

EDMONTON HUNDRED HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Founded in 1936 to promote and foster interest in local history in
Edmonton Enfield Potters Bar Southgate South Mimms Tottenham Wood Green Monken Hadley



November 2022

Newsletter

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday 16th November**
at **2.30pm** at **Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield, EN2 0AJ**
Doors open at 2.15 pm.

Enfield Fire Brigade

1790-1965

By Chris Whippe

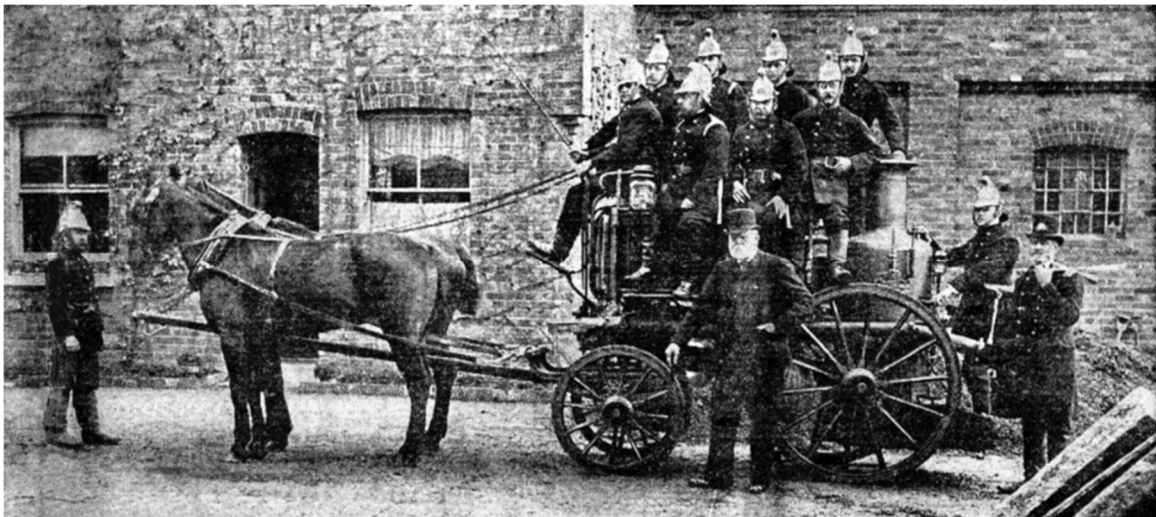


Photo : Enfield Local Studies

Enfield Fire Brigade in 1879

Chris Whippe is a member of the EHHS and a trustee of the Enfield District Veteran Vehicle Society which runs Whitewebbs Museum of Transport. His talk will cover the history of the fire brigade in the old borough of Enfield and will be illustrated with old slides from his collection. He will also be bringing some interesting artefacts.

And on **Monday 21st November** at **8pm** at **Jubilee Hall, Enfield, EN2 0AJ**

Memories of Chase Side County Junior School in the 1950s by Stephen Gilbert

This will be an interactive presentation with everyone invited to share their primary school memories of lessons, craftwork and games, outings and holidays, poems, projects and pets, parties, plays and pantomimes. Please also bring along any photographs or artefacts you may have of your primary school days. A Joint meeting with The Enfield Society

And another joint meeting with The Enfield Society on **Tuesday 22nd November**
7.30pm at **All Saints Church Hall, Church Street, Edmonton N9**

Lost pubs along the Hertford Road - Part Two by Gary Boudier

Diary Dates - talks and events arranged by other organisations

Tuesday 8th November. 8pm. Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield, EN2 0AJ.
From Ozymandias to Colston: the Changing Significance of Statues in Cultural History.
Dr Tim Hochstrasser *Historical Association*

Friday 11th November. 7pm. Online. A link to access will be emailed to members and published on the website the day before.
Tools in Roman London. Owen Humphreys *Enfield Archaeological Society*

Tuesday 15th November. 2-4pm. Bruce Castle, Lordship Lane, Tottenham, N17 8NU
Reminiscence café. Whatever the Weather. There has been some very extreme weather around the world recently. Do you remember the scorcher of '76 or the Great Hurricane of '87 ? Share your memories and photos of weather events that affected you. *Bruce Castle Museum*

Wednesday 16th November. 6pm. Online or in person. See Gresham College Website
The Irish Question and the Ulster Question Then and Now.
Prof Vernon Bogdanor *Gresham College*

Saturday 19th November. 10.30-6pm. Museum of London, 150 London Wall, EC2Y 5HN
L.A.M.A.S. Local History Conference. The Museum of London: A Celebration.
Tickets are available through Eventbrite. *London & Middlesex Archaeological Society*

Day Conference 2022

After a 3-year break we finally had a Day Conference on 29 October. 'Transport in the Edmonton Hundred' was attended by 25 people, enough to make it worthwhile but more would have been even better. We had the advertised talks on the theme of transport by three of the speakers, David Cockle, chairman of The Enfield Society, Ian Jones, Chairman of the Enfield Archaeological Society, and our own President Dr Jim Lewis. Our third speaker was the victim of an unpredictable journey and in his absence Dave Cockle gave an unexpected (to all of us including himself) and off-the-cuff talk which he hadn't prepared, but just happened to have some of the images on computer. It went down well and was clearly enjoyed. Thanks to all the speakers for a great day.

Rachael Macdonald

My Life and Family by Joseph Rye

Edited by Michael Rye

Continuing the memoirs of Joseph Rye written between his 79th and 80th birthdays at the behest of his grandson Councillor Michael Rye. Chapters 1, 2 3 and 4 can be found in our February, March, July and September newsletters.

Chapter 5. The King's Shilling

After I left the Co-op I tried to get into the army as a Royal Horse Artillery soldier but was turned down on the chest measurement. I tried elsewhere to get into the army but was told to go into the munitions side of the war and wait until I was called. This did not suit me at all, but I went to Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield Lock, wore a Royal Crown on the lapel of my coat and carried a card of identity to show what I was doing. Despite the many times I had been to the RSAF with Col. Tisdall, I still needed two sponsors to say I was a good Englishman. They were Rev E W Kempe and E A Bowles. I worked in various departments on rifles and machine guns.

First of all, I was working on the machines. My money here was a couple of pounds a week at first, then later on a bit more. It was about this time that we moved from Maidens Bridge to Goat Lane, 51 Ivy Terrace. This meant a good walk-through Hoe Lane which had huge hedges all the way down to the bottom, passing by a farm just beyond the New River Bridge, across the Highway, past the Bell and then going down to East Road, to the railway over the level crossing, through a gate into a field and finally along the footpath to RSAF. When working nights, you could walk along the River Lea and I did love that.

As time went on, I began to get upset as I saw many of my pals going to the war, so I started worrying my employers to go, time after time until eventually in 1915 I achieved my ambition and got permission from the factory to try and enlist. I went up to London for that purpose, but was not accepted. They did not seem to want me out of the munition side, so I continued at RSAF for a while longer. Then one weekend I went to the recruiting office in Tottenham High Street still carrying my discharge note from the last attempts at enlistment. This time I passed my medical to become a Private in the Middlesex Regiment and took the King's shilling.



Private Joseph Rye

It was not long before I was notified of my unit, first to muster at Hornsey before moving to Park Lane Territorial Headquarters, Tottenham. I was billeted for three months at home, my mother getting 14s.0d per week. During this time to my surprise, I was to do my initial training of all places on Tottenham Hotspur's Ground or at least on their vacant terraces above the stands.

I enjoyed this and had a chance to become a Lance Corporal as I passed out drilling a squad and was able to dictate. I admit I was silly to have turned this down¹. As our Regiment grew bigger, we went on marches all over North London, accompanied by a nice band that was much to my liking. Then we started to go further afield, but I was very surprised to find out one day we were going to London to represent the Middlesex Regiment in the Lord Mayor's Show on November 9th 1915. I had never seen the Lord Mayor's Show and never expected to be in it.

We were astir early and had the order to roll great coats. This was a red-letter day for us and all went well until just before we got lined up for the parade having been inspected, all coats nicely rolled with three buttons showing and worn bandolier fashion ², then came the rain and didn't it rain, it poured and poured. The bands accompanying us were good, so good some of us new soldiers had a job to keep in step. The Scottish contingent was very good and had their own pipe band which at least gave us a nice pace to march to, but it continued to rain and rain. When at long last we reached the Mansion House the Lord Mayor went in and we were soaked to the skin and believe me when the O.C. gave us the order that overcoats could be worn, they were like lead with wetness. I think this was all part of preparing us for our coming trip overseas.



Still from Pathé News on YouTube

Lord Mayor's Day 1915

One of the things I will always remember is how the crowd cheered for us all and people showered odd coins and cigarettes on the procession. This Lord Mayor's Show was my first and last.³

Later on, we went on another long march to Woodford and round about, eventually moving to Essex – Avery Wood. It was very cold then in tents. Washing and shaving in the open. This was again the hardening process. Whilst being trained for active service we did a lot of work in the use of the rifle, both firing and how to protect oneself with rifle and bayonet. Then there were ample miles of marching and also training about bombs, both our own and the German ones.

Then one day I was told to parade for Lewis Gun Squad. I knew a bit about these from working at RSAF Enfield Lock and to my surprise met two officers who used to come to RSAF – a Lt Grocer and also a Lt Hawks, both officers of the Hythe School of Musketry. After this and during my time on the Lewis gun I was put in the musketry stores by one of these officers, but I did not want to stop there which I should have done. After this we moved further into Essex and were taught to use a range finder which was to come in handy when I was seconded to the MGC (Machine Gun Corps).

By now we were nearby in Purfleet where we eventually were based for some time. Here we did our firing and then passed our marksmen or otherwise. I just missed my marksmanship by a few shots. I then did a spell at the firing butts which I did not mind at all. We paraded under an officer and NCO and had to work the targets up and down whilst the officer in charge would record all the shots after our men had taken their turn to fire. I liked this very much especially the signalling of the result of each shot on the target. We had a long pole with discs on it. A magpie was a shot off target and an inner was a shot in the circle near the bull's eye. The markings of the range were a twisted disc for a magpie, a wave across the target for an inner and a disc put right over the spot if the soldier hit the bull's eye.

At first, I got a bit frightened but soon got used to it as there were real 303 bullets being used. The OC in charge would then phone back the shots of various men and then add up the points for each man, and in some cases I saw an officer put his pencil through the target to make it seem OK ⁴ – I was not that lucky. When one set of targets were full another set were put up.

After the firing was over, I went on a bombing course using live bombs having first practiced with dummy ones. I also used other explosives and at times blew up trees that were booked to be felled. Our training continued at Tunbridge Wells which was just right for me as I knew the area quite well and in addition was not far from my grandparents who lived in Tonbridge and also not far off Southborough where my Dad's cousin lived. He was a craftsman who made cricket balls. This was to be a very nice way to pass the time when I got leave at weekends. I think that Wisdens were his employers at this time.

We were billeted in large private houses, a platoon per house. I was in the Mount Vidance ⁵ area and Mount Pleasant area, very aptly named. Our training was of course the usual foot slopping and over obstacles when not on guard duty. We could walk around the Pantiles and march up and down listening to the Military band. We had to carry a cane which we had to put under our arms when saluting an officer at that time we had to salute left and right with either arm from which side the officer passed you. Later on, this stopped and we only saluted with our right arm. We were liked by all the population once we had got to know them well. What a wonderful thing discipline was there and it was the basis of all soldiers' training.

One thing I omitted to tell you is that I had to go sick and have my teeth out. I shall always remember the way in which an officer dentist extracted my teeth ⁶. I had to parade at the MOs first, then marched to the dentist who was a Harley Street man and very good. I had one lot out one day and then a break before having the rest out. Then I had to see my Colonel for leave home. I was advised by Capt. Rowe RAMC to apply for further leave if I was not able to eat ordinary food. After a fortnight I applied for an extension of sick leave and got an extra week. After returning to the Regiment within three months I had false teeth and had no trouble with them.



It was now coming up to 1916 so one really expected to go overseas before long. Our training was stepped up, more intense, until we eventually moved off to Folkestone and after a short stay here, we were shifted to private houses our numbers dwindling as we were going out as replacements for the various Middx Regiments ⁷, so I had a fortnight's embarkation leave and then back to Folkestone and sailed to Calais.

1. Private Rye became Lance Corporal during the war.
2. Across the left shoulder to the waist
3. Lord Mayor Sir Charles Wakefield made the show a military recruitment campaign. The Show and rain can be seen on Pathé news on You Tube
4. Unclear what is meant
5. Near the centre and railway station
6. Lack of access to dentists meant many men had rotten teeth that had to be extracted
7. He meant Battalions. There were 49 and the Middlesex Regiment lost 12,270 men during WW1

Letters and Emails

The poor state of the roads

Ian Jones article on the poor state of Victorian roads reminded me of a few such instances in my own area of Winchmore Hill. In my book on the *Village 1831-1871*, I noted that in his *History of St Paul's Church, Winchmore Hill*, Eric Spalding reproduced an article from the Parish Magazine of October 1901 which harked back to the old village. It included the following,



Hoppers Road near the Dog and Duck c.1900

© Enfield Local Studies

“The first thing which strikes an old inhabitant of this neighbourhood, when he recalls memories of 30 or 40 years ago, is how very great are the changes which have taken place in everything ... Green Lanes was a narrow road with broad strips of grass down each side, and only made of gravel, and as water carts were a future luxury, the dust in summer was only exceeded in depth by the mud in winter. There was only one roadman in regular work for the whole district, “Old Henny”, who

lived near the Dog and Duck. He also worked as a jobbing gardener when he chose to consider that the roads did not require his attention! Of course, when new gravel was simply shot down and roughly spread with a shovel, the highway expenses were not large ...”

Stuart Delvin

One Hundred Years Ago in the Edmonton Hundred

Junior “Imps” Cycle Race

Mr J.Peck, of Ponders End, proved the winner in a 14-mile cycle race promoted in connection with the Junior Imperial League (Enfield Division), and run on Sunday morning last. The trophy competed for was presented by Mrs Ashley Cowan of “Wildwoods”, Clay Hill, Enfield. Only five entrants turned up at “Wildwoods” at eight o’clock on Sunday morning, when a start was made from “Wildwoods” in a biting north-east wind.

The raw-cold weather conditions, combined with the early starting hour, probably accounted for the small field. The route taken was White Webbs Lane to Turkey-st., Hertford-road, Eleanor-road, Sun-st., Sewardstone-road, South-st., Southbury-road, Baker-street, Clay Hill, to starting-point. The 14 miles were covered by the winner, Mr.J.Peck, in 42 minutes, Mr.Barnes coming in second 21 seconds later. The winner had a spill when rounding the corner by The Fountain at Sewardstone, and was also delayed at the level crossing at Ponders End.

Enfield Gazette 3rd November 1922



Clay Hill

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Graham Frost

Registered Charity No. 299073.

Please send contributions to the newsletter to Kate Godfrey, 69 Margaret Road, New Barnet.

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