

HENRY MORGAN – PURLEY NEWSAGENT – PURLEY PIONEER



Olive Himsley (*née* Morgan)
talks to Jean Hain



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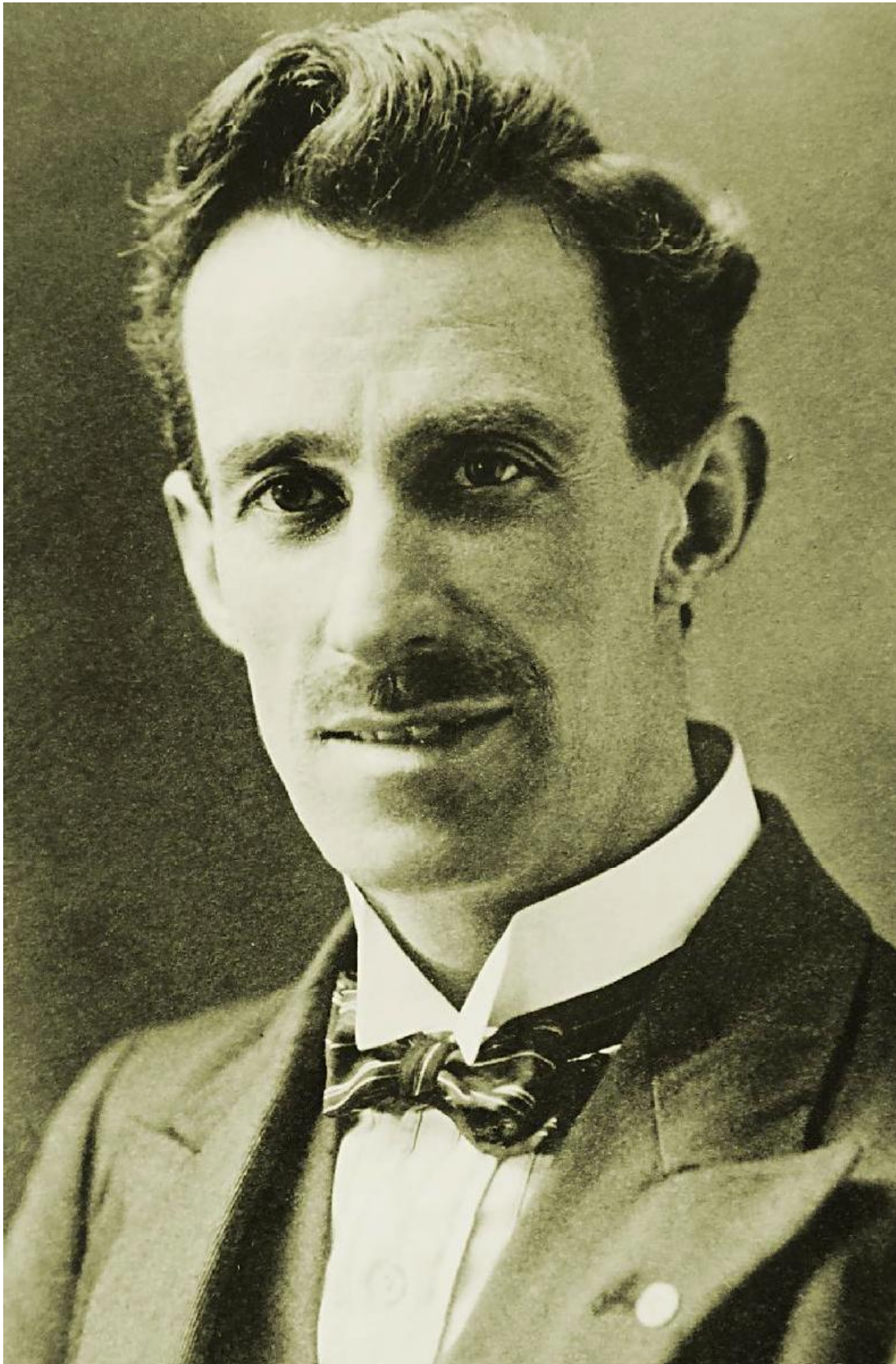
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Cover: The Railway Hotel and High Street, Purley, in the 1900s. Henry Morgan's shop towards the right. *Postcard courtesy of Roger Packham.*

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Henry Morgan, Chairman of Coulsdon & Purley Urban District Council 1925

Olive Himsley (*née* Morgan) talks to Jean Hain

HENRY MORGAN – PURLEY NEWSAGENT – PURLEY PIONEER

Dedicated to the memory of Henry and Alice Morgan

INTRODUCTION

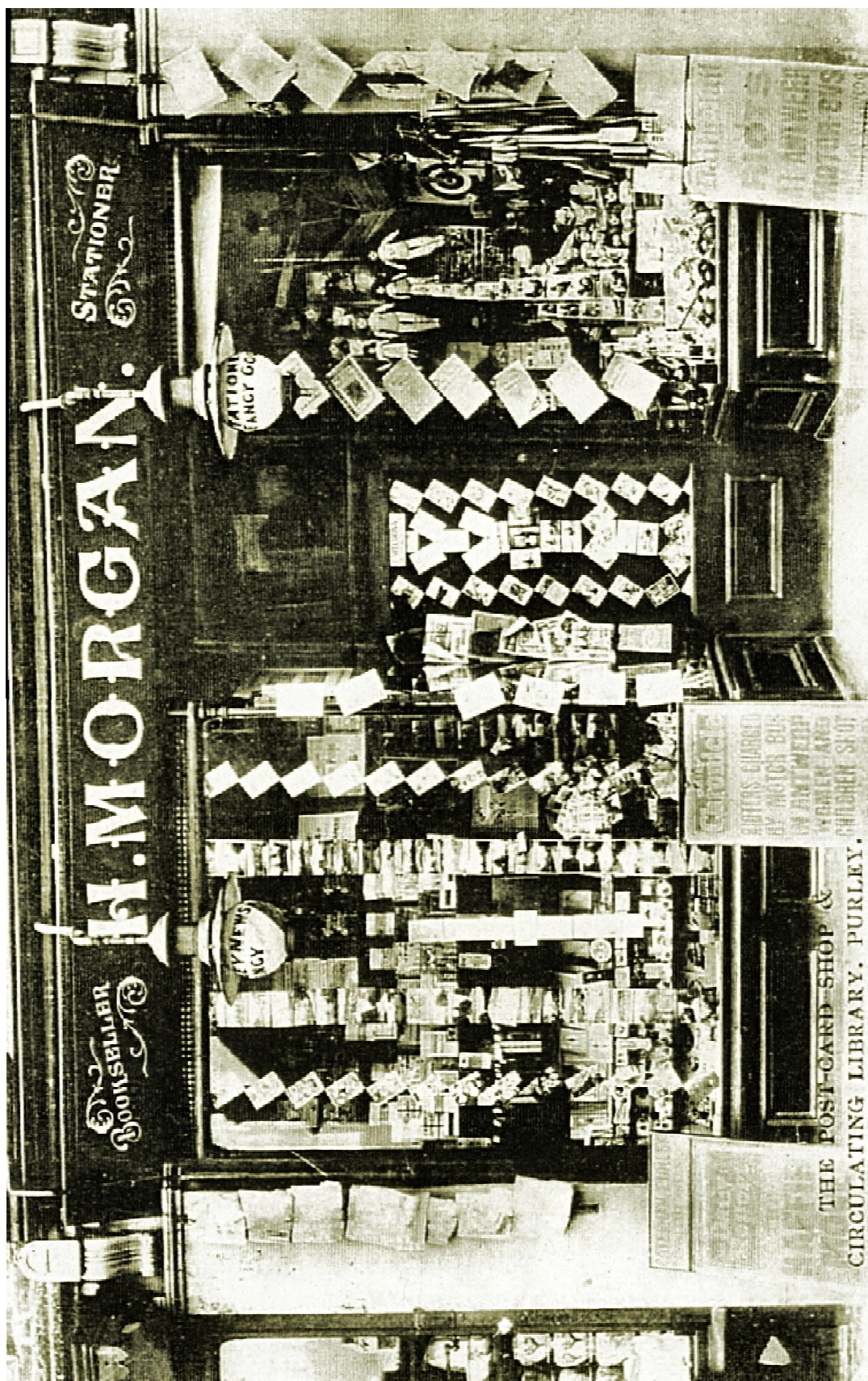
Olive Himsley, aged 91, is the youngest child of Henry and Alice Morgan and these are some of Olive's memories of her father, her family and Purley.

Henry Morgan loved Purley and he truly was a pioneer of the town.

As well as owning Morgan's, the. newsagents which traded in the High Street for 83 years, he was also one of the first Councillors, later becoming Chairman of Coulsdon and Purley Urban District Council, a President of Purley Rotary Club, a founder member of Purley Chamber of Commerce, a Justice of the Peace, Chairman of the Governors of two schools, a founder, member and Deacon of Purley Congregational Church, a founder of Croydon Newsagents Association and a President of the National Federation of Retail Newsagents.

Jean Hain

December 2005



'MEADOW HURST'

My father was Henry Thomas Morgan who owned the newsagents, stationers, sports goods and toy shop in the High Street, Purley. Father and my mother, Alice, were born in 1879. They met at the school in the High Street which much later became Christ Church School. They also attended services (which were the start of Purley Congregational Church*) at the Village Hall, known as the Tin Hut, in the High Street opposite the present Boot's shop. Father gleefully maintained that mother had sent him a St Valentine's card: mother hotly maintained that she had not. They married when they were 23 and were devoted to one another. Mother died in 1957 when they had been married for 56 years.

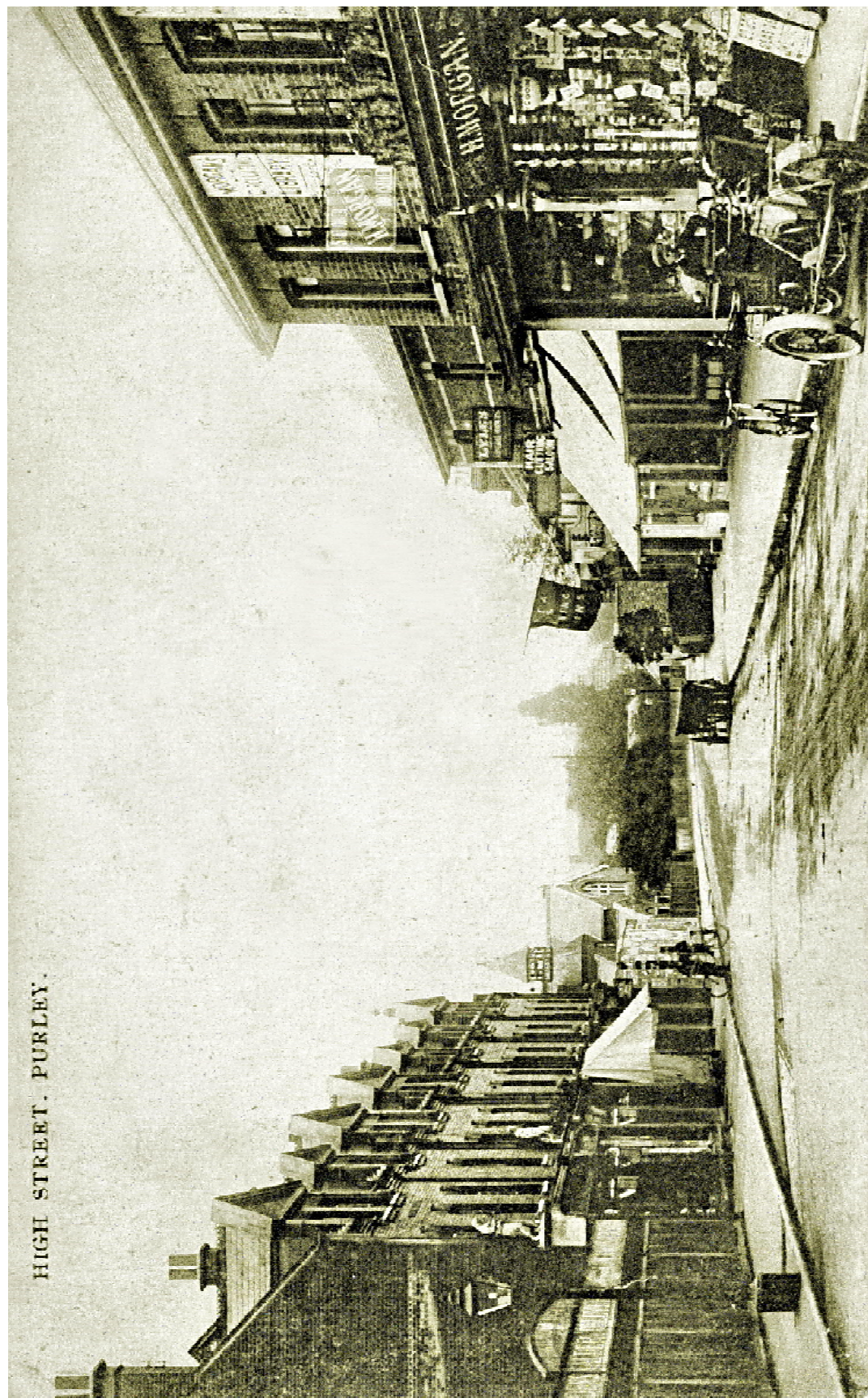
For a few years, my parents with their first three children, lived above the shop but in 1909 father took the considerable step of having a house built. Father wanted it to be on high ground as he believed it was healthier there than in the valleys which were flooded from time to time. Father bought three plots of land in Graham Road from Mr Henry Oldaker. Mr Oldaker lived in 'Woburn Lodge' in the High Street (where the electricity transformers are now opposite the hospital). He built many shops and houses in Purley. Mr Oldaker must have been a kind man for he donated a house which was converted into the first Purley Hospital but he used to frighten me and my three younger brothers as he rattled by in his dog cart, whip in hand. When he saw us playing in the fields where he kept his horses in the Beaumont Road area that he had bought for development he would shout out to us, 'I'll take my whip to you children if you don't behave!'

Father's three plots were in open countryside and on one plot our house, the first in Graham Road,** was built. It is still there right at the top of the road. The house, called 'Meadow Hurst', was built to face the sun so did not front the road and it was later hung with warm red tiles. The view across the meadow to Reedham was lovely and the setting sun over Cane Hill was often breath taking.

It was quite a large house – two storeys at the front and three at the back. It had a beautiful drawing room looking across the meadow. There was a

* Purley Congregational Church became Purley United Reform Church in 1972.

** Originally there were Foxley Road (renamed Higher Drive), Middle Drive (Graham Road) and Lower Drive (Beaumont Road).



High Street, Purley, early 1900s. Morgan's shop on the right Postcard courtesy of Roger Packham

large kitchen and scullery and the huge larder was at the foot of the steps in the cellar. There was a coal cellar (I used to count the coal sacks, usually 14, as the coalman toiled up and down the steps) and when coal was no longer used and the cellar cleared, a lovely flagged floor was revealed. Another part of the cellar came into its own during air raids in the last war, I spent the night before my wedding day with my parents in that cellar (and practically the first fortnight of married life under the dining-room table in the flat in Kew Gardens).

Yet another part of the cellar (now a garden flat) housed my brothers' motorbikes. Father used to take a mild interest in the motorbikes but, of course, his interest had long since moved on to cars. I remember a photograph of father with his Rex motorbike. Mother, hat tied on with a scarf, stood by the wicker sidecar containing my sister and two of my elder brothers. Father's first car was one of the first Morris Oxfords but later he favoured Fords because he knew Hubert Dees of Dees Motors very well and could always take the car back to his workshop opposite Whitgift School for quick repairs. Father also liked to be able to use Dees' test-drive beside the railway lines outside Purley Oaks Station. He never had to take a driving test and never had an accident but once he slightly alarmed me when I was driving him, and spotting the wing mirrors he said, 'Do you use those things?'

On the second plot was our garden and kitchen garden and on this years later, father built a house into which my parents eventually moved. The house had only two bedrooms, 'to limit the number of family coming to stay', father said.

On the third plot was our hard tennis court. Father would invite a friend to play with him at six o'clock on Sunday mornings – his only spare time. I played endlessly with my brothers and friends but to advance our play Laurie, one of my brothers, and I joined Kenley Tennis Club much to the disappointment of father. Elsie Thompson and her brother Harold Thompson (Warden of Purley Congregational Church's Sunday School and a founder member of the Badminton Club which was originally for the Sunday School teachers) played there too. Father used to invite the Church Choir to tea and tennis. Father loved his tennis. Years, later when Laurie brought his wife Peggy home for Christmas, father could hardly wait to have a game. Peggy was a very fine player and Laurie thinks Peggy gave father a Christmas present by letting him win.

The court could not be maintained during the last war but it saw play of a different kind. Just after the war I was very ill in hospital so mother looked

after my son Rodney who was then 10 months old. Mother would wheel Rodney onto the court where he was safe from cats and foxes. Rodney lay there singing happily to himself on the court which had changed itself into a giant playpen.

The tennis court is now under the lawn of a house, to the detriment of the lawn in hot weather.

THE FAMILY AT 'MEADOW HURST'

I was born on 10 October 1914 at 'Meadow Hurst'. Mother was delighted to have a second daughter after a run of five sons Charlie, Laurie who celebrated his 100th birthday on 19 September 2005, Clifford, Lloyd and Raymond. My sister, Connie, was less delighted; at the age of 12 and the eldest of the family, I hardly fitted into her plan but I do have her to thank for saving me from being old fashioned before my time. Mother had become quite unaccustomed to dressing a little girl but Connie was well informed.

When I was three and Raymond four, mother took us to see her mother who lived in Coulsdon Road, Old Coulsdon in one of the flint terraced cottages with long front gardens just before Coulsdon Bowling Club. Mother pushed us in our wicker pram across the meadow down into Reedham Drive, up Old Lodge Lane and into Squire Byron's wood (the woods around Coulsdon Manor) and out into Coulsdon Road.

This was the only time I saw my grandmother. She was wearing a pink dressing gown. Unfortunately I didn't understand why I – at only three – could feed myself and she, who was so old, could not.

After our visit, mother pushed us back down Coulsdon Road and, I think, Hartley Down to Old Lodge Lane and then to the shop in Purley. From there father took over and he pushed us up Foxley Hill Road and home to 'Meadow Hurst'. Mother must have been exhausted.

I remember this expedition so well because it really was an event in my young life. I also remember that the countryside was open from 'Meadow Hurst' nearly all the way to grandmother's cottage.

I used to wear black leather lace-up boots for school. Stout footwear was very necessary for Graham Road was unmade – it was chalk and flint, and cart ruts made the road even more hazardous. Once when I was walking over the railway bridge at the beginning of Higher Drive which was then a brick structure with a single low cart track, a horse-drawn cart with steel-rimmed

wheels sent a flint flying into the air and it cut me slightly under the eye. On a less dangerous occasion on the bridge, a gentleman stopped to take a photograph of me. I felt most important, but now I think he was really interested in my fairy cycle which was the first in the neighbourhood.

Where there was street lighting it was gas. There was a lamp post in the middle of the road facing the side of our house. I could see the lamplighter from my bedroom window and found this most fascinating and exciting. I shared the bedroom with Connie but when she left home, mother would let me have a friend to stay. This was remarkable because mother was always busy although she did have two regular helpers to do the rough work. Even while reading to us, mother was knitting our vests. I also remember mother preparing huge quantities of vegetables from the garden. When I was old enough I helped her and it often seemed to me that half the soil from the vegetable garden was clinging to them. We were vegetarians and mother was very ingenious with our meals. During the First World War she wrote and had published a booklet of vegetarian menus. We all told her that our lack of brains was attributable to a fishless diet but she was well able to cope with any teasing having come from a large family herself

Father grew all our vegetables. Having arrived at the shop shortly after 4.30 a.m. in the morning, he would return home for breakfast at 7.30 a.m. and then tend the vegetable garden for an hour. After that he would return to the shop, walk along to Lloyds Bank with the day's takings and then take a much needed break at Williamson's for coffee with business and retired friends. (Williamson's, I think, was next-door to the bank where the Post Office is now at 940 Brighton Road). Father always went home for lunch and returned after a two hour rest which would set him up for any evening function. However, when Lloyd joined the business, my father was able to ease off to a certain extent.

Mother kept chickens and ducks which she really loved. On returning from holiday her first enquiry was always, 'How are my chickens?' Not 'How are my children?'

We were a happy family. Mother and father were very caring if undemonstrative, except for the time that mother flew at father and, with her hands round his throat, told him in anguished tones that he had just chastised the wrong child. Father looked quite worried but in later life neither could remember nor even imagine that entertaining occasion. I am very conscious of the secure childhood and freedom they gave us.

At regular intervals on a Saturday afternoon, a hairdresser cycled from Purley to 'Meadow Hurst' to cut the whole family's hair. For a little while we looked exceptionally neat and tidy, especially father who had a thick head of hair all his life. After one session mother was the attraction. She had been finding it difficult to put her hair up because of an injured shoulder. Consequently, mother was one of the first in Purley to have her hair bobbed. It was a great success.

My brothers were always up to something, usually harmless. I was full of admiration when Lloyd trying to toss a slice of bread and butter like a pancake succeeded in getting it stuck to the ceiling. My younger brothers built a tree house in a magnificent oak at the foot of our garden. Fortunately for them, my little legs just would not span the climbing pegs but it was not for want of trying and once I snagged my knickers in the attempt.

As the youngest I was often teased by my brothers and being rather gullible I was an easy target. I was very young when one day I obediently closed my eyes and squeezed something soft that had been put into my hand. To this day I shudder at the thought of a dead mouse – or a live one come to that.

At Christmas, father dressed up as Father Christmas but mother had her work cut out: at least 12 and sometimes 21 people sat down to lunch. To give mother a bit of space on Boxing Day father would lead my brothers in a paper-chase up Higher Drive although I am not sure it was a relief to mother when they all came back with ravenous appetites.

After Christmas father would book a box at The Grand in the High Street, Croydon (where Leon House is now) for the pantomime and years later Lloyd continued the tradition by taking his grandchildren to the pantomime at Fairfield Halls.

Father used to love playing draughts. He started playing with Charlie and worked his way down the family. Competition was intense for the penalty for losing was doing the washing up. I learned the double corner move in an all out effort to win. Father was well practised. Most shops closed at lunchtime and sometimes Mr Frederick Crabb (who owned the gentlemen's outfitters near the corner of Station Approach in what is now Whytecliffe Road South) would drop into father's shop for a game over the counter. Two of Mr Crabb's best selling lines were handkerchiefs; bought by businessmen on their way to London who had forgotten theirs, and on their way home, umbrellas, when they had been caught in a sudden downpour.

HOLIDAYS AT SHOREHAM AND LEISURE TIMES

While we were all young we used to play together when we had our month's holiday at Shoreham. A huge tin trunk containing all our clothes was sent on ahead (once it was lost, causing great consternation) and from the station in Shoreham it was taken by Carter Paterson, the carriers, to our holiday home. This was a large bungalow surrounded by a veranda from which radiated old railway carriages converted into bedrooms. It was so exciting!

Ted Glover*, also on holiday then with his two brothers and two sisters, remembered all seven of us running about in bright red bathing costumes. Mother made them to enable her to keep track of us more easily as we ran wild. Neither of my parents could swim and mother alone, until joined by father at weekends, had to keep her eye on us all and any of our friends who came with us. At the end of the holiday the final excitement was seeing the tin trunk loaded into a horse-drawn cob at Purley Station and then some of us, like the horse, would plod home up the hill.

After all that my parents would go on holiday by themselves for two weeks and our elderly Aunt Emily bravely stood in for my parents during that time.

The boys, as cubs, scouts and then rovers gradually went off on camping holidays and jamborees on the Continent. Laurie went on to tour the Continent on his motorbike. In Austria he remembers there was one province where driving was on the left so he had to keep his wits about him. Laurie traded in that motorbike and side car for £38 when he bought his first car – a 1932 Morris Minor two-seater, which was the first £100 car. It was very reliable and he toured Scotland in it. When the family holidays came to an end, I went to the Crusader holidays in a school at Cooden Beach. We continued our Bible studies there and had a very enjoyable time.

My parents did their best to take us to interesting events and to the surrounding countryside. We went to Crystal Palace several times. I was entranced by the light and space – the vast floor just disappeared into the distance. Father took us boating on the lake which I enjoyed but I was terrified of landing; I was convinced the dinosaurs on the bank were waiting to tear me apart

We also went to Wembley. I cannot recall the exhibition at all but the journey home was memorable. I remember feeling dreadfully ill and hanging

* Ted Glover was a member of Purley United Reformed Church

over the side of the charabanc and also feeling dreadfully sorry for the cyclist hanging onto the side of the vehicle!

The ponds at South Godstone were a favourite place to visit. My parents took us there by bus when I was quite young. There was such a long wait for the bus to go home that father thereupon resolved to get a car, and he did. The Morris was large enough to take us all and was quite elaborate. There was a silver vase on the dashboard which I think inspired mother to make curtains for the windows. It was rather like a drawing room on wheels.

When Lloyd was about 19, he took me on the pillion of his 2-stroke Royal Enfield motorbike on a camping holiday to Birling Gap. The bike did very well especially as we both had enormous rucksacks containing all our camping gear.

SCHOOL DAYS

I started school when I was five at Millville House School, approximately where Azalea Court now stands in Whytecliffe Road South. I went there with Clifford, Lloyd and Raymond. Below me in a lower class were John Taylor (a former Church Secretary of Purley United Reformed Church) and his cousin David Garrard.

When I left Millville, I went to the school at Reedham Orphanage which was taking in outsiders to make up numbers. It was delightful going to Reedham – running across the meadow. Dorothy Mortby of Lansdowne Hall fame (now PACE) was at Reedham with me. Then someone decided that outsiders brought infection to Reedham (of course, we thought it was the other way around) and I had to leave. At short notice my parents had to find another school; the solution was to rejoin Clifford, Lloyd and Raymond who were attending a boys school in the Godstone Road run by the Reverend Bloxham. I was the only girl there. At the bottom of Foxley Hill Road either Lloyd or Raymond would hitch a rope between my fairy cycle and his and would tow me to the school along the Godstone Road. It was a different story going home when we all had to push our bicycles up the steep hill.

My brothers moved on to Purley County Grammar School for Boys which was then in the school building (still there) at the bottom of St. James Road.

My next school at the age of nine was the preparatory school for Whyteleafe Grammar School for Girls. It was then I made an important

announcement about my name. When Raymond at 14 months first saw me he proclaimed to the family, 'Doll-doll' and that was my name at home. Outside I was Marjorie. I never liked the combination of Marjorie Morgan so I announced that I would henceforth be called by my second Christian name, Olive. So off I went to my new school with my new name. I travelled there by steam train from Purley Station. At the senior school I had a school uniform for the first time, which included a hat to be worn to and from school at all times. Oh, how hot it was on summer days!

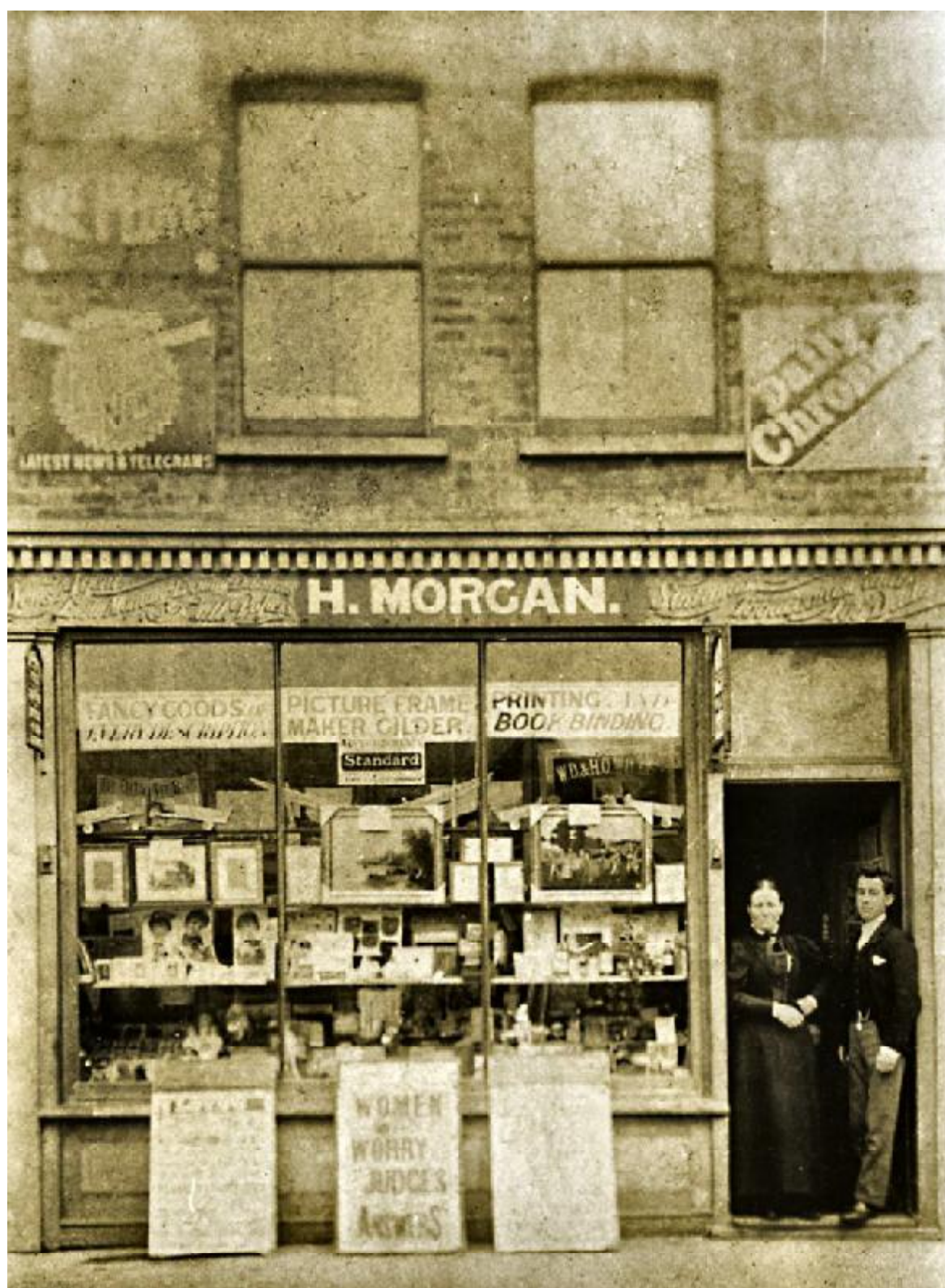
One day I left my Bible on the train. It had been used by three of my brothers and was well marked up, so I was very worried about its loss. Fortunately I had added our address inside the cover and it was returned to me by a policeman who had walked all the way from Kenley Police Station to 'Meadow Hurst'. I use that Bible with its large print to this day.

My connection with Reedham continued for a while because of its swimming bath. It was the only one in the area for many years and the schools round about all used it. While at Whyteleafe our class would take the train to Purley and march up Foxley Hill Road into Higher Drive and then down steps (where Callow Field is now) and into Reedham Drive. I didn't like the bath much because of the din. Going home I had a decided advantage over my classmates; while they had to walk back to the station I was off over the meadow again and home to tea. I still meet a school friend from Whyteleafe School.

During the General Strike in 1926 I had to walk to Whyteleafe School. With me came Dorothy Mortby who lived in Higher Drive and her mother. Mrs Mortby kindly pushed her bicycle along with our cases hanging from the handlebars. Our route from Higher Drive was via Cullesden Road, Firs Road and Hayes Lane. At first the walk was highly exciting but the novelty soon wore off. Mrs Mortby had to cycle back from Whyteleafe but Dorothy and I were lucky to return on one of the few trains that was still running. We didn't miss a day.

Purley County and Whyteleafe were then fee-paying and at one time father was paying four lots of school fees.

I used to love Saturday mornings. I would walk to my piano teacher at her house at 34 Brighton Road and after that I would go to the Imperial Ice Rink near the fire station. (When it closed it became the Orchid Ballroom, or as Ted Glover named it, the Awkward Ballroom; there is a fitness organisation there now). The building then was very new and, of course, the



Morgan's Newsagents, High Street Purley, c.1897. Henry Morgan & his mother standing in the doorway

ice rink was known for miles around. After skating I would go home *via* Reedham Drive and across the meadow to 'Meadow Hurst' where lunch was ready. After that I tackled my homework. I continued to skate after I left school and still remember the delight of waltzing on the ice.

I used to skate outdoors as well. When I was in my teens, there was a very severe winter and Laurie drove me in his green Morris to skate on the ponds at Gatton Park. The surface was ridged and we also had to watch out for bits of wood and other debris locked in the ice otherwise we would have soon taken a tumble. The ponds at South Godstone also froze and back home our milkman was up to his knees in snow drifts but he didn't give up.

Mother didn't enjoy Saturdays for she would make the bread and cakes for most of the week. Her cakes were well known. A young friend once stood outside and asked diffidently if she could come to tea. She tempered this by assuring my mother that she wouldn't eat much and of course, mother welcomed her. My friend, an only child, revelled in the gaiety of a family tea. Mother was always hospitable especially when the time came for boy friends and girl friends but she did get fed up when one son had a succession of girl friends because she never knew which one to treat as the special one.

Throughout my school days mother made me a vegetarian lunch. This was accompanied by a sweet which she put into a small earthenware pot with a brown glazed lid. Little did mother know that sometimes I would swap my vegetarian lunch with a friend. I found that I rather enjoyed the taste of meat!

EARLY DAYS AT MORGAN'S

In 1896 my grandfather opened the shop under the name 'J Morgan' in the High Street, but it was my grandmother who really ran it. She was widowed at 21 with a baby daughter and married again. Father helped his mother in the shop and when she suffered a severe stroke and died in her early forties, he took her place. He had no option but to carry on the business. One of his brothers had been lost at sea in a submarine in World War I and two brothers went to America and never returned. His step-sister had died aged 12. The business was renamed, 'H Morgan' and later on it was changed to 'Morgan's'.

Father never disclosed whether he had planned a different career but he certainly led a very full life. He was a founder member of Purley Congregational Church while it was still situated in the Village Hall in the High Street. The new church in Brighton Road was completed in 1905 and



High Street, Purley c.1900. Morgan's shop is to the right of the road to the left of the picture.

Courtesy of Croydon Local Studies Library

there he was a Deacon for many years, a Registrar of Weddings and a sidesman. He was one of the first Councillors and later, a Chairman of the Coulsdon & Purley Urban District Council, a Justice of the Peace, a President of Purley Rotary Club (he opened the Rotary Field in 1925) and Governor of Purley County Grammar School for Boys and also the school for the girls. He was also a founder of Croydon Newsagents' Association and of the National Federation of Retail Newsagents. He supported a children's home in Croydon and helped to organise summer camps for them at Pilgrim Fort in Caterham and sports days at the View Point. He was so busy and attended so many meetings and events that we didn't see much of him. There were also functions practically every fortnight. Mother had a few evening dresses and she looked lovely as she left the house albeit slightly reluctantly for she was never one for the lime light. I used to enjoy helping her to put on her jewellery.

My parents also entertained quite frequently particularly when father was President of Purley Rotary Club. Their most treasured compliment came from an American couple they had met on the *Queen Mary*. My parents took them to Box Hill and then back to 'Meadow Hurst'. The large family tea party was their best memory of England!

In 1901 the tram service between Croydon and Purley started and over the years brought a lot of worry to father because he predicted that the trams and then the buses would cause a gradual decline of the High Street. The High Street was the shopping centre and at one time practically anything could be bought there but larger shops were built in Brighton Road and Russell Hill Road. Then shops were built in Godstone Road and also beyond Grovelands Road in Brighton Road and at the bottom of Old Lodge Lane. Fortunately father was full of ideas. There was no shop like Morgan's in Purley but there is no doubt the tram and bus services did turn the High Street into a backwater.

There was no bank in Purley until Lloyds Bank came to the High Street in 1899. After the move to 'Meadow Hurst' and before Lloyds Bank had a night safe, father used to walk home with the takings in one hand and a shillelagh at the ready in the other. He found the rustling fields of artichokes in Graham Road quite frightening. He was the very first customer at Lloyds Bank. Beginning in the early 1930s, Lloyd would accompany my father to Lloyds Bank (long since in its present position in the Brighton Road). They would go at different times and by different routes. Later on my son Rodney, in his summer holidays, would go with father and quite often I would have to



use the night safe. I would have to stretch to reach the safe and to create some space between me and passers-by, I would place my trolley behind me. I was always relieved when the depositing of the takings had been completed without mishap.

Next to Morgan's towards Whytecliffe Road South, there was for many years F Parker's shop. Parker's were seed, corn and, later on garden supply merchants (their name can still be seen on the doors in Whytecliffe Road South which opened onto their yard behind the shop). Facing the end of the High Street in Whytecliffe Road South when I was still at school, were the Post Office and a butcher's shop, A & P Markwick. I remember pigs being pulled out of the trucks by their tails. Father found the noises from the abattoir hard to endure and it was because of this we became a vegetarian family.



Above: High Street, Purley, early 1900s. *Postcard courtesy of Roger Packham*

Opposite page, top: Opening of Rotary Field, Brighton Road, 22 July 1925 Mr H T Morgan right, Revd Arthur Pringle centre. Postcard courtesy of Roger Packham

Opposite page, bottom: Opening of Rotary Field, Brighton Road, 22 July 1925. Henry Morgan 4th from right. Courtesy of Croydon Local Studies Library.

On the other side of our shop was a cycle shop called Reeves Garage. Father bought these premises thus doubling the size of Morgan's and this part became the toy shop. Father also opened a library which was run in conjunction with Harrods. The distinctive Harrods' van would arrive and a liveried driver would step out and bring in the books. Many wealthy customers and several celebrities came to the library and shop. Some of them lived on the Webb Estate and others in Kenley or Chipstead and they often arrived in Rolls Royces with their chauffeurs in livery. So as not to monopolise parking outside the shop, the chauffeurs would have to take a few turns round the block.

Morgan's also kept a Register of Servants. Until the last war there was a big demand for servants. The domestic staff mostly came from the roads abutting the railway in South Croydon and between Kenley and Reedham.

MORGAN'S PAPER-BOYS

For many years Morgan's newsagency was the largest in the South of England and at any one time, employed some dozen paperboys. The rounds were hard on their shoes because of the unmade roads, so father would often advance money to their parents for new shoes. All my brothers were paperboys and father insisted that they were in bed by 10 o'clock. 'There's work to do in the morning', he would say. He himself would be up at 4.30 a.m. and that could be after a meeting or function on the previous night. Sometimes he would drag my brothers out of bed at 5 o'clock and sometimes he would telephone from the shop to make sure they would be there by 6 o'clock. Father would proclaim, 'Bed is the most dangerous place in the world – more people die there than anywhere else.'

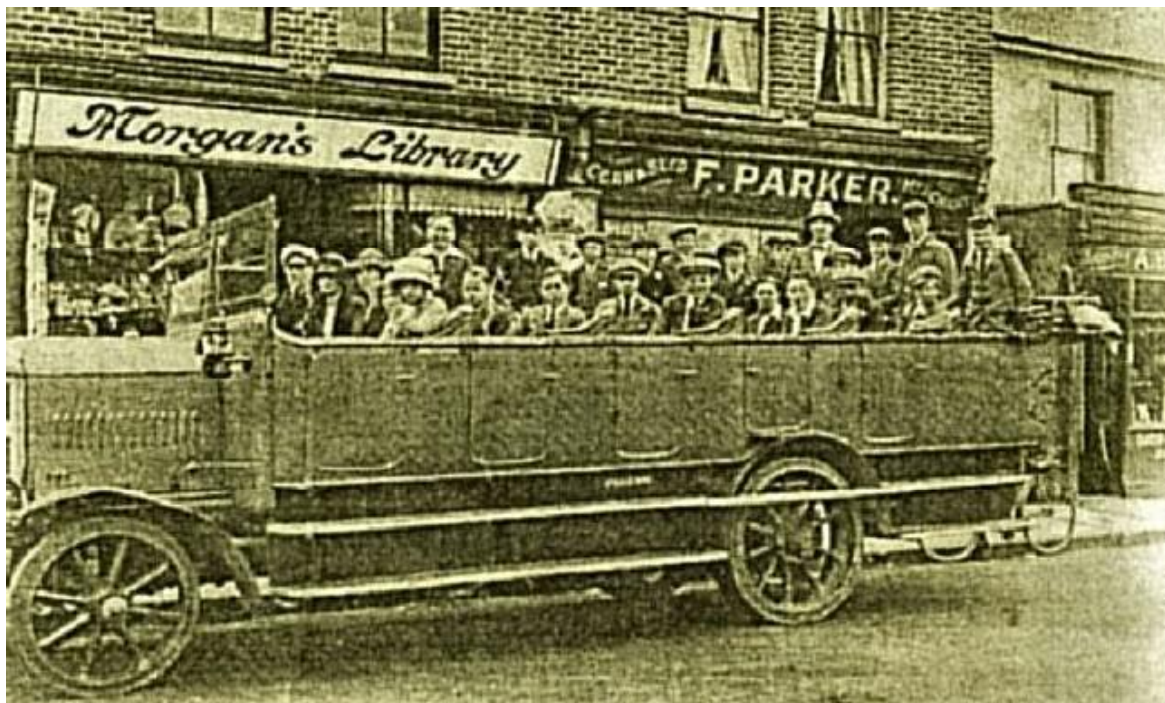
Although father must have been very tired at times and even ill, I never remember him staying at home. I think he just worked through it. He was very disciplined and we had to try to follow his example.

Laurie started delivering papers earlier than the other boys. This was because at eight he was very good at figures but it meant he couldn't always reach the letter boxes. One of these was at Sainsbury's in the Brighton Road. Laurie's solution was to ask the policeman on point duty at Purley Cross to deliver it for him. The policeman was happy to do this and found that he also had time to flick through the paper. Father bought bicycles for my brothers for their rounds and told them if they didn't look after them properly they

themselves would have to pay for the next ones so there was no throwing them down on the ground.

There were 16 dropping points for the papers to save boys who lived outside Purley from coming to the shop. One boy lived in Rose Walk and was dismayed one day when the dustmen picked up his stock of papers. There was much scurrying about at the shop to replace the papers as quickly as possible. Over the years the papers became far more bulky so father had Lines, the pram manufacturers, make some pram-like carriers for the rounds with 'Morgan's' emblazoned in red script on the sides. These considerably helped the boys particularly in wet weather as the covers kept the papers dry. Father bought a pram for each of his children when they started a family. He even shipped one out to Charlie in Canada. 18 grandchildren started their travels in their Lines' prams.

Father kept a paternal eye on his boys and for a treat he would take them every year at Christmastime to Bertram Mills Circus at Olympia and in the summer would hire a charabanc to take them to Brighton. The vehicle was very cumbersome and with solid tyres which tended to slide on the loose road surfaces, it took several hours to get there. Father was especially proud of his paperboys when they did well at school. Dr Burchill, the headmaster at Purley County Boys School, disapprovingly told father that he was



Charabanc outing outside Morgan's Library c.1930. Henry Morgan is under the 'K' of PARKER and two of his sons are standing at the back of the charabanc.

'mortgaging their future'. However, father would enjoy himself on prize days when as a governor of the school, he would position himself on the stage next to Dr Burchill and whisper a triumphant aside to him as the paperboys received their prizes 'That's one of mine, that's one of mine!'

In the early days newspapers were delivered by horse and cart from London and then by train. Laurie remembers as a young lad coming from Purley Station very early on dark, icy mornings and struggling with a fully laden porter's trolley down the sloping passageway to the shop where father was waiting anxiously to assemble the papers for delivery. Father himself would often be first out onto roads deep in snow or covered in black ice. After one particularly hazardous sideways descent of Foxley Hill Road, he telephoned me from the shop to say 'Do be careful, dear, the roads are a bit dangerous!' He would charge hills at speed, skid round corners and abandoned cars and even go round traffic islands on the wrong side. I found it completely hair-raising when I was with him but he always looked quite unconcerned. I think he found it exhilarating and Lloyd was just the same: neither father nor Lloyd and the paperboys ever missed the early morning delivery to their customers and I think both of them, and Laurie too, could have made quite a team for the Monte Carlo Rally. Lloyd, would tow his family caravan up the precipitous St James Road, turn into Famet Avenue and then manoeuvring in a very small area, would reverse into the drive of his house.

Wet mornings were also no joke. One customer complained to Laurie that his paper was wet whereupon Laurie replied, 'So am I!' At that the customer walked 1½ miles in the rain to the shop to remonstrate but father would have none of that. He preferred to lose such a customer. Nonetheless, father was devoted to his business and when Laurie started his banking career at a bank in Croydon, cycling there from home, father couldn't understand why Laurie didn't wish to deliver papers before going to work.

Father would not allow work on Sundays so the newspapers were delivered by arrangement with another newsagent but there came the time when Lloyd reluctantly persuaded father that they could no longer afford to bear the loss of that business. Lloyd, after all, had a family to support but father never worked on a Sunday. Father certainly needed some rest but he seldom missed Morning Service and mother would never have domestic help on Sundays saying, 'I will not be responsible for keeping anyone away from church.'



CUBMASTER AND CUBMISTRESS—Two well-known figures in the Scout movement locally—Mr. Lloyd Morgan, of Purley (Cubmaster of the 1st Kenley Troop), and Miss Monica Shrimpton, of Sanderstead (where she is Cubmistress)—were married at Sanderstead Parish Church on Saturday. The bridal group.

LATER DAYS AT MORGAN'S

Father employed a book-keeper, Kathleen, for 52 years (apart from her munitions work during World War II) and many customers thought she was one of the family. As a young girl he had paid for her to train at Pitman's College. There were also two or three regular assistants and several part-time assistants except during the two World Wars when they were all called up. Father had difficulty in keeping the shop going. He was not called up himself for World War I because it was thought that a father of seven would be too expensive to lose but he worked hard as a special constable. In World War II father was in the Home Guard. His large 1929 24-hp Ford was requisitioned and probably turned into an ambulance and father, by then in his sixties, had to take to a bicycle.

New toys were unavailable so he advertised in the local paper for second-hand toys in good condition and when people responded, he would collect the toys by taxi. It was marvellous how father overcame such difficulties during the last war and I think he brought happiness to many children especially at Christmastime.



Henry and Alice Morgan with their family in 1917

Children left to right: Connie, Charlie, Laurie, Clifford, Lloyd, Raymond and Olive

At Guy Fawkes' time there was a brisk sale of Brock's and Paines' fireworks and I remember father telling me that on the outbreak of World War I, he had locked away his stock in a bin at the back of the shop and there they were ready for the celebration of the end of the war in November 1918.

Lloyd worked with father for many years. After I married I lived in Kew Gardens for 16 years but returned to Purley to a flat in 'Meadow Hurst'. I went to help Lloyd in the shop. I thoroughly enjoyed buying stock although it was quite a responsibility. Sometimes I would have to take a firm line with persistent sales representatives. There was a fine line between having a good stock and being overstocked which affected the cash flow.

Life was very varied in the shop. We arranged for the printing of notepaper, business and wedding stationery and then there were the toy and sports sections. The book section did very well and we loved recommending authors to our customers. I especially liked it when customers asked to see Miss Morgan although once when one of them said, 'I hope you don't mind if I call you Miss Morgan' I couldn't resist replying, 'I don't mind – but my son might!' Some of the customers who asked for me came annually to buy cash books. The books had beautiful marbled covers and were bound with calf leather adorned with gold lettering on the spine. The pages were thick and crisp to take ink entries. The greeting card business in this country, influenced by America, increased tremendously and it was a very successful part of our trade. I enjoyed going to the trade displays to order the cards, particularly when they were held at the Waldorf Hotel in London.

I liked meeting so many people from the locality, their relations and the new generations of the families. I also met some famous people who came to the shop. Among them I remember Revd David Sheppard, the England cricketer and Captain of Sussex who became Bishop of Liverpool, Harry Worth and Charlie Drake, the comedians and David Nixon – who was such an entertaining magician.

Lloyd was considerate to all our customers but especially to the nannies. The beautiful high, well-sprung prams wheeled into the shop were often accompanied, not by the squalling of babies, but by the piercing squeaking of the wheels which Lloyd could not bear. Out would come the oil can and the prams glided out – silently. Lloyd also took delight in talking to his young customers, helping them to choose toys, telling them how some of them worked and giving advice on building all sorts of things with their Meccano sets. I think many children and their parents have happy memories of the toy shop.

Lloyd and I, but especially Lloyd, were quick at mental arithmetic – we had to be as there were no calculators or computers then and it was especially necessary during stock-taking, which was really hard work. Lloyd and I never had a cross word all the time we worked together and when Rodney helped in the school holidays, he was just as happy as we were. Nevertheless we worked a long day – usually to 7 o'clock and 8 o'clock on Saturdays but still shorter hours than in father's early days.

For years after my father retired he used to like to sit in my conservatory at 'Meadow Hurst' and wait for me to return from the shop. He invariably greeted me with the words 'Where have you been?' and I would invariably reply 'Working, Dad'. He was always eager to know what was going on in the shop. He died in 1976 aged 97.

After 83 years Morgan's closed in 1979 – one hundred years after father was born. It was the longest established business in Purley. The premises, numbered 12 and 14 High Street, (original telephone number 230) have reverted to two

shops. The decline of the High Street my father had predicted so long ago had happened and the ever worsening traffic problems I had discussed at the Purley Chamber of Commerce had materialised.



• Mrs Hinsley and Mr Morgan

Family shop closes

A SHOP that has served Purley for more than 80 years — Morgan's, of the High Street — is closing down.

And for Mr Lloyd Morgan and his sister Mrs Olive Hinsley, it is goodbye to the shop their father founded in 1896. Today it sells stationery, newspapers and toys.

Said 67 year old Mr Morgan: "I came here as a paper boy and just carried on. I left

school and came straight into the business when I was 17."

His sister has also been connected with the firm for many years, and is a co-director.

"I started after I left school in 1933. In those days jobs weren't easy to come by so my father said: 'What's good enough for me, my girl, is good enough for you'."

Their father, Mr Henry Thomas Morgan, died three

by DAVID HARDING

years ago aged 97. He was a former member of the old parish council and chairman of Coulsdon and Purley Urban District Council.

Mrs Hinsley said: "I have met so many interesting people: we have had Harry Worth, Charlie Drake, Bill Ward the TV producer, and David Nixon in here."

"Everybody is so sad and they are all wishing us all the best."

Of the children who have come into the shop, she said: "The kiddies are lovely. I love to see them excited and happy."

Morgan's will stop selling newspapers on Saturday, February 24. Its doors will be closed for the last time a week later on Saturday, March 3.

"We are sad. It is like a bereavement," said Mrs Hinsley.

Press cutting from *The Coulsdon & Purley Advertiser*,
Friday 9 February 1979,
recording the closure of
Morgan's shop



Morgan's shop, 12/14 High Street, Purley, taken from the Sale Particulars when the premises were sold in April 1979, and photographed just before the shop closed in March 1979.

GOING TO CHURCH

I first went to St Barnabas Church, which was then more like a church hall, in Higher Drive because it was easy for me to walk there and for the same reason Connie and my brothers all went to the children's service at Reedham Orphanage. When I was nine, I went to Purley Congregational Church. Mr Pringle was the Minister then and the Church was so well attended that extra chairs were placed in the aisles. People from miles around used to come to hear 'Pringle of Purley'. Mr Pringle conscientiously visited his large flock and he must have cycled miles up and down the hills of Purley, Coulsdon, Kenley and Sanderstead.

Mother used to help wash the communion cups, complete with chromium-plated lids. There could be some 700. There was insufficient time to wash them after morning service so it was done on Monday mornings.

The evening services at the Church were really for servants and nannies and were well attended. As a member of the Young People's Club which in my day was run by Mr and Mrs Wilfred Pascall, I helped to serve coffee and biscuits to them after the evening service. However, some servants were not allowed to attend. I asked a maid from a house in Graham Road if she would like to come but I was severely reprimanded by her mistress who accused me of 'interfering with the running of her household'. So that was that!

The Young People's Club had quite formal dances in the Church Hall; we wore evening dress and they were a major social event.

Mr Pringle officiated at Connie's wedding in 1929. I presented my bridesmaid's bouquet to Mrs Pringle. Mrs Pringle was very delicate and she was pushed around in a wheelchair by her husband. We did not see her very much but I was told that if I did meet her I was never to shake hands with her as it would cause her considerable pain.

Until I was well into my teens I went to Crusader classes which were still held in the Village Hall. I passed all the grades to become a Knight. No-one objected to such a male title being bestowed on a mere female!

I had a tenuous connection with Henry Sell's family. (Mr Sell was one of the founders and the first Secretary and Treasurer of Purley Congregational Church) – he died in 1910 – four years before I was born. Mr Sell lived in a Victorian house called 'Ottinge' in what is now Whytecliffe Road South opposite the side of Azalea Court. His daughter suffered from extremely light-sensitive eyes which explained why my Aunt Eva, mother's youngest sister, invariably played with her under the dining-room table. This connection ended when Aunt Eva emigrated to America in 1912 to marry father's younger brother Will. Aunt Eva was to have sailed in the *Titanic*. She and Uncle Will went on to have five children.

When I retired at 64 I joined the Thursday Soup and Cheese team at Purley United Reformed Church. I enjoyed it so much I didn't give up until I was 84.

On Good Friday this year I was pleased to join the Purley Churches Together Service on the grass outside Tesco's. I am not able to go to Purley United Reformed Church quite as regularly as in the past. I am so grateful and thankful for the Church's guidance together with the inspired fellowship, caring and loyalty of the congregation which have enriched my life.

WAR TIME

When war was declared on 3 September 1939 it was just at the time when my parents were beginning to take life easier. My sister and brothers had all left home. In 1936 my parents went to America to visit father's two brothers and they came back on the first return trip of the *Queen Mary*. By chance I was on the Isle of Wight. I took a photograph of her as she sailed into Southampton and again, by chance, it was when I met my future husband, Alex Himsley. The war ended my parents' plan to take dancing and golf lessons but they never complained and father had to work as hard as ever. They both helped on Sunday nights in the Forces Canteen at Purley Baptist Church and I myself used to feel quite tired after a long washing up session. Many of the men were Coldstream Guards from Caterham Barracks. At Purley Congregational Church, the hall was used as a ward of Purley Hospital, as indeed it was during World War I when the building was very new. The hall made an ideal ward with its then folding partitions.

My parents were constantly worried about their sons. Of course, this was the story of practically every family in the land. We were one of three families with businesses in Purley who had missing sons all about the same time in 1943. We each drew comfort from one another.

Bob was the son of Mr and Mrs J H Stanley who were members of Purley Congregational Church and lived in Russell Hill. Stanley & Keith were builders and their premises were near Kimberley Place in Brighton Road. Bob was in the army in North Africa where he was captured. He became a prisoner of war in Italy and returned home after the war.

Charlie Jones and his brothers were all called up. Charlie was from the family who owned Jones' Brothers the dairy in Sunnysdene Road which closed only three years ago. His three sisters, who lived at the top of Downscourt Road, took over and I well remember one of them struggling along with a horse and cart during a heavy air raid. Charlie flew on a number of bombing raids over Germany. He always said he owed his life to a German who carried him to safety. He endured captivity as a prisoner of war for two years.

My youngest brother, Raymond, was a sergeant in the RAF and an air gunner in a Lancaster bomber. He volunteered to take the place of another air gunner and was shot down over Germany and killed. He was the only married man with a family in that crew. A few years ago Rodney showed me photographs of the beautifully tended grave in Hamburg. His widow, Lily,

with their three children, Beryl, Jean and three-month old Raymond, returned to Purley from Yorkshire where her husband had been based. The pilot's father was a wealthy man and the following Christmas he sent a blank cheque to Lily for her to buy presents for the children.

One day after the war, Beryl, about five years old, was passing Jones's dairy and Charlie Jones whom she knew, said 'Hello!' Beryl responded by saying, 'I'm going to have a birthday party' whereupon Charlie said 'Can I come too?' Beryl paused and then said 'I will have to ask my Mummy'. Charlie did go to the party and that led to Charlie asking Lily to marry him. Once again Lily said 'Yes'.

My other four brothers survived the war.

Charlie served in some way that I don't recall, in Canada when he lived. He sent marvellous food and clothing parcels to us.

Clifford was sent to Scotland on Government business but he was not allowed to disclose anything about it.

Laurie was a Captain in the Royal Marines and served in Burma. On one occasion he was required to attend a church service in uniform. Laurie always looked resplendent in his uniform but when the text of the sermon was 'Solomon in all his glory', he rather took it to heart. He said his hardest task was writing to parents when their sons were killed. Laurie's letters, of course, were in addition to the official notifications.

REPORTED MISSING **News Wanted Of Sergt.** **Ray Morgan, R.A.F.**



SERGT.-GUNNER R. MORGAN

HIS many friends in Purley will learn with regret that Sgt. Gnr. Raymond Morgan, R.A.F., is reported missing from air operations on July 29th-30th.

Youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Morgan, of Grahani-road, Purley. Sgt. Gnr. Morgan was a director of Morgans, Ltd., the well-known Purley newsagents.

Aged 30, he joined the R.A.F. nearly two years ago. His home was at Grasmere-road, Purley.

Press cutting 13 August 1943

**The photograph also appears in the
Book of remembrance at Purley United
Reformed Church**

Lloyd was in the fire service and was based in the New Forest. On hearing that Laurie was getting married in Bournemouth, he managed to get there but returning through the New Forest in the blackout he had difficulty in finding his camp.

Connie, with a young family, was exempted from war duties. She lived in Lancing. Both father and I, on different occasions, went to visit Connie as she was feeling rather lonely. On another occasion father visited an uncle in Dover. An unexpected consequence of these visits was that father and I were fined for not getting licences for access into these protected areas and Connie and father's uncle were fined for aiding and abetting.

I was married in 1941 and Rodney was born in 1944. Rodney was born prematurely and Mother, overcoming all restraint, put her arms around me and managed to call me 'Dear'! It was a telling measure of her concern for me. Mothers of young families were usually evacuated and I went to Birmingham to live with my husband's parents who were very kind to me. My husband, Alex, was in a reserved occupation and involved in turning sea-water into drinking water.

Purley and its surroundings suffered during the war. In 1944 while I was in Birmingham, one lovely building was destroyed. It was the St Marie Hotel. The entrance was in Olden Lane and the hotel extended eastwards along Dale Road as far as the priest's house to St John the Baptist Church. All that remains are stretches of the flint garden wall. A block of flats now stands on the site. A V1 flying bomb fell on the hotel and many died or were injured. I have since learned that Len Abbott* on leave at home from the Merchant Navy, saw the doodlebug approaching and thought that it was going to hit his parents' house which was the last house at the top of Downs Court Road overlooking Riddlesdown. When Len saw the explosion in the valley, he jumped on his bicycle and sped down St James Road and thence to Dale Road to help with the rescue operation. The bomb badly damaged houses at the beginning of Northwood Avenue.

Another bomb fell on Edward Densham's house called 'Woodlands' in Higher Drive near St Barnabas Church. The Densham family go back several generations in Purley and their mansion called 'Foxley' (later called 'Foxley Hall' and demolished in 1968) was on the corner of Northwood Avenue and Higher Drive but I never saw it as it was hidden from view by a belt of trees.

* Len Abbott is an Elder of Purley United Reformed Church



Betts Mead, Old Lodge Lane, opened 11 July 1925 by Miss L Hall. Henry Morgan 4th to right of flagpole.

Courtesy of Croydon Local Studies Library.

(Now on that site, there is a block of flats also called 'Foxley Hall'). After the destruction of 'Woodlands', Mr Densham and his family moved into 'The Lodge' by the bridge in Higher Drive. His beautiful daughter, Connie, used to invite her school friends to parties and as 'The Lodge' was far too small for entertaining, my father let her use our garden, tennis court and summerhouse. Mr Densham rebuilt 'Woodlands' in the same style as the original.

The Densham family suffered further losses in the war. Edward Densham's nephew, who was in the RAF, was killed. Also, the family who owned the well-known Mazawattee Tea Company lost their warehouse at Tower Hill – it was completely destroyed by fire.

PURLEY

Father saw the centre of Purley and nearly all the houses in and around Purley being built. He knew many of the builders and developers including Henry Sell, Henry Oldaker, William Webb who developed the renowned Webb's estate and F Betts who built Haydn Avenue. Mr Betts presented Betts Mead (near the top of Old Lodge Lane) to Coulsdon & Purley Urban District Council in 1925 and father received the Deeds on behalf of the Council from Mr Betts at the opening ceremony.

However, looking back I myself recall quite a lot of the development of Purley. I remember the fire station and the Council Offices being built. Father was Chairman of the Council when the Council Offices were opened in 1930 and his photograph, taken in 1926, hung on the stair case. Father would have been dreadfully upset to see the Offices closed.

The houses in Russell Hill Road which were similar to those round the corner in Foxley Lane, were demolished and replaced by shops. Bartlett Cottages, a row of terraced cottages in the High Street opposite Purley Congregational Church, were replaced by Purley Parade. With my father, I was able to attend the opening ceremonies of the Regal and Astoria Cinemas in Purley and the Davis theatre in Croydon, but all long since closed.

One great change occurred when I was about 10 the view from the top of 'Meadow Hurst' looking north was open fields right to the horizon. One day, I saw what appeared to be a white ribbon being slowly unrolled across the green downs. It was Purley Way in the making. I also watched the development of Woodcrest Road, Manor Wood Road and Woodside Road.

He Is Up With The News At 84



Couldson & Purley Advertiser 1963

Mr. Henry Morgan, of High-street, Purley, is about his business at 4.30 each morning helping with the delivery of 1,000 newspapers. Mr. Morgan, who started delivering papers at ten, and took over the business at 17, still works a 48-hour week. His age ? 84.

I suppose two of the greatest changes for me were leaving 'Meadow Hurst' with all its memories to live at Godstone Mount in Downscourt Road and then to Abbeyfield in Purley Knoll where I am very happy to be in my advancing years. My sitting-room looks out over a pleasant garden and the one next door where I can see young children playing. Across the Brighton Road I see people flocking into Tesco's. I think my father would be astonished to see a shop of such size in Purley.

Laurie and I have enjoyed exchanging memories and, in written form, we know they would have brought pleasure to father, we hope these memories will bring pleasure to you.

PURLEY AS I REMEMBER IT 70 YEARS AGO

(From Bourne Society *Local History Records* 1: 27-28 (1963))

[Written by Henry Morgan, Morgan's Newsagents, Purley High Street, in 1965 when he was aged 86.]

The name was Caterham Junction then and was changed to Purley in about 1888 when the Railway Company changed it to Purley, and the Postmaster-General followed.

The railway station was just a wayside station with two platforms and a very small waiting room beside the entrance from Whytecliffe Road. The platform could be reached by a flight of steps near the arch in Godstone Road. There was a cab yard near the Whytecliffe Road entrance.

There was no station at Coulsdon which was then known as Smitham Bottom.

The Railway Hotel was originally called the *Caterham Junction Hotel* and was built by the company who constructed the Caterham Railway. (It has been considerably enlarged since). There was no goods section, this was all done at Stoats Nest goods station (between Purley and Coulsdon) and was demolished about 1896.

The other public house was known as *The Hammer and Clink* (now *The Jolly Farmers*) as there was a blacksmith's forge at the rear and also a wheelwright's yard. It was one of our pleasures as boys to take our broken iron hoops to be repaired for two pence and to see the sparks fly from the forge; also during the winter months the district echoed to the sound of horseshoes being made at the forge for 'roughing' the farmers' horses.

The shopkeepers in the High Street were—

H Green	Baker
J Lovegrove	Greengrocer and Fishmonger
Ridgway	Draper
Hyde	Butcher
Huggett	Bootmaker
H Pullen	Grocer
Wicks	Barber
Attrel	Dairyman
Honey	Grocer (post Office)
Spice	Seed Merchant
A & P Markwick	Butcher
Turvey	Newsagent, stationer, toy shop

and they closed their shops with wooden shutters at 9 p.m. every night and 11 p.m. on Saturdays.

The owner of *The Railway Hotel* at that time, a Mr Parker, was a keen gardener and the ground in the High Street now used as a car park and also the land on which the shops were built by Mr Oldaker known as Mafeking Terrace, in 1900 formed his garden; also there was a 'Pitch for the Game of Quoits' for his customers.

There was a row of cottages, from the present Astoria picture house to the car park, known as Bartletts cottages; there were 39 of them and among the tenants were three policemen.

The school in the High Street had been built, called the National School. It was built and controlled by the Vicar of Christ Church, Revd R R Resker. The previous school was in a large private house at the corner of Downs Court Road.

The water company's pumping station was built on farm land belonging to a Croydon businessman named T Gurney White and the farm buildings were now Lansdowne Road.

There were no houses on either side of the Brighton Road from Purley corner to what was Smitham Bottom (now Coulsdon) except a large farm known as Stoats Nest Farm; this was demolished in 1900.

At Smitham Bottom there was a little public house called *The Red Lion*, about three shops and a little infants school; also some 40 cottages.

There was no electricity or telephone or, of course, motor cars. The 'penny-farthing' cycle was beginning to be popular.

A Mr Gardner had laid out a large tea garden at Kenley (opposite Little Roke) where he advertised 'Riddlesdown 1,000 acres to roam without fear of trespass'. (Riddlesdown is less than 700 acres).

Every three or four years the whole valley from Whyteleafe to Purley was flooded with the flow of water known as the Bourne Water or 'Woe Waters'.

The population was 597, there were 69 cottages, 18 villas and 16 shops.

At Brighton Road where all the large shops have been built there was a row of villas stretching from Russell Hill Road to the Gas Company. On the opposite side were the gardens, a tennis court for the tenants of the villas, a baker's shop and workmen's club. Also there was opposite Bartlett's cottages, a deep ditch which carried the Bourne water on to Croydon. This water has ceased to flow since the pumping station was built.

After passing under the arches at Godstone Road, on the left side all was open country to Riddlesdown, and on the agricultural land round Purley there were a number of small farms – Roke Farm, Hartley Farm, Stoats Nest Farm, Old Lodge Farm, Woodcote Farm, Purley Oaks Farm.

Jean Hain has known Olive Himsley for many years and more recently recognised that Olive, aged 91 and as a daughter of Henry Morgan, had a tale to tell. Also, Jean first spoke to Henry Morgan when she was aged nine and he was aged 67 and remembers, him as a very kindly gentleman.

From *THE PURLEY REVIEW*, August 1928

MR H T MORGAN OF PURLEY

The subject of our sketch this month, Mr Morgan has just returned from a tour in the USA, comprising an itinerary of more than 5,000 miles after reaching New York, and including visits to Philadelphia, Atlantic City, Washington, Chicago, Detroit, Toronto, Montreal and Quebec. From these he has brought back a wealth of observations, a few of which he retailed to the Purley Rotary Club at the Luncheon Hour meeting last month. Mr Morgan's position would appear to be almost unique in the district upon which he has exclusively concentrated his undoubted business abilities for a generation. Born in Kensington he came to Purley quite a young boy. His early years were passed on a farm at Stoats Nest, now demolished, and for 31 years he has occupied the premises in High Street, which have been gradually developed into a miniature Emporium, covering an extensive newsagency, stationery department and book depot for sale and loan purposes, indeed 'Morgan Library' was probably the first Loan Library hereabouts. Mr Morgan has altogether grown with the district and it is generally acknowledged that there is little about its wonderful expansion with which he is not acquainted.

It is many years too since his public spirit came into play, having first become a member of the Coulsdon Parish Council and subsequently of the Croydon Rural District Council, besides being one of the original members of the Coulsdon and Purley District Urban Council established in 1915. Qualifying on every Committee of the Council at one time or other, he was Chairman in 1925, at the termination of which office he was defeated at the polls at something in the nature of a 'stunt' Election, inaugurated and carried out by the then newly-formed Purley Ratepayers' Association. Not a few regretted that the Council should have been deprived of the services of one who had made himself master, by continuous practical administration, of the intricacies of local government.

Mr Morgan has been a member, moreover, for many years of the Croydon Board of Guardians (one of the biggest Unions in the country) i.e., of the Croydon Borough and the Urban Districts of Coulsdon and Purley, Mitcham, Beddington and Wallington, was chairman in 1923, and is the present chairman of its Finance Committee. He is also a governor of Purley County School, for many years an Overseer of the Parish of Coulsdon, a Sub-

Inspector of the Metropolitan Special Constabulary, and a member Purley Rotary Club, in connection with which he was lately appointed its 'Speakers' Secretary'.

During his American visit (along with Mrs Morgan) he travelled 2,500 miles by train and 2,000 miles trip by motor car, after arriving at New York in the *Olympic* on 5th June, and before sailing for England on 28th June. The journey included transit by steamer on many beautiful lakes. New York he found a city of rush, noise and skyscrapers. Philadelphia, like a home town where everything contributed to social and domestic comfort; Atlantic City, the 'joy town' of America; Washington, a town of Arts and Crafts, the residence of the intellectuals; Chicago, the 'Town Beautiful,' nestling on wooded banks of Lake Michigan with its 250 public parks and wide boulevards, its Hotel Stevens, having 3,000 bedrooms, the 23rd floor affording an unforgettable view of the City at sunrise. They saw in Ford's Factory at Detroit, a motor car assembled in 20 minutes. At Toronto and Montreal the agricultural side of the continent was predominant being busy inter terminia cities for merchants and merchandise. Quebec was found to be, as described in the geography books, the French city of the Summit Heights.

As a well-known member of the National Newsagents Federation, a representative of 'Newsagent-Booksellers Review' secured an interview with Mr Morgan on his tour, which was published on 28th July under the title of 'American Newspaper Methods' The American newspapers, he says, are of amazing bulk, and the United States Post Office makes annual deficit in encouraging interchange of them between the States. There was an absence of competitions for great money prizes, or insurance schemes, but the instalment, or deferred payment system, appeared to be fostered. Both the editorial and general matter of the newspapers perhaps could be best described as slogan, slogan titles, slogan phrases as paragraphs, slogan references in American snap, snip and cut style. Making comparison Mr Morgan thought he could see the trend of the English newspapers towards American methods, and to him the most prominent was the tendency towards the seven day newspaper.

Mr Morgan neither smokes nor partakes of alcoholic beverages, is an early riser as well as a strict vegetarian, to all of which may be attributed his abounding health and energy. Probably he would say work was his recreation, but he is known to be a motor cyclist and a motorist proper, with all that that fact implies.

THE BOURNE SOCIETY was formed in 1956 and takes its name from the intermittent streams that follow the lines of the A22 and A23 roads, meeting in Purley to flow northward into the River Wandle. The objects of the Society – England's largest local history society – are to extend the knowledge of local history in Caterham, Chaldon, Chelsham, Chipstead, Coulsdon, Farleigh, Godstone, Kenley, Purley, Sanderstead, Whyteleafe, Warlingham and Woldingham, and to ensure the preservation of records and objects of historical interest. The Society celebrates its Golden Jubilee in 2006.

The Society is able to help newcomers to satisfy their curiosity about the area, and to stimulate residents to search out further information. Through its publications, visits, speakers, meetings, placement of plaques, and archaeological work, the Society seeks to place the area in an historical perspective.

The Bourne Society is a registered charity, and as well as general work it has active special-interest groups in archaeology, industrial archaeology, photography, pub history and landscape history. Regular outings, meetings and events are arranged, and a wide range of publications produced, including a quarterly publication, *Local History Records*, which is sent free to members.

Membership is open to individuals, families, and organisations. The Society's Membership Secretary, Mrs J Emery, 118 Coulsdon Road, Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 2LB, will be pleased to provide further details of membership and subscription rates.



BOURNE SOCIETY

Publications

Local History Records:

Single copies (issues 1-45 annual, 46 on quarterly) available. Enquire for details and prices.

Books:

Village History Project – Histories for Whyteleafe (Published 2006), Chelsham & Farleigh (2004) Chaldon (Published 2002), Kenley (2002), Coulsdon (2000), Warlingham (1999), Sanderstead (1998), Caterham (1997), Purley (1996). Other volumes to follow. Each volume £9.00

Electricity Supply in Caterham & District 1900 to 1992 by John Pipe £5.95

East Surrey Manors—a guide to their documentation by Mary Saaler £1.50

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