

A Resistivity Survey At Hog Croft, Ovingdean By The Brighton And Hove Archaeological Society

Hog Croft is the field that lies North and, directly adjacent to the churchyard wall of St. Wulfran, in the village of Ovingdean, East Sussex. (TQ3355036). The field of Hog Croft contains several mound and platform features

The field was used during the making of the film 'Oh What a Lovely War' and two areas particularly were rotavated and heavily disturbed to recreate Somme battlefield conditions for the film.

Documentary evidence reveals a dried up village pond against the East wall of the field close to the entrance gate. The path to Brighton ran across the field from the gate entrance to the South West corner, the site of the present stile, A track also ran across the field to the chalk quarry on Cattle Hill. During the 1930's a ditch for a water main was cut across the field from the area of the village pond to just North of the Quarry gate entrance.

In 1986 Mr Ray Hartridge, along with Mr John Davies (Ovingdean's local historian), Mr Roland Cove and members of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological society began a resistivity survey of Hog Croft

The resistivity meter used was a Martin Clark meter, the field was divided into 30 metre squares and readings were taken at every metre The Datums were set up at points AF2 and AF4 on the plan drawn up by Ray Hartridge. An area of 8100 square metres was covered by the survey and the readings transferred to a resistivity plan.

In the Summer of 1990 the Brighton and Hove archaeological Society returned to Hog Croft to complete the survey started by the late Ray Hartridge

The resistivity meters used on this occasion were the RM4 meters. The resistivity meters were loaned to the Society by the Field Unit of the College of Archaeology of the university of London and the Archaeology Department of East Sussex County Council

The Datums at Af2 and Af4 from the plan of Ray Hartridge were relocated and used for the Datums of the 1990 survey The grids used on the 1990 survey however, were 20 metres square wide readings were taken at 1 metre intervals The survey encompassed an area of 18.800 square metres and is a strip 140 metres wide running from South to North of the field The area originally surveyed by Ray Hartridge was also resurveyed. The field was divided into grid numbers for easy reference Nos 1-46 and 62-82 the higher numbers being the area of the original survey

The surveys were conducted on the following days:-

May 5th 1990- Datums located and tests made with PN4 meters.

May	19th	—	Grid squares 17,18,19,24,25,32,34,36 readings.
June	16th	-	Grid squares 8,16,20,27,28 readings.
June	23rd	—	Grid squares 2,3,4,5,9,10,11,26, readings.
June	30th	—	Grid squares 6,12,41,60,61,64,65,67,72,73 rdgs.
July	7th	-	Grid squares 62,63,66,68,69,70,71,74,75,76,77,81
July	14th	—	Grid squares 13,14,21,22,29,30,47,48,78,82. Rdgs

The weather during the survey remained mainly dry with light rain on a few occasions; the only exception to this was the week prior to June 30th and including June 30th when there were heavy showers.

The highest reading taken was in grid square 60 and was 521. The lowest reading taken was in grid square 14 and was 12.

Conclusions

The resistivity survey readings of 1990 have been transferred to a Radan CAD computer and a plan plotted of those readings.

Areas of very high readings are concentrated in grid squares 60,65,70,71 and these align with the readings of Ray Hartidge's earlier surveys.

Other concentrations of high readings are grid squares 61,62,63,64,74,75 and these readings run along the ridge of one W the embankments, again these were found by Ray Hartridge's survey.

New concentrations of high readings are in grid squares 62 and 27 as well as grid squares 81 and 82 and also in grid 22. High readings in grid 48 concur with surface finds of contemporary material of breezeblock and brick and may be the site of either hay holders or a previous water trough.

Low readings occur in grids 47 (The former site of the village pond), and in grid 14 (The current position of the water trough). Grids 75,29 and 21 also contain concentrated low readings.

There is no geophysical evidence for the water main that bisects the field.

The field at Ovingdean, known as Hog Croft, contains some very interesting features, highlighted by both the ground survey and the resistivity survey. An interpretation of both these surveys could only be conjectural, as previous resistivity surveys have sometimes proved to be geological anomalies on excavation.

Walking around the field to the West of the church, amongst the burrows of foxes and badgers, produced both flintwork and pottery.

A rectangular building in the field to the North of Hog Croft, only the base and one brick height remaining, produced on inquiry to be an ammunition dump from the second world war.

It is obvious that some investigation of the field of Hog Croft is required. It is suggested that 5 or 6 trial trenches be cut in-to the relevant sections to ascertain what lies under the topsoil. The Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society will hopefully carry out this work, and steps will now be taken to seek permission for access to the land, from both the land-owner Brighton Corporation and the tenant farmer Mr Masefield Baker.

Pottery Report

1 Shard LBA/EIA Flint tempered
1 Sherd E>S> Ware
1 Sherd R.B. ?
8 Sherds Medieval sand and sand and flint wares (1 sherd glazed ?)

David Rudling

Map and readout references:-

Figure 1-Grid reference for Hog Croft supplied ESOC

Figure 2—Resis. Readings high/low supplied ESCC(A4,A1, A0)paper.

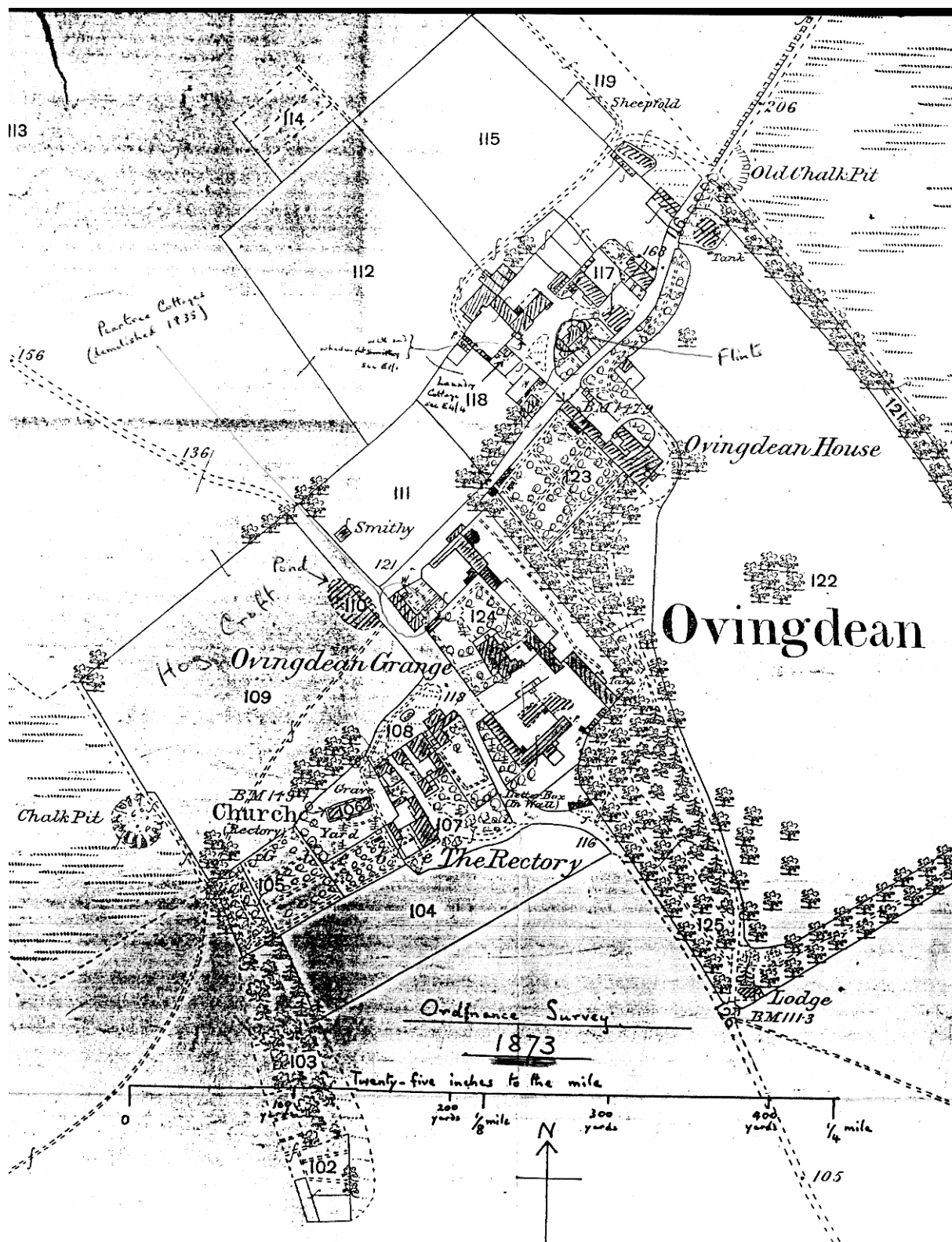
Figure 3-Resis. Readings/Ground surface indicators supplied ESCC

Appreciation and thanks are expressed for all those who helped in conducting both surveys, to members of the Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society, members of the Mid-Sussex Field Archaeology Team and particularly to Mr John Davies and Mr Poland Cove whose effervescence made hard work enjoyable, and not forgetting Delia and Laurie there to the end. Thanks also to Mr David Rudling and Mr Chris Butler for the pottery and flint reports.

Flint Report

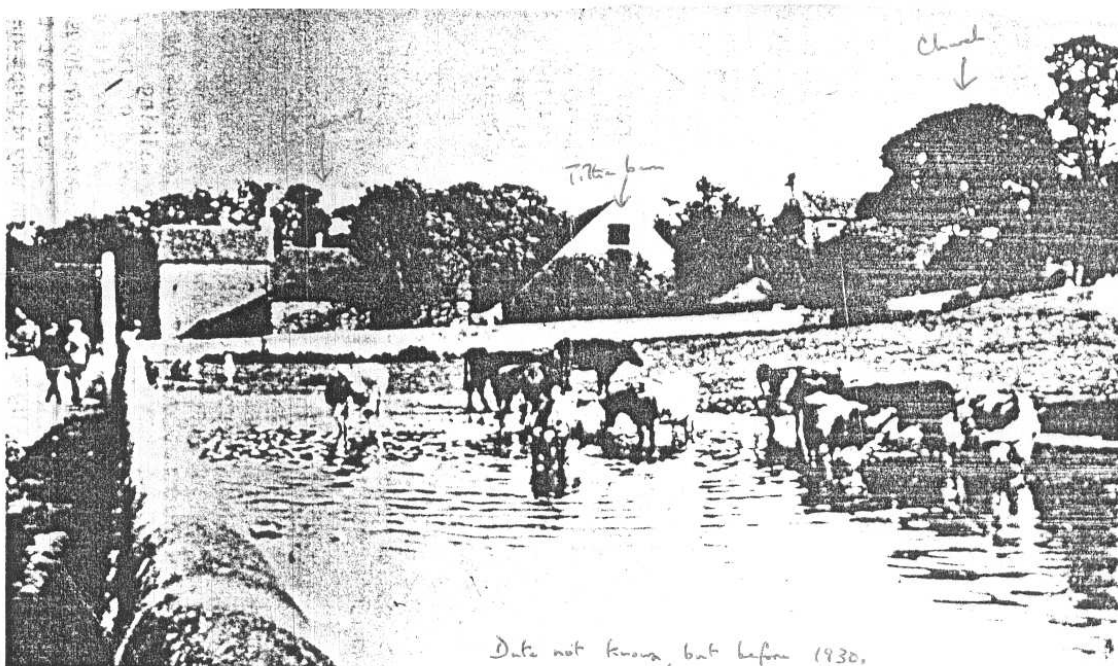
10 Flakes
1 Blade
1 Notched flake
1 Axe thinning flake
11 Fire—fractured flint pieces

Chris Butler





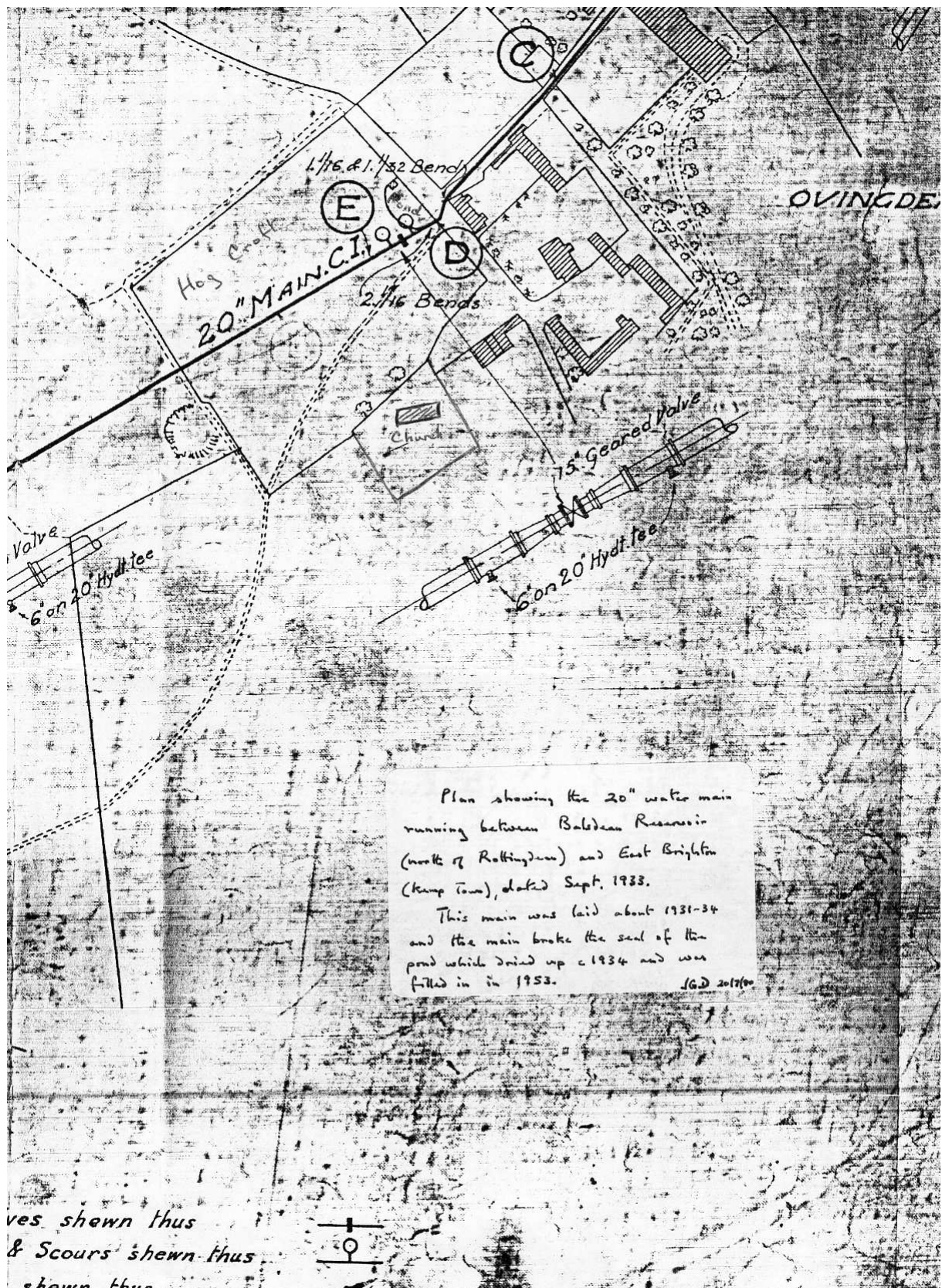
Date not known, before 1930.



Date not known, but before 1930.



← Peartree
Cottages
gate and pond.
Date not known.
Before 1935



Water Main Plans

~Ovingdean~

VISUAL AIDS

for the

Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society
visit on Sunday, 12 June 1988

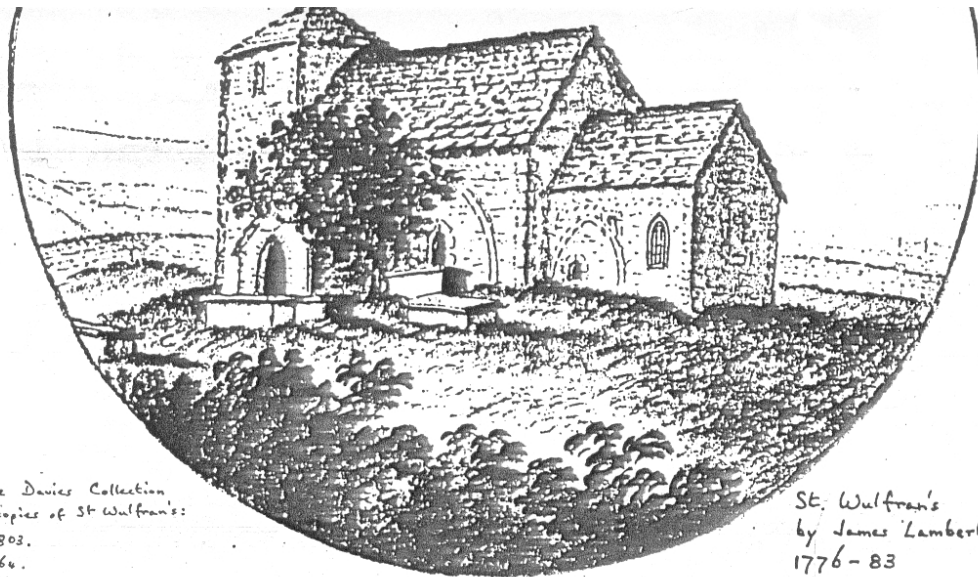
by
John G.Davies

1. The parish of Ovingdean
2. The church of Ovingdean
3. The hamlet of Ovingdean
4. Aide Memoire: The theory and
practice of Ovingdean

Also available on loan:-

5. Hog Croft Resistivity Survey, 1986 & 1987
6. Photocopies of pictures of St Wulfran's, 1776-1907
[Also, when available, Occasional Papers and
Spicilegia on Ovingdean History by J.G.D.]

Published at Flints, Ovingdean
Not copyright
June 1988



From the Davies Collection
of photocopies of St Wulfran's:
3: pre-1803.
12: 1804-64.
13: 1865-1907.

St. Wulfran's
by James Lambert
1776-83

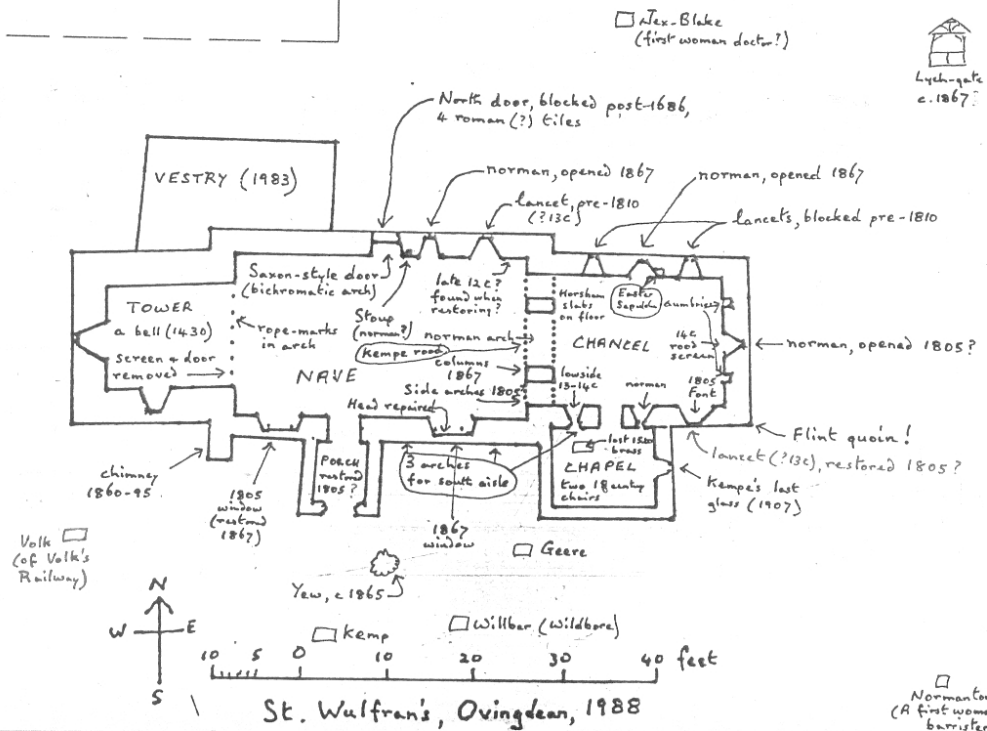
OVINGDEAN

History

1086: 'Small church' (wooden?) in Domesday Book
1066-86 or a little later?: Nave + chancel built
1170-1230?: Tower built, and South Aisle arches made
?: South Aisle not completed or destroyed.
(cf Howe (demolished), St Botolph's (Bromby): The 1377 pirate
story is very doubtful.)
c 1805: major restorations
1867: major restorations
1907: chapel
1983: vestry

Highlights

Typical (reasonably restored) downland church; cf Coombes, et al.
Tombs: dex-Blake; Normanton; Geeres + Willbar of 17c; Kemp; Volk.
Kemp's work: glass in windows (n.b. garbs), rood, and ? painted
ceiling of chancel, all by Kemp (1867-1907)
Items noted below.



Aide-Memoire
The Theory and Practice of Ovingdean

THE THEORY

- A. Pre-history. Archaeology (trepanned skull, barrows, burials)
Ancient (celtic) field systems (Two settlements)
Boundaries (sea-strip, enclosures before 1714,
High Hill, no natural boundaries)
- B. Dark ages. Speculations of Saxon foundation. Hog Croft.
- C. Medieval and later
1086 Domesday Book: Godfrey (6 hides), Brictnor (2 hides)
Godfrey's manor descends in secular deeds and appendant advowson
to 1839 Tithe Map as western $\frac{2}{3}$ of Ovingdean. n.b. One
estate; not sold off; Lords of the manor never lived here.
Brictnor's estate more complicated. In 11-12C parts given
to Lewes Priory. 1537 Henry VIII seized a "farm called
Ovynden" and its descent is traceable to a 1714 map
as eastern $\frac{1}{3}$ of Ovingdean. n.b. Until 1784 Withdean
Cayliffe and Allington manors held small parts.
n.b. Eastern Farm house of 1662-85 (1538-1701?) untraced.
Population: D.B.=100 plus; 14C=80; 16-18C=40; 1801=80.
- D. The Awakening (1786-1911)
1786 Nathaniel Kemp (uncle of Kemp Town) bought 349 acres in
middle of Ovingdean; built Ovingdean House; Upper
(Street) Farm.
1804 Rev. John Marshall, first resident rector; built Rectory
in 1805 and Rectory Cottage in c1825.
1823 Beard family moved into Grange and modernised it.
Triumvirate, with 4 to 7 indoor servants each, lasted 1825-1900.
1830 middle-class arises - small farmers and professionals.
Population: 1801=80; 1891=160; 1901=250; 1911=248.
- E. Today's Ovingdean (1911-1988)
1912 Brighton bought manor from Steyning Beard (d. owing £63,000)
1913 Brighton bought northern half of Kemp Estate.
1918-39 First generation, shacks and bungalows on plots.
1945- (especially 1970-) Second generation, houses (shacks
were demolished, upmarket housing, infilling).
1980s Three farmhouses and barns become chi-chi residences.

1927 Ovingdean
parish incorporated
into Brighton
County Borough.

AND PRACTICE

- Church: see other page. Reasonably-restored; early Norman; downland.
- Rectory: red mathematical tiles (2 sides), cobbles. Water-tank.
1445 existed in same position; 3 hearths in 1662; "mean thatched..
only proper for a labouring Man"; demolished.
1805 present building built. 1849 much altered (bay-window, W.C.)
- Ovingdean Grange: Tudor farmhouse with c1823 gentrified facade.
16th century (oldest) part in north. Farmhouse sold 1987.
Pigeon House croft to east. Charles II did not stay here.
- Ovingdean Hall (formerly House): Yellow math. tiles front & sides.
1786 or 1792 built by Math. Kemp (uncle of Kemp Town).
1858-91 Macnaghten; 1891-1941 prep. school; 1945-88 Deaf School.
- Upper Cottages: outer 2 on 1839 map. Eastern farmhouse, fold & barns?
- Flints: built c1790. Bailiff's house for Kemp Estate. Behind it
are the Upper Farm's granary, coachhouse, stables & barns.

J.G.Davies
June 1988

1986 Offsets

