

## *Woodhouse Allotment s Limited - 1928 and all that*

Woodhouse Allotments (Limited) covers approximately nine acres in North Finchley between Grove Road and Warnham Road, and today has 133 plots. Recently discovered in the Allotment trading hut are membership records from 1928 which tell us not just the names and addresses but also the occupations of most plot holders. Taken together these records provides a rich social picture of Woodhouse Allotments and the surrounding areas between the wars. The full tabulation of these records is detailed under appendix 1. By 1928 the allotments had to the best of our knowledge been running since about 1920. There had been a nationwide expansion of allotments following the food shortages experienced in the later stages of the First World War. However, it was in 1928 that Woodhouse Allotments Limited was established under the 1893 Industrial & Provident Societies Act. In essence this was the means by which Woodhouse Allotments were able to exercise greater control of the allotments – up until then Finchley Council was responsible for granting lettings to individuals, and clearly members wanted greater autonomy. Hence the formation of Woodhouse Allotments Limited as a limited liability company and the need for shares to be issued and to record shareholder names, addresses and occupations. The President of the Allotments during the 1920's was Councillor E.S. Bowen and it may be that he played a pivotal role in navigating these changes. A cup – the Bowen cup – is awarded annually to the best plot, so Councillor Bowen's contribution is still honoured.

The records also provide some detail on when the shares were paid out i.e. when the plot holder gave up their tenancy. Many carried on in to the 1950s and one plot holder held his plot from 1930 to 1969 (see plot 38). It is notable that in 1928 there are no women plot holders, the first – Norah Ellen Stephens, the widow of Herbert Stephens (a nursery hand) , takes up the tenancy of her late husband's plot (97) in December 1930. (Today roughly half of the allotments are held by women.) The habit of recording occupations seems to have petered out by the early 1930's, but what we do have here is a treasure trove of fascinating insight.

### **Occupations**

Most of the occupations are what we would term today as semi-skilled or unskilled manual workers with a smattering of professionals. In essence a reflection of the working class and lower middle class makeup of the streets surrounding the allotments from which the overwhelming majority of plot holders were drawn. A detailed schedule of occupations is given in the table below. The largest single group are tram drivers and workers who would have worked out of the Finchley tram depot of The Metropolitan Electric Tramways situated at the corner of Woodberry Crescent and Rosemont Avenue (the site is today occupied by Homebase). As you will see below they seem to have been very enthusiastic in signing up for plots. There are a good number of gardeners and this might well relate to the market gardens then present in the Finchley and Whetstone area. No doubt their horticultural skills were well applied in growing produce for their families. Amongst the more distinctive occupations are brass furnisher, street lighter, coach builder, and horse keeper. A breakdown of the occupations is detailed in the table below. **(Notes on occupations.** Carman and motorman are other terms for tram driver; traveller – this is another term for a commercial salesman; collector is likely to relate to rent collection; and doorkeeper is a security man.)

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### **A tale of two Boroughs?**

Woodhouse Allotments straddled the then separate Boroughs of Finchley, and Friern Barnet. Albeit most of the site apart from the Grove Road entrance came at least initially under Friern Barnet. Although that specific boundary appears to come after the creation of the site, as initially it seems Finchley Council was the key body. What this actually meant in practical impact for the running of the allotments is an interesting question.

### **How much did it cost?**

We know that in 1926 the annual rent was 1 shilling and two pence per plot – so twelve pence in today's money. By 1945 this had risen to five shillings and four pence – twenty nine pence. The 1928 documents record the original share costs – ten shillings (fifty pence) which updated for inflation would equate to £31.62. The average annual wage for a working man in 1928 was around £250.

**Howard Davies, Woodhouse Allotment Committee, N12, April 2020.**

### **Schedule of Occupations**

**(Note they will not necessarily compute to the number of plots as several allotment members held two plots)**

<b>Tram Workers</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Gardeners, Nursery Hands &amp; Groundsman</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Labourers &amp; Navvies</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Retired</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Clerks</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Teachers &amp; Headmasters</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Street Lighter</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Bus Drivers &amp; Conductors</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Chauffeur &amp; Motor Drivers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Engineers &amp; Electrical Engineer</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Timberman</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Bricklayer &amp; Builders</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Police</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Commercial Traveller &amp; Salesman</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Porter</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Grocer &amp; Grocers Assistant</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Horse keeper</b>	<b>1</b>

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Picture Frame Maker	1
Accountant	1
Draper	2
Coach Builder	1
Decorator	1
Public Health Department	1
Welfare Superintendent	1
Glass Washer	1
Fitter	1
Depot Manager	1
Carpenter	2
Door Keeper	1
Collector	2
Dustman	1
Messenger	1
Auctioneers Assistant	1
Civil Servant	2
Brass Furnisher	1
Gas and Water Employee	1
Merchants Manager	1
Railway Clerk	1
Shop Manager	1
Manager	1
Butcher	1
Furnishing Buyer & Furnisher	2
Plumber	1
Water Inspector	1
Postal official & aux postman	3
Joiner	1
Upholsterer	2
Bakers Roundsman	2

- This might refer to the Tram depot?

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**Appendix 1 – Tabulation of Woodhouse Allotments Members Records (largely drawn from the original 1928 membership)**

<i>Plot</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Address (all addresses are N12, unless otherwise stated)</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Date share allotted</i>
1	<i>Henry Arthur Baldock</i>	<i>22 Crossway</i>	<i>Police Constable</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
2	<i>Charles Thomas Walker</i>	<i>60 Percy Road</i>	<i>Greengrocers Assistant</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
3	<i>Frederick John Coles</i>	<i>35 Ingleway</i>	<i>Tram Driver</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
4	<i>Clarence Herbert Gates</i>	<i>20 Grove Road</i>	<i>Commercial Traveller</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
5	<i>Henry Trevor Powell</i>	<i>Clarence House, Friern Park</i>	<i>Accountant</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
6	<i>John William Crow</i>	<i>32 Finchley Park</i>	<i>Decorator</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
7	<i>William B H Wykes</i>	<i>The Laurels, Ballards Lane</i>	<i>Electrician</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
8	<i>Frederick Barnabas Gibson</i>	<i>12 Churchfield Road</i>	<i>Traveller</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
9	<i>Arthur James Dore</i>	<i>13 Percy Road</i>	<i>Electric Tram Driver</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
10	<i>William Jarvis</i>	<i>53 Stanhope Road</i>	<i>Groundsman</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
11	<i>John William Taylor</i>	<i>16 Regents Parade</i>	<i>Draper</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>

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12	<i>Charles Hanson</i>	<i>80 High Street</i>	<i>Postal Official</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
13	<i>George Eldridge</i>	<i>17 Percy Road</i>	<i>Coach Builder</i>	<i>1.8.28</i>
14	<i>William Scuffle</i>	<i>65 Grange Avenue</i>	<i>Public Health Department</i>	<i>3.5.28</i>
15	<i>Earl James Davey</i>	<i>6 Castle Road</i>	<i>Gardener</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
16	<i>Thomas Mayall</i>	<i>18 Regents Parade</i>	<i>Grocer</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
17	<i>No such plot recorded</i>			
18				
19	<i>William G Harper</i>	<i>78 Grove Road Finchley</i>	<i>Furnisher</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
20	<i>William Harper</i>	<i>78 Grove Road</i>	<i>Furnisher</i>	<i>1.8.28</i>
21	<i>No record</i>			
22	<i>Ernest William Wheatley</i>	<i>21 Woodgrange Avenue</i>	<i>Police Constable</i>	<i>3.5.28</i>
23	<i>Ernest Samuel Bassell</i>	<i>Devonshire Lodge, Friern Park</i>	<i>Builder</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
24	<i>George Albert Hendy</i>	<i>206 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Carman Conductor</i>	<i>1928 (exact date not clear)</i>
25	<i>Frederick Thomas Judd</i>	<i>Dale Grove</i>	<i>Tram Conductor</i>	<i>11.7.28</i>

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26	<i>Walter Taylor</i>	<i>25 Crescent Way</i>	<i>Manager</i>	<i>3.5.28</i>
27	<i>George Frances Field</i>	<i>30 Percy Road</i>	<i>Upholsterer</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
28	<i>Henry George Marshall</i>	<i>186 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Messenger</i>	<i>12.4.28</i>
29	<i>Ernest Owen Earl</i>	<i>154 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Bricklayer</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
30	<i>Frederick Shepherd</i>	<i>6 Bramber Road</i>	<i>Retired</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
31	<i>Charles William Bradfield</i>	<i>21 Stanhope Road</i>	<i>Navy</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
32	<i>Frank Thomas Seller</i>	<i>49 Grange Avenue</i>	<i>Tram Driver</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
33	<i>Walter Izzard</i>	<i>180 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Timberman</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
34	<i>Frederick George Mallett</i>	<i>54 Grove Road</i>	<i>Chauffeur</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
35	<i>Herbert Harvey Sotham</i>	<i>14 Hutton Grove</i>	<i>Furnishing Buyer</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
36	<i>Francis Cornwell</i>	<i>23 Upway</i>	<i>Tram Conductor</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
37	<i>Rowland Edward Penfold</i>	<i>11 Percy Road</i>	<i>Motor Driver</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
38	<i>Rowland Edward Penfold</i>	<i>11 Percy Road</i>	<i>Motor Driver</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
38	<i>Edward Dilloway</i>	<i>20 Sunnyway</i>	<i>Bricklayer</i>	<i>9.7.30</i>

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39	<i>William George Hoath</i>	<i>54 High Street</i>	<i>Water Inspector</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
40	<i>Willie Gore</i>	<i>49 Castle Road</i>	<i>Gardener</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
41	<i>Alfred Hester</i>	<i>53 Percy Road</i>	<i>Gardener</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
42	<i>Charles Pryke</i>	<i>44 Stanhope Road</i>	<i>Carman</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
43	<i>William Henry Halfhead</i>	<i>108 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Decorator</i>	<i>1.8.28</i>
44	<i>Frank Ernest Skinner</i>	<i>1 School Way</i>	<i>Electric Motorman</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
45	<i>William Saunders</i>	<i>45 Stanhope Road</i>	<i>Glass Washer</i>	<i>1.8.28</i>
46	<i>Frederick William Smith</i>	<i>5 Belgrave Terrace</i>	<i>Fitter</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
47	<i>Alfred Freeman</i>	<i>6 Albert Street</i>	<i>Dustman</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
48	<i>Joseph Smith</i>	<i>29 Woodgrange Avenue</i>	<i>Clerk</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
49	<i>Herbert Victor Allwood</i>	<i>12 Winifred Place</i>	<i>Gardener</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
50	<i>John Cox</i>	<i>69 Grove Road</i>	<i>Labourer</i>	<i>1.8.28</i>
51	<i>Frank Chas James Carter</i>	<i>76 Grove Road</i>	<i>Clerk</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
52	<i>George Pressland</i>	<i>14 William Street</i>	<i>Labourer</i>	<i>3.5.28</i>

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53	<i>John Reid</i>	<i>114 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Tram Driver</i>	<i>3.5.28</i>
54	<i>Alfred Nicholson</i>	<i>64 Stanhope Road</i>	<i>Gardener</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
55	<i>William Brown</i>	<i>168 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Tram Conductor</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
56	<i>Henry Roberts</i>	<i>75 Grove Road</i>	<i>Doorkeeper</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
57	<i>Charles David Taylor</i>	<i>90 Ingleway</i>	<i>Bus Conductor</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
58	<i>Evelyn John George</i>	<i>100 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Bus Driver</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
59	<i>Arthur James Cork</i>	<i>12 Winifred Place</i>	<i>Gardener</i>	<i>11.7.28</i>
60	<i>Lionel Herbert Froome</i>	<i>14 Castle Road</i>	<i>Welfare Superintendent</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
61	<i>Peter Burkage</i>	<i>89 Grove Road</i>	<i>Porter</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
62	<i>Harry Bryant</i>	<i>65 Lodge Lane</i>	<i>Horse keeper</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
63	<i>Not recorded</i>			
64	<i>William Henry Armstrong</i>	<i>88 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Tram Conductor</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
65	<i>Joseph Waller</i>	<i>43 Stanhope Road</i>	<i>Labourer</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
66	<i>Frederick Barrett</i>	<i>12 Princess Avenue, N3</i>	<i>Tram Conductor</i>	<i>3.5.28</i>



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67	<i>George Frost</i>	<i>40 Hutton Grove</i>	<i>Labourer</i>	<i>3.5.28</i>
68	<i>Not recorded</i>			
69	<i>William Henry Skempton</i>	<i>49 Castle Road</i>	<i>Upholsterer</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
70	<i>George William Bruce</i>	<i>55 Stanhope Road</i>	<i>Labourer</i>	<i>3.5.28</i>
71	<i>Herbert John Driver</i>	<i>2, The Laurels, Ballards Lane</i>	<i>Tram Driver</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
72	<i>Arthur Wilson</i>	<i>Ellenleigh, Dale Grove</i>	<i>Retired</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
73	<i>Edward Ernest Croft</i>	<i>Lilydene, Lambert Road</i>	<i>Auctioneers Assistant</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
74	<i>James Anthony</i>	<i>53v Hutton Grove</i>	<i>Motor Driver</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
75	<i>William Herbert</i>	<i>49 Grove Road</i>	<i>Carpenter</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
76	<i>Samuel Legood Chettle</i>	<i>9 Avenue Road</i>	<i>Bakers Roundsman</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
77	<i>Laurie Alywynne Poore</i>	<i>60 Woodgrange Avenue</i>	<i>Clerk</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
78	<i>Alborough Cook</i>	<i>33 Hutton Grove</i>	<i>Plumber</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
79	<i>Arthur Davey</i>	<i>50 Coleridge Road</i>	<i>Civil Servant</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>

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80	<i>William Edgar Kent</i>	<i>1 Crescent Way</i>	<i>Tram Conductor</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
81	<i>Frank Carter</i>	<i>76 Grove Road</i>	<i>Clerk</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
82	<i>Charles John Timson</i>	<i>69 Hutton Grove</i>	<i>Tram Driver</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
83	<i>Walter Groome</i>	<i>6 Stanhope Road</i>	<i>Gas &amp; Water Employee</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
84	<i>Sydney Reeves</i>	<i>10 Hutton Avenue</i>	<i>Collector</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
85	<i>Fred Percy China</i>	<i>18 Hutton Avenue</i>	<i>Commercial Traveller</i>	<i>11.7.28</i>
86	<i>William Coultas</i>	<i>11a Bramber Road</i>	<i>Draper</i>	<i>3.5.28</i>
87	<i>Not recorded</i>			
88	<i>Reginald Rice</i>	<i>61 Crescent Way</i>	<i>Tram Car Fitter</i>	<i>1.8.28</i>
89	<i>Charles Golding</i>	<i>54 Fallow Court Avenue</i>	<i>Electrical Engineer</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
90	<i>Henry John Searle</i>	<i>Charnwood, Bramber Road</i>	<i>Headmaster</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
91	<i>Henry Otto Wainwright</i>	<i>15 Park Parade</i>	<i>Picture Frame Maker</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>

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92	<i>Thomas ,Frank Herbert</i>	<i>Bassingbourne, Church Path</i>	<i>Carpenter</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
93	<i>Alexander Arthur Redhouse</i>	<i>90 Grove Road</i>	<i>Clerk</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
94	<i>Herbert Harry Southam (also plot 35)</i>	<i>14 Hutton Grove</i>	<i>Furnishing Buyer</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
95	<i>Matthew Henry Crabb</i>	<i>118 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Tram Conductor</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
96	<i>Jospeph Flaik</i>	<i>118 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Retired</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
97	<i>Herbert Stephens</i>	<i>156 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Nursery Hand</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
98	<i>Edgar Frank Biggs</i>	<i>49 Castle Road</i>	<i>Tram Driver</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
99	<i>Alfred Bertram Childs</i>	<i>28 Lodge Lane</i>	<i>Labourer</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
100	<i>Edward George Frost</i>	<i>20 Castle Road</i>	<i>Motorman</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
101	<i>Edward George Frost</i>	<i>20 Castle Road</i>	<i>Motorman</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
102	<i>Ernest John Snell</i>	<i>Braemer, Woodhouse Rd</i>	<i>Civil Servant</i>	<i>3.5.28</i>
103	<i>Not recorded</i>			
104				

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105	<i>Charles Ridge</i>	<i>16 Woodside Park Gardens</i>	<i>Engineer</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
106	<i>Charles Ridge</i>	<i>16 Woodside Park Gardens</i>	<i>Engineer</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
107	<i>Charles Henry Cope</i>	<i>Ruby House, Friern Park</i>	<i>Retired</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
108	<i>Frederick William Jones</i>	<i>47 Grange Avenue</i>	<i>Brass Furnisher</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
109	<i>Robert Charles Jones</i>	<i>14B Gruneisen Road, N3</i>	<i>Painter</i>	<i>3.5.28</i>
110	<i>William Basil Pilgrim</i>	<i>9 Derby Avenue</i>	<i>Engineer</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
111	<i>Edward Sampson</i>	<i>3 Park Parade</i>	<i>Salesman</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
112	<i>William Brown</i>	<i>168 Woodhouse Road</i>	<i>Tram Conductor</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
113	<i>George Wright</i>	<i>20 Crossway</i>	<i>Tram Driver</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
114	<i>Ernest P.G. Hudson</i>	<i>73 Grange Avenue</i>	<i>Gardener</i>	<i>1.8.28</i>
115	<i>Ernest P.G. Hudson</i>	<i>73 Grange Avenue</i>	<i>Gardener</i>	<i>1.8.28</i>
116	<i>Samuel Marshall Bull</i>	<i>58 Friern Park</i>	<i>Retired</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
117	<i>Harold Greston</i>	<i>96 Woodgrange Avenue</i>	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>

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118	<i>Walter George Priest</i>	<i>10 Regents Close</i>	<i>Joiner</i>	<i>1928 - (exact date not recorded)</i>
119	<i>Louis Charles Durrant</i>	<i>10 Regents Close</i>	<i>Street Lighter</i>	<i>11.7.28</i>
120	<i>Gathorne Harris</i>	<i>21 Ashurst Road</i>	<i>Depot Manager</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
121	<i>Louis Charles Durrant</i>	<i>10 Regents Close</i>	<i>Street Lighter</i>	<i>11.7.28</i>
121	<i>George Eldridge</i>	<i>17 Percy Road</i>	<i>Coach Builder</i>	<i>1.8.21</i>
122	<i>Charles W Sherman</i>	<i>21 Stanhope Road</i>	<i>Navy</i>	<i>11.7.28</i>
123	<i>Frederick Edmund Reeve</i>	<i>8 Petworth Road</i>	<i>Retired</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
124	<i>Thomas Edgar Hall</i>	<i>41 Castle Road</i>	<i>Gardener</i>	<i>1.8.28</i>
125	<i>William Tinsley</i>	<i>17 Frederick Place</i>	<i>Postman</i>	<i>11.4.28</i>
126	<i>Leonard Sargent Holmes</i>	<i>14 Petworth Road</i>	<i>Merchants Manager</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
127	<i>George Reeves</i>	<i>8 Hutton Avenue</i>	<i>Not recorded</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
128	<i>Arthur James Halsey</i>	<i>8 Castle Road</i>	<i>Aux Postman</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>

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129	<i>Not recorded</i>			
130				
131	<i>Leonard Timbs</i>	<i>30 Stanhope Road</i>	<i>Postman</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>
132	<i>Frederick Reeve (see also 123)</i>	<i>8 Petworth Road</i>	<i>Retired</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
133	<i>Victor William Taylor</i>	<i>18 Petworth Road</i>	<i>Railway Clerk</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
134	<i>Henry Pike</i>	<i>4 Petworth Road</i>	<i>Salesman</i>	<i>3.12.30</i>
135	<i>Alan Frederick Brooadberry</i>	<i>20 Ashurst Road</i>	<i>Collector</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
136	<i>Thomas Colyer</i>	<i>Dale Grove</i>	<i>Tram Driver</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
137	<i>Samuel Redhouse</i>	<i>90 Grove Road</i>	<i>Butcher</i>	<i>6.6.28</i>

**Plot 109** seems to have changed hands between March and May 1928. So for completeness, detailed below is the details of the plotholder registered in March 1928:

109	<i>Arthur Gilbert Gosling</i>	<i>71 Petworth Road</i>	<i>Shop Manager</i>	<i>14.3.28</i>
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