

# SUSSEX INDUSTRIAL HISTORY



NUMBER 53

2023



**Brighton Photographic Portrait Studios— Part 2**  
**The Selsey Tram Way**  
**Barnham Windmill**  
**The Chalk Pit Furlong, Brighton— Part 2**  
**The Original Southdown Bus Garage at Lewes**  
**A Bus Station and New Bus Garage for Lewes**

£5.00

# SUSSEX INDUSTRIAL HISTORY



**Journal of the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society**

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**FIFTY-THREE**

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*Cover illustration:* Waymarker on the Selsey Tramway

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The annual subscription to the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society is £15 payable on 1 April. Life membership is available at fifteen times the annual subscription. Members are entitled to copies of the *Sussex Industrial History* and the *Newsletters* without further charge.

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## EDITORIAL

This edition of Sussex Industrial History, number 53, now has an Editorial; here we can outline the articles contained within and give some background on the authors. Some of the latter will be well known to SIAS members, but others may be new contributors. The contents in this edition range across some of the many and varied interests that we have in the county's industrial history. A perennial interest in mills of all descriptions is such that there is a Mills Group within SIAS and it is good that we have the history and evolution of Barnham Mill. Transport in all its many and varied forms has been a SIAS stalwart since the earliest days and in this issue that aspect of IA is covered in not one but three articles! The route of the Selsey Tramway is now a footpath system, and the article takes us along the trackway and outlines proposals for its enhancement as an industrial heritage project. The imminent demise of the fine period bus station at Lewes has prompted a pair of articles: one tracks the location of the original Lewes bus garage and a subsequent article tells of the Lewes bus station history and the battle to save it as a community asset. Finally I have completed my history of a central Brighton former industrial area, The Chalk Pit Furlong. A service industry that only developed in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century was that of photographic portrait studios, and the article on Brighton studios concludes the study to that in SIH 52.

### *About the contributors*

Clive Gillam, having a lifelong interest in the Southdown bus company, undertook a survey in 2015 of some 50 of the former Southdown Bus Stations and Garages. The survey revealed that seven out of ten premises had been demolished. Since then, the author has identified and written about a number of the lesser-known garages. The 1929 Lewes garage demolished in the late 1960s is the latest to be researched with the findings placed on the record.

Alan Green is a retired chartered civil engineer who now writes and lectures on his passions for local, industrial and architectural history. He is chairman of Chichester Conservation Area Advisory Committee, on which he also represents the Georgian Group, and has written nine books on the history of his native Chichester. He is leading for SIAS in the campaign to prevent the demolition of Lewes Bus Station, and in his article he explores the history and design of this important feature of the Southdown Story.

Philip Hicks is Chairman of the Sussex Mills Group. He has an honours degree in civil engineering and a masters degree in construction management, and currently works in adult education at a college in Brighton. He has been studying windmills and watermills most of his life and was technical adviser for the renovation of Oldland Windmill from 2000. The article is intended to highlight future uncertainty for the preservation of historic buildings which can be influenced by many different factors.

Bill Martin & David Pearce are members of the Manhood Wildlife & Heritage Group based in Selsey, West Sussex. Together they created a heritage trail for The Selsey Tramway with a guide, interactive map, signage, a website and information boards at points of interest along the route, including the sites of the 11 stations. Their article is based on '*Walk The Selsey Tram Way*' and what can still be seen today, almost 90 years after the closure of the line in 1935.

Dr Geoffrey Mead taught in Adult Education and with the Geography department at University of Sussex. One course, in the Landscape Studies degree, was in Industrial History. His article is a continuation of research into an old industrial corner of central Brighton which has undergone great change, from providing raw materials for a manufacturing process, lime burning, to a major retail area. Now almost obliterated, a ghost of the industrial past landscape has recently surfaced.

David Simkin taught History in secondary schools before becoming involved in educational publishing. It was during the preparation of an 'active learning' pack on the subject of Victorian life that he first encountered 19<sup>th</sup> century photographic portraiture. Over the past thirty years he has built up a substantial collection of Victorian and Edwardian photographs which had been produced in Sussex portrait studios. He has used his photographic collection to form the basis of an historical study of the growth of photographic portrait studios in Sussex towns during the Victorian & Edwardian period. He has authored a number of websites on the subject (e.g. *Brighton Photographers 1841-1910*; *Sussex Photo History*).

# PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT STUDIOS IN VICTORIAN & EDWARDIAN BRIGHTON

## Part Two—From Cabinet Card Portraits to Postcards, 1871-1910

*David Simkin*

### Introduction

For over a decade (1861-1871), the *carte-de-visite* (*cdv*) – a small photograph measuring 2½ inches by 4¼ inches - dominated the photographic portrait market in Brighton. (See Part One of my article, ‘From Daguerreotype to Carte-de-visite’, 1841-1871, in *Sussex Industrial History* 52)<sup>1</sup>. Technical developments in photography, the introduction of new photographic formats, and changes in society gradually changed the nature and character of portrait photography.

### The Cabinet Card Format

In 1866, Frederick Richard Window (1825-1875), a London studio photographer, put forward the idea of a larger format for portrait photography. The proposed format was a photographic print mounted on a sturdy card measuring 4¼ inches by 6½ inches (roughly 11cm x 17cm). The new format was called the ‘Cabinet Portrait’, presumably because a large photograph on a stout card could be displayed on a wooden cabinet or similar piece of furniture. The



Fig.1. A picture showing the comparative size of the cabinet card against the small *cdv* photograph. A portrait in both formats produced by J.J. E. Mayall of King's Road, Brighton.

Scottish photographer George Washington Wilson (1823-1893) had produced 'cabinet' sized landscape views as early as 1862, but F. R. Window had adopted the large format specifically for portraiture. Frederick Window believed that the larger dimensions of the 'cabinet print' would enable the professional photographer to better demonstrate his technical and artistic skill and produce portraits of a higher quality and sharper definition than the smaller (*cdv*) would allow.<sup>2</sup>

The cabinet photograph increased in popularity as the demand for *cdv* portraits fell. Much larger than the *cdv*, the size of the 'cabinet format' made it more suitable for group and family portraits.

### Instantaneous Photography

It was not until the introduction of the highly sensitive gelatin 'dry plates' in the late 1870s, that Brighton-based studio photographers started to use the term "*instantaneous*" in their publicity.

The greater sensitivity of manufactured dry plates reduced the length of exposure times to a fraction of a second. Although the use of gelatin-bromide dry plates did not have a great impact on the work of the photographer producing single portraits in the studio (many professional portrait photographers continued to employ collodion "wet plates"), it did enable photographers to extend their photographic repertoire by taking group portraits on location or producing photographic views of significant buildings or other places of interest.<sup>3</sup>

### Photographing children and family groups

Before 'instantaneous photography', photographs of individual sitters were more common than family group portraits. Some subjects provided extra challenges. To hold a pose for several seconds proved difficult for restless and fidgety children and uncomfortable for elderly or disabled sitters. In 1879, Henry Spink, who had a studio in Western Road, Brighton, and another at Goldstone Villas in Cliftonville (later part of Hove), was advertising "*an instantaneous process for invalids and children.*"



*Satisfaction guaranteed. First-rate photographs taken in any weather at any hour of the day".*<sup>4</sup>

In 1877, the firm of C. Hawkins of Preston Street, Brighton, was offering to photograph large groups on "moderate terms". An advertisement for Hawkins' studio in January 1881, when the larger 'cabinet' format and instantaneous photography were making family portraits more popular, does not mention additional charges for groups of sitters. Between 1877 and 1881, a single copy of a 'cabinet' size portrait of a family group would cost 2s 6d (12.5p) at Hawkins' studio. (The prices for *cdvs* at the same studio were one shilling for the first copy and six shillings for one dozen copies). Additional copies of a photograph in the cabinet card format would be charged at the rate of "twelve shillings the dozen" by the Hawkins company.<sup>5</sup> Henry Spink, a rival photographer with studios in Western Road, Brighton, and at Goldstone Villas in Cliftonville, also charged 2s 6d (12.5 p) for a single 'cabinet' size photograph but further copies could be had at the rate of one shilling (5p) each.<sup>6</sup>

A high-class photographic portrait studio, such as that owned by John J. E. Mayall, would charge considerably more for a 'cabinet' photograph. Lock & Whitfield of 109 King's Road, Brighton, charged 10s 6d for three 'cabinets', while ten 'cabinets' would cost 21 shillings at this high-class studio in 1884.<sup>7</sup> The Brighton branch of A. & G. Taylor at 34 King's Road, charged 10 shillings for six 'cabinets' and 18 shillings per dozen in 1888.<sup>8</sup> Prices for 'cabinet' cards and *cdvs* dropped towards the end of the century. In



Fig 2. A family group portrait. A 'cabinet' card photograph by Henry Edwards of 11 Lewes Road, Brighton. (c.1896). Although introduced in 1866, the 'cabinet portrait' did not really establish itself until after the invention of dry plate photography. The introduction of "instantaneous photography" around 1880 reduced photographic exposure times to a fraction of a second.

1899, C. H. Boswell of 9 North Street Quadrant was promoting his "High-Class Photographs at Popular Prices". Boswell's advertisements drew attention to his "extraordinary Low Prices", charging 10 shillings (50p) for twelve cabinets. A dozen *cdvs* would cost 3s 6d at Boswell's studio in 1899.<sup>9</sup>

### Brighton's Leading High Street Studios

The history of photographic portrait studios in Victorian and Edwardian Brighton is dominated by the names of companies that were in business in the town for many years and had well-appointed studios in the main shopping streets of the town. Mayall & Co.'s studio at 90 & 91 King's Road, Brighton, was in operation from 1864 to 1908. The firm of Hennah & Kent was established in 1852 and their photographic portrait studio at 108 King's Road did not close until 1884. Hennah & Kent's studio was eventually acquired by the owners of Hawkins & Co.

Established in the town of Brighton by Charles Hawkins as early as 1861, by the late 1870s, the firm of C. Hawkins was also operating branch studios in London and Bath. A photographic portrait studio under the name of 'Hawkins' was established at 38 Preston Street by the photographer Charles Hawkins around 1865, and was in business until the end of the First World War. After his death early in 1871, another studio was set up at No. 32 Preston Street and from that time on the photography business was managed by the founder's widow, Mrs. Eliza Hawkins (1829-1887). For the next 30 years, the

A NOTE ON PRICES: Today, a price of 2s 6d (12.5p) for a single 'cabinet' size photograph seems a trifling sum. In Victorian and Edwardian times, a visit to a photographic portrait studio would not be cheap and for many in the poorer classes it would be a "once in a lifetime" experience. In 1871, a clerical worker could earn £70 to £80 per annum – roughly 30 shillings a week. A housemaid in 1872 was paid around £16 a year, approximately 6 shillings a week. In 1880, the average weekly wage of a working man was 23 shillings. An unskilled labourer would probably earn around 16 shillings a week. What would be considered a moderate price for a photographic portrait in the 1880s (18 shillings for a dozen cabinet portraits) would be out of reach for most ordinary working people. (A 'High Class' studio, such as Mayall & Co., could charge £3, or 60 shillings, for a single portrait). In the early 1900s, a kitchen maid earned around £26 a year - equivalent to a wage of 10 shillings (50p) a week. In this period a single cabinet portrait could be bought in a standard studio for about two shillings (10p). To provide some idea of comparable values - two pairs of silk stockings would cost 3s 10d. A pair of new court shoes would cost 5s 11d (a second-hand pair of shoes cost around 2s 6d). In other words, for a domestic servant to have a portrait taken at a professional portrait studio was a special occasion or "treat"- the equivalent of buying a new fancy hat or a good pair of silk stockings.



Fig. 3. The business premises of E. Hawkins & Co., Artist Photographers, at No. 32 Preston Street, Brighton. A picture taken from an advertisement published in *Edwardian times*.

studios in Preston Street went under the name of her late husband, “C. Hawkins”. It was only in 1902 that the name of the studio in Preston Street was changed to “E. Hawkins”, some 15 years after the death of Mrs. Eliza Hawkins, the actual owner of the Hawkins photography business between 1871 and 1887.

A number of these well-established studios were large business concerns. Allen Hastings Fry (1847-1931) ran a studio in Brighton’s East Street from 1867 to 1922. In the 1871 Census return he, together with his older brother, Walter Henry Fry (1841-1916), in the firm of W. & A.H. Fry of 68 East Street, is recorded as employing 14 workers.<sup>10</sup> Fry had a very long photographic career. He served his apprenticeship with the studio of Henna & Kent in the 1860s. The photography firm of W. & A. H. Fry continued until Walter Fry’s retirement from the business thirty years later in 1897. After his partnership with his older brother ended in 1897 Fry continued at 68 East Street, Brighton, under the studio name of ‘A. H. Fry’, for the next 26 years. Fry retired and closed his studio in East Street around 1923.

“High Class” photographic studios required significant investment and the employment of a large number of assistants. On the opening of his Brighton studio in 1864, John J. E. Mayall declared that he had “spared neither pains nor expense in preparing ... one of the most efficient studios ever built”. Mayall was already famous for taking photographic portraits of the Royal Family and producing a series of “Portraits of Eminent and Illustrious Persons”, including the novelist Charles Dickens, Alfred



Fig. 4a (L). The Brighton photographer Allen Hastings Fry (1847-1931) pictured in 1878. [Photo courtesy Lorne Shields of Canada].

Fig. 4b (R). A later portrait of Allen Hastings Fry. This picture appeared as an illustration in the magazine “*The Professional Photographer*” in June 1916.

Tennyson the Poet Laureate, the Bishop of London, Karl Marx, and a host of nationally famous actors, actresses, artists, scientists, and politicians. In addition to producing photographic portraits in a range of formats, the Mayall studio also created “oil colour portraits” and “Life Size” portraits based on the photographic likenesses taken at the King’s Road studio. To produce these portraits, Mayall had “engaged the most talented Artists to finish his portraits in oil colours, water colours, India ink, etc.” By 1887, Mayall had expanded his premises to incorporate a shop that sold photographic apparatus, photographic albums, picture frames, opera glasses, musical boxes and magic lanterns.<sup>11</sup>

Although established and successful businesses such as Mayall & Co., Henna & Kent, W. & A. H. Fry, Lock & Whitfield and Lombardi & Co. could employ a number of camera operators and studio assistants, the majority of the studios in Brighton were run by photographic artists who worked alone or by individual photographers who were assisted by family members or one or two junior employees or apprentices.

### Family Businesses

When John J. E. Mayall established his studio in Brighton’s King’s Road, he recruited his three photographer sons to assist him. William Hall ran a series of studios in Brighton for over 40 years and was assisted by three sons and two daughters. Donovan & Co., a photography firm founded by the Bristol-born photographer Thomas Donovan in 1878, was in business in St James’ Street, Brighton, for over 43





Fig. 5 A portrait of the well-known Brighton photographer Thomas Donovan (1837-1909), taken at Donovan's studio in St James' Street. [Photo courtesy David Cryer]



Fig. 6 The business premises of Thomas Donovan, Artist and Photographer, at 1c St James' Street (c1897). Half-tone illustration from the advertising leaflet "Views and Reviews: Brighton & Hove". Unusually for the time, Donovan's photographic studio was situated on the ground floor, yet he claimed the studio commanded the "best and most rapid light."

years. Donovan operated his studio at 1c St James' Street with the assistance of his wife, three sons and two daughters from 1878 until his death in 1909. Stephen Grey worked as a photographer in Brighton from 1854 until his death in 1891, at the age of 68. All four of Grey's sons assisted him in his Brighton studios and three of them eventually ran their own studios in the town.

### Smaller Studios and Dual Occupations

A number of photographic portrait studios in Brighton and Hove were operated by a single photographer, perhaps with the help of a spouse or a young assistant. The majority of Brighton's photographic studios were situated in the town's main shopping parades – the King's Road, Western Road, North Street, West Street and St James's Street – but there were a number located in residential streets, away from the main thoroughfares. William Prudden (1842-1922), for instance, began his photographic career as an assistant and camera operator for Charles Combes, a photographer who operated a studio in Preston Street, but in 1869, Prudden established his own photography business at his home in Tidy Street, a small residential street



Fig. 7 A group portrait of Brighton photographer Thomas Donovan and his family (c1889).

FRONT ROW, Sitting, left to right: Thomas Donovan (1837-1909), Brighton photographer and head of the family firm of Thos. Donovan & Co.; "Teddie" Donovan (born 1886), Thomas Donovan's grandson; Mrs. Victoria Donovan (born 1842), Thomas Donovan's wife; Florence Donovan (born 1873), Thomas Donovan's youngest daughter.

BACK ROW, Standing, left to right: Charles Donovan (born 1864), Thomas Donovan's second eldest son; Minnie Donovan (born 1869), Thomas Donovan's eldest daughter; Frank Donovan (born 1871), Thomas Donovan's youngest son. Missing from the family group photo was Thomas Henry Donovan aka "Harry" Donovan, Thomas Donovan's eldest son, who had recently emigrated to the USA. [Photo courtesy David Cryer].

leading off Trafalgar Street. Prudden was to run his studio at 19 Tidy Street, Brighton, for the rest of his working life, a period of nearly 37 years from 1873 to 1909. Given its location in a rather anonymous street, situated some distance from the main shopping areas and the bustling crowds on the seafront, it may seem surprising that Prudden managed to build up a reasonably successful business at his studio in Tidy Street. The majority of the houses in the street were occupied by ordinary working people who were employed in the shops, workrooms, and small factories of Brighton and it was from this stratum of society that Prudden drew most of his customers. Trafalgar Street, at the northern end of Tidy Street, led to Brighton Railway Station and it is likely that Prudden's photographic studio was frequented by railway workers and those employed at Brighton's large railway works. In the publicity printed on the reverse of his photographic portraits, Prudden advised customers that he was only "one minute's walk" from Brighton's railway station.

Apparently, the front of the house was painted with the name "W. Prudden" and carried publicity for his photographic studio. The house was too small to accommodate a photographic studio, so Prudden

took his portraits in a specially constructed “glass-house” attached to the back of his family home.

Throughout the Victorian period, some tradesmen and creative artists combined photography with a regular occupation or profession. For example, in the 1881 Census, Alfred Alphonse Atkins (1844-1926) is described as a “*Photographer & Bootmaker*” and William Henry Kessler (1859-1929) is recorded as a “*Photographer & Musician*”. Although Atkins worked primarily as a boot & shoemaker throughout his working life, from around 1880 until the mid-1890s he was also taking photographic portraits, either at his home address or on Brighton’s seafront. In Kelly’s 1882 *Trade Directory for Sussex*, Alfred Atkins is listed as a photographer at 161 Lewes Road, Brighton. In 1888 and 1889, Atkins is recorded as a photographer at 6 Port Hall Place, Brighton. As

late as 1895, Atkins was seeking permission to take photographs of day trippers on Brighton’s beach. It was not uncommon for portrait painters and other artists working in Brighton and Hove to turn to photography in order to expand their customer base (e.g., George Ruff, Edwin Dalton Smith, Isaac Shaw Lennox, Frederick Oakes Devereux).

William Samuel Antill (1826-1894) and three of his sons worked as photographers in Brighton from the early 1860s until the late 1890s, but it is clear that taking photographic portraits was supplementing their income from their main business of making picture frames.<sup>12</sup> In late Victorian Brighton there were a few bicycle manufacturers who offered to take photographic portraits at their business premises (e.g., Thompson & Gordon at their workshop at 2 Madeira Road in the mid-1880s).



Fig. 8a The Brighton photographer William Prudden [Picture courtesy Terry Prudden]



Fig. 8b William Prudden’s house in Tidy Street [Photo by the author, 2008.]

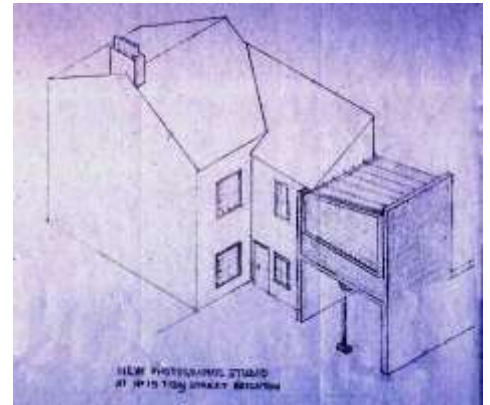


Fig. 8c Isometric projection drawing showing the “glass-house” style studio, based on plans for Prudden’s photographic studio dated 15th April 1873. [Picture courtesy Terry Prudden.]



Fig. 9a ‘Portrait of the Artist’, a self-portrait by Frederick Oakes (1840-1912), signed and dated on the reverse “F. Oakes, 1867”. (Oil on canvas). When he began to take photographic portraits at his studio in 1872, he adopted the surname of Devereux. His *cdv* portraits carry the name “F. O. Devereux”. He was one of several portrait painters who also offered to take photographic portraits. [Photo: Brighton Museum & Art Gallery].

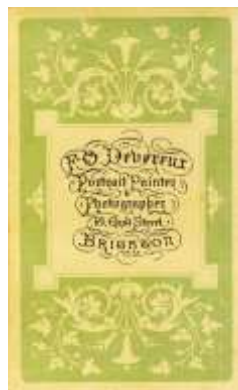


Fig. 9b The reverse of a *cdv* portrait by F.O. Devereux, “Portrait Painter & Photographer” of 69 East Street, Brighton (c1877). Between 1872 and his death in 1912, he operated photographic studios in West Street and East Street in Brighton, and Lansdowne Terrace and Western Road, Hove.



Fig. 10 Alfred Alphonse Atkins, photographed outside his boot repair shop in Brighton. [Photo courtesy Judy and Don Fleming of Ontario, Canada].



## Women and the Photography Profession in Brighton & Hove

There were a few women engaged in photography in Brighton during the period 1841 and 1871 but it was in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras that female photographers began to make their presence known.<sup>13</sup>

At the time of the 1871 Census, 19 women and girls were recorded in Brighton as being engaged in photography, mainly working as photographer's assistants or as artists employed to colour the monochrome photographs by hand.<sup>14</sup> Out of over 30 photographic studios active in 1871, only one was owned by a female.

When the census was taken on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1871, there was only one woman who was recorded as running a photographic studio in Brighton, 42-year-old Eliza Hawkins, who had recently been widowed. Eliza's husband, Charles Hawkins (1826-1871), had established photographic portrait studios in Brighton during the 1860s and when he died early in 1871, Eliza took over the running of the two studios at Nos. 32 & 38 Preston Street. Interestingly, Mrs. Eliza Hawkins (1829-1887) decided to continue the photography business under the name of her late husband. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, advertisements for the studio of 'C. Hawkins' make references to Charles Hawkins (e.g., "*C.H. begs to call the attention to his very successful carbon enlargements*") even though Charles Hawkins had been dead since the beginning of 1871.<sup>15</sup> It appears that Mrs. Hawkins thought that customers would be reluctant to patronize her studio if they thought it was being operated by a woman. During the 1870s, only one other female studio proprietor was listed in

Brighton – Mrs. Rosetta Jane Walls of Kensington Place, the widow of the photographer William Walls, who had died in 1873 at the age of 43.

When the next census of Brighton and Hove was taken on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1881, the number of females engaged in photography had doubled, with 40 women and girls recorded in the profession. In the 1880s, Mrs. Eliza Hawkins was joined by other female studio proprietors. In 1885, Miss Marie Bertin (born c1856, France), the daughter of the French-born Brighton photographer, Louis Bertin, operated her own studio at 42a Cannon Place between 1885 and 1888. By 1889, the Cannon Place studio was operating under the name of 'Madame Rivers'.<sup>16</sup> At the time of the 1881 Census, Mrs. Lucy Hennah (1838-1917), widow of the artist & photographer Thomas Henry Hennah, was recorded as a "*Sleeping Partner in a Photographic Business*" (i.e., Hennah & Kent of 108 King's Road, Brighton).

By the time the 1891 Census was carried out, the number of females working in the field of photography had risen to 54, but female studio proprietors were still a rarity.<sup>17</sup> At least in one case, (as it was with Mrs. Eliza Hawkins in the 1880s) it turns out that even though the studio carried the name of a man, the day-to-day business of taking of photographic likenesses at Alfred Wright's studio at 18 Kensington Place, was mainly in the hands of his wife, Mrs. Hannah Wright (1854-1932). Taking photographs under the name of "*Madame Blanche*", Mrs. Blanche Arnot (1856-1901), the wife of Captain William Preston Arnot, a former officer in the Indian Navy, is not recorded as a photographer in the 1891 Census, but there is evidence she was taking photographic portraits at 24 Montpelier Crescent and at her studio at 40 King's Road during this



Fig. 11  
Portrait of  
Marie  
Bertin (born  
c.1856,  
France).



Fig. 12 Portrait of Mrs. Hannah Wright (1854-1932) who worked as a photographer at 18 Kensington Place, Brighton, from 1890 until 1913. The photographic studio carried the name of her husband Alfred Wright (1854-1922) who, during the 1890s, was employed at a Brighton brewery, but the 1891 Census return indicates that it was his wife, Hannah Wright, who took the photographic portraits at the Kensington Place studio. [Photo courtesy Jeanette Holm of Brandon, Manitoba].



Fig.13 A portrait of a woman reading a book photographed by Miss Lois Girling (c1898). Lois Girling (1854-1945) worked in Brighton as a "Photographic Artist" for over 25 years, from 1880 until 1905, but she never appears in the lists of professional photographers published in local trade directories during this period. Only the existence of cabinet card portraits carrying her trade plate indicates that she ran her own photographic studio at her home address.

period. Lois Girling (1854-1945) is recorded as a 'Photographic Artist' in the Brighton census returns of 1881, 1891 and 1901, but her name does not appear in the lists of professional photographers printed in local trade directories, even though there is physical evidence, in the form of cabinet card photographs, that Miss Lois Girling was taking portraits at her home at No. 42 Russell Square, Brighton.

The photography firm of E. Mentor & Co. operated a studio at 43A Ship Street, Brighton at the end of the nineteenth century and throughout the 1890s the company had branch studios in Barrow-in-Furness, Birmingham, Bournemouth, Cheltenham, Coventry, Kidderminster, Southsea, Wolverhampton, and the Isle of Wight. What is not generally known is that the owner of the company E. Mentor & Co., Photographic Artists, was a woman, Elizabeth Zilpha Mentor (1861-1941).

According to the 1901 Census, around 50% of the 92 workers employed by photographic studios were female. In the early part of the 20th Century, several women photographers became studio proprietors. Fanny Pannell (born 1851, Brighton), the sister of the Brighton photographer Ebenezer Pannell, was a "Photographic Artist" in 1891, but at the time of the 1901 Census, Miss Pannell was described as a "Photo. Artist / Employer" and was presumably a partner in the firm of Pannell & Holden which operated photographic studios in St George's Road, Kemp Town, Dyke Road, Brighton, and Church

Road, Hove, between 1900 and 1909.

Thomas Frederick Foulkes had worked as a beach photographer in Brighton for nearly 25 years, but at the time of the 1901 Census he was languishing in the Elm Grove Workhouse. However, his wife, Mrs. Alicia Ann Foulkes (born c1852, London) was described in the 1901 Census as a "Photographer (Employer)" and was apparently in charge of their seafront studio, facing Brighton beach, for the next six years.

Madame Marie Baum (born around 1851 in Greenwich) ran photographic studios in Brighton between 1905 and 1909. At the end of the decade, Mrs. Selina Goodchild, the widow of a publican, was operating a studio in Church Road, Hove, and Mrs. Ada Schofield was in charge of a studio in Dyke Road, Brighton. Ada Schofield is best known today as a photographer who specialized in taking portraits of leading campaigners for women's suffrage.

### Electric Light Studios

Photographers in Victorian and Edwardian Brighton relied primarily on natural sunlight. Early photographic studios were often built at the top of buildings and constructed out of glass. When John J. E. Mayall opened his new photographic portrait studio at 90 & 91 King's Road, Brighton, in July 1864, he announced that he had "constructed THREE glass houses of magnificent proportions, and they have all been arranged so as to command the best light at all times".<sup>18</sup> Many photographic studios in Brighton would have to wait until the 1890s, when mains electricity was supplied to the town, before artificial light could be utilized by the portrait photographer.

In 1877, Britain's first electric light studio was opened in London's Regent Street under the direction of the artist and photographer Henry Van der Weyde. To provide an electric lighting system in a portrait studio in the 1870s and 1880s, a photographer would need to purchase and maintain an electricity generator. Even by 1882, there were only four electric light studios in London; one of these electric light studios was owned by John J. E. Mayall, who also operated the photographic portrait studio in Brighton's King's Road.

The use of an artificial light source would enable a photographer to take portraits even when it was rainy and cloudy, and sunlight was absent. It would also allow the proprietor to extend the studio's

working hours. In May 1879, the photography firm of Lombardi & Co., which operated two portrait studios in Brighton, one in West Street, the other in the King's Road, was offering to take photographs using the 'Luxograph'. (The 'Luxograph' was a method of creating artificial light by burning a mixture of combustible chemicals). According to advertisements placed in local newspapers during 1879, Lombardi & Co. promised their customers that, with the aid of the 'Luxograph', photographs could be taken "at all times and weather".<sup>19</sup>

Around 1880, John J. E. Mayall had purchased and installed an electricity generator to enable his studio in Brighton's King's Road to take portraits by electric light. An advertisement in the 1881 edition of Page's *Directory of Brighton* announced that Mayall's studio at 90 & 91 King's Road was able to offer "Instantaneous Portraits by Electric Light".<sup>20</sup>

In the past, photographers could only take portraits in daylight hours, but an electricity supply meant a studio could extend its opening hours. An advertisement placed by Mayall & Co. in the *Brighton Gazette* in June 1887 assured customers that photographic portraits could now be "taken at all times by ELECTRIC LIGHT" and, if necessary, the ground floor studio could be booked for a portrait in the hours after 6 pm.<sup>21</sup> For the first time, men and women could call in at a photographic studio in hours of darkness and have a portrait taken when dressed in their finery or clothed in specially made 'fancy dress'. Mayall & Co.'s advertisements emphasised the fact that an electric light studio was "especially convenient for ladies en route to balls and

dinner parties".<sup>22</sup> At the foot of one advertisement was a notice that advised readers that "Ball and Fancy Dress costumes" could be "photographed in the evening by appointment", adding that the "Electric Light Studio was on the Ground Floor".

The Brighton photographer Percy Cocker Mitchell (1846-1899), who traded under the pseudonym 'P. C. Mora', equipped his studio with electricity from the mains in 1893, at a cost of several hundred pounds. Two years later, in an interview, Percy Mitchell admitted that "the number of sitters taken by the electric light here has not been such a success to even pay interest on the outlay; has been more an advertisement than any substantial benefit." As Audrey Linkman notes in her book *The Victorians: Photographic Portraits*: "It would appear that, for the most part, high street studio photographers used the introduction of electric light as a publicity ploy to attract customers into the studio out of curiosity rather than to develop any specific new line of work."<sup>23</sup>

By the mid-1890s, it seems that the use of electricity by photographic studios was affecting the supply of electricity to shops and households in Brighton. When, in 1895, Brighton Corporation received complaints about the variable and unreliable supply of electricity in the town, Arthur Wright, the consulting electrical engineer, blamed the "intermittent use of motors and large arc-lamps for photographic purposes".<sup>24</sup>

### Beach Photographers

As early as 1853, a French teacher named Adolphe



Fig.14 A magazine illustration showing a photographer using a large electric arc-lamp (c.1880).



Fig.15 An advertisement for Mayall & Co.'s Electric Light Studios which was published in the *Brighton Gazette* on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1887. The advertisement points out that photographic portraits at Mayall's King's Road studio are "taken at all times by ELECTRIC LIGHT".



Fig. 16a (L) Portrait of a woman in the costume of Ancient Rome; cabinet portrait taken at Debenham & Co.'s studio at 109 King's Road, Brighton (c1888).



Fig. 16b (R) Portrait of two young women in national costume, photographed at one of the studios owned by E. Mentor & Co.(c1899). At this time, the firm of E. Mentor & Co. (owned by Elizabeth Zilpha Mentor) had branch studios in Brighton, Southampton, and Bournemouth. 'Fancy Dress' events were particularly popular in the late Victorian period.





Two cabinet portraits taken at 'Electric Light' studios in Brighton.

Fig.17a (L) Portrait of a man posed in front of painted seascape; a cabinet portrait taken at the 'Mora' studio at 127 Western Road, Brighton (c1900).

Fig.17b (R) Portrait of a woman leaning on the back of a chair; a cabinet portrait taken by Henry Spink junior of 109 Western Road, Brighton (c1900). Henry Charles Spink (1868-1948), known professionally as Henry Spink junior, was the eldest son of the Brighton photographer Henry Joseph Spink (1840-1892). Henry Spink junior operated the studio at 109 Western Road, Brighton from 1890 until 1921.



Alexandre Martin (1824-1886) had suggested using the newly invented collodion process to produce a direct positive image on a black varnished metal plate. In America, Professor Hamilton L. Smith (1819-1903), picked up on Martin's idea and experimented with making collodion positive photographs on thin sheets of iron. By the early 1860s, the inexpensive photographs which were made on these thin sheets of iron, were either known as 'ferrotypes' or by the nickname "tintypes". There was no actual tin in the photographic plates, but the word "tin" was associated with both thin sheets of metal and the idea of cheapness.

When the 'tintype' was introduced from America in the 1860s, professional photographers in England, who were enjoying commercial success with the *cdv* portrait, were reluctant to adopt what they regarded as an inferior product. Very few studios in Brighton offered to take ferrotype photographs. In the early 1880s, only a couple of studios were producing 'American Gems' (Tiny ferrotype portraits the size of a postage stamp, mounted on a decorated card of the same dimensions as a *cdv*). However, 'tintype' photography did have an appeal for travelling trades people who had limited experience in photography. The actual process was simple and straightforward to use, materials and equipment were relatively cheap and, as 'tintypes' could be produced quickly, these itinerant traders could offer a "*photographic portrait while you wait*" service. In the 1870s and 1880s, 'tintype' photography became the process preferred by showmen in travelling fairs and beach photographers.

In other seaside towns in the south of England, such as Hastings and Eastbourne, beach photographers carried portable dark rooms on little handcarts, which they trundled over the beach itself. A number

of the photographers who wheeled handcarts along the beach produced 'tintype' portraits on a 'while you wait' basis. Many of the beach photographer's customers were 'day trippers' and so it was important that the photographic portrait could be developed on the spot. The tintype portrait was ideal for beach photography, in that it was cheap, fast to produce and processed on a durable metal base, rather than a fragile glass plate. Tintype portraits were sold for as little as 6d each, being the cheapest format of photographic portrait available.

From the 1870s, itinerant photographers equipped with tintype cameras descended on seaside towns and, with the advent of dry plates and 'instantaneous' photography in the 1880s, professional photographers could leave their studios and come down to the beach to find customers. In Brighton, professional photographers were able to set up small studios and workrooms in the Arches under the Kings Road and still maintain better equipped and more orthodox studios in town. In 1878, for example, William Dawson (1843-1920) was operating a photographic room in Arch No.6 alongside the beach, close to the West Pier, yet at the same time his firm of Dawson & Co. had a conventional portrait studio in Brighton's London Road. Richard Cartwright senior (1837-1898) and his son Richard William Cartwright (1873-1953) ran a photographic studio at 63 North Street, Brighton, but also operated as "beach photographers" from the King's Road Arches, near the Shelter Hall.<sup>25</sup>

In Brighton, it was possible to establish small permanent photographic workshops alongside the foreshore. Over a long stretch of Brighton's seafront, a series of small shops occupied the arches below King's Road. From the mid-1870s, beach photographers were able to set up workshops, small studios

and photographic rooms there, from where they could operate a beach photography service. Some beach photographers produced 'tintypes', others preferred to use the old-fashioned method of making 'collodion positives' on glass. A few photographers who had established studios in the town, men like William Dawson and Richard Cartwright senior, made their beach photographs on paper prints in the cdv format. At any one time in the 1880s and 1890s there were at least half-a-dozen beach photographers operating from the King's Road Arches, some making 'tintype' portraits, others producing their photographic portraits on a glass support using the "wet collodion" process. In Edwardian times, beach photographers were able to adopt the newly introduced 'postcard' format for their portraits. By 1910, there were nearly a dozen photographers taking portraits of "day trippers" on the Lower Esplanade or on the beach itself. On the eastern seafront, near the site of the Chain Pier, small photographic studios were established on Madeira Road (now known as Madeira Drive).

### Competition and Disputes between Beach Photographers and Studio Proprietors

The existence of permanent photographic studios alongside Brighton's seaside promenades did not deter itinerant portrait takers and freelance beach photographers. Audrey Linkman, who has made a special study of itinerant photographers, has trawled through the minutes of the Brighton Beach Committee, and discovered evidence of disputes between resident studio proprietors and photographers who operated near their premises with portable equipment. In her book, *The Victorians - Photographic Portraits*, Audrey Linkman gives details of a series of complaints against interlopers made by proprietors of the Chain Pier Studio located on Madeira Road. A letter of complaint from Alfred Sharp of the Chain Pier Studio was received by the Brighton Beach Committee in January 1881. In the letter, Alfred Sharp makes a grievance against Thomas Foulkes, whom he alleges was standing near his premises on Madeira Road "with a box and camera for the purpose of taking photographs". In fact, Thomas Foulkes was not an itinerant photographer but a professional photographer who had previously operated a small studio on Brighton's western seafront. Over the next year or so Mr. Sharp wrote letters of complaint about a competitor working at Arch 15 under Junction Road and another opposite the Aquarium Clock Tower.<sup>26</sup>



Fig. 18a. William Dawson (1843-1920) depicted in a cabinet portrait by Dawson & Co. of 106 London Road, one of two photographic studios owned by Dawson in Brighton. William Dawson operated conventional photographic portrait studios in the centre of Brighton, but he was primarily a 'beach photographer' who worked from premises near the West Pier. [Photo courtesy Jonathan Newman].



Fig. 18b. A Beach cdv portrait of a young woman sitting on Brighton beach, photographed by William Dawson (c1872).



Fig. 18c The reverse of the portrait has the trade plate of William Dawson: "Photographer, 1 Campbell Road, New England Road, also at 6 Arch, West Pier, Brighton."



Fig. 19  
An amateur photographer with the initials "T. H. F." captures a professional photographer at work on Brighton's beach during the 1880s. The photographer has written below the print "The Photographer Photographed".



Three different types of beach photograph taken in Brighton:  
 Fig. 20a (left) A 'collodion positive' portrait on glass of two men sitting on chairs in front of the King's Road Arches (c1900). The portrait is housed in a 'pinchbeck' metal alloy frame. The background suggests that this portrait was taken on a stretch of beach close to where Mrs. Alicia Ann Foulkes had her photography business.  
 Fig. 20b (centre) A 'tintype' of three members of the Shuttler Family, photographed on Brighton beach close to the Kings Road Arches at the Middle Street Gap (c1900). [Photo courtesy Simon Pettitt].  
 Fig. 20c (right) A 'postcard portrait' of a family group, photographed on Brighton's beach in front of the large arches to the east of the Ship Street Gap. This picture might have been taken by William Lable, who worked as a beach photographer from No.186 King's Road Arches, Brighton, from 1909 until 1911.

**the End of the Victorian Period**

Going through the 1891 Census returns for Brighton and Hove, I counted 176 individuals associated with the business of photography. (Out of these 176 individuals, 54 were female). The majority of the photographic workers recorded (over a hundred named individuals) declared that they were employed as apprentices, assistants or camera operators in Brighton's established photographic studios. Of the 54 professional photographers who were resident in Brighton and Hove at the time of the census and who described themselves as either "employers" or "self-employed", 47 names can be

identified as proprietors of studios. Only seven photographers, therefore, can be regarded as working independently on their own account, possibly as "street photographers" or "beach photographers".<sup>27</sup>

Even after the growth in the number of amateur photographers and the introduction of roll film and Eastman's 'Kodak' box cameras in the 1880s and 1890s (the Kodak company's advertising slogan was "you press the button, we do the rest"), there was still a large demand for photographic portraits taken by professionals.

At the time of the 1901 Census, there were over 160



inhabitants of Brighton & Hove who were working professionally in the field of photography. Out of this total, only 18 can be classified as independent photographers working on their own account and not based in a recognized photographic studio. In the 'Trades Section' of Towner's *Directory of Brighton*, published in 1901, a total of 49 studios are listed under the heading of 'Photographic Artists'.<sup>28</sup>

### The Edwardian Period and Postcard Portraits

At the start of the Edwardian Age, *cartes-de-visite* and 'cabinet' portraits were still being produced, but a wide range of studio formats were now



Fig. 21. A typical photographic portrait studio at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. An illustration from a "Textbook of Practical Photography" by Wilhelm Knapp (1902). Even at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, many photographic studios still relied on natural light. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was common for studios to be located on the top floors of buildings, facing north. As in this picture, a portion of the studio roof and one side wall was constructed out of glass. The incoming light was controlled by the use of curtains, blinds and reflectors.

available to the customer.<sup>29</sup> However, after 1902, it was the picture postcard which became the most popular format for photographic portraiture.

Pictorial postcards had been in use since around 1894, but it was not until The Post Office changed its regulations that postcards could be used to carry photographic portraits taken in a professional studio. Before 1902, one whole side of postcard had to be reserved for the address to which the card was being sent. Any picture on the other side of the postcard would have to share its space with the sender's written message. In January 1902, the Post Master General authorised the use of picture postcards with 'divided backs'. A dividing line on the back of the postcard allowed the address and message to be written on one side of the card, enabling the whole of the other side to carry a picture or photograph.

From 1902 onward, professional photographers could print their studio portraits on the whole of one side of a postcard, the standard size of which was 5½ inches by 3½ inches. Picture postcards were specifically designed to be sent through the post and over the remaining years of the decade photographic portraits in the 'postcard' format became increasingly popular. (An official report from The Post Office estimated that around 190 million picture postcards were posted in

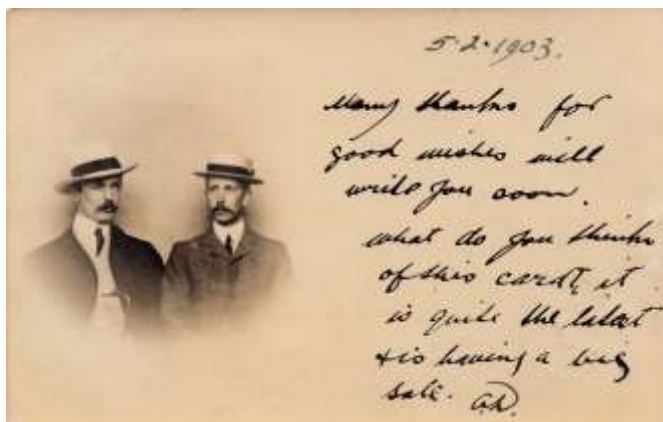


Fig. 22. A postcard featuring a photograph of two men, produced at the American Art Rapid Photography Gallery on Brighton's Palace Pier (1903). The message has been written on the picture side of the postcard, with the whole of the reverse carrying the details of the addressee.



Fig. 23. A 'postcard portrait' of a man and a child, photographed by Sydney William Grey at his studio at 172 Lewes Road, Brighton (c1910). Sydney Grey (1873-1951) was the youngest son of the veteran Brighton photographer Stephen Grey (1822-1891).



Fig. 24. The reverse of a 'postcard portrait' showing the 'divided back', allowing space for a postal address and a written message. The face of the picture postcard could now be given over to a photographic portrait. This postcard was sent from Brighton and is postmarked with the date 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1907.



Fig. 26. A postcard portrait of three young men, photographed at the studio of Seaman & Sons, 75 King's Road, Brighton (c.1909). The photography firm of Seaman & Sons had been founded by Alfred Seaman (1844-1910) the father of nine sons, eight of whom became professional photographers. In 1905, Albert Edward Seaman (born 1866, Grimsby), Alfred Seaman's second eldest son, was sent down to Brighton to establish a branch studio in the seaside town. Albert Seaman managed the studio at 75 King's Road, Brighton, until his father died in 1910. The casual pose of the three young men in this postcard, each holding a cigarette in their mouth, is in sharp contrast with the rigid formal portraits taken in photographic studios during the Victorian period.



Fig. 25. A postcard produced around 1908 by Henry Edwards of 10 Lewes Road, Brighton, detailing his services and scale of charges. Even at this late date cdv portraits were priced at 5 shillings per dozen; a dozen cabinet portraits would cost 12 shillings. If customers ordered a dozen cabinet portraits, they would receive a complimentary 12" x 10" enlargement. Other formats included the "circle" portrait (12 shillings per dozen) and the "oval" portrait (14 shillings per dozen). The cheapest option was the 'postcard format' studio portrait, priced at 3s 6d per dozen. [Photo courtesy Mike Felmore]

the year ending March 1910.) By 1910, *cdv* and 'cabinet' portraits had become obsolete.

At the end of the Edwardian era, a relatively small number of people owned their own camera and there was still a demand for portraits taken in a professional photographer's studio or on the seafront. The 1910 edition of Pike's *'Directory of Brighton'* lists no fewer than 55 studio addresses under the heading of 'Photographers'. Over a dozen of these photographic studios were situated in

Hove, At the close of the Edwardian period, there were at least 60 professional photographers offering to take portraits in the town. Around half a dozen beach photographers were working from the 'King's Road Arches' and a couple more working on the beach near Madeira Road. There were also photographers working from kiosks on the Palace Pier and the West Pier. It was not until the 1920s and the 1930s that the number of photographic portrait studios began to decline. In 1922, there were still 41 photographic studios in Brighton & Hove. By 1938, the number of studios had fallen to 22.<sup>30</sup>

## Notes and References

1. *Sussex Industrial History*. Number 52 / 2022. pp11-27
2. A full account of the introduction of the 'cabinet card' format for portraiture can be found in an article entitled "Cabinet Portraits – A New Impulse for Portraiture" which was published in *'The Photographic News'* in August 1866. [*The Photographic News*, 17<sup>th</sup> August 1866. Vol. X. No. 415. pages 385-386]. The earliest cabinet card portraits were produced by Frederick Richard Window and his partner Henry Gawler Bridge at the Window & Bridge studio, 63a Baker Street, Portman Square, W. London in 1866.



3. A large majority of the 30 or more photographic studios active in Brighton during the 1870s were primarily concerned with portraiture, but over the next three decades there were some photographers who were prepared to venture outside the portrait studio. For instance, in addition to producing *cdv* and 'cabinet' portraits, during the 1870s and 1880s, photographers employed by the firm of C. Hawkins of Preston Street were prepared to take photographs of "schools and residences". Edward Fox (1823-1899), an artist who lived at 44 Market Street, Brighton, was exceptional amongst Brighton photographers in that over his long career he devoted himself almost exclusively to photographing landscapes and buildings. For further information on Edward Fox, see the webpage at <https://spartacus-educational.com/DSfox.htm>
4. Advertisement for Henry Spink, Photographer, 109 Western Road, Brighton and Goldstone Villas, Cliftonville, in the '*Cliftonville & Hove Mercury*', 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1879. Henry Joseph Spink (1840-1892), who had a house and studio at 36 Goldstone Villas, Cliftonville, was one of the few photographers who operated a photographic portrait studio in Hove during the 1870s. See my webpage at <http://photohistory-sussex.co.uk/SpinkGallery1.htm>
5. Advertisements for C. Hawkins, Brighton School of Photography: *Brighton Herald*, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1877; *Page's Directory of Brighton* (1881); *Hastings & St Leonards News*, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1878; *Brighton Examiner*, 11<sup>th</sup> January 1881.
6. Advertisements for the Brighton photographer Henry Spink: *Cliftonville & Hove Mercury*, 13<sup>th</sup> September 1878; *Cliftonville & Hove Mercury*, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1879. See webpage at <http://photohistory-sussex.co.uk/SpinkGallery1.htm>
7. Advertisement for the photography firm Lock & Whitfield, 109 King's Road, Brighton: *Brighton Almanac* (1884).
8. Advertisement for A. & G. Taylor, Photographers to the Queen, 34 King's Road, Brighton: *Pike's Directory of Brighton and Hove* (1888). During the 1880s, the photography firm of Andrew & George Taylor ran a chain of over 30 branch studios across the country and owned six studios in the USA.
9. Advertisement for C. H. Boswell, Photographer, 9 North Street Quadrant: *Brighton Guardian*, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1899.
10. 1871 Census return for the photographer Allen Hastings Fry residing at 68 East Street, Brighton. Sub-registration District: The Palace. Household schedule number: 89. Piece: 1085. Folio: 13. Page number: 19. "Photographer, employing 14 hands". At the time of the 1871 Census, Brighton, which had a population of just over 90,000, was served by 30 or more photographic studios. According to the 1871 Census, in addition to the 32 studio proprietors and employers, there were another 70 individuals engaged in photography, either employed as camera operators or working in another capacity (e.g., assistants or apprentices, photographic printers, and artists hired to colour monochrome photographs.
11. Advertisements for Mayall's studio at 90 & 91 King's Road, Brighton. *Brighton Examiner*, 12<sup>th</sup> July 1864. *Brighton Gazette*, 25<sup>th</sup> June 1887.
12. William Samuel Antill (1826-1894), who started his working life as a "carver & gilder", set up a photographic portrait studio at his business premises at 57 Preston Street, around 1863. Two of W. S. Antill's sons - William Antill junior (1848-1895) and Thomas Antill (1849-1897) worked both as photographers and picture-frame makers in Brighton from the early 1870s until the late 1890s. A third son, Herbert Samuel Antill (1862-1954), worked as a photographer and picture-frame manufacturer in London during the 1880s and 1890s. See my webpage on the Antill Family at <http://photohistory-sussex.co.uk/BTNAntill.htm>
13. I have identified over 170 females who were involved professionally in photography in Brighton and Hove during the period 1841 to 1910. The earliest female photographers and photographic workers in Brighton were either relatives of a male studio proprietor or the wives of professional men, often foreign-born academics and teachers. See my webpage on 'Women Photographers in Sussex' at: <http://photohistory-sussex.co.uk/WomenPhotgrsContents.htm>
14. In the 1871 Census for Brighton, a number of the women engaged in photography can be identified as the wives, daughters or sisters of established male photographers.
15. Advertisements for the photographic studios carrying the name "C. Hawkins" at 32, 33 & 38 Preston Street, Brighton: *Page's Directory of Brighton* (1876, 1877); *Brighton Herald*, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1877; *The Brighton Examiner*, 11<sup>th</sup> January 1881.
16. Miss Marie Bertin (born c1856, France) was the daughter of the French-born Brighton photographer, Louis Bertin, who operated a photographic portrait studio at 88 King's Road, Brighton between 1874 and 1886. See my webpages on Louis Bertin and Miss Marie Bertin at <http://photohistory-sussex.co.uk/BTNBertin.htm> and <http://photohistory-sussex.co.uk/BTNBertinMarie.htm>
17. The 1891 Census was taken in Brighton and Hove on a single evening (on the night of 5<sup>th</sup> April 1891) and so it cannot provide us with a complete picture of the photographic activities of all the town's inhabitants during the 1880s and 1890s. As well as the material supplied by the census returns, information has to be supplemented by other sources, such as advertisements, newspaper articles, street and trade directories and, of course, surviving portrait photographs carrying the name of female professional photographers.
18. Advertisements for Mayall's studio at 90 & 91 King's



- Road, Brighton. *Brighton Examiner*, 12<sup>th</sup> July 1864.
19. Advertisements for Lombardi & Co.'s photographic studios which mention the 'Luxograph'. *Cliftonville & Hove Mercury*, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1879; *Brighton Gazette*, 7<sup>th</sup> June 1879.
  20. Advertisements for Mayall's 'Electric Light' studio. Advertisement Section in Page's *Directory of Brighton* (1881).
  21. Advertisement for Mayall's 'Electric Light' studio. *Brighton Gazette*, 25<sup>th</sup> June 1887.
  22. Advertisement for Mayall & Co.'s Electric and Daylight Studios (16<sup>th</sup> July 1887)
  23. 'The Victorians: Photographic Portraits' by Audrey Linkman (Tauris Parke Books, 1993), page 137.
  24. Brighton Lighting Committee Minutes and General Purposes Committee Minutes, quoted by Judy Middleton in her article 'Brighton, Hove, and Portslade's Street Lights' on her website 'Hove in the Past'. Arthur Wright (c1858-1931) was chief engineer for the Brighton and Hove Electricity Supply Co and later a consulting electrical engineer to Brighton Corporation.
  25. The majority of the beach photographers in Brighton were situated in the 'King's Road Arches' on the lower esplanade. There were at least a dozen beach photographers based in the 'King's Road Arches' between 1872 and the end of the First World War. At least half of the photographers who plied their trade on Brighton Beach were engaged in other seaside businesses e.g., refreshment rooms, bowling alleys, shooting galleries, pleasure craft, boatbuilding, bathing huts, etc. See my three webpages starting at <http://photohistory-sussex.co.uk/BTNBeachPhoto01.htm>
  26. Minutes of the Brighton Beach Committee (1881-1897) quoted in 'The Victorians: Photographic Portraits' by Audrey Linkman (Tauris Parke Books, 1993), pages 172-173.
  27. Not all the photographers in the towns of Brighton and Hove operated from conventional portrait studios. There were a number of "street photographers" who worked from "door to door", taking photographic portraits of the inhabitants of a particular house 'on location', usually posing them in front of their own home. These "street photographers" worked from their home addresses and canvassed for customers by touring residential streets and knocking on doors, asking if they would like to have a portrait taken. Street photographers would work at weekends and might have another occupation during the week and would not appear in trade directories under the heading of 'Photographers'.
  28. Listings of professional photographers in other trade directories (e.g., W. T. Pike's *Brighton and Hove Directory*, Kelly's *Directory of Sussex*) published around the same time as Towner's *Directory of Brighton*, support a figure of around 50 photographers or photographic studios being active in 1901.
  29. Photographic Formats. There were many other formats for portraiture produced during the period 1871 -1910 (e.g., the 'Boudoir', the 'American Gem', the midget carte, the 'Promenade', the 'Imperial', the 'Panel Print') but it was *cdv* and the cabinet card which dominated the photographic portrait market.
  30. The lists of professional photographers in local trade directories are an important source of information. I have drawn information from the local directories that were published between 1871 and 1911. The numbers of photographers working in Brighton and Hove after 1911 have been taken from the 'Trades' sections of Kelly's *Directory of Sussex* published between 1911 and 1938.
  31. *Sussex PhotoHistory* is an online resource covering the history of commercial photography in Sussex between the years 1841 and 1910. Detailed accounts of the lives and careers of photographers active in Brighton and Hove during the period 1871 and 1910 can be found in the index of 'Brighton Photographers' on the *Sussex PhotoHistory* Home Page at <http://photohistory-sussex.co.uk/index.htm>
  32. On the *Sussex PhotoHistory* website you will find detailed accounts of the lives and careers of photographers mentioned in this article and galleries featuring examples of their photographic work. e.g., Thomas Donovan, W. & A. H. Fry, William Prudden, Henry Spink.

## WALK THE SELSEY TRAM WAY

*Bill Martin & David Pearce***Introduction**

The Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramway ran from Chichester to Selsey, a distance of 7.5 miles. It opened in 1897, having taken only four months to build at a cost of £31,000; it was called a tramway because it was completed just before light railway legislation came into force. In 1910 passenger numbers peaked at 100,000. Nicknames such as the Hedgerow Railway, Blackberry Line, Sidlesham Snail, the Clickety-Click and Bumpity Bump, plus messages on post cards at the time were indicative of its quirky reputation – ‘From Chichester to Selsey and back in a day – if you are lucky’, ‘Would have written sooner, but only just arrived’. A combination of its unreliability and increasing competition from the local bus company brought about closure in 1935.

**The Walking Guide**

In 1997, to commemorate the centenary of the first train, a walking guide was produced and waymarkers attached to footpath signs; in 2008 the leaflet was updated. In 2022 members of the Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group (MWHG) further updated the walking guide leaflet plus an interactive walking guide and map was made available online. New way markers were attached to West Sussex County Council footpath posts and information boards were installed at key points of interest, including the 11 stations, along the route; the information boards have QR codes with links to the interactive map and the website. Unlike several of the much later ‘Beeching’ closures it is not possible to walk the entire trackbed of the Tramway; however, a number of sections are directly accessible. Several artefacts remain, a few houses have links to the Tramway and some road names preserve its memory.

A copy of ‘Walk the Selsey Tram Way’ can be downloaded from the MWHG website, [www.mwhg.org.uk/tramway](http://www.mwhg.org.uk/tramway). The guide has been written taking the walker from Chichester south to



Fig. 1 Interactive map with track (black) and walking route (orange) plus points of interest along the route.

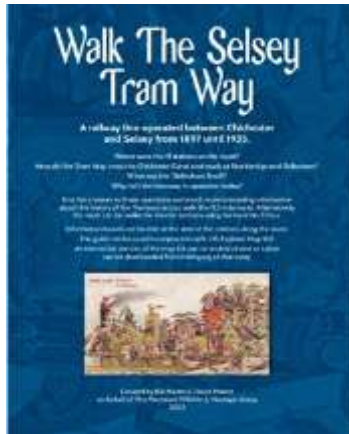


Fig. 2  
Guide available  
on website

Selsey, a distance of 11.8 miles; the interactive guide to the route, also on the website, enables the walker to travel north from Selsey. Although the Tramway closed almost 90 years ago there is still plenty to be seen. An Information Board in the car park of Chichester Station marks the site of the Chichester Terminus; now the site of Wiley’s publishing company. The houses in nearby Canal Place (which is the original Terminus Road) backed onto the station. No 5 is called Tramway.

**The Walk**

On the south side of the A27 Chichester Bypass (not built until 1936) the Tramway crossed the A286 at Stockbridge. There is another information board at the start of a public footpath by a pedestrian crossing; this footpath follows the track-bed of the Tramway to Chichester Canal. When it was opened in 1822 an embankment had been created from the spoil of the canal, this then formed the trackbed upon which the Tramway ran. Neighbouring road names bear connections to the Tramway – Peckett’s Gate (Train engineer), Hesperus Mews (one of the engines) and Tramway Close. An information board by the side of the canal denotes the point at which the Tramway left the canal and headed across fields (following hedgerows) to the Lifting Bridge. The



Fig. 3  
Waymarkers

abutments of the Lifting Bridge which carried the Tramway across the canal are still visible and in 2009 SIAS added some track and wheels; a Canal Trust information board tells the story. Members of the Society dressed up as Colonel Stephens (the engineer of the line) and his colleagues to mark the occasion.



Fig. 4 SIAS members, in Colonel Stephens attire, at the Hunston Lifting Bridge in 2009

The footpath from the canal to the B2145 follows the track-bed of the Tramway. The house on the right near the canal was occupied by the operator of the Lifting Bridge; an information board on the main road explains that Hunston Station was on the other side of the road; part of the foundation of the platform is visible today, albeit on private land. The track-bed of the tramway now follows more private land to Sidlesham. Although somewhat circuitous, the walking route does pass the location of Hoe Farm Halt (now Chichester Golf Club) which has an information board. Chalder Station is a short walk from The Anchor Inn in Sidlesham. The station platform, regularly maintained by volunteers, is clearly visible as is the base of the waiting room; it is hoped to restore the station with the support of SIAS. Another information board explains Mill Pond Halt, built in 1910 at the time of the Pagham Harbour flood. The walking route from Sidlesham Station to the crossing of the rife at Ferry follows the precise trackbed of the Tramway where the embankment was raised after the flood and its chalky make-up demonstrates how unstable the line must have been.



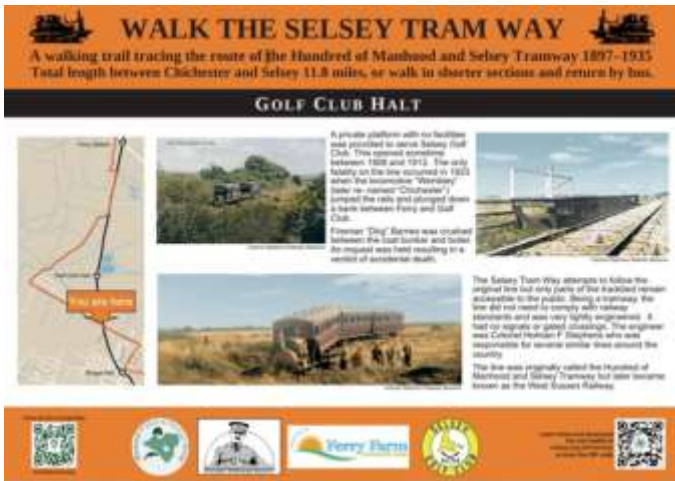


Fig. 5 Information Board at Golf Club Halt

Ferry Station was on the south side of the B2145 with another precarious road crossing. The walking route again follows part of the trackbed of the Tramway to the northern edge of the Golf Club, before deviating around the course and a holiday village to an information board for Golf Club Halt.

It is not possible to follow the Tramway through Selsey but information boards have been installed at

the sites of Selsey Bridge, Selsey Town and Selsey Beach stations. The bridge at Selsey has now been filled in but the cutting either side of it can be seen. In Church Road (which used to be Station Road), near the information board for Selsey Town Station, there is a terrace of four houses built for workers on the Tramway. Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group received financial support and/or in-kind support for 'Walk the Selsey Tram Way' from Ferry Farm Community Solar, the Colonel Stephens Society, Langmead Farms, Nature's Way, Sidlesham Parish Council, Hunston Parish council, Selsey Golf Club, Chichester Golf Club, Caroline's Ice Cream and The Lady Neville Foundation.

On 27th August 2022, there was an organised walk from Chichester to Selsey to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the first train. From June 2024 until 2026 there will be an exhibition about The Selsey Tramway at The Novium Museum in Chichester and we are currently discussing a film to accompany the display. There will also be a collection of artefacts so if you have anything that could be used please contact us.



Fig. 6 Ferry Rife Crossing



Fig. 7 Chalder Station Platform and the base of the Waiting Room

## BARNHAM WINDMILL

*Philip Hicks*

Fig. 1 Old postcard of Barnham Mill in working order

The present tower mill was built to replace an old post mill which was destroyed by a severe gale on 11th October 1827. The following account of its demise was reported in the Brighton Herald:

*“On Thursday se’nnight during the heavy gale of wind, a mill at Barnham - was blown down. It is hoped that the proprietors will not be allowed to re-erect it on the same spot, as from its contiguity to the public road, many accidents have occurred, one of which recently happened to a gentleman, his lady and four children, who were overturned by their horse taking fright from the shadows of the sails, but providentially sustained no injury. By recent Act of Parliament, no windmill can be erected within 200 yards of any public road.”*

Ignoring the parliamentary legislation the new tower mill was erected on the same site by Henry Martin, millwright of Bognor, in 1829. In January of the following year it was advertised for sale by private contract with notices providing the following details:

*“A substantially built cylindrical MILL, recently erected, without regard to expense in completing it. It works two pair of stones, and can grind eight loads of wheat per week.*

*The mill is holden for the residue of a term of 10,000 years at a nominal rent...”*

According to parish records the old post mill was owned by Joseph Murrell at the time of its destruction. His son Isaac had been its miller in the 1820s. The Murrell family were local farmers and landowners during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The nearby pub is named the Murrell Arms. In 1830 Messrs. Martin & Wilshear were

recorded as the owners of the tower mill. They were succeeded the following year by James Chandler. By the early 1840s the mill was occupied by George New, miller and baker, who died on 25th May 1843 from tuberculosis. His widow Ann New remained in occupation of the premises and took charge of the business with help from miller John Towse and later from her son Arthur. The parish tithe map of 1846 shows the mill detached from any buildings with a house occupying the north-west of the site which was demolished about 1880.

By 1866 Henry Feaver had succeeded Ann New as master miller. In May 1878 the mill was advertised for sale by private contract, sale notices provided the following description:

*“A Tower Wind Mill, 2 pairs of French, 1 pair of Peak stones, flour and grist machines, spring sails, panes, etc. Good dwelling house, 2 Cottages.”*

It was purchased by brothers Maurice & John Baker, millers, bakers, and dealers of malt, hops, linseed and cotton cakes. For many years they also ran the mill at Aldingbourne.

The mill underwent significant modification and improvement during the 1890s by J. W. Holloway, millwright of Shoreham. The list of work undertaken is believed to include a new cap, brakewheel and windshaft, a new cast iron curb, patent sweeps, an extra pair of millstones and new internal cast iron machinery (eg. upright shaft, great spur wheel and wallower).

In the First World War John Baker’s son Percy, who had assisted in the mill for many years, served in the Sussex Yeomanry as a Sergeant-Major and died at Gallipoli in December 1915, aged 31 years, from wounds sustained in action. Captain Henbury L. Kekewich wrote a letter to the Baker family in which he described Percy as an extraordinarily nice fellow to work with, who was always cheery and never upset by anything. He was also the most hard-working and conscientious worker the Captain ever came across. Percy was buried at Twelve Tree Copse, Gallipoli. His name is inscribed on the Barnham war memorial and on an individual stone tablet, both mounted on the wall of Barnham Church.

During the nineteenth century there were many windmills sited around this region of West Sussex but by the end of the First World War most were either derelict or had disappeared completely. In the 1930s John Baker junior said:





Fig. 2 Showing original cap and fantail in the 1930s

*"When my father was working this mill he could count eleven other windmills working from this platform. But now they have all vanished. Halnaker Windmill can just be discerned on the skyline over towards Stane Street. That was built in the time of Queen Anne, but it has been nothing but a wingless ruin for the last hundred years."*

Use of wind power at Barnham ceased around 1926 and all subsequent milling was undertaken using the auxiliary engine. However, the windmill remained relatively well maintained and the fantail and four empty sweep frames survived for many years. In September 1938 one pair of sweeps and stock were dismantled. During the Second World War the mill was used as an observation post to alert nearby RAF Tangmere of incoming air attacks. At this time the reefing stage was allegedly damaged by an unfortunate accident involving an army lorry and was subsequently removed. In 1958 the fantail and surviving pair of sweeps, which were then in very poor condition, were removed. The mill was enclosed in scaffolding for works to make the cap and tower weathertight. The rear ends of the cap sheers were sawn off flush with cap frame, the fanstage was cut off flush with the cap roof and the defective lead covering on the roof was replaced with copper sheets. No milling was undertaken on the premises after 1978 and they were used only for mixing and distribution. The business proprietor, Reg Reynolds, retired in 1985 and the mill was subsequently put up for sale.

Vic May, a butcher at the neighbouring nursery, purchased the property in 1989 with the intention of

renovating the windmill to full working order and converting the complex of outbuildings into an heritage centre, cafe and restaurant. He also compiled a detailed history of the mill in a small book entitled 'The Mill & The Murrell' with some help from his friend, windmill author Martin Brunarius. Before the enormous challenge of the mill was tackled, a careful and authentic refurbishment of the stable building was undertaken and work also commenced on consolidating the other adjoining buildings. The workshop, store and office building were converted into a residence. Inside the mill an old Derbyshire Peak millstone was recovered from the ground floor which was in use as a pad foundation. However, finance soon became a problem, and despite securing a grant from the European Community Vic May fell victim to the 1992 recession. Adverts for an investor or business partner were unsuccessful and he was subsequently forced to sell the property.



Fig. 3 Barnham Mill prior to renovation, 1992

By late 1994 the property had been purchased by Barry and Joy Lee who continued with the renovation plans. In early 1995 the rest of the outbuildings were refurbished and partially rebuilt. The mill was enclosed in scaffolding so the tower could be retarred and made weathertight. The cap was repainted and the missing ball finial replaced. Inside the mill the spout floor was partially dismantled, new timber was spliced into the rotten ends of the two main girders and all rotten joists and floorboards were replaced. During the following years the other floors inside the mill were refurbished, the composition millstones were removed and the missing reefing stage was reconstructed. The bin and dustfloors were almost entirely dismantled



as the boards and joists had been severely affected by insect attack and the two main girders were repaired in situ.



Fig. 4 Raising the new cap by crane, June 1999.

The cap was removed by crane in 1997 and was dismantled and renovated on site. The sheers, tail beam, ribs, fanstage, fanblades and fan mechanism were renewed. The breast beams, windshaft, bearings, brakewheel, brake, and all surviving original ironwork were reused. The restored cap was then reinstated by crane in June 1999. The operation drew significant crowds of local people and live pictures were uploaded to the internet which attracted interest from some enthusiasts in Holland. Renovation of the mill's interior continued and as the millstone governors were missing Barry acquired two second-hand sets which had been salvaged from Littlehampton Windmill decades earlier. With the cap now capable of winding itself, a new set of stocks were erected in the early 2000s and plans were underway to construct the new sweeps. However, these never materialised.

From 1997 Barry and Joy had run a tea room in the stable with the kitchen equipment housed in the hay-loft above. It proved to be a very popular and successful enterprise drawing a large base of custom from the local district with profits helping to fund work to the windmill. Unfortunately after eight years of business, a dispute with the owners of the neighbouring Parsonage Farm Nursery regarding extension of the lease for use of their car park led to the permanent closure of the tea rooms in September 2005. In 2009 planning permission and listed building consent were granted to convert the premises into four separate homes. It sealed the fate of the last surviving tower mill in West Sussex for which full restoration was viable. Although some of the basic machinery was retained such as the brakewheel, upright shaft, great spur wheel and layshafts, many features were removed including the millstones, stone spindles, stone nuts, jack rings, tentering gear and reefing stage. The height of the spout floor was lowered from its original position to provide more headroom and the bin floor was completely removed. The outbuildings were also changed significantly with their flat roofs replaced with tiled gables providing an extra storey of living accommodation. Due to financial problems Barry and Joy were forced to sell the property in 2014 and the project was completed by new owner Andy Rush of Bolrush Developments. In May 2015 the mill was advertised for sale as a luxury home.



Fig. 5 Spout Floor prior to house conversion - showing the Great Spur Wheel, Stone Nuts and other surviving machinery, October 2010

At the start of restoration work in the early 1990s most of the windmill's original features and machinery survived (which are described below) -

the main exceptions being the reefing stage, the wallower and upper section of the upright shaft, the millstone furniture, meal bins, governors, flour and wheat machines, sackhoist, fantail and fanstage, stocks and sweeps, striking gear and ball finial. In the late 1990s discovery was made of two lengths of old sweep whip presumably having originated from this mill - one had been supporting the roof of an outbuilding and the other served as a gate post for a neighbouring property. The spacing of the sail bars revealed that one was of patent type and the other of common type.

**TOWER**

The cylindrical tapered tower is constructed mainly of flint up to dust floor level and red brick above. The exterior is faced with cement render and tarred. Although it is commonly stated that the top of the tower has been extended, it is more likely the brickwork merely represents a rebuilding of the top of the tower to accommodate the new curb. The few windows are of semi-circular shape and relatively small.

**GROUND FLOOR**

The two access doors were positioned north-north-east and west. Both doorways were enclosed by the outbuildings. An old Derbyshire Peak millstone was set into the centre of the floor serving as a pad foundation under the central stanchion in the centre of the floor. (This has now been replaced with a concrete plinth). The central iron stanchion is a solid circular section and is a single casting spanning two storeys. It bears "HOLLOWAY SHOREHAM" just above spout floor level.

**SPOUT FLOOR**

There are two narrow doors to the reefing stage positioned east and west. The great spur wheel is a single iron casting with eight tapered T-section arms and wooden cogs. An iron bevel ring with wooden cogs is bolted underneath the spur wheel. The upright shaft footstep bearing is carried on two

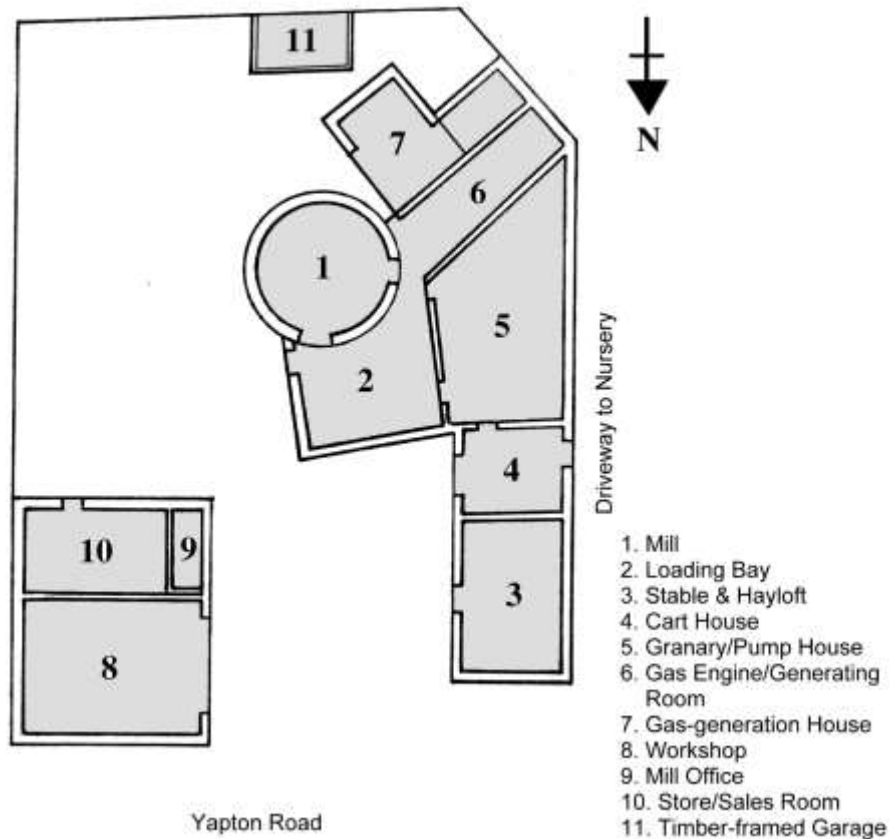


Fig. 6 Site layout during the final period of Barnham Mill's working life

perpendicular pine cross beams - one is full length spanning wall to wall north-east/south-west, and the other is half length spanning from the wall to the centre of the mill. It seems the north-western end of the half length beam was removed to accommodate the auxiliary drive layshaft. The layshaft passes through the wall on the north-west side and carried two large iron pulley wheels (fast and loose) outside the mill, which were belt driven from the engine below. Near the south-eastern end of the layshaft is mounted an iron bevel gear with iron teeth which were permanently engaged with the cogs of the spur wheel bevel ring. A semi-circular mesh grill was fitted under the bevel gear as a safety guard. The stone nuts were cast iron with iron teeth and were raised out of mesh with the spur wheel with jack rings. The wheel shaped tentering screw handles were positioned below the cross beams directly under the stone spindles. Hanging from the ceiling there were two secondary layshafts carrying various sized iron pulley wheels, and an oat roller stood on the floor directly below the north-western end of the main layshaft.

**STONE FLOOR**

There were two pairs of composition millstones

positioned north-east and south-east. The circular stone tuns and furniture were missing. The upright shaft was boxed in up to about 4ft in height. Suspended from the bin floor above were two sets of wooden spouts feeding the millstones and a large wooden hopper believed to have fed the flour machine.

#### BIN FLOOR

Most of the floor space was occupied by grain and meal bins which were separated by wooden partitions. The partitions were full height up to the dust floor, so the bins were completely enclosed. The 'dog clutch' connection between the two lengths of the upright is at this level.

#### DUST FLOOR

The top section of the upright shaft and wallower were missing but the latter is believed to have been of cast iron and of similar style to that at Waterhall Mill. The sack hoist is believed to have been friction driven from below the wallower.

#### CAP AND CURB

The dome-shaped cap is covered with lead. The cap frame is of pine and unusually the sheers protrude by about 2m at the tail but did not provide any direct support to the fanstage. The cast iron windshaft is of tapered circular section and has been cast in two pieces flanged and bolted together between the neck bearing and windshaft. The cast-iron brakewheel has eight arms and wooden cogs. It is cast in two halves bolted together around the windshaft. The neck bearing is carried in an iron casting similar to that at Waterhall Mill. The wooden brake was applied by a screw mechanism (instead of a lever) which was a trademark feature of millwright Holloway. A shaft from the screw mechanism was positioned above the cap shear and passed out of the rear of the cap where it engaged with a small pulley wheel via a series of bevel gears of similar principle to Waterhall. The 'live' curb comprised a segmented cast iron track with a shallow trough in the top for the cap rollers and a cog rack on the outer rim. This ironwork was mounted upon a ring of oak segments.

#### FANTAIL

The large six-blade fan was mounted above a horizontal fanstage of typical Sussex design. The gearing drove an iron worm gear which meshed with the teeth in the curb. Suspended below the fanstage was the striking wheel, a lower access platform and tailpole to steady the striking chains.

#### SWEEPS

Latterly there were two pairs of double-shuttered patent sweeps, controlled by a striking wheel mounted beneath the fanstage. The inner pair was 10 bays long with four shutters in each bay except at the heel which had three shutters. The outer pair was 12 bays long with three shutters in each bay.



Fig. 7 Barnham Mill after house conversion, March 2022

#### Conclusion

In the future, it is inevitable that more mills will be converted into houses or lost altogether due to circumstances outside our control. Recent planning applications to convert Shipley Windmill have been rejected, which is reassuring. However, current shortages of housing space is likely to lead to weaker planning legislation controls in the future. This places ever more emphasis on the importance to accurately record all aspects of each mill in terms of its details, history, features, construction, machinery and all millwrighting work.



## THE CHALK PIT FURLONG: A LOST PART OF WORKING BRIGHTON

Part Two—the 20<sup>th</sup> century

'Lath Cleavers, Maltsters...and Marks &amp; Spencer'

*Geoffrey Mead*

The Chalk Pit Furlong lies on the eastern edge of Brighton's former West Laine, now a forgotten name in the city; it had that term since at least the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, where the 1735 Brighton Terrier document lists it as one of the nine furlongs in West Laine.<sup>1</sup> There is some evidence that the actual chalk pit was in use during the 17<sup>th</sup> century and its industrial history extended from that distant time into the 1960s. A previous edition of SIH 52 (2022)<sup>1</sup> outlined the early history and industrial development of the area, one of 'mean dwellings' and 'small tenements' arranged in an urban landscape of twittens and small streets. They had names now long gone from even the most detailed histories of the city: Chalk Pit Island, Regent Row, Regent Court, Pentecost Buildings, Walls Court, names redolent of an earlier and now largely forgotten aspect of Brighton's urban

continuity. All were interspersed with stabling, warehouses, taverns, smithies, workshops and storage yards; one major employer only, the North Street Brewery, which occupied the south east corner of the Chalk Pit Furlong until the 1920s.<sup>2</sup>

One statement from a medical officer's report from 1849 shows the nature of the habitations in Regent Row—"Number 12, a beer shop kept by Mrs Miles. The well, upwards of 100 feet in depth is now converted into a cesspool, and consequently the water in the neighbouring wells is much injured." Supporting evidence shows this to be the Lath Cleavers Arms, known at an early date as the Two Jolly Lath Cleavers.<sup>3</sup>

The article in SIH 52 was mainly concerned with the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the interior of Chalk Pit Furlong, its employments and social structure; this article will

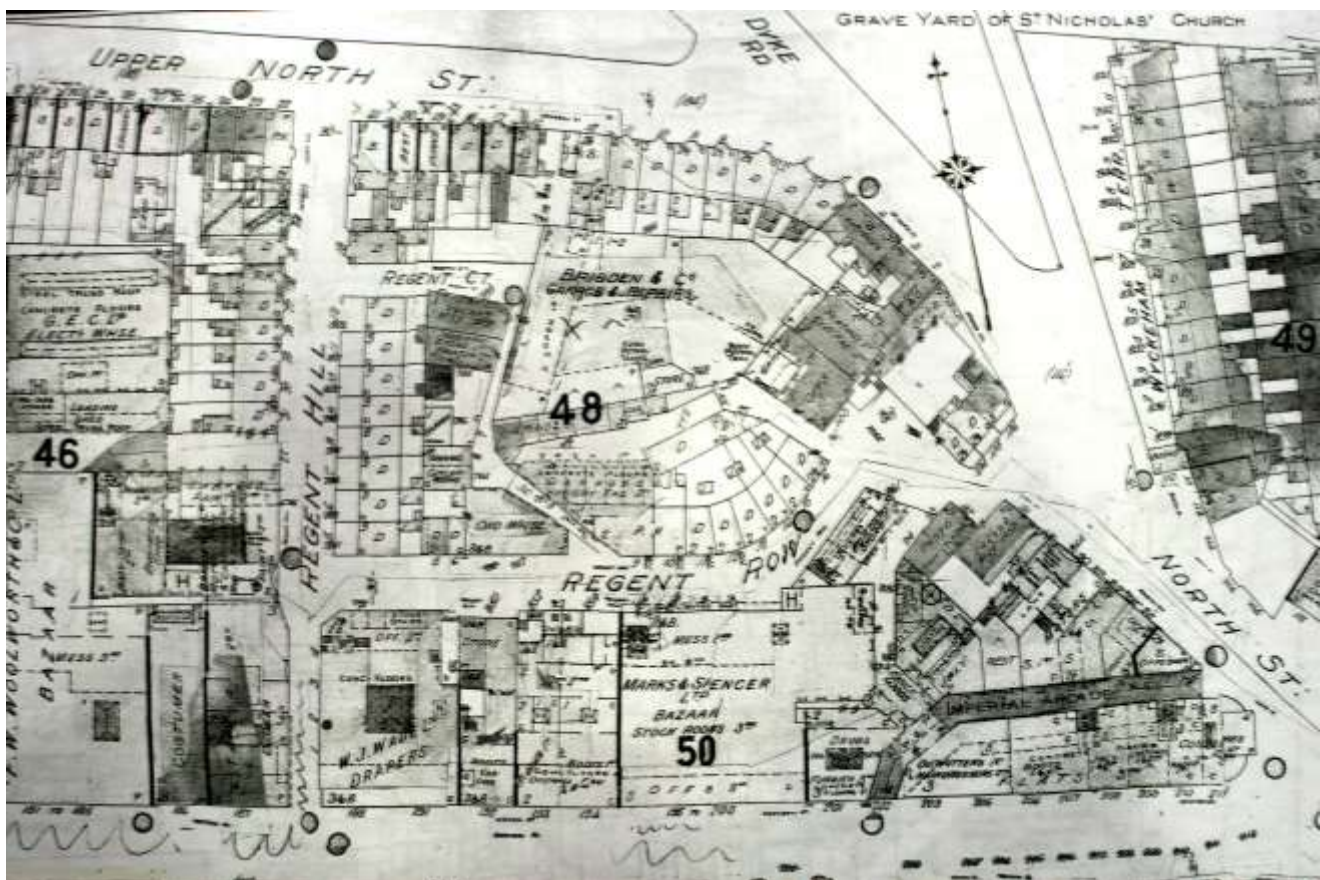


Fig. 1 Goad insurance map, 1952. The complex nature of the Chalk Pit Furlong is apparent from this map; with the large retailers along the south side and the network of yards, twittens and premises north of Regent Row. This latter area all but obliterated, only the Regent Row 'dog-leg' at the east end has survived into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

build on that core with a study extended to the periphery. A significant source for the 20<sup>th</sup> century history of this now long-gone industrial landscape are the images collected and taken by the late James Gray, whose collection is now accessible on-line courtesy of the Regency Society of Brighton & Hove.

Where the internal area was a basic working space with a solid core of trades and occupations, the periphery had more of a social mix. High on the downland slope rising from Western Road, the line of Upper North Street was a mix of small traders, with its continuation down Dyke Road (then listed as North Street) being one of small houses used as rented accommodation and latterly as small antiques businesses and bed and breakfast establishments. Budgen's map 1799 shows three blocks of buildings south-east of the clearly indicated Chalk Pit and Cobby's map of the same date shows a continuous line of development in the then North Street, but none in the south side of the furlong along Western Road. Regent Hill along the west fringe was noted in SIH 52 as having more refined occupations amongst its residents, but the line along the south side of the Furlong, now Western Road, but in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Regent Place, was one of large residential properties with extensive front gardens facing south along the downland dip slope.

A map of 1823 shows an intermittent line of buildings along Regent Place and on into the then Western Place. A directory of 1828 notes that Regent Place housed amongst others, Lady Millicent Acheson and the Rev. Nelson Goulty, a wealthy benefactor of the town.<sup>4</sup> This is now a busy thoroughfare with major retail stores on the north side and the Churchill Square mall opposite; in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century it was simply shown on maps as '*the footway to Hove*'. With the development in the 1820s of Brunswick Town a mile away to the west this route way was used by traders who were discouraged from using the newly opened Kings Road along the seafront. Buildings started to appear early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, larger properties facing south, with smaller north-facing buildings opposite; many of these westward of the present Churchill Square still remain, in contrast to the mainly interwar store developments on the north side.

With the rapidity of upmarket housing appearing in a range of developments in Hove the superior dwellings along the Furlong's southern fringe came down in the world, and the first detailed large-scale OS map in 1875 shows only one distinct house

remains, along with its front garden. Twenty-three years on and a Goad Insurance map of 1898 shows only retailing, with drapers, furniture stores and fancy goods indicated. The houses were not demolished but they were downgraded to storage areas for the shops that were appearing in what had been the front gardens. These largely mid-19<sup>th</sup> century buildings remained until the 1920s and 30s when wholesale demolition took place along a wide spread of Western Road on its northern side.<sup>5</sup> The rebuilding in the form of some classic interwar retail outlets enabled the cramped width of Western Road to be widened, with the new structures along the building line of the former dwellings, minus their front gardens.

The Chalk Pit Furlong thus exemplified the 19<sup>th</sup> century urban picture of mixed building types and usages in a confined location, with delineated social areas. The Chalk Pit core with its Kent & Sussex Ice Stores (on the site of a much earlier ice house), its smithies and coachbuilders, timber yards, builders, brewery and its '*mean dwellings and tenements*' had as its perimeter elegant villas with gardens and glazed enclosures, small lodging houses and apartments. There is physical evidence that some of the buildings may have had a manufacturing process or were the homes of owners, as stoneware bottles exist stamped '*James Smith 189 Western Road*'; it is not known whether these were beer or mineral water containers but that name does not feature in SIAS research into Brighton brewers.<sup>6</sup>

Early 20<sup>th</sup> century directories show the range of land usage in this small inner urban district; Regent Hill on the western fringe contained nine properties listed as 'apartments', out of a total of only 22 properties; alongside the more manufacturing components of baker, signwriter, carpenter, dressmaker, plus Mrs Louisa Miles, 'beer retailer'. Turning east at the top of Regent Hill the line of properties that formed part of Upper North Street were another six 'apartments' plus a 'boarding house' alongside a 'teacher of dancing'. There were further service trades here with a furniture dealer, shopkeeper and hardware dealer. As this is 1914 the 'ladies tailor' Otto Kehlbacher may soon have been changing his overtly Germanic names. Upper North Street turns downhill at its junction with the present Dyke Road, but in 1914 that latter road was then listed as part of North Street. Its occupancy was not too dissimilar to its western neighbours, a costumier & ladies tailor, Swan Downers School for Girls and the offices of Smithers Brewery.





Fig. 2 Haselgrove's forge, Regent Row, North Street, at the end of its days in 1932, having been a Chalk Pit fixture for almost a century. Haselgroves ran two forges almost adjacent, although listed in different streets, as blacksmiths and whitesmiths (workers in non-ferrous metals).

Here in this northern extension of North Street was the eastern entrance to Regent Row and the Chalk Pit interior landscape, and thus here are listed James Barnes' builders yard and Henry Haselgrove, whitesmith. It was the southern edge of the Chalk Pit along Western Road that had housed substantial villas that saw the major changes, where large-scale retailing units had developed on the re-purposed villas.<sup>7</sup>

Within the core area of the Chalk Pit some of the continuity from the 19<sup>th</sup> century was apparent with a printing works, gasfitter and the wonderfully named Mrs Harriett Onion being a beer retailer in what we know to be 'The Lath Cleavers Arms', with the above mentioned whitesmith and builders yard at the North Street end.<sup>8</sup> In 1925 'The Lath Cleavers' remains, along with Henry Haselgrove's smithy, a venerable institution which had antecedents back into the 18<sup>th</sup> century; but the large printing works at #7/8 at the junction of the Regent Court twitten and Regent Row, was by 1927 a warehouse for Oxo Ltd and the six properties in the twitten of Regent Court had the addition of RE Dowling hosiery manufacture, however this is shown in Goad 1937 as behind #10 & 11 Regent Hill. Along the slope that led to Upper North Street on the eastern edge of

the Chalk Pit were a series of long established businesses; TM Fowler oil & colourmen at #88 since 1864; in 1876 they are described as 'Geo & Thos Fowler oil & colour & Italian warehousemen'. Their location at the corner of Western Road and the then North Street was for many years well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century termed 'Fowler's Corner'.

In 1925 this stretch of roadway was reflecting the changed industrial situation as a local firm GA Brittain had motor showrooms at #89 and by 1927 Bishops motor garage was at #92 in a large yard and garage tucked in between Swan Downer's School and the Barnes' builders' yard at the east entrance to Regent Row.<sup>9</sup> Throughout the 1930s there was the standard urban 'churn' of trades and occupations within the Chalk Pit, although some addresses contained the same occupants throughout the decade such as The Lath Cleavers Arms, Oxo's warehouse and the curiously named 'The Bungalow'. This latter, a curiously 'un-bungalow' like structure had been built in 1931 but only lasted until demolition in November 1966. This is a poignant date as a photograph dated November 27<sup>th</sup> shows the north side of Regent Row demolished, with some warehouse buildings along the south side. November 27<sup>th</sup> is my birthday.<sup>10</sup>

A photographic works, Deane, Wiles & Millar are variously listed in Regent Row and Regent Court, but this is an indication of the complex network of twittens and yards that constituted The Chalk Pit; the Goad Insurance map of 1928 shows the photographers to be above the garages behind Regent Court, but more accessible from Regent Row.



Fig. 3 These charming cottages at the east end of Regent Row, 104-106 North Street, are shown on a map of 1875 to have had small front gardens with two trees indicated. At 105 in 1925 lived Miss Alice Cottrell, costumier.





Fig. 4 Regent Hill west, Smithers Brewery bottling plant 1920s

In 1932 J. Ireland 'cutler' appears at #8 Regent Court; this is the workshop/stores of the retail arm of Ireland's cutler, silversmith & opticians at #203 Western Road. Goad's map of 1937 actually shows the 'cutlery works' at the rear of #7. The west side of the Chalk Pit, in Regent Hill in 1914, had alongside its several apartments and lodgings, The Beehive pub, a baker, signwriters and a bootmaker, but in the 1925 directory are premises occupied by Smithers Brewery (their malthouse) and 'Brigden & Co motor engineers (workshop)'. Brigden's business appears to have developed along with changing transport technology from the carriage showrooms and coach factory located in Regent Hill as shown in the 1876 OS map. By the later 1930s the manufacturing that had been a staple of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Chalk Pit landscape was fast disappearing and the area was increasingly utilised for storage and services. The Pikes Directory for Regent Row in 1925 shows only residents with but two traders noted, The Lath Cleavers arms and Haselgrove's smithy. Kelly's Directory of two years later gives more detail of interest to SIAS as it only lists traders, omitting residents; thus Regent Hill has at #4 on the east side a boot repairer and a greengrocer sharing the premises, presumably on different floors.

On the west side are Jarrett & Arnold's signwriting workshops Arthur Pollard the beer retailer (presumably The Beehive) Fred Wright the trunk and portmanteau maker, Myer Gould 'tailor', with the brewers premises and Brigden's carriage builders noted earlier. In Regent Row are Leslie Bishops motor car garages, Henry Murdoch at The

Lath Cleavers, and Alfred Knight a cabinet maker. With another Knight in the next street in a similar trade, that of trunk & portmanteau making, I am thinking these may be related. At the east end where it meets North Street is Henry Haselgrove whitesmith, and although the Oxo warehouse is listed here, it is actually in the centre of the complex of buildings. The North Street entries for the stretch of road that borders the Chalk Pit are Fowlers oil & colourmen, Greenberg silk mercers, Brittain motor car agents, and Leslie Bishop's motor car garage.

Regent Row joins North Street at this point and, above this turning, some of the more traditional trades still survive at this location: a dressmaker, a decorator,

Barnes the builder and Henry Haselgrove, who rather confusingly here is listed as a blacksmith... although as a whitesmith when listed under Regent Row. The traders' section of the directory shows his name twice, with two addresses in North Street and Regent Row with the two different occupations; however the highly-detailed Goad map 1898 shows both smithies, almost adjacent but one listed for North Street and the other for Regent Row...the delights of historical research! But change was in the air for the industrial economy of Regent Row. Pikes Directory 1932 shows Henry Haselgrove the smith who had been noted previously at #16, but in 1932 with no occupation given, and in the trades section of the same directory under *Blacksmiths and Farriers* he is not listed, but 'Ye Old Forge' is at #5 Centurion Road, a short distance uphill from The Chalk Pit. Pages Directory for 1867 showed a Haselgrove in Regent Row and that surname carried on in various metal working trades, with Goad's map 1928 indicating the smithy at #101 North Street but clearly within the area of Regent Row, in that all-confusing network of streets and twittens, yards and storage. A note in the Brighton & Hove Herald 1933 records H. Haselgrove, age 86, as being at *The Old Forge* in Regent Row, but noting its closure as 1932, although a photograph of 1932 shows the sign 'Olde Brighthelmstone Forge'.<sup>11</sup> The Sussex County Magazine in 1933 has an advertisement for *The Forge*, Centurion Road 'makers of fine art metalwork established 200 years', however later directories somehow miss #5 Centurion Road from the listings. Thus the long history of Chalk Pit metalworking came to a close.<sup>12</sup>



Fig. 5 1920 Smithers Brewery buildings in Regent Row (right), demolished 1931. Smithers Brewery was the major employer in the Chalk Pit, until closure in 1923; the brewery chimney was a landmark for many years.

Along Western Road the villas constructed in the 1830s were by the 1920s all being used as retail outlets, the shops are on the former front gardens and the houses themselves serving as storage and as staff quarters. Along the Chalk Pit frontage in the numbers #188-214 are the traders one would expect to see in a major retail zone, but names we are not familiar with today, predecessors of the traders of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Kelly's 1914 shows at #188-191 WJ Wade's drapers (where in the 1950s the author was taken to see Father Christmas) there follows a litany of retailers, boot makers, costumiers, jewellers, house furnishers, domestic machinery warehouse, cutlers, booksellers, but also some surprising high street traders, with at #192 Shoemith & Sons corn merchants, an address they also share with Louis Widenbaum jeweller, a curious combination; and a trade of interest to several SIAS members at #205, the Railway Timetable Office (WE Nash Ltd proprietors), the latter also show at the same address 'Brighton & Hove Times' & 'Sussex Evening Times' plus John Jonas, stock & share broker. The Goad Insurance map

1898 indicates this address simply as 'Printer'. This is located in a block of small premises which lay at the east end of the Chalk Pit fronting onto Western Road (now the area east of the Imperial Arcade) but having as their hinterland the large enterprise of Smithers North street Brewery. SIH 52 gave a fuller description of the history of the brewery, but that was before I had access to the Goad map 1898; this shows the many and various elements of the brewery, the offices at #201 Western Road, the cooperage and malthouse behind that section, beer store, barrel warehouse, brew house, fermenting house, beer cellars. This all lasted until the North Street Brewery ceased brewing in November 1920 when that process was transferred to the Portslade Brewery, eventually all being sold in 1923 prior to the demolition of almost the whole eastern block between Western Road and North Street, for the eventual construction a year later of the Imperial Arcade. Some of the brewery backing onto Regent Row survived into 1931.<sup>13</sup> The Brew House located at #90 North Street survived until its demolition in 1984.<sup>14</sup>

The Chalk Pit at the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was an industrial shadow of its former incarnation during its mid-19<sup>th</sup> century life of manufacturing, from coaches and coffin makers to metal workers and bakers, but after the demise of the brewery there was little to show of its vigorous industrial life; one that reflected the past dominant trade here was at #210 Western Road adjacent to Smithers Brewery, The Maltsters Arms.

Increasingly the retail element of this economic landscape came to dominate and Brighton Corporation's scheme of road widening allowed for wholesale demolition along the north side of Western Road east of Hampton Place, with the introduction of some classic interwar store frontages and the opportunity for some major retailers to enter the local scene. One example which typifies this trend is the site at #194-198 of Benford's, a local firm which in Pikes 1925 sold all manner of domestic items from carpets and bedding to 'perambulators'. Seven years later these numbers are missing from the directory and the 1937 directory shows the site as Marks & Spencer 'bazaar'. M&S had been further west at #186 since 1911 but took the opportunity to create a very much larger store with the new development. Fowler's oil merchants was demolished in 1934 and 'Fowler's Corner' replaced with a



classic 1934 store front, that of James Barrington 'costumier' (where my mum bought her wedding hat!).<sup>15</sup>

The sad demise of Regent Row, once the economic hub of The Chalk Pit is exemplified in the same directory which simply lists 10 addresses with only the Oxo store and The Lath Cleavers having any

economic input. Some limited production occurred in the narrow twitten that ran south from tiny Regent Court, the small cul-de-sac that lay on the east side of Regent Hill. Here was the hosiery manufacturer Raymond Dowling, John Ireland the cutler whose retail outlet had been in the demolished brewery area and the commercial photographers Dean, Wiles



Figs. 5a & 5b These two images a few years apart show the dramatic changes that came with the widening of Western Road between 1934 and 1939. The appearance of major chain stores in the area eventually sealed the fate of the Chalk Pit as their physical expansion northwards obliterated most of the previous built landscape features.





& Millar. Opposite Regent Court in Regent Hill there was a little more economic activity where Jarrett & Arnold signwriters had their workshop, a beer retailer (The Beehive at one time), Fred Wright trunk maker, and General Electric Company electrical engineers. The North Street section of The Chalk Pit was very much in the services sector: Cambridge motor driving school, a milliner, Swan Downers School for Girls, County Window Cleaning office, Streamline taxis and 'Miss Mary E Jellicoe, artist *The Studio*'. This was on the corner of Regent Row and north of there were located trades more in the older working tradition, a paperhanger, Brigden's motor car garage, Barnes the builder and the Roman Flooring Company. In Upper North Street there was the same mix of trades and residential, apartments and boarding houses, alongside a confectioner, furniture-dealer and two tailors—one was the aforementioned Otto Kehlbacher, a tailor whose name in 1914 I had expected to be changed during the WW1 xenophobic name-changing furore when Brighton's German Place became Madeira Place.

The Chalk Pit in the post-war world of the 1940s was in the twilight of its existence as an industrial area; a Goad map of 1946 shows little change in the physical layout, but with some shift in the economy which is listed in the first post-war Kelly's in 1949. Regent Row still has the Oxo warehouse and The Lath Cleavers Arms; in Regent Court the same trio of firms in the adjacent twitten and Regent Hill has Diamond Edge 'grinders & electrical engineers to the trade', GEC, a clothing manufacturer and Brigden's automobile engineers. The North Street side now houses a car-hire firm, plus Bri-cab taxis, coach painters and still Barnes the builder, but now there are William Willett auction galleries, a chiropodist, the milliner and strangely, a potato merchant. Upper North Street with its almost rural view across to St Nicholas tree clad churchyard has William's guest house, a dress agency, furniture dealer and Field's café.

Goad's insurance maps were a detailed source of a premises' exact location, but after WWII the copies held at The Keep archive at Falmer are very poor in detail compared to their earlier iterations, with only the Western Road frontage shown, this doubtless reflects the fact that the internal structure of The Chalk Pit had been largely obliterated. Demolition in the 1960s of most of the area behind Western Road saw a huge office block, Crown House, for the Inland

Revenue constructed on Upper North Street, running down to, and over Regent Court. A later office block on the corner of Upper North Street and Dyke Road took the demolition south to the very edge of Regent Row. The Lath Cleavers was demolished in December 1963 removing a long link back into The Chalk Pit history.<sup>16</sup>

In Kelly's 1974, the final Brighton street directory, Regent Row is listed, but only to the extent that it has two lines of type indicating a warehouse each for Wades and Marks and Spencer. Soon after this M&S is extended north to back onto Crown House and Regent Row is now just termed locally (if at all) as 'the sunken road' squeezed between M&S loading bay and yard and the rear of the Western Road shops. Only at its junction with Dyke Road does any section of the Row have public access and that a mere stub of the former road. What does survive is the curious twist and bend in Regent Row at that point; in spite of all the demolition, clearance and rebuilding, the ghost of Regent Row and with it the Chalk Pit history remains into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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## THE ORIGINAL SOUTHDOWN BUS GARAGE AT LEWES

*Clive E Gillam*

### Introduction

Bus services between Brighton and Lewes were being provided by the *London and South Coast Haulage Co Ltd* which became part of *Southdown Motor Services Ltd* (SMS) on its formation on 2 June 1915. The first record of a garage at Lewes appears in 1929 and to the writer's knowledge the whereabouts of this garage, which became redundant in 1953, has never been determined.

### Why was a garage at Lewes needed at this date?

One important consideration was moving the main terminus in Brighton from Madeira Drive (Aquarium) to Pool Valley, from 1 July 1929. A

major shake-up of services to and from Brighton with frequencies being increased and services becoming more 'regular' happened about the same time. Hourly and two hourly frequencies were adopted on a large scale resulting in a ten-minute frequency of services between Brighton and Lewes. Increased leisure and attendance at Brighton's picture palaces and live theatres in the evenings (especially Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday) created the need for buses to outlying areas after these performances finished. Buses provided for this demand and out-stationed each night were then in position and ready for duty the following morning. The other great advantage of Lewes Eastgate and the other outstations was the avoidance of the dead mileage caused by sending out early morning buses from main depots such as Brighton and likewise sending them back to Brighton in the evenings. For every bus out-stationed a space was made available at the main depot, where it seemed space was always at a premium.

WEST SIDE



EAST SIDE

Fig.1 An aerial view of part of Lewes before the demolition, in the 1970s, of the Phoenix Ironworks site together with the railway earthworks and associated structures. One building in the area that remains to-day, is the Eastgate Baptist Church (flagged blue) which makes it a useful reference point. The shed fitting the description of the old Southdown Garage (flagged red) is east of the church. The Uckfield - Lewes railway line, seen at the bottom of the photograph, closed in 1969. The adjoining Phoenix Ironworks, which covered an extensive area, was sold - making way for the Phoenix Causeway and an industrial estate to be built. This work was carried out in the 1970s at about the same time that the small bus garage and most of the surrounding buildings were demolished and a supermarket (presently Waitrose) built on the site. © *Historic England*

*Note:* Cliffe High Street railway bridge can be seen in the bottom left-hand corner. The bridge was one of the many railway structures demolished in about 1969. Roughly in the centre of the photograph is the walled garden that became the site of the onetime Southdown Bus Station and garage (built in 1954). At the time of writing (2022) both these buildings are earmarked for demolition.

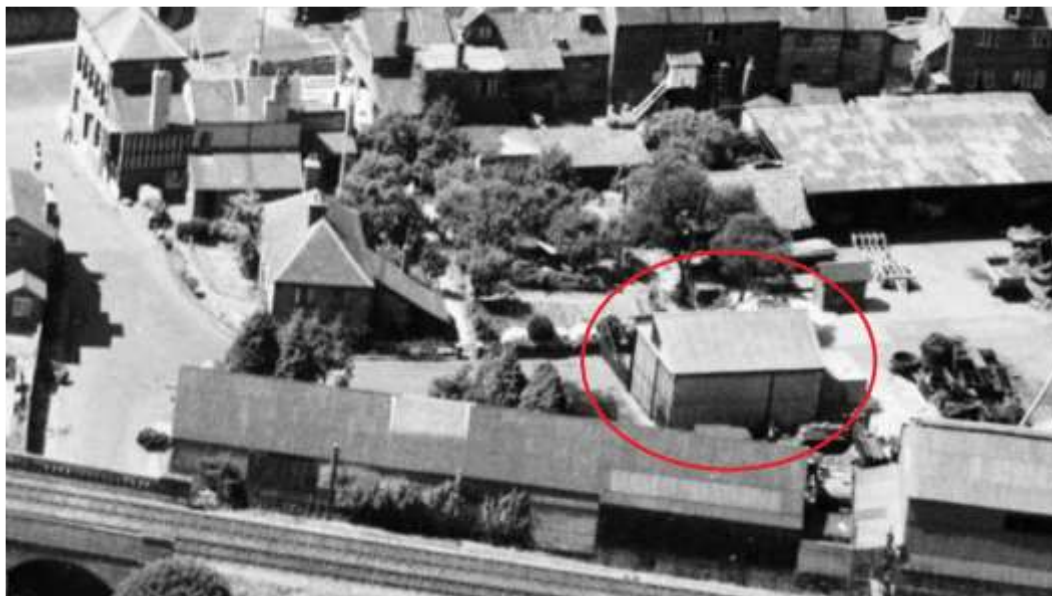


Fig.2 Lewes showing the Southdown garage (1929 to 1953) near Eastgate Street. The bus garage is marked with a red oval. The garage with sliding doors was just large enough to house two double deck buses. Most of the buildings, including the small bus garage, were demolished in the 1970s to make way for a supermarket.

© Historic England

## The Tenancy Agreements

The Southdown Motor Services (SMS) archive (The Keep, Falmer) catalogue has two entries relating to the company's Lewes garage that became operational in 1929. The first entry reads....'L26 Tenancy Agreement for garage at Eastgate, Lewes, John Every to SMS, 25 Apr 1929' and the second reads...'L16 Tenancy Agreement for garage at Eastgate Street, Lewes, J M Every to SMS, 6 Dec 1944'.<sup>1</sup>

Both Tenancy Agreements reveal that the garage, for two motorbuses, measured 32ft long x 24ft wide x 15ft high inside and had two sliding doors.

## Search Material

In locating the original 1929 Southdown bus garage use has been made of contemporary O.S. maps for Lewes and period aerial photographs. The history of the Every Family and the Phoenix Ironworks by John Blackwell proved invaluable.<sup>2</sup>

The Every family were ironfounders in Lewes spanning four generations from 1832 to 1951 and trading under the name of 'Phoenix Ironworks'. The business moved to the site at the bottom of North Street in 1861. This extended from the river Ouse to Eastgate Street with a western boundary along the historic Green Wall. The site has been partially demolished and is currently disused and awaiting re-development.

## Summary of Findings

The garage for two buses was leased by Southdown,

from 1929 until 1953, from the Every family - who were also owners of the Phoenix Ironworks. An aerial photograph of the area showed a building, matching the description of the garage, located at the southern end of the Phoenix Ironworks. A period map (scale 1:2500) confirmed the location of the building of interest as being in the yard of the ironworks, off Eastgate Street.

## The Location Today

See Figures 1 and 2 (3 and 4)

The closure of the railway from Uckfield to Lewes was followed by the lifting of the double track line and demolition of several bridges, and earthworks for the construction in 1971 of the Phoenix Causeway. This passed through the southern yard of the Phoenix Ironworks resulting in the demolition of many buildings and sheds, including the building of interest identified as the original 1929 Southdown bus garage. The site of this building at TQ 41829 10348 (estimated GPS location 50.875235, 0.014454) is approximately where the north end wall of the supermarket (Waitrose) stands to-day.

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Fig.3 Lewes Eastgate Street (A2029) and Eastgate Wharf showing supermarket (white roof) dating from the 1970s. The first Southdown garage (1929 to 1953) was located where the north end wall of the supermarket stands today (marked here with an 'X'). Image - Google Maps aerial view .



Fig.4 Lewes Eastgate Street showing both the original (1929) and the later (1954) Southdown bus garages: 'A' indicates Southdown Garage Phoenix Ironworks (1929-53), east of Eastgate Baptist Church (extant) 'B' indicates Southdown Garage (1954-89) - transferred to Stagecoach (1989-2005). Part OS Map c1960.

## A BUS STATION AND A NEW BUS GARAGE FOR LEWES

*Alan H J Green*

Clive Gillam's search for the original Lewes bus garage (see pages 30-32) happens to have coincided with a two-year battle to save Lewes Bus Station which was – and still is – threatened with demolition for redevelopment. It opened in 1954 and included a new garage to replace the earlier one which is the subject of Clive's article. With Lewes Bus Station sadly now doomed and it being the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding, it is an appropriate time to take a look at its history.



Fig. 1 A view of Lewes Bus Station from Eastgate Street in the early 1950s which clearly shows how the overhanging upper storey provided shelter for waiting passengers. Sadly the projecting clock and Southdown lettering have disappeared, having been replaced by an advertisement hoarding. Southdown 254 (GCD 354) a 1939 Leyland TD5 re-bodied by Northern Counties in 1950, waits to depart on service 28 to the Landport Estate. Another TD5, this time re-bodied by Park Royal, lurks in the background. To the left of the picture can be seen the east wall of the garage.

*(The late E A Mayer, courtesy Lewes History Group)*

### Introduction

Founded in 1915 in Worthing, Southdown Motor Services quickly expanded to serve the whole of Sussex and its immaculate green and cream vehicles were synonymous with the county. The 1950s proved to be Southdown's golden era when wartime restrictions were easing and more money and time were available for leisure travel, but car ownership was still far from widespread. Southdown introduced new services and there was scarcely a hamlet within Sussex in the 1950s that was not served by the company. In tandem with this was the addition of three commodious new bus stations to their property portfolio, at Lewes (1954), Chichester and Haywards Heath (both 1956).<sup>1</sup> All three locations were

transport hubs and the new bus stations provided accommodation for waiting passengers in the form of waiting rooms, enquiry offices, restaurants and toilets, all very much in the Southdown tradition. They also housed operational control offices and messing facilities for bus crews and, at Lewes and Chichester, a garage.

### Lewes Bus Station

In December 1948 a derelict garden, measuring 170 feet by 120 feet, and situated on the corner of Eastgate Street and East Street, was conveyed to Southdown Motor Services by Lt Col C.H.N. Adams for the construction of a bus station and associated garage.<sup>2</sup> The site was rather cramped and as a result the bus station was to be constructed as an island to make best use of the available space. It was designed by the Brighton architectural practice of Clayton and Black whose previous work for Southdown included the magnificent Art Deco Bognor Bus Station of 1934, sadly now demolished.<sup>3</sup> At Lewes their clever design was sympathetic to its historic setting whilst using the brown brick, concrete and glass bricks so evocative of the 1950s. It features a widely-overhanging, cantilevered first floor on three sides which, as well as minimising the building's footprint, provided shelter for those waiting for buses. The rear of the building has sweeping radiused corners, again aiding traffic flow around the cramped site. At the front, facing onto Eastgate Street, was a wide cantilevered canopy above which was a projecting clock and the legend SOUTHDOWN BUS STATION in individual cast letters. The shallow-pitch hipped roof was, unusually perhaps, covered in cedar shingles and featured a gable at its east end. Overall the design was clean and functional and blended unobtrusively into the Lewes townscape.

Site clearance began in January 1953, the main construction contract having being awarded to Ringmer Building Works Ltd, and building work proceeded apace.<sup>4</sup> From time to time though construction traffic caused havoc in the town's congested streets such as when a lorry shed its load of steelwork in Station Street, blocking the highway for an hour whilst nearby railway workers made the load secure. It seems that the driver found himself in Station Street having been misdirected in his quest to find Eastgate Street – and that without the misleading advice of a Sat Nav! <sup>5</sup> Quite how being on the wrong route caused him to shed his load was seemingly not a question put to him by the reporter. The works were completed in March 1954.





Fig. 2 The rear of the bus station was seldom photographed, but here it is seen in June 2022 when the threat of imminent closure was hanging over it. It shews the radiused corners and the slender columns supporting the first floor (*Author*)



Fig. 3 A view under the overhang on the west side of the bus station in June 2022 shewing the glass-block windows. The bus station was still in use and the cafe open for business – but not for much longer (*Author*)



## The Garage

The new garage at Chichester\*, constructed two years later in 1956, was a bold, state-of-the-art structure with a clear-span pre-stressed concrete thin-shell roof but, by sharp contrast, the replacement garage at Lewes was decidedly utilitarian. Situated at the south end of the site, it comprised brick walls to sides and rear supporting a steel-truss hipped 'M' roof covered with corrugated asbestos cement sheeting. Roof lights and four large ventilators completed the roofscape. The north-facing entrance had full-height sliding doors (eight leaves), 100feet in overall length, supplied by Messrs E Hill Aldam of London. There was a service pit in the bay closest to Eastgate Street and a 5,000 gallon fuel oil storage tank furthest from the public road. The overall size of the bus station and garage site was 23,744 square feet, of which the garage occupied 6,890 and the administration building 4,765.<sup>6</sup> Whereas the garage which it replaced had only housed two buses, the new one was planned to accommodate 19 vehicles but this was later reduced to 16.



Fig. 4 The north elevation of the bus garage seen after it had been taken out of use. The prominent ventilators to remove exhaust fumes can clearly be seen. The vertical white 'Bus Station' sign on the wall was to direct those approaching from Friars Walk as the view of said bus station was eclipsed by the garage.

(Former bus garage, Lewes, © Maic McDonald cc-by-sal 2.0)

## The Opening

The opening ceremony was performed on 26 March 1954 by the Mayor of Lewes, Alderman J Bennett, before an assembled crowd of dignitaries from the company and the councils. A glowing account of it occupied a whole page of the *Sussex*

\* It replaced the earlier garage located in a former cinema at Northgate and was the subject of a visit by SIAS in 2016

*Express*, whose reporter opined that the new bus station 'fits unobtrusively into its surroundings.' The new facility was to be managed by Inspector Arthur Heaseman, a long-standing company servant, and bus routes around the town were to be amended that day to suit the new hub and at the same time ease the traffic congestion that so beset the town. Many of the sub-contractors had submitted advertisements for their services and these surrounded the article. After the ceremony the public were invited into the garage to view a display of the company's latest vehicles whose 'special features would be explained by technicians in attendance'.<sup>7</sup> Those vehicles would doubtless have included the new underfloor-engined Leyland Royal Tiger coaches and the Leyland PD2/12 double-deckers which featured the undreamed-of innovation of platform doors!

## Decline of the Southdown Bus Stations

After privatisation of the National Bus Company in 1988, Southdown was acquired by Stagecoach and most of the ex-Southdown estate was quickly sold off for development. Currently only three ex-Southdown bus stations survive; the earlier Brighton Pool Valley (now just a National Express Coach Station) Chichester and Lewes. Haywards Heath closed in 1988 and was demolished in 2015, Lewes bus station and garage have closed and are under threat of demolition whilst Chichester – which is owned by Chichester District Council and only leased to Stagecoach – has been earmarked by that council for wholesale redevelopment.

## Death in Lewes

Stagecoach diverted their services away from Lewes bus station but allowed Brighton & Hove and Compass Bus to continue to use it under licence. The reason for their pull-out was that they wished to sell this valuable town-centre site, which they duly did in 2006. It is currently owned by the developer Generator Group Ltd who continued to grant short-term rolling licences to the other bus companies and the proprietor of the popular café.

Generator filed a pre-planning application with the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) in January 2022 to demolish the bus station and garage and redevelop the site for high-density housing, in blocks six storeys high. They did not make provision for a replacement bus station as required by the Local Plan, but proposed instead exposed new bus

stops strung out along Phoenix Causeway. They also applied to Historic England for a Certificate of Indemnity (COI) against listing, having become aware of the listing application made by the Twentieth Century Society. Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society lent support to the Twentieth Century Society's aspiration and also objected strongly to the COI, but regrettably Historic England refused the listing and granted the COI, leaving the bus station with no protection at all. The fact that it was the last surviving island bus station in Britain (the other two at Derby and Hawkhurst having already perished) and that it had particular architectural merit were seemingly lost on Historic England. It should be pointed out that the listing aspiration was only for the bus station building and not the garage which, it has to be said, was not an outstanding example of Clayton & Black's oeuvre.

The pre-application caused uproar in the town and beyond; objections piled in and The Friends of Lewes mounted a campaign to save their bus station.



Fig. 5 The message around the town in June 2022 was clear!  
(Author)

In July 2022 Generator filed their full application for redeveloping the site, in which they audaciously claimed the site to be the *former* bus station - despite its still being served by Brighton & Hove and Compass Bus and the café being open. No fewer than 716 objections were sent in (including one from SIAS) and the application finally went before the SDNPA Planning Committee in Midhurst on a very wet 8 September 2022. A coach had been laid on to convey objectors from Lewes albeit they were forbidden from making contributions from the floor.

After just under an hour the planning committee voted almost unanimously to refuse the application on the grounds of lack of affordable housing, overbearing design and lack of adequate alternative provision for bus services. Sadly the loss of Lewes Bus Station itself was not seen as a reason for refusal, despite some passionate representations by Lewes Town Council and the Friends of Lewes, and its lack of listed status meant it now had no hope. It was doomed to die. The developer was not present but his agent spoke on their behalf and promised to take on board the criticisms of the scheme and come back to them.<sup>8</sup>

### Envoi

After refusal of the planning application all users of the bus station were given notice to quit and hoardings were erected around the site which now forlornly awaits its fate. At the time of writing (April 2023) no further application has appeared, but it inevitably will, and unfortunately Lewes Bus Station is doomed to go the way of all things. SIAS has played an active part in the battle to save it but the battle is almost certainly lost; however, it is probably better to have tried and failed than not to have tried at all. Once Chichester Bus Station and its imposing garage is redeveloped, all the once-impressive Southdown estate will have vanished.

### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank John Blackwell for providing some extra information about the bus garage and to the Lewes History Group for granting permission for the use of the photograph in Fig 1.

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 No. 3 (1971/2) Lewes Population 1660-1880; Kingston Malthouse.  
 No. 5 (1972/3) East Sussex Milestones; West Brighton Estate; A Bridge for Littlehampton 1821-2.  
 No. 19 (1989) Leather Industry; Bignor Park Pump; Lowfield Heath Mill; B.M.R. Gearless Car; Wadhurst Forge.  
 No. 20 (1990) William Cooper, Millwright; Foredown Hospital; Ford Trimotor & Aerodrome.  
 No. 21 (1991) Quick's Garage, Handcross; Punnett's Town Wind Saw Mills; Hollingbury Industrial Estate.  
 No. 22 (1992) Swiss Gardens, Shoreham; Seven Brighton Brewers; Mill Bibliography; Beddingham Kiln.  
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An amateur photographer captures a professional portrait photographer at work on Brighton beach in the 1880s



The rear of the bus station at Lewes photographed in 2022