

AMBERLEY SOCIAL HISTORY: SOURCES AND RESOURCES

There are huge resources available to the Amberley researcher, offline and, increasingly, online. But the material is scattered and much is not all well indexed, if indexed at all. So locating information can be quite a challenge. But anyone who has searched through archival material will know the buzz you get when, serendipitously, you come across nuggets of valuable information.

There are masses of relevant material in various archives but the amount of material available online means that much research can be done simply at your computer. The material described below is probably most helpful for initial research purposes. Note that the information contained in archive catalogues can often be very informative; some example are given below.

Material which is available online (wholly or partly) is indicated by an asterisk (eg *Amberley Parish Registers), with the name of the online site and online catalogue information where relevant (especially for *FamilySearch.org*). Links (underlined and in blue) are given for all online source: to access the material place your cursor over the link and on Windows hold down Ctrl key and press Enter/Return or right-click and select "Open Hyperlink". This will either take you to the relevant website or download the item.

NB Text **in red** indicates possible projects and subjects for research.

For more detailed information about sources available for social and family history, we would strongly recommend Mark Herber's excellent *Ancestral Trails: The Complete Guide to British Genealogy and Family History* (3rd edition, 2009). While some information, particularly about online resources, may be out of date, the descriptive detail about the the great variety of source records is very high value and unlikely to go out-of-date any time soon. (Second-hand copies of the earlier editions of Mark's book are readily available for under £10.)

Request to anyone preparing research material for publication: Please try to ensure that you record the sources for all information you provide. It can be extremely frustrating when this is missing, making it impossible for readers to check and follow up your research. As an example, the otherwise very informative booklet, [Dear Amberley](#), by Revd Noel Staines, provides no more than very general information on his sources, viz: Sussex Archaeological Society and their Collection; Sussex Record Society; West Sussex Record Office; Worthing Reference Library; West Sussex Gazette offices. This limited information doesn't really help much to actually locate the material he drew upon. It may appear burdensome to prepare detailed references to source material, but such references are invaluable. This doesn't mean that every publication you generate from your research - eg cut-down or summarised versions of your work - has to provide references. But the main work you publish should carry the references. For example, Ian Galbraith's articles on Amberley's vicars in the parish magazine don't have references, but his main article on the vicars, [available online](#), is fully referenced.

Archives and Record Offices

The most important resource for primary material related to Amberley is [West Sussex Record Office](#) (WSRO), at Chichester. Search [WSRO catalogue](#). Luckily, a substantial amount of the material at WSRO has been digitised and is available online, at [FamilySearch](#); search [FamilySearch catalogue](#). But much more material can only be accessed at the Record Office.

There is a relatively small amount of Amberley material at [The National Archives](#) (TNA); search [TNA catalogue](#). Other small amounts of material are at [East Sussex Record Office](#) (ESRO), Lewes.

Note on archive catalogue entries

The amount of information in the catalogue entries of WSRO and ESRO varies enormously, from little more than a subject heading to an abstract of the actual document contents. This can depend on the type of record but also on whether the record office got volunteer help with cataloguing. Examples:

WSRO

Churchwardens' Presentments, Ep/1/22/2 Volumes of Presentments: The subsequent catalogue records, for

Ep/I/22/2/1 – 29 simply give as ‘description’ the year, 1858 – 1917. So if you want to look for Amberley presentments you have to consult each physical volume.

Deposition Books, Ep/I/11/2, Deposition Book, July 1572-June 1573. The catalogue ‘description’ is rich, containing a mass of detail, inter alia, the following relevant to Amberley:

[Next case] f6v Ex pte Richard Whiteacres vicar of Amberley v William Rose. Between 26 July & 4 Oct 1572 Parish: Amberley. Cause: Tithes.

f6v Dep: Stephen Wood of Rackham, Amberley. Lived Amberley 17 years. Before lived Cowfold 23 years. Born Cowfold. Age 44.

f7 Dep: Robert Brabye of Amberley. Born Amberley. Age 40.

f7v Dep: William Rose junior of Amberley. Lived Amberley 30 years. Born Watersfield. Age 40. Contd at f8 below.

[Next case] Contd from f3 above. 4 Oct 1572

f8 Dep: Alice Stacey of N. Mundham. Lived N. Mundham 3 years. Before lived Sidlesham 2 years. Born Birdham. Age 40.

[Next case] Contd from 7v above. 11 Oct 1572

f8 Dep: George Leynarde of Amberley. Born Amberley. Age 40.

Note that simply searching the WSRO catalogue for ‘Amberley’ will find this catalogue record.

ESRO

Searching for catalogue records for ‘Amberley’ finds, for example, a fair number of Quarter Session records relating to poor relief. For example:

Chichester sessions, 31 March 1788, QO/29/1788-03031, description includes, inter alia, HARWOOD Henry, wife Sarah; JPs order removing them from Arundel to West Chiltington recorded and confirmed [Henry HARWOOD, 22, husbandman of Amberley married Sarah AUSTIN of Arundel 15 March 1788 at Amberley].

So you can see that simply searching the catalogues can turn up useful information without needing to access the original records at all.

Amberley Archives

The Amberley Society has a full set of Amberley parish magazines, dating from 1895. They have been [catalogued](#) and it is intended that they will all be digitised and made available online, on the Amberley Society website. It is hoped to complete this project in 2022. The magazines are currently unavailable for public access.

The Society keeps a collection of Amberley material in its Amberley Archive. The collection contains a miscellany of material, none of which is fully catalogued, but much of this material will be digitised and made available on the Society’s website. The biggest sets of material here concern the Amberley Society itself, from its beginning in June 1977, and the Amberley Revels, from 1965 to 1999. There is also a set of logs for Amberley First School, 1874-1992.

Assistance with cataloguing this material and with digitisation would be welcomed. [Email](#) if you are interested.

Important websites

FamilySearch

In the latter part of the last century the Church of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) microfilmed a great deal of source material held by West Sussex Record Office. All of this material has now been digitised and the images are available, free, online at familysearch.org, which is probably the most important of all websites for the family historian. Of particular value is the extensive collection of digitised copies of Amberley records, some of which may be unexpected. The Amberley record sets available at *FamilySearch* are described [below](#).

Accessing digitised material on FamilySearch

The simplest way to get directly to the images is via the *FamilySearch* Catalog search. For the sets of records described below which are available on *FamilySearch*, the ‘DGS number’ will locate the series of digitised images which includes that set of records. Clicking on the little camera icon to the right of the list of records takes you to

the start of that image series. Insert the 'image number' in the 'image' box to the top left of the image display and hit 'return'. This takes you to the first image for the record set you are interested in.

Commercial genealogical websites

[Ancestry](#), [Findmypast](#) and [The Genealogist](#) contain much relevant material. While these sites contain a great deal of essentially duplicated material (eg census records) all contain substantial sets of material which are not available elsewhere. This material includes parish registers, probate records, school and college registers, criminal records, etc. Since each site continually adds new material, it is recommended you check periodically to see what is available. All require subscriptions to access their content but searching their indexes is generally free. Note that the accuracy of index data (and transcribed text) can vary, and though errors are relatively rare, the same material on different sites may not have identical index data.

The material on the commercial sites can be of great value not just for research into particular families, but also for more general social history research. Unless you already have subscriptions to one or more of the commercial sites, we suggest searching *FamilySearch* first, for much digitised source material is available there free (eg West Sussex parish registers).

Source records relating to Amberley

For source material held in archives catalogue numbers are given in square brackets.

*Amberley Church Monumental Inscriptions

Typescript created in 1987 by the Sussex Family History Group from copies made in the early 1920s by A. H. W. Fynmore. The inscriptions cover both the churchyard gravestones and those within the church. Digitised images are available at *FamilySearch*: DGS no 4427902, from image 36.

*Amberley parish registers, 1559-1901 [WSRO Par 3/1/1/1-5, 3/1/2/1-3, 3/1/3/1-2, 3/1/4/1-3, 3/1/5/1-2]

All of Amberley's extant parish registers up to 1901 have been digitised and are available online at *FamilySearch*. Baptisms 1559-1878; Marriages 1560-1876; Banns 1768-1876; Burials 1560-1887: DGS no 4428751, from image 246. Images 248 & 249 show the WSRO catalogue references.

Baptisms 1874-1901; Marriages 1874-1900; Banns 1874-1900; Burials 1874-1900: DGS no 4428488, from image 4.

Transcripts are also available on the commercial genealogy websites, and at <http://www.sussex-opc.org/>

*Bishop's transcripts for Amberley 1571-1858 [WSRO Ep/I/24/2A]

Bishop's transcripts (BTs) were copies of the parish register entries made for the bishop. This means that there are generally two sources for records of events: if a parish register is missing, the records may still exist in the BTs, and vice versa. All Amberley's extant BTs are available in digitised form at *FamilySearch*.

Baptisms 1571-1825; Marriages 1571-1824; Burials 1571-1826: DGS no 4429410, images 551-end (766)

Baptisms, marriages & burials 1826-1858: DGS no 4428130, images 4-144

Transcripts of Bishop's transcripts for Amberley 1662-1707

Transcribed by W H Challen. These have been digitised by the LDS but are not accessible freely online.

1662-1683: DGS no 7905736, image [\[couldn't access\]](#)

1684-1701: DGS no 8040914, image [\[couldn't access\]](#)

*Amberley marriage register transcripts 1560-1840

Transcribed by Jeremy Gibson, these transcripts are strongly recommended. They compare entries from the Bishop's Transcripts with those of the registers. There are numerous comments on the register entries. The entries in the transcripts can easily be checked against the actual register entries, via searches on the *FamilySearch* database (DGS no 4428149, images 273-339).

*Amberley burial registers, 1813-1874 [WSRO Par 3/2/3]

Transcribed by E Beavis 1986. Online at *FamilySearch*, DGS no 4428149, images 341-354. Note that the Amberley burial registers do not state cause of death.

***Amberley tax records: land tax assessments 1780-1832**

These records contain the names of the owner and the occupier, with the value, for every property in Amberley, for each year from 1780 until 1832, except for 1786. The property descriptions are not always very clear, eg 'Butlers', 'Randals', but farm names always are, eg 'Castle Farm', 'Downs Farm', 'Rackham Farm', and 'the Vicarage' is clear enough.

Online at *FamilySearch*, (DGS no 4429400, images 162-246. [The WSRO catalogue reference is shown on the LDS microfilm as Q/DE/2/1 but can't be located in the WSRO online catalogue, which just gives a reference to a microfilm copy (MF/625/625) – presumably that created by the LDS.]

[Possible project: Transcribe these entries into an Excel spreadsheet.]

***Amberley tax records: (tithe) rate book 1841** (DGS no 4428232, image 283-321) [WSRO Par 3/13/1]

Wrongly catalogued as 1851. Contains names of proprietor and occupier, brief description and size of land, price per acre, rateable value, map number. It is not clear whether the map referred to exists still, but many of the properties can be identified in the Tithe Apportionments for 1847, and located on the 1847 Tithe map.

[Possible project: Transcribe these entries into an Excel spreadsheet.]

Amberley tithe map (1847) [TD/W2]

Tithe Maps are held by WSRO and full-colour digital copies can be purchased via the WSRO website (£20 each). The maps are also available as grey-scale digital images on *TheGenealogist* website (subscription needed).

The tithe maps (as jpeg images) are accompanied by the Tithe Apportionments (as an Excel spreadsheet) which give the owner and occupier names, the name/description of the property, with its size, and the rent payable. Note that the Apportionment file for Amberley also includes that for Rackham, for which there is a different tithe map. (WSRO Parham/1/4/6/1/28; this map is not digitised). We recommend using the version of the Apportionment file [here](#), where fields left blank in the one provided by WSRO have been completed, and for most houses/cottages shown on the tithe map the name of the present property is included – which is not necessarily the same property as on the map, since some properties have been replaced.

[Possible project: From the tithe map identify where many of the people mentioned in the 1841 and 1851 censuses lived. The Amberley Manor court books can provide information about when properties changed hands.]

***Amberley Valuation List 1892** (DGS no 4428232, image 322-370. [WSRO Par 3/30/3]

Contains similar information to the 1841 rate book, but for the poor rate. The entries have no map references, so it can be more difficult to identify properties, particularly houses.

[Possible project: Transcribe these entries into an Excel spreadsheet.]

Amberley Manor Court Records 1295-1936

These records, held at WSRO, are very extensive (see the WSRO catalogue), and a large proportion of these, for the period 1295-1853, have been digitised by the LDS and are available at *FamilySearch*.

Historically, most property in the manor was [copyhold](#), and transactions involving such properties had to go via the manor court. Amberley Manor Court (whose lord of the manor was the Bishop of Chichester) also had jurisdiction for Houghton, (Cold)waltham, (part of) Fittleworth and the tything of Ashfold in the parish of Wisborough Green. This is potentially a major source of information particularly for Amberley properties and their owners over the centuries. But the manor courts dealt with much more than just property, and a great deal of other information can be gleaned from these records. For more information about manor courts see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manorial_court and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Court_leet; [Mark Herber's book](#) contains an excellent section on Manorial Records.

Note re Ashfold. It is unclear where Ashfold was actually located. In the Amberley Manor customary of 1647, there is an entry for Amberley Manor Fair, which was held annually on 1 August, 'within the Tything of Ashfold near Wisborough Green Church.' So far I can find no information other than this to indicate where Ashfold actually was, and this Ashfold seems now

to have disappeared. I do not yet know how long Ashfold appears in the manor records. It appears clearly to be a place quite different from the Ashfold near Slaugham,

The Manor Court continued until 1936 but the records after 1853 have not been digitised; they can be consulted at WSRO.

There are a few deeds (c.40) at WSRO relating to Amberley properties.

****Amberley Manor Court records online***

There are thousands of pages in this online set, and only a small portion has been examined. But there is clearly an enormous amount of useful information in these records. For 1670-1853, there are persons indexes to the records which can help locate entries. For example, DGS no 4428501, image 588 ff is an alphabetical list of names of people to whom property within the manor had been transferred ('admitted') or who had given up property ('surrendered') with dates, for the period c.1670-1720. These dates help locate the relevant court book entry. See also Court Books 1706-1803.

There are no indexes to the older records. So where there is not an index you really have to have an idea of the dates you are interested in and then browse through the images.

There are occasional lists of inhabitants of the manor who 'belong to the [court leet](#)'. For example, DGS no 4428501, image 57, has 44 names of Amberley men (all men) as at April 1673; image 68 lists 49 men in September that year. There are also lists for Houghton, Coldwaltham and Ashfold. It is likely that there are similar lists for other dates.

Note that until the early 18th C, a large proportion of manor court book entries are in Latin, especially those entries relating to property transactions. So be aware that forenames are often latinised, eg Gulielmus for William, Jacobus for James.

WSRO catalogue references are shown below in square brackets.

Court rolls 1295-1508, 1641-1645: DGS no 4429002, images 631-870

- 1295-1508: images 632-794 [Ep/VI/19A]

- 1641-45: images 795-870 [Ep/VI/20/1-5]

No index for these sets.

Court rolls 1646-1671: DGS no 4429003, all images [Ep/VI/20, contd.]

No index.

Court rolls 1672-1687: DGS no 4428501, all images [Ep/VI/20, contd.]

- 1672-78: images 4-222

- 1679-83: images 223-437

- 1684-87: images 438-582

No index.

Court books Apr 1670-1706: DGS no 4428501, images 583-802 [Ep/VI/21/1, pages 1-381, Apr 1670 – Apr 1706; contd on DGS no 4428203].

- images 588-598: index with dates

- image 599: page 1 (Apr 1670)

NB Since the entries in the court book are chronological, the dates in the index are a surrogate for page numbers.

Court books 1706-1803: DGS no 4428203, all images [Ep/VI/21, contd from DGS no 4428501]

- 1706-27: images 4-161 [Ep/VI/21/1, pages 380-626 (end); contd from DGS no 4428501, which contains the index on images 588-598]

- 1728-61: images 162-479 [Ep/VI/21/2]. Index on images 164-171.

- 1761-87: images 480-732 [Ep/VI/21/3]. Index on images 482-492

- 1787-1803: images 733-883 [Ep/VI/21/4, pages 1-235; contd on DGS no 4429471]. Index on images 735-745; page 1 on image 747.

Court books 1803-1849: DGS no 4429471, all images [Ep/VI/21, contd from DGS no 4423203]

- 1803-14: images 4-126 [Ep/VI/21/4, pages 234-513 (end); contd from DGS no 4423203, which contains the index on images 735-745]. Page 234 on image 7.

- 1814-36: images 127-442 [Ep/VI/21/5]. Index on images 129-141; page 1 on image 143.

- 1836-45: images 443-733[Ep/VI/21/6]. Index on images 445-453; page 1 on image 455.
- 1845-49: images 734-end [Ep/VI/21/7, pages 1-223; contd on DGS no 4429472]. Index on images 736-747; page 1 on image 750.

Court books Oct 1849-Oct 1853: DGS no 4429472, images 4-170 [Ep/VI/21/7; pages 222-515 (end)]; contd from DGS no 4429471, which contains the index on images 736-747]. Page 222 on image 7.

Court rolls 1359-1360, 1375, 1462, 14th C: DGS no 8833995, images 440-481

- 1359-60: images 440--454 [Add Mss 34229, Court rolls and accounts of Amberley Manor]
- 1365?, 1375 : images 455-461 [Add Mss 34230, Amberley Manor Court Baron]
- 1462-63: images 462-470 [Add Mss 34231, Accounts of William atte Gate, reeve]
- 14th C: images 471-481 [Add Mss 12242, Rents of assize, customs & services of Waltham [Coldwaltham] pertaining to the manor of Amberley]

Amberley Surveys 1644-1722: DGS no 4428503, images 247-538 [Ep/VI/24]

NB It has not been easy to link the WSRO catalogue numbers to the material in this set, and some of the numbers in square brackets may be incorrect. This ought not reduce the value of this material.

Images 248-445 [Ep/VI/24/1]: This comprises a miscellany of records, in 193 folios, originally two separate volumes, compiled in the 18th cent.

- images 248-255 (ff.9-14): *notes from court books, 1650-1722*
- images 256-283 (ff.15-39): *index, and memoranda from earlier court books;*
- images 285-379 (ff.44-136): *copy of Amberley Court Rolls 1641-8), June 1644 - Oct. 1668* [Ep/VI/20]; see also DGS nos 4429002-3
- images 381- 445 (ff.140-193): *copy of Amberley Court Rolls 1641-87, May 1653 - Apr. 1668* [Ep/VI/20]; see also DGS nos 4429002-3 [Ep/VI/24/2 (126 ff), 1647-1742]

Images 449-489 (ff. 1-55): *Amberley survey 1641*

This set of images provides a very valuable source of information on Amberley properties and continued to be referred to for at least a hundred years. It is a copy of a survey of the 'Freehold and Copyhold Lands and Tenements lying within and held of the Mannor of Amberley ... and belonging to the ... Bishoprick of Chichester', 'supposed to be made in or about .. 1641', with additional notes, 1702 and 1742. The page headings appear to show that the entries are for freehold properties, but the great majority of entries are actually for copyhold properties. The entries give the names of the proprietor (usually a copyhold tenant) and others with an interest in the property (usually family members), a description of the property, its value and size. The entries are preceded by a name index, on images 449-456. Only 13 freeholders are listed, with 16 properties . A very small number of entries may have dates later than 1641, eg image 489, first entry contains the date 1652, but essentially the information in this survey relates to 1641. [Ep/VI/24/3]

Images 490-515 (ff. 56-101), images 521-529 (ff. 111-125): [on right hand page of double-page image 490]

'*Abstract of the Rolls for Amberley Manor from the old books*'- Book no 7. It is not clear what the dates are for these abstracts, but the reference to Book 7, and the handwriting on this page being the same as on the facing page, which mentions Book [Liber] 6 and has a date '6 Oct 1659' would appear to indicate that these abstracts refer to entries made from around 1660. Images 490-515 carry entries numbered 1-255, images 521-529 carry entries 256-344. It is not clear whether these numbers are present in the actual court book, but probably not.

Note that image 516, on the left, has an inverted copy of entries 256-260, and image 520 on the right has an inverted copy of entries 249-255. These pages can be ignored.

images 515-520 (no folio nos): *Amberley customary 1647*, a copy of the 1647 'customs that belongeth to the Customary Copyhold Tenants' of Amberley Manor. [possibly Ep/VI/24/4 or /25]

The description of the customs is preceded by descriptions of the common land of Amberley, Rackham, Houghton, Coldwaltham, Fittleworth and Ashfold. It seems that these were the customs which applied at the time of the 1641 survey. (The copy of the customary was made in 1748. See also [Customals of Amberley, Rackham](#)) [Ep/VI/24/4]

Note that image 515 on the right has an inverted copy of the last page of the customary, and can be ignored.

image 533: *Rent Rolls for Rackham, Ashfold, 1687-1703* [Ep/VI/24/7 (ff.59v-64)]

images 534-537: *Rent Roll for Amberley Tything, 1719* [do]

image 538: *Rent Roll for Coldwaltham, 1719* [do]

Some examples of information contained within the Manor Records

DGS no 4428203

Image 184 (left page), 1729. Refers to disputes between the tenants of Watersfield and the warreners of Coldwaltham concerning the boundary of Coldwaltham Warren, and the rabbits over-running Coldwaltham Common. On the right page and next few pages there is detailed report on walking the bounds of Houghton Forest. Eleven men took part, including Amberley's vicar, Bell Carleton.

Image 186 The court ordered that no person shall put any mangy horses on Amberley Common. This must have been an issue in Amberley.

image 337, 1745. Carefully argued case concerning non-payment of heriots. Manor custom not clear: was there actually a custom requiring heriots to be paid? Refers to the 1641 survey. This case may be quite important in showing the way the manor court worked in making legal decisions.

DGS 4428501

Image 57: April 1673, lists of freeholders 'the tenants and inhabitants belonging to the court leet') in Amberley (44 names), Houghton, Ashfold & Coldwaltham; *image 68*: Sep 1673, similar lists.

DGS 4428503

Image 516: 1747. Amberley's common land:

- Cow Brooks & Ox Brooks, 100 acres pasture
- Amberley Hill & Amberley Down, 140 acres (pasture for up to 900 sheep)
- Thorndell, Wild Brook, Mean Torr, & Dedman Torr, 430 acres brooks & pasture land

In Rackham there were 12 acres of brook, part of Wild Brook, and 100 acres Rackham Common. Houghton Down could support 600 sheep.

[Possible project: transcribe the Manor Court indexes for 1670-1853.]

Help in locating Manor Court records from page indexes

In the indexes you will find the page number(s) against a person's name. You then need to locate that page within the digitised images. The page numbering normally starts after the index pages, which usually take up around half-a-dozen images. So you can quickly locate the images for page 1. The images are normally of two open pages in the court book, so there are approximately half the number of images as pages – approximately, for quite often there is more than one image of the same pages. For example, the court book for the period from 8 Nov 1814 has page 1 on image 143 (on film #4429471). Suppose you want to go to page 298; this should be about 149 images further on, ie around image 292 or later. In fact image 292 is of pages 275-76, so page 298 will be about 10 images further on. In fact, pages 298-99 are on image 312.

***Census Records**

Census records for 1841 to 1911 are available on all the commercial genealogy websites (*Ancestry*, *Findmypast*, *MyHeritage*, *The Genealogist*), and that for 1921 has recently been made available (at extra cost) on *Findmypast*.

IG has transcribed all Amberley parish (ie Amberley village + Houghton Bridge) records for 1841-1911, and [these are available](#) on the Amberley Society website as an Excel file. (Details of the fields in this file are given [here](#).) This set should probably be treated as the definitive transcriptions (most if not all other sets of transcriptions, eg on *Findmypast* or *Ancestry*, contain errors), and it should not (or only rarely) be necessary to view the original documents. Bear in mind that the 1841-1901 census documents are the transcriptions made by the returning officer from the schedules completed by on or behalf of the head of household, and so are already a secondary source: these documents already contain errors. In many cases it has been possible to correct these errors (usually the spellings of forenames) by comparing the entries for the same person in different census years. The 1911 census documents (and those 1921) are the schedules completed by the head of household and so are generally more trustworthy – but even there you have to rely on the head of household telling the truth.

[This file](#) contains analyses by IG of the Amberley census data for 1841-1901, including by occupation, age, birthplace, marriages, surnames.

Note re population numbers from census records. These will not be 100% accurate: some people will not be in the village (visitors to the village must be excluded); some schedules may be incomplete because the head of household does not want to include some persons who are present, for whatever reason. For example, I do not appear in the 1961 census because my then landlady did not want to declare that she had students staying and paying, and we should not assume that this is unique to time and place. However any errors are likely to be small, perhaps two or three people not recorded in the case of Amberley, and a similar number not present on the night. So taking the “raw” number (less visitors) will probably give a sufficiently accurate number for statistical purposes.

1939 register

This register was created in order to identify people who could help with the war effort. It is an excellent census substitute. Amendments were made later which can, for example, show the married names of women who had married since the register was created. Available online on *Findmypast* and *Ancestry*, the actual entries are shown only for people who by now would have been over 100 years old or were known to be deceased. Each year more names become visible.

[Possible project: transcribe all the Amberley entries from the 1939 register.]

court records & police records

From the 14th century, the Assize courts, which were originally set up to handle property disputes, dealt with more serious criminal offences (eg murder, riot, rape, burglary, treason. These usually sat twice a year. Less serious offences (eg theft, poaching, assault, vagrancy) were dealt with by the Quarter Sessions, which sat four times a year, and also dealt with poor law cases, tax administration, upkeep of highways, local defence, and trade licensing. Petty sessions, established in around the 1730s, were magistrates courts, and dealt with minor offences which would otherwise have been dealt with at quarter sessions. The Assize and Quarter Sessions courts were abolished in 1971.

Assize records

Most of assize records for Sussex are at TNA, but there is also much at ESRO – the Sussex Assize was generally held at Lewes.

Quarter sessions

In West Sussex Quarter Sessions were held at Chichester, Horsham and Midhurst. The WSRO catalogue records for the Quarter Session Rolls are very full (case, defendant(s), witnesses) for the period from 1775, but have no detail for the earlier records. There are only six catalogue entries for Quarter Sessions records which mention Amberley, from 1795 to 1842, which tends to indicate that Amberley’s population was relatively well-behaved in that period (could this be true?). There are presumably many more cases involving people from Amberley in the earlier rolls, but to find them at present requires looking through the original rolls at the WSRO.

The ESRO catalogue has 74 quarter session catalogue records which mention Amberley. These nearly all relate to poor relief removal orders (see next).

poor law records

Under the poor laws, people who tried to live within a parish would have to prove their right to live there or could be removed to another parish. Removal orders give a small amount of biographical detail, but settlement examinations give much more. These records are included in Quarter Sessions archives; there were quarter sessions at Chichester, Midhurst, Petworth. The ESRO catalogue entries for poor law events are particularly full and so online searching can provide almost as much information as the original documents. For example, the ESRO catalogue entry for a settlement examination of 29 December 1853 (DH/B/92/3 pp 292-3) has the description:

William Coot of St Mary-in-the-Castle Hastings: aged 36; son of Edward and Sophia Coot of Rackham in Amberley, WC was born at Rackham; EC was removed to Rackham from St Mary Magdalen Hastings on 13 May 1847; WC married on 4 Mar 1852 at St Mary-in-the-Castle Hastings to Sarah; children Mary (illegitimate born on 13 Mar 1847 at St Mary Magdalen Hastings), [Elizabeth (legitimate)]; statement by Richard Harman, governor of Hastings Workhouse.

There will be little more information in the original record.

The WSRO catalogue has only 3 records of settlement examinations involving people with an Amberley connection, and these are thinner than the ESRO records. Example:

Pulborough parish records, Settlement examination: William ADFIELD [Par 153/32/4]:

Subject: William ADFIELD; married: Mary ADFIELD; Rackham (Amberley)

Child: Mary ADFIELD, 2y

Child: Henry ADFIELD, 4y

Child: William ADFIELD, 7y

There is one very full catalogue record from Petworth Quarter Sessions for *Examination of a Rogue and Vagabond and Subsequent Removal Order, 15 May 1750* [QR/W432/15, f.15]:

Mary Griffiths (Nee Hobbs). Exhibitant. From parish of Petworth to the parish of Amberley. Served for 2 years in Amberley

Robert Drewitt from Amberley. Mentioned in document. Farmer who employed Mary.

Sandham Rev'd Mr from City of Chichester. Mentioned in document. Performed Mary's marriage service in Subdeanery parish

Robert Griffiths. Mentioned in document. Was a soldier at the time of his marriage to Mary. Subsequently discharged from the Army. Deserted his wife 6 weeks previously in London. Never disclosed his parish of settlement to her

Elizabeth Griffiths. Mentioned in document. Daughter of Mary and Robert, aged 14 months. Born in the parish of Wiggentholt

William Smart from Petworth. Apprehending Officer. Victualler

So again, we have a catalogue entry providing essentially all the salient information from the primary document.

Police records

Sussex police records for 1857-1981 are at WSRO [POL]. There is 70 year embargo, but the pre-1953 records should all be accessible. Possibly the most useful records will be the Charge Register and the Register of Convicted Persons.

education records

There is much material relating to Amberley School and its founding in 1872 at WSRO, including log books. See the WSRO catalogue entries for 'amberley school'. There were apparently 'dame schools' at Amberley before Amberley School was built but no records for these have been located. See also [Dear Amberley](#), pp. 9-12.

[There is enough material available to produce a detailed history of Amberley School. West Grinstead Local History Group has published (2011) "The story of education in Dial Post, Partridge Green and West Grinstead", which may be worth looking at, as a guide to structure and to sources for a history of education in Amberley. IG had a copy: who has it now?]

enclosure maps & awards

The [Inclosure Acts](#) dealt with the enclosure of what was previously common land, creating legal rights to the common. At WSRO, the *Inclosure Acts. award, maps of Amberley, Rackham and Coldwaltham* [Ep/VI/26/1] provides details of the situation in 1828. There are more documents at WSRO relating to enclosure at Amberley; see the [WSRO catalogue](#).

Inland Revenue Valuations, 1910-20 (TNA)

These include the value of every property in England, their owners and tenants, accompanied by large scale OS maps; no. of rooms, floor area, condition and use of the property. See <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/valuation-office-survey-land-value-ownership-1910-1915/#18244> For a detailed description of these records as they apply to Sussex, see *The County of Sussex in 1910: Sources for a New Analysis*, B. Short and M. Reed and W. Cauldwell (Sussex Archaeological Collections, vol. 125, 1987, pp. 199-224). Digitised copy available [here](#).

The most useful documents are the field books, held at Kew, which usually include:

- the names of owner and occupier
- the owner's interest (freehold, copyhold, etc.)
- details of tenancy (term and rent)

- the area covered by the property
- figures entered for the purpose of valuation (i.e. market value)

and sometimes include:

- the date of erection of buildings
- number of rooms
- state of repair
- liability for rates, insurance and repairs
- date(s) of previous sale(s)
- a sketch-plan of the property

The field book references for each property are shown on the Valuation Office maps. That for Amberley (1:2500, OS map sheet Sussex L 2; c.1910) has the TNA reference IR124/9/399, and can be viewed at Kew, or a digitised copy ordered online.

Miscellaneous records

There are several other useful sources of information about Amberley and its people, described briefly below.

Churchwardens' presentments (*WSRO*)

Churchwardens and "sidemen" were required to present offenders against ecclesiastical law at least once a year; they could also make "voluntary presentments" at any time. Presentments were written out by the churchwardens on single sheets of paper or were in the form of answers to a set of articles of visitation and enquiry sent by the archdeacon, bishop or archbishop before visitation. In the 18th century the answers were written in the margin of printed books of articles. By the 19th century they were written on printed forms.

Although most of the single folio presentments are merely certificates that there was "nothing presentable" in the parish, the answers to the articles give much valuable information about the clergy and church officers, services, church fabric, behaviour of the parishioners, and the number of schools, hospitals, schoolmasters, doctors and midwives. By the 19th century the more detailed returns are concerned primarily with the conduct of the clergy, with the services and the fabric and finances of the church.

Ep/I/22/1,2: CHURCHWARDENS' PRESENTMENTS, CHICHESTER ARCHDEACONRY, 1573-1873

Ep/I/22/1 are loose papers only; these include Amberley 1602, 1662, 1663, 1664, 1665, 1666, 1667, 1668, 1669, 1672, 1673, 1675, 1680, 1686, 1742, 1746, 1758, 1766, 1767, 1769, 1771, 1772, 1776, 1781, 1782, 1784, 1795, 1796, 1800, and one undateable ...

Ep/I/22/2 are bound volumes, reputed to include every parish.

Electoral registers (*WSRO*)

WSRO has a full set of electoral registers from 1832, excepting 1833, 1834, 1837, 1840 and 1841. These contain the names of all those entitled to vote. In 1832 only the male owners of larger properties and tenants could vote. The Reform Act of 1867 extended the franchise to male owners of property worth £5 per annum and tenants paying £12 per annum, and that of 1884 to all male householders and to lodgers paying £10 per annum. Thus from 1884 the registers provide a 'census substitute' for male householders – which can help locate individuals between census years. But prior to 1884 only a small proportion of males are included in the registers. Note that entries in the early registers are for people owning property in a particular place, which does not mean that they lived there - the place they actually lived is given – and owners of multiple properties could have votes in more than one place.

The Representation of the People Act of 1918 introduced a universal male franchise and included all women over 30; in 1928 the female qualifying age was reduced to 21. The historical electoral registers may be searched online at *Findmypast*.

[Possible project: transcribe all entries for Amberley.]

Feet of fines

These were fictitious disputes for recording property transactions, which give the names of the parties to the transaction, a description of the property and its value. There are seven records referring to property in Amberley,

which are included in [this Word file](#). See *An Abstract of Feet of Fines Relating to the County of Sussex: vol.2, 1249-1306 & vol.3, 1308-1509*, ed. L. F. Salzman (Lewes: Sussex Record Society, vol.7, 1908 & vol. 23, 1916), downloadable [here](#).

***Lay subsidies**

The lay subsidies were taxes imposed on moveable personal property. An act of 1523 was passed for a subsidy to raise funds, in 1524-25, for the war against France. The tax was imposed on just one source: land, goods or wages, whichever would produce the greatest sum. The rates of tax were: *land*, 1s in the pound of annual income; *goods*, 4d in the pound for goods with a capital value from £1 to £2, 6d in the pound between £2 and £20, and 1s in the pound for goods worth over £20; *wages*, 4d for persons aged 16 and over who received wages over £1 per annum. So the subsidy records give an (very) rough indication of a person's wealth.

Transcriptions of the Lay Subsidy Rolls for Sussex are given in *Lay Subsidy Rolls*, transcribed and edited by Julian Cornwall (Lewes: Sussex Record Society, vol.56, 1956), available [online](#). The subsidy roll for Amberley (p.45) lists 41 names for 1524 and 2 for 1525. The introduction to this volume will assist interpretation of the entries.

Pepper papers (WSRO)

The records of Frank Montague Pepper of Amberley, and of Dr Frank R. Pepper of Pulborough are at WSRO Add. Mss. 37, 527 - 37,537 1899-1978. These contain much material relating to Amberley and the chalk pits.

***photographs**

These can show people formally, but also at work and play. You can see the people who will appear in the stories which will unfold, making these stories more immediate; you can see the places, the houses & shops, where the people lived and worked; you can see how they dressed, etc.

NB Aside from collections in the village (eg Janet Kelly's postcards, the collection in the shop), other relevant collections include:

West Sussex Past Pictures, at www.westsussexpast.org.uk; 235 relate to Amberley

West Sussex County Council Library Service

major collections at Amberley Museum and Weald & Downland Open Air Museum (Amberley buildings)

***Protestation Returns**

The Protestation Returns of 1641-42 are lists of English males over the age of 18 who took, or did not take, an oath of allegiance "to live and die for the true Protestant religion, the liberties and rights of subjects and the privilege of Parliaments." A transcription of the return for Amberley appears in *West Sussex Protestation Returns 1641-2*, Garraway Rice, ed. (Lewes: Sussex Record Society, vol.5, 1905). A copy of the page containing the Amberley return is available [here](#); the names of 80 men are listed; no one refused to sign. The complete volume may be downloaded [here](#). [More information about Protestation Returns.](#)

Press Articles

Newspapers have been published from the 18th century and a huge proportion of those published in Britain are now available online at the *British Newspaper Archive*, www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk
This is available on subscription or free at WSRO.

***The British Newspaper Archive**

The British Library's [British Newspaper Archive](#) project to digitise British newspapers from the 17th century on has resulted in a mass of material relating to Amberley (tens of thousands of items) being accessible online in fully searchable form. This is an indispensable resource of information for the 19th and much of the 20th centuries. As of 16/4/24 the following – all of which contain many items referring to Amberley - are online:

Bognor Regis Observer (1878-82, 1884, 1890-99, 1901-59)

Brighton Gazette (1825-75, 1877-94, 1896, 1899-1910, 1912-13)

Brighton Guardian (1832-33, 1860-69, 1876-77)

Brighton Herald (1833, 1861-62, 1870, 1873, 1877, 1881, 1885-86, 1889, 1891, 1925)

Brighton Patriot (1835-39)

Chichester Express & West Sussex Journal (1863-1874)

Chichester Observer (1887-1901, 1903-05, 1909-28, 1930-49) [many sporting items]
 Crawley and District Observer (1939-53, 1985)
 Crawley News (1991-99)
 Eastbourne Chronicle (1865-1951)
 Eastbourne Gazette (1862-87, 1889-96, 1898-1911, 1913-17, 1928-49, 1951-59, 1986, 1988)
 Eastbourne Herald (1939-49, 1951-58, 1988)
 Hampshire Advertiser (1823-28, 1830-32, 1834-49, 1851-52, 1854-63, 1865, 1867-95, 1897, 1899-1907, 1914-40)
 Hampshire Chronicle (1772-98, 1800-70, 1881-90, 1895-1909)
 Hampshire Independent (1836-52, 1858-95, 1898-1910, 1917-23)
 Hampshire Observer & Basingstoke News (1903-16)
 Hampshire Telegraph (1799-1878, 1880-110, 1912-61)
 Hants & Berks Gazette & Middlesex & Surrey Journal (1892-1910)
 Hants & Sussex News (1889-1917)
 Horsham, Petworth, Midhurst and Steyning Express (1863-96, 1899-1902)
 Isle of Wight County Press & South of England Reporter (1884-1911, 1913)
 Isle of Wight Journal (1877, 1879, 1889)
 Isle of Wight Mercury (1856-1858)
 Isle of Wight Observer (1852-70, 1873-76, 1878-95, 1898-1922)
 Isle of Wight Times (1862-67, 1871, 1873-74, 1876-79, 1889, 1897, 1901-13)
 Kent & Sussex Courier (1873-96, 1898-1910, 1912-76, 1978-81, 1987, 1991-99)
 Littlehampton Gazette (1923-39, 1955-56, 1985)
 Mid-Sussex Times (1881-1945, 1982, 1984-86, 1989)
 Petersfield Express (1865, 1869-70, 1879)
 Portsmouth Evening News (1878-83, 1885-6, 1889-95, 1897, 1899-1916, 1920-27, 1929-44, 1949-61)
 Portsmouth Times & Naval Gazette (1850-71)
 Sussex Advertiser (1746-7, 1749, 1751, 1756-63, 1765-68, 1782-86, 1792-93, 1799-1800, 1802, 1808, 1811-15, 1818-20, 1822-1859, 1864-7, 1877-79)
 Sussex Agricultural Express (1857, 1859, 1861, 1867, 1877, 1883, 1888-1963)
 Sussex Daily News (1916-17, 1953)
 Sussex & Surrey Chronicle (1823-24)
 West Sussex County Times (1874-93, 1898, 1901-59, 1983, 1985-87)
 West Sussex Gazette (1853-91, 1897, 1910, 1912-58)
 Worthing Gazette (1889-97, 1899-1960)
 Worthing Herald (1921-59, 1979, 1982-83, 1985)

Some example items from the above, all of which have or could have stories behind them, are included [here](#).
 Note: From the 3rd quarter of C18 to around 1920, there were full-page ads in the *Illustrated London News* for fishing competitions at Amberley (Houghton Bridge), with special trains. Very helpful towards a history of fishing in Amberley. All online at the [British Newspaper Archive](#).

Local newspapers at local libraries

The most significant local newspapers are available (on microfiche unless stated otherwise) in the libraries shown below (as of Nov 2016):

- Bognor Regis Observer 1890+: [Chichester Library](#)
- Bognor Regis Guardian and Post 1926 to 1989 - [Bognor Regis Library](#)
- Chichester Express 1863 to 1902 - [Chichester Library](#)
- Chichester Journal 1860 to 1864 - [Chichester Library](#)
- Chichester Observer 1961+ - [Chichester Library](#)
- Crawley Observer (previously Sussex and Surrey Courier) 1884 to 97, 1925, 1939+ - [Crawley Library](#)
- East Grinstead Observer 1886-1946 (some gaps), 1977+ - [East Grinstead Library](#)
- Littlehampton Gazette 1923+ (bound 1956 to 1976) - [Littlehampton Library](#)
- Mid Sussex Times 1881 to 1925, 1939 to 45, 1977+ - [Burgess Hill Library](#)
- Midhurst & Petworth Observer 1961+ - [Chichester Library](#)
- Shoreham Herald 1938 to 1945, 1960+ - [Shoreham Library](#)
- Sussex Agricultural Express 1837 to 1871 - [Chichester Library](#)

- Sussex Chronicle 1802 to 1803 (bound) - [Worthing Library](#)
- Sussex Daily News 1881 to 1956 - [Worthing Library](#)
- Sussex Weekly Advertiser 1749 to 1822 (incomplete) - [Chichester Library](#); 1746 to 1859 (incomplete) - [Worthing Library](#)
- West Sussex County Times 1871+ - [Horsham Library](#)
- West Sussex Gazette 1860+ - [Chichester Library](#); 1860 to 1887 - [Worthing Library](#)
- West Sussex Journal 1863 to 1902 - [Chichester Library](#)
- Worthing Gazette 1883 to 1980 (incomplete, 1883-1889 bound) - [Worthing Library](#)
- Worthing Herald 1920+ - [Worthing Library](#)

A newspaper cuttings collection of over 30,000 articles is available at [Worthing Library](#). A file on every parish in West Sussex is held together with general topics, famous Sussex personalities and an expanded Worthing section.

A special collection of World War One (to early 1920s) and World War Two newspapers on DVD (all text searchable) is held at [Worthing Library](#) and [West Sussex Record Office](#) and at some larger libraries.

Probate records

Wills and other probate records are of very great value. The average will also contains the names of around ten people, who are usually relatives and friends of the deceased. Until the introduction of the national probate service in 1858, wills of Amberley people were generally proved at Chichester, with a tiny number (16) proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC). Chichester probate records are preserved at WSRO; PCC wills at TNA. Inventories can be extraordinarily helpful, and were mainly produced in the 16th and the first half of 17th centuries. The index records indicate where inventories are available.

Pre-1858 probate records

***Chichester wills and indexes**

All Chichester probate records are at WSRO, and all have been indexed:

Calendar of Wills in the Consistory Court of the Bishop of Chichester 1482-1800, ed. E. A. Fry (London: British Record Society, vol. 49, 1915). This provides the WSRO catalogue references, mainly for the registered wills though sometimes for the original wills, which can be consulted at WSRO. There are references to hundreds of wills of Amberley people. A [pdf version](#) of this index may be downloaded.

Chichester Consistory Court Administrations 1555-1800 (London: British Record Society, vol. 64, 1940). This is available online at *Findmypast*.

Card index to additional West Sussex probate records, 1483-1858. This WSRO index contains references to all surviving locally proved wills and administrations not included in the British Record Society vols 49 and 64. The courts concerned are those for: the Archdeaconry of Chichester; the Dean's Peculiar of the City of Chichester; the Archbishop's Peculiar of Pagham and Tarring. In addition, the index also contains references for all surviving probate accounts. This index was microfilmed by the LDS in 2000 and is available in digital image form at [Familysearch](#): DGS nos 4427602 (from image 8294), 8306164, 830163; & 4427752. (Note: An earlier version of this card index was microfilmed in 1986 and is also available in digitised image form on *Familysearch*. This older version can be ignored.)

***Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC; to 1858)**

Digital images of PCC probate records may be accessed (presently freely) by searching the [TNA catalogue](#) (search for 'amberley sussex will'): this will return the catalogue records for the 16 PCC wills plus 6 will abstracts, created by the Inland Revenue (not of PCC wills), all of which may be downloaded. These are all [listed in this Excel spreadsheet](#). IG has downloaded copies of all of these documents, and he can provide these on request. Unfortunately these TNA images are very poor quality.

Probate accounts

Probate or administrators' accounts are an extraordinary resource. Largely because so few survive they have been little used. But WSRO holds over twelve hundred of these, of which eight refer to Amberley persons:

	<i>date</i>	<i>WSRO ref</i>
Church, Wm	1626	Epl/33/1625/3

Coles, George	1631	Epl/33/1631/10
Duke, Richard	1618	Epl/33/1617/26
Elliott, Richard, bachelor	1684	Epl/33/1684/19
Francis, Richard	1650	Epl/33/1650/2
Greene, George	1651	Epl/33/1650/6
Hopkin, Stephen	1618	Epl/33/1618/20
Rose, May, widow	1676	Epl/33/1676/5

These have not yet been examined, but to give an indication of how rich probate accounts can be, here are sample of information extracted from a few Kent probate accounts:

Nicholas Bowden, a miller of Milton near Sittingbourne, was owed money by some London bakers. He was murdered while travelling by sea from London to Milton in 1624 and his body thrown overboard.

Thomas Hammon, a Maidstone boy, lost his family to the plague in 1603, and was provided with a new outfit when the infection had ceased. He was bought two and a half yards of fustian for breeches at 3s 4d, half an ell of canvas to line his doublet, two and three quarter ells of cloth at 1s 8d for a shirt, ... The total cost of his outfit was 15s 8d including making up the outfit.

Catherine Symons of Sandwich died in 1670 of stomach cancer, diagnosed by several physicians. She spent the last months of her life boarding at the house of John Browne in Sandwich, during which time 'she [had] such extremity of paine by reason of her ... distemper that none would endure the roome but upon great necessity.'

[Possible project: Examine the Amberley probate accounts and produce a paper on what they tell us.]

***Transcripts of Sussex wills**

The Sussex Record Society published 4 volumes of 'transcripts' of Sussex wills up to 1560. These are far from full transcripts and contain only information as far as it relates to 'Ecclesiological and Parochial Subjects'. So while this information is useful it excludes a great deal of the information which wills generally contain. The volumes, arranged by parish, are all available in digital form on the SRS website, that including Amberley at <https://www.sussexrecordsociety.org/olb/srs041/>. *Transcripts of Sussex Wills*, by R. Garraway Rice, ed. Walter H. Godfrey, vol. I Albourne to Chichester (Lewes: Sussex Record Society, vol. 41, 1935)

Post-1857 wills

The calendars of wills from 1858 are searchable online at <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/>, but year of death is required. This can be approximate, but you may have to scan through multiple pages to see the entry you want. The entries give the address of the deceased, the value of the estate and the executor name(s). Example:

CLARKSON the reverend George Arthur of Amberley-vicarage Sussex and 1 Arundel-terrace Brighton clerk died 18 July 1897 at 7 Marine-parade Hythe Kent. Probate London 1 December to Elizabeth Harriet Clarkson widow and the reverend Henry Palmer clerk. Effects £2355 6s. 11d.

Inventories can be extraordinarily helpful, but were mainly produced in C16 and the first half of C17)

[Possible project: Capture digitised images of Amberley inventories (at WSRO), and transcribe.

Oral history interviews

There is much interesting information to be gleaned from the oral interviews which have been conducted with Amberley's older residents, the most recent of which are available [here](#). These are particularly relevant for 20th C research. There are further recorded interviews in the Amberley Archives, some from the 1970s, which have been digitised and which we shall add to the online collection soon. Most of the earlier interviews (before 2010) have been transcribed and will be made available on the Amberley Society website in 2025 (we hope!) The later interviews have not yet been transcribed; we would welcome any help to get transcriptions or abstracts made of these interviews.

Note: While voice recognition is becoming increasingly accurate - cf. Alexa, Echo, Siri - this type of software usually depends on 'learning' the speaker's voice. This isn't possible in interviews, and comparable accuracy cannot be

expected. A brief test showed that the amount of time needed to edit an automatically transcribed interview was not greatly different from the amount of time needed to fully transcribe that interview.

Organisations

Sussex Archaeological Society

<https://sussexpast.co.uk/research/sussex-archaeological-collections>

The Sussex Archaeological Society publications contain relatively little of direct relevance to Amberley: a search of their volumes (over 150) returns only about a dozen hits. Of importance, however, is the Revd George Clarkson's article 'Notes on Amberley, its Castle, Church etc, published 1865 in *Sussex Archaeological Collections* vol. 17, 1865; see [below](#).

Digital copies of the Sussex Archaeological Society's volumes – *Sussex Archaeological Collections* - are available online, fully searchable, at the [Archaeology Data Services' website](#). These are released two years behind the current volume. Individual articles – with links to online versions – are included in The Sussex Archaeological Society's [online library catalogue](#) where available.

Sussex Record Society

<http://www.sussexrecordsociety.org/>

Sussex Record Society (SRS) has published a mass of relevant material and should be an early port-of-call for anyone researching Amberley's history.

A list of all (SRS) publications is available at [SRS Publications](#)

The Society publishes digital versions of many of their publications, including historic print publications plus records and other content complementary or additional to the Society's main print publications. All SRS Digital Editions are published in pdf form, and may be downloaded free of charge for personal use. Extracts may be copied and reproduced provided appropriate acknowledgement is given.

Currently available titles can be reviewed here:

[SRS Digital Editions: Historic Volumes](#)

[SRS Digital Editions: Additional Volumes](#)

A number of other SRS publications are available as online books at [SRS Online Books](#)

Further material is available on the SRS site at

[SRS Online Resources](#)

The National Archives

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

Online Parish Clerks

<http://www.sussex-opc.org/>

Publications related to Amberley

Items preceded by an asterisk are viewable online and/or downloadable as pdfs.

General

***Parish of Amberley**, by Thomas Walker Horsfield, published 1835 in *The History, Antiquities and Topography of the County of Sussex* vol. II (1835), pp.157-159. [View online](#)

***Amberley**, by Mark Antony Lower, in *A Compendious History of Sussex, Topographical, Archaeological & Anecdotal* vol. I, (Lewes: George P. Bacon, 1870), pp. 7-9. [View Online](#)

***Notes on Amberley, its Castle, Church etc**, by Rev. George Arthur Clarkson, in *Sussex Archæological Collections* vol. 17 (1865), pp.185-239) [View Online](#) [Download pdf](#)

Contains much information on the castle and the church, though not much relating specifically to social history.

***Amberley: Its Castle, Church and History. Illustrated with original drawings by the author**, by Rev. H. Rickard (Chichester: Moore & Wingham, 1923), 59pp.

Horace Rickard was vicar of Amberley from 1918 to 1926. There is actually little about Amberley in this 59-page book which is not covered in more detail by Noel Staines in *Dear Amberley*, but it is worth a look. [Download pdf](#)

***Dear Amberley: A Guide to Amberley and History of the Parish**, by Revd E Noel Staines (Amberley Parochial Church Council, 1968, revised 1969, 1971. [Download](#) pdf version; this is made available by kind permission of Amberley Parochial Church Council.

Review by L. F. Salzman in *Sussex Notes and Queries*, May 1969:

This Guide compiled for the Parochial Church Council by the Vicar, the Rev. E. Noel Staines, is refreshingly unlike the run of parish guides which tend to imply that a village consists of a church and possibly a manor-house. The Vicar states: "The History of a Village is made by the people." Accordingly he devotes most of his space to a very readable account of the people and their homes with well-chosen pictures - rather poorly reproduced. The section on the Church would have benefitted by the inclusion of the plan printed in S.N.Q. viii, 103. If the booklet goes into a well deserved second edition, the paragraph on Domesday should be revised by an expert and the odd description of the emblazoned surcoat of the Wantele Brass as "crested" should be corrected. [Corrected in revised edition.] Between 1746 and 1897 three Vicars held office for some 20 years apiece. One may wish Mr. Staines an equally long tenure - unless ended by transference to a higher dignity.

Noel Staines was vicar of Amberley 1961 to 1970 This little book has much which could be expanded upon. Rev. Staines sourced information from Sussex Archaeological Collections and Sussex Record Society publications, West Sussex Record Office, Worthing Reference Library and Museum, and the West Sussex Gazette office.

***Amberley Heritage**, by Wilfrid E. Cheal (published by the author, 1972); 72 pp. [Download pdf](#)

This contains a considerable amount of material on Amberley people and occupations. (Cheal's family owned the nursery, Cheals of Crawley, and later set up a nursery at Pulborough, which became the Pulborough Garden Centre. In the 1970s Wilfrid lived at Spindlewood, off Amberley High Street. He died in 1987.)

***Ordnance Survey Book of Reference to the plan of the Parish of Amberley** (London: H.M.S.O., 1876) [View Online](#)

Littlehampton, Arundel & Amberley with their surroundings, by W. Goodliffe, published 1903; 2nd edn 1907 (London: Homeland Association) accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 4675\]](#) & [West Sussex Libraries](#)

***Amberley and Parham**, by E. V. Lucas with illustrations by Frederick L. Griggs, in *Highways and Byways in Sussex* (London: Macmillan & Co, 1904.), Chapter IX. [View Online](#)

Parish Profile no. 8: Amberley, by Reg Towner, in *Sussex Family Historian* vol. 12 no. 5 (March 1997), p.162. Accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 14879\]](#) & [The Keep \[LIB/508812\]](#) & [CD SFH40 from S.F.H.G.](#)

Amberley Castle

***The Architectural History of Amberley Castle**, by W. D. Peckham, M.A., published 1921 in *Sussex Archaeological Collections* vol. 62 (1921), pp.21-63) [View Online](#)

***Amberley Castle Measurements**, by C. G. O. Bridgeman, in *Sussex Archaeological Collections* vol. 63 (1922), notes & queries, pp.231-234) [View Online](#)

***Amberley Castle Measurements**, by W. D. Peckham and C. G. O. Bridgeman, published 1923 in *Sussex Archaeological Collections* vol. 64 (1923) [View Online](#)

***Amberley Castle**, by Walter D. Peckham, published 1928 in *Sussex Archaeological Collections* vol. 69 (1928), notes & queries, pp.226-227) [Download pdf](#)

Amberley Castle, by Thea Valentine, in *Midhurst Magazine* vol. 12 no. 3, pp.24-26 (April 2000). A short history of Amberley Castle. Accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 15969\]](#)

Amberley Castle 1103-2003: a celebration of 900 years, by David Arscott and Annabelle Hughes (The Dovecote Press, 2002). Accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 14823\]](#) & [West Sussex Libraries](#)

***The Amberley Castle panels and a drawing by William Henry Brooke**, by Karen Coke, in *Sussex Archaeological Collections* vol. 145 (2007), pp.137-152. [Download pdf](#)

Abstract:

In 1989 a drawing of 1820 by William Henry Brooke (1772-1860) was included in an exhibition at Michelham Priory. It was soon realized that it provided valuable historical evidence of the original form of Lambert Barnard's Amberley Castle 'Worthies', painted for Robert Sherburne, Bishop of Chichester in the early sixteenth century. Beginning with a documentary history of the panels and their origins, the article continues with a discussion of their subject, of Brooke's drawing and of the importance of their combined survival.

Amberley Church

The publications listed here add little of nothing to the information contained in the [online guide to St Michael's Church](#) but are included here for completeness.

Amberley Parish Church, St. Michael's, by E. Noel Staines (Amberley Parish Church, 1961) Accessible at: [West Sussex Libraries](#)

A Lost Brass at Amberley, Sussex, by Rev. E. N. Staines, in *Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society* vol.10 (1967), pp.397-98, and also in *Sussex Notes & Queries* vol. XVII no. 4 (Nov 1969), pp.123-126. The latter accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 8235\]](#) & [The Keep \[LIB/500219\]](#) & [S.A.S. library](#)

Amberley Church: a critical appreciation, by Nigel Foxell (London: Menard Press, 2005). Copies may be purchased at Amberley Village Stores. Also accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 15415\]](#) & [West Sussex Libraries](#). This book is specifically about the church, and otherwise contains little of relevance to Amberley's social history.

Abstract:

Nine-hundred-year-old St Michael's Church in the beautiful Sussex village of Amberley adjoins the world-famous castle, now a hotel. The nave is Norman; the chancel, south aisle and west tower are Early English. Artists, as is to be expected, have long settled in Amberley. This accounts for the church's richness in decorative features that date from the first third of the twentieth century. These vie with the medieval ones, of which the murals are the most celebrated. St Michael's is open all day, every day.

Chalk Pits

Chalk Pits Museum, Amberley (The Southern Industrial History Centre Trust, 1979); pamphlet. Accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 7168\]](#)

Chalk Pits Museum, Amberley, West Sussex, A Working Centre where the Industrial History of the South-East can be Studied and Preserved, by Fred Aldsworth (Southern Industrial History Centre Trust, 1979). Accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 10501\]](#) & [West Sussex Libraries](#)

***Chalk Pits Museum, Amberley**, by A. J. Haselfoot, in *Sussex Industrial History* no. 9 (1979), pp.31-33. [Download pdf](#)

Abstract:

The Chalk Pits Museum, Amberley, the first Open Air Museum of Industrial Archaeology in the South East of England, was opened to the public on Saturday, 26th May, 1979. The Museum, situated in the old chalk pits at Houghton Bridge, has been set up by the Southern Industrial History Centre who have leased the chalk pits from the West Sussex County Council. The purpose of the Museum, as an educational and exhibition centre, is to demonstrate the varied range of industries to be found in South East England which existed to support the predominantly agricultural nature of the area. Industrial Archaeology in its broadest sense is the study of the working life of past generations by the documentary and physical remains they have left behind - how did they live, how did they travel, what kind of machines and power sources did they use, what were their working conditions - all these aspects will in due course be covered by exhibitions and demonstrations at the Museum.

Lime burning and the Amberley Chalk Pits: A history, by Fred Aldsworth (Chichester: West Sussex County Council, 1979); pamphlet, 40 pp. Accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 7264\]](#) & [British Library](#) & [East Sussex Libraries](#)

***Amberley's railway collection**, by Mark Smithers, in *The Railway Magazine* vol. 134, no.1044 (Apr 1988), pp.227-229). The industrial railway exhibits at the Amberley Chalk Pits Museum and

***Return to Amberley**, by Mark Smithers, *The Railway Magazine* no.1391 (Feb 2017), p.45. A return trip to to see how the Museum has progressed since his first visit almost 30 years ago. These two articles can be accessed online <https://www.railwaymagazine.co.uk/archive/>. Subscription required.

Miscellaneous

An Amberley Manor Document , by W. D. Peckham, published November 1928 in *Sussex Notes & Queries* (vol. II no. 4, (Nov 1928), pp.123-124. Accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 8951\]](#) & [The Keep \[LIB/500204\]](#) & [S.A.S. library](#)

Amberley Mount: Its Agricultural Story from the Late Bronze Age, by Dr Hugh Benjamin A. Ratcliffe-Densham and Mary Margaret Ratcliffe-Densham, in *Sussex Archaeological Collections* vol. 104 (1966), pp.6-25. [Download pdf](#)

The Amberley Papers (shadowgraphy and early cinematography in the county), in *West Sussex History, the Journal of West Sussex Archives Society* no.2 (June 1974) p.3. Accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 16404/2\]](#) & [The Keep \[LIB/500479\]](#)

Domesday Book of Amberley, Greatham, North Stoke, Parham, published 1985 (Amberley Society). Accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 9503\]](#)

Amberley Religious Survey 1851, in *The Religious Census of Sussex 1851*, ed. John A. Vickers (Sussex Record Society, vol.75, 1990) pp.135-146 (Worthing district). Accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 10578\]\[Lib 13824\]](#) & [The Keep \[LIB/500452\]\[LIB/507827\]](#) & [West Sussex Libraries](#) & [East Sussex Libraries](#)

Worthing district includes: Broadwater, Lancing, Littlehampton, Clapham, Patching, Goring, Ferring, East Preston, Angmering, Poling, Rustington, Climping, Ford, Arundel, Tortington, South Stoke, Burpham, North Stoke, Houghton, [Amberley](#) & Wigginholt

Amberley Schools in the 18th Century, in *Sussex Schools in the 18th Century*, ed. John Caffyn (Sussex Record Society, vol. 81, 1998) p.38. Accessible at: [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 13825\]\[Lib 13828\]](#) & [The Keep \[LIB/500458\]\[Lib/507864\]](#) & [West Sussex Libraries](#) & [East Sussex Libraries](#)

Arnold Bennett and Amberley, by James Hepburn (Smoke Tree Press, 2002). Copies at Amberley Archives, [W.S.R.O. \[Lib 14782\]](#) & [West Sussex Libraries](#) [Very rare]

***Customals of Amberley, Rackham**, in *Thirteen Customals of the Sussex Manors of the Bishop of Chichester*, ed. by W. D. Peckham (Cambridge: Sussex Record Society, vol.XXXI, 1925), pp 42-53 (Amberley), pp 64-66 (Rackham) [Download](#)