SURREY HISTORY

Kenneth Gravett and Surrey Local History Council
London's and Surrey's 'Fight for the River'
A History of the Telephone Service in the Town of Redhill
Commemorating the Fallen
Accessions of Records to Surrey History Centre in 1999

VOLUME VI NUMBER 2

£3.95

SURREY LOCAL HISTORY COUNCIL

The Surrey Local History Council is a charity (Registered No. 247784), which exists to foster an interest in the history of Surrey, by encouraging local history societies within the county, by the organisation of meetings, by publication and also by co-operation with other bodies, to discover the past and to maintain the heritage of Surrey, in history, in architecture and in landscape.

The meetings organised by the Council include a one-day Symposium on a local-history topic, the Annual General Meeting, which includes a visit to a place of historical interest, and lectures. The Council produces *Surrey History* annually and other booklets from time to time and these are available from bookshops throughout the county.

Membership on the part of local history societies will help the Council to express with authority the importance of local history in the county. The annual subscription for Societies is £15.00, due on 1 April, and in return for this they receive a copy of *Surrey History* and three newsletters a year. Members of Member Societies may attend the Symposium and other meetings at a reduced fee and obtain publications at a special rate from the Hon. Secretary. Member Societies may also exhibit at the Symposium and sell their publications there.

Individuals, especially those who live where there is no local history society, may subscribe for £7.00. For this they will receive one copy of *Surrey History*, the newsletter and all other benefits of membership, except that they will not be able to vote at the A.G.M. All enquiries for membership should be made to the Hon. Secretary, c/o The Guildford Institute of the University of Surrey, Ward Street, Guildford, GU2 4LH.

Papers for publication in *Surrey History* are welcome and intending authors are invited to consult the Hon. Editor for advice before proceeding. To assist in setting the journal, articles must be typed clearly, with minimum errors, in double spacing and with a wide margin on the left hand side. They should be sent to the Hon. Editor, at the address above. Please enclose a stamped, addressed envelope.

SURREY HISTORY

VOLUME VI NUMBER 2

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Cover illustration: A view of part of the manual switch-room at Redhill manual exchange in the late 1950s.

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Kenneth Gravett and Surrey Local History Council

David Robinson, County Archivist

Ken Gravett was a founder member of Surrey Local History Council in 1965 and Chairman from 1972 until his death in November 1999.

Inauguration

On 8 June 1965 Captain A.L. Tapper, general secretary of the Council for Social Service for Surrey, circulated the announcement that 'a meeting will be held at Jenner House, 2 Jenner Road, Guildford at 2.45pm on Saturday 12 June 1965, to consider the inauguration of a County Local History Committee'. Mrs. D. Newman, vice-chairman of the executive committee of the Council, would take the chair and the meeting would be addressed by Mr. P.D. Whitting, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Standing Conference for Local History, an associated group of the National Council of Social Service. The meeting was well attended and a number of leading members of Surrey Archaeological Society and other local historians attended. Some, like James Batley, Elfrida Manning, T.E. Conway Walker and Richard Leveson-Gower, became active members of the new body. The SAS Council had resolved the previous evening to give every help to the formation of the new body. The 12 June meeting appointed a steering committee. This committee recommended that the Local History Council should be under the wing of the Council for Social Service which would provide secretarial and administrative services. 'One of the main objects of the Council is to encourage the formation of more local groups, and the county organisation should not therefore provide an alternative membership for local people interested in the subject.' Membership would be confined to organisations 'except for individuals whose entry should be specifically approved by the Executive Committee'.

The proposal had been floated in the previous year and aroused some concern as to the relationship of the proposed new committee with Surrey

Archaeological Society. After Captain Tapper had sent out in May the preliminary notice of the meeting the county archivist Marguerite Gollancz and Guildford Museum's curator-archivist Enid Dance needed to be persuaded at a lunch meeting at the University Women's Club that the proposed new body could fulfil a rôle which SAS did not in bringing local history to a much wider audience. Women's Institutes and Old People's Groups were singled out as examples.

The inaugural meeting was held at Jenner House on 23 October. Lionel Munby, editor of *The Amateur Historian*, spoke on 'The Amateur and the Professional in Local History – How can they best co-operate.' At the business meeting subscriptions were set at 1 guinea per annum for large organisations, half-a-guinea for smaller ones with 15 or fewer members and for individuals. Three projects were identified: a short list of books on the history of the county and parishes for use by amateurs; the recording of Surrey dialects; and the distribution and collection of forms recording local history data. Richard Dufty of Farnham, secretary of the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments (England), was elected chairman and Uvedale Lambert of Bletchingley vice-chairman.

In February 1966 it was announced that a Surrey Local History Symposium, sponsored jointly by the Local History Council and Surrey Archaeological Society, would be held at Dorking, following a suggestion made by Ken Gravett, who had organised a similar event for the Archaeological Society. Ken, Conway Walker and Captain Tapper were appointed to arrange the details. One month later, at Walker's suggestion, Ken Gravett and he were the SAS representatives at the first Surrey Local History Council AGM, by which time 23 organisations were in membership.

The 1966 symposium held at the Dorking Halls was a success, with 195 tickets sold, and the event became an annual one. Much of the organisation fell on Ken and following the 1967 Symposium Captain Tapper wrote to him, 'Very many thanks for your help on Saturday. All seems to have gone reasonably well. We sold 200 tickets, and there is little doubt that we shall break even financially. I still dare to hope that we shall see you there next year, though maybe not working so hard.' In fact the 1968 symposium saw Ken being one of the three speakers with Maurice Barley and Derek Renn. His subject was 'Post-Mediaeval Small Houses in Surrey'. Captain Tapper later wrote 'As a layman may I say that I think your talk was just exactly the sort of thing we want, as a Local History Council, to bring in and interest more people. I found it fascinating.'

Early Years

The symposia were a success but the Council was in other respects a sickly body. Already at its first AGM the Chairman had warned that 'it must be realised that, while ideas are welcome, the success of projects must depend entirely on people being willing to spend time and energy in actually carrying them out. This I must emphasise. The Local History Council will not succeed until enough people are willing to WORK for it.' The following year's AGM, planned as a major event at the Red House, Leatherhead, was cancelled when only ten representatives of five societies indicated their intention of attending, and was replaced by a purely business meeting at Jenner House. The future of the Council was already being questioned.

The Executive Committee identified the need for a 'Programme Secretary' or 'Area Organiser' to go around the county encouraging interest in local history, promoting the formation of new societies and supporting existing ones. Ken was proposed for this rôle later in 1967, but work commitments prevented him from taking it on. In 1969 he offered to produce a nucleus of slides for use by anyone prepared to undertake the work and to run off further copies of the *Guide for Local Historians* produced by Miss Gollancz for the 1968 symposium, but only one candidate came forward and even that person found himself forced to withdraw. By this time the Council for Social Service was expecting the Local History Council to find its own events secretary. Captain Tapper's official duty was restricted to acting as meetings secretary but he had found himself actively involved in organising all the Local History Council's activities. In 1969 it was announced that a volunteer secretary must be found or the Council would be forced to close down but in fact successive secretaries of the Council for Social Service, Colonel Kup and Peter Inskip, continued to provide the secretariat until 1987. Meanwhile the fee paid for this service regularly increased: in 1983 it was £300, almost half of the Local History Council's expenditure. Ken's answer to low attendance at the AGM was to link it with a visit to a historic building. In 1970, for example, the AGM was held at Carshalton House and Ken took members on a short walk around the village, showing them 'a nearby house and some cottages of interest'.

Some of the early proposals never got off the ground. The project to record local dialects did not reappear in the Council minutes after the first year, although oral history projects have been successful in Surrey on a local basis. A local history recording scheme produced a rather miscellaneous range of reports before fizzling out. Early in 1967 a scheme was mooted to provide training for potential lecturers because of the shortage of good lecturers in local history, but this came to nothing.

A number of active supporters kept the Council alive. James Batley organised the local society displays at the symposium and Conway Walker promoted ticket sales. Mrs. Basset and Mrs. Dugmore promoted the work of the Council in west Surrey in an area initially defined as 'the hundreds of Farnham, Godalming, Blackheath and Woking'. They spoke to 45 people in

Shere school hall, 38 of whom decided to form their own group in Shere and Albury. A visit to Ockham led to the formation of a history society. A Women's Institute contact gave them the entrée at Shackleford and they researched in Godalming Library, especially in the Woods manuscripts, to get the local people going. Mrs. Dugmore took Women's Institute executives around Waverley Abbey. Elfrida Manning took responsibility for the Farnham area.

Ken becomes chairman

In July 1971 Ken offered his resignation from the Executive Committee because of his difficulty in attending meetings but was asked to continue because of the useful work he was doing. Later that year Dick Dufty announced that he would resign as chairman at the next AGM. Ken was asked to join Conway Walker and Ruth Dugmore on a sub-committee to select a successor. Walker had already identified Ken as an admirable appointment if Dufty were to resign. Mrs. Dugmore wrote to Ken early in 1972 'You are obviously the person but you can't come to the meetings', and Conway Walker wrote, 'you have avuncular qualities which appeal to the public!' It became apparent that, if meeting dates could be reorganised, Ken could be persuaded to take office. This was done. He was elected unopposed at the AGM and Dufty commented, 'I feel the SLHC is now on the map and rarin' to go'. Ruth Dugmore wrote 'I think that at last we are going to do something with the Council and I am ready to do anything I possibly can', and at the end of the year Walker wrote, 'Good wishes for 1973, and may the Council go from strength to strength under your powerful leadership'.

Surrey History

One of the first fruits of the new régime was the appearance of *Surrey History*. Mrs. Dugmore was already collecting articles and early in 1972 it was agreed that there should be an annual publication. The aim was to publish comparatively short articles, of 200 to 2,000 words, offering a facility not provided either by *Surrey Archaeological Collections* or the SAS Bulletin. Phillimore would publish it, producing each issue in time for the symposium. The Council would put up £100 per issue and copies would be sold at 20p to members and member-societies, each society receiving one free copy, 25p to non-members (this was revised to 25p and 30p respectively). Mrs. Dugmore would be editor and Ken would deal with the business relationship with Phillimore. Tim Grimm, of the County Council's Historic Buildings team, provided sketches of Surrey buildings for the front and back covers. In his introduction Ken described the rôle of the new publication: 'Several local societies already publish Proceedings or Special Papers and *Surrey History* will not interfere with these, nor will it compete with the *Surrey Archaeological*

Collections, which is both more learned and wider in scope, covering also the field of excavation. It will provide a useful forum for studies over the whole range of local history, including aspects of geography, personal memories and bygone life in the ancient county, and will allow some discussion at an earlier stage than publication in a learned journal.' It was probably this introduction which inspired the comment about 'your tactful comments about the new SLHC publication' in a letter from a leading member of Surrey Archaeological Society. The first edition appeared in 1973 but a few days before publication Mrs. Dugmore suffered a stroke. She had already virtually prepared issue two, which Ken saw through the press. He remained largely responsible for editing until 1978 when Robin Chalkley took over, and he handled negotiations with Phillimore throughout his chairmanship.

During the remainder of the 1970s and into the early 1980s the Council continued in a mode which can be seen in retrospect as relatively steady but felt at the time like lurching from crisis to crisis. *Surrey History* regularly made a loss but this was borne by Phillimore who almost annually reported that they could no longer sustain the publication but were equally regularly persuaded by Ken to continue for a further year. In 1974 'the Chairman was considering using an electric typewriter and typesetting' but at that time the proposal was not adopted. From issue number 3 there was a photograph on the front cover and an advertisement for Phillimore on the back cover. Pleas were issued for more and shorter articles. In 1975 there was a discussion about how to get *Surrey History* into 'local newsagents, shops, post offices, olde tea shoppes, and special efforts made to sell to tourists'.

In 1978 an appeal was issued to member societies: 'Save Surrey History!!!', and a scheme was launched to sell it in libraries. Sales to societies at the symposium declined; volume II no.1 (1979) was badly hit and the next issue was subsidised by an anonymous donor. Ken had suggested to Surrey Archaeological Society that *Surrey History* be issued to all SAS members and in 1975 the suggestion of a bulk sale was made, at least unofficially, on behalf of SAS, but nothing came of the proposal.

The symposium

The symposium regularly made a profit, except in 1980 when 'Sport in Surrey' was the chosen topic. Almost from its inception the symposium had been largely managed by SLHC but in the early years any profit was divided equally with SAS. This was perhaps galling to SLHC but even more so to the Council for Social Service (from 1973 Surrey Voluntary Service Council), which provided considerable administrative support while SLHC was unable to pay its management fee. At a meeting at the Athenaeum in October 1973 Ken persuaded John Nevinson, president of SAS, that the proceeds of the symposium should be used to meet the Social Service Council fee and other appropriate costs and to finance future symposiums. Every year there were complaints about the projection facilities. In 1978 these were solved but at a cost of £45, considerably more than the hire of the hall, which cost £27. Victoria Houghton succeeded James Batley in organising the society exhibit stands – and also secured sheets to make a screen of acceptable size.

A typical symposium timetable would be:

9.30	societies begin erecting displays, with Ken solving a host of problems regarding location and facilities
10.30	exhibits open
10.55	chairman's introductory remarks
11.00	keynote speaker, presenting the subject of the symposium in a broad context
12.00	discussion
12.20	lunch, with opportunity to view the exhibits and buy society publications
2.30	two or three speakers on specialist, often local, aspects of the subject
4.00	discussion
4.45	close

Ken would preside with immense amiability, overcoming hazards presented by wayward lecturers and equipment, and frequently a small minority of protesting participants. He would make a point of purchasing every local publication.

The topics were wide-ranging. In the early years there was not necessarily a single theme: in 1969 Christopher Taylor spoke on 'The Inherited Pattern of the English Landscape' and E. Halfpenny discussed and played instruments used in old church bands. From 1973, when the topic was agriculture, each symposium was based around a theme, and local societies increasingly prepared their displays on that theme. Good keynote speakers were found: Cargill Thompson on Tudor England; Mavis Batey on Surrey Gardens. The acoustic and projection difficulties of Dorking Halls, combined with the cost of parking, which for many participants exceeded the price of the ticket, induced the Executive Committee to transfer the symposium in 1982 to Sondes Place School and in 1983 to Ashcombe School, both in Dorking. In 1984 Professor Crocker, newly elected to the Council, offered the services of Surrey University. Their lecture hall provided excellent facilities and proved popular although Ken acknowledged that 'East Surrey people will be disappointed that another event has moved to Guildford'. Initially the University provided the facilities free but by the early 1990s they were moving towards a full commercial letting charge. Even then, a successful symposium with a popular subject could make a substantial profit: the 1987 symposium on Surrey at War made £477. The risk was that a poorly-attended symposium might make a loss, or at least fail to make sufficient profit to cover the costs of *Surrey History*.

In 1994 the symposium moved to Chertsey Hall. The venue, thanks to the hard work of Ron Davis and Richard Williams, proved highly suitable, although

Chertsey's good communications hardly compensated east Surrey historians for its location in north-west Surrey. At the end of the 1994 symposium a ballot recorded 69 visitors in favour of Chertsey and 9 against with 7 ambiguous replies out of 169 who attended.

Tutorials and the Newsletter

An attractive event was held in 1975 when Dick Dufty hosted an evening party at the Tower of London Armouries to bring together chairmen and secretaries of member societies; 'it was a slightly traumatic experience for your Chairman, who discovered that he was about the same size as Henry VIII was at his age.'

In 1979 the first 'Specialist Tutorial' was held, at the Brew House, Guildford, on the subject of Brickwork. Ken Gravett spoke on 'How the Bishops brought their bricks to Surrey' and 'Later Brickwork', and Jack Frank on 'How bricks were made in Surrey up to 1927'. Later in the year a tutorial on parish records was held at Surrey Record Office. These continued spasmodically until 1986 when a celebration of Domesday Book became the first of a regular series of Spring meetings on specialist themes

In 1981 the first Newsletter appeared. It was edited and typeset by the Chairman. Despite his express hope in the first issue that a new editor might be found, he remained editor until his death. The newsletter contained news of Council events and executive committee activities, news from member societies when this was forthcoming and a list of local publications, largely a record of Ken's own omnivorous purchasing of books, booklets and pamphlets on the history of Surrey. Ken also encouraged Phillimore to publish the illustrations from Cracklow's Surrey Churches, for which he provided the introduction and photographed all 156 prints.

Surrey History and other publications

Sales of *Surrey History* dropped off sharply from 1981. Whereas average sales of volume I (1973-8) were over 750, volume II (1979-83) averaged about 550. None of the next three issues sold as many as 500 copies. In June 1987 the Executive Committee debated the future of *Surrey History*; whether to include a copy in the price of each symposium ticket or include five copies in each society's membership. Each of these, with its concomitant increase in ticket price or membership subscription, was seen as unacceptable. An approach was made to a local history publisher to see whether their Surrey agent would sell *Surrey History* but this was unsuccessful. At that point 'the chairman offered to spend a week or ten days in November offering copies to booksellers throughout the county on a sale or return basis and then returning in January to discover what success there had been. He could only do this once, but it would indicate whether that particular market could be tapped using, perhaps,

local volunteers.' It was the start of a commitment which, coinciding with Ken's retirement from employment, did not cease until his last year. Initially it was highly successful. Sales of vol. III no. 4 (1987) at 884 were about double those of its predecessor. No. 5 sold 716 copies and made a small profit and vol. IV no. 1 (1987) sold over 1,000 copies and made a substantial profit. Thereafter the decline of independent bookshops and perhaps disappointing results for retailers reduced sales to a little over 500 a year, and substantial losses ensued. In 1995 Phillimore drew a line under an account in which they estimated that they had suffered £3,436 loss on sales totalling £12,664. Royalties due to the Council on other publications may have halved the loss, although no comprehensive statement was provided. Phillimore returned the unsold stock to the Council and thereafter published *Surrey History* at the Council's expense.

One further initiative was the publication of booklets on single subjects. Mavis Batey's keynote lecture on Surrey Gardens at the 1976 symposium was warmly received and there were many requests for it to be published. Ken took up the project enthusiastically. Until the early 1980s it was regularly reported to be close to fruition but ultimately it failed to materialise. The books which appeared, typeset by Ken, who promoted their sale alongside *Surrey History*, were *Pastors, Parishes and People in Surrey* (David Robinson, 1989), *Old Surrey Recipes and Food for Thought* (Daphne Grimm, 1991), and *Two Hundred Years of Aeronautics and Aviation in Surrey 1785-1985* (Sir Peter Masefield 1993). *The Sheriffs of Surrey* (David Burns, 1992) was published jointly with the Under Sheriff of Surrey. *Kingston's Past Rediscovered*, a collection of articles by the late Joan Wakeford which appeared in 1990, was a joint publication by the Council and Kingston-upon Thames Archaeological Society. One other planned publication, Mervyn Blatch's *Surrey Churches*, developed into a major hardback publication. Although Ken typeset it, it became clear that the Council could not bear the cost of publication and it was published by Phillimore.

New developments

In 1987 Surrey Voluntary Service Council's secretarial support finally came to an end when Peter Inskip retired. At the 1988 AGM 'the Chairman stressed ... that the SLHC will continue to be handicapped in its work until an Hon. Secretary comes forward and that, for the future, less reliance needed to be placed on the Chairman carrying alone the burden of the Secretaryship.' The solution was to transfer the administration of SLHC to Surrey University Library in return for the £500 fee formerly paid to SVSC, with the Librarian, Bill Simpson, as Hon. Secretary.

Within a year Simpson had moved to become Goldsmith's Librarian at the University of London and the administration moved to the University's Guildford Institute, with Glenys Crocker as secretary. Although individual membership continued to be resisted, individual subscription was accepted in 1989, subscribers enjoying all the privileges of membership except the right to vote. It was only in 1991 that the revised constitution replaced 'individual subscribers' by 'individual members'.

During the early 1990s Surrey Local History Council intervened on several occasions on behalf of the county record office and local museums: in 1991 when Bourne Hall Museum, Ewell, was threatened with closure; in 1992 when proposed local government reorganisation threatened the record office and again in 1995 in support of the successful Heritage Lottery Fund bid on behalf of Surrey History Centre; in 1993 when swingeing cuts were threatened to Sutton Heritage Service; in 1995 when Croydon proposed to levy admission charges at their new museum; and in 1996 on behalf of Kingston Museum. It was almost always Ken who wrote the letter of protest or support, and he was always willing to join local members at public meetings. Another act of solidarity with an historical venture was his accompanying Christopher Elrington on the Surrey section of his Hike for History, on behalf of the Victoria County History. Ken walked from Royal Holloway College to Runnymede and on to the county boundary before leaving the Berkshire section to those more able to maintain the pace.

* * *

The history of Surrey Local History Council, both from its minutes and from the reminiscences of those most closely involved, feels like a continual battle: to keep *Surrey History* alive; to meet the auditory and visual problems posed by successive symposium venues and lecturers; above all, to obtain officers and active participants from a pool of local historians already for the most part heavily engaged with their own societies. The achievements, though, have been considerable. The symposium has given societies a showcase for their research and displays while introducing their members to the wider context into which village and town history should be located. *Surrey History* has provided an outlet for worthwhile articles, most of which would not have found an alternative home. The Spring meetings have deepened members' understanding of specialist subjects which are of considerable relevance to local historians. And the Council has survived and has remained in a reasonably comfortable financial situation. From his letter to Conway Walker on 27 October 1965 when he proposed the holding of a symposium, through the inception of *Surrey History*, the Newsletter and other publications and the other activities of the Council until his bequest to the Council in his will, Ken Gravett has been indispensable to its survival and its achievements.

London's and Surrey's 'Fight for the River': Politics, Perceptions and the Thames, 1897

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This essay looks at a struggle over rights to the water of the Thames as it flowed through Surrey, a conflict over resources adjacent to, and critical for, London – the late 19th-century world's largest city. The competitors were the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company, the London County Council, and the county of Surrey itself. This essay is not just a history of the politics of water resources, but also an examination of how these competing groups perceived (one might say strategically defined) and related to the Thames. It is a close study of the discourse of *competing* definitions of the Thames; at stake in the struggle to identify the river was the inextricably linked future of the river/environment and of the competing groups.

Michael Drayton's lengthy poem 'Poly-Olbion' describes the progress of the Thames from its source in the Cotswold hills to London and the sea beyond (Figure 1). Drayton illustrates the convergence of the stately Thames with the River Wey in eastern Surrey, writing, 'As still his goodly train yet every hour increast,/And from *Surrian* shores cleere *Wey* came down to meet/His Greatnes, whom the *Tames* so gratiously doth greet.'[1] In his poem 'Prothalamion' Edmund Spenser describes the rural Thames in Arcadian terms, its banks 'paynted all with variable flowers,/And all the meades adorned with daintie gemmes.'[2] Long before Elizabethan poets anthropomorphized the river, or equated it with Elysium – most likely before the Romans ever carved the face of the demi-god of the Thames – humans have known the great river as much more than a simple flowing body of water, a means of transportation, a source of drink. Even to the late Victorians, who built the colossal Thames embankment in London, who lined the river with reservoirs to conserve floodwater, the Thames represented more than a mere water resource. In 1897 the spirit of the river, 'Father Thames', lived on. In the spring of that year the Surrey County Council published a letter in the *Surrey Advertiser* thanking the Thames Conservancy Board for its flood prevention regulation, stating, 'They saw Father Thames asserting his might, and perhaps ridiculing the puny efforts of the Conservancy Board, [but] they would have had floods several weeks ago but for the regulations made.'[3] The next year *Punch* printed an image of rotund, yet muscular Father Thames dressed like an old rural oarsman (Figure 2). In 'Prothalamion' Spenser describes 'A Flocke of *Nymphes* ... All louely Daughters of the Flood.'[4] In the image from *Punch* Spenser's nymphs flee from a smoky, clawed invader in the form of train – against which the mighty Father Thames prepares to wield a huge oar. In the previous half-century, rail companies had laid numerous lines through Surrey radiating out from inner London. Here, Father Thames takes a stand against them himself.

In 1897, the Surrey County Council assumed the defensive pose, defending the Thames, but preserving much more than a volume of water. That year, the county struggled with London over the control of the river. Ostensibly, theirs was a conflict over simple rights to water; however, implicit in the rhetoric of the political debate was a contest over the very nature of the Thames. In seeking to restrict London's rights to the water of the Thames, Surrey was not just protecting its river, but its very lifeblood from the thirsty city. Surrey insisted that the needs of the city not eclipse its needs. By claiming the Thames, London would subsume not only Surrey's resources, but its identity as an independent rural county as well. While staking its claim to the river, London defined the Thames as the key to the metropolitan health, expansion, and progress. Critical to the well-being of millions of inhabitants, London could not afford to let the Thames 'belong' to anyone else.

This essay, then, is not another examination of the development of urban water resource management in the 19th century. It describes how perceptions of the river, even in the age of rational progress, played a critical role in the politics of environmental resources. It explores how Surrey and London claimed the river, and by claiming the Thames, defined it. It is a close study of rival demands on, and perceptions of, the environment – and at stake in defining the river in 1897 was nothing less than the future of the Thames, London, and Surrey.

The Thames According to the London County Council

The 19th century saw the physical area of Greater London more than quadruple. Its population doubled in the second half of the century alone, reaching over 5 million in 1900.[5] This populace had tremendous water needs, drawing the resource from a 600 square mile region.[6] The city-side Thames was polluted well beyond potability; therefore, water companies pumped water into London from rivers and wells in Essex, Hertford, Kent, Middlesex and Surrey.[7] In 1897

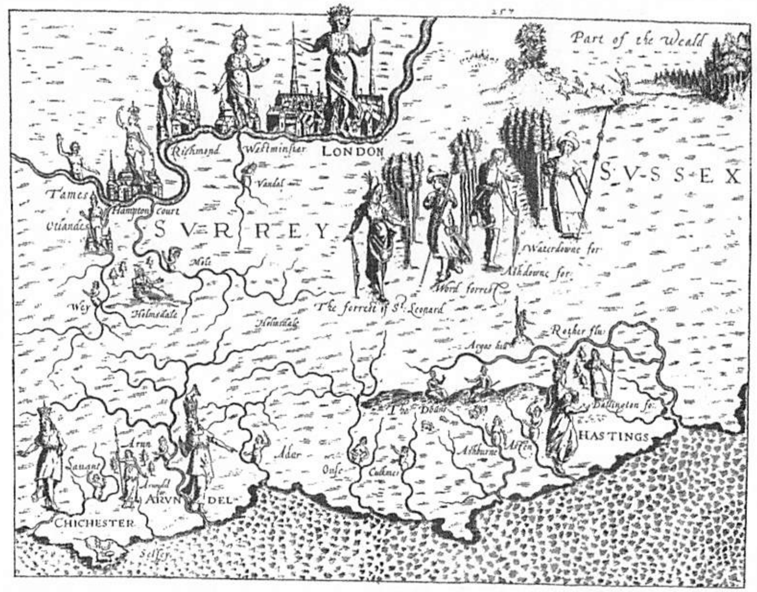
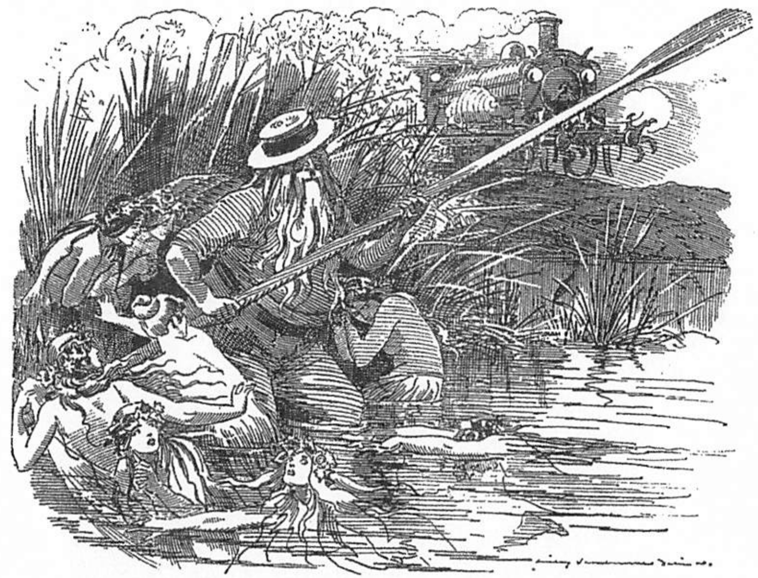


Fig. 1 Illustration from Michael Drayton's Poly-Olbion.

Fig. 2 Father Thames in *Punch* magazine in 1898.



eight water companies served London, struggling to meet the growing demand with water from the rivers Lea, Thames, Ver and Wandle.[8]

Members of the London County Council saw the Thames as key to London's growth and fitness. The Council came into existence in 1888, the same year all of Britain acquired new county councils as part of the Local Government Act. The LCC, which possessed 126 councillors, had jurisdiction over 117 square miles. Apparently, the Council also thought it had jurisdiction over the Thames; three years after its inception the LCC sent a Bill to the House of Commons which designated an eight-member committee of its own councillors a new Water Trust. This trust would take over all of the existing London water companies and their sources, including the valuable Thames. Speaking before the House of Commons in 1892, London County Councillor Sir James Lubbock said, 'The average daily quantity taken from the Thames is 97,000,000 gallons, rising upon occasions to 105,000,000 ... and the maximum amount which legally can be taken is 130,000,000. We are then approaching very nearly the limit of our tether, and this in the face of a rapidly-increasing population.'[9] Lubbock saw the river as the bulwark of urban expansion, access to its water was a critical prerequisite to London's growth. While perhaps it was a potential tether to the metropolis's expansion, the House of Commons did not similarly identify the river as belonging to London. The Bill failed quickly.

Other Londoners defined the Thames as the key to urban health or ailment, as well. London's need for a great volume of water was obvious to contemporary commentators, but so was the need for consistent water quality and regular supply. These contemporaries saw the private water companies as a danger to public health; profits and dividends, they claimed, were what mattered to the companies, not trustworthy supply or quality. Critics alleged that only companies catering to wealthier sections of London concerned themselves with water purity. 'The fact remains that Battersea people get 352 microbes in every cubic centimetre of water, whilst Westminster and Chelsea get off with only 130,' wrote W.H. Dickinson in *The Contemporary Review* in 1897, 'Richer London gets better water. Poorer London gets worse water; and so it will be until the end of private companies.'[10] The public acquisition of the private companies, and the amalgamation of water sources like the Thames could mean progress and justice for 'poorer London'. Dickinson also postulated that, had a central authority controlled the distribution of water from London's hinterland resources, there would have been no residential water shortages the previous two drought years, an opinion repeated in 1898 by commentator H.L.W. Lawson of the *Fortnightly Review*.[11]

Supported in the public discourse by individuals like Dickinson and Lawson, the LCC continued its attempts to acquire the rights to the Thames and the mechanisms for shipping its water eastward to the metropolis. The

Council sent numerous Bills to the House of Commons for the consolidation and acquisition of London's water companies again in 1895 and 1896, insisting any 'excursion and delay would inflict on the people of London a heavy and grievous burden and irreparable wrong'.[12] Altogether the Council sent eight similar Bills to parliament, all of which failed. Many members of parliament opposed the bills because the water companies would have to sell themselves at an unfair price and shareholders might lose money in the transaction; as one MP put it, 'the shareholders felt that their income would be more secure in the hands of the water companies than in the hands of the London County Council'.[13] In 1897 the government decided to intervene by creating the Royal Commission on London Water Supply.

The Thames According to the Surrey County Council

This metropolitan water controversy brought London's and Surrey's conflicting views of the Thames to a head in 1897. Meeting between that year and 1900, the Royal Commission on London Water Supply sought to solve the inveterate problems of water supply consistency and quality once and for all. Its plan was to amalgamate Surrey – the northern border of which the Thames demarcated – into a union of the metropolis with all of the counties that supplied its resources. The Royal Commission proposed a water authority of 26 members consisting of 1) representatives of the London County Council, 2) existing water authorities and economic concerns, and 3) the councils of those counties – including Essex, Hertford, Kent and Middlesex – immediately surrounding London and supplying the metropolis with water. This new board would control the sources of water (the Thames, most importantly), its distribution, and the charges for the water. The confederation was to be called Water London. Of the water board's 26 seats, the London County Council would appoint no less than ten.[14] The Commission thus agreed with the LCC that, since London's welfare depended so greatly on the Thames, the metropolis could indeed identify it as its ward, if not its property.

While the struggle was ostensibly fought over the mere control of water supplies, Surrey's opposition shows that something far more significant was at risk. As London's attempts to seize control of its hinterland water supply came more regularly and frequently, the Surrey County Council stepped up its opposition. In 1895 the Surrey County Council sent a memorandum to the county's local councils assuring them that Surrey would continue to oppose any attempt by London (in this case, the London County Council) to consolidate the area's water resources. The letter stated that 'the efforts of the Surrey Council were directed to ... securing to the County the control of its own sources of water.'[15] The next year the county sent another memorandum, this time to both Houses of Parliament, making clear their position on the subject of water boards. The letter (the typesetting of which is here recreated) stated that it was

> the opinion of the Council that no change ought to be made from the
> present system which does not give
> 1) the control to Surrey of its own
> sources of water, and the supply thereof
> 2) the absolute assurance that Surrey will not have to contribute to the
> cost of any
> fresh supply for the
> County of London.[16]

The letter made absolutely clear that Surrey did not want to be known as the backyard reservoir of London's water.

When the Royal Commission met to hear evidence on the latest incarnation of the proposed water board, they almost certainly expected adamant resistance from the county to the west. At the beginning of 1898, Surrey County Council alderman Charles Burt (nominated along with the County Council's chairman to represent Surrey's local councils in this matter) sent the following message to the commission on behalf of the Council:

> The Surrey County Council does not think that a Water Board or Trust would be a satisfactory solution of the question; on such a Board London must necessarily be the predominant partner, and it requires no argument to show how little power any one unit of such a Board would have to protect its individual interests.[17]

Surrey's influence, they felt, would be minimal on such a board, and thus London would be able to help itself to as much of the Thames as it felt it rightfully deserved. Soon after Mr. Burt had written to the commission, the Council's chairman E.J. Halsey was ready to appear before it to make the county's case. His testimony was a clear assertion of Surrey's independence from London:

> We were supposed to be made a rural county, and we wish to be what we were made by Act of Parliament – a county contained in ourselves without any dependence or inter-dependence between London and ourselves. We want to be Surrey and Surrey alone.[18]

For the Surrey County Council, to defend the Thames from absorption into an enormous water confederation was to defend a self-image as independent from the sprawling metropolis. Its opposition to the water board suggests the issue was also one of control. The County Council repeated its assertion that Surrey would 'control its own sources of water', that it must

'protect its individual interests', and that they wanted to be 'Surrey, and Surrey alone'. There was little doubt the county had to maintain its independence and individuality from its enormous neighbour. Surrey insisted it would not 'contribute to the cost of any fresh supply for the County of London', that there must be no 'dependence or inter-dependence between London and ourselves', Surrey would not give another inch to the creeping city; it would not give up its control over what was Surrey's – would not give up its sovereignty and river in one stroke.

The Thames According to the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company

The London County Council was not the only group in the metropolis that viewed the river as its own. The Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company had contended for water resources (and the water consumers of London) for almost a century. Founded in 1805 as the South London Water Company, Southwark and Vauxhall was one of the few companies that faced competition in the districts it supplied. The Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company viewed the Thames as a critical financial resource in this contest, and in 1897 it demanded more of it. Thus, at the very same time Surrey County Council Alderman Burt was writing to parliament declaring Surrey's aversion to a London-dominated water authority, he (and much of the rest of the county) was also fighting the scheme of the London water company. Its plan was to double its outtake of water from the Thames in Surrey, and to build two huge reservoirs to house this new supply near the villages of Walton and East and West Molesey.

The Thames represented a bargain to Southwark and Vauxhall. London's water companies naturally sought to acquire a large volume of their commodity, of as high quality as possible, at the least inconvenience and expense to themselves. While sources like wells in Kent and the River Lea abated some of the metropolis's needs, London's water companies coveted the great Thames most of all. Before it passed over Teddington Weir where it became the tidal cesspool of the metropolis, the water of Father Thames was more-or-less pure by the low standards of the day. This relatively fresh supply induced water companies to erect reservoirs along the river as it passed between Middlesex to the north and Surrey to the south. From Kingston to Sunbury, companies such as the Chelsea, Lambeth, and Southwark and Vauxhall built these open-air brick reservoirs spanning hundreds of square acres next to the river. Due to the high demand for their product, these companies shipped hundreds of millions of gallons of water per day out of Surrey.[19] The Southwark and Vauxhall operated two large mains sending Thames water northeast to the metropolis. One led to the Vauxhall district in southwest London after which the company was named, and the other great main sent water 15 miles into the heart of the city, to the Southwark area between London Bridge and Lambeth

Bridge.[20] In 1897 the company supplied water to over 121,000 buildings and around 800,000 people in London, and it anticipated supplying water to another seven square miles of new development soon.[21]

If they were to succeed financially, the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company had to assure their customers in London a regular supply of their merchandise. The company appealed to parliament for the right to take extra water from the Thames one year after drought had left some of London's water consumers with only intermittent water supply. Southwark and Vauxhall published notice of their plans in the *Surrey Advertiser*.[22] On the front page of their county paper, Surrey's residents read that the company planned to double its already enormous outtake of 24.5 million gallons daily, increasing the total withdrawal from the Thames (of all water companies) by 20%.[23] Additionally, the company proposed a new pumping station on the bank of the river to pump its new allotment to a meadow 125 yards south of the Thames where it would construct two reservoirs. These massive constructions would be capable of holding 247,000 square yards of water. Southwark and Vauxhall had already purchased 150 acres of land for the purpose.[24] Since parliament required the water companies to maintain, to the best of their ability, an adequate supply of water to their customers, the 1897 plan would, in the company's words, 'enable them to perform the statutory obligations imposed upon them by parliament in relation to the Supply of Water'.[25] They did not indicate who would receive this improved supply.

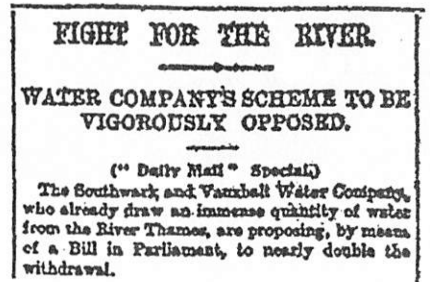
The Thames According to Surrey's Villages of East and West Molesey

The Southwark and Vauxhall plan, by threatening to impose London's will on the river, once again threatened Surrey's autonomy. Both of Surrey's main points of opposition had to do (ostensibly) with the disruption of the county's landscape.[26] The County Council fought the company's Bill claiming the extra outtake would significantly lower the Thames' water levels in the county, while Surrey's Thames-side local councils claimed the company's construction crews would foul their neighbourhoods with both their construction activity and the enormous edifices they would construct.

In January of 1898 Charles Burt, head of the County Council's Parliamentary Committee, reported back to Surrey that the Southwark and Vauxhall Bill posed a threat to the county. He sent a foreboding report to the Council, describing the danger from the water company. Southwark and Vauxhall would leave 'about one-half of the volume of the lowest River there for many years', reported the alderman. He explains that 'the volume of the minimum flow of the River ... is of great importance. It is obvious that anything like these results would produce very serious injury to the River in Surrey.'[27] The Council took Burt's words to heart, authorizing his committee to 'take

such steps in opposition to the Bill as they may think desirable', in view of 'the importance of preserving the flow of the River Thames within the County',[28] The parliamentary committee proceeded to present Surrey's definition of the Thames before a House of Commons select committee considering the Bill.

The *Daily Mail* offered Surrey's view of the Thames to an enormous newspaper-reading public. Many lines of the provocatively titled article 'Fight for the River' were taken directly from Charles' Burt's report (Figure 3). It is tempting to speculate that Burt or a member of the County Council sent a copy of this report to the *Daily Mail* to build support for Surrey's opposition; no evidence, however, suggests the sensationalizing newspaper acquired a copy on anything but their own initiative. Seen by around half a million readers in February 1898, many read the story of how the company threatened a 'drain upon the resources of the river' and how Surrey was 'very anxious to preserve a full and adequate flow of water'.[29] The article repeated the ominous language Burt had used in his report to the County Council, painting Southwark and Vauxhall as brutes, 'injuring' the Thames. On the morning of 12 February, at least, Surrey's view of the Thames stood pre-eminent.


FIGHT FOR THE RIVER.

WATER COMPANY'S SCHEME TO BE VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED.

("Daily Mail" Special.)

The Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company, who already draw an immense quantity of water from the River Thames, are proposing, by means of a Bill in Parliament, to nearly double the withdrawal.

Fig. 3 *Daily Mail* headline from February 1898.

The *Times* also kept Surrey's struggle in the public realm, reporting on the county's opposition to the Bill before parliament. The Select Committee of the House of Commons heard evidence on the bill throughout the Spring of 1898. Both Charles Burt and council alderman Lewis Coward appeared before that committee to represent Surrey's opposition to the bill. The *Times*, however, did not serve Surrey's interests as well as the *Daily Mail* had, since the newspaper's editors did not publish the testimony of either representative – the newspaper did, on the other hand, publish the testimony of Southwark and Vauxhall's chairman Sir Henry Knight. Knight was a London County Council alderman and was a former mayor of the metropolis itself.[30] If the *Daily Mail* had been less than objective in favour of Surrey, the *Times* had, in turn, done Southwark and Vauxhall a favor.

In opposing the bill before the House of Commons, home county MP J. Stuart used language even stronger than Burt's or the *Daily Mail*'s. He framed his argument in dramatic terms, to put it mildly. He warned that Southwark and Vauxhall's plan would 'practically denude the Thames of water', repeating for melodramatic emphasis, 'practically it will denude the Thames of water'.[31]

While the County Council fought the Southwark and Vauxhall Bill on the apparent grounds that it would desiccate the Thames as it passed through Surrey, the Bill also met opposition from the local Urban District Councils who saw it as a threat to the river and their rural village identities at the same time. The councils believed the company sought to use the Thames to fuel a profit-machine for London. Southwark and Vauxhall would build that profit-machine in their back yards – a machine they viewed as dangerous. As the East and West Molesey (combined population: 5396) council reviewed the company's plans in January 1898, one detail in particular troubled them: thirty feet of the proposed reservoirs' forty-foot height would be above ground.[32] The council's chairman, Mr. H.J. Robertson, expressed his concern that the reservoirs 'would be a source of imminent danger should one of the embankments burst at any time'.[33] The council wrote to the company inquiring into the validity of the plans and the safety of such a structure, and at the next meeting the clerk read the water company's reply, which stated, the 'deposited sections shewed a "possible" construction of Reservoirs 30 feet above [the] road but nothing to cause anxiety'.[34] Upon receipt of the laconic reply the council launched its opposition to the bill. The *Surrey Advertiser* reported on these discussions, airing the council's concerns in the public discourse.[35]

East and West Molesey's council did not oppose the Bill based only on the company's impertinent reply; the local towns also had a history of dealing with London water companies they found negligent. One of Southwark and Vauxhall's water mains passed under the centre of Kingston on its way into the heart of London. Nearby Kingston often complained of 'continual leaks in this main', and not only did the water turn the roads above the leak into a muddy trap, but the repair crews often left behind their own mess.[36] In seeking redress for one such incident, Kingston's council wrote to the company asking for a meeting to discuss reparations. Kingston had to write no fewer than four letters to Southwark and Vauxhall before getting a response, and the response the council did receive was essentially an invitation to litigate:

> whilst most desirous at all times to fall in with the suggestions of the local Authorities – it does not appear to them that any advantage could accrue either to the local Authorities or the Company by the proposed conference. The various matters on which you desire to confer being already regulated by Acts of Parliament, must be carried out accordingly.[37]

The London company would threaten the safety of rural Surrey while reaching for its commodity, and would be unapologetic while doing so. In January of 1898 the *Surrey Advertiser* also reported nearby Hampton's ongoing 'struggles' with Southwark and Vauxhall to fix roads damaged by broken water mains.[38]

The negligent companies, grasping for their Thames, represented the mindlessly imposed will of London.

East and West Molesey was becoming familiar with Southwark and Vauxhall's interest in the concerns of rural Surrey. East and West Molesey determined to avoid such problems at the first discussion of the Bill. When the council wrote to Southwark and Vauxhall expressing their concern over the height of the reservoirs, they also requested a new clause in the Bill 'to ensure the proper reinstatement of the Roads disturbed'.[39] The company, it seemed, did not share the local council's opinion regarding responsibility. The next month the council's clerk read the following reply from Southwark and Vauxhall, 'as to the Road, [Southwark and Vauxhall] ought not to be called upon to do more than comply with the water works clause act of 1847, and as to the extra traffic the Company paid rates and surely an increase in cost of repair would fall upon them to a legitimate Extent'.[40] Upon the receipt of the letter, the East and West Molesey council directed its clerk to prepare and lodge a petition against the bill and to write to the Surrey County Council, 'drawing their attention to the views of the [East and West Molesey Urban District] Council in reference to the Bill & express a hope that they would do all they could to oppose the Bill'.[41] Soon afterward, the council learned that nearby Kingston would contribute £237 to Surrey's effort against Southwark and Vauxhall, as they stated, 'in consequence of the obduracy of the Company'.[42]

Local authorities protested the likelihood that the new reservoirs would be a serious blemish on the riverside landscape, as if to disfigure the Thames waterside would be to mar Surrey's self-image as the elysian abode of Father Thames. The existing Chelsea and Lambeth water companies' reservoirs already created, in the opinion of one rambler and writer, one of the 'ugliest' areas in Surrey. He described the enormous ramparts as some of the 'loneliest' stretches conceivable – this was not the Thames of Spenser.[43] South of these brick edifices stood Apps Court estate, an area of cottages, fields, and fishponds – the area now threatened by Southwark and Vauxhall's new reservoirs.[44] After complaining of the peril to their riverside scenery, the East and West Molesey Urban District Council received an unsurprising reply from the London water company. Southwark and Vauxhall argued the new construction would be 'scarcely visible from the river' and that it would possess 'a more or less ornamental appearance'. Despite the elimination of the fields and fishponds, the company assured East and West Molesey that their constructions would leave 'a not less pleasing appearance than the former condition of things'.[45]

This struggle was over more than just a supply of water and a construction project; the Southwark and Vauxhall Bill would harm both the rural riverside landscape and the villages' pride and self-image. The Bill's opposers anthropomorphized the river, making Father Thames a victim of the water company's humiliating attack, subject to denuding or disrobing. The London company 'would produce very serious injury to the River in Surrey' stated Charles Burt, a statement repeated by the *Daily Mail* nearly verbatim. The company would 'practically denude' the Thames of water in Surrey for the sake of pawning its clothing to the metropolis. As for the 'imminent danger of flooding', which the District Council feared, the aloof company denied the possibility of such an occurence, just as it denied responsibility for their reservoirs' disturbance to East and West Molesey's townscape. It went so far as to suggest that acres of unbroken brick walls would have a 'not less pleasing appearance' than the existing fields of Surrey. The company sat unlistening in its distant London offices, while voices in the London hinterlands defended their rights to their resources and identity – voices which insisted the sprawl to the east not mar their local landscapes and rural image as determined by the Thames.

'There is nothing in the entire life of a city at once so pathetic and remorseless as the law and habits of its growth,' wrote British social commentator Arthur Sherwell the same year Southwark and Vauxhall published notice of its plans.[46] The London County Council viewed the Thames as its key to expansion, Surrey saw its preservation of the Thames as bold stand against London's remorseless growth. The events of 1897-8 were not about simple resource acquisition. Surrey understood that a threat to its water resources was a threat to its identity. The Royal Commission's plan to consolidate all of London's water sources and absorb Surrey into the Water London conglomeration threatened to make Surrey a minority on a board that would control the Thames, even as it flowed through the county. Additionally, the Southwark and Vauxhall Bill represented an attempt by a London company to take Surrey's resources with no regard for the consequences. The unhearing company would disrupt the Thames and the county's landscapes with indifference. Just as it had before the Royal Commission, Surrey promoted its definition of the Thames as rural, picturesque, and Surrey's own; Surrey reminded London that its hinterlands were not uninhabited repositories of its resources.

Epilogue

The Select Committee deliberating over the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Bill seemed to agree with Surrey's definition of the Thames, determining that Southwark and Vauxhall could not increase its total outtake from the river, except in time of surplus water levels. The committee, the *Times* reported in May of 1898, also decided that the company must measure the river's level at the western end of the county to assure that there was a sufficient flow throughout the length of Surrey.[47] A few months later, Charles Burt reported on the county's apparent success in opposing the bill, stating, 'this will serve

for the maintenance of the river below, and necessarily ensure a sufficient depth of water in the Surrey district above Teddington.'[48]

The residents of East and West Molesey could claim no such victory in the struggle with the water company. While the towns received the ancillary benefit of a conserved Thames, they still had to suffer the indignity of London's intruding work crews and massive constructions. A report on potential county landscape rejuvenation a few decades later designated Surrey's riverside reservoirs a blight. The writers complained of 'the excessive rigidity of the retaining wall of brick, which stretches in an unbroken line, bare and uninteresting, the length of which was once a very beautiful stretch'.[49] The water company's claim to the Thames had overshadowed East and West Molesey's.

The Surrey County Council's view of the Thames as uniquely Surrey's also won out – for a time. Two years after fighting against the proposed water board, Charles Burt could report success. The Bill was voted down when the Royal Commission finally presented it to parliament in 1900. But it finally passed two years later, and Surrey's Thames became London's Thames - London's water problems became Surrey's water problems. Surrey, no longer 'Surrey and Surrey alone', was one step closer to becoming consumed by the metropolis.

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A century later, all but the western end of the county seems like an extension of the sprawl (East and West Molesey are now hemmed in by London's M25), and from all parts of the county tens of thousands of people start each day by leaving Surrey for Waterloo Station and their jobs in central London. The length of the county also doubles as a major flight path for noisy jetliners bound for London's Heathrow airport.

The water authority has been called 'Thames Water' since 1974; on the walls of tube stations the company has tried to influence its public image by displaying self-congratulating billboards claiming the water of the Thames is literally as clear as that of a fishbowl. In 1989 the utility was privatized, creating the largest water company in the United Kingdom with 7.4 million customers in London alone. The river that had formerly been claimed by 8 different companies, and then one large authority, now 'belongs' to one enormous company, Thames Water.

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2. Edmund Spenser, 'Prothalamion', *The Works of Edmund Spenser* 8, Charles G. Osgood and Henry G. Lotspeich eds. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1947), 257.
3. *Surrey Advertiser*, 6 February 1897, 2.
4. Spenser, 257.
5. Dale H. Porter, *The Thames Embankment: Environment, Technology, and Society in Victorian London* (Akron: University of Akron Press, 1998), 11. Donald Olsen, *The Growth of Victorian London* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1976), 32. L.D. Schwarz, *London in the Age of Industrialization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 126. Roy Porter, *London: A Social History* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995), 306. Gillian Kinsey, *The Growth of London* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1973), 48.
6. George Turnbull, 'The Water-Supply', in *London in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Sir Walter Besant (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1909), 350.
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8. W.H. Dickinson, 'The Water Supply of London', *The Contemporary Review* 71, (February, 1897): 241. Gomme, London, 63.
9. Parliamentary Debates, 4th ser., vol. 3 (1892), col. 815.
10. Dickinson, 'The Water Supply of London', 236.
11. *Ibid.*, 241. H.L.W. Lawson, 'The County Council Election', *Fortnightly Review* 63 (1898), 206.
12. Turnbull, 'The Water-Supply', 370-1. *Parliamentary Debates*, 4th ser., vol. 39 (1896), col. 11.
13. *Parliamentary Debates*, 4th ser., vol. 39 (1896), col. 12.
14. 'Evidence Given Before the Royal Commission on London Water Supply,' *Surrey County Council Reports*, 1898, 581. Turnbull, 'The Water Supply,' 371.
15. 'Memorandum of the Surrey County Council to Surrey Local Authorities', 2, Surrey History Centre catalog number CC28/70. Much of this essay is based on archival research performed at the Surrey History Centre [hereafter SHC], Woking, Surrey. Thanks are due to the helpful staff of the Centre and to the Department of History, University of Maine, for the financial assistance which allowed me to travel there.
16. 'Memorandum sent by the Surrey County Council to both Houses of Parliament,' 28 April 1896, SHC #CC28/70. Original typesetting replicated.
17. 'Memorandum submitted to the Commission on behalf of the Surrey County Council, 1898', 25 January 1898, SHC #CC28/70. 'Evidence Given Before the Royal Commission on London Water Supply', *Surrey County Council Reports*, 1898, 580.
18. 'Extract of the Minutes of Proceedings taken before the Royal Commission on London Water Supply, Monday June 27th, 1898', SHC #CC28/70.
19. Turnbull, 'The Water Supply', 372.
20. Southwark and Vauxhall was formed in 1805 under the original name of the South London Company. It was one of the few companies that competed with others in the districts it served. 'Map of London, Water London & Greater London shewing the areas supplied by the Metropolitan Water Companies', 1900, SHC #4463/3/1. Dickinson, 'The Water Supply of London,' 249.
21. *Times* (London), 15 June 1898, 4. Ibid., 30 April 1898, 4. Turnbull, 'The Water Supply,' 357.
22. For the 12 months between the autumns of 1897 and 1898, rainfall had been only 55% of the previous average. As water supplies began failing, water companies (including the Southwark and Vauxhall) appealed to parliament to take extra water from the Thames. Shadwell, *London Water Supply*, 154. *The Surrey Advertiser*, 30 Nov. 1897, 1.
23. Dickinson, 'The Water Supply of London', 241.
24. A cottage rented by Mr. James Mills and another rented by Mr. Charles Hibbet was sold by the trustees of Apps Court Estate in the deal with Southwark and Vauxhall, as well as a field rented by Mr. Charles Richard Townsend. 'Southwark and Vauxhall Water "Plans and Sections" Session 1898', SHC #QS6/8/1262/2.
25. *The Surrey Advertiser*, 20 November 1897, 1.
26. Surrey had an existing record of defending its water resources from London. As far back as 1877, for example, the Metropolitan Board of Works had sought to acquire water from Surrey, only to meet with opposition from the county. In fact, Surrey protested so strongly that the board had to abandon its project. 'Evidence Given Before the Royal Commission on London Water Supply', *Surrey County Council Reports*, 1898, 581.
27. Charles Burt, 'To the General Purposes Committee of the Surrey County Council, 18th January, 1898', *Surrey County Council Reports*, 1898, 37-9.
28. 'Report of the Parliamentary Committee', *Surrey County Council Reports*, 1898, 8 February 1898, 120.
29. *Daily Mail* (London), 12 February 1898, 3. R.C.K. Ensor, *England, 1870-1914*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), 312.
30. *Times* (London), 4 May 1898, 9. *Ibid.*, 7 May 1898, 15.
31. *Parliamentary Debates*, 4th ser., vol. 18 (1898), col. 951.
32. Unaddressed Letter of the Surrey County Council, 15 May 1895. SHC #CC28/70.
33. 'Minutes of the meeting of the Urban District Council of East and West Molesey', 4 January 1898, 207-8. SHC #3419/3/2.
34. 'Minutes of the meeting of the Urban District Council of East and West Molesey', 1 February 1898, 225-6. SHC #3419/3/2.
35. *Surrey Advertiser*, 8 January 1898, 4.
36. 'Memorandum from the Kingston Corporation for the Chairman's Presentation before the Board', SHC #CC28/70.
37. 'Copy of a letter from Southwark and Vauxhall, "Disturbance of Roads by the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company"', SHC #CC28/70.
38. *Surrey Advertiser*, 5 January 1898, 4.
39. 'Minutes of the meeting of the Urban District Council of East and West Molesey', 4 January 1898, 207-8. SHC #3419/3/2.
40. 'Minutes of the meeting of the Urban District Council of East and West Molesey', 1 February 1898, 225-6. SHC #3419/3/2.
41. 'Minutes of the meeting of the Urban District Council of East and West Molesey', 4 January 1898, 207-8. SHC #3419/3/2.
42. 'Memorandum for the chairman's presentation before the council', SHC #CC28/70.
43. Eric Parker, *Highways and Byways in Surrey* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1908), 254-5.
44. 'Southwark and Vauxhall Water "Plans and Sections" Session 1898', SHC QS6/8/1262/2.
45. 'Minutes of the meeting of the Urban District Council of East and West Molesey', 3 January 1899. SHC #3419/3/2. In 1897 there was another movement among Surrey's riverside towns to raise the property taxes of reservoir owners. The action has all the appearance of an attempt to win restitution from the irresponsible water companies. 'Letter from the Hampton Urban District Council to Staines, Walton, Sunbury, and East and West Molesey', 7 December 1897. SHC #3419/3/2.
46. Arthur Sherwell, *Life in West London*, 2.
47. *Times* (London), 7 May 1898, 15.
48. *Surrey County Council Reports*, 1898, 7 July 1898, 464.
49. Adams, Thompson & Fry, London, *The Thames from Putney to Staines; a survey of the river, with suggestions for the preservation of its amenities, prepared for a joint committee of the Middlesex and Surrey County councils* (London: St. Dominic's Press, 1930), 11.

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A History of the Telephone Service in the Town of Redhill and surrounding area

Alan Moore
Redhill Historian

The first patent for the development of a device to transmit speech over wires was granted to Alexander Graham Bell in March 1876. Succeeding years saw the telephone service begin and grow quickly in America and Europe. In England the first use for telephones was point-to-point communication, such as between branches of shops as an announcement in the *Surrey Mirror* of 21 April 1883 indicated:

> Mssrs TS Marriage and Co., Agricultural and Domestic Engineers, have connected their branches at Redhill and Reigate with the telephone, and the convenience of communication cannot be over estimated.

This installation was possibly the first use of the telephone in the Redhill area

The first British telephone exchange was opened in London in 1879, with 10 'subscribers'. The market for the new instrument was considerable and by 1887 there were 26,000 subscribers nation-wide. The word 'subscribers' was used because people in the early days paid a subscription to belong to the service and use their private lines accordingly. This worked fine for frequent users but was not fair for infrequent users, and the idea of pay-by-call charging was first introduced in 1884. The term 'subscribers' (shortened to 'subs' within the telephone service) outlived the subscription system by many years and was still in common use in telephone engineering jargon as late as the 1980s, when a campaign to officially substitute the word 'customer' was launched to assist the service out of the old electromagnetic age and into the new digital era.

A telephone exchange at Redhill was established in 1892 and took the form of a single switchboard at the premises of Rees Estate Agents' offices on the corner of Warwick and Station Roads. By April 1893 there were 15 lines. Redhill was a part of the Metropolitan area and Redhill subscribers were listed in the London directories, there probably being no separate local directory at this time. Redhill numbers began nominally at 1 and worked forward in natural progression but the 1893 directory shows them all with a prefix of 98. It seems that as exchanges were provided this prefix also grew, so it is likely that Redhill was the 98th telephone exchange installed by The Telephone Company. Redhill listings for 1893 were:

9801 Redhill & Reigate Borough Police, Police Station, Redhill
9802 Arthur Wood, 45 Station Road, Redhill (call rooms)
9803 Hall & Co., Redhill, Surrey
9804 Rees A & L, Station Road, Redhill
9805 Searle, James, Eversfield, Reigate
9807 Roberts, T.H., 'Covertside', Earlswood, Redhill
9808 Roberts, T.H., Reigate Station
9808 Rickett, Smith & Co., Reigate Station (call rooms)
9809 Rickett, Smith & Co., 12 Station Road, Redhill
9810 Wyman & Sons, Athenaeum Works, Brighton Rd., Redhill (new subscriber)
9811 Adams, Richard, Church Street, Reigate
9812 Adams, Richard, 32 Station Road, Redhill
9813 Rennie, George B., Horley Lodge, Redhill, Surrey
9814 Duncan, J. Hill, 'Hollycroft', Redstone Hill, Redhill (new subscriber)
9816 Weston J., Station Road, Redhill (new subscriber)
9806 and 9815 were spare numbers as were 9817 to 9831.

Presumably the switchboard had at least this installed capacity with possibly a maximum of fifty lines. The above pioneering few were the forerunners of today's telephone list of thousands. By 1896 the 98 prefix had been dropped, one more call office had been added at Reigate and every number from 1 to 22 was in use. The shortest lines were in Redhill and the longest at Chipstead, the Redhill exchange covering the whole of the Borough of Reigate and beyond, an area now covered by several exchanges.

The different telephone companies amalgamated in 1896 to become the National Telephone Company. This company provided by far the majority of Britain's telephones and exchanges under a 31-year licence that had been granted by the government in 1880. Its trunk system was taken into state control in 1896 as the government tried to control its monopoly. At this time £5 million of public money was invested and the Post Office began to open exchanges. The National Telephone Company was told in 1905 that it would be taken over when its licence expired. In 1912 its system was duly nationalised and taken over by the Post Office. The only independent systems were those run by local authorities at Hull and Portsmouth. Today only Hull's service remains independent, Portsmouth's having being sold to the Post Office in 1913. The telephone operation of the General Post Office (GPO) was finally privatised on 1 October 1981, and thereafter run by its successor, British Telecommunications (BT).

A New Site for the Exchange

Fig. 1 The Redhill offices of Mr. Leonard P. Rees on the corner of Station and Warwick Roads. Note the high pole at the rear of the premises. Over the window to the right of the entrance is written; 'National Telephone Co.'

In 1896 Redhill exchange moved from Rees' offices to a house called 'Hillside Villa', at 21 Chapel Road. The date is confirmed by a National Telephone Company publication *Sites and Buildings – 1908* in which is shown against Redhill exchange, in a column headed 'Conditions of Tenure', the statement, '14 years from 25th December 1896'. The annual rent for the building was £33 10s. 0d.

The 1898-9 Kelly's directory for Redhill lists, 'National Telephone Company (Call Rooms) Chapel Road (for London & Provinces day & night)'. The 'day and night' reference does not mean that the exchange was staffed at night. It would seem that no night service had been offered at the Rees office location as the switchboard closed down at 7pm each evening. The new location was probably switched via a junction after 7pm to another exchange that did offer night service. The reason for the move may well have been to do with anticipated future growth, Rees' premises allowing no room for expansion (e.g. a second switchboard), and Rees might have only been a temporary location from the beginning.

In 1902 the first modernisation of the Redhill exchange upgraded the switchboard to the magneto type of the hand restoring type. On this type of installation a ringing generator handle on the telephone needed to be cranked to drop an indicator at the switchboard. The operator would restore the indicator, plug an answering cord into the socket associated with that number and ask for the number required. The caller would give the information and the operator would plug the other end of the double-ended cord (the calling cord) into the socket associated with the required number. She would restore the speak key with which she had connected her headset to the circuit and operate a second key to connect her ringer to the circuit and turn a handle on her board to ring the called line's bell.

Returning to the speak position she would wait for the called number to answer when she would advise that there was a call for them and tell the caller that conversation could proceed. She would then restore her key leaving the two telephones connected and disconnecting her from the circuit. More than one set of cords and associated keys enabled the operator to have more than one call in progress at a time.

Later switchboards had systems which allowed the operator to monitor visually the progress of the call but before then it was up to the caller to advise the operator when the call had finished by replacing his handset and once more cranking the handle of his generator to drop the indicator. This alerted the operator, and she would restore the connection by removing both cords. This method of ending a call was known as 'ringing off', a phrase still sometimes used today to indicate the termination of a telephone conversation.

By the 1st January 1904 Redhill Exchange had 211 lines. The growth rate was probably slowed by the advent of the First World War but by 1920 the number of lines exceeded 500. This number would have been greater still were it not for the opening of additional local exchanges. One was Betchworth, opened by the National Telephone Company at Christmas 1908 with 15 working lines at the house of Mrs Sandford, 3 Elm Villas, Betchworth. Another was Reigate, opened on 7 September 1909, its location unfortunately unknown. It had 80 lines, many of which would have been transferred from Redhill. Following the takeover of the private telephone companies by the Post Office in 1912, Reigate exchange was relocated over the Reigate Post Office in Bell Street. In the 1920s there were five operators employed there.

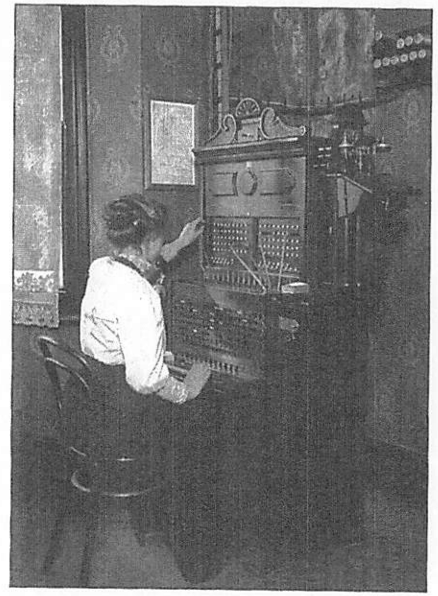
Merstham Exchange opened on 14 February 1910 at 2 Elm Cottages, Merstham, with around 40 lines, and Burgh Heath Exchange opened at Roberts' grocery stores in Brighton Road on 25 May 1910 with about sixty. Headley Exchange began at the Head Post Office in North Street, Headley in 1912 with 31 lines. These new exchanges either relieved Redhill of much of its load or allowed lines to be connected to places too far distant from Redhill. In 1920 the number of Merstham lines approached 100 whilst Reigate's total already exceeded 300.

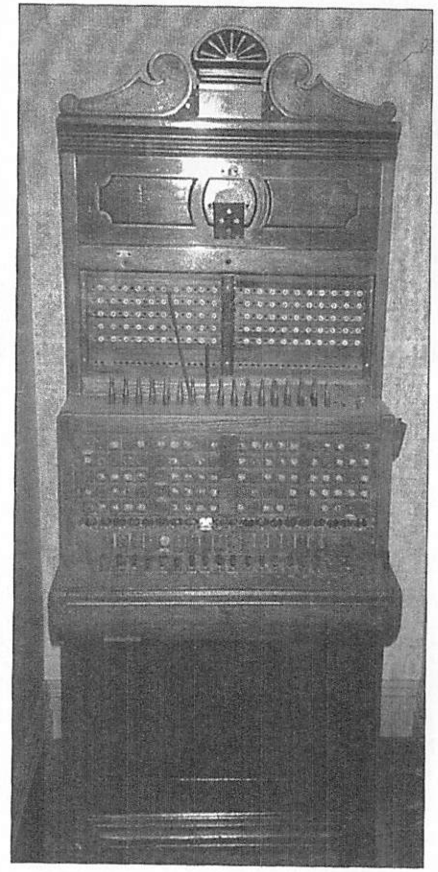
In 1921 the equipment in Redhill Exchange was updated once again. It remained the magneto type but the old National Telephone Company equipment was replaced by the London Telephone Service with an up-to-date design, part of an improvement being made to almost all of the outer London exchanges in order to modernise them and increase their capacity. An announcement was made in the *Times* to the effect that on the afternoon of 12 March 1921, between 2.25 and 2.30, callers to the Redhill Exchange would get no reply whilst the change-over was made,

By the end of 1929 there were over 750 Redhill lines in service and the number of staff had increased to nine operators plus a supervisor, three or four engineers, a cleaner and a cook. From its beginnings as a single-operator switchboard the exchange had become a busy place. The switch-room was in the ground-floor front of the house and the engineers' room was at the rear. Contact between the operators and engineers is evident from the fact that one of the operators and the supervisor, Nell Kenwood, each married engineers.

Fig. 2 *(below)* No picture of the early Redhill installation is known. The similar Purley switchboard at the turn of the century is shown. (Courtesy of BT Archives)

Fig. 3 *(right)* A better view of a Magneto Switchboard. (Courtesy BT Museum, London)





Another of the Redhill operators, Mabel McGregor, had previously worked at Reigate Exchange in the early 1920s.

Continued growth was the reason for Redhill Exchange moving again in February 1930 to Clarendon Road and a building that was an extension to an existing house known as 'The Moorings', built between 1871 and 1881 and sold to the GPO by the Monson estate in 1928. The extension was a red-brick, flat-roofed building which dwarfed the old house it was attached to. The house was used for the engineer's tea and recreation rooms, and upstairs a dining room provided dinners for exchange and external staff alike. The operators making the move were those from Chapel Road, who were at last at an exchange with the type of equipment for which they had been trained.

Initial operator training was carried out at Clerkenwell, in London, with 'live' experience of working in London exchanges on the modern switchboard

Fig. 4 In the 1920s the Telephone Exchange at Reigate was situated over the Post Office in Bell Street. There were five operators there and three of them are pictured in the switch-room.

types, not magneto, which was obsolescent by this time, so they had needed to adapt and learn anew at Chapel Road. When moving to Clarendon Road they at last found equipment similar to that of their training days.

Enid Bell, who started at Chapel Road in 1928, was one of those operators. During her training she had been dismayed at the size of London exchange switch-rooms and the noise generated by the operators' voices as they asked for connection information and passed it on to distant operators and had wondered if she would be able to stand it. Fortunately both old and new Redhill exchanges were far smaller and quieter and the new switchboards did not have so far to reach to the higher connection points as the London boards. Because an operator might have to stand to reach the uppermost working parts of the switchboard there was a minimum height requirement of five feet.

The new switch-room was built to take the expected expansion of the coming decades and in 1930 was only partly equipped, seven or eight switchboard positions only being installed. The room must have been very light then as later switchboards blocked out the light from the windows and war time black-out restrictions caused the roof-light to be painted dark green. Nell Vine (née Kenwood) continued to be the supervisor, with Mabel McGregor as her deputy. The exchange was now operational 24 hours and female operators worked shifts to cover 8am-8pm with male operators working the night shifts.

Over the ensuing years the switch-room slowly filled up. The supervisor's desk had the clerical desk alongside but separated from it by a partition. In front of the clerical desk was the two-position enquiry board, or Information Desk (ID). Around the west, north and east sides of the room were to be more than thirty operator positions.

The Information Desk was the equivalent of today's directory enquiries, with the difference that it was a much more personal service. Callers often asked for a number but could offer only scant information regarding names

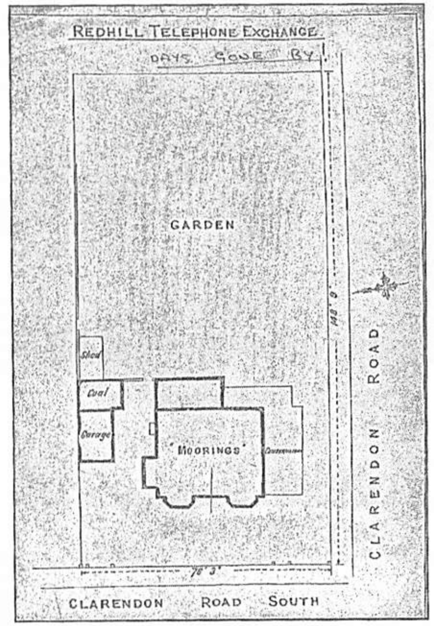


Fig. 5 This plan of original house, 'The Moorings', before the exchange was built on to it, was found in the old Croydon drawing office during a clear out in the 1970s.

and locations. The operators were mostly local girls, familiar with the town and knowing many of the shop numbers by heart, and able to deal with most queries. If not they could look up names in Kelly's Street Directory. If there were still problems, such as when shops had recently changed hands, with an associated change of name and telephone number, the solution was to ring a known shop, either next door or opposite the requested location, and ask them the new name. It was not unknown for a shopkeeper to go next door to get the new owner's number while the operator held on. The enquirer could either hang on or be rung back with the information. In today's directory enquiries, efficient and computer controlled as it is, a failure to locate a number fairly quickly is terminal. The enquiries operator might be sited nowhere near the area under enquiry, with no local knowledge of it. She makes the search on a database; if she does not find the requested name then that's the end of the matter.

The switchboards were grouped around the new Redhill switch-room according to their specific functions. The first two boards were where connections for trunk calls were made. A Tunbridge Wells operator, for example, might not have a direct junction to Reading and so have to set up a call between the two towns via a Tunbridge Wells-Redhill junction and a Redhill-Reading junction, the two junctions being connected together by the operator at Redhill. By this method a telephone in one town could be connected to a telephone in any other town anywhere in the country, the connection often being via several other strategic exchanges. Should an incoming junction require a Redhill number the operator would plug it into a circuit for a local board to deal with.

Next to these positions the 'multiple' began. This was the name for the jacks (plug connection points) from which all Redhill numbers could be called. The name was derived from the fact that all the Redhill numbers were multipled, or repeated, regularly all the way around the rest of the positions in the room so

Fig. 6 Two operators dispensing information from the Redhill Exchange Information Desk in the late 1950s.

Fig. 7 A view of part of the manual switch-room at Redhill manual exchange in the late 1950s. Incoming calls appeared on the lower part of each board's fascia, and outgoing calls to other exchanges were connected via junctions on the mid part of the fascia. The multiple of all Redhill numbers can be seen at operators' head level above these, with plenty of room to grow vertically.

that every Redhill number was within the reach of every operator. The multiple contained all the numbers from 1 to 2000 (later to 3000 and 4000) the rows of jacks expanding vertically on the front face of the switchboard, hence the need in London exchanges with thousands of lines for operators to reach higher.

Redhill numbers had their incoming jacks below the multiple, but repeated only around positions 19-41, which were dedicated to Redhill originating calls. If a Redhill number wanted something other than another Redhill number they would be connected accordingly – for enquiries to the ID, or for other parts of the country, to the outgoing board, and so on. These incoming jacks had an associated calling lamp. To get an operator the caller simply lifted the telephone receiver and equipment at the exchange would be activated by contacts operated in the telephone and light his or her calling lamp on each of its appearances around the switch-room.

Several positions contained incoming junctions from local exchanges, each junction having a light associated with it to show when a call was present. The operator would plug into the incoming junction, find out which number was required and make the connection via the 'multiple' or extend it to an outgoing junction. By this means other local exchanges could call any Redhill number or be connected to other exchanges. These boards also handled the calls extended to them by the operators on the first two positions.

Before the Redhill Post and Sorting Offices had their own switching system installed all their extensions were connected to position 17. Any postal employee calling another postal extension would lift their receiver and ask the operator on that position for the required extension number, just as though the board was their own private switchboard. The Post and Telephone companies in those days were one and the same business. The Post Office extensions connected to the board were in addition to the multiple of Redhill ordinary numbers, so calls could be made from extensions to outside lines. Similarly, calls could be made from Redhill numbers or other exchanges to any Post Office extension.

Several positions were exclusively for Reigate 'traffic' (the term for calls in progress). The services of the operators who had worked over the Bell Street Post Office for 25 years were no longer needed when the automatic exchange had opened in Church Street in 1937 in one of the few public buildings in Great Britain commissioned during the reign of Edward VIII. On 27 February 1963 the numbers were converted from four to five digits, the old numbers receiving 4 as a prefix. In the late 1960s Reigate obtained STD services via Redhill, and later the numbering range was further altered to six digits with the new prefix of 2. Reigate Exchange had grown in respect of numbers of lines connected to the point where it eventually outstripped Redhill – at least for a time. It was not until the 1980s that Redhill town expansion created the demand for extra lines that would take it past Reigate as the larger exchange once more. Reigate had direct access to other local automatic exchanges as well as to the whole of the London area and its size created the requirement for three boards to cater for its traffic to Redhill numbers alone.

Three spare boards were used for training purposes or were available if unusually heavy traffic occurred. Unusually heavy traffic was usually associated with extremes of weather, such as sudden snow, when everyone would ring everyone else to say why they were not at work, or a national event such as the death of King George VI in 1952, when thousands of calls were made by people enquiring if friends or relatives had heard the news.

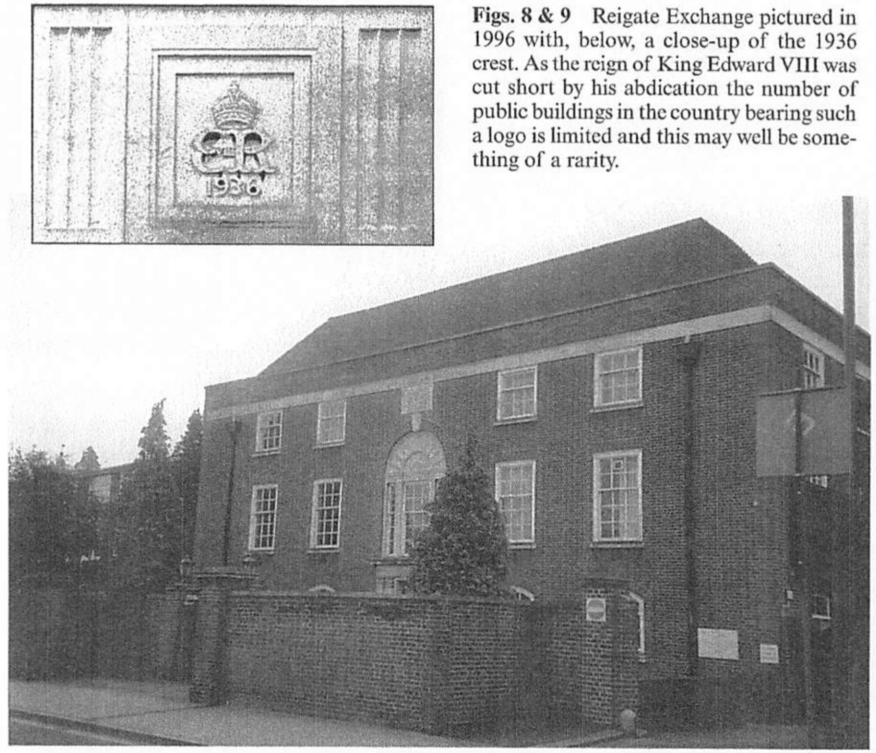
Operators

The day operators and supervisors were almost always female and the night operators were often male, although not exclusively so. Operators became familiar with certain numbers and to the customers associated with them. This tended to put callers at ease with the operators and some were inclined to chat to girls whose voices they liked. A man, who in the early 1960s rang his bookie daily, was one such individual and when an operator responded to his cheerfulness he liked the sound of her voice and asked her name. She told him and he said he had been going to put £80 on a horse, but now he would make it £85, the odd five for her. The horse won at 8-1 and an envelope containing £40, several weeks' wages for an operator at the time, duly arrived at the exchange with her name on it.

Around the same time, G.J. Wrights, the frozen food merchants at Earlswood, dispensed with the services of a great number of their reps, deciding instead to telephone their many regular customers to collect their orders. Consequently they sent to the exchange a list of all the numbers their sales people had to speak to, arranging that these numbers should be called between 9.30 and 11.30 on a Monday morning and connected to their number at Earlswood. This task would occupy two operators for two hours as they worked through the list. It was a service that G.J. Wrights paid for via their bill, but at Christmas they showed their personal appreciation in the form of a basket of fruit sent to the exchange.

Fraternisation with the male staff in the building (the engineers who maintained the boards and associated equipment in the exchange) was considered a distraction from efficiency. As in most jobs where male and female mix, associations formed and engineers and operators married as they did at the Chapel Road exchange, but when such an association was in full bloom in an exchange it could sometimes lead, in the interests of 'good working practices', to the transfer away from that building of one or other of the persons involved.

The engineers maintained additional equipment, including power plant, and staffed a fault-handling desk situated on the ground floor. As the exchange



Figs. 8 & 9 Reigate Exchange pictured in 1996 with, below, a close-up of the 1936 crest. As the reign of King Edward VIII was cut short by his abdication the number of public buildings in the country bearing such a logo is limited and this may well be something of a rarity.

grew there were often additional engineers installing new equipment, and with one or two cleaning staff they added 10 or 15 to the 60 operators, making a resident total of around 75 persons in the 1950s and 60s.

As a manifestation of his authority the engineer in charge of Redhill during the 1930s had worn a bowler hat and always sat in the same seat during tea and lunch breaks, a tradition that died out soon after WW2. The overall engineer-in-charge of the Redhill group of exchanges had his office at Reigate and would visit Redhill and the other exchanges regularly.

The Change to Automatic Working

Automatic exchange equipment had been invented in 1888 by an American named Strowger. The first automatic telephone exchange in Great Britain opened at Epsom in 1912 and the British version of Strowger's automatic principle was generally adopted in 1922. Even so, manual exchanges remained widespread, the last UK one closing in 1976. Manual exchange engineers could be retrained on automatic exchanges and the operators and supervisors moved to other jobs within the company.

Redhill customers were familiar and at ease with the operator service. The owner of the London Road 'Chocolate Box' sweet shop, on finding out that Redhill was going to be converted to automatic working commented, 'I pick up the 'phone, give the girl the number I want, and she gets it for me; that's automatic! This new way I'll have a dial and have to do it all myself. What's automatic about that?' The answer to the question, sprung on an unsuspecting local telephone engineer who had only gone in for a quarter of boiled sweets, was that automatic working was well established and proven, was less labour-intensive, and its arrival at Redhill was inevitable. The change came on 13 December 1967, and the *Surrey Mirror* of Thursday 15 December reported:

> On the dot of 1.30 on Wednesday, engineers blacked out the old Manual exchange and switched the town's 4,000 subscribers to the automatic Subscriber Trunk Dialling System (STD).
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> There were no problems as the last manual exchange in the district went smoothly automatic. Everything in the switch-room on the first floor of the building in Clarendon Road went oddly quiet and 60 operators found themselves suddenly without work. For some it was a sad moment but for GPO authorities it meant that, after many delays, Redhill had been brought up to date.
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> Redhill subscribers had been asked not to make any calls after 1.15, and operators would not connect any calls after 1.25. 'After engineers had disconnected the manual circuits, subscribers could start direct dialling to numbers throughout the country. Dialling '100' now means connection to operators at the local central exchange at Uplands.

STD stood for 'Subscriber Trunk Dialling', the system whereby calls to distant exchanges could be made using dialled codes, a system today's telephone users are perfectly accustomed to but was unfamiliar to many in the 1960s. This was the pre-electronic age. Transistors were on the horizon but the auto equipment was mechanical and worked by the operation of electromagnets, some of which operated at ten pulses per second under control of the telephone user's dial, others working far more quickly. The overall effect was to allow the customer to direct the equipment to find a path through the exchange to the number or the outgoing junction route he or she wanted.

The equipment, with its vast quantity of wiring and cabling, made the apparatus floors technically complex places, especially as there were a great many differing types of equipment, all of which had to be understood by engineers. Each one had a section of the exchange to maintain and they rotated sections on a six-monthly basis. Duties included routine cleaning and oiling of mechanisms, the replacement of worn parts and the regular functional testing of equipment. Faulty equipment was removed from service until repaired.

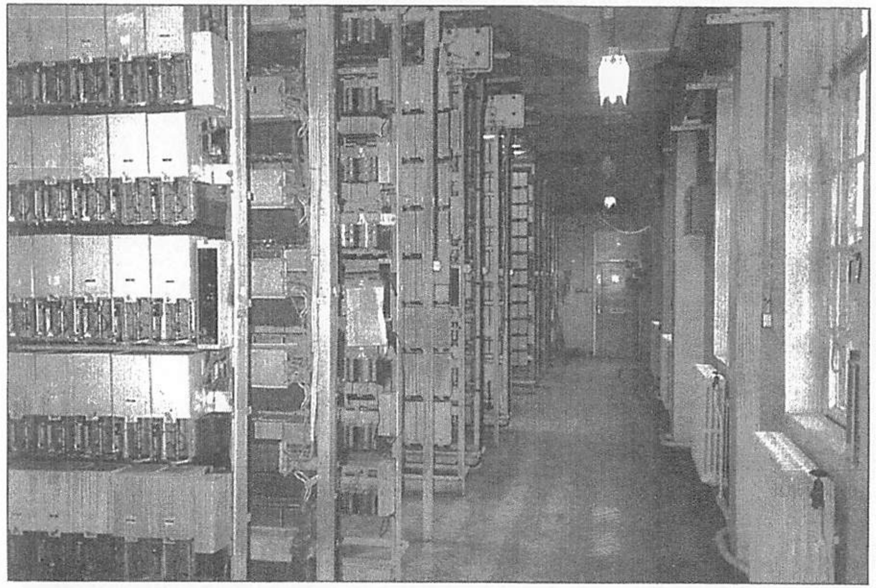

Fig. 10 A small part of the first-floor apparatus room at Redhill Automatic Exchange in the 1980s. The first rack of equipment contains selectors routing calls via 81-80 to local exchanges. Note the highly polished wood block flooring, necessary as dust could be a problem for this kind of equipment.

The history of Redhill town is closely connected with its position as an important railway junction. Redhill's manual exchange had also been an important communication junction, being a strategically placed switching point. The new automatic installation was now three exchanges in one: the local exchange (the parent exchange in the local area, nearby exchanges using it as a switching centre for access to other local exchanges they did not have direct routes to), a Group Switching Centre, routing traffic to and from other Group Switching Centres from the surrounding area, and a termination point for trunk routes from London, the Midlands and various other parts of the country dialling in to this area.

Other Exchanges

Yet more local exchanges had been provided. Downlands started life on 16 June 1930 as a hypothetical exchange at Merstham. It was created to serve the Hooley area and was eventually given a home of its own as a manual exchange at Hollymeoak Rd, Coulsdon. Its date of conversion to automatic is unknown.

Dawes Green Exchange opened on 15 January 1934 at Topners Road but is no longer part of the Redhill group, as it was transferred out of the London

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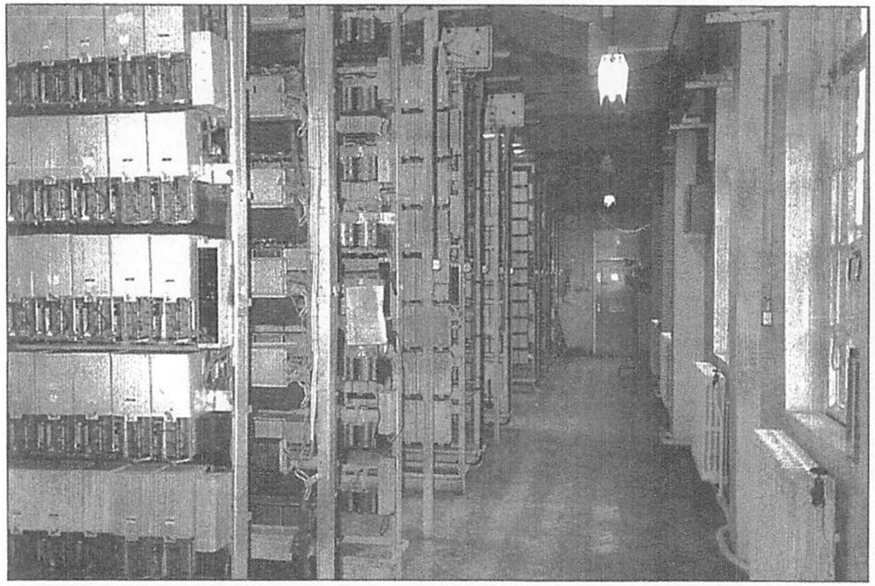

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Dawes Green Exchange opened on 15 January 1934 at Topners Road but is no longer part of the Redhill group, as it was transferred out of the London

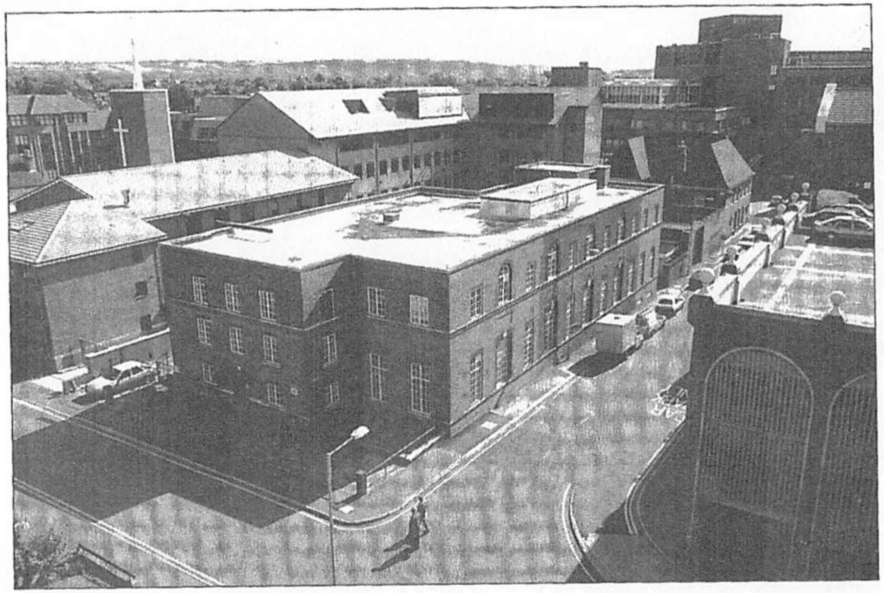

Fig. 11 Redhill Exchange in its auto days, occupying the whole of the site once occupied by 'The Moorings'. The dark brick side wall shows the location of the 1930s building, the lighter brick either end revealing subsequent 1960s extensions. The projection on the roof is the old roof light (here bricked up and painted over) that gave extra light to the switchroom from 1930 until 1940.

area into the Home Counties region. Nutfield Ridge got its own exchange on 22 January 1936 at Mid Street. It was converted partly to automatic and partly to TXE2 (an early type of electronic working) on 7 April 1971.

Tadworth Exchange opened on 17 January 1940 as an automatic exchange at Epsom Lane South. The location of Betchworth Exchange by the 1940s was the local Post Office; it became automatic a few hundred yards along the same road on 5 May 1948. Mogador Exchange opened on 15 November 1945 as an automatic at Sandy Lane, Kingswood to relieve part of the rapidly growing Burgh Heath area. Burgh Heath itself became automatic at Garratts Lane, Banstead on the 23 November 1966. Merstham's manual building was unsuitable for conversion to automatic working and a new building was erected next door behind Merstham Village Hall. An automatic exchange opened there on 18 October 1967.

A New Era

If one aspect of Redhill's telephone service remained constant it was its record of growth and change and it outgrew its available space once again. In 1974

this resulted in the provision of a second building in Clarendon Road, required to house not just more equipment but a new, modern switch-room for operator assistance. Even though operators were required less for generally connecting calls they were still required for other services, such as 999, some call office connections and assistance in cases of customer difficulties.

This new building was known at first as Redhill Group Switching Centre, a slight misnomer inasmuch as it handled only outgoing traffic. Technical innovation, however, meant that it had some of the more advanced designs of equipment, as well as a different mechanical system to the Strowger one, known as 'Crossbar'. This system, new in design although not in concept, had far fewer moving parts and therefore less complexity and noise.

'The Moorings' had been demolished in 1967 when the old exchange had been extended during the conversion to automatic, but its name had not been used since 1930. Now was the time to revive it so the two Clarendon Road exchanges could be separately identified for postal reasons. The name 'The Moorings' was affixed to the redbrick building and remained there for the rest of its life. The new building slowly became known as 'Redhill Clarendon' and was as busy as any of the previous exchanges had ever been. Its Crossbar equipment required engineers specifically trained in its operation as it routed Redhill and other local exchange customers' STD calls to in other parts of the country

'The Moorings' continued in an increasingly limited role for another 13 years before the transfer of the local exchange itself to Redhill Clarendon, its fourth home, and this time using new digital 'system X' equipment that is still in use today. The preparatory work for this was mainly complete by Easter 1987 and the new facility was brought into operation on 14 May of that year. The old exchange went almost as quietly on that day as it had been noisily born 20 years earlier at its conversion to mechanical automatic working. 'The Moorings' lasted three more years, its last remaining mechanical equipment acting as a tandem exchange for through traffic only while modernisation took place elsewhere. It finally closed in May 1990.

In Redhill Clarendon the digital local exchange was almost completely silent and required no permanently dedicated staff. With enhancements it was able to cater not only for the local traffic but also, in conjunction with other strategically placed switching units, STD and international traffic, routing it to other centres for processing and onward routing. The Crossbar unit on the ground floor fell into disuse and by the 1990s there were the same gaps on the mechanical equipment apparatus floors that 'The Moorings' had experienced. Even the top floor auto-manual board, of a far more modern design than any of those that preceded it, bowed to the progress that no longer required local facilities and moved away. Reigate Exchange was converted to digital working on 4 June 1987, only weeks after Redhill, the equipment occupying only a fraction of the space used by the old automatic equipment. By 1991 all of the local exchanges had been converted to digital working, functioning together like a networked computer system.

During a period of a little over one hundred years, telephone exchanges, not only in this part of Surrey but all over the country, have changed considerably. During much of that time people and practices had remained much the same but with the new technology and increased competition these have had to change as well. It will be interesting to see what innovations the 21st century will bring.

Sources:

The author has been able to base much of this article on his own knowledge, having worked at Redhill, Reigate and many of the surrounding exchanges in the 1950s and '60s, and at Redhill 'The Moorings' from 1967-90. Considerable additional information was obtained from research at the BT Museum, London (now closed), BT Archives, also in London, and from material in the local newspaper, the *Surrey Mirror*. Information from the deeds of the original house which once stood on the site of 'The Moorings' was provided by Canadian and Portland Estates, London. The author is grateful for the assistance provided by these bodies. He also thanks those persons, some ex-telephone engineers and operators, who provided further information and material.

Commemorating the Fallen:

The Lord Lieutenant's Soldier Sons' in the First World War and the Making of the Memorial Chapel at St Barnabas Church, Ranmore

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North-west of Dorking and overlooking the Weald on the lofty chalk down expanse of Ranmore Common there stood the swagger Italianate mansion 'Denbies' from 1854 until its demolition one hundred years later. One of the focal points of the estate, adjacent to the busy working environments of the stables and the gardens, was St Barnabas Church. It was designed by George Gilbert Scott, erected in 1859 and entirely funded by George Cubitt (first Lord Ashcombe from 1891) along with the school, rectory, dispensary and training institution for domestic servants. This new 'model' estate had all the features of a 'close' village, without their longevity. The church contained 120 sittings for household and outdoor servants and Ranmore became an ecclesiastical parish in 1860. The population of the parish numbered 307 in 1891.

In 1906 Hope Moncrieff referred to its 'graceful spire [which] makes a far-seen beacon beside the upper edge of Denbies Park' and, two years later, Parker described the church as 'more finely placed than any in the county except perhaps St Martha's'.[1] The spire, or 'Cubitt's eternal finger', still forms a landmark for miles around. In 1915 F.Green made the common mistake of wondering how the church ever obtained a congregation as so few houses were visible in the immediate vicinity.[2] He omitted to contemplate the requirements for labour at a vast mansion and the deferential social relationships which arose in a parish which was entirely contained within the estate. In 1959 the third Lord Ashcombe reflected on the intimate association of the mansion, community and church: 'The Church of St Barnabas and the school were built by my grandfather and they have been I hope, a refuge and a comfort to a great many people during the last hundred years.'[3] Amid the extensive plantation of firs and spreading oaks, the shaded churchyard, with signs of past access to Denbies, the richly ornamented Early English style church and 19th-century flint-faced estate buildings continue to bear testimony to a once aristocratic pleasure ground and moral order on the brow of Ashcombe hill, which survived long into the 20th century.

In St Barnabas Church there is a poignant memorial chapel to the loss of three young lives on the Western Front in 1916, 1917 and 1918. They were the eldest sons of the Hon. Henry Cubitt (second Lord Ashcombe, 1917-47). Its survival in the former estate church, and the considerable care with which parishioners maintain the exquisite mural by E.Reginald Frampton, enables it to remain a living expression of remembrance for the fallen of the Great War. Its complex interplay of Christian and patriotic iconography reminds us of the very particular moment in the early 20th century when the cross and the sword were intertwined and the language of martyrdom and redemption was used to bring tolerable meaning for the bereaved who mourned their Absent Dead. In grief-stricken county seats of residence expressions of simple patriotism, especially of Christian chivalry, took form as the proposed centre-pieces of memorials in their churches.

At St Barnabas Church pious, loving parents dwelt on the sacrifice of their sons and the righteousness of the national cause. They created a memorial which tells us much about perceptions of the 'lost generation' and attitudes on the home front during the war. Further, the interplay of the landed interest, Anglicanism in small rural communities and deeply embedded military values in civil society can be discussed within a specific *locale* through record linkage of documentary sources and physical remains in the built environment. The surviving topography of Ranmore and the impressive embellishments of the church allow the modern-day saunterer along the North Downs the opportunity to consider values and social relationships which, dominant in late Victorian and Edwardian society, would not long survive the Great Deliverance of 1918 and the Victory Balls of 1919. This article will consider the emergence of the Cubitts in county society, their patronage of the St Barnabas Church, the military service of the three eldest sons on the Western Front, the commemoration of their lives, and intimations of social and economic change at Denbies in the aftermath of war. As a newly ennobled family, the Cubitt's were remarkably successful in gaining an *entrée* into county society. An important aspect of securing status and respectability ensued from adopting military functions, with a well-defined sense of territoriality, in service to the crown. Consequently, the public career of the Hon. Henry Cubitt and the tragically young wartime deaths of his three eldest sons can be placed within the context of enduring links between the landed interest and the army, which survived into the 20th century. In 1914, 46 per cent of all colonels in the regular army originated from villages with populations of less than 1,000 inhabitants.[4]

The Hon. Henry Cubitt (1867-1947), only son of the Hon. George Cubitt, Lord Ashcombe (1828-1917), went to Eton College and Trinity College, Cambridge and became MP for Reigate, 1892-1906. Soon after leaving Eton he began an enthusiastic career as a militia officer in the volunteer battalion, Queens Royal West Surrey Regiment. Initially, he served in the Dorking Company, and after 1890, on becoming captain, as commanding officer of the

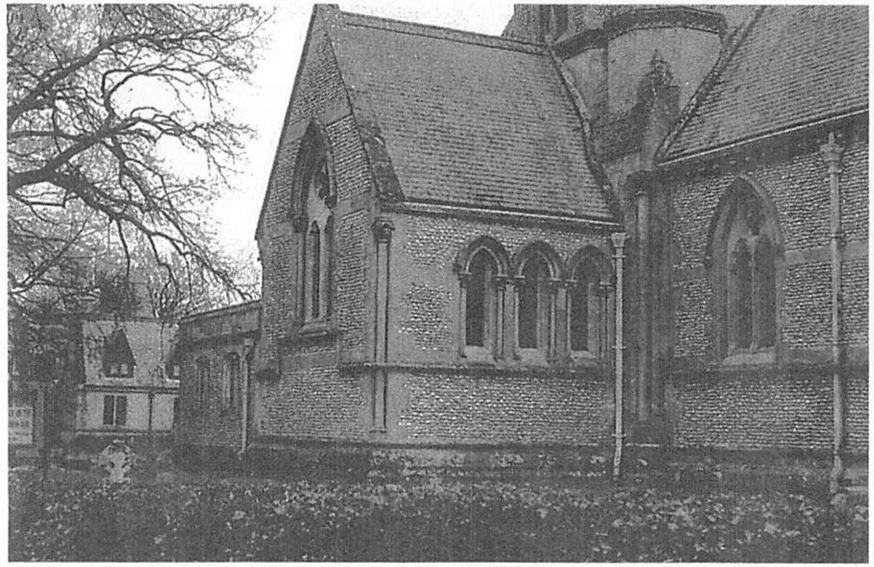

Fig. 1 Exterior view of St Barnabas Church

Farnham Company. In 1889 George Cubitt built, on his land, a Drill Hall in Dorking with armoury and hallkeeper's cottage. Edwardian reference works on the social elite of Surrey highlight Henry's 'keen, practical interest in the welfare of our forces'.[5] In April 1901, during the Boer War, Colonel Henry Cubitt took immense pride in raising and commanding a new regiment of Surrey Imperial Yeomanry. The first training camp took place at Denbies in July 1901, when 200 yeomen mustered. In 1902 the regiment was re-named the Surrey (Princess of Wales' Lancers) Imperial Yeomanry and, subsequently, The Surrey (Queen Mary's Regiment) Yeomanry.[6] Members of the family served as volunteer officers and drills and exercises regularly took place on Ranmore Common.[7] Henry Cubitt was commanding officer until 1906 and remained Honorary Colonel until 1912.

In 1905 Henry Cubitt became Lord Lieutenant of Surrey and therefore the historic embodiment of raising forces from the county in times of national crisis. On the formation of the Territorial Forces in 1908 he automatically became president of the Surrey Association. He personified the amateur military tradition in Surrey and was associated with the age-old aristocratic principle of providing territorial leadership, mustering men and subsidising units within the paternalistic context of hierarchical social relations in small towns and villages.

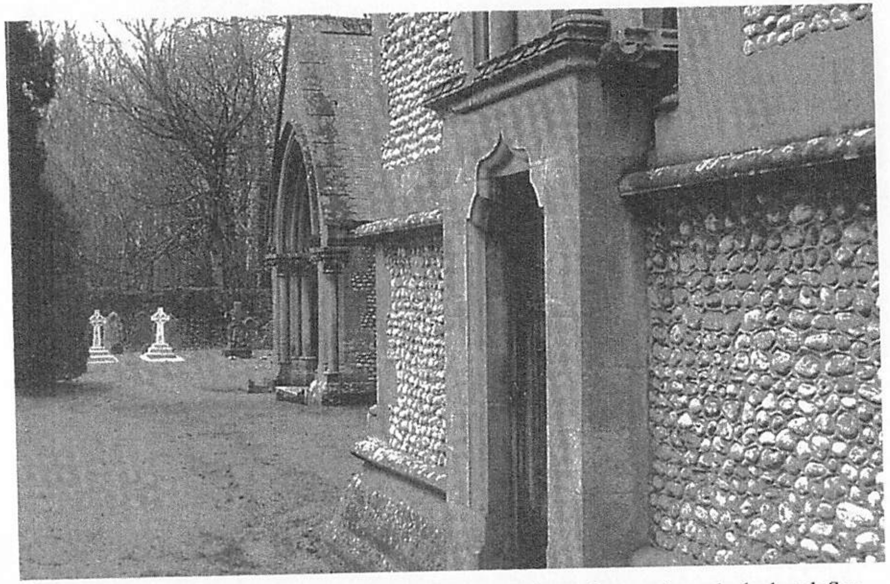

Fig. 2 The new door under the southern window which continues to be unlocked each Sunday. Inside te door is the grave marker of the H. Capt. the Hon. Henry Archibald Cubitt.

Cubitt met the most important qualifications for the lord lieutenancy through his ownership of 5,000 acres, considerable wealth and a sense of public duty.[8] Additionally, he had the support of key county notables, such as Lord Midleton.

These principles of social and political leadership found expression at the outbreak of war in August 1914. The Lord Lieutenant convened a meeting of influential county figures at St James's Vestry Hall, Piccadilly to form a committee to supervise Surrey's response to raising men for military service, providing funds and hospitals for the wounded and alleviating distress caused by unemployment. Henry Cubitt observed, 'Since the last war, some 15 years ago, an immense amount of organisation work of a military and semi-military character has been done in the country, and we were in a much better position in that respect than in 1899 (hear, hear)'.[9] As an authorised recruiter Henry Cubitt, like many others, embraced the short war illusion. He could not envisage an expeditionary force, even for continental warfare, that would be significantly larger than the mounted detachments of Imperial Yeomanry which, embued with patriotic enthusiasm, were despatched to South Africa in 1900. Otherwise, two issues were highlighted by the Lord Lieutenant. Firstly, Cubitt announced that the recreational shoots on his estate would end and that his tenants had been told to 'knock any birds on the head' which were ready for the table.

Secondly, that the announcement of generous subscriptions would stimulate fund raising in the county. Lord Onslow of Clandon Park promised £5,000 and Lady Onslow £1,000. The Lord Lieutenant intended to subscribe £1,000 per quarter for one year and the Hon. Mrs. Cubitt would give £1,000 to the Red Cross Society.

Alongside philanthropic endeavour for semi-military purposes at county level, it is a commonplace that the presence of the Church of England in rural areas depended, very greatly, on landed families as patrons of a wide range of ecclesiastical assets.[10] In the development of a quasi-medieval self-sufficient estate at Ranmore, the Cubitts immersed their energies and wealth in paternalistic actions. These included the retention of Harvest Home, estate parties, cricket matches, the endowment of the Dorking Cottage Hospital and, most of all, the patronage of the church at the end of the garden. Henry Cubitt undertook these customary functions of a country gentleman, as permanently resident at Denbies after 1905.[11]

St Barnabas Church, in design and use, reflected the intimate link of social hierarchy and formal religious observance. Attendance at Anglican services in rural areas was highest in parishes with a resident squire.[12] At St Barnabas Church patterns of worship depended utterly on activities at the mansion. In the far from loquacious Register of Services terse entries indicate the defining role of the Cubitts, alongside poor weather, in relation to attendance at 8 a.m., 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. services each Sunday. On 27 March 1910 the entry read 'The family away from Denbies for Easter', and on 4 February 1912 'Fire at Denbies kept some away'. In July 1905 the new marble altar in memory of Laura, Lady Ashcombe, given by her surviving daughters, was dedicated. On 6 November 1911 the vestry built by Henry Cubitt was also dedicated.[13] Towards the end of the war Sonia Keppel visited Denbies and noted, 'As the next day was Sunday, prayers did not take place, but every member of the party was expected to attend church, at eleven. Wearing a surplice, Lord Ashcombe sat in the choir, and most of his male employees seemed to sit with him.'[14] Attendance at church provided the 'social glue' by generating an organic sense of community in a far from egalitarian age. Dress codes were scrupulously maintained and time was given for servants to attend and take their customary place in the pews. As the servants and visitors walked through the large stable yard, with its labour intensive requirements, to church, they passed through a space which gave the family the essential accoutrements of a gentlemanly ethos on the eve of war.

David Cannadine has summarised the readiness of the British aristocracy to fulfil their traditional obligations in 1914: 'By tradition, by training and by temperament, the aristocracy was the warrior class. They rode horses, hunted foxes, fired shot-guns. They knew how to lead, how to command, and how to look after the men in their charge.'[15] The officer class were gentlemen and its social and financial exclusivity arose from a public school education and the necessity to pay for training at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. In February 1911 the Hon. Henry Archibald Cubitt obtained a commission in the Coldstream Guards, aged 19 years. The Hon. Alick George Cubitt joined the 15th King's Hussars from Sandhurst in September 1914, aged 19 years. The Hon. William Hugh Cubitt entered the Royal Military College as a cavalry cadet and joined the 1st Royal Dragoons after a shortened officer training course in 1915. A receipt for payment of £150 for admission to the College is dated 5 July 1914.

These three, of six sons of Henry Cubitt, joined regiments where entry was socially competitive and required a private income, perhaps amounting to £400 per annum in the Coldstream Guards. Some cavalry regiments required larger incomes. Their shaping as gentlemen at Eton College supplemented the necessary prerequisities for officer entry of 'a commitment to country pursuits, loyalty to institutions, self confidence and physical courage'.[16] In other circumstances a short 'apprenticeship' in prestigious regiments at home would have prepared them for public service, the conspicuous consumption of leisure and social leadership in pastoral settings.

In 1914 the costliness of assuming leadership and command in an attritional continental war could not be calculated. One in five sons of British and Irish peers were killed in the First World War.[17] As subalterns on the Western Front, privileged social groups bore heavy casualty rates and violent deaths of the aristocracy reached the highest levels since the Wars of the Roses. Perceptions quickly developed of a 'lost generation', much emphasised in the inter-war years, comprising disproportionate numbers of middle- and upper-class men under 25 years.[18] One in ten heirs to estates over 3,000 acres were killed in the war. One of these was the heir to Denbies.

On 12 August 1914, eight days after the outbreak of war, the third battalion, Coldstream Guards left Chelsea Barracks for France, as part of the Guards Division, with farewells from Queen Alexandra. Second Lieutenant Henry Cubitt was battalion transport officer. He participated in the retreat from Mons, at one stage taking temporary command of the battalion, and the battles of the Marne and the Aisne. He was promoted captain in June 1915, adjutant three months later and was the only officer to serve continuously in the battalion throughout the first two years of the war.

During the Somme offensive the Guards Division was deployed in the Ginchy-Les Boeufs sector in the further quest for breakthrough. It attacked objectives in a slight mist in featureless terrain at 6.20 a.m. on 15 September 1916 behind a creeping barrage. The regimental history noted, 'Almost immediately the two Coldstream battalions came under the most terrific machine-gun fire from the Flers-Ginchy sunken road, and the first waves of

the assault were literally mown down. Major Vaughan, Second in Command of the 3rd Battalion, and Capt. Cubitt, the Adjutant, were both killed before they had gone a hundred yards.'[19] Three battalions of the Coldstream Guards attacked in line together – 'as steadily as though they were walking down the Mall' – and suffered heavy casualties.[20] On the first day of tank deployment, gaps were required in the barrage, which allowed intense machine-gun fire to enfilade the flanks from shell holes and wrecked trenches. Later that day the battalion commander, Colonel Campbell, used his hunting horn to rally the depleted remnants and to seize the objectives in a headlong rush, for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross. The battalion lost 128 men killed and 233 wounded during the week 10-17 September 1916.[21]

In many ways this action on rolling ground, with a not dissimilar morphology to the vales and ridges of the North Downs, contained abiding images of frontal attacks on the Somme, where values of ardour and courage encountered entrenched machine-gun positions, and slaughter ensued. Captain Cubitt died leading his men over the top soon after zero hour.

Five days later this news reached Denbies. On the same day news of the death of his cousin, Capt. William George Cubitt Chichester, also 24 years of age, was received at the Dorking vicarage. He was the son of Canon Edward Arthur Chichester, Vicar of Dorking 1885-1921, who married Mary Agnes, daughter of Henry Cubitt. He was also chaplain of the West Surrey Volunteers. Capt. Chichester was also killed in action on 15 September after he dragged men from a wiring party in no man's land to safety. The quartermaster remarked, 'it was a jolly fine thing to do, we all think the world of him'.[22] This double bereavement was widely reported, most notably in *The Times*.[23] Capt. Chichester is commemorated in *opus sectile* wall mosaics in the Lady Chapel at St Martin's Church, Dorking, where he is depicted as a knight slaying a dragon.

On 25 September a memorial service was held at St Barnabas Church for Capt. Cubitt. The *Surrey Mirror and County Post* noted that its simplicity 'emphasised the poignant grief of those among whom the young gallant officer "Master Harry" as he was known by humble parishioners had passed his all too brief life'.[24] The decision of the government not to repatriate the bodies of the fallen led to memorial services which contained elements of the burial service, including hymns, address, catafalque and the Last Post at estate churches.[25]

Elsewhere, men who died in the concentrated misery which the battle of the Somme brought to numerous districts from which 'pals' battalions were recruited, were commemorated in parishes by collective remembrance in specially designated services, which started to occur at six-monthly intervals.

It was a measure of the community of mourning at Ranmore that the memorial service for this eldest son, for whom a letter a letter of condolence had been received from the King and Queen, was shared with the bereaved relatives of five men who had left the estate to enlist in service battalions of nearby county regiments. Inevitably, however, the sublime assemblage of the military apparel of the fallen heir idealised the honour and glory of death on the battlefield. On the altar steps were placed his Croix de Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur on a scarlet ribbon, which was surrounded by a wreath of bay leaves. Below the decoration the sword which he carried in the retreat from Mons was laid, along with his bearskin headdress with red plume. The incongruity of modern uniform was avoided. The service included the much used hymns 'Onward Christian Soldiers', 'Fight the good fight' and 'Through the night of doubt and sorrow'. A muffled peal of bells preceded the service and the Last Post was sounded by six buglers from the Coldstream Guards.

In 1917 Henry Cubitt, now 2nd Lord Ashcombe, petitioned the Bishop of Winchester to grant permission for the conversion of the south transept into a memorial chapel in 'proud and grateful memory of Henry Archibald Cubitt'. The vestry meeting proposed substantial alterations including the removal of windows and the formation of an altar recess in the east wall, comprising carved stone, marble back and retable, and a picture of the Adoration of the Magi with inscriptions. Work also commenced on a new doorway in the south wall and a carved oak screen between the chapel and the nave with light iron gates.[26] Progress was made on the building of the chapel, but by the end of the year Lord Ashcombe received news of the death of his second son.

Alick Cubitt was among the first reinforcements to join 'B' Squadron, 15th The King's Hussars in November 1914 and he served at the battles of Ypres, Neuve Chapelle and Loos in 1915. In November 1917, as part of 9 Cavalry Brigade, the regiment expected the order to move forward and, as the mobile arm, to capture Bourlon Wood and exploit the gap. Indeed, as Paddy Griffith has noted more generally of cavalry operations in the war, there was a 'tantalising vision of flat-out manoeuvres deep in the enemy's rear and even of breakouts into green fields beyond'.[27] Instead, as so often before, the horses were off-saddled, watered in nearby ponds and given nose-bags. Dismounted, the regiment took up positions in sand pits south of Bourlon Wood and were then ordered into roughly dug trenches in the front line. Amid constant fluctuating fighting at close hand, to capture the village, Alick Cubitt died on 24 November 1917.[28] A copy of the telegram sent that day to Col. Lord Ashcombe survives in the army service record.[29]

News of his death in action was received at Denbies three days later. On 20 December 1917 a large congregation of the household and estate workers gathered at St Barnabas Church for a memorial service. Symbolically, the accoutrements of a horseman who had fallen in the service of King and Country formed the focal point below the altar steps: 'Upon a draped Union Jack was placed the leopard skin saddle cloth, with embroidered panels, distinctive of the deceased officer's regiment, upon which again was placed his gold belt and pouch and sword, the whole being surmounted by his busby, with the red plume, and busby bag worn by the 15th Hussars.'[30] Psalm 23, which most soldiers knew by heart, was read before the hymns 'Onward Christian Soldiers' and 'Fight the good fight'. A muffled peal took place before and after the service and the Last Post was sounded after the hymn 'Fierce raged the tempest o'er the deep'.

Four months later, on 24 March 1918, the Hon. William Hugh Cubitt died of wounds received in action during the German spring offensive on the Western Front. His service and casualty form indicate that he embarked at Southampton on 22 May 1915 and joined the 1st Royal Dragoons at the front seven days later. He was promoted Lieutenant on 1 September 1916 and undertook a course at the Fourth Army Trench Mortar School on 21 June 1917. He shared with his brother the general expectation that cavalry regiments would be used, in their entirety, to undertake *arms blanche* actions across open ground as manoeuvre returned to the battlefield. However, sudden breakthrough by German infiltration units on 21 March 1918 led to hastily improvised defensive actions. Near Ham a mounted squadron was formed, which included a troop of the 1st Royal Dragoons.

In a galloping dash with sword the cavalrymen briefly repelled the onslaught in an action which evoked another age, far removed from the largely empty, anonymised artillery-dominated battlefields of 1917-18. Descriptions of these few examples of mobility and dash in post-war regimental histories encouraged the hope that the horse still had a continuing utility in modern warfare, 'Knee to knee at first, opening out a little as they dashed forward, the 10th and the Royals covered the ground at a gallop. Many fell, among them 2nd Lt. Cubitt, but the German fire was wild and did not stop the horsemen, who came right in among them, cutting them down left and right.'[32] It was not without significance that one of the surviving brothers, the Hon. Charles Guy Cubitt, served in this unmechanised regiment during the years 1920-7. Further, Guy Cubitt commanded the Surrey Yeomanry, which his father had raised, in action during the Second World War and was honorary colonel of the regiment after the war.

Lt. William Cubitt died at 46 Casualty Clearing Station on 24 March 1918. As news of this third tragedy reached Denbies, Lord Ashcombe's daughter Mary Agnes, at Dorking vicarage, was informed that her surviving son, Major Arthur Chichester, had been wounded in France.[34] He survived the war. Expressions of sympathy from Dorking Urban Council brought the poignant reply from Lord Ashcombe, 'They could only hope that these great sacrifices would be rewarded by lasting benefits to our country and to civilisation.'[35] The text for services at St Barnabas Church in March 1918 was 'Perseverance. Relief.Sacrifice.Triumph'.[36]

In 1919 exhibitions of designs for war memorials were held by traditional arbiters of taste in the decorative arts, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Royal Academy. The exhibitions were intended to remind the public that war memorials in past epochs were usually commissioned by individual patrons, which generally ensured that messages were effectively communicated to future generations. Examples of aesthetically appropriate memorials were presented to educate public sensibilities and some were commended in art publications. *The Studio* devoted space to Frampton's mural painting at Ranmore and observed, 'The war has laid a very heavy toll on the noble families of England, but few of them have suffered so severely as the owner of "Denbies", on the hill overlooking Dorking, in Surrey.'[37] Twenty years after the war the ubiquitous 'King's England' series of county topographical surveys edited by Arthur Mee, which frequently referred to the commemoration of the war dead in towns and villages, drew attention to the nobility of the chapel at Ranmore in memory of 'three brothers in their twenties who went from the great house here to die in foreign fields'.[38]

On 10 June 1919 the memorial chapel was dedicated by the Bishop of Winchester. The scheme as originally conceived in memory of the eldest son was implemented in remembrance of the three brothers. The spirit fresco 'The Adoration of the Magi' was undertaken by Reginald Frampton in soft pastel shades. The Madonna is depicted beneath a thatched stall and at her foot is the infant Christ among spring flowers and stones. St Joseph stands nearby holding a lantern and staff and on either side are the three Wise Men. A portion of the village of Bethlehem is depicted in the middle distance. On the left and right sides of the reredos the patron saints of the western allied nations and other warrior saints were applied in spirit fresco, directly onto the stone.

On the left side St Joan of Arc, St George of England, who kneels by his horse, St Eustace and St Aidan are shown. On the right side Sir Galahad also kneels by his horse accompanied by St Denis of France, St Gudule of Belguim, St Martin and St Alban. Over all are three angels and the arc of the rainbow (symbol of hope) on which, from left to right, are figures representing Justice, Fortitude, Peace, Faith, Hope and Love (charity).[39] On the foot pace of the altar three inscriptions, rather than one proposed in March 1917, remembered also the lives of Alick, 'The Lord is my light and my salvation, Whom then shall I fear', and William, 'The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom then shall I be afraid'. The *ensemble* also contained the arms of the see of Winchester, the Ashcombe family and the respective regiments. On the chapel door remains the large wooden cross, which was the grave marker of the eldest brother. They were replaced by uniform headstones, returned to home parishes and retained

Fig. 3 Memorial chapel, St Barnabas Church, Ranmore featuring St George who kneels by his horse and strikes a crusader's sword in homage to the fallen to the left of the reredos.

in many churches as relics of the holy war.

The war was not a gentlemanly chivalrous contest and the world was not made safe for the *status quo.* Many aristocratic families mourned the loss of young sons as knights in armour who were inspired by the elevated language of medieval romance and late Victorian Christian manliness. Indeed, their short lives were influenced by stories and images which reconciled the martial and the Christian, especially in the form of Sir Galahad. He was a knight-officer, a 'natural' leader of men and a symbol of purity in poems by Tennyson and the publicity of the Boy Scouts.

Consequently, knightly representations of brave gentlemanly lives were much used in the immediate post-war years to bring solace and comfort, using a consoling aesthetic which the parents would understand, whose sons had fought in the 'Great War for Civilisation' for justice, righteousness, freedom and honour. Although two of the sons served in cavalry regiments and one was mortally wounded in one of the last charges by the British army, the carnage on the Western Front shattered chivalric discourse as a code of military conduct.[40] However, high diction and the iconography of noble deaths, great sacrifice and valiant hearts were sustaining notions on the home front.[41] At St Barnabas Church and elsewhere the purpose of memorial chapels, as suggested by Wilkinson, was to 'convey an atmosphere of repose by clothing everything in archaic dress and language; war memorials were not erected to disturb, dismay or even warn'.[42]

Christian knights, Arthurian romance and confident aristocratic hegemony may have had a diminishing place in post-war society, but St George appeared in numerous stained glass windows. At Ranmore there is a special quality in the ambitious panoply of warrior saints drawn from heroic tradition to commemorate the fallen sons as soldier saints, at a time when many churches received captured weapons as thanks offerings.[43] St Alban was the first martyred saint in Britain and St Eustace was popular as a patron of hunting in the medieval era. St Denis is represented in many French and Belgian churches and St Martin's gift of half his cloak to a naked beggar is widely illustrated in European art.[44]

Representations of the patron saints of England, France and Belgium in the national church convey the profoundly engaged sense of a crusade which secured a Great Deliverance. The quest for sources of national identity and the use of Christian imagery endeavoured to give a positive meaning to the costliness of the sacrifice through notions of medieval fellowship before the disillusioning onset of anti-heroic writings in the late 1920s, which banished the the spiritual dimension of the Great War. In an age of faith, which linked the Christian and the patriotic, Frampton's mural spoke clearly of a righteous cause, rather than the brutal shock of modern war. It also fulfilled the axiom in decorative arts that buildings might be adorned for the purposes of remembrance provided that the scheme was in general harmony with the setting. The juxtaposition of the polychromatic crossing and the soaring angelic representations of 19th century universal truths is sublime. In a Gothic Revival church of the highest quality of craftmanship and materials, Frampton's work exalts and inspires. As a painter of religious and symbolist themes, with decorative echoes of Pre-Raphaelitism and, as an admirer of Burne-Jones, he responded to nature, romance and medievalism. He studied great wall paintings in France and Italy and, at a time of renewed interest in the art, his schemes for churches were deeply sensitive to the structural context of mural design.[45]

The war had a shattering effect on families and values which dominated British society in the early 20th century. At St Barnabas Church it is clear that a reverent regard for the chapel has long survived the generation which called it into being. If its expression of the idea of sacrifice is unduly sentimental, it needs to be recalled that the dedication service, as a whole, expressed an ardent romanticism and drew on images of nature and nobility to present a tolerable meaning of war, rather than the secularising, liberalising abstractions of modernity. Arno Mayer noted that, for the old order, 'In ministering "premodern" elements of iconography, symbolism and ceremonial ritual carried great weight'.[46]

At the service the Bishop was attended by the rectors of Ranmore, Mickleham, Little Bookham, Great Bookham and Wotton, and Lord Ashcombe (Rector's Warden), and Mr. Dobinson (People's Warden).[47] After the divine blessing Sir John Arkwright's hymn 'O Valiant Hearts', written in the war, was sung. It offered comforting images of Christian chivalry.[48] It was noted at the time that the final three stanzas were very appropriate:

O valiant hearts, who to your glory come
Through dust of conflict and through battle-flame:
Tranquil you lie, your knightly virtue proved.
Your memory hallowed in the Land you loved.

Proudly you gathered, rank on rank to war,
As who had heard God's message from afar;
All you hoped for, all you had, you gave
To save mankind – yourselves you scorned to save.

Splendid you passed, the great surrender made,
Into the light that nevermore shall fade:
Deep your contentment in that blest abode
Who wait the last clear trumpet call of God.

The Bishop's address was on the theme of 'He is not the God of the dead, but of the living for all who live unto Him'. Amid the splendour of Whitsuntide blossom and foliage, the Bishop reminded the congregation of death in one of its noblest forms, namely, of duty and courage on the battlefield. He noted that there were no funeral urns or weeping figures in the chapel, but emblems of noble life and sacred warfare were offered out of suffering and sorrow. He wished for more peaceful and blessed times in the lives that remained. Despite the strain on personal faith he concluded, 'War had taught us a wonderfully strengthening belief that though we had lost many young beautiful and brave boys they were not dead but had passed into life'.[49] This message of solace contrasted with the utterances of 19th-century preachers on the death of soldiers and drew the comforting and necessary conclusion that they had entered into everlasting life and had not really died.[50]

In the lives of the Cubitts at Denbies there is evidence of both change and continuity in the years immediately after the war. Documentary sources are limited and often inadequate in attempting to reconstruct individual lives as they endeavoured to make sense of the cataclysmic events of total war. In the face of private grief and general adversity, Lord Ashcombe met tribulation with a resilient 'bent head', perhaps fortified by the Victorian 'Big Words' so prominently displayed in the memorial chapel.[51]

Lord Ashcombe continued to organise the shoots on the estate, which went on until the Second World War, but he did not carry a gun on such occasions. Matters of etiquette remained unchanged, for example, in the requirement for women to wear elbow-length white gloves at dinner and in Lady Ashcombe's resolute antipathy towards modern manners. The pre-war Panhard limousine, perhaps rather old-fashioned in 1919, was passed to Roland, heir to the estate, whose draft for France was imminent at the Armistice. He joined the Coldstream Guards in 1917 and was in uniform for the memorial service for Alick Cubitt.

Sonia Keppel noted of 'Rolie' at the war's end, 'suddenly he had discovered himself the eldest of the remaining three with eldest son responsibilities he had never dreamt of assuming'.[52] Perhaps, the sombre late Victorian furnishings

Figs. 4 & 5 Memorials to Capt. William George Cubitt Chichester at St Martin's Church, Dorking.

and fittings at Denbies were compounded by three life-size, full-length portraits of the deceased brothers who appeared to Sonia Keppel to resemble a selection committee.

There were many continuities of social convention as a large, fashionable congregation gathered at the Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks in November 1920 to witness the marriage of Roland Cubitt and Sonia Keppel, youngest daughter of Col. the Hon. George and Mrs. Alice Keppel. Customary expressions of loyalty and esteem were observed as the employees at Denbies gave a large silver inkstand with clock to the bridegroom and the tenants of the Surrey estates provided a grandfather clock and silver dish. He also received

an old map of Surrey and books on hunting. Reciprocally, the staffs of Denbies and the London residence and the non-commissioned officers of the second battalion, Coldstream Guards were given a luncheon at the Grosvenor Hotel. Many old servants attended and in proposing the health of the bride and bridegroom Mr. Boxall noted, 'As for the bridegroom, they all knew him so well as to make it quite unnecessary to say more (applause).'[53] Then they left for 16 Grosvenor Street, to view the presents and be entertained to tea.

Old antipathies and nuances of social gradation were expressed by Mrs. Ronald Greville, of Polesden Lacey, who condesended to inform Lord Ashcombe, without leaving her chauffeured car in his driveway, that Roland was not good enough for her goddaughter. Similarly, Sonia Keppel, who 'longed for a family link with the country', remarked on the late Victorian 'railway-carriage plush' of the furniture at Denbies as if it lacked sufficient age and elegance.[54] However, she quickly invested the beech wood, grass terrace and view of the church with romance.

As a debutante in 1918, Sonia Keppel was deeply imbued with the interlocking worlds of patriotic fund-raising masquerades, romantic accounts of glorious action on the field of battle, debonair young dancing partners from the Brigade of Guards who awaited active service, the importance of duty, self control and social distinctions and the last moments of chaperonage. She appeared as Canada, carrying wheat in homage to Britannia, at the Victory Charity Ball at the Albert Hall in 1919. Her cousin died at the third battle of Ypres and her yearning for flapperdom and fun largely died with him. She invested 'Rolie', who gave her a regimental badge in diamonds at their wedding, with highly idealised knightly qualities, which was a fearsome pressure to withstand in the immediate post-war years. In later life she described these turbulent years and attempted to attach meanings to the impact of war on leisured society in the novel *Sisters of the Sun*.[55] Well-established social conventions remained evident at this union of society and county families in 1920. Indeed, the marriage settlement was more expensive than Lord Ashcombe had initially envisaged.[56]

In economic rather than social terms, trends and their consequences might be more precisely observed. As far as can be ascertained, death duties arising in 1917 led to the sale of outlying portions of the Denbies estate extending to 261 acres in, and nearby, Dorking town. The sale at the Red Lion Hotel included a county residence in old world gardens (Sondes Place), meadows, ground rents and numerous cottages. Over £30,000 was realised from 71 plots.[57] No longer did the estate embrace the freehold of such integral features of a market town as a drill hall, mills, timber works, bowling green, villas and yards on routes which, for decades, had comprised the 'sedate round' of the barouche led by the stately greys through Dorking town.[58]

Many of the farming and commercial freeholds were bought by existing tenants. It was a small *vignette* in the much larger process of land sales, which transferred ownership of one-quarter of the acreage of England, in the years 1918-1925. After 1926 a middle-class building estate emerged on, and near, Ashcombe Road on the lower slopes of the hillside, but there still remained an indoor staff of 24 servants at Denbies in 1934.[59] Overall, C.F.G.Masterman's prognosis in 1922 was unduly simplistic, 'The aristocracy has vanished as all aristocracies vanish in prolonged war. War is both the opportunity, the object, and the destruction of aristocracies.'[60]

Changing economic relationships beyond the core ownership of the 'close' village unfolded after the sale of the outlying lands in 1921. However, in some ways, the customary acts of hospitality, born of privilege, quickly resurfaced after the war and survived well into the inter-war years. In the same week as the dedication of the memorial chapel Lord Ashcombe welcomed 2,500 Boy Scouts to Whitsun camp on Ranmore Common. He was glad to see so many old faces and provided tea. He hoped that the boys would understand that they must live for others, as so many had done in service abroad since the last rally. The mansion and the church were maintained on the old tenets.[61] Nonetheless, land sales, the reducing size of the establishment, shifts in social attitudes, the remembrance of the battles of 1916-1918 and the growing honorific role of the lord lieutenancy had irrevocably changed life at Denbies and the wider fortunes of the landed interest in an unprecedently short period of time.

Notes

I am very grateful to Sir Hugh Cubitt, custodian of the family interest in the memorial chapel, for commenting on an earlier draft of this article. I also appreciate the many insights into the history of St Barnabas Church which Mr. Dick Gover, Churchwarden, has given me in recent years. The community of St Barnabas, Ranmore must be thanked for their determination to maintain this remarkable building as a place of worship. For permission to reproduce photographs of the chapel I am grateful to the Rev. Canon Malcolm King, Rector of Ranmore, the Churchwardens and Sir Hugh Cubitt. I also acknowledge permission to reproduce cartoons of the memorial chapel from *The Studio*.

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2. F.E. Green, *The Surrey Hills* (Chatto and Windus, London, 1915) p.112.
3. Dorking Library, Local Newspaper Cuttings Collection, *Dorking Advertiser*, 19 June 1959.
4. E.M. Spiers, 'The Regular Army in 1914' in I.Beckett and K. Simpson (eds.), *A nation in arms. A social study of the British army in the First World War* (Manchester U.P., 1985) p.40.
5. J. Grant (ed.), *Surrey. Historical, Biographical and Pictorial* (London and Provincial Publicity Co. Ltd., London, n.d.) p.98; W.T. Pike, *Contemporary Biographies Surrey* (W.T. Pike and Co., Brighton, 1906) p.107.
6. E.D. Harrison-Ainsworth, *The History and War Records of the Surrey Yeomanry (Queen Mary's Regiment) 1797-1928* (Regimental Committee, London, 1928) pp.31,32,33,36. See also I.Beckett 'The amateur military tradition' in D.Chandler (ed.) *The Oxford History of the British Army* (Oxford U.P., 1994) p.397.
7. S. Tallents, *Man and Boy* (Faber and Faber, London, 1943) pp.117-18; *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 20 October 1914, p.3.
8. *Who's Who in Kent, Surrey and Sussex* (Horace Cox, London, 1911) pp.177-8.
9. *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 11 August 1914, p.3.
10. A.D. Gilbert, 'The Land and the Church' in G.E.Mingay (ed.), *The Victorian Countryside* (RKP, London, 1981) Vol.1, pp.47-50.
11. E. Parker, *Highways and Byways in Surrey* p.59; S.E.D. Fortescue, *The House on the Hill. The Story of Ranmore and Denbies* (Denbies Wine Estate, Dorking, 1993) p.53.
12. A. Howkins, *Reshaping Rural England. A Social History 1850-1925* (Harper Collins, London, 1991) p.289; H. McLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe* (Oxford U.P., 1981) p.59; G. Ewart Evans, *Where Beards Wag All* (Faber and Faber, London, 1970) pp.199-200.
13. All entries are taken from SHC PSH/RAN/6/1 Register of Services, St Barnabas Church, Ranmore. I am very grateful to Ms. Mary Mackey, Archivist at the Surrey History Centre, for drawing my attention to this material.
14. S. Keppel, *Edwardian Daughter* (1958, Arrow Books, London, 1961 ed.) p.186.
15. D. Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (1990, Pan Macmillan ed., London, 1992) p.73.
16. K. Simpson, 'The officers' in Beckett and Simpson (eds.), *A nation in arms* (see n.4), p.65.
17. Cannadine, *Decline and Fall* (see n.15) p.83.
18. J. Winter, *The Great War and the British People* (Macmillan, London, 1985) pp.66, 89, 92, 98.
19. Lt.Col. Sir J.Ross of Bladenburg, *The Coldstream Guards 1914-1918* (Oxford U.P.,1928) Vol.2, p.489; PRO WO95/1215 official war diary of the 3rd battalion, Coldstream Guards, entry for 15 September 1916.
20. Quoted in C. Headlam, *History of the Guards Division in the Great War 1915-1918* (John Murray, London, 1924) Vol.1, p.151.
21. Ross of Bladenburg, *The Coldstream Guards* (see n.19) Vol.2, pp.498, 499.
22. *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 22 September 1916.
23. *The Times*, 23 September 1916. See also the photographs of the grandsons of Lord Ashcombe in the *Surrey Advertiser and County Times* 30 September 1916.
24. *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 29 September 1916, p.4; *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 30 September 1916, p.4. The memorial service is entered in the Register of Services SHC PSH/RAN/6/1 without details.
25. For the wider context see A.Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (SPCK, London, 1978) p.175.
26. SHC PSH/RAN/9/1 Faculty for the conversion of the side chapel [at St Barnabas Church, Ranmore] dated 27 April 1917.
27. P. Griffith, *Battle Tactics of the Western Front. The British Army's Art of Attack 1916-18* (Yale U.P., New Haven, 1994) p.159.
28. Lord Carnock, *The History of the 15th the King's Hussars 1914-1922* (Crypt House Press, Gloucs., 1932) pp.1, 103, 149-150.
29. PRO WO339/9254 army service record, Lt.Hon. A.G. Cubitt 15 Hussars, copy of telegram to Col. Lord Ashcombe C.B., 24 November 1917. See also *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 30 November 1917, p.8; PRO WO95/1114 official war diary of 15 (The King's Hussars) entry for 24 November 1917.
30. *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 21December 1917, p.5. In the same month Lord Ashcombe appealed for more volunteers for anti-invasion battalions in the county to release men from the home army for the front.
31. Information drawn from the service and casualty form in PRO WO339/14087, army service record, Lt. Hon.W.H.Cubitt, 1st Dragoon Guards.
32. C.T. Atkinson, *History of the Royal Dragoons 1661-1934* (University Press, Glasgow, 1934) p.454.

33. *Ibid.*, p.483.
34. *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 5 April 1918, p.5.
35. *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 3 May 1918, p.5.
36. SHC PSH/RAN/6/1 Register of Services [St Barnabas Church, Ranmore].
37. *The Studio* Vol. 78, 1919, p.63.
38. A. Mee, *Surrey. The King's England* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1938) p.178.
39. Full descriptions of the memorial chapel were provided in the *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 13 June 1919, p.5 and *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 14 June 1919, p.5. The present Lord Ashcombe has no records relating to the commissioning of the mural and the construction of the memorial chapel. The mural is kept in very good condition [personal observation]. For an introduction to the subject see C. Babington et al, *Our painted past. Wall Paintings of English Heritage* (English Heritage, London, 1999). The dedication service took place two days after the patronal festival of St Barnabas SHC PSH/RAN/6/1 Register of Services.
40. M. Girouard, *The Return to Camelot. Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (Yale U.P., New Haven, 1981) pp.198, 256,260, 290.
41. J. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male. Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (Reaktion Books, London, 1996) pp.53,248.
42. Wilkinson, *The Church of England* (see n.25) p.297.
43. A. Borg, *War Memorials from Antiquity to the present* (Leo Cooper, London, 1991) p.63. On the use of St George after 1918 see p.100.
44. See appropriate entries in P. and L. Murray, *The Oxford Companion to Christian Art and Architecture* (Oxford U.P., 1996).
45. On Reginald Frampton see his obituary in *The Times*, 8 November 1923;*The Studio* Vol.36, 1906, pp.346-50 and Vol.78, 1919, pp.61-63; R. Dircks, 'Mr E.Reginald Frampton' *Art Journal* 1907, pp.289-296.
46. A. Mayer, *The Persistence of the Old Regime* (Croom Helm, London. 1981) p.245.
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48. A. Wilkinson, 'Changing English Attitudes to Death in the Two World Wars' in P.C.Jupp and G.Howarth (eds.), *The Changing Face of Death. Historical Accounts of Death and Disposal* (Macmillan, London, 1997) p.152.
49. *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 14 June 1919, p.5.
50. Wilkinson, *The Church of England* (see n.25) pp.180-1.
51. Keppel, *Edwardian Daughter* (see n.14) p.186. For an invigorating exploration of post-war England 'as a sort of negative sum' and the early questioning of the war as a defence of *civilization* see S. Hynes, *A War Imagined. The First World War and English Culture* (The Bodley Head, London, 1990) pp.311-336.
52. Keppel, *Edwardian Daughter* (see n.14) p.181.
53. *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 19 January 1920.
54. Keppel, *Edwardian Daughter* (see n.14) pp.109,185.
55. S. Keppel, *Sister of the Sun* (Chapman and Hall, London,1932). 'Bertie' leaves for the front in the Coldstream Guards shortly after the war broke out (p.105). The book searches for answers to the question 'Surely the British soldiers (Basil among them) had died for some ideal which would one day find fulfilment?' (p.272).
56. Keppel, *Edwardian Daughter* (see n.14) pp.199-200. See the same pages for the disputatious relationship between Mrs.Greville and Lord Ashcombe.
57. SHC 4414/1/74 The outlying portions of the Denbies estate Dorking [sales particulars] 1921; *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 9 September 1921, p.1 and 23 September 1921, p.3.
58. Tallents, *Man and Boy* (see n.7) p.44.
59. A.A. Jackson, 'The Town in the Motor Age 1901-1991' in his ed. *Dorking. A Surrey Market Town through twenty centuries* (Dorking Local History Group, 1991) pp.99-100.
60. C.F.G. Masterman, *England after War. A study* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1922) p.24
61. *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 13 June 1919, p.3.

ACCESSIONS OF RECORDS TO SURREY HISTORY CENTRE IN 1999

Michael Page, Head of Acquisitions

In the course of 1999 the History Centre has taken in 252 accessions of records from previous and new depositors and donors and we would like to record our gratitude to all the individuals and organisations who have supported this aspect of our work. The following is an attempt to give some flavour of the variety and chronological span of these accessions.

The More Molyneux family of Loseley Park

We have received a significant addition to one of our richest archives in a new deposit of Loseley Manuscripts (ref 6729/-).

The antiquary William Bray was agent to the More Molyneux family in the late 18th century, and, having access to the 'evidence room' at Loseley Park, heused the Loseley Manuscripts extensively in his work on the history of Surrey. He also arranged for selected correspondence which he considered of particular national historical significance to be bound into volumes: those volumes remaining from Bray's original selection, along with two notebooks of Bray's, are the principal group in our new holding, offering a major source for 16th- and 17th-century political and social history. The correspondence includes local government material including records of JP business (pre-dating surviving Surrey Quarter Sessions records), records of the deputy lieutenancy (including muster rolls and papers relating to the Armada campaign), records of taxation, the regulation of trade and industry, and recusancy commissions. Letters signed by Henry VIII, Edward VI, Elizabeth I, as well as by some of the great figures of Elizabeth's court such as Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, and William Cecil, Lord Burghley, figure largely in the deposit, and many of the letters bring the political dramas of 16th-century England vividly to life: thus, Lady Jane Grey, at the beginning of her nine-day reign in 1553, writes to the marquis of Northampton, Lieutenant of Surrey, and to the deputy lieutenants, sheriff and justices of the peace, that she has entred the Tower of London, 'as rightfull Quene of this realme', and is confident that the marquis will do all in his power to maintain her in her 'rightfull possession of this kingdome and to disturbe repell and resist the fayned and untrue clayme of the lady Mary basterd daughter to our grete uncle Henry the eight of famous memory'.

A collection from the Loseley Park library includes many pamphlets reflecting the political and religious turmoil of the 17th century, for example the Bishop of Ossory's impassioned pamphlet of 1643, *The discovery of mysteries or, the plots and practices of a prevalent faction in this present parliament to overthrow the established Religion and the well setled Government of this glorious Church.* Other material includes a beautiful coloured plan of Loseley house and grounds surveyed in 1682; a volume of late 17th-century essays including a piece on gambling, 'the gaming humour considered and reproved; and records relating to the career of Admiral Sir Robert Henry More Molyneux, in particular his naval service in Egypt and the Middle East in the 1880s.

William Gilpin and Painshill

A small but significant acquisition of the past year is the sketchbook made by the Rev. William Gilpin on his visit to Painshill Park, Cobham on 14 August 1772, which was deposited with us by the Garden History Society (ref 670 1). Gilpin (1724-1804), a progressive schoolmaster in Cheam until 1772, was a proficient draughtsman and indefatigable traveller who, on a number of tours around the country, formulated his concept of the 'picturesque', an attempt to set out rules for appreciating landscapes and for understanding and recording the diverse pictorial qualities of many parts of Britain. Through a number of very influential publications, illustrated with his own idealised sketches, he inspired tourists and artists to look on the landscape of Britain with new eyes.

His Painshill sketchbook was compiled on Gilpin's second visit to Charles Hamilton's great landscaped garden, in which water, trees, follies and fake ruins were interwoven to magical effect. The slim notebook reveals Gilpin's astute and critical eye as he illustrates and comments upon the various structures which ornamented the Park. These included the Turkish tent, the Gothic temple, the hermitage (in which a short-lived professional hermit is supposed to have plied his trade, according to legend) and the spectacular artificial grotto made of spongestone, which he dismissed as 'trifling' and 'unnatural'.

The Farming Journal of a Quaker

John Greenwood (1773-1855) ran Wanborough Manor Farm between June 1793 and August 1794 for Morris Birkbeck, who leased the farm from Thomas, 2nd Earl of Onslow. Greenwood kept a detailed record of his activities on the farm and his journal was discovered there in the 1940s by one of his successors as farm manager. The journal has been well described by R.G. Vevers in an article in *Surrey History*, vol. II, no. 2, but at that time it remained in private hands. It has now been deposited with us (ref 6744/1) and provides a fascinating insight into farming methods, fluctuating prices and wages for farm labourers, and trade routes. Greenwood describes the crops he is sowing, the animals stocked on the farm, the condition of the soil and the sale of produce: thus wool 'is to be sent next fifth day to Guildford to go by Watsons Waggon to

London from thence to Hustler and Peckover, Bradford, Yorkshire, who sort it and give a fair price for it'. Greenwood's name does not appear in the diary but his Quaker beliefs are revealed by the dating system he employs and the outline of his life can be traced through the records of the Guildford and Chelmsford Monthly Meetings. This journal suggests a conscientious and hard-working man but we know that, after he moved to Essex in 1794 to work at Kelvedon Hall, he was causing the Chelmsford Quakers some disquiet because of his rowdy behaviour and excessive drinking.

The missing registers of Merrow

A visit last spring by some archivists from the Centre for Kentish Studies to the History Centre also saw the return to Surrey of two 18th-century parish registers from St John the Evangelist, Merrow, believed long lost.

The registers, one for baptisms and burials, 1753-1812, and the other for marriages, 1754-1812, had been loaned to the Society of Genealogists in 1939 for microfilming. A month before the outbreak of the Second World War, the Rev. L. Starey, then incumbent of Merrow, received a typed transcript copy and notice that that the registers had been placed in the strongroom of a London bank for safekeeping.

Unfortunately, the war intervened and for the next fifty years the registers were believed lost, perhaps destroyed. Then, in the early 1990s, the registers were discovered by an executor, along with some from parishes in Kent, amongst the papers of a former member of the pre-war Society of Genealogists' Committee for the Microfilming of Parish Registers. The collection was passed to the Centre for Kentish Studies who in turn returned the Merrow registers to their home county.

Deeds, deeds, deeds

As in every year we have taken in large quantities of deeds and estate records which provide invaluable evidence for the development and transformation of the county. The vital work of the Records Preservation Section of the British Records Association has secured for us important material which was stored in the strongrooms and basements of firms of solicitors. Much of this is relatively modern. Medieval deeds come our way less frequently but their significance is increased because of the comparative sparsity of evidence for the people and topography of Surrey in the middle ages. However, we have acquired by purchase three deeds which are of interest both for the people they mention and the properties they describe. One, a grant of a messuage in 'Wugners' (Wonersh) by Thomas of the mill to his brother John the tailor (ref 6569/1), is undated but a clause in it forbidding the subsequent sale of the property to religious men or Jews, indicates that it must date between the mortmain legislation of 1279 (forbidding grants of land to the 'dead hand' of the church without licence) and the expulsion of the Jews by Edward 1 in 1290.

The two other deeds relate to settlements made by John de Billingshurst in 1354 and 1356 of his property in Shalford, Dunsfold, Hascombe and the vill of Bramley. The only property actually named is 'atte Furtlthe' (perhaps Furtherfits) in Dunsfold but the conditions of the grants and the witness lists provide evidence for de Billingshurst's network of family and friends on the Surrey/Sussex border.

South East Region Motorway Archive, 6594

The face of Surrey, in common with much of the rest of England, was transformed in the second half of the 20th century through the creation of the motorway network, a vast, if undersung, engineering achievement. The idea of a Motorway Archive, to document this achievement, was conceived by Sir Peter Baldwin KCB, at one time the Permanent Secretary at the Department of Transport and an Honorary Fellow of the Institution of Highways and Transportation. He perceived that there was very little written about the forty years or so of motorway construction and development and approached the Institution which agreed to give its formal backing to the creation of an Archive to form the basis of a social history of the motorways of Great Britain and the people who were involved in their construction. The Archive was not intended to be a technical treatise on design and construction; instead it draws on the personal recollections of those who were involved, from the earliest days of the first stretch of motorway up to 1999 and mainly consists of memorabilia collected from those people willing to contribute. The work of collecting archive material was accomplished by teams of volunteers organised by region and topic. The regional teams collected material relating to specific motorways within their area and the resulting archive for the South East Region was deposited with us in March 1999. Motorways covered include the M2, M3, M4, M20, M23, M25 (Junctions 15), M26, M27, M40 and the A20. The archive includes contemporary newspaper cuttings, photographs of construction work, personal reminiscences of engineers, official publications concerning construction work and promotional films.

A complementary recent accession, as yet unlisted, is the papers of the County Engineers' Department transferred in May 2000 (CC971). This includes original documentary material on the construction and maintenance of the road network within Surrey, in particular the creation of the motorways and dual carriageways which had such a huge environmental impact. We also hold much material on the County Council's post-1974 transport policies within the recently listed Surrey Development Plan publications (CC659) and further information on the County Council's transport strategies is contained within the accruing County Council publications series under list references CC858 (transport) and CC856 (planning and environmental studies).

PUBLICATIONS

The Surrey Local History Council has produced *Surrey History* for many years and the majority of the back numbers are still available. In addition the following extra publications are in print:

Pastors, Parishes and People in Surrey
by David Robinson
1989 £2.95

Views of Surrey Churches
by C.T. Cracklow
(reprint of 1826 views)
1979 £7.50 (hardback)

Kingston's Past Rediscovered
by Joan Wakeford
1990 £6.95
(published jointly with Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society)
[Nearly out-of-print—remaining stocks with Kingston Heritage Service]

Old Surrey Receipts and Food for Thought
compiled by Daphne Grimm
1991 £3.95

The Sheriffs of Surrey
by David Burns
1992 £4.95
(Published jointly with the Under Sheriff of Surrey)

Two Hundred Years of Aeronautics & Aviation in Surrey 1785-1985
by Sir Peter Masefield
1993 £3.95

The Churches of Surrey
by Mervyn Blatch
1997 £30.00 (hardback)

These books are published for the Surrey Local History Council by Phillimore & Co., Ltd., of Chichester. They are available from many bookshops in the County. Members are invited to obtain their copies from the Hon. Secretary, c/o The Guildford Institute of the University of Surrey, Ward Street, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4LH.