

## **Visits of Jessie Younghusband and Chidham Schools to West Sussex Record Office**

The visits were encouraged as part of, first, our Tithe Map and then, later, our Joining Up Our Heritage projects. The Project Co-ordinator for both projects, Gillian Edom, was a qualified teacher so she had a good idea of the sort of exercises to arrange for the children. Caroline Adams, Senior Archivist, and myself were also involved.

Gillian used some of the work created by our project volunteers to encourage the children to be involved. For example a floor jigsaw was created of the Chidham tithe map and the Jessie Younghusband pupils helped produce a map of the East Broyle Estate area for the St Peter the Great database. Local residents provided historical information and photographs and the children used these as a basis for drawings, which were attached to the border of the map. The map was then constructed by Record Office staff.

It was felt that the groups needed to be small to enable the children to get the most benefit from the visits; so half the class came one week and the other half the next. Gillian introduced the children to the work of the Record Office and Caroline and I talked to them about various documents and showed them examples (School Log Books, photographs, documents relating to smuggling and slavery etc). The small groups were then divided into two. One half took part in activities in the Record Office classroom while the other half were taken on a tour of the Searchroom and Strongroom. They then swapped round.

Caroline and Gillian worked with the teacher and children in the classroom and I took the tours.

There was writing with quill pens, looking at old photographs and maps, filling in family trees and answering questions on a pre-prepared sheet. The tour took in the document enlarger in the searchroom and the mobile racking in the strongroom. There was also the 'guess what animal skin was used to make the parchment for this map' competition (answers included snake, dinosaur, crocodile etc as well as, the much more likely, cow, pig and goat!).

We would like to continue involvement with these and other schools but there are two problems. One is that we no longer have the large classroom as part of that area now houses the Registrars' offices. We are left with a much smaller workroom so it would be difficult for even such a small group of children to work effectively. The second problem is lack of staff, particularly now that the map projects have finished and we no longer have the teaching expertise of Gillian.

Hopefully, we can modify what we can offer and involve our new Quarter Sessions project. Schools are welcome to get in touch with us to discuss possibilities for future involvement.

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Susan Millard  
Archivist