

Friern Barnet *Newsletter*

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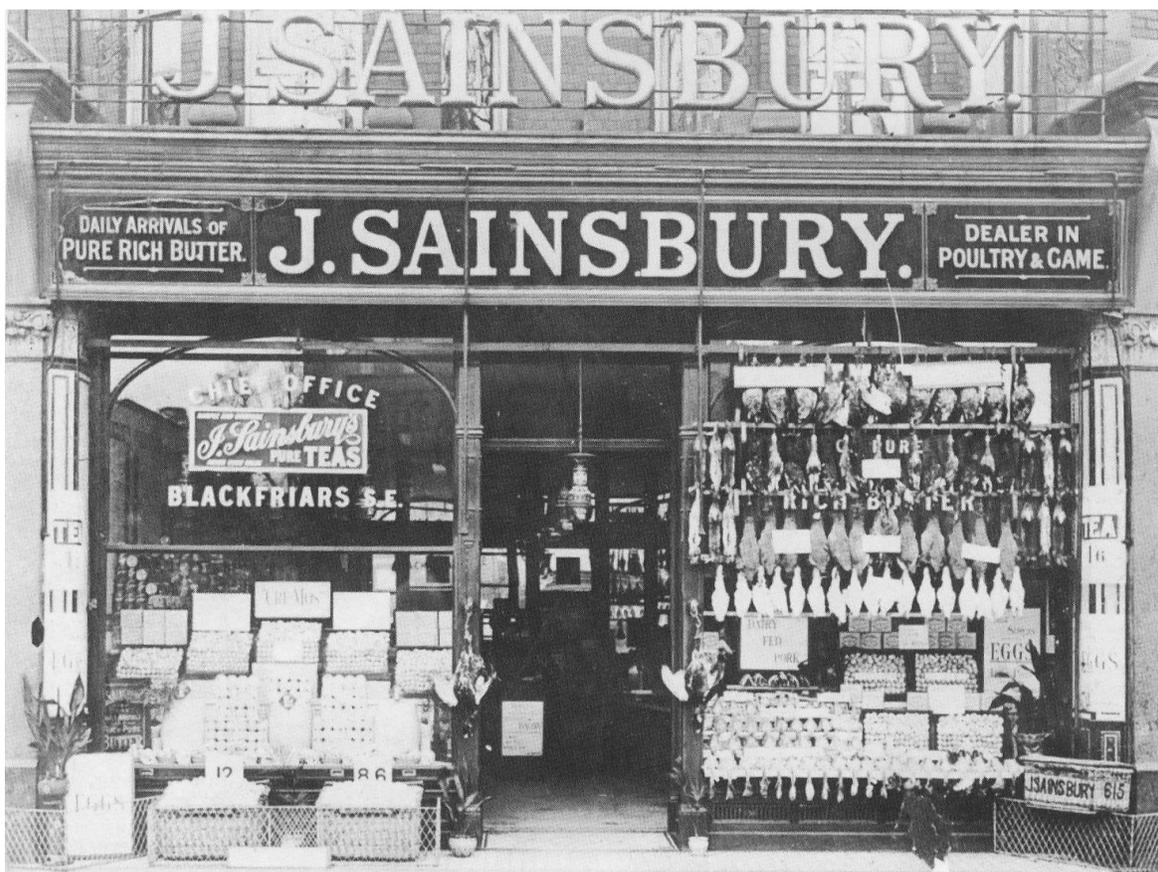
September 2011

GROCCERS

by John Heathfield

Richard Attfield moved to Whetstone about 1790. He described himself as a “*grosser*”, that is he bought things by the gross and sold them individually. His sales book includes sugar bought by the cone and broken into pieces; candles; salt; spices; flour; tea and bacon. Opposite him were Henry Holden, a “*cow keeper*” who sold milk, cream and butter, and a butcher who presumably got his stock from the cow keeper.

A hundred years later our residents in The Bishops Avenue included George Sainsbury and William Lyle. Sainsbury’s stores had two counters, one for bacon and one for butter, which were kept well apart for hygiene reasons. The butter counter was tiled and the assistants made artistic pats with their wooden paddles dipped in slightly salted water. The price of bacon always ended with $\frac{3}{4}$ pence.



The first Sainsbury’s store opened in 1869 at 173 Drury Lane. This one dates from the early 1900s, long before the arrival of Health and Safety regulations

William Lyle was a pioneer in the mass production of foods, a process begun by Heinz in the USA. The original source of sugar was cane from the West Indies, with its byproducts of molasses, treacle and rum and based on the slave trade. By the 1920s most English sugar was made from sugar beet grown in East Anglia. Sainsbury's stores were the forerunners of supermarkets, stocking an increasing range of goods where plastic packaging, in spite of its poor image, had made an enormous improvement in quality and hygiene.

Other strands to the supermarket movement were the Co-op, run by local communities for the local community (do you remember your Co-op number?).

Two more local citizens deserve mention. George Gamage, one of the pioneers of the department store, with its splendid catalogue (you could even buy a car from Gamage's by mail order!) and William Whiteley who revolutionized shop window displays by putting price tags on the goods in the window. Both lived at Finchley and are mentioned in a rather good book called *Finchley & Whetstone Past*.

Footnote by David Berguer

William Whiteley opened the very first department store in 1864. He started out with drapery, but later added gloves, jewellery, furs and artificial flowers. In 1870 he added an estate agency, hairdressers, tea rooms and a furniture shop. He styled himself *The Universal Provider*. John Lewis also opened a shop in 1864. The first day's takings were 16/4d!

CONVENT SCHOOLDAYS

by Pamela Ellis

A few years ago there was a fashion for memoirs of miserable lives in convent schools run by callous and sadistic nuns. If you are hoping for something along these lines, read no further, because my experience was very different.

I was a pupil at St Michael's Convent School in North Finchley from the age of 4 to 18, so my entire school life was spent in the care of the Sisters of the Poor Child Jesus (PCJ), the Order of nuns that ran the school. The school opened on the Nether Street site in 1908, so by the time I started in April 1951 it had been in operation for nearly 50 years. At that time it was what was known as a 'high school', with junior and senior departments taking girls for their whole school career, and boys up to the age of 7.

The school was housed in a jumble of buildings – the original house, known as The Grange; a purpose-built block of classrooms and gym hall; and a row of terraced houses known as The Villas. Classrooms in The Villas were two rooms knocked into one, which made them a rather awkward shape for teaching and meant they had an oddly domestic air with their bay windows and ceiling mouldings. The Junior School was mainly based here, and the early forms were rather quaintly named Reception, Lower Kindergarten, Upper Kindergarten and Transition, before the more conventional numbering began with Form I (today's Year 4), Form II and IIIb (the 11+ year).

Like most children, I accepted the elements of my life as normal and 'given', so I didn't find the presence of nuns in their black and white habits in any way odd. Only much later did I realise that the fact that the school was also a convent, and therefore the nuns' home, gave it a very special character. It didn't, for instance, close down after we children left at the end of the school day or during the

holidays. Its life continued on a 24-hour, 52-week basis. This gave it a completely different feel from that of other schools I have had contact with since.

The education we received in the Junior School was typical of the 1950s – a solid grounding in literacy and numeracy, but with time too for art, music, PE and sewing (which I hated) – but, being a Catholic school, there was also a strong stress on religious education; every lesson began and ended with prayers, and the school routine was enlivened by regular trips across the road to St Alban's church for Mass or Benediction; more exotic delights were the annual First Communions and May and Corpus Christi processions, while we were encouraged to use the nuns' chapel at any time for private prayer. As I progressed through the Junior School the 11+ loomed large. We knew it as 'the scholarship', because, as the school was at that time independent and fee-paying, that essentially is what the 11+ was: a way of determining who got the limited number of places funded by the local authority. I found this exam more stressful than O-levels, A-levels or Finals, because so much more depended on it. Had I 'failed', my parents would not have been able to afford the greatly increased fees for the Senior School, so it was a great relief when I 'passed' and was able to return to St Michael's in September 1957 wearing the coveted sailor hat, badge of the senior girl. Only for a year, though.

At the end of my first year in the Senior School, St Michael's became a voluntary-aided grammar school instead of an independent high school, and the senior department moved to a new, purpose-built school on what had been the tennis courts and part of the nuns' garden. It was a shiny modern building with well-equipped labs and a large assembly/gym hall, but I missed the quirky intimacy of the 'old school' and was never as happy in the new one. And I hated the uniform – purple and grey, a particularly harsh purple that few can wear successfully (and I wasn't one of them); the styles too were unflattering (deliberately so, I am sure), though we did our best to customise the clothes by tightening the belts of our grey gabardines to the point of asphyxiation, and folding and pinning our grey Breton hats to the back of our back-combed hair so that from the front they were nearly invisible. Uniform rules were very strict and we would be in deep trouble if caught in the street without our hats. Gloves too were compulsory: grey wool in winter and white cotton in summer. Prefects would stage periodic 'glove inspections' at the school gate, with 'order marks' for defaulters.

Like many schools of the era, St Michael's had a system of 'houses' that competed against each other. In our case these were St Agnes (Green), St Theresa (Red), St Thomas Aquinas (Blue) and St Francis (Gold). There were inter-house sporting fixtures and an annual music competition, but the main competition was by means of study marks (good), order marks (bad) and conduct marks (very bad). The aim was to get the most study marks, and the fewest order or conduct marks, over the school year. Each house had a House Captain, appointed from the Sixth Form prefects, as were the Head Girl and the Games Captain. These positions were no sinecures, as I discovered in my Upper Sixth year when I was Head Girl!

Although it was a convent school, by no means all the teaching staff were nuns. In the Junior School five of the seven forms had nuns as form mistresses but there was a much higher proportion of lay staff in the Senior School, and after 1958, when St Michael's became a grammar school, the proportion increased steadily. The nuns were, of course, all dressed identically in their habits, but this didn't prevent their very different personalities from coming through. There was Sister

Mary Michael, who loved the little boys and used to hitch up her habit to kick a football with them; Sister Mary Patrick, diminutive, Irish and short-tempered: a cry of 'Patty's on the warpath' would scatter any group of girls bent on mischief; Sister Joan Vianney, the gentle, kindly and scholarly teacher of Latin; Sister Teresa, stern moralist but unexpectedly sympathetic when anyone was in real distress; and of course Mother Clare Dominic, headmistress for the entire duration of my time at the school, who ran the school with a very firm hand indeed and seemed a remote, Olympian figure. Great was our astonishment when we heard that she had left the convent in the late 1960s and was working in a library in Oxford. It appeared she was human after all.

Strict or kindly, none of these women conformed to the stereotype of bitter spinsters taking out their frustrations on the children in their care. Rather, we were dimly aware that their celibate lifestyle meant that they cared about us in a way that the lay staff, with their lives outside the school, could not do. Those days are, of course, long gone. The PCJ Order has almost ceased to exist in this country (though it still flourishes elsewhere); the school was handed over to the archdiocese of Westminster in 1980, and a lay head appointed, though the Order remain trustees of the school, which still flourishes, now greatly expanded, on the same site.

NEW SOUTHGATE NEWS

by Colin Barratt

Following acceptance of the New Southgate Masterplan by Enfield Council last December, consultations have been held with residents on the detailed plans and timetable. The 1970s housing development, known locally as the "Red Brick Estate", in the centre of New Southgate, will be the first to benefit from the improvements, which are expected to start in late summer this year. There will also be improvements to the open spaces around the High Road area, and better access between High Road and Friern Barnet Road.

Enfield Council have announced their chosen development partner for the regeneration of the Ladderswood Estate. They are Mullaley and One Housing Group. It was decided that their scheme best met the requirements of the local community and the Council. The development will create a mix of private and affordable homes, a new community centre and employment space, as well as improvements to the surrounding area. All of the existing flats will be demolished. Subject to planning permission, work will start in 2011, and the first homes will be completed by 2014.

Works on the A406/Wilmer Way junction are expected to be completed later this summer. The overall road scheme of road improvements on the North Circular between Bounds Green Road and Palmers Green is scheduled to be finished by February 2012 and many of the properties along the route are being refurbished. Although the scheme is principally to improve safety along this section, let's hope it helps to relieve some of the congestion that often spills over into Colney Hatch Lane and Friern Barnet Road.

FURTHER NOTES ON BAWTRY ROAD

by Joan Morrell (née Legg)

I can well remember my mother taking me there about 1921 when I would have been five years old. We went to see a lady at the end house on the left hand side after leaving Oakleigh Road. She was, I believe, a Mrs Cooper who took in

washing and my mother made arrangements for her to come to our house at 78 Pollard Road on Monday mornings to do our family washing, which she eventually did. She was a kindly lady and we three children liked her very much.

At that time at the end of Bawtry Road there were only fields, as was much of Whetstone. Mrs Cooper did this work as her husband was an invalid and I vaguely remember seeing him sitting on a wooden chair at the end of their kitchen, by a fire, no doubt.

Years after our family were all Scouting and Guiding at All Saints Church Hall, with the Scout Hut behind. My mother ran the Brownies and dad was a Rover leader, my sister Jeanne and I were Guides and my brother Harold was a Scout. There was a Scout and then a Rover who lived in Bawtry Road – he was Frank Tavener from a pleasant family. At that time the two Scout leaders were the Girling brothers from Woodside Park.

Footnote by David Berguer Unfortunately we do not have a *Kelly's Directory of Finchley* for 1921, but we have one for 1927, and the entry for number 11 Bawtry Road reads: "Copsey, Miss Elizabeth, laundry". *Kelly's* only shows the head of household for each address, and there is no male name here so perhaps by 1927 the Copsey's daughter was running the business. There is nobody of the name Cooper in Bawtry Road at that time so perhaps the name Joan remembers as Cooper was, in fact, Copsey.

MY STORY – PART 6

by Ray Lewis

As a qualified Engineer I was often involved with major problems on the electricity network, being called out at all hours of the night and day. On one occasion I was called out to Colney Hatch Hospital, one dark winter's night when the electricity had gone off in a section of one of the very long corridors. If I remember rightly, the doors in the corridors didn't have exterior handles; staff used to get in and out with a special type of T key that used to turn the lock. I went to the switch room with their Chief Engineer and we worked on this piece of switchgear for some time, finally restoring the supply. As I left and started walking down the corridor, the switch tripped out again and all the lights went out. By this time quite a number of patients were promenading up and down and immediately the lights went out they started to scream and shout. My heart was in my mouth and I quickly moved to the side wall, backtracking quite a way to where I thought the door had been and that I had not long come out of. I luckily banged on the right door and was greeted by the Engineer who had a wry smile on his face. "*Worried were we?*" he said. I just looked back at him and tried to stop shaking, thinking in my vivid imagination about what might have happened. We finally fixed the problem after another session and I got home late that evening.

On another occasion I was working on Tottenham High Road opposite the Spurs ground. We had Paxton Road substation, which fed the ground, off main HV supply and fed by low voltage cables. A team of my fitters were carrying out routine maintenance on that section and worked well into late afternoon. Around 5.00pm a policeman knocked on the substation door and asked whether these were our cars on the extended paved area outside. He asked us to move them as there was a match on that night and we would be causing congestion. I said that unless he allowed us to finish the job, it would be unlikely that there would be *any* match. I quickly shot across to the ground, met their engineer, and told them not

to switch any lights on until I told them to, as the whole lot would blow. Anyway, the lads got their skates on and finished the work in about half an hour and all was put back to normal. Relief! I used to go to watch both Spurs and Arsenal quite regularly in those days and even now, having lived in Nottingham for the past 35 years, I still like to watch their progress

I joined South Herts Golf Club when Dai Rees was the Professional. I remember Frankie Vaughan bought the house right next to the course entrance, with a view to becoming a member. He was never allowed to be a member on religious grounds – it wouldn't happen today! One day I was on the practice green, when three other guys asked if I would like to make up a four. I accepted and started off down towards the first tee. It suddenly dawned on me who they were, Frank McClintock, George Eastham and Ian Ure, all three Arsenal players. I had a lovely afternoon and, later that evening they invited me to have dinner with them and Dai Rees. I was totally included in their conversation and, for that moment, felt part of the group. Later, when I joined the Tottenham Round Table and then the Enfield Round Table I met Frank McClintock at numerous fetes where he was invited as guest of honour. He always came over and spoke to me and the other Tablers were quite in awe when I told them that he had been a golfing partner. In another Society I also played with one or two Tottenham players like Alan Gilzean and John White, who was tragically killed by a lightning bolt at Crews Hill Golf Club while sheltering under a tree.

We had a wonderful camaraderie amongst the young Engineers when I moved to Carterhatch Lane in Enfield. A lot of us had been trained within a year or so of each other. We started a Shares Club, where eight of us met once a month and put in £10 each to invest in shares. We went on for a couple of years before some of the lads got married and dropped out when financial priorities became different. We made a handsome little profit over two or three years and even spoke about setting up our own grocery retail outlet company. Nothing ever came of it, but the thought was there and we used a lot of our planning expertise to evaluate the situation. Who knows, we could have become another Tesco's? We socialised quite a bit and had outings to Caesar's Palace in Luton where we had chicken in a basket and chips, whilst being entertained by some of the top names of the time, with Tommy Cooper and Helen Shapiro amongst many others. I remember we all went to Finsbury Park Empire and saw the likes of Adam Faith, Billy Fury, Cliff Richard and the John Barry Seven.

However, despite all these good times, to this day I wish I hadn't become an Engineer. As I mentioned earlier, my heart had always been in films or television and I spent quite a lot of time script writing with one of the other Engineers at Enfield Office. We tried to write a sitcom of six episodes, all to no avail, although we did meet a BBC scriptwriter and had a great chat with him about our progress. I later teamed up with a colleague when I moved to Nottingham and we did have some minor success with scripts for the Grumbleweeds, Little and Large and a few other comedy shows. Amongst others, we actually had one of our sketches in the pilot for the Little and Large Show; we got the princely sum of £75 and our names were written at the end of the programme.

HOSPITALLERS' LIVING CONDITIONS

by John Heathfield

The earliest details of living conditions of the Hospitallers are contained in Camden's *Britannia* of 1637:

“They were continually at prayer, mortified themselves with watching and fasting and called the poor their masters. Infinite were the donations so that by the year 1240 they owned nine thousand Lordships and Manors”

The Hospitallers had a number of privileges; together with the Cistercians and the Templars, the order was exempt from tithes. Fuller says:

“While the order was young, poverty and humility of spirit and oatmeal porridge were the diet, but as the order grew old, rich venison and claret were not incompatible with the order”.

In one year, besides the fish and fowl from its demesne (land), the Clerkenwell priory used 430 quarters of wheat, 413 quarters of barley, 225 quarters of oats for brewing, 300 quarters of oats for horses, and 8 quarters of peas for pottage. *“20 quarters of peas and 60 shillings were distributed among the poor”*

The corrodaries (pensioners) were well treated:

“William de Langford is to receive a fixed daily allowance of four white loaves; two loaves of ration bread; three flagons of bitter beer; 2 flagons of the second sort of beer and one whole dish of the sort supplied to the brothers. He shall have candles and one bundle of wood for his chamber; hay; litter; a shoe and nails for his horse, together with half a bushel of oats”

Allan Gille is to receive:

“...every year four wain loads of bush and seven quarters of charcoal; four wains of hay and one wain of litter; and every night half a bushel of oats and candle as much as two brothers. When the convent happens to drink wine, he is to have allowance of two brothers”

Thomas Isaac, a Jew, was to have:

“A pension and a robe and if he were sick, to have an ample allowance in his chamber”

NEW SOUTHGATE 1871-1971

by Mrs M E Green

It was a very historical village of farms, cornfields and country lanes, springs and a beautiful waterfall. Betstyle Farm, on the corner of Bowes Road, extended down one side of Waterfall Lane. On the right of the lane was a tree with an iron chain where people used to tie their horses. Opposite was another farm, and lower down was an old cottage called Halfway House which was occupied by one of my ancestors. At the bottom of the hill came the beautiful waterfall (now only a brook) and beyond was Dr Corner's Mental Home and another farm. On the other side was the large house (Beaver Hall) with high gates, a cannon at each side. We had just a small bridge to cross the stream from the waterfall and on this side was the rabbit warren. From here to Bowes Road chiefly consisted of a wood, known as Walker's Woods, which remained until after the 1914-18 war.

Very little was done to the village until about 1872 when parts were starting to be built up, between Station Road and the High Road, with both shops and houses. St Paul's was the first church and Garfield Road School and the Police Station

were built between 1883 and 1887. Before that the police used to have to take people to Southgate and if they had any trouble from them they used to take them on a bier. The school was enlarged in 1906. In the 1870s the railway was only one line up and one down. The lighting of the area was very poor and a lamplighter used to go round with his long pole, and pull a chain to bring on the gas lights. The Salvation Army was the last to be built in Garfield Road.

As a resident for seventy six years in Garfield Road, from 1894 to 1971, I saw many changes. The Methodist Church was started in 1899 and we sold a one penny paper brick to help pay for it. Previously we used to go to the old tin chapel; the new church was built next to it. Barclays Bank was at the corner of Garfield Road and only later took over a large house at the top of Station Road. The shops at the bottom of Station Road were pulled down to make way for the open top double deck trams which started to run from Wood Green to the Railway Hotel on August Bank Holiday Monday in 1907. The front gardens from the small houses at the lower end of the High Road had to be taken away to widen the road and further down, adjoining Albert Street, some small shops were lost to the Gas Company for their own buildings. Up Bounds Green Road there was a farm on one side and piggeries on the other.

Our only amusement was the Coronation Picture Palace. In the late 1800s and early 1900s we had a lovely town band and at Christmas time we used to look forward to the carol singers, singing under lamps, especially when it had been snowing. Sometimes we had a little Pleasure Fair or Sanger's Circus which was held where Express Motors was. We had to cross a small bridge to get to this as the brook used to come up to the roadway. To get to the Freehold we had a path (the line path) between Colney Hatch Asylum and the railway and we used to get to this either by going through Station Approach, or by an old bridge from Station Road across the railway.

Up to the early 1900s funerals were carried out by horse-drawn carriages and hearses. If we were going on a journey we had to hire a cab from Haggars Cab Yard in Station Road; we used to look forward to our brake outings from Sunday School! Our milk was always fresh as we could go and get it straight from the dairy at the corner of Springfield Road where they kept their own cows.

This article was first published in *St Paul's Church Magazine* in April 1971.

PROBLEMS WITH THE FIRE BRIGADE

by David Berquer

A number of pieces in *All Saints' Parish Magazine* help to paint a picture of life in Friern Barnet before the introduction of a national Fire Service:

August 1898

“THE FIRE AT THE HAYSTACKS

Dear Sir – Is it true that the reason for the four hours' delay in bringing up the Finchley Fire Engine on the night of July 15th, was that it had got mislaid under some papers on the Secretary's desk? – Yours faithfully,

INTERESTED

[We decline to answer riddles – especially hard ones about the doings of the fire engine. Apply at the station – they may know there. Ed]”

September 1898

“THE FIRE AT THE HAYSTACKS

Dear Sir – Could not some sort of an amateur fire brigade be established in this neighbourhood? By this means we could avoid a repetition of the scandalous delay alluded to by your Correspondent, “Interested,” in the August Magazine. I, for one, should be glad to take part in such a movement – Yours faithfully,

ALPHA

[This correspondent has not observed our rule as to enclosing his name and address. We must in future keep strictly to it. Ed]”

February 1900

“OUR PROTECTION (?) FROM FIRE

The week beginning January 7th was a notable one in that it witnessed the extraordinary coincidence of three serious fires in our immediate neighbourhood. The first of these took place in our own parish, when the Congregational Chapel was entirely destroyed in about two hours. We who love and value our own Church can to some extent at least sympathise with those who have suffered by this loss, and we do extend our very heartiest sympathy and condolence to Mr Milnes and all his fellow workers, not only for their money loss – which we believe is considerable – but still more for the tearing away of all the associations of many years’ steady work. We cannot help thinking again as we thought more than a year ago, on the occasion of a very much less disastrous fire, of the lesson of self-preservation which we ought to learn from these calamities. On this occasion we had the same tale told to us again, of the utter inefficiency of the local precautions against fire. Of course, a large open building like the chapel burns very much more rapidly than a private house would, but with the utterly contemptible water supply there would have been no more chance of extinguishing the fire had it taken place in one of our larger private houses than there was in that of the chapel. Our engines are bad enough – surely a disgrace to a large and wealthy district such as this that there is no “steamer” available – our fire escape has been a source of scoffing and one is tired of speaking about it, but even with effectual implements there can be nothing achieved which will make the neighbourhood a reasonably safe one till some scheme is devised by which a water supply shall be constant, easily got at, and at a much greater pressure than there is at present. Unless these things are achieved we shall only have a repetition of the recent fires at Totteridge and at Barnet, and if any of us is unfortunate enough to see his house once alight, the only thing he will be able to do will be to rescue what he can of his personal effects, and, if he is wise, save the expense of sending for a fire engine which will be utterly ineffective through no fault of his own.”

October 1901

“We have been delighted to hear of the efforts made of late by Mr A J Sly, Chief Officer of the Finchley Fire Brigade, to improve the efficiency of that important institution and also of the good response to those efforts made by the members of

the Brigade. The Annual Review, held at Redbourn Avenue, Church End, Finchley, by kind permission of H Harper Esq., on Saturday, Sept 7th, produced not only some very keen competitions, but also some very smart performances. The competitions included various Brigade Drill, and, at the conclusion, a temporarily erected house was set on fire, a passer-by noticed the smoke and flames, roused the inmates, and called the Brigade by means of the electric fire-alarm; whereupon the Brigade turned out with all appliances, rescued several persons, male and female, extinguished the fire, made up, and returned to the station. Mr Sly commended the men for the excellence of their performances, and expressed a hope that before long, with regular drill and diligent practice, the Brigade would be in a high state of efficiency. We only hope that when occasion for their services arises a good supply of water will be as promptly on the spot as the Brigade. This has been the insurmountable difficulty in the past. The best Brigade in the world cannot put out fire without water."

MURDER AT IRISH CORNER

by David Berger

A number of people lived at a lodging house at 30 Mint Street, Southwark. There was Emily Matthews and her partner Enoch Clark, John Baker, Clark's close friend, James Smith, known as 'Muffin Jack' and another man, 'Curly' Wooldridge.

At six o'clock on 2nd March 1881 Clark told Emily that he and John Baker were going out saying: "*I shall see you about 9 or 10 o'clock if I don't see you before.*" Emily did not see Clark that night but Baker returned alone the following morning and said that Clark would be along "*in a minute or two*". While Emily was washing in the kitchen, Baker said: "*Look here, look at the state I am in*", pointing to the leg of his trousers which had a few stains the colour of port wine. Clark then produced two tablecloths, one large and one small, and asked her to wash them, which she did. After mangling and drying them she was asked by Clark to pawn them and Emily gave them to a friend who managed to get 2s 11½d for them.

At about 2 o'clock she asked him if he had seen Clark and he replied: "*If he is not here soon I shall go down and see if I can hear anything about him.*" He then said that he and Clark had been going along a fence and there were two policemen, one on horseback and one on foot, and the one on foot had looked over the fence and Baker had produced a port wine bottle from his pocket and hit the policeman over the head with it and he then hit him a second time and knocked him out. He then looked for Clark and thought that the policeman on horseback must have chased him. Baker lived with, and apparently slept with, Emily Matthews for a few days and during that time he produced a number of further items which he asked her to pawn – several pairs of boots and shoes, some silver knives and forks, a meerschaum pipe and even a silver flute.

On 4th March William Alexander Hill, who lived at St Albans Villa, Friern Park, returned home to discover that a number of items were missing from his home including several pairs of boots and shoes, some silver knives and forks, a meerschaum pipe, a combination knife and a silver flute. His maid reported that she had locked up at 10.40pm the previous night and, on getting up at 7am, she had found the dining room and drawing room doors were open, cupboards were open and things were scattered about the floor. It seems that the thieves had entered by forcing the hasp of the back kitchen window. Police Inspector William Thompson visited Mr Hill's house in Friern Park and traced footmarks in the

garden – there had been a white frost in the night – followed these down through two fields to the corner of Woodhouse Lane.

Walter Brinkley was a wireworker who travelled the country with his van and he, his uncle and another man were camped with the van on 4th March at Irish Corner, near the Smallpox Hospital, apparently a place where gypsies frequently camped. The three men got up in the morning to look for their pony which had strayed and discovered the body of a man in the wood covered in blood. They went to the hospital and reported it to the porter and then the police.

Around 7th March Emily Matthews read in a newspaper that a body had been discovered in a wood at Finchley but thought nothing of it. On the 16th the police took her to Kentish Town Police station where she was shown a photograph of the body and some clothes from the dead man which she recognised as belonging to Clark.

On 20th March William ‘Curly’ Wooldridge, was taken by the police to Colney Hatch Cemetery where he saw and identified the dead body of Enoch Clark. He had earlier told the police that Baker had shown him a combination knife and told him: *“This is a funny sort of knife”*. Some days later Baker had taken him by train to Finchley and they had walked to a wood where there were some gypsies and Baker had asked to borrow his basket. Baker returned after half an hour and gave him the basket back which had boots and a silver flute in it. They then walked to Alexandra Palace and caught a train to Farringdon and then back to Mint Street.

At the trial of John Baker at the Old Bailey on 1st May 1882, PC Edwin Webb gave evidence that he had been on horse patrol on the night of 2nd March along Friern Lane, Summers Lane, Woodhouse Lane and Friern Park and then on to North Finchley. He reported that he had not seen two men, he had not been in the company of another officer and he had seen nobody hit with a bottle.

John Baker was tried at the Old Bailey, found guilty of the manslaughter of Enoch Clark and was sentenced to penal servitude for life.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At the AGM on 25 May the Committee (David Berguer, Chairman; Mel Hooper, Treasurer; Patricia Berguer, Secretary; John Holtham, Membership Secretary; Janet Liversidge, Events Secretary; Richard Testar, Publicity Secretary; Colin Barratt; Patricia Cleland and Dorrell Dressekie) were re-elected. It was decided at the meeting that there would be no increase in the annual subscription for the year 2012-2013 as the Society’s finances were in a healthy state. A copy of the Report & Accounts is enclosed with this Newsletter for those who were unable to attend the meeting.

FRIERN BARNET LIBRARY

Despite a well organised and vociferous campaign by local residents including a petition with 5000 signatures, Barnet Council decided in July that Friern Barnet Library would be closed, along with the library in Ravensdale Avenue at North Finchley. The plan is to replace these with a new library in the artsdepot at Tally Ho Corner, although where this would be situated within that building has not yet been divulged.

Friern Barnet Library is small, but is obviously valued, particularly by parents with school children and the staff are extremely friendly and helpful. Sadly its closure will see yet another part of the old Friern Barnet disappearing. The Town Hall was converted into apartments; there is a planning application in for the conversion of *The Triumph* pub to residential accommodation; and *The Orange Tree* is being converted into a Tesco Express, despite the fact that there is a huge Tesco Metro not a mile away at the bottom of Colney Hatch Lane. These events make the work of the Society even more important. If we do not record what is happening today and at the same time investigate what happened in the past, then in years to come people may well say: "Friern Barnet, what was that?"

Anyone wanting to find out more about the history of Friern Barnet Library should read *Friern Barnet Library: A Brief History* which was written last year by our own Dorrell Dressekie. Copies are available at £1.50 plus 66p postage and packing

NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

Plans to convert the former Friern Barnet Sewage Works site at the bottom of Alexandra Road into a large waste treatment plant serving seven London Boroughs have been put on hold following a huge campaign from residents of Barnet, Haringey and Enfield. Apart from the possible noise and fumes, one of the main concerns was the large amount of traffic likely to be generated on the already inadequate North Circular Road (some 330 lorry movements a day was the figure quoted).

FRIERN BARNET SUMMER SHOW

The weather forecast promised us dry and sunny weather for Saturday 20 August and we arrived at Friary Park at 9.00 in the morning to set up our two gazebos and load up our tables with a panoply of previously loved items. To our surprise and horror the heavens opened at around 2 o'clock; this definitely wasn't forecast. We had no option but to pack up all our things, take down the gazebos and go home – there wasn't any point in staying, since nobody was coming into the park, and those already there were sheltering in the big marquees. Needless to say, around four o'clock the sun came out and it ended up being a perfect late summer day.

We repeated the operation the next day, but this time the Met Office got it right and it was warm and sunny all day and we had lots of visitors to the stall. After doing the sums we discovered that we had taken only £98 on the Saturday, but made up for it with £280.67 on the Sunday, giving a total of £378.67. Not as good as last year, but we all had a good time and met lots of nice people. Just to round things off there was a magnificent firework display in the park on Sunday evening. All in all, not a bad weekend! Huge thanks to everyone on the Committee for their hard work and to the members who donated items and those who came to say hello.

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