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

BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

DECEMBER 1990 No. 9

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BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM TRUST

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

Affiliated to The Historical Association,The Sussex Archaeological Society,The Sussex Archaeological Trust,Sussex Record Society,The Federation of Sussex Local History Societies,

and

South Eastern Federation of Sussex Museum and Art Galleries.

Officers and Committees 1990-1991

THE SOCIETY

(registered as a Charity, No. 292593 on 8 May 1986)

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Newsletter Editor Rev. D.J. Thompson

FROM THE CHAIRMAN
1989/1990

I am pleased to report that the Society has had another successful year. Membership has been maintained at about 380. Seven Lectures were held with an average attendance of eighty. There were six outings altogether, commencing with a four day visit to Durham in April. A successful Commemoration Service and Party were held in October and the year was wound up with the Annual General Meeting in November at which some excellent slides of the summer outings were shown. This was followed by a 40th Anniversary meeting in December which looked back on local events and the history of local family firms.

With such a full programme I am very conscious that the Society in general and myself in particular owe a debt of appreciation to the individual organisers of these events, full reports of which will be found elsewhere in this newsletter. The reporting of them has inevitably led to a larger newsletter over the past two years, with more work for our enthusiastic Editor, but I do believe it helps keep the membership in touch. As long as it does not have an adverse effect on postage I believe this is a good thing. Fortunately we are helped by a network of distributors. Judging by the number of requests I have had the Newsletter is looked forward to by an increasing number of elderly members who cannot attend all the lectures and like to hear about the Society outings and what progress has been made in other fields.

You will therefore find up to date reports on Oral History, the Street Index, and the first report on Lost Ways on which we are working with the Hastings Area Archaeological Research Group. Slow but sure progress is being made in identifying Lost Ways and anyone who would like to take part should please get in touch with the Hon Secretary or any Committee Member.

It is encouraging to see the Society attracting outside support. The Hastings Central Library and the Battle Library, both being completely modernised, have joined as corporate members and we look forward to their continuing co-operation. I think that this can be built on and augurs well for the future.

Whether we like it or not Battle Town is in the process of change, but in this process much that is historical is being

highlighted and the Society and its Museum are well placed to contribute to this change.

It has been my pleasure to work with the Chairman of the Museum and his Committee over the past three years and I do hope members of the Society will continue to give support to the Museum and Library.

As I take my leave I would like to thank my fellow members who have supported our activities through the year. Without their support the society would not be the flourishing body that it is today.

I know that my successor will continue to enjoy the support I have received and wish him and the Society every success in the challenging years ahead.

Alan Denny

After Alan Denny had given his last Chairman's Report at the Annual General Meeting, Dr. Nicol the incoming Chairman thanked him on behalf of the Society for his service over the past three years. He has been indefatigable; good at persuading others; working unsparingly himself; and fertile with new ideas and initiatives. We are most grateful to him.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MUSEUM TRUST

The museum season commenced on a sad note with the death of Frank Moppett, our friendly custodian organiser, and Mrs. Marjorie Stubberfield, one of our most loyal custodians. In addition, due to pressure of business, we also lost the services of Mr. Robert Duffill, our Hon. Treasurer since 1983, and, at the same time, that of Robert's father, who checked and banked our daily income. Happily, Mr. Jack Cooke agreed to take over as Hon. Treasurer, and Mrs. Dot Knight, who already does a vast amount of work as Hon. Secretary, assumed the duties of Custodian Organiser. In addition, due to the demise of George Moyes, Mrs. Knight also opened the Langton Hall each morning at 8.15 a.m. and made sure that the museum was clean and tidy in time for visitors. As, throughout the season, we were plagued with a leaking roof - at one time leaks appeared in six different places - Mrs. Knight also arranged for the disposal of the resulting water from numerous buckets and soggy towels, and, as if all that was not

enough, she badgered various members of the Langton Hall committee until, at long last, repairs were carried out which, so far, have proved successful.

Considering how hot the season was, the visitor numbers were very good - 7835 adults, up 385 on last season. Book sales also increased by nearly £400. Most museums in the Rother district reported reduced numbers! This success would not be possible without the devoted efforts of your committee and a willing band of custodians. As has been said before, and I will not apologise for repeating it, most of the work involved in running the museum goes on unheralded, behind the scenes.

Dr. Roger Clark, our Curator since 1980, has regretfully decided to resign, and I am pleased to say that Mr. Stanley Bennett has agreed to take over the reins. Both these gentlemen have worked continously to upgrade the museum content and display. We all owe Dr. Clark a great debt of gratitude - no one has been more assiduous than he in their efforts to ensure the well-being of the museum.

Mrs. Gladys Young, our Librarian, has not only looked after the purchase of new books and care of those extant, she has also been responsible for maintaining stocks of books etc. for sale to visitors, no doubt accounting in some measure for the increased income referred to above. Mrs. Young has also offered to assist Mr. Bennett in his work as curator.

Mrs. Carol Gilbart continues to define and analyse the records, memorabilia and photographs of Battle's past. She has also recorded the minutes of the eight, well attended regular meetings of the committee, and was responsible for editing down from twenty nine pages to eight pages, the very interesting 1850 Battle Health report - now available to all members of the Society.

Miss Maureen Millar has continued to support the committee and provide invaluable help on matters concerning the personalities and activities of both the Museum and the Society since its inception.

Special displays were arranged for each month of the season; if nothing else these provided newsworthy stories which resulted in our achieving considerable press and radio publicity.

The museum could not function effectively without custodians, and we are fortunate to have such a loyal team*. During the year, apart from the general public, we also hosted upwards of 16 schools (one with 140 students), and a special 'thank you' is due to Mrs. Audrey Swann, Mrs. Mary Wonson and Mr. John Saunders, who have helped to make the childrens' visits so interesting and worthwhile.

I feel sometimes that the word 'museum' conjures up an image of academic tedium, and that the pragmatic majority therefore fear to get involved. The result is that the willing few are required to carry too heavy a burden for too long. If just three or four Society members would volunteer their services the committee would be grateful, and I am sure that the volunteers would be agreeably surprised.

*CUSTODIANS: Mr. W. Beard, Mrs. G. Bolton, Mrs. A. Curry, Mrs. L. Ford, Mrs. W. Hall, Miss H. Moore, Mr. A. Murduck, Mr. S. Ockenden, Mrs. M. Patmore, Mr. J. Saunders, Mrs. A. Swann, Mrs. M. Wonson.

This report must end on a sad note, in that Mr. Ockenden (Ockie to everyone), has decided to 'hang up his boots'. Ockie has filled our Sunday afternoon session for many years, but now, due to hearing difficulties, he cannot converse with visitors - something he loved to do. Thank you Ockie for all your help.

John Hill (Chairman).

THE ARCHITECTURAL IMPLICATIONS OF SHOPPING

Kenneth Gravett, M.Sc(Eng.),F.S.A. 5 January 1990

My interest in shops was first awakened about 1960 when I was busy trying to photograph old buildings in rapidly changing town centes. I found that houses called "Southdown" or "Aberdeen" were invariably attached to a butcher's shop. This led me to investigate other names and their relationship to the trade that had once been carried out at that address.

The itinerate Trader.

Shopping commenced long before the existence of shops. Most rural communities were almost self-sufficient even up to this century, but were regularly visited by the pedlar, who walked with his goods on his back, including salt in medieval times, and small luxuries. He still exists to-day, albeit in the form of the 'Man from the 'Pru' or the 'Kleen-e-zee-Man' but in the past they were lone operators and seldom did they have any memorial. But there are exceptions - in the church of St. Mary, Lambeth is a glass window in memory of a pedlar who gave an acre of land, worth 2s. 6d. in 1504 for the repair of the church, and is now the site of County Hall, the old G.L.C. premises. Some traders managed to acquire horses and carts. Parson Woodforde records in his diary that "Nancy bought a new gown of Mrs. Batchelor of Reepham, who travels about with a cart'. This would have been a dress length, not a ready-made dress. The rag-and-bone man has almost vanished from our streets but in the country districts we still see people trading from a van or lorry.

The Market Place.

Obviously it was convenient for itinerent traders to meet on occasions, thus forming a market, and this occurred in towns before the Conquest. In south-east England there are two markets with known dates. The abbey at Battle, founded by William I, was not completed until 1095. The monks complained of the solitude and inconvience, but by 1180 there were 115 houses around the market place in front of the abbey gateway and up the High Street. Such markets were primarily for food and cattle. Cattle were moved on the hoof, and hence a network of markets was developed at roughly five-mile intervals - the distance the

animals could walk there and back without suffering in quality. Once or twice a year the market would be used for a fair, for clothes and capital goods. This trend continues to-day at the agricultural show.

In 1221 the Bishops of Salisbury acquired the manor of Godalming and established a market at its southern tip, in Haslemere. The 13th century was the period when most new towns and markets were founded and the bishops were prominent in this activity. Their motive was profit, as also was that of the king when he was persuaded to grant a charter. An old plan of 1735 shows such key features as the shambles, where the butchers operated, the town hall for the administration of justice and tolls, and the pillory. Many of these small town halls exist in south-east England and the majority fit into a pattern, with the court room upstairs, where the town council met, and the market and cells underneath. Battle never had a market hall as the administraion took place in the building next to the abbey gateway.

The Permanent Shop.

The first permanent shops were often erected around the market place. They were often butchers shops and one, dating from 1500 is still in use in Charing, Kent. Such shops did not have glazed windows but shutters, hinged horizontally, the lower dropping down to form a counter, the upper rising to form an awning. Each butcher had his own slaughterhouse behind the shop and at Christmas the entire frontage would be covered with a display of meat and turkeys, now vanished in the interest of hygiene.

As the shopping centres became more prosperous houses were built turned around, end-on to the road so that more of them could have a street frontage. To get the same accomodation buildings often rose to three storeys or more. The rows of Chester are famous with two storeys of shops along the main streets, the lower storey often being a cellar. The ones in Winchelsea, of which there are over thirty, appear to have been associated with the wine trade from France.

As the shops expanded, so the markets became less important and were infilled with shops. Competition arose and shop signs appeared in order to attract customers.

The use of glass in shop windows was very restricted, not only because it was not available in large sizes but because of its cost. An early 18th century shop in Battle High Street, which used to be an ironmongers, has sash windows and small panes of glass but most of the old shop fronts which remain date from the end of that century or the beginning of the 19th when good quality glass up to 2' square became available.

In the last century shops were small. The main feature was the counter, made of polished mahogany with bentwood chairs for the comfort of the customers especially in the drapers where the assistant would bring lengths of dress material for their approval.

Chemists, like most professional men, worked from their houses in the 18th century and one in Hothfield, near Ashford, Kent which was occupied by a Dr. Coetlogan and which dates from 1762 has an inscription along the eaves advertising medicines, ale and grocery. Boots were the first multiple-store chemists and, possibly to prove their respectability, erected a series of buildings in ancient towns with frontages designed to reflect the history of their surroundings.

Growth of the large Stores.

Most large stores grew from small draper's shops, although Harrods started in food. No discounts were given and goods were delivered in smart vans which were travelling advertisements. Blakes, drapers of Maidstone, commissioned the first iron-framed store in 1885. In 1903 the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society in Woolwich was rebuilt in brown terracotta with a clock tower. Burtons devised a marble frontage for their tailoring shops which were often provided with a billiard saloon above 'to keep the young men off the streets'. Interestingly, they were the first group to fall foul of the new planning laws when the City of Chichester refused to permit the design for the frontage because it did not conform with the character of its streets. The most impressive design was that of Bentall's in Kingston-on-Thames which was re-built in 1931 on the corner of Wood Street. Inspired by the design of Hampton Court, the architect used brick and Portland stone with keystones carved with the partners' initials.

Shops have now become even larger. Counters have almost gone and the customers wander amongst the goods. Out-of-town shopping at

superstores with adequate car parking is the present phenomenon - windows have vanished as internal space for display of goods is at a premium. The number of checkouts gets greater with each new store, but to the casual observer the buildings now look more like factories than shops.

B. Gillman-Davis

THE KENT AND EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

Mr. D.S. Lindsay — 19 January 1990

The first railway line through Kent to the coast built during the Industrial Revolution was the South East Railway from Tonbridge to Ashford, and in 1850 a line went from Ashford to Hastings. Eventually a main line was built connecting London to Tonbridge going on through Battle to Hastings.

After the passing of the "Light Railway Act" cheaper railways were allowed in order to supply the surrounding areas, and these did not need to have all the equipment of the main lines.

Colonel Stevens, the son of a pre-Raphaelite painter, seized the opportunity to build, having been left the sum of £300,000 by his father, which he proceeded to spend on constructing a series of railway lines. He was eventually in charge of seventeen railways all over the country.

The line from Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst, which he built, went as far as Rolvenden, which at the time was called Tenterden station. A line was built from Robertsbridge past Salehurst to Bodiam and on to Northiam, Wittisham Road and Rolvenden, and eventually to Headcorn. The name Rother Valley Railway was changed to Kent and East Sussex Railway. The whole system ran for 23 miles. At Biddenden the railway transported vast quantities of sheep and cattle, and at the last station before Headcorn at Frittenden Road the railway was used for transporting timber for the Kent coal mines.

Colonel Stevens set up his headquarters in Rolvenden. He printed his own tickets as well as tickets for other companies. The first time table was issued in April 1900. The light railways were not required to have all the equipment required for the main lines, such as signal boxes, but Colonel Stevens was very adept at

procuring second-hand engines and carriages, and in building his own equipment was independent of outside help. At one stage he operated two carriages fixed back to back and propelled by Ford motor car engines either going forward or backward along the line. An exhibition hall in Sutton which was to accommodate an engine did not have sufficient access for the engine, which was then loaned on a more or less permanent basis to the Kent and East Sussex Railway and was christened "Bodiam". In 1972 this engine celebrated its centenary and it still runs today.

After Colonel Stevens death the line still operated but on 1st January 1954 it was closed to passengers. The line from Headcorn to Tenterden was closed entirely, but the section from Tenterden to Robertsbridge was open for freight only. Finally in 1961 this was also closed. The last train named "Rother Valley Limited" ran in 1961.

This appeared to be the end of this railway system, but an amateur group got together and in 1971 bought the line from Tenterden to Bodiam in its derelict state. With volunteers and dedicated workers a section of the line was opened in June 1974 by the Rt. Hon. William Deedes, M.P. and in 1977 a bridge was built enabling the line to be extended to Wittisham Road. This was opened in 1978 by the Rt. Hon. Edward Heath, M.P., giving 10 miles of track. The line was again extended, and with further voluntary help will eventually go to Northiam.

At the moment about 60,000 to 70,000 passengers a year use the line. Special events are staged such as the Christmas period "Santa Special" train, when a Father Christmas rides with the train handing out presents to the children. The guards and station-master dress in traditional clothing, the station-master perhaps wearing a top hat and a carnation in his buttonhole. Pullman cars are put on for dinner parties, the carriage being equipped with a bar and the service carried out by voluntary helpers.

Tenterden station has a restaurant and a souvenir shop which helps to provide some income; but financial support is always needed.

Eric Augele.

FORTIFICATION AND DEFENCE OF THE SUSSEX COAST 1500-1940's

Mr. John Goodwin — 2 February 1990

Our lecturer is a member of the Fortress Study Group which under the patronage of H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester is involved in the study of fortifications worldwide. His own researches, lectures, and publications have specially referred to the coastal defences of Kent, Sussex and Hampshire.

He began by listing three governing principles which would be in the minds of would-be invaders from the sixteenth century down to the atomic age. (i) The main objective would be to reach London, the seat of government, and to take it quickly. (ii) There must be a quick Channel crossing, and this indicates the coast between Kent and the Isle of Wight. (iii) The most formidable defence is the sea, and this is reinforced by the Royal Navy.

General principles in the minds of the defenders would be (1) Landings would be unlikely near the strong naval bases of Chatham and Portsmouth. (2) Nor are they likely at coastal high ground or cliff. (3) But they are most likely at shelving beaches with a flat hinterland e.g. at Pett Levels and Seaford and Rye bays.

For most of the period being considered the French were regarded as the main enemy, even as late as 1911. Artillery (first used to defend castles rather than to attack them) was the primary resource. Bodiam Castle, built in 1385 soon after the French had burned Rye, had six main gun ports. The first purpose-built artillery castles were built by Henry VIII who might be described as the father of British coastal defence. Using an expert Austrian adviser he built Camber Castle (then on the sea shore) and Deal Castle among others. Deal Castle was notable in that it was sunk low so that its inner parts were protected from gunfire by the outer walls.

Fifty years later came the Spanish Armada, long expected. In 1588 Count Medina Sidonia sailed up the Channel to pick up Parma's waiting army from the Netherlands before invading. The lecturer showed an interesting slide of part of Medina's map of the Sussex coast, marked with the position of alarm beacons, churches, batteries and flanking trenches. In fact, the attackers never reached our shores. Again the sea, supported by the navy, proved too strong a defence.

Two hundred years later came the threat from Napeoleon. 1803 saw batteries being built every 500 yards along the coast complete with guns, earthworks and guardhouse. Each might have two, three, or five 24 pounders. Most were at the coast, but some inland at river crossings. Between the coastal batteries trenches were dug for musketeers. The intention was to build barracks for 20,000 men in Sussex, one near Pett Wood, another at Battle (for which Lewins Court may at one time have served as hospital). The Royal Military Canal was built immediately afterwards, from Hythe running 27 miles in a deep loop to Cliff End at Pett. It was a better option for the authorities than opening the Romnney Marsh sluices, since they might then have had to foot the bill for compensation! The canal was generally 60 feet wide and 9 feet deep, backed by trees to provide cover for a raised parapet for musketeers, and the whole backed by a service road. Bends provided every few hundred yards gave positions for defensive cross fire. The Martello towers were built at the same period. Earlier in 1797 similar towers on the Mediterranean coast had proved very effective against our gunboats, and in 1804, against the wishes of our Army officers, Pitt took the decision to build a ring of these very strongly built brick towers. A gun on the roof had a full traverse so that it could cover the neighbouring towers on either side.

The lecturer also referred to (i) the battery at Ypres Tower, Rye, built to cover the harbour, though there is no record of its being used. (ii) Three redoubt fortresses, at Eastbourne, Dymchurch, and Harwich, with 24 pounders, manned by 300 men. (iii) Smaller forts at Langley (now ruined), at Crumbles (now a coastguard station), at Littlehampton and at Shoreham. (iv) The largest fort at Newhaven, built 1865-1873 at a cost of £80,000 to protect the harbour. The magazine had a double brickwork skin, lit by outside lamps shining through fixed glass windows as in the big redoubts on Portsdown Hill. 1865 saw the first use of concrete here. As late as the 1939-1945 war this was still in use with new 6 inch guns installed.

In the 1914-1918 war, no coastal attack was envisaged. But U boat attacks on the Channel shipping was a major threat. The plan was to seal off the Channel between Dover and Calais. Towers were built to be sunk in 30 fathoms of water, complete with anti U boat nets, and four of these were built ready at Shoreham in 1918 - too late for use! Three were broken up, and one sunk as the Nab Tower off the Isle of Wight.

In the 1939-1945 war the German Operation Sealion planned to land between Hythe and Beachy Head, and at Pagham. Hence the gun posts at Camber, tank defences at Worthing, gun post at Bishopstone behind Seaford Bay, and searchlight post at Cooden, anti-tank defences at Crumbles, and 6 inch batteries all along the danger coast at 7 mile intervals. The remains of some of these can still be seen.

Dover is a specially interesting example of defences over many hundreds of years, where at one site can be seen a Roman lighthouse, a Norman castle, mediaeval additions, further additions during the Napoleon scare, and finally command posts for the united services, visited by Winston Churchill, and in regular and important use throughout the second world war. The site that had been strategically important in Roman times was no less so in our own day.

During questions and discussion, members instanced Pevensey Castle as another example where Roman wall, Norman keep, Armada cannon, Martello Tower (in sight nearby), and second world war observation post can be seen, underlining the strategic importance of the site over towards 2000 years. Reference was also made to concealed concrete hides, prepared in case the Germans should overrun our positions, in Powdermill Wood and at Rushlake Green. There were also some further details of the Battle Barracks c 1803.

D.J. Thompson

ROBERTSON MEMORIAL LECTURE

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ROMAN LONDON

Geoffrey Toms, Head of Education, Museum of London 16 February 1990

The spate of development and rebuilding in the City of London has given archaeologists in the last two to three decades unique opportunities of examining and recording the remains of Roman, mediaeval, and post-mediaeval building and life within 'the square mile'. It has also posed a threat. It could be that by the beginning of the next millennium the deep foundations of many of these new buildings will have destroyed for ever evidence which has survived nineteen centuries of change. It behoves developers, the authorities, and the historians, to be alive to the

situation; and their co-operation has led the Museum of London to recent and far-reaching discoveries. The post-holes and the hearths of the early London destroyed by Boudicca have come to light; but much more besides, relating to its rebuilt successor as one of the greatest imperial and commercial cities north of the Alps - details of the forum and the painted walls of its basilica, the governor's palace, the temples and statues, the masonry houses and tessellated floors of the rich, the one-room hovels of the poor, the bridge across the Thames, the stone quay-sides and warehouses. From here garrisons were sent to the northern frontiers; here merchant ships tied up to land amphorae of wine and olive oil. One load of smashed Samian ware ditched in the river as not worth landing.

The basilica, the 'city hall', its site Leadenhall Market, with its five-foot thick walls, is known to have been the longest of its kind in western Europe. The encircling city wall, a new defensive measure of the third century AD, was built of Kentish ragstone brought up by sail barge from the Maidstone state quarries via the Medway. Bastions were added a century later using monumental tombs from the cemeteries along the roads outside the gates. Most recently, a riverside wall, the existence of which was long discounted has come to light along the north bank, built in a hurry again with masonry re-used from nearby buildings. It is now twenty feet below ground in Thames Street, still in places seven feet high, resting on a bed of chalk which in turn lay on twelve-foot oak piles driven into the river bed. Pieces of discarded monumental sculpture are embedded in it, enough remaining in one case for the reconstruction of a monumental arch with sculptures of the gods of the days of the week. Along the quay below Billingsgate, warehouse walls stand six feet high, with massive timber floors and traces of the sliding doors; below them the main sewer of oak discharging into the river. Three Roman vessels have come to light, one sailing barge, one with its coin deposit still under the foot of the mast.

There were two further recent discoveries of significance, the first an amphitheatre under today's Guildhall yard, walls of stone and brick overlying an earlier wooden structure, entrance, adjoining shrines, drains clearly discernible, the church of St. Lawrence on the site of the main stadium, perhaps in part constructed out of its remains. The second important discovery has been that of a large bath-house on Huggin Hill, walls some six feet high, and the traditional features of such a building identified. This has been re-buried and remains available for

future excavation, perhaps in the not too distant future; as the lecturer said, the turnover rate of buildings in the City seems to be some thiry years!

Finally the innumerable artefacts illustrative of life in this Roman cosmopolitan city. The Mithraic temple, at some time purposely destroyed; the temple to Isis rebuilt by the governor Marcus Martianus; four Celtic mother goddesses; memorial altars, one to a fourteen year old girl Marciana; a statue of Mercury; a Romano-Celtic temple from the current excavations in the Fleet valley; a well-preserved shoe; a mosaic floor; a collection of intaglios still awaiting mounting as seals; a unique skeleton of a horse; and, in the City Ditch (hastily abandoned?), three hundred and twentyfive moulds for forging coins in bulk, some coins of the time turning up with their obverse not matching the reverse. Bronze bracelets from a tomb, oyster shells from Whitstable, one-brick thick timber-framed hovels towards the west, one where a wall collapsing had taken with it its owner's shelf full of pots. The chance survival of a roof tile attached to its upper wall indicated the angle of the pitch of the roof.

The end of Roman London? Excavation has shown that early Saxon settlement appears to have been further along the river to the west, in the region of the Strand. The lecturer considered that it was not until the reign of Alfred some four centuries later that London began to recover the importance it held in Roman times and has held since. He invited the Society to visit the Museum of London and view at firsthand the fruits of the excavations he had described.

John Springford

THE GENEALOGY OF THE ROYAL HOUSE

Miss F.M. Nithsdale — 2 March 1990

The pageantry surrounding our royalty is a great attraction to foreign tourists, but few of them will be aware of the long history of our royal house. The same is true of the British people themselves. A vague notion of a cake-burning Alfred is all that most people know of the kings before William the Conqueror; whereas our royal house has the longest authenticated pedigree of any reigning monarch today, going back to Cerdic, the first Saxon King of Wessex (c.520), Alfred's ancestor.

The Saxon royal line might seem to come to an end with the coronation of the Norman William I on Christmas Day, 1066. But Edgar AEtheling[1] and his sister Margaret fled to Scotland. Edgar had no heirs, but Margaret[2] married Malcolm Canmore, King of Scots. Their daughter Matilda married Henry I of England, the youngest son of the Conqueror. Their daughter, another Matilda, married Geoffrey of Anjou whose son was to rule as Henry II. His sons were Richard Lion Heart and John. In this way the descendents of Alfred were united with the Norman line.

The crown passed from father to son until the reign of Edward III whose claim to the French throne, through his mother, led to the 100 Years' War. His heir, the Black Prince, predeceased his father, and the throne passed to the grandson, Richard II who was deposed and succeeded by his cousin Henry IV, the head of the Lancastrian branch of the Plantagenets. His son was the victor of Agincourt, Henry V. His heir, Henry VI succeeded as a child, whereupon the Yorkist side of the family put forward their claim to the throne; hence the Wars of the Roses. Henry VI was deposed, and the throne occupied by the Yorkist Edward IV whose son Edward V was one of the Princes murdered in the Tower. The last Yorkist king, Richard III was defeated and killed at the Battle of Bosworth, 1485. The Lancastrian claim of the victor, Henry Tudor, now Henry VII, was tenuous and through a bastard line, but he strengthened his position by marrying Elizabeth of York, the daughter of Edward IV. He bolstered his claim still further by declaring descent from the daughter of Joseph of Arimathaea, cousin of the Virgin Mary, and hence from the Royal House of David. After Henry there followed in unbroken succession, Henry VIII and his offspring, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth, followed by James VI of Scotland (James I of England). James was the son of Mary, Queen of Scots, and Henry Stuart (Lord Darnley), both of whom were grandchildren of Henry VIII's sister, Margaret Tudor. Then came Charles I, Charles II, and James II and when the latter was deposed his daughter Mary, married to William of Orange, came to the throne, to be followed by her sister Anne. With the death of Anne the Stuart royal house came to an end (ignoring the 'Pretenders', James III and Bonnie Prince Charlie etc. *K.M.R*) George of Hanover, grandson of James I's daughter Elizabeth, became George I. Then three further Georges, William IV, and Victoria daughter of the Duke of Kent (like George IV and William IV, a son of George III). Victoria married her cousin, Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, whose many children married into continental royalty. Her son Edward VII was followed by George V, whose son

reigned briefly as Edward VIII. Edward's abdication brought his brother to the throne as George VI: his daughter is, of course, our present Queen, Elizabeth II.

Sir Iain Moncrieffe, late Lord Lyon King of Arms of Scotland, quotes a source[3] tracing Queen Mary (George V's consort) back to Genghis Khan[4]. He also states that King John's wife, Isabella of Angouleme, was descended from a Jewish Prince whose ancestry included King Jeconiah of Judah. Irish "histories" (my inverted commas, *K.M.R.*) relate how a Princess from Babylon at the time of the Captivity, came to Ireland accompanied by Jeremiah the Prophet. It is said that she married the High King of Ireland, and the stone she brought with her, said to be Jacob's Pillow, was taken by the Scots of Ireland into what became Scotland and hence the stone of destiny, the Coronation Stone. If true that would make the biblical ancestress claimed by Henry VII, and the descendents of the High King of Ireland, contributors to our own royal line. Both Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria had genealogical charts made, showing ancestry back to Biblical times[5].

It is interesting to note that every member of a reigning royal family is descended from William the Conqueror: in Great Britain, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Liechtenstein and Luxembourg, through the marriage of Eleanor, daughter of Henry II, to Alfonso of Castille.

Footnotes and a further note from K.M.R.

[1]Edgar and Margaret were grandchildren of King Edmund Ironside (d.1016)

[2]Saint Margaret of Scotland.

[3]Perhaps this accounts for her somewhat forbidding expression at times!

[4]In his book "*Royal Highness, Ancestry of the Royal Child*" (i.e. Prince William) published by Hamish Hamilton 1982,

[5]Elizabeth's chart is on show at Hatfield House, and Victoria's is in the British Library, MSS No 43968.

The curiosity of most of us will, I think, be satisfied with the knowledge that we can trace the line of our present Queen back to

Cerdic of Wessex. For a more exalted ancestry I think that in the absence of adequate and reliable written evidence, the verdict of historians must be the Scottish legal one of "Not Proven". (Those who were at the Commemoration Lecture on 5th October, 1990 and heard Dr. Smyth's critical appraisal of Asser's "*Life of Alfred*" will appreciate the point!) This is not to say that old legends and folk memories may not contain residual elements of far distant fact. (e.g. 'The Dream of Maxen Wledig' in the collection of old Welsh tales "*The Mabinogion*").

But what a pity that, as far as I know, neither James I nor Charles I claimed ancestry from the Royal House of David in support of their doctrine of the "Divine Right of Kings"! Had they done so the Puritan opposition to them would surely have been stopped clean in its tracks, and Pym, Hampden and Cromwell would not have taken up so much space in the school textbooks of my youth.

Keith M. Reader

SMUGGLING IN SUSSEX

Mr. Michael Smith — 16 March 1990

Duties on goods carried into or out of England have been a means of raising revenue for centuries.

In Sussex, a secret export trade in wool, from sheep of the Romney Marsh and South Downs, was a successful means of avoiding both a levy of £3 a bag imposed on the export of wool by Edward I in 1275, and the later restriction of legal wool market channels to Lewes, Chichester and Winchester. Sussex Owlers, or Birds of the Night, continued to smuggle wool abroad until the 18th century with the English Channel playing a cohesive part in their success. Sea-crossings were short and coastal towns supplied skilled and experienced sailors.

Attempts to tackle the problem made during the 17th century by both individuals and the government were frequently frustrated. In 1698, Riding Officers were appointed to patrol stretches of the South Coast, and to arrest Owlers with assistance from local dragoons, but by 1700, Daniel Defoe had noted that these officers were often outnumbered by smugglers and rendered powerless.

Owling had become too successful and justifiable an occupation, in the eyes of the participants, to be curtailed, and smuggling was to undergo a rapid expansion before being brought under control in the mid 19th century.

Several factors contributed to this growth, which saw a swing from owling to the smuggling of imported goods between the years 1720 and 1740. As the economy of Sussex became depressed, and the level of imported duties was raised to provide revenue for England's involvement in overseas wars, the incentive to smuggle increased. Low-paid farm labourers, redundant iron and wool workers, and surplus sailors (from the silted Cinque ports) were attracted to this lucrative occupation.

The range of desirable imported goods was wide, but the most desirable and highly taxed commodity was a black China tea known as "Bohea" - with spirits and tobacco not far behind. Towns in Belgium, France and the Channel Islands supplied goods specially for the English market, many of which were delivered to "Coopers" - boats moored off-shore as floating supermarkets - where imports could be exchanged for English wool.

By the early 18th century the whole of Sussex was employed in some form of smuggling activity, and Adam Smith's comment that the laws of the country had made smuggling "a crime which Nature never meant to do so" reflected the common attitude of the time.

Two types of vessel were increasingly used to transport goods, either the three-masted lugger furnished with cannon to repel patrolling revenue cutters, or the swift manoeuverable galley with up to twenty-four oars. Purpose-built luggers were constructed in Hastings, and double-hulled craft, providing secret storage space, were a speciality of Rye boat-builders.

Favoured landing places in Sussex were many, but those of Eastbourne, Bexhill and Hastings provided the ideal conditions for the unloading, or loading, of contraband on to horse-drawn vehicles. Firm sandy surfaces extended to the cliff face on these deserted beaches.

Once the sea-smugglers had ascertained that the coast was clear, boats were beached, and shore gangs took over. To avoid capture, speed in unloading was essential, and an efficient team, protected by "batmen" armed with staves, cutlasses or pistols,

could land five-hundred tubs of spirits in twenty minutes. Prior to a voyage these tubs were frequently threaded to rope lines and attached to the deck rail of a boat, from where they were released and hauled ashore at journey's end, or, should a revenue cutter approach, released to float undetected on the sea before being retrieved by specially constructed grappling irons. Above inaccessible beaches, wooden derricks were rapidly assembled in order to haul goods up steep cliff-faces, and as quickly dismantled.

Swift transport overland to the waiting local or London markets was undertaken on foot, horseback or cart by individuals or groups of men relying on their intimate knowledge of the countryside to choose the most expedient route. Hastings and Bexhill beaches in particular were well served by a network of roads leading inland.

Contraband was confidently transported along turnpikes when the coast was clear, but via sunken byways or alongside impenetrable hedgerows should strangers be in the vicinity. "Duffers", or tea-carriers, stuffed tea - frequently adulterated by the addition of sloe-leaves - into the linings of their custom-made quilted coats and caps before taking it to market. In this way thirty pounds of tea could be carried from the coast to London by one individual. Stockwell and Lambeth were the main London clearing houses for smuggled goods.

To avoid detection, smugglers often disguised their identities, by blackening their faces or wearing bee-skeps over their heads, for example. A Pevensey parson led a group dressed as scarecrows.

Goods awaiting local distribution, or goods in danger of being discovered, were deposited in known storage "warehouses" en route, or were left in a variety of hiding-places - in caves, tunnels, ponds, streams, tombs, churchyards, houses, inns etc. before being retrieved. Houses and inns equipped with secret hiding places still exist in Sussex. Nearer to home, it is known that tea landed at or near Hastings was regularly loaded on to pack horses, and transported via Hollington Woods, Battle or Sedlescombe, to an inn at Whatlington known as "Turner's Hole", where the landlord provided storage facilities. Ghost stories relating to storage sites and the occasional sighting of phantoms kept the inquisitive at bay. The drummer of Herstmonceux was a local ghost often "seen".

A system of look-out posts and ingenious, pre-arranged signals gave support to smugglers on their journeys inland. De Hooker, vicar of Rottingdean, acted as look-out for the Rottingdean Gang from his church tower. Light signals were sent by means of spout-lanterns, windmills' sails were set in certain positions, and cattle were tethered in certain ways (sometimes in the form of a cross).

Although smugglers were sometimes regarded as otherwise excellent citizens, and admired for their ingenuity and bravery, many resorted to despicable means to procure and protect their gains. Over the centuries, gangs had grown up around key points on the network of routes into London, and by the 18th century large and powerful gangs dominated the trade within Sussex. The most notorious of these was the Hawkhurst gang, which terrorised the countryside to maintain its control. It was this group's savage and protracted torture and murder of two informers, Chater and Gelley, in September 1747, which outraged the country and led to the break-up of the major gangs of Sussex.

Organised smuggling on a large scale was eliminated by increasingly efficient preventive services and the change to free-trade policies after 1848.

Barracks, signal stations and Martello towers, which had been erected along Sussex coasts to repel Napoleon's anticipated invasion, and soldiers returning from the Napoleonic Wars, led to the strengthening of the Coastal Blockade and the eventual establishment of a Coastguard Service in Sussex in 1831. Cottages were built for top-hatted excise men, and the Sussex Customs control headquarters was established in the Tallboys Shop, Rottingdean. By the mid-19th century, Sussex and Kent possessed the most heavily protected coastlines.

Instances of individual "enterprise" have continued into the 20th century and were extended in scope with the arrival of illegal immigrants in the 1960s, and the sinister development of organised drug-smuggling in the 1970s on Romney Marsh and at Cuckmere Haven.

The romance of smuggling has been kept alive, however, by the exploitation of past links with this illegal activity. Many smuggling haunts in Sussex now form tourist attractions.

Audrey Swann

COMMEMORATION LECTURE

ALFRED THE GREAT. BURNING THE CAKES OR COOKING THE BOOKS?

Dr A.P. Smyth, Reader in History, University of Kent 5 October 1990

The year 1901 marked the traditional millenium of King Alfred's death and the climax of fifty years of almost manic idealisation of him by Victorian society. He was the Christian victor over Guthrum, as warrior and strategist the saviour of Saxon Wessex, and moreover the inspirer of a royal court where religious teaching, philosophy, and literature in native Saxon language flourished, and where the education of nobles' children was impelled by the king himself. Alfred was credited with personally translating from Latin into Anglo-Saxon, works which would conduce towards order and justice and a better society throughout his realm. Burning the cakes, a contemporary folk-tale illustrating saintly qualities and in time applied to Alfred, was the measure of his concern in deep adversity for his people.

So what's new? asked Dr. Smyth. Our sources of information on the history of Alfred and his reign come principally from two contemporary works - the Anglo-Saxon chronicle, and the Life of Alfred by Bishop Asser of Sherborne. With regard to the first, Alfred himself appears to have instigated the collection of old annals into a continuous narrative of English history up to and including his reign (and which was to continue as a priceless record of earlier mediaeval history). Is there a case to examine that Alfred was in a position to dictate for posterity an account most favourable to himself, of his life and times? Ego-promotion? Turning to Bishop Asser, we have his own account of how he was called by Alfred from St. David's to the court. A royal favourite whose writing would inevitably be coloured by the likings of his royal master? Is it significant that Asser took his biography not beyond 893 though both he and the king lived for years after that? A difference of opinion? And do we possess this biography only in a form as amended and interpolated by later editors? The original perished in the Cottonean fire.

Turning first to the Chronicle. In 853 it records that King Ethelwulf sent his (youngest) son Alfred to Rome where Pope Leo "consecrated him as king and adopted him as his spiritual son". (Ethelwulf incidentally himself returning two years later from Rome took to wife the King of the Franks' daughter Judith, a girl

of thirteen.) To begin with, the Pope had no such authority. Saxon kings were elected from the royal line by the Witan principally for their fighting qualities. Moreover, Alfred had in 853 no prospects of becoming king. He had three older brothers. Ethelbald who succeeded Ethelwulf in 858 (and married his father's widow Judith!) happened to die in 860. Ethelbert his successor died in 866. The third, Ethelred, died in 871 leaving two young sons who were passed over in favour of Alfred. Was the 853 entry cultivation of the valuable supportive power of the Church?

In the time of Ethelred, Alfred is invariably mentioned in the Chronicle fighting alongside his brother against the Danes. The account is discreet, and sophisticated. For long the English fight victoriously...yet the Danes possess the field and the spoil. Peace is made...and the Danes are bought off. Guthrum surrenders and is baptised...yet north of the Thames the Danish hosts continue to harry and to settle. Writing up in a favourable light? Alfredian propaganda?

Asser continues the downgrading of the older brothers. He records that Ethelbald fomented rebellion while his father Ethelwulf was in Rome. His marriage to Judith is not missed as an infamy. Alfred is beloved of all the brothers by his parents. He is the most comely. At his mother's knee he defeats them in reading. Yet probably by this time they are out in the field. It would seem that Alfred was nine when his brother Ethelbald became king and married Judith. The contrast is marked. Alfred is both a warrior and a pious scholar. Even the undiagnosed pains he suffered from childhood and by implication steadfastly over-came, are suggestive of saintlike qualities. Is there a hint of the neurotic, of the obsessive? Alfred himself related how, helping to build his father's hall, he took pleasure in choosing his tools and his wood; with the inference that care and application were lessons all should learn. It might seem that Asser modelled his biography on the hagiographies of the time.

Among the questions that followed, arose the likelihood that Alfred himself was responsible solely for the translations of Gregory's Pastoral Care, some fifty of the Psalms, and St. Augustine's Soliloquies. Though this was not to deny that other translations formerly attributed to him, Boethius' De Consolatione Philosophiae, Orosius' History, Bede, none the less arose at his bidding. Alfred's Jewel - might it have been the top

of a wand of office? But it is known that with copies of his Pastoral Care, Alfred sent styluses to his bishops, perhaps as a symbol to spread learning. Might this have been the handle of an ornate stylus?

Dr. Smyth had made his point that we should not take the sources for Alfred uncritically. Perhaps by discreet doctoring of the records he contrived to loom larger than his contemporaries. Yet on balance he still stands out in ninth century history as the stabiliser of the Wessex kingdom whose court reflected to some degree those of the Franks in learning, native culture, and the Christian faith of the times. Or has the present recorder of Dr. Smyth's lecture been taken in too?

John Springford

THE EXCAVATION OF THE ROSE THEATRE

Mr. Martin Clout — 2 November 1990

This lecture began by our being shown a map of London in 1572 when its population was about 100,000 to 150,000 people living within the walls. The city was at that time being ruled by the Puritan fathers.

Around this time, Lord Leicester's men were granted a licence by Queen Elizabeth I to build a theatre. The first theatre was built in Shoreditch, followed in 1576 by the building of The Playhouse at Newington Butts. Two years later The Curtain Theatre was built, and then after a lapse of nine years Phillip Henslowe built The Rose Theatre in 1587. Others follows. After another eight years The Swan Theatre was built, and then in 1599 The Globe. After that Phillip Henslowe, a dyer by trade, joined forces with Peter Street, a builder, to erect The Fortune Theatre, and then The Hope. In 1613 The Globe was burnt to the ground, and was rebuilt.

In 1592 Henslowe had decided to remodel The Rose. Documents relating to this remodelling are held at Dulwich College. The new Rose Theatre was approximately a fourteen sided shape, and the stage projected into the central "yard". The entrance to the theatre appeared to be at the southern end where the threshold was found to be very worn. The roof would have been tiled with wooden shingles which were found on the site. Of course thatching

would have been a fire risk.

The locations of The Rose and of The Globe are on either side of Southwark Bridge Road south of the Thames.

It was during this time that William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe put on their plays in London, and The Rose was noted for Marlowe's works. Phillip Henslowe shared the running of the theatre with Chumleigh, a grocer, and became very wealthy in this enterprise. It is assumed that several men with money boxes (later discovered on site) were employed to collect the entrance money.

After this period we do not know what happened in The Rose up to 1650. However, right up to 1957 the site of the theatre was intact, and then began the construction of Heron House. Concrete piles were sunk through the site, but these actually did little damage.

In 1988, Heron House was demolished and moves were made to investigate the site archaeologically. An agreement with the developers was made and it was decided to allow two months to open up the whole site. Later an extension of two weeks was allowed by the developers; then ten weeks, though more time was needed.

Archaeologists from the Museum of London excavated the north and west areas where they found walls of Tudor brickwork. They also found thousands of hazel nuts, which, mixed with soil, formed a firm floor covering which appeared to be relatively waterproof, and must have been laid intentionally. A ditch was dug which exposed strata of different substances.A drain made of Baltic pine was discovered, although its function was not clear. Many artifacts were dug up, including brass pins no doubt from costumes worn on stage. Clay barrels were found, possibly belonging to Henslowe (a dyer by trade). Coins and tokens, a monkey's skull, a turtle's carcase, a rosary, a bradawl and a knife and fork on centre stage were all found on the site. Some of these items may have been props used in the plays.

A week before the time limit expired, the tension of trying to complete their findings grew to fever pitch, and twenty two actors and actresses wrote a letter to The Times and also read speeches from theatre stages publicising the excavation. Well

known actors and actresses including Dame Peggy Ashcroft, Judy Dench and others stood on the site to prevent building work going ahead. Audiences jammed switchboards in support, and eventually Margaret Thatcher the Prime Minister announced that The Rose Theatre would be saved.

English Heritage agreed with the contractors that a covering of soil, sand, and then concrete should protect the site, and Nicholas Ridley announced that one million pounds would be provided for the developers to carry out this protective work.

There is now a possibility that further excavation can be carried out, and in time to come more of the site will be exposed for investigation. Thus a cultural heritage will not be lost, thanks to the pressure, enthusiasm and effort of archaeologists, actors and actresses, and other interested parties.

Eric Augele

LOOKING BACK IN BATTLE

THE SOCIETY'S 40th ANNIVERSARY MEETING

Which came first, the Society or the Museum? Talks by the Chairman of the Society (Donald Nicol) and the Chairman of the Museum Trust (John Hill) to the 40th Anniversary meeting showed that there is no exact answer to this question. However the year 1950 certainly saw the beginning of both. On 5th July 1950 Battle "Festival of Britain" Committee elected a sub-Committee, one of whose terms of reference was "To arrange an exhibition of objects of historical interest as part of the festival celebrations". The intention was to hold this exhibition in 1951 but such was the enthusiastic response and the wealth of material available that a trial exhibition was held on 4th October 1950, as part of the Autumn Flower Show.

The interest aroused suggested that there would be considerable support for a local Historical Society in Battle and a temporary Committee was formed to discuss a draft constitution. This met on 17th and on 30th November 1950, and it was decided to hold a public meeting in the Church Hall on 13th December 1950 to enrol members and elect officers. It was agreed that all persons attending that meeting should be deemed Foundation Members of

the Society. This meeting was duly held and there is thus no doubt that the 40th Anniversary of our Society fell on 13th December 1990, although it was convenient to celebrate it on 7th December.

In the Minutes of the first Committee Meeting of the new Society it is recorded that a room had been booked in Pyke House for the four Saturdays of January 1951 to hold "a small exhibition of antiques and items of local interest". At the next meeting of the committee on January 25th it was reported that the "Museum Exhibition" had been very successful. This is the first use of the word "Museum" in the Society's records and thus it could be claimed that the Society preceded the Museum by about a month. On the other hand one could argue that the trial exhibition of October 1950 was the start of the Museum in everything but name.

It is remarkable that almost all the activities of the Society as we have them today were established in the first year of its existence. The proposal to set up the Library was made in April 1951 although the Library itself was not opened until 1953. The first Commemoration Service was held in 1951 when 14th October most conveniently fell on a Sunday, and the proposal to publish an annual record of the Society's activities was put forward in September 1951. The early Transactions of the Society show a programme of winter lectures and summer visits much as we enjoy today.

The next reference to a "Museum Exhibition" is in the Transactions for 1953 which report an exhibition held once again at the Autumn Flower Show, and in the same year a tentative start with a permanent Museum was made by hiring a room in Old Brewery Yard. This also housed the collection of books which the Society was accumulating to open the Library. The tenancy of small rooms in Battle proved rather precarious and the embryo Museum had a most difficult time over the next three years. However in 1956 it was possible to lease premises at "Old Church House", Battle and after much effort by members and friends the Museum was opened on 19th May 1956 (Whit Saturday). Its success was immediate and by 30th September 4,153 people had paid the 6d. admission charge. In 1963 the lease on the premises at "Old Church House" expired and the Museum was temporarily closed, to be re-opened in its present premises at Langton House in 1965.

The Museum was constitued a separate body with its own Committee by a Trust Deed of 1967, and to bring the story nearer to the present the first leak in the roof was reported in 1979!

The history of the Society and Museum was followed by four short talks by speakers who had long family and business connections with Battle. Space does not permit anything but a brief account to be given here, but members will be pleased to know that a recording was made as part of our oral history project and verbatim accounts of these most interesting studies are available.

MR. DAVID JENNER who is currently making a study of his family history and that of the firm of Jenner and Simpson said that his family who had been farmers in East Sussex in the 18th century began their connection with Battle when William Jenner was the tenant of "Great Beech Farm" (the present "Beech Farm") on the Ashburnham Estate from 1837 to 1856. His brother, Jonathan, took over "Little Park Farm" in the 1850's and subsequently built the house "Fernlea" (now "Mill House") on Caldbec Hill where he celebrated his golden wedding in 1894. His sons, William Caleb and Samuel built up a successful milling business, operating the two windmills on Caldbec Hill, (one of which may still be seen) the water mill at Whatlington, and a number of other mills in the area.

The use of wind and water mills persisted until 1912 when the mill at the corner of the High Street and Mount Street was built. This was driven by a remarkable gas engine with a single cylinder of 18 inches bore and flywheel of 4½ tons. It operated on water gas derived from anthracite. In addition to driving the mill machinery by a system of belts and pulleys it operated a generator giving 230 volts D.C. for lighting. Power was stored in a battery of Leclanche cells and the surplus used to provide lighting in Battle High Street. In 1914 Mr. Simpson, who had been manager of one of the company's mills became a partner in the firm.

In 1953 on the death of his father and of Mr. Simpson within a month of each other, Mr. David Jenner, then at Cambridge found himself with his brother, in charge of the company. They continued its diverse activities as millers, corn chandlers, suppliers of animal feeding stuffs and fertilisers, but in the 1960's and 70's there was extensive rationalisation in the

industry and many of the smaller firms and merchants were eliminated. In 1982 his brother was forced to retire for reasons of ill health, and in 1988 he received an offer for the business which he felt he could not refuse. This concluded a fascinating story in which one felt that Mr. David Jenner had modestly understated his own important part.

MR. TONY EMELEUS told us that his father, who took over "The Old Pharmacy" in 1900, had been born in Finland, then an unwilling subject state of the Russian Empire and had done National Service in the Imperial Russian Army before coming first to England and then going on to America, where he qualified as a pharmacist in New York. He returned to England to marry Mr. Emeleus's mother, and as she did not wish to go to the United States, started business in Battle. He was a remarkable character and an extremely skilled and knowledgeable pharmacist.

Mr. Tony Emeleus himself qualified in 1935, just before the enormous modern development in medicine, when as he pointed out, the practice of pharmaceutical chemistry had changed little over the previous century. He instanced the cavalier manner in which such poisonous substances as potassium cyanide (for killing wasps nests) and arsenious oxide (for killing wireworms) were handled.

"The Old Pharmacy" itself was originally a Hall House of the 16th century, but in about 1750 had been given a rather ugly plaster front which may be seen in early photographs of Battle. In 1946 Mr. Emeleus was able to buy the property which had hitherto been leased, and since the plaster had been badly cracked by wartime bombing, set about removing it and returning the building as nearly as possible to its original appearance.

There is no doubt that all residents of Battle and all our visitors owe a considerable debt to Mr. Emeleus for his contribution to the appearance of our High Street.

MR. HERBERT NEWBERY'S family connection with Battle began a little earlier than that of the previous speakers, for it was in 1817 that his great grandfather came from Hastings to work at the Whatlington mill and thereafter set up in business as a baker. Bakers in those days were closely linked with millers. The jam factory, for which his family are best remembered, arose by chance when a customer, who was unable to pay his bill, offered his crop of soft fruit (whether strawberries or raspberries is

uncertain) instead. These were accepted and made into jam which sold so well that jam manufacture soon became a major activity of the firm. During the 1914-18 War they gave up baking altogether and concentrated on making jam, bottling fruit and manufacturing confectionery. A minor adaptation to the times was the renaming of one of the firm's products. A "German cake" which had sold well before 1914 became very unpopular, but when it was labelled "Belgian Cake" sales immediately revived.

Those who complain about late trains or crowded roads may care to recollect that Mr. Newbery's great grandfather, when needing to do business in London, simply walked there, after starting in the very early hours of Monday morning to avoid working on the Sabbath. Having dealt with business matters he would stay in London overnight and then walk back to Battle. Possibly as a result of this healthy exercise he lived to be 96 years old.

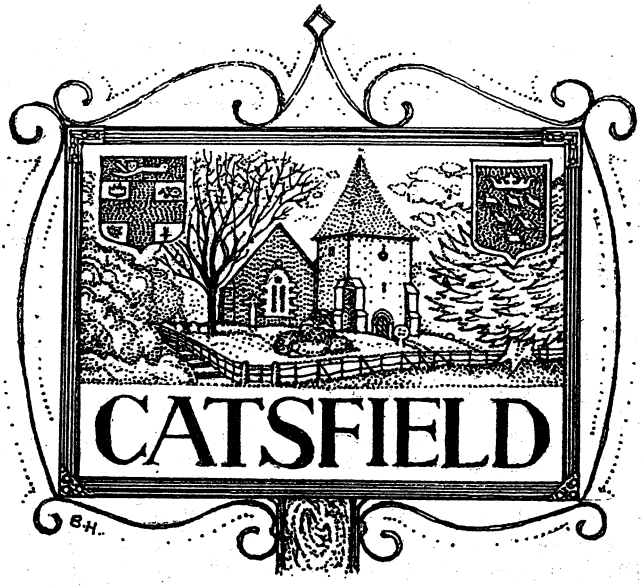
The final talk of the evening was by MR. DENNIS CAMBELL who described the long and distinguished history of Thorpe's shoes, one of the very few independent businesses in these days of large multiple stores. The family's connection with Battle goes back almost as far as that of Mr. Newbery. George Thorpe of Chiddingly set up the business at 14 High Street in 1819, possibly attracted by the existence of a Tannery in Battle. The arrival of the railway assisted the development of the business and one of George Thorpe's sons, George Archibald Thorpe bacame Mayor of Hastings. At the turn of the century theirs was one of the first shops to stock ready-made shoes. Also at about this time Mr. A.H. Sinden, who had married Benjamin Thorpe's daughter became Managing Director and the guiding hand of the firm for a great many years. He recalled the days when the shop was open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. from Monday to Thursday, until 8.30 p.m. on Friday, and 10.00 p.m. on Saturday; and when a pair of hob-nailed boots cost 3s. 11d. It was Mr. Cambell's estimate that a comparable pair of boots would cost about £85 today. He also pointed out that his wife, Mrs. Wendy Campbell, was the great, great, grandaughter of the original George Thorpe.

Referring to the interconnections of the businesses of Battle he noted that Thorpe's had been sorry to see the end of the jam factory since the processes seemed to have a particularly destructive effect on the workers' boots which needed frequent replacement!

After the talks members had the opportunity to examine a fine collection of postcards of Battle in former years displayed by Mr. Kenneth Clarke, together with photographs and other memorabilia kindly provided by the speakers. Our Librarian, Mrs. Gladys Young had also arranged an exhibition of some of the old and valuable books in the library.

Also available for the first time at this meeting was the abridged version of the Cresy Report of 1850 prepared by the society's archivist, Mrs. Carol Gilbart. This report of a preliminary enquiry "Into the Sewerage, Drainage, and the Supply of Water, and the Sanitary Conditions of the Inhabitants of the Town of Battle", will convince anyone that, although there may be much to deplore in recent developments, some at least of the changes in the last 140 years have been for the better

D.L. Nicol



The wooded vale of Catsfield sweeps down from its highest, most northerly point, 350 feet above sea level, to the watermill two miles to the south and a mere 50 feet above the sea. To the west, the parish is bounded by the Catsfield Stream, running through a fault created at the time when a great heave of the earth's crust threw up the Alps.

Catsfield Stream once powered John Potman's iron forge and iron mill; the dam he built is still evident beside the site now occupied by the Electricity sub-station. Its water turned the wheel of the watermill, mentioned in Doomsday, and powered the Tudor furnace of Buckholt. Thriving for a hundred years, both forges were out of business by the mid-seventeenth century.

The parish is formed mainly of Tunbridge Wells sand, brought down from the London plains by pre-historic rivers, though a cap of Tunbridge Wells clay extends over the area of the Village Green in the centre of the parish. The sandstone is evident in deep cuttings like the ancient lane, Frickley Hollow or the road beside the church.

The original settlement was here on the promontory where the Parish Church stands today. A wooded piece of high ground, it invited fortification and there are traces of earth ramparts in the fields sloping away to the east. They may well have protected the wooden dwellings of the Anglo-Saxon Catti, who siezed the site in Roman times and were later to have their village sacked by Norman invaders. On the other side of the road from the church, the farm Burrowhide is a reminder that a Saxon barrow once occupied our Christian burial ground.

The Doomsday book records :'WRENC holds the manor of Catsfield, held previously by Elfalm.' It notes the lord of the manor had eight oxen and sixty four villagers. 'WRENC also holds the manor of Broomham', a reference to the northern part of the parish. It was on this original, Saxon site that the village remained until medieval times, when it moved to the present Village Green.

From Tudor times until the period following the Great War, the parish of Catsfield was divided into three estates, or manors. To the east the Pelhams owned the Catsfield Place estate, while the Church Farm estate extended from the watermill in the south, to the Toll Road, the present A269. The Broomham-Parkgate estate comprises the 300 acres of thin, sandy land to the north of the parish and is now called Normanhurst.

This has restricted the growth of the village to the nuclear settlement in the centre of the parish, on the 'waste' or 'green' owned by the Pelhams. Some cottages on this ground are still subject to the Pelham Lease. The Victorian census of 1851 records that there were 550 inhabitants in the parish, living in 109 houses and that three houses were empty. Today there are about 750 people living in Catsfield, with 281 houses and the main development is still restricted to the triangle of the old Village green.

There are two delightful hamlets, Henley's Down, originally serving the Pelhams at Catsfield Place, and Catsfield Stream, serving another house mentioned in Doomsday, Tilton.

The history of the parish is dominated by the owners of the three manor houses: Catsfield Place, Catsfield Manor (formerly Church Farm) and Broomham-Parkgate, re-named Normanhurst by the Brasseys.

In 1584, Edmund Pelham, lord of the manor of Crowhurst, bought Catsfield Place. The Pelhams were the most powerful family in Sussex, and the Catsfield Pelhams were notorious recusants in the days when Battle was a Roman Catholic stronghold. A change is indicated by a gift, in 1677, of a chalice and paten to the Parish Church, by a 'virtuous' Lady Pelham.

During the French Revolution, Thomas Pelham, who was later to become the second Earl of Chichester, made prolonged visits to the continent. In June and July 1791, Mr. Pelham was entrusted with a letter to Lafayette in Paris interceding for the life of the French King and Queen. In fact the letter was never delivered, as he prudently burned it before travelling on to Italy. Perhaps it was as part of these negotiations, that the Princesse de Lamballes brought some of Marie Antionette's jewels to Catsfield Place, for safekeeping by her friend, Lady Gibbs. The jewels were kept in a safe at the back of the house and the story persists in the village, as Lady Gibbs' daughter married a distinguished soldier and came to live in Catsfield.

The Catsfield Place estate passed from the Pelhams through a daughter the the Papillons and is now a private school.

The largest estate in the village is the Church Farm estate, called Catsfield Manor when it was auctioned in 1938. This was acquired by the Markwick family in the seventeenth century and in about 1715, William Markwick, a distinguished clock maker, built the Queen Anne house beside the church.

It was his grandson, also a William, who was to achieve fame as a naturalist. A younger contemporary of Gilbert White, William Markwick kept diaries between 1769 and 1793 'of the first appearance of birds, trees and flowers' in Catsfield. In 1803, his aunt, Lady Eversfield, died, leaving him the Eversfield estates, on condition that he moved to her great house, Dene Park, Horsham and changed his name to Eversfield. It must have been a bitter blow for a man so attached to the countryside where he was born. However, he had a family to consider and he duly complied with her wishes. When William Markwick died in 1813, he was buried alongside his family in the churchyard beside his old Catsfield home. Later, the Eversfield estates were sold and became Burton's St. Leonards, where the family name survives in Eversfield Place and Markwick Terrace.

William Markwick 1739 - 1813

In 1823, the Markwick estates were bought by a veteran of the Napoleonic Wars, General Sir Andrew Pilkington, who had married Lady Gibbs' daughter. For thirty years, the General farmed the land and is remembered in the fine east window in the Parish Church. The 1851 census records that the General was then 74, his wife, Maria, was 65, and one of their daughters, Louisa, was still living with them. Also living at Catsfield Place Church House (a suitably resounding address) were: Thomas Champion, the butler; Rebecca Haw, their cook; Thomas Holden, the groom; two housemaids, Elisabeth and Julia; and there was young George Wheeler, the page.

Living next door, at the Rectory, was the General's second daughter, Maria, who was twenty five. Recently she had married the Rector of Catsfield, the Reverend Burrell Hayley. He was forty one and his spinster sister, Julia, lived with them. Their three month old baby, Georgiana, was the first of Mrs. Hayley's ten children.

Mrs. Hayley, whose grandmother had looked after Marie Antoinette's jewels, lived to be a hundred. After her father, the General's, death, she moved back to the house built by William Markwick, which she extended to provide rooms for her large family. The estate was sold and broken up after her death in 1922.

The most northerly of the three estates is Broomham-Parkgate, owned by Thomas Alfraye, a successful local ironmaster, then by the Fuller Aclands, before it was bought in 1865 by the great railway contractor, Thomas Brassey, who is buried in Catsfield churchyard. He employed the architect Haberchon to design a mansion in the style of a French chateau, set on the high ground commanding a breathtaking view of the English Channel. His son, also Thomas, inherited the estate when his father died in 1870.

The Brassey family dominated the life of the village and the neighbourhood, until Idina Lady Brassey died in 1951 and the great house built by her husband's grandfather was demolished. They were generous benefactors, at a time when one man in four in Sussex was unemployed. The digging out of the chain of lakes at Normanhurst, the gardens, the woods and the house provided work for local people. The Village Hall and the Playing Fields were a gift to the Parish Council from the Brassey family.

The last of the feudal lords has departed, the great estates have been broken up and the manor houses are now in private hands. But the character of the village, its houses clustered round the Green, and the multitude of harmonious activities that thrive in the parish owe much to a history dominated by benevolent patronage.

Patricia Speedy

Illustrations by Barbara Hanson

CHARLOTTE WILSON (nee SMITH)

Charlotte (Lottie) Lizzie Smith was born on 27 November, 1896 at Swailes Green Cottages, Cripps Corner. There were five children, of which Lottie is the eldest and only surviving child. Lottie's father Spencer Smith (affectionately known as Bangy because of his prowess with his fists when protecting his family) was born at Little Footlands Farm. A member of a family of twelve children, he lived until he was nearly 97, still with all his faculties. Her mother was born at Doleham, near Westfield.

When Lottie was 6 or 7 the family moved to Blackbrooks Cottages. The two cottages at Blackbrooks each had a lavatory at the end of the garden, separated by a bake oven. Good use was made of the bake oven. Her father would start the fire with kindling wood, and when flour thrown on the floor of the oven immediately turned brown, the oven was ready for use. Lottie's mother was a good cook and the family was well fed with large rice puddings, bread, pies, and a joint at weekends. The mother was also a good needlewoman and made clothes for the children and for herself. Her father then worked at Oaklands (for the Coombe family) and was a good all-round farmworker, being especially good at thatching and hedging.

The children attended the Old School at Sedlescombe. When Lottie's mother died at the age of 53 in 1916, Lottie took over the mothering of her sisters and brothers. As a child she did hop picking at Luff's Farm. They also helped at haymaking time, and she loved to be able to lead the horses out into the field. Her mother made sure that there was a long lead for Lottie to hold, because she was afraid that the horse might walk on her otherwise. Lottie also attended Sunday School up the hill to the south of the village (Chapel Hill), and she remembers what a treat it was to "have a ride in the swivel chair" if she answered questions correctly.

Lottie promised her mother, before she died, that she would always look after her father, and this she did. They moved to Manor Cottages when Lottie was 18, and Lottie lives there to this day. She remembers the grocer's shop at the house now known as Harriet House. Mr. Ditch was the shop keeper,

and when one entered this shop the smell of Dutch cheese, covered with its muslin cloth, was very appetising. There was a very fine bakery at the bottom of the hill, opposite the Coach and Horses owned and run by Mr. Gregory, and the bread was so good that people came from afar to buy it.

At Manor Cottages the water came from a well at the back in the middle of a large yard. They had oil lamps, and a kitchen stove for cooking and heating the kitchen and sitting room. The well has now been filled in. After Lottie's father had retired from work he used to sit in the yard near the well, and loved the local children to come and talk to him. He always had sweets in his pockets. They had a garden and allotment to grow their own vegetables; two plum trees (Black Diamond and Victoria); six chickens and two pigs.

When he died Sir John Thorne wrote of him "Now he is gone Sedlescombe is a very much poorer place, but all who knew him will treasure the memory of him".

Lottie kept her promise to look after her father, but when she was nearly 40 she and her fiance decided they could wait no longer, and so they were married. She and her husband shared The Cottage with her father. Her husband was head gardener at Marley House, for a family named Pears (Pears soap). He was a very good gardener.

Lottie looks back on a good life with a very happy childhood.

Vera F. Hollis.

BATTLE STREET INDEX

The on-going task of keeping a record of the Battle Conservation Area has continued, with new photographs being taken whenever there is any substantial change in the appearance of a building. As before, one application of the findings has been the annual revision of the Society's leaflet of a walk around Battle, which is sold by our Museum and by the Tourist Information Office. A new version is produced in February, ahead of the tourist season, and this year the policy has been adopted of replacing any unsold copies of the old edition by the new version, as soon as it is available. The out of date copies are then destroyed. Despite this rather generous policy the leaflet still returns a small profit to the Society.

The more interesting, and rather more difficult part of the project is the extension of the record back into the past by the use of old street directories. As mentioned last year, these appeared at varying, though fairly frequent, intervals over the period 1862-1974, and the majority have now been examined. The temporary closure of Hastings Reference Library for structural work has delayed the finish of the study, but it is hoped that this part of the study will be completed in the near future. Fortunately the gap between the end of street directories in 1974 (when they were replaced by "Yellow Pages") and the start of the street index in the early 1980's can be covered. A diary of changes in Battle over the period 1973-1985 was maintained in our Museum, originally by Miss Robertson and subsequently by Mrs. Langley. Thus we have the possibility of putting together a fairly good record from 1862 to the present.

The use of these old directories does however present some difficulties. The houses in the High Street, Mount Street, Upper and Lower Lake, were numbered by the Battle Board of Health in the early 1850's. Since then some houses have been divided up and others joined together, and the re-numbering has not always been consistent. Thus the numbers near the bottom of Mount Street are:- 5,6B,6A, and 7, while on the other side of the street there were until recently two adjacent shops each claiming to be No.38. Some numbers such as 34 Mount Street and 48 High Street have vanished completely. These anomalies would not matter if all the

houses and shops displayed their numbers, but many do not, and deducing the missing figures calls for rather more than simple arithmetic! However, by a mixture of persistence and good fortune most of the problems have now been overcome and we may claim that the majority of the index cards do show correctly the number of the house and the names of its successive occupiers.

To extend the record beyond 1862 will present more difficulties. Prior to 1850 there were no house numbers, and although there were a few earlier directories (The Universal British Directory of 1797 seems to be the first) they are less useful for Street Index purposes. They list "Gentry", "Professions", and "Tradesmen" and do not give addresses in any detail. Nevertheless such directories are of some help. They also yield interesting incidental information such as the times of stage coaches from Battle to London (one had to change at Tonbridge) and the availability of post-chaises to Brighton and Lewes. Indeed, the arrangments for travel to and from Battle before the days of the railway might be an interesting study for any member who cares to undertake it.

D.L. Nicol

1990 SUMMER OUTINGS

DURHAM AND HADRIANS WALL, 20th - 23rd APRIL

The foundations of the present Cathedral were laid in 1093 and it is the finest example of Early Norman architecture in England with its massive grandeur enhanced by the magnificence of the site. It is the Shrine of St. Cuthbert and of the Venerable Bede. The Cathedral survived the attentions of both Henry VIII and Oliver Cromwell. In 1650 Cromwell took 10,000 Scots prisoners and 4,000 of these, starved and exhausted, were shut up in the Cathedral for many months. To keep warm the prisoners destroyed everything which would burn, sparing only the 15th Century Prior Castell Clock.

We entered by the North Door furnished with a replica of the Sanctuary Knocker and started our tour in the Galilee Chapel with its magnificent 12th century wall paintings, and the tomb of St Bede whose remains were stolen from Jarrow

Monastery in 1022. Then into the Nave with its decorated pillars where we gazed at the font and cover provided in the last half of the 17th century by Bishop Cosin, the cover being most intricately carved, and at the 1947 Miners' Memorial, a marble slab rather beautiful in its simplicity. We passed under the Central Tower supported by four huge arches each more than 68 feet in height and strained to see the lantern 155 feet above us. The Bishop's Throne in the Choir Stalls is the highest in Christendom and was built by Bishop Hatfield as his own memorial and is set above his tomb. The Neville Screen of Caen stone, carved in London in about 1389 and brought by sea to Newcastle, is most delicate stone work and since the Reformation missing its 107 richly gilded statues. The remains of the Saint rest in the Chapel of the Nine altars beneath a simple polished grey stone slab but overhead is a modern embroidered tester which seems to be at odds with the simplicity of the tomb.

In 1832 the then Bishop of Durham handed over his Castle as a home for the new College founded in that year. In the courtyard we had pointed out to us the piecemeal additions to the buildings over the centuries. We entered via Bishop Cosin's porch and visited the Kitchen. The roof, brickwork, windows and great fireplace have remained unchanged for 500 years and old cooking pots can be seen on the walls; but modern equipment has now been installed to feed 300 college members daily during term time. Then into the Great Hall, now the Dining Hall, one of the largest in the UK (45 feet high and over 100 feet long). Much altered, the present interior dates back to when the College was founded. The walls are adorned with military trophies and portraits of prominent figures involved in the history of the College and University. We climbed Bishop Cosin's Black Staircase, built in the 1660's, 57 feet high, and , except for the carved side panels, made from oak. Originally free standing with its weight carried by the outside walls it was soon found necessary to insert plain cylindrical columns for support at each angle of the stairs but they do not detract from the beauty of the staircase. At the first landing of the staircase is the great round headed Norman doorway to Tunstal's Gallery, once the principal entrance to the 12th century building, and a fine example of late Norman stone carving, magnificent because it is so well preserved.

Tunstal's Chapel was built in the 1540's and extended in the late 17th century by Bishops Cosin and Crewe. Most of the woodwork has been put in since the Castle was handed over to the College but there are some early 16th century carved stallends. We went up the Black Staircase to see more Norman architecture in the form of arcades of columns and decorated arches and then down a narrow stone spiral staircase to the Norman Chapel, the oldest part of the Castle (1080). There we saw early Norman sculptures of foliage, animals and grotesque masks on the capitals of the 6 columns. This Chapel was unused for nine centuries but was re-opened in the early days of the University to provide a means of access from the Courtyard. But with the opening of a new route from the Courtyard to the Keep stairs in 1952 it was found possible to restore this beautiful building and it functions once more as a Chapel.

On Sunday morning our first destination was The Roman Army Museum at Carvoran designed to introduce the visitor to the Roman Soldier and his way of life, and to put Hadrian's Wall into its historical context. The Museum's display areas tell us about the men who built and garrisoned the Wall, their countries of origin, and the distinctions between Legionaries and Auxiliaries. The food, clothing and personal belongings featured brought the past into focus as did the short talk given to us by a member of the museum staff. He showed us the weapons and armour of the soldiers and demonstrated the weight of the equipment the soldiers were required to carry. For members not familiar with Rome an exhibition of photographs of Trajan's Column was an exciting display as much of our information about the dress and tasks of the Roman army is taken from this magnificent sculpture. We left then for Housesteads which is the most complete example of a Roman fort to be seen in Britain and occupies a commanding position on a ridge looking north. The visible remains include curtain walls and interval towers and examples of buildings such as the Commandant's House, hospital and latrines - the last a superb example of Roman sanitary engineering. Onwards then to Chesters Roman fort alongside the North Tyne River which the Wall crossed. Chesters was built to the same basic pattern as most Roman forts but, as it housed a cavalry regiment, had larger and more imposing headquarters and a more generous allotment of space per man. There are extensive remains of the

gateways, the headquarters building, the fort commandant's house and a fine example of a Roman military bath-house. The bath-house is some distance from the fort, on a bank of the North Tyne, with both hot and cold bathrooms, rooms for dry heat and moist heat, and provision for hot air at floor level, below floor, and along flues in the walls. The Memorial Museum on site contains many important stones, iron tools and weapons, and miscellaneous small personal objects.

BLENHEIM PALACE 31st MAY

Blenheim Palace was built by Sir John Vanbrugh, for John Churchhill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, in recognition of his great victory over the French at the battle of Blenheim in 1704. It took some seventeen troublesome years to complete, years punctuated by quarrels between Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough and Sir John, and loss of Queen Anne's favour and financial support. We started in the schoolroom where our guide Mr. J. Forster set out for us the historical background to Blenheim and details such as the Duchess not having access via the front entrance to the Palace until 1716 whilst she waited on the builders to complete the steps. Equally the builders and Sir John had their problems with a client who constantly changed her mind and insisted on being consulted about every detail and cavilled about the cost! On our way to the Palace entrance we had pointed out to us the political significance of the stone sculptures by Grinling Gibbons e.g. the British lion savaging France represented by a cockerel. Blenheim was first and foremost a monument to Queen Anne's glory and this is reflected in the grandeur of the rooms and the Great Hall which we entered first. The stone work is richly carved and includes the arms of Queen Anne. The Hall ceiling painted by Sir James Thornhill in 1716 (for 25 shillings a yard and said by Sarah not be be worth half a crown a yard) shows Marlborough victorious kneeling to Brittania. Via the Winston Churchill exhibition we then made our way to the Drawing Rooms, stopping en route to look at the portrait of the first Duke and Duchess and their children and displays of Meissen and Sevres porcelain. The Green and Red Drawing Rooms and the Green Writing Room have original ceilings designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor and are beautifully moulded and decorated with gold leaf. These rooms contain many fine portraits of the Dukes and their Duchesses but the family group that

attracted most attention was that of the ninth Duke and his beautiful American heiress wife Consuelo and their two sons, refered to by Consuelo as 'the heir and the spare'. In the Green Writing Room hangs the most famous of all Blenheim's tapestries showing Marlborough accepting Marshal Tallard's surrender at Blenheim. Through the State Dining Room with the table laid with a Minton service and silver gilt, pausing to look at the silver centrepiece showing Marlborough on horse-back writing his despatch to the Queen from Blenheim telling of his 'glorious victory' and the ceiling and murals by Louis Languerre after Sarah had decided Thornhill was too expensive. At first glance the ceiling and murals look rather dull after the grandeur of the Drawing Rooms but the trompe l'oeil effect of the ceiling and balcony scenes on closer inspection is rather fetching. The gilded woodwork in the three interconnecting State Rooms is magnificent (paid for from Consuelo's dowry!) and the walls are hung with tapestries of Marlborougyh's campaigns. In the first room one can see Marlborough's dispatch to the Queen from Blenheim (written on a mess bill) and the cradle commissioned by Consuelo's mother and copied from a cradle in the Doge's Palace. From the State Rooms into the Long Library, 180 feet long, with fine stucco decoration and plain ceiling panels as Sarah would not pay Sir James Thornhill's rates. Here one finds a marble statue of Queen Anne by Rysbrack commissioned by Sarah to show respect for her former friend and benefactor. In the afternoon we visited the park landscaped by Capability Brown in the 1760's but the formal water gardens were designed by Achille Duchene for the 9th Duke and lend an air of grandeur to the gardens. We paid a quick visit to Bladon Churchyard to see the Churchill graves. It is curious that Consuelo for all her unhappiness in her first marriage asked to be buried at Bladon but it is noticeable that her grave stone does not bear the name of Spencer Churchill.

FIRLE PLACE, 4th JULY

Firle Place, originally a Tudor manor house but extensively remodelled about 1730, is not particularly impressive on first sight but it houses many important European and English Old Master paintings, fine French and English furniture, and a collection of Sevres porcelain. We started in the Tudor Hall where the original hammer beam roof is

still in position though now covered by an 18th century coved plaster ceiling. The custodian explained to us some of the family history and the background to the collections, much of which was brought to the family via marriage. Then into the Little Hall where a Tudor doorway was uncovered in the First World War and which now bears the initials of Canadian soldiers billeted there in the Second World War. The upstairs Drawing Room contains the original Fra Bartolomeo's Holy Family made familiar by countless Christmas cards, and another 'old friend' Correggio's The Crown of Thorns. This room also houses pictures by Guardi, Rubens and Tintoretto and the Panshanger Cabinets, attributed to Chippendale, and considered to be some of the finest examples of English cabinet work in existence. The next room was rather a curiosity in that it was restored Victoriana - rather gloomy and overcrowded - with some remarkable portraits of George Elliott. Then on to the Long Gallery, which extends the full length of the first floor of the entrance front, and unusual in that it is rare to find one introduced in the middle of the 18th century. This contains many rare books and maps, fine paintings, English, French and Italian furniture and beautiful Sevres porcelain, including a dinner service, made for the first Lord Melbourne in 1771, featuring musical instruments. The bill for the service is on display showing that it cost nearly £5,500! On the landing we were shown Chinese porcelain of the famille rose and famille verte periods. Then a quick swoop on the billiard room where those interested in stitching saw georgian embroidery re-used as applique on cushions and chair backs. The colours of the silks appeared to be as fresh as the day they were first used.

HAMMERWOOD HOUSE, 2nd AUGUST

Hammerwood House was designed by Benjamin Latrobe who went on to build the White House, the Capitol, Baltimore Cathedral and other major works in the United States. The house, with its 32 acres, was purchased by David Pinnegar in 1982 (for £150,000) when it was in an advanced state of decay with fungi growing on walls, a leadless roof, gaping holes everywhere, much water penetration and dry and wet rot in abundance. Since our visit in 1988 much renovation work has been completed but the dining room remains unrestored with gaping holes in the ceiling and much evidence of dry

rot to remind us of the condition of most of the rooms when David Pinnegar took over. The other main rooms have been restored to their original colour schemes of pastel pinks, blues and greys with gilding still awaited. We were shown the ingenious method adopted to make replicas of the missing plaster work and the 'mirror image' mould for shaping cornices. Much work has been done on a bartering system e.g. R.A.F. helicopters lifted the huge sheets of lead to roof level on condition B.B.C. Blue Peter could film the task. One unforeseen consequence was that the down draught from the helicopters caused an avalanche of soot from every chimney in the house. The main staircase survived the years of neglect almost intact but the oak filials were removed by vandals. Replacements in oak were produced by a Dutch craftsman in exchange for a fallen yew in the grounds. Individual rooms have been furnished in styles to celebrate a particular period - the 1890's bedroom in the pale blues then popular in Paris instead of English heavy 'Victoriana'. The plan now is to restore the top nursery floor and, thanks to elderly ladies who worked in the house in the 1930s, the opening to the original staircase to the upper floor has been discovered. There are a number of collections on view including early cameras, and some Society members spent time on these collections rather than brave the heat of the sun. But an outside view of the house reveals the Doric porticos that flank the house copied from 6th century BC originals of Paestum and Delos and the false windows which add 'balance' to the facade.

BRIGHTON PAVILION, 6th SEPTEMBER

The outside appearance of the Pavilion owes very little to the classical design of Henry Holland as his building has been transformed by John Nash in a style based on Indian architecture but to untrained eyes it has a strong Chinese influence. Our guide, Jennifer Jones, gave a most informative talk about the building and decoration of the Royal Pavilion and its subsequent history. Our guide was sympathetic to George, Prince Regent, and although she touched on his excesses, did not mention his unkindness to his wife Caroline. We started our tour in the Corridor, 162 feet in length, and furnished with 'Chinese' pieces, only a few fashioned from real bamboo, the remainder simulated bamboo in beech and satinwood. Some of the Chinese furniture

was imported in 'flat packs'! There were a number of Chinese figurines and our guide showed us how the heads could be set nodding. Then into the Great Kitchen with iron and copper palm tree columns supporting a great dome introduced to ventilate the room and a wealth of enormous cooking utensils donated by the Duke of Wellington's family as the Pavilion originals have been lost. Into the dining room, its 45 foot high dome decorated trompe l'oeil, with an enormous winged dragon beneath from which is suspended a magnificent crystal gasolier which itself is surrounded by more dragons supporting globes shaped like flowers. There are dragons and serpents everywhere and delicate murals of costumed Chinese figures. The table is set with glass and china of the Regency period. Through the Drawing Rooms again with palm tree columns and into the Music Room which is magical with crimson and gold landscape murals with gilded serpents and flying dragons in abundance. The beautiful carpet is an exact copy of the original which Queen Victoria removed and cut to fit the servants rooms in Buckingham Palace. The main rooms are now almost restored but much work remains to be done.

MUSEUM OF LONDON 25th SEPTEMBER

This was an additional outing based on a lecture on Roman London given by the Head of Education of this Museum. The collections displayed in permanent galleries, arranged in chronological order, represent over 2000 years of the Capital's history from prehistoric times to the 20th century. The items on display include paintings and prints, excavated objects and costume. Unlike most museums the overall impression is of light, with windows opening on to the remnants of the Roman wall. The Museum also mounts special exhibitions and during our visit we were able to see Images of the London Blitz which marks the 50th anniversary.

J.E. & E.L. Goldsworthy

MORE DISCOVERIES AT ST. MARY'S BRAMBER

Those of our members who went on our summer outing to this historic house in July 1989 will be interested to know of further discoveries when floor boards there had to be taken up because of wet rot in underlying joists. Underneath was

the accumulated debris of centuries, and a small group organised by Mrs. Holden carried out a quick 'dig'.

Among many small artifacts were found an early medieval hearth of tiles set on edge, the surface blackened by charcoal; a piece of a cooking pot (possibly 12th century); and a complete tile with a shield design which Mrs. Holden believes may have come from the site of St. Mary's Chapel on the stone bridge of Bramber (built 12th cenutury). The hearth would seem to confirm the existence of an earlier house on the site.

These finds, and photographs of the work in progress, should be exhibited to the public at a later date.

(From the Beeding and Bramber Local History Society, through the Newsletter of the Federation of Sussex Local History Societies)

ORAL HISTORY

The Battle and District Historical Society has put together a collection of audio tapes on which recordings have been made by members of the community who have memories of earlier times. The object is to get records of some past history, previous local events, past customs, personal impressions of earlier days, and local atmosphere, and to preserve these memories for posterity.

Many fascinating tales have been recorded of farming areas and local industry round the district, with amusing anecdotes and facts of local history.

The tapes are to be held in the new Battle Library, and will be issued to schools and to interested persons in the same ways that books are loaned from the library.

Thanks are due to the organisers and speakers who have given much time to this enterprise.

Eric Augele.

THE SUSSEX LOST WAYS PROJECT

Our Society is now carrying out field surveys to discover old routes which were used from the earliest days of the Abbey to take animals and produce to market, and also for general communications between the coast and the High Weald; and by so doing to identify settlements and associated activities.

I was therefore delighted when Dr. Peter Brandon suggested that we undertake surveys around the Battle area, which he felt was an ideal centre for this area of Sussex, to discover mediaeval routes and other lost ways. This would enable us to tie in with The Hastings Area Archaeological Research Group in the south, and The Robertsbridge and District Archaeological Society to the north. The object would be to produce an annotated map of these three areas, to be deposited in the East Sussex Record Office and local libraries.

About 30 of our members expressed an interest in taking part, and the first briefing meeting was held in the H.A.A.R.G. office on 25 March when slides were shown by Dr. Brandon, maps studied, and potential areas identified. The three areas chosen for Battle were Great Wood, Netherfield/Ashes Wood and Ashburnham/Penhurst. The first walk took place on 6 May when Dr. Brandon led a walk through Great Wood. Three lessons were learnt. Firstly, that the benefits of spring/summer surveys are limited because of seasonal growth; secondly that the pace of the leader must be limited to the average pace of the group, thirdly, that group leaders need to be trained to know what to look for.

We are therefore fortunate the find that John and Celia Saunders (Catsfield) had already done some work in the Ashburnham/Penhurst area, and followed this up by study visits with Dr. Brandon. Results were encouraging, and duly reported at the Annual Meeting. John and Celia are concentrating on Penhurst while George and Sheila Bishop (Ninfield) have taken on the Ashburnham area. They will have the continued assistance of Pamela Haines and David Padgham (Hastings) whose knowledge of the area will be of great assistance.

Meantime, interest is being shown in Great Wood by Pamela Corbett (Sedlescombe) and Benedicta Whistler with Hilary Moore in Netherfield, and in due time I hope groups will emerge.

It is in the very nature of this project that progress is being made literally step by step, coupled with much interesting map study. In this connection we are fortunate in that East Sussex Record Office supply any necessary maps. We look forward to many enjoyable walks in 1991. If any member is interested, please contact the Hon. Secretary; or if interested in reading more about Lost Ways, contact the Hon. Librarian in our Museum. Dr. Brandon is a Landscape Historian, and author of South Saxons, of the Sussex Landscape; and co-author of The South East from A.D. 1000. He is currently Chairman of the Sussex Branch of The Council for the Preservation of Rural England.

A.R. Denny

A DESCENDANT OF SIR ANTHONY BROWNE COMES HOME

MISS WAVENEY ROSALIND LANCASTER BROWNE

During a visit to Brisbane, Queensland, in March 1988, my wife and I were invited to lunch with Miss Waveney Browne, a delightful and characterful lady in her eighties. She had heard from a friend that we were connected with the Battle and District Historical Society, and wanted as much information as we could provide. She produced family trees, documents with seals, and papers showing her membership of the "Descendants Society of Knights and Friends of St. George Garter". She said that her one regret was that she was too old to make the journey to Battle to see her ancestor's tomb in St. Mary's Church. She felt the next best thing was to become a member of our Society, and the Membership Secretary duly enrolled her on the spot, with the promise that if she did come to England she would be an invited guest at Battle.

Imagine our surprise two years later when she wrote to say that she would be visiting Battle in September, 1990.

During her stay with us she visited St. Mary's Church, our Museum Library, and the Abbey. After giving her a personal tour of the Church, Mrs. Patricia Roberts the Chief Steward wrote "We take our local history so much for granted that it was both rewarding and humbling to witness Miss Browne's enthusiasm, pride and awe as she stood gazing around at the roots of her family history. She simply could not believe that she was standing beside the magnificent alabaster tomb of Sir Anthony and Dame Alis, fingering and touching every motif within her sight and reach". Following this she spent an interesting time afterward* She was intensely interested in the Browne family history and all I was able to show her in so short a time. She read avidly from '*The History of Battle Abbey*' and from '*Battle under 39 Kings*' the latter containing many references to the Brownes. I felt it was a pity she was not here longer". Both Patricia and Gladys received glowing letters of appreciation from Miss Browne. In her visit to the Abbey she had been particularly interested in the terrace and the range above with its two western corner towers which had been rebuilt by Sir Anthony.

The visit to Battle must have been the highlight of her life. Perhaps it will be no surprise to the reader to learn that Miss Browne is an ardent member of the Victorian League. We were sorry to see her leave Battle, but glad that the Society had been able to perform some small service for Sir Anthony Browne and his Australian descendant.

A.R. Denny

* in the Library and Mrs Gladys Young the Librarian said