



GREAT WAR 100

# WESTENDER

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## FROM OUR ARCHIVE



WEST END NATIONAL SCHOOL PUPILS BEHIND THE SCHOOL 1915

Our picture this issue shows the rear of St. James' School in West End (now the Hilldene Community Centre) in 1915. The schoolchildren are gathered for the photograph on the raised area behind the playground which is now the car-park at Hilldene. This ground was the site of the school's gardening area and further up the slope in a later period stood temporary overspill classrooms. This photo, one of several, comes from the beautiful retirement book that was presented to long serving West End school-master George Henry Elliott when he retired from teaching at St. James' in 1915. George was school-master at West End from 2nd April 1883. Ed.

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## MY VISIT TO St. MILDRED'S CHURCH, WHIPPINGHAM

By Paula Downer

In the churchyard of St. Mildred's in Whippingham village, Isle of Wight lies Archibald George and Ethel Florence Smith, the son and daughter-in-law of Sidney Smith (late Indian Navy and Indian Police) who is buried in the Old Burial Ground of West End, Hampshire (see 'Westender' Volume 11 Number 6). Archibald George Smith was born in the British cantonment town of Landour in Northern India to Sidney and Sidney's first wife Mary (née Cumberlege) on the 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1870.

Archibald George Smith joined the British Army's Royal Artillery, he is acknowledged in a London Gazette War Office communication dated 9<sup>th</sup> August 1889, as a Gentleman Cadet from the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich (*set up for training of commissioned officers of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers*), appointed as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant with the Royal Artillery, seconded for service as 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Assistant Inspector of Stores.

The England Census 'Return of all the Persons who slept or abode in this Institution on the Night of Sunday April 5<sup>th</sup> 1891' lists officers and men of the Royal Artillery at Sheerness Barracks - two officers including Archibald George Smith and six soldiers/gunners. In July 1892, Archibald George Smith was promoted to Lieutenant.

During 1897-1898, Archibald Smith was part of the Tirah Expeditionary Force which took place on the North West frontier of India. Due to ongoing tribal warfare, in 1893, a boundary had been "agreed" between Afghanistan and India. The British erected forts along this boundary, the local Orakzais and Afridis tribes felt that the British were interfering too much. These forts were subsequently captured and destroyed. The British were outraged, in retaliation, an expedition force was set up to invade and destroy the summer camp of the Orakzais and Afridis situated south of the frontier at Tirah. General Sir William Lockhart was chosen to command the force, it was the largest expedition ever deployed on the frontier. The ensuing skirmishes were fought over difficult mountainous terrain, in an area unknown to the British, many were killed or wounded. However, it became apparent that the campaign could not terminate with a conclusive engagement so at this point, General Lockhart considered it prudent to withdraw before the onset of winter which would have made fighting even more difficult. The majority of the Orakzais agreed to a Treaty to leave the British alone but the Afridis did not. The British decided to call it a day, they had done enough. The expeditionary force was disbanded on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1898.



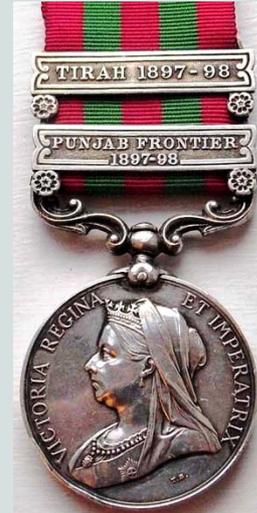
General Sir William Lockhart KCB, KCSI had nothing but praise for his men  
'Splendid service was provided by the Artillery'

For his part, Sir William Lockhart KCB, KCSI was awarded  
'Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath' (GCB)

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**Archibald George Smith was awarded with the India Medal with two clasps (Tirah 1897-1898 and Punjab Frontier 1897-1898)**



### **India Medal 1895-1902**

From May 1899 to April 1904 Archibald Smith was based in Hull, England serving as Adjutant of 2<sup>nd</sup> East Riding Royal Garrison Artillery (*suffixed* (Volunteers) in 1902). The Royal Garrison Artillery Unit maintained the coastal defence artillery along the Humber estuary, training took place at nearby Paull Point Battery. In September 1899 Archibald George Smith was promoted to Captain.

In April 1900 Archibald George Smith and Ethel Florence Smith were married in the parish of Christ Church, Didsbury in Lancaster. Ethel Florence Smith's father was Joseph Smith, late Indian Civil Service. Archibald and Ethel Smith lived in the village of Cottingham just outside the City of Hull. In August 1910 Archibald George Smith was promoted to Major, in July 1916 he graduated to rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Archibald and Ethel Smith retired to East Cowes on the Isle of Wight, living at Woodside Cottage, New Barn Road which borders the estate of Osborne. Archibald George Smith died in January 1937 and is buried in St.Mildred's churchyard.



**'IN EVER LOVING MEMORY OF A VERY DEVOTED HUSBAND'  
Grave of Archibald George and Ethel Florence Smith**

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The church of St.Mildred was frequented by Queen Victoria when in residence at nearby Osborne House. Apparently, Queen Victoria thought that the original church was too small so a new Chancel was added, at the Queen's expense, for the sole use of the Royal Family. The rest of the church was then demolished and rebuilt, the foundation stone laid by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in May 1860. The Prince had played an influential role in its design. The final design of the church, however, received mixed reviews, to quote from 'Buildings of England' Architectural Guide by Pevsner and Lloyd *'it is a weird design, especially the tower, in a mixture of Romanesque and Early Gothic'*.



Inside the church are several memorials to Queen Victoria's family, some transcriptions can be viewed on the following website :-

[www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk/mis\\_bis/mis\\_whippingham\\_st\\_mildred.html](http://www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk/mis_bis/mis_whippingham_st_mildred.html)

In the North Transept of the Church, of particular interest to our local history society members is a memorial to Alice Shedden (née Gater). The Shedden family of Paulerspury in Northamptonshire had made their fortune in the American and West India tobacco and sugar trade.

In 1880 - George Shedden of Paulerspury, Northamptonshire, of Springhill, Isle of Wight, of Hardmead, Buckinghamshire married Alice Sarah, daughter of Caleb Hammond Gater of Townhill House, South Stoneham. George Shedden was a Barrister, being called to the Bar in 1883 as a member of the Inner Temple. They lived on the Springhill estate which originally encompassed the shoreline of East Cowes, the house situated at the top of the rise commanding a lovely view of the Solent. In 1924, George Shedden generously donated several acres of foreshore and the esplanade to the people of East Cowes. George Shedden was a busy man on the Isle of Wight, he had various roles including Justice of the Peace, Deputy Lieutenant, Honorary Treasurer of Frank James Hospital in East Cowes, Chairman of the Magistrate Bench, President of the Conservative Association, Church Warden at St.Mildred's Whippingham and a lay Canon of Portsmouth Cathedral. George Shedden was awarded a knighthood in 1926. Sir George and Lady Alice Shedden had three sons - Roscow George, Edward Claude, Graham Percival and three daughters - Alice Katherine Beatrix, Constance Evelyn, Mary Eleanor Goodrich.

In 1892 - Graham Eden Shedden (brother of George Shedden) of Knockmarloch, Ayrshire, of Millfield House, East Cowes, Isle of Wight, and of Elvington Court, Eythorne, Kent married Margaret, daughter of George Henry Gater of Winslowe House in West End, South Stoneham. Graham Shedden was then a Captain in the Hampshire Carabiniers Yeomanry. Graham and Margaret Shedden had two sons - Harold Roscow Graham and George Eden Graham. They lived in Kent for many years.

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**Memorial to Lady Alice Shedden (née Gater), dearly beloved wife of Sir George Shedden**

Photograph of St.Mildred's Church courtesy of Geoff Allan [www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk](http://www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk)

My thanks go to the volunteers of St.Mildred's Church at Whippingham for their valuable help in locating Archibald George Smith's grave and also to Pauline Berry for pointing me in the right direction with the Gater families.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

November 7

**DEFENCE OF THE REALM : gun culture in Tudor Southampton**

*Dr. Cheryl Butler*

December 5

**SOCIAL EVENING**

*Christmas Buffet and Raffle*

**2019**

January 2

**FOR VALOUR : the Victoria Cross story**

*Jeremy Prescott*

February 6

**WILLIAM COBBETT'S BOTLEY**

*Geoff Watts*

March 6

**PORTSMOUTH : Harlots, Dung & Glory (Part 1)**

*Andrew Negus*

## NELSON & HMS VICTORY

A Review by Roy Andrews

### PICTURES

Admiral Lord Nelson right and below HMS Victory at Trafalgar painted by Montague Dawson



The September talk by Colin van Geffen was basically two long lists of names, places and dates, one each for Nelson and Victory; this could have made it a very boring talk. However the slick slide show, and occasional sound effects, which changed with every new fact, made for a very interesting talk.

Both the stars of the evening came into existence at much the same time, Nelson was born on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1758 and the keel of Victory was laid down on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1759, her name being chosen in 1760. However work on her stopped for three years and it was not until 6,000 trees later that the completed ship was handed over to the Navy in 1765.

Meanwhile Horatio Nelson, having grown up and been educated in Norfolk, joined the Royal Navy in 1771 and experienced being under fire for the first time in 1775 but within a year had returned to this country suffering from malaria; ill health seemed to dog him for the rest of his life. His health did not seem to interfere with his steady promotion within the Navy and nor did it seem to stop him from chasing the ladies in various ports around the world. He eventually married Francis Nesbitt and at about the same time found himself 'on the beach' for five years, his services not being required by the Navy.

The 1789 French Revolution, and that country's declaration of war on England in 1793, found Nelson's services once more required and while in the Mediterranean, Nelson met Emma Hamilton who became his mistress and later bore him two daughters. And by 1800 he was back in England suffering once again ill health and living with Emma at Merton Place in Surrey until the Navy recalled him.

Meanwhile HMS Victory, which had received a copper bottom in 1778, been laid up a couple of times and even used as a hospital ship, had also been in the thick of many battles under the command of numerous admirals. Finally she became the flag ship of Nelson and together at the Battle of Trafalgar they became immortalized together down through history.

After the battle, Victory was badly damaged and the repairs meant that she was not recommissioned until 1808. She continued to serve until laid up in 1816 in Portsmouth Harbour when she became the flag ship Portsmouth. By 1922, she had been afloat for 160 years and so it was decided to permanently berth her in Number 2 Dry Dock where she remains to this day.

## THE VANISHING PUBS OF WEST END

By Nigel Wood

One could be forgiven for thinking that in recent years West End (or to give it its old spelling Westend) is going tee-total. Since the 1950's the community has lost four of its relatively small number of public houses.



THE FIRST "NEW INN" PUB BEFORE BEING REBUILT

The "Lamp & Mantle" formerly known as "The New Inn" was demolished in March 2004 to make way for a block of apartments now known as Rosemount Court. The pub, constructed in mock Tudor style was built by Strong & Co. of Romsey in the late 1920's and had an identical twin at Eastleigh, known as "The Leigh" in Leigh Road. The building previously occupying this site dated back to at least 1834 and formed what was once the centre of the village of West End, complete with a village green in front. However, since that time the centre of the village has moved gradually up the High Street towards its present position centred around another pub the "West End Brewery".

Another prominent public house to have disappeared as recently as 2003 is "The Sportsman" at the top end of the village on the corner of Telegraph Road and High Street. Originally it was a small building situated right on the corner and was known as "The Sportsman's Arms", it later had the indignity of having a new replacement built on ground behind in the 1930's just prior to World War Two. During the war the original pub was kept going whilst the new one was temporarily used as a Home Guard HQ on the right hand side with training trenches dug in front. A wartime "British Restaurant" (providing good wholesome food at low cost) occupied the left hand side of the building. After the war the old pub was knocked down and the area it occupied became the large front car park for the "new" pub. Over the years the name of the pub changed to "The Collared Dove", but this only lasted a short time before the name returned to the slightly different "The Sportsman". In 2002 the pub was closed and the site sold to developers who demolished the building in 2003 and built the McCarthy & Stone retirement complex now known as "Fielders Court", so named because of its close proximity to The Ageas Bowl, home of Hampshire Cricket.

Moorgreen once boasted two pubs, the "Southampton Arms" (still in existence) and "The Moorgreen Inn", run latterly by Mr and Mrs Goodeve. Long since demolished the site today is occupied by housing.

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THE "MOORGREEN INN" IN THE 1930's

Another well known and much loved local pub dating back to the 1870's, the "Blacksmith's Arms" in the High Street, still stands today, but is now a private home, its days as a public house long gone. The front of the pub is no longer of "checkerboard" brickwork construction and curved window tops, for many years ago in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century a vehicle driving down the road lost control and crashed into the front of the building, which had to be completely re-built in a more conventional style.



THE "BLACKSMITHS ARMS" IN 1900  
Before a vehicle crashed into the front and the facade was rebuilt without the chequerboard brickwork.

Other public houses that still exist in West End comprise "The Master Builder", formerly "The Crown & Thistle" on the Swaythling Road, the present building although very old replaced a much earlier one that jutted out into the road. The "West End Brewery" in the High Street again is a newer building replacing one that stood on the site of the present car park in front. This pub at one time exhibited a sign stating "The Winchester Brewery". The "Southampton Arms" in Moorgreen Road, is the only old pub not to have been re-built in Westend and today still looks very much as it did in the 1930's, and "The Two Brothers" in Townhill Way a more recent modern pub which is still going strong. On the border of West End and Mansbridge is the "White Swan", a very old public house dating back to 1834 or before, once a Hotel it was originally known just as "The Middleton Arms" after the owner of Townhill House, later changed to "The Swan". Although much extended today and set back from the busy main road, in more genteel Edwardian times it boasted out-door refreshment booths overlooking the garden and river and punts for hire. You can almost taste the cucumber sandwiches and pot of tea, how times have changed!

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THE "WHITE SWAN" IN 1911

A picture of Edwardian charm with punts for hire, afternoon tea cubicles and a nice green area for sitting by the river. This area is now covered by a dining extension to the original pub. When not in use the punts were moored on the opposite bank of the river in indentations in the river bank, no longer visible due to the undergrowth and overgrown nature of the bank. The wooden bridge that connected both banks of the river succumbed to nature some years back and is no longer there.

## HATCH FARM - an introduction to Albert Fray's farm diary

### Part 1

By Pauline Berry

Very little has been recorded and therefore researched about West End's farming heritage. Most of the low-lying land to the north of the wooded ridge was transformed long before the workhouse, businesses, shop's and cottages became established in West End (with the exception of the ancient Gater's Mill). The names of old farms were Quob, Chalcroft, Berrywood, Allington, Moorgreen, Townhill and Hickley which existed around 1800, not forgetting the many smaller ones and individual fields leased from richer landowners.

We have been fortunate to have been given permission by Mr Adrian Fray to publish extracts from his grandfather's diary (1895-1897) kept to record the daily activities on Hatch Farm. Albert Fray kept this farm, a mixed farm (growing crops and a dairy herd) of 200 plus acres for roughly 14 years until his early death in 1905. On reading this diary it soon becomes obvious how hard-working, in fact overworked Albert Fray, his family of eight and workforce were. There was no rest from the daily grind of ploughing, threshing, harvesting, planting, thatching, pig-killing etc.. and visiting Hampshire markets to buy and sell his animals and produce. His only days off included Sundays at Chapel, funerals and Christmas Day.

I hope to print extracts from Albert Fray's diary, starting in 1895, trying to paint a picture of the work of Hatch Farm (much of the area west and north of Barbe Baker Avenue, now mainly covered by modern housing and the cemetery). There is much repetition of the daily tasks, but there are also small but concise observations of his family life and the minor dramas on the farm, births and deaths which occurred approximately 125 years ago.

**1895**, The start of the Diary kept by Albert Fray of Hatch Farm.

July 9<sup>th</sup>      A fine day. Tom and Sid ploughing and working the ground for turnips. Men hoeing the mangolds where they are thick. Mrs Broomfield (Thorneydown Farm) came to see us.

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July 10<sup>th</sup> Fine day and hot. I have been to Town (Southampton) .... Paid £24.15s. 0d. into the Bank. The "Band of Hope" children had their tea today in Bignell's Mead.

July 11<sup>th</sup> Fine Day, put sheep into clover .... I have bought 3 heifers and calves off Minns and sold him 'Beggar' (bull or horse?) £25 to settle. I have been to Mr (John St. Barbe) Baker's annual tea.

July 12<sup>th</sup> Men hoeing turnips on (Hatch) Hill. Aunt Minnie came to see us ... Mr Boyt (Shopkeeper nearby) had a gallon of milk.

July 13<sup>th</sup> John and Edwin (brothers) came over and put in another manger (a feeding trough for livestock).

**Sunday**

July 14<sup>th</sup> ... I have been to Salisbury Fair and bought 75 lambs at 27 shillings each. Brother George came over for a little time this evening.

July 15<sup>th</sup> We drilled a piece of ground, where we (previously) cut barley, with turnips. Men hoeing swedes where we ploughed up wheat.

July 16<sup>th</sup> .... Sheep (purchased) arrived from Salisbury Fair. Pearce sent for the calves I bought.

July 17<sup>th</sup> .... I am not very well today. Our children been for a treat to Botley Grange. A lot of rain during the night.

July 20<sup>th</sup> .... Roberts fetched hurdles from Candy's field (off Allington Lane), took them to the sheepfold and closed the sheep up a bit.

**Sunday**

July 21<sup>st</sup> .... A lot of rain this morning and through the day. Mr Squire spoke all day at Chapel (Bible Christian in Chapel Road).

July 22<sup>nd</sup> .... Mr Othen bought ¼ ton of barley straw. Also Mr Gardner.

July 23<sup>rd</sup> Fine drying day (6 men working in fields). We have begun harvest, 4 men cutting Barnsland wheat. (Paid them £4. 12s. 6d. for the job.

July 24<sup>th</sup> Dung carting with 3 carts. I went to Stoneham (farm) this afternoon. Father (George) was threshing winter oats. Children have been to Lyndhurst Road with their Sunday School.

July 25<sup>th</sup> Damp day. Alresford Fair, (but) we have been dung carting all day.

July 26<sup>th</sup> Fine day, Tom horse-hoeing the turnips. Weyhill Fair (near Andover) on but I have been to Town (Southampton) and bought a new cheque book (2s. 6d.) .... Paid for 1½ tons of coal (£1. 7s. 9d.), 2 quarts maize (£26), two broomheads, a hoe and 3 files.

July 27<sup>th</sup> .... Father (George) drove over (from Stoneham Farm) this afternoon.

**Sunday**

July 28<sup>th</sup> Damp most of the day.

July 29<sup>th</sup> Roberts fetched 2 tons of coal from Town. I have been with Mother (wife Augusta) to Chilworth Farm saw (brother) Harry and Ellen. Got home after 8 o'clock.

July 30<sup>th</sup> Roberts fetched 2 tons of coal and took wool to (Swaythling) station. Davis had been transplanting some swedes..... 4 men cut about 1¼ acres of wheat ... paid them 12 shillings for it.

July 31<sup>st</sup> Roberts ploughing ..... other men hoeing. Mother (Augusta) and I have been to Stoneham Flower Show. Father gave me a receipt for £100 which I paid him.... Leaving a balance of £847 on my (farms) valuation.

***NB. Although a tenant farmer, Albert Fray was trying, with the help of his father George Fray, to purchase Hatch Farm eventually. But fate would put an end to these hopes! Part 2 to follow in the next issue.***

## **RECIPE CORNER - Sue Ballard**

### **PUMPKIN PIE - Recipe adapted from 101 Cookbooks**

Pumpkin pie is a traditional part of the Thanksgiving Day feast (on the fourth Thursday of November) in North America, commemorating the first harvest of the Pilgrim Fathers in 1621. Pumpkins formed a staple part of Native Americans' diet long before white settlers arrived; seeds from related squash plants have been found in Mexico dating back to 7000 B.C. It is believed that pumpkin pie originated by colonists filling hollowed out pumpkins with milk, honey and spices before baking them in the embers of a dying fire. Don't be put off by it being a vegetable (we all love carrot cake!) – it really is a tasty dessert, especially served with a little cream.

#### **Pumpkin Pie Spice Blend**

2 Tablespoons ground cinnamon

1½ teaspoons ground allspice

1 teaspoon ground ginger

1 level teaspoon ground cloves

Mix together and store in a sealed jar in a cool dark place. It is good for adding to porridge, cookies and cakes.

#### **Pumpkin Pie Recipe**

1 pumpkin or butternut squash weighing about 3lb

sunflower, corn or vegetable oil (not olive oil)

225g plain flour

120g lightly salted butter

50g caster sugar

1 beaten egg mixed with a splash of milk, for egg wash

1 Tbsp molasses or black treacle

½ cup soft brown sugar (dark or light, according to taste)

1 Tbsp pumpkin pie spice blend (see above)

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 level tsp salt

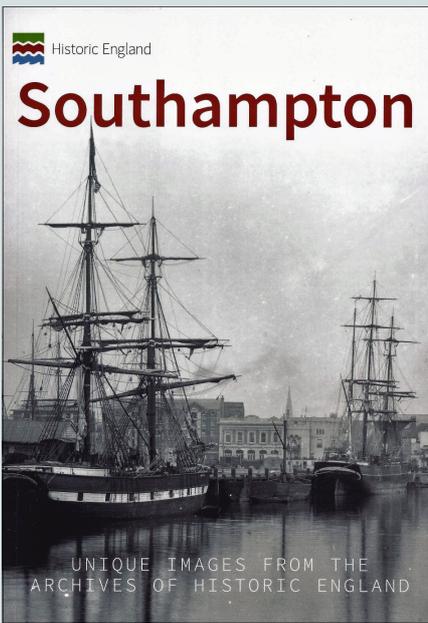
1 level Tbsp cornflour

3 extra large eggs, beaten

1 cup full fat milk

1. Preheat oven to 400F / Gas 6 / 200°C (180 fan).
2. Roast the pumpkin: trim off the stem and cut the pumpkin into four wedges, discarding the seeds and fibres. Rub the wedges with oil, sprinkle lightly with salt, and bake 45mins - 1 hour or until tender.
3. Scoop out the flesh, discarding the skin and any remaining stringy bits, and purée with a blender or mash well by hand. Leave to cool completely. This can be done the day before if you like.
4. Make the pastry: Sieve flour into a bowl and rub in the butter until crumbly. Mix in sugar. Add a very little cold water gradually until it comes together as dough. Wrap in cling film and chill for 20 minutes.
5. Place a baking tray in the centre of the oven and preheat oven to 350F / Gas 4 / 180C (160 fan).
6. Roll out pastry thinly. Grease and flour a 9 inch round loose-base flan tin and line it with the pastry dough.
7. Prick the bottom of the pastry shell all over with a fork and brush it with egg wash. Place on the hot baking tray in the oven for 3 minutes to seal the pastry and avoid a soggy bottom. Allow the pastry shell to cool completely in the flan tin, but return the baking tray to the oven to heat.
8. Meanwhile, whisk together the molasses, sugar, spice blend, vanilla, salt, and cornflour.
9. Stir in 1½ cups of the cold pumpkin purée with the beaten eggs and milk.
10. Pour the mixture into the cold pie shell and place on the hot baking tray in the oven to bake for 35-40 minutes – until the edges are set and the centre just barely wobbles when you move it.
11. Leave to rest for 5 minutes before turning out on a wire rack. It will continue setting as it cools.

## BOOK REVIEWS by Nigel Wood



### **HISTORIC ENGLAND – Southampton unique images from the archives of Historic England**

**By Dave Marden with contributions by Historic England**

Publication: 15<sup>th</sup> August 2018

Price: £14.99

ISBN: 978-1-4456-8245-7

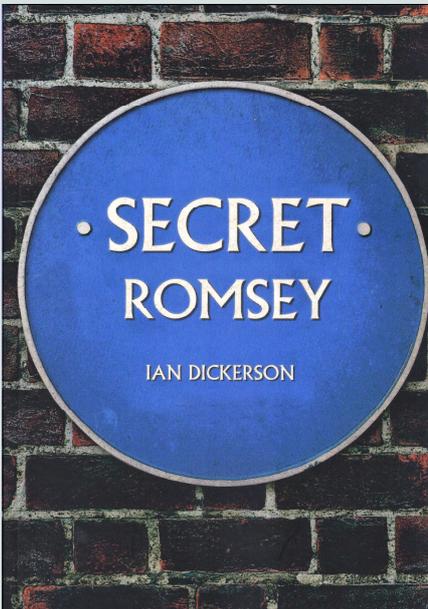
Paperback 96 pages 160 illustrations

Also available in Kindle, Kobo and iBook formats

Published by: Amberley Publishing

[www.amberley-books.com](http://www.amberley-books.com)

Just in time for Christmas! This well-presented book of images of old Southampton draws heavily on the superb Historic England archive based at Swindon. Outstanding aerial images of Southampton, some not often seen, compliment the excellent selection of vintage images, both in black and white and sepia with an occasional colour photograph. There are sections on all aspects of Southampton including a fleeting glance at Hamble, Netley, Calshot, Fawley, Hythe, Totton and Woolston etc.. There is a good selection of images representing maritime Southampton, from liner interiors to the docks to Southampton's parks, shops, pubs, hotels, streets, churches and so on. The format is such that the images are given centre stage with just enough wording to give you the background and relevant information about the image, well-balanced and certainly not boring. I would commend this book to anyone interested in what Southampton looked like in times past, it would make an excellent stocking filler for the upcoming festive season.



### **SECRET ROMSEY**

**By Ian Dickerson**

Publication: 15<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Price: £14.99

ISBN: 978-1-4456-7895-5

Paperback 96 pages 100 illustrations

Also available in Kindle, Kobo and iBook formats

Published by: Amberley Publishing

[www.amberley-books.com](http://www.amberley-books.com)

A fascinating book giving an excellent insight into the history and oft forgotten stories of local goings on. Although visiting Romsey from time to time and living not that far away, I will look at Romsey in a new light from here on.

There are lots of information and images regarding the history of some of the well-known roads, buildings and businesses as well as prominent residents of this old established town near Southampton. From Lord Palmerston who owned Broadlands (later the residence of Lord Mountbatten) to Florence Nightingale (of Nursing fame) at Embley Park to Strong & Co of Romsey Ltd, a Brewery founded in 1858 by Thomas Strong which was based at Romsey until taken over by Whitbread in 1969 and closed a decade later.

There is a section relating to the ancient Romsey Abbey, its history and personalities through the ages and much, much more. In common with the "Secret" series of books there are blue coloured sections which give the reader little known facts, such as: *"During the Second World War troops suffering from pneumonia were cared for in the Town Hall, lying on the floor with just one blanket each"*! There is lots to read in this book and much valuable information to learn and like me you will come away and see Romsey as much more than just a name on a map.