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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

I hope that this edition of *Transactions* will appear less than twelve months after the last and make up a little of the arrears. But I realise that it is still recording activities of the Society which members may almost have forgotten. Unfortunately, production of *Transactions* still falls entirely upon the Chairman who would willingly vacate the editorial chair to any volunteer and would also welcome assistance in finding speakers for the winter programme. Members need not be shy in suggesting themselves as speakers.

Besides the lectures reproduced in the pages which follow talks were given by Mrs. Joy Dart on "Some writers of the Rother District", Miss Jean Adamson on "The Venerable Bede—Father of British History" and Mr. Alan Scott on "Rescue— a Trust for British Archaeology". I apologise to speakers if their lectures have sometimes been abridged or paraphrased for publication.

The Commemoration Lecture was delivered on October 15th, 1976 by Prof. Domenica Legge from Oxford, who spoke on "Hastings—The Cultural Heritage". The text of this fascinating and learned talk is available in the Society's library.

The evening party on the following day was held once more in the attractive surroundings of the Abbots Hall of Battle Abbey. We are again grateful to Miss Parker for permitting us to use this historic building. The party was a great success.

The preacher at the Commemoration Service on October 10th, 1976 was the Right Rev. Maurice Wood, D.S.C., Bishop of Norwich.

January, 1978

E. G. CREEK,
Chairman.

OBITUARIES

Brigadier D. A. Learmont, C.B.E.

It was with great sorrow that we learned of the death of Brigadier Learmont on August 22nd, 1976. He joined the Society in 1962–63 and from the first played an active part in its work. In 1964–65 he was a member of the Committee, in 1966–67 Vice-Chairman, in 1969–70 Chairman, which office he held with one short break until 1972–73, when he retired for health reasons. He lectured to the Society in March, 1967 and again in March, 1969. He was always full of future projects and of ideas for lecture programmes. He was keenly interested in all matters relating to Battle history and many will recall his snippets from vestry records in the parish magazine.

Sir James Doak

The last number of *Transactions* omitted unfortunately to record the death on July 9th, 1975 of Sir James MacHaffie Doak, who was one of the four original trustees of the Museum. He was always ready to help the Museum in its early days when it was in financial or other difficulties. Sir James Doak was co-opted as a member of the Committee in 1954–55 and he continued to serve on the Committee right up to 1965.

CARDINAL JOHN KEMP AND THE FOUNDING OF WYE COLLEGE

Mr. J. D. Sykes (December 12th, 1975)

The Royal Manor of Wye formed part of the Conqueror's endowment of the Abbey of St. Martin at Battle. Together with all the appendages, liberties and royal customs belonging to the Court of Wye, the jurisdiction of which extended over the Hundred of Scray, covering almost one-fifth of the area of Kent, it was no small bequest. For some four hundred and seventy-five years it provided the Abbey with significant economic proceeds and for almost a hundred years, up to the Dissolution, a close link existed between the Abbey and the College of St. Gregory and St. Martin at Wye.

John Kemp, the founder of the College was born in 1380 at Olantigh, a site a mile away from Wye Church on the road to Canterbury. He rose to high office in the Church and State. At the time of his death at the then great age of seventy-three, in 1454, he had twice served as Chancellor of

England and for nearly thirty years, successively, as Archbishop of York and of Canterbury. His tomb, with its richly coloured and magnificently carved wooden canopy, lies on the south side of the choir in Canterbury Cathedral.

Origins and Upbringing

Lelande incorrectly describes Kemp's father as "a pore husbande man of Wye". In fact, the Kemp family had occupied Olantigh for several generations and Kemp's father, Sir Thomas, was Escheator for Kent and Middlesex to Richard II. His mother was Beatrice Lewknor and came from the family then resident at Bodiam Castle. It is said that Kemp may have received his early schooling at King's Canterbury, but of this there is no documentary evidence. However, at the age of fifteen, in 1395 he entered Merton College, Oxford where in due course he became a Fellow and eventually Doctor in the Faculty of Laws. As a benefactor he was commemorated by his College and by the University. The crest of Kemp, with its three wheat sheaves, replicated in various forms, sometimes in association with the Cardinal's hat and sometimes with the pallium of the Archbishop of Canterbury, occurs as one of the principal decorative features in the exquisite fan vaulting of the Divinity School.

The Rise to Fame

Following his ordination to the priesthood, Kemp's name becomes associated with a multiplicity of parishes, although some could have seen little of him. He may first have served at St. Michael's, Crooked Lane, destroyed in the building of the new London Bridge in 1830, before moving to Southwick between 1407–1417. His name appears again at Hawkhurst in 1416–1417, at Aldington in Kent, and Slapton in Buckinghamshire. He was also a Canon of Wingham, near Canterbury, where there was a Collegiate foundation somewhat similar to that Kemp established at Wye.

It was events in 1413, however, at the age of thirty-two, the year in which Archbishop Chichele introduced him to Henry V as a man of great promise, which appear to have been decisive for Kemp's career. Kemp had already achieved considerable repute as an ecclesiastical lawyer when he was appointed assessor for the trial of Sir John Oldcastle. The trial of this prominent Lollard took place in the Chapter House of Old St. Paul's and although Kemp by no means seems to have all the best of all of the arguments, his bearing

clearly picked him out for future preferment. Within two years he became Dean of the Court of Arches and Vicar General to Archbishop Chichele. A year later, in 1416, he was appointed Archdeacon of Durham. However, on proceeding to Normandy in 1418 with Henry V, as Keeper of the Privy Seal, it was necessary for him to request indulgence to visit his distant archdeaconry by deputy. Certainly, there was less time for ecclesiastical duties after 1419 when he became Chancellor of Normandy.

Political and Ecclesiastical Preferment

Kemp spent a good deal of his time in France or dealing with French affairs. It was the closing phase of the Hundred Years' War and his period in high office literally witnessed the demise of English power in France. Kemp served as Chancellor of Normandy till the death of Henry V in 1419 and it was during this three-year period that he was involved in a somewhat remarkable series of ecclesiastical preferments. These began with his election to the See of Rochester in January 1419. His consecration took place at Rouen and he received the temporalities and spiritualities from Chichele. He was subsequently translated to the Bishopric of Chichester, in February 1421, but he performed no ecclesiastical acts whilst in this office due to his appointment as Bishop of London in November of the same year by Pope Martin V. A representation of Kemp is included, nevertheless, amongst the Chichester Cathedral portraits of pre-reformation Bishops, which were painted by Bernardi in the early sixteenth century. Due to opposition from the Dean and Chapter, it was not until the middle of 1422 that Kemp was fully installed in his new diocese, but this eventually brought him control over vast estates and growing wealth. It also provided the first opportunities for his indulgence in building, in this case at Fulham Palace, which was eventually to find expression at the Bishop's Palace at Southwell, at the Palace at Cawood, near York and at Wye College and Church.

In 1426, the year in which he became Archbishop of York, Kemp was also appointed Chancellor. He received the silver seal from the five-year-old King Henry VI at St. Mary's Abbey, Leicester and held office until 1432. He became Chancellor for the second time in 1450 and held the post until his death in 1454, also serving the last two years as Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Cardinal Archbishop

Kemp's elevation to the Archbishopric of York only came after a protracted struggle between the King, supported by the Dean and Chapter and the Pope who stood in opposition. Kemp was in his forty-sixth year when he became the fiftieth Archbishop and his twenty-six years in office made him one of the longest serving. He was by no means universally popular but he acted vigorously with care and dexterity, and with right on his side. Certainly the records are full of conflicts between Kemp and his tenants over the payments of rents, fees and taxes and various factions. He maintained an army of mercenaries and there were bloody conflicts at Ripon and at Otley and in the great Forest of Knaresborough. In 1443 the dissidents attempted to burn down the Palace he had rebuilt at Southwell, in Nottinghamshire.

Although Kemp certainly incurred some odium, it was perhaps less than might be expected, as for example following his part in the trials of the Kentish rebels who took part in Jack Cade's revolt in 1450. The evidence of the Paston letters points to a wise and sympathetic counsellor. Inevitably, his pastoral duties suffered from his preoccupation with the affairs of state. In the age in which he lived, virtually the only men of learning and ability were clerics and ministerial duties had to take precedence over ecclesiastical responsibilities.

In 1440, the Pope, prompted by Henry VI, appointed Kemp Cardinal Priest of St. Balbina and the King's commendation provides an exceptional insight into the qualities of the Archbishop, "the sanctity, honour and purity of his life, the depth of his knowledge, the ripeness of his judgement, his skill in action, the grace of his speech and the soundness of his utterances, together with the elegance of his person—(in) no other man could be found—so many and such great gifts of erudition and nature . . ."

The Founding of Wye College

In 1432, six years after becoming Archbishop of York and in his fifty-second year, Kemp was granted a licence by the King to found a College of Secular Priests. The application came after a period of ill-health, when he felt concern for the souls of his father and mother and certainly some conscience over his neglect of ecclesiastical affairs occasioned by the six years he had served as Chancellor. He was authorised to acquire the advowson of the vicarage of Wye from the Abbey of Battle, to whom he offered the patronage of the

Masterhood of the College. He also curiously requested the grant of a parcel of land "that lieth besides his garden at Olantigh". The College, eventually was built, however, adjacent to the Church, and a good number of the buildings of the original foundation, which only came into being in 1447, some fifteen years after the granting of the licence, are in existence today. They include the Old Hall, Latin School and parts of the old quadrangle, cellars, parlour, etc.

Kemp intended that the foundation should comprise, "a Master, six priests, two clerks and two choristers . . . and a Master of Grammar that would freely teach . . . all that would come to his teaching". He prescribed in detail the nature, conduct, activities and rules for the governance of his foundation and these are set out in a copy of the original statutes, formerly in the possession of Merton College, and now to be found in the Library of Wye College. Lastly, Kemp extensively endowed the College with lands and property. Interestingly, some form part of the present College Estate, although a good deal of the original endowment was well away from Wye.

In Conclusion

Cardinal John Kemp, Archbishop of Canterbury, died on March 23rd, 1454 after four troublesome years during which as Chancellor he faced schisms and political divisions at home, Jack Cade's Revolt, the termination of the French War and the madness of the King. It had been an overwhelming burden for the old archbishop. In a moment of lucidity, the King hearing of his death was heard to say: "One of the wisest lords of this land is dead."

Kemp died possessed of great power and wealth. His books, apparel, vestments, goods and chattels were valued at more than £4,000, an immense sum for the time. However, much of his wealth had gone into the establishment of his College at Wye and in benefactions to Merton College and the University of Oxford. Furthermore, through years of loyal and devoted service and wise counsel he had contributed immeasurably to the wellbeing of Church, State and Crown.

Nevertheless, one of his most lasting and tangible memorials is to be found still in his College at Wye where the ancient, medieval buildings provide an atmosphere and background of considerable value and relevance to present-day study and research. Yet more important, Kemp created a community devoted to education and learning that has

literally existed continuously for five hundred and thirty years. Although the secular college for priests was extinguished on January 19th, 1545, the Grammar School also created by John Kemp survived the Dissolution, at the direct instigation of Henry VIII. It continued, in fact, with varying fortunes until the last decade of last century when, together with the village charity school, founded by Lady Joanna Thornhill in 1708 and also accommodated within the old College, it was superseded by the South Eastern Agricultural College established by the Kent and Surrey County Councils. So came into being and has survived and prospered the College of St. Gregory and St. Martin at Wye, now a School of the University of London and a leading centre for research and advanced studies into agriculture, food production and related studies.

THE MANUFACTURE OF GUNPOWDER IN BATTLE

Mr. J. Woodhams, F.R.I.C.S. (February 13th, 1976)

Any subject such as this is bound to involve the writer in a good deal of plagiarism and in this respect I am grateful to Robert Held, author of THE AGE OF FIREARMS; to the records of the Sussex Archaeological Society and in particular to the late Herbert Blackman, who recorded most of what is known about the Battle Factory at a time when the last of the employees were still alive.

I am also very grateful to Mrs. Webster, Mr. Godfrey Webster, and Mr. David Evans for allowing Graham Walker, who took the photographs, and me, to wander over their land.

As to the material itself, there is still a good deal of doubt as to who was the actual inventor. Incendiary and sometimes near explosive mixtures of naptha, sulphur, pitch and tar, loosely known as Greek Fire, were in use as early as the fifth century before Christ. They continued to be used well into the Middle Ages and after and even survived into the 1939 war in such anti-tank weapons, well-known to Dad's Army, as the Blacker Bombard and the Molotov Cocktail. They were, however, primarily incendiary devices used mainly against ships and wooden fortifications.

To quote Robert Held:

"Hundreds of alchemists apothecaries and physicians between Baghdad and Manchester in the thirteenth century —mostly in the Moslem world—busied themselves with compounding niter charcoal and sulphur in iron mortars with iron or stone pestles. The spark generated by friction or static electricity was inevitable sooner or later. After several thousand pestles had roared off ceiling bound it must have occurred to quite a number of fingerless experimenters that perhaps this reaction could be put to less immediately suicidal uses."

It is probable that gunpowder was first used by the Moors in North Africa and southern Spain about 1250, but many European and several Asiatic countries lay claim to have been the first gunners. Germany attributes the invention to a legendary monk, Father Berthold Schwartz, who probably never existed at all, while we claim the honour for Roger Bacon, Fellow of Merton College, Oxford. Bacon was certainly no mythical figure but as his recorded recipe of Saltpeter 41.2, Sulphur 29.4 and Charcoal 29.4 is very different from the optimum it would seem that either his ingredients were very impure or that his gunpowder was of very low power. Before long, with improved refining methods the proportions were settled at Saltpeter 75 parts by weight, Sulphur 10 and Charcoal 15 and these remain more or less undisturbed at the present time.

The earliest powder was a floury dust of the components mixed dry and it was known as serpentine. Serpentine had various disadvantages: it was a slow burning and low-powered propellant: the ingredients tended to separate into levels when jogged along in military waggons over rough roads and the barrels would emit clouds of explosive dust; unless very consistently rammed it had a tendency to burn in a gun barrel rather than to explode.

By the early fifteenth century great improvement was effected by mixing the ingredients into a moistened paste as they were ground together. Even greater efficiency was achieved by pressing the moist paste into cakes and grinding the cakes into small lumps. The latter, about the size of corn kernels, became known as "corned powder". This had the advantage that it did not separate, made little dust, caused less fouling and was very much more efficient and

powerful. In fact it was so powerful that it would blow the early cannon to bits and until improvements were made in the casting of ordnance the gunners had to return to the use of serpentine powder.

The stream known as the river Asten, which rises in Tellis Coppice, behind the Squirrel Inn and eventually flows into the sea at Bulverhythe was once the site of great industry. Bloomeries and furnaces existed at Battle Park, the present position of Powdermill House, Peppering-Eye, Forewood, Crowhurst (below Court Lodge Farm), Rackwell Gill, Crowhurst Park and Blacklands Farm on the main stream and at Sidley, Potmans, Buckholt and Bines Farm on the western tributary, the Watermill Stream. Several of these were Roman and the last to close, Battle Park and Buckholt, ceased to operate in the 1660's.

Slightly after this date there is an entry in the Charters and Muniments of Battle Abbey:—

> "Francis, Viscount Montague, Lease for 21 years to John Hammond of Battle of the four parcels of brookland and upland, called Peperengeye Lands in Battle with permission to erect a Powder Mill etc. dated November 11th 1676."

For the next two hundred years the industry flourished and at one time there were no less than five mills on the Asten, each using the same water in succession. The uppermost was "Farthing", with a pond of about 6 acres. Next came the "House", as the Powdermill site was known, with a pond of about 12 acres. Below the bottom of Richards Hill, about half a mile downstream, was Peppering-Eye, connecting in turn to Lower Peppering-Eye. Later a fifth mill was installed at Crowhurst on the site of the old furnace and at some time prior to 1750 a further subsidiary was built on the Brede near Sedlescombe bridge.

The Battle Abbey charters contain an entry: "April 11th, 1750. George Matthews of Battel, late officer in the Excise etc. bond to Sir Thomas Webster, George Worge of Battel Gent. and William Gilmore Gunpowder maker in the penal sum of Five hundred pounds, as security for his Trust in the conducting of the Powder Works of the said partner in the Parish of Sedlescombe."

The reputation of the Battle Factory was very high. Defoe mentioned that the town was remarkable for making "the finest gunpowder, and the best, perhaps in Europe."

The process of manufacture remained fairly constant over the years.

The saltpeter and sulphur were imported; the charcoal for ordinary powder was from alder wood burnt in pits in the customary manner; for the finest sporting powder, dogwood (cornus sanguinea) was used. When the underwood was being cut in the district the dogwood was carefully reserved, peeled and tied in bundles similar to the method used for osiers for basket-making. It was converted into charcoal in cylinders similar to the retorts used in the manufacture of coal-gas. At "House" the cylinder house is now converted to the dwelling Peartree Cottage. It is interesting that all the ponds are still surrounded by alder coppice plantations and that dogwood can be found between Farthing and Powdermill Ponds.

The sulphur in the earlier days was crushed under stones previous to mixing with the other ingredients; later this was found unnecessary and discontinued. The small runner stones used for the purpose, five and a half feet in diameter and fourteen inches thick are built into the coal store at Powdermill House.

The saltpeter which was delivered in its crude state was purified or refined in a large building called the Refining House. Large cast iron furnace pans were used in which the saltpeter was placed with water and boiled for several hours. After cooling the water was drawn off, the saltpeter remaining in the pans in beautiful white crystals.

Two of the furnace pans remain at Powdermill—one behind the Watch Houses and one in the kitchen garden.

The grinding or amalgamating was the first process in the manufacture after the preparation of the ingredients. The buildings in which this was done were always referred to as "The Mills", and were constructed of stout framing with light roofs and panelled sides with the object of offering little resistance in the event of an explosion.

Actual grinding was carried out by two large circular stones or "runners" set vertically on a horizontal axle and resting on a stone bed about ten feet in diameter. The axle was rotated from a vertical drive by water power and the action would have resembled the turning of a pair of waggon wheels through full lock. The motion was a constant crushing and screwing round on the bed which mixed as it crushed.

The "runners" were about six and a half feet in diameter, sixteen inches thick and bevelled at the edges. They each weighed about six tons. Each mill had two pairs of runners.

The amount of material put under a pair of stones was eigthy pounds, which was termed a "charge" and the time required to grind each charge was ten hours. During that period the mixture was kept slightly damp by an automatic sprinkler and the mass was kept broken up and spread by the millmen.

At the "House" mills there were two larger pairs of runners each weighing nine tons. These took a "charge" of one hundred pounds and the grinding time was eight hours.

In 1814 a beam engine was installed at the "House" to supplement the water power and later one was added at Peppering-Eye also.

Two runner stones are built into the wall of the garage at Peartree Cottage and another pair lie in the garden at Peppering-Eye. The larger runners were removed to Dartford when the work ceased at Battle.

The powder was taken from the grinding mills to the presses where it was further damped and spread on copper sheets three and a half feet square to a depth of about 2 inches. The loaded plates were placed one on top of the other until about half a ton was in position. Pressure was applied manually by a screwpress with a long wooden arm until the thickness of the powder layers was about three-quarters of an inch.

After the introduction of steam power a hydraulic press was installed. It had a power of four hundred tons and must have speeded up the process a good deal.

The corning or granulation of the powder was the next process. The pressed cakes were passed between zinc cogged rollers to reduce them to pieces the size of marbles and then through plain brass rollers, to reduce them further to the size required. Finally, they were graded by mesh sifting for the purpose of use, the coarsest grade for blasting and the finest for musketry.

At one time there were five corning houses at the various branches but when a large two-storied corning house was built at Peppering-Eye (the building survives) most of the corning was done there.

The glazing succeeded the corning of the powder. In a large house a central wooden shaft carried barrel-like containers into which the powder was placed with a small quantity of graphite. As the barrels revolved slowly the corns were rounded off and coated with graphite giving the characteristic colour and touch. After glazing the batches were taken through "dusters" to extract the finest grains, dust and surplus graphite, passing for the final drying process to the "Stove" or drying houses. When weather permitted drying was carried out on large lead trays outdoors but mainly it was spread on shelves in a house heated either by water pipes or by a system of ducted hot air.

After a final grading and classification each batch was tested and packed. Two of the instruments used for testing can be seen in the Hastings Museum, but modern opinion is doubtful of their efficiency, ingenious though they appear.

Packing was carried out mainly by a substantial staff of women, ordinary powder being made up in 28 and 56 pound kegs and sporting powder in one pound canisters. The containers were also made in Battle and until about 1936 the Buckman and Elliott families continued to practice their trade as hoopshavers in the Pound Field.

As may be imagined, such a large and potentially dangerous undertaking was not without its hazards. Although detailed records are few there seem to have been some nasty accidents in the earlier days.

An extract from the burial register at Battle reads:

"1764 December 5th. James Gillmore and Thomas Gillmore both buried in one grave who were accidentally killed by the blowing up of the Sifting House at Sedlescombe Gunpowder Mills; in which house there was computed to be a Ton of Gunpowder, at which time and place there were two other men killed which were buried in Sedlescombe."

A louder bang took place on 27th April 1798 at the "House". In two almost simultaneous explosions the Drying House and Store Room, together with five other buildings, were totally destroyed. It was estimated that fifteen tons of Powder were involved. Three men were killed and the damage was estimated in excess of £5,000.

The last record of a major explosion appears in the London-published "Courier", Friday April 1st, 1808: "A few days since a violent explosion happened at the Gunpowder Works belonging to Messrs. Jeakins and Love at Battle in

the county of Sussex, which began in the corning house and communicated from thence to a magazine containing upwards of 200 barrels of gunpowder, the explosion of which swept away the drying house, receiving house and several other buildings. Two men were killed and a child lost its life by being struck by some of the shattered ruins; one mill only was slightly damaged."

It would appear that this last explosion was at Peppering-Eye as at that date House and Farthing were in the ownership of the Harveys.

Finally, it may be of interest to record what is known of the owners of the mills.

As shown above, the original Powdermaker was John Hammond in 1676. The Montagus, then still owners of the Abbey Estate, granted a further lease of 21 years to William Hammond, John's son, in 1710.

By 1750 control had passed to William Gilmore and it was probably two of his sons who died in the 1764 explosion. However, he had an able assistant in Lester Harvey who, in 1756, had married his daughter Jane. On Gilmore's death Harvey carried the firm on as Gilmore and Harvey, and on his death it passed to his son, William Gilmour Harvey. In spite of or perhaps because of the period of prosperity during the Peninsular War, Peppering-Eye and Crowhurst seem to have been sub-let to the firm of Jeakins and Love.

In, I believe, 1816 great tragedy overtook the Harvey family. Two sons and a daughter were drowned in the pond at the House before their parents' eyes. Apparently nobody could swim. The following year the control of the works passed to a Mr. Curtis and the name was changed to Curtis and Harvey.

Curtis was succeeded a few years later by a Mr. Gill, who eventually sold to Mr. Charles Laurence, the then proprietor of the Peppering-Eye Mill. Laurence succeeded in re-assembling all the branches including Sedlescombe and with his son, Charles, continued in production until 1874 when the works (the firm having been incorporated with Messrs. Pigon and Wilkes) were removed to Dartford and the manufacture of gunpowder at Battle came to an end.

LOOKING AT ABBEYS AND ROYAL BURIAL PLACES

Mr. and Mrs. A. C. G. Mason (February 27th, 1976)

In the second half of our programme we look at the layout of various abbeys but in the first half we search for the burial places of royalty from the time of Edward the Confes-

sor to the Dissolution of the Monasteries. We were surprised to discover that in this period of nearly 500 years only a third of our rulers had been interred at Westminster.

After Edward the Confessor, except for Edith Godwinson, the wife of Edward himself, and his great niece Matilda, the first wife of Henry I, no King or Queen was buried in Westminster Abbey for 200 years; which brings us to 1272 and Henry III. He had rebuilt the Abbey and transferred the Confessor's shrine to behind the High Altar. Around the shrine are buried Henry III (but not his wife Eleanor of Provence), his son Edward I and Eleanor of Castile, Edward III and Queen Philippa, Richard II and Ann of Bohemia and finally to complete the horseshoe, Henry V and Catherine, his French Queen. In othr words, during those 150 years, only Edward II and Henry IV were not finally interred at Westminster.

Richard II, after being deposed by Henry IV and murdered at Pontefract, was originally buried at King's Langley in Hertfordshire. Henry's son, Henry V, had never forgotten Richard's kindness to him when he was a hostage as a boy. The first act of his own reign was to bring Richard's body from Langley to lie beside his wife at Westminster.

During this Plantagenet period memorials were erected to other members of the royal family and their children, including the three lovely tombs by the High Altar. A stone urn, containing the bones of two children and assumed to be the remains of Edward V and his brother Richard (the Princes in the Tower), was placed some two hundred years later by the order of Charles II, near the tomb of Queen Elizabeth. The Richard III society have recently installed a memorial brass to mark the burial place of Anne Neville, wife of Richard III.

Henry VII extended the Abbey by building the beautiful chapel which bears his name, intending it to be the chosen burial place for *his* descendants. Henry and Elizabeth of York and the rest of the Tudor sovereigns lie there, except for Henry VIII. After the monasteries, including Westminster, were dissolved he chose to be buried at Windsor beside Jane Seymour, his third wife and mother of his only son.

Now for the missing two-thirds. Both Henry III and Henry VII set a fashion for family burials. Why are our earlier rulers, the Normans in particular, so scattered. The proper thing to do at that time was to found a monastery.

As the founder you were naturally buried before the high altar in the middle of the choir—and your relations could be interred in the same monastery, unless they were wealthy enough to found one for themselves.

No wonder it was difficult to trace the final resting places of our early Kings and Queens. They are all over the place and you can never be sure that husband and wife are buried together or even in the same country. But with two exceptions they were all buried in a monastery or nunnery, which explains our title.

[The next part of this lecture, which we summarise, gives details of the accompanying slides.—Ed.]

1. The ruins of Waltham Abbey endowed by Harold in 1060.

2. The stone at Waltham marking the position of the high altar beneath which King Harold is believed to have been buried.

3. The statue of Harold placed there during the 1964 restoration, the work of Elizabeth Muntz, step-sister of Miss Hope Muntz.

4. The twin abbeys at Caen in which William and Matilda were buried. These abbeys were founded in return for the Pope's sanction to their marriage. St. Etienne was built by William and his body lay there until his bones were scattered by Huguenots in 1562. Little Matilda, she was only four feet two inches tall, still rests in the choir of La Trinite.

5. The tomb of their eldest son, Robert, Duke of Normandy, before the high altar of the Benedictine Abbey at Gloucester, now the Cathedral.

6. At Winchester Cathedral, once a Benedictine priory, lie William's next two sons, Richard and William II. Prince Richard was killed as a young man by a stag while hunting in the New Forest.

7. The stone marking the site of the oak tree beneath which William Rufus was killed by a glancing arrow aimed at a stag by Sir Walter Tyrrell.

8. An artist's impression of Reading Abbey, where King Henry I was buried, in the abbey which he founded. His tomb and effigy were destroyed soon after the Reformation and no trace remains.

Some say that Henry's beautiful second wife Adeliza was also buried at Reading but more reliable sources agree that she returned to her native land and was buried at an abbey in Flanders.

9. A window in Faversham church which may portray a visit by King Stephen and Queen Maud to the abbey they founded at Faversham. Stephen, Maud and their son, Eustace, were all buried there, but little of the abbey is left. At the dissolution Stephen's bones were thrown into a creek, but it is possible they were re-interred in a tomb in the Parish Church nearby decorated with a head which may represent Stephen.

10. Portraits in Chichester Cathedral of Henry II, Richard I, Henry's wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and Isabella, widow of King John, all of whom are buried in the abbey of Fontevrault in Anjou, near Le Mans.

11. King John was interred in the centre of the Benedictine abbey at Worcester, later the Cathedral, for which he had a special affection. The carved figure of the King on the tomb is the oldest royal effigy in England.

12. The Saxon abbey church at Amesbury near Salisbury re-founded by Henry II as a daughter church of his abbey of Fontevrault. It was a popular convent with royal ladies. Henry III's Queen, Eleanor of Provence, survived him by nineteen years and retired to this nunnery. She is buried at Amesbury, probably in this church.

Special prayers were ordered to be said in this chantry at Amesbury for Prince Arthur of Brittany (for whose death King John was held responsible). Arthur's sister and Mary, a daughter of Edward I were both nuns and buried in this convent.

13. The ruins of the Cistercian abbey at Hailes in Gloucestershire founded and endowed by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, younger brother of Henry III, after escaping from shipwreck in the Scillies. Henry and Richard married sisters. The remains of Richard, his second wife Sanchia of Provence, younger sister of Eleanor, their son Edmund and his wife lie in the choir at Hailes.

During this century the bones of Henry of Almain, Earl Richard's eldest son were found only a few feet from the high altar. Henry was murdered at Viterbe during vespers by his De Montfort cousins.

14. Richard, Earl of Cornwall's first wife, Isabella Marshall, was buried in 1240 before the high altar at Beaulieu Abbey.

15. The body of Edward II, after his murder at Berkeley Castle was taken to the abbey of the Benedictines, now the cathedral, at Gloucester, and given this beautiful tomb.

16. At Canterbury we find the magnificent tomb of the Black Prince. He particularly wished to be buried near the shrine of St. Thomas Becket.

Also near the shrine is the tomb of Henry IV and his second wife, Joan of Navarre. He is the only English King to be buried in Canterbury Cathedral.

17. The Yorkist King Edward IV was the first King to be interred at Windsor. Edward and Elizabeth Woodville are buried on the north side of the altar of St. George's Chapel.

On the opposite side of the high altar lies the coffin of his deposed Lancastrian predecessor, Henry VI. Henry's body had been taken by water from the Tower in 1471 and buried at Chertsey Abbey. When Richard III came to the throne twelve years later he gave orders that Henry's coffin was to be removed from Chertsey and re-interred at Windsor.

18. At Christchurch Priory on one of the misericords is what is believed to be a true portrait of Richard III. His niece, Margaret, was lady of the manor here.

After the battle of Bosworth Richard's body was taken to Leicester and the monks at Grey Friars gave it burial, but no trace remains so far as we could ascertain.

19. At Tewkesbury Abbey, another Benedictine foundation, the feeling of history is almost overpowering. Here, after the terrible battle of Tewkesbury in 1471, the defeated Lancastrians took refuge in the church until the Yorkist soldiers burst in.

Beneath the central tower is a modern brass which marks the burial place of Edward, Prince of Wales, the only son of Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou and the last hope of the Lancastrian cause. He was either killed at the battle or murdered in the town afterwards.

From a more glorious period of history are the tombs of the lords of the manor grouped round the altar—including that of Edward Despencer who was one of the original Knights of the Garter and fought alongside the Black Prince.

On the north side of the altar are the tombs of more Despencers, De Clares and Beauchamps—all ancestors of Anne Beauchamp the wife of Richard Neville, who was known as Warwick the Kingmaker.

On the right side, opposite to the cenotaph of the last Abbot of Tewkesbury, is an iron grating covering the vault in which are buried Warwick's daughter Isabelle and her husband George, Duke of Clarence, brother to Edward IV and Richard III. Warwick's other daughter, Anne, was married to Richard.

At Christchurch Priory we saw the lovely chantry chapel which Margaret Plantagenet built for herself and her son, Cardinal Pole.

Margaret, the last of the Plantagenets, was the daughter of George, Duke of Clarence. As the grand-daughter of Warwick the Kingmaker, she was also Countess of Salisbury in her own right.

At the dissolution of the monasteries her son, Cardinal Pole strongly attacked the policies of Henry VIII. Pole was safe in Rome but his mother was arrested.

She was executed in 1541 at the age of 69 and was buried in St. Peter's in the Tower of London.

The dissolution of the monasteries ends our search and the first part of our talk.

[Second part of this talk—"Looking at Abbeys"—not reproduced here for want of space.—Ed.]

"SEVEN SUSSEX SQUIRES—THE HISTORY OF THE FREWEN FAMILY FROM 1666 TO 1919"

Christopher Hartley, Esq. (1st October, 1976)

The ground on which Brickwall stands was sold in 1491 to Thomas White and from the wording of the Latin deed it is possible to guess at the existence of a house on the site. Thomas White's grandson William married Mary, the sister of Sir Thomas Sackville of Sedlescombe. It is in the marriage settlement (1615) of William and Mary that the name "Brickwall" first occurs.

William and Mary enlarged their house by building the three-gabled, black and white north front and proudly placed their initials and the date 1633 on the bressemer. However, William and Mary left no male issue and the property was sold to Stephen Frewen in the year of the Great Fire of London, 1666.

The Frewens had been associated with Northiam since 1583 when the Rev. John Frewen, Stephen's father, was inducted as rector. During the 45 years that he was rector, until his death in 1628, he married three times and was father to eleven sons and one daughter. Only six of these children lived to become adults.

The eldest, Accepted, entered the Church, becoming Archbishop of York from 1660 to 1664. The second, Thankful, became secretary to Lord Keeper Coventry in the reign of Charles II. The fourth son, John, became Rector of Northiam on his father's death. Stephen, the sixth son, went into business as a furrier and became master of the Skinners' Company in 1665. He lent £1,000 to the Skinners' Company to rebuild their hall after the Great Fire.

Stephen was succeeded by his son Thomas. There have been four Thomas Frewens to own Brickwall and in the 19th century they were given nicknames to distinguish them, derived from the colour of their jackets in their portraits: Black Tom, Gingerbread Tom, and Blue Tom. To complete the series I have called the last Thomas Frewen, Victorian Tom. Black Tom, Stephen's son, born in 1630, became a member of the Inner Temple and M.P. for Rye in six parliaments. He married three times. After the death of his wife Bridget and his father in 1679 Thomas grey less attached to Brickwall and lived at his house in Putney with his third wife, Jane. When Black Tom died Jane moved down to Brickwall where she busied herself for her remaining years building the great brick walls round the gardens and the warren or paddock.

The third squire, Edward Frewen, was knighted by James II on 4th March, 1684. He was one of the 32 barons representing the Cinque Ports who by tradition held the canopy over the King's head during a coronation procession. He performed this duty for James II and his Queen Mary of Modena. A full-length portrait of James II by Sir Peter Lely hangs on the grand staircase at Brickwall.

In the early 1680s, Sir Edward travelled to Paris and Rome. On his return he built the magnificent ceiling over the grand staircase and constructed the drawing room in a similar style. The drawing room was intended as a banqueting room in which to entertain the Corporation of Rye, of which the Frewens were then the patrons.

Sir Edward's children Thomas and Selina married their Turner cousins Martha and John, linking the families of Frewen of Sussex and Turner of Leicestershire and the properties of Brickwall and Cold Overton.

The fourth squire, "Gingerbread Tom", 1687–1738, and his wife spent lavishly. Letters from Martha to the steward at Brickwall urged him constantly to send further supplies of cash. When in Northiam she never went to church without six horses to her coach. The distance was a quarter of a mile. Thomas left the estate so crippled and encumbered by debts that his son's life was perpetually shadowed by financial trouble. Blue Tom was born in 1716 and went to Oriel College, Oxford. He spent most of his adult years at Brickwall and never married. The picture of him living with his mother Martha is one of loneliness troubled by Matha's failing mental faculties and by financial difficulties. In 1752, aged 47, Martha Frewen was burnt to death in the kitchen chamber. Her poor son had left a lighted candle in her reach and she pulled it down into her lap. For the next 14 years before he died Tom wandered about his estate alone and in deep melancholy with none to care for him except his old servants. He grew very stout and infirm. He died in 1766 aged 50. His coffin confirms his stoutness, being unusually large, indeed the largest in the vault. For forty years the house was to be unlived in by a Frewen.

During the interregnum various tenants took Brickwall. One such, a man named Axell from Beckley, was a jobbing gardener whose wife was a dressmaker. Many of the rooms, once furnished for comfort, were used to keep rabbits in.

The Rev. Thomas Frewen inherited the Sussex estates in 1777, but resided in Cold Overton. He had three children, John who lived at Cold Overton and inherited all the Frewen and Turner property, Mary and Selina who died spinsters. Mary came to Northiam in 1804, aged 51. She found the tenant dying and tried, luckily unsuccessfully, to find another. By the winter of 1805 the house was still unlet and Mary herself moved in. For the next six years she was to bustle about the estate bossing the workmen and labourers, even joining with them in their tasks of rebuilding and repairing. Mary died of cancer in 1811. Her monument recounts her virtues.

It was a last and happy comfort to her to hear that her brother John Frewen Turner had married at the age of 53 and that his second child, Thomas, was born a few months

before she died. John Frewen Turner's life centered around Cold Overton and he rarely visited Brickwall which was again let whenever possible. The accounts show that much timber was cut at this time. John had lost much of his fortune in the South Sea Bubble.

After the death of his parents Victorian Tom, the sixth squire, came to see whether Brickwall could be made habitable. He found all in a poor state of decay, but was so enchanted by the ceilings that he decided to restore the family house. Thomas spent much money and time in the restoration. He turned the main Rye road further to the north and erected the fine gate piers with the Frewen motto "Mutare non est meum". He removed the plaster from the north front exposing the 17th century timbering. His absorbing interest was family history. Much of this lecture has been culled from his researches.

Thomas planned to extend the park and build the new road and this involved raising money on a mortgage. Since an entailed property could not be mortgaged his son John signed away the entail. On the reading of Thomas's will it was discovered that the eldest boy John had been passed over and the estate given to the eldest son of his second marriage, Edward.

Large estates were in trouble by this time all over the country. Cities grew up. Labour left the country. Agricultural rents fell. Edward found himself master of a large estate at the age of 21. He spent lavishly as the family lawyer had given him the mistaken idea that he could. Brickwall was in bad repair. He resolved to demolish the eastern wing and old kitchen and build a new wing. The final cost was £3,221.13.6. Nine years later we find an account to instal four radiators.

But no amount of central heating could keep the frost of debt at bay. The property had to be mortgaged to the Law Life Company, who cut timber ruthlessly on both the Northiam and Brede estates. The Leicestershire property of Cold Overton had to be sold off. Finally, however, the company surrendered the mortgage. Col. Edward let Brickwall as often as he was able to bring in a little cash. His brother, Moreton Frewen, had moved into Brede Place with his wife Clara Jerome, sister-in-law to Lord Randolph Churchill. Their daughter Clare married Wilfred Sheridan, a descendant

of the playwright. Clare passed one summer at Brickwall as a child and captured in her book "Nuda Veritas" the essence of the house as it was then a few years before the death of the seventh squire, Colonel Edward Frewen, in 1919.

SUMMER PROGRAMME 1976

The form of programme that has been customary for several years was again adopted and visits were arranged for each month from May to September. The attendance was good, averaging over forty. Inevitably some places previously visited were again included in the programme but only after some considerable interval, and each year an attempt is made to find some fresh places of historical interest to visit. Certainly it will be long before all the churches in the area have been visited and from time to time additional historic houses are opened to visitors.

WYE COLLEGE, ASHFORD; BROOK AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM AND CHURCH (May 20th)

The visit to Wye College was a sequel to the lecture given by Mr. Sykes on December 12th, 1975 (see page 4 of this volume).

After tea at Wye the party went to Brook to see the Agricultural Museum, a fine collection of farm carts, implements, etc., housed in a splendid mediaeval barn, and to Brook Church.

Wye College and Brook Church were last visited in 1969 but this was the Society's first visit to the Agricultural Museum.

CLANDON PARK AND SHERE CHURCH (June 16th)

On our way to Clandon Park, Guildford, we visited Shere Church. Much of this building dates from 1190 and is therefore a "Transition" church, the Norman style giving way to Early English. Many additions and alterations have been made through the centuries the latest being completed within the last ten years and this recent restoration while

preserving the fabric has added much to the beauty of the church.

Clandon Park, now National Trust property, was built in the first half of the 18th century and was for over 200 years in the possession of the Onslow family. It is remarkable for elaborate plasterwork, especially the ceiling of the grand Marble Hall and for some beautiful wallpapers.

The National Trust undertook a thorough renovation of the house during the years 1968–70 and installed in it the collection of furniture and china bequeathed by Mrs. David Gubbay to the Trust.

Neither Clandon Park nor Shere Church had been visited by the Society previously.

ALLINGTON CASTLE AND THE FRIARY, AYLESFORD (July 14th)

Both of these had been visited on previous occasions (see *Transactions* Nos. 15 and 16).

BEECHES FARM, UCKFIELD AND ST. DUNSTAN'S PALACE, MAYFIELD (August 16th)

Beeches Farm, an interesting 16th century farmhouse, was last visited in 1965.

St. Dunstan's Palace at Mayfield, now forming part of the Convent of the Holy Child, had not been included in a previous programme. The Old Palace probably began as a wooden manor house built in the 10th century by St. Dunstan, and later a stone building with an enclosed courtyard was substituted and this served as a country residence for the Archbishops of Canterbury until the time of Cranmer. The original courtyard is now roofed over but the Early English walls remain. The Great Hall, now the school chapel, belongs to the 14th century and is remarkable for the breadth of the stone arches which support the roof.

In 1545 the Manor and Park came into the possession of Henry VIII. Later it became the property of Sir Thomas Gresham, founder of the Royal Exchange, who entertained Elizabeth I there in 1573. The panelling from the room where she was entertained and the mantelpiece bearing grasshopper emblem were later moved to the present Guest Room.

The building fell into ruin after changing hands several times in the 17th and 18th centuries and Princess Victoria as a child rode over from Tunbridge Wells where she was staying and picnicked among the ruins. The restoration began in 1863 first of all for a convent and later the school was founded and many additions were made.

CUCKFIELD PARK AND CLAYTON CHURCH
(September 14th)

Cuckfield Place, as the house was called until the 19th century, was built in the second half of the 16th century by a wealthy ironmaster, Henry Bowyer. It was approached through the turreted gatehouse which still stands, but now in isolation, and across a paved and walled courtyard. In the 18th century the original brick walls of the house were concealed beneath a stucco facing to give the appearance of a stone-built house, but the walls of the gatehouse were left uncovered.

In the 17th century the house was bought by Charles Sergison, who succeeded Pepys as Commissioner of the Navy and Clerk of the Accounts, and it remained in the possession of the Sergison family until 1969 though it had been let to tenants for some years. The house is now owned by Mr. Malcolm Holt and it was first opened to the public in 1975.

Notable features of the interior are moulded plaster ceilings in the Hall, Dining Room and Drawing Room, much beautiful oak panelling especially the handsome Renaissance Screen in the Morning Room, and the "open well" type of staircase running from the lower ground floor to the second floor. The 19th century additions were made skilfully and blend well with the older parts.

Clayton Church had been visited in 1968. The wall paintings for which the church is noted have had further treatment and are now in a very good state of preservation.

TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY
held on November 26th, 1976

The Chairman, Mr. A. B. Huntley, presided.
The Chairman opened the meeting by referring to the loss

suffered by the Society in the death of his predecessor, Brigadier Learmont.

The Chairman's report which had been previously circulated was approved. It showed that membership was slightly down at 325, a fall of about seven per cent. The series of nine lectures had been very well supported, on several occasions to the full capacity of the Shephard Room. Miss Frewer had again arranged five most interesting summer visits and all were well supported. The summer evening party was held at Pyke House, with the help of Mr. Hobson, who gave a short talk. The one item that transcended all others during the year was the purchase of the Abbey and Battlefield for the nation with substantial American help.

The Treasurer's report showed a healthy financial position with a surplus of current income over expenditure of nearly £100. Bank balances had increased by £70 to £513, although this included subscriptions paid in advance and a provision for the printing of *Transactions*. The report was approved.

The Committee's recommendations for the election of officers were approved as follows:—

President: Serving—Miss I. Hope Muntz, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. for the period 1975–77. Vice-Presidents: Re-elected—the Bishop of Sherwood, Miss J. E. S. Robertson 1976–79; serving: Mrs. E. Webster, Mr. A. E. Marson 1974–77, Prof. D. Whitelock, C.B.E., Prof. Eleanor Searle, Mrs. W. N. Palmer, 1975–78. Chairman, Mr. E. G. Creek, elected. Vice-Chairman, elected, Mr. K. N. Crowe; Hon. Secretary, re-elected, Mrs. F. M. Cryer; Hon. Treasurer, re-elected, Mr. D. I. Powell.

There were eight candidates for six vacancies on the Committee and after a poll the following members were declared elected: Mr. H. Hobson, Mr. P. A. W. Howe, Mr. F. W. Kempton, Mr. J. E. Sanders, Miss J. F. Mackenzie, M.B.E. and Mrs. E. Bay Tidy, O.B.E. These persons constituted the Committee together with Miss C. V. Cane, Miss R. Frewer and Mr. B. S. Martin retiring in 1977 and Mr. A. C. G. Mason retiring in 1978.

BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM TRUST

TENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held on November 26th, 1976

The Chairman, Mr. W. N. Palmer, presided.

The Chairman reported that the number of visitors to the Museum was 12,548, about 1,500 below the five-year average, which he attributed more to the fine weather than to the increase in charges for adults. Included in the total were 17 groups from schools. About half of these groups came when the Museum was closed.

An addition to the publications on sale was "Battle, 1066 A.D., a Walk Round the Town" written by the Curator, which was proving deservedly popular.

The Committee were grateful to the volunteers who made possible the opening of the Museum on Sunday afternoons.

Interest in the impending sale of the Abbey resulted in visits to Battle and to the Museum of representatives of the B.B.C. World Service, Southern Television and German Television.

The Treasurer reported that receipts for the past year exceeded payments by a sum of £79, but only after bringing in deposit interest of £119.

The Committee recorded its lively indebtedness to its Treasurer, Curator and Secretary for their services.

Mr. Palmer did not seek re-election and the Committee expressed their appreciation of his nine years' membership, including three years as Chairman.

The Committee recommended the following members for election and they were duly elected and subsequently appointed to the following offices: Chairman, Mr. D. H. Beaty-Pownall; Vice-Chairman, Mr. E. J. Tyler; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. R. W. Bishop; Hon. Secretary/Librarian, Miss J. E. S. Robertson; Hon. Auditor, Mr. J. C. D. Shearing. Committee: Mrs. M. Kempton, Mrs. F. Mason, Miss C. V. Cane and Mr. K. N. Crowe.

After the two meetings Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Mason showed slides taken during the summer visits with a recorded commentary.

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