Battle and District Historical Society

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Battle and District Historical Society
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THE SOCIETY
Charity No. 292593

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Our 50th year turned out a good year all round. A splendid season of lectures and lecturers - despite the quaintly called "heating system" at the Memorial Hall which is very even handed - blowing hot and cold in equal proportions. The Summer programme was excellent with the one nearest home, Old Hastings, being particularly well received especially as the guide was one of our own members. The lecture programme is well up to the high standards we have come to expect. Despite a change in Committee personnel organising these various events, mainly a job swap, the excellent service continues.

There have been changes during the year most notable perhaps being the establishing as a separate organisation of the Museum. It is still seeking funding to carry out the changes required for the move to the Almonry, but it has already established a sound core of "Friends". If you missed out on this I am sure the Battle Museum of Local History, to give its formal title, will still be happy to accept more Friends.

There remains the continuing problem of the B.D.H.S. Library. Whilst the Museum has offered accommodation at the Almonry there is a school of thought which would prefer the Library to remain, if possible, at the Memorial Hall, not least in order that members can continue to use it prior to each lecture. Use of the Library outside of these times, it has to be admitted, is rare. The books in the Library have been carefully sorted so that the best, the most useful and the most apposite remain. All this has created much work for Cliff and Diane Braybrooke, our Librarians. They have borne the task stoically and with good humour - for which our thanks.

Our membership keeps at a pretty steady level - as many

members as in our early days, between 200 and 250 which says much for the continuing enthusiasm of your hard working committee. I have thoroughly enjoyed my three years and hope I have been able to continue the high standards of my predecessors - at least I tried.

Colin Eldridge

MUSEUM REPORT

Battle Museum of Local History closed its doors in the Memorial Hall on 14th October 2001 and the Museum premises are to be finally vacated on 28th February 2002. The lease has run out and could not be renewed. An application to raise funding to move the Museum to the Almonry site is ongoing and the bulk of the money required is being sought from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The 25% of matching funding required has to be found and although the South East Economic Development Agency is providing a significant amount, more funding is being sought.

Following submission of the full application, Dr Michael Houghton of the HLF visited the Museum and Almonry site in June 2001. The Museum was granted a stage one pass by the HLF to enable it to develop the plans further with the work to be completed by the end of November. All the points raised by the HLF have been met. These are:-

1. Additional space at the Almonry site which has been granted by the Town Council.

2. Audits done by Museum specialists on the physical and intellectual access and environmental conditions.

3. Re-design of the building and detailed design of the interior incorporating the information raised by the audits.

The additional space has allowed for a disabled toilet, store room (to contain reserve collection, archives, photographs and reference library) and an office.

A final decision on the success of the application to the HLF will be made by the HLF Committee on 7th March 2002. But if the Development project is not completed by the end of November 2001, the application will not be reviewed until June 2002.

If the bid is successful it is hoped work will start at the Almonry site in April 2002 and be completed by the autumn. The Museum would then re-open at Easter 2003.

The Charity Commission has agreed to the change of the financial year which will commence in April and the first AGM of the Friends of the Museum will be held on Friday, 10th May 2002 and cover the first 18 months of operation. The number of Friends now stands at 97. New "Friends" are welcome at £5 single, £8 double per annum.

The Museum collection has been packed up and put into storage in the Memorial Hall. The Historical Society archives are being stored by the Archivist David Sawyer, the photographic collection by the Photographic Archivist Eric Augele and the books by the Secretary Neil Clephane-Cameron.

Some of the cabinets are to be stored for use in the new Museum but the majority are to be sold to other Museums or auctioned at Burstow and Hewitt. If anyone can offer dry storage of cabinets for approximately eight to nine months please contact Anne Ainsley - telephone/fax: 01424 772827.

The Museum now has a website - www.battlemuseumoflocalhistory.co.uk which will be updated to carry news of the Almonry project.

The Town Council has granted the Museum a "peppercorn rent" at the Almonry site which will be invaluable in keeping the Museum solvent in the future. This is in line with other small independent Museums in the Rother District.

The Museum could not exist without the volunteers who run it and the Museum Management Committee would like to thank the custodians for their hard work and support. Various activities will be arranged during the period of closure to keep people informed of progress and involved in the project.

Anne Ainsley, Hon Chair
Battle Museum of Local History

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

As reported at the Annual General Meeting, the future location of the Library is uncertain. This situation is caused by the continuing uncertain outlook of its landlord, the Museum. As a result the Library will be packed and stored. For a variety of reasons, this activity will need to commence in January 2002, consequently the Library's contents will not be available throughout 2002. As to its future after that, hopefully some information will be available at the next Annual General Meeting scheduled for November.

As was reported in 1999, a number of the Library's books could not be found. This is a continuing situation. The Librarian feels that this is an undesirable situation and asks that during spring-cleaning a look-out is kept for "foreigners" in bookshelves and from behind settees. All books will be welcomed back and there are no late return fines. Happy hunting!

C Braybrooke, Librarian
December 2001

EDITOR'S NOTE

My thanks to all the contributors to this year's Journal with whom responsibility rests for the facts and opinions expressed.

Dawn Elliott, Editor

TITUS OATES - THE WICKEDEST MAN IN SUSSEX

Brion Purdy 12 January 2001

Titus Oates and his notorious Popish Plot is well known to anyone with an interest in seventeenth century history. He invented a conspiracy that was improbable and preposterous but which excited a nation that was ready to believe that there *really was* such a plan to overthrow the Protestant religion, assassinate the King and re-establish the Catholic church.

He manipulated public opinion and, in his turn was manipulated by unscrupulous zealots, even though, it is obvious, that the King himself never believed him. Quite why Charles, who early on caught out Oates in a lie, did nothing, is hard to explain but perhaps he, too, found the hysteria of the times impolitic to circumvent. What *is* clear is that, even though the supposed Plot collapsed and Oates was deservedly and severely punished, the Catholic religion suffered cruelly and honest and honourable men were imprisoned and executed.

Oates had fully and completely satisfied his early promise of being totally unscrupulous and Brion Purdey's lecture was interesting in that he dwelled as much on Titus's childhood as on his maturity. I too will follow his example...

Titus was the son of Samuel Oates, a Norfolk weaver who came to London and joined the Anabaptists (an aggressive religious sect that believed in total immersion and polygamy).

In 1644, he went "dipping" in Sussex which was a particularly remunerative undertaking and from which he emerged "well-lined". Next, he became a chaplain in the army and, in 1649, was stationed in Rutland where Titus was born. The child was grossly unprepossessing; even his mother could find little good to say of him. She believed she had been "with child of the devil", and his father could not endure him. Oates senior would take one look at the boy in the chimney corner and cry out "take away that snotty fool and jumble him about". This lack of parental affection was unsurprising from a father who was court-martialled who adhered to the Anabaptists until he reverted to the Church of England and was presented, in 1660, with the living of All Saints, Hastings.

The family lived at the bottom of Old London Road and it was from here that Titus commenced his education. He is said to have been sent to Westminster School but the school is happy "to have no record of this". He *certainly* went to Merchant Taylor's where he managed to trick the master out of his entrance money. He was expelled in 1665 and went to a school in Sedlescombe and thence to Caius College, Cambridge from which he was "spewed out" in 1667. He was next admitted to St John's College, Cambridge from which he was ejected again, this time for bilking a tailor of the price of a coat. He was regarded as a "great dunce, never mastered Latin and liable to gross errors, but capable of plodding industry and unparalleled assurance and tenacious memory".

In 1670, Titus took Holy Orders and became curate of Sandhurst, for three years. Apparently he behaved himself to the extent that he was presented as Rector of Bobbing in Kent. Here he reverted to character and was turned out for stealing poultry, being too drunk to hold services and making indecent comments on the Christian religion.

And so back to Hastings as curate for his father but spots do

not change and here he was considered to have "neither wit nor learning and to be a scandal in the pulpit". And now, in his maturity he was described as squat, with a very high colour, one leg shorter than the other, small eyes, a very large chin, two large warts and a very high and an affected voice. Yet, with all these defects he clearly had ambition and self-confidence because his next action was his most discreditable to date. He coveted the position of teacher at the William Parker School and plotted to remove the incumbent. He accused the master "of an unnatural offence on a young and tender male child in the church porch", an offence incidentally, which was a capital one. Luckily for the master, he was able to prove another engagement at the time of the alleged incident and workmen, actually working in the church, denied the events.

But this was only a taster for what was to come. Arrested for perjury Titus managed to escape to London and join the navy as a chaplain; subsequently becoming the Protestant chaplain to the Catholic Duke of Norfolk. Here he learned of, and profited by, the experience of a Frenchman who had discovered a Popish Plot (false, of course) and who had been given a flow of gifts.

In 1677 Titus became a Roman Catholic and completed his education as a very mature student at the Jesuit College of St Omer in France. Here it was said, he listened to wild talk about a Catholic revival in England, even though he was generally despised by all who met him, none of whom would have chosen him as a fellow conspirator. When he returned to England he had already conceived the plot that was to restore his fortune and avenge himself upon the Roman Catholics. He prepared well and convincingly, setting out a manuscript with 43 paragraphs of false innuendo and malice which he presented to the King. Charles intuitively spotted the liar and caught Oates out immediately. "I see", he said, "you saw Don John of Austria paying bribes. What did he look like"? When told that he was "tall, lean and dark" the

King laughed "I know him well. He is short, fat and fair. For my part I call this fellow a lying knave". This was where the nonsense should have stopped but the Privy Council only heard what they wanted to hear and encouraged Oates ever onward.

It is savage satisfaction that he was exposed and ruthlessly punished on the pillory but even in this he was more fortunate than many he accused. They were executed...

David Sawyer

THE VIKINGS

Ian Pierce 26 January 2001

A Viking was a member of the Scandinavian seafaring warriors who raided and colonized wide areas of Europe from the 9th to the 11th centuries. The Vikings were certainly raiders but they were also traders. They voyaged further in the northwest than anyone ever had before and eventually via Iceland and Greenland, reached the east coast of America. Their aim was to gain wealth to take home to Scandinavia and also to prove their bravery. But the key to their success was the fact that they made the finest ships of the age - the longship.

Thanks to several of these boats, which have been disinterred from burial mounds, we know beyond any doubt, what magnificent ships they were. They were clinker built, sail and oar vessels that were exceptionally sturdy in heavy seas. They varied between 45 to 70 feet long and had an exceptionally shallow draft and they could therefore be rowed right up estuaries. At first they were steered by the sail but later they had a steering oar mounted on the right side. The word "starboard" or right side of a boat comes from the Norse word "styri", which means rudder.

Sometime in the late 8th century the Vikings realised that there was an easy way to acquire wealth and they began to raid monasteries in Britain, Ireland and mainland Europe. The monasteries were full of the beautiful objects that the Vikings so coveted and they were sitting ducks for men with such adaptable ships, as they were situated on isolated coastlines and were poorly defended. With the raid on Lindisfarne in 793, the reign of terror began. Many monasteries and trading centres were raided almost annually.

The Vikings did not always pillage and run, in many places they came to stay. Dublin became a Viking town, as also did most of Lincoln and York. Scotland became almost wholly Viking, as did Normandy. William the Conqueror was, of course, of Viking descent. He used longships to bring his army across the channel in 1066 and there are pictures of these in the Bayeux Tapestry.

Mr Pierce then showed us many slides of Viking swords. Many of their swords were of great beauty and were handed from father to son. They had beautifully worked pommels and cross guards and had generally survived because if they were lost in rivers, they sank to the bottom and were preserved in the mud and silt. He brought his own Viking sword for us to see and it was admired but not touched!

Joanne Lawrence

THE HISTORY OF MAPPING FROM ANTIQUITY UNTIL TODAY

Peter Moore 9 February 2001

The scope of the subject is vast and the speaker Mr Peter Moore, a Civil Engineer by profession, wisely structured his talk around the development of land surveying.

From ancient times there has been a demand for specialists

to measure features of the landscape and establish and record boundaries for various purposes such as taxes, defence and ownership.

As an example, to show how precise the art of surveying had become at a very early date, Mr Moore illustrated the Great Pyramid at Gizeh 2500 BC, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, which is remarkable in that its base is almost a perfect square and it is aligned with the polar star. A Babylonian clay tablet impressed with the course of a river, thought to be the Euphrates, and mountains, dated from 3000 BC is the earliest sketch map discovered. The Babylonians also took an important step by dividing the sky into 360 degrees making it possible to locate any point on the earth by calculation, using the time and the stars. The earliest surviving paper map the Turin papyrus, is a sketch map showing the location of gold mines and dates from 1100-1300 BC.

The confidence of the early surveyors was illustrated by a map of the route of the Giloan Tunnel which was dug under the City of David (Jerusalem). Some 50 feet underground and not in a straight line, digging commenced from both ends and as Mr Moore pointed out the diggers met up. He suggested that this was probably achieved by setting up offsets from vertical shafts to an above ground line, parallel to the tunnel.

In 331 BC Alexander the Great established Alexandria, the city being laid out using simple ranging rods and lining these up. Features that were off the line were positioned by offsets and triangulation (as a Sapper the writer remembers using similar methods in the not too distant past). It was a Greek Eratosthenes who had accepted the theory that the world was round, calculated its circumference in 240 BC to give a dimension that is remarkably close to the modern figure.

Three hundred years later the Greek geographer, Ptolemy produced his "Geographia" which projected the spherical

globe as a flat surface: a map of the known world with a recognisable Europe, including the British Isles. As only copies exist to what extent some countries are mediaeval additions is unclear. Included in the "Geographia" were co-ordinates for 8,000 places - 100 in the British Isles. Only a few degrees out in latitude, considerable errors occur in longitude. The speaker agreed that this was probably due to Ptolemy not using Eratosthenes' figure but a later calculation by Posidonius, that gave the world's circumference as 7,000 miles less. Only fragments of Roman maps exist, the best is the Madaba mosaic.

Mediaeval maps were briefly described; these are not true representational maps and featured Jerusalem at their centre. The Mappae Mundi and Matthew Paris's maps of Great Britain were illustrated. Contemporary with these religious maps there had been considerable advances in charting the coastlines. In 1325 the Genoese drew the Portolan Charts which featured radiating compass lines to aid navigation and the magnetic compass was introduced into Western Europe.

With the fall of Constantinople in 1453, a series of voyages was commissioned to find a sea route to the Spice lands. Information from these, the re-introduction of Ptolomey's Geographia that had been lost to the West, together with the greatest change, the invention of printing, brought about a renaissance of map-making.

In 1537 Mercator, the great Dutch cartographer developed his cylindrical projection with the latitudes increasing away from the Equator with which we are all familiar.

Mr Moore then spoke of British cartographers and 1574 saw Christopher Saxton publish his maps of the counties of England. These showed the county boundaries and positions of towns, hills and rivers but not roads. The seventeenth century saw William Camden's "Britannica" and John Speed's maps which included an inset detail plan of the county town.

By 1761 the problem of plotting longitude had been solved by John Harrison's ship's chronometer. Remarkably, Captain Cook was not provided with a chronometer for his famous voyages.

To resolve the differences that existed between the English and French National Surveys a series of triangulations was taken crossing the Channel (of local interest, one of the points used was at Fairlight). The surveying was carried out using Jesse Ramsden's 1787 theodolite that gave readings of extreme accuracy. Rapid improvements continued and in 1791 the Ordnance Survey was established, the first sheet being published in 1801.

Bringing his talk to a close, Mr Moore referred to the introduction of aerial photography in WW1 and world mapping from space satellites from the 1960's and the use of global positioning satellites. Space age surveying is now a one-man operation, utilising satellites, lasers and instant computer print-outs.

Malcolm Stocker

THE HISTORY OF THE THEATRES IN TUDOR AND ELIZABETHAN LONDON

Simon Blatherwick — 23 February 2001

Our lecturer commenced his talk by indicating that the architectural heritage of the bear and bull-baiting pits, particularly in the Southwark area south of the Thames, gave rise to the form of the playhouses. The Rose and the Globe are now scheduled sites. It has been established that there is much documentary and cartographic evidence surviving relating to London theatres and animal baiting houses, especially the Rose.

The first evidence of animal baiting appears in a 1542 map known as the "Long Map of Southwark" showing a structure

called "The Bull Ring". No evidence is shown to indicate whether this was an animal holding pen prior to going to market or whether it was used for bull-baiting. However, it is known that by the 1540's there were Royal Ordnances for establishing animal baiting rings south of the Thames.

A second map of the late 1540's showed Southwark Cathedral and London Bridge and two circular animal baiting rings on the south side, on park land owned by the Bishops of Winchester known as the Liberty of the Bishops of Winchester. We were informed that the whole reason for the location of London theatres is largely connected with the dissolution of the monasteries. As the monasteries dissolved the whole question of the use of ecclesiastical land was called into question.

Another map showed the array of play houses in London in the late sixteenth century including the liberty and land of the Bishops of Winchester, over which there was very little jurisdiction of use. During the period of 1560 to 1640 there were probably about 26-28 different playhouses in London.

The first map showing the structure in which animal baiting took place, is a map by Ralph Agas of 1560 showing both a bull and bear-baiting pit. Fish ponds were also indicated on this map. Documentary evidence is also available and an account was read by our lecturer indicating "a round building three stories high in which were kept one hundred dogs" - the kennels were shown on the map. "English dogs in separate wooden kennels. Each dog was made to fight singly with three bears. After this a horse was brought in and chased by the dogs, and at last the bull which defended himself bravely. Next came in a number of men and women, dancing and fighting and conversing with each other. Right over the middle of the place a rose was fixed, this rose being set on fire by a rocket - suddenly a lot of apples and pears fell out of it into the people below. Further fireworks came out from all corners and that was the end of the play".

Another document piece was read indicating that "the London bear-baiting usually takes place every Sunday and Wednesday across the water (i.e. south of the river). The playhouse is circular in form, above are a number of seated galleries, the ground space under the open sky is unoccupied".

Today, bull and bear-baiting would be thought to be cruel but in those days the dogs were mastiffs and thought to be an even match for a bear (the equivalent to a human) and the butcher's ordnances required bulls to be baited before slaughter so that the adrenalin would tenderise the meat.

A slide of John Norden's map dated 1593 of the City of London showed London Bridge, Bankside and the first graphic evidence of a playhouse which we now know to be the Rose Theatre which was built in 1587. The south bank was not heavily populated being still marshy and reclaimed land. The theatres were built to attract customers from the city who could only travel there by bridge or by ferry. The Globe was built in 1599 and shown in a subsequent map.

A modern slide showed the area with the Rose Theatre being under an ugly square concrete building known as Rose Court and the Globe is under Anchor Terrace. In December 1988 Southbridge House in Rose Court was destroyed and the archeologists were allowed to investigate the site. During the excavations problems were found due to the marshy soil which kept flooding with the Thames seeping up and the rain coming down. Three quarters of the foundations of the Rose were uncovered - comprehensive details of the original building costs etc. amounting to £105, are in papers which survive in Dulwich College. A number of slides were then shown which indicated various foundations of the 1587 14-sided building covering 94sq.ft which would have had wooden sides. The internal yard dipped down towards the stage to allow people at the back to see more clearly. A timber drain made of pine was discovered which took water away from the stage. In 1592 a new projecting stage was

made. The floor of the yard was replaced with a mix of clinker, ash and nutshells which was a by-product of soap making which took place in that area. A small number of artefacts were found, wooden tiles from the stage, rings, a fork, bone manicure pieces, and shoes. The Rose went out of commission about 1604/5 probably due to competition from the Globe. A new building now straddles the Rose Playhouse. The excavations have been covered by English Heritage. The Globe is probably under a brewery listed building.

This was a fascinating lecture giving an insight into early play-houses and recent excavations in London. It is gratifying to know how well documented the early buildings were and how much information is still available to us.

Diane Braybrooke

THE QUEST FOR BECKETT'S BONES

Professor John Butler 9 March 2001

This most interesting talk was inspired by Professor Butler's initial reading of an article in the Kentish Gazette in 1990. This related that two men, professional villains, by name Peregrine Prescott and Risto Pronk (truly!) had been arrested at 3am inside the precincts of Canterbury Cathedral. They had been found with housebreaking equipment; a set of abseiling gear and a map of the inside of the Cathedral. Their defence was that they had intended to break in *not* to steal anything, but to open the tomb of a certain Cardinal Chatillon which, they believed, contained the relics of St Thomas Beckett.

This extraordinary tale elicited one letter only to the newspaper, from a Thomas Chough, who asserted that it was untrue that Beckett's bones were buried in the tomb but, that it was true that the bones had been buried secretly and that

the location was known to a handful of people in each generation; these persons met twice a year, beside the true grave, on the 29th December and 7th July - (the dates are significant) - to pray for the conversion of England to Roman Catholicism.

This bizarre story whetted Professor Butler's investigative interest and he set out to find out precisely what *had happened* to the Saint's bones.

The unquestioned historical fact is that Beckett was slain in the Cathedral on the 29th December 1170 and that his body was buried by the Benedictine monks in the Eastern crypt. Here it lay, clad in full archiepiscopal regalia for fifty years until a sumptuous shrine was erected in the Trinity Chapel, immediately above the original resting place. The shrine was consecrated on 7th July 1220 and was a thing of great wonder and magnificence. It was made of wood and covered in gold and gold filigree and generations of pilgrims, offering precious gems, had interwoven the jewels within the filigree. At the time of its destruction, in September 1538, it represented the largest portable source of wealth in England. Whilst the shrine was dismantled, no-one knows precisely what happened to the bones, although the official story is that they were burned.

However, on 23rd January 1888 workmen discovered an unknown grave in the Eastern crypt, just six feet from the site of the 1170 burial. The grave contained a skeleton which was removed for examination by a local doctor, Pugin Thornton who concluded that it was of a male, about 50 years of age and of a large frame (consistent with Beckett).

The coffin was just 4 inches below the surface and showed signs of a hasty burial. More particularly, the coffin was too small for the body so that the skull lay in the middle, with the large bones surrounding, in exactly the same way Beckett had lain in the shrine. In addition, when reconstructed, the

skeleton lacked a number of bones which again, fitted in with the story of bones being distributed as relics. And, most significantly, the skull showed evidence of severe damage to the left side, consistent with a sword blow from a facing right-handed assassin.

The bones were reburied after a very short period and nothing more happened for sixty years but scholarly discussion.

In 1929, prominent Roman Catholic and High Anglicans offered £10,000 to the Dean and Chapter (the sum to be matched by the Cathedral) to rebuild the shrine. A classic Gothic shrine was designed by Sir Ninian Comper and a full-scale model made in plywood. However, the offer was turned down on the grounds that the shrine would over-dominate the Eastern end of the Cathedral; however, the probable *real* reason was that the authorities feared that the shrine would pave the way for a Catholic revival.

In 1948, the Dean and Chapter decided that the 1888 skeleton *was* Beckett and they decided, this time on their own initiative, to commission a new tomb. More importantly they reinterred the bones and entrusted them to the care of Mr Cave, Professor of Anatomy at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Cave took two years to prepare his report which was submitted to the Dean in May 1951. And now the plot deepens; for some strange reason, the report is missing from both the Library and Archives of Canterbury Cathedral and from the personal papers of the late Dean, Hewlett Johnson. If this was by some devious design, the intent was thwarted because, miraculously, Professor Cave was still alive and able to answer the lecturer's request for a copy. His own personal copy was sent and, amongst other things, stated that the skeleton, when reconstructed, had bones left over. These extra bones included bits of pig, sheep, ox and bird and what else? - and this is where the lecture ended. On a high note of suspense! One point more, the reference to the grave of Cardinal Chatillon - this comparatively unimportant

Frenchman, sent to England in 1558 to seek Queen Elizabeth's help in funding the Protestant cause in France, had died in England in 1571 and been buried in a temporary grave within a couple of yards of the site of the shrine of St Thomas.

This sacred spot was totally inappropriate for someone of such insignificance and the inference, clearly is that the bones of the Martyr were somehow, mysteriously saved from the 1538 destruction and buried in the 1571 tomb. Quite what the two twentieth century intruders were hoping to discover is uncertain; and the hiding place of the bones for 33 years was not revealed.

It is only fair to add that, in an effort to complete the story, it is reliably reported that a significant number of our members ordered copies of Professor Butler' book from the local bookshop. Perhaps they can tell us the ending!

David Sawyer

RUDYARD KIPLING

Geoff Hutchinson 23 March 2001

Mr Hutchinson began by telling us that Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay in 1865 the son of John Lockwood Kipling. He was sent home to England to school at the age of six and spent five miserable years with a foster mother. However, he was then moved to the United Services College in Westward Ho! Here he found his love of literature and while still there he published his first book of poems called "School Boy Lyrics".

He returned to India at the age of 17 where he found his true inspiration. He began to work on the Anglo Indian Newspaper and also began to produce a sizeable body of work, including his "Plain Tales from the Hills". The people of this country

were fascinated by India and his stories and poems about the country made him a successful and popular author.

In 1892 he married Caroline Balestir, an American, and they moved to Vermont. Here he wrote "The Jungle Book", "Kim" and "The Just So Stories". He was not happy in America and came home in 1902 and bought "Bateman's" in Sussex. In 1907 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, the first Englishman to be so. Many people regarded him as a soldier's author because so much of his work was written from a soldier's point of view and he included the "slang" used by the military of that time. However, he was never in the army and just wanted to encourage patriotism.

His only son was declared missing, believed dead in the First World War. He was devastated and spent the rest of his life working for the War Graves Commission. It is his words that are on every unidentified soldier's grave - "A Soldier - Known only to God". Mr Hutchinson then gave us a spirited rendering of many of Kipling's poems.

Joanne Lawrence

COMMEMORATION LECTURE

SAXONS, NORMANS AND THEIR BUILDINGS

Professor Eric Fernie 12 October 2001

Professor Fernie proposed to investigate the significance of the Norman Conquest upon architecture. Starting with the premise *"There is no trace of any Anglo-Saxon masonry standing in any of these buildings"*, Professor Fernie reminded us of the church builders' practice of adding to existing structures, rather than demolition and replacement. Durham Cathedral provides a fine example with its intermingling of post-Conquest architectural styles, but no Saxon.

The sole exception to this hypothesis is Westminster Abbey, however this pre-Conquest structure had been built in the Norman style and so does not counter the premise. Of Dorchester-upon-Thames, Wells and Sherborne, which retain Saxon features, Dorchester and Wells were down-graded, whilst Sherborne did not assume major status until the twelfth century.

The conclusion is unavoidable - that during the forty years or so following the Norman Conquest, England became one vast building-site. The psychological impact upon the Saxons, of seeing the foreign invaders demolish every major ecclesiastical building and replacing them in an unfamiliar style with the largest ecclesiastical buildings in Europe, must have been tremendous.

Professor Fernie suggested that "we all want to be Anglo-Saxons", explaining that greater pride is taken in identifying a church as "Saxon", rather than "Norman" or of another period. The church tower at Bosham, Sussex is claimed as Saxon, yet this is unlikely. To bring much needed clarity to the study of Anglo-Saxon buildings, a system of architectural time-scales was introduced as follows:- A1, 2, 3; B1, 2, 3; C1, 2, 3. Each represents a fifty year period, with C3 being AD 1050-1100 and thus only sixteen of its fifty years are pre-Conquest. Nevertheless, features that are placed in this time-scale are eagerly claimed as Saxon. By contrast with Bosham, the tower at Earls Barton, Northamptonshire is clearly Saxon with no noticeable Norman element.

But what if Saxon architecture appears to include "Norman" features? At Wittering, Northamptonshire are found long-and-short quoins, strip work, cone-shaped capitals and bases, giant impost blocks, variable-sized voussoirs and large stones in the jambs. These features are all part of the Saxon architectural repertoire and are not found in Normandy. However, the half-roll on the soffit is a Norman feature as are the radial voussoirs.

The conclusion that is too obviously drawn is that this is a post-Conquest structure which shows survivals of an earlier tradition. However, whilst the roll on the soffit is a Norman feature, Professor Fernie pointed out that rolls on the faces of arches are found elsewhere such as Stowe, Sherborne and Earls Barton, which are either known to be Saxon or show no trace of Norman influence. If the Saxons were experimenting with rolls on faces, then why not on soffits? Secondly, Barnack Quarry, a widely used source of building-stone in early Norman England, is only two miles from Wittering.

It is conceivable that a Saxon mason working in an isolated area would continue to use the methods with which he was familiar, but it is not reasonable to suggest that antique working practices would survive near such a major industrial centre. Nor is there any evidence that the original stone was re-worked. It would be as well, Professor Fernie urged, to keep an open mind.

A similar difficulty is encouraged at Barnack Church, where radiating voussoirs of the nave arch may be used as a diagnostic feature for a "Norman" designation. But all other aspects recommend the church as Saxon.

No Saxon examples of Bishops' chapels are known. The Norman examples that survive show influence from Germany.

It has long been held that castles were **the** Norman import. However, questions are now being asked which challenge this. By way of illustration, Professor Fernie demonstrated that despite the strong, defensible appearance of the castles at Hedingham, Essex and Rochester, Kent, a closer look reveals the large entrance doors, suggesting that defence was not the only, or even necessarily primary, consideration. The interiors too, with their large spaces, appear more suited to entertainments than warfare.

The seat of a Saxon thegn comprising a chapel, kitchen, bell-

house and "burhgeat" (i.e. a defended gate) does not then seem very far removed from what one finds in Norman castles of the immediate post-Conquest period, such as at Chepstow, Ludlow and Richmond. It is, in fact, only the touris or "keep" (itself a sixteenth century term, employed when these structures were used as prisons), which would appear to differentiate the seat of a thegn from a Norman castle, a feature that did not in fact appear until much later.

Neil Clephane-Cameron

FOUR BROTHERS AND A FRIEND CALLED DAN

Hugh Miller 9 November

On the eve of Remembrance Day, Hugh Miller told a poignant tale of four Sussex brothers and a farm horse, Dan, who went to France in the Great War in the service of their country. It was a moving story of guileless, patriotic young men who did not hesitate to offer up their lives for love of country and honour.

The brothers were barely grown up. Jack, a postman in Battle (born 1890); Stephen (1893); Wilfred (1895) and Fred (1896), all farmhands. Dan, the horse, solid and dependable was born in 1910. Wilfred had been present at Dan's birth and these two were especially devoted.

The parents and twelve children lived simple, uneventful lives in Pevensey. The youngsters were all educated at the village school where they were brought up to believe in the love of Empire and country. The outbreak of war was a thunderbolt and no-one had the remotest idea how devastating it would be; how everyone's life would change completely.

When Lord Kitchener asked for 100,000 men for the New Army, the brothers volunteered at once. Colonel Claude Lowther of Herstmonceaux Castle offered to raise a battalion

of 1,000 men, which the brothers joined; so many men came forward that three battalions were raised. Known affectionately as Lowther's Lambs, the official name was the South Down Battalion.

Stephen and Wilfred had consecutive serial numbers SD 614 and 615. The recruits were accommodated throughout the Bexhill area finally finishing up at a hutted camp at Cooden, and Dan went along too. Wilfred became his minder and groom and they were never separated.

In 1915, the South Down Battalion became the 11th, 12th and 13th Battalion. The Royal Sussex Regiment and lads remained under training at Whitley Camp, Godalming until the spring of 1916. Sadly, Stephen contracted tuberculosis and was discharged. In November 1916 he died.

In March, the regiment moved to France where, just south of Armentieres they lost their first casualty by a stray sniper shot. Soon after, they were in action and found themselves in a salient known as the Boar's Head and here, Jack was wounded. He was one of 750 wounded; 350 were killed, amongst whom was Company Sgt/Major Nelson Carter, VC from Hailsham.

Jack's injury was serious enough to be returned to "Blighty" where he was sent to the Eastbourne Central Military Hospital and then onto Summerdown Camp, the largest convalescing camp in England.

In August, Lowther's Lambs moved to the Somme, Dan gallantly helping to pull guns and transport wagons. On the 28th August, the battalion rested in apparent safety; they were hidden from enemy sight but *not* from the observation of a German balloon. They were spotted and a barrage was sent over, mainly shrapnel shells which exploded to release a shower of deadly, small balls. On hearing the explosion Wilfred and Fred rushed to their horses. Wilfred was struck

by a shrapnel ball and died in Fred's arms. Dan amazingly was unharmed.

In September, the regiment moved to the banks of the River Ancre where they took part in another futile, uphill attack over open ground. Nothing was gained and 142 men died. In November, they moved north to Ypres and the following July (1917) were sucked into the horror of Passchendaele where 250,000 casualties were sacrificed for five miles of flooded shell holes and liquid mud.

Jack had improved but had a premonition that if he were sent back to France he would never return; to France he went.

By early 1918, Lowther's Lambs had moved south and returned to the Somme in time for the German spring offensive. The allies were pushed back across the same fields that they had died to defend in 1916, and only stopped retreating when the German momentum failed. In August 1918, so near to the end, Jack was killed, grotesquely by friendly artillery fire. He has no known grave.

On the 11th November, the slaughter ended and Fred, alone of the brothers, returned to Pevensey. Dan also survived, an exhausted but heroic survivor of one million horses who went to the Western front. He returned to Sussex as a hero and lived out his life on the farm until the 1930's. When Dan got back to the farm, the farmer called the men together and told them "This horse has done his duty and he shall never do another day's work as long as he lives".

And of the men who died, many thousands were, like Jack with no known grave; or if there is a grave, just an inscription with Kipling's words "A Soldier of the Great War. Known unto God".

Wilfred *has* a grave, where he lies amongst other lads who should have grown old. To end, a moving verse..."We are

the dead, short days ago we lived...we shall not sleep though poppies grow in Flanders Fields".

I cannot end but mention what Hugh Miler was too modest to tell. The men of whom he spoke so affectionately were his own family.

David Sawyer

ANNE OF CLEVES - THE LADY BEHIND THE PORTRAIT

Helen Poole 14 December 2001

Our Lecturer commenced by expressing her hope that the next time we talked about the Six Wives of Henry VIII, we would not forget Anne of Cleves who, in her opinion was very badly done by. She lived for 41 years but was only Henry's wife for six months. She was born in 1515 which made her 24 years younger than the man she was to marry. She had lived in a small principality in Germany and probably would never have come to Henry's knowledge but the fact his first three wives had lasted for a relatively short space of time!

Jane Seymour was the only wife of Henry to produce a son and heir (on 12th October 1537) but unfortunately she had died 12 days after the birth.

Henry was devastated - but about a week later was already seeking a replacement wife both at home and on the Continent. Apart from being without a wife, Henry was experiencing religious troubles. A slide was shown of Martin Luther who was to play a rather important part in the history of the 16th Century.

Many of the German principalities were supportive of the Catholic Church; some supported Luther and there were some in the middle who regarded themselves as reformed Catholics.

The Cleves family thought themselves to be reformed Catholics and this was to Henry's liking as he still considered himself a Catholic but did not think the Pope was! Eventually Holbein was sent in August 1539 to make a miniature of Anne of Cleves. On this basis Henry decided to make her Queen of England. Unfortunately, she spoke no foreign languages nor had a liking for music (both of which were enjoyed by Henry) she only liked to embroider. Duke William, her brother, said the family could not provide a dowry which, as he was getting desperate and being pressed by Parliament, Henry waived and so on 4th September a marriage contract was signed.

Arrangements then proceeded to get Anne to England but this meant travelling through the Netherlands which was in the hands of the Spanish who did not wish a Protestant lady to travel through their lands. France took the same line. It was suggested she be smuggled to the coast and then put on the King's flagship but this idea was abandoned as it was thought it might alter her countenance (she might be seasick). She was eventually taken through Flanders starting at the beginning of November with her train of 263 people and 228 horses. There is a popular story at Sir Anthony Brown who had Battle Abbey went as proxy for Henry to Anne but he later said this was not true as the first time he saw Anne was when she landed in Kent.

Anne had never been out of Germany before and decided to enjoy herself and not hurry. She first stopped in Antwerp and then went on to Calais where she arrived on 11th September and had to stay for two weeks because the weather was so bad. She learnt to play cards (Henry's favourite game) and listened to music. On 26th December the wind changed and she arrived at Deal 17 hours later. Henry eventually met Anne at Rochester. Neither could speak each other's language, and the meeting was a disaster - he had forgotten to give her a present of sables and left, reputedly muttering "I like her not". The court could not find a way for Henry to

get out of the marriage and at 8.00 am on 6th January 1540 he married Anne at Greenwich.

She was due to be crowned on 2nd February but he was adamant this would not happen. They had nothing in common - she was not fashionable - she had kept her German clothes. He told everyone he had not consummated the marriage and that she smelt. Anne did not know the facts of life and told Lady Rutland the King just kissed her at night and in the morning before he left and that was all. Thomas Cromwell who had been responsible for her introduction was held for treason. The King said he would forgive him if he agreed to help negate the marriage. Henry had already noticed Catherine Howard, niece of the Duke of Norfolk. She was a Lady in Waiting together with Lady Brown (Anthony Brown's wife). Parliament approached the King urging him to marry someone who would give him an heir. It was agreed the King had not consummated the marriage which was dissolved on 9th July.

Anne was sent to Richmond, given a pension of £4,000 a year on the understanding she never went back to Germany and did not marry and in future would be known as the King's sister. She was given Hever Castle and Penshurst and then Bletchingly Park. She lived fairly quietly and had most of her income for her pension from Lewes Priory. No money came from Henry. Anne sent her wedding ring back to Henry broken in half. There is no evidence that Anne came into Sussex.

Anne was about the same age as Princess Mary and older than Princess Elizabeth. Henry died and when Edward came to the throne Anne had difficulty in getting her £4,000 pension until her family intervened. Mary came to the throne and Anne's last public engagement was with Princess Elizabeth at Mary's coronation. She remained quietly at one of her homes.

She died on 16th July 1557 aged 41 years - having outlived her husband and all the other wives. It is thought she died of some form of cancer.

Anne of Cleves House in Lewes was so called in 1910 when it was advertised for sale in a catalogue. Anne never lived in it.

A truly fascinating lecture about one of Henry's lesser known wives.

Diane Braybrook

SUMMER PROGRAMME 2001

Our first outing, on May 9th, was to Somerset House. It is situated between Covent Garden and the Embankment and is Sir William Chamber's 18th century masterpiece. In its early days it housed all three learned societies - The Royal Society, The Royal Academy of Arts and The Society of Antiquaries. It was then the Navy Office and in the last century was the office of the Inland Revenue and the General Register Office. It is now open to the public and houses the magnificent Gilbert Collection of European Silver and Gold. It also has the Hermitage Rooms, which house collections from the Hermitage Museum and are modelled on a wing in the Winter Palace in St Petersburg. There is also the Courtauld Gallery with its wonderful collection of Impressionist paintings.

In June we went to St Mary's at Bramber. This is a very beautiful medieval house, set in the downland village of Bramber. It was built in 1470 by the then Bishop of Winchester, founder of Magdalen College, Oxford. It has fine panelled rooms with 16th and 17th century furniture and a large collection of English costume dolls. After the tour we sat in the sun in the gardens and then had a tea in the music room. It was a lovely afternoon.

In July we had a very good-guided tour of Old Town Hastings. This is the Hastings the tourists don't see. We started on the West Hill and walked down through passages seeing Georgian and Regency and medieval houses and All Saints Church. We walked along the Rope Walk and the Tackle Way, admired some lovely tiny gardens and heard how Hastings had developed from a small fishing village into a seaside resort.

In September we visited the Roman Palace at Fishbourne and the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum at Singleton. We visited Singleton first and admired the more than 40 authentic historic houses, interiors and gardens. There is also a working 19th century farm and a watermill. Nearly all these buildings have been saved from demolition. In the afternoon we moved on the Roman Palace at Fishbourne where a modern building houses the extensive remains of a Roman palace built around AD 75. This site has the finest Roman mosaics in Britain and a very good museum and visual programme that tells of Fishbourne's remarkable history.

Joanne Lawrence

OBITUARY

PROFESSOR HENRY R LOYN MA, D LITT, FSA, FRHistS, FBA

Professor Henry Loyn, President of the Battle and District Historical Society from 1989 to 1995, died on the ninth of October 2000, we have sadly to record. Prior to his presidency he had been a Vice-president for some ten years.

His life was marked by a distinguished career in historical scholarship. At University College, Cardiff, he proceeded from MA in 1949 to the Professorship in Mediaeval History from 1969 to 1977; and subsequently, at Westfield College, University of London, became Professor of History from 1977 to 1987, Fellow, and between 1980 and 1986 Vice-principal

of the College. He served outstandingly on many historical bodies including the Historical Association (President 1976 to 1979), the Society of Antiquaries and the Ancient Monuments Board of England. His printed publications spanned the Anglo-Saxon and Viking ages, the Norman Conquest, the English Church from 940 to 1154, mediaeval European history and the "Governance of England", not to omit his contributions to learned journals.

On the death of Professor R Allen Brown in February 1989, Professor Loyn succeeded him as President of the Society. Keith Reader, in his obituary of Professor Allen Brown commented that not solely was the holding of Society presidency by distinguished scholars a mark of the Society's standing but also an invaluable source of historical knowledge and personal advice. Hence Chairman of the time Alan Denny's recalling Professor Loyn's considerable personal contact with him as Chairman, not least in the suggesting of outstanding and relevant speakers which stood in such good stead for the annual programmes. Professor Loyn himself addressed winter-programme lecture meetings on "The Normans" and (Commemoration Lecture of October 1991) on "Reconstruction of the Past", when he quoted John Buchan's "History must have science in its method, philosophy in its spirit and art in its presentation". Hence references to Alan Sorrell, artist and to William Burgess's work (1868 to 1880) on Cardiff Castle for the 3rd Marquis of Bute, which "was to turn the remains of a mediaeval fortress into, for the introspective man, a dream castle of thirteenth century ideals". Professor Loyn's contribution to the well-being of the Society will long be recalled, and thanked for.

John Springford