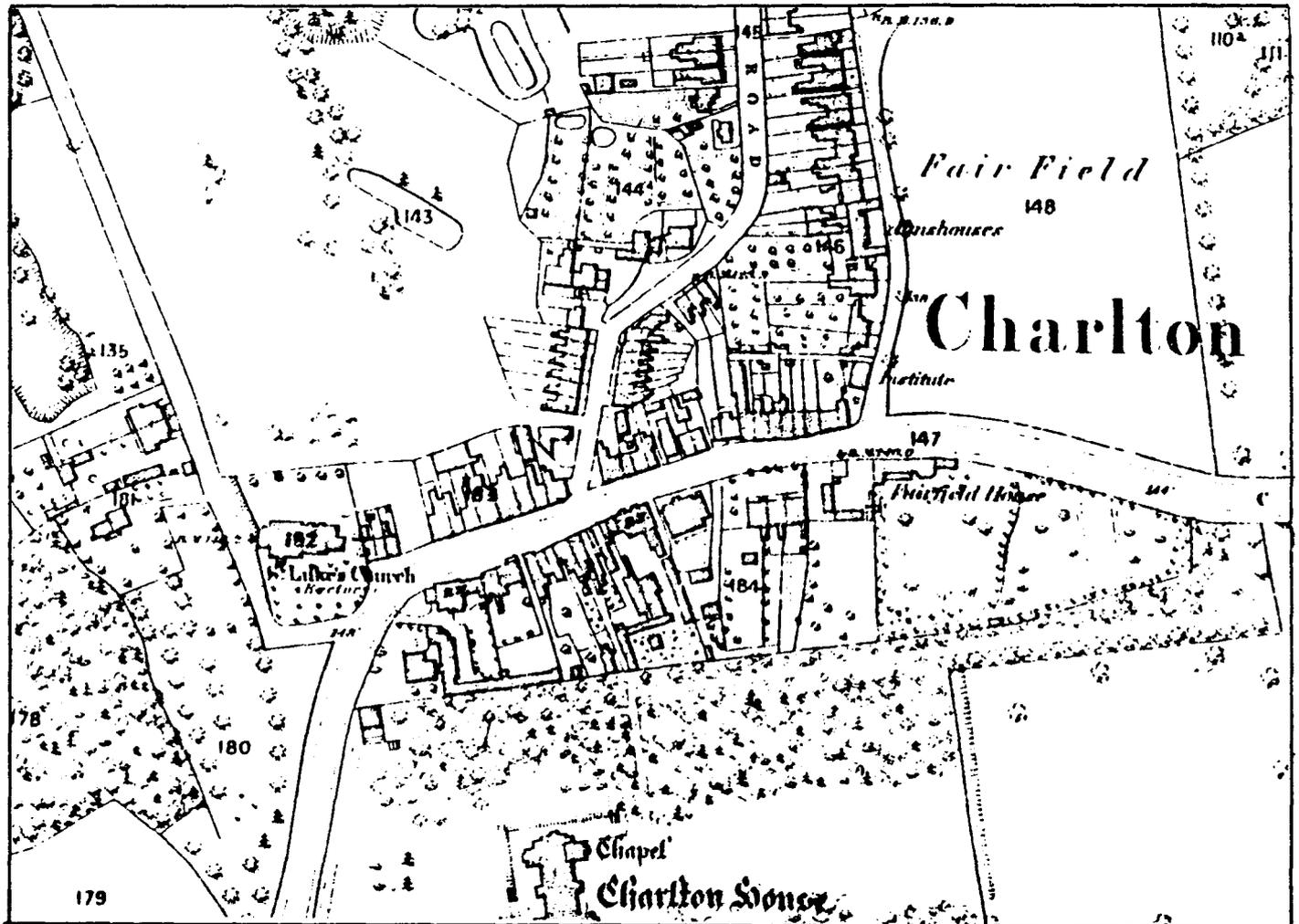




THE VILLAGE  
Old Charlton

## Introduction

If you stand in front of the Bugle Horn pub and look across the road to St. Luke's Church and the row of shops beside it you can easily visualize the village as it was a hundred years ago. Let's try and reconstruct it as it was then. Perhaps it would be a good idea to walk along the street and see what we can find out about each of the buildings. Shop windows and shop fronts are changed too frequently to give us much information about the past, but if we look across the road as we walk along we can see the upper storeys with old brickwork or stucco, Victorian windows of various shapes and sizes, frames that are no longer straight and differing roof levels, all indications of when the shops were built. A look at the back of the buildings tells us even more, for the fronts may have been dressed up to face the street whereas the backs have been left untouched. Old maps will confirm when these buildings were standing here and the census figures can tell us something about the people who lived in them.



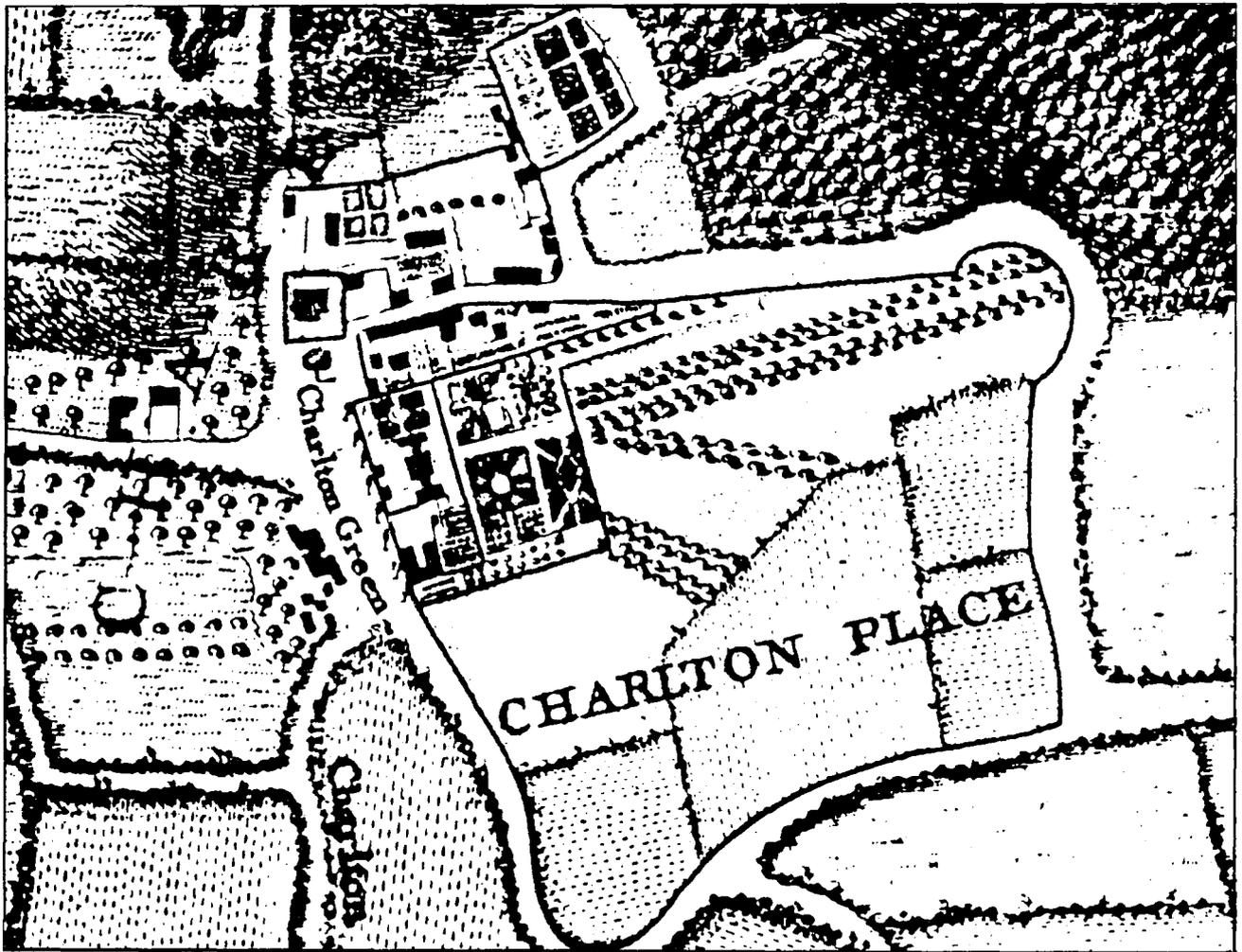
This map of 1869 shows the village surrounded by woods and fields. Suburban villas were already being built in Fairfield Road.

## The Churchyard



An old postcard shows how the church backed on to open land until the beginning of this century.

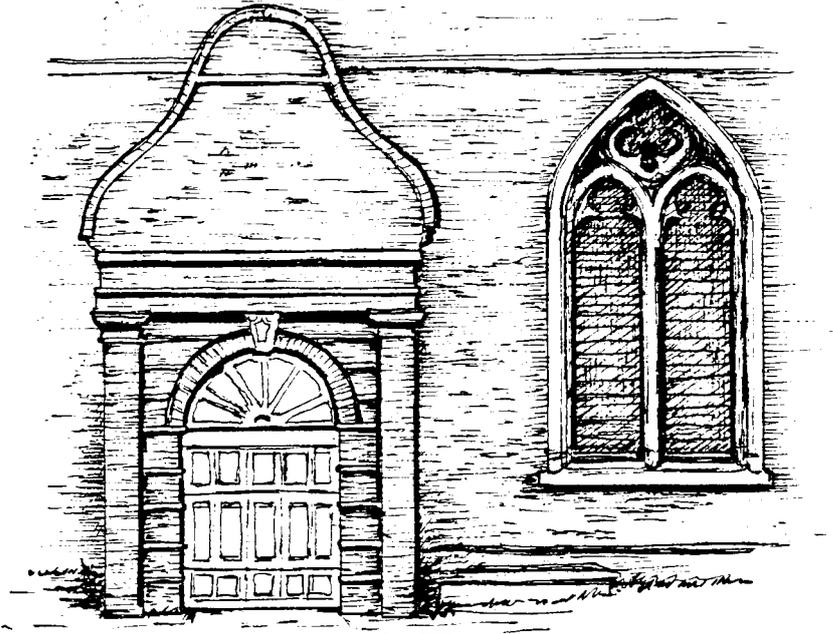
So let us start in the churchyard and imagine we are back in the 1880's visiting Charles Swainson, the Rector of St. Luke's Church. He did not live in the village but in a house where the Rectory Field now is. North of the church where we find the present rectory was then part of the churchyard and the gravestones that pave the path to the church would have stood there. The view across open land sloping steeply down towards the river with its three masted ships and split sail barges visible in the distance would have been very different from the closely packed buildings of today. The second half of the nineteenth century showed a tremendous increase in the population of South East London and it was during this time that Charlton changed from a country village to a London suburb, joined by the railway which was opened in 1849. Throughout the century people were moving to the big towns and away from the poverty of the countryside. In the census of 1871 we find in a village as small as Charlton people who had been born in sixteen different counties whereas only six householders were actually born in Charlton.



If we look back another hundred years to Rocque's map of 1741 we can still recognise the village street, St. Luke's Church, Charlton Lane as a real country lane and the village bounded on the South side by the wall of Charlton place which still stands, but only a small cluster of cottages where we now find a street of shops. Even by 1841 most of the households in the village were families engaged in rural trades, agricultural labourers, sawyers and gardeners, either market gardeners working their own small patch or employed by one of the larger farms around or working on one of the nearby estates. The gravestones are a reminder of these times for the churchyard was not used for general burial after the new cemetery was opened in 1857 and although some of the stones are worn away and their inscriptions are hard to read other names are still clearly visible. Against the wall on the East side of the churchyard we find the grave of Sarah, Michael and Charles Bance who all died before 1850. Their son William is described as a gardener in the census of 1851; he is married with six children and his wife is a bookseller. The village may have been small at this time but Charlton was a desirable area for the gentry with its splendid views, healthy air and easy access to London and there were several wealthy families living in large houses close by who may well have bought books from Ann Bance. Her business must have been successful, for twenty years later we find her son, who has given up gardening, still running it. Their house no longer exists, it was on the Bugle Horn side of the road, about where the grocer's now stands.

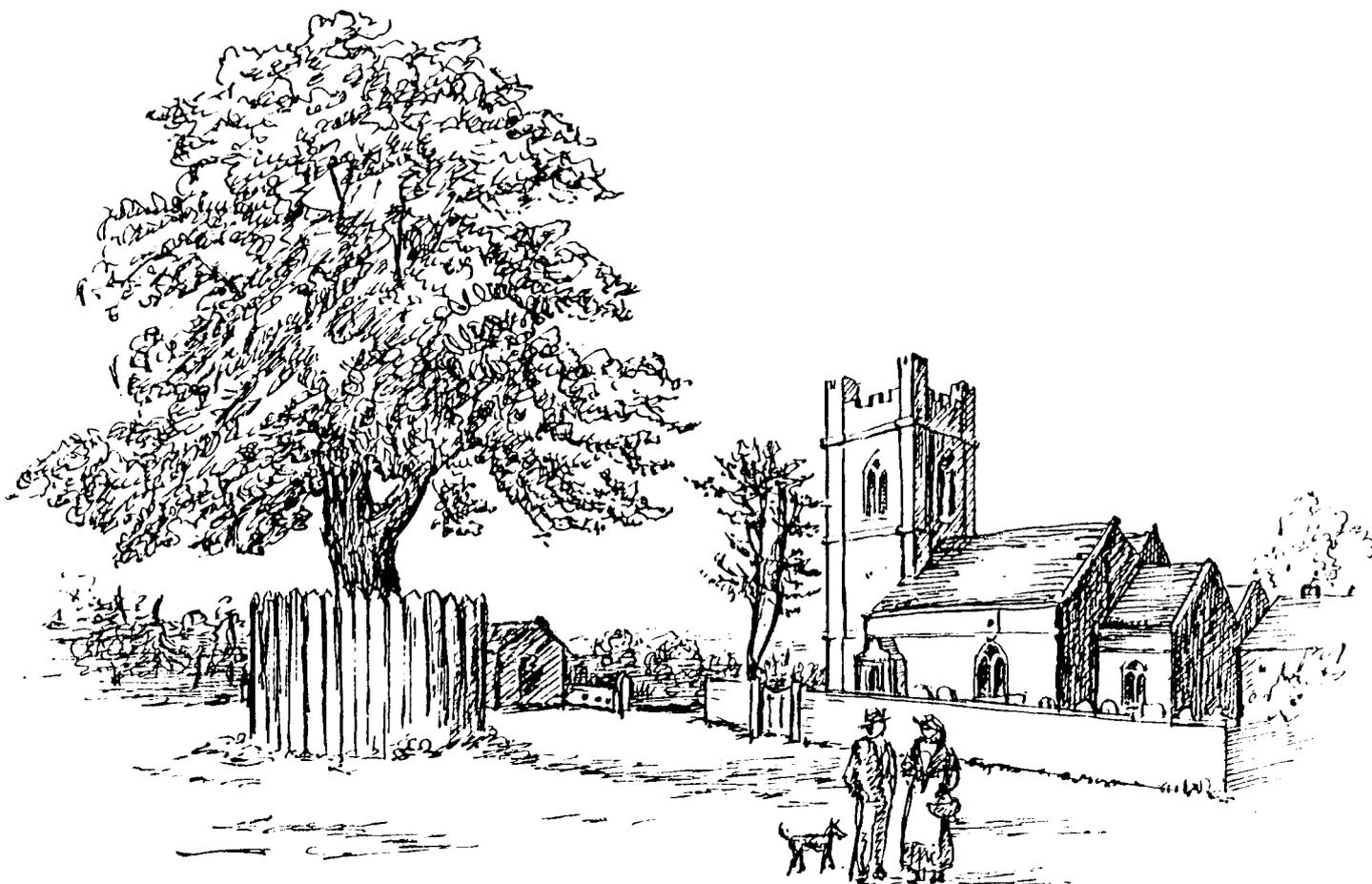
## St. Luke's Church

The classical pilasters of the church porch and the Dutch gable above it echo the garden house and stable block of Charlton House.



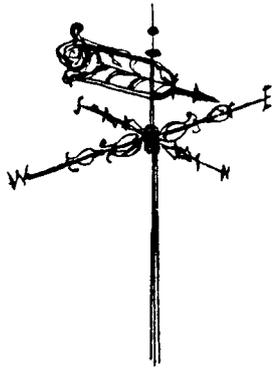
Look now at the church itself. Though it is small and simple it has a long history and a study of the monuments inside it give a better indication of its importance. A church has stood on this site since the twelfth century but the present building dates back to the 1630's, built by the trustees of Sir Adam Newton the first owner of Charlton House. It is built of the same red brick as the house, and like that building now wearing away quite badly. Compare the pilasters on either side of the porch with those on the Garden House by the entrance to Charlton House. When Charles Swainson was appointed rector in 1874 he would have been proud of the repairs and alterations that had just been carried out by Sir Spencer Maryon Wilson, the owner of Charlton House and of much of the land around. New pews and a new organ chamber had been installed and the North aisle had been restored. The floor tiles in front of the altar also date from this time. The connection with the owners of Charlton House and with the regiments of Artillery stationed at Woolwich are obvious from all the marble monuments and inscriptions around the walls. The Maryon Wilson family had their own special pew and the church would have been well attended every Sunday by the respectable middle class families of the neighbourhood wearing their "Sunday best". In some families Sundays were so strictly observed that children had to put away their toys and were only allowed to read the Bible or religious books on that day. The church had a long association with children's education; in the eighteenth century there had been a Charity School for local boys above the vestry but this had been demolished when the chapel was extended and by 1880 the boys of the village would have had to walk down the hill to the National School in New Charlton, while the girls may have gone to a school run by the Misses Irving nearby in Fairfield Road.

At this time the drinking fountain and the horse trough had not yet been built; they were installed to commemorate the coronation of Edward VII and their inscriptions can still be clearly read. The War Memorial followed later. If you had stood here with Charles Swainson you might have met someone who remembered when this bit of land was part of the old village green where the Hornfair had been held since the Middle Ages. Two old prints show us the green as it was before Sir Thomas Maryon Wilson enclosed it within the park in 1829.

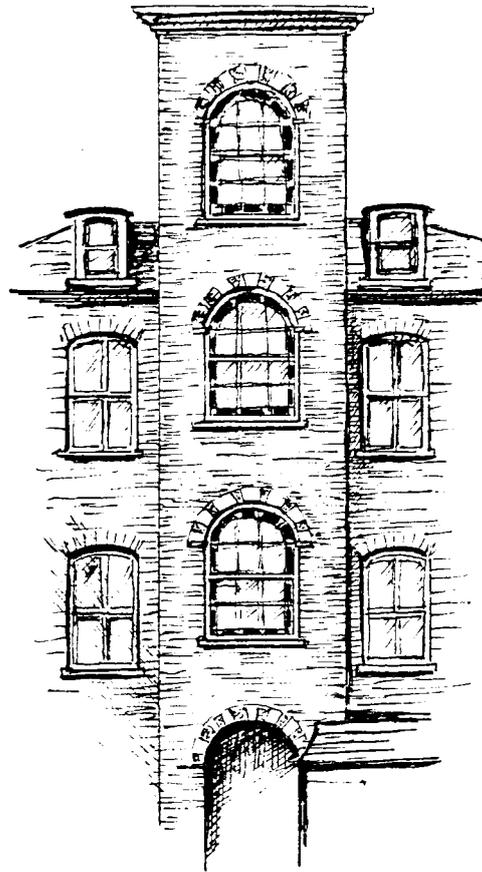


On the village green between a large tree and the churchyard stood the stocks and the cage (a little lock-up) - two forms of punishment for local offenders.

## Number 1, The Village.



The weather vane.



This tower at the back of Robert Martin's house gave a splendid view across the river.

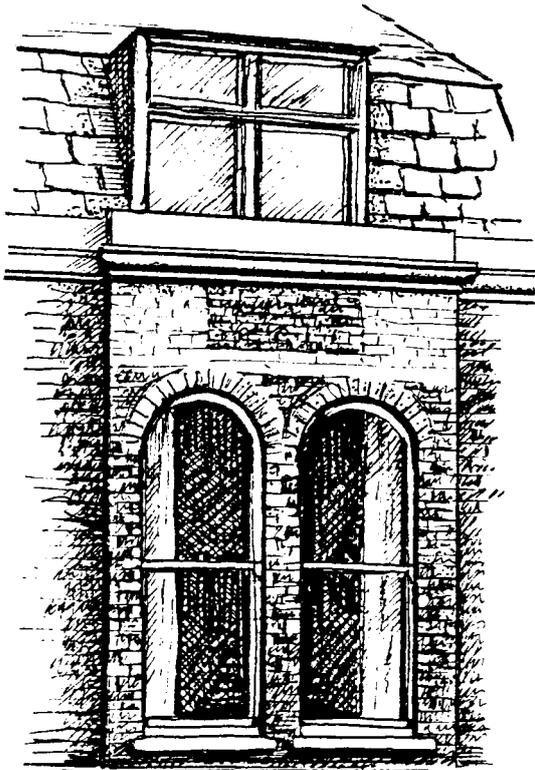
It is now time to walk down the village street. Next to the church stands Robert Martin's house. In 1881 it was newly built and Mr. Martin has recently moved in with his wife, five children, two servants and two nurses to look after the children. He was born in Devon but has done well for himself since coming to Charlton. Ten years before this he was living in one of the small cottages in the village, but his toolmaking and mechanical horseclipping business was already thriving, for he employed five men and seven boys even then. By this time he was employing thirteen men and five boys with a workshop behind the house. Three old cottages next to the church have been pulled down to make way for his new house with its large front door and wrought iron weather vane to proclaim his success. Inside it would probably have had a bathroom which was still a rarity in those days and the ground floor would have been lit by gaslight. A gas-fitter had been living in the village as far back as 1851 and old postcards show the gas-lit lamposts along the street. Go down by the side of the R.A.C.S. supermarket and walk along Fletching Road so that you can see the back of his house with its tall four-storey tower which must still have a fantastic view.

## Numbers 3,5 and 7

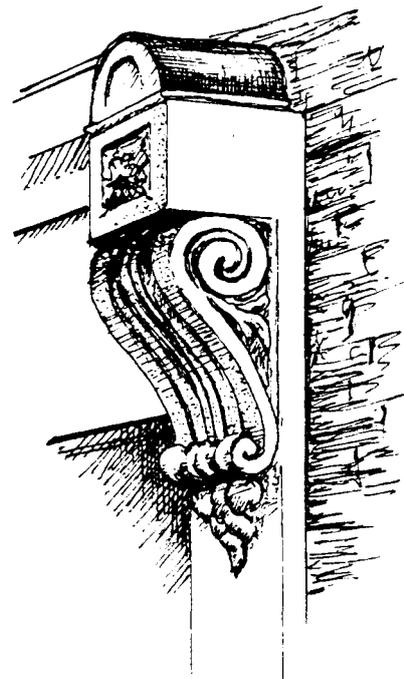
These three shops were built at about the same time as Robert Martin's house. In 1881 they are occupied by Mr. Harding the fruiterer, Mr. Parson the fishmonger and Mr. Potter the Cabinet Maker. In fact at the time of writing, Harding's name is still over the greengrocer's shop for it stayed in the hands of the same family for about a hundred years. These buildings retain much of their character in the moulded console brackets which support the awnings and the original arched windows which are left in numbers five and seven. The use of two different coloured bricks is characteristic of later Victorian buildings.

The fishmongers was one of the new shops in the village. Keeping fish fresh was a problem in the days before refrigeration, and Mr. Parson would probably have bought blocks of ice to lay the fish on. Growing urbanization had greatly increased the demand for ice and farmers flooded their fields in winter and sold the ice to trawler fleets and insulated warehouses. Ice was even imported from America and Norway from the 1830's. By the 1890's commercial refrigeration was used for carrying food cargoes.

Mr. Potter the cabinet maker lived next door. His was one of the trades which was being rapidly superceded by mass production and mechanisation.

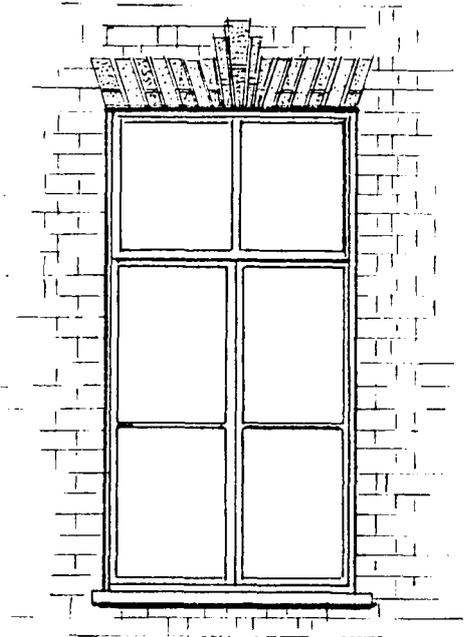
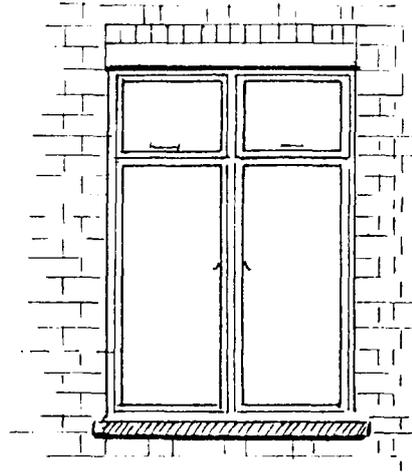
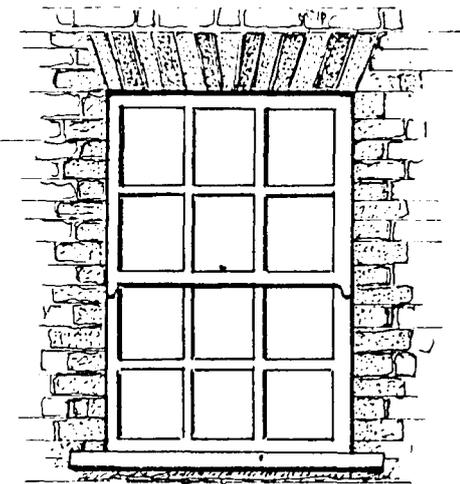


Different coloured bricks were used to emphasise the shape of the windows.



These console brackets show the Victorian love of architectural ornament.

## From 9 to 17.



An original sash window from number 13 is followed by modern replacements at numbers 15 and 17.

These five shops are older than the previous ones and can be seen on the map of 1869. At first sight numbers 15 and 17 look more recent than the others because of their new bricks and modern window frames but if you look at the windows you will notice that they are the same size and shape as those next door. Walk round the back and you find that the bricks match those of the adjoining shops, so it is just the front that has been refaced.

Number nine has been a chemist's shop for over a hundred years. In 1880 it was run by George Fox who probably did a brisk trade in patent medicines. Ordinary people could not afford doctors before the National Health Service and extravagant claims were made for the efficiency of all sorts of pills and potions and were widely advertised.

**THOUSANDS & TENS OF THOUSANDS DIE IN THEIR YOUTH**



in consequence of disease produced in the first instance by neglect of the body, viewed as a Living Machine, should perform all its functions with Perfect Regularity; this is the first necessity. It is, therefore very important to pay constant attention to the state of the Stomach and Bowels and there is no medicine has such deserved repute as

**PARR'S LIFE PILLS**

For preserving regularity, and, consequently, ensuring long life.

**SOLD BY ALL CHYMISTS.**

A patent medicine advertisement of 1890.



A Victorian  
bootmaker.

The next shop was a confectioners and then came Mr. Scott the bootmaker who lived at number thirteen. He was now sixty two and must have noticed a change in his trade over the last twenty years or so. More and more boots and shoes were now factory made and although the number of people living in Charlton had grown considerably over the last few years there were now only two bootmakers in the village, whereas there had been four ten years earlier. There is a great difference too between the sturdy boots, hand stitched with waxed threads which had been a major item of expenditure for the agricultural workers and the light weight fashion shoes worn by the middle classes, for whom "nice shoes need not cost more than two and sixpence, and these, with a bow, made up of any old scrap of ribbon, and set off with good steel buckles, and will always look nice".

Stock of **BOOTS** and **SHOES**, including many  
**NOVELTIES**  
introduced by the principal French and English Houses.



**BOOTS FOR CROQUET  
AND PROMENADE**  
*Of beautiful Design and  
Workmanship.*



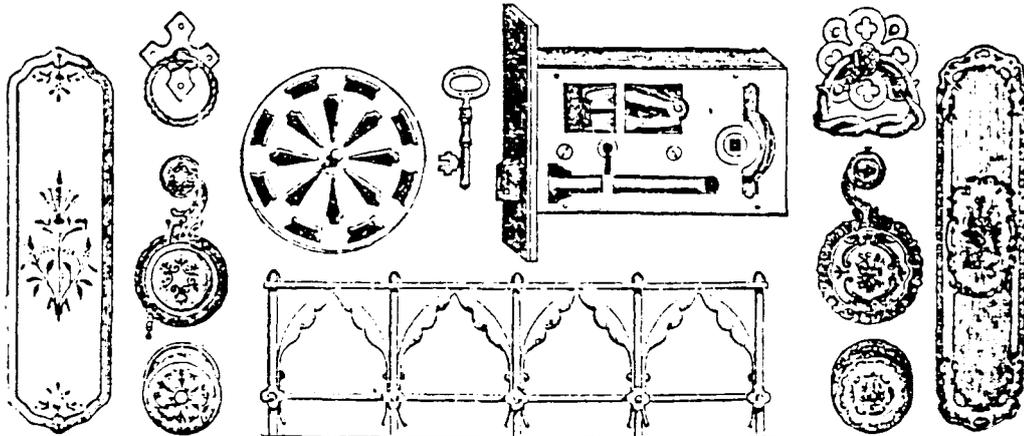
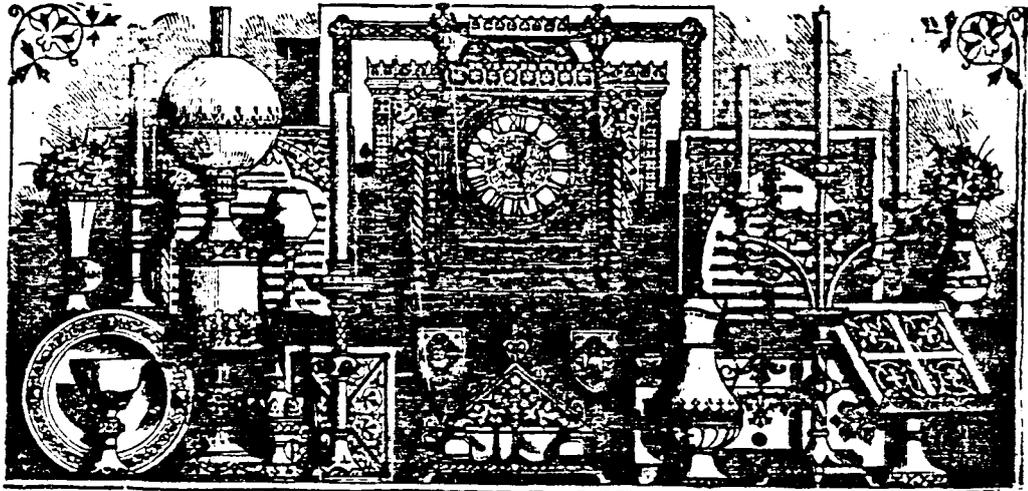
**HESSIAN BOOTS**  
Wurtemberg  
Heels.:

An advertisement of 1890. Ladies would use a button hook to do up the boot.

Alice Peacock sold fancy goods from number fifteen. She was only thirty eight but is a widow with two young children to support. Her servant also named Alice, aged seventeen, would have worked long hours for little pay, helping in the shop as well as doing the household chores. The shop would have been stocked with a wide variety of haberdashery, needles, pins, cottons and silks, buttons and buckles, ribbon and trimmings of all sorts. Her shop is conveniently situated next door to Mr. Ratcliffe, the draper. H.G. Wells was a drapers assistant at this time and his novel "Kipps" gives us a clear picture of the long hours, low pay and dreariness of the job.

Where the R.A.C.S. supermarket now stands there were three shops, a baker, a china dealer and an ironmonger. This baker's was smaller than the one across the road, so we will pass on to Thomas Taylor, the china dealer. He was now an old man aged 68 and had lived all his life in Charlton. He had started off as the village blacksmith. His son had worked with him at one time, and the two generations had occupied the adjoining houses. By 1871 he was also selling ironmongery, for although all the road transport was still horse drawn many of the other objects that the blacksmith used to forge - hinges, nails, tools and pans were already mass-produced and machine made. Remember that in the days before plastic a large number of household utensils were made of metal - baths, buckets and bowls, coal scuttles as well as pots and pans. In 1881 Edwin Parker is running the ironmonger's shop and there is no blacksmith in the village street. Probably Thomas Taylor is too old for such a hot and strenuous job and now that his wife has died he has moved in next door with his son and his daughter who has married a soldier from the Artillery at Woolwich. Their china shop would be needed by all those setting up home in the new rows of houses being built all around, and in addition to kitchen and tableware they would of course stock jugs, basins and soapdishes and chamber pots for all those houses without bathrooms.

**HART, SON, PEARD & CO.,**  
**MANUFACTURING IRONMONGERS,**  
AND  
**ART METAL WORKERS,**  
**BIRMINGHAM AND LONDON.**



Wrought Iron Grilles, Gates and Hinges; Boundary, Balcony, and Tomb Railing; Altar Rado and Standards; Vanes and Gable Terminals, and Lightning Conductors.

Gas, Oil, and Candle Pendants, Standards and Brackets; Billiard Lights, Chandeliers, Candelabra, Candlesticks; Flower Vases, Chalice, Patens, Flagon, Alms Basins and Boxes, Altar and other Chairs, Font Covers, and other Ecclesiastical Furniture.

Hot Air Stoves, Dog and Register Grates, Fenders and Fire Irons.

Pitt's and Clark's Patent Door Furniture; Arnott's, Sheringham's McHaffie's, and Sliding Ventilators, and all kinds of Ironmongery.

Engravers of Monumental Brasses and Heraldic Devices.

PRIZE MEDALS: { LONDON, AMSTERDAM, PARIS, LONDON, DUBLIN, PARIS,  
 1851. 1853. 1855. 1862. 1865. 1867.

ART METAL WORKS, GROSVENOR STREET, BIRMINGHAM.  
 ART METAL WORKS, 53 TO 58, WYCH STREET, STRAND, W.C., } LONDON.  
 SHOW ROOMS, 4, BROOK STREET, HANOVER SQUARE, W., }

Another advertisement shows a selection of goods that would be sold by an ironmonger's shop.

## From the Corner to Bowes the Shoe Shop.

On the next corner once stood a beerhouse, The George Tavern. By 1880 it had ceased trading and we next find the premises occupied in 1894 by a solicitor. The present building looks as though it was built at about this time with its heavy stone pediments above the windows.

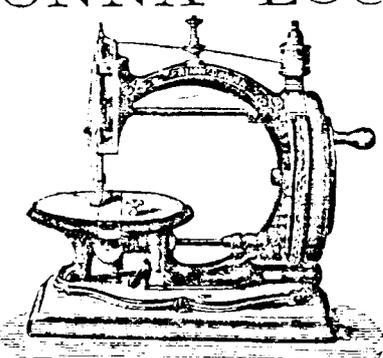
At number twenty-nine was Mary Emms, the corn dealer. She is in her mid-fifties and has never married and it is unlikely that her shop makes much money for she has no servant and has had to take in a lodger, another single woman Elizabeth Hallock, who earns her living like so many others as a seamstress. The sewing machine was a Victorian invention which had quickly become popular and Miss Hallock would surely have used one.

Three more single women are earning their living next door - Mary Thorne and her sister Jane run another drapers shop and are helped by their servant Hanorah Green, one of the thousands of Irish who left the poverty of their country in the last century.

Charles Fitt the watchmaker lived at number thirty-three. By the end of the century John Bowes the shoemaker had taken over the shop, and it is still run by the same family. It is the only shop in the village which gives us some idea of the interiors of this period. The rows of heavy almost square wooden drawers were characteristic of many shops in the days before packaging and display assumed any importance beyond the shop window.

**PRIMA DONNA LOCK-STITCH**

Does every kind of  
Family Sewing.



Very simple; easy to  
operate, and with all the  
latest improvements.

**HAND SEWING MACHINE,**

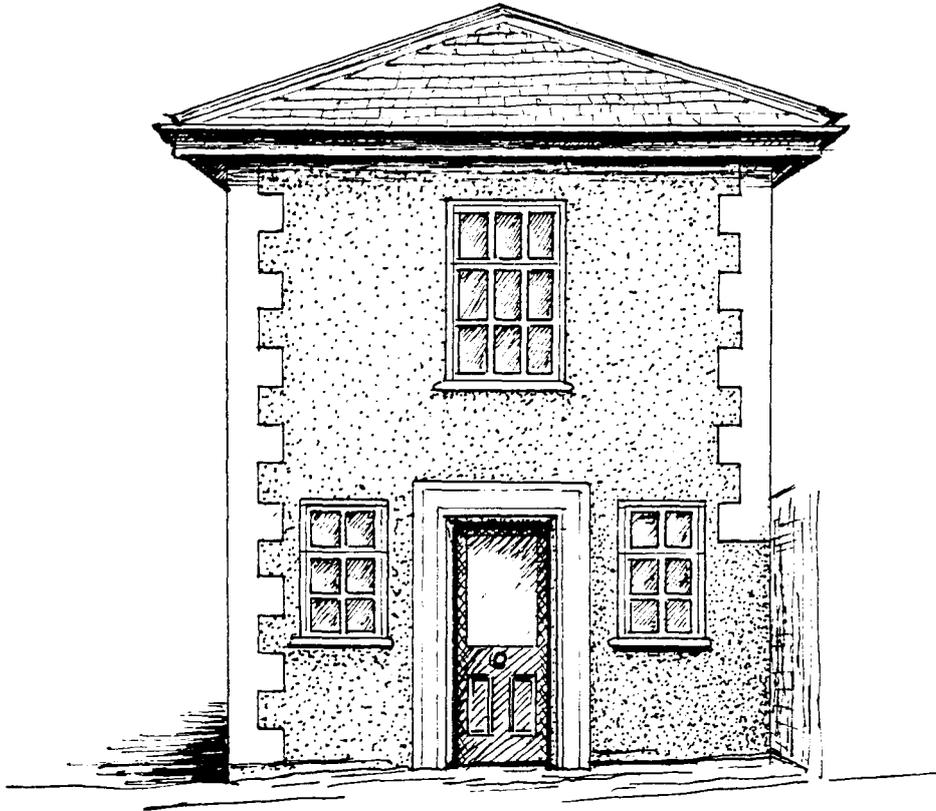
AWARDED THE FIRST PRIZE AT THE INTERNATIONAL SEWING MACHINE CONTEST.

PRICE FROM FOUR GUINEAS.

Silent LOCK-STITCH Family Machine, complete, on stand .....	from 5 Guineas.
Improved Family SHUTTLE Machine, LOCK-STITCH, on stand .....	„ 6 Guineas.
Excelsior DOUBLE LOCK-STITCH, the best ever invented for Dress and Mantle Makers .....	„ 6 Guineas.
Single-Thread Hand Sewing Machines (Weir or Raymond's System) .....	„ 2 Guineas.

*Improved Machines for Boot Makers, Tailors, and Manufacturers, at the Lowest Prices compatible  
with good Workmanship. Easy terms if required, or Discount for Cash.*

Notice the price of these sewing machines - A guinea was worth one pound, one shilling (£1.05).



Number thirty-five is a very attractive old cottage, which has been well preserved. The front door would lead straight from the street to the living room. This was the home of Thomas Weeks, the carpenter. The next pair of houses were occupied by Thomas Earney, a toolmaker and Mr. Tansett, the builder. He had arrived in the village in the 1850's and started as a plumber and gas-fitter and soon employed seven men and three boys; gas lighting and bathrooms must have come into many homes around this time. He continued to prosper and his son took over the business. Their customers' ledger for 1897 shows jobs carried out in the village and reminds us how cheap labour was in those days when the workmen did a fifty hour week.

Plumbing for Bowes the Bootmaker

Repairing broken pipe in scullery 1½" plumbing joint	0s 9d (4½p)
Clearing out lead gutters and repairing 3lbs of solder	3s 0d (15p)
Stopping joints of iron gutter side of house ½ lb red lead cement	0s 3d (1½p)
Plumber and boy - 5 hours	6s 3d (31½p)
	<hr/>
TOTAL	10s 3d (51½p)

Another entry gives details of decorations for the Swan Hotel as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. A 14ft. wire star, a 13ft. V.R. (Victorian Regina) and over 50 paper festoons were fixed to the front of the building and illuminated.

# The Village T



A

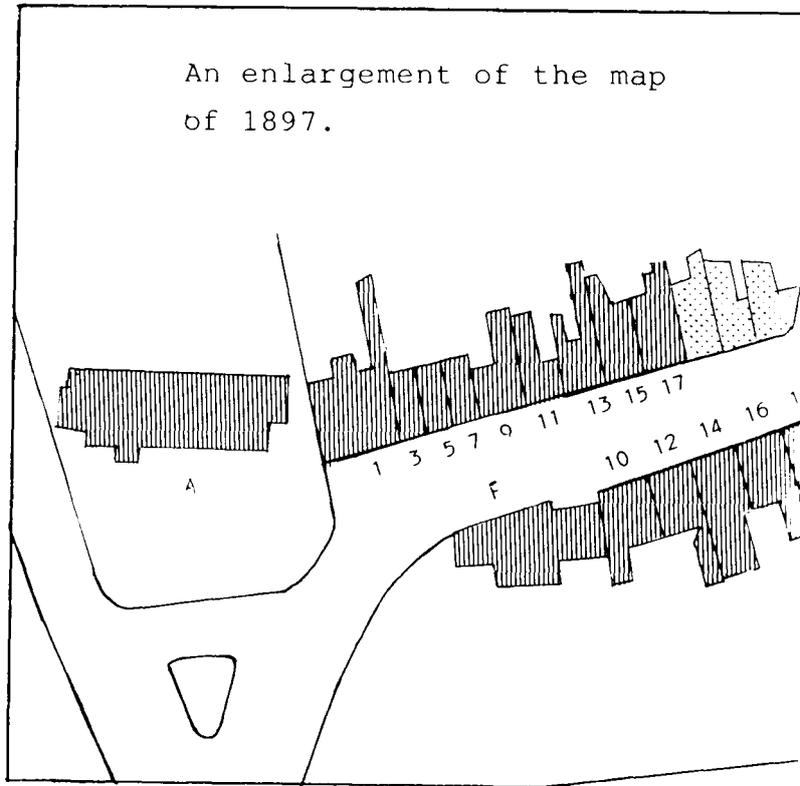
1 3 5 7 9 11 13 15 17 19

North Side

## Occupants in 1881 North Side.

1. Mr. Martin the Toolmaker
3. Mr. Harding the Greengrocer
5. Mr. Parson the Fishmonger
7. Mr. Potter the Cabinet Maker
9. Mr. Fox the Chemist
11. Empty
13. Mr. Scott the Bootmaker
15. Mrs. Peacock the Haberdasher
17. Mr. Ratcliffe the Draper
19. Mr. Smith the Baker
21. Mr. Taylor the China Dealer
23. Mr. Parker the Ironmonger
25. Empty
27. Mr. Williams the Bootmaker
29. Miss Emms the Corn Dealer
31. Miss Thorne the Draper
33. Mr. Fitt the Watchmaker
35. Mr. Weeks the Carpenter
37. Mr. Earney the Toolmaker
39. Mr. Tansett the Builder
43. Mrs. Ward
45. Mr. Hoeltzer the Telegraph Engineer

An enlargement of the map of 1897.



## Key

Buildings that are still standing

Buildings that have now gone

The numbers marked on the map are those in use today.

South Side



C

B

52

50

48

46

D

# then and Now.



## Today.



## Occupants in 1881 South Side.

52 - 46 not yet built

The Board of Works - Mr. Collins the Clerk

The Swan - Mr. Turrell the Publican

20. Mr. House the Baker

18, 16 and 14 - not yet built

12. Mr. Stephens the Grocer and Post Master

10. Mr. Guyer the Butcher

The Bugle Horn - Mr. Ashton the Publican

- A. St. Luke's Church
- B. The Assembly Rooms
- C. Site of Drill Hall
- D. Site of Board of Works
- E. The Swan
- F. The Bugle Horn

are in

## Today.

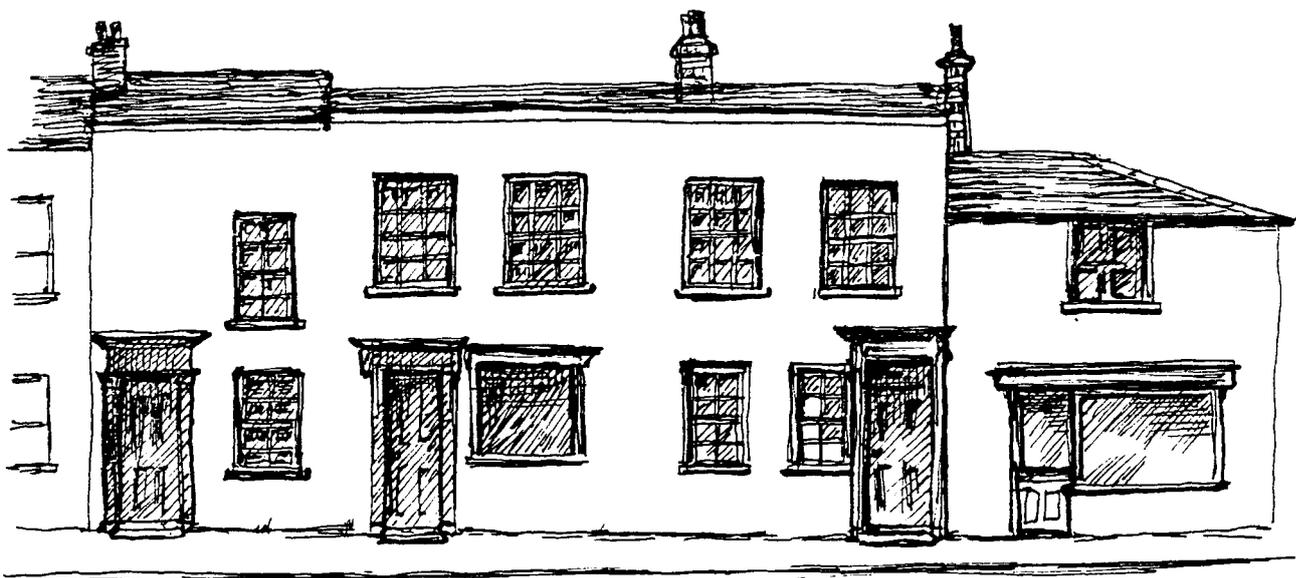


**From Park Cottage  
to Fairfield Grove.**

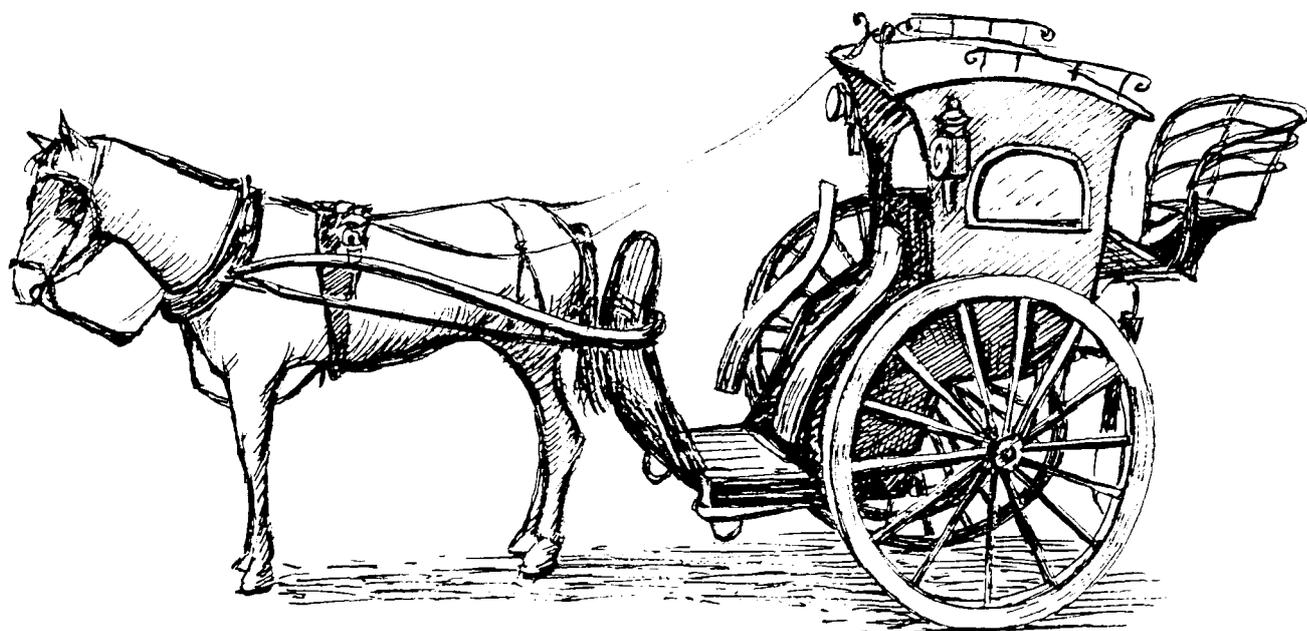


Park cottage, number forty-three has changed very little on the outside over the last hundred and fifty years. The wrought iron porch is typical of Regency and early Victorian houses. Mrs. Ward lived here with her three children and a general servant. Her income must have been sufficient for her to live a lady-like existence and not lower her social standing by taking a job or doing her own housework. The Hoeltzer family were next door with their four children, a nurse and a servant. They were all German and had moved to Charlton because Mr. Hoeltzer was a telegraph engineer who had been brought to England by Sieman's, the German engineering company who had started a big factory down near the river.

Next we come to a new row of council houses. Notice that they have been carefully designed to fit in with the character and scale of the rest of the village. In 1881 we find seven homes occupying this land. The first was occupied by Edwin Light, the grocer. He had been living here for many years and took an active part in the life of the village. Three of his grown up children still lived with him and he had made sure they have had a good education, for John is an analytical chemist, Henry a commercial clerk and Clara a school teacher.



There was another greengrocer's shop next door and then a group of small cottages of which we have a photograph taken shortly before they were demolished. John Russel lived here on his army pension eked out by his wife, Sarah's earnings as a dressmaker which was still a meagre amount on which to raise their four children. Sarah seems to have travelled with him during his military career, for their eldest child, Mary, was born in Canada and the next two were born in Dublin and only Emily, the youngest in Woolwich. Then comes Mr. Rastin's house. At eighty-four he is the oldest man in the village and owns the local hansom cab but his son has turned to a more modern form of transport and works as a railway clerk. Another carpenter lives in one of these small cottages. With his wife, six children and a lodger it is hard to imagine how they all fitted in.



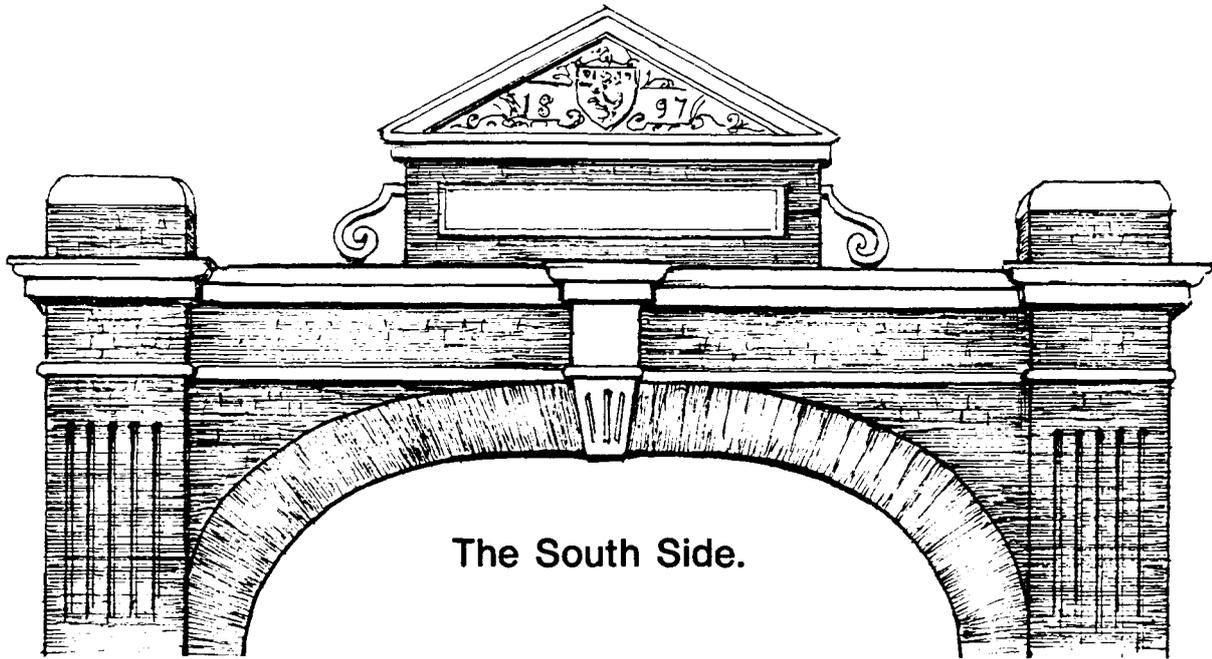
Hansom cabs were hired in the same way as taxis are to-day. The driver sat up outside at the back.

The other two cottages were both occupied by widows. The first Eleanor Williams had her two daughters living with her and both working as dressmakers. Ready-to-wear clothing was gaining popularity by this time but most dresses were still handmade. The bustle was in fashion and the sale of paper patterns made it possible to copy the latest styles, and it was said that there was no difference apart from the material "between the attire of a housemaid on her "day out" and that of her mistress". Her son was also bringing in money as a bricklayer and should have had plenty of work with the number of red brick houses going up all around, but with pay at about a shilling per hour a week's wages would not go far.

Susannah Rowland lived on her own in the last cottage. This was the end of the village and open fields and woods stretched away along Charlton Road towards Woolwich, though if you had turned left and walked down Fairfield Road you would already have found the pleasant row of villas that still stand on the left hand side.

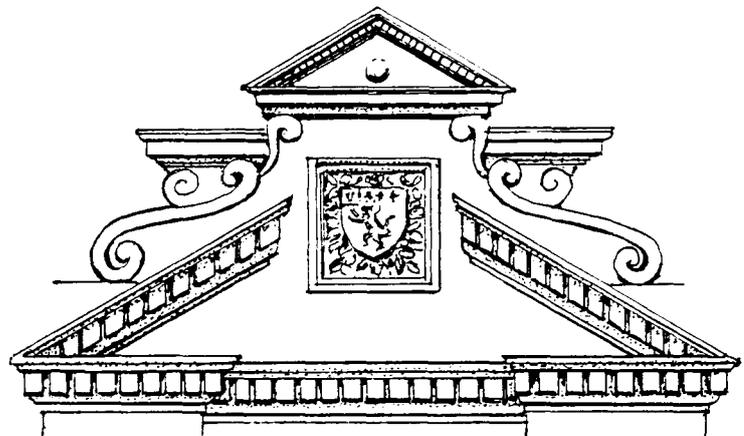
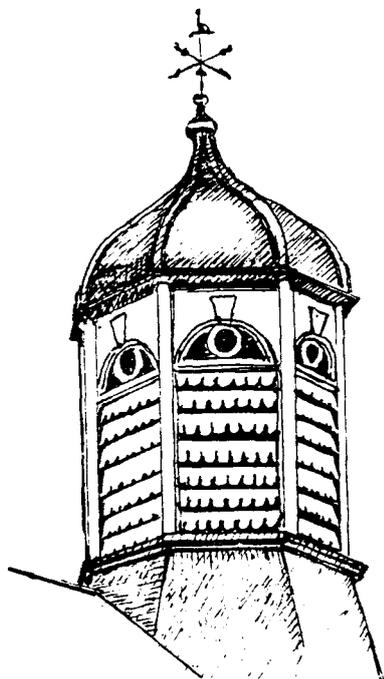


Maids always wore a white cap. Notice her tough boots and oversleeves of the same material as the apron. Girls' dresses were becoming shorter, but for the richer children they were still heavy and uncomfortable. The fashionable lady's walking costume is trimmed with fur to match her muff and the skirt is draped at the back to form a bustle.



Now let us take a look at the other side of the road. We first notice an old archway that now has just a car park behind it. Above the arch is the date it was built; 1897, and the Maryon Wilson coat of arms. Several buildings on this side of the road were built in the last twenty years of the century and it is worth observing what they have in common. This group includes the archway, The Assembly Room, The Swan and shops numbers 18 - 14. Red brick, now mass produced and no longer subject to a brick tax, was popular and so were gables, steep roofs and arched windows.

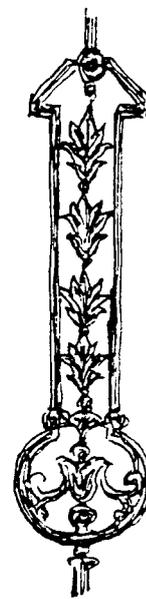
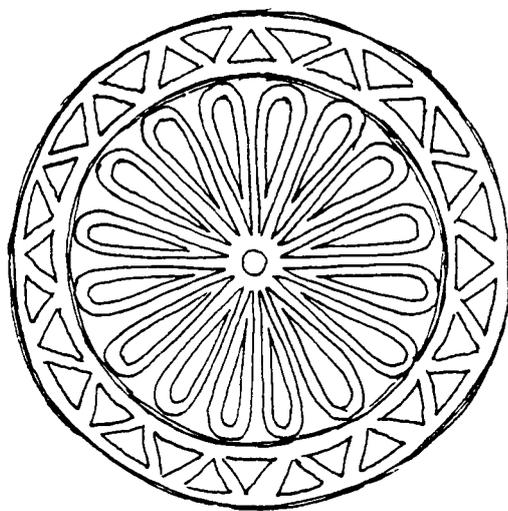
The archway used to lead to the Drill Hall of the local regiment. It stands next to the recently restored Assembly Rooms, built for Sir Spencer Maryon Wilson in 1881 and used for meetings and local entertainments. Its Dutch gables echo those of the stable block in Charlton Park for Stuart and Jacobean styles of architecture were very fashionable at this time.



Two details from the heavily decorated Assembly Rooms.

## A Late Victorian Terrace.

The terrace of four houses, 46 to 52 are shown on the map of 1897 and took the place of an earlier row of three houses that were still standing in 1881. The present houses like the ones they replaced were built for families of higher class than shopkeepers. Doctors and army officers were among those living in this group of houses and to the Victorians who were acutely aware of social status, profession or trade and family background were as indicative as the size of one's house, the number of one's servants, what school one's children went to or the way one spoke. These houses were built with a tradesman's entrance in the basement where the local shops would have delivered their goods. The kitchen was also in the basement and the servants slept at the top of the house in the cold and draughty attics. Domestic service was the main source of employment for women, and as late as 1900 there were still more than a million men and women earning their living this way. The maids worked very long hours and rarely earned more than five shillings a week plus their keep. There was a vast amount of housework to be done in those days that we now tend to forget, carrying coals up from the basement for the fires in each room, carrying pitchers of hot water up to the washstands, scrubbing stone floors, polishing brass, silver and the ornately carved mahogany furniture, washing all clothes by hand and preparing and cooking the food. Before we leave these houses let us walk up the side of number 46 and look at the coal hole on the ground and at the original railings leading up to the front door. There would probably have been similar railings in front of the gardens, but these would have been removed and used for scrap metal at the beginning of the Second World War.



Examples of Victorian iron work - a piece of railing and a coal hole cover.

## The Board of Works.



The post war row of shops stands on the site of the building of the Board of Works which was established in 1855 and was primarily concerned with establishing standards of Public Health at a time when cholera was rife and living conditions in town were overcrowded and insanitary. It was the forerunner of the London County Council, established in 1888 which later became the G.L.C. In the early 1880's we find the Board of Works calling on the services of clerks, a surveyor, a medical officer and on "Inspector of Nuisances", who was Edwin Light, the grocer from across the road. An early postcard shows us what it looked like.

## The Swan Public House.



The main window, like the gateway to the Drill Hall makes a feature of the flattened arch.

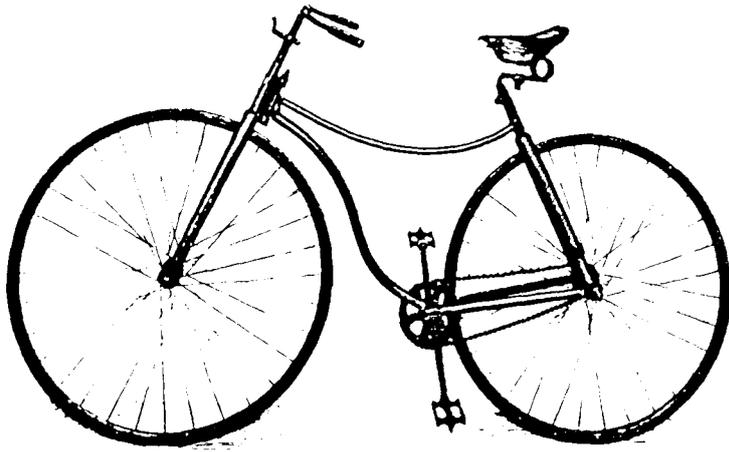
The building that we now see is on the site of a much older inn which dates back at least as far as the eighteenth century and was still flourishing at the beginning of the 1880's, when Mr. Turner was still providing accomodation as well as food and drink and had a family from the Royal Artillery lodging with him. The present pub was built in 1889 and designed by the same architect as the Assembly Rooms.

## Number 20



A postcard of about 1900 shows the baker's shop. Brand names of products are becoming popular and Hovis bread and Cadbury's and Fry's chocolate are advertised on the shop windows.

This is the oldest building on this side of the road and was already in use as a baker's by the 1850's. It is a typical cottage type shop with its low roof and unevenly spaced windows. The entrance to the yard, paved with irregular cobbles would have led to stables for many of the shop keepers would have had horses and carts for deliveries. All bread and cakes would of course have been baked on the premises, and Mr. House the baker was helped by his nephew and an assistant. This must have been another crowded household. Eight people slept above that little shop - Mr. and Mrs. House, their son, nephew and neice, an assistant, a maid and a visitor.



The introduction of Safety Bicycles like these led to the popularity of cycling.

Bloomers for women caused a sensation when they were first introduced.

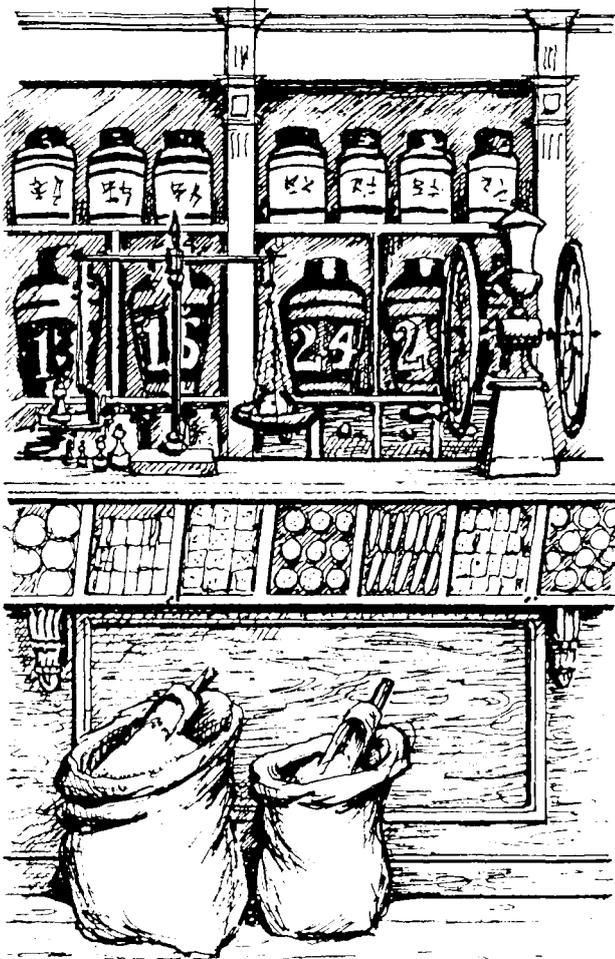


The group of shops numbers 18 to 14 was built towards the end of the century. They are more spacious than the older shops and were expensively built with attention to detail apparent in the tile hung fronts and arched windows. A post-card of the 1890's shows the newly opened Charlton Cycle Works at number 18. Cycling became very popular at this time; women adapted their clothing to join in the craze, wearing bloomers in place of their long trailing skirts and the Music Hall song "A bicycle made for two" gained quick and lasting popularity. At the time of the 1881 census two of the previous houses were still occupied. Mr. Staines a bootmaker lived in one and Mrs. Gardener, a gardener's wife was in the other with her daughter who was a pupil teacher at the Army School nearby.

## The Last Two Shops.

The last two shops were both well established in 1880. First Mr. Stephens, the grocer and postmaster, who must have been doing quite well, employing his fourteen year old nephew as his assistant and also able to afford a maid and a nurse to help his wife with their three young children. A hundred years ago there were no frozen foods or breakfast cereals and few branded, pre-packed or tinned goods, while jams and pickles were still generally home-made. Tea, coffee, sugar, flour, oatmeal and dried fruit were all scooped out from canisters or sacks and weighed for each customer.

Finally we come to Mr. Guyer, the butcher. Meat was expensive and poor people could not often afford it but Mr. Guyer had plenty of customers and needed four assistants and servants. We now take standards of hygiene so much for granted that we would be horrified by the way perishable foods were displayed uncovered in the open air.



Shop interiors with their mahogany shelving were much darker than those of today. In this drawing the coffee grinder and scales stand on the counter.



A Victorian photograph of a butcher's shop shows how the meat was displayed in the open air outside the shop.

## The Bugle Horn Public House



The Bugle Horn Pub dates back a long time. We need to stand across the road to be able to see how it is in fact a collection of several cottages. It has been restored, adapted and enlarged to such an extent that it is hard to visualize it as it used to be, but it certainly dates back to the eighteenth century. When Edmund Burry who lies buried in St. Luke's Churchyard was landlord there earlier in the century it had provided accomodation for up to a dozen lodgers but by 1880 it had ceased to take in boarders.

That brings us to the end of our visit to the Village of a hundred years ago; a time when the oldest residents could look back at their rural childhood, remembering the old Hornfair on the village green, the smithy, the little market gardens and the surrounding fields, woods and estates of the gentry, while the young were growing up into what was fast becoming a typical London suburb.

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Costume of the Nineteenth Century	IRIS BROOKE	A & C Black

### Suggestions for further visits

- The Museum of London - Victorian London - shop fronts and shop interiors  
The Science Museum - Transport  
Early kitchens & domestic appliances



An early photograph shows the three cottages that were pulled down to make way for Robert Martin's house, number 1. The Village.

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