

THE



TUBBS

Christmas 2011

Ave Freddy



The above is a detail from a portrait of Grahame Burnell Tubbs (Uncle Gray) by Alfred R (Tommy) Thomson RA. The "P" is absent as in bean. It is believed to date from around 1956, aetat. suis 64. Thomson features in this edition, as does GBT himself. Thomson is believed to have been living at Milton House, Fernshaw Road, London, S.W.10 around that time. Since Gray lived at Cranmer Court they were both upholding the Protestant tradition, if only by their postal addresses.

The Festival of Britain - 60 glorious years

The sixtieth anniversary of the Festival of Britain did not pass completely un-noticed. Those commentators who mentioned it remarked that the Dome of Discovery was much superior to Tony Blair's Millennium fiasco. Serious critics recalled that the Dome was designed by Ralph Tubbs, though few commentators get past mentioning Hugh Casson who led the team of architects as Director of Architecture working at the South Bank and elsewhere. In all there were about 25 so-called pavilions on

the site, eight housed in the Dome of Discovery. Each pavilion was themed, one a reminder that it was precisely 100 years since the Great Exhibition of 1851. Now that was an exhibition! It marks the beginning of the great series of South Kensington Museums. The Crystal Palace, designed by Sir Joseph

Paxton, the Gardener at Chatsworth, was originally sited on Hyde Park, of course. It only moved to its hill-top crematorium after the exhibition had closed. The first sketch of the Palace was made on Derby Midland Railway Station (no train stations here please) and there is a plaque on platform 1 to commemorate it. Delightful man though he was, Casson can not have more than an indifferent architect as Derbyans witness every time they look at his Assembly Rooms. We can not blame Casson, I suppose, for demolishing a mediaeval masterpiece but Derby Market place is not what it was. Nor is the South Bank Exhibition site. Much of it became a

victim of politics. Churchill's new government disliked the whole thing and ensured that there was no reprieve for the Dome. The famous Skylon also went as did the shot tower which was turned into a radio telescope for the Exhibition. The most important thing about the Festival of Britain is that the South Bank Exhibition was just one of many sites throughout the land. Festival Ship Campania toured ten ports between May and October. The Land Travelling Exhibitions covered Manchester,

Leeds, Birmingham and Nottingham in the same period. There were major exhibitions in Edingburgh, Glasgow, Belfast and a Pageant of Wales in Cardiff plus a host of Arts Festivals and smaller local festival events. It was a serious attempt to escape from post-war



gloom to a new optimism. Well, that was the idea anyway.

A serious report on the competition to design a pub for the future awaits the completion of my research. Despite all the optimism for the future of architecture it was all about to go wrong, as we now know. One of the Festival Sites was Poplar, The whole area was rebuilt as required after the Blitz and included The Festival public House. Of all that the less said the better. A visit soon betrays the fact that it has not stood the test of time, but then on the other hand it hasn't been yuppified either, or hadn't last time I looked.

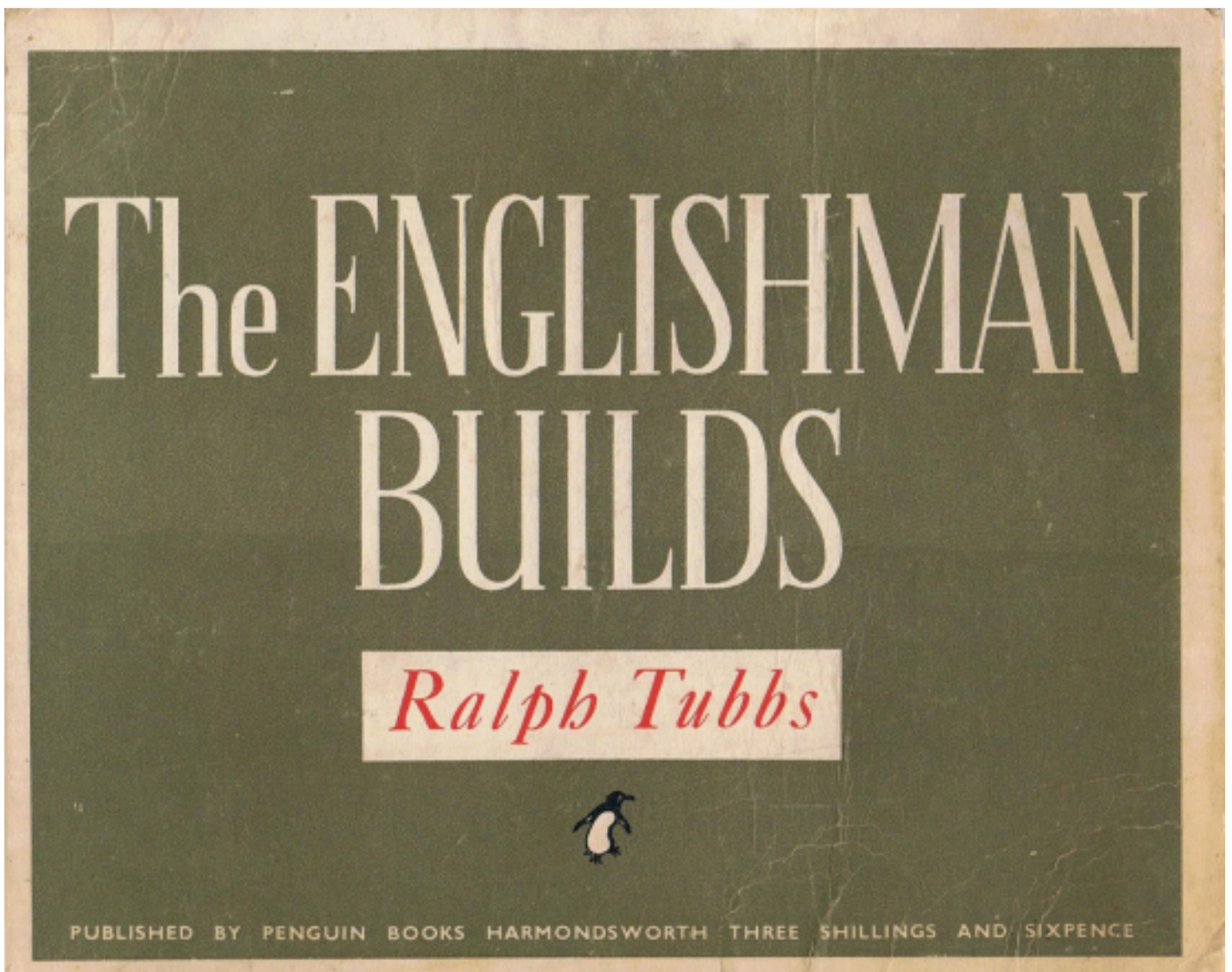
The Englishman Builds - 1912-1997

Ralph Tubbs came out of the Festival with a greatly enhanced reputation and won plaudits for two major post-war buildings.

Though championed by the Twentieth Century Society the Granada Office off Deansgate in Manchester remains unlisted and its future is constantly under threat as the license of Independent Television Companies to print money turns into IZAL. There are charming stories of Tubbs and Sydney Bernstein of Granada jointly sketching the initial design. This was the first curtain wall building in Manchester and the first office block built there post-war. A brief visit by the beer buffs afforded a view of the Granada building from the hotel window,

a view also enriched by the prospect of the former Liverpool Road Station, the oldest surviving railway station in the world now the home of the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry.

The Indian YMCA, which was built on Fitroy Square with the assistance of the University is not under threat as far as I know. See overleaf for images. The Englishman Builds is a hardback Penguin of 1945; this also reflects a post-war aspiration for progress tempered with a sense of historic continuity. There may be high quality photographs of the complete Dome but I have not yet found one. I include a drawing used by British Aluminium in their Festival advertising, which also shows the Skylon.



REMOVAL MAN

The nearest common ancestor of Ralph Tubbs and me was HTT's father Richard Thomas. Descended via Alfred Thomas and Sydney Walter, Tubbs is therefore second cousin to CBT and second cousin twice removed to me. The lesser number of

greats+grands gives you the cousinage and the difference between the two give the removal. e.g.

CBT's father was PBT so HTT was grandfather and RTT great grandfather - so that's two great+grand. Four for me minus two for him equals two. geddit?

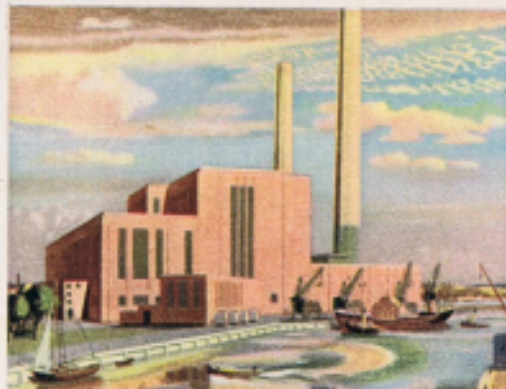


HAPPY CHRISTMAS 2011

NEW POWER STATIONS



Cliff Quay, near Ipswich. By Norman Wilkinson, C.B.E., P.R.I.
Ultimate capacity 170,000 kilowatts.



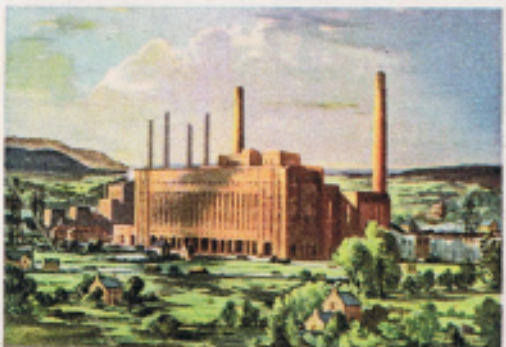
Poole, Dorset. By R. Vivian Pitchforth, A.R.A.
Ultimate capacity 200,000 kilowatts.



Staythorpe, near Newark. By A. R. Thomson, R.A.
Ultimate capacity 360,000 kilowatts.



Aggroft, near Manchester. By James Bateman, R.A.
Ultimate capacity 210,000 kilowatts.



Stourport, "B", Worcestershire. By Charles Cundall, R.A., R.W.S.
Ultimate capacity 120,000 kilowatts.

THESSE paintings by well-known artists show five of the new power stations now being built in Great Britain—as they will appear when completed.

Forty-five new stations are under construction or projected. They are part of the vast power expansion plan to make good the war-time power shortage and to provide for the future electricity needs of Britain's industries and factories, businesses, farms and homes.

BRITISH ELECTRICITY

The Power and the Gallery

Another nice little sideline on the Festival. Power Stations. British Electricity (Everything was nationalised after the war) commissioned five paintings by well-known artists to show five new power stations as they would appear when completed. "Yummy!", you say. Well I'd walk a mile to see a picture of a power station by Norman Wilkinson. He got Ipswich. Charles Cundall got Stourport and AR (Tommy) Thomson got Staythorpe. Staythorpe A and B eventually pumped fly ash to within a couple of miles of where I used to live. When the stations closed the gravel extractors wanted to turn Hoveringham into a rubbish tip.

There's the past coming to haunt you. Quite a lot of brain and muscle went into defeating that one. A new power station is now being built at Staythorpe, but Hoveringham's gravel pits are now re-filled only with water.

The connections here of course are that A.R. Thomson, now unfashionable, is also the creator of the portraits of CBT and GBT. Cundall created both the childhood portrait of UMT and MCT and the rather grand view of the Pool of London which now hangs in the inner sanctum at Haileybury College. I will get to see it one of these days. The Indian YMCA (bottom left opposite) lives in the shadow of the erstwhile Post Office (now BT) Tower.

I am now the custodian of GBT's collection of bookplates. Despite being warned that they are boring I find them otherwise. This is one of my new hobbies. It is really quite hard to understand how bookplates become collectible; they are supposed to be stuck into books, and once stuck should remain where they are and would be difficult to remove anyway. I suppose the obvious answer is that having some plates printed is cheaper than buying the books to which they are affixed and so every collector of books has a few spares. GBT seems to have had a knack of identifying collectors and writing to them for specimens of their plates, in much the same way that children of all ages wrote to celebrities seeking their autograph. The interest in the plates comes in four forms. First is where there is a family connection. Second is the plates of celebrities, that little brush with fame: then there are those of historic or heraldic interest and finally many of them have artistic merit. There is also a fifth category which is those that have not survived in the collection though there is documentary evidence that they once may have been. Lancelot (Capability) Brown seems to have gone missing so it would be quite a coup to find one of his. In the family category we have PBT, GBT himself, F A Waite (AMT's father) and most intriguingly Robert and Cecilia Tubbs, about whom I still know nothing. Their plate is armorial and over the familiar Tubbs shield of a chevron gules and two or three gurnards hauriant (leaping) there is an inescutcheon which is itself quartered. That is not the usual way of representing the arms of husband and wife so I am a bit lost there. The motto is *Sempre Lo Stesso* which is used by a lot of people and means I remain standfast or words to that effect. Their secrets will be uncovered, I trust, *per industriam*.

Naturally GBT's collection includes plates from several architects. The most bonkers has to be John

Cotton an architect from Bromsgrove and Birmingham who produced at least 50 different plates of which they are nearly 40 in the GBT collection. The City of Birmingham Museum has what may be a complete collection so there's a day out in that I should think.

Without doubt the most distinguished book collector

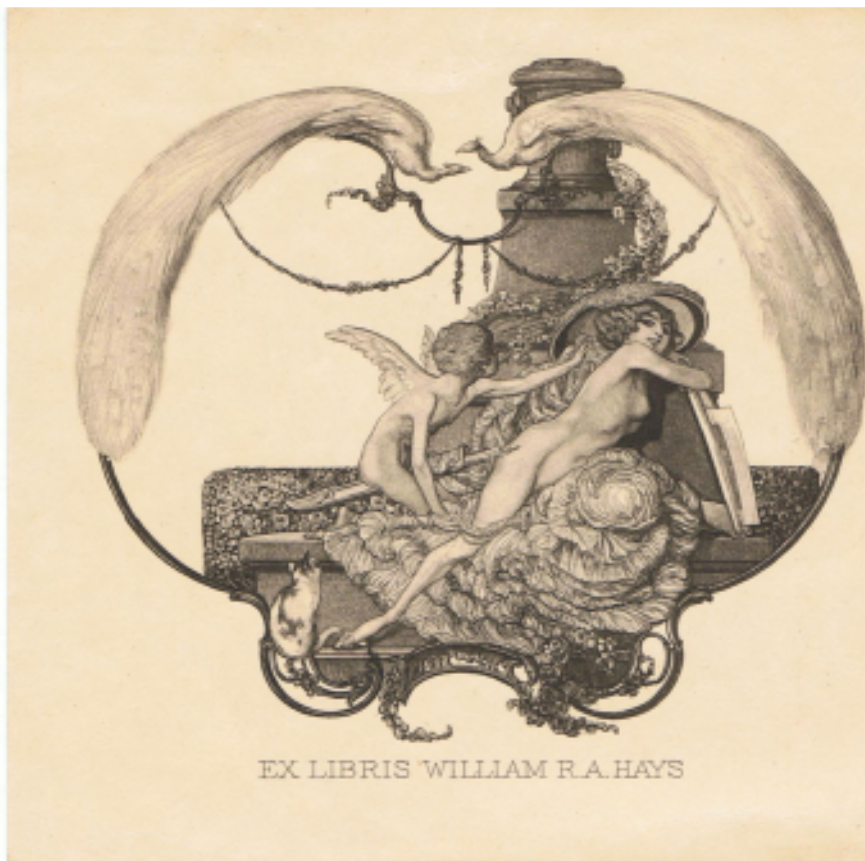
represented is Joseph Smith, Consul at Venice. He was Canaletto's agent and a collector on a huge scale. His first book collection was acquired by George III and used to occupy a whole gallery in the British Museum and now resides in the central tower inside the British Library.

PBT's bookplate (It's in a book and is not part of the GBG collection) is mentioned in DBT's memoirs. DBT states that it was based on a photograph taken by PBT while waiting for repairs to be carried out to SS Otranto,

damaged on its maiden voyage in 1926. Sure enough the plate is dated "SS Otranto 11.5.26". The subject is said to be the Erechtheum (there are several ways of spelling it) on the Acropolis. There is a much more familiar view of this building; its portico is supported by four caryatids, silent women would you believe? If you can't get to Athens there is a copy of sorts attached to St Pancras Church. PBT was a serious student of classical architecture and his collection of Piranesi

prints (*Carceri d'Invenzione*) was bequeathed to the RIBA, I understand. The British Library has a superb collection of them and I should think they are rather valuable. The book containing the plate is itself a 17th century printing of a 16th century treatise on the classical orders of architecture by one Barozzio da Vignola.





The Art Nouveau bookplate of William R. A. Hays is thought to have been designed by one Stanley Harris. I know nothing about either of them yet, but include it as a reward for your diligence in following all the dry stuff in this year's newsletter. The good news is the WRAH had at least one other plate featuring the little-draped female form. Maybe next year if you behave!. Its motto is "Un livre est un ami qui ne change jamais" (A good book is a friend for

ever).

Sadly there are rather a lot of F. A. (Frederick Augustus) Waite plates. AMT's father died too young for his book-collection to be complete. We have a few peers of the realm, gentlemen's clubs, old girls' associations, architects from mainstream to crackpot. All human life is there, if it reads.

Go West - then East, then West, then to Korea and then go west again - all in one trip!

I am grateful to a colleague of mine at work for reminding me how not to visit San Francisco; he recovered his reputation in one respect only, observing that the Old Faithful Geyser is on Tubbs Lane. He studiously avoided Tubbs Street in the City, as would most others; it contains a bus depot, missed the Tubbs Cord Company Offices and failed to visit the Jeremiah O'Brian. Here is a quick run-through just in case you are ever passing that way. It is said that HTT crowed that where King Canute had failed, Tubbs had succeeded in containing the waves by building the sea wall at Littlestone.

Another Tubbs defied the most famous of all American witticisms. It was Mark Twain who advised his fellows to buy land; they have stopped making it. The Tubbs Cordage Company built a pier that ran about a kilometre out into the bay. As is well known you can't make a rope by hand that is longer than the ropewalk it is made in. Miners in particular needed long, strong ropes. I had seen a photograph of the offices that MCT had taken, but it has only recently dawned on me that this is a rare survival of San Francisco's early industrial heritage, so much having been destroyed in the great Fire and subsequently. The offices date from about 1890 and were situated at the pier head. They are now preserved and protected by the US equivalent of listing.

Tracing the Tubbs who emigrated from England and finished up in California is work to be done. There

are two published histories of the cordage company but they are expensive and have not yet been obtained.

The Jeremiah O Brian was built on the East Coast but is now moored not very far from the former shipyards where MCT laboured. In one of the most impressive demonstrations of specialist knowledge I ever came across MCT was able to show The Tubbs at Portsmouth in 1994 exactly where the main welding seams differ on that ship from those he worked on. The sub-sections were pre-fabricated according to the available space, materials and size of crane.

There are published studies of the shipyards, the Liberties and the Victories. I hold copies of several of these from the MCT collection. I have used them to argue in public against Councillor Frank Leeming of Derby and a former merchant mariner, that these were not one-trip ships. The

point is that they were built so economically that if they survived their first trip they had paid for themselves in terms of their contribution to the war effort. A few of the early ships did fail badly and a few more failed over the years; many more of them sailed in merchant fleets into the 1970's by which times they had recovered their cost many times over. Victories were built with greater length and more modern engines specifically to serve in merchant fleets after the war.



Jeremiah O Brian

Photographed by The Tubbs at Portsmouth in 1994. The only ship actually involved in the Allied landings to be present at the 1994 anniversary sailed from the Pacific under her own steam and back again. So much for one-trip ships!

Jeremiah himself was a terrorist/freedom fighter in the early years of the American War of Independence.

The Monk's Speech 1896-1917

The private agony of a speech impediment may well be a reason behind Geoffrey Alfred Sutton gaining the nickname of Monk. Clearly he lacked his father's ability to balance greek verbs on the end of his nose but he was officer material in most respects.

Educated like his brothers at Haileybury he was a member of the London Irish Rugby Club and a member of Leander, six foot plus and built for scrummage and rowing. After leaving school he started to train as a railway engineer and went to diving school. How do we know so much about this unfortunate cousin of ours. It is largely because a great deal of his correspondence survives as well as a few artefacts which are witness to his existence.

He was not particularly communicative and most of his wartime correspondence consists of requests for money and equipment; this he had in common with millions of his contemporaries who were in any case forbidden to say much about their wartime experiences and, if they survived, spent the rest of their lives trying to forget about them.

The topical interest here though is the speech impediment. With it he could not get a commission. With a brother who was a regular officer and soaring up the ranks (see The Tubbs 2010) it must have seemed almost imperative that he gain a commission. He had been a member of the Artists Rifles before the war. Restrictions on Territorials fighting overseas were soon by-passed. Monk went to the trenches as a private soldier in the A.R. We don't know exactly what attracted him to this Company but we do know he was able to paint and draw.



Somehow his speech therapy continued and finally he was successful in gaining a commission in the Royal Irish Fusiliers. The Irish connection has long been a dark subject and is still a matter of speculation. The Fusiliers trained in Ireland and for a while Monk was based at Buncrana (Donegal) and on courses in Dublin. He went out to the trenches again, this time as an officer until resigning his commission in August 1916. There was a Court Martial. It is evident that drink was involved but there is a suggestion that there was more to it than that. His teetotal parents were not impressed.

The plot soon gets even darker. After an interview with the CO - How many people were interviewed by the CO before being accepted as a private soldier? - he was accepted into the Irish Guards. I believe this to be a back-handed compliment. The Irish Guards were training in England. I believe that this was to ensure that they were kept as far away from Ireland as possible following the 1916 uprising, though there was no conscription in Ireland. There are records in Hansard of questions in the house about the severity of training in the Irish Guards. Monk must have cut a strange figure as a public schoolboy mixing it with men who were, in his own unkind words, straight from the bogs. The last of his days were plagued with money troubles as the Crown tried to recover sums advanced to him while he was commissioned. He failed to win a prize at a boxing match at Christmas 1916, went back to the trenches for the third and last time, being killed in 1917. How many men served in three different infantry regiments in that war?



Monk is 3rd from right. Unfortunately the picture of A Coy. above does not seem to have taken at The Artists' Rifles Drill Hall on Duke Street, NW1, now a theatre. Nevertheless it helps to round off a sub-theme of this edition which you will have spotted if you are reading carefully. We have now mentioned Duke Street, The British Library, the Indian YMCA, The BT Tower and St Pancras Church. Some of these seem to be nearer to St. Pancras Station than St. Pancras Station, now that the mainline terminal is half-way to Bedford. We could add Argyle Square which is where Louisa Tubbs held her creche. Then as now the area had a doubtful reputation, Aunt Lettie and a few of my readers excepted,

Mentioning ourselves in The Tubbs is only supposed to be an occasional indulgence, but this one is hard to avoid. Having promulgated my phantasy for years that I work personally for Sir Henry there was only one possible location for this photograph of me and Gerald Bennett celebrating our success in solving 6000 problems for our illustrious patron. Sir Henry's statue was moved from central Derby to a new location outside his Moor Lane Headquarters. He has been replaced in Derby by an equestrian statue of Bonnie Prince Charlie whose influence on Derby was briefer. He stayed here for about a week before heading back to Scotland, defeat and exile. The Company is still known as Royce's in Derby. Royce founded his company in 1882. Rolls (and Claude Johnson) put the hyphen in during 1906 and Rolls soon moved on with Toad-like enthusiasm, to flying. He was killed in a flying accident in 1910.

Our little exercise in self-promotion paid off. The boss sent the story off to our superiors and we received a small cash bonus. Yippee!. In 2011 we also went on strike for 2 hours and got a pay rise!

Our fate will be settled early in 2012. Sir Henry has terminated our contract a year early and is re-distributing his largesse. The Rolls-Royce IT Director organising all this used to share a desk with me twenty years ago. . A pension would still be nice! Meanwhile I am on their Risk Register!

While not stupidly over-confident we have seen off three capi di tutti capi in three years at HP. Mark Brown had to walk the plank after fiddling his expenses. His replacement was a temp and Leo Apotheker goofed up and and was sent packing before



he even knew it himself. Any number of bosses at EDS previously have faded into the western sky and two culls a year have seen countless early retirements and worse. It has to be our turn one of these days. They are so good at it! The Tshirt graphic is a home-made affair and the design is a pastiche of all those 6000 forms they had to send us.

HIS LAST BOW

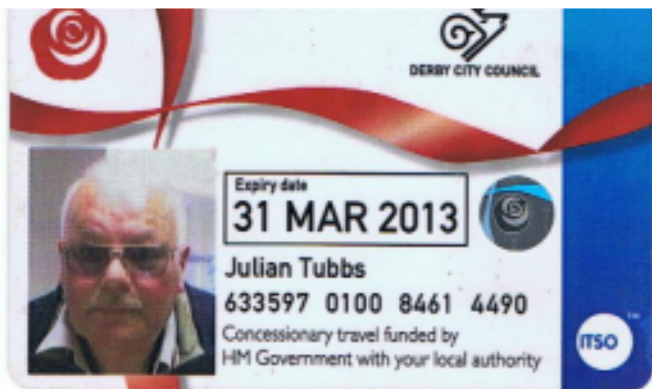
Are they or aren't they? On balance we guess not even though it seems most improbable that two unrelated sets of Tubbs should be finding their way in London at the same point, around the turn of the nineteenth century. CBT never mentions them and MCT (a violinist at one time) did not know of a connection. Tubbs bows are highly sought after and this one by James Tubbs was estimated at about £7,000, He was the last of five generations of bowmakers.. He is said to be in the top ten of all time, paying minute attention to the requirements of players and enjoying the patronage of royalty. The family is said to have emerged from Poplar, which doesn't sound like us, but was fond of drink, which does; he was fond of vile inns, no doubt, The Blue Poles being mentioned in the most detailed biography of the bowmakers available on the net. James Tubbs had a workshop at 94 Wardour Street. More to follow!





PEDIGREE QUALITY

Sutton's Seeds are still produced, so we are in good company and the brand must be one of the very oldest in the land with a genuine pedigree going back to the founding of the firm in Reading in 1806. There is now no known family connection; the firm is part of a group named Vilmorin, and they decamped from Reading to Torquay in 1976 and subsequently moved to Paignton. The Tubbs has always known that tennis is a hard game, but it came as a surprise that Suttons helped to make it harder. Annie Hill Sutton was the daughter of Dr Moxhay. Dr Moxhay was the surgeon at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading, but he and his family appear to have originated in Devon. Annie Hill married The Reverend Edwin Sutton; they seem to have been adequately provided for. Of their other children Will was the professional soldier, Basil managed the buses in Reading, Gwen was a teacher and I believe Dorothy was as well. Irene married CBT and the rest is history. Enamel signs are highly collectable. The signs above are to be found in the transfer shed at Didcot. Now you'll want to know what one of those is? It's where you changed trains when you were travelling with a company idiotic enough to have two gauges of railway track.



While my legs last, owning both a Brompton, a Senior Railcard and an old gits card is the ideal way to reduce expenditure on travel, except of course that like legs, Bromptons also wear out. Is there no end to the bounty of the taxman? HP have joined the Cyclescheme, permitting employees to buy new bicycles tax free. The old one was showing its age. It has visited over 100 venues in the UK outside Derbyshire in seven years.

More on the Irish Guards

We like little ironies in this newsletter. The historian of the Irish Guards in the First World War was none less than Rudyard Kipling, England's first Nobel Laureate for Literature. Kipling wrote the history in tribute to his only son John who was commissioned in the Irish Guards and lost his life very soon after going out to France. Mrs K was convinced that her son was not fit to be a hero as he had very poor eyesight, not unlike CBT, and she never forgave her husband for pulling strings to get him in!

A trip into Sussex failed to uncover my quarry in Alfriston but permitted me to visit Batemans, Kipling's home, now National Trust where his despised Rolls-Royce is on display. Kipling's vast output varies in quality and relevance. I can't read Stalky and Co, the language is so dated. It is widely acknowledged that Kim was his masterpiece. And who was Kim? Kim O'Hara, little friend of all the world.

THE TUBBS CROSSWORD No 2

The solution will be published at homepage.ntlworld.com/tubbspubs on 6th January 2012

We wish all our readers a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

p.s. Crossword No 1 was published separately in 2010.

11 across requires specialist knowledge which Mark Tubbs possesses for certain.

Across

- 1 Chop, Chop! Just in time (3 2 4)
- 6 Have to walk! Blame my mistake (5)
- 9 Is twitch in folk what defines them? (15)
- 10 It's Don, so think (6)
- 11 Former flag-waver sounds like a half of Pedro (3 5)
- 13 14 Mayor may grow oleander on B route (10 4)

- 16 Band the SAS has to fight? (4)
- 17 Carter took seed away and was the ruin of it (10)
- 19 It gets everywhere (8)
- 20 Master trains one (6)
- 23 Closing time or just a little earlier (3 8 4)
- 24 It's that ethereal quality (5)
- 26 Most unreliable when accessories get in garment (9)

Down

- 1 Two senior officers mix their drink (5)
- 2 How to do it badly (15)
- 3 1050 ways for 20 used to make Zeros (8)
- 4 A fan goes thither (4)
- 5 He makes his mark. Oh no he doesn't (10)
- 6 Be as certain as ruse will permit (6)
- 7 Specks here. Looks and sounds possible (6 2 3 4)
- 8 Hogs on celluloid? (4,5)
- 12 They have see-through ends (10)
- 13 Gnats play some deck game that loses direction (9)
- 15 Half a measure perhaps. Sounds like Bob gets A and O levels confused (8)
- 18 Yell up and get back into gear (6)
- 21 Remit this once you have earned it (5)
- 22 Prose? He's averse to it we hear (4)

