

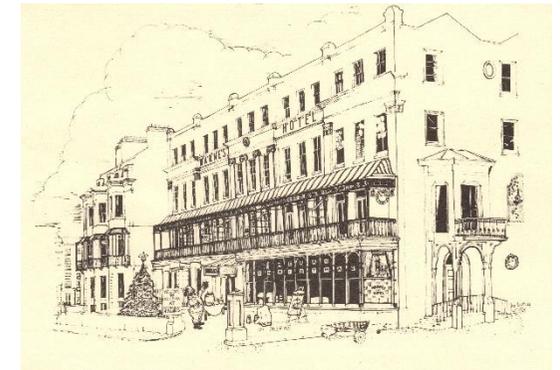
# The Worthing Society

Conserving, Preserving  
and

Safeguarding our Heritage

Heritage Leaflet No: 11

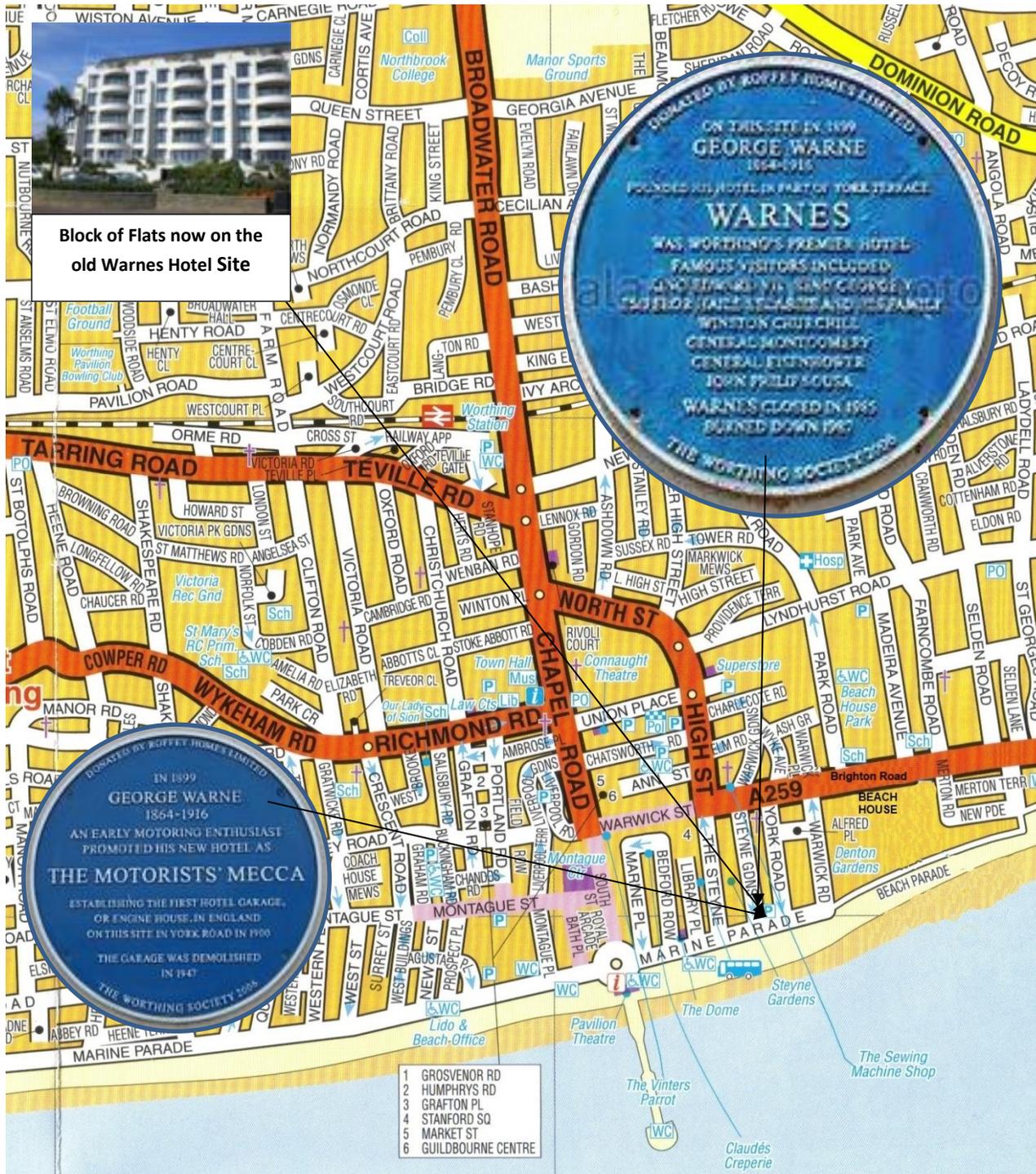
## Warnes Hotel



This is one of a series of leaflets being produced by the Worthing Society to accompany the plaques erected throughout the Town to commemorate notable people, buildings, and events in the town's history. For more information about the Society and its activities go to our Web Site at:

[www.worthingsociety.org.uk](http://www.worthingsociety.org.uk)

Reg. Charity No. 286899



# WARNE'S HOTEL



Telephone 365 Worthing.  
Telegraphic Address :—"Warne, Worthing."

WARNE'S HOTEL,  
WORTHING.

For the best part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Warne's hotel was the only Worthing location known nationally and internationally. Its fame was fundamental in putting Worthing on the map during that period.

Warne's hotel evolved from York terrace which was built in the 1820's the hotel acquired further houses until it occupied the whole terrace and also took over Steyne house a separate building immediately to the west.

The hotel was named after George Hilbery Warne (1864-1916) an entrepreneur from Brighton who owned and managed it for the first 17 years of its 86 year existence.

2 years after Warne's hotel opened, the Royal, Worthing's largest hotel was destroyed by fire. Subsequently Warne's became the premier hotel in Worthing.

## MOTORING AT WARNE'S

George Warne was an avid early motorist and his hotel was the first in England to have a garage with a trained mechanic which opened in 1900. On 29<sup>th</sup> May 1909 Autocar magazine said of Warnes "The motorists house par excellence of the south coast". The journey from London took motorists through Findon where the local government board bought in a 10 miles per hour speed limit.

Earlier in 1902 Warne organised a motor trial from the Crystal Palace to Worthing for where lunch was served in the hotel. The event attracted 250 competitors. Over 300 cars and motor cycles attended a 2<sup>nd</sup> event on Easter Monday 1905. It is thought these early initiatives by George Warne inspired the London to Brighton car run which still takes place in November every year.

In Worthing boundaries were extended and Greater Worthing came into existence and a banquet was held at Warne's hotel to celebrate.

## FAMOUS NAMES

Famous people who visited Warne's hotel :--

King Edward VII , King George V , Emperor Haile Selassie of Abyssinia, Winston Churchill, General Bernard Montgomery, General Dwight Eisenhower, John Philip Sousa the American march composer.

John Logie Baird dined with his future wife on their first date.

The English poet T S Eliot stayed there in 1959 and visited the Connaught theatre to see the Agatha Christie play Appointment with Death.

William Kenny who served as commissioner was awarded the Victoria Cross for heroism when he rescued wounded men under fire during the battle of Ypres on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1914

By the 1980's there was a oversupply of accommodation in Worthing

With a limit on modernisation to a 150 year old building the hotel eventually closed 1985.

In October 1987 the empty building suffered a catastrophic fire which was attended by 14 fire appliances. The ruined site was demolished in 1992 and a block of flats built in 2006. (shown on the map)

Two blue plaques were erected by the Worthing Society in 2006 (see map) :-

1. To commemorate the famous people who stayed there .
2. To commemorate it being promoted as a motorists' mecca by George Warne , an early motoring enthusiast.