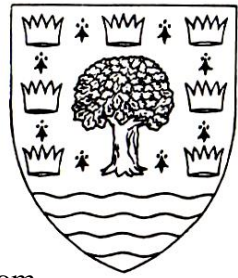


Ilford Historical Society

Newsletter No.142 August 2023



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

The Coronation of King Charles III

After the euphoria of the 70th anniversary of the reign of Queen Elizabeth and then the outpouring of grief at her death and funeral, His Majesty had asked that a more modest ceremony be planned for 6th May, bearing in mind the financial hardships facing so many people in 2023. However, Pomp and Splendour are part of the Royal show and in spite of a few protests outside the Abbey, the whole day was one of happy celebrations.



The King wears St Edward's crown during the Coronation



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Redbridge Museum update

It's been a long wait, but the new Redbridge Museum is nearly ready. I thought I'd give you a peek behind the scenes to see what's involved in 'making a museum'.

Since the redevelopment project began in 2019, there have been several overlapping phases. We have undertaken a fund-raising campaign and successfully applied for grants from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arts Council England, the Art Fund, Museum Development London, and the Rothchild Foundation. This has been a time-consuming process and with rising costs, managing the budget remains challenging. We were also pleased to receive support from the Friends of Valentine Mansion, and of course Vision Redbridge Culture & Leisure the charity that runs the Museum.

A major part of the project has been talking to local people. We gathered opinions from nearly 500 public questionnaires; 15 focus groups, with everyone from nurseries to historical societies (including Ilford) to residents' forums; and had many other informal conversations. Through this and our own research, ideas were shaped for what sort of themes the new Museum should cover.

I've spent much of my time undertaking detailed historical research, often with the help of local historians including Jef, Georgina, Colin, Martin and Carol from the Society; choosing potential objects and photographs for display; shaping a storyline based around both historical themes and the Museum's collections; and writing text panels and labels. Alongside this has been the practical challenge of turning ideas into physical displays, working out requirements for display cases and room sets, and seeing how everything can fit into a very tight space. Then there is choosing the decorative scheme, flooring, and lighting. All of this has been developed with the Museum's designer, fit-out contractor, and graphic designer.

At the other end of the scale but no less challenging is coming up with ideas for low-tech interactives, many aimed at younger visitors, as well as developing a space for babies, toddlers, and infants. While the Museum has been closed, we have continued to deliver education sessions to local schools, either online or in their classrooms, and taught nearly 3000 pupils.

Research with local communities will ensure new content for the displays but it's also been pleasing to use material collected since the Museum first opened in 2000 – in some ways, the project has been 23 years in the making!

There is still much to do, including finishing the building of the display sets, installing the objects, and completing the graphic design, print and installation. If there are no major delays, then we hope to reopen the Museum in November – please see www.visionrcl.org.uk/museum for updates.

What's actually in the Museum, you might ask? Hopefully the next newsletter will carry a review!

Gerard Greene, Redbridge Museum & Heritage Centre Manager, 19 July 2023



When the new museum opens in Ilford there will be a section devoted to local people connected to the East India Company and key among them was Sir Charles Raymond. Although I have written much about him, little of it has appeared in the society newsletter so I hope the articles below will help to put Raymond and some of his colleagues into context.

Sir Charles Raymond of Valentines and his family

Charles Raymond was baptised 310 years ago, on 23 April 1713, the son of John Raymond, a gentleman of substance, and was brought up at Withycombe Raleigh (now part of Exmouth, Devon). Two of his uncles were captains, and with the waves washing the rocks at the bottom of the garden, it must have been almost inevitable for the young lad to go to sea. At the age of just 17 he served as purser on the East Indiaman *Dawsonne* on a trip to Madras and Bengal. This was a position which allowed a young man of a good family to find out what a voyage was like and learn about the administration of the ship, without being too arduous. His next voyage was as third mate on the *Princess of Wales* which enabled him to learn about navigation and the running of the ship. He then served as the captain of the *Wager* on four journeys to India. This was a rapid rise to the top and must have been due to his family connections – *Wager* was built for him by his uncle! He was only 22 when he first commanded the ship but the East India Company would not have agreed unless they had confidence in Charles's ability to bring home their cargo.

As a captain, Charles was entitled to engage in private trade which allowed him to build up sufficient funds to invest in ships sailing for the East India Company when he retired from the sea. He soon became the Principal Managing Owner of a number of ships, engaging the captain and crew, provisioning the ship and responsible for the organisation of the voyage. He was by far the most important and influential Principal Managing Owner of his time as of the 914 voyages made by East Indiamen in the 41 years between his retiring as a captain in 1747 and his death in 1788 he was PMO for 113 voyages. This is almost twice the number of anyone else at that time.

Charles Raymond married Sarah Webster in 1743 and at first they lived at Wellclose Square, Wapping. By 1750 they had moved to a more prestigious residence at Upton and it was at West Ham church that their eldest surviving child, Sophia, was baptised in 1753. She had two younger sisters, Juliana and Anna Maria, and they may also have had a brother who died young.

Their father purchased Valentines in 1754 and at that time the building was more compact than the Mansion we know today. In 1769 it was substantially rebuilt, with an extension on the west side, and given the Georgian appearance we see today. Three rain-water hoppers still bear that date with the Raymond arms today. The line drawing frequently used as an illustration of the Georgian house dates from 1771, not long after the work was completed.

Charles Raymond also took a keen interest in his garden, planting a Black Hamburg Vine in 1758. A cutting of this was taken to Hampton Court ten years later and it is still flourishing there now. In 1771 it was recorded that there was a collection of "curious birds and other animals" in the garden and possibly the Cedar of Lebanon tree was becoming established by then. The estate owned by Raymond covered a substantial amount of land stretching from the Roding to Ley Street, with other properties in the district.

A number of his fellow captains came to live nearby and some became related. William Webber was a childhood friend of Charles and he served at sea under Captain Raymond before becoming a captain himself. He married Elizabeth, sister of Mrs Sarah Raymond, and they lived at Highlands which was owned by Raymond. Their step-sister Ann married Captain John Williams and they lived at Aldborough Hatch. Another step-sister Mary married Donald Cameron who did not go to sea, but became a banking partner of Charles Raymond. They lived at a property to the south of the Valentines estate.

Having established himself with the East India Company, Raymond expanded his City experience becoming a director of the Sun Fire Office for 1756-73, and a director of the South Sea Company 1766-9. He was also a Governor of Bridewell and Bethlem Hospitals from 1749 until his death.

The wealth that Raymond accumulated enabled him to invest in home comforts and his “house contents” insurance which was £500 in 1755 was increased to £2,000 by 1769. Like many wealthy people involved with the East India Company he had dinner and tea services made of fine porcelain in China to his own specifications. A plate made for him is on display in Valentines Mansion today. In the early 1760s he purchased the original painting of *Southwark Fair* by William Hogarth and probably owned other works of art.



Sir Charles Raymond, Bart, 1774

Charles Raymond became a founder member of a bank known as Raymond, Williams, Vere, Lowe and Fletcher. This later became Williams Deacon’s Bank and is now part of the Royal Bank of Scotland. Williams was his brother-in-law and Fletcher was another retired East India captain who lived at Ilford for a time. Raymond later founded another banking firm in which William Webber and later Donald Cameron were partners.

The early 1770s were happy years for Charles Raymond. In 1771-2 he was Sheriff for the County of Essex and in 1774 he was created a baronet. In 1773 his eldest daughter, Sophia, married William Burrell, a close relative. William was twice her age and a very learned man, working in a rather obscure branch of the legal system, a Director of the South Sea Company, and MP for Haslemere. William had long been interested in “antiquarian pursuits” and spent much of his spare time travelling around Sussex, collecting information about its history. His

entire collection was left to the British Museum Library and formed the basis of a history of the county published in 1815-35. Sophia probably accompanied her husband on some of his journeys around Sussex, although the couple had three sons and two daughters which may have restricted her somewhat. She spent much of her time at home in writing and it is for this that she was given an entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Her work included poetry, two volumes of which were published in 1793, and two tragedies.

On 3 Nov 1774 the Raymond’s middle daughter, Juliana married Henry Boulton, Esq, of Leatherhead, the son of another East India Company Captain. Henry and his father worked alongside Charles in managing voyages for the East. Henry was Sheriff for the County of Surrey in 1783.

Sir Charles Raymond was greatly respected and mixed in the highest social circles. Newspapers reported his arrival at Bath on a number of occasions and we also know from newspapers that he attended the King’s Birthday Ball in 1782.

Lady Sarah Raymond died in 1778 and some time after this Charles moved from Valentines to live at Highlands, a house he had built on land he owned. The tower he built there, intended as a family mausoleum, later became known as Ilford Castle. This was demolished 100 years ago and the site is now covered by the administrative block of Cranbrook Primary School.

In 1781 his youngest daughter Anna Maria married a young man well known to her father. Thomas Newte had served on a number of ships owned by Sir Charles Raymond and made two voyages as a captain. He also became a Principal Managing Owner himself, although sadly Anna Maria died two years after they married.

Sir Charles Raymond died in 1788. His obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* reported that on 24 August Sir Chas. Raymond, bart., banker died at Highlands, his house near Ilford, and that he left his whole fortune equally divided between his two daughters, independent of their husbands, and afterwards to their children. The baronetcy passed to William Burrell. The couple inherited considerable wealth and property, including half the manor of Knepp in West Sussex which Charles had purchased the year before he died. Sophia purchased her sister's half of the Knepp estate which is still in the Burrell family today.

© *Georgina Green, 14 April 2013*

The Raymond Room at Valentines Mansion

I hope most of you have visited Valentines Mansion since it reopened in 2009 and have seen 'The Parlour' which was originally furnished to represent the period of the Raymond family, c.1770s. Over the last couple of years the Friends of Valentines Mansion have been adding to this to enhance the room, which now reflects the description of the house as 'A Cabinet of Curiosities' in 1771. A picture of Calcutta illustrates Raymond's time in India (all six of his voyages had that destination) and various items on the table for children echo his time at sea. There is a lady's writing desk which includes many facsimile books either written by his daughter, Lady Sophia Burrell or which it is thought she may have owned. The west wall has five pictures, the largest being a reproduction of 'Southwark Fair' by William Hogarth as we know that the original hung in the house for 30-40 years in Raymond's time. There is a book showing illustrations from an original presented to Raymond, with over 800 beautiful Chinese watercolours of medicinal plants which is held at the Royal College of Physicians.

Valentines Mansion is open every Sunday and Monday, 10.30am – 4pm so do visit and see for yourself.

The Friends are holding a special 'shipwreck' event on **Sunday 17th September** when small items from the wreck of Sir Charles Raymond's ship *Valentine* will be shown by Richard Keen, the diver who retrieved them. There will be a number of special activities with a nautical theme for young and old to enjoy.



A painting of *Valentine* by Sandra Wilbraham for The Friends, made into a jigsaw for visitors.

The Loss of the East Indiaman *Valentine*

There would have been considerable worry among some of the wealthy residents of Redbridge 240 years ago as news reached them that the East Indiaman *Valentine* had been wrecked in a storm. As darkness fell on 16 November 1779, in a violent storm on her homeward journey, she struck the rocks off the little island of Brecqhou, near Sark in the Channel Isles. Thankfully her passengers and crew were able to get ashore safely and part of her cargo was saved although the ship was lost.

She was the second ship to carry that name as it was customary for an East Indiamen to be rebuilt after four voyages to the East. *Valentine* was owned by a consortium of investors, several of whom lived in the Ilford area but she had been built for Sir Charles Raymond and was named after his home. He acted on behalf of the other investors, often in partnership with Andrew Moffatt, an insurance broker, who lived at Cranbrook House.

It is likely that his close friend William Webber of Highlands had also been an investor although he had died seven months earlier. His widow was the sister of Raymond's wife who had also died, in April 1778. Another of her brothers-in-law, Donald Cameron, who at this time lived at a prestigious property to the south of the Valentines estate, was also part of the consortium.

Having made six journeys to India himself, four as captain, Raymond invested the wealth he gained from these voyages in managing other ships which were offered for charter to the East India Company. During the 18th century 6.6% of East Indiamen did not return home and Raymond was fortunate that while he was responsible for managing over 113 voyages, he lost only three of these ships. Apart from the *Valentine*, *Ajax* was captured by the French off Scilly on 6th March 1761 and *Lord Clive* was wrecked off Boulogne on 28th February 1767 having been blown towards the French coast in a high winds.

In the 1770s Raymond established a bank in partnership with others involved with his business interests. A recently discovered letter from Nov 1770 says of Raymond "I found him, as I always have done, the best & most generous man I ever met with in making Bargains." From this and other sources he seems to be have been greatly respected in City and Court circles and in 1774 he was created a baronet. The loss of the *Valentine* must have been a great personal sadness for Sir Charles Raymond.

© *Georgina Green, 14 November 2019*

Items from the shipwreck will be displayed in the new museum, kindly loaned by Richard Keen, the diver who discovered the wreck in 1976.

Small pieces of agate, cut and roughly shaped square or rectangular in India (company trade?) for use in signet rings etc



Blue and white Chinese porcelain, loaded in Canton and brought to India by EIC country ships. Porcelain was often packed in boxes with loose tea or pepper for padding, and best use of space. The cargo consisted of a range of qualities from choice items for the aristocratic tea party to thicker items for general use. The fine fragments here are from a better quality (sugar?) bowl, decorated inside. The blue and white china was a popular design in England.

The ‘Disappearance’ of Ilford Cottage

Victoria County History is an essential source of information on local history and I find myself referring to the sections on Ilford often. Regarding the final days of Ilford Cottage which was on the west side of Cranbrook Road, it says “*When the estate was broken up in 1894 Ilford Cottage, with an acre of garden, was bought by J.T. King. The house appears to have been demolished in 1924.*”¹ However, the evidence is that it was ‘hiding in plain sight’ and not demolished until much later.

Firstly, let me briefly recap on the history of the estate in its latter stages. Ilford Cottage had come into the possession of James Graves in 1836 following the bankruptcy in 1835 of the previous owner, Richard John Brassey.² Henry Graves inherited the estate in July 1864 following the death of his father; and following Henry’s own death in 1888 and that of his wife Sarah Ann in 1890, the estate was put up for auction. The sale at The Mart, Tokenhouse Yard in London on 18th April 1893 comprised two Lots – Lot 1 being Ilford Cottage, Cranbrook Lodge and all of the land on the north side of the railway line; while Lot 2 was for a terrace of ten houses with gardens known as Roding Cottages, and about an acre of land let to the Ekman Pulp and Paper Company on the south side of the line.³ The cottages had been built by James Graves at some point in the early 1840s.⁴ The auction does not appear to have been a success and the property was withdrawn at £27,000.⁵



Part of the map within the catalogue relating to the sale of Ilford Cottage in 1893. ERO ref. D/DSa 1328/11. Reproduced by permission of the Essex Record Office.

Tasker records that on 1st January 1894, Mr Cameron Corbett had paid between £31,000 and £32,000 for the estate.⁶ This appears not to have included the Cottage and a small amount of land around it – this was apparently bought by Thomas King. It is not clear whether, like Ilford Cottage, Cranbrook Lodge was split off from the rest of the land. The Lodge was used as a school known as Cranbrook College which opened in 1896. Corbett set about preparing to build on his newly acquired land and the Essex Times reported that he had laid plans for the new roads on

¹ Victoria County History of Essex Volume 5, 210

² *The News (London)* 21st June 1835; Essex Record Office ref. D/DB 314.

³ Essex Record Office ref. D/DSa 1328/11

⁴ In an article in the *Essex Standard* 1st July 1842 relating to a case where a brick wall had been built making it impossible for Graves’ employees to gain access to them, the cottages were said to be “recently erected.”

⁵ *Essex Herald* 26th April 1893

⁶ G. Tasker *Ilford Past And Present*, 92

what he called the Grange Estate at the end of January 1894.⁷ Corbett went back to the Local Board the following month to request another road on his estate – this one was to be called Beal Road. Mr Beal had apparently asked him to get a ‘more important name’ but had to admit that it was not worse than Balfour Road.⁸ Corbett clearly had no use for the land on the other side of the railway line and cottages that he had purchased, and put them up for auction in July 1894.⁹

Ordnance Survey map of 1914-5 showing Ilford Cottage. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.



What happened to Thomas King is, at present, a mystery but in May 1924 a building plan was

approved for ten shops and offices along Cranbrook Road in front of Ilford Cottage.¹⁰ This would become known as Cranbrook House. It would appear that the lack of any occupant of Ilford Cottage in the Electoral Register is the reason behind the VCH’s assumption that the building had been demolished. However, it did not remain in residential use. The old house, reached through the entrance to Cranbrook House, was taken over by a company called De Bear Schools Ltd who ran an organisation ‘For modern business training.’¹¹ There were two building plans submitted for the conversion of the house into a school in 1925, and it is clear from the correspondence that De Bear wanted the alterations to be carried out quickly so that they could open the school. The first listing in Kelly’s Directory is for 1927 where Gregg School for Modern Business Training was listed as 22 Cranbrook Road and would have been reached by using the main entrance to Cranbrook House and through to the back. The school is listed in Kelly’s Directory right up to the outbreak of World War Two and I have seen two adverts in the Ilford Recorder for both of January 1941 and January 1947. But it is likely that they occupied Ilford Cottage right up to the point where the owners, Prentis, who were still at 16 Cranbrook Road in Cranbrook House, submitted a plan to convert the house into a Recreational Centre for the Essex County Fire Brigade complete with Officers and NCOs rooms, games rooms and a canteen.¹² The address of

⁷ *Essex Times* 31st January 1894

⁸ *Essex Times* 17th February 1894. At this time Jabez Balfour would have been in Argentina having fled the country after the collapse of the Liberator Building Society and the halting of building work on the Ilford Lodge Estate.

⁹ Essex Record Office ref. D/DSa 1328/7

¹⁰ Ilford UDC Building Plan no. 6596

¹¹ From correspondence contained in Ilford UDC Building Plan 7071. There is a letter dated 11th May 1925 in the name of Gregg School, Ilford Cottage, 22 Cranbrook Road, Ilford.

¹² Ilford Building Plan 25462 approved July 1956.

the building on the application form is *Ilford Cottage, Mansfield Road, Ilford (late Gregg School)* which suggests that there were no occupiers in between.

The last occupant of Ilford Cottage was the Ilford Jewish Youth Club. Pinning down a date as to when they moved in has proved rather difficult but it appears to be at some point between the building plan mentioned above from 1956, and when it appears named on the Ordnance Survey map revised in 1961.¹³

Ilford Jewish Youth Club 1967. Used by permission of London Picture Archive.



Sinclair House in Woodford Bridge Road was opened on 4th May 1969 for the Jewish community in Redbridge and the Ilford Jewish Youth Club in Mansfield Road was closed.¹⁴ Ilford Cottage was demolished towards the end of 1969 but fortunately IHS member Bernard George was on hand to capture what appears to be the beginning of its demise.

Far from being demolished in 1924, Ilford Cottage had quite a long and varied history after the estate with which it was associated was sold in 1894 - even though its view onto Cranbrook Road was taken away from it with the building of Cranbrook House.



The front of Ilford Cottage with part of the roof already missing – photo by courtesy J. Page

© **Dr Colin Runeckles, 12th July 2023**

¹³ A call for information on Vincent Goodman’s Gants Hill Facebook group had many members that remembered ‘the old house’ in Mansfield Road but none that knew the date of when the club was founded.

¹⁴ <https://www.guardian-series.co.uk/news/18097305.redbridge-jewish-community-centre-celebrates-50th-anniversary/>

Gants Hill: A History in Photographs

– so good they launched it twice!

Gants Hill: A History in Photographs by Vincent Goodman, a member of Ilford Historical Society (IHS) and our President, Jef Page was published in May. The book was launched on 1 June at Central Library to an invited audience of about 20 people including the deputy mayor, Councillor Saira Y. Jamil. Gerard Greene, Redbridge Museum & Heritage Centre Manager, introduced the event and the two authors. Vincent Goodman said he was brought up in Gants Hill and, in 1983, his father set-up the print business in a shop in Cranbrook Road. Wanting to do something positive during the Covid lockdown, Vincent set-up a Gants Hill Facebook Group one day in August 2020 and by the next day had 1000 members! This proved to him that there was interest in the area.

Jef said that the book came out of a conversation with Vincent in his shop. He said that history is a visual topic and hoped that the book would go some way to satisfying people's needs for glimpses of the past. Jef gave thanks to the deputy mayor for coming and to Gerard Greene, Paula Wade, Saima Qureshi, Colin Runeckles and Alan Simpson for providing photos. He also thanked the IHS committee for attending

and said that the society had backed the project financially. Finally, he thanked the History Press for backing Vincent. In answer to a question from the public, he said that the hardest part of producing the book had been getting the captions right for over 180 photographs. The authors also told of their frustration that some photographs of famous Gants Hill residents such as Bobby Moore and Geoff Hurst had to be omitted because of the exorbitant copyright costs.

On 8 June, a public launch was hosted by the Redbridge Institute, where about 50 people attended. Jef thanked Gita Makawana for allowing the use of the institute. Jef gave a short history of the area including detailing the name changes in the area over time from Gantesgrave (1291), Gantesgrove (1313), Gauntes Heath, Gauntstubbing and Gantesfield to the Gants Hill, we know today.



Left to right: Jef Page President of Ilford Historical Society, Deputy Mayor of London Borough of Redbridge Saira Jamil, and Vincent Goodman owner of Speedprint at Gants Hill at the first book launch on Thursday 1 June 2023

Reviewing the book

The book starts with a short history of the area from farmland to the bustling urban area it is today. The book is well laid out across ten chapters. Chapter 2 on Streets and Roads is particularly interesting showing the car-free streets of the 1920s and 30s and the encroachment of cars in the 1960s. Chapter 6 Going Underground was fascinating featuring the war work done by Plessey staff and the modern station opened in 1947. For those interested in motor vehicles, there are some splendid photographs of buses in Chapter 5 Going Places. There are also some lovely historical moments captured from the visit of Princess Elizabeth in 1949 (page 30) to the Olympic Torch Procession in 2012 (page 46). I challenge anyone not to feel a pang of nostalgia looking at Chapter 7 Saturday Night at the Movies and photos of the dear old Odeon. If I have a criticism, it is that there were far too many photographs of the roundabout, although I appreciate that it is the most famous thing about the area. I also didn't think that the small maps added anything as they were so hard to read. Minor reservations apart, I thought it was a very interesting book and a worthy addition to any bookshelf. In the words of the deputy mayor, 'precious memories were captured'.

www.gants-hill.com gives details of where to buy the book. As well as on-line, it is available at Speedprint 432 Cranbrook Road, Gants Hill, Ilford, Essex IG2 6LL and WH Smith Ilford.

© *Janet Seward, 23 July 2023*

The Mystery of Gants Hill Cottage

Maybe the only disappointment about the content of the new book on Gants Hill is that extensive searching over the years has failed to turn up a picture of Gants Hill Cottage. This was, after all, the only sign of anything labelled Gants Hill on old Ordnance Survey maps before the extensive development of the area in the 1920s.

What we know about Gants Hill Cottage begins at time of the Tithe of 1847.¹⁵ The cottage was in field number 2179 with the index showing that it had just under an acre of land attached to it. It was part of the Little Gearies estate which was owned by George Johnson but the cottage itself appears to be unoccupied. Johnson died in late 1851 and was buried in Wanstead. There is no evidence of a sale of the estate at this time from the newspapers. However, there was an auction on the premises of Little Gearies to sell off 'live and dead farming stock' at the end of May 1852. There was a sale of the Little Gearies estate but it was not until over four years later and was a consequence of the death of the owner Charles Johnson. It is not clear whether this was a relative of George Johnson or merely a coincidence.¹⁶ The notice of the auction of the entire estate held on 25th June 1857 states that it is for "a respectable residence, offices, and pasture land, and two

¹⁵ There is something which could be a house in the same location on the Chapman & André map of Essex dating from 1777 but I cannot be certain as to whether this was Gants Hill Cottage.

¹⁶ George Johnson's sons in the will proved in London in December 1851 were shown as the Reverend James Thomas, and William.

capital farms adjoining.”¹⁷ Going back to the Tithe details the latter are of Gants Hill Cottage and Middlefield farm. There were two additional auctions held in July and September at Gants Hill Cottage to sell off fifty acres of growing crops and then the whole of the agricultural implements and household furniture.¹⁸ The fact that it was the *whole* of the farming equipment implies that this was to be the end of Gants Hill Cottage as a farm. An auction catalogue would confirm or otherwise whether these were sold as separate lots.

To Farmers, and other Buyers of Growing Crops.

MESSRS. DAVIS and JOHNSTONE will SELL
 by AUCTION, by order of Mr. W. R. Parsons, the tenant
 (who is leaving the farm at Michaelmas next), To-morrow,
 July 23, at Two, on the Premises, Gant's Hill Cottage and Land,
 Barking Side, the whole of the excellent and thriving GROWING
 CROPS, upon 50 acres, comprising 28 acres of wheat, 12 acres peas,
 5 acres tares, the crop of grass off 6½ acres, which is computed to con-
 tain nine loads of hay in stack, well got without rain, and about 60
 bushels of turnip seed. The company are requested to assemble at
 Gant's Hill Cottage, at Two precisely.—May be viewed any day
 preceding sale, and catalogues obtained on the premises; at the May-
 pole, Bee-hive, and Red House, Barking Side; the Angel, Ilford;
 King's Head, Chigwell; and of the auctioneers, 68, Mark-lane,
 London, E.C.

NOTE.—Messrs. Davis and Johnstone will hold a sale of the live
 stock, implements, furniture, and effects, in the middle of September
 next.

Morning Herald 22nd July 1857. Newspaper image © The British Library Board. All rights reserved. With thanks to The British Newspaper Archive (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk).

The next occupant of the cottage was to remain there for quite some years. Henry Green is listed in the 1861 census as a railroad registrar, and following censuses show him to be a registrar of various organisations. Green and his family lived there until the late 1890s and the next occupant was a merchant, George Hundsdon Gadsdon. Kelly's Directories did not begin the inclusion of Gants Hill or Barkingside until 1924 so we have to rely on other sources.

In September 1914 it was reported that the son of John Harrison Gibson of Gants Hill Cottage was getting married, and there were adverts requiring servants for the cottage in late 1918 and early 1919.¹⁹ Listings for Harrison Gibson's previous home, 19 The Drive, indicates that he was there in 1912 but not in 1913. Given that Harrison Gibson's homes before and after were that double-fronted house in The Drive, and afterwards to a large villa in Cranbrook Road opposite Valentines Park; it is not clear why they moved out for a few years to what was then countryside. Of course, that might be precisely the reason why he did.

At this time the area around Gants Hill Cottage was developing very quickly, and by 1924 it had semi-detached houses on both sides and a new road called Gaysham Avenue at the rear. With the development came proper road numbering and Gants Hill Cottage became 438 Cranbrook Road. Between 1924-27 there was a succession of tenants but who do not appear to have stayed for very long.

¹⁷ *Chelmsford Chronicle* 12th June 1857

¹⁸ See *Morning Herald* 22nd July 1857 and *Chelmsford Chronicle* 18th September 1857

¹⁹ *Eastern Counties Times* 18th Sept 1914; *Western Gazette* 24th Jan 1919. There is a listing in the Kelly's Directory for Essex in 1914 but there is no indication as to when the volume was compiled save for a Preface dated June 1914.

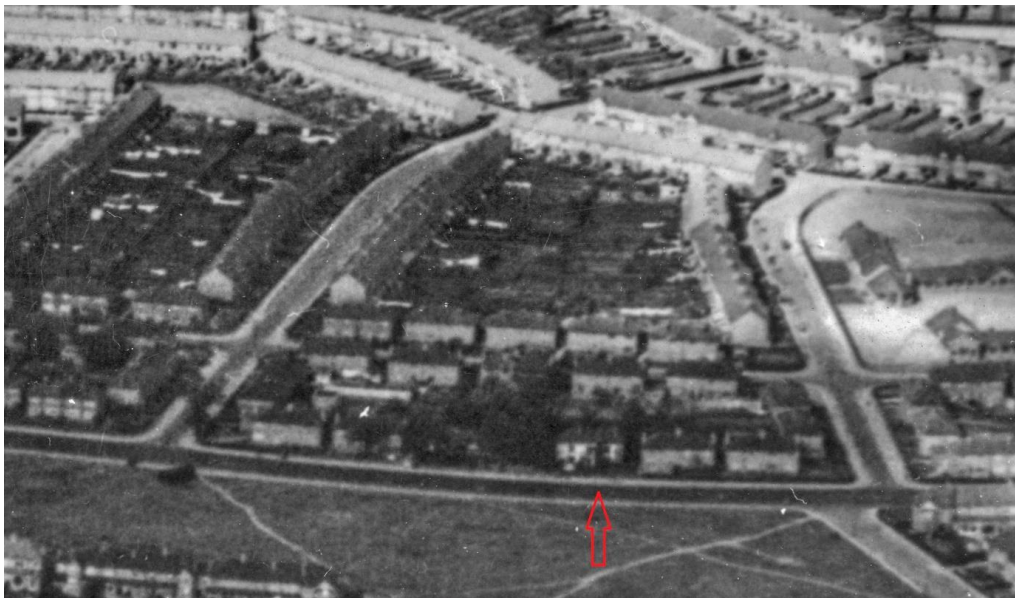
It has been suggested that the cottage became an extension to the house next door, 436 Cranbrook Road, which was being used as the Gants Hill Cross Site Office but an omission of a listing in Kelly's generally implies an empty property. In the Kelly's of 1931 there are two entries for 436 Cranbrook Road – the Gants Hill Cross Site Office which had E.S. Edenborough in brackets as the agent but also for Edwd. Stanley Edenborough; suggesting that he lived there as well.²⁰ There is no entry for 438 nor is there one for 440 implying that both are empty. It is of course possible that this was the case and later for it being used as a builder's yard but there is no firm evidence to support this. In the 1939 Register, the cottage is shown as being empty.

An expert on Gants Hill, Matthew Saye, added to the story by searching the Land Registry records for Gants Hill Cottage.²¹ These show that the house was sold by the City of London Corporation to Charles Henry Lord (later of building firm Lord & Mellowdew) on the 8th February 1929, and that Lord then sold it on to Courage and Company Ltd within a year on 29th January 1930. Matthew thought it likely that the Corporation acquired the property in 1920 together with the rest of the land around Gants Hill.

It is not clear though why Courage then did not immediately develop the site although the economic conditions at the times might be one explanation.

In February 1948 a building plan for licensed premises was approved by Ilford UDC. This was to become the King George V Public House. To date, I can find nothing in the Ilford Recorder of the period as to when Gants Hill Cottage was demolished.

I know that my title sounds like an old Enid Blyton children's book but it does seem to be a mystery as to why a house which would have been a local landmark in the pre-built up area leaves so little trace – especially in photography.



*Aerial shot of
Gants Hill
Cottage in 1933.
(Source:
Historic
England,
Britain from
Above, ref
EPW043386)*

Grateful thanks to Matthew Saye, Alan Simpson, and Vincent Goodman for information in a discussion on the subject.

© **Dr Colin Runeckles, 12 July 2023**

²⁰ This was common with, for example, banks at the time where the manager had a flat upstairs.

²¹ Land Registry Title Summary NGL63730

Ilford Castle, demolished 100 years ago

It was Sir Charles Raymond who built the three-sided tower which was known as Raymond's Folly, Ilford Castle or Cranbrook Castle. Raymond purchased Valentines in 1754 and within a few years he acquired other property in the area. This included the estates of Cranbrook,



Ilford Castle c.1900

Courtesy of Redbridge Heritage Centre

Wyfields and Highlands between Cranbrook Road and the River Roding. Some of the fields he retained, others he sold on, but in 1765 he rebuilt Highlands House which he leased to his very good friend and business associate William Webber. After the death of Webber and of his own wife, probably around 1781, Raymond left Valentines to live at Highlands with the widowed Mrs. Webber, who was the sister of his dead wife.

He built the "castle", a crenellated tower, on the Highlands estate in 1765 as a mausoleum

for his family. Apparently it had catacombs with fourteen compartments in the underground vault. Above this was a chapel, and above that a room where refreshments could be served. However no-one was ever buried there; instead Sir Charles Raymond and his wife Sarah were buried at St. Margaret's at Barking. According to George Tasker (*Ilford Past and Present*, 1901) a descendant of Sir Charles Raymond came across some documents relating to the mausoleum which stated that Raymond and the Bishop could not agree over certain points connected with the consecration, so the ceremony was not performed. The documents show that the building cost £420 and Tasker comments that the quality of the brickwork was very fine even after 130 years.

After Sir Charles Raymond died in 1788 his daughters sold Highlands to Sir James Long and it was merged into the Wanstead House estate. Highlands was demolished early in the 19th century but the castle survived.

During the Great War the tower was used as an observation point but it was demolished by the Port of London Authority in 1923. *See photo.* They built a pavilion on the site which remains there today, Listed Grade II. It was converted into the administrative block of the new Cranbrook Primary School. Looking at the site in 2006 it was clear that any evidence of Raymond's castle was long gone.



Haldon Belvedere (Lawrence Castle) Higher Ashton, Dunchideock, Exeter, Devon EX6 7QY was built in 1788 for Sir Robert Palk following his time as Governor of Madras and is very similar to our lost building. I had the pleasure of attending a wedding there and was amazed how spacious it is, each tower could be made into a reasonable sized bedroom.

<https://www.haldonbelvedere.co.uk/>

© Georgina Green, 24 July 2023

Seven more Stations on the Central Line

Towards the end of a very interesting and detailed 574 page history of the London Underground system entitled *Rails Through the Clay*, I came across a cryptic reference to the booklet *Seven more stations on the Central Line*, published by London Transport in 1947. Luckily Redbridge Central Library Heritage Unit has a copy of the booklet in its Reference section (Ref Y 570). It is a fairly detailed 30 page account of the extension of the Central Line from Leyton to Newbury Park and Woodford, presumably produced as a hand-out to those attending the official opening.

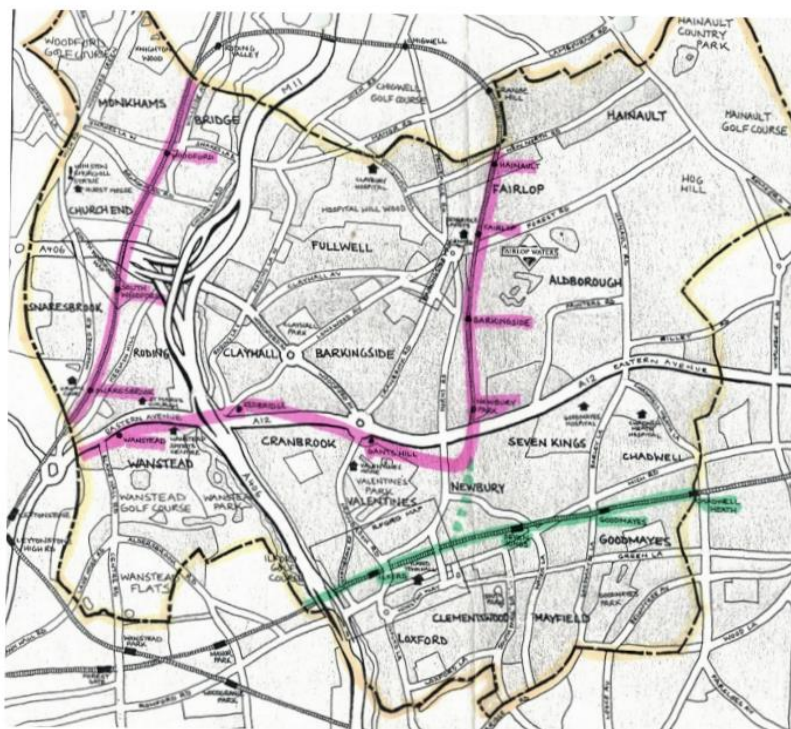
Bound in with the Redbridge copy of the booklet is a programme of the opening by The Rt. Hon. Alfred Barnes, P.C., M.P. Minister of Transport, on Friday 12 December 1947 commencing at 11am at Wanstead station. Guests then boarded the colour coded car (carriage) of a special train matching the colour of their admission ticket. The train left for Newbury Park, passing Redbridge and Gants Hill. There is a note 'A stop may be required for the convenience of press photographers, in which case the doors of the press cars only will be opened. Other guests are requested to remain seated.'

After the train had stopped in Newbury Park siding to allow the crew to change ends, at 11.20am it returned to Gants Hill for guests to inspect the station. At 11.30am the guests adjourned to the Valentine Hotel, Gants Hill, for a reception and speeches by The Rt. Hon. Lord Latham, J.P., F.L.A.A., London Passenger Transport Board, The Rt. Hon. Alfred Barnes P.C., M.P., Minister

of Transport, and Sir Ronald Matthews, J.P., Chairman, London & North Eastern Railway.

Presumably the Valentine Hotel is what we knew as the 'The Valentine' before its recent demolition. The LNER was still very much involved in the area with regular train services. There doesn't seem to be any involvement by local dignitaries (mayors etc.) but no doubt they were among the guests.

The programme also lists 'Transport Arrangements'. Guests could leave motor-cars at Wanstead station under police supervision, or send them (presumably with their drivers) to wait outside the Valentine Hotel



Purple - The Hainault Loop, with the seven new stations, plus the Woodford route.

Map by Martin Fairhurst

at Gants Hill. The special train would run two journeys between Gants Hill and Wanstead for car pick up at 12.40pm and 1pm. For guests without cars double-decker buses left from 55 Broadway SW1 (London Transport head office) for the Wanstead opening, and would return from the Valentine Hotel, Gants Hill, after the reception and speeches, to Liverpool Street, where guests may change to other London Transport services!

© *Martin Fairhurst*, 1 July 2023

IHS Programme for 2023 – 2024

The Inaugural Meeting of Ilford Historical Society was held on 23 September 1968, so it seems appropriate to mention it's our 55th anniversary. **Happy Birthday to us!**

Our regular monthly meetings will be held in Studio 2, Ilford Central Library, Clements Road, Ilford IG1 1EA. on the second Monday of each month, September – May.

Free refreshments will be served from 7pm and our talks start at 7.30pm; we finish by 9.30pm.

Visitors are welcome, £3 per meeting. There are often walks for members in the summer.

Membership of the society for 2023-24 is £10 (payable from September) This includes 3 newsletters available at our meetings, or by email on request.

Please check our website: <http://ilfordhistoricalsociety.weebly.com/> for updates.

11 September 2023 *Housing - are we Better Served?* The National and Redbridge Scene.

By Cllr Muhammed Javed, IHS Vice-President, Public Servant & Volunteer

9 October 2023 *London Public Sculptures “Monuments are for the living not the dead”*

(Frank Wedenkind). A look at some of the great London sculptures & a reflection on their history and purpose. Can we live with the past?

By Rev John Brown

13 November 2023 *Mercantile Monasteries* - English Shops and Shopping.

By Neil Houghton, Walthamstow Historian

11 December 2023 Christmas Social Evening *A Short History of Aviation in South-West Essex.*

By Alan Simpson, Ilford HS committee member and author followed by *Mince Pies and a Quiz*

8 January 2024 *With Dignity and Despatch-* The World of F&C Walters and the Edwardian Funeral Trade.

By Neil Houghton, Walthamstow Historian

12 February 2024 *Kings, Queens and Commoners of Epping Forest.* A look at the Royal and Social History of the Forest from its Earliest Times to the Present.

By Lynn Jones, Ilford HS committee member

11 March 2024 *Reflections on Monkams.* The story of a grand house in Woodford from c.1135 until the break up of the estate in early 20th century.

By Georgina Green, author & Vice-President, Ilford HS

16 March 2024 at 10.30am Georgina will lead a walk around the Monkams area

Details will be available for members later

8 April 2024 AGM 7.15pm followed by

How Did We Get Here? A look back at post-war development of Ilford.

By Dr Colin Runeckles, Treasurer Ilford HS

13 May 2024 *We Celebrate the Bi-centenary of the Founding of the National Gallery in 1824:*

one of the world's greatest art galleries. By Jef Page, Ilford HS President and author

The next newsletter will be available at our December meeting.



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You can follow us on Facebook too.

