



GREAT WAR 100

WESTENDER

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FROM OUR ARCHIVE



VIEW DOWN ALFORDS HILL LOOKING TOWARDS HATCH GRANGE ENTRANCE

This view dates from around 1900 and shows the lower High Street looking down Alford's Hill towards the blacksmiths with the entrance to Hatch Grange opposite. On the left is the original Blacksmiths Arms before the front was re-built following a vehicle crashing into it. The blacksmiths which is just beyond the flagpole was the site from where the wheelwrights tying plate now in the museum garden was discovered when the smithy was demolished. You will notice in this picture that the road level is considerably lower than today, with the road and pavement on a level with the front step of the pub. Today the road is about 2-3 feet higher with a slope down to the front door. Today the building survives, a little modified, but now serves as a family home. The cottages in between also still exist but again have all been modified.

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**WEST END
PARISH
COUNCIL**



A HISTORY OF THE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

A review by Roy Andrews

Our speaker at the February meeting was Alan House who before retirement had been Deputy Fire Chief for Hampshire and in that role he admitted to being responsible for the closure of West End's Fire Station, where now the Society's museum is located.

The Romans were the first to identify the need for a method of fighting fires as early as 300BC when they set up the *Familia Publica* who were slaves required to watch for fires. These individuals being less than dedicated, by 6AD Emperor Augustus had formed the *Corps of Vigiles*, still slaves but with the incentive of freedom after 6 years if they did a good job of *Saving life and saving property*. In that order it is still the motto of the modern Fire Service. The *Vigiles* were to last 500 years with however very limited equipment although a type of fire pump has been found in the Roman remains at Silchester.

King Alfred the Great aware of the fire risks in the mainly timber and straw buildings of his day, ordered that all fires had to be extinguished overnight after the evening bell, and William the Conqueror upon his arrival here did the same.

Fires did however happen and in 1116 the Great Fire of Peterborough burned for 9 days. The first Lord Mayor of London in 1189 ordered that all buildings should be built of stone and tile and a barrel of water kept outside every front door, still in 1212 over 3,000 people died in just one fire.

Recognising that Arson was a serious crime, in 1246 the death penalty was decreed for any miscreants. Prior to the 15th century, the only means of fighting fires was with buckets of water and hooks to rake away combustibles or pull down buildings. Now the Syringe Squirt Pump, like a bicycle pump, was invented and after the Great Fire of London in 1666, there was rapid development in Fire Engines helped by insurance companies offering protection from 1680.

By the 1800's there had been a huge growth in manual powered pumps requiring between 8 and 46 men to work them; beer tokens were offered to passersby as an incentive to help with the pump. The first steam-powered pump appeared in 1829 but did find favour. However in 1861, the firm of Merryweather, over the later years famous in this field, was asked to build 15 pumps and by 1878 had built 500. Its first self-propelled steam engine was built in 1899, the last in 1918, and the first petrol powered engine appeared in 1903, still carrying no water only the pump and crew.

The first municipal brigade was set up in Edinburgh in 1824 and in 1833 in London the various brigades amalgamated followed by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Act in 1865, in rural areas, it was still down to the locals to do the fire fighting with pumps kept in churches as they were the focal point of the village.

Many brigades were run by and manned by police officers trained to fight fires and this was the case in Portsmouth until 1941.

During World War One firemen were not considered to be in a reserved occupation and so were called up, leaving many areas with no protection at all. This changed in World War Two as it was seen that the need for fire fighters would be much more important. 1938 saw the formation of the Auxiliary Fire Service to help the regulars and in 1941 was the formation of the National Fire Service (NFS) which meant that fire crews could be sent anywhere in the country as and when the need arose. Alan had skipped through many slides showing the development of pumps and later engines during his talk, and on the subject of World War Two he was able to show the many types of vehicles, including London taxis, that were commandeered for use.

After the war, and with the demise of the NFS, Fire Authorities were formed which meant locally in Hampshire County, Southampton, Portsmouth and Bournemouth. These survived until 1974 when they were combined except Bournemouth, by then in Dorset, into the Hampshire Fire Brigade. With the changing pattern of its work, fewer fires to fight but many more road accidents etc.. to deal with, in 1992 it became Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and in 1997 the County and Cities took over full control of the Brigade.

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Alan spoke of what might happen in the future believing that there may, as has already happened in part, be a return to earlier times when once again the fire service will amalgamate with the police. Perhaps not surprisingly Alan ended his long but very interesting talk by becoming evangelical on matters relating to fire prevention.

St. MARY'S INDEPENDENT SCHOOL VISITS OUR MUSEUM

By Lin Dowdell



A group of Year 1 pupils, their teacher and helpers came on a visit to our museum on Friday 10th March. The visit went very well, they were a delightful group of well behaved children and embraced the topic of the Titanic, Captain Rostron and the Carpathia ably told by one of our members wife Lisette Edwards. It so happened their history subject in Year 1 deals with life in the recent past, and they were so excited to see so many interesting artifacts in our museum.



MORE OF ROMILL CLOSE

By Roy Andrews

In the last edition of Westender, and continued this month, Pauline Berry wrote of the memories of an old resident of what is now Romill Close. In the list of residents for 1922 of the still existing row of terrace cottages, in what was Allington Lane, was shown John Pearce (Estate Bailiff) at No.10. He was my paternal great grandfather born at Sutton Scotney in 1855.

In 1887 he married Annie Wort (1855-1928) in South Wonston church. She had been born in Bramshaw in the New Forest and probably met her husband while employed as a maid at Chesil Rectory, still on the corner of Chesil Street and Bridge Street, Winchester.

The couple moved to West End where John was employed by the Gater family for the rest of his working life. At various times he lived in Black Farmhouse, when it was divided into four labourers' cottages, (not two very nice homes as now), New Farm which stood in Allington Lane opposite the entrance to Itchen Valley Country Park—long since demolished but the base can still be seen in the undergrowth—and certainly by the time my Grandmother Louisa was born in 1892, they were living at No.10.

John and Annie had seven children, which must be why as a small boy out with my Dad in West End, when it was still a village, Dad seemed to know everyone and when I asked him who they were, they all seemed to be related to us. Besides Louisa (1892-1979), there was Ann (c.1878), Elizabeth (1879-1959), Susan (1880), William (1882-1959), Emma (1885-1975) and Albert (1900-1973). John died in 1940 while living with one of his many relations in Lower New Road, West End.



John Pearce and Annie Pearce (nee Wort) Golden Wedding Anniversary at 10 Romill Close 17.3.1927



Above 17th March 1927 Golden Wedding Anniversary of John and Annie at 10 Romill Close (Allington Lane) - My grandmother Louisa sitting on right of her parents John and Annie Pearce.



Left Wedding of Arthur Andrews to Louisa Pearce June 11th 1911. Probably taken at New Farm which once stood opposite entrance to Itchen Country Park in Allington Lane.

WHEN ROMILL CLOSE WAS ALLINGTON LANE Part 2

By Pauline Berry

A continuation of the conversation between George Rowe and Mrs Laura Morant in 1993. At that time she lived at No.6 Allington Lane (Romill Close) having lived in that road since 1915.....

After Laura Skilton (Mrs Morant) left West End School at the age of 12 in 1918, she went to work as a maid for Mr John Gater jnr. at Mill House, on the Gaters Mill site, for 3 shillings per week. She used to walk down the hill to work, from her home at No.4 Allington Lane, where Black House still stands on the corner. This was then the home of Mr and Mrs John Gater snr. who lived there until they died in the early 1920's.

"He was a very nice old gentleman and the old lady had horses, carriages and a coach.... There was a stack of stones by the stables.... That is where they mounted the horses I haven't seen it used", commented Mrs Morant. Mr Gater's sister was called Miss Kate by the staff and she was a very austere lady. She was a portly lady, who having sat in her gig with a wrap around her, the driver would then move off. Her brother had one of the first motor cars in West End, a Studebaker. They had a telephone on the wall, which one had to wind the handle to reach the exchange at West End Post Office, kept by Mr and Mrs Langford, who would then connect the call.

After Gaters Mill itself burnt down in 1917, Laura and the other maid helped to saw up the great timbers, which smelt of pine, for the (house) fire. Mrs Gater made dog biscuits from some of the semi-burnt flour (at a time of rationing) and the dogs enjoyed them, along with 'lights' (offal) from the butcher. When Mr Gater snr. Died, his eldest son John jnr. moved up the hill into Black House and Laura went too. She 'lived in' and her wages were doubled to 6 shillings per week, getting up at 6am and retiring at 10pm, working as a 'between maid', doing part housework and part cooking. She recalled that Black House had a galvanised larder in the 1920's, with slate shelves, where the game which was shot, used to hang. The bacon came from the pigs on Black Farm which was first salted then smoked in Swaythling. The cows provided the milk and cream, and salmon came from the nearby River Itchen where the Gater family owned fishing rights. Chickens were also kept and the only item purchased was the butcher's meat. Laura used to help the dairymaid walk the herd of Guernsey cows down (Gaters) hill to the lower fields in order to be milked. Eventually there was too much traffic on the hill and so the herd were kept in a field with new milking pens at the top. Seventy years later Mrs Morant proclaimed that *"she wouldn't go near a cow even if it was a mile away"*.



WILFRED LANGFORD'S STORE c 1910



BLACK HOUSE 1976

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Laura and Mrs Coster from No.8 Allington Lane used to walk all the way to Bishopstoke on Sundays, because the carpenter's wife was a lay preacher. She also happened to be blind but knew the route to her chapel without hesitation. Mr Coster also travelled to the chapel, but he went by tricycle at least 3 or 4 times on Sundays.

West End Lodge was a big house then, owned by Mrs Gillett and stood on Swaythling Road, next to the present car sales business. The staff there comprised of 3 or 4 maids, a lady's maid and a chauffeur. One Sunday in the early 1920's, Laura's family had several people, in their Sunday best, round for tea. It included Laura's brother Cecil who *"was done up like a dog's dinner"* and after tea, leaving the ladies to wash up, he and his friend set out to *"go up the village expecting to get a drink"*. But they didn't get far because they met a panicking maid from West End Lodge who told them that she had accidentally set fire to the shed next to the house. (She had dropped a candle into the paraffin for the oil lamps). Seeing that the house was in danger, Cecil grabbed a spade and dug an earth bank to try to stop the flames from spreading. Meanwhile, his friend rushed into West End village to alert the firemen who were mainly *"in the pubs enjoying a quiet sup"*, shouting, *"Fire at West End Lodge!"*. They all hurried out to the lean-to shed behind the Parish Hall, grabbed the truck with the hose on top and headed for the Lodge at top speed. When they

A LATER PHOTOGRAPH OF THE
WEST END FIRE APPLIANCE

NOTE

WEST END'S FIRST FIRE STATION - THE
HUT TO THE LEFT OF THE PICTURE
WITH THE HOSE CART TO THE LEFT
OF THE BRAND-NEW FIRE ENGINE.



arrived they encountered a problem, for the hydrant was on the far side of Swaythling Road and they were hampered in their efforts by passing cars which passed over the hose, cutting off the water supply! The firemen eventually put out the fire, discovering the canvas hose was split and water was everywhere over the road.

Cecil and his friend received one shilling (5p.) for assisting the Fire Brigade, and he had it framed for the wall of his cottage at No.1, where it remained for many years.



AN IDYLIC VIEW OF
GATER'S MILL BEFORE THE
FIRE OF 1917

PHOTO TAKEN c.1905

To be continued...

THE ART OF THE ANGLO SAXONS

A Review by Roy Andrews

Kay Ainsworth was our speaker at the March meeting and speak she certainly can as she spoke for an hour unscripted on the above subject, without hesitation or deviation. This was however a talk which needed to have been seen as Kate showed us many dozens of images of beautiful work which came out of the once upon a time so called 'Dark Ages'.

She started her talk with the ending of Roman occupied Britain. Although the Romans had started to introduce Christianity to these islands, it soon disappeared when they left. And an indication of the trade that had been and would continue with northern Europe was the pagan Germanic and Danish artwork that has been found in excavations at Roman settlements and coastal forts around the east and south coast. Some of the designs on the artifacts could be traced back as far as the Iron Age and originating in Austria and Switzerland. The designs were of writhing beasts, interlocking designs, Celtic knot and often images of the god Odin.

The Angles, Saxons and Vikings all came to these islands initially as marauders but eventually settled here bringing their customs with them, often in their forms of burial of the dead, such as at Sutton Hoo, thus making grave excavations a rich source of exquisite artifacts.

England was made up of seven kingdoms when Pope Gregory sent St. Augustine to these islands in 597AD to start the conversion to Christianity in Kent. At about the same time St. Columba, having arrived from Ireland, was busy converting the North-West. Jewellery and stone carvings then began to reflect the influences of Christianity, some designs coming from as far afield as Constantinople but yet forever after pagan images would continue to be included.

As monasteries began to be established, so illuminated writings began to be produced and Kay described the differences between the artwork in such as The Book of Kells produced by the Irish influences, different to the church in Rome, more cartoon like. Winchester had its own style produced under the influence of King Alfred who had seen the work produced in France under Charlemagne.

This, as I mentioned, was a talk which needed to be seen to appreciate the glorious Technicolor images on the slide show highlighting the skill of the early metal workers creating extremely intricate pieces using gold and silver wire, enamelling and jewels. Having done a bit of calligraphy in my time I could appreciate the hours and days spent by monks, probably in some cold damp cell producing just one page of this art form.



Some examples of
Saxon art

DAVID LANCE ESQUIRE OF LANZ ISLAND AND GREAT LANCE'S HILL

By Paula Downer

David Lance was born around 1757 to a William and Mary Lance of Sandwich in Kent. Mary was the daughter of Sir John Temple, a cousin of the Marquess of Buckingham.

Very little is known of David Lance's early life except that he had a brother William (born 1760) and a sister Mary.

In his early twenties David Lance was in the Far East, as a foreign agent or 'Supercargoe' for the East India Company. He dealt with trade between England and China. At this time, Europeans were not allowed to set foot inside China, they were kept to the 'Factories' lined up along the waterfront outside the walls of Canton (now Guangzhou). The Thirteen Factories (one for each nation) were the living accommodation, warehouses and offices where the European merchants conducted business, the Chinese called these places 'Hong's'. As Supercargoe, David Lance would meet the incoming ships to organise the selling and buying of cargo for its return journey. Tea was becoming very popular in England (the French still preferred a glass of wine). In 1784 The Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger reduced the tax on tea from 119% to 12.5% ! The consumption of tea rose dramatically, the favoured tea at this time being green tea. India Office records, dated 1777, show David Lance shipping out two chests of Hyson (Lucky Dragon green tea) for himself and a box of tea for a William Lance esquire of Canterbury (his father?).

For David Lance, it seems that he was in the right place at the right time, a commodity that the Chinese were really keen to get hold of was sea-otter fur (sea-otters have exceptionally thick coats). David Lance entered a partnership with William Fitzhugh and Henry Lane sponsoring voyages under Trading Companies such as Cox and Reid/Beale. A voyage was sent out in 1785 to the North West coast of America, the ship ended up in Nootka Sound. Five hundred sea-otter pelts were bought from the natives; it was a very profitable trip. A year later, another ship went out, with James Hanna as Commander, this trip was not so successful but while he was out there, James Hanna drew up some charts, naming Fitzhugh Sound, Lane's Bay, Lance's Island and Cox's Island. (Lance's Island, lying off Vancouver Island in Canada, is now part of the Scott Islands and is spelled Lanz Island).



Some of the European Factories on the waterfront of Canton

David Lance returned to England in 1789 a rich man. His brother William had become an ordained member of the clergy and was shortly to become the Reverend of Faccombe. David Lance married William Fitzhugh's sister Mary. Their father Valentine Fitzhugh lived at Bitterne Manor. David Lance's trading partner in Canton, William Fitzhugh, was now his Brother-in-law. In 1790 David and Mary Lance christened a daughter Mary, followed by twins Emma and Eliza in 1791, unfortunately Eliza died a few months later. A son William was christened early 1793 and then another son John Edwin was born at the end of the year. The children were baptised at All Saints Church in the Town of Southampton, it has been

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assumed that the Lance family lived in a large house nearby.

David Lance bought land to the east of the River Itchen. He had a house built in 1797 which he named 'Chessel'. The house sat on the top of the rise, commanding unobstructed views over the valley, the Town of Southampton and in the distance, the New Forest. At this time, the way to Chessel House from Southampton was either by bridge at Mansbridge or by ferry across the River Itchen, from Chapel to Itchen Ferry Village. In 1796 David Lance had invested in the Northam Bridge Company to construct a bridge between Northam and Bitterne Manor and from here a new road to Botley. The Admiralty were also keen as this meant better communications to and from Portsmouth dockyard to Southampton; England was at war with the French and in danger of invasion on the South coast. A wooden toll bridge was opened in 1799.

Around this time Volunteer Militia Corps were being organised all over England, officered by the gentry of their Shires. In 1798 David Lance qualified as a Deputy Lieutenant of the Volunteer Regiment of Horse militia. To qualify, one had to be a gentleman or esquire of substantial means, David Lance owned land at Chessel and at Faccombe near Andover in Hampshire where his brother William was now Reverend.

David Lance was a man of influence; in October 1794 he was admitted and sworn a Burgess of the Town of Southampton; in May 1807 David Lance took his oath to become Sheriff of Hampshire. Local newspapers of the time show David Lance in attendance at County meetings, sometimes joined by another ex-East India Company servant, Nathaniel Middleton esquire of Townhill Park. David Lance may have known Nathaniel Middleton well as they were both with the same militia unit and members of the exclusive Royal Southampton Archers.

A further tragedy came to David and Mary Lance in April 1801 when their daughter Frances was born and only lived for two weeks. Frances Lance was baptised at Jesus Chapel on Pear Tree Green and buried at All Saints two days later.



Extract of 1888-1913 map showing Chessel Estate

Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland
<http://maps.nls.uk/index.html>

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Around 1806-1809, the novelist Jane Austen was living with relatives in Castle Square in the Town of Southampton. It seems that the Austen family knew David Lance's brother the Reverend William Lance of Facombe. Occasionally, Jane Austen paid courtesy calls on Mrs Lance at Chessel. In letters to her sister, Jane Austen explained how she and a companion had crossed the River Itchen by ferry boat, walked up the hill of Sea Road and then across Pear Tree Green to get to Chessel. After tea and polite conversation, they then made their way home over the new Northam Bridge. Of Chessel House, Jane Austen described it as a "handsome building, stands high and in a beautiful situation" and that "they live in a handsome style and are rich". Jane Austen sometimes encountered Mrs Lance and her two teenage daughters, Mary and Emma, at the Assembly Ball in the Dolphin Hotel in Southampton High Street. In 1809 the Austen family moved to Chawton. They would have heard that David and Mary Lance's daughter Emma had died in 1810 aged only 19.

By 1815 David Lance and his family had left Chessel to travel around Europe, on June 15th they attended the Duchess of Richmond's famous Ball in Brussels held in honour of the Duke of Wellington and his officers prior to the Waterloo Campaign.

By the end of 1817 David Lance had sold Chessel House and lands to the Right Honorable Lord Ashtown, the Lance family then moved to Marylebone in London. It is not certain when David Lance died, it is thought to be around 1819.

There is a record of a David Lance buried in October 1820 in the crypt of St.Marylebone Parish Church, his age when he died (63) tie up and concurs with Mary Lance's Will which identifies her as the widow of the late David Lance of London. Could this be the same man ?

Today, in Bitterne, Southampton, the legacy of David Lance lives on - we still acknowledge Little Lances Hill which, in David Lance's time, was Lance's Hill and Lance's Hill (now Bitterne Road) was Great Lance's Hill. There were originally three lodges leading to Chessel House (now demolished), two lodges have been pulled down but one still stands at the junction of Chessel Avenue and Peartree Avenue.

Footnote :-

This year marks the 200th anniversary of Jane Austen's death, events such as exhibitions, talks, walks, writing competitions and performances are taking place all over Hampshire.

For more information see :- <http://janeausten200.co.uk/search/node/southampton>

THE NEXT MEETINGS ARE.....

May 3

THE MILLIONTH YANK

Jake Simpkin

June 7

FROM SILK TO SOAP - the trade & infrastructure of medieval Southampton

Dr. Andy Russel

July 5

SALISBURY - a tale of two cities Part 1

Andrew Negus

August 2

SOCIAL EVENING AT THE MUSEUM

(including raffle and free refreshments)