

EDEN VALLEY HERITAGE

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Issue Number 29

2015

The Eden Valley Museum - everywhere has a story to tell



Newsletter of the Eden Valley Museum



Eden Valley Heritage

Issue Number 29 December 2015

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Editors

This issue of Eden Valley Heritage has been compiled by Helen Jackman and Joan Varley.

Cover photograph

The Corn Mill, Four Elms by Robert Bayley 2000.

For the record

Image: P2002.541 on page 38 of Issue 28.

The date of this picture is c.1950.

**Newsletter of the
Eden Valley Museum**

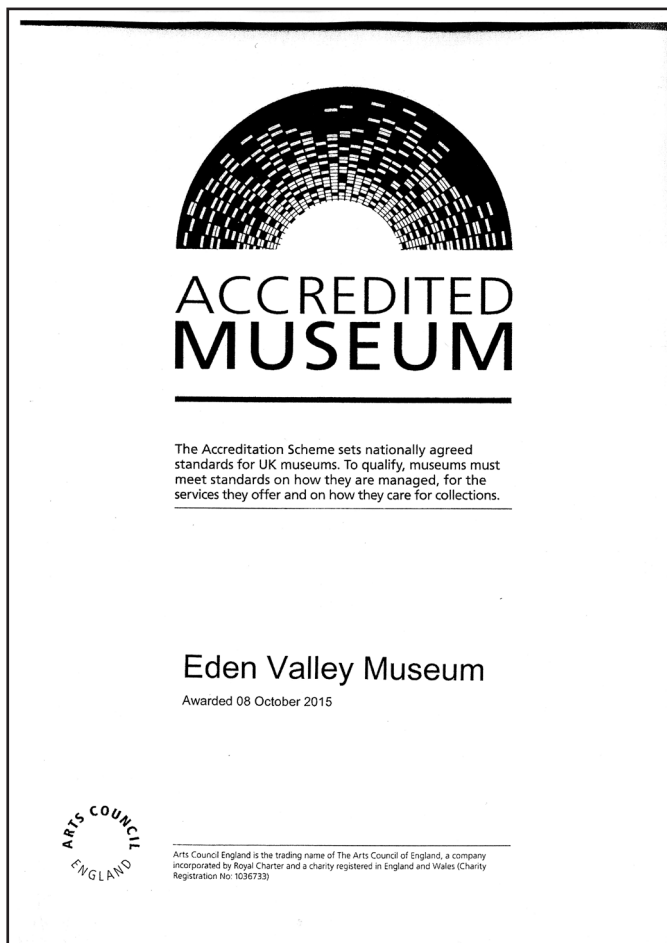
FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I am glad to report that we remain an accredited museum. What difference does it make? Basically it says that we have a good museum working to achieve agreed quality standards. There are 1800 museums in the scheme which for us has been administered by Arts Council England. Accreditation enables museums and governing bodies to assess their current performance, and it supports them in planning and developing their services. It is quality standard that serves as an authoritative benchmark for assessing performance, rewarding achievement and driving improvement. It raises awareness and understanding of museums, building confidence and credibility both within the governing body

and among the public and helps museums to improve their focus on meeting users' needs and interests and developing their workforce. Volunteers are critical in the visitor experience and we have worked with National Heritage to develop seminars and train the trainers of volunteers

Accreditation also demonstrates that a museum has met a national standard, which strengthens applications for public and private funding and gives investors confidence in the organisation as demonstrated by the grants this year from the J. Paul Getty Jnr and Lennox Hannay Charitable Trusts to fund the installation of new lighting to enhance viewing and to reduce lighting costs.

Alan Smith.



EDEN VALLEY MUSEUM TRUST

The Eden Valley Museum Trust is a Registered Charitable Trust whose objectives are for the advancement of the education of the public in the history of Edenbridge, the Eden Valley and the surrounding areas in particular, but not exclusively, by the provision and maintenance of a museum. The Trust is run by an Executive Committee and the day-to-day management of the museum is overseen by a part-time House Manager, part-time Administrative Assistant and a volunteer Collections Manager.

President: Elizabeth Fleming DL

Chairman: Alan Smith

House Manager: Alex Paton

Collections Manager: Jane Higgs MBE

Administrative Assistant: Jean Reader

THE CORN MILL, FOUR ELMS

By Lyn Layland

The oil painting on the front cover, showing the old corn mill at Four Elms, was painted from life by Robert Bayley in 2000. Once known as 'Birds Mill' it was one of two water



driven mills in the parish of Hever, however the other at Hever Castle no longer exists. It is known that the Mill Cottage, which housed the miller and his family, dates from the early 17th century, but the present mill building suggests a date of construction of about 1800. There is some evidence to suggest that the mill was built on a former construction. The mill pond was fed by a stream from the north-west and a mill leat channelled the water from Elms Brook which can still be seen running past the Four Elms Inn.

It seems that a succession of millers were employed to work the corn mill in its functioning years as the 1841 census tells us the miller's name at that time was a William Dicker, his wife and family. By 1851 another family by the name of Dicker lived and worked at the mill and were no doubt related to the previous Dicker family. The mill saw a new family in 1861 by the name of Laney, and by 1871 the Bookham family had taken over the mill.

In 1878 'Birds' and Mill lands, including the water corn mill, mill house, stables, two cottages and paddock along with all the machinery of the mill were conveyed to Sir George Bramwell from James Young of Chiddingstone and John Young

of Penshurst. Sir George Bramwell had several properties, including Holmwood, in Four Elms. *Kelly's Directory* for 1882 gives Thomas Stanford as the miller.

In 1892 Sir George Bramwell conveyed the property to A. Bremner and the same year there is a conveyance from A. Bremner to Sir Frederick Bramwell which includes the 'water corn mill with messuage or mill house along with stabling, two cottages, paddock and mill pond known as Birds Mill comprising of four acres'.

Kelly's Directory for 1899 gives George Kenward as miller at Birds Mill and he continues to be the miller until 1903. In 1902 Sir Frederick Bramwell conveyed Birds Mill to his daughter Lady Florence Bliss.

The mill ceased to function around 1903. A certificate of estate duty records that the water mill was disused in 1908. In 1989 an application was made for the conversion of the mill building to a three bedroom dwelling. The mill has been saved for posterity, is of great local and historical interest, and continues to be used as a family home.

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PAINTER'S PARADISE - SOME LOCAL ART AND ARTISTS

By John Isherwood

You would think that in the Garden of England and particularly in the lovely Eden Valley with gems such as Hever Castle and Penshurst Place, there would be a plethora of painters and other artists who lived and worked nearby. Research, however, does not bear this out and although a number of artists were born or lived in the immediate locality, I have taken the liberty of using the word "local" rather liberally. The search for local artists has proved challenging but also absorbing.

Unlike the Penzance, Norwich or Shoreham "Schools" (groups of artists in a locality rather than academic establishments) Kent in general, and the Eden Valley in particular, have no specific School of Art.

Some members may recall that I gave a talk at the Museum on the Pre-Raphaelites in 2012 followed by an article in *Museum News* (Isherwood, 2012)

One of our most local professional painters is William S. Rose (1810-1873), a landscape and genre painter who lived amongst other places mainly in Kent and in particular Edenbridge.

Rose was prolific and specialised in SE England landscapes. He exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1845 to 1875. His obituary in the *Art Journal* gave a glowing report on him and mentioned that his small landscapes were seen almost annually at the (Royal) Academy.

Rose, the son of another William (Stanford) Rose, an Engineer, is buried in Edenbridge Churchyard alongside his wife Hannah (1808-1901) who was a widow when she

married him on the 16th May 1852 at St Mary Newington, Surrey. Her previous married surname was Ray and her maiden name was Golding. She was born in Oxford, the daughter of a farmer, George Golding. Also buried in the same grave is Charlotte Golding, Hannah's niece who died on the 13th June 1931 at the ripe old age of 99. William and Hannah appear to have had no children together.



Clover Time, Den Cross Farm, Edenbridge, Kent
by William S. Rose, 1858.
Image: www.edenbridgegalleries.com

During their stay in Edenbridge (alas we do not know when) William and Hannah rented a room or flat at Eden Banks in Lingfield Road. After William's death Hannah continued to live at Eden Banks.

Amongst Rose's paintings are "Clover Time at Den Cross Farm" (1858) and "Landscape near Sevenoaks Kent". He painted exclusively in oils.

Our next professional painter was Margaret Gillies (1803-1887), the second daughter of William Gillies, a Scottish merchant. She was born in Throgmorton Street in the City of London and trained as an artist in Paris and elsewhere. Margaret's connection with the locality is that she died at The Warren, Crockham Hill. During her lifetime she painted in both watercolour and oils.

Not a landscape artist, Margaret was a portrait and figurative (mainly miniaturist) artist of some note having, for example,



Margaret Gillies (1803-1887 by Cundall, Downes & Co. Albumen print on card mount, published 1864. NPG Ax131880

been commissioned to paint a miniature of William Wordsworth. During this commission she lived at Wordsworth's Lakeland home. Margaret is buried in Crockham Hill Churchyard although the grave is now unmarked.

Our search now briefly journeys further afield to my home town of Hayes, Kent where John Everett Millais (1829-1896) stayed at the George Inn in 1852-53 when he painted "The Proscribed Royalist" depicting two lovers on opposite sides during the English Civil War. The male Roundhead furtively whispers to his Puritan lady love while the former hides within an old oak tree. The tree was an ancient oak on West Wickham Common - just off Gates Green Road and it became known as the "Millais Oak" but it is no longer possible to locate it precisely.

Millais was, along with Turner and Gainsborough, the greatest of English artists. He became the first painter to



The Proscribed Royalist, 1651 (made in 1853) by John Everett Millais (1829-1896) Image: www.wikipedia.org

be made a Baronet and was also elected President of the Royal Academy shortly before he died in 1896.

While staying at The George, Millais, doubtless as a favour, repainted the pub sign for the landlord. However it was, sadly, over-painted later - goodness knows what the cost of this piece of vandalism was!

Millais' name also appears in a document produced by Sevenoaks District Council Planning Department (SDC, 2003) which also refers to artists David Cox (1783-1859), Walter Dendy Sadler (1854-1923), and the architect and artist Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928). Millais is reported as having stayed at Chiddingstone Castle. (Newton, 1985)

Charles Rennie Mackintosh who designed the famous Glasgow School of Art building, sadly damaged by fire recently, sketched in 1910 many of the buildings in Chiddingstone High Street. He also painted

many pictures of flowers. His art must have post-dated the Victorian era as, unlike his wife Margaret, he has no entry in the *Dictionary of Victorian Painters*.

Birmingham born David Cox was a painter of Welsh and English scenery including coastal scenes and genre subjects. His “Rhyl Sands” (c.1854) (Tate, London) is a masterpiece and it is surprising that he was not elected as a Member of the Royal Academy.

Walter Dendy Sadler, born in Dorking, stayed in Chiddingstone with fellow artist Cecil Aldin. Sadler’s “Sweethearts” (1892) (Guildhall Art Gallery London) showing a young couple standing in front of a seated elderly lady - presumably the mother of one of the couple - is a classic Victorian “Problem picture”.ⁱ

However these artists, despite having visited the Eden Valley, do not appear to have resided there other than briefly.

Continuing with the Chiddingstone connection, Robert Hills (1769-1844) painted “Bow (sic) Beech near Chiddingstone” and clearly visited the village.

Hills was an etcher and painter mainly of watercolours. He enrolled in the Royal Academy School in 1788 and some of his

work is in the Tate Gallery London, the Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge and the British Museum. (*Burlington*, 1945)

Artist Arthur Rackham is known to have stayed in Forge Cottage near Gilwyns in Chiddingstone and may have been inspired by the countryside nearby in his dark faerie paintings. In his 60’s he was described as “a smallish, ageing, almost wizened person with a bald domed forehead and a very wide and elfish grin” (Newton, 1985)

Howard Gaye (1848-1925) born in Ipswich the son of a vicar, trained as an architect and created many architectural paintings and drawings including several of Chiddingstone (including “Chiddingstone Street view from East” and “Chiddingstone Street view from West”)(both 1867), and Bore Place (1877). (SDC 2003)



Bow Beech (or Bough Beech) near Chiddingstone by Robert Hills (1769-1844). Image: P2012.1996



Bow Beech (or Bough Beech) near Chiddingstone by Robert Hills (1769-1844). Image: P2012.1996

Cecil Aldin (1870-1935), born Eastbourne, died London, trained at what later became the Royal College of Art. At the invitation of Walter Dendy Sadler he stayed at Chiddingstone where he became a friend of Phil May, John Hassall and Lance Thackeray who all, along with others, later

founded the London Sketch Club.ⁱⁱ

Slightly removed from Edenbridge at about 13 miles as the crow flies, lies Shoreham, Kent. This was the location of the coming together for around 10 years from the mid 1820s of a group calling themselves “The Ancients” (because of their interest in ancient poets including Milton and Virgil). The group included as its most celebrated artists Samuel Palmer (1805-1881), George Richmond (1809-1896), Edward Calvert (1799-1883) and John Linnell (1792-1882). They sought a communal life of rural simplicity. Palmer, the finest painter of the group, was a great admirer of William Blake who probably visited his friend Palmer at Shoreham.

Palmer’s paintings of the area show shepherds with their sheep, moons, sunsets and hills in quasi-religious settings. He was born in Redhill - just along the A25 as it is now.

On the subject of Shoreham the modern artist most associated with Kent, Rowland Hilder, painted “Sepham Farm, Shoreham” as well a view of “Crockham Hill”. Hilder was born of English parents in Long Island, USA but I cannot trace any reference to his living locally.

Extending our search to those whose canvas was “bricks and mortar”, namely architects, “our” architect Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott (1865-1945) must be included as he both designed local grand houses and also chose to be buried in our churchyard. Baillie Scott’s huge number of commissions include the restoration of Ockhams, Marsh Green Road, where he lived possibly from 1919 and certainly until he sold it in 1942.

Another, more famous, architect with local connections was Sir George Gilbert-Scott (1811-1878). Scott, who worked mainly in the English Gothic Revival style, designed

amongst many other commissions, the Midland Grand Hotel at St Pancras Station - saved for the Nation from demolition largely by the influence of Sir John Betjeman; the Albert Memorial and the Foreign and Colonial Office, Whitehall, the last being, unusually for Scott, in Classical Greek style. Scott lived with his wife, Caroline (née Oldrid) at Rooksnest, Tandridge for many years towards the end of his life.

To complete the trio of architects, Charles Robert Ashbee (1863-1942) was a prolific Arts and Crafts interior designer, architect and design polymath who died at Godden Green, Sevenoaks and is buried at St Peter and St Paul’s Church, Seal.

For the deltiologists among you (collectors of postcards!), Albert Robert Quinton (1853-1934) will be of interest. Although it is not known if he lived locally, he painted many local scenes. “The Smithy at Penshurst” and “Chiddingstone High Street” were among this watercolour artist’s works.

Known for his painting of British villages and landscapes, many of his works were published as postcards - particularly by Joseph Salmon of Sevenoaks who published a calendar of Quinton’s works after seeing several of the latter’s works in a gallery in Oxford Street, London. Salmon met Quinton who gave permission for his works to illustrate Salmon’s 1912 calendar.

Salmon, a London Bookseller had acquired 85 High Street, Sevenoaks in 1890 as a Stationer’s and produced the first calendar in Britain with illustrations from postcards.

By the end of his life, Quinton had produced 2300 views for Salmon and was paid 5 guineas for each. Quinton’s postcards are among the most sought after by the current 100,000 collectors today. (*Sevenoaks Chronicle*, 2012)



The Smithy at Penshurst, 1933 by A.R. Quinton, (1853-1934).
Postcard from an original watercolour. Image: P2002.35

Of a similar ilk was Charles Essenhigh Corke, born 17th October 1852 in Sevenoaks, who enjoyed a highly successful career as an artist and photographer. He lived at 39 London Road, Sevenoaks and married at the age of 28. Corke photographed and painted most of the grand properties in West Kent including Knole, Hever Castle and Ightham Mote with many of his paintings making highly popular postcards.



Inner moat and Tudor Village (Hever Castle), 1910
by Charles Essenhigh Corke (1852-1922/3).
Postcard from original watercolour. Image: P2008.1577

His work appears somewhat “chocolate boxy” to modern eyes but remains popular with one of his paintings, “Family Austen House at Sevenoaks”(c.1905) for sale at Bonhams Auctioneers in 2011 with an estimate of £600 to £800.

A few miles away at Tunbridge Wells lived Charles Tattershall Dodds (1815-1878) a painter of landscapes, mainly views of Kent

and Sussex. His identically named son who flourished as a painter between 1892 and 1904 similarly painted landscapes - but also figures. ⁱⁱⁱ (Wood, 1971)

In the same town lived Betty Swanwick (1915-1989) born in Forest Hill, London who was a painter, illustrator and designer. She also designed posters for London Transport as well as the cover for an album of the pop group Genesis! ^{iv}

In the Art Gallery on the first floor next to Tunbridge Wells Museum, the Ashton Bequest, 31 Victorian paintings collected between 1852 and 1863, are exhibited on an occasional basis. The paintings were produced mainly by good, if not entirely top rank, artists with a few exceptions such as John Linnell (The Ancients) Frederick Daniel Hardy (1827-1911), Henry Nelson O’Neil (1817 -1880) and Abraham Solomon (1823-1862).

Ernest Arthur Rowe (1863/62-1922) was another Victorian landscape painter who lived in Lambeth and Tunbridge Wells and exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1885.(Wood, 1971)

The Connoisseur Magazine said of his works that his detail tended to subsume the overall effect. Many of his works were produced at Penshurst (e.g. “Below the Terrace, Penshurst” and “The Formal Garden at



The Italian Garden, Hever Castle
by Ernest Arthur Rowe (1863/62-1922). Image: www.wikigallery.org

Penshurst”) and he also painted Hever Castle (e.g. “Hever Castle from the Rose Garden” (1920) and “The Italian Garden, Hever Castle”).

He lived at Prospect Road, Southborough for five years until he became wealthy enough to build “Ravello” in Rusthall but the early years of the Great War affected his ability to sell his work and he sold up and moved to rented accommodation. He died of TB in 1922 and is buried at St Peter’s Church, Southborough.

I must mention Helen Allingham’s (1848-1926) “Dairy Farm, Edenbridge” (1900), “The Kentish Farmhouse at Crockham Hill” and “Heather at Crockham Hill Kent” proving the artist’s visits to this area, although she never actually lived in the Eden Valley.



Dairy Farm Cottages, Stangrove Road, Edenbridge.
Attributed to Helen Allingham (1848-1926). Image: P2004.1172

George Samuel Ellgood (1851-1943) was an English artist born in Leicester and he studied at Leicester School of Art and the College of Art, South Kensington. He illustrated two books with Gertrude Jekyll. His delicate water colours “Penshurst, Sussex” (sic) (1903) and “Evening in garden at Penshurst Place” (1883) are a joy and similar in style to Helen Allingham’s. (*Burlington*, 1945)

Israel Watts Phillips (1825-1874), a playwright and illustrator and pupil of

George Cruikshank was born in Hoxton. He was essentially a cartoonist, often of Dickens’ works and later contributing to *Diogenes* (a not very long-live rival of *Punch*). Whilst living at Eagle Lodge (2 The Firs), Main Road, Marlpit Hill he became bankrupt. He died in Brompton, London. (Varley, 2012) (OUP, 2015)

In a final round-up of local artists we must include local resident Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965) who discovered the pleasures of painting at the age of 40 and many of paintings are displayed in his studio (now a gallery) at Chartwell. More recently Eden Valley Artists, a group of professional and semi-professional artists who came together in 2008 and work in many media including painting, sculpture, mixed media, glass and ceramics, are finding inspiration in this “Painters Paradise”, and hold regular exhibitions at the EVE Gallery in Edenbridge.

I hope this journey around the locality in search of artists of varying kinds has been of interest and may perhaps generate further research into the subject. Clearly the inspiration of the Eden Valley to artists continues to this day.

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ⁱA genre of art popular in the late Victorian era, characterised by a deliberately ambiguous narrative that can be interpreted in several different ways, or which portrays an unresolved dilemma.

ⁱⁱ1898 - The London Sketch Club was founded on April Fool's Day - a social club for artists working in the field of commercial graphic art, mainly for newspapers, periodicals and books. www.londonsketchclub.com

ⁱⁱⁱInformation provided by the Tunbridge Wells Museum Operations Officer.

^{iv}Information provided by the Tunbridge Wells Museum Operations Officer.

^vwww.edenvalleyartists.com

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Joan Varley, Jane Higgs, Lyn Layland and the Tunbridge Wells Museum Operations Officer for their considerable contributions when preparing this article, and my wife Valerie for her patience and typing. All errors are my own!

EDEN'S MEADOWS

By Samuel Thomas, Landscape Scale Project Officer, Kent Wildlife Trust

The Eden Valley has a rich history of hay meadows. Evidence clings on with the wildflower species that can still be found in some fields in the area. Orchids, dyers greenweed (*Genista tinctoria*), adders tongue fern (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*) and sneezewort (*Achillea ptarmica*) all hint at what once was. Tithe maps and earlier deed maps contain field names like Lambs Mead, Wallmead and Mead Field. Similar street names that persist today show the prevalence of traditional meadows

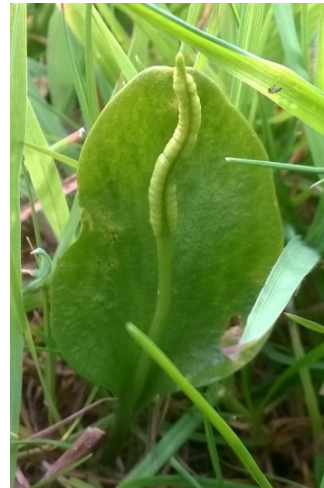


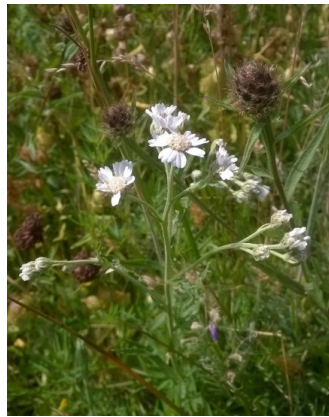
Image 1: Adders tongue fern
© Samuel Thomas

in the 18th and 19th centuries. The tithe map apportionments for Edenbridge Parish list 1126 acres of meadow and pasture. That means, in 1844, 21% of land within the parish was managed in this way.

Since then, the stresses of agricultural change and increasing development have taken their toll. Landowners were encouraged to fertilise artificially, periodically plough their fields, remove hedgerows and convert to arable crops. Even the very street names which betray the previous existence of meadows are evidence of the fact that they have been concreted over. Between the 1930s and 1990s 97% of species rich grassland was lost, a further 17% had been lost by 2010ⁱ and it has been estimated that in Kent during the 20th century, an average of one species of wildflower was lost every three yearsⁱⁱ. In

2012 semi-improved and unimproved meadow and pasture only accounted for 2% of land in Edenbridge Parish.

A few ancient meadows and pastures remain as a token of the natural beauty that once characterised the valley. Cowden Pound and Polebrook Farm Meadows Sites of Special Scientific Interest are two such examples.



Sneezewort
© Samuel Thomas



Polebrook Farm Meadows
© Samuel Thomas

The field system at Polebrook Farm near Bore Place is estimated to have remained unchanged in over 700 years. One can well believe this when confronted by the array of colour these meadows display throughout the early summer months.

Over the last few years, efforts have begun across the country to connect sites like this, restoring declining grasslands to their former glory. By harvesting green hay or seed from local meadows, with the landowner's permission it is possible to reintroduce these species to nearby meadows where they have been lost. Fields that have been fertilised or ploughed consistently take much longer to restore than those with a more sympathetic recent history. Since 2011 Kent Wildlife Trust has, with the support of the Environment Agency, Biffa Award

and local volunteers, identified and begun the restoration of historic meadows that could act as stepping stones for wildlife which depends on the habitat. Bumblebees, butterflies, skylarks, reptiles, small mammals and birds of prey all rely on the availability of grassland habitat for nesting, foraging and over wintering.

The chosen sites are hay meadows and pastures that have been left untouched by cultivation or fertiliser for over 20 years in most cases. Annual hay cuts have been gradually reducing nutrient levels in the soil, allowing wildflowers to compete with usually strong grasses. However the most desirable lowland meadow species alluded to at the beginning of this article are unlikely to recolonize these meadows on their own. Most meadows have short lived seed banks so they require a little help to return to their former glory, particularly if that glory was lost up to a hundred years ago.

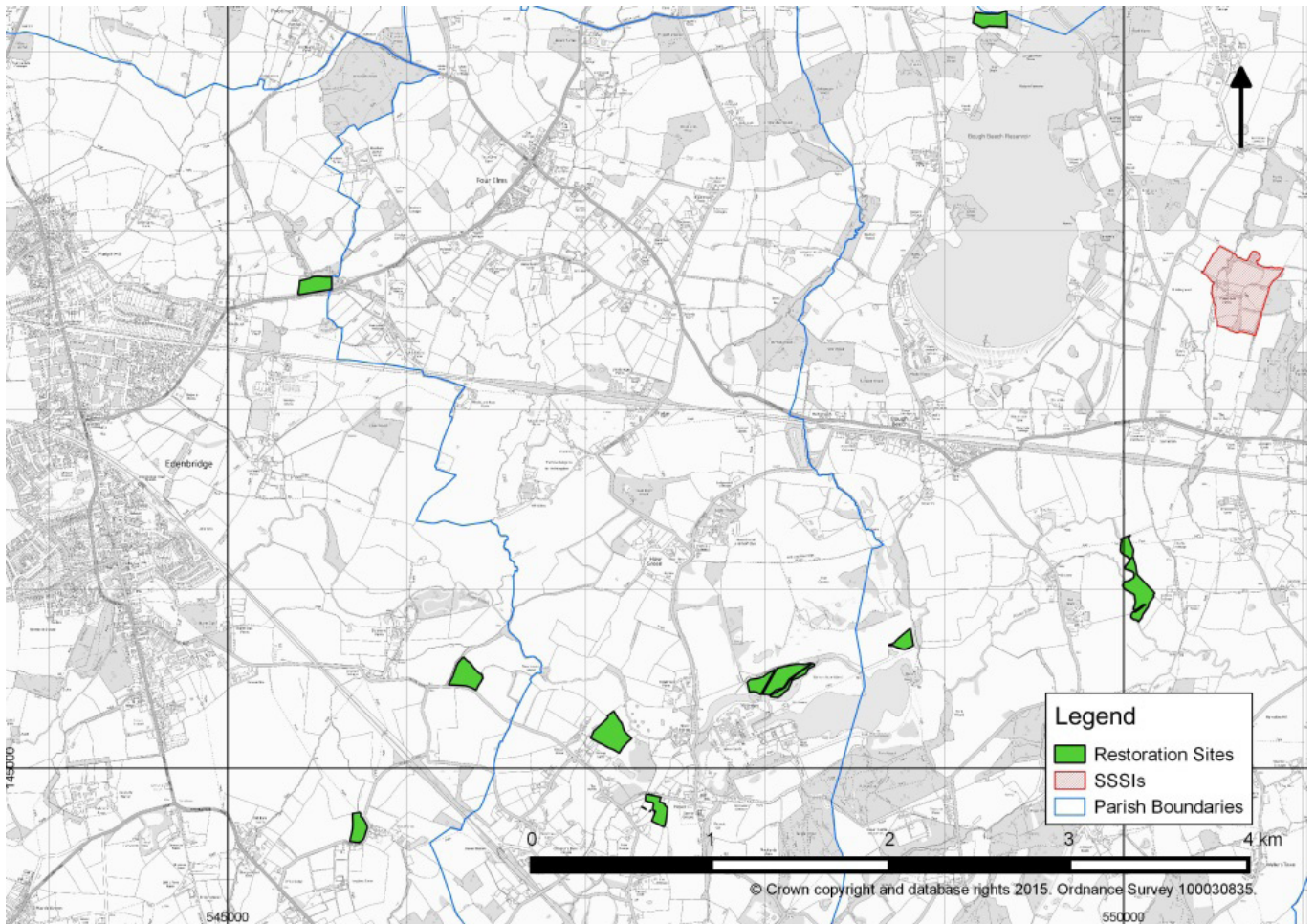


Blunts Brook Meadow
one year after restoration in 2014
© Samuel Thomas

Take for example Blunts Brook Meadow, a small privately owned field north of the Four Elms road:

Whilst fields all around had been built on or ploughed, this small parcel of land has remained. However, upon examination in 2013 the meadow contained very few wildflowers. Why was this?

As with so many grasslands, the temptation to add fertiliser to encourage a much larger yield of lush green grass had proved too much for a former owner. Whilst this may have increased the biomass produced by the



Map of meadow restoration sites in the Eden Catchment
 © Crown copyright and database rights 2015.
 Ordnance Survey 100030835.

field, all the additional benefits that a flower rich meadow can provide had been lost. This was no longer a place for bumblebees and other pollinators to refuel, insect numbers would have dwindled, depriving farmland birds of their food source. Predators of crop pests would no longer have refuges or overwintering sites. It has even been suggested that the diversity of proteins provided by flower rich hay can improve livestock health and reduce veterinary bills!

The current owners had resisted adding fertiliser in more recent years meaning the site was ideal for restoration. First, yellow rattle was introduced, a hemi-parasitic wildflower that can help reduce competition from grasses. In November 2013 a group of eager volunteers cut, raked and prepared strips in the meadow then sowed and trampled in the seed with a spot of line

dancing, warding off the chilly November weather.

The following summer the whole field was cut for hay then harrowed in strips to prepare for sowing more, native, locally harvested wildflower seed. On a sunny September day local volunteers helped sow the seed which was then firmed in by a combination of a heavy roller and subsequent autumnal showers.

With some autumn and spring grazing arranged to keep the competitive grasses under control the project team awaited the emergence of the additional colour of the sown species. Most meadow species are perennial, meaning they take a couple of years to flower but once established, are able to withstand the annual hay cut and grazing whilst flowering unmolested in the summer months.



Small copper enjoying a newly created wildflower meadow at Edenbridge Primary School ©Samuel Thomas

During 2014 this same process kick-started the restoration of nine fields shown on the map in Image 4. Even more recently, the Friends of Eden's Meadows have begun developing community projects to restore local grassland and engage with local residents. Kent Wildlife Trust continues to identify and restore additional meadows, whilst also working to protect and restore the wetland and wet woodland habitats that together contribute to the traditional character of the Eden Valley. To measure all of this work, volunteers and landowners trained and enthused during our projects are carrying out surveys year by year to chart the valley's progress towards the wildlife haven that older generations still remember.

ⁱ Kent Nature Partnership, 2014

ⁱⁱ Plantlife, 2012



Kent Wildlife Trust is the county's leading nature conservation charity. Formed in 1958, it manages five visitor centres and 65 nature reserves covering 8,000 acres and is supported by over 31,000 members and some 1,000 registered volunteers.

The Trust aims to protect and improve habitats in the countryside, coast and town for the benefit of the wildlife and people of Kent; campaign against inappropriate and damaging development; and educate and inspire young people. For further information, visit www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk



Building communities. Transforming lives.

The projects mentioned have been funded by Biffa Award, a multi-million pound environment fund managed by the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (RSWT), which utilises landfill tax credits donated by Biffa Waste Services.



If you would like to be involved in any of these projects, either as a volunteer or a landowner please feel free to contact the article's writer.
samuel.thomas@kentwildlife.org.uk
or 01622 662012
You can also visit
www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk to find out more about nature conservation in Kent.

NATHANIEL HITCH AND EDEN COTTAGE

By Lyn Layland

I first came across the name Nathaniel Hitch was when I was transcribing the Victorian Rate Books which we hold at the Eden Valley Museum. These original books cover the period 1882 to 1892 with some incomplete books for 1838/1839 and 1850. I was intrigued by the name as it sounded Dickensian in nature and so I decided to investigate further. The first record I found for him was in the 1882 Rate Book as being the owner of Eden Cottage, Edenbridge. The house still stands on the main road through Edenbridge, close to the Victoria Road junction on land once known as Coles. Over time much of the original land has been sold and so only a fraction of it remains as the garden. Originally, it comprised of an acre or more containing a house, a garden, orchard and outbuildings.



Eden Cottage, Mill Hill, Edenbridge
Image: © Lyn Layland, 2015

The first positive reference to 'Coles' can be found in 1649 when Thomas Seyliard of Delaware died and left in his Will 'Coles' with barns and lands in the occupation of Richard Perrin to John Seyliard his son. From then on a succession of people bought

and sold the land which appears to include a 'messuage' or building, which would indicate that a house stood on the land.

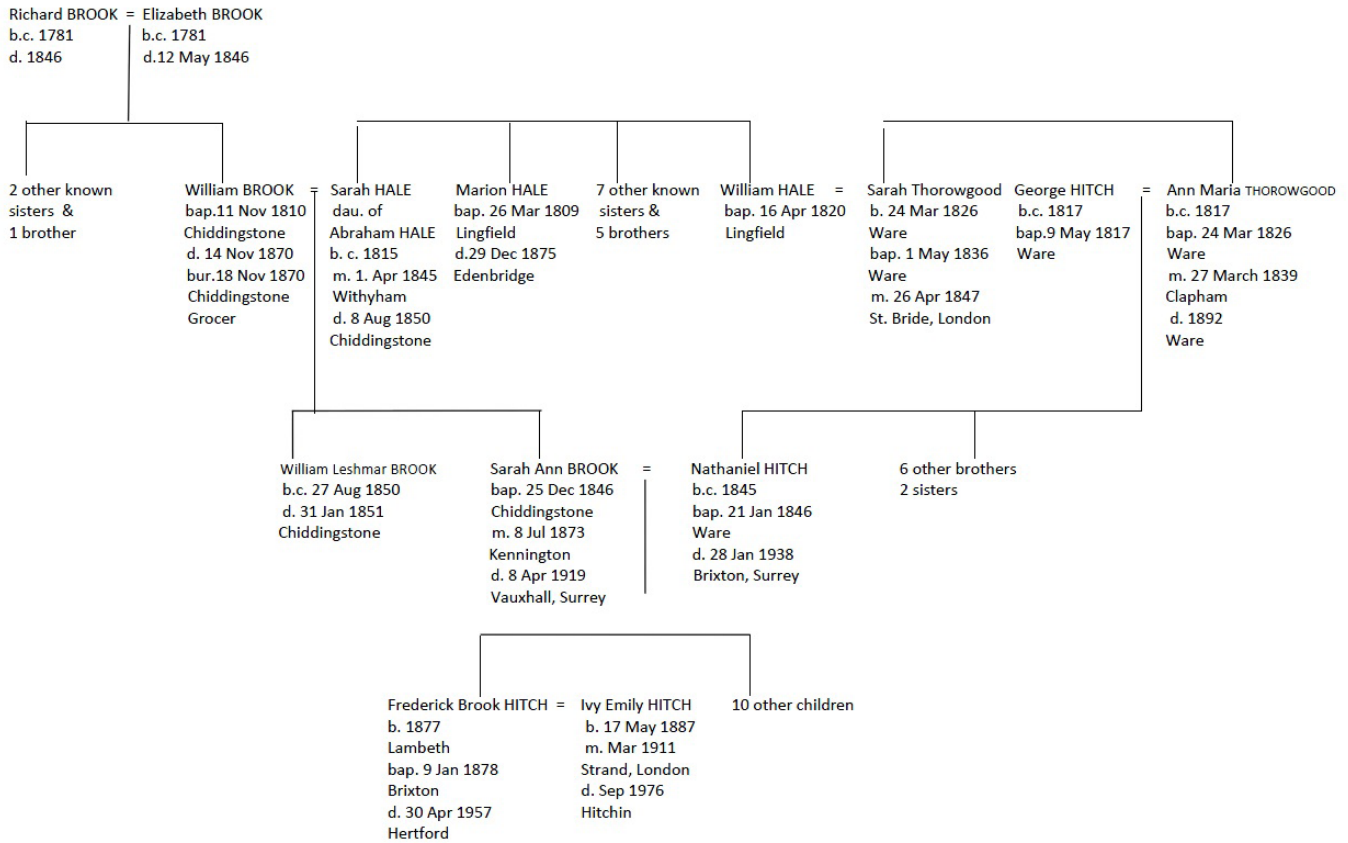
By the late 18th century, 'Coles' was in the possession of the Lampon family. In 1818, Thomas Lampon took out a mortgage on 'Coles' for £400 to Richard Brook of Chiddingstone, who was a grocer and draper, and by 1836 Richard owned the property and land.

The Rate Books for 1838, July and December, give Mr Lampon as being the occupier of 'Coles' and Mr Brook as being the owner and the Tithe Map and Apportionment of 1844 gives Richard Brook as the owner and occupier of 'Coles' (TA784).

It would seem that the original house was pulled down and a new one built by Richard Brook as, according to the British Listed Buildings website, the present building was built in the second quarter of the 19th century (c.1830) and has been given the status of Grade II listed. Certainly it was built by the time of Richard Brook's death as in his Will, proved on 7th February 1853, he devises this 'newly erected messuage or tenement with the workshop garden, ground and orchard' to his son William Brook.

William Brook

William Brook was born c.1810 to Richard and Elizabeth Brook and baptised on 11th November 1810 at Chiddingstone. He married Sarah, daughter of Abraham Hale on 1st April 1845 at Withyham, Sussex. Their daughter Sarah Ann Brook was baptised on 25th December 1846 and their son William Leshman Brook, was born early August 1850 and christened on 27th of that same month. It would seem that complications during the birth may have been the cause of Sarah's death on 8th



August 1850 and her son William died at the age of 6 months on 31st January 1851 (see family tree above).

William was left a widower and no doubt needed some help to look after his four year old daughter and sickly son. Soon after, according to the 1851 census, Sarah's sister Marion Hale came to live with William at Chiddingstone. It was quite usual in Victorian times that a female member of a deceased sister would come to live and look after her sister's orphaned children. The relationship between William and Marion became more than in-laws, as by the 1861 census, Marion was recorded as William's wife. At that time, marriage between a deceased wife's sister and her brother-in-law was not legal and it was not until 1907 that the law changed. Many couples still married, perhaps not aware of the law, and, if there was no opposition to their marriage, many married in church. However, I can find no official marriage record for William and Marion.

William Brook died on 14th November 1870. In his Will he instructed William and James Hale, his brothers-in-law, to sell all his real and personal estate other than that which he had devised and invest the money to bring in an income for his 'wife' Marion and his daughter Sarah Ann. On the death of either of them, the survivor inherited the income of the investments. This cannot have included Eden Cottage as by the 1871 census Marion and Sarah Ann had moved to the house along with Mary Hale, the mother of Marion and grandmother of Sarah Ann and James Day a nephew of Marion's.

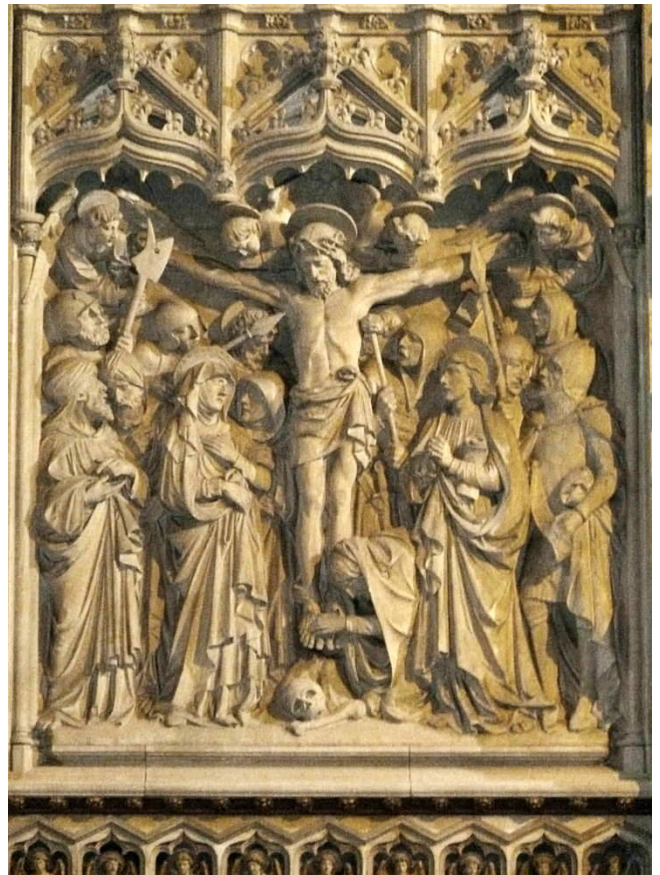
Sarah Ann Brook married Nathaniel Hitch on 8th July 1873 at Kennington, Surrey.

A little background to Nathaniel Hitch

Nathaniel Hitch was born on 31st May 1845 at Ware, Hertfordshire to George and Anna Maria Hitch, and baptised on 21st January 1846. Nathaniel's father George was a joiner carpenter and builder by trade and he married Anna Maria Thorowgood on

26th March 1839 at Clapham, Surrey. Anna Maria's sister Sarah, was married to William Hale therefore Nathaniel Hitch would have known the Hale family as his uncle and aunt would have been William Brook and his wife Sarah née Hale. (*see family tree*)

Nathaniel was apprenticed at the age of fourteen to the firm 'Farmer and Brindley' in London who were architectural sculptors and made church furnishing and art metalwork. Nathaniel went on to run his own business in Battersea and employed several other highly skilled masons. He referred to himself as an 'architectural sculptor' and the great majority of Nathaniel Hitch's work was in or on church buildings. He specialised in carving altarpieces, church furniture and other decorative features. His work can be found in the cathedrals and churches of Truro;



Reredos, Truro Cathedral, by Nathaniel Hitch © www.victorianweb.org



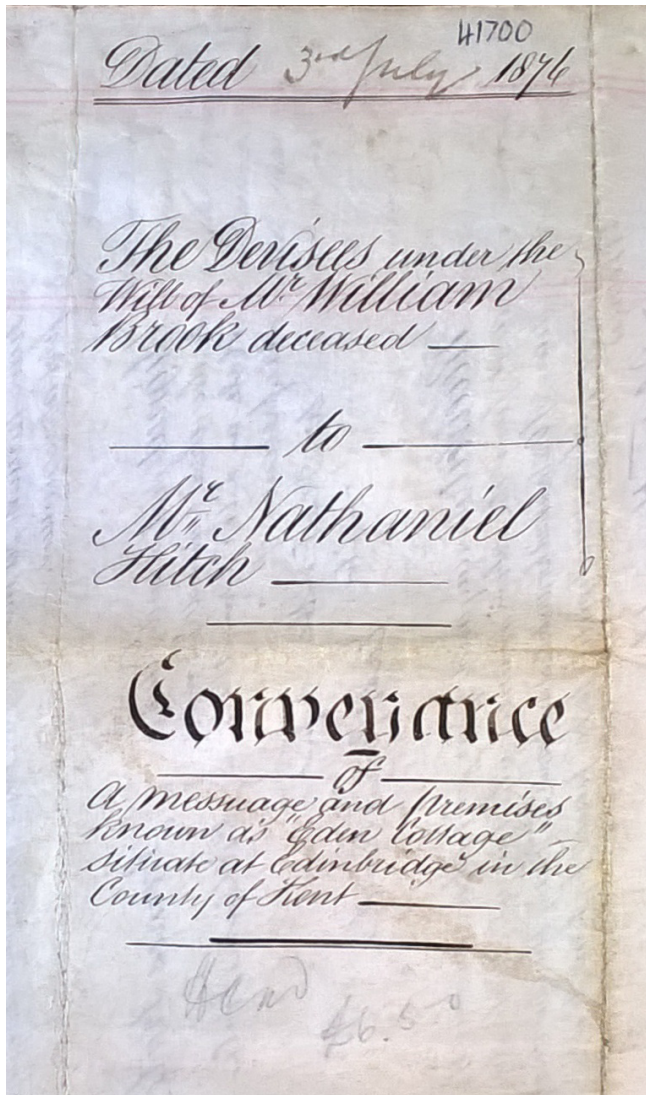
Statues on the West Front of Truro Cathedral, by Nathaniel Hitch King Edward VII. © www.victorianweb.org

Westminster Abbey; Lincoln Cathedral; Bristol; All Saints' Church, Hove; Canterbury; Lincoln; Peterborough; Beverley Minster in the UK and elsewhere in the world including Washington Cathedral, USA; Calcutta Cathedral, India; St. David's Cathedral, Sydney, Australia. He also worked for many architects including H.P. Burke Downing, H. Fuller Clark, W.D. Caroe, Paul Waterhouse and T.H. Lyon. He was regarded as an extremely talented Arts and Crafts sculptor.

Marion Brook died on the 29th December 1875. The probate index states that she died intestate and the Letters of Administration described her as a spinster and recorded her surname as 'Hale otherwise Brook'.

The museum has a copy of a document dated 3rd July 1876, 'between James and William Hale and Nathaniel Hitch' 'The Devises under the Will of Mr William Brook deceased for the conveyance of a messuage and premises known as Eden

Cottage' (see below). The original document remains in private hands.



'The Devises under the Will of Mr William Brook deceased ...'
Eden Valley Museum Archives.

The reason why Nathaniel bought the cottage will probably never be known. Perhaps Sarah Ann had some attachment to the house.

From 1882, the Rate Books at the museum give the owner of Eden Cottage as Nathaniel Hitch until 1892 when our records end. According to the Register of Electors Nathaniel continued to own Eden Cottage until at least 1897. The occupier at that time was a Mrs William Searle who continued to live at Eden Cottage until 1901.

Nathaniel and Sarah Ann had eleven

children one of whom was Frederick Brook Hitch, the eldest son, who had been working in the family business since the age of 16 (b.1877). He studied at the Royal Academy Schools from 1902-4 and he exhibited regularly at the Royal Academy from 1906 to 1947, and also at the Royal Cambrian Academy from 1908-1912. He was responsible for many public commissions, particularly portrait sculpture but wasn't really interested in continuing the family business.

Sarah Ann died on 8th April 1919. Her address at that time was given as 60 Harleyford Road, Vauxhall, Surrey. Probate was granted on 11th August the same year to Nathaniel Hitch, sculptor, Frederick Brook Hitch and John Oliver Brook Hitch. Her effects were valued at £94 1s. 3d.

Nathaniel Hitch died on the 28th January 1938 aged 92. His address at that time was given as 48 Stockwell Park Road, Brixton, Surrey. Probate was to Frederick Brook Hitch, sculptor and the effects were valued at £9618 16s. 5d. It is not known if Nathaniel Hitch ever lived at Eden Cottage or when he eventually sold the property.

On the 27th March 1973 the County Council of Sevenoaks served a Building Preservation notice on Eden Cottage following receipt of an application to redevelop the site by Grinstead Motors Ltd. who wished to expand their garage opposite Eden Cottage. This would involve demolishing Eden Cottage and building a petrol garage. The Council refused this application. Although an appeal was made against the decision, this was also refused by the planning committee. Eden Cottage became a Grade II listed building on 27th July 1973 and due to the Council's foresight, still remains there today.



Nathaniel HITCH with his wife and his family
Image courtesy of www.trurocathedral.org.uk

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Ancestry. www.ancestry.co.uk

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www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk

Conveyance of a message and premises known as Eden Cottage, 3rd July 1876. Copy held by Eden Valley Museum.

Family Search. <https://familysearch.org>

Find a will or probate (England and Wales). www.gov.uk/search-will-probate

Kent Archaeological Society. www.kentarchaeology.org.uk

Tithe map and apportionment 1844, held at the Eden Valley Museum.

Truro Cathedral, February 2010. *Nathaniel Hitch, Architectural Sculptor and Modeller*. Occasional Monograph No. 1. www.trurocathedral.org.uk/cathedral-story/documents/NathanielHitch_000.pdf

Victorian Rate Books 1882-1892, held at the Eden Valley Museum.

The Victorian Web. www.victorianweb.org

BRICKFIELDS IN THE EDEN VALLEY

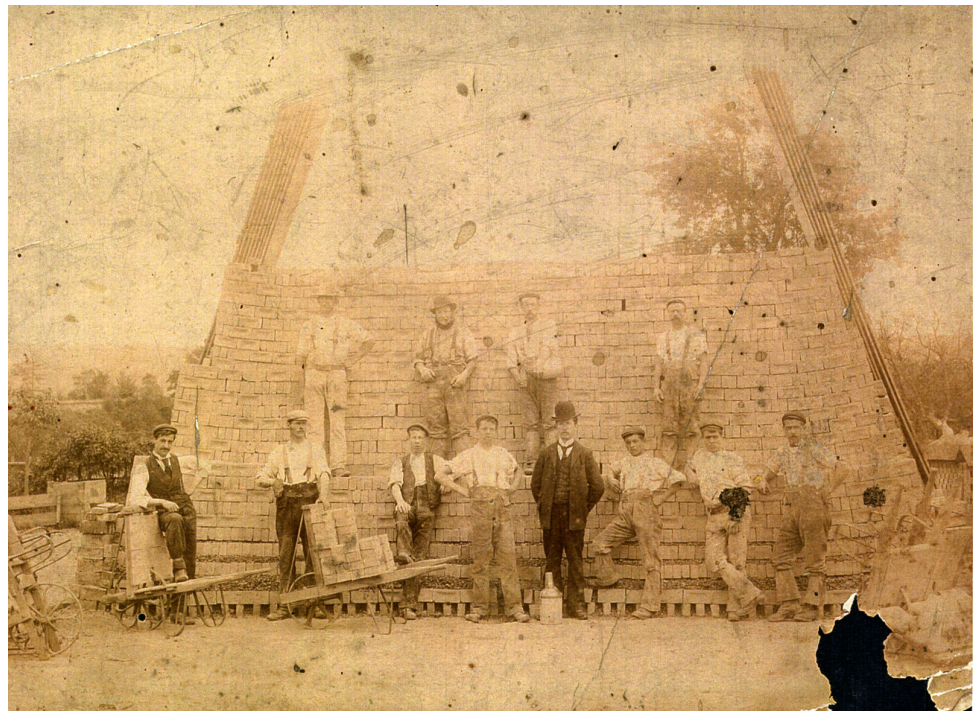
By David Cufley

Nicholas Pevsner'sⁱ *Buildings of England, West Kent and Weald*, by John Newman in discussing building materials states, "Some of the loveliest bricks of all are the reds of Wealden Kent." These bricks are made "from the brown and blue clays of the Weald, at any point along the SW portion of the County from Hythe to Edenbridgeⁱⁱ."

For the purposes of this article, the parishes considered forming the Eden Valley are Edenbridge, Cowden, Markbeeche, Hever, Chiddingstone, Penshurst and Leigh. The contiguous parishes to the south in Sussex are already well recorded by Molly Breswick's book *Brickmaking in Sussex*ⁱⁱⁱ. No similar books are available for Kent or Surrey although the author's own *Brickmakers Index*^{iv} covers the UK, and has been used to provide extracts of specific areas' brickfields, their owners, and the workers that manufactured the clay products for them.

The location of local brickfields was dictated not only by the clays, but also by the distance a horse and cart could transport bricks along the rough roads to their markets. This is normally accepted by the author as five miles out and back in a day. Once the railways and canals were built they, like the river and coastal traffic, extended the distance the heavy bricks

and clay products could be transported and increased the load for a single journey. The 1850's brought into use 'brickmarks' stamped into the brick frogs, so that the makers were known and the quality recognised. A form of advertising impressed on every brick. In 1882 the Bonsey Brothers of Brox Pottery, Chertsey advertised in *Kelly's directory*^v that they delivered by road within 15 miles of the works and on rail at Addleston Station. Perhaps steam powered transport increased their market range by road and rail.



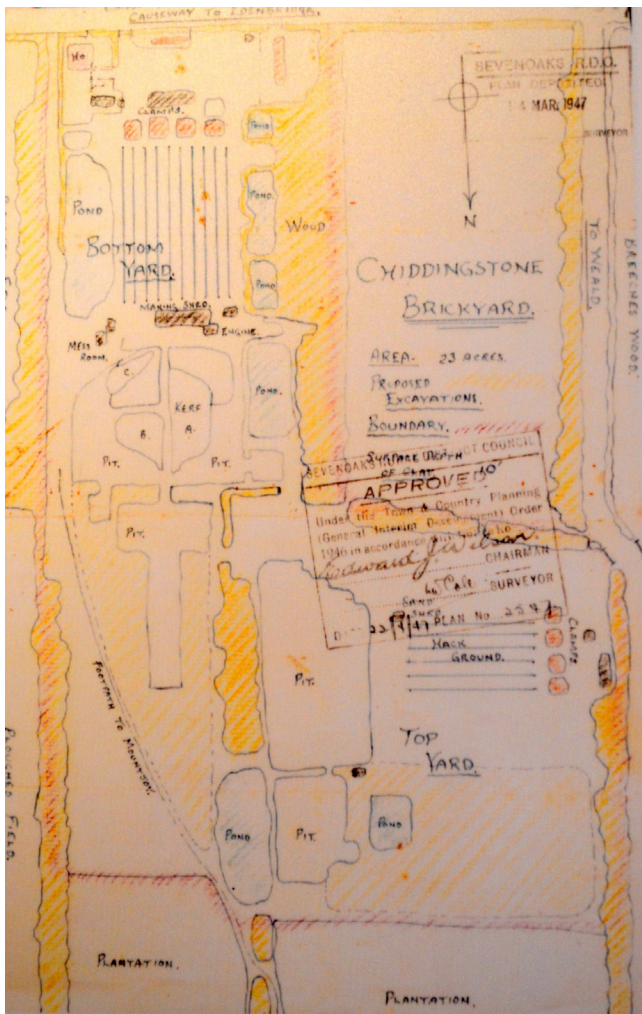
Chiddingstone Causeway brickfield workers standing in front of a brick clamp they are constructing. Site 1. Image P2002.549

The Eden Valley brickfields, prior to the railway coming in 1842, were local brickfields using horses and cart transport. Once the railways arrived the contractors not only created brickfields alongside the track for their own construction materials, but on completion they were able to provide materials for housing and industrial needs.

The method of burning the bricks on the rural brickfields was by clamp rather than using a kiln. Clamp burning is done by stacking the 'green' bricks with layers of fuel between them then setting the fuel alight.

The clamp is a temporary structure built up and taken down for each firing.

The Museum is fortunate that they have a hand-drawn layout of Chiddingstone Causeway brickfield showing the way the brickfield was organised. Otherwise, we rely on the Ordnance Survey (OS) map for the details of the brickfield structures to interpret their layouts and facilities. Most of the maps seen for the following brickfields are clamp burning brickfields with their hackfield shown on the map. Brickworks with kilns noted on the maps are High House Brickworks and Leigh Brick and Tile Works. The modern brickworks at Bore Place, Peshurst was also kiln burning. Kilns are a permanent structure, and were signs of higher capital investment in the brickmaking process to gain the advantage of more even and controlled burning



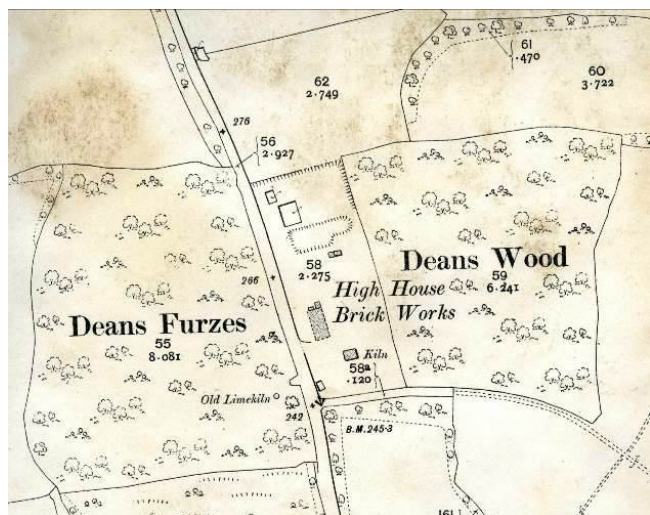
Chiddingstone Causeway brickfield layout showing the facilities and organisation of the brickworks, c.1947. Site 1. Image: EVM Archives

throughout the kiln, and the opportunity to burn other clay products.

1. Chiddingstone Brickyard,
Chiddingstone Causeway was founded by Owen Wilks (1883-1954) in c.1924 and his family continued its production until c.1976. He used bricks marked 'OW' in their frog. His son Owen Alan R. Wilks (1914-1988) continued the business using 'AW' as his brickmark. Until the closure of the works Alan's sisters Constance, Hilda and Nina ran the brickworks under the name C. & N. Wilks producing handmade 'multi-coloured facing bricks and briquettes'^{vi}. Owen Wilks had come from Galley Hill Brickyard, Brailes, Warwickshire where he mainly manufactured drainpipes and bricks^{vii}, products that he continued to produce at Chiddingstone. The Chiddingstone brickfield employed 20 men in 1939^{viii}. The newspapers after Owen's death claimed the brickfield was started with him and Mr Clifton^{ix}. The Brickworks is shown on the 1930 OS map with large clay pits on the north of the site. The Chiddingstone OS maps from 1870 show the brickworks, but the owners and occupiers are unclear before the Wilks.

2. Chiddingstone Brickworks Ltd, Bore Place Farm, Chiddingstone was bought by James Wates in 1976, and he opened the brickworks in 1994^x with Tony Nicholls as the brickmaker. It is said to be on the same site as a Tudor brickfield and used clays excavated on the farm. In 1999, the four man team of brickmakers were Tony and Bryan Nichols, Gordon Castle and John Whybrow^{xi}. In 1998, they celebrated their 100th kiln firing. In 2009, they also referred to it as Chartwell Brickworks. Bore Place was purchased in 1830 by William Whitton who was a brickmaker at Sliders Bridge (Site 7) in 1825.

3. Francis Leigh of High House, Chiddingstone, was listed in *Kelly's Directory* 1899 as a brickmaker, but it is not clear if this is his residence or work. **The High House Brickworks** was situated on the Ide Hill Road (OS map 1897-1909) north of Bough Beech railway between Deans Furzes and Deans Woods. On the 1840 Tithe map (plot 63) this brickfield was owned and occupied by John Williams.



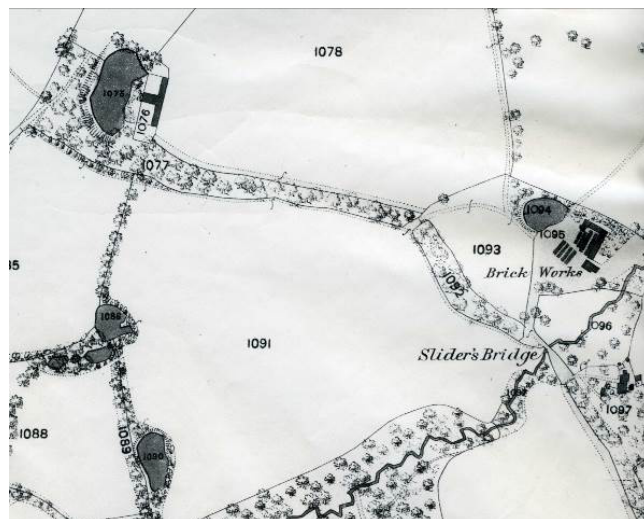
OS map 1909 High House Brick Works Site 3. EDEVT:876

4. Brickfield east of Winkhurst Road on the 1840 Tithe map for Chiddingstone as plot 83, part of Ivy House and Baileys Farm owned by John Williams and occupied by John Smith. The 1890 edition of the OS map no longer notes it as a brickfield.

5. Painters, Chiddingstone has one of the oldest references, so far seen, to brickmaker William Waters on a quarter sessions document^{xiii} dated 16 September 1592 when John Harrison of Leigh and Richard Hayward of Chiddingstone agreed to being sureties for him (QM/RLv/22/1).

***6. Red Leaf Brickworks, Chiddingstone. See Penshurst below.**

7. Sliders Bridge Brickworks, Chiddingstone in 1867-1882 was run by Richard Best. Previously in 1825 it was occupied by William Whitton^{xiii} who, as previously stated, purchased Bore Place



OS map 1880 Brick Works at Sliders Bridge Site 7. EDEVT:312/4

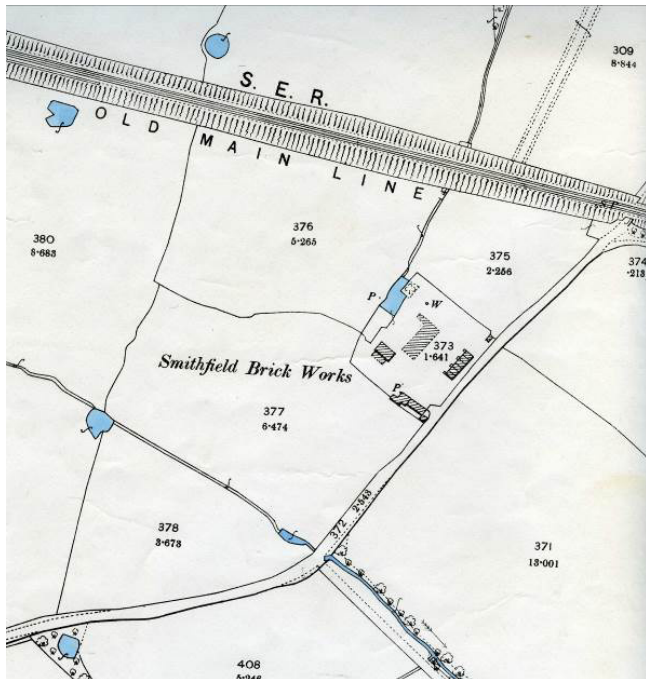
in 1830. Sliders Bridge is on the Truggers Gill midway between Hoath Corner and Hill Hoath Farm and west of Wellers Town Road. In the 1840 tithe map (plot 423) it was owned and occupied by Henry Streatfeild.

8. Cowden [Pound] brickmakers, listed in *Melville's Directory* of 1858, were Joseph Powers Howard a farmer and brickmaker and Stephen Burfoot a brickmaker. It is not known which of the two brickfields at Cowden Pound they owned or occupied. These brickfields are shown on the OS map for 1880 but had disappeared by the 1890 edition. One Brick and Tile Works was north of Spode Lane.

9. The second Cowden Pound Brick Works was south of Cowden Pound Road and east of Hartfield Road.

10. Goodwin's Brickyard, Four Elms Road, Edenbridge was south of the railway arch opposite the entrance to Skinners Lane^{viii} in the Spitals Cross Area. In the 1907-1918 Directories Oscar Goodwin is listed in Edenbridge, and it is assumed this brickyard is the same as 'Smithfield' brickyard. **Smithfield Brickyard, Near Spittle Cross, Edenbridge** in the 1891 census lists a George Bradford age 52 as brickmaker with his son Frederick Bradford age 21 working here^{xiv}. The OS maps 1897

Kent sheet XLIX.6 and 1909 XLIX NW locate this brickfield north of Four Elms Road and south of the Railway, the same location as the Goodwin's Brickfield. This brickworks was closed by 1930.



OS map 1897 Smithfield Brick Works Site 10. EDEVT: 231/4

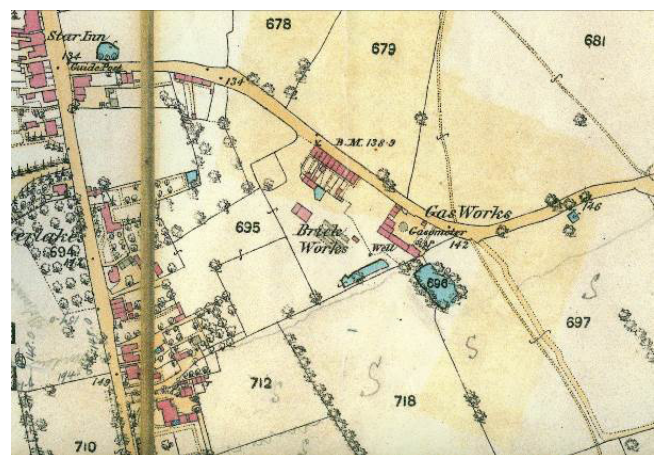
11. Greybury Brickyard, Marsh Green, Edenbridge in 1882 provided the bricks for the Presbyterian Church and school buildings at Marsh Green^{viii}. This building has monochrome brickwork in English bond with mainly red bricks and a three course feature banding in yellow bricks. The windows and doors have stone reveals, cills and arches. In 1867 G. Bradford was making bricks at 'Greyberry' (sic) lane. By 1870 Joshua Marchant jnr was advertising at 'Greybury Brickyard'.

12. Lower Wharf, Railway Station, Edenbridge advertised under Henry Benson in the PO Directory and Kelly's directories from 1867 to 1874. In the 1882 directory, Frederick Jordan was a brickmaker on this site. **Marl^{xv} Pit Hill** is an area north of Edenbridge, and alongside the railway line is a brickworks between it and Pit Lane. In the 1841 census Richard Rutledge was a brickmaker at this

brickfield^{xvi}.

13. Brick and Tile Works, How Green Lane, Edenbridge. These works are shown on the 1880 OS map just north of the railway line at Meachlands, but had disappeared by 1890.

14. Scutts Lane Brickyard, Edenbridge is shown on the 1844 Tithe award map as plot 773 owned by Anna Maria Leigh and occupied by Daniel Goodwin. This plot had an original entrance off Mill Hill between plots 774, 'A House and garden' owned by Thomas Langridge and occupied by Thomas Quickenden, and plot 772 'Three Houses & Gardens' owned by Anna Maria Leigh and occupied by 'Sampon(?), Spittle and Sales^{xvii}'. By 1819 Edward Leigh had purchased the land and built the brick kiln. By 1832 it was in the ownership of his widow Anna Maria Leigh and occupied by William Goodwin. Daniel Goodwin was occupying the site in 1849^{xviii}. In the 1841 and 1851 censuses there are a cluster of brickmakers in Scutts Lane (now Hever Road) who it is assumed worked at this brickyard. However, Daniel Goodwin refers to himself as a bricklayer and farmer of 80 acres and living in Edenbridge Street. Perhaps he was a bricklayer who obtained the brickfield to ensure the supply of known quality bricks and by combining both businesses increased his profits. By 1880 the brickworks, with

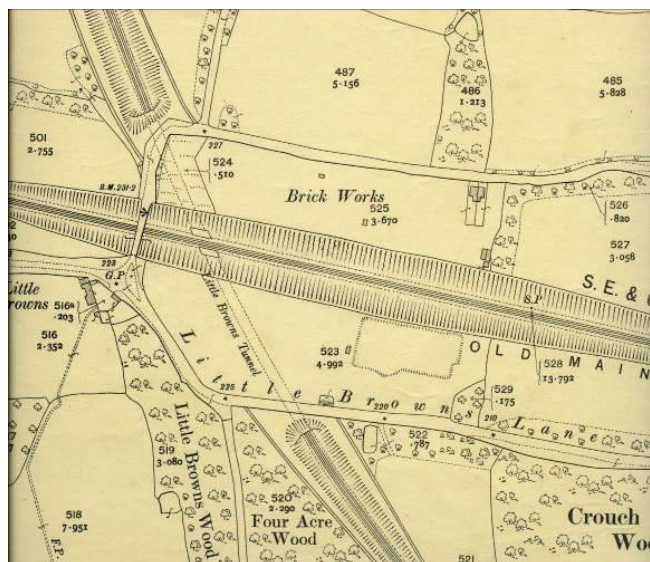


OS map 1890 Brickworks at Scutts Lane (Hever Road) Site 14. EDEVT: 995

entrances on Scutts Lane, had reduced in area and were closed by 1890.

15. Brickworks Hilders Lane, Edenbridge. North of the railway station and south of Hilders Lane this brickworks is shown on the 1900 OS map but not in 1890. It had become housing by the 1930 edition of the OS map.

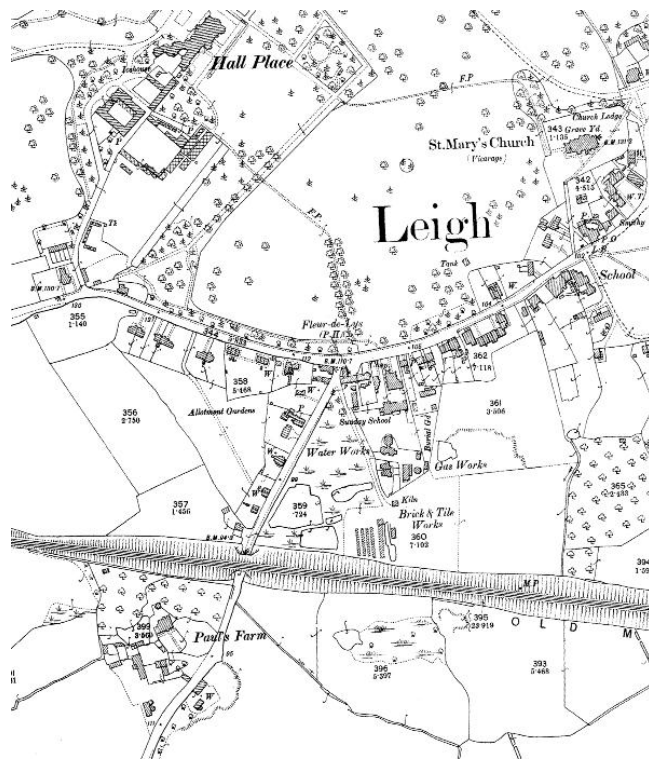
16. 'Old Clay Pit' site was south of the railway line and north of Little Browns Lane on the 1880 OS map. It had been enlarged by 1890, and still existed in the 1930 edition of the OS map. It is wondered if this pit provided clay for the bricks used to construct Little Browns railway tunnel.



OS map 1900. Brick Works at Hilders Lane (Site 15) and south of the Railway line and north of Little Browns Lane is the 'Old Clay Pit' that had been enlarged (Site 16) . EDEVT: 231/3

17. Hever had a James Ford, farmer and brickmaker, in the 1882 and 1891 *Kelly's Directories*. He was also there in the 1861 census age 48 and 1881 census age 66. In 1870-1874 he was listed as 'James Ford and Son'. No precise location for this brickfield is given in the directories. A James Ford was at Scutts Lane, Edenbridge in 1841 age 25 and in 1851 age 38, probably working for Daniel Goodwin.

18. Leigh. The 1838 Tithe Award Map shows plot 235 was a Brickyard owned by Sir John Shelley Sidney and occupied by



Leigh Brick and Tile Works c.1897. Site 18. EVM Archives

Henry Fuller. This is the area where the railway and Leigh station were built in c.1842. It is shown on the 1870-1910 OS maps but is closed by the time of the 1930 edition.

19. Markbeeck Brickworks was on the west of Uckfield Lane north of Markbeeck. It was on the 1880 OS map but had disappeared by the 1890 edition.

20. Penshurst's 1838 Tithe Award Map shows plot 730 as 'Brick Kilns yard and pasture' owned and occupied by Richard Saxby^{xvi}. In the 1841 census he was, age 45, living at Palmers Cottage. In the 1851 then 1861 census he is still at Palmers Cottage, Little Hickmans, a farmer with 90 acres employing four men and two boys which became three men and two boys in 1861.

21. Hope Constable (b.1825) was the brickmaker at Penshurst from 1870 to 1874 according to the directories. He was still there in the 1881 census but the exact location of the works is not known. He was living at Elliots, a farm on the outskirts of

Penshurst for the censuses 1871 and 1891 and listed as a builder, brickmaker and farmer of 44 acres employing one man on the farm and 28 men in other businesses.

22. Brickfield plot 308 north of Coldharbour Road, Penshurst was listed in the 1840 Tithe map at Weaver, Coldharbour and Finches Green owned and occupied by Thomas Hillman. By the 1870 OS map it was not noted as a brickfield.

23. 'Further Brickfield' plot 277 east of White Post by Blackmans Wood was listed in the 1840 Penshurst Tithe map at Weavers, Coldharbour and Finches Green, owned and occupied by Thomas Hillman. The 1870 OS map did not note it as a brickfield.

***6a Red Leaf Brickworks, Penshurst** is frequently listed in the directories of Chiddingstone parish as well as Penshurst, and can appear in both parish sections of the same directory. James Barnett was a brickmaker here in 1871. Henry Remnant is noted in the Chiddingstone section of *Kelly's* 1891 and 1899 directories as of Redleaf Brickworks and is also listed in the Penshurst section, which is assumed the same brickworks. In 1882, Doult & Son are listed at Red Leaf Brickworks, Chiddingstone and recorded in the 1881 census as Henry Doult age 25 employing three men and two boys. By the 1907-1911 *Directories*, George Alfred Gosling is working this brickfield.

6b Red Leaf Pottery, Penshurst was the title James Barnett used in the 1867 *Harrods Directory*, but had returned to Redleaf brickyard title by 1871^{xix}.

6c Red Leaf Sawmills, Penshurst advertised as brickmakers in the 1931 *Kelly's directory*, and is thought to be the same site as Redleaf Brickworks.

One of the problems in using the directories

to find brick making sites is that the entries are not very precise and sometimes they confuse parishes. An example is the entry for 'The trustees of Robert Bellchambers' in the 1870 and 1874 *Kelly's Kent Directory* which records them at 'Westerham, Edenbridge, Kent'. Only by additional documentation and a series of maps can one narrow the search to the correct location.

Most of the references in this list are 'a work in progress' and cover 19th and 20th century entries. There is a lot of early research needed as the Bore Place Tudor reference and 'Painters' 1592 reference would indicate.

Any errors in this list are mine and help to recognise their actual locations and timespan would be appreciated. Email: davidrcufley@btinternet.com

Editor's note:

The author recommends reading his article on 'Brickmaking in the Eden Valley' in Issue Number 28 of *Eden Valley Heritage* (December 2014) as there is information in that article that may make reading this current article clearer.

ⁱNicholas Pevsner's (1969) *Buildings of England in the West Kent and Weald*, by Newman, John, Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

ⁱⁱClifton-Taylor, Alec, Chapter on 'Building Materials' in Nicholas Pevsner's (1969) *Buildings of England in the West Kent and Weald* by Newman, John, Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, Middlesex (p.23).

ⁱⁱⁱBeswick, Molly (2001), *Brickmaking in Sussex: A History and Gazetteer*, Midhurst, West Sussex, Middleton Press.

^{iv}*Brickmakers Index*, Database of Brickmakers and others who owned and worked the Brickfields in the UK. Contact David Cufley at davidrcufley@btinternet.com to lodge information or request details.

^v*Kelly's Directory of Kent* 1882. Edited by E. R. Kelly.

[1882.] previous editions were published under the title *The Post Office Directory*. Other editions used are referenced in the text.

^{vi} Museum documents relating to Chiddingstone Brickyard. EDEVT: 114.

^{vii} 1911 Census for Galley Hill, Brailes, Warwickshire RG14/18872/0247.

^{viii} Hillman, Brenda (ed.) (2000), *The Past in Pictures. Passing Trades: Bygone workers in the Eden Valley*, Edenbridge and District Historical Society, (p.37-38). Available for sale at the Museum.

^{ix} *Daily Express* 1st July 1964 and *Evesham Journal* 3rd September 1965.

^x *New Builder* 13th May 1994.

^{xi} *Daily Telegraph* 27th November 1999.

^{xii} QM/RLv/22/1 for 1592 Quarter Session documents, William Waters a brickmaker. Kent History and Library Centre, James Whatman Way, Maidstone.

^{xiii} Newton, J. (1985), *Chiddingstone: An Historical Exploration*, Rainham, Kent, Meresborough Books Ltd.

^{xiv} 1891 Census RG12/675.

^{xv} Marl is a clay soil rich with lime.

^{xvi} 1841 Census HO 107/482.

^{xvii} Kent Archaeological Society Research pages 'Tithe Schedules' www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/Maps (accessed 4th September 2014).

^{xviii} Cole, Lionel (2012), *Index to Places in Edenbridge* www.theweald.org (accessed 4th September 2014)

^{xix} Correspondence with A. Arnold (February 2000) and documents in his collection on James Barnett, brickmaker of Redleaf Brick Yard, Penshurst.

ASPECTS OF EDENBRIDGE – ILLUSTRATIONS

By Gill Steinberg

Perhaps you have wondered who was responsible for the illustrations which used to appear in *Aspects of Edenbridge* initialled with DS in the bottom right hand cornerⁱ.



The Castle Inn, Chiddingstone
Image: P2015.2472_2 © Derek Steinberg

Derek Steinberg was a Consultant Adolescent Psychiatrist who moved with his family to Alfriston in Four Elms Road in 1977. We decided to change the name to Blunt's Brook; according to local historical sources the land on which the house was built was originally owned by John Blunt, and that is the name of the stream which runs at the bottom of the garden.

Derek always had a talent for and an interest in art. While at medical school he illustrated various student publications and after qualifying he was commissioned for several years to draw cartoons for *World Medicine*. When drawing at home he used pen and ink, either a Rotring pen or one of the vast collection of wooden dipping pens he acquired from a junk shop in Tunbridge Wells. I still have more than a hundred of these at home!



Railway Bridge, East of Edenbridge Town Station

He took a sketchbook on holiday and always encouraged his daughters in their artistic efforts. Our youngest daughter, Anna, has inherited his artistic talents and is an illustrator and visiting lecturer at art schools, while Kate, the eldest, is now a qualified homeopath.

I can't remember just how Derek got involved in illustrating *Aspects of Edenbridge*, but I know that going to local villages and spending time drawing must have been a very welcome change from time spent running a busy adolescent unit at Bethlem Royal Hospital, where, incidentally, the staff support groups often involved participation in various artistic projects.

Railway bridge east of town station, Edenbridge
Image: P2015.2472_7 © Derek Steinberg



Barnhawe, Mount Pleasant / Edenbridge High Street
Image: P2015.2472_10 © Derek Steinberg

After retiring from the health service Derek wrote several books, mostly psychiatric text books, often designing his own covers, and including his cartoons as illustrations.

In 1996 Derek and I moved to Lyme Regis in Dorset, where he did a lot more writing and drawing, and enjoyed buying some original artworks. He died in October 2006, aged 65, leaving behind many sketch books, which it was a poignant pleasure to rediscover.



Crockham Hill School and Church
Image: P2015.2472_19 © Derek Steinberg

ⁱ The first edition of *Aspects of Edenbridge* was published by Edenbridge & District Historical Society in 1980. Derek contributed the front and back covers, the Town Square and signpost at Four Elms Crossroads, for 11 of the 12 editions.

WW1 - GALLIPOLI

By Colin Fairman

In late 1914 with the war on the Western Front stagnating, Winston Churchill as First Lord of the Admiralty promoted the idea of a breakthrough by the back door. The plan was to take Germany's ally Turkey out of the war. This would both enable supplies from Russia to be shipped to the allies and provide a base for an outflanking attack on Germany's ally Austria-Hungary. It could even force the Germans to weaken their forces on the Western Front by sending troops to help Turkey.

This was initially going to be a naval campaign in conjunction with France which would force a way through the Dardanelles strait and on to Constantinople. However the strait had been mined, and after several warships had been lost it was decided to switch to a land campaign involving British and Anzac troops under the command of General Sir Ian Hamilton.

The first landings at Cape Helles and (what became) Anzac Cove in the Gallipoli peninsular were on 25th April, but due to delays and the rapid response of the Turks under the German Liman von Sanders little headway was made and the campaign bogged down to one of attrition with the added perils of heat, dust and disease. A later landing fared no better and eventually the allied troops were evacuated - the last being in January 1916. Ironically these were the only successful allied actions – taking the Turks totally by surprise.

With better planning and luck the campaign could have succeeded. However it can only be described as a costly disaster for the allies with casualties for the two sides being around 200,000 each. Churchill was among those blamed for the failure and resigned.

Although there were more British soldiers than Australians involved, a side effect was to promote national pride in that part of the world and 25th April is today commemorated as Anzac day.

Amongst the thousands that perished during this disastrous campaign were men from the Eden Valley.¹

6th August 1915

Walter Eric Cecil Yeoman, Lance Corp., had lived with his brother Robert and his father Walter (both gardeners) and mother Louisa in South Park, Peshurst (they later moved to Reigate). He joined the Somerset Light Infantry (later part of 5th Battalion, Royal Irish Regiment) in 1914. His was the first Irish regiment to fight in the Dardanelles and he was killed in action on 6th August 1915, aged 23 years. He is commemorated on the Helles Memorial, Turkey.



8th August 1915

Evan Evans was born in Edenbridge in 1897. He served as a Private in the 2/4th The Queen's Own (Royal West Surrey Regiment). He was killed in action on 8th August 1915 and is commemorated on the Helles Memorial, Turkey.



13th August 1915

Edward Burt was a Lieutenant in the Army Service Corp. (A.S.C.). He was the son of Edward Robert and Ellen Mary Burt of Edenbridge. He drowned on 13th August 1915 when the transport ship HMS Edward was torpedoed and sunk off the Dardanelles. He is commemorated on the Helles Memorial, Turkey.



6th September 1915

Rhys Evans, the older brother of Evan Evans, was born in 1896 and lived in Edenbridge. He enlisted for WWI in Guildford and served as a Private in the 2/4th The Queen's Own (Royal West Surrey Regiment). He died of his wounds on 6th September 1915 and is buried in Pieta Military Cemetery, Malta.



23rd October 1915

Herbert William Grubb, Private, served with the 2/4th Battalion, Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment). He was the son of Charles and Mary Grubb who lived at Stone Cottage, Penshurst. Herbert was mortally wounded in action and died at sea of his wounds on 23rd October 1915, aged 22 years. He is commemorated on the Helles Memorial, Turkey.ⁱⁱ



28th October 1915

H.W. Clifford was the first man from Hever to lose his life in the war. He served with the 3rd (Kent) Fort. Coy, R.E. and he died at sea (HMS Hythe) on 28th October 1915. He left a widow and one child.

28th October 1915

William Herbert Coppard lived in Hever. He served as a Driver with 1/3rd (Kent) Field Coy, Royal Engineers. He died at sea (HMS Hythe) on 28th October 1915, aged 33 years. He is commemorated on the Helles Memorial, Turkey. He was the husband of Alice Maud Coppard, née Pickett of 33 Cromwell Road, Tunbridge Wells.



28th October 1915

Charles William Reginald Gander of Poundsbridge was born in Bough Beech on 19th October 1897. He was the son of Mr and Mrs Charles Gander of Bowens Cottage, Poundsbridge. He enlisted for WWI in Gillingham and was serving as a Driver with the 1/3rd (Kent) Field Coy, R.E. He drowned (HMS Hytheⁱⁱⁱ) on 28th October 1915, aged 18 years. He is commemorated on the Helles Memorial, Turkey. At the time of his death his brother Edwin was serving at the front in the Royal Field Artillery.

28th October 1915

Thomas William Langridge was the son of Mrs Emma Langridge of Church Cottage, Edenbridge. Prior to WWI he worked as a butcher for R.A. Ashby in Church Road, Tunbridge Wells. He enlisted in Tunbridge Wells in November 1914 and was serving in No. 3 Res. Coy, (Kent) Fort., R.E. as a Driver and Orderly to Captain Reginald Salomons. He died at sea (HMS Hythe) on 28th October 1915, aged 19 years. He is commemorated on the Helles Memorial, Turkey.



28th October 1915

Albert George Sumner married Rosetta Bassett from Penshurst in 1907. During WWI he served with the 1/3rd (Kent) Field Coy, R.E. He died at sea (HMS Hythe) on 28th October 1915 aged 32 years and is commemorated on the Helles Memorial, Turkey.



His wife Rosetta was left with three sons under six years to care for, Charles, William and Earnest.

3rd November 1915

Harry Maynard Cooper was born in Chiddingstone in 1885. His parents were James Edward Cooper and Jane Gunner who at the time he died were living in Marlpit Hill, Edenbridge. Sapper Cooper was serving with the 1/1st (Kent) Fort., Coy, R.E., and he was killed in action in the Dardenelles on 3rd November 1915 and is buried in Lala Baba Cemetery, Suvla, Turkey.

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ⁱPlease note that this does not purport to be a comprehensive list of all those local men who lost their lives during the Gallipoli campaign; rather it comprises those that have come to light during research to date.

ⁱⁱHelles Memorial, near Sedd el Bahr, Turkey is for First World War missing, presumed dead from the Gallipoli campaign and have no known grave. There are four other Memorials to the Missing at Gallipoli. The Lone Pine, Hill 60, and Chunuk Bair Memorials commemorate Australian and New Zealanders at Anzac. The Twelve Tree Copse Memorial commemorates the New Zealanders at Helles. Naval casualties of the United Kingdom lost or buried at sea are recorded on their respective Memorials at Portsmouth, Plymouth and, Chatham, in the United Kingdom.

ⁱⁱⁱOn the 28th October 1915 whilst at sea and about to land her troops at Cape Helles, Gallipoli the ferry 'Hythe' was struck by a larger vessel and empty troop carrier called the 'Sarnia'. The Hythe sank in ten minutes and due to a number of reasons, including the lack of life jackets, some 155 souls perished. The majority of those who died were members of the 1st/3rd Kent Field Company, Royal Engineers and men from Kent. Their Captain was David Reginald Hermon Phillip Salomons, he died with his men (Ellis 2008).

The H.M.S. Hythe Memorial Plaque is located in St. Matthew's parish church Gordon Road, High Brooms, Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Acknowledgements:

Additional research on those who lost their lives during the Gallipoli campaign was carried out by Joan Varley and Lyn Layland.

Editor's note:



HMS M.33 © Colin Fairman

Readers may be interested to know that a restored British warship from the Gallipoli campaign was officially opened to the public on August 6th 2015, the centenary of the last major Allied offensive on the peninsula, at Portsmouth's historic dockyard. The gunboat HMS M.33 is the only surviving naval ship from this ill-fated campaign. With a shallow draft and a top speed of nine knots, M.33 was designed for inshore attacks on land targets.

www.historicdockyard.co.uk



Party for children at South End of Edenbridge to celebrate the end of WW2.
Image: P2003.677

WORLD WAR TWO

From the Archives ...

WARTIME EDENBRIDGE AS SEEN IN THE KENT AND SUSSEX COURIER [Extract]

Aspects of Edenbridge, No. 10, EDHS, 1994

2015 marked the 70th anniversary of the end of WW2. This extract from *Aspects of Edenbridge* records some of the local celebrations that took place, and highlights the community spirit which subsequently endured to produce the wealth of local groups and activities, many of which the town still enjoys today. Eds.

...With the surrender of Germany on May 8th 1945 and Japan in August there was an outbreak of celebrations in the district.

In Cowden in May the village was decorated, a bonfire was lit in the square, a dance was held in the village hall and Mr Gearing organised the ringing of the bells. £13.0.0d was raised for the Village Memorial Fund and at a Sunday service various organisations were on parade

and £8.0.0d was collected for Christian Reconstruction in Europe.

At Marsh Green the Victory celebrations featured races and sports on the green and a tea for the children. Money and saving stamps were given to the winners of the events.

A party was arranged for the children of Church Street [Edenbridge]. There were races and

games and each child was given 6d.

In August a V.J. Party was held in Marlpit Hill Institute with a tea organised by Mrs G. Fermer. After games and community singing each child was given a gift and money.

One hundred and twenty children attended a party in Lingfield Road and the Reverend E.A. Graham opened the proceedings.

The children of Church Street and Frantfield had another party in August, this time beginning with a Fancy Dress Parade to Church House where they enjoyed tea, sports, games, community singing and fireworks and were sent home with sweets, fruit and money.

In June 1945 the British Legion entertained returned prisoners of war at a concert. Company Sergeant Major Seal, who was now home at the Drill Hall, thanked the branch for their many kindnesses during the captivity of the men; and Major Gavin Astor thanked the branch for their wonderful reception, especially the individual welcome home letters from Mr H.H. Muggridge which each returning prisoner had received.

Gradually servicemen and women returned to their civilian families, war brides set up home with their civilian husbands, sometimes locally, sometimes further afield in the U.K. and sometimes in Canada and other foreign parts. Sadly for some families there were no “happy returns”, but gradually the town resumed normal activities.

A strong community spirit was a legacy of the war years, evident in such events as the Whit Monday Sports, Bonfire Night Celebrations (which become nationally famous), a thriving Agricultural Show, strong St John’s Ambulance Brigade and Red Cross units and youth organisations, sports clubs, dramatic society, W.I., British Legion, Women’s Royal Voluntary Service and other organisations.

THEY SERVED THEIR COUNTRY DURING TWO WORLD WARS (2)

By Joan Varley

In our 2014 issue of *Eden Valley Heritage* we featured the stories of two Eden Valley residents who served during and survived World War One, then went on to serve their country again on the Home Front during World War Two. In this issue we are featuring the Potter family.

Michael Potter was born in Hever in 1850 and he married Harriet Aylward from Cowden (b.1850) on 7th November 1876 in Speldhurst. The 1891 census shows them as having three sons, William (10yrs), Alfred James (7yrs), Percy (3yrs); and three daughters, Elizabeth (13yrs); Ethel (4yrs) and Olive (5months). Another son, Victor was born abt.1894.

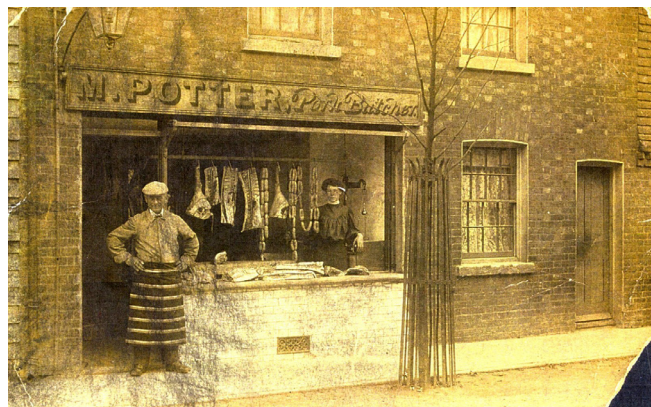
Early in the 19th century they were living on the Lingfield Road in a house opposite the entrance to Starborough Castle.

When Michael established a butcher’s shop in Edenbridge High Street (next door (to the south) of Honours Mill), they moved to Edenbridge and the family was divided between living in the shop accommodation and in Church Street.



Percy Potter with horse and trap outside Potter’s Butchers (next to Honours Mill) Image: P2015.2447

Information passed down the family tells us that all four sons served during WW1 whilst their daughter, Ethel, took her brother's place, serving in the butcher's shop.



Michael Potter and his daughter Ethel at M. Potter, Pork Butcher's Shop, 89 High Street, Edenbridge, c.1914-1918. Image: P2003.1023

No service records have been found for William, Alfred or Victor, however Victor carried a shrapnel injury from the war. We do, however, have more information on Percy.

Prior to World War One, Percy George Potter worked for the Astor family looking after their polo ponies, and later as Batman or Groom to Messrs Cox (army bankers).

Percy enlisted in Edenbridge during June 1915 and was given the service number 095800. Because of his experience with horses he served in the Remount Squadron of the Army Service Corps (ASC), joining the Remount Depot in Romsey, Hampshire on 8 June 1915.



Percy Potter in WW1 Army uniform, 1914-1918
Image: P2015.2445

The ASC Remounts Service was responsible for the provisioning of horses and mules to all other army units. A remount squadron consisted of approximately 200 soldiers who obtained and trained 500 horses, using

generally older and experienced soldiers. Percy's previous experience with horses obviously stood him in good stead.

Animals were compulsory purchased in the United Kingdom, but were also purchased from North and South America, New Zealand, Spain, Portugal, India and China. As the army expanded so did the number of Remount Squadrons, both at home and overseas.

The Romsey Depot received its first horses in March 1915 and by the end of the war had processed about 120,000 or around 10% of the animals required by the Remount Service.

In addition to the depot at Romsey, there were three more at Shirehampton (for horses coming in via Avonmouth); Ormskirk (for Liverpool); and Swaythling which acted as a collecting centre for horses trained at the other three depots for onward shipment overseas.

By April 1919 the collecting centre at Swaythling had received 342,020 horses and mules of which 317,165 came from the USA; 6,712 from Ireland; 9,357 were home purchased; 8,856 returned from France.

The connection with horses ran throughout the family, Ethel Potter married Charlie Stewart, a groom working at Mapleton in Four Elms, in the Spring of 1915.



Ethel Potter and Charlie Stewart taken before they were married, 1914.
Image: P2015.2417



A young Alfred Potter dressed as a groom, pre-WWI.
Image: P2015.2448

Alfred Potter continued to work with horses after the war. He never married but lived with his sister Lizzie (Elizabeth). Lizzie never married but travelled extensively within the UK and amounted a large collection of Goss crested china.

From 1929 to c.1955 Potter's Butchers was located at Jubilee House or 82 High Street, Edenbridge. This shop, along with others, was later demolished to make way for the Leathermarket.

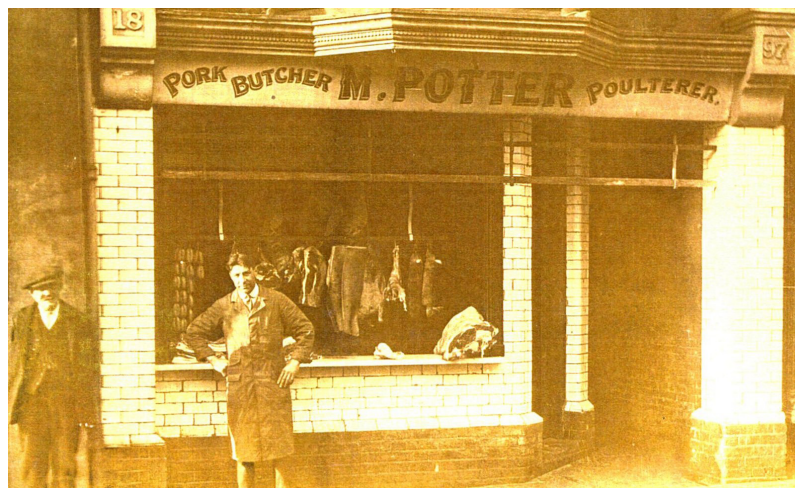


M. Potter Butchers at Jubilee House, c. 1920 Image: P2002.70

William Potter moved to Hemel Hempstead to run a greengrocers'.

Victor married a Miss Piper from the Cowden family of Tanners and Fellmongers and he went on to run Potter Brothers' Butchers with Percy.

In 1917 Olive married Alfred Hinkley who was the inspector for International Stores, the local store was situated in The Square, Edenbridge. They went to live in St. Leonards and had a son who worked for the British Council, as a result of which he taught the Dalai Lama to speak English.



Possibly Victor or Percy Potter outside the Jubilee House shop, c. 1930
Image: P2003.1024



International Stores, The Square, Edenbridge, c.1920.
Image: P2003.807

During World War Two, Percy served as a Special Constable in Edenbridge along with his brother, Victor who served as a Sergeant in the Special Constabulary.

Alfred Potter also served his country during WW2 as a civilian driver/army messenger working at Hobbs' Barracks on the Felbridge Road in East Grinstead.



Percy Potter's WW2 Special Constabulary Medal inscribed 'For faithful service in the Special Constabulary'.



Percy Potter's WW2 Special Constabulary Cap Badge and Lapel Badge.



Michael Potter died in 1927 and Harriett in 1933. They are buried in Edenbridge Churchyard.

© Gravestone Photographic Resource

The family is also in possession of the ribbon for the Defence Medal, awarded to subjects of the British Commonwealth for both non-operational military and certain types of civilian service during the Second World War. Percy, Victor and Alfred would no doubt have all qualified for this medal.

Percy Potter died in 1951, aged 63 years.

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Note

Given their ages, it is highly likely that the two older brothers, William and Alfred James also served during WW1, but our research has been unable to find any further information about these two brothers.

Acknowledgements

The information included in this article has been compiled with the help of Michael Potter, the grandson of Michael and Harriett Potter and son of Percy. Additional research was carried out by Allen Varley and Kay Wilson.

JOHN OSBORNE – A MAN OF CONTRADICTIONS

By Helen Jackman

In 1955 John Osborne was an unemployed actor, separated from his wife, and living with a friend on a creaky barge moored near Chiswick Bridge. Here they eked out their meagre diet by stewing the nettles they found on the riverbank as they desperately looked for work. Osborne saw an advert in *The Stage*, inviting submissions for new plays for the newly founded English Stage Company. He submitted *Look Back in Anger*. His play was selected from over 750 entries, and when staged at the Royal Court Theatre in Sloane Square captured the mood of the time, and made its young author an overnight celebrity. Based on the breakdown of his marriage to the actress Pamela Lane, it was intensely autobiographical. Jimmy Porter, the prototype of the angry young man, became Osborne's most famous hero, and his alter ego.

The museum collection has a signed poster of the play, when it was staged at the Ashcroft Theatre, Croydon in 1981. This was given to Jimmy Middleton, who was his window cleaner at Christmas Place.



Image: EDEVT: 124

Look Back in Anger made John Osborne's name, and over the next two decades he wrote over twenty stage and television plays and won a number of drama critic awards. His main theme remained consistent; embittered central characters, hostility and disillusion. Many well-known actors of the day starred in the leading roles. Laurence

Olivier's portrayal of Oliver Rice in the original production of *The Entertainer* was acclaimed as his 'best ever role'; Albert Finney, playing the leading role in *Luther*, was a triumph in London and New York; Alan Bates was a great success in the 1983 production of *A Patriot for Me*. When a producer could not be found to finance a film version of *Look Back in Anger*, Osborne joined forces with Tony Richardson to form Woodfall films. Subsequently he wrote the script for the film *Tom Jones*. This was to be one of the most successful British films ever, and made them both multi-millionaires.

Whilst Osborne's career flourished his personal life was in constant turmoil. Wife number two was the actress Mary Ure, his leading lady in *Look Back in Anger*. They divorced in 1961 and he married the film critic of the Observer, Penelope Gilliatt, with whom he had a daughter, Nolan, in 1963.

John Osborne's association with Edenbridge began in 1967 when he bought Christmas Place, Marsh Green - a year before his marriage to Jill Bennett, who played the leading role in many of his stage plays. According to his biographer, John Heilpern, his new wife preferred their Chelsea Square house, rarely visiting their country home which she referred to as 'the abortion clinic'.

The sixties had been a period of triumph for Osborne but during the following decade his relationship with Jill Bennett broke down acrimoniously, and his plays began to fall out of fashion. He had funded several divorces, and with serious tax problems was heading towards bankruptcy. This was a dark time. Escaping from a loveless marriage and sinking low with depression, he was drinking heavily. Christmas Place became the sanctuary where he lived, more-or-less as a recluse, with just a housekeeper and gardener.

On 21st June 1976 Jill was performing in his

play, *Watch it Come Down*, at the National Theatre. John phoned to say he was leaving her. That summer he moved permanently into Christmas Place with the Arts Editor of the Observer, Helen Dawson, who became his fifth wife. Two weeks after their wedding in 1978 Nolan came back from America to live with them.

Helen Dawson shared his love of country living, and the ten years they spent at Christmas Place were probably the most relaxed and happy of his life. They entertained their London friends, kept dogs, walked in the country, went racing, shopped locally and patronised the local hostelryes. John attended Evensong at Edenbridge Parish Church and borrowed the money to build an enclosed swimming pool. John Heilpern describes the period in his 500 page official biography, *John Osborne, A Patriot For Us*. Included are many quotes taken from interviews with a wide section of the local community; publicans, restaurant owners, church members, tradesmen, neighbours and friends.



Christmas Place, said by Helen Dawson to be John's favourite snap of the house and lake. Image: P2002.146

No new plays were performed in the West End during this period, but encouraged by his wife Osborne wrote the first part of his autobiography, *A Better Class of Person, An autobiography 1929 to 1926*. This met with critical acclaim. Melvyn Bragg wrote in the Evening Standard: 'It is, quite simply, one

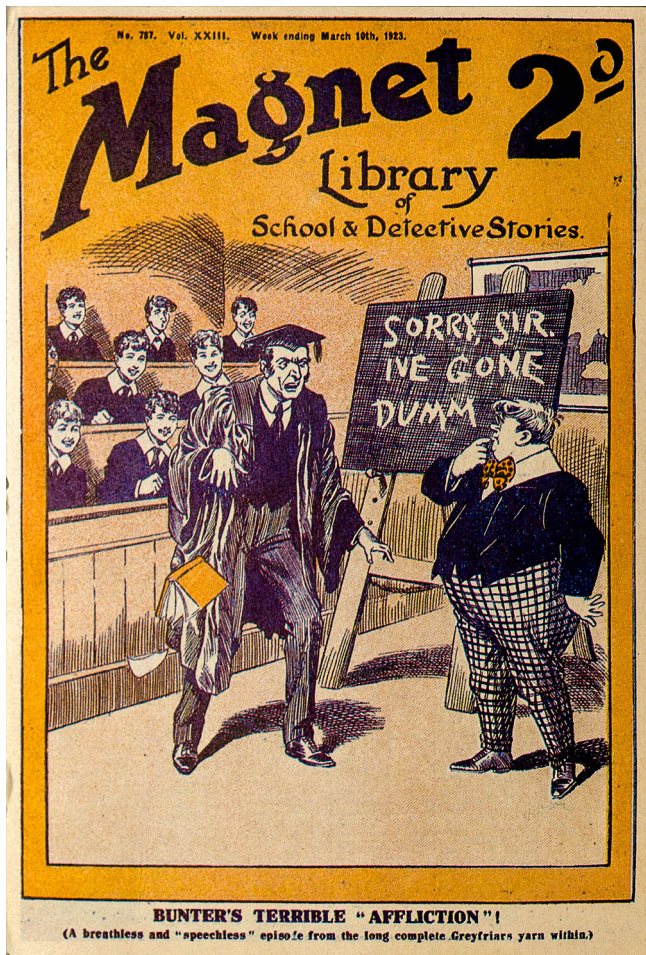
of the best, most moving, richest and most bitterly truthful autobiographies I have ever read. It's a classic.' Helen Osborne donated a first edition to the museum together with a copy of the official photograph taken at Christmas Place at the time of its publication in 1981.



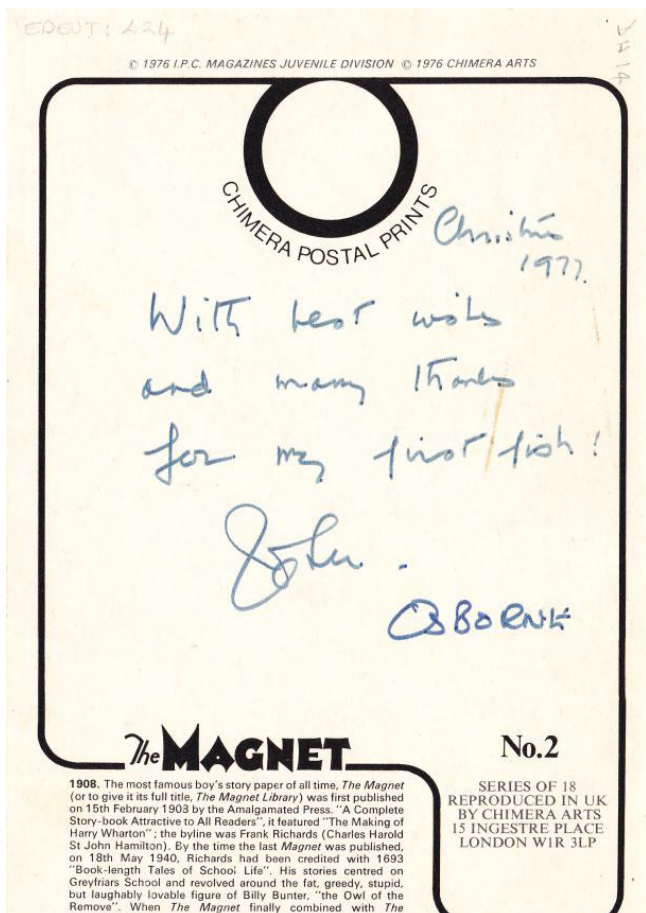
Leaning on gate at Christmas Place, 1981 Image: P2002.260

A sequel, *Almost a Gentleman, Vol 11: 1955 - 1966* was published in 1991. These two autobiographies, praised for the 'clarity of the prose', are striking for the stinging references to his mother, ex-wives, and most notably for the vicious attack on Jill Bennett following her suicide in 1999.

Throughout his life John Osborne was known for his predilection for scribbling off post cards on every occasion, 'sending smoke signals of friendship and war', from his small regency writing desk. The dispatching of these postcards stemmed from his childhood. His father, to whom he attributed his enthusiasm for reading and writing, died of tuberculosis when John was ten. A few months before he died he spent several months in a sanatorium in France, and from there sent dozens of personally decorated postcards to his only son. These much treasured cards Osborne carried around for years, and throughout his life he suffered his worst bouts of depression around Christmastime, the anniversary of his father's death.



Postcard sent by John Osborne to Dennis Leigh. Image: EDEVT: L24
 And the reverse side:



Dennis Leigh was the recipient of several of these cards, and one displayed in the museum relates to a fishing outing in 1977. When John mentioned to Dennis that he had never had the time to fish Dennis suggested that he and Gerald Fletcher could accompany him on the lake at Christmas Place. Dennis recalls three bottles of champagne were consumed in three hours, mainly by their host, but they also had their share!

Following John's death his biographer visited Helen Osborne at their final home in Shropshire. Here, displayed in the drawing room, was evidence of the happy years spent at Christmas Place - 'A Snowdon photograph of John and Helen Osborne - both sunny, he in a white suit, she in pink stripes and straw hat - hosting one of their summer garden parties when jazz bands played in tents and theatre grandees rolled around in the flower beds ... these parties were held in the grounds of their Edwardian house in Edenbridge, Kent. "Horrible kiddies drowned in pool by request," the coveted invitations used to say.'

Each June the Osbornes threw open the doors of Christmas Place for their summer party - Cranmer's Annual Summer Ball, named in celebration of the Archbishop of Canterbury. John was always a generous host, 'sipping champagne from a silver tankard', while three hundred guests would gather in the house and gardens. It was the eclectic nature of the invited guests which was most surprising, with theatrical and London friends, among them Peter Bowles, Edward Fox, Michael Gambon, Glenda Jackson, George Melly, Laurence Olivier, Edna O'Brien, Harold Pinter, Natasha Richardson, Maggie Smith, Janet Street-Porter, Lord Snowdon et al - all rubbing shoulders with the residents of Edenbridge.

The examples of these invitations come from Dennis Leigh, who was a guest at several

of these parties. One particular memory sticks in his mind. ‘Helen had gone to great lengths to buy John a superb classic open topped sports car, a Lagonda or something similar. David Sparrowhawk made all the necessary arrangements, and may have done the restoration. It arrived late morning and was parked in the drive by the swimming pool. There it stood, all afternoon, gleaming in the sunlight and looking splendid. But John never turned up. All day he remained indoors, and sadly Helen had to tell us that John was indisposed. We had to assume that he had taken to his bed with a bottle. I saw nothing of him at that party, and I don’t think anyone else did either. However, I did see him later that week driving through Edenbridge in his new car and was able to give him a cheerful wave.’

A telling reminder of these legendary parties came a few years later when the new owners dredged the four acre lake, and a large number of champagne bottles were unearthed.

John and Helen Osborne lived at Christmas Place, until 1986 when they moved to their final home at Clun on the Welsh borders. Among the reasons suggested for the move was the increase in the number of planes circling before landing at Gatwick, which challenged John’s lifelong phobia of noise. It is more likely that he needed to sell the Edenbridge property to pay off his debts. John Osborne died, aged 65, on 24th December, 1994 and was buried in the village church at Clun.

On the 20th anniversary of his death the Guardian reprinted from their archive Michael Billington’s obituary, which reflected on his life and legacy. ‘His unique gift was to create fiercely articulate dramatic heroes who embodied his own wounded and damaged spirit. He was, to the very last, a man with a talent for dissent.’

CHRISTMAS PLACE, MARSH GREEN, NR. EDENBRIDGE, KENT

John and Helen Osborne
invite you to
Cranmer’s Annual Summer Ball
Poolside 1662
July XXII (22nd) 12.30 onwards

Horrid Kiddies, Teenagers,
Aussies, Guardian Readers,
Feminists on lead only.
Large dogs welcome.
R.S.V.P.

The Rev. Sid Trendo
and his A.S.B.
Stompers.
Outside if Wet.

Invitation to Cranmer’s Annual Summer Ball Image: EDEVT: L11a

CHRISTMAS PLACE, MARSH GREEN, NR. EDENBRIDGE, KENT

You are invited to
ONE OF CRANMER’S
BETTER CLASS OF BALLS
on
12th December 1981, 8.0 pm
at
Hever Castle Pavilion

Dress: Frocks and Gaiters (1662)
or any old drag you like.
R.S.V.P. Helen Osborne

Magnificent prizes:
Daily Telegraph readers
& S.D.P. supporters
admitted.

Invitation to Cranmer’s Better Class of Balls Image: EDEVT: L11b



Summer Party at Christmas Place Image: P2002.259

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THE REYNOLDS FAMILY

By Jane More

The evocative photo on the front of issue No. 28 of *Eden Valley Heritage* made me remember our links with two members of the Reynolds family in the 1970's.

In 1976 my parents, Joyce and Sidney Linfield, left their home in the Hertfordshire village of Gosmore, near Hitchin, to join forces with Bryan, our daughter Ros and me to live in Hever. Here we all stayed very happily until Dad and Mum died in 1995 and 1997 and we moved to Five Oak Green, near Tunbridge Wells.

Soon after moving to Hever Mum and Dad started attending Sunday evening services, held at that time in Mark Beech Village Hall, where they met Jessie Reynolds, the wife of Stan who appears in the photo – Charles Stanley. Jessie, they discovered, came from the village of Pirton near Hitchin, birthplace of William Reynolds, Stan's father. Jessie must have met Stan when he visited his father's birthplace. From then on, when on visits to Hitchin, Jessie would go with Mum and Dad to visit her family.

Jessie and Stan had two daughters. I remember one – Mary Baldock – who lived at Smallfield. Stan at one time worked at the tannery in Edenbridge and he told us that if you were unlucky enough to fall into one of the tanks you had just one hour to get home to wash, change, and get back to work!

Stan was an excellent gardener and his home at 'Bella Vista' on Stick Hill was full of produce. His tomatoes were always winners at Hever Show. Jessie told me that to get the water boiling for Monday's washday she would put an old shoe in the fire to ensure it would soon heat the water!



Image: P2002.195

Stan's younger brother, Alfie, presumably the Alfred John in the photograph was well-known in the Stick Hill area where he lived with his faithful companion Jake, a sprightly Jack Russell terrier. Once when we were coming home along Hever Lane we spotted Jake trotting along towards his home. Knowing Alfie was away and Jake was lodging in Hever Road in Edenbridge we caught him and he happily rode with us back to Edenbridge. I guess it wasn't long before he set out for home again!

I know this tells you nothing about Stan and Alfie's father William, but I thought it might be of interest.

Editor's note:

After forty years serving the Edenbridge and District Historical Society (EDHS) Jane More has just retired as its President.

NEGRESKO UPDATE

By Joan Varley



Architectural drawing of the frontage of the Negresco by G. Wrenn, 1982 Image: P2015.2590

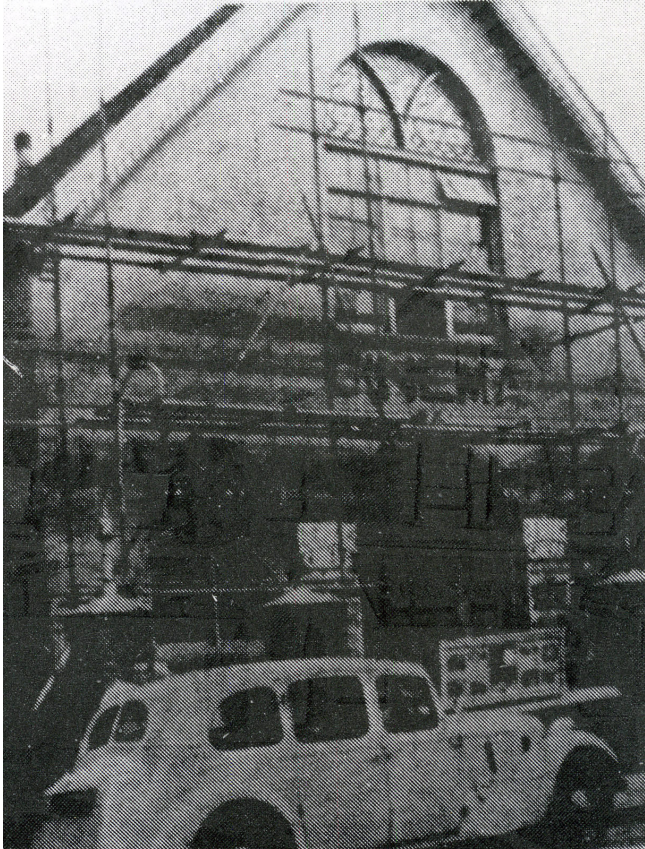
In issue number 26 of *Museum News* (2012) we published *The History of the Cinema Site - Edenbridge*. Recently further information has come to light about the cinema along with the architectural drawing above and two more photographs.

In the previous article it was stated that 'In December 1927 the building was leased to the Adelphi Advertising Co. and converted into a 330-seat cinema with a new Art Deco frontage'. It would appear now that the building was utilised as a cinema for some time before the new Art Deco frontage was added.

In Picture 1 of the old Oddfellows Hall, albeit covered in scaffolding, it is just possible to see the sign for CINEMA across

the front. Perhaps this photograph was taken just before the conversion, hence the scaffolding. If someone could identify the car in front, this might help us to date the picture.

Picture 2 shows the cinema with its new Art Deco frontage. The renovation was carried out by Kenneth Friese-Greene (1900-1965), a builder from Sheffield who was also a cinema equipment specialist and amateur cinematographer. He was involved in the renovation of many cinemas across the country which were converted to the Art Deco style, such as the Globe cinema in Johnstone, Renfrewshire (re-modelled in 1930), Rutland Picture House in Sheffield (re-modelled in 1934), and the Theatre Royal, Tyne and Wear (re-modelled in



Picture 1. Negresco Cinema, Edenbridge High Street.
Image: P2015.2589

1937), by which time he was working out of Newcastle.

His firm later became Modernisation Ltd., which subsequently became Chart Developments credited with a lot of work at the Paris Disneyland including The Castle and most of Main Street.

Kenneth Friese-Greene was the son of William Friese-Greene who is believed by many to have invented the moving picture camera in the late 19th century. Kenneth's brother Claude was also a successful cinematographer.

The Magic Box, on general release in January 1952, was the English film industry's contribution to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Its all-star cast generously forsook their usual salaries for the privilege of paying tribute to Kenneth's father as the unsung pioneer of cinema. In the film William is played by Robert Donat. The screenplay was adapted by Eric Ambler from the controversial biography of William Friese-



Picture 2. Negresco Cinema, Edenbridge High Street.
Image: P2015.2588

Greene by Ray Allister, which contends that Friese-Greene was the true father of motion pictures. In the film, Kenneth was played by James Kenney (Picture 3), an English actor born in 1930 in Wandsworth, London.

The cast of the film included such British film luminaries as Joyce Grenfell, Miles Malleon, Michael Redgrave, Eric Portman, Emyln Williams, Richard Attenborough, Peter Ustinov, Cecil Parker, Kay Walsh, and Laurence Olivier.



Picture 3. James Kenney as the young Kenneth Friese-Greene in the *Magic Box*. © www.aveleyman.com

It is not known if this film was ever shown at the Negresco cinema, which went into decline from 1957 and finally closed in 1959.

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Gordon's Miscellanea, Some Listed Cinemas in Scotland. <http://gbarr.info/2011/01/05/some-listed-cinemas-in-scotland>

Accessed: 5 September 2015

IMDb: The Magic Box <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0043769/combined>

Accessed: 5 September 2015

Rotten Tomatoes: The Magic Box <http://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the-magic-box/>

Accessed: 5 September 2015

Sitelines: Tyne and Wear's Historic Environment Record <http://www.twsitelines.info/smr/7383>

Accessed: 5 September 2015

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Elsie's (The Queen's Arms update)

By Terry King

In February 2015 Mary McGlew, who had contributed so much to Elsie's story, (see *Eden Valley Heritage*, Issue Number 28, 2014) died at the age of 75; followed less than 2 months later by Elsie herself (aged 91). The wakes were held at the pub, which is flourishing under the stewardship of Jonathan and Min Hancock.

OBITUARIES 2015

It is with great sadness that we record the deaths of several of our founder members during the course of the year. By contributing their talents, time and treasures each has played a major part in creating the vibrant museum we have today.

Robert Bayley, MBE

1916 - 2015

Robert Bayley worked with the Project Manager, Don Garman, writing the text for the permanent panels that explain elements of local history to our visitors. He was also the editor of the original guide, 'Flow of Time in the Eden Valley'. A gifted artist Robert was commissioned to paint a set of ten oil paintings of local scenes of historical interest, and these he donated to the collection. A retrospective of Robert's life, and his WW2 service which earned him a military MBE, appeared in *Museum News*, Issue No 22, 2008.

Alan Keith Davies

1937 - 2015

Alan Davies joined the Executive Committee in 2002 and was a great support to the Executive when the museum was struggling financially. With his business background he made a key contribution in sorting out our legal commitments, obligations and responsibilities, which allayed many of the concerns at that time. Alan edited *Museum News* for nine editions and was, until recently, a holding trustee for the lease.

William George Greenaway

1928 - 2015

Bill Greenaway was born at Marsh Green, the eldest of six sons. He had a wealth of local knowledge which was invaluable to the original Research Group and he donated, or sourced, many items of local interest - several relating to Whitmore's Tannery where he worked for a number of years. At the time of the Museum Initiative he was actively involved in promoting the project at such events as the Agricultural show, the opening procession, and Heritage Open days.

Elsie Griffin

1925 - 2015

Elsie Griffin was the caring and supportive wife of Doug (1926 - 2013). Doug was our first treasurer, maker of the model of Church House, illustrator and author of the booklet *The Lost Manor of De-La-Ware*, and designer of the original museum logo. The applique banner of the logo was sewn by their daughter Elaine Webster.

Betty Milsted

1929 - 2015

Betty was a member of the original Research Group which helped to gather information, images and objects for the museum to open



with. She became a Museum Assistant and a permanently available fount of local knowledge on the Thursday morning slot.

When the drive for more temporary exhibitions started it was Betty who came up with winning ideas for them and then proceeded to find and extract material from

anyone she knew or could track down. The first one I worked on with her was 'Doing Our Bit' local memories of WW2.

At this point I realised I had to design a system for keeping track of all the loans so that we could make sure they were returned to the right owner at the end of the run. We took over every case and corner in the museum for the hundreds of photographs and stories that came in from 120 donors, working until nearly midnight on the last days before the opening. The exhibition did exactly as we wanted and boosted our visitor numbers for the 2005 season.

There followed 'Schooldays' A History of Local Schools - all 22 of them in 2008. Again every available space was taken up telling this story and over 400 photographs were logged in for use with the objects that were loaned.

There would be a third big exhibition masterminded by the irrepressible Betty and sadly it was her last. 'Pills, Potions & Poisons' A short history of Health Care in the Eden Valley was developed from her idea to do the history of our local hospital and she would not let me rest until it was done! We opened in February 2013 with an overflowing audience in Rickards Hall to listen to Dr Milner tell us stories of running local medical services.

Betty was also a valued member of the cataloguing group from its first meeting in 1998, and a delight to work with. Helen Jackman's abiding memory is of Betty, magnifying glass in hand, meticulously studying some small black and white snap of perhaps the 1930's or 40's, then reeling off a list of names - usually with an anecdote and mischievous twinkle in her eye.

Thank you Betty for your energy and inspiration.

Jane Higgs MBE

Hon. Curator 2003-2013

Restoring the spire at the 850 year old parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Edenbridge. 5 November 1986

A small team of workers, Master steeplejack Peter Harknett with his assistant Enrico Delmastro and apprentice Adam Geddis. scaled Edenbridge Parish Church. Using traditional methods and tools they placed new chestnut shingles and dressed the lead cap of the spire. It was estimated that the work would be good for 50 years.

EVE
EDENBRIDGE

The images were taken by AP Associated Press and are now at TopFoto.co.uk - home of the EVE Gallery Edenbridge, located on the ground floor of the House of Jaques building at 1 Fircroft Way.





THE KENT PHOTO ARCHIVE

The Kent Photo Archive is run and maintained by a small group of volunteers interested in restoring and preserving old photographs of Kent and making them available for the public to view. Currently (July 2015) the website contains over 18500 archive images, many of which are accompanied by modern pictures taken at the same locations giving the viewer a 'then and now' comparison. Collections currently on the site include:



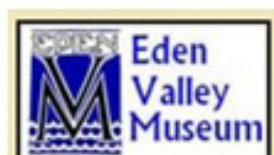
CRANBROOK MUSEUM



FREDERICK CARLEY COLLECTION



KENT CHURCHES



KENT SHARPshootERS



LYDD MUSEUM



SHEPWAY COLLECTION



SNODLAND MUSEUM



STEPHEN GOLDING COLLECTION



IGHTHAM HISTORY PROJECT COLLECTION

KENT'S PUBLIC HOUSE ARCHIVE COLLECTION

KPA also host a 'FINDING LOST KENT' page on www.facebook.com to help to identify locations, people and unusual objects in old photographs.

Back cover: Eden Valley Museum images recently added to the Kent Photo Archive:

- P2003.673 Remains of water wheel at Scarletts Corn Mill, Cowden, c.1910
- P2003.682 Australian cricketer Richie Benaud with W.G. Goodwin at Penshurst Place, 1961
- P2003.697 Going under the railway arch in Four Elms Road, Edenbridge, c.1960
- P2003.710 Village Shop and Post Office, Chiddingstone Causeway, c.1910
- P2003.727 Katherine Villas, Edenbridge High Street. 1937
- P2003.739 Young couple in the hop garden at Days Farm, Chiddingstone, 1916
- P2003.772 Hop pickers in a hop field at Bough Beech, c.1900
- P2003.777 Four Elms Cricket Club at their ground in Four Elms, 1913
- P2003.782 Outside the gasworks, Hever Road, Edenbridge, c.1920
- P2003.785 Marsh Green School, 1906
- P2001.1.62 Crockham Hill village with the Royal Oak on right, 1935
- P2001.1.141 Chiddingstone Hoath, wheelwrights and cluster of houses, 1912

www.kentphotoarchive.com

EDEN VALLEY MUSEUM

A Dynamic Social History Museum in a 14th Century Farmhouse

MUSEUM OPENING TIMES

March to December 2016

Wednesday and Friday 2 to 4.30pm

Thursday and Saturday 10am to 4.30pm

Sundays (June, July and August) 2 to 4.30pm

FREE GUIDED WALKS

Evening walks: Saturdays June 11th, July 9th, August 13th,
meet at the museum at 6.30pm, visit museum afterwards.

Afternoon walk: September 10th,
meet at the museum at 2pm.

MEMBERSHIP

Annual individual membership	£10
Annual family membership	£20
Annual corporate membership	£75

DONATIONS

Cheques should be made payable to: **Eden Valley Museum Trust**

Send to: The Treasurer, Eden Valley Museum, Church House,
72 High Street, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 5AR

You can also donate online via the Charities Aid Foundation:

go to: www.cafonline.org and search using our charity number:
Eden Valley Museum Trust - Registered Charity No. **1065466**

Leaving a legacy in your Will to the Eden Valley Museum is a gift to future generations - helping to safeguard the future of our past.

If you would like to discuss leaving a legacy, please contact The Treasurer,
Eden Valley Museum, Church House, 72 High Street, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 5AR

EDEN VALLEY MUSEUM

Find us on the web at: www.evmt.org.uk; Twitter: @EdenMuseumKent;
Facebook: www.facebook.com; Easy Fundraising: www.easyfundraising.org.uk; and on the
Kent Photo Archive: www.kentphotoarchive.com



The Eden Valley Museum contributes photographs to the Kent Photo Archive. To date more than 500 images have been made available to the public via this online resource.



[Photo A. J. Bull. A. - REMAINS OF WATER WHEEL, SCARLETS, SUSSEX.]