

The Milestone

CHRISTOPHER JOHN HOGGER

This article describes the house, bakery and shop constituting 'The Milestone' which operated on the southern side of the Guildford Road, Effingham from the early 1920s until the late 1970s. In the sources this property is sometimes referred to as 'Milestones' or as 'Milestone House'.

Introduction

The premises described in this article took its name from the milestone seen in these present-day photographs. This stone is situated on the northern side of the Guildford Road (A246) just a few yards east of the entrance into the King George V Playing Fields by the Scouts HQ.

It is still possible to make out the word LONDON incised on the stone and at one time – but not today – it was easy to read also the number of miles from this point to the centre of the City of London (actually 22 miles as the crow flies). It is registered with reference SY-GULH08 in the Milestone Society Repository.

The premises named 'The Milestone' used to stand by the southern side of the road directly opposite this milestone.



Figure 1 Close-up of the milestone.



Figure 2 View of the A246 with the milestone in the foreground.

The position of the milestone is marked (M.S.) on the section of the 1914 Ordnance Survey map shown in Figure 3. A short distance along the road in the Guildford direction can be seen a curious feature which appears to be a small hollow, possibly a pond. Whatever it was, its position was exactly opposite the point at which a junction would later be formed with the newly-constructed Norwood Road.

In 1914 there were no buildings of any kind along this section of the Guildford Road.

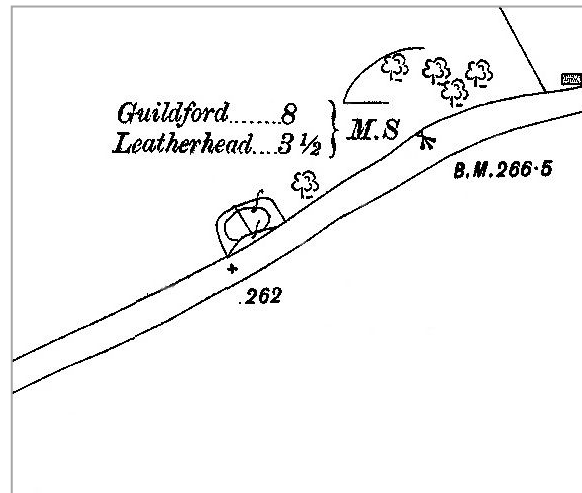


Figure 3 The milestone on the OS map in 1914.

Construction of The Milestone

The Milestone was planned by a long-standing Effingham grocer named Thomas William Plowright West. He had been born in 1875 to the then proprietors of Yew Tree House in The Street, namely James West and his wife Rebecca Frances Ann (née Booth). James and Rebecca had been running Yew Tree House as a grocery and drapers as early as 1860, the year in which they married at St Lawrence Church.

After James died in 1900 Thomas and his sister Mary took over the running of Yew Tree House. In 1903 Thomas married at Southwark to Maria (née) Jackson. In the following year his mother died. Thomas and his wife carried on the business at Yew Tree House with the continuing assistance of his sister Mary. Thomas and Maria evidently produced no children.

In mid-November 1923 Thomas, then aged 48, submitted two sets of plans to Dorking Rural District Council. One was for a 'house, shop and bakehouse' and the other for a 'cart shed, store and stable' intended to stand about eleven feet from the western side of the main building. The original plans are held by the Surrey History Centre under references 5118/5/2/1/923 and 5118/5/2/1/924. These constructions would become The Milestone and the builder would be W. Baker of Ripley.

Plans for the House, Shop and Bakehouse

These plans were signed by the builder on 12 November 1923, deposited with the Council on 3 December and approved on 13 December. Figures 4-8 show extracts from the plans.



Figure 4 Sketches of the planned front and rear elevations.

The plans give the home address of the builder W. Baker as Poplar Cottage, High Street in Ripley. From this detail it has been possible to identify him with certainty as Willie Baker (registered at birth with that forename) who was born at Feltham, Middlesex on 10 January 1883. In 1907 he married at St Leonard in Shoreditch to Elsie Adelaide Beatrice (née) Martin and in the register he is described as a joiner. In 1916 he enlisted with the Royal Air Force. By the mid-1920s he was being described in *The London Gazette* as a builder and decorator and living at Poplar Cottage, High Street in Ripley. He died in 1963.

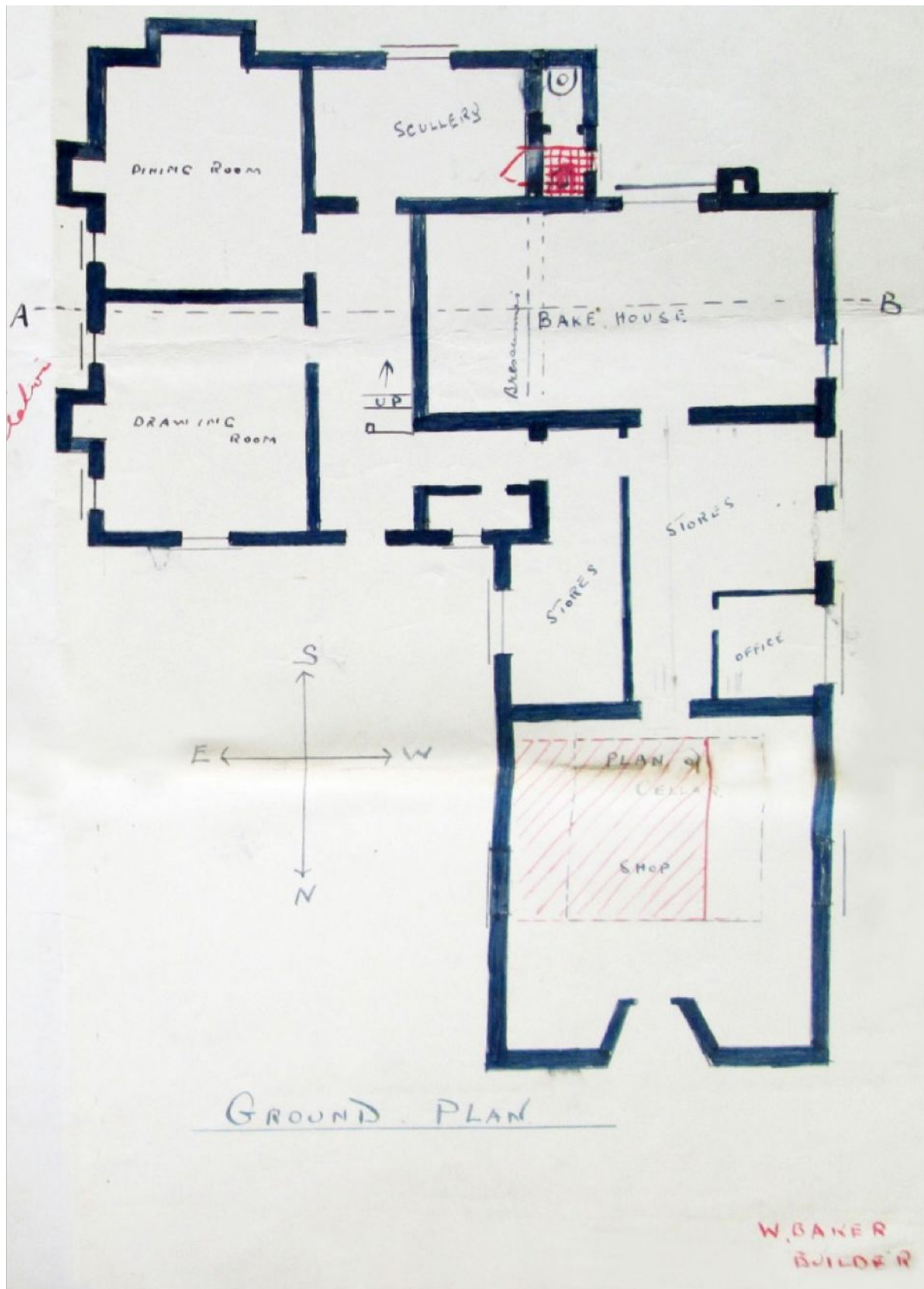


Figure 5 The ground floor plan.

It is striking how primitive these drawings were, with evidently no use made of drawing aids, barely even a ruler. They also appear to provide no precise indication of scale. The documents at the Surrey History Centre include a sheet, not displayed here, showing the fine details of the proposed materials and features.

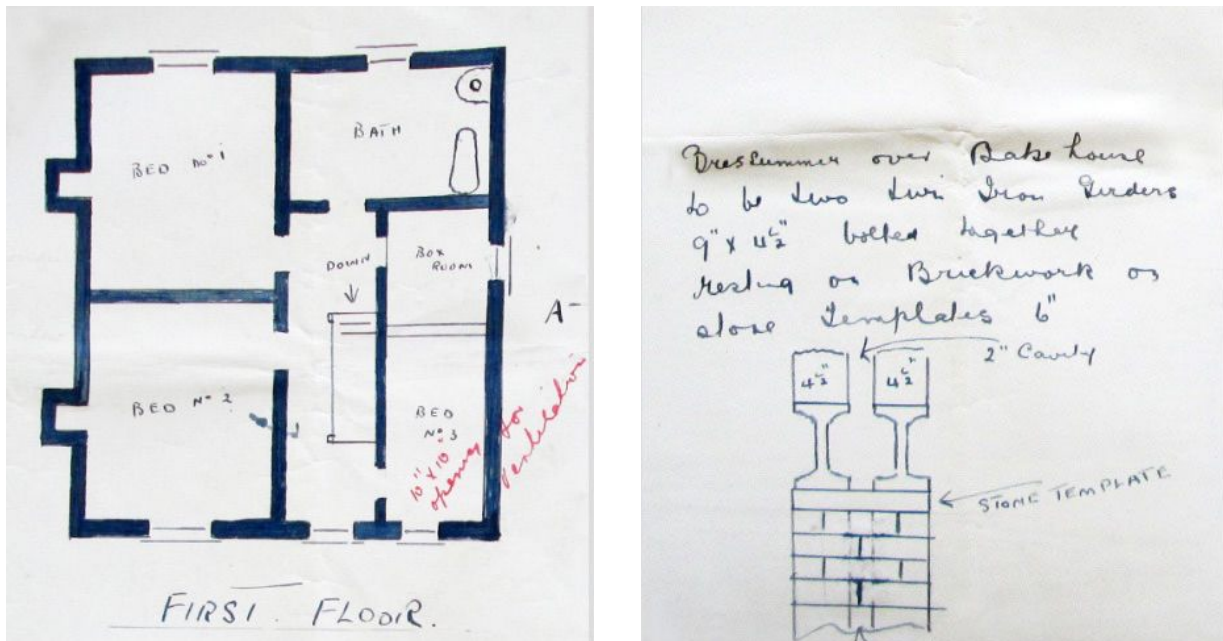


Figure 6 The first floor plan and bressummer beam specification.

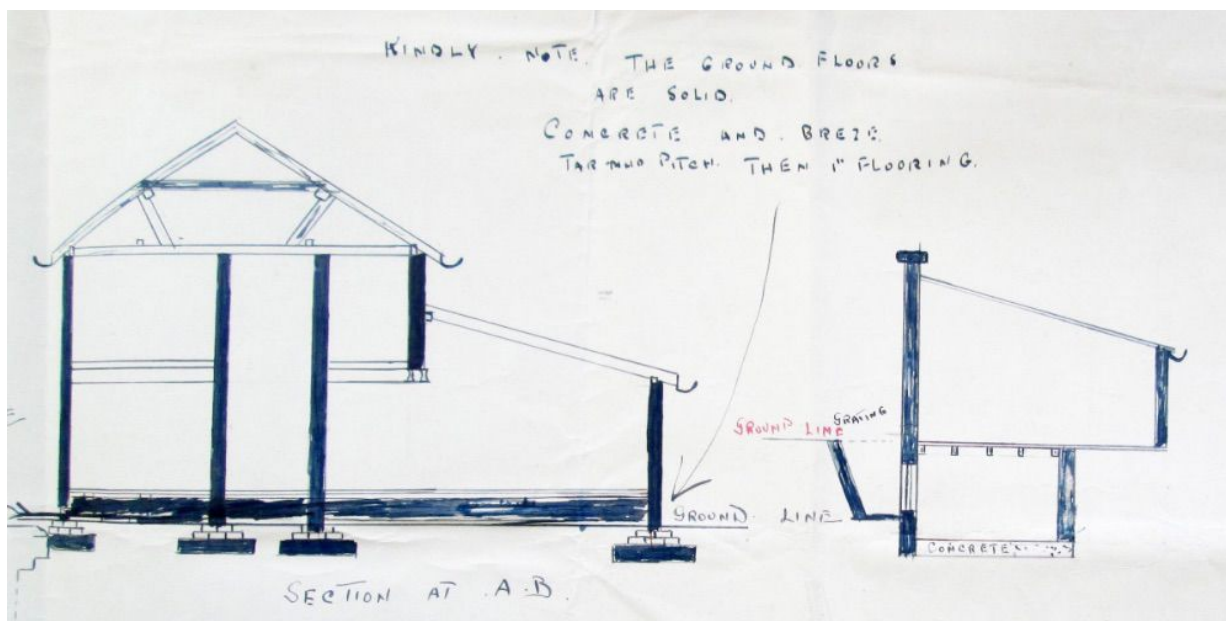


Figure 7 Floor and foundation details.

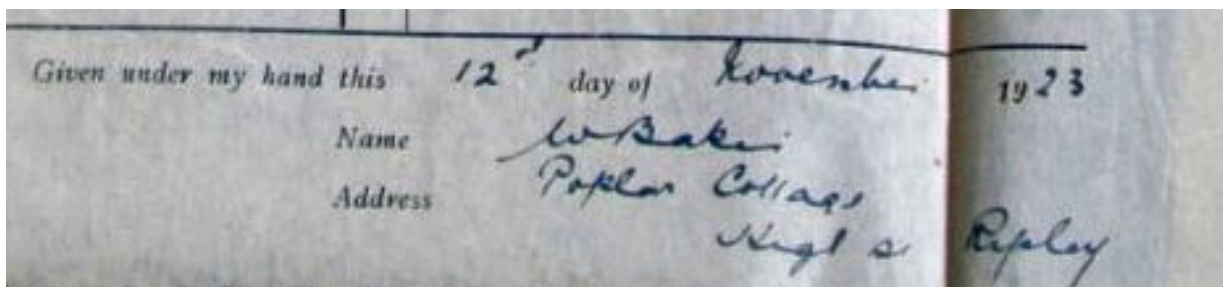


Figure 8 The builder's signature and address.

Plans for cart shed, store and stable

These plans were signed by the builder on 12 November 1923, deposited with the Council on 14 November and approved on 16 November – a notably fast process, and one that preceded the same process for the main house. Figure 9 shows the core of the plans for this smaller construction. Again, the plans include a sheet, not displayed here, showing the fine details of the proposed materials and features.

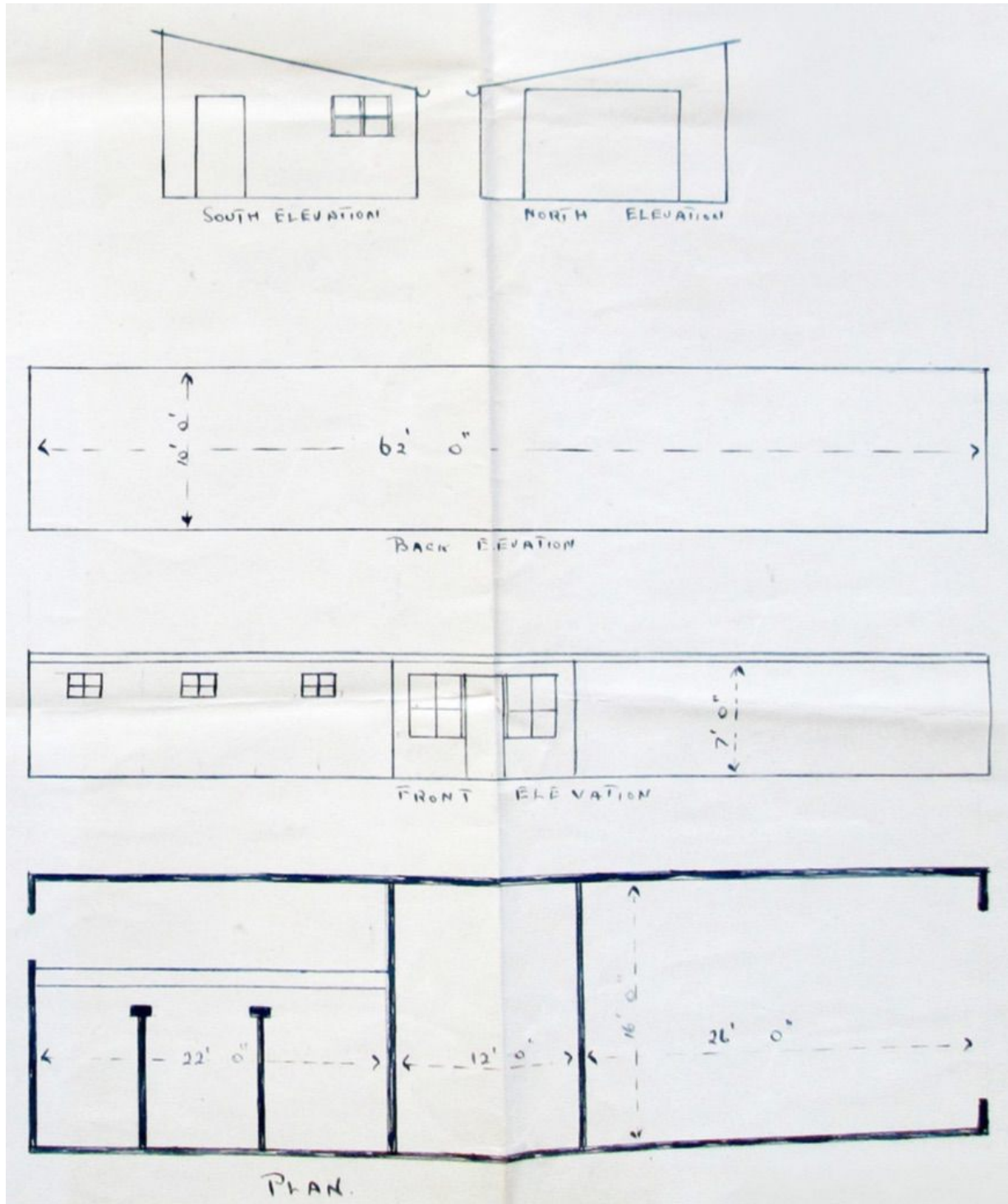


Figure 9 Elevations and plans for the cart shed, store and stable.

Occupancy by the West family

Thomas and Maria West were still living at Yew Tree House when the Spring issue of the Electoral Register was produced in 1924. Soon afterwards, however, they put their goods up for sale. On Friday 9 May

a notice was published in *The Surrey Mirror* stating that, on the following Wednesday 14 May, a significant amount of furniture and stock-in-trade would be sold by auction at Yew Tree House. It noted that the sale was 'by instructions from Mr. T. P. West, who is removing to New Premises'.

It follows from the latter remark that by early May The Milestone must have already been built and made ready for occupation, merely five months after the plans had been approved. The task was probably expedited by the fact of the winter months having not produced severe weather, although there had been a moderate amount of snow for a few days in January.

Mr West had evidently decided on this move because, as reported in *The Surrey Advertiser and County Times* on 17 November 1923, Mrs Rosella Beatrice (née Smith) Yates, who had owned Yew Tree House since 1920, had lodged with the Dorking County Court a claim for possession against Mr West who had occupied the property for 23 years. The court granted her possession from the following 25 March.

The Spring issue of the Electoral Register for 1925 shows Thomas and Maria, together with his brother Harry, living at 'The Milestones' [sic].

However, in December 1927 The Milestone was put up for auction 'by Order of the Mortgagee', as shown by the notice in Figure 10 published in *The Surrey Mirror* on 2 December.

By Order of the Mortgagee.
MESSERS. ARNOLD AND SON
 Will Sell by Auction, at The Swan Hotel, Leatherhead, on Thursday, December 15th, at 4 p.m., important Freehold Business Premises with Vacant Possession.
"THE MILESTONE," EFFINGHAM,
 having a frontage of 88 feet to Leatherhead-Guildford Road. Commodious double-fronted shop and dwelling-house, Bakehouse with Collins double-deck steam oven; Office, Cellar, Garage, Stabling, Store-rooms, and large Garden. Co.'s Water and Gas.
 Solicitors: Messrs. Hart, Scales, and Hodges, Dorking and Leatherhead.
 Particulars and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the Solicitors or from the Auctioneers, as above. db227

Figure 10 Sale by auction of The Milestone, 1927.

The implication is that Thomas had been unable to make the business earn enough to cover his mortgage payments and that his lender, the mortgagee, had foreclosed.

It is not clear what the outcome was of this sale announcement. Although the premises was to be sold 'with Vacant Possession', Thomas and Maria continue to be listed at that address in the subsequent Electoral Registers up to and including 1930. Meanwhile, however, the premises was also occupied from 1928 by the family of another baker Cecil Whitehead whose entries in the Electoral Registers name the property as 'Milestone House'.

As seen in Figure 11, the *Holmesdale Directory to Dorking and Leatherhead* for 1928 lists Thomas West at 'The Stores' – the trading name for his Milestone shop – but does not mention Cecil, presumably because it had been compiled prior to his arrival. We also see from this entry that Yew Tree House had been taken over by the Yates family who were running it as a boarding establishment.

COMMERCIAL.	
Adams, John S., headmaster, "School House"	Hemus, F. W., farmer, "Norwood Farm," The Common
Almond, James, grape grower, "The Vineries"	Hooper, W. J., Police Station, West Lane
Burrows, B. W. R., grocer, Church Street	Hopkins, Mrs., "Hill Farm," Effingham Hill
Butcher, William, carpenter, and Post Office, telegraph and telephone call office, etc.	Killick, Arthur J., farmer and dairyman, and clerk to the Parish Council, "West Lane Farm"
Carpenter, John, fruit grower, The Common	Madge, Sidney, butcher, High Street
Chapman, George H., licensed victualler, "The Plough" p.h.	Nottage, Charles, bailiff, "Home Farm,"
Collins, —, baker, High Street	Saunders and Forehead, coal merchants and contractors, "Westmoor House"
Covey, Harry, carpenter, 7, Victory Cottages	Sparkes, C. H., head gardener to Capt. Botterell
Denew, John, "Orestan Farm"	Stovell, Arthur A., boot and shoe maker, Lower Street
Edwards, Frank, bricklayer, The Common	Street, Ralph E., head gardener to Mrs. Pauling, "The Lodge"
Ford, J. D., butler, "Home Farm"	West, Thomas P., The Stores
Froud, A. G., licensed victualler, "Sir Douglas Haig"	Wood, H. F., blacksmith, Church street
	Yates, Rosella Beatrice, "Yew Tree House" (boarding house)

Figure 11 Thomas West shown at The Milestone in the 1928 *Holmesdale Directory*.

It may be that the property was purchased by the Whiteheads at the 1927 sale and that the Wests remained there as tenants, with Thomas perhaps working for Cecil. A more likely possibility is that the Wests vacated The Milestone in 1927 and moved elsewhere but for three subsequent years failed to have their address updated in the Electoral Registers. There may be other explanations. Whatever the case, the registers for 1931 show the Wests living at a house named 'Sterlingworth' located near the beginning of Norwood Road, where they remained for the rest of their lives.

The earliest image we have showing The Milestone is an aerial photograph taken in about 1928-29 (Figure 12). The view is westwards and shows the Guildford Road on the right, snaking its way from Little Bookham past the junction with the sparsely developed Woodlands Road running horizontally across the picture, then up the small rise to pass the newly-built Milestone (ringed in red) on the left and thence past Victory Cottages, also quite newly-built, to reach the main crossroads near the top of the image.

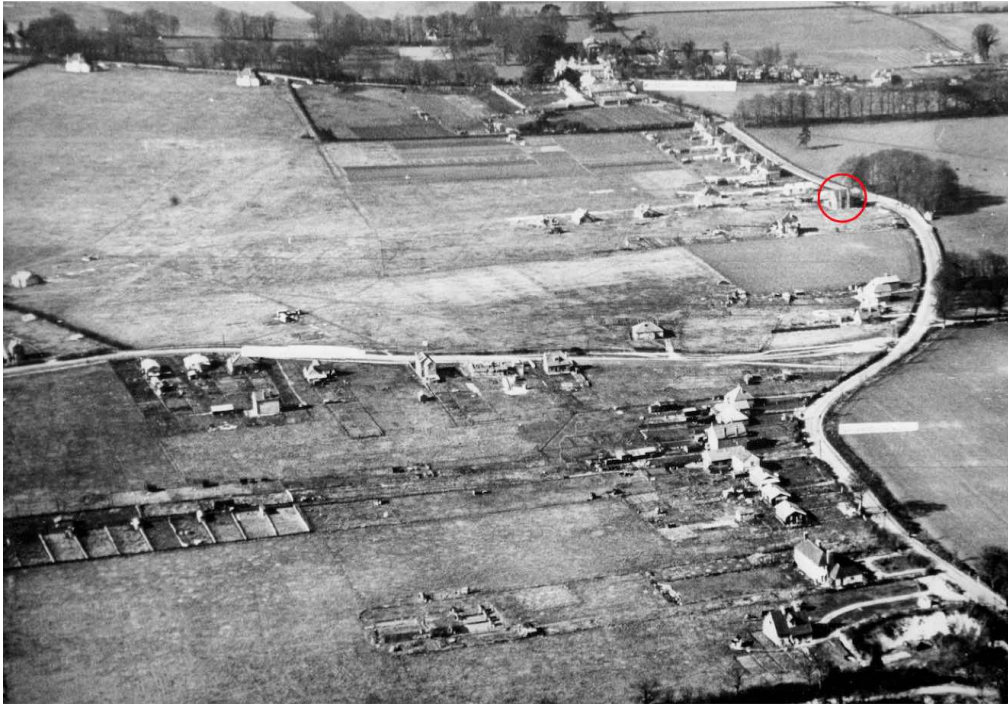


Figure 12 Aerial view showing The Milestone (circled) in about 1928-29.

The close-up in Figure 12a shows The Milestone at bottom-right. The two large chimneys on the near (eastern) side serving the dining and drawing rooms are visible. The features to the rear and far side of the building are indistinct and to clarify them would require inspecting the superior copy of the photograph held at the Surrey History Centre. In this period Norwood Road had barely begun to take shape. The long line of mature trees seen at the top of this section stood alongside Brown's Lane and were beech trees.

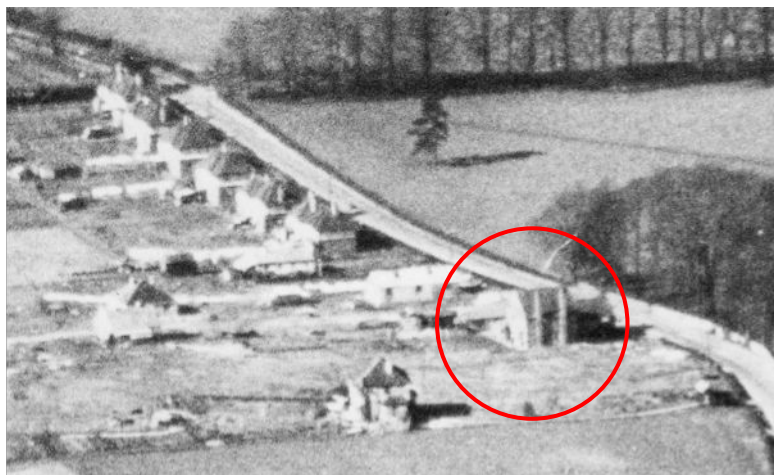


Figure 12a A more close-up view of The Milestone.

Occupancy by the Whitehead family

Cecil Whitehead was born in Fooks Cray, Kent on 5 July 1890 to parents James Robert Whitehead and Sarah Ann (née Barrett) who had married in 1874 [GRO Ref: Croydon 2a 387, 1874 (Q2)]. The 1911 census finds the family living at 4, Longlands Parade in Sidcup where James was running a bakery and confectionery business in which several of his children, including Cecil, were assisting. Before long, Cecil became a baker in his own right.

Cecil married in 1917 to Annie (née) Clacy and over the next 13 years they produced two sons and three daughters. The Electoral Registers for 1921-26 show the family living at 10, Bridge Street in Leatherhead, whilst in 1927 they were listed at both that address and 'Wisenden' in Grove Side, Great Bookham. They then moved to The Milestone and lived there until at least 1933, whilst throughout this period continuing to run the Leatherhead property as a baker's shop. These details accord quite well with the following notes supplied to ELHG in 2012 by Cecil's great-grandson:

'My Great-grandfather Cecil Whitehead owned the Milestone bakery on the Guildford Road, Effingham between 1926 and 1935. He lived there with his family. He owned what is now Harrington's Bakery in Leatherhead between 1922 and 1933. Cecil also owned the shop at the top of The Street, Effingham between 1926 and 1930, before selling it to an Arthur Anderson.'

Arthur Sydney Anderson and his wife Ivy Maude are indeed listed in the Electoral Register for 1930 (but not before) at The Village Stores in The Street. This property was not at the 'top' of The Street but some way down it, being the old bakery there. The Andersons are shown in the registers at this address up to 1933 after which they moved to Ashtead.

The photograph in Figure 13 shows Cecil's three daughters playing with a maypole in the back garden of The Milestone. Lodging with the Whiteheads were the family of Harry Nathan Bridger and his wife Lena (née Keeling) with their daughter Mary Alfreda, the latter being the other girl in the picture. Taken in about 1932-33, the photograph shows, from left to right: Hilda May Whitehead; her twin sister Joyce Millicent Whitehead; Mary Alfreda Bridger (later Rice-Oxley); and Maureen B. Whitehead. The youngest child Maureen was born in early 1930.



Figure 13 Playing with a maypole in the back garden of The Milestone, early 1930s.

By 1934 further development had taken place immediately west of The Milestone, as shown in the 1934 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 14). The area shaded in red is that part of The Milestone as first built for Thomas West, whilst the small area shaded in purple is a later addition which can be seen clearly in the photograph above. Also visible in the photograph, to the left of the main house, is the single-storey side extension containing the bakehouse (with its large rear chimney), stores, office and shop. At this time the

further developments immediately west of The Milestone, as seen in Figure 14, had not yet been put into effect.

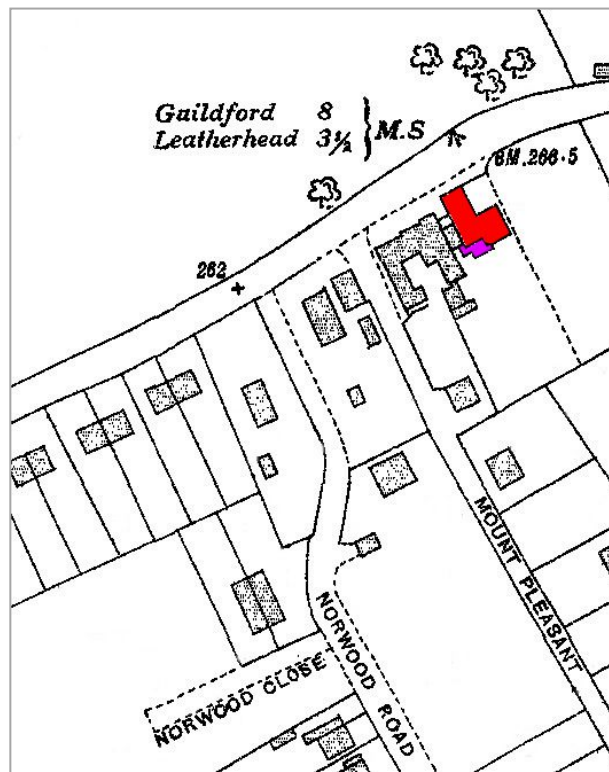


Figure 14 The Milestone in the 1934 OS map.

Nearly forty years later Lena Bridger and her daughter Mary – then Mary Rice-Oxley, having married in 1951 – were recorded reminiscing about their brief spell at The Milestone while lodging with the Whitehead family. Here is the start of their conversation:

Lena: For fifteen years from 1932, in Effingham, my husband and I kept the village shop. We took the shop over in 1932 but it belonged to us for three years before that. Effingham then was completely different. We were a small self-contained village with a small population. We stayed at The Milestones while the shop was being enlarged and altered. We were there for three months. The Milestones which is now a flat was a bakers shop in those days with a bakehouse behind and stabling for the horses.

Mary: There were three horses, were there?

Lena: Yes. Early in the morning when the oven was lit the crickets woke you. Opposite, where the opening to the playing field is, was a path with a belt of trees.

Mary: And I think there was a pond.

Lena: And a pond, yes there was a pond. A beautiful spot there really wasn't it? The old milestone standing there ...

Mary: Which is still there now.

Lena: Is it still there?

Mary: I think so.

Independently, Mary's own writings about that era include the following remarks in which she states that the Andersons had been just managing The Village Stores in The Street, not owning it as claimed in the above account by Cecil's great-grandson.

We came to Effingham in 1932 having bought The Village Stores in 1930 ... Andersons had managed it for two years. We stayed at Whitehead's bakery at The Milestone while the house [The Village Stores] was altered.

Tom Poulter – who later delivered coal from Weale's [in] Little Bookham – was working in the [Milestone's] bakehouse as a boy, where there were noisy crickets early in the morning with the warmth of the bakehouse.



Figure 15 The Whitehead family in about 1933.



Figure 16 Cecil Whitehead's delivery boy Tom Poulter in about 1933.

Figure 15 shows the Whitehead family at the back of The Milestone; Cecil is left-most at the back and Annie is right-most at the front with their dog Spot. At the front are their three daughters. Figure 16 shows Cecil's delivery boy Tom Poulter in Woodlands Road; the horse was named 'Rainbow'.

After leaving The Milestone the Whiteheads moved briefly to Fetcham where the 1935 Electoral Register finds them living at Langaller Farm in The Glade. Thereafter they lived at Between Streets in Cobham, running a bakery there at 'London House'. Cecil's great-grandson wrote:

'I think that it was the Great Depression that forced him to sell all the bakeries; however, about a year later he restarted the bakery business at Post Boys Row, Between Streets, Cobham, which he ran until 1952.'



Figure 17 Cecil and Annie Whitehead at Bognor in 1936.

Annie died in early October 1940, as reported on 5 October in *The Surrey Advertiser and County Times*:

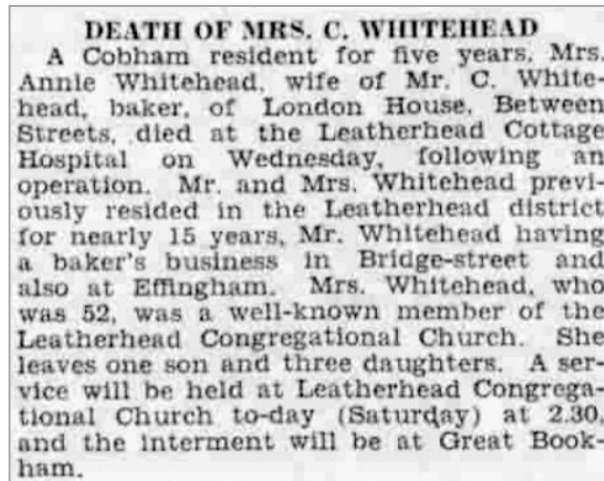


Figure 18 Death of Annie Whitehead in 1940.

The last entry of Cecil in the Electoral Registers for Surrey is in 1951 when he was still in Cobham. He died on 24 January 1965 at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital, having been living at 33, Fitzroy Road in Tankerton, Whitstable. He was buried, however, on 29 January at St Nicolas, Great Bookham where Annie had been interred 25 years previously.

Occupancy by the Gleeson family

Several residents have recalled that after the Whiteheads departed The Milestone was taken over by the Gleeson family.

Stephen Ernest Gleeson was born in Ealing on 14 July 1899 [GRO Ref: Brentford 3a 106, 1899 (Q3)] to parents Frederick and Alice (née Diamond). The 1901 Census finds him – named as ‘Steven Gleason’ – as a nurse child in an apparently unrelated family living in Acton. Meanwhile, his mother and various other children were living at 11, Havelock Road in Norwood, Southall where she was occupied as a dealer in old clothes, working on her own account. Frederick, who had been a railway porter in 1891, was not present and it is suspected that he had left her. The 1911 Census finds her at Perriams Place in Chapel Street, Budleigh Salterton in Devon living with a labourer Thomas Pearcey, together with Stephen described as Thomas's step-son. Alice and Thomas declared on their census form that they had been married for three years but the GRO index appears to hold no reference to their having married each other at any time.

On 1 November 1915 Stephen enlisted in the Royal Marine Light Infantry, Plymouth Division [The National Archives, Royal Marines Registers of Service Index, Register No. 18538].

He married in Devon in 1921 to Mabel Gertrude Woodley who had been born in Sidmouth on 27 November 1901 to parents John Peter Woodley and Georgina (née Ireland). Stephen and Mabel produced two children in Devon – Alfred E J Gleeson in 1922 and Mabel G Gleeson in 1923.

Stephen was a baker and a chef. He and Mabel appear to have first arrived in Surrey in about 1928 or possibly the year before. The Electoral Registers for 1928-33 find them living at the Effingham Manor Golf Club and it seems likely that Stephen was working there as a chef. In 1935 they produced a third child Kathleen M Gleeson. The Electoral Registers for 1935-37 find them living at ‘The Milestone Café’. A former resident, the late Patricia Ann Read, speaking of the part of Effingham in which The Milestone was located, recalled that ‘There was a bakers (Gleesons) there. They had a café there where you could get coffee and that.’

The 1937 Electoral Register lists the Gleesons also for ‘The Cakeshop’ in the High Street, Great Bookham, whilst noting that their abode was in Effingham. They do not appear in the registers for 1938 and their whereabouts are unknown. The 1939 National Register finds them living apart: Stephen was in Uxbridge Street, South Kensington and occupied (possibly at that address) as a head chef and mistakenly giving his birth year as 1898; meanwhile, Mabel was living at 4, Westgate Bay Avenue in Margate and doing unpaid domestic duties.

We have been told that after the War the Gleesons were running a guest house at Westgate-on-Sea. They both died in Devon: Stephen in 1976 [GRO Ref: Exeter 21 1449, 1976 (Q1)] and Mabel in 1983 [GRO Ref: Mid Devon 21 2069, 1983 (Q2)].

Occupancy by the Madge family

The Milestone makes no appearance in the Electoral Registers for 1938 and 1939, whilst the 1939 National Register does list it but shows it to be uninhabited. However, the following remark appears in the written recollections of Mary Rice-Oxley:

‘When Whiteheads sold up, the business was taken over by Gleesons and then by a butchers owned by Madges, whose main shop was in Church Road, Great Bookham.’

This is currently the only clue we have to the use of The Milestone after the Gleesons had departed. Mary’s mention of the shop in Bookham refers to the butchers business that had been long established there by Sidney Madge at Aberdeen House in Church Road.

Sidney was the first of ten children born to George Madge and Dinah (née) Splatt who had married in 1875. One further child William Henry Splatt – described as George’s ‘son-in-law’ aged 8 in the 1881 Census – was evidently a member of the Splatt family and had perhaps been placed under the guardianship of George and Dinah; he was raised among their own children whilst retaining his Splatt surname. The eleven children consisted of six boys and five girls.

George and Dinah were both born at Thorverton in Devon and came to Surrey in the period 1881-83. The 1891 Census finds the family living at Woodlands Park in Stoke D’Abernon where George was working as a farm bailiff. George was still a farm bailiff ten years later at the time of the 1901 Census when the family was living at Sheepbell Farm in Great Bookham.

The photograph in Figure 19 shows the family at Sheepbell Farm with George prominent at the rear next to his comparatively diminutive wife Dinah. In addition to them there are six males and five females. It is likely then that this photograph shows George and Dinah with all their eleven children. If this is the case then the youngest child, at the centre of the front row, is May Frances born in 1894, so dating the photograph to around 1900.

In this photograph the oldest sons of George are (as relatives have stated) Sidney Madge seated second-from-left at the front and William Henry (né Splatt) Madge seated far right at the front.



Figure 19 George Madge with his family at Sheepbell Farm in about 1900.



Figure 19a Close-up of Sidney Madge from Figure 19.

By 1904 Sidney had established his own business and had married in that year to Agnes Violet (née) Pooley. We are fortunate that in 1904 the photographer Francis Frith took a photograph of Sidney outside his shop at Aberdeen House in Bookham's Lower Street (today's Church Road); the image in Figure 20 comes from an original postcard bearing this photograph and in it we can see the shop logo 'S. MADGE' clearly visible under the canopy. The three women may have included some of his sisters and/or Agnes, and all three were presumably assisting in the shop.



Figure 20 Sidney Madge and staff outside his Bookham shop in 1904.

In 1914 George, then aged about 60, decided on a new direction in life. As can be seen in the notice shown in Figure 22, published on 3 October 1914 in *The Dorking & Leatherhead Advertiser*, he put his business as a carrier and coal merchant up for auction together with his household furniture. He then moved to the very old cottage named The Laurels in Effingham at which there had been a succession of butchers. George and his family in turn ran a butchers business there. He and Dinah remained there until their deaths in 1934 and 1936, respectively.



Figure 21 The Laurels, seen no later than 1907 when it was already a butchers run by the Conisbee family.

Meanwhile, at the time of the 1911 Census Sidney was living in Church Road with Agnes, their three children and his unmarried brothers Alfred and Leonard. He also was now working as a butcher, assisted by Agnes, his brothers and an unrelated woman. In later years he also played a role – perhaps the primary role – in managing the butchers business with his father George at The Laurels in Effingham; the *Holmesdale Directory to Dorking and Leatherhead* for 1928 lists him as a butcher in Effingham's main street, although he was not living there.

If Mary Rice-Oxley's above remark about the Gleasons being followed at The Milestone in the late 1930s by a 'butchers owned by Madges ... in Church Road' is correct then it appears that this must refer to Sidney Madge. By 1938 his father and his brothers George and Frank were no longer alive; his brother Leonard had lived in Devon since the 1920s; his only other brother Alfred vanishes from the British sources after marrying in 1912 and it is suspected – on the basis of occasional transatlantic voyages undertaken by his wife – that he had emigrated to the Americas.

The provisional conclusion of all this is that for some years from 1938 onwards Sidney Madge ran a butchers business at The Milestone. It is plausible that he rented the premises – or at least that part of it consisting of the shop, office and storerooms – and employed someone to manage the business there on his behalf. Such an arrangement might have continued through the war or it might have been cut short by it. Whichever the case, occupancy of The Milestone had changed yet again by the end of the war.

ON MONDAY NEXT.
EASTWICK.
GREAT BOOKHAM, LEATHERHEAD,
 About 2½ miles from Leatherhead Stations.

MESSRS. WHITE AND SONS

will Sell by Auction, under instructions from Mr. George Madge, giving up business, on **MONDAY, OCTOBER 5th, 1914, at 2 o'clock,**

THE STOCK-IN-TRADE OF A
CARRIER AND COAL MERCHANT,
 comprising
3 VAN AND CART HORSES,
2 COBS, CHESTNUT PONY,
WELL-BRED BAY COLT AND FILLY,
BLACK PONY, TRAP AND HARNESS,
 3 Spring Carrier's Tilted Vans, 2 Tip Carts, Miller's Cart, Market Cart, Waggonette, Pony Phaeton, 14 Sets Van, Thill and Trace Harness, Scales and Weights, Van Cloths, Corn Bins, Harrison McGregor's Mowing Machine, Ashby's Hay Tedder, Howard's Iron Horse Rake, 2-knife Chaff Cutter, Hand Turnip Drill;

2 STACKS PRIME MEADOW & SEED HAY,
GROWING CROP OF MANGOLD AND POTATOES,

Several lots of HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE,
 Etc.

Catalogues at the Place of Sale; the Hotels and Inns in the neighbourhood, and of the Auctioneers, Dorking and Leatherhead. db5

Figure 22 George Madge's sale in 1914.

Occupancy by the Startup family

Our account of The Milestone after the 1930s currently relies to an extent upon fragmentary recollections by residents, with some support from formal sources. In particular, we have these documented memories, from two different persons:

‘There was a house on the front there called Milestone which was occupied by a Mrs Startup who used to sell old bits of clothes from the building there.’

‘To the latter’s right [meaning, in the context, immediately west of The Milestone’s shop and bakehouse] is a smaller single-storey building, this being Covey’s general stores and later Mrs. Startup’s bric-a-brac shop.’

In order to clarify these remarks we need to revisit the earlier section of the 1934 Ordnance Survey map but with a little more coloured in. The structure coloured dark green had been built on the site where Mr West had built his stable and cart shed back in the 1920s and which had been still standing when the Bridgers were lodging at The Milestone in 1932. This must have been demolished around 1933 and replaced by the structure shown in dark green. This structure is the “smaller single-storey building” referred to above in which Mrs Startup evidently had her bric-a-brac shop.

It is perhaps worth a brief digression here to say a few words about the ownership of The Milestone and its adjoining properties as opposed to its succession of occupancies. Although documented proof is not yet available, we have been told by a descendant that Cecil Whitehead owned The Milestone, including its stable, in the early 1930s. We conjecture that he sold the property to local resident Harry Albert Covey. It is certain that Mr Covey had the adjoining properties built in the 1930s besides other properties in the Mount Pleasant area.

The recorded memory above states that Mr Covey (or family members) ran a general store in the building where Mrs Startup later had her shop.

The small area shown in light green appears to have been only a side extension of this store and did not actually adjoin The Milestone – a narrow alley separated the two.

Mrs Startup was the second wife Nesta Madeleine (née Burley) of Alfred James Startup. Alfred was born on 4 January 1887 in the Ratcliffe–Shadwell docks area of London to parents Alfred James (senior) and Mary Ann Elizabeth (née) Schofield who had married at Poplar on 28 February 1886. Alfred senior worked as a labourer in a tea warehouse. He and Mary produced three children – Alfred junior in 1887, Eleanor Rosetta in 1888 and Rosetta Jane in 1891. The 1891 Census finds Alfred senior and Mary living with these little daughters at 17, Marshfield Street in Poplar, but their son Alfred junior was in distant Essex in Prittlewell, being a visitor in the household of Alfred senior’s sister Alice Elizabeth Louisa, now married to a man named William Marshall.

Later in 1891 Mary died, aged just 29, leaving Alfred senior with three very small children. However, the youngest of these, Rosetta Jane, also died soon afterwards, in the first half of 1892. It is probable that the remaining family were then taken into the permanent care of William Marshall’s family, since this is where they are found in both the 1901 and 1911 Censuses, now living in Poplar in both cases. By 1911 Alfred junior was working as an assistant draper for William but his sister Eleanor Rosetta was apparently unemployed.

On 14 August 1915 Alfred (junior) married to his first wife Katherine Rosetta (née) Pethers at Christ Church in Greenwich. By now Alfred senior was dead, as was Katherine’s father. The marriage was witnessed by William Marshall and Alfred’s sister Eleanor Rosetta. At this time Alfred was working as a draper’s warehouseman, doubtless still employed by William.

Katherine had been born in 1894 to parents John James Pethers and Catherine (née) Greany who had married in 1873. Between 1916 and 1923 Alfred and Katherine produced five known children: Eleanor

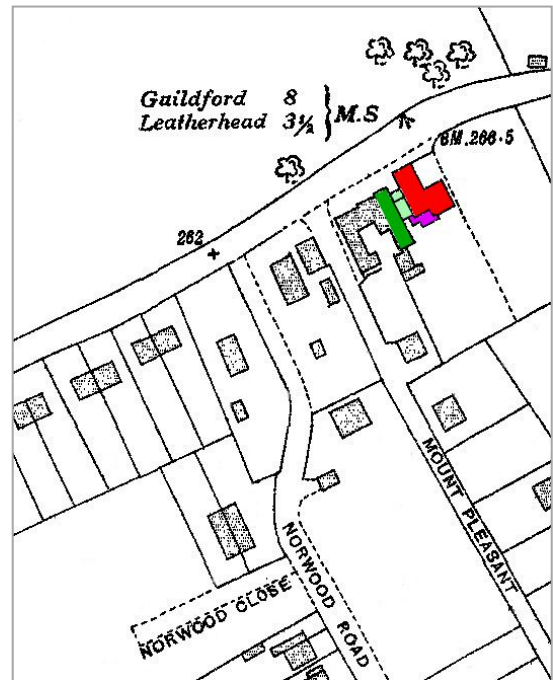


Figure 23 The Milestone in 1934.

Catherine Dorothy, Dorothy G (Gladys?), Gladys May, Alice and Alfred John. This family life was, however, significantly interrupted by the Great War and by Alfred's active military service in it. Alfred's army service and pension records have survived, held in The National Archives.



Figure 24 Alfred Startup with his first wife Katherine and infant daughter.

The photograph in Figure 24 shows Alfred and Katherine with an infant daughter, possibly their first child Eleanor Catherine Dorothy born in Essex on 30 May 1916. It was made available to ELHG for scanning by Patricia A (née Simmons) Gale, a grand-daughter of Alfred, and appears here by her kind permission.

In late 1915 the Startup family was living at 33, Gillett Avenue in East Ham, which is the address that Alfred cited for his 'next of kin' Catherine when he enlisted with the Army on 9 December. At that time he was lodging at 27, Albecore Crescent in Lewisham and it was at Lewisham that his attestation took place. He gave his age as 28 years and 338 days, and his occupation as warehouseman. His attestation form gives his height as 5 feet and 7.5 inches.

He was placed on the Army Reserve on 10 December, being appointed to the 22 Reserve Battalion of the London (infantry) Regiment with Service Number 6280.

In the following year, 1916, he was mobilized with the 2/22 Battalion of the London Regiment with Service Number 683196 and posted on 30 August. Presumably several months of training then followed to prepare him for battle. On 16 January 1917 he embarked on a troop carrying ship at Southampton, bound

for the campaign in Salonika (Macedonia) which had already been in progress since mid-1916, involving nearly half a million allied forces and sustaining many tens of thousands of casualties.

Alfred's Regiment was probably sent as part of the so-called 'Army of the Orient' formed as an attempt to defend Serbia from the continuing hostilities of German, Austrian and Bulgarian forces. Alfred arrived at Salonika at the beginning of February 1917 and was then sent into the field, on active service.

Within fewer than three months in the field Alfred fell ill, being admitted to a Light Field Ambulance on 20 April, and two days later to a Casualty Clearing Station; at this stage his illness was recorded as 'NYD' (not yet diagnosed). On the 22nd he was moved to the 1st Canadian General Hospital in Lembet, Salonika where the diagnosis was made: malaria, the illness that had already brought down thousands of others in that campaign.

After another year he had become so seriously affected by the malaria that he was sent back to Britain, embarking on 31 May 1918 and travelling via Taranto and Itea in Italy, a standard route for ill or wounded soldiers being sent home from this region. On arrival he was posted to depot on 21 June.

On 12 February 1919 he was discharged from the Army, being disabled to a degree assessed at 40%, having suffered chest pains, palpitations and shortness of breath. His condition on discharge was recorded as poor and debilitated with deficient teeth and a heart murmur, this latter owed to valvular heart disease brought on by the malaria. His pension record states that his hair was brown, his eyes grey, his complexion dark and his height on discharge as 5 feet 9 inches (so, taller since enlisting!).

Alfred's pension records also include a statement by him that his last employer before joining the Army had been J. Rotherham of 84, High Street in Shoreditch; this was a large wholesale and retail drapers business founded by Jeremiah Rotherham. The photograph in Figure 25, taken in about 1904, shows that it was a substantial department store. As a warehouseman Alfred may not have been working at these Shoreditch premises but at one of the company's warehouses elsewhere, possibly in or near Lewisham.

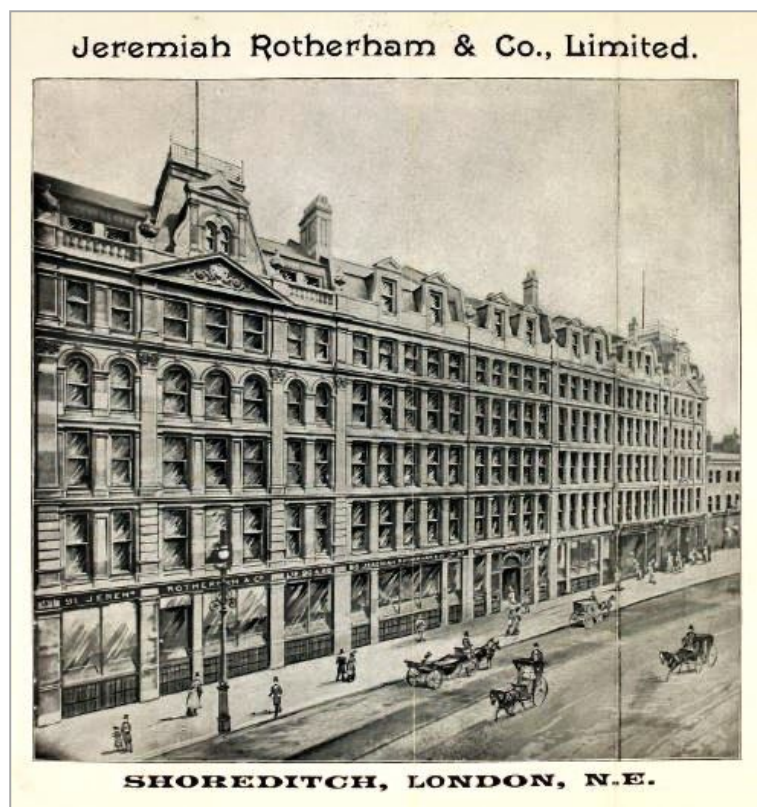


Figure 25 Alfred's employer prior to his enlistment.

In acknowledgement of having been honourably discharged owing to sickness Alfred was awarded the standard Silver War Badge in March 1919. In this period his home address was recorded variously as No. 76 or 78, Azof Street off Blackwall Lane in Greenwich. His campaign medals – the British War Medal and Victory Medal – were not received by him until 22 June 1922, perhaps due to confusion as to his address (one item of correspondence about the medals was sent to No. 28, Azof Street).

In his pension records Alfred expressed his wish, upon discharge, to take up employment as a 'holder-up', that is, as a rivetter's mate. Whether he did subsequently work in that capacity is not known.

In 1929 Katherine died, aged just 34. Her death was registered in the Rochford district of Essex. We do not know the cause, but perhaps she died in the course of bearing another child. Her death left Alfred with five children to raise, the oldest just 13.

Later in 1929 Alfred remarried, to Nesta Madeleine (née) Burley. Nesta had been born in Nottingham on October 5th 1891 to parents Frank Curtis Burley – a wheelwright – and Frances (née) Davenport who had married in late 1881. She had not previously married.

In 1931 Alfred's daughter Dorothy died at age 11.

The 1939 National Register finds Alfred living with Nesta and at least one daughter Gladys May at 273, Hamlet Court Road in Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex where he was working for a wholesale clothier merchant business as a manager in charge of dispatching and packing. Both he and Nesta were also volunteer A.R.P. wardens.

At some point during the Second World War the family moved to Effingham, why we do not know. ELHG possesses at least eight newspaper articles published during 1944-45 in *The Surrey Advertiser and County Times* referring to Nesta's many community activities. One of them implies that she and Alfred were already in the village by early 1943. Another describes Nesta as "a very valuable social worker in the village". Yet another is shown in Figure 26.

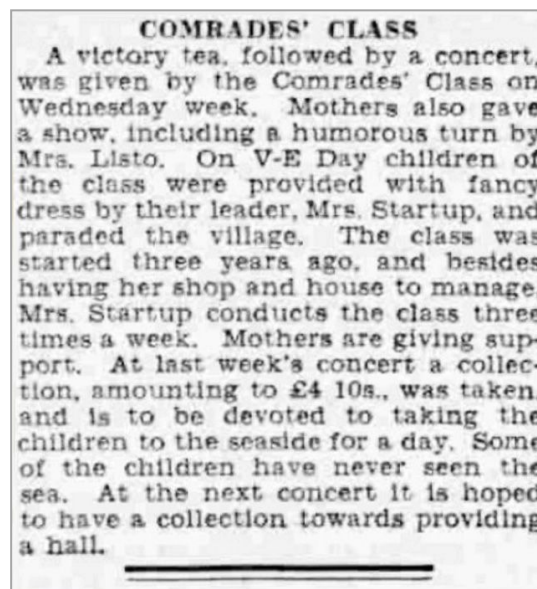


Figure 26 Nesta mentioned on 2 June 1945.

Owing to the suspension of Electoral Registration at the start of the war we do not know where Alfred and Nesta were living when they first settled in Effingham, but it was probably at The Milestone where they – and Gladys May – were certainly living when registration resumed in 1945. By 1951 Gladys had moved to 18, Strathcona Avenue whilst Alfred and Nesta remained together at The Milestone up to 1955. Nesta's location during 1956-58 is unknown but from 1959 she resided for some years in The Lord Howard pub in Forest Road, Effingham Junction, whilst Alfred meanwhile moved to Woodlands Road where he lived alone.

The exact period when Nesta was running her shop in the building next to The Milestone is unknown but it must have been post-war because the person who provided the first of the two recollections cited above did not arrive in Effingham until 1946. In Figure 27 we have a single photograph showing Nesta, again provided by Patricia A. (née Simmons) Gale and appearing here by her kind permission.

The event is believed to have been a fete held in Effingham in about 1954. Nesta is at the table apparently giving out prizes. The man standing with her in the foreground was the very famous British actor Stanley Holloway. It is remarkable that such an esteemed celebrity gave his time to a modest event in a village with which he had no known connection. It is not impossible that his presence there had been arranged by Barnes Wallis who in this period was taking an extremely active role in many strands of Effingham's community life. In Minutes describing plans for one of Effingham's fetes in the 1950s,

Barnes Wallis – as Chairman of the KGV Committee of Management – expressed his hope of persuading actor Michael Redgrave to open it. Wallis had the connections and the prestige to engage the support of such people. Redgrave had played the character of Wallis in the 1955 film ‘The Dam Busters’ and so the two may have been acquainted.



Figure 27 Nesta standing next to actor Stanley Holloway at an Effingham fete in about 1954.

It appears that around 1962-63 Alfred left Effingham and went to live in Essex with, or near to, his son Alfred John. He died there on 3 February 1963. His probate records states that he had been living at 14, Old Heath Road in Colchester and that probate was granted to Alfred John, a personnel clerk. His effects were valued at just over £190. Nesta died in Surrey in the summer of 1969.

Occupancy by Allan Ernest Chitty

The recollections of two different former residents indicate how ‘The Milestone’s store/bakehouse was used after the Madges had finished with it:

‘They [the Madges] were later followed by an electrical shop owned by Alan [sic] Chitty.’

‘Also in those shops was Chitty’s electrical store. Alan [sic] Chitty was also a Special Constable in the late 60s.’

As far as is known the last person to conduct business on The Milestone premises was Allan Ernest Chitty. He did not live there but ran an electrical, radio and TV business in its adjoining store/bakehouse. His signboard can be seen on its wall in the photograph in Figure 28.

Allan was born in 1942 to parents Ernest Edward Chitty and Brenda (‘Rene’) Leonora(h) C. (née) Waterer who had married in late 1939. Earlier in 1939 Edward and Brenda had both been living in East Street, Great Bookham – he at No. 22 and she at Fairfield Cottages, being No. 25. Allan appears to have been their only child.

The Electoral Registers show Ernest and Brenda living at 25, East Street during 1946-48 and then at 30, Middlemead Road, Great Bookham from 1949 until at least 1962. In 1964, however, Allan was listed in the Electoral Register at 8, East Street.



Figure 28 Allan Chitty's store at The Milestone.

By the 1960s Allan had become a radio/TV engineer. The telephone directories for at least the period 1968-79 list him as such at the address 1, Bookham Grove Corner, as seen in the example below for 1975.

Chitty A, 5 Cottage Rd, W. Ewell	01-393 9534
Chitty A.E, Radio & TV Engs, 1 Bookham Gro Cnr, Gt. Bookham...	Bookham 52693
Chitty A.E, 17 The Close	Reigate 46465
Chitty A.G, 22 Lincoln Rd, Worcester Pk.....	01-337 9430
Chitty A.H.J, 12 Downs Wy, Gt Bookham	Bookham 53395

Figure 29 Allan at Bookham in 1975.

It is plausible but unproven that he resided in East Street, had his main office in Bookham Grove Corner and used The Milehouse's store only as a secondary outlet.

Allan's father Ernest died in 1976. Three years later Brenda remarried at St Lawrence Church to a widower George Biles, as seen in the wedding photographs in Figures 30 and 31.

During 1981-82 Allan was listed in the telephone directory as now having his office in East Street. In 1982 he married to Sylvia Marie Hughes. Just one year later, on 9 June 1983, Allan died aged only 41 and was interred at St Nicolas in Bookham. Brenda died in 1998 aged 77. A descendant has told us that Sylvia died on 3 October 2020.



Figure 30 Allan's mother Brenda remarrying to George Biles at St Lawrence in 1979.



Figure 31 Brenda and George in the wedding carriage.

Aftermath

Residents have said that The Milestone house was converted into flats after the war. During the 1950s-70s various families there are listed in different periods at Flats 1, 2 or 3 in the Electoral Registers. The photograph in Figure 32 is the only one we possess showing the full frontage of the main house. The gable window was that of Flat 3; this window was not present in the original 1923 plans. The ground floor was Flat 1 and the first floor was Flat 2. On the right of the photograph the adjoining store is partly visible.



Figure 32 The Milestone from the Guildford Road; perhaps 1960s or a little later.

We are told that The Milestone and adjacent properties were all demolished in the late 1970s in order to make way for the new residential development Lindens Close. Today no visible reminder of The Milestone remains, except – the milestone.



ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures 1, 2: Supplied by C. J. Hogger

Figures 3, 14, 23: Ordnance Survey maps

Figures 4-9: Surrey History Centre (Refs: 5118/5/2/1/923 & 924)

Figures 10, 18, 22, 26: by permission of Reach Plc / *Mirropix*

Figure 11: from the late Robert Booker

Figures 12, 32: from David Hefford

Figure 13: archives of the late Mary Rice-Oxley donated to ELHG

Figures 15-17: from Alan Whitehead

Figure 19: from Penny Easun

Figure 20: Francis Frith postcard

Figure 21: from Jim Coughlan

Figures 24, 27: from Patricia Gale and Helen Simmons

Figure 25: *Wikipedia* under Creative Commons CC SA 4.0,
courtesy of the Winterthur Library, Printed Book & Periodical Collection

Figure 28: (cropped) Surrey History Centre (Ref: 8423/4)

Figure 28: *Ancestry*, Phone Directories

Figures 30, 31: from Linda (née Pratley) Reid