# Battle and District Historical Society

# JOURNAL

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**BATTLE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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## THE SOCIETY

The Society was founded in 1950 to encourage the knowledge and study of local history within Battle and the surrounding area, through:-

A Winter Programme of illustrated lectures by specialists in their subjects. Lectures take place in St. Mary's Church Hall in Battle at 7.30 pm on selected Fridays from October to March.

A Summer Programme of day or half day visits to places of historic or architectural interest.

An Annual Commemoration Lecture of the Battle of Hastings 1066 and participation in a service in St. Mary's Church.

A free annual Journal with reports on lectures and visits.

Free admission to the Battle Museum of Local History, and access to the Society's Library that is housed in the museum.

Membership of the Society's Research Group in the active study of all aspects of local history. No experience is necessary, new members are especially welcome.

Publication of local history guides.

The Society is affiliated to the Battlefields Trust and the Sussex Record Society.

To join the Society complete the application form on the end page.

**Battle and District Historical Society**

Charity No. 292593

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## BATTLE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT September 2004

Journeying across France and Spain on holiday this summer I became conscious of the historical events that had taken place in the surrounding countryside. Disembarking at Caen, with the 60 year anniversary of D - Day just weeks away, the remarkable 'coup de main' now known as Pegasus Bridge came to mind, the seizure of the bridges over the Caen Canal and Orne River by glider troops to secure the flank of the invasion beaches.

Proceeding through the bocage towards the Loire and an overnight stay in a hotel opposite a Benedictine monastery where Gregorian Chants are performed at the morning service. Onwards through Gascony and regretting the break up of the Angevin Empire and the loss of all that viticulture and wondering what course history would have taken if it had remained under one crown with England. Would we be speaking Norman French? Would the EU have come about earlier?

Poitiers recalled the Black Prince's victory in the Hundred Years War the evidence of which survives in the architecture of the Bastides. Slipping across into Spain with not a border control in sight I drove to my destination, Pamplona, a city reputably founded by Pompey the Great.

The return journey was via Vitoria, where Wellington defeated Soult, to Bilbao and a visit to the idiosyncratic art gallery designed by Canadian architect Frank Gehry. By ship to the historic dockyard of Portsmouth to complete a journey of some 900 miles of countryside and 2050 years of history.

Last season's lectures continued the policy of providing a wide range of subjects of local and general historical interest. Setting up the programme a year in advance involves a considerable amount of time, research and effort and I would like to record my thanks to Julie Ede who undertakes this task. It is not without its organiser's nightmares as occurred when the lecture programmed for the 14 November was cancelled at short notice. Fortunately we were able to call on the local historian Geoff Hutchinson who gave a lively enactment, I choose the word deliberately, of a life of a monk in Battle Abbey in the C16. Write-ups of this and all the other lectures are included in the Journal with reports on the visits of historical interest made this summer and the current work of the Research Group.

I managed to join the visit to Dover Castle and see the World War II underground operations room where the Dunkirk evacuation and the D Day landings were controlled. It was fascinating to compare the simple gridded plotting tables of the English Channel and the domestic linen measuring tapes used in the 1940s to scale off ranges with the present day operations room filled with large flashing screens and banks of computers. Sophisticated equipment by itself though is not enough unless backed by good analytical intelligence, as recent events have regrettably shown.

This year the Committee decided in view of poor attendance over the last years not to hold a Commemoration Wine and Buffet Party, however tea and coffee will be available at the conclusion of each lecture giving us all the chance discuss the subject further. The Commemorative Service of the Battle of Hastings will be held in October as usual.

Malcolm Stocker
Chairman

Editors Note

Neither the Committee nor the Hon. Editor is responsible for the opinions expressed by the contributors to this Journal. 

## THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Dr M. K. Lawson 10 October 2003

Dr Lawson thanked the Society for inviting him to give the Commemoration Lecture and expressed his pleasure at being here this evening.

The Battle of Hastings is a subject which is so widely known as to require little introduction, being one of the most famous events in English history and one with clear long-term historical consequences:

- The replacement of an English king and aristocracy by a French king and aristocracy;
- The collapse of some of the features of late Anglo-Saxon government;
- The reform of the English Church by Continental ecclesiastics led by Archbishop Lanfranc of Canterbury; and
- The political re-orientation towards (and connection with) northern France, which was to have an important effect on English rulers and their forces for the next five hundred years.

The story of King Harold being hit in the eye by an arrow is one of the great stories of our past, like King Alfred and the cakes, which is familiar even to people with no particular interest in history.

There are a great many sources for the battle (relative to other events of the period) but this does not mean that the sources are adequate, and it is the best known event in our history up to that time and for a century after - until the murder of Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral in 1170 produced a wealth of evidence, some of which was written by eye-witnesses. Although there are no first-hand accounts of the battle, the battlefield itself forms a not inconsiderable piece of evidence.

Having thus introduced the significance of the battle, Dr Lawson explained that he would go on to cover the history of the battle's history (the 'past' of his title), discuss his ideas of how this may have got things wrong (the 'present' of his title) and then look at how our understanding may develop – possibly dramatically – in the future.

<u>The Past</u>

This really begins in the 1860s when Prof. E. A. Freeman published his remarkable 'History of the Norman Conquest', which will probably always remain the most detailed treatment of the subject. Freemean visited the

battlefield and included a photozincograph map specially produced by the Ordnance Survey in his work. Showing an aerial photograph and Freeman's map, Dr Lawson indicated the extent of Senlac Ridge, about one mile in length. Freeman thought King Harold had occupied the entire length of the ridge as well as Horselodge Plantation – the hillock just south of the ridge and north of the great pond – and positions a field fortification (mentioned by the chronicler Wace) along the front of the Saxon army. Freeman's views held sway until his death when, in 1892, his reputation as an historian and his account of the battle were heavily criticised by J. H. Round. At this time a German historian, W. Spatz, produced a small book on the battle, which was to have a huge influence. Sir James Ramsay and F. H. Baring also produced significant works. Thus by 1900 a very different view of the battle had emerged.

Ramsay and Baring each produced maps showing the Saxon army as only occupying the crest of the ridge, a view that was accepted in favour of Freeman's. Ramsay and Baring each showed the Saxon army with its flanks refused, i.e. turned back. Such limited dispositions required much smaller numbers of men than did Freeman's, whose dispositions required 20,000 – 25,000 men, a figure which did not seem possible: Ramsay looked at the size of English forces during the Hundred Years' War and invited his readers to decide whether a Duke of Normandy in the eleventh-century could field a bigger army than a King of England in the fifteenth-century. The assumption being that the armies at Hastings were of similar size (had he looked back instead of forward then of course he would have found that the Emperor Claudius used forces of 40,000+). This idea of smaller numbers, approximately 7,000 – 10,000 per army, have been accepted by subsequent historians and enjoyed consensus for about one hundred years. However Dr Lawson suspects this view to be incorrect and proceeded to examine the fragility of this concept.

The Present

Given the unusual length of the battle for that period (approximately eight hours), the severity of the fighting and Duke William's failure to use his cavalry to try to turn the flanks of the Saxon army, Dr Lawson suggested that the Saxons' flanks must have been secure, resting upon natural obstacles. The left is obvious, being the end of the ridge along Marley Lane (above the Lake Field). The right is more problematic. Baring describes a stream (which does not in fact exist) for it. However continuing west along the ridge a position is found which would answer the purpose – but this is near to were Freeman

places it. It is of course possible that dense vegetation, rather than topography, may have protected the Saxons' right flank and so this alone is not helpful in determining the size of the army. Dr Lawson therefore turned to the Bayeux Tapestry's depiction of fighting around a hillock (widely accepted as being that where Horselodge Plantation now stands), which he believes shows a unit of Saxon light infantry that had been deployed there at the start of the battle on ground that was suited to it and a defended stream at the hillock's foot (near to what is now the great pond). The Song of the Battle of Hastings also talks of the English occupying a hill and valley. William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon both mention a Norman disaster at a watercourse, as does Wace who goes further, saying King Harold had made the defence secure with a ditch and appears to be recounting an oral tradition. Thus there seems good evidence of fighting to the south of the ridge and if Freeman erred then it was not in showing a Saxon deployment that was too extensive, but one that was not extensive enough!

Dr Lawson next explained the long history and sophisticated development of the army in late Saxon England, demolishing the myth of Saxon military incompetence born of the remembered defeats of 991, 1016 and 1066. In the ninth-century, King Alfred developed a sophisticated military system based upon static defence provided by strategically placed fortified towns and garrisons, and mounted mobile units; a system which prevented further Viking encroachment and gained significant victories over them, and indeed the Celts. In addition Dr Lawson read from a contemporary description of fighting on the Continent in which the Vikings used dykes fortified with stakes and then drew our attention to curious pointed objects in the watercourse at the bottom of the hillock on the Bayeux Tapestry, which Sir David Wilson in his commentary on the Bayeux Tapestry in the 1980s identified as being stakes. This would certainly explain the spectacular difficulties in which the cavalry find themselves in that scene, thus suggesting that King Harold had used a tactic that was well known during the period to counter enemy cavalry and further supporting the idea of initial deployment in front of the ridge. The Battle of Hastings thus lasted so long because both sides fought well and used sophisticated tactics (the feigned retreats of the Norman army are well known). This new understanding of the battle which Dr Lawson suggests, is much more in accord with the sophistication of late Saxon military practice and the duration of the battle.

The Future

In 2002, English Heritage published the result of an earthwork and parkland survey of their part of the battlefield, which concluded, 'there is no earthwork evidence that a battle actually took place within the park.' Dr Lawson questions this conclusion (assuming that this is the site of the battle – which he does not doubt!).

The reason for Dr Lawson's questioning of the report's conclusion is that two depressions feature on the lower part of the ridge below its crest, where the heaviest fighting would have taken place. The survey did not investigate the cause of these depressions, which the surveyors subsequently expressed a belief may be clay quarries that were subsequently landscaped, however their position would be entirely consistent with that of burial pits following the battle. A second feature, labelled 'Linear Feature J' on the survey is shown crossing the battlefield along the lower slope of the ridge (where it is clearly visible to the visitor) then disappears in the vicinity of the hillock (Horselodge Plantation) to reappear as a feint trace farther west. Is this, Dr Lawson wonders, the remains of the field fortification described by Wace?

It would be extremely difficult to prove a connection with the battle from excavation of Linear Feature 'J', however any investigation of the two depressions which was to uncover quantities of human bone would surely be the find of the century. Both the depressions and Linear Feature 'J' cry out for full investigation. But whether or not the remains of those who fought and died in the battle lie under those depressions, they must lie somewhere nearby and it is surely not beyond the capability of modern archaeological technology and technique to find them. It was with this thought that Dr Lawson ended.

Honorary Secretary's Post-Script

At a meeting of the Battle Abbey Advisory Committee on 16 October 2003, I raised the question of the depressions and Linear Feature 'J' and was informed by Dr Andrew Brown, Assistant Regional Director of English Heritage, that they have no further research plans for the site at present. One cannot help but wonder whether any such investigation will ever be sanctioned by English Heritage, for the discovery of mass-graves would be certain to throw into sharper focus the question of the appropriateness of certain commercial events at the site.

Neil Clephane – Cameron

## LIFE OF A MONK AT BATTLE ABBEY IN THE 16TH CENTURY

Geoff Hutchinson. 14 November 2003

The presentation was given in the form of an impressive monologue by Geoff, who appeared dressed as a 16C monk. This was realistically acted and included tape-recorded voice-overs by Geoff, representing other characters and excerpts of monastic chants.

This Benedictine monk had been at the Abbey in Battle for 45 years having been sent there by his parents at the age of 13 years. Being a Roman Catholic at that time was seen by the Monarch to be a sin. A Commission was formed by Thomas Cromwell; who sent Richard Leighton to assess the Abbey. He ridiculed and insulted the Abbott and thought the Abbey to be a disgrace and the monks to be corrupt. The Abbey was seen to be a valuable source of money by King Henry VIII (who was having well known matrimonial problems at the time) to build more castles needed for national defence.

Founded by William the Conqueror, Battle Abbey was first built 4 years after the Battle of Hastings to mark the place where King Harold fell in 1066. The Abbey was rebuilt in the 13C for use by up to 140 monks, but the total never reached many more than 40 and by 1538 it was down to 18 as the Bubonic Plague had taken its toll. Battle Abbey was the 15th wealthiest Abbey in the nation and as such was seen as ' rich pickings' by Henry VIII.

The Abbey was run in accordance with the 7C Benedictine rules; study, contemplation, worship, practical work; 4 hours prayer and 4 hours spiritual reading each day and unquestionable loyalty to the Pope. Having entered the Abbey at the age of 13, this monk was placed in the care of a Novice Master. He was taken to kiss the Abbot's feet, his head was shaved, and then he was dressed in the black robes of a Benedictine Monk. Thereafter, under careful supervision, he was taught to follow the strict regime of the Abbey. Instructions to the boys required, no speaking, living at the Abbey for the rest of their lives, 5 hours sleep each day, sleeping in their clothes, and a strict daily routine. Unless the rules were obeyed there would be punishment. The mid-day meal was the formal meal of the day, when they ate fresh vegetables and bread; there was to be no talking but they could listen to bible readings.

The daily routine for the monks was that after about 5 hours sleep, they would rise at 2am for a Service and then sleep for another hour between 5am and

6am followed by a light breakfast and another Service. Next would be a meeting to discuss devotions, business matters for the day, hear confessions, award punishments as necessary and then the mid-day meal. Afternoons were devoted to study, domestic crafts and gardening, followed by Evening Service and Compline, the final Service of the day, and finally back to the dormitory. This orderly and disciplined routine was repeated daily.

The organization at the Abbey was headed by the Abbot who represented God, laid down the law and required obedience without delay; he was also responsible for the area within about one mile radius from the Abbey. The Prior was second in order of priority; his responsibilities included organizing the daily routine, security and safeguarding the treasures of the Abbey. Under him, with their various responsibilities, came the Sacristan – Church maintenance; the Precentor- church music and singing; the Guest Master- hospitality; the Infirmarer- medical matters; and the Cellarer- catering. No excess talking was allowed in the Cloisters and definitely no laughing. When speaking was allowed it had always to be in Latin. In the library the books were written and richly decorated by the monks and scribes- more 'rich pickings' for the King!
The church was the heart of the Abbey, attended by the monks seven times daily. The choir sang Plainsong and Gregorian Chants. Matins was described as an experience of pure drama consisting of interspersed chants and prayers.

The Monks enjoyed a healthy diet. Beef on 3 days a week, oysters, mussels, eggs and home produced food from the Abbey garden. They also drank about one pint of wine daily. Wine, and others specialities, were obtained from London by the Cellarer.

The Abbey was surrendered to the Crown on 27 March 1538 and the monks left. In August of that year the Abbey was gifted to Sir Anthony Browne who demolished the church, chapter house and part of the cloisters. He then used the Abbey as a country house and it remained with the Browne family for many years.

Peter Roberts

## ANGELS, THEOLOGY AND DEVOTION

Ms T. Bloxham 12th December 2003

Ms. Bloxham started by explaining that she was an Art Historian at the Victoria and Albert Museum and that she specialised in the Middle Ages. She said that she would concentrate on the early period of the Christian Church up to the 15th century.

Early theologians agreed that there was a celestial hierarchy of angels, which was comprised of nine orders, divided into three groups of three. The highest and closest to God were the Seraphim, the Cherubim and the Thrones, who surrounded Him with perpetual devotion. The second group of three were the Dominions, the Powers and the Virtues and these governed the stars and the elements. The third group and the closest to us were the Principalities, the Archangels and the Angels. There were generally agreed to be seven Archangels, who protected the kingdoms of the earth and acted as divine messengers.

From the death of Jesus and for the following 200 years, the newly emerging church was much persecuted by the Romans, and very little artwork has survived. However when Constantine began to take control of the north-eastern Mediterranean, the church began to flourish and by the middle of the 4th century there were images of angels in almost all the churches. In the wonderful slides that Ms. Bloxham showed us, taken from both sacred illustrations and from wall paintings, there were Seraphim dancing around the throne of God singing and playing musical instruments, particularly trumpets. There were more pictures of hosts of angels accompanying Jesus on his ascent into heaven. Angels carried out the will of God and there Archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary to tell her that she would give birth to Jesus and an angel appeared to the aged Sarah, wife of Abraham to tell her that she would give birth to Isaac. And again an angel appeared, this time to Abraham, to tell him not to sacrifice Isaac. As well as messengers, Archangels had other jobs; some were healers as when Raphael helped heal Tobias and his wife Sarah. Archangels were also warriors; Archangel Michael was usually depicted in armour as he fought Satan.

The most familiar type of angel, even today, is the guardian angel. Guardian angels have been mentioned since the beginning and were believed to be with us at baptism and to stay with us until death and in many church monuments guardian angels are shown to be holding up the effigy. In the slides that we were shown the angels were sometimes shown

with wings and sometimes not and as St.Thomas Aquinas stated, the angels have no gender.

Ms. Bloxham ended with a question from St. Thomas; 'How many angels can you get on the head of a pin?' Medieval logic was different to ours but the answer is the same. Since angels have no corporeal form, you could get an infinite number.

Joanne Lawrence

## LOVE, SEX AND POLITICS AT THE PLANTAGENET COURT

Professor J. Gillingham 9 January 2004

Professor Gillingham began with a quotation from a review in The Times Literary Supplement referring to a book of which he was a co-author, which stated that 'Professor Gillingham may be a professional historian but he is naïve about sex', and warned the audience that it was up to them how they interpreted this

The first of the Plantagenet dynasty, Henry II and his glamorous and astonishing wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, were generally regarded as the first dysfunctional royal family. Between them they had nine children, six sons and three daughters known as the Devil's Brood. Four sons, Henry, Richard, Geoffrey and John survived into adulthood and all of them at one time or another took up arms, rebelled against their father or fought against each other. Indeed the quarrel between Richard and John became part of English folk lore which led to the modern version of the tales of Robin Hood.

It is almost but not quite true that none of the sons ever took up arms against their mother. While Richard was King and in prison in Germany, Eleanor was in effect the governor of the realm, John did take up arms against his brother and therefore also against his mother. None of the sons ever rebelled against their mother while their father King Henry II was alive.

It was Eleanor herself who led the first great family rebellion against Henry II in 1173. As a result of this, Eleanor was kept in captivity and remained her husband's prisoner until his death on 6th July 1189. The fact that Eleanor rebelled against her husband made her such a figure of romantic ballad and of mythic imagination and more recently a feminist icon which is not as portrayed in Little Arthur's History of England first published in 1834. There is no doubt that the family were always fighting amongst themselves. An historian writing in the 1190s on the subject of "The Troubled History of the House of Oedipus" stated that there was something desperately troubled and demonic about this royal family.

Why were they always fighting? Henry was by far the wealthiest and most powerful King of England. He had inherited much of France and invaded and took over Brittany and Ireland. Henry could claim that he

needed all this to provide for his sons and daughters and perhaps it is not surprising that with so much wealth and power they squabbled amongst themselves and with their parents.

In these circumstances perhaps it is not necessary to bring in such complicated factors as sex or love or thwarted or frustrated love and jealousy which is the opinion which prevailed in the 18th, 19th and 20th Centuries.

Henry II had the reputation of being a great king, the founder of the English Common Law . The Battle Abbey Chronicle provides a vivid account of King Henry's Court during the years in which his great legal innovations were being created.

Why had Eleanor rebelled against her husband? Was she really the wronged wife out for vengeance? Henry had a mistress, the fair Rosamund Clifford and there are vivid tales of Eleanor's treatment of Rosamund.. It was taken for granted at that time that a king would have a mistress and it would have been very unusual for Eleanor to object to this.

Historians have since suggested that it was not Eleanor's jealousy and emotional and sexual passions that made her an amazing woman but her political aspirations and activities, particularly after Henry's death. At that time, marriage was always arranged for political and diplomatic reasons. Sexual and romantic love was one thing and marriage quite another. However this was not a cause of tension between Henry and Eleanor.

The 12th Century was the age of the troubadour, the age of courtly love and romances, as recorded in the literature of the times. A writer of the time, Churchman, is insistent that there should not be a marriage without love and partners should pay the conjugal debt to one another. Matthew Parris, a famous Monk of St Albans stated that a married couple were connected 'by law, by love and by the harmony of the bed'. It is clear that this was very important and for an aristocratic or royal family a certain degree of harmony was essential in order to produce an heir.

Eleanor was first married to Louis VII of France by whom she had one daughter. When she failed to produce a male heir to guarantee the succession of the monarchy she and Louis were divorced on the grounds of consanguinity (incest). The whole political map of Europe was then transformed as a result of their divorce and sexual incompatability.

Eventually Louis VII did have a son, known as Philip Augustus, Philip II, the most successful of all kings of France. His second marriage to Ingeborg of Denmark also illustrated how difficult and awkward sex could be in affecting the political calculation of even the most calculating politicians. Immediately after his marriage he divorced Ingeborg on the grounds of consanguinity. Ingeborg refused to return to Denmark and appealed to the Pope and it was proved that there was no consanguinity between them. Twenty years later he took Ingeborg back into his bed and all France rejoiced.

Similarly there was incompatability between Richard I and Berengaria of Navarre who had no children. This created a succession dispute which led to the disappearance and supposed murder of Prince Arthur and ultimately to the collapse of the Plantagenet empire.

The theory that Richard was a homosexual has been given more prominence in the last fifty years. There is evidence that in June 1187 Philip II invited Richard to stay with him in Paris. It is recorded that 'Philip loved Richard as his own soul and so honoured him that every day they ate at the same table, shared the same dish and at night shared the same bed' which caused King Henry to wonder what it could mean. In fact for two men of high rank to share a bed was a political act and not an act of sexual passion. Sharing a bed was a public demonstration of a new and unexpected political friendship and trust.

Returning to Henry II, did matters of sex ever disrupt the politics of his reign? In January 1169 a betrothal was arranged between Richard and Princess Alice of France, daughter of Louis, who was then eight years old. This marriage never happened and for twenty years Alice was in the custody of the King of England. It is possible that Henry wished to divorce Eleanor and marry Alice himself. Alice did become his mistress and bore him a child. Lust and love must have come into their relationship

According to the historian, David Hume, 'Henry II was a great legislator, the provisions he made were calculated both for the future and for the present happiness of his kingdom. He was the greatest prince of his time of wisdom, virtues and abilities'. It followed that such a prince could not have been swept off his feet by lust and this assessment has been followed by academic historians ever since.

In the days when kings ruled as well as reigned the questions of the emotions which ruled their hearts then mattered greatly. Sue Moore

## IMAGES OF KING CHARLES 1

Dr. F. Heal. 23 January 2004.

This is a difficult lecture to write up because it lacks access to the slides of the various portraits, statues and busts which illustrated how the monarch wished to be represented.

Charles, unlike his father James 1 (who disliked anything remotely artistic and cultured) sought to represent himself through the medium of art as the personification of monarchy. He resembled more his elder brother, Prince Henry, who had himself portrayed as a mediaeval knight in full jousting armour. Charles extended this theme by being painted as St. George, freeing his Queen (who represented the Kingdom ) from the enemies that threatened it. Symbolically, behind the Queen was a lamb which was taken to be the Church. This epitomised how Charles wished to be shown; powerful, authoritative and in full control of the State.

From the time of the Tudors, royal portraiture was highly symbolic. It mattered where the picture was hung and the positioning of the figures carried an implied message to the viewer. The King, above all, had to be a powerful icon and all eyes needed to be drawn to him.

Henry had his artist, Holbein and Charles, after much searching, his own - Van Dyke. Van Dyke managed to aggrandize Charles by foreshortening other figures, particularly horses, by reducing the size of their heads and ensuring that they were always bowed; Charles' lack of height was disguised by making him look slightly downwards and lack of majesty was masked by a stylish beard. Every paint stroke was designed to emphasize authority and order.

Dr. Heal illustrated her talk by showing a number of slides depicting various portraits of Charles, all of which sought to repeat the atmosphere of law and order. Charles believed in his divine right to rule and, in Van Dyke, he found the man to present the image.A Frenchman wrote of Van Dyke; " without exaggeration, in preserving the state of this great monarch, he has so skilfully brought into life with his brush that if our eyes were also to be believed they would boldly assert that the King was alive in this portrait, so vivid is its appearance. So, if we are to believe the writer, Van Dyke captured the image as it was seen in life.

Dr. Heal also speculated that Charles became a victim of his own aesthetics , confusing representation with reality; perhaps a classic example of believing ones own publicity.

It was interesting to learn that Charles' interest in art developed from a trip to Madrid in pursuit of a bride in the person of the Infanta of Spain. She rejected him but Charles became enamoured with the artistic life of the Spanish Court. He was particularly impressed with Titian's portrait of Charles V, which captured precisely the image of monarchical authority. Charles returned to England, not only with the painting but also with the enthusiasm to replicate this type of imagery.

Van Dyke's masterpiece, and the one most nearly capturing Titian's work, is no longer in England. It was given as a diplomatic offering to the royal mother-in-law, Marie de Medici, and now rests in the Louvre. This portrait absolutely encapsulates Charles' theme.

The iconography was also repeated by Rubens on the ceiling of the Banqueting Hall in Whitehall. This is a powerful representation and publicly viewable today.

Similarly, the equestrian bronze by Le Sueur was an extension of majesty although, uncharacteristically, this was for public display. It was set up at Charing Cross and was meant to show the human face of monarchy; there is little evidence that it was treated with much respect or veneration. Charles did not repeat the experiment; public display was alien to him. Far more to his taste was an interest in the Masque, a form of performance art which he not only enjoyed watching, but in which he sometimes took part. The masque incorpor--ated everything he most valued; the power of the monarch; the victory of good over evil and the triumph of order. This was the environment in which Charles felt comfortable but it is easy to see how divorced it was from the world outside.

No succeeding monarch has ever had an artist so much in tune with his concept of monarchy, but equally no later monarch has been so entrapped by symbolism. There is an underlying feeling of sadness that somehow Charles never quite understood what the people wanted. He achieved majestic art but that's all it was- a face on canvas.

David Sawyer.

## THE ASHFORD WARRIOR BURIALS

Mr C Johnson, Archaeologist 13 February 2004

Mr Johnson commenced his talk by telling us that he lives in Hawkhurst. The Ashford Warrior Burial excavations at Ashford took place during 1999 to 2001, when he was then working at the University College, London, but based at Ditchling. He is now an Archaeologist for Kent County Council.

Ninety per cent of all excavations now being assessed were referred by Developers and through Planning Departments. As this is now a requirement for new developments, it is forcing archaeologists to search in areas other than those which had been focused upon by previous research.

The site at S.W.Ashford is on poorly drained Weald Clay between two riverheads and charcoal from the site has been dated at between 1000-2000BC. During the excavations weather conditions were extreme, from hot sunny days which baked the clay to deluge conditions in the winter which meant the burial excavation sites kept filling with water.

Evidence was found of enclosed buildings on the site, including many bones in the ditches. However the burials were the most important. The two Warrior burials were found near to each other and were both inhumations (i.e. buried). They were side by side, one head to the North, the other to the South, one in a shallow grave, approximately half a metre deep, and the other in a deeper grave of over one metre.

The larger grave has been dated to AD10-20. Finds in this grave included a shield boss, a sword ring, a spearhead, plus a pot and a long sword with a bone handle, in the remains of a leather scabbard. There was also a pig's head and teeth, which might represent food offering. From the marks in the soil it would appear the warrior was wrapped in a coffin blanket. This excavation was done in very dry conditions, in under one week, the clay so hard that it was necessary for earth blocks to be lifted and taken to Southampton to enable proper archaeological searches to be made.

The smaller burial, head to the South, contained teeth and a jaw of a male 18-22 years old but only 5ft.2ins. tall (the other remains were estimated at nearly 6ft.). This burial has been dated to AD30-AD50 and so nearer to the Roman time of habitation in this area. A plate, stamped Canicos (AD25-AD45), a cup and a wine jug were found in this grave and were probably imported from Northern France. A spear, bent to fit into the grave, and a shield were also found, together with the remains of a very

long sword and suspension rings. These rings would indicate the sword could be worn across the back, when not being carried on a cart. All in all it suggested a burial of a man of extreme wealth

Evidence suggests that the two graves continued as a focus for feasting and ritual into the late first or early second century AD. This raises questions about their identity and their relationship both with the native society and also with the Roman administration, which seems to have tolerated their veneration.

Mr Johnson stressed the importance of these two Warrior Burials as only nine confirmed other inhumations with weapons have been found in England, South of the Humber. He also confirmed that with the development of Ashford, archaeological work is on going.

On completing his lecture, Mr Johnson left us with many unanswered questions regarding these two Warriors. Were they the last "Heroes" before the Roman Invasion? Were they father and son? Were they English or French? We will probably never know. A truly fascinating lecture to a packed house, none the less.

Diane Braybrooke

## THE EVOLUTION of SUSSEX PLACE NAMES

Professor Richard Coates - University of Sussex 27 February 2004

As a linguist and Director of the English Place-Names Society (founded 1923) Professor Coates is admirably matched with his subject. He began by giving the references for a bibliography of the subject which included both ancient and modern titles including the recently published "Cambridge Dictionary of English Place Names" (price £175) as well as more modestly priced volumes such as Judith Glover's "Sussex Place Names" and M Gelling's "Signposts to the Past".

How can place names be studied? Initially by using early spellings from ancient documents and by applying linguistic knowledge from the many languages which have been used in England. The place names of parishes and manors are the starting point in relation to other similar names. In East Sussex there are very few names derived from Latin (eg Firle) and even less from pre-Roman Celtic times as Sussex is the least 'Welsh' county in the British Isles eg Andred (the Weald), East Chiltington (steep slope) and perhaps Lewes?

One question that should be asked is - are the English names on the map the original ones and what is their relation to other records? It should be remembered that in the past the majority of people were illiterate and spoke various dialects, often without the benefit of teeth. Alfriston is an example of a pre-Domesday name; in 1066 the tenant was 'Alfrish' - a common name of the period. A typical name of a place is in two parts; firstly the 'type' which is then defined by a general ending. English place names are rarely just a person's name although examples of exceptions are; Lafayette, Peterlee (a trade union leader) and Telford (the engineer)

Geographical features are often referred to in place names for example;
Hills: - dun, don, (down with a smooth top)
Valleys: - hamm (Michelham) heath, hale.
Marsh: - mersch (Peasmarsh)
Moor: - poor land (Westfield Moor)
Island: - raised land, ey, (Oxney)
Heel: - hock, spur, hoh (Hooe)
Spongy land: - wisc
Water: - ea (Mersey)
Pool: - mere (Udimore)
Well or spring: - weill

Slow-running brook: - burna, bourne (Eastbourne)
Long narrow valley: - dene (Oxendene)
Short valley:- combe
Land use: - field, in open country, on edge of Weald (Catsfield, Westfield)
Swine pasture: - denn (Newenden, Horsmonden)
Woodland: - leah, lee, ley (Beckley)
Wooded hill: - hurst, hyrst (Crowhurst, Herstmonceux)
Tree names: - (Appledore, Cowbeech, Broadoak)

Place names endings include:
Economic endings: - ham, a major ancient farm and -tun which is very common on fertile land in central, western England.
Caistor: - a Roman camp or settlement (Chichester)
Borg/bury/borough: - (Chanctonbury, Pembury, Cissbury)
Borsell: - hovel/ shack/ temporary buildings
Wick/wyk: - specialised farm for dairy, salt
Bridge
Pytt/ pit/ pett
Street/ strat: (Cade Street, Sedlescombe Street)

There are also extra little settlements at crossroads or infills (Cross-in-Hand, Wallcrouch (cross), Fourthrows (ways). Later outgrowths from villages are referred to as "green", "heath" "common" "street" Sevenoaks as one word is an earlier name than say Three Oaks.

Professor Coates concluded his interesting talk with the well-known phrase; "if you have been, thanks for listening"

Ann Stocker

## STAINED GLASS THROUGH THE AGES

Dr Sebastian Strobl 12 March 2004

The first known glass seems to have been produced in Egypt where glass vessels and beads have been found dating from 1450 BC. In these early years only opaque glass was produced. By the last century BC clear glass started to be produced for vessels and subsequently the Romans began to use small size panes of opaque glass in the windows of their bathhouses. In the northern parts of the Roman Empire the glass was needed to conserve the heat inside the bathhouses. This glass was produced by pouring the molten liquid onto a sand bed and stretching it resulting in fairly thick opaque glass. Later the blowing pipe was invented and the resulting glass may be seen in villas of AD35 in England and Germany.

The ingredients of glass are soda, sand and some colouring (currently 5,000 different colours of glass are produced in Germany). The raw materials are melted at a high temperature and then blown into a cylinder shape which is cut open then re-heated to become malleable. This allows it to be flattened into sheets about 2 feet x 3 feet although earlier ones were smaller, about 1 foot x 2 feet. Theophilus, a twelfth century German monk, described the method in some detail and his writings are an important source of information.

In 310AD windows were compared with the human eye and at that time burglars entered the church of St Gregory in Tours by breaking the window depicting St Martin. Archaeological information about early windows is scarce as few have survived due to re-cycling by melting the glass. Were the windows coloured, figurative or abstract? Crown glass was used in mosques in the form of flattened discs from the pontil and these were unpainted, non-figurative. In the mid C6 church of San Vitale in Ravenna Christ's head was painted onto crown glass.

As only small pieces of glass could be produced at this time so the technique of joining them together with 'H' shaped lead cames gradually developed. Lead is easy to work and can be milled into shape and soldered up. In the Saxon church at Jarrow coloured glass was used while at Magdeburg in C10 heads of Christ were salvaged when the rest of the glass was destroyed. New designs of life-size figures were then introduced with painted and coloured glass which was fired at 600degreesC. Nowadays hydrofluoric acid is used to etch into the glass through about half the 4mm thickness.

During C12 paper was not used but according to Theophilus the design for a window was drawn in charcoal on a whitewashed bench. This has been confirmed by the discovery of a bench which had been concealed for centuries at Gerona Cathedral. The master craftsman designed the main figures while the background was completed by his apprentices. Standard drawings, with slight variations, were repeated at different places

Bible stories are depicted in C12 but who designed the windows? probably the monks. Windows dated 1176-1220 at Canterbury Cathedral contain glass which is thought to be of French origin. Occasionally the glass painter included a self-portrait in his design. Sources of the designs appear to be pattern books such as C14 "Book of Prayer" and even a hockey player appears!

"Stained glass" formed by using silver nitrate, was introduced about 1300, although the technique had been known since C6. For the first time two colours could be used on the same piece of glass; enamels followed in C16. Insertions were used to add other colours despite the effect it had of weakening the glass.

The dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII resulted in a great deal of destruction of earlier windows. Glass from France was difficult to obtain and there were changes in taste; silver-stained roundels, glass with enamel on the back became popular. The Civil War caused more destruction and obstructed progress in design. At St Botolph's Church in Lullingstone there is a window of 1754 where the glass has been painted like a canvas. By the C19 Gothic revival period all these ideas were rejected and design reached new heights and depths. A large choice of different varieties of glass was available and the "Arts and Crafts" movement made good use of these. C20 designs vary in quality but an outstanding example is the work by Marc Chagall at All Saints Church Tudeley near Tonbridge. Everything is now possible in stained glass through a continuous process. At the Stained Glass Studio of Canterbury Cathedral a thousand years of unbroken tradition continues.

Ann Stocker

## BATTLE in the EARLY 12th CENTURY

Ian Peirce 26 March 2004

Mr Peirce began the Robertson memorial Lecture by stating that he had been researching Battle and the Battle Abbey Chronicles for the past thirty years. The Chronicles begin with an account of the start of the building of the Abbey. They give what seems to be an accurate account of the Abbey boundaries and then a list of the rental of properties around it. The list of rentals starts between 1102 and 1107 when the Brothers building the Abbey began to record the sites offered to their craftsmen. The road through Battle was exactly where the High Street is today with the market at the far end, close to the present day roundabout. The most expensive rentals were in the market area.

The two areas north of the Abbey were known as Claverham and Middleborough with Sandlake lower down, starting near St Mary's church. Each plot fronted the road and in general the rents were 7 denari per annum plus one day's labour in the fields. The higher value plots near the market cost up to 12d and the ones below Lower Lake as little as 5d. The plots were usually about 28-32 feet wide and 290feet long making and area of approximately a quarter of an acre which enabled tenants to grow vegetables and to keep the odd animal.

The list of tenants is very interesting and shows the sort of work that the population, which numbered about 500, was doing. There was Gilbert the weaver, Robert the Miller, Oderic the swineherd, Lambert the shoemaker, Edric the bell founder who lived (rent free) near St Mary's as did Bennet the sewer and Eldric the cook (who had two plots and paid 13d). Emma who paid 7d lived at no 46 and Elsrildis the nun, who lived next door paid 6d. Wolfric the pig man lived close to the market and Humphrey the priest lived close to St Mary's but unlike the bell founder paid 7d rent. Alwyn the sacristan and Selwyn the reed cutter both paid the same amount.

There were three Guildhalls; the two main ones were the Guild of St Martin at Sandlake and the Guild of St George at Claverham. These were the breweries, the Abbots and Brothers belonged to both and there the daily problems of the town were sorted out. There was a third at the bottom of the town near the quarry but this was less important and was used by 'rustics'

The Chronicles give a wonderful insight into C12 life in the town and the 1724 map of Battle shows that 600 years later the boundaries were practically unchanged.

Post script
Each tenant was given a 'seam' of malt to make beer which was then returned to the Abbey as part of their rent

Joanne Lawrence

## SUMMER VISITS 2003 - September

The fourth and final visit in 2003 was a half-day visit to Hever Castle. As with all the visits in this glorious summer, it was a perfect day. The castle dates back to 1270, and two hundred years later the Bullen (Boleyn) family added the manor house within its walls, here Anne Boleyn spent her childhood. It was later given to Henry VIII's fourth wife Anne of Cleves. The American millionaire William Waldorf Astor bought the estate in 1903 restoring the castle and grounds, including building a village to house his guests behind the castle. As well as the attractive gardens and the maze there were exhibitions of Henry VIII's six wives, model houses and patchwork and quilting.

## SUMMER VISITS 2004

Our first visit was in May to The National Archives (formerly The Public Record Office) where the nation's documents are stored. We were given a guided tour and shown the facilities provided for visitors researching family, military or other historical matters. We were taken behind the scenes and saw how and where the archives were stored and allowed to see a few significant letters and documents such as the papers relating to the Oscar Wilde trial. The 'Treasury' displayed items such as the Domesday Book.

We followed with a visit to Kew Gardens, the weather was glorious, a real bonus for May. Unfortunately the sun brought out many other visitors to the gardens and glasshouses which were looking magnificent. The "Kew Explorer" toured the area with eight stopping off points, so we managed to get around, even when our legs did not wish to!

The next visit was in June to Dover Castle, where the previous day very high winds caused the cancellation of the ferries and the closure of the Castle to the public. However, we had a sunny day and brought back the same number of members we taken despite the very strong winds on top. We were given a guided tour of the secret wartime tunnels, these were first excavated in 1941 and completed in 1943, below the Napoleonic ones. The tunnels contained an underground hospital and Admiral Ramsay's headquarters, the nerve centre for the Dunkirk evacuation. The three tunnel levels were linked to form a Combined Headquarters. It brought back many memories especially to those who had worked in

similar places. Later the tunnels were adapted to be used as a Regional Seat of Government in the event of a nuclear attack, This third, lowest level was not open to the public, however a few of us had a bonus trip in the lift down to this level, but happily we got back to the main group safely. There was so much to see, with many exhibitions at the Castle that we had difficulty fitting it all in. A land train took those who wished around the steep Castle site.

Our third, and only half-day visit was to Charleston in July, the home of the Bloomsbury Group. We were again blessed with glorious weather, but had only 11 members and some guests on the coach. This confirmed last year's thoughts that half-day visits were not adequately supported and should possibly be discontinued. After coffee and biscuits we were split into two groups for a private guided tour. From 1916 the farmhouse had been home to the unconventional household including amongst others Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant. Over the following half century it been the meeting place the group of artists, writers and intellectuals known as the Bloomsbury Group. The artists had decorated every conceivable surface in the house. By the time Duncan Grant died in 1978 the house had become very dilapidated but it and the delightful garden have been restored, and are now maintained, by the Charleston Trust.

We then went on to St. Michael's Church Berwick. During the Second World War, Bishop Bell of Chichester asked Duncan Grant Vanessa Bell and Quentin Bell to produce a scheme for complete decoration of the church. The murals were painted on plasterboard at Charleston and then fixed inside the church. The Bishop dedicated them in 1943.

We have one more visit for 2004 which is to Clarence House and the Queen's Gallery in September. A report on this visit will be included in the Journal for 2005

Wendy Roberts

## RESEARCH GROUP

There are currently five members contributing to the work of the Group, who in the year past have conducted research on subjects of their personal choice. Subjects covered included: -

Battle Abbey, six months after the Battle work on the Abbey commenced which was dedicated in 1095, and much information exists on the buildings and estate of the Abbey. Current interest is the cultural and spiritual achievements of the monks and their relationship with the town, and the gradual decline of the Abbey despite the prestige and political eminence of the Abbot's post.

Elizabeth Acton, the early nineteenth century authoress who was born in Battle and distinguished for her poetry and her books on cookery, the latter which has been recently republished.

The history and development of the Methodist Church in Battle, its relationship with the Anglican Church.

The Poor Relief in Battle which before 1834 was the responsibility first of the Abbey and then the Parish Church.

The Webster family, this is expected to be published soon and the author Professor Roy Pryce is a Society member.

John Springford

## WINTER PROGRAMME 2004-5

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| Coins, Conquest and Continuity<br>Dr. Gareth Williams British Museum | Friday 15 October |
| Battle of Hastings Service<br>11am, St Mary the Virgin, Battle | Sunday 17 October |
| Dunkirk: The Poet Laureate and the book that Churchill banned. Arthur Cooksey Author | Friday 12 November |
| Annual General Meeting | Friday 26 November |
| Fit for a King? The finds from a Saxon princely burial at Prittlewell, Essex, and their context<br>Lyn Blackmore Museum of London | Friday 10 December |
| Henry V: The making of a military genius<br>Prof. Anne Curry University of Southampton | Friday 14 January |
| The Battle of Evesham, 1265<br>Prof. David Carpenter King's College London | Friday 28 January |
| The story of the Dance Band Days: music and memories of the 1930s & 40s Don Dray | Friday 11 February |
| Recent Excavations at the Wilmington Long Man<br>Chris Butler Archaeologist | Friday 25 February |
| Gunpowder Mills Prof. Alan Crocker | Friday 11 March |
| The life and times of John Ashburnham 1603-71<br>Rhoderick Jones The Ashburnham Trust | Friday 25 March |

## SUMMER VISITS 2005

Proposed visits included,
The Cabinet War Rooms, The Methodist Central Hall
Eton College, Savill Gardens Windsor, Brighton Pavilion
These are all day-visits, there are no half-day visits planned for 2005.

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