

Aylsham Local History Society



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AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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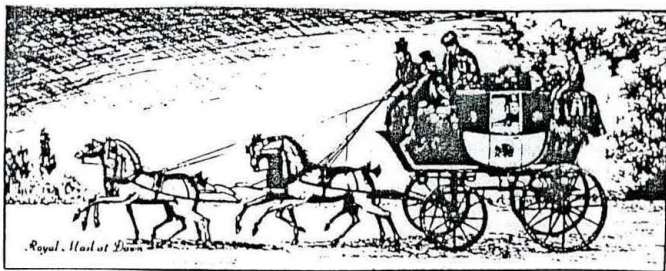
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CHRISTMAS GHOSTS

This is just the time of year to recall all those old ghost stories that we listened to as children. Do you know any ghost stories associated with Aylsham? or any legends or folklore?.

If you do - Tricia Beresford, of 6 Penfold St. would welcome any such information. She is compiling a history of Aylsham, including its folklore and legends, and has written to the Society, asking for help from any of its members.





AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

JOURNAL & NEWSLETTER

Volume 1

Number 9

I had hoped that we might, perhaps find some 'Christmassy' bit of Aylsham history to set the tone of this latest number of our Society's Newsletter - but nothing suitable has turned up.

May I therefore simply wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a good and peaceful New Year?

Your Committee has been planning a programme for 1988 which will provide, we hope another good year in the life of the Society, and perhaps break some new ground in our exploration of Aylsham's past.

I hope that we may meet at the Party on January 29th.

With good wishes,

Jack W.M.Vyse
Chairman

CHRISTMAS IN AYLSHAM 100 YEARS AGO

Christmas in Aylsham, over 100 years ago, was just as popular as it is today. It was probably celebrated even more keenly than it is today, by a much more tightly-knit community that stayed at home in Aylsham unlike today when so many people travel hundreds of miles over Christmas to link up scattered families. One thing is certain, it was better reported in the local press in those days, when editors were quite happy to report at great length the daily activities of the townsfolk. We are indebted to Ron Peabody for the extracts which follow all of which were originally reported in the Eastern Daily Press during the 1880's and preserved in a collection of newspaper cuttings by the late Mrs. Laxen. Ron has extracted all those with Christmas connections. It was always popular to report on the variety of foodstuffs on sale for the festivities and their excellent quality:-

23rd. December 1880 Christmas Fare: "the grocers' shops in this town are well filled with choice fruits etc for the season and are prettily decorated with holly and evergreens. The butchers have a splendid display of meat and poultry. Mr. James Sands had a half-bred heifer grazed by Mr. James Smith of Brampton - 75 stones; two shorthorn oxen, by Mr. W. E. Griffin of Banningham, - 103 and 105 stones; and several half-bred sheep by Horace Wortley, Esq. - upwards of 12 stones. Mr. D. Partridge had two shorthorns by Mr. E. J. Learner of Burgh - 75 and 68 stones, another by R. Wortley Esq. of Suffield - 48 stones; several fine hoggets, by Mr. Utting of Stanninghall, and several pigs by H. E. Wortley Esq. of Frettenham (these took a prize at the Norwich Show)".

The less fortunate were remembered at Christmas. It was always ensured that the inmates of the Workhouse were not forgotten, and Christmas Day and New Year's Day were well celebrated and duly reported:-

31st. December 1884. "On Christmas Day, all the inmates of the Aylsham Union Workhouse had their usual dinner of roast beef and plum pudding. Afterwards the old men had stout and tobacco, and the other inmates were supplied with nuts, oranges, sweets, etc. A plentiful supply of plum cake and bread and butter awaited them for tea. These were much appreciated by the recipients. Mr. and Mrs. Barker of Blickling, Dr. and Mrs. and Miss Morton of Aylsham and other ladies and gentlemen were present. The greatest credit reflects upon the Master and Matron (Mr. & Mrs Collins) for the manner in which they added to the comfort of the inmates. The dining hall was most tastefully decorated with bannerettes, flowers, ever-greens, mottoes etc. .

3th. January 1885 "On the evening of the 1st. January an excellent entertainment was provided for the inmates of the Union Workhouse in the spacious dining hall, which was very tastefully decorated for the festive season. The funds for the tree were provided by subscription. Ample justice having been done to an excellent tea, the entertainment commenced and some capital songs and pieces were sung by the children, also by Miss Collinson (assistant matron), Miss Culley and Miss Leaford. The comic singing of Mr. W.W. England, who also introduced an excellent Father Christmas, was a source of much amusement. Mr. Waine (schoolmaster), Mr. Livick and others also added to the pleasure of the evening by their amusing songs. A

number of the boys acquitted themselves most creditably in performing a piece entitled "The Workhouse King". A huge Christmas tree was shorn of its products and great credit is due to the matron (Mrs. Collins) for the admirable selection of presents thereon. The Aylsham Brass Band, under the leadership of bandmaster Bullock, very kindly attended and added much to the pleasure of the evening. Fruit, sweets and refreshments were served round among the paupers during the evening, and the fragrant weed was a source of enjoyment to the old men. Several ladies and gentlemen were present, among them being Mr.H.J. Gidney, Mr.R.K.Morton, Mr.and Mrs.R.J.Morton, the Misses Gilbert, Rawlinson and Williams, Mrs.E.K. George, Mr.C.H.Ward, Mr.and Mrs.England, Mrs. and Miss Lemon etc. Many thanks are due to Mr.and Mrs. Collins and all the officials in the house, for the very admirable arrangements made for the treat, which was very greatly appreciated by the inmates who expressed their gratitude by hearty cheering in response to a vote of thanks proposed by Mr.R.K.Morton, and seconded by Mr.H.G.Wright. The proceedings concluded with the National Anthem".

The poor who were not in the workhouse were also remembered, and an example of true, and practical generosity is recorded on 26th.December 1890.

"SEASONABLE BENEVOLENCE" - During the lifetime of the late Miss Shaw of this town, a sufficient sum was deposited by her in the hands of a gentleman to purchase 4cwt. of coal for thirty aged poor of this parish. This distribution has now been made, and is much appreciated by the recipients in the present cold weather.

Just as today, there are always some presents we look twice at, before we know whether to be pleased or not, so it must have been at Christmas in 1890 when it was reported:-

2nd. January 1891 - Mr. J. Gurney Hoare has presented the subordinate employees at the Eastern and Midlands Railway station here, each with a pair of worsted gloves, for which they are thankful, and also suitable Scriptural mottoes to be affixed in the waiting-room.

There are no reports of the comments of the subordinate staff at either station.

Different organisations in the town made sure that they celebrated with a Christmas dinner, even if they first had to go out and collect the proceeds to pay for it:-

2nd. January 1893 - FIREMEN'S DINNER - The members of this brigade had their annual dinner at the club-room of the Red Lion Inn, provided by Host and Hostess Woodhouse. Mr. Arthur Neale presided, and a pleasant evening was spent. The expense was defrayed from subscriptions collected on Boxing Day, and the firemen wish to thank all those who contributed.

- RINGERS DINNER - As usual the ringers called on the principal people in the town for Christmas "boxes", and this resulted in a dinner being held in the club-room of the Cross Keys Inn last Friday, when Host and Hostess Taylor placed dinners before the ringers and chimers to the number of sixteen. Mr. C. Clements presided and Mr. J. M. Roberts was vice-chairman. They met again on Saturday night,

and on both occasions touches on the handbells were given under the leadership of Mr. Robert Stackwood.

The ringers at least were able to earn their keep by contributing to the celebrations:-

2nd. January 1891 - The New Year was ushered in by the ringing of our splendid peal of ten bells, and the Volunteer Band which played a good selection of music in the Market Place. A midnight service was held in the church and also at various dissenting places of worship.

hopefully, the firemen enjoyed a day of rest.

A much more personal account of how Christmas was enjoyed and celebrated at the neighbouring workhouse at West Beckham appears elsewhere in this issue. See page 212

Explain it if you can.

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Christmas Day in the Workhouse West Beckham 1914-18

I remember Christmas Days in the Workhouse, some of the happiest of my life. No, I was not an inmate, although at the time, from six years until ten years I was quite sure that to be one was to be as happy as myself.

My grandfather, grannie and auntie were respectively Master, Matron and Assistant Matron at a small county workhouse at West Beckham, near Holt, about four miles from my home. To me it was Heaven and Fairyland all in one, and I certainly saw it through rose-coloured spectacles.

On Christmas Eve my brothers, sisters and I were bundled into big coats, shawls and rugs, the trap was loaded and we were loaded up. It was a back-to-back cart, and we soon learnt that it didn't pay to look downwards on the road—that was asking to feel sick. The gas was put out, the door locked, and off we jogged with father riding on his bicycle beside us. We rumbled along in the darkness with only the candle-lit carriage lamps and father's oil bicycle lamp.

At last we were there and up the drive to the House—out of the trap stiff and cold and into the warm 'Lodge', as the entrance hall was called. We were welcomed by 'Old Alder' at the desk and the strong smell of oil lamps.

Then down the flagged passage to the 'Octagon', the centre of the House, around which my grandparents had their quarters. Great swags of evergreen were everywhere strung across the passages. These had been made by the old men by threading twigs of ivy, laurel and holly on string.

The sitting room door would open, and there was granny in black, with a cap of velvet and lace—grandad behind her, tall, benign, with a beautiful silver beard, and auntie in her pink uniform and white apron and cuffs.

When we had been thawed out with hot cocoa and mince pies it was off to bed—bed being beds all over the place.

Then it was Christmas morning and the children singing carols actually outside the bedroom door. Then to look at our presents.

There were five of us, so there was only one present each, but always a new dress and pinafore to wear on the great day. Our presents duly presented and appreciated and breakfast over, it was time to go with granny on her Christmas rounds with a present for everyone—sweets for the children, tobacco for the men and tea and a cap and apron for the old ladies. To me everyone seemed happy and in my grandparents' special care. Across to the Infirmary, just separate from the House, with gifts for the bedridden and to see the decorations in the wards. Then to the big kitchen to watch the preparations for dinner, which was served in the dining hall to all the able-bodied. Families were allowed to sit together, a great treat for them which I was too young to appreciate. The great range which cooked the great rounds of beef, and the great cauldron in which the yellow football-sized Christmas puddings were cooked, fascinated us, especially when they were hauled out of the copper on a pulley. My grandfather, father and the porter put on their aprons, sharpened their knives and carved the beef. Potatoes, greens and gravy were got ready, and then we were allowed to run backwards and forwards to the dining hall carrying loaded plates. Men and women were allowed a glass of stout or beer and the children lemonade. I remember one old man who put meat, pudding and vegetables all together and then ate them. He told astonished me that anyhow 'it mixed when it got down'.

Then to granny's back room, where we and all the staff that could be spared sat down to our own Christmas dinner of turkey and pudding. There was no time to linger, as we must hurry back into the dining hall and help (?) Anderson the inmate carpenter build a stage for the evening entertainment.

Tea for everyone in the dining hall—stacks of dripping toast made at the kitchen range, mugs of strong tea and sweet biscuits, which once again we helped to serve. This was our opinion, but I have never known if it was that of anyone else. When tea was over it was upstairs, wash, comb hair and don the new Christmas dresses, with instructions on how to keep them clean and how to behave during the evening. We certainly wouldn't risk being turned out of the Hall, with everyone in there and only long passages lit with oil lamps outside it.

At last seven o'clock and the concert began. I loved the decorated stage, even the 'institution' smell was exciting to me. The children performed; we did our duet and dialogue; the staff did a patriotic tableau, and everyone sang the war songs 'Tipperary' and such like. It was the time after the Interval that I loved most of all. Many of the inmates had spent much of their lives at the House and had their one or two songs which they always sang. They needed no asking, and grandfather would call on them in strict rotation.

Blind Jinny 'The Old Arm Chair'; Crutches Hardingham 'The Miners' Dream of Home'; Alden 'The Death of Nelson'; and so it went on, everyone singing the chorus.

It seemed to me to go on for ever, but at last grandfather would say a prayer and goodnight. Everyone went to bed, the doors were locked and we returned to the back room for supper. There seemed masses of food and lots of people, but I never remembered going to bed, only waking the next morning and realising that it was all over and I had to face the journey back to a cold, empty house. I was sure none of my friends had had such a marvellous Christmas. When my grandparents retired and we all went to their home the following Christmas, how we missed all the fun and excitement of Christmas in the Workhouse!

Reproduced, with permission, from "Within Living Memory" by the Norfolk Federation of Women's Institutes; published by the Boydell Press Ltd. 1972

AYLSHAM

Little town, your roots in history lie deep.
The Saxons knew you, long before the Normans
came,
And Roman legions marched within your bounds.
Great Domesday book records your ancient name.

The linen weavers added to your story.
Lord Nelson knew an Inn which stands today,
And through the years, in grey majestic glory,
The Church has overlooked each broad highway.

Oh little town! so many of your children
Have travelled to far, distant foreign shores,
Some come not back, they lie in hallowed
silence
Brave heroes of two devastating wars.

Of those who live, remembrance of their
childhood,
Floods back with every echo of your name;
Dear little town, may we who now salute you,
Be ever worthy of your ancient fame.

Olive M. Skoyles November 1960

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held on the 14th. October at the Friendship Club. It was announced during the meeting that the membership stands at 82, and as nearly 40 members were present at the meeting, it indicated a healthy turn-out for an AGM and a keen interest in the affairs of the Society.

The Treasurer, Alan Quinn, presented his last report, having indicated at last year's AGM that he intended to resign as Treasurer, a post he has held since the Society's inception. Alan was thanked for all his hard work, and a successor, George Collins, who volunteered his services at the meeting, was elected in his place. The Treasurer's report appears elsewhere in this issue. Mr. G. G. Loynes has kindly offered to continue as Auditor.

The Secretary gave her usual review of the year past, listing all the activities in which members had participated. Elections were held for the Officers and Committee, and the composition of the committee is as follows:-

Chairman:	Canon Jack Vyse
Vice-Chairman	Ron Peabody
Secretary	Mrs. Jane Nolan
Treasurer	George Collins

Committee: Mary Elsey, Anne Williams, Alan Quinn and Tom Mollard.

Reports were given on the progress, or in some cases, the lack of progress, of different workshops.

1) The Rental - This is the original project of the Research Group which had translated and transcribed the Aylsham survey, of c1620. That part of the work is completed. It is now approaching a state where it is ready for publication. A name has been selected from the survey, and to it has been added a will and an

inventory linked to the name. Together with a coloured map and some photographs, the whole work should be published early next year by Poppyland Publishing, and will appear as a commercial venture. It was suggested that a "launching party" be held when it is published - an idea that found general favour.

2) Oral History - Oral history has been taken under the wing of Mary Elsey. Mary, who was unable to attend the meeting, sent the following written report

"Regretfully, for a variety of reasons, there has been little progress in the work of the Oral History Group this year. In fact, can you indeed call one person a group? No, and this is where the problem lies.

There has been an accumulation of information and an extension of knowledge. Ann Williams kindly played host to Alec Douet, and a wide variety of topics were covered by the Norfolk Oral History Group at their meeting in Norwich.

But the success of an Oral History Group is dependant on bringing together differing talents, those with their own life memories, others with technical know-how, and very importantly; those who have the skill of getting others to talk!

Surely, there are members with these attributes? If so, why not get together? For to quote Paul Thompson, we can then 'give history back to the people in their own words'!

3) Millgate - No activity to report.

4) Barnwell - a little more progress from last year. More bundles have been opened as part of local history study at the Middle School, and a few more remain to be dealt with.

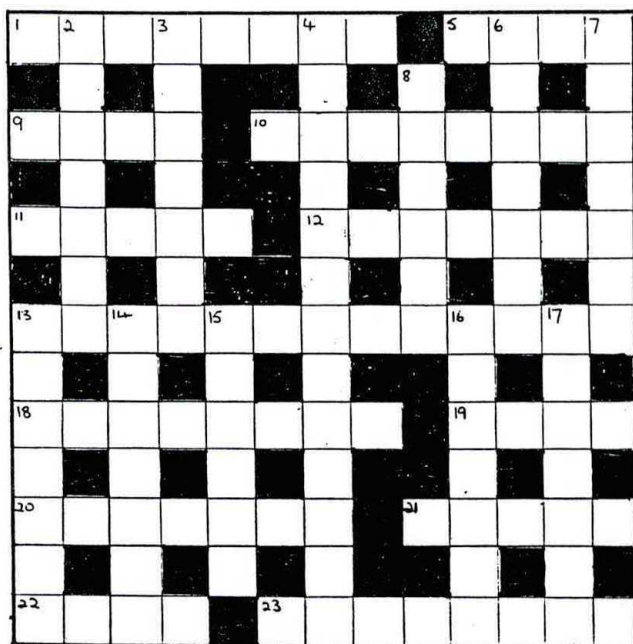
Future activities - The New Year's party will be held again this year at Frazer's Barn, but it was generally agreed that no organised entertainment was

required to follow the dinner, and that members would prefer to socialise and enjoy meeting each other.

Peter Holman spoke briefly to members, explaining his wish to prepare and produce a parish map of Aylsham with the co-operation and assistance of members.

After the Chairman's remarks and refreshments, everyone enjoyed an entertaining slide show by Ron Peabody which explored features of the Aylsham Tithe map held in the parish archives.

-oo0oo-



CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD



Not only can you test your wits, there is also a chance that you can win yourself a £5 booktoken. Completed entries should be sent to the editor by 15th. January 1988. The winner will be announced at the New Year's party on 29th. Jan. The compiler of this puzzle is Alan Quinn, who writes:-

"I have not really succeeded in making this much of an historical puzzle, but there is a little local flavour at least. The clues are mostly cryptic, but some are more straightforward. Beware, I have a tortuous mind!"

CLUES ACROSS

1. This will be a puzzling game till you find it leading to the staithe. (8)
5. This main hostelry is no longer welcoming (4)
9. Sir William's girdle? (4)
10. Confused I left Liberace in exchange for right hemisphere. - brainy eh? (8).
11. Motorway in brightness can reach no further. (5)
12. For tea I sat mesmerised at the age of this word. (7)
13. A bit of odd behaviour there in France gets the 151 expected good forecasts. (2,4,7)

18. They did this to the local dialect, in memoriam (8)
19. The key to this is in one's ale (4)
20. Endless hot flavouring leads to caring, finally (7)
21. Sexton and Bolwick each had one (5)
22. In local floods he'd need to row from ma's house(4)
23. 6 & 17's last request was to - - - ? (3,1,4)

2. Sounds as though I noticed a scotsman describing an East Anglian tribe. (7)
3. The family who left their hall for us had earlier laid foundation for another. (7)
4. A long line, with national and local branches and connections, started by E.Crouchbank. (3, 10)
- 6 & 17. Jolly sounding proportion mixed on L.Ness belonging to victorious Norfolk hero. (7, 7)
7. A woman's mantle seen in chambers or Oxford perhaps (7)
8. Tanks of no military value, kept underground, all over Norfolk (6)
13. Aegel's joint has now been modernised (7)
14. Picture men got out of dire straits (7)
15. Lost one from the 1st XI; the point is only two can play this game (6)
16. See gaunt craft that could not be found. (4, 3)

[illegible]

The Starling memoirs in the Parish Archives reveal so much detail of life in Aylsham in the middle and late 1800s that one would expect to find a full description of Christmas festivities, but, surprisingly, little is revealed. The most direct reference seems curiously innocent when read today:-

"I am now going to tell you about the merry raffling parties we used to have at Christmas time. They started about a fortnight before Christmas and went on up to Christmas Eve. There were scores of people used to come into the town for these parties, and raffling every night, but each had what they called 'a big night' when there were turkeys, geese, ducks, chickens, wine, liquor, tobacco, cigars and all sorts of good things as prizes. You paid 6d, and the big raffle was 1/-, and how the people did enjoy themselves.

Now, I could never make out why this was done away with. Our raffles were conducted as straight as a gun, and all the long years I attended I never saw any ructions, but I suppose it was some narrow-minded humbug that wanted to restrict one of the poor peoples' pleasures."

But with Christmas came the winter weather, and Starling describes the hazards of a winter rail trip to Wroxham during a particularly severe winter in the 1870s, and how they coped in Aylsham at that time.

"And now I will tell you about the biggest snow storm I have ever seen in my long life. It occurred a few years after the railway had been opened. We had snow before Christmas, but not such a lot as usual, but after, the most severe frost set in

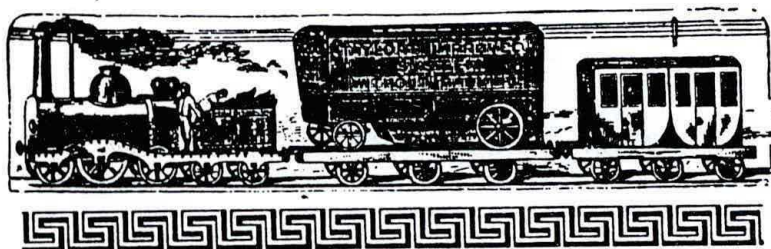
for weeks, and everything was frozen hard. The ice was like glass. You could skate from Wroxham bridge anywhere you liked to go, and it was so good in Wroxham Broad that the great Skating Association out Holbeach way decided to have their races there. The day was a Friday and a big lot of people went from Aylsham to see the races. Fish Smart, the champion of England, and other big skaters came, with a big following to see the races. It was a bright sunshine morning and freezing very hard. They had just got to Wroxham when the sky came over very black and it began to snow, and snow it did indeed. I have never seen anything at all before like it. All these people were stranded at Wroxham, but they were a great deal better off as there were plenty of houses for them to get lodgings.

The worst was the passengers in the mid-day London train for Cromer, and those coming to Aylsham which should change at Wroxham. The train got as far as Salhouse, ran into a big snow drift, and could get neither back nor forward, and all this occurred in a few hours. The passengers in the train had to wait until they were dug out from each compartment, and this was very nearly night. The railway people had gone to all the farmhouses and other houses nearest the line to get permission from the different tenants for the stranded passengers for shelter and when they did eventually get them out of the train, the difficulty was to get them to the different houses as the snow was just four feet deep, but they managed at last to get them to the different houses where every kindness, I have heard, was shown them. The next day they dug the train out and got it back to Norwich, where they put on the big snow ploughs and on the Wednesday we had the line free again from Norwich. Of those that were stranded at Wroxham, only two got back on the Sunday. Several got back on the Monday, and the others on the Tuesday

but the others from Salhouse did not get home until the Wednesday.

Now I will tell you how we got on at Aylsham. All the wires were down. No letters or mail for three days. We were quite isolated, but there was one good thing - we had plenty of food, as I told you before, we always prepared for this. The street was about $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft. deep in snow, and the surveyor got all the farm hands from the different farms he could get for the town and the roads. First they cleared the middle of the street, and made a little cutting opposite each shop door, then they started to clear the snow away and we got pretty clear in the town in about three days. They put great gangs of men in each road, and they cut just room enough for one cart to travel and about every hundred yards they cut a place in the snow for one cart to pass the other, and we were like this for over four weeks before a change set in.

We had another sharp winter about three years later. We were skating on Blickling lake a fortnight before Christmas and on Christmas morning, but in the afternoon came a change and spoilt it for Boxing Day, but three days later the frost set in again and it went quite up to the first week in April. We were skating four or five times a week at Blickling, and Mr. R.J.W. Purdy told me he was skating on his pond at Woodgate on Aylsham Fair Day morning - 23rd. March - We had some very sharp winters about this time - 1870 quite up to 1896, and then there seemed to be an alteration."



Starting with the centre word, read in a clockwise direction and the following is revealed

1. THE NORFOLK RIDDLE EXPLAIN IT IF YOU CAN

In *Norfolk* once, there was a Thing that look'd as great as any King, and yet he was no King indeed, tho' by him all things were Decreed; He made each one to him Submit, Abroad, at home, as he thought fit; Yet this immense prepost'rous Beast, Destroy'd whole Thousands at the least; He never thought he had enough, His greedy Maw he so did Stuff; Untill he ready was to burst, Yet after more he still did Thirst, and headlong on, he still did run In the same Course that he begun: If *Norfolk* do's such Monsters breed How shall we do them for to Feed? Worse than a Dragon he destroys, the Country daily he annoys, Some, like himself, him Homage pay, And are Delighted in his ways, But time will come to feel the Sting, As well as cut off this vile Thing, who does upon us so much Prey, With Sport and Pastime e'ery Day; Defying those, that would perswade The rest who basely he betray'd, to pull this Monster from the Head, Who has so many Mischief's bred: This Devil like, more than a Man! Explain this RIDDLE if you can.

*Marked in British Museum Catalogue as ? Dublin 1730? .
Perhaps a satire on Sir Robert Walpole*

(Taken from 'A Norfolk Anthology' by
Caroline Fendall, 1972)

CHRISTMAS CUSTOM IN NORFOLK.

During the last century it was the custom on large farms to make a great quantity of cider of two qualities, and at Christmas the best cider was tapped, and so long as the yule log, or Christmas block, was burning, say for some ten or twelve days, the servants had the cider in common. The worst or slowest burning log was held in reserve by the servants till Christmastide; and till that was consumed, a small piece excepted, which was retained till another year for the purpose of setting fire to the new yule log, the general beverage of the family was the best cider, of which one or more casks were made expressly for the occasion twelve months before it was required. Master, mistress, and servants took their meals together.

Christmas is a season of festivity in all parts of the kingdom, but in Norfolk that festival was formerly begun in a way which was not general in other parts. On the morning of Christmas Day, in many farmhouses, a large quantity of frumerty used to be prepared, and the labourers on the farm, with their wives and children, were invited to breakfast upon it. It is considered a great treat, and is really a most nourishing and delicious food. Ale or mead, with a toast and nutmeg, was appropriated to Christmas Eve.

from
"The Norfolk
Garland" edited
by J.Glyde.



Searching for material for a Christmas Number, it will be apparent by now that the editor has been searching biographies and published diaries for suitable items, and the 'Norfolk Diary' of the Reverend Armstrong seemed a likely source. What a disappointment! - although interesting in so many ways, the diarist saw Christmas and the end of the year as a time to record all the disasters which had occurred during the year. Much more likely to depress our readers than to cheer them up, as this example from 1881 shows:-

December As usual, the year closes with the most fearful
31 public catastrophes, e.g., three trains smashed
up together in a railway tunnel at Canonbury;
tremendous colliery explosion at Wigan; destruction by fire of a Vienna theatre with a loss of 800 lives; Mr Powell, M.P., an amateur aeronaut, carried out to sea and never heard of since; Ireland in a fearful state.

However, one little snippet can still
raise a smile -

1868

January I have often observed how little out of the
I common one comes across even in a parish of
4300 inhabitants. But to-day I met with an
old gentleman of 74 who last week married a
lady of 84. He seems well off and had travelled and had "a

particular mind to see the land of Goshen." His grandfather had been Vicar of Aylsham, and his great-grandfather had been a clergyman also. He was related to the celebrated Sir B. Wrench, for many years a great M.D. of Norwich. He cannot tell how he came to marry and supposed it was due to Providence. But it is said that the old lady has £800 a year.

. . . say no more!

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SOCIETY NEWS

NEW TREASURER - After guarding the funds of the Society ever since its inception, Alan Quinn relinquished the post at the last AGM. Thanks are due to Alan who handed over the accounts in a very healthy state to George Collins. Thanks are also due to George who stepped in so readily at the AGM to fill this important post. George lives at No.1 Banningham Road, where he is ready to receive subscription renewals.

COACH TRIP

A coach trip to the Royal Academy, to include a visit to the 'Age of Chivalry' exhibition is being arranged. Provisional date - 20th. February 1988. Details and cost to be announced later.

DAY SCHOOL

The CUEMB has agreed to back a Day School to be arranged on the study of Aylsham's buildings. It will probably take the form of a day divided into three sessions, and should include visits to some of the more interesting examples. Expected cost will be about £5.50. Judging by the recent survey on members' wishes, we already have sufficient members interested to make this a success.

Date? - sometime after Easter. Full details later.



Members of the Aylsham Local History Society Committee rehearsing for the Christmas Party?

- or to be more accurate -

THE NEW YEARS PARTY

This year it will again be at Frazer's Barn, on FRIDAY 29th. January at 7.30 pm. Cost £3.50. The same successful arrangements as before will be made. This year, it was agreed not to arrange formal entertainment to follow the meal, but to give members and friends the chance to meet and talk to each other.

RESCUED FROM A RUBBISH DUMP Eileen & Robin Rush

Whilst talking to a friend in one of our local art galleries, he told us about a clock dial and hood with the name 'Read' and 'Aylsham' painted on the dial. He had been shown the pieces which had been rescued from a dump by the man who had salvage rights to the dump, and this man was willing to sell.

We arranged to meet the man, and after a certain amount of haggling, bought the clock. It is a Grandfather clock movement, complete with hood. Both are now being repaired, and we are having the rest of the case made to fit the clock.

The dial is a 12inch, break-arch dial painted with flowers, and the name MATT.READ AYLSHAM. After washing the dial it was found to be in good condition. Matthew Read was born in 1756 and died in 1826.

We are very pleased with our find, and one day we will have this lovely old Grandfather clock restored and standing in the corner of our room.

(Eileen and Robin Rush are researching the history of Aylsham watch and clockmakers. See also the earlier references on pages 66-67 in issue No.4, and pages 125-126 in issue No.6 - Ed)

WITH CHRISTMAS IN MIND

When it comes to Christmas presents, what better gift could you give than a good book? particularly a good local interest book. All the ones listed below have been published since the last list which appeared in Issue no.7.

If you have already bought your Christmas presents, it is nice to know that all these can be borrowed through Aylsham library if you want to dip into them yourself.

--ooOoo--

BILYARD, J.	Hales Hospital: a history
BROWN, R.D.	East Anglia 1941
BURRELL, D.	Our story: St. Matthews Church, Thorpe Hamlet.
CARTER, A. (ed)	A year in the field: The Norfolk Historic Farm Buildings project.
CLARKE, P.	Where to watch birds in E. Anglia.
COMFORT N.A.	Mid-Suffolk Light railway.
COTTON, B.	Cottage and farmhouse furniture in East Anglia.
COWLEY, I.	Anglia East: transformation of a railway.
DODDS, A.	East Anglia drawn.
EASTWOOD, A. <u>and</u> DAVAGE, M.	Canary citizens: Official history of Norwich City Football Club.

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| ELLIS, E.A. | Ted Ellis's year. |
| FORMAN, J. | Haunted royal homes. |
| GIFFORD, A. | Ghosts and legends of Lynn. |
| GROSE, J. | Those seaside days: memories of East Anglian family holidays in the 1940's. |
| HAWKINS, C. | Great Eastern Railway engine sheds Vol.2 - Ipswich and Cambridge. |
| HAWKINS, J. | The Wymondham Bridewell. |
| HIGGINS, D. | The Beachmen. |
| LEIGHTON, M. | Discover Broadland by boat. 1987 (2 cassettes) |
| MACCULLOCH, D. | Suffolk and the Tudors - Politics and religion in an English County, 1500 - 1600. |
| MUIR, M. | From slate to computer: a history of education in Saxlingham Nethergate. |
| MUMBY, J. | Elsing: a village history. |
| NORFOLK County Council. | Norfolk guide to town centres. |
| NORFOLK Museums Service. | Norfolk from the air |
| PLUNKETT, G. | Disappearing Norwich. |
| ROBINSON, B. | Norfolk origins 3: Celtic fire and Roman rule. |
| ROBINSON, G. | Glorious ruins of Norfolk. Vol.1 - Abbeys, Priors and castles. |
| TAYLOR, M. | Birds of Sheringham. |
| VERIOD, B.S. | A history of the Norwich City Fire Brigade. |
| WATSON, J. | Norwich City Football Club: canaries souvenir scrapbook. |
| WRIGHT, A. | No laughing matter: theatre pieces and stories. |
| YAXLEY, S. (ed) | Sherringhamia: journal of Abbot Upcher. |

--ooOoo--

THE AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY ACCOUNTS - 1986/7

RECEIPTS

Balance as at AGM 30.6.86:-

Current a/c	35.65
Deposit a/c	406.58
cash in hand	<u>6.44</u>
	448.67

Subscriptions	164.00
Entrance fees	26.50
Lecture course fees	122.00
Newsletters	20.34
Party	206.00
British Museum	168.00
other trips	21.00
Bank interest	<u>27.42</u>

Total

1203.93

Treasurer: Mr.A.Quinn

EXPENDITURE

Stationery, postage and photocopying	90.13
Speakers Fees	70.00
Fees to CUEMB	92.40
Party	157.35
Coach hire	170.00
Mannington Hall	50.00
Typing	67.74
Coffee	3.35
AHSA Book	26.00
Suffolk Churches Trust	10.00
Friendship Club	10.00

Balance as at 31.7.87:-

Deposit A/c	324.00
Current A/c	149.09
cash in hand	<u>13.87</u>
	486.96

Total

1233.93

less unpaid cheque

30.00

Total

1203.93

Audited by Mr.G.G.Loynes

Dated 31.7.87

Despite all the festivities and jollifications, are you one of those people who have to confess that there are times when Christmas can get, ever so slightly, right up your nose?

Do you experience those occasional moments when it all seems a bit too jolly, perhaps not quite so sincere, and certainly a bit too commercial?. Do you reach the point where you never want to see a Christmas pudding as long as you live, and the prospect of another turkey dinner appals you?. If all this applies to you, then apart from the fact that you have probably over-indulged, you will have a sneaking sympathy with Jilly Cooper, who wrote in her book -"Jolly Super Too" the following:-

I do wish Christmas card manufacturers would be more imaginative about their verse instead of all that snow and jingle bells and 'hearty greetings brimful of cheer to someone dear.' My husband was so enraged by the banality of this year's that he composed a little poem which I feel constitutes a real breakthrough in Christmas verse:

*'Noel,' the festive Robin cried,
When he the heavenly babe espied.
But Santa said: 'Enough of that.'
And with a yule log squashed him flat.*

A Merry Christmas to you all.

Happy Christmas

