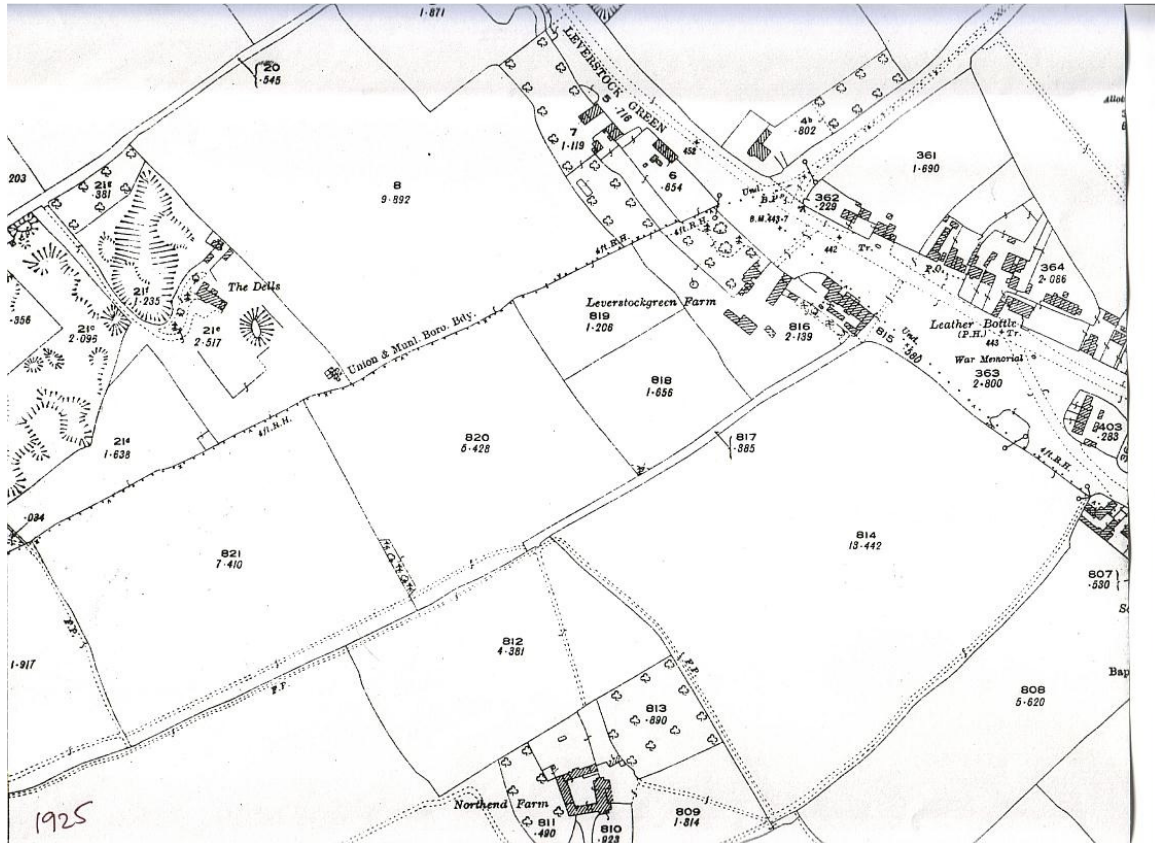


## L.G. CHRONICLE ENTRIES RE THE SECRETAN FAMILY LEVERSTOCK GREEN

1912: Kelley's Directory mentioned **Herbert Secretan at The Dells** (Off Tile Kiln Lane)



OS MAP, 1925 SHOWING THE DELLS.

**Saturday January 17th 1914** - The 1st Leverstock Green Baden Powell Girl Guides held a very successful concert and play in the school. "The programme opened with an address by Mrs.. TD Cox. Piano solos were given by Miss Hart, violin solos by Miss A Hart and Mrs.. Gamble, songs by Mr. W Dell Guide 6 and recitations by Mr.. Wright. "Cinderella" was performed by: Prince E M Durrant, Mulgy, L Martin, Baroness S Seabrook; sisters H Write & O Seabrook, ; Cinderella Miss Cox; Lords R patty & G Woolmer, Ladies L Steer & D Turner, Attendant W. Sharp. The children were admirably trained by **Miss Secretan** and Captain Cox to whom much praise is due. Mr. Michael Durrant announced the items and Mrs. TD Cox played suitable music during the play. The absence, through indisposition of the vicar & Mrs. Durrant was much regretted." [Gazette January 24th 1914]

**The First World War 1914 - 1918** - The years of the First World War. The men of Leverstock Green, like those throughout the rest of the country, rallied to defend their country. Many never came back. Their names are remembered on the memorial in the village (click on button at top of page to view more details.), then at the junction of Leverstock Green Road and Bedmond Road. It reads as follows:

T. Alderman	H. Biswell
J. Biswell	
G. Brown	F. Charge
A. Chisman	T. Childs
G. De Beger	A.M. Durrant
H. Freeman	F. Freeman

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G. Goodenough	J. Hallett
F. Harrowell	J. Knox Hart
F. Johnson	B. Oakley
W. Parkins	V. Perkins
W.W. Sears	R.H.Secretan
H.Smith	F. Taylor
E. Thorn	G. Timson
W.Webb	H. Woodward
H. Waubruell	B.W. Wright

**1st October 1914** - Bernard Joseph Brookes spent three days at shooting practice. A miniature firing range had been made in the garden of "The Dells" off Tile Kiln Lane, owned by Herbert Secretan - probably on what had at one time been the brickfield.[ S27, S106 ]

**10th October 1914** : The Gazette carried the following patriotic information:

*LEVERSTOCK GREEN - SERVING THEIR COUNTRY:*

*The men of Leverstock Green have responded well to the call of their King & country. The following is a list of those men who are serving:*

*R Atkins - territorial  
Bennett - Royal Field Artillery  
JA Bessant - artists corp.  
H G Bennett - new Army  
Child - New army  
H Charge - new army  
M Durrant - new army  
L Goodman - reservist  
E GOODENOUGH - NEW ARMY  
T Ingham - Territorials  
BJ Oakley - new army  
WF Randell - RN Flying Corp.  
HR Secretan - new army  
RH Secretan - attached to Flying Corp.  
Shadbolt - new army  
MJ Simonds - new army  
Colour Sergeant Smith - Oxford & Bucks Regiment  
E Thorne - new army  
Lance Corporal Turner - Royal Fusiliers.*

**23rd February 1916** - - The Gazette reported on the setting up of the Land Army in Leverstock Green

*WAR SERVICE FOR WOMEN ON THE LAND (LONG ARTICLE)*

*A public meeting was held in the schools Leverstock Green on February 23rd to explain the scheme of the Herts County Council for organising women's labour on the land, which is that there shall be a canvas of all women between the ages of 17 and 60, in every rural parish in the county, and a register formed of all those willing to give some help if needed, even if only one morning or afternoon a week. Each village will have its own register of helpers for the neighbouring farmers to refer to if they wish.. Mrs Durrant, who took the chair expressed great sympathy with the scheme and hoped there would be a good response on behalf of the women. Mrs Hart made a most interesting speech.....Mrs Secretan read a paper in which she said let no one think they wanted the rearing of children neglected.....In recognition of the patriotic spirit of those women who undertook work on the land the Board of Agriculture propose to grant a certificate, emblazoned with the Royal Arms in colours to such women workers. A cheap and sensible uniform will also be on view in each district shortly and can be bought complete or in part.....and armband will probably be issued to genuine women workers. [Gazette 4th March 1916]*

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**26th August 1916** - Leverstock Green again featured in the Gazette's Pictorial Roll of Honour: *Sergt H E Chisman 10th Royal fusiliers. Wounded May 31st, discharged from army and was this week welcomed back to his duties as Master of the Isolation Hospital BE.* The Gazette also reported that: *Mrs Secretan of Leverstock Green has been appointed a member of the St. Albans Tribunal for Conscription.* [Gazette 26th August 1916]

**4<sup>th</sup> November 1916:** Report in Herts Advertiser

**A PATRIOTIC VILLAGE.**

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**THREE LEVERSTOCK GREEN OFFICERS WIN MILITARY CROSS.**

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**HOW THE WOMEN-FOLK HELP.**



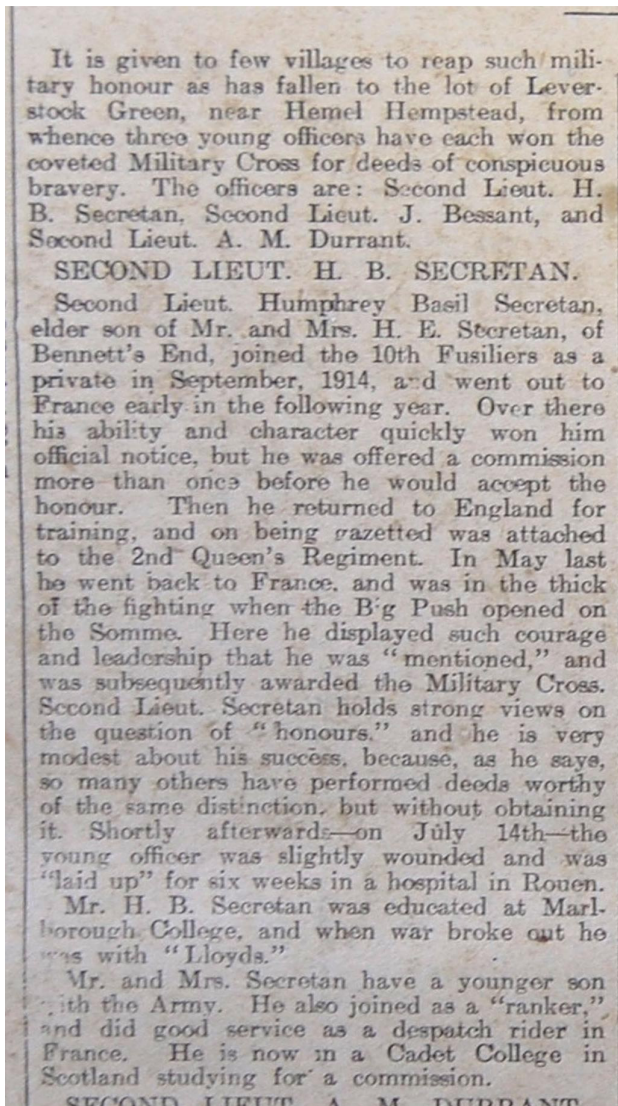
**SECOND LIEUT. H. B. SECRETAN,**  
QUEEN'S ROYAL WEST SURREY REGT.,  
Son of Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Secretan,  
Bennett's End.



**SECOND LIEUT. J. A. BESSANT.**  
ROYAL ENGINEERS,  
Son of Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Bessant,  
Tile Kiln, Leverstock Green.



**SECOND LIEUT. A. M. DURRANT.**  
ROYAL ENGINEERS,  
Son of the Rev. Arthur Durrant,  
Vicar of Leverstock Green.



**1917** - Kelly's Directory for this year was only a little changed from that for 1912. It was, however, noted that Arthur Evans had been knighted, and was now Sir Arthur Evans.M.A. Interestingly it gave the 1911 population figure as 697, as opposed to 649 quoted for 1911 in 1912! The police force was represented by Constable William Thomas Bedford. The lists of residents were given as follows:

Private Residents.

Joseph Bailey, Chambersbury  
Charles Bessant, Tile Kiln  
Thomas Daniel Cox, Hill Farm  
Rev. Arthur Durrant, Vicarage  
George Secker, Cox Pond

William Beecham, Wood Lane End  
William Charles Child, Hill Side  
Col. Chas. Wm. Enst. Duncombe. J.P., Orchard Lea  
John McOustra, Hill House  
Herbert Secretan, The Dells

**31st July 1917** - Two Leverstock Green soldiers serving at the front, were killed at St. Julien : Lieutenant Reginald Herbert Secretan & Private J E Hallett. The following appeared in the Gazette:

**MRS SECRETAN'S SON KILLED**

*We regret to hear the news has been received of the death in action of the son of Mr & Mrs Secretan of Bennetts End, Leverstock Green. The gallant young officer was one of three from Leverstock Green who won the Military Cross. The other two were Captain Durrant, son of the Vicar*

of Leverstock Green, and Lieut.. Bessant. Capt. Durrant met his death some time ago. [Gazette August 11 1917]

**2nd Lieut. R H SECRETAN**

The son of Mr & Mrs Secretan whose death was announced last week, was the youngest son, and not the one who was awarded the MC. The following notice appeared in "The Times":

Second Lieutenant R H Secretan, the Hertfordshire Regiment, killed in action July 31st, aged 22; youngest son of Mr & Mrs Herbert Secretan of Leverstock Green near Hemel Hempstead and nephew of the late Henry Richardson of Marlborough. He was educated at Hildersham House Broadstairs, and Oundle School. On the outbreak of war, having just left school, he tried 8 times to enlist, but was rejected for short sight. Finally he was accepted for the M.T.A.S.C. and went to the front in December 1914. After serving 18 months in France as Motor Driver and dispatch rider, he came home in August 1916 to take up a commission. He joined his regiment at the front in January 1917. The Commanding Officer writes: n He was killed instantaneously while leading his platoon against our final objective. His men tell me that nothing could have been more gallant than the way in which he led them. He was always so cheerful and ready to do everything that he was a great favourite with everyone. There was no braver boy in the whole army.

A friend writing to his parents says: "I shall never forget your boy in the first days of the war, dashing about the country on his motor bike, entreating to be enlisted anywhere and in any regiment." Second Lieutenant R H Secretan was Captain of his house and his housemaster had a "vast regard" for him. He was very keen on all games, at many of which he excelled. In his last letter home on his way up to the front he says: "I am awfully bucked with life, I have been given a good job and the men could not have been better. One of his men said he always took any shelling like a football match. He loved his men and they loved him. "A splendid lot" he called them. The Chaplain writes: One of his men tells me that he rallied his men to the attack on our final objective shouting "Come on No 8" and was instantly shot. [Gazette August 18th 1917]



**Secretan, Reginald Herbert**

- M.T.A.S.C. (drove a motorbike)
- enlisted 1914
- Hertfordshire Regiment
- KIA at St. Julien July 31st 1917- Herts Regiment -aged 22
- Memorials: Leverstock Green, Hemel Hempstead, Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial
  
- son of Herbert E. Secretan & Mrs Secretan, The Dells, Bennetts End.(Tile Kiln Lane)

**Tuesday 18th September 1917** - The wedding of the Secretan's elder daughter took place. The Gazette carried the following report:

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WEDDING --At St Michaels Church Chester Square on Tuesday, the marriage took place of Miss Marjorie Secretan, elder daughter of Mr & Mrs Herbert E Secretan of Bennetts End to Major Charles Herbert Fair DSO assistant master at Hazeleybury College. The Rev R.H. Fair, father of the bridegroom officiated, assisted by the Rev M H Watham, vicar of Woodford Green, Essex. [Gazette September 22nd 1917]

**1st June 1918** - The Gazette included a picture of Bernard Wright in their Pictorial Roll of Honour. It also reported the following:

#### WORKING PARTY

The number of garments made by the Leverstock Green working party since war broke out is now 1080, 505 being mostly pyjamas, and 585 knitted articles. Some of the latter were made by the school children. As the members were nearly all working women with homes to look after this is a very creditable performance. The material is given by the Red Cross Society. The village is small so there are very few member, of these 11 have gained the badge given for good consistent work by the Red Cross namely: Mrs Bedford, Miss Bloxam, Mrs Clarke, Mrs de Begar, Mrs Fountain, Miss Hobday, Miss Ingham, Miss Morley, Mrs Sears, Mrs Secretan, Mrs W. Woodwards. [Gazette 1st June 1918]

**1st February 1919** - The Leverstock Green Red Cross Working Party which had been started on August 1914 was officially closed down. Mrs. Secretan had been the Hon. Secretary. The total number of garments made by the group was 1441. There had been 30 regular members of the working party and 30 others. [Gazette 10/5/1919 p.8]

**2nd July 1919** - A meeting was held at the home of Mr. Secretan (The Dells), to discuss the erection of a war memorial. The following article appeared in the Gazette on 12th July:-

A meeting was held at Mr. Secretan's Bennetts End, on July 2nd, to discuss the erection of a war memorial to those men of Leverstock Green who have laid down their lives for their King & Country in the great war. In spite of heavy rain there was a very large attendance. Those present were asked to give their views freely and openly. After some discussion it was unanimously decided (that subject to permission being obtained) a stone column with the names of the fallen inscribed on it, should be erected in a prominent position on the Green. It was felt that such a memorial would keep fresh in the minds of all and especially the children, the names of those men who had died for them and that it would be a warning to generations to come of a world war. In this small village 27 men made the great sacrifice. A committee of 11, all of whom had been bereaved in the war, were elected to carry out the views of the meeting.

The memorial was eventually unveiled on 5th February 1920. [Gazette 12th July 1919 p.7]

**4th September 1920** - The following brief articles appeared in *The Gazette*:

#### LEVERSTOCK GREEN WAR MEMORIAL:-

This is now nearing completion and is expected to be erected shortly. The total cost will be £206. Subs received and promised amount to £180.

#### W.I.:-

The W.I. recently held a sale of needlework in the school, as it was a very wet day, otherwise it would have been held in Mrs... Secretan's garden. Some members of the Institute have attended a sewing party at her house since February for the purpose. A sum of £19 was handed in to the Parish Room Fund. [Gazette 4th Sept. 1920]

**31st December 1920** - This was a triumphal evening for the Leverstock Green community as their long awaited Parish Hall was eventually opened. The Gazette published the following report over a week later

#### LEVERSTOCK GREEN PARISH HALL

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**OPENED AT LAST**

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*A large and representative company assembled on Thursday evening December 30th for the opening of the long anticipated Parish Hall.*

*The Rev. Durrant declared the hall open with prayers and a few appropriate words. A delightful concert of 14 items followed, and was much enjoyed. This was arranged by Mrs. Ford and helpers. After sumptuous refreshments, admirably supervised by Mrs. Howe and helpers, came dancing and whist. Mrs. Durrant and her orchestra played for the dancing and throughout the evening. The orchestra was a revelation to those who do not attend the weekly dances and the music was a great treat to all. Mr. Howe and Mr. R. Sears arranged the dances. Miss Child and helpers ran a very successful whist party. The large hall and goodly sized ante-room were prettily decorated by Misses Bailey Bourne and Cox. The transport department was splendidly worked by Mrs. Secretan and helpers. Mr. Wright successfully arranged the lighting of the rooms. Messers M Gambles, Woodwards, Dell & Wilkins and others kindly helped in other ways. A most happy evening was spent finishing about 11.30.*

*The trustees for the Parish Hall are Rev. Durrant, Viscount Grimston, Mrs. Mary M Cox, Mr. W.C. Child, Mr. J. Bailey, Mr. Percy Webster, Mr. F. Dell, Mrs. W.W. Wright and J.W. Dell hon. Secretary.*

*Many of these were present amongst them some who originated the scheme 15 years ago. A few of the originators have passed away and their memory was duly honoured by in Rev. Durrant's speech.*

[Gazette January 8th 1921]

**16th April 1921** - The Gazette reported on the Wedding of Miss Esme Secretan daughter of Herbert Secretan of Bennetts End to Lieut. Charles C Champion DSO of Silverdale Carnforth. The wedding took place Great Amwell though no indication was given as to why the service was conducted at Amwell rather than Holy Trinity. The couple honeymooned in Cornwall. [Gazette 16 April 1921]

**Saturday 16 July 1921** - There were some major reports in the Gazette concerning Leverstock Green :

**LEVERSTOCK GREEN HOUSING TROUBLES**

IS THERE ANY HOPE?

A DEPUTATION TO THE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

*AFTER EIGHT YEARS OF STRENUOUS SEEKING AND THE PREPARATION OF A NUMBER OF ILL feted schemes the erection of houses at Leverstock Green is still in abeyance. Last week meeting of the St. Albans RDC the surveyor reported that although revised estimates had been received for the Leverstock Green cottages a verbal request had been made by the Commissioner that the Council should not obtain competitive estimates as it was probable that sanction for them would not be given. The only means by which Leverstock Green can get its houses is to prove that there is serious overcrowding existing.*

*The clerk said that nobody regretted the holding up of the scheme more than the Council.*

*Mrs. Secretan and others attended the meeting as a deputation from the village Woman's Institute, she had written that they viewed with alarm and very concern the continued postponement of the scheme. Mrs Secretan said that the members of the Institute felt that the chief responsibility lay with the Rural District Council.*

*The Chairman said the deputation had the sympathy of the council, who would have been only too pleased to go on with the scheme and give Leverstock Green houses if it had been possible.*

*Mrs Secretan: Surely you don't mean there is no hope for us? Sir Alfred Mond said that the Government would concentrate on places where there was great overcrowding.*

*The Chairman: We do not mean to let the matter drop*

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*The Clerk said unless the Medical Officer of Health could advise the council that as far as public health was concerned very bad overcrowding was taking place at Leverstock Green there was very little hope of going to the Ministry of health on the subject*

*In reply to a question the Medical Officer remarked that he could not say off-hand whether there was more overcrowding in Leverstock Green than there was in other parts of the district. The clerk suggested that perhaps Colonel Freemantle could be asked to raise the question in the House and explain the case, and perhaps Mrs. Secretan could back it up with a letter to him.*

**1922** - The entry in Kelley's Directory for this year showed Herbert Secretan, The Dells

**24th May 1922** Empire Day was celebrated by the village school children as recorded by Walter Ayre in the school log book:

*"Afternoon lessons on Empire instead of after play lessons. Senior Section sang "Land of Hope and Glory" & Kipling's Recessional. Rev. A & Mrs. Durrant and Mrs. Secretan were present.*

*3.40pm. The Whole School marched past and saluted "The Flag" in Procession to the War Memorial, where a large quantity of flowers brought by nearly every child in the school was deposited. After a short prayer by the Vicar and the National Anthem the children dispersed."*

**1926** - The entry in Kelley's Directory for this year showed Herbert Secretan, The Dells

**Thursday February 2<sup>nd</sup> 1928** - MARRIAGE OF CAPT H B SECRETAN MC

The wedding between Herbert B Secretan & Miss Ninon Michaelis took place at St. Mark's Ch North Audley Street. Mr Hubert Secretan OBE acted as best man – the couple left for a honeymoon in Madera. [Gazette Feb 18<sup>th</sup> 1928]

**13<sup>th</sup> December 1928** — Herbert Edwin Secretan died at his home of Tile Kiln Cottage. (Previously of The Dells) He would have been 79 on Dec 28<sup>th</sup>. He had lived in Leverstock Green since 1912, having retired as an underwriter for the London firm of Provision Marine & General. He had played a major role in village affairs being a "highly esteemed figure in the district and his disposition to help in every good cause endeared him to everyone who knew him. For some years Mr Secretan was Churchwarden at the Parish Church..... His funeral was held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December [Gazette Dec 23<sup>rd</sup>]

**1929 Kelley's Directory:** Humphrey B. Secretan, The Dells

1930'S Syd Dollimore recalled: *There were a few well off residing in Tile Kiln Lane, one springing to mind was Mr. Secretan who lived at the Dells. At the very top of the Lane lived the Bessants, the daughter Annie a fairly well known sculptor or potter.*

**Friday 26th August 1932** - A photograph appeared in the Herts Advertiser showing Sir Frances Freemantle MP addressing a conservative garden meeting in Leverstock Green. A heat wave was currently being experienced and this was referred to in the text. Others in the photo included Miss C.M. Mortimer, Lady Freemantle, Dr Sydney Lee (Chairman of the local Conservative Association and in whose garden along Tile Kiln Lane the event probably took place, Mrs. H. Grimwood, and Mrs. H. Secretan. [Herts Advertiser & St. Albans Times August 26th 1932.]





**1933 Kelly's Directory showed:** Captain Humphrey B. Secretan, M.C. ,The Dells  
Mrs. M. Secretan, Tile Kiln Cottage

**20<sup>th</sup> February 1934** - A committee meeting of the nurses association was held on Tuesday at which ex-committee members and Nurse Hendry were present. The following report was published in the Gazette on the Saturday .

#### NURSING ASSOCIATION

...After the business was transacted, Miss Hobday asked the Chairman & Hon Treasurer Mrs Day to accept for herself and the President Mr Day, a handsome fender stool presented by the committee and Nurse and beautifully worked by Nurse. Miss Hobday warmly thanked Mrs Holliday on behalf of the committee for the invaluable and untiring help, that she and Mr Day had given the Association for many years; no trouble was too much for them and they \all deeply regretted that they \were leaving the village. She wished them many years of happiness in their new home – Mrs Day in reply said she was delighted with the gift, which she would always treasure. It had been a great pleasure to her and her husband to help the association. The Hon Secretary, Mrs Secretan then presented Mrs Day with an easy chair for their new home. She said she could also never be grateful enough for their unstinting help and for the many acts of loving kindness shown her. [Gazette 24<sup>th</sup> February 1934]

**9<sup>th</sup> May 1936** – Leverstock Green was on the front page of the Gazette:

#### DEATH OF Mrs M Secretan

(précis) Mrs Mary Secretan of Tile Kiln Cottage, Leverstock Green died on May 5<sup>th</sup> after a month's illness. She was 77. She and her husband had come to live at The Dells in 1912 – in 1928 the family moved to Tile Kiln Cottage – her husband dying later the same year. She was very well respected in the Leverstock Green area. She had, together with Mrs Durrant, founded the Nursing Association, and following Mrs D's death carried on her own being Secretary of the Association until her death. Together with others since the war she had been fighting to get more & better housing built in Leverstock Green. During the war \she had been a member of the Military Service Tribunal, and had herself become a nurse at West Herts Hospital. She was also a member of the Women's Agricultural Committee for Hertfordshire. Funeral was held Friday 8<sup>th</sup> at 2.30pm.

**1937** - According to Kelly's Directory: Capt. H.B.Secretan,M.C. The Dells

24<sup>th</sup> March 1960 – A Faculty was granted to Holy Trinity Church to

- 1) to erect a notice board near the main entrance gates to Parish Church ..... and 2) to insert a stained glass window in the North Aisle and to place a stone tablet beneath the said window suitable inscribed to the memory of Fleur Secretan..... [HTLG 59]

**November 12<sup>th</sup> 1960** - Buglass archive document Leverstock Green 186 - On headed notepaper from H.Kilby of 79, The Horseshoe Leverstock Green, the letter is concerning an offer made by Herbert Secretan (The Dells, Tile Kiln Lane) to give some land for the founding of a tennis club in the village) The Martin Residents Association had agreed Mr. Secretan's offer was generous, but weren't sure where the money to run such a venture would come from; and it was not thought there were enough tennis players to warrant such a club. Apparently Bernard Field had previously reported that previous attempts had been made to found a tennis club without success through lack of support. Mr.Kilby went on....."I regret, however, that he did not first approach the Parish Hall Trustees or its Management Committee for some of us on the Martin Estate have had whispered warnings from some well meaning friends, that our Resident's Association is resented in the village on the grounds that we are trying to organize everything and everybody in Leverstock Green. This assessment is quite wrong but can, I suppose, be excused because we have tried to take an interest in local affairs and give them our support. In the circumstances, therefore, our committee feels that it is not anxious to promote any Village activities but is ready to support any such activities when invited to do so...."

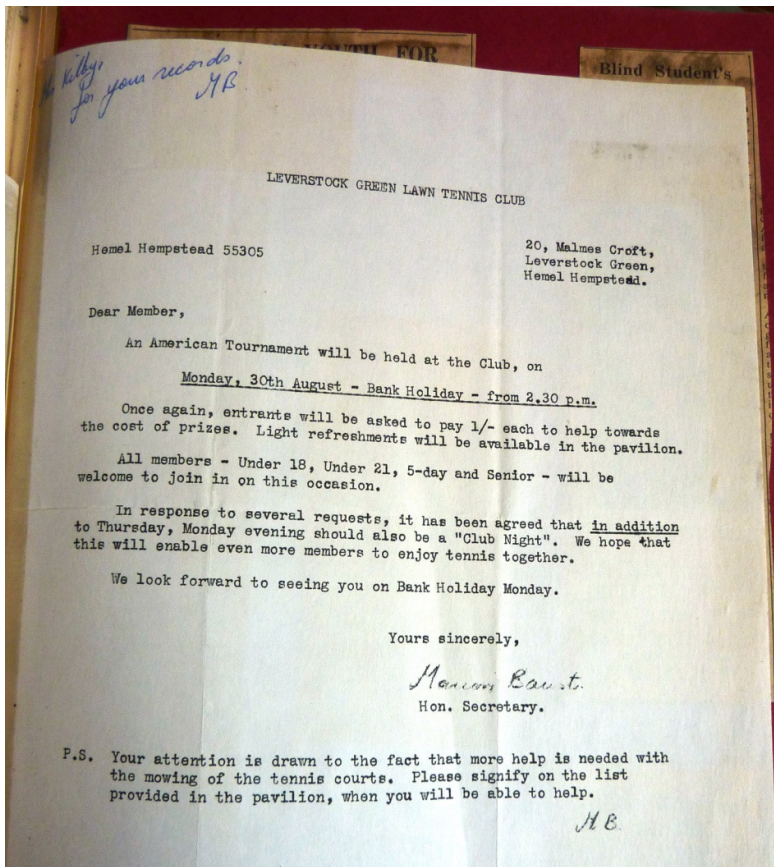
**Nov/Dec 1960** Buglass Archive document LG185 - Two foolscap sheets of rough paper and one very small letter stapled and paper clipped together (rust suggests from 1960 onwards). The letter on embossed paper, dated 26th Nov.. 1960, from "The Dells, Bennetts End" as follows: "Dear Mr. Kilby, Sorry I have not replied to your letter before. I should not take any notice of local criticism. I went to you as I felt most of the young people keen on tennis would be the new arrivals around your area. I doubt whether there would be many players in the old part of the village. When a meeting is called I do hope you can get people near you to go. Yours sincerely H.B.Secretan "The two foolscap sheets (one written in ink, one in pencil, both in FB's writing seem to contain notes concerning a meeting in connection with the building of Community Centres by the local authority. These were undated, but I presume about the same time as the letter."



NB NOT STRICTLY RELEVANT TO THE SECRETANS, EXCEPT THAT HB GAVE THE MONEY & LAND TO FOUND THE CLUB – THERE IS A DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE CLUB PHOTO BELOW, AND THE DETAILS LISTED IN 1965.



**30<sup>th</sup> August 1965:** Tennis Club held an American Tournament. See picture below:



19<sup>th</sup> October 1965: Tennis Club AGM – see picture below.

