

East Grinstead Town Council is celebrating the
Sestercentennial of East Court...



250th anniversary exhibition - College Lane, East Grinstead RH19 3LT
Monday to Friday. Please call for opening times. Tel: 01342 323 636



British Troops land in Boston under General Thomas Gage - 1768

James Cooke discovers Australia - 1770



American War of Independence 1776 to 1781

Fletcher Christian leads a mutiny on HMS Bounty - 1789



John Cranston builds East Court Mansion 1769

John Cranston

John Cranston was a London lawyer who had been Assistant Warden of Sackville College from 1767 until 1769. He married Catherine Green in 1759, whose family owned the land and nearby farm of Estcot's.

In 1769 John Cranston commissioned East Court House to be built and the land was developed as a country estate. However, at the age of 44, he died in 1781 and the house was inherited by his son Edward who later became Deputy Lieutenant of Sussex.

Edward died in 1841, leaving the estate to his five daughters and his widow Harriet. At its peak, the East Court Estate comprised of over 900 acres.

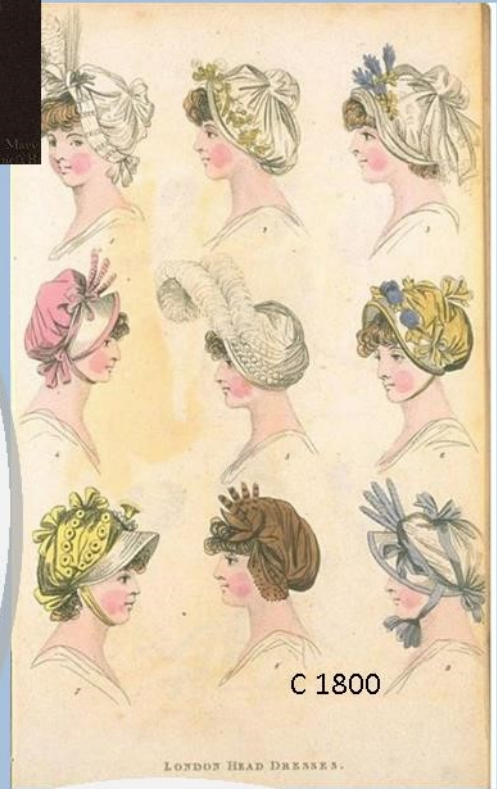
The original building of Estcots Farm, a 15th century structure with 17th century additions, still remains to the south of East Court and can be found as you enter the estate from the Estcots Drive entrance.

The name East Court can be traced back to 1285 in the form of "Estcot" and means east cottage.

Plaque inscribed :
"September 3th 1770 mead
by me Edmmd Mitchil"



John Cranston—Built East Court House



1750's to 1800's



1815 - Battle of Waterloo

1865 - Abraham Lincoln assassinated



1876 - A.G. Bell patents the telephone

1879 - Battle of Rourke's Drift



John Cranston dies at 44.
Edward Cranston inherits East Court.

1781



East Court circa 1800

Charles Walter Payne Crawford at 40



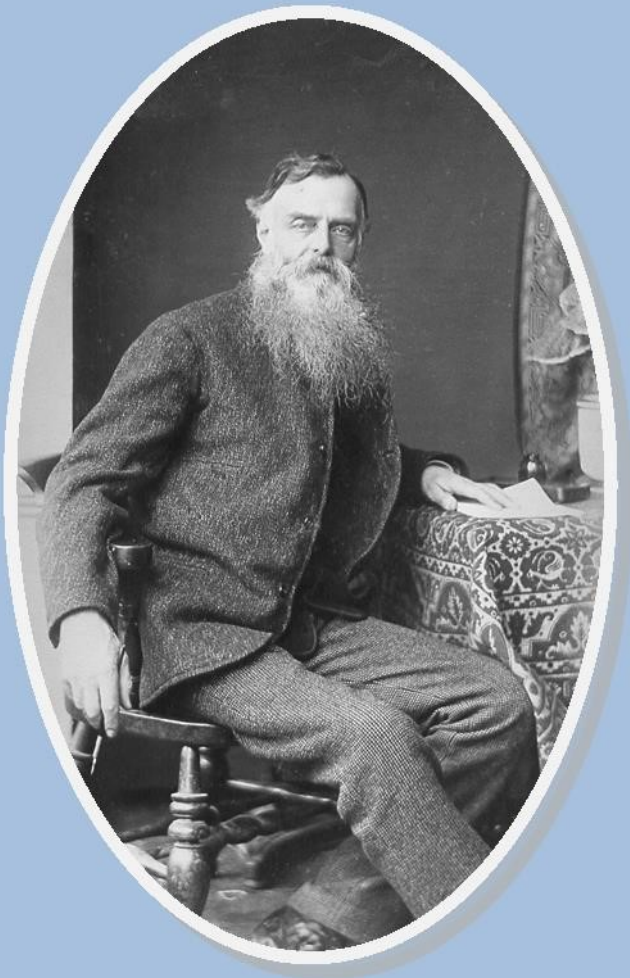
Crawford family on the lawn at East Court

East Court circa 1890



Reverend C.W.P. Crawford moves into East Court

1863



Born at Saint Hill and educated at home and Oxford, as a young man, Reverend Crawfurd was a keen sportsman. He began reading for the Bar, but then chose to pursue a life in the church.

After his older brother's death, their father sold Saint Hill and moved away, although Charles returned to East Grinstead in 1863 and rented East Court from the Cranston family and continued to live there until 1903, whereupon he built his own house, Ardmillan (now Martyns Place), named after the ancestral home in Scotland.

The Reverend Crawfurd lived the life of an English country gentleman, involving himself with the local community and was the nearest East Grinstead had to a village squire. He was involved in the setting up of the cottage hospital and running the dispensary and National Schools, as well as helping out in the local churches. Amongst his many achievements, he was renowned for giving one-man performances of Shakespeare's plays (without a prompter) in aid of local charities. He funded the restoration of the chancel of the parish church and, in 1887, presented the drinking fountain to the town, to mark Queen Victoria's fifty year Jubilee celebration.

He became chairman of the Burial Board and was the chairman of the East Grinstead Local Government Board throughout its existence, (1884 to 1894) and became the first chairman of the East Grinstead Urban District Council between 1894 until 1895.

Charles Walter Payne Crawfurd died in 1908, after a short illness, leaving six sons and five daughters.



Presentation of Drinking Fountain 1887

Charles Walter Payne Crawfurd 1826-1908



1901 - Queen Victoria Dies

Kellogg's Cornflakes Company
formed - 1906



1st Rolls Royce Motor Car Type A
1904

Women's fashion c 1900



1906

Ernest Cooper buys East Court

Mr Ernest Cooper



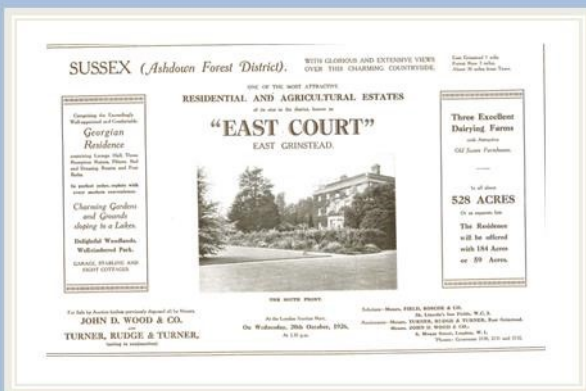
In 1906, the Cranston Family Trustees sold East Court Estate to Ernest Cooper (an accountant from Limpsfield). A great deal of money was invested into the house; a re-design of the interior turned the kitchen into the main entrance hall. A new staircase was added, together with pillars and decorative plasterwork.

The separate service wing was then joined to the main house and in 1918 the terraces were constructed within the grounds to create a "pleasure garden".

Upon Ernest Cooper death in 1926 and the 500 acre estate, was put up for sale and bought by local developer Frederick Woodgate, who sold the house and 120 acres to Captain Frederick Card.

The house was eventually sold by Captain Card's descendants to Mr Godfrey H J Williams in 1933, whose widow, Mrs. Elizabeth Card eventually sold the estate to the Urban District Council and The War Memorial Trustees.

The remaining 380 acres of the original property was later to become the housing development Escots.



Cover of sales document 1926

Ernest Cooper 1874 -1926

Ribbon-1850



1900



1800's to 1900's



1900 1901 1902 1903 1904 1905 1906 1907 1908 1909



1910 1911 1912 1913 1914 1915 1916 1917 1918 1919

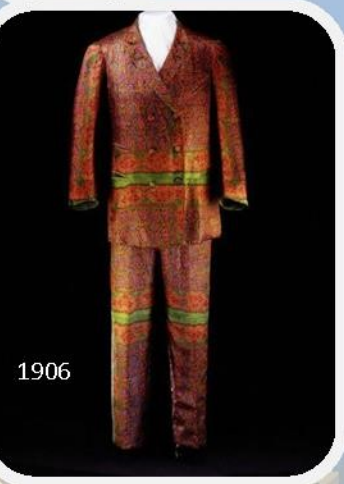


1920 1921 1922 1923 1924 1925 1926 1927 1928 1929

1904



1915



1906



1915



1908



1920

1900's to 1920's



The Crawford family at the Grand bazaar 1896

Men's fashion - Morning Suit c 1900



Robert Payne Crawford at East Court c 1889

Staff at East Court - 1902



1890-1902



Russian Revolution - 1917

The Lower Terrace at East Court
looking east



The Lower Terrace at East Court
looking west

East Court interior circa - 1920



1918

**Ernest Cooper builds the terraces at
East Court**



The Cooper's at East Court - 1906 to 1926



1927



1930



1920's to 1930's



Manfred von Richthofen
shot down & killed

The Romanov Royal Family
assassinated



The end of World War One

Women's Fashion c 1918



1918



Howard Carter discovers
Tutankhamun's Tomb - 1923

John Logie Baird
demonstrates 1st TV 1926



Winnie The Pooh is published
- 1926

Walt Disney Studios 1st character
Oswald the Lucky Rabbit - 1927



1926

Ernest Cooper sells East Court with 500 acres



Main entrance to East Court
(used to be the back door!)

Study (now Cranston Suite Annex)



Bedroom
(now Estates Manager's Office)

Ensuite to bedroom
(now Bookings Office)



East Court interiors at the time of the sale

1926



East Court sold to developer
Frederick Woodgate

The house and 120 acres bought
by Captian Frederick Card



Woodgate sells off 380 acres
to become Estcots Estate

Title transfers to Mrs Matilda Card - 1928



1926-1928

Drawing Room / Council Chamber - 1926



Entrance Hall - looking down



Lounge / Entrance Hall

Bedroom/Main Office



Dining Room / "Cranston Suite"



Drawing Room / Council Chamber - 1937



East Court Interiors - 1926 to 1937



1st VW prototype produced - 1932

Edward VII ascends to throne



Hoover Dam opened

Hindenburg airship disaster



Godfrey Williams buys East Court

1936

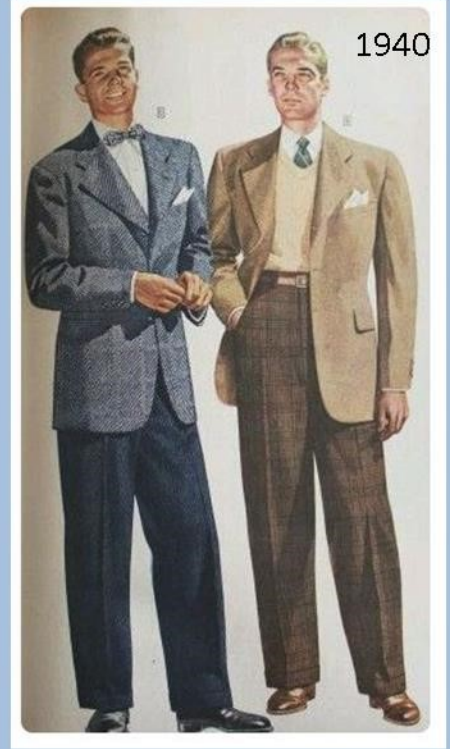
Tie designs-c 1940



C 1930



1940



1940



1940

1930s to 1940s



Ministry of Defence
requisitioned East Court

General Leese on main hall. Alfred
Wagg can be seen in the background

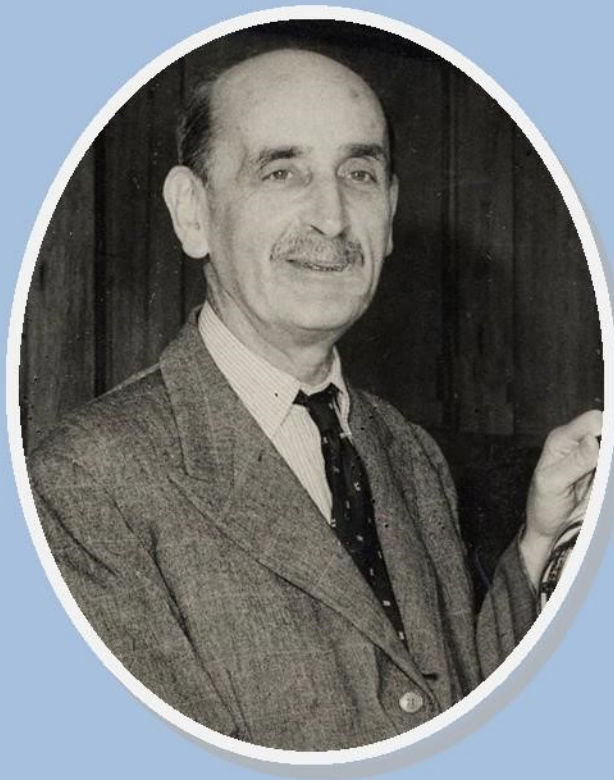


Mrs Williams puts East Court up for sale

During this period, East Court
Mansion was used to barrack the
army and acted as a training base



1938-1944



Alfred Ralph Wagg was born in London on 14 March 1877. The youngest of the six children of stockbroker Arthur Wagg and his wife, Mathilde, he was educated at Ash-down House preparatory school and later Oxford College.

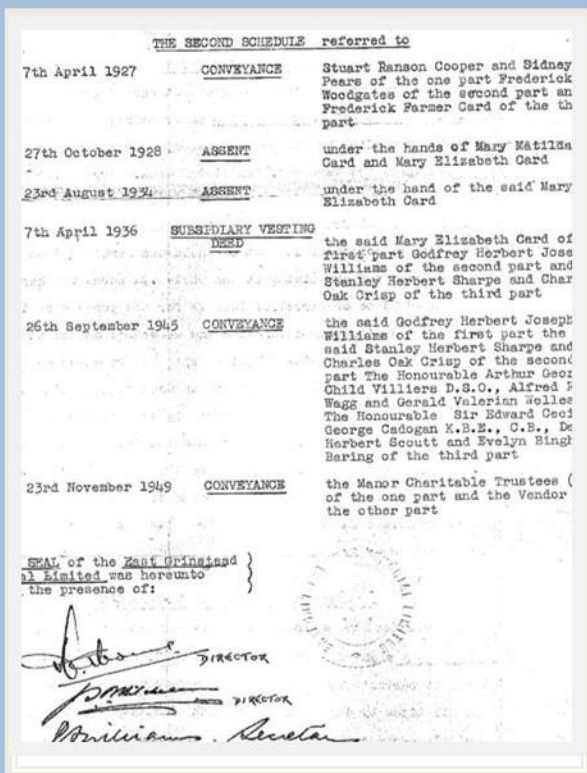
He joined the family firm of Helbert, Wagg & Co., City stockbrokers and eventually became head of the firm. It later became known as Schroder Wagg and finally Schrodgers, which still exists today.

In 1945, The Urban District Council bought East Court Mansion and the adjoining five acres of land. Alfred Wagg, together with a number of others, purchased the remaining estate of 115 acres from Mrs. Williams. The greater part of the estate was later conveyed to the Manor Charitable Trustees in 1949 in order to create a 'living memorial to all who were affected by the war'.

Mr. Wagg also gave part of the land on which today's Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead, now stands, as well as being a generous benefactor to local people who had fallen on hard times.

Incidentally it was his sister, Elsie Wagg, who started the National Gardens Scheme in 1926 where private gardens were opened to the public on a 'special' day to raise money for nursing and other charities. This highly popular scheme continues to this day.

Alfred Wagg lived at The Hermitage, East Grinstead and died in Uckfield, East Sussex.



Detail of Conveyancing Document

Alfred Wagg 1877-1969



Soviet troops liberate Auschwitz
& Birkenau Concentration Camps

Britain Celebrates VE Day



Mountbatten oversees Partition
of India and Pakistan

World War Two ends

1944 - 1945



1950



1950

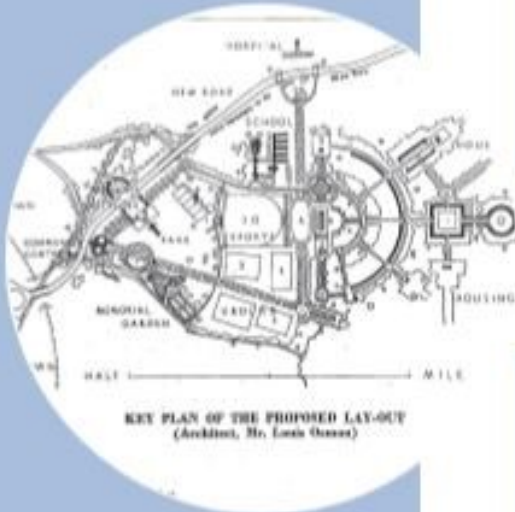


1940's Womens Coat Fashion
Glamourdaze



1940

1940 to 1950



Plans were drawn up to create East Court as a living memorial to all those who were affected by the war.

Sufficient money was never raised and the plan was never realised.



East Court is sold, together with five acres, to East Grinstead's Urban District Council

1945

Parts of the house were later squatted and plans were put forward to turn it into housing for families who were in need. These plans never materialised, although the squatters were finally evicted in 1946.

The Urban District Council holds its first council meeting at East Court - January 1947.



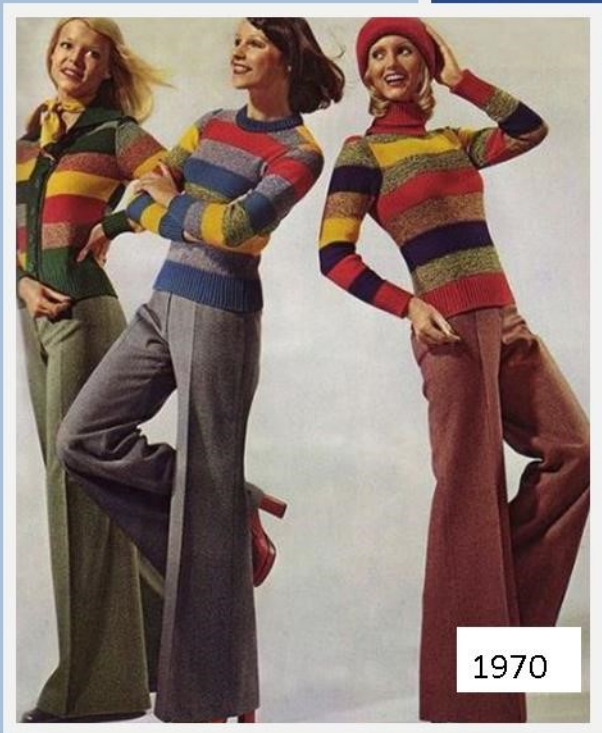
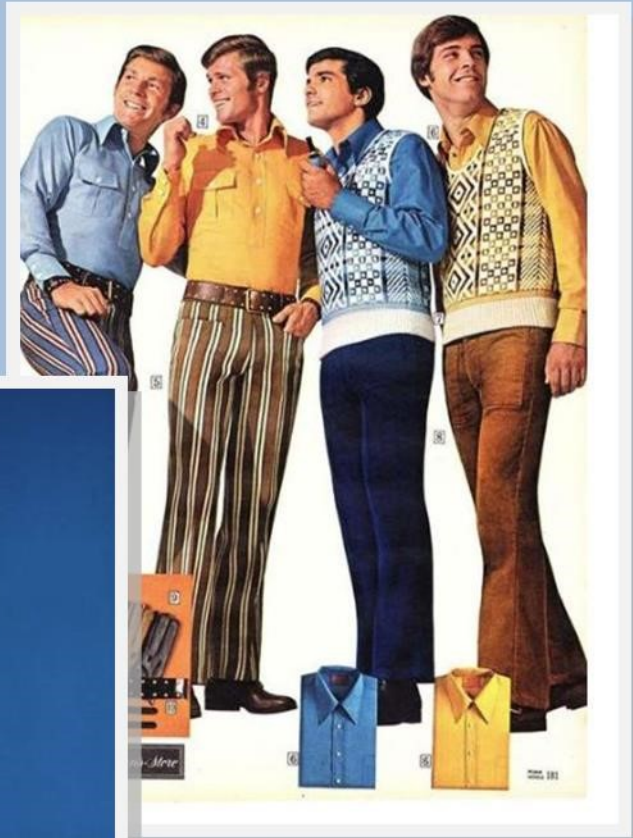
Queen Elizabeth II succeeds her father, George VI, to the throne - 1952.

East Grinstead War Memorial Limited sells the War Memorial Gardens to East Grinstead Town Council – September 29th 1971



1947-1974

East Grinstead Urban District Council becomes East Grinstead Town Council - 1974



1960 to 1970



Remodeling to make way for The Meridian Hall

The old car port circa 1940



Work in progress

The New Meridian Hall



1980-2019

The changing face of East Court

Many groups have used East Court over the years..



Archery at the summer fair

...as well as East Grinstead's Carnival



...and, of course, East Court Live!

1980-2019

Over the years East Court has been adapted to play host to the various community groups that serve the interests of the local people of East Grinstead.