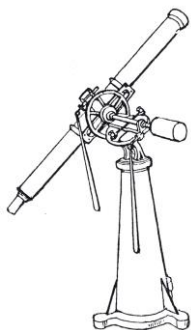


Anticipating the June 'walk and talk' in the Group's 2005/06 programme, the following is an extract from 'Family Feats' the children's book published in 1884 by Lady Bray in which she describes her childhood, as Emily Octavia Barclay, at 'The Old Home' i.e. Bury Hill.

The Bury Hill Observatory

The observatory was a square stone building, with a flight of steps up to the door. It was built on the top of a high hill above the house, where you could get an uninterrupted view of the sky all round. On the top of the building was a large dome, that is a roof shaped like St Paul's Cathedral. I am sure you all know what that looks like, for if you have not seen it yourself, you must have seen pictures of it.

This dome was not fixed on to the roof, as you would imagine; but it just rested upon three cannon balls, which ran in a groove, so the whole dome revolved upon these balls, which rolled round when the dome was turned. A portion of it could be opened by turning a little wheel, and this left a large open space like a great slit in the dome, through which you could see the dark sky with its countless myriads of other worlds. By taking hold of some handles on the inside you could easily turn the great dome round. Many and many a night did our father spend in this observatory, which was like a



friend to him. He had a large and very good telescope which had a very long name. It is called an Equatorial Telescope. I want to know how big this one was measure six inches; that was the diameter of the object glass. It was about eight feet long and mounted on a large stand. Now I wonder if you have ever looked at a star through a telescope. It is a good deal of trouble to get it exactly at the one you want to see. After a good deal of moving about, you get the star just where you want to see it and exclaim, "Oh, how beautiful!" and sit comfortably down to watch it. All at once the star is gone. How very odd, you think quite certain that you have not moved the telescope, you have been as still as possible, and yet the star has gone.

How can it be? Well now, I suppose you know that the world you live in is moving round and round faster than you can imagine. Therefore if you keep on moving you must lose sight of the star. It looks as if the star moves away from you, but really you are running away from it. Now to this telescope there was a clock fastened, not like the clocks which tell you the time but a clock which keeps the telescope moving exactly at the same pace at which the earth moves. In this way you could watch the stars with the greatest ease and comfort, without having them continually racing away out of sight.

Every now and then our father used to let us go up with him to the observatory. This was an immense treat. First of all we had to wait until it was dark, so that sometimes we had to sit up much later than usual. Then there was the walk by starlight, up a particular little path which always went by the name of "papa's walk". It led straight up the side of the hill through a mass of St John's wort. Then came the unlocking of the observatory door, the solemn hush of silence which fell upon us as we entered, for our father would allow no noise there. Then the mystery of the great trap-door which could be let down over the staircase so as to give more room for walking about. The slow revolving of the great dome and the flash of a myriad countless orbs as it turned slowly round. Then the peep by turns through the great telescope.

What wonderful sights were revealed then. Saturn with his bright golden ring round him and his six or seven moons. Jupiter with his four. Of Saturn I must really give you a fuller description, for I daresay you have no idea what a wonderful planet it is. First of all, although it looks like a little tiny speck to you, it is really nine hundred times as big as the world you are living in. Round its bright shining body is a great double ring like a belt. But you must not think that this belt clasps it closely round like a band. It is a great distance from the body and does not touch it anywhere. Indeed, you will hardly believe me when I tell you that it is thirty thousand miles distant from any part of the planet, and yet it travels everywhere with Saturn as he goes round the sun. This ring is double and is of such an enormous size that the diameter of the outside ring is eighty

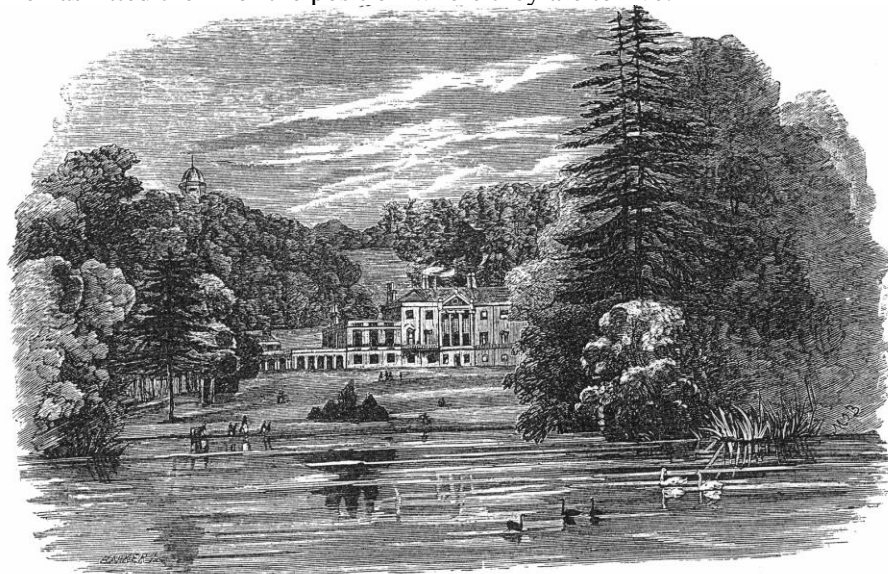
times the diameter of our earth, and the smaller ring two-and-a-half times. If you were to take four hundred and fifty balls the size of this world in which you are living, and put them all together, close to each other, the great rings would easily go round them all. Then there is the lovely planet Venus, brightest of all, and often seen like a little crescent moon of silvery whiteness. She is usually called the morning and evening star. If ever you have a chance of looking through a telescope do not forget to ask to see Venus.

There is something else I must also tell you about, and if you find this chapter dull you can skip it. This is about the "Milky Way". On a clear starry night you will see a great patch that looks like a thin feathery cloud across the sky. You may have seen it many a time without taking much notice of it. Point a telescope towards it, and what do you think it turns into? Millions and millions of stars, more than man can count, or even imagine. A great astronomer called Sir William Herschell only examined a small bit of it, and he actually found in that piece fifty thousand stars large enough to be counted. Then there are the double stars. These look like tiny specks to the naked eye, but through the telescope you find that they are two and sometimes more stars, one generally smaller than the other and continually moving round it.

Last of all, though not least, I must mention the moon. She is the nearest to us of all the heavenly bodies, and yet even she is two hundred and forty thousand miles away. What wonderful things the telescope shows us when we point it at her: lovely mountains like the Alps and Andes, others tall and pointed like the Peak of Tenerife, bright shining spots and dark cavities.

Truly the wonders of the universe are inexhaustible, and one longs with such an intense longing to know more and more of those mysteries which we shall never understand until we know even as we are known. Our world is but one of many worlds, some infinitely larger than our own. Even our great sun, upon which we look with such respect, may be only one of many suns, each possibly with planets revolving round them. We cannot tell; yet it may even be that those other worlds are also peopled, and the same power that brought us out of chaos, and called us 'very good', may have in the boundless space of His dominions countless multitudes whom no man can number.

These worlds may be totally different to ours, indeed we know that many of them must be so, for some of them are so near the sun that people of the same nature as ourselves would be burnt up and could not live there. But can we set any limit to God's power? If He has placed people in those other worlds, we may be very certain that He has fitted them for the position where they are to live.



Bury Hill as depicted in the frontispiece to 'Family Feats'
The Observatory dome can be seen above the trees on the left side of the picture.

The Nower Temple



an article 'Milton Heath and the Nower' in the 2003 report reference was made to the pavilion-like structure at the highest point with the admission that its origins were unknown. However, one further quote from Lady Bray's childhood memoirs informs us that: 'At the top of the hill there was a little building called the Temple, with an iron fence round it. It was really a summer house; but as my grandfather had built it in imitation of a Roman temple, called the Temple of Vesta, that is how it came to be called a temple.'

Barclay, Perkins & Co Ltd.

For most of the nineteenth century the prosperity of Westcott was closely linked to the wealth of the Fuller and Barclay families. The Fuller fortune came from banking (see 'Messrs Fuller & Company, Bankers' in the June 2000 Annual Report). The Barclay family also had a banking interest but it was as brewers that the Barclays of Bury Hill were to make their mark.

Robert Barclay was born in 1751 in Philadelphia where his father was a Customs Officer. He came to England at the age of 12 to complete his education and was befriended by David Barclay and Silvanus Bevan, half-uncles who were partners of Barclay's Bank. Walking across London Bridge one day they saw Thrale's Brewery advertised for sale and agreed that "This will do for young Robert". The sale to what Henry Thrale's widow described as "A knot of rich Quakers" was completed on the 31st May 1781 for £135,000. Henry Thrale's executors included Samuel Johnson who, when challenged about the value of the property, famously replied, "We are not here to sell a parcel of boilers and vats, but the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice."

Samuel Johnson was right. The Anchor Brewery proved to be a profitable venture. With financial help from his banker uncles and the technical expertise of John Perkins, Thrale's former manager with whom Robert went into partnership, the brewery was extended and modernised, including the installation of a Boulton and Watt steam engine¹. Production in 1860 had been 30,000 barrels but by 1815 Barclay and Perkins were producing over 337,000 barrels a year, making it – at that time – the biggest brewery in the world.

¹ It is claimed that when Mr Barclay sought some indication of the power represented by the new engine, William Murdoch, Boulton & Watt's installation engineer, compared its performance with that of the pump then being used to raise water from a well on the site. This was driven by horses led round and round a circular track. Murdoch, at James Watt's instigation, compared the energy expended by the horses – judged to be of the order of 22,000 feet pounds per minute – and added 50% to this 'to be on the safe side'. The resultant '33,000 feet pounds a minute' has remained ever since as the standard definition of one horse-power.



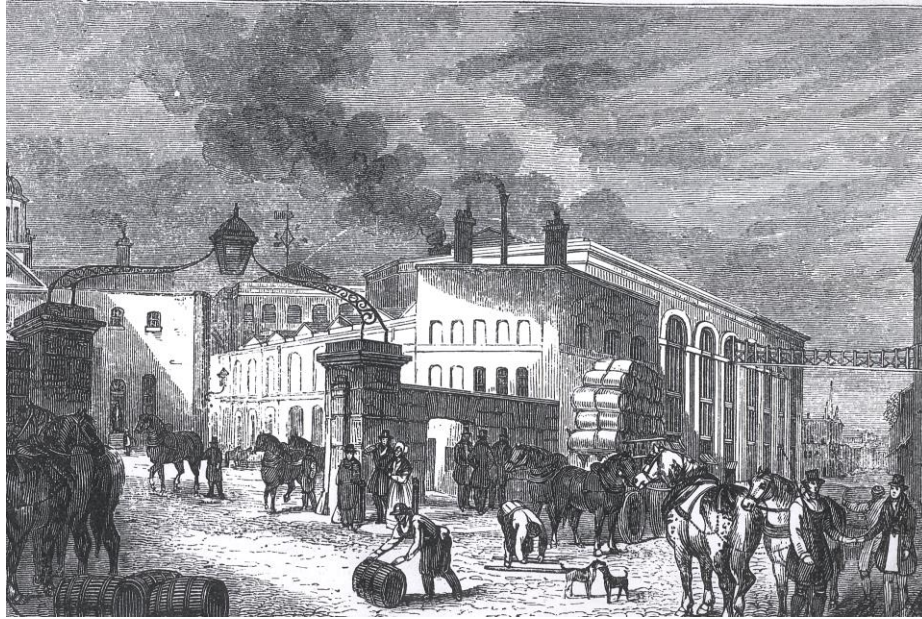
The Anchor Brewery

In 1805 Robert Barclay sought a country house away from the hustle and bustle of Southwark. He chose Bury Hill, with its 2,000 acre estate which he initially leased and then bought in 1812.



Bury Hill, Westcott

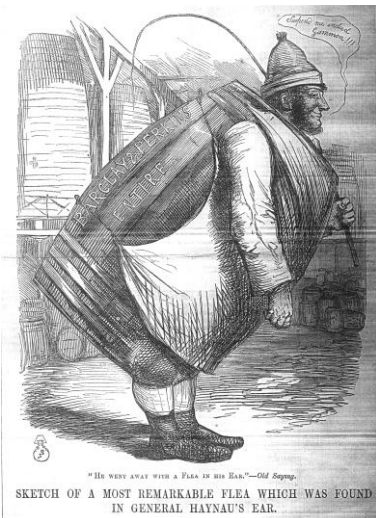
In 1832 part of the brewery was destroyed by fire but the availability of the first steam fire engine in England helped to limit the damage, and the engine was then retained to pump beer day and night for a month until normal production could be restored.



Entrance to Brewery 1841

By this time Robert had handed over control of the brewery to his son Charles and had devoted the last years of his life to the stocking of his new estate with trees and plants from Asia, Africa and America. As a result his extensive garden attracted many visitors, one of who noted that *'As an accompaniment to the flower garden was a rustic summer house, thatched with the refuse shavings obtained in making wooden barrel hoops'* – no doubt brought down to Westcott from Southwark.

By 1850 the Anchor Brewery employed over 400 men (and had stabling for the 200 horses that delivered beer throughout London) and was one of the principal attractions of the capital. The Visitors' Book included Napoleon III, Tchaikovsky and Bismark as well as the future Edward VII. However one overseas visitor in 1850 did not receive a warm welcome.



A flea in the ear of General Haynau

The Austrian General Haynau was notorious for the brutality with which he had put down rebellions in Hungary and Italy and so his name had scarcely dried on his name in the visitors' book when the word spread that the 'Hye' was in the brewery. The General had barely crossed the yard when he was attacked by draymen and brewery workers with brooms and shouting *'Down with the Austrian bi'* Haynau was forced to hide until rescued by police and spirited away by boat across the river. The Austrian ambassador demanded an apology but the Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmston sided with the brewery men

and it was only after the intervention of Queen Victoria that a conciliatory letter was sent to Vienna. Even then Austria was still so resentful that it sent no representative to the funeral of the Duke of Wellington in 1852. The incident was not forgotten and when the Italian revolutionary Garibaldi visited England in 1864, he insisted on visiting the brewery to thank *'the men who flogged Haynau'*. The event was, of course, commemorated in the Music Halls, with the following song:

*Jolly boys, who brew porter for Barclay and Perkins,
The prime London stout of our cans and our firkins,
Here's a health, English hearts, what'er may betide,
For the dose you gave Haynau along the Bankside.*

The fame of the Anchor brewery was such that it often featured in Victorian novels. It was a job at the brewery that Micawber had in mind when he was *'waiting for something to turn up'* in David Copperfield, and it was Barclay's beer that Dick Swiveller claimed in the Old Curiosity Shop contained *'a spell in every drop against the ills of mortality'*.

Dr Johnson's influence on the creation of Barclay Perkins & Company was not forgotten. As the Barclay's 'Doctor' brand beer gained fame at home and abroad Samuel Johnson's face was to be seen on the bottle labels and his figure clutching a pint pot became the brewery's emblem.

It was not only the profits envisaged by Dr Johnson that enhanced Bury Hill and Westcott. In comparatively recent times there were tangible links with the great Southwark brewery. In September 1939 some of the key members of staff were evacuated to Bury Hill House with the Barclay family and their resident staff. At one time there were 46 people living in the house and all available space was utilised for offices and sleeping accommodation.



Before then Westcott's links with the brewery were marked in a much more civilised way. Bury Hill was the venue for outings for the Brewery workers. Tennis tournaments between the Brewery Sports Club and the Directors were held at 'The Chairman's House' and a Barclay Perkins cricket team, accompanied by anything up to 200 supporters, had bank holiday fixtures with the village XI.

In this picture Westcott players take the field against Barclay's Brewery on August Bank Holiday 1937, with Leslie Howard's son Ronald (centre) in the village team

Brewing continued at the Anchor Brewery throughout the 19th century and the first half of the twentieth, during which time successive generations of Barclays and Perkins continued to manage the business. The Bury Hill Barclay interest progressed from father to son:

Robert (1751-1830)
Charles (1780-1855)
Arthur Kett (1806-1869)
Robert (1837-1913)
Robert Wyvill (1880-1951)
Robert(1906-1959).

In the early 1950's, at about the same time that the Barclay Family sold the Bury Hill Estate, Barclay Perkins merged with Courage. The brewery became a bottling plant before finally closing in 1987 when the 12-acre area (including the site of the Globe Theatre) was purchased by the GLC for £2.5m, bringing to an end 300 years of large scale brewing on Bankside.



Although there were excursions from Bankside to Westcott, this photograph from the Barclay, Perkins magazine – The Anchor – shows 21 charabancs leaving the Brewery for an outing to Brighton at 6.30 am on Saturday 5th June 1926.

WARTIME MEMORIES FROM BURY HILL

On the outbreak of the World War II several companies moved out of London to avoid the anticipated German bombing campaign. The staff of Barclay's Brewery in Southwark were housed in Bury Hill House with members of the Barclay family and their resident staff. By the end of September 1939 there were 46 people living in the house and all available space was utilised for offices and sleeping accommodation. Although there were air raid warnings, when everybody gathered in the cellar, this was the period known as the phoney war and by the end of December 1939 the brewery staff had returned to London.

On 2nd July 1940 the Barclay family moved to the new family home at Logmore in Logmore Lane, which was renamed as Bury Hill House. 'Old Bury Hill' was requisitioned by the army and became the Eastern and South Eastern Command Weapon Training School. The Barclay Estate was still a going concern, however, and Col Barclay arranged for the Adjutant of the Weapon Training School to issue passes to allow the estate staff to go about their business.

Bury Hill

Edward Walter

An early description of Bury Hill was that it was 'part of the waste of the Manor of Milton'. It was probably typical heathland – heather, gorse and a few pines - when Edward Walter first set eyes on it around 1750. He was 23 and MP for Milborne Port in Somerset. He was also very rich, having inherited wealth from his grandfather, Peter Walter, who had been estate steward for the Duke of Newcastle. He decided Bury Hill was where he wished to live and seems to have had a clear vision of what he wanted.

He first lived at Chadhurst Farm and then bought up the land he needed to create the estate. In 1754 he married Harriot Forrester, in Dorking, and by 1756 the estate was almost complete, with his house under construction. His 1756 survey map shows Bury Hill House as a rectangle described in the key as 'The Ichnography of the new House now erecting'. The new lake is a finger of water building up behind a dam.

By 1762 the work was completed. Rocque's map of that year shows the house with paths around the grounds, the stables and the lake all in being. The lake alone was an astonishing achievement; digging it out and creating the retaining bank must have required a great deal of labour. The house seems to have been relatively modest at that time.

Two other buildings probably put up by Walter were the lodges on the approach road from Milton Heath, now known as Bracken Cottage and Bury Hill Lodge. The 1901 census shows the latter occupied by Emily Shearcroft whose occupation was described as a Biblewoman – she acted as a welfare and social worker on the estate.

Edward and Harriot had two sons, who died young, and a daughter, Harriot, who was born in 1755. The Walters were in Rome in 1771 and it was here that Harriot met James Bucknall, son of Viscount Grimston. Three years later they married. James had by then succeeded as 3rd Viscount Grimston on the death of his father and the couple moved in to the family home, Gorhambury House, near St Albans.

The Grimstons

Edward Walter died in 1780 and Bury Hill passed to Harriot as his only child. By that time James and Harriot had three children – James Walter, Harriot and Charlotte, born in 1775, 1776 and 1778. Sadly, Harriot's health declined and she died in 1786. Her three children inherited Bury Hill and her mother moved up to Gorhambury to look after them; this she did until her own death in 1795. Bury Hill House was let to James Richardson, then George Shum and, finally, Robert Barclay.

A feature which seems to date from this time is the ice-house in Rock Lane. Built into the side of the hill facing north and in deep shade, it stored ice taken from the lake each winter. Kept between layers of straw, it remained frozen for use in the house through the summer months. The ice-house is entered through a short passage and is about 20 feet deep. There are tally marks on the walls and a header brick dated 1808. What they did for ice before then is a mystery.

James Walter had a very different character to his father, who he succeeded in 1806. He was extravagant and passionate about racing. He was a close friend of the Prince Regent, later George IV, and in 1808 married Charlotte Jenkinson, only daughter of the 1st Earl of Liverpool. In 1811 they decided to sell the entire Bury Hill estate which was bought by Robert Barclay, who at that time was renting the house.

The Barclays

Robert Barclay (1751-1830) was born in Philadelphia, where his father had been sent to help with the family export business. At the age of 12 Robert came to school in England and later went in to the family brewing business which was later to become Barclay, Perkins & Co. He married Rachel Gurney and they had 15 children. Rachel died in 1794. Ten years later Robert married Margaret Hodgson.

The Barclays were a successful Quaker family and Robert was a wealthy man when he became the owner of Bury Hill. He was a philanthropist and a strong supporter of William Wilberforce in his campaign to end slavery. Closer to home, he set up the Dorking Emigrants' Scheme and founded schools for the poor; he may have started the idea of a school in Milton Street.

Apart from these interests Robert Barclay was also a renowned botanist. Specimen plants were sent to him from all parts of the world and he built hot-houses to display his collection. He employed an artist to make drawings of his rarities and he had one of the finest collections of natural history books in the country. The *Barclaya* species of water-lily was named after him. He also started the collection of trees at Bury Hill.

It was these interests that brought changes in the house and grounds. After Robert's death an obituary in Curtis's Botanical Magazine describes the changes he made. The range of hot-houses was extended and 'Near the mansion, and communicating with it by an arcade, in which stood oranges, lemons etc...was another conservatory'. This is shown in a print c1830 (fig) which shows a house very different to the earlier structure.

Robert was succeeded by his eldest son, Charles (1780-1855). He was an MP and also prominent in the anti-slavery campaign. He ran the brewery from 1812 and after taking over the estate did a great deal to improve the farms. He paid for the new village school to replace the one in Milton Street, built the vicarage and was one of the main contributors to the costs of the village church. Sadly he died after being thrown from his horse when it was startled by a stag in Milton Street..

Arthur Kett Barclay (1806-1869) was interested in geology and chemistry, but above all he was a keen astronomer and was made FRS for his astronomical work. He had the Bury Hill observatory built to the design of Decimus Burton, who had designed the Palm House at Kew. Apart from his scientific interests Arthur Kett also ran the brewery and was one of the trustees of the Great Exhibition in 1851.

The Bury Hill observatory had a 5.9 inch refractor telescope in the tower and a transit instrument in the adjoining transit house. At 400 feet above sea level with clear all-round views it was ideally

sited. Arthur Kett was paralysed in his final years, but had a sled made so that footmen could tow him up the steep slope to the observatory each night to make his observations.

The observatory remained very much as it was until after the second world war when the instruments were removed. The building gradually fell into decay but was restored as a house in 1990. The original dome remains a feature of the property.

Arthur Kett's eldest son was Robert Barclay (1837-1913). He was a good athlete and a fine shot. After an education at Harrow and Cambridge he joined the brewery, and became Master of the Brewers' Company in 1871. He made major alterations to Bury Hill House, rebuilding and heightening the wings which substantially enlarged the house and brought to its final form. He was later much involved with the restoration of Southwark Cathedral.

Robert had married Laura Wyvill; they had 4 sons and a daughter and a big event during this period was the coming of age in 1901 of their eldest son, Robert Wyvill Barclay. The celebrations lasted a week with balls, dinners, a childrens' party and fireworks. All the events with their speeches and toasts were recorded in a souvenir which gives a vivid picture of the convivial atmosphere of the occasion.

Robert Barclay died in 1913 and the following year Lt Col Robert Wyvill Barclay put Bury Hill up for sale. The auction took place on 23 July 1914 but no acceptable bids were made, possibly because war was looming. However, the sale particulars give a good picture of what the estate was like. The house had six reception rooms and 31 bedrooms, a far cry from the house of 1811 which had just seven bedrooms. It also described the grounds with a list of the principal trees including a Douglas Fir, 114 feet high, planted in 1832.

The sale also included Milton Street and the Nower, but not the farms. Interestingly the Nower was described as 'A Very Valuable Area of Building Land', 'An Exceedingly Fine Site for one or more Important Residences'. It was fortunate for Dorking that the sale did not go ahead; seventeen years later Col Barclay gave the Nower to the town as a permanent open space.

The reason for the sale is not known; it was probably the need to meet death duties. Although the sale was cancelled, the Barclays were nevertheless able to let Bury Hill and move to a new house they had built in Logmore Lane. The letting, to Sir Spencer Maryon-Wilson, ended in 1927 when the Barclays returned to their old home.

In 1940 Col Barclay offered to sell Bury Hill House to Dorking Council for use as a cottage hospital. The idea was still being considered when the house was requisitioned and taken over by the Army; estate workers had to have passes to get in and out. By 1944 the house was being used by the Canadian Army prior to the invasion of Europe.

After the war the house and lake were sold privately. In 1949 the central block of the house was badly damaged by fire and had to be pulled down. The two wings were unaffected and were converted to flats, later sold as the separate properties they remain today. The lake was sold and made open to fishing. Today the lake is owned by Bury Hill Fisheries who have added three smaller lakes to the south and west of the main lake.

Col Barclay died in 1951 and the rest of the estate had to be sold to meet death duties. This included not only Milton Street but also Home Farm, Chadhurst Farm and Westlees Farm and some 20 other properties. The sale was by auction and took place on 23 July 1952, thirty-eight years to the day after the sale was due to take place in 1914. It was the end of an era and a sad occasion, typical of many similar events which were taking place across the country in a time of massive social change.