

The  
BULLETIN  
of the  
EAST GRINSTEAD  
SOCIETY

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THE EAST GRINSTEAD SOCIETY

[www.eastgrinsteadsociety.org](http://www.eastgrinsteadsociety.org)



**The Society was founded in 1968 to protect and improve the amenities of East Grinstead and its environs. The Town has a long history and a unique architectural heritage, entrusted for the time being to the hands of our generation. It should be our concern that such contributions as we in turn make are worthy of the past and a fitting bequest to the future. Key to this is an active role in scrutinising planning applications and regular liaison with planning authorities and our publications, of which the *Bulletin* is one.**

The *Bulletin* was established and edited by Michael Leppard. The continuance of the *Bulletin* forms both a tribute to Michael's legacy to the Town and a source of future research on the Town's history, The *Bulletin* is an important tool for highlighting the rich and varied history of the Town and a key resource for the general reader, schools and researchers. As such we welcome suggestions for topics to be covered and, of course, draft articles for possible inclusion. We also welcome comments on the *Bulletin* and any aspect of the Society's role to: [Chairman@eastgrinsteadsociety.org](mailto:Chairman@eastgrinsteadsociety.org)

Full information on the Society and updates on activities can be found on our website: [www.eastgrinsteadsociety.org](http://www.eastgrinsteadsociety.org)

The strength of the Society lies in the extent to which it can be seen to represent public opinion: the larger the membership the greater the influence. We are committed to expanding our membership by offering benefits such as a regular Newsletter and meetings and a social programme.

James Baldwin - Chairman

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## Cover Picture

Image of Whitehall with Art Deco Façade c.1936 (©East Grinstead Museum)

Images for the Whitehall article by kind permission of East Grinstead Museum

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## Editorial

I am very grateful to Graham Edwards for his research and the account of Harry Thomas Smeed, a local young man who died of disease, serving his country, a long way from home, in 1900. This seems particularly poignant at this season of Remembrance.

I am also very grateful to Jonathan Parrett, Museum Manager at our Town Museum, for allowing me to publish his article and the pictures about the Whitehall Cinema Bombing in East Grinstead on 9 July 1943. I have always felt reluctant to accept responsibility for writing about this event. For previous anniversaries I have used Michael Leppard’s account, taken from his *History of East Grinstead*, with his permission and approval. Michael was only a boy during the War, but he was local and as a meticulous historian, he gathered much information about the event. Jonathan has added to our knowledge of the event, but also sketched the history of the Whitehall buildings, giving us a sense of their social history, too. Jonathan has generously provided pictures from the Museum. Jonathan’s work was displayed at East Court this summer for the eightieth anniversary of

this atrocity. A touching ceremony was held at the War Memorial in East Court and flowers were laid in individual vases for each of the named victims. This raid must surely have caused one of the worst losses of civilian life in the south of England during the War. There are people in East Grinstead, and much further afield, with connections to the victims. We cannot change what happened, but we can continue to honour those whose lives were cut short that day.



goes on!

Amongst the papers of the late Michael Leppard was a poem about local traders, dated 1799. It gives the impression of a busy town and it was written before photography was invented, so it provides a word picture of the town at that time. Members of local families may find the names of some of their ancestors within the poem. I hope that others will enjoy it, too.

## The Whitehall Bombing Friday 9th July 1943

Ten German bombers are spotted over the South Coast. They are headed towards London, probably intending to deliver a reprisal for the heavy bombing of German industrial towns in the Ruhr that had been happening since March 1943.

However, weather conditions have deteriorated, and low cloud forces one bomber - a Dornier 217 - to separate from the rest. A target is identified: the bomber tries to machine gun a train.

Unsuccessful, it follows the train to the nearby town, then releases its payload of heavy explosives and incendiary bombs, firing on fleeing civilians before leaving.

Around 10 minutes later, it is shot down near Bletchingley.

This raid, lasting just a few minutes, left 108 people dead and a further 235 injured.

80 years on, an exhibition at East Court told the story of that fateful day in 1943 and its impact on East Grinstead and its people.

## The Whitehall Palace

The Whitehall started life as the Grosvenor Hall, built by Mr G. Bridgland in 1883. The hall acted as the town's public hall and had a roller-skating rink (a popular sport at the time).

By 1910, William Christopher helped convert the Grosvenor into the town's first picture theatre, renaming it the Whitehall in the process. It opened in November 1910 but sadly the films the first patrons saw have been lost to history. However, it soon became a huge part of the daily life of East Grinstead.

The daytime roller-skating came to an end in 1913, and the following year brought cine-variety, where acts performed in between the short silent films. The performers would arrive each Sunday and Thursday, staying in Queen's Road, and performing for three nights.

The performers were supported by the theatre's resident pianist, but the performances were extended, thanks to the addition of violins, double bass and drums. There was even a sound effects man who used everything from horns to coconut shells to add to each musical piece!



*Coronation Day for King Edward VII, 1902*



*Whitehall interior 1911*





*Frontage 1911*



*Rock Gardens 1924*

By the 1920s the picture theatre was well established, and the management added to the entertainment by hosting live entertainment. This included performances by the East Grinstead Operatic Society, which was formed in 1922.

In 1940 the live performances came to a close, but not before a special live show was staged, featuring a young Vera Lynn amongst the performers.

### **The Art Deco Golden Age**

By 1929, the Whitehall had been wired for sound, as the world of silent films gave way to talking films, or Talkies.

However, some patrons preferred the silent films, so a joint programme of both silent films with musical backing and the talkies continued until 1930.

In 1936, Letheby and Christopher decided to update the Whitehall. They purchased the cottages next door, known as Rock Cottages, knocked them down and extended the building.

The refurbished building included a large restaurant, three shops, function rooms and the Rainbow Ballroom in addition to the cinema, aiming to make it one of the major destinations for people to visit.

They also redesigned the front of the building with a stylish Art Deco design, using the same architect who had built the Radio Centre at Little King Street. However, the richly decorated cinema with its classical murals of Comedy, Drama and Music was untouched.

The project provided work for many local people who had been affected by the Great Depression of the early 1930s.

The popularity of the cinema kept growing, and by 1939 a three-week showing of "Gone with the Wind" was a sellout.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, members of the armed forces became regular visitors, often leaving the cinema with standing room only.

### **The Bombing - Friday 9th July 1943**

It was a wet Friday in July. The Whitehall Cinema was showing a double feature of the Veronica Lake film 'I Married a Witch' and a Hopalong Cassidy cowboy film. As a matinée, the tickets were cheap, especially at the front.

There were 184 people in the audience - mainly, children, women and off-duty Canadian soldiers. An air-raid warning had been displayed but the wet weather and the likelihood that the planes would target London had deterred the audience from leaving.

Air-raid warnings had been displayed countless times at the Cinema, but East Grinstead had never been a target.



*London Road July 1943, with the Vicar, Dr Golding-Bird to left*



*Cinema damage*



*Cinema damage*

At 5.17 pm, two bombs smashed through the roof of the Cinema, splitting it in two. They landed in the front seats, burying some under falling masonry. There was a gap of about six seconds before they exploded, which gave enough time for some patrons to escape through the emergency exits. When the bombs did explode, however, many of the remaining audience were killed instantly. Others were trapped by the collapsing roof. The floor caved in, leaving some people buried in the cellar below the Cinema.

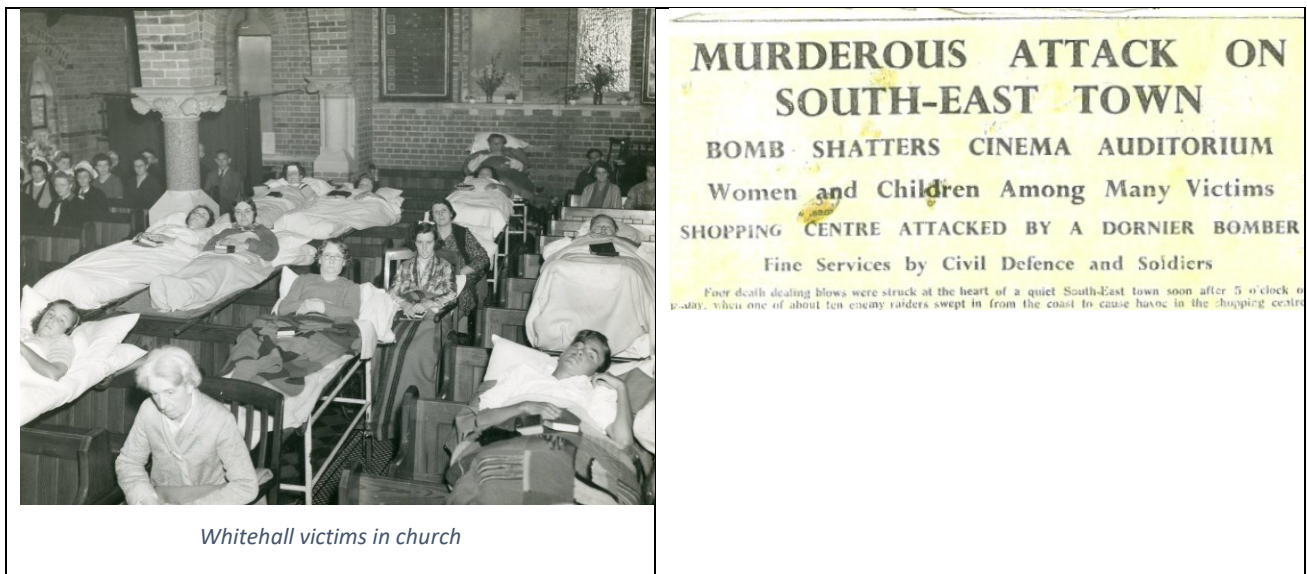
## The Response

"Now the Cinema: hardly a body could be seen - all covered by rubble. What a task!"

(Recollections of Head Warden, T.P. Peters, 1947)

The bombs caused devastation along the London Road and the High Street, where they hit several businesses. The ironmongers, A & C Bridgelands, was hit by a 50kg bomb, which exploded in its basement, in turn igniting 500 gallons of paraffin and causing further destruction.

Civil Defence workers, townspeople and soldiers arrived and rushed to rescue trapped people. They worked through the night and into the early hours. The National Fire Service fought the flames: it took two hours to get them under control.



*Whitehall victims in church*

People with minor injuries were treated at the Moat Road clinic and first aid posts, whilst those in a more critical state were taken to the Queen Victoria Hospital. As the number of casualties increased, the injured were taken to hospitals further away.

A temporary mortuary was set up in Foster's Garage, where over 100 bodies were laid out for identification.

108 people were killed in the bombing of July 1943 and a further 235 were injured. Many of the victims were buried in a communal grave in Mount Noddy Cemetery on the following Wednesday.



## After the War



*Guinea Pig Club Reunion 1952*



*Whitehall- 1990s*



The Whitehall façade survived the bombings, and as it had been previously designated as an “Emergency Feeding Centre” it was quickly rebuilt. A rebuilt Rainbow Ballroom reopened on 29th April 1944, only nine months after July 1943. The cinema was never rebuilt.

The restaurant and ballroom hosted several of the Guinea Pig Club Reunions in the 1940s.

These weekends allowed the Guinea Pigs to meet with their old friends each year, as many moved away from the town after the war.

The Guinea Pigs were airmen who had had operations at the Queen Victoria Hospital.

In 1951, Sir Archibald McIndoe gave a speech at the Whitehall in favour of a new children's ward at the Queen Victoria Hospital funded by the Peanut Club. This ward was eventually opened in 1955.

Over time, many of the original function rooms were converted into more shops, and eventually, a nightclub, which occupied the space where the cinema had been.

A plaque for the 50th Anniversary of the bombing was unveiled on the Whitehall in July 1993 by the East Grinstead Society. However, the plaque had a minor mistake. It commemorated the 25th anniversary rather than the 50th!

In 2017, the Whitehall was redeveloped by the Martell family into a department store from their previous store in Queen’s Walk.

## The Victims

108 people were killed in the bombing of July 1943 and a further 235 were injured. Many of the victims were buried in a communal grave in Mount Noddy Cemetery. There are memorials in St Swithun's Church and at East Court. Here we look at the stories for 3 of the people who lost their lives that day.

Doris Isabel Roberts



Thirteen-year-old Doris Isabel Roberts, known by her second name, went to the Whitehall Cinema with two of her friends, Hilda Bashford and Audrey Golding, to see one of the "Hopalong Cassidy" films. They were westerns which were very popular with children and the younger audiences.

Hilda left the cinema early but Isabel and Audrey remained where they were, in the third row. When the bomb dropped, Isabel and Audrey were trapped near to each other. Isabel was able to speak for a few moments to tell Audrey she was hurt and couldn't move and then there was silence. Audrey was later rescued, and treated at the Queen Victoria Hospital for burns to her arm, but

Isabel had died.

Lloyd Cameron



Lloyd Cameron was a Canadian soldier, stationed in Forest Row. He had met and married a girl from Crawley Down, Phyllis Jupp. She was in the Queen Victoria Hospital having just given birth to their first child. The visiting hour was in the evening, so with time to spare, Lloyd went to the cinema. It was not only time that was killed: Lloyd, too was killed. Stephen, their baby son, died two days later. He is buried in All Saints' churchyard at Crawley Down. Phyllis went to Canada after the war to meet her parents-in-law. She met and married another Canadian and stayed there.

Norman Arnold



Almost the most unbearable part of this tragedy is that the pilot of the Dornier circled back and machine-gunned people as they made their escape from the wreckage. Norman Arnold was one of the victims. He lived in Crawley Down and his father had died about three months earlier. Norman was the oldest in the family and left school to work as a porter at Three Bridges Station. He left work at 4 o'clock and instead of going home, he stayed on the train and continued his journey to East Grinstead to go the pictures.

He escaped from the cinema and was walking along Station Road, to catch a train back to Grange Road, the station for Crawley Down, when he was shot. He managed to stagger a few yards before he was picked up and taken to the hospital. He died of his wounds the next day. His funeral was attended by past and present pupils and staff of Crawley Down School and representatives from the railway. He lies in the churchyard at Crawley Down.

*Jonathan Parrett, Museum Manager, East Grinstead Museum*

## Memorial To Harry Thomas Smeed (1879-1900) in St Swithun's Church

The Smeeds were farmers in the East Grinstead area in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and, at various times, were the tenants of Blackwell Farm, East Court Farm, Hoskins Farm and Fairlight Farm. Smeeds Close, off Holtye Road, built on land which had formed part of Hoskins Farm, was named after the family. The patriarch, William Smeed, was born in 1791 in Otford, Kent. By 1814, he was living in Withyham where he married a local girl, Caroline Turner. They lived in Blackham and William worked as a labourer. However, by 1819 they had moved to Cowden, where he was a farmer. He next became the tenant of Brooklands, a farm of seventy-four acres, situated near Hammerwood. William and Caroline had eleven children, eight of whom were boys. Unsurprisingly, many of his sons went into farming. By 1861, William was the tenant of the much larger Fairlight Farm in East Grinstead.

In the 1870s, William's grandson, James, was the tenant of East Court Farm (46 acres). It is interesting that James was only four years younger than his grandfather's youngest son Edward, born in 1835! And, in fact, James was brought up with his grandfather's family on Fairlight Farm. James married Amy Simmons from Worth in 1878 and they lived in the farmhouse at East Court, where they brought up four children, Mabel, Harry Thomas, Edith and George.

Harry Thomas Smeed was born on 6 October 1879. He first went to school in East Grinstead but was later awarded a Payne Endowment Scholarship and spent two years at Cranleigh School in Surrey. On leaving school he was articled, for three years, to Mr R Wilds, Surveyor to the East Grinstead Urban District Council, who had been appointed in 1895. In this capacity Harry attended the formal opening of the isolation hospital at High Grove on 6 January 1898. (This hospital, which closed in 1946, was demolished, apart from one building, in the development of the present civic amenity site.)

Having been brought up on a farm, Harry would have been a good horseman and so when, in the Second Boer War, a Sussex company of the Imperial Yeomanry was being recruited at Eastbourne, he quickly volunteered. He enlisted on 24 February 1900 and his army record states that he was a Surveyor's Assistant and 6ft 1in tall, with blue eyes and a fresh complexion. He became a Trooper in the 69<sup>th</sup> Sussex Company of the 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Imperial Yeomanry. The Company left for South Africa on 31 March 1900. He saw action in a number of places and was wounded, following which, he was attached to the Provisional Transvaal Constabulary in June 1900. He sadly died of enteric fever on 22 July 1900 and was buried in Pretoria.

He was posthumously awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal with clasps for Johannesburg, Diamond Hill, Cape Colony and Orange Free State. His name is also recorded on the memorial, in St Mary the Virgin Church, Battle, as one of the eight members of the 69<sup>th</sup> Sussex Company who died in the Boer War.

*Graham Edwards*



*Memorial to Harry Thomas Smeed  
on North Wall of St Swithun's*

## Lady Anne Clifford (1590-1676)

Lady Anne was born in 1590, the daughter of George Clifford, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Cumberland and Queen's Champion, and Margaret Russell. Lady Anne had a long, distinguished pedigree and was acutely aware of it. As a girl, she served at the court of Queen Elizabeth I and she rode to London with her mother to attend the coronation of King James I in 1603, the year when her surviving Diaries begin.

In 1609 she married Richard Sackville, who, just a few days later, became 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Dorset, when his father, Robert, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Dorset, died. This brilliant marriage united an important southern family with a powerful northern family. At first, Lady Anne was happy and they were a glamorous couple at Court, but the death of their three sons as babies took its toll. She was the Lady of Knole in Sevenoaks and of Little Dorset House in London.

She pursued her 'Great Matter' relentlessly, hoping to inherit her father's estates in Westmorland and Yorkshire, supported by her husband and her mother. First her uncle, and then his son, inherited the lands before her and when she finally gained control, she had to wait for the end of the English Civil War before travelling north, where she then stayed until the end of her very long life.

Richard Sackville has been described as 'the kind of handsome, dashing, rather bad lot that make women collectively go weak at the knees.'<sup>1</sup> He led an extravagant lifestyle and hoped to share her wealth. His father, Robert Sackville, founded Sackville College almshouse in his will in 1609, but did not see a single stone laid. Richard Sackville took about 10 years to have the almshouse built and incorporated a grand wing, the Dorset Lodgings, for his own occasional use. We have no evidence that Lady Anne ever visited the almshouse or even the site whilst it was being built. There is a story of Sackville ladies looking down (disapprovingly) through a spy window when the Earl and his retinue went hunting and then feasted in the Dining Hall at Sackville College, but this is only a story.

Lady Anne often stayed at Knole whilst her husband went to Court and she was unhappy. She described herself as 'like an owl in the desert', which is an extraordinary image. The marble pillars of the colonnade at Knole, built by her husband's grandfather, some ten years before, became 'but the gay arbours of anguish' to her. She devoted herself to her books, virtuous thoughts, and to her two surviving daughters, Lady Margaret (1614-76), who married the Earl of Thanet, and Lady Isabel (1622-61), who married the Earl of Northampton. Lady Anne recorded visiting Withyham church, where her husband's grandfather, Thomas Sackville, 1st Earl of Dorset, was buried, and Buckhurst and Bolebroke in Sussex, which were all connected to the Sackville family at this time.

Richard Sackville died in 1624, aged only 34. His younger brother, Edward Sackville, became the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Dorset. Edward fought for the King in the English Civil War and was fined heavily by Parliament. His son and heirs continued the Sackville line. Lady Anne married again, this time Philip Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, in 1630. This was apparently an unhappy marriage and she had no surviving children by Pembroke, who died in 1650. She travelled to her estates in the north and spent the rest of her life visiting each of her properties in turn. She also founded her own almshouse, St Anne's in Appleby, for 12 women. She was very business-like about this, buying property specifically

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<sup>1</sup> Brenda Polan, 'Designer Collection', *Heritage Today* (English Heritage, November 2004), p. 35.

to endow her foundation and having the deeds kept in a chest in the Chapel. She dined regularly with her almswomen.

Sackville College became the subject of lawsuits after the death of her first husband in 1624, and these continued for most of the rest of the seventeenth century. The Civil War was a terrible time for Sackville College and some inmates may have died of starvation. The Warden at Sackville College insisted that the income promised for the residents by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl in his will ought to be paid. Edward Sackville did not wish to reduce his income as he had been fined by Parliament. Lady Anne and her family did not wish to pay for a Sackville foundation. Both her sons-in-law became involved in the controversy and the Earl of Thanet, married to her elder daughter, had to spend time in the Fleet Prison. Lady Anne eventually allowed money to be deducted from her jointure to help secure Thanet's release. This is probably the only time that Lady Anne agreed to a decision that she opposed, to save her son-in-law. The Court case is mentioned by Samuel Pepys in his Diary on 9 February 1660

'To Westminster Hall, where I heard an action very finely pleaded by my Lord of Dorset ...his lady and other ladies of quality being there, and it was about £330 per annum that ... concerned a poor Spittal which was given by some of his predecessors'.

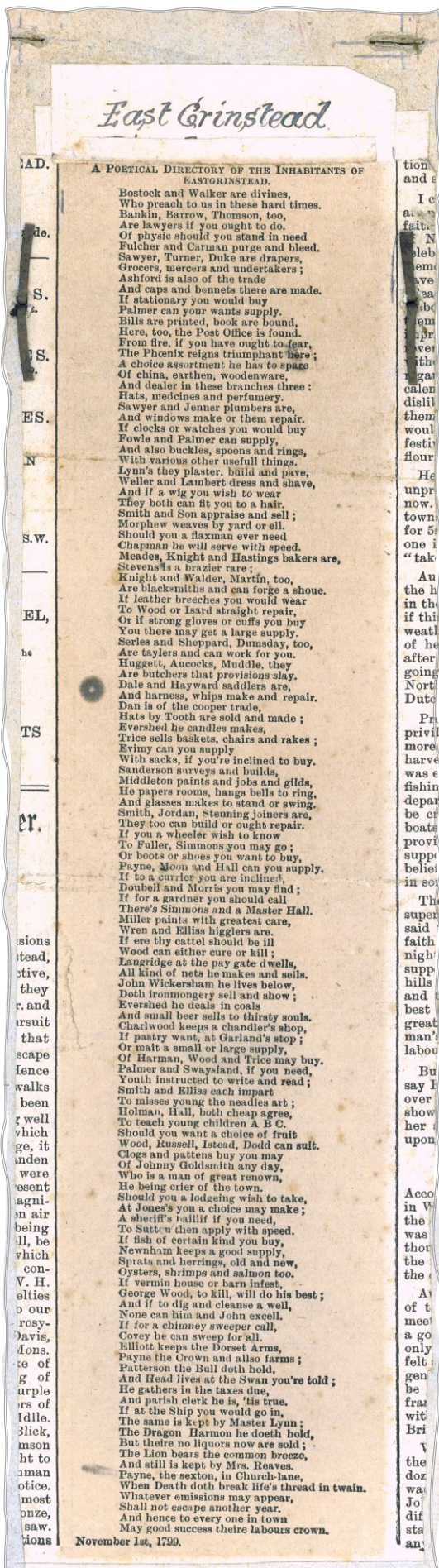
'Spittal' was another word for a hospital or almshouse. The Lord of Dorset by this time was the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Dorset, son of Edward Sackville.

Lady Anne's daughters both had large families and she was an active grandmother and great grandmother. Whilst she did not necessarily visit East Grinstead, Lady Anne certainly had Sussex and Kent connections. Her daughter, Margaret, as Dowager Countess of Thanet, gave £100 to benefit the poor of the parish of Hartfield and land was purchased at Holtye, just outside East Grinstead. She gave tenements to house the poor, and apprenticeships for poor boys of Hartfield were arranged due to her charity. In 1840 the houses were demolished and new almshouses were built on land given by the Earl De La Warr and his wife, Elizabeth, nee Sackville.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The National Archives, PAR 360/24/7.

# East Grinstead Trades 1799



Probably written in November 1799 and republished in *East Grinstead Observer* 1896 and kept by Michael Leppard

A transcription and commentary follow:

A. POETICAL DIRECTORY OF THE INHABITANTS OF  
EASTGRINSTEAD.

**Bostock** and **Walker** are divines,  
Who preach to us in these hard times.  
**Bankin, Barrow, Thomson**, too,  
Are lawyers if you ought to do.  
Of physic should you stand in need  
**Fulcher** and **Carman** purge and bleed.  
**Sawyer, Turner, Duke** are drapers,  
Grocers, mercers and undertakers;  
**Ashford** is also of the trade  
And caps and bonnets there are made.  
If stationary you would buy  
**Palmer** can your wants supply.  
Bills are printed, book are bound,  
Here, too, the **Post Office** is found.  
From fire, if you have ought to fear,  
The **Phoenix** reigns triumphant here;  
A choice assortment he has to spare  
Of china, earthen, woodenware,  
And dealer in these branches three:  
Hats, medicines and perfumery.  
**Sawyer** and **Jenner** plumbers are,  
And windows make or them repair.  
If clocks or watches you would buy  
**Fowle** and **Palmer** can supply,  
And also buckles, spoons and rings,  
With various other usefull things.  
**Lynn's** they plaster, build and pave,  
**Weller** and **Lambert** dress and shave,  
And if a wig you wish to wear  
They both can fit you to a hair.  
**Smith and Son** appraise and sell;  
**Morphew** weaves by yard or ell.  
Should you a flaxman ever need  
**Chapman** he will serve with speed.  
**Meades, Knight** and **Hastings** bakers are,  
**Stevens** is a brazier rare;  
**Knight** and **Walder, Martin**, too,  
Are blacksmiths and can forge a shoue.  
If leather breeches you would wear  
To **Wood** or **Isard** straight repair,  
Or if strong gloves or cuffs you buy  
You there may get a large supply.  
**Serles** and **Sheppard, Dumsday**, too,  
Are **taylers** and can work for you.  
**Huggett, Aucocks, Muddle**, they  
Are butchers that provisions slay.  
**Dale** and **Hayward** saddlers are,  
And harness, whips make and repair.

**Dan** is of the cooper trade,  
Hats by **Tooth** are sold and made;  
**Evershed** he candles makes,  
**Trice** sells baskets, chairs and rakes  
**Evimy** can you supply  
With sacks, if you're inclined to buy.  
**Sanderson** surveys and builds,  
**Middleton** paints and jobs and gilds,  
He papers rooms, hangs bells to ring,  
And glasses makes to stand or swing.  
**Smith, Jordan, Stenning** joiners are,  
They too can build or ought repair.  
If you a wheeler wish to know  
To **Fuller, Simmons** you may go;  
Or boots or shoes you want to buy,  
**Payne, Moon** and **Hall** can you supply.  
If to a currier you are inclined,  
**Doubell** and **Morris** you may find;  
If for a gardner you should call  
There's **Simmons** and a Master **Hall**.  
**Miller** paints with greatest care,  
**Wren** and **Bliss** higglers are.  
If ere thy cattel should be ill  
**Wood** can either cure or kill;  
**Langridge** at the pay gate dwells,  
All kind of nets he makes and sells. .  
John **Wickersham** he lives below,  
Doth ironmongery sell and show;  
**Evershed** be deals in coals  
And small beer sells to thirsty souls.  
**Charlwood** keeps a chandler's shop,  
If pastry want, at **Garland's** stop;  
Or malt a small or large supply,  
Of **Harman, Wood** and **Trice** may buy.  
**Palmer** and **Swaysland**, if you need,  
Youth instructed to write and read;  
**Smith** and **Elliss** each impart  
To misses young the neadles art  
**Holman, Hall**, both cheap agree,  
To teach young children A B C.  
Should you want a choice of fruit  
**Wood, Russell, Istead, Dodd** can suit.  
Clogs and pattens buy you may  
Of Johnny **Goldsmith** any day,  
Who is a man of great renown,  
He being crier of the town.  
Should you a lodgeing wish to take,  
At **Jones's** you a choice may make;  
A sheriff's baillif if you need,  
To **Sutton** then apply with speed.  
If fish of certain kind you buy,

**Newnham** keeps a good supply,  
 Sprats and herrings, old and new,  
 Oysters, shrimps and salmon too.  
 If vermin house or barn infest,  
 George **Wood**, to kill, will do his best;  
 And if to dig and cleanse a well,  
 None can him and **John** excell.  
 If for a chimney sweeper call,  
**Covey** he can sweep for all.  
**Elliott** keeps the Dorset Arms,  
**Payne** the Crown and allso farms;  
**Patterson** the Bull doth hold,  
 And **Head** lives at the Swan you're told;  
 He gathers in the taxes due,  
 And parish clerk he is, tis true.

If at time Ship you would go in,  
 The same is kept by Master **Lynn**;  
 The Dragon **Harmon** he doeth hold,  
 But their no liquors now are sold;  
 The Lion bears the common breeze,  
 And still is kept by Mrs. **Reaves**.  
**Payne**, the sexton, in Church-lane,  
 When Death doth break life's thread in twain.  
 Whatever emissions may appear,  
 Shall not escape another year.  
 And hence to every one in town  
 May good success their labours crown.  
 November 1st, 1799.

This remarkable poem gives us a snapshot of trades and occupations in the town in 1799. First, we have **Stileman Bostock**, the **Vicar 1792-1811**, and Walker, a preacher, then Bankin, Barrow and Thomason, lawyers. Fulcher and Carman were bloodletters- perhaps physicians or healers. Sawyer, Turner and Duke and Ashford were apparently drapers, undertakers, mercers and grocers and Ashford sold caps and bonnets, so perhaps they dealt in luxury goods.

The **Palmer family** featured in the last Bulletin. **Thomas Palmer (1751-1821)** was the quill maker, and he ran the stationers and quill pen shop from what is now 12 Middle Row. He was also a schoolmaster, so the reference to Palmer and Swaysland teaching youth to read may refer to this family again, as might Palmer selling clocks and watches.

**Thomas Palmer (1775-1844)** was the **Warden of Sackville College** from **1813-44**. Four generations of the Palmer family are buried by the path from the High Street in St Swithun's churchyard:

**Mr Thomas Palmer. Born 17 Nov. 1751 Died 13 Dec. 1821.** Also Elizabeth his wife. Born 28 Feb. 1746 Died 26 June 1833.

**Mr William Palmer, born 16 Feb 1784 Died 26 May 1861.**

**Thomas Palmer, Late Warden of Sackville College. Born 24 Sep. 1775. Died 4 Dec. 1844.** Also Harriet his wife. Borne [sic] 2 Jun 1786 Died 15 Jul. 1845.

And **Henry Palmer son of the above Born 3 Mch 1814 Died 12 Mch 1830.**

The **Post Office** presumably had a phoenix symbol showing that the building was insured against fire. At this time it also apparently sold a range of other items. **Smith and Son** may have dealt in second-hand items which they 'appraised'. An ell is an old-fashioned cloth measurement of 45 inches. A **flax-man** grew, sold or treated flax for weaving into linen cloth. A **brazier** worked in brass. **Taylers** is a form of the old word taylors for tailors. I hope that **Newnham's** 'old and new sprats and herrings' meant smoked or salted rather than stale fish. (There is a monument to Mary Newnam (d. 1737) in St Swithun's church, which says that she was the wife of John and daughter of Jane Thorp. Newnam and Newnham might be connected).

There were several inns and innkeepers: **Elliot at the Dorset Arms, Payne at the Crown, Patterson at the Bull, Head who lived at the Swan**, but was the parish clerk, **Lynn at the Ship, Mrs Reaves at**



**the Lion**, which ‘bears the common breeze’. (Perhaps it was a coaching inn on the High Street?)  
**Harman** was at the **Dragon** with no liquor, so perhaps this was an early Temperance Hotel?

There is a monument to later members of the **Head** family above the south door of St Swithun’s church.

**Tooth** at this time sold hats. Later a **Mr & Mrs Tooth** ran the stationery and bookshop that is now **John Pye’s Bookshop**. **Edwin and Kate Tooth both died in 1943**, after sustaining injuries in the Whitehall bombing on 9 July.

A **higgler**, according to the dictionary, was an itinerant dealer who bought up dairy and poultry products in exchange for petty commodities from the shops. The word is similar to haggler.

A **Mr Trice** was a resident at Sackville College almshouse, who helped the Warden (1846-66) John Mason Neale to ring the bells at Christmas. Trice was a vegetarian and suggested that the line in the Carol *Good King Wenceslas* ‘Bring me flesh and bring me wine’ might be altered to ‘Bring me milk and bring me bread’, but this change was not made. A **Miss Swaysland** became a resident at Sackville College during Neale’s wardenship. **William Wren** was Neale’s porter and Wren’s mother, Mary, was also a resident at Sackville College.



Inside St Swithun’s church there is an iron monument to a **Thomas Wickersham** who died in 1713, aged 78.

There are also monuments to the **Stenning** family in the Memorial Chapel in St Swithun’s church.



These are all tenuous links to others with similar names in the poem. Readers may find names of their ancestors and may know much more about them. The anonymous poet would never have become Poet Laureate, but the poem is a piece of fun and ends kindly by wishing good success to crown the labours of all.