years later, *'I just seemed to float around the track, passing people without effort'*. The Colonel, as he was known affectionately, spent the last nine years of his life in Bushey House Beaumont, where he celebrated his 100th birthday in May 2009. His visitors that day included his daughter, the distinguished actress Charlotte Rampling. He died peacefully a month later.

### **Pat Floyd (1911-88)**

At six feet six inches and 14 stones and with a good punch in both hands, Pat Floyd was a natural heavyweight. He won the Amateur Boxing Association (ABA) heavyweight title in 1929, 1934 and 1935 and represented England at the Empire Games and European Championships. In 1946, after wartime service in the RAF, he returned to the ring, despite being overweight and out of condition, and won his fourth ABA title, 17 years after his first. In his prime, Floyd had the talent to box professionally, but he preferred to retain his amateur status and continue his day job with *Times Newspapers*. A familiar figure in Bushey, Floyd lived for many years in Herkomer Close and was President of the Bushey Royal British Legion Club.

### **Reverend Gilbert Montague Hall (1868-1937)**

Montague Hall is best remembered locally as Rector of Bushey from 1898 to 1937 and author of a

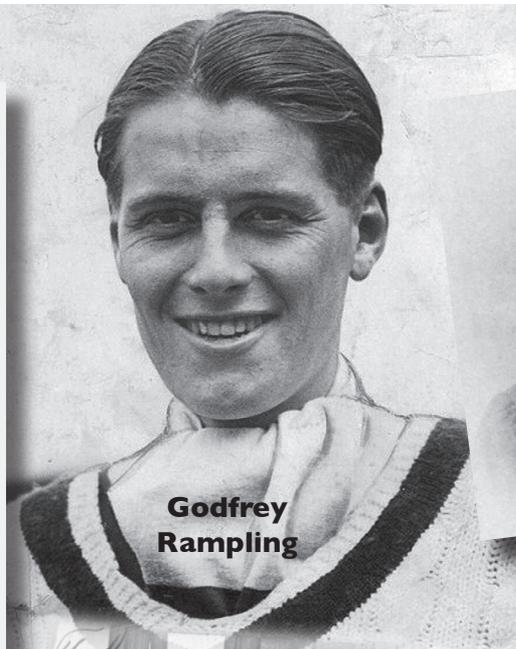
*History of Bushey*. He was also a talented all-round sportsman. At Felstead School he played first team football and cricket and set a record for the Mile that stood until 1924. At Oxford University he won a Blue for football in the 1890 Varsity match. After ordination, he was appointed curate of St John's, Walham Green, Fulham in 1892. He was asked to turn out for Fulham FC, then an amateur club, and ended up spending three successful seasons as their right back. On his arrival in Bushey, Hall hung up his football boots. However he joined Bushey Cricket Club as an opening bat and also represented Hertfordshire. It was said that if Bushey batted first, the Reverend would ask to be excused fielding so that he could officiate at Even-song and the twelfth man would be required to take over. On the other hand, if Bushey batted second after tea, the assistant curate could expect an urgent summons to take the service.

### **Ted Ray (1877-1943)**

Ted Ray hardly conformed to the modern image of a top professional golfer. He was a lumbering figure, over six feet tall, weighing 16 stones and with a walrus moustache. He played in a tight-fitting jacket, collar and tie with a trilby hat and a pipe seemingly permanently clamped between his teeth. Nevertheless, he hit a prodigious length and had a surprisingly delicate touch on the greens. In 1912 he won the Open Championship at Murrayfield, with a first prize of £50, and in 1920 he became the oldest winner of the US Open at the age of 43. (His record was surpassed by Raymond Floyd in 1986). Ray also captained the Great Britain team at the first Ryder Cup competition in 1927. During all this time, Ray was head professional at Oxhey Golf Club, part of which survives as the present nine-hole Oxhey Park Golf Club. Ray was not a great teacher, but his friendly manner made him a popular figure in Oxhey, where he lived for many years.



**Frank Chester**



**Godfrey  
Rampling**



**Reverend Gilbert  
Montague Hall**



**Pat Floyd**



**Ted Ray**



**Tony Wilding**

**Tony Wilding (1883-1915)**

Tall, handsome and debonair, Tony Wilding moved comfortably among the pre-First World War international 'smart set'. Having left his native New Zealand to study law at Cambridge, he preferred to tour Europe on his motor bike, winning tennis titles on the way. In 1910 he won the Wimbledon men's singles title for the first time. Among the crowd that day was Maxine Elliott, a twice-married American actress and society beauty. She invited Wilding to a weekend house party at Hartsbourne Manor, her estate in Bushey Heath. Wilding became a frequent visitor, and rumours began to circulate about their relationship, despite the 15 year age gap. There were reports of an engagement, and even a secret wedding in Nice. Meanwhile, Wilding retained his

Wimbledon title for the next three years. He also won an Olympic bronze medal in 1912, and helped Australasia to victory in the Davis Cup on four occasions. When the First World War started, Wilding enlisted immediately. He was killed in Northern France in 1915, one of the highest-profile sporting casualties of the conflict. Maxine sold Hartsbourne in 1923 and retired to Cannes. She never remarried.

### Editor's addenda

Clearly the Chesters were a sporting family. Frank's brother Arthur had a happier time during the war. Early on he wrote home to say that he had been doing remarkably well with the bat in Malta having an average of 99.33 for his last three completed innings. He had also been getting plenty of golf. He was still playing cricket in 1917 when he had a batting average of 80.5 with a top score of 155. Both brothers were keen billiard players at Bushey Conservative Club, where Arthur had been champion before the war. Frank played using a specially constructed arm rest which is now in the museum at Lords.

When browsing through the Wisden's obituaries of cricketers killed during the First World War, I came across a familiar name, that of Lt Edward Hedley Cuthbertson (Royal Warwickshire Regiment) who died of heatstroke in Iraq, 24 July 1917. He played for Clare College XI, and for Cambridge University. He made 151 playing for Hertfordshire against the MCC Club and Ground at Lords in 1910. He did not get a Blue for cricket but won one for association football.

Also mentioned in the entry was his brother Geoffrey Bourke Cuthbertson, who played firstly for Middlesex and then he captained Northamptonshire, for whom he played in 43 matches without ever being on the winning side – not really a record to be proud of! He was elected to the MCC in 1919 and when he died in 1993 at the age of 93 he was the joint senior member of the MCC.

# Reveley's 'Secret' Journals

What takes your eye when you visit Reveley Lodge [what do you mean 'Where is it?' Shame on you!]

## Barry Hyman

Do you love the garden; the vegetable plots; the beehives? Or do you head for the house, that wonderful time capsule of a bygone age, full of captivating paintings, sumptuous dining furniture, and a drawing room that would do service in Downton Abbey?

Me? I pick up the written memorabilia. The old books. The envelope from the Chewett family in Canada c. 1930. And my latest find. Sitting on a corner table, two irresistible magazines – *The Ladies' Home Journal*. American A5 sized magazines, dated respectively February 1919 and January 1925. Well, what you need is a roaring fire by which to curl up and take a dream trip back in time.

The covers alone defy you to pass by without a peek inside and when you do, what a little treasure house you find. The 1919 edition clearly reflects the fact that the First World War is only recently over, with Old Abe on the cover resolving 'that these dead shall not have died in vain...' (Hmm, plus ca change). The very first article, 'Making our men fit again,' has pictures of amputees learning skills from secretarial to industrial. 'Why shouldn't prices go down, now the War is over?' asks another. Patronising by today's standards, one is headed 'The War Bride's New Work. He will be proud of her if she can make a good loaf.'

There are stories, music, economy recipes, but best of all are the ads. White Naptha Soap which will 'lighten your housework immensely.' (As it's also used in bitumen mining and lighter fluid I daresay it got you really clean!) Gossard Corsets. Heinz Tomato Ketchup ('free from Benzoate of Soda.') Lux flakes. And, unfamiliar to British readers, Aunt Jemima's Pancake Flour; Smirnoff's Russian shampoo; Pillsbury's Health Bran. And so on.

Most fascinating of all perhaps is the ad on the back cover headed with the line 'How our 23 allies say – "Good health with Colgate's ribbon dental cream.' It contains the flags of the 23 allied nations – anyone want to guess which? – with a 'good teeth' message in each of their languages. A small addendum reads 'During the preparation of this ad, the Czecho-Slovak nation has been recognised by our Government and the flag of Siam has been changed.'

By 1925 the mood has changed and there's a chubby baby on the cover. There's story after story and feature after feature on appearance, clothes, cooking and beauty, e.g 'These Biarritz clothes forecast for South and Summer'. There are short stories 'Cleopatra was a Blonde.' Features: 'Brigham Young'; 'Titan.'

Best of all again are the ads. You'd recognise the products, but the manufacturers? 'Pebeco Toothpaste'; 'Spencer Corsets'; 'Vanta baby garments, teething bands and abdominal binders.' 'Alaska cork-insulated fridges.' You'll know 'Del



With beautiful full colour illustrations, these reminders of the past are a delight, apart perhaps from the Jokes page. Most of them are fairly witty if a bit stiff by today's standards of throwaway punchline, but two illustrate

how racial and religious stereotypes were then quite acceptable. One is about little Jewish Ike and another about little 'darker' Moses. Both are told in crass and probably inaccurate dialect and jar on the modern mind, more sensitive – one hopes – to minorities.

That apart, the *Ladies' Home Journal* is a joy to read for both Ladies and Gentlemen. Do pick them up and look next time the drawing room is open.

Monte,' 'Palmolive,' and 'Yardley's,' but how about 'Fels-Naptha, the golden bar with the clean naptha odor.' (Naptha still going strong and no I haven't misspelt 'odour'.

## Moina Belle Michael - the Poppy Lady

Janet Murphy

Barry Hyman found items of interest in the copies of the *Ladies' Home Journal* at Reveley Lodge, but I wonder if he was aware that an item in the *Ladies' Home Journal* of November 1918 inspired an American lady, Moina Michael, to campaign for the poppy as a symbol of remembrance.

Moina was on duty at Hamilton Hall, Columbia University, New York where a conference of the Overseas Y.M.C.A. War Secretaries was being held. A soldier left a copy of

the *Ladies' Home Journal* on her desk. When she had chance, she looked through it and her attention was caught by the coloured illustration, accompanying the poem *We shall not sleep*, also known as *In Flanders Fields*, by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae.

She was particularly moved by the final verse: *'To you from failing hands we throw the torch; be yours to hold it high. If ye break faith with us who die we shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders Fields'*.

She vowed to wear a red poppy like those from Flanders Fields as a sign of keeping faith with those

who had died.

Three of the delegates to the conference came to her desk to present her with a cheque for 10 dollars as a sign of appreciation of the flower arrangements she had provided for the conference. She spent the money on 25 silk poppies, which she then handed out to delegates at the conference, the first time that they were used as symbol of remembrance.

Some of you may have visited the Tower of London to see the *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* installation, by Paul



Cummins. The inspiration for this came when Paul sought shelter from the rain in his local library. This also happens to be my local library, but I have not been similarly inspired!

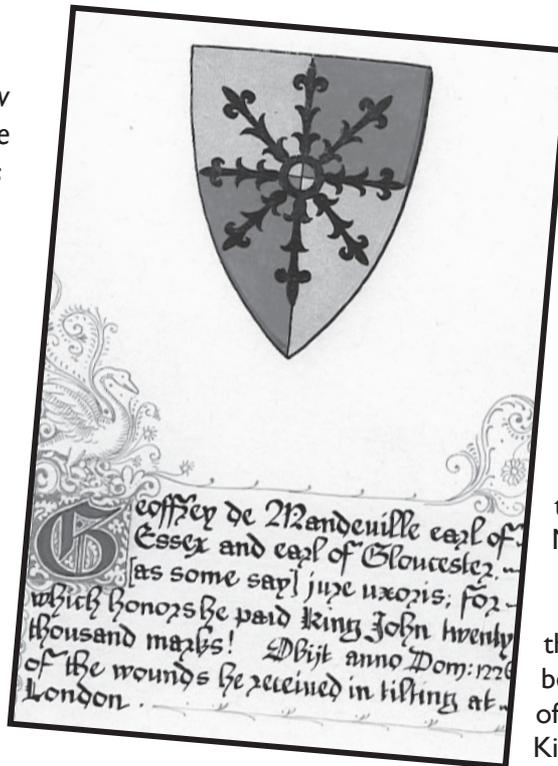
For further information see <http://www.greatwar.co.uk/people/moina-belle-michael.htm>

# What is the connection between Bushey, Chesterfield and Scarborough?

*Some of you will be aware that I now live in Chesterfield, but that is not the connection which is related to events which happened centuries ago.*

Janet Murphy

**T**he Manor of Bushey was granted by William I to Geoffrey de Mandeville. A powerful man, he held 18 more pieces of land in Hertfordshire and property in a further 10 counties. In the Domesday Survey Geoffrey de Mandeville is recorded as holding land rated at one hide in the Manor of Cashio, which was the hamlet of Leavesden. These holdings gave him complete control of the ford at Bushey Mill an important crossing point on the river for the road between Harrow and St Albans. On his death Geoffrey de Mandeville was succeeded by his son, and then his grandson another Geoffrey, who was deeply involved in the war for the throne after the death of Henry I, between Henry's daughter, the Empress Matilda, and his nephew Stephen. At first Geoffrey sided with Matilda, who in 1141 granted him a Charter confirming his right to hold the Manor, granting him the right to hold a market there on Thursdays, and a fair each year to begin on the Vigil of St James, lasting for three days. By Christmas he had changed sides and was supporting Stephen who granted him another Charter confirming his possessions and adding more. A few months later he changed sides again and was supporting the Empress Matilda, who in turn granted him another charter with even more lands. He was arrested by an angry King Stephen at St Albans. He escaped and fled to the marshy land



around Ely where he and his followers ran amok, pillaging and burning towns, churches and monasteries and confiscating their treasures. He was killed in 1143. Although he was the most notorious of the lords of the manor of Bushey, the descent of the manor was a catalogue of disputes over ownership; charges of treason, confiscations, executions and deaths in battle.

After the manor had been confiscated from Geoffrey de Mandeville, it was probably granted to Geoffrey de Jarpenville. The manor remained in the hands of the family until Sir David de Jarpenville died about 1300, leaving a young daughter Joan. His brother Thomas claimed that the manor was his and gave it to Hugh le Despenser, a favourite of Edward II. Joan was not the only woman to be deprived of her inheritance as the Despensers, father and son, persecuted rich widows and heiresses with invented criminal charges until they gave up their estates. Upon the execution

of both Despensers in 1326, the manor reverted to the crown and Edward II who gave it to his brother Edmund of Woodstock, first earl of Kent (fifth creation). Edward II was forced to abdicate in favour of his son Edward III. Edmund of Woodstock was executed, accused of plotting to restore Edward II to the throne; however his widow Margaret retained his lands.

By comparison the descent of the manor of Chesterfield had been more ordered. The manor of Chesterfield was granted by King John to William Brewer in 1204. It descended through the Brewer and Wake families until the death of Thomas Wake during the Black Death in 1349, when it passed to his sister Margaret, who was the widow of Edmund of Woodstock. Thus, from 1349, Bushey and Chesterfield had the same manorial lords.

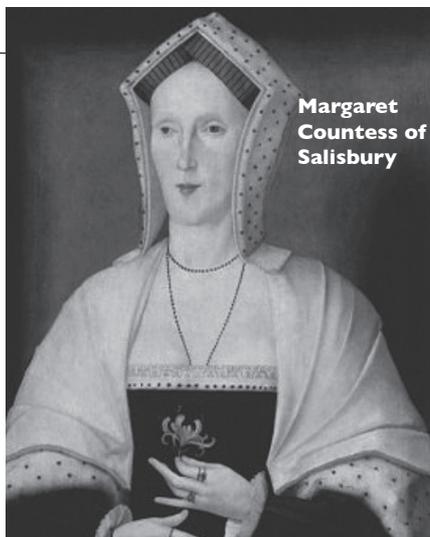


Margaret's first son died young and, when her second died childless in 1352, he was succeeded by his sister Joan. She was married to Sir Thomas Holand, who was created first earl of Kent (sixth creation) when she was just 12-years-old. While Sir Thomas was abroad fighting for the king, she underwent a form of marriage with William

Montagu, first earl of Salisbury (second creation). On his return Thomas successfully petitioned the Pope for the restoration of his wife. After the death of Sir Thomas in 1360, Joan married Edward, the Black Prince, and she was the mother of Richard II.

After Joan's death the manors passed to her son Thomas, and, in turn, his son Thomas, who was beheaded. Some of his estates passed to his brother Edmund but Bushey and Chesterfield were retained by Thomas's widow Alice and on her death they passed to Eleanor, sister of Thomas and Edmund, who married Thomas, earl of Salisbury. He started work on the magnificent Bushey Hall in 1428, but died the same year. After the death of Eleanor, the manors passed to her daughter Alice, who married Richard Nevill, who thus became fifth earl of Salisbury. He was beheaded in 1460, and succeeded by his son Richard, earl of Warwick, who played an important part in the Wars of the Roses and was known as the Kingmaker. Like Geoffrey de Mandeville, he changed sides. He was killed at the Battle of Barnet in 1471.

His eldest daughter Isabel married George Duke of Clarence. The manors of Bushey and Chesterfield were presumably settled on his younger daughter Anne, wife of the Duke of Gloucester (later Richard III), because in 1475 the manors of Bushey and Chesterfield (just these two) and the hundred of Scarsdale (in which Chesterfield lies) were exchanged by Anne and King Edward IV for Scarborough and some other Yorkshire properties. Whilst it was clearly advantageous for Anne to gain Scarborough with its castle and Edward would have gained a property near London there seems to be no obvious reason why Chesterfield should be part of the deal unless he was aware of the lead mines in the High Peak of Derbyshire.



In 1484 the manor of Bushey was granted to Francis Lord Lovel, who joined the long list of the lords of the manor accused of treason and then the manor was granted to the Earl of Oxford. He died without heirs and the property was granted to Sir Thomas Boleyn, father of Anne Boleyn although it is doubtful if he ever obtained possession of the manor as in the same year, 1513, by an Act of Parliament, Margaret, granddaughter of Richard earl of Warwick, was made countess of Salisbury, and the Salisbury family lands were restored to her, including the manors of Bushey and Chesterfield. She was made governess to Henry VIII's daughter Mary, but later became a victim of the conflict between Henry VIII and the Catholic Church and was executed in 1541.

The original manor house of Bushey would have been built on the demesne land of the manor – property which was for the lord of the manor's own use. This was where Bushey Hall Farm now is. In 1543, the demesne lands, fisheries, mill and coney (rabbit) warren were granted to William Milward alias Alexander. At the same time the Manor of Bushey and its income were leased to him for 21 years. However in 1554 Queen Mary granted the manor to Lady Winifred and Lady Catherine, daughters of the eldest son of Margaret countess of Salisbury, and the Manor and the Bushey Hall estate were separated. In 1573 the Manor was sold by to

Robert Blackwell and it remained in the family's hands until Richard Blackwell died without issue in 1677 when it passed to his cousins Susan Parkyns and Anne Pitt; the latter selling her portion to Susan's husband Sir William Parkyns who was executed for treason in 1696 – the last of the long line of the lords of the manor who met a violent death. In 1719 the manor was conveyed to Richard Capper, whose family held it until it was sold in 1814 to General Frederick Nathaniel Walker.



As the manor of Bushey was comparatively small, it might be expected that these important characters in history would have spent little time in Bushey. However the main road between London and the important Norman Castle at Berkhamsted passed through Bushey. It probably became even busier when Queen Eleanor of Castile built a castle at Langley in 1276 which was a popular home for the Royal Family until the time of Henry II. A century later, Richard II wrote a letter from his mother's home in Bushey to a friend in Rome; at the same time the manor of Bournehall belonged to Alice Perrers, mistress of Edward III. Margaret countess of Shrewsbury held her first manorial court in Bushey in 1514. The proximity to London and the battles at nearby St Albans and Barnet meant that Bushey was at least on the fringe of the national events during these turbulent times.

The same cannot be said of Chesterfield, which was rarely if ever visited by the lords of the manor; but that was all about to change. Margaret exchanged Chesterfield

and Scarsdale for four manors in Hampshire with George Talbot, fourth earl of Shrewsbury, in 1531 and after almost two hundred years Bushey and Chesterfield once more had different lords of the manor. This exchange did at least make sense as George Talbot was consolidating his holdings around Sheffield and Margaret was consolidating her holdings in the south of the country. It was George Talbot, the sixth earl, who had the greatest impact on local affairs. The Manor came to him in 1560; two years later his agent surveyed the Manor, and, in 1567 at a stormy meeting in Sheffield, his principle seat, he called the burgesses of Chesterfield 'arrant knaves'. A year later his advisers produced a document which resulted in him tightening his control of the Manor and denied his tenants their right to self government. Acrimonious disputes followed until his death in 1590.

George Talbot, sixth earl of Shrewsbury, is better remembered as the fourth husband of Bess of Hardwick and the custodian of Mary Queen of Scots. Now it was Chesterfield that was on the fringe of national events. Mary was housed for some time at Chatsworth, eight miles from Chesterfield. The marriage between Bess and George Talbot broke down, partly because of the strains caused by the custody of Mary. The Manor of Chesterfield passed via the Talbot side of the family to the Dukes of Newcastle and then the Dukes of Portland, whose principal seat was Welbeck in Nottinghamshire. In 1792 an exchange of land between the Dukes of Devonshire and Portland resulted in the Duke of Devonshire becoming the Lord of the Manor of Chesterfield.

Although I said at the beginning that the connection between Bushey and Chesterfield was not that I have lived in both places, if I had not done so this somewhat esoteric connection would never have come to light.

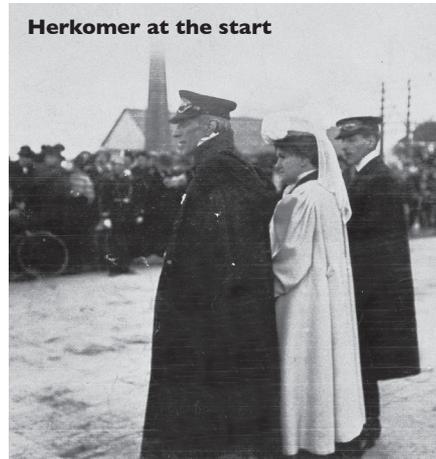
# HERKOMER- Founder

## Philip Morgan

Rector of Bushey. 1981-1994

*Philip writes in response to the article Herkomer Man of many parts in the last issue of the Journal.*

**H**erkomer had so many gifts and skills that it is always interesting to read summaries of his life, and Hugh Lewis's article in the *Journal* is no exception. I would like to amplify Hugh's reference to Herkomer's interest in cars and motoring. First to ask, can we establish what make of car Herkomer brought to Bushey to rumble along High Street? Secondly, to make a distinction between motor racing and motor rallying.



Herkomer at the start

Pictures Bushey Museum Archive

Motor racing consists of a group of cars competing with each other to get from A to B in the fastest time. The earliest race I can discover took place in France in 1899 between Paris and Bordeaux – on open roads. In England, racing on open roads was never legal, though that ban did not apply to Ireland or the Isle of Man. The TT races for motor bikes is a descendant of that exception. The first international race was sponsored by a wealthy American newspaper owner, Gordon Bennett,



The Konkurrenz Plaque 1906

in 1900; it was between Paris and Lyon. These races continued for five years, and Herkomer went to Ireland to see the 1903 race.

After the Gordon Bennett races, the system of Grands Prix took over, in France first, hence the name, but quickly spreading through Europe, and even from Paris to Peking (as it then was.) Now of course, it is an internationally recognised sport of major importance.

Herkomer was struck by the exceptional nature of the racing car, built specially and only for racing – a single purpose vehicle. Realising the impact that motoring would inevitably have on society, he developed the idea of holding events in which ordinary production cars would take part, on open roads, with competitions within the competition, such as completing a slalom course (on level ground), or reversing into a number of narrow spaces. The winner would have to complete the course, which might be from A to B or from A to B to A, within a given time; cars would start one after another. Being a standard car, it would not go as fast as a racing car, but a combination of reliability and speed would produce the best performance; there would be a winner. It was this kind of event that produced the first Herkomer Konkurrenz from Landsberg-am-Lech, of course, in 1905, sponsored

# of Car Rallying in Germany

Line of Edwardian cars outside the Mutterturn in Landsberg



by the Bavarian Automobile Club. This came to be known as rallying, and I have seen in Waal, Herkomer's birthplace, a 'blue plaque' announcing him to be the 'Founder of German Motor Rallying'. Rallying sparked a whole new version of motor sport, also a source for improving technology and of publicity for motor manufacturers. The Konkurrenz still takes place. Kate and I saw the start in 2001 – a very remarkable gathering of vehicles made before 1914.

I have a particular interest in the distinction between racing and rallying, because I was lucky enough to take part in the Monte Carlo Rally in the early 1960's. A friend at college was a good enough driver to be in the British Motor Corporation rally team, and sold the idea to the team manager of two curates doing the Monte: it might help publicity. These were years when there were



two types of entrant. One was along the traditional lines of taking part for fun with a holiday in Monte Carlo; others were in it to get a win or a place in a class – or even better. In a works team, you'll know which category we were in. We were driving a hand-built standard Mini. Behind us at the start at Glasgow was a hefty Standard Ensign with a full crew. We didn't see them again. We spent the best part of two days driving a circuitous route through France; if we arrived at a control

late or early, we would lose points. From Chambéry we were on a common route with those who had started from other major European cities through the Alps. This lasted about

24 hours with a number of special stages, driving those as fast as we could over closed roads. Fatigue and weather made it difficult not to arrive late at controls. We did lose time, but got to Monte Carlo about 70th out of 300 finishers – and a third place in our small class. A boyhood ambition fulfilled. Might there be another Herkomer around now to introduce again a rally of importance using cars we could buy in the showroom? I'm afraid the whole scene is far too macho to think of it.

# 'A little piece

January 1915, joining the battalion at the front at Beuvry, France on 31 January 1915.

At some point during 1915, Private Edgar Charles Fulks was shot; caught up in machine gun fire at night when taking ammunition supplies up to the front-line trench. Whilst kneeling on some duck-boards at a trench cross roads (each side would train their machine-guns on those crossing points and fire off random shots at night), Edgar was hit and it was like a brick hitting him. He dropped in the mud. He soon realised that he could feel his hands and feet but couldn't get up. The German bullet had lodged in his diaphragm, and he was taken to army field hospital but the doctors would not operate to remove the bullet as the act of cutting into his diaphragm would have killed him. That bullet remained lodged in Edgar's diaphragm for the rest of his life, only noticeable to him when he laughed.

Edgar returned to England, recovered, and was transferred to the 5th Bedfordshire Regiment. He was promoted to Acting Sergeant, specialising as a gunnery instructor, and remained in the army till he was discharged at St Leonards, Hastings on the 6 March 1919.

It is not known whether Edgar Fulks visited Talbot House whilst on active service, but he certainly would have known about Toc H, as the knowledge of this renowned haven from hell had permeated throughout the British Army to troops stationed at home and abroad during the First World War. Stories would come back to Blighty, of the special feeling of fellowship, camaraderie and Christian brotherhood that emanated from within the walls of Talbot House.



Edgar Charles Fulks

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## Katharine Whitaker

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**T**he Bushey & Oxhey Men's Branch of Toc H was founded in the mid-1930s. One of its key founding members was Edgar Charles Fulks, builder and decorator, of 25 and later 27 & 29 Koh-i-Noor Avenue, Bushey. So what was Toc H? And what has Toc H to do with Belgium and Bushey?

Toc H as an organisation was born out of a need to give soldiers a respite from hell during the First World War. The name Toc H is an abbreviation of Talbot House and the soldier's nickname; 'Toc' signifying the letter T in the signals spelling alphabet used by the British Army in the First World War.

Talbot House, formerly a hop merchant's house, is located in the heart of Poperinge, a bustling town near Ypres, Belgium. 'Pops' as the soldiers called it was a busy transfer station where troops on their way to and from the battlefields of Flanders were billeted.

It is here that Army Chaplains, Philip (Tubby) Clayton and Neville Talbot, opened an 'Every-man's' club on the 11 December 1915. It was an alternative place of wholesome recreation where soldiers, regardless of their rank, were welcome.

Edgar Charles Fulks (1895-1976) volunteered to serve in the First World War and he enlisted on the 7 September 1914, completed his training and was then drafted into the 1st/1st Battalion of the Hertfordshire Regiment on the 23

# of Belgium in Bushey'



After the war, Reverend 'Tubby' Clayton wanted to recapture the War's spirit of comradeship in common service and to pass it onto the younger generation for the greater task of peace. He started again on a modest scale in 1919-1920, and, with a group of men who had passed through Talbot House during the war, set up the movement called Toc H. The main aims of Toc H were to work for a better world through the example of friendship, service, fair-mindedness and the Kingdom of God. It was known as the Four Points of the Compass.

In 1922 Toc H was granted a Royal Charter and in 1929, thanks to the generosity of Lord Wakefield, the original Talbot House in Poperinge was bought for the movement. Many of the furnishings, posters, pictures and memorabilia were returned to Talbot House and, in 1932, it was opened to visitors. Every year after 1932 many former soldiers and their families returned on pilgrimage and in November 1934 Edgar Fulks made the same journey (see postcard).

This journey must have been a seminal moment for Edgar Fulks, as soon afterwards he gathered a number of Bushey & Oxhey men, including his army compatriot

and life-long friend Frank Jefferys, around him to form a small tentative Group. This Group, in course of time and after a real test of stability, unity and work, became a Branch, which was granted a Lamp of Maintenance as a symbol of its trust and responsibility, to be lit with a simple ceremony at all meetings. Each lamp was dedicated to the memory of one of the Elder Brethren – those who, whether in peace or war, passed over in the doing of unsparing service for their fellows. The Bushey & Oxhey Lamp was dedicated at the Coming-of-Age Festival of Toc H in June 1936 in memory of Lieutenant Frank Harry Bethell, who was killed on 25 September 1915, aged 19, and donated by his father Lord Bethell of Romford, who lived at Bushey House in the High Street.

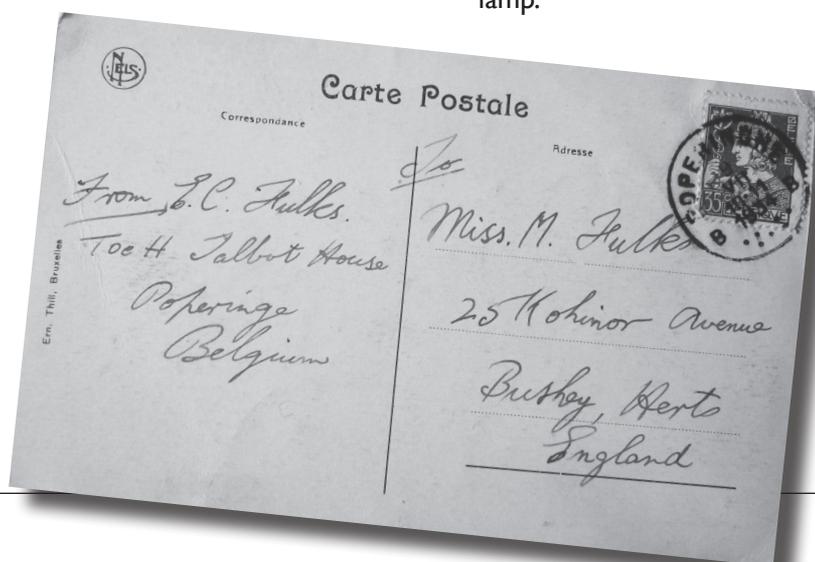
The Bushey & Oxhey Men's Branch of Toc H met weekly in the appropriately named Power House, the former electricity generating room which powered Bushey House before mains electricity was connected. Entrance to the Power House was via a large wooden gate, situated near to the present Bushey Dental Surgery in the High Street. A large notice board, fixed to the post of the gate hung out to advertise the branch, adorned with its logo, the Toc H lamp.

Membership was open to men of 16 years and upwards and, like Talbot House, was open to men from all ranks of society. Each prospective member had to be sponsored by two members of the branch before election. An initiation ceremony was held where the member up for election accepted the Objects of Toc H and pledged himself to Fellowship with other men and to the service of those less fortunate than himself.

The corporate life of the branch's weekly meetings was an important aspect of the Fellowship. A yearly programme would be drawn up, speakers booked, and activities decided, but integral to each meeting were the discussions and debates generated about issues of the day.

Meetings always began with a prayer, followed with the Ceremony of Light. All present would stand and all lights put out. One member appointed gives the word: 'Light' and the Lamp of Maintenance is lit. The leader of the group would begin with the words: '*With proud thanksgiving let us remember our elder brethren, especially ...*' after which he would recite Lawrence Binyon's poem *For the Fallen*. A prayer would close the meeting.

Every member was expected to do voluntary service in the community, following the three main Toc H themes: Individual help, Leadership and comradeship, and Corporate jobs. Edgar Fulks fulfilled these by offering friendship, hospitality and respite in his home to very poor, elderly, former hop pickers from the East End of London after the Second World War. He ran the Youth Fellowship group at the Congregational Church in Bushey, where he was affectionately called



Pop Fulks. He, together with other branch members, looked after gardens for elderly residents in Bushey. After the Second World War, he organised yearly rambling holidays, staying at Youth Hostels, for up to twenty friends from Bushey.

Edgar often went to the yearly Toc H Festival of Lights evening at the Royal Albert Hall, and frequently went on pilgrimage to Talbot House. His wife, Gladys, and his two daughters, Margaret and Sheila, were members of the Watford women's branch. Sheila recalls the very moving pilgrimage that she and her husband made with her parents in 1953 to Talbot House, receiving Holy Communion in the little chapel in the Hop Loft.

Edgar Fulks was the branch's

honorary secretary in 1936 and after Bushey House was sold in 1949, meetings took place in his carpenter's workshop at 29 Koh-i-Noor Avenue. Other honorary secretaries were Henry Southall 1938-49 and treasurer in 1952 to 1954. Edward Henry Abrams 1952-54 and in 1956 Frederick Keen. The branch closed in 1964.

Edgar Charles Fulks, a modest but friendly man, whose way of life was underpinned by the principles of Toc H, brought a little piece of Belgium to Bushey for every man who wanted to participate in the traditions of fellowship and service. In researching this article and interviewing three surviving members of his family, I have a strong feeling that Edward Fulks was a contented, thoughtful and considerate man who did his utmost to help those

less fortunate than himself and to serve his local community without looking for any recognition or reward.

December 2015 is the 100th anniversary of the founding of Talbot House, and in 2020 it will be the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Toc H movement.

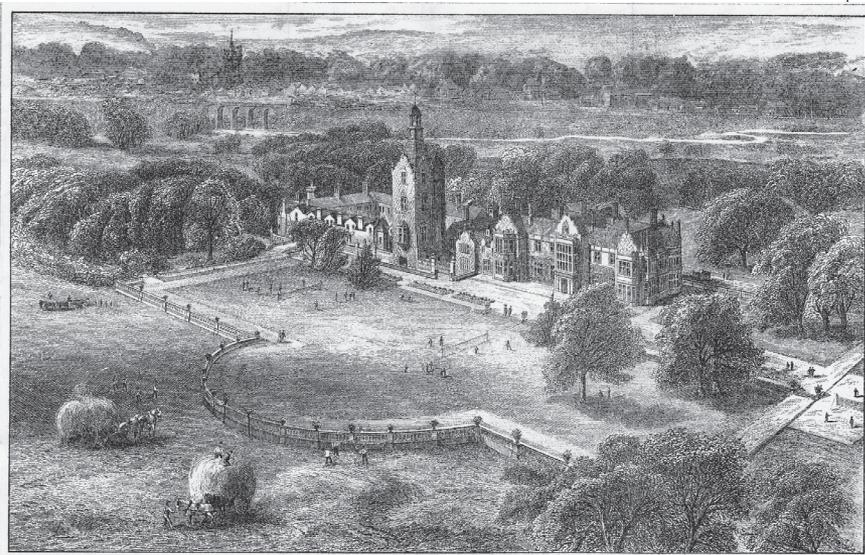
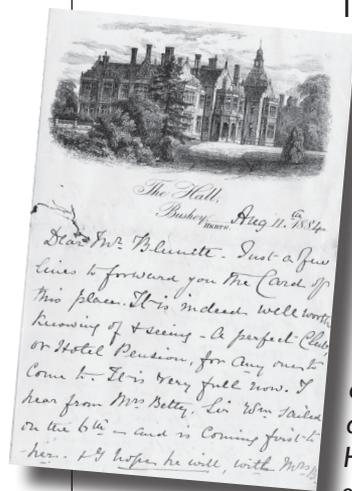
If you have any information or memories about the branch, please contact me on 020 8950 6786.

**Acknowledgements and sources:**

1. Katharine Whitaker wishes to thank Edgar Fulks's two daughters, Margaret Blaza (91) and Sheila Fisher (88) and grandson Paul Fisher for their knowledge and support in the writing of this article.
2. Toc H archive, Birmingham University library, special collections.
3. National Archives, Kew, London.

# Bushey Hall from the Air

This is a letter card written at The Hall, Bushey on 11 August 1884. The writer begins:  
*Just a few lines to forward you the Card of this place. It is indeed well worth knowing of and seeing – a Perfect Club or Hotel Pension, for Any one to come to. It is very full now.*



This is the garden front of the Hall, and it is a faithful representation as is shown by this postcard of about 1870, even down to the large trees casting a welcome shade. There appear to be two grass tennis courts in front of the Hall together with one hard court at the extreme right.

It is difficult to say how accurate the background is. Certainly the Colne, the Five Arches and the tower of Watford Church are obvious but are they correctly aligned? Did the artist sketch the surroundings when flying over in a balloon?