

# Worthing Archaeological Society Journal

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*Photo by courtesy of Robin Bennett*

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Dear Members

Welcome to this year's Journal, and I hope those of you who are members of the Field Unit enjoyed this year's full season of excavations. Spring began the season with a co-excavation with the National Trust at Sullington Common where a squarish anomaly had been revealed by geophysics. Three weeks of the summer were taken up with a continuation of our dig at Sompting, attempting to find the outline of the elusive building. And at the end of August, we were working with Worthing Museum on the "Burpham Big Dig", digging test pits and trenches in the gardens of the lovely Downland villages of Burpham and Wepham. Post excavation work on all the above is in progress.

Our articles once again reflect the variety of work individual members independently present for publication. This year Alex Vincent has looked at the field name site of Barrow Acre in Ferring.

Alan King who has been prematurely taken from us and is greatly missed, burrowed into literary records and collected a variety of tales on the villages of Clapham and Patching and their inhabitants.

Keith Bolton has written up an interim report on the excavation at Sullington Warren where Worthing's Field Unit joined with National Trust volunteers and opened our season in the spring.

I have written a short note of my experiences in the Finds Team at the Burpham Big Dig. And if you think this sounds fun, then you would be very welcome to join us. We are currently conducting post excavation work at Slindon during the winter months.

I hope you enjoy the articles and, once again, I would like to thank all the contributors to this year's Journal for their energy and time in pursuing their research. And a Happy New Year to you all.

Cheryl Hutchins  
Editor

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# Barrow Acre, Ferring

By Alex Vincent

Barrow Acre is an old field-name in Ferring, which was recorded in 1635. This name suggests a piece of land on or near a tumulus or barrow from the Old English “beorg”. Barrow Acre was Field No. 81 in The Field Names of Ferring and the site (now occupied by houses) is along the eastern side of Langbury Lane and west of the Ferring Rife. Langbury Lane runs east to west at its southern end and then goes northwards after crossing the Ferring Rife.

The name Barrow Acre could be due to a Roman cremation, which was discovered at the north-western end of Langbury Close during the laying of water mains in March 1956. This was a pottery vessel decorated with dots, which contained a cremation and was in the south-east corner of a small grave. Was this part of a Roman cemetery? There could be other Roman burials in the area waiting to be discovered and some possibly on the Barrow Acre site. It is also possible that Barrow Acre was named from barrow(s), which may have existed on Highdown to the north.

The name Langbury suggests a long barrow, which stood on Highdown. Recently a Neolithic long barrow was discovered on the hill west of the Roman bath house site. The long barrow is aligned with the Winter Solstice rising Sun. It is completely ploughed out and only survives as a slight earthwork today. Langbury Lane leads to the long barrow and it is possible that this lane is on the line of an ancient trackway going back to Neolithic times.

Langbury Croft (Field No. 107 in The Field Names of Ferring) was recorded as Langeburgh in 1327, which means long fortification. The name Langbury could refer to the Iron Age hillfort at Highdown instead. This field is now in a built up area north of Langbury Lane and crossed by the modern Cissbury Road.

It is possible that two other Neolithic long barrows existed on Highdown, one of these being just to the south-west of the Iron Age hillfort (ca TQ 092 042) and another to the west of The Miller’s Tomb (ca TQ 093 043). This means that there could be three Neolithic long barrows on Highdown. The one south-west of the hillfort faces east to west and probably aligned with the Equinox sunrise and sunset, and the other is facing north to south. Some places have more than one long barrow and there are three at South Wonston in Hampshire.

There could also be Bronze Age barrows on Highdown and the windmill mound may have once been a barrow. There could be a Bronze Age barrow cemetery on Highdown, which faced east to west and they seem to get smaller the further west they go. These barrows seem to be aligned with the Spring and Autumn Equinox sunset. They run along the top of the hill from the hillfort going westwards and would have been seen from Ferring and surrounding areas particularly along the Ferring Rife. It is possible that Barrow Acre was so-named because the barrows were prominent from this location, possibly until the 18th century before being largely ploughed out.



*Barrow Acre east of Langbury Lane, Ferring  
with Highdown in the distance  
(Alex Vincent)*



*Possible Neolithic long barrow  
west of The Miller’s Tomb  
(Alex Vincent)*



*Possible Neolithic long barrow  
south-west of the Iron Age hillfort  
(Alex Vincent)*



*Aerial photograph showing the crop mark  
of the possible Neolithic long barrow  
(Google Maps)*

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# A Box of Delights: Tales of Clapham and Patching

By Alan King

## Clapham

Clapham lies four miles north-west of Worthing on the south slope of the South Downs. The modern parish is elongated from north to south, with an eastward extension in the south part. The ancient parish, however, also included two detached parts to the north-west, higher up the Downs, which contained Michelgrove House and Lee Farm.

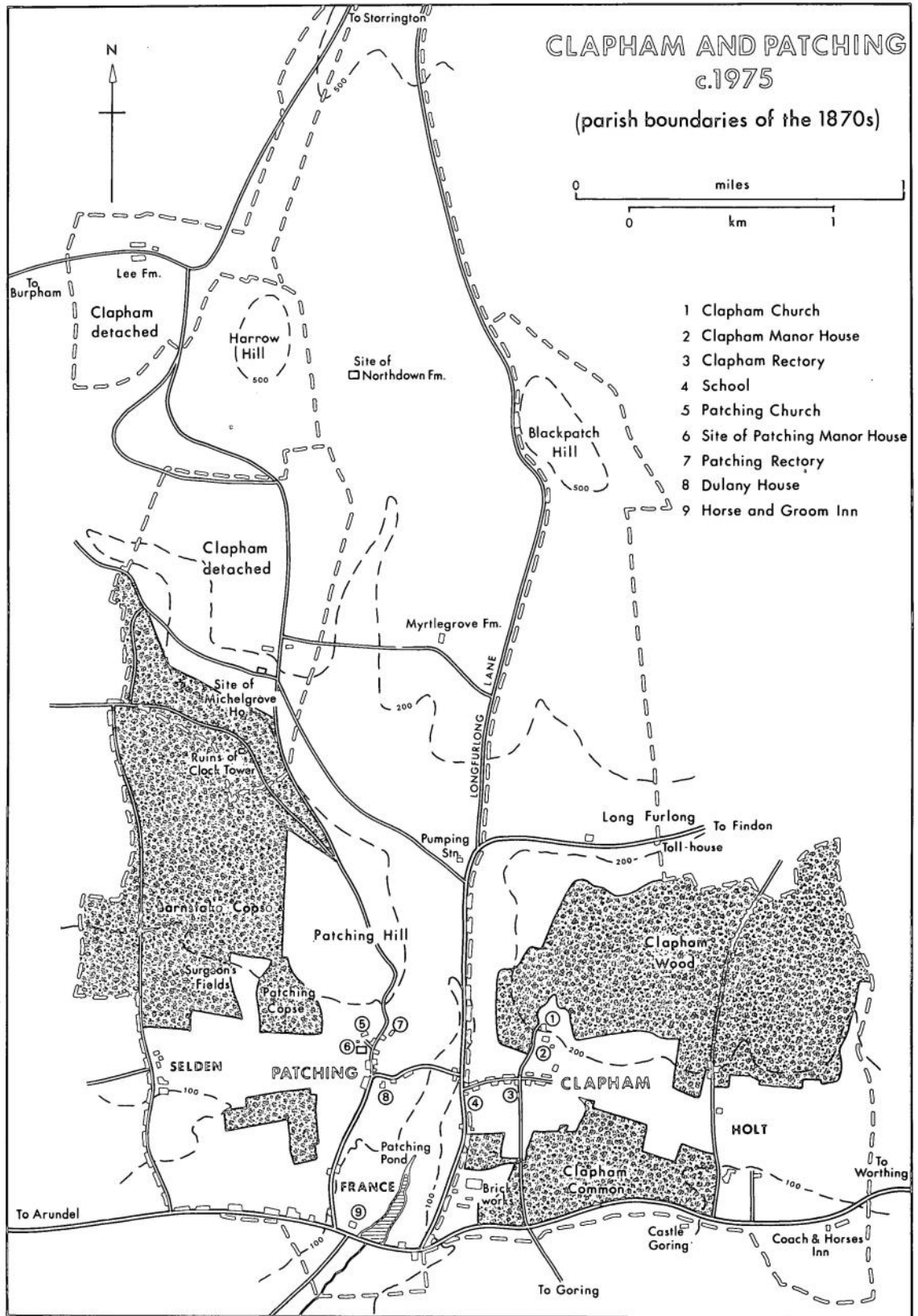
The village was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, recorded then as 'Clopeham' ([sussexlocal.net/sussex](http://sussexlocal.net/sussex)). The first element of the name Clapham probably means 'hill', and the second may indicate early Saxon settlement. Clapham village consists of a single street climbing eastwards out of the valley and levelling out, with a steep drop to the south and a more gradual one to the east. The church and Clapham Farm are on rising ground some distance to the north, but were probably once linked with the village; there are disturbances in the ground in that area, and the surviving network of paths might indicate former streets. There are several timber-framed buildings in the village, some of them 17th century, and some mid-19th-century flint and brick cottages built by the Duke of Norfolk. Council houses were built in Clapham in the 1920s and 1930s (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/sussex/vol6/pt1>). Lee Farm is situated in a small valley that is bounded by Barpham Hill, Harrow Hill and the southern slopes of Kithurst Hill. Its remoteness meant the valley was an ideal location for a medieval leper colony and local paths can still be traced to both Clapham and Burpham churches where leper windows still exist, whilst Arundel contained a hospital that treated those with the disease. Both the colony and the settlement of Barpham at the southern end of the valley had disappeared by the end of the medieval period leaving just a couple of farmsteads.

The manor of Clapham was held of King Edward by Alwin in 1066. In 1073 it belonged to William de Braose. The under-tenant in 1086 was Gilbert, apparently the same as the Gilbert of Clapham recorded in the reign of William II and the Gilbert St. Owen recorded in 1103. The St. Owen family held the manor for the next 300 years as two knight's fees. Four by the name of Ralph were tenants c. 1150, 1201-2, 1242, and in 1268, the last two perhaps being identical. They were

succeeded by John Ralph, who in 1304 was granted free warren in Clapham, another Ralph, a minor in 1316 and later Sheriff of Sussex, and another John. In 1402 Thomas St. Owen, son and heir of John St. Owen, died a minor and was succeeded by his father's uncle Patrick, but eight years later Patrick was shown not to have been the rightful heir and the manor passed to Thomas Downton, nephew of Thomas St. Owen and then a minor. At his death, before 1456, he was succeeded by his three daughters, one of whom married William Wood. The Wood family later came to hold the manor alone. John Wood was described as Lord of Clapham in 1501, and other members of the family of the same forename held the advowson \*, which apparently descended with the manor at that date, in 1483, 1516, and 1524. Edward Wood, son and heir of John, sold the manor in 1527 to Sir William Shelley of Michelgrove. (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/sussex/vol16/pt1>)

*\* Advowson or patronage is the right in English Law of a patron (avowee) to present to the diocesan Bishop a nominee for appointment to a vacant ecclesiastical benefice, a process known as presentation (jus praesentandi, Latin: "the right of presenting") and each such right in each parish was mainly first held by the Lord of the Manor. Many small parishes only had one manor of the same name.* (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advowson>)





(<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/sussex/vol6/pt1/Clapham>)

## St Mary's Church, Clapham



Clapham Church was built in the 12th century, replacing an earlier Norman building. There are continuous records of the Rectors of Clapham from 1257, when William de Radenore was appointed. The parishes of Clapham and Patching were combined in 1875, and then joined with that of Findon in 1982. Although Clapham appears in the Domesday Book, the church itself is not mentioned. The earliest document which names the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Clapham is dated 1405.

The church is small, with a plain exterior. It has a low-pitched roof on the tower; it used to have a spire, but this was removed in 1790. The church has undergone many changes over the centuries. The last remains of the older Norman church is the walled-in window on the north side of the nave. The only remaining 12th-century structure is the south wall of the tower. The outside walls are 13th-century.

From the outside, there are signs on the south side of what may have been an additional side chapel; there are also the remains of a low window, which legend has it was a 'leper window', through which lepers could watch the service without infecting the congregation. It is certainly true that Lee Farm was a leper settlement in the Middle Ages, and the path from the church to Lee Farm used to be called the 'leper path'.

On the inside, the chancel is not in a straight line with the nave. One theory goes that this was deliberate, and was supposed to imitate the angle of Christ's head on the cross. An extremely ancient gravestone with a cross carved on it, which may be 12th-century or even earlier, has been moved from the churchyard to the wall of the vestry. (<https://focpc.org.uk/welcome/clapham-church/>)

The Church has an exceptional collection of 16th-century brasses and monuments, in memory of the Michelgrove and Shelley families. Some of the brasses show religious symbols which would have infuriated the reformers during the Commonwealth. They were possibly buried for safe keeping, otherwise they would not have survived. The other prize of the church - though of much later date - is the set of tiles behind the altar, depicting the four Archangels. These are from the workshop of William Morris, and are believed to have been made by Morris himself. (<https://focpc.org.uk/media/7904/brasses-of-clapham-spreads-1.pdf>)

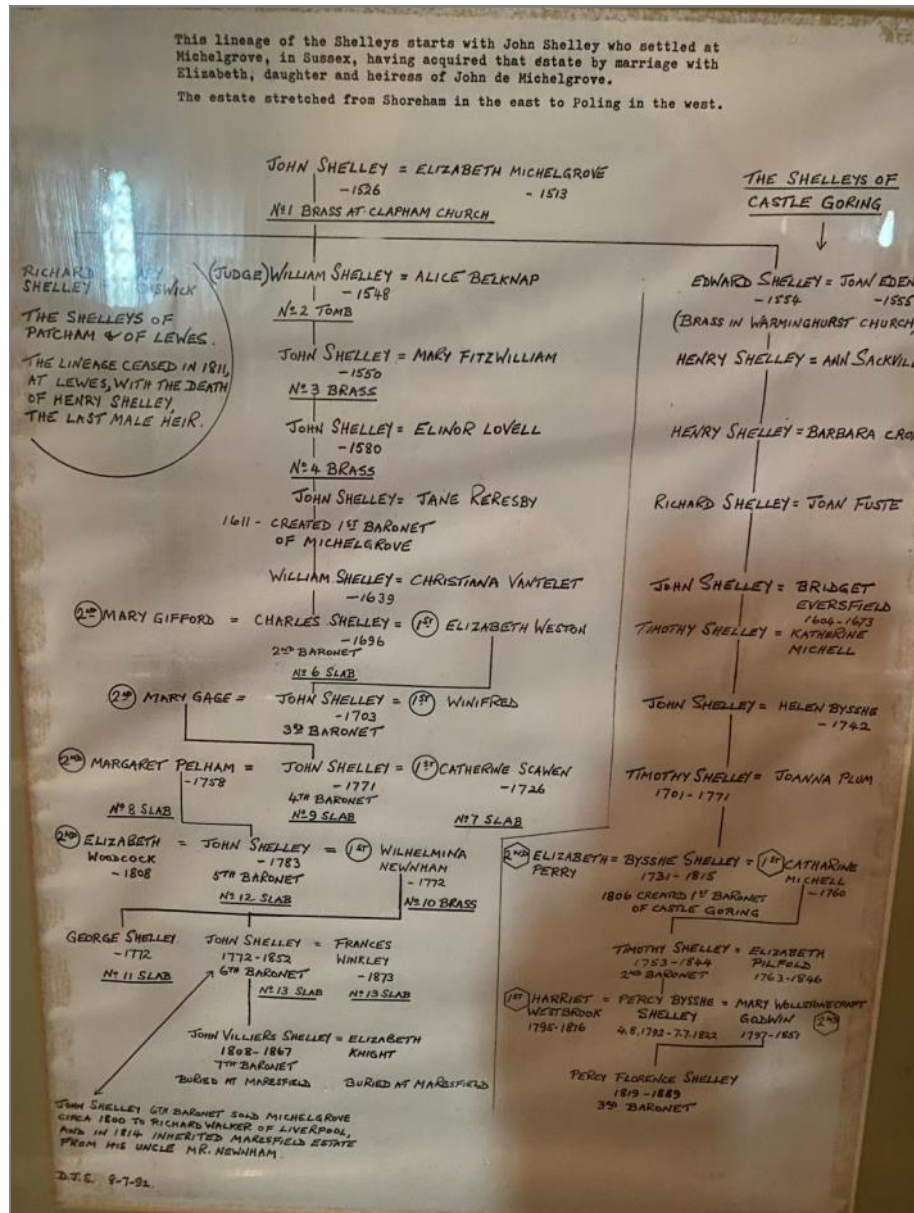


## The Shelley Family from 1527

On wall of St Mary's Church is the family tree of the Shelley family (see below). The right hand shows the lineage of the Shelleys of Castle Goring from John Shelley (1448-1526) onwards.

Sir William Shelley, John's son, succeeded in 1527 and bought Clapham manor in the same year. Thereafter the two manors descended together, Michelgrove eventually becoming absorbed in Clapham. Sir William found favour with Henry VIII and was made a judge of Common Pleas and Recorder of London. His brothers Edward and Richard founded the Warminghurst and Patcham branches of the family. Sir William was succeeded in 1549 by his son John (d. 1550). John's son William was imprisoned in 1580 for recusancy \*, and was attainted in 1586-7 for his part in Throckmorton's plot. Sentence of death was commuted, however, and he was released from the Tower in 1596. The family estates were leased by the Crown to John and Henry Shelley, Sir John Caryll and others, but in 1604 they were restored to William Shelley's nephew John on payment of £11,000. He was created one of the first baronets in 1611 and was later a Commissioner of Sewers for Sussex. His son, Sir William, having predeceased him, was succeeded by his grandson Sir Charles, a minor, at his death in 1641. Sir Charles was abroad in 1649 and though resident at Michelgrove in 1671 was abroad again from c. 1678 until his death in 1681. During the time of his son, Sir John (d. 1703), Michelgrove was let to the Butler family for a number of years. John's son and namesake (d.1771) renounced his recusancy \* in 1716 and was Member of Parliament for Arundel and Lewes between 1727 and 1747, and his son, another Sir John (d. 1783), besides sitting in parliament, held various offices of state. In 1800 the last-named John's son, Sir John (d. 1852) sold the Michelgrove estates, which by then included the greater part of the parish, to Richard Walker of Liverpool. Walker died in the following year; his son, Richard Watt Walker, who came of age in 1813, lived so extravagantly that he had to sell the estate in 1827 to the Duke of Norfolk. In 1843-4 the whole parish except c. 100 acres was in the Duke's possession. In 1874 a later Duke exchanged 400 acres in the east and south of the main part of the parish with Lady Burrell, widow of Sir Percy Burrell, Bt., of Castle Goring. From her, the lands passed to her sister Adelaide Harriet, who married Lt.-Col. (later Sir) Alfred Somerset, also of Castle Goring. In the 1920s more of the parish, including Clapham farm, passed from the Norfolk estate to the Castle Goring estate. (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/sussex/vol6/pt1/pp10-21>)

*\*Recusancy, from the Latin recusare (to refuse or make an objection), was the state of those who refused to attend Anglican services. The term was first used to refer to people, known as recusants, who remained loyal to the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church and did not attend Church of England services. The '1558 Recusancy Acts' began during the reign of Elizabeth I, and while temporarily repealed during the Interregnum (1649-1660), remained on the statute books until 1888. They imposed punishment such as fines, property confiscation, and imprisonment on those who did not participate in Anglican religious activity. The suspension under Oliver Cromwell was mainly intended to give relief to nonconforming Protestants rather than to Catholics, to whom some restrictions applied into the 1920s, through the Act of Settlement 1701 despite the 1828 Catholic Emancipation. In some cases those adhering to Catholicism faced capital punishment and some English and Welsh Catholics who were executed in the 16th and 17th centuries have been canonised by the Catholic Church as Martyrs of the English Reformation.*  
(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recusancy>)



On wall of St Mary's Church is the family tree of the Shelley family. The right hand shows the lineage of the Shelley's of Castle Goring from John Shelley 1526 onwards

### Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822), Poet

Shelley was born on 4 August 1792 in Sussex. In 1811 he eloped to Scotland with the sixteen year old Harriet Westbrook. A few years later he met his second wife Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin. In 1818 they moved to Italy where he worked on translations, his poetry and other writings. His most famous works include 'Queen Mab', 'Prometheus Unbound', 'Ode to the West Wind' and 'To a Skylark'. He drowned on 8th July 1822 while returning by boat from Leghorn and his

ashes were buried at the Protestant Cemetery in Rome.

Described as a farmer, he married Harriet Westbrook, daughter of Mr John Westbrook on 28th August 1811. The entry in the Old Parish Register (OPR) for Edinburgh does not include a date but is on a page headed Edinburgh 22 August 1811, the entry above it is dated 28th.



(<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/learning/hall-of-fame/hall-of-fame-a-z/shelley-percy>)

In 1814, against the Godwin families' objections, Shelley and Mary Godwin eloped to France on July 27th, taking with them Mary's stepsister Jane (later "Claire") Clairmont. Following travels through France, Switzerland, and Germany, they returned to London, where they were shunned by the Godwins and most other friends. Shelley dodged creditors until the birth of his son Charles (born to Harriet, November 30th, 1814). On his grandfather's death (January 1815), the provisions of Sir Bysse's will forced Sir Timothy to pay Shelley's debts and grant him an annual income.

By mid-May 1816, Shelley, Mary and Claire Clairmont hurried to Geneva to intercept Lord Byron with whom Claire had begun an affair. During this memorable summer, Shelley composed the poems "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" and "Mont Blanc," and Mary began her novel *Frankenstein*. Shelley's party returned to England in September, settling in Bath. Late in the year, Harriet Shelley drowned herself in London, and on December 30th, 1816, Shelley and Mary were married with the Godwins' blessing. A Chancery Court decision declared Shelley unfit to raise Ianthe and Charles (his children by Harriet), who were placed in foster care at his expense.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Percy\\_Bysshe\\_Shelley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Percy_Bysshe_Shelley))

A couple of connections in Worthing is the street named Shelly Road and 21 Warwick Street, where Percy Bysshe Shelly had some of his early poems published by a printer working from these premises some two hundred years ago. A blue plaque identifies the location.

### Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin

Below is Richard Rothwell's portrait of Mary Shelley which was shown at the Royal Academy in 1840, accompanied by lines from Percy Shelley's poem "The Revolt of Islam" calling her a "child of love and light".

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley née Godwin (born 30th August 1797, died 1st February 1851) was an English novelist who wrote the Gothic novel 'Frankenstein', or, The 'Modern Prometheus' (1818). She also edited and promoted the works of her husband, the Romantic poet and philosopher Percy Bysshe Shelley. Her father was the political philosopher William Godwin and her mother was the philosopher and feminist Mary Wollstonecraft who wrote 'The Vindication of the Rights of Woman' in 1792.

Mary Shelley's mother died less than a month after giving birth to her. She was raised by her father who provided her with a rich if informal

education, encouraging her to adhere to his own anarchist political theories. When she was four her father married a neighbour.

In 1814, Mary began a romance with one of her father's political followers, Percy Bysshe Shelley, who was already married. Together with her stepsister, Claire Clairmont, she and Percy left for France and travelled through Europe. Upon their return to England, Shelley was pregnant with Percy's child. Over the next two years she and Percy faced ostracism, constant debt and the death of their prematurely born daughter. They married in late 1816, after the suicide of Percy Shelley's first wife, Harriet.

In 1816, the couple famously spent a summer with Lord Byron, John William Polidori and Claire Clairmont near Geneva, Switzerland, where Mary Shelley conceived the idea for her novel 'Frankenstein'. The Shelleys left Britain in 1818 for Italy where their second and third children died before Shelley gave birth to her last and only surviving child, Percy Florence Shelley. In 1822, her husband drowned when his sailing boat sank during a storm near Viareggio. A year later Mary Shelley returned to England and from then on devoted herself to the upbringing of her son and a career as a professional author. The last decade of her life was dogged by illness, most likely caused by the brain tumour which killed her at age 53. Mary Shelley had faithfully collected her late husband's unpublished writings, and by 1840 aided by others, she had circulated most of these. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary\\_Shelley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Shelley))



(<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary-Shelley>)

## Castle Goring

Castle Goring is an 18th Century architectural masterpiece and John Biagio-Rebecca was the original architect. The south, Palladian (Greco-Roman), aspect is yellow brick and may have been inspired by the renowned Villa Lante, near Rome. The Gothic aspect is constructed of flint and sandstone, and was designed to replicate nearby Arundel Castle.

(<https://castlegoring.com/history/>)

Castle Goring has an intriguing history and is understood to be the only large house in Sussex built by the Shelley family. Sir Bysshe Shelley, grandfather of the great Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, commissioned the property. Building began in the 1790s and continued for a period of over fifteen years. The intention was that the property would be the ancestral home of the Shelley family, to be lived in by Percy Shelley. However, following his tragic death from drowning aged 29, this never materialised.



In 1825, the building was then let to Captain (later Vice Admiral) Sir George Brooke-Pechell, fourth Baronet of Paglesham and Lord of the Manor of Angmering, who was also the MP for Brighton from 1835-1860. An equerry of Queen Victoria, he was responsible for creating the fabled glass dome, which is the oldest and largest in a private residence in the country. The horseshoe staircase which was added to the back of the building, was brought from Italy, at vast expense (eighteen million in today's terms), by Brooke-Pechell.

Sir George's daughter Adelaide, goddaughter of King William IV's widow, Queen Adelaide, (after whom she was named), married Sir Alfred F C Somerset. He was Deputy Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace for Middlesex. Their daughter Gwendoline married her cousin Arthur Fitzroy Somerset, the famous cricketer who held the same offices for Sussex. The property was occupied by the Somerset family until it was requisitioned during the Second World War for use by the Canadian Army. After the war, the castle was let out to be used as a language school, as well as associated residential and business purposes. The property remained in the Somerset family until sold to the authoress, socialite and television personality Lady Colin Campbell in 2014. (<https://castlegoring.com/history/>)

## Michelgrove House

A house at Michelgrove was mentioned in 1279, 1302, and 1364, and at the time of her marriage in 1474 Elizabeth Michelgrove was 'seised of a capital messuage', \* two granaries, a dovecot, and two gardens there. In 1534 the house was rebuilt by Sir William Shelley who is said to have entertained Henry VIII in it. The Tudor building was quadrangular, with an open internal courtyard and polygonal towers at the outer angles. It was of brick, and the south or entrance facade\*\* had a three-bay Doric or Tuscan arcade, apparently of stone, with an achievement above. The entrance hall may have been incorporated from the previous building. Upstairs was a gallery 78 feet long. In 1585 the house was said to contain more than 50 rooms, but their scanty furnishing, much of it in poor condition, suggests neglect and non-residence. Eight years later it was described as in great decay and urgently needing repair.

*\*Messuage is a dwelling house together with its outbuilding, curtilage and the adjacent land.*

*\*\* Façade – front of building.*

About 1769 large alterations were made. The building was apparently cased in cream-coloured brick, and the internal courtyard was made into a hall 53 feet by 27, and 40 feet high, rising above the rest of the building, and having four square towers at its corners. Further alterations in the Gothic style were made after 1800 for the Walker family to the designs of George Byfield. One-storey wings were added on both sides of the house, that on the west including a conservatory and that on the east containing a dining-room 50 feet by 27, and a drawing-room 46 feet by 40 with a groined chestnut ceiling. The very elaborate staircase inserted at the same date was later moved to Burton Park near Petworth. At the same time apparently a new stable block was built north of the house, replacing the earlier stables to the east.

The former pigeon-house, which stood on the hill to the south, was apparently built between 1755 and 1768. After 1800 it was converted into a clocktower by the addition of another storey. The building was square and of three storeys, each narrower than the last; it was built of brick and flint with some cement rendering. By 1955, and probably long before, it was in ruins, and it had been demolished by 1974.

The park belonging to the house lay to the south, almost entirely in Angmering parish, and consisted in 1793 of 660 a.; much of it had been planted during the mid 18th century. In 1802 it contained 649 deer. Plans for its improvement, which

Humphrey Repton made c. 1800-1 for Richard Walker, were not carried out.

After the Michelgrove estate was bought by the Duke of Norfolk, the house was demolished and the park partly cut down and abandoned. In 1974 only one wall and a turret, apparently of the early 19th century, remained, besides the stables and a walled garden to the east. A pair of 18th-century lodges south-east of the house survived although much altered and in 1974 were cottages. (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/sussex/vol6/pt1/pp10-21>)

## Clapham Manor House

The manor-house of Clapham manor, formerly Clapham Farm, lies south of the church. The building, which is largely cased in brick and hung tiles, has a central timber-framed range with east and west cross-wings, and is probably of the late 16th century. A brick range with two large external chimney-stacks was added on the south in the 17th century, and the roofs were reconstructed in the late 17th or early 18th. North of the house is a square dovecot of flint rubble with sandstone quoins, which may be medieval in origin. (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/sussex/vol6/pt1/pp10-21>)

## The Clapham Wood Mystery

This has been confounding paranormal researchers for decades. A feature of Clapham Wood is its abundance of UFO sightings. Since the 1960s there have been hundreds of strange sightings both in the woods and in the village itself. The area has been the focus of a great deal of UFO logical study, and has hosted a number of sky-watching vigils over the years. In addition people have reported unexplained nausea and the distinct feeling that they were being followed. Reports of a strange grey mist appearing suddenly on pathways throughout the woods, and instances of ghostly forces pushing hikers and dog-walkers, have been known for years. Studies using a Geiger counter showed a slightly higher level of radiation in the area, although the measurements are fleeting and difficult to localise.

The Clapham Wood Mystery though, may have its ties to Satanic Cults. In 1975, residents of Clapham were plagued by strange illnesses and the disappearance of beloved pets. Three cases in particular, one told of two dogs that went missing without a trace and a third that suffered a mysterious paralysis. The son of Peter Love, while walking their family chow in the woods, watched as his dog ran amongst a thicket of trees in the forest and disappeared, never to be seen



again. The following week, farmer John Cornford's collie disappeared in the same place. A third dog, a golden retriever owned by Mr. E.F. Rawlins was found partially paralysed after running into the woods, the cause of which was never determined and which eventually led to its being euthanized. It gets worse.

In April 1972, the body of an unidentified young woman was found in Clapham Woods. The case was investigated by Police Constable Peter Goldsmith. In June of the same year, Goldsmith himself disappeared. Goldsmith, a former Royal Marine Commando had last been seen walking across the Rolling Downs (grassy chalk) near the 13<sup>th</sup> century church. Despite intense investigation and a wide search of the entire area, his body wasn't found until six months later, on 13th December 1972, amid a thick patch of bramble less than a half mile from the location where the girl's body had been found. No suspect was ever identified, nor was a cause of death.

And it doesn't end there... In July 1975, pensioner Leon Foster disappeared and was subsequently found three weeks later, by a couple who were searching for a horse in the woods, a horse that had gone missing under mysterious circumstances. Next, on Halloween 1978, the vicar of Clapham, the retired Reverend Harry Snelling went missing. His body was found three years later by a Canadian tourist. No cause of death could be identified. In 1981 a homeless schizophrenic named Jillian Mathews disappeared. When her body was found in the forest police determined that she had been raped and strangled. While no culprit was ever brought to account for these heinous crimes, this does not mean that there are not a few theories about who was responsible. Paranormal investigator Charles Walker, who was looking into the strange goings on in and around Clapham received a telephone call from an unknown man. Described as "well-spoken", the man claimed to have inside knowledge of the cause of the strange happenings of Clapham Woods. A very spooky late-night rendezvous was arranged inside Clapham Woods at the "Cross-Roads". When Walker arrived at the agreed location, he could find no one there. A voice called out from a nearby bramble claiming that it would be dangerous for both of them if Walker had seen the identity of the mysterious tipster.

The informant stated he was an initiate of a Satanist cult called The Friends of Hecate. He claimed that the woods were used for their monthly meetings and that the missing animals had been used as sacrifices to Hecate. The mysterious man then issued a dire warning, saying: "There are people in high places involved, holding positions of power and authority, who will

tolerate no interference. We will stop at nothing to ensure the safety of our cult". This warning came close on the heels of Reverend Snelling's disappearance, which occurred barely a week before.

The Friends of Hecate are reportedly an occult sect that worships *Hecate*, an ancient pagan goddess said to be associated with cross-roads, fire, light, the moon, magic, witchcraft, knowledge of herbs and poisonous plants, necromancy and sorcery. Typically, worship of Hecate has roots in a re-evaluation of ancient Greek mythology and is not readily attributed to Satanism. Nonetheless, The Friends of Hecate laid claim to the mysterious woods of Clapham for a period of at least 20 years, allegedly holding monthly ritualistic gatherings, at which a blood sacrifice was always required. It is believed that the group used the Clapham Woods until they were forced to find an alternate location after the Great Storm of 1987 damaged large tracts of the forest.

Apparently as a result of all the suffering and death that has occurred in and around Clapham Woods, many paranormal investigators today believe the forest to be among the most haunted places in England (47<sup>th</sup> in the top 100). When one considers the morbid history of the area accompanied by the reported UFO activity, one is hard pressed to retain skepticism of this assertion.

(<https://www.darkhistories.com/the-clapham-woods-mystery-satanism-the-occult/> & [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clapham\\_Wood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clapham_Wood))

### **The Turnpike Road**

The parish is crossed at its southern end by the Chichester-Brighton road, which is of great antiquity (Margary I., 1973, Roman Roads in Britain, 75). Another east-west road further north, however, was more important in the Middle Ages and later. Crossing the northern tongue of the main part of the parish from the east it proceeded to Michelgrove, turning south to climb Patching hill, and then west along the crest. During the 18th century the part between Michelgrove and the Findon boundary was under the control of the Shelleys, who from time to time closed it to the public, on one occasion levying a toll of 1d. In the early 19th century R.W. Walker of Michelgrove, attempting to set up a coach service from Littlehampton to London in opposition to the commercial one via Arundel, made a private turnpike road along the dry valley called Long Furlong to take advantage of the Worthing turnpike road. The castellated toll-house on the boundary between Clapham and Findon, which survived in 1974, may have been built contemporaneously, or may have been



converted from an existing lodge. The scheme was a failure, however, and in 1823 the Long Furlong road was incorporated in the public turnpike road between Findon and Littlehampton, Walker's right to the tolls on his section of the road being protected. At the same time the Michelgrove-Findon road was closed as a public carriage road (Town J., *Reminiscences of Old Coaching Days* (Worthing)). The Long Furlong road was disturnpiked in 1878.

A road leading from the Chichester-Brighton road to Storrington formed almost the entire western boundary of the main part of Clapham parish, and is therefore presumably ancient. Another north-south road, described as a public carriage road in 1812, led through the hamlet of Holt towards Findon (<https://www.geograph.org.uk/snippet/9440>). Within the parish, two tracks connected Clapham and Holt, one, which was a footpath in 1974, leading east from the village street and the other, mentioned in 1415, leading from Clapham church along the south side of the modern Clapham Woods. The old road to Lee farm was replaced in the 20th century by a longer, lower one of concrete.

The Coach and Horses inn in the south-east corner of the parish was newly built in 1741, when it was called the Rose and Crown. Additions were made before 1763, when the inn was described by its present name. In 1779 it was known as the half-way house between Arundel and Shoreham. A coach house was built shortly before 1786, and in 2020 reverted back into a hotel or a modern day coach house, as The Coach and Horses.

### Archaeology

Various archaeological discoveries and activities have taken place in Clapham and Patching and are briefly mentioned here.

Alex Vincent of Worthing Archaeological Society, speculated in an article in the *Worthing Archaeological Society's Journal* Vol.4. No.3, January 2016, that a Roman Road ran through Clapham and Patching.

Excavations at Patching were shown on a Time Team episode on Channel 4 Television on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2006, when the team followed John Pull's excavations from the 1930's and found Neolithic evidence. ([www.imdb.com/title/tt0960643/](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0960643/)). Members of Worthing Archaeological Society took part in the dig and comments from Pat Jones and Bob Turner can be read in *Worthing Archaeological Society Journals*, Vol.3, No. 5, Summer 2005, and Vol. 3, No. 7, Winter 2006 respectively.

John Henry Pull (25th June 1899 – 10th November 1960) was an amateur archaeologist. During

service in World War I he learnt surveying skills, but his main interest was always archaeology and he was a key member of the Worthing Archaeological Society. But because he was not a professional archaeologist, he was unpopular with some of the experts in the field at the time, who constantly shrugged off Pull's work as amateur and unimportant.

According to James Sainsbury of Worthing Museum, Pull was only 23 years old when in 1922 he noticed a cluster of some 100 craters at Blackpatch Hill. With the help of Worthing Archaeological Society he began excavating one of the shafts. Blackpatch Hill would keep him busy for the next ten years.

In the end, much of Pull's work and findings were given to Worthing Museum which holds a large archive. The main results of Pull's excavations at Blackpatch, Church Hill and Cissbury between 1922 and 1956, housed in the archive, were finally published in 2001. The site at Blackpatch Hill was bulldozed over in the 1950s. Fifty years later, a Time Team episode focused on the area of Pull's work and was able to confirm some of his presumptions about the site. His work was cut short when Pull was shot and killed by an armed robber during a bank robbery while he was working as a bank guard at Lloyds Bank, Durrington, Worthing. The gun man, Victor Terry was hanged in Wandsworth Prison on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1961 for capital murder. (<https://www.ferringhistorygroup.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/FH-Magazine-05-2019.pdf>).

Con Ainsworth (1917 – 2001) a member of WAS, led a dig in nearby Patching, by the pond, and found a section of a massive flint foundation with Roman roofing tiles, pottery and a base for an oven (Gillard, Best, Bacon and Crowther, 2000, *Bricks & Water, 100 Years of Social History in Clapham & Patching Villages*, p.237).

In April 2016 a detectorist searching a field in Clapham found a scabbard chape dated around the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century. Anglo Norman chapes such as this are rare in England. A chape is formed of a single piece of cast metal, folded over in a 'U' shape.

In 2006 Worthing Archaeological Society was asked to excavate the site of the 18th century Patching Farmhouse which had been demolished around the 1950's. The farmhouse was the home of the Drewitt family. Goff Stanford worked in the garden on Saturday mornings and got paid 6 pence. He remembers the apples being the sweetest apples ever (Gillard, Best, Bacon & Crowther, p. 37). The Society found the majority of pottery sherds from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries included Blue and White Transfer-printed 'Willow

Pattern' tableware, glazed stoneware jars and pots, and unglazed red earthenware bowls, jars and dishes. A small number of medieval sherds were probably due to manuring, and a larger number of post-medieval pieces indicated an earlier phase of the house. An interesting find was an iron patten (used to raise the foot above the level of the mud), a design in use from the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century through to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Patching Farmhouse, Patching, West Sussex, February/ March 2006, Finds Report by Gill Turner).

The Roman gold and silver Patching Hoard was found in a Patching field during 1997 and consists of 22 gold solidi, 25 silver coins or fragments of silver coins, 2 heavy gold rings and 50 small pieces of silver bullion dating to AD 380-461.

The hoard was discovered by two local men who were searching the field using their metal detectors. When they found the first coins in April they reported them to the Coroner's Officer in Worthing. He showed them to Dr Sally White at the Worthing Museum who was able to identify them.

When more coins were discovered in May, Sally White contacted John Manley and Richard Jones of the Sussex Archaeological Society who agreed to undertake a small, emergency excavation. Their aim was to see if traces of a pit or any buildings could be found on the site. The excavation was carried out by a small team of archaeologists working with the finders. The excavation did not reveal any structural features on the site and it is possible that the hoard had been disturbed once before, when a land-drain was laid at least 100 years ago.

The hoard must have represented a very large sum of money in the fifth century. Gold and silver were very valuable at that time and, since coins were not in circulation in the mid-fifth century those in this hoard must have been collected for the value of their metal. We are never likely to know the answers to the intriguing questions of who the original owner was or why they were buried.

Regarding the late date of this hoard (which was probably deposited sometime after 475), there are several reasons why this should not be all that outstanding. With the evacuation of Roman legions in 410, Britain did not automatically and immediately fall into a Dark Ages. The large towns continued to exist the way they had prior to the Roman withdrawal.  
(<https://www.treasurerealm.com/coinpapers/hoards/release.html>).

The Hoard can be seen at Worthing Museum.

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# Sullington Warren Excavation 2024: Interim Report

By Keith Bolton

## Introduction

In May 2024 Worthing Archaeological Society Field Unit (WASFU) was requested by the National Trust to undertake an evaluation excavation at Sullington Warren NGR TQ 0957 1449.

The site is located within the National Trust owned Sullington Common on an exposed area of grassland commonly referred to as the "lawn" or warren, see figure 1 below.

On the southern, eastern and western boundaries are 10 Bronze Age barrows, all of which are scheduled monuments.

A GPR survey undertaken by Portsmouth University (Lovell 2023) identified anomalies which coincided with the parch marks identified in previously taken Aerial Photographs (see figure 2, image taken from Brown 2021).

The topography of the site gradually slopes down from the south towards a dip before rising again in the north.

The underlying geology of the site is Folkestone Formation Sandstone (BGS2021).

The site code is SW24 and the archaeological archive including finds will be retained by WAS with the intention of depositing it with the National Trust at a future date.

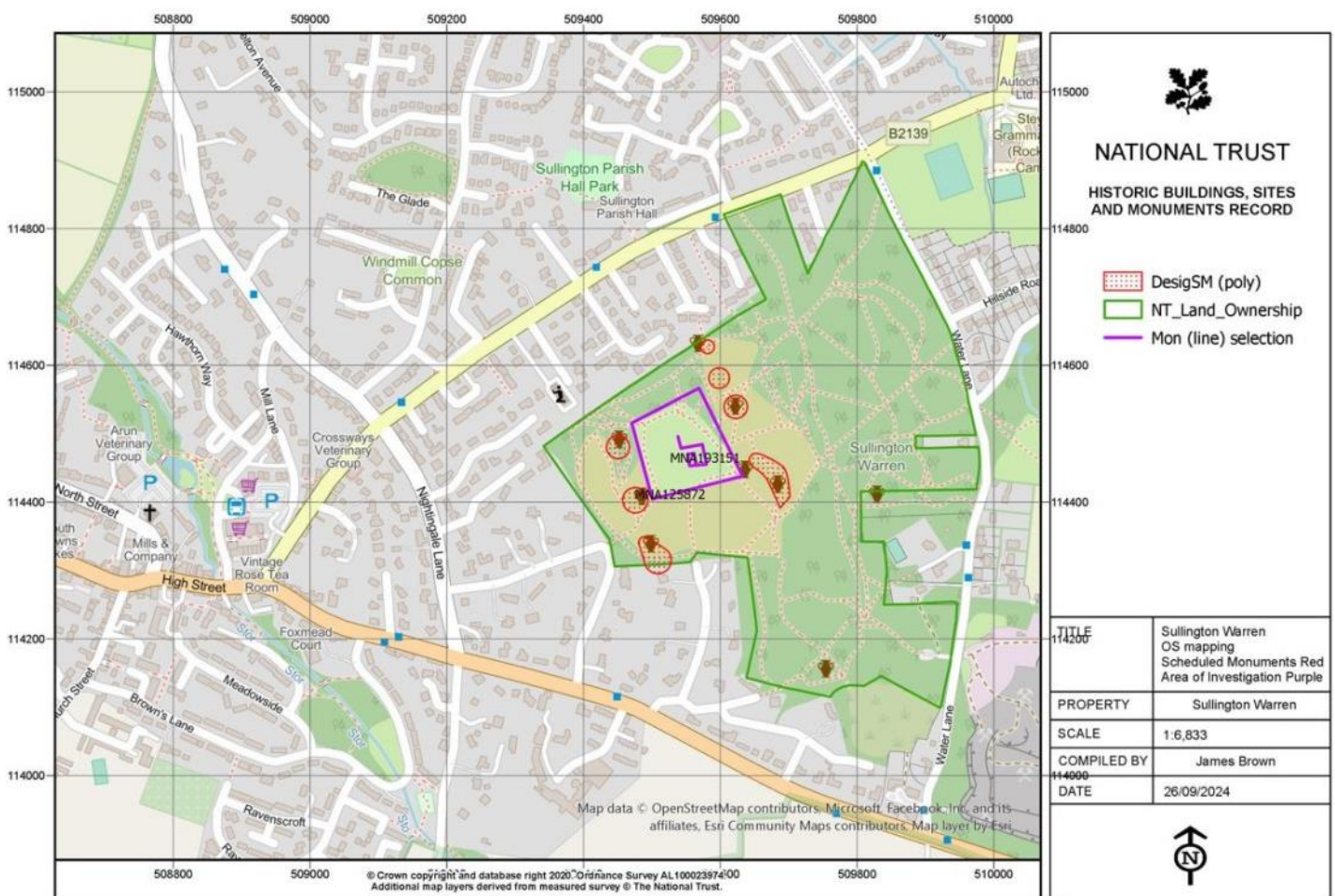


Figure 1: Sullington Warren Site Map - National Trust





Figure 2: Aerial Photograph of Sullington Warren showing parch marks

### Historical and Archaeological Background

For the purposes of this report, the following section on history is restricted to the period 1500-1800, for more detail, see the National Trust reports (Ede 1997).

### History

The following table summarises the key events regarding ownership of land near the warren (Ede 1997, 7-8).

During this period, the population of Sullington parish was significantly smaller than that of its neighbours in Storrington and Thakeham. In a census taken in 1676, the count of people over the age of 16 was:

- Storrington 400
- Sullington 90
- Thakeham 250 (Cooper 1902, 147)

And in 1724 there were only c25 families living in the parish (VCH VI, 19).

In the 19th century a windmill was built on the hill in the southern part of the property. This was used throughout the century and fell into disuse in about 1907. In 1911 it was burnt down accidentally by a fire which swept across the whole property.

In the mid-19th century two enclosures were constructed by surrounding areas of land with a bank and ditch. One enclosure in the middle of the property on sloping ground was used until the First World War to cultivate crops such as oats. The other enclosure, if it was used for arable cultivation, did not last long. By 1875 it was shown on the Ordnance Survey map as rough pasture with scattered trees.

### Agricultural Regime

Sullington lies within the South Downs (mixed sheep/grain, sheepwalks) region (Brandon & Shore 1990, 206), with the nearby market at Storrington being established in 1673 (Brandon & Shore 1990, 163) with fairs held in 1795 for cattle, horses and pedlary (Harris 2005, 15).

Date	Event
1546	Sullington Manor granted to Sir Richard Lee, then to Edward Shelley of Warminghurst until 1697, when it was sold to the White family.
1727	Henry Shelley of Lewes bought Sullington Manor
1734	Rabbits kept at Sullington Warren and Cobden farm (VCH VI, fn25). Sullington farm sheep/corn farm.
1767	Eleanor and Thomas Fuller tenants at Manor farm, Sir John Shelley (owner). (Tompkins 1930, 13)
1789	Earl of Egremont bought part of Sullington Manor from Sir John Shelley including manor farm (VCH VI, 21)

Whilst occurring in Yorkshire, the deliberate depopulation of settlements to create warrens and sheepwalks seems to have experienced something of a revival in the late seventeenth century when grain prices were particularly low (Williamson 2002, 54-5).

### Cartographical Evidence

The map evidence would suggest that any significant structure was removed some years before 1800. Whilst Sullington Common is shown on the Yeakell and Gardner map of c1780 and on the Ordnance Survey draft of 1806, no buildings are shown on the common in either map.

### Archaeology

Mesolithic activity is the earliest period represented on this property. Several pieces of flintwork dating from the Mesolithic have been found on paths.

There are at least ten early Bronze Age round barrows on two Lower Greensand ridges, running north/south. There may also be other barrows on lower areas of the property although their identification is by no means positive. In this period and earlier in the Neolithic this area was probably cultivated. After about the Middle Bronze Age soils would have been so acidic and poor that cultivation was no longer feasible and the area was used to graze animals.

This grazing continued for many centuries preventing the regrowth of the woodland. Fire may also have helped keep this area open and dominated by ericaceous shrubs rather than grass.

### Archaeological Results

All archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded using WASFU standards, with context record sheets numbered 01 – 99. Deposit colours were recorded using a Munsell Colour chart.

Due to the scarcity of finds, all pottery was recorded using the Small Finds process.

Two evaluation trenches (A and B) were opened using a mechanical digger, which removed the top 0.2-0.3m of top-soil from both trenches. All remaining excavation was undertaken by hand. Both trenches were positioned over parch marks, trench A to locate a linear feature with two possible returns and trench B to locate a possible corner of a feature.

Trench A initially measured 17.3m by 2.0m and was extended to locate two possible returns from the linear feature. Trench B measured 4.5m by 6.5m and was extended to the west and north to gain a better understanding of features or absence of features.

### Features

As part of the excavation process, contexts were assigned to layers as they appeared (shown in square brackets in following text ), some of which were subsequently assigned feature ID's, as summarised in the table below.

For features 2, 3, 4 and 7, there was no evidence in sections of either a foundation or robber trench.

Feature ID	Trench	Description	Interpretation
1	B	Thin layer (50mm) of orange/red clay matrix measuring 1.1mx 1.0m containing CBM, Greensand and chalk pieces.	Area of burnt clay brought onto the site, function unknown.
2	A	Layer of sub-angular Greensand pieces.	Remains of a return "wall foundation"
3	A	Layer of sub-angular Greensand pieces	Remains of external "wall foundations".
4	A	Layer of sub-angular Greensand pieces	Continuation of feature 3.
5	A	Layer of sub-angular Greensand pieces	Remains of a return "wall foundation". In parallel to feature 2.
6	B	CBM spread	CBM deliberately laid to provide a flat surface.
7	A	Greensand and CBM spread	Part of wall foundations in eastern return

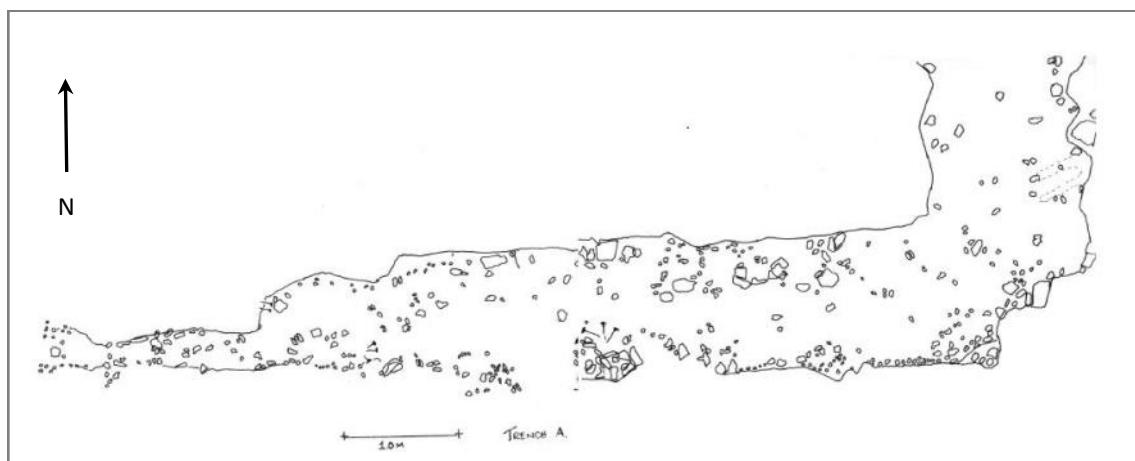


Figure 3: SW24 Trench A Plan of possible wall foundations. Scale 1:20

### Trench A

This trench confirmed the Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) results and parch marks, to reveal possible wall foundations consisting of greensand and two returning walls. The plan above (figure 3) shows one of the returning walls plus the remains of the main foundations.

The topsoil from this trench [3] contained the only coin found on-site, a 4d Groat dated 1846.

No dating evidence was recovered from these foundations.

The linear area of greensand stops before joining the western return (see figure 4 below). The linear feature is 8.4m in length, of which 1.9m at the west end is truncated in width (only 0.3m – 0.4m), with the rest of the feature up to 1.2m wide and up to 30mm-40mm in depth.

Greensand blocks define the edge of this feature on both sides. There is CBM *in-situ* except for one piece at the eastern end. There is no evidence for either a foundation or robber trench and the foundations appear to be laid directly onto sandstone/sand. No mortar was found associated with this feature.



Figure 4: Western truncated end of main foundations in trench A

### Trench B

The plan of trench B below shows the three main areas of excavation undertaken in this trench. Area A represents the Clay feature, Area B the CBM spread and Area C the western arm of the trench.

#### Area A

This consisted of a sub-angular clay feature spread over 1.1m x 1.0m and is foreign to the site geology, but does not appear to be widespread enough to suggest a foundation or working area.

#### Area B

This consisted of a spread of CBM (figure 6) overlaying a very shallow ditch (figure 7). It is currently being interpreted as being deliberately placed to create a flat surface. Whether the CBM is from the site i.e. demolition debris or was bought in from elsewhere is open to debate, however, the former is the author's preferred interpretation.

See figure 7 for photograph of section excavated through feature 6 once planning had been completed.

#### Area C

The whole of the western arm of the trench was excavated to a depth of 0.4m down to the local greensand natural. However, nothing was found to explain the parch marks running east-west. Only two sherds of post medieval pottery were found in this section of the trench together with a small quantity of burnt CBM.



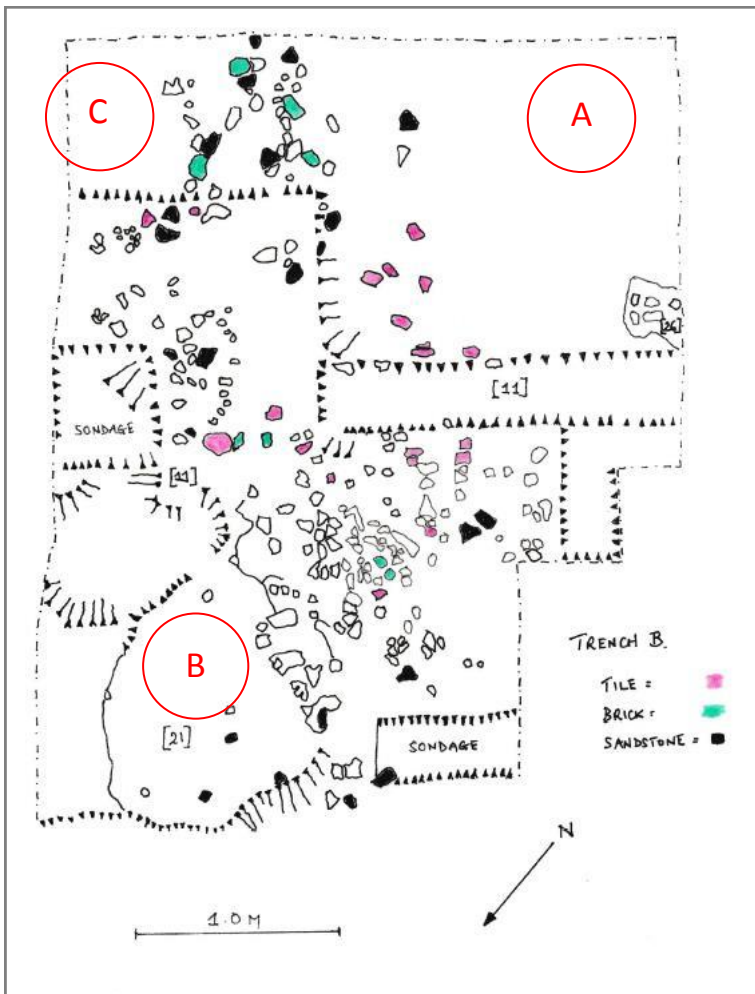


Figure 5: SW25 Trench B Plan

### Finds

All the pottery, brick and tile recovered from the excavation are post-medieval in date. In addition, none of the artefacts was from a secure context.

All non-diagnostic brick and tile was reinstated into the trench A (western end) as part of the reinstatement of the spoil heap.

All diagnostic brick and tiles were retained for processing, a summary of which will be included in the next report.



Figure 6: Trench B - general shot of the CBM spread



Figure 7: Trench B section of possible ditch and fill forming F6 (photo courtesy of J Mills)

### Pottery

The pottery assemblage recovered from the site was very small, and until further analysis is undertaken the following is only a preliminary assessment:

- Two unglazed sherds, late medieval to early post-medieval i.e. 1500-1600.
- Small sherd of fine yellow glazed Whiteware.
- Two base sherds with internal green glaze. Dishes, possibly 17<sup>th</sup> century.
- Sherds of Border ware (whiteware and redware), produced in Surrey-Hampshire area, 1550-1650.
- Sherds of Sussex red earthenware dishes, 1600-1800.

## Discussion

In essence what has been revealed is limited in terms of providing further information regarding the warren and the structure therein. Local Greensand was used to provide the basis for foundations, the remains of which make it difficult to determine the type and size of structure, they supported.

The lack of sealed contexts together with the small pottery assemblage and other domestic related artefacts, would suggest an agricultural related function as opposed to a dwelling. The quantity of brick and tile suggests a structure which had time and money spent on it, and when demolished care was taken to remove most of the building material, which could be used elsewhere.

## Function

### Association with the warren

The late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries saw a period of expansion for rabbit warrens, both in the growth of existing medieval warrens and the introduction of new warrens. The main drive for this growth being the decline in both grain and wool prices and assisted by the introduction of more winter food, thereby making rabbit farming a more attractive economic proposition (Tittensor & Tittensor 1985, 155).

Conversely in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as competition with sheep and cattle for grazing land increase, coupled with increasing return on corn and wool, saw the value of warrens decline and as a consequence removed (Tittensor & Tittensor 1985, 155).

At this stage of research, two things should be noted. Firstly, the warrener (in charge of maintenance, security and managing the rabbits) normally lived in a warren lodge, positioned to have a good overall view of the warren. This structure was often a tall building, however the possible foundations located in Trench A do not appear to be substantial enough to support such a structure.

However, there are instances where domestic buildings have been constructed directly on the natural geology without the use of deep foundations i.e. the house at Walderton site 2 (site occupied from the mid-13<sup>th</sup> to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century), which may have had a light timber base with later additions of brick, tile, and flint (Aldsworth and Harris 1982, 89).

Secondly, the word *warren* itself has changed successively from meaning 'an area for the commercial rearing of rabbits' through 'an area for encouraging wild rabbits for sport' to its modern use of 'an interconnecting system of rabbit warrens' (Tittensor & Tittensor 1985, 153).

Despite the above points, the presence of the Bronze Age barrows would have made ideal substitutes for man-made *pillow-mounds* the usual structure for housing rabbits. Also of interest there is no mention of rabbits in the Tompkins Diary (Eustace 1930, 21). The diary covered the period 1768-1814 and was kept by the Tompkins, who acted as estate agents for the Shelley's Michelgrove estate, which included parts of Sullington.

### Stock Enclosure

Whilst mainly associated with the medieval period, one possible function of the structure could be that of a sheepcote or enclosure with associated building. Sheepcotes appear in the documentary evidence from the 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards and whilst reaching their peak in the 15<sup>th</sup> century continued to be used into the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (Dyer 1995, 147). Both the documentary and archaeological evidence suggests that stone foundations and walls were the norm (Dyer 1995, 148).

These structures consisted of long narrow buildings with substantial foundations (0.6m wide to 0.6m high), with the buildings varying in length from 23m to 65m in length and 6m to 8m wide (Dyer 1995, 139) and adjacent enclosures, 50m to 200m in length (Dyer 1995, 143).

The function of these structures was to provide winter shelter for flocks of 300-500 sheep as well as acting as fodder stores, usually for hay, peas, oats and straw. In addition, they were used during the lambing season (Dyer 1995, 152).

There is an example in Sussex at Appledore, which measured 30m by 4m in 1352 (Dyer 1995, 151), smaller than the possible enclosure showing as a crop-mark in Sullington Warren.

### Barn

One possibility is that the remaining footprint is that of a barn. Structures of a similar size are known in East Sussex e.g. Great Bigknowle at Heathfield, which measures 17.1m x 9.6m and Hill House, Crowhurst, which measures 15.3m x 8.7m (Martin & Martin 2006, 110-111). Also, there are instances of barns having ceramic roof tiles in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries e.g. Great Tott at Burwash, Tanhouse and Northiam and Church House, Northiam (Martin & Martin 2006, 82).

### Source of Building Material

Assuming that the brick and tile are associated with a structure and not brought in from another site, one question is where were they made?

There are several brick and tile kilns nearby located in Storrington and Thakeham (Beswick 2001, 220), however, they all started operating in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is possible that one of the kilns was in operation before 1840 and that nothing remained or less likely (due to transportation costs) that the brick and tile came from a production centre further away.

By 1767 Sir John Shelley who purchased Sullington Manor in that year, had already owned a brickmaking site at Clapham Common for over 30 years. The purpose of this brick production centre was to supply the estate, including the rebuilding of Michelgrove House in 1769 (Beswick 2001, 32 and Eustace 1930, 24). Is it possible that this centre also supplied the building material for the structure at Sullington Warren?

Another possible source of the brick and tile could be a local farmer with a side-line in brick and tile production, which would be fitted around their farming activities. Clay being dug in the autumn, wood cut in winter, with bricks and tiles made in the spring and left to dry until being fired in summer using an open-topped up-draught kiln. An inventory from 1720, showed that a small-scale farmer with less than five acres had a stock of 5,000 bricks and 12,000 plain tiles (Beswick 1983, 9-10).

The map below (figure 8) is the surveyor's drawing for the initial OS map, dated 1806. It shows several farms to the north of Sullington common, which are possible candidates for the side-line production of brick and tile. The red stars indicate the approximate location of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century brick and tile production centres.

Whilst the connections between Sir John Shelley's estates at Sullington and the brick kiln at Clapham common are worth investigating further, it is more likely that the brick and tile were produced more locally, as in rural areas it was common practice to make these heavy products as close to the building site as possible (Campbell & Saint 2002, 171).

### Ownership

If the structure was demolished towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, then the owner at this stage was the Earl of Egremont, who purchased part of Sullington Manor in 1789. Prior to that Sir John Shelley was the owner.

However, the map evidence, especially Yeakell and Gardner, would suggest that any structure was demolished prior to 1780 i.e. during Sir John Shelley's ownership (Kingsley 1982, 91).

### Dates

Given the results from the initial analysis of the finds and lack of documentary evidence (to either support or dismiss the hypothesis), the author would like to tentatively suggest a date range for the structure as 1600-1800. Hopefully, further analysis of the brick, pottery and documentation from the Petworth House archive may give a more definitive answer.

### Last Thought

If the structure is associated with a rabbit warren, one possible clue as to why it was demolished in the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, is given by the Rev. A. Young a friend of the third Earl of Egremont (1751-1837) in his survey of Sussex Agriculture and is worth quoting in full.

"...all the great improvements in our agriculture have been patronized, propagated, and encouraged by gentlemen of large landed property and scientific exertions...In this class it is impossible for the Author not to mention the Earl of Egremont...his lordship's estates are conducted upon a grand scale, in the highest style of improvement" (Young 1813, 17).

Given Young's opinion on rabbits (he only gives one short paragraph on them) it would come as no surprise if structures associated with a warren were to have been demolished and building material used elsewhere.

"Rabbits – this stock is the nuisance of a county; they flourish in proportion to the size of the wastes, and are therefore productive in Sussex. From Horsham Forest and Ashdown considerable quantities are sent to London" (Young 1813, 391).

### What's Next

#### Research

Further research is continuing to see if any of the outstanding questions regarding function and date for the structure can be answered or provide possible further leads. As Ede points out, further documentary research is required, particularly with regards to the sales particulars relating to the 1789 purchase (Ede 1997,1).

One specific reference to follow up is that relating to the mention of rabbits being kept in the warren (VCH VI, 24-7) in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## Finds

The Sullington Warren material is currently being processed by the Finds Team at Slindon, and has joined the backlog alongside all the other on-going field work projects.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to say thank you to all the members of the WAS Field Unit (figure 9) for undertaking the excavation at Sullington Warren, especially the supervisors (Liz Walker, Vicky Lillywhite and Connie Shirley) as well as the Finds Team supervisors (Gill Turner and Jennie Williamson) for the smooth and efficient processing of the finds.

Also, thanks to the NT staff – James Brown for initiating and co-ordinating the project, Lee Walther for managing the logistics and transporting all the equipment to and from the site. Also to the NT volunteers for working on the site and especially a big thank-you for undertaking the backfilling and reinstatement of the site- always a thankless task.

Finally, a big thank you to the Sandgate Conservation Society for supporting the excavation and undertaking the maintenance of the warren.



Figure 8: Surveyor's Drawing for initial OS map dated 1806. Source TBC.



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Figure 9: Sullington Warren Trench A view from NE of site

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# On being a member of the Finds Team

## at Burpham, Big Dig, August 2024

By Cheryl Hutchins

Having been a digger with Worthing Archaeological Society for many years, age has taken its toll and I am now a member of the Finds Team, and this summer I took part in the 2-week excavation taking place in the gardens of Burpham and Wepham, under the joint direction of James Sainsbury of Worthing Museum and our Field Unit Director Keith Bolton. The aim was to deeper explore the histories of Burpham and Wepham and, particularly, to shed light on the ramparts and ditch area at Burpham. We were housed in Burpham's splendid Village Hall with magnificent views overlooking the valley to Arundel Castle and Cathedral. And, crucially, since it is in an elevated situation within the entrance to the Saxon burh, there was always a welcome breeze. Not so for the diggers, down in their test pits and trenches!

From a slow start, the work picked up rapidly. We soon took over a row of long tables with a system in place whereby the bags of finds came from the test pits and were sorted into finds that needed washing (pottery, glass, bones, foreign stones, etc), and those that were not washed (brick, tile, etc). Flint went to our flint specialist and metal to our metal specialist. Finds not requiring washing were weighed, counted and recorded before being discarded. All the rest went back into the bags for washing. Every day a small team of washers sat outside in the sun and chatted while applying their toothbrushes to the assortment of finds. Mornings began by filling bags back up with the finds which had dried overnight and were placed further along the processing line, i.e. further up the tables. They were then sorted into dated pottery (medieval, post-medieval and modern) and glass, as well as bones/teeth, clay pipes (stems and, in some cases, decorated bowls), and oyster shell. Then each category was counted, weighed and listed on a spreadsheet. The paper records grew and grew. And the trays of sorted finds also grew and grew.

Every now and then we made visits to neighbouring test pits to see how the diggers were getting on. We said hello to the rescued donkeys who thought we had some titbits for them, and viewed the emerging burh ditch at two places. Mostly the test pits were situated in orderly gardens but one which later developed into a trench was through a locked gate and into a jungle-like field where

the temperature rose sharply as the head-height vegetation closed in around us. We felt sorry for the diggers!



Finds are important to a site as they are the means by which it is dated. And here the on-site identification was undertaken by the Team, with James always on hand if we were in doubt. The prehistoric was invoked by Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age worked flint tools and debitage, and moving forward in time, we had a possible iron-age sherd, and one Roman coin, and a splendid Anglo-Saxon rim. Then there was a selection of Saxo-Norman pot sherds which dated to around the building of Burpham Church, medieval jug and pitcher sherds with their characteristic green glaze, and many more post-medieval finds including a few prestigious Bartmann and Westerwald stoneware and tin-glazed sherds, many broken clay pipe stems and one or two nicely decorated pipe bowls. Then came the modern era with blue and white transfer printed ware, large yellow kitchen/laundry earthenware bowls, and all the other kitchen earthenware that is familiar to many of us from our mothers' kitchens.



Special finds included not only a plastic dinosaur but a Victorian “Frozen Charlotte” doll, a macabre figure memorializing a child who froze as a result of refusing to wear a coat to a party! The small girls to whom I related this story were not impressed so I had to say it was only a story.

Another “find” that arrived on the table I was working on and sat in its own finds tray was a large amount of a pig’s skeleton embedded in earth. I was not too sure how I felt about it – it did not in any way evoke Peppa Pig or even George and was glad when it disappeared. Someone somewhere planned its micro-excavation.

We had an Open Day in the middle weekend and were visited by at least 100 visitors. We were busy all day explaining what we did and what we had found. It was very satisfactory all round.

And a lasting memory will be that of our leader James Sainsbury arriving at the hall by bicycle in a hot sweat from his numerous hilly trips around the village keeping up with new discoveries and encouraging the diggers. The villagers were so kind to us as they kept up a running supply of cake and on the last day treated us to a splendid lunch complete with Pimms, an ideal accompaniment to a summer lunch. Robin Bennett’s photo on the front cover shows all the workers alongside James Sainsbury, our Chairman Keith Bolton, and Karen Campbell and her ladies who represented the villagers. Many thanks to them for running the dig and looking after us so well. We will be continuing finds recording throughout the winter. And, we believe, we may be going back next year . . . . .



*Members of the Finds Team peeping over the front wall of one of Burpham’s historic houses. (courtesy of Chris Bien)*

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All contributions to the Journal are very welcome!

Supply in Word format if possible with inserted photos, and send to  
Cheryl Hutchins, Editor

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