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With Southall
From 1904**

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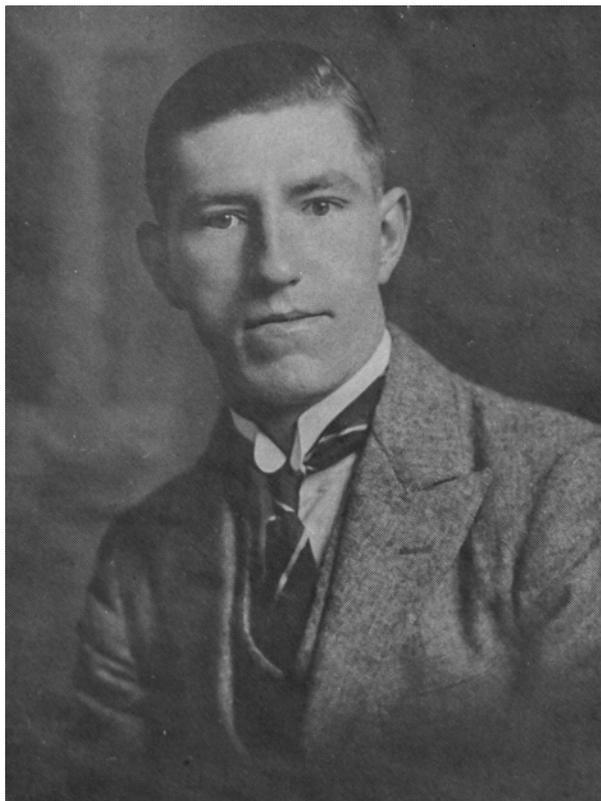
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Me Age 21

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R. J. MEADS.

Growing Up With Southall From 1904: Memories of R.J. Meads

As It was in the Beginning

I was born in Cambridge Road in July 1904, the third son of Mr. and Mrs. D. Meads. Just how my parents met is a story in itself. My mother, born in Northolt the oldest of 14 children, was in service as cook at "Cumberland Lodge", Ealing Common. Her family lived at 8, Southall Place, High Street. A sister aged 12 was dying and a message had to be sent, to get my mother home. This was done by getting a passing carman to deliver same. Having got permission to come home my mother went into the Uxbridge Road to get a lift, and who should come along but my father. Born in Yeading Lane the youngest but one of 11 children, he was working as a carter for W. Rouse, farmer, Hayes and had been to London with a load of hay and was returning with a load of manure. Thus the meeting, this was in 1895. They were married in 1897, at the then new Holy Trinity Church, by the Rev. Henry Mills. By that time my father, wanting more money, had become a builder's labourer, and helped to build Southall Town Hall. They went to live at No. 1, Grove Terrace where my two elder brothers were born, moving to Cambridge Road in 1901. The landlord was Mr. W. Brown and the rent 6/6 (32½p) per week. This of course included all rates.

My mother told me that not very long before I was born, she was cleaning the front of the house when Mrs. Quinion (this was the wife of Mr. W. Quinion whose family owned a harness and saddler's shop in the High Street opposite the Market) stopped to have a chat. She had two sons, Gordon (who was to be ordained) and Cyril, but was not going to have any more. So it was arranged that Mum should have her pram for me when I came along. That is how I came to share the same pram as my life-long friend Cyril, who always interested himself in local affairs and became a councillor and a Freeman of the City of London. He died aged 76 in 1977.

26th July 1904, Till 1909

I was brought into the world by Dr. Windle, a very well respected family doctor who lived at Chippingham Lodge, South Road. He used to run a dispensary club to which a family paid 6 pence (2½p) a month to belong. I was a bit of a disappointment as a girl was wanted, but in due course was christened Richard James at Holy Trinity Church. Girls were not to be in our family, as my younger brother Alf was born 3 years later. Mrs. Quinion did go on to have another boy Leslie and a daughter Ivy.

I cannot remember anything until starting school, but have been told that I was nicknamed Dirty Dick - always getting into mischief and several times having to be fetched back from the Cattle Market, which in those days had a back entrance in Boyd Avenue. There were few cars then, but plenty of horses and carts, so you can guess you could get very dirty and smelly. Gypsies would use Avenue Road to run their horses up and down to test their fitness, and deal with one another and cows and sheep would be driven into the slaughterhouse. My mother was always busy collecting the manure for the garden. Wednesday market day was also early closing day. That meant that shops closed at one o'clock.

Another thing that happened when I was about three (1907), the County School in Boyd Avenue was built, and the boilers and heating was installed by the firm of Haydons from Trowbridge. Two of the men came to lodge with us, one by the name of Willis. This started a family friendship, which has lasted, to the present day, 1978, with the fifth generation.

I started school at the age of 5, (North Road Infants, Mrs. Dunn headmistress and Miss Varney (Mrs. Jones) my teacher). My other teachers, Miss Wilkins, Miss Marlow, Miss Shipway, in that order. These were happy days and I can remember taking part in concerts and good Christmas parties.

Family Upbringing

Money was always hard to come by but my father, who was then working for E. Plaistow, builders of Southall, was a very good sober man and also a good gardener, having an allotment. Also he used to do Mr.

Plaistow's garden, which was good for us boys, for one of our older cousins was housekeeper there and. tea and cake came our way when helping Dad, also cast-off clothes and. other things not wanted by the Plaistow boys. My mother was always full of energy. It was her who made sure we behaved ourselves, but we always had plenty to eat and were well clothed.

We all had to do jobs and the pocket money had to be earned 2 pence paid on Saturday, 1 penny for pictures, 1 penny for sweets. A penny bought a lot in those days, we would spend $\frac{1}{4}$ p at a time on such things as sherbet dabs, liquorice laces, calorbonas and gob stoppers. We were always trying to earn extra pocket money which we would save up to spend on the outings which came our way (more about them later on).

All us boys had to go to Sunday school and this was held at North Road School. We used to look forward to the Sunday school outings and I remember going to Burnham Beeches by horse brake twice and to Hampton Court by tram. That's when our extra earned pocket money came in handy. Christmas time the Sunday school teachers used to organise a pantomime and tea party, when prizes would be presented and there would be a bun and. orange for all the children at the end.

Southall itself was growing very rapidly and building was going on all round. We used to have to take my father's breakfast and dinner to him over to Windsor Road when those houses were built. My eldest brother had to take a Mr. Wells' dinner down to the Gas Works 5 days a week for 6 pence, and do a paper round, which took him from the High Street as far as Osterley Lane, for $\frac{1}{6}$ ($7\frac{1}{2}$ p) per week. When he eventually left school at $13\frac{1}{2}$ he started work at Abbott Bros., beehive and. cabinet-makers, whose works were in the High Street, for 1 penny per hour (58-hour week, with the prospects of $1\frac{1}{4}$ d hr. after 1 year's service).

1913-1914

When at the age of 9 (1915) it was time to go up to the "Big School", as we called it, Mr. Payne was the headmaster and my teacher Miss Dry. Things to look forward to in those days were Empire Day, when all the scholars would line up in the playground, sing the patriotic songs, be addressed by some notable public person, salute the flag and. cheer like

mad when ½ day holiday was given; also the yearly sports day, this was held usually the first Wednesday in June. Great competition between schools, with races going on all day and the prize giving in the evening, all of which was organised by the teachers, plus refreshment tents. Discipline was very strict in the classroom and if you misbehaved you were sent to the headmaster for the punishment book and cane; and after receiving several of the best it was entered in the book, and you had to return it with cane. You had to sit in class and not talk.

Just after my 9th birthday I started work, running errands and dusting for the caretaker, Mr. A. Perkins, at the County School (7 to 8.15 mornings, 4 to 5.30 evenings, 8 to 12 on Saturday, for 1/6 (7½p) per week, about 20 hours). Mr. Pollitt, the headmaster, found out I was too young so I got the sack.

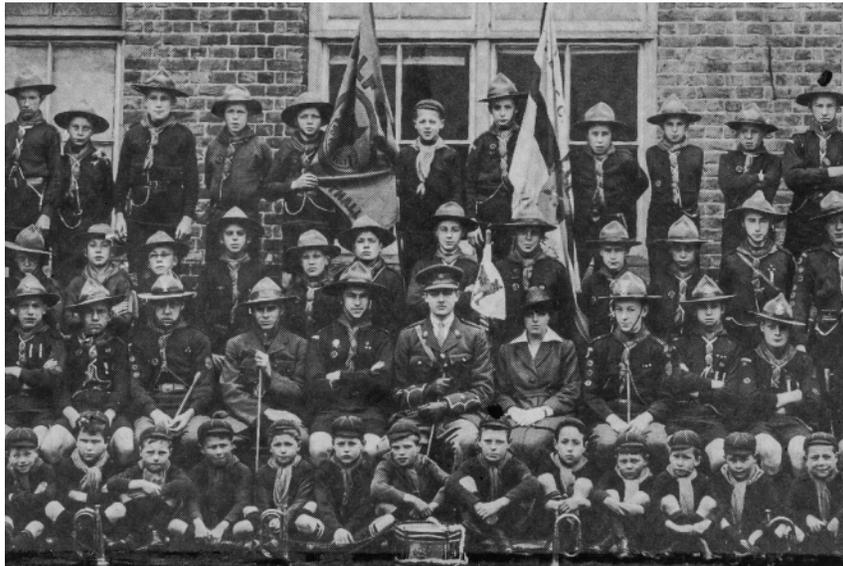
The first real holiday I remember was a week at Trowbridge with Mr. Willis' family who had lodged with us and had then two sons, one the same age as myself, George, who in 1929 was best man at my wedding. Another was a day excursion to Southend, the fare then being 2/9 (13½p) return adults, 1/4 (7p) children, from Southall.

Other outings were days at Kew Gardens with the added joy of a ride on the ferry at Brentford (Fare 1 penny adults, ½ penny for children). Mum could do the whole day out for 5 at a cost of about 2/6 (12½p). At least once a year Mum would take us over the footpaths to Northolt village, where us boys would play on the green and have a picnic, whilst Mum would visit relations, one of whom was Mr. Reid landlord at the "Crown" public house, who would give us a bottle of ginger-beer and a cartwheel arrowroot biscuit before starting our walk back home, tired out.

What prompted the idea I don't know but it was decided that I should start violin lessons. So one was purchased but no case, just a green baize bag. Lessons at 6 pence an hour started with a Mr. Wiles in Beechcroft Avenue once a week, and there were lessons at school, which included playing the hymns at Assembly in the mornings with the School orchestra. We went to the Crystal Palace to play in the Schools Orchestras Festival in 1912. After leaving school I continued playing with the Brotherhood band at the Central Hall under Mr. Oliver, and finally in the Maypole Margarine Works orchestra with Mr. Wheeler, conductor, until the works shut down. I have not played since.



Industry Cottages Yeading Lane
Where My Father Was Born 1869



Holy Trinity Boy Scouts Troop 1915



St Marylebone School
South Road 1905



Class Two teacher was "Big" Miss Bush, known thus because her sister "Little" Miss Bush was teacher of Class 3. Everyone liked Big Miss Bush, a very gentle natured person. In 1914, aged 10, I joined the Holy Trinity Church Choir. Choirmaster then was Mr. Craven; also the Trinity Church Scouts (scoutmasters Mr. Hitchcock and Mr. G. Quinion). In the middle of July the troop went to its first camp, going by lorry to a farm at Long Crendon on the Friday, staying the night in a barn, and trekking to the camp at Brill, Bucks, on the Saturday. As we moved in the Boys' Brigade moved out. The weather had been very bad for them and the site was very muddy. We had a good week and returned home the week before war broke out.

By sheer coincidence I was in London when war was declared. It happened like this. Being August Bank Holiday my mother wanted to give us a treat. A big row took place because my father was late coming home from his allotment. After getting ready we found ourselves at Kew Bridge landing stage. There was a large queue for the boat going to Windsor but on the boat going up to Westminster there was plenty of room. So to London we went and landed at Westminster Pier, walked round to the Houses of Parliament where war was declared. That explained why Chelsea Embankment was full of soldiers when we passed it. Next day several of our relations were called up on reserve and less than a month later one was a prisoner of war. My mother's reaction was to get as much tea, sugar and anything that would store; this proved a wise move. Rationing was not introduced before 1916 and hours were spent lining up for butter, margarine, etc.

In October 1914 the Royal Garrison Artillery on their way to France were billeted on the town for a night. Beds had to be found for the men and us kids had the time of our lives watching the great big guns being put in the Market and "White Hart" yard. Workpeople were being drafted into the town, for war work at the Gramophone Works and a big filling factory at Hayes known to us as Hayes Arsenal. We had to take in two lodgers, both from Beeston, Nottingham and both turned out to be professional footballers who had played for Notts County. One of them played for Chelsea several times (H. Pacey) and later played a big part in Botwell Mission Football Club's success. 1915 was a very busy time for the town.

The Marylebone School in the South Road was taken over as an Australian hospital and with it the newly built Beaconsfield Road School for officers' and administration block. The King's Hall was opened on October 11th, 1916 by the Lord Mayor of London, Lord Wakefield, the Rev. Broadbent being in charge.

The Maypole Institute was turned into a military hospital and under V.A.D. staff and Dr. Chill treated 5,500 patients, of whom 2,520 came straight from France (only 4 deaths). It closed February 1919.

Town Development

But to get back to developments in 1911, when I was 7. My grandparents (the Fuells) lived as I stated at No. 8, Southall Place in the High Street. This was one of a row of 21 cottages along with the old "Three Horseshoes" public house, which had been built in 1858. By 1911 all but 5 of the cottages had shop fronts put on. My grandparents, together with the other two remaining cottage tenants, were given notice to quit. The reason given was that they were going to be pulled down, as the High Street was going to be widened. They moved into Cambridge Road next door but one to us. I remember the moving very well, as all us boys were kept busy carrying things round, and the heavier furniture was brought round on Dicky Duffell's coster barrow.

Within a month shop fronts were fitted to the cottages, and they are there today, 1978, and that part of the High Street has never been widened. They settled down, but it started a very hard time for our family. In 1912, with the great "Titanic" disaster on the 15th April on all our minds, my Granny after a short illness died on 25th April. This resulted in my mother having to cook and wash for her father and 5 brothers.

Myself had got a job with Collett's, greengrocers in the High Street (1/6 (7½p) a week, 4 till 6.30 evenings, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturdays, 20 hours.) One Saturday morning, due to Mr. Collett having a terrible hangover, I was asked if I would go round to Brown's yard in the North Road and harness the horse to the cart and get it round to the shop, so that he could go to Brentford Market. This I did, but when I arrived at the shop they nearly had fits. Never having harnessed a horse before I had not turned the collar round. That was just one of the things wrong - me always a trier!

Over the years 1904 to 1912 great developments had taken place: St. George's Church dedicated in 1906; Public Library built in Osterley Park Road in 1905; Scott's Emulsion factory built 1904; Tudor Road School, 1907 (Schoolmaster Mr. Reid); Villiers Road built. There are strange circumstances in connection with this. The Earl of Jersey's agents wanted to build the houses facing Avenue Road, but the Council would not agree because of the footpath (Church Path) which would have been incorporated with Avenue Road. So plans were accepted to build Villiers thus, the back gardens facing Avenue Road. The footpath and hedge has been an eyesore ever since.

1910, Southall's first cinema, the "Gem" was built in the Green opposite Osterley Park Road (seating about 150 on knifeboard seats, manager, Mr. March). 1911, the "Empire" Cinema was opened. This was in the Uxbridge Road, corner of Northcote Avenue. It quickly got a bad reputation by the films shown, and closed after 6 years. I was told that the last film shown, "The Exploits of Elaine" was very daring, the ladies revealing about 4 inches of leg and very low cleavage. Yet another cinema opened 1912, the "Paragon Palace" built in the South Road; this was on some of the frontage of Townsend House. It was a very up-to-date building and very comfortable, showing in those days only silent films and the action on the screen being accompanied by a pianist playing the appropriate music. One of the ladies whose job that was, was a Mrs. Creech. It seated 300 with tip-up seats, with 1-penny matinee Saturday afternoons and thrilling serials. It is still going today, very much altered and named the "Liberty".

The Maypole Institute, now the Southall Community Centre, was built in 1910 by A. & B. Hanson at a cost of £13,850. It was for their employees, with canteen and all kinds of social functions for which they paid 6 pence a month. Western Road School opened 1911. Tickler's jam works started October 27, 1911. House building was in progress all around. Oswald, Abbots, Hambrough, West End, Townsend, Trinity Roads were all on what was the Hambrough Estate, named after the banker family of that name, whose residence was in South Road opposite Hamilton Road. It was in ruins when we were kids and provided a good playground. My father told us that a builder used to go broke almost every month whilst the estate was being built. It happened like this. Many

had very little capital but if they could buy a piece of land and get the houses to "joist high" they could raise a mortgage and thus be able to get them finished. This was far from straightforward. "Sharks" used their influence so that the work was condemned, and thus broke the poor builder who would be forced to recover what he could. Then the "sharks" would finance someone to get the houses finished. It was well known that some local gentry were involved, and they became known as the "Forty Thieves". The cost of a 6-room terrace house would be about £300. Houses would be to let at between 8/-(40p) and 9/-(45p) per week including rates. Gas was installed for lighting and cooking.

It was a regular thing to hear of someone who had done a "moonlight flit". This meant that they had got behind with the rent or in other trouble and, under cover of darkness, had moved out. I can remember a horse-drawn van with "Why pay rent? Keep moving. No questions asked" painted on the back flap, and on the side "It pays to move".

During the period 1904 to 1914 the population of Southall increased from about 12,000 (1904) to 27,000 (1914), and by 1921 to 30,290.

High Street Traders - What Memories!

Perhaps here would be a good place to record the shops, which were in the High Street from around 1904 to 1914. On the right hand side between South Road and the "Red Lion":

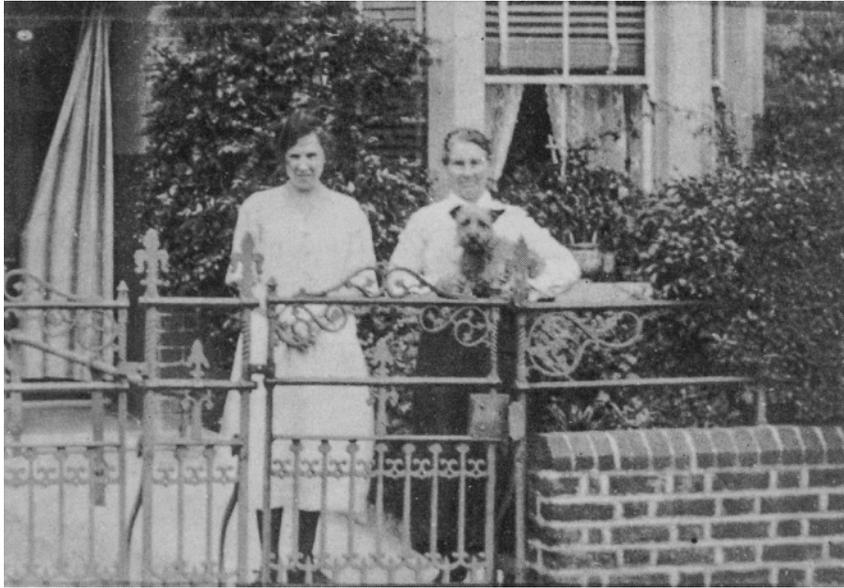
Keevil's (dairy); Wells (tobacco and papers); Sanguinetti's (drugstore); Fairfax-Avery's (bakers and post office); then the Market House and Market; Burns (men's boots and clothes); Curry's (cycles, toys, etc.); Styles-Wadham's (grocers); Barclay's Bank; Avenue Road; W. Jiggins (butcher with slaughter house at rear); Jeffery Jefferies (corn dealer), Bradbury (jewellery); Mrs. Margaret Willes (2 shops, coffee tavern); Price's (tobacco and papers); Tompkins (hairdresser); Collett's (greengrocers); Clifton-Brown's 4 shops (drapers); Stevens (boot repairs); Bolam's (photos); Addis (fishmonger); King's ("Gazette" office); Warren's (grocers); Langley's (bakers); small sweet shop; Salter's (chemist); "Three Horseshoes".

Left hand side, between Lady Margaret Road and Holy Trinity Church: Beckett's (drapers); entrance to Abbott Brothers and office; A.



Southall High Street
1909





My Mother. My Dog and
Cousin, Cambridge Road



Holy Trinity Church 1909

Jiggins (butchers); Chaplin's (oil shop and hardware); Clifton-Brown's (hat shop); Singer's (sewing machines); Salter's (greengrocers); the "George and Dragon"; Sherman's (plumbers); Lot's (grocers); Wilding's (sweets and tobacco); Anstis (butcher); Etherington's (milk dairy); the "White Hart" and yard, in which was H. Girdler's blacksmith's forge; Quinion's (harness makers); the site of the "Black Horse" the licence was transferred to the "Northcote Arms" when this was built in 1907; Penny's (off-licence); Police House (Sgt. Hudson the small corrugated iron police station was at the rear in North Road); Juggins and Peace's (forage merchants); Sanders (bakers); corner of High Street and Park View Road.

All the shops I have mentioned have played a part in my memories of childhood. Wells' and Collett's I have already mentioned; Sanguinettits for the fact that I was sent there for some ipecacuanha and came back with some ginger wine; Fairfax, school cakes; Avery's old Mrs. Avery was my Granny Meads sister, and two of her sons used to play football for Southall; Burns, where most of our boots and clothes were bought, this was due to a provident club run by the school; Curry's, violin strings, and my grandfather used to do all her cycle repairs; Styles we used to be sent there for such things as 2d mustard pickles, 1 lb. broken biscuits (6 pence), a basin of cracked eggs; Jiggins, W., a very good butcher, but brutal in the way he allowed the treatment of the animals in the slaughter house. Only once did I go in there and saw a cow poleaxed and pigs' throats cut, and its memory still gives me a shudder; Bradbury's - robbery in which the whole of the window display was taken. A Brentford man was caught and got 2 years; Willis' - a lot of societies had meetings there and we had to pay the allotment rent there to the Earl of Jersey's agent of 5/6 (17½p) a year for 10 rod; Tompkins - haircut 6d, shave 3d. One of my schoolmates was lather boy at 1/- per week and tips; Clifton-Brown's (more anon); Price's - lost two sons in the War. We trained a dog to go and fetch the paper from there; Stevens, a bad cripple (more anon); Bolam's - had a family photo taken, the idea being that my father and eldest brother had prospects of being called up to the army; Addis, a great character - he used to drink very heavily. His three sons all opened fish shops, one in King Street, one in Beaconsfield Road and one in Boston Road, Hanwell; King's (Southall "Gazette" office) - they loaned their shop for a recruiting centre in 1915, for "Kitchener's Army", the

Middlesex Regiment. The volunteers lined up in the South Road and were given a farewell send off. In less than two months 80% were killed wounded or missing; Warren's - I well remember being sent with 6d to get a gammon rasher ½-inch thick, not one of the wafer things cut by the new-fangled bacon machine; Langley (this was next door to my grandparents) - I was told they made my mother's wedding cake and gave all the bread for the reception. I can even now remember the beautiful smell of baking bread; Salter's - a very nice man, and used to make up a lot of medicines and we used to be sent there for senna pods and sulphur, for that is how Mother used to keep us healthy, brimstone and treacle or senna on bath night, Friday; the "Three Horseshoes" (Baxter's) - we were sent with a jug for a pint of porter (14d) or a quart of ale (4d). Also you could get Osborne or arrowroot biscuits 4-inch across and ½-inch thick for 1 penny; Beckett's - quite a good draper's shop with large window frontage. This is my memory: In those days the Windsor to London marathon used to pass through Southall. A group of us boys were playing about waiting for the runners, when someone threw a stone, which cracked a side window. We all made a run for it and finished up near Dormers Wells Lane. We heard nothing about it; Abbott's - they used to ring a bell for the men to start work, and Mr. Tingay, who used to be timekeeper, lived next door to us. They had no children and. were very good to us, and. I have happy memories of the Christmas party they used to give us; H. Jiggins, brother of W. Jiggins opposite - was a good, very henpecked man and. very strong chapelgoer; Chaplin's - my brother Tom was the oilshop boy and used to deliver paraffin and goods on a bicycle with a big basket carrier on the front. Much later on my mother took shelter in their cellar during air raids; Clifton-Brown's hat shop - they used to live over the shop and we used to supply them with vegetables from the allotments. One day my mother sent me with a note. For some special occasion she wanted a new hat. Mrs. C-B put a selection of hats in a box for Mum to choose one, after which I had to take them back. The one Mum kept was 4/9 (23½p). We were on friendly terms with the family until they died at their home "Old Garden", Norwood Green. They moved their business into South Road in 1959, when once again the High Street was going to be widened; Singer's - the lady in charge used to demonstrate the machines in the window, and her daughter was in my

class at school; Salter's - he was killed in the War, and later the shop was turned into a sweet shop run by Mr. and Mrs. Allen, who was previously assistant at Beckett's; the "George and. Dragon" (Mr. Ford) - this was a square shaped building straight off the pavement; Sherman's with yard at the side - a very good plumber. My brother started work as plumber's boy for 7/6 (37½p) per week in 1914; Lot's - small grocery business. He had to close, being called up in the Army, and was killed in France; Wilding's - this was our on the way to school sweet shop, always had a big selection of things for ¼d. Sissy Wilding was my childhood sweetheart; Anstis, butcher - Mum used to deal there. He gave me a puppy and I used to call on the way home from school for bones. His only son died from meningitis through over-study; Etherington's - he used to come round twice a day with a milk float. There were churns and cans in those days, and. Dad used to have manure from the stable at the rear, which we had to fetch away by wheelbarrow; the "White Hart" (Mr. Fewkes) - during market day (Wednesday) the scene of gypsies trading horses and running them up and down to prove their fitness; Harry Girdler, the blacksmith, had his forge in the "White Hart" yard. He was a very jovial man and coming home from school us boys would watch him at work and sometimes there would be a horse or a job to be delivered, a penny earned; Quinion's - already mentioned but Leslie was my great schoolmate. We got into many scrapes together. He was a great animal and bird lover. This led to us going after Sunday school to Muddy Lane (now Allenby Road.) bird nesting, not to steal the eggs but to find the nests and watch them. I remember he climbed a tree and found an owl's nest, and disturbed the owl sitting. She flew out and attacked him. We of course got into trouble for coming home smothered in mud. He also had several caged birds in the garden at the back of the shop, one of, which was a kestrel for which he got scraps of meat from Mr. Anstis. I was not surprised when he left school, he went to a farm to learn and later went to Australia, where he became a farmer and died out there. Penny's (Ebdens) - we used to be sent there especially around Christmas time for such things as "Tarragon Port" (1/9 - 8½p -a bottle), Scotch whisky (5/9 - 18½p - a bottle) and quart bottles of oatmeal stout (1/- - 5p - per bottle). When Ebdens took over, the shop took on a more modern look. The family became involved in Town and Church affairs, the boys

in the choir and Scouts; next to this used to be what we called the Police House, with trees in the front. It was formerly the residence of Mr. W. Pearce, who was a big contributor to Holy Trinity Church and died Feb. 1887, after which it was bought by the police. At the rear was the small station and, two other stations having since been built and demolished, now stands there the new fortress-like station; Juggins and Pearce - large yard supplying hay and straw and other cattle feeding stuff. I remember they had a chaff-cutting machine, which had to be turned by hand, and one of my schoolmates' fathers who worked there had two fingers cut off. We also used to have rides on the carts sometimes during the holidays; Sanders - his bakehouse was in the cellar, and us choirboys were the plague of his life. One Easter my brother Tom got a temporary job helping with the delivery of the hot cross buns, which were then 13 for 6 pence.

After Holy Trinity Church and the Vicarage came the "Chestnuts", residence of Mr. C. Abbott, and Mr. and Mrs. Paton's Melrose House, Red Lion field, where Southall Football Club used to play, and then Longford Avenue with a big house, the residence of Mr. Reginald Brown, Surveyor to the Southall Urban District Council.

1915 - 1916

Now after all the local shops' list let us get back to school days. In Class 3 "Little" Miss Bush was a teacher in every sense of the word; very strict, with the ruler ever ready to strike, you had to learn. Arithmetic, composition, dictation had to be done with the threat that too many mistakes would mean staying in after school to write them out 50 times each. I am sure I learned more in her class than any other. But she had a good side, which showed itself when someone in the class had dad or somebody in the family killed or wounded in the War; and there were sweets for those with a clean record for the week.

The new North Road School was being built and was ready for us to move into in April 1916. I was by that time working as a paperboy for Prideaux'. This was a fairly high standard stationers in the Uxbridge Road. This ended in a very funny way. In those days we had to go to the Southall Station to collect the number of papers required. The day when the "Hampshire" was sunk, 6th June 1916, the headlines were "Lord

Kitchener Drowned. Official". This I shouted as I came back to the shop, selling papers on the way and not leaving enough for the regular customers. I was sent back to get more, but none were available. I suppose perhaps my attitude did not help thus the sack. But we were not allowed to be idle for long and I found myself houseboy to Mrs. Norman, 55 South Road, and a job, which I kept until leaving school (starting at 2/- (10p) per week, with 2/6 (12½p) in 1918 - more later).

Health of the Town

During my growing up there was always talk of someone being taken away with "scarlet-fever", "diphtheria", "consumption (T.B.)". T.B. patients were taken to Harefield Hospital, and the others to the Fever Hospital, now the Mount Pleasant Hospital. The Council used to send a van to collect all infected clothing and bedding and after its being fumigated, return it.

Our family did not escape these things and 4 cousins died of diphtheria, all under the age of 7, and an uncle and some very near relatives died of tuberculosis. Thank God that medical science has almost eradicated these diseases.

People were so poor they could not afford doctor's bills and funerals, there being no National Insurance until the middle of 1912. I can just remember a walking funeral of a child, the coffin being carried by two men. Also, the undertakers using what was called a "shelaby" coach for a child funeral. This carried the coffin crosswise under the driver's seat, with the mourners inside the coach.

A great many people used to take out insurance policies at anything from 1 penny per week, for which the agent called. With one of my brothers every so often I had the job of delivering Dr. Windle's doctors' bills all over the town.

When my brother Tom was 13 he started to have epileptic fits, but carried on at school and I. used to be called from class to attend to him. My mother, not satisfied with the London Hospital treatment he was receiving, was put in touch with a gentleman at Ealing and with his treatment he gradually got better and was free from fits just after his 14th birthday, 1915.

Childhood Games

When I look back now remembering all the jobs we were made to do it seems impossible that we had any time to play at all. Playing along the "hedge", our name for the left-hand side of Avenue Road, a favourite was "tin can copper". A bashed up tin with a stone in it would be thrown from the base of a lamppost and everyone except the "copper" would dash away and hide. He would recover the tin, leave it at the base and go looking for us and in doing so would rattle the tin and shout out the name of the one seen. If possible someone would try to get to the tin, which would again be thrown, thus releasing all caught. "Tip-cat" was played with a large stick, and a small piece about 6 inches long. This was placed on a stone on an angle, and when struck hard would fly into the air. The winner would be the one to make it go the farthest. Then there were iron hoops with skimmers.

Marbles - there were several games played with these, including "Strikem", played along the gutter or with a marble board. This was made with a piece of wood with holes of various sizes cut into it arch fashion. Each had marble value; small hole 3, large hole 2. Played on the pavement, the idea was to get the kids to bowl up and win - and of course so many in a ring each and knuckle down tight to knock them out, each taking a turn.

Conkers - how we used to try all sorts of ways to make them tough, and lie without batting an eyelid that it was a "fourer" or more and "stringems 1 2 3" if getting twisted up.

Tops were very popular, peg tops on which you wound the string round the top and through it, thus making it spin and whip tops, with these you had to have a whip. You started the top spinning with your hands, and whipped it to keep it spinning.

Dabs (or, Five stones) - these could be purchased for 1 penny a set of six. They were china, about $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch long, $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch square. The game was to throw one up in the air and do all sorts of tricks with the others. This game could be played indoors.

Girls had wooden hoops and played hopscotch, chalking the beds on the pavement. There was also "diabolo". This was a top something like a dumb-bell, which they used to spin on a string, tied to two sticks, one held in each hand. And, of course, skipping.

I cannot remember toy guns, but we used to buy boxes of caps for a ½-penny. These resembled small pills on a roll, and made a bang. With these we had a small, iron nutmeg-sized device, in two halves grooved so that string would hold them together. A cap would be placed between the two halves and when thrown it would cause a bang. You can imagine what pranks we got up to with these.

An incident comes to mind. One holiday us kids planned a paper chase. After tearing up a lot of paper we filled two haversacks, and I was unlucky enough to be the one to lay the trail. Given so much start, going up Avenue Road and down Villiers Road making for the Park, unfortunately I dropped the bag with the paper and it went all over the road. Before I could get away "Gaffer" Reid (schoolmaster) who lived in Villiers Road was on the scene, and stood over me and the others when they came and made us pick it all up, and followed us back picking up the trail as we went. That was our punishment for dropping litter.

Cigarette cards used to be very plentiful and you tried to collect sets of 25 or 50, swapping with one another. The odd ones we would play games with, like "droppems"; that was up against a wall and each dropped one in turn until one fell on another, which meant that the player could pick them all up. Or, both players knelt down and flicked a card towards a wall in turn until one was crossed, which meant that he had won and could pick them all up. They were also very instructive and featured a great many subjects.

Children's reading matter - comics etc., "Comic Cuts", "Chips", "Eagle" and the books "Magnet" and "Gem", both featuring colleges - used to be read and exchanged and some of them now have become collectors' items.

School 1916-1917

The new North Road School was built 1915-16 and was occupied after the summer holidays. We started Class 4 (Mr. Reeve the teacher) after the Easter holidays. By then conscription had become law and all men between 19 and 43 had to register for the Army, and Mr. Reeve was called up. There was a shortage of teachers, so Standards 4 and 5 were put together, which meant about 60 pupils in one class. A Mrs. Warren became teacher. She was the wife of one of three brothers who were

plasterers but later became builders. In the old school the headmaster did not have a room to himself but a desk in the corner of our classroom, which of course did help to keep order. We were now old enough to go to the County School one morning a week, boys for woodwork, girls for cookery. We had to go normally to school, get marked in, and were then allowed 15 minutes to get to Boyd Avenue. Mr. Beeley was our woodwork master and I owe him a great deal for what he taught me, it was always useful. After the summer holidays we found ourselves in the new school with Mrs. Warren and Standard 5 with a new teacher, Mr. MacKenzie. Lessons went on much as usual, but all the bigger boys had to help clean up the playgrounds and do various jobs for the staff. Then Mr. Bunce the caretaker got called up, and that meant more of our time was spent helping Mrs. Bunce by keeping the boilers going to heat the school, than at lessons.

Just about this time we had some Belgian refugees come to live in South Road, and some were in my class at school. By a mere chance I met one of the young ladies again in a Menin café whilst on a visit to the battlefields in 1927.

War Memories

Every week more local men were reported killed. More land was put under cultivation. Part of Ealing Common and most of the parks were turned into allotments. My father was cultivating 28 rods, 75 allotments, one at the end of what is now Dane Road, one next to the "Empire" in the Uxbridge Road and another in North Road. We all had to help, and when a small 5 rod piece became vacant next to his piece in Dane Road he persuaded me to take it on, so that I could grow plants for sale. That was the beginning, at 12. I am now 74 and have had an allotment in Southall for 62 years.

My job as house-boy kept me fairly busy, and among my jobs was the taking of gift parcels and magazines to patients in the Australian Hospital opposite. Mrs. Norman (who lost her only son in the War) had two daughters and with others used to make all sorts of things for the soldiers, using the house as a collecting centre, and poor me would be sent to deliver the goods. It soon became obvious that there would be a lot of local girls going to Australia after the War. Two of my cousins were killed, both only sons.

We had been visiting my aunt at Bushill Park, Enfield, and were on our way home in Enfield High Street when a Zeppelin was sighted and, while we were watching it, burst into flames. We learned afterwards that Lieut. W.L. Robinson had been responsible. This was September 3rd, 1916.

Before the War ended men were called up from 18 to 47. They were so hard up for men that an uncle of mine was taken into the Army for home service despite the fact that he had 6 children, and 5 fingers off one hand. Women took over all sorts of jobs and I well remember, having been to the gas works for some coke, a group of women just leaving off work and as they came out of the gate quarrelling like mad. Mr. Baker, the gate man, kept them on the move till they got right to the end of Gas Factory Road, off gas works property, and then the best fight I've ever seen took place, with all the rest egging them on; hair-pulling, clothes ripped off, blood everywhere. I did not stop to see the finish.

To help with the labour shortage the government instituted a "labour" exam. This meant that boys of 13 and physically fit sat for an education exam., and those that passed could leave at thirteen and a half. I sat for it myself at St. Ann's School, Hanwell, but left school before the results were known.

Osterley Park had a big training camp. The then A.S.C. (Army Service Corps) were stationed there and every day you could see drivers under instruction with lorries with solid tyres. Some friends took me over the camp one Sunday afternoon, and I remember all the bell-tents and the earth ovens. This would be autumn 1915. It was years afterwards that I learned that my wife was stationed at the camp in 1917, having joined the Queen Mary's Women's Army Corps in 1916, and after training was drafted there as a cook. She told me by that time cooking arrangements were greatly improved. She was 7 years older than me.

Also at Osterley was a prisoner-of-war camp, mostly Germans who used to work on farms and all had a big red patch on their clothing. They could be seen shopping in Southall and playing local football clubs on Norwood Green.

On Thursday November 23rd, 1916 their Majesties King George and Queen Mary visited the Maypole Institute Hospital, giving only two hours notice of the visit, and were shown round by Dr. Chill and the Matron, Mrs. W. Taylor. At the time there were 102 patients.

Before the War aeroplanes were a great thrill, and the great event was the Hendon to Brooklands air race. We would watch for hours to see the biplanes or monoplanes pass over. Such names as Hawker, Grahame White, Bleriot, Alcock, Fewker and Leblanc used to be the competitors and our heroes, by 1915 they were being used in the War by both sides. In 1917 bombs were dropped at Brentford and Kew, 5 all told. We saw the damage in Whitestile Road, two houses down. A large crater outside Kew Bridge, and a gate lodge at the Brentford Water Works hit, killing 5 men. Another fell in the Thames and one on the towpath on the Surrey side. I remember the fear these bombs caused, how trifling they really were in comparison with World War Two blitz! Searchlights used to light up the sky and naval guns mounted on lorries could be seen on the roads.

Food was very short and rations were very small. We at home were always well fed. Mum was a good cook, we used to keep rabbits and chickens, and Dad grew most of the vegetables. Mum almost always had to cook for 6 or more. There were no such things as school meals, and us kids had to come home to dinner. We had two hours in the summer; 1½ hours winter. Most times there was some errand to do. Price's had built a bakery in the Uxbridge Road in front of St. George's Church in 1912, and the price of a quartern loaf was 3¼d. (1½p) So we used to be sent for the bread. It became law that a loaf must weigh 2lbs. Until the bakery could adjust their machinery to comply with the law they used to weigh the loaves and cut a piece to make up. This we called "overs", and we ate it on the way home.

Several times my father was sent to work at his boss' brother's jam works (Plaistows), Kings Cross, and would be able to purchase 7lb stone jars of jam which would cost 1/9. (8½p).

Hard Earned Pocket Money

In the winter of 1917 I earned quite a bit of pocket money fetching coke from the Gas Works. At that time the price was 10 pence (4p) for large and 11 pence (4½p) for small per cwt. I would go to the works, hire a sack barrow for 2 pence and deliver it to who wanted it for 6 pence. This would be in the lunch time. Next day I would return the hired barrow and bring another sack. To finish I would take a barrow of my own, with

the hired one on top, and bring coke back in it. It was hard work and always plenty of customers. With so many horses about it was fairly easy to earn some pocket money with barrows of manure and, of course, both Dad and I were always glad of it.

As previously stated my duties as house-boy included taking parcels and messages to patients in the Australian Hospital, and I used to get very good tips from them also. If Mr. Norman asked me to clean his bicycle or thigh boots, that earned 6 pence. Mr. Payne (schoolmaster) also would ask me to take my barrow to the station and collect packages that had been sent from Devon, and Mrs. Payne would give me something for doing so.

School Memories 1917

My teacher Mr. MacKenzie had been discharged, poor man, from the Army with shell shock and every so often would show signs of it. Needless to say some of the lads (for the first time it was boys only) would mimic him. But he was a good teacher.

Here I must confess to playing truant every now and again in the afternoon to go swimming at the Ealing Baths with one or two mates. We would go by tram -1 penny each way, 2 pence for entry and towel and costume - making sure to get home at the usual time. We knew we were fairly safe from the school attendance officer (Corky Morris). He had a false leg and was known to be a good customer at the "Northcote Arms" and it being war time nobody bothered.

Of course we knew all the best spots where "scrumping" would be worth while -cherries, Hammond's orchard; apples, Walter Moore's; plums, gardens in the Park. I have been caught in all of them. But we used to get a wallop on the spot and be told to "go home and tell your father". More legitimate spoils were walnuts in the Park and mulberries from the Manor House grounds. And of course the leaves came in handy for silk-worms.

There was only once I can remember feeling sore in more ways than one, being punished twice for the same offence. We had always been told by the headmaster to go orderly home. But we started fighting in the school passage and P.C. Phillips, who was at the High Street watching children across the road, came and gave us both a clout and

sent us on our way. Next morning we were told to report to the headmaster, who gave us four of the best for not doing as we were told.

Musical Entertainment

It seems hard to believe that there was no such thing as television, and radio was still very crude; from about 1915 they were still experimenting with what became known as crystal sets with cats-whiskers. Until around 1922 one had to rely on the gramophone, or making your own music. In 1913, just before Christmas, my father spent the then large sum of 55 shillings at Bensted's, West Ealing, on a box portable H.M.V. gramophone and 9 Zonophone 10-inch records. What a treat and we came to know them off by heart. One of my uncles had one of those gramophones' which played the cylindrical records, a "phonograph". This had a very large horn and every record started with "Edison Bell Record" spoken in a very stately way. This to us kids was a wonder of the times.

A Mr. Church was well known in the town for his skillful playing of the hand bells and was always in demand. There were 4 brass bands at different times: the St. Marylebone School's boys' band. Their uniform was red-braided tunic with pill-box hat, they used to lead the boys to church on Sunday morning; the North Hyde School band, their uniform was green tunic and short trousers piped with black braid and Stetson hats, their bandmaster Mr. Dunn was a very good instructor and 3 of his sons later had distinguished careers as Army bandmasters; the Gas Works had a very good band, also the Maypole margarine works. They used to tender one against the other for the job of playing in the Park during the summer on Wednesday and Sunday evenings. They had to provide a stipulated number of players and to do so very often they were made up one from the other.

Also there was a very good Salvation Army band from the Citadel in Adelaide Road. I can remember Bandmaster Snellings and how they used to stand in a circle at the "White Swan" corner on Sunday evenings and throw their pennies on the drum. Several attempts have since been made to form a Southall Town Band but none lasted very long. But Hanwell has for years had a prize silver band.

Housing Conditions And Poverty

Housing had improved over the years, but in the 1900 to 1914 period there were a great many low 3-room cottages. These were put up to house the men that worked in the brickfields, and were usually in blocks of 8, with just a bedroom, small kitchen, scullery (or washhouse) and outside earth toilets. These are some of the names: Lowes Cottages, Tilly-Billy Bottom, Barrack Row, Buckingham Terrace, Woodlands Place. Just a little better were some two-storey houses with two bedrooms upstairs. The staircase would go up in between the front room (or parlour) and the kitchen. Many of these you would step straight into off the pavement, others had just a very small front garden. A good example is Hamilton Road, which has both types. Some very large families were reared under these conditions.

My mother was brought to Pluckington Place in a flat-fronted two-up-and-two down house at the age of 3 years in 1871, when her father came from Northolt to work in Cullis's brickfields. These houses were all built of locally made stock bricks and were all more or less tied cottages, which meant that you worked for the owner and, if you left or got the sack, you were evicted. I saw this happen several times, all their possessions being put into the road, because men were leaving the brickfield for the factories. The Gas Company had White Street and Spencer Street built to house some of their workers. Rents were on average 4/-(20p) a week, but the bosses expected the men to be on call to deal with the brick kilns, especially in frosty weather.

It was the practice to work in gangs and the boss used to pay the wages of the gang to their ganger to pay out. My mother told me that this usually happened in a pub. You can guess what used to take place, the money spent on beer. My Granny got tired of this. One Saturday she waited her chance and when the pay-out started in the "White Swan" she grabbed some money and made off., I don't know the sequel. Incidentally, the "White Swan" was then at the bottom of Pluckington Place. The new one was built in 1904.

It is recorded that in the winter of 1885-6, due to the bad weather and the brick-makers being unable to work, poverty was so bad, that Mr. Thomas at the Manor House provided 1d dinners for up to 100 children from 12 to 1 p.m.; after which time anything left would be divided between those waiting outside

Shopping

In the early 1900's Brentford used to be the place where Southall people went to do their shopping, via the Brentford branch of the G.W.R., but by 1906 West Ealing became the shopping centre. On Saturday afternoons or evenings after tea Mum and Dad would get us all smartened up and take us up to West Ealing shopping. The Sunday joint had to be got and the butchers would be doing all sorts of things to get a sale. In their straw hats and striped aprons they would offer a joint or a bird for such a price, and if there was no sale would add something else for the same price, talking all the time to make passers by take notice. Dad would buy leather to mend our boots. There was a Penny Bazaar where among other things you could buy a dozen boxes of matches for 1 penny. We would meet some of Dad's relations and, when the shopping had been done, they would go for a drink; and that would mean ginger beer and biscuits for us kids.

Christmas times the shops would be all dressed up and it was a special treat to be taken on the trains to Shepherds Bush and back. In those days the outside of shops used to be lit by naphthalene lamps, and these used to smoke. Grocers would have crates of eggs selling at 14 for 6 pence outside, and butchers turkeys hanging all over the front of their shop, and you would go from one to the other until you got the bargain; a turkey perhaps for around 10 shillings (50p) for a whopper, with the sausage meat thrown in.

Most things could be bought at the door. The milkman came twice a day, the second round being termed the "pudding round". You took your jug to the door, or it was left in cans. Cost was 2d a pint, 1½d for skimmed milk. Greengrocer, oil and hardware, coal-man, all would be calling out their presence in the road. Tradesmen were always willing to deliver your order. There were also characters such as Dicky Duffell with his winkles and watercress, Wild Rabbit Joe with his rabbits strung on a pole and Hoky Poky the "Itie" who came round with a variety of ices.

Our nearest fish and chip shop was near Hanbrough Road and for 1/3(6½p) you could get 6 pieces of fish, 5 pennyworth of chips and ½ penny- worth of crackling to eat on the way home. At night there used to be two coffee stalls, one at the High Street corner of Lady Margaret Road, the other on the Station bridge. These were open all night. They

used to dispense most drinks and cakes and hot pie - hot cheese cakes 4 inches across with lashings of coconut on top, and what was known as "Tottenham" or "Nelson", a flat triangular piece of cake 1 inch thick with pink icing on top for 2 pence.

Up to 1914 Mr. Marwood used to ply for hire from the Station with a hansom cab. Tallymen used to call trying to get people to have goods on credit. Once in their clutches they would get more and more into debt, very often with sad endings.

Southall Market

As the town began to have more shops some of the more well-known firms came, and with them Woolworth's (nothing over 6 pence) and the Fifty Shilling Tailors. No written word can ever describe the Market atmosphere. From early Wednesday morning cattle would be arriving, quite a lot being driven by drovers. There were gypsies with horses, and dealers all trying to make a private deal, which would be clinched with a smack of the hands. In the Market itself the auction started at 11.50, up to which time all interested would be viewing and prodding the animals, the noise from which left nothing to the imagination.

The family who were the auctioneers, the Steels, used to live in the Market House. Mr. Steel used to fascinate me by the speed of his talk and how he knew who was bidding. For refreshments there was a jellied eel stall, and a very smart gentleman with a beautifully decorated small van from which he served sarsaparilla and "Brompton lozenges" and other cures. The fat stock sale just before Christmas each year used to attract a great many people, and some majestic cattle. It was not until I got older that I learned that most of them were for slaughter. Market day was to me something that I could not miss and the hidings taken for getting mucked up I still think worth it for past memories.

Items At Random

There were two pawn-shops, at the corner of Abbots Road and in the King Street. As far as I know my parents did not take advantage of them, but I have been told that my grandfather's best clothes were "popped" fairly regularly, thus keeping them well pressed. The 3-brass ball sign was explained to me as "two to one they would never be redeemed".

April 1918 saw me in Mr. Spence's class, Standard 7. He was an excellent teacher and also interested himself in local affairs. More and more of our lesson time was taken up with doing the caretaker's jobs and being sent to help someone in distress through the War. So the day came at the end of July when my school days were over.

As stated I joined the choir in 1915 and stayed to 1919. We used to be paid 1 penny for each service, ½ penny for practice. This was paid half-yearly. Misbehaviour would mean fines and of course choir-boys are not angels. Mr. Addler was choir-master (followed by Mr. Craven) and the Rev. Henry Mills vicar. In the men's section were Mr. Paine and Mr. Reid, schoolmasters, Mr. L. Harrison, Mr. Gordon Quinion (later ordained), Mr. Bass, Mr. Arnold, Messrs Hitchcock senior and junior, Mr. Aston (stationmaster), vicar's warden, Mr. Burwell, people's warden. We used to have an outing in the summer and a supper on New Year's Eve, and then go straight to the Watch Night service. All new boys had to be initiated, this entailed being "holly-bushed". Unfortunately this led to a rather nasty accident. A new boy by the name of Loader was taken round to the front of the church after practice, taken by the arms and legs, and thrown into a bush a little too hard. He hurt his back fairly badly and had to have medical attention. We all got a good dressing-down and were fined 5 pence each, the money to go to the victim.

Almost every Sunday during the War the name of someone killed was read out, and several major disasters were commemorated. On April 25th, 1917 the Vicar, the Rev. H. Mills, died and with the choir in procession was buried at Havelock Road Cemetery. He had been Vicar of Holy Trinity for 27 years. The curate, Rev. Beck (who later became Vicar of St. Thomas's Church, Boston Road) took charge until the Rev. Young was inducted.

Boys used to wear short trousers, a blouse or jersey, Oxford shirts, knee-length blue stockings, and boots, with flannel vests in the winter. We were lucky enough to have a Sunday-best outfit. It was quite a day when you went into long trousers, starched collars, and bowler hat. A lot of men wore what were known as starched dickey fronts, this was a collar with long flaps which would go inside the waistcoat. Girls would be in dresses almost to the ground, with petticoats and long drawers, white pinafores, woollen stockings, and boots. They had their hair in

plaits tied with ribbon at school, but long flowing otherwise. It was a sign that they were growing up when they appeared with their hair "up". In the elementary schools there were no school uniforms. Perhaps just as well, for poverty in families showed itself in the way the children came dressed, and clothes used to be passed down, and the teachers would help with clothes given by the better-off.

Southall Park played a large part in our growing up. Mr Billy Perkins was park-keeper. He was a friend of my father's, but that did not help us if we got caught up to mischief. Playing all the usual boys' games was OK but climbing trees and getting into the orchard at rear would be dealt with if we were caught with stripes with a stick he always carried. In 1910 what was known as Etherington's Field, on the east side, was added. This extended the Park to where Green Drive is today. Just before this Bostock and Wombwell's Circus opened there, with a parade of their performers dressed as cowboys and Indians on their horses around the town to advertise their arrival. This field had a small pond, a wonderful place for us kids to get frog-spawn, and very wet and dirty. It was near here that my father took us to watch the train go past containing the coffin of Edward VII on the way to Windsor. This was 12th May, 1910. My mother had taken my eldest brother to London to watch the funeral procession. On the Coronation Day of King George and Queen Mary, 22nd June 1911, a children's party was held in the Park, and after a good tea each child received a medal to commemorate the event.

Southall Fire Brigade

In May 1915 the annual competitions of the South Midland District of the National Fire Brigade took place in the Park. A large scaffolding rescue tower was erected and special canvas tanks set up for water. It went on all day, with us kids very excited watching the hose-pipes being used. Mr. Long ("Longy" to us kids) was the assistant park-keeper who we used to play up and. it was not till years afterwards that I discovered that he was my wife's uncle.

There were the remains of a large house, which we were told was the remains of a private asylum burned down in August, 1883. It was this fire that started the idea for the formation of the Southall Volunteer

Fire Brigade. Mr C.N. Abbott, who had been commended for his actions at the Park fire, became the first officer. In April, 1901 a fire station was built on to the Town Hall at a cost of £175. Men were recruited, a great percentage from Abbott Bros. staff, and training began with a horse-drawn fire engine.

When the brigade was required to attend a fire a maroon was set off to summon the crew, who would dress and often had to wait whilst the horses were brought in from where they had been working. Although great efforts were made to get to the fire in the shortest possible time it had a great many snags. Although I cannot remember these teething troubles some of their later efforts, however, have left memories in more ways than one. Robinson's flour mill, Norwood Road, was destroyed by fire 2nd January, 1912; Endacott's drapers at the corner of Western Road and King Street burned down 27th November 1914; there was a large grass and hedge fire at Ford's field September, 1913; John Lines's wallpaper factory at the rear of Balfour Road burned down 2nd September, 1917.

The last three each cost me a hiding. Sent out on an errand, the fire engine dashed past and forgetting everything I followed to the scene of the fire. When eventually I got home, it was a hiding and to bed with no food. For the record, here are the names of firemen I knew personally: Mr. Harry Willis (officer); Mr. Albert Smith (officer); Messrs Haisman senior and Burney Haisman; Bill Strickland, W. Ward, Harry Parslow, Bill Turner, H. Beasley, Martin, Tom Smith, Harry Comfort. Mr. Comfort I believe was the first professional. It seems rather ironic that the present fire station is on the site in the High Street where used to be the works of Abbotts, who did so much to get it started.

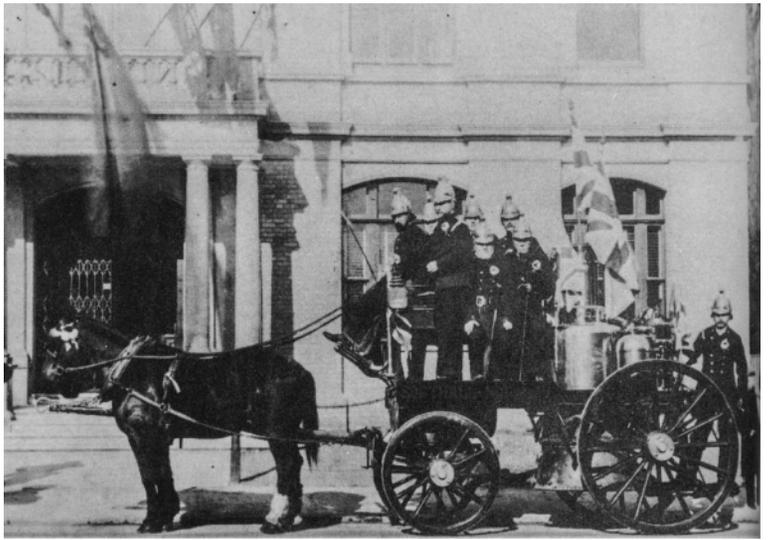
South Road etc.

The scenes and sounds were vastly different to what they are today. No noisy planes, no shrieking sirens from Panda cars or ambulances. The police plodded the beat or had bicycles. They also had rolled capes, which they used as a weapon if us kids asked for it. If an ambulance was wanted it would be horse-drawn. The postmen wore a uniform of dark-blue serge with red piping, and a hard fore-and-aft peaked hat.



Southall Park Lodge
1910

Southall Fire Brigade
1900



Corner of King Street and
Norwood Road 1905

Old Post Office
South Road 1910



Railway and tramway men also had uniform, and a strict discipline was maintained as to how it was worn.

The first trams I remember had slat seats on the open top deck and at the terminus the conductor had to turn all the backs round. They were on a pivot. Also the long arm which went up to the overhead electric wire had to be pulled down with a hook on a long bamboo cane and turned round. The turning point for Southall-only trams was "Haddrell's Corner" (Herbert Road).

South Road used to house most of the prominent people of the town Doctors Windle, Hart, Macdonald; two dentists, Green and Dunkings; two solicitors, Harris and Holder; the Postmaster, A. Hanson; an architect, Mr. Norman; Mr. Sanders, head of Sanders tube works; three builders, Brown, Kirby, Plaistow; a retired hospital matron, Miss Smithers; the Wesleyan manse; and Mr. W.W. Houlder, head of Houlder's chemical works. All these were on the left-hand side. On the right were: a bank on the corner; Arnold's, tobacconists; Edward and Thompson's estate office; Eastman's, dyers and cleaners; ruins (Townsend House); a cinema; Fuller's, boot repairs; Kirby's; offices; a small Salvation Army hall; Gibson's yard, in which were Kirby's workshops; Hudson, plumber; Edward and Thompson's auction room over the top of R. White's mineral water storage warehouse; Northcote House, home of Mr G. Gibson, who was Southall's first county councillor; the Marylebone School, with three houses for staff all behind a close board fence; Gate Lodge, with ornamental gates; a field where now stands the Kings Hall; and the head post office, on the corner of Beaconsfield Road. For years on the other side was the burnt-out ruins of Jarvis, coffee shop(burned down August, 1887). Later the Central Hall was built there.

When Otto Monstead's margarine works came to Southall they brought with them a fair number of Danish staff. This was in 1894. They settled in very well. The works manager, Mr Michelsen, lived at "The Chestnuts"(now the Southall Hospital), built by Mr. T. Watson as resident, and later rented to the Working Men's Club. He moved to Ealing when the works closed in 1929. The chief chemist, Mr Blickfeidt, lived at Vine Cottage, Park View Road (now the site of the Youth Centre). The rest settled in various parts of the town and were all well respected.

Lady Margaret Road

Lady Margaret Road up till 1925 went only as far as Shackleton Road. It was fairly high-class standard and used to house many people known to us kids - schoolmaster Mr. Wilson and his daughter Miss Wilson, a mistress at Clifton Road School; school teachers Miss Chapple, Miss Fraser and Miss Wilkins; Mr. H. Watson, builder and estate agent; and Mrs. Freeman, sister of the Abbott brothers, among others. There used to be a fair amount of "moonlighting" going on from here.

Holy Trinity Church hall was just behind the Town Hall on the right-hand side. This played a very great part in town affairs and, it being the only hall this side of the town, there was always something going on. Us kids used to go there for Sunday school Christmas parties and all sorts of concerts and Band of Hope meetings. I can remember seeing the "Ealing Police Minstrel Show", and a flower and vegetable show in which both Dad and Mum had prizes.

Uxbridge Road

I have not as yet mentioned anything regarding the Uxbridge Road from South Road to Hayes Bridge. Butler's Corner and the fine block of shops along to Herbert Road was built in 1902. (Leggett's Forge on the corner was pulled down 1901). Butler's (men's outfitters) had a unique shop- front with a small kiosk like a showcase in front. You could enter the shop from both South Road and the Uxbridge Road. A Mr. Scott was manager for years.

Sainsbury's came next, and was noted for its high standard of goods and cleanliness. Over the shop there used to be quarters for the staff, with a housekeeper in charge. Then there were Richardson's (boot shop); Chambling's (ladies' wear); Home & Colonial (provision merchants), always a noticeable smell of roasting coffee beans; Hallam (corn chandler), I did not like going there as he was a very surly man and seemed to hate serving children; the drug stores, I can remember he used to have in the window 3 very large bottles of coloured water, red, green, yellow; Prideaux' (stationers and papers) whom I have already mentioned; Hutchings (butchers), whose son was in my class at school, took a great interest in local affairs and was a councillor for several years; Shellshear's, later Elgie's (ironmongers), who spoiled his business with

heavy drinking. Both his assistants started up their own business, Larrondy in King Street and Copley in the Uxbridge Road; and Haddrell's (furniture) on the corner of Herbert Road.

After this came a field with some large elm trees, which came in very handy for us a few years later when a severe gale blew two of them down and Dad got permission to split them up for fire logs.

Then came Rubble's (cycle shop); and. Tome's (greengrocer). Dad offered him 14 cabbage (large) for 1/- and he turned the offer down, so we sold them for 14d each going door-to-door in Alexandra Avenue. I shall only mention 3 more : Stratford (butcher) a great character in the town; Webb and Banks (bakers and Post Office); and the Hambrough Coffee Tavern on the corner of Hambrough Road. This was as far as the shops went on the left-hand side.

On the right-hand side were: Francis Wakeling's (estate agents), with Blower's, dentist, over the top; the Co-Op (provisions); Evans (newspapers and tobacco); Fletcher's (butchers); Taylor's (off-licence); then Ford's field; Collins (bakers); and the Empire Cinema. A German had a bakery and shop at the corner of Northcote Avenue. He and his wife were interned at the beginning of the First World War. There were about 6 more shops, which would remain empty for long periods and when let did not last long. Then fields, until Price's bakery was built, and one general shop at the corner of Tudor Road.

Over the Green

You will note I have made very little reference to anything over the south side of the railway. In the days I am writing about there were no buses, and we only went "over the Green" to get something special or on visits to relations. Several of our relations lived and worked that side, and we used to be sent to Cogswell's or Owen Barnett's for seed potatoes and take our metal and rags to Brand's at the same time. The two brothers Stanley had charge of the "White Swan" and they were the last that I can remember to ride a penny-farthing bicycle.

Featherstone School under Mr. West, headmaster, used to turn out some very good athletes, also a good football team which won the "Gosney Cup" most years. The building firm of A. & B. Hanson had their offices and yard in Featherstone Road, and they carried out the

contracts for a great many local buildings which included churches, pubs, cinemas and factories. Mr. Ben Hanson lived at Beverley House in the King Street. The Hanson family, who came to Southall about 1886, became involved a great deal in local affairs. Besides the building firm Ben was a councillor for many years. A brother was Head Postmaster, and a Mr. Alf Hanson was Chief Rating Officer for the Council.

The drill hall in Featherstone Road, built in 1901, housed a Middlesex Regt. Territorial company and the R.S.M. used to live in a flat there. The horses used at the Gas Works were stabled in Havelock Road, which is now the Council yard. Opposite was the Cemetery lodge, just to the rear of which was a small mortuary.

King Street had several good shops - Butler's (men's outfitters); Boots (chemists); Maypole (butter and margarine); Freeman, Hardy & Willis (footwear); Outland's (drapers); a large Co-Op; World Stores (provisions); Norwood Farm dairy; Loaring's (oilshop); Platt's (grocers); and the Labour Exchange.

Hard Times

From as early as I can remember there was always talk of the workhouse and the Board of Guardians. With large families and very low wages, it only needed a minor tragedy for a family to have to apply for parish relief. This meant going to the Relieving Officer who would ask all sorts of questions and tell you to sell any of your possessions of value. If there was nothing, he would assess the ability of either husband or wife to work. After exhausting all this he would grant the rent and bread according to the number in the family. A great many old people who could not support themselves would have to go into the workhouse at Hillingdon or Isleworth, husband and wife parted perhaps forever. Tramps used to make their way from one workhouse to another for a bed, and had to do some task before leaving in the morning. Workhouses had a very bad reputation.

Well I remember with what joy my Granny drew her first 5/- (25p) old age pension. This was in 1909, and thankfully with the coming of Lloyd George's National Insurance in 1912 things got gradually better.

Tots and Treats

My parents brought us up to be thrifty. We learned the value of old iron, metals, rags, jam jars, glass and old newspapers and in our holidays would go to where they tipped rubbish, totting. One of my schoolmates' father's worked at the Yeading tip. London rubbish used to come along the canal in barges. A crane would be used to dump the rubbish and men would be kept busy levelling it. At the same time they would pick out anything of value, which was sold and the money divided. We helped in this, but used to get up to other things. Armed with some old black stockings and some round tins with both top and bottom removed, we would tie the stockings to the tins to form a sleeve. These we stuffed into rat-holes, then with a stick agitated holes near by. Rats would dash out into the stocking, when we would kill them.

One Saturday we were taken to the Northolt trotting course as a treat. This was situated in Eastcote Lane. They raced with horses harnessed to a very light two-wheeled vehicle (a sulky) and would race around the track, one against the other. Betting would be going on and the atmosphere was very exciting, with of course plenty of jellied eels and beer.

One familiar sight on fine Saturday afternoons were mental patients in the charge of staff coming into the High Street to do some shopping. They would walk from the Hanwell Asylum (now St. Bernard's Hospital) and back. It would be men to West Ealing, women to Southall, alternating. Although known as Hanwell Asylum it came within the Southall boundary and all personnel counted as residents for the purposes of a census.

Once a year Abbott Brothers promoted a 10-mile road race. This would start from Park View, on a circular route via the Greenford Road and back to starting point. A Mr. Holmes was winner several times. This event finished in 1914.

Two old tramps were to be seen around the High Street, "Chunky" Briant and "Old Gaylard". Both would be rag-bag dressed and scrounge what they could. Both finished up in the Army. One got killed, the other decorated for bravery.

Local Conditions

Street lighting started in Southall in 1866, with main roads only lit by gas. Gradually all the roads had lamp standards. These were 11 feet high, with a square-shaped glass box on top in which the burner with two gas mantles was situated. A clock device regulated the pilot for lighting-up time. These of course had to be maintained. "Lamplighters" were employed, and they could be seen during the day with a small ladder and box, cleaning the lamps and fitting new mantles, and at night cycling round making sure they were alight. Lamplighters I remember were Mr. Baden and Mr. Church.

During the dry weather water carts would be used. These used to have a spray at the back which sprinkled the road to help keep the dust down. At various places alongside the main roads hand pumps were placed so that the carts could be refilled.

There were several private roads. This meant that one day a year they were closed to the public. Gas Works Road (The Straight), Otto Monsted's Road (now Bridge Road), Rubastic Road, Beresford Road and Johnson Street were examples. In most cases, after planning permission had been granted, the Council took over responsibility for a road's upkeep, after imposing road charges. The main Uxbridge Road was the responsibility of the Middlesex County Council and in the middle of this road were the tram tracks set in cobblestones; London United Tramways (L.U.T.) had to maintain these.

At all the schools a bell would be rung 5 minutes before opening time, and the same at churches 5 minutes before service. Most factories had a siren or hooter. The Maypole Works hooter was very distinctive and would be heard at 6 a.m. and 2 p.m. The Gas Works' steam siren would blast at 6 a.m. and 4.15 p.m. weekdays and 6 a.m. and 11.15 a.m. on Saturday. This was for those on day-work starting and finishing time. 5 minutes was allowed after starting time; anyone coming later than that would not be allowed to start work before breakfast, thus losing two hours wages. Being late too many times would mean the sack.

There were no such things as football pools or betting shops. But as kids we knew all about bookmakers and bookmakers' runners. Off-course bets were illegal, so those who wanted to place a bet would write same out and get it to the bookmaker's runner. Most works had

one, others would have their collecting places. They passed the money and slips on to the bookie, and paid out the winners next day. The police would know this was going on; but they would let the runner know when he was going to be arrested so that he would only have very few bets on him, because they would be confiscated. Up before the magistrate at Brentford the next day he would be fined one or two pounds, which would be paid by the bookie, and would carry on as usual next day.

Our relations were spread all around the town and this meant, when messages had to be sent; walking, for instance, to Myrtle Cottage, about half way between Hayes Bridge and Yeading Lane, where my aunt and uncle lived (He was green-keeper on the West Middlesex Golf Course); or to another aunt at the end of Bankside, Hayes Bridge. Several more lived "Over the Green". This was the expression used for anything the other side of the railway bridge. On Sunday evenings in the summer my parents would take us for walks, perhaps through Osterley Park to the "Hare and Hounds" or something similar, and us would pick wild flowers which would be placed in jam jars on the window sill.

Starting Work

Leaving school on my 14th birthday, 26th July 1918, I had a few days' holiday and on August Tuesday, the day after the Bank Holiday, I presented myself smartly dressed at 8.30 a.m. for a job at the Maypole Margarine Works. There were three boys waiting for Mr. Woodfield, the personnel manager. When he came he looked us up and down, asked us for our school references and told us what would happen if we did not behave ourselves. After giving us a number (mine was 22) he told me to wait, and took the other two to the "Box Shop." He then took me to the laundry for a white coat and apron, marked with No. 22 and told me they must be put on No. 22 peg in the cloakroom on leaving the factory, and must be worn at all times at work. He then took me to the Works Laboratory where I was to work.

I remember my first job was to stand at a sink and wash a large number of small bottles with funny-shaped top, which I found out were named "Hansen bottles". There were no such things as tea breaks, but I found there was always plenty of milk, this being left over from samples taken for testing. The working hours were 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. ½ hour for

breakfast; 8.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. dinner 1 hour; 2p.m. to 6 p.m. On Saturday it was 6 a.m. to 12 noon, making 58 hours a week on day shift. Night shift was alternate weeks, starting at 11 p.m. Sunday night till 6 a.m. Monday; 6 p.m. Monday to 6 a.m. Tuesday; and so on till Saturday 6 a.m. 58 hours in all. There was no extra pay for night work. Nobody under the age of 18 did nights. The men used to take their cans of tea into work with them, and breakfast and dinner would be heated up for them in the temporary canteen, as the normal one was being used as a hospital.

I was quite happy with my job, but soon found that my errand-boy days were not over. One of my jobs was to collect 3 cans of milk from the dairy at 7 o'clock and deliver one each to Mr. Blickfeldt's (Vine Cottage), Mr. Yorkenson's (Park View Road) and Mr. Thornley's (Shackleton Road). Then home to breakfast and report back at 8.30 a.m. The firm kept a week's wages in hand, so after a fortnight I received my first week's wages, £1:0:6d (102½p) for 58 hours. I gave Mum 15/- (75p) and thought I was well off. My job mostly was to collect samples from all over the factory, at the same time taking back the results of same.

Hanwell Asylum

Included in the population of Southall were the patients and living-in staff of Hanwell Asylum. The number was always around 1,500. The Asylum also provided work for quite a number in the town. From the time it was built in 1855 until about 1922 it used to be almost self-supporting, with its own bakery, tailors, boot-shop, farm and cows, and growing most of its own vegetables. It even had its own gas works. Working parties used to cross the Uxbridge Road and cultivate the field where now stands the Southall bus garage, and also the fields now the A.E.C.

The male staff included men skilled in all trades. They had a dark blue serge uniform and round peaked hats, with keys and whistle on a chain, more like prison warders than nurses. You stood a better chance of getting a job if you could play an instrument, were good at sport, or an ex-military man. If you got a job you were on probation for six months, in which time you had to study mental nursing. They had a brass band and orchestra (there were two bandstands in the grounds) and excellent sports grounds.

For reasons best known to themselves the Lunacy Board did not favour patients being from near-by localities. Mental cases from Southall and around used to be sent to Wandsworth or Tooting Bec, and those from that side of London to Hanwell. It is on record that until 1914 the maintenance allowance for each patient was 9/4d 46½p) per week.

Staff discipline was very strict, and nurses living-in had to be in by 10.30 p.m., with a late pass till 12 o'clock one weekend a month. Those under the rank of sister had to pass through the matron's office to check that they were properly dressed. I can speak from knowledge of these things, as I courted my wife from there, and many is the time we have had to hustle back so that she could clock in by 10.30. We married in August 1929 and had the St. Bernard's church been licensed for weddings it would have been there; but it comes in the parish of Holy Trinity. As I am writing this in 1978 I should like to record something perhaps unusual in the nursing world. Both Matron Potter and Chief Male Nurse Mr. A. Greig were born and educated in Southall, and retired in 1972.

Local Transport etc.

Until well after 1925 the only means of public transport was the London United trams from Uxbridge to Shepherds Bush, and the Great Western Railway. When this came in 1859 it virtually cut Southall in half. When the bridge and station were built in 1859-60 no thought was given to the fact that intending passengers had to climb the bridge, perhaps with heavy luggage, only to go down steps to get their train. The parcels office was also on top. How Irish!

Fares on the railway were classified 1st, 2nd, 3rd class. A great many cheap day excursions were run and an organisation known as the Sunday League used to charter special trains for parties on Sundays. In those days only bank holidays were recognised by the employer, but a lot of what were known as "bean-feasts", in other words day's outings, would be planned. Men would pay in so much a week to an appointed agent and arrangements would be made for a day out at the seaside, and provision of refreshments. Some bosses gave good support to these, and I remember my father going to Skegness and Weston-super-Mare with Plaistow's men. To us kids these seemed like foreign parts, and how we

used to boast about where Dad had been and the presents he brought us back!

Later came the char-a-bancs and outings taken by road. These used to be open-top coaches and children used to run alongside shouting "Throw out yer mouldys"(coppers) Going in from the South Road was a road leading to the goods yard and coal wharves and, a little further on, the engine sheds. Here the engines would be cleaned, coaled and watered. This was where a great many local men started on the railway by becoming cleaners, graduating to firemen and in time to drivers. The men working on the coal wharves had a very hard time unloading the coal trucks, loading the coal trolleys, which brought the ordered coal to the customers, and the coal carts used to canvass the streets making their presence known by the shout of "coal man". Prices I remember were 24/- (120p) to 27/- (130p) per ton. It is on record that the "best brights" were supplied to schools on tender in 1908 for 19/6(97½p) per ton. It was not unknown that you had to count the sacks in, or you would be one short.

Over the Bridge Left Hand Side

Coming over the station bridge from the South Road on the left-hand side, just in Bridge Road on the left-hand side, is what appears to be a house; but in fact it was built by Otto Monsted's as a water pumping station. They required thousands of gallons a day. It eventually fell out of use when the company had their own artesian wells sunk and lay empty for years. Much later it was used by the local St John Ambulance Brigade as a first-aid station, and an A.R.P. post in World War II. The bank and Watson's offices were built 1904. A little further along the Green were two old cottages with flat top shop-fronts. This was Alexander's (papers, sweets, tobacco). Down an alleyway at the side was Godbolt's slaughter house and 8 one-storey cottages, Woodlands Place. Godbolt's (later Anstis) butcher's shop with a canopy front came next, and a very old double-fronted house with a garden brought one up to Kingston Road. All this was redeveloped between 1925 and 1928.

Public Houses

The town was served by three breweries, the Royal Brewery, Isleworth, Harman's, Uxbridge and Fuller, Smith and Turner. Some pubs

were beer houses only. They had to obtain a full licence to sell wines and spirits. I am not to know who sold what. There are several very old pubs in the town. The "Plough", Norwood Green (15th century) is the oldest. Then there are the "White Hart" and the "Hambrough Tavern" (16th century); the "Red Lion", "Wolf Inn", "George and Dragon", and "Prince of Wales" (17th century); and the "Three Horse Shoes", the "Bricklayers Arms", the "Lamb", and the "Three Tuns (18h century). There are several more. Most have been altered, and some have been replaced by others. The "Prince Arthur", which used to be on the railway side of the Crescent, was pulled down and the licence transferred to the "Railway Hotel" (nicknamed the Glass House because of its large glass frontage). The "Black Horse" closed and its licence was transferred to the "Northcote Arms". The old "White Swan", which used to be at the end of Pluckington Place, was replaced by the new "White Swan" at the corner of Norwood Road. One name changed due to the First World War, from the "Duke of Prussia" to "The Victory". On the sign depicting a crest displayed outside the "Bricklayers Arms" are the words "In God is all our trust". It was not unusual for the landlord's name to identify the pub. For example, "Franky Newell's" would be the "Hambrough Tavern."

Right Hand Side of The Railway Bridge

On the right-hand side of the railway bridge, coming from South Road, with the Central Hall on the corner, is "The Crescent", a few shops which included Lilleshall's coal office, Deacon's cycle and motor cycle shop and a very good provision stores, Scott and Taylor's. Next to that was a flat fronted block of flats, with about 30 ft. of garden in the front. These had been built in 1860 and were in a bad state of repair, so as soon as the Council could offer alternative accommodation they were condemned and pulled down, leaving an open space. But although one eyesore had gone it left another by exposing the backs of Randolph Road. Next to this came Deacon's Garage. This was the first garage in Southall, supplying cars for weddings etc. and doing car repairs.

Then follow 13 houses built for railway workers running round to Randolph Road. At the start of the Gas Works Straight running parallel with the railway on the right-hand side was the Waterworks and Tower. Us kids used to think this was a huge tank of water disguised to represent

a castle. Two houses built for Gas Works officials and the Gas Works sports fields, beautifully kept, brought you to the "White Lion", which was very handy for gas workers during break times. White Street led off to the right, leading to Naylor's varnish works and Houlder's acid works.

On the left-hand side, just before the entrance to the Gas Works, is "The Subway". This was built in 1885-86 after several demonstrations regarding the right of way. Use of a footpath was upheld, and although the use was not encouraged it actually ran through the Works on its way to Hayes. Just through the subway on the right hand side was Spencer Street. This had some very bad slum property backing on the railway, which was pulled down, leaving an open space. At the end of Spencer Street was the Submersible & J.L. Motors works and the Scott's Emulsion works, with its famous sign which faced the railway - a fisherman with a large fish on his back, 30 ft. high, done in mosaic containing 22,000 pieces. To the rear of these was John Line's wallpaper factory. This was totally destroyed by fire in September 1917. I had a good view of this.

Up to Mount Pleasant

Leading from the High Street, on the left-hand side between the "White Hart" and Etherington's the milk shop, was School Alley (as us kids called it) or School Passage. This went up to North Road School on the left, with an entrance to Abbott Bros, who also had an apiary next to the School. Dorothy Villas was on the right-hand side, with all 6 tenants well known to us kids. At the end of the Passage was Meadow Road on the left; Mr. Bunce the school caretaker lived at No. 1. You were now in North Road, with Grove House on the right hand corner. Here lived Mr. Stroud, veterinary surgeon. He used a very smart pony and trap.

Going up North Road on the left-hand side were two old cottages and the "Plough" public house. The landlord was the brother of that of the "Plough" at Norwood Green, Mr. Dean; then came Shackleton Road; Etherington's Farm; and next an allotment site. Further on was the "Woodlands", a very old double-fronted house about 30 ft. back from the road. This was occupied by the Martyn family, who took a great interest in the town. Past a field the road led round to Durdan Cottages and Walter Moore's plantations.

On the right-hand side of North Road it was all fields attached to Sparrow Farm (Mr. Alderton). The Fever Hospital was straight ahead. You were now in what was known as Mount Pleasant. It was like a small community on its own, centred on the "Beehive" public house. It had two shops and a Post Office, a laundry and a cartage contractor.

Leading straight on was Muddy Lane, or Cow Lane. This was exactly as its name implies, and eventually emerged at the Ruislip Road. About 400 yards up on the left hand side was Hill House (Mr. Gosney). It was formerly owned by the Delottes, who in 1897 had the almshouses built to commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee. Just a little farther on was a lane leading to Waxlow Farm (Mr. Goddard) and three small cottages. Turning right at the "Beehive" you were in Dormers Wells Lane which is one of the oldest parts of the district. Before reaching the Uxbridge Road you passed on the left-hand side the house of Rountree the painter, Ewer's Farm and West Middlesex Golf Course.

War Memories

Southall during the War was a very busy place. With the large H.M.V. works and several more factories on war work, and a large shell-filling arsenal at Hayes, a great many workers - a big percentage of whom were women - were drafted into the town. It was thus only to be expected that, with around 800 Australian patients and staff at the Australian Hospital (St Marylebone School) in the town, a great deal of fraternization took place and much open love-making was to be seen, much to the disgust of the local gentry. Some kids used to earn themselves money by keeping a lookout for couples so that they should not be disturbed.

The wages at the Arsenal were good but the work very dangerous. In September 1917 an explosion killed 28 women. Also, the nature of the work turned the skin a shade of yellow. Those working under these conditions had a free allowance of milk per day. Rationing of food became very strict, but, as always, a black market existed. All sorts of things could be bought, some made at the factories, toys, petrol lighters, bracelets, lamp standards. I have to this day a ring made from part of the Zeppelin brought down at Cuffley.

Every piece of ground, including part of the Park and Recreation Ground, the golf links and Ealing Common were turned into allotments and the Council placed swill bins at various places to collect scrap food for pig-feeding. We used to collect acorns and sell them to Mr. Ewer at Dormers Wells Farm. As I mentioned previously, for my part with a five-rod allotment next to my father's in 1916 I earned quite a lot by growing all sorts of plants for sale, and also lettuce and wallflowers. I got a great deal of helpful knowledge from my father, which has also stood me in good stead.

My grandfather Fuell had reverted back to his old trade from the brickfields. This was that of a tinker. He was well known in the town as "Tinker Fuell". He had a portable grinding machine, with a board on the front, which read "Tinker-Grinder-Umbrella Mender." He was a very good tradesman and could do wonders with a soldering iron. People used to bring him things to mend or grind and us grandsons got roped in to take them back and get the money charged for doing the job.

End of the War and Repercussions

When I started work at the Maypole in August 1918 there were a lot of women employed doing very heavy jobs. The woman foreman had a very good reputation, keeping production going and at the same time making sure of work being done in happy surroundings. A great many of these women were the wives of men employees who had been called into the Army and if and when bad news came great sympathy was shown by all. It was a happy atmosphere to work in and the children used to come into the canteen at lunchtime, so that mums could make sure they had food. In the town itself food was still very short and now air-raid warnings more frequent. There was no law enforcing a black-out, and no air-raid shelters. One Saturday evening I had been with my brother to the "Grand" Cinema, Hanwell, and just as we came out about 10.30 the air-raid alarm sounded. A searchlight mounted on a tram went into action, and gradually made its way along to Shepherds Bush. We had to walk all the way home and guns could be heard in the distance.

Three months went by, and the news of the War indicated that we had the Germans on the run at last. And then it all happened. Can I ever forget the scenes that followed when at 11 o'clock on 11th November

1918 news came through that an armistice had been signed? All work stopped. Cheering and singing some made their way into the Hospital but were asked to leave as unfortunately a local wounded man was very ill; he did in fact die that evening. The celebrations continued well into the night.

But the repercussions soon began to show. Within weeks the Hayes Arsenal shut down, and of course all other factories making munitions had to discharge workers so that they could re-organise to get back to normal production. A lot of these workers had not foreseen that this was bound to happen. They were quite happy earning a good wage by making weapons to kill, and had made no provision for the end.

"FOR WHAT CARETH A MAN WHETHER HE IS MAKING A
FEATHER BED OR A BULLET PROVIDING HE IS GETTING A
WAGE PACKET?"

During the winter of 1918-9 the King's Hall, with the Rev. Broadbelt, did a wonderful job of bringing some very good talent to the town. On Saturday evenings there would be brass band concerts, or visits from famous singers, at the cost of a very moderate entrance fee. Also, on Saturday afternoons there were picture shows for children. Although the War was over it was not a very enjoyable Christmas time. There was a lot of unemployment. Men being discharged from the Army (some had been prisoners of war for quite a long while) often found their homes broken up, and their wives gone off with someone else. The local press reported several such cases.

The Australians began to move out and in March 1919 Beaconsfield Road School opened as a school. The Maypole Institute returned to normal and provided employees with a wonderful fully-licensed club, for which they paid 6d a month. As the men returned the women gradually left; and the company found jobs for several employees who had lost limbs or had other disabilities due to the War. All types of sport were encouraged and at the rear of the factory was a football field and cricket ground. There was also a fairly large orchard (where now stands the Quaker Oats factory) in which the firm granted plots to any employee who applied for one. This I did, and my plot had four large apple trees

and two pear trees. I had this for 2 years, keeping it clean and cultivated; but then the land was sold. Because I had kept my piece clean I was granted a plot at the south side of the factory, almost adjoining the Church Path. This also had apple trees, and 1 plum and 1 damson. In the autumn of 1925 I had so many apples I was selling them for 2/-(10p) half a bushel picked. I had this plot three years.

Land that had been cultivated for wartime allotments in the Park etc., was cleared and re-grassed and Dad lost the first of his plots. Both my elder brothers became unemployed, but not for long, as they found work in the building trade. At the end of October 1919 my grandfather died (aged 72) and he left me 5 golden sovereigns in a purse. These I had until 1932 when, due to being unemployed and married with 5 boys, I sold them for 58/-(190p) each. At the time of writing this (1978) their value would be about £26 each.

Good Offer Turned Down

About this time the piece of land in Cambridge Road where now stands the telephone exchange was offered to my father by Dr Windle for £100. Despite all good advice he turned the offer down. The councillor who bought it built 8 houses on part and sold the remainder to the Post Office for the first part of the new telephone exchange, which was built by Halse Ltd. of Woolwich and opened in 1925. My father worked on it and did most of the drain work, of which he was proud. He could not say the same about the work on the houses, which he also helped to build. At the time the builder's son was Building Inspector for the Council, and some of the work which normally would not have been passed was granted certificates. He was eventually dismissed for unprofessional conduct.

Emigration, Local and Far

Towards the end of 1919 the Australian government provided passages for wives and children to join their husbands in Australia, and the day came when the tearful good-byes were said by many Southall parents seeing their daughters and some grandchildren off at Tilbury. After a time news was received as to how they were settling down, and it was not all good.

Canada was also calling for skilled building workers, offering far better wages than were paid in England. Wages at that time were 10½d to 1/- per hour for labourers, 1/1 to 1/3 for painters, 1/4 to 1/6 for bricklayers and tilers and 1/6 to 1/8 for carpenters. Plasterers were nearly all on piece-work. Highly skilled joiners and electricians earned 1/9, and plumbers the same. I knew personally several that did emigrate, men that had worked with my father. Most of them did very well and sent for their families.

Unemployment was very bad in the town during 1919-20, but then things started to get better. A large number found employment at Hayes. The H.M.V. Gramophone Company got back to peace-time production. A large piano factory, the "Aeolian", opened. Harrison's stamp works, Scott's jam factory, the British Electric Transformer Co. and the X-Chair factory all helped to find more work.

Although a great many used to walk along the canal or ride their bikes to work the railway fare (workman's return) was only 5 pence. Workman's fares were issued to all who travelled to reach their destination before 8 a.m. The fare to Paddington was 10 pence, and to Farringdon Road 11 pence. Some Southall men used to work at the Maypole Company's head office in London.

Town Development

After a postponement during the War the Council started to build council houses, and the first 8 were built by Hanson's on the right-hand side of Norwood Road between Norwood Bridge and the "Wolf". They were occupied in February 1921. Around 1920 the Australian government offered the St Marylebone School, which they had used as their hospital, and all the land and three houses and a lodge, for a sum said to be £28,000. This the Council turned down, the excuse being they were not certain of the structural soundness of the building; and it would have added at least 6 pence to the rates. Over the years this has been seen as a grave and costly mistake. The site was purchased by the Catholic authorities, who used it as a girls' school for a few years, selling the land for the building of St Joseph's Drive and Beatrice Road for about the same sum as they gave for the whole site. Later they closed the school, which was demolished in 1931. When the Council later bought the

remainder of the site to build a new civic centre land values had gone up so much they paid more for that piece than the whole would have cost them.

In 1924 a great deal of change was taking place in the town. The station bridge was widened on the right hand side. Etherington's Farm in North Road was bought by the Council and was being developed for council houses. Woodlands House, a very old house in North Road, was demolished and the allotments were taken. Dad lost his second one. Although Lady Margaret Road was being made and was to go straight to the Ruislip Road progress was being held up because two houses in Shackleton Road stood in the way. Maybe it took a tragedy to get things going. One house was the residence of Mr. George Winchester who, one very foggy night (11th January 1925) whilst on duty as night-watchman at the Maypole Works, fell into the dock and drowned. Before the year was over the houses were demolished and the road through.

Some Personal Recollections

I had started courting again. This time the young lady lived in the "Rising Sun" cottages and for three months this meant walking at all times over there to meet her, and walking back home to Cambridge Road after seeing her home. This was a distance of about 2 miles each way, part of which was through Clifford's rhubarb fields. A footpath used to go from the old "North Star" to the "Rising Sun", Cranford.. It all finished after a good bust-up. I called for her but was told she had gone to Heston Fair. In those days this was held on the first of May and in the streets near the church. I found her and did not like what I saw, so that was that. They say love is blind, but looking back now I think I should have had my head examined earlier.

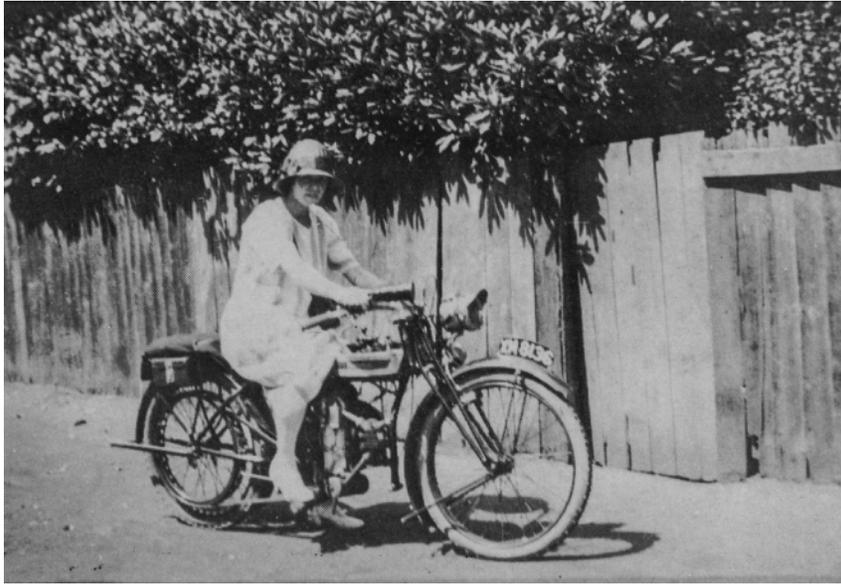
My mate Bob had got himself a motor bike, an Enfield, and of course I had to get one. So when a 2³/₄h.p. belt-drive Douglas came along it was mine for £27.(I was still making money from my gardening). The 5/- (25p) you paid for a driving licence entitled you to drive any type of vehicle. Now we could show off, and we went to the Isle of Wight over Easter week-end 1925. There was a nice group of lads and lasses from the works who used to get about together, some pairing off eventually. I myself was doing my best to court a young lady who lived in Marlow

Road. With the motor bike things began to go my way. Soon I offered to take her to visit her sister at Reading. So we started off one Sunday morning, but rounding the corner into Cranford Lane I skidded and we both came off. Shaken but not hurt we carried on, only to run into a thunderstorm just before we got to Reading. We arrived soaking wet. After drying out it turned out fine and we enjoyed ourselves and had a safe ride home. But the romance did not blossom.

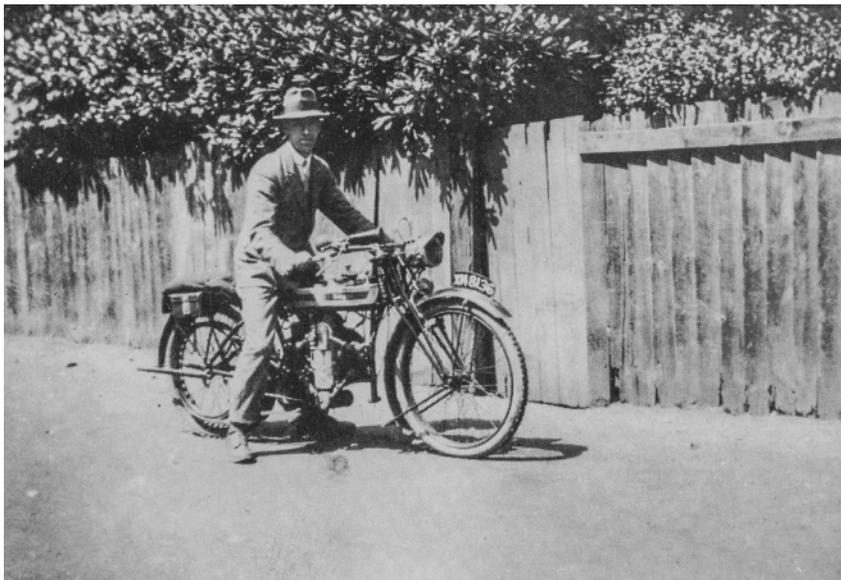
My mate Bob and I made good use of our motor bikes, going several times to my friends the Willis family, who had moved to Barnwood from Trowbridge to take charge of the boilers after helping to install them at Barnwood Asylum. His son George, the same age as us, had also got a motor bike so we saw a great deal of the Gloucestershire countryside. One Sunday evening in September we found ourselves at the old Heston Airport and noticed that people were queueing up to take a flight over London lasting ½-hour in a 3-seater biplane, fare 15/-each. Although it took all the money we had with us we made the trip. What a thrill, we went as far as Tower Bridge and back.

Adventure at Cup Final 1925

One of the men I worked with, Tich Richards suggested we go to Wembley to see the Cup Final between Bolton Wanderers and West Ham. Leaving off work at twelve o'clock we got to Wembley by bus, and Wembley High Street was one mass of people. We made our way towards the Stadium and across the railway line, which runs alongside. Scaffolding and ladders were still up on this side of the Stadium. Seeing men climbing the ladders and getting in we waited our turn and got up to the first ledge. My mate had just made it when a quart bottle of beer crashed down from somewhere up above. It missed him by inches, otherwise he would have been killed. We carried on and eventually finished up in the 10/6 seats, where we stayed and watched the white police horse scene, which has so often been described, and Bolton beating West Ham 2-0. It was estimated that there were 120,000 inside the Stadium, but there were three times that number on the outside. It was of course thought that the Stadium would be big enough to hold all that wanted to come, hence no tickets.



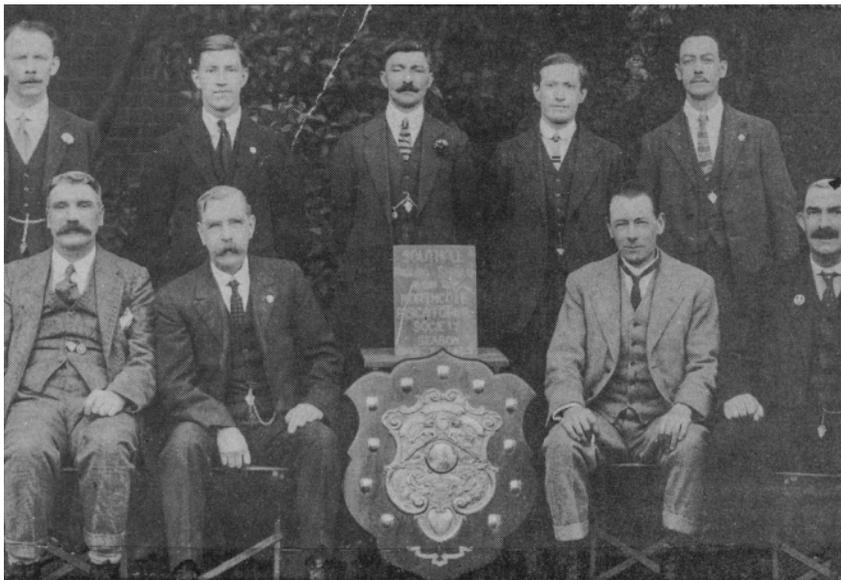
Maud On My Bike



Myself 2³/₄ Belt
Drive Douglas 1924



1922 Southall Football Club 1923
 T. Holding
 F. Buttery W. Harry
 F. Fidler (Capt) A. Wenham W. Strevens
 B. Morey F. Watts B. Alford L. Heard J. Hunt



Northcote Arms Fishing Club 1924
 F. Wilkinson R. Meads F. Griffith B. Oaten
 J. Shepard (Sec)
 F. Purvey G. Lang Alf Hanson G. Tichurst

Town's War Memorials

During 1920-21 a committee was formed to consider what form a memorial to those men killed in the War should take. Most seemed to favour a hospital, but funds were very slow coming in. Perhaps this was due to the fact that there were plans for several more memorials in the town. In February 1921 a monument to old boys of Featherstone Road School was unveiled by Field Marshal Sir W. Robertson. Most churches had their own. On January 9th 1920, a bronze tablet to the 22 men of the Maypole who died was unveiled by Mr. Otto Monsted at the Institute. Eventually the town's memorial, which stands in the Green, was erected, and unveiled by our local M.P. Col. Sidney Peel. It did not meet with the approval of a great many townspeople. But who was to foresee that 24 years after that day, 8th April, 1922, the adding of just "1939-45" on that same memorial was all the town thought necessary to honour those who died in the Second World War? ("Lest We Forget"). The site it stands on already belonged to the Council, they having bought the Manor House and 5 acres of land from the Scarisbrook family in 1915 for £6,100. A lot of brave men died for 1/- a day. Their lives were lost, but a good many in Southall made money out of the wars.

Times Change

Due to food shortages the Maypole could not hold its annual party in 1920, but a great change took place in the working hours. All those who were not on production of margarine, who had always worked day shifts, had their hours changed to 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with 1 hour for lunch, and 8-12 on Saturdays. All others worked 8-hour shifts, 6 a.m. till 2 p.m. with a ½ hour break, 2 p.m. till 10 p.m. with a ½ hour break, and 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. with a ½ hour break. The night shift started at 10 p.m. on Sunday night. No change was made in the wages, but there was nothing extra for shift work and nobody under 18 was allowed. This meant that a lot of new foremen were created, but again everything went according to plan and every department had a representative on a works committee. There was no trade union.

Sports and Parties

Sport in the town was very well catered for. There were bowling greens at the "White Swan", the "Plough" Inn, Norwood Green and the

"Northcote Arms": also, the Gas Works green in The Straight and. the Maypole green. In cricket Norwood Green C.C. and Southall C.C. were the best known, but most works had teams. In football Southall F.C. had a very good team in the Athenian League and again most works and clubs had teams in junior leagues. For fishing there were three clubs in the town, Southall Anglers, Working Men's Club A.C., and Northcote A.C. Tennis was mostly played on private courts. There were already in the town a Working Men's Club, a Conservative Club and a Labour Club, and now there was to be a new one, for in August 1919 the newly-formed British Legion opened at the "Romans" in the Green. This incorporated the "Old Contemptibles."

One event which used to draw a crowd on August Monday, and raise money for charity, was the Battle for the Bat, a cricket match on Norwood Green between teams from customers of the "Wolf" and "Lamb" pubs. The winners retained the large bat, about 6 ft long, which was displayed on the front of the pub. Another sporting incident recorded about this time happened at a cricket match being played at the Gas Company's ground, which runs parallel with the railway. During the match a Mr. Dandridge gave the ball a mighty swipe and it landed in a railway truck going west. Only a six could be given! Although not in Southall, Botwell Mission Football Club, which played on Hayes F.C. ground, were having a great deal of success and used to draw a large number of supporters from Southall.

There was great excitement in the football circles of the town when Southall F.C. reached the final of the Amateur Cup and played Clapton on Millwall's ground at New Cross, losing 2-1. I think most of Southall's males were there. Dad and us three brothers saw the match. Southall's success had made it very difficult for secretaries who were running other teams in the town, their players preferring to watch Southall's Cup rounds. The result was that Minor League fixtures got well behind.

Due to workers moving back home the population of Southall had only slightly increased over 1914 figures, to 29,000 in 1920.

Things in the town were getting back to normal, and the Maypole works party was to take place on the second Friday in January. Each employee was issued with a ticket, which included tear-off slips for refreshments. Work finished at 2 p.m. Part of the factory had been cleared

and catering contractors moved in and prepared for the dinner, which started at 6.30. It was beautifully laid out like a banquet. When everyone had finished and the various toasts had been rendered, we all moved over to the Institute where the management made speeches and any presentations. Time was then allowed for the wives and families to settle in, and a first-class concert would be staged, with all well-known London artists. This would go on till 11 p.m., after which the hall was cleared and dancing would go on till 3 in the morning. Besides all this a beer bar was installed in the women's canteen, the beer coming straight from the barrel ad-lib. All forms of gambling took place, and you can guess what the atmosphere there was like. Everyone was paid for any time lost, and work was back to normal with the night shift Sunday night. Those who had to work through the party week end were taken to a dinner in London and a show of their choice. I attended four such parties, and they all followed the same pattern. At the first one, after the concert, not being able to dance I with my mates drifted over to the beer canteen; and you can guess the result, I had just enough to be merry. On the Monday morning, back at work, a lady in the same department had something to say about it, and it resulted in a group of us going to the dancing classes held at the Institute, so at least some good came from it.

Among other things the firm did was to allow broken boxwood to be sold at 6 pence for a truck-load. You had to have your name put on a list kept by Mr. Watts, maintenance foreman, who told you which day was your turn. On two occasions I took a truckload to Elthorne Park Road, Hanwell, for an elderly man I worked with.

Our Own House

Early in 1922 our landlord died and in April we had notice our house would be up for sale with all his other property. The sale was held at the "George and Dragon." I had left work at 2 o'clock and Mother asked me to go along. It was announced that Mr. Brown wished that his tenants should have the first chance to buy. Most did, but I had to come home and tell Mother that they had all been sold for £300 each, except the end one which was slightly bigger and sold for £345. Ours had been held over till 12 o'clock the next day, to give us the time to find the money. After a big rally-round the money was paid to the agent in the

morning. No. 2 (now 17) Cambridge Road was ours. Solidly built, bay-fronted, with garden back and front, three up and three down, outside toilet and coal-house, it was in our family till 1956 when it was sold by my brother's widow for £5,200. We thought that was inflation, but in September 1976, noticing one of these houses was up for sale, out of curiosity I enquired the asking price. £11,500! 54 years older, and not altered in any way - but £11,200 more. If that isn't inflation gone mad!

Growing Up, Beginning to Show

Just about this time, for what reason need not be stated, I had been in conflict with my mother and decided I would join the Army. So I made my way over to Hounslow Barracks to join the Royal Hussars. Finding the recruiting sergeant I told him I was 18. He told me to wait, and whilst doing so the R.S.M. came in. He asked me my age in such a bullying way that I told him I was 17½. He told me to go home and come back when I was 18. Maybe it was for the best.

On the Thames at Windsor during the summer four of us used to spend week-ends in a punt on the Thames. We would go down to Romney Lock, Windsor by cycle, hire a punt for £1 plus £2 deposit and with provisions and a Primus stove enjoy ourselves till Sunday evening, then ride home.

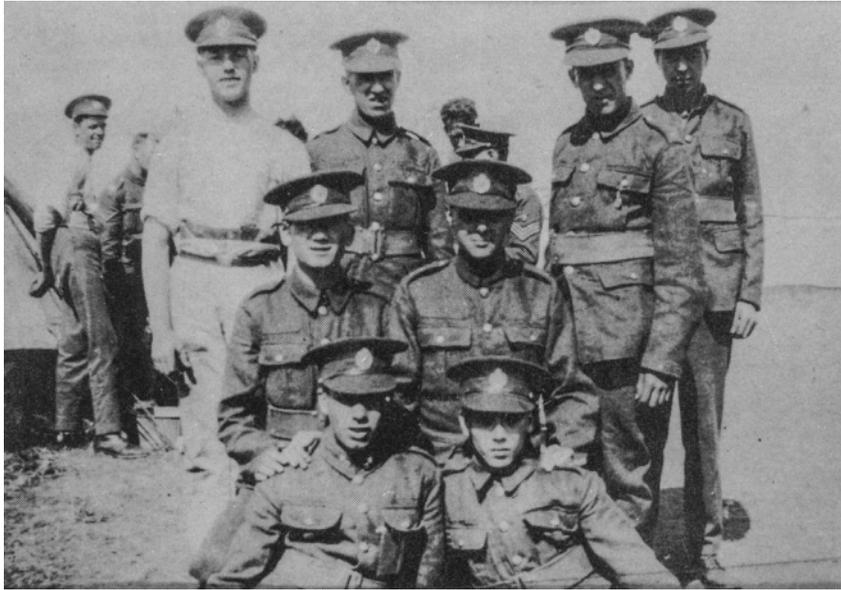
Southall High Street on Sunday evenings got the name of "Monkeys Parade", the reason for this was the habit of lads and lasses parading up and down trying to catch the eye of someone they fancied. Some of course did pair off, and maybe that is how the tunnel under the railway got nicknamed "Devil's Tunnel."

The Maypole, End of the Road

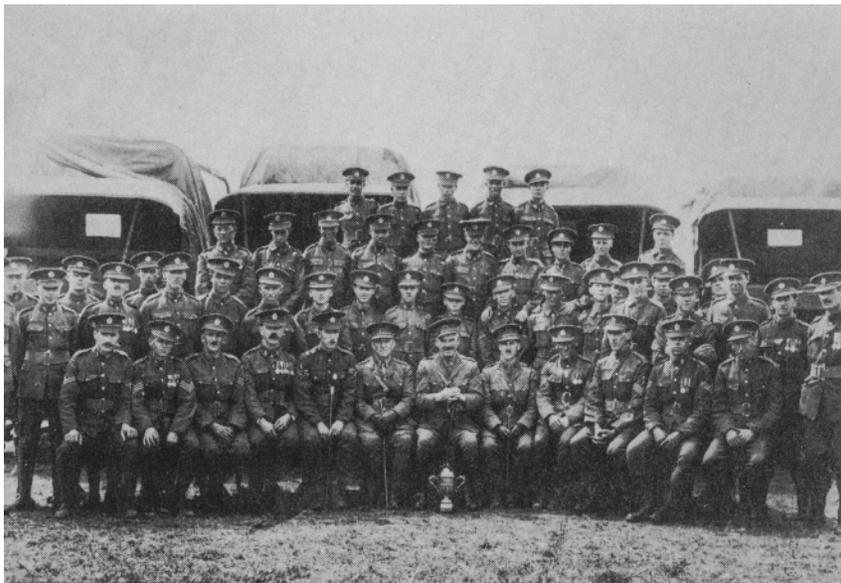
Towards the end of 1922 a start had been made on Maypole's new shipping sidings on the left-hand side of Bridge Road. Built by A. & B. Hanson from designs, which had been for competition in the "Architect's Journal" it was completed in August 1923, and it has been acknowledged as one of the finest examples of brickwork in the country. Having reached 18 I was moved to work in this new department. It soon became obvious that it was much too big and, because of the distance the boxes of margarine had to travel on roller conveyers, a great deal of waste



Enjoying Ourselves On The Thames
At Windsor



Manston Camp
1925



317 Coy. R.E. Searchlight Batt.
T.A. Southall 1925

happened through boxes getting smashed by accidents. When in 1925 it was announced that factory was to close this was one of the first parts to be axed.

The firm encouraged all kinds of sport and I interested myself with the football teams. All the facilities and equipment were provided, with transport for away games. An outing was arranged to Erith Oil Works to play their works team. We were shown over the works, and I remember the large silos with copra and ground nuts in. One of our party was lowered into one on a bosun's chair and came up with a hat full of monkey nuts. We watched as great presses squeezed the oil out and left the residue, a flat slab which was used to feed cattle. A very nice outing, though we lost the match.

A great blow hit the town when in May 1925 news came that the Maypole factory was to close down. Lever Brothers had taken over controlling interest and works study investigators had reported that overheads were much too high, and the whole site too big; and that alteration to bring production into the pre-wrapped era would be too costly. What a tragedy! A very happy work force, nearly all unskilled, facing notice. There was no such thing as redundancy pay in those days. But the management did everything it could to make the going as human as possible. There had been a pension fund to which men over 21 paid 6d a week. The printing works under Mr. Jordon was the first to go, then all outside contractors' men; then came the big new Shipping Department in which I was working. Six of us were called to the works office and given a week's notice one Friday to finish the next. Included in that 6 was my mate Bob's father. When next Friday came we were paid 2 weeks' money and in my case I had to sign that I had received my pension of 2/6 (12½p), being 5 weeks I had paid. So at 21 and 5 weeks I was out of work and drawing pension money. I was allowed to keep my garden plot to the end of the year. Also, I did return for about two months later that year on a temporary basis.

Territorial Service

In February 1923 Bob and I joined "B" Company, 8th Battalion, Middlesex Regt. T.A. at the Drill Hall, Church Road, Ealing. Capt. Parmeter was commanding officer and the resident Sergeant Major Tom Baynum. We made a great success of this and won 4 cups between us,

taking part in all that was going on and being best recruits of the year. We used to go to Bisley for rifle practice, fire our course on the range in the morning and do service as markers in the butts in the afternoon, or vice versa. This was always on Sundays. It was part of your service obligations, which were a minimum of 15 drills, firing a course and 14 days annual camp. The yearly bounty was £2:5:0. Our first camp was at Seaford. I enjoyed it - 1/- (5p) per day, but plenty of good sport and exercise.

We went to Shoreham to camp in 1924 but before that, in February, we attended a dinner at the Great Central Hotel in honour of the Middlesex Regiment, in the presence of its Colonel-in-Chief the Prince of Wales. Then, on 9th May, we formed a guard of Honour with 80 more marching four abreast with the Grenadier Guards into the Stadium when the King opened the Wembley Exhibition; and on Saturday 6th June the Regiment formed a guard of honour at Brentford when King George opened the Great West Road.

Just after the summer camp at Shoreham with the 8th Coy., T.A. Bob and I were persuaded to transfer to the newly-formed 317 Company (Searchlight) R.E., T.A., 317 Coy. R.E. Searchlight Batt. which had been started at the Southall Drill Hall. We were both promised promotion. This did not take place, and it turned out to be a great mistake. It was not a happy company. We had to go to the Rainham range for our rifle course and the summer camp was at Downham in Kent. Exercise was mostly at night. The 1926 camp was at Manston Aerodrome, and I was not sorry when my four years T.A. service was finished.

I chose for the title of this book "Growing up with Southall from 1904". My growing up is now complete. I am 21, a man. My upbringing made me clean both in habits and mouth. Having to work hard to get what I wanted has made me realise the value of money. I was brought up to know right from wrong and made to know what to expect if, as we all do as youngsters, I went a little off course. I used to be proud to say I was born in Southall, but most unfortunately things have changed so much for the worse that when asked the same question in 1976 one tells the truth with some misgiving. Southall has had many different names in its history; but when walking through the streets with even public notices displayed in three different languages maybe perhaps another

change, such as "Southallabash" would be in order. Who could have foreseen what has happened in 74 years. From a vestry of Uxbridge to an urban district (Southall-Norwood) to a borough (Borough of Southall), only to become part of the Borough of Ealing. Even Middlesex has vanished from our postal address. A population of just over 11,000 has risen to 33,000. (1925)

I cannot say how grateful I am to the teachers of North Road Schools who made you learn. I am proud to be an old Maypolean; my 7 years working there gave me a great start in my working life.

In writing these memories I have at all times tried to be as factual and impartial as possible. Maybe one day I may attempt to carry on and try to record more of the growing pains of Southall, which I am sure will be a great deal more difficult. It is my hope that whoever reads my efforts will get some idea of how Southall developed.

R. J. MEADS

ANECDOTES AND TRUE STORIES

(Chanted by us kids).

Mr. Payne (Reid's) a jolly good man. He goes to church on Sunday to pray to God to give him strength to cane the boys on Monday.

(On Band of Hope outings. Shouted from the brakes).

We're all tee-totallers here, we don't want none of your beer. Shut up your public houses, we're all tee-totallers here!

(During election times).

Vote, vote, vote for good old Burney. Kick old Chamberlain out the door. For Burney is our man and we'll have him if we can, and we don't want Chamberlain any more.

(Advice to us from my father).

Don't forget you are never too old to learn if you are never above being told.

(Advice to me by my father).

Having got to the allotment early one Sunday morning my father was very annoyed because I had forgotten something. He said, "Son, never go about this neighbour-hood without a hat". And when I asked why, he said: "You're that bloody wooden-headed and there are so many woodpeckers about that you daren't take that risk!". Since then I have always worn a cap.

(A true story from Otto Monsted's - Maypole).

Six men had been discharged one Saturday morning in 1899. Among them was Jimmy Lovall, a big strong man but a bit of a simpleton. He was a very henpecked man and no doubt got a good telling off for getting the sack. So he turned up as usual for work on Monday morning, and the foreman found him on the melting floor, where he had left off on Saturday. He sent him to Mr. Birch, personnel manager, to whom Jimmy

told of his telling-off by his missus. He got his job back and I saw him get his 25 year service medal; and of course he got a small life pension when the works shut down. His wife worked in the works laundry during the War.

(A knock-out).

When it came to spring cleaning time at Mrs. Norman's, Clare Lodge, where I was house-boy, the carpets would be taken up and she would borrow a lad from Abbott's to give me a hand to beat them. They hung over a line, he on one side with a carpet beater, me with a walking stick on the other. Both were bashing-away when unbeknown to me he leaves off and comes toward the carpet to say something. The next thing I knew he was lying stretched out on the lawn unconscious, with a lump on his forehead as big as a duck-egg where I had hit him with my stick. Taken into the house he said that it was an accident. Later I took him home to Bankside Cottages, Hayes Bridge. Later on he married a great friend of mine and we had a good many laughs about it.

(Hard work. Quick wit).

When Wimpeys started developing the Greenford estates the gangers they employed for their road work were real hard slave drivers. Labour being very plentiful it was their practice to get everything possible out of their gang, and then sack a few each night at an hour's notice. This would put the fear of the sack in the others to keep them going. One ganger walking along found one man with a straight back and bawled at him to get a move on, to which the man replied: "All right, Rome wasn't built in a day". To which the ganger answered: "No, but it might have been if Wimpey's had had the contract".

(A fair cop, but friends).

Walter Moore's plantation was our venue for a scrumping expedition. It ran along the side of the canal towards Spikes Bridge. Four of us boys went along the towpath and I was left as a dodger-out while the others went in to get the apples. Unbeknown to us we had been watched by the ranger Tom Farrance, who grabbed me and dragged me some distance

from the hole, and I got several swipes from his stick. I ran off, leaving him to catch the others. In later years Tom became Propagating Officer on the Parks Department and a great friend of mine, as members of the Southall Horticultural Association.

(A meal in advance).

A new man had started in the gang my father was working with when Windsor Road was being built, and when it came to breakfast-time next day it was noticed that he was not eating. On being asked why he said his wife was always too lazy to make him a breakfast in the morning, so he had it last thing at night.

(Costly smokes).

Mr. Plaistow was noted for being very bad-tempered on Monday mornings, and when he was building St. George's Church Hall, Lancaster Road he appeared one Monday morning and approached one of his men. "I have been watching you make that cigarette. How many do you smoke a day?" "About 30", said the man. "Well, you were six minutes making that one, so if you make and smoke twenty in my time, that's two hours I get no work done. You will finish up tonight".

(Just a joke).

Whilst at Manston Camp in 1926 with 317 Coy. R.E. (T.A.) several of us had time off in Margate. Larking about on the beach Johnny Jee fell fast asleep. Gently we covered him all over with sand except his face. We placed his hat on his chest, and with stones made the letters R.I.P. We then moved some distance away. You can guess what happened. He woke up with a group of people around him, having a good laugh. He was not amused, but forgave us later.

(A catch).

One of the trick questions which we used to try out on strangers was; "How many streets do you think there are in Southall?". Various numbers would be forthcoming. The right answer is "7" - High Street; King Street; White Street; Spencer Street; George Street; Johnson Street; Clarence Street. It is still so today.

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