

# **FERRING HISTORY MAGAZINE**

## **2023**



**Lionel Guest, cousin of Winston Churchill; resident and one of the developers of Ferring 1922-35. (National Portrait Gallery)**

## OUR PROGRAMME FOR 2023

### Meetings: Fridays at 7.30 in Ferring Village Hall

3 February: Trevor Povey on **Portslade**

5 May: Simon Cornish and Ed Miller on **Ferring on Film**

4 August: Chris Hare on **Worthing in World War II**

3 November: Tim Baldwin on **Victorian Art and Artists in Sussex**

8 December Social: with Chris Horlock on **A Sussex Christmas**

**Walks and Visits:** to be arranged, for the warmer, lighter months.

**Web site:** [ferringhistorygroup.co.uk](http://ferringhistorygroup.co.uk)

We try to keep this up to date, and there are extra pages of text and photographs for our members. Ask Ed Miller for a password.

## COVER STORY

Our front cover (with thanks to the National Portrait Gallery) shows LIONEL GUEST, a cousin of Sir Winston Churchill. With his American wife Flora he was one of the first of the ‘in-comers’ to Ferring in 1922, and died here in 1935.X His family presented to St Andrew’s Church a font cover inscribed with his name, in his memory.



David Garnett tells the story of Guest and the font cover on pages 22 to 24.

# **FERRING HISTORY MAGAZINE**

**Journal of the Ferring History Group. Compiled by Ed Miller: EdMiller43@msn.com No. 9**

## **THE JUBILEE AND THE NEW REIGN**

**by Ed Miller**

In June we celebrated the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Elizabeth's accession to the throne. The anniversary date should have been 6 February, and many of our members will recall that day in 1952. I was 8 years old and at school when the caretaker came into the classroom and whispered to our teacher what he had just heard on his 'wireless' as we used to call it. The teacher told us all to stand up, gave us the news, and told us to say, 'God save the Queen'.

We had a very good day on 4 June 2022. The rain stopped, the sun shone, the wind dropped and a good few hundred residents took part in the activities in the Village Hall, on the Village Green and on Glebelands. The History Group showed film and displays of the way the village had celebrated the jubilees of Queen Victoria and George V, and those of Elizabeth, as well as the coronations of George VI and Elizabeth. Everyone knew this would be the Queen's last jubilee but no one could have expected her reign to end so abruptly just three months later.

The Queen had never visited Ferring (although Princess Anne did, to open a new unit at the Country Centre). Nor did the Queen Mother (and there is no evidence of any link between the Bowes-Lyon family and the Lyons of Goring Hall). But the Queen's death certainly marked the end of an era for thousands of our residents who had known no other monarch on the throne.

In the early 1950s pundits talked about 'the new Elizabethans' and thought the evocation of the first Elizabeth expressed a new optimism and spirit of enterprise linked with the literary, scientific and social progress of the late 16<sup>th</sup> Century (which was not too fanciful). Will anyone want to evoke the memory of Charles I or Charles II as avatars of a new age? Charles I ruled like a despot, waged war against his Parliament, and paid for it with his head. Charles II did not follow the example of his father: he ruled peaceably and died peacefully. In his reign there was a surge in the arts and sciences but he is usually remembered as the Merry Monarch or the consort of Nell Gwyn. His (unofficial) epitaph ran, "Here lies our sovereign Lord the King, Whose word no man relies on, Who never said a foolish thing. Nor ever did a wise one."

Charles III will no doubt create his own reputation. He will have a much shorter reign than his mother, but we already know from his public life as Prince of Wales that he has none of the characteristics of the first two monarchs of that name. He is a serious man, committed to democracy and social progress, and although he may have said a few foolish things as the Prince, he certainly did some wise ones – including his support for environmental causes.

## **CHANGING VICARS IN FERRING**

Our Vicar, Gary Ingram retired last September after 13 years in Ferring. Many of the Ferring Vicars served longer terms: 30 to 40 years in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries and Arthur Mackreth Deane served from 1888 to 1918. But his next three successors had much shorter tenures. Hector Grepe was appointed in August 1918, followed by Thomas Jellicoe in 1924, and Stuart Morgan in 1927. Morgan left in 1934. I wondered why this rapid turnover.

The press cuttings show that Grepe resigned as Parish Council Chairman in April 1924, saying that 'since property in the village had changed hands the time is opportune to appoint someone 'with more vested interests than myself' (a curious view of local democracy)X. Then in July 1924 it was announced that he was resigning as Vicar too, and exchanging parishes with the Rev. Thomas Jellicoe, Rector of Chailey, near Lewes. This was a step up for Grepe – a Rectorship as opposed to a Vicarage, and a living worth twice as much as Ferring. Thomas Jellicoe was a cousin of the famous Admiral (of whom Churchill said, 'He was the only man on either side who could have lost the war in an afternoon', referring to his command of the Grand Fleet at Jutland). For Jellicoe it was a step towards retirement. He was 63 and had been in poor health (he had been 'off sick' for some months earlier in the year) and he said his health was no longer up to the demands of such a large and scattered parish as Chailey.

He must have thought Ferring was a quiet backwater, with a much smaller, more compact population (East Preston and Kingston was now a separate parish). But he announced his resignation just two years later – September 1926, and Stuart Morgan was not appointed until April 1927.

Perhaps it was ill-health again – but Jellicoe lived on for another 16 years, dying in Sullington, near Storrington. Perhaps he found the rapid development of housing too threatening to his idea of a cosy semi-retirement. The short item in the local press says simply that the Parochial Church Council 'records his resignation with regret and expresses its gratitude for all he has done for the church and parish of Ferring'. A rather cool farewell.

Jellicoe's own farewell to his congregation in the Parish magazine dated September 1926 was also odd. He simply said that 'after nearly two years in Ferring, I am to leave it'. He gave no reason but hinted at some problems in his ministry: 'I hope that all who have come under the teaching and discipline of the Church have felt its power. I know some have, and one of the very brightest spots in the work has been the blessings brought to little children, in spite of discouragements and hindrances. ... I am very conscious that a great deal more could have been done in the time but it was not given to *me* to do it.'

Stuart Morgan had been the Curate-in-charge at a church in Heathfield, East Sussex, so this was a step up for him. He had built up the Sunday School there and was a keen Choir Master. In 1930 he arranged for a BBC radio broadcast of a Sunday service at St Andrew's. But he did not stay long at Ferring: after seven years here he said he had come to the conclusion that the Village needed a different sort of vicar. 'If Ferring Church is to make progress in these next ten years and really keep abreast with the immense increase that is going on, and move with the changing character of the place, I do think you need another man', he told the Parochial Church Council in April 1934.

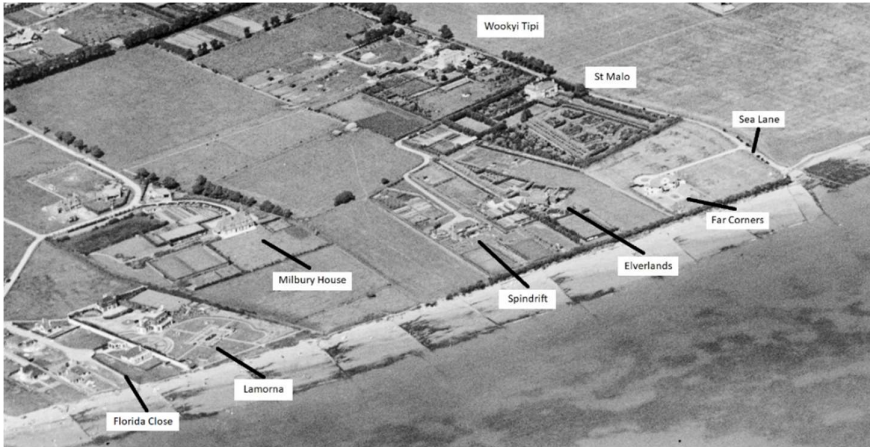
The 'changing character of the place' was certainly evident by 1934. The building boom in both north and south Ferring was changing the old farming village into a suburb of Worthing. The population Xhad been 256 in 1921: by 1931 it was 795. Morgan found a very quiet village in Dorset for his next parish but that presented problems of its own. He published a booklet onS'Music in the Village Church', about 'the problem of a small country church where there is little musical talent available'. But that is what he chose.

Thus the rapid turnover of Vicars between 1924 and 1934 seems to be very muchX a reflection of the rapid changes in population size, social structure and life-style of the village.

## LAMORNA, FLORIDA ROAD

by Simon Cornish

From Sea Lane to Florida Close, the seafront at Ferring was dominated by five large properties between the late 1920s and the late 1960s. Running from east to west, the first, Far Corners still exists in Sea Drive and is easily identified by its green tiled roof. The second property was Elverlands, which stood on the plot where Arundel and Crowborough Courts now reside. Unfortunately, we don't have any photos of this house but we do know that in the grounds were paddocks and stabling. The third property along was Spindrifft (known for a short period as



Ferring Beach circa 1933

Lark Hall). The actual house stood on the land where Doone End is today, with the grounds stretching between what is now Herm Road and Elverlands Close. Ed Miller wrote about Spindrifft in the 2020 magazine.

The next property along was Milbury House (which still exists), and then finally was Lamorna.



Lamorna from the north

Lamorna was built in 1927/28 for Lady Hulton, the widow of Sir Edward Hulton, the newspaper and magazine publisher. The house was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, who was a celebrated architect and garden designer. One of Blomfield's most famous works was the Menin Gate at Ypres. Lamorna was a Florida Road address and was approached via a long driveway just east of where Florida Close is today.

Lady Hulton was born Fanny Warris in 1869. She was a music hall artist, actress and singer who was known by the stage name of Millie Lindon (her mother's maiden name). Her marriage to Hulton was her second marriage. After Hulton's death, she went on to marry twice more.

Lamorna was rented to Sir Kenneth Lee in 1931, and Lady Hulton eventually sold it to him in 1934. Lee was an industrialist and government advisor, born in 1879. His grandfather founded the cotton manufacturing company Tootal Broadhurst Lee. By the late 1900's, Lee was involved in the company's management.



Lady Hulton



He married the American soprano Giulia Strakosch in 1910. He subsequently became chairman of the family business and also sat on numerous government committees. He was knighted in 1934. At the outbreak of World War II, he was appointed Director General of the



Sir Kenneth Lee (left) and Giulia at Lamorna

Ministry of Information, serving until 1940 and then went on to be Director-General of Raw Material Controls at the Ministry of Supply. From 1948 to 1953 he was a member of the Council of Industrial Design, and was heavily involved in the 1951 Festival of Britain. In 1941 he was created a baronet and he died on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1967.

garden went straight down to the beach – Patterson’s Walk did not exist until about 1970. The rear gardens were formally laid out. An aerial photo from 1933 shows a symmetrical layout based on the shapes of quadrants, semi-circles and a central sunken terrace. In 1968 developers tried to get planning permission to build 16 properties (a combination of houses and bungalows) on the site, which was refused. In 1970 they tried again but asked permission to build 13 bungalows.



Lamorna's west boundary wall today



Lamorna from the seafront

This was passed in July 1970, and is today Lamorna Gardens, at the south end of The Warren.

A significant portion of the original boundary wall still exists and the end of this can be seen along Pattersons Walk. The wall runs northwards to the extreme north-west corner of the plot and then turns east and runs behind No 12 Lamorna Gardens.

Our thanks to Suzanne Blake for the photos of Lamorna.

## A FERRING DOWRY

by Ed Miller

A document in West Sussex Record Office (Add Mss 26976) records the wedding of Alice, daughter of John le Nhud, of Northedowne, Ferringge, to Robert le Heyr atte Holte, of Clapham in the 1340s, at Ferring church, and the dowry presented by the bride’s father. There are no parish registers in this period but the Record Office believes the wedding was before 1347.

The dowry was four acres of arable land, and a substantial house with an acre of ground, all at 'Holte'. There is still a Holt Farm in Clapham, opposite Castle Goring, on the A27 (latterly the home of the Somerset family) and this is probably the land and farmhouse referred to. It may be wondered how 'le Nhud' of Ferring came to own land in Clapham.

This is time when personal surnames were evolving from occupational, dwelling-place and other descriptors. 'Le Nhud' probably refers to his status as a cattle farmer (in Shakespeare's time a 'neat' was a cow or bull). Some 10 years earlier, the fourth highest taxpayer in Ferring was 'Simone le Nhed' (possibly John's father) and if John was farming at Northdown (the north side of Highdown) it was quite likely that he owned a few acres at Holt, just a mile or two to the east.

## **Malcolm Linfield's HISTORY OF THE WORTHING GLASSHOUSE INDUSTRY**

Report by Helen McCutchan

On a warm spring evening the packed village hall eagerly anticipated Malcolm Linfield's talk on the Worthing Glass House Industry. Malcolm is a well-known horticulturist and local historian working at the Ferring Country Centre. His passion for horticulture was tangible throughout the talk, bringing the past to life with some amazing photographs of the crops grown in the prime of the glass house industry. The period covered from 1830 through to the last glass house closing in 1986.

The industry had humble beginnings. We learnt that between 1830 and 1850 most of the owners were market gardeners of modest means. 'Worthing Grown' earned a reputation all over the country as a prime growing area producing quality crops. The climate in Worthing which was three weeks ahead of the North of the country, combined with the fertile brick earth soil, facilitated favourable growing conditions. In turn this provided more growing capacity and better income.

Readily available fertiliser in the form of seaweed was also used, something we would all approve of now, particularly when the seaweed gathers on the shoreline producing its own special 'fragrance'. Another common fertiliser was the use of mackerel or sprats. It doesn't take much imagination to believe that aroma must have outdone the seaweed!

Other factors that assisted the boom included the development of the railway in 1845 with a line between Brighton and Worthing. The invention of sheet glass in 1833 which replaced the expensive crown glass previously used, cutting the cost by at least half. The repeal of heavy taxes on glass made the expansion of the glasshouse industry a realistic ambition.

Affordable and efficient boilers, essential to heating and maintaining the correct temperatures also played a part. Favourable credit terms for glasshouse construction also helped. We learnt they did not recoup their credit until the growers had sold their first crops. The growers also supported each other in the industry.

By 1880 'pioneers' exploiting the industry saw an explosion of glasshouses. What did they grow? Grapes, including the Black Hambro variety were the favoured crop but vines took 3-5

years to establish. Other crops included tomatoes, cucumbers, strawberries and later chrysanthemums, mushrooms and peaches.



This beautiful photograph of Fullers glasshouse in Lancing shows an abundance of perfect grapes, bringing to life the importance of maintaining and managing the glasshouses.

The most lucrative crops were tomatoes. They had not been a commonly popular item for many years, often treated with suspicion. Initially they were used as a cooking ingredient in sauces etc, then they became a fashionable food eaten raw in salads. Cucumbers were grown in hot steamy tropical conditions facilitated by boilers. Malcolm vividly described the reality of the unpleasant working conditions endured. Cucumbers were in great demand and could fetch 12 shillings a dozen, but they were expensive to produce.

Strawberries became the specialist crop for the Magnet Bros in Lansdowne Road who supplied Buckingham Palace. One photograph from the 1890's showed the technique of growing each individual plant in its own terracotta pot. Fertilising the flowers was done by hand using a rabbit's tail. The amount was staggering, at one point the nursery had 40,000 plants. The number of rabbits donating their tails wasn't mentioned.

After the tomato crops were removed, chrysanthemums were brought in from outside to bring them on. Combined cropping with grapes also occurred. A.G. Linfield began the fashion of growing mushrooms on the floor of the vine houses, it was a risky move but when it was successful, the mushrooms brought more revenue than the grapes. Henry Hollis was the first grower to produce carnations and remained the only one growing orchids.

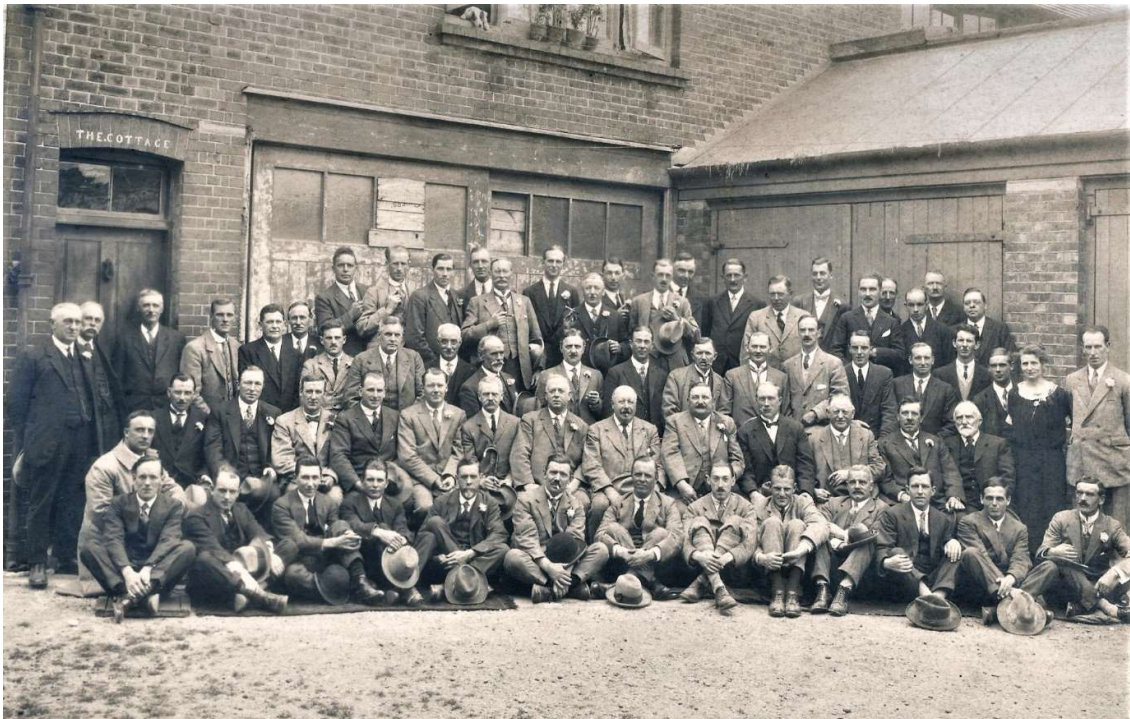
The advent of World War 1 changed the trend of which crops were grown. The government decreed what could be grown, stipulating tomatoes, cucumbers and lettuce. For the first time



women worked in the glasshouses to replace many of the men who joined up. This was illustrated by a wonderful photograph of some Land Girls harvesting mushrooms.

Post WW1, the vines were depleted, more tomatoes were grown and cut flowers were in demand. The Lea Valley took over the no. 1 slot from Worthing; Smithfield was nearer and transport costs were less. Sadly, the glasshouses were beginning to show their age and the decline had begun.

The photograph below is believed to be the first meeting of the newly formed Home Counties Market Growers' Association in 1921, probably in the Lea Valley. Included among the growers are several from the Worthing area including Arthur Linfield (junior), Stanley Frampton, Frank Sparkes and his three sons and Henry Hollis. As the owners were usually men, it's interesting to note a solitary lady in the picture, sadly there is no information about her.



World War 2 caused major upheaval in the industry. Once again, they were told what to grow. Tomatoes were the most important crop. Cut flower growing was reduced to 10% of pre-war production.

In 1945 the cropping order was revoked, the tomato production was reduced with a major shift towards flowers. Around 1965 John Manning grew chrysanthemums at his nursery in Hangleton Lane. Between 1952-59 there was a sharp rise in land values which caused the greatest losses of glasshouses. Nurseries were declining in numbers and many sadly abandoned and in a state of disrepair. Many houses in Worthing are built on the site of the land where the nurseries once thrived, providing a living for many men (later women) and quality fresh produce with all the history and hard work to have made that happen.

By the 1980's the remaining glasshouses were more than 100 years old, old-fashioned and showing their age. The surrounding building development had reduced the light and there was no room to expand. By 1986 sadly, the last remaining glasshouse at Lyon's Farm closed.

## FERRING'S GENERAL

by Simon Cornish

Major-General Cyril Lomax CB CBE DSO & Two Bars MC lived at Rosegarth, 21 Sea Lane, from the mid-1950s until his death in 1973, and is buried in the churchyard in Ferring.

Born in Birmingham in June 1893, he was educated at Marlborough College, attended the Royal Military College, Sandhurst and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant into the Welch Regiment in September 1912. Lomax saw action all through the First World War and was promoted several times. He was awarded the Military Cross in 1916 and mentioned in despatches five times throughout the war.

Between the wars, Lomax remained in the army, holding various ranks with various battalions. Just before the outbreak of the Second World War he was promoted to full Colonel and given command of 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade.



Major-General Lomax

Throughout the Second World War, he again saw action in Egypt with the Western Desert Force, and in Syria, Lebanon, Tobruk, Ceylon and India. In February 1941 Lomax was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire. He was promoted to acting Major-General in June 1942 and the rank was made substantive in December 1944. Lomax retired from the army in September 1949 but maintained his links with the army in honorary positions.

Lomax was married to Rene Lomax. Their son Peter Francis Napier Lomax, a pilot officer with 229 Squadron, RAF died in action on 24 February 1940

## FERRING CRICKET IN 1895

In April 1895 the Worthing Gazette reported on the fixtures for the coming season. The Hon. Sec. was Peter Tourle (the Great Panjandrum of Ferring) and he had arranged the following matches: Saturday 4 May, Patching (away); Saturday 25 May; Southwick (away); Monday 3 June, Portslade (at home); Wednesday 12 June, Rustington (away); Wednesday 10 July, West Tarring (away); Saturday 27 July, Rustington (at home); Wednesday 5 August, Preston Strugglers (at home); Wednesday 21 August, Portslade (away); Saturday 31 August, Patching (at home); Wednesday 18 September, Tarring (at home); Saturday 28 September, Southwick (at home).

The annual accounts showed income of £12 1/-, expenditure £12 6/- and a balance of 19/10d. In the previous season they had won five matches and lost four. The President of the Club was Edwin Henty, the vice-presidents the Vicar (AM Deane). Arthur Smith and W P Cortis. Other Committee members included Henty's Bailiff Albert Cosens, Charles Lower of Hangleton Farm and Albert Hills the landlord of the New Inn.

Richard Standing, the historian of East Preston, tells us, 'Cricket club matches involving East Preston are reported from 1868 with games against Ferring. Before the modern weekend it mattered little on what day such events took place, barring Sunday which was sacred. Tuesdays,

Fridays, and Mondays were favoured but for no obvious reason. A feature of the early club matches is that they had two innings, but a long afternoon would have been sufficient for men who made hay with a scythe'.

Ferring's home ground in 1895 was probably the one they used up to the 1930s – a farmer's field south of the railway line and east of the crossing. This belonged to the Hentys until 1930, when it was sold off with the rest of the northern half of the Henty estate. Cricket continued there until the development of Onslow Parade shops in 1936 and the Elm Park houses in 1938 made it impossible.

## **FERRING GRANGE SCHOOL**

**by David Garnett**

The 2022 issue of *Ferring History Magazine* detailed the transformation of Ferring Grange, home of the Henty family since the end of the eighteenth century, into the Ferring Grange Hotel. There was, however, a brief interlude between these two episodes in the building's history, when it became a school.

With the death of the second Edwin Henty (1844-1916), his wife Georgiana (1854-1928) became the last of the Ferring Hentys. A few years later she set about selling the family estate. After first attempting a private sale, then an auction, the land was divided up and sold as smaller lots. In April 1924, the house and its grounds were bought by Charles Draycott and Percival Ridley Hooper. (For more on Draycott see *The Day Before Yesterday* by Ed Miller, p 16).

Hooper was the 'sub-purchaser' and provided the funds for the sale. A Cambridge University database lists him as teaching in Scotland and Wales, then as 'Head Master of Charlecote Prep. School, Worthing, 1919-1927'. It seems that in 1924 Charlecote School moved premises from Byron Road, Worthing to Ferring, where it became the Ferring Grange School.

Further evidence for this comes from a copy of *Ferring Grange Magazine* in the archives of West Sussex Libraries. This is the 'Christmas Term, 1925' issue, which is 'No. 18' -- but it is extremely unlikely that seventeen previous issues were published in the short time since Hooper had bought Ferring Grange. If, however, *Ferring Grange Magazine* is the successor to an earlier *Charlecote School Magazine*, the numbering sequence is a more credible one issue per term.

The editorial to the Christmas 1925 issue mentions that it was 'written by the light of an oil lamp' because in November the school's gas plant was destroyed. Electricity first came to Ferring, if not yet to the Grange, in 1925 and mains gas three years later. The building had to rely on its own gas engine for lighting, a process which involved heating coal in an air-free 'retort' and storing the gas in a pressurised tank. The Grange gas plant was located 'close to the newly-constructed lane leading down to the sea' (Ferringham Lane) and it is quite likely that it was never rebuilt, instead being replaced with electricity via the sub-station built on the same site- a successor to which is still there.

A falling tree had destroyed the gas plant, and the editorial continued: "Our consolation lies in the fact that the damage was only to material and not life or limb. The work of reconstruction is slow owing to the leisurely habits of the Insurance Companies, but we hope by next term once more to be employing our gas-winders, who were thrown out of work by the accident, yet quite forgot to apply for the 'dole' as they might have done." This is a reference to the pupils who helped operate the gas plant.



The pupils also contributed to the magazine pages, and an example of schoolboy humour from a century ago can be found in their own version of the gas plant accident (reproduced here).

### Ferring Grange Magazine.

[Extract from *The Daily Clap-Trap* of Monday, November 9th, 1925].

#### SENSATIONAL UP-ROOTING OF A GIANT ELM.

(From our Own Correspondent).

Ferring-next-the-Sea, Sussex.

Sunday.

Exciting scenes were witnessed this afternoon in the beautiful grounds of Ferring Grange, a Boys' Preparatory School, near Worthing, when a gigantic elm was blown down, completely demolishing a building containing the gas engines which supply the School with light.

A feature of this alarming catastrophe was its overwhelming suddenness: but fortunately no boys appear to have been in the immediate vicinity at the time, though only five minutes previously, several of the pupils had been in the gas house winding up the weights which regulated the supply of gas.

[Extract from *The Daily Clap-Trap* of Tuesday, November 10, 1925].

#### THE DEMOLISHED GAS HOUSE.

(From our Special Correspondent).

Ferring, Sussex.

Monday.

The awe-inspiring spectacle of the destruction on Sunday, by a falling elm, of the gas plant which supplies Ferring Grange School with light, this morning attracted a large crowd to the scene of disaster. The ruined building which is close to the newly-constructed lane leading down to the sea, now appears as if it had been hit by a well-directed shell.

Eye-witnesses and others who were in the locality gave me vivid accounts of the upheaval.

Mr. Snooks, of Snoring-by-Sea, said that it so transpired that as he was returning home to tea, he heard what he thought was the rumble of thunder; while Mrs. Waggles, who lives in an old-world cottage, picturesquely thatched, a short distance from the scene of destruction, said she heard what she took to be a man emptying sacks of coals—only much louder; but, later on, thought it "funny," as it was Sunday.

Hopes are entertained that the wreckage will soon be cleared.

This was balanced by more serious articles on worthy subject such as 'Some Japanese Customs and Beliefs' and 'The Basque Country'. There was also a piece on 'Some Early History of Ferring and the Grange' with part of the report by 'S.S' in *The Topographer* of September 1790, which has often been referenced in these pages.

Much of *Ferring Grange Magazine* was devoted to the exploits of the school football team. "Last year we failed to score a goal, whereas this term we scored in every match except two ... the revival has gladdened our hearts, and to see our forwards at last shooting goals took us back to our palmier days, when even Brighton Preparatory School feared us". There were results (played 8, won 3, lost 5), match Xreports, paragraphs onX the top players ('characters of



football colours') and a list of those who 'also played' for the team. 'F.C. Hummel' was one of those names.

77 years later] Fred Hummel published his memoirs: *Memories of Forestry and Travel: Uganda, Mexico, Britain, Brussels and Beyond* (2002). Because his father worked for the colonial office he grew up overseas, and he remembered going to school in England when he was nine years old:

"Ferring Grange was a small preparatory boarding school for boys, which was situated a few miles from Worthing and within easy walking distance of the south coast. The school had originally been a privately owned country house and was set within ample grounds some of which had been converted into playing fields. It was on the recommendation of friends that my parents left me there before returning to British Honduras at the end of 1924. I was not to see them again until their next leave in 1927.

"The boys ranged in age from seven to thirteen, when they went on to public schools. We were split into four classes with about ten boys in each, and I quite liked the lessons. Much harder to bear was the regimentation to which we were subjected. Even all games and other free time activities were organised and supervised. That may have been necessary to keep us out of mischief, but there was no excuse for the dismal standard of catering and the censoring of our letters home."

Hummel concludes his time in Ferring: "In 1926 my parents decided to continue my education in Augsburg." His parents were both born in Bavaria, and he was sent to St Stephan's school. Founded in 1828, the school continues to this day. Ferring Grange School had a far shorter history. It closed in 1927, and Percival Hooper became an assistant master at Brighton College. And, as narrated in the 2022 *Ferring History Magazine*, the Grange was bought by Major Wallace John McNab -- and became Ferring Grange Hotel . . .

Dr Frederick Cornelius Hummell died in 2012, aged 97. Part of his obituary in *The Times* read: 'Fred Hummell was a forester who worked in many countries and for diverse organisations including the Colonial Forest Service, The Forestry Commission . . . He oversaw the application of new methods in forest management which are now practised, and taught in Universities around the world.'

## **WESTBROOK MEMORIALS**

On the south wall of St Andrew's Church is a group of four memorials, all of the Westbrook family. The most important of them is the one to William and Elizabeth Westbrook. He died in February 1702 (in modern chronology 1703 because at that time the year began on 25 March), she in 1694. The most important because he was probably the wealthiest man in Ferring and the best known outside the parish. The other memorials are to his brother Richard and two of his granddaughters. His parents have a large floorstone (not currently visible~~X~~) and one of his daughters is also buried here but no stone has been seen.

William was born in Godalming, in 1638. His father, John Westbrook, was a landowner in Surrey, and a supporter of Parliament in the Civil War – a Captain of Militia, Justice of the Peace and, in 1659 and 1660, Member of Parliament for Haslemere. John then settled in Ferring, where his wife (one of the Watersfields) owned land, and took out a lease of the restored Bishop's estate.

William trained as a barrister at the Inner Temple from 1655 and was called to the bar in 1663. In that year he married Elizabeth Houghton, in London. He seems to have settled in Ferring soon after that because his father passed to him the lease of the 'Ferring Farm' before he died (in 1666). His brothers inherited John's estates in Surrey but William, the eldest son, inherited the rest, including 25 acres on the far side of Highdown.

William became the Steward of 16 manors in Sussex: East Preston, Wick, Kingston and Brinsbury in 1671, Goring in 1672, East Angmering in 1679 and Donnington and Lancing in 1685. In that year he also became Steward of Ferring Manor, as well as lessee of the Manor Place and its demesne, and remained so for the rest of his life. He did not stop there: in 1688 he was Steward of Streatham and Tangmere, 1694 Cakeham, Barlavington in 1695, Rustington and Selsey in 1696. In 1698 he was Steward of Aldingbourne Manor. He may not have held all these posts at the same time, and he must have had clerks working for him. But it was a very large portfolio.

Not content with that, he was a Magistrate, Commissioner for Assessment (of taxes), Member of Parliament for Arundel in 1685 and for Bramber in 1698, and Recorder (part-time Judge) for Portsmouth from 1689 until his death. The Inner Temple wanted to make him a Bencher (governing member) in 1683 but he declined saying he was too busy with his '*little affairs in the country*' and rarely came to London.

William probably lived at Ferring Grange but he also owned the farmstead of East Ferring where he was Lord of that (rather small) Manor, and the Manors of Portslade, Atlingworth and Lufford. The 1670 Hearth Tax returns show him with seven hearths – two of which may have been at the East Ferring farmstead. With all his other commitments he would probably have let East Ferring Manor Farm to a tenant farmer.

He had five daughters (one died aged 19) and no sons. His will left his land and manors to the four surviving daughters but in a rather vague way (unexpectedly for a lawyer). He left his lands in Surrey and his copyholds in Ferring to the eldest daughter, Barbara, but the rest of his property, including the Manor of Portslade and Atlingworth to the other three daughters. His will says he intends to allocate these manors and lands to each of them separately. He made this will on 2 September, 'in good health' he wrote, two and a half years before his death, out of prudence, 'considering the uncertainty of life', and he died before he made a detailed allocation.

The will was contested by his sister, Phoebe (it is not clear why) but probate was confirmed. The three daughters jointly leased out the Ferring estate for one year and then Mary Westbrook was given a lease in her own name. Elizabeth took on the Manor of Portslade.

We know little about William's wife, Elizabeth Houghton. She came from Mayfield, East Sussex, and had land of her own. It seems to have been a happy match. She died in 1694 he said in his will that he wanted to be buried next to her in Ferring Church. He was, and as well as the floor stone, there is the tablet on the wall 'erected by their grieving daughters' with a Latin inscription that translates as 'Love joined us in our bridal chamber, as Death has in our tomb. At the end we rest happy in one urn'.

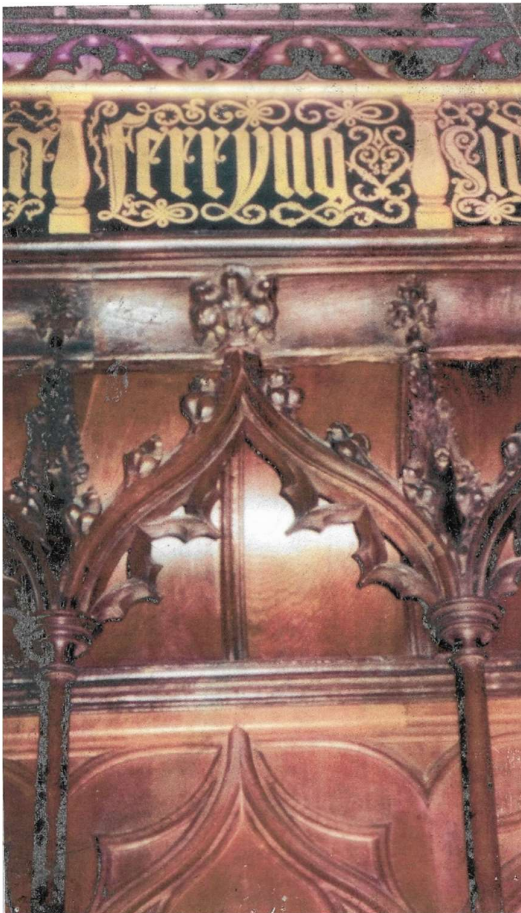
His brother Richard has an impressive memorial tablet next to him. He was born in Godalming in 1651 and seems to have been a merchant who settled in Cyprus. The Latin inscription on the tablet says he was a Consul there for some 20 years, 'not without profit and honour', but

‘returned home and took care that when his soul went to heaven, his remains would be buried here’.

On the other side is the monument to his grand-daughter, Elizabeth Richardson, ‘a loving parent, of exemplary piety’ and on the far left a monument to another granddaughter. Barbara Johnson, also a lady ‘of exemplary piety’. Both tablets spell out and emphasise the relationship with this rich and powerful man. William’s daughter Mary, also buried remained a spinster and there were no children keen to establish their lineage in any memorial.

## FERRING’S PREBENDAL STALL

by Ed Miller



Where is this?

Our member Angela Simmons tells me it is in Chichester Cathedral, in the Choir section.

What exactly is it?

It is, she told me, one of the seats, or ‘stalls’, at the back of the Choir, reserved for Cathedral officials. This is the one reserved for the Prebendary of Ferring – that is a senior clergyman with certain responsibilities, whose stipend was financed by the ‘prebend’, tithes andX land assigned to him in Ferring.

When was it carved?

The late-mediaeval spelling and the style of the furnishing and decoration are a clue. ‘The Buildings of England – Sussex West’ says these old stalls can be dated to c.1315, by analogy with those of Winchester Cathedral.

The Ferring prebend was established some time between 1147 and 1169. The record (in SRS vol.46) reads, ‘I Hylary Bishop of Chichester with the consent of the Chapter have granted for a prebend of the church of Chichester the church of Feringes with the chapels of Kingston and East Preston and specially all the tithes of my

demesne of Ferring ...’. The Bishops of Chichester were, of course, Lords of the Manor and received the rents and services of their tenants, as well as the profits of their own farm, and continued to do so while the Prebendary took the tithes. The Prebendary fulfilled the function of Rector, and appointed the Vicar of Ferring, paying him a small stipend and, later, awarding him the ‘small tithes’ (that is, excluding those of cereals and hay) and a portion of the prebendal estate (the ‘Glebe’).

By the 16<sup>th</sup> Century the remaining part of the Rectory Estate had been leased out to a succession of ‘lay impropriators’. One of these, was ‘Mr Shelley of Hendfild’ and in 1571 he was reported to the Chichester diocese for failing to maintain the chancel of St Andrew’s Church. This was the Rector’s duty, part and parcel of the impropriator’s lease, and the subject of endless complaints about neglect. From the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century the Rectory (prebendal) estate was always

leased alongside the Bishop's estate, and the last impropriator was Edwin Henty snr., who bought the freehold from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1859. There is no liability for chancel repairs on any subsequent owners of that property.

The Prebend continued in some form, into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In January 1922 the Rev. J Salway, Vicar of Eastbourne, was appointed Prebendary of Ferring, but it is not clear whether he had any previous connection the parish, or any duties to perform as its Prebendary. Possibly not.

## **DATING FERRING POSTCARDS AND PHOTOS**

**by Simon Cornish**

One thing those of us on the committee of Ferring History Group spend a lot of time doing is trying to date old photos and postcards. About half the postcards we have are used and therefore display a postmark but these are often these are misleading. It is not unusual for a postcard to be used decades after the picture on it was taken.

For the purposes of this article, I will work through how we dated four Ferring postcards.

### **Island Cottages – Ferringham Lane**



Ferringham Lane, looking south from junction with Brook Lane

This postcard was taken in Ferringham Lane, just adjacent to the junction with Brook Lane, looking south. There were two cottages that appear to be in the middle of the road (one behind the other). Ferringham Lane ran to the left of the cottages. The sign of the right hand side of the cottages is pointing directly up Brook Lane to the Ferring & Kingston Dairy. At this time, there were very few properties south of Home Farm Cottages but once South Ferring began to be built up, these cottages were demolished. Properties were just starting to be built in South Ferring in 1926. In this picture, there is a telegraph pole, with quite a number of insulators on it. So, this must make the picture post 1926. These cottages were demolished around 1933/34, so it must be before then. However, there is a really good clue in the picture. Pasted on the



water tank is a poster advertising a “Pound Day” in aid of Worthing Hospital. By blowing up that portion of the picture, we can make out the words “Saturday”, and “September”.

A Pound Day was a fundraising day – donations of groceries weighing a pound each were sold to raise money for a good cause – in this case Worthing Hospital. Pound Days were reported in the *Worthing Gazette* – so, we need to look at the dates of Pound Days in between 1926 and 1935. Usually, the Pound Days in Worthing were held in either October or November. In our range, there is one exception – 1929 where the Pound Day was held on 14<sup>th</sup> September. So, that quite accurately dates this picture to 1929.

### Ocean Parade Looking East



Ocean Parade looking east.

This postcard was taken outside the old kitchen/bathroom shop in Ocean Parade looking east. At the time this was taken, that particular shop was a grocery shop, run for many years by Leslie Allen. Unlike the previous postcard, there are no posters to aid with dating. So, in this case, we are going to use Street Directories. These were books produced most years which listed who lived at each address, together with business and commercial details. The most popular version of these was produced by Kelly's.

By examining and blowing up the image, we know that the shops were (furthest to nearest), J T Gibbs (Shoe mender), Marjorie Court (Dressmaker), Michael Hair Fashions. Another clue may be the house that appears directly behind the car – a house called Erin, in Beehive Lane, which for many years was a private school run by Miss Turnbull.

So, to the street directories. Let's hazard a guess, and start with 1953, and work forward. We have street directories for 1953, 1956, 1960, 1962, 1964, and 1966. Michael Hair Fashions and Marjorie Court first appear in 1966. Bearing in mind these directories can be a year out of date,

that makes our image 1965 or after. The house I mentioned in Beehive Lane (Erin) is listed in the 1964 directory but in the 1966 directory it has been replaced by two bungalows – 3, and 3a. So, 1965 seems the right date for our image.

### **Lilac Cottage, and the Tob-a-Con. Ferring Street**



Lilac Cottage and the Tob-a-Con, Ferring Street

Like the postcard of the Island Cottages in Ferringham Lane, this image shows a poster on an 'A Board' outside the shop. The poster is advertising a concert at the Pier Pavilion by Worthing Municipal Orchestra. We can just make out the conductors name – Herbert Lodge. Research shows that Lodge was the conductor of Worthing Municipal Orchestra between 1935 and 1940, and again between 1946 and 1954. So this doesn't help us really. It is not possible to read a date or any other further details from the poster.

So, it's back to the street directories. The thatched cottage is Lilac Cottage, which stood on the site where Pump Court is now. We know from the street directories that Lilac Cottage, 39 Ferring Street was listed in 1968, but not in the 1970 edition. In addition, planning records show that permission was granted for the building of Pump Court in 1968. Therefore this **X** points us in the direction that Lilac Cottage was probably demolished around 1968/69. So our image is pre 1968/69.

The next thing we can look at is the tiled roof that appears between Lilac Cottage and the Tob-a-Con. This is the rear of the first pair of semi-detached bungalows in Onslow Drive – Nos 2 and 4 now. Firstly, we can use the OS Maps. These two bungalows are not on the 1947 map, but are on the 1960 map. So that gives us a range to look through in the street directories. Around this time, we have street directories for 1946, 1948, 1949, 1953, 1956, and 1960. The two bungalows do not exist in the 1946 directory but do exist in the 1948 directory. Again, with our year difference, we can assume they were built around 1946/47.

So, tying these three things together – the poster, Lilac Cottage, and the two bungalows, we are able to narrow down the image to between 1946 and 1954 (when Herbert Lodge retired).

The postcard shows two ladies talking outside the shop. Three different sources have named the lady on the left as Nellie Beckett – the proprietor of The Tob-A-Con. According to street directories, William and Nellie Beckett appeared to own the Tob-a-Con from around 1939 to about 1967. So this image has quite a wide range – 1946 to 1954.

### **Cows in Ferringham Lane**



Ferringham Lane looking north

This image is taken in front of Home Farm Cottages looking north. The sloped roof you can see right next to the telegraph pole is the Island Cottages taken from the other direction. So, to dating.

We know that building south of this point did not start in any serious way until 1926. So, the presence of the telegraph pole with so many insulators on it must indicate after 1926. We can just make out a cottage on the site of Brook Lane Garage (or Bulls Garage as it was first known). Bulls Garage was built around 1930. Also, there is no entrance for Grange Park, which was first listed on the buildings plan register in 1930.

So, we can safely assume this image dates from between 1926 to 1929, and probably nearer to 1928/29. The cows are likely to have been to the dairy, west of Home Farm for milking, and were being walked back to their grazing fields in South Ferring. You can also just make out an open top car behind the cows in the bottom right hand corner.

As you have read, we use several different resources for dating images. The task itself is quite rewarding when you are able to narrow it down to just a few years, but can also be very frustrating when clues are few and far between.



## **THE HIGHDOWN STORY**

**report by Ed Miller**

Seventy members of the Group heard an excellent talk by James Sainsbury at our 4 February meeting, on the story of Highdown from the Stone Age to World War II and the 1988 excavations that followed the uprooting of trees in the previous year's hurricane. As the archaeologist-curator of Worthing Museum, James was well placed to tell the story of the successive excavations and what they revealed.

The Stone Age relics were found on the surface, on the southern slopes – flint axes and other tools used by the first farmers who felled the trees and cultivated the land, he said. The Bronze Age enclosure and the earthworks of the Iron Age fort, on the hilltop, would have been visible for centuries but the existence of the Saxon cemetery, for which Highdown is best known, was only revealed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century by excavations.

The Roman period followed but there was no evidence of the Roman army on the hilltop – the fort had been abandoned long before the legions arrived. Sainsbury said Sussex may well have welcomed the Romans as peace-keepers, traders and bringers of a more sophisticated lifestyle. There was possibly a Villa halfway down the southern slope. The bath-house that served it was excavated in 1939 and then back-filled to await a post-war further examination (which never happened).

The graves that were discovered in the 1890s, when Edwin Henty put a plantation on the hill top, and in the subsequent excavations were more clearly of the Saxon period, between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Centuries but James said it was not clear who the 200 or more burials and cremations were for. There was no evidence of a village of any kind, or of any houses at all. There was an abundance of 'grave goods', some of which are in Worthing Museum, showing the high status of many of the dead, and many weapons, which suggested that some of the graves were those of warriors – perhaps mercenaries employed to protect the area against raiders. Others may well have been farmers living down on the coastal plain. Ferring must have been a settlement well before the founding of the minster church in 765 AD.

The building of the Radar Station in 1941, with its slit-trenches and machine-gun nests must have disturbed much of the archaeology, Sainsbury told us, and this was confirmed when the military installations were removed in 1947 and the archaeologists were allowed a quick examination. Sainsbury said there was an on-going project to re-examine all the records of the previous excavations, as well as DNA analysis of the human remains in the Museum, and other investigations, to establish the full story of this remarkable ancient site. We look forward to getting the results.

James followed up this talk with a guided walk over Highdown at the end of March, where he pointed out many of the features he had described in his talk, and showed some of the Museum's objects from excavations in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries.

## **CISSBURY RING**

**report by Ed Miller**

Twenty members turned out for our walk over Cissbury Ring at the end of August, guided by local archaeologist Dr. David Dunkin. We walked up from Nepcote Green, on the Monarch's Way footpath, and then up a gentle slope towards this Iron Age hill fort. On the way up the views were breathtaking, north and west to Church Hill, Harrow Hill, Blackpatch and Chanctonbury Ring: and south and east to Cissbury and the sea beyond, Dunkin said all these



hilltops were fortified in the Iron Age (the eight centuries before the Romans came to Britain) but Cissbury was the largest and the best preserved. It was also the largest area of flint mining in Neolithic times (around 6,000 years ago).

David Dunkin told us that the flint mining, with shafts and galleries, and tool making, was on an industrial scale and must have supplied a large area of southern England. The only comparable site was Grimes Graves in Norfolk.

He showed us flint tools he himself had collected, mostly rejects or unfinished pieces. The mines were excavated by 'local hero' John Pull in the 1950s. He uncovered 200 shafts and a skeleton he found there was dated to



On the ramparts, our members with David Dunkin pointing out landscape features

3,600 BC, although modern radio-carbon analysis would probably put an earlier date on it. The Bronze Age people left few traces on the hilltop (apart from a burial mound) but certainly lived in the valleys because gold ornaments of that era, and round huts, have been found there.

It was in the Iron Age that the hilltop was fortified, with huge ramparts of chalk, timber breastwork and a steep-banked ditch. It is the highest as well as the largest hillfort in Sussex, at 184m (580ft). We walked round the top, where Dunkin explained the landscape features that showed the layout of the fields ploughed by the pre-historic farmers and the Romans. The fort belong to the Atrebates, and was held against other Iron Age tribes, not against the Romans, who made an alliance with them.

Although there are some similarities with Highdown, this site is about four times as large and there are no Saxon graves on Cissbury Ring, and no flint mines on Highdown. Both were used for beacons as part of the system for warning of the arrival of the Armada in 1588. In World War II Highdown had its Radar Station and Cissbury had a large anti-aircraft battery. Cissbury Ring has its own long and rich history, well written up on websites - and is well worth a visit.

#### **OUR DECEMBER MEETING - Brighton**

#### **Report by Ed Miller**

We ended 2012 with a presentation by local historian Trevor Povey, on 'Brighton – from Fishing Village to Railway Town'. With good Covid precautions (and no Christmas buffet), 50 members enjoyed an informative and witty talk, illustrated by a wealth of illustrations, on how this insignificant fishing village became a fashionable place to live and, later, an industrial centre.

Like Ferring, Trevor told us, Brighton was a Saxon village and its name, ultimately comes from 'Beorhthelmstun' (Beorhthelm's farm). In the Domesday book it was 'Bristelmestune', mainly described as farmlands but there is a mention of a rent of 4,000 herrings. Two separate communities evolved - the fishermen on the beach and the farmers up on the cliffs. By 1313 Brighton had a thriving agricultural market and a charter spelling out the rights of the farmers and fishermen. The town was fortified against raids by the French, which continued into the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, but there is hardly any trace left of the walls and gatehouses -and many of the earlier forts on the cliffs tumbled into the sea, not long after they were built.

The big change in Brighton's fortunes came with the craze for sea bathing as a supposed cure for 'diseases of the glands', promoted by Dr Russell. This attracted wealthy visitors, and minor royalty, culminating in the Prince Regent's Royal Pavilion, begun in 1787. This in turn brought the railway from London, in 1840. Victoria hated Brighton and the railway visitors, we were told, and abandoned the Pavilion when she became Queen in 1837.

The railway brought industry as well as day-trippers, and Brighton became an important engineering centre - for building locomotives and carriages and many other enterprises. The last locomotive was built there in 1958. Fishing and boat-building continued and the many trades that depended on it were still an important part of the town's employment well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

## **WARREN POND IN SOUTH FERRING**

**by Ed Miller**

The name 'Warren Pond' is very recent – named after the road which flanks its west side, 'The Warren' which was only named in 1960, but the pond is very much older than that. A survey of the Ferring Manor in 1330 listed various fields, including one 'at the old pond' and one 'at the new pond'. It notes that the old pond itself is half an acre, and this corresponds very well with Little Paddocks pond. It seems to show the new pond as almost two and a half acres but it probably means 'the area around the new pond'. Warren Pond is nowhere near two and a half acres. In the 1876 and subsequent Ordnance Survey maps it is shown at its current size, a rectangle with trees round the edge and a steep bank down to the water.

The earliest map or plan we have of this area is the survey of the Bishop's estate in 1621 by George Randall. It shows the pond as a rectangle of approximately its modern size, in an area marked 'Milbarrow field with the East Lane adjoining'. **XThat** lane is on the alignment of modern Jersey Road, which terminates just north-east of the pond. Just south of the pond is a field of just over two acres, which may be what the 1330 survey was referring to.

'Milbarrow' suggests a windmill on a hill but there is no mention of a mill of any kind here in any other records. Randall drew a little post-mill at the top of Highdown but nothing like that here. The rectangular shape might suggest a mill-pond for a water mill but there is no stream feeding the pond and so no flow of water capable of turning a wheel. Again, there is no mill shown on the Armada map of 1588, whereas the beachside windmill at Heene is shown.



Warren Pond today: a Nature Reserve, home of Herons and Little Egrets

The shape of the pond certainly looks man-made, and the fact that the surveyor of 1330 referred to it as 'The New Pond' is significant. If it was a natural pond it would have been there centuries before 1330. If it was man-made what was its purpose? It was a long way from any houses, or buildings of any sort. Was it for cattle or sheep to drink? This seems unlikely – a Survey of the Bishop's estate in 1388 listed no cows, and this is good arable land (this is what 'field' implies) Perhaps it was for oxen, pulling the ploughs?

Possibly the pond had always been there but in an area not previously under cultivation, and it was the field that was new, rather than the pond. The pond now belongs to the Parish Council and is a valuable habitat for wildlife, as well as an attractive sight.

### THE ST ANDREW'S FONT COVER

The font in St Andrew's Church was installed c. 1880 and the "old" one removed. In 1935 the vicar, H. Copley Moyle was asking in the parish magazine for information about the previous font: "... it is only about fifty years since it was removed from the Church, and it may still be in the neighbourhood and recognisable, so we hope our readers will be on the look-out for any stone which looks as if it may have been a Font. The old Font is said to have been bowl-shaped."

The medieval font was never found, although in 2014 its shape was confirmed by the discovery of an 1850 pen and ink drawing by Miss Victorine Young: the lost font was round, supported by a central column and four pillars. It had the typical appearance of a Norman font, which dates it as 12th or possibly even late 11th century.

Over the centuries, much else has disappeared from St Andrew's, either lost or stolen. One example is the pen and ink sketch of the church by Thomas Baskerville (sic), as detailed in the 2022 *Ferring History Magazine*. The booklet *St Andrew's Church in the Village of Ferring* details a number of other church objects which are "missing". The most recent of these is the lectern. A gift from Robert Blight, who was the vicar of Ferring 1886-1888, the St Andrew's guidebook says: 'The lectern was moved from the church some time after 2000.' Its whereabouts are unknown.

In 2021, the leaded glass in the baptistry was replaced by a contemporary stained glass window. Created by Mel Hawes, the translucent blue designs symbolise water and baptism. Later, in April 2022, a spun steel bowl was fitted into the limestone of the font. Made by the same artist,

its swirling colours complement the new stained glass. The font's carved oak cover was removed -- and faced an uncertain fate. Carved into the rim of the cover, almost unnoticed, is a name: Lionel Guest . . .

## **LIONEL GUEST**

**by David Garnett**

*MRS. FLORA DODGE A BRIDE. Recently Divorced, She Weds Lionel Guest, Who Is Twenty-four. (New York Times, 7 July, 1905).*

Lionel George William Guest (1880-1935) was born into a world of wealth and privilege. He was the fourth son of Ivor Guest, the first Lord Wimborne, one the richest men in Britain, whose fortune had its genesis in iron and steel production during the industrial revolution. A first cousin of Winston Churchill, Lionel was educated at Eton, Glasgow University and Trinity College, Cambridge. Lord Kelvin, scientist and mathematician, inventor and engineer, was Professor of Natural Philosophy at Glasgow for 53 years and a strong influence on Lionel's subsequent life and work.

Lionel had business interests on both sides of the Atlantic, ranging from hydraulics to finance, and he first met Flora Bigelow Dodge (1868-1964) at a wedding in Washington, DC in 1904. Their own wedding was six months later.

Flora Bigelow was the daughter of John Bigelow, who was the American consul in Paris at the time of the Civil War. She had married Charles Stuart Dodge, heir to a mining and timber fortune, when she was eighteen. They had two children, Lucie and John. Flora wanted a divorce, which in her home state of New York was impossible without proof of adultery. South Dakota had the most liberal divorce laws in the USA, and in early 1903 Flora moved to Sioux Falls. Her divorce came through the following year, but she remained living there until she and Lionel Guest were married in her home, which was called Wookyi-Tipi. She was twelve years older than he was -- and they were exact opposites.

As Tim Carroll, biographer of Flora's son 'Johnnie' (Major John Bigelow Dodge DSO MSC MC, and one of the 'Great Escapers') wrote: "While Flora was forcible and often overbearing, Lionel was modest and scrupulously polite and could appear to be painfully shy."

Lionel was one of the founding directors of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Montreal, then under construction, and he took his new family back to his home in Canada. Home was a farmstead on a small island in the St Lawrence river, where Lionel could escape the pressures of business and tend his herd of pedigree cattle. In 1912, after a decade in North America, he returned to London with his American wife and her children.

In the half century leading up to World War One, there were scores and scores of transatlantic marriages between a British husband and an American wife. A good example is the Washington wedding where Lionel first met Flora: Lionel was best man to the groom, the 19th Earl of Suffolk; Flora was a friend of the bride, Daisy Leiter, whose family fortune came from a retail empire. These were almost like a business transaction. The bride would provide American finance, the groom would add aristocratic legitimacy to the partnership -- usually involving the wife gaining a title via her husband. Lionel's uncle, Lord Randolph Churchill, had married the American Jenny Jerome in this style in 1874. These American imports were often referred to as 'dollar princesses' (from a 1907 West End musical, 'The Dollar Princess', which opened on Broadway in 1909).



But Flora had no dollars to bolster the Guest family funds, and they needed none; and as a younger son of a baron, Lionel could only give her his own courtesy title of 'The Honourable'. By marrying him, Flora became The Honourable Mrs Lionel Guest.

As for Flora's children, Lucie resented having to move to Britain and returned to the USA, while Johnnie divided his time between the old and the new world. Finally deciding where his future lay, he became a British citizen in 1915. The previous year, at the outbreak of World War One, Lionel had joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and transferred to the Royal Flying Corps in 1916. He was awarded an OBE (Military) for his war services.

*The Times* reported: "After the War he actively resumed his business interests and his directorships included those of Guest's Trust Ltd, the American Austin Company Inc, Hull Telephone Accessories Ltd, and Memphis Cotton Fibre Ltd." He also continued his scientific work. The Royal Astronomical Society journal explained: "He had a versatile mind which found an outlet in many inventions of an engineering character. Had these inventions been followed up they would probably have had revolutionary results. Guest was modest to a degree, and it was probably for this reason that so many of his ideas failed to fructify."

One such example of Lionel's pioneering work was in electro-acoustic technology. He and Horace Owen Merriman developed the world's first electrical gramophone pick-up device. Until then, all recordings had used acoustic or mechanical techniques. On Armistice Day, 11 November, 1920, in a vehicle parked outside Westminster Abbey, Major Guest and Captain Merriman were literally side by side as they recorded the funeral of the Unknown Warrior.

"'Long-Distance' Gramophone Records in the Abbey" was how the story was reported in *The Illustrated London News* of 18 December, 1920 and the achievement was to be acknowledged as the world's first true field recording. Four carbon microphones were placed around the abbey, each manned by an engineer, with cables running to the recording van. Inside, Lionel and Horace Merriman used a lathe to cut into each wax disc which was then hardened in a kiln. They made thirty-six single-sided master discs, two which were chosen for release by Columbia Records: 'Abide with Me' on one side, and Kipling's poem 'Recessional' on the other. Five hundred copies were pressed, then sold at 7/6d in aid of Westminster Abbey restoration appeal.

The recording, however, was of very poor quality, not even up to acoustic standard, and Columbia declined to continue backing the nascent Guest-Merriman technology. Nor would any other company provide support, either in the UK or USA. It was to be another half a decade, with the development of the condenser microphone, before electrical recordings were released commercially.

In March 1922, Lionel Guest applied for planning permission for a "timber framed chalet -- temporary building" near the seafront in Ferring. The death of Edwin Henty in 1916 was to lead to the sale of all the Henty lands in Ferring, although a three acre plot off Sea Lane had already been sold to Sir Louis de Pan Mallet in 1909. Having done nothing with the land, Mallet sold it to Flora Guest in 1922, who had bought an adjacent plot from Mrs Henty the previous year. In May 1922 the planning application was altered to a 'timber framed building'. This was to be the Guests' 'seaside retreat', named Wookyi-Tipi after Flora's home in Sioux Falls. (The name is Lakata, the language of the Ogalala Sioux, meaning 'House of Peace'). Then in March 1923 Lionel bought another plot of five and a half acres and started building for sale.

## THE ST ANDREW'S FONT COVER

. . . continued

Lionel Guest died of tuberculosis at his Ferring home on 27 September 1935. He was 54. His family commissioned, in his memory, an oak cover for the font in St Andrew's Church. Lionel was the last in his line, but Flora Guest had two children by her first husband. One of these was Johnnie Dodge, who had two sons with his wife Minerva.

Years went by, there were more births, marriages and deaths within the Dodge family. Johnnie died in 1960, aged 66, Minerva in 1980, aged 78. But it was the death of Flora in 1964, aged 96, which brought an end to the family's connection with Ferring. Her ashes were scattered in the grounds of Wookyi-Tipi, and the site sold for development (where St Aubin's Court now stands).

When the font cover was removed in 2022, Ferring History Group contacted the Vicar, Gary Ingram, and told him about the font's own history and asked about its future. After some discussion, it was suggested that the cover could be returned to the family who had given it to the church. An approach was made to FHG member Jane Aitken, the first wife of Johnnie and Minerva's younger son Tony. (He was originally named "Lionel" but that name fell out of favour.) Jane and Tony had two daughters: Alex (Alexandra) who lives in South Africa, and Tona (Antonia), who lives in Canada (as does Jane).

And while on a trip to the UK, Alex Dodge came back to St Andrew's on 9 June, 2022. She had last been to Ferring with her mother and sister in 2015, to view the new memorial stones on Johnnie and Minerva's graves. (They were her grandparents, Flora was her great-grandmother, and Lionel was her step-great-grandfather.)

Reverend Gary Ingram presented the font cover to Alex, saying it had served its role well for almost ninety years, that the church had been very grateful for its 'loan' but now was the time for it to be returned to the safe keeping of the family from which it had come and to which it belonged. St Andrew's still has one memorial to the Dodge/Guest family: a small wooden cross with a brass plate inscribed 'In Memory of John Bigelow Dodge'.



Alex Dodge with Rev Gary Ingram

Photo by Simon Cornish

## LIONEL GUEST THE INVENTOR



Captain Merriman and Major Guest with the world's first electric gramophone pick-up, about 1920

### THE PROPERTY DEVELOPER

The Guests kept their London house in the West End but spent a lot of time in Ferring, especially in the summer. They bought the south-east corner of the Henty estate on 30 April 1924 and began to develop it for what they hoped would be an exclusive social set. The London correspondent of the Jamaica Gleaner reported in June 1926, 'The Honourable Mrs. Lionel Guest, daughter of the late Ambassador John Bigelow, and wife of the brother of Lord Wimborne, who is one of the leading social figures in London, is now combining business with pleasure. She is becoming something of a realtor. She and her husband are now developing what is likely to prove to be the most up-to-date new country colony for society at Ferring-on-sea, the spot in Sussex ..... Lord and Lady Westmoreland, the latter the daughter of the late Lord Ribblesdale, are among those occupying their own houses at the new colony'.

Again, these society figures retained their London houses and, even more so than the Guests, regarded Ferring as a holiday residence.

Guest placed many advertisements like this, in *The Times*.

**THREE** Thatched-roofed modern COTTAGES for SALE at Ferring, near Worthing; painted wood. Furnished. From £1,100 to £3,000. Ready to walk into. Also building land for sale, overlooking sea.—Write Hon. Lionel Guest, 26, Connaught-square, W.2.

From *The Times* 6 June 1928

