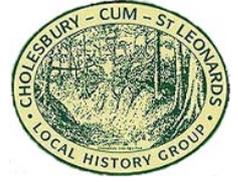


# Cholesbury-cum-St Leonards

## Local history Group



NEWSLETTER No. 12  
2008 - 2009

### Chairman's Introduction

This Newsletter marks both the conclusion of another successful year and heralds a new season for the Local History Group. Each of us will have our favourite talks from last year's bumper crop; be it digging up prehistory beneath the A41, history seen in Technicolor, spooks and their deceptions, a flourishing story of Tring Gardens or the historic bricks and mortar of Berkhamsted. But the lasting memories for me will be Anne Batchelor's account of her ancestor Daniel and the unanticipated gem about Westminster Abbey, which inspired our decision to select this venue for our imminent Summer Outing on 6<sup>th</sup> September. If you have booked to come along I look forward to seeing you there. As our speaker recommended, bring your binoculars!

July just gone we were invited for a second time to have a stand at the Buckinghamshire Family History Society Open Day in Aylesbury (*see photograph*). Although genealogy is not the LHG's main focus it was interesting to meet and exchange information with people who have a connection with our villages, through their ancestors.



The LHG could not have thrived for over forty-five years without somewhere to meet each month. At this year's AGM there was an important discussion about the refurbishment of St Leonards Parish Hall and members unanimously agreed to give a donation of £250 for equipment of facilities connected to the use of the Hall by the LHG. Members also asked the Committee to review subscription levels, with a view to proposing at next year's AGM an increase for 2009/10 to reflect the additional expenses of securing good speakers.

I am pleased to report that the LHG has successfully applied for a Chiltern DC Community Grant to enable us to purchase a multi-media projector, exhibition equipment and conservation materials. These will provide better facilities for speakers and help us put on more extensive displays at exhibitions, both locally and to organisations elsewhere.

Looking forward to our 2008/09 programme, I hope you will agree we have put together another interesting series of talks, with something for everyone to enjoy. As always our speakers will bring to our doorstep stories of people, places and events in history from nearby and further afield. I will take the opportunity to mention here one that the Committee will present in April next year!

The Parish of Cholesbury-cum-St Leonards came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1934. One suspects that far from being by design, the coming together of four remote but distinct villages and several outlying smaller hamlets was less to do with some logic or synergy that had been discerned by distant local authority planners but more to do with the tidying up of orphaned rural communities. It is true that the remnants of 'parish vestry pride' sometimes caused the neighbouring communities to fall out. In contrast, the topography combined with the harsher weather conditions of those days must have frequently conspired to make travel to Chesham, Great Missenden, Tring or Wendover impossible, inspiring the locals to weld even more strongly together for support and entertainment. For an illustration of this see Barry Warr's article on Victoria's Jubilee celebrations. But it is also worth pausing a moment to appreciate that the strength of community spirit, the various 'societies' and the annual and *ad hoc* events which we participate in and enjoy today, owe much to this haphazard coming together of communities in 1934. So the LHG Committee has decided to celebrate the parish's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in this way.

Elsewhere there are accounts of LHG activities including the Reading Old Documents Workshop last March by Laura Robertson who returns in December to talk to us on unlocking your house's history. Read about our ever-expanding library and how work on the Archive continues in leaps and bounds. Find out the historic connection France has with Aylesbury and where China is to be found in Tring.

In thanking the Committee and everyone who helps make our meetings a success I would like to mention Sylvia Watson and Brian Rice who stood down at the AGM. Our thanks go to both for their efforts on behalf of the Group. A warm welcome to Barry Warr, who takes over as Secretary and to Linda Wordsworth, who have both joined the Committee.

**Chris Brown, August 2008**

**2008 – 2009 PROGRAMME**  
 Researched and produced by *George Cobby*

<b>FRIDAY, 3 OCTOBER 2008</b> 8.00pm for 8.15pm <b>Cholesbury Village Hall</b>	<b>LONDON BETWEEN THE WARS</b> <b>Colin Oakes</b> is an archaeologist and expert on London's history. He returns once again to perform for us in his unique and entertaining way.
<b>FRIDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 2008</b> 8.00pm for 8.15pm <b>St Leonards Parish Hall</b>	<b>SULGRAVE MANOR</b> <b>Thea Young's</b> day job is Visitor Manager at Sulgrave Manor but she will be visiting us for the evening.
<b>FRIDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2008</b> 8.00pm for 8.15pm <b>St Leonards Parish Hall</b>	<b>WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU LIVE – Does your house have a history?</b> <b>Laura Robertson</b> is Senior Archivist at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies and ran the 'Old Handwriting' workshop for us last season.
<b>FRIDAY, 9 JANUARY 2009</b> 8.00pm for 8.15pm <b>St Leonards Parish Hall</b>	<b>BUCKINGHAMSHIRE'S FAVOURITE CHURCHES</b> <b>Julian Hunt</b> is long-standing friend of the Group and is an expert, lecturer and prolific writer on all things historic in Buckinghamshire.
<b>FRIDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2009</b> 8.00pm for 8.15pm <b>St Leonards Parish Hall</b>	<b>FIRST LANDING AT HALTON</b> <b>Francis Hanford</b> is curator of the The Trenchard Museum and an authority on the history of RAF Halton.
<b>FRIDAY 6 MARCH 2009</b> 8.00pm for 8.15pm <b>St Leonards Parish Hall</b>	<b>LIFE IN A FOUNDLING HOSPITAL</b> <b>Lydia Carmichael</b> will speak from first hand experience as a former pupil of the hospital in Berkhamsted.
<b>FRIDAY 3 APRIL 2009</b> 8.00pm for 8.15pm <b>St Leonards Parish Hall</b>	<b>CHOLESBURY-cum-ST LEONARDS PARISH – The first 75 years</b> The Local History Group's own 'Time Team' digs up 75 years of the Parish.
<b>FRIDAY 1 MAY 2009</b> 8.00pm sharp <b>Cholesbury Village Hall</b>	<b>AGM AND MEMBERS' EVENING</b> A time when we look forward to exchanging local history stories and anecdotes
<b>MEMBERSHIP £6.00 PER ANNUM – VISITORS WELCOME: £2.00 PER MEETING</b> Coffee and Biscuits are served and a collection is taken	

### Cholesbury-cum-St Leonards Local History Group Committee

<b>Hon. President:</b>	<b>Mrs E Money</b>	
<b>Chairman &amp; Editor:</b>	<b>Mr Chris Brown</b> , Rays Hill Farm, Rays Hill, Braziers End, HP5 2UJ	01494 758890
<b>Deputy Chairman:</b>	<b>Mrs Paddy Thomas</b> , Cherry Orchards, Cholesbury Common, HP23 6ND	01494 758460
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Mrs Sandy Clarke</b> , Beechwood, Jenkins Lane, St Leonards, HP23 6NW	01494 758567
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Mr Barry Warr</b> , 5 Lammas Close, Staines, Middlesex, TW18 4XT	07941 144631
<b>Programme Secretary:</b>	<b>Mr George Cobby</b> , 188 Amersham Way, Little Chalfont, HP6 6SF	01494 762954
<b>Archivist:</b>	<b>Mrs Shirley Blomfield</b> , Chambers Green Farm, St Leonards, HP23 6NP	01494 758314
<b>Committee Members:</b>	<b>Mr Ian Piggott</b> , Lane End Cottage, Lanes End, St Leonards, HP23 6LF	01296 620000
	<b>Ms Linda Wordsworth</b> , 4 Sheriff Way, Off Haines Way, Watford, WD25 7QF	01923 662843

*[www.cholesbury.com](http://www.cholesbury.com)*

Remember to take a look at the local history pages on the website, these contain articles about the local history of the villages, and from here you can download our five Jubilee Local History Walks.

*[localhistorygroup@cholesbury.com](mailto:localhistorygroup@cholesbury.com)*

If you would like to receive periodic updates and reminders of forthcoming LHG meetings and other events please contact us on the above email or include your email address on your Membership renewal form.

## Learning to Read Old Documents Workshop - March 2008

On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March a group of eager members gathered at Cholesbury Village Hall for a workshop session on “Learning to Read Old Documents” and were not disappointed by their morning’s efforts. The session had been arranged by Paddy Thomas following a visit to an Open Day at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies and Laura Robertson, Senior Archivist at the Centre, was our teacher for the morning. (See the photograph of Laura in “teaching mode”).

Laura began with an introduction into the background of palaeography, the study of ancient modes of handwriting (derived from the Greek ‘palaeo’, old, and ‘graphein’, to write). Surprisingly, we learned that it is easier to read old handwriting, because it conforms to a style and there were fewer practitioners and fewer variances.

It is possible to date documents by the style of handwriting and from the 12<sup>th</sup> Century to the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> Century the formal style known as “book hand” was in use for the writing of books and the “documentary” (sometimes known as “hybrid”) style was used as a functional all-purpose method for both government and personal purposes. By the 19<sup>th</sup> Century more people were able to write and so changes and differences appeared in the style of the written alphabet, although even so, the particular letter shapes remained very similar right up into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

We were told that the first very early script is known as Carolingian Minuscule, which is a lower case script, developed in Europe during the reign of Charlemagne, and used as the standard so that the Roman alphabet could be easily recognised. Later, in 12<sup>th</sup> Century England a more cursive, free flowing script was used, known as Anglicana. This was in use until the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, with monks taking the role of teachers. There then came what Laura described as a “bad handwriting period” when the Secretary Hand was used naturally, by secretaries, to be followed by the development of an Italic Style, which is actually closer to modern styles, being cursive with a right-hand slope and linking letters.

By this stage, to complicate the study of old documents, abbreviation was also being used.

Having been given this background we were given some tips on reading old documents, the important point being to read what is there on the page, by reading each letter individually and not leaping to conclusions.



It was now time to get down to work ourselves, with copies of an old will in front of us Laura went round the class and we all took it in turns to transcribe a sentence each. This was fun and a useful introduction for us all. With time running out it was necessary to draw the session to a close and there were just a few minutes left for Laura to look at the old documents brought along for advice by some participants. This Laura willingly gave, with the comment that she had enjoyed the event as her other duties at the Studies Centre do not often give her opportunity to undertake any transcribing, and this is part of the function of an archivist.

With thanks to Laura, and Paddy for her organisation, it is hoped that another event can be organised in the future. Meanwhile, there are useful books available on the subject produced by the University of Leicester, and if you look on the website below you can have a practise for yourself.

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/palaeography/tutorial](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/palaeography/tutorial)

**Shirley Blomfield**

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### Founder's Prize 2008

The Founder's Prize in memory of General Money, one of the Group's Founding Members, is awarded to someone who in the view of Members has contributed to the activities of the LHG over the Season. **Sylvia Watson** was the deserving recipient of the Founder's Prize, voted on at the last AGM. We look forward to hearing about her choice of book, which will be presented at a meeting during the year.

When attending meetings and other LHG events over the forthcoming season take note of the contributions from those involved, including the invaluable contributions made by those who help out before and after events as well as 'behind the scenes'. All contribute towards ensuring that the Group continues to thrive.

## “All went home tired and satisfied”- the 1897 Jubilee

At some point on our journeys between the hilltop villages and Chesham, we've all passed the weathered stone pillar that stands on the common opposite The Full Moon. The more curious of us have walked there to read the attached plaque and learned that it marks Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, and that it stands astride the boundary between Cholesbury and Hawridge.

Victoria surpassed George III as the longest reigning monarch in September 1896, but she requested that all public celebrations be deferred until 1897 to coincide with her Diamond Jubilee.

But how did our villages commemorate the occasion? Although David and Joan Hay's admirable *Hilltop Villages of the Chilterns* provides us with a detailed account of how the villages celebrated Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887 it is, like the stone, silent about events a decade later. To find out what happened we must turn to the local newspaper accounts. Fortunately, Chesham Library's Study Centre retains an extensive archive of Chesham and Bucks Examiners on microfilm. Spanning the years 1889 to the present day, they not only make fascinating and entertaining reading, but also shed light on the activities, concerns, triumphs and failures of our predecessors.

It's ironic that the stone marks a boundary. The Chesham Examiner for 21<sup>st</sup> May reported that the two parishes held a joint meeting at Hawridge School, chaired by Mr Turner of Brazier's End. The committee, comprising Mr Pallett, W Darvell and Mr Steward for Cholesbury, and John Hobbs, W Darvell, and Alfred Cook for Hawridge, decided to “... celebrate the Queen's Jubilee by having a huge tent erected on the Common, in which the whole of the inhabitants might be entertained to dinner and tea; that there should be sports, and in the evening, a bonfire.”

The Queen was clearly as popular with the local villagers as she had been ten years earlier, and between £50 and £60 was subscribed, with Turner generously promising ten guineas.

Queen Victoria's Jubilee day diary entry of 21st June begins: “The 10th anniversary of the celebration of my fifty years Jubilee. Breakfasted with my three daughters at the Cottage at Frogmore. A fine warm morning.”



© Trustees of the British Museum

(Victoria's Journal is accessible from the British Monarchy website [www.royal.gov.uk](http://www.royal.gov.uk))

At the same moment, some 19 miles or so to the north, Cholesbury and Hawridge must have been a site of intense activity. The Chesham Examiner reported on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, the villagers that day were provided with “a substantial and plentiful dinner and tea for every parishioner – man, woman and child.”

“The catering was done by three publicans Messrs. Pallett, Bishop and Wright. The huge tent, which well-nigh held the 400, was very prettily decorated with red, white and blue crinkled paper, and the tables were bright with flowers.

A neat programme of the day's events, bearing a portrait of the Queen, had been issued, and after dinner a long list of sports made the afternoon pass rapidly. The prizes for were useful and good, and consisted of umbrellas, carving knives and forks, watches, pocket knives etc. and memorial mugs.”

The great event of the day was, however, “the lighting up of the Common with Bengal lights, and firing of the huge bonfire, which must have been seen for many a mile. Not till midnight did the merry-making cease, when all went home tired and satisfied.”

Not to be outdone, St Leonards and Buckland Common, “through the generosity of many friends, notably amongst whom were Mr Alfred Rothschild, Lord Rothschild, Mr H.J. Turner of Cholesbury...” also sat down to their dinner and tea. In addition, every child under 14 was presented with a Jubilee mug by the Master and Mistress of St Leonards School, Mr. and Mrs. C. Wescombe.

Hearty cheers and a rendition of ‘God save the Queen’ were followed, like their neighbours in Cholesbury and Hawridge, by the lighting of a “splendid Jubilee bonfire” to conclude the festivities.

As well as marking the boundary between two villages, 1897, the year the Jubilee stone commemorates, also marks the boundary between



two very different worlds. In July 1897, Guglielmo Marconi was awarded a patent for radio communication following his experiments in southern Britain between 1896-1897.

More poignantly, perhaps, one of the guests at Victoria's Diamond Jubilee reception in Buckingham Place in 1897 was Archduke Franz Ferdinand whose assassination at Sarajevo in 1914 sowed the seeds of the First World War.

**Barry Warr**

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## Archivist's Report

Data input onto Catalist continues, with almost 1000 entries now made but still some way to go because we are accepting new items as we go along! Thanks again to Paddy Thomas for working on the data entry and to Chris Brown for undertaking the scanning. I also thank Brian Lake, who scanned a set of photographs from an album belonging to our President, Evelyn Money.

A number of photographs have been donated this year, including a collection of family photographs from Brian Rice. The photograph reproduced from Brian's collection (*right*) shows Julia Terry in the garden at Six Row Cottages (also known as Sheeps Head Row). These cottages were at Buckland Common, and were demolished in the late 1960s. (See also Newsletter No. 8, 2004/05, Memories of Buckland Common by Mrs Margaret Probert).

Linda Wordsworth also has connections with these cottages and the photograph (*below*) is of her grandparents, Mr and Mrs King (George senior, and Kate) on the plot of land to the side of the cottages, where Buckley and Higher Faugan now stand.



through old newspapers and has provided copies of reports relating to the parish.

Maureen Newall took a set of photographs of houses, mainly in Buckland Common, which have been put into the archives, and Maureen has been reading through the church register entries in Hilltop News and putting these records onto a separate database. Our copies of the parish magazines date from about 1990 and if anyone

has earlier magazines, I would be interested to know.

Lyn Horridge has been researching the Brackley surname for many years and we now have a wonderful summary of her results, beginning with the marriage of Joshua Brackley to Hannah Carpenter in 1773 at Cholesbury.

We have also acquired records relating to the Cholesbury Clothing Club (and I understand that there was also a St Leonards Clothing Club). The Cholesbury Club operated from 1928 to the 1970s (finally being administered by Evelyn Money) and members paid in to the club and were given clothing or materials tokens in exchange to spend at certain shops, such as Gutteridges in Chesham.

Thanks go to everyone who has contributed over the year. If on reading this you believe that you have items of interest which could be added to the archives, please get in touch. If it is a photograph or document we do not have to keep the original as we can scan and copy.

**Shirley Blomfield**



In the background is the bus (the 348), which used to turn at the junction of Parrotts Lane, Little Twye Road and Bottom Road.

John Horn has given us photographs of Cherry Tree Lane in Buckland Common, which date from the 1940s, with a wartime aviation background to the people pictured. Other photographs have been donated by Barry Warr and we have been able to exchange information. Barry has also been looking

## The History Group Library

The Weekend FT has a regular column headed 'How to Judge a Book by its Cover' and it's a good game to play with any books. Does it work with some of the latest additions to the History Group Library? A top-hatted gentleman with a piece of lettuce on the end of his walking stick is offering it to the giant tortoise he is riding. This quirky and arresting cover really does sum up a book absolutely packed with anecdotes, letters, references, photographs and biographical details. The man in the photograph is the subject of 'Walter Rothschild, The Man, the Museum and the Menagerie' written by his niece, Dame Miriam Rothschild.



*By permission of the Hon. Walter Rothschild]*

*[Tring.*

### GIANT TORTOISE.

This photograph of Mr. Walter Rothschild riding on one of his huge tortoises gives a good idea of the relative sizes of one of the "giant tortoises" and a human being.

As a child she stayed with her Grandmother and other members of the Rothschild family at Tring Park and for forty years she also spent some of her time working at 'My Museum' as her uncle called it. So this is a very personal book written with affection and honesty about the eccentric, awkward character who at seven announced 'Mama, Papa. I am going to make a museum' and 'fifty years later had amassed the greatest collection of animals ever assembled by one man'. In the telling of Walter's story we get a riveting picture of the Rothschild family. His amazing life was not limited to science and zoology. There was time with the family bank as well as politics. In particular he was involved in the Balfour Declaration on Palestine. This is a book you could read from cover to cover or just open at any page to get a compelling glimpse into the life of our neighbours down in Tring.

'Tring Gardens Then and Now' by Wendy Austin looks a much more sober cover with its photograph

of three charming little girls sitting in a tiny cart in the garden with their mother. However, look closer and you will see that the little cart is harnessed to a goat. The book expands the talk the author gave to a recent History Group meeting telling the story of gardens in Tring and district from the late seventeenth century to the present day. Once again we can enjoy a good look at our near neighbours whether it is the beginnings of Tring Agricultural Association and its annual show, how lavender was grown on Tring Hill or the state of the Memorial Gardens. A chapter on Tring Park Gardens gives us yet more about the Rothschilds.

Getting to know our neighbours continues in 'No Finer Courage. A Village in the Great War' by Michael Senior who lives at The Lee. He researched letters, memoirs, diaries, newspapers and The Lee Magazine to write an account of the village and how the coming of the First World War changed it. It feels very close to us, being full of familiar names and places. The story of the people of The Lee is vividly interwoven with descriptions of the war itself. Look at the cover, it draws you in with its line of smiling young people fading into a distant sepia photograph of soldiers in the trenches.

Perhaps members will continue the 'cover game' with the other new books on the list. The first is 'Pots and People that have shaped the heritage of medieval and later England' written by Maureen Mellor. It is of general interest and beautifully illustrated with pottery from the medieval room of the oldest public museum in Britain, the Ashmolean in Oxford.

Next is 'Tis the Far Famous Vale. National Influences on the Vale of Aylesbury' by Ken and Margaret Morley. This very wide-ranging history of the Vale from 'Early Times' to 'Looking to the Future' is fully illustrated. You can find almost any subject in it from farming and transport, canals, local industries and craft. The Vale is so near to us that influences there will certainly have had an effect on our villages over the years.

The title of the sixth book is more intriguing than its cover. 'Rock Around Bucks. Rocks fossils and landscapes' by Dr Jill Evers was part of a Local Heritage Initiative Project. It gives a very good overview of the county's geology with lots of photographs and diagrams. Lively chapter headings encourage you with titles such as 'Buckinghamshire's Jurassic park' or 'Getting stuck in the freezer'.

Anne Batchelor came to tell us the story of her search for her ancestor, Daniel who was born in 1571 at Chapel Farm, St Leonards. An uncle took him to

Court where he became a well-known composer and lutenist. Her book 'A Batchelor's Delight' has been added to the Library and when you read it you might also like to borrow our CD and listen to his music.

We are most grateful to Wendy Austin, Caroline Coates, Barry Warr, as well as Mike Palmer of Bucks County Museum for giving books to the History Group Library this year. Look out for the new Library List at the first meeting. Members may borrow any book from the list. You can speak to me at most meetings or if you want to borrow a

particular book or have suggestions for new titles call on 01494 758460.

Our second hand book sale will continue in the autumn. There has been a grand clear out so please bring some new ones and buy some in return. You can hand books to any committee member. All titles are welcome and need not be restricted to historical subjects.

*Paddy Thomas*

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## The French Connection – Versailles in Bucks

Over the centuries Buckinghamshire has given shelter to refugees of all kinds, but among the most unusual was the exiled King of France who, two hundred years ago, turned up at Hartwell House, outside Aylesbury. Was there nowhere suitable, and more prestigious, nearer London? After all, but for the Revolution, Louis XVIII would have been one of

some two hundred of them, and all penniless, at least by aristocratic standards.

The exiled King did his best to accommodate them all under one roof, but even his considerable alterations to the house fell woefully short of the standard of living to which they had become accustomed. The place was no better than a refugee camp, laundry strewn everywhere, while the inmates, once lording it over a country of thirty-five million inhabitants, were literally sleeping in wardrobes. Little wonder that the Queen of France took to the bottle!



the four greatest monarchs in Europe. It could have been that our fun-loving Prince George, soon to be the Prince regent, did not relish the thought of Louis and his entourage dropping in unannounced for coffee, or otherwise getting under their feet.

Napoleon eventually saved the day. Seven years later he abdicated and the blue-blooded squatters went home.

*George Cobby*

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## **Snippet - Volunteer Wanted!**

Sandy Clarke has taken on the job of Bookings Secretary for St Leonards Parish Hall Management Committee. As a result, there is now a vacancy on the Hall Management Committee for someone to represent the interests of the Local History Group. The Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 8.00 pm. If you are interested and would like to know more, please talk to Sandy Clarke (Tel 758567) or Shirley Blomfield (Tel 758314).

## “Crested China” - Civic Heraldry

### Do you recognise these?

They and hundreds of pieces like them adorned the mantelpieces and filled the cabinets of most Victorian and Edwardian middleclass households. They were part of the so-called ‘holiday souvenir market’ of the time; these bought on a day trip to the Isle of Wight (*top*), Lee-on-Sea (*middle*) or Bournemouth (*bottom*). And it is highly likely that many of you will have a few pieces tucked away that have been handed down from grandmothers or elderly aunts. But it wasn’t just the seaside resorts that sold them. Major towns and places of attraction were also part of the market. So where did it start.

W H Goss is the originator and best-known manufacturer of “heraldic” or “crested” china, although many people mistakenly call all crested china “Goss”. Many other pottery manufacturers, mainly from the large established pottery district of Stoke-on-Trent, quickly followed suit, producing imitations of Goss models but none could compete with the quality.

Born in London in 1833 William Henry Goss began his working life with William Copeland, at the time Lord Mayor of London and owner of the prestigious pottery factory originally established in Stoke-on-Trent by Josiah Spode. Under Copeland’s guidance he studied the application of the principles of chemistry to the manufacture of pottery and porcelain. He rapidly rose to become Copeland’s chief designer. At the age of 25 Goss left Copeland to set up his own business and in 1862 he won a medal for his exhibit of porcelain and sanitary ware at an international exhibition in London. In 1872 Goss moved to a larger factory, the Falcon Works, in Stoke-on-Trent.

In the late 1870s W H Goss started producing pieces bearing the heraldic devices of notable public schools, University colleges and certain famous people (he was already producing parian busts). The late 1880s saw a decline in the production of the larger and more costly items and the beginning of the heraldic porcelain for which Goss is best remembered today. The public of those days knew little of heraldry, and it was only with the ever-



increasing popularity of “trips to the seaside” that Goss was able to market his “souvenir ware” as a commercial proposition. It was his son, Adolphus, who had the idea of supplying chosen agencies up and down the coast with small ivory porcelain shapes decorated with a local coat of arms. As the craze took off W H Goss, himself a keen antiquarian, started travelling around Britain, selecting ancient pots in museums to copy in miniature, in porcelain and decorated with the local coat of arms. Adolphus then selected a sole agency in each town to sell the pieces.

Appointed agents, whilst enjoying the exclusivity of their stock, found they could not get enough to meet demand so the Goss factory added “arms” to other pieces. ‘Table Requisites’, ‘Useful Articles’ and ‘Ornamental Articles’ are listed in the Goss records. This also widened the market enabling almost every town in Britain to have an appointed agent. The nearest agency to us, that I know of, listed in the Goss records was G T de Fraine & Co Ltd, later to become G J Woodbridge, of High Street, Tring.

The larger towns, cities and boroughs often had established “arms” but where these did not exist imaginative shields were devised showing historical connections, landmarks, industries etc. But strangely the arms used for Tring are those of our old friends, the Rothschilds. How and why I do not know yet but perhaps the answer is to be found in the history books.

By the end of 1822 the five Rothschild brothers (sons of Amschel who founded the banking house) had been made hereditary Barons by the Austrian Emperor and were granted a coat of arms. In 1838 Nathan (in London) was authorized to use his Austrian title in England. In 1847 Nathan's elder son Lionel was offered a British Baronetcy, but he turned it down and it went to his brother Anthony. In 1876 Lionel's son Nathan succeeded to his uncle's Baronetcy and in 1885 was made Baron Rothschild of Tring, the first Jew in the House of Lords.



This plate shows the Rothschild arms as used by Goss, but they do not appear to have been used until the beginning of the 20th century.

**Sandy Clark**