

# Times Past

*Storrington & District Museum  
Preserving Yesterday for Tomorrow*

*NEWSLETTER • Issue No.13 • December, 2002*

## **CURATOR'S CORNER**

**T**he last few weeks have been exceptionally busy on all fronts. We now [thankfully] have a volunteer to take control of the property database, one of our "Millennium" projects which is beginning to see the light of day. Whereas I had previously envisaged this particular database being an old-fashioned card index only, as we do not have the space for electronic access in the Museum, our volunteer has managed to persuade his computer to produce cards for the index so that we will hopefully end up with the index in two formats, building a resource for the future. On that basis, would someone now care to volunteer to take on the names index? I'm sure that our property volunteer would be happy to share his discovery with someone who is willing to deal with the names in a computer database, rather than writing out cards by hand.

A large portion of the museum's Library is now available for use **IN THE MUSEUM ONLY**. Please, under no circumstances, should ANY books [or any other material] be removed from the Museum room.

We are always looking for willing hands to take on

various tasks in the Museum. Even if you have previously told us that you are willing to offer help, if you have not heard from us PLEASE ask again. We are all human, and pieces of paper do get covered up by other pieces of paper. We still need more stewards to replace others who have had to give up for whatever reason. If you already steward but are bored just sitting there [why not read the catalogue to "gen up" on the collections?] there are endless indexing tasks that we can give you - just leave a note for Joan or myself via the usual "Enquiries" system - we will always get back to you.

I know that you have heard this before, but we WILL arrange a system of training for stewards as soon as it is practicable. In the meantime PLEASE read the Stewards Book whenever you are on duty - this is updated regularly - at present we are still finding newly-deposited items with no accompanying paperwork and the Book Sales records never seem to tally with the record in the book. We do appreciate all donations to the Museum and without the paperwork it is not possible to properly thank those kind people who chose to entrust their treasures to us.

### ***Eric Linfield M.A., M.Ed. 1921 - 2002***

It's my sad duty to report the recent death in August of 'out-of-county' member Eric Linfield at the age of 81. In spite of living near Bristol for the past forty years, Eric's roots remained firmly in Sussex.

He took a very keen interest in the development of the museum, and we are particularly grateful to him for his generous donations of 98 books about Sussex, which forms the nucleus of our fledgling library.

Eric was born in Henfield in 1921, but a serious accident to his father in December 1922 whilst felling a tree at Woodmancote, meant his childhood was particularly difficult. Being a very bright pupil, he obtained a rural scholarship to Steyning Grammar School in 1931, and after war service, eventually managed a scholarship to Cambridge University before entering the teaching profession. From 1963 - 1984, he was a senior lecturer in education at the teacher training college at Newton Park in Bath.

He had a long interest in local and family history, and I am particularly going to miss his infectious enthusiasm and loyal support - as, no doubt, there are many of the 48 organisations to which he belonged! On behalf of our society, I would like to express our condolences to his widow Sheila and his two daughters Janet and Julia and their respective families.

Malcolm Linfield

## *Charles Henry Frewer 1919 -2002*

We were all very sad to learn of the sudden death of our loyal Friend and regular museum steward Charles Frewer on 30th September, 2002. Charles, son of the Rev. Lancelot Osmund and Valentine Audrey Frewer, (nee Pickersgill-Cunliffe) was born on 23 May 1919 and baptised by his father on 29 June 1919 in Ashington Church as his brother and sister were. He grew up in Ashington Rectory. With his elder brother and two sisters born "on either side of him". His brother born in 1916 was given his mother's family name, being christened John Cunliffe Frewer, but sadly died at the age of nine. Of his sisters who lived in Canada, only Mary survives. His father had been curate of Ashington from 1894 - 6 and was Rector of Ashington with Bunton and Sequestrator of Warminghurst, from 1909 -1936. Charles knew everybody who was anybody in the district during the pre-war years. His early life included tennis parties, cricket, picnics, scouting activities, and the usual social life of the local children of professional parents.

Charles was educated first at The Gables in Seaford, later at Bexhill and then went to Lancing College where he learnt to play the organ. He left Lancing in 1938 and went on to read History and Classics at Oxford, but his academic studies were interrupted by WWII, when he received call-up papers for the Royal Army Ordnance Corps. During the war, he was in a building in London which collapsed on top of him and he was badly wounded, from which he never fully recovered. He told me that it was during his spell in hospital that he met Miss Maud Petre who was doing voluntary work there, and although she had lived in Storrington for many years in Mulberry House and was a prominent local resident and parish councillor, this was the first time he had made her acquaintance, which he thought a very odd coincidence.

He resumed his Oxford studies, and rowed for his college, a sport in which he retained a life-long interest and always kept detailed records of the Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race. When Oxford lost all their records in a fire, Charles was able to restore them from his private notes. He achieved his BA and later MA and after one or two teaching posts went to Culford House at Bury St Edmunds, where he remained for the next 34 years, retiring 19 years ago to his parents' home in Storrington.

Retirement began a new life for him where he could indulge his many interests and hobbies. He was a keen stamp and coin collector and loved travel, often going abroad to sites of historical interest. He was a gourmet

and loved nothing better than a good meal with a fine bottle of wine with friends. He renewed acquaintance with his Alma Mater, and became a guide at Lancing College Chapel, taking this duty twice a month. A keen bridge player, he joined the Bridge Club, and the Sandgate Preservation Society: no sooner was the Storrington and District Museum established in April 2000, Charles was there, joining the Friends of the Museum and doing duty as a voluntary steward, and attending their monthly winter lectures. He had a very special knowledge and interest in the English Civil War, and collaborated with Patrick Morrah and Frank Kitson on their Civil War books. It was this special interest and his knowledge of Ashington that gave us the idea of asking him to give talks sadly this point was never actually reached as his untimely death intervened before it could be suggested.

Charles was a member of the Lunch Club, which met on one Sunday a month in the Old School for a meal. He used to say that he relied on the W.I. for his weekly shopping; he went to the Village Hall every Friday morning where they hold their weekly W.I. Market and Charles would eagerly stock up on their delicious home-made products.

Charles always had a fund of local anecdotes and was often to be seen chatting to people on his way to the shops. I had a most interesting afternoon with him

Some years ago, when researching one of my Storrington books, when he was extremely helpful with information and memories of local people. He also told me that he made some very good blackberry ice-cream which his mother loved.

Although he never married, Charles enjoyed family life and was a much-loved brother, uncle, great uncle and shortly before his death, attended the christening of his great-great niece.

Charles' death was sudden and unexpected; he complained of feeling unwell in the evening and phoned his good neighbour to ask if she thought he should call the doctor. The next morning after three unanswered phone calls to enquire how he was, two neighbours went into his bungalow and found him peacefully tucked up in bed looking as though he was asleep. He had died during the night.

We shall miss Charles Frewer very much, as I am sure all his friends in the other organisations which he supported so enthusiastically, will do.

## *What's in a road name? Monastery Lane*

*by Simon Mole*

History in Storrington is not only evidenced by its older buildings and church records but also by its road names, place names and other signs of the past.

A case in point is Monastery Lane, at the southern end of which you will find the Priory of Our Lady of England. The monastery building is home to the local community of Canons Regular of Premontr  part of an order of canons originally founded in 1121 by St Norbert, whose Rule was based on that of St Augustine of Hippo. Premontr  lies in the north-east of France near Reims.

From their inception the "Premonstratensians" expanded rapidly, spreading to England by 1147 where over 30 houses were soon established. By 1350 the "White Canons" were administering to the needs of 150 English parishes. However, the existence of the order in England came to an abrupt halt in 1536, when its 40 houses were confiscated under Henry VIII's edicts which resulted in the "Dissolution of the Monasteries".

A similar later fate was met by the order in France in 1789 when, following the French Revolution, all its abbeys and priories were seized, including the "Mother House" of Premontr .

1856 saw the rebirth of the order, with guidance from the Curd of Ars, in part. This time the order was centred on Frigolet, south of Avignon, on the Rhone. Again the order expanded rapidly, spreading into neighbouring countries, then to England in 1871 with the first house at Crowle in Lincolnshire.

Problems loomed up again in France in 1880, with the order again facing government inspired anti-clericalism, which led to the evacuation to England of the community of canons based at Frigolet. The canons arrived at Newhaven on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1882 but this time good fortune moved in the canons' favour. The Duke of Norfolk, whose family has a strong Roman Catholic tradition, heard of the "Norbertines" plight from, amongst others, Princess Eugenie, the exiled widow of Napoleon III. The Duke had just regained the Lordship of the Manor of Storrington with its extensive lands and generously gave over a large parcel of these to the  migr  community. The endowment, in time, led to the construction of the Priory, Cloister and Church buildings, largely as they now stand.

Today, throughout the world, the life and work of the order of "White Canons" continues much as it has done over the centuries priests living in community under vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, serving the needs of others. Storrington's Norbertine community not only serves the needs of the Roman Catholic Parish of Storrington but is a highly valued diocesan resource, helping in other Sussex parishes, schools, prisons, etc. There is also an ecumenical dimension to the work of the community, especially as over the past few years the Prior and Community have generously hosted and made available its buildings for functions organised by Christians in Storrington.

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### ***NOTICES FOR NOVEMBER "TIMES PAST"***

Correspondence and articles are very welcome and should be sent to  
E.P.Beaumont, "Woodside", Melton Avenue, Storrington. RH 20 4 BH

Our lecture for December is on the "History of Amberley Museum" by Brin Thomas; Thursday, December 12th. Wine and mince pies are included in the  2 cost. A Christmas gift table (for which contributions will be welcome) and the return of the Flower Fairies display will also be available.

**LATE NEWS** - As Martin Roberts is currently in hospital, the production of this newsletter has been undertaken by Kenads Printer. Have a speedy recovery Martin!!!

### ***SERIOUSLY WANTED***

More stewards to man the museum between the hours of 2 and 4 every day except Monday. If we cannot find more we may have to close on one other day. Michael Taylor, our stewarding organiser (742218) or Philip Beaumont (744388) await calls from new volunteers or existing Friends who may like to do another stint or, perhaps, go on a reserve list.

The annual Christmas dinner will take place on December 19th at the Roundabout Hotel; cost  18. More details from Gina on 01903 892210

## *Henry Bishop of Wiston*

One of the more fascinating characters to emerge from the Bishop [Bisshopp etc] family of Parham and Wiston has to be Henry Bishop who appears to have served possibly both sides in the Civil War and who went on to become Postmaster General under Charles II, his main "claim to fame" being the invention of the postmark. [This is the same Henry Bishop who is the subject of the local "legend" when he hid in a cupboard with his pet dog to escape a Parliamentary search party]

His career as Postmaster is fairly well documented but, although there are a number of references to his experiences in the Civil War, most of these can be traced back to one or two contemporary sources. The fullest published account that I have traced in contained in "The Story of Henfield" by Henry de Candole MA [Cambridge, 1947]

The family tree in "Parham in Sussex" [available at West Sussex Record Office but privately published and long out of print] shows Henry Bisshopp 1605-1691/2. On p.61 it states "Henry Bisshopp of Henfield a younger brother of Sir Edward also joined the Royalist cause but, losing heart, determined to try to make peace with Parliament ... Henry Bisshopp lived until 1691 when, at his death, he was buried in Henfield Church"

"Sussex in the Great Civil War 1642-1646" [Stanford, Chiswick Press 1910] pp125-6 "Henry Bishop of Henfield third son of Sir Thomas begged on 1 Oct 1646 to compound for delinquency in bearing arms. In January 1645 being at Bristol, and resolved, to make his peace with the Parliament, he got a pass to London for the wife of Mr. Netherbury, a brewer with which he was quartered, to use means thereto. She did not return within 6 weeks, so the petitioner took ship to Virginia and lived on his plantation there, 'til he returned with a letter from the Colony of that Country to the Speaker. He was discharged by Order of Parliament 13 Feb 1647 and on the earnest desire of the Colony of Virginia, signified in a letter from the Grand Assembly. There is no mention of a fine". A slightly expanded version of this account appeared in Sussex Archaeological Collections XIX, p. 107 which reveals that he took the Covenant 1 October 1646 before praying to be admitted to composition.

After his return to this country [and indeed almost certainly before] Henry Bishop was an associate of John Wildman who was heavily involved with the Cromwellian "civil service". A good account of his career was written by Maurice Ashley [Cape 1947. Ashley has written numerous books on the Civil War period] and this book contains a very detailed account of the allegations of mismanagement which were made against Bishop with regard to his career as Postmaster General and gives a vivid impression of the chicanery which was rife in government during that period [some would say nothing changes !] In view of his associations with Wildman I feel fairly sure that Henry Bishop almost certainly was either a "double agent" during the Civil Wars or swapped sides on several occasions. The apparent lack of any fine or sequestration levelled against him by the Cromwellian government appears to bear out this assumption, when other individuals were heavily punished for taking up arms in the Royalist cause. His name has also been linked with other local figures who allegedly played "both sides against the middle" [*English Historical Review* ca. 188 81. I have also come across a reference to both Henry Bishop and John Wildman being involved in plots against Cromwell, Bishop there being referred to as a Leveller ! The Royalist Composition Papers give details of his properties at Henfield and other properties in Middlesex which came to him via his wife [*Royalist Compounding Papers P'* series Vol. 8 p312,311,315,317]

Clearly there is considerable scope for further research into the career of Colonel Henry Bishop. Was he really a Leveller? Did he really act as an *agent provocateur* within the Royalist side? Were the machinations which led to the accusations of mismanagement in his office as Postmaster general just the everyday chicanery rife at that time, pure incompetence or an unscrupulous attempt to feather his own nest? In many ways he seems to come over as a very "modem" character, far removed from the image of the chivalrous, gentlemanly Cavaliers of popular perception.

## THE MEYNELLS OF GREATHAM (*Part two*)

The great partnership was that of the genius of Francis Thompson, an otherwise lost soul, and kindness of the Meynells.

They encouraged him and weaned him off his addiction to laudanum long enough for him to write his finest works.

Both "Daisy" and "The Hound of Heaven" were composed while Thompson was in the care of the gentle brothers at Storrington Priory.

Francis Thompson's idleness, unpunctuality and disaster proclivity played havoc with the domestic and business life of the Meynells with their seven children and large house in London. Alice told their friend, William Scawen Blunt, who had invited them and Thompson to his estate at Southwater, that they could not allow Francis to stay over-night because of his habit of setting light to his bed.

One such disaster occurred at his lodgings when he put his coat, with his pipe still alight, in the wardrobe. The fire that ensued woke him up and, in trying to put out the fire, he knocked over a lamp, thus setting the room alight. On another occasion, Wilfred received a telegraph from the police telling him that Francis had been knocked down by a hansom cab due to his habit of wandering across the busy London streets. He frequently had to change his lodgings; one landlady regarded him as a mental case; another showed Everard Meynell the worn circle on her rug caused by the poet's habit of walking round the table all night.

Wilfrid kept a tight grip on Francis' expenses and spending money, for any surplus was likely to end up with a chemist in exchange for laudanum. So Francis was to buy only tobacco for his pipe and paper for his poetry. Occasionally he would have extra expenses such as needing a new pair of boots; one having a hole caused by putting his feet so close to the fire that it caught alight. Thompson worshipped Alice but rather as a mother figure, perhaps replacing his natural mother whom he had so hurt long ago. He was not alone in admiration of Mrs. Meynell; other authors including Coventry Patmore and George Meredith wrote passionately to Alice. Wilfrid was undisturbed by the passions aroused by his wife; he was proud of her talents and attractions and knew her to be a woman of impeccable virtue. In any case he, more than most, would have been aware of the literary indulgences of Victorian poets.

Mrs Hawkins assured me that the family took a lively interest in public affairs, Wilfrid for professional reasons, but were never attached to a particular party except in the case of Francis, the youngest son. On the great issues of the 19th and 20th centuries they were "progressive". Thus, they supported Irish Home Rule. (Their friend William Blunt was imprisoned for supporting the Irish Land League). They opposed the Boer War seeing Britain as the aggressor. Mimi's

husband, now General Butler, and C.O. in the Cape, returned to Britain because he disapproved of Britain's policy in South Africa. The wars of 1914 and 1939 were clearly the result of German imperialism and the Meynells, except for Francis in the Great War, supported the official policy. Alice supported women's franchise but disapproved of the militant activities of the Pankhurst family. She took part, with her daughters, in several demonstrations, and Olivia sold suffragette papers at street corners.

The Meynells were always supporters of the rights and welfare of the poor, and Wilfrid seldom passed a beggar without giving a greeting and a coin. It was always morality that formed the basis of their judgements rather than popular opinion.

Almost inevitably, the children inherited many of the talents of their parents and forebears. Writers, painters and poets proliferated although only Viola wrote professionally. But it was the "baby" of the family, Francis, who attracted the most attention during his stormy life. He was the exception to the "non-party" rule. His left-wing credentials included a food-and-water strike while in prison for refusing military service in the Great War, editorship of "The Communist" and "The Daily Herald", active support for the General Strike of 1926 and smuggling jewels for the beleaguered Russian government after 1917.

The dominant figure in his life was George Lansbury who was leader of the Labour Party in the '30's and who was almost worshipped in the East End. A cartoon showing J.H. Thomas, leader of the railway union, as Judas, cost Francis a bankrupting £10,000 in 1926. Like many pacifists of the 1914-18 war, Francis saw the rise of German Nazism as morally insupportable and he became an active anti-Fascist as, first, Italy, then Japan and finally Spain showed that the dictators had to be fought.

By 1939 he was already over military age but his anxiety to play his part was frustrated by his reputation as an agitator, and he found difficulty in finding the right niche for his talents. Ultimately he became adviser on rationing of food and clothing and, for his outstanding work in fairly and efficiently distributing Britain's scarce civilian resources, he was awarded a knighthood.

Wilfrid and Alice acquired the Homestead with its 80 acres in 1911, initially as a holiday home. Their daughter Madeline (Mrs. Percy Lucas), already had a home nearby. Now in their sixties, Wilfrid and Alice probably felt the need for quieter times than were possible in their much-visited London home. But visitors still came, usually walking from Pulborough station.

The state of the farmhouse can well be imagined and its facilities and accommodation had to be improved if it was to contain family gatherings. A large library was

added including a large 17th century style open fireplace. The cowshed was converted into "Shed Hall" for Viola where she could concentrate on her already extensive writing.

Much of the furniture was bought by Alice at Pulborough Repository including three chairs (10 shillings), an iron bedstead (9 shillings) and a lawnmower "knocked down" for five shillings.

A cottage was built nearby but Wilfrid was not pleased with it so, being an incurable punster, he named it "Regreatham".

Many famous people visited Humphreys Homestead including Maxim Litvinov, then an exile from Tsarist Russia and later Stalin's foreign minister, Hillaire Belloc and sculptor Eric Gill. Two visitors stayed for six months in Shed Hall; D.H. Lawrence and his wife, Frieda Richtofen, sister of the famous "Red Baron", German air ace of the Great War. The Lawrences had been loaned Shed Hall while David wrote "The Rainbow". Periods of quiet were interspersed with noisy quarrels so that Viola may well have regretted her generosity. Later, Lawrence wrote "England, my England" in which the main characters were thinly-disguised and distorted Meynells. When Francis charged Lawrence with gross ingratitude and libellous intent, Lawrence made no reply but in a letter to a mutual friend he wrote, "I didn't want to see the Meynells ever again, any of them."

The days after 1911 were tinged with sadness. Francis' pacifism and left-wing politics caused concern but without reproach. Freedom of conscience was an attribute highly treasured in the family. Alice's health declined under the weight of her massive output of poetry and prose as well as exhausting lecture tours in America. Anticipating her end, her last poem was called "The Poet to the Birds", the last verse saying:

"My human song must be  
My human thought. Be patient 'till tis done.  
I shall not hold my little peace; for me  
There is no peace but one."

Wilfrid lived on into his 96th year after being awarded the C.B.E. for his services, not just to literature but also for his help to young and impecunious writers. Poet, publisher and punster; he was, above all and content to be one who served those more talented than himself; Francis Thompson, of course, but above all Alice his Boswell to her Johnson.

His over-riding joy was in his wife and family as his own epitaph reveals:-

"Think of me only when you laugh;  
And if you write my epitaph,  
No name or date be there, but rather,  
Here lies Her Husband and Their Father."

Wilfrid Meynell's remains lie in Storrington Catholic Cemetery.

*E.P. Beaumont*

## WILLIAM PENN AND THE BLUE IDOL

One of the most important and least acknowledged of our local late-residents is William Penn (1644 - 1718), who lived for six years at Warminghurst, from where he and his family would go to worship at the Quaker Meeting House strangely named "Blue Idol" in Old House Lane, Coolham.

Penn was a Quaker (correctly, "The Society of Friends") who was persecuted by both Anglicans and Puritans, being sent down from Oxford and imprisoned in the Tower for his writings which advocated religious tolerance ;a very revolutionary theory in the 17th century. His father was an admiral in Cromwell's fleet but William was rewarded for his friendship to the future (Catholic) James II by a grant of a huge area in the New England colonies. He called it Pennsylvania and hoped to set up a society of tolerant Christians. His constitution included the abolition of capital punishment. Sadly, his scheme was impractical and William returned to England after two years. The house at Warminghurst was sold and demolished by the purchaser who hated Quakerism.

### The Blue Idol Meeting House at Coolham.

This lovely old building, its ancient timbered-framed walls with plaster infilling, roofed with Horsham stone, has had a chequered history of use and neglect. Today it is set in among pleasant lawns and has the serenity of a building that is loved and cared for.

We do not know when it was first built but it is estimated that the oldest part dates back to 1580. This part of the building extends from the meetinghouse end as far as the library nook in the sitting room, which was the kitchen in the old farmhouse.

In the years before the Toleration Act of 1688, many Friends (Quakers) in the Horsham district suffered persecution for maintaining their right to worship freely in their own way. It was from among these that the meeting at Thakeham was first started. In 1691 the Friends of this part of Sussex decided on a suitable place in the Parish of Shipley for the regular holding of a meeting for worship. The meeting at "Shipley (alias) Thacom", as one minute has it or at "Thacom in Sussikes," according to another, had a precarious existence between 1691 when it was founded, and 1793 when it was closed. The numerical strength of Friends had been seriously depleted when some 60 Sussex families emigrated with William Penn in 1682 to found his Utopian colony in Pennsylvania. From 1793 the regular meeting of Friends was discontinued.

"Shipley," "Little Slatters" and "Thakeharn" are all names by which this Meetinghouse was known but the origin of its present name "Blue Idol" is far from clear. Many explanations have been put forward; some with a basis of history others purely conjectural. One theory suggests that timber from one of Penn's ships was used in the construction of the Meeting House and that somewhere in the building there was a ship's figurehead. As the Meetinghouse was closed from 1793 until 1869 and that it was colour washed blue it is possible that the name Blue Idle Meeting house - the word idle then being widely used for any unoccupied building or silent factory. The Meetinghouse was re-opened in 1869 and holds regular meetings every Sunday.

John Shaw converted the original farmhouse into a Quaker Meetinghouse in 1691, by the removal of the first floor. The building has a gallery with 2 attic bedrooms for Friends coming from afar. William Penn, who lived at Warminghurst, attended this meeting between 1676 and 1693. Often he would ride over on horseback while his wife Guliema and their children rode in the family coach drawn by a team of oxen. His daughter Letitia is buried in the small burial ground attached to the meetinghouse

There are plans (2002) to establish a memorial garden and foundation to William Penn in order to preserve this historic site. There are, also, plans to attract visitors by providing better car and picnic facilities; to landscape the garden; to up-date toilet facilities; and to have a permanent memorial to Penn by way of a display in the barn. Total costs could amount to £250,000, to be raised partly by visitors' subscriptions.

We are grateful to Mr Michael Marriage for his help in compiling this article.

## *Storrington's Book of Remembrance*

When the Friends' Chairman asked me if I would contribute something for this issue of 'Times Past' I immediately jumped at the chance (in theory, if not literally!) This was for three reasons. Firstly: it would enable me to tell those of our Friends who were not aware of the above project something about it. Secondly: it would give me a chance to offer my grateful thanks to all those connected with the Museum who have already given me their help and advice. Chief among those, of course, is the ubiquitous and

indefatigable Joan Ham, together with old time resident Eric Hues, our former Hon. Sec. Malcolm Linfield, Ann Rapley and Joyce Chacksfield. Finally: it might serve to elicit some additional information to fill in missing details in my research.

The motivation for the project stemmed from a realization by members of the Storrington Branch of the Royal British Legion as we gathered round the War Memorial at last year's Remembrance Service. Despite the Exhortation delivered at all our meetings ending with the words 'We will remember them', very few of us knew anything about let alone remembered - Storrington's Servicemen who had sacrificed their lives for their country in the two World Wars. We felt, too, that this would apply to everyone in the village, except for the few who are descended from our War dead and are still living here.

We decided that the best method of ensuring that their contribution would not be forgotten would be to produce a Book of Remembrance. This book would give details of each man's ship, regiment or other Service Unit, date and place of birth and his connection with our village. It would also contain his marital status and details of the action in which he was killed, his place of burial and where his death overseas is commemorated. Finally we thought that where possible a photograph of the man should be included.

We recognised from the outset that only a handsome leather-bound book of the highest quality, containing archival paper, would be suitable. This would involve not a little expense - certainly greater than the Branch itself could fund - and steps were taken at once to enlist support. The Parish Council, a little to our surprise, was unable to offer any help at the present time. However, the West Sussex County Council and local organisations such as the Lions Club and Rotary have given, or promised, financial backing. This, together with the thousand pounds that our own members have already raised, ensures the project's viability.

Publicity has been given to the project in the local Press and in the Church Magazine and the help of local residents in providing detailed information on the War

casualties concerned has been widely canvassed. Unfortunately, our appeal has not produced as much data as I had hoped. However, the usual source for research on the dead of the two World wars, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, has been most helpful. The West Sussex Records Office is the repository for much of the information on the Royal Sussex Regiment. This was therefore another place to look, since so many of the names on our memorial served in the Royal Sussex Regiment. For soldiers who served in other regiments: their Regimental Associations have in some cases been able to provide valuable facts. In a few cases research has already been undertaken by Joan Ham or other local residents. Also: the article on our local Battle of Britain hero Carl Davis, written by Steve Holbrook in a previous issue of 'Times Past' has proved of great value. The fact that Martin Roberts has nobly undertaken the printing of the book is also a great boon.

At first it appeared that quite a few names of war casualties were missing from the Memorial. Several names on the Roll of Honour in the Storrington Club and on the Roll in the Roman Catholic Church were not on the Memorial. This apparent anomaly, however, disappeared when I found that most related to men living in adjacent parishes, rather than Storrington itself. In four cases, however, the men concerned lived in the village and it is hoped that a way can be found to inscribe their names on the Memorial too.

At the initiation of the project it was hoped that the Book could be completed in time for its dedication at this year's Remembrance Service at St. Mary's, where a display case is being prepared for that purpose.. The research involved, however, has inevitably proved more time-consuming than I anticipated. I need to spend more time at the P.R.O. - and on another source that (being a virtual 'Computer Illiterate') I have not yet investigated -namely the Internet. With the help of my daughter and -dare I say it - my eleven year old granddaughter, I hope soon to remedy this omission! In any event we are now thinking in terms of a date in May around the anniversary of V.E. Day, when the 'great and the good' and all those who have helped in

providing information could be invited to witness the dedication of the Book. This would seem to be a fitting conclusion to a project which, it is hoped, will fill a most important gap in the history of our Parish.

If funds are available it would surely be a great benefit if a copy of the Book could be produced for addition to the Museum's Library -and perhaps, too, further copies for the main Storrington Library and the West Sussex Record Office.

Finally: is there anyone out there who can give me any information on some of the men about whom I have so far been able to find very little? Four of these were the following World War One casualties:

1. Private James Hearn, Royal Sussex Rgt., died in France 25 September 1915
2. Rifleman Frederick Lelliott KR.R.C., died 4 November 1918, buried in Storrington Churchyard
3. Private Wallace Medhurst, 7th Battn. Leinster Regt., died in France 23 November 1917
4. Sapper William E. Vincent R.E. died 26 December 1917, buried in Storrington Churchyard

There are also five who died in the Second World War (or subsequently), about whom very little seems to be known. They were:

1. Sergeant Cyril J. Attield R.A.O.C., died in Aden during May 1965
2. Flying Officer Frank W. Elliott DFM RAF, died over Berlin 6 March 1945
3. Sapper Harry Miller R.E. believed to have died in a Japanese POW Camp during the war and to have lived at Meadow Cottage, Chantry Lane
4. Private William G. Reeves Royal Sussex Regiment, died 8 March 1944, buried in Storrington Churchyard
5. Flying Officer Richard S. Tovey RAFVR, died in India 19 February 1943

If anyone has any information on any of the above, I would be most grateful to receive it.

*David Coward*