

STEVE BULLMAN'S STORY in the last issue of *Past Times* prompted some comments. Charles Comport, who lived in the *Old Vicarage* for some years had researched the history of his home there and he tells us that it was in the occupancy of Sarah Wing and Thomas Olley



*The Old Vicarage*

when Benjamin Wing bought it from the Rev Bramston in 1842. The 1851 census gives his occupation as farmer and this stretch of land was known as '*Parker's Croft*' so this would have been the site of the farm mentioned by Steve.

Wendy Cummin has supplied some lengthy notes of her own research and confirms that in 1891, Thomas Olley was retired and living in Goat Hall Road next to the *Running Mare*. We can correct an obvious error in the original article and state that Thomas Olley died in 1985. He and Susannah had five sons; William, Thomas, George, Joseph and Edward.

**Croft** - *Enclosed meadow or arable land, usually adjacent to a house. Alternatively called Croad, Croud or Crowd.*

## A new Treasurer

We are delighted to announce that Ken Edwards has accepted the post of Treasurer and will be looking after our funds and membership list.

### GALLEYWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**President** Ted Hawkins

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Comments or contributions to this Newsletter would be welcomed by the editor  
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# PAST TIMES

GALLEYWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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www.essexinfo.net/galleywoodhistoricalsociety

## Fateful move to Galleywood by evacuee

**N**ELLIE ELIZABETH OWERS was an evacuee. She was the wife of Walter Owers of Stepney and was sent away from the East End of London 'to be safe'. It is possible that she was pregnant. How ironic then, that Nellie should die in Galleywood. In World War 2, the Chelmsford factories of Marconi and Hoffmans were obvious targets for German bombers, and so of course Chelmsford was bombed. There were many casualties at the factories due to the bombing raids, but there were also bombs which went astray.

One of these landed on *Rosedale* in Skinners Lane on 30th October 1940, and this was the bomb which claimed the life of our evacuee Nellie Elizabeth Owers, who was 29. Those who died with her were Alice and George Smith, and also Elijah Saveall who lived next door at *Maylin*. Two others were pulled from the wreckage alive but died soon afterwards. They were Charles Herbert Francis and young Nellie Lodge aged 13. All the victims were buried in St Michael's churchyard.

We don't know if Nellie Elizabeth Owers had any connection with Galleywood, or whether her evacuation here was just chance. It seems likely that she was the Nellie FAIR who married a Walter Owers in 1936, and who was born in 1911 in West Ham, her mother's maiden name being Bruce. If so, she was probably the daughter of William Henry Fair and Jane Bruce, but this is speculation.



*This story was provided by our indefatigable researcher Wendy Cummin. If anyone has any further information on Nellie, please contact Wendy on [wendy@galleywoodhistoricalsociety.org.uk](mailto:wendy@galleywoodhistoricalsociety.org.uk) or 01245 250499.*

Our next meeting

# WORLD WAR TWO

## Life on the Home Front from 1939 to 1945



*A dramatic presentation by Pauline and David Scott*

Pauline and David Scott are both experienced public speakers and their talk will recreate the epic six years that dominated the life of the people of Britain during the war years. Their talk will be supported with a mini exhibition.

### A very different War

THE FORTHCOMING TALK by Pauline and David Scott on the way life was affected during World War Two prompted me to pick up my copy of *Prosperity and Poverty* by Arthur Brown and have another look at the impact on Britain of another War. I re-read his chapter entitled *Rural Essex in Wartime, 1793-1815*. Fears of a French invasion impacted particularly on life between the Essex coast and the route to London. Infantry barracks were being set up at Tendring, Colchester, Warley and Chelmsford and Danbury Common was under almost continuous occupation. A temporary rumour that the camp was to be evacuated caused dismay among innkeepers, shopkeepers and artisans who feared losing their flourishing trade. The troops returned however and officers throughout the County underlined their elevated position in Society. A splendid ball was held at the Shire Hall in Chelmsford in 1794 and Galleywood Races was a particularly brilliant event with numerous officers present in full uniform. Villagers could have watched an officer from Chelmsford barracks, cheered on by his colleagues, win a 20 guinea bet by riding his horse to Dunmow facing his horse's tail and passing more than twenty vehicles and a flock of sheep. Duels took place from time to time on open spaces including Galleywood Common.

Volunteer corps were set up to enable civilians support resistance to invasion and enrolment conferred exemption from militia service. Lord Petre of Ingatestone established two companies in a single day, one of infantry and the other of cavalry. But later around 1807, with little useful activity to occupy them, volunteers had to be reminded that their exemption from militia service was dependant upon them reporting for eight days training every four months. Military movements continued across the County but the genteel social round which even at times of crisis had never completely ceased, now resumed. The War confirmed the authority of the County's landed class by thrusting them into prominence and power both in military and administrative spheres.

Many farmers profited from their proximity to local garrisons and increased their acreage to cope with the increased demand. Investment in more efficient machinery saw better drills and threshing equipment and completed the County's transformation from a partly industrial region to a predominantly agricultural one. Despite this, high food prices brought discontent amongst the poor and in many areas Volunteer forces were put on alert to put down possible riots.

The 'Home Front' in the Napoleonic War was not exposed to the same dangers that the population endured 150 years later but it was a time of great change and many of the developments in Essex life were triggered by the War that almost never happened.

*David Stacy*

**Wednesday 18 November 2009**

**Keene Hall Watchouse Road at 8 pm**

The meeting will start with the brief formalities of our Annual General Meeting

### DATES for your Diary

2010

20 March

NOTABLE PEOPLE OF GALLEYWOOD

Three talks by our members

REV. HIRZEL CAREY de LISLE, FIRST VICAR *Sarah Walters*

MONTE REY - 30S HEART - THROB *Susan Wilson*

FROM THE PEARL TO THE PATRON *Wendy Cummin*