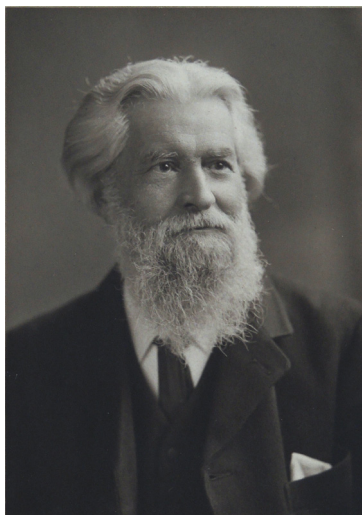


AHS London Lecture Thursday 12 November 2020

Hills Brothers, Watchmakers, Jewellers and Postmaster: a Personal History, by Jonathan Hills



In the nineteenth century virtually every market town in England had at least one family watch- and clockmaking business. In general, rather than actually making, they were retailing, servicing and repairing watches, clocks, jewellery, silver and other items. One such family were the Hills of Sudbury in Suffolk, who occupied the same premises as a home and workplace for five generations from 1831 until 2000.

Each generation of Hills left behind a wealth of information that remained forgotten in cupboards, cellars and attics until discovered by Jonathan's father, Michael Hills FBHI, during the final forty-five years of the business. Michael spent a great deal of his spare time enthusiastically collating and analysing the

archive and researching the family tree, joined in the past few years by Jonathan. Following Michael's death at the end of 2019, Jonathan has become custodian of the family archive.

The second generation to run the business were brothers Joseph (right) and Edward (left), Jonathan's great-great-grandfather, whose business and private lives can be followed, through the archive, from birth to death. Of very different character, they worked both together and separately, playing their own roles in commerce and the community and as fathers of their own families.

Jonathan will discuss their lives, loves, successes and tragedies through the written and photographic records and items that they have left behind.

Jonathan Hills was born in Sudbury, Suffolk and initially trained as a general valuer and auctioneer with a local firm of Chartered Surveyors. Joining Sotheby's, the international auction house, in 1987, Jonathan's horological ancestry finally caught up with him in 1992 when he was asked to head their Sussex clock department. He is currently Director and Senior Specialist in Clocks and Barometers at Sotheby's in London and was Master of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers in 2019.

TICKETS

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