

# SHOPPING IN WOKING IN THE 1920's

Iain Wakeford 2016

The shoe shop of Messrs Freeman, Hardy & Willis, were another early national company to move to the town.

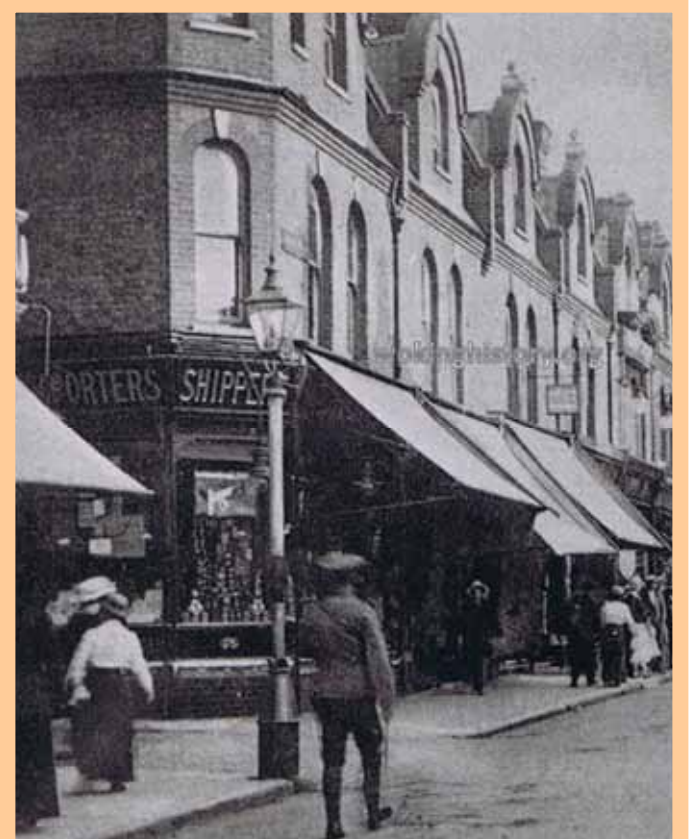
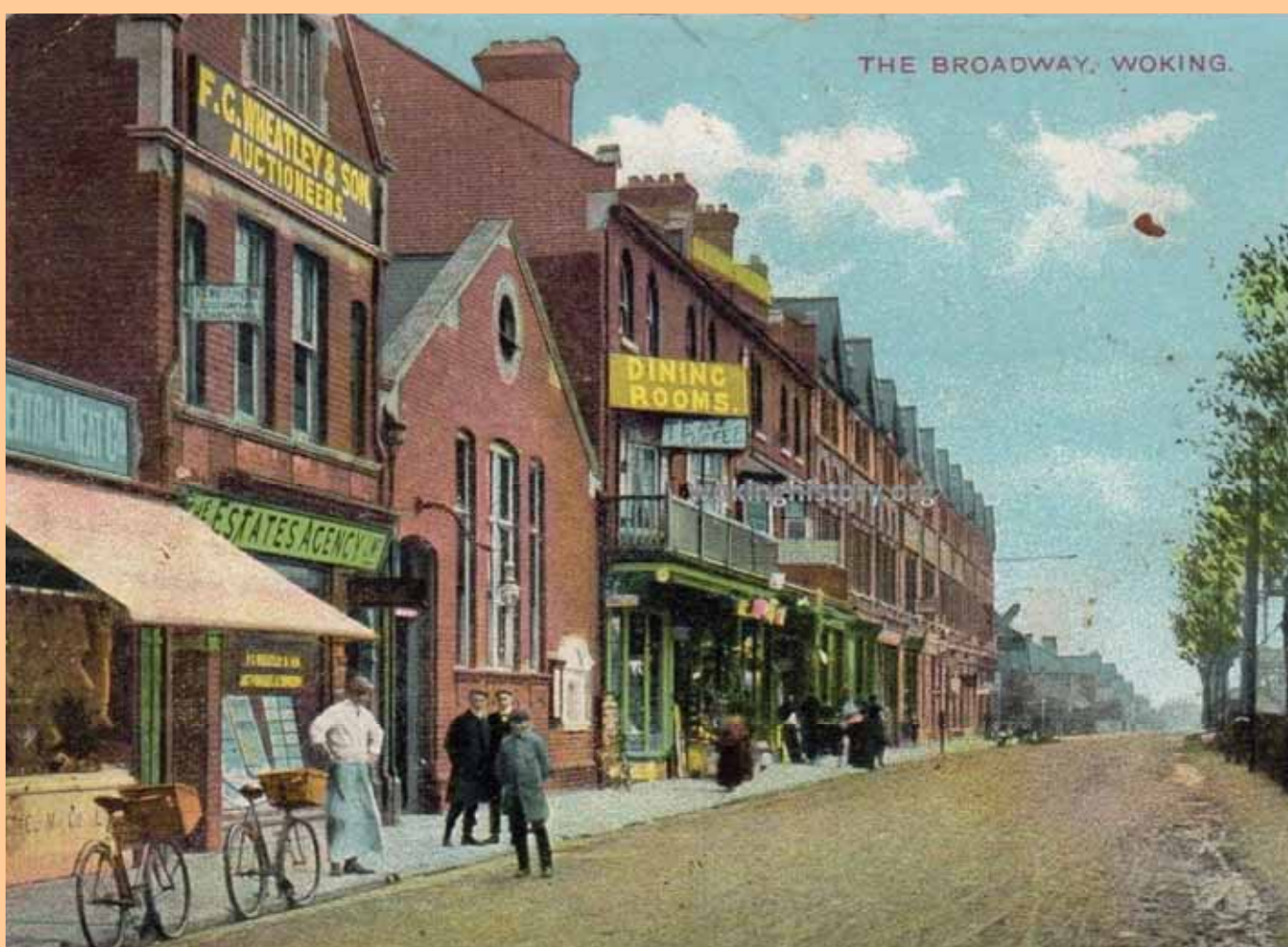


When 'New Woking' first started to develop its shopping centre in the 1860's and 70's, the shops were small family owned and run affairs, often with the shopkeeper and his family living 'above the shop'.

Gradually some 'national' stores found their way onto the high street (if not the High Street), such as the Home & Colonial Stores, the International Tea Stores, and the shoe shop of

Messrs Freeman, Hardy & Willis (all in Chertsey Road by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century).

Another early national concern was the London Central Meat Company, which despite its name appears to have started out in 1880 as a market stall in Tamworth, Staffordshire, before expanding by 1900 to have over a hundred branches nationwide, and continuing to expand well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century under the Baxter and later Dewhurst brands.



The International Tea Stores (on the left of this view of Chertsey Road) opened in Woking in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In Woking their greatest rival was probably the Wasleys – George, a fishmonger and poulterer at number 21 Chertsey Road, and Robert, a butcher, across the road at number 20. The two appear to have combined under Robert's name, opening more shops in Chertsey Road and Walton Road and eventually expanding to other nearby towns and villages.

The London Central Meat Company were just one of many butcher's in Woking in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.





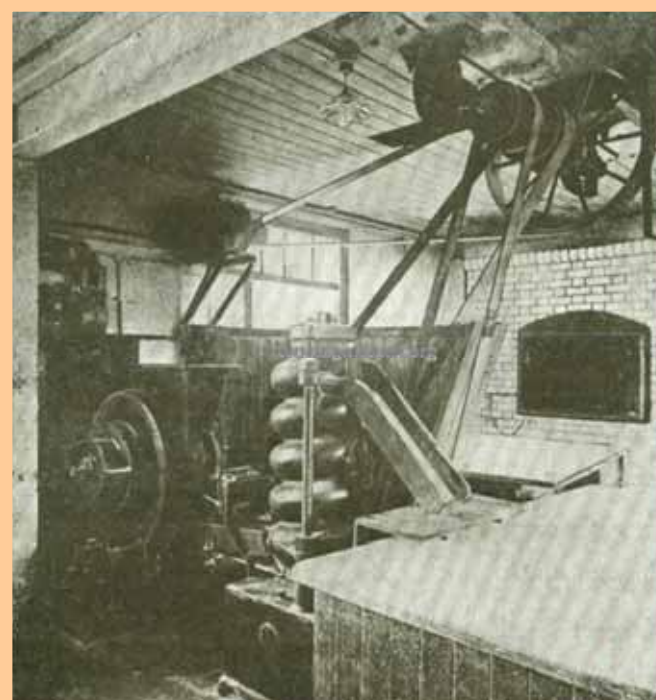
As well as the branch above in Chertsey Road, Tyler's had branches in almost every village in the district (and much further afield such as the south coast and south London.

Meanwhile other 'local' companies were also expanding to become regional, if not national, concerns, such as Tyler's Off-Licences who by the early 1920s had branches as far afield as Brighton, Hove, Chichester and Southampton. Mr C T Tyler, wine & spirits merchant, had been in business in Woking since the 1870's, and the company continued to have their head quarters in the town decades after the company was incorporated in 1908 (and even after they were taken over by Victoria Wine) after the Second World War.

Even the Woking Co-operative Society which had been busy opening small village branches immediately before and after the Great War (and had taken over the operations of the Surbiton Co-operative Society Ltd in 1913) were expanding further still with branches at Bagshot Road, Sunninghill; Hersham Road, Hersham; Station Parade, Claygate; and Obelisk Road, Camberley - all opened between 1921 and 1924.

Indeed the Co-op was probably one of the largest stores in Woking at this time, with not just a grocery department but also clothing, drapery, footwear, furnishing and hardware, as well as their own bakery and coal business.

## THE CO-OP BAKERY



**W**hen the Co-op first opened in Woking they were supplied with bread by the Guildford Co-operative Society, but quickly they obtained the use of a bake house of their own in Walton Road and by July 1901 in their first quarter year of production they had made just over 8,500 loaves.

A couple of years later they opened a new bakery with stables at their Church Street store, increasing sales to 34,110 loaves in the first half-year, which was further increased when an electric dough-mixer and a 'divider and hander-up' machine were added, so that in 1920 they were able to boast output of 571,545 loaves per annum.





# HODDER'S STORES

(T. C. HODDER, Proprietor)

High-Class Grocers  
and Provision  
Merchants,

49, Chertsey Road, WOKING

Also at :—

Tel. 189.

33 GUILDFORD ROAD,

Tel. 235.

83 GOLDSWORTH ROAD,

Tel. 373.

1 BOARD SCHOOL ROAD,

117 WALTON ROAD and

1 HERMITAGE ROAD, St. JOHN'S.

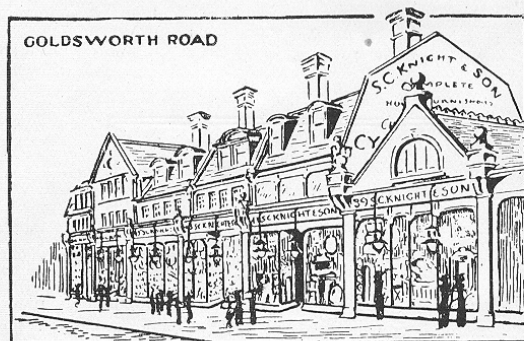
Tel. 538.

FAMILIES WAITED UPON

Store Prices. Your Patronage Solicited.

Advertisements from the 1921 Woking Guide (above)

They had their rivals – with shops such as S C Knight's which had started out as a drapers in the High Street in 1870 and fifty years later also had shops in Chertsey Road and Goldsworth Road; R & S Coleman 'Complete House Furnishers' with shops at one time or another in the High Street, Chobham Road, Chertsey Road, Duke Street and North Road (as well as Rosemount Parade in West Byfleet, and in Guildford High Street); and on the grocery side Hodder's Stores', that had branches in Chertsey Road, Guildford Road, Goldsworth Road, Board School Road, Walton Road and Hermitage Road at St Johns.



COMPLETE HOUSE FURNISHERS  
IRONMONGERS  
CHINA & GLASS MERCHANTS  
BOOT & SHOE FACTORS

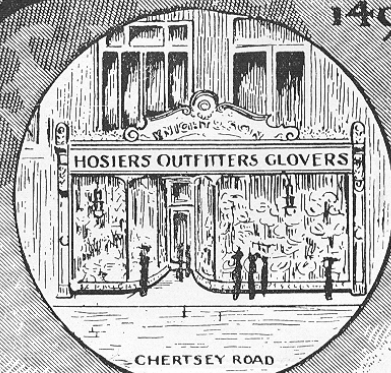
EST. 1870

**S.C. KNIGHT & SON**

PHONE  
149

WOKING

DRAPERS &  
MILLINERS



GENTS' & BOYS' OUTFITTERS

TELEPHONES :  
WOKING 85 GUILDFORD 912

FURNITURE  
DEPOSITORIES :  
NORTH ROAD.

SECOND-HAND  
DEPARTMENT :  
9 & 10,  
HIGH STREET.

**COLMAN'S**  
R. & S. COLMAN  
*Complete House Furnishers*  
AND REMOVAL CONTRACTORS

ELECTRIC CARPET  
BEATING WORKS :  
NORTH ROAD.

BRANCH AT  
159,  
HIGH STREET,  
GUILDFORD.

55, 57 & 59, CHERTSEY ROAD, **Woking.**  
AND DUKE STREET,

M

may 1924





In 1924 Boots moved into expanded premises at number 19 & 21 Chertsey Road.



But even when J Sainsbury's opened their first shop in the town at number 19 Chertsey Road in 1920, it was still a fairly small affair. The same could be said of MacFisheries across the road at number 18 and Boots the chemist further down at number 54 Chertsey Road.

The point is that although some local firms were expanding by opening other shops in other streets or districts, few were expanding the actual size of the shops – although in 1924 Boots did double the size of their Woking branch by moving up Chertsey Road to take

over numbers 19 & 21!

Even Gammon's (who had branches in Cobham as well as their original drapers shop in Guildford), only developed into a department store by gradually taking over neighbouring premises, so that eventually you had to go through one little shop to get to another, usually either one step up or down, into the next department.

So by 1924 a number of names that would be well-known in Woking for at least the next fifty

years were already well established in the town, although it is a sign of modern shopping habits that few of those truly local names have managed to survive to the present day.

Of those that have, the oldest name is probably that of George Harper, a chemist, who started out in Guildford Road, Woking, with a nice sideline developing films and eventually selling cameras.

Long may they, and some more recent local companies, continue to thrive!



Gammons, originally on the corner of Chobham Road and Commercial Road, expanded into numerous shops in both roads as the department store expanded.



# THE OFFICIAL RE-NAMING OF THE BROADWAY



**T**he shops at the town end of Maybury Road had been built in the 1890's, but it was not until 1923 that the street, from

the junction with Chertsey Road as far as Duke Street, was officially renamed 'The Broadway'.

Not that it was any 'broader' at that point than elsewhere along the road – or indeed as wide as it is now. Where the bus stops are was then

**W**oking is surrounded by golf courses (and last week we noted how another was nearly built on Horsell Common in the early 1920's), but it may come as a surprise to learn that not all of those constructed have survived, and even more of a surprise to find that instead of being redeveloped with housing, one of them actually reverted back to being farm land!

In 1907 the 292 acres of the former New Haw Farm, owned by Frank Holmes Sumner, was sold at auction. The estate included a polo ground, five tennis courts, a boat house, bathing house and cricket pitch (the pavilion of which had apparently been used as a Masonic Lodge). It was also to feature a golf course – the Wey Manor Golf Club – for which shares were still being sold in 1915, although by then the land was apparently being farmed again for the war effort.

Some of the buildings too were being used as a prisoner of war camp during the First World War, although details of its operation remain sketchy. After the war the golf club was not revived and in 1923 the business was officially wound up and the site returned to crops – the end of one of the area's shortest-lived golf club.

## WEY MANOR GOLF CLUB

