

# The Farningham & Eynsford Local History Society

Founded 1985

*A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee*

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(Original Society founded 1985 Registered Charity no 1047562)

## Bulletin No 103 September 2014

### Forthcoming Talks and Events

2014	Details	Where
26 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Keep the Home Fires Burning Dartford 1914 to 1918 Chris Baker	FVH
21 <sup>st</sup> Nov	Edith Cavell – Paul Rason	EVH

Unless otherwise stated all Meetings are held on a Friday evening from 730pm, talk commencing 8pm. (Note: front row seats can be reserved for members with hearing or eyesight difficulties and hearing loops are now available on request)

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS FOR 2015 TO FOLLOW IN NEXT BULLETIN

### REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE

#### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (Barbara Cannell 864253)

Jan and I were disappointed when we both realised at the last minute that due to unforeseen last minute important family commitments neither of us would be able to attend the Farningham Fete. This yearly event is something we both look forward to and enjoy putting together a display of village history. It is interesting talking to visitors and we always learn something new about a local family or village event.

This unfortunate situation made me think how nice it would be if the Society had a group of volunteers who we could turn to for help when occasions like this arise. Volunteers would not necessarily have to become a committee member. Sadly we cannot be in two places at the same time and sometimes we have to choose which event we really should attend.

As you know the Society is in dire need of a treasurer and secretary and if these two positions are not filled before the next AGM in May 2015 we cannot legally operate.

We would really like to expand our range of evening meetings and events, trying out new ideas, but without your support none of this will happen.

**. RESEARCH REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923)(www.felhs.org.uk)**

I have been kept busy researching life in our villages during the Great War of 1914-1918 for our major Exhibition which will have taken place during August by the time you read this. I hope you were able to go along to one of the venues and that you were impressed by the involvement of the whole community - young to old - in the war effort locally. If I can muster up the 'oomph' perhaps a publication on the subject will be the follow-up.

**Maplescombe Church**

I came across an article by F.C. Elliston-Erwood about this in *Invicta Magazine*, 1913. He described his visit to the spot, with a farm, extensive hop fields, a few sheepfolds and the ruined church. The church was 54 feet long and 22 feet wide, and Elliston-Erwood went on to describe what then remained of the ruins in detail, which was early C12th by design. (Alas! much has been lost since.) One piece of stone in the walls was found to be a fragment of a Roman millstone of lava imported from Italy. The list of clergy as by then compiled began in 1322, although the church was already 150 years old at that date. The church was reported as being totally ruined in 1427, with no incumbent, but after a break of 70 years there were more clergymen listed until 1638, when the parish was united with West Kingsdown. The decline of the settlement at Maplescombe has been linked with the Black Death of 1348-1349. Although the church was in decay, ministers continued to be appointed more as a sinecure (i.e. to collect the income) than to serve the few parishioners who remained.

**Questionnaire about the Poor filled in by Farningham, 1834**

The Poor Law Reform Act of 1834 drastically altered the way the poor were treated, and Workhouses were built as bureaucratic institutions in which sentiment played no part. Farningham Parish was used as a sample parish in Kent, and sent a questionnaire about its poor by the Commission of Inquiry looking into the operation of the old Poor Law.

- The farms were generally poor and large.
- 100 labourers would be sufficient, but there were 160 in the parish.
- There was full employment in the summer, but 30 unemployed in the winter.
- The average weekly summer wage was 15 shillings (75p).
- Women and children weeded, made hay and picked hops at 1 shilling (5p) a day for women, and 6 pence (2-3p) for boys.
- There were 15 inmates in the Poorhouse; 4 infirm, 6 boys under 14, 5 able-bodied men. 14 got help outside the Poorhouse.
- 7 bastards had been born in 5 years, costing the parish £221, of which £120 was recovered from the fathers, giving the parish a loss of £101.

**Eynsford Paper Mill watermarks, BBC Antiques Roadshow, 4 May 2014**

A number of pieces of T.H. Saunders special watermarked paper were brought to the experts on Antiques Roadshow to be valued. Our Society has a varied collection (most of the largest pieces of which are deposited in the Maidstone Museum under special conservation climatic conditions). A valuation of between £50 and £60 was put on the most elaborate watermarks, such as those displayed in the Great Exhibition of 1851. One shown on the programme, which I recognised, was of portraits of George V and Queen Mary to commemorate their Silver Jubilee in 1935.

### **Boyne House & George Schomberg, Founder Director of Chelsea Football Club**

Rick, the official historian of Chelsea Football Club, is researching the background of the founders of the Club in 1905, one of whom was George Schomberg, who died at Boyne House, High Street, Eynsford in 1918. George Schomberg, a founding director of the Club, was a London saddler and whip maker to the gentry with business premises in Kensington. Rick has been trying to make a direct link with George Schomberg and the Duke of Schomberg, who was William III's General at the Battle of the Boyne, Ireland, in 1690, during which he was killed. A portrait of the Duke hangs in Cobham Hall. Rick hoped that the house name might provide a clue as to whether George and the Duke were related.

I visited the house unannounced after Rick's query and was made welcome by another Rick and his wife, Lisa. Very soon a fine array of deeds was produced, and we thought we might be able to link the name 'Boyne House' to George Schomberg, but found there was a gap in the deeds from about 1890 to 1921, when Charlotte Schomberg (George's wife) died. There were once 3 cottages, dating from about 1720, but 2 were combined so the deeds only reflect  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the premises. The house was not called Boyne in the 1901 census, but was in the electoral roll of 1919. The Boyne Tea Rooms were set up after the Schombergs had died. Curnow in his book of Eynsford (1953) wrote that the Tea Rooms were named after a tailor, Schomberg, who had a business there and claimed to be descended from General Schomberg, but this does not appear to be entirely accurate. Clearly, there was more to George Schomberg than this. So far we have been unable to prove that George Schomberg named his house 'Boyne', but the strong inference is that he did; neither have we been able to prove a direct genealogical link between George and the Duke, because Rick has only been able to trace George's family back to Lanark, Scotland, in 1814.

If any reader can shed any more light on this, it would be welcomed. We can, in any case, add George Schomberg, to Eynsford's list of notable residents.

### **Charles Blake - killed in the First World War**

#### **Private 242785 from West Kent Regiment, but attached to The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) 1st/5th Battalion**

Wilf Duncombe meticulously researched the names of those who died as a result of the conflict, 1914-1918, but sometimes more comes to light, and this is the case for Charles Blake. In the publication 'The Commemoration of Wars in Crockenhill, Eynsford and Lullingstone' Wilf wrote about George Edward Blake, rather than Charles Blake (C on the War Memorial can be mistaken for G). Charles Blake's image is included in the composite photograph, recently restored, which hangs in the Village Hall. It is oval, as are all the images of dead men - those surviving have round images.

For those of you who wish to add a correction in their publication, here is what is known of Charles Blake.

He was the son of William and Emily Mary Blake of 2 Church Cottages, Eynsford. He was in the Swanley Territorials' camp on Salisbury Plain at the outbreak of war, and was immediately mobilised and sent to Dover, where he joined a boat sailing to India in September 1914. He was promoted to Lance-Corporal, but his obituary in the local paper says he gave up his stripe to go on the expedition to Mesopotamia. At some stage he was taken ill, and died in Colaba hospital in India of fever 'after much suffering' on 23 November 1917. He is named on the Kirklee Memorial, Face B, which commemorates 1800 service men and women who died in

India in the First World War, and who are buried in various cemeteries in India and Pakistan, where graves cannot be properly maintained.

Charles' father, William served in the Royal Field Artillery, but was invalided home with shell shock after 16 months in France, while Charles' brother, William, joined the Royal Navy. This brother worked at Eynsford Station after the war.

### **Farningham Boys' Club Newsheet, March 1944**

I came across this in our collection recently. It gave news of former Boys' Club members who were serving in the Second World War. It listed as killed, Cecil Dunmall (Merchant Navy); serving in the Royal Navy, N. Covill, T. West, B. Butcher and F Mason; serving in the Army, H. Mason, R. Baldock, and W. Stevens; serving in the RAF, P. Eldridge, R. Tompkins, and R. Crowhurst. Phil Garman had become a Bevin boy and had been drafted to the Kent coalfield near Canterbury. Ron Crowhurst was the first of the bunch to enter Germany. Norman Covill was on a ship which made the headlines when it rescued two British airmen. Fred Mason was serving on the 'Nelson'.

### **Deeds of 42 St Martins Drive, Eynsford**

In the Bulletin no.101, March 2014, I mentioned the detailed deeds copied from Eric Syddique's collection. I tried to summarise these, but Eric has pointed out that in doing so I have not been entirely accurate. Eric has now provided a clear sequence of events, which are too complex to put here, but I will put Eric's information with the deeds, so anyone consulting them can understand them better. Eric told me that his father ran Danson Park Garage in Bexley on the A2, but wanted to sell up in 1956 - the year of the Suez crisis - when there was great uncertainty in the motor trade. Kent County Council had plans to widen the road, which would have meant the demolition of the garage, but nothing was done until into the 1970s. Now the site of the garage is under the slip road from the A2 to Danson Road.

### **Family History enquiries**

- **Phillips / Webb** - Christy from South Dakota, USA, is trying to trace descendants of her 2x great grandparents - Emily Webb (born Croydon) and Henry Phillips (born Eynsford in 1856), who married in The Dalles, Oregon, in 1880. This couple brought a photograph album with them when they emigrated to USA, which Christy has inherited. She would dearly like to be able to identify the people in the photographs and thinks contact with current relatives might well help. Please contact me if you can help. I looked up the early censuses for the Phillips and found that they farmed at Wested Farm. There were several branches in 1841, but no Phillips in the 1871 census.
- **Marjorie Mee** - Keith, the professor from Australia who is writing a book about Arthur Mee, enquired about his daughter, Marjorie. I found an obituary in the Trident of January 1983 for her, and reference in a piece by Barbara Laming in the Trident of December 1982.

### **Other enquiries**

- **Lullingstone Castle in the 2nd World War** - Sarah, a Masters student in Building History at Cambridge University, visited the area and I was able to show her items from our collection. I took her to the Castle and she arranged a further visit with Guy Hart Dyke. She has promised to send us a copy of the Lullingstone section of her dissertation in due course.

- **Stations in the Darent Valley** - Ed Thompson visited the Centre to see the railway collection, and was able to add items to our collection, as well as learning new things from the visit.
- **Farningham Home for Boys** - Yet another enquiry - this time from Catalina, a researcher for the BBC series 'Who do you think you are?' I wonder what celebrity will be featured with the connection.
- **Boyne House, Eynsford, and George Schomberg** - Rick enquired about the origin of the name (see above).

**ARCHIVE REPORT (Susan Pittman 01322 669923) (archives@felhs.org.uk)**

### **FELHS Centre**

Cataloguing has stopped while I have been producing the art work for the Great War Exhibition so there is little to report.

### **Acquisitions**

**From Diana Beamish** - Interview notes with Ethel Darby (1898-2008); article 'Remembering Farningham's wartime heroes', Journal of Kent History March 2010; articles about the 1st World War from the Financial Times, 2013-2014; 1914 Diary Notes from her grandfather, Charles Percy Hoyle, in 1914 at Oxford University; Pages from My Magazine, August 1918, by Arthur Mee about death; Page from Children's Newspaper 1938 about the Darent Valley; Pages from Kentish Times, 1938, Eynsford by a modern chronicler; Package of modern flyers, pamphlets, timetables, photos of Eagle Heights, 2000, photos Anthony Roper School plays 1989, 1990, Brownie Play 1988.

**From John and Una Christophers** - Display box with objects found at 2 Whitewood Cottages, High Street, Eynsford, during renovations in 1990. These include J.M. Jennings ration card from 1st World War, George II halfpenny, Victorian locket engraved 'May', small metal plate shaped as tiger, a heavy metal marble found in the garden. A photograph album showing progress of the renovations - before, during, and after (the property dating back some 250 years). CD with conveyance documents - one deed of 1901 witnessed the purchase of the cottages from the Mandy family to Sidney William Gibson, engineer of Eynsford.

**From John Gee** - 1910 Programme Eynsford Horticultural Society Annual Exhibition.

**From Helen Goldsworthy** - 5 postcards of Farningham, 1920s, 1930s; Coronation Souvenir Programme, 12 May 1937, Farningham; 5 photographs of groups in front of St John's Ambulance Brigade headquarters, Farningham, and 2 cuttings of its opening, late July 1935, and letter 1937 re trying to purchase adjoining land.

**From Caroline Gould** - Photograph of Institute Cottage, Eynsford, 2000.

**From Mary Hill** - A photograph album featuring Muriel's musical maze day, 1998; Evening with Queen Anne, Lullingstone; Tudor evening, Lullingstone; Old Mill Close, royal wedding celebration; Eynsford, Farningham, Lullingstone Croquet finals, 1999; Ladies Probus 1999; Mens Probus, 1999.

**From Sheila Smith** - Eynsford Parish Magazines 1923, 1942, 1945, 1969, 1970; FELHS Short History of St. Martin's Church; St Martin's Church Guide, 1964.

**From Ed Thompson** - Copy photo of H. Wellbands Aveling traction engine threshing at Parsonage Farm, Eynsford, 1920, driven by John Dollings; 3 photographs of Farningham by George P. King Ltd., early 1990s by car registration number; various plans of Eynsford station and Lullingstone station, which I will write about in the next Bulletin.

**and finally.....**

What a month August was, firstly the unveiling of the World War I servicemen in Eynsford Village Hall. It was great to see so many people there paying homage to these men. Guy Hart Dyke unveiled the picture and Peter Nicholson played the Last Post. The display put together by Barbara was interesting and there was the first chance to see the WWI Servicemen slide show put together by Dennis Molyneux, who incidentally restored the picture. If anyone would like a copy of the CD please let me know they are £7.50, but if you are coming to the next evening meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> September I will have them with me.

Some of the families of the servicemen came along and I thank them for the help they gave me in putting information together. On the day we collected £90.00 in donations of which £45.00 for sent to Help for Heroes and £45.00 to The Royal British Legion.

Then we had the World War One Exhibitions put together by Susan Pittman and Veronica Sheppard and what a splendid job they did. The turnout for each exhibition was good and for myself I heard nothing but praise. It was splendid to see the World War I tablecloth and the Visitors book from the Castle Hotel and all the other artefacts and information Susan and Veronica gathered, it is a lot of hard work putting these things together but I would say it was worth it.

Earlier in the year I received a phone call from David Wright of Farningham House, a Dead Man's Penny (*Memorial plaque issued after WWI to the next of kin of all British and Empire Service Personnel who lost their lives as a consequence of the war*) had been discovered down his well and on it was the name Ashton Morgan. Both of us were a bit perplexed as to why this penny would be down the well. Anyway off I went to see what I could find out who Ashton Morgan.

He was born on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1891 the eldest son of Ernest and Jessie Morgan, having two brothers Esdell (who also served in the RFC) and Ernest. He was educated at St Johns Leatherhead. In 1915 he joined the Royal Fusiliers serving in France and then transferred to the Royal Flying Corps. Lieutenant Ashton Morgan was killed on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 1918 and is buried in Fighledean in Wilshire.

Ashton's parents moved to Farningham House we believe some time in the early 1920s and we can only assume it was them who put the penny down the well. Through various means I traced Peter Morgan who is Esdell's son and on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August we all met at Farningham House and the penny was returned to the family.

On a final note, none of the above is possible without the help and involvement of others, for which I am very thankful.



Jan Wilkes (865122)

## WHAT'S ON 2014/2015

### **Horton Kirby & South Darenth Local History Society**

#### **2014**

10<sup>th</sup> Nov      AGM

All meetings are held at the Village Hall, South Darenth from 8pm. If you require further information contact Barbara Cannell (01322 864253) (Remember your membership card)

### **Shoreham & District Historical Society**

#### **2014**

21<sup>st</sup> Nov      Building the Sevenoaks Tunnel – Paul Dunn

#### **2015**

9<sup>th</sup> Jan      Twelfth Night Social

20<sup>th</sup> March    AGM/Beasts Bishops & Bankers, The Pleasant town of Sevenoaks –  
Jonathan Fenner

Meetings held in the Village Hall Shoreham from 8pm. Members who wish to attend these meetings are advised to contact the Secretary Lynda Alleeson (01959 525312) to check that no changes have been made to their programmes (Remember your membership card)

### **Hextable Heritage Society**

#### **2014**

9<sup>th</sup> Oct      Talk on the Royal British Legion

13<sup>th</sup> Nov      Crayford's unknown Warrior, a WWI soldier – Dyanne Jarrett

5<sup>th</sup> Dec      Christmas Party

All meetings are held at the Hextable Heritage Centre. Crawfords, Dawson Drive, College Road, Hextable 7.30pm start. If you require further information please contact Barbara Cannell (01322 864253) (Remember your membership card)

