

SOUTHALL LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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The keen interest shown by visitors to the excavations at Northolt last year and the viewing there of several items from Dormers Wells, speeded to its fruition the idea of excavating the alleged site of the Cheseman Manor House at Dormers Wells. The existence of this manor house is known from the will of Robert Cheseman dated 1547 (the relevant extracts can be seen in the society's Transactions No. 1. 1959). Dormandswell is also mentioned in the will of Lady Ann Dacre of 1594, but it does not describe the house or land.

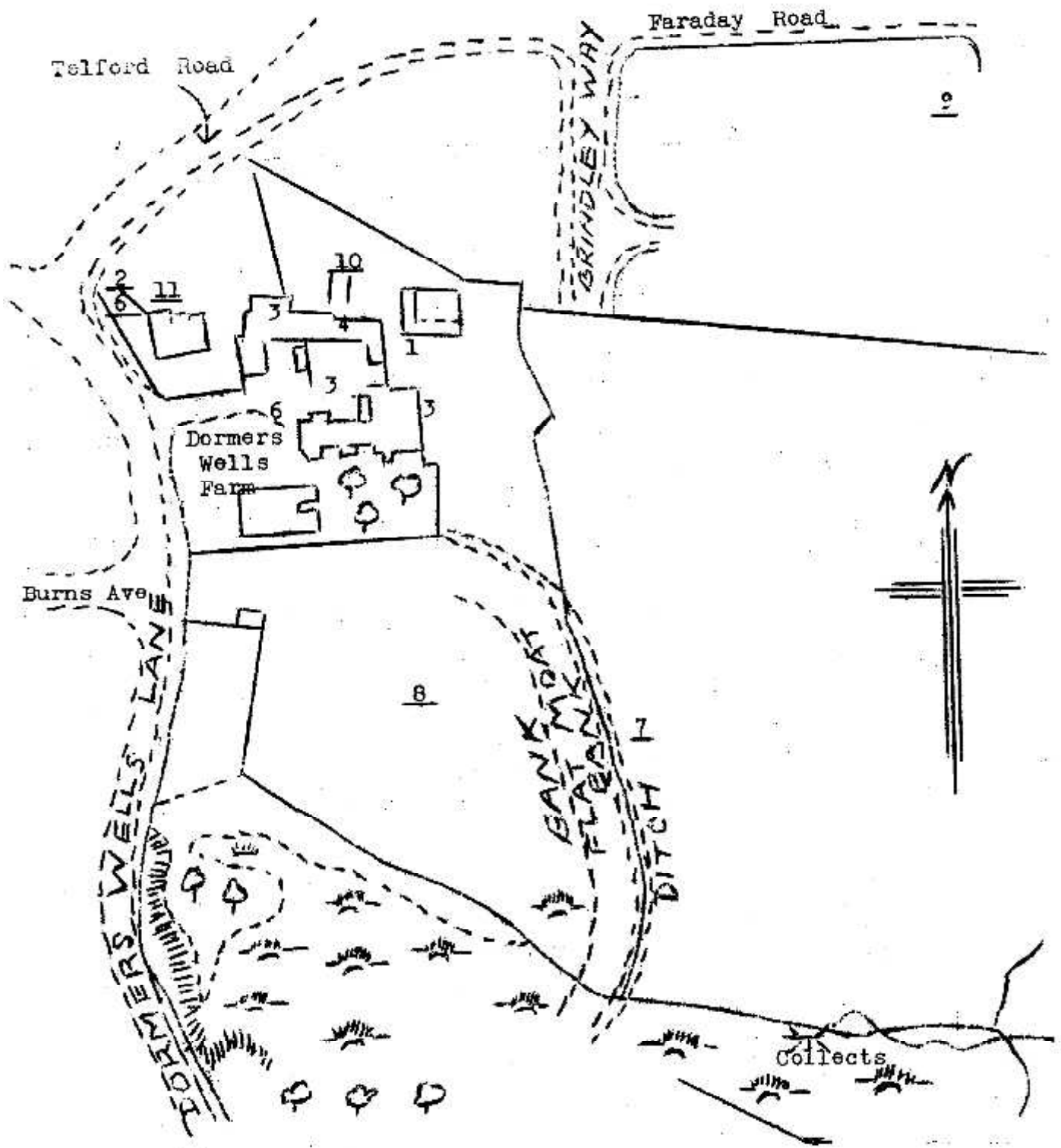
It is thought that the most likely site of the house is that piece of land in Dormers Wells Lane between Dormers Wells Junior School and Farm Close since there have been several finds of pottery in the area and the topography of the land suggests an area surrounded by a moat (see the sketch map included in this issue which is copied from a plan drawn up by Mr. Keen.) This is also supported by information provided by Dr. Smith, our President, who states, "The field to the east of the site was once called Moat Mead". He goes on to say, "The locality of Dormers Wells is shown in all old maps available which are of a big enough scale". In a seventeenth century map it is shown as an empaled park (see the society's Transactions No.3. 1961 and No. 4. 1962).

After deciding to excavate, we first obtained permission from the tenant and the Council who own the land. An aerial photograph of the area showed little of interest, but nothing daunted, a circular letter was delivered to all the residents of Farm Close, which is actually on the site of Dormers Wells Farm, asking if any one of them, whilst digging their gardens, had found anything which might be of interest to us. So far this has produced no results, but this may or may not be a good thing.

Digging has now actually begun, and at the time of writing the latest development has been the excavating of four trial holes on the site in an endeavour to locate the best place to commence the real dig. Two of these holes produced signs of what could be the bed of the moat, but this can only be confirmed by further digging which at the moment is being organised for week-ends and any volunteers should contact me for further details.

Alan Skates.
149 Allenby Road,
Southall, Middx.

The map referred to above is on page 2.



Location of Early Buildings and Archaeological Finds

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| 1. Horse Shoes and Wheelwrights' Spokeshave. | 7. Flat Moat: Low Bank: Ditch |
| 2. Tudor Glazed Floor Tiles. | 8. Alleged site of Cheseman Tudor House |
| 3. 11 th C. St. Neot's Developed sherd on gravel. | 9. Alleged site of "Norman" buildings found 1930's |
| 4. Delft Ware 17 th C. | 10. 16 th C. walls (robbed) |
| 5. General Scatter 18 th C. pottery | 11. 17 th C. walls (robbed) |
| 6. 18 th Century Pottery | |

SOUTHALL COFFEE TAVERN - A few more facts.

Many of our members will recall that in previous issues we have emphasized the historical importance of the Southall Coffee Tavern. Accounts in contemporary newspapers indicate that a great deal of parochial business was carried out here; many decisions affecting the development of the town must, have been first mooted and discussed here over an excellent meal. It is absolutely necessary that one day a member of the Southall Local History Society will write the history of this establishment, but meanwhile we are grateful to Dr. Hector Smith for sending us the following extracts from 'Southall Monthly Magazine', a leaflet issued by St. John's Church in January 1882 - the first issue.

SOUTHALL COFFEE TAVERN
(Under new management)

Hot and Cold Joints Daily. Chops and Steaks, Tea, Coffee, Cocoa and Temperance Drinks.

Watling's Pork Pies, Sausages, and Pastry, supplied.

Tobacco and Cigars. Good Beds.

A Social Evening every Wednesday at 8.

Under a news item we find:

"The Coffee Tavern. This excellent institution is now under new management and there are already marked signs of renewed life and progress. Shilling books of penny tickets, which are exchangeable for refreshment at the Tavern,. may be had of the manager, and their general use (especially as a substitute for the too common mode of Treating by means of intoxicating liquors) would do something towards helping to promote temperance in our neighbourhood"

Under "Parochial Notices of Meetings June 1882.

Burial Board Meeting.	At the Coffee Tavern.
Highway Board meeting.	At the Coffee Tavern.

Another interesting advertisement:

SOUTHALL HIGH SCHOOL

Provides a sound and liberal education at moderate cost.
Particulars, apply to Mr. R.H.O. Stubbs, M.A., Headmaster.

"FAREWELL TO STEAM"

Such was the banner emblazoned across the front of a steam locomotive as it thundered through Southall Station recently.

The occasion was an historic one, the last steam hauled passenger train to leave Paddington and head westwards through Southall. This was the official changeover on the Western Region from steam to diesel.

Representatives of Southall Local History Society travelled on the specially organised excursion to mark the occasion. It was fitting that the honour to haul the train fell to No. 7029, "Clun Castle" the last of a great line of "Castle" class engines to be operated by British Rail. The 'Castle' class was perhaps the most successful design of steam railway locomotive to be produced and a long list of speed records stand to its credit.

Television and film cameras recorded the engine pulling out of Paddington hauling its final load of 548 tons, the carriages packed to capacity with enthusiasts from all over Great Britain.

The engine stopped at Swindon to take on water and as it pulled slowly away past its birthplace at Swindon Works, the new diesels sounded their horns in tribute whilst the tracks were lined with cheering workers from the railway workshops.

The train visited Bristol, where again it was met by cheering crowds armed with cameras and tape recorders; then to Gloucester, and up to Cheltenham to commemorate the route of the famous "Cheltenham Flyer". Then the final run back to Swindon where "Clun Castle" completed her service for British Rail.

For the return trip the train was appropriately hauled by two of the latest English Electric 1750 h.p. diesels topping 100 m.p.h. as it roared through Reading and Slough to reach Paddington soon after 5 p.m.

Southall Motive Power Depot had the honour of preparing the "Clun Castle" the day before for its final journey, as it had done the "Flying Scot" the week previous.

Southall's association with steam locomotives goes back 127 years to the time when the famous Isambard Kingdom Brunel, Chief Engineer to the Great Western Railway Company, completed the line through the hamlet of Southall Green in 1838. A year later the little station of the same name was opened, and from the coming of the railway Southall developed from a collection of three small villages with a total population of 2,000 to the industrial town it is today.

Most Southall residents have expressed annoyance at some time or another with the smoke issuing from the "Sheds", or from an express or goods train as it clanked along the track, but many will also miss the metallic beat of a "Castle" or "King" pounding through the town.

Southall's changeover to Diesel will be complete at the end of this month when the "Sheds" officially will only accept diesel locomotives for service. But stored away in a corner of the Depot is the beautifully preserved, and privately owned, "Pendennis Castle" the words "Great Western" painted on its tender. This locomotive will be housed at Southall for some time to come.

What of "Clun Castle"? This too, has been bought privately by a Cornish group of railway enthusiasts and will be preserved near Camborne.

A.J. Errington.

PROGRAMME 1966

- JUNE 13th. OUTING TO WEST DRAYTON GREEN and PARISH CHURCH.
- JULY 11th. INDUSTRIES IN SOUTHALL.
A.J. Errington, Chairman, Southall Local History Society.
- AUG. 8th. PATES MAJOR.
W. Dudeney Esq., Hounslow Local History Society.
- SEPT. 12th. BERKELEYS OF CRANFORD. Colour Slides.
F. Clive Ross Esq.
- OCT. 10th. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS OF THE RIVER THAMES. Colour Slides.
J.W. Parton Esq. , Secretary, River Thames Society.
- NOV. 14th INNS OF SOUTHALL, (part 2).
A.C. Hilson Esq., Southall Local History Society.
- DEC. 12th. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.
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NORWOOD HOUSE

Today on the south east corner of Norwood Green one can watch the children happily playing on the swings, (sometimes the "children" look a bit on the elderly side, but perhaps they are just young minded). Before the coming of the swings, and well within living memory, this area was the site of Norwood Pond, a good-sized rectangle of water, lovely in its youth, serene in middle age, and just plain stagnant in old age. In the very nature of things it just had to fall a victim to the planners.

Opposite the pond stood Norwood House, a mansion that in its day must have watched the development of Norwood from village to township.

It was in 1848 that Norwood house was legally conveyed by William Alexander Thomas and George Baker to Miss Anna Spencer Summers. Miss Summers, born in 1818, was the daughter of Charles Summers, a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, and who was buried in Norwood churchyard when he died in 1863, aged 74.

In 1851 Miss Summers married William Rush, the son of the Revd. Henry John Rush, Vicar of Hollington, Sussex. The Mansion at Norwood formed part of the marriage settlement and the couple made this their home after the wedding. There was one child of the marriage, a son, Spencer Summers Rush who, in 1876, married Louise Hart.

Spencer Rush inherited Norwood House after the deaths of his father (in November 1880) and his mother (in February 1881). However, five years later he put the whole estate, amounting to 57 acres, on the market, and it was sold in September 1886 to John Charles Taylor of Bradbourne House, Acton, for £12,105.

Mr. John Taylor immediately took up residence at the House, but he was not long to live there. In May 1892 he made his Will leaving his estate to his wife, Elizabeth during her life and then, after her death, equally between his two sons, Alfred and the Revd. John five days after the signing of his Will Mr. Taylor died leaving a total estate amounting to £29,000. His wife died in 1900.

In 1902 Alfred changed his name to Kinsey-Taylor and was the second surgeon to be associated with the House, being a fellow of the College. His brother John, the clergyman, died in 1919, and six years later Alfred, then a Member of Parliament living at Farnham Royal, sold the House together with 15 acres to a development company for £6100. In 1926 Norwood House was razed to the ground and on the site were built the houses of Alleyn Park.

All this information was obtained from an old Abstract of Title, a lawyer's document which traces the devolution of a property for at least 30 years prior to the sale. It cannot be stressed too often that a piece of paper which appears to be useless may prove to be Invaluable to the local historian. In this case it is obvious that Norwood House existed before the sale to Miss Summers in 1848 - perhaps our Research Group might take up the challenge and trace the earlier history.

B..J.T.H.

THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS

On the 12th March 1966, the Livery Hall at the Guildhall was the scene of the Third Annual Conference of Archaeologists. With its glass chandeliers, thick red curtains and luxurious red leather chairs engraved with the Coat of Arms of the City of London, it was a perfect setting for the event.

In his introductory address, the Chairman, Mr. Cook, after expressing his pleasure at the size of his audience, which numbered over a hundred, went on to state the importance of the amateur in what he called the 'vintage years of archaeology'.

The first speaker was Mr. V.K. Davidson, who gave a talk on the excavations at the Tower of London. He showed, with the aid of colour slides, the development of the site from Roman times to the 14th century, and disproved the theory of a riverside Roman wall, much to the pleasure of the Chairman. This talk will I am sure, have caused his listeners to look upon this well-known site with renewed interest.

Dr. J. Kent next addressed the gathering, and gave what the Chairman called 'a continuing account' of the excavations at Motte at South Mimms, since he had given an initial account of the work two years ago. In his present address he showed, with the aid of colour slides, the progress made over the last three years, both on the ditch and the Motte itself. An interesting fact which emerged, although greeted with scepticism by the Chairman, was that the building on the Motte was probably only in use for five years or so after its construction.

Next followed Mr. G.J. Dawson reporting on Kennington Palace excavations. Again colour slides helped to illustrate the points discussed but, unfortunately, the site seems to have revealed little in comparison to the time spent there.

After a tea break of some forty-five minutes, the programme continued with an excellent illustrated talk by Mr. B.J. Philp on Field Work in West Kent. He presented the facts clearly, in a logical sequence, tracing the co-operation of various groups in Kent to form a society which is becoming well-known for its speedy but enlightening digs, both in Kent and elsewhere. This has only 30 or 40 members because of the qualifications necessary to join. These are a deep interest in archaeology and the willingness to travel anywhere at any time. The group have followed the progress of the laying of sewers and gas mains which has proved most rewarding in archaeological finds. One point brought out was the interested co-operation that the group received from firms whose work they interrupt.

We were next addressed by Mr. J. Alexander on the opportunities for amateur archaeologists in the London region, and he was followed by the final speaker, Mr. P.V.R. Marsden who spoke mainly about the three sites investigated

by the City of London Excavation Group. Two were sites near the Guildhall, one being the site of a Wren church built on medieval foundations. The third site was what is believed to be a Roman palace of some considerable size, being built at three levels leading down to the waterfront of the Thames. The site was first discovered when work was being carried out at Cannon Street station, and further extensions were revealed as more nearby sites were cleared prior to rebuilding.

The Conference ended with a few words from Mr. Farrant, Honorary Secretary of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, who said that two societies were about to undertake excavations (one of these being the Southall Local History Society) and he hoped that their findings would be included in talks at the next conference.

On exhibition in the Hall were items from the Southwark and West Kent societies and the City of London Archaeological Group.

A. Skates.

THE LONG ARM OF COINCIDENCE

"We are indebted to our President, Dr. Hector Smith, for an account of a meeting that came about through his interest in local history. Some months ago, referred to Dr. Smith by Southall, Public Library, a young man called upon him seeking information regarding the site of the former Waxlow Farm.

Recently, the young man explained, he had come into possession of some old Deeds that indicated that one of his forebears had held the Farm in the 1640's, and he apparently wanted to "look up the old homestead". The only definite clues he had was that at that time the Farm had its own wharf on the Paddington Canal plus, of course, the farmer's name, Curnock, (also that of the young man).

Dr. Smith was able to fully inform his inquisitor, telling him that the site of Waxlow Farm is now occupied roughly by the Lady Margaret Hotel, Lady Margaret Schools, and the area of Cornwall Avenue. The old road to the Farm from North Road is today followed by Allenby Road and Cornwall Avenue.

An interesting bye-product of Mr. Curnock's visit was that Dr. Smith recalled that many years ago he knew a dental student of that rather unusual name at Charing Cross Hospital, and this old acquaintance was readily identified by the young man as his uncle. A small world Indeed.