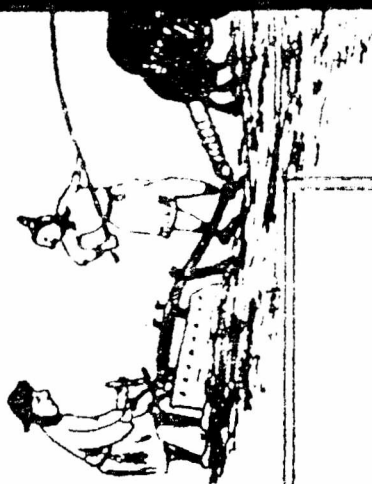
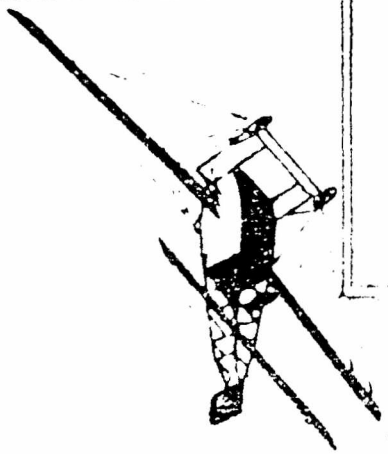


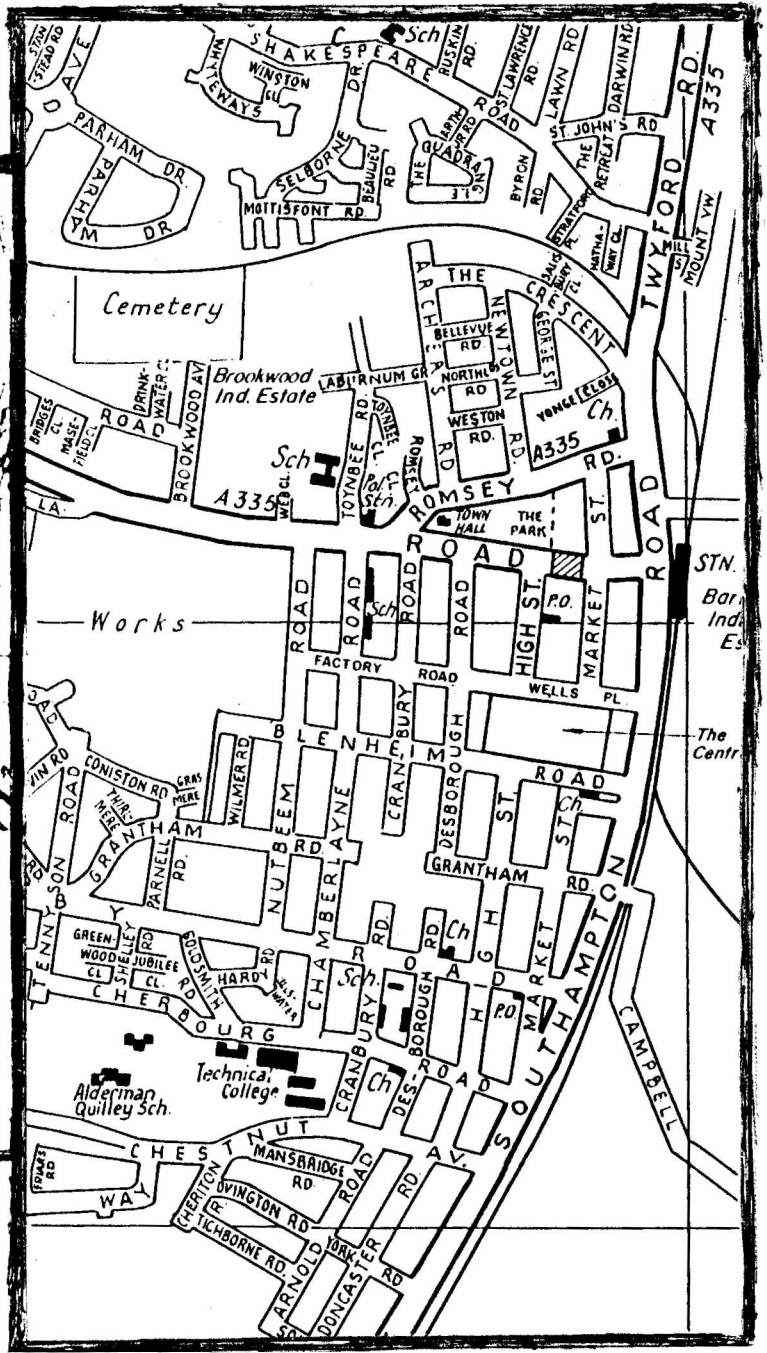
MEMORIES of EASTLEIGH



*Eastleigh & District
Local History Society*

OCCASIONAL PAPER No. 38

1930



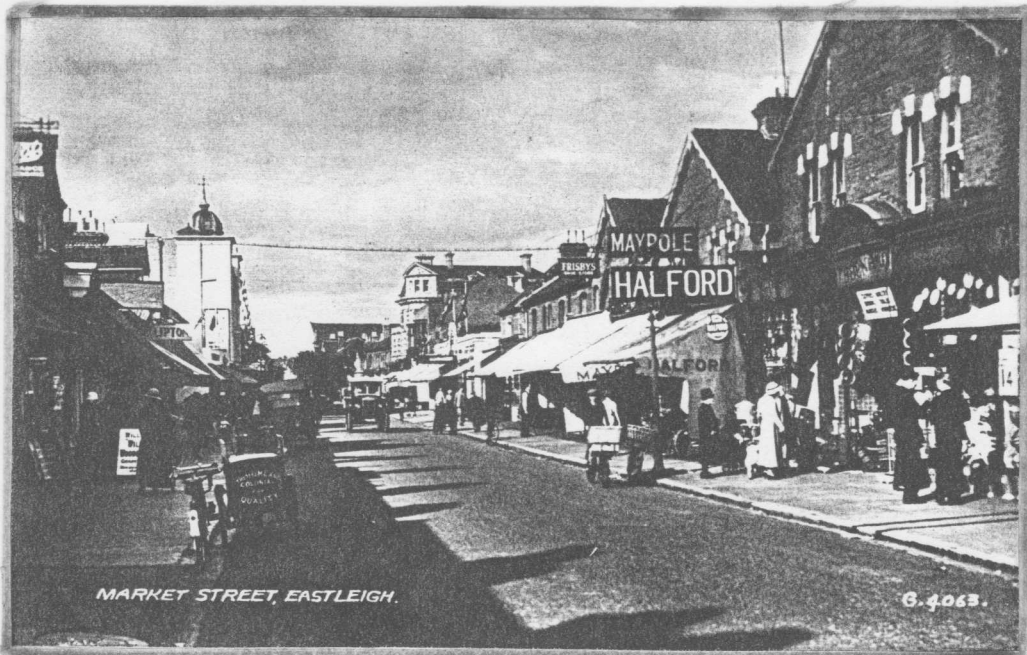


Eastleigh Station, Eastleigh.



LEIGH ROAD, EASTLEIGH

14.



MARKET STREET, EASTLEIGH.

G. 4063.

MEMORIES OF EASTLEIGH

When I first came to Eastleigh, the town was run by an Urban District Council and remained as such until it became the borough of Eastleigh. on October 3rd, 1936. The first Charter Mayor of the Borough was Mr. E. J. Bradshaw and the Charter Town Clerk, Mr. F. W. Cuthbertson. The centre of the Town, such as High Street, Market Street and Leigh Road, has not changed much during the last sixty years.

Going down High Street on the right hand side there was a small Chapel, of which the 'Apex' with a small window can still be seen above the new Piccolo Restaurant. Next door were four cottages with small front gardens. A short distance down the road was the Salvation Army Hall, now the Eastleigh Museum. The Army band used to play in Leigh Road on Wednesday evenings, near the railway station. Next to the Army Hall was Varnes, the pork butcher, who had his own slaughter house next to his shop. His sausages and cooked meats were reputed to be the best in the district. After crossing Factory Road, on the other side was the Wesleyan Chapel, now demolished and replaced by a new Methodist Church in Blenheim Road.

Continuing down High Street you came to Stubbingtons, a furniture dealer where you could pay weekly for any goods you had, a great help in those days. Close by was Howards, another butcher, then Hillikers where they sold the best faggots and pease pudding you could get. Next door was Howards, another cooked meat shop (no relation to the butcher). Both Stubbingtons and Hillikers moved later to the other side of the road. On the corner was Jefferys, ironmonger and china shop. On the way back to the Post Office, which has not altered much, there was a seed merchant, then Ward's the drapers, where you could buy anything from a yard of elastic to a complete outfit. If your change was one farthing you usually received a packet of pins instead. Next was Mr Wellis, a chemist who would fix you up for 'tummy ache' or a cough for a few coppers.

Next came Edna May, the baby outfitters, then Hopgoods, a butcher. At the corner of Factory Road you turned right until you came to Desborough Road. On the corner is the Baptist Church, one of the oldest buildings in the Town, which celebrated its centenary three years ago. Opposite the Church on one corner was Mr. Powis, the grocer, and on the other Gibbs, a boot and shoe repairer. At the next corner in Desborough Road was Woodfords, the bakers, where you turn right into Blenheim Road. Passing Cranbury and Chamberlayne Roads, you came to Nutbeem Road. There were no buildings past this road; it was all cornfields, as far as the river at Stoneham. These fields were a picture in the summer when the corn was ripe and the poppies in full bloom.

On the other side of the river across the footbridge were several cottages with thatched roofs. In the gardens were many fruit trees. For one old penny, the cottagers would fill your bags with apples. Passfield Avenue and Derby Road were not known; it was all fields.

Next we come to Chestnut Avenue, or Stoneham Lane as it was then called. Continuing down the road we pass a few thatched cottages, one of which was the old Stoneham Post Office, and across the road was the Old Forge where horses were newly shod. At the end of the road you came to Southampton Road. On the opposite side of the road, across the railway lines was a flying field, now Eastleigh Airport. During the First World War it was used by the Royal Flying Corps and in 1918 by Americans. There was so much to do that a railway line was built from the Locomotive Running Shed into the flying field, which later became known as Atlantic Park. (see Paper no. 49) The railway line was pulled up soon after the war, and the Park was later used to house immigrants until arrangements were made for them to go to America. Most were Russians fleeing the Revolution. They arrived at Eastleigh railway station by train and were taken to Atlantic Park by buses.

Turning left along Southampton Road towards the station was a row of railway cottages; next to them was the Railway Outdoor Machinery Repair Department and then the steps that crossed the railway bridge to Campbell Road and the Railway Works and Locomotive Running Shed. Opposite, on the corner of Blenheim Road, was a newspaper and confectionery shop, where railwaymen got their morning papers. On the other side of the road, where the newspaper shop used to be, was the Unity Club. Close by was Goodenoughs, the coal merchant, who delivered his coal by horse and cart. On the next corner, Factory Road, was the large butter and cheese factory, later for many years Peter Green's carpet store. On the opposite corner was the Bee Hive Restaurant which many railwaymen preferred to their own canteen in the works. Next door was a large house, and then some cottages and a pawnbrokers and Mrs. Lawrence, a second hand dealer. Next were some of the first cottages built in Eastleigh in 1865 and known as Tate's Terrace. Opposite were a few railway cottages for use by men who had to live near the station, such as Inspectors. Next was the railway station itself, built over 150 years ago. Until recently it had not altered much, except that a canopy over the entrance was removed, as double decker buses damaged it when stopping at the station. Adjoining the station was the Junction Hotel, demolished in 1970. Opposite and still standing is the 'Home Tavern'. In the centre of the road there was always a policeman on point duty, directing traffic. On the corner of Leigh Road was the Westminster Bank, which is still there. Next door, still in Southampton Road, was the Station Cafe, used by many workers, then a tobacconist and another newsagent, all handy for men going to and from the station.

Retracing our steps to Market Street we come to two cinemas, both owned by Mr. George Wright. On the left was the Regal and opposite was the Picture House. Both were built in 1911, but are now gone. A memorial stone commemorates the opening of the Regal. Close to the Picture House was Burtons, the men's tailor, which has outlasted the cinemas and is still there. There were many other shops such as Liptons, Home and Colonial, Maypole, Wallers and Misselbrook and Westons, all grocery stores. Sangers home made sweets, Imperial Meat, J. Groves wine merchants, Olivers boots and shoes, Frisbys shoes, Boots the Chemist, W. Peacock Greengrocers, and many others of which only a few are left.

We now return along Leigh Road to the Recreation Ground, across the centre of which is a lovely avenue of trees planted by local Nurseryman Mr. Bazeley. On the left is a Victorian type band stand built about 1904. It has remained unaltered except that a roof has been added and it has been equipped with loud speakers. Occasional Paper No.37 tells the full story of the Bandstand.

Even after the First World War, about 1920, not many houses had their own baths or indoor toilets. To help people the local Council built wooden frame buildings, covered by corrugated iron roofs at the Eastern end of the Recreation Ground, to be used as baths and toilets by people without them. They were pulled down about ten years later when the Council built many houses with baths and indoor toilets. About the same time, 1928, a new Town Hall was built adjoining the Council Offices at the other end of the Recreation Ground on the corner of Leigh and Romsey Roads. Turning right into Romsey Road, you walk along the other side of the Recreation Ground to Twyford Road, formerly Winchester Road, where you turn left by the old Parish Church which was burned down in 1984. Next to the Church was the Crescent Infants School, now replaced with flats. Across the road was a busy railway goods yard and depot now used as a car park.

Going left over the bridge that crossed the once busy Romsey and Salisbury railway line, you turn left again at the bottom of the bridge into Shakespeare Road. On the left there used to be a large Council Yard and depot that extended back to the railway line, now replaced with offices and flats. On the next corner, Byron Road, there was a large Bacon Factory, also replaced with flats. Across the road was another Recreation Ground still used as such. It is between Shakespeare, Lawn, Lawrence and St. Catherines Roads. During the war, underground air raid shelters were built on it in Shakespeare Road, and I think they are still there. Opposite the Recreation Ground is the new large Unigate Milk Depot.

Continuing along the road you pass Arthur Road and come to a footpath on the left. Opposite it is the Infants School which was as far as Shakespeare Road went. Across the road on the left was a gate and fields as far as the railway line and on the right across to Woodside Avenue and Boyatt Lane. There were many footpaths across the fields to the woods. The Eastleigh Carnival Fair was always held in these fields and during the war anti-aircraft guns and crew were stationed there. Alas, all is now gone and covered by the large Boyatt Wood housing and factory estates. At the end of the lane is a footbridge over the aforesaid Romsey Railway Line. On the other side of it is Archers Road which has not altered. It brings you back to the Recreation Ground, thus completing our circular walk.

ELIZABETH BISHOP
October 1990

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