



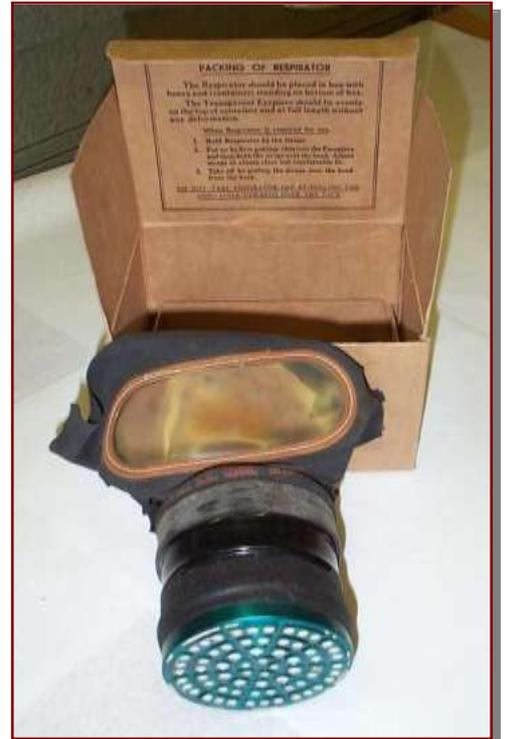
NEWSLETTER

No. 88

AUTUMN 2017

www.dacorumheritage.org.uk

ARMED FORCES DAY



More than 2,000 people visited Gadebridge Park in Hemel Hempstead on 1st July 2017 for our special Armed Forces Day celebration, organised by Dacorum Borough Council in association with the Ministry of Defence. The Royal Signals Motorcycle Display Team, (The White Helmets), were the star attraction, performing one of their final ever shows, before being disbanded. Armed Forces Day is an annual campaign that gives everyone



the opportunity to show their support for the men and women of the Armed Forces past and present, including currently serving troops, service families, reservists, veterans and cadets.

It was a great opportunity to support a local event, and to continue to raise our awareness and our historical collections to a wider audience, building on the success of our 'Traditional Dacorum' exhibition in June. We were able to showcase our heritage service to both the Cllr. David Collins (Mayor of Dacorum) and Mike Penning MP amongst others, to keep the idea of a museum and art gallery at The Bury in their thoughts.

Our fantastic team of volunteers organised historical objects and information from the collection to create captivating displays for this event to engage with the public. Objects were military themed for the event. It included a WWII air raid patrol (ARP) warden's equipment including a rattle and a gas mask with its original cardboard box.

Images: *Top Left* – Our volunteer (Quentin) at our stand. *Top right* – Gas mask and box from our handling collection and part of our Loan Boxes for schools & community groups (for more information email or see our website). *Lower* – Mayor of Dacorum (Cllr. David Collins) and Mrs. Elaine Collins helping to advertise our activities. Two images from event courtesy of Anne Anderson.

THE DACORUM HERITAGE TRUST LTD.

Registered Office: **The Museum Store, Clarence Road, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire HP4 3YL.**

Tel. No. **01442 879525** (answer phone). Or email collectionsmanager@dacorumheritage.org.uk

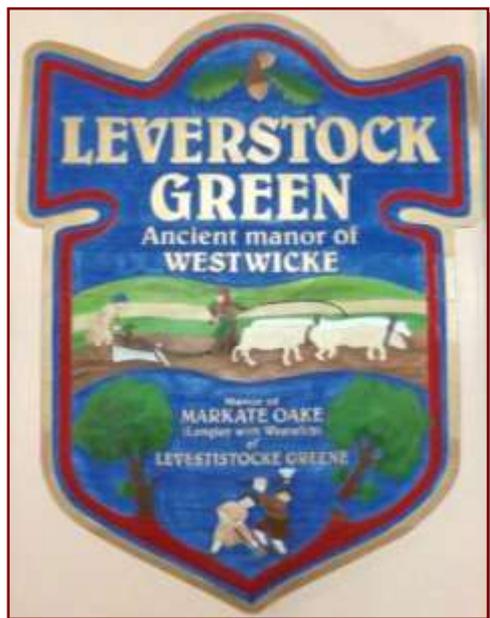
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LEVERSTOCK GREEN VILLAGE SIGN & THE LUTTRELL PSALTER

The old Village sign, now beautifully restored and hanging in Leverstock Green Village Hall foyer where the elements cannot harm it. A major advantage of its new position, the details on the sign can be seen with greater clarity than studying the sign on the green. Next to the sign is a document, (a collaboration between John Baldwin and Barbara Chapman), which tells the story of the sign and the significance of the elements depicted in it.

The sign's two main pictures show aspects of life in the 14th century. These are copied from two of the many illustrations in The Luttrell Psalter, which is housed in the British Library and is a collection of religious texts, including psalms, prayers and a calendar of religious feast-days, written in Latin on vellum. The Luttrell Psalter was commissioned by Sir Geoffrey Luttrell, Lord of the Manor of Irnham, Lincolnshire, it was created between 1320 - 1345 by a scribe and a number of unknown artists. We can all enjoy viewing it online at (set to 'Folio' or 'Open Book'): http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add_ms_42130_fs001ar. See if you can find our two pictures!

There is also an excellent short documentary film based exclusively on the pictures of life in the 14th century depicted in the Psalter, this is well worth watching. It can be found here: <http://www.luttrellpsalter.org.uk/> - allow yourself to be transported back to explore life in Westwick during mid 14th century.



The original village sign was unveiled on 11th December 1999 to mark the millennium. The basic design and wording by local historian Barbara Chapman, with the final touches, manufactured and installation completed by Teresa and David Woolcott of Amber Signs of Berkhamsted.

This original sign has suffered the ravages of the weather for over sixteen years. The cost of refurbishment would have been very high and only offered a temporary solution. Leverstock Green Village Association (LGVA) commissioned the replacement sign in 2016 from Signs of the Times in Tebworth. Constructed of hand painted polyurethane and, whilst the paint will eventually deteriorate, the sign itself should last for many years. LGVA is indebted to Steve and Janet Read for restoring the original sign, which can now be admired in the Village Hall.

The different elements of the sign are as follows - the acorns and oak leaves are important for several reasons, they are part of the logo's for Leverstock Green School, Dacorum Borough Council and even Dacorum Heritage Trust. One of the earlier names during the 14th to 17th centuries, the tiny Manor of Leverstock Green was 'Market Oak' (more often written as

Markate Oake). Oak trees were then a major feature with one in particular known as 'The Market Oake'.

From Saxon times until the abolition of manorial courts in the 1920's, the Manor of Westwick (or Westwicke) was the principle manor of the village. The name still survives in the area including Westwick Row, Westwick Farm and Westwick Cottage. In medieval times Westwick was important as it supplied the St. Albans Abbey with all its needs for the refectory, either in kind or in funds from timber etc. Westwick Cottage dates from the 12th century and was probably the original Saxon Long Hall Manor House, represented by the medieval peasants ploughing the land.

The peasants felling trees in the bottom half of the sign, shows that much of the land had been covered by trees following the demise of Roman rule and these would have had to be cleared to give access to the arable land beneath. This was revealed in old documents and the word 'stoc' means tree stump.

The wording **Manor of Markate Oak, (Langley with Westwick) or Levestistocke Greene**, gives alternative names and spellings of the small Manor of Market Oak belonging to Markyate Priory.

We have documentary and archaeological proof that people lived and worked in the immediate area of Leverstock Green from the time of the Roman occupation onwards. Recent research indicates that settlement along Westwick Row may well date back even further to the Iron Age and perhaps the Bronze Age with Chambersbury Lane, Bunkers Lane and Blackwater Lane being of Iron Age origin. It seems quite likely that the Westwick area was a "suburb" of the major Iron Age settlement at Pre Wood just outside St. Albans.

Edited from an article by Barbara Chapman (from Leverstock Green Chronicle website: <http://www.lgchronicle.net>)

Image: Restored sign courtesy John Baldwin.

WWI - 100 YEARS ON – AS REPORTED IN THE GAZETTE

A snapshot of home life during the Great War, with selected articles published in the Gazette from a century ago.

Air Raids Refugees from London from the Gazette dated 13th October 1917. A meeting of the Hemel Hempstead Town Council was held to discuss the arrangements in connection with the people who flock into the district from London when the air raids are on. The Mayor (Councillor G. A. Talbot) detailed the steps, which had been taken to get

an alteration in the decision to turn Gadebridge Camp into a military isolation hospital for the treatment of venereal disease.

The Town Clerk (Mr. A. D. Keen), at the request of the Mayor, explained the action he took after the last Council meeting to deal with the large influx of air raid refugees from London. He saw the inspector in charge at the Police Station and also wrote him a letter stating that it had been reported to the Council that many of these people had great difficulty in finding accommodation and that some had no alternative but to spend the night in the open, some of them on the moor. The Council therefore authorised him to say that if the Police were unable to find accommodation for all the visitors Boxmoor Hall and the Town Hall might be used, but some responsible person should be left in charge. Councillor Kerridge said that on the four nights he visited Boxmoor Hall it was open, and the caretaker kept it open until after the arrival of the last train.

The Mayor said it came to his knowledge that the police took no action or very little, and that there were great difficulties at Boxmoor station and in the neighbourhood of Apsley and Boxmoor. So far, except that Apsley had taken an active part he did not think any real arrangements had been made, and he must congratulate the Apsley people on the energy with which they tackled the difficulty in their district. There were two important points to consider in connection with the arrival of these visitors, some of them were quite destitute, and something must be done to help them. These people came down in such large numbers that accommodation was not sufficient for them, neither was there enough food, and people in the Borough had had to suffer through the arrival of this surplus population. They had to consider what steps to take to provide for that helpless ones, and if possible restrain those who were well off because many of them were aliens, and some had plenty of money and came there and certainly did no good to the Borough. He had called an emergency committee meeting, to do what they could to organise the matter, but the Chief Constable said the police could not prevent these people coming, and were not prepared to take any action with limiting the number coming. Some householders took them in, in large numbers and made a profit out of it, but that was not altogether for the benefit of the Borough or the good repute of the Borough.

During this week people had been flocking back to London, but the expression one generally heard was, "See you again when the next moon's on," so they would probably have the same difficulty then. In Boxmoor there was an epidemic of measles. Whether the people from London brought it down he could not say, but some of them were none too clean, and no doubt helped to spread it.

They took the matter up at Apsley because they felt that having done so much for the Belgians they could not reasonably do nothing for their own people. Last week they had large numbers of people thrust upon them, and they had some sort of organised effort to find accommodation. At Apsley they had a number of cases where refugees left without paying a penny for the food or lodging they had received, leaving behind them things of no value. On the other hand there were some who were willing to pay almost any price for accommodation. The Mayor said that if people cleared off without paying that was the householders fault, and nobody could protect them against that if they chose to let them in.

Gadebridge Camp – Efforts to Avoid a Calamity. The Mayor said that at the special meeting of the Council the question of Gadebridge Camp being turned into an isolation hospital for the treatment of venereal diseases was brought up, and he was empowered to act. The War Office said the matter rested with the Eastern Command, and a deputation, consisting of himself, the Rt. Hon. T. F. Halsey, Mr. Percy Christopherson, Mr. E. A. Mitchell Innes, K.C., Mr. J. Burles, and the Town Clerk waited on the authorities. The deputation fully represented the different interests of the Borough. The points put forward were that there were large industries in the Borough, the water supply, watercress

growing, the fact that the camp was situated on the public roads and paths, the Borough was the centre of a number of institutions, and important preparatory schools, that the Borough had borne considerable expense in the construction of the camp, and that the proposed hospital would mean serious depreciation in the property in the Borough. He also pointed out that if the camp was used for the purpose intended it would be nothing less than disastrous for the residents and owners of property. The General listened to them, but his point was that the isolation camp must be



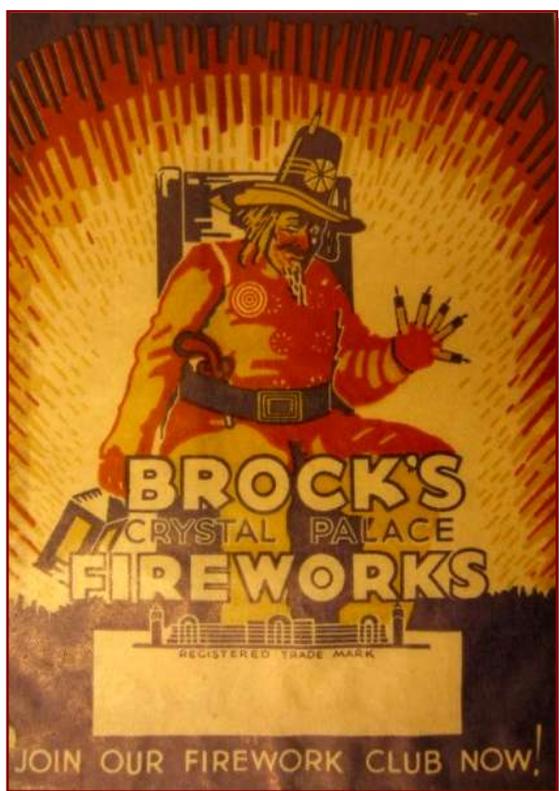
The Hutments, Gadebridge Park, Hemel Hempstead.

placed somewhere, and that wherever it was placed there would be an outcry, that the cost of removing it would be considerable, and, further, that isolation camps had been placed in Cambridge and other large places. Therefore he did not hold out much hope of altering the decision. But on pressing him the General agreed to delay the matter until a report had been made on alternative sites by an engineer officer. That officer came down, and together with himself and the Borough Surveyor looked at other sites including the old horse lines at Markyate, but objections were raised, including the insufficiency of water supply. However, the matter had come before the Public Health Committee of the County Council, and there it had been taken up strongly. The Vice-Chairman of the County Council, Mr. E. B. Barnard, was going with Sir Charles Longmore to the Local Government Board.

Here the Town Clerk read a copy of a letter, which Mr. Barnard had sent to the Local Government Board as Chairman of the Metropolitan Water Board, in which he pointed out that the river Gade joined the Colne, which emptied into the Thames from which the Board drew the extensive supplies at Staines. Apart from any danger to the water supply there might possibly be a sentimental objection to drinking the water under the circumstances. Continuing, the Mayor said he thought they must be satisfied at present with the action taken by the County Council. Some progress was also being made by the action of those connected with the schools, but he could not say that it was very hopeful, as it was very difficult to interfere with the military when they had set their hearts on a thing. However, he trusted that they would be able to avert what would be nothing less than a calamity to the Borough.

Photo: Previous page - Sepia post card of 'The Hutments' Gadebridge Park, c.1916, photographer H. W. Flatt.

CURATOR'S CORNER



Staff Changes at The Museum Store. In August, our Museum Support Officer, Sophie Dimond married her fiancé Andrew Walter, everyone at DHT send their congratulations and good wishes for their future together. Sophie will be leaving DHT at the end of October, she has been offered full-time employment at The Garden City Collection, Letchworth where she currently works three days a week in her other part-time job.

Farewell Nicola Minney. At the end of September Nicola's contract finished as maternity cover for the Collections Manager. Nicola said "I have had a brilliant time working at DHT and have learned a lot that will serve me well at my new position in Hillingdon. I will be the new Local Studies Curator based in Uxbridge, working with local history societies and producing exhibitions. I was really proud of the Traditional Dacorum Exhibition and all of the hard work that went into it from everyone at DHT. It was a lot of fun and our visitors really enjoyed it too! I am going to miss you all and I am really pleased to have had the opportunity to work with you all".

Welcome Back Nina. We were pleased to welcome Nina Glencross back from her maternity leave. It's surprising how quickly the year has passed and how much Nina's beautiful daughter Neve has grown. Nina is now looking forward to starting some new projects and planning for a major exhibition next autumn.

Dacorum Heritage Trust - Job Vacancy. For a Museum Support Officer (15 hours per week, £7,200 p.a.) to support our small, but busy Heritage Service, reporting to and directed by the Collections

Manager. The position will involve working with volunteers. A post graduate qualification in Museum Studies with experience working in a museum environment is desirable. If you would like to learn more please call 01442 879525. The application deadline is 9 am. on Tuesday 31st October. Interviews will take place during the week of 6th November. To download the full job description and application: <http://www.dacorumheritage.org.uk/dht-news/job-vacancy/>

Image: A seasonal paper bag from Brocks 'Crystal Palace' Fireworks, c.1950, fireworks were manufactured at their site in Hemel Hempstead, where the Woodhall Farm housing development is now.

Legacy Giving. Help us safeguard our collections for future generations by remembering Dacorum Heritage Trust when you make or revise your will. Please visit our website <http://www.dacorumheritage.org.uk/support-us/legacies/>

The Museum Store is open by appointment only. For enquiries email Nina our Collections Manager.

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EDITOR: Pam Gasking
office@dacorumheritage.org.uk

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Deadline: for next issue is 25th November 2017.



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