



## The Bald Faced Stag

By Hugh Petrie

In 1712 the Great North Turnpike Road brought opportunity to those servicing coaches. In 1736 a Finchley Blacksmith called John Newey, was allowed by the Lord of the Manor to build a workshop and house on condition that it was not a "Publick House".

In 1736 he, and another blacksmith called Thomas Grub, were fined £5 for selling 'beer and ale'. Despite this the house was called the Jolly Blacksmiths until around 1779. By 1781 William Boulden had renamed it The Bald Faced Stag. One story is that such a stag took refuge in the bar. There is also belief that in public deer hunts participants were allowed to take hair from the face of the dead stag, and the house may have been the centre for such hunts. There aren't many Bald Faced Stags but all are on major turnpike routes, and it is more likely that they had some connection with a stage coach company.

In the same period a gibbet is said to have stood where Budgens is today. It was common for Highwaymen and thieves to buy information in

the Inns on the road about other travellers and local homes. One villain (called Gentleman Harry) spent a productive evening in 1778 making inquiries at the George and the Stag. He burgled the house of a sick farmer called Daniel Clewing, of Cuckolds Haven (Red Lion Hill). Harry was taken and publicly hung at Tyburn.

The railways brought a decline in both the pig market and the coach trade. The house was saved by the 'black' trade, which provided mourners at the new cemeteries with refreshments. The possibility of trams from Archway, and a new suburban development, led William Shaw to have the house rebuilt at great expense. However there were no trams until 1904, and he lost the house.

*To be continued.*



The Bald Faced Stag in 1910. Photo reproduced by courtesy of the Archives of London Borough of Barnet.



393 (Finchley) Squadron ATC march past East Finchley Library. Photo supplied by Andrew Bryson

## The Spitfire opposite the Station

By Daphne Chamberlain

**"What happened to the Spitfire opposite the station? Why was it there anyway?"**

*THE ARCHER* has been asked these questions so many times that it's high time we answered them. We know now why it was there, but we still need some help with the first question.

For the benefit of anyone who hasn't the foggiest idea what this is about, a World War 2 'plane, said to have been a Spitfire, stood outside Park House in the 1940s.

It was there because Park House was the base for 393 (Finchley) Squadron Air Training Corps, and it was customary for RAF training establishments to keep a plane in their grounds.

Official records of this are thin on the ground, but thanks to Andrew Bryson of the long established East Finchley printing business, *THE ARCHER* has had access to a store of photos and memorabilia. They belonged to his father, John Gordon Bryson, who was to

become a local alderman and twice Mayor of Finchley.

### 393 Squadron

In 1941, exempt from military service as his printing works supplied servicing instructions for the undercarriages of bombers, Mr Bryson was appointed to the RAF Volunteer Reserve. His post was Adjutant to the Commanding Officer of 393 Squadron.

The "lads" in the Squadron really were just that - boys 15-17 years old, being trained for war. Like Mr Bryson, who had run the gym attached to the East Finchley Congregational Church, the squadron's civilian instructors may well have worked in boys' clubs or gyms before the war.

Mr R. Pledge from 28, Summerlee Avenue, and Mr J. Craig from 17, Ringwood Avenue were instructors from the N2 area, and one of the secretaries was a Miss Davis from 3, Summerlee Gardens.

It would be fascinating to hear from anyone with connections with this branch of the Air Training Corps.

### Where did it go?

As to where the plane went, I'm afraid we don't know - but perhaps one of you might. There is one faint hope. If, by any remote chance, a 1940s anorak recorded its serial number the RAF can trace it.

There is an unexpected footnote to this. We have been told that a Messerschmidt was parked outside Barnet station at the same time. Before you ask, shot-down planes were apparently used as a focal point for collecting money for the war effort.

### Apology to The Duke

In the October issue of *THE ARCHER* in a story about the Duke of Cambridge public house, it was implied that the pub was to close soon. This was a regrettable error made by the editorial team of *THE ARCHER*. The editor offers sincere apologies to Paul O'Mahoney, landlord at the Duke of Cambridge for this error, and to his customers who may have been concerned by the comment made. *THE ARCHER* would also like to point out that the original submission, by Hugh Petrie, contained no implication of closure so our apologies are offered to him too.

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