The Heron-Allen Society

Newsletter no. 16

Spring 2010

Edward Heron-Allen outside Large Acres, Selsey, 1928

THE TENTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

Theme: Edward Heron-Allen and Local History and Archaeology

Venue: West Sussex Record Office, Chichester, West Sussex

Date and time: Saturday 3 July 2010 at 11.00. Tea and coffee will be available from 10.30.

[Transport: There are direct trains to Chichester from Victoria Station in London, from Gatwick Airport and from Portsmouth and Brighton. The Record Office is opposite the Westgate roundabout and is ten minutes walk from Chichester Station. There is parking behind the Record Office building]

Programme:

Welcome and introduction by the Chairman

David Bone, 'Edward Heron-Allen and the Geology of Selsey'

Martin Bates, 'The Selsey area - climate and sea-level change over the last 500,000 years'

Timothy J. McCann, 'Edward Heron-Allen and 'The Mound' at Selsey, 1911'.

Lunch

Annual General Meeting.

John P. Mahoney and Barbara P Mahoney, 'Preamble to the Le Gallienne vs. Heron-Allen 'Incident': Part II: The Clouds of Discontent at the Sette of Odd Volumes, 1889-1890'

'The Mound; at Church Norton, Selsey in 1797 by Grimm

Lunch has been arranged at No.12 Wine bar and restaurant, Westgate, Chichester. A menu is enclosed with this Newsletter. Those wishing to lunch with the Society should chose one item for each course and book with Juliet Field at 40 Portland Road, Oxford. OX2 7EY. Tel: 01865 552640. E-Mail: jools.field@dsl.pipex.com

THE HERON-ALLEN MEMORIAL LECTURE, LADY MARGARET HALL, OXFORD, 5 MARCH 2010

This year the lecture was given by Professor John Beddington, with the title *'A Changing World: Challenges of the 21st Century'*.

After a short explanation of the history of the Heron-Allen lecture and scholarships at the college from the Principal, Dr Frances Lannon MA, DPhil, FRHistS, Professor Beddington was then introduced to us by the eminent conservationist Professor David Macdonald DSc, FRSE, head of Oxford's 'WildCRU' .

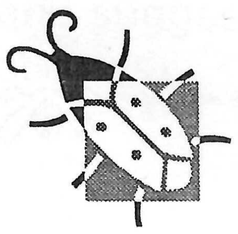
Professor Beddington CMG, FRS is the Government Chief Scientific Advisor and Head of the Government Office for Science, a role he took over in January 2008. He was a most engaging and amusing speaker, and he held the rapt attention of his whole large audience in the very new Simpkins Lee lecture theatre at Lady Margaret Hall in Oxford. One thing for which he is especially known is his description of the 'Perfect Storm' of social and political consequences resulting from the increasing energy, food, and water shortages, and demographic changes which scientific studies predict by the year 2030.

In his talk he gave us a brief but most informative overview of these trends and changes, focusing on the probable areas of conflict (trans-border aquifers, GM crops, biofuels, distribution of wealth, climate-change measures in developing countries, and so on), and acknowledging that there was much more to be said on the sociological side of the arguments than he had touched on in the talk.

One of the most dramatic examples of progress in feeding the world was a photo of a vast field in Brazil where soya and cotton are rotated twice a year; it showed a line of machines harvesting one crop, while not far behind them another line of machines planted the next! There is no intermediate tilling, so no extra energy input and no dustbowl effect.

On the down side, his phrase 'the ubiquity of stupidity' struck a chord in describing the sort of obfuscation and inefficiency we are all at one level or another familiar with.

I wonder what our revered Perpetual President would have made of it all!



In the reception that followed I was delighted to be introduced to Karen Cleaver, one of the past Heron-Allen scholars, now a trustee of the bequest, and together we went to look again at the memorial stone to Armorel before we left after a most enjoyable and informative evening.

Juliet Field

THE FIRST TEN YEARS

Ten years ago on 5th June 2000 the Heron-Allen Society first burst forth to the world.

To remind you; the objectives were put down as:

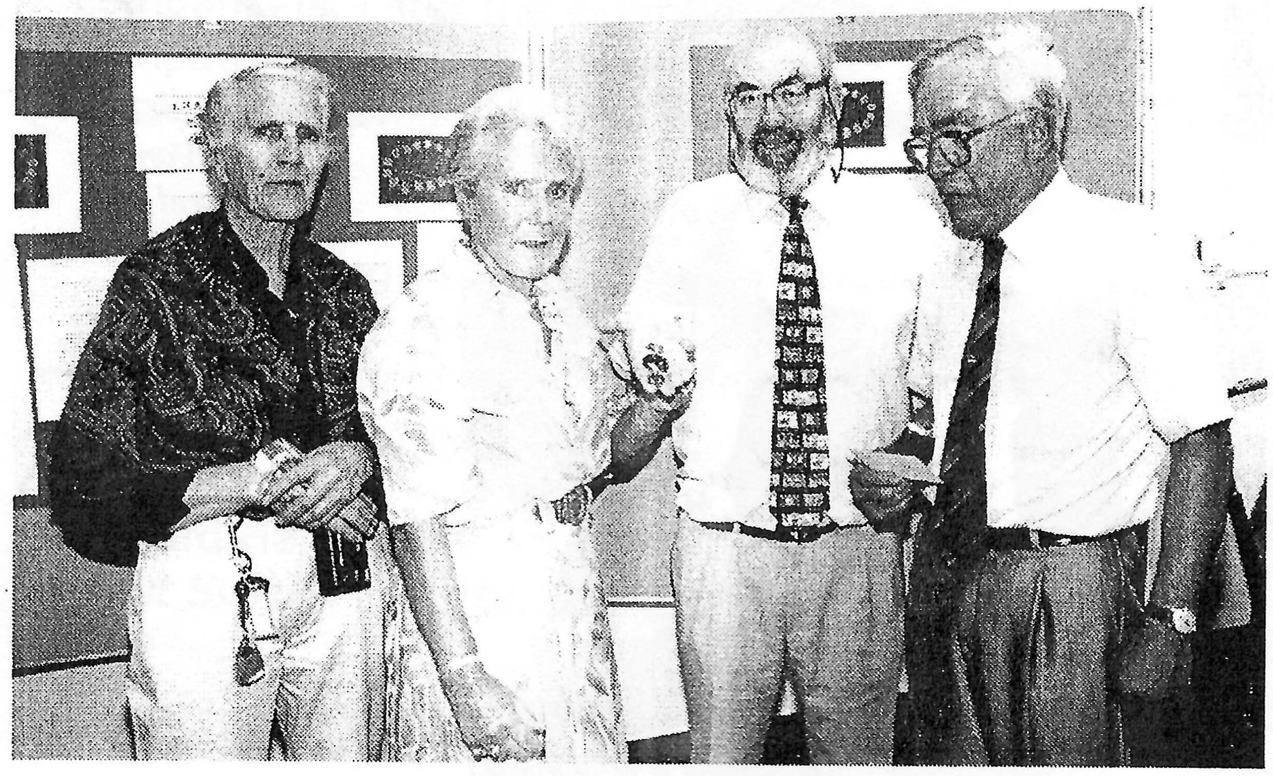
"To study and record all aspects of the life and interest of Edward Heron-Allen and to promote his work.

Additionally, the Society will encourage the publication of biographical material, perhaps first in separate studies relating to his different interests and the final target of a complete biography".

There were six people present who formed the original committee and from that committee we have grown to a membership over 60 world-wide.

Our achievements may seem small but we have published regular Newsletters – sixteen so far, now published twice a year - and thirteen Opuscula (It was the determination of the Founders that all our publications should be of a high standard as befitted everything that EH-A (as we now refer to him) himself produced. His grandson "stole" the name Opusculum from the Sette of Odd Volumes of which EH-A was a member and one-time President). We have held nine annual Symposia – our tenth will be held in Chichester on 3 July – on different themes and at different venues. Our themes have included Heron-Allen's War Journals; his scientific career; Heron-Allen and Music; Heron-Allen and friends; his daughter Armorel; archaeology and local history and various miscellaneous topics.

The venues have included the West Sussex Record Office at Chichester; the Allen Rooms, the Natural History Museum and the Royal College of Music in London and Lady Margaret Hall in Oxford. Other meetings have been held in Selsey. We have erected a plaque in his memory on a building near to the original entrance drive to Large Acres in Selsey; restored his grave at Church Norton in Selsey and re-erected the doors from his Library at Large Acres, at the Heron-Allen Library in the Natural History Museum in



Pat Coleby, Liza Wood and Ivor Jones, three grandchildren of Edward Heron-Allen with the Chairman, holding 'The Purple Sapphire' at the Society's first Symposium, Chichester 2001

London. The collection of archives relating to EH-A continues to grow at the West Sussex Record Office.

The first major publication was Professor Brian Harvey & Carol Fitzgerald's condensed version of EH-A's war journals "Journal of The Great War" From Sussex Shore to Flanders Fields, printed in 2002. Brian Harvey also wrote the entry on EH-A for the new *Dictionary of National Biography*. A number of members of the Society have published articles on EH-A in a range of publications on subjects as various as his violins, his music library, his scientific publications, his fictional writings, his work on Omar Khayyam and his interest in asparagus cultivation.

Contact has been established with the Royal Irish Academy, regarding The Clare Island Survey of 1911 to which EH-A contributed, and a successful symposium was held under their auspices at Dublin in October 2009.

We "found" the violins which he personally made when apprenticed to Chanot but which like many of the ephemera that have come to light are beyond the financial resources of the Society.

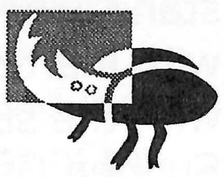
The last adult who actually knew EH-A sadly passed away at the age of 97 which leaves the only member, Ivor Jones, who vividly remembers him but only from the aspect of a thirteen year old.

We were very fortunate in having one of our earlier members, Dr Joan Navarre of Wisconsin, U.S.A., volunteering to undertake the mammoth task of writing the definitive biography of his life and times.

The Purple Sapphire is now on permanent exhibition in the Vault in the Natural History Museum, in London, and we reprinted EH-A's story in one of our Opuscula.

There is a vast amount of material still to be processed, to name but a few, his Holiday Journals from 1885 to 1937, the Large Acres Visitors books and many more items which are continually re-appearing.

The Internet has been an enormous asset and assisted in this task. We have enthusiasts in the U.SA., Canada, Ireland, Andorra, France, Australia (family members) and we look forward to the next ten years .....and beyond.



Ivor Jones

THE INEXORABLE LAW

[Edward Heron-Allen published two characteristic essays under the title – The Inexorable Law – in the *West Sussex Gazette* in 1912 and 1914. The first he described as "written upon the murder of Itha's two black guinea-pigs, by Bill and Storm the black retrievers and published in the *West Sussex Gazette* 3 October 1912.]

————

In the mighty Procession of Things that Must Be, a Procession before which that of the Equinoxes itself pales – perhaps by reason of its remoteness – into Insignificance, who shall say that the black guinea-pigs had not been called upon to assume the purple of stern Protagonism.

Sooner or later it is born in upon us all – generally sooner. Few of us, can recall the cataclismic moment, when the veil of ignorance, or at any rate of pococurantism was torn aside, and we realised the inexorable law that "We must surely die"

To voice this law teachers have emerged from all time and all space, some like the favourite sultana of the King Kusraw Parviz – as recorded by Hafiz – to voice it in the music of regret; some, like Dante – as recorded by Carlyle – with a satisfaction that illuminates utter weariness; and some. like Omar – as recorded by Fitzgerald – as a litany of cynical Hedonism. It was left for the most ornamental of pessimists, Count Giacomo Leopardi to fulfil its exposition as

you who are familiar with the Canticles of the wild Cock, must surely know. In the cosmogony of Itha and Armorel the revelation was made, a revelation that involved the martyrdom of their sleek, esurient persons, by the black guinea-pigs.

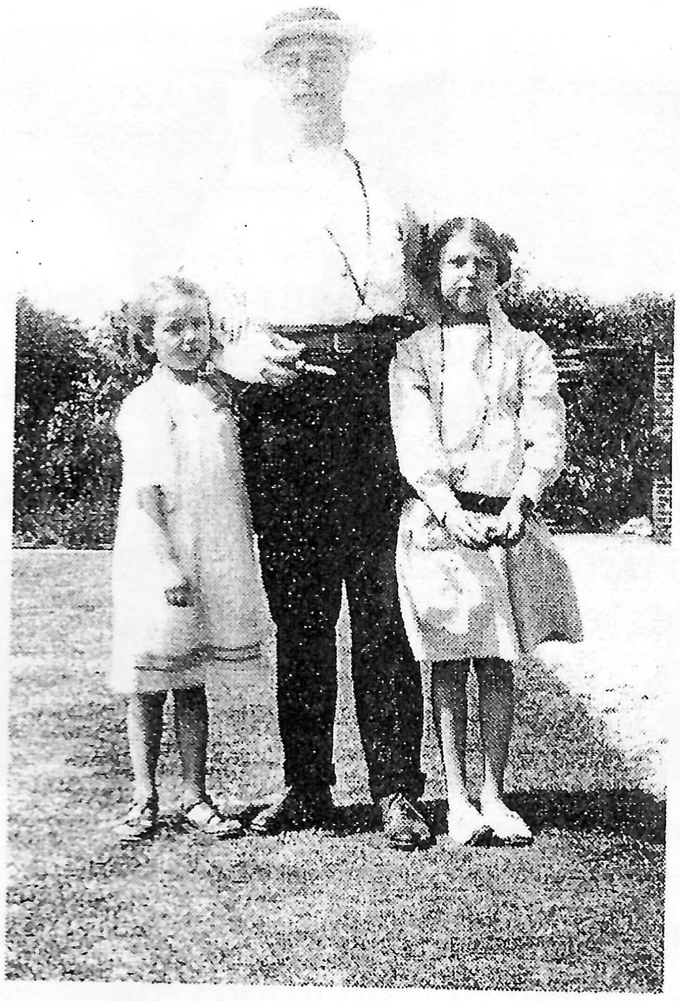
Out of the chaos of violent emotions which panoplied the moment of the revelation, no one had been able to deduce any theory of how it really happened – least of all Itha and Armorel, whose frenzied screams brought their palpitating father and Babette in record time across a newly-mowed hayfield. The babies stood upon the bridge, which connects their private domain, with the sophisticated pleasaunce where the grown-up people keep clean and talk of things which it were vain for babies to try to understand. The flower faces scamed and puckered with inarticulate grief, the shining eyes stricken with the stigmata inseparable from the Vision of Sudden Death. Itha, whose seven years have endowed her with the more co-ordinated methods of voice production found words sooner than Armorel, whose four have provided her with a fuller vocabulary.

"The blacks have eaten my guinea-pigs!"

It were vain to say that it was the nurse's fault, and that she should have warned the babies of approaching disaster. The two retrievers were part of the complicated machinery of Fate. The moment had struck for the babies when the two dogs and the two guinea-pigs should combine – in a sense disastrous to the latter – to confront them with the Inexorable Law.

Their father, helpless and stunned by the suddenly realised impotence of words, devoted himself with tactless irrelevancy in the comforting of Itha, and, as he followed the first blind instinct at action, locomotion, and change as a palliative (unconsciously expounding Herbert Spencer's definition of life), Armorel's recovered vocal chords wailed like a pibroch into the neck of Babette her indignant comment: "I loved them just as much as Itha."

Arrived, damp and breathless from the scene of these tragic happenings, we awaited the phase of comparative exhaustion to expound the Law. When it arrived there arrived with it, the difficulty of knowing where to begin. Face to face with such a cataclysm, youth is not to be distracted by the sophisms of the schools. Lately there had been two black guinea-pigs with finely demure manners and boot-button eyes. Then vomited from the jaws of Fate, there had been two black retrievers. Vain to point out to the babies that here was an illustration of one of



Edward Heron-Allen with Itha and Armorel at Large Acres, Selsey, c.1914

Euclid's favourite apothegems, "The lesser is contained in the greater." The grey eyes of Itha, blurred with tears, quoted plainly to her father: -

> Hush, mocking voices, check the scoffing thought,
> There are not many more like him where he was bought!

No comfort in the promise that other black guinea-pigs might be conjured presently from that inexhaustible "Wonderland of Desirable Possessions," of which only daddies command the golden key. These guinea-pigs, a possession of only two hours proof, and the wholly unexpected and inexplicable result of the extraction of a tiny first tooth by a wise and previsional dentist, were the very flower of guinea-pigs, and no fairy, however good, could possibly produce their like.

It was Babette who, wise among women and wisest, appealed to the babies as mother to mother, and started the great distraction train of thought that in, and for, a moment overwhelmed the Realisation of the Law. "Suppose we had two black daddy guinea-pigs and two white mummies?" Or again, one black daddy and one white mummy, and vice-versa" Imperial Eve came stalking down the Ages from the suburbs of Eden, and woke the Eternal Instinct in the woman-baby.

Then ensued a discussion on Mendelism which might have shocked Professor Batson, but which wholly ingrossed the advancing intellect of Itha, to the scattering of the agonising impression of the Inexorable Law.

Indeed there came a moment when we found ourselves seriously balancing the cogmata of two schools of thought – whether guinea-pigs or dormice made the better parents, and which

were the more sympathetic – and tidy – companions. Later the elder baby's ready sympathies received a new induction. "Do you think," she asked Babette, "that the blacks had a pain?"

And I regret to say that as Armorel proceeded with reluctant stoicism to bed, I heard her say to Nannie: "Do you think that the blacks liked the guinea-pigs?"

Edward Heron-Allen
West Sussex Gazette, 3 October 1912

FORAMINIFERA OF PLYMOUTH SOUND: THE LEGACY OF EDWARD HERON-ALLEN 80 YEARS ON

This was the title of an address recently given by Professor Malcolm Hart of the School of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences, University of Plymouth, to the 48th Annual Conference of the Ussher Society on January 4th 2010.

Fortescue William Millett, the late 19th Century Cornish naturalist, had an interesting career – some of which remains shrouded in mystery! In a thoroughly well-researched article, our member Richard Hodgkinson (2006) showed how Millett had influenced the young aspiring Heron-Allen, becoming his first scientific mentor. On his "retirement" and return from living in London, Millett worked on the remarkably fossiliferous Pliocene clays of St. Erth (Cornwall) and the foraminifera of the Cornish and Devon coasts before moving to live in Brixham, where he died in 1915. His various works, publications and slides were rescued from Brixham by Heron-Allen and are now in the collections of the Natural History Museum, London. Millett's (1885) work on the foraminifera of Cornwall (which was only part-completed) inspired Edward Heron-Allen to work on sediments from South Devon and Cornwall. This work resulted in a paper on the shallow-water foraminifera of Cornwall published by the Royal Microscopical Society (Heron-Allen & Earland, 1916).

This work continued and, in 1930, in the same journal, Heron Allen and his collaborator Arthur Earland, also published a beautifully illustrated monograph in two parts, on the *Foraminifera of the Plymouth District*. Published 80 years ago almost to the day, they recorded no less than 258 species and varieties of foraminifera from Plymouth Sound, coastal stations and offshore, as far out as the Eddystone in over 30 fathoms. This was a significant milestone in our knowledge of the foraminifera of the area (especially Plymouth Sound), building on the earlier work of Lister (1895) and Worth (1904). This interest in the foraminifera of Plymouth Sound was continued by staff of the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom, including the publications of Jepps (1942), Myers (1937, 1942a,b), Buchanan & Hedley (1960) and Murray (1965). In 1973/1974, E.C. (Pete) Manley of Plymouth Polytechnic began a sampling programme of Plymouth Sound that was, unfortunately, cut short by illness. Students of the University of Plymouth (Castignetti, 1997; Manley, 1997) continued this work with an intensive period of sampling from December 1993 to November 1994. The fauna in the Sound is diverse and quite abundant (as Heron-Allen & Earland indeed showed), although the living component of the fauna has reduced in recent years with the "clean sweep" undertaken by South West Water. This has, effectively, reduced the bacteria in the Sound on which the foraminifera live (Manley, 1997). The different sediment types (gravels, shell sands, shell-rich muds and pure clays) provide a range of habitats, all of which have their own faunas (Castignetti, 1997). Compared

Professor Hart's students searching for foraminifera on Plymouth Sound

to the days of Heron-Allen & Earland, we now have some very detailed sediment maps of the Sound, much of which was mapped by Fiona Fitzpatrick (1991) by diving and hand-sampling.

The drawings made by both Millett and Heron-Allen are all beautifully crafted, the original artwork being still preserved in the Heron-Allen Library at the

Natural History Museum. They compare well to the modern scanning electron microscope images used by present-day micropalaeontologists. Many of the taxa they described were new to science at that time and are still in use today. Without the diligence of Heron-Allen & Earland, in particular, we would know little of the taxonomy of the fauna.

In February 2010 Pete Manley died and it would be a fitting tribute to his memory if the research done by his daughter, Catherine Manley, and her student colleague of three years, Paul Castignetti, could be brought to publication. It would also be the first opportunity to illustrate the whole of Heron-Allen & Earland's fauna with scanning electron micrographs and document the annual population statistics of the taxa they described. The Sound is still a valuable training area from students of the University of Plymouth and we still go out on MV *Sepia* to collect samples for foraminiferal analysis using our specially constructed "Murray Grab".

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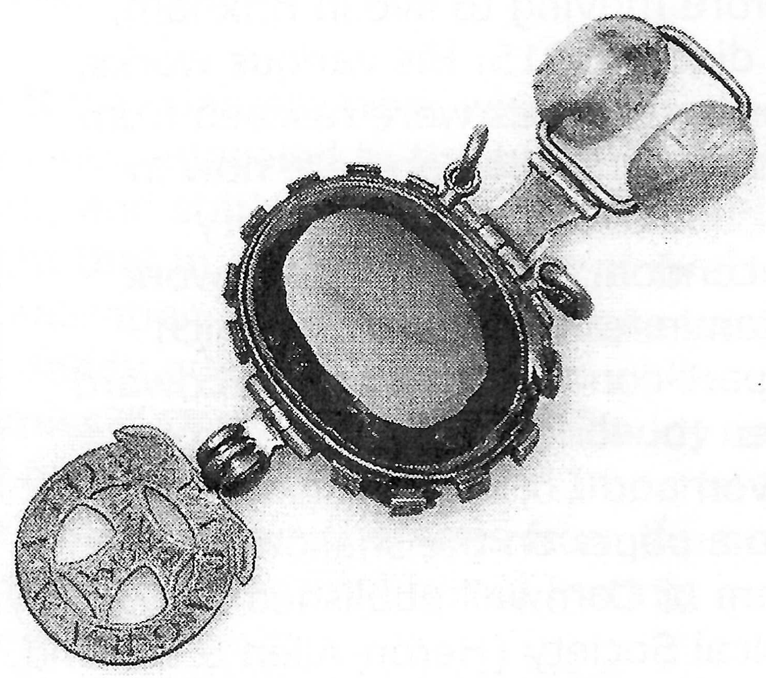
Malcolm Hart

THE PURPLE SAPPHIRE ON FILM

Its fame is spreading!



Kensington Communications of Toronto, Canada, are currently shooting a one-hour documentary in their series, *Museum Discoveries,* about the Natural History Museum, London (NHM) and its collections. The programme will be based on some of the

remarkable individuals who worked there in the past and certain "specimens with a story", that were highlighted in Richard Fortey's excellent behind-the-scenes book *Dry Store Room no. 1, The Secret Life of the Natural History Museum* (Harper Press, 2008).

Ivor Jones writes.....

They were very intrigued by the Purple Sapphire, the curse and the story behind it and asked me if I would like to make it part of their programme. Would I be prepared to be interviewed about the stone? The up-shot was "Of course"; accordingly I presented myself at the NHM on Tuesday, 16th March and was led down into the bowels of the Museum where a camera crew were set up. I had previously sent them a copy of the H-A Society's *Opusculum X*[1] and also a copy of Grandfather's letter accompanying the Purple Sapphire, which is actually an amethyst.

"To whomsoever shall be the future possessor of this amethyst. These lines are addressed in mourning before he, or she, shall assume the responsibility of owning it". (Signed and dated by Edward Heron-Allen October 1904).

It was left to my mother, his daughter, with the advice to somehow get rid of it; he couldn't do that himself as his Rosicrucian Oath forbade him doing so himself. Edward Heron-Allen died in 1943 and my mother instructed that it be bequeathed to the NHM and that none of the family should touch it. So there it sat, quietly and unobtrusively until it formed part of "The Vault" collection of gems and gemstones recently opened in the Mineralogy Gallery and on permanent display. It is interesting to note that it is the only stone there which is actually mounted – in silver charms and amulets – to contain the "evil influence".

Anyway there it was down in the bowels with the camera crew and me. It was carefully unpacked from its box in which it was (I hesitate to say) sleeping. I was invited to pick it up and hold it. I refused; this invitation was twice more repeated but I still declined. It's not that I'm superstitious but I am, in regards to the no-longer owned family Sapphire. I wish it a long and peaceful sojourn in its present locality. However, I feel we have not heard the last of it.

John Whittaker writes.....

The film company also approached me as a possible modern recipient of the curse, as highlighted in Steve Farrar's *Sunday Times* article of 25th November 2007, reprinted in our *Opusculum X* [2].

Because of my present immobility (I was waiting for major hip surgery), the camera crew came to my home in Essex on Saturday, 13th March and set up in my living room! They wanted me to recollect the various happenings that have occurred to me since the day I took the Purple Sapphire down to our First Heron-Allen Society Symposium in Chichester in 2001 – the mega-storm of that evening, and my sudden illnesses on the eves of both the 2nd and 3rd Symposia in 2002 and 2003. I suppose this could now be added to by the collapse of my right hip coincident with the time of my visit to Dublin for our meeting on Edward Heron-Allen and the Clare Island Survey last October at the Royal Irish Academy. Something clearly does not like me!

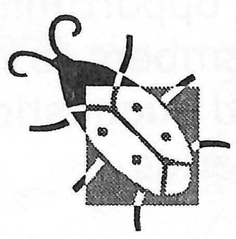
They asked me if I really believed in the curse. I said I had an open mind. It's like ghosts, you don't tend to believe in them until you see one, and I have. I told them I could easily understand why Heron-Allen did as he had a much more vivid imagination and intelligence. All this will probably get 20 seconds in the final film, but it was an interesting experience talking about it to them.

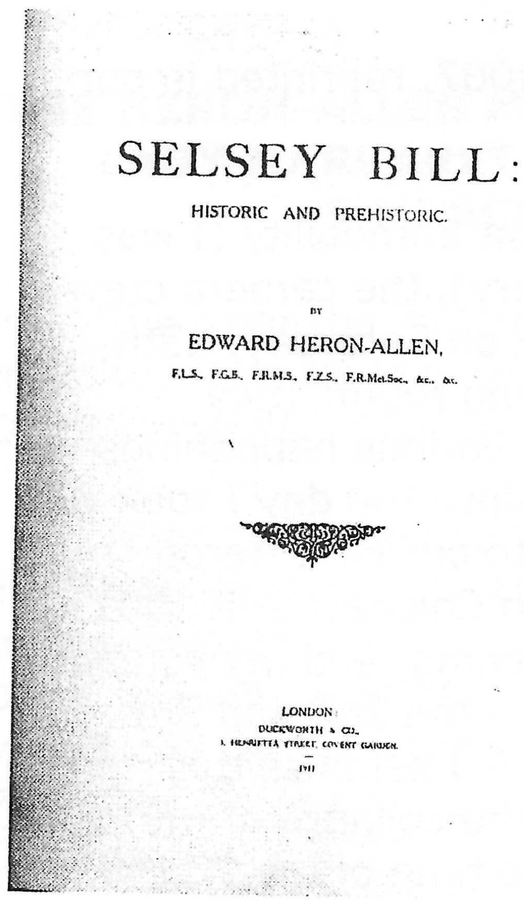
.....and on reflection, it certainly makes you think?

[1] *Opusculum X. The Purple Sapphire by Edward Heron-Allen*, first published under the pseudonym Christopher Blayre in 1921 an republished, with additional material by Timothy J. McCann and Steve Farrar, to celebrate the Natural History Museum's exhibition, The Vault, 2007. (Heron-Allen Society, 2008)

[2] Out of the cupboard and calling to you: the cursed Delhi Purple Sapphire.....by Steve Farrar, *in Opusculum X, ibid.*, 2008.

[When details of the *Museum Discoveries* documentary are announced, members will be notified on how and when to view it, via the Website and Newsletter, if time permits.]





SELSEY BILL:

HISTORIC AND PREHISTORIC.

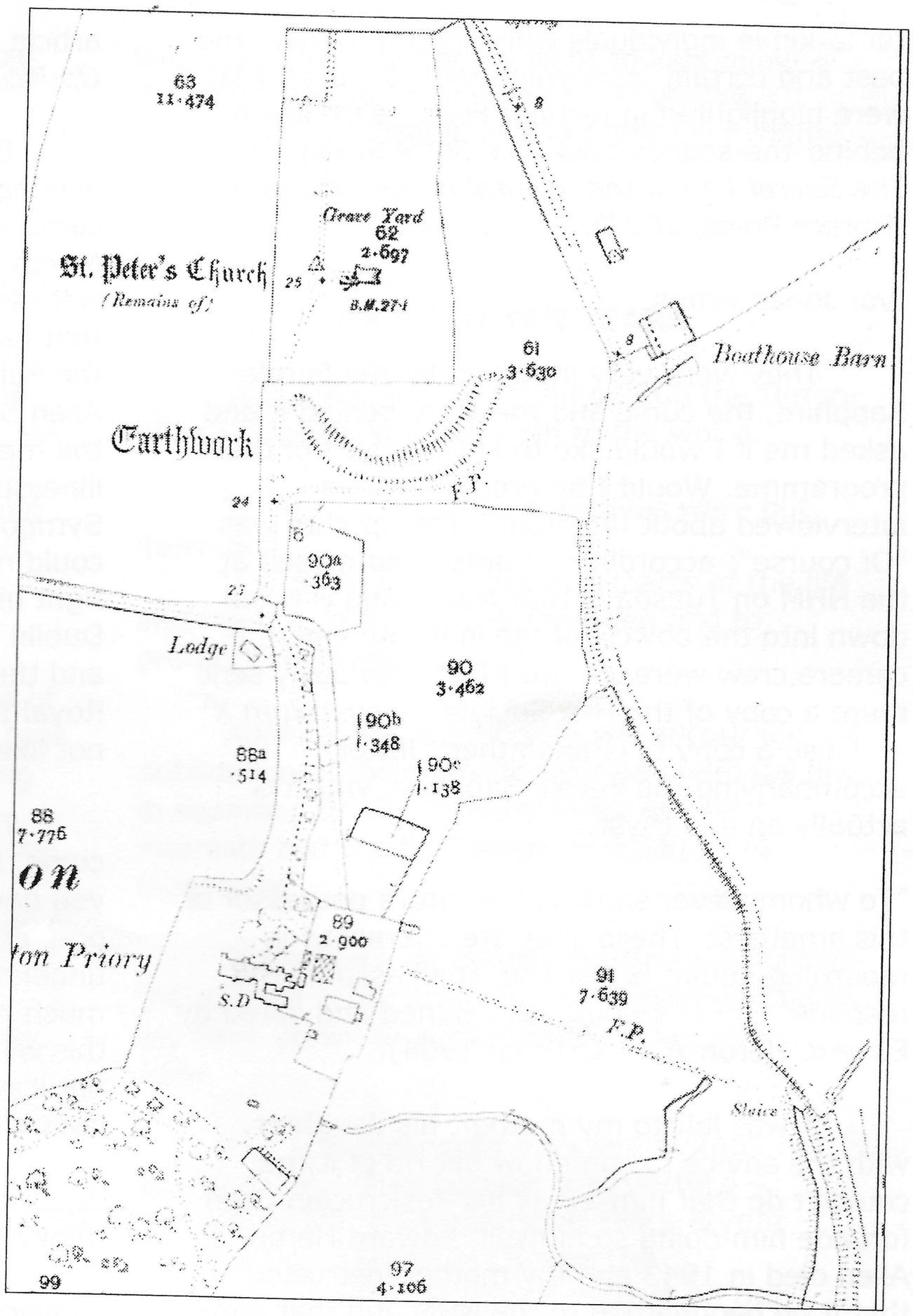
BY

EDWARD HERON-ALLEN,

F.L.S., F.G.S., F.R.M.S., F.Z.S., F.R.Met.Soc., &c., &c.

LONDON:
DUCKWORTH & CO.,
3, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
1911

Title Page of Selsey Bill by Edward Heron-Allen, 1911



Portion of OS map for 1911 showing Selsey Mound [WSRO, OS 73/15 3rd ed. 1911, 1:2500]

THE HERON-ALLEN BIOGRAPHY

Joan Navarre is writing a biography of Edward Heron-Allen. Any information concerning Heron-Allen (e.g. letters, manuscripts, photographs) will be greatly appreciated. E-mail: jnavarre@hotmail.com

THE SOCIETY'S WEB-SITE

The Heron-Allen Society has a website at: http://www.nhm.ac.uk/hosted_sites/heronallen/ The webmaster, Dr. Andrew S. Henderson, can be contacted through the website or directly by e-mail at: andy.henderson@fugro-robertson.com. Andy updates our web-site on a regular basis, and members are encouraged to keep in touch by making use of it. There is an opportunity on the site for members to make comments and suggestions and to post queries.

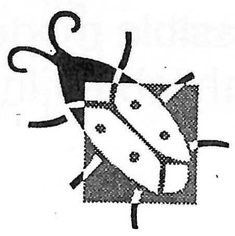
OFFICERS

Chairman/Archivist Timothy McCann, 18 Oaklands Road, Havant, Hants. PO9 2RN.
Tel: 02392 451649
E-mail: mccann@dsl.pipex.com

Secretary Juliet Field, 40 Portland Road, Oxford. OX2 7EY.
Tel: 01865 552640
E-mail: jools.field@dsl.pipex.com

Treasurer Ivor Jones, Sweets Farmhouse, Stour Row, Shaftesbury, Dorset. SP7 OQH
Tel: 01747 838201.
E-mail: heron_allenjones1@hotmail.com

The Heron-Allen Newsletter was edited by Timothy J. McCann and designed by Caroline Adams.



EDWARD HERON-ALLEN LUNCH MENU
3RD July 2010

Starters

Tomato & fresh basil soup
served with homemade bread

Duck & Pork Terrine
with pistachios served with dressed
salad leaves, rustic roll and home made chutney

Mains

wild mushroom risotto
creamy wild mushroom risotto
finished with shaved parmesan

Beer Battered Fish and Chips
Fresh fish fillet cooked in a light beer batter
and served with chips, mushy peas
and homemade tartare sauce

Chicken and bacon salad
Chicken breast and crispy bacon
Served on a bed of mixed salad leaves
Finished with a pesto dressing

Desserts

crème brulee
set cream dessert with caramelised topping

Crumble of the day
served with crème anglaise

Cheese
English cheese served with homemade tomato chutney
and a selection of biscuits

£12.50 PER PERSON

[Those wishing to join us for lunch should chose one item for each course and send the details to our Honorary secretary Juliet Field at 40 Portland Road, Oxford, OX2 7EY or jools.field@dsl.pipex.com by 18 June.]