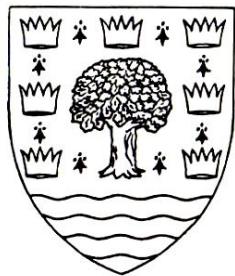


# Ilford Historical Society

## Newsletter No.127 August 2018



Editor: Georgina Green 020 8500 6045, georgina.green@btconnect.com

Our website can be found at: <http://ilfordhistoricalsociety.weebly.com/>

### Society news update

Our main problem for the coming months is that the Chapel will be closed and refurbished so from September to January 2019 we will hold all our regular Monday monthly meetings in the Gloucester Room, Redbridge Central Library, 7 - 9pm. We will serve refreshments at the beginning of the evening and start our talks as usual at 7.30pm. Details of our programme for Autumn 2018 and a pre-season film show about Cameron Corbett are given on the back page.

Our excellent Newsletter, edited by Georgina Green, comes out three times a year, is free to members (visitors £1) and can be sent out by email. It is great to see a variety of articles in this current issue by several of our own members. But costs have risen and we are looking at reducing the printing costs to save money using a different printing firm (we have already printed the 2018-19 programme much more cheaply).



Dr Shabnum Tejani and Dr Eleanor Newbigin from SOAS, University of London, gave a very interesting talk for the Society on 'The Independence and Partition of British India: 1947 and its legacy' to a packed audience at the Central Library on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2018. We have already been asked to repeat the event, and interest in the Society has garnered another donation.

#### Newsletter No.127 ~ CONTENTS

Richard C W Beckford, 1926 - 2018

A Plan of the Hospital Chapel

Spending a penny

Through adversity to the Stars

Captain William Goodleff Scotcher, M.C. R.A.F

When is a shop not a shop?

The Rise and Fall of Ilford Sports Ground

Is Barkingside the equal of Bath?

Without traffic, Ilford would not have existed

Looking back at Ilford . . .

'Some curious birds and other animals, from the East Indies'

Our Programme, Autumn 2018

Overall, Ilford Historical Society had a pretty good year: we have a good bank balance but only around 40-plus members so we made a loss on the year and only a large donation and raising subs gave us some cover. Subscriptions were raised to £15 for members, £25 for married couples and visitors £3 per meeting. But we cannot go on losing money yearly. Two local history societies - Romford and Chingford, went out of business and folded.

We continue to get many requests to support local conservation campaigns and we judge each one on its merits. Successful campaigns have included saving Barkingside's Oakfield playing fields and the cinema on Chadwell Heath High Rd about which Ramanan Muraleetharan wrote in our Newsletter No.125. Ilford is going through great change at the moment as blocks of flats are built sky-high whilst established stores like Bodgers, one of our oldest, founded 1890 by John Bodger, closed in March.

Our committee has been enlarged and strengthened by having three new members: Sinclair Frydland (our resident chef de cuisine, alongside Treasurer Sylvia), Angela Banner along with husband Alan, and researcher Colin Runeckles, whilst John Sharrock remains as Vice Chairman. Great Thanks to Secretary Janet Seward, Martin Fairhurst, Carol Franklin, Laurie Ford, and Vice President and Newsletter editor Georgina.

*Jef Page, President, Ilford Historical Society, June 2018.*

### **Richard Clement Wyatt Beckford - 17th October 1926 - 22nd April 2018**

Richard, our long serving tea maker, was born near Bombay in a place called Doolali from where the term for madness comes from as his mother had travelled out to India to marry a military man she had never met. His younger brother died some years ago leaving a daughter Rebecca and a nephew whilst his wife Kristina sadly predeceased him.

Aged 19 Richard joined Bomber Command Pathfinders during World War II as a navigator and went on missions to Hamburg, Dresden and Berlin. At the end of the war he was involved in food drops to Holland, the repatriation of allied POWs and he was very proud of Bomber Command and his service. After the war he eventually joined the Ministry of Fuel and Power but before then he got a job as a waiter in Lyons Corner House Tottenham Court Road-making and serving tea correctly!

Richard was quiet and self-effacing, a stalwart of Redbridge Music Society and was involved with the both Ilford Hospital Chapel where he was a Chapel Warden and St Mary's Ilford where his funeral took place on 4<sup>th</sup> June. In 2003 he dressed up as Charles Holcombe of Valentines Mansion for a recreation Georgina Green was organising (*see photo*), and he became an expert ballroom dancer - so he told Doreen Weller who read the eulogy at his funeral. He became rather deaf and short-sighted which tended to disguise his sense of humour and because he didn't understand technology all that well, his phone immediately transferred to a fax machine which he could never cancel.

As well as holding a minute's silence for him at our last meeting, the Society also made donations in his name to the MS Society and Battersea Dogs & Cats Home (he had a cat) as per the families wishes.

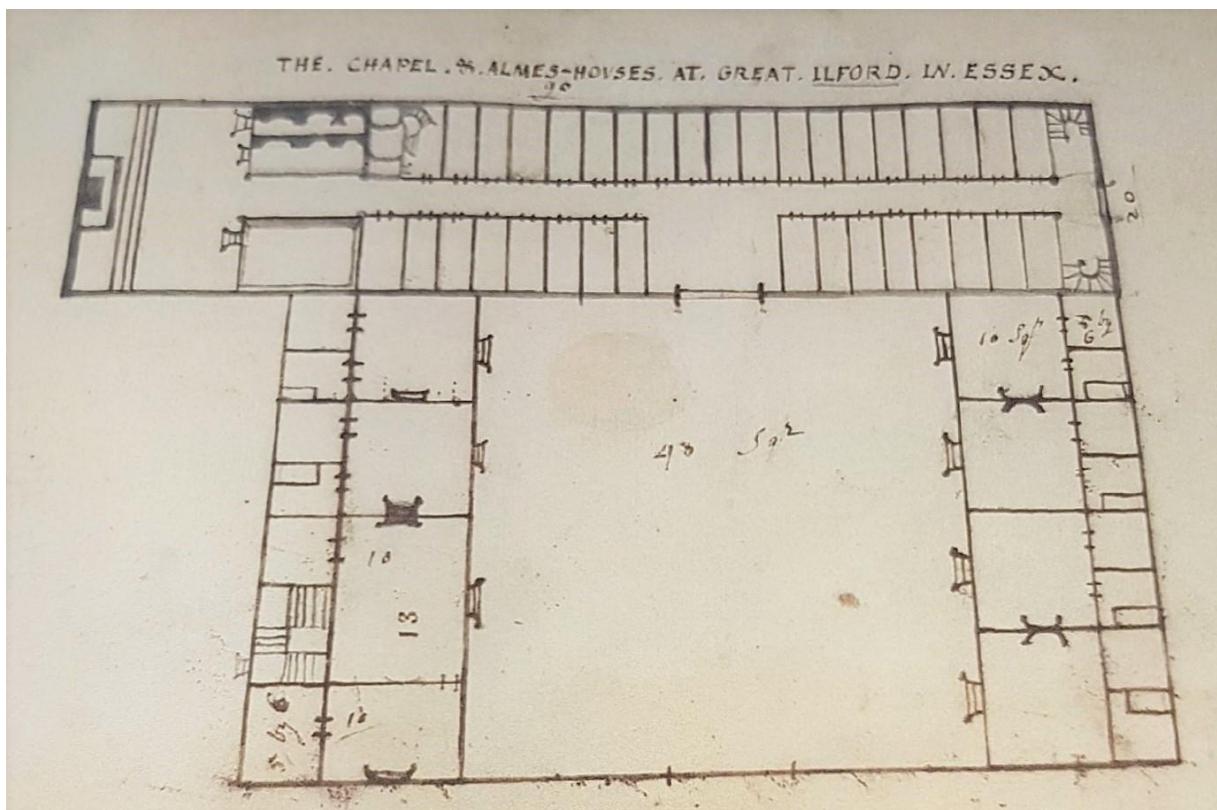
*Jef Page, President, Ilford Historical Society, June 2018.*



## A Plan of the Hospital Chapel

I recently acquired from the British Library a copy of an undated document entitled ‘The Chapel & Almes-houses at Great Ilford in Essex’. The original is bound into a very large (and heavy) volume of pictures, maps, and descriptions of towns and churches in the county of Essex, the former owner being George III (1738 – 1820) and donated to the library by George IV (1762 – 1830). The volume forms part of the King’s Library, which together with other donations became the core of the British Library. \*

The document is listed as “A plan, with admeasurements, of the chapel and almshouses at Great Ilford.” in the Catalogue of Maps, Prints, Drawings, etc., forming ‘the geographical and topographical collection attached to the Library of his late Majesty King George the third, etc., London, 1829’.

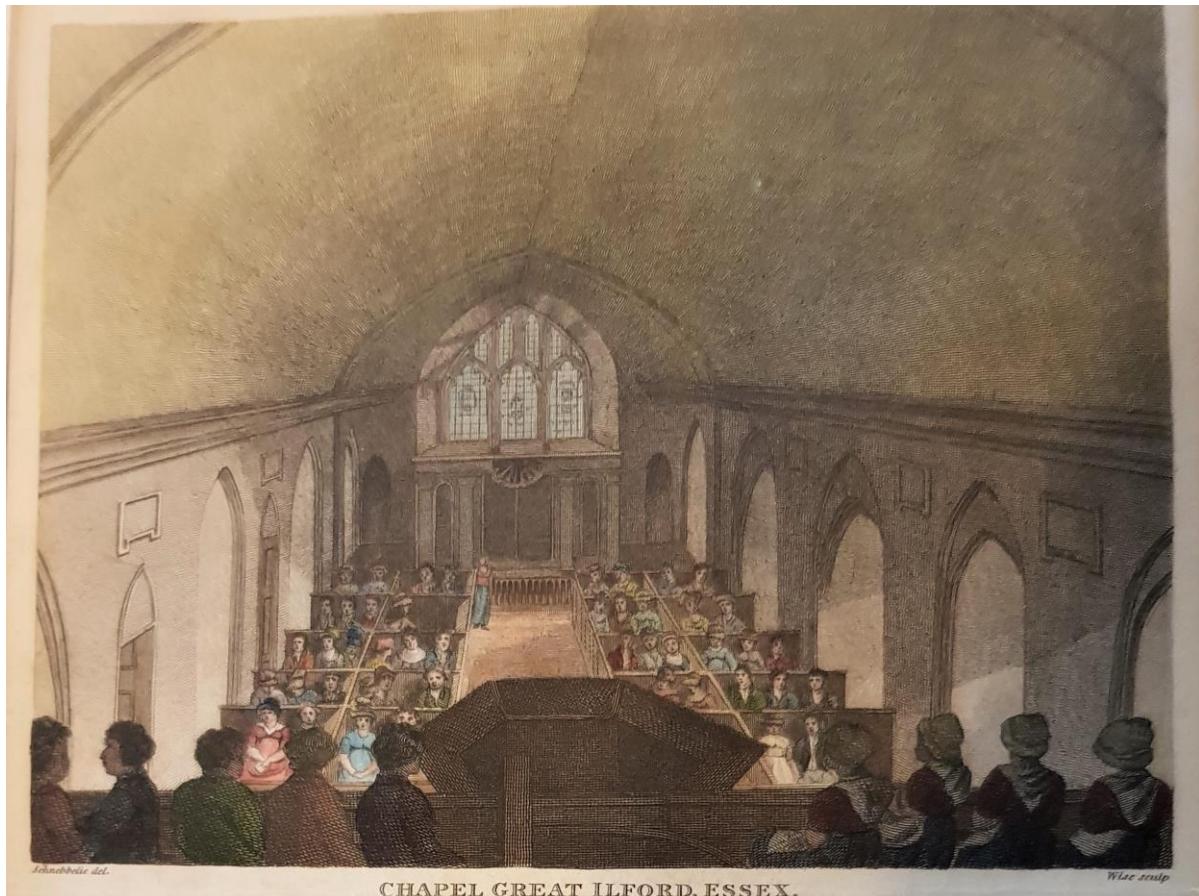


From the East the plan shows the Chapel altar on raised steps, raised choir stalls to the South, a raised platform to the North, a raised pulpit on the South and then box pews, 18 on the South side and two blocks of 8 on the North, separated by the doorway from the courtyard (no porch). At the West end there is a doorway and on each side staircases rising to a gallery.

The gallery is shown in the 1816 picture which hangs on the North wall of the Chapel and is reproduced in Bert Lockwood’s guide to the chapel. Bert says ‘... *the first Bamber Gascoyne ... renovated the Chapel 1781-2 ... His tenant in the Master’s House (then the Green Man Inn!), a builder called Mark Gibbard, also added a small West Gallery. An engraving of 1816 shows the resultant appearance of the interior of the Chapel at the time; the congregation face towards a new pulpit in the gallery – epitomising the 18<sup>th</sup> century emphasis on preaching rather than the sacraments of the altar*’.

On the North of the Chapel the plan shows the courtyard with rooms accommodating the brethren, four to the West and two to the East. Each room is shown as being 10 feet square with a fireplace and a pair of smaller 6 feet square rooms. We can only speculate on whether the rooms were for single occupation or shared. On the Eastern side the northernmost door

from the courtyard appears to enter into a set of 4 rooms, one 13 feet by 10 feet, which might have been a communal area, or occupied by a supervisory person. Through the external East wall there is a doorway leading into what seems to be a staircase, but the second 1816 picture from Bert's guide appears only to show single story buildings, so the purpose of the stairs is unclear, unless there was a storage area in the roof.



The courtyard is shown as 40 feet square, and the Chapel is measured as 90 feet long by 20 feet wide.

© Martin Fairhurst, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018

\* On 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018 the British Library reported . . . 20 years ago Queen Elizabeth II officially opened the doors at our new site in St Pancras and in that time we're delighted to have delivered 14,299,912 collection items to Readers in our Reading Rooms.

**How lucky we are to have this wonderful facility just an hour away on the tube!**

## Spending a penny . . .

On a more trivial note, my grandsons have never understood why I use the expression 'to spend a penny'.

The photo taken in the ladies cloakroom at the Museum and Art Gallery building in Bristol explains this!

**Georgina Green**



## Through adversity to the Stars

This is the motto of the Royal Air Force which came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1918 with the merging of the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service. The centenary was marked with a special parade and flypast. I have a particular interest as my cousin served in the RAF as a Flight Lieutenant and later continued as a civilian instructor training young pilots in a simulator. I have visited him on a number of RAF bases including Scampton, the home of the Dam Busters Squadron and the Red Arrows, the RAF Aerobatic Team.

**Georgina Green, 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

In the April 2017 newsletter (no.123) I gave some statistics from the Redbridge Museum WWI website which features many individuals who gave their lives for their country. They may not all have died as heroes, but each one played their part and was mourned by those at home. The statistics showed that 55 men from Redbridge lost their lives serving in the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Air Force.

See <https://redbridgefirstworldwar.org.uk/the-war-dead>

We have already featured soldiers and sailors in the newsletter, so as the centenary draws to a close I'd like to highlight one more of our local heroes who served in the newly formed RAF.



*Typhoon planes on their way to salute the Queen in the flypast over Buckingham Palace on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018, from my balcony at Hainault.*

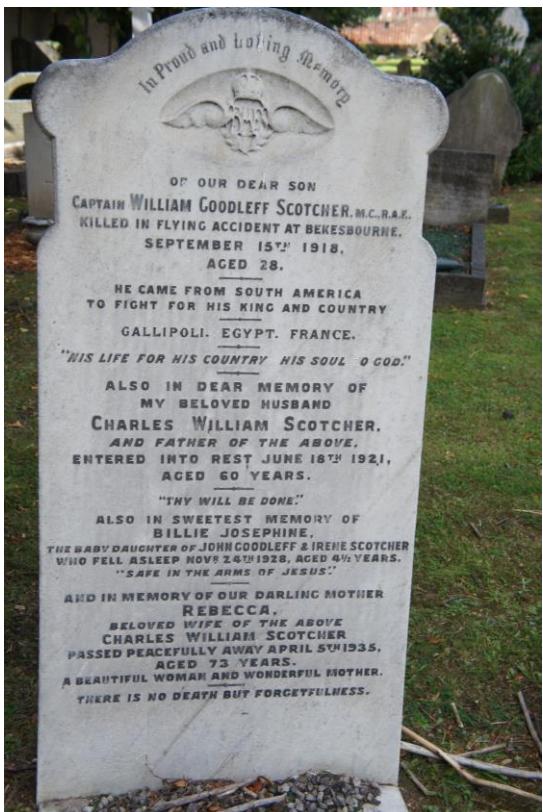
## Captain William Goodleff Scotcher, M.C. R.A.F

In our issue no.122 for December 2016 (p.12) I mentioned a tombstone at Buckingham Road cemetery, photographed by Roger Backhouse, which tells of a remarkable man. My sincere thanks go to Museum Manager Gerard Greene who kindly sent me the entry in the *Ilford War Memorial Gazette* and to IHS Secretary Janet Seward for her help in uncovering his story.

William was born on 17<sup>th</sup> March 1890, the son of Charles and Rebecca Scotcher. At that time his father was a printer and the family lived in Brixton. His middle name, Goodliff, was his mother's maiden name but he seems to have changed this to Goodleff in later life. Two younger brothers were added to the family, the younger born in Ilford in 1895. By the time of the 1901 census they were living at 5 Rutland Road, Ilford, and by 1911 they had moved to 80 Balfour Road. By this time his father was shown as a commercial traveller for a printing firm. William was aged 21, an engineer apprentice for GER Locomotives.

William Goodleff Scotcher (Engineer) was admitted to the Freedom of the City of London on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1913 and in April he travelled to Argentina to take a position as 'Loco' Draughtsman on the Central Argentinian Railway. Apparently, he was one of the youngest Freemen of the City and the youngest Associate of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers.

William was still in South America at the outbreak of war so he returned to Liverpool and in November 1914 he joined up. William Goodleff Scotcher was described as "Red hair, fair complexion, 5ft 9 & 7/8 inches, 127 lbs. Cites previous military experience as Officer Training Corp London Unit 1911."



The memorial at Buckingham Road cemetery, photographed by Roger Backhouse, to Captain William Goodleff Scotcher, M.C. R.A.F. and other members of his family

*The remaining account is largely lifted from the Ilford War Memorial Gazette.*

In October 1914 he arrived at Liverpool on the s.s. 'Arlanza' to fight for his country. He went for a few weeks' training with the Coldstream Guards and then obtained his commission to the East Yorks Regiment, stationed at York. In 1915 he proceeded to Gallipoli and joined the 6th Batt. East Yorks. He was soon mentioned in despatches and was one of the last to leave the Peninsula. From there he was sent to Egypt and was in action in the river Nile district.

Then he transferred to the Somme front in France where he won the Military Cross for conspicuous bravery as described in the *London Gazette* "He commanded his platoon with great skill and determination when his trench was constantly being blown in by shell fire. He exposed himself fully in order to encourage his men. Though partially buried by a shell, he carried on his work as soon as extricated." His Colonel sent him home for a few days' leave to be decorated by His Majesty the King at Buckingham Palace.

Soon after going back to France he became an Observer in the R.A.F. (20<sup>th</sup> Oct 1916), during which time he had some very thrilling and narrow escapes from the enemy and brought down some enemy aeroplanes. Eventually he contracted dysentery and was sent to Endsleigh Palace Hospital. After recovering, he graduated as a pilot on 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec 1917.

He was a pilot at an aerodrome in Kent and was only a short distance from his Commanding Officer who brought down an enemy Gotha on Whit-Sunday evening. From there he was sent to Bekesbourne Aerodrome near Canterbury as a Flight Commander, where he met his fatal accident through engine trouble on Sunday Night, 15<sup>th</sup> September 1918 at about 10.30pm. The Coroner remarked, at the inquest, upon the hazardous nature of the flying profession, and said "we could only be thankful that there was no lack of young men prepared to offer themselves for this hazardous but particularly necessary branch of our Imperial Forces, and expressed to

Mr.Scotcher, his father, who was present, his and the jury's deep regret at the loss which had befallen him. This was one of the losses which was not confined to the parents. It was a matter of regret for the nation that they should have lost so gallant and capable an Officer as Captain Scotcher."

© Georgina Green, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018

## When is a Shop not a Shop?

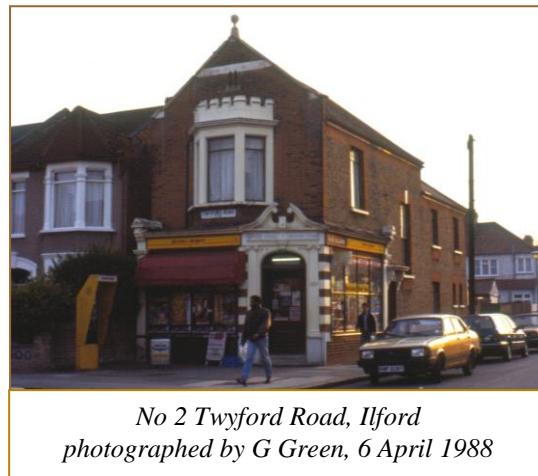
In IHS Newsletter no.119, December 2015, Georgina Green wrote about the shop at 2 Twyford Road, dating from 1905, in her series about listed buildings. As I have a now fairly battered copy of *Kelly's Directory* for 1933 I looked up the address to see who the shopkeeper was at the time. There was no entry which usually means that it was unoccupied at the time, so I turned to a downloaded copy of the same series for 1926. This time I had some success but the entry only had Curran, James Frederick and nothing about what kind of shop he ran. I thought maybe this was a mistake so decided to check the various editions of *Kelly's* when I was next in the Research Centre. And this is what I came up with:

1908-1927	James Frederick Curran
1929	Unoccupied
1931	Wm. Foster
1933-1935	Unoccupied
1937	E. Gardiner, Shopkeeper
1939	John Crotty, Shopkeeper

I was now very intrigued since it was clear that at certain times it was defined as a shop but for the majority of its early existence it does not appear to have been one. So, to find out what James Frederick Curran actually did I turned to the Census of 1911. And this is what I found.

Children still Living.	Deceased Children	made or Materially occupied or dealt in should be clearly indicated.	No entry needed. Domestic Ser- vants in private employment.
8.	9.	10.	11.
James Frederick Curran		(See Instructions 1 to 8 and Examples on back of Schedule.)	(See Instruction 9 and Exam- ples on back of Schedule.)

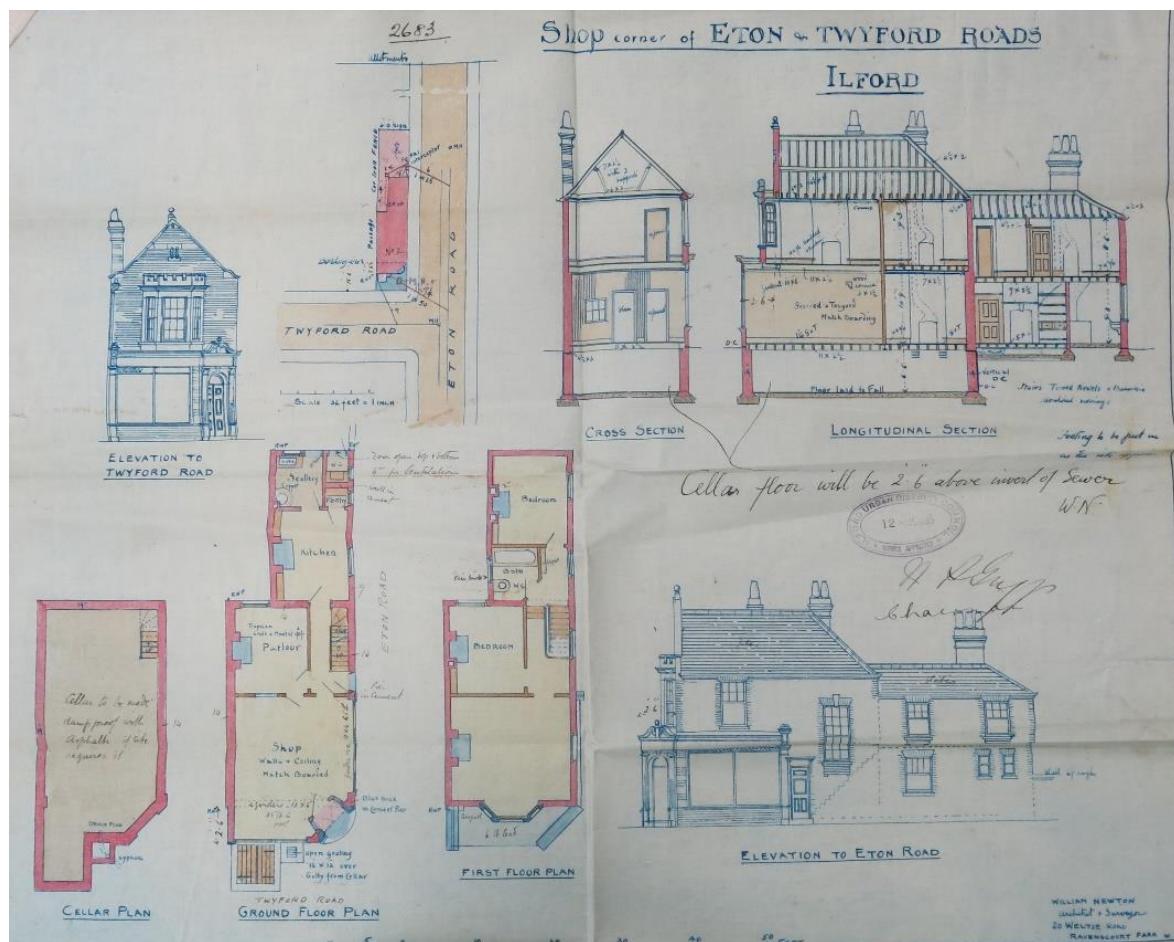
Occupation Code 933 is defined as "Mustard, Vinegar, Spice, Pickle &c – Makers." James Curran wasn't the traditional shopkeeper then but a provision manufacturer milling spices. This raises some interesting questions. What spices did he mill? Who did he sell to – other food manufacturers, dining rooms, or to individual households?



Most importantly, and a question that it may be possible to answer, is whether he advertised in the local press. After all, if he didn't have his business listed as such in *Kelly's Directory*, how did people know where he was and what was his business?

Having looked through the 1908 and 1909 issues of *Ilford Guardian*, Curran does not appear to have advertised in that weekly paper; neither does he seem to have done in the *Ilford Recorder*. It is possible that given the location of the shop being closer to Barking than Ilford, he advertised in the Barking local press.

As for the shop itself, the Heritage Centre holds the plans which were approved in September 1905. As is usual practice the plan shows the block plan – location – and ground plan – its layout and appearance.



Plan 2683 (Reproduced by kind permission of the Redbridge Heritage Centre)

The documents accompanying the plan have the proposer being one Henry Higginbotham of Church Road in Leyton. Both Curran and Higginbotham can be found to be living in Leyton a few years earlier. In the 1901 Census they are recorded as living at the same address in Capworth Street, Leyton – both having the occupation shown as beer retailers.

So, we now know how the business came about, and where the proposer and owner had been living up until then. There are unanswered questions about who his customers were and what he manufactured. Adverts in the local press may help here and trawling through the local press in Ilford and Barking this is the next piece of work that needs to be done.

© Colin Runneckles, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018

# The Rise and Fall of the Ilford Sports Ground

## Prologue - 1896

Frederick Butler stood on the corner of the sports ground that was surrounded by nothing but fields and a couple of newly laid out roads leading from the small town of Ilford and pondered. This would be an ideal place for a house, he thought. Since the land had been bought by the Ilford Park Company, and Coventry Road had been extended, there were opportunities for building and it would be nice to be the first to have a house on the perimeter of the sports ground. And if he had it built on the corner of the ground, he could ask an architect to include a drawing room that pointed across the ground towards the sports that were being played there.

## The history

The owner of Ilford Cricket Club's ground having need of his land on the south side of the High Road close to Green Lane in the mid-1880s, a new ground was required. J.W.Hobbs was then a vice-president of the club. As he was also one of those connected with the Ilford Lodge Estate responsible for building houses in Cranbrook Road and roads leading from it, he was able to find room for a new ground on the estate at a cost of £20 per annum from 1886 onwards. According to the club history, the ground was "let out for shooting matches and sheep grazing in the winter."

By 1888, the football club that had been founded in 1881 was also in search of a new ground, as theirs on the Clements Wood estate was needed for housing. The cricket club were approached by a Mr Stenning to see whether they could help. So, in the season 1888-9 the Ilford football Club began playing at the Ilford Sports Ground on condition that half of the gate receipts of matches went to the cricket club.

This is how the sports ground appears on the Ordnance Survey map in the mid-1890s. Note the lane leading to the ground from Ley Street. By around 1897 this would become Adelaide Road.



Ilford 1893-5 (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

In 1895 Ben Bailey, a local notable and JP, formed a company called Ilford Sports Co. Ltd. which acquired the ground. It is possible that this was done in order to save the sports ground from being developed for housing at that time.

As this was now a public company, a report of the proceedings of the AGM held in December were sometimes carried in the local press. The report of the AGM held in December 1898, for example, noted that the company had made a net profit of £85/16/- (£85.80) and that this would be used to write off the remaining preliminary expenses of forming the company rather than paying a dividend. But there was another matter of interest that was discussed:

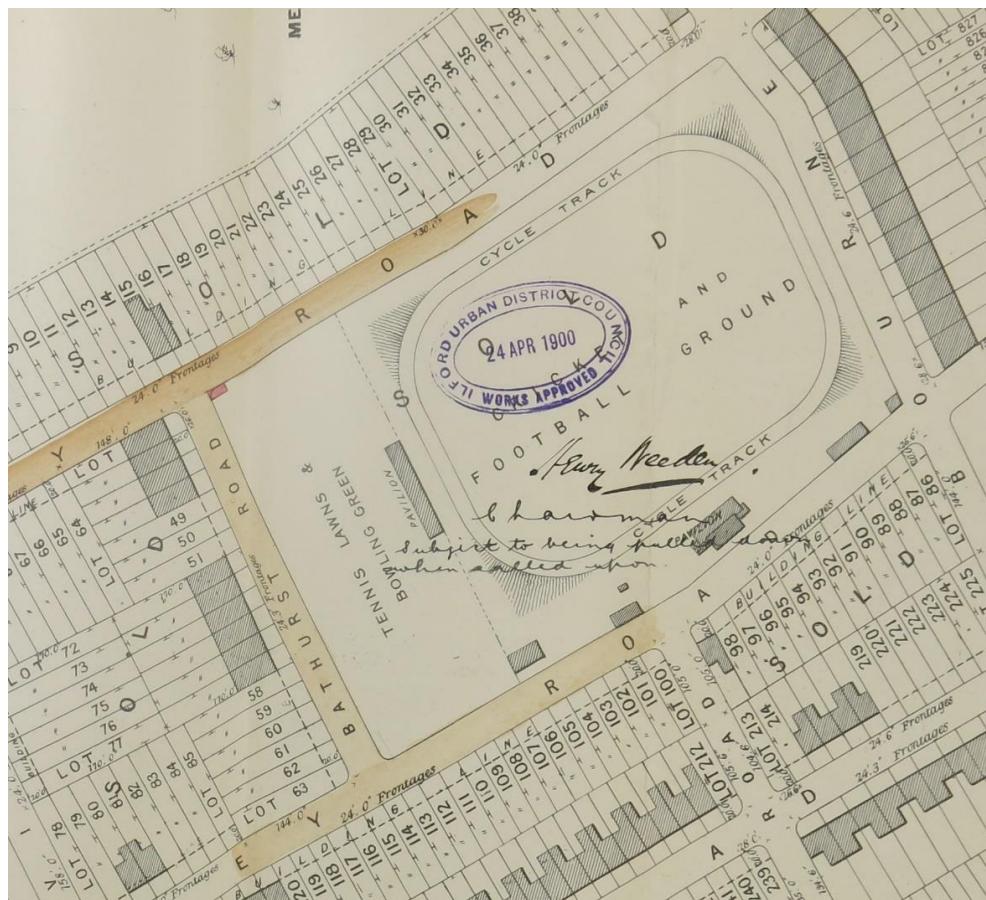
*“Speaking of the construction of the cycle track, he [Ben Bailey] said that they were all sorry if it had brought about the retirement of the Ilford Cricket Club, but the directors believed that the track would be for the ultimate benefit of the ground from a financial point of view”*

The report notes that the Company “wished the Ilford Cricket Club every success at Valentines” but Ben Bailey couldn’t help a sly dig at their departure by saying that he “hardly thought the crowds they drew there would materially interfere with the gates at the Sports Ground.”

It would appear then, that the cricket club’s move to Valentines may well have been precipitated by the laying out of the cycle track.

A year later in 1899, the *Ilford Guardian* noted in its report on the AGM that losses on cricket and hockey had more than been offset by profits from the cycle track. Losses incurred by the Ilford Football Club were blamed on their poor season and hence falling gate receipts although it was noted that their form was improving. Ben Bailey also noted the losses incurred on every meeting of the Ilford Beagles (athletics club) and commented on the “terrible apathy among the people of Ilford so far as sport was concerned.”

The size of the sports ground can be seen on this plan from 1900 which has been recently



discovered in one of the many plan envelopes held by the Heritage Centre. Not only has it the football ground and cycle track but tennis lawns and bowling greens as well. Note “Butler’s house” as it became known at the top left-hand corner of the ground in Coventry Road.

*Ilford Sports Ground in 1900 (Reproduced by kind permission of the Redbridge Heritage Centre)*



*Final of the Essex Cup, Easter Monday 1901. Note the houses in Wellesley Road behind the main stand, and the Christchurch and Park Higher schools to the left.*  
*(Reproduced by kind permission of the Redbridge Heritage Centre)*

But by 1902 there were indications that sport at this ground might not be for much longer. A report on the Football Club AGM noted that no dividend had been paid to shareholders since the formation of the Company but that so far “they had not grumbled much.”

However, at the AGM of the Company itself that was held in December 1902, it was clear that the grumbling had indeed started. The report in the *Ilford Guardian* was headed “Dissatisfied Shareholders.” Apart from the usual business of approving the report and accounts, the main agenda item was to consider whether or not to keep the ground open for sporting purposes, as the compulsory term for doing so was due to expire the following July.

The main reason for even considering such a step was that not enough paying customers were coming to the ground despite every effort having been made to draw the crowds. The motion to discontinue sports at the ground was carried by 13 to 10.

An extraordinary meeting held in February 1903 gave final approval by an overwhelming majority to the directors to sell off the ground and its assets. A further meeting in May decided that this should be sold as one lot.

And so, at auction at the Mart, Tokenhouse Yard, EC on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 1903, the Sports Ground was sold to Councillor W.P.Griggs for £9,600.

In September it was reported that the Football Club had secured the ground for another season through the happy accident of the club’s treasurer being the same W.P.Griggs that had purchased the land. They therefore had time to find themselves another ground for the 1904-5 season onwards. In the same month Mr Griggs had his plans approved to build 104 houses on what was described as the Sports Ground Estate.

The final match on the ground, featuring players past and present, was played on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1904.

## **Epilogue – 1906**

From his drawing room at the front of the house, Frederick Butler looked out over the newly built streets and houses and sighed deeply. Things had been so different when he had stood here a decade before and dreamed about the perfect house on the edge of the sports ground in the middle of the fields. Ilford had changed so rapidly. Maybe it was time he and his family moved on, he thought.

## **Sources used**

Plan OS 507 is Mr Butler's house at 67 Coventry Road and can be viewed in the Heritage Centre on request.

Ilford Guardian – various issues

Ilford Football Club 1881-1931: Souvenir of Jubilee celebrations at Liverpool Street Hotel, Monday January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1931

Ilford Cricket Club 1879-1978: A History of the first 100 years and centenary souvenir

© Colin Runeckles, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2018

## **Is Barkingside the equal of Bath?**

'John' clearly thought so ...



A postcard in my collection shows newly built houses in Fremantle Road in the late-1930s and was posted locally by 'John' who sent it to 'Wilma' in Bath. His message on the back reads: '*This picture will remind you that Bath is not the only place with long and elegant terraces*'.

Oddly, the card was posted in 1962 – a quarter of a century after the photograph was taken.

© Alan Simpson, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018

# Without traffic, Ilford would not have existed

*One of a series of articles written by our late President, Peter Wright, published in 1969.*

Situated as it is, at the junction of a road – river crossing, it is apparent that transport in all its forms has played a major part in the history of Ilford, and indeed is the reason for the very existence of the town.

The road – the Great Essex road as it was formerly known – was literally the artery of Ilford and for many years the commercial life of the area was geared to supplying necessities to the traveller passing through.

This main road, which followed the route of the Roman road, was like others up and down the country, repaired, or not dependent

upon the whim of local landowners or parishes. However, an Act of 1555 devolved the maintenance of the highways on each parish, which was to elect two surveyors to oversee the roads, and days were set aside in the summer months during which each householder had to work on the roads, or send labourers, or lend horses and carts. This highly unsatisfactory system, which inevitably led to a large number of “presentments” at the Quarter Sessions for failing to maintain the highways, continued in this area until 1721.

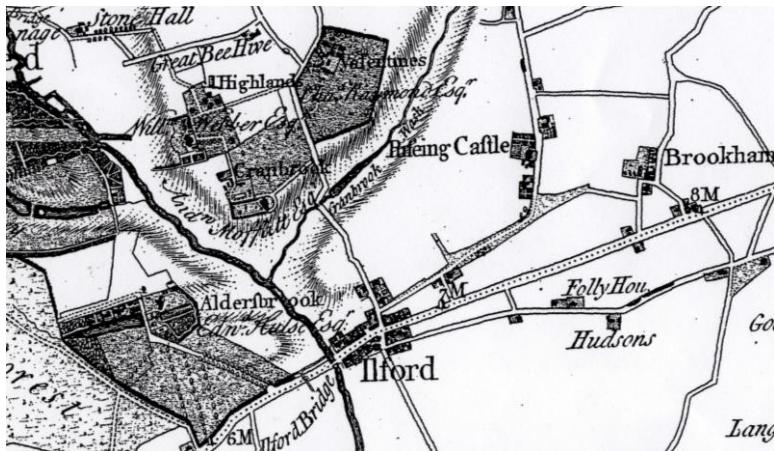
In that year the Middlesex and Essex Turnpike Trust was set up to manage the road from Whitechapel to Brentwood, and toll gates were erected at various points. A constant stream of traffic passed through the town and by the 1830s this had increased so much that coaches passed through Ilford every half-hour.

Green Lane, or Street, which has a known existence of over 600 years [at the time of writing, 650 years now], formerly ran parallel to the High Road for all of its western end and joined Ilford Lane by Clements Lane.

In 1814, John Thompson set about consolidating various parcels of land, purchased by him, to form the Clements Estate. One obstacle to this was Green Lane, which separated two parts of the estate. Thompson obtained permission from the Manor Court to stop up this part of the highway and then got an Order from the Quarter Sessions to divert Green Lane into the High Road, through another part of his lands. In 1826 this was disputed by some local inhabitants and an attempt was made, by force, to open up the old route. Brickfield employees of Thompson resisted this and the ensuing fracas was only stopped when a local justice literally read the Riot Act. The case was taken to the assizes and later to the King’s Bench. Although the stopping up and the diversion were declared illegal, Thompson managed in 1827 to gain fresh orders which made the operation final, and thus Green Lane became as it is today.

During the various court hearings it was disclosed that the site in question contained valuable brick-earth and that the Ilford Surveyor had sold the land to Thompson for £4 10s., although previously the Vestry had been offered and refused £500!

*With acknowledgement to the late Sadie Gomm who passed on the press cutting of the article*



*Map by John Chapman & Peter André 1777.*

## **Looking back at Ilford . . .**

**from our Vice-President Roger Backhouse who now lives in York**

Going through more old slides, I found these of the High Road undergoing pedestrianisation. The works uncovered the tramlines in September 1987.



The pictures below were taken about four months later, on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1988, of the last day of Routemaster buses on the 25 route (Victoria to Ilford). The buildings the bus is passing on Hainault Street were demolished to make way for Spectrum Tower, at least I think that's what it is called.



The Routemasters were the last buses with conductors until the advent of the “Borisbus” much later.





Roger also sent these pictures of the late Tessa Jowell (and ‘Sunny Jim Callaghan’) outside Ilford Labour Hall on the High Road during the 1979 Election campaign (which Labour lost) These were taken on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1979.

© Roger Backhouse, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018

## ‘Some curious birds and other animals, from the East Indies’

It was Charles Raymond who introduced the first live Secretary bird into England. A letter from George Edwards FRS was read to the Royal Society on 17<sup>th</sup> January 1771 in which he

described seeing ‘some curious birds and other animals, from the East Indies’ when he visited Valentine House ‘last August’. Edwards said ... ‘among these, I discovered a rare bird, not known to me before. ... It is about the bigness of a heron...’ He went on to describe the bird and provided a drawing. He added ‘This bird was called a snake-eater, by those who brought it from India.’ \* ... ‘Another bird was brought with this, supposed to be the male of this species, which died soon after it was landed. Mr.Raymond’s servant told me that it was something larger...’ which suggests that Raymond had sent a servant to collect the birds from the ship.



It seems likely the birds had been collected when the East Indiaman *Granby* (which was part owned by Raymond) stopped near Cape Town on the voyage home. There is no clue as to what the ‘other animals’ might have been but even a small menagerie requires a proper enclosure and it is frustrating that no map indicates the site of this. The octagonal dovecote at Valentines, set into the wall of what was later referred to as the kitchen garden, is thought to date from the mid-eighteenth century. It is possible that in Raymond’s time the garden was a walled enclosure for these ‘curious birds and other animals’ with the octagonal building as a viewing tower. It does have high quality brickwork and elaborate windows which may have been partly bricked in when the building was converted into a dovecote. We can only speculate!

At around this time the elegant and valuable ‘Chinese ducks’ which ‘the English in China called the Mandarine’ were frequently for sale at Canton in China. There are Mandarin ducks on the canal at Valentines today, but they were acquired in 2008/9 by the Valentines Park Manager, Simon Litt. However, it seems very likely that others of the species lived at the same place 250 years ago.

© Georgina Green, 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018

\*India was an incorrect assumption

# Redbridge Museum & Heritage Centre News

6<sup>th</sup> February 2018 marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Representation of the People Act, 1918. This legislation enabled women over the age of 30 to vote for the first time and paved the way for universal suffrage ten years later. To celebrate, Redbridge Museum will open a major exhibition this October exploring 100 years of women's lives in Redbridge.

**Monday 3 September 2018, 7.30 - 9pm**

***Archibald Cameron Corbett: the man and the houses.***

Filmmaker Ben Honeybone will present the first showing in Redbridge of a documentary about the man who made the Corbett Estates. The film will be followed by a question and answer session. This event will be held at the Gloucester Room (see address below).

For more information call 020 8708 2417 or email  
[info.heritage@visionrcl.org.uk](mailto:info.heritage@visionrcl.org.uk)

The event is free but please book in advance at the library (as above) or on Eventbrite

[www.redbridge-events.eventbrite.com](http://www.redbridge-events.eventbrite.com)



## IHS PROGRAMME 2018-2019

Our regular monthly meetings are held on the second Monday of each month, September – May from 7.30 – 9.15 pm. Visitors welcome, £3 per meeting, with free refreshments

Membership of the society costs £15 per year which includes 3 newsletters

The Society meetings listed below will be held in the Gloucester Room, Ilford Central Library, Clements Road, Ilford IG1 1EA.

**10 September 2018 70 Years of the NHS 1948-2018- In Good Health? Trust me, I'm a Doctor.** By Jef Page, President Ilford HS.

**8 October 2018** Poetry month. ***Poets of Redbridge, past & present: John Clare, Peter Foley, Jane Grell, Denise Levertov, Kathleen Raine etc.***

**12 November 2018 1918- celebrations after World War I**  
By Gerard Green, Redbridge Museum Manager.

**10 December 2018** Christmas Social Evening ***Votes for Women!*** a talk by Jef Page, President Ilford HS, followed by ***Mince Pies and a Quiz***

**14 January 2019** ***Woodford's Community Through the Ages***  
by Georgina Green, author and Ilford HS Vice President.

**The next newsletter will be available at our December meeting,** or from the editor (details on page 1) after 11<sup>th</sup> December.

You can follow us on Facebook too.

