

# **FERRING HISTORY MAGAZINE**

## **2016**



**Latest Archaeological Find in Ferring**

**COVER STORY:    ARCHAEOLOGY IN FERRING STREET            by David Garnett**

In 2010, part of the garden of Yew Tree Cottage (one of the oldest houses in the village, built c. 1720) on Ferring Street was sold for development. Ed Miller of the Ferring History Group realised that, with the ground cleared, it was that, with the ground cleared, it was ideal for an archaeological survey. This led to John Mills, senior archaeologist for West Sussex County Council, visiting the site and excavating some of the trenches dug by the builders. He found “a single rim sherd from an unglazed coarse ware medieval cooking pot, probably 13<sup>th</sup> Century” but more significantly he also discovered several small pieces of “burnt flint, usually associated with prehistoric activity.

He explained: “The flint was heated to a high temperature, so that it was almost 'spitting', and then dumped in a trough in the ground full of water. The water heated up, in a slow release of heat from the flint, and could be kept simmering by additions of more flint; in the boiling water, food could be cooked. I have heard this process described as an early version of 'boil in the bag'.”

The discovery of burnt flint proves that in the Later Bronze Age (3300 to 2650 years Before Present) people were living, and cooking, in what is still the heart of Ferring village. A new house was built on the site, and before long the owners made their own archaeological discovery in the garden: a glazed clay pot, eleven inches high (pictured on our front cover).

Most excavated pottery (such as the 13<sup>th</sup> Century rim sherd found nearby) is broken, not because it broke in the ground or when found, but because it was already broken and therefore thrown away. But this glazed pot was almost intact. The owners took some photographs which they sent to Ferring History Group. Simon Stevens of Archaeology South East, who gave the F.H.G. talk on Sutton Hoo, saw the photos and thought that the jar could be 14<sup>th</sup> Century. On the history group visit to Worthing museum, the archaeologist James Sainsbury suggested that it could be a 17<sup>th</sup> Century “witch bottle” whereas John Mills thought it “certainly looks post-medieval to me. I would have thought that it was a bit large for a witch bottle, and would have guessed at an 18<sup>th</sup> Century date.”

So what is, or was, a witch bottle . . . ?

First recorded in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> Century and still in use in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, witch bottles were believed to be protection from malign forces and witches' spells, and they were hidden wherever evil spirits could enter the house – doorways, windows, chimneys. Filled with ritual objects such as hair, fingernail clippings, bird feathers, animal bones, iron nails, thorns, needles, perhaps even blood and urine, they could also be buried in the ground to protect the boundaries of a property – which could be the case of the Ferring discovery.

The Ferring jar was almost empty when it was found, with only dirt inside, but that is not significant. In 2009, *The Daily Telegraph* reported a witch bottle being discovered in Greenwich. “Around 200 witch bottles have been found in the past,” said the story, “but this is thought to be the first time one with its contents intact has been discovered.”

Three archaeologists have given different dates for the Ferring jar, based only on photographic evidence, but it seems there will be no opportunity to discover more: the people who found it have moved away, and the whereabouts of the “witch bottle” is unknown.

*Cover photo by Julie Dennison*

# FERRING HISTORY MAGAZINE

Journal of the Ferring History Group. Compiled by Ed Miller: [EdMiller43@msn.com](mailto:EdMiller43@msn.com)

No.2

## Editorial

Last year was a busy year for the Group, with extra events for the 1250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the grant of land for the 'Minster Church. Much of that activity is recorded in this second edition of our new-format magazine. We have over 100 paid-up members (subs for 2016 are now due) and our meetings are always well attended, by non-members as well as members.

We have a good programme of talks, walks and visits for 2016 and we hope to build up the 'Members Only' section to provide a full library of articles, data and photographs for your enjoyment. Please send an e mail asking for a user name and password once you have paid your subscription for the year (passwords will change every year).

It has been good to see some of our own members giving talks and writing material for us in 2015. We very much welcome active involvement in research, presentations and publication – or simply ideas for new speakers, walks or visits, magazine articles or donations to our lending library of local history publications. Please talk to one of the Committee members if you have anything you would like to contribute.

We hope you enjoy this Magazine. Any feedback about what you liked or did not like will be welcome.

## THE BEEHIVE IS NO MORE

One of the earliest modern cottages in Ferring was demolished in October. The developer's application to build a block of flats there was refused in September but consent had previously been granted for four 'chalet bungalows'. With its thatched roof and high hedges, and dominant position opposite the south Ferring shops, 'The Beehive', built around 1925, had been a much loved feature of south Ferring for 90 years. Planning permission for the new houses was given in 2006 but the last owner, Stanley Jenkins, wanted to carry on living in the old cottage, where he had lived for over 40 years, for as long as possible.

When south Ferring was first developed in the mid-1920s, the first roads to be laid out were Ferringham Lane, leading down from the village, Ocean Drive, South Drive (along the seafront) and West Drive. The Beehive stood at the junction of Ferringham Lane and Ocean Drive. A new road, Beehive Lane, was then laid out in 1926 to connect with Sea Lane, taking its name from the cottage.

The Beehive was built by Lionel Guest, a cousin of Winston Churchill's, on land they had bought from Mrs Henty in 1924. According to a report in the Jamaica Gleaner (of all papers) in June 1926, they 'are now developing what is likely to prove to be the most up-to-date new country colony for society at Ferring-on-sea .... Lord and Lady Westmoreland, the latter the daughter of the late Lord Ribblesdale, are among those occupying their own houses at the new colony'. We know that the Equerry to the Prince of Wales spent several summers in one of their Beehive Lane cottages, and there is some evidence (from a later owner) that the Prince himself stayed a short while at The Beehive. He certainly stayed in Ferring several times between 1926 and 1928.

This familiar photograph with the house in the left foreground) was taken around 1927. It shows only a few houses in Ocean Drive and Beehive Lane. It must have been



taken from the upper storey of the shops at the Pantiles, then under construction

A last-minute application, on behalf of the History Group, for ‘listed building’ status was refused by Historic England because the house had been altered substantially from the original 1925 design: an extra wing had been added, and the old window frames had been replaced with PVC.

## **FERRING’S JUBILEE**

**by Ed Miller and Eileen Godfrey**

Queen Victoria had a Golden one in 1887, and a Diamond one in 1897, but what is 50 or 60 years to Ferring? We celebrated a 1250<sup>th</sup> one in 2015. There is probably not a name for that sort of Jubilee it but we marked it in various ways.

On 3 August 765 Osmund and the Bishop of the diocese of Selsey (later to become the diocese of Chichester) signed the document granting an estate at Ferring to support the building of a Minster Church. On 2 August 2015 his successor, the Right Reverend Dr. Martin Warner, Bishop of Chichester visited St. Andrew’s. After the special Service, he cut the first slice of a magnificent celebration Cake.

For the History Group the significance of that date is also that it is the first record of the name Ferring’, about halfway through the Saxon era – and there was only one more record of the name before Domesday. So we gave the year a Saxon theme – with talks on the Saxon burials at Sutton Hoo, and The Church in Saxon Sussex, together with a talk and close-up view of the exhibits at Worthing Museum on Saxon Highdown and the Patching Hoard. Our 16 August walk was up to Highdown and its Saxon Cemetery, and we put together a display for the Village Fair and the Library.

At the Fair, St Andrew’s organised a ‘church building race’ with the youngsters having to run and fetch huge cardboard cubes and make them up into a church-like structure. A new Guide Book for St Andrew’s Church was also in preparation.

Ferring Conservation Group could not quite manage a Saxon venture but did install a small herb garden on the Village Green, in which some of the plants would have been in medicinal and culinary use in Saxon times.



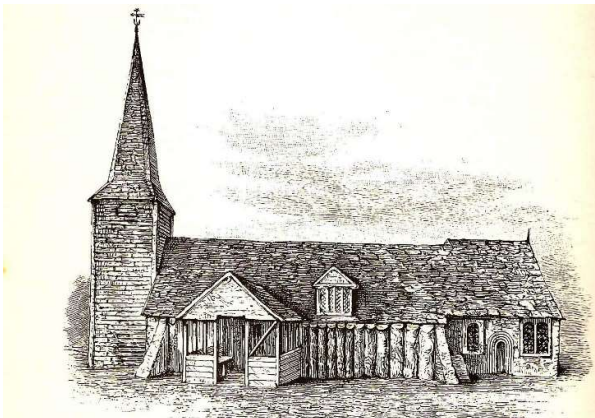
South Downs Film Makers recorded various events in the village. Imagine if we had such a visual record of events 1250 years ago! They have filmed the events connected with the church including the visit of the Bishop of Chichester, and the many happenings in the various clubs and societies in the village have also been filmed. They make special mention of those who have been celebrating special anniversaries: the Library celebrated its 50th anniversary; the Retirement Club celebrated its 35th and the W.I. which is a world-wide organisation, celebrated its centenary. To mark the occasion, Ferring W.I. aimed to provide Worthing hospital with one hundred tiny knitted garments for premature babies. In fact, they almost doubled that number and displayed their work at one of their meetings, all of which has been captured on film. There will be a Grand Showing of the finished film in the Village Hall in the spring of 2016 and a DVD will be available to purchase. What a wonderful legacy to leave for our children and grandchildren!

### THE CHURCH IN ANGLO-SAXON SUSSEX

In July, Dr. Chris Lewis, editor of the Victoria County History volume covering our part of West Sussex) gave the Group an excellent talk on the early Church, as part of the celebrations of the 1250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St Andrew's.

He began with the fact that some of the first Christians in England had been converted by the Celtic monks from Ireland while others had brought the faith to our shores at the time of the Roman occupation. An example of a place name indicating the latter is *Ecclesden* – the first part 'eccles' from the Latin for *church* and the second part 'den' or 'dun' meaning *a whale-backed hill*. Ecclesden is the old name for Highdown and so it is likely that there was a Romano-British chapel of some kind somewhere on the hill.

St. Augustine landed in Kent in AD 597, having been sent by Pope Gregory the Great to convert the people of England. Gradually, Christians became part of an organised church with loyalty to the Pope in Rome who was considered to be the successor of St. Peter. Churches were dedicated to various saints, relics being sent to England to be put under the high altar. In Sussex, St. Pancras was a favourite saint and many churches were dedicated to him. He had been martyred in AD 304 during the Diocletian persecution and St. Augustine's first church in Canterbury was dedicated to him.



In 765, Osmund, King of the Southern Saxons (Sussex) granted land for the building of a Minster Church in Ferring which would have been a wooden construction. It may have looked something like the nave of this timber-built church at Greenstead, Essex. The present church is standing on the original site. Chris Lewis said that these Minsters were common between 550 and 1000 – a period of mission and conversion to Christianity of the pagan South Saxon people.

The translation of the Latin in the Ferring Charter which had been drawn up in AD 762 begins: *In the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, God be our helper, whom we believe and love and know as the redeemer of our works.*

*Therefore, I Osmund, beseeched by my thegn Walhere to give him a piece of land in order to build a minster on it; in response to which prayers I gladly made an everlasting gift of that land for the salvation of my soul; that is 12 hides of land called Ferring, with everything belongs to it in fields, woods, meadows, rivers, springs, and the woodland of Copanora [Coppa's bank] and Titelsham [Titel's ham].* We can only guess at the location of these places.

The document was signed by Osmund himself and by Bishop Oswald. The copy we have is from the 14<sup>th</sup> Century and bears the date *dcclii*. Chris Lewis said this must be a misreading of *dcclv* because other documents tell us that Oswald became Bishop in that year.

AD 970 saw the start of the foundation of the monasteries. These were important in everyday life during Anglo Saxon times and up to the 1530s when they were dissolved by Henry VIII. Monks belonged to a religious order, e.g. the Order of St. Benedict. They took vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Some of these monasteries owed allegiance to churches on the continent who had founded them, for example, St. Pancras Priory in Lewes. William de Warenne had visited the Abbey of Cluny in France and had asked the Abbot to send over some monks to settle in Lewes. The ruins are still to be seen. Monasteries provided alms for the poor, accommodation for the traveller, were responsible for education and for copying manuscripts, especially those used in Services in the various churches.

St. Bede, writing in Jarrow in the 730s in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* tells us about the conversion of the Southern Saxons by St. Wilfrid, Bishop of York, who was assisted by four priests who arrived in Sussex about AD 680. King Æthelwealh had already been converted five years earlier, his godfather at baptism being King Wulfhere of Eafe, belonged to the Christian ruling family of the diocese of Worcester but Bede tells us that *Southern Saxons were ignorant of the divine*



about AD 680. King years earlier, his Mercia. His Queen, Hwicce who were from “*all the rest of the name and faith.*”

According to Bede, there had been no rain in Sussex for the previous three years. The people had no food due to failed harvests and were suicidal, jumping off cliffs. After the baptism of the newly converted Christians, gentle rain followed which they saw as a miracle. We are also told by Bede that although the South Saxons fished in the rivers, they did not know how to fish in the sea. This is something Wilfrid taught them which meant that they might never go hungry again.

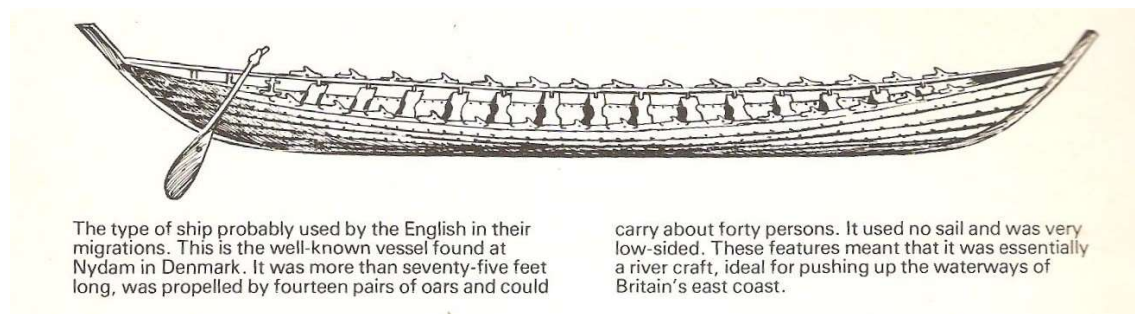
Oswald, King of Northumbria, granted a large piece of land at Selsey, together with livestock. This is where Wilfrid founded a monastery from where the work of conversion continued. He stayed in Sussex for five years. We are not sure how far the conversion of the South Saxons had gone at this point as Bede omits this information. What we are sure of, is the fact that Selsey was the centre of the diocese and therefore the place of the first Cathedral. It was not until after the Norman Conquest that it would be moved to Chichester. The church of St. Peter was taken over and eventually replaced by the present Cathedral built from Quarr stone from the Isle of Wight by Bishop Ralph Luffa who consecrated it in 1108.

Minster churches were territorial church centres rather than parish churches. Each had a community of secular priests rather than those belonging to a monastic order. They were under the supervision of a dean or provost who sent priests out to preach at crosses stationed throughout the territory. As the minster church had exclusive rights of baptism and burial, people had to travel there although they would gather at the local churches (which were gradually being built) for Sunday worship. Eventually, the minster churches like Ferring, Rustington and Lymminster became parish churches thus losing their rights of baptism and burial over the outlying churches which had been under their jurisdiction.

Chris Lewis summed up with the observation that Minster churches, parish churches and monasteries all played their part in the Christian life throughout this early period as the Christian faith spread throughout the area we now call Sussex.

### GRAVES OF ANGLO-SAXON KINGS

In June, Simon Stevens gave the Group a most interesting talk on the Sutton Hoo Burial mounds near Woodbridge in Suffolk, believed to be the burial mounds of the Saxon Kings of East Anglia. They were excavated in 1939 but Simon had worked on a later dig there and was able to give first-hand information about this historical site. Mrs. Edith Pretty, had bought the estate in the 1930s overlooking the River Deben, which included the mounds and nearby Sutton Hoo House where the couple lived. Edith was interested in Spiritualism and believed she could contact the dead through reaching to others in the place where they had died. She called in amateur archaeologist Basil Brown, who discovered in one of the mounds, evidence of a burial ship measuring 98ft by 14ft. He was able to calculate that the ship would have had room for forty oarsmen and was very like the Viking ships found in Scandinavia. He also identified evidence of repairs to the ship and came to the conclusion that it had been used at sea.



It is thought that the ship which was found in Mound 1 was the burial site of King Rædwald, ruler of the East Angles from 593 to 625 but by the time excavations took place there was just a 'ghost outline' of the ship although many rivets were found. Rædwald, who belonged to the Wuffing Dynasty was of Swedish descent. His father was Tytila and his grandfather was Wuffa. The quality of the artefacts found support the theory that this was the burial site of someone of exceptionally high status. These included coins with an appropriate date for the reign of Rædwald, weapons, jewellery and feasting items including the 'Coptic bowl' which the experts have identified as belonging to the classical world around the Mediterranean. Also found were silver dishes, bronze cauldrons and silver spoons.

It is known from early documents that Rædwald was the first king of the East Angles to convert to Christianity. [St. Augustine had arrived two years before] so the spoons may be christening

spoons. His wife, whose name is unknown, was a member of the royal dynasty of Essex and remained pagan. It is also known that in their private temple they had two altars, one for pagan sacrifice and the other presumably for Christian worship. This may also be interpreted as Rædwald hedging his bets, so to speak, and not having fully converted to Christianity.

This site has a very chequered history. A seventeenth century map shows twenty burial mounds but the ploughing of the land for agriculture meant that some have disappeared. There is evidence of ransacking by treasure hunters but they missed the main part of Mound 1, the site of Rædwald's burial, although it must be said that no human remains were found. The experts are not sure if this was a burial site or just a cenotaph commemorating Rædwald. After the early attempts of archaeological excavation, the site was used for various World War II activities and the site was also damaged by bracken roots and rabbit burrows. In 1980, further excavation was started under Martin Carver and by the mid-eighties, York University was involved in the project. This was the time when Simon Stevens started to work on the site.

He described a rather unusual item that was found on the site. He said that this could only be described as resembling a hat stand made of iron! This has been interpreted as an Anglo Saxon ceremonial standard and is thought to have originally been adorned with pendants and streamers. This item sets Rædwald apart from lesser mortals and is important in backing up the theory that he was a person of great importance. Also found was a whetstone, carved with a stag which is a symbol of power, and eight faces thought to be of Rædwald's ancestors. Simon Stevens explained that if you could sharpen your tools, you have power! No other example of this artefact from the Saxon period has been found in this country. A sword found at the site, now rusty, showed a technologically advanced technique of a welded pattern. This sword was thought to be symbolic, as it was too brittle to be used in battle.

There are several items such as gold and garnet fasteners which are very similar to those in the Staffordshire Hoard which was found in 2009. This of course poses the question whether they all made at the same workshop and distributed around to the various Saxon rulers. It is assumed that the gold is Welsh or it may have been from melted-down Roman coins. It is worth noting that the influence of the Roman occupation was still in evidence. A slide on the screen during the talk showed an example of this in the form of a shoulder clasp although the animalistic-style art with its twisted curves is definitely Viking in origin. The lid of a purse follows this trend and has imagery of a hawk grabbing a duck. Inside the purse thirty seven coins were found, each from a different mint in France. Along with these, were three blanks. Where these to make the total up to forty to pay the forty oarsmen who would row the boat to the afterlife? The Great Buckle, now in the British Museum with the other precious artefacts, is of top quality and measures 13 cm long, but the artefact that is most generally identified with Sutton Hoo is the helmet.



What we see is a reconstruction based on other examples, using fragments that were found in the burial mound. It is thought to be purely ceremonial as it would have been most impractical



in battle. If one looks carefully, the figure of a duck can be seen – its wings spread out to form the ‘eyebrows’ and the end feathers of the tail, a ‘moustache’.

Interestingly, in Mound 2 there is evidence of burials of a later date. The soil is sandy and therefore acid which burns away human tissue and leaves a reddish deposit in its place. Careful excavation of the surrounding sand reveals the outline of the original body. Evidence of thirty bodies, known as ‘sand bodies’ were found and all had had their heads cut off! These are thought to be gallows victims which is seen as ironic: the ‘lowest of the low’ buried with the ‘highest of the high’.

*The site was given to the National Trust in 1998 and has been open to the public since 2002. Sutton Hoo House, now known as Tranmere House, has been open to the public since 2010. There is a substantial Visitors’ Centre with a display of replica artefacts and the usual restaurant and visitor comfort facilities. It’s well worth a visit.*

### **THE SAXONS IN FERRING**

The Group made a visit to Worthing Museum on 30 May, for a presentation on the Saxon archaeology of Highdown and Patching. Local archaeologist James Sainsbury outlined what is known about the Saxon settlements that followed the withdrawal of the Roman army in 410 AD and went on to analyse the finds from the Saxon Cemetery on Highdown and the coins and silver objects from the ‘Patching Hoard’. We were then invited to handle some of the objects, including the femur of a very tall Ferring resident from one of the graves.

James said the sources for this period of British history were very few. The withdrawal of the Army from Britain was well documented in Roman history – part of a reduction in commitments in view of the threat from the Goths and other populations moving out of Central and Eastern Europe – but little had been recorded about the arrival in Britain of the Angles, Saxons and Jutes. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, compiled some 400 years later, says that Aelle came to England in 477, with his three sons Cissa, Cymen and Wlencing, landing at Cymenshore (believed to be near Selsey) fighting the Welsh (i.e. the Britons) and driving them into the Weald. It mentions further battles in 485 and 491, at locations probably also in modern Sussex.

James Sainsbury thought the dates for Aelle were about 20 years too late, and that there could be a link between the battle fought in 465 and the burying of the hoard of gold and silver at Patching. This consisted of some 50 coins with dates from 337 to 455 AD, some gold rings and some broken silver pieces. The find site is only a mile north of Highdown Hill, where the large Saxon cemetery was first uncovered in the 1890s. The burials were spread over more than 100 years and the grave goods included swords and other weapons, as well as personal belongings such as the famous Highdown Vase.



It seems possible, at least, that the Patching hoard was buried by one of the Saxon warriors – plunder from battles like that of 465. Another theory was that the person who buried the hoard was a paymaster of some kind, and that some of the early Saxon warrior bands were mercenaries, hired by the Britons to fight the Irish and other groups who were raiding the south coast.

The highlight of the visit was the ‘handling’ session, of some of the gold and silver coins from Patching and shield bosses and other items from Highdown, including that enormous thigh bone.

These talks and handling sessions are now going to be a regular feature of the Museum’s programme – covering the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age, as well as the Saxons.

### **LOOKING FOR THE CEMETERY (and the Windmill)**

On 16 August our Guided walk took us up Ferring Lane, across the Littlehampton Road and up the track to Highdown. We were looking for some evidence of the exact location of the Saxon cemetery and the windmill that, rebuilt many times, stood near the top of the Hill from the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century to the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

It is easy enough to find the Iron Age fort on the hill top. The ramparts are still there (somewhat eroded by 2000 years of weather and human activity), and the Saxon cemetery was no doubt within the ramparts but whatever was uncovered in the various archaeological investigations is now well covered with downland turf. The area enclosed by the ramparts cannot be much more than 200 square yards and more than 150 graves and 28 cremation urns were uncovered, which raises the question of whether any Saxon community, whether warriors or farmers, actually lived on the top of Highdown, rather than just being buried there. No evidence has been found of any buildings of any kind, nor any artefacts of domestic life. Wooden huts would not have been preserved but there were not even any post holes (although some were found for a Bronze Age hut).

We can be sure that by 765 AD Saxons were living down on the coastal plain, in a territory known as Ferring (otherwise there would have been no point in building a church there): we do not know at what time between 450 and 765 AD this settlement was established. Some of the graves on Highdown were oriented east-west, which suggests Christian burials but even in 765 the villagers may have been carrying their dead up to the old hill-top burial ground. Perhaps an early warrior group lived within the old ramparts but a farming community would be much more likely to live on the fertile soil, with a good supply of water from the Rife, than up on the thin, chalky soil of the windy hill top.

Which brings us to the windmill – documented since the 1180s, portrayed in the Bishop’s estate map of 1621, located on the first Ordnance Survey map of 1806, but demolished in the 1820s. The Ordnance Survey map was properly surveyed and should be accurate but the scale is too small, and the hatching round the hillside too dense, to fix the position within 20 or 30 yards. There is no better indication on the ground but the paths are still there, the routes by which villagers came to the mill with their corn, or to buy their flour. The area where they intersect

must contain the mill site. This is just below the top of the hill, to the east of the Iron Age fort. Possibly this was better than a totally exposed spot, or perhaps the mediaeval millers knew of the Saxon cemetery and did not want to disturb it.

We did not find the exact location of either site but on the way up and on the way back, across Highdown, down the footpath to Hangleton Lane and into Langbury Lane, we passed many historic buildings with fascinating stories. A full guide to the walk is on our web site ([ferringhistorygroup.co.uk](http://ferringhistorygroup.co.uk)).

### **LANCING COLLEGE CHAPEL**

On 18 October members of the Group visited Lancing College and its splendid neo-Gothic Chapel. The sun came out and we were able to see from the terrace the stunning view across the Adur. Our tour began here, with a talk about the grounds of the College – including a hilarious account of naval officer training in World War II on the football field, where trainees had to ride ice cream sellers' trikes over the field on compass bearings while having buckets of water thrown over them, simulating the problems of small ship handling.

Our guide was Dr Janet Pennington, Sussex historian and a former Archivist at the College. Inside, we were immediately struck with the scale and ornateness of the building – bigger and better than some English cathedrals. The vaulted ceiling is almost 100 feet high, the rose window at the west end the largest in the country, the main organ has 3,000 pipes. Janet explained how the school and particularly its chapel came to be built on such a scale – through the religious zeal of Nathaniel Woodard, who came to Shoreham as a curate in the 1840s. Woodard was an educationalist who saw High Church Anglicanism as the centre of a worthwhile education.

The Chapel was built over a long period – it was begun in 1868 and is still not finished. The huge 300 ft tower will never be built now but a large porch is still to be added to the west end.



Having told us the story of the building, and its architect R H Carpenter, and of Woodard's struggle to fund the enormous programme of work, Janet Pennington read some of the letters and diaries of the boys attending the school in the Victorian era that she had found in the archives, to great amusement.

We have all admired the distant view of the Chapel from the A27 but close up, and inside, this is an architectural treat that should not be missed. The Chapel is open to visitors most days of the year between 10 am and 4pm.

## MY BRADSHAW SAYS.....

*Bradshaw's Descriptive Railway Handbook* of 1861 enthuses over Worthing but rather sniffs at Littlehampton, and is downright rude about Lancing ...

### ‘WORTHING

Population 5,370. A telegraph station.

HOTELS. – Sea House and Steyne

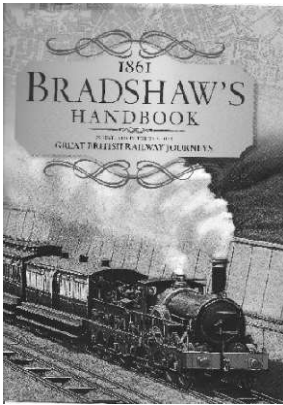
OMNIBUSES to and from the station and Storrington.

MARKET DAYS.- Wednesday (corn), and Saturday.

FAIR - July 20<sup>th</sup>.

MONEY ORDER OFFICE.

BANKERS. – London & County Bank; Henty, Upperton & Co.



This market town has lately become very fashionable as a watering place. Its rise from an insignificant hamlet to its present rank has been rapid almost beyond precedent, even in the annals of this coast. It is said to owe this distinction to the superior mildness of its temperature, arising from the shelter afforded by the Downs, which at the distance of scarcely a mile, environ it, and exclude the chilling blasts of the northern and eastern winds, rendering bathing practicable even in the depths of winter. The climate is perhaps somewhat relaxing. The sands, extending nearly ten miles in length, are level, hard, and compact, and afford a beautiful ride or walk. Like

Brighton, the town follows the line of the sea, the esplanade extending for three-quarters of a mile along the shore. Towards the close of a summer or autumnal evening no more delightful promenade can be imagined than this beach, as it echoes to the hollow murmuring of the waves, rippled with the sea breeze, whilst afar off can be seen the gas-lights of the town of Brighton, forming a continuous chain of beads of light’.

### ‘LITTLEHAMPTON

[The station is a] short distance from a little hamlet on the coast, which has some admirers as a retired watering place.

Telegraph station at Arundel 3 miles.

HOTELS - Norfolk; George, and New.

MAILS - Two arrivals and departures, daily, between London and Littlehampton.

MONEY ORDER OFFICE’.

‘LANSING STATION is close to the pretty ‘sea-side’ village of that name, known as ‘Lancing-by-Sea’, which is in some repute as a quiet, retired bathing place, but it is excessively dull, and *ennuyant*’. [boring]



## THE PARISH MAGAZINE 1935-38

(Bound copies of the magazine for 1915-38 and 1940-41, were kindly donated to the History Group by Derek Tourle in July 2014, following the death of his step-mother Joyce Tourle)

The February 1935 issue showed the accounts of the Village Hall for 1934. The main hall (featured in this post card sent that year) was much used – for socials, dances, whist drives –



and the Billiard Room [now the Club room] brought in over £24. The Recreation Ground [this was the field immediately behind the Hall] was also let out. Receipts were £8-1-3d that year but one of the Hall's largest expenses was 'interest on Recreation Ground, £13-9-11d'. It is not clear what tenure the Village Hall had on it. They had been using for the Village Fair on the August Bank Holiday for at least six years and proceeds from that operation were £116 in 1934.

It was noted that R Tourle, the Clerk and Sexton, was also now the Verger. His family had been in one or more of these roles for the previous 50 years.

Plans were being made for the Silver Jubilee (6 May 1935) and in the next issue there was a very full and witty report of the Jubilee Procession. Some of the detail enables us to date precisely a photograph we have of the tail end of a procession heading down Ocean Drive. The report began, 'Did you see our wonderful procession? Many thanks to Mr Penfold, Mr Palmer and Mr Jenkins for lending us your carts and lorry'. Later it says, 'How lucky we are to have sportsmen like Miss Marshall and Mr Davies, whose efforts really made our parade, and how well their horses were turned out and how well handled'.

Among the many advertisements was a pair for Edward Benton (Coal, Coke and Ironmongery) and Brook Lane Garage, sharing the same telephone number. The garage was originally owned (c. 1930) by a Mr Bull, and was known as 'Bull's Garage'. (*See inside back cover*)

Mrs Child held a garden party at East Ferring House for the Goring and Ferring District Nursing Association.

A Vicarage Fete was held on 19 June 1935 – the first for many years – for the benefit of SPCG Medical Missions. Miss B Moyle, and her father the Vicar (Rev Copley Moyle) organised it. It was fine until 6pm, then rained, but the fete raised £41. Either this or the 10 June 1936 fete (which had maypole dancing and pony rides) must be the event shown in FR Claridge's film.

The Village Hall Fair took place on August Bank Holiday Monday. Some 1100 people attended. A large number of balloons were released carrying messages but none of these seem to have travelled more than a few miles. [*FR Claridge's surviving film of the fair was probably of the 1936 event because there was no reference to the balloons, or to the film being shown at the February 1936 film show – see 'Fascinating Films' on p.16*].

In the 1936 issues there is a reference to the article on St Andrew's Church in *The Gentleman's Magazine* of 1811, with a drawing of the church. We also have the report of a Film and Variety Show at the Village Hall on 24 February in aid of the Goring and Ferring District Nursing Association. The films included a newsreel of King George V's funeral and the first showing of RF Claridge's comedy short, 'A Spot of Bother at the Crossing'. The live entertainment was provided by Joe Goddard and his friends.

Dr (Lt. Col) F W Gibbons of Elm Bank, Langbury Lane, was buried in July 1937. [*He is not to be confused with Lt. Col W F Gibbon, who lived at St Malo (formerly 'Holidays') in Sea Lane. Walter Gibbon left Ferring in 1938 and put St Malo and its contents up for auction. An extraordinary coincidence of names and military rank.*]

Also in 1937, Harriet Street was buried at St Andrews, aged 93. She was one of the two sisters who lived in West Lodge, the gate cottage at the Ferring end of the Ilex Avenue.



In October 1938 the Magazine reported that Col Weekes had sold 'the land originally acquired for a recreation ground and has handed over £1,225 to the Trustees of the Village Hall. This sum will be used to improve the Hall'.

A sub-committee of the Parish Council looked into the question of street lighting for Ferring and put the issue to a Parish Meeting, which must have decided against.

In September there was a Red Cross Fete at Ferring Grange, 'with Nervo & Knox, Flanagan & Allen and Florrie Forde, selling autographs and generously patronising the sideshows'. Several members of the Crazy Gang lived near Ferring, and Bud Flanagan bought his house in Ocean Drive in that year.

In November, mains water was laid to the Village School: before that they may have been pumping it from a well but in the early days it was brought to the school in a pail.

## EIGHTY YEARS AGO IN FERRING – the Silver Jubilee



As the Parish Magazine reported, the Silver Jubilee of George V was celebrated enthusiastically in Ferring. George had come to the throne in turbulent times. In 1910 there was a constitutional crisis, with the House of Lords refusing to pass the Budget, a looming political crisis in Ireland, and industrial unrest in England, as well as a militant campaign for 'Votes for Women'. The House of Lords issue was resolved in 1911 but the other three conflicts grew to alarming proportions by 1914 and were only halted (or rather, suspended) by the outbreak of war.

George V was a popular figure during that terrible war. He changed the family name from the German Saxe-Coburg Gotha to the very British 'Windsor', and took the pledge to abstain from alcohol while the war lasted. Although rarely out of military uniform, his dignified and modest style contrasted with that of the Kaiser. In peacetime he was seen as a unifying influence in Britain and the Empire,

and in 1932 he began the royal Christmas broadcasts. He died in January 1936.

The highlight of the all-day programme was the Grand Carnival Fancy Dress Parade, with an



Empire theme. The procession is seen here coming up Ferring Street.



## **FASCINATING FILMS OF FORGOTTEN FERRING**

Last February brought another chance to see some of the amateur film of Ferring taken by Francis Claridge in the middle and late 1930s. His son, Geoffrey was to present the films and tell us how they were made, and explain the various locations and personalities that appeared in them. Unfortunately Geoffrey wasn't well enough, on the day, to travel from his home in Lavant but Ed Miller was able to read out some of the script that Geoffrey had prepared for the occasion.

Geoffrey's grandfather RF Claridge had a carpentry business in Wimbledon. He came to Ferring in 1929 or 1930 and built two bought two plots of land in the largely empty Ocean Drive. There he built a house for himself (Capel Cottage) and one for his son F R Claridge (Holmwood – later No. 14) and occupied by him after he married in 1931. Grandfather died in 1941 and is buried in Ferring churchyard. Geoffrey's father FR Claridge set up an Estate Agency, for holiday lets as well as properties for sale. He made many short films in Ferring, partly to interest his prospective clients but mainly for his own satisfaction.

The films were made between 1934 and 1939, on 9.5 mm stock. What survives of them was edited and transferred to Compact Disc by, Geoffrey (born 1933), who has kindly donated a copy of the films to Ferring History Group archive.

The full archive consists of

'Introduction to Ferring' (11 mins) in which we see the Summer visitors arrive, a village fair, a Church fete, and an anti-litter exercise by the Residents and Owners Association.



'Apples for Sale' (2 mins) in which Mrs Cunliffe was promoting her orchard in Langbury Lane.

'The 1937 Coronation Procession' (6 mins) in which we follow a number of carnival floats and people in fancy dress down Ocean Drive, along South Drive and back up to the Village centre.

'Trouble at the Crossing' (4 mins), a comedy starring several of FR Claridge's friends based on the familiar experience of being held up at Ferring's level crossing.

'Spring and the Car Mechanics' (11 mins), another comedy with a similar cast with a 'Laurel and Hardy' style story of inept garageworkers, which begins in East Preston and 'runs in' to Ferring (a crash at the Village Hall).





There is also a compilation of Claridge family material, which we did not show but as with the films listed above the interest is as much in the background of the film sequences – the houses and shops under construction, the diminutive cars that people drove, the clothes that they wore, and how easily they were amused. Other films show Worthing town centre, Steyning market and severe flooding at Houghton bridge.

As always when the Claridge films are shown, the large attendance at our Group's meeting, found them both fascinating and very amusing.

Now on DVD, these fragments of Ferring's past will no doubt be enjoyed for many years to come. We know from the Ferring Parish Magazine of 1936 that FR Claridge put on a film show at the Village Hall in February 1936, with a copy of the newsreel of George V's funeral, followed by his own short comedy 'A Spot of Bother at the Crossing', to great delight.

Geoffrey was born in Ferring. He attended Ferring Health School, then Tudor Close Preparatory School, then Goring Hall School. Later, he attended Worthing Art School and became an architect. He married in 1955, at St Andrew's Church (and there is a brief sequence in the 'Family film', outside the church).

His bride was Jill London, daughter of Mr and Mrs London, who had a pharmacy at the northern end of the Pantiles shopping parade in South Ferring. On their marriage, Geoffrey and Jill moved to Worthing and then, in 1958 to Lavant.

They both remember Ferring before and during the Second World War. Geoffrey remembers the coming of mains water to Ferring in 1937 and 1938, using hand-dug trenches. The family did not take in any evacuees but Geoffrey remembered seeing them in the village during the first six months of the war. Although children were being evacuated into Ferring, many families left Ferring at this time, partly the normal 'end of the holidays' return but also because of fears of invasion or enemy attack. This left many houses and bungalows empty and during the very cold winter of 1939/40 many of them suffered from burst pipes and Geoffrey remembered going around, with one of his grandfather's workmen, turning off the stop valves.

FR Claridge's estate agency was dormant and he worked instead for the Ministry of Works, dealing with various property issues. Geoffrey remembered accompanying his father on some of his work trips around Sussex, including one occasion when his father requisitioned a seaside hotel for soldiers returning from Dunkirk. After this, although the London evacuees had returned to London, there was no talk of evacuating any children from Ferring. Jill remembered the ARP post in a vacant shop just south of her father's pharmacy.

## **BOUNDARIES OF FERRING**

The boundaries of Ferring today are quite clear, on a map, anyway – a long, narrow rectangle aligned with the Rife, Hangleton Lane, the back of Highdown, returning over Highdown near the Miller's Tomb and then due south through the Goring Gap to the sea.

On the ground it is not so easy – coming up the Rife, the boundary leaves the stream at the Country Centre and follows the footpath to East Preston for just over 100 yards before striking north along the Country Centre’s boundary fence and across the railway. Now we are in ASDA and its car park, then across Littlehampton Road, with a kick right, along the front of the Wyevale Garden Centre. It is plain sailing up Hangleton Lane, which then becomes a footpath through the old chalk pit and along the hedge up to the top of Highdown. It then runs down the north slope of Highdown, down to a brook just south of Water Lane, and then turns east, to include North Down Farm and Woodlands Stables before turning south, up between Highdown Copse and Goring Wood to just west of the Miller’s Tomb, but none of this is clear on the ground.

From here though, we have the steep-sided path down to the National Park boundary (not yet marked), continuing down to McIntyre’s Lane (not officially named) and the Littlehampton Road again. Crossing the road, the boundary skirts the edge of the houses in Ferring Street and continues on the footpath down to the railway. Across the railway, the boundary runs through the gardens of Singleton Crescent, across Goring Way and between Glynde Avenue and Glynde Close, across Midhurst Drive and into the Ilex Avenue. There are no boundary markers in these streets but the Worthing sections have street lights and the Ferring sections do not.

From the Ilex Avenue to the sea, the boundary runs south-south-east through the Goring Gap but the only feature on the ground is a small copse surrounding an old dried-up pond (previously known as ‘Palmer’s Pond’, after the farmer of the 1930s. On Marine Drive, the boundary is marked (accidentally) by a change of road surface – the ‘Ferring’ sign is somewhat further to the west.

These are the boundaries of the Civil Parish of Ferring established in 1894, inherited from the boundaries of the Ecclesiastical Parish which had survived from the middle ages. They were almost certainly the boundaries of the Bishop’s Manor of Ferring as listed in the Domesday Book, and close to those of the Grant of 765. By the 16<sup>th</sup> Century the south-east corner of this estate, by 1086 already devolved to one Ansfrid, had become a separate manor (of East Ferring). The main manor was of ‘Ferring and Fure’ (Fure was a detached part of the Bishop’s manor, some six miles north of Ferring, near Billingshurst: it was never part of Ferring Parish and lost any connection with Ferring when the manorial system petered out in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century).

Kingston was closely associated with Ferring. Although it was always a separate parish, it was (along with East Preston) under the care of the same vicar until 1913. It had its own chapel until the 1620s, where the vicar or his curate would hold services, and its dead were buried in Ferring churchyard. East Preston was also a separate parish and had its own church and graveyard from at least the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, but again the services were held by the Ferring vicar. This reflects the fact that St Andrew’s, Ferring was founded in 765 as a Minster Church, serving a number of local settlements.

Ferring’s present boundaries then are those of the old manors of Ferring and Fure (without Fure) and East Ferring. The Rife and the sea were natural, but not unchanging boundaries. There have been minor changes in the course of the Rife (some caused by flood prevention works) so that some small scraps of land at the seaward end are still part of Ferring Parish although they are on the Kingston bank. The sea has advanced at least 200 yards since the early 17<sup>th</sup> Century, with the loss of many acres of farmland.

The other boundaries are not at all natural: they follow ancient field boundaries, few of which survive today, on the edge of the Bishop's estate. Hangleton Lane is an obvious route over Highdown, and McIntyre's Lane an obvious continuation of Ferring Lane up to the Mill. As for the Goring Gap, we have a note, in one of the few records of the Manor Court of East Ferring date 1708:

*That on the Twentieth Day of November Anno 1708 The Freeholders and Tennants of the said Mann. Together with the Ancient Inhabitants of the p'ish of Ferring who went over and Trod the Bounds of the sd Mann Did give their Opinion in writing with their and every one of their hands, under named sett (as Fol[loweth] viz)- Wee doe believe and have heard That the Bounds of th said Mannr towards the Sea doe extend itself from Ferring Lane End on the West as far as the Outside of the Dyke Against the Lands of Sr William Goring called the West Boroughams towards the East being about two Furlongs.*

The boundary today is 350 yards east of Sea Lane compared with the two furlongs (440 yards) of 300 years ago. Given the slight eastward angle of the boundary and the loss of 200 yards of farm land to the sea, this confirms the 'land ownership' basis of the boundaries.

If any 'Ancient Inhabitants of the parish of Ferring' would like to tread the Bounds today, one hopes they will find this article and a 1:25000 Ordnance Survey map some help.

## **FERRING IN 1916**

When war was declared in 1914, Ferring already had 13 men serving in the Army or Navy or being recalled from the reserves. More joined as volunteers that Autumn and in 1915 but the supply was limited: men were still needed on the farms. Two men had been killed in action in 1915.

In 1916 the war ground on, with fierce fighting and heavy losses in France (particularly on the Somme) and a bloody, full-scale, naval battle, at Jutland. Conscription was introduced but there were few men still available in Ferring for military service.

In July, the Worthing Gazette reported: 'Applying to the East Preston Tribunal for exemption of two sons, one of whom is acting as Foreman and salesman and the other as a carter and machinist, and also for another carter, a Hangleton farmer stated that his holding was of nearly 300 acres, 100 of which was pasture, 50 potatoes, 50 wheat, and 24 oats. He had 10 horses and 7 able-bodied men to do the work of the farm and if it had not been for the female labour he would not have been able to plant his potatoes. One of his sons was already serving with the colours. The Tribunal decided to allow 6 months conditional exemption'. This must have been the Penfold family, who in the 1911 Census had George (then aged 56) and three sons (William, aged 25; George, aged 23 (the salesman); and Charles, aged 19).

In late September, the Gazette reported an Appeal Tribunal at Chichester deciding on an application by a Ferring Market Gardener, fruit grower and poultry farmer, aged 26, for a renewal of his certificate of exemption. This was granted on the grounds of national interest and hardship, for a further 6 months. Although the age fits Charles Penfold, there is no reason why he should have made an appeal for renewal of his certificate only half way through its duration. Conscription began in March 1916 so it is likely that the appellant had been given 6 months exemption then and had an application for an extension refused by the East Preston Tribunal in August.

Nor was it Fred Grout, of Hangleton Cottages, although he was also working as a market gardener and was 26 at the time. He 'decided to join up', as he put it in a long note he wrote some 50 years later, shortly before he died, and this was probably in 1916 because, although he was not awarded the 1914 Star, he took part in the Somme battles (in particular, Bapaume) in July 1916. He is seen here on home leave in 1916



War news appeared regularly in the Worthing Gazette, with particular reference to the servicemen from the Worthing area. On 7 February, it reported that Major H E Pennethorne RGA, formerly of Ferring, had been promoted to Lt Col. This was the son of the former Vicar (1870-1886). Later in August, the Vicar referred to the 'sacrifice in a righteous conflict' .. including of local people – Lt Henty, grandson of the late Edwin Henty of Ferring Grange, Lt Molson of Goring Hall, Midshipman Candy and, in the ranks, George Kilham, William James Thomas and John Winton. There is no Thomas on the Ferring War Memorial; he is buried in the churchyard of St Mary's, Goring – where his parents lived.

In October, the Worthing Gazette cited the Parish magazine: 'We recently reported the official commendation by his Colonel for his gallantry in raids on the German trenches ... Sad duty now to report the death of Reginald Hoare on the Somme'. ..Always bright, cheery and unselfish he was a universal favourite wherever he went and now he has left us a bright example of duty performed for his King and Country and he has died a soldier's death'. Further details were published in the Parish magazine early the next year: he was in a trench when a German shell exploded, killing him immediately. His Commanding Officer had written to his parents: 'He has done most splendid work out here and was always so bright and cheerful that his loss to us in the Company is very great. I can only express my deepest sympathy, and the whole of the Company also wish to send the same message to you. He died doing his duty in the splendid way he always did it. His grave is there, right up in the Front. My prayer is that you might be comforted at this time of great bereavement.'

In November it reported that Col. Carr, of East Ferring House, had been badly wounded in the capture of Thiepval (at the end of the Somme campaign) but was 'getting on well'.

Meanwhile, back in Ferring, life continued more or less as usual, although with so many men now in the army and navy, more work was carried out on the farms and smallholdings by women. Tragedy struck here too, however. In April: While playing in the garden at Hangleton Nurseries a little boy, two and a half years old, George Bullen, fell into a stoke-hole containing three feet of water and drowned. Rosina Mills of Ferring, who worked for George Bullen snr was a witness to the boy's short disappearance but did not see the accident.

In September Mrs Carr of East Ferring House collected £1-0-61/2d for Graylingwell War Hospital in Chichester, and in October the 'Hospital Sunday' collection raised £5 7s 6d in Ferring Church.

Also, in October, the Gazette reported that a party of archaeologists visited Ferring, after meeting in Worthing. Presumably they were interested in Highdown, where Edwin Henty had excavated the Saxon cemetery some 20 years earlier.

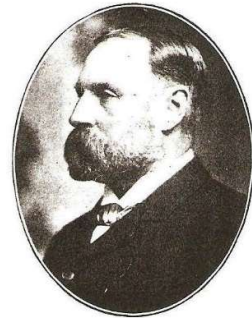


In November, Harold Wesson, of the family ran the village shop, asked East Preston Rural District Council for his wife to be allowed to act as Assistant Overseer and Collector of Rates for Ferring during his absence on active service – which was agreed.

The Vicar and his family featured regularly in the Worthing Gazette reports. On 12 January, it reported Miss Katherine Deane, one of the Vicar's daughters, 'back at the Vicarage from a visit to her brother's family at Lake Kootenay [British Columbia, Canada] after a tempestuous journey. On landing in Britain, she had to prove that she was not a spy'.

In June, the Vicar advertised the vicarage to let from August to October. It was let to a painter, Briton Riviere RA, and on 2 August the Vicar made his annual three-month 'pilgrimage to the Cathedral city' (as the Gazette reported it). Presumably he had some duties in Chichester there as a Canon of the Cathedral.

The year in Ferring ended with the death of Edwin Henty, the last of four generations of Hentys at Ferring Grange. He was 72, and had been unwell for some weeks. He died on Christmas Day. The funeral was attended by many Sussex dignitaries, including the Duke of Norfolk. The wreath from his widow had an inscription, 'God bless you always my darling Wyn, from your loving wife Alma'. She went on to outlive him by 12 years



Mr Edwin Henty, V.D., J.P., D.L.

## RELIGION IN TUDOR SUSSEX

Eileen Godfrey gave a talk to the Group on 7 August, on Religious controversy in Tudor Sussex. After sketching in the background at national level- with Henry VIII's quarrel with Rome, his takeover of the Church in England, the persecution of Catholics and Protestants



under Edward VI and Mary, and the compromise settlement secured by Elizabeth, she went on to show how Sussex was involved in the events of those turbulent and violent middle years of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Even in Ferring, the religious upheavals left their mark.

Most of the clergy conformed to the changes that were required – in the services and the arrangement of their churches, although several bishops and archbishops were burnt at the stake. So were a number of Sussex Protestant

laymen, notably at Lewes (pictured above) and Steyning.

Eileen said the most serious blow in Henry's reign was the dissolution of the monasteries, including Boxgrove Priory and Lewes Priory. The ruins still standing give an impression of the size and importance of the lost buildings but, Eileen said, what was also lost was the learning

of the monks and nuns, their care for the sick, their work in education and the hospitality they provided to travellers.

Ferring had escaped lightly. The bishop's estate was valued in 'the King's Book' but not confiscated. The 'chantry', whereby priests were paid to say regular private masses for the wealthy dead in a designated part of St Andrew's, was abolished but the Vicars adapted as best they could to the changes imposed on them in each reign. The only evidence of how all this affected the general population was in the formulas used in their wills – references to 'God's mother Mary and all the holy company of heaven' changing to 'Jesus Christ my Redeemer' and legacies no longer being left 'to the high altar' or for masses to be said.

The evening ended with a discussion on how religious differences are dealt with in England today – with tolerance and understanding, rather than torture and brutal execution.

### **SOUTH FERRING WALK**

Our New Year's Day walk trod a well-known route, up the Rife, along Brook Lane to the old village centre, across Little Twitten, down Sea Lane and along the seafront to the Bluebird Café. The Rife and the distant view of Highdown present the oldest features of Ferring – themselves millions of years old and showing traces of the earliest inhabitants, Stone Age through to the Saxon settlers. The bridge that carries the footpath between Ferring and Kingston reminds us of the link between the two villages – separate parishes but a single church community from the founding of the Minster church in Ferring in 765 until the creation of a new East Preston with Kingston benefice in 1913.

The footpath back to Ferring, running into Brook Lane, crosses rich farmland – now covered with bungalows but this was the Common Field, where the villagers from the middle ages up to the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century ploughed their narrow strips. Home Farm House at the end of the lane reminds us of the incorporation of these strips into the large holdings of the Henty family.

And so to what survives of the Hentys' mansion, south of the church. This Victorian country house was built over the old Manor House, after Edwin Henty bought the freehold from the Bishop of Chichester. St Andrew's Church is of course the oldest building in Ferring by far but it too was built, in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, over the old timber Saxon church. The small group of cottages in Church Street and Ferring Street just north of the church are the last surviving relics of the village – again, stone and flint buildings replacing the ancient huts that must have stood here in earlier centuries.

Walking across Little Twitten we came to what was formerly called 'East Ferring Lane' and the traces of the old East Ferring manor. Deep in the undergrowth of the copse south of the Ilex Avenue are the foundations of the old manor house – still being used as farmworkers cottages in the 1950s. One sees 'East Ferring House' on the west side of the west side of Sea Lane but although it has been there (with many alterations) since the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, that side of the road until much further south was in the main Ferring manor.

At the south end of the lane, one can tell the story of the Armada beacons, the scene of an alleged large-scale smuggling operation in 1818, and moving along Pattersons Walk, the World War II pill box. It is also worth hearing about the attraction of the beach in the 1920s and 1930s – the large houses (of which only two survive) of the rich and the more modest arrangements for the day trippers, including the Blue Bird Café, opened in 1928.

*A full guide for this walk can be found on our web site – [www.ferringhistorygroup.co.uk](http://www.ferringhistorygroup.co.uk)*

## HENRY KING

Henry King was possibly one of the unluckiest bishops of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century; not quite as unlucky as Archbishop Laud, who was beheaded in 1642, but unlucky all the same. Well-connected (he was a Royal Chaplain and his father was Bishop of London, he was appointed to Chichester as his first bishopric in 1641, but the day after his ordination in February 1642 Parliament introduced a Bill to abolish the bishops altogether. Only a few months later a Parliamentary army besieged Chichester and quickly occupied it, ejecting Bishop King. His estates, like those of the other Bishops, were sequestered in June 1643.



He spent the next 18 years in exile in parts of the country which remained sympathetic to the Royalist cause and Anglicanism, and returned to Chichester immediately Charles II was restored in May 1660. He had been promised the Archbishopric of York (he had even selected his chaplains) but something seems to have gone wrong and he had to pick up the threads again in Sussex.

One of those threads was the Manor of Ferring and the other Episcopal property. The Restoration Parliament moved quickly for the return of all confiscated lands, and King and his staff would have taken back the ownership of the demesne lands in Ferring (including the Manor House) as well as the Lordship. Presumably a new lease was made out, although there is no clear record of it. There is

an Estate Book in the West Sussex Record Office listing all the leases from 1661, but the first mention of Ferring is in 1682 when William Westbrooke was granted a lease ('having surrendered another lease'..). However the will of John Westbrooke in 1666 refers to his 'Farme at Ferring which I hold from the Bishopp of Chichester'.

Henry King died at Chichester in 1669. This portrait of him, painted in 1641, is from the Chichester City Council collection.

## FERRING IN 1841

We have at least three good pieces of evidence for land ownership, occupation and residence in 1841. Most informative is the Tithe Redemption Settlement of 1840, listing every field and cottage and the map of 1837 locating them. Then we have the 1841 Census, the first to show households, with names, ages and occupations. Finally, we have the Births, Marriages and Deaths in the Parish Registers. Tying these, and other sources, together gives us a good picture of life in Ferring at that time, four years into Queen Victoria's reign.

### Land owners and farmers

The Tithe Settlement lists 209 fields and buildings, the Census lists 285 residents in 56

households; the Parish Registers allow us to check the names, ages, and sometimes occupations, of any of those residents who were born in, married in, or (later) died in Ferring.

The major land owners were Edwin Henty (mainly leasehold, in the western half of the parish), and David Lyon (mainly freehold, in the eastern part). Henty, whose grandfather had first leased the estate in 1786, had been adding to his holdings (buying up copyhold land from the Bishop's tenants) but was more engaged in the family's banking business than in land management. He gave his occupation as 'Banker' in the 1841 Census. He was 35, with a young wife and two baby daughters, and had five servants living in at the old manor house. He had made some improvements to the house, clearing away the farm buildings which had adjoined it, but it would be another 25 years before he acquired the freehold and rebuilt the house as the gentleman's residence of 'Ferring Grange'.

David Lyon had only recently bought the East Ferring property (some 130 acres), along with a large estate in Goring, and since he did not live in Ferring he did not appear in this Census. Most of it was farmed, as a tenant, by William Cortis, whose brother had previously owned it. Cortis lived in the 'East Ferring Farm' farmhouse at what is now the Midhurst Drive junction with Sea Lane.

Henty had two major tenant farmers. William Marshall had 169 acres in south Ferring, based on 'Home Farm' about 100 yards west of the house, mainly arable. Thomas Trussler had 135 acres in north Ferring – mixed farming, including sheep on Highdown. He lived in what we now call Franklands Manor in Ferring Lane. Marshall was himself a landowner, and lived not in Henty's farmhouse (now 'Home Farm House') but in his own, 'The Square House' (now 'Greystoke Manor').

The Duke of Norfolk had bought the land north and west of Highdown from the Shelley estate around 1790. This comprised some 110 acres, tenanted by John Duke Olliver. Among the minor landowners (as copyholders) were John Bennett, with 58 acres around the northern end of Langbury Lane, and Hugh Ingram with 30 acres (both tenanted by William Knowles). William Westbrook Richardson had sold most of the East Ferring estate to David Lyon but retained some 40 acres, tenanted by William Olliver.

### **Residents and occupations**

The census shows 56 households, comprising 285 residents. There are six households of Bennetts (23 individuals), four West households (23 individuals), four Mitchell households, three Moore/Moore, two Leggett/Legatte, and two Belchamber/Balchamber.

The Bennett families are difficult to track through subsequent censuses, to work out relationships and to assign to particular houses, but in 1841 they were all classified as Agricultural Labourers and seem to have worked on one or other of the Hangleton farms. The 1840 Tithe Rent Charge schedules show the main farm of 56 acres as the property of John Bennett and there is a tenant farmer, William Knowles. In the 1851 Census a John Bennett, aged 48, is the farmer. This is presumably the owner recorded in 1840. He does not appear in the 1841 Census of Ferring but may have been living nearby because he was running the farm at the time of the 1851 Census and died in Ferring in 1853. The six heads of households in the 1841 Census are presumably brothers and cousins – the family had been in Ferring for at least 200 years.

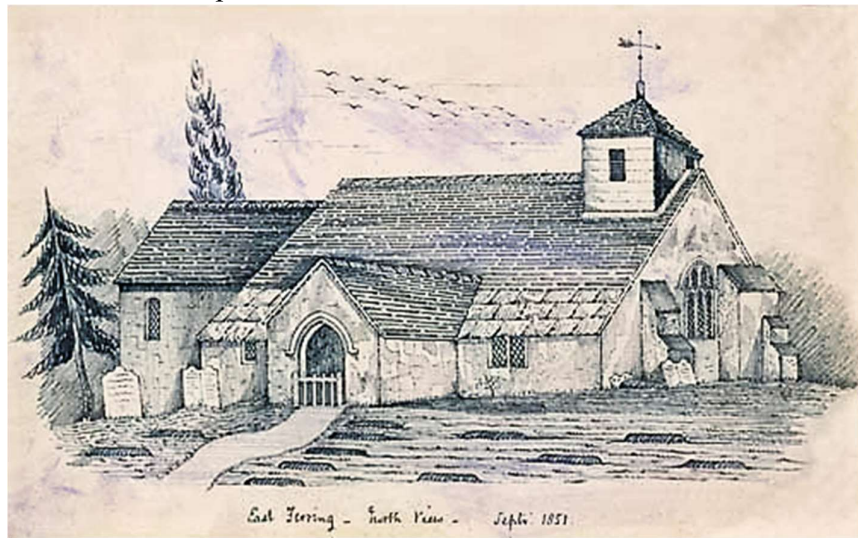


The dominant occupation (usually shown for only the head of the household) is 'Agricultural Labourer', or simply 'Labourer' (35 cases). Others associated with farming are 'Farmer' (7 cases) and one 'Gardener' (i.e. smallholder). There were eight building tradesmen (three carpenters, two joiners, a sawyer, a stonemason and a bricklayer. Surprisingly, there were five shoemakers; less surprisingly, in a coastal village, one sailor. The rest were the two professionals (Banker and Vicar), two 'of independent means', and 28 servants.

Eleven households included servants. William Marshall had six, Edwin Henty had five, the Vicar had four and Thomas Trussler had three. The rest were 'singles', usually in agricultural workers' households and sometimes helping a widower with young children, or simply lodging there.

### **The Church**

The Church was an important social and administrative institution as well as a place of worship. The Vicar, Henry Dixon, had been in post since 1832 and would continue until 1870. He married a cousin of Jane Austen's in 1837 and they lived in the vicarage until her death in 1864. Everyone went to church on Sunday and this was probably the main source of local news. The 'Vestry' had some of the minor local government functions later assumed by the Parish Council and the church ran the only kind of education service – the Sunday school.



The Parish registers show there were only two burials in 1841 – Elizabeth Drewett aged 75 and Thomas Moore (from Littlehampton) aged 50. There were two weddings – George Streeter (a servant) to Anne Kelloway (a servant from Kingston) and George Tellick (a painter from Worthing) to Charlotte Bennett (seven months pregnant). There were 13 baptisms, including a daughter of Edwin Henty's, a daughter to William Marshall, and a son to Thomas Trussler.

### **Everyday life**

For most Ferring residents, life must have been dominated by work (mainly in the fields) and family events, and on Sunday – their only day of rest – attendance at church and a chat with neighbours after the service. Only a handful of residents had much leisure time – those with servants. There is little record of their pastimes or of what they thought about their life.

## OUR PROGRAMME FOR 2016

Meetings (all at 7.30):

5 February: **Brighton -The West Pier Story** - Geoffrey Mead

8 May: **A History of Sport in Ferring** – local speakers

5 August: **Sussex in the Civil War** - Helen Poole

4 November: - **The Romans in Sussex** - David Rudling

9 December: **Christmas Social** – guest speaker to be confirmed

Walks and visits (dates to be confirmed):

**East and West Kingston** - with Ed Miller

**A Historical walk in Brighton** - with Geoffrey Mead

**Tour of Old Tarring** - with Chris Green

**Visit to Bignor Roman Villa**

## RESEARCH

Researching your house, or Ferring ancestors? We can help. Like to do more general research on Ferring? We would welcome that, and help you get started.

## LIBRARY

We have a good selection of old maps, street directories and local history books which we can lend to our members. There are also back numbers of our Newsletter (2001 -2014), with over 100 articles on the history of the village. We also have a database of copies and transcripts of relevant documents from Ferring's history, and a collection of postcards and other photographs of the village's more recent past. Have you got any photographs, postcards, maps, conveyances or other documents that we could copy for our library?

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

Please visit our web site: [www.ferringhistorygroup.co.uk](http://www.ferringhistorygroup.co.uk) where you will find more articles and photographs. And have we got your e mail address for reminders of meetings and other events, including those organised by other local history groups?

Ferring Parish Magazine.

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