



ARDINGLY HISTORY SOCIETY Newsletter

No. 43 June 2023

Chairman's Comments

It was very rewarding for the Committee to see a good turn out for the AGM. There were no objections when the Treasurer proposed an increase to the subscriptions to £15 single and £20 for double. This was as a result of the strong recommendation of our Auditor. The Speakers charges have increased considerably and with the hire of the Hall, together with the Treasurer's report, show the Finances were getting very low.

The whole Committee are prepared to stand again for another year. They were re-elected en bloc. I am pleased to report that Paul Taylor has agreed to become a Trustee for the Society.

Following the AGM, with the kind permission of Lynn Wilson, we showed a film of the bells of St. Peter's Church being taken down and taken away for refurbishment, then returned and re-hung in the Church tower. Copies of this are available on DVD from Lynn.

Members who receive information online will be aware that we are moving into the 21st century. You can now obtain the majority of Miss Holgate's extensive information on the History of the Village and Place Names in the Parish, as well as the research carried out by Olive Barraclough. Roy Simmons' detailed survey of the Graveyard and Cemetery is also available. The documents are available at ardinglyhistory.org.uk and additional documents to be added when time allows.

OFFICERS OF THE HISTORY SOCIETY

Mr M. Denman	President	892344
Mr R. Tester	Chairman	483363
Mr G. Luthman	Treasurer	892202
Mrs J.B. Broughton	Secretary	892014
Mrs T. Baker	Committee Member	892338
Mr D.M. Hadden	Committee Member	892456
Mrs A.G. Knowles	Committee Member	483376
Mrs M. Page	Committee Member	892309
Mr R. Simmonds	Committee Member	892064
Mr P. Taylor	Committee Member	892747
Mrs L. Willett	Committee Member	458854

SOME ASPECTS OF LIFE IN ARDINGLY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

This is a selection of items from Olive Barraclough, wife of Maurice, a well liked, now retired, Maths tutor at Ardingly College. Olive, whose research of the above title, was compiled between the years 1959-1961. Unlike Mary Holgate's 'From Generation to Generation', which I have written from in the Newsletters of the past, Olive includes many personal aspects in the Appendices, from Inventories of the homes made on the death of the inhabitants and of their holdings. More about these later.

Wakehurst was never a real Manor in its own right although very important to the village. Therefore the six Manors that held land in Ardingly were South Malling, of which Stanmer was a subsidiary, Ditchling, Street, Plumpton Boscage. The Manor of Highly and Lewes claimed small sections.

Ardingly lies on the Sussex Weald, north of these Manors, and the clearings in the Wealden Forest which eventually developed into the village of Ardingly were, in origin, the assarts or outliers of those Manors.

The River Ouse, which runs through the Parish, would have been a natural boundary for the Saxon division of land, probably well established before the Norman invasion and embodied in the Rapes stretching from the South Coast.

Wakehurst, although known as a Manor in Ardingly, was a 'reputed' manor, not held directly from the King. Its owners had by the 18th century grown to be the most important in the district, although not able to claim manorial rights over the inhabitants. By the 18th century they were the largest single landowners, owners of the house and patronage of the Church, acquiring the status of lords of the manor, in name if not in fact.

By the 18th century Wakehurst had had several owners and, as was common practice, the Manors were run by Stewards, in Ardingly there were four Stewards in the 18th century – Timothy Burrell, a Lawyer, who regularly invited local farmers to Christmas dinner, and this is a list of its courses – typical of the age, (*plum pottage, boiled leg of mutton, goose, roast beef, veal, roast pig, a rump, two baked puddings, three dishes of mince pies, two capons, two dishes of tarts, two pullets.*) *No wonder he was well thought of!* The other three were John and Francis Warden and Samuel Waller.

The courts would be convened by the Steward who was assisted by the Bailiff and the 'Homage', two or three of the most important tenants, acting for the other tenants. The Court Rolls show how the jurisdiction of the Manorial Courts had shrunk since their introduction in 1633.

The Manor Court in Ardingly was held at very irregular intervals, only 12 being held in the 18th century, with a gap of 14 years between 1757 and 1771 and another 13 years between 1708 and 1721. Courts however were held two years running in 1756 and 1757.

The inheritance law was not at all clear in Ardingly and so it was the eldest son who inherited the property and estate, in other Sussex Manors it was the youngest son who inherited. The 1727 map shows, apart from isolated farms, that houses in Ardingly were concentrated around the Church and in the area near the cross-roads known as

Hapstead Green. The actual village was, however, the area near the Church. The first report made to the Bishop of Lewes, in April 1724, concerning the state of the Church was that it was in need of a great deal of repair. The second visit by 1782 shows a great improvement with all repairs taken in hand.

Charles Lydell, Rector, served Ardingly well for thirty-three years, he died in 1757. The rest of the 18th century was well served by three ministries, and the 18th century was considered to have been a most peaceful one.

By the turn of the century many upheavals were developing, with demands for more wages with finally, labourers, taking the law into their own hands and in the early 19th century when they burnt down the Tithe Barn.

It was said that the peaceful relationship existing in the 18th century had gone and although there were growing difficulties for the country in the 19th century the labourers dispute could have been resolved. The Parish Overseers' Accounts show that the Poor Rates were so much lower in the 18th century than the following e.g. 19th century 1776 - £218. 14. 4p. rising to £959.19.9p in 1803.

There were the poor, sick, aged and children to be cared for and the Ardingly Parish was able to shoulder the responsibilities during the 18th century. Economy buoyant, employment was improving, there were several fairly large landowners and farmers in the district, able to support families by employing servants, keepers, farm-workers, etc.

(I have taken an example how the poor rates were used for poor, sick, aged and children. There are more examples in the original.)

1721. Pd. John Allington for rent of the Withyland House (for small-pox cases) £3. 10. 0.

The Poor Sickness

1736. Pd. John Wicking for lodging a soldier at Richard Pilbeam £0.1.0.

Children

1795 Pd. Boys and girls pence money £0. 3. 4d

The Aged

1739. Pd. For laying forth of ould Wheast £0. 4. 6.

The poor people in Jordan's workhouse worked chiefly at spinning, the yarn afterwards was sent to the Fulling Mill to be woven and dyed.

As was common practice, the children of the poor were boarded out with farmers, to whom payments were made, the children on the whole appear to have received kindly treatment.

Apart from one or two who ran away, children were quite well equipped by the Parish before they started off on their own.

(Another example. Dated 1798. Original spelling More examples in the original.)

Wm. Nicholas, "off for himself"

New hat and pare of Stockings.....3s. 6d.

New pare of high chouses.....9s. 6d.

2 shirts and a frock, 9 ½ ells..... 16s. 9d.

1 wascot.....17s. 0d.

In the 18th century the word, 'enclosure' often loomed large, but in Ardingly the Parish had long been enclosed into farms of varying sizes. The 1727 estate map shows that of farms belonging to Wakehurst estate of the Parish, there were three of over 200 acres, occupied by William Chatfield, Thomas Fieldwick and William Tully, two between 100 and 200 acres and two under 50 acres. This pattern was, no doubt, due to the development of the outliers of the Saxon Manors.

Farming methods seem to have remained the same for generations with not much advancement since the 13th century. There was a reluctance to give up traditional methods and also poor communications. New methods were being developed and by the end of the 18th century beginning to interest and be tried by the wealthier landowners.

There were three small areas of common land, Lywood Common, Bingham's Green and Hapstead Green. The name Tinkers Croft may have been one of the stinted Pastures allocated to people practising a trade generally useful to the village.

An interesting light is thrown on the lives of the farming community by inventories, which had to be produced at the time of granting a probate or a will or at the issuing of letters of administration, if the person died “intestate”.

A glimpse of the interiors of the farm-houses given in the ‘inventories,’ is very vivid and the lists of equipment in kitchen, parlour and bed-chamber are brought to life. The long massive table which often filled the centre of the parlour or kitchen was a treasured possession, passed from father to son. John Tully in his will of 1701, bequeathed to “*my son James one longe table standing in the parlour of the house, wherein I now dwell, also one large joined press in the hall chamber.*”

In Sussex most of the furniture would be locally made of oak. Beside the table there would be oak chairs and stools, possibly a dresser or cupboard, and mentioned in nearly every inventory, one or two spinning wheels for linen and wool. No mention of curtains other than for around beds, no china or glass, except for 2 ½ dozen glass bottles on the premises of William Hicking, shoemaker. All plates and dishes seem to have been pewter, with cooking utensils of iron, copper and brass. (*There are more details in the Appendices*)

One can say that the main crops grown in Ardingly in the 18th century were wheat, barley, oats, clover, peas and beans, together with a considerable quantity of hops. No mention was made of root vegetables. It was obviously too early for Townsend’s farming methods to have spread from Norfolk (where he died in 1738) to Sussex.

The stock was chiefly cows, pigs, and a few sheep with oxen and horses used for draught and ploughing, because of their suitability for the very heavy soil.

There is no mention of poultry, except for the solitary hen-coop in Stephen Roborough’s inventory but this is, probably, because hens, geese, duck, etc. traditionally belonged to the farmer’s wife and therefore not included in his property.

Farming machinery was of the simplest – ploughs, harrows, rakes and a farm wagon or cart. No Jethro Tull's or Townsend's machinery.

It is probable that the lack of winter feed due to traditional farming methods giving poor crop yields, still necessitated the killing of cattle when winter set in. The mention of hay and forage crops known to the people of the pre Norfolk course age must have had some efficacy. 'Old Hay' was included in John Langridge's inventory and valued at £9. 0. 0. This implies that at least in the winters of 1772 to 1773 there was no shortage of feeding stuffs on his farm.

(The pages 23 to 28 in the original along with pages in the Appendix are of interest as they give details of farm and personal items)

Ardingly appears to have been particularly well served with men able to carry out the trades necessary to the smooth running of a village community. In addition to the essential miller and blacksmith, there was a carpenter and wheelwright, a shoemaker, a tailor and a village shop-keeper. There were also those who worked at the Ardingly Hammer while the Sussex Iron industry was still flourishing and who were eventually replaced by the weavers and cloth-workers as the Fulling Mill reverted to its original function when the Iron industry in Sussex came to an end.

The only Professional people mentioned in 18th century Ardingly were Church and Law. Legal matters were dealt with by the Stewards, their signatures have been found on several legal documents of the period. There was no resident Doctor but the Parish Accounts show – "*pd. To Mr. Richard Chatfield years pay of doctoring poor, £5. 5. 0.*"

There was no School Master. However, the assessors whose names appear at the end of the inventories were all farmers, but the handwriting, although varied, was clear and legible, the spelling though admittedly eccentric, did not present difficulties.

Ardingly had two Water Mills for the grinding of Corn, one called Stone Mill and the other at the bottom of Cob Lane, Stone Mill was probably the only one working in the 18th century. The Blacksmith's Forge was in the centre of the village next to Hapstead Farm, where

Roger Payne the Wheelwright lived. The Blacksmith, Mr. Bashford lived on the premises.

The Box family were well-established in Ardingly in the 18th century and there are many pointers connecting them to the carpentry and joinery trades and in the 19th century connecting them with the Sawmills under the name of Box and Turner. George Box was a Churchwarden and a member of the “Homage” at the Manor Courts of Wakehurst previously mentioned.

There are some interesting examples of Sussex Dialect in the life of the village people. William Box included “*wimble*”, “*twibill*” and “*scuppit*” (Hook with two handles for twisting up hay or straw, - combination of small axe and adze used for making mortices in the stakes of hurdles, - wooden shovel use by maltsters and hop driers)

In the Brewhouse there was a “*Bucking tub*”, two “*Kneelers*”, a “*stallage*” and a “*firm*” (wash tub, shallow tub for cooling the beer, - stool on which the cask of beer was placed in the cellar and a form) A “*seed lipp*” was included in John Langridge’s inventory, this was a seed shallow basket shaped to the body, used for sowing seed broadcast. A “*pair of rods*” was the shafts of a cart or wagon.

The first mention of a tailor comes from the Lindfield Registrar when he married ‘*Wiliam Roberts of Ardinglygh, Tailor, and Anne Pennell of ye same*’ in 1656.

There is evidence that there has been a village shop in Ardingly since the 17th century when trade was connected with the Bingham family who left their name in Bingham’s Green and who issued tokens. This showed that they had enough custom to need small change, the purpose for which tokens were used. (*There is an extract from Joseph Clarke Grocer & Draper of Roxwell in Essex in the Appendix since it bears a close relationship to the things that could be found in the store in 1950*)

We can end by a visit to the Bough House in the High Street; when the bough is hung outside it signalled it was open for business (until it became the Sweet shop beloved by children of the village) for a tankard of Ale.

SUSSEX DURING THE 1ST WORLD WAR

Talk given on the evening of 21st Feb 2023 by Mr. Ian Everest.

Another welcome visit by Ian to our History Society. He has a fondness for Ardingly as his parents were married in our Church.

Ian's interest in researching his family started when he was putting his three children to bed and deciding that he wanted something more interesting to do in the evenings other than watching television. It was then he realised that he should have listened more carefully to his Grandfather, who had lived with them for his last ten years.

His Grandfather had been a prisoner in the 1914-18 war and was one of the Old Contemptibles. (*The British Expeditionary mobile artillery between 5 August and 22 November 1914 at the first battle of Ypres*).

During his researches he found the name of one of his ancestors, Arthur Everest who died in battle, been a prisoner and was one of many who had to dig trenches, some 400 miles of them. He was buried in France.

Ian visited the War Graves and has continued to visit them ever since. He found two Ardingly names Arthur Nunn and Edward William Tester who were also buried there.

Ian displayed a map of Sussex which showed just how many places in Sussex became involved, in so many ways, during WWI. One person who he mentioned was the forceful character, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. He called for men to join his army to defend our shores if the time came. The idea spread to other towns but his plans were not in keeping with the governments' wishes, nothing came of Conan Doyle's idea but eventually the Government decided to have their own organised Home Guard.

Maresfield Park was owned by Prince Munster of Derneburg, who had to return to Germany in 1914 and the house was sequestered by the Government. After the war the house was sold and the Government received the money.

There was little industry in Sussex, farming mostly and the farm workers joined the forces, taking some 300,000 horses with them.

In 1917 1,500 Merchant ships were lost which resulted in a shortage of food at home, also men and machinery. Agriculture was put on a war footing, to raise efficiency. The Women's Land Army was formed and 5000 tractors were sent from America.

Photographs were shown with elephants operating a pump and throwing bales of hay up on to carts with their trunks. Bales of tightly packed hay were sent to feed the horses of the army abroad from Newhaven Port, along with 700 million ton of ammunition.

In 1915 700 tons of Christmas puddings were shipped out to the fighting troops. The ships were decorated with confusing striped patterns to confuse the enemy.

Sea Planes made of wood and glue flew to look out for enemy U boats, on board a man holding a bomb ready to drop it, by hand, on the enemy!

In 1918 hollow concrete manned forts were planned to be placed across the harbour at Shoreham, but with the close of the war the project was abandoned. Just two were built, one was towed to the Nab rocks off the Isle of Wight where it remains today, known as Nab's Tower. Huts were built to house the troops through the winter and were put up for sale after the war.

The Royal Pavilion was used to nurse the injured Indian soldiers. Recovering men were sent to convalescent camps to regain their strength. They wore blue suits with an orange lapel. *(Was this, I wonder, from the days when they did not have a uniform but wore orange lilies in their hats)*

The Cenotaph was built to honour the fallen and many villages and towns raised money to build their own memorial. Those who could not raise the money, such as East Wittering, commissioned a plaque which had engraved upon it, 'Thankful Village'.

This is only a brief recap I am sure you can recall more of Ian's 1st W.W. story.

MINNIE SIMMONDS

of 21 Gowers Close

Interviewed by 11 year old Bridget Baker.

In the School year 1971/72 Bridget Baker's Class were set an assignment to interview someone in the village. Bridget decided to ask Minnie Simonds, who was born in 1904, Minnie was agreeable, and this is the result.

- Bridget Have you always lived in the village?
Minnie Yes, at Jubilee Cottages where I was born. I lived there until my Mother died at 84 years of age. My parents were married on July 30th 1898. It was a double wedding (two sisters marrying on the same day)
- Bridget At what age did you start school, also do you remember any special incident that happened?
Minnie I started at 3 years old. Then we had to come home to dinner. When we were older we had to make nightdresses for the Head Master's daughter, also we had to do his housework. For him the boys had to fill the coal scuttles. We learnt to cut out and knitting and sewing, which was all done by hand. On Empire Day we saluted the flag.
During the war we had an egg collecting day, we each took an egg or perhaps two (if we could afford it) and these went to the hospital for the injured soldiers. (then eggs were 1d each)
The school was then heated by coal fires, two in the big rooms and one in the small.
The boys were often caned at school, and I received some nasty lashes across my knuckles with a foot ruler just because I was left handed. There was no 11 plus then.
- Bridget Was there a Girl Guide company in the village when you were a girl and did you belong?

Minnie Yes there was a company but I did not belong. Miss Hett was the Captain.

Bridget When did you leave school and what was your first job?

Minnie When I left school at 14 years (you could leave at 13 if you had the attendances) I went to do domestic service at Hapstead.

Bridget What was your Father's job and was he in the 1st World War?

Minnie He was a carpenter, like his brother. He was in the 1st. World War and he was a Royal Engineer, he put huts up. He was unfit for foreign service, then he was passed medically unfit for the army.

Bridget Any other points?

Minnie We bought milk by the gallon at Upper Lodge Farm. The girls then had wooden hoops and the boys metal ones.

Thank you Bridget and what a delightful snippet of life long ago.

SPINSTERS

In this village of spinsters many
 We all enjoy watching the telly;
 We come and go just as we please –
 No grumpy looks, no violent scenes.

Thirty, forty, maybe more –
 And I am one amongst them all;
 But we are happy and content
 Although we're grey and a little bent.

I wonder why they pity us
 And seem to think we've missed the bus?
 We have our friends and hobbies too
 So there's no time for feeling blue.

We sometimes hear the Church bells ringing
And the choir softly singing,
But do we envy the bride inside?
Not on your life! We have our pride.

No tears we shed as we go our way
But off to the Post Office to draw our pay;
And how we grip our purses tight
With head held high and heart so light.

So please don't think of us as odd;
For many years we've held a job.
Whilst you enjoy your wedding bliss
We much prefer to be a 'Miss'.

Minnie Simmonds October 1971

30 years collecting Post Cards

Talk by Alan Barwick Tuesday 18th April 2023

Alan started his talk with Post Card illustrations of his hometown, Henfield. Back we went in time with his recollections of filling early albums of the town around Church Street where he lived, then moving to a photograph of Alan on another of his abiding interest – his motor bike, he also has a collection of Post Cards on motor bikes, but this evening he concentrated on places, people and the way of life since photography developed, creating another fascinating past time.

Post Card enthusiasts developed Clubs along with large Magazine Fairs displaying their collections and selling those Post Cards no longer required by the collectors. Alan's hobby took him around the country, while we travelled around the country with him, viewing his Post Card memories of the changes in the way people lived and the places that some of us would know and how they had changed, the buildings that have altered over time into a new shape – a school into a desirable, but expensive house or a village amenity. Shops with new owners selling

different goods, there was a butcher's shop showing the meat hanging outside and although still a butchers shop, no dangling sides of dead animals on show.

Some photographers specialised in specific area. Their Post Cards would have captions and show a letter and number depicting how many Post Cards were in that particular series, other Post Cards would bear no caption or number, just the photograph and those Post Cards would fetch a higher price, they might also be just "one off" Post Cards. Like most items for sale the prices have reflected the times.

By 1906 coloured Post Cards appeared but, personally, I feel they lack that perception of going back in time, witnessing the horse drawn carriages of a Postman delivering the daily post.

The Wheelwright's Premises shows waiting carriages needing a wheel repaired, as well as the Farrier ready to re-shoe a horse.

From just collecting Post Cards of past times, Alan also became interested in the names of the people he was looking at and the owners of the shops that had changed hands over time. He stated that he had 9,900 Post Cards in his collection and had spent quite a lot of money in the process of satisfying his favourite hobby.

Alan ended with Post Cards of Haywards Heath, Sussex Square, Cuckfield High Street and Ardingly Station. Those members who attended the meeting had a relaxed evening viewing times that reflected our grandparents', great-grandparents' and, in some cases, parents' lives.

This is just a general overview of the many cards Alan showed us.

IT'S JUNE – THE TIME FOR ROMANCE

A proposal of marriage, 1866, with the original spelling.

My Dere Miss,

I now take up my pen tow rite yow open feelines will find yow well as it leaves me at present. Yow will praps be supprised that I should maik soa bolde as tow rite to yow who is sutch a ladi and I hop that yow will not bee vex at mee for it. I hardly dare say wat I want I ham so timid about ladis and mi and trimmels like a lespin lefe. I am a farmer in a small wai and mi age is rather more than 40 year and mi mother lives with me and keeps mi house and shee as been very poorley laityly and cannot stur mutch and I think I shud be comfortable with a wife.

I have had mi I on yow a long time and I think that yow are a very nice young wumman and one that wud make me appi if only yow think soa. We ave a nice parlor down stares with a blu carpet and a huven on one side of the fire plaice and the old woman on the uthar smoaking.

The golden rules claimed up on the walls abuw the long settle and yow cud sit awl the day in the chare and nit and mend my kirtles and leggings and yow cud maik the tee ready again I cum in.

So I hop to hear from yow as I am in desprit and yurnist and will marrie yow at mai day or if mi mother dees afore Ise want yow afore if only yow will except of mi. And mi dere we cud be verri appi to gedder and I oap yow will let me now yow mind by return of poast and iff yow are faverable I will cum up to the scratch, Soa noa moor at preasant from your well wisher and tru luvve.

Pea hes. I hop yow will sai nothing about this if yow will not except of mi as I have anuther very nice wumman in mind and I think I shall marrie her if yow do not except of mi but I thought yow wud suite mi mother better...so I tell yow before yow cum. She will be maister.

Contributed by Gösta Luthman

Programme for 2023

Tuesday 19th September – Mr. Roy Tester – Keir Hett

Tuesday 21st November - Chris Horlock – A Sussex Christmas

Meetings commence at 19:45.

The aims of the Society are:-

to arouse and stimulate interest in the History of Ardingly: to seek out material of historic interest and persuade owners of the need to take steps to ensure its preservation: to arrange meetings, lectures and other activities to foster interest in the History of Ardingly.

A Welcome by the President of the Monumental Brass Society

Saturday, 8th July 2023 at 2pm

St Peter's Church, Ardingly, West Sussex

There has been a church on this site, high above the Ouse valley, for about a thousand years. It was given by William de Warenne to the Cluniac Priory at Lewes which he founded with his wife, Gundrada. Most of the present church dates from the fourteenth century, and one of the bells is thought to date from this period.

The south Chancel contains a priest's door. Part of an iron grave slab dates from 1521 and is dedicated to Ann Forster, a descendant of Richard Wakehurst

The meeting is free with no booking required.

There will be three Speakers and refreshments will be served.

=====