

# FIFTY YEARS ON

*A diary of the years from 1952 to 2002*

As we celebrate in our various ways H. M. The Queens Golden Jubilee, it gives the opportunity to consider how the village of Otford has changed in the fifty years that Queen Elizabeth II has been on the throne.



*Otford Duck Pond*

To do this we should first of all recall how the village stood in 1952 and then review the changes that have occurred since that time...

Oxford was a very different place in 1952. It was much smaller with many fewer houses. Colets Orchard was still an orchard - forming part of the grounds attached to Colets Well. Warham Road was grazing land. Willow Park and Flowerfield were open fields; Knighton Road and Orchard Road were the site of a chicken farm set beneath apple trees. Dane Road, Darnets Field and Saxon Close were unbuilt; the site of Twitton Meadows was covered with war-time prefabricated bungalows and Great Till Close was the site of Fry's Garage and private grazing land. Wickham Fields was an Isolation Hospital. Many small developments of one or two houses had yet to be built. The Catholic Church was a small building (the original Methodist chapel) adjoining Pickmoss, opposite 'The Horns'.

So far as commercial buildings go, the Vestry Estate was only partly built, the remainder being open ground bounded on the eastern side by a railway siding which in earlier times had received trainloads of household rubbish from London, disgorged down the side of the railway embankment. Here, in the 1950's, antique hunters dug for early tins and bottles amongst the ash and cinders which formed the bulk of the refuse. Where Otford Builders Merchants warehouse and offices now stand was the business of Mr. Nash, a builder and builders' merchant using a very small single office building and storing materials beneath chicken houses that covered much of the site. The shop next to the 'Crown Inn' was a residential cottage, in the front garden of which, for many years, a duck from the village pond insisted on building a nest and raising her brood - causing havoc with the traffic when she deemed it was time to lead her ducklings across the road to the pond. Number 6 High Street was a garage and store attached to Knight's Grocery. A number of the shops at Nos. 12 to 28 High Street were also residential cottages. A timber building between Forge House Restaurant (then cottages) and the Church Hall was the Village Forge, although possibly out of use by 1952. The Hope Room at the Village Memorial Hall was a Billiard Room. The Club Room was unbuilt and both the car park and the recreation ground were much smaller than at present.

The village boasted a variety of shops - five or six grocers, a greengrocer and a baker. The premises now occupied by 'Nicola's' was two shops, one of which was occupied by Mr. Shepherd as a garden shop and the other was run by Miss Broombank as a draper and haberdasher. Mrs. Lowrie ran a licensed grocery at number 28 High Street whilst her husband ran a veritable Aladdin's cave of an ironmonger's just next door.

Pubs were still mainly serving their original wares - beer and spirits with very little, if any, food. Part of the Forge House Restaurant was used as a tearoom of limited enterprise, as was part of Mrs. Waite's house adjoining the family's garage and car showroom in Sevenoaks Road. Mrs. Cole ran a small cafe and home bakery at number 12 High Street. Number 25 High Street was a grocer's and sweet shop with two petrol pumps on the forecourt.

Drs. Lothian and Campbell had a surgery in two small rooms at Dr. Campbell's house on The Green

Some things have changed very little. In 1952 some plans were frustrated because of the need for stringent economy in public spending. There was a large collection of surface water at the junction of Rye Lane and Pilgrims Way West whenever there was heavy rain.

The effects of the Second World War were still felt. Food was still rationed and Air Raid Wardens were still being recruited - even in May 1956 the village had nine vacancies!

There were plans for improvement of amenities. The hut which was the Village Memorial Hall was in a dangerous condition and needed to be reconstructed; the corner of Leonard Avenue was a bombed site which was cleared and planted. In these and other ventures the Otford Preservation Society took an active part. There was realisation that the Recreation Ground and allotments needed to be enlarged. Grants were sought for these works resulting in reconstruction of the Memorial Hall between 1952 and 1955 (although it was never completely out of use) and extension of the Recreation Ground and allotments at the end of 1952.

The Queen's Coronation was celebrated with an Old Tyme Dance in the Memorial Hall. Other festivities involved the Parish council in expenditure of £70.

By June 1952 the iron railings which had enclosed the Pond had been removed but concern was felt about the weed which was choking the Pond - until someone suggested that ducks might solve the problem. The first ducks were installed in September 1952 and succeeded in their mission.

Late 1953 and 1954 saw early plans for larger scale development with planning applications lodged in regard to Willow Park (although work did not start for several years) and for three factories on the Vestry Estate.

Road traffic was increasing and provoked much discussion in the Autumn of 1955. Pilgrims Way West between Rye Lane and Telston Lane, which had been little more than a single track road, was widened early in 1957 and footways formed. The year 1967 saw a footway formed in Shoreham Road between Hillydeal Road and Greenhill Road

Development continued with the first part of Knighton Road being built in 1957. The Primary School was extended the following year. One building was lost to the village however in 1958 when it was thought safe to demolish the public air raid shelter near the Village Memorial Hall. Dane Road was built in 1959.

From 1958 the Village was entered in the Best Kept Village

Competition. Much effort was rewarded in 1967 when it was judged the winner and again in 1968 when it topped the winners' class. Cash prizes enabled seats to be purchased for public places.

### THE 1960's

Fears rose in February 1961 when application was made for a licence to extract gravel from the Darent Valley but fortunately this failed.

For many years the Otford Lawn Tennis Club played at a single hard court at Telston Lane on land owned by Miss Lunniss who gave this and surrounding land to the Parish Council in 1958. It was realised however that it would be more convenient for the club to have courts in the centre of the Village, and in late 1962 orders were given for three Courts (one for public use) to be constructed on the Recreation Ground. These were brought into use in April 1963. With the Telston court becoming redundant the Parish Council decided to sell it with adjoining land for housing, but such was the outcry within the village that the plan was dropped and volunteers cleared the land for use as a public open space and children's play area.

Sport was becoming more popular and, in March 1962, the Otford Sports Association was formed to co-ordinate the sports needs of the Village. The following month the Chalk Pit, having been levelled and grassed, was opened as a junior football ground.

In June 1963 planning permission was granted for construction of the parish church car park and also for the extension of Knighton Road and the building of Orchard Road. Telston Lane was widened and its many pot-holes filled in March 1966.

The houses in Colets Orchard were built between 1963 and 1965. The Primary School was provided with a swimming pool in 1966/7, as a result of much voluntary effort.

Nature struck a severe blow on the night of 15th September 1968 when, following a heavy storm, the Darent Bridge at the western end of the High Street was washed away. It was replaced the following day by the Army with a Bailey bridge which was in use until May 1972.

### THE 1970's

Spring 1970 saw the centre of the village declared a Conservation Area thus emphasising that only development which enhanced the appearance or character of the centre would be permitted. Darnets Field was built about this time. A plan was evolved to revise the road layout at the Pond so that the road to and from Sevenoaks would pass Bubblestone Cottage on its western side rather than on the narrow passage on its eastern side where the cottage was repeatedly suffering impact damage from heavy vehicles.

In September 1970 an exhibition was made of plans for the M25 motorway and comments were invited.

Oxford established another "first" in June 1971 when the Pond was nominated for inclusion in the List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest. The listing was confirmed in January 1975 - the first Pond to be so recognised.

For some time prior to 1972 it had been realised that the Station Road bridge over the railway was of inadequate strength to support the heavy traffic which was using it. Weight restrictions were imposed but widening and strengthening were much needed. This was undertaken over a period of some eight months from April 1972.

Early in 1972 shelters for bus passengers were provided although bus services were being reduced - a process which has continued! Work on the new Catholic Church was started in 1972. At the end of that year a number of trees near the river had to be felled because of dutch elm disease.

Strong feelings were aroused in 1972 when it was proposed to open a 'Little Chef' adjoining Waite's Garage in Sevenoaks Road. The objections were of no avail and the restaurant operated for some years.

Much interest was engendered in 1974 when building operations in Bubblestone Road unearthed a part of the Archbishop's Palace that had not been seen for some centuries. The area was excavated and the remains left exposed for a few weeks when many people inspected. It was decided, however, that the Ministry of Works had insufficient specialists to carry out preservation in the near future and the site was filled in again as the best way of preserving the discovery, pending the ability to carry out full conservation.

The village lost a very able leader in October 1974 when Frank Weston, who had been Parish Council Chairman for 25 years, retired. A public subscription was raised to purchase the clock and plaque, housed in the gable end of the Memorial Hall, to commemorate his services.

The Parish Council published a Village Appraisal in October 1975 as guidelines as to what facilities and advantages the village enjoyed and what was foreseen as its needs and desires for the immediate future.

In an endeavour to keep pace with the ever increasing demand for sports facilities, a further extension of the recreation ground was negotiated in October 1976. It was in that month that Mrs. Miles, who had served the Parish Council as Clerk for 20 years, retired.

Throughout 1976 plans were being formulated for the construction of the motorways M25 and M26. There was strong opposition to these proposals in many quarters but many in the village anticipated that their advent

would bring relief from the heavy traffic which, at that time, formed a continuous stream along the A225 through the village. The Road Construction Unit found it an unusual experience that a Parish Council supported the building of motorways and responded by meeting the council's requests for landscaping and, to some extent, the shielding of the village from the noise and pollution arising from the new roads.

Another defence against heavy traffic was a plea for a width restriction forbidding vehicles more than 6 feet 6 inches wide from using the High Street as a through route.

On a lighter note, the embankment on Station Approach was planted in the Spring of 1976, but sadly this endeavour was brought to naught by the severe dryness of the summer which meant that few of the plants survived. However, they were replaced in subsequent years.

The condition of the Palace Tower gave cause for concern and views were expressed that it would be better preserved if it was repaired to a condition where it could be used and hopes were expressed that it might house a cultural centre or museum. One recurrent proposal was to establish a youth centre and although some plans proceeded to varying extents, the youth of that era reached full maturity without seeing realisation of this goal.

The needs of the hikers of the area were met in 1977 when the North Downs Way was opened along Telston Lane, through the High Street and over the Mount.

All was not peace, however, since a number of drakes had joined the ducks on the Pond and outnumbered them by a considerable margin. This resulted in the drakes waking as early as 2.45 a.m. to press their attentions on the ducks, with the resultant noise preventing sleep for the villagers who lived within earshot. Many birds were given to good homes in other areas reducing the total on the pond to eight but the spring hatching of that year (1977) produced twelve healthy ducklings!

In 1977 Mr. Roy Alexander, the then Chairman of the Village Society, undertook a photographic record of the village and particularly of the Conservation Area with a very praiseworthy result.

A fortieth anniversary was celebrated in June 1977 by Telston Cricket Club which played on the pitch at the end of Hale Lane. This was unfortunately a short-lived celebration since early in 1979 the club decided to leave its home of 42 years and joined with a club at Mereworth.

November 1977 saw work started on the construction of the M26. There followed some years of complaint of mud being spread on the A225 and of noise arising from the road-builders' efforts.

A more parochial need was voiced for a footway for pedestrians along Pilgrims Way East. Much pressure for this was mounted on the highway authority and, although a footway was eventually formed as far as Tudor Drive, the stretch beyond remains to this day a place for only the brave!

Spring 1978 brought realisation that the needs of the sportsmen of the village required further extension of the recreation ground. Negotiations resulted in a further 3.17 acres being acquired in March 1979.

September 1978 again saw Otford declared winner of the Best Kept Village Competition. On several occasions in later years the village was commended for its efforts and in 1986 won the second prize in the competition.

Concern arose at the end of 1978 when the owner of a large area of land on Otford Mount offered it for sale in 300 small "Leisure Plots". It seems that very few were sold before Kemsing Parish council purchased an area for use as a nature reserve in June 1980 and the remainder was sold to an adjoining owner.

Youth football received a boost in 1979 when the Hale Lane Recreation Ground was made available. The land was in the ownership of the Sevenoaks District Council which granted a lease to Otford Parish Council in May 1983, enabling the Parish Council to build changing rooms for the young players later that year.

Bubblestone Cottage suffered more impact damage in September 1979, giving impetus to the work to re-route traffic behind it. This work was started about three months later.

#### THE 1980's

The local Boy Scout Group had cause for celebration in September 1980 when it attained fifty years Scouting in the village.

Parts of the M25 were in use by the Autumn of 1979 although the Swanley to Sevenoaks section was not opened until February 1986. However, suggestions were made early in 1980 that slip roads should be built giving access to the M26 from the A225 just south of Otford. Strong opposition was successfully raised to this in Otford and elsewhere, but the threat remained very real for the next four years.

Financial restraint had been a constant need throughout the whole period under review but the seriousness of the situation became very evident in the Autumn of 1979 when Sevenoaks District Council announced that, with help from the Parishes, it must save £290,000. Clearly no appeals for grant aid to new projects could be made to that quarter.

The importance of preserving ancient records was understood and in February 1980 the Archive Department of Kent County Council called for the

records held by the Parish Church and dating from 1559 to be deposited at Maidstone. Before this was done photostatic copies were made for retention at the church.

The Otford Medical Practice had become based in a smart modern surgery at the end of Leonard Avenue, but in February 1980 found that the building was not large enough to store all the paper records that it needed to keep and obtained planning permission to enlarge to its present size. Another planning permission granted at that time was for the Roman Catholic Chapel opposite 'The Horns' to be converted to residential accommodation.

Up to July 1980 the Otford Branch Library operated from a series of bookcases lining one wall of the Hope Room, but from that date readers could choose their books in the new purpose built library next to the Methodist Church.

The M26 motorway construction proceeded and was opened in November 1980. Then started the battle to screen houses in the village from the visual and noise pollution which it generated - a battle not yet won although traffic has continually increased.

As plans to bring the recreation ground extension into use progressed it was found necessary to provide changing rooms of a higher standard. Comparing costs of a new building with making alterations within the Village Memorial Hall it was decided that the latter could achieve a satisfactory solution. This work was authorised in September 1981 at the time the recreation ground extension was ready for use. A tedious part of making the ground ready was to hand-pick stones from the surface. It was whilst doing this that a German student volunteer discovered some stone age tools.

Although the needs of Otford sportsmen were thought to be met by the extended recreation ground, the neighbouring Sevenoaks Vine Sports Club was seeking a ground on which to play hockey and cricket. It achieved its aim when planning permission was granted (on appeal) in September 1981 for use of land at the rear of the medical surgery at the end of Leonard Avenue.

A watchful eye was kept on the remains of the Archbishop's Palace and pressure was exerted on Sevenoaks District Council, which was responsible for their maintenance, to do work when necessary. This led to quite extensive work being done in February 1982. It was then that it was decided to name the Hope Room in memory of Bill Hope who had been caretaker of the Village Memorial Hall for some years prior to his death.

The need to protect pedestrians (particularly children) from the increasing number of vehicles was of very great importance. Thus in March 1983 a pedestrian crossing was installed in the High Street near the Primary School. Pressure to build another near the railway station did not succeed.

Ways to impress the judges of the Best Kept Village Competition were always sought and in May 1982 prizes were offered for the Best Kept Front Garden. It is thought that this was a factor in the village receiving commendation over the subsequent years.

With the increase in social activity it was realised that the Village Memorial Hall was finding difficulty in coping with the demands for accommodation and in May 1982 consideration was given to rebuilding the Hall to an enlarged design. A more modest solution was found in an extension which yielded the Club Room. This plan, however, put pressure on the car park which was again enlarged in April 1983. The Hall extension materialised in the Summer of 1985.

Although the end of the War in 1945 had perhaps removed the need for a regular Civil Defence Unit, it was realised that nature or accident could bring disaster and in December 1983 an Emergency Organisation was established under the leadership of Brigadier J. Lewendon. The team was called into action when the River Darent flooded in December 1985, only to dry up in places the following September.

The Anglican Church in the village was led for 28 years by the Reverend F. Christopher Bunch who retired in November 1984 - a state he was to enjoy, unfortunately, for only some six and a half years. He was succeeded by the Reverend David Towne.

The Otford Lunch Club opened in April 1986 in the recently built Club Room. Here the elderly could obtain a substantial meal every Thursday at a very reasonable cost, thanks to the efforts of a number of local lady volunteers.

Contemplation of the Channel Tunnel brought fears of noise for people living near the railway with the prospect of long freight trains passing through the village, particularly at night. Calls were made unsuccessfully from June 1986 for screening and compensation.

October 1987 found the Sevenoaks area struck by a hurricane which caused severe damage, with many large trees brought down, making travel out of Otford impossible for several hours, and in some directions for days.

The telephone service updated apparatus throughout 1987 and 1988 and introduced a new type of public callbox which hardly fitted the street scene of a picturesque village. Although a few of the new type were installed (e.g. at Bubblestone Road and Pilgrims Way West) the callbox at the Pond was listed as a Building of Historic Interest and thus preserved.

The wartime prefabricated bungalows on Pilgrims Way West at Twitton had well exceeded their original life expectancy of ten years by April 1989 when they were demolished to make way, in due course, for housing association accommodation on the newly named Twitton Meadows, which was

built in 1991/92.

Sportsmen of the village who, in their youth, had enjoyed football and cricket, found they no longer had the pace and stamina for such activity and needed a more sedate pastime. They therefore called for a bowling green and, although several locations were investigated, the unsuitability of most and the cost of evolving a good green ruled out an outdoor green. The indoor Short Mat Bowls Club was, however, accepted by many players as a good substitute.

#### THE 1990's

March and April 1990 brought events which changed the village forever - and unfortunately not always for the better. Firstly, J. Sainsbury plc announced its intention to build a Superstore north of Sevenoaks. We all know what effect this had on the local shops! These small shops could probably have overcome the second development announced at that time - the building of the Blighs complex in Sevenoaks. The third change was soon accepted without difficulty - all telephone dialling codes were changed. No longer would a call to the operator confirm whether the trains were running to time on a foggy morning or which of the local doctors was on call as had been the case in the 1950's!

Drought again struck in 1990 and by August stretches of the River Darent were completely dry, causing great consternation. The dryness of the season did not prevent two of Otford's allotment holders taking first and second prizes in the Kent County Allotments Competition.

After spending some 25 years searching for suitable land in the village to develop as a burial ground the Parish Council resolved in November 1991 to buy land bordering Sevenoaks Road for this and other purposes. The purchase was completed in November 1993.

The National Census of 1991 showed that the Parish of Otford was inhabited by 3282 persons.

The 110th anniversary of the opening of Otford Railway Station was celebrated in August 1992 with an exhibition in the station car park.

An auction sale in June 1992 found the Parish Council successfully bidding for five acres of land as a further extension to the main recreation ground. New sports pitches were laid out in September 1993.

Extensive publicity heralded what proved to be an anti-climax in May 1993 when the cycling Milk Race crossed the Channel and the riders peddled, with very little enthusiasm, through Otford watched by a large part of the population.

Spring 1993 saw new houses built in Saxon Close.

The Parish Council Newsletter, which has become a regular monthly

feature of the village, was first published in September 1993 and now gives news of all that the council does or attempts to achieve and items that might be of interest to all residents.

Summer 1993 found a campaign raised against an application by Boots the Chemist to be allowed to open a dispensing pharmacy in Sainsbury's Supermarket. The endeavours of many people were rewarded in September 1993 when Boots' application was refused.

Efforts were made to improve the sporting facilities at the Hale Lane recreation ground and, as youth football became established, new changing rooms were built. These were extended in September 1993. This endeavour was not appreciated by all the youth of the neighbourhood and the roof repeatedly suffered damage with a serious fire taking place in April 1998.

The recreation ground extension bought at auction in June 1992 made possible the provision of an additional football pitch and a new cricket square by October 1993. The floodlighting moved to the new, more distant pitch.

A daily reminder of the existence of the Channel Tunnel arose by December 1993 when Eurostar passed through the village, usually twice each day enroute from Waterloo to Paris.

In March 1994 the Centenary of the establishment of the Parish Council passed almost unnoticed by most inhabitants of the village – despite some organised events. Most people were however aware of the fiftieth anniversary of Victory in Europe Day on 8th May 1995. Otford and neighbouring parishes hired a Spitfire to fly and circle over the area.

Youth football in the Village received a further boost in September 1995 when Chelsea and Charlton Athletic Football Clubs held coaching sessions on the recreation grounds. These were very popular and have been repeated.

Planning permission was granted in February 1996 for the establishment on the land purchased in 1993 of a burial ground and a community woodland with an adjacent car park, accessible from the Sevenoaks Road. These were opened in April 1997 with a tree planting day held in November 1997, at which many local children and residents assisted. The community woodland, known as Otford Palace Park, was leased to the Woodland Trust for 199 years.

Construction of Blighs Shopping Centre in Sevenoaks meant that car parking facilities in the town were much reduced. A 'Park and Ride' service was therefore arranged, whilst the work proceeded, from a site near the gasworks with a bus leaving every 15 minutes

The work of the Parish Clerk increased over the years, as did the number of records which needed to be stored and could no longer be

accommodated in one room of the Clerk's home. To solve the problem and also provide a heritage centre the Parish Council acquired the School House in January 1997 which, after necessary repairs, redecoration and building an extension, was officially opened as the Parish Council office and Heritage Centre, in November 1997.

This was not the only purchase in which the Parish Council was involved at this time. Joining forces with Kemsing Parish Council and Sevenoaks District Council, Keddie's Field, which joined the Parishes of Otford and Kemsing, was bought and renamed Oxenhill Meadow. Building work started at Great Till Close (previously Fry's Garage site) in the Winter of 1996.

In February 1997 the Reverend Pat. Hopkins was appointed Vicar of Otford, the Reverend David Towne having retired a few months previously.

A period of comparative calm and quietude settled over the village for a few years whilst the various organisations concerned consolidated recently acquired properties and assets. Grants from the National Lottery Fund and local and national agencies were sought but were not always forthcoming so that some plans had to be curtailed or postponed. The mood and effect, however, was always one of progress.

Although the heritage centre was equipped as circumstances permitted and a token display made available to the public, it was not until November 1999 that the centre, including the purpose built extension, was officially opened by Lord Weatherill in the presence of dignitaries from local councils and conservation and preservation groups.

## THE START OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Much thought was given as to how the Millennium should be celebrated. Apart from religious services in the village churches, the following events were planned and were, or are being, executed:

- A Grand Raffle to provide funds for the repair of the Pond
- A Millennium reprint of 'Otford in Kent' by Clarke and Stoyel
- New aerial photographs of the village
- Parish council reception for all parishioners
- Otford Mosaic, sponsored and arranged by the Otford Society, on the wall of the Church Hall
- Spring Flower Festivals in all the churches

- Scale Model of the Solar System laid out across the village with the position of the planets as at 1st January 2000 marked by pillars with engraved plaques.

Many other events of celebration were planned by various groups and organisations to take place throughout the year. This included a joint "Parish Picnic" with Kemsing parish in Oxenhill Meadow on 16th July 2000.

May 2000 saw the Otford and District Historical Society celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of its establishment.

Some flooding was experienced on 23rd May 2000.

Planning permissions granted in June 2000 included those for an extension at Otford Primary School and for a comprehensive sports pavilion at the main recreation ground. This has yet to be built and waits for the balance of funding to become available.

Vandalism and violence were recurrent problems at the railway station and it was heartening to learn of a proposal to increase the number of close circuit television cameras in and around the station to over twenty in an endeavour to combat this.

A competition was held in November 2000 to design a Village Sign to be erected on The Green. The design submitted by Barbara Darby was ultimately judged the winner and was erected and the plaque formally unveiled in 2001.

Methods of traffic calming in the High Street and Pilgrims Way West were investigated in September 2001 with a temporary experimental scheme operating for a few weeks prior to proposals for permanent provision.

Otford Cricket Club celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in the Summer of 2001.

Success rewarded the efforts of many people in 2001 when Otford won the Environmental section of the Kent Village of the Year Competition and was highly commended in other sections. However, all was not serene - virtually the whole country was affected by the foot and mouth crisis and for many months all footpaths in and around Otford were closed to walkers and dogs. Great relief was felt when the very necessary ban was lifted and people could once more enjoy the beauty of the village and of the Darent Valley.

*So how does one summarise the last 50 years of our community? Many things have developed and changed - hopefully for the better overall. Otford is situate in a beautiful area but it is not only the scenery that makes it such a grand place to live. We are fortunate in having so many organisations and societies led by dedicated people*

*all keen to forever improve the pleasures and facilities we enjoy and to which we can all subscribe whenever we wish. This review reminds of some (but not all) of these activities, and whilst hopefully is mainly correct, it does not set out to be a true and accurate account of **all** that has happened.*

**GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!!!**

*and long may Otford remain one of the brightest jewels in her Crown.*

This account was written by Mr. Reg. Lythaby, Chairman of Otford Parish Council from 1974 to 1982, after long and detailed examination of Parish Council minutes. The Council is deeply indebted to him for undertaking this mammoth task. If there are corrections, or omissions of what are believed to be significant events, please send them to the Parish office. They may be written into the final chapter of "Otford in Kent", when it is republished.

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