

## THE ANCIENT ORDER OF FORESTERS

This is a re-production of a picture postcard of the annual tea party given by the Ancient Order of Foresters in February, 1932. It was for the children of: West Dean, Singleton, Charlton and East Dean and was held in the Singleton Village Hall.

This AOF was the oldest 'Court' in Britain and was called the 'Court Royal Victoria Number 2288'.

Brother Frank Pilcher is seated in the centre; with the 'Robert's' Challenge Shield in front of him. He had collected this National 'Shield' in the prior year for outstanding recruitment of members; with particular regard to 'death insurance', for people of the district.

My father; Charles Alfred Dunk: is seated to the right of Frank and the Vicar of Singleton to his left. They are all wearing the regalia of the 'Order'. The Author of this article, Ben Dunk: stands to his father's right; with the Page Boy haircut and blue sash and carrying a bag of gifts: at just under three year's old. To the left of The Vicar is a young girl of unknown name. Ben's mother; Ada Florence Dunk: is standing at the rear, on the right.

Note of interest: Frank Pilcher had a strong connection with West Dean Estate. He lived in the main gate house of West Dean Park and House. The gates were normally kept closed in those days and only important people were allowed to enter and exit through them. It was Frank's duty to control the gates. The double gates, flanked by wide pedestrian gates, were extremely large; wide enough for a coach and horses: constructed of decorative cast iron and hand wrought iron: black painted with gilded highlights.

