

WALTON ON THE HILL & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

FOR HEADLEY, KINGSWOOD, TADWORTH & WALTON



Old Forge Smithy Lane, Kingswood

Charity Reg. No. 803796

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

A special thank you to Graeme Roy from the Historic Croydon Airport Trust for his brilliant talk at our Society meeting on 2 October 2024. *The virtual reality videos were especially useful to understand what it was like to fly from the airport. (see YouTube)*

Croydon officially became London Terminal Aerodrome on March 29, 1920. Originally established on a 1915 World War I airfield, it transitioned to commercial operations after the RAF vacated the site. In 1925, Britain's first airport expansion Act of Parliament paved the way for the airport's redevelopment, with new facilities completed in 1928.

The airport was the stage for historic events, groundbreaking innovations, and the rise of Britain's international airline, Imperial Airways, which eventually evolved into today's British Airways. Croydon was also the birthplace of modern Air Traffic Control; in 1923, London Croydon Airport Radio Officer F.S. "Stanley" Mockford coined the international distress call "Mayday."

During the 1920s and 1930s, Croydon Airport hosted numerous daring and record-breaking flights that turned aviators and aviatrixes into global icons. Trailblazing women like Amy Johnson and Jean Batten became household names, competing with legendary male pilots such as Jim Mollison, Charles Kingsford-Smith, and Sir Alan Cobham.

Graeme encouraged us all to visit the airport for a tour. The Visitor Centre is open on [the first Sunday of every month](#). Visitors must pre-book on a guided tour, which will take you around the building and into the museum and control tower. Tours last for approximately one hour and are in groups of about 12 visitors. Tickets for the next open day are usually made available two weeks in advance. You can book for our next open day here: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/historic-croydon-airport-trust>

Upon arrival, you will be asked to make an £8 donation for each adult and child over 16 in your group. Please book a ticket for each individual attending. Donations can be made in cash or by card (debit or credit) and will be asked for before you start your tour.

See <https://www.historiccroydonairport.org.uk/opening-hours/>

Lorraine Spindler

Hon. Secretary Sandie Hunt huntsandie47@gmail.com

Our next meeting
11 December 2024 at
Good Shepherd
Church Hall
Station Approach Rd, Tadworth
KT20 5AH

Doors open at 7.45 pm
£4 to non-members
Free for members

When Harry met Dotty

We welcome back the amazing Dr Nick Barratt - author, broadcaster and historian best known for his work on BBC's ***Who Do You Think You Are***. A personal exploration researching the parentage of his illegitimate maternal grandmother, born in Belgium without any idea of her parents' identity, before being fostered in rural Norfolk. The talk follows the research trail across 3 continents and uses a range of techniques to provide some surprising answers, including DNA.

Seasonal refreshments available—
donations welcome.



Please check your emails before our meeting
in case of last minute changes.

The Tragic Tale of Arthur Ernest Nash: A Young Policeman Remembered By Lorraine Spindler

In the quiet churchyard of St Peter's, Walton on the Hill, lies the grave of Arthur Ernest Nash, a young man whose brief life and untimely death have piqued the curiosity of the Walton and District Historical Society (WDLHS). Our new committee member Ann Wayman, a keen genealogist and local historian, noticed Arthur's gravestone and embarked on a journey to uncover his story. What emerged was a poignant tale of a rural boy drawn to serve as a police constable in one of London's most notorious districts, only to succumb to illness at the age of 21.



Transcription of the grave stone –

Arthur Ernest/H Div. Metropolitan Police/The beloved son of Henry & Lydia Nash/ Who feel asleep April 27th, 1900 in his 22nd year.



Henry and Lydia Nash (nee Saunders), Arthur's parents.

A Life Cut Short

Arthur was born in Walton-on-the-Hill in 1878 to Henry Nash, a signalman, and Lydia Nash (née Saunders). He was baptized at St Peter's Church on September 8, 1878. The 1891 census reveals that Arthur grew up in Pond Cottages, a now-demolished row of homes near the Blue Ball public house. Life in Pond Cottages was cramped, with Arthur living alongside his five siblings in modest conditions.



Pond Cottages next to the Blue Ball

Seeking a better future, Arthur joined the Metropolitan Police, assigned to H Division in Whitechapel, an East End district infamous for its poverty, crime, and the shadow of the Jack the Ripper murders a decade earlier. H Division's officers faced extraordinary challenges, patrolling densely packed rookeries and dark alleyways rife with crime.



Whitechapel Police at the time of the Ripper 1888.

A Fatal Illness

Arthur's promising career was cut short when he contracted an infectious disease, likely while on duty.



A Whitechapel Constable 1902.

He was transferred to the Northern Convalescent Fever Hospital at Winchmore Hill, one of several isolation hospitals established by the Metropolitan Asylums



Board to treat contagious illnesses like scarlet fever, tuberculosis, and smallpox.

Patient accommodation comprised of sixteen villas arranged around an oval. Each contained a day room, dining-room, lavatories, verandah, and single-storey kitchen annex, on the upper floor 32 beds, bathrooms and lavatories, and charge nurse's room.

Despite the hospital's advanced facilities, Arthur succumbed to his illness, and his body was returned to Walton-on-the-Hill for burial.



A uniformed porter at the gate of the Northern Hospital at Winchmore Hill, Enfield, Middlesex. The hospital, more formally known as the Northern Convalescent Fever Hospital, was opened in 1887 by the Metropolitan Asylums Board. The site later became known as the Highlands Hospital.



Surrey, England, Church of England Burials, 1813-1997 for Arthur Ernest Nash
Walton on the Hill, St Peter's 1898-1955

BURIALS in the Parish of <i>Walton on the Hill</i> in the County of <i>Surrey</i> in the Year One thousand <i>nine</i> hundred and <i>1900</i>				
Name.	Abode.	When Buried.	Age.	By whom the Ceremony was Performed.
<i>Frederic George Nelson</i>	<i>By Lovers' order Walton</i>	<i>April 2nd '70</i>		<i>Henry J. Greenhill Rector</i>
No. 17				
<i>Arthur Ernest Nash</i>	<i>from Fever Hospital Winchmore Hill Walton</i>	<i>May 3rd '00</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>Also Nicolas off. Min.</i>
No. 18				

The registration of Arthur's burial on 3 May 1900 at St Peter's

The Nash Family Legacy

Arthur's death marked a tragic moment for the Nash family, but his siblings carried on, leaving their own marks on history. By 1911, the family had relocated to Wokingham, Berkshire. Lydia Nash recorded in the census that she had borne ten children, with Arthur the only one who had passed away by that time.

Mabel Alice Nash, born on May 22, 1882, was Arthur's younger sister. In 1904, she married a local man, James Tugwell. Like her brother, Mabel remained in Walton on the Hill, and by 1911, she was living with her young family at Wooden Row in the village. Mabel and James were living in Hook Road, Epsom by the outbreak of the Second World War.

One of Arthur's brothers, Thomas Saunders Nash (1891 - 1968), became an accomplished artist. Trained at the Slade School of Fine Art, Thomas's works, including *The Sermon on the Mount*, were widely admired and are now part of collections in prestigious galleries. As depicted in his painting *In the Orchard* an idyllic, pastoral scene stands in stark contrast to the harsh realities of Whitechapel that his brother Arthur faced as a young constable.



In the Orchard (The Apple Pickers) by Thomas Saunders Nash, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Henry William Nash, Arthur's older brother, was born on December 6, 1884. Unlike his parents, who moved to Wokingham, Henry remained in Walton on the Hill. He worked as a gardener and resided in Breech Lane, close to his brother's burial site.

Arthur was not the only son of Henry and Lydia Nash who was to die young. William Humphrey Nash, born in 1896, appears on the 1911 census as a carter boy working on a farm in Wokingham, Berkshire and living with his parents. Tragically, William passed away in 1912 at the young age of 16. Ten years later there is a record of a Henry Nash Snr. buried at St Peter's in 1922, aged 82. As for Lydia, she appears in the 1939 Register, living with her daughter, Gertrude Pearce (née Nash).

Arthur Nash's story is a testament to the courage and sacrifice of those who served in the Metropolitan Police during a tumultuous period in London's history. His grave at St Peter's Church reminds us of the contrast between Walton-on-the-Hill's rural tranquility and the bustling, troubled streets of Victorian Whitechapel.

Through the interest of local historians like Ann Wayman and the WDLHS, Arthur's story has been brought to light, ensuring that his short but meaningful life is not forgotten.



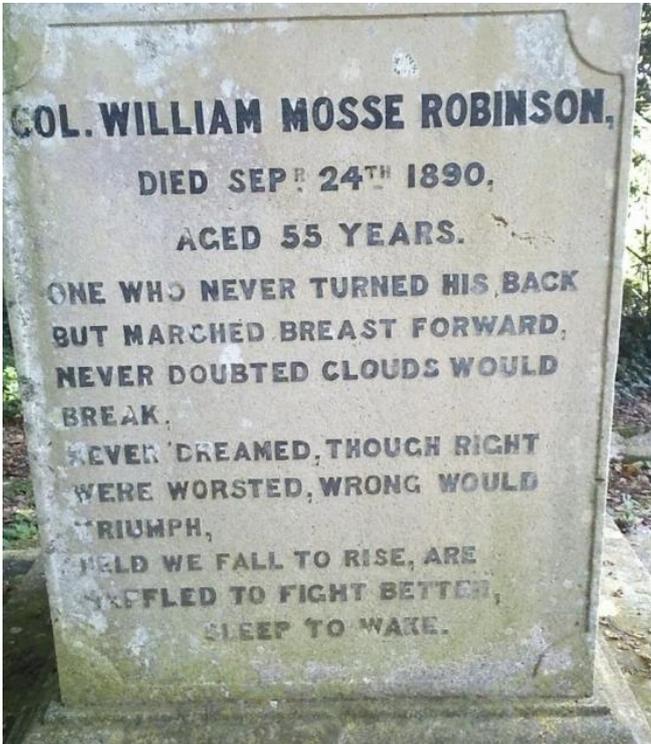
The Sermon on the Mount by Thomas Saunders Nash, Manchester Art Gallery



An East End policeman in 1894

Colonel William Mosse Robinson and the 1886 skirmish of Walton Heath By Lorraine Spindler

In the churchyard at Bonchurch on the Isle of Wight, there is a gravestone with a connection to our villages. It commemorates three individuals.



The front of the gravestone is dedicated to Paul Fearon, inscribed:

"Sacred to the memory of Paul Fearon of Hampstead, Middlesex, who died at Ventnor January 15th 1858, aged thirty-three. 'For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.' (1 Corinthians 13:12-13)"

Although Paul Fearon wasn't from the Isle of Wight, he passed away here and was buried at this small church. His epitaph includes a thoughtful Bible verse, but what about the other two names on the stone?

On the left side is a tribute to Colonel William Mosse Robinson:

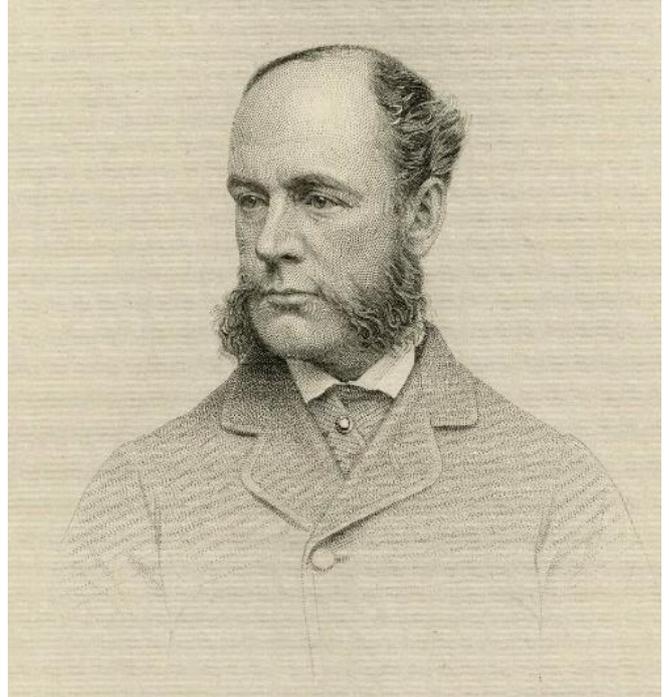
"Died September 24th, 1890, aged 55 years."

This is followed by a quote from a Robert Browning poem:

"One who never turned his back but marched breast forward, never doubted clouds would

break, Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph, Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake."

The powerful words suggest Colonel Robinson was a man of determination and optimism, offering insight into his character.



Col. W Mosse Robinson 1835-1890

On the right side, the faded inscription honors Anne Robinson, who died on September 18th, 1868, at the age of 43:

"Weep not for me:— Be blithe as wont, nor tinge with gloom, The stream of love that circles home, Light hearts and free! Joy in the gifts Heaven's bounty lends; Nor miss my face, dear friends! A sea before The Throne is spread:—its pure still glass Pictures all earth-scenes as they pass. We, on its shore, Share, in the bosom of our rest, God's knowledge, and are blest."

This poignant verse is the opening stanza of *A Voice from Afar* by John Henry Newman, conveying hope and comfort.

So, what ties these three together? Records reveal Anne Robinson was first married to Paul Fearon. After his death, she remarried his friend, Colonel William Robinson. Both men were bankers and wine merchants from Surrey who frequented Ventnor. Paul and Anne had six children, and Anne later had two more with William.

From a single gravestone, we can uncover a compelling story of connection, respect, and shared affection. Anne, Paul, and William are all buried together, suggesting a strong bond and mutual regard. Despite living in Surrey, their love for the Isle of Wight endured, bringing them back to this serene churchyard near Ventnor to rest together for eternity.

When William passed, his will was managed by his two sons and stepdaughter. The family was evidently wealthy—William's estate amounted to nearly £35,000, equivalent to around £13 million today.

William Robinson was not only a successful businessman but also a respected Colonel in his local militia, held in high esteem by all who knew him and especially popular with the volunteer riflemen who served with the 2nd Surrey Rifles.

William's name regularly appeared in Surrey's local papers. The following article was published to alert the men to forthcoming parades and marches.

SECOND SURREY RIFLES.

REGIMENTAL ORDERS.

All men intending to be present at the Easter march out will parade in barracks on Wednesday, April 12, at 7.30, in marching order. No Company drills during the week.

The battalion will parade in marching order on Sunday Morning, April 16th, at 7.30, in Katharine-street, and march to Reigate. Church parade in the afternoon. March to Walton Heath on Monday, for battalion movements and skirmishing, and probably return from Epsom Downs to Croydon in the evening by train. Each man should take a second pair of socks, a comb, and towel.

F Company will parade on Good Friday, under Captain Balfour, and march out for four days, meeting the rest of the battalion on Sunday. A limited number of men from other companies will be allowed to join F; application to be made at once at the orderly room.

The commanding officer trusts there will be a good muster, and reminds men that by attending they will do a great deal towards completing their efficiency.

Members of the corps who cannot possibly join on Sunday, may meet the battalion at Reigate on Monday morning, up to 9.30, but the commanding officer hopes this permission will only be taken advantage of in cases of emergency.

W. MOSSE ROBINSON,
Lieut.-Colonel.

Norwood News - Saturday 08 April 1876

Two weeks later the men were praised by William Mosse Robinson for their performance in the 22 April 1876 edition of the *Croydon*

Chronicle and East Surrey Advertiser. The article read under the main heading of *Second Surrey Rifles*:

EASTER MARCH OUT.

The commanding officer desires to express his entire satisfaction and approval of the high state of discipline and efficiency exhibited by those who took part in the Easter March Out, and the movements on Walton Heath. He warmly congratulates all on the credit they have gained for the corps by the excellence of their behaviour and their readiness in submitting to strict military discipline. The commanding officer feels he has especially to express his thanks to Captain Balfour and the men in the detachment under his command for the steady and soldier-like manner in which they went through the really arduous duties of a four days' march. The commanding officer desires to record his satisfaction with the manner in which the members of the Cadet Company of the corps performed their duties. He was struck with their steadiness in the ranks, and was as much pleased with the ready manner in which they obeyed his orders at an important moment in the sham fight. W. MOSSE ROBINSON, Lieut. Colonel.

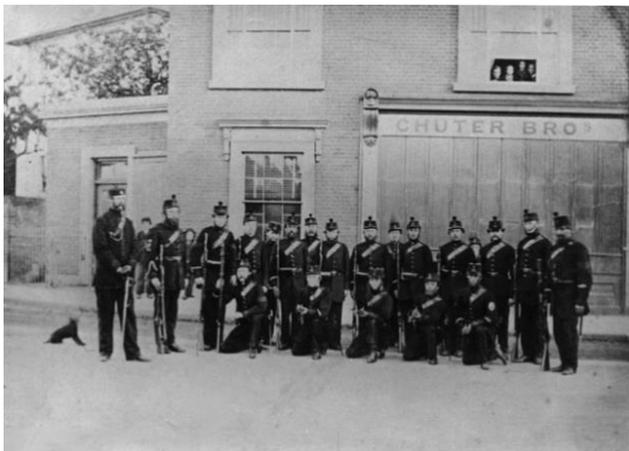


Surrey Rifle Volunteer reenactors

To understand why riflemen trained on Walton Heath, we need to delve into the history of the Surrey Militia during the Napoleonic Wars. This militia was part of the South Coast Defensive Army, responsible for guarding French prisoners of war. In 1811, the Surrey Militia was deployed to Ireland, and in 1812, they briefly served in France. Notably, as the Battle of Waterloo approached, many Surrey militiamen were urgently sent to reinforce the Guards regiments, still wearing their distinctive Surrey Militia jackets on the battlefield.

In 1808, the government formed the "Local Militia," drafting entire volunteer infantry regiments into service. However, following the end of external threats in 1816, the militia's importance waned, and it saw a steady decline in prominence until 1852.

The 1848 French Revolution reignited concerns about national defense, sparking a revival of the Militia in 1852. From 1854 onward, recruitment became entirely voluntary as the ballot system was abolished. During this period, the 1st Surrey Militia established its headquarters in Richmond, while the 2nd Surrey Militia was based in Guildford. Officers of the 2nd Surrey Militia often held meetings at the "White Hart," a historic inn still standing at the top of Guildford's High Street.



The Surrey Rifle Volunteers outside Chuter Brothers on the corner of High Street and Church Street, Epsom

This renewed focus on the militia and the establishment of volunteer forces like rifle regiments led to training exercises on Walton Heath, ensuring these part-time soldiers were ready to defend the country if the need arose. The location, history, and enduring tradition of the militia reflect the evolving role of local forces in Britain's defense.

Militia uniforms were updated to match those of the regular army, though they featured silver lace instead of gold. The Permanent Staff included the Adjutant, Sergeant Major, ten sergeants, and seven drummers.

In May 1859, growing public concern over potential French aggression prompted Lord Derby's government to authorize the creation of Volunteer Rifle Corps. These small, enthusiastic units had a similar structure to the Militia, with an Adjutant, a Sergeant Major, and two or three permanent staff instructors, often seconded from regular army battalions.

Surrey raised 26 Volunteer Corps, which were grouped into Surrey Rifle Volunteer Battalions in 1861 for administrative efficiency into four battalions. By 1881, the Volunteer movement had grown significantly, with 254,000 Volunteers serving under arms across the United Kingdom. The Volunteer movement was absorbed into the Territorial Force in 1908 after the passing of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act, the 2nd Surrey Rifle Volunteers evolved to become the 4th Battalion, Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey).

The annual 'Easter March Out' began at Katherine Street on Mitcham Common, marking the start of a challenging two-day trek for the volunteers. On Sunday, participants embarked on a rigorous march from Mitcham to Reigate, covering significant ground while maintaining their military discipline. The following day, the march continued to Walton Heath, where the volunteers would join large-scale military exercises—a true test of stamina and teamwork after the exhausting journey.

After two days of marching and drills, the journey home by train was undoubtedly the most welcome and well-deserved part of the experience, offering a moment of relief and reflection for all involved.

This historic tradition highlights the dedication and endurance of those who volunteered to serve in the Surrey Rifles, providing a fascinating glimpse into the demands placed on local forces of the past.

The Lieutenant-Colonel, William Mosse Robinson was the son of Thomas Leedham Robinson. In about 1838, Croydon Union Bank

had been started by George Chasemore, (John) William Sutherland and Thomas Leedham Robinson. George Chasemore was a miller (occupying Waddon Mill), William Sutherland a wine merchant, and Thomas Robinson had previously been the manager of the Croydon branch of the London & County joint-stock bank.

During the late 1860s and early 1870s Henry Chasemore and William Mosse Robinson joined their fathers' business, which henceforth became Chasemore, Robinson & Sons. In 1873, the bank started trading as the Union Bank of Croydon.



On 31st December 1891, shortly after William's death, the business was sold to the Union Bank of London, for £37,000 and eventually became part of Nat West Bank.

William would likely have been familiar with Walton Heath as he was the Master of the Staghounds. According to the *Bailey Magazine of Sports and Pastimes* (Vol 23, 1873) he was also the President of the *East Surrey Agricultural Association* and Treasurer of the *Farmer's Club*.

Various obituaries published in the autumn of 1890 reveal that William was deeply mourned by the men of the Surrey Rifles, as well as by the many charities and organizations he had supported throughout the county.

THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGSWOOD CHALICE AND THE STEPHENS FAMILY OF EPSOM

By Pia Chamberlain

The parish of Kingswood is in possession of a magnificent silver-gilt chalice and paten which, for safety reasons, are now on permanent loan to the Victoria & Albert Museum. Dated to

1675, they bear the mark of Jacob Bodendeich.



Jacob Bodendeich was born in 1633 in Lüneburg, northern Germany, where he served his apprenticeship. He probably came to London in the late 1650s. He worked for some time for the goldsmith William Mouse (whose daughter he married) before opening his own workshop. He excelled in chasing and became one of the leading goldsmiths of the Restoration period. He died in 1681 and was buried in the Church of St Ann and St Agnes in London.



Although medieval in form, the chalice is embellished with a fashionable design cut from applied sheet silver. During the Commonwealth period church services were conducted with little ritual and only a few pieces of simple silverware. It was not until the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 that churches again used a Gothic chalice and celebrated the Eucharist with an elaborately chased and decorated communion set.

In his book entitled 'The Church Plate of Surrey', published in 1902, the Rev. T.S. Cooper mentions, in connection with the Kingswood chalice, there is a coat of arms on the bowl, 'supposed to be that of the family of Stephens of Epsom'. He adds further on: 'Some members of the family of Stephens are buried in the adjacent church of Chipstead, among them Anthony Stephens, Esq., of London, who died 1695 in his sixty-second year, possibly it was he who gave those vessels [i.e. the chalice and paten].'



Anthony Stephens was born in 1633 in Portsmouth. He was the son of Anthony and Margaret Stephens, his father being the third son of Thomas Stephens, a London haberdasher. Anthony Stephens Senior was working in Portsmouth as a 'chirurgion', the old word for surgeon, possibly in the navy. Anthony Junior became a clerk, then cashier in the Navy Treasury. By about 1671, he was working for the Treasury Commissioners.

Later he became an assistant auditor, then auditor of the Land Revenues. In 1663, he married Margaret Hide (née Bolbin), a widow, aged 18, at St Andrew Undershaft, in London. She, too, was originally from Portsmouth. Their son John was born in 1665 in Epsom, but he sadly died just two years later and was the first of the family to be buried in St Margaret's Church, Chipstead, in June 1667. In October 1682, Anthony Stephens and his wife bought a property in Chalk Lane, Epsom, known as Woodcote Place, which they either renovated or rebuilt. Originally built in red brick, the house was much altered and extended over the years. It ended up as a hotel and eventually became derelict before being converted into luxury flats and re-named Westgate House.



The former Woodcote Place as it looks today

Anthony's first wife, Margaret, passed away on 7th June 1693 at the age of 47. She was buried in St Margaret's Church, alongside her only child. According to the church register, Margaret was buried "wrapt in linen," following a Christian tradition that mirrored the burial of Jesus, whose body was wrapped in linen.

This practice, however, had economic implications. Linen burial shrouds benefited France, England's great rival, which supplied a third of the country's linen. To protect England's wool industry, Parliament passed the Wool Act of 1667, mandating that corpses be buried in wool instead of linen. The act was reinforced in 1677, requiring churches to document the fabric used for burials. Families had to submit an affidavit signed by two "credible" witnesses confirming compliance. Those who buried their dead in other materials faced a hefty £5 fine—equivalent to over £550 today. While the penalty ensured most

adhered to the law, wealthier families often chose to pay the fine, allowing their loved ones to be buried in linen as an act of tradition or prestige.

A little over a year later, on 4th October 1694, Anthony Stephens remarried. His second wife, Mary Rolt, was the daughter of Sir Thomas Rolt of Milton Ernest, Bedfordshire. The wedding took place at St Michael's Church, Highgate. Mary was 28 years old, while Anthony was 61.



Mary Rolt in a portrait attributed to Simon Pietersz Verelst

Anthony Stephens died on 2nd May 1695. He had made no provision in his will as to where he wanted to be buried and left the decision to his wife. She decided that he, too, should be buried in Chipstead with the rest of his family. Not only was he buried in linen, as was to be expected, but he was given a full heraldic funeral with all the pomp and ceremony that involved. In Britain, the great age of the heraldic funeral was between 1500 and 1700 and was meant to be a statement of the deceased's wealth and status. We know this to have been the case for Anthony Stephen from the funeral trappings, a banner, a tabard and a helmet, which are still on display at St Margaret's, except for the helmet, which was stolen in 1965.



St Margaret's Church, Chipstead

On the surface, this all fits in reasonably well with the supposed provenance of our

Kingswood chalice and paten. Our story, however, begins to unravel when we look at Anthony Stephens will, dated 30th April 1695. According to that, he made a payment to a 'Mr. John Nesbet Minister of the Gospel... at the particular congregation to which I belong and am a member in London'. A similar payment was to be made to a 'Mr Rowe Minister of the Gospel at Ebisham (the old Saxon name for Epsom).

The Mr. Nesbitt alluded to was one of the most popular preachers at a meeting house in Hare Court, in the Inner Temple, in London. Benoni Rowe was born in London, the son of a Congregational minister and a minister himself. He came to Epsom in 1688 and exercised his ministry there until 1699, when he took over as pastor of another congregation in London's Fetter Lane.

Shortly after the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, negotiations took place between the newly reinstated bishops and the Puritans to determine the form of service which would be used in the restored church. It took two years to prepare a revised Book of Common Prayer. Under the Act of Uniformity of May 1662, clergy unwilling to accept the new Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Anglican Church's doctrinal basis, in their entirety, as well as the principle of ordination by a bishop, were expelled from their benefices. In Surrey, 38 clergy gave up their living, including the vicar of Ewell, John Crofts, and the vicar of Ashted, William King. When the so-called Compton Census was held by the established church in 1676, it was found that in Ewell 25% of the population were Dissenters.

Both in Epsom and Ewell, these Dissenters started to meet in private houses and were regularly prosecuted for holding such conventicles. In 1688, at the time when Benoni Rowe took over as their minister, they declared themselves publicly in anticipation of the Act of Toleration of May 1689.

The first question one needs to ask here is whether a man like Anthony Stephens, who did not hide his religious convictions, really commissioned an ornate High Anglican chalice. Very unlikely is the answer to that, which throws some serious doubt over the

supposed provenance of the chalice. And that is not all. On closer inspection, the coat of arms represented on the chalice and paten does not match that of the Stephens family, which is displayed in various places in St Margaret's Church. In heraldic terms, the first one is described as a chevron with a label of three points; crest, a man's head affrontée, wreathed, on a squire's helmet. The Stephens family coat of arms, on the other hand, consists of a chevron inter demi-lions rampant, as many crosslets; above a helmet surmounted by the crest. What is more, the 'label of three points' shown on the chalice coat of arms signifies that it is an heir's coat of arms whose father is still alive. Anthony Stephens's father died in 1660 and the chalice bears a date of 1675, all of which leads to the conclusion that the original donor of the chalice cannot have been our Anthony Stephens of Epsom.

the coat of arms on the chalice, implying that it was something he was told when he presumably visited Kingswood. The V. & A. have expressed the same opinion, that the two coats of arms do not match, and that the donor cannot, therefore, have been Anthony Stephens.

How and when the chalice ended up at St Andrew's Church is not clear either, as Kingswood did not become an independent parish until 1838. It had been an outlying part of the parish of Ewell for centuries and its inhabitants had to walk the 5 miles to Ewell (and back!) to worship at the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin.

When he became lord of the manor of Kingswood, Thomas Alcock made it one of his first tasks to provide Kingswood with its own place of worship. A subscription was launched and thanks to the generosity not only of members of the Alcock family, but also of all the major landowners in the area and of members of the neighbouring clergy, a small chapel was built along the Brighton Road and dedicated to St Andrew. Then on 11th September 1838 came the official announcement in the London Gazette that a new ecclesiastical district, to be known as the consolidated chapelry of St Andrew, Kingswood, had been constituted by an Order in Council.



The Stephens family coat of arms



The chalice coat of arms

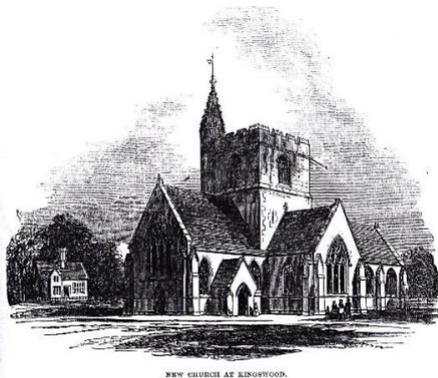


The old St Andrew's chapel

It soon became apparent, however, that the building put up in 1835 was too small to accommodate the number of worshippers and Thomas Alcock decided to build a new, larger church, this time entirely at his own expense. The consecration of the new church by the Bishop of Winchester, Charles Richard Sumner, took place on 23rd September 1852.

To give him his due, the Rev. Cooper did choose his words carefully when he described

Could the Diocese of Winchester, of which the parish of Kingswood formed part at the time, have donated the chalice to the still sparsely furnished church at that stage?



The new church in 1852

Unfortunately, there is no record of when and from whom the new church acquired its precious chalice. All we know for sure is that it had come into its possession before 1894, the date at which a silver-gilt flagon was commissioned from the church furnishers, Jones & Willis, to match the chalice. Where the story of the connection with the Stephens family came from remains a mystery.

Equally intriguing is why an affluent Epsom family chose to bury its dead in Chipstead. Mary Stephens, Anthony's widow, not only managed to have her husband, a self-professed Dissenter, interred in the chancel of St Margaret's Church, but she also became one of the parish's most significant benefactors.

After Anthony's death, Mary was left financially secure and continued to reside at Woodcote Place. In 1746, she purchased a small farm with 76 acres of land in Outwood Lane, Chipstead, and established a trust to support the education of six poor children—both boys and girls—of the parish. Classes were held in the farmhouse, which also served as the schoolmaster's residence. The school's



running costs were covered by the rent paid by the tenant farming the land attached to the property.

The Old School House in Outwood Lane

Mary Stephens died on 25th July 1755, having survived her husband by 60 years. In her will, she stipulated that she wanted to be buried 'very privately at Chipstead near the grave of Mr. Stephens my late husband'. She bequeathed the considerable sum of £16,000 as well as various pieces of jewellery, to her Chipstead charity.



The gravestones of Mary and Anthony Stephens in St Margaret's Church

The Mary Stephens Foundation has survived to this day and is providing financial assistance to students under the age of 25 living within the parish of Chipstead.

Despite all the research, the origins of the Kingswood chalice remain a mystery. However, we hope this article has inspired you to view this remarkable artifact for yourself the next time you visit the V&A.

We are currently seeking to help save the planet! Please let us know your email address if you are still receiving your newsletter by post.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS. DO YOU HAVE AN ARTICLE FOR OUR NEWSLETTER OR WISH TO CONTACT US? Please email lorrainespindler@hotmail.co.uk

All Enquiries please forward to the W&DLHS Secretary Sandie Hunt huntsandie47@gmail.com.