



GREAT WAR 100

WESTENDER

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FROM OUR ARCHIVE



THE GRANGE, SWAYTHLING (Photo courtesy Colin Mockett)

The Grange at Swaythling was situated at the junction of Wide Lane and Mansbridge Road and was originally the Manor House to the St. Denys Priory and built in the 17th century. Later belonging to the Dummer family it was purchased by (Sir Samuel Montague) Lord Swaythling in 1905 and became a Nursing Home in 1908.

Later owned by R.R.Jenkins it was damaged by a fire in 1964 and in 1965 was sold to Southampton Corporation.

Demolished in 1973-4 the grounds now form part of Monk's Brook Greenway nature trail, whilst the site of the house is now under the revised road layout.

West End Local History Society & Westender is sponsored by



**WEST END
PARISH
COUNCIL**



FROM CHIMNEY FIRES TO TELEVISION

By Bill White

I received a phone call from a relation of A.G. Cornish-Trestrail, who was manager and owner of “The Picture Palace”, a cinema at 113 East Street, Southampton in the 1920’s.

He couldn’t find his copy of our book “Dream Palaces” and wanted to know if a fire on the premises caused the cinema to close in the 1930’s. No trace of it remains as the area in East Street has been redeveloped.

I was reminded that the fire records of the city’s Fire Brigade were held in the archives at the Civic Centre and so I booked a visit to see them. I selected the 1930’s period but found no mention of a fire at the cinema although a neighbouring property had a fire of rubbish in their back yard.

Each fire attended was logged in the Register:

1. Number of fire
2. Address of fire
3. Resident
4. Owner
5. How many fire engines
6. How many firemen attended
7. Report of fire
8. Cost of damage

How surprised I was to find a report of a fire at the house I lived in. My grandmothers name, with one engine and four firemen attended a chimney fire with not too much damage to the property. I arrived seven months later but in the front bedroom and now realised we had six fire-places which did not always get swept of soot.

Going through the reports, chimney fires were the most common and summer time there were many cellars to be pumped out with flash floods in companies like Edwin Jones in East Street.

The most striking report was a fire in the New Forest at a large house with a claim of several thousand



THE MANAGER & STAFF OF “THE PICTURE PALACE” 1921

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pounds in 1935. The claim included a grand piano, a pipe organ, a radio, collection of Chippendale furniture and a television set!

A most interesting collection of reports and I shall return to look at the 1940's.



THE "PICTURE PALACE" c.1912

Note:

1935 was very early for someone to own a television set – the extract below is taken from Wikipedia.....

John Logie Baird set up the Baird Television Development Company in 1926; on September 30, 1929 he made the first experimental television broadcast for the BBC from its studio in Long Acre in the Covent Garden area of London via the BBC's London transmitter. Baird used his electromechanical system with a vertically-scanned image of 30 lines, which is just enough resolution for a close-up of one person, and a bandwidth low enough to use existing radio transmitters. The simultaneous transmission of sound and pictures was achieved on 30 March 1930, by using the BBC's new twin transmitter at Brookmans Park. By late 1930, thirty minutes of morning programmes were broadcast from Monday to Friday, and thirty minutes at midnight on Tuesdays and Fridays after BBC radio went off the air. Baird's broadcasts via the BBC continued until June 1932.

The BBC began its own regular television programming from the basement of Broadcasting House, London, on 22 August 1932. The studio moved to larger quarters in 16 Portland Place, London, in February 1934, and continued broadcasting the 30-line images, carried by telephone line to the medium wave transmitter at Brookmans Park, until 11 September 1935, by which time advances in all-electronic television systems made the electromechanical broadcasts obsolete.

After a series of test transmissions and special broadcasts that began in August 1936, regular BBC television broadcasts officially resumed on 1 October 1936 from a converted wing of Alexandra Palace in London. "Ally Pally" housed two studios, various scenery stores, make-up areas, dressing rooms, offices, and the transmitter itself, which then broadcast on the VHF band. BBC television initially used two systems on alternate weeks: the 240-line Baird intermediate film system and the 405-line Marconi-EMI system. The use of both formats made the BBC's service the world's first regular high-definition television service; it broadcast from Monday to Saturday between 15:00 and 16:00, and 21:00 and 22:00.

RIO - WEST END CARNIVAL 2016

Main photo's by Jim Chapman



Another year and another Carnival in West End - the theme this year was Rio and by all accounts very well attended. Some pictures above will give you a flavour of the event. WELHS was once again represented by our Coconut Shy which proved very popular as always and our thanks to Doreen and Richard for manning it, our thanks also to Enid, Chris and Kevin who volunteered to act as Marshals for the Carnival, well done!

WEST END IN THE SUMMER OF 1916

By Sue Ballard, PhD.

One hundred years ago in July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme constituted perhaps the worst day in British military history and although the newspaper reports tried to put a positive gloss on it, there was no doubting the massive loss of life as the campaign progressed. Curious about how the War affected people at a local level, I turned to the parish magazines from that time, expecting to find a list of the dead or missing and perhaps messages of sympathy or hope for their families. Yet that is not quite what I found.

Scattered amongst the routine parish business of sales of work, Friendly Society festivals and Missions of Repentance & Hope, there are some clues that a war was being waged in Europe: reports of contributions to the War Hospital Supplies at the West End Supply Depot, appeals for vegetable produce to supply the Navy and letters from the Scout Master serving with his regiment. In June 1916, the Vicar, Reverend Frederick Rowland Dawson, had written at some length about the progress of the War, predicting: "I have felt from the beginning that we were in for a long war; that it would entail upon us tremendous sacrifices of both men and resources." But in July & August, following the shocking losses of the Somme, Reverend Dawson was occupied with events closer to home in West End – and the Kensit Preachers. Who were the Kensit Preachers and what had they done to aggravate the Vicar to such an extent?



Rev. Frederick Rowland Dawson
Vicar of West End
1911 - 1923

Following the Reformation in the 16th Century, many Church rituals were abandoned as being Papist and churches and services both became plainer. By the 19th Century, however, such austerity within the Church of England was waning and the so-called Oxford Movement sought to restore some of the older traditions of the church. This was partly as a reaction to the Irish Church Temporalities Bill of 1833, which sought to change the administration of the (Anglican) Church of Ireland, including reducing the number of bishops and the leasing of church lands for secular purposes. This was seen as an erosion of the rights of the Church and a threat to Church property, which could set a dangerous precedent for similar revisions within the English Church. But as the Oxford Movement grew, it became interested in the origins of the Church and argued that the Thirty Nine Articles of Religion established in 1563 as the basis of doctrine for the Church of England were wholly compatible with those defined by the Council of Trent for the Roman Catholic Church in the same year. Under the Oxford Movement, services began to change, with an increasing emphasis on the Eucharist (holy communion) and use of vestments.

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This so-called “High Church” ritualism caused controversy and heated debate within the Established Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury introduced a Private Member’s Bill into Parliament, resulting in the Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874, an overt attempt to limit the growing ritualism of the Oxford Movement within the Church of England. The Act enabled an archdeacon, church warden or three adult male parishioners to make representation to the Bishop if they perceived the incumbent to have acted in breach of the Act. But for some this was not enough. John Kensit (1853-1902) founded the Protestant Truth Society in 1899 as a reaction against the Oxford Movement and his followers became known colloquially as the Kensit Preachers – a group of evangelists who actively preached against the growth of ritualism within the Church of England, which they saw as akin to Roman Catholicism. Kensit and his son were regarded by their adherents as eloquent and courageous speakers and by their detractors as violent rabble rousers. Kensit himself died of pneumonia following an incident in which he was struck by a chisel thrown during a riot, but the movement was continued by his son, John Alfred Kensit, and indeed the Protestant Truth Society still exists today, its preachers now known as Wyciffe Preachers, after the 14th Century theologian and reformer John Wycliffe.

It would appear that in the summer of 1916 the Kensit Preachers launched an attack upon Reverend Dawson, the Vicar of West End. There are few clues as to the exact form of the attack or how many were involved, but we can infer that there was a rally or public meeting of some kind, for in the July parish magazine Reverend Dawson states that the “Agitators” insinuated that he had paid people to go there and argue on his behalf. In August, writing of his decision not to leave the benefice as he had planned, he states “After the attack of the ‘Kensit Agitators’ and the personal attack upon myself by a lady parishioner to the Bishop of the Diocese, I could not leave my work.” He goes on to detail the list of accusations made by the lady parishioner – burning incense, wearing red vestments, hearing confession and such like – and refutes each point in turn, concluding “it was a wicked, untruthful attempt to dislodge me ... I have never known anything so un-British in my life.” The emphasising italics were his own – clearly he felt the attack to be unpatriotic as well as personal.

In both July & August, he wrote at length, making a detailed theological argument in support of his practice of the Church of England’s liturgy, but in the context of the events on the Somme it is his opening words that are of interest here. After thanking his many sympathisers within the parish of West End, he gently rebuked his attackers, not for the attack itself, but for indulging in such behaviour in a time of war:

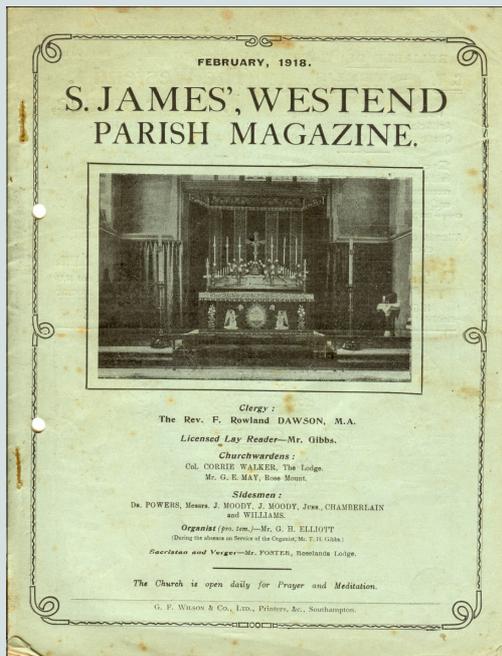
Wedding of Thomas Henry Gibbs
and Doris Emily Snelling
June 1916



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“I think, however, that the time was inopportune, and I am sure from what I have heard from people, that most people, whose thoughts are both mature and sincere, regard the present time as unsuitable, when the Church is trying to bring up all the spiritual resources, in an hour of crisis in the National Life. Is it a time to speak even against the Catholics, though we may disagree with some of their religious views, when so many thousands of them are dying for our national preservation as well as their own? The fields around Verdun alone are strewn with the dead bodies of Roman Catholics. ... and it is surely an act of ingratitude at this hour, to speak one word against them or the faith they hold.” Reverend Dawson’s words remind us that our cosy view of a united home front all pulling together in the face of war is not entirely accurate. This is confirmed by his address in November 1916, when he writes about profiteering and what he perceives as injustice in the unfair decisions of the Tribunals: “War reveals many injustices and evils. There is a tendency for character to harden and become embittered.”



West End Parish Magazine Feb 1918
Note that in addition to being the school teacher and scout master, Thomas Henry Gibbs was a Licensed lay preacher and organist
“absent in Service”

Ultimately, it is left to Thomas Henry Gibbs, the Scout Master, writing from the frontline himself, to remember the lads who left West End to march away to war. Mr. Gibbs, who was also the school teacher, was 28 years old when war broke out and in 1916 he enlisted as a Private with the Gloucestershire Regiment. He wrote enthusiastic letters to his scout group from his training camp in June & July 1916, encouraging them with the history of his regiment, in which he took great pride, details of his training and his hopes that the Lewis Automatic Rifle “a very wonderful and intricate machine” would bring the War to a close. Mr Gibbs’s optimistic tone in the June & July issues was noticeably changed by the August issue, when he was writing from the frontline. His letter takes on a more sombre note as he writes: “Amongst those lads were many whom we knew and loved, who lived in your midst, and who it was my privilege to help educate. Shall I ever forget, or you forget, the day when our first recruits left West End – so full of life and fun, and all with the one desire to ‘do their bit’. Then came other numerous recruits until West End was almost emptied of its lads. How proud we all were to see them when they came home on their short week-end leaves. Twelve months passed away and the news came that so many of them had been killed, or were drowned in the sinking of the ‘King Edward’. ... Do you remember to pray for their parents, who feel their loss more than words can tell?”

The last letter from Mr. Gibbs came in November 1916 – no doubt he was kept too busy to continue writing after that, or lost the heart for it – but happily he survived the War and is found in the Kelly’s Directory for 1920 living at Thorneydown Farm, West End. He and his wife, Dora Emily Snelling, whom he had married in June 1916, went on to have two sons, John (1921) & Peter (1923), both born in West End, before moving to Hertfordshire where their daughter Cecilia was born in 1926. Thomas died in Harpenden, Hertfordshire in 1972, aged 87.

NATHANIEL MIDDLETON'S SOUTH STONEHAM OFFSPRING

By Paula Downer

Further to my article on Nathaniel Middleton of Townhill in 'Westender' Volume 10 Number 5, have you wondered what happened to Nathaniel and Anne Middleton's South Stoneham born offspring ?

The two sons Henry Johnson and Charles John followed in their father's footsteps, going out to India in 1809-1810 as Writers for the East India Company. They both worked their way up the ladder to Judiciary level of the East India Company's Civil Service. The British in India administered justice at a District level, the control and administration of the District Courts came under the High Court of the state. Henry and Charles covered various roles of jurisdiction at District level in the northern half of India, both staying until 1836 having completed 25 years from which time they could collect their pension (sitting in a hot, stuffy courtroom all day must have been a bit wearisome!). While out in Bengal, Henry met and married Mary Ann Ochterlony, they had two sons (Henry Ochterlony, Charles Frederick) and three daughters (Henrietta Marie, Mary Ann Ochterlony, Eliza Mary). There may have been more as children often did not survive in those days. Henry's brother Charles married Eliza Carpenter.

By 1861 Henry and Mary Middleton were living in the much sought after Royal Crescent in Bath. No. 25 is a palladian style Georgian town house with 28 rooms complete with a coach house to the rear of the property. Their servants (Coachman, Footman, Lady's Maid, Housemaids and Cook) probably lived in the attic rooms above. Henry Johnson Middleton died in 1866, he is buried in Locksbrook Cemetery in Bath.

Before settling in England Charles and Eliza Middleton spent some time in Jamaica – perhaps they stopped off on their way back from India ? Charles had a share in a freehold estate here. In 1843, in Jamaica, their daughter Catherine was born.

Upon their return to England, Charles Middleton took out a mortgage in 1843 on Midanbury estate which was then part of Bitterne Manor. Midanbury Lodge was a large house at the top of Witts Hill commanding superb views over Southampton, New Forest and the Isle of Wight. The grounds contained a partly walled kitchen garden (complete with greenhouse, grapery with furnace), coach houses, stables, cow house, chicken house and piggeries. Coal vaults could be found under the lawn. The property was surrounded by a beautiful 90 acre paddock.



Midanbury Lodge/House in the 1930's (see footnote)

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Charles, Eliza and their daughter Catherine lived in Midanbury Lodge for about a year before Charles passed away in 1844 at the age of 52. His Will and Codicil became a case for the Chancery Court as Charles Middleton had obviously presumed that he would have lived long enough to pay off his mortgage! The case could easily be resolved as Charles owned two houses in Calcutta and some land in Jamaica. Charles John Middleton is buried in All Souls Cemetery, Kensal Green, London. His widow Eliza has placed a memorial tablet in affectionate remembrance of her husband in South Stoneham church. During the years 1871-1891 Eliza Middleton and her unmarried daughter Catherine were living at No.9 Anglesea Place in Above Bar, Southampton. Their servants included a Coachman, General Servant, Housemaid and a Cook. Eliza Middleton was 'living on her own means'.



A memorial tablet to Charles John Middleton in South Stoneham church
(photograph courtesy of John Moore, Swaythling Parish Office)

Nathaniel and Anne Middleton's Louisa Anne married Charles John Herbert in London in 1814. The Herbert family owned land and property in Muckcross, County Kerry, Ireland. They had made their money in the copper mining industry on the Muckcross peninsular. Charles and Louisa lived in a house called Muckcross Abbey with their six children (Jane, Emily, Louisa Anne, Charles, Maria, Henry Arthur). Charles died young in 1823, at the age of 37. Louisa took the children to her family home in Bradford Peverell in Dorset, unfortunately, she died five years later. Today, in Powis Castle in Wales, hangs a painting of the six orphaned children of Charles and Louisa Herbert by Richard Rothwell (c.1831) - Ref. National Trust Collections website.

The estate of Midanbury ended up with the Lord of the Manor of Bradford Peverell in Dorset. To piece together how Midanbury came to be part of the Middleton's title in Dorset, another of Nathaniel and Anne's offspring step into the plot. He is the third son of Nathaniel and Anne Middleton, Hastings Nathaniel Middleton (1781-1821), his first son was also called Hastings Nathaniel Middleton (1809-1898). Nathaniel and Anne also had a daughter Emily (b.1787) who married Edward Jerningham. Presuming that Charles and Eliza Middleton did not have a son and heir, and with reference to Charles John Middleton's Codicil of 1843, the following can be deduced :-
Upon Charles John Middleton's death in 1844, Midanbury was inherited by his wife Eliza who died in 1898 at the age of 91. The estate should then have been passed onto Charles's brother Henry Johnston Middleton but he had already died (1866). The next heir in line was Henry Johnston Middleton's eldest son, Henry Ochterlony Middleton and then when he died the estate was to be divided between Emily Jerningham's son Charles and Henry Johnston Middleton's eldest daughter but Charles Jerningham had died in 1854. One

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has to assume that Henry Ochterlony Middleton inherited the estate of Midanbury but it is not clear whether Henry did anything with this inheritance, he would have been 79 years of age, unmarried, with no offspring (that we know of!). Since his return to England, he had been involved with the church. For the 1881 and 1901 census Henry Ochterlony Middleton refers to himself as a 'Clerk of the Holy Order' (i.e. a priest) at St. Leonards in East Sussex. When The Reverend Henry Ochterlony Middleton died in 1903, the son of Hastings Nathaniel Middleton, Hastings Burton Middleton was the Executor of his Will. Hastings Burton Middleton became Lord of the Manor of Bradford Peverell and Midanbury.

Midanbury stayed in the family for many years, rented out to tenants, until it was sold to a building company T. Clark & Son in 1927 by Hastings Burton Middleton's eldest son Lieutenant Colonel William Henry Middleton D.S.O. (Hampshire Regiment). Midanbury has since become a residential area, the house being pulled down in the 1930's.

In the churchyard of Bradford Peverell village today, there are gravestones where some of the Middleton family are buried. In the church are memorial tablets to Hastings Nathaniel Middleton (Nathaniel and Anne Middleton's son) and other members of the Middleton family. In 1850 Hastings Nathaniel Middleton (Nathaniel and Anne Middleton's grandson) had contributed towards the cost of rebuilding the church after it burnt down in the 1820's.



On the windowsill in the church lies a memorial tablet to the son of Nathaniel and Anne Middleton - Hastings Nathaniel Middleton

Footnotes :-

The imposing castellated gatehouse which was known locally as Midanbury Castle may have been a later addition to Midanbury Lodge - it is not mentioned in the sales particulars for Townhill dated 1808 which were drawn up for the late Nathaniel Middleton esquire. Is it possible that when the gatehouse was built, this became Midanbury Lodge and the house became Midanbury House ?

Mary Ann Ochterlony was born in India, the daughter of Sir David Ochterlony G.C.B., apparently, the story goes, he had 13 wives in India! Sir David Ochterlony is a very interesting character – still intriguing researchers to this day !

WEST END LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

For the benefit of new members and readers of this newsletter, who may not know a lot about the society and our museum, a brief outline is given below:

THE SOCIETY

West End Local History Society was formed in 1996, and exists to provide a focus for those interested in the varied local history of the West End and Moorgreen area Southern Hampshire. The Society's Old Fire Station Museum provides a resource for local and family history research.

It all started back in 1996 with the closure of the Fire Station here in West End, crewed latterly by 'retained' men, who had played a long and distinguished part, both on and off duty, in the life of the community, the cover it provided was transferred to a new purpose-built fire station at Thornhill. The fledgling West End Local History Society set up its Museum in what had become 'The Old Fire Station', now a Community Building and the property of West End Parish Council.

The Society meets once a month (except August when we have a social evening at the museum) in the nearby Parish Centre, with guest speakers covering many diverse topics. Our free newsletter "Westender" is issued at these meetings or available at the museum or in full colour on-line at our website:

www.westendlhs.co.uk

Visitors are very welcome to come along – or why not take out a membership subscription.

THE MUSEUM

Designed by Herbert Collins, a noted local architect, to match the houses around it in what is now a Conservation Area, the Old Fire Station contains an extensive and ever growing archive of local material (maps, directories, sale notices, photographs etc.)

Whether your interest lies in research on houses, family or local history in general, they are at your disposal. Sit and browse. We are happy to help further if we can, including photocopying or computer generated copies of archive material (subject to copyright!). Our small reference library is at your disposal too.

The display areas of the Museum are constantly being updated to reflect the history of the area and its inhabitants. From West End's Iron Age Barrow to its connections with Titanic, Florence Nightingale and Napoleon, information can be found in the Museum. Take home a reminder of your visit from our bookstall!

The Museum is open on Saturdays only between 10am to 4pm or on other days by arrangement for group visits.

For more information phone 02380 471886

VOLUNTEERS

We are always looking for members to volunteer for Museum duty on Saturdays, it only involves a two hour shift, either 10.00 - 12.00, 12.00 - 2.00 or 2.00 - 4.00 on a Saturday. Full details and instruction will be given, just see Lin Dowdell at one of the meetings or put your name on the Roster Sheet in the museum. Thank You. Ed.

ALPHABETICAL TOUR OF WINCHESTER

A Review by Roy Andrews

Jill Daniels provided the topic for the June meeting but by her own admission for some of the letters she stretched a point when using some of the letters as her heading.

'A' was fine with King Alfred then 'B' for the Buttercross, only one small part of which is original, the rest being 19th century restoration. 'C' was a brief history of the Cathedral followed by 'D' about the writer Conan Doyle staying at the Black Swan Hotel; then Queen Eleanor's garden behind the Great Hall sufficed for 'E'. 'F' was for fonts and 'G' the Great Hall and its history; for good measure Jill threw in a bit on God Begot House.

Stretching a point, 'H' was for Richard Taunton's Hospital in Parchment Street followed by 'I' and the Itchen Navigation. 'J' was for St. Johns Hospice founded in the 12th century with its concrete beds. John Keats stayed in Winchester where he wrote *Ode to Joy* thus Jill covered 'K' following on with 'L' and the mother church of the city St. Lawrence's.

Manners Maketh Man is the Motto of Winchester College and again stretching the point 'N' denoted new for old and the Theatre Royal which in an earlier life had been a hotel where members of the Cyclist Touring Club could stay and the cinema in South Street which had once been the Garrison Church. Order of Noble Poverty and the residents of St. Cross gave us 'O' and 'P' as in Peter Symonds and Christ Hospital founded in 1607. 'Q' was for Queen Anne and the curfew bell which is still rung at 8pm every night.

Of course 'R' had to be about the Round Table as 'S' had to be St. Swithun and the miracle that got him into the Sainthood when he restored some broken eggs a lady had dropped while fording the River Itchen. Then we had the sad story of a Thomas Thetford who died from drinking cold beer at the Blue Boar Inn.

Struggling to something beginning with 'U', Jill settled for Underwater and Diver William Walker who single handedly saved the cathedral from sinking into the mud by underpinning the foundations. 'W' was for wedding and that of Mary Tudor to Philip of Spain in 1554.

Really struggling now, Jill used 'X' to talk on the Execution, (do you get it?) of Alice Lisle, an elderly lady who had offered succour to the King's enemies during the Monmouth rebellion. Put on trial and found not guilty twice, Alice was finally convicted by the same jury threatened by Judge Jefferies. 'Y' was for the founding of Hilliers garden centres in 1864, Fosters Tobacconist shop in the museum and The Hampshire Chronicle all under the banner of, wait for it, YESTERDAY.

Last and by no means least, we were introduced to the 'Z' in Zucchetto - no I had never heard of it either - which is the skull cap worn by Catholic Cardinals at all times and would have been worn in Winchester pre-Reformation, so remember the name it may be the answer to a question one quiz night!



THE BUTTERCROSS



THE ROUND TABLE AT THE CASTLE

LAWRENCE BEFORE AND AFTER ARABIA

A Review by Roy Andrews

In 1962 David Lean produced his epic film, lasting three hours, on T.E. Lawrence's experiences during World War one. Based upon the amount of information that our speaker Colin van Geffen at the July meeting directed at us, and this poor reviewer had to attempt to record, Lean could have made similar length films on Lawrence's exploits before and after the war.

Lawrence was born in 1888 and his early life seemed to have been spent with his family moving residence from Ireland, Wales, France and Channel Islands before settling at Langley in the New Forest. Then it was up to Oxford for its High School and later University. His studies were interspersed with cyclig holidays in France, indulging in his lifelong hobby of photography. In 1909 he went to Palestine and researched the Crusader Castles.

From 1911, for four years, he went to Syria and studied Languages and Archaeology; this was, he said "The happiest time of my life". On the outbreak of war, he returned to Oxford but by late 1914, he was in Cairo spying for the British Government and the next four years as they say is history (and a very long film).



By 1919 Lawrence seems to have become very well connected in high places but was suffering from depression over the death of his father and the fact that the British Government and her allies had re-neged on promises they had told Lawrence to give the Arabs, which he did in good faith, promising them their independence if they fought with the allies during the war.

In 1920, having written his now famous book *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, he manages to lose his only copy at Reading Railway Station but in three months from memory he had rewritten all 400,000 words. However it would take four rewrites and several years before he published it.

By 1921 he was in the Colonial Office working in the Middle East; in July of that year he joined the RAF but over the next few years he was also in the army, then back to the RAF. His contacts in high places seemed to make this easy to do although occasionally the opposite was true. In 1925 he was back in the RAF and on his fourth revision of his book which he later paid for himself to have published.

By now he had changed his name to Shaw and was employed on the maintenance of RAF planes while at the same time developing aerial photography. While stationed in Plymouth in 1931, he witnessed a plane crash into the sea and helped rescue the two survivors of the eight man crew. As a result of this, he became involved in the design and standardisation of fast rescue boats and over the next few years spent much time at RAF Calshot and British Power Boats at Hythe. As a result of his work, survival rates went from 1 in 50 to 1 in 5.

On 19th February 1935, he left the RAF and spent a week with Nancy Astor at Clivedon, leaving on 26th February to travel across England on his Brough Superior motor-cycle visiting friends and back to his home in Dorset; finding his home there was not ready for occupation, he rode back to London. On 21st May 1935, Lawrence crashed his bike on a country road and died.

And so, having given us the details of Lawrence's life, in a very well illustrated talk, Colin, was with many other people, was unable to explain what drove this somewhat strange, enigmatic and in some ways confused man, who hated publicity, who tried to hide in obscure postings, changed his name several times but was not averse to using his well connected friends when it suited him to get what he wanted.

CAPTAIN ROSTRON FETED

By Bill White

When Captain Arthur Henry Rostron of Carpathia/Titanic fame was being feted in New York by many organisations; he was invited to many events with gifts and money collected for the crew. Rostron was dubbed the “Titanic Hero” and together with the First Class Surgeon and three of the junior Officers invited to see a well- known singer perform at the Winter Gardens Theatre, New York.

Stopping the show the audience joined in the singing of the “Star Spangled Banner” and God Save the King” and stood up and cheered the visitors, who thanked them for the honour shown them, when they were introduced by the “star of the show” from the stage.

The star of the show made his first three records on December 22nd 1911 for the Victor Talking Machine Co., launching his career as a famous singer.

Who was he? No! don't send in a postcard with the answer.

The answer will be revealed in the next edition of Westender.

THE NEXT MEETINGS ARE.....

September 7

WINCHESTER - Bishops, Buildings & Bones Part 3

Andrew Negus

October 5

LIVES INTERRUPTED - 10 Officers in the Great War

Dr Frances Hurd

November 2

MEDIEVAL SOUTHAMPTON - the Italian Connection

Geoff Watts

ON THIS DAY.....

On this day (August 3rd) in.....

1492 Christopher Columbus left Palos de la Frontera in SW Spain on his famous westward voyage, in command of the small ‘Santa Maria’, attended by the ‘Pinta’ and the ‘Nina’.

1721 Grinling Gibbons, English woodcarver, notably in St. Paul’s Cathedral, died.

1792 Sir Richard Arkwright, English inventor who developed the mechanical cotton spinning process, died.

1801 Sir Joseph Paxton, English landscape gardener, architect and designer of the Crystal Palace, born at Milton Bryant, near Woburn in Bedfordshire.

1916 Sir Roger Casement, Irish nationalist, was hanged in London for treason, because of his attempts to induce Germany to support the cause of Irish independence.

1977 Archbishop Makarios, religious leader and President of Cyprus, Died.