

Times Past

Issue No. 30, Summer 2008

Storrington & District Museum

Preserving Yesterday for Tomorrow

THE HORSHAM HANGING FAIR

WILLIAM ALBERRY devoted over 60 pages of his "Millennium of Facts in the History of Horsham" to the grim history of the Sussex County Gaol; a period that began in the reign of Henry VIIIth and ended in 1845, in Victoria's. There were many hangings of course (for one could suffer the death penalty for scores of crimes) but many inmates' "crimes" were for no more than debt or for being a Quaker.

From 1810 to 1819 the Sussex Assizes appear not to have been favoured with good hanging judges for, whilst there were sentences of transportation galore, there was but one case of capital punishment at Horsham, that of a young man named Falconer who, with another, one Bowley, together with 15 more at the Assizes at Horsham in March, 1817, were sentenced to be hanged.

Of these only Falconer was hanged - in the presence of about 1,500 people.

But the year 1819, as if to make up for lost time, yielded four more victims to capital punishment. At the assizes at Horsham in March that year, James Gibbs was condemned for an attempted murder at Storrington. On Saturday, 10th April he, with his coffin, was given his last ride to his doom. Afterwards his body was taken away by friends to Parham, where it remained all day Sunday and on Monday was buried in the churchyard there another was Edward Broadbent, 29 years of age, a private soldier who enlisted at Horsham in the 90th Regiment of Infantry. On 29th June, 1819, he shot a bullying sergeant of his company in his barracks at Brighton

What followed was agonising in the extreme. The hangman, an apprentice, made the rope too long so that the poor wretch's feet touched the ground so he

lay there, slowly choking to death. The hangman suggested that they repeat the hanging, with a shorter rope. Finally one of the sheriff's officers fetched a spade and dug a hole so that poor Broadbent died less painfully.

One of the most notorious and despite this, interesting characters, was one James Pettitt, alias Jigg, much better known as "Jigg of Jevington" whose brilliant anti-social career began and finished in one short decade of the 18th century In 1789 Pettitt kept a public house at Jevington. This house was the rendezvous of a notorious gang of smugglers, horse thieves, burglars, highwaymen and footpads - in one modern word - gangsters. On December 29th, 1789, Jiggs was merrily entertaining , inside, a party of card players , ladies and gentlemen, when the pub was late at night surrounded by 8 or 9 constables, well armed, with the intention to capture him. The gentlemen took the situation philosophically enough but the ladies were greatly agitated and one of the company, very faint, after a short parley, was graciously allowed by the gallant constables to be passed out into the fresh air the "lady" did revive and very quickly made off discarding, as "she" went "her" bonnet and gown Jiggs, not for the first or last time, had outwitted the law.

Jiggs was twice condemned to hang but was usually able to afford, from his crimes, counsel He also gained a popular Robin Hood or Ned Kelly image. Finally, he was transported to New South Wales where he presumably died.

The Sussex Assizes yielded almost every year and frequently twice a year, victims to the scaffold; victims of both sexes and all ages and dispositions,

from those of Richard Bridger, the pitiable boy, said to be but 13 years of age, and Elizabeth Lavendar, a girl of 17, to that of Ann Cruttenden, the murderous hag; 80 years old.

Ann Cruttenden had the distinction of being the last woman to be burnt at the stake in Horsham for murdering her husband.

Ann Cruttenden was borne to the stake on a hurdle. In the gaol accounts there is a bill of Peter Potter, a carpenter, for his share in those proceedings. "August 8th - for putting up the post for the woman to be burnt on, making a slip board to stand. Doing the slide and putting on hurdell for her to ride on and board for the back and side of ditto; time nails and board £ 1- 10 - 0. and there is the account of the gaoler, Charles Cooper, "Wood and faggots to burn Ann Cruttenden, the half part £1 - 5 - 0"

Horsham earned the doubtful distinction of executing a man by the method called "Peine forte et dure", the last to die so in England. This horror was reserved for people who tried to avoid sentence by remaining mute during the trial. Such a one was John Weekes of Fittleworth, tried for the murder of Elizabeth Symonds during a burglary at a cottage some three miles from Petworth. Three accomplices were sentenced to hang but Weekes remained "dumb".. The punishment was as follows.

"That the prisoner shall be sent to the prison whence he came, and put in a mean room stopped from light and shall there be laid on the bare ground without any litter, straw or other covering, and without any garment about him except at the waist. He shall lie upon his back; his head shall be covered and his feet shall be bare

Then shall be laid on his body as much iron or stone as he can bear and more, and three days after he shall have three morsels of barley bread without any drink, and the second day without any drink The dreadful scene was enacted in full public view and a very great crowd was present to witness it.

Two successive hundred weights were laid upon his chest and then 50 pounds more. Still alive and still dumb he finally expired when the executioner, who weighed over 16 stone, laid himself upon the board. This, and many other grim tales are faithfully recorded in Albery's great work - still obtainable through the County Library service. Like a good historian Albery makes few personal observations but some idea of his views on capital punishment may be construed from his quoted question by Tom Paine; "Why do they only hang poor people?"

E.P.B.

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STORRINGTON & DISTRICT ARTISTS WITH WORKS ON DISPLAY IN THE MUSEUM

I was recently asked to research some of the artists whose work in featured in the Museum. The information will appear on our website but I thought this might be of interest to stewards and others who might not have access to the internet

William Henry Stothard Scott 1783-1850

William Henry Stothard Scott was a watercolour painter and lithographer. He worked at Brighton and was an Associate of the Old Water-Colour Society. He painted rural scenes in Sussex and Surrey and published a series of "Etchings on Stone" in 1812

The British Museum catalogue lists just one work, "Landscape with Figures. View on a road to a village[etc] a group of three girls and one boy" signed W.Scott 22 x 30 ins. He was an exhibitor at the Royal Academy 1810-1833 with a total of 229 known works, mostly scenes and cottages in Sussex and Surrey, views in Northern France, the Meuse and Moselle regions, Pyrenees and Edinburgh. His children Mary and John

Henderson Scott were also known artists – Mary painted as Mrs Brocklebank [fl. 1823-1859] - and John William Scott is listed on the 1841 Census at Cannon Place, Brighton. Also in the household is another daughter Emily age 25.

Charles William Taylor 1878-1960

Watercolour Artist

There is a vast amount of information, including images of his work on the internet [www.findonvillage.com/0048_charles_William_Taylor_watercolour_artist_1878]

Mrs Hoare

This is not an easy identification but I believe the artist to be Henrietta, wife of John William Hoare. The couple are listed on the 1881 and 1891 Censuses at Byne Lodge, Storrington. John is listed as “Gentleman” and “Living on own Means”, age 65 [in 1891], born Godstone, Surrey and Henrietta age 58 [in 1891], born Wittersham, Kent. By 1901 John has died and Henrietta is living with her brother Francis George Deedes, a Church of England clergyman, their mother Henrietta Charlotte Deedes and two unmarried sisters, Caroline Maria and Emily Elizabeth Deedes, at the Vicarage, Blindley Heath, Godstone. Henrietta does not seem to have been an artist of any note and is not mentioned in any known reference works or catalogues. There was another Hoare female artist, Sarah Hoare daughter of Samuel Hoare and Sarah Gurney, who was a noted Flower Painter and a student of William Henry Hunt. However she died in 1856 and so cannot be the Mrs Hoare who was working in 1885

HMW

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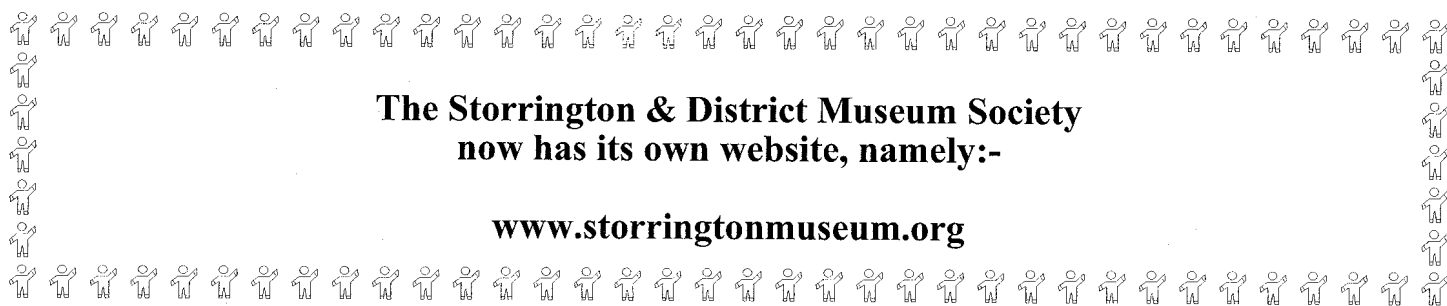
The Roman Villa at Wiggonholt

Our new exhibition *History Underfoot* includes the Roman villa at Wiggonholt, Mostly buried under the A283 road near Lickford and Winterfield. We are able to show things that were excavated in 1937 by S.E. Winbolt and have not been on public display since then. The villa was discovered when a water-main was being laid close to the Storrington-Pulborough Road and the workmen (unaware of what they had been digging through) left some pottery sherds on the surface. Mr. Winbolt concluded that a villa lay close by and, with the permission of the owner, the Hon. Chve Pearson of Parham Park, was able to spend a month in April of that year excavating. Buried 5.5 feet underground he found five rooms - the remainder is most likely under the present road. It is also close to the link road and causeway connecting the site to the great Roman road, Stane Street, leading from Chichester (Noviomagus) to London (Londinium). He believed

that the villa was the centre of a Roman farm stretching from the land between the Arun and Stor rivers, Wiggonholt Church to Wickford Bridge and up to Hurston Warren.

We are grateful to Parham for the loan of the artifacts on display (which have only recently been re-discovered at Parham and are not yet catalogued or properly examined!), and also to Worthing Museum who kindly loaned other items. We also show earlier items of the first people in Sussex as well as some of the most recent finds in and around our village. Horsham and Littlehampton Museums have also been most generous in lending us material for which we thank them. Do take the opportunity to see what lies under our feet. The exhibition lasts until the end of September.

Joan Ham
(Society Archivist)



**The Storrington & District Museum Society
now has its own website, namely:-**

www.storringtonmuseum.org

Museum Society Committee:-

Chairman: Meg Everitt (Contact No. 01903 745051)

Secretary: Kate Wise

Treasurer: John Wharmby

Programme Secretary: Pauline Archibald

Membership Secretary: Trisha Cook (01903 746276 & trisha@trishacook.co.uk)

Education Officer: Jill Atkins (jilli-kins@hotmail.co.uk)

Web Master: Michael Leeming

Members: Philip Beaumont, Trish Colebrook, Gena Grenney,
Jean MacWhirter, Michael Taylor, Cindy Waters, & Helen Whittle.

Curator: Gina Wilmshurst (Contact No. 01903 892210)

Archivist:- Mrs Joan Ham

Future Activities:-

Saturday, September 6:- Walk around historic area of Church Street, Storrington, conducted by Joan Ham. — meeting at the museum at **2.30 p.m.** Tickets £3.50, including refreshments at the Old School, from the Programme Secretary - Tel. 01798 813987

Sunday, October 5 :- Family History Day - An all-day event at the Old School. Admission £2. Refreshments available.

Future Exhibitions:-

June - September: “Local Archaeology”

October- December : “A Stitch in Time”

First Winter Lectures:-

October 13: “Southern smuggling “ by Margaret Henderson

November 10: “Coasting along Sussex” by Geoffret Meade.

Apology

We apologise for the mistake in issue no. 29 . The photos were, of course, NOT of the noted Sussex photographer, George Garland, but of Charles Kilhams.

EDITORIAL TEAM

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Printed by: Kenads print & design Tel: 01903 506444 www.kenads-printers.co.uk