

WESTENDER

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FROM OUR ARCHIVE

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This edition our cover photographs show part of the Swan Nurseries shop. Some of the staff are seen in the photo above. Haskins Garden Centre is now located on the site.

Our pictures come from a collection of images taken by Adrian Fray in the 1950's, copies of which are now held in our society archive courtesy of Adrian.

As you can see the Garden Centre is somewhat changed today.



West End Local History Society & Westender is sponsored by



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STORIES BEHIND A MUSEUM OBJECT: “George Coster & the Methodists of West End”

By Sue Ballard, PhD

On display in West End Museum is a brass tablet, which reads: “In loving memory of George Coster preacher, steward, teacher, and school-worker for many years. The leader of his brethren in the erection of this chapel in 1900 and its clearance from debt in 1920. A man of integrity, zeal and generosity. Born 1853. Died September 1920”. The plaque comes from the Primitive Methodist Mission Hall in Swaythling Road, known more simply as the Primitive Methodist chapel.



George Coster’s Memorial Plaque now in West End Museum.

What was Primitive Methodism? The various forms of Methodism all derive from the teachings of the Anglican preacher and theologian John Wesley (1707-1791). Wesley was ordained into the Church of England in 1728 and 10 years later founded his own ministry, preaching outdoors as he travelled the country. He appointed his own ministers, who had not been ordained, to lead small local groups in prayer and the movement came to be known as Methodism. Yet although in his early ministry he had been barred from many parish churches, Wesley himself remained within the Church of England and always insisted that Methodism was well within the traditions of the Church of England and did not see it as a separate religion. Its main differences were in the use of lay (unordained) preachers and preaching out of doors. Yet by the early nineteenth century there was a certain level of dissatisfaction with their leadership among Methodists and a growing feeling that Methodism was moving away from the original teachings of John Wesley.

Under Wesley’s leadership Methodists had been actively engaged in many social issues, such as prison reform and the abolition of slavery. However, over the course of 65 years since its foundation, mainstream Wesleyan Methodism developed a leadership of ministers with ornate churches and formal services, which appealed to the middle classes. Wesleyan Methodists now refused to become involved in politics. This resulted in them being seen by some as closer to the Church of England than to their Methodist roots and, by their inaction, effectively supporting the status quo, which oppressed the poor. A number of splinter groups arose, one of which was Primitive Methodism, formed under the leadership of

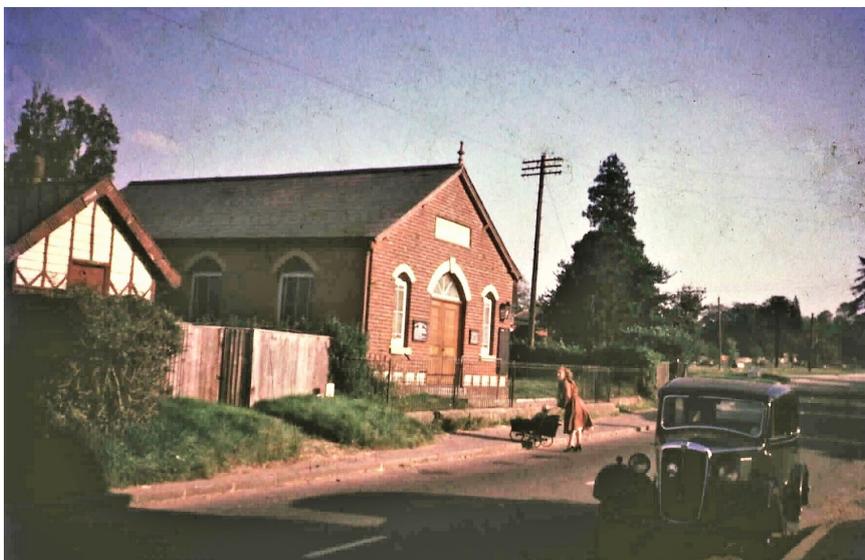
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Hugh Bourne (1772-1852) between 1804 & 1810. The term “Primitive” was intended to reflect their return to the original, primitive, form of Methodism. Primitive Methodists focused on lay preachers without leadership or ordination and stressed simplicity of worship in plain and simple buildings. They concentrated on missions to the rural poor and became active in supporting social and political reform, including temperance, male suffrage (despite 19th century Parliamentary reforms, working class men did not gain the vote until 1918), the Labour Movement and the debate over the Corn Laws which contributed to poverty. However, during the early 20th century, after many of the reforms had been achieved, the various Methodist movements began to focus on their similarities rather than their differences and several splinter groups began to merge once more, culminating in their formal union in 1932 to form the Methodist Church of Great Britain.

There were Methodist groups in West End from the last decades of the nineteenth century. The 1887 directory shows that in addition to the original Anglican church of St. James, built in 1838 with seating for 610, there was a Bible Christian Chapel with seating for 200 – at almost a third of the size of St. James, representing a substantial proportion of the population. Although it is not found in the 1884 directory, a report in the Portsmouth Evening News on 18 December 1883 refers to Mr. Gater presiding over a meeting of the West End & South Stoneham Branch of the Liberal Association held at the Bible Christian School Room at West End, suggesting that it had been founded sometime before 1883. The Bible Christian Church was a form of Methodism founded in 1815 by a Wesleyan Methodist preacher, William O'Bryan. It was notable for recognising the ministry of women, known as “Female Special Agents”, although there were only 5 female ministers in 1907, when the Bible Christian Church amalgamated with other Methodist groups. After this date the Bible Christian Chapel at West End no longer appears in the directory.

A proliferation of new religious establishments sprang up in the area at the turn of the 20th century. The West End Primitive Methodist Mission Hall which George Coster helped to establish in 1900 was modest in size, with seating for 120. By 1907, there was also an Evangelical Mission Hall seating 280, as well as a Wesleyan Chapel at Moorgreen. The 1912 directory shows the addition of a United Methodist Chapel seating 200, a Church of England Mission Room at Moorgreen seating 100 and a Church Army Hall – a meeting hall, not a place of worship. The Church Army, founded by Reverend William Carlisle in 1882, is an evangelical organisation operating within the Church of England. The Church Army Hall disappears from the directory some time between 1925 & 1931.



The Primitive Methodist Mission Hall in the first half of the 20th century.

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The sudden burgeoning of local religious establishments may be due in part to a general revival which began with the 1904-1905 Welsh Revival, the largest Christian revival in Wales in modern times, growing out of a conference at Blaenannerch in September 1904 led by a Methodist preacher, Joseph Jenkins, which resulted in mass conversions there and later at New Quay and Bethesda. The revival was taken up by Evan Roberts, a young coal miner who was training to become a Methodist minister and claimed to experience visions. Though short-lived in Wales, the revival spread throughout Britain over the next few years, coinciding with the rise of the labour movement and a general dissatisfaction with the established Church among working class youths. However, the Primitive Methodist Mission Hall which George Coster helped to found predates this revival, from which we can assume that his religious conviction was long-standing and deep-rooted. George Coster is not found in the Index of Methodist Ministers held by the John Ryman Library (University of Manchester), perhaps because in keeping with the original principles of the Primitive Methodists he did not believe in formal ministries but considered himself to be a lay preacher rather than a clergyman, although the Index does include other ministers who were Primitive Methodists.

George Coster was born at East Dean, near Lockerley in the summer of 1852 and was baptised in the Anglican parish church at East Dean on 15th May 1853. He was the son of agricultural labourer Charles COSTER, born at Finchley Common in Middlesex & his wife Ann GALTON, formerly a dairyman's servant, who was born at West Tytherley, Hampshire. Charles & Ann married at West Tytherley on 13th May 1847 and settled at East Dean, where they had four sons, George being the third. George and his siblings were all baptised in the Anglican parish church and his father remained within the Church of England, which raises the question of when (and why) George converted to Methodism.

George's father, Charles Coster, worked as a carter for James Lavington, a farmer of 356 acres in 1861, who by 1881 had expanded his holding to 706 acres. Charles was awarded several prizes over the years by the Romsey Labourers' Encouragement Association. In 1859 he won 1st prize for a tidy cottage and well-cultivated garden, in 1872 sharing the prize for the same with his wife Ann. A report in 1867 shows him to have been award 30 shillings (worth £130.50 today) for having lived 8 years as carter to Mr. Lavington and never having returned with his team in a state of intoxication. The previous year he had received 20 shillings. The other teamsmen (carters) received much smaller awards for more years without intoxication, suggesting that drink was a common problem for carters. Many individuals from other classes (shepherds, ploughmen, seedsmen & drillmen, rickmakers & thatchers, turnip hoers and domestic servants) received smaller awards for far greater achievements. Award-winning shepherds received between 10 and 20 shillings for rearing over 150 lambs each with the loss of only 2 or 3 ewes. As well as being relatively excessive, Charles Coster's award was the only one to name an individual donor – William Edward Nightingale (born c.1794) of Embley House at East Wellow, Romsey, a magistrate and former High Sheriff of Hampshire (1828) and the father of Florence Nightingale. Why did Nightingale single out Charles Coster for such a generous reward? When he died in 1890 at the age of 73, Charles Coster had worked as East Dean's parish clerk for 33 years.

The G.R.O. marriage index shows that in the summer of 1875, at the age of 22, young George Coster married Jane Vere. No parish record exists for their marriage, suggesting that they married in a non-conformist chapel. Perhaps it was Jane who introduced George to Primitive Methodism. Jane was 4 years younger than George and census records show her to have been the daughter of agricultural labourer James Vear and his wife Mary Ann and to have been born at Bishopstoke or Otterbourne (about 3 miles north of Bishopstoke), although there is no record of her baptism in Hampshire – again, perhaps

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because her family were non-conformists. The birth of a Jane Vear was registered in the Winchester Registration District (which incorporates Bishopstoke) in 1857, her mother's maiden name being recorded as Appleton.

George & Jane initially lived at Twyford, where their eldest daughter Annie Louisa and son Charles were born in 1876 & 1878 respectively. Sometime between 1878 & 1881 they moved to West End, where they settled in Allington Lane, taking up permanent residence. Their youngest child Ethel was born there in 1882. Annie Louisa worked as a domestic servant, first as a scullery maid and later as a cook, before marrying William Tapper in 1917. She died within the Romsey Registration District in 1932 at the age of 56 and does not appear to have had any children. The 1911 census shows Charles working as a farm hand at Storrington, near Pulborough in Sussex with a wife Agnes, but no children. The census shows them to have married around 1904, but I have not found a marriage record for them and Charles does not appear in any records after 1911. It is possible that he died in the First World War. Ethel was working as a dress-maker in 1901 and in the spring of 1909 she married a Baptist minister, Arthur Charles Durman. Ethel & Arthur settled in Maldon, Essex, where they had two daughters, Olive & Myrtle.

For many years, George worked as a gardener for corn miller and farmer John Gater of Black House, West End. George died at home in Allington Lane on 24th September 1920 at the age of 67. His memorial tablet states that he cleared the Primitive Methodist chapel from debt in 1920. This indicates that the chapel was financed with a loan, repaid by public subscription and that George paid the final outstanding amount from his own savings. Probate records show that he left effects worth £613 to his widow Jane, worth £24,190 in today's money – a tidy sum for a gardener who had given so much to his faith.

A report in the Hampshire Advertiser on 1st April 1921 tells us that on Good Friday that year, the 21st anniversary of the West End Primitive Methodist chapel was celebrated with a tea accompanied by a musical recital by the Southampton South Front Primitive Methodist Choir, at which the brass tablet commemorating George Coster was unveiled. The address, by Mr J. Quinton on behalf of the trustees, spoke of George's "great activity and faithfulness", having worked for many years "untiringly and ungrudgingly, although suffering great weakness".

Newspaper reports show that George's wife Jane worked for the Primitive Methodist Mission Hall alongside him. At the Harvest Festival in September 1917, George gave the treasurer's financial report and the Rev. W. Sawyer presented Mrs Coster with a Braille watch for the blind, subscribed for by family and friends in gratitude for over 20 years of work "through sunshine and rain in school and pulpit", suggesting that she was a Sunday school teacher and a lay preacher herself. Indeed, in her book "The Swaythling Road Methodist Church" (WELHS Occasional Paper No.5) a personal memory of the church, its services and various church groups, Marjorie Bodman states that Mrs Coster was superintendent of the Sunday School and that "the church was affectionately known as Mrs Coster's Church". Newspapers indicate that Jane Coster continued her work for the Mission Hall after George's death. On 30th October 1922 The West End Primitive Methodist Band of Hope (children's temperance society) held their annual demonstration. The ample tea afterwards was provided by Mrs Coster and Mrs Houghton and Mrs Coster received a vote of thanks after the evening's entertainment. The 1939 Register shows George's 82 year old widow Jane living with her daughter and son-in-law Ethel & Arthur Durman at Maldon, Essex; she is described as "incapacitated" and died 23rd December 1939.

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The Primitive Methodist Mission Hall shortly before demolition.

Following the final service on 14th May 1989, the Primitive Methodist Mission Hall in Swaythling Road, which George & Jane Coster worked so hard to establish, was permanently closed after only 89 years of use; thenceforth services were held at the Hilldene Community Centre.

THE MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF WILLIAM RUFUS

A Review by Roy Andrews

Andy Skinner, who works for Southampton Council extolling the pleasures of our history to the city's school children, was our speaker at the February meeting. He explained that we all know of the story of Rufus dying in the New Forest while hunting having been shot by an arrow. The story goes that he was shot accidentally by Walter Tyrell, perhaps, who fled the scene leaving a charcoal burner named Purkiss to find the body and take it to Winchester. But was it an accident? William the Conqueror lost two sons in hunting accidents in the New Forest; was it murder or was it possibly suicide? Nobody will ever know for sure. And Rufus was not the only king to die mysteriously; others such as William II, Richard II, Richard III and Edward V had deaths which left a lot of questions unanswered.

Then to bring his personal interest into the equation, Andy told us that the name Walter Tyrell was in his family tree so was it possible that thirty six generations back, Walter Tyrell was his relation? And for those in the audience who did not take note, it would mean that Andy had 68,719,476,736 ancestors, perhaps!

Nobody knows for sure if the Rufus Stone is in fact where he died; other locations, such as Park Farm, Beaulieu, are possible sites and at the time it was talked of as an accident. It was only later that suggestions of a murder started to be circulated by the history writers. Rufus had a half brother who was Bishop Odo of Bayeux and a brother Robert who, on the death of their father, became Duke of Normandy.

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Upon the death of Rufus, who was unmarried and possibly 'gay,' the crown should have gone to Robert (as Robert II) but Henry I quickly had himself crowned King on 5th August 1100 - so had he anything to do with the death? Henry later met Robert at Alton and persuaded him with a large cash handout to go back to Normandy.

Meanwhile Walter Tyrell had fled to France where he founded the Priory of St. Dennis. A descendant of his, James Tyrell, was implicated in the mystery of the Princes in the Tower, so perhaps murder did run in the family.

With all the conspiracy theories around the death of Rufus, one William of Ockham investigated and found that all things being equal the simplest solution, namely an accident, was the best.

Andy finished by showing us a picture of his children and explained that they might not only have the blood of Walter Tyrell in their veins. His wife has researched her family tree and found she was related to a Purkiss family in the New Forest, perhaps descended from that charcoal burner!

A vote of thanks to Andy at the end was given by Alec Samuels who in just a few minutes created a very entertaining mini speech which itself was roundly applauded.

LEPE BEACH AND THE D-DAY MULBERRY HARBOURS

A Review by Roy Andrews

Dr. Henry Goodall was our speaker at the March meeting giving a talk filled with a host of facts and figures on the building and use of the floating harbours but it was the slide presentation of these massive constructions which I felt really portrayed the massive effort required in their building.

Churchill first saw the need for temporary harbours during WW I in 1917 but did not renew his idea until 30th May 1942 when he issued a memo requiring the planning to build harbours which could float up and down with the tide and be anchored in readiness for an invasion of Europe. Six months later, he was forced to issue another memo, on 10th March 1943, as very little had been done towards planning or building these structures.

Eventually work started in many locations around the coast of southern England to build the 213 floating concrete Caissons that would be required. It is thought the name for the harbours, Mulberry, came from the design team in Bath who had a Mulberry tree growing outside their office. There would be two harbours, one American and one British, and they would also require 4miles of piers and pier heads and 6miles of floating roadways

Lepe beach became a production line for some of the Caissons. Work would start at one end of the beach, then at each stage of construction, the Caisson would be moved along the beach on rollers and the next would be started and then follow it. At the end of the line, the finished Caisson would be launched sideways into the Solent and taken into deep water and sunk out of sight of enemy spy planes and later refloated when required. It sounds simple until you realize that each Caisson was 200 feet long, 60feet high and weighed 60,000 tons.

Anchors had to be specially designed to hold these behemoths by Allan Becket and 200 were built capable of each holding 30 tons.

Much of the concrete and brick groundworks required for the Caisson construction can still be found at Lepe including the beach long leveled platform, along which the Caissons were rolled, and the launching site.

The Caissons were given the code word 'Phoenix'. 'Whales' were the floating hinged roadways, 'Spuds' were the 200feet long piers at the end of the Whales and 'Corncob' denoted the 59 old Block ships sunk as a breakwater. Churchill had the idea of using old ships while on a visit to President Roosevelt in the USA upon seeing old ships moored on the Hudson River. As the President commented, Churchill has a hundred ideas a day, four of which are good.

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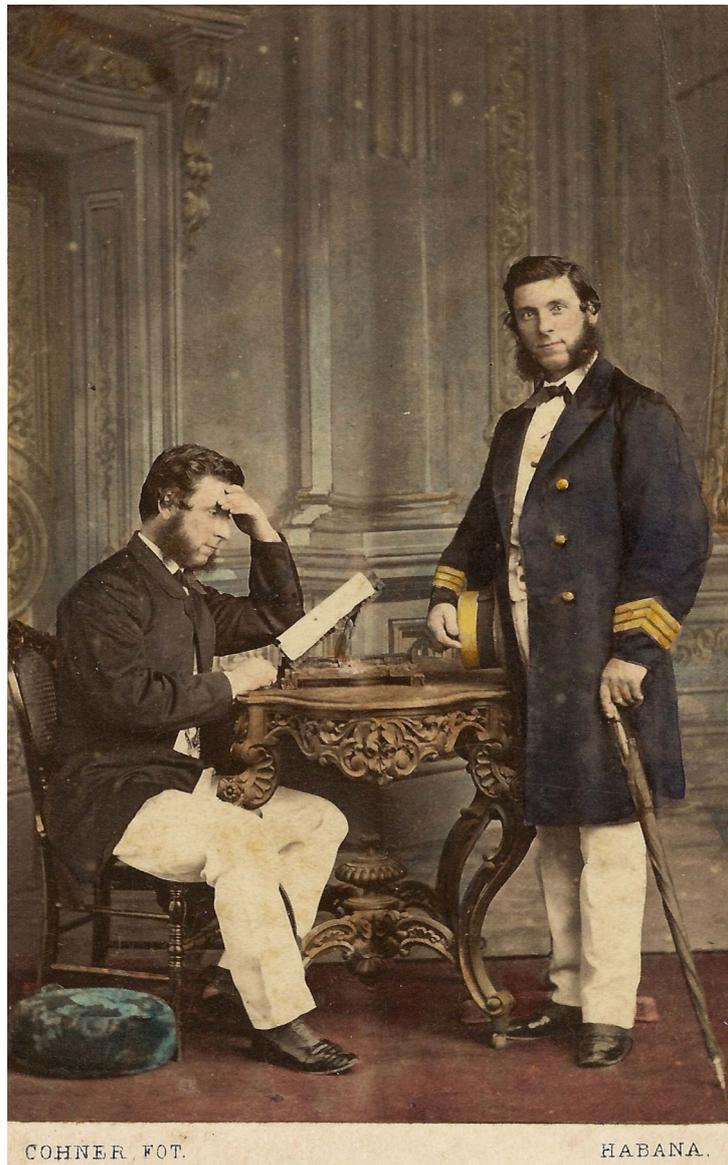
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It required 15,000 men to tow, plant and maintain the Mulberrys and they proved a great success once installed on the French coast. However an unprecedented four day storm, beginning 19th June, destroyed the American harbour and although damaged the British one survived. Even so in the first hundred days, 2,500,000 men, 500,000 vehicles and 4,000,000 tons of supplies were landed onto the beaches from the Mulberry. Planned to be used for three months, the harbour was still in use eight months later.

As one of Hitler's henchmen Albert Speer said after the war *'The Allies made the Atlantic Wall irrelevant because they bypassed it by means of a single brilliant technical device.'*

CAPTAIN JOHN BRUCE OF HICKLEY FARM, SOUTH STONEHAM By Paula Downer

In the West End Museum archives is a superb studio photograph of John Bruce in the uniform of an officer in the service of a West Indies Steamship Company. The photograph was taken by Samuel Alexander Cohner (d. January 1869) an American photographer active in Havana, Cuba. The photograph appears to have been taken in the early to mid 1860's.



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The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company was established in 1839 by royal charter as there was a need to improve the transatlantic mail service to the West Indies. In 1840 the Admiralty awarded a contract to the company whereby it was agreed that a fleet of not less than fourteen large and powerful steamships were provided to carry mail twice a month to Barbados in the West Indies from Southampton or Falmouth. There was also a requirement for these ships to carry guns similar to those used on Her Majesty's War Steamers in case they were needed for war service.

Fourteen wooden steamships propelled by paddle wheels were built, known as the West Indies Mail Steamers. The Atlantic crossing from Falmouth took about nineteen days to reach Barbados. Once there, the ships delivered mail to the many Caribbean islands returning to England some four to six months later. A depot and coaling station were established on the island of St. Thomas to bring in stores and coal for the steamships, this then allowed smaller ships to serve between the islands and the larger ships to run the transatlantic service. St. Thomas was recognised as the 'hub' of the local mail and passenger services.

After 1843, the mail service from Falmouth was discontinued by the Admiralty as it did not offer a safe anchorage subsequently Southampton became the favoured port, an office, Dock House, had been built in 1841 with a store in Winkle Street. Initially, a coaling hulk 'North Britain' was used as a depot for the crew, stores and engineering facilities until an dedicated engineering factory was built adjacent to the Outer Dock in 1847. Here boiler and engine parts were manufactured.

In 1850 the Admiralty renewed the contract for a further eleven years, requiring faster ships with an additional route to Brazil every month. five new steamers (Amazon, Demerara, Magdalena, Orinoco, Parana) were built, speed being increased by using feathering floats (blades) on paddle wheels so that the floats could pivot instead of remaining fixed.

The largest ship 'Parana' was built locally by Money Wigram & Son's at their Northam Yard in Southampton. The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company proposed that iron be used for the hull but the Admiralty insisted that the ships were built in wood so that they could be requisitioned as frigates during wartime. Launched 15th July 1851, the Parana's hull was coppered and her masts rigged before being towed to a shipyard on the River Clyde to have her engines fitted.

Wooden ships were prone to catching fire and as ships became larger timber was becoming more difficult to source to the length and shapes required. Many years of timber being felled for shipbuilding had depleted much of the English forest. After RMS Amazon caught fire on her maiden voyage the Admiralty relented and from then on ships were allowed to be constructed in iron. Messrs John and Robert White of Cowes, Isle of Wight built the 'Solent' as a composite ship, i.e. wooden hull with iron frames. The engines were fitted at West India Dock in London. In service, the ship ran at twelve knots but she was capable of steaming at an impressive fifteen knots. Her maiden voyage to the West Indies on October 3rd 1853 was commanded by Captain John Henry Jellicoe (father of Admiral Sir John Jellicoe). RMS Solent was used mainly for the local island routes.

The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company's contract was again revised in 1858, provided that the average speed was increased for the mail run to South America. Royal Mail Ships Oneida and Magdalena were put into service. RMS Oneida was fitted with a more efficient screw propeller capable of twelve knots.

In London, 1861 John Bruce was granted a Certificate of Competency as Master Mariner which sanctioned him to command Merchant ships.

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From Lloyd's Captains Register I was able to trace the early career of John Bruce (which indicates his place of birth as Banff, Scotland, 1829) :-

1861 served as Mate on RMS Parana to United States

1861-3 served as Mate on RMS Seine to West Indies calling in at St.Thomas

1863 served as Mate on RMS Oneida to West Indies

1863-4 served as Mate on RMS Magdalena to West Indies and Brazil

1866 served as Mate on RMS Atrato (first iron hulled ship built for R.M.S.P.) to West Indies calling in at St.Thomas. Atrato was sold to R.Penney, Shoreham 1868-9.

A Mate was responsible for the operational and maintenance duties of a Merchant ship, overseen by the Captain (or Master).



**SS Atrato of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co.
by William Frederick Mitchell
Image courtesy of <http://commons.wikimedia.org>**

(William Frederick Mitchell lived for most of his life near Portsmouth, painted Naval and Merchant ships, before moving to Ryde, IOW c.1881)

The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company ships left Southampton with Her Majesty's mail on the 2nd, 9th and 17th of each month or the following day if it was a Sunday. The latest time for posting letters for the British West Indies being the day before. The steamship to Havana, Cuba left Southampton on the 2nd day of the month.



**Arrival of Royal Mail Steamer, Dominica, West Indies
Raphael Tuck & Sons postcard courtesy of <https://tuckdb.org/items/105155>**

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On November 3rd 1863 John Bruce married, by licence, widow Emily Ward of Hickley Farm, West End, South Stoneham. The marriage, performed by Incumbent J.W.Hatherell D.D. at St.James's Church, was attended by John's father, George Bruce, Gentleman. John Bruce, a bachelor, is described as an officer in the West India Service. Emily Ward's (née Trodd) late husband Edwin James Ward (d. April 1858) was a Yeoman, having occupied Hickley Farm since 1852-3. *(one wonders how John and Emily met)*



Emily Bruce, sitting on the right
Studio photograph taken by Samuel J. Wiseman, Southampton

The arrival of the Steamship Company brought much needed employment and prosperity to the Danish West Indies port of St.Thomas but unfortunately in the 1850's the island was affected by yellow fever, a disease spread by mosquitoes. Many died. The depot was subsequently moved to the British Virgin Islands which was not ideal as the area was prone to hurricanes.

In October 1867, a storm swept the islands, many ships were sunk, smashed up or damaged, including RMS Solent, and many lives were lost. The RMS Rhone had been lying at anchor near Peter Island taking in cargo for her return crossing to England when, during a lull in the storm, she headed out to sea. A hurricane swept through, forcing the ship onto the rocks of Salt Island, the ship broke up, over one hundred men were killed, not many survived. RMS Wye smashed onto Buck island where many perished. Southampton mourned its tragic loss, a relief fund was set up to provide for the widows and orphans.

(was John Bruce riding out the storm elsewhere ?)

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Memorial to Royal Mail Steamships Rhone and Wye at Southampton Old Cemetery

The land at Hickley in West End, South Stoneham was granted to Queen's College in Oxford by King Edward III in 1344. The lease on the farm placed certain restrictions, for example, according to the sales particulars for Town Hill Manor and Estate dated 1808, the tenant was only allowed to take a third of the oak. *Vast quantities of timber was needed for buildings and shipbuilding, a large amount being required just to build one ship, English Oak, especially that grown in the south of England, was considered the best timber.* Hickley Farm is described as a shooting and sheep farm, its woodlands providing a natural cover for game birds.



Extract from a historic map of West End (OS 1888-1913 series)
'Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland'

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The 1861 Census for England describes Emily Ward as a Renter and Cultivator of two hundred acres, employing six men and three boys on Hickley Farm. A carter, James Pearce was also employed, a horse drawn cart would have been necessary to transport goods to and from the market. Hickley Farm was dedicated mainly to the cultivation of crops with pasture areas set aside for grazing animals. Sheep would have helped to improve soil structure and fertility as the soil in this area was not particularly fertile.

The 1871 Census shows Emily Bruce, aged 42, is Head of the family, a farmer with 156 acres which suggests that her husband John is away at sea. Emily's 20 year old daughter Alice is still at home. According to the Directories for Southampton, John Bruce of Hickley Farm is listed as a Captain between the years of 1865-76, between 1884-7 he is described as a Farmer. John appears to have retired in his late forties/early fifties as he is shown as a Farmer and Head of the family for the 1881 Census; it is worth noting that his occupation as 'Mariner' has been crossed out. There were a number of Agricultural Labourers including the Jewell, Dunford and Pearce families living close by, suggesting that the farm was not highly mechanised. The men would have been needed for the haymaking season, turning grass into animal feed. Unfortunately for Emily and John Bruce, the years of 1873-96 saw the 'Great Depression of British Agriculture', Britain's market was being flooded by cheap grain imports from the prairies of North America, further exacerbated by economical transportation by steamships.



Hickley Farmhouse before 1990, since demolished

By 1889 John and Emily had given up the lease on Hickley Farm and moved to a house in Gordon Avenue, Portswood, Southampton. A servant was employed to take care of the domestic tasks. After John Bruce died 10th June 1903, Emily stayed within the locality, moving to Alma Road, she passed away 3rd November 1912 aged 86.

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The man sitting at the table opposite John Bruce looks so similar, could it possibly be his brother ? he is not in uniform, perhaps he met up with John in Havana, hence the studio photograph, possibly for his brother to take back to England for John's sweetheart Emily in West End ?

RMS Parana's fate - in 1868 engines removed, used as a hulk ship at St.Thomas, in 1876 sold and broken up. She was the last wooden vessel in the fleet.

Hickley Farm is now part of the Ageas Bowl complex, home of Hampshire Cricket. A 999 year lease was sold to Eastleigh Borough Council in 2011.

HATCH FARM - extracts from Albert Fray's Hatch Farm diary (1897) Part 8

By Pauline Berry

Early spring of 1897 has arrived, with the usual daily round of ploughing, drilling, weeding and general repairs. At that time the busy farm-workers were named Brown, Davis, Knight and Sid Harfield.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| March 1st | Came onto rain at dinner time and a good deal this evening ... obliged to leave off threshing the wheat and could not finish the rick. |
| March 2nd | We have finished threshing and got 97 sacks off the machine and paid £3.10 shillings for it ... a rough evening. |
| March 3rd | A rough day ... a lot of rain through the night. Wind almost blew our barn over ... Several trees blown down around here. |
| March 4th | Rough wind and cold, heavy storms ... Davis went to plough but came home it being so wet. |
| March 5th | Fine morning, showery afternoon ... I have been to Town, sold wheat to Leggatt for £7 ... bought manure, grass seed and a pair of boots for (son) Henry, 5s.6d. |
| March 6th | Fine day Our (sister) Eliza had a daughter born yesterday, a fine child weighing 12 1/4 pounds. |
| Sunday March 7th | A memorial service at Chapel for Mrs Bignell, a great many people there. |
| March 8th | Frost this morning ... Mr Willis paid 5 shillings for the rent of his garden at Barnsland (cottage on Swaythling Road) |
| March 10th | We have got a little daughter, born this morning, Mother (Augusta) and child (Rachel) doing well. |
| March 11th | Fine day ... I have begun to thatch the straw rick but Uncle Harry came over, so I left off ... Paid Frank Allen £4.10s. For a second hand bicycle for (son) James. |
| March 12th | Fine day ... I have been to Town, paid £1.9s. for coal ... Crumple has calved today. Mr Blakiston (The Wilderness) 1/3 ton straw. |
| March 13th | Fine day I have finished thatching straw Ted Sheppard came over, sold him 20 sheep at 42 shillings (each) |

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- March 14th Showery and cold Tom Sheppard came and paid me £42. 10shilling. I have been to a sale at Kirkstyle (Church Hill) and bought a 'butler's worker (a type of tray ?) for 10 shillings.
- March 17th Showery day with heavy rain Brown took 20 sheep to market They sold very well.
- March 18th Showers in morning, fine later Mr (Daniel) Haines had a ton of straw. I have been to a sale at Wickham and bought a winnowing machine (for separating chaff from corn). 2 guineas.
- March 20th Fine day, not much sunshine Fred Pearce came and took away a bull and 3 barreners (cows, Topsy, Woodford and Crystal), paid me £41.
- March 21st Sunday Fine, Augusta (wife) came downstairs for the first time after dinner (after 11 days of confinement, following birth).
- March 23rd A fine day Sid carted some dung (fertiliser) for Small I have been to Winters Hill (beyond Durley) and bought many drain pipes (for saturated fields) costing 15 shillings in all ... and a load of Gaslime £2 (for spreading onto mangel ground etc.)
- March 25th Lady Day Fine I have put 2 drain pipes into meadow. Mr Fletcher (his landlord and owner of 200 acre estate) has been to look at the (wind damaged) barn and ordered it to be repaired.
- March 26th Damp morning, fine afternoon I have been to Town and bought (for horse) 2 currie combs, dandy brush, pair braces and a whip for 6s. 6d. Sold old Duke (carthorse) for over £5.
- March 27th A beautiful day, we have been busy And the ground worked beautiful, Tapper the carter has left today.
- March 29th Held the last Parish Council meeting tonight of the old council year. (Albert was a Parish Councillor).
- April 1st Very cold showers, rain and snow. (Drain laying continues).
- April 2nd Fine day. Davis has rolled (Hatch Grange) park for Mr Fletch. Paid Mr Fletcher for the rent and feed off his paddock. £122.
- April 3rd Wet morning and very cold I have done a little smithing this morning Sid Harfield gone to be confirmed at Pear Tree Green Church.
- April 5th Sharp frost this morning. (Ploughing and rolling continued). I and Mother (Augusta) have been to Stoneham Farm this afternoon, Father (George Fray) is very poorly, obliged to keep to his bed.
- April 6th Showery day Finished planting potatoes ... The new carter (Brown) has come this evening, paid 15 shillings for the carriage of his goods.
- April 7th Very cold showers Brown banking (the soil) in Barnsland. Mr Blakeway sent cheque £65 for the milk, eggs and hay.
- April 8th Fine day Cows went into Long Meadow (pasture just north of home farm).

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April 10th	Fine day We have drilled the barley (sow in rows) today and struck water in the furrows.
April 11th Sunday	Fine - Mr Painter all day at Chapel, made two very good discourses, better than usual.
April 13th	Fine day Brown mending fences, Knight cleaned out water furrows ... Father is much better.
April 14th	Wet morning I have been to Town and sold 20 sheep £37, not very dear. Father sold six lambs there.
April 16th	Wet a good part of day Good Friday Men worked till dinner time, not afterwards.
April 17th	Had a lot of rain Davis fetched some timber for Child to repair the barn.
April 18th Sunday	Easter Sunday fine. Sunday School anniversary services at Chapel (Chapel Road).
April 19th	Mr and Mrs Leaves (tailors) came and spent the day with us, brought (son) James a suit of clothe £1.9s.3d.
April 21st	Wet I cared for the sheep and worked at forge (opposite).
April 22nd	Mr Child's men have come to repair the barn.
April 24th	Fetchd 5 thousand spars (long thin pieces of timber) from Gater's Copse, paid 26 shillings.
April 26th	We have turned cows into mushroom meadow.
April 27th	Very warm and thundery Sold Rosie's calf to Fred Pearce for 2 guineas.
April 29th	Davis fetched some board from Town for barn.... Mrs Smith came and marked 20 sheep (for purchase).
April 30th	Fine morning Ploughing, rolling and dragging ground continues ... Mr Blakeways usual account is £58.

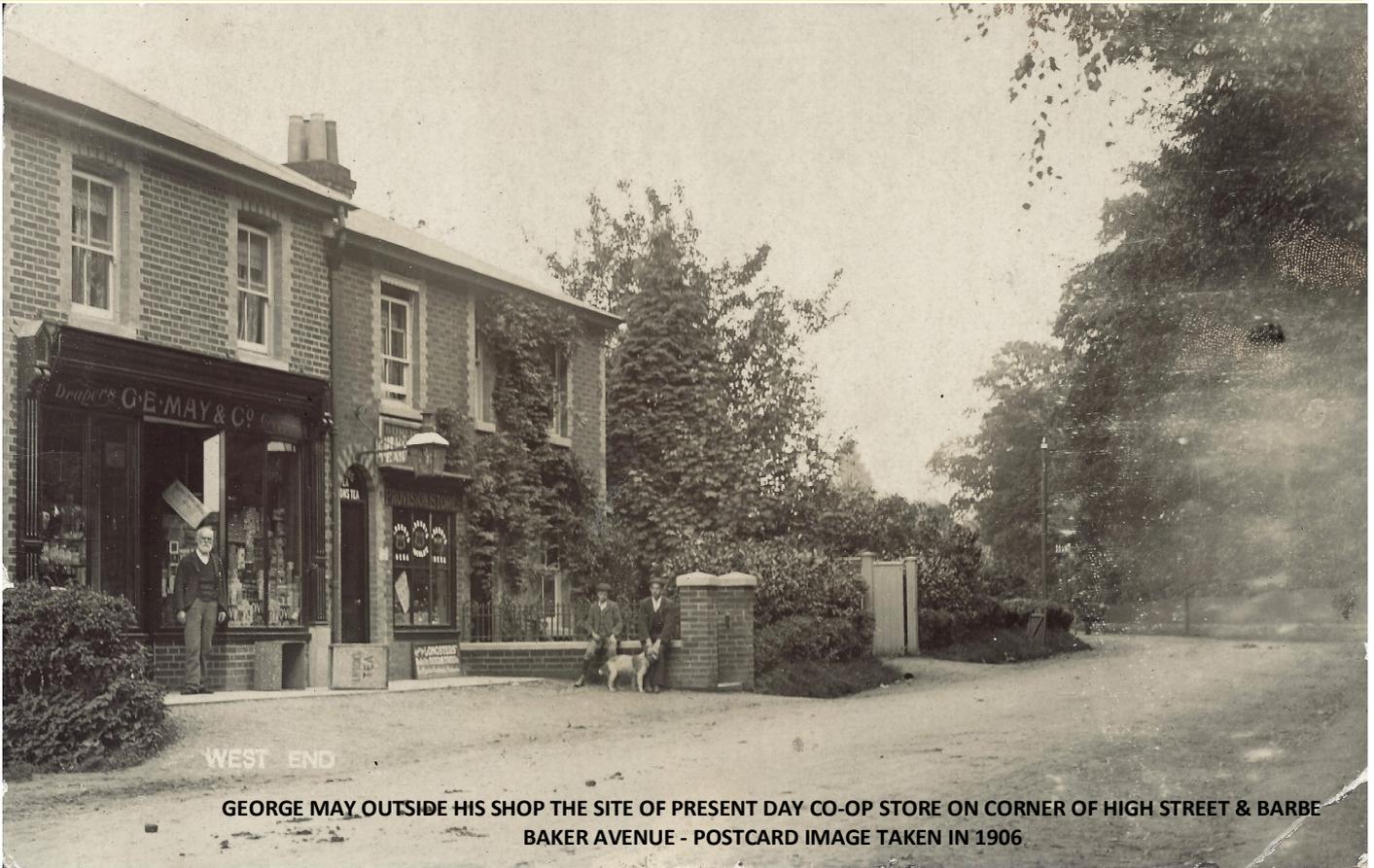
Credits

Thanks to Adrian Fray for permission to reproduce some of his grandfather's diary.

FIRE STATION NEWS

The Old Fire station in West End, since 1996 the site of our museum will reach the grand old age of **80 years of age this year in May and has served as West End's Heritage Museum for the last **23** years - Congratulations!!!**

IMAGES FROM OUR ARCHIVE COLLECTION



RECIPE CORNER - Sue Ballard "Natasha's Tanter Mocha Cake"

The term mocha was first used in 1733 as the name of a coffee variety from Al Mokha in the Yemen. Its first recorded use to describe a combination of coffee and chocolate was in 1849, although the marriage of chocolate and coffee had been known in Italy since the 17th century. Both were luxury imports that arrived in England within a few years of each other. Coffee had been known in the Arab world since the early 11th century, but did not reach Europe until Italian traders introduced it in the beginning of the 17th century. The first coffee house opened in London in 1651.

Traces of cocoa in archaeological deposits from 5,300 years ago suggest that chocolate was known and used even before the establishment of the Mayan civilization (c.2000 BC) in Mesoamerica. Later, the Aztecs prized it more highly than gold as they associated it with their god Quetzacoatl. Their emperor Montezuma II entertained the conquistador Hernan Cortes with cocoa and gave him a cocoa plantation during "peace" negotiations in 1519 which ended with the Spanish Conquest of the Aztec Empire. Chocolate became a favourite drink at the Spanish court after sugar was added to counteract its natural bitterness. Louis XIII's Spanish bride Anne d'Autriche introduced it to the French court in 1615 but it was not until 1657 that the first chocolate houses appeared in England. Chocolate remained a drink until J.S. Fry & Sons produced the first bar of solid chocolate in 1847.

This decadent recipe was created for my birthday by a friend and colleague, Natasha Tanter of Winchester.

Espresso Sponge:

250g soft unsalted butter
250g dark Muscovado sugar
4 large eggs
250g self-raising flour
2 Tablespoons cocoa powder
2 Tablespoons instant espresso coffee powder
50g dark chocolate, melted
2-3 Tablespoons milk

Espresso Filling:

300g dark chocolate
50g unsalted butter
2 teaspoons instant espresso coffee powder

White Chocolate Frosting:

80g white chocolate
30g butter
60g sour cream
130g icing sugar sifted
cocoa powder or coffee beans to decorate.

1. *Preheat the oven to 350F / Gas 4 / 180C (160 fan). Grease two 21cm diameter deep sandwich tins.*
2. *Cream the butter and sugar, then beat in the eggs one at a time.*
3. *Fold in the flour, cocoa and coffee powder.*
4. *Add the melted chocolate and thin the batter with the milk.*
5. *Pour the batter into the cake tins and bake for 25 minutes, until the cakes are beginning to come away at the edges, are springy to the touch on top and a cake-tester comes out clean. Leave the cakes in their tins on a wire rack for 10 minutes before turning out and leaving to cool completely.*
6. *Espresso Filling: Put the chocolate, butter and instant espresso powder in a bowl over boiling water (not touching). Whisk together to combine, and spread over the top of one of the cakes and sandwich them together.*
7. *White Chocolate Frosting: Melt the chocolate and butter in a bowl over boiling water. After it's cooled a little stir in the sour cream. Gradually beat in the sieved icing sugar. If the consistency isn't right add either hot water to thin or more icing sugar to thicken. Spread roughly over the top of the cake.*
8. *To decorate, dust sparingly with cocoa or sprinkle with real coffee beans.*