



Ashdown Forest at a Time of Change, 1850 -1914: A Timeline

A collation of text and images from the Group's exhibition Ashdown Forest in a Time of Change, 1850-1914, which was held at the Ashdown Forest Centre from 5 July to 31 August 2017

Pam Griffiths

Preface

In July and August 2017 the Ashdown Forest Research Group held its second exhibition at the Ashdown Forest Centre, Wych Cross.

Entitled “Ashdown Forest at a Time of Change: 1850-1914”, the exhibition covered a diverse range of topics that illustrated some of the profound changes that were taking place to the Forest and its communities in the period from the middle of the 19th century through to the outbreak of the First World War.

We have now collated the text and images from the exhibition into a series of booklets based around these topics. They comprise:

1. Ashdown Forest at a Time of Change: A Timeline
2. Aspects of Change in Forest Occupations
3. Life and Leisure on the Forest
4. Changing Architectural Styles on the Forest Edge
5. The Development of Railways around Ashdown Forest

These booklets are being made available for download as PDFs from the website of the Conservators of Ashdown Forest – the address is on the back page.

If you wish to contact the authors of any of these booklets, please get in touch via the group's email address – also given on the back page.

Ashdown Forest at a Time of Change

This timeline shows local events in bold black.

National events are shown in blue.

World events are shown in brown.

There is a strong emphasis on local events from the northern parishes of Ashdown Forest, as these are the areas the

Ashdown Forest Research Group

currently focuses on.

<http://www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/AshdownResearchGroup.php>

1830

Swing Riots nationally were agricultural workers' uprisings in response to newly introduced threshing machines, low levels of poor relief and a reduction in wages. *The first 'inter-city' railway - Liverpool & Manchester – was opened by the Duke of Wellington; 98 miles of railway open in all.*

Sussex experienced Swing Riot incidents – usually arson – at East Grinstead, Hartfield, Withyham, Rotherfield, Buxted, and Maresfield. A barn was burnt at Forest Row.

The Second French Revolution overthrew Charles X. Rioting in Brussels and elsewhere caused by high unemployment and industrial unrest helped lead to Belgium's secession from the Netherlands.

1831

A village pump was installed at Hartfield. Population there was 1,455; there were 186 houses and 88 names on the list for Poor Relief.



Hartfield Pump

1832

The Great Reform Act brought wide-sweeping changes to the electoral system, but still only one in seven adult males could vote – and no women. *The Slave Emancipation Act was passed.*

***The London Courier and Evening Gazette* reported a notice seen ‘at the entrance of a wood not a hundred miles from Hartfield’ to the effect that, ‘Steel traps and spring Guns [are] set in Theas Woods; whosoever found Stealing Wood or Destroying Gaim Prosiquted Cording to the Law’.**

1834

The New Poor Law led to the rise of the workhouse.

The workhouse at Hartfield [now *The Anchor*] became part of East Grinstead [Workhouse] Union, serving East Grinstead, West Hoathly, Worth, Crawley, Hartfield, Withyham and Lingfield. It catered for girls only; boys went to a similar institution in East Grinstead.

Slavery was abolished in the British Empire.



Holy Trinity Forest Row

1836 The Tithe Commutation Act was passed – an attempt to rationalise taxes paid ‘in kind’. *The London & Greenwich railway (the first passenger line) was complete from London Bridge to Greenwich by the end of the year.*

Holy Trinity chapel of ease, erected so that Forest Row residents didn’t have to walk to East Grinstead to church, was designed by W. Moseley with a broad, aisle-less nave. Local stonemason family the Blackstones reputedly cut and carted the stone used, along with masons from Honeywell Quarry at Wych Cross.

South Australia became a British colony.



Hartfield Workhouse

1837

William IV died; Accession of Queen Victoria.

Holy Trinity Forest Row was consecrated by the Bishop of Chichester. The first school at Friar's Gate opened. A Dame school was opened at Withyham behind the Dorset Arms.

The Institute for Coloured Youth in Philadelphia – first higher education available to black people in USA – opened. Sam Morse patented the Telegraph.

1838

In Britain this year, 58 children under the age of 13 died in mining accidents, and 64 between the ages of 13 and 18.

Baden Powell [father of the founder of the Scout Movement] dined at the Dorset Arms Withyham after watching a ploughing match at Doggett's Farm Buckhurst.

Full freedom from slavery in the British Empire was finally achieved.



Baden Powell



St John Withyham

1839 In Britain, Conservatives defeated another reform package, and there were riots in Wales and such cities as Glasgow, Newcastle and Birmingham. The 1st Chartist Petition – demanded, among other reforms, the vote for some men over 21. The London & Croydon railway opened, and eventually became part of the Brighton line.

St John the Divine Withyham, built by the De la Warrs, was consecrated.

Charles Goodyear invented vulcanization, for making rubber.

1840

1,116 turnpike trusts were in existence in England & Wales administering 22,000 miles of toll road.

Flour for Queen Victoria's wedding cake was ground at the New Mill in Withyham parish.

1841

First national census recording names and occupations. *The London to Brighton Railway opened on 21 September; it was a huge success.*



The Baptist Chapel, Hartfield Road, circa 1908, showing the extension to the western end, incorporated in the main building since 1910. On the right is the small turnpike cottage (Sheridan House site).

Population: Hartfield 1,603; Withyham 1,607; Maresfield 1,579; East Grinstead [including Forest Row] 3,586. Bethesda Chapel, Forest Row, re-opened after extensive repairs, and gained its first resident pastor. Baptisms took place in the canal at Stonehouse, a little distance away near the Hartfield Road [Stonepark Drive].

1842 Second Chartist petition presented to parliament. *England outlawed gibbeting – displaying bodies of the executed for the purpose of deterring crime – the last of this having occurred in 1832.*

A new school building was opened in Hartfield.

1844

Forest Row celebrated a visit from the Earl of Ellenborough, late Governor General of India, and brother-in-law to the owner of Kidbrooke. He paid for the church wall to be built.



Queen Victoria's Wedding Cake



Lord Ellenborough

1845

Friedrich Engels published *The Condition of the Working Class in England* which heavily criticised the effect of the Industrial Revolution on the lives of working people, especially in cities.

The Glyndebourne Harriers, with the Earl of Sheffield and about 20 horsemen, hunted a stag released for the purpose at Nutley across Ashdown Forest to Crowborough Warren; the stag escaped.

The faster shipment of potatoes from the Americas across the Atlantic to Europe allowed the survival of mould arriving with the potatoes. This created potato crop failures across Europe and starvation in Ireland.

1847

Britain's parliament passed the "Ten Hours Bill," which limited to sixty-three the hours of work per week for women and children.

William Heasman of Hartfield was fined £2 for poaching on Earl de la Warr's land. The fine not paid, he was committed to Lewes Gaol for two months.

1848

The third Chartist Petition was submitted to parliament.

A man named John Green was apprehended on the Forest and committed to the House of Correction for 14 days for abandoning a wife and five children chargeable to Lewes parish.

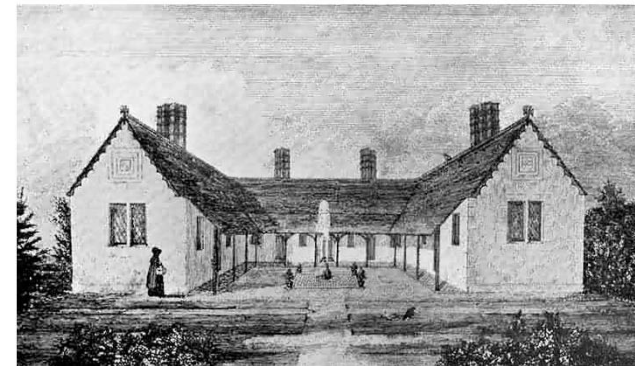
Marx and Engels published *The Communist Manifesto*. There was revolution in Italy, France, Germany and Austria & Hungary. The Second Republic was founded in France.

1850

The Public Libraries Act was passed giving local boroughs power to establish free libraries.

Forest Row became a separate ecclesiastical district and 100 new sittings were agreed for Holy Trinity. A short chancel was added to the church. Almshouses were built at Withyham by Countess de la Warr in memory of her son George. Withyham became a separate ecclesiastical parish, and also opened its first post office.

Five percent of British ships were now powered by steam rather than sail.



Withyham Almshouses

1851

First national census to show family relationships was taken, alongside a religious census. The latter proved contentious, and not always accurate, and was never repeated. *Great Exhibition celebrating the works of industry of all nations held at Crystal Palace in Hyde Park. More than 5 million people travelled to it by train.*

Population: Hartfield 1,573; Withyham 1,692; Maresfield 1,805; East Grinstead [including Forest Row] 3,820. Forest Row Primary School was established on land conveyed for the purpose by Lord Gage, lord of the Manor of Maresfield. It was a National School, so Anglican in a predominantly non-conformist district.

The Australian Gold Rush began.

1852

Eight Southdown sheep were either stolen or strayed off Ashdown Forest. A reward of £2 was offered for information by William Osborn of Hill End Farm, Maresfield.

Louis-Napoleon declared Emperor Napoleon III. France was no longer a republic and became known as the Second Empire.

1854

John Snow proved that cholera was carried in water or food and could be ingested by studying a pump in London.

A new classroom was built in Forest Row School.

The Crimean War broke out, involving Britain, France and Russia.

1855

Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister. Henry Bessemer filed his patent for the 'Bessemer process' for making steel.

A plot of land called Dickers, close to Wall Hill, Ashurstwood, was advertised for auction. The newly-opened railway was stressed as a selling point, and the plot was described as 'a most eligible spot for the erection of a villa'.

Hartfield Cottage Garden Society was formed [later the Horticultural Society].

The Duke of Teck and the Princess of Teck [parents of Queen Mary] attended the Harvest service at Hartfield.



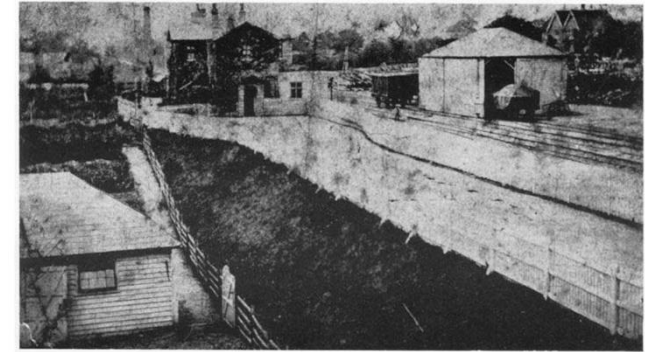
Duke and Duchess of Teck

The first rail link between East Grinstead and London was built, a single-line branch from Three Bridges.

The Berlin/Frankfurt railway was extended to Freiberg.

The first locomotive ran from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean on the Panama Railway.

Following a siege, Sevastopol fell to the British and their allies in the Crimean War



East Grinstead Station

1856

A coroner's inquest was held into the death of Fanny Heasman, daughter of William, who accidentally drowned in a well. The Heasmans were an extensive local family.

The Crimean War ended.

1858

The Uckfield to Brighton Railway opened.

1859

Darwin published *The Origin of the Species*.

Wall Hill Farm, Forest Row, with its valuable live farming stock and farming implements, was put up for auction.

John Brown, abolitionist, began an uprising to liberate American slaves. He was captured, tried, convicted and hanged.

1860

Jews in Britain were allowed to vote.

London Victoria station opened, providing direct access to Westminster and the West End. During this decade, several Forest residents were brought to trial for litter-cutting, [i.e. the cutting and taking away of bracken, heather etc. for livestock bedding].

British and French troops invaded the Forbidden City in Peking in the Second Opium War.

1861

The third full national census was taken. *The Cotton Famine in the North-west lasted throughout the American Civil War, causing much hardship.*

Population: Hartfield 1,451; Withyham 1,597; Maresfield 1,911; East Grinstead [including Forest Row] 4,266. Hartfield workhouse was run down and was purchased by William Garret for the purpose of selling beer.

The American Civil War broke out. Tsar Alexander abolished serfdom in Russia.

1863

In London, the Metropolitan Railway opened the world's first underground passenger line.

Notice appeared in the local press of the intention to submit an application to build a railway which would serve, among other places, Withyham and Rotherfield.

1865

The Commons Preservation Society was founded – later renamed as the Open Spaces Society.

Brambletye Castle Hotel in Forest Row was opened by Henry Histed. A Wesleyan Chapel was built at Hartfield. The Surrey and Sussex Turnpike Trust was wound up. Tollhouses, gates and other assets were sold or destroyed.

The American Civil War ended.

1866

The East Grinstead to Tunbridge Wells railway opened.

1867

The Representation of the People Act (the second Reform Act) extended the vote to urban working men meeting property qualifications.

The *Hartfield Magazine* - one of the first of its kind in the country - was first published, and recorded the population of Hartfield as 1,300. *St Mary's church Hartfield* underwent restoration.



Wesleyan Chapel Hartfield

In Sweden, Alfred Nobel made nitroglycerin safer and more convenient to manipulate by combining it with an absorbent substance. His mixture was patented as dynamite. *The Dominion of Canada was created.*

1869

The Suez Canal opened, reducing the journey to the East by 7,000 kms.

George John Sackville-West, 5th Earl De la Warr, died.

1870

The Foster Act was the first in a series (1870-3) by which education became compulsory in England and Wales for children aged 5-13.

The steeple of St Mary's church Hartfield was struck by lightning. Repairs cost £307 10/-. Reginald Sackville West became Lord Buckhurst.

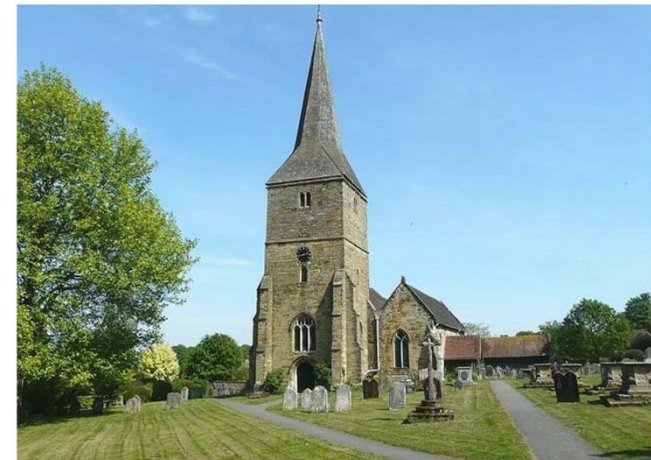
During this decade the American prairies were opened up for wheat growing, something which had a long-term effect on agriculture at home.

1871

The decennial national census was taken. *Average life expectancy at birth in England had risen from 36 years in 1700 to 41 years. Infant mortality was high, but some lived to a ripe old age. An act of parliament ended all turnpike tolls in London.*

Population: Hartfield 1,540; Withyham 1,970; Maresfield 1,965; East Grinstead [including Forest Row] 5,390. Alterations were made to Forest Row School. A soup kitchen was opened at Hartfield, and soup doled out every Friday in the winter months to 60 families.

The Franco-Prussian War upset the balance of power in Europe and sowed the seeds of WWI.



St Mary Hartfield

1872

The Ballot Act introduced the secret ballot at elections.
A shoe club was formed at Hatfield. Only children attending school and Sunday School could belong. Interest, contributed by the local gentry, was paid on money saved.

The American Sunday School Union adopted plans for the same texts to be used lessons taught across all denominations.

1873

The Return of Owners of Land – also known as the 'New Domesday' - was designed to show that it wasn't just a few landowners hogging the land in Britain. In fact it showed that 4/5 of the land was owned by just 7,000 people.

Reginald Sackville West – Lord Buckhurst and rector of Withyham - became Earl de la Warr, making him Lord of the Manor with rights over Ashdown Forest.



Reginald Sackville-West
Earl de la Warr

1874

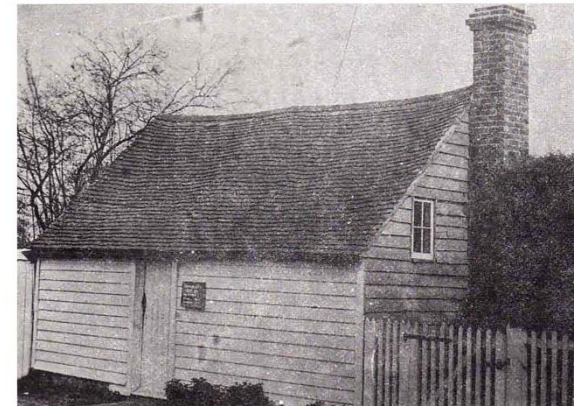
Britain made a colony of coastal territory 100 kilometres [c 62 miles] deep and 400 kilometres [c 248 miles] wide in what today is Ghana. During fighting there a British commander had his troops wear brown jackets and khaki trousers rather than the traditional red coats – a move toward camouflage.

Henry Ray Freshfield bought Kidbrooke Park. Members of the Strict Baptists living at Forest Row acquired their own chapel. Before this, they had either walked to Crowborough for services or met at Chequer Farm at Highgate. The

disused cowshed at Ashdown Farm which they converted into a place of worship, served this group until 1927.



Kidbrooke Park



Strict Baptist Chapel Forest Row

Holland outlawed child labour (for children under 12 in factories).

1875

PC Morley of the East Sussex Constabulary was fined by Forest Row Magistrates for being drunk and disorderly and abusing the congregation at Blackham Chapel during Divine Service.

In Canada the light bulb was invented. Thomas Edison bought the patent.

1876

The Commons Act passed, with the aim of improving commons and amending inclosure acts.

The Ashdown Forest Dispute began between Earl de la Warr and the Commoners over rights on the Forest. Reginald West's younger brother Mortimer, who had inherited Knole, became Baron Sackville.

Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone.

1877

The last turnpike trust with roads crossing Ashdown Forest – the Tunbridge Wells and Maresfield trust – was abolished. Its roads are today's A26 and B2110.

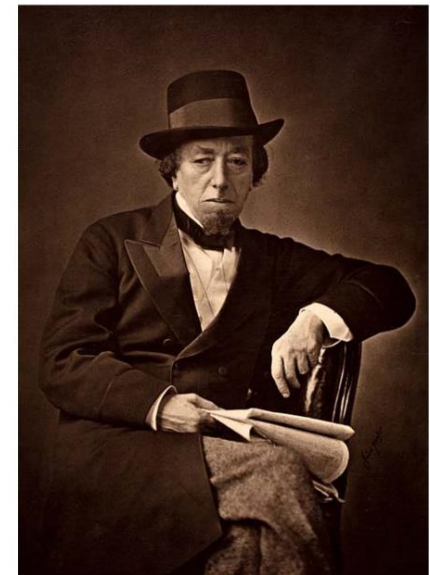
A south aisle and vestry added to Holy Trinity church Forest Row. A test case took place in the Ashdown Forest Dispute between De la Warr and Bernard Hale over the right to cut litter on the Forest. New school buildings were put up in Withyham by Earl de la Warr. Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield, attended morning service at Hartfield church on 15th July; he was staying with Lord de la Warr.

1878

The Epping Forest Act was passed, protecting open space. The Bicycle Touring Club was founded (renamed as the Cyclists' Touring Club in 1883 – today Cycling UK).

Further alterations were made to Forest Row School. A hoop-making shop was opened at Friar's Gate.

The Zulu Wars led to the dominance of the British in an area which had been the kingdom of Zululand, paving the way to conflict with the Boers.



Benjamin Disraeli

1880

Education became compulsory for children under 10.

The courts found against the Commoners in the Ashdown Forest Dispute. *John Jenner of Hartfield, aged 88, was awarded a special prize in the Annual Cottage Garden Show.* During this decade the invention of the bicycle put the Forest within reach of ordinary people.

The import of frozen meat began in Europe. The industrialization of food had started with new technology replacing the stone grinding of grains. The oil in flour would now quickly turn rancid, so it was removed. The new flour was without valuable nutrients, which was unknown to those processing the grains. Vitamins would not be discovered until the 1930s.

1880

Three incidents of arson were committed by incendiaries on Ashdown Forest.

The First Boer War began.

1881

The decennial national census was held.

Population: Hartfield 1,558; Withyham 2,150; Maresfield 2,082; East Grinstead [including Forest Row] 6,968. *In the De la Warr v the Commoners case the decision was reversed on appeal led by lawyer William Augustus Raper.*

The Boers were given self-government in Transvaal after the British were defeated.

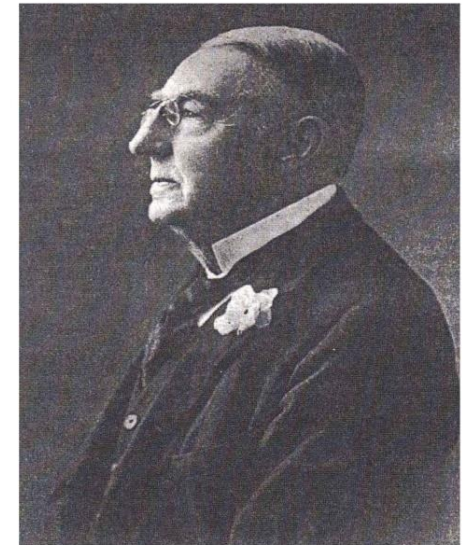
1882

The Ashdown Forest Dispute was settled. Commoners were guaranteed the right to cut litter.

Britain invaded and occupied Egypt.

1884

The Representation of the People Act (the third Reform Act) addressed the imbalance between men's votes in boroughs and counties. All men paying £10 p.a. rent or owning £10 worth of land had the vote. Two out of three men could now vote – but no women.



Augustus Raper

John Farmer was committed for trial at Lewes Quarter Sessions for attempting to commit suicide by swallowing prussic acid at Hartfield while in a depressed state of mind.



Hartfield Church and Schools

1885 Constituencies were redistributed, giving more representation to urban areas.

The Ashdown Forest Act established a Board of Conservators with the right to make bye-laws. 164 children were recorded as attending Hartfield School. Dr Charles Leeson-Prince published *Observations on the Topography and Climate of Crowborough Hill*, encouraging people to live in the 'healthy' climate of Ashdown Forest, promoted by developers as 'Scotland in Sussex' In Germany, Karl Benz developed an internal combustion engine. It could run at 250 revolutions per minute.

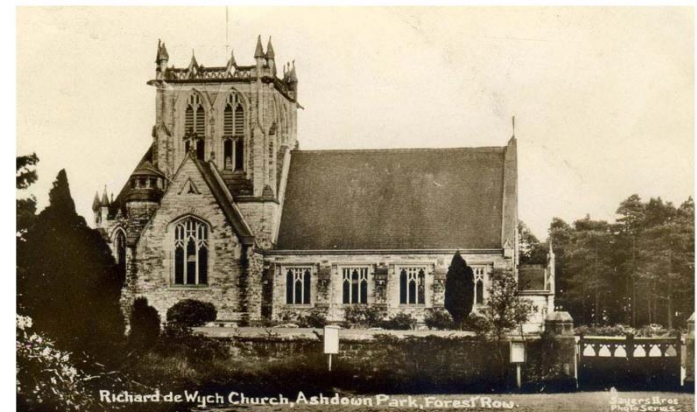
1886 The Irish Home Rule bill presented a first attempt to give Ireland some degree of self-determination.

The Ashdown Foresters' Protection Association was

formed. The first Board of Conservators for Ashdown Forest was formed. St Richard de Wych church was erected at High Beeches by Mr Thompson of Ashdown Park. Hartfield Parish Magazine ceased publication due to lack of financial support other than by the rector.

1887

The First meeting of the Ashdown Forest Conservators took place at the Nutley Inn on 5th May. Later that year the Conservators resolved to appoint a Ranger at a salary of !0/- [10 shillings] a week. A new Baptist chapel was built at Forest Fold [between Lye Green and Crowborough], financed partly by Earl de la Warr and Andrew Carnegie, then living at Buckhurst Park. Abe Mitchell – professional golfer, 'the man on the Ryder Cup', was born at Forest Row.



St Richard de Wych church

The Triple Alliance between Germany, France and Austria-Hungary ended.



Litter Cutting

1888 The Jack the Ripper murders took place in London. Dunlop's new pneumatic tyres, combined with the 'Rover', increased access to cycling for the masses. This was particularly liberating to women. Annie Besant led the Bryant and May match girl strike, protesting against poor working conditions, long hours and the health hazard of 'phossy jaw', caused by working with phosphorus. Symptoms included painful swellings in the jaw and ultimately brain damage and organ failure. The Local Government Act gave the new county councils responsibility for all main through roads. **The Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Club was formed on land leased from Earl de la Warr. The Ashdown Forest Ranger's salary was increased to £1 a week. An agreement was reached between Forest Conservators and Foresters [those who lived on the Forest but weren't Commoners] that they could cut litter for private use provided they could prove they'd been**

doing it for 60 years.

1891

The national census showed whether people were employers or employees for the first time. By the 1890s there were 1 ½ million cyclists in Britain and hundreds of touring clubs. Roads improved and the 12 mph speed limit was lifted. Cycle engineering paved the way for Britain's automobile and aircraft industries.

Population: Forest Row 2,389; Hartfield 1,158; Withyham 2,073; Maresfield 2116; East Grinstead 5,180. Henry Douglas Freshfield, 14 year old son of the Kidbrook Park family, died. The Forest Row Memorial Hall was built the following year as a result.

In Russia a two-year famine led to the death of two million peasants, although the country continued to export grain.

1892

A military camp and rifle range were allowed on the Forest. Manoeuvres took place on the



Henry Douglas Freshfield

Common in Withyham parish by the Regulars [Redcoats] and the East Kent Volunteers. A rift among the Conservators of Ashdown Forest led to resignations.

Russia banned women and children under 12 from working in mines.

1893

It was reiterated that sheep were not allowed on the Forest and several were removed.

New Zealand became the first country to allow women the vote.

1894

The Local Government Act established district and parish councils, reorganising local administration. Urban and rural district councils were now elected, and elected parish councils were established in rural areas, replacing the old parish vestry.

Forest Row became a separate civil parish. A Parish Council was formed from local citizens, voted in by their peers. This replaced the old church vestry as a means of social support, and its first meeting was held on 4 December. Henry Ray Freshfield of Kidbrooke Park died, and the day after his funeral, Freshfield Hall, built in memory of his son Henry Douglas, burnt down. It was rebuilt the same year by local builder Job Luxford.



Freshfield Memorial

1895

The 'Red Flag' legislation was repealed. The 1896 Locomotives on Highways Act raised the speed limit on roads to 14 mph and removed the '3 persons in attendance rule'. The celebratory "Emancipation Run" is now commemorated by the annual London to Brighton veteran car run. The last surviving turnpike trust in Great Britain covering the Anglesey portion of the Shrewsbury & Holyhead road was abolished.

Crowborough Beacon Golf Club was formed on land leased from Earl de la Warr. Representatives were sent to the new parish council in Withyham. At its first meeting a complaint was made about 'an inundation of a Nomadic tribe whose sanitary arrangements and morals were not conducive to the well-being of residents in Lye Green.' The Conservators granted Foresters above the status of cottager the same rights as Commoners in exchange for a rate.

Lenin was exiled to Siberia.

1898

Record-breaker Harry Green cycled from London to Brighton and back in 6 hrs, 7 mins and 57 seconds.

Three gypsies were summoned for violating Ashdown Forest By-law no. 3 by 'suffering a tent to remain on the Forest'.

Britain obtained a 99-year lease of Hong Kong from the Chinese.

1899

Fourteen men from Forest Row volunteered to fight in the Boer War. At least two of these died in the fighting.

The Second Boer War broke out. British victory three years later ended the existence of Transvaal and Orange Free State as Boer republics; they became part of the British Empire.

1900

In Britain the average male life expectancy was 51.5 years and the average female life expectancy was 55.4. In France these figures were 45.4 and 50. In Spain they were 41 and 42.5.

Sheep became commonable [allowed to be pastured on public land] on Ashdown Forest for the first time. The first of the large houses on the [Crowborough] Warren in Withyham parish were built.

The World population stood at roughly 1.7 billion, up from about 1 billion in 1800.



Crowborough Beacon Golf Links

1901

The National census had a column included to show disabilities. *Queen Victoria died; accession of Edward VII.*

A memorial to Private James Caldwell was unveiled in Forest Row church. He was one of the Boer War volunteers from Forest Row and died in Bloemfontain Hospital of Enteric Fever.

1903

George Smith snr of Buxted was summoned for placing a tent on Ashdown Forest, and shortly after became an inmate of the Uckfield Union workhouse.

At Kitty Hawk in North Carolina the Wright brothers made their first engine-powered air flight.

1904

A forest fire, which destroyed 'a large tract of picturesque Sussex country between Tunbridge Wells and Crowborough' was blamed on gypsies who had been 'giving the Forest authorities a lot of trouble'.

Britain and France signed the Entente Cordiale, ending almost 1,000 years of intermittent conflict.

1905

Crowborough station was extensively rebuilt over two years, reflecting increasing rail traffic.

1906

The Open Spaces Act gave control of open spaces to local authorities. The British launched a new class of battleship, the Dreadnought, which made obsolete other battleships in the reach of their big guns.

The hop harvest failed in many parts of Kent and Sussex. In Hartfield and Withyham, where good crops would be expected, 'the quantity picked is very meagre'.



Crowborough Station - 1890s

1907

Taxis with meters began operating in London.

Earl de la Warr made experimental borings on the Forest to look for coal and iron.

Marconi initiated commercial transatlantic radio communications between Clifden, Ireland and Glace Bay, Nova Scotia.

1908

Old Age Pensions Act gave a non-contributory pension of 5/- a week to half a million eligible over 70s.

Thomas Hyde JP of Pixton Hill, Forest Row, died leaving an estate valued at over £127,000. He willed a life annuity to his servant Benjamin Badcock.

Henry Ford produced his first Model T automobile.

1910

Edward VII died; accession of George V.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle became club captain at Crowborough Golf Club. Work began on extending the Royal Ashdown Forest Golf Course from 4,900 to 6,400 yards in length.

The Union of South Africa was created. Moore-Brabazon became the first person to fly in the UK. Bleriot flew across the English Channel.

1911

The national census included details of length of marriage and number of children born, even those who had died young. At the instigation of Lloyd George with support from George V, Britain's Parliament Act made it possible for the House of Commons to pass legislation without the approval of the House of Lords, revolutionising British politics. The National Insurance Act was passed, the foundation of the UK Welfare State. Sick pay and unemployment benefit began.



Conan Doyle playing golf

Population: Forest Row 3,035; Hartfield 1,628; Withyham 2,479; Maresfield 2,278; East Grinstead 7,089. *King's Hall* was built at Withyham on land given by Earl de la Warr, funded by public subscription.

1912

The Titanic sank.

New waterworks were begun at Forest Row with the aim of supplying Forest Row and Ashurst Wood.

The Chinese empire fell and was replaced by a republic.

1913

Suffragette activity – happening nationally since 1909 in the UK – became local with the burning down of the Tunbridge Wells Cricket pavilion in 1913.

1914

Britain was on the move, with 20,266 miles of railway and almost 400,000 motor vehicles on the roads, supplementing another 400,000 horse-drawn vehicles of various types.

Freshfield Hall, until now owned by the Freshfield family, was given over to use by the army. Crowborough Army camp was established. Practice trenches were dug on the Forest.

World War I broke out.

1918

The franchise – right to vote – was granted to women over the age of 30.

At least 115 men with connections to Forest Row or Hartfield had died in service by the time the war ended.

World War I ended.



Crowborough Camp - 1915

1925

AA Milne bought Cotchford Farm.

1926

The Campaign to Protect Rural England was founded. *The General Strike, with over a 1 ½ million participants in support of miners' pay, lasted for 9 days.*

War Memorials were erected at Forest Row Camp and in Forest Row.



Cotchford Farm

Pam Griffiths 2017

The Ashdown Forest Research Group is a group of enthusiastic volunteers who research the historical geography of Ashdown Forest. We focus particularly on the people who have lived and worked on the forest, and their impact on it, and the impact that the forest has, in turn, had on them.

Articles based on this research have been published in Ashdown Forest News and elsewhere. We also give talks and hold exhibitions of our work.

For more information about the group, a list of its publications, and contact details, please visit our page on the Ashdown Forest conservators' website:

<http://www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/AshdownResearchGroup.php>

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