

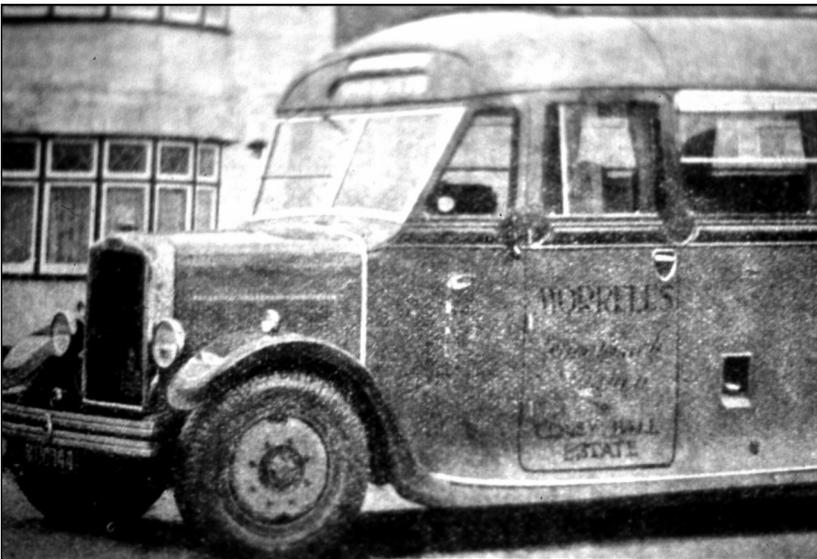
## A Window on West Wickham

In the closing years of the 19th century, Sir John Lennard (1816–1899) became Lord of the Manor and began to fence in the Common.

Emily Hall noted in her diary “*he has fenced in every morsel of the common that he can, and is now beginning to do the same to the woods*”. West Wickham previously contained 75 acres of common, but 50 acres were enclosed and disposed of for building purposes. After a public out-cry, opposition was organised and the remaining acres were saved by West Wickham residents who purchased 75 percent (£1500) and the Corporation of the City of London the rest (£500). The Corporation now looks after this in perpetuity. In 1892 the Mayor of London travelled to Wickham Common and declared it free and open to the public forever.

In 1926 Henry Lennard, son of John Lennard and cousin to Bertie Roberts, donated 36 acres of Spring Park to the Corporation of London for the people’s use for eternity and the following year added a further 16 acres.

Sir Henry Lennard died in 1928 and after the death of his wife, their son emigrated to Canada and sold part of the estate to Morrells (builders) who built Coney Hall; the cheapest houses being £479 with a deposit of just £1.00. Being nearer to train connections at Hayes, Morrells had a free bus service which ran every 10 minutes from early morning to late at night for those needing to travel. The roads were in a poor state and London Transport refused to provide a service. Surrounding farms were bought by Kent county Council in order to create a green belt.



## A Window on West Wickham

### Wickham Hall

Situated on the right looking down the High Street from The Swan, Wickham Hall, now 86 to 100 High Street, was a very large mansion in grounds of around 10 acres. The original Georgian house was called Wickham Place. The house was enlarged for Gustav Mellin, a baby food manufacturer in the late 1880s. The walled kitchen garden of the house was on the opposite side of the road where now there is a car park behind what was Woolworth (now Carpetright).

The house was demolished in 1931 and replaced with two parades of art-deco style shops and houses in Braemar Gardens. The stables became a United Dairies depot, now listed Grade II and incorporated in the Marks and Spencer supermarket.



*The stables of Wickham Hall became United Dairies*