



NEWSLETTER

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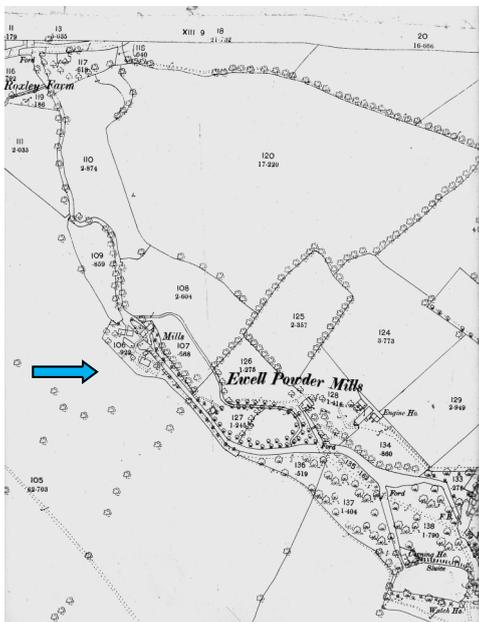
<i>Welcome to New Members</i>	Chairman's Notes
Sophia Patel	<p>This Newsletter includes a report on the recording of the remains of one of the Gunpowder Mills at Ewell Court exposed during work of environmental improvement on this stretch of the Hogsmill. The work, coordinated by the Wandle Trust, was funded , at some £200k, by Defra—the work by EEHAS was free! The Powder Mills of Ewell are of some importance for the area and for the history of gunpowder industry in general, and since their clearance in the 1950s there is no reference to them along the Hogsmill Open Space.</p> <p>We are grateful to Ms. Salusbury the owner of 15 Lintons Lane for sight of the bundle of old deeds she owns relating to the building of the pair of cottages, 15-17 Lintons Lane. One of the earliest deeds, of 1827, relates to a mortgage on a piece of land in Childer Plat Shot on which the cottages had been lately erected. This gives a very good date for these buildings and also reminds me of the traditional names of the Common Fields of Epsom which come in a bewildering range of obscure descriptions. Childer Plat Shot was a division of Smith Hatch Common field. These shots, as they are called in Epsom, were further subdivided into separate holdings.</p>
Mr P T Weatheritt	
Inside this issue:	Lecture Diary
<i>Ewell Gunpowder Mills</i> 2	December 4th Christmas Party: members and their guests only
<i>Lost Roads</i> 3	January 1st Prehistory in Malta: Richard Watson
<i>Conservation round up</i> 5	February 5th Pilgrimages to the Holy Land: Rev John Baxter
<i>88 High Street Epsom</i> 6	March 5th AGM and talk by Jon Cotton, EEHAS President
<i>September & October meetings</i> 8	Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at St. Mary's Church Hall, London Road, Ewell KT17 2BB
<i>A Poor Poem!</i> 9	Doors open 7.45 for 8pm start. Members free, visitors £4, includes refreshments

EWELL GUNPOWDER MILLS

Stephen Nelson

Recent environmental improvement works to the Hogsmill River have shown the survival below ground of some of the buildings associated with the gunpowder mills that operated along this upper reach of the river around Ewell Court.

The Hogsmill river meanders for some 6 miles from its source in Ewell to the Thames at Kingston. A number of subsidiary streams feed into the river mainly from the gravel plateau of Epsom Common. The Geological Survey map (sheet 270) shows that the river valley cuts through varying Woolwich and Reading beds and London clay. In the area of the modern weirs at Ewell Court the main deposit is London Clay with a river margin of alluvium. However, from the work carried out in 2011 further downstream at Tolworth by Reading University it seems the geology of the Hogsmill valley can be more complex.



In August 2013 the Wandle Trust commenced work to remove the concrete weirs and retaining walls at two points on the Hogsmill river. These coincided with the known gunpowder mills buildings that existed along this stretch of the river from at least the mid C18, when owned by Alexander Bridges, until the mills closed in c 1875. The mill buildings existed mainly as ruins until they were all demolished and covered over during a comprehensive programme of recanalising and clearance of the industrial remains. It is thought that this occurred in the 1950s as a number of photographs exist in Bourne Hall Museum taken in 1954/55 some showing work underway. The two weirs concerned relate to the sites of the *Corning House* and *Mills* buildings shown clearly on the 1866 OS map. The *Mills* buildings were the furthest downstream of the Ewell Powder Mills complex. A plan of 1863 (PRO WO 385/11), when the mills were in the ownership of Sharpe & Co, further identifies the mill buildings and notes those furthest downstream, Lower Gunpowder Mills, as the *Incorporating Mills*. Access to the work on the Corning House weir was difficult and recording concentrated on the Incorporating Mills weir.

SITE OF THE INCORPORATING MILLS

Incorporating or mixing mills were those installations which ground and mixed the main constituents, saltpetre, charcoal and sulphur, before being passed for further processing in separate buildings. Work on this weir exposed stretches of brickwork in the left bank of the river which flows roughly north south at this point. Machine excavation, initially in two "benches" to provide a c5m working area, unfortunately removed some of the brick work but the plan of the foundations and a section through the remains were recorded. These comprised the ends of two buildings set at an angle to the river with a central channel between them and splayed outer walls extending to the river where they had been broken through by the concrete revetment. The section through the remains had been arbitrarily cut by machine some 5m back from the river. The bank here is quite high roughly 3m above the water level. The stretches of brickwork had been set in what appeared to be natural London clay and were covered by a layer of demolition rubble under a top layer of re-deposited silty clays resulting from a more recent dredging exercise. Despite the current disturbance and that of the 1950s demolition it was possible to plan the features revealed.

The left hand (south end) brickwork comprised a thick, 1.4m width of wall set at an angle to the river. This survived 1m high built in random bond with one soldier course about midway. This seemed set on a chalk foundation which included one large shaped block. The wall stepped down on the internal, channel side and may represent a rebuilding of an earlier phase. There was no apparent return angle, to form the building, as there was to the north end. On the channel side there was a narrow "leet" feature, .4m wide with a less substantial side wall and with two courses of brick floor. A wing wall, .3m wide backed by chalk rubble, turned at right angles towards the river.

The right hand (north end) brickwork was less easy to interpret due to the sloping side and angle of the section through the structure. However, it comprised the right angle corner of walls of a building again at an angle to the river and parallel to the left hand wall. Like the left (south) wall this was set on a substantial chalk rubble foundation, seemingly wider than was strictly necessary for the upper brick work and this may represent a rebuilding of an earlier phase. However, these structures were set into a sloping river bank and significant foundations may have been needed. The brickwork of the walls continued, at lower level, into the central channel where the inner courses seemed to be set on edge, perhaps to form a surface or floor of the channel. However, this had been cut through by a subsequent wall also parallel to the walls on the left side. It appeared to be a narrowing of the central channel. Unlike that on the left, this wall turned obliquely to the river but still formed a similar 45 degree angle.

The central channel was 1.62m wide between the parallel side walls. This was filled with demolition rubble debris and ashy deposits. Unlike the subsidiary "leet" on its left and the possible wider floor on its right, it was not possible to check the depth at this point.

Date: The main sections of walling are of brick set in a white lime mortar. Some have shallow frogs but others not and would appear to be of early/mid C18 date. The walling is set on substantial chalk rubble, with no concrete, and there were indications that the chalk may represent an earlier phase. Documentary work by David Hartley may establish further, earlier evidence for the Ewell Mills. The only dateable finds,

all un-stratified, were 3 sherds of pottery - one of medieval glazed grey brown sandy fabric (late C12-early C13), one sherd of red Border ware (late C17 early C18) and a small sherd of stoneware jar (late C18 early C19). There was also one piece of clay pipe stem (an unlikely find on a powder mill site!). Apart from the brick and chalk rubble there were a few pieces of pantile roofing tiles.

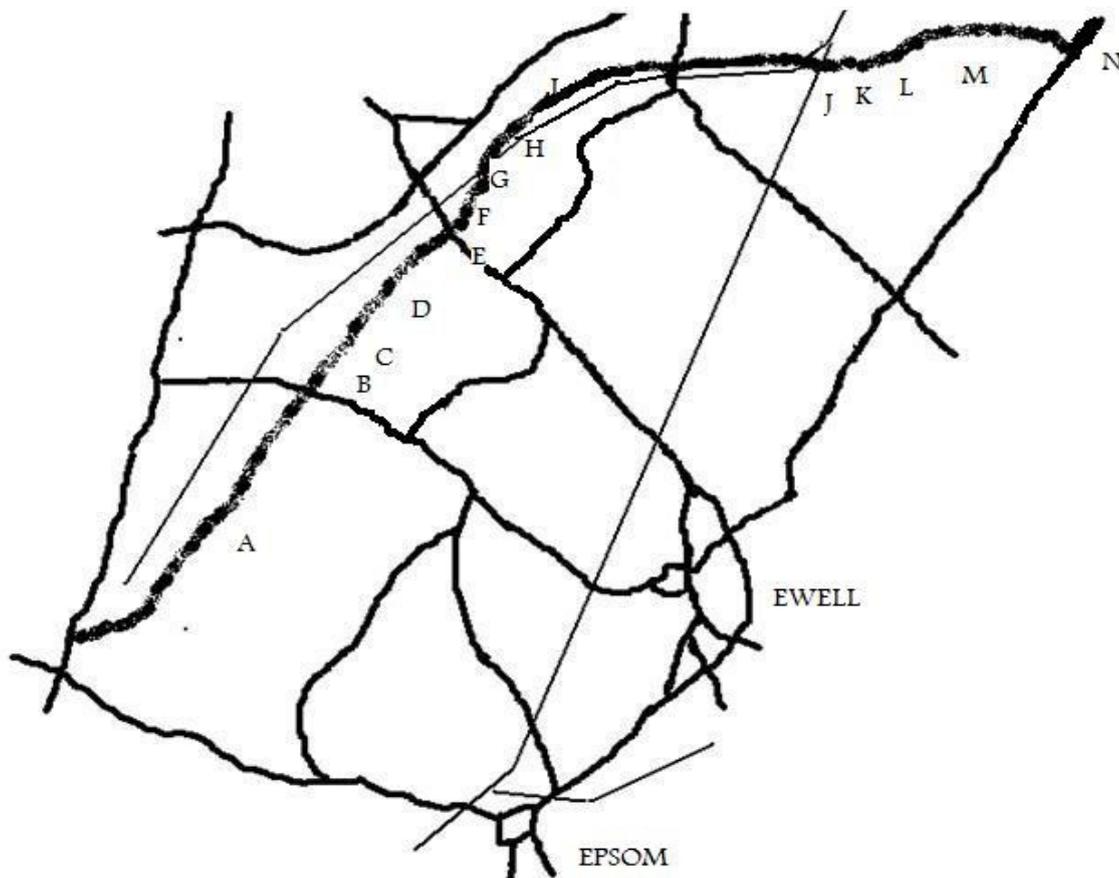
It seems that the brickwork revealed in this area relates to the pair of mill buildings and water wheel channel shown on the maps on the left hand braid of the river where it had been split into three streams. It is clearly more complex than the simple rectangular outlines shown on the 1866 OS. A corner was evident on the north end but not on the south. A second pair of mills presumably still survives further over under the right hand bank. These buildings, together with their holding ponds and ancillary buildings serviced two pairs of grinding wheels in the Incorporating Mill. It is uncertain whether the central wheels were of over or under shot type.



Lost Roads – an early attempt at an Epsom & Ewell bypass

Jeff Cousins

Whilst sitting in a traffic jam in the centre of Epsom due to the badly phased traffic lights, I started thinking about previous failed attempts to do something about the traffic problem. When we first moved to the area in 1988, I bought a new Master A-Z of Greater London. It rather prematurely showed a bypass under construction alongside the railway just north of the centre. In 1998 a bypass was proposed to the south of the centre, leading to the protests at Silver Birches that reached the national news. But in the mid-1930s something much more ambitious had been planned. Developers were required to put aside land to leave room for a dual carriageway to bypass not just Epsom & Ewell but also Ashted, passing with such a margin that none of it would actually pass through the borough. Much of it would have followed the Chessington railway being built at the time, which opened in stages during 1938-9. The Second World War put paid to this and other road plans, but much evidence remains on the ground, as described below.



A = Gilders Road. Wide grass verges on either side to allow for expansion.

B = footpath to Chantry Road with wide grass strip on west side.

C = long thin paddock along site of route.

D = Jubilee Way eventually built on the route (according to map evidence between the late 1950s and 1969, so it's not obvious what jubilee is being referred to) with a tree belt planted on the site of the eastern carriageway. Tolworth Station would have been on a rather strange isthmus in-between two bypasses, Kingston and Epsom & Ewell.

E = carriageway used as access road to Court Farm garden centre.

F = carriageway visible as crop mark in aerial photo.

G = dual carriageway width bridge over railway just to serve Knollmead Primary School and a small recreation ground (latter recently closed).

H = Knollmead. Wide grass verges on either side to allow for expansion.

I = Sheephouse Way. Extra wide grass verge on the south side to allow room for second carriageway.

J = an embankment used to separate Pembury Avenue from Kingshill Avenue, leading up to where a bridge had been intended over the railway junction. Supposedly it was built from wartime rubble, but in 1938 local residents were pushing for a pedestrian tunnel through the embankment to join the two avenues, so it may have actually been built before the war, contemporary with the railway. Part was cleared to make way for new houses shortly after 1988.

K = some of the embankment remains behind the houses, an overgrown area known as "The Dump".

L = Green Lane, track along intended route.

M = Lower Morden Lane. Extra wide grass verge on the south side to allow room for a second carriageway.

N = The A24 was dualled north from where the bypass would have joined, between the late 1950s and 1969.

"Field-walking" for this was performed by making detours whilst cycling to and from work in New Malden, though much is obvious from Google Earth.

Thanks to David Rymill's excellent "Worcester Park, Old Malden & North Cheam: History at our Feet" for drawing my attention to this road.

Round up of recent Conservation work

Nikki Cowlard

Building Recording

West Ewell Infant School – the Society was asked to record the air raid shelter and Horsa hut at West Ewell Infant School, prior to its demolition during building work. David Brooks kindly stepped in and carried out the photographic recording. The air raid shelter had an area of graffitied bricks (which some of our members remember from their childhood) and there were plans to attempt to preserve them.

The Albion – we have been attempting to get permission from the agents of this listed building to record the upper floors and roof structure. However, it has not yet been forthcoming.

Linton's Lane - Steve Nelson has visited the owner of 15 Linton's Lane, a locally listed building, who has documentary evidence that the pair of houses (15-17) were built mid- 1820s, which is earlier than thought.

Local Listing – a number of members have been working with EEBC to ensure that the list of locally important buildings is a robust document which will help protect them during the planning process. Thirteen of fourteen new buildings put forward for local listing were accepted at a council meeting in September. They include: Archway across West Hill Avenue, Epsom; The White Cottage, West Hill Ave, Epsom; West Park Hospital patient "airing court" shelters, West Park Rd. Epsom; Entrance gates etc. to former mental Hospital, Horton Lane Epsom; Health Centre adj. to Ewell Court House, Ewell Court Avenue; Archway across pavements either side of Briarwood Rd. Stoneleigh; Bourne Hall Ewell; Bridge alongside Chessington Rd near Spring Tavern; Ice house within "The Dell" beside Cheam Rd., Ewell; The Queen's Stand, Epsom Racecourse; The Derby Arms pub, Derby Arms Rd; The Rubbing House, Langley Vale Rd Epsom; The Amato pub, Chalk Lane, Epsom; The Ladas former pub, Woodcote Rd. Epsom; Nos 4-8 Woodcote Green Rd Epsom; "Chandlers" Avenue Rd Epsom; The Vestry pub, Church St. Epsom.

Lane House, Epsom Rd/Mongers Lane – the committee has opposed a planned development at The Lane House, Epsom Rd, Ewell, which included the demolition of part of the wall adjacent to Mongers Lane. We were pleased to hear that the application has been turned down, in part due to the potential loss of a historic feature within the setting of the Conservation Area.

91 High Street, Epsom – we were concerned about the out-of-character planning application to this locally listed building by Metro Bank. The project was turned down in its current form but no new application has yet been lodged.

Chesham House, 55 South Street – listed building consent has been granted for conversion of this office building to flats. A new building application was lodged after EEHAS ensured that the architects had access to a 1980s conservation report on this historic building.

Public conveniences, High Street, Ewell - an application for demolition of the building and construction of two maisonettes was dismissed. The developers have appealed and a decision is awaited.

Wall in Worple Road (at back of The Cedars) – the top 12-18 inches is badly cracked. Lou Hays has flagged up this issue with Anthony Evans, the Borough's Conservation Officer to ensure action is taken.

88 High Street Epsom

Ian West



This photograph shows the building formerly on the site of Leightons Opticians (previously the Gas Show-rooms). When this photograph was last published, in *Old Views of Epsom Town* by George Cockman & John Marshall, it was said to be on the site of 61 High Street but documentary evidence locates the property to what is now 88 High Street. A companion picture of the rear of this building (see over) was correctly located, as the Clock Tower is visible in the top left corner.

From the photographs, taken in the 1880s, it can be seen that the original building had an east-west range with gabled projecting wings at each end. A single storey extension projects from the east wing with the words "Dining Room" on the fascia. On the east side of the west wing a lean-to has been added. At the rear there were at least four periods of extension mostly with brick ground floor walls and weatherboarding at first floor. As the walls of the original building were rendered it is not possible to know if the walls were timber framed. The roofs were tiled and on the east wing what appear to be the original casement windows. On the west wing 18 century sash windows have been inserted along with an early 19 century shop window with "straps" hanging a sun shade down from the sign board allowing light in at higher level.

It is possible that the original building predates the development of the Spa period "Parade" which really started with the Restoration of 1660. A dwelling of c 1600/50 was excavated by EEHAS (formerly NAS) on the site now occupied by T K Max. The building on No. 88 when originally built was a substantial 'U' shaped property on a site of over 1 acre and had accommodation on ground, first and attic floors. A dormer window in the main range can just be seen above the Beauchamp Boot Maker sign. As the adjoining land was sold off a wagon way was cut through the main range to give access to the rear yard. This would not have been required until the frontage of adjoining plots were sold off and built up.

All the documentary references below are taken from the Residential Copyholds of Epsom by H L Lehmann. In the Epsom survey of 1680 Thomas Franke held a tenement, outhouse, orchard and 1 acre of land. The tenement is the property shown in the pictures. Thomas Franke is referred to as a taylor in 1697 when he and his wife Margaret mortgaged the property *on the north side of the town pond* for £53. The property passed to their eldest son (also Thomas) who in 1711/12 passed it to his three daughters in equal parts. In 1731 they sold the property to Edward Holand of Epsom, and

Elizabeth his wife who the next year sold off some of the land to an adjoining owner. By 1755 the owners were Edmund Wood, plumber and Elenor his wife (nee Holand). In 1773 Elenor Wood mortgaged the property, now in several tenements for £200 to Robert Shaw of Banstead, butcher at 4.5 %. By 1773 the owner was Francis Wood, stonemason of East Cheam who mortgaged the property for £300 to John Collins, shoemaker. As the mortgage had not been repaid in 1812 F Wood, stonemason now of Kennington passed the property to J Collins. The property remained in the Collins family until 1876 when in settlement of outstanding debt it passed to Benjamin William May.

Although the property was owned by three families from 1600– 1876 there was only one sale and on two occasions transferred in settlement of debt. In May 1877 and again in April 1880 the property was reputed to be out of repair and the Bailiff was commanded to seize them for the Lord of the Manor but in December 1883 B W May obtained enfranchisement (ie freehold) of the property in the occupation of George Robert Head and Elizabeth his wife, William Beauchamp and Issac Jones. Mr & Mrs Head probably ran the 'Dining Room' whilst Mr Beauchamp was a boot maker. On the rear elevation of the property was a sign 'Jesse Jones *open & close flys* let on hire' who must have been a relative of Issac Jones.

The threat of seizure may have been a bargaining position by the Northey Estates to get the best price for the enfranchisement especially as there was a 6 year lapse between the first proposal for seizure and sale of the freehold. Shortly after 1883 the buildings in the photographs were demolished and the present one erected.



September Meeting – These Sherds Belong to You and Me – Clive Orton

Isobel Cross

This was an account of the Time Cheam Project in 2010-2012 designed by Clive Orton to study, archive and publish the large amount of pottery found behind Whitehall in Cheam.

Clive began by reviewing the finds of later medieval pottery production in Cheam that have been made since CJ Marshall's original Parkside excavation in 1923 which found a kiln with unusual internal features. Further work took place in the High Street and at the Harrow pub in the 1930s. In 1969 Martin Morris found two kilns at 15-23 High Street, and in 1978/80 Norman Nail excavated the garden of Whitehall. This produced a huge amount of kiln fragments and wasters of Cheam whiteware, mostly from a pit surrounding the well in the garden and this was the focus of Clive's project.



Clive decided that, like the Time Team programme, a lot of people in a large space working for a limited time would be better than an individual specialist working alone. The finds were sorted and washed at the Honeywood Museum in Carshalton and the people – members of the public and local amateur archaeologists – worked in the Europa Gallery in Sutton Central Library. The pattern was one day's training, four day's work, one day's exhibition.

Of the known Cheam sites the pottery from Whitehall is the most similar to that produced in medieval Kingston. It is possible that around 1350 potters moved from Kingston to start another industry in Cheam. Cheam, it seems, was a producer of whiteware jugs to sell to a niche market. Production stopped by 1500 possibly because of competition from German stoneware jugs.

The Time Cheam Project has studied and catalogued the sherds, and draft reports have been produced. There are questions still unanswered, such as where did the Whitehall well material come from, Parkside or from an unknown kiln? Also, the nature of the enigmatic kiln furniture fragments remains uncertain. The training of the volunteers has been useful for other situations, such as Church Meadow, disappointingly members of the public were not generally engaged by all of this. The Project is a model of a method for dealing with large quantities of material.

October Meeting – Rudyard Kipling: his Life and Remarkable Story – Gary Enstone

Isobel Cross

This meeting was held in the presence of the Mayor, Colin Taylor, who spoke about his designated charities. Gary Enstone is the premises manager at Kipling's home, Batemans, Burwash, East Sussex.

Kipling's mother, Alice, was one of four sisters who each married remarkable men, notably Georgina who married Edward Burne-Jones. Alice married the artist John Lockwood Kipling, who became a head master in Lahore. Rudyard was born there and spoke Hindi before English. He absorbed Indian life and culture through the influence of his Indian nannies. At six his life changed when he was sent to a boarding school in England which he called 'The House of Despair'. Education was poor, beatings common, and he worried about his little sister who was also there.

However, he read books under the bedclothes and in summer he stayed with the Burne-Jones family in Chelsea. On arriving the sound of the doorbell signified freedom. He got hold of it later and it is at Batemans. He went to Westward Ho College in Devon in his teens. Photographs show a boy aged before his time by his experiences. He encountered prejudice against people born and brought up in the Empire and was turned down by Oxford and Cambridge.

He went back to India at 17, became a journalist and started to write short stories. He was offered a chance to go back to London with a publisher's advance of £1,000 which he spent travelling the world. Finally he arrived in London, living in Villiers Street, then a red light district. By this time he had a close American friend, Wolcott Balestier, who became his manager. Wolcott died suddenly, specifying that Rudyard should look, after his sister Caroline, so he immediately married her, a practical convenience for both, but the marriage turned out well.

The Kiplings moved to Vermont where they had two daughters, Josephine and Elsie, and Rudyard's books sold well in America and throughout the British Empire, but relations with Caroline's family were bad, so they returned to England to live in Rottingdean, Brighton, near the Burne-Jones family. Their son John was born there. Their problem was Rudyard's celebrity status – he was actually harassed by sightseers when he went out. Things took a sad turn when Caroline's mother became ill, so the whole family sailed across the Atlantic. In bad sailing weather all but Caroline got pneumonia, Rudyard was in a coma for weeks and Josephine died. They never quite got over this.

Back in England, in 1900, they saw Batemans for sale where there would be seclusion and no bad memories. Kipling could now write what he wanted. He turned down a knighthood but accepted the Nobel Prize for Literature. In 1914 he became a recruitment officer for the War Office. There has been controversy over his actions in the Great War. Most people in 1914 were in favour of the war and it would be normal for Kipling to respond to this. He spoke in many places to encourage young men to join up, but it was obvious his son John had not. This young man was in poor health, but white feathers arrived at Batemans and his father got him a commission in the Irish Guards. Some say John could not bear continuing to be a civilian. Others say Kipling forced him to join up. John reached his 18th birthday as he arrived in France and went missing in action within three days.

In the end Kipling realised the soldiers had been let down by the Government and the High Command. He was instrumental in setting up the War Graves Commission. He chose phrases for memorials like 'Their Name Liveth For Evermore'. John's body was not found at the time but in 1994 one was buried as John and in 2002 another body was buried as John. The DNA evidence is not 100% certain so both graves exist as his. Rudyard died in 1936 two days before George V. Only 14 people attended the memorial service in Westminster Abbey. In 1948 a second service attracted 12,000 people.

A POOR POEM OF EPSOM

Jeremy Harte

In turning the pages of the *Surrey Magazine* (vol 3 (1901/2) facing p108) I came across the following poetic effusion by S.F. Wicks. I don't recommend 'St. Ebba of Epsom' either as literature or history (the author evidently had difficulty telling Saxons from Britons) but it has a certain period charm:

<i>Our Epsom, if the ancient bard</i>	<i>St. Ebba, hie thee to the Downs;</i>
<i>For holy truth had much regard,</i>	<i>Take seat upon the Stand which crowns</i>
<i>Was once the fair domain</i>	<i>That hill of rolling grass.</i>
<i>Of some princess with flaxen curl,</i>	<i>Compare that scene, those crowds which sway</i>
<i>Who, over sun-blowzed British churl,</i>	<i>To chariot race in thy dim day.</i>
<i>Held grim despotic reign.</i>	<i>Then wilt thou sigh, alas!</i>
<i>St. Ebba was this maiden's name.</i>	<i>Away princess! Swift-running Time</i>
<i>How strange, methinks, if back she came;</i>	<i>Hath mad thy home another clime...</i>
<i>Her ghostly spirit roam...</i>	<i>Nor canst thou recognise.</i>
<i>What altered scenes would greet her eyes;</i>	<i>I wonder if, in years unborn</i>
<i>The cottage smoke lifts to the skies,</i>	<i>I walked abroad, a ghost forlorn,</i>
<i>Where lay the slumb'ring lawn:</i>	<i>What scenes would meet my eyes'.</i>
<i>The dismal walls of soot-hued shaft</i>	
<i>Loom high where once the winds did waft</i>	
<i>The scent of flowers new-born...</i>	

A hundred years have passed since that closing line, and the late S.F. Wicks is now the ghost that he prophesied. One would like to know what he makes of Livingstone Park and the Station Approach redevelopment.

Please Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society

Founded 1960 Registered Charity No.259221

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You can see a colour copy of this newsletter on the Society website from mid-November
www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk