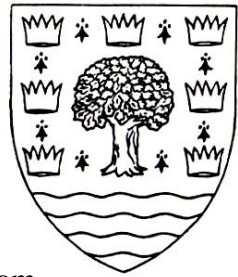


Ilford Historical Society

Newsletter No.143 December 2023

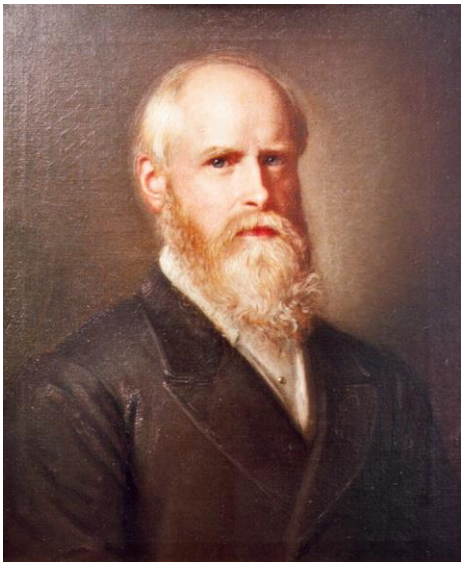


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Our website can be found at: <http://ilfordhistoricalsociety.weebly.com/>

Happy Birthday to the Inglebys

Dr Clement M Ingleby was born 200 years ago on 29 October 1823 at Edgbaston and his wife, Sarah Oakes, also 200 years ago on 22 December 1823 at Gravesend. They came to live at Valentines (where Sarah had spent her teenage years) from around 1860 and they both died at the house – Clement on 26 September 1886 and Sarah on 3 January 1906.



Dr Clement M Ingleby
by Guido Philipp
Schmitt, 1879

© Redbridge Museum &
Heritage Centre

Mrs Sarah Ingleby by
Guido Philipp Schmitt,
1884

© Norfolk Museums
Service (Lynn Museum,
King's Lynn)



Sarah's example as a Christian woman who did all she could to help others less fortunate is a model for teaching about the Victorians. Clement was a noted Shakespearean scholar, as seen on the following pages, and it seems appropriate that his birth was almost on the 200th anniversary of the publication of the Shakespeare 'First Folio'.

We are fortunate that their home, Valentines Mansion, has been preserved by the borough and is open for us all to enjoy on a Sunday and Monday, while the park is an asset all the year round.

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Clement Mansfield Ingleby (1823 – 1886)

Clement Ingleby was born on 29 October 1823 at Edgbaston, (at that time “near Birmingham”) only son of Clement Ingleby, a well-known solicitor, who became well-respected because of his work in connection with the construction of canals and railways at that time. His brother (Clement’s uncle) John Ingleby was a eminent surgeon while his nephew (Clement’s cousin) Joseph Beete Jukes (1811–1869) became a leading geologist. He was a delicate child, not expected to survive, and suffered from ill-health most of his life. He was educated privately but entered Trinity College at Cambridge when he was twenty, becoming B.A.(1847), M.A.(1850), and LL.D. in 1859.

Ingleby was acquainted with Charles Holcombe who lived at Valentines in Ilford, with his wife and their niece, Sarah Oakes. Family letters from 1839-40 show affection between Mrs Margaret Holcombe (aged 47) and the lad who was 30 years younger. Young Clement had apparently been in correspondence with Charles Holcombe about complex issues regarding atmospheric pressure and railway technology. Quite how the Inglebys and Holcombes were acquainted is not known but Margaret obviously knew Clement’s uncles, Alfred and Frederick Jukes, brothers of his mother, Elizabeth.

Clement M Ingleby married Sarah Oakes on 3 October 1850 at the parish church of Great Ilford. They had been acquainted for at least ten years, maybe since before the Holcombes moved to Valentines. In her letters Sarah refers to Clement by his middle name, Mansfield, the maiden name of his maternal grandmother. They settled down together at 35 Carpenter Road, Edgbaston and had four children: Arthur born 18 September 1852, Holcombe born 18 March 1854, Herbert born 19 May 1856 and Clementina Rose born 27 December 1857.

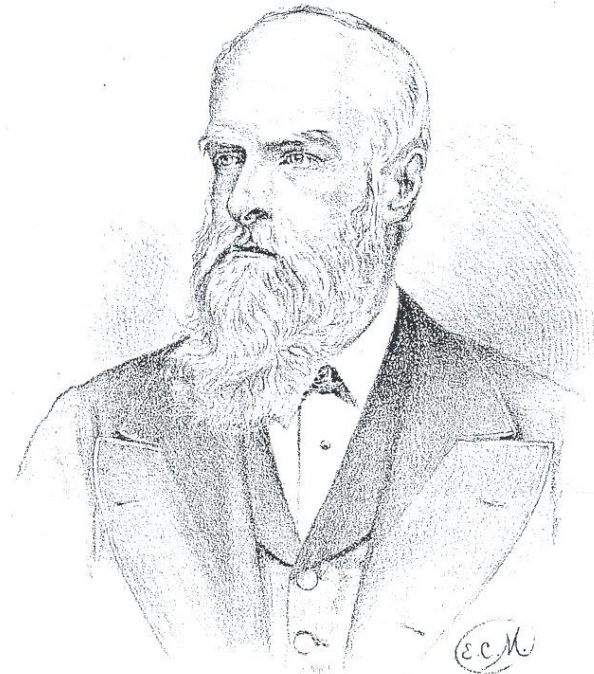
His early working life was spent with his father, eventually being taken into partnership as a solicitor in the firm of Ingleby, Wragge and Ingleby of Birmingham. However, he did not enjoy the legal profession and in his spare time he studied metaphysics, mathematics, philosophy and literature. He was a member of a debating society and a literary circle, contributing to their publications. On the title page of his book *Outlines of Theoretical Logic*, published in 1856 as a school text-book, Clement M. Ingleby is described as “Teacher of Metaphysics and Logic in the Industrial Department of the Birmingham and Midland Institute”.

Apparently Ingleby first became interested in Shakespeare through an acquaintance with Howard Staunton with whom he played chess. Staunton was the champion chess player in 1843 and author of *The Chess Player’s Handbook*. He was a Shakespearean scholar who produced an edition of Shakespeare in 1858-60. In 1859 Ingleby published a study of the “Perkins Folio” which had been claimed as a newly discovered work of Shakespeare but was later acknowledged as a forgery. His legal training and logical mind were soon put to good use in setting out the facts in a more detailed work. For this “he was a constant visitor to the library of the British Museum”. Clement Ingleby senior died on 21 Aug 1859 so he felt able to abandoned the legal profession. At about this time he moved away from Birmingham, taking his wife and their young family back to her earlier home at Valentines. In April 1860 Charles Holcombe’s wife, Margaret, died and this may have prompted a decision for them to stay at Valentines permanently.

According to his obituary in *Shakespeariana*, “After his removal from Birmingham... Dr.Ingleby went to reside at Valentines, Ilford... a stately mansion with a noble lawn, and park, a grand avenue of yew-trees, and famous gardens. He was one of the members of the literary society of London – the Athenaeum Club – and in its library, and his own pleasant library, at Ilford, his literary life was chiefly passed.”

Although the move gave him a new home he still needed to provide for his family. Dr Ingleby published at least 18 books in 29 editions, including 5 on metaphysics and 12 on Shakespeare with an edition of *Cymbeline* with notes for schools. He wrote many essays and contributed to several publications like *Note & Queries*. Apart from Shakespearean topics his articles ranged from “The Principles of Acoustics and the Theory of Sound” to “Miracles versus Nature”. He also wrote poetry, some of which was published in periodicals. His verses were collected together after his death and printed for private circulation. This is now reprinted and shows a range of topics, both serious and amusing.

Dr. Ingleby’s mother lived until 1877 (she died aged 94) and he kept in regular contact with her. He took an active part in the festivities held in Birmingham in 1864 to celebrate the tercentenary of Shakespeare’s birth. He had a fine singing voice which he put to good use in performing some of Shakespeare’s songs “in a voice so sweet, yet ringing, in a style so faultless and impressive and with a feeling so deep and sympathetic, that aged ears played truant at his words and younger ears were quite ravished by his brilliant and silvery tones”. This quotation is given in full to balance a suggestion he was “unfeeling” because of his ability to write logically and without sentiment. This was the reaction of some, indeed many, to his argument put forward in 1883 in *Shakespeare’s Bones*, that the grave of the great man should be opened so that an examination of his skull could help to establish his appearance. His colleagues respected the merit of his argument, but did not act on the suggestion.



The portrait “from a recent photograph” appeared in *Edgbastonia*, Vol.III, No.25, May 1883.

At the Annual Meeting of Shakespeare’s Birthplace Trust at Stratford-upon-Avon on 5 May 1875 the Trustees had unanimously agreed to elect Dr Ingleby one of the Life Trustees. He was also elected a Vice-President of the Royal Society of Literature in 1876, an honorary member of the Shakespeare Society of New York, and an honorary member of the German Shakespeare Society of Weimar.

In 1877 and 1881 he published the two volumes of his work *Shakespeare – The Man and the Book*. This was a compilation of his writings gathered from a number of sources, some published in magazines, some previously unpublished. In the introduction Dr. Ingleby says “It is useful to get one’s scattered papers together... the collection includes such of my smaller writings as I

Redbridge Museum update

Since my last report in summer, work to complete the Museum has been continuing at pace. It now looks like the opening will take place early in the New Year. The majority of the fit-out build is now finished, and we are working our way through the remaining smaller jobs, decoration, snagging, and audio-visual installation. As an example, I have 100 spotlights to fit to light the new displays. This will involve me going up and down a ladder at least 100 times, so if nothing else I will keep fit.

Around 60% of objects have been carefully installed on their custom-mounts, and it's good to see exhibits in their display cases and they're looking very impressive. We will be working with the mount-maker to measure objects for the 'modern section' of the Museum so that their mounts can be made. The modern section covers the period 1939 to the 2020s and is the last to be installed. It takes in the Second World War, how homes and town centres have changed, significant local and national events, the increased diversity of the borough, and finishing up with the most recent changes. All of these displays will be told through the eyes of the people that were there.

Much of my time over the past 6 months have been taken up with content writing, editing, and proofing the artwork for text panels. It has been a very time-consuming process and some of the text panels are on version 18! There is a huge amount of content, and it is a challenge to boil information down to its bare essentials. Low-tech interactive designs are being developed before production in November and will be installed shortly afterwards. This includes a chance for visitors to build the Red Bridge, make a Roman pot, and load cargo onto a barge on Ilford Wharf. The under 5s area has been fitted out with a child-sized 1930s kitchen, a Victorian shop, and a Routemaster bus, so there is something for all ages.

We have decided to prioritise local schools in the final phase of the redevelopment and are pleased to say that our first in-person education session will take place on 1 November. There is a huge demand for school visits and we are fully booked until Christmas which is great news. The majority of the sessions we are teaching cover 'Ice Age to Iron Age' so we have made sure this section of the museum is ready first.

So, it has been a long wait but the Museum's completion is much closer. I would like to wish all the members of the Society of a very Happy Christmas and look forward to welcoming everyone to the new Museum in the New Year.

Gerard Greene, Redbridge Museum & Heritage Centre Manager, 11 October 2023



One of the newly installed displays about sport, clubs, and societies.

John Ward, Ilford's forgotten composer

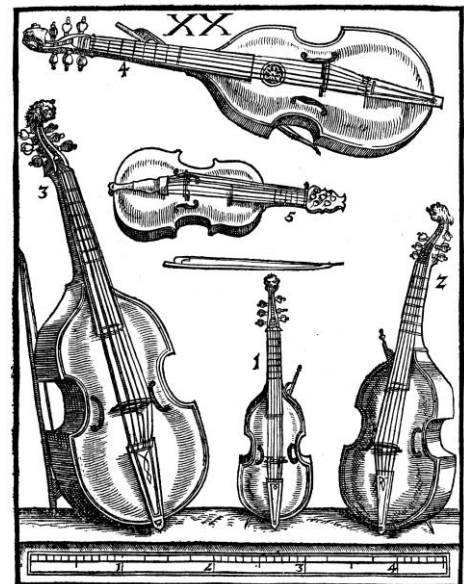
“Ward is one of the most daring and modern ecclesiastical composers of the madrigalian time....
...he is full of anticipations of much later times, and, indeed, is not infrequently almost Purcellian in spirit” wrote Ernest Walker, in *A History of Music in England*, published in 1907. Until recently very little was known about the life of John Ward - in 1970 the tenth edition of the Oxford Companion to Music devoted just four short sentences to him. That was about to change, thanks to the work of specialist early music scholars and performers, from the 1980s onwards. Most of Ward's known compositions have now been recorded. He has been overshadowed by his better known and admittedly greater contemporaries such as William Byrd and Orlando Gibbons. Some sources give Ward's date of birth as 1571, others 1589, but agree that he was born in Kent, possibly in Ashford, and became a chorister at Canterbury Cathedral. It might have been his father – also John – who was born in 1571. Ward senior was in the service of Elizabeth Smyth of Ashford, who married Sir Henry Fanshawe in 1594.¹

John junior came to London and entered the service of the Fanshawe family. This might have come about as a result of his father's connection with Elizabeth Smyth. Sir Henry Fanshawe (1569 – 1616) was an enthusiastic patron of the arts, with painters, poets and musicians at his establishment at Ware Park in Hertfordshire. He held the post of Remembrancer to the Exchequer – the third in his family to do so – and it seems that Ward was later employed as Attorney to the Remembrancer after Sir Henry's death, when his son Thomas took on the post. This might have been why Ward was regarded as not being a true professional musician, though in 1622 the distinguished composer Thomas Tomkins (1572 – 1656) paid him the compliment of dedicating a madrigal to him.

Ward's first publication, in 1613, was a set of madrigals dedicated to “the honourable gentleman, and my very good Maister, Sir Henry Fanshawe knight”. When Sir Henry died, in 1616, Ward composed the anthem *If Heav'n's Just Wrath* in his honour.² Ward was a witness to Sir Henry's will.

Sir Henry's son, Sir Thomas, did not share his father's passion for the arts; consequently the musical establishment at Ware Park was down-sized; that might be why John Ward took on a new role in the Remembrancer's office.

In 1624 John Ward married Thomazina Clee at All Hallows by the Tower; three children – Susan (1626), John (1627) and Thomas (1629) – were baptised there. According to the *Dictionary of National Biography* John Ward senior “who had built up a modest estate at Great Ilford, a village in Barking parish, had recently died, and that the composer and his wife had moved to Ilford”. Mary Ward, baptised in 1630 at Barking, suggests that the family had moved into Essex. However, the mother is not named, so this does not prove that it is the same family – and I have found no mention of Ward holding any land in Ilford or district in the *Victoria County History Essex*.



a consort of viols, from *Syntagma Musicum*,
Michael Praetorius, 1619.

¹ *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*

² *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*

An article from Wikipedia makes the intriguing claim that Ward “appears in the 1630s to have been assigned the mastership of the Hospital Chapel of St. Mary & St. Thomas of Canterbury, in Ilford”. Further research required!

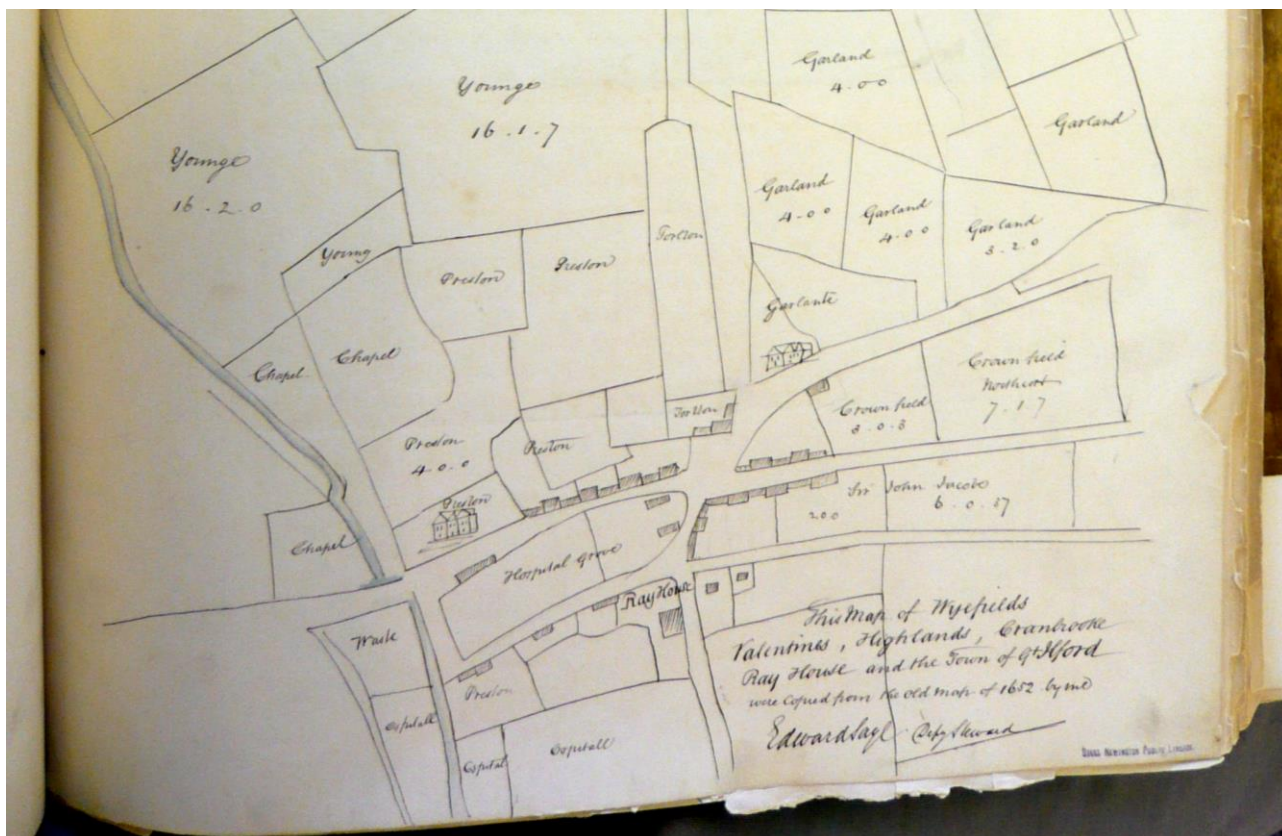
John Ward died in 1638. The generous bequests to his wife and children show that he was wealthy and owned property, mentioning a farm and mill in Ilford and Shenfield. I perused the will hoping to find mention of musical instruments, maybe “my best virginals to my loving wife” or “my bass viol to my son”, but I could see nothing, though I must confess to little experience of deciphering 17th century script.

Ward composed madrigals, anthems and consort music for viols – I have seen no mention of any keyboard music. In 1676, Thomas Mace (composer, lutenist and writer on music) described Ward’s fantasias as “fit monuments, and patterns for sober and wise posterity, worthy to be imitated and practiced”³. Ilford can be proud of him.

© Madeline Seviour, 6 November 2023

Ilford in 1650

The map below dates from 1652 when Ilford was just part of Barking parish. There were a few large houses and farmsteads scattered in the countryside but the majority of the population lived around the Grove owned by the Hospital Chapel. We know it today as a large traffic roundabout! It seems likely John Ward lived in one of these houses.



Essex Record Office D/DSa 1321 ‘Collections for a History of Barking, Dagenham and Little Ilford Co. Essex’ Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office

³ quoted by Laurence Dreyfus in a programme note, 2009 - Practiced is original spelling!

Flying from Ilford

In early July 1959, a small single-seat aircraft took off from White Waltham airfield⁴ near Maidenhead. Watching closely on the ground was John Taylor (1922-1967), the aircraft's designer and builder. This was the first British home-built design to fly since the end of the Second World War and John was anxious that nothing untoward should happen to his creation. What made the event equally notable, however, was the fact that the aircraft had been constructed in a first-floor flat in Ilford.

Home-building an aeroplane was one route to affordable flying, but in the years after the Second World War such home-building was still in its relative infancy. The disastrous pre-war 'Flying Flea' experience had tarnished the concept in the eyes of the British authorities, and it took a long time to remove that stigma. The aircraft that took shape in John Taylor's home was at the forefront of the movement's revival.

The seeds of John's interest in flying were sown by his mother – she had worked for the Sopwith Aviation Company at Kingston-on-Thames. As a teenager, John initially worked as an apprentice for a garage mechanic, but swiftly moved to A J Dorset as a precision tool-room machinist making submarine components. In his spare time, he began to make free-flight model aircraft, especially of First World War types. Aged 17 at the outbreak of the Second World War, John went to work for J A Prestwich Industries (JAP), primarily known at the time for its small industrial stationary and motorcycle engines. The work was deemed so important that, rather than being called up, John stayed in this reserved occupation with the firm throughout the war.

The Taylor family lived in Hackney during the Second World War, but their house took a direct hit from a German bomb. In 1944, they were relocated to 46 Sunnyside Road, Ilford where they lived until 1961. When John married Eve in 1948, his parents gave the couple the top floor of the Ilford house.

In the period after the war, John's interest in combustion engines merged with his pre-war hobby. After setting up his own motorbike repair business in 1946, two years later he began running his own model aircraft engine company. This lasted for only two years because of poor work by a sub-contractor costing him a lot of money. John then joined London Transport in 1950 as a bus driver with the intention of learning to fly with the London Transport Flying Club⁵. This he achieved at Fair Oaks airfield, near Woking, in 1952. After his time with London Transport, John went to work in the jig and tooling office at Briggs Motor Bodies, attached to the Ford Motor Company.

Throughout this period, the desire to build a full-size aeroplane of his own design burned bright so John began learning how to design small aeroplanes. His ambition was to design a single-seat aircraft that people with average construction skills and the minimum number of tools could make and fly.

In 1957, after an introduction to entrepreneur, flight engineer and pilot Douglas Bianchi of Personal Plane Services at White Waltham, John started building an airframe in the flat at Ilford.

⁴ White Waltham had been the headquarters of the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA), formed in 1939 to transport mail, personnel and supplies to the armed forces within the British Isles. The ATA was soon responsible for ferrying Royal Air Force aircraft between the various factories, maintenance units and bases. Today the airfield is home to the West London Aero Club.

⁵ The London Transport Flying Club (LTFC) was founded in 1931 by a group of London bus drivers who wanted to fly but had little money to pay for lessons. Backed by the sports association of the London General Omnibus Company, and subsequently the London Passenger Transport Board, it provided training at low cost to company staff. The club continues to fly from Fair Oaks airfield today.

What would become the JT-1 Monoplane was of all-wood construction, with a two-spar wing, and a rib structure. The wing leading edges were covered with plywood, as was a portion of the wing surface, but behind the main spar was covered with fabric. The fuselage consisted of four longerons (spar-like structures that run the length of an aircraft's fuselage) covered with ply to form a 'box'. All these elements went towards building up an immensely strong structure.

John's son Terry later recalled that the aircraft:

'... was just there, I sat in it, people came to take pictures of us all from time to time. I didn't understand how unusual it was. I remember going to friends' houses and noticing that they didn't have anything like that. We ate off the tailplane, because he'd commandeered the table to make a bench out of it'.

In a small news item on 5 December 1958, *Aeroplane* magazine reported:

'The attractive JAP-powered single-seat ultra-light has been designed by Mr John Taylor of Ilford, Essex, and built, with the assistance of his wife, in the living room of his upstairs flat during the past year. Its completion is imminent, but flying it will not be a fraction of the problem involved in extricating it from its birthplace'.



The Taylor family with the JT-1 Monoplane at 46 Sunnyside Road, Ilford in 1959.

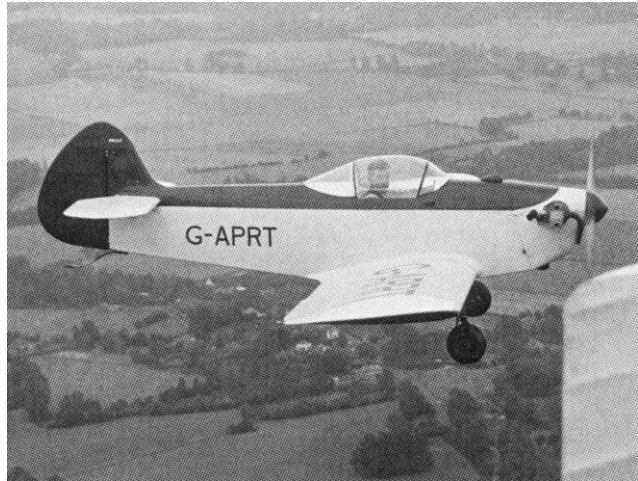
(All three Photographs courtesy of *Aeroplane* magazine)

The living room dimensions (16 x 11 feet) and the window through which the airframe would have to be extricated (4' 6" across the diagonal) had influenced the size of the aircraft built. Subsequently, in early July 1959, to get the fuselage and wings out of the flat, it was necessary to remove the first-floor bay window, and slide the parts down window cleaners' ladders. At ground level, they were then man-handled into a waiting lorry to carry them to White Waltham airfield, where John would assemble his machine.



The JT-1 Monoplane being removed through the upstairs bay window of 46 Sunnyside Road, Ilford, in July 1959.

Douglas Bianchi was also responsible for recommending the aircraft's test pilot, O V 'Titch' Holmes. At White Waltham on 4 July 1959, Holmes duly took the plane into the air for the first time. It was the culmination of a remarkable effort, for the building process had lasted just 14 months and cost less than £100. Holmes was very pleased with the flight and the aircraft required no major alteration. A flight permit was issued and the aircraft registered as G-APRT. Little more than a year later, in September 1960, John Taylor flew his creation himself.



The JT-1 Monoplane in flight

The JT-1 Monoplane displayed fine handling characteristics. Power was initially supplied by a JAP engine putting out about 37hp, but this was subsequently replaced by a more powerful 45hp engine. The loaded weight was only 660lb, so, despite a small engine, its maximum speed was 115 mph, and it cruised at 100 mph.

Both British Pathé News and the BBC heard about John's unusual project and visited his home. Two films of the construction and flight of the JT-1 Monoplane can be found online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5CsjyvCGCc> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Vym2JcV7So>.

John owned G-APRT from 1959 to 1961 when he sold the aircraft for £150 to put towards a new house in Leigh-on-Sea (and a new career teaching metalwork). Four owners later, the aircraft ended up on the Portuguese register (1985 to 1989), but later came back to Essex in an unusual manner. In 1994, G-APRT had changed hands again and was making its first flight in the hands of its new owner from Birmingham to Kent on 6 March that year. The aircraft set off south in company with a Piper Cub flown by the pilot's father, following the M1 motorway and then turning east towards Stapleford where it was intended to turn south again along the line of the M11 towards Kent. The engine failed and the aircraft was forced to set down near the M11 in Chigwell. After rolling for a number of yards, the port wheel dug into the soft ground and collapsed. The accompanying Piper carried on to Kent, the pilot returning three hours later to recover G-APRT on a low-loader.

There have been some alterations to the aircraft's original colour scheme over the years, and the original full canopy has been dispensed with. Despite these alterations, the prototype JT-1 Monoplane survives today and can be found in the Newark Air Museum in Lincolnshire. The aircraft's status on the National Aviation Heritage Register is given as 'noteworthy'.

G-APRT was the first of many JT-1 Monoplanes, making them one of Britain's most popular home-built designs. Over the years, the prototype has been followed into the air by more than 150 others, with examples flying in Africa, America, Europe and Oceania. If you fancy building your own JT-1 Monoplane – in your living room or elsewhere – more information and copies of the plans are available via Terry Taylor's website at www.taylortitch.co.uk.

© Alan Simpson, 27 October 2023

Further reading

'Taylor Made' by Ben Dunnell in *Aeroplane* magazine, June 2017

Beer and Paper on Ilford Hill

Roding House

Regular readers of my articles will recall that the Eastern Counties Railway company bought up land and buildings along the route in the 1830s, and then resold that surplus to requirements some years later.⁶ One of these sales in 1843 included the White House – the Ilford Academy – and the adjacent Roding House which at the time housed Ilford’s section of the Metropolitan Police. Shortly after, the police moved further up Ilford Hill on the same side. The story of Roding House thereafter involves beer and paper although not at the same time.

Beer

Our story begins with William Rose, a brewer who, according to the 1839 Pigot’s Directory of Essex is based in Ilford but does not specify whereabouts. By studying the 1841 Census we can locate him on Ilford Hill not far from the Red Lion. It is possible that a later side-turning off Ilford Hill known as Rose Court was named after him. Rose is also mentioned in an advert relating to houses which were being pulled down due to the building of the new railway line. Four of his houses on Factory Row were due to come down.⁷ In 1844 Rose raised an objection to the assessment of the ‘malting and premises’ he occupied at Great Ilford but again with no exact location.⁸ It’s possible that Rose bought the site at the auction in 1843.

Rose can be located with certainty in that by 1847 he has moved down Ilford Hill and now occupies Roding House and the land that went with it.⁹ But Rose was to die later that year in a tragic accident near Leytonstone. *Patriot* recounted the sad tale

*“On Thursday week last, Mr. William Rose, brewer, of Great Ilford was riding in his chaise with his servant, near Leytonstone, when the horse, a high-spirited animal, took fright at some object in the road, and begun to plunge and kick furiously. Before he could be controlled, he run away and dashed the chaise against a wall, by which Mr. Rose and his servant were thrown out.”*¹⁰


The servant was unhurt but Rose died the next day.

The next occupant of Roding House was Francis Somerset who is listed as a brewer and maltster in White’s Directory of 1848. However, he appears to have moved during the latter part of 1850, since he is listed as living in Speen, Berkshire in the 1851 census but with a 7-month-old infant who had been born in Ilford.

Replacing him in Roding House was Edmond Batt who placed an advertisement in a Lincolnshire newspaper in December 1850. Batt is then listed in the Census for 1851 as a brewer, malter, and merchant.

To MALTSTERS and BREWERS.

A Practical Porter and Ale Brewer, whose article is well known, is open to an Engagement as Brewer. The Advertiser, having Casks, Mash Tun, Mashing Machinery, False Bottoms, and other Brewing Utensils, will prefer making arrangements with a party where the above can be worked to the advantage of both.

 For further particulars apply to Messrs. BOYD and COMPANY, hop-merchants, Borough, London ; or to E. C. BATT, Esq., the Ilford Brewery, Ilford, Essex.

Stamford Mercury 6th December 1850. Newspaper image © The British Library Board. All rights reserved. With thanks to The British Newspaper Archive (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk).

⁶ *IHS Newsletter* 138, April 2022

⁷ *Morning Advertiser* 28 April 1844

⁸ *Chelmsford Chronicle* 29th November 1844

⁹ The Tithe Index records that Rose was the owner and occupier of numbers 1413, 1413b, 1413c, 1414, and 1415; and the occupier of 1413a and d which were owned by others.

¹⁰ *Patriot* 28th June 1847

But by 1856 the brewery was clearly in difficulties, and together with the “*malting, residence, garden, conservatory, and large kitchen garden*” and three beer houses, was put up for sale.¹¹ I can find no further references to the brewery after this.

Paper

The next Census in 1861 records that Thomas Farrands, Paper Maker, is the occupant of Roding House. This is the first reference I can find of paper making having replaced brewing on the site. Farrands is also listed in the 1871 Census. But there are new houses that have been erected close to the paper mill, some of whose occupants work in the factory. This was Sundown Place, a terrace of ten houses which faced away from the High Road and towards the railway line. In the middle of the terrace there was an opening by which occupants could reach their front doors. As well as Sundown Place, there was another, more substantial, house known as Moor Cottage that was the home of the factory foreman. The auction of the land “*...adjoining the garden belonging to the Ilford Brewery...sufficient for the erection of several small cottages*” was back in December 1851.¹²

It is possible then, that this was bought by the owner of the brewery and sold off in 1856 with the rest of the brewery site. The first mention of the cottages is an article about the potential of the well on the paper mill site to supply the households of Ilford and Barking with water.

*“Mr. Simpson, the freeholder, is willing to supply this water at 1s per 1,000 gallons, which sum includes the cost of pumping. The scheme is to erect a tank capable of holding 60,000 gallons, near Sundown Place, Ilford.”*¹³

Newspaper reports include a visit from a Medical Officer of health in 1864, a letter from Thomas Farrands about a new process for making chlorine in 1867, a theft by an employee, a fire at Simpson & Co in 1869, the demonstration of a new furnace door in 1872, and an advert placed by



Sundown Place to the right of the railway line.
Ilford To Shenfield David Brennand, Middleton Press 2002

Farrands in 1873 for “*some middle-aged married men that can use a shovel.*”

But at the end of June 1876 the Chelmsford Chronicle recorded a story about Farrands himself. Under the headline SHOCKING SUICIDE AT ILFORD it told the tragic tale of Farrands who “*had been in very low spirits for eighteen months, owing to a variety of causes, one being the depressed state of trade*” and had taken his own life with a revolver.¹⁴

¹¹ *London Daily News* 19th September 1856.

¹² *Morning Advertiser* 18th November 1851

¹³ *Essex Times* 14th November 1868

¹⁴ *Chelmsford Chronicle* 30th June 1876. It transpired the following year that Farrands was owed £26 by Wm. Howitt – the brother-in-law of the deceased – and an IOU was found on Farrands body.

Whether that downturn in trade continued isn't clear but an advert for the sale or let of the paper mill was placed in the Evening Standard in 1879, which said that it was capable of turning out 20 tons of paper every week. Application was to Joseph Simpson in Clapham or Mr. Mears – the manager then occupying Roding House. A Rate Book from 1882 gives the occupant as Thompson Bonar & Co with Mr. Simpson retaining ownership.

In June 1883 The Ekman Pulp and Paper Company was formed with a capital of £250,000 in shares of £10, and in August it was reported in an Antigua newspaper that Mr. Ekman had sold his patent for manufacturing paper from wood pulp to the new company for £125,000. The article notes that the capital had already been subscribed and that "...*the Company will continue operations at the Ilford Paper Mill until their new works are completed.*"¹⁵ It would appear then that Ekman Pulp and Paper had already taken over from Thompson Bonar as operators of the paper mill. Newspapers of the period record that the company paid for an annual excursion and dinner to a coastal resort – Southend, Brighton, and in 1888 to Ramsgate. After an early start from Ilford, employees enjoyed breakfast first, then rowing, bathing and the like before reconvening at lunchtime for a company-paid dinner with toasts to the chairman and success to the company. After a full afternoon's activities, the employees returned to Ilford at a very late hour.¹⁶

In a letter to the Essex Countryside in May 1961, Percival Prior gives much valuable information about the history of the paper mills at Ilford as his father John – later to be the manager in its final years – arrived in Ilford to take up employment with the company.¹⁷

Working conditions in the 19th century were not as stringent as they are today and newspapers record two accidents at the mill – one more serious than the other. In August 1883 "*a lad named Chambers*" was fixing a belt when his arms were caught in the machinery resulting in two broken arms and a finger torn off.¹⁸ Three girls were injured in October 1892 when an upper floor of a building where they were working in the store room sorting paper collapsed. Of interest is that the article gives the girls' addresses which were all extremely local ones – Sedan Cottages (on Ilford Hill opposite Mill Road), Brandon Grove (off Ilford Hill on the same side as the mill), and Union Court (off Ilford Hill before Sundown Place was reached).¹⁹

At this point the company appears to have been doing quite well. In May 1890, at the request of the manager, Edward Read, the company gave all of its employees a week's holiday to be taken whenever the employee wished. The article went on to say that some of the employees had taken up the offer already.²⁰ In May 1896 it was reported that the company were to issue £130,000 worth of debenture stock but what was interesting was what the advert said about the company:

*"The company possesses two mills, one at Northfleet (freehold) with a complete plant for the manufacture of sulphite wood-pulp and four paper machines, and the other at Ilford (leasehold) with one paper machine. The output of these five machines is now 150 tons of paper per week."*²¹

¹⁵ *Antigua Observer* 20th August 1883. The article had come from the *Planters Gazette*.

¹⁶ *Essex Times* 25th July 1888

¹⁷ *Essex Countryside* May 1961

¹⁸ *Chelmsford Chronicle* 24th August 1883

¹⁹ *Barking, East Ham and Ilford Advertiser* 29th October 1892

²⁰ *Barking, East Ham and Ilford Advertiser* 17th May 1890

²¹ *Westminster Gazette* 13th May 1896. Debenture stock is essentially just a loan to the company with bears a fixed rate of interest to be paid before any return to shareholders.

Note here two things – that the Northfleet factory was considerably larger than Ilford, and that the Ilford site was only held leasehold. John Prior took over as manager of the paper mill around 1903 and the family moved into Roding House. Percival Prior says about the house that:

“The rooms were large with oak floors, and there were a wine cellar and a butler’s pantry. The photograph (see below) shows my late father, mother and sister in front of the house, and in the background a fine wisteria can be seen covering the ground and first floors. The kitchen garden was at the rear, approached by going through part of the mill.”²²



The Prior family in the garden of Roding House. Reproduced by kind permission of the Redbridge Heritage Centre.

In March 1904 it was reported that the name of the company was to be changed to Northfleet Paper Mills Limited. One can imagine that this might have worried employees in Ilford as to the future of the factory there. In 1907 the business at Ilford was sold to a man named Judd and, Percival Prior tells us, the business focused on producing writing paper.²³ As to Northfleet Paper Mills, it was reported in November 1923 that a Receiver and manager had been appointed and that the company had *“passed a resolution that it could not carry on. It had stopped payment, had come to the end of its resources, and had no further money for the payment of wages.”*²⁴

²² *Essex Countryside* May 1961

²³ *Essex Countryside* May 1961

²⁴ *Aberdeen Press and Journal* 10th December 1923.



Ilford Paper Mills by Mill Road -
Ilford to Shenfield David
Brennand, Middleton Press 2002

The detail of how the Ilford paper mill came to an end and why is quite difficult to ascertain. The business was listed under Mill Road in Kelly's Directory for 1924 but not for 1925. Gunby states that the building was demolished in 1926.²⁵ John

Prior, as last manager of the mill, was last listed in Kelly's in 1929 which, given the advert discussed below, suggests that Roding House was demolished c.1929-30.²⁶

Afterwards

The site with an area of 76,500 sq. ft including Sundown Cottages was sold at auction on 29 May 1930.²⁷ However, there appears only to have been warehouses and lorry parks on the site until it was then developed by the forerunner of British Telecom as Mill House in the 1960s. This development also swallowed up Brandon Terrace along the High Road and Brandon Grove.

Just a note about the public house, The Papermakers Arms in Roden Street. There is only one publican or beer house keeper listed in the 1871 Census and that is for the Old Coach and Horses which was further up Roden Street. The Pub History website lists a William Scott at the Papermakers Arms in 1872.²⁸

The brewery, sadly for Ilford's frequenters of the many public houses, did not last very long. The paper mill lasted a lot longer and left its mark with the Papermakers Arms and Mill Road. It is also possible that Prior Road (off Mill Road) is named after the last manager.

© *Dr Colin Runeckles, 11 November 2023*

Papermakers Arms, Roden Street
17 April 1988
Photo: Georgina Green



²⁵ N. Gunby *A Potted History of Ilford* (1997), p318

²⁶ The suggestion of Percival Prior that the house was demolished in 1931 seems unlikely given the sale advert. A trawl through the Ilford Recorder of the period might reveal more detail on the end of the mills and house.

²⁷ *Eastern Counties Times* 2nd May 1930. Note that there is said to be eleventh Sundown Cottages – the last one is possibly Moor Cottage.

²⁸ <https://pubshistory.com/EssexPubs/Ilford/papermaker.shtml>

IHS Programme for Spring 2024

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.

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

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

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

Meet at the junction of Monkams Lane and The Green, near All Saint's church.



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 April meeting.



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