



Newspaper reports featured in the *Worthing Herald* between 1960 and the late 1980's.

West Sussex C.C Library Service westsussexpast.org.uk

13.03.2003

Smuggling tales



By 1824 when this engraving was made of Worthing seafront looking eastwards, the town was developing rapidly and smuggling was gradually declining. But the biggest local battle between the contraband runners and the forces of law and order wouldn't be fought for another 8 years.

Tarring from 1834 to 1878, personally knew many smugglers among his own flock and wrote that he found in them "much to admire and much to pity".

He also blamed the prevalence of smuggling in the early days to the press gangs taking so many young men for service in the Navy, leaving their dependents largely unsupported.

Mr Warter related how, when walking one day through the churchyard at Tarring, he met one of his parishioners, an old man who had been seriously ill but was now recovered, sitting on one of the flat tombstones enjoying the spring sunshine.

The old man, who had been a notable smuggler in his youth, noticed the name on a neighbouring stone, that of a former companion who

many years before had been involved with him in an unsuccessful smuggling run.

With increasing vigour, the old smuggler told how they ran nearly five miles with the preventative men hot on their heels before they could find a hiding place. And with great enthusiasm added: "It was as good as a fox hunt!"

For more resources visit: www.worthingpier.org.uk