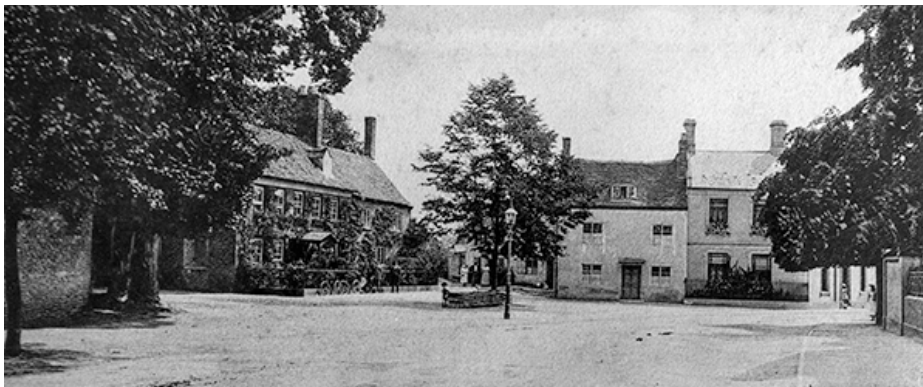


Issue: 84 January 2022

Bicester Historian

The monthly newsletter for Bicester Local History Society

Edwardian Views



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6th January 1882

OLD PEOPLE'S DINNER AT THE CORN EXCHANGE

This ancient festival which has run its half-century of years, was celebrated on Tuesday last at the Corn Exchange, and, as on former occasions, passed off with the greatest éclat. The good things were partaken of by no less than 250, 156 of that number being seated, the remainder of the dinners being sent to their homes. It is to Messrs E.H. Paxton, Finch, Thomas, Averill, Campin and Camozzi that the old people of Bicester owe their thanks for being able to meet and enjoy themselves to their heart's content at least once this year.

The committee throughout has met with every encouragement, and, as was stated during the afternoon, hardly a person called upon failed to comply with the request of subscribing towards the good object.

As the time appointed for dinner drew on, the "old stagers" could be seen wending their weary way towards the Crown Hotel, and in a short time the spacious room was completely filled, the committee and carvers being only too anxious to superintend the arrangements. The room had been bedecked with evergreens, and in conspicuous places were placed appropriate devices, such as "Charity never faileth," "God is love," "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," "A contented mind is a continual feast," "Better is little with fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith," "Those who give to the poor lend to the Lord," "Put thou thy trust in the Lord and be doing good, and verily thou shalt be fed," and directly over the stage, facing the entrance to the room, was suspended "A Happy New Year to all." These, we understood, were lent by Mr Rest, who was paid very high compliments from all parts of the hall for the sumptuous repast which had been prepared under his supervision.

The chair was taken by Mr S. Averill, who was supported by several tradesmen of the town, and the duties devolving on the carvers were no slight ones, as might be imagined. The room presented a scene of the liveliest description. The fair ladies did their utmost to keep the guests supplied with good things. The huge joints of meat disappeared with alarming rapidity, whilst others were promptly brought to fill up the vacancy. After the joints had been removed and the plum puddings were "fit," anyone might well have asked the meaning of such a commotion among the ladies, but a few minutes' patience would have dispelled any grave doubts of fear, as they were only anxious to have the honour of each bringing in a plum pudding, and to see the array of these looked as though Mr and Mrs Rest had taxed the exertions of the whole of the establishment in

making them alone.

The Union inmates were amongst the company, and a peep only inside the room was enough to satisfy anyone that the old people were going at it merrily, and that their intention was an afternoon of thorough enjoyment.

At the conclusion of the feast and the many toasts, Mr Campin thanked everyone for the flattering manner in which the toast of the Committee of the Old People's Dinner had been received. He could assure them it was their delight to see them enjoy themselves. This year they had been backed up in a very handsome manner by the hunting gentlemen, alluding more especially to those who were staying at the Crown Hotel, and there was hardly a single person who had not responded to their solicitations. The gentleman he referred to, and Messrs Shillingford, had contributed enough to dine 60 persons. Mrs Drake and the Earl of Jersey had also behaved most liberally.

The number of people here today was a sufficient proof that their efforts were appreciated. During the 50 years the dinner had been given there had not been a single complaint. He was exceedingly sorry the clergy were not represented, the thoughts of which deeply pained him, and their absence was to be regretted. The collectors of the fund, he trusted, if they were not spared, might find others to take their place, and that they might all meet next year on such an auspicious occasion as the present.

12th January 1917

O.V.R. INSPECTION



BIOESTER DETACHMENT OF THE VOLUNTEERS. [Photo by J. T. Mountain.]

On Sunday last, January 7th, the local Detachment of the Oxfordshire Volunteer Regiment were inspected at 9:45am on the lawn of Bicester House, by Colonel Calley, of the Southern Command, and they were also present the Duke of Marlborough, Colonel Granville, and the following officers of the 1st Battalion O.V.R.: Lieut.-Colonel A.D. Godley, Captain Cooper, Major S.J. Collcutt,

and Lieut. A.F. Walden (Adjutant). The Detachment was under the command of Lieut. H.G. Fane, with Sec.-Lieut. C. Dewar as second-in-command.

The inspection over, Colonel Calley then proceeded to address the officers and men of the Bicester Detachment. After complimenting the men on their appearance, he briefly outlined the new regulations which the Volunteers would be required to fulfil under the Volunteer Bill. Those men who signed on under the new regulations would be provided with arms, and a grant would be allowed the Corps to provide each man with uniform, which would not be of the present green-grey, but the proper khaki. These men would be medically examined, and, provided they came up to the medical fitness required, would be in "Class A."

Recruits in this Class would have to attend fourteen drills per month, and later when the recruits course was over, ten drills per month. These ten drills would be varied. For instance, two would be set apart for musketry, two for trench-digging, two for bomb-throwing, etc., and the military would go as far as they could in providing instructors.

The man who could not fulfil the requirements would be termed "Class B," and would be like honorary members of the Corps.

The Duke of Marlborough then addressed the men. He said he did not think Colonel Calley need have any fear as to the fitness of the men. Oxfordshire was a healthy county, and the old men had got more in them than they thought, and he had not the slightest doubt but that the majority of the men would pass for "Class A."

Lieutenant Fane then drilled the Detachment in the adjoining field after which the officers departed for Thame.

After the inspection Mrs H.G. Fane presented the "Harris" Inter-section Challenge Cup to the section-commander of the winning section for the month of December. No.10 Section were the winners, Corporal Colby receiving the Cup, which he will hold for one month.

17th January 1941

WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN PETROL CHARGE

A charge of stealing four petrol cans, containing eight gallons of petrol, value £1 6s 8d, the property of the Air Ministry, was preferred at Woodstock on Tuesday against Rosslyn Bernard Wilkinson, of the R.A.F. He pleaded "Guilty."

There was also a charge of receiving the petrol cans and petrol, knowing them to have been stolen, against Peter Austin Turney, aged 20, an agricultural fitter, of The Star Garage, Weston-on-the-Green, who also pleaded "Guilty."

Giving evidence in the charge against Wilkinson,

Special Constable Godwin, of Weston-on-the-Green, said he observed two men leave a public house in the village, go to an R.A.F. lorry, take out four petrol cans and put them in a car.

Det.-Constable Cassell said that Wilkinson admitted stealing the petrol, which he put in a man's car, but did not receive any cash for it. Witness recovered two full tins of petrol and two empty ones from a garage. A fine of £3, with 7s costs, was imposed.

In the case against Turney, Special Constable Godwin said he recognised the defendant as one of the two men who went to the R.A.F. lorry and put the petrol cans in the car. Turney told him it was his father's car.

Det.-Constable Cassell said Turney handed him the four petrol cans and said an airman offered him the petrol, which he did not pay for. Defendant was fined £3 and 7s costs.

20th January 1989

COUNTRY HOUSE SET TO BE KNOCKED DOWN



Col. Anson in front of Tusmore Park House, which the owner wants to demolish

Tusmore Park House, near Bicester, may be demolished and replaced by another house.

The country mansion and agricultural estate of 1,566 acres was sold in 1987 to the trustees of the Al Mulk Settlement, a trust set up for the benefit of Mr Wafic Said's family. Although the sale price was not disclosed the guide price was £4.5 million. If the plan is approved by Cherwell District Council, the house will become the home of Mr Said, a Middle Eastern businessman, and his family.

Since the estate was sold in 1987 the trust has obtained permission from Cherwell to extend the existing house built in the mid-1960s by local builder Norman Collison for Lord Bicester, who was killed in a road crash in 1968. The estate manager, Col. Gus Anson explained that Mr Said felt that the proposed extensions were not satisfactory and would be very expensive.

Col. Anson said: "So it was thought it would be more practical to demolish and start again - and it could be a bit cheaper."

The house has not been lived in since the previous owner moved out following the sale. Col. Anson expected demolition would start as soon as possible after planning approval was given and rebuilding would take two to three years. But he did not know how much the project would cost. He explained that Mr Said was an

international businessman who had lived in England for many years and had a home in London.

Cherwell's south area planning officer Mr Bob Duxbury said Tusmore Park house was not a listed building. Adding: "I think the intention is to replace the existing house with a classical Georgian-style house similar to the house previously on the site."

Plans to be put to Cherwell's south area planning committee in March show the new house would include six bedrooms all with en suite bathrooms - compared with eight bedrooms in the existing house - a large

drawing room, dining room, library and an entrance hallway. There would be an indoor swimming pool and games room in the basement.

After the death of Lord Bicester in a road crash three years after the existing house was finished, the estate was left to his eldest daughter, the Hon. Mrs Gillian Collins. Following her death in 1981 the estate was left to her husband Mr John Collins and their son and daughter.

After the sale to the trust Mr Collins went to live at Chetwode, near Bicester.

Talks Update

These talks may be held at the Clifton Centre or broadcast via Zoom. We continue to monitor the situation and will advise members nearer the time.

Monday 21st February

Mark Davies comes to tell us about some of the amusing incidents involving Oxford's Mayors and Freemen over the last 500 years in his talk, **What a Liberty!**

Monday 21st March

Sheila Allcock talks on the history of council houses in Oxfordshire and the rest of the country in **Homes Fit for Heroes.**

Monday 25th April

Our illustrious editor, Matthew Hathaway, will take us through the changing faces of Bicester's streets as described in his recent book, **Bicester Reflections.**

Correction

In the bumper 80th issue of the newsletter back in September 2021 we included a short piece in the AGM Chairman's Report about the sad death of long-time member Esme Timms. This included the picture below of a young Esme being held outside The Star Inn by Mrs Mary Ann Lang. In the piece we said that Mrs Lang was Esme's Grandmother, but unfortunately we were mistaken and Mrs Lang was actually just a friend of the family.



Roll of Honour

The following are the local men, and those buried locally, who died in the Second World War, 80 years ago.

Gunner Alan Howe, of Bletchingdon.

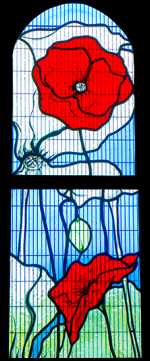
Died: 25th January 1942 Aged: 26 Served in: Royal Horse Artillery

Sergeant Reginald Stanley Raines, of Wallington, Surrey.

Died: 29th January 1942 Aged: 27 Served in: Royal Air Force
(Died on service at RAF Bicester, buried in Caversfield)

Sergeant John Ruddock.

Died: 29th January 1942 Aged: 20 Served in: Royal Air Force
(Died on service at RAF Bicester, buried in Caversfield)



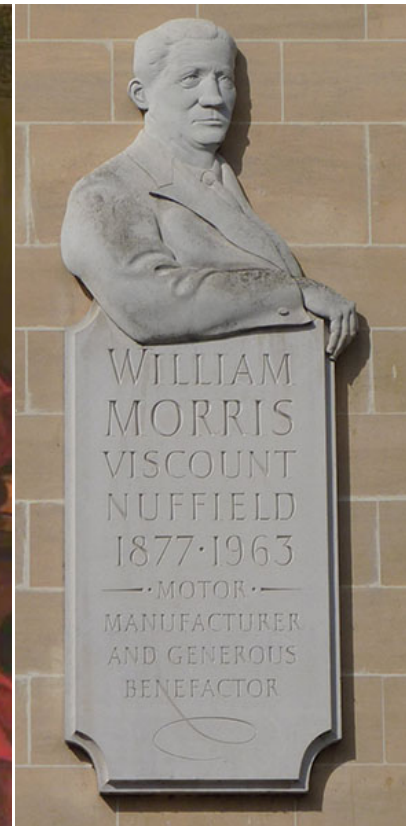
2022 Walks

This year we plan to restart our programme of guided walks for members with Liz Woolley taking us around Oxford in March and Pat Snelson taking us around Bicester in the summer.

You should already have received the details for Liz Woolley's walk, Lord Nuffield & Morris Cars in Oxford. This will take place on Sunday 6th March and places are limited so bookings need to be submitted to Sally James as soon as possible, and no later than 27th February.

William Morris, later Lord Nuffield, probably did more than any other individual to transform Oxford in the twentieth century, physically, economically and socially. His success as an industrialist allowed him to become one of Britain's most generous benefactors; he gave away the equivalent of £1.5 billion in today's money, to causes including health, education and academic research.

He assembled his first car, the Bullnose Morris, in 1912 at his garage in Longwall Street. On the walk we will visit this and some of the other city-centre sites associated with one of Oxford's most famous sons - buildings in which Morris



repaired, made and sold bicycles, motorcycles and cars, and institutions which benefited from his incredible generosity.

The walk will start at 2pm at the junction of Holywell Street and Longwall Street. It follows a linear route of approximately 1.5 miles, taking about 2 hours, and ends outside Nuffield College.

Then, later in the year, long-time member of BLHS and architecture

enthusiast, Pat Snelson, will guide us on a walk around Bicester town centre.

Bicester has a surprising amount of architectural interest and many of the different building styles and decorative fashions of its long history can still be seen in the town's buildings. This walk serves as an introduction to Bicester's architectural history and will explore its central streets and view the



facades of some of the town's most distinctive buildings.

The walk will begin at 3pm outside St Edburg's Church, then proceed down King's End to Bicester House, double back along Church Street and the Causeway, through Market Square and up Sheep Street, finishing at the Methodist Church. We will have regular stops along this 90 minute / 1 mile long route, but few opportunities to sit down.

Again, places are limited, but to help accommodate as many members as possible Pat will repeat the walk through the summer on the following dates:

- Sunday 12th June
- Sunday 3rd July
- Sunday 7th August

The booking form and further details will be sent out within the next month.



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