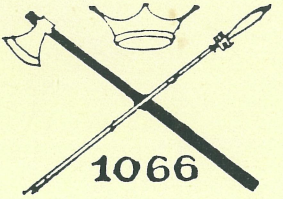

From a map of Sussex by John Nordon, augmented by John Speede. a.1616 d.

BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

DECEMBER 1995 No. 14

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Typeset by Rother Museums Service

BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM TRUST

Official Address : Langton House, High Street, Battle, TN33 0AQ

Affiliated to The Historical Association, The Sussex Archaeological Society, The Sussex Archaeological Trust, Sussex Record Society, the Council for British Archaeology (South East Area) and the South East Museum Service

Officers and Committees 1995-1996

THE SOCIETY

(Registered as a Charity, No.292593, on 8 May 1984)

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Vice Presidents

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Mr. E.G. Creek, M.A.
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Mr.F.R.Marshall	Archivist
Mr.E.Augele	Asst. Archivist
Mrs. A. Swan	Schools Organiser

Mr.E.J. Upton
Society Representative: Miss M.S. Millar

FROM THE VICE CHAIRMAN

The high standards of the Society have been maintained during the past season despite the difficulty of operating without a Chairman, but I sincerely believe that this will be resolved at the Annual General Meeting.

There are to be many changes as far as the committee is concerned and I thank most sincerely all the present members who have helped to make my job easier than it might have been.

There have been some outstanding lectures, including the new angle on William the Conqueror as explained by Professor David Bates in the opening lecture. It is invidious to give singular commendations so suffice to say that none could be faulted and the attendances confirmed their popularity.

With an elderly membership it is inevitable that in a year old friends pass away and this year has been no exception. I take this opportunity to say "Thank you" for all the marvellous work done in the library by Gladys Young who died quite suddenly in July. She joined the Society in 1984 and soon took over as Librarian, a job that she thoroughly enjoyed but one which, because of her enthusiasm, improved the facilities of the Library not only for the members but for many researchers who found her intimate knowledge of its contents invaluable. She will be sadly missed.

As I have said there will be many new faces, I hope, after the A.G.M. - I have enjoyed my short spell as Vice-Chairman and although I will not be carrying on I will continue to organise the outings for 1996. I do hope that members will support the outings. Only three were organised this year and although they were most successful numbers could have been greater. You will find extensive reports on these in the Annual Newsletter. I wish the new committee every success - it will be considerably younger than the present one!

Bernard Gillman-Davis

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MUSEUM TRUST

Thanks to the total co-operation of all concerned, especially the committee members and custodians, plus considerable support from Brenda Mason (Rother Museums Service Curator), I can report another successful year. It used to be said that we needed rainy days to encourage visitors into the Museum but we have just experienced the longest dry summer for 300 years, and yet our visitor numbers have remained steady at around 7,800; not like other attractions in the town which report a drop in numbers - in one case by as much as 15%.

The year, however, was not without sadness, particularly in the sudden death in June of Mrs. Gladys Young, who for so many years was closely involved with both the Museum and the Historical Society; a more detailed report appears about Gladys on page 37 of this Newsletter. Also, as a result of his resigning from the Historical Society Committee, we are losing the services of Mr. Bob Mears, who, as the Society's representative on the Museum Committee for the past six years, has given us the benefit of his analytical mind and verbal encouragement.

On a happier note, we were pleased to welcome to the Committee Mr Eric Augele as Assistant Archivist, and to learn that in spite of her increasing work-load, our Curator, Julie Ede, has agreed to continue as Curator - with a little help from her friends!

Congratulations are due to Mrs. Audrey Swann (Schools' Liaison Officer) whose draft Education Policy has been described by the Rother Curator as "a model of its kind" and which provides, among other things, a number of useful ideas for all those connected with the Museum - particularly the Chairman!

I am also pleased to announce that Mr John Upton, a member of the Museum Committee for many years until 1982, has agreed to join us again. Mr. Upton's interest in history, particularly of this locality, will, I'm sure, prove invaluable.

During the off-season period it is hoped that arrangements will be made to change some of the Museum exhibits and also to put on display a number of photographs and maps which hitherto have been hidden away in drawers and boxes. Copies of some of these photographs may be available for sale.

Finally, to me, the most pleasing aspect of the Museum Committee work is the close liaison between all its members - each ready to help the others in their efforts to make a visit to the Museum both interesting and thought-provoking. In attempting to achieve this goal I also acknowledge the co-operation received from the Memorial Hall committee and Brenda Mason, the Rother Museums Service Curator.

John Hill

CUSTODIANS: Mrs.A.Armitage, Mrs.G.Bolton, Mr.H.Charman, Mr. & Mrs.J.Downes, Mr.T.Drinkwater, Mrs.L.Ford, Mrs.C.Gilbart, Mr.J.Hill, Mr.R.Marshall, Mrs.J.McMurray, Mr.J.Polush, Mrs.F.Reffell, Mr.J.Saunders
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LECTURES

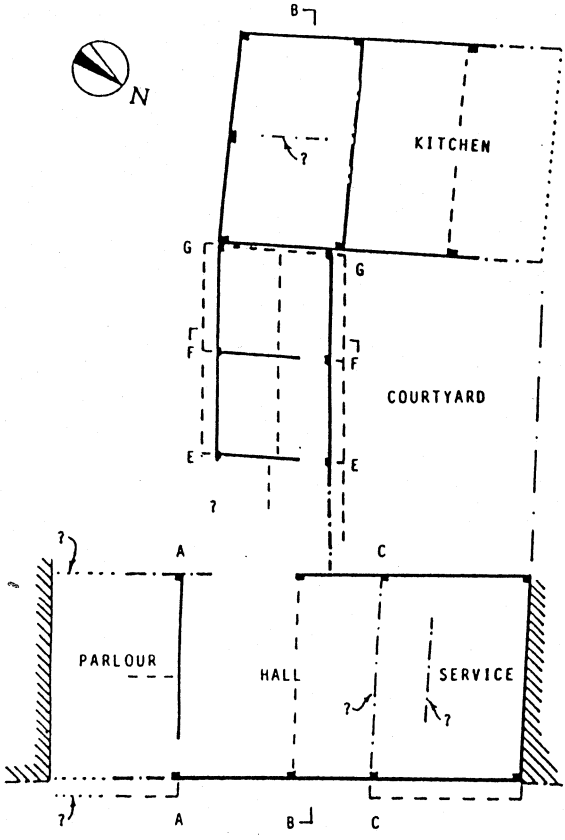
THE TOPOGRAPHY OF BATTLE BEFORE 1840

Mr. Christopher Whittick, Archivist, East Sussex Records Office
Mr. David Martin, Historic Buildings Officer, Institute of Archaeology, University College, London — 3 February 1995

Mr. Whittick opened this illustrated lecture with the outline of a project designed to research, parish by parish, the topography of East Sussex and, through the field archaeologist, the specialist historic buildings' surveyor, and the documentary researcher, establish the authoritative record of each parish's character and place in the history of the county. It had its origins in a bequest to the Sussex Archaeological Society by the late I.D. Margary, author of *Romany Ways in the Weald*; and two parishes, Iden and Playden, were chosen for an initial survey to be conducted under the superintendence of Mr. Whittick and Mr. Martin who, since 1978, had combined in the prototype work required by *The Rape of Hastings Survey.* They began in 1991 and in twelve months an astonishing amount of detailed material (including, incidentally, a major Neolithic site in Playden) had been uncovered and classified. The buildings themselves were investigated to determine, so far as was possible, their original structure and the subsequent alterations which had come about with the changes in affluence and taste of succeeding centuries. Simultaneously they were traced in the mass of local documentary evidence which has so fortunately survived in this country: land tax records since 1692, manorial court rolls and accounts reaching back into the 14th century, central subsidy rolls, personal wills from 1540, deeds. The resulting information was classified and computerised, with emphasis on the recording of the source references to guide future researchers. As an example of the detailed material coming to light from court rolls running from 1440 to 1800, it was shown that the Manor of Mote held 25 tenements in the two parishes, while several manors might have holdings in a single parish. By the end of the day, from buildings, documents and field survey, had emerged a picture of holdings in the parish, the historic development of its buildings, taxation and valuation, and not least, an account of succeeding owners and tenants who had played their part from the middle ages to the 19th century.

Iden and Playden completed, a further project was undertaken for the South Downs Conservation Board in the four parishes of Alfriston, Lullington, Litlington and West Dean; and then in Herstmonceux and Wartling, the last two each the size of Iden and Playden put together. Completion was expected by mid-1995. But the great challenge to come was Battle - no village, but a small country town steeped not only in local but in national history, endowed with a wealth of documentary records from the early middle-ages onwards, and with perhaps over one hundred

scarcely less ancient buildings surviving. First in the archives were the Battle Abbey documents themselves; these include accounts which throw light on the building operations, the management, the provisioning of monastery and populace and the great estate which followed. Documents for the period 1200 to 1700 have been preserved since 1922 in the Huntington Library, California, but now, thanks to the work of Mr. Whittick and ESRO, are available in Lewes on Microfilm and in print. The town prospered and its buildings changed with the times. But behind the present facades of bank, shop and house lie, in many cases, 15th century buildings on tenements laid out by the 12th century abbots, with purpose and ownership ready to hand in the estates and tax records. The task was to apply to a little-disturbed ancient town those techniques tested out in the villages.

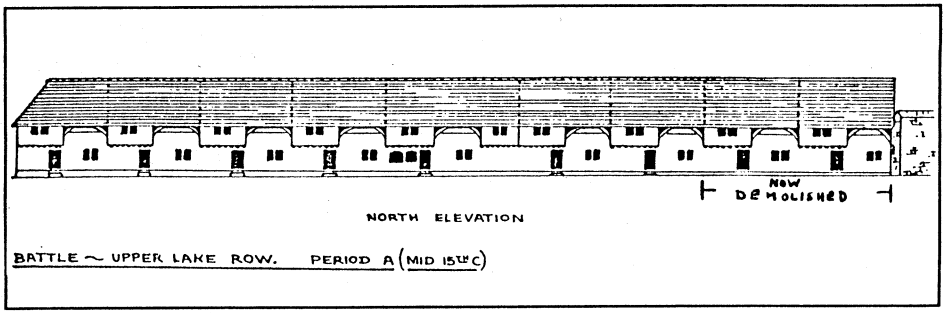


12/13 BATTLE HIGH STREET

At this point Mr. David Martin resumed the lecture with an illustrated description of specifically selected buildings which would illuminate the preceding speaker's dissertation. First he considered the topography, from, in the north, Mount Street, through the High Street and The Green, to Upper Lake, and down through Lower Lake. A manorial survey of 1569 showed within this area some 150 houses. But an

earlier one of 1443 showed that even by this date there had been some shrinking of the built-up area, partly in the north and along Mount Street, but notably beyond Lower Lake and on the road to Hastings. Nonetheless the central area had if anything increased in density, so the actual number of dwellings had probably not varied that much.

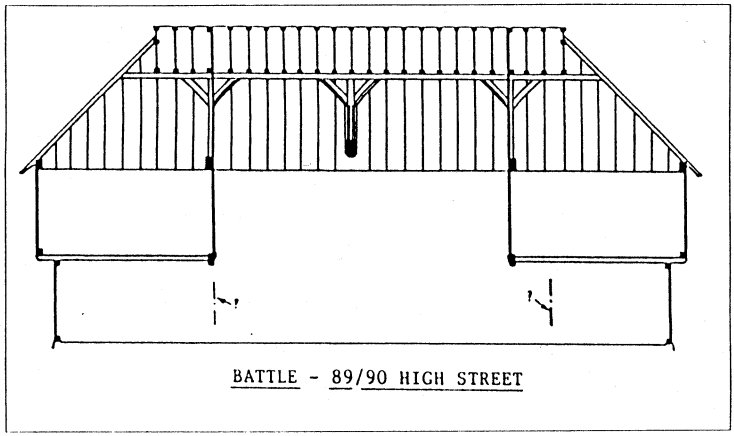
An outstanding building to begin with had to be The Pilgrims Rest, the original Abbey almonry, which accounted for its comparative size. Records gave a date for the present building in the 1430s, quite early for its close-studding but all the same a typical Wealden hall-house which we should find characterised the buildings of Battle of this period - a central hall stretching up to a timbered crown-post roof, recessed between parts of the house jettied and bearing upper floors. In earlier buildings, smoke from a hearth would have escaped through a louvre in the roof, hence sooted roofbeams; to be succeeded by the brick chimney (or by, as we should see, a timber-supported clay chimney much given to fire-risk). The Pilgrims Rest, as today restored, gave a convincing picture of a medieval Battle house, though it had to be admitted that in the course of restoration, features demonstrating its architectural history through the centuries had been covered up or destroyed.



The speaker turned momentarily to Tewkesbury Abbey where in the 15th century on a piece of spare ground the Abbot had erected a terrace of houses to be let for rent. In 1460 Battle Abbey had done precisely the same on what is now the south side of Upper Lake (from today's Pyke House to 21). From the manorial survey of 1433 the site appears as an abandoned quarry used as a rubbish dump. Between 1460 and 1479 nine terraced houses of traditional hall-house type were raised, which, under the continuous roof, stand today; but originally characterised by recessed hall up to sooted roofbeams, jettied upper storeys close-studded, the ground floor wall at some time pushed out for more room and more substantial brickwork, and in the plaster surface of the wattle and daub interior partitions, combed decoration. One retains evidence for its use as a shop; others may have

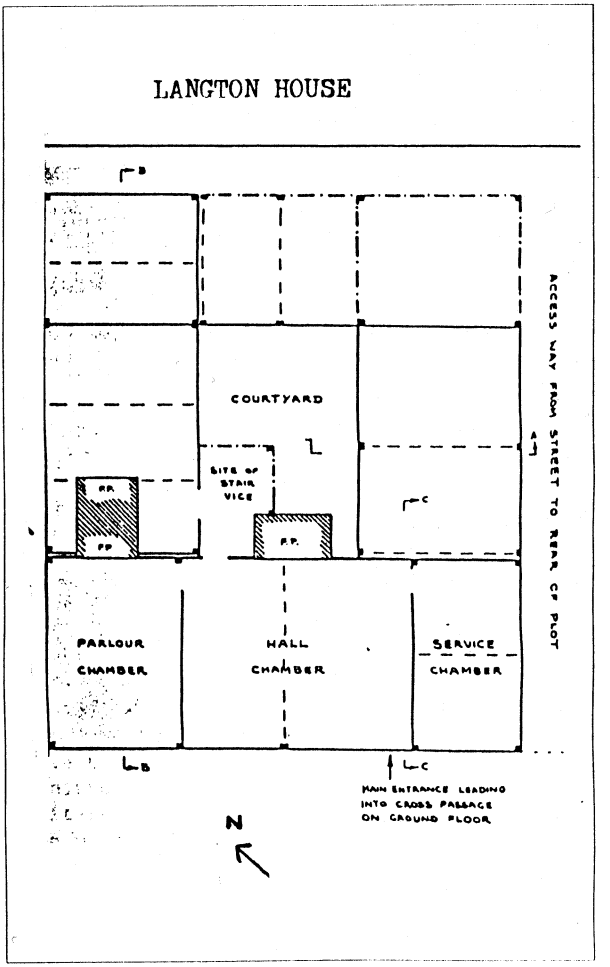
been. The rents varied, but the tenancies seem to have been less than savoury in character (one was a bawdy-house) and by 1500 they had been sold off. Such precise information had only come to light in the last twenty years after detailed examination of buildings and records; which promised much for a full survey in central Battle.

On the North side of the Abbey Green stands today's Buckley's Yesterday's World, its 18th century facade masking a considerable house known to have been built by Richard Curteis between 1406 and 1414. (Curteis was a man of some standing whom the Abbey might be suspected of playing down with its description of him as "their bondsman".) The building, covering two tenements, was of considerable dimension and quality, its upper rooms unusually lofty. The crownpost roof was strong enough to sustain a covering either of (Horsham) stone or possibly West Country slate, expensive but then becoming available. Higher up the High Street on the same side (number 76 and 77) is a large building described in the Victoria County History as of the 17th century, but which detailed examination proved to be another standard 15th century Battle Wealden hall-house. Built over two tenements, it has what appears to be two halls, but is in fact a kitchen linked to the main hall. Of about 1470, there arises the strong suspicion that such residences were being built with an eye on keeping up with one's neighbours.



Almost opposite in the High Street (numbers 12 and 13) is a hall-house with a distinctive feature: its frontage on the street, but in the rear, and standing detached from the house itself, a separate medieval kitchen; though this appears to have been a subsidiary building not only incorporating the kitchen serving the house itself and banishing the smells and smoke, but with other ground-floor accommodation perhaps for storage, or malting, or use as a "milkhouse" or dairy; with room upstairs possibly as sleeping accommodation for the less important occupants of the

house. The crownpost survives. Many such ancillary buildings were adapted and incorporated within main houses; but this, with its roofed passage of about 1500 linking it with the main house, has survived. After years of neglect it has today become a residence in its own right!

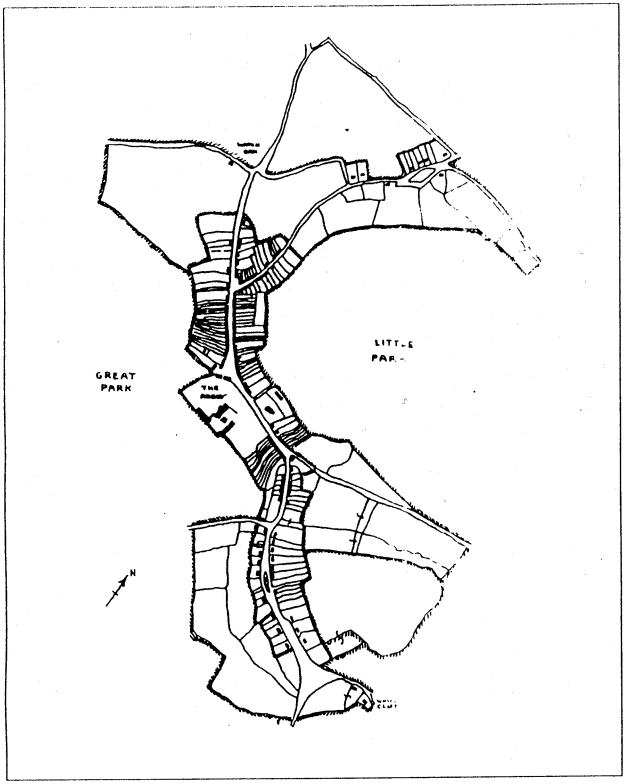


At this point the lecturer drew attention to an "earlier building" interpretation to be guarded against. An apparent medieval kitchen behind "Slatters" in Mount Street proved, when the roof became accessible for examination, to be a late 17th century construction of re-used building material, and, in all likelihood, a butcher's slaughterhouse.

Mr. Martin returned to the subject of clay/daub timber-framed chimneys. One had been discovered recently at No. 10 Lower Lake during repair work in which a wattle and daub wall was removed to reveal a timber-framed chimney in the roof side-by-side with its later brick replacement. Even though built against a house wall with a wooden or brick turret to take it through the roof, and perhaps a brick hearth at floor level, they were very liable to catch fire and were banned in Rye in the 1580s - thus attracting a double fine for having a clay chimney and for causing a town fire. A similar chimney was located at Stream Farm. They are a feature which any future survey might well study in detail.

Langton House, the present Battle Memorial Hall where the lecture was taking

place, looked from today's exterior a fine house of the 18th century with its brick, tile and balustrade. One of the largest of properties outside the Abbey, it proved to be the work of Richard Weeks in about 1565 - a two storey house with a steep pitched roof, fronting on to the street but built round a central courtyard destroyed when the Memorial Hall was planned. The original main hall is now the estate agent's office, the parlour with a fine plaster ceiling now the Hall entrance. Three Elizabethan doors and their frames have survived the vicissitudes of successive owners - Samuel Gott before 1671, ironmaster, barrister, writer, JP, MP for Winchelsea and the County of Sussex; Thomas Western, London ironmonger who set up a Battle charity with the house as its surety; Richard Hay, JP and would-be ironmaster from 1724 and 1747, who ended in bankruptcy; and finally David Langton who in 1764 took on the building in a state of disrepair and covered the timber-frame with the facade much as it is seen today.



The Priory Hotel is a classic building of 1700, three-storeyed, balconied, with a fine egg-and-dart pattern on the exterior; and one curious feature- what appears to be brickwork being in fact painted brick on rendering, which required constant attention as the paint grew shabby. Finally, the ultimate misfortune to the historian - the speaker showed a photograph of the gap left in the High Street between a pulling down and a rebuilding. One trusted that papers and pictures survived even if, alas, the building itself was beyond examination.

Mr. Whittick summed up. Those present had witnessed a fragment of the volume and quality of building and documentary evidence available (given the organisation of its research) to produce a total survey of the buildings and occupants of Battle

almost from its earliest beginnings. Hitherto such survey work in East Sussex had been carried out expertly but largely beyond the hours of duty. His estimate was that at twenty buildings a year, the study would be achieved in five years. Perhaps a similar time would be required for documentary research. The total cost could reach perhaps £20,000 to £25,000 a year for those five years. A meeting had been convened for expert and local influential opinion to attempt to define a proposal to be put to the Millennium Commission as part of an East Sussex County Council submission. The Royal Commission on Historic Buildings was known to be interested. He hoped to be back, perhaps in two years' time, to report that the project for Battle had been formulated and set in motion.

The meeting ended after questions from the audience. (1) How far did heavy traffic in narrow ancient town streets damage buildings? This was a much-debated point, but there seemed no doubt that vibration did cause movement in timber-framed buildings, with consequent problems. (2) There was a discussion on Lewens Croft which Mr Martin knew as Phillip's, and on the High Street building pulled down. (3) Mr Whittick's expectation was that the project would produce a detailed account of building investigation and academic research available for all time in the archives; a publication of academic standing; and published information for the general public, both residents and visitors.
(The illustrations by kind permission of Mr David Martin)

John Springford

HAROLD GODWINSEN: HIS FAMILY AND HIS CAREER

Dr Ann Williams — 17 February 1995

The first part of *The Life of King Edward Who Lies at Westminster* describes the career of Queen Edith's father, Earl Godwin, and of her brothers, especially Harold and Tostig. Writers in the 11th century were little interested in individual traits of character, so what we learn about personality is conventional, although we are told about Harold's "natural cunning" and watchfulness in diplomacy, and there is the famous phrase that he was "alas, too free with his oaths".

However, details of Harold's family are well documented for the period. His paternal grandfather was Wulfnoth cild, [1] a South Saxon who in 1009 quarrelled with a favourite of King Æthelred II, was "accused of the king" and subsequently ravaged the South Coast with 20 ships. A man of substance, he and his

[1] Cild pronounced "child" means just that, literally "boy", it came to mean also "young man" and by extension "warrior" or "nobleman" and could be applied to a thegn of some substance.

descendants held about a third of the taxable land of Sussex.

Only the name is known of the father of Harold's mother Gytha, Thorgils Sprakaleg. His two sons, Gytha's brothers were Elaf and Ulf. Danes from Scania (now in Sweden), they were well connected, for Ulf married Estrith, daughter of Swein Forkbeard, King of Denmark and was thus brother-in-law of Cnut. Elaf received an English Earldom (Gloucestershire), and it was presumably Cnut who arranged the marriage of Elaf's sister Gytha to Godwin the son of Wulfnoth cild. Godwin, an Earl since 1018, probably in the south east, was by 1020 holding the whole Earldom of Wessex from Kent to Cornwall. What service Godwin rendered to Cnut to account for such generosity we do not know.

Of the children of the marriage of Gytha and Godwin, Swein, Harold, Tostig, Gyrth and Gunnhildr have Scandinavian names; Leofwine, Edith and Wulfnoth English ones. We know little of Godwin's wider kindred. Elfwym, Abbot of the New Minster at Winchester, may have been a relation, and died at Hastings in 1066. Another kinsman was Ælwic, a monk of Christ Church, Canterbury, elected Archbishop of Canterbury by the monks in 1050, but Edward the Confessor vetoed the appointment. Maybe one should not expect traces of a wider family, since its lesser members may have been discouraged from claiming relationship after the debacle of 1066.

Gytha's family is better attested. Her brother Ulf was briefly Regent of Denmark under Cnut, with whom he quarrelled, and although subsequently reconciled, Cnut nevertheless had him murdered. Elaf held his Gloucestershire Earldom until he returned to Denmark in 1035. Ulf's eldest son Swein[2] was king of Denmark from 1047 to 1076. Another son, Beorn, received an English Earldom and died in 1049. Another son, Asbeorn led a Danish expedition against England in 1069-70.

When Cnut died, Godwin was the most powerful man in England, his only rivals being Leofric of Mercia and Siward of Northumbria. His position is shown by his role in the succession dispute between Harthacanute, Cnut's son by Emma of Normandy and Harold, Cnut's son by an Englishwoman (Harold "Harefoot", Harold I). In 1036 the exiled sons of Emma by her first husband Æthelred intervened. The youngest, Alfred, arrived with a considerable force but was intercepted by Godwin and handed over to Harold Harefoot who had him murdered. Godwin's role in this episode gained him the enmity of Alfred's half-brother Harthacanute and of his full brother Edward the Confessor who came to the throne in 1042. Neither Harthacanute nor Edward was able to displace Godwin.

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[2] Swein, Beorn and Asbeorn all bore the matronymic "Estrithson" and not the patronymic "Ulfson" because Estrith, as a King's daughter, outranked her husband who was only an Earl.

Indeed the early years of Edward's reign saw the extension of Godwin's authority. In 1043 Swein, his eldest son, obtained the Hereford Earldom; in 1044 Harold was promoted to the Earldom of East Anglia. In 1045 Beorn Estrithson was made Earl of the East Midlands and Edward married Godwin's eldest daughter Edith. But King Edward was building up a counter faction drawn from Normans and Frenchmen known to him during his exile. Thus Robert of Jumièges became Bishop of London. At the same time the standing of the Godwins was not helped by the behaviour of Swein, the black sheep of the family, who in 1046 abducted the Abbess of Leominster.

When refused permission to marry her Swein left England and his lands and offices were divided between Harold and Beorn Estrithson. Reconciled to the King a quarrel led to Swein's murder of Beorn. He was again exiled, and again pardoned and restored to his lands and Earldom in 1050.

By 1050 Edward felt able to challenge the ambitious Godwins. Robert of Jumièges was made Archbishop of Canterbury, Beorn's Earldom given to Edward's nephew Ralf, and in the following year a Norman, Osbern Pentecost, was allowed to build a castle in Swein's territory at Hereford, and another Norman favourite, Robert Fitz-Wimarck, erected a castle at Clavering, in Harold's Earldom. A third castle to be entrusted to Eustace of Boulogne was projected for Dover, and on returning from a visit to Edward, Eustace and his retainers were involved in a fracas with the inhabitants of that town. Eustace fled back to Edward who ordered Godwin to take action against the town but Godwin refused. The King supported by Leofric and Siward and their levies, summoned Godwin and Harold to attend a Council in London, Swein was exiled immediately and the King transferred the allegiance of Harold's thegns to himself. Archbishop Robert publicly accused Godwin of Alfred's murder. When Godwin was refused safe conduct to attend the Council, he fled to Bruges with Swein, Tostig, Gytha and the younger members of the family and Harold fled to Ireland. Edward now repudiated Edith and had her confined in the nunnery at Wherwell where his half-sister was Abbess.

But in 1052 the Godwins were back in force and the King made to capitulate. They were restored to their Earldoms; their chief enemies, including Archbishop Robert, were expelled, and Edith returned from Wherwell. Only Swein was missing; he went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem and died at Constantinople on his way home.

The following year Godwin died of a massive stroke and Harold succeeded to his father's Earldom of Wessex, and from then on the government of England was largely in his hands, for, after his humiliation in 1052, Edward seems to have lost interest in public affairs and occupied himself in hunting and building and endowing his Abbey at Westminster. In 1055 Tostig became Earl of Northumbria on Siward's death. Two years later Leofric of Mercia died, to be succeeded by Ælfgar whose

Earldom of East Anglia was given to Harold's brother Gyrth. In the same year the King's nephew died and his Earldom of East Anglia was divided between Harold and Leofwine who now became an Earl, and Ralf's other Earldom, Hereford, went to Harold. All Godwin's sons were now Earls except Wulnoth, the youngest.

Harold was already acquainted with Hertfordshire for in 1053 Gruffydd ap Llewellyn, King of Gwyneth, invaded the shire and put Ralf and his forces to flight "before a spear was thrown". It was Harold and the levies of Wessex who restored the situation and it was in the wars against Gruffydd that Harold gained his reputation as a military commander. When in 1063 Harold and Tostig led an expedition against Gwynedd, Gruffydd ap Llewellyn was killed and Harold married his widow Ealdgyth, the daughter of Earl Ælfgar.

Edward's last years were dominated by the problem of the succession, since his marriage to Edith was childless. When he repudiated her in 1051 he offered the succession to his maternal kinsman, William of Normandy. The return of the Godwins a year later nullified that arrangement, so in 1054 an expedition led by Earldred, Bishop of Worcester, set out to find the two sons of King Edmund Ironside who as infants had been smuggled out of the country to escape the clutches of Cnut. They brought back one of them, Edward ætheling[3], but he died immediately on arrival. As the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle says "We do not know for what reason it was brought about that he did not see the face of his kinsman, King Edward." This comment has been taken to imply foul play, with Harold under suspicion, but it would not have been in Harold's interest to arrange the death of the ætheling who was the best insurance against a Norman succession. With no alternative, for the other ætheling, Edgar was young, Edward in 1064 renewed the promise of the succession to Duke William of Normandy.

In the autumn of 1065 the thegns of Northumberland and Yorkshire rebelled violently against Tostig on account of his repressive rule and extortionate taxation and sent for Morcar, the son of Earl Ælfgar and chose him as their Earl. Tostig, then hunting with the King in Wiltshire, was Queen Edith's favourite brother and he expected support from Edward. He didn't get it. Harold prevailed on the King to ratify the Northumbrian's choice of Morcar, aware that the feeling in the north against Tostig was so strong that to attempt to reimpose his authority there would have led to full scale war. Outraged by his brother's treachery (influenced, perhaps, by the fact that Morcar was now Harold's brother-in-law) Tostig accused Harold of inciting the rebellion, and, getting no satisfaction, took refuge with his brother-in-law, Baldwin of Flanders. The author of the *Life of King Edward* says that the quarrel between Harold and Tostig was the cause of the downfall of them both.

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[3] ætheling, from A.S. æthel, "noble", hence king's son.

Edward's Abbey Church of Westminster was dedicated on 28th December 1065, and shortly afterwards on 5th January 1066 Edward died, having on his deathbed named Harold as his successor. The next day Edward the Confessor was buried in the Choir of his new church and this was followed straight away by the coronation, by Archbishop Ealdred of York, of Harold II as King of the English.

Conscious of the threat from Duke William of Normandy, Harold assembled by far the largest fleet and land force that the country had ever seen. Yet the first intruder to be repulsed was not William, but Tostig, who raided all along the south coast until driven north at Sandwich by Harold's fleet, and then from the Humber by Edwin and Morcar; from whence he went to Scotland and stayed at the court of Malcolm Canmore. Unfortunately, by September Harold could no longer maintain his large force and the land army was disbanded and the fleet returned to London. As Harold disembarked, he learned that a huge Norwegian fleet had arrived in the Humber. Tostig had received help from an unexpected quarter, Harold Sigurdsson, Hardrada, (Hard counsel), King of Norway, and the greatest of the warrior kings of Scandinavia. Hardrada and Tostig made rendezvous off the Northumbrian coast, landed at Ricall, and defeated the forces of Edwin and Morcar at Fulford. York, perforce, opened its gates and promised to help the invaders in the march south. But a march south was not to be. After their victory Hardrada and Tostig encamped at Stamford Bridge but Harold II had marched north and reached Tadcaster in just four days and, taking the Norwegians by surprise, won a crushing victory in the course of which both Tostig and Hardrada were killed. Of the three hundred ships in which the Norwegians arrived, just twenty-four sufficed to take the remnant home. The only contemporary account of the Battle of Stamford Bridge comes from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. The account given by the Icelandic historian Snorri Sturlson (1179-1241) is obviously not contemporary and is quite unhistorical, but it is nonetheless a very splendid story.[4]

With the news that Duke William had landed at Pevensey on 28th September Harold made another rapid march, reached London on 7th October and on 12th October, with his brother Leofwine and Gyrth and what fresh forces he had been able to raise, set out to repel the invader. Harold has been accused of rashness in challenging William so soon after the dearly won victory at Stamford Bridge but he had no option. Sussex was the heartland of Godwin power and the place where many of his most trusted men held land; which was why William was devastating the area.

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[4] Certainly a splendid story which space does not allow us to reproduce. It comes from Snorri Sturlson's *Heimskringla* and the relevant episode can be found in *King Harold's Saga* translated by Magnus Magnusson and Herman Pálsson in the Penguin Classics. K.M.R.

Harold's rallying point was the Hoary Apple Tree, presumably on Caldbec Hill, from which he intended to launch an attack on William's newly built castle at Hastings. William's intelligence service being better than that of Hardrada, the Duke marched out to meet Harold who, taken by surprise, drew up his men on the ridge here, above the marshy valley which would make it difficult for the Norman cavalry. Battle was joined about 9 o'clock and raged until the light waned. The Norman cavalry finally broke through the shield wall, cut down King Harold (Leofwine and Gyrth were already dead) and the remnants of the English host fled into the thick woodland of the Sussex Weald.

Tradition maintains that the final struggle around the English Standard, the White Dragon of Wessex[5], was so fierce that the English dead were unrecognizable and that Harold's corpse was identified only by his first wife Edith Swan-Neck. What happened next is disputed. The King's mother, Gyrtha, offered William her son's weight in gold. The Norman version is that William refused the ransom and had the body buried on the cliffs above Hastings, wrapped in a purple cloak. However, William of Malmesbury[6], writing in 1125, says that William accepted the ransom[7] and allowed Harold to be buried by the Canons of Waltham Holy Cross, a house founded by Harold. The writer of the history of that religious community at Waltham, written soon after 1177, tells that as a boy he knew the sacristan Thurkill who remembered the arrival of the King's body, and the author himself recalls the translation of the King's body when the church was subsequently rebuilt.

Recent excavations of Harold's original church have uncovered the battered remains of a tomb. It could have been Harold Godwinson's final resting place. Tradition[8] would have it so, but of conclusive, firm evidence, there can be none.

Keith M. Reader

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[5] Was the Dragon of Wessex white? In the Bayeux Tapestry it looks reddish. In the model of the battlefield in the undercroft of the Abbey Guesthouse it is red.

[6] William of Malmesbury has English ancestry

[7] No so. The 19th century translation of William of Malmesbury runs "He (William) sent the body of Harold to his mother (who begged it) unransomed, though she offered large sums by her messengers. She buried it...at Waltham". See also *The Normans and the Norman Conquest* by our late President, Professor Allen Brown, not 166 on page 152. K.M.R.

[8] Tradition, however, reinforced by the brochure of the Swallow Hotel in Waltham which lists Harold's tomb as one of the tourist attractions of the area! K.M.R.

SISSINGHURST - THE HISTORY OF THE CASTLE AND GARDEN

Mr. Brian Meldrum — 3 March 1995

The story of Sissinghurst can be summed up in a sentence: a great Tudor and Elizabethan mansion slowly falling to pieces because nobody was left to care for it, until in 1930 it came into the hands of two gifted people, Vita Sackville West and Harold Nicolson, who repaired the surviving buildings, few as they were, and created among them one of the loveliest gardens in England, and one of the National Trust's most visited properties.

The site was occupied as early as the 12th century, when it was called Saxingherste. There was almost certainly a moated manor house where today's orchard is, and three arms of the moat remain, two still filled with water and one converted into a grass walk. Edward I and his retinue stayed there in 1305 and in 1490 the property was bought by a family called the Bakers of Cranbrook. The family demolished the old manor and built a great new house round a grand quadrangle. In 1560-70 the Tudor house was mostly demolished and the Tower and the Elizabethan mansion were built. It was clearly a magnificent house and Queen Elizabeth visited it for three days in 1573. However the Baker family backed the wrong side in the Civil War and lost their fortune. The decline of Sissinghurst had started. In 1752 Horace Walpole visited it and wrote that he found "a park in ruins and a house in ten times greater ruin". Sissinghurst was then leased to the government as a prison for French prisoners of war, who burnt a lot of the wood to keep themselves warm. It was then valued at £300. In 1800 Sir Horace Mann purchased it and pulled down the larger parts of the house, sparing only the Tower, the front range and the Priest's house. He also left the very end of the South Wing which is now called the South Cottage. For the next hundred years these buildings were used as the parish workhouse and later to store farm machinery.

In 1930 Vita Sackville West and her husband Harold Nicolson saw the mouldering ruins and realised their possibilities. It was a colossal job and before they could start they had to clear away literally centuries of rubbish. It took a year to get the buildings into habitable condition and then they started on the garden. The garden was divided into "separate rooms, each with its own colour and theme". There are Spring, early Summer, late Summer and Autumn "rooms". The White Garden is possibly the best, all the flowers being white and the foliage grey. There is a huge arch with festoons of lacy white roses, surrounded with white lilies, silvery cineraria and clouds of gypsophila. There are white delphiniums and white veronica and under a silvery pear there is a lead statue of the Virgin. Truly a wonderful garden, and today it is one of the pearls in the National Trust's crown. How fortunate we are to live so near to it!

Joanne Lawrence

A TOUR AROUND WINCHELSEA - ENGLAND'S SMALLEST TOWN

Mr Clive Richardson — 17 March 1995

To the casual visitor Winchelsea appears to be no more than a pretty, well cared for village with a few ancient buildings, but it is a town with a Mayor and Corporation reflecting its former importance and dignity as one of the Cinque Ports. It is also a "new town" in the sense of having been designed and built for its purpose rather than evolving from some earlier settlement. The original Winchelsea was built upon a shingle spit running out northeasterly from the Fairlight cliffs. Its exact site is not known, but is generally considered to be off-shore of the present village of Camber. There is no reference to it until the 12th century when Hastings asked Winchelsea to assist it in fulfilling the duty of a Cinque Port. The outcome was that the "antient towns" of Rye and Winchelsea joined the Confederation of the Cinque Ports on terms of equality with the original members (Hastings, Romney, Hythe, Dover and Sandwich).

The Cinque Ports rose to importance with the loss of Normandy in 1204 when the English Channel, which since 1066 had been an English lake, became the border between two unfriendly powers. The Cinque Ports' fleet, for which they provided the ships and the crews, was a most important factor in the defence of the country and was in effect the predecessor of the Royal Navy. However, while Winchelsea was achieving national importance it was also suffering domestically from serious coastal erosion. A commission of 1282 reported that a large part of the town had already been destroyed and the rest was in imminent danger. The commissioners recommended that the town, being of great value to the realm, should be rebuilt on a safer site and that national funds should be used for this purpose.

The King (Edward I) acted promptly on this advice. The site of the present town was selected and work put in hand. In 1288 the new town was handed over to the burgesses and by 1292 all the population of Old Winchelsea had moved to their new quarters. This move was only just in time, for a particularly violent storm in 1287 had done much damage to the town and had breached the shingle spit so that, at least at high tide, Old Winchelsea was an island.

It seems that the King himself took a keen interest in the design of the new town which was based upon a "bastide", the fortified hill towns with which he would have been familiar in Aquitaine where about 20 such towns were built in the borderland between English and French possessions. "Bastides", whether English or French, were built to a very standard pattern with a wall or rampart enclosing a chequerboard layout of straight streets. The best preserved are Monpazier (English) and Villereal (French). A special feature of Winchelsea is that the merchants living at the north end of the town had, in addition to their plots of land,

wharves on the river Brede and extensive wine cellars. These had fine vaulted roofs and were dressed with Caen stone (as was Battle Abbey).

The new town of Winchelsea was clearly of great importance, for when in 1294 Edward I called out a general levy of seamen the Cinque Ports provided 50 ships of which Winchelsea contributed 13, the largest number of any port. As might be expected the town attracted the attention of the French and in the course of the 14th and early 15th centuries it suffered seven major attacks which were repelled. However, it was not war damage but the silting up of the Brede estuary which ended Winchelsea's days of eminence. By the end of the 15th century Winchelsea was no longer a port and all the merchants had left the town. A further blow came with the Reformation when the support of Religious Houses was also withdrawn. Reports of the 17th and 18th centuries tell of the town being very run down.

It did, nevertheless, achieve some prosperity of a less reputable kind. In the 18th and early 19th centuries it played a prominent part in the traditional Sussex practice of smuggling. Also, as Cinque Port, Winchelsea had the right to send two members to Parliament and the "management" of the rotten borough gave substantial profits to the Mayor and Corporation who controlled the few votes. The town's Parliamentary Representation was ended by the Reform Act of 1832 but it continued to govern its local affairs until these powers (in common with those of many old medieval boroughs) were abolished by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1883. However, because of its status as a Cinque Port, Winchelsea was allowed to retain its Mayor and Corporation and continues to do so albeit in a purely ceremonial capacity. In the 19th century the town also experienced a measure of revival, becoming a favourite haunt of artists and writers.

When walking around the present town it requires some effort of imagination to envisage the importance of medieval Winchelsea. The walls have long since vanished but the ruins of three gates survive. The 13th century Strand Gate on the north-east side is the largest and the grooves for its portcullis can still be seen. The Pipewell or Land Gate at the North-West corner is the most recent, having been rebuilt in 1404 after the destruction of the original gate in a French attack of 1380. The 13th century New Gate is more interesting for where it is than for what it is. It stands as an isolated ruin in the countryside roughly half a mile to the south of the present town. This shows the extent of the original "bastide" planned by Edward I. It is not certain whether the whole of the original street plan was ever completed, but there is no doubt that in the late 13th and early 14th centuries there were many more houses than at present and the population is said to have been about 6,000. At that time the population of Battle is estimated as around 1,000.

Of the ancient buildings within the present town the most notable is St. Thomas's Church. This is particularly renowned for its 20th century stained glass but also has

some fine medieval tombs. Externally it is rather unimpressive being one part of a larger church which was partially destroyed in one of the French attacks. The oldest building is the Court Hall, parts of which date from the foundation of the town itself although extensive restoration was carried out in the 16th century. The upper floor of this building is the local museum, in which one of the notable exhibits is a list of the Mayors of Winchelsea shown on oak boards. This list is complete from 1430 to the present day and has only a few gaps in the period from 1430 back to 1295 when the Mayors were first appointed.

Mr. Richardson's talk was illustrated by many excellent slides of Winchelsea, showing its present charm which gives such little indication of its important and turbulent past.

Donald Nicol

COMMEMORATION LECTURE

THE BENEDICTINE CONQUEST OF THE NORTH

Professor R.B. Dobson
Professor of Medieval History, University of Cambridge

13 October 1995

Professor Dobson began by telling us how pleased he was to be with us and that, indeed, no medieval English historian could not be pleased to be speaking at Battle of all places on English soil and on such a date. That Battle was the first and most considerable English monastic foundation in the reign of William the Conqueror seems certain enough and, for that reason, Professor Dobson suggested that it might be useful to turn our attention to the small minority of Benedictine monks who established monasticism in the Norman North, at Selby, Whitby, Durham and St. Mary's York. There, as here at Battle, we should have a chance to see how a small number of Black Monks opened a new phase in the social, as well as the religious, history of England.

That followers of the Rule of St. Benedict were a minority, and a very tiny minority, in the late 11th century North of England is certain. Indeed in 1066 one would be unlikely to encounter such strange beings north of the Humber at all; monastic life there had failed to survive the Viking invasions of the 9th and 10th centuries. To all intents and purposes, and excluding the special case of the Cluniac Priory at Pontefract, founded in 1090, the Benedictine triumph in the North was the work of the four major religious houses already mentioned - Selby, Durham, Whitby and St. Mary's York.

This Benedictine conquest of the North in the reign of William I was primarily the consequence of a handful of monks and this is clearly apparent in the case of the

first of all the post-Conquest monasteries, Selby Abbey. The founder was a monk, also called Benedict, who was Feretar (Keeper of Sacred Relics) of the great French abbey at St. Germain d'Auxerre. It was in that abbey that the monk had a dream in which he was told to depart to a place called Selebia and found a house. After many adventures and misadventures, since no-one he met when he first crossed the Channel had ever heard of a place called Selebia, Benedict finally sailed up the Ouse towards York. It was accordingly on the river bank, twelve miles south of that city, that he constructed "a dwelling of leaves and branches under an oak tree". At Christmas the following year William I, who was staying in York, granted Benedict a carucate of land and slowly a few disciples gathered around him. The early years of the foundation were not without their tribulations but by the end of the century, under its second abbot, Hugh, Selby's future as a religious house was absolutely assured.

As Selby Abbey was founded as the consequence of a supernatural vision, our next two Northern Benedictine houses, Durham and Whitby, were the outcome of historical vision. According to Symeon of Durham, it was because of reading Bede's Ecclesiastical History that the future first Prior of Durham, Aldwin, travelled North with his colleagues from Evesham in 1073-4. Aldwin's first intention, rather like Benedict of Auxerre, was to live the life of solitary poverty. Such a motive was not unusual in those days and accounts for the somewhat bewildering peregrinations of Aldwin and his companions in the next few years. Most of the places they visited were mentioned in Bede's Ecclesiastical History, Jarrow in 1074 and Tynemouth a year or two later, then Melrose and Monkwearmouth before Durham, where they finally settled.

The foundations of Whitby Abbey can only be understood as a deliberate attempt to re-create the past. According to at least one of the five cryptic and slender accounts of the foundation of Whitby, Reinfrid, its first Superior, actually decided to become a monk when he visited the hallowed ground of "Streoneshalch" in his youth. His monastic zeal was reawakened by the lamentable spectacle of the ruins of St. Hilda's Abbey in uninhabitable disarray. The early history of both these houses is unclear but it is indisputable that a handful of Benedictine monks overcame the challenge of Viking pirates on one side and the territorial appetites of the Percies and other baronial families on the other, to establish their houses.

Perhaps the history of no other major religious house of medieval England is as mysterious as is that of St. Mary's Abbey, York. According to an account ascribed to its first abbot, Stephen, it was Alan I, Earl of Richmond, who took the decisive initiative by inviting a contingent of Whitby monks, to move to York. By offering them the church of St. Olave, the earl would enable them to leave the isolation of the North Yorkshire moors for a more populous town "where the citizens will be ready

to come to your aid". By 1087 the Abbot of York appears in the Domesday Book as the tenant and immediately afterwards there was an astonishing burst of endowments and, more important, gifts of spiritualities which made St. Mary's Abbey a synonym for outstanding monastic wealth. On the eve of the Dissolution it was the richest religious house in the North.

Professor Dobson then pointed out the general problem presented by the Benedictine minorities of the late 11th century North. Why and how did such a small and apparently ill-disciplined group of monks come to be the dominant spiritual, cultural and, at times, even economic force in Northern England by 1100? Such questions would seem by no means easy to answer. The most obvious reason for the spectacular rise in fortunes of St. Mary's Abbey must be that the city in which it was located had already emerged as the undisputed economic and financial capital of the North. This was the one monastery in Yorkshire which could never go unnoticed by any clerk or layman engaged in public affairs. The advantages of nearness to a pre-existing town also applied, if to a lesser extent, to the other three houses of Durham, Selby and Whitby. There are grounds for believing that by 1066 each of these three towns was already an important urban and, above all, commercial centre of the still undeveloped North. For the Benedictine monks who began to settle in Northern England during the 11th century, success depended not - as was always thought - in leaving the world but in locating one's community as close to the largest concentrations of lay population as was possible.

Should one interpret the monastic invasion of the North, small as it was, as a phenomenon deliberately encouraged by the new Anglo-Norman aristocracy and William I and II for their own political ends? Norman kings and magnates were well aware that the foundation of new monasteries was a useful method of consolidating power in regions of territorial dispute or of doubtful allegiance and, by 1066, this was already a political weapon well known to rulers throughout Christendom and certainly here in Battle. However at our four houses and perhaps even at Battle it seems to be against all available evidence to suppose that their original monastic plantations were actually premeditated by the King. Neither Benedict of Auxerre, Aldwin of Evesham, Reinfrid of Whitby or the monks who migrated to York profited directly from royal or aristocratic patronage. However it is clear that William I and William II were quick to exploit the initiatives taken by a small group of Black Monks.

Professor Dobson ended by pointing out that, whatever their reasons for settling where they did, these Black Monks indubitably helped to open a new chapter in the history of the North of England and there can be little doubt that the most powerful material weapons at their disposal were the pen, the book and the stonemason's chisel. Regarding the latter, the appearances of the monastic churches and

precincts of St. Mary's York, Selby and Whitby are now, alas, impossible to recapture but, as every modern visitor to Durham must immediately be aware, the Black Monks of the early 12th century made the North of England the centre of European fashion for the building of large churches. And regarding the pen and the book, by 1100 or soon after, the abbeys that we have talked about had become centres of Latin learning and one of the greatest achievements of these Benedictines was to be able to articulate their achievements by the written word. As Symeon of Durham and his contemporaries will always remind us, here was a minority so dominant that it not only displaced its predecessors; it rewrote their history as, of course, did the monks of Battle.

Joanne Lawrence

WHO LIVED IN A HOUSE LIKE THIS?

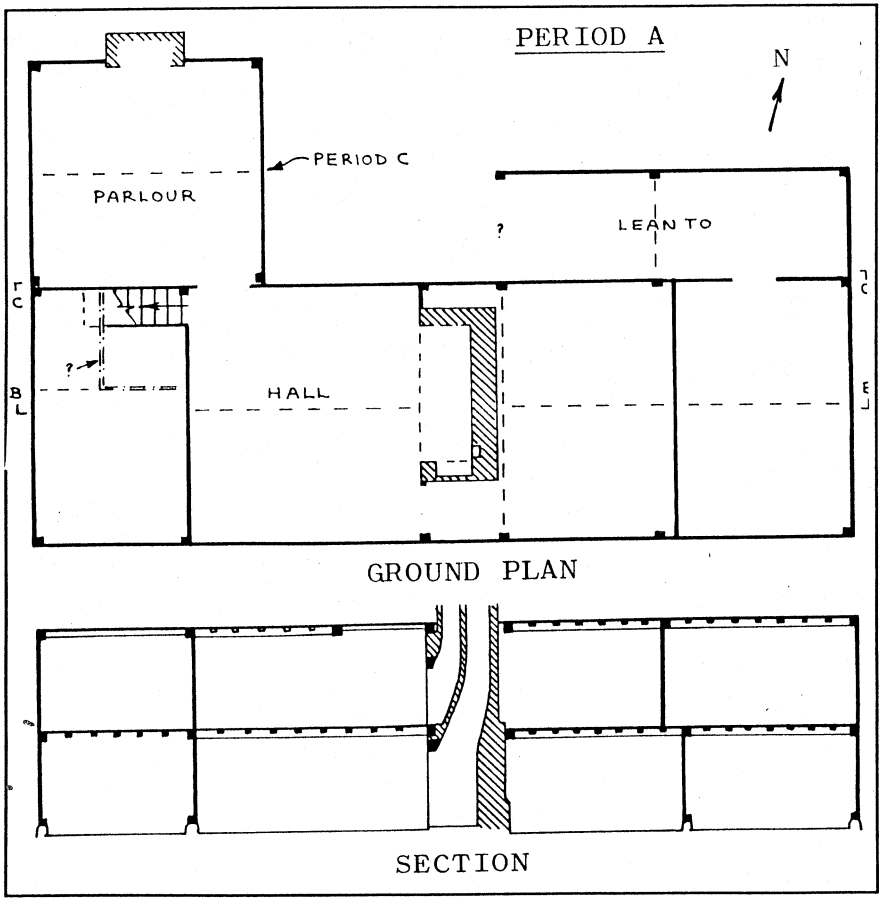
Mr. David Martin — 3 November, 1995

Mr. David Martin started by explaining that this would not be an ordinary talk; instead of speaking about the construction of historic buildings or their historical background he was going to show us pictures and plans of old houses and he would like us to guess either who would have built them or who lived in them.

The first house was the very beautiful Rampyndene in High Street, Burwash, which was built in 1699. It is a Queen Anne style house with a magnificent "shelf hood" over the front door. It has a very grand entrance hall with stairs straight ahead. There are three parlours, one each side of the hall and one to the rear. The first floor layout of the bedrooms is the same as the ground floor and there are similar garret rooms for the servants on the second floor. The main feature of Rampyndene is the plastered ceilings. These are heavily moulded and very elaborate and are on both the ground and first floors. The house is entirely timber framed, which was unusual in a quality house of 1699. The brick facing was added later. Members were then asked to guess who lived there. There were many suggestions, some quite near, but no-one actually guessed that a timber merchant, one John Butler, Esquire, built the house as a speculative venture and let it to tenants.

Next was Brown Oak Farmhouse in Brightling. Today the house has little to recommend it from the exterior because it has had its roof altered and has been enlarged. It was originally built in about 1600 and was only half the length with a steeply pitched roof and exposed timber framing. It just had a main room with a service room to the back, a small store room reached by stepping off the stairs and two bedrooms. In 1700 it was enlarged to twice its size. It had about 30 acres of low grade land. This time members rightly guessed that it was owned and lived in by a poor farmer, who probably had to supplement his income from other sources.

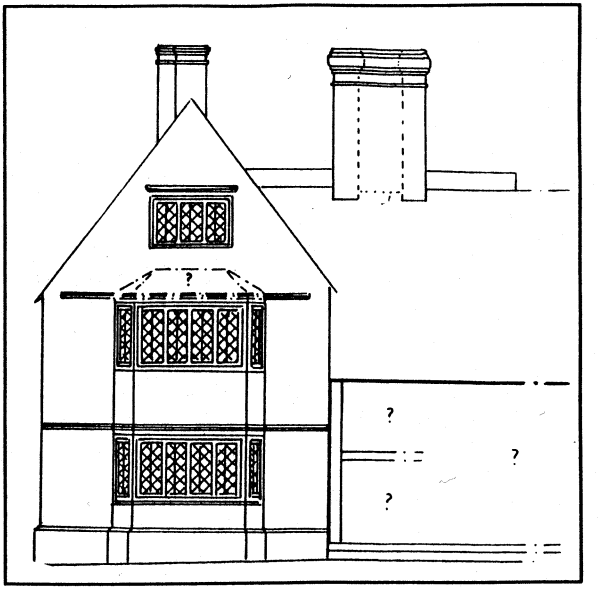
Next we saw Scrag Oak Farm, that has now been renamed Swallowfield, Brightling. There was already a building there which was enlarged in 1600 by putting on a crosswing and using the old building as a kitchen. In 1700 the old building was demolished and rebuilt with a fine projecting gable and a bay window, which were a feature of status. However from the sides of the building it was



BRIGHTLING - BROWN OAK FARMHOUSE

apparent that staves that carried the wattle and daub were visible - a sign of economy. The house was both glazed and unglazed. Nobody guessed this house correctly. It was built by the owners of a nearby estate and tenanted. The rather better front elevation was meant to make people feel that the owners were looking after their tenants.

NORTH ELEVATION

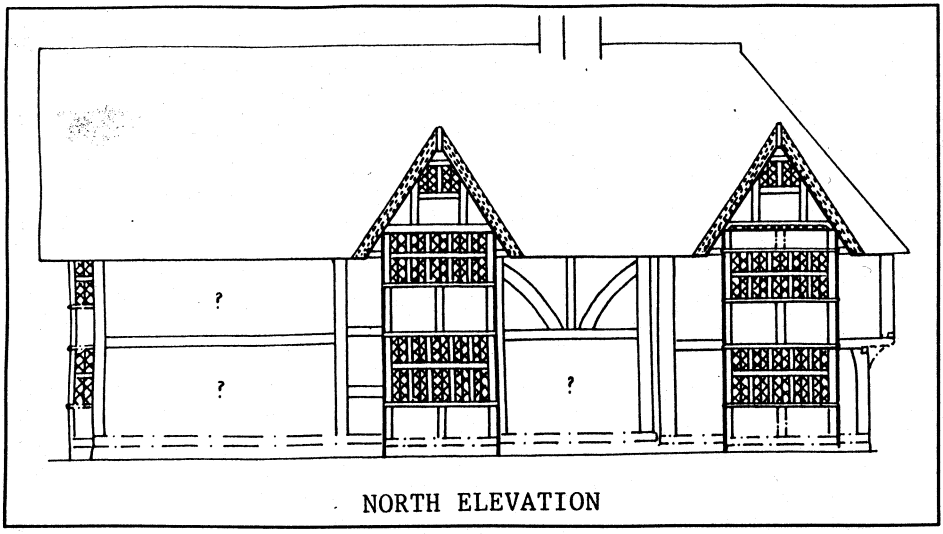


ETCHINGHAM - KING JOHN'S LODGE

Next we saw King John's Lodge, Etchingham, an improbable name since the house could have had nothing at all to do with King John. It has a stone range and crosswing of reasonable status, with many stone fireplaces and there is evidence that it had wood panelling and a plastered ceiling. It was rebuilt by one Edmund Hyam in 1730. This house was correctly guessed as being owned by an iron master. It is probable that Edmund Hyam, who purchased it from a nearby estate, meant to add more to the house and intended it to be the first stage of building to make a mansion.

The last house was The Banks, Mountfield. Although it looks Victorian, it is in fact the oldest house so far. It was originally a medieval hall house and was built in 1450 on the site of an earlier house. It was fairly large, 42ft times 20ft and was a typical hall house. In 1530 it was extended and an upper floor put in and again in 1599 the house was much changed with rather grand gables and bay windows added. There were about 70 acres of land. This house was again correctly guessed as being owned by a series of yeoman farmers.

Mr. Martin ended by saying that he know of four to five hundred other comparable houses whose history and owners were known for nearly five hundred years and he said that if any members had old houses they should go to the County Record Office and "flesh out" the history of their own houses.



NORTH ELEVATION

Pictures kindly loaned by Mr. David Martin Joanne Lawrence

THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON
2-5 SEPTEMBER 1666

Mr. Peter Street 8 December 1995

Our lecturer admirably set the scene for the drama he was to unfold. 17th century London was compact and heavily populated with some quarter of a million inhabitants. The buildings were a mixture of wood and brick, mostly wood, up to three storeys high, and the streets narrow, with the buildings almost touching at second floor level. It was still a predominantly medieval city and a busy commercial and trading centre. It also had one hundred and nine parish churches and fifty Livery Halls.

The Summer of 1666 had seen a drought; water was low. The city was well used to fires and at the sound of a church bell all the citizens rushed to help and formed a chain for water buckets - the men carrying the water from the rivers and streams, the women carrying back the empty buckets, a truly community response to a problem affecting all. But the Great Fire started on a Sunday, 2nd September and many folk were still abed and though they may have heard the church bell, it had been a long week and, by and large, they stayed in bed and let someone else take action for a change.

1666 was not long after the Restoration and there was general unease and

uncertainty. The City had, after all, taken sides against the King and there was serious talk of further uprisings to return James and the main method to be first employed, it was rumoured, would be the starting of fires. The citizens were also not entirely sure of Charles's real religious beliefs. Added to which the date, which included three 6s, was an evil portent. The City feared that divine retribution would fall upon it at any time.

The fire started in a baker's shop in Pudding Lane. This was very near the old London Bridge and consequently an area full of inns catering for travellers. Such inns were packed with hay and straw and provender for the horses. The fire soon spread to the Star Inn and took firm hold. At first, the size and significance of the fire was not appreciated. The Lord Mayor, Sir Thomas Bloodworth, having been summoned to look, poured scorn on such a small fire. Samuel Pepys, having been woken by the maids at 3.00 a.m., thought so little of the fire that he returned to bed. However, by the morning, he thought it expedient to advise the King that 300 houses had already been burnt down. On his journey by boat to report to the King, he observed that the fire looked "most horrid, malicious and bloody, not like the flame of an ordinary fire". What with the lack of action by the authorities and the feeling of dread amongst those who had seen the fire, the concept of divine judgement being wrought upon the City was reinforced with the thought that the fire could not be quelled by human endeavour.

The Lord Mayor, having belatedly taken charge, attempted to set up fire breaks: the traditional method. But he encountered strong consumer resistance. Some, whose properties were next to the fire, could understand the necessity for the Lord Mayor's strategy but others, whose houses were six or seven houses away from the blaze, were less convinced. This especially applied to tenants who were answerable to landlords for the safety of the buildings. They wanted notice in writing from the Lord Mayor before agreeing to demolition, time was not on the Lord Mayor's side.

The continually blowing East wind did not help and Old St. Paul's, already in a poor state and with wooden scaffolding all round it, was the next important building to burn. Such was the heat that stones flew and six acres of lead in the roof melted to form a stream of molten metal. Then, on the 4th September, the Guildhall started to burn. For hours there was no flame, the heat building up until the whole building was a golden glow. When it finally, and spectacularly, collapsed then people knew the Fire could only be an act of God with the Church and the State literally going up in smoke. The panic increased and the streets became jammed with people, some going to help in the fire fighting, many others fleeing the City with what goods they could carry, or have carried by the number of "porters" who were suddenly making themselves available but who were unlikely to return your property to you once clear of the City. Pepys arranged the evacuation of his papers,

though he buried his wine and Parmesan cheese in his garden, perhaps anticipating a large wine and cheese party to celebrate the end of the fire. He also took £3,000 with him to Woolwich.

By now the enormity of the Fire had dawned on all concerned. The smoke could be seen for miles around and schoolboys at Westminster School claimed to be able to read at 8.00 or 9.00 at night by the light of the fire in the sky. The King, together with the Duke of York, came into the city to take charge of matters and by his authority and ability to underwrite the destruction of houses was able to create fire breaks. He was also fighting for his own crown for, had the fire destroyed the whole of the City, his power base would have disappeared, putting his own future in doubt. At this moment fortune smiled on the King for the wind at last changed direction from East to West.

In due time the Great Fire of London was quenched (though not without it being noted that as the Great Fire had started at Pudding Lane and ended at Pie Corner, the City had been punished for its gluttony) and thought could turn to rebuilding. But not before two other cities, Bristol and York, had made bids to become the capital in its stead. Eighty percent of the City had been burnt down (compared to a third in the Blitz in the Second World War). The Court of Fire Justice was established to deal with disputes and to prevent delay in rebuilding. Plans for rebuilding were put in hand (and continued to be proposed for the next hundred years). There was, however, a difference of opinion between those who proposed a total rebuild and those who wanted the City to stay much as it had been before the Great Fire. Unfortunately property owners were loath to delay rebuilding as they were being deprived of their rents so replanning gave way to expediency.

So the City came back to life, business returned to normal and a little had been learnt about fire prevention. Fire insurance, though already existing in Germany where a premium was put on the rates, was introduced in 1667. Planning controls were also introduced and no more entirely wooden houses for the City could be built; houses with wooden structures had to be brick faced. The Corporation of London repealed the import tax on goods used for rebuilding though records show that three times the amount of goods actually required for this purpose were imported under this dispensation. A Coal Tax was introduced and the King made a grant out of his own money. A parish could petition the Corporation for a grant to rebuild its own church but had to show that money was also going to be given by the local parishioners. A large part of the city had been rebuilt by 1676 though after this time many of the new planning restrictions came to be ignored.

A fascinating evening and proof that there was still a considerable interest in "the greatest Fire of the kind the World had ever known".

Colin Eldridge

SUMMER PROGRAMME 1995

VISIT TO NORFOLK 21 - 25 APRIL

Once again we were fortunate with the weather, leaving Battle in sunshine on a fairly warm Spring morning. After an uneventful run we arrived at Audley End in Essex just before lunch which we gladly ate before touring the house and gardens.

Audley End is one of the greatest Jacobean country houses in England. Built between 1605 and 1614 by the first Earl of Suffolk, who was Lord Chamberlain and Lord Treasurer to James I, it stands on the site of the medieval Abbey of Walden. Nothing survives above ground of the original monastic buildings and the present building is but a shadow of its original. There were two courts, the inner built on the site of the original cloister, containing the Great Hall, Chapel and State Apartments and the outer, added probably to the designs of John Thorpe, providing lodgings and offices. Over the ensuing decades the huge house became a financial burden and was gradually reduced in size to what we see today.

The entrance is also known as the Bucket Hall from the leather fire buckets which hang from the moulded Jacobean ceiling beams and are painted with the initials and coronet of Richard, 3rd Lord Braybrooke, and the date 1833 . Entering the Great Hall one is impressed by the twin gilded staircases. The walls are hung with many paintings. Some are of former owners of Audley End. Much of the roof is Jacobean, as are the armorial badges between the beams including one of Thomas Howard, the builder of Audley End.

The Great Stairs were probably designed by Nicholas Dubois circa 1725. The stairs lead to the Great Apartments which were completely replanned in 1776 by Robert Adam. The Ante-Room formed part of the processional route to the Great Drawing Room. Before reaching the Drawing Room one passes through the Dining Parlour and the Vestibule. Dinner was served in the early afternoon and the decorations were designed to lead the eye out across the lawns of Capability Brown's landscape. Adam was a very practical man and had hard stucco walls instead of damask or tapestries so as not to retain the smell of the food!
The Great Drawing Room has a very low ceiling, only 11ft 6in high, and all the decorations and furniture are scaled down to complement the height.

The Adam Library was destroyed in 1825 but a new library was created in the same position on the floor above. The South Stair of the original house became the best staircase in later years, leading to the guests' bedrooms.

Even now, in its very reduced size, Audley End is large and to describe all the State Apartments, the domestic quarters, the Chapel and the remaining rooms would take pages of this newsletter. I can only recommend that you visit this fine house under the guardianship of English Heritage.

The following day, Saturday, the weather was unkind but as we were going to visit Blickling Hall, near Norwich, it did not matter a great deal. Lunch was taken when we arrived before starting our tour of the house.

When Sir Henry Hobart, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas to James I, purchased Blickling in 1616 he took possession of a late medieval moated house. He owed his high office to the influence of the Secretary of State, Robert Cecil, and it was to Cecil's architect at Hatfield House (which we were to visit in June) Robert Lyming, that he entrusted the design of the new Blickling. Completed in 1628 it remained the principal seat of the Hobart family until 1793 when it passed through the female line to the Marquesses of Lothian. In 1940 the house and estate were left to the National Trust.

The entrance arch carried the arms of Sir Henry Hobart, Blickling's builder. Passing through the Outer Courtyard one enters the Great Hall. The double-flight staircase is heavily carved. On the staircase walls are reliefs representing Anne Boleyn and her daughter Elizabeth 1. Passing into the Brown Drawing Room carved angels, which originally came from Causter Castle, catch the eye. Pictures portray members of the early 17th century Stuart Court brought from Newbattle Abbey in the mid-19th century.

In the Lower Ante-Room are fine Brussels tapestries woven about 1700 and depicting scenes of rustic life by the painter David Teniers. The Dining Room was originally a private dining room used by the family. It was converted to its present form by the 2nd Earl of Buckinghamshire. The dining table and chairs belonged to the 2nd Earl but the 17th century chairs were introduced by the 11th Marquess in the 1930s. Passing through a small serving room one descends into the basement corridor, through the 1930s kitchen, complete with Aga cooker, and up to the first floor into a series of bedrooms and dressing rooms. Notable was the West Turret Bedroom with fine plaster work ceiling and a Canaletto *View of Chelsea*. The Chinese Bedroom is also noteworthy with its Rococo plasterwork, Chinese wallpaper and green and white japanning of the 18th century wardrobe.

The South Drawing Room was originally the great chamber of Jacobean Blickling. It was in here that Charles II was entertained in 1671. Builders' accounts tell us that Edward Stanyon was paid 5s. 6d. per square yard for the plaster ceiling. The decoration is unusual; stripped wood, green walls and pale fabrics, all dating from the 1930s when the 11th Marquess, then Ambassador to Washington, was

instrumental in bringing the U.S. into World War II; he used the room for meetings. In the next room, the Upper Ante-Room, are 17th century tapestries woven at the Mortlake factory, depicting the life of Abraham.

Probably the most remarkable room at Blickling is the Long Gallery. Built originally for exercise and social activity it became the Library in 1745. The Hobart arms are depicted down the centre of the ceiling. The Library contains many rare and important manuscripts and books and the 12,000 volumes form one of the most remarkable collections in any English country house.

Two rooms remain: the Peter the Great Room and the State Bedroom. The first takes its name from the large tapestry of Peter the Great defeating the Swedes at the Battle of Poltawa, presented to the 2nd Earl by the Empress Catherine the Great. Finally the State Bedroom, the best of the 18th century rooms: the tester and back board of the state bed are made up from a canopy of state issued to Lord Buckinghamshire for his Russian embassy. The Axminster carpet was made for this room. There is a fine gilded pier table, French commode dressing table and French commode chest of drawers. Having exhausted the house and ourselves, tea was called for as the rain continued to fall.

But Sunday was a different matter. The sun shone as we drove to Sandringham. As it was too early for lunch some of us took a trip on the tractor and trailer. The purpose-built covered trailer seating 22 adults takes one through the country park and into the private park not normally open to the public. A running commentary by the driver, with a lovely Norfolk accent and a fund of stories about the estate, made the trip an unusual experience. After lunch a land train, a relatively new facility, took us down to the house. Sandringham was not built for the Royals. It was not until 1861 that Queen Victoria decided that there should be a royal residence for the Prince of Wales. The Hon. Charles Spencer Cowper had decided to sell his house and estate at Sandringham. In February 1862 the Prince went to see it, liked it and the purchase was completed in a few days.

The front door leads into the largest room in the house, known as the Saloon. Two stories high, the room serves as an entrance hall and as the principal reception room. There is a fine Minstrels' Gallery and, at the opposite end of the room, three 17th century tapestries adorn the walls telling the story of Constantine.

The central corridor which links the main rooms to one another contains trophies of arms, principally from India, and a pair of fine Italian drug jars.

The Small Drawing Room beyond the corridor is used by the Lady-in-Waiting in attendance when the Queen is in residence. The seats on the small wooden chairs are covered with needlework by Queen Mary. Fine European porcelain is contained

in the wall-case. The main Drawing Room which leads into the Dining Room is where the Royal Family and their guests assemble before dinner. The room contains fine collections of Chinese figures in jade, amber and rock crystal, Worcester porcelain of the 18th century and Russian ornaments and drinking vessels in enamelled silver.

The Dining Room walls are hung with tapestries woven in Spain and presented to the Prince of Wales in 1876.

The corridor leading to the Ballroom contains guns used by the Royal Family and many pictures of various members of the Royal Family. In addition to the paintings are many bronze statuettes. Beyond lies the Ballroom which was not complete until 1883 and is now used for cinema shows and parties for the staff at Christmas. So ended the tour of the house, following which a visit was made to the Church. The altar and reredos are solid silver and were presented to Queen Alexandra by Rodman Wanamaker, the American, in memory of Edward VII's work for the cause of peace.

In the afternoon we had a guided tour round Kings Lynn by a member of its Historical Society and despite the biting wind members found it very worthwhile as many of the unusual features of the town, not usually noticed, were pointed out to us.

On Monday the weather changed yet again and fortunately our programme took us indoors to Oxburgh Hall, a moated house built in 1482 by the Bedingfeld family who occupied the house until 1952 when it was given to the National Trust by the Dowager Lady Bedingfeld.

Crossing the moat into the Gate House one is impressed by the architecture of the Tudor house. The decorative arcaded corbel tables are typical of the more ambitious brick buildings erected in eastern England in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. The English bond brickwork pre-dates Flemish bond by some two hundred years.

A large portion of the house is still occupied by members of the Bedingfeld family so one is restricted to half the ground floor and four rooms on the first floor. The Saloon is the first room one enters from the Courtyard. The neo-classical decoration is the most distinguished part of the 18th century work at Oxburgh. On the left is a huge oak buffet which is on loan from Alscot Park. Executed in 1851 by William Cookes of Warwick, it is a remarkable piece of Victoria furniture. Next, the Old Drawing Room formed after 1774. There is a fine ebony cabinet inlaid with ivory and tortoiseshell which was probably made in Antwerp. The West Staircase hall has walls hung with the 17th century embossed and painted Spanish leather.

The room which has the most Victorian atmosphere is the Library. Most of the decorations and fittings are original 1850s including flock on gilt wallpaper. There is a neo-Tudor fireplace with coats of arms and tiled monograms of the 6th Baronet. Victoria bookcases, a longcase clock and an ornate high-backed chair complete the picture.

Next was the Small Dining Room. Items of particular interest were the carved fireplace with beautiful heraldic tiles, the composite sideboard with the centre drawer bearing the date 1687 and a dinner service made in Lambeth commemorating the marriage of the 3rd Baronet in 1719. The North Staircase, which leads to the North Room, has Spanish leather hangings which still retain their original 17th century colour. Many family portraits adorn the walls including one of Sir Henry Walpole, England's first Prime Minister. The North Room is outstanding for the remnants of the wallpaper which was discovered in 1985. It consists of a trellis pattern on a gilt background. The room also contains some of the Bedingfeld costumes.

Retracing one's steps up the staircase, in a small room along the passage, is a room converted to a bedroom in 1975 which now contains what is known as The Marian Needlework. This is the celebrated work of Mary Queen of Scots and Elizabeth Countess of Shrewsbury; formerly an heirloom of the family; it has been lent back to the house by the V. & A. The feature of the hangings is the display of over one hundred appliqué panels of gros and petit point needlework of which about thirty are signed with the personal monograms of Mary Stuart.

Leaving this room and climbing a short flight of stairs one enters the King's Room, so called since Henry VII lodged there in 1487. The brick fireplace is a prominent feature. The bed bears the date 1675 and the initials 'A.M. & J.M.' stand for Anthony and Jane Montagu. It was possibly brought from Cowdray Park, Sussex, following the marriage of Mary Browne, daughter of the 6th Viscount Montagu of Cowdray, to Sir Richard Bedingfeld, 4th Baronet.

Last but by no means least was the Queen's Room. Similar in dimensions to the King's Room it is named after Elizabeth of York, Henry VII's Queen. The dominant feature is the Sheldon Tapestry Map of 1647 which shows Oxfordshire and Berkshire with adjoining counties.

Some of us climbed up to the roof where, on a clear day, which this day wasn't, the octagon of Ely Cathedral, which we were to visit on our way home, can be seen eighteen miles away!

Tuesday morning we packed our cases and set off for Ely where we were to have a guided tour of the Cathedral. Once again the sun shone. In 673 St. Theldreda,

Queen of Northumbria, founded a monastery on the Isle of Ely in the century of the Fens, where she was Abbess until her death in 679. Some 400 years later, in 1081, work on the present building was begun under the guidance of Abbott Simeon. Completed in 1189 it now stands as a wonderful example of Romanesque architecture. The outstanding feature is, of course, the Octagon, built to replace the Norman tower which collapsed in 1322. We were shown, and had described by our guide, the 14th century chapel, the largest in England, the Prior's Door, the painted Nave ceiling and St. Ovin's Cross - the only piece of Saxon stonework in the Cathedral. Lunch was taken in the Almonry adjoining before returning to Battle after a most rewarding long weekend.

HATFIELD HOUSE 1 JUNE

Hatfield House in Hertfordshire, home of the Cecil family for nearly 400 years has, over the South front, the family coat-of-arms bearing the motto *Sero Sed Serio* - Late, but in Earnest - but we were so early arriving after a very easy journey that we were able to visit the house before our booked time. We were guided by a young lady, very knowledgable, who said just enough but never too much. We entered by the main door on the north side and waited in the Entrance Hall while another party cleared away in front. The Hall is hung with armour and heavy leather coats worn by soldiers under their breastplates in the 17th Century. As one leaves the Entrance Hall and enters The Marble Hall one immediately sees the similarity between the Jacobean and the old medieval Great Hall. Occupying two floors there is the Screen, the Minstrels' Gallery and the Oriel Window. Magnificent Brussels tapestries depicting mythological subjects adorn the walls. Napoleonic flags hang from the Minstrels' Gallery and there are two portraits of Queen Elizabeth I.

To reach the first floor we climbed the Grand Staircase. At the foot of the staircase hangs a sword captured by the Duke of Wellington at the Battle of Seringabatam and presented to Emily Mary, wife of the 1st Marquess. There are pictures of Lord Burghley and Robert Cecil, the builder of the house, and of Queen Elizabeth, known as the 'Rainbow Portrait'. The dress is covered with eyes and ears, to show that she saw and heard everything that happened in her kingdom and in her hand is a rainbow with the motto above *Non sine Sole Iris* - No rainbow without the sun. The staircase itself is beautifully carved. Originally covered with several coats of paint it was stripped off by the 2nd Marquess and restored. Above the staircase is a large painting of a white horse traditionally supposed to be the one Queen Elizabeth I rode at the review of her troops at Tilbury prior to the defeat of the Armada. From the staircase we entered the King James Drawing Room, the principal reception room. The present decoration is Victorian. Many family portraits adorn the walls and a cabinet contains fine Sèvres china dating from 1753. Every great house in the 17th century had a Long Gallery and Hatfield is no exception. 189 feet long, it runs the whole of the centre of the South Front. The ceiling is

covered in gold leaf. There are cabinets and two showcases, the latter containing the belongings of Queen Elizabeth 1, a garden hat and gloves and the first pair of silk stockings. There used to be displayed a Poset Set which was a betrothal gift from the Spanish Ambassador to Philip of Spain and Mary of England. Attributed to Cellini it was of crystal, mounted on gold and set with precious stones and with exquisite enamel work. No longer dare the family display it. In the North Gallery leading off the previous room there is a panel which slides down to reveal two small windows which overlook the Marble Hall. The tradition is that if the gentlemen sat there drinking for too long their wives would send down and have them taken off to bed! The room contains the cradle of Charles I. The next room, the Winter Dining Room, was originally two rooms but was converted to its present form about 100 years ago. Full length portraits hang on the walls and there is a showcase containing miniatures of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.

The Library contains some 10,000 volumes dating from the mid-sixteenth century. There are showcases containing letters from Queen Elizabeth I, Mary Queen of Scots and other Royal personages.

The Chapel stands at the entrance to the West Wing. The stained glass window is original through there have been extensive alterations to the interior in the late 1800s. Finally, to the Armoury. Originally an open portico with windows in the north wall, it proved to be inconvenient and the windows were filled in about 1830 and the black and white marble floor was laid. Tapestries known as 'The Four Seasons' depict the everyday life of the 17th century in Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn. When they were recently cleaned, the signature of the maker, Ralph Sheldon, was discovered in a turned-edge. The armour which gives the area its name came from the Spanish Armada and was presented to Lord Burghley.

There were two special exhibitions. The kitchen had been restored to represent the 1830s and in one of the outbuildings a National Collection of Model Soldiers was on display. A worthwhile excursion which I am sure everyone enjoyed.

Bernard Gillman-Davis

FINCHCOCKS, GOUDHURST 4 JULY

Twenty-six members visited Finchcocks on a beautiful Summer afternoon. The party was welcomed on the lawn by Mrs. Katrina Burnett and given a talk covering the history and details of the building. This was followed by a brief tour of the house, and later by Richard Burnett playing many of the historical keyboards.

The Burnetts purchased the premises in 1971 as a joint venture with instrument builder Derek Adlam, founding the Adlam Burnett Historical Keyboard Instruments

Ltd., employing about ten craftsmen on the restoration of keyboard instruments for museums and other specialist requirements until 1980. Links with the craftsmen are still maintained.

Although records of Finchcocks (or Finchcox as sometimes spelt) go back to 1256, the present house was built during the reign of George I in the midst of beautiful parkland surrounded by hop gardens and farmland. The building belongs to the school of architecture known as Georgian Baroque and is considered to be the finest example of this style in the country. The architect is thought to be Hodgskin, a local master mason. The east facade is striking for its shape, brickwork, graduated windows and massive chimney stacks. Its size is deceptive because it is only one room in depth. The magnificent brickwork is of Flemish bond and it is thought the bricks were fired on the estate as Finchcocks possessed its own brickyard with seven or eight "lodges" until this century. The skilful use of plum coloured shading in the curves of the wings is particularly effective, and the delicacy of the small rubbed bricks in the alcove above the front door, with its central shell design, repays inspection. The inferior quality of bricks of the parapet and side wings suggests that the enormous number required or the large vaulted cellars led to a dearth of best bricks needed to complete the house.

The most important function of present day Finchcocks, which opened in 1971, is the display of historic keyboard instruments. It is not only a museum of keyboard instruments but a music centre of international repute. The visit was enhanced by Richard Burnett playing appropriate composers' music, on two historic harpsichords made in the middle 1700s, and on a Flemish virginal. This was followed by a composition by Mozart played on a Sebastian Lengerer piano built in 1793. An amusing piece was played on Johann Fritz Viennese forte piano whose tone colour is achieved by a variety of mechanisms operated by the knee. Tremendous sound, incorporating bells, drums and a cymbal clash can be produced.

Richard Burnett received great applause not only for his ability to play these historic instruments but also for the humour and wit of his commentary.

R.J. Mears

ARTICLES

ORAL HISTORY REPORT

During the past few months I have begun the slow process of transcribing the Society's Oral History tapes on to computer disk, so that the tapes can easily be duplicated for future use. I have, so far, transcribed sixteen of the recordings. Several of them I had not seriously listened to before: they are extremely interesting

and describe a way of life which was widespread until the end of the Second World War, but has now almost disappeared.

One tape in particular, tape 7 side A, was recorded by Mr. Wilfred Barden, who lived at Ashburnham Forge. In it he names some of the games he played as a small boy in about 1910. "We played Long Tag, Short Tag and French Tag, Egg in the Hole, Push in the Corner, Rabbits in the Burrow, My Sheep Come Home, and 'Please Mr. Fox, what's the time?'. We played Jacks and Russians, this was played with the bloom of the Lambs Tongue, also Bossers and Marbles, Anti and Love-long." If anyone can describe any of these games I should be most interested to hear from them, as I think it would be useful to add a postscript of explanation to the tape. The tapes are kept in the Society's Library and are available for Members to borrow. There are also copies held in the County Library at Battle Market.

Several people have been recommended to me for future recordings and I hope to be able to add to the tape library in the next few months.

Alan Kinnear

THE SOCIETY LIBRARY

New members may not be aware of the existence of the Society's library. This is housed in the office of the Museum and contains some 2,000+ books on archaeology, general history, Sussex and Kent, Battle Town and Abbey and the Battle of Hastings as well as many periodicals.

Access is limited to Society members and research students, either by production of a current membership card when the Museum is open or at the normal times (i.e. half an hour before Society lectures and most Friday mornings, 10 a.m. to 12 noon). However, other times can be arranged to suit by advising the librarian, whose telephone number is given below.

Most books are available for borrowing at no cost. All books should be entered in the register in the library and returned in four weeks unless other arrangements have been made.

The collection is extremely impressive and has been built up since the Society was founded in 1950. Many books came by way of gifts and bequests, others by subscription and purchase. The collection not only caters for academic students' concerned for details but also more general and light reading with a historic background. In short there is much to delight and interest anyone! The Society subscribes to many historical societies and associations, whose newsletters are in

the library and available for perusal but not generally for borrowing. These include the journals of The Sussex Archaeological Society, The Historical Society and The Sussex Industrial History Society; of which a recent edition of the latter's gave details of the windmill at Telham,

Included in the Battle Town section are many manuscripts, notes and theses on various aspects of the town's history, from monastic to the 20th century. This is an area I am particularly keen to develop, as a collection of otherwise unpublished material is of importance to our Society. I therefore appeal to anyone who has written notes, essays or just memories of Battle or the surrounding area (Catsfield, Crowhurst, Westfield, Sedlescombe, Whatlington, Mountfield, Brightling, Ashburnham and Penhurst) to deposit a copy in the library. Typing and presentation can be arranged.

The Society has recently made a number of additions to the library including the Sussex Archaeological collections Vol. 132 and the latest volume from the Sussex Record Society, *St. Richard of Chichester: the sources for his life.* These were obtained by subscription.

Recent purchases include the following:

An Introduction to Battle, Rye and the Villages by Geoff Hutchinson. The author will be familiar to many members for his booklets on various aspects of local history. This recent publication gives a brief historical sketch of the district, village by village. As the author states, the book serves as an introduction but nevertheless gives more information than many general guides.

The Roman Bath House at Beauport Park by Gerald Brodribb. This booklet is a reprint of an article written in the 1970s when the excavation at Beauport was undertaken. It gives, in clear terms, details of the site, its use and context. A good accompaniment to our lecture of 2nd February 1996.

Fuller of Sussex - A Georgian Squire by Geoff Hutchinson. An in-depth study of "Mad" Jack, politician, benefactor and patron of the arts. A very readable account with useful background information to put John Fuller's exploits in context.

Brickmaking in Sussex by Molly Beswick. This is an authoritative work which not only traces the history of brick and tile making in the county such as those which Battle Abbey feature but also a gazetteer of all known tile and brick making sites, including details of the exact location, goods made and the owners. This is an important research aid and a refreshing look at an otherwise neglected industry, once much in evidence in our area.

All the above books are available to borrow and it is proposed to purchase more local studies as finances allow - so even if you have read all the existing books there will still be new ones to find!

In conclusion, I look forward to meeting many more members in the library. If anyone should have a particular requirement or query please let me know on Bexhill 730994 and I will do my best to help. Having been librarian since August 1995 I am only gradually getting to know the full contents. As time allows, I am hoping to complete the subject index begun by Gladys Young. This should be of great benefit and provide easy reference. Browsers are always most welcome.

Don Phillips

OBITUARY

We were all saddened to learn of the death of Gladys Young in June 1995. Gladys had long been actively involved in both the Battle and District Historical Society and the Museum. In 1982 and 1983, with the late Dr. Clark, she opened the Museum daily as no other custodial help was available, and she remained a custodian until shortly before she died. She was elected to the Museum Committee in 1985 to take on the position of Librarian, and immediately recategorised the books to the professional standard still in use. In 1990 she was appointed Assistant Curator, and in 1991 Deputy Curator; during that period, in addition to her library duties, she undertook the detailed recording of the Museum collection necessary to enable the Museum to qualify for registration under government legislation, which it later achieved. Ill health forced her resignation from the Committee in 1992.

In 1993, when responsibility for the Library was transferred to the Historical Society, she continued in the capacity of Librarian as an elected member of its committee, devotedly opening the library on Tuesdays and Fridays, and also before evening meetings during the Winter season. With her considerable knowledge of local history and affairs, Gladys was ever willing to provide enlightenment to all who sought it, be they visitors, students or correspondents from this country or overseas.

Some may wonder why an obituary notice did not appear in the press at the time of her death, but this was at the express wish of her family. There is no doubt that the effect of Gladys's contribution to both the Society and the Museum will long be felt, and that she will be greatly missed.

John Hill