

A Brief Walk Though Time - From Station to statue Town Trail

This trail is a brief guide to the history of some of the buildings to be found on a walk through the town from the station quarter (the hub of the main line railway station and the Heritage Bluebell Steam Railway) to the Historic High Street and the Sir Archibald McIndoe Statue.

The trail takes approximately 20 minutes to walk and the route will follow along Railway Approach, London Road and High Street.

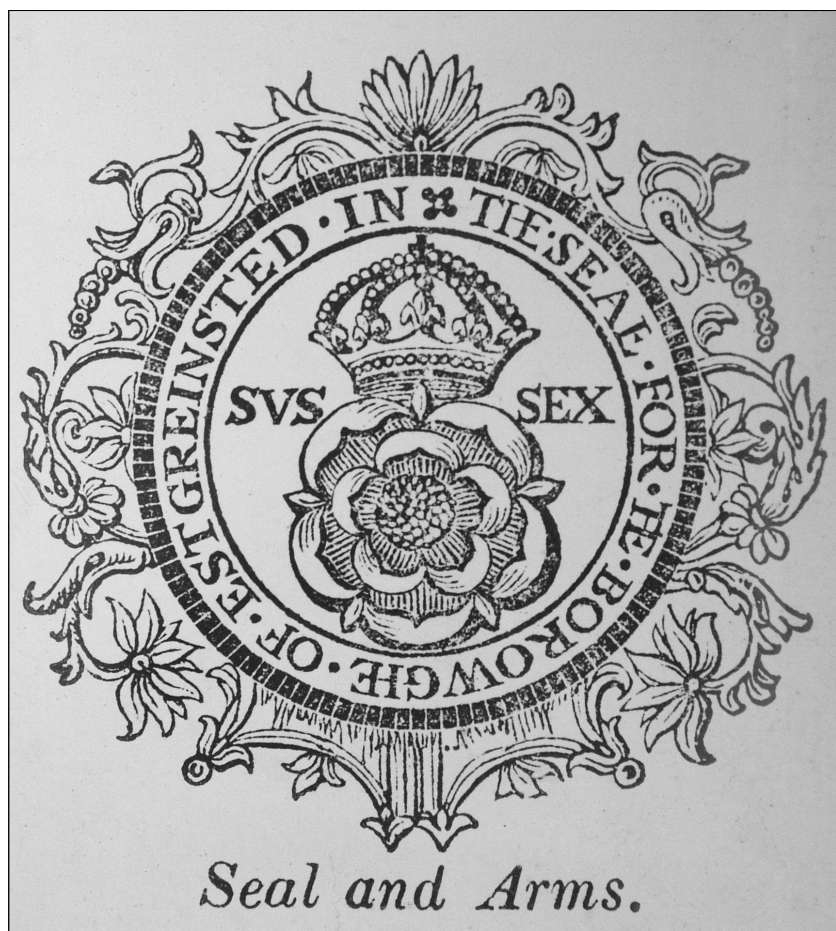
We hope that you enjoy your time in our town, exploring the many interesting places along the route.

For more information on places to visit while you're in the area, please visit the Tourist Information Centre, which is located within the public library in West Street, just past The Ship Inn. (See trail for details).

Tel: 01342 410 121

Email: tourism@eastgrinstead.gov.uk

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 9:30am – 6pm Saturday 9:30am – 5pm



East Grinstead – Brief History

East Grinstead is a West Sussex town with a rich and fascinating history and was founded in the twelfth century by Gilbert D'Aquila. This medium-size town lies in the middle of the Weald, half way between London and the south coast. Its prominent position and ancient trackways mean it has always been the focus of local settlements, flint implements from the Mid Stone Age are its earliest evidence of human activity.

Certainly, the Domesday Book records 13 farms in the “hundred of Grenestede” – and we know that Grenestede was founded in the 13th century by Gilbert de Aquila, whose land was granted to him by William the Conqueror. Timber and framed houses were built along the town’s High Street – three of which stand there proudly to this day.

Wealden iron production is likely to have had a significant impact on the economy of the town, with the beginning of the period coinciding with the development of the blast furnace, expanding markets, and rapid growth in the industry. The first blast furnace had been established 8km from East Grinstead, at Newbridge on Ashdown Forest, in 1496. The industry expanded rapidly in the 16th century, thereafter declining to the point of extinction by the end of the 18th century.

There were 22 ironworks of this period within 10km of East Grinstead, with 53 Burgages, (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burgage>) with holders such as Edward Payne and John Duffield being owners and operators of furnaces in the late 16th century. The employment of woodland workers, charcoal burners and furnace workers would have been significant. Certainly, the strong interest of the Sackvilles in the town and parish (their estates covered a quarter of the parish in 1597-8) supports this inference, since iron production and ordnance trade were important activities for the Buckhurst based branch of this family in the 16th and 17th centuries.

By the 16th century, East Grinstead had two MPs, a criminal court and a gallows. The High Street accommodated weekly cattle markets and annual fairs and cattle were driven on hoof to the winter fair. Goods produced by local craftsmen were available to the townsfolk and people from the surrounding villages who came to buy and sell. Gradually, East Grinstead became an important staging post as bad roads meant that Assize Courts were held here, with judges unwilling to venture further into Sussex.

In 1609 Robert Sackville, Earl of Dorset, established Sackville College as an almshouse for elderly residents and a townhouse for him. East Grinstead’s importance to travellers greatly improved its prosperity; even more so when, in 1717, the road to London was a turnpike and tolls charged for its upkeep. Twelve inns provided food, drink and accommodation for travellers and horses.

Cont.



A Postcard from East Grinstead

By the end of the 18th century, the town's prosperity was fading, as the growing popularity of the seaside drew traffic away to a more direct road through Cuckfield. East Grinstead became even more isolated with the 1841 opening of the London-Brighton railway.

However, the town flourished with the opening of a bustling market in Cantelupe Road in 1884. Well known for its many points of interest, including the historic High Street and St Swithun's church, East Grinstead has become a vibrant community and tourist destination.

The town's fortunes continued with the opening, in 1855, of a rail link to London. Wealthy business men, who were able to commute to the City, built large family houses around East Grinstead's rural outskirts.

East Grinstead residents were employed in domestic service and brick-making for these new houses, bringing more money into the area.

Throughout World War One and the Depression East Grinstead remained a quiet market town, recovering well from both events. The town's darkest day to date came during World War II, when 108 people were killed in a single bomb raid, most of them in the Whitehall cinema.

However, during the War, East Grinstead gained an international reputation thanks to the pioneering work of plastic surgeon Archibald McIndoe. Post-War, East Grinstead continued to thrive, with housing estates replacing the country houses of the wealthy London business men, which enabled more commuting. The later expansion in other parts of the country, in particular Gatwick Airport, created even more employment to the local area.

Today, its popularity continues to increase with the recent arrival of the Bluebell Railway.

Excerpts taken from "Secret East Grinstead" by Dorothy Hatswell.

History about our Town Crest:

This coat of arms was designed in 1954 to mark the diamond jubilee of the Urban District Council.

The hammer recalls the iron industry, the cause of much prosperity in this area. The Assizes (trials) held in the town until the end of the 17th century is represented by the sword and the tree represents our connection to Ashdown Forest. It is set within the royal crown. The Greenwich Meridian which runs through the town is marked by the white line and the East in the place-name by a rising sun.

The green colouring of the shield harks back to the name of Grenestede or Green Place and the Latin inscription in the scroll at the bottom is translated as 'Amid green meadows I proudly stand' goes some way to explain the desire to fiercely defend and protect those green places that surround the town and village parishes. This coat of arms and the shields of our twin and partnership towns can be seen in a commemorative garden on West Street near its junction with Ship Street.

Find more by following this link:-

<https://www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk/.../leaflet-st.../time-machine/>



Starting from East Grinstead Station

The first trains ran between East Grinstead and Three Bridges in July 1855, with the main line to London opening in 1881, using a new station, built on two levels to serve the two lines.

The station was replaced in 1971 and again in 2010, to make way for the current building, which opened in 2012.

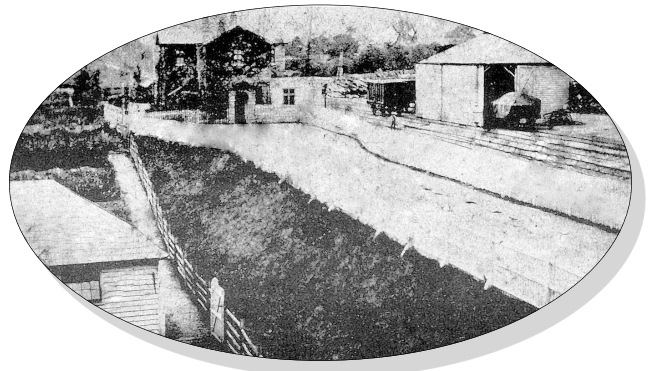


This is an early photograph of **the East Grinstead Railway Station built in 1883** which replaced two others before it due to extensions in the popular railway service.

The station seen here however, was in turn 'remodelled' in 1970 by British Rail. Much of the rail service had been cut by then and the old station was considered too grand for a small market town!

Between 1855 and 1967 it had three railway stations in succession, the last of which was built with high-level (east-west) platforms on a bridge over its low-level (north-south) platforms.

The first station opened in 1855 as a terminus to a branch line which ran from the main London -Brighton route at Three Bridges, seven miles to the west. In 1866 that branch was extended to Tunbridge Wells and the second station was built in a cutting along the north side of the first station. When the third station opened in 1882 there was some local consternation at it being on a new site amongst the fields to the west of the town, although the second station did remain open for several months, no doubt regarded as the Town station. Despite being closed in 1883, the second station's buildings were not demolished until 1908. The old terminus became a goods yard until it closed in 1967.



This is the only, known, photograph of the first East Grinstead station, built in 1855. The building still stands in its original position on the one-way system that is Beeching Way. It is currently a chiropodist practice.

The Worth Way (old railway track)

The Three Bridges line (East to West) was closed in 1966 as part of the Government's sweeping railway closures under Dr Richard Beeching, then Minister of Transport. The discontinued line is now a Linear Country Park, with shared use walking, horse riding and cycling and now provides a leafy walk known as The Worth Way. It can be accessed from the car park behind the station and goes towards Crawley Down and Three Bridges. It also forms part of the Sustrans Cycle route 21 and Avenue Verte, London to Paris Cycle route. Links to the Forest Way can be found at the far end of the High Street, beyond the statue to Archibald McIndoe at Lewes Road and heads out towards Forest Row...Tunbridge Wells then on to Paris!



The Worth Way



St Margaret's Loop and Worth Way

St Margaret's Loop



Beeching Way

Dr Beeching moved to East Grinstead and was made a Life Peer in 1965, becoming Baron Beeching of East Grinstead.

His name is remembered in Beeching Way, part of the current one way system which passes the station.

(See more on Dr Beeching here.)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Beeching



The Bluebell Railway (old railway line)

Beside the mainline station you will find the heritage steam attraction The Bluebell Railway.

This famous heritage railway celebrated its 60 year anniversary in 2020. Running steam trains from Sheffield Park to Kingscote on the old East Grinstead to Lewes line, it opened less than 3 years after that line was closed. It was extended to East Grinstead in 2013 and has its own platform and ticket office, alongside the existing station.

The Bluebell Railway was one of the first preserved heritage lines in the country resulting in one of the finest collections of vintage steam locomotives and carriages, many of which were preserved straight out of service from British Railways.

The first paid-passenger service departed from East Grinstead station at 9:45 on Saturday 23 March 2013, and the first train left Sheffield Park for East Grinstead at 9:30 a.m. with services running each way every 45 minutes thereafter.

Sheffield Park Station East Sussex TN22 3QL
- 01825 720800



Station Road

As you leave the station, head across the roundabout, using the crossing points and make your way on to Railway Approach.

On your right, you will see St Leonard's Park Estate.

This was built after the demolition St. Leonard's Hospital, which was, originally **The Union Workhouse**.

In 1834, the Poor Relief Act (Poor Law) was amended to allow for parishes to consolidate workhouses into unions, hence The Union Workhouse.



St. Leonard's Park Estate

St Leonards Park Estate (The Union Workhouse)

The Union Workhouse in Railway Approach (then Glen Vue) was built in 1859, replacing an earlier building in London road. It was for 260 inmates from the Parishes of East Grinstead, Hartfield, Crawley and Lingfield – the “Union” refers to the grouping of Parishes together for providing poor relief, under the rule of a locally elected Board of Guardians. By this, time, care had improved somewhat: nurses were employed and there were visiting doctors.

It was transferred to the NHS in 1948, becoming St Leonard's Hospital for geriatric medicine, until its closure in 1982.

Mid Sussex Timber stands on the site of the workhouse annexe, directly opposite .



The Union Workhouse



Photos: East Grinstead Museum

There were strict procedures to ensure that only eligible local people were admitted, but from 1840 there were also Casual wards, where the homeless poor, vagrants or travellers could be accommodated for a couple of nights. These were the forerunners of Casualty or Emergency departments in hospitals, where patients are not counted as admissions until they are moved to a ward.

Demolition day...

The Poor Law

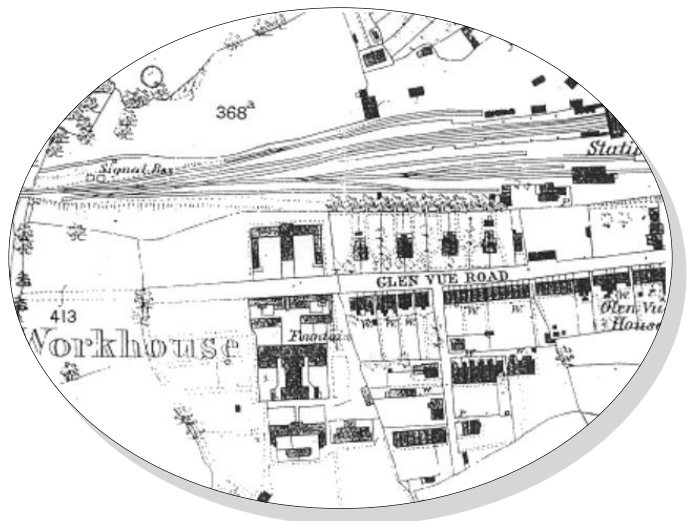
The Poor Law was first passed in 1388 in an attempt to alleviate the devastating effects of the Bubonic Plague and help was administered to the needy directly from the state. However much later, in 1834, the Government passed the Poor Law Amendments Act, whereby parishes were to join together to form Unions to help efficient use of resources. Life in the Workhouse was intended to act as a deterrent to the able-bodied pauper and would therefore be made worse than the poorest life outside.

Any able-bodied person who wanted help would have to live in the workhouse to receive it. Husbands, wives and children were to be separated. The idea was that only the destitute would wish to seek admission. Workhouses rapidly entered the public imagination as symbols of degradation and the 'respectable' poor would do almost anything to avoid being put into them.

However, it was increasingly the elderly and disabled who were admitted, along with people who were injured or ill, because there were no hospitals or dispensaries in rural areas. In the absence of nursing or medical care, female inmates were expected to care for those who were sick as best they might.

The system finally changed in 1920, when local authorities took over running the workhouses, now called "Public Assistance Institutions". When the NHS started in 1948, many of these former workhouses became public hospitals. In East Grinstead it was St Leonard's Hospital, which was finally demolished in 1982, to be replaced by the flats in St. Leonard's Park.

With thanks to Loral Bennet and Dorothy Hatswell.



<http://www.workhouses.org.uk/EastGrinstead/>

<https://www.rh7.org/factsheets/workhse.pdf>

<https://sfhg.org.uk/handouts/Poor%20Law%202018.pdf>

RAILWAY APPROACH (Glen Vue Road)

As you continue along Railway Approach, you will see a row of red-brick buildings and, over the years, they have seen many different occupants. This road, leading up to the town centre, was formerly called Glen Vue Road. It was renamed in 1906, to mark the recent opening of the railway. The original name is marked by the title of the **Glen Vue Community Hub** along the road on the right.



There used to be a Sunday street market held in Station Approach. The picture, below, shows a typical scene taken in 1965.

Railway Approach c1910

Edgar Kinsey East Grinstead Photo Co.

Photo: Photo-History Sussex



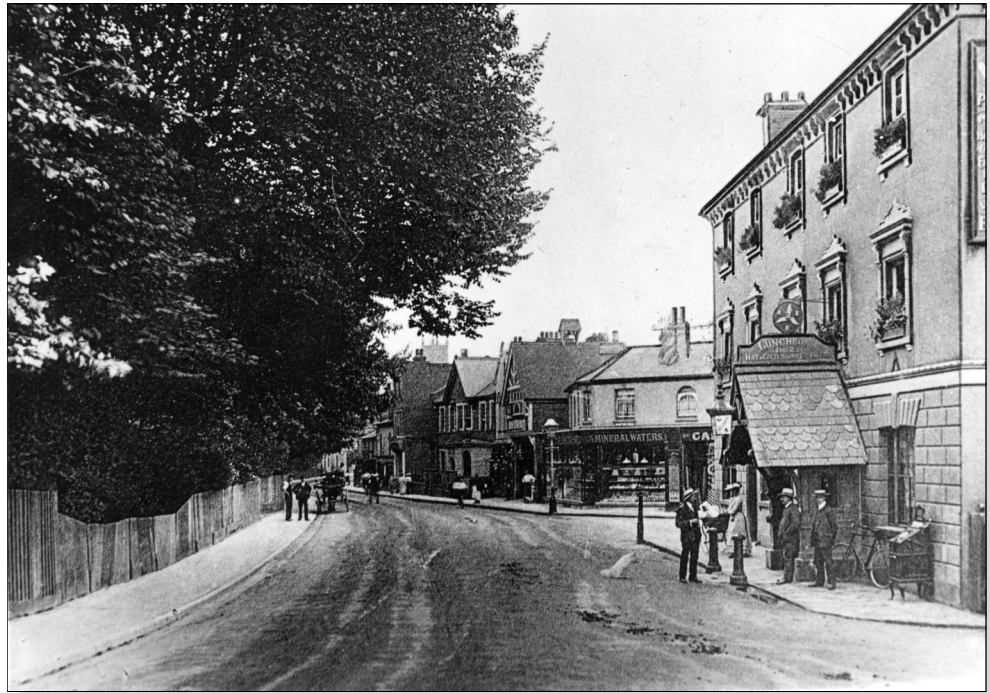
Glen Vue Road—now Railway Approach

Photos: East Grinstead Museum

The Railway Tavern (The Station Inn)

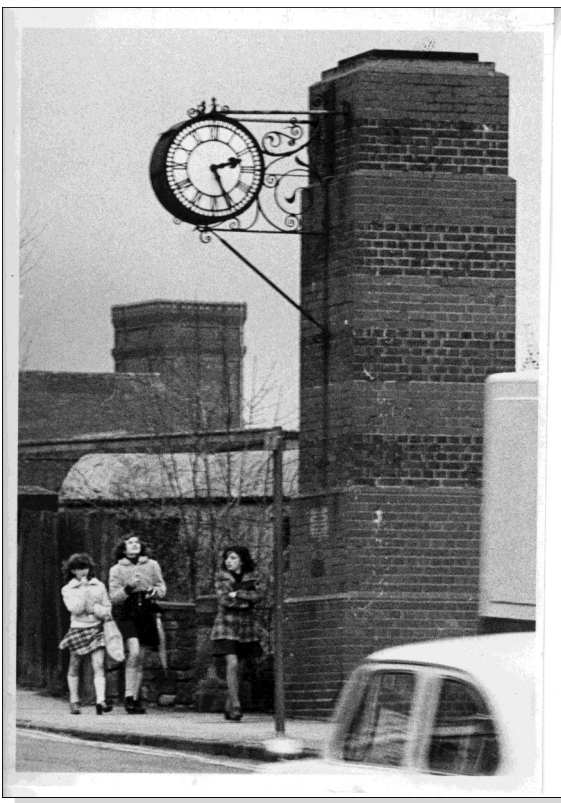
As you reach the top of the road you will see, on your left, The Railway Tavern. It was opened in 1856 and was originally The Station Inn, then The Railway Hotel. Providing accommodation and hospitality for users of the town's first railway station nearby, it was popular with cyclists and achieved AA recognition by 1929.

Rebuilt in 1939 and named The Glanfield Hotel after its architect, it had several other names before reverting to (almost) its first title.



Photos: East Grinstead Muse-

The Station Inn from London Road, looking north. 1910



The Clock Tower

Looking left from the junction of Railway Approach and London Road, on the opposite side of the road, you will see the Clock Tower. The clock, mounted on its purpose-built tower since 1955, was originally hung outside the Scientific and Literary Jubilee Institute, further up London Road. (**See page 15**).

It was commissioned in the memory of Thomas Cramp, who died in 1891. He had held many public offices and was highly respected, despite founding the unpopular local Temperance Society, which banned the drinking of alcohol.

The clock was removed from the Literary Institute when it was demolished in 1938.

LONDON ROAD

Turning right onto London Road, you will find yourself on the main road through the town, which leads up to the ancient High Street. This road (A22) was, in the fifteenth century, the longest and oldest coaching route from London to Brighton via Lewes. Over the years, it has been developed and now features buildings from several different eras.



London Road, looking South 1908

London Road. Looking North-1910



Photo: photohistory-sussex.co.uk / Edgar Kinsey The East Grinstead Phot Company.

LONDON ROAD - continued.

As you continue to walk up London Road, you will come to

Tim Ley, 108 London Road (The Old Fire Station)

This shop stands on part of the site of East Grinstead's first purpose built fire station, opened in the late 1800s. The lookout window can still be seen on the first floor. There is more information in the Museum, including a piece of rotted timber from the fire station's original bell tower!



Detail of lookout window.



East Grinstead Fire Service 1913

LONDON ROAD - continued

Almost opposite from Tim Ley, you will see a blue-tiled building. This is **The Christopher Estate** . This ambitious 1930s development, by Messrs Christopher and King, was built mainly in the art deco style. It starts on London Road, opposite the end of Railway Approach, with the parade of shops with distinctive blue tiled roofs (these were formerly considered garish and likely to attract wartime attention from the air) and extends round the corner, by Robert Dyas, onto King Street.



Photo: East Grinstead Museum

London Road, looking south. The Literary & Scientific Institute Building can just be seen in the background, to the left.

London Road today...



London Road continued

Staying on the same side of the road as Tim Ley, continue further along London Road and you will come to a large, red brick building on the corner of Queen's Road. This is **The Post Office (Grade 11)** listed for its architectural interest, this elaborate 1896 building is prominent on the corner of Queen's Road. Over three storeys, along with the main counter hall, it had a telegraph instrument room, a caretaker's flat and a sorting room – only the latter now is still operational.



Motorised Mail Van-Panhard 1913

Photo: The Weald.org



Directly opposite, across the road on the corner of King's Street, you will see **Hollywood Nails**. This building is on the site of the **Jubilee Scientific & Literary Institute**. It was opened in 1888 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. It contained a lending library & coffee bar and was the original home of Thomas Cramp's clock. Its name endures in Institute Walk, the alley behind it. The clock can now be found at the beginning of the one-way system, on the bridge at Beeching Way and London Road. The Institute was demolished in 1938.

The Travelodge (Caffyns Garage)

If you venture into King's Street, you will see on your right, The Travelodge Hotel and The Atrium Cinema. The Travelodge stands on the site of Caffyns Garage and Motor Agent, opened in 1936. It was an art deco building with "*white concrete, ribbon windows and curved walls*". The firm prided itself on its excellent service and continued operating until 2006, having acquired several car and motor cycle franchises during its existence.



Photo: Caffyns



The Atrium cinema

This is on the site of the **Radio Centre Cinema**, named after the Radio Centre Music Hall in New York. One of the three original cinemas in the town, it had a lavish interior, with a café and 1012 seats. It was demolished in 1989 and replaced by the glass Atrium, which houses three smaller screens.

(See also *Cinema Deluxe* and *Whitehall*)

(The Radio Centre)

The Whitehall—Now Martells Department Store

Starting life as the **Grosvenor Hall** in 1883 and later renamed **The Whitehall**. The building contained a theatre, dance Hall and restaurant. Declarations of election results were also announced from here.

As films increased in popularity the Whitehall Palace Cinema became an established and very popular addition to the venue.

1936 saw a re-development boom in East Grinstead and the Whitehall building that we see today was created in the Art Deco style.

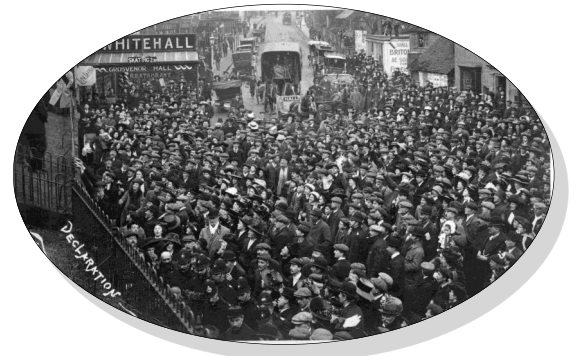
On 9 July 1943: One single event of WW2 saw 108 people killed and 235 injured. The packed cinema auditorium was destroyed during a German bombing raid. The film playing at the time was a Hopalong Cassidy cowboy classic and many of the victims were children. A plaque commemorating this sad event can be seen on the building.

In the 1960s the Whitehall became a popular dance hall with live bands – the Rolling Stones, The Yardbirds and The Kinks all appearing there very early in their careers.

Today the present owner has preserved as much of the original building as possible and it remains a fine example of the Art Deco style of the 30s



Grosvenor Hall c1883



The Declaration of Poll December 8th, 1910
(Credit EG Museum)



Whitehall Parade

Whitehall Cinema Bombing 1943

On 9th July 1943, ten German aircraft crossed the Sussex coast at Hastings and headed for London. At 5.05 pm the air raid sirens sounded in East Grinstead. At the time 184 people were watching a film featuring Hopalong Cassidy in the Whitehall Cinema. A warning appeared on the screen that a German air raid was taking place but few of the audience, mostly children, took any notice of the message.

At 5.10 PM one pilot became separated from the other planes and decided that he would find another target before he returned home. A few minutes later he saw a train entering East Grinstead Station. He circled the town twice before dropping his bombs on the High Street.



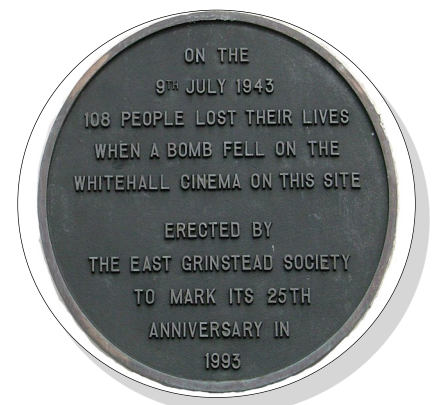
5.05 pm EAST GRINSTEAD July 9th 1943
Enemy aircraft circling town stop Issue general alert immediate stop



5.40 pm EAST GRINSTEAD July 9th 1943
Reports that Whitehall Cinema has been target of enemy aircraft stop



9.30 pm EAST GRINSTEAD July 9th 1943
Fatalities as result of raid believed to be in excess of 100 stop Other casualties with severe injuries at last count over 200 and rising. All available ambulance and heavy recovery units on scene stop



Memorial plaque produced by the East Grinstead Society for their 25th Anniversary.

Photos: East Grinstead Museum

The Whitehall Palace Theatre Bombing—1943



Queen Elizabeth visits East Grinstead



Bomb damage to London Road

Cinema de Luxe-Woolworths-Poundland

Continuing walking south, towards the High Street and just after Swan Court on your right, you will see the current Poundland shop. On this site stood the **Cinema de Luxe**, originally opened in 1875 as a Public Hall. It opened as the Cinema de Luxe around 1913, showing silent movies, with seating for 425 in stalls and a small balcony. It closed in 1931. However, it was eventually equipped with a Mihay sound system, refurbished and reopened in 1933 and re-named **The Solarius Cinema** with seating reduced to 390. There were sunburst decorative features around the screen curtain wall and along the side-walls. A Western Electric sound system was eventually installed.



The Solarius Cinema was closed in 1938 with Charles Boyer in *"History is Made at Night"*. The building remained empty, and was damaged by a fire in 1940. It was finally demolished in the 1950's and a branch of Woolworths and offices for the East Grinstead Courier newspaper was built on the site.

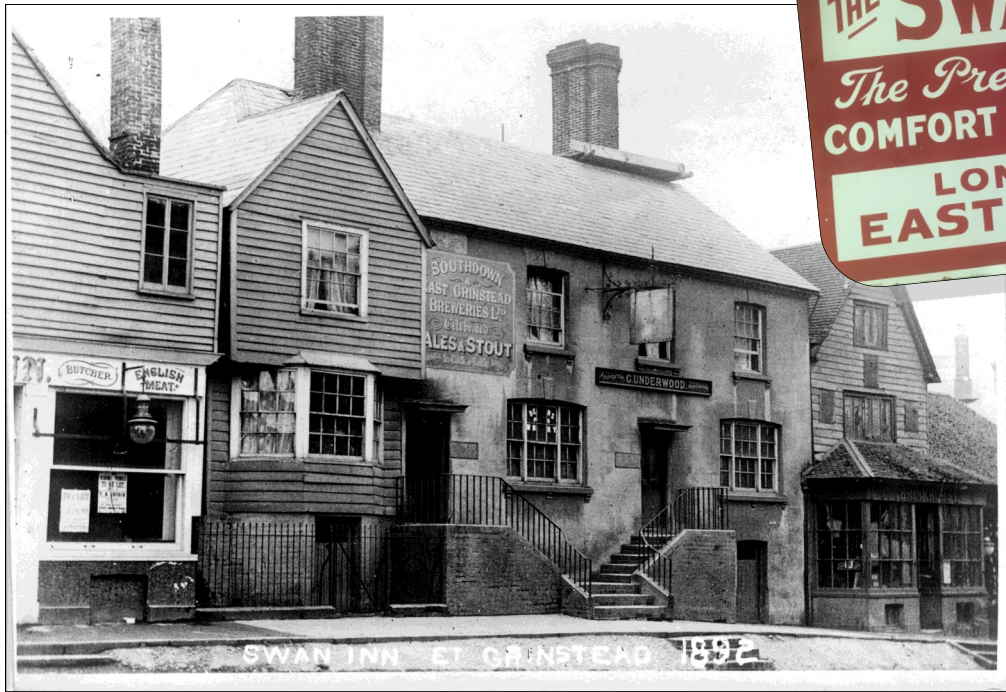


Woolworths (now Poundland) opened in East Grinstead in 1929. The building is quite interesting as the upper floor had the right side in line with the street and the left side back a bit. So we can guess the store was small to start off with – probably the right side. And then extended to the left in later years. Or vice versa.

Swan Court (The Swan Inn)

Almost at the end of London Road, as it meets the High Street, you will see a small parade of shops which includes Greggs Bakery.

The Swan Inn stood on this site and was first mentioned in 1709, and by 1886 had become “a family and commercial hotel”, with “Good stabling, loose boxes and lock-up coach houses”. It was demolished in 1963, to make way for the development you see now the new shop development called Swan Court.



The Swan Inn-1892

Photo: East Grinstead Museum

How it looks today...



The Ship Inn, corner of Ship Street and West Street

When you reach the top of London Road, turn into West Street. To your right, you will see **The Ship Inn**. It has stood on this site since 1696. The present, Victorian style, building has porthole-style windows reflecting its name. It's always been an alehouse and in the mid-1800s, it also accommodated various lodgers, including labourers and travellers. Today, it still offers bed & breakfast accommodation.

An early photograph of The Ship Inn
c1800



The Ship Inn - c1900

Photo: East Grinstead Museum

Judge's Terrace, Clarendon House and its extension Old Stone House (Grade 11 Listed)

With The Ship Inn to your right, cross West Street at the pedestrian crossing and you will come to **Judges Terrace**, which combines **Clarendon House** and **Old Stone House**. These buildings, dated c.1500 and c.1630 respectively are so named because, until the early 19th century, this was the location of the Sussex Winter Assizes (travelling regional courts). Judges were unwilling to travel further South on the terrible roads, so stopped here and were the judges' lodgings. It is said that punishments were administered outside their doors, including whippings and hangings. Over the years, Clarendon House has been an inn, a canteen for the armed forces and civil defence, a restaurant and, from 1968, a solicitors' office. Old Stone House was a private house, then a doctor's surgery and now an architects' practice.

Clarendon House



Old Stone House

Constitutional Buildings (The Cook Shop)

As you pass Judge's Terrace, on your right, you will see Constitutional Buildings on your left. Originally a forge, dating from 1475, it was built on an island site to safeguard the surrounding, timber-framed buildings from any stray sparks from the furnaces! It was rebuilt in 1893, for the Constitutional Club, a Conservative social club for gentlemen, with a balcony incorporated to announce election results. The unknown architect won five guineas (£2.50) in a competition for the privilege of designing the building.



Constitutional Buildings viewed from London Road, with Clarendon House in the background



Constitutional Buildings looking into The High Street

You're now about to enter East Grinstead's Historic High Street...

Places to eat along the way:-

<https://www.facebook.com/nestsussex>

<https://www.facebook.com/themugtree/>

THE HIGH STREET

East Grinstead's Historic High Street is a Conservation Area. It was planned and built in medieval times and made very wide to accommodate markets and fairs. It was lined on both sides by timber framed houses (burgages) with 22 metre long gardens (Portlands) behind them.

Thirty-two of these houses survive and some have been occupied for 600 years.



The High Street 1864 by William Harding



East Grinstead High Street

East Grinstead's Market History.

Henry III presented the town with a charter to hold weekly markets in 1247 and there has been one ever since.

In 1665 the market moved from Monday to Thursday, mostly for sales of corn with the addition, in 1703, of cattle sales.

The cattle market thrived until December 1970, when the last one was held and Thursday has remained the day for the popular Farmer's market.

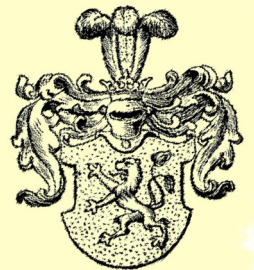
More photographs and information can be viewed at the Town Museum which is built on the old cattle market yard.

Despite its fewer than 300 inhabitants, East Grinstead was an important centre within the flourishing High Weald, due to its iron industry, its hosting the Assizes (periodical courts, hence Judges Terrace), weekly markets & annual fairs, plus it was sited on the major route from London to the coast via Lewes.



Photo: East Grinstead Museum

harter



*by the grace of his most
gracious Majesty
Henry III*

*Granted to the towne of East Greenstede
In the County of Sussex in the year
of our Lord 1247*

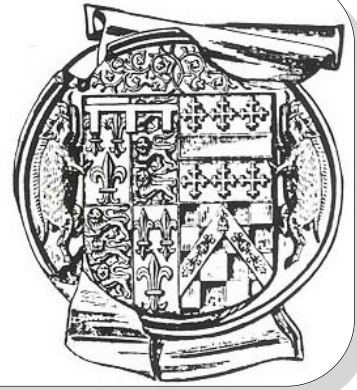
*For the holding of a Market to be held on the
first day of the week it not being a Saints Day
or other Holy Day as decreed by His Majesty*

To which I give my hand

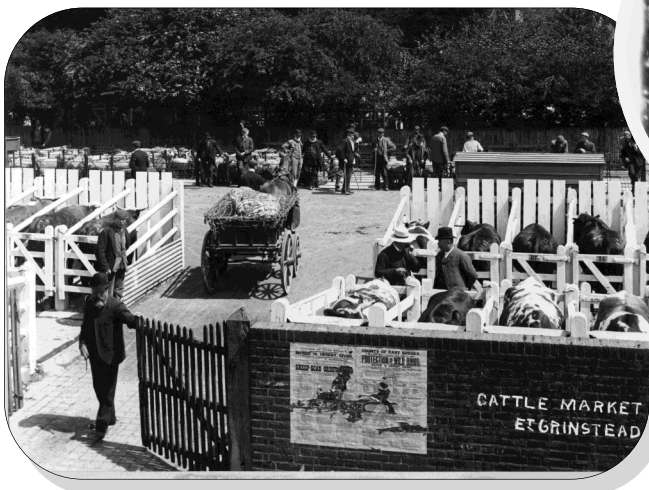
Henry Rex



East Grinstead Market 1270-1970



The Royal Seal of King Henry III



The Old Cattle Market
Cantelupe Road





Views of East Grinstead High Street

Photos: EGWatts/Gray/East Grinstead Museum

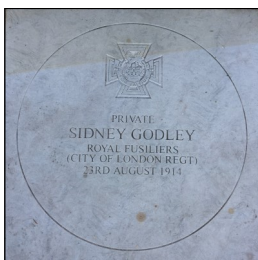
The War Memorial

Leaving Constitutional Buildings behind, you will come to **The War Memorial**. This is dedicated to the men of East Grinstead from the Sussex Regiment, killed in the First World War. It was created by sculptor Earnest Gillick and unveiled in 1922 by Sir Charles Madden, Commander-in-chief of the Atlantic Fleet. The names of 204 men are commemorated and many of their descendants still live in the town. At the foot of the memorial is a plaque honouring Private Sidney Godley.

Photos: East Grinstead Museum



Private Sidney Godley. VC



On 23 August 1914, at Mons, Belgium on the Mons-Condé Canal, **Lieutenant Maurice Dease** and **Sidney Godley** were manning the machine gun after the previous crews were either killed or wounded. When Lieutenant Dease had been mortally wounded and killed and the order to retreat was issued, Private Godley offered to defend the Nimy Railway Bridge while the rest of the section retreated. For two hours Godley, single-handedly, held the bridge under very heavy fire and was wounded twice. Shrapnel entered his back when an artillery shell exploded near him, and he was wounded in the head by a bullet. Despite his injuries, he carried on the defense of the bridge while his comrades escaped. His final act was to dismantle the gun and throw the pieces into the canal. He attempted to crawl to safety, but advancing German soldiers caught him and took him prisoner. Sidney Godley was 25 years old.

Herbert's Sports 10-14 High Street (The Bull Inn)

Just past the War Memorial, stands a timber-framed building that was once one of East Grinstead's many coaching houses. For over 200 years it was **The Bull Inn**. It was bequeathed by Edward Drewe to his wife in 1619 and, 1710 Thomas Bodle sold it to Edward Head and Francis Greene (who wanted to secure the parliamentary vote it carried) for the Earl of Dorset. In 1918, the tailor Alec Johnson moved in from Middle Row. It is now Herbert's Sports. You can still see the stagecoach entrance to the side of the building.



The Jubilee Drinking Fountain

Next up, you will see **The Jubilee Fountain**. Built in 1887 to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, it was paid for and donated to the town by Reverend C W P Crawford (b. 1826 d.1908). The fountain is built out of yellow York stone and topped with red Mansfield stone tiles.

However, it was vandalised on the morning of the celebration by members of the town band, who covered it in boiling tar because Crawford had withdrawn their funding due to the unauthorised public celebration of a verdict which had declared the former workhouse site parish property.

The drinking fountain was designed by the, then vicar of St. Swithun's, Rev. D. Y. Blakiston.

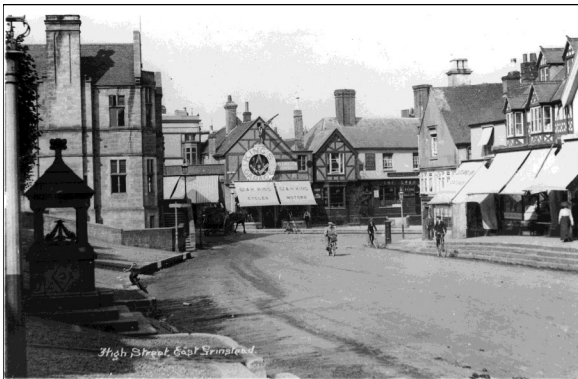
Originally, the top of the fountain had a carving of the five feathers from the East Grinstead crest, had water spouts of bronze dolphins and two metal cups on chains to drink from.

The feather carvings, Bronze dolphins and cups have long-since disappeared. However, in 2005 the Town Council, together with the town's two Rotary Clubs, restored the finial.

The fountain was further restored in 2024 with a push-button brass tap housed in a new masonry structure. The fountain was brought back into use on April 19th 2024 when children from Estcots School performed the opening ceremony.



The Jubilee Drinking Fountain



The Reverend Charles Walter Payne Crawford, The Jubilee Fountain and The East Grinstead Town Band

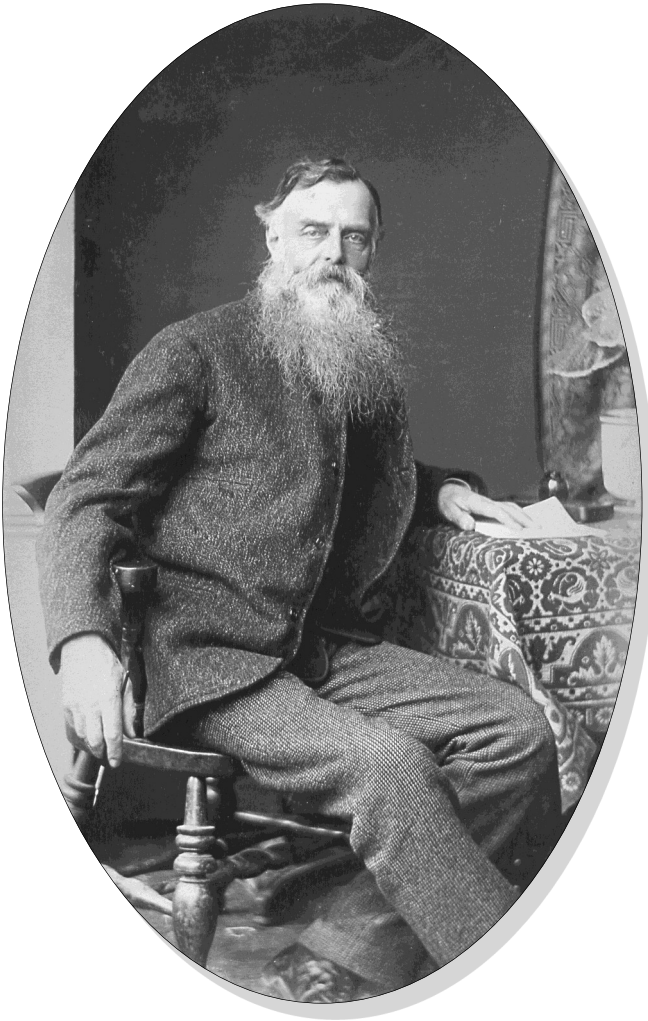


Photo: Arthur Crawford

A JUBILEE GIFT TO THE TOWN.
The following letter, addressed to the Clerk, was read from the Rev. C. W. Payne-Crawford :—
East Court, East Grinstead.
January 4, 1887.
Dear Sir,—You will oblige me by bringing the following matter before the East Grinstead Local Board. If the Board will allow me to erect a drinking fountain of the design furnished herewith in the High-street, in the open space abutting on Mr. Bailie's shop, and distant some six feet therefrom, I shall accept such permission with great pleasure. Your Board will observe that the structure, which will be about 7-ft. high and 3½-ft. wide, has been considered with an eye to its occupying the special site indicated, as also to the existing antiquities of the town. As it is probable that your Board will wish to give the matter due consideration before finally deciding it, you will oblige me by forwarding to me, after your next meeting, the result of such decision.
Yours faithfully,
C. W. PAYNE-CRAWFORD.
The design which accompanied the letter showed a fountain of antique and handsome design, mounted on a triangular base. The brief written description stated that the structure, with its supporting fluted columns, would be of Sussex stone, the base and finials of York or some hard stone. There might be some departure from the design in minor details, such as the dolphins, &c., &c. The proposed inscription was: "Hunc fontem in communem usum posuit Carolus Gualterus Payne Crawford in hac parochia olim natus diu postea versatus Anno Salutis MDCCCXXXVII. Regni annu jam quinquagesimum explente Victoria Regina. Domine salvan fas Regiam." The translation is, "Charles Walter Payne-Crawford in this parish whilom born and therein afterwards long resident, erected this fountain for the public use in the year of grace 1887, when Queen Victoria had fulfilled the fiftieth year of her reign. God Save the Queen."

Image: Arthur Crawford



Photo: West Sussex Past.org/WSCC

The Bookshop, 22-24 High Street (The Tudor House) (Grade 11 Listed)

You will now see a 15th century hall house on your right. The cork bark on the upper parts installed by a 19th century owner. It was nearly destroyed in July 1943, when a bomb exploded on the building next door. Sadly its owners were killed by the blast as they sat in their back garden.



Photos: East Grinstead Museum

The Bookshop then...



...and now, not much has changed

The Market Square, 30-32 High Street

Three doors further along, you will see The Market Square. This is the site of the house that was demolished, which led to the formation of The East Grinstead Society and the designation of the High Street as a Conservation Area. Previously a bank and a school, it was a chemist's shop at the time of demolition.



Photos: East Grinstead Museum

Broadley Brothers, 34-40 High Street (Grade 11 Listed)

Opened in 1896, this is one of the town's oldest family businesses. Originally covering two burgages and portlands, parts of this building have been tree-ring dated back to 1351, with some internal original features intact. The present shop front, traditionally built from hand-crafted oak and held together by wooden pegs, dates from only 1966.



Can you see the plaque commemorating the Martyrs unveiled in 2016? The Martyrs were, most likely, held over night in the cellars of Broadley's before their execution.

History of The East Grinstead Martyrs

Ann (or Mother) Tree, Thomas Dungate and **John Forman** were burned at the stake in July 1556 for refusing to denounce their Protestant faith. This was a common practice under the rule of Catholic Queen Mary. The burning probably took place in the open part of the High Street, outside what is now The Old Bank Café.

Of the 3 people burnt, little is known. They may not even have been residents of East Grinstead, the town may have been only their place of execution. Ann Tree lived in the Parish of West Hoathly, a tiny village just to the south-west of East Grinstead (a brass plaque to her memory was placed in the church in 1940). Little is known about her apart from the fact that her granddaughter was married in the time of Queen Elizabeth I to an Edmund Ellis, a resident of East Grinstead and she was mentioned as 'Mother Tree' in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* in 1563, which might suggest that she was elderly. She may also have been connected with **Thomas Athothe or Hoath**, a priest, who was condemned for heresy and probably martyred in the diocese of Chichester.

Although there is sufficient family evidence for us to be sure that Thomas Dungate resided in East Grinstead, he is believed to have been arrested at a farm which was then about a mile north of the ancient village of Crawley, Sussex. We know that from 1556 this farm was known as '*Martyrs Farm*'.

Of the third martyr, John Foreman, virtually nothing is known.

What happened to the ashes of the 3 burned in East Grinstead is not known. Such ashes would not normally be buried in consecrated ground. In the late 1800s or early 1900s, Lady Musgrave had the stones inscribed and laid over ashes then believed to be those of the martyrs. The commemorative slabs can be found in St Swithun's churchyard and bear the faded inscription '*fideles usque ad motem*' (faithful even unto death).

You can just see the tower of St Swithun's church across the road to your right, which we will come to as we make our way back down the High Street.



Photo: East Grinstead Museum

Middle Row

You are now standing at the entrance to Middle Row, which stands as an island between the rows of shops. Originally, market traders would set up their stalls outside the church, gradually these spread out onto the very wide street and began to be left there from week to week, eventually they were replaced by the more permanent buildings we see today.

Take a moment to walk through this ancient street and imagine what it must have been like back then.



Middle Row & High Street



Middle Row - Looking East

12 Middle Row

This shop, at the end of Middle Row, from about 1600, was originally a stationers', selling quill pens made by Thomas Palmer, who gained a Royal Warrant for them. The windows, now replaced, were in the shape of pen nibs, but the decorative diamond shape at the top still survives.



Middle Row - Looking West



Portland Road

At the end of Middle Row, you will come to Portland Road. Two houses were demolished to enable this road to be built over their “portlands”, (long gardens) which were designed to give the householders, or burghers, enough space to be self-sufficient through growing food and keeping animals. The length of these plots were 660 feet.

(See Sackville House).

Portland Road - Looking South



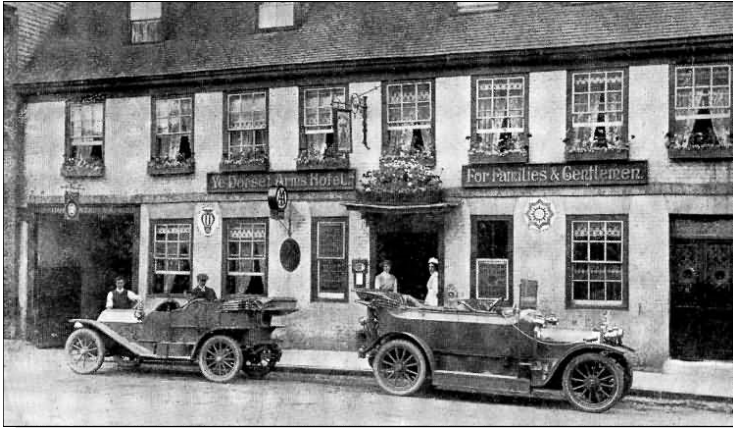
The view from Hermitage Lane to St. Swithun's Church

Hermitage Lane

Parallel to Portland Road this steep, narrow, ancient lane was the only break in the houses from the start of the High Street at Judges Terrace and is named after The Hermitage, a large house dating from 1780.

The Dorset Arms, 58 High Street

Next, we come to The Dorset Arms. The name refers to **Thomas Sackville**, the last Earl of Dorset in 1604. It has been an inn for over 500 years and was an important resting place on the main London/Brighton coaching route, providing coach houses and stabling in the Portland behind. Sadly, the garden no longer remains and has been converted into a car park.



Dorset House, 62-64 High Street

Next door is Dorset House, with its Queen Anne façade. This was constructed later than its neighbours in 1705. The name dates from its acquisition by the Sackville family (Earls and Dukes of Dorset). It was originally a private town house, then later used by solicitors, later as a boarding house and, most recently, restored for offices.

Amherst House, c 1340, next door, is a privately owned residence.



Sackville House, 70-72 High Street (Grade 11 Listed)

Built about 1520, this is a substantial timber-framed house with rooms of wood and lime plaster and the patina of centuries past.

This Wealden hall house with its roof of Horsham stone is now owned and managed by the Landmark Trust. When you enter the yard you escape the bustle of modern day East Grinstead and find yourself in a large, peaceful garden. From the garden there are beautiful views of the Weirwood reservoir and the Ashdown Forest.

In 1919, Geoffrey Webb, a prominent local artist known especially for stained glass windows, painstakingly returned a run-down Sackville House to its former glory. He installed the grille in the gate, so passers-by could enjoy the splendid view across to Ashdown Forest. It was eventually bequeathed to the Landmark Trust by his daughter upon her death in 1995.

The Landmark Trust is one of Britain's leading building conservation charities and can be hired for holidays.

<https://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/search-and-book/properties/sackville-house-11523/#Overview>



Cromwell House 78 - 80 High Street

Grade 11 listed now a privately owned residence, it was originally built for the Payne family. Although many original features remain, it is likely that the height of the building has been reduced over time.

The roof tiles date from c19, although it still retains some of the original Horsham slab stones. The brick flue stack is also original.



The Porch House 82 - 84 High Street c1550 (earliest parts)

Grade 11 listed private residence. Originally timber framed, it is now encased in stone and has been extended in the 17th century. It also has a very substantial chimney stack topped in brick and Horsham slabs for most of the roof.



The Toll Gate

Although long gone, directly next to The Porch House stood the Toll House. The London—East Grinstead Turnpike Trust installed a toll gate in East Grinstead in 1717. Remember, this was the coaching age, long before the age of the steam train and the only way to travel (in style) was by coach. The Toll Keeper, lived in the small octagonal building, with his family and collected money from everyone passing through to fund the road maintenance: the charges were 1d for a horse and 6d for a coach. There are two toll tickets in the Museum. The toll-gate, which was situated at the southern end of the town, was removed some time after 1865, when the London to East Grinstead Turnpike Trust was wound up.



The Toll House is the low building on the left. The tower of St Swithun's church can be seen centre-right in this photograph.

Example of Turnpike Toll Ticket. East Grinstead Museum

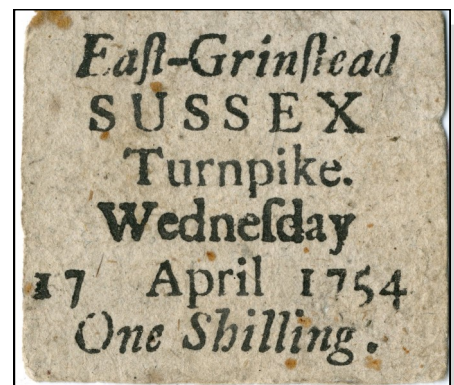


Photo: East Grinstead Museum

The Old Lock Up, 90 High Street (Grade 11 Listed)

Now a private house, this was one of the first purpose-built town gaols and doubled as a residence for the Town Constable. It was built around 1830, although it appears that the first floor was added later, as the brickwork is different from the lower floor. The cell was originally on the right hand side, with its unusual, diamond-shaped, window.



Photo: East Grinstead Museum

Cluttons, 92 High Street

This building was formally called “Poynders” after Dr Frederick Poynder for whom it was built in around 1900. Dr Poynder practised locally and had connections with Queen Victoria Hospital. The house was built of quality local materials in the Arts and Crafts style and since the early 1950s, it has been occupied by Cluttons an independent property consultant.

We now need to begin our journey back down the High Street. Please take care when crossing the road.

Sackville College (Grade 1 Listed)

Directly opposite Poynders is Sackville College, a Jacobean alms-house, founded in 1609 by Robert Sackville, 2nd Earl of Dorset, who left £1000 in his will for a 'hospital or college' for 21 poor men and 10 women plus an endowment of £330 per year for their maintenance. The building was completed in 1616 by his son, the 3rd Earl of Dorset. The maintenance grant was to be made up from monies derived from the various tenancies the Earl owned. However, because of legal disputes, settled in 1684, between the subsequent tenants and the Trust, the final amount was reduced to £216 12 shillings and 9 pence.

Sackville College continues to provide accommodation to the elderly residents of East Grinstead to the present day.



Photo: East Grinstead Museum



Photo: Wikipedia

The Christmas Carol "Good King Wenceslas" was written by The Reverend John Mason Neale while he was warden from 1846-66.



Image: Orthodoxwiki

The McIndoe Statue

To the right of Sackville College and at the far end of the High Street, is the bronze statue dedicated to Sir Archibald McIndoe. He was the world-renowned plastic surgeon, who transformed the disfigured faces and hands of servicemen who sustained horrific burns during WW11 and practised at the town's Queen Victoria Hospital. He recognised the importance of rehabilitation and re-integration into society and encouraged his patients to venture into the town to mix with the locals, so much so that the town of East Grinstead became known as "the town that did not stare".

On Monday 9 June 2014, after 3 years of hard work and fundraising by the Steering Committee, Martin Jennings' statue to Sir Archibald McIndoe, of Queen Victoria Hospital and Guinea Pigs fame, was unveiled by HRH the Princess Royal.

The whole project was made possible by Dave Brown of Dormans Park (Chairman of DUARIS Ltd) whose financial support enabled each stage to be completed on schedule. Thanks to Cowen Architects, to Duaris Ltd for contributing all the groundwork necessary to install the statue and to sculptor Martin Jennings, whose creativity and drive were crucial.



Photograph courtesy Royal Airforce Benevolent Fund.

Members of the Guinea Pig Club at the unveiling of Archibald McIndoe's statue

St Swithun's Church (Grade 11 Listed)

Enter St Swithun's churchyard by Church Lane. A church has existed on the present site for over 1000 years and it was the point around which the original medieval town was planned. Its tower can be seen for miles around. The present church, in the then fashionable 'Gothic' style, opened in 1813. It is the only church in Sussex with 13 bells.



Photo: East Grinstead Museum

In the church yard, there is the tomb of Reverend John Mason Neale, who was Warden of Sackville College and who, together with translating many of today's hymns, wrote the Christmas Carol "Good King Wenceslaus".

See if you can find the mice, hiding on the doors behind church. They are hand-carved into the doors, which are made, by hand, using traditional tools.



The Crown Inn

Leave the churchyard through the small alley opposite the front of the church to find yourself back on the High Street, then turn right to head back into the centre.

Soon you will come to The Crown, which is the oldest pub in East Grinstead. The original building was timber framed and rebuilt about 1800. Originally, The Magistrates Court was held there until moving to Judges Terrace. Several societies had their headquarters in the building. The Crown was the first inn to have electric light which was installed in 1885.

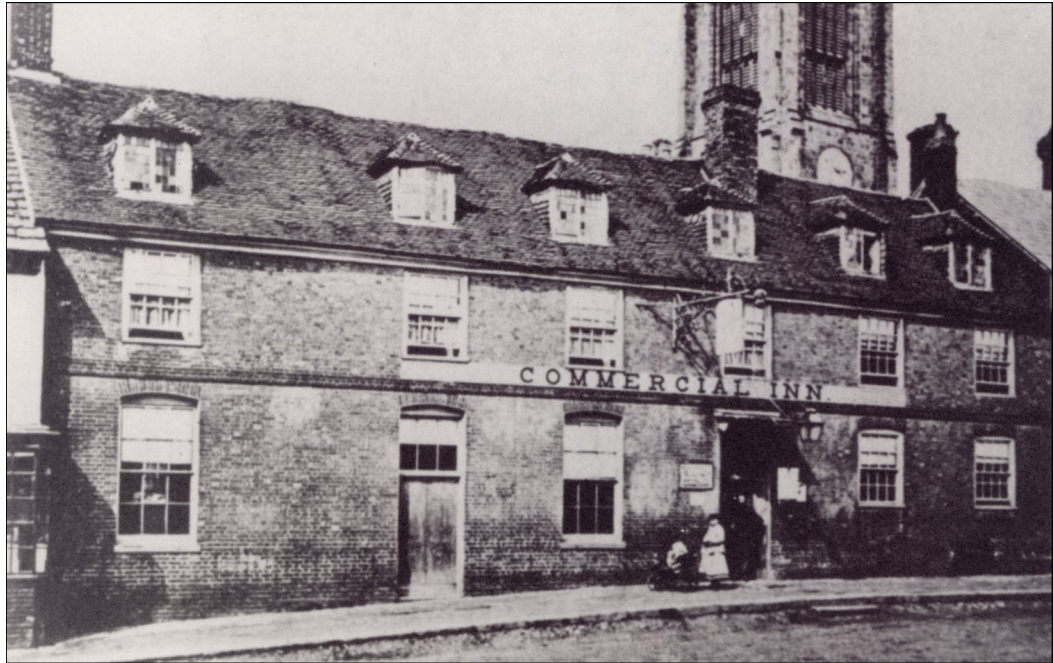


Photo: East Grinstead Museum

The Crown Commercial Inn c 1864 by William Harding



About **William Harding**. Around 1862, he began taking photographic views of East Grinstead. His photographic activities were a side line to his main business of selling cigars and tobacco at his shop in Middle Row. But by 1864 he was regarded as a professional photographer.

The *Post Office Directory of Sussex*, published in 1866, records William Harding as a photographer with premises at **High Street, East Grinstead**.

Harding became well known for his topographical views of East Grinstead and nearly every street and significant building in the town was recorded by him in the period 1862-1867.

Photo: Photo History Sussex

Cantelupe Road Market

The last stop on our journey is East Grinstead's Museum. As previously mentioned, the High Street market was established by Royal Charter in 1247 and in the 1950s, it moved to Cantelupe Road, behind the Crown Hotel. There were animal pens to the front and an auction house behind. The market was started by a local firm of auctioneers, which owned the land and continued as a thriving cattle market until closing in the 1990s.



Ariel view of Cantelupe Road showing the cattle pens



East Grinstead Museum

When the market closed, the Town Council bought the land and gifted it to the Museum Trustees. With the help of Lottery funding, a new museum opened in 2006, standing on the exact footprint of the old auction house. It houses both exhibits telling the story of East Grinstead and a large, permanent exhibition devoted to Sir Archibald McIndoe, who treated the Guinea Pigs at Queen Victoria Hospital.

Opening Times:

Wednesday to Saturday 10am to 4pm

Sunday and Bank Holidays 1pm to 4pm

tel: 01342 302233

email: info@eastgrinsteadmuseum.org.uk

Web: <https://www.eastgrinsteadmuseum.org.uk/>

For more information please visit: <https://www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk/tourism/>

