

BEYOND THE GRAVES

Volume 12, Number 1, January 2017

THE ROY BRINTON COLLECTION

MR ROY BRINTON - When Roy died in December 2015 the Ryde Social Heritage Group lost a President who had been characteristically generous with his time and knowledge. However Roy's impact was Island-wide. It is highly appropriate that the papers he left behind have been shared by the family between the RSHG, the County Record Office and Carisbrooke Castle Museum, three organisations to which he gave so much of his time as a local historian. Roy worked as an archive assistant at the County Record Office in the late 1970's. His next role was as curator of Carisbrooke Castle Museum, a post which he held until his retirement. Roy's considerable charm, and his knowledge of the Island's history, made him an excellent ambassador for the Museum and for Island history generally.



Roy's demeanour was quiet, and he was modest, but he could tell a good story, and his talks on Ryde and other topics were always deservedly popular, full of information and delivered with great skill. More sombrely, I can recall vividly his account of his life at Binfield in the war, and the horrific occasion during the Cowes Blitz when nine individuals died at Point Cottages on the Racecourse.

It was such a shame that Roy was not able to achieve one of his great ambitions, to write the history of Ryde that the town deserved. However Roy [by sharing his knowledge, his enthusiasm, and by making available the rich sources of local history material that he had collected] has helped to ensure that others can build on the best foundations that anyone could have set down.

Above all, however, meeting Roy was always a pleasure. He had a ready, genuine, smile, an attentive tilt to his head when he was listening to others, and always gracious words of gentle encouragement. It is very fitting that this issue focusses on his legacy to the rest of us, which will ensure that his contribution to the telling of Ryde's story will continue to grow.

Richard Smout [Isle of Wight Record Office]

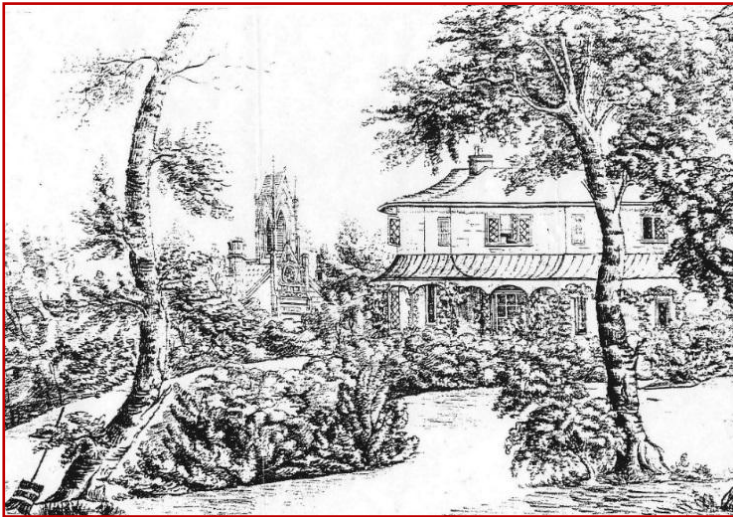
The Roy Brinton Collection as part of the Ryde Social Heritage Group Archive

All the illustrations used in this issue can be found in the Roy Brinton Collection, held within the RSHG Archive.

The text has been compiled from Roy's extensive research, either from his original or photocopied documents, or from his own handwritten transcripts and notes, now all part of the RSHG Archive.

In this magazine we are sharing some examples from the Roy Brinton Collection which now forms part of the Ryde Social Heritage Group Archive. This is intended as only a small sample. Roy collected a vast amount of research and RSHG is still in the early stages of sorting through all the documents and pictures that have been so generously donated to us. We will be sharing the Collection through future publications, displays and at events.

THE BIG HOUSES

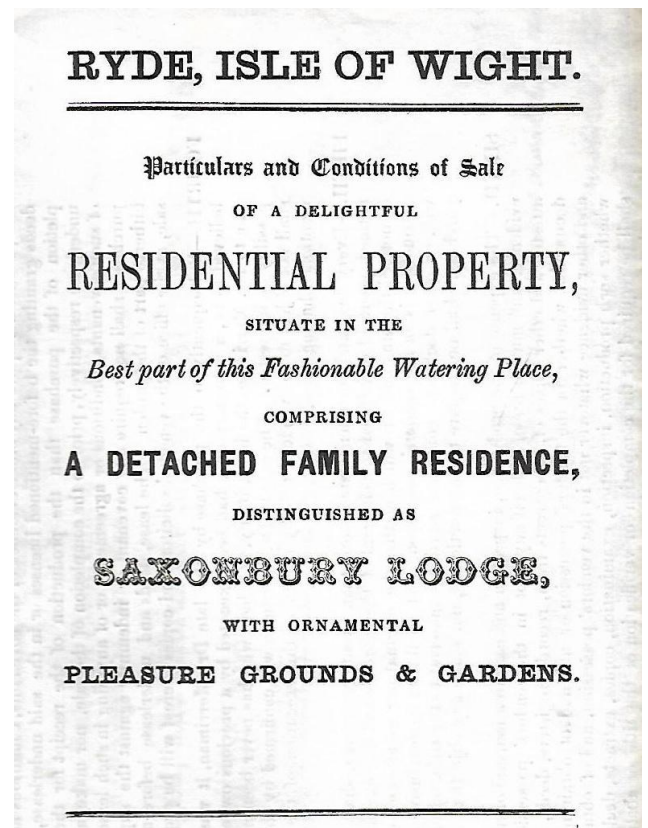


In the Roy Brinton Collection there are several boxes labelled '*Big Houses of Ryde*' which contain files on many of the estates and properties of the wealthy in the Ryde area.

This pretty pictorial example shows '*Saxonbury Lodge*', built in 1819 and later enlarged. It was leased out to various people including, in 1853, Dr. James Merriman. He was Surgeon and Apothecary Ordinary to Queen Victoria. He had the original house [seen here] demolished and a larger modern house built. He died in 1854, aged 48.

The next occupier of the new house was the Hon. John Petty Ward, late of the East India Company, who died at Saxonbury in 1869. A later resident was Mrs Elizabeth Brigstocke, from 1884 to her death in 1922. For a brief while in the 1930's it became a school and then a sports club. In 1951 it was divided into apartments.

A large portion of Roy's Collection consists of Property for Sale Notices, Auction Catalogues and Booklets. These provide a valuable insight into types of properties, layout of estates and contents of homes.



PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHS - The Collection contains numerous portraits, many produced by the local studios. This example is from Mr Debenham's High Street, Cowes Studio, although he had studios in other towns, including Ryde, as well. This photograph is annotated as Mr & Mrs Andrew Guy. Mr Guy was a Market Gardener and Grocer.

Roy has noted that the family lived at the top end of the row of terraced houses [which were opposite the 'Prince Consort', although in their day it would have been the Royal Yacht Club]. Their business premises were at No 4 St. Thomas' Square, which Andrew took over about 1875 from

G. & H. Guy. A Miss Guy then ran it from 1932.

LOCAL BUSINESSES


VECTIS April 26, 1899.

Cottrell Bros. —

Special Line
IN
Ladies' Cambric Shirts

fitted with
White Linen Collar & Cuffs,
as sketch,

1/11³/₄.



In
Five Colours,
viz :
Pink,
Sky,
Heliotrope,
Fawn,
Butcher Blue.

— 37, Union Street, Ryde.

Numerous local businesses are recorded in the Collection, with many interesting adverts. Cottrell Brothers were at 37 Union Street, just 3 doors from the Post Office. They were a Drapers & Ladieswear Business who also specialised in Millinery. They often advertised in the IW Observer, taking up the right-hand column for the length of the page.

This example is from the 'Vectis' Magazine of 26 April 1899 and promotes, no doubt, the most fashionable colours for that season.

The previous year, in the IW Observer, they had advertised their '*Special Show of Autumn Millinery*', which included '*Wings; Bird Ornaments; Flowers & Foliage.*' They also had a Special Purchase of '*Windsor Scarves Plain and Fancy*' at 6³/₄d and 1/0³/₄d.

J. ELEY,
SADDLE & HARNESS MAKER,
49, UNION STREET,
(OPPOSITE THE POST OFFICE,) RYDE.

Plain & Fancy Dog Collars, Chains, Whistles, Whips, &c.;
Leather Garters and Purses;
Luggage, Cloak, and Umbrella Straps.

Portmanteaus and Travelling Bags Repaired,
And Covers made for ditto.
ENGRAVING EXECUTED WITH DISPATCH.

A Business Card for another local business, this time opposite the Post Office, is that of Mr Eley. He could supply or repair almost any leather goods.

Associated with this family there is also a photograph of an elderly lady standing at her gate. The name on the gate of the property is 'Eley'.



NEWSPAPER INFORMATION

Information from many newspapers make up an important part of the Roy Brinton Collection. The extract below is from the 'Isle of Wight Observer and Portsmouth, Portsea & South Hants Chronicle' of 7 March 1846:

G. Fowlestone, No 4 Royal Victoria Arcade, Union Street, Ryde, 'Lapidary, Dealer in Pebbles, Diamonds, Fossils, etc.' took the opportunity to advise the 'Nobility, Gentry, Visitors and Residents of Ryde' that he was the first person to offer the 'Genuine Beautiful Isle of Wight Pebbles and Agates' for sale.

He warns 'Amateurs' not to be taken in by 'Foreign Pebbles' offered at shops, bazaars and even door to door. Buying fake 'Isle of Wight Crystals, usually called diamonds' was also a danger. Mr Fowlestone offered 'fine specimens of Fossils, the produce of the Island together with Sand Drawings and Sea Weeds by the original inventor. Genuine Alum Bay Sand Soap for rendering hard or salt water soft and pleasant'. He could split or polish pebbles for 4d an inch.

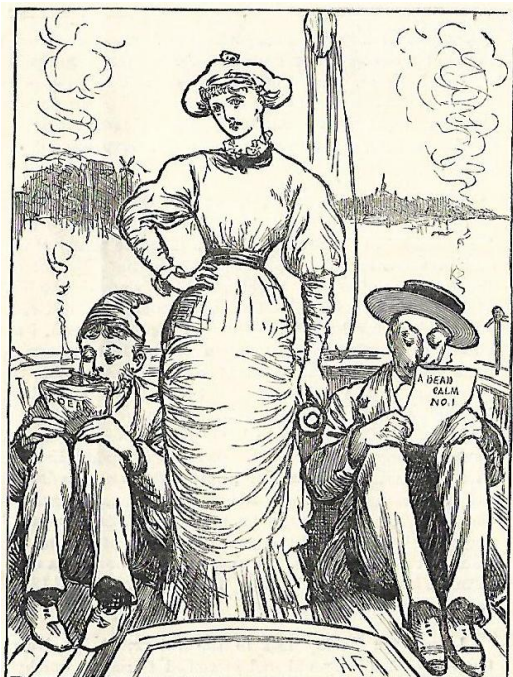
Dr Mantell gave a testimonial, probably because Fowlstone stocked the Doctor's books, including the 7th edition of 'Thoughts on a Pebble' with additional engravings price 3s.

Fowlestone also exhibited from 10 until 12 and 1 until 4, for 'a small charge of 6d, a new and curious Fossil Reptile called the *Ichthysaunus of Fish Lizard*, six feet in length'.



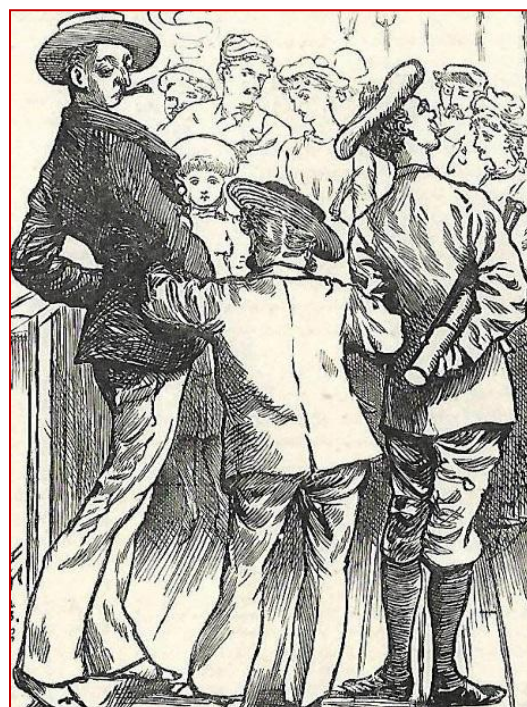
An early engraving of the entrance to the Royal Victoria Arcade

The Illustrated London News was always very popular and provided scenes of social events around the country. Ryde was often featured and there are many illustrations of activities at Ryde Pier. Frequently they contain a humorous look at life through their cartoons.



Here are two examples from the 13 August 1881 issue, which covered the Ryde Regatta and several drawings depict the crowds and the sailing.

The one on the left is entitled 'Dead Calm,' and on the right we have 'Doing the Pier.'





FARMS

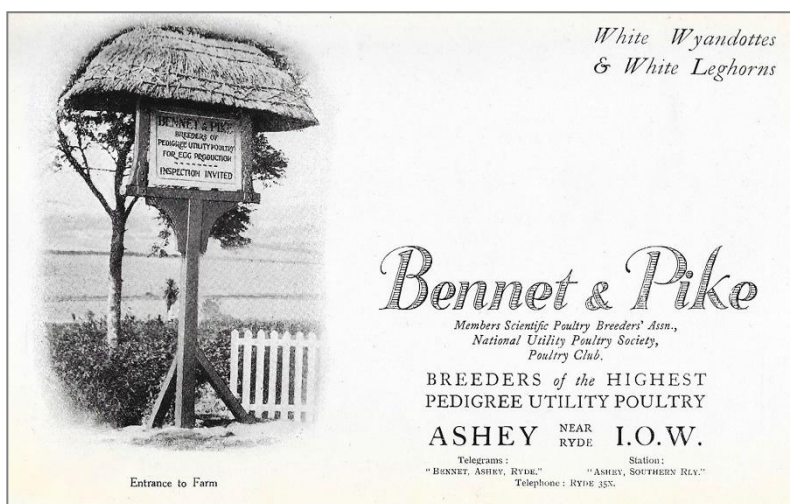
Another part of the Collection concerns local farms. There is a small card covered brochure featuring a cockerel on the cover and entitled 'Mating and Stock List for Season 1928'. On opening it the frontispiece reveals it to be for 'Bennet & Pike' at Beanacre Farm at Ashe. Roy's notes state that it was part of the Manor of Ashe, but the original farmhouse was demolished.

This was possibly when the Railway went through in 1875.

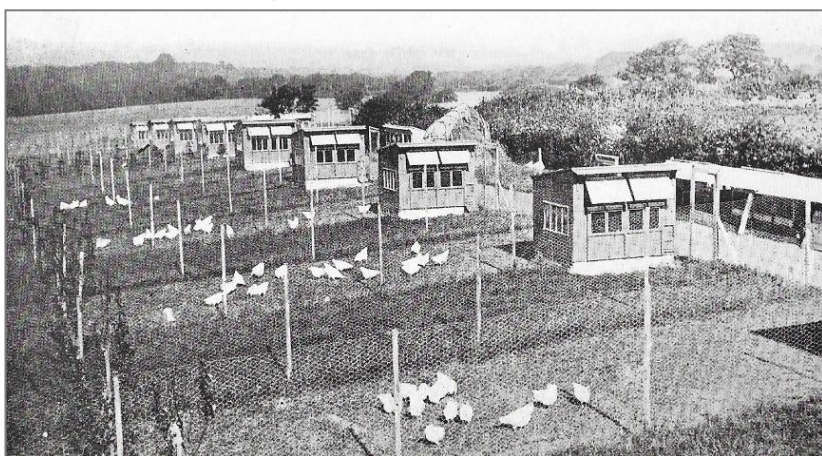
J.G. Duffett, previously of the Brewery in Ryde, was there in the early 1920's and Gordon Rae was listed just before the Second World War.

Bennet & Pike's Brochure gave an extensive list of their stock. The pedigree and history of each bird was available on their card index system. Modern science meant they bred strong, healthy and virile stock.

Buyers could purchase eggs or chicks. Eggs could be bought by the 15, though if only 12 were taken then unfertile eggs would be replaced within 14 days. Depending on the laying ability of the layer White Wyandottes eggs varied from 10/- to 20/- for 15, whilst chicks were double the price for 12. Prices per hundred were also given. They could also supply White Leghorns.



Eggs and chicks listed under 'Special Pens' were considerably more expensive. They also sold specially selected Breeding Cockerels, those from the 'Special Pens' were 2 to 3 guineas each, though cheaper ones were available, all in the Autumn.



All orders were sent by passenger train and it was requested that all empty baskets, etc., were returned immediately by passenger train to Ashe Station.

In the Brochure there are many photographs of the Beanacre Farm premises, including an interior of the 'Happy Thought' Brooder House, with a capacity of 4,200 chicks.

This image (left) is of the 'Trap-nested Recording Houses' which were built on brick foundations and designed for maximum light and ventilation.

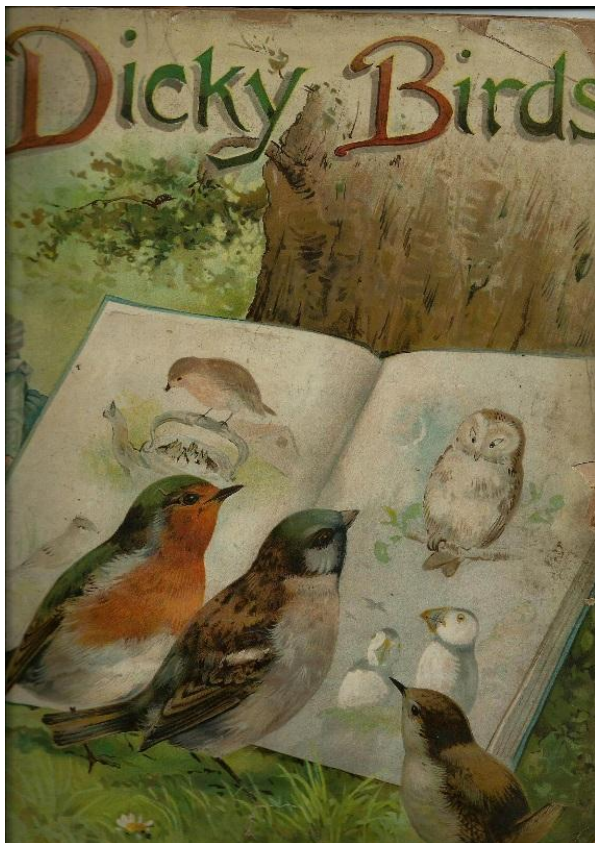
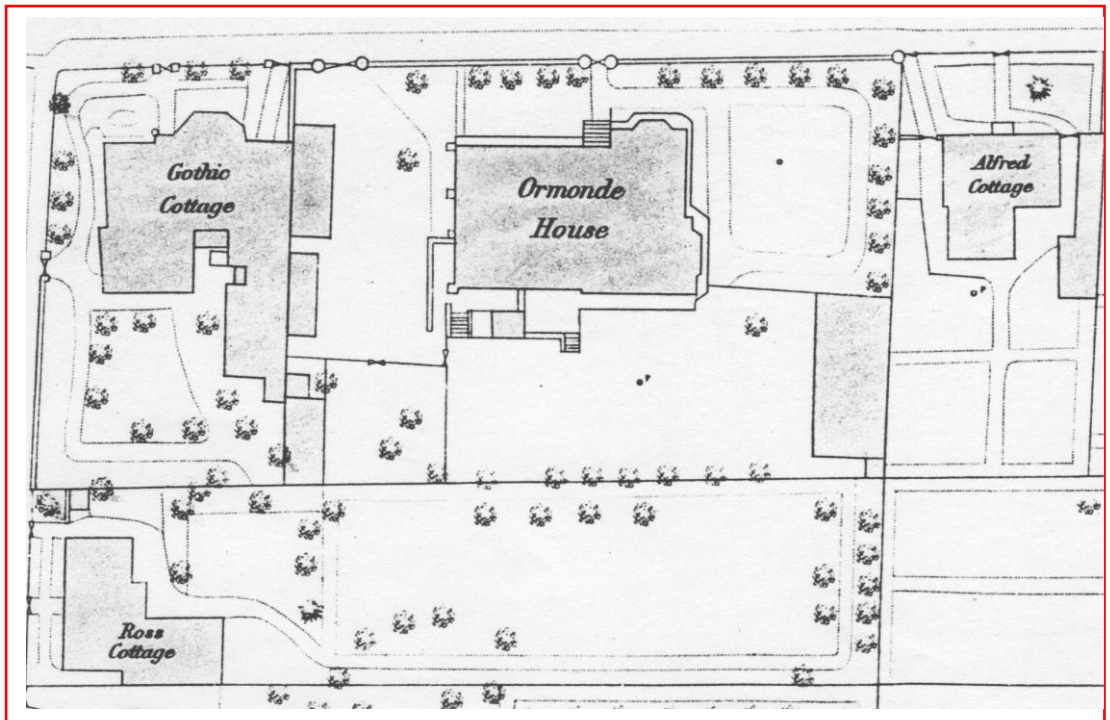
SCHOOLS - Schools are another subject in the extensive Roy Brinton Collection.

Ormonde House, Wood Street, formerly known as Argus House, was built around 1834 and first occupied by William Burt, agent for the Argus Life Office.

Around 1853 Joseph Paul took over the house and made elaborate extensions to establish his Ryde Naval School which he ran until 1878.

In 1878 the Paul family left and a Mr.

Augustus Dimmer ran a much smaller school until 1886. Next came Mr. Greenup who opened a gentleman's school which he ran until 1890 when he moved to premises at 50 George Street, thus ending a 36 year run of the house being a school.



This Book entitled 'Dicky Birds' is a lovely example of how good attendance at school was rewarded in late Victorian times.

On the back of the book a card is attached which confirms it was awarded to Courtney Cocks for regular attendance at the Infants Department of St. John's Road School in 1895. The Head Teacher, E. Watson, signed it.

