

Ewhurst History Society Journal



Hurtwood

In March we had a very interesting presentation on the history of Hurtwood House School by History Society member Louise Haile, who is a teacher there, and who has recently written a book to commemorate the school's first 50 years. We will be visiting the school in September, and I have written about the history of the house; and two of the boarding houses, Cornhill Manor and Ewhurst Place. Interestingly, both Cornhill Manor and Ewhurst Place have previously been schools, and there is a link with the educational philosophy of Charlotte Mason who pioneered the idea of 'Home Schools'.

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A SCHOOL WITH A VIEW - HURTWOOD HOUSE

by Louise Haile

Hurtwood House School, nestled just below the top of Holmbury Hill, has remained something of a mystery to many local inhabitants, so it was a pleasure to share the history of its creation recently, and to draw attention to its impressive contribution to both local employment and business, as well as adding to the range of education on offer not just locally, but to a far wider world as well. Founded in 1970, and with a portfolio of extraordinary boarding houses, Hurtwood has quietly colonised the Surrey Hills – Holmbury Hill, Leith Hill, Peaslake and Pitch Hill, preserving some extraordinary buildings intact in the process, but converting buildings designed for leisured living into part of an extraordinary experiment into more meaningful and enjoyable education. It is the story of one individual and his family, a singular dream, decades of hard work and a lot of luck.



Above: Louise with Richard Jackson at the launch of her book

So, once upon a time in Soho, in the swinging sixties, one Richard Jackson had a dream – of a school that could capture the warmth and intimacy and fun of junior school. When learning was exciting, not exacting, and all the teachers knew your name but for the right reasons. You could talk to them and they would actually listen. But he was in his late twenties, in Soho, at the heart of the glamorous but brittle London advertising scene. Education? A new type of school? Really? Yes.

Coming from a family dedicated to public service, with missionary grandparents and an architect father passionately committed to public service (including the post-war reconstruction of Britain), he found himself, in spite of his considerable success, worried: just what would he tell his kids when they asked

what he had done with his life? His own education beyond prep school had proved unrewarding, and rebellion had backed him into an unhappy corner by the age of 16. He couldn't wait to leave Cranleigh School (which had educated his father and grandfather) and why on earth would he go back?

While he waited in the 1950s post-war queue to take up the place he had earned to study at Cambridge, he took up a temporary post at a nearby prep school that subsequently proved to be rather prestigious. He found himself with a class of wonderfully challenging 10-year-olds and it was a revelation: he felt like the 'lion-tamer' of all these little chaps and totally loved it. Pulled aside by the headmaster, he was complimented warmly on his skills for what felt like the very first time. When said Headmaster rather tragically died, Richard felt like he had lost his first-ever champion, and the joys of classroom were put aside at the end of the year.

Cambridge and a degree followed, and of course the need to 'get a job', mainly in order to support the rather desirable lifestyle of a flat in London. This brought him serendipitously to the 'mAd men' of Soho (rather than Madison Avenue) having accepted a job in advertising that had been turned down by Tim Brooke-Taylor. He flourished. Making director of his third agency by the tender age of 28, however, he wobbled. How would he justify himself to his children, he wondered, by which of course he meant himself? When had he felt most fulfilled? That memory of his own classroom – the achievement and excitement he had felt – the seeds were still there. One year, he felt, one year to 'have a go' at that dream, of recreating the joy of learning so soon lost in the face of adolescence, even if it was only one year.



Richard and Linda at their wedding in 1964

'So how do people start schools?' Having asked a fairly simple question of educational agency Gabbittas Thring, he found himself heading down to 'an eccentric set-up in Surrey'. Leaving behind a comfortable family house in Kensington, Richard and Linda and three little Jacksons arrived at Leith Hill Place, a freezing cold, smallish country house with cultural and historical connections and views to die for. It was 1970 and change was very definitely in the air. What they found were a bunch of assorted pupils and tutors assembled by one Lord Keyes, originally to facilitate the education of his own children at home and expanded to at least share the expense.



Left: Leith Hill Place in 1970.

Within short measure (there was no money in the pot, it seemed) Richard found himself the leaseholder of this crumbling atmospheric piece of the National Trust empire. He paid £6,000 for the fixture and fittings which proved little more than an ancient and ferocious old oven and a few odd sticks of furniture, and the vision that

would become Hurtwood House now had a shape. He set about refining and enlarging the student list and the door opened that year with a motley crew of 17 pupils and assorted part-time tutors. Only one lived in: the attic at the top was home to the mysterious Val Bolan, described by all who recall these early years as having a kind of Rasputin-like appearance and charisma. An eccentric academic, he was often to be found at the grand piano, music drifting out into the gardens, and is recalled with reverence by many. The house was packed. Without any clear teaching space, Richard began to create avantgarde areas of learning: no classrooms here, but lots and lots of learning, coaching, encouraging, cajoling and living. It was one very busy and lively world.



Above: Val Bolan

Everyone helped out with pretty well everything, from teaching, cooking and cleaning to driving. Linda was feeding the rambling household of students and staff, raising three small children, cleaning and helping with the teaching as 'everyone did!' Two Leith Hill stalwarts were Mrs Pike and Mrs Cosham who lived in the cottages opposite and helped domestically for decades to come.



With another little (Ted) Jackson on the way Georgina Giacomuzzi was recruited, taking over the catering and charged with providing 'good food, emphatically not institutional food'. She described what she found as 'not quite a commune, but certainly alternative, and different enough to be interesting.' She fitted in alongside au pairs various, kids, dogs, tutors, and like everyone else 'did everything' and was never bored, and 'never left.'

Left: Gina Giacomuzzi keeps an eye on the latest (4th) little Jackson - Ted

Teaching at Leith Hill? The only equipment was a second-hand Remington typewriter – ably commanded by one highly capable Sheila Moore, soon to be known as Sheila Cheshire (who some may remember as the redoubtable commander of the local division of Horse Rangers – any memories stirred?) Taking control of front of house and finances, Sheila made sure the dream worked, and meanwhile student numbers were growing, alongside the gradual garnering of promising teachers and staff. This was certainly fulfilling Richard's aim of 'a school that didn't look like a school or smell like a school.' Here was a houseful of teenagers of different nationalities and a flock of little kids creating a 'bohemian and crazy' world that was 'never dull'. There were 'BBQs under the trees with everyone sitting on logs and on the grass.' The pastoral idyll that Richard had envisioned was taking its own wacky shape. From the start however, the fun was balanced with high expectations: the social independence and freedoms were always traded against academic rigour and sustained hard work. The house was bursting at the seams, but student numbers were steady, everybody mucked in

with everything, domestic and scholastic, pretty much from dawn to dusk, and gradually there were results: student passed exams, moved on, indeed two of them taking up Oxbridge places, others arrived in their stead.

And Richard? 'I was doing what I wanted: I was absolutely in my element'. Teaching English, with bits of History and Geography thrown in, learning was taking place in any nook and cranny. A child's blackboard was commandeered in lieu of any formal equipment: it was all 'seat of the pants' non-stop labour, but it *was* working. Students and family and teachers made it work. One year turned into four. The 'dream' had survived its first years: the problem now was space. Was there another house that was not a purpose-built school they could expand into? One day the postman mentioned a large house over on the next hill that had been empty for 8 years. Was that worth taking a look at? I hear your chorus: of course it was!

mediate Possession.

BETWEEN GUILDFORD AND DORKING

650 feet up, facing South with panoramic views.

occupying a sheltered position, the Norman Shaw residence which was erected in 1914 is in first-class order. It is approached by a long drive with Lodge at entrance. 11 reception rooms, 10 bedrooms or dance room, 9 bathrooms and 4 servants' rooms, 4 bathrooms, tile-tiled domestic offices.

Companies' Electric Light and Water. Central Heating.



Telephone. Septic tank drainage. Garage accommodation for 4 cars. Two cottages. The Pleasure Grounds are an outstanding feature and set in terraces which form a delightful setting to the house. Tennis court.

FINE SWIMMING POOL.

Lily ponds. Well-stocked kitchen garden. Woodland. In all about 40 ACRES.

FOR SALE, FREEHOLD.

The property was the subject of an illustrated article in "Country Life" about 35 years ago.

Owner's Agents: Messrs. KNIGHT, FRANK & RUTLEY, 20, Hanover Square, London, W.1. (36,409)

Ref: 3771
(6 lines)

20, HANOVER SQUARE, LONDON, W.1

Telegrams: "Gallerio, Weeds, London"

House for sale!

January 1974: the next defining moment, arrival at Hurtwood House. It was a very cold winter, everyone recalls, and Richard, Linda and Georgina found the house at the end of a scruffy chalk driveway. The house alone was for sale, without the Lodge, and with a boundary that ran along the edge of the present top courtyard. This viewing has earned its place in the annals of HH History and foundational myth. The house was empty and neglected, yet in spite of everything its limed oak beauty and understated grandeur must have been fully evident. From the start it was clear that this was THE place. It was a house, and most importantly 'it didn't look like a school, it didn't smell like a school.' This had always been part of Richard's dream manifesto. His mind was made up at once. There was, however, a small problem: as the agent showed them round there seemed to be another keen buyer who was already rather loudly declaiming how good this would be for the studio. Determined to clinch the deal Richard surprised the agent by offering the full asking price, stipulating only that the deal was completed within 24 hours. There was to be no debate or demurring, and although it did take a little longer than the stipulated day, Hurtwood House was swiftly well and truly acquired for the princely sum of £110,000. The joke? There was no competition for this gracious oddity, and they had probably paid a lot more than needed for the place. But hey ho for Hurtwood: everything was about to change.

The rest of 1974 was a blur of activity as the House was readied for its new life. Massive building adaptations were needed to satisfy the demands of Health and Safety: the dull necessity of a fire-escape meant the introduction of a huge supporting beam to support the left side of the building. Fire doors, bedrooms, teaching space (not yet called classrooms) accommodation for Richard and Linda and the four children, catering for all – oh yes, and Planning. Ahem.



Left The first winter

The deadline was met (seat of the pants) and the doors opened in late September for around 50 students. Leith Hill was retained as a boarding house for boys, transported across the hills in a large and legendary white bus. More boys and girls were to board on campus, where the learning and catering would take place. It was a massive gamble, based on the premise that more students could be recruited to justify

the expense and outlay. Existing students feared that intimacy would be lost; Richard meanwhile had something to promote that at least looked more like education: 1975 went by in a flash. His friends and enemies thought him insane and largely said so, but the dream was still alive and five years had passed.



Above: Staff and students on the fountain lawn at the rear of the house, 1970s.

By Christmas the exhausted Jackson family relaxed with some energetic skiing, returning on New Year's Eve to some rather late drinking and celebrating with local pals. The next day, New Year 1976 was to prove the next moment for our tale of Hurtwood House. It brought in the legendary David Broome, who, alongside his wife Gill, joined a raft of extraordinarily talented new staff, who would man the dream across the subsequent decades and soundly into the 21st century. Like so many of the cornerstones of Hurtwood's foundation, the Broomes came for a few months and left over three decades later, inspired by what Richard had created and just what this approach to education could achieve and still achieves. David soon moved on from only teaching his beloved Economics, to organizing the timetable, disciplining the students, soon assuming the role of Deputy Headmaster. Oh, and being the most amazing Antipodean 'can-do' innovator, dealing in between the heavy stuff with everything from mowing the grass to building the barbie.

David and Gill (who many may remember, lived in Ewhurst for many years) joined two more Hurtwood legends, whom many of you may still know: Mike Fanya and Alison Morton (both History Society members) had both already taken leaps of faith and committed themselves to Richard's vision of what education could be. 1976 brought in a new era, consolidating this patchwork of amazing talents.

Economics (David) and French was added to the EFL post that had drawn Ali in, and Politics and Law (Mike) enhanced the curriculum, while timetabling, student monitoring, support and nurture entered a new phase of professionalism, even while it still pivoted on the original policy of weekly grading life at Hurtwood entered a new phase: plenty of time for fun but also increasing commitment to a growing curriculum and community.

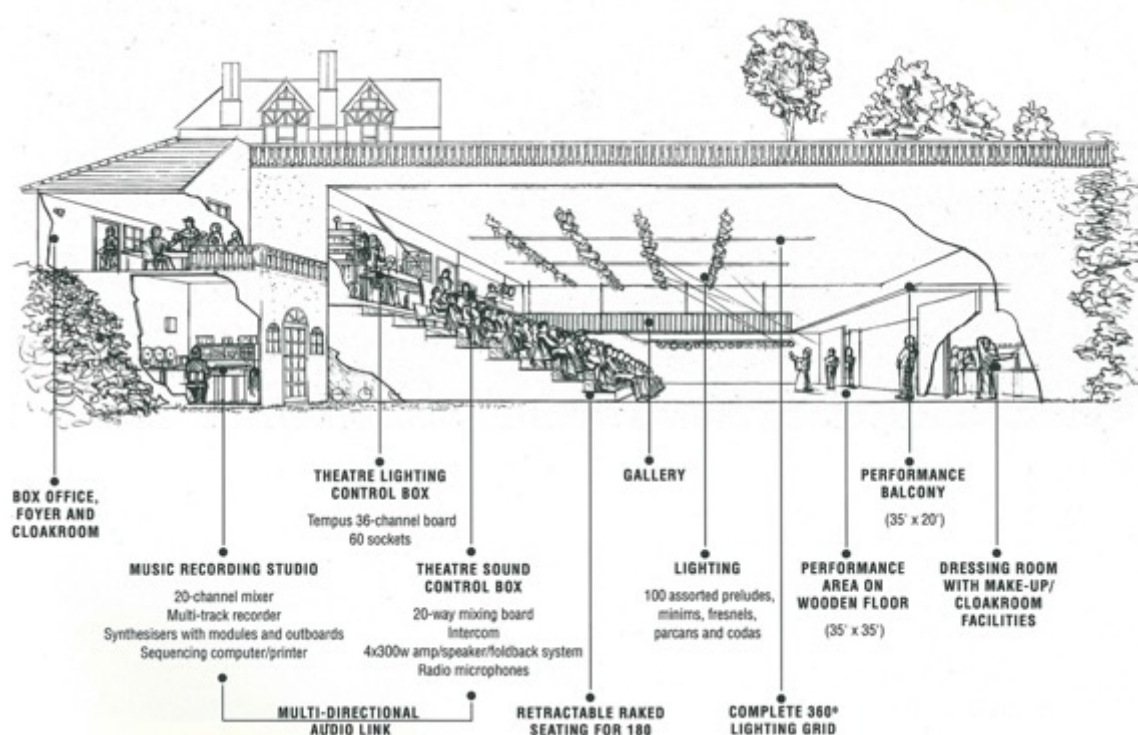


Ali Morton (left) and Mike Fanya (right), both Ewhurst History Society members

Luckily for Hurtwood and for us all, Alison began to record Hurtwood creativity in the regular school magazine, wisely storing copies and other articles for posterity; much of Hurtwood's early years would have been lost without her commitment. With David largely running the school day-to-day, Richard was finally freer to 'sell' his educational vision to the world, and critically, he had now something to show prospective parents and students. With lots of international students alongside increasing numbers of British kids, many of whom had lived abroad, exam results were beginning to consolidate; two-year A levels became the norm alongside a broad range of 'O' Levels.

Boarding houses were being added, along with more adjoining land, extending the campus and adding playing fields. Richard and Linda managed to buy the beautiful Radnor House in 1977, after another tip from the postman, bringing invaluable adjoining land as well as Radnor Cottage that was soon housing students as well as some classroom space. The Lodge arrived in 1983, tying up the land around the main house. Meanwhile Ewhurst Place added to the boarding capacity in 1980, with Beatrice Webb House opening its doors for business in 1987, and Peaslake House enlarging the magic circle in 1990. Cornhill Manor (the jewel in the crown?) arrived very much later, in 2007, when the National Trust finally claimed back Leith Hill, its treasure on the hill, where all this had begun.

All the while the school was growing, consolidating, changing the lives now of hundreds of students each year. There is however one more key moment of change for Hurtwood which has defined and clarified its unique nature and success. It means going back to the mid-eighties, as they say: we've reached an epiphanic moment, when, as Richard puts it, 'the scales fell from (his) eyes. One Summer School brought along a drama teacher called Mike Friend. He organised a drama project in Private Study, and Richard went along to watch: a frothy satirical skit, it involved a cast of mesmerized students and an enthusiastic and totally absorbed student audience. 'Everyone was focused, disciplined and totally on board with the proceedings,' Richard recalls, 'having so much fun'. With his sharp eye for the challenges of education, he saw instantly the possibilities of this within the main school curriculum. 'This was a turning point in my mind.' He had seen the future and the die was cast. Here was something to focus student energy and engagement; here was something to harness and trade against the rigours and rewards of traditional studies. Richard remembers the negotiations as immediate, short and to the point. "Will you come and work for me?" was the simple question and Mike, clearly ready for new challenges pronounced 'Build me a theatre and I will come.'



The Theatre

It's tempting to say that the rest is history, and of course in so many ways it is. The commitment made in this decision has fundamentally shaped the school ever since, generating all the other areas of creativity that over the years have likewise burgeoned into extraordinary successes in their own right: Music, Media, Dance. It became central. 'It intruded on everything... you saw its effect in action,' Richard recalls, his excitement there even now.

So Hurtwood in 2026 is still a thriving hub of academic and creative energy, with a curriculum that Richard could only have dreamt of in 1970. With a focus on the arts, but always balanced with a pragmatic emphasis on the real-life needs of the workplace, it prepares students for an extraordinary range of career outcomes. Like all schools in the independent sector, it is weathering challenging times, but it continues to astonish and reward so many students year in, year out, many of whom cannot quite believe that they can have so much fun, even as they work harder than they ever have before. It is an enormously rewarding place to work – so much so that I can't quite seem able to retire it seems. On another local level, it still generates a huge range of employment and income, not least in the local hostelrys and catering establishments, for students as they come and go, and the provision of all that that implies.

It is a happy place, decisively non-conformist, unique, and lively. For many kids it has quite simply changed their viewpoints and lives. In a world that has become increasingly conformist, Hurtwood still marches to its own individual drum and long may that beat go on.



(If anyone has any memories of Hurtwood House School over the last 56 years I would love to hear from you! Louise_haile@hotmail.com)

EUSTON HENRY SARTORIUS AND HURTWOOD

By Janet Balchin

Early career

Euston Henry Sartorius was born on 6 June 1844 in Cintra, Portugal and was one of three brothers and three sisters. His father, George, later Sir George Sartorius, had served with the Royal Navy at the Battle of Trafalgar when he was just 16 years old, but after the Napoleonic Wars he took up a command with Dom Pedro IV's Liberal forces in the Portuguese Liberal War and, in 1832, commanded a fleet of 60 ships in the 'Landing at Mindelo' which proved to be a turning point in the war. This led to his dismissal from the Royal Navy for being a mercenary, but he was reinstated in 1836, and finished his career with the highest rank, Admiral of the Fleet.

Despite their father's distinguished naval career all three brothers went into the Army. Euston and his brother Reginald have the distinction of being one of only four sets of brothers to have both won the Victoria Cross. His older brother, Reginald, was awarded his VC in 1874 for rescuing a casualty under heavy fire during the First Ashanti Expedition. Euston won his VC in 1879 in the 2nd Afghan War. The three brothers had been educated at Victoria College, Jersey, and one of the boarding houses is called Sartorius in their honour.



*Euston (far left)
with his brothers, George, (centre)
and Reginald (right)*

When he won his VC, Euston was serving with the 59th Nottinghamshire, (later, the 2nd Battalion of the East Lancashire Regiment) in Afghanistan during the 2nd Afghan War. His citation reads *"For conspicuous bravery during the action at Shiah-jui, on the 24th October, 1879, in leading a party of five or six men of the 59th Regiment against a body of the enemy, of unknown strength, occupying an almost inaccessible position on the top of a precipitous hill. The nature of the ground made any sort of regular formation impossible, and Captain Sartorius had to bear the first brunt of the attack from the whole body of the enemy, who fell upon him and his men as they gained the top of the precipitous pathway; but the gallant and determined bearing of this Officer, emulated as it was by his men, led to the most perfect success, and the surviving occupants of the hill top, seven in number, were all killed. In this encounter Captain Sartorius was wounded by sword cuts in both hands, and one of his men was killed."* He was presented with his VC by Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle on 1 July 1881, and it is now on display at the National Army Museum in Chelsea.

As a result of his injuries, he partially lost the use of his left hand and was appointed to a staff post, but went on to serve in the 1882 Anglo-Egyptian War, where he was Mentioned in Despatches; and later as a Military Attaché to Japan, and was promoted Major General in 1899. He retired in 1901, but was appointed Honorary Colonel of the South Lancashire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Volunteers), a post he held until his death in 1921.

Family

Euston married Emily Jane Cook in 1874. She was the daughter of Francis Cook, a wealthy merchant, and had also grown up in Cintra. They had three children, Elfrida Emily, born in 1876; Daisy Augusta, born in 1877; and Euston Francis Frederick, born in 1882.

On the death of his father, Euston inherited one of his father's Portuguese titles of Count of Penha Firme. In addition to his VC Euston also had another medal for bravery, the Royal Humane Society Bronze Medal for saving the lives of three girls whose boat had capsized in 1869, at Broadstairs. In the 1896 Birthday honours he was appointed Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB) in the Military Division.

Hurtwood

The Sartorius family had a London home, The Old Swan House, on the Chelsea Embankment, but around 1903, they bought a plot of land at Radnor in Ewhurst and commissioned Christopher Hatton Turnor to build a country house. Turnor had been asked by George Frederick Watts to design the Watts Gallery in Compton. Although they could afford to commission well known, fashionable architects, George and Mary Watts deliberately chose to support aspiring young people in the arts. However, his architectural output appears to be small and limited to the early 20th Century, although he did design another house in Ewhurst, Copse Hill. In 1903 he inherited a large estate in Lincolnshire and in later life became an author and campaigner for agricultural reform.



Hurtwood would have been a big commission for a relatively inexperienced young architect. The house is set on a spur of land, just below the summit of Holmbury Hill, with extensive views to the south east,

south and west. It is built of local stone and, although all one build, has the appearance of a place that has evolved over time. With its timbered gables and imposing three-storey porch, the east and south elevations are in the 'Tudor Revival' style, popularised by architects such as Richard Norman Shaw. The effect was so convincing, that a 1951 article in *The Tatler* describes it as a "*magnificent Elizabethan country mansion, one of the finest in the county*"! However, on closer inspection, small details, such as use of tile under the window frames are Arts & Crafts features, which would not be found in an original Tudor house. The front elevation faces east and over the door is a copper panel with entwined roses and the date 1907. To each side are the initials ES, for Euston Sartorius and Emily Sartorius.

To the rear, the west elevation is much more eclectic and original, with Arts & Crafts features such as the wide bay windows and demi-lune windows. A narrow timber balcony originally ran around the south and west elevations but has been removed for safety reasons.

Inside the long galleries, at ground floor and first floor level, have an Arts & Crafts feel. The principal reception room is very large and known as the Great Room. An article in *Country Life* notes that the stone mantelpiece had been removed from a '*well known country mansion*'. Off the Great Room is a study area with a west-facing bay window. The bay is very wide, but low, which concentrates the panoramic effect of the view.



Mr & Mrs Huggett, the owners in 1951, by the fireplace in the 'Great Room'
(picture: *The Tatler*)

Emily Sartorius worked with Turnor to design the gardens, taking her family home Monserrate in Cintra as an inspiration. Cintra, high in the hills and overlooking the Atlantic, was popular for summer residences by the Portuguese nobility and the town has many palaces with lush gardens. Monserrate had been destroyed in the 1755 earthquake and, despite attempts at rebuilding, was still in ruins in the 19th century when Emily's father, Francis Cook, leased the estate from 1856. In 1863 he was able to purchase it and set about rebuilding it with architect James Knowles in a mixture of Romantic, Mudéjar and Moorish Revival styles.

The house is approached by a narrow drive that curves into the line of the hill; the enclosed effect enhanced by mature shrubs. then, as one arrives at the house, the dramatic view to the South Downs suddenly opens out, with the house to the right and a terrace with two gazebos framing the view. Below the terrace there was originally a long pond, but the school's theatre is now cleverly built into the space below and the area grassed over. To the right a flight of original steps descends to the lower level.

At the rear of the house the land drops away, giving the feel of a sunken garden. This is a small formal garden with a central fountain flanked by lily pools. Hidden in the woodland are two gazebos, sadly now in a ruined state, featuring Portuguese *Azulejo* tiles. The gardens have featured in *Country Life* and in Gertude Jekyll's book '*Gardens for Small Country Houses*'.



*A ruined garden
feature with
Portuguese Azulejo
tiles*

The First World War

War was declared on 4 August 1914, and on 7 August the Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener, called for men aged 19 - 30 to volunteer. Only three houses in the parish, Hurtwood House, Holmbury House and High Wykehurst, had telephones but word travelled quickly in the close-knit community and a meeting in the Church Hall was arranged for the evening of the same day.

The 1911 census suggests that by 1914 there were probably around 96 men aged 19 - 30 in the parish, out of a total population of approx. 1,115. A recruiting station was opened in the Capital and Counties Bank premises [now Mount Cottage] and the first batch of about twenty recruits left the village for Stoughton Barracks on 2 September. The previous evening Maj. Gen. Sartorius entertained the men to a send-off dinner at 'The Bull Hotel'. By mid-September 78 men had volunteered.

It was also realised that there might be a need for home defence and a meeting was held in the Church Hall in December 1914. Other villages in the district were also keen to set up a corps and The Hurtwood Volunteer Training Company was formed with Maj. Gen. Sartorius as Acting Voluntary Commander. No doubt the men were proud to serve under a VC winner and by February 1915 they had recruited 191 men.

In March 1915 it was reported that Maj. Gen. Sartorius's son, Capt. Euston Francis Frederick Sartorius, serving in the Grenadier Guards, had been seriously wounded at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle. He was evacuated to Boulogne Base Hospital, but died three weeks later on 5 April.



Major General Euston Henry Sartorius (left) and his son Capt. Euston Francis, Frederick, Sartorius (right) at the time of the First World War.

Death

Euston died at his London home on 19 February 1925, aged 80, and he is buried in Ewhurst churchyard. His grave is in the north east corner of the churchyard near the gate to the Old Rectory drive. It is a simple kerbed plot which also commemorates his son who is also remembered on the Ewhurst War Memorial and the plaques in both churches. His wife and two daughters are buried nearby. Emily had died on 6 January 1915, just 3 months before their son was killed. Neither of his daughters married; his younger daughter Daisy died in 1937, and her elder sister Elfrida died in 1957.

Right: Euston's grave in Ewhurst churchyard, near the gate to The Glebe.



EWHURST PLACE

Ewhurst Place was built in the 1880s on the site of the original Icemongers or, Isemongers Farm. The farm was purchased by Col. Warne Lemmon in 1880 and he demolished it and replaced it with Ewhurst Place. A new farmhouse, which is still called Isemongers, was built higher up the hill and an old barn was dismantled and moved to the new site. The house is built of stone with crenelations. Over the entrance is a relief of the Legend of the Pelican, who drew her own blood to feed her young, and the motto 'If you do a thing do it thoroughly'. The Pelican is an ancient Christian and Masonic symbol.

Thomas Warne Lemmon was born in 1838 in Hampshire and served with the North Middlesex Regiment in 1860 before being promoted to Captain and transferring to the 1st Royal Surrey Militia in 1866. From 1887 he served with the 3rd East Surrey Regiment as Lieutenant-Colonel and in 1898 was appointed Honorary Colonel of the Battalion. He was created C.B. in 1897 and K.C.B. in 1922.

Firstly, he married Emma, in 1864, but she died in 1865 and he subsequently married Ellerie in 1886 and they had a son, Charles. Thomas sold Ewhurst Place to William Rigby in 1904.

William Rigby was a railway contractor, a lucrative trade to be in during Victorian times. William had been born in Croydon in 1850, and by 1871 was working as a railway contractor's clerk in the midlands, but soon became a contractor in his own right with an office in Worksop. Most of the 'boom' of railway construction was over by the 1880s, but there was still a lot of work for branch lines and William won a contract for the Bexley Heath Railway. He also worked for the South Eastern Railway in collaboration with the engineer Col. Holman F. Stephens. (The engineer surveyed the route and the contractor built the infrastructure). He had married Emma in 1873 and they had a daughter, Margaret. Emma died in 1880, and he remarried in 1897, to Adelia, and died in 1929.

In the 1930s Ewhurst Place was briefly a school, and during the war was taken over by Lloyds Bank Executor & Trustee Department who had moved their offices and staff out of London. Initially the staff used the bunk beds in the dormitories! Staff were responsible for all housework except cooking, and a Domestic Committee was formed to organise rotas for cleaning, laundry, washing up etc. As people settled in, some staff were able to move out to better local accommodation; some even moving their

families down from London. Huts were erected in the grounds for offices. The house became a boarding house for Hurtwood in 1980.



Left: Ewhurst Place during The Second World War.

CORNHILL MANOR

Cornhill Manor was originally a Victorian house called Malquoits, but was given the name of Cornhill Manor when it was owned by Cornhill Insurance who used it as a training centre.

Previous to the Victorian house there was a farm and cottages on the main road, opposite what is now Coneyhurst Lane, confusingly known by various names including Brookhurst / Brockhurst, and also Mallands / Wellands / Mallards / Mawland / Malquads. The farm was advertised for sale in 1861 as 'Brookhurst and Mallquods'.

In the 1871 Census it is named as Malquoits, & Cheapside, and was occupied by Henry Kirke Swann, a gentleman, who presumably had bought the old farmhouse and rebuilt it. [There are multiple entries for Cheapside, for what is now Coneyhurst Lane on the other side of the road.] His son Henry, known as Harry, was born in Ewhurst in 1871 and grew up to be a respected ornithologist and author of ornithology books.

Walter Webb, a London solicitor, acquired Malquoits in the late 1870s and extended it. He became very involved in village life and was a member of the first parish council in 1894. A newspaper report from 1879 describes a cricket match, on the lawn at Malquoits - Gentlemen *v.* Ewhurst. Mr Webb entertained everyone to luncheon and Ewhurst won by two runs. The club started playing at Ewhurst Green at about the same time and Walter became the president. From 1902 he also offered the use of a field at High Edser (which he also owned) for the Horticultural Society's summer shows, which also included a sports day and an evening dance.



Above: an early 20th century photo of Malquoits.

Walter Webb also organised 'theatricals' at Malquoits. He held a regular autumn house party where guests spent the days hunting or playing tennis and after dinner put on performances in a barn, which had been converted into a theatre. The estate's tenants were invited to be in the audience. The artist Frank Holl painted the scenery and the stage actor Weedon Grossmith was a regular guest. He recalled one occasion that the laughter was so great that Mr Webb had to intervene, saying "*I know how difficult*

it is to restrain our mirth when Mr Grossmith is on stage, but if we don't check our laughter the performance won't be over until midnight". A burly farmer rose from his seat and replied "Excuse me Mr Webb, but it bain't be Mr Grossmith we be laughing at but someone left the barn door open and the pigs have got in, and they be almost pushing us off our seats" Then under the direction of our host the whole audience rose and chivvied the pigs out".

Walter appears to have married late in life. There is no mention of a wife until the 1901 Census when he is aged 58 and married to Annie Georgina and with two children Muriel, aged 8 and Evelyn Maxwell aged 4. Tragically, Capt. Evelyn Maxwell Webb was killed in action on the Somme, aged 19. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial and Ewhurst War Memorial. After the war the Webbs moved away to Hove, but Walter returned to unveil the Ewhurst War Memorial in 1920, and he and his wife and daughter are all buried in Ewhurst.



Above Walter Webb with his son Evelyn and daughter Muriel.



Above right: Evelyn, just before his death on the Somme, aged 19.

The next owner was Sir Charles Ellis, who did not participate in village affairs, and in the mid 1920s it was bought by Edward Morton. But once again the family was hit by the tragedy of war, when their son Donald, a pilot in RAF Bomber Command, was killed in 1939. Edward died in 1940. Mrs. Morton carried on and helped to run the WRVS canteen at the YMCA during the Second World War. She moved to Woking after the war, but was buried in Ewhurst with her husband. Donald is also commemorated on their grave.

After the war it became a school and from 1970 was a training centre for Hobbs Padgett. In 1976 it was bought by Cornhill Insurance who renamed it Cornhill Manor. In 2007 it became a boarding house for Hurtwood House School.

AN INTERESTING EARLY LINK WITH EDUCATION.

By Janet Balchin

Hurtwood has a number of boarding houses in the area, including Ewhurst Place and Cornhill Manor. As Hurtwood prides itself on its different approach to mainstream education it is interesting to know that both Ewhurst Place and Cornhill Manor had previously been small boarding schools run as 'Home Schools', known respectively as 'Ewhurst Home School' and Desmoor School. As well as Ewhurst Place and Desmoor, there was an earlier 'Home School' at Spange Haw [now The Old Forge] on the other side of the road. It is curious that three schools, operating at different times, but all described as 'Home Schools', should be so close together.

The Home School movement followed the principles laid down by the Victorian educationalist Charlotte Mason, who believed that a child is a person in his or her own right, and that education should educate the whole person, not just the mind. She published her ideas in '*Home Education*' in 1886, and founded the Parent's Educational Union [P.N.E.U.] in 1897.

Mrs Alice Hannay established a small school in 1899 at Spange Haw. Assisted by her two daughters and a Swiss governess, she offered education for eight girls. A newspaper advert notes that it was based on "*The latest modern principles*", but does not specifically mention the P.N.E.U. However there does appear to be a link with Ewhurst and the P.N.E.U. as between 1901 and 1905 their journal, "*The Parents' Review*", lists the wife of the rector of Ewhurst, Mrs Clarke-Kennedy as the P.N.E.U. contact for the Guildford area. The Hannays moved away in 1905.

A LADY living in beautiful part of Surrey hills,
OFFERS to GIRLS Thorough EDUCATION on latest
modern principles; number limited to eight; resident certificated
English and Foreign Governesses; riding (own stables), hockey, &c.
Mrs. Hannay, Spange House, Ewhurst, Guildford.



Spange Haw, now called The Old Forge

From 1905 and 1906 the school, now known as 'Spange Haw School', was run by Ellen Parish and Catherine Allen, who were both key figures in the early P.N.E.U. Charlotte Mason had set up a teacher training college, known as the House of Education in Ambleside, in 1892, and Ellen had trained there between 1901 and 1902. After two years of teaching at Ewhurst, she took up a role of working in the head office in London under Netta Franklin. Then, in 1922, she became Vice-Principal of The House of Education and, on Charlotte Mason's death in 1923, was appointed Principal. Catherine Allen also trained at the college and was the author of many articles in "The Parents' Review".

Little is known about the school at Ewhurst Place, other than information in an advert for 1938. Although called a "Home School", it does not advertise any link with the P.N.E.U. and so does not appear to have operated for long as the house was taken by Lloyds Bank during the war.

Left: Advert for Ewhurst Home School

Desmoor School was founded at Malquoits [Cornhill Manor] in 1946 by Henrietta (Netta) Franklin. Netta was the Hon. General Secretary of the P.N.E.U. - a role she held for an amazing 70 years, from 1894 to 1964. Ellen Parish had worked with her at the London office after leaving Spange Haw, but it is not known if Netta had visited Ewhurst during the time the school was operating.

Ewhurst Home School
Boys and Girls — 7 - 16.
Principal - I. C. WALKER, B.A.
ASSISTED BY A COMPETENT STAFF OF QUALIFIED TEACHERS.

Founder: REV. R. C. JONES. Medical Officer: DR. W. H. FORSHAW, F.R.C.S.
Music Teacher: MISS G. ETTE.

The School Syllabus provides a sound modern education leading to University standard. Specific examination requirements receive special attention. Particular consideration is given to backward pupils. All teaching is by the latest approved methods. Playing fields are extensive and games, though encouraged, are not compulsory.

NEW TERM DATES (1937) April 15th. Sept. 23rd. Jan. 12th. (1938)
(Boarders return the day previous)

**EWHURST PLACE, EWHURST
GUILDFORD, SURREY.** TELEPHONE: EWHURST 141.



Desmoor was said to have been named after Desmond Moore, the son of an early benefactress. In 1968 Desmoor amalgamated with another school, Newalls, and moved to Handcross, where it is now known as Handcross Park School.

Left: Netta Franklin.

As well as her involvement with the P.N.E.U., Netta was a leading figure in the women's suffrage movement, being a founder member of the Jewish League for Women's Suffrage (she was Jewish) and became President of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies in 1916. Her name and portrait (along with 58 other women) are on the plinth of the statue of Millicent Fawcett unveiled in Parliament Square in 2018.