

APPENDIX N

Grey Literature – extracts of Smith, Beswick, Robertson, Butler and Pevsner

**A HISTORY OF
THE DICKER
TWO SUSSEX VILLAGES**



Lez Smith

Chapter One

THE DICKER

The Dicker can be found a few miles inland from the South Downs and just west of the Cuckmere River. The puzzled visitor may question the origin of its unusual name, but a hasty motorist, would give it only a brief glance. However the name differs from other early settlements inasmuch as the name DICKER referred to an area of land rather than a settlement or village. A previous study of Sussex placenames confirms dyker or dicora as Old English combined with Latin words for ten, and establishes the once thousand-acre Dicker Common as "ten hides of open common land" situated between "Boarship" (Boship Green) and "Broad Oak" (now Golden Cross) and south into the village of Upper Dicker. This suggests the possibility of an earlier pattern of farmed enclosures around the periphery of the Common. Although it must be said that, apart from Michelham Priory, evidence of earlier history has been lost in the mists of time and we are left with little but conjecture.

Considering evidence of earlier occupation, archaeologists identified a pottery kiln and a scatter of pot sherds at Polhills Farm, Arlington, as being Roman which indicates Roman industrial activity and settlement in the area. Regarding its close proximity, Wick Street may well be of Roman origin, as 'street' suggests a link to places on or near a Roman road. There is little doubt that the more navigable Cuckmere contributed considerably to early Saxon settlements at Alfriston and Arlington. Michelham being Anglo-Saxon, meaning 'a large piece of land within a river bend', suggests there was likely to have been a Saxon settlement here long before the Norman Conquest. With the ready availability and exploitation of the intensive woodland of the Weald, it is reasonable to assume that le Dykera gave way to open scrubland and pasture, and that the parochial system of Saxon churches formed the parishes of Arlington, Chiddingfold and Hellingly.

Twenty years after the Norman Conquest in 1066, the Domesday survey ascertained what or how much each landowner held and taxation due under Norman rule. Based on this evidence both neighbouring Claverham and Sessingham were identified as valuable pre-conquest settlements. The fact no record had been entered for Dykera probably implies the land was regarded as of little value or importance.

It was when Gilbert de l'Aigle (Lord of Pevensey Castle) obtained



circa 1912

Boship Green, Lower Dicker

***Zoar Villa, once the home of Uriah Clark is on the left;
the Forge and Dicker Pottery is in the centre.***

The sign on the house reads 'G Stevens, Boot and Shoe Repairer'.

treat, deemed as both a novelty as well as educational. This excitement was experienced fifty four years later when Park Mead children journeyed by train to Mayfield, probably the longest trip they had taken in their young lives!

As already stated, boundaries had always been of importance in Dicker's history. Perhaps both Upper and Lower Dicker residents had always resigned themselves to the fact that their villages came under the civil jurisdiction of another parish, for what is a boundary other than an invisible demarcation line?

So with this thought in mind, we traverse the area that was known as the "lower end of the Diccar near that Fair Place in Hellingly Parish", now known as Lower Dicker. It has become a ribbon development along parts of the old turnpike road (now the A22). Apart from a brickyard situated near Boarship (Boship), the Zoar Chapel and two beer shops, only a scatter of dwellings were in evidence by 1843. However by 1875 we know many more houses had been built near the Dicker and Boship potteries; what remains uncertain is whether these were built by Uriah Clark. At the time when the old pair of Boship cottages were pulled down to accommodate the new A22 roundabout, they were always known as, the first and last houses on the Dicker! (depending on whether you're coming or going!)

The 1843 Tithe map confirms the field known as Croft was pasture land

Ultramodern Road — the A22

The 1888 Parliamentary Act stipulated that county councils would be responsible for all main roads, superseding the turnpike trusts and eliminating the fragmentation of control and maintenance. Powers were further extended by the Local Government Act in 1929, which transferred all highway powers from a county responsibility to a national one.

In 1873 concrete was first used in road construction, bringing with it a new era of modern roadbuilding. Sixty years later concrete road surfacing was adopted by Mr H.E. Lunn, the County Surveyor for East Sussex County Council, and plans were implemented for the reconstruction of roads, notably the A22 from Uckfield to Polegate, the coastal road from Pevensey to Bexhill, and the Kitchenham road towards Battle.

During the early 1930s, the ESCC Roads and Bridges Committee embarked upon the greatest road improvement scheme seen since the turnpikes; the frequency of committee meetings indicates the complexity of planning and costing involved. The start of one such road was the road from Golden Cross to Lower Dicker; apart from being turnpiked it had seen little change over the previous hundred years.

A committee meeting held on Tuesday 5th July 1932, indicated plans had been submitted for a five-year improvement programme of the A22 road, with drafts submitted by the Clerk for the compulsory purchase of land; a further meeting found that no objections had been received. Notable was the compulsory purchase of Boship Cottages and land from Mrs Pratt, who received £1,500 in compensation. Boship Cottages were demolished to facilitate the construction of the roundabout, the Rodemark and Vine families being the last to reside there.

Although no date so far has been found, it is probable that the construction of a concrete carriageway commenced in 1933, starting at Golden Cross from the junction of the Lewes road (A273) eastwards to near Willow Hyrst Farm. A recorded meeting held on 24th January 1933, indicates this section was of 1,000 yards of carriageway with an estimated cost of £10,000. Consequent meetings disclosed the cost of each section of carriageway, which included ancillary work, drainage, kerbing, footpaths and fencing. Following the need to replace or realignment of property boundaries that fronted the Lower Dicker (A22) road, new fences were manufactured and supplied by the local Victoria Fencing Works. By 1936, the road reconstruction had been extended to just east of Hackhurst Lane and was completed as far as the new Boship Roundabout by about 1938.

Throughout, the construction had been fraught by traffic problems, with sections open in only one direction, complicated at weekends with coach day-trippers *en route* to and from Eastbourne, the one-way system caused both

minor and serious accidents.

As reported in the *Sussex Express* newspaper:

"Dicker Road Fatality.

"Employees of the East Sussex County Council engaged on the reconstruction of the main London road at the Dicker, were involved in an alarming accident.

"On Thursday, 28th November 1935, an accident occurred on a section of the concrete road not yet open to traffic between the junction of Camberlot Road and Nash Street, (near the bakehouse). A car travelling on a section where one-way traffic was in operation and controlled by 'stop and go' signs, when it ran onto a section not yet completed and collided with workmen taking their dinner break. Three workmen were seriously injured, 31 year old Mr Eli Brinkhurst, a bachelor from Ringmer, later died of his injuries in hospital."

Despite the use of barriers, 'stop and go' signals to control one way traffic and warning boards 'Go slowly for ½ mile – single way traffic', accidents continued to occur.

Extract from the *Sussex Express*, 15th May 1936.

"At 11.05pm on April 7th, a bus coming through a one-way section on the main road at the Dicker, a car approaching at a fast speed from Golden Cross, when it endeavoured to get round the bus as it was coming out of the section, crashed into a barrier consisting of drums of beach and an arrow direction board was damaged.

"Defendant was fined £2, with costs of £3 5s. 4d, and his driving licence ordered to be endorsed."

Again on 21st August 1936, the newspaper reported:

"Sequel to Dicker Accident.

William Warren of London, denied that he drove a car without due care and attention on the Lower Dicker road. PC Von Der Hyde stated, he was on traffic duty near single-way traffic that was waiting owing to road works. The traffic signal was at 'stop' and traffic was waiting to go through. He saw a car driven by the defendant, approach the line of traffic and swerve to the off-side of the road, which then struck and damaged the last stationary car. Defendant was fined £1, and costs of 15s. 6d."

Despite all the traffic trauma and upheaval to the local residents (the Medhurst family were unable to move into their new bungalow 'Agra', in August 1936), the new Dicker section of the A22 road was completed. Over the five years (1932 – 37), documentary evidence from the ESCC meetings gave an estimated cost of £51,384 for the Golden Cross – Lower Dicker section (it is conjecture whether this included a Government grant). By 1937, the Ministry of Transport had already approved the plans and expenditure for the construction of dual carriageways which would become the Hailsham bypass from Arlington road joining the Dicker on the Hailsham side of Boship Farm, and including a new concrete bridge over the Cuckmere River. Plans were also approved in respect of carriageways past Nightingale Villas at Woodside to Polegate, and a new section of link road running north east to

join the Tunbridge Wells road near Lobdens Farm. The total cost of all these road works was estimated at £217,000.

FOOTNOTE: Due to the war years (1939 – 45), some of the dual carriageway and link roads would remain unfinished until the hostilities were over.

Transport

For centuries, the rural populace had little need to travel any distance. For most, if the need arose, journeys would have been by shank's pony (on foot) using the network of footpaths that criss-crossed the rural landscape. By the mid 1800s, journeys of any distance for those less affluent, would have been with the local carrier, whose prime function would have been to convey goods to local villages and market towns: those of Hailsham, Heathfield and Lewes. The carrier's vehicle was generally a horse-drawn tilt-covered waggon; a fitted bench would have provided seating for one or two passengers.



*A Carrier in the village of Upper Dicker.
The old village bakehouse is in the centre of the picture*

Chapter 7

COMMERCE AND EMPLOYMENT

Farming

Since man's progression from hunter-gatherer to farmer, over the centuries there has been a vast change in the landscape as man's ever-growing demands necessitated encroachment into the forested areas of Sussex. Today's landscape can be attributed to farming needs which saw the enclosure of common land and the felling of immense swathes of woodland.

Most who farmed or gained a livelihood from the land were employed or tenanted to a major landowner. The early method of land cultivation was known as 'husbandry', much later referred to as 'agriculture'. It was labour-intensive and gave employment to the greater number of people living in a rural community, which included children until compulsory education removed them from the equation, (although Dicker school log books until the 1920s, reported pupils absent due to the pressure of harvest time). The multitude of landless labourers, who were without rented land to work, were greatly dependent on the changing economical fortunes of their employer. Throughout the 19th century, the agricultural labourer's circumstances had changed little. Not only crop failures but also the change of farming methods were responsible for unemployment.

The improvement by using the horse-driven threshing machine that had denied the workers their winter employment, was cold comfort to the farm labourer who struggled to support his family on nine shillings a week. In the end the labourers were in open revolt in what is now known as the 'Swing' riots. Anarchy first occurred in Kent on Sunday 29th August 1830 and quickly spread to Sussex and other adjoining counties, where demands were made for a living wage. An exasperated 150 labourers met with Lord Gage (a principal landowner) on Ringmer Green to present a letter regarding poor wages and demanding the parish overseers be more sympathetic to their plight. According to a newspaper report, all requests were granted and the gathering dispersed, but in doing so some over-exuberant people on their way home, damaged the village grindstone.

During the discord in Sussex, 145 incidents were reported, seventeen perpetrators were charged with causing unrest and damage, and were sentenced

and transported to penal servitude in Australia. The Swing riots quickly collapsed, but were a spontaneous gesture by farm labourers who had felt their livelihood was threatened.

During the 19th century, employment in agriculture continued to be the principal occupation. In 1851 it was recorded that over two million gained employment from the land, but due to changing methods and mechanization, by 1881 the number had fallen dramatically to 1,633,000. Due to the complexity of Dicker's parish boundaries, it is difficult to determine exactly how many were employed on the land, but the 1841 census records 76 residing in and around Upper Dicker, and working on the land, which, ten years later, had risen to 99.

Early documentation indicates the land in and around the Dicker fell mainly within the bounds of the Manors of Alciston and Laughton, and that of Michelham Park Gate.

Kelly's trade directories indicate the principal landowners were the Hon Mortimer Sackville-West, Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Chichester and Edward Shoosmith in 1874, and by 1895 records that of Sir James Duke Esq and the Viscount Gage. Four years later (1899), Horatio Bottomley Esq had purchased land on the Dicker, and by 1907, so had J A E Gwynne Esq and Mr Charles Morrison, who had acquired Camberlot Hall and the adjacent farm of 157 acres in 1892 from Mrs William Hickman.

Not always were major landowners committed to farming directly themselves. They often installed a bailiff or a tenant farmer who paid rent on a given quarter-day, his tenancy probably held on an annual covenant. The size of Dicker's farms on the whole were of 60 acres or less, many deemed by today's standards would be called a small-holding. The 1851 census records those occupied by Cornelius Fox – 6 acres, Henry Bishop – 6 acres, John Pitcher – 8 acres, David Butters – 3 acres, Henry Bourne – 8 acres and Samuel Dearing – 4 acres. The smaller tenant farmer with a holding of a few acres, would almost certainly have had to hire themselves out as agricultural labourers to others with greater acreage. Many also relied on 'rights of common', which gave free access to grazing, firewood and litter, with bracken as bedding for one or two animals. Others would be involved in a dual occupation, dividing their time between farming and brickmaking, for example. The 1861 census shows Stephen Haffenden as a farmer and beer retailer, Edward Miller as a farmer of 21 acres and potter, and Trayton Parris as a farmer and 'Ag lab', indicating he hired his labour out to others. In 1871, James Goldsmith's dual occupation was that of farmer and brickmaker and Richard Manser, who resided in Mount Lane, was both farmer and engineer, being in partnership with Thomas Boys, running an engineering business with steam threshing machines. Although few in number, one of the larger farms encompassing the Dicker in 1861, was that

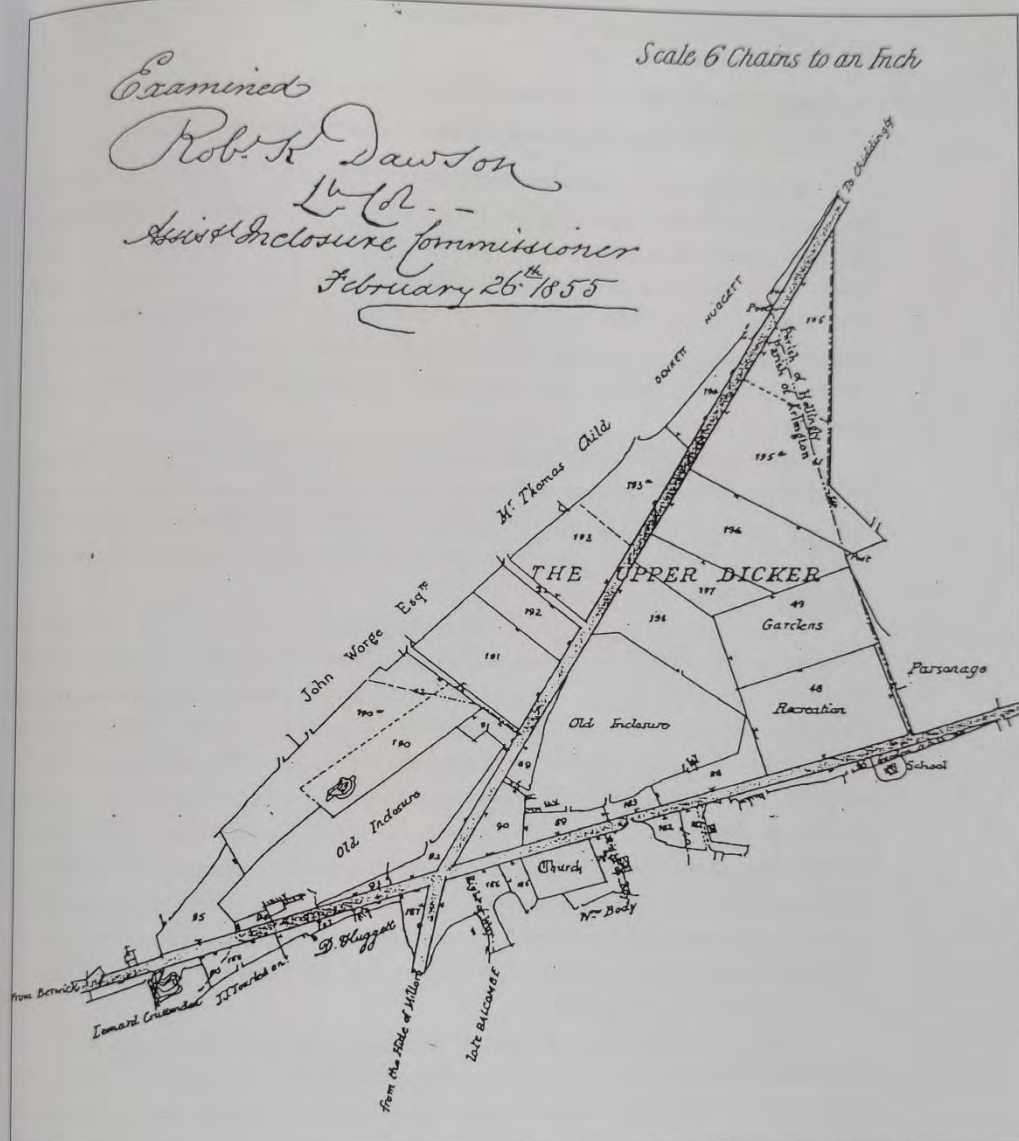
of the Boreship: the 400 acres farmed by Algernon Pitcher, who at the time employed 13 men and 3 boys. Earlier documented evidence records on 31st Aug 1818, a lease signed by William Stone (gent) of Framfield, granting land to John Bourne of Hellingly (farmer of Boreship). The 1861 census shows a farm of 400 acres at Michelham being farmed by Elizabeth Child. Of the larger farms at that time, others were Hackhurst (140 acres), Camberlot (152 acres), Coldharbour (100 acres), Clifton (80 acres) and Park Wood with 240 acres, overseen by William Lambert, bailiff for Mr George Woodhams.

Whether by changing fortunes in agriculture or other reasons, land holdings of some farms differed as one tenant farmer succeeded another. One instance was in 1861, when Boreship Farm had assets of 400 acres but twenty years later Charles Cane farmed only 104 acres. In a sale document dated 26th July 1922 when Coldharbour Farm was sold, the acreage had plummeted from a holding of 92 acres to just 14 acres.

In Sussex agricultural practices varied greatly due to the diversity of soil structure throughout the county. The well-drained region of the South Downs, where sheep and cereal farming were predominant, were quite different to the Low Weald where cattle rearing and dairy farming were favoured. The clay which had effectively contributed to the brickmaking and pottery industry, impeded the ploughing of the Low Wealden fields around Dicker, clinging as it does to everything – hence the Sussex lament of “luvin’ mud”. Despite that, the soil structure was not suitable for cereals; hop production was taken up by some farmers. Muggeridge’s map dated 1844, records that 114½ acres were under cultivation in the parish of Hellingly. Although hop growing was more predominant nearer Kent, *Kelly’s* 1870 and 1874 directories record that hops were grown on the Dicker by Algernon Pitcher at Boship Farm and William Russell at Hackhurst Farm.

Intense grazing of common land resulted in it being exhausted as ideal pasture. Many commons had been enclosed before 1700, and early 19th century legislation was deemed necessary to accelerate agricultural change and improvement. Following a general Enclosure Act in 1801 and subsequent acts, commissioners were appointed to survey the land deemed as ‘Waste Ground’, and to administer and set out allotments (awards), that would enable millions of acres to be used more productively.

Previous to the 1813 Enclosure Act when the enclosure of the Dicker Common took place, grants and licences to dig clay for brickmaking had been granted. The size of the common had been previously documented as being of 1,000 acres, its extremities encompassing common land in the parishes of Arlington, Chiddingly and Hellingly. The waste ground known as Milton Hyde has never been enclosed and until the 1940s, ‘Arch’ Haffenden was the last to claim ‘rights of common’. Some land grants or apportionments remain



1855 Enclosure map of the Dicker Common
(identified by numerals in designated land apportionments bordering Upper Dicker)

Land (184, 193 and 193a) to William Body of Arlington (yeoman).

Two parcels of land (182 and 192) to Thomas Austin of Hellingly

Land (185 and 196) to William Burton of Hellingly (bricklayer) – purchased from John Gosden

Strip of land (181) in front of Providence House – to William Couper of Arlington (dissenting minister).

Land (189, 191 and 197) to Leonard Cruttenden of East Hoathly (farmer).

Land (183, 186 and 198) granted to Robert Reeves of Chiddingly (farmer).

As already mentioned, the complexity of the Dicker boundaries initially due to encroachment into neighbouring parishes of Arlington, Chiddingly and Hellingly, prevents a determination of an exact acreage of farmland. The 1874 *Kelly's* trade directory assesses the parish as having 1,852 acres being farmed. The enclosures in 1813 and later of 1855 of the Dicker Common, where before gorse and poor grazing had previously existed, would have increased the acreage of viable pasture and advanced the progression of 19th century farming.

Farms in the area varied greatly in size, the larger being that of Boship and Michelham, both of around 400 acres, Park Wood Farm with 200 acres, and Starnash where Samuel Deadman farmed 242 acres and employed six men and two boys in 1871. The greater number of farms during the 19th century remained diminutive in size.

The origin of the name of some properties is very old. In Richard R. Creasey's publication *The History of Hellingly*, he mentions that in 1578 certain lands were named Hackers (now Hackhurst), and a tenement at Bowershippe (Boship); also in 1561 two tenements with 30 acres of land and wood known as Bowles lying near le Dicker were held chiefly by John Woodhams and were valued at 5 shillings. (probably Bowlers, or in more recent years Clover Farm, farmed by the Hicks family.) Place names, so much a part of local history, can change and go undetected losing their association with the past. Whereas the origin of some farm names have been lost, many remain. The 1841 census and earlier documents record tenant farmers whose surnames would eventually endorse the name of a farm, for example that of Bourne, Body, Caldicott, Price, Lambert and Sharrard.

Methods of farming had progressed little for centuries, even with the innovative horse-drawn drilling and hoeing machines invented by Jethro Tull in the 1700s. Farming remained labour intensive, and provided a livelihood for the rural work-force; for farmers labour was cheaper than machinery. But there were those who saw change as fundamental to farming and to their own prosperity.

William Child moved to the Dicker in 1791, his attitude towards progressive animal husbandry brought acclaim throughout the county and prominence to Michelham, which became associated with cattle breeding. Such was his enthusiasm for efficient farming and stock breeding, he along with others, proposed in 1806, a Sheep Fair to be held annually on the Dicker

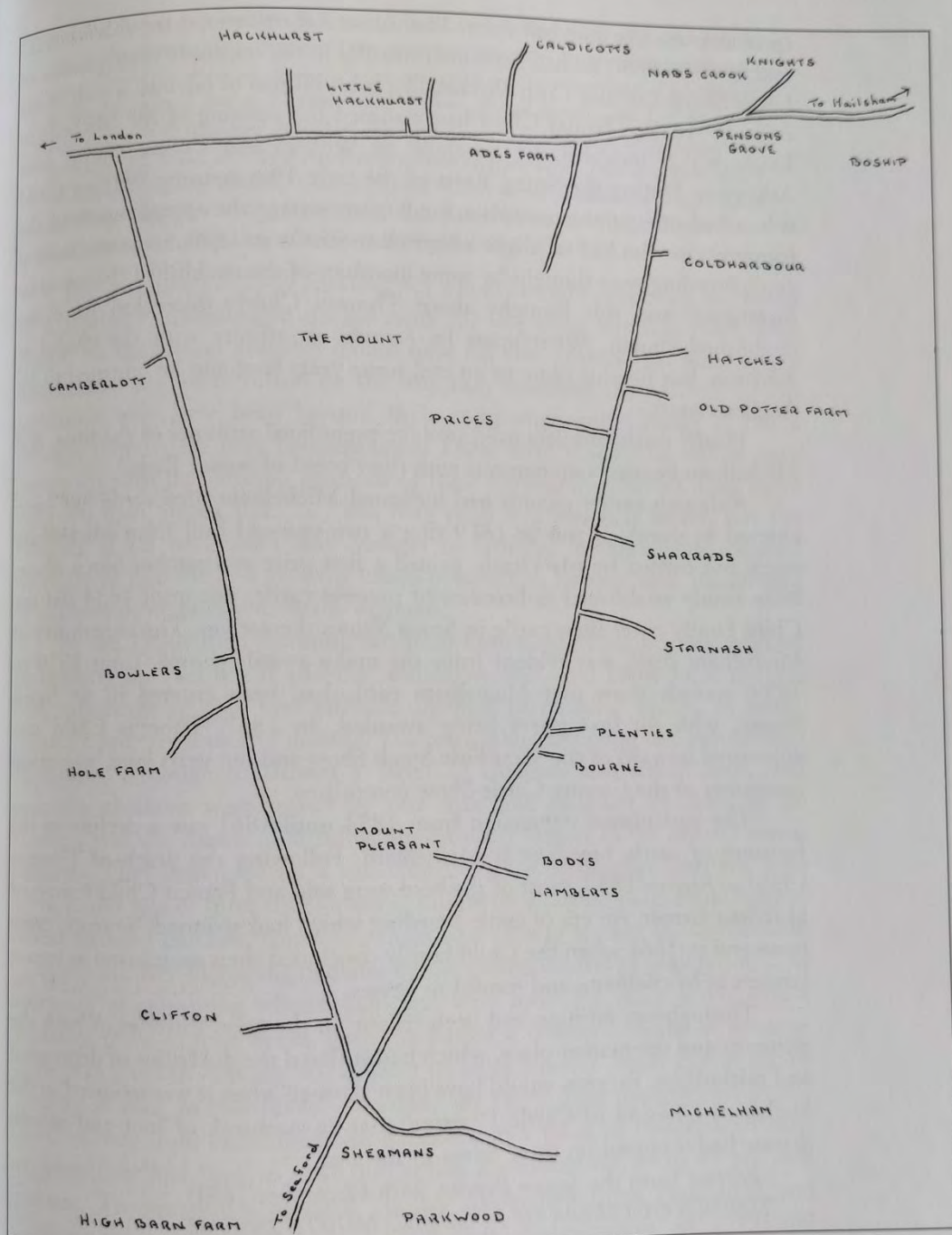
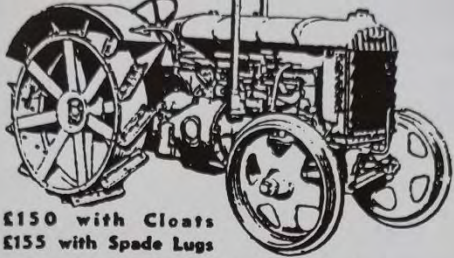


Diagram of approximate location and names of farms situated on the Dicker

FORDSON TRACTORS



£150 with Cloats
£155 with Spade Lugs
Prices at Works Supplied from Stock.

HARPER & EEDE, LTD.
44 CLIFFE LEWES Telephone 684 (2 lines)

dire need for increased home-grown food production, led to a rapid introduction of the tractor. By 1944 it was estimated that 173,000 were in use and by 1950, this had risen to 332,000. In the immediate post-war years, the Ferguson TE20 produced at Coventry, with its hydraulic system and range of implements, revolutionized mechanisation in farming. Many other manufacturers' names became synonymous with tractor development, such as Fordson Major, John Deere, Case, Field Marshall and many others. Over the last ninety years, the tractor has evolved from a slow cumbersome machine into the high-tech computerised tractor now sold by the Lower Dicker based firm of Palmer Agricultural.

The enclosure of the Dicker Common and the necessity for increased hedged field boundaries, would probably have been the only significant visual change to the farming landscape, but those who farmed the land were part of Dicker's farming history. So below is a list of farmers from the years 1841-1924 compiled from *Kelly's* directories and census returns.

1841 Census

Susannah Bishop (Hatches)	John Noakes (Coldharbour)
William Bourne	Eli Page (Clifton)
Thomas Child (Michelham)	Susannah Price
Arthur Fox	William Russell (Hackhurst)
James Harmer	Richard Smith (Bowers)
William Huggett (Pensons Grove)	Thomas Thatcher (Starnash)
James Hide	Frances Wheeler (Boship)
James Lambert (High Hids)	

1851 Census

Henry Bishop
David Butters
Thomas Child (Michelham)
Arthur Fox
Cornelius Fox
David Funnell (Coldharbour)
James Harmer

William Huggett (Pensons Grove)
Algernon Pitcher (Boship)
John Pitcher (Plenties)
Robert Pitcher (Camberlot)
William Russell (Hackhurst)
Thomas Thatcher (Starnash)

1861 Census

Walter Bourne
Henry Bourne
Elizabeth Child (Michelham)
John Dodson (Clifton)
Samuel Dearing
Samuel French
Cornelius Fox (High Barn)
David Funnell (Coldharbour)
Richard Gander

William Gutsell
Stephen Haffenden
Mary Huggett (wid)
William Lambert (Park Wood)
Edward Miller
Trayton Parris
Algernon Pitcher (Boship)
William Russell (Hackhurst)
Robert Wright (Camberlot)

1871 Census

Thomas Boys (Knights)
Arthur Butler (Coldharbour)
Thomas Brown (Michelham)
Henry Cousins (Crossways)
Samuel Deadman (Starnash)
Emily Dearing (Sharrards)
Samuel French (The Mount)
David Funnell (Hatches)

James Goldsmith
Robert Gutsell (Shermans)
Charles Goldsmith (Bourne)
James Lower (Valley of Achor)
Richard Manser
Richard Mitchell (Mount Pleasant)
Algernon Pitcher (Boship)

1881 Census

Henry Aucock (Park Wood) (bailiff)
James Brotherhood (Clifton)
Thomas Brown (Michelham)
Thomas Boys (Knights)
Arthur Butler (Coldharbour)
Henry Cousins (Crossways)
Charles Cane (Boship)
Emily Dearing (Sharrards)
John Deverall (Camberlot)

Samuel French (The Mount)
David Funnell (Hatches)
Robert Gutsell (Shermans)
Charles Goldsmith (Bourne)
James Goldsmith
James Lower (Valley of Achor)
Richard Mitchell (Mount Pleasant)

(Starnash shown uninhabited.)

1881 Census
Charles Barrett (Upper)
William Brauch
Henry Brown (Michel)
Charles Cane (Boship)
Henry Ford (Clifton)
Samuel French (Hatch)
Robert Gutsell (Sher)
1891 Kelly's Directory
George Brett (Starn)
Thomas Clark
Robert Stanley Cre
Henry Ford (Bosh)
George Gardiner (C)
Joseph Johnson (N)
1904 Kelly's Directo
Allander Poultry
James Benjamin
Robert Stanley C
Mrs A Dadswell
Sidney Dinnis (I)
George Dann (K)
Albert Gander (C)
Albert Harmer
Throughout
changed with regi
new John Wheat
Farm by 1899, a
mining of Clifton
farm and retired.
sale conducted b
Express the follo
summer-hand bro
van more sold fo
section of poul
mixed farming
hammer was a c
sold for £55.
Further

1891 Census

Charles Barrett (Upper Mount)
 Alfred Brett (Starnash) (bailiff)
 William Brauch
 Henry Brown (Michelham)
 Charles Cane (Boship)
 Henry Ford (Clifton)
 Samuel French (Hatches)
 Robert Gutsell (Shermans)

Frank Goddard (Park Wood)
 Orpah Guy (Little Hackhurst)
 Edwin Jenner (Manor House)
 William Medhurst (Caldicott)
 William S Piper (Knights)
 John Tillywhite (Sharrards)
 Henry Wooller (Osborne)
 John Wheatley (Camberlot)

1911 *Kelly's Directory*

George Brett (Starnash) (bailiff)
 Thomas Clark
 Robert Stanley Cree (Laurelhurst)
 Henry Ford (Boship)
 George Gardiner (Bowlers)
 Joseph Johnson (Michelham) (bailiff)

William S Piper (Knights)
 Noakes Brothers
 John Stone (Park Wood)
 John Wheatley (Clifton)
 Henry Wooller

1924 *Kelly's Directory*

Allander Poultry Farm Ltd
 James Benjamin Chilton (Prices)
 Robert Stanley Cree
 Mrs A Dadswell (Old Pottery Farm)
 Sidney Dinnis (Park Wood)
 George Dann (Coldharbour)
 Albert Gander (Mount Pleasant)
 Albert Harmer (Bowlers)

John Harvey (Camberlot)
 George Hoddinott (Clifton)
 James Keeley (Little Hackhurst)
 Richard Pratt (Boship)
 Henry Smith (Lamberts)
 Frederick Vitler (Starnash) (bailiff)
 Sidney White (Plenties)
 Henry Wooller (Hatches)

Throughout farming's chequered past, the running of individual farms changed with regularity, whether instigated by change of fortune or pastures new. John Wheatley was at Camberlot Farm in 1895, had moved to Bowlers Farm by 1899, and by 1909 was farming at Clifton Farm. In 1922, the running of Clifton Farm altered course yet again when James Elliott quit the farm and retired. On Friday 30th November, good prices were to prevail at the sale conducted by Messers A Burtenshaw and Son, as indicated in the *Sussex Express* the following week. Lots ranged from two Jersey cows to "Tom" a sixteen-hand brown cart gelding which sold for 25 guineas, an eight year old van mare sold for 29 guineas and a sow with ten piglets for £10 10s. A cross section of poultry, turkeys, geese and 40 guinea fowl gives an indication of mixed farming in the 1920s. The last lot which came under the auctioneer's hammer was a covered motor van with new body by Davis of Hailsham, which sold for £55.

Further changes occurred when the 15-acre farm known as Little

Southdown ewes and lambs, and 12 draught horses and realized upwards of 35 guineas. Also sold, was Mr Brown's seven year old hunter Michelham, purchased by Mr De Costabadie for 22½ guineas.

The sale catalogue indicated the great affinity a farmer had with his dairy herd, given names like Primrose, Blossom, Frosty, Damsel, Kitty etc; and his working horses, Boxer, Mover and Turpin.

Large landowners who had purchased land according to their aspirations, with a desire to own and administer vast acreages of farmland, began to change their minds. Farmers who had previously been a tenant, during the 1920s and 1930s, found that farms became available as large estates were fragmented and sold, and ownership became a possibility. The 800 acre Folkington and Michelham Estates owned by Colonel Roland Gwynne were auctioned at Hailsham's Corn Exchange on Wednesday 24th June 1925, and Lamberts Farm (in the 1840s known as High Hids) in Upper Dicker, a farm of 16 acres, six-roomed house, garden and pasture, was sold to tenant Henry Smith for £550. Also Fair Place, with two enclosures of land and cattle lodge adjacent to the church, was purchased by Mr R Fletcher for £100. Other land holdings were, Park Wood Farm with 287 acres, farmhouse, buildings and pair of cottages £6,000 and Pit Field, 13½ acres of pasture opposite Park Mead School (with vacant possession). Both were withdrawn but were later sold by private treaty.

The interest in farm ownership was still apparent in 1932 when, in accordance with orders from the executors of Mr B T Tillerstone-Rogers' estate, farms, cottages and land which fronted Coldharbour Road came under the auctioneer's hammer on the 4th May in Hailsham: Plenties Farm with 7 acres of pasture, was sold for £450 to S H White (tenant), and Bourne Farm was purchased by Mr F T Hastings for £400. The auction also saw the sale of Old Pottery Farm to Mr John Wooller for £475 and Old Pottery Cottages to Mr E Shoosmith for £210. Farmers were probably galvanised by increased prices of seven years previously, and the 181 acre Starnash Farm and Prices Farm with 52 acres of pasture, were both withdrawn as both failed to meet the reserve.

After the First World War, farmers experienced a situation in which grain was plentiful but prices had fallen sharply to the guaranteed minimum price which had been introduced when state support was established. The Agriculture Act that had supported farmers, was hastily repealed by the government, which left farmers to fend for themselves. Following the Great Depression in 1929, farmers faced a bleak future, in many areas farm prices had fallen by a third, and farm labourers were forced to vacate the land as farmers were compelled to change to less intensive agriculture. Boship Farm of 112 acres, which had previously been farmed by the Cane and Ford families

from the 1880s was purchased by Richard Montague Pratt for £14,000 in 1919. It seems that due to agriculture's impoverished predicament Boship Farm was both farm and tearooms, according to the 1927 *Kelly's Directory*, and remained popular throughout the 1930s. It is likely that the tea rooms were frequented by day-trippers who had earlier enjoyed an excursion to the Dicker Pottery just up the road, – postcards of the day affirmed their popularity.

The farmer had always hoped he would profit from his endeavours, knowing from the past that farming had suffered from pestilence, bad harvests and had been victim to Britain's ever increasing commitment to overseas free trade policy, but the farmer was forever optimistic that next year would be a better one! Probably with this in mind, farmer Gomer Emlyn Jones abandoned hope of successful farming in Wales and searched Kent and Sussex for the ideal farm. In 1933, unaware of the prejudicial views of those who would not entertain a stranger in their midst, became tenant farmer at Knights Farm at Lower Dicker, with a herd of 24 dairy cows. The demand for more milk brought about an increased herd. Previous to the 68-acre farm being purchased in 1968 for £20,000 from the Hancock-Nunn estate, pig farming had been introduced on a large scale with 150 breeding sows, now farmed by John and Mary Jones.

Throughout the 1930s, tenancy and ownership of farms on the Dicker changed, one of the causes of which may have been the depressed agricultural climate during that time; the 1934 and 1938 *Kelly Directories* point to change at Clifton Farm where Alfred Helyer had replaced Thomas Vine; Hatches Farm which had previously been farmed by Henry Wooller and then his son John had now been purchased by Frank Barrows. Ownership of Starnash Farm changed in the mid 1930s when Thomas 'Arch' Piper purchased the 181-acre farm from Charles Botting. Very few farmhouses can ascribe parts of their structure to 1697: 'Starnash' comes from the Saxon 'Stearne-erse', transcribed as 'sea swallows (terns) on the stubble'. At Lamberts Farm, the old farmhouse can attribute origins to close to the Elizabethan period of timber framed, wattle and daub construction, with evidence of stonework probably taken from Michelham Priory following the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. Unlike so many other farms where old farm buildings were replaced by today's modern wide-span industrial structures, some of Starnash farm buildings retain evidence of a past era and can lay claim to fame as overnight billets for soldiers *en route* to Newhaven and France in the First World War.

With unemployment in 1932 at an unprecedented high of three million, the government hoped to curb overseas imports by the introduction of a tariff that year, and in addition to the 1931 and 1933 Agricultural Acts that had pioneered the Marketing Boards, they re-introduced price control. Boship Farm was ranked a prominent farm throughout the 19th century, and it may



K Piper, Will Orr



*Boship Farm
Jabez and Ruth Ford*

1920



*Farm Workers at Boship Farm.
'K' Piper, Will Orton, Fred Medhurst, George Young, unknown, Fred Page*

be plausible to believe that its farm status had diminished by 1938 when *Kelly's Directory* identifies a change from farming interests, to that of 'Boship Farm Guest House', when farming probably became secondary to the owner's aspirations.

By the 1930s Britain's agriculture had been allowed to fall into decline as government policy was toward imported wheat and meat from the Empire, supplemented by trade agreements. As in 1916 when a poor harvest and Germany's increased threat against Britain's imported foodstuff, by 1935, the Ministry of Agriculture had deemed it necessary to set up a committee to look at the way farming should be organised in wartime. It was to take the possible isolation by Hitler's warmongering in 1939, that would result in maximum agricultural production. Dicker's farmers had eked out a living during the 1930s, and the ensuing war that urged greater productivity, threw farming a lifeline. The Ministry of Agriculture had complete authority to control and direct food production, which included the right to take possession of any farm where the land was deemed to be neglected or poorly cultivated; such a fate befell Boship, Pokes and Black Barn farms, which were run for the duration of the war by the County Agricultural Committee, generally known as War Ags. Following two decades of agricultural depopulation when many had sought employment elsewhere, and by intensive recruitment into the armed forces, members of the Women's Land Army were drafted in to work on some of Dicker's farms. One old farmer who has long since gone to the great pastures above, was heard to say scornfully in his broad Sussex dialect, "Am baint 'aving 'er pull my cows teats about." But such changes were necessary to meet the shortage in both labour and home grown produce.

The wartime approach to farming had seen many changes; those who farmed Dicker farms remained almost unchanged from the late 1930s. They had struggled to meet the M.o.A. wartime demands and had provided food for the nation, and they should be proud of their essential part in achieving victory!

Farmers and farms

Frank Barrows	Hatches
John Cox and Charles Vitler	Bowlers
Wilfred Peerless	High Barn
John Conway	Caldicotts
Alfred Dadswell	Old Pottery Farm
George Dann	Coldharbour
J H Duncan	Michelham
Stanley Dinnis	Parkwood
Gomer Jones	Knights

Don Martin	Hackhurst and Perrylands
Thomas A Piper	Starnash
Sidney Smith	Lamberts
Thomas Vine	Clifton
John Benjamin Wheatley	Prices
? Saunders	Camberlot

The 1939-45 war years had generated maximum productive returns from agriculture, and the 1947 Agricultural Act was designed to save the farmer from the insecurities of post-war farming. By the end of the war there were over half a million full-time workers still working on the land. But in a few years, changes were to occur that would alter the old and tested farming methods forever. One was the introduction of pedigree tuberculin tested cows, another the use of piped water, leading to many ponds being filled in. Bigger and improved cow-stalls and dairies were advised, and the installation of bulk milk tanks would see the demise of the milk churn collection by firms like Matthews of Hailsham. Government legislation would sound the death knell to many small dairy farmers, like Trevor Smith, who gave up a 36 head milking herd.

Probably the farming ideology of 1950s and '60s was that the larger farm would be more profitable and more viable to run. George Dann (the younger) who had inherited a milling business and Coldharbour Farm from his father in 1935, engaged upon greater dairy production, and around 1955 expanded the farm's acreage with the purchase of land from Prices and Mount Pleasant farms, and land adjacent to Camberlot Road. The trend towards larger farms also brought about the removal of many hedgerows across the area known as The Mount. Not since the enclosure of the old Dicker Common, had the landscape seen such change. Coldharbour Farm continued to be farmed by the Dann family until it was sold in 1978 to a Mr Tyoonk. Barns that had once been an integral part of a farm, became impractical were often converted into homes of great character. Retaining the name of the farm, Coldharbour Barn was converted by Aubrey Dann around 1993 and continues to maintain a link with farming history.

Very few farms had remained in one family's farming ownership since the earlier part of the 1900s: Coldharbour Farm which had been purchased by George Dann in 1922, Lamberts Farm purchased by Henry Smith in 1925, and Starnash Farm had continued in one family's ownership for a period of time. Starnash Farm purchased by Thomas 'Arch' Piper in the 1930s, continued in the true tradition of dairy, beef and arable farming, extending into Laughton with the purchase of Michelham Farm, where much of the acreage was taken up by growing cereal crops, necessitating the removal of hedgerows to accommodate modern farm machinery. Two men who had experienced many changing seasons at both Starnash and Michelham were

BRICKMAKING IN SUSSEX

A History and Gazetteer



M. BESWICK



Middleton Press

1. RAW MATERIALS

Almost anywhere in Sussex, except on the tops of the chalk Downs, if a shallow layer of topsoil is stripped away, the subsoil will consist of material suitable for making bricks. So it is hardly surprising that in the 19th century, when brickmaking in the county reached its peak, practically every parish had at least one brickyard. Brickmaking was not only widespread but was characterised by the variety of its products. The reason is to be found in the different properties of the brick earths and clays produced by the different geological strata which underlie the various parts of the county; some consideration of these at the outset will help in understanding the way in which the industry developed.

Brick earth, clay and sand

The geological formations exploited for brickmaking were the product of the weathering of harder rocks, which were first eroded and then re-deposited as sediment on the beds of ancient lakes. Their main constituent is quartz, in the form of sand or silt, which gives the material its strength but they also contain clay minerals, complex aluminium silicates, which consist of very fine particles that cling together when moist and give the material its plasticity. Also present are small quantities of other compounds, such as the minerals of iron, calcium, magnesium, sodium and potassium. All of these contribute to the quality, durability and appearance of the finished brick.

The proportions of sand and clay present in this raw material vary. This has given rise, at different times and in different parts of Sussex, to the use of

terms to distinguish between the coarser brick earths and the finer clays. A satisfactory brick earth, which contains up to 75% of sandy material, was formerly referred to in West Sussex as 'earth' and in East Sussex as 'loam'. This yields a brick which is hard, strong and has good heat resistance and does not shrink excessively on firing. The term 'clay' was at one time reserved for the finer-textured, silty material with a higher alumina content. This is easily moulded but has a tendency to crack in drying and shrink and warp during the burning process and so is more suited to the manufacture of tiles, agricultural drainpipes and other ceramic products. However, it can also be used for brickmaking if the correct proportion of sand is added and nowadays the word clay is often used indiscriminately to denote both the coarser and the finer material.¹

The **Hastings Beds**, which form the High Weald, or forest ridges, at the core of the wealden district and extend to the coast in the area between Hastings and Bexhill, provide perhaps the best example of the variety of materials available. This is the oldest geological formation exploited for brickmaking in Sussex and consists of a series of deposits of clays and sands, which often outcrop quite close together. The lowest of these, the Ashdown Sand, constitutes an ideal brickmaking material. The Wadhurst Clay, which lies immediately above it, is eminently suitable for tilemaking and the Tunbridge Wells Sand, the highest stratum in the series, is a soft rock which can be ground to provide sand for use in the moulding process. Intermingled with these three main strata are

subsidiary deposits such as Fairlight Clay and Grinstead Clay, which can also be exploited.

Given this variety of material, it is not surprising that many of the brickyards in this part of Sussex regularly produced not only bricks but also tiles and sometimes agricultural drainpipes and domestic pottery as well. Maps of the late 19th and early 20th centuries reveal almost as many 'Brick & Tile Works' as simple 'Brick Works' in the area and in a number of places, such as Brede, Hastings, Bexhill and Uckfield, there were 'Brick, Tile & Pottery Works' as well. These latter works were all situated on deposits of Wadhurst or Fairlight Clay but, in general, brickyards would be sited on a suitable bed of loam, the tile clay and sand being carted from pits a short distance away. This was the case, for example, in the estate brickyard at Ashburnham, where loam for brick-making was dug from a pit on the edge of the yard, clay for making tiles,

drainpipes and flower pots was brought from a pit half a mile to the south and sand for moulding was obtained from a nearby outcrop of Tunbridge Wells Sand.

The broad band of **Weald Clay**, which forms the Low Weald to the south and west of the forest ridges, is also a very versatile material, as can be seen from a report produced in 1925 on the subsoil of the land adjoining the Dicker Pottery in Hellingly. This stated:

Clays are found within a relatively small area for nearly every type of clay-ware from common and facing bricks to sanitary pipes. . . Field one: beautiful dark red clean plastic clay - suitable for highest class red wares (pottery, facing bricks, roofing and floor tiles and terra cotta). In field adjoining: similar clay but not quite so deep, accompanied by rougher texture clay suitable for common bricks. In third field: clean but more sandy clay is found, suitable for common or facing bricks. Below, at one point, a bed of greenish-grey clay is found, believed to go to a considerable depth. This burns to an excellent buff colour: should



2. Claypit at North Corner, Horam, in the 1920s

make good salt-glazed stoneware pipes. There is enough clay for 100 million bricks or equivalent.

Boreholes were sunk to a depth of 15ft (4.5m) only and so give no indication of the potential of the underlying strata, which have never been exploited in this locality.²

The great depth of the Weald Clay is the reason why more bricks have been made from this formation than from any other. In 1975, 80% of the bricks produced in Sussex were made of Weald Clay and this figure has probably now been exceeded. In the past, when clay was dug by hand and carted in barrows, claypits might extend over quite a wide area but were rarely more than one or two metres deep. With the advent of modern machinery, however, it became possible to exploit the lower strata which, when weathered and mixed, produce brick earth of the desired texture. At Southwater near Horsham, some of this material was found to be suitable for the production of bricks of engineering quality. Yet even before the era of mechanical extraction, the greatest concentrations of brickyards and potteries were to be found on the Weald Clay belt, from Hailsham in the south, through Burgess Hill in mid-Sussex to Horsham in the north of the county.³

Between the Weald and the Downs lie the bands of **Greensand** and **Gault Clay**, which also provided material for brickmaking, although on a much smaller scale. In the Pulborough area, the bottom strata of the Lower Greensand, known as the Atherfield and Marehill Clays, were exploited until quite recently at brickyards in Stopham and North Heath respectively. Also sand

from the quarries at Pulborough was dispatched by rail to brickworks as far afield as Berwick in East Sussex, where it was used in the production of sand-faced bricks. The Gault could be used on its own for making tiles, as was the case in the medieval period in Wilmington, Alciston and Ringmer in East Sussex. In West Sussex, where the bands of Gault and Greensand are very much wider than they are further east, a number of brickyards were sited at the junction of the two formations to take advantage of both materials. One of these small yards is still active at Pitsham, in the parish of Cocking south of Midhurst. Here the Gault provides the main brickmaking material but the adjacent Greensand is mixed with it to give the desired texture and also, until recently, supplied the sand required for moulding.

South of the Downs, from Brighton westwards, the coastal plain gradually widens and here, too, are to be found a range of materials suitable for brick-making. The **Woolwich and Reading Beds** which outcrop in small patches in Aldrington and Portslade but more extensively west of Worthing, again provide material from which both bricks and tiles could be produced, as was the case at the brickyard on the Goodwood estate at Westhampnett. In the early 1800s this yard was selling 'earth' bricks for building purposes and 'clay' bricks for paving. In fact there were two brickyards in existence simultaneously on opposite sides of the road and it seems probable that each was exploiting a different type of subsoil, one using a sandy earth to make building bricks and the other a finer, silty clay to make not only paving bricks but also a wide variety

of tiles and agricultural drainpipes. There were a number of other 'multi-product' yards on this formation, from Poling Pottery, east of Arundel, to Westbourne on the Hampshire border.⁴

The subsoil of the rest of the coastal plain consists mainly of the geological formation known as **Brickearth** which, as its name implies, is suitable for brickmaking. This deposit has been exploited in the Selsey peninsula and along the narrow coastal strip between Brighton and Bognor, where large quantities of bricks were manufactured to meet the demands of the developing coastal resorts. Indeed in Brighton itself, where the Brickearth lay to no great depth, the demand for bricks was such that the deposits were totally exhausted by the middle of the 19th century.

The **Alluvial Clay** of the river valleys, although again offering suitable material for brickmaking, has not been widely used in Sussex. This is principally because most valley-bottom sites were liable to flooding and therefore not worth exploiting, particularly as there was so much material available elsewhere. There were, however, a few short-lived brickfields in the 19th century on the brookland of the Arun and Lower Ouse Valleys, alongside the Cuckmere at Alfriston and at Rye Harbour and a longer span of life was enjoyed by the brickyard on the bank of the Ouse at Piddinghoe.

Finally, the chalk Downs are the one part of Sussex where one would not expect to find bricks being made at all and yet, even here, a few small brickyards once existed, on shallow clay deposits of post-glacial age, which overlay the chalk.

Brickyard Farm in the Chilgrove Valley in the parish of West Dean indicates the existence of one such yard and another was in operation on Lye Common in Up Marden in the middle of the 19th century.

Iron and other minerals

The various mineral compounds found naturally in all of the foregoing formations also make their contribution to the texture and, more particularly, the colour of the bricks produced. This is the case with the iron oxide which is present in most Sussex clays and results in the attractive red coloration of the bricks, especially those made in the Weald. The iron is mostly dispersed evenly throughout the brick earth as a thin coating on the sandy particles but concretions do occur, particularly in the lower levels of the Wadhurst Clay. These then appear as black patches within the fabric of the burnt brick. Occasionally, they are also found on the outer surface, where they take on a hard, slag-like appearance, having served to lower the melting point of the silica and then combine with it in the high temperature of the kiln.⁵

Although the majority of the bricks made in Sussex were red, this was not universally the case. Even within the Weald Clay there are occasional strata which burn to a paler red or even a buff colour, particularly when fired in a reducing atmosphere. This is also true of the Gault, if enough calcium is present to cancel out the iron content of the clay. South of the Downs, especially in Worthing and Littlehampton, 'white' bricks were made in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, exploiting natural



3. Polychrome
Souls' Church

deposits
the 19th
coast,
incorpor
mouldin
practise
Clamp-
from c
produce
about 6
ash (the
can be
particu
where
polych
the Vic
which
this w
Station
rail, a
Seaford



John Stanly, John
Tysehurst were
the same offence and
sent. The peak was
in seven brickmakers
per kiln. Not all of
the Broyle itself but
proximity to the
the brick earth was

Evidence from other manors confirms that the popularity of bricks was gradually increasing during the course of the 17th century. A licence was granted to Henry Chapman to dig earth on Hailsham Common in 1649. In East Grinstead, John Butching was fined 10s in 1670 for unlawfully digging earth and clay for bricks and tiles from the waste and this was followed in 1679 by a further presentment for digging earth and erecting a kiln. In both of these localities the adjacent market town guaranteed a steady demand for bricks but even in the remoter country areas the commons were being utilised in the same way.³

Expansion in the 18th century

From the beginning of the 18th century onwards, surviving manorial records become more numerous and from them it can be seen that brickyards which had been set up without permission, or which had been the subject of an annual tenancy only, were now being recognised as permanent premises, which justified the grant of copyhold tenure. On the west side of St John's Common, which lay within the jurisdiction of the manor of Clayton, a grant was made in 1711 of land on which a kiln had already been in existence for some time. In that year, John Dunstall,

a clerk in holy orders, became the owner of a brick kiln and two acres of waste land but the brickmaker was probably James Parker, who was fined for digging and carrying away earth in 1713 and, in 1730, was able to buy the yard himself. By 1741 he was the owner of two brickyards in the same area, one of which was leased to another brickmaker, George Taylor of Keymer. However, Parker had had to borrow quite heavily and in 1751 he was obliged to sell off some of his land and Taylor was able to acquire his own yard.⁴

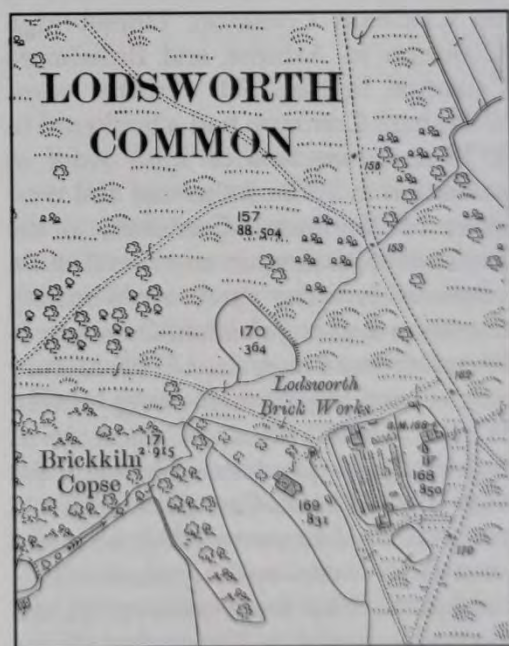
Chailey South Common, which was part of the manor of Wanningore, also had a well-established brickyard by the beginning of the 18th century. The tenant in 1711, Richard Calchin, held one acre, on which a cottage and two brick kilns had been built and for which he paid an annual quit rent of 2s 6d. In 1754 a second brickyard was opened to the north. On this occasion a licence was granted by the lady of the manor to John Siffleet to dig earth for making bricks on the South Common for seven years, paying 16s per annum and 'not taking any earth within the space of 60 rods from the brick kiln of George Colvin (Calchin's successor) on the same common'. Siffleet died in 1759 and the probate inventory of his goods and chattels taken in April of that year lists his stock of 10,000 bricks, 1,200 tiles, 300 hollow tiles, 226 paving tiles and 34 gutter bricks unsold from the previous season, as well as moulds, tile boards, a sieve, tables, wheelbarrows, faggots and kiln ashes. He, too, had two kilns.⁵

Often the first intimation that brickmakers were at work comes from presentments at the manor court, not for

clay-dig
the was
genera
of a st
advent
that in
seems
of Fran
numbe
In the
in deta
Brooke
Durrar
and o
Paleho
respec
which
in the
John V
and I
brickp
refere
offenc
have
purch
illegal
of cop
and it
brick
What
amou
Comr
two
furth
anoth
descr
as ear
marri
This
brick
consi
was t

clay-digging but for encroachment on the waste. Absentee lords of the manor generally left supervision in the hands of a steward and it was only with the advent of a new lord, or a new steward, that irregularities came to light. This seems to have been the case in the manor of Framfield in 1745, when a very large number of encroachments were reported. In the following year, these were listed in detail. The culprits included Edward Brooker, Nicholas Clarke and William Durrant, who had enclosed plots of land and constructed kilns on Blackboys, Palehouse and Highland Commons respectively. On Ridgewood Common, which lay partly in Framfield but mainly in the neighbouring parish of Uckfield, John Whatford had a kiln and two plots and Richard Teeling a kiln and a brickplace. This last was the only specific reference to bricks at this stage. The offenders were all fined but they must have entered into negotiations for the purchase of the land they had been using illegally as, over the next 10 years, grants of copyhold were recorded in each case and it became clear that the kilns were all brick kilns. For example, in 1756 John Whatford was granted two plots amounting to $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres on Ridgewood Common together with a brick kiln and two 'workhouses', which occupied a further half acre. Nicholas Clarke, another of the offenders, had been described as 'brickmaker, of Framfield' as early as 1709, the year in which he married Elizabeth Ticehurst of Ringmer. This suggests that some of these brickyards had been in existence for a considerable length of time before action was taken against their operators.⁶

On the Dicker, the extensive common divided between the parishes of Hellingly and Chiddingly, and on Laughton Common, both of which formed part of the waste of the manor of Laughton, much the same thing happened about 10 years later. Presentments for encroachment in 1756 were followed by a series of new grants of copyhold over the next few years. One brickmaker in Laughton and three in Chiddingly benefited in this way. When it became known that land on the Dicker was available for the establishment of brickyards, applications were made for grants on the east side of the common in Hellingly and one of the new entrepreneurs, Thomas Wood, came from as far afield as Plumpton. The map drawn when the Dicker was finally enclosed in 1813 shows these numerous



8. Brickyard on the edge of Lodsworth Common (OS Sheet XXII/6 1912)

small enclosures dotted about the common. As long as the common remained unenclosed, the brickmakers were able to gather brushwood to fuel their kilns, but enclosure put an end to that and may have contributed to the failure of several of the smaller operators around that time.⁷

Most of the commons mentioned so far were in East Sussex but the commons of West Sussex had experienced similar development. On Horsham Common brickmakers had been active from the 16th century. Nicholas Dinnage, whose occupation was given as brickmaker in 1665, was one of two men who had brick kilns on the Common in 1709 and by 1787, three more kilns had been erected. There were brickyards on Tortington Common and on Ebernoe Common in Kirdford in the 17th century and by the 1730s there were brickmakers working on Clapham Common, Horsebridge Common in Ashurst and Broadmare Common in Henfield. Further west, Sidlesham Common had a brickyard in 1755 and two sets of kilns were in operation in 1778 on the east and west sides of Hambrook Common, in the parishes of Funtington and Westbourne respectively. The yards on Worthing Common and on Jolesfield Common in West Grinstead were also of 18th-century origin and there were many others. When North Heath Common in Pulborough was enclosed in 1815, the map showed James Cumper's brick kiln and premises, surrounded by what had previously been open ground. This brickyard, like those shown on the enclosure map of the Dicker, had clearly been in existence for some time.⁸

The Wealden-type wood-fired kiln

In the small 17th- and 18th-century brickyards, bricks were, almost without exception, kiln-burnt. The kilns were brick-built and of a type similar to the ones used in Roman times. They were straight-sided, open-topped and often built into a bank of earth. This gave a measure of heat insulation and strength to the structure which was liable to develop cracks as a result of the extremes of temperature to which it was subjected. It also made it possible to fire the kiln through two tunnels at the lower end and have access for the bricks at a higher level. The floor of the kiln was either by vertical rows of holes or spaces left in the walls which the bricks were set in for firing. A large fire was built across the top of the kiln, a temporary protection for the bricks employed which was generally as a rule as 'fast' as Sussex as 'bav' pushed down the firing tunnels to reach right to the back of the kiln. The temperature was raised slowly to begin with, to drive off any moisture remaining in the bricks, and then increased gradually and maintained at about 1000°C for 48 hours, or even longer, the whole process taking about six days.⁹

Kiln capacity was small, generally of not more than 24,000 bricks, plus the same quantity of tiles, and often much

5. DUAL OCCUPATIONS

Brickmaking in this country, until quite recent times, was a seasonal activity. Brick earth was dug in the autumn and left in a heap in the yard over the winter for the wind, rain and frost to temper it and make it easier to handle when brickmaking began in the spring. Moulding could only start when there was no further danger of hard frost, which might damage the 'green' bricks as they dried in the open air. Burning, in an intermittent kiln, took place at any time from midsummer until the first frosts of autumn signalled the end of the brickmaking year. The seasonal nature of the job, combined with the fact that demand for bricks was by no means constant, depending as it did on the amount of new building, or rebuilding, taking place at any given time, made it difficult for country brickmakers in particular to subsist entirely on the profits from their trade. They needed some other means to support themselves and their families when times were bad and so they often combined brickmaking with another occupation.

Farmer/brickmakers

The most common solution adopted by brickmakers, as by many other rural tradesmen, was to combine their main activity with running a small farm. These artisan/farmers either owned or rented a few acres of land on which they grew corn or raised animals, with the brickyard situated on a rough piece of ground, which was agriculturally unproductive. Brickmaking activities were fitted into the seasons when farming made the fewest demands. After clay-digging in the autumn, the slack period in the winter

was spent gathering brushwood for kiln faggots and brickmaking did not begin until late spring, when sowing and lambing had taken place. The bricks were then left to dry until late in the summer when haymaking and harvest were complete and time was available to set and fire the kiln.

Some farmer/brickmakers had 100 acres of land, or more, in which case the brickyard was of secondary importance. One skilled brickburner would be employed to act as foreman of the yard and the rest of the labourers worked either on the farm or in the brickyard, as the need arose. Others had as little as five acres, which was barely enough to support the brickmaker and his family, all of whom, including quite young children, were expected to do their share of moulding bricks and tiles. The most precise information in this respect can be obtained from the 19th-century census returns, on which both occupations were frequently declared. In 1851, for example, Joseph Barrow, a brickmaker of Runtington Farm, Heathfield, was farming 100 acres and employing four men, whereas Richard Morley of Lower Beeding, with 50 acres, was employing seven men. As brickmaking was more labour-intensive than farming, this suggests that Morley derived most of his income from the brickyard, whereas Barrow was essentially a farmer, only running his brickyard as a sideline. In 1871, George Parks of Mayfield described himself as 'farmer and brickmaker' although he only had six acres, but the average small farm run in conjunction with a brickyard had between 15 and 25 acres of land.

Brick Yard Account 1853

contra £

20640 Tith and London Faggots @ 3/6	36	11	19 1/2
Carriage of Faggots to Yard	12	5	6
Wage and Manual Labour done in the Yard and credited to farm in farm Account	11	1	10
Making and burning 136,220 Bricks @ 1/4	65	2	2 1/2
Making and burning 22,025 plain tiles @ 1/4	12	0	3
Making and burning 65,168 2 1/2 in pipes @ 1/4	24	16	5
Making and burning 900 Ridge & Corner tiles @ 1/4	2	14	
Making and burning 200 paving Bricks @ 1/4		6	
Loading 67,200 Bricks, Pipes and Tiles @ 1/8		14	0 1/2
Digging and grinding clay for 42,000 pipes		1	2 1/2
Washing sand to clay Mill		2	1/2
Making of Bogen Lows @ 1/6		13	6

Balance in favor of the Yard 135 1 10 1/2

£ 302 4 8 1/2

136,220 Bricks @ 3/6 per 1000	195	6	7
22,025 Plain tiles @ 3/6	36	9	
65,168 2 1/2 in pipes @ 3/6	65	19	1 1/2
900 Ridge & Corner Tiles		1	6 1/2
200 Paving Bricks @ 1/4		12	

£ 302 4 8 1/2

12. Accounts of the brickyard on Newhouse Farm, Ewhurst, for the year 1853 (ESRO BAT 2928)

Typical of the smaller farmer/brickmakers was William Sargent of Hellingly, who died in April 1720. His probate inventory showed that he had 2 1/2 acres of corn on the ground and 2 acres of oats. His stock included 5 cows, 5 horses, 34 sheep, some of them with lambs, and also 5,000 bricks, 12,000 plain tiles, 300 well bricks and a few paving bricks and hollow tiles, all presumably unsold from the previous year. The inventory of John Hills of Ashurst, who died in 1736, paints a similar picture. He had 2 acres of wheat and 3 acres of oats and his farm stock consisted of 3 cows, 2 mares and 2 colts, 2 hogs, a sow and 6 pigs. In the brickyard he had 1,050 well bricks, 1,000 paving bricks, 200 quarry bricks, 1,200 plain tiles and a few ridge and hip tiles, all ready burnt. In addition, as the inventory was taken in June, there was the current season's production:

7,000 raw (unburnt) bricks and 8,000 raw paving bricks, as well as quantities of brick earth and tile earth ready cast, 1,200 bush faggots and a load of sand.¹

Limeburners and pottery manufacturers

Hills was even more versatile than Sargent: he also had 'four loads of chalk in the kiln'. This was not unusual, as brickmaking and limeburning often went hand in hand. In the clay and sandstone areas around Rye and Hastings, chalk was brought by sea to brickyards near the coast and in central and western Sussex, chalk from the Downs was taken considerable distances inland along the various rivers and navigations. Like the brick-kilns, the 'flare' kilns used for limeburning were wood-fired and there was generally a plentiful supply of fuel in the Weald. Customers found it

time not only bricks but sand and lime for mortar. Abraham Cooper, a Hailsham brick-maker who died in 1603, mentioned his limekiln in his will. The brickyard at Woolbeding, run by members of the Denyer family, must also have contained a limekiln, to judge by references to chalk in the probate inventory of Robert Denyer in 1657 and to lime ashes in that of his successor in 1684. Both chalk and lime figured in the inventory of Stephen Pryer of Henfield in 1723. Several of the brickmakers on the Broyle in Ringmer and on the Dicker in Hellingly and Chiddingfold also had limekilns in their yards and the OS map of 1872 shows a limekiln at the brickworks on the bank of the Rother in Beckley. Conversely, the limeburners in the Arundel area in the 19th century found it advantageous to market bricks. Charles Chamberlain of Arundel Cement Works also owned a brickyard at Tortington, and Peppers,

The brickyard at Piddinghoe in the Lower Ouse Valley was particularly favourably situated. Not only was chalk for limeburning and the manufacture of whiting available from a pit alongside the brickyard but the yard itself lay on clay which was suitable for making pottery as well as bricks. Brown-ware pottery, both glazed and unglazed, was produced at a number of Sussex brickyards, in some cases merely as a sideline and in others predominating over the output of bricks and tiles. It has already been seen that pottery- and tilemaking often co-existed in the medieval period, the same type of clay frequently being suitable for both products. This tradition persisted in the parishes of Graffham and Woolavington (East Lavington) over a period stretching from Roman times to the 19th century. Various sites in the district, examined in the 1970s, revealed pottery, brick and tile wasters from the Romano-British medieval and post-medieval periods and a remarkable series of 15 probate inventories, from dates between 1617 and 1706, show that activity must have reached a high level in the 17th century. Eight of the inventories list the goods of men described as potters, two of tilers and five of brickmakers but it is clear that there was a close association between the different trades.³

In the parish of Ringmer, where extensive evidence for a medieval pottery industry has also been uncovered, brickmaking seems to have superseded it from the 16th century onwards but elsewhere in the area the two trades continued to flourish side by side. A

yard in V
kiln and a
sale in 17
Crowhu
brickmal
the succe
up on th
around
until the
were all
the east
tradition
continua
and 19th
the sam
as was
parish d

Potte
elsewhe
in the c
at Polin
of West
exampl
large co

13. Probate inventory of Stephen Pryer
(ESRO W/INV 1619)



14. Poling Potteries in the 1930s

yard in Wilmington containing a brick kiln and a pot kiln, which was offered for sale in 1759, was run by members of the Crowhurst family, who also had brickmaking interests in Ringmer and the succession of potteries which sprang up on the east side of the Dicker from around 1760 onwards and continued until the middle of the 20th century, were all associated with brickyards. In the east of the county, Rye has a long tradition of pottery manufacture, which continues to the present day. In the 18th and 19th centuries the pottery was under the same management as the brickyard, as was the case in the neighbouring parish of Brede.⁴

Potteries and brickyards co-existed elsewhere, notably at East Grinstead and in the coastal region of western Sussex, at Poling near Arundel and in the parish of Westbourne but the most flourishing examples of this dual trade were on the large commons in the centre of the county

at Chailey, Ditchling, Keymer, Clayton and West Grinstead. Here the small-scale potteries and brickyards of the 18th and early 19th centuries, producing domestic pottery and bricks and tiles to satisfy purely local demands, expanded in the late 19th century and manufactured substantial quantities of terracotta, a subject which will be dealt with later.⁵

Other rural trades

The tools and other items of equipment required by the brickmaker, such as moulds and barrows, were few and could be made at no great cost by the village wheelwright but capital was sometimes needed to buy a suitable plot of land and build a kiln. This might well be furnished by the local miller, who was generally one of the wealthier members of the community. In 1826 James Dives, the miller at Nutley, was reported to have enclosed land for a

Meanwhile, the success of Brighton as a resort had led to attempts to attract visitors for sea-bathing elsewhere along the coast. Some expansion took place in Hastings, where, as in Brighton, local landowners were to the forefront in providing facilities for brickmaking. In 1766 there were two brick kilns on the estate of John Collier in Halton, on the east side of the town and Edward Milward's Priory Kiln was in operation by 1773. In Worthing, which before this time had been merely a hamlet in the parish of Broadwater, brickmaking made its appearance on the common in the 1770s, heralding the expansion which was to follow and some resort facilities were also being developed in Westhampton.⁴

Further west, Sir Richard Hotham, a Bognor hatter, set out to create a completely new resort at Bognor. In 1771 he bought land in the parish of Bognor and drew up plans for the town and elegant terraces, intended to rival those of Brighton. Initially the bricks were acquired from yards in the neighbourhood, principally the one on the Duke of Richmond's estate at Westhampton. This brickyard's accounts show that receipts for bricks and tiles sold in the 1780s were never more than about £500 but in 1791 they doubled to £1,009 3s 3d and this can only have been because of the development taking place in Bognor. Subsequently Sir Richard set up his own limekiln and brickyard and even boasted that his bricks were superior to those of the Duke but after his death in 1799 work ground to a halt, the estate was broken up and further expansion did not take place until a much later date.⁵

Supplies of fuel

Whereas the Weald had abundant supplies of wood for firing kilns, the coastal plain was less well-endowed, especially in its narrowest part around Brighton. To begin with, the fuel generally used in the brick kilns here was the one traditionally employed in limeburning, namely furze. This grew naturally in the district and provided the kind of fierce heat required. The area of the Wick estate occupied by the Brighton brickyards was the part nearest to the coast, south of present-day Western Road. To the north of this lay the furze fields where fuel was gathered, a name perpetuated in the road still called Furze Hill. As demand for bricks increased, this source of fuel was clearly inadequate. By 1777, a carrier was 'bringing furze for Mr. Scutt from Rottendean' and brushwood faggots were carried from as far afield as Offham north of the Downs.⁶

The obvious alternative was coal, brought by sea and landed on the beach near the kilns, but this was expensive. As early as 1723, Henry Hill had used coal-fired kilns to make bricks in Brighton and Newhaven for the building of Stanmer House and the agreement stipulated that he should be responsible for furnishing the 'coals' himself. However, as the supplies of furze and underwood became depleted and had to be carried from ever greater distances, their cost, too, increased. By 1792 the shortage was so acute that brickmakers in Lewes and even on the Dicker were turning to coal and finding that this proved more economical to use.⁷

It is not known whether the design of the coal-burning kilns of this period

Cross

16. Res

differed materially from that of the wood-burning ones used in the Weald. Some modification would have been required when a brickburner switched to a different type of fuel and it seems probable that this took the form of a conical extension to the usual wealden-type kiln, to help regulate the draught. A watercolour of Shoreham, painted by J.M.W. Turner in about 1830, shows a circular kiln near the coast in Portslade and photographs of kilns at East Preston and Poling, taken in the early years of the 20th century, reveal structures of a similar type. As the coastal areas used for brickmaking were all subsequently redeveloped, no traces of the kilns used at this period have been found but the recently-restored 19th-century tilekiln at Piddinghoe was probably of the same basic design, although on a smaller scale.⁸

Coal could also be used to burn bricks using an open clamp instead of a kiln. This had been tried, unsuccessfully, in Brighton in 1722 and was almost certainly the method adopted when large quantities of bricks had to be produced at short notice for the building of the Martello Towers in 1805.

Coastal defences

The Sussex coast had always been vulnerable to attack and fortifications had to be built, or repaired, whenever the threat was renewed. In 1759, during the Seven Years' War, a new battery was constructed on the seafront in Brighton and problems were encountered in obtaining 120,000 well-burnt bricks for the purpose. Brickmaking was a seasonal activity and the manufacturers did not carry over a large stock of bricks from one season to the next. In addition,

several weeks had to be allowed at the beginning of each season for bricks to dry naturally in the open air before they were ready for firing and so it was usually impossible to obtain large quantities at short notice. Further batteries, or small forts, were erected at various points along the coast in 1795, by which time the local brickyards were stretched to capacity. Therefore, when Napoleon was massing his forces for invasion in 1804, a fresh solution had to be found.⁹

The decision was taken to build a string of forts, the Martello Towers, in Sussex. The towers were large, circular, and were operated by a small number of men. Each tower was built on a hill and through the fortifications the firing activities were concentrated along the coast. Winchester were required to make bricks for the towers themselves and for the towers themselves and some 32 million bricks were produced for the towers between Rye and Seaford and the larger redoubt at Eastbourne. Some of the bricks made in Eastbourne appear to have been kiln-burnt but it seems fairly clear that, for such quantities to have been produced in the short time available, clamp-burning must have been the technique generally adopted.¹⁰

Clamp-burning

This was a method which had been employed by some of the Tudor

on top
themselves
of fuel
with th
that, or
became
might
bricks,
and cla
a previ
and let
consur
The
that m
could
cost. T

in Sussex of brickmaking on a truly industrial scale.

Terracotta

Another feature of the brickworks at Ditchling and Keymer Junction was the production of specially-moulded bricks and terracotta to cater for the demand for ornamental bricks and tiles, which were becoming increasingly popular at this time. Terracotta was not new in Sussex. It had been used in the building of Laughton Place in the early part of the 16th century but then went out of fashion. It reappeared at the very end of the 18th century, not as a building material, but in the form of ornamental panels incorporated in church memorial plaques and tombstones. These were the speciality of Jonathan Harmer, a stonemason whose workshop was in Heathfield. The local clay, which burnt to a bright red, was his main material but some of his products were cream-coloured. Harmer had a number of designs, which he used repeatedly, including a cherub's head, a basket of fruit and flowers and an urn with ram's-head handles, as well as rosettes of various kinds. He seems to have had a monopoly of this trade, which died out after his death in 1849, although members of the Harmer family continued as brickmakers in the Heathfield area for the next two or three generations.⁷

The pottery-making tradition was strong in Sussex and had long co-existed with brickmaking at a number of locations. One of the best-known firms was that of William and Richard Norman at Chailey Potteries. Their bill-head of

1828 described them as 'Manufacturers of all sorts of Bricks, Tiles and Brown Ware Pottery' and from this it was a short step to the production of more elaborate terracotta ornaments. As already noted, when restoration work was being done in 1854 at Laughton Place, replacements for some of the 16th-century terracotta cornices were supplied by the works at Chailey. But it was from the 1870s onwards that the high-Victorian style of building encouraged a number of manufacturers in Sussex to turn to the production not only of chimney pots, crested ridge tiles and roof finials but often of the more elaborate moulded terracotta ornaments as well.⁸

The old Ditchling Pottery, now known as the Ditchling Terra Cotta Works, was the foremost producer of this kind of ware. A speciality was 'grotesque' finials, such as dragons and wyverns. Henry Wolf, in his contemporary account, describes the process involved:

The terra cotta works are by their very nature more of an art-factory than the purely industrial brick kilns. The product requiring more perfect finish, every operation has to be performed with correspondingly greater care. The clay is thoroughly soaked and afterwards ground under rollers. . . It is next shaped in moulds taken from models designed by artists kept on the premises. The model is formed of Plaster-of-Paris. From this is taken a mould of the same material, and cut up into fragments according as its shape may demand. Some moulds comprise a very large number of pieces which have to be put together with extreme nicety, and removed one by one. . . When taken out of the mould the shaped pieces are left to dry for three or four weeks or more. They are then polished with a piece of leather, to

give them a "face". Afterwards they are placed in the kiln, carefully surrounded by seggar bricks, to keep them secure from any pressure or displacement. The heating has to be done very gradually.

Wolf goes on to list buildings in which terracotta made in Ditchling had been used. Some, naturally enough, were in Brighton but others ranged as far afield as Manchester and Dublin.⁹

Other established potteries in the district, such as those of John Gravett, W. & F. Meedes and R. & N. Norman at Burgess Hill and E. & R. Norman at Chailey, as well as ones further afield in Poling and East Grinstead, on the Dicker and in Brede, Hastings and Rye, extended the range of their wares to include some ornamental terracotta. New firms were added to the list, including the Brick, Tile, Drainpipe & Pottery Works at Bosham near Chichester, the Crowborough Brick & Terra Cotta Co. and works at Lower Beeding, Partridge Green and Ardingly. In 1883 Benjamin Ware, an Uckfield brickmaker, moved to a larger site and named his new enterprise the 'Sussex Pottery, Brick, Pipe & Tile Works'. A catalogue of his products illustrates several types of crested ridge tile, 12 different roof finials, including two examples of the wyvern pattern, some relief-patterned mural tiles, which were 9in (228mm) square and 6in (152mm) deep and intended for decoration on the external walls of houses, seven different designs of chimney pot and two free-standing urns. Other factories had a more limited range of wares, mainly confined to chimney pots, crested ridge tiles and the simpler type of finial. Like many of the other potteries, Wares also produced flower



27. Wyvern-pattern finial and crested ridge tiles on the house built for Benjamin Ware in Uckfield

pots and seed pans. These were in demand for the gardens and conservatories of Victorian villas and also in the greenhouses of the market gardens along the coastal plain of Sussex from Worthing westwards, which supplied vegetables, tomatoes and flowers for the London markets.¹⁰

Other new products

Fashion in Victorian times demanded a much greater variety of building products and an extended range of colours. The peg tile, with two square holes punched in by hand, was supplemented by the nib tile, with raised nibs and one or two round holes made by a hinged metal attachment at one end of the mould. New shapes of plain tile were also introduced, some for use on roofs but mainly for tile-hanging. Special moulds were designed with rounded or pointed ends to produce tiles which created scalloped and other ornamental patterns. The natural red colour of the

tile was varied by the addition of manganese to the pugged clay, to achieve a darker brown shade. The different coloured tiles could then be mingled or alternated to produce various striped and mottled effects.

Similarly, bricks of different colours were used, often in the same building. Grey headers had always been available as a natural product of wood-fired kilns but it was now possible to produce dark blue bricks in some of the newer coal-fired kilns and yellow gault bricks, some made paler by the addition of powdered chalk, were also available. As a result, many houses and also railway stations, churches and civic buildings, were built in the polychrome style favoured at this period.

Another feature of Victorian brickwork was the use of smooth-textured bricks with narrow mortar joints. Closer joints had been made possible from the late 18th century onwards by the introduction of the 'frog', a depression made in the brick by fixing a 'kick' to the top of the stock-board on the moulding table. The hollow so formed was filled with mortar, enabling less mortar to be used between courses of bricks. Some of the brickmaking machinery introduced in the latter part of the 19th century incorporated a press, which produced the frog mechanically. Machine-made bricks, both extruded and pressed, had smoother surfaces and sharper arrises than the hand-moulded ones and for this reason became increasingly favoured by architects and builders.

It is difficult to ascertain how widely brick-making machines had been adopted by the end of the century. A certain number of brickyard inventories

and valuations have survived and these suggest that, in the main, brickworks were still seasonal, employing hand-moulders and using a minimum of machinery. However, Peter Jenkins, a Hastings builder who had an interest in several brickyards in the area, advertised both pressed and wire-cut stocks in 1899 and from the evidence provided by the buildings of the period, it appears that wire-cut bricks were being used quite extensively.¹¹

The production of extruded, wire-cut bricks had been made possible by the introduction of grinding machinery to supplement the work of the simple pugmill. The brick earth was first crushed under rollers, then mixed with a small quantity of water in a grinding pan, compressed and forced through a die. Enough of this extruded material to form a brick was then cut off by means of a taut wire. Machinery of this kind must have been in use at Beauport Brickworks in Hastings by 1898, as in that year, the manager was brought before the local magistrates 'for having failed to fence the very dangerous cogwheels of a crusher. He pleaded guilty but... alleged in mitigation that his attention had never been called to the matter by any inspector'. The managers of the Keymer and the Crowborough brickworks also fell foul of the regulations governing the fencing of machinery, resulting in prosecutions at around the same time.¹²

The peak in the number of brickyards

By the end of the 19th century, information of various kinds was being collected and published which allows estimates to be made both of the number

without doers in
It ap acct of hdy.

In the worke house
tyles & bricks & to
It 3 rebells & 3 bagg
It 2 cords & halfe of

Live good
Item one little horse
It money upon bonds
It ready money in the
It ap acct of lease. Jan
It in dangerous debts

It lumber within & without doers
Rishan Philp Sum totall
maxhe

000	15	00
187	00	10

31. Part of the probate inventory of Roger Philp, taken in January 1685/6 (WSRO EPI/29/93/52)

bricks for yet more building work at the house. Finally, over a century later, William Philp was taxed between 1805 and 1813 on the house and brick kilns in Woolbeding, which had formerly belonged to the Denyer family.⁵

Family-run brickyards in the 18th and 19th centuries

Few brickmakers seem to have served regular apprenticeships, probably because most of them entered the family business at an early age and learnt their trade in that way. Of the rare apprenticeship indentures which have been preserved, one, strangely, appears to have been a family agreement: in 1746 Robert, the son of Samuel Coney, was apprenticed to Stephen Coney of Wadhurst, brickmaker. Another is that of Thomas, the son of William Weller, a

brickmaker in Westfield, who was apprenticed in 1795 to John Eldridge, a master potter and brick-burner at Brede. The Wellers were a large family with interests in two brickyards in Westfield, a yard on Fairlight Down in the parish of Guestling and another in Ore. In addition, from 1806, a Mr Weller was the lessee of the Priory kiln in Hastings. Thomas's elder brother John inherited the Westfield brickyard (which later came into the hands of the Carrick family) and Thomas himself founded a line of potters which ran the Brede pottery and its associated brickyard until its closure around 1900. Another William Weller, probably a brother, moved to Salehurst in 1816, when he bought land at Silverhill north of Robertsbridge, on which there was an established brickyard. He emigrated to America in 1835, leaving

his son, a yard and was reco depression William second br Green.

1844, after of this br

The A provide a of brickr were obl employr brickma marriag brickma Twenty a new l and a br building the insc

John's brickm Laught and inl there t Thoma 1775 an that h brickm were l moved over th had di was a the elc

his son, also William, in charge of the yard and by 1841, when the economy was recovering after the agricultural depression and riots of the 1830s, this William Weller was the tenant of a second brickyard further north, at Hurst Green. The Silverhill yard closed in 1844, after which nothing more is heard of this branch of the family.⁶

The Alcorns, originally of Isfield, provide another example of a large family of brickmakers, some of whose members were obliged to look further afield for employment. The first mention of a brickmaking connection comes with the marriage of John Alcorn of Isfield, brickmaker, to Mary Davis in 1724. Twenty years later he was able to build a new house adjoining the brickyard and a brick panel in the north wall of the building, now called Greens Farm, bears the inscription:

IOHN MARY ALC HORN BR ICK MAC KER 1744
--

John's brother George was also a brickmaker. He was working on Laughton Little Common in the 1750s and in his will of 1770 he left his property there to his brother's sons, John and Thomas. John Alcorn the elder died in 1775 and from his will it becomes clear that he had four sons, all of them brickmakers. George, John and Abraham were living in Isfield but Thomas had moved to Chailey, where he had taken over the brickyard of John Siffleet, who had died in 1759. It is possible that there was a family connection, as John Alcorn the elder had been one of the appraisers

of Siffleet's probate inventory. The Isfield brickyard was sold to Thomas Best in 1795 and the Laughton yard, although still owned by an Alcorn, had gone out of use by 1841 but the Chailey business prospered. Thomas Alcorn died in 1815 and was succeeded by his son John, who advertised regularly from 1828 onwards. In 1835 he was named as executor of the will of Thomas Best, who had sold the Isfield yard in 1801 and moved to Hamsey. The close links which existed between the brickmaking families in this area are further evidenced by the fact that Best's daughter Mary Ann was married to Thomas Diplock, a brickmaker who worked for Alcorn at Chailey. On the census returns of 1851, John Alcorn was stated to be 75 years old, still working as a master brickmaker and employing three hands but by 1859 he had been succeeded by his nephew William, the last brickmaker in the family, who advertised until 1887.⁷

From the middle of the 18th century onwards, an increasing number of brickyards were established and most of them were family-run. Some belonged to quite substantial yeoman farmers, such as the Guys of Chiddingly. Richard Guy, first mentioned as a brickmaker in 1754, had a yard on Limekiln Farm, on the boundary between Chiddingly and Chalvington and bought another, at Millhouse Farm on the west side of the Dicker, in 1789. By this time he was working in partnership with his son Walter who, in 1800, acquired a third brickyard to the north of the others. In his will, made in 1802, Richard Guy left his share of the brickmaking business to two more of his sons, Jesse and David, but Walter Guy seems to have retained

the management of it. During the slump of the 1820s he was forced to sell all three yards, but leased two of them back. 'Guy & Co.' were still the tenants of the Limekiln Farm and Millhouse Farm brickyards in 1844 but, by the late 1850s, these were under separate management, John and Thomas Guy both advertising as brickmakers on the Dicker. John's widow appears to have kept the yard at Millhouse Farm going until the mid-1880s and Thomas was succeeded at the other by his son Gaius, who continued in business until about the same date. However, these small country brickyards had by this time become uneconomic and, by 1887, John Guy's son Stephen had moved to a yard at Hawkswood on the outskirts of Hailsham, where he could supply bricks to local developers and send them to Eastbourne by rail. A final generation was represented by William Guy, who advertised as a brickmaker in the same area until the 1920s.⁸

On the east side of the Dicker, the Goldsmith family, instead of concentrating their resources into one family business as the Guys had done, tended to operate independently. In fact there were so many Goldsmiths involved in brickmaking that it is difficult to determine their relationships. In 1800, James, George, Robert and Benjamin each owned a brickyard but all had had to borrow to finance their purchases and first James, in 1811, and then Robert, were unable to pay the interest and were obliged to forfeit their property. George sold his original brickyard but continued in business as the tenant of the one vacated by James. He was succeeded by his son John but by the 1850s he, too, was in financial difficulties. The longest-

lived of the Goldsmith brickyards was the one at Upper Dicker, which was in the hands of Benjamin and his descendants from 1799 until about 1900. Another family of Goldsmiths, who may have come of the same stock, had brickyards in Wartling and Warbleton and the name of Goldsmith is also to be found in connection with yards in Fletching, Uckfield, the Eastbourne area and Bexhill.⁹

Many other families carried on the brickmaking trade, though not always in the same yard, for five or six generations. The Cornfords, who had owned a small farm in Warbleton from the early 18th century, took up brickmaking at some time before 1796 and, although forced to sell their property in 1880, remained as tenants of the brickyard until World War 1. By the mid-19th century, however, the family had grown to such an extent that some of its members had to seek work elsewhere and found it at brickyards in Herstmonceux and Hailsham. The Stevenson family, who ran the brickyard on Piltdown Common in Fletching for over a hundred years, were in all probability related to the Stevensons who were brickmakers at Nutley, in the neighbouring parish of Maresfield, over an even longer period of time. The Funnells were associated in the 18th century with two of the brickyards in Chiddingly later taken over by the Guys. In the 19th century the name reappeared in Westham, where James Funnell, the senior brickmaker at Red Dyke in 1871, was followed by his son George and grandson Harry. Other members of this family also worked briefly in Hailsham, Berwick and East Blatchington.¹⁰

The n
Int
and
promi
nume
which
the b
Indee
brick
away
popu
churc
whic
religi
Jo
1714
in D
prom
Bapt
Free
on I
mile
beca
Bapt
had
with
simi
also
brick
in 17
had
John
and
they
this
that
Cha
a m
Mee
rem
Cha
anot

The non-conformist connection

In the 18th and 19th centuries, artisans and tradesmen often figured prominently among the elders of the numerous dissenting congregations which grew up across the county. In this the brickmakers were no exception. Indeed, the fact that so many of the early brickyards were situated on commons, away from the main centres of population and the influence of the parish church, may account for the strong link which existed between brickmaking and religious non-conformity.

John Billinghamurst, who was born in 1714 and died in 1791, was a brickmaker in Ditchling, where he was also a prominent member of the General Baptist, later known as the Unitarian or Free Christian, Church. His brickyard on Ditchling Common was over two miles north of the village and his house became the focus of the life of the local Baptist community. He appears to have had either family or business connections with a number of other brickmakers in similar locations, many of whom were also Baptists. Edward Billinghamurst, a brickmaker at Wisborough Green, died in 1749, another member of the family had an interest in a brickyard on St John's Common in Clayton in the 1750s and in 1762 John himself acquired one of the yards on Chailey South Common. In this connection it is interesting to note that John Siffleet, who ran the other Chailey brickyard in the 1750s, was also a member of the Ditchling Baptist Meeting. Billinghamurst, however, remained at Ditchling and leased his Chailey yard to Richard Norman, another General Baptist, who was given

the chance to purchase the property under the terms of Billinghamurst's will.¹¹

Meanwhile another branch of the family had become established at a brickyard on Jolesfield Common in West Grinstead. Noah and Thomas Billinghamurst were both working there by 1784 and in 1791 Thomas, who by this time was a deacon of the General Baptist Church in Horsham, was granted the copyhold of the brick kilns and land but in 1794 he followed the example of a number of other Baptists and emigrated to America. The brickyard was left in the hands of William Evershed, a brickmaker and potter who was also a member of the Horsham meeting. The next owner, in 1801, was Philip Kensett, another General Baptist, who married William Evershed's widow and his descendants continued brickmaking, at Jolesfield and later at Partridge Green, well into the 20th century. Kensett's brother, William, was a brick- and tilemaker at Slaugham until at least 1819 and it was this branch of the family that maintained the non-conformist tradition.¹²

After John Billinghamurst's death, the brickyard on Ditchling Common was taken over by two more General Baptists, John Caffin and Francis Foster, but their partnership was dissolved in 1815. In 1820 the new owner was William Gravett, a potter from Westmeston, a member of a different group of Dissenters, who had been the pastor at Ote Hall Chapel in Wivelsfield since 1817. By 1851 he was also the minister of another Independent congregation at Yokehurst Chapel in East Chilmington. In the late 1850s he retired from brickmaking altogether, to

devote his time to preaching until his death in 1872. His son John moved in 1854 to St John's Common, Keymer, where he took over the tenancy of an established pottery and brickyard and from 1872 to 1900 he was Secretary at Ote Hall Chapel.¹³

Some of the brickmakers on the Dicker, too, were active members of non-conformist sects. In 1811 a licence was granted 'for an assembly for religious worship of Protestant Dissenters in the dwelling house of George Goldsmith situate near the Dicker in the parish of Hellingly'. In 1839 the new Zoar Chapel was opened and a book recording proceedings and the names of members was begun in the same year, entry No 10 being the dismissal of S. (probably Stephen) Goldsmith for bad attendance. However, other members of the family remained loyal and George Goldsmith was interred in the burial ground there in 1849. His brickyard, which was adjacent to the chapel, had been taken over in 1845 by Uriah Clark, who was received into membership of the Zoar Chapel congregation and baptised in 1849, thus continuing the tradition. On the western side of the Dicker, in Chiddingfold, the Guys belonged to a group of Dissenters of a different persuasion: the Independent Calvinists. A barn was registered as a place of worship in 1813 and in the following year a site was acquired for the construction of a chapel on the north side of the Lewes road at Lower Dicker. The names of several of the Guys figure among the founding members and also in the building accounts: Walter was paid £62 13s for bricks and tiles and Jesse received £8 due for carriage of materials.¹⁴

Richard Norman, a Baptist already mentioned as the successor to John Billingham at Chailey, was married at Ditchling in 1777 and founded what became the most widespread and successful of all the Sussex brickmaking dynasties. On his death in 1818, management of the Chailey brickyard and pottery passed to his sons William and Richard. They, in turn, handed on their shares of the business to their respective sons John and Richard. By 1882 a fourth generation, John's son, Ephraim, and his cousin, another Richard, were in charge and henceforth the firm was known as E. & R. Norman. The business survived both world wars under the control first of Ephraim's son and then of his grandson, Wallace, the last member of the family to be involved before the works was sold in 1959 to Redland Brick.¹⁵

In 1813 William Norman, the son of the first Richard, who was in partnership with his brother at Chailey, acquired an interest in another brickyard on St John's Common, Keymer. He moved to Clayton to supervise this expanding business and after the enclosure of the Keymer part of the common in 1828, he established a new brickyard and pottery on London Road. On his death in 1849, management passed to two of his sons by his second marriage, Richard and Nathan. This firm then traded under the name of R. & N. Norman until the works closed in the 1930s. Meanwhile, in the 1850s, another of William's sons, Thomas, moved to Lower Beeding, south of Horsham, where he took over an existing brickyard at Holmbush and enlarged the range of wares to include pottery. He was later joined there by his

BRI
1856
Feb
Mar

32. Bill for
brother
opened
However
years later
sold. Jesse
at Holmbush
works,
other
belonged
the tenancy
Keymer
Norman
Green
The mill
Most
either
held

Holmbush Brick Yard, near Crawley.

Mr. Welder

Bought of J. & T. NORMAN,

MANUFACTURERS OF ALL KINDS OF

BRICKS, TILES, CHIMNEY POTS, WATER PIPES, & BROWN-WARE POTTERY.

1836
Feb 8 50 Plain Tiles at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per 1000 1 7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Mar 17 90 Paving Do at 18/- per 100 17 2
25 Red Bricks 9 $\frac{1}{2}$
21 25 Do " & Brown Ware 1 8
£ 1 1 3 $\frac{1}{4}$
Settled Jan 20th 1868
Thomas Norman

32. Bill for goods supplied by J. & T. Norman

brother Jesse and, by 1874, they had opened a second works at Southwater. However, when Thomas died about 10 years later, the Southwater works was sold. Jesse and Henry Norman were still at Holmbush in 1887 but by 1890 that works, too, was in other hands. Two other brickmakers may also have belonged to this family: John Norman, the tenant of a brickyard at Horsted Keynes in 1839 and William John Norman, who advertised at Partridge Green in the 1890s.¹⁶

The migrants

Most of the families so far mentioned either owned their own brickyards or held long leases but there were many

more who subsisted on short-term tenancies and for these, links are much more difficult to establish, as they were frequently on the move. Short leases were particularly common in the coastal resorts. Here one of the few families which can be traced for even three generations were the Claytons. John and his son James worked in the Brighton and Hove areas from about 1820 to 1860, then James Frederick moved along the coast, first to Southwick in the 1870s and finally to Portslade, where he remained until 1887.¹⁷

Further east, the Martins began as hired labourers in various brickyards in Bexhill, Hastings and Eastbourne. John Martin, who was born in Battle, was

- Op.: Clement Turner advertised in 1913 and 1915
 Prod.: Clamp-fired bricks
 Refs: OS 25in 42/13 (1899, 1910); Kelly (1913-15); SNQ 1 (1927), 74.
- 8 Brickworks south of the Burwash road
 NGR: TQ 625 226
 Date: Marked on the map of 1898 but as Old Kiln in 1909
 Refs: OS 25in 29/15 (1898, 1909).
- 9 Brickworks east of Mill House Farm on the Burwash boundary
 NGR: TQ 635 233
 Date: Marked only on the map of 1909
 Ref.: OS 25in 29/15 (1909).
- 10 Brickworks on the north side of Ghyll Road
 NGR: TQ 583 207
 Date: Opened c1900 and marked on the map of 1910
 Op.: Heathfield Brick & Tile Co. Ltd, manager: Thomas Stephens
 F.Inf.: In 1905 the brick earth was valued at 1s per cubic yard and the buildings were said to have cost about £260
 Refs: OS 25in 42/5 (1910); BMW/A2/16; Kelly (1903).
- 11 Brickfield at Horam Bridge on the east side of Waldron Gill
 NGR: TQ 582 177
 Date: Marked only on the map of 1910
 Ref.: OS 25in 42/9 (1910).
- 12 Brick and tile works at North Corner, Horam
 NGR: TQ 590 159
 Date: In existence by 1913; production ceased in 1971
 Op.: Sussex Tileries & Brickworks Ltd: in 1913 the owner was T.M. English and in the 1930s the managing director was G.C. Seaton. In the 1960s the works was acquired by Hudsons (cf West Hoathly 3) and modernised but closed in 1971. The present owners, Ibstock Brick Hudsons Ltd, plan (1989) to open a new brickworks to the west
 Prod.: Roofing tiles marketed under the name of Coverwell, common bricks, fireplaces and briquettes (1959)
 Cond.: The site has been cleared except for a steel-framed building, sheeted in corrugated asbestos

Geol.: Wadhurst clay
 Refs: OS 6in 42 SW (1932); Kelly (1913-38); QMJ (1927-59); White, *Lewes*, 21; 'A Lesson in Making Old Works Viable', *British Clayworker*, July 1969.

see also: WALDRON

SOUTH HEIGHTON

- 1 Brickyard at the north end of present-day New Road
 NGR: TQ 447 025
 Date: Opened in the late 1890s and closed c1914
 Op.: C. Cooke advertised from 1899 to 1913
 Refs: OS 25in 78/3 (1899); Kelly (1899-1913).

HELLINGLY

- 1 Brick kiln west of Carters Corner Place (formerly Barton House)
 NGR: TQ 606 126
 Date: Probably the site of brickmaking in 1647-9 and marked on a map of 1671
 Op.: Leves and his partner (cf Herstmonceux 2) were paid for making bricks in 1647
 Refs: AMS 740; SAS/RF 15/17.
- 2 Brickyard(s) on the east side of Coldharbour Road at Upper Dicker
 NGR: TQ 557 103
 Date: Brickmaking was taking place in the neighbourhood of Starnash from the 17th century onwards. The yard at Upper Dicker, first mentioned in 1767, continued in operation until the 1930s
 Op.: Probably William Sargent prior to 1720, Thomas Wood from before 1767 to 1776, Thomas and James Peckham from 1776 to 1799; after this the yard was in the hands of Benjamin Goldsmith and successive members of his family until c1900 when Harry Page took over
 Prod.: Kiln-fired bricks and tiles and pottery; in the 20th century paving bricks were a speciality
 Cond.: The footings of a circular kiln can be seen in the garden of Kiln Cottage

- Geol.: Weald Clay
Refs: TDE 5; OS 6in 55 (1874) 55 SE (1899, 1911); W/INV 1202; Kelly (1862-1930); Pike/Eastbourne ((1886); QMJ (1927); DBC (1938); White, *Lewes*, 29; Beswick, 'Dicker', 2-6, 9.
- 3 Brickyard on the north side of the road at Lower Dicker
NGR: TQ 564 114
Date: In existence by 1708, offered for sale in 1813, after which date it was probably abandoned; listed as Kiln Plot on the tithe award of 1842
Op.: Edward Wenham before 1758, followed by his son William, who paid land tax on the brick kilns in 1785, and other members of the family
Refs: TDE 5; SWA, 12 Apr 1813; Beswick, 'Dicker', 3, 8; SRS 77, 108.
 - 4 Brickyard on the south side of the road west of Boship Green
NGR: TQ 569 111
Date: Active in the 18th and early 19th centuries but listed as Old Brickyard in 1842, when it had been superseded by a new yard to the west (568 112). This later became known as the Dicker Pottery but bricks and tiles still formed part of the output until c1930
Op.: George Goldsmith in the early 19th century, followed by Uriah Clark from 1843
Prod.: Kiln-fired bricks and tiles, drainpipes, chimney pots and ornamental fittings as well as pottery
Geol.: Weald Clay
Refs: TDE 5; OS 6in 55 (1874) 55 SE (1899, 1911); Kelly (1874-82); Pike/Eastbourne (1882); White, *Lewes*, 29; Beswick, 'Dicker', 2, 5-6, 8; inf. L.R. Smith.
 - 5 Brickyard on Old Pottery Farm on the east side of Coldharbour Road
NGR: TQ 563 108
Date: In operation from c1765 until c1850
Op.: William Cuckney from 1765 to 1787, members of the Mitchell family in the early 1800s and Stephen Goldsmith in 1842
Prod.: Principally pottery, with some bricks and tiles
Refs: SRS 72, 174; TDE 5; SWA, 13 Feb 1826; Beswick, 'Dicker', 3, 9.
 - 6 Brickyard on Price's Farm on the west side of Coldharbour Road
NGR: TQ 559 108
Date: From c1775 to the early 1800s
Op.: Richard Price in 1800
Ref.: Beswick, 'Dicker', 5, 9.
 - 7 Brickyard on the west side of Coldharbour Road NE of site 6
NGR: TQ 561 111
Date: In operation from c1798; the kiln was mentioned in 1806 and was still in use in 1855 but abandoned by 1874
Op.: James Goldsmith, followed by George Goldsmith and his son John
Refs: TDE 5; Beswick, 'Dicker', 5, 9.
 - 8 Brickyard on the west side of present-day Mansers Lane
NGR: TQ 561 114
Date: In use for a few years only from c1800
Op.: Robert Goldsmith
Ref.: Beswick, 'Dicker', 5, 8.
 - 9 Tileyard (Boship Pottery) on the north side of the road opposite site 4
NGR: TQ 570 113
Date: In existence as a pottery from c1820, listed as Tileyard in 1842 but pottery and drainpipes only were made after c1850
Op.: Several generations of the Miller family
Refs: TDE 5; OS 6in 55 (1874) 55 SE (1899); Beswick, 'Dicker', 8.
 - 10 Brickfield at Lower Dicker between Coldharbour Road and Mansers Lane
NGR: TQ 563 113
Date: Marked only on the map of 1898
Refs: OS 6in 55 SE (1899); Beswick, 'Dicker', 8.
 - 11 Brick and tile works on the west side of Hawks Road, Hailsham
NGR: TQ 585 105
Date: Marked on the map of 1873; closed by 1880
Op.: Uriah Clark (cf site 4)
Refs: OS 6in 56 (1873); sale partic. of 1873 (ex inf. A. Hibbs).

** see map in Village Character Assessment – APPENDIX D, Appendix LD 04. Location of Brickyard sites in Lower Dicker

- 12 Brickyard on the east side of London Road, Hailsham
 NGR: TQ 584 105
 Date: 1880s: referred to as a former brickyard in 1892
 Op.: The tenant in 1892 was Oscar Funnell
 Ref.: Sale partics. (ex inf. A. Hibbs).
- 13 Brickworks at Leap Cross on the west side of London Road, Hailsham
 NGR: TQ 584 104
 Date: c1903 to c1922
 Op.: Walter Langley
 Refs: OS 6in 56 SW (1911); Kelly (1903-1922).
- 14 Brickworks at Rucklands on the west side of London Road, Hailsham
 NGR: TQ 583 107
 Date: Opened in 1900 and closed in the 1940s
 Op.: Owned by Joseph Martin, an Eastbourne builder: the brickmaker was his brother Frederic, who was joined in 1919 by his son Gordon
 Geol.: Weald Clay
 Refs: OS 6in 56 SW (1911); Kelly (1907-38); QMJ (1927-44); White, *Lewes*, 31; Lake et al, *Lewes*, 35; Martin, 'Frederic Martin', 35; R. Martin, 'The Rucklands estate' *Hailsham Historian and Naturalist* Vol 2 No 3 (1992), 47-50.
- 15 Brickworks on the west side of Hackhurst Lane
 NGR: TQ 557 118
 Date: 1920s and 1930s
 Op.: Sussex Stock Brick Co. in 1938
 Prod.: Clamp-fired stocks
 Refs: Kelly (1938); White, *Lewes*, 29; Lake et al, *Lewes*, 33; Beswick, 'Dicker', 7; inf. L.R. Smith.
- 16 Brickyard south of Herstmonceux Castle
 NGR: TQ 646 100
 Date: The bricks were made on site when the castle was built in the 1440s. Thereafter bricks were made intermittently for repairs and alterations. The last brickyard was in operation in 1839 but closed c1850
 Op.: John Leves and Thomas Browning made bricks for Lord Dacre in 1645-6. In 1839 and 1841 the occupier was Trayton Smith
 Refs: TDE 89; XA 11/2; census (1841).
- 17 Brickyard and pottery on the west side of the road from Bodle Street to Windmill Hill
 NGR: TQ 650 133
 Date: Listed as a brickyard on the tithe award of 1839
 Op.: John Siggery, a potter, was working here in 1835. In 1839 the tenant was his widow, Ann, who was also a potter
 Refs: TDE 89; Baines, *Pottery*, 24, 167.
- 18 Brickworks on the west side of Victoria Road, Windmill Hill
 NGR: TQ 647 126
 Date: Opened c1860, marked on the maps of 1874 and 1899 but disused by 1910
 Op.: Edward Beeny, a farmer and miller, was also listed as a brickmaker in 1861. George Franks was the brickmaker in 1871 and by 1881 the yard was in the hands of John Cornford. In 1896 William Stevens was the tenant of the brickyard with Cornford living in a cottage nearby. Edward Bradford advertised as a brickmaker in Herstmonceux in 1903, probably on this site
 Refs: OS 25in 56/11 (1874, 1899, 1910); A 4887; census (1861-81); Kelly (1903).

HERSTMONCEUX

- 1 Tile kiln on the west side of Foul Mile north of Cowbeech
 NGR: cTQ 619 160
 Date: Tiles were made on land called Luxtrood in the late 14th century. This probably lay in the vicinity of two plots called Brick Earth Land, listed on the tithe award of 1839

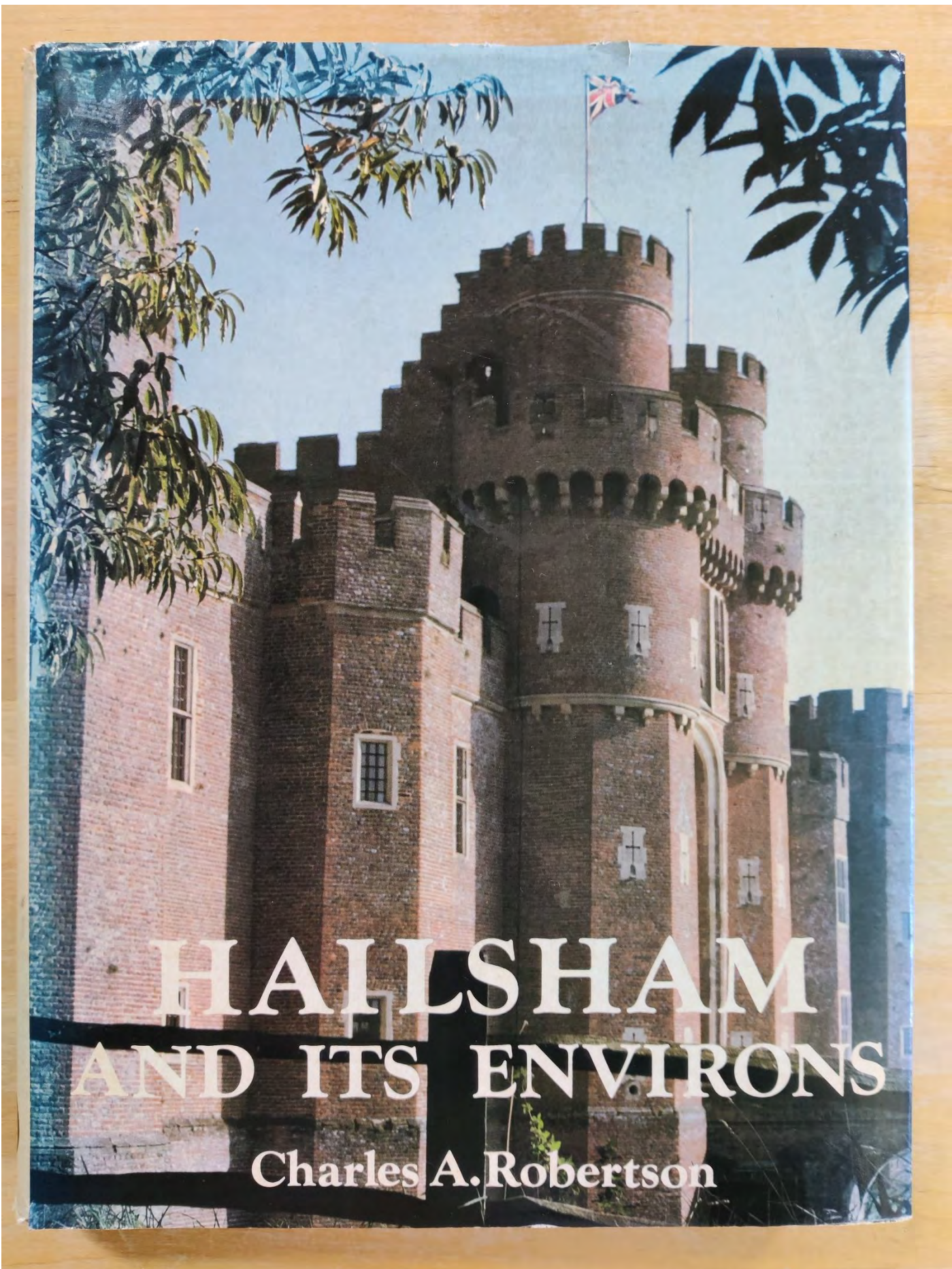
Brickworks on
 NGR: TQ 633 133
 Date: In existence
 in 1906 and
 War 1
 Op.: William
 advertised
 OS 25in 56
 Refs: sale catalog
 Philippa H

EAST HOATHLY
 Brickyard on Heat
 NGR: TQ 527 16
 Date: Marked
 1788 and
 on the tit
 Richard
 Op.: East Ho
 half of
 working
 occupier
 Refs: A 4113
 Turner,

BOLLINGTON
 1 Tile kiln near the
 Drive
 NGR: cTQ 78
 Date: The na
 used in
 in 166
 west c
 map o
 site fo
 Refs: TDE 4

2 Brickyard on t
 NGR: TQ 77
 Date: In op
 the m
 Op.: The y
 estate
 Refs: TDE
 Mini

3 Brickworks c
 Lane
 NGR: TQ 7
 Date: In op
 map



HALLSHAM AND ITS ENVIRONS

Charles A. Robertson

... The XXX day of Marche James the sixth Kynge of Scotland wast proclaymed
Kynge of England in the town of Haylyham ...

Such a proclamation was probably made from the market cross in the Market Square.

1604

Brickmaking was carried out at several small sites in and around Hailsham. One such brickfield and kiln was situated a mere three hundred and eighty yards from the Market Square, it was a site much later to have the bungalows of the present Old Orchard Place built upon it.

c. 1606

With furnaces for smelting iron as close as Chiddingly, Horam, Waldron, Heathfield, Warbleton and East Hoathly, all of which had been operating for many years, the steady destruction of forest land for fuel was now causing much concern and it was recorded that Dicker Common had lost seven thousand oaks, of which six hundred were mature.

The devastation of trees was widespread and so serious that parliament had, on several occasions, passed Acts with restrictions aimed at controlling the damage. But often these Acts in turn reacted against even the simple life of the peasant for he frequently lost grazing land when the use of woodland was forbidden to him, or land was cut off by its enclosure to encourage the growth of young trees.

Timber, and especially oak, was needed by the towns and for export but most important,

... the navy wanted Sussex oaks for the 'wooden walls of England' indeed contracts for building the King's ships stipulated Sussex oak before any other kind ...

1607

John Norden, the map maker, wrote in his book, *Surveyor's Dialogue*:

... He that well observes it, and hath known the Weald of Sussex, the grand nursery of oak and beech, shall find an alteration within Less than thirty years as may well strike a fear lest few years more as pestilent as the former will leave few good trees standing ... such a heat issueth out of the many Forges and Furnaces for the making of iron, as hath devoured many famous woods ...

1607

Arlington parish church register begins.

On a Roman site the beginning of this church was a humble Saxon structure nearly one thousand years ago of which isolated parts still remain, as does the chapel the Normans added late in the 12th century. The rest of the church has examples of other early periods and in spite of Cromwellian damage and white-wash, the faint remains of several remarkable wall paintings can still be seen. There appears little doubt that the church was regularly visited by pilgrims, who followed the old Roman road after leaving Lewes on their way to Canterbury.

A small and simple church of some beauty that has long lost its village but retained an atmosphere of great age, it is a church rare indeed for the stonework

... to fix the price of husbandry would be attended with many inconveniences to both master and servant... by paying an idle, indolent fellow the same wages per day as you do a good working hand, I beg to know how long it would be before they all would come under the former description... what is the language of the servant? ... 'why should I save any of my wages as the parish must keep me in case of illness, or a large family' ... This opinion being so prevalent in the minds of most common servants, is a big mischief... it tends to encourage servants to frequent gin-shops and ale-houses, which rid them of what should be laid up... and what is worse, corrupts their morals, and makes them discontented...

Respected for both his character and his supreme knowledge of sheep, John Ellman was to greatly enhance the prestige of Sussex agriculture. Such was the success of his Southdown sheep in his later days that he frequently withdrew from shows rather than dominate the awards. He was unique in his lifetime and was consulted for his knowledge by landowners and breeders from all over England. His sheep were much in demand for breeding in New Zealand.

But John Ellman remained very much a Sussex man and was often to be seen in Hailsham market. He died in 1832.

1754

An Act was passed that allowed the establishment of the Horsebridge-Horam Trust which had as its object the building of a local Turnpike Road between Uckfield and Langney Bridge, later to be extended to Sea Houses in East Bourne. There was also to be an additional section between Horsebridge and Horam.

The road was one of the earliest in Sussex to be improved and was named the 'Horsebridge-Horam Turnpike', but generally it was referred to as 'the turnpike that runs through Hailsham' and meetings of the trustees were usually held

... at the house of Armgill Terry, known by the sign of the King's Head at Horsebridge...

The positions of the toll houses were Union Point in Uckfield, Dicker Common, Horsebridge opposite the *King's Head*, Hailsham Common at the junction of South Road with Ersham Road, and Langney Bridge near Westham. The route through Hailsham was south from Horsebridge along London Road, through the town by what is now North Street and along Ersham Road past Priesthawes then to Stone Cross and Langney.

In a report on Sussex Turnpike Trusts drawn up in 1852 details were given on all the fifty-two turnpikes in the county and it was recorded that only three were free from debt and one of these was

... the turnpike that runs through Hailsham...

The repair of loose road surfaces was a constant problem and the main material used was beach with broken stone and flint. In the year 1822-1823 over one thousand eight hundred tons of material was needed in repair work with beach coming from the nearby coast and most of the stone from the quarry near the sea front at East Bourne. (See appendix 'G').



Map of 1795 by
Gardner, Yeakell and Gream
showing turnpike roads and
proposed canal

Turnpike roads
Proposed canal

the wide Hudson River. At one time the Manor House was surrounded by an estate of over two hundred square miles.

The Manor House was lived in by members of the Van Cortlandt family until 1940 and in 1953 it was purchased by John D. Rockefeller, Jnr., with the intention of preserving this historic place for the American nation. Work under the care of specialist architectural and historical researchers with experience of previous Rockefeller projects, has brought the house of wood and stone together with its subsidiary buildings to a state of excellent restoration.

Several family portraits originally from the house now hang in galleries throughout America including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, but much of the original period furniture has been traced and returned to its place in the house. This property of a famous family is now open to the American public who are looked after by guides in costumes of the period when the Cortlandt family lived in the house. *Note:* The house 'Cortlandt' in George Street, Hailsham, once lived in by Philip Van Cortlandt, is now listed as a building of special interest. (See entry of 1814 and appendix 'H').

c. 1775

A modest house of brick opposite the market in Market Street called 'The Old Vicarage' has the appearance of being possibly two hundred years old, but inside the house, heavy timbers of great age can be seen. The presence of such a wooden structure suggests that at some time a brick rebuilding around the original frame has taken place.

Under the tiled roof are again timbers of immense weight with some still joined by wooden pegs, while among the minor rafters some have only been axed in a crude manner leaving much of the rounded tree trunk still visible. There appears no reason to doubt the thought that once this house was indeed an early vicarage.

1776

The Dicker area for many years yielded a clay suited to maintain several local potteries at different times. The products were mainly of a basic kind including land pipes and roofing tiles but some potteries produced among them such domestic items as jugs, spittoons, vases, simple crockery, flower pots and large unglazed earthenware for storage.

In this year, a time of keen competition among local potteries, Thomas Wood was declared bankrupt and his business assets auctioned at the *King's Head*, Horsebridge.

The last of the potteries at Dicker survived until c. 1964 and during its final phase, specialised in a range of small ornamental items finished with a distinctive black lustre iron glaze.

1776

The Rev. John Herring died aged sixty-seven and was buried in the porch of Chiddingfold parish church. It was written of him by Mark Antony Lower:

1833

A petition in Atherstone, Warwickshire, drawn up as a protest against high taxes, claimed that too much was allocated to the relief of the poor and it was accompanied by a table setting out the rate for each county.

It was shown that Warwickshire paid 3s. 4½d. in the pound, Middlesex, Durham and Worcestershire each paid 3s. 0d. and most other counties paid under 3s. 0d. Kent paid 5s. 8¾d. while Sussex had the greatest burden with 6s. 9½d. in the pound.

1833

In the book *Coast of Sussex* by J. D. Parry:

... executed in the most unshrinking style of expence ...

considerable space was given to descriptions of places and buildings as they were seen at the time.

... from Ashburnham to Lewes ... is a lonely road ... with the sole grand feature of the distant range of heights near Eastbourne ... we pass through Gardner's Street, a dull village, and soon after leave to the left the tower of Hailsham with its lofty and elegant pinnacles ... Horsebridge the next point, is a hamlet to the parish of Hellingly, whose mean church, with a pointed Steeple, is seen on the right ...

1834

The Poor Law Amendment Act substantially changed a system originally established in the reign of Elizabeth when each parish was responsible for its own poor. It had been a reluctant duty with the almost inevitable sad results.

The hardship of life in many rural areas with their widespread unemployment aggravated an already inadequate system and caused a Commission of Enquiry to reveal parishes that had tolerated appalling conditions in which the poor and destitute had to live.

The new Act resulted in the parishes of Sussex being divided into convenient groups to enable each group to be served by a new central workhouse now to be called a Union. It was from this year the Board of Guardians of the Poor were introduced to administer the Poor Law, but members of such boards needed to be owners of property before their election was possible.

The group of eleven parishes of which Hailsham was one was to be served by Hailsham Union, a new building which reflected a serious effort to solve a piteous problem.

In 1836 the Union was built at the junction of Union Road (now Hawks Road) and the Horsebridge Road (A 271) to serve the poor of the following parishes:

Arlington, Chiddingly, Hailsham, Heathfield, Hellingly, Herstmonceux, Hooe, Laughton, Ninfield, Warbleton and Wartling, with Chalvington and Ripe added in 1898.

With the creation and use of the new Hailsham Union, the age old practice of providing individual relief was largely discontinued. For those paupers in dire

need and incapable of helping themselves, it was now the intention to take them into the new workhouse or Union as it was called, where there was both discipline and help. The workhouse, built to house up to three hundred inmates was large and grim and surrounded by a high wall. It was self sufficient with a kitchen garden, kitchens, laundry, a delousing oven, an infirmary and a mortuary.

A system of separation was operated in the workhouse when men, women and children were housed in separate quarters, and not even married couples with children were treated otherwise. The 'casuals' or tramps had to stay two nights, sleeping on boards, after which they often moved on to another union. While they were in the union however, they were expected to work and if they were tough and difficult they were enclosed in what was referred to as 'the cage', where they had to break flints.

One of the improvements of this drastic re-organisation was that able men could with a measure of dignity, be allowed out to work when employers were forced to pay them a fair working wage. With the thinking of the times it was inevitable that union life would be hard, for the intention was that inmates would seek outside work rather than prolong a stay. A rough justice was the object.

1834

A Vestry meeting of 5th April agreed to 'hire' a sum of money repayable with interest to pay for a pauper John Smith, his wife (unnamed) with eight children to be sent to America. The ages of the children were: Harriett, 18 years; George 17 years; Francis 16 years, James 11 years; Joseph 10 years; Charles 6 years; Eliza 2½ years; John 5 months.

The main expenses involved in this emigration were: clothing for the family, 10s. 0d. each; conveyance to London 4s. 0d each and 2s. 0d. for the four youngest. Passage money £6 5s. 0d., half price for the four youngest. Dock fees for parcels 2s. 0d. each. Landing money £2 0s. 0d. for parents, half price for children.

From correspondence beginning on 11th April it appears that John Smith and his large family were conducted on an early morning coach from Hailsham on Monday 21st April to arrive at the *Spur* inn in Borough High Street at 8 o'clock in the morning the next day. At a meeting with the shipping agent the money for the passage was handed over, some simple refreshment given to the family after which they were taken aboard the *Catherine* in the London docks.

Other similar passages were arranged and recorded up to 1849.

1835

The market in Hailsham was now beginning to enjoy a prosperity and it was written at the time that,

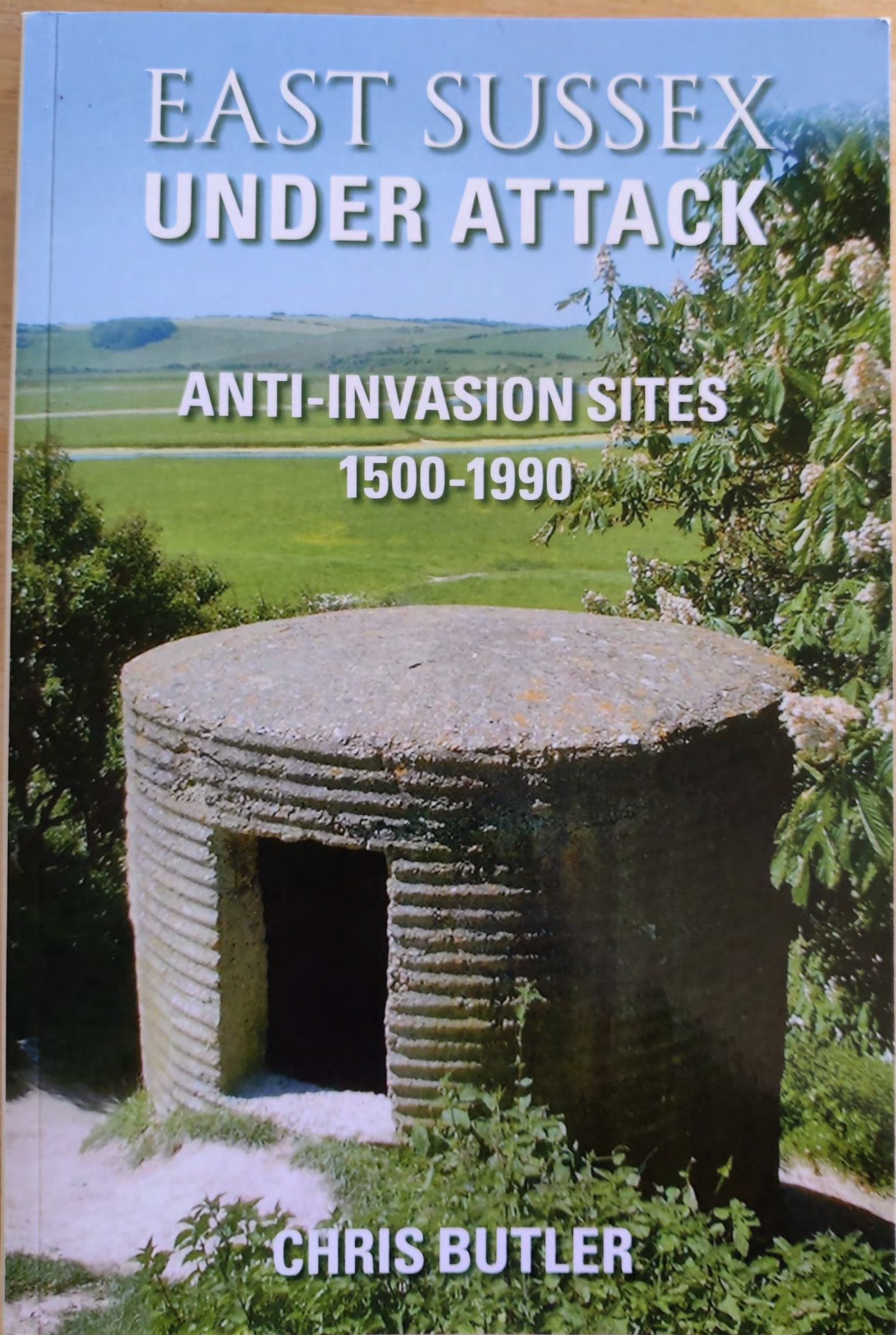
... to the great rejoicing of the inhabitants, be it said, that it can boast of having one of the greatest markets for cattle and corn in Sussex ...

A huge volume of cattle was sold in the market, purchased for consumption in many large southern towns.

EAST SUSSEX UNDER ATTACK

**ANTI-INVASION SITES
1500-1990**

CHRIS BUTLER



References/Background reading

- Brooks, R.J. 1996, 'Wilmington Airfield', *Sussex Express*, 9 August, 13
Dobinson, C. 2000, *Fields of Deception*, London, Methuen Publishing Ltd

SITE 44: HAILSHAM

Period: **Second World War**
Type of site: **Nodal Point**

History

Hailsham was designated a Nodal Point and put into a state of defence in the summer of 1940. A line of anti-tank cubes was constructed around the inner town, filling the gaps between houses to form a continuous perimeter, whilst roadblocks formed from coffins and hairpin rails were located at all of the entry points. Civil Defence organisations were established in the town and a number of air-raid shelters constructed. The 20th Sussex (Hailsham) Home Guard Battalion was raised in the town and surrounding villages.

Green Brothers, an engineering company, situated in Western Road was involved in the production of full-size replica Hurricanes, which were used as decoys on airfields and at dummy airfield sites.

Construction of the Hailsham bypass (now the A22) had just been started and was left unfinished when war broke out. To cover the newly constructed bridge over the River Cuckmere two machine gun emplacements were built, one being located on either side of the road. The surrounding fields were covered with anti-glider posts and wires. Interestingly a surviving defence scheme shows the bridge with a roadblock, covered by two anti-tank guns, but does not show the machine gun emplacements being used.

Michelham Priory, located some 3km to the west of Hailsham, was used as a headquarters by 5th Canadian Infantry Brigade and then later by 8th Canadian Infantry Brigade. Officers were housed in the Priory itself, whilst other ranks were quartered at Crossways House in Upper Dicker village.

The sites today

There is no surviving above-ground evidence for the anti-tank cubes or roadblocks in Hailsham, however a line of around 32 parch marks (67) can often be seen in very dry weather running north-south across Hailsham Recreation Ground (TQ 5872 0943).

At Horsebridge there is a single machine gun emplacement covering the A22 bridge over the River Cuckmere (colour plate 23). The concrete emplacement is situated in a field to the north-east of the bridge (TQ 5747 1106) and was originally partly sunken with only the upper part visible above ground. It has a protected entrance, with steps down to a square sump in front of the door.



67 A line of parch marks shows up in very dry weather running north-south across Hailsham Recreation Ground. These mark the location of a line of anti-tank cubes that formed the perimeter of the Nodal Point. Copyright: Peter Hibbs

There are five long narrow embrasures providing an almost 360° field of fire. A second similar emplacement was located on the north-west side of the bridge (approximately TQ 572109), but this was demolished after the war.

At Michelham Priory (TQ 5585 0934) there is little surviving evidence for its use during the war, although a platform behind the dovecote may indicate the site of one or two Nissen huts. In the Gatehouse there is a wartime map of France on the first floor, probably used to follow the progress of allied forces after D-Day, and some wartime graffiti at the top of the stairs to the roof. Close to the entrance are four anti-tank buoys lining the verge (TQ 5578 0942), with another four in the adjacent farm car park. Crossways House is now part of St Bede's School.

At Horam, to the north of Hailsham, there are two pairs of loopholes crudely cut through a brick wall covering the adjacent road junction (TQ 5771 1736).

Directions and access

The Horsebridge machine gun emplacement is on private land, but can be seen from the A22 and a footpath to the north-east.

Michelham Priory is owned by Sussex Archaeological Society and is signposted from the A22 at Lower Dicker or Hailsham (see below). There is a small museum inside the Priory, which includes information on its wartime role.

The Horam loopholes are in the boundary wall of the Merrydown Cider centre, at the top of a steep bank. Turn off the A267 into the B2203 and park; walk back to the road junction to view them from the opposite side of the road.

Opening times

Michelham Priory: 01323 844224

Open Tuesday-Sunday, 1 March-31 October (also open on bank holiday Mondays and every Monday during August); March and October: 10.30am-4.30pm; April-July and September: 10.30am-5pm; August: 10.30am-5.30pm

References/Background reading

Farebrother, G. (ed.) 1986, *Hailsham at War*, Falmer, CCE, University of Sussex

www.sussexpast.co.uk

SITE 45: HADLOW DOWN TO STONEGATE

Period: Second World War

Type of site: Pillboxes

History

Although the GHQ Stop Line had stopped following the River Uck near Buxted (Site 35), pillboxes were constructed to cover bridges across the Uck further east and to continue following the defence line to join up with the River Rother, which rose at Mayfield. From here they follow the River Rother through to Stonegate and beyond. Unlike the contiguous line of defence works along the River Ouse, those along the Rother were positioned to cover the bridges, with both Type 24 and Type 28 pillboxes being utilised. The bridges themselves had roadblocks and anti-tank coffins, whilst the river appears to have been modified in places to improve its ability to act as an anti-tank ditch.

Mayfield was designated as a Nodal Point in 1940 as it occupied a dominating position on the high ground in the Weald, with an important road from Heathfield to Tunbridge Wells running through the village from south to north. Some pillboxes were also positioned to cover the approaches to Mayfield from the south-west.

The sites today

From Howbourne Farm (Site 35) eastwards, pillboxes were situated to cover crossing points over the River Uck. The first of these is at Hastingford Farm (TQ 5236 2583). This is a 'squashed' Type 24, and is situated on the east side of the road, facing south to cover the bridge. According to the owner, it originally had a timber and wire netting structure on its roof, which was covered with straw to resemble a haystack. Inside there are four embrasures, below which is an extant wooden shelf sitting on brick supports. Outside there was a brick blast wall, although much of this has been demolished. Further east is a similar 'squashed'

THE BUILDINGS OF ENGLAND

SUSSEX: EAST
WITH BRIGHTON AND HOVE

Nicholas Antram and Nikolaus Pevsner



in the C18 and when Pevsner visited was tile-hung and Georgianized. In 1990 the timber-framed front was exposed and the façade restored, as correctly as possible. The result is undeniably impressive. Close studding. Pedimented mullioned-and-transomed oriel windows, linked on both floors by a continuous clerestory.

FAIRCROUCH, 1½ m. NW. The rear wall is of the early C17 house built by Thomas Edwardes, described in 1820 as in ruins and from which stone was used for the building of Wadhurst Castle. Rebuilt for Walter Prideaux in 1862. Low, with plain ashlar elevations. Irregular entrance front with a big canted bay and a broad porch on ionic columns. Still Late Georgian in style. **LODGE**. *Cottage orné*, the bargeboards decorated with a kind of rustic Vitruvian scroll. Veranda on timber posts.

GREAT SHOESMITHS, 2 m. NNW. Up a long approach. A house of the Barhams. In 1630 John Barham enlarged the house, further altered by his grandson, also John, in 1695. A long late C17 front, the roof hipped at one end only. The windows are not regularly placed. Inside, the stair around an open well, open-string with twisted balusters. In the wall half of a blocked four-centred arch. Several plain four-centred arched stone fireplaces.

See also **MARK CROSS** (p. 547) and **TIDEBROOK** (p. 637).

WALDRON

5020

A large and scattered parish.

ALL SAINTS. Mostly E.E., see the chancel E wall with two blocked lancets, perhaps of a former group of five stepped ones, and the N aisle, its W window a cinquefoiled lancet, the N windows with simple bar tracery, and the N arcade inside, of four bays with standard details. The aisle is remarkably wide for a C13 aisle on a small church. The nave is wide too and probably C12. The tower, with higher stair-turret, is late C15. Small two-light bell-openings and the W door and window with panel tracery, both set within a single arch. The E windows and chancel S windows are Perp. Gabled S aisle added 1862–3 by *R. C. Hussey*, with Dec-style windows and a pretty W window, a spherical triangle with intricate cusped tracery. His too is the part timber-framed N porch with stone-slate roof. Inside, he matched his S arcade with the N arcade. Oddly there is no chancel arch and no evidence that there ever was one, just a cusped arched truss by Hussey. — **STAINED GLASS**. E window, 1863 by *Lavers & Barraud*. Richly coloured and detailed. The N aisle E window is probably by *Clayton & Bell*. Other windows by *Powell & Sons*. — **MONUMENTS**. Major John Fuller †1722 (N aisle). Standing grey and white marble monument. Straight-sided tapering sarcophagus, tall obelisk with a shield and

garlands. Urns on substantial pedestals l. and r. No figures at all. A very up-to-date and metropolitan piece. The Fullers are first recorded in Sussex in 1575, when a John Fuller acquired Tanners Manor (*see below*). The family established great wealth as ironfounders, becoming major landowners in the county; their most famous member was 'Mad Jack' Fuller of Brightling (q.v.). – Also in the N aisle three cartouches to members of the Dyke family, dates of death between 1669 and 1722, the latter (to Bridget Dyke) attributed to *Stanton & Horsnaile* (GF). – In the churchyard NE of the church a small CHEST TOMB with numerous terracotta rosettes by *Jonathan Harmer* of Heathfield. Nearby a HEADSTONE with a terracotta urn, also by Harmer. – LYCHGATE. 1906, in memory of Louis Huth of Possingworth Manor (Cross in Hand). Substantial timber-framed upper part to carry a stone-slate roof.

The small village centre is dominated by the red brick garden walls of WALDRON HOUSE (the former Rectory), c. 1858, with gables, chimneys and all over diaper brickwork. Opposite the church CROSS FARM, built by the Hammond family, ironmasters. Superficially early C19, but evidently once a C17 house of some pretension: inside, a fireplace dated 1622 and 1851.

TANNERS MANOR, 1 m. SE at Lions Green. Brick with stone dressings. Jacobean, rebuilt for Samuel Fuller in 1617 after inheriting from his father. The E front has mullioned-and-transomed windows and a gable on the l., originally balanced by another on the r. (demolished by 1800). Purchased by the Hassell family in 1898, for whom *R. C. Tuppen* made enlargements, completed, with the W wing, in 1926.

FOXHUNT MANOR (Visitation Convent), 1 m. S. Red brick Jacobean of 1898–9, for Joseph Lucas, probably by *Frederick Reeve*,



Waldron, Tanners Manor, east front.
Drawing by S. H. Grimm and J. Lambert, 1784

a land agent from Haslemere, with broad shaped gables. The refectory of 1964 by *J. G. The CHAPEL* has a belfry transept for the laity: from the start, had a rather more endearing tile-hung and half-timbered over the courtyard entrance five-light window, set in a window of Laughton erected here 1903.

POSSINGWORTH MANOR, rainwater head on the roof which also has the iron mullioned windows, etc. The three-storey porch has gabled bays and, between dormers. Profusion of the porch some time for Lord Strathcona. New is almost indistinguishable (entrance) front only shows that to the red equal gables.

WAPSBOURNE

A scattered parish with Green and Rushlake Corner and Warbleton

ST MARY. With wide doorway, made later into a low doorway, show the windows later C14, lions but also curvilinear. Perp. The nave also and low s porch. Deep pierced spandrels in lower chapel, its E wall Perp w tower, whose tower, an unusual arrangement, with big head aligned as becomes E.E. chancel arch, done on moulded corbels