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SKY HIGH – SUSSEX

AN AERIAL JOURNEY

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'Sussex by the Sea' is how this most famous part of England is popularly known and it is true that the presence of the sea has had an enormous impact on it from ancient times to the present day. The Romans came by sea to settle the area, and the most well-known sea-borne invasion in English history took place at Hastings in 1066 when William of Normandy defeated the native Harold and his Saxon armies, an event the Conqueror celebrated by building Battle Abbey. In the eighteenth century a new trend set in as sea-water bathing became fashionable and – with easy access from London – the stylish flocked to the Sussex coast. Brighton became easily the most famous resort, but with the coming of the railways others grew rapidly too: Bognor Regis, Littlehampton, Worthing, Eastbourne, Bexhill and Hastings are today amongst some of the most famous holiday haunts in Britain.

Inland, the pace of life was slower. Sussex has still very much a farmed and pastoral countryside. The Downs are perhaps its single most important feature, the rolling chalkland that extends for some 90km from Eastbourne to the Hampshire border which, it is planned, will become the first National Park in South East England.

Sussex can boast an impressive number of picturesque villages and small towns. Its climate and soils have made it particularly suitable for the creation of gardens which accompany the country houses for which Sussex is legendary. Almost everywhere you look there is a trace of its rich past in its thriving present, and – particularly when seen from above – an incomparable variety of wood and field, down and village, framed by one of the most renowned coastlines in the world.

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THE GALLERY – SKY HIGH SUSSEX



Birling Gap offers the only access to the beach below the Seven Sisters cliffs.

24



At Birling Gap the receding cliffs threaten the houses and hotel.

25



Bodiam was rescued from ruin in the nineteenth century and was given to the National Trust by Lord Curzon in 1925.

36



The moat at Bodiam is supplied by a series of springs and lies some way above the level of the nearby river.

37

Some examples of double page spreads.



The Sussex Downs. Rudyard Kipling, who lived in Sussex, called them the 'blunt, bow-headed, whale-backed downs.'



The Seven Sisters are among the most unspoiled coastal areas in Britain and certainly the most dramatic.

Left: The Long Man of Wilmington at 73m high is perhaps the largest outline of a human figure in Europe.

Far left: Uppark was given to the National Trust in 1954 and was regarded as a jewel because of its carefully-preserved original decoration.

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