

The Friends of Henfield Museum Newsletter, Winter 2017



The Sussex Dialect: Curiosity or Linguistic Time Machine?

In 1875, The Rev. W.D. Parrish said *'The march of education must sooner or later trample down and stamp out anything like distinctive provincial dialect in England; but when this result shall have been effected, much that is really valuable will be lost to our language, unless an effort is promptly made to collect and record words which, together with the ideas which first rendered them necessary, are rapidly falling into disuse.'*

The word **Dialect** is derived from the Greek *dialogesthai* (to converse with one another) and takes its current meaning of a 'local language' from the Latin *dialectus*.

Our knowledge today of many of the old dialectal words is largely down to a number of enterprising Victorian linguists, culminating in Parrish. Writing based upon their own experience, while lamenting the contemporary decline in usage that went in tandem with the more widespread literacy and mobility of the industrial revolution, they went out to collect as many words as possible while they still could.

For centuries, regional 'doggerels' were seen as indicators of provincialism and lack of education. However, particularly since the 19th century, increasing numbers of academics have appreciated the value of dialects as a recent window into Germanic (i.e. Old English), Brythonic (i.e. post-Roman Celtic) and Norman French/Latin derived words that gradually fell out of use in mainstream English by the end of the Medieval era, in part due to the changes in pronunciation of the Great Vowel Shift (of High Medieval Middle English - 16th-17th C. Early Modern). Yet these words sometimes remained in use for centuries afterwards in the regions, archaic senses and pronunciations largely intact.

In Henfield in recent times, the Sussex accent could often be heard by the Tanyard field, where local resident Bill Goacher would greet all comers (plus no doubt his hens, ducks and other animals) with his notable Sussex accent. Bill died in 1981 and his photo is to the right.

Although regional accents do survive in the UK better than in some other countries, traditional Southern variants have been disappearing far more quickly than many of their very well known more northerly brothers. On the pronunciation, Parrish described it as broad and rather drawling. His predecessor W.D.



Bill Goacher at the Tanyard ©Eric Wells

Cooper (whose 1836 glossary of Sussex provincialisms Parrish drew strongly from) thought that *'the Sussex pronunciation of many words derived from the Saxon is superior to that generally received; thus earth...in Anglo-Saxon books written e-orth... is still correctly pronounced as a word of two syllables, e-arth.'*

Here are listed a few points on some aspects of the pronunciation:

- a before double l is pronounced like o; fallow and tallow become foller and toller.
- I is pronounced as ee, so mice, hive, dive, become meece, heeve and deeve.
- O before r is pronounced as a; as earn and marning, for corn and morning.
- A before ct becomes e; as satisfaction for satisfaction.
- E before ct becomes a; and affection, effect and neglect are pronounced affaction, effact and neglact.
- Double t is always pronounced as d; as liddle for little and the th is d; thus the becomes de; and these, them, theirs dese, dem and deres.

See the third page for a small selection of words with some suggested derivations and examples of usage. How many do you recognize?

From the Chairman

Thoughts on 2017

Salvete Friends!

As 2017 draws to a close I would like to thank all of our members for their ongoing help in supporting heritage in Henfield and the surrounding area for another year. In addition all who have served and those who continue to serve with enthusiasm on the Friends committee!

We have recently joined two groups with the aim of sharing resources and content (look out for emails to come):

1. *The British Association of Friends of Museums*

The UK wide umbrella group for museum friends. In addition to offering events and chances to showcase stories from their members, they also distribute email and hardcopy

newsletters. Hardcopies will be found in the museum for those interested (please return when finished).

2. *The Horsham District Heritage Forum*

A local forum for collaboration coordinated by Cowfold History Group. We are currently working on a '100 Objects Illustrating Sussex' project to tie in with the *Horsham District Year of Culture* in 2019. Henfield will submit a few emblematic objects or buildings - suggestions would be welcomed.

A particular success this year has been the Friends funded *A Tour of Our Commons* book - a replica of articles from the 1916 parish magazine plentifully illustrated by location photos. Thanks to Peter Bates and Rose Sharp for their work on this!

From the Curator

A temporary exhibition on Henfield in WW1 ran from May until October, and in place until 12th Jan 2018 is one on the Centenary of the Henfield W.I. If you know of someone who has a collection which could be displayed in the museum please put them into contact with me.

Stephanie Richards continues to do good work publicising the costume collection, and has organised a number of viewings of items of costume for interested groups.

Visitor numbers have been boosted this year by opening the museum on the Piazza

Italia Sunday on the 2nd. April (170 visitors), during the four performances of 'O What a Lovely War' (153), Election Day on the 8th June (126), and the Garden & Arts weekend 10th/11th June (161). We gave guided historical walks over the Garden & Arts weekend which generated about £60 for the charities being supported. Thank you to all who manned the museum on those occasions, and helped with the walks.

I gave guided historical walks around the village in May & July for twelve members of the East Grinstead Friends and eight from the

1860 paisley shawl



Alan Barwick

Beeding & Bramber Local History Society.

The children from St. Peter's School came to the museum on the 18th October to learn about Henfield in WW2. We had objects out of the store for them to handle, and helmets etc.

which they could try on. In addition we had two slide shows of pictures for them to look at.

The sessions were run by Leo Jago, Conway Thorns, and Graham duHeaume.

We need a volunteer to do the first Saturday afternoon in the month. If you can do this, or can find someone who can please let me know.

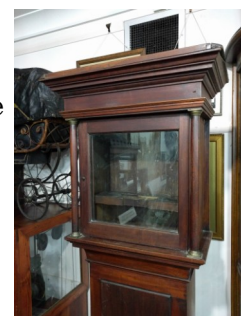
We are looking into getting a touch screen computer so that we can show photographs, and play oral history recording etc. We will need someone with expertise on PowerPoint to set it up for us, and to scan in the images.

New objects are coming into the museum all the time. The most interesting in recent months are a box full of fall size cartoons of

stained glass windows produced by the Glasby family.

The grandfather clock made by Bailey in the mid 1800s donated earlier in the year is now in the process of being re-

Bailey grandfather clock



The Sussex Dialect (continued)

Key: e, w, m (was mainly used east, west, or mid Sussex)

AX, (verb) inf. Acsian, Sax. To ask. 'Axe not why : for tho' thou axe me I wol not tellen goddes privetee.' Chaucer, The Miller's Tale, v3557.

BAIT, m. Afternoon refreshment, with which strong beer is given, in the hay and harvest field.

CAB. Cabaler, French, to plot. A small number of persons secretly united in some undertaking.

DARKS, m. A word used by sailors, but more particularly by smugglers, to signify those nights when the moon does not appear.

FAN, e. To banter; to tease.

'The love I bear him / Made me to fan you thus...'

Cymbeline, Act i. sc. 7.

GAY-GROUND, e. A flower garden.

GENTLEMAN, m. A person who does not earn his own living.

Anyone who is disabled from work. The term is sometimes applied to a sick woman, or even to a horse.

HAGRIDDEN, m. To be hagridden is to have nightmares.

ITEM. A hint.

JAWLED-OUT, w. Excessively fatigued.

KELTER, m. Condition. "This farm seems in very good kelter."

LIDDS, m. Large open fields.

MARETAILS. Streaky white clouds, said to indicate wind.

NABBLE, m. To chatter; to gossip; to idle about.

ORTS, m. Odds and ends ; fragments of broken victuals.

'The fractions of her faith, orts of her love,

The fragments, scraps, the bits, and greasy reliques...' Troilus and Cressida, Act v. sc. 2.

PIMPS, m. Small bundles of chopped wood for lighting fires.

QUIDDY, e.[Que dis tu? French.] What say you?

RAGGED-JACK, w. Scotch kale. For further info ref. Parrish, W.D, 1875, 'A dictionary of the Sussex dialect and collection of provincialisms in use in the county of Sussex' & look out for more lost Sussex words in future issues. *RG*

Photo Gallery

From the WI 100th temporary display:



From a Spring village walk



What's coming up in 2018?

Tues March 13th, ~12:15PM: Trip to Christ's Hospital Museum

A visit to the museum of the famous school with a walk through parts of the school itself and a chance to hear the school band.

Date TBC: Rescheduled trip to East Grinstead Museum

A chance to see the heritage lottery funded *Rebuilding Hearts & Minds* Guinea Pig Club exhibition; the fascinating story of some of the most resilient aviators of WW2.

Date TBC: Parsonage House Visit

A rare chance to visit one of the most historic Henfield houses and learn a little of its history and past inhabitants.

Henfield Museum

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Museum opening times:

Monday	1000 to 1200
Tuesday	1000 to 1200
Wednesday	1430 to 1630
Thursday	1000 to 1200
Friday	1000 to 1200
Saturday	1000 to 1200 1430 to 1600

Other times by arrangement.

Shut Bank Holiday w/e & between Christmas/New Year

A Little Known Sussex Memorial to a WW1 Aviator

Within St Peter's at Twineham, lies a sombre reminder of the aerial battlefields of WW1.

As you walk into the church (a rare early 16th century brick structure with Horsham slab roof and broached shingled spire), glance to your left within the porch and you may notice something that looks a little out of place. A temporary grave cross made from the propeller of an aircraft brought over from Esquelbecq military cemetery in France. It memorialises Capt. Eric Horace Comber-Taylor, K.I.A. on the 16th of June 1918, at the age of 29.

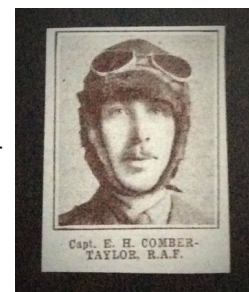
Comber-Taylor began the war as a Private in the Royal Fusiliers, but by 1918 was serving in the newly formed RAF with No.10 Squadron on spotting and bombing duties.

On Sunday the 16th of June, his recently delivered Armstrong Bristol F2B (C967), took off from Droghda aerodrome a few miles north west of Poperinghe. Sadly, the engine immediately failed. Comber-Taylor was killed in

the ensuing crash, while his observer, 2nd Lt. Cameron, survived with serious injuries. The son of Mr W. O. Comber-Taylor and Mrs I. E. Comber-Taylor of "Furzelsands" in Albourne, his father placed the cross at Twineham Church.

While not visible on visiting in 2015, the brass plaque read: 'IN MEMORY OF AN ONLY SON/ CAPTAIN ERIC HORACE COMBER-TAYLOR/ FLIGHT COMMANDER ROYAL AIR FORCE/ KILLED IN ACTION IN FRANCE JUNE 16TH 1918/ LOVED BY ALL FOR HIS GENTLENESS AND QUIET BRAVERY'.

RG



A Visit to St. Mary's

One sunny summer day in July, a group of twenty-one Friends gathered outside the door of St Mary's Bramber. We were split into two groups: our delightful guides, Jan Oswald and Jerry Nice, both from Henfield, took us on extremely interesting tours of the house and then the gardens.

St Mary's is a house full of charm..and surprises! As we walked through panelled rooms we imagined the past: how in the fifteenth century pilgrims would stay here on their way to Canterbury, how in the 17th century King Charles II possibly stayed here as he fled to the coast, and we marvelled at the very early examples of trompe

l'oeil paintings in the room used by Queen Elizabeth 1 when she visited.

In the Octagon, and the Library, there are collections gathered by the present owners Peter Thorogood and Roger Linton, of dolls depicting the history of costume through the ages, and a unique collection of Thomas Hood's caricatures and poems in the library.

After tea in the Orchard Tea Rooms, we were taken to explore the surprisingly extensive, five acres, of gardens. We saw woodland, a secret garden, topiary, herbaceous borders and rose gardens, and an interesting museum of old farming and gardening implements.

The enthusiasm and knowledge of our guides contributed to making this a fascinating and most enjoyable visit.

RS

