

William Burden, A Lost Child from Moseley.

William was an unusual case for the Middlemore Homes as he had both parents living and a stable home with his father in employment. In 1881 the Burden family were living at No 2, The Cottages, in Billesley Lane. William's father was a gardener who had come to Birmingham about 1875 and started working for Mr Francis Wilmott, a Surveyor, who lived in a substantial house Wake Green House, on Wake Green Road. At this time the Burdens had four children of whom William was the eldest.

Date	No.	Name of Parent	John Burden	John Francis Wilmott, Wake Green
1900	572	Name and Age of Child	Wm Charles Burden	
General Condition				
Father has been gardener for Mr Wilmott 12 yrs boy was given a trial in Mr Wilmott's office but pilfered the stamps Mr Wilmott recommended father to try				
Special Condition				
to get him in our Homes.				
Father to pay 3/- per week to clothe him Mr Wilmott to pay £5 emigration expenses				
Report of Visitor				
accepted				

In 1886 William was 12 years old and his family were looking to his future as he was nearing school leaving age. His father arranged for him to have a trial in the Coachman's office at Mr Wilmott's. Unfortunately temptation overcame William and he pilfered some stamps.

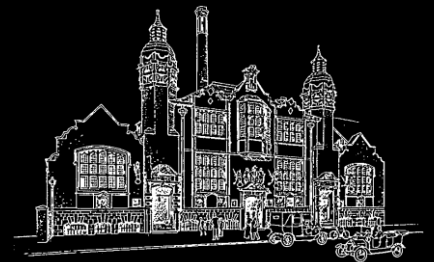
At this point Mr Wilmott stepped in with what he obviously thought was a good way forward. He recommended to Enoch that he try to get his son into the Middlemore Homes and offered to pay a £5 emigration fee himself. The Homes were well regarded and received many donations from people all over Birmingham who wanted to support this worthy cause. William was accepted and his father agreed to pay 3 shillings a week to clothe him, though it is not specified how long this would continue. William was admitted in October that year.

The Middlemore records show that William, together with 156 other children was indeed emigrated to Canada in June, 1887 at the age of 13, on board the ship, Lake Ontario. He was placed with a farmer called Daniel McIntyre, living at Port Stanley, on the north shore of Lake Eyre, Ontario, where he seems to have stayed for many years.

Meanwhile, back in Birmingham, Enoch continued to live in Billesley Lane but by 1901 had expanded his scope, listed in the census as Nurseryman, gardener and employer. By 1908 he appears in Directories as Enoch Burden & sons, Florist, still in Billesley Lane. Then he returned to Wiltshire where he still had family connections. He had set up a nursery in Patney, near Devizes, by 1911.

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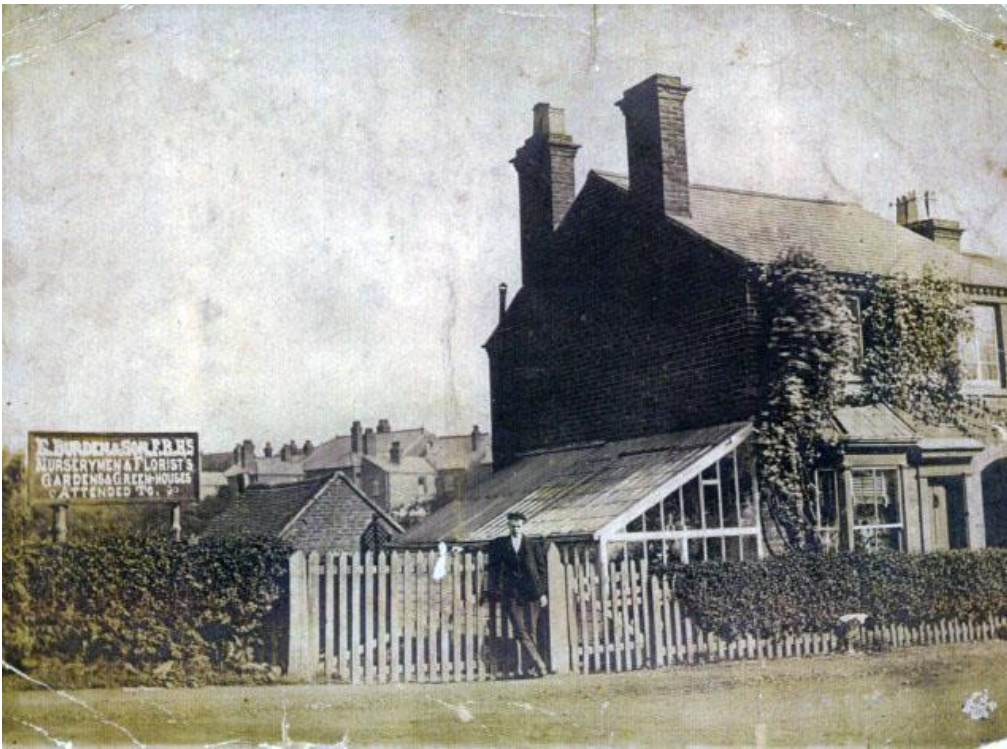
www.thelostchildren.uk

Facebook: Balsall Heath Local
History Society and
lostchildrenproject

Membership of the Society will cost £12 a year from Jan 2022. No subscription will be renewed to taken until then. Membership will then run from January to December each year. Fees at meetings will continue unchanged: £1 for members and £3 for visitors. Refreshments will be served from 7 to 7.20 pm at the start of the meeting.

Next meeting.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, November 25th at St Paul's Venture, Malvern St. B12 8NN at 7 for 7.30 p.m. The Speaker will be Andy Vail who will be presenting, "Marching for the King? The rise of the Brigade and Scout Movement in Birmingham".



This photo, supplied by the family, shows that he became a Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society. They believe it might be of his house in Birmingham but there is no record of a Nursery in Billesley lane so it is probably a photo of his place in Patney.

Val Hart

Birmingham Heritage Week

Sarehole Mill



A 250 year old idyllic watermill famous for its association with author J.R.R Tolkien, just 4 miles from Birmingham city centre. There are also connections with Matthew Boulton, who leased the Mill between 1756 and 1761 and used it as a 'flattening mill', producing sheet metal to be used for button manufacturing. Tolkien, author of the Hobbit and Lord of the Rings trilogy, had as a child lived nearby, and in his later life spoke of how the mill and its rural surroundings inspired his writings of Middle-earth.

For the Birmingham Heritage event our tour guide of the mill and colloquially named 'Moseley Bog' was our friendly Hobbit, Ash. He knows his subject and enlighten us with many examples of Tolkien's inspirations. A thoroughly enjoyable and imaginative tour.

Pictured, Ash, the Hobbit. If he doesn't inspire your imagination on the tour, then the 'surroundings' will.



The Watermill tower stands proud and the green patch in front of the building is not grass but the pool of water necessary to drive the mill. Step on this 'grass' and you will need to swim for it!



The nearby wood with its shaded walkways will have you wondering what is around the next corner and thinking of the possibility of Tolkien's elves and trees that move. It is certainly an atmospheric exploration that awaits you.



Tolkien, father of modern fantasy, imagines wizards, dragons, archers, and fierce fighting for Middle Earth. J.F

Ghost Streets of Balsall Heath and the Non-Place (2)

Readers of September's Gazette will know that these two (title) phrases were coined at an event staged at the Old Print Works (remember Butcher's Transfers?), on the Moseley Road in 2018. The occasion was a result of the collaboration between the Ort Gallery and Flatpack Film Festival. These words expressed a view about what Balsall Heath looked like before during and after the demolition of streets of housing and other buildings. Illustrated by the photos of Janet Mendelsohn which had been shown first at the Ikon Gallery, it was a mindful retrospective view of those years of the late 60's and early 70's. For this we are grateful to the above mentioned organisations and their people. In particular to Joe Holyoak, Kieran Connell, and Ian Francis.

We continue with our focus on the Junction that has been styled 'the non-place'. And this because of what it was before demolition, i.e., the very opposite of what that title conjures.



Photo: Janet Mendelsohn 1968.

Top left, the sign for Balsall Heath Rd above the two shops that separate Cox St West (out of picture) from Clevedon Rd. With the Wallace pub at our backs, we look westwards past the vertical 'Cinema' sign of the Luxor and towards the Pershore Rd.





Turn around on the spot and look eastwards, we have the 'Ansells' owed Wallace pub and the beginnings of a row of shops leading to the next pub, the



Lyttleton Arms. And opposite these the Cycle Speedway track.

Photo: BHLHS Collection. Balsall Heath Rd Junction with Longmore St 1961.

What does this street section look like now? Left, Kinver Croft, housing near the former location of the Wallace Pub. And further east, where once George Mason's grocery shop and the Lyttleton Arms stood. Opposite those, a football pitch, a place where from 1948 until

1962 had been the home of the Balsall Heath Panthers Speedway Club. When operational the speedway action brought impromptu crowds distracted from the business, they had come out to do.



There is nothing wrong with this modern day part of Balsall Heath Road. In fact, there is a lot going for it, with its tidy warm homes and spacious greenery. This is about the reality of change. Blink an eye and change the scene from colour to black & White.

Photos, BHLHS Collection

Photo comments by Brian Buck, Speedway club secretary, first published in Carl Chinn's 'BRUMMAGEM' Feb 2011. Left to right: Geoff Ward, Maurice Newby, F.L. Goode (Manager), Ray Goode? Gerry Mills.

George Mason's shop in the background.

The Panthers Speedway club was previously featured in article of the Gazette in September 2010



(left) Unidentified riders in action

This for your writer is not about comparing the times, past with present, one being a better time than the other. But the



quietness of now with the bustle (bustle is the word), of the metropolis that we once lived in. A place we had no problem leaving behind for the rest of our lives, but which still lives on in youthful part of our imagination. This won't happen for that road traffic island of the present day. J.F.

(left) The kind of crowd which used to turn out to watch the racing in those days.

New Money for Moseley Road Baths

BBC Midlands Today Report:

"A historic Victorian swimming pool has secured funding to carry out further renovation work, opening more areas to the public. Grade II listed Moseley Road Baths has been awarded £100,000. It is the oldest building of its kind still in use in Britain."

(the boardroom, picture from BBC.co.uk)

This money will be spent on repairs to first floor rooms including the long neglected boardroom and the old flat used by the resident caretaker, and to the roof above them. It will also allow for the front of the building to be cleaned, repaired, and the growth of weeds cleared.

The rooms have been off-limits to the public due to their dangerous condition. Opened in 1907, the baths have appeared on TV several times and was once known as 'First class baths for first class people' (none of us Balsall Heathens will argue with that). The building was forced to close in 2003, with fears that it would never open again.

The award has come from Historic England and follows previous grants of over a million pounds, which importantly has seen part of the roof repaired. More will be needed to preserve the old slipper baths and bring swimming back to the Gala Pool, beloved by many as the place where they first learned to swim this will be very good news.



Represent

A new exhibition inspired by the Fourth Reform Act of 1918 that gave some women and more men the right to vote for the first time has arrived at Moseley Road Baths and will be there during opening hours until the end of the year. More details are available at

<http://www.representpeople.co.uk/>

A new Birmingham Archive

The library of Birmingham has a new online archive of historic images at

<https://brumphotoarchive.co.uk/>. It has hundreds of pictures tagged Balsall Heath although most of them seem to be in Highgate. Some of them have no more detail than say "Photographed c1970s - 1990s. Derelict buildings in Balsall Heath" so they are eager for your comments.

This does not include the previous "Digital" archives including "Digital Balsall Heath" which can still be found at <http://www.birminghamimages.org.uk/>

The Balsall Heath Local History Society is Registered Charity No. 1101945
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