No. 20

BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Affiliated to the Sussex Archaeological Society, the Sussex Archaeological Trust, and the South Eastern Federation of Museums and Art Galleries.

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NOTE:—The Society is in no way responsible for the opinions of contributors as expressed in the above articles.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The year covered by this number of Transactions is the twenty-first in the life of the Battle and District Historical Society, whose formation arose, in 1950, from the celebrations in Battle of the National Festival of Britain.

The Coming of Age of our Society was celebrated by an evening party held on October 16th, 1971, in the Library of Battle Abbey School, by kind permission of the Headmistress, Miss Parker. Ninety-eight members and eleven guests attended. On the previous evening the Battle of Hastings Commemoration Lecture had been given by Professor Eleanor Searle of the University of California, Los Angeles, an Australian by birth. Her subject was "The last years of the Conqueror's Abbey at Battle", and the lecture was attended by 248 members and friends. On Sunday October 17th, the annual Commemoration Service was held in the parish church of St. Mary the Virgin. The Bishop of Chichester, the Very Rev. Dr. Roger Wilson, D.D., preached.

With this number of Transactions are included an index of the twenty numbers which have appeared to date and an up-to-date list of members. Pressure on space has precluded the publication of four interesting lectures, namely: "The North Sea and German Ocean 1914-18", given by Captain D. P. Cather, R.N. (Retd) on October 30th, 1970; "The Amsterdam", given by Mr. J. Manwaring Baines, B.Sc., F.S.A., on January 15th, 1971; "The Turnpike System in Sussex", given by Mr. B. Austin, B.A., on February 12th, 1971; and "Brightling and the Hundred of Netherfield", given by Mr. B. French, F.A.I., on March 12th, 1971.

In No. 4 Newsletter of the Sussex Archaeological Society the editor of that publication saw fit to criticise the policy and layout of our Transactions, and the allocation of funds to finance it. Believing that what has pleased our members for 21 years is in no need of reform on the advice of another society, and that we are quite capable of managing our own affairs, a suitable letter from this Society has been addressed to the S.A.S.

With this number of Transactions, the eighteenth which he has edited, the Editor lays down his pen. We are pleased to record that Miss P. Ireland has expressed her willingness to take over the editorship, and is already gathering material for No. 21.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POST, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BATTLE

The lecturer began by quoting from the 3rd and 8th chapters of the Book of Esther, where a description is given of a post service established over the whole of the Persian Empire from India to Ethiopia by King Ahasuerus, better known as Xerxes, about B.C. 530. Even before that, he said, there were posts for royal letters in the ancient empires of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia. He then showed slides of Egyptian letters written on papyrus about B.C. 2,000, and Assyrian clay tablets and letters written on leather and wood from the Khotan district of Chinese Turkestan.

The Roman postal service was called the *Cursus Publicus,* operating through a series of relay stations where riding or draught horses were exchanged.

Henry I (Beauclerk) employed Cursores to carry the King's despatches; Henry III gave them their first uniform; Henry IV began the postboy system, with relays of horses kept about 20 miles apart; and Henry VIII made Sir Brian Tuke the Master of the King's Post with an annual salary of L 66-13-4. In the post-Reformation time of Elizabeth I the post was restricted mainly to royal letters, and private letters were subject to censorship. In 1603 two posts were introduced—Packet Post and Through Post. The former was a royal post: each packet was separately accounted for, and both messengers and horses were changed at each stage. Private letters were sent by Through Post, and the messenger carried them the whole distance, changing horses at each stage. This Packet or Crown Post cost Charles I so much (L 3,400 a year) that he made it a public post. His Chief Postmaster, Thomas Witherings, set up a system along the six main roads from London, namely to Edinburgh, Yarmouth, Dover, Plymouth, Bristol, and Chester, and these main roads were served by branch roads. The first Post Office Act was passed by Cromwell, and the appointment of Postmaster-General was farmed out. At the Restoration, Henry Bishop, a Sussex man, paid L 2,500 a year for the appointment. He invented the "Bishop Mark", the first postmark. In 1680 William Dockwra started a penny post of his own for the city of London. He soon had five sorting offices and 500 receiving offices. He was taken to Court and fined; but when William and Mary came to the throne he was made Comptroller of the Penny Post and given a pension of L 500 a year.

In the 16th century Battle was served by horse from Rye, and Rye itself from London via Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, and Stonecrouch near Flimwell.. Previous to that, Rye had been

served from Dover. By 1800 Battle had become a Post Town serving Bexhill and Sedlescombe. A time bill for the post of 1797 is really identical with that of the Hastings Mail Coach, and the route from London was Bromley, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Lamberhurst, Battle, and on to Hastings; a distance of 65 miles with a time allowance of 12 hours. About that same period the east to west gap in Sussex was closed by extending the Lewes-Hailsham post to Gardner Street to meet the six days a week post which came there. This was the result of a petition from Lewes residents to Lord Gower and Auckland, the Postmaster General. In 1818 it was proposed to introduce a penny post instead of the fourpenny rate. Incidentally the old spelling "Battel" appears in *Cary's Itinerary* of 1821; but in *Paterson's Roads* of 1829 the spelling is "Battle". Mail Coach routes had begun by 1837. The St. Leonards coach left the Bolt-in-Ton, London, at 8 p.m. daily, passing through Battle at 3.11 a.m. The return coach left St. Leonards at 9.30 p.m., and passed through Battle at 10.56 p.m. In 1844 letters were postmarked at Battle with the number 54. Most types of business were transacted at Battle post office in 1844; and by 1909 full Post Office service was in operation.

The lecturer concluded by saying that a more serious study of Sussex postal history was, he felt, long overdue.

THE HISTORY OF ST. NICHOLAS PRIORY, EXETER

The story commences with a Saxon church of no very great size in the western part of the walled city of Exeter. It is dedicated to the Scandinavian hero-saint Olave or Olaf. Olaf Haraldson was born in 995, the son of a local chief who died during his childhood. In adolescence he engaged in Viking pirate expeditions, and employed his talents as a mercenary to Ethelred the Unready. He also visited Normandy and was there converted to Christianity. When opportunity offered he returned to Norway to claim his kingdom, and completed the introduction of Christianity. He brought priests from England, gave his church a legal constitution and placed it under the pastoral care of the Archbishop of Bremen. But he had enemies, and in 1028 they drove him out and he fled to Russia, but two years later attempted to return with a small force. On July 29th, 1030, he was defeated and killed, and his body buried by the river at Trondheim. But miracles began to take place at his grave, so he was exhumed and re-buried with honour. A church for his shrine was later built over the spot of his original grave, and its successor is Trondheim

Cathedral. His fame spread throughout Europe as a saint and churches were dedicated to him. There is one in York, another in Chichester, now the S.P.C.K. bookshop. Stowe lists four in London; that in Hart Street, best known as the burial place of Samuel and Elizabeth Pepys, another in Old Jewry, a third in Silver Street Aldersgate Ward, and the fourth in Bridge Ward Without, Southwark. It was here in later years that William the Conqueror gave the Abbot of Battle his London Inn or town house. Today, this ground is occupied by London Bridge Station. St. Olave's church had already degenerated to "Townlyes"—our Tooley Street—and an open watercourse flowed under a bridge which the Abbot had to keep in repair. Nothing now remains except the name "Battle Bridge Lane". Hay's Wharf now occupies the site of the church of St. Olave.

It might appear strange that this Viking warrior-saint, whose links would seem to be with the North Sea, the Thames, and the Humber, should be found in Exeter; but vast estates in Devonshire were held by the family of Earl Godwin. Godwin's countess was a sister of Earl Ulf, who was married to Estrith the sister of Canute. After Canute became king the founding of this Exeter church might have been at his instigation, which would date it to before his death in 1036. Earl Godwin died in 1053, and it has been stated that his widow gave to St. Olave's church in Exeter the income from her manor at Sherford. St. Olave's had other endowments, but none is specified in Domesday, and they must be assumed to be lands which were given to Battle Abbey. When William was obliged to lay siege to the rebellious city of Exeter in 1068 he gave clemency to the citizens, but the ascendancy of the House of Godwin was over, and the church which they had patronised was abandoned.

The History of Battle Abbey now takes up the narrative, listing the gifts by the founder, King William; among them two estates in Devonshire—the King's own church in the town of Cullompton with its prebends, namely Upton Weaver, Colebrook, Henland and Ash, also the church of St. Olave in Exeter with land called Sherford and Kenbury, and other lands and tithes belonging to it. These remote and valuable gifts to Battle Abbey had to be brought under control. A monk named Gunter was chosen, energetic and with administrative ability, and was sent to Devon to get the property organised and the income from it secured. This he quickly accomplished and was then recalled. After his return two monks were sent, Cono and Robert, the former full of initiative and very businesslike. Gunter's arrangements were operating satisfactorily and St. Olave's enshrined relics working their effects, with the consequent inflow of oblations. He obtained permission from King William I and commenced building a fresh church dedicated to St. Nicholas, and with it

a monastery. A charter of William II stated that the church was under construction by Battle monks, when he declared that it should be as privileged and free as his father had made Battle from all earthly service; and this was confirmed by subsequent royal charters. Something of a thorn to plant in the flesh of the very independent capital city of the west. A small colony was sent out from Battle and the regular monastic life implanted with Cono as the first Prior. The Battle Abbey bestowed on its daughter-cell the valuable royal gift of Cullompton. If the Prior of St. Nicholas was in any difficulty he had only to call on the Abbot of Battle for assistance, who had the ear of the king and access to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Pope. During the rule of Abbot Henry (1096-1102) Bishop Osbern of Exeter tried to prevent the monks from ringing their bells. Archbishop Anselm's help was enlisted and he wrote to the bishop in rebuke, and that the monks should ring their bells whenever they liked. Abbot Henry and the monks of Battle also had to act on behalf of St. Nicholas when the cathedral canons claimed exclusive rights to all burials in the city, and disputed that the monks should have their own cemetery; in this instance they appealed to the Pope, who wrote to Bishop Osbern forbidding him to interfere with the monks, who might bury their own dead in their own precincts. And in the last quarter of the 12th century, when priory land was being alienated, the grant was made not by the Prior of St. Nicholas but by Odo, Abbot of Battle. Further gifts began to be made to the new religious foundation, and King Henry I is the donor of land in the city and outside the walls, and at Rolleston, which was rented of him for twenty-five shillings a year by one Harold of Exeter, and was known as "Harold's Fee" (no connection with Harold Godwinson). This holding became known as St. Nicholas' Fee, and it carried privileges and liberties which were a bone of contention to the city authorities who went to considerable trouble to get hold of it after the Suppression, by which time its annual value was over L 20.

King John was a friend of the Benedictine Order, and he shows up in a very good light at Exeter, where there was famine and he ordered at his own charge sustenance for 300 poor people, appointing the Prior of St. Nicholas as one of his almoners for this benevolence. He was known to practise high personal standards, and the cleanliness of the monasteries suited him. In Sussex we know that a bath tub had to be provided for him when he visited Bamber Castle. He paid three visits to Exeter in 1201, 1204, and 1207, on the second and third staying overnight; it is tempting to think that he may have lodged at St. Nicholas. He gave the Priory his manor of Bradham.

Since before the Conquest the citizens of Exeter had enjoyed the right of a three-day Fair at Lammastide, held at Crulditch or Southernhay, which was a source of income from the tolls levied on stalls and merchandise and fines exacted from offenders. For some reason King John had deprived the city of these profits, which were collected for the Crown until he gave them to the Earl of Devon and St. Nicholas Priory jointly; in course of time the city recovered the Earl's share, but the Priory retained their's. Lammas Fair is still proclaimed by the Mayor at some public occasion at the Guildhall each July, but Southernhay is now very professional. King John further gave to St. Nicholas the right to have a fair on their feast day (December 6th), but it had to be held in their own precincts. A small chantry was instituted in 1295 charged on a tenement on St. David's Hill, to the north of the city, given by Richard de Nyweton to commemorate his father annually on September 15th with the office of *Dirige* and a solemn peal, for which each monk was to receive twelve pence and wine worth three half-pence. In 1467 Matilda, widow of Sir Hugh Courtenay, bequeathed property in Exeter to the Priory and directed that she should be buried in the Lady Chapel of the Priory church; where daily after Compline an office was to be said for her, in return for which the Prior was to receive three shilllings a year for himself, and each monk two shillings. St. Benedict's ruling that monks should have no property of their own no longer obtained.

St. Nicholas was supplied with water from its own sources from an early date; and about 1257 Martin Durling obtained leave for himself and his heirs to draw from the aqueduct in the Priory cemetery. In 1346 a grand scheme was introduced by the Dean and Chapter building an aqueduct to bring water from a spring on the property of their's outside the city's East Gate into the cathedral precinct, where it would be divided into three channels, one being taken by the Mayor and citizens, and another by the Prior and Convent of St. Nicholas, who each paid the cathedral authorities eight shillings a year for the service. On November 8th, 1400, the Priory seal was stolen from the Chapter House. In the centre was a building, on one side of which were the Royal Arms of three leopards, and, opposite, the erect sword and crown from the arms of Battle Abbey. A new seal was made, with a change in the building, the Royal Arms, and those of Battle Abbey entire. Impressions from both seals are attached to some of the city archives.

Exchanges of personnel are constant: men with Sussex and Kentish names and former obedientaries are found as Priors of Exeter; and Devonshire names are among the officials at Battle. Four Priors of Exeter became Abbots of Battle. The Act of February 1536 required the houses of monks, canons,

and nuns which had an annual income of L 200 or less to be suppressed. The cells of larger houses were reckoned as part of the mother house and so not affected by this Act. Exeter Priory was a dependant cell paying its subjection fee; the Prior was appointed by the Abbot of Battle and was removable by him. Legally it was exempt from the 1536 Act of Suppression, and yet it was suppressed. The last Prior was William Cullompton, appointed in 1523. In 1533 and the two following years ordinations were being held in the Priory church by William, Bishop of Hippo. Hippo was a purely nominal title, and Bishop William was, of course, Prior William Cullompton, consecrated to be suffragan to the Bishop of Exeter. On May 2nd, 1534, he was collated to a canonry and prebend of Exeter cathedral. Why he should have so readily surrendered his Priory when not required by law to do so is because he had made a friend of Thomas Cromwell. With such an ally it is hardly surprising that the last Prior received an annual pension of L 20, which was double that awarded two years later to the Prior of Battle. He lived until 1557, so he survived some upheavals of the Reformation. The estates of St. Nicholas Priory had been cut up and applied for piecemeal by various rising men suing for what they wanted.

Of the building of St. Nicholas only two ranges of the cloister survive. The medieval rebuilding of St. Olave's still stands on the north side of the main east-west thoroughfare of the city; the Priory church stood parallel with it to the north. We know that the church had a tower because of the trouble over the bells. The Chronicle of Battel Abbey tells us that before St. Nicholas, Exeter, was completed it was severely damaged by a fire in the city. The tower of the church fell in the early part of the 14th century; and from Lady Courtenay's will we know that there was a Lady Chapel. As at Battle, the western claustral range was spared destruction; part of the early Norman vaulted *Cellarium* survives, and over it is a large and lofty chamber with a tower projecting on the west which rises to a second floor, all of the 15th century. The large and lofty so-called guest hall echoes the magnificence of the Abbot's hall at Battle. In this fine chamber the Prior of Exeter could suitably have received the type of guest that at Battle the Abbot would be receiving in his hall; and when the Abbot came to Exeter on his visitation as head of the house, this hall would be his, of proportions fitting to his dignity, where he could lodge and transact whatever business awaited him in this dependent cell which he ruled through his Prior.

The kitchen survived and has been restored. It is placed at an angle of the west range and the Frater, so that it served the Prior's hall as well as the Refectory. This latter is still in existence, transformed into a private dwelling, sliced off from its adjoining kitchen, while a right of way passes between them.

In 1913 Sir Harold Breakspear was called in by the city to disentangle the remains of the west range from the secular ocupations that had invaded it since William Collompton gave up possession in 1536: he reported carefully on the fabric, and good work was done to salvage and restore the medieval appearance. Abbot Walter had rebuilt the cloister at Battle with marble pillars; and at the time of his death in 1171 work had commenced on a *lavatorium* of the same style and materials. Exeter Priory would doubtless want to have one similar. In June 1916 Breakspear exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries of London some bases and capitals of Purbeck Marble that had been excavated from the Priory, dateable to the late 12th century, and so fashioned that they were intended for a circular building, affording sufficient evidence for him to publish the plan of a laver of this type. He also urged strongly that the city should acquire the remainder of the building: but regrettably nothing was done. It is very much to be hoped that it will be possible for the city to purchase the surrounding property, preserving the original and demolishing the intrusive, and to lay out suitably the precincts this cell to the Royal Monastery of Battle; wherein for four and a half centuries men devoted their lives to the service and worship of Almighty God.

(A fuller version of Miss Ireland's lecture has been placed in the Society's library.)

NORMAN MONKS IN ENGLAND

In this nationally self-conscious age it may seem strange that monasteries in Normandy should have been able to enjoy status and properties in England for more than three hundred years. In the middle ages this was as much taken for granted, as the community of interests in the white commonwealth has been in ours. The Norman founders and benefactors of the Norman monasteries wished naturally to share the benefits they had received from the Conquest with the monks who prayed for them and their families in Normandy. Occasionally the monks were given gifts of money or money rents, and this could easily have become the usual form of English benefaction had it not seemed more desirable to involve the monks completely in interests of their patrons by grants of lands and churches. And certainly it proved more difficult to sever such connections later on, than it would have been to suspend payments of money rents. Hundreds of Norman monks were therefore obliged to visit England regularly, to stay for long periods and to fit into the patterns of English living, if their

monasteries were to derive any benefit from their endowments here. In this way they shared totally in the lives and concerns of those whose spiritual welfare they cared for and played their small part in showing how little the universal church was divided by political differences.

The monks' properties were never conveniently concentrated in one part of England, so that the obstacle of the channel crossing, which seems so important to some modern Englishmen and Frenchmen, was probably the least of their problems. The monks of Séez in southern Normandy had outposts as far away as Lancaster and Pembroke. Throughout the twelfth century travelling monks would of course always find many companions on their journeys, but when the political ties between England and Normany were broken by the French conquest of Normandy in 1204, the monks began to have difficulties of a different kind. From that time they came to depend much more closely upon the king's goodwill, for their numerous former patrons were not well placed to help. This is of course the period when growing royal power affected all landowners, even Englishmen, more than ever before, but the Norman monks had to reckon not only with the interference of royal bureaucrats, but the success or failure of the kings foreign policies. When the kings of England and France were at variance, the interests of the monks for peace and concord were carelessly brushed aside. Even when secular lords lost their lands on the other side of the channel however, the monks were allowed to keep theirs; though the loss of the goodwill they had been able to count on in England could be a serious check on their activities.

The English properties could be used in one of two ways. The abbot could either send across a small group of monks to establish a priory in England or he could send a monk (with one companion) to manage the estates and transmit the "profits" to Normandy. Most of the priories remained very small, though in some instances the acceptance of English recruits might ultimately so increase the size of the priory that it could become independent. This happened with Lessay's priory at Boxgrove. The fact that this was unusual suggests that there was never any serious effort made to encourage such a process. The alien priories were never very distinguished as religious houses and the abbots may have been unwilling to grant priors enough powers to keep their priories adequately disciplined, but they were probably normally satisfactory. A list of books from the priory of Carisbrooke (a dependency of Lire) shows that the monks read and wrote the typical theological works of the day. The monastery had no wish for the priory to become too independent of the abbot, but they had no desire for them to become ill-famed. On balance the monks

certainly preferred to do without priories as much as possible and instead to send over an agent to manage all the estates. The use of monk-bailiffs was well-established by the twelfth century and some of them acquired titles like the bailiffs of Warminghurst and Atherington. The longer he served in England the more useful he could be, provided he remained loyal. He was a man of affairs, busy and restless and his religious companion was an encumbrance some bailiffs tried to do without. But it was not necessarily because the monk-bailiff wanted to rid himself of a chaperone.

His business interests could be very valuable. The bailiff of Atherington managed properties four times more valuable to his monastery at Séez than the same monastery's assets in the priory at Arundel. Though it sounds as though he had a headquarters at Atherington, in fact he was always on the move, visiting the estates, attending religious patrons, consulting legal advisers, visiting friendly clergy and pursuing legal business in the courts of the church, the shire and the king. The properties themselves were extremely miscellaneous in character; if rights were not to be usurped, the dues had to be collected regularly. Much revenue was tied up in church lands and tithes which involved inevitable disputes about collection and division of the revenues between the monks and the parson, even when the latter was nominated by the monks. Such disputes would also involve the neighbours, the gentry and the diocesan officials; problems that were by no means peculiar to the alien monks. Like others they had simply to learn how to get on with their neighbours. There is a letter from a monk of Winchester Cathedral to the abbot of St. Saveur reporting the good opinion one Norman monk had won in Hampshire. Good relations with the diocesan clergy were the reason for the conversion of some churches into cathedral prebends; as members of the cathedral chapter the monks could anticipate some collective support. The monks of Grestain established such a prebend for Wilmington at Chichester. They also needed to deal tactfully with the gentry, acceding to their requests for additional religious services and commending new agents and priors to their benevolence. In the late fourteenth century such men tried to defend their local aliens against the demands made by greedy royal favourites and must have alleviated the hardships that wartime brought to them increasingly.

When the war with France broke out in 1337 the monks continued to live in England, though their contacts with Normandy were interrupted and their dues paid to the king, not to the abbot. No attempt was made to confiscate their property. In 1360 when peace was proclaimed the old position was restored. The abbess of Caen came over for a long stay

at this time and renewed acquaintance with her tenants in Essex and in Wiltshire. However, when the war began again in 1369 the relationship with England was poisoned, because the English did not retain their equanimity in the face of the disasters they suffered in the late phases of the war. Money for the war was seized everywhere on the flimsiest excuses and the alien monks were too weak and vulnerable to protest loudly enough. There is no need to explain this as xenophobia. The government was in the hands of corruptible and grasping royal servants and kinsmen; the schism in the church prevented the Pope from helping them. The properties of the aliens could easily be grasped with impunity. Monks were exiled; some monasteries offered to sell their rights to the men invested by the government with their estates. Over the years the Norman monks lost their property. Parliament confiscated their estates, which passed ultimately by royal benefaction to new religious and educational foundations, though in individual instances some monasteries somehow managed to hang on for a while. The original introduction of the Norman monks to England had been one of the consequences of the Norman Conquest; but when the King of England could no longer personally guarantee his support, the monks lost their estates. The fortunes of the Norman monks in this long period provide their own oblique commentary on the history of England.

D.J.A.M.

SCIENTIFIC AIDS TO THE STUDY OF HISTORY

The lecturer began by remarking that this subject covered a very wide field; he proposed to concentrate on only one furrow—how to date relics of the past.

Archaeology without dates is like a train timetable without times. Up to 20 years ago relics were dated relatively to one another. Is A older than B? Meeting a mother and daughter today one could reasonably infer that the mother was at least 20 years the older. But progress and time are narrowing the gap, so that the next generation will probably infer that the mother is at least 15 years older. However, in the last 20 years there has been a remarkable advance in dating relics by the use of scientific methods.

The lecturer then put the various methods used into the context of one notorious—and reasonably "local"—fraud; to show how the two "Piltdown Men" were exposed at forgeries. Relating the story of the initial "discovery" of the Piltdown Man, he said that in December 1912 Charles Dawson, a respected solicitor of Uckfield and Lewes, and a reputable amateur geologist and archaeologist, found a skull, jawbone,

and other fragments in a gravel bed at Piltdown. In August 1913 at the same spot he found a fossilised tooth; and in 1914 he unearthed there a piece of fossilised elephant bone. In 1915, two miles away in Sheffield Park, he disinterred a fragmentary skull and a hippopotamus tooth. Dawson died in Lewes in September 1916. His "finds" have been described as "the first recorded Englishman".

Such were the clues, and the lecturer then proceeded to unravel the mystery. Although from the start there were misgivings on both geological and anatomical grounds, yet in 1948 Sir Arthur Keith could write "The Piltdown enigma is still far from a final solution". But by 1955 a final verdict was reached by Dr. Oakley who reported "Of 18 specimens of fossil mammals recorded from Piltdown by Dawson, ten are certainly frauds and the rest are highly dubious". What were the scientific advances that changed the "Not Proven" verdict of 1948 to that of "Guilty" in 1955?

There are three tests of relatively dating whether A is older than B:

1. FLUORINE TEST. Bones which lie in water absorb from it minute quantities of fluorine. In 1949, and again in 1953, the jawbone was subjected to this test, and showed both times that, as an antique, it was a fake; as its proportion of fluorine content was just the same as in fresh bone—3 parts in 10,000.

2. URANIUM TEST. Here there is a similar though slower build-up of uranium and its compounds in waterlogged bones. In 1955 Professor C. F. Davidson, of the Atomic Energy Division of the Geological Survey, applied this test to the suspected clues. In fresh bones there is normally no trace of uranium. Professor Davidson's results showed:

Fresh Bone	No Trace
Suspect Jawbone	No Trace
Suspect Skull	3
Hippopotamus Tooth	610

so leading to his conclusion that the tooth must have been imported from an area abroad, rich in uranium, and subsequently reburied at Piltdown.

3. NITROGEN TEST. In this case the nitrogen content decreases as organic matter decays, so that this test introduces a scissors effect with the fluorine and uranium tests. In 1953 Mrs. Foster of the British Museum Department of Mineralogy applied this test to the suspected relics with these results:

Fresh Bone	4%
Suspect Jawbone	4%
Suspect Skull	1.4%
Hippopotamus Tooth	None.

Obviously then these three tests all give the same conclusion —that the jawbone was not an antique and had nothing to do with the skull; and that the hippopotamus tooth was a genuine antique but was a plant.

Mr. Palmer then continued by discussing the use of more modern methods to establish absolute dating, as distinct from the older relative dating. It is of course generally known that counting the "rings" in a tree trunk will give its age, and so make the "rings" the tree's birth certificate. There are now tests from which we can recover, with anything that once was living, its death certificate.

The first, and the more generally known, test is the "radio-active carbon" content in the relic. Its basis is that all living matter contains a minute but constant proportion of carbon 14 (C^{14}) which is radio-active. Upon death this content begins to decay, and each year loses a constant fraction (i.e., half, quarter, tenth or what have you) of its level at the beginning of that year. This "decay", on a graph, would produce an "Exponential Curve", which means simply that it never reaches exactly zero but goes on and on to infinity. This gives rise to the use by scientists of the expression "Half Life", which indeed would be more correctly expressed by the term "Half Decay". With C^{14} "Half Life" is at 5,570 years.

The Piltdown jawbone, the lecturer said, was subjected to a C^{14} test in 1949 which disclosed an age of only 300 years. A "spectroscope" test on it showed chromium to be present, which of course had no business to be there. It had in fact been used to stain the jawbone to give it the look of an antique.

Finally the latest test was mentioned—"Thermoluminescence". Its basis is the simple fact that many minerals and ceramics glow when strongly heated. This has been known for 50 years or more as a pleasing display but it has been used only in the last ten years as a means of dating sherds of ancient pottery. Even so there is still some doubt as to the reliability of conclusions drawn from it. The theory is that all clays contain very minute amounts of radio-active impurities. After the pot has been fired, these impurities begin to decay, emitting Alpha particles which cause ionisation in the structure of the pot. Thus in theory the older the pot the more radio-active decay there has been and the greater the ionisation. Rapid heating converts this ionisation into a glow, the "Light" output of which can be measured. It is established that the temperature of the brightest glow is related to the age of the pot. The higher the maximum glow temperature, the older the pot, as ionisation has been going on for a longer period.

TURNPIKES, TOLLGATES, AND TOLL HOUSES IN AND AROUND BATTLE

In the first half of the 18th century the roads around Battle must have been typical of those in Sussex generally. Much has been written in a derogatory manner by travellers who have recorded that the roads in Sussex must be the worst in the country. It is recorded that in 1703 Charles, King of Spain, riding in a coach, was six hours travelling the last nine miles on a visit to Petworth House. Daniel Defoe, who died in 1731, wrote "I have seen one tree on a carriage drawn by 22 oxen. Sometimes the whole summer is not dry enough to make the roads passable and it takes two years to get timber to Chatham". It was to improve the state of these roads that the Tudor Highway law was passed. Once a year every common labourer had to give six days' forced labour to help repair the roads in his district. Landowners and farmers were penalised if their men did not perform this duty; but the men worked unwillingly and the work was skimped.

In 1752 an Act was passed for repairing the road from Malling Street, Lewes to Broil Park Gate, just north of Ringmer. A year later one for repairing and widening the road from Flimwell via Hurst Green, Robertsbridge, Whatlington, Battle, The Ridge, Ore and Old Hastings. This Act saw the introduction of turnpikes around Battle; one opposite Gate Farm on the Whatlington road, another at Lower Lake, and a side gate at the beginning of Marley Lane. Turnpikes were so named because their construction was a row of pikes across the road, which turned on a pivot after payment of toll. They and their attendant keeper were hated and depised. Later, gates were substituted, and "Turnpike" became the name for the road itself. In 1788 the Marley Lane gate and one at John's Cross were discontinued because of low receipts. The first reference to a coach from Hastings to London was in 1745. It left Hastings at 4 a.m. on Mondays, and only reached Robertsbridge the same day. It got to Sevenoaks the next day, and London on the third day. It returned to Hastings on the three following days. Road improvements at that date consisted only of putting stone or beach on existing surfaces. For real road making the county had to wait for Thomas Telford in 1806 and John Macadam in 1817. In 1762 an Act was introduced for widening the road from Flimwell to Rye. It was described as very ruinous and bad, almost impossible in winter, and dangerous because of its narrowness. The Act provided for no less than six turnpikes on it. The tolls laid down in this act were: 6 horse vehicles 1/-, 4 horse 9d, 3 or 2 horse 6d, 1 horse 3d. Two oxen were equivalent to

one horse. Waggons were cheaper than carriages; 4 or more horses 6d; 3 or 2, 4d; 1, 2d. Single horses were 1d; mules or asses ½d; a drove of oxen 5d a score; calves, hogs or sheep 2d a score.

The next stage in improving the roads round Battle came in 1766, with the introduction of an Act authorising a Trust to amend the road from Broil Park Gate to Battle. This road led via Watch Oak along the still existing track behind Wellington Gardens, now known as Chain Lane, along North Trade Road to Catsfield, thence to Ninfield and Boreham Bridge, and following the road, more or less as it is today to Ringmer. It was inserted in this Act that no gates should be erected within half a mile of the Brightling-Battle road; which accounts for the position of the toll cottage where it still stands on the North Trade Road. Chain Lane, already mentioned, is still an unmade road, and gives a very good idea of what the roads were like after Trusts had carried out improvements to the muddy surface. The next Trust authorised was in 1771 to improve the Vinehall-Rye road. This Act also referred to improvements to the Cripps Corner-Beckley road via Staplecross. The Account Book for 1796 shows the carrying of beach for the Hastings-Battle section, and cinders (iron slag) for the Robertsbridge-Flimwell section of that turnpike. Of the latter, 609 loads at 2d a load came from Footlands Farm, the Roman iron site. Takings at gates on the Broil Park Gate-Battle road in 1797 were: Ninfield L 43-10-0, Boreham L 48, Laughton L 53, for six months, North Trade Road L 30-4-8½ for eight months, and Amberstone L 16 for three months. The parishes' responsibility for road maintainance in lieu of labour was called "composition". Battle's contribution was L 2-14-6 for 1 mile 3 quarters 24 rods. Account books also show penalties for evading tolls; thus George Levell was find L 1 in the 1795/6 account for "passing through a private way to evade payment of the toll". Revenue on the Flimwell turnpike rose from L 1,000 per annum in 1785 to L 1,602 in 1798/9. In the latter year expenses had risen from an average of about L 750 to L 1,286. In 1799/1800 the Postmaster-General indicted the road in the parishes of Whatlington, Mountfield and Salehurst, incurring a Bill of Costs: Post Office contractors blamed the state of the Hastings-London road for lateness of mails. Toll houses and milestones had to be erected in compliance with the original Acts; and on the road from Flimwell to Rye nearly all the latter remain—a cast iron plate on a massive stone. Those in the Uckfield area bear the Pelham buckle and Bow bells, signifying that the distance was measured to London.

In 1801 another Act was passed to amend and widen the two roads from Staplecross; one via Hornscross and Northiam

to the Flimwell-Rye turnpike road; and the other via Bodiam and Salehurst to the Flimwell-Hastings turnpike road at Silverhill (Robertsbridge). Further bars, gates, or turnpikes were allowed on these roads. Around Battle at the turn of the century there were 31 main toll gates, several side gates, and the Turnpike Trustees controlled close on 100 miles of road. Travelling was becoming a very expensive item in one's budget.

In 1813 an Act was passed authorising roads from Beech Down, near Battle, to Heathfield, and from Robertsbridge to Hoods Corner. The Trustees raised mortgages to the value of L 4,550 at 5 per cent. The route from Beech Down lay along an existing lane and path to a point near the Gun Inn at Netherfield; thence along an existing road to Hood's Corner, and so on approximately in the line of the old road to Cade Street, joining the Lewes-Burwash road at Heathfield. A branch from Hood's Corner used the existing road through Brightling to Oxleys Green and Cold Harbour, joining the Flimwell-Hasting Turnpike south of Robertsbridge. At a meeting on May 28th, 1813, the Trustees resolved that the bed of the road should be 22 feet at the bottom, and the crown of the road 11 feet wide, that the centre of the road should be 18 inches from the bottom (?) of the water table, before being gravelled to a depth of nine inches. Mr. James Putland proposed to complete the whole of this road for L 210 per mile by August 2nd, 1814. On July 14th the Surveyor reported that he had completed it, and the Trustees resolved to pay his bill of L 3,302-11-1½ and take over the road. A Mr. James Lansdell of Battle tendered to build toll houses at Netherfield Gun Inn, Hoods Corner, Cade Street, and Cold Harbour, Salehurst, for L 400. He was later paid L 406-15-6. The salary of Toll Collectors was fixed at 7/- a week with a rent-free toll house. The road had been in use for a few weeks only when it was reported to the meeting of the Trustees that owing to the extremely bad state of the road in many parts, no more money should be advanced until the next General Meeting, or until certain parts of the road were made passable for the winter. On March 27th, 1817, an order was made to move the Netherfield Gun Inn gate 100 yards to the south-east. On November 25th, Mr. Tilden Smith was paid L 30 for carrying this out. It has now become the practice to let tollgates to the highest bidder.

In 1815 the Netherfield Gate was let to Mr. Woodiwiss for L 81, Cade Street Gate to Mr. Goldsmith for L 120, Hood's Corner Gate to Mr. Randall for L 139, and Cold Harbour Gate to Mr. Phillips for L 104. Tolls were rented to people in all manner of professions, who had to enter into a bond and give surety of others against payment of the rent. It is

interesting to note that payment of rent in advance for the full twelve months in cash was subject to a discount which varied between two and five per cent, there appearing to be no set rate. It was necessary to resort to Courts of Law to interpret the finer points of this Act; and in one case, held on March 21st, 1817, in the King's Bench it was decided that carriages laden with manure and passing on a turnpike road which led to the land of the farmer concerned were exempt from toll. In the case of Gray v. Shilling at the Court of Common Pleas in 1820, the plaintiff, who owned two coaches, claimed that he had paid toll for some horses drawing one coach to Rye, and that on their return with the other coach on the same day another toll had been demanded. The question was whether it was the coach or the horses which were subject to toll. The judge decided it was the horses, and found for the plaintiff.

The Laughton Turnpike Act was now drawing to a close, and in 1821 a new Act was passed. Two years later a new Act was passed relating to the Staplecross-Northiam-Silverhill (Robertsbridge) road. By this time the roads were in a reasonable state of repair, and new roads were being made to the specifications of Thomas Telford and John Macadam. Macadam was appointed Surveyor of the Sussex Turnpike Trusts, but not in the Battle area. William Cobbett in "Rural Rides" gives a good account of the roads in the 1820s. In the "Times" of that period a letter from "A Commercial Traveller" stated that in many places the gates cost from 5/- to 7/- for less than 30 miles; and that at Robertsbridge there were three fourpenny gates within half a mile. By 1815 the London-Hastings coach service had much improved: there being a daily service (Sundays excepted), and the journey was performed in one day. The coach was called "The Diligence"; and it was frequently impeded by the overflow of the Rother at Robertsbridge, and sometimes it even floated.

After the founding of St. Leonards in 1828 by James Burton, a new road was cut northward from it to join the existing road to Silverhill and The Ridge; so that the detour via Hastings and Ore was no longer necessary. An Act which received Royal Assent on May 19th, 1836, authorised a turnpike from Beauport Park to Hastings. It is now the road through Hollington, Bohemia Road, and Cambridge Road. The London coach journey was thereby shortened by two miles. At the same time another Act provided for a road from St. Leonards to the Royal Oak Whatlington, with a branch through Sedlescombe to Cripps' Corner. The making of this road was a large undertaking involving the construction of a complete new road over most of its length, cutting through the top of the Baldslow Ridge, and building an arch to carry

the London-Ore road over it. (The latter was demolished and replaced in 1971.) By this Act the John's Cross-Battle portion of the Flimwell-Hastings road was abandoned as a turnpike, and Battle had been bye-passed. The Turnpike Trustees, however, had to keep the old road in repair. Battle did not like being deprived of the London coaches, so in 1838 an Act was passed providing for a completely new road straight from Watch Oak to John's Cross. Mechanically-propelled vehicles are mentioned in the Act of 1836: they had to pay a toll of five shillings, whereas the toll for a horsed vehicle was only sixpence, and they could not reurn through a gate free of charge.

It was intended that the road between Hollington and The Harrow should go along what is now Beauharrow Road; but the Trustees of the Eversfield Estate objected, so the junction with the Ridge road was made at Beauport. The cost of the whole road, including cost of litigation, was about L 10,750, which left about L 2,400 to be met by mortgaging tolls. Costs were rising, and it now cost L 134 to build a toll house. In October 1838 Sir Charles Lamb of Beauport served notices of actions for Trespass and Ejectment on the Trustees, of whom he himself was one! He ordered fences to be put across the road and claimed to recover possession of his land. However, the road was opened; but two years later Sir Charles claimed L 65 with interest per acre for the land. This was settled on December 4th, 1840, and cost the Trustees L 267-8-6. The Trustees' minutes for March 1840 record: "On the night of 6th December last, an attempt at robbery was made at the Tivoli Toll House, for which John Wood was convicted at the Assizes and transported for 15 years".

In 1837 the line of the North Trade Road was altered to what we now know along the side of the recreation ground, in order to reduce the stiff gradient into Battle. The ground was purchased from Sir Godfrey Webster for L 124-16-10, and the old section of road sold for L 20. Lavender Cottage now stands on a section of the displaced road.

In 1841 an Act was passed for a turnpike road from Cripps' Corner to Hawkhurst.

Iron cinder from Roman bloomeries was used as road metalling. A heap 30 feet high at Oaklands provided thousands of tons for the Harrow-Whatlington road. Even after 1870, 2,000 to 3,000 cubic yards of cinder were taken from Beauport Park bloomery annually for the roads. The original heap at Beauport Park rose to 50 feet and covered two acres. When this was exhausted, Martello Towers were bought and demolished. The Battle-John's Cross road was metalled from quarries at Hastings, Hollington, Watch Oak, Le Rette Farm, Salehurst, and Ticehurst.

In 1839 the mortgage and debts of the Turnpike Trust stood at L 27,197-7-0, of which the Battle-John's Cross road accounted for L 3,292-17-5.

During 1842-3 the Laughton turnpike was improved by bye-passing the hill at Magham Down at a cost of L 865-6-3. The new roads of that period are characterised by their straightness.

In 1841 a request was made to the Trustees to reduce the toll on the Tivoli gate at Hollington, and to let the gates by auction. Mr. Ticehurst, a mortgage creditor, took possession of the Tivoli gate and tolls. He was still the "mortgagee in possession" in 1845, in spite of an action to eject him.

In 1843 the Hoods Corner Trustees stated that 11/- a week was a sufficient wage for a roadman.

The opening of the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway led to reduction in traffic and loss of tolls. A new tollgate was erected at Hollington Lane to catch the traffic from inland to Bopeep station. Toll evasion was also taking place at Cade Street, where Mr. Kemp was allowing people as well as his own farm waggons to pass through his field behind the toll house. He agreed to pass through the tollgate and lock his own gate and to pay 5/- a quarter.

Virgins Lane gate at Battle was built in September 1838 at a cost of L 140, and the first quarter's rent was L 58-15-0.

The run down of the Trusts began in 1871, when the Laughton Trust was wound up. The last tolls were collected on November 1st, and on the 5th the gate was burnt on a bonfire. In 1874 the Hoods Corner Trust was wound up and four toll houses sold for L 135. 1875 saw the cessation of the Hollington and Sedlescombe trusts and the final removal of tollgates in Hastings. The Flimwell Trust was wound up in 1880, by which time the turnpike system throughout the county had reached its termination, and road upkeep was taken over by local Highway Boards.

(Note: The above article has been extracted from Mr. Upton's complete paper which has been deposited in the Society's library. Ed.)

MY SUSSEX SCRAPBOOK

The lecturer, who was giving his nineteenth or twentieth lecture to the Society, wandered about the county in an inconsequential way, stopping anywhere in his quest for objects or places of interest. In the course of over half a century of exploration in Sussex, one characteristic had impressed itself on him as the years went by, namely that wherever you travel in our county, and whenever you stop, it will not be long

before you come across something worthy of note, historically or folkwise. His lecture, one of a series, called collectively "My Sussex Scrapbook", consisted of describing such objects with the help of some of the 300 slides which he has amassed.

Among others, the following were shown on the screen and described:

Saddlestones, showing a barn at Terwick mounted on them.

Some Sussex lychgates, including the beautiful Pulborough example.

The satyrs outside the Bull Inn, Lewes.

The extraordinary story associated with the inn sign at East Preston, the Roundstone.

The iron tombstones in Wadhurst church.

The Solomon's Knot, carved on the north pier of the chancel arch at Selham church.

The leaden fonts at Pycombe, Edburton, and Parham.

Follies, such as the "ruin" at Uppark, and Racton Tower.

"Bevis Thumb", the long barrow in West Sussex.

The Long Man of Wilmington.

The Shipley Mill, now a Belloc memorial.

The painted wall-panels in Berwick church.

The "Hollow Ways" of Sussex, showing one near Udimore.

The old Town Wall in Westgate, Lewes.

Tapsel gates, showing the example at Coombes.

An excellent example of a lowside door at West Stoke.

Some quaint inn-signs, including the "Labour in Vain" at Westergate, the "Dew Drop" inn at Wick, and the "Three Moles" at Selham.

The finely-shaped brickwork at Rye's old Grammar School.

The foundation stone of Cogidubnus' temple to Neptune and Minerva at Chichester.

The wonderful view of the forests of North Sussex from West Hoathly churchyard.

VISIT TO LEWES

This visit was attended by 39 members who were conducted over the Castle, Museum, and St. Pancras Priory. The Vicar of the church of St. John the Baptist then showed members round the church and the tomb of Gundrada, wife of De Warenne. The previous visit of the Society to all these places, with descriptions, appeared in "Transactions" for 1953-54.

VISIT TO SISSINGHURST CASTLE

This visit repeated that of July 7th, 1954. Thirty-five members attended. Of the original castle, built in the 16th century by the Tudor Chancellor Sir Richard Baker, only the gateway and one side of the quadrangle remain; and of this, converted in recent times to a modern residence, only the Library is shown. The castle is noted today for its garden, to see which the visit was planned.

THE LOST RIVER

On Thursday, July 15th, a party of 38 members set out to find "The Lost River", which had been the subject of a lecture the previous winter by Mr. W. J. C. Murray of Horam. The river referred to was found to be the Cuckmere River, where the Eastbourne Water Company had built a reservoir in the big bend south and west of Arlington. Mr. Murray met the party and took them round the reservoir and pumping station. The party then proceeded to Arlington Church. **Arlington Church,** dedicated to St. Pancras the 14 year old Roman boy who was martyred in A.D. 304, is interesting from the fact that it occupies the site of very much earlier buildings. A prehistoric urn has been found on the site, and there are indications that a grove led from it to the Long Man of Wilmington. Fragments of pottery and bricks found beneath the name indicate Roman work. The next remains are those of a Saxon church indicated by a small window and long and short quoins; to which an early Norman chapel was added on the north, containing four coffin slabs with crosses. The present church, erected, apparently, after a disastrous fire, is Transitional in architecture with two perpendicular windows. The whole church presents a complete history from the earliest time of Christianity in England.

VISIT TO BERWICK AND ALCISTON

Fourteen members attended this meeting. Of Berwick church there is a full description in "Transactions" No. 12, and of Alciston church and tithe barn in "Transactions" No. 15 (1965-66).

GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL AND POLESDEN LACEY

Twenty-six members attended this meeting. Tea was taken at the Waterfall Tearooms, Dorking.

The Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Guildford, was first visited. The only Anglican cathedrals to be built on new sites since medieval times are Liverpool and Guildford. In 1932 an open competition was held for the design. It was won by

Mr., now Sir Edward, Maufe from 183 competitors, and he was appointed architect. In 1936 Dr. Cosmo Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury, laid the foundation stone. Between 1939 and 1952, building was stopped by the war. On May 17th, 1961, the Right Reverend George Reindorp, the fifth Bishop of Guildford, consecrated the almost completed cathedral in the presence of H.M. The Queen and H.R.H. Prince Philip.

Built on Stag Hill on the western side of the River Wey and just outside the town, the cathedral, 365 feet long, is of the same dimensions as that of Lichfield, but has one-third more internal space, its seating capacity being 1,750. The three pairs of bronze doors on the west front, given by the Pilgrim Trust, have angels engraved on their thick plate glass. The great vaulted nave, 41 feet wide, is 10 feet wider than almost all other English cathedrals, with seven arches on each side. In the north transept three wrought iron gateways lead to the chapel of the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment, above which is the four manual organ given by the Colthurst Trust. One window contains the arms of the craft livery companies who gave their support, and in others are portrayed the symbols of the professional bodies which gave them.

Stained glass windows in the chancel were given by Charterhouse School and the High Sheriffs of Surrey, Moira Forsyth and Rosemary Rutherford being the designers. The west windows were given by the Freemasons of Surrey. The cathedral contains very many other gifts from societies, schools, and other bodies. In the words of the architect's competition report," The ideal has been to produce a design, definitely of our own time, yet in the line of the great English cathedrals".

Polesden Lacey is situated 5 miles from Dorking, 5½ miles from Leatherhead, and 1½ miles from Great Bookham, Surrey. Before the latter part of the 18th century it was known simply as Polesden. It has had many owners. In 1470 the manor was sold by the ancient Surrey family of Slyfield. In 1650 Anthony Rous built a Carolean house which stood to the second decade of the 19th century. In 1796 the property was bought by Richard Brinsley Sheridan the dramatist. He found the house in a dilapidated condition; but his plans to rebuild it came to nothing. He did, however, extend the terrace, begun in 1761, which forms such an impressive feature. In 1818 Sheridan sold the property with 318 acres for L 10,000 to Joseph Bonsor, who pulled down the house and built a Regency village in its place between 1822 and 1825. The present mansion is a pleasant building of two storeys, surrounding an open courtyard, without architectural pretensions.

The south front with its fine Ionic colonnade is much as it was when first erected. Joseph Bonsor's Doric portico has been taken down and a new entrance built. Polesden Lacey was acquired in 1906 by Captain the Hon. Ronald Greville, who died two years later. His widow, a well-known hostess, lent the house in 1923 to the Duke and Duchess of York (afterwards King George VI and Queen Elizabeth) for part of their honeymoon. When Mrs. Greville died in 1942 she bequeathed Polesden Lacey to the National Trust with 1,000 acres and her collection of pictures and other works of art, the nucleus of which she had inherited from her father, William McEwan, sometime M.P. for Edinburgh, and to which she had added during her lifetime. Included in the collection are pictures by Lely, Raeburn, Reynolds, Lawrence, and Ruysdael. Other exhibits include French furniture of the Louis XV and XVI period, Dresden china, and Chinese porcelain of the 17th and 18th centuries.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BATTLE

The Town of BATTLE was conceived sometime in the early hours of October 14th, 1066, when WILLIAM, Duke of Normandy, was preparing for the battle to be fought against HAROLD, King of England, at SENLAC on that day. A battle which was one of the most momentous in its consequences in the history of this country. What led to the vow then made by William is recorded in great detail in Lower's translation of "The Chronicle of Battel Abbey" (c. 1180). ". . . I make a Vow, that upon this place of battle I will found a suitable free Monastery, for the salvation of you all and especially for those who fall . . ."

Thus was BATTLE conceived, but probably was not born until the Spring of 1067 when William, who had been crowned King of England in Westminster Abbey on December 25th, 1066, "grew angry"—that is, at the delay in fulfilling his vow —"and commanded them with all haste to lay the foundations of the Temple on the very place where he had achieved the victory over his enemy". Hence the foundations of BATTLE ABBEY were at last laid, and in accordance with the Conqueror's specific orders, the High Altar of the Abbey Church was erected upon the very spot where King Harold's Standard had been flown during the battle. William, however, was not to see it completed for he died on September 9th, 1087, eight years before its Dedication on February 3rd, 1095, at which William II was present.

The building of this Royal Monastery clearly required the employment, the experience, and the skill of a large number of craftsmen and labourers, all of whom would need accommodation nearby, where none at all existed. Thus was born the Town of BATTLE, which still nestles close to the "Ecclesia Sancti Martini de BELLO", as early Royal Charters of William and succeeding Norman Kings of England name the "Abbey of St. Martin of Battell".

Thus too did the new town derive its name—"Bellum" in the charters; "La Batailye" (11th Century); "Batayle" (14th Century); "Bataill" (15th Century); "Battell" (16th Century); "Battel" (17th and 18th Centuries); and now "Battle". So it has been named ever since its first sod was turned; and so, D.V., may it always be named.

At this moment it is appropriate to the history of Battle to emphasise the importance to it of "The Chronicle of Battel Abbey". Is there another town in the Kingdom of anything like comparable age and size which has so complete an account of its foundation? The early portion of the Chronicle, probably dating from before 1107, contains a contemporary directory of the town of Battle, which must be quite unique, in that it gives the name of the head of each household (115 in all), his occupation, the rent paid, and his address.

The intimate association between the Abbey and the Town has of course conditioned the latter's whole life. Indeed it would be more correct to talk of the close association which has now existed for more than 900 years between the Church and the Town, for since the Dissolution of the Monastery in 1538, the allegiance previously given it has quite naturally transferred itself to the Parish Church of St. Mary The Virgin, originally only a Chapel of the Abbey Church. Moreover, although the latter itself and most of the other monastic buildings are by now only historic ruins, subsequent Lay Owners of them, and of what is left of the monastery which remains habitable, have continued to enjoy the respect of the inhabitants of Battle.

How has the Battle of today evolved? From 1067 to 1538 its whole life revolved round the Abbey. This, being a Royal foundation, became one of the most important and influential Ecclesiastical Establishments in the country. It owned vast estates throughout southern England, south of a line from the Wash to Milford Haven; it held the Patronage over more than fifty churches including many in villages around Battle; and it enjoyed, with the Parish Church, complete exemption from any Episcopal Jurisdiction. By 1320 the Abbot became

"mitred", and so was thereafter summoned to attend Parliament as a Lord Spiritual—a practice continuing right up to the Dissolution in 1538. He was indeed "Lord of all he surveyed", having almost absolute power over much of Sussex and Kent. With this background the Town of BATTLE could not help but become the religious, the civil, the agricultural and the administrative centre of the surrounding countryside. It is, for example, on record in the Battle Abbey archives that cattle, poultry and farm produce generally were regularly brought into Battle from the outlying Battle Abbey Manors as far away as WYE in Kent, ALCISTON in Sussex, and from the same records it is known that the Abbot's feudal and legal authority extended over a large part of Sussex and Kent, as witnessed in the proceedings of his various Manorial Courts. From a very early date William the Conqueror had authorised the Abbot to hold a weekly market in the Town—a practice well supported by the surrounding farmers, and which was only discontinued as recently as 1967.

On the Dissolution of the Monastery and the advent of Lay Owners to the Abbey Estates, this role of being the local metropolis continued. It is on record, for instance, that for many years after the Dissolution and the beginning in England of the Reformation, BATTLE, under the leadership of Magdalen, Viscountess Montague, the Chatelaine of Battle Abbey, became the centre from which the Roman Catholic Church, certainly in Sussex, was administered. It was indeed reported by no less an authority than the Archbishop of Canterbury himself, that when carrying out a Visitation in 1569 he found BATTLE to be "the most popish town in all Sussex". In due time it became one of the important centres of the Sussex Iron and Gun-founding Industry, the Gunpower Industry, Pottery and Brickmaking, Charcoal burning, and Tanning. BATTLE was a centre for all these, though not all were operated in the Town itself. Indeed it is fair to say that whilst in the post-Dissolution centuries BATTLE continued to be the market town serving its fairly well-defined area, it can also be associated during the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries with the iron and gun-founding industries, as a supplier of war materials. There were at least seven powermills in its near neighbourhood, which all supplied powder for the Civil War, the Revolutionary and other wars with the French, and the Napoleonic Wars. Daniel Defoe commented that "BATTLE was remarkable for making the finest gunpower and the best, perhaps, in Europe". Whilst most of the Parliamentary cannons in the Civil War were manufactured not more than 5 miles away from BATTLE. In the wars at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries BATTLE had a military garrison as a first reserve to the troops guarding the coast

against invasion—a story faithfully repeated, and familiar to many still living, 50 years ago. It is indeed hard to disassociate BATTLE from battle.

Not that these activities ever evolved any undue growth of the Town. For so conservative were the successive Lay Owners of the Abbey Esates in their devotion to BATTLE that as recently as 1924 the number of private holdings in the Town was almost exactly the same as it had been in about 1100, as then recorded in "The Chronicle of Battel Abbey"—that is 115. It is only since 1924 that new housing has appeared along nearly all the approach roads into the Town, leaving its centre much as it has always been. A 17th century inhabitant of BATTLE, if he could return to the Town today, would have little difficulty in finding his way from, say, the 'crooked house" in Mount Street, or the windmill on Caldbec Hill, to the Parish Church, and indeed would see much that was familiar to him. What growth there has been, has been slow by modern standards. In 1150 the population of BATTLE must have been between 750 and 1,000. By 1750 it had probably risen to 1,500 to 1,750. 1801—the first census year and when BATTLE'S Barracks were full of troops for the Napoleonic Wars—it was 2,040. By 1851—when the railway was being built—it was 3,849 (including 600 railway labourers); by 1901, 2,996; by 1921, 2,891; by 1931—at the start of the expansion period after 1924—it was 3,491, rising by 1961 to 4,517. Thus in the last 200 years BATTLE has grown in population from 1,500 to 4,517, an average increase of 1%.

This appears to be its normal and natural rate of growth, and defines its character. It is unique; it is historic; it has many architectural gems; it is largely unspoilt; it is a closely-knit community with tremendous community spirit, supporting as it does no less than 50 social, cultural and sporting organisations; more than 250 parishioners regularly volunteer to "service" a much-loved Parish Church; its inhabitants quite naturally become "part of Battle" and can be assimilated as such only at that natural rate of growth. Finally, one has only to look through the Parish Registers to be impressed by the number of Battle families whose surnames occur with unfailing regularity over and over again for the past 300 years—Webster, Eldridge, Gower, Holland, Mepham, Sinden, Soane, Ticehurst, Vidler, for instance. Of such, is BATTLE, and is content to remain so.

To over-populate it would be nothing less than murder of a truly lovely bit of Old England, well worth conserving and preserving as it stands.

D.A.L.

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THE RIDDLE OF THE LIMEN AND THE ROTHER

During the Roman occupation one of the three fortified harbours which protected the communications of the Romans with the Continent was Portus Lemanis, mentioned by Ptolemy as Kainos Limen. Its site and the ruins of the fortress (Stutfall Castle) lie near West Hythe about 2 miles from the sea, and the River Limen has disappeared. A relic of the name remains in Lympne, a nearby village. The River Limen flowed along the base of the ancient cliffs on the western side of Romney Marsh, and its course must have been much the same as that chosen later for the Royal Military Canal.

We are told by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle that in A.D. 893 the Danes towed their ships up the Limen to Appledore. Towing is impossible on an estuary; so that one visualises the Limen as a navigable but not very broad river with firm banks. About the year 1100, New Romney Church was built upon the seashore at the head of a large harbour which had existed from Roman times; in fact certain place-namers believe the name Romney to mean *Roman Island*. It is on record that ships could tie up to the churchyard wall, and that the River Rother then flowed into the harbour. Its course from Appledore is said to have been along the Rhee Wall; but examination of the heights shown on the map suggests that it may have taken a more southerly course. As, however, Appledore in 893 was on the Limen, it has always been assumed that between 893 and 1100 the Limen changed its course and was thereafter called the Rother. It is the correctness of this theory which it is here proposed to challenge. What can be said about the names Limen and Rother? The subject of place-names is controversial. It is with a sense of surprise that we realise that *Limen* is the Greek word for *Harbour;* but why should the Greeks so name a river in Britain? Perhaps Ptolemy was responsible. On the other hand *Limen* may be connected with *Line*, the name of many rivers, which is said to be derived from an ancient Celtic word

meaning *smooth.* In either case we have in *Limen* a name which dates from before the Saxon invasion. *Rother* has been set down by the Place-name Society as a back formation from Rotherfield, where the river rises, and Rotherfield as being of Saxon origin and meaning *Open land for cattle.* Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, however, gives *rother* and *rothor,* and states that they mean respectively *sailor* and *oar.* As either of these names appears to be more suitable for a river than *cattle pasture,* the name Rotherfield would seem to be a back formation from *Rother* or *Rothor* rather than the reverse. It is not suggested, however, that the original name of the river was Anglo-Saxon.

Isaac Taylor, in his book *Words and Places,* wrote: "These river names survive where all other names have changed. They seem to possess an almost indestructible vitality . . . Throughout the whole of England there is hardly a single river name which is not Celtic". When people find a place named in a language they do not understand, they often seek to name it by similarly sounding words in their own tongue. This has been observable in modern times, especially when soldiers were in foreign countries in war years, and even when training in Wales in peacetime. Evidently considering that the Saxons had named the river Rother "Sailor" because the word sounded like a Celtic name akin to the Cornish *Ruth dowr,* Isaac Taylor translates Rother as *Red water,* and Austen Farmar in his *Place-name Synonyms Classified* as *Red stream.* Seeing that the river crosses the iron-ore belt, this may well be the solution.

The question therefore arises why one Celtic name was substituted for another Celtic name as late as the 10th or 11th century. It is here suggested that there were originally two rivers, one the Rother, with its present tributaries as far as Newenden, but excluding the Hexden and Newmill Channels, which flowed, much as now, into the sea near Rye; and the other, the Limen, whose headwaters were the Hexden and Newmill Channels, which flowed north of the Isle of Oxney (not yet an island) via Appledore to Hythe. In the area near Wittersham Road Station these two rivers would have been in the same valley, close to each other but independent. Between 893 and 1100, it is suggested, the Limen "captured" the Rother. Such river captures occur sometimes: in quite recent years the River Wey captured the Blackwater near Ash in Surrey. The additional water might have been too much for the combined river, which burst its banks near Appledore, and found a new course to New Romney Harbour. The lower reaches of the old Limen then dried up and the name was lost.

This is conjecture; but we do know for certain that the whole river system was upset by the great storms and floods of 1287. The sea flowed in, drowning Old Winchelsea, insulating Rye and Oxney, and forming a large tidal estuary. Smallhythe, on the branch of the estuary north-west of the Isle of Oxney, had long become a port when Henry VIII went there in 1537 to inspect a warship which was being built. The Harbourmaster lived in a house built during the 15th century, which some four or five centuries later became the home of Ellen Terry. By the end of the 16th century there remained at Smallhythe only a creek of salt water navigable only by lighters and very small vessels. There now remains a drainage ditch.

When the tidal estuary dried up, the river, which, according to our theory, consisted of the combined Limen and Rother, did not resume its course to Romney, but followed the old course of the Rother to Rye.

C.H.L.

COMMEMORATION OF THE 905th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS

COMMEMORATION SERVICE IN THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, BATTLE

The Commemoration Service on October 17th, 1971, was conducted by the Dean of Battle, the Very Rev. H. R. Darby, B.A. The lessons were read by Mrs. E. Webster, the senior Vice-President of the Society, and Brigadier D. A. Learmont the Chairman. The sermon was preached by the Bishop of Chichester, Dr. Roger Wilson, D.D.

The Bishop began his sermon with a reference to the Battle of Isandhlwana, fought in 1879, where a small British force was overwhelmed by a Zulu army. For some months after, the battlefield was desolate, left to the bodies and the carrion birds. Then a little group of Christian missionaries appeared, who collected the bodies, buried them, and set up a pile of stones which can still be seen. They then proceeded to build a hospital and a little mission station on the spot. Anyone who visits the spot today cannot fail to be moved both by the pile of stones, which could tell a story, as also by the hospital which has continued its work ever since.

He mentioned these things because there is some little parallel between them and the great moment of history which draws people of Battle together on this occasion. It is of course this, that when the armies had departed and the dust had settled, as it were, from the battle, there arose on that spot a Christian church which was the deliberate policy of William the Conqueror. "I make a vow," he said on the eve of the battle, "that upon this place of battle I will found a free monastery for the salvation of you all, and especially for those who fall." Many such prayers and promises, continued the Bishop, may be selfish—an attempt, so to speak, to bribe God into being on our side—but beyond that there was the recognition that something must be done both for the survivors and the victims, and that is why the church must be there in the midst of strife, and not just in some quiet spot of its own, if it is to do its job. Strife, no doubt, is always present in humanity as at present constituted; and the cost of strife is always there too. If battle is joined, there are many who pay the cost. Most of us can recall something of world wars.

Most of us are seeing some signs of the eternal struggle in our own country, and the cost of it. We do not often recognise the tremendous need for people who have their eyes open to see what can be done afterwards and do it. Even in the parable attention is focussed more on the Samaritan than on the innkeeper who cared for the victim. Always there is need for the individual, the good person who is able to rise above himself and take part in paying the cost of strife. Live your life for yourself and it will not bear fruit; but sacrifice always does. It is in sharing sacrifice and not standing aloof that there lies some of the strength and inspiration to all those who turn to Christ and learn to live with him. That is what the Church is meant to be—a people meeting together with Christ, to learn how to heal the battles of mankind, and out of them produce a world of peace.

TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held on November 12th, 1971

The Chairman, Brigadier D. A. Learmont, presided. The Chairman's report, previously circulated, was approved. Membership at the end of September stood at 236 (225 adults and 11 juniors). Forty-nine new members joined during the year.

In his report the Chairman had stated that with regard to the summer visits, it was disturbing that fewer members than usual had attended; and that the Committee would be very pleased to receive suggestions from members for future visits. On June 19th, at the kind invitation of Mrs. George Kent, an evening garden party, attended by 45 members, had been held at Telham Place.

The Treasurer's statement and report, also previously circulated, was approved. Income had again exceeded expenditure, but only by £1.32½, as £24 included in the surplus in the accounts was paid in advance by members for the 16th October sherry party, and so properly belonged to next year. Fall in membership, coupled with less by way of addition to the minimum subscription, accounted for a fall in revenue of £26. The basic expenses, however, of running the Society rose by only 91½p during the year. The cash at bank in the General Fund on September 13th amounted to £93.77. The Battle Index Fund stood at £6.23. The Guide Publication current account stood at £72.08, and its deposit account at £143.27.

Members would be pleased to know that the Society had taken an active part in the discussions about the new proposed Battle Town plan; and also that, with other Battle Societies, it may shortly be discussing how best to present, especially to visitors, the many historical, architectural, cultural, and other features of the town. The Chairman's report concluded with thanks to the Officers and Members for their support during the year.

Before the elections it was decided that the warm regards and gratitude of the Society to the President, Colonel Lemmon, for all his sterling services to the Society over the past 21 years, should be recorded in the minutes.

In the elections which followed, Mrs. Webster and Mr. Marson were re-elected Vice-Presidents for three years. It was agreed that the thanks of the Society to Mr. A. E. Marson should be recorded in the minutes for the invaluable service,

covering 21 years, which he has given to the Society. The following officers were elected for one year: Chairman, Brigadier D. A. Learmont; Vice-Chairman, Mr. A. E. Stevenson; Hon. Secretary, Mrs. K. D. Upton; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. R. W. Bishop. Miss R. Chiverton, Mr. E. H. Mayer and Prof. A. E. Bate were re-elected to the Committee for three years. Miss C. V. Cane was elected to the Committee for three years vice Mrs. O. Bindley resigned.

After the Museum Trust meeting Mr. David Manners, with the kind assistance of the Battle Camera Club, gave a slide-illustrated talk on "Sussex Windmills".

MUSEUM TRUST

Fifth Annual General Meeting

held on November 12th, 1971

The Chairman, Mr. E. H. Mayer, presided. The Report of the Committee of Management, previously circulated, was approved. The Hon. Treasurer's Report and Accounts were also adopted.

The Committee of Management reported another successful year, with total attendances of 15,299—nearly 12% higher than last year's record figure. During the year the Museum had acquired several additional items and some new cases had been installed. Sales of postcards, under 2,000, had been rather disappointing. Only every seventh or eighth visitor had bought a card. Mr. Catt, one of the two custodians, had felt unable to carry on for another season. After one month, the post was filled by Mr. W. H. Cooper. During the hiatus the Museum was enabled to keep open in the afternoons by volunteeers; to whom, as well as the members who undertook Sunday afternoon shifts throughout the season, the thanks and appreciation of the Committee was extended. Acknowledgement was made of the devoted services of the Hon. Secretary and Librarian, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Curator, and Prof. Bate, who had succeeded Mr. Weber in keeping the day-to-day accounts.

The Hon. Treasurer reported that income during the year had exceeded expenditure by £195.78½. The balance of the current and deposit accounts at the end of the year stood at £927.35. There was also £20.72 in the Research Account.

At the election which followed Prof. A. E. Bate, Mr. R. W. Bishop, Mr. A. R. Clough, Miss P. Ireland, Mr. E. H. Mayer, Mr. W. N. Palmer, Miss J. E. S. Robertson and Mrs. K. D. Upton were re-elected to the Committee for one year.

At the first meeting of the new Committee on November 15th, 1971, the following officers were appointed: Chairman and Curator, Mr. E. H. Mayer; Vice-Chairman, Mr. W. N. Palmer; Hon. Secretary and Librarian, Miss J. E. S. Robertson; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. R. W. Bishop; Hon. Assistant Treasurer, Prof. A. E. Bate.

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