BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL

Per Bellum Patria

September 2018 No.23

BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

September 2018 No 23

CONTENTS

THE RESEARCH GROUP

LECTURES September 2018 to July 2019

THE SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS

PER BELLUM PATRIA

BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society was founded in 1950 to encourage the knowledge and study of local history within Battle and the surrounding area. This is achieved through:

- a programme of illustrated lecturers by specialists in their subjects;
- a programme of day or half-day visits to places of historic or architectural interest;
- an annual Commemoration Lecture on the Battle of Hastings 1066 or a subject related to it;
- a free annual published Journal with reports on the lectures, visits and business of the Society;
- free admission to the Battle Museum of Local History;
- membership of the Society's Research Group in the active study of all aspects of local history;
- publication of local history guides;
- presence on the world wide web of a dedicated Society website with Society news, useful local information resources, and contact details for members of the public or potential new members of the Society.

The Society is a registered charity (Number 292593) and is affiliated to the Sussex Record Society.

BATTLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

President	Professor David Carpenter MA PhD FKC
Vice-President	Dr Don Nicol BSc

Committee

George Kiloh	Chairman
Dr Keith Foord	Vice-Chairman
Neil Clephane-Cameron	Hon Secretary
David Sawyer	Hon Treasurer
Georgina Doherty	
Dr Peter Greene	
Adrian Hall	
Sarah Hall	
Alan Judd	
Charlotte Moore	
Richard Moore	
Sue Moore	
Brigadier (Retd) Hugh Willing	

Further roles

Archivist *Georgina Doherty*, Journal Editor *George Kiloh*, Lecture Organisers *Adrian and Sarah Hall*, Membership Secretary *Adrian Hall*, Publicity Officer *Sarah Hall*, Reading Group convener *George Kiloh*, Refreshments at lectures *Sue Moore*, Representative to Battle Abbey Explanatory Board *Neil Clephane-Cameron*, Representative to Battle Museum of Local History *Sarah Hall*, Research Group Chairman *Dr Keith Foord*, Website Managers *Dr Keith Foord and Dr Peter Greene*

Honorary members	Professor David Carpenter
	Mr and Mrs A Kinnear
	Dr D Nicol

Contacting the Society

Membership	Adrian and Sarah Hall 01424 775200
General contact	Neil Clephane-Cameron 01424 775590
Website	www.battlehistory.btck.co.uk

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2017-2018

2017-18 has proved another successful year for the Society. Our membership has remained at 207; our books have continued to sell well. We have been researching more of the history of Battle and its environs, much of which has previously been unexplored. We have an active reading group.

But our main business remains the provision of a lecture in every month except August, almost always held in the Memorial Halls on Abbey Green. They have been well-attended and in general much enjoyed. Their purpose is to bring history to the members in an accessible and useful form. Although the emphasis must inevitably be on the history of Battle and the surrounding district, other matters are included, the relevance of which may be more distant.

This year we began with Barnaby Phillips's lecture on the African army fighting under British command in Japanese-occupied Burma, a fascinating account of an overlooked episode of the war by the 'forgotten army', personally researched and recorded in an excellent book. In February Louise Wilkinson told us of the forgotten princesses of Edward I, another well-presented account of some women previously unknown to almost all if not all of us, who with one exception were used, as princesses were, to advance the policies of the king both at home and abroad.

This was followed in March by Hugh Willing's masterly story of the way that nineteenth century Britain tried to prevent the continuation of the slave trade from its main source in West Africa, a process that cost many British lives in pursuit of a most worthy objective. And the last two lectures were on topics that had had direct effects on the country as a whole: Imogen Corrigan on Henry the Navigator, a half-English prince of Portugal who pursued exploration of the west African coast and its islands, leading shortly to Portuguese commerce and colonisation in India and the East Indies. George Goodwin's lecture on Benjamin Franklin's long time in London explored his abilities as a scientist and his attempts to prevent a break between ill-advised Britain and its understandably fractious colonies.

Between all these was a very varied programme. Roy Porter explained to us the purpose and history of Dover Castle, a military base for almost a millennium that continues to display much of its mediaeval past; our new President Professor David Carpenter told us of the difficulties that brought Henry III to our area, who was only to be defeated at Lewes by Simon de

Montfort, an event leading to the establishment of a parliament. In May we heard Kay Douglas Smith on the origins and early history of gunpowder, an industry that later provided Battle with a major industry and whose remains still mark this part of Sussex. Her account of the various experiments conducted to establish the chemistry of early gunpowder was particularly impressive.

Just before Christmas Tim McDonald explored the origins of Twelfth Night and the myths and mistakes that have grown up about this still-observed point in time. His lecture was preceded by the first performance of the specially-translated and composed *Battle Carol* (see page 19).

In January, as in 2017, we had the series of brief talks about the locality by three members of the Society: on the author Sheila Kaye-Smith, whose connection with Battle was primarily through her father but one that she maintained until her death; on Battle in the civil war when the population was put under unusual pressures; and on Sir Francis Ronalds, who invented electric telegraphy among other things and died here. And in April we had Chris McCooey, a most entertaining account that centred on how he became a historian.

These lectures were always well-presented and clear, adding to our knowledge of history in many different ways, and they were well-attended. As always, reports of all these lectures are given in this issue of the Journal.

Early in the year we published *Edmund Langdon and his world*, an exploration by Adrian and Sarah Hall of an early seventeenth-century man apparently from Battle who was a physician and astrologer among other things. We have also published a third version of *1066 and the Battle of Hastings – preludes, events and postscripts* by Keith Foord and Neil Clephane-Cameron, which continues to sell well.

I am pleased to report that warm relationships were established with English Heritage at Battle Abbey. The Society ran a stall at the battle anniversary in October and propose to do so again in October; in March we held a meeting at the Abbey, with their kind permission, to hand over to the East Sussex Record Office a parchment from our records dated from about 1493 outlining the rights and obligations of the Abbey as it then was. We have also established contact with the town of Saint-Valéry-sur-Somme, and hope to develop a relationship productive for both of us.

That brings me to our archives, where the 1493 parchment was found

(picture on page 49). Over the years we have amassed a large number of documents and photographs, which have remained in some cases uncatalogued and difficult to access. We are close to a plan to digitise at least some of them so that they can be studied at a distance and at length and thereby made more accessible to members and perhaps to others, and we hope to make progress on this complex process during the next year.

The new website is in place, attracting users from outside, and its contents have been much enlarged. In particular the *Collectanea* part carries an increasing number of local history articles by members and others. These are easily available on-line and are worth studying to illustrate the very varied history of the town: we know how it began but the interest is far from stopping there. The report of the Research Group says more.

The Society's reading group remains active and properly critical, meeting in ten of every twelve months, with a very wide choice of books concerned with events in most parts of the world – Germany, north America, east Africa, Indonesia, Spain and India among them.

We finished the year not only with success in all fields but also with a healthy bank balance, so the subscription is unaltered for next year. Our situation is helped enormously not only by the continued sale of Keith Foord's and Neil Clephane-Cameron's book on 1066 (see page 51) but also by the lecture programme so ably and imaginatively continued by Adrian and Sarah Hall, the revival and running of the website led by Keith Foord and Peter Greene and the leading of the Research Group – Keith Foord again. These mentions are not to obscure the work of every other member of the Committee, whose contributions, primarily but not only at meetings, have always been positive and helpful.

The Society looks forward to the future with confidence.

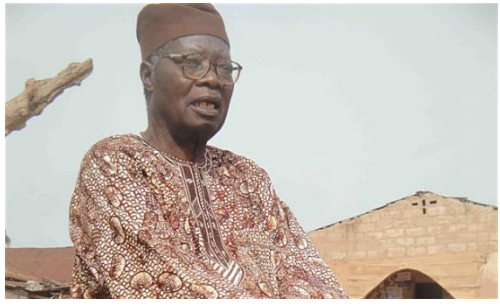
George Kiloh

The new Battle: the Emmanuel Centre replacing the old Methodist Chapel on a new site in Harrier Lane; it opened in March 2014. The architect was Roger Langham of Pinewood Ltd, Bakewell, Derbyshire.

ANOTHER MAN'S WAR: THE STORY OF A BURMA BOY IN BRITAIN'S FORGOTTEN ARMY

Barnaby Phillips *21 September 2017*

Our speaker for this talk was Barnaby Phillips, a senior correspondent for Al Jazeera since 2006, and before that he was for fifteen years a correspondent for the BBC World Service, reporting mainly from Africa, including Nigeria. His talk was based on his 2014 book entitled *Another Man's War - The Story of a Burma Boy in Britain's Forgotten African Army*. The 'Burma Boy' in this riveting tale was Isaac Fadoyebo who at the age of sixteen ran away from his Nigerian village to join the British Army in 1943. It is a story of personal heroism from the Second World War but more importantly, a moving tribute to the power of the human spirit.



Isaac Fadoyebo in his home village in Nigeria in 2011, the year before his death. [Barnaby Phillips]

When the men of General Bill Slim's 14th Army returned to Britain after defeating the Japanese in one of the harshest campaigns in military history, they found their ordeal in the jungles of Burma had passed largely unnoticed at home. People knew all about El Alamein and Normandy but Britain's victories over Japan at places such as Kohima and Imphal were (and remain) obscure. The distant war in southeast Asia had been overshadowed by campaigns closer to home. The soldiers of the 14th Army were known as the "Forgotten Army", and if the British public thought about Asia at all, they remembered only humiliation at the surrender of Singapore and the appalling treatment of prisoners in Japanese POW camps. The fact that the 14th Army recovered from defeat, mastered jungle warfare and successfully defeated the Japanese in Burma never quite sank in.

No group faded more swiftly from memory than the 100,000 African soldiers who had fought for Britain in Burma. At the peak of the campaign General Slim commanded a million men in the 14th Army, of whom about 10 per cent came from the West African colonies of Nigeria,

Sierra Leone, The Gambia, and the Gold Coast serving in the Royal West African Frontier Force, while the East African possessions of Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, Rhodesia and Nyasaland formed the many battalions of the King's African Rifles. Some British generals assumed that the Africans were suited to jungle warfare, even if they hailed from arid savannahs. African troops enjoyed promoting the idea that they ate human flesh to terrify their enemies, when most were devoutly religious.

The talk and book were based on the experiences of that one Nigerian soldier, Isaac Fadoyebo, who was sent not to battle the Nazis in Europe but to Burma, whose inhabitants were also caught up in a conflict that wasn't theirs.

A post-war map of the position of the Kaladan River. It rises in the Lushai Hills in the southern projection of India and flows southward to the Arakan area. (From the Oxford Atlas.)

In March 1944 Isaac Fadoyebo was serving as an orderly in the 29th Casualty Clearing Station, a medical unit and part of the 81st Division of the Royal West African Frontier Force advancing through the Arakan. His unit was on the Kaladan River when it was caught in a Japanese ambush and, as his comrades were cut down around him, a bullet struck Fadoyebo's right leg, shattering the femur, while another round penetrated his side.

The Japanese found Fadoyebo alive, surrounded by the bodies of men who had been machine-gunned. As his wounds appeared to be so severe, the Japanese left him to die, but later a comrade appeared called David Kargbo, from Sierra Leone. He was hurt, but fit enough to run off by himself, yet he never abandoned Isaac. They were force to hide in the jungle, unaware that the British had chosen to withdraw back to the border with India and it would be almost a year before the war once again allowed British forces to advance back to this same area. With stinking untreated wounds and no medicines at all, tortured by heat, leeches, mosquitoes and monsoon rains, evading Japanese patrols, Isaac and David

survived like this for nine months.

They survived thanks to the local people, poor Arakanese (today's Rohingya Muslims), who fed them. One man especially, Shuyiman, cared for the men, eventually hiding them in his hut where they lived with his family in the village of Mairong. Shuyiman might have calculated that by saving Africans he was backing the right side and could expect a reward. To ingratiate themselves the men claimed to be Muslims, even though to revive their spirits daily they sang 'Abide with Me'. Had the Japanese caught them, they certainly would have killed Shuyiman and his people. In a village nearby the Japanese had executed a chief accused of informing for the British by pinioning him to the ground with bayonets before skinning him alive and rubbing salt into his flesh.

It seems clear that Shuyiman saved them mainly because it was the right thing to do. This is the 'common bond of humanity', which formed the basis of the talk as well as the 'courage and friendship that transcended time and distance and race, and shone through the horror of a world war'. Two black Africans saved by a family of Burmese Muslims, hardly able to communicate, from opposite ends of the world, caught up in a war that wasn't theirs.

After nine months they were discovered by an advancing British unit and sent home, David to Sierra Leone, never to be seen again, and Isaac to Nigeria. When he arrived in his father's village, people threw dust at him to check that he wasn't a ghost. After fleeting fame in the local newspapers he settled down to a lifetime spent largely in respectable obscurity.

Barnaby Phillips explained how he stumbled on this tale in the library of the Imperial War Museum, where he found Isaac's own 60-page Burma memoir, *A Stroke of Unbelievable Luck*. He tracked Isaac down in Lagos using his old BBC World Service contacts. Covering Nigeria's post-independence story was somewhat depressing, so unearthing Isaac Fadoyebo and hearing his tale became something of a passion. Then an octogenarian, Isaac recalled that in the heat of their frontline rescue he and David had not been able to thank Shuyiman or say goodbye. This had weighed heavily on him, and so Barnaby Phillips got Isaac to write a letter, and then set off for Burma to find Shuyiman's village. Much had happened in nearly seven decades: 'A war had ended, an empire had fallen, civil wars had started and stopped and started again, there had been a coup, years of repression and many natural disasters…'

At least Nigerians have taken life on with style compared to the miserable lunacy of Burma's post-war history. By way of contrast, Barnaby Phillips quoted a Burmese historian whose view was that Burma is a place where the Second World War never really ended. Dictatorships, relentless civil wars with Burma's minorities, the Saffron Revolution, it has all culminated in yet more rounds of violence in the current decade.

Barnaby Phillips located the village of Mairong, but he couldn't get there because of military operations nearby. The Muslim Rohingyas who rescued David and Isaac are once again being attacked, this time not by the Japanese but by government-backed Buddhist militias – a humanitarian catastrophe that the Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi refuses to condemn.

Miraculously, Barnaby Phillips managed to meet the grandchildren of Shuyiman, who had died in 1960, and in a hurried, secretive meeting he was able to hand over Isaac's letter. The family told him: "Our parents said those men were in trouble; they needed help, otherwise they were going to die." When he rang Fadoyebo to report back on the success of his journey, the old man replied: "Alleluia!" Isaac Fadoyebo died a few months later at the age of 86, no longer a forgotten soldier.

Among the 26,380 Allied forces who died in the Burma campaign many were Africans. They won General Slim's admiration, yet Isaac and his comrades never even received campaign medals. "No one has sung their praise in this campaign," wrote a British officer with Orde Wingate's Chindits, several thousand of whom were black Africans. "But their unwearied, unselfish and Christ-like service will not be forgotten by the men who came to rely on them."

Hugh Willing

The Burma Star

THE HISTORY OF DOVER CASTLE.

Roy Porter *19 October 2017*

Mr Porter explained that as requested he would be focussing on the castle's mediæval (Henry II) and twentieth-century periods; however, some contextualisation will feature aspects of the castle's story at other times.

The origins of Dover castle are unknown but there is a belief, first put forward in the nineteenth century and re-kindled in the mid twentieth-century, that it originated as a hillfort in the late Iron Age. This belief is due to the extant ditches and evidence of a possible causewayed entrance. Very little archæological work has been undertaken at Dover castle and so the theory has not been tested. The oldest buildings on the site are those forming the middle bailey, notably the Roman pharos, second-century AD (but its top is sixteenth-century), and the Saxon church of St Mary-in-Castro, of about.1000 but significantly rebuilt in the nineteenth-century. Evidence of a community associated with the church was found in the form of a Saxon cemetery containing the bodies of adults and children. Although William of Poitiers describes Duke William visiting the castle on his march from Hastings in 1066, no definitely identifiable remains of the Saxon castle have been found; however a mid-eleventh century ditch has been found cutting through the Saxon cemetery, perhaps evidence of the hastily constructed defensive measures undertaken by William that are mentioned by contemporary writers as having been put in place during his army's short stay.

The Roman Pharos [Chris McKenna]

The shape of the castle as we know it today was created by Henry II, who constructed the great tower (keep), inner bailey & outer curtain wall. The great tower was one of the last of its type to be built in England and would have been one of the most impressive secular buildings of its time (1180s). It served both military needs and royal prestige, the distinctive bands of Caen stone being a notable feature designed to impress important visitors from the Continent, though canny use of cost-saving artifice in the form of lime render for the uppermost banding was noted during recent restoration. Henry II spent £6,000 on the work but died before he could see the great tower completed. The reason for the opulence may have been an attempt by Henry to host important visitors on their way to the tomb of Thomas à Becket (in the 1170's the king of France had lodged at Dover priory as there was no other suitable accommodation). In 1185 work commenced on the curtain wall and its fourteen towers, and the stylistic similarity between two the those towers and those of the inner bailey suggest that Dover's is one of the earliest concentric castles in western Europe, i.e. comprised of multiple rings of walls with killing grounds between.

Following the siege of 1216 the landward defences were significantly strengthened, including the addition of an outer barbican connected to the castle by tunnels. Constable's Gate was built in 1220 and is the largest gatehouse in England. Although it was the main entrance of the castle the king was not permitted to enter by it during the hours of darkness, but

Dover Castle today: Lieven Smits - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=15123326]

instead was required to use the postern. The overall appearance and plan of the castle then remained unchanged until the middle of the eighteenth century. At that time advances in artillery led to major changes, including

reductions to the height of many of the outer towers to provide fields of fire from positions inside the castle. Barracks were also constructed as well as casemates (bomb-proof shelters) obscuring parts of the curtain wall against which they were built, although the original arrow loops were retained for use by muskets. By the middle of the nineteenth-century the increased ranges of artillery made Dover castle incapable of self-defence and a new fort was built farther out on the eastern side.

The barrack accommodation for officers made use of adaptation of existing buildings, whereas the other ranks were housed in tunnels dug through to the cliff face. This level is known today as 'Casemates'; the tunnels above (dug from 1942) are known as 'Annexe' level and at the base of the cliff (dug in the 1950's as nuclear shelters) is the level known as 'Dumpy'.

In 1940 Operation Dynamo was supervised from the Casemates level and the ventilation system reflected that used in the Royal Navy's ships of the 1930s. The tunnels were divided into rooms and although photographs exist showing their appearance there is now no evidence in them save parts of the ducting; nevertheless some areas have been reconstructed using the evidence of the photographs.

Annexe level was built as a dressing station to attend to pilots rescued from the English Channel. Dumpy level was intended to be used as one of twelve regional centres of government in the event of a nuclear attack taking out the seat of national government. In fact all three levels would have been used in this way, those staffing them being required to attend in the build-up to a nuclear war and remain there for two to three weeks after a nuclear attack, then emerge to set up a government of their region from a country house or similar. The environment of the tunnels would not protect from nuclear explosion but would give protection for a limited amount of time against nuclear fallout, so the tunnels would work only if a nuclear bomb were dropped some distance away, which is what military intelligence perceived in the 1950's and 1960's. The facilities were refitted in the 1970's but then shortly after military intelligence discovered that Dover harbour itself was likely to be a nuclear target and so Dover castle lost its final military significance, the last military garrison leaving in 1958.

Neil Clephane-Cameron

HENRY III AND BATTLE ABBEY

Professor David Carpenter *16 November 2017*

While Henry III did not have close connections with Battle Abbey, the interactions that did take place illustrate overall characteristics of his reign.

Henry III was the son of King John; he came to the throne at the age of nine in 1216, reigning for 56 years. From 1217 until towards the end of 1263 it was a reign of peace. This period was hugely beneficial in many ways, particularly for the development of the economy: a new network of fairs and markets was established and there was an enormous increase in the money supply. Religious life was transformed in the 1220s with the arrival of the Friars who introduced a significant programme of preaching, and the pastoral movement saw bishops much more active in their dioceses, ensuring good practice and administration. There was also a revival of queenship – since Eleanor of Aquitaine, wife of Henry II, royal consorts had not had an active role; this was to change with Henry III's

The coronation of Henry III

Queen, Eleanor of Provence, who played an important role in the politics of of his reign. There was also a notable building programme, including Salisbury Cathedral and the rebuilding of Westminster Abbey.

Last but not least, Henry III's reign saw the expansion of the political community, with parliament achieving a central role and knights and burgesses being regularly summoned, rather than a body simply representing the major barons.

There was, of course, a negative side to the reign. Under Henry III the persecution of the Jews reached a new height, with the King sanctioning the view that Jews crucified young children, paving the way for the Statute of Jewry in 1253, which attempted to segregate Jews and enforce the wearing of Jewish badges, although it remains unclear how strictly

this was enforced. The condition of unfree peasants, the majority of the population, was very hard and further deteriorated due to an increase in population and a series of bad harvests, resulting in famine. The reign also climaxed in a vicious civil war from 1258, in which political power was wrested from Henry for a time by his brother-in-law, Simon de Montfort, with two notable battles at Lewes in 1264 and at Evesham in 1265, when Simon de Montfort was defeated and killed.

The personality of Henry III helps explain these events. He was extremely pious, assiduous in his attendance at Mass; generous in his alms-giving, with the Court regularly feeding 150 paupers and on special days more, including one occasion when 5,016 were fed; and another key feature was his devotion to his patron saint, Edward the Confessor. He was easy going and lazy, luxuriating for long periods at his favourite palaces; he was fond of hawking but there is no record of him hunting. He had no interest in the business of war and there is no evidence of him attending tournaments. There is also evidence of him having a sense of humour, both slapstick and more subtle. He was completely loyal to his wife.

Central to his rule and the long peace was Henry III's observance of the Magna Carta. In 1215 the charter seemed doomed to failure but his terrible position on gaining the throne led his advisers to think that the best course of action was to accept the charter. His father John's Pipe Rolls indicate the extent to which he was an absolutist monarch; those of Henry III illustrate a very different form of kingship – he did not raise significant sums of money arbitrarily and so had to call parliaments to raise taxes.

There were several reasons why civil war eventually broke out. Henry III was ambitious, with an expensive building programme and a desire to go on crusade. He also promoted two groups of foreigners – the relations of his wife and his Lusignan half-brothers. Both factions were extremely unpopular and to make matters worse did not get on with each other. Henry also became obsessed with his second son becoming King of Sicily – this had been proposed by the Pope purely as a means of extracting money from Henry, which again was very unpopular. He also had a problem with the exercise of justice. He believed in the concept but he lacked the drive to ensure that people received justice and he did not try to reform a system in desperate need of change.

Henry was described as 'simplex', meaning in his case naïve and impulsive. By 1258, the factional struggles were beyond his control and

there was a combination of a court coup and a protest against the lack of justice.

So what about Battle Abbey? Records show he was aware that it was a royal foundation but it did not feature large in his life. There is a record of him visiting Battle for two days in July 1240 on his way back from Dover but this part of Sussex was not part of his itinerary – there were no royal manors, castle or residences so there was no reason to come regularly. Also, Battle Abbey did not have a saint and so lost out in prestige in this respect; it is also possible that, with his devotion to Edward the Confessor, that Henry had an ambivalent attitude to the Conquest.

Henry's relations with the Abbey were a great improvement on those of his father. The Magna Carta of 1225 was a consensual document, with a witness list attached for the first time – the third witness was the Abbot of Battle. In 1227 Henry III assumed full powers as King after his minority and, as normal, people were summoned to get their charters confirmed by the new King. The Abbot received confirmation of the Abbey's charters for the sum of £20 – Henry's father had made the Abbey pay £1000 for the same charter which allowed the Abbey to administer its own affairs after the death of an abbot and also to elect a new abbot from among the Abbey's own numbers (otherwise, the King would have been able to have the income from the Abbey until the election of a new abbot). In 1235 the Abbot of Battle died. After an initial attempt by the sheriff to take possession of the Abbey's lands, the terms of the Charter were honoured and Ralph elected as the new Abbot within 10 days.

However, the Abbey also experienced the downsides of his reign. As a result of trying to gain the kingdom of Sicily for his son, Henry agreed to the Papacy's request for the English Church to repay some of the Pope's debts to Italian merchants, and the Abbey was one of many institutions in 1256 to find themselves required to pay towards these debts, in this particular case 225 marks. In spite of the King's piety, the government was also alert to loopholes. An example of this was a dispute about the ownership of a valuable fish which washed up on Abbey lands – not only did the abbot have to demonstrate the right of the Abbey to the fish but also that this right had been exercised historically: he was able to do this and so kept the fish!

The Chronicle of Battle Abbey makes clear how unpopular Henry III became due to the Sicilian affair and his favouritism to foreign relatives. In 1264, with Simon de Montfort in control of London, Henry III made a second visit to Battle on his way to bolster allegiance for himself in the

key area of the Cinque Ports. On his way down, his cook was killed and in reprisal he decapitated a number of local men at Flimwell. On arrival at Battle, he learnt that Simon de Montfort had left London and Henry left for Lewes.

As far as can be determined, it does not appear that the Abbey was punished in any way after the de Montfort period and indeed, at the end of his reign, Henry made a significant concession to the monks of Battle. In 1271, in a letter patent, the King granted the abbot the right to exercise justice over his men, both civil and criminal, with the abbot's steward sitting in judgement alongside one of the King's men. This is an extraordinary concession, which apparently was designed to give teeth to a previous charter. The original charter cannot be found and it is possible that this could be an example of the forgeries for which Battle Abbey was notorious at this time. Whether or not this was the case, subsequent abbots used this concession to full advantage!

Sarah Hall

The seal of Simon de Montfort (History Extra, BBC)

TWELFTH NIGHT

Tim McDonald *14 December 2017*

The Christmas meeting opened in fine style with a rendition of *Be Merry*, the 'Battle Carol'. Originally written in about 1500 on a service book by one of the monks of the Abbey, the carol had lain dormant for several centuries in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. Set to new music by Stephen Page and with modernised words by Charlotte Moore, it was performed with gusto by the Battle Community Singers, to the great pleasure of all. [*See* http://www.battlehistory.btck.co.uk/Newsande-Newsletters.]

This was followed by a highly entertaining talk by Tim McDonald, on the rituals and customs associated with Twelfth Night. Though now most strongly associated with Shakespeare's comedy of cross-dressing, mistaken identity and disruption of the social hierarchy, until fairly recently Twelfth Night marked the last of the twelve days of Christmas and the end of yuletide festivities. Often regarded as synonymous with Epiphany, the revelation to the Magi of the infant Jesus, which is celebrated on 6 January, properly speaking Twelfth Night falls on the 5th – the night before Epiphany.

Even this date was unfixed for centuries; Twelfth Night used to be conflated with Candlemas, 2 February, which marks the presentation of Jesus in the Temple. Indeed, Shakespeare's play was first performed at Candlemas, 1602.

Whatever the date, the festival has always been a time of revelry and feasting. Charles Dickens held celebrated Twelfth Night parties, at which he would perform conjuring tricks: a hat full of flour, sugar, eggs and fruit would be transformed into a pudding with flaming brandy. The revelry has links to ancient, pre-Christian winter festivals such as the Roman Saturnalia and the Celtic Samhain. During Saturnalia normal social roles were reversed, and masters waited on the slaves at banquets; Twelfth Night revels involved a similar re-ordering of the hierarchy, presided over by a 'Lord of Misrule' or 'Abbot of Unreason'. This links with the English cathedral tradition of electing a 'boy bishop' from among the choristers, who 'rules' over his superiors for the duration of the festival. Cross-dressing was also a 'Festival of Fools' custom, and has evolved into modern pantomime. Saturnalia often involved human sacrifice, an element missing, as far as is known, from Twelfth Night observance, though some of the revels came perilously close to the Black Mass.

In common with its pagan prototypes, Twelfth Night celebrated fire and light. The Celts believed that the sun stood still in winter, and that keeping a huge log perpetually burning would persuade him to move again. The Yule Log of Christian tradition follows this practice; a log was selected on Christmas Eve, decorated, blessed with a libation of wine, and kept burning until Twelfth Night. One idea was that this would keep the stable warm for baby Jesus. Today, the Yule Log appears mainly in chocolate form.

Many of us still take down our Christmas decorations on Twelfth Night, vaguely believing that it is 'bad luck' not to do so. For our ancestors, witches and demons might make their homes in decorations left up after this date, though some left them up until Candlemas Eve, marking the forty days between the birth of Jesus and his presentation in the Temple and purification of his mother Mary. To leave winter greenery up might also delay the return of spring, as Robert Herrick writes in his poem *Down with the rosemary and bays*.

Herrick also mentions the wassaillers' drink, 'lambswool' – hot, spiced ale, mixed with frothy apple purée. Wassailing, which literally means passing on wishes for good health, involves carrying the wassail bowl from door to door; it is linked to the midwinter custom of banging pots and pans to wake the sleeping spirits of apple trees, and pouring hot cider on their roots – at a time when labourers' wages were partly paid in cider, a good crop was important.

For the labouring classes, Yuletide was the only real break in the year apart from Wakes Week. In midwinter agricultural work was scant, and on 'Plough Monday', the first Monday after Twelfth Night, labourers blackened their faces and dragged a decorated plough, calling "a penny for the poor ploughboys"; one of them, dressed in animal skins and carrying a pig's bladder tied to a stick, was 'the Fool'. They were sometimes accompanied by 'molly dancers', hoping to raise more funds. The blackened faces were to disguise themselves from potential employers. Plays, related to the 'mummers' plays', might be performed on Plough Monday and on the day before, the ploughs were blessed in church. 7 January was 'St Distaff's Day', when women returned to their spinning after the Christmas holiday.

We were shown images of delicious-looking Twelfth Cakes, loaves and pies, nowadays more often to be found in Italy, France or Portugal than in Britain, though through a legacy of the C18 actor Robert Baddeley, a

Plough Monday, from George Walker's The Costumes of Yorkshire, *1814*

themed 'Baddeley cake', based on the current show, appears each year in Drury Lane, accompanied by punch in a silver bowl. The traditional Twelfth Cake, as mentioned by Dickens in *A Christmas Carol*, was packed with fruit, and symbolised wealth and posterity. Another descendant of Saturnalia is the inclusion of a bean and a pea in the cake; the man who finds the bean is king for the day, and the woman finding the pea is his queen.

There could be other less appealing inclusions – if you got the clove you were the villain, a twig was for the fool, and a rag – to be found by a woman only – signified a whore. European cakes tend to relate more directly to Epiphany and the 'three kings' (though the Bible does not state that the Magi were kings, nor that there were three of them). They are shaped like crowns or contain tiny figurines of the Christ Child, object of the kings' quest.

Mr McDonald's talk was handsomely illustrated. He covered a wide range of material with clarity and humour, and sent his audience home in suitable festive mood.

Charlotte Moore

SURPRISING TALES OF BATTLE

SHEILA KAYE-SMITH

Gina Docherty *18 January 2018*

Although Sheila Kaye-Smith is no longer so well known, in the early part of the twentieth century she was a leading contemporary novelist. She was passionate about Sussex: its countryside, dialect and accent. A cartoon from *Punch* (1922) was shown, illustrating both her fame as an author and her identification with Sussex, depicting Sheila firmly in control of Sussex, permitting 'No Trespassers'.

Sheila Kaye-Smith

The speaker briefly summarised Sheila's life history: her upbringing at 9 Dane Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, where she lived with her mother and father, Dr Edward and Mrs Emily Kaye-Smith, her younger sister Mona and two half-sisters, Dulcie and Thea; her marriage to Penrose Fry, curate at the local Christ Church; their subsequent move to London; Penrose's decision to leave the priesthood preceding their move to Little Doucegrove at Northiam; their conversion to Catholicism and building of

The church of St Teresa of Lisieux, Horns Cross, Northiam

building of St Theresa's Church, Northiam, where Sheila and Penrose were both buried.

The talk then considered the Kaye-Smith connections to Battle and its locality. Sheila's father had moved to Battle from Bedford following his first marriage in 1867, setting up practice as a doctor at 22 Upper Lake and stabling his horses at The Chequers, making visits to his patients on horseback. At that time his surname was Smith – his middle Christian name Kaye was hyphenated to Smith at the time of marriage to Sheila's mother. Sadly his

Dr Edward Kaye Smith outside his house, 22 Upper Lake

first wife had died following the birth of their daughter, Dulcie. Two servants, sisters, had moved with the Smiths to Battle, one marrying locally and becoming the speaker's great grandmother. Edward Smith held various local offices in Battle including that of Medical Officer.

As such he saved the town from a typhoid fever outbreak in 1880. Sheila based one of her novels, *The Village Doctor*, on her father's memories of the time he practised in Battle. Dr Smith formed a close friendship with William Raper, the local solicitor who practised at 1 Upper Lake, and the firm of Raper and Fovargue managed all the Kaye-Smith legal affairs until the death of Penrose Fry in 1971.

Sheila herself had various connections to Battle and its surroundings – as children she and her sister Mona were left at local farmhouses while their parents holidayed abroad. Her favourite was Platnix, at Westfield. Sheila wrote about her memories of Platnix in her novel *The Children's Summer.*

Sheila was childhood friends with the Raper daughters and enjoyed cream teas at The Pilgrim's Rest. She 'came out' at the Battle hunt ball, held at the Drill Hall on the site of the present telephone exchange. Sheila wrote the prologue to the Battle Abbey Pageant of 1932, an open air performance involving hundreds of local amateur and professional artistes which took place in the grounds of Battle Abbey. The prologue was written in Sussex dialect and delivered by local performer 'Buttercup Joe'. A lasting memorial to the Kaye-Smith family can be found in the local cemetery, where most of Sheila's family are buried.

The speaker concluded by drawing attention to the fact that Sheila Kaye-Smith had been a Vice President of the Battle and District Historical Society.

Gina Doherty

SURPRISING TALES OF BATTLE

BATTLE AND THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

Adrian Hall *18 January 2018*

Adrian began by outlining the background of the English Civil War: 'The World Turned Upside Down'. Charles I was not the only one of the parties who found the Civil War turning out differently from what they envisaged. Both Charles I and the Protector had problems with Parliament, which was trying to extend its role. Parliament found Cromwell and the Army trying to interfere with its running, much as Charles had done. Cromwell and the Army had no sooner won the war than they found themselves at loggerheads about the way forward. Cromwell as Protector found himself with a Parliament which would not do as he asked and an Army that was riven with political and religious dispute and generating ideas that he regarded as dangerous. The war started as a struggle about Charles's proposed religious reform and his literal interpretation of the Divine Right of Kings' but the period after 1649 saw an explosion of ideas both religious and political with the Levellers, the Diggers, the Ranters and others.

Herbert Morley

Against this background Adrian described how Parliamentary forces got an early grip on eastern Sussex, which they regarded as strategically important as a route to France and for its ironmaking. Colonel Herbert Morley was a notable Parliamentarian of influence in east Sussex who appeared to have used Battle as a base for his committees, which doubtless had a calming influence. Local families that might have been a local influence for the Royalists in the Battle area were either impoverished, absent or divided. The local Royalists were a mercurial group, none more so than the extraordinary Sir Thomas Lunsford of East Hoathly, whose quarrels and deeds were still vivid over 380 years later.

The local MPs ducked and dived during the Civil War, none more so than Sir Samuel Gott, an early owner of what was to become Langton House on the Abbey Green.

There were protests about living conditions and other matters in Rye and Hastings, and a battle at Muster Green in Haywards Heath, but no activity at Battle, which was probably Parliamentarian and under the close supervision of Col Morley.

Adrian then asked what life would have been like in Battle during the English Civil War. Excessive celebration at Christmas was discouraged under the Major Generals in the mid-1650s. An often-quoted public notice of the time says: "The observation of Christmas having been deemed a sacrilege, the exchanging of gifts and greetings, dressing in fine clothing, feasting and similar satanical practices are hereby FORBIDDEN with the offender liable to a fine of five shillings". Sabbatarianism was imposed by High Church Arminians and Low Church Puritans alike – especially. ploughing on a Sunday was a problem. Alehouses were frowned upon in the Puritan era. 'Loose wenches' were transported to Jamaica as slaves. On the other hand, fairs continued. The Hastings sub-committee of Parliamentarians heard lectures when in Battle, sometimes in a local tavern; and probably most people tried to get by through lip service to the latest requirements. Even among Puritans there was some moderation: Henry Fisher, a Puritan Dean of Battle, saved the St Mary's gold communion chalice from being melted down by describing it as a silver bowl.

Adrian concluded with reference to the broadsheet of the time depicting Prince Rupert with his dog Boy, in a clash with Parliamentarians, who have a dog called Pepper. The scene probably reflected Battle's cynicism about both sides.

Adrian Hall

SURPRISING TALES OF BATTLE

SIR FRANCIS RONALDS

George Kiloh *18 January 2018*

Not many people are given to wandering around cemeteries, but with a little care one might find in Battle the grave of Sir Francis Ronalds (1788-1873). He lived the last few years of his life at Battle, in a nineteenth century house in St Mary's Villas close to Battle Hill.

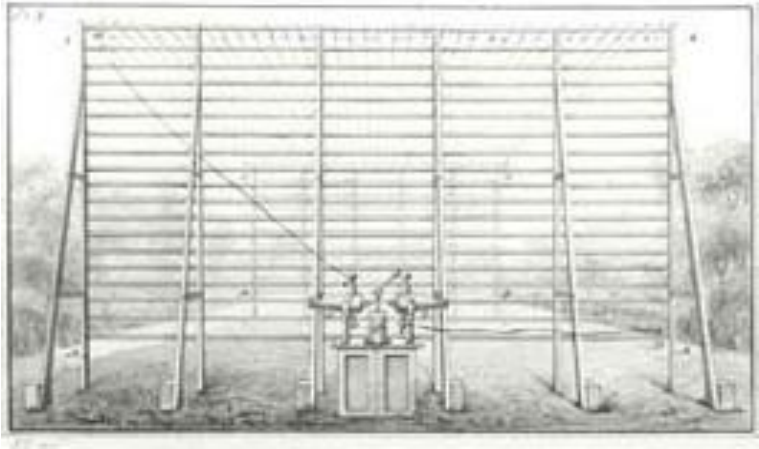
Up to the middle of the nineteenth century very few scientists received honours, so his knighthood was unusual; this honour tended to be confined to the landed gentry and military men. It eluded Michael Faraday, for example, and Charles Darwin, who are today certainly regarded as having been among the greatest contributors to science. Those few who were honoured were on the technical side.

Ronalds's best known invention was a prototype of the electric telegraph. The telegraph would be an enormous improvement in communication, within and between countries, and in due course proved essential to military and naval engagements. It allowed almost instant communication between telegraph offices almost anywhere in the world and survived up to the 1980s.

If invasion were threatened, instead of using hilltop beacons the Admiralty would have been instantly alerted and would as instantly have send signals to Portsmouth and other ports. When a man murdered his wife at Slough in 1845 his wife's doctor (who later practised at Battle) was just too late to stop him catching the train to Paddington: using the new telegraph the staff there were able to send a description and the Metropolitan Police arrested him on arrival. Newspapers now received almost immediate news; the firm of Reuters was built on the telegraph.

Two international incidents stand out. First, the Ems telegram of 1870 from the French emperor was wilfully interpreted by the Prussians as an insult and war began very shortly thereafter, leading to the final unification of Germany and a lasting enmity between the two countries. Then in 1917 the Americans came headlong into the first world war when a German telegram from Mexico was decoded in London, through which all German diplomatic traffic passed across the Atlantic: the Zimmerman telegram.

Ronalds's telegraph, built in his garden at Hammersmith, was slow and cumbersome. There was effectively no code such as that developed later by Samuel Morse. Nevertheless it worked, and at the end of the Napoleonic war he went to see the Admiralty. They turned him down flat.



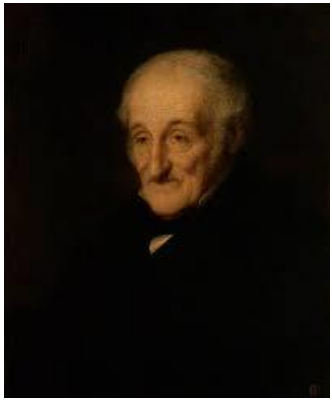
One version of Ronalds's experimental telegraph. version in which the wires were enclosed in glass tubes buried in the ground. At each end of the line a clockwork mechanism turned synchronously revolving discs with letters on them. A frictional electricity machine kept the wire continuously charged, while at each end two pith balls hung from the wire on silk threads, and since they were similarly charged from the wire they stayed apart. When someone desired to send a message he earthed the wire at his end at the moment when the dial indicated the desired letter. At the receiving end the pith balls would fall together when earthed and the recipient noted the letter showing on his dial at that moment. The system was slow and depended on the two dials staying in step, but Ronalds demonstrated that it would work over 150 metres of wire.

The war was over. Ronalds's invention could not be used from ship to ship. Britain was free from invasion. Like generals in 1919 who thought that tanks would be useful only in trench warfare and that the horse would return in triumph, they could not see into the future.

But they were probably right to do so. The telegraph as finally perfected depended on reliable electric current, a more reliable protector of wire than glass and a code of fewer than 26 characters. Faraday came up with the right means of electrical production. Gutta percha arrived in 1842, a latex from Malaya, and by then Morse had invented his code (very shortly to be refined).

Ronalds was a meteorologist and an electrical engineer. He produced an electric clock and a device (used into the twentieth century) to record air temperature and geomagnetic forces, as well as several other useful devices. He also invented the hinged tripod stand for theodolites (and now cameras), a device for identifying the location of a fire and a combined propeller and rudder for boats, among other things.

He was a notable student of meteorology, and in 1843 became the first honorary director and superintendent of the Kew Observatory. He was elected FRS in 1844.



In 1856 the Websters of Battle Abbey were in trouble, and about to leave the town. They sold a very large estate to the future duke of Cleveland and another to a lawyer named Samuel Carter. The main house was the rather ageing Rose Green, where the Glengorse estate now stands.

The picture is by Hugh Carter and is in the National Portrait gallery.

Hugh Carter was Samuel's son and Ronalds's nephew: Ronalds's sister Maria had married Samuel. At Battle Ronalds was looked after by a niece, Julia, who was one of those who signed the petition of 1866 calling for women's suffrage. Hugh was a noted artist of the nineteenth century, a midlander like his father. Neither family was Anglican, which helps to emphasise the extraordinary contribution to science (and to politics) made by dissenters in the nineteenth century

It is believed that his final experiments with the telegraph were witnessed by a 14-year old boy called Charles Wheatstone. He was one of those men instrumental in developing a fully workable telegraph. Incidentally Wheatstone was also knighted.

George Kiloh

THE FORGOTTEN PRINCESSES OF EDWARD I

Professor Louise Wilkinson *15 February 2018*

In May 1307 King Edward ordered masses to be said on the death of his daughter Joan of Acre, indicating a degree of caring and grieving not always typical of mediaeval monarchs. But Edward was not typical. He is remembered as the Hammer of the Scots and as an astute king who helped to develop Parliament. What is not so familiar is that he was a devoted husband and a loving father.

His own father Henry III is regarded as an ineffectual monarch but as a parent he was reputedly loving, clearly an attribute inherited by his son. In 1254, when Edward was 15, he was married to a third cousin, Eleanor of Castile, who was some years his junior. Eleanor is widely regarded as one of the most admirable queens consort, her virtue being that she devoted herself to domestic matters and did not interfere in political events. Edward was devoted to her and at her death famously erected crosses at the places where her body rested on the final journey from Grantham to Westminster (hence *Chère Reine*, corrupted to *Charing Cross*, it has been conjectured; but *Charing* was in use before then).

The royal couple had fifteen children, most of whom died in infancy. The eldest, Eleanor, was born in 1264 and the youngest, and only surviving son, in 1284. Other surviving daughters – and the subject of the lecture – were Joanna (1272), Margaret (1275), Mary (1279) and Elizabeth (1282). In 1299 Edward married for a second time, to Margaret, youngest daughter of Philip III of France. Margaret, in age terms, was a contemporary of her step-children who were already adults. Relations between them appear to have been cordial.

Royal princesses were commodities to be traded for dynastic purposes. While puberty, at about 12, regularly triggered the actual marriage, many were betrothed at a much younger age although they regularly remained within their families until such time as childbirth became a possibility.

Eleanor was solemnly promised in marriage in 1276 to Alfonso, the king of Aragon, and actually married by proxy in 1282. In the event she was kept in England until she was 29. This was most unusual and may have been a consequence of political disputes within Aragon or the fact of Eleanor's importance in regard to the succession to the English throne. Alternatively Edward is said to have been warmly attached to her (she may also have been his favourite) and unwilling to part with her. In fact

Alfonso died in 1291 without ever having seen his wife. Two years later she married Henry, duke of Bar-le-Duc, a luckless husband who became involved in a dispute with the French, was taken prisoner by them and died in captivity in 1302. Eleanor predeceased him in 1298, nine years before her father.

Joanna (known to history as Joan) was born in the Holy Land, hence the epithet *Acre* by which she was called. In infancy she was sent to live with her Castile grandparents and promised as marriage to the eldest son of the emperor Rudolf; this grand alliance came to nothing when the boy died. In 1290 Edward bestowed Joan, as second wife, to Gilbert, earl of Gloucester, who was a contemporary and personal friend of the king. The marriage settlement was extraordinarily favourable to the princess, directing that, on the failure of any issue of the marriage, the English estates were to be settled on Joan and her descendants by any subsequent marriage, to the exclusion of Gilbert's own relatives. And the estates were massive. Gilbert controlled 160 manors and was second in influence only to the king.

Joan lived in great style and travelled widely and extravagantly. A fabulously wealthy widow, she married – presumably for love – a squire of her household, Ralph de Monthermer. Her father was infuriated but she seems to have weathered the predictable storm and died in 1307, shortly before her father.

Margaret, the third daughter, was betrothed in 1282 and married in 1290 to John II, duke of Brabant. John was a notoriously dissolute and unfaithful husband and Margaret's life was lonely and neglected. She died in 1318. She is the saddest of Edward's daughters.

Mary, daughter number four, was described by the speaker as the naughty nun. She was earmarked for a heavenly future as a child. Born in 1278, she was professed with her grandmother queen Eleanor in 1282. She outlived all her siblings and died in 1332 aged 54. Her life as a nun was not typical. She never attained the rank of prioress, her royal status overruling any ambition. She drew a large income granted to her by her father, which enabled her to live a comfortable and independent life. She was a constant visitor at court and at the homes of her married sisters, and spent much time in pilgrimages accompanied by a princely retinue and considerable expenditure. Of all women in the kingdom she appears uniquely to have enjoyed the benefits or privilege without responsibility.

Elizabeth, the last of the five, was betrothed in 1284 at the age of two to John, son of the earl of Holland. He was sent to England to be educated (some say more as a hostage) as relations between his father and Edward were not amicable. John and Elizabeth were married in 1297 but the marriage was stormy. Initially Elizabeth refused to join her husband in Holland, disobeying her father; she went eventually but returned to England in 1300, childless, after his death in 1299. In 1302 she married Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford and spent the rest of her life in childbirth. She died in 1315, having borne eight sons and two daughters.

The individual representations of the daughters are very similar, but this one of Elizabeth looks the most interesting. It is probably contemporaneous.

Edward seems to have been genuinely a loving father, and his children seem to have returned his affection. They got on well with each other and were apparently devoted to their brother, who became Edward II. Betrothed and married at an absurdly young age, they seem to have been formidable and forceful women. Joan and Elizabeth both incurred their father's wrath but both seem to have won him over and reconciled themselves with him. Mary, a nun in name only, enjoyed a life of comfort but perhaps she regretted her single status, even when none of her sisters' marriages were enviable.

Edward and his second wife had two sons and a daughter. Eleanor, born in 1304, survived her father but died young in 1311.

David Sawyer

THE 'BLACK CRAFT' – THE STORY OF THE ROYAL NAVY'S WEST AFRICA OR 'PREVENTATIVE SQUADRON' IN ENFORCING THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE

Hugh Willing *22 March 2018*

Parliament passed the Slave Trade Act in March 1807, which formally abolished the slave trade, prohibiting British subjects from trading in slaves, crewing slave ships, sponsoring slave ships or fitting out slave ships. The Act also included a clause allowing the seizure of ships without slave cargoes on board but equipped to trade in slaves. In order to enforce this ruling the Royal Navy established the West Africa Squadron at substantial expense in 1808. The Squadron's task was to suppress the Atlantic slave trade by patrolling the coast of West Africa. But the nation had been continuously at war for 14 long years, and only a token unit was sent to carry out the initial anti-slavery patrols. It was to take nearly 60 years of untiring diplomacy and naval patrolling, and the loss of over 17,000 lives, for the Royal Navy to abolish the Atlantic slave trade.

While the 1807 Act made trading in slaves illegal, there had been little consideration about how best to enforce the legislation. A quarter of all the estimated 17 million Africans who were enslaved in the period 1500-1870, were transported across the Atlantic after 1807. The Atlantic slave trade was not extinguished in a few years, as many had hoped.

With peace in Europe from 1815, and British supremacy at sea secured, the Navy turned its attention back to the challenge and allocated more assets to the West Africa Station, now known as the 'Preventative Squadron', which for the next 50 years operated against the slavers.

The task of enforcing the act was huge, quite beyond any one nation without the co-operation of all governments concerned. But it was not a story of continual success. Patrolling the West African coast was arduous, unpleasant and frustrating, and the vessels employed on the station were often too old, too slow, and too few in number to catch the slave ships. Service on the West Africa Squadron was a thankless and overwhelming task, full of risk and posing a constant threat to the health of the crews involved. Contending with pestilential swamps and violent encounters, the mortality rate was 55 per 1,000 men, compared with ten for fleets in the Mediterranean or in home waters.

The prospect of prize money paid to naval officers and men for captured ships, and 'head money' for released slaves, may have made the duty more bearable, but very few saw any profit in the campaign. Rewards may have been few, though one cannot doubt the evangelical zeal with which many officers and men alike took up the task of anti-slavery patrolling.

HM Brig Philomel Capturing the Slaver, 'Condor'*, off the Coast of West Africa, by Richard Brydges Beechey*

The Foreign Office had to persuade other nations to enter into treaties prohibiting the slave trade and empower British naval officers to arrest the slavers. As defects in the treaties became plain, yet more diplomatic manoeuvring was needed. Unsurprisingly, this proved difficult to obtain. Up until 1842 the French paid eloquent lip service to the idea and, sensitive to any appearance of servility to the British, would not allow boarding parties to search their ships. Nor would the Americans, who were in any case too dependent on slave labour to join the campaign in these early years with any real enthusiasm. The Spanish, Portuguese, and Brazilians continued their human trafficking openly, and their colonial economies were so bound with slave labour that they had neither the will nor the power to act effectively.

The inclusion of an 'equipment clause' in new treaties – which made the presence of manacles and chains, extra planking or water storage enough to prove that a ship was engaging in illegal trading – improved success

rates greatly, and in time these nations conceded Britain the right to search their vessels. The pursuit and capture of slave ships became celebrated naval engagements, widely reported back in peacetime Britain. An expectant public could follow vivid accounts in the newspapers, while many of these 'battles' were also reported at home in watercolours and oil paintings, which helped sustain the positive reputation of the Royal Navy, while also maintaining public interest in Britain's suppression activities.

By the 1850s, around 25 vessels and 2,000 officers and men of the Royal Navy were on the station, supported by nearly 1,000 'Kroomen', mostly fishermen recruited as sailors from what are now Sierra Leone and Liberia. However by this time, with the other European nations finally persuaded to desist in the trading of slaves, the battles were taken on to the land to 'persuade' the African chiefs, who provided the slaves to the European traders, to cease the "black craft' and to turn to legitimate trade. Armed action was taken against African leaders who refused to agree to British treaties to outlaw the trade. Anti-slavery treaties were signed with over 50 African rulers.

By the end of the 1860s even the richest and most powerful of the African slavers had given way to bribery, coercion or force and induced to replace the slave trade with 'legitimate commerce'. Those who refused were crushed.

In 1869 the Preventative Squadron and the Cape Squadron were merged, but while slavery was suppressed on the West African coast it continued amongst the inland kingdoms of Africa. It may also have been abolished in America and Cuba, but it continued in East Africa between the Arab and African. It continues in different forms into the 20th century and it continues now in the trafficking of humans all over the globe for foul or exploitative purposes.

The work of the Preventative Squadron has been described as a*mongst the three or four most virtuous pages in the history of nations*. Whilst others have concluded that, had the capitalists of the 19th century not found the commercial benefits of legitimate commerce with Africa to be so lucrative in filling the trading gap left by abolition, then the slave trade would undoubtedly have continued.

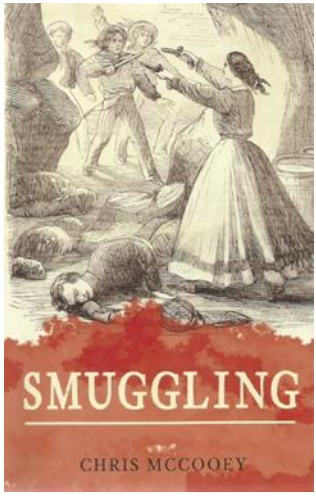
Hugh Willing

TALES, TITBITS AND TRIVIA OF KENT & SUSSEX

Chris McCooey *19 April 2018*

This was probably the most amusing talk that the Society has enjoyed for some years.

Chris McCooey is a freelance writer who has written several books and numerous pieces for newspapers. His book *Smuggling* (2012) is a masterpiece of research and presentation, for example, carefully and fully researched, which takes the reader through the reasons for engaging in contraband and the attempts – always ultimately unsuccessful – of the authorities to bring it to an end, starting with the early actions on wool and progressing through tea, tobacco, rum, brandy, whisky to other spirits. It seeks to glorify neither side, indeed dwelling for a while on the inhuman cruelty of some of the smugglers as well as on the unpleasant means of executing those found guilty by the courts.



The main theme of his talk was how he became a historian in the first place and how he found his subjects. Reading geography at Oxford, he found that he was required to submit a 15,000 word paper on a relevant topic, and chose *Smuggling on Romney Marsh*. On the advice of his tutor this was changed to *Socio-geographical aspects of illicit trading in Kent and Sussex during the eighteenth century*.

One might have thought that a consequence would have been an elaborate and long-winded approach to the topic using academic terms inaccessible to the great majority of readers, but judging from the work published in 2012 this was clearly not the case.

Much of his later work was prompted by accidental encounters with people with interesting records. For example, questioned on what his book *Kent & Sussex Scandals – Sensational, Salacious and Sad* contained he

said that his definition was not what popular newspapers might think but much deeper – boy chimney sweeps, for example, though he did name the fate of Donald McGill, the cartoonist whose work very frequently depicted exceptionally large wives, small and hen-pecked husbands and improbably developed young women, accompanied by doubles entendres. It was 'saucy' and sold well.

Despite the passing of the years and the obvious changes in public taste, McGill was judged by an Act of 1869 and found guilty of obscenity. The case appears in Chris McCooey's *Kent & Sussex scandals – sensational, salacious and sad.* The speaker had found McGill's cards while a boy. Chance encounters with people led, as another example, to the publication of some diaries for the home front of 1939-45 (*Despatches from the home front – the war diaries of Joan Strange 1939-1945)*.

Others opportunities arose, for example, from calling into churches and finding something unexpected, such as the grave of the Hokkaido missionary John Batchelor in Uckfield churchyard. The lecturer had spent a considerable time in Japan as well as in Tuvalu and other distant places, and his career as a journalist (and later writer) had begun in the latter place. By chance, too, at Oxford he had played in the scrum with the future US president Bill Clinton, whose knowledge of the rules of rugby was non-existent and who in true American football style went directly for the opposition rather than for the ball.

Tales, Titbits and Trivia of Kent & Sussex is in fact the title of one of his books, and much of the talk was taken from there, including the invention of table football by a man from Longton Green near Tunbridge Wells that was originally called simply *Hobby* but for legal reasons had to be changed – so he chose part of the scientific name of the hobby bird: *falco subbuteo*. There were also some tales of pig-keeping, related to his writing profits. Most of his other books follow this pattern.

In terms of autobiography there was a considerable amount of history in the talk, especially about how someone finds the different aspects of history and is moved to write about them, but less than might be expected of the world outside the man and his obvious interest in the odd and unexpected.

George Kiloh

FROM THE DUNG HEAP TO THE STARS: A HISTORY OF EARLY GUNPOWDER

Kay Douglas Smith *17 May 2018*

Kay Smith's lecture focused on the early history of gunpowder up to about 1500CE and how knowledge of the subject could be enhanced by experimental archaeology. As well as describing gunpowder's discovery and the history of its use in weapons she told how, using information gained from illustrations of early guns and artillery as well as depictions of gunpowder manufacture as a starting point, she and a group of enthusiasts had conducted a series of experiments, first exploring how gunpowder had been made and secondly how effective the weapons illustrated in early documents were likely to have been.

The lecture began by explaining that the early history of gunpowder was very obscure, with a lot of gaps in our knowledge. Gunpowder, or black powder, was a mix of saltpetre (potassium nitrate), charcoal and sulphur. Saltpetre was a manufactured substance which had been discovered as a by-product by alchemists working for Chinese emperors looking for the elixir of life, and it was found to be a means of preserving meat.

Traditionally it was thought that they went on to discover its use in making gunpowder, early use of which was commonly believed to have been first illustrated by a depiction of two demons holding what appear to be fire weapons, dating to about 1000CE. Joseph Needham, in his works on the history of science and technology in China, had used this and other illustrations to argue that the Chinese did not invent the gun, feeling that they manufactured not gunpowder, but proto-gunpowder or an eruptor. However, Kay Smith herself felt from her investigations that the Chinese did invent guns.

Kay Smith went on to provide early examples of the use of gunpowder in artillery. Its use started in Europe in the 1320s, but although there was evidence of this, there were no securely dated early guns or cannon. An illustration was shown dating from 1326/7 of a vase shaped 'gun' firing an arrow, and comparison to its use of the "old" technology of the longbow was drawn. It was explained that evidence of an order for guns and gunpowder pellets from Florence in the 1320s suggested that gunpowder was in use in Europe from at least that time. The first dateable piece of artillery was 'Mons Meg' in 1449; the Battle of Pavia in 1525 was the first time it was thought that gunpowder weapons had had a significant impact. By 1620 Bacon argued that gunpowder was one of

three great inventions that had led to European dominance of the world, together with printing and the compass. We were told that today's gunpowder differs from early gunpowder, of which sadly none has survived. The classic composition for gunpowder was 75% saltpetre, 15% charcoal and 10% sulphur. Use of gunpowder gradually tailed off in the nineteenth century as alternatives such as gun cotton, nitrocellulose and TNT were discovered.

To expand knowledge of early artillery, Kay and others decided to experiment to investigate whether artillery depicted in early documents could be replicated and to see how efficient they would have been. They began by making a replica of a 'gun' depicted firing an arrow in an illustration of 1326. It was found that if too much gunpowder was used the arrow shattered but if less was used the arrow gun worked well.

The next experiment focused on a replica of cannon of 1485, as found on the Mary Rose; the replica was made with the support of the Royal Armouries and the Mary Rose Trust. A stone cannonball was fired from the cannon at a replica of the side of the Mary Rose. It was discovered that the cannonball made a small entry hole, but the exit hole surprisingly was found to be much bigger and created many splinters, which would have proved lethal to those manning the opposing guns on deck. She explained that the battle aim would not have been to sink the opposing ship, but to capture it, so the casualties caused by splinters would have been useful to forward this. Further experiments had been carried out using a replica of an 18lb culverin from the Mary Rose at Shoeburyness. It was discovered that the effective range was 100-200 metres. As modern gunpowder had been used for the experiment, however, results were not entirely reliable and the team moved on to see whether they could create gunpowder as it would have been made prior to 1500CE in order to gain a more accurate picture.

The team at this stage were assisted by Peter Fleming and others from the Danish mediaeval centre which specialised in investigating mediaeval technologies. Their aim was to create gunpowder using mediaeval methods, to test differing compositions and to find out whether 'corning' (making pellets of gunpowder) had a significant impact on its explosive qualities. They informed their experiments by looking at depictions of gunpowder manufacture in the period under review. Sulphur for the experiment was obtained from Iceland and was purified simply by heating and straining trough a coarse cloth. Alder was used to create charcoal in a

traditional manner. Saltpetre (a compound of nitrogen, potassium and oxygen) had to be created, for it did not exist naturally. In order to do this

urine, dung and soil were used to make dung-heaps, kept under a wooden shelter structure as shown in an illustration of the period from Ipswich. Eventually, after about two years, saltpetre would form on the dung-heap, which, as it was soluble, could be extracted by passing water through the dung-heap materials to dissolve the saltpetre, then collecting the resulting liquid and concentrating it to leave long needle-like crystals of saltpetre.

The experiment worked, but managed to produce only a small amount of saltpetre, not nearly enough to make gunpowder in sufficient quantities – one metric tonne of processed dung gave only 150g saltpetre in the experiment! The team therefore decided to purchase sodium nitrate from Chile which had been converted to potassium nitrate in Spain to provide enough saltpetre to make the gunpowder for their experiments.

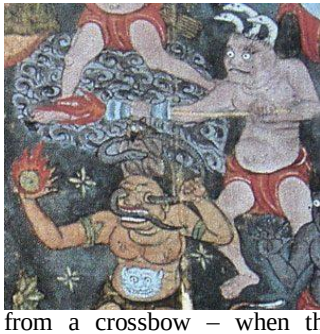
Having successfully obtained all the ingredients to make gunpowder, the team made the black powder by traditional methods, pounding it with pestles, assisted by an experienced firework maker. They then corned it, or made it into pellets, by dampening the gunpowder with alcohol (apple brandy) and pushing it through a sieve. They made gunpowder to a variety of recipes from manuscript sources – Rouen, which used 50% saltpetre; Lille, which used 55.6% saltpetre; Marcus Graecus, which used 66.7% saltpetre and Rothenborg, which used 75% saltpetre, aiming to experiment to find out which combinations were most effective. A replica of a probably 14C hand cannon found in Sweden was used for the tests, mounted in a wooden bed. The Danish Army provided radar equipment used to measure trajectory and range of missiles fired.

It was discovered that all the mixes of gunpowder worked. This was because the gunpowder was compressed by the tightness of the ball in the bore, ensuring that even the compounds with lower amounts of saltpetre worked well. This showed that how gunpowder was loaded into the gun impacted on success and was crucial, leading to new thinking on early gunpowder use. Corning was discovered to make gunpowder more reliable, but not necessarily more powerful as believed in the past.

Further experiments were carried out on incendiaries from the early modern period: fire pots, fire arrows and rockets – examples of all of which could be found depicted in mediaeval manuscripts. In the middle ages fire had been used as a weapon. A fire lance was created by tying what was in effect a Roman candle to a piece of dowel, all following a mediaeval recipe. It was found to burn for about 18 to 19 seconds

throwing fire out, being very effective.

Fire pots were also investigated. These appeared in illustrations to be round pots with multiple handles which could potentially be thrown by the use of a sling. The pots would contain a mixture of animal fat and gunpowder, lit by a rope fuse soaked in saltpetre. They would be dropped from a height on the enemy and then burst into flames. A replica made by the team was dropped from a height and successfully ignited. Examples of fire pots had been discovered at Castle Coburg and also at Corfe Castle.



A fire spear (from the Dunhuang caves, 900sCE)

A fire arrow illustrated in a 15C manuscript was copied in order to find out its effect. In its manufacture gunpowder was compressed with string under a cloth sack around the arrow to make it burn more slowly and the arrow was dipped in tar. A fuse was used to light it. The arrow would have been fired from a crossbow – when this was tried out a flame shot forward successfully from the arrow. Kay Smith went on to explain that the team had also made an experimental rocket. This was made from a rigid outer tube with highly compressed gunpowder surrounding a central void. The powder was lit by a fuse. To provide better lift the end was "choked" to concentrate the gasses further. The team also successfully made and deployed one of these, taking them "from the dung-heap to the stars".

Kay Smith spoke a little about the importance of gunpowder in securing European world domination from the 17C onwards. She explained that massive amounts of saltpetre required for gunpowder manufacture were by the 17C imported from India. To find out how it would have been made in quantities large enough, informed by a photo of saltpetre production in India in the early twentieth century, she and colleagues visited India, going first to Agra and then to Jalasar. They were shown the remains of a saltpetre factory and the original production method was demonstrated to them. Slides shown illustrated that the method used was surprisingly similar to the method they had used in their rather unsuccessful experimental small-scale production of saltpetre in Denmark. The Indian production, however, was far more successful, producing viable amounts of saltpetre.

Georgina Doherty

HENRY THE NAVIGATOR

Imogen Corrigan *21 June 2018*

Imogen began and ended by emphasising the importance of Henry the Navigator (1394-1460) being half English. His mother was Philippa, sister of Henry IV of England and daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. Her marriage to John I of Portugal had marked the 1386 Treaty of Windsor between England and Portugal, which had confirmed the Aviz family on the Portuguese throne after a campaign – which Edward II had assisted earlier in the century – to become independent of control from Castile. England's oldest active diplomatic treaty, the Treaty of Windsor, has been invoked on several occasions in modern times, notably when Britain needed to use the Azores in the Second World War and again in the Falklands War. Britain had declined support for Portugal, however, when India invaded its colonies in 1961.

Prince Henry, an English picture

The House of Aviz had the motto: 'Hunger to perform worthy deeds' and Philippa brought with her a strong ethic of monarchy's divine obligation to govern well. Under John I (Henry was his third son) the Aviz family had achieved control of a small windswept kingdom of less than a million inhabitants, with 527 miles of coastline, limited cultivation and few trees – a significant defect for a country which, through Henry the Navigator's influence, became a significant maritime power. Wood was imported from the Baltic states but Portuguese demand drove prices up.

Portugal was strongly Catholic; Henry, who was probably celibate and never married, was very religious and wore a hair shirt; he preferred a simple life at Sagres in the south to the life of the Lisbon Court or the princely 'grand tour'. His country also had Arab influences – the style

and affluence of the Moors were admired but this did not stop Edward and Henry seizing in 1415 the Moorish colony of Ceuta, a military adventure which in the long run was to prove unsustainable. Their ruthlessness is shown by their persuading their father John I to shorten the period of mourning for their mother Philippa from six months to one week in order to expedite the trip to Ceuta.

Extant records of the time show that fine clothes were important in Portuguese society, whose upper echelons were also particularly interested in manuals of how to do things. This methodical approach was to be found in Henry too, who wrote out six reasons for encouraging exploration.

It was from studying the behaviour of the sea at Sagres that Henry came to promote the study of navigation and encouraged cartography. This was at a time when there were genuine fears of being alone and out of communication on the sea; and apparently plausible rumours abounded of terrible phenomena such as the sea boiling at the equator, sea monsters and so on. Inventions such as the astrolabe, promoted by Henry, helped to counter these fears.

We do not know of Henry as a man of letters but his silence may be explained by the fact that for the Portuguese, the maps showing trade routes – his speciality – were highly prized and above all secret on commercial grounds.

His appetite whetted by the apparent success of the Ceuta venture, Henry encouraged Portuguese exploration and military adventures for acquisition of colonies. A cold, intense person, Henry was described by a contemporary as burning with ‘a hard gem-like flame’ and brought this determination, and meticulous planning, to the projects he encouraged. Part of the planning was the good diet for the crews of his ships: sardines, garlic, lentils and artichokes, the last of these thought to have special powers and represented frequently in Portuguese art and sculpture of the time. Centuries after his death, Henry became remembered as ‘the Navigator’, but was not usually an active participant in the expeditions he organised and sponsored.

The acquisition of Madeira (Portuguese for wood/trees) was typical of Henry’s operations. It was in 1418 that two Portuguese explorers in

Henry's team – Zarco and Teixeira – reported to him that they had accidentally found an island which they called Porto Santo. Henry ordered immediate colonisation but did not go himself. The acquisition of Madeira and accompanying islands, which followed two years later, was enormously significant for Portugal: it provided good grapes, had abundant water and most important of all, was covered in the trees which the home country lacked. Even better, Madeira was uninhabited, but that did not restrain Henry from reporting to Pope Martin V that he had converted the inhabitants to the true faith – for which he was made Governor of the Order of Christ!

Henry did much the same thing with the colonisation in 1432 of what were first called the Formigas islands and are now known as the Azores (Portuguese for hawk). The perceived need for colonisation, and profit, were the motives.

Henry organised 15 expeditions down the west coast of Africa 1414-24, extending Portuguese reach much further south than Cape Bojador, the most southerly point on the African coast hitherto known to sailors. The trading rewards were substantial, including slaves negotiated with local chieftains, whom the Portuguese sold on throughout Europe.

Cape Bojador, which caused so many problems for the Portuguese, is now on the coast of the disputed territory of Western Sahara.

These waters were hard to navigate and the journey was long, so Henry promoted a change in the type of boat which the Portuguese used for the African routes. He noticed that Arab traders used a lateen-rigged caravel with more acutely angled sails and a lighter hull than the traditional Portuguese square rigged Barca. This innovation, with just a 12 degree difference in the sails, made it easier to manoeuvre the boats in difficult waters and took weeks off the journey. It also enabled the Portuguese to circumvent Muslim areas to reach African markets.

The African trade and the new style of boats on African routes established the basis of maritime wealth for Portugal. Henry encouraged Portuguese navigators to perfect their use and understanding of the Volta do Mar ('turn of the sea'), which were dependable trade winds near the equator and in the Atlantic. The trick turned out to be to follow these winds and this innovation was very significant in the history of navigation.

Henry's career ended in disgrace and embarrassment, due to the fiasco of the attempted invasion of Tangier. Perhaps encouraged by his strong religious faith, and over-confident from previous successes, Henry thought that the Moroccans were an easy target. Opinion at the Portuguese Court was more prudent and hard-headed, but once his older brother Edward succeeded their father John I as King of Portugal the attack went ahead in 1437.

Everything went wrong. For example the scaling ladders were too short, and 4000 out of 7000 men deserted. The Moroccan terms involved the return of Ceuta but the Portuguese Cortes refused and as a result Henry's younger brother Ferdinand, given as a hostage, died after five years of harsh captivity.

Statue of Henry the Navigator at Oporto

Henry the Navigator died on 13 November 1460 with vast debts, but was remembered at the time as a leader who on behalf of the fledgling state of Portugal developed maritime activity and fought for the Christian faith. It might also be said of him that he was a significant influence in the development of European exploration and colonisation.

Adrian Hall

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN IN LONDON: THE BRITISH LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FOUNDING FATHER

George Goodwin *19 July 2018*

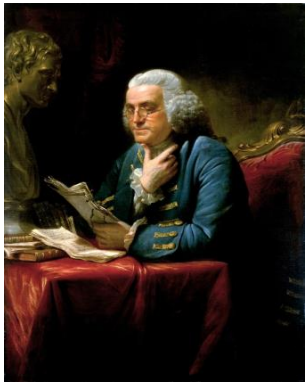
Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) was one of the Founding Fathers of the United States – the only signee of three of its founding documents – as well as a journalist, newspaper proprietor, author, inventor, scientist and diplomat. He was also an Anglophile who spent 17 years in London and was much influenced by the writings of John Locke, Daniel Defoe and Joseph Addison. George Goodwin's lively and energetic lecture, based on his book, *Benjamin Franklin in London*, focussed largely but by no means exclusively on Franklin's British connections and influences.

Franklin was born in Boston, the tenth son of an English tallow chandler and his wife, both devout puritans. His father intended him for the church but the boy wanted to go to sea. After a brief education at a good grammar school he was apprenticed at the age of 12 to his printer brother. From then on he was virtually self-taught and at 17 he ran away to Philadelphia. There he became a printer but soon branched out into journalism and newspaper proprietorship. He was sent by the then governor of Philadelphia to London for about 18 months, where he lived by typesetting in Smithfield, returning aged 20.

By the time he was 23 he was publishing the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, beginning a lifelong engagement in public affairs on behalf of Pennsylvania and other colonies. He founded the University of Pennsylvania, the American Philosophical Society, the fire service and its associated insurance industry, and a public hospital.

He also invented the lightning conductor, bi-focal lenses, a urinary catheter, a glass harmonica and other devices, never patenting anything since he believed they should be freely available. He wrote an influential book on electricity, devised the 'positive/negative' label to describe electrical current, invented a battery, organised the American postal service, designed the Franklin stove and mapped the Gulf Stream. His common law wife, Deborah, was his business partner and their joint efforts were so successful that he was able to 'retire' from business into public life at the age of 42. He became a leading member of the Assembly of Pennsylvania and in 1758 sailed to London as representative of the colony, almost being wrecked on the Isles of Scilly when pursued by a

French warship. His principal reason for travelling was to persuade Thomas Penn, absentee landlord of Pennsylvania, to agree a more rational constitutional and taxation status for the colony. This was the dominant theme of his long stay in London, which lasted until 1775 and involved acrimonious meetings with Penn (who had been briefed against Franklin), referrals to the Attorney General and Privy Council, and agreements and disagreements with successive prime ministers. Franklin's initial aim was independence not from Britain but from the Penn family; he sought to establish Pennsylvania as a British royal colony responsible for its own internal taxation.



As time went on he came to represent the interests of all the American colonies, while his adopted son William was appointed Governor of New Jersey in 1762.

He was tempted to remain permanently in Britain but, although he was eventually successful in securing American release

Franklin in London, 1767. (By David Martin; displayed at the White House, Washington)

from the unpopular Stamp Tax, his efforts to achieve satisfactory long-term constitutional and taxation arrangements for the colonies fell victim – despite considerable support – to British political in-fighting.

The Earl of Sandwich declared in the House of Lords that Franklin was an enemy and persuaded the House to pass punitive measures against the Americans. This turned Franklin into the enemy he had never aspired to become, transforming him into a fierce American patriot. A warrant for his arrest was issued, but he had already embarked for America. Surprisingly, his 17 years in Britain do not appear to have damaged relations with his wife and family, who remained in America and continued to prosper. Deborah probably would have joined him but for her fear of the sea and unfortunately died of a stroke the year before he returned.

When he arrived in London in 1758 Franklin took lodgings at 36 Craven Street, about three minutes' walk from Charing Cross. He remained there throughout, forming an enduring Platonic bond with his landlady,

Margaret Stevenson, and becoming a father-figure to her daughter, Polly. (Their house, Franklin's only surviving residence, is known as Benjamin Franklin House and is open to the public as a museum and educational centre – see benjaminfranklinhouse.org).

Alongside his political activities, Franklin maintained an energetic social, scientific and intellectual life, with each aspect seamlessly feeding into the others. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Society, was awarded its prestigious Copley Medal for his work on electricity, was given honorary doctorates by Oxford and St Andrews and was a popular and influential participant in London's coffee house society. Among his many friends was the philosopher and *bon vivant* David Hume, with whom he stayed a month in Edinburgh. When Franklin died of pleurisy in 1790 at the age of 84 he was honoured on both sides of the Atlantic.

Alan Judd

Franklin is pictured on the highest denomination note of the US currency.

BDHS RESEARCH GROUP 2017-18

The Research Group meets three or four times a year and in between collaborates by way of email and telephone. It is very informal and new members are always welcome. The specific geographic area that we cover is of Battle itself plus neighbouring parishes up to two away, but works may cover a wider Sussex area.

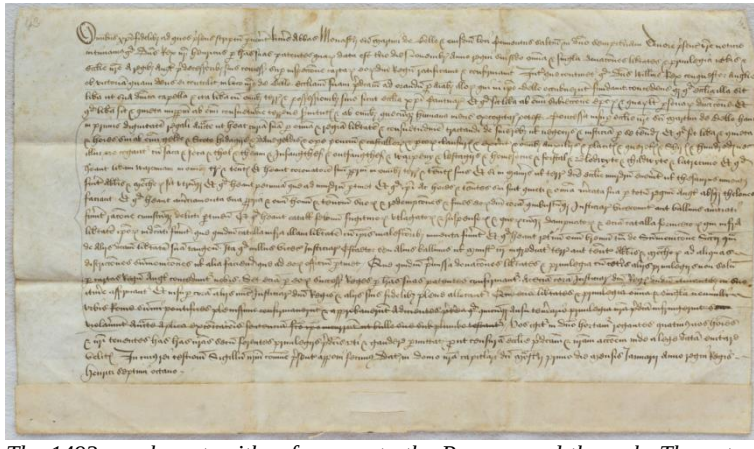
Specific interests of the group are:

Neil Clephane-Cameron: military history;
Gina Doherty: local authors and medical history;
Keith Foord: early history of Eastern Sussex until the Reformation;
Adrian Hall: modern history.
Sarah Hall: post-Reformation local history;
George Kiloh: local social history.

We try to work as a team to help each other if a subject gets tricky and all ask for cross checks, critical comment and grammar and spelling checks on their work – before we get as far as publishing on line in the BDHS *Collectanea*. But occasionally all go 'off-piste' to deal with specific issues that attract attention and sometimes produce joint work: an example of the latter is the recent article from Adrian, Sarah and Keith *Brownes, Montagues and Recusancy 1538-1629* about the Brownes' retention of Catholicism. Neil and Keith have also re-written the first part of Chapter 16 of the BDHS book *1066 and the Battle of Hastings – Preludes, Events and Postscripts*, which has achieved a third printing.

This year George has produced a number of papers on local 'big houses' and their families as well as encyclopaedic listings of *WW2 Civilian Deaths in and from the Battle District*, *Military Deaths from the Battle District 1939-45*, and of local MPs going back to 1334, plus reviews of inns, doctors, breweries and banks in Battle and roads in the wider district.

Gina has written about the author Sheila Kaye-Smith and wrote about the finding of a small parchment in the BDHS archive which is a 'Passport' from 1493 setting out the Liberties of Battle Abbey and Inhabitants of Battle. She is now working on some follow ups in between being the active Archivist for the Society and will be looking at the Napoleonic era barracks on Whatlington Road with Neil.



The 1493 parchment, with references to the Pope scored through. The actual version measures 32 x 18.5 cm.

Adrian and Sarah have written *Edmund Langdon and his World – General Practitioner in Astronomie and Physicke*, published by BDHS, an extraordinary piece of detective work about an astrologer who produced 'tables' about the best times to treat particular diseases and the part of the body to be treated. And on *Collectanea* can be found their *Two Years in the Life of Philip Papillon* describing what was found in the copy (business) book of Philip Papillon, of the family that later owned Crowhurst Park, donated in 2017 to Battle Museum of Local History.

Keith has had an in-depth look at how the rapes of Sussex developed with a lot of detail about Hastings Rape in *The Rapes of Sussex, Hundreds of Hastings Rape and the people of the Rape of Hastings to 1538*, and taking a leap forward of many centuries wrote *An American at Brede Place: Stephen Crane* about one of America's foremost realistic writers who briefly lived at Brede Place. Looking critically at the Norman Conquest he has also produced an interesting discussion paper *The changing British Interpretations of the effects of the Norman Conquest* which covers the 952 years from 1066 to today's interpretations.

If you would like to join in please talk to one of the group. We are moving on to particularly look at local family histories and you may be able to add something interesting. See http://battlehistory.btck.co.uk/Collectanea-OurVirtualLibrary/CollecteanaTopicIndex for a selection of papers by the group as well some donated papers and links totalling nearly 100.

Keith Foord

PROGRAMME OF LECTURES 2018-2019

All lectures will begin at 7.30 pm in the Memorial Hall, in the Wynne Room unless otherwise shown. The AGM on 15 November will begin at 7 p.m.

Thursday 20 September 2018
THE MAKING OF GRAY'S ANATOMY
Dr Ruth Richardson

Thursday 18 October 2018 ***in the Main Hall***
Commemoration Lecture
THE PRIVATE LIVES OF THE TUDORS
Dr Tracy Borman

Thursday 15 November 2018
Annual General Meeting at 7 pm followed by
CITIZEN CLEM
Professor John Bew

Thursday 13 December 2018
CAPABILITY BROWN **followed by Christmas party**
Tom Oliver

2019

Thursday 17 January 2019
HISTORICAL STORIES OF BATTLE
The BDHS Research Group

Thursday 21 February 2019
CHARLES THE MARTYR
Professor Jackie Eales

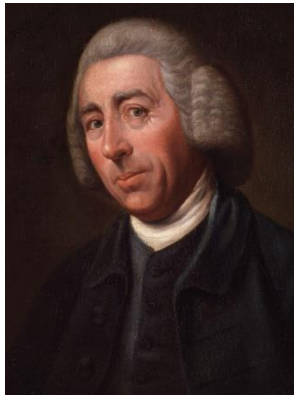
Thursday 21 March 2019
HOW TO BUILD A MEDIAEVAL HOUSE
Stephen Howard Gray

Thursday 18 April 2019
THE SYKES-PICOT AGREEMENT
James Barr

Thursday 16 May 2019
Springford Memorial Lecture
WHO *REALLY* BUILT THE CLIFTON SUSPENSION BRIDGE
Julia Elton

Thursday 6 June 2019 ***in the Main Hall***
D-Day 6 June 1944: the Allied assault on Normandy
Brig. Hugh Willing

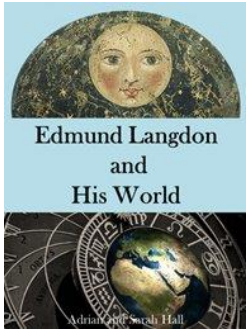
Thursday 18 July 2019
Robertson Memorial Lecture
THE FIRST MOON LANDING: THE UNTOLD STORY
Dr David Baker



Lancelot 'Capability' Brown; anonymous painter.
See lecture list for 13 December 2018.

THE SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS

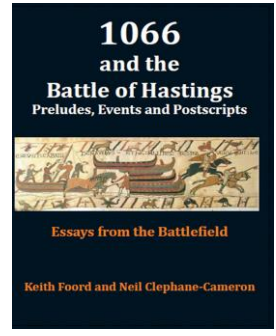
(Receipts of all sales other than through commercial outlets are to the Society's funds)

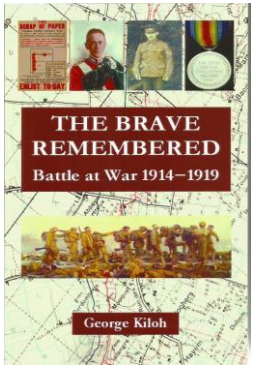


Edmund Langdon and His World, by Adrian and Sarah Hall, an investigation into Edmund Langdon of the seventeenth century, a doctor of physicke and astrologer, and one of Battle's more unusual characters.

£10, available at BDHS meetings or by contacting the authors.

1066 and the Battle of Hastings – Preludes, Events and Postscripts by Keith Foord and Neil Clephane-Cameron, was produced for the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings. It takes a fresh and logical view of the historic, dynastic and political factors which brought Harold and William to their epic encounter on 14 October 1066. A 'best seller' at Rother Books, English Heritage's Battle Abbey shop and at Battle Museum of Local History. Packed with facts, interpretation and illustration, the work which draws on the best analyses contains many original new maps and diagrams of the medieval Sussex coastline. *£14 + pp£2.80 if required. (Members £12.50 at meetings). Available to order from some on-line booksellers.*





The Brave Remembered by George Kiloh, published 100 years after the outbreak of WWI, is a poignant and deeply researched book, giving a local but very typical picture of the effects of the Great War on a small town. Against a compelling illustrated account of the progress of the War, the book tells the story of some 500 Battle men who served in the Great War and explains what happened to them. The stories include men from all walks of life, be they the heir to the last Webster baronet of Battle Abbey or a labourer who gave his address as 'in a barn'.

£12.50 p&p £2.80 if required. (Members £10 at meetings).