

AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



JOURNAL & NEWSLETTER

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Front cover: The White Horse area on the Tithe Map of 1839 at the The National Archives.

Back cover: The Inland Revenue Map of 1910 at the National Archives, showing the early White Horse site.

The **JOURNAL & NEWSLETTER** is the publication of the Aylsham Local History Society. It is published three times a year, in April, August and December, and is issued free to members. Contributions are welcomed from members and others. Please contact the editor:

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The Editor is very grateful for the contributions to this issue and welcomes material for issues to come as always. We are most grateful to Caroline Driscoll for taking on the job of organising outings for the Society: the summer visit to Blakeney was a great success. We are sorry that Gillian Fletcher and Ann Dyball have felt it was time to relinquish their long-standing places on the Committee. We greatly appreciate all they have given to the Society and are glad that they will continue to give us their help in a more informal way. We do hope that other members of the Society will feel that they are welcome to help with the running of the Society, both as members of the Committee and more informally, contributing to the journal, organising or reporting on events and thanking our speakers for example. The AGM in October provides a good time to have a chat with one of us.

The Society annual social, arranged for us by Jim Pannell, was a dinner at 'The Crown Inn' at Banningham on Thursday 26th April. We had a record gathering of 40. We much appreciated the good service at a reasonable price and hope for a good experience next year. Jim is always glad to have ideas for a venue.

Please see notices on the last page for our new book, the autumn courses and Heritage Open Days.

Lecture programme for the rest of 2015 has been arranged as follows.

Thursday 1 October 2015. AGM at 7 pm at Friendship Hall, followed by tea break and 'Woodgate' by William Vaughan-Lewis.

Thursday 22 October, 7.30 pm at Erpingham Church. 'Agincourt in context' by John Alban.

Thursday 26 November, 7.30 pm at the Jubilee Centre. 'Agincourt; Unravelling the Myth' by Matt Champion.



Fig. 2. The Inland Revenue 1910 map (TNA). The early White Horse site.

The property has first been spotted in the ownership of William Wright in 1461–62, when he and his wife surrendered their house (messuage) and its 2½ acres to Robert Farman and his wife Katherine.⁴ Five years later the Farmans conveyed it to Richard Bettes and it stayed in that family for some time. In her 1517 will Joan Bettes, the widow of Aylsham engraver John Bettes, noted that she had recently sold her property to her only son Simon, also an engraver.⁵ The court roll for Michaelmas 1516 shows Simon, with two trustees, admitted to the property described as a messuage formerly of William Wright and three acres of land lying in one piece in croft with the messuage in a place or street called Thorgate with the King's Highway (Millgate) on the east. Part of the property, a cottage and old building on the north side of a barn, together with a yard containing fruit trees and access to the well was retained for Joan for her to live in for the remainder of her life and after her death would revert into the main premises. The following August, just after her will was proved, Simon was admitted to the whole property; he stayed in Aylsham for some time but later lived in Norwich.

Thorgate was the old name for Workhouse Lane/Commercial Road/Bure Way and, as will be seen, the premises once had an access strip of land to that road even though the main frontage was on to Millgate. The derivation of the road name is not certain and it dropped out of use during the 18th century.⁶

Simon Bettes's widow Agnes remarried to Norwich carrier Thomas Pate (Payte) and the two of them were admitted to the main messuage and three acres in the autumn of 1538. In April 1548 Thomas and Agnes surrendered it to a John Butler (Butteler or Boteler) of Blickling. In April 1549 a cottage and one rood parcel on the north side of the messuage (presumably Joan Bettes's cottage) was conveyed to an Aylsham fletcher (arrow maker) Ralph Wood and his wife Joan; this giving rise to the later name of the smaller property as effectively 'the fletcher's'. In November 1550 the main messuage and three acres (but not the cottage) was sold to members of the Marsham family and in August 1552 this was conveyed on to Robert Humphrey. In September 1558 the court recorded the deathbed surrender by Robert, through his will and trustees, to the use of his wife Joan.

The property then fell into the hands of some of our Aylsham attorneys. Around the 1560s or 1570s Stephen Drury, son of attorney or man of business Henry Drury, acquired both the Humphrey messuage with its 3½ acres in North Croft, the old name for this area of Aylsham, and the cottage lived in by the widow Joan Woods.⁷ Drury's acquisition was not without problems; challenges to ownership in the 16th century, often groundless, were routinely tried on. In February 1582 George Bettes, only surviving child of Agnes and Simon, sued Drury in the Duchy court for ownership of the Humphrey messuage and land.⁸ He argued that, whatever the court rolls showed, he should have had his father's Aylsham property as his heir. Agnes had sold because all her other children had died and she expected the same fate for George; she believed the property grant from Simon's deathbed surrender and will was to her alone and thus was hers to sell. However, witnesses said that on her deathbed she regretted having deprived her son of the property and George tried to use this to his advantage. To no avail: lawyer Drury produced as his key witness Christopher Knolles. An attorney of Sprowston, he was the son of the other major Aylsham lawyer of the era, Thomas Knolles who had been steward of Aylsham Lancaster.⁹ Christopher testified that George had said two years earlier that he would not pursue an ownership claim. George had found that his mother had been left the property in fee simple (to her alone) and he also seemed then to have been swayed by Knolles's appeal that the premises were occupied by poor tenants (Joan Humphrey widow was still living there) and his view that George had no right to the property. Clearly Bettes lost the case but it is helpful in one particular regard. The questions for

Drury's witnesses and Knolles's evidence included the description of a 10-foot wide parcel of ground that extended from the south side of the croft of the messuage into a common way nearby which was used as a rear way out of the premises. Thorgate was usually described in Latin as 'a common way' whereas Millgate Street (the 16th century name) was usually the King/Queen's Highway; this strip of land must have run from near the south-west corner of the field (tithe 335) past the west end of what was later the workhouse. This would have given rise to the premises being 'in Thorgate' rather than in Millgate.¹⁰

The 17th century

Stephen Drury died in 1599 leaving his extensive Aylsham property largely to his wife Bridget for life and then to their two daughters: Mary who married Charles Suckling gent and Frances who married George Gardiner (another attorney) and who inherited the Humphrey messuage and its subsidiary cottage lately of Joan Woods.¹¹ The court rolls show family admissions immediately after Drury's death and in August 1601 George and Frances Gardiner surrendered her part of the inheritance to Charles Suckling.

In August 1608 Suckling surrendered to Thomas Harward the Humphrey property in Thorgate, mortgaged with a loan of £70 repayable to Suckling at the Guildhall in Norwich, and the cottage and quarter-acre free of the loan. The Fletcher's cottage was retained by Thomas Harward and his wife Alice for many years although he mortgaged it several times over the next 25 years, with court book entries in 1612 (when Fletchers is first used as the cottage descriptor), 1617, 1621, 1625, 1628, 1631 and 1638 relating to the cottage and/or the main messuage. In 1621 Fletchers was mortgaged to Aylsham brewer Robert Gurney gent.¹² Gurney was accordingly logged as the 'owner' in the 1622 manor survey where Fletchers is described as a four-bay house or cottage with an orchard and garden totalling one rood; a classic small hall house is suggested.¹³ Gurney had other premises in Aylsham which were most likely the centre of his brewing operations.

Harward (Harwood) was recorded in the survey at the main part of his premises, showing the old 1608 mortgage had been repaid. He had added to the Humphrey site in September 1612 and in 1622 it was described as a messuage, 5-bay barn, three acre close and a further three and a quarter acres in North Croft.

The cottage 'Fletchers' may well have been an alehouse during this period; it is said by Elizabeth Gale that in 1620 William Kilby was licensee of the White Horse in Aylsham but we have not been able to discover her source for this.¹⁴ The alehouse licenses for that year that have survived in the Quarter Sessions rolls show six different licensees – without inn names – but this is

probably an incomplete record of the total number of licensed premises in Aylsham at that time.¹⁵ One of the six licensed men was a William Harward, probably a relation of Thomas. It is perfectly reasonable to believe that this site was already an alehouse; Millgate was a centre of malting and brewing in the 17th century and the White Horse had a competitor, certainly from about mid-century, in the Swan or White Swan located in what is now known as Mill Row. Before moving on, it is worth noting that the delightfully named Cheeke Curle was granted a license in 1626–27, with Robert Gurney standing security for him. Since gents are rarely found doing this it is possible that Gurney as mortgage owner stood security for his own tenant and Curle may have been in our site.

In the summer of 1638 all Harwood's premises were acquired by Thomas Riseborough (Riseburrow, etc) and he too took out mortgages on the property: from Richard Bell in 1641 (probably the Itteringham shopkeeper of that name at that time) and Daniel Daynes and his wife Elizabeth in June 1645. By August 1646 Riseborough had sold on to Geoffrey Flaxman the Fletchers messuage with its one rood, three roods plus 2½ acres in North Croft and the Humphrey messuage with its adjoining three acres in North Croft at Thorgate. Flaxman continued the mortgage, by now held by the widowed Elizabeth Daynes who had remarried to Benjamin Tesmond. Flaxman was a joiner by trade but also clearly a brewer of some scale supplying beer in 1641 to workmen doing tasks for the churchwardens.¹⁶ Fletchers was probably a drinking establishment during the Flaxman ownership: his son Thomas Flaxman was granted annual alehouse licences in 1649 and 1651 and his father in 1661.¹⁷ Geoffrey was referred to as 'victualler' in 1661; Thomas was a beer brewer.¹⁸

As Geoffrey also owned another property just to the north we cannot be certain whether he was running an alehouse in that property or at our site (or both); his inventory suggests a good-sized house with playing tables in the Hall and a significant quantity of barrels in the cellar, including '9 hogsheads to sell out beer'.¹⁹ The house to the north was in Aylsham Wood manor and it is possible that the two properties were being used jointly by father and son for malting, brewing and retailing as well as the joinery business. By March 1667 Geoffrey Flaxman was dead and Thomas had taken over Fletchers and the Humphrey premises (but not much of the other lands once associated with this site). In October that year Thomas Flaxman mortgaged Fletchers and Humphreys to Thomas Hallifax, worsted weaver of Aylsham, but died in late 1671 shortly before the due date for repayment early in 1672. Flaxman's will shows that his wife Margaret was to repay his debts and have power to sell his estate, with his sister Mary, wife of William Wilson (whose father Richard was a licensee in 1620), and her children to have cash legacies.

In Thomas Hallifax's will, made in 1668 and proved in October 1672, he noted that Thomas Flaxman, 'maltster of Aylsham', was indebted to the tune of £118 which sum, if it was repaid, he left to his two sons equally divided.²⁰ The debt was not repaid and Hallifax therefore effectively left Fletchers and Humphreys to his sons Nathaniel and Thomas (who were admitted at an April 1673 court).

Certainly Fletchers had become known as the White Horse by the late 1680s when the poor rates show payments for it, explicitly named. At this time occupiers rather than the owners paid the rates – for the alehouse that was the widow Pinchin. Thomas Hallifax junior shows in the poor rates for a decade or so from the early 1690s paying for the White Horse.²¹ The Norfolk Pubs website, using Elizabeth Gale's book, suggests that Thomas Hallifax junior was licensee of the White Horse off and on during the 30 years from the early 1670s.²²

The 18th century

Thomas Hallifax junior outlasted his brother Nathaniel and in September 1707 he conveyed the White Horse property to Thomas Forster, starting an extended period of ownership by the Forster family. The poor rates show that Forster was tenant of the good-sized farm later known as Belt Farm, earlier Mucklyn's, from 1703 and that for a time he also leased the nearby mills. Thomas Forster was a maltster and brewer as well as a farmer, an increasingly common trend to vertically integrated businesses. In 1707 and 1710 the poor rates for the White Horse were paid by both John Surfing (of a Millgate family) and Thomas Forster – a modest 4d each month, well below the level for an established large inn in the centre of town. It seems reasonable to assume that it was a modest alehouse at this time. Forster continued paying rates until 1720, after which date inn names are rarely noted in the rate books and occupancy of the site is hard to track. Again, web sources and Elizabeth Gale show Thomas and his son Charles as licensees from 1723 to 1734.

Either Thomas Forster did not think much of his son, or Charles was sickly, as in his will made in 1730, he left Charles just £5; all his real estate was left directly to Charles's wife Mary, who was also made sole executor.²³ Thomas asked three tradesmen friends to help Mary as necessary: John Moore grocer of North Walsham, Robert Thexton gent of Aylsham (a tradesman and inn keeper) and Thomas Clarke innkeeper of Aylsham. Moore was Mary's father and there were close ties to the Curties family from whom Mucklyn's had been leased.²⁴

Thomas Forster's inventory totalled goods worth the fairly substantial sum of £564 and included his Millgate brewhouse (most likely sited at Fletchers)

and the contents of the malthouse (probably at Belt Farm).²⁵ All this passed to Mary in 1734, who may well have been running the brewing and retailing operation for some time. Indeed, redoubtable woman that she obviously was, she even continued to run the Belt Farm lease until 1739. Charles died just two years after his father, both buried in Aylsham. Charles's inventory showed assets of £512 including the Millgate brewhouse, regarded as his even though left to his wife.²⁶ During 1734–36 Mary shows as the White Horse licensee but in 1740 Mary Spinks briefly held the licence.

By 1740 Mary Forster had remarried to another Aylsham publican and beer brewer William Rannells who had held the Red Lion from 1722 and whose first wife Hannah had died in December 1739. William too was dead by early August 1743 and Mary was left in control of the pubs, with a clutch of young children by both her husbands to look after. Rannells left his own Aylsham estate to his baby son William whom he had by Mary.²⁷

Rannells also owned property in Ingworth, Barningham, Alby, Roughton, Cawston, Reepham and Briston; it is possible that this was an early example of a small rural tied estate. Attempts to identify these premises in parish and manorial records have only identified one of them: a messuage in two cottages with half an acre of ground in the centre of Cawston. This was held copyhold of Cawston manor and was acquired from William Jenkinson by Rannells, 'of Aylsham beer brewer', in October 1722, the same year in which he set up at the Red Lion.²⁸ There is no evidence to prove that part of the premises was a drinking establishment but it is at least possible in this era. Earlier, the property had been held by absentee owners: Anthony Athill grocer of Cawston (with John Birdwell and the widow Pommell as tenants) and Gilbert Margetson worsted weaver of Newton St Faith). Why else would Rannells have invested here just at the time he was building up his Aylsham business? There is a distinct possibility that the Pommell family may have lived here for many years; in 1811 the property was described as in two dwelling houses 'now' in the occupation of Robert Woodhouse and Sarah Pommell widow – neither was the owner. Is it coincidence that by the 1830s this was the site of a beerhouse, owned and occupied by the Austin family, that became known as the Lamb Inn?²⁹

Mary remained licensee of Aylsham's White Horse from 1743 to 1761. In her will, made in December 1760 and proved the following April, Mary asked her executors, carpenter Thomas Hawkins and James Curties, to sell her estate and divide the money equally between her first two sons Thomas and Moore Forster.³⁰

In November 1761 the Aylsham attorney George Hunt Holley acquired from Mary's executors the Fletchers/White Horse house, stable, outhouses

and garden (with John Rice noted in the court book as the tenant although he did not pay the poor rates) together with further premises there in the occupation of four tenants and a 2½ acre pigstye used by Edmund Jewell. Since just a year later Holley conveyed these White Horse premises onwards to the affluent Aylsham retailer and property holder James Curties, the two transactions may have been a device to create a proper arms' length purchase by an executor.

Curties retained the property for 40 years but would have had tenant publicans running the house. The poor rates show that he held the licence in his own name from 1762 to 1771, albeit with a man named —Alexander for 1768–69. William Wiseman had it in 1772–73 and was followed by Clement Ives from 1774 to 1785.³¹ In 1785 Edward Phillips paid the rates for part of the year and Curties himself for a part of 1785–86. At this time Curties seems to have placed the house under the tie of Norwich brewer John Day and his St Martin's Brewery; the Norfolk Chronicle in October 1785 and June 1791 shows the lease being offered for tenancy by Day and also the details, after his death, of the sales in October 1794 and May 1795 of his whole large estate of pubs.³² The White Horse was one of a small number of sites where Day's tenure was as a leaseholder rather than owner.

Frederick Gedge ran the White Horse in 1786–87 and for the following three years it was run by John Eager, as the Quarter Sessions' licenses have him, or Agnur/Agnus, as the poor rates show him. Thomas Goose followed and was still there in 1805 running the White Horse, as named in the poor rates. The premises were probably modest since the rates paid dropped in 1791 and the 1793 directory makes no mention of the White Horse amongst Aylsham's inns and public houses.

The 19th century

The property remained in the large portfolio of James Curties until his death in 1801. In March 1802 it passed to Stephen Ashley the wine merchant, who had run some of Curties's retail ventures and had married his niece Jane. His admission in 1802 described the premises as the White Horse, still an alehouse of some sort. The poor rates show Goose giving it up in October 1805 when the property was empty. It remained empty for about nine months until Robert Deary briefly paid the £6 rate in June 1807 but had given it up within a year, after which the White Horse and its £6 rate disappear altogether. Ashley fairly soon started selling off piecemeal the Curties estate and in May 1810 Aylsham farmer John Tuck paid £350 for Fletchers and the cottages with their four tenants and the land with it. At this date the White Horse descriptor was no longer used in the court book.



Fig. 3. The small premises now 1a Millgate that became the White Horse with clear signs of the butcher's shop window.

Tuck acquired the property the same year that his first wife Mary (née Watts) died. He lived there alone for some years until he married Sarah Amess in Aylsham in April 1819. The 1821 census shows Tuck living in Millgate.³³ In June 1835 John Tuck died aged 73 and the property passed by his will to Horsford schoolmaster William Ward Hannant, also his executor, with a proviso that Sarah should continue to live there.³⁴ Hannant was admitted in February 1838 and two months later, with Sarah still in residence, he conveyed it onwards to Aylsham carpenter-builder William Bartram. Sarah died in March 1840 aged 70 by which time Bartram was developing the whole site.

All change and a new White Horse

In Bartram's 1838 admission entry the property was described as: the messuage of the Tucks with barn, stable, buildings, gardens and yards; a 2 acre 2 rood close; a messuage in four tenements occupied by Robert Hagon, Joseph Clarke, William Huggins and the widow Ann Webster. It had John Fielde millwright to the north and the lands of the parish (the poorhouse, tithe nos 297–300) and William Hill to the south. Bartram immediately set about redeveloping the old buildings which were later described as 'two wasted

messuages' and some of the open land. The old Tuck house had clearly been deemed unfit for habitation or repair.

He sold a small piece of ground at the northern edge in December 1839 to Anne 'Phellips' (333 on the tithe map) and a rather larger piece at the southern end in May 1840 for £190 to Reepham brewer William Bircham junior (tithe 336).³⁵ Bircham's purchase was 120' long, 55' at the west end and 45' at the east with a 'newly erected messuage in two tenements occupied by Robert Hagon and the widow Webster'. This accurately dates the building of these new premises at the south-west end of Millgate and Hagon can be found listed in the directories as beerhouse keeper here. This was the White Horse that Elizabeth Gale describes in detail in her book.

The tithe map and apportionment shows that by mid to late 1839 Bartram had also built, on part of the remaining site, the houses now numbers 9 and 11 Millgate. The barn shown at an angle to the rear of number 9 and its location towards the north of the whole site is suggestive of this being roughly the site of the old White Horse. The census in 1841 fortunately records Millgate by side of street and it is certain that by early that year Bartram had also built the two semi-detached houses, now numbers 3 and 5, and had tenants living in them. The building style of all these new houses and the beerhouse is very similar, with small flints and distinctive ashlar around windows and doors. This style can be found in a number of other houses in the Millgate area and just over the bridge, with one or two explicitly dated to the 1840s, no doubt all Bartram's handiwork for clients.

William Bartram was buried on 16th September 1864, aged 65, and in May 1866 his widow Caroline was admitted to half his properties in dower and their son Robert (also a builder) to his half and the reversion of Caroline's after her death. The court book entry at Robert Bartram's admission describes the site with four houses. Robert's first wife Martha Anne was buried on 19th June 1891, aged 63, and he married again, at Thetford in the spring of 1893 to Ellen Spaul Press who had been born in Hanworth about 1833. The marriage was short-lived; Robert was buried on 5th August 1893, aged 67. Robert and Martha's daughter Edith Maria, born in Edgefield in 1862, and Ellen were admitted to the premises in November 1894. Now the entry showed the Millgate property together with the real estate added by William and Robert Bartram: land bought from neighbours immediately to the west; part of the old workhouse site; part of the old Jewell estate adjoining Town Lane and premises in Hungate.

Ellen and Edith moved away from Aylsham and can be found in the 1901 census running a lodging house at 'Abbotsford' in Sheringham. At the 1910 Inland Revenue valuation (red numbers 297, 324, 483, 484), Robert Bartram's



Fig. 4. Numbers 3 and 5 Millgate.

estate was still technically in the hands of his executors and all four houses on his part of the old White Horse site were thus still in the family. In 1911 Edith, still unmarried and in the same business, was visiting in Yorkshire just weeks after her stepmother had died.

The main property, number 297 on the 1910 assessment map, was let to Red Lion Street butcher and farmer Daniel Partridge and the land was soon to become the market garden and orchard of the Tuttle family. House number 324 just to the north (now 11 Millgate) was lived in by AH Kitchen; number 483 (now 3 Millgate) was let to the Wesleyan Reform minister George Wright, who did not have to travel far to his chapel; and 484 next door (5 Millgate) was home to the widow Bayfield. The Bircham-owned White Horse beerhouse and shop had been sold to Steward & Patteson Ltd by 1882 and in 1910 their tenant was butcher Stanley Nichols, with the property now described as a house, shop, slaughter house and stables; there was no longer any mention of the White Horse anywhere on the whole site.

Sources

1. E Gale, *Aylsham Inns and Public Houses a History*, E Gale and ALHS, 2001.
2. Copyhold ownership can be followed in the Aylsham Lancaster court books. NRO, NRS 13434 (digital images now available of the Henry VIII roll), 12131, 19562, 10225, 16614–25; MS 20828–9

3. TNA IR 127/6/786–787, IR 58/62196–62205; NRO, P/DLV/1/80
4. NRO, NRS 19247A
5. NRO, ANW will 1509–19, Gloys fo. 204, incorrectly catalogued as John Bettes. These two engravers raise the intriguing question of whether they were related to the John Bettes, engraver and painter who has an entry in ODNB but whose origins are entirely obscure. We have standardised the surname as Bettes but it can be found in many other spellings such as Bettys.
6. The word is only once in error spelt ‘Thorngate’ which might otherwise be an expected meaning, as in Lincoln. Robert Ferguson, *The Teutonic name-system applied to the family names of France, England, and Germany*, 1864, gives Old Norse Thorgautr from the god Thor for the names Turgot (Domesday), English Thorgate, Thoroughgate, Targett? Thurgood, Thoroughgood and French Turgot. This might suggest a through way, describing a cut-through to the north of the town centre. Three or four other sites in Thorgate can be found, suggesting a small number of properties along its north side (the whole of the south possibly always part of the old Parmeters property, see *Nest of Lawyers*).
7. Stephen was under age at his father Henry’s death in 1560 but certainly had the site by 1580. TNA, PCC will 1599 Stephen Drury, PROB 11/94/357; NRO, NCC will 1560 Henry Drewry, Bircham 189; *Nest of Lawyers*
8. TNA, DL 4/24/5
9. *Nest of Lawyers*
10. The Cressy poorhouse site was also originally described as in Thorgate.
11. See our *Nest of Lawyers* for details on Drury and his family.
12. NRO, ANW 6/7 gives us Gurney’s occupation.
13. TNA, E315/360
14. Since licences, visitation records and churchwardens’ accounts rarely gave ‘pub’ names it is unclear how Kilby was identified as at the White Horse; perhaps his name was spotted in some other type of document. NRO, ANW will 1643, 1640–3 fo. 464 no. 421 – William Kilby’s will gives no indication of involvement in licensed premises. Kilby had his own premises in Hungate at the 1622 survey.
15. NRO, C/S 3/box 22, bundle 2 for April 1620
16. NRO, PD 602/70. Flaxman was involved with loans from James Gogle and ended up suing him in Chancery in 1658 – here he describes himself as a joiner and a ‘weak and illiterate man’ (stressing his relative poverty compared to the gent Gogle). TNA, C 5/409/32
17. NRO, C/Sch 1/5 & 1/7 & 1/10
18. NRO, ANW will of Thomas Flaxman beer brewer of Aylsham, 1670–71, fo. 489

19. NRO, DN/INV 52A/95 of 1666–67
20. NRO, ANW will 1672-3 fo. 179
21. Aylsham Town Archive poor rate books 1674–c1842
22. www.norfolkpubs.co.uk, not corroborated.
23. NRO, ANW made 1730, proved 1734, 1734–35 fo. 76 no. 69
24. NRO, NCC will 1745, Wright 124. John's brother appears to have been Thomas Moore of Northrepps (d.1750) who may well have been married to a Curties since his ANF will of 1750 (1746–54, fo. 263) is dominated by bequests to members of the Curties family and one to Mary's son Thomas Forster.
25. NRO, 1735–37, ANW 23/22/12
26. NRO, 1735–37, ANW 23/22/61; he died intestate, ANW administration 1736, no. 1. In March 1735 Mary Forster was admitted to the Fletchers house and one rood and a one acre parcel of the old Humphrey messuage; by this date the Fletchers name was used to describe both main house and cottage site.
27. NRO, ANW will 1743, 1742–43 fo. 127 no. 121; Rannells also had daughters by Mary.
28. NRO, MC 1835/1–5, 855x2; BUL 11/459 & /463
29. NRO, DN/TA 818 tithe plot number 676 at the corner of the old Norwich Road (now Back Lane) and New Road/Street, with the rectory to the west and the church immediately north of that. Directories from 1836 (online at historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk/mapexplorer); norfolkpubs.co.uk; cawstonparish.info/publichouses.htm; court book entries
30. NRO, ANW will 1761 no. 49
31. There is no evidence to suggest he was connected at all closely to the Ives brewing family of Coltishall. Gale had in error Mary Bush during this time but she was at the White Hart.
32. Norfolk Pubs website; The European Magazine, 1794, p. 310 noted his death on 11th September 1794, previously in 1783 a Sheriff of Norwich. See also Margaret Bird, *The Diary of Mary Hardy 1773–1809*, Volume 3, 2013, pp. 170-1 for a copy of the Norwich Mercury version of the October 1794 sale notice. The sale notice of June 1797 did not include Aylsham's White Horse, suggesting that the tie was dropped in the mid-1790s.
33. ALHS ed. Tom Mollard, *Aylsham in 1821*, 1997
34. NRO, ANW will 1837, 1835-9 fo. 149 no. 120; the relationship to Hannant is unclear. Tuck's will shows that he had no surviving son to leave his property to but that he had daughters and grandchildren.
35. Ann was the daughter of John Fielde and his wife Ann the neighbours; his will NRO, NCC will 1837, Warren 774. Ann married Norwich surgeon Matthias Phillip(p)o in 1839 www.FreeBMD.org.uk.

The usefulness of ephemera!

Maggie Vaughan-Lewis

Lady Walpole recently donated two 20th century photograph envelopes to the Town archive which came from the Walpole family archive. At first one might ask why such items should be kept – surely the information about the photographic developer would be findable in the Directories?

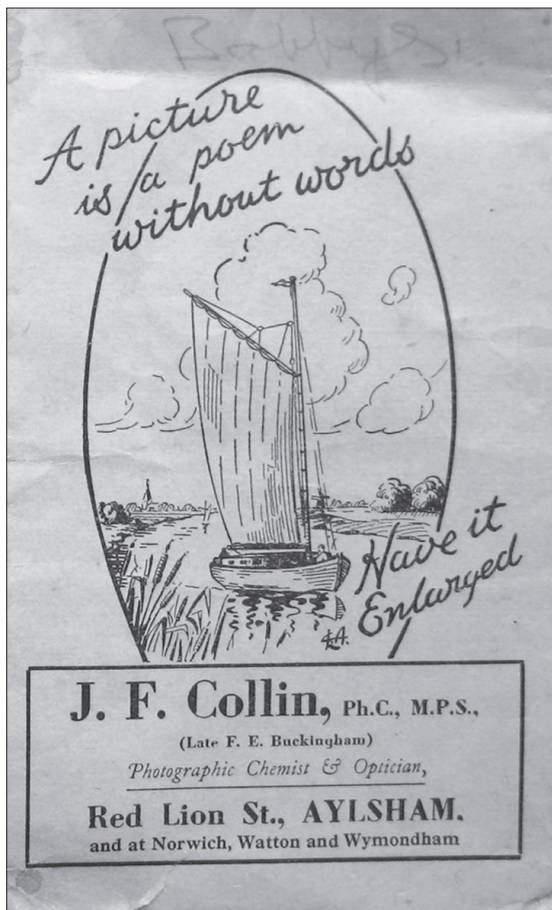


Fig 1. The wherry sketch is initialled 'L.A.' - does anyone know the artist?

The first reason is an aesthetic one – the main envelope is illustrated with a charming sketch of a wherry on the Broads. As the packet was dated as used in July 1939, it was presumably meant to remind customers of their 1930s visits and holidays. The second reason is that there is wealth of information to be found on this single item.

John Francis Collin Ph.C., M.P.S. appears first in directories in 1929 as a chemist in Red Lion Street at a time when his neighbours in the same street included Buckingham & Co, chemists and F E Buckingham, dentist. Frank Edward Buckingham was both a dentist and chemist (Ph.C) and had first appeared listed in 1904 only as the latter. In 1910 Buckingham had owned both 17 and 19 Red Lion Street with International Stores as his tenant in the smaller shop. As Collin states in his publicity in 1939 'late F E Buckingham' it would seem he took over the chemist's premises, No 17 (now The Little Clothes Shop).



Fig 2. Buckingham's in Red Lion Street (Town Archive).

Born in Cambridgeshire and trained in Diss, Collin was a chemist, optician and supplier of photographic equipment! He lived in Norwich where his main shop was near the market place. He sold all makes of cameras, developed and enlarged film and had a 'special room for sight testing' and could dispense oculists' prescriptions. Perhaps he did a deal offering to check the sight of potential camera purchasers so they could take better snapshots!

If we had just used the directories, it would appear that there were no photographers, photographic services or opticians in Aylsham in the 1920s – at a time when affordable photography was really taking off. A printed wrapping paper, already held in the archives, which had been used to wrap a glass plate negative, also shows where Collin had other premises: High Street Watton, Town Green Wymondham as well as the Head Office, The Walk Norwich. His advertising may have lacked a catchphrase but was clear and to the point: “Bring us your Developing and Printing. We do it quickly and well”.

Another chance find shows the value of checking the photographs themselves. The author was looking at an Edwardian album of her Norfolk family and noticed that a baby photo of her uncle Percy who lived in Great Ryburgh was taken by ‘May Bone’ in Fakenham, in about 1907–08. The printed mount added that the studio photographer, which I assumed was a company name, also worked from Red Lion Street in Aylsham. Looking in the Aylsham Directories I discovered that May Bone was a lady photographer! In 1891 aged 14, she was a photographer’s apprentice in her home town of Fakenham obviously already keen to take up the profession. In her thirties Miss Bone was working as a photographer on her own account; as two of her brothers also traded in Fakenham (Richard a clock and watchmaker and Ernest a cycle agent) she probably shared one of their premises in Norwich Street.

At Aylsham, she may have been using the shop in Red Lion Street which her eldest brother, Sidney Dyball Bone, had been shown at in 1896 as a watchmaker and 1900 as ‘watch maker, jeweller & cycle agent’. Unfortunately Sidney Bone was not listed after 1900 and May is only listed once in Aylsham – in 1908 – as ‘attending on Sats’ in Red Lion Street. We cannot discover the whereabouts of her studio – it could have been a room at the back of a shop or even upstairs.

Perhaps there was not enough custom to warrant the trip to Aylsham for May was not listed there again although she still was working in Fakenham in 1912. At this date a Frederick Coleman, another Norwich man, was advertising as a photographer in Red Lion Street but again he did not stay long. Was there really no photographer working in the town in 1916 and later? May Bone continued working elsewhere including from a kiosk at Hunstanton where she was an early ‘promenade’ or ‘walkies’ photographer. She also had studios at Peterborough and examples of her work can be seen online.

Perhaps if members look closely at their family photos we might be able to find a few more Aylsham photographers for the 1st world war and post-war periods?



Editing Aylsham Local History Society Publications with Tom Mollard

Geoff Gale

Tom and I first worked together on *A Backwards Glance*, a book which had come into being as a result of the exhibition in the Town Hall during 1995. The project had been staged to celebrate the foundation of the History Society ten years earlier. In retrospect I think it was a daring venture for the Society to undertake. There were few of us with experience of mounting such a complicated exhibition and little money to buy any extras we would need, such as paint. The intention was to fill the Town Hall with information about Aylsham – its history, streets, pubs, wherries, the Aylsham Navigation and the History Society with its plans for the future. A centre of interest in the displays was the photographs of past Aylsham notables. The collection came from the town archives and at that time they were rarely seen, but it was a clear indication that the Archives should become more available than they had been.

At the close it was feared that much of the work used in the exhibition would be dispersed and lost. A small committee was formed to edit the exhibits so we could publish them as a book, eventually to be called *A Backwards Glance*. At the same time Tom arranged for a separate bank account to be formed to build a reserve from the sale of the book. The account could then be used to support future publications without the Society being inhibited by the cost of printing. Following the production of *A Backwards Glance* a number of courses mounted by UEA and WEA generated research subjects that ended as a piece of work we could publish. They were relatively slim volumes, simply constructed with a text usually typed by the author, electronically printed and slipped into a printed cover. Two such books were *Aylsham in 1821* and *The Poor in Aylsham 1700–1836* and eventually to the 1839 Wright's Map of Aylsham.

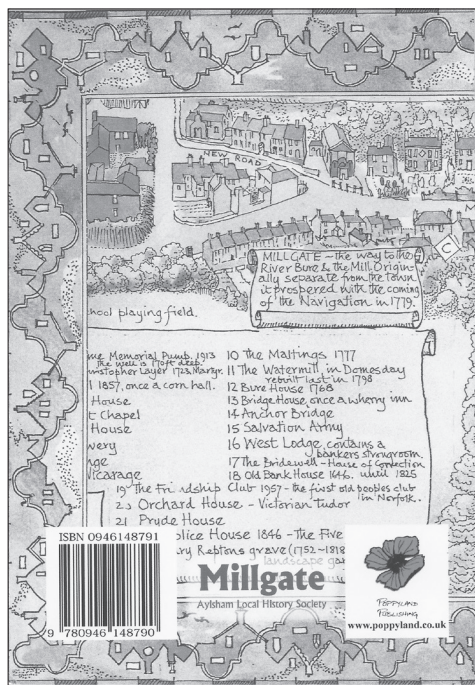
Another book that had grown out of a UEA course on East Anglian Churches, conducted by Gerald Randall in Aylsham during 1996 and 1997. It was a slightly different product, being a small book by Peter Holman, who was interested both in maps and illustrations, called *Six High and Lonely Churches*. It was full of notes, an illustration of each of the churches involved and preceded by a drawn map of the surrounding areas. There were notes on church towers, Ley lines, Winged Hourglass, carving found on gravestones in North-east Norfolk and pits with a warning if they happened to be “Norfolk Shrieking Pits” (best avoided on dark winter nights). It was a slightly more complicated production than some of the others and took longer to bring into

order, partly because all the illustrations and mile measures were at a slightly different scale so most of them had to be adjusted to fit into the same size page. Once that had been achieved the actual technique of printing was simple.

Two books came by a slightly different route. The first edition of *Millgate* was published in 1993. It began as a project with the late Christopher Barringer and used a bundle of deeds and papers belonging to Tom Bishop. The bundles consisted of papers from a number of properties that had been collected by Tom Bishop over the years and are now housed in the Aylsham Archives. The first task of the research group was to put them into date order and then into the various family groups. Eventually the work edited by Tom came out as the first *Millgate*. Thirteen years later the second *Millgate* arrived, now in colour and in partnership with a local publisher: Poppyland. I remember we both welcomed this association with a local publisher. No longer did we have to visit local book shops hoping to land an order. I recall that on one occasion one of us rearranged the local history book shelf in Jarrold's bookshop, unbeknown to the staff – so all the History Society publications reappeared at a more eye-catching level. The vacant spaces on the shelves below were refilled with the titles left over from the rearrangement. To the best of my knowledge there was no notable increase in the sales, but it was an interesting experiment.

There is a variety of tricks a successful editor uses to avoid problems through a lack of contributions and Tom having been a resourceful editor for 17 years was well aware of these difficulties. When he was in danger of running short of material for the Journal he had a file of short humorous pieces that could be slotted in to fill the gap. Occasionally a page from a Kelly's Directory would be used to fill a larger slot, but all these directory entries would appear at random intervals as they were needed. Eventually we decided to print all the Kelly references on Aylsham in one volume but in date order. In time we added other directories until we had a run beginning in 1793 and ending in 1937 when the war intervened. For the cover I was able to produce a facsimile of an original Kelly's Directory and on the back we added a line drawing of England marking Aylsham as the point of note. Without our band of valiant typists the production would not have even been possible. As a consequence of gathering all these Kelly's parts together Tom's little store of gap-fillers slowly disappeared.

This appreciation of Tom tends to read like a record of the History Society's publications and to some extent that is what it is. We met mostly about the publication of a new book and rarely socially. It was a good period when a great deal of our time was involved with the publication of a book, the final cost of production and could we sell it?



Back cover of *Millgate*, ed. 2, published by Poppyland in 2006. The latterday White Horse beerhouse is at the southwest corner of Millgate, shown just to the right of the Tabernacle going from New Road into Millgate.

Apart from these regular discussions we were both early Friends of the John Innes Centre where they gave a series of evening lectures on a range of subjects. Usually on subjects we knew little about but we were interested – which is of course why we went. The evening was rounded off with a light supper and a chance to talk to others. I often felt I was surrounded by biologists and farmers who knew the subject or subjects intimately, it was a little later to my surprise that I found they were no more informed about the subject that evening than we were.

It is at times like these that there emerges revelations of a past life and interests we know nothing of, a change of location and house leaves a whole world of interests behind, rarely spoken of again and surprising when later revealed. Over the long history of collaboration between Tom and myself, we had worked very easily together and the range of publications by the Society owes much to that ease, for that alone he will be sorely missed by me.

Alan Quinn[†] (11th August 1940–14th February 2015)



As part of his seventieth birthday celebrations Alan created a time line that featured highlights in his life, interspersed with national and international events which had shaped and affected him. This was typical of Alan – intensely bound up with home and family, he also saw himself as a part of the local and world community and actively contributed through his wide range of skills and interests.

Alan was prominent in Aylsham affairs and organisations (including being at one time treasurer of the Society) and readily voiced opinions both personally and through the media. The success of the Heritage Centre owes much to Alan's enthusiasm and hard work.

To go to a party given by the Quinns was to submit oneself to games and quizzes. You might be tested on signature tunes or radio programmes or the national anthems of obscure countries or asked to mime the titles of books and films or play charades. At the seventieth birthday party there was a questionnaire on the time line to ensure that we gave it proper attention!

There was no warning that this time line would come to an abrupt end for Alan earlier this year, leaving undone plans for the future to add to a spell of teaching English in Poland, a successful attempt to complete the London Marathon, a trek to the Everest basecamp and much, much more.

Aylsham has lost a character, a friend and a champion.

Ian McManus

Primitive Methodism in North Norfolk – a talk by David Yarram



John Wesley, a life-long member of the church of England was the founder of Methodism, a movement to energise religion in the eighteenth century. In time part of this foundation came to be called the Wesleyan Methodist church with an emphasis on ministerial authority.

But from America in 1804 came the idea of camp meetings – gatherings of the faithful and yet to be converted, held outdoors with the speaker standing on a farm wagon. The first such meeting in England was held at Mow Cop in Staffordshire in 1807. Governments just after the French Revolution and at times of industrial and agricultural unrest were suspicious of mass public meetings. They feared crowds would produce revolt against established authorities. But gradually the camp meeting became an element of the regular life of the part of the methodist church called Primitive Methodism.

The ‘Prims’ appealed more to the poor. There was more emphasis on lay participation. This movement spread from the East Midlands from about 1812 into Norfolk where it flourished, particularly among the agricultural farm labourers. Primitive Methodist Societies were founded in 1821 in King’s Lynn. At first these were part of the Nottingham Circuit, a circuit being a group of chapels in a defined area. Soon the Primitive Methodists were found throughout Norfolk, meeting in barns and cottages on Sundays and week days. Robert Key, who had been a coal heaver in Great Yarmouth, was a leading figure in early Primitive Methodism, becoming a travelling Preacher in the Shipdham and Watton Circuit. He was a rough character who demanded high levels of commitment from his congregations.

The 1830s were a time of rick burning and the Swing Riots, as farm labourers tried to resist the advance of farm machinery threatening their jobs. The

North Walsham area was badly affected. Methodists had shown a determination to spread the gospel and reach the poor in their way apart from the established Church. Such independence towards authority that could have been used to encourage rebellion was harnessed by the local preachers. They spoke to the labourers using Christian ideals as a calming influence. In counties where more of the population were influenced by methodists there were fewer riots.

Gradually village chapels were built. The circuit ministers, were supplemented by local preachers, laymen. These were ordinary working men, sometimes illiterate who preached with conviction and fervour – hence the term ranters. If you were a preacher you could be thrown off the register if you were intemperate, in debt or indulged in Harvest frolicking. High standards were demanded, but as a preacher you were given help with illiteracy, experience of public speaking and local responsibility in the administration of the chapel. These skills gained in chapel were of use when the agricultural labourers union was set up in the 1870s. Many Union officials, such as George Edwards, were local preachers and Union meetings were often held in Chapels. Tom Higdon of the Burstons School strike that confronted the authorities in 1914 was a methodist local preacher. A rally is still held there every year supported by the Labour Party

In the 1950's there was a farm workers union service in the Methodist chapel at Wells. Now every year at Gressenhall Museum there is a George Edwards memorial lecture, when the methodist church joins with the Unite Union, which now includes the agricultural labourers union.

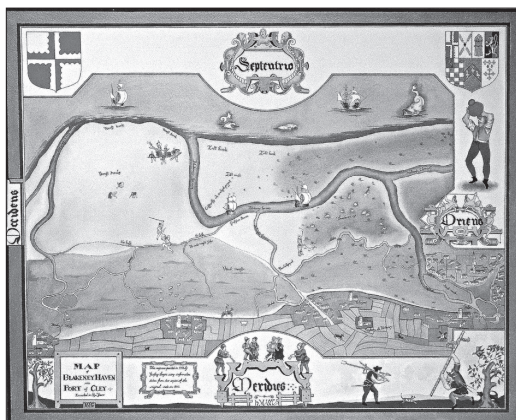
There could be a vast social divide in the villages between the primitive Methodists, agricultural labourers and the larger farmers. To go to chapel rather than church could affect your employment. There is record of farmers victimising and evicting those who were suspected of voting Liberal in the 1906 election. The Liberals had supported the Trade Disputes Act giving the right to strike without penalty.

David Yarram introduced us to the Labour Hymn Book. He spoke of the chapels being the social life of the village. He showed us a prize book given for Sunday school attendance. He explained that certain childrens' Hymns dwelling on death were used because infant mortality rates from, for example, scarlet fever were so high. It was a reality for which children needed to be prepared.

With quiet humour he told many stories of his experience as a member of New Holkham and Fulmodeston chapels. Greatly reduced numbers of those working on the land and changes in society has led to the closure of many chapels. But the speaker was proud of the help and hope the primitive methodist church has given to poor, ordinary families.

Lynda Wix

VISIT TO BLAKENEY



Twenty four Members came on a visit to Blakeney on 25th June 2015. Our tour guides were John and Pam Peake who had given the Society an illustrated talk earlier in the year.

It was a beautiful day and Sanders Coaches dropped us off at the recently refurbished White Horse Inn for coffee. Fortified by this, the party climbed up Mariner's Hill for an introductory talk by John on the history of Blakeney as a port. We had a panoramic view of the salt marshes, the shingle bank and the sea (Mariner's Hill had probably been a lookout point for Blakeney's seamen and merchants). 10,000 years ago the view would have been very different as the sea would not have been visible; there would have been land as far as the eye could see.

John explained that the written history of the fishing port starts during the 14th and 15th centuries with records of boats sailing to Icelandic Seas from March to August to catch cod and similar fish, then in the Autumn fishing for herring in the North Sea. By the mid-16th century Blakeney, as shown on the 1586 map above, was classified as a creek, a minor port of Yarmouth, but at that time Cley, Blakeney and Wiveton were sending more boats to the Iceland fishing than Yarmouth or King's Lynn, although many were quite small. Cley and Wiveton were the oldest ports, but as they silted up Blakeney increased in importance, trading extensively with the Baltic, the Low Countries, Newcastle and London, carrying luxury goods as well as salted fish, coal, grain, timber and tiles. An indication of the wealth created by this prosperity is the size of the three parish churches. Trade began to decline in the eighteenth century

though the export of barley and malt and the import of coal flourished up to the late 1800s. The Blakeney Harbour Company was founded in 1817 and a New Cut made to facilitate entry to the prosperous harbour. A rapid decline was accelerated by development of the railway network in the second half of the 1800s, only two ship owners remaining by the end of the century.

John next drew our attention to the shingle ridge on the horizon. There is a continual battle between an East to West drift and pressure from on-shore gales which can push the shingle inland, thus periodically blocking the River Glaven. Stones from the ridge were useful building material as illustrated in a house immediately behind the Hill clad in stones of a uniform size, clearly someone had done a good job in selecting stones of the same size and shape.

We could just make out two lifeboat houses in the distance, the older one black and the newer one blue-grey. We also noted drifts of the distinctive salt marsh plant, *Suaeda vera* or Shrubby Seablite. Blakeney is the most northern place where this plant is found. As it prefers to grow at a higher level than the surrounding flooded land, it acts as a marker for the shingle level. John drew our attention to a path of *Suaeda* snaking out to sea which is known as a Pilot's Path, pilots being needed to navigate the bar as the boats came into the harbour. The haven inside the bar, known as The Pit, was 10 foot deep in the mid-1700's and provided shelter for up to 200 boats.

The salt marshes and the inter-tidal areas were useful sources of food, notably cockles and mussels, and also grazing for sheep. There used to be two sheep bridges (John's view is that there was possibly a third as well) and there is still a designated footpath over the marshes. The bank enclosing Blakeney Freshes, now the raised coastal pathway between Blakeney and Cley, was probably created around 1650, but repeatedly breached by sea storms, most recently in 2013. At the base of the Hill is a horse pond for Manor Farm (occupied by tenant farmers of the Calthorpe family until it was auctioned in 1911). There is an ancient Mulberry tree in the farm (now The Manor Hotel) claimed to have been planted in the 1700's.

At this point, the group descended the Hill and split into two, with one half being guided by Pam and the other by John for a tour of the Quay area.

Pam took her party down past the Manor Hotel to the beginning of what is now a permissive path to Wiveton. Looking up to the right we could see the wall of the Carmelite Friary about which there is no firm evidence until 1304 although Friars are falsely said to have arrived in 1296. Looking out across the marsh we could see the drovers' paths where sheep would have been herded across the marshes. Pam explained that the area had been used for flat racing, village sports and a sawmill. There had also been a golf club until WWII when the area had been mined and rendered unusable. Blakeney Point was donated

to the National Trust in 1912 after the sale of the Calthorpe estate the previous year.

The tour then moved to the Guildhall and went in to the cool of the fine 14th century undercroft. The building was probably a merchant's house and the undercroft would have been used for storage, the stable temperature being particularly useful for merchandise with a tendency to spontaneously combust under more volatile conditions. It was agreed that the brick vaulting was of fine quality (or a 'class act' as Vic Morgan put it). The final part of the quay tour was a look at the historic properties along the quay front mostly owned by three families, the Calthorpes, the Temples and the Breretons.

Members then went for a well-earned lunch at The White Horse and reassembled at 2.30 at Blakeney Church.

Pausing outside Pam explained that the second tower with its light was used as a navigational mark, there being no trees as there are today to mask the view from the sea. We were shown the remains of an inscription on one of the pillars which, when translated, dates the church tower at least to 1404 and not 1434 as given in some of the guide books, although the present church is not the earliest church for Blakeney parish.

Inside John took us on a fascinating tour of some church graffiti. He explained that if you were looking for graffiti in a church start on the columns near the entrance and on those nearest the chancel. In Blakeney both locations are rich in ship graffiti, often drawn precisely enough to determine the general type of craft and its period. Here images of ships are confined to the columns along the south aisle and many are at kneeling height. This restriction suggests that it could have been associated with a mariner's guild, but this presents an interesting conundrum as in many churches the south aisles were predominately used by women. Most of this graffiti was pre-Reformation. There are also merchant's marks and other images. In a small coastal community like Blakeney, the majority of working men would in some way have been associated with the sea, they were living on the edge and while there were great opportunities, for many there were also enormous risks.

After completing the Church tour the party divided again into those who walked to the site of the Carmelite Friary and those who wanted to climb the Church Tower. As noted above the Carmelite Friary was said to have been completed in 1321, though the Calthorpe family had been earlier patrons of the order. Just a few fragments of imported decorative stonework and other minor features still remain in the reconstruction, now used as offices of a peaceful caravan park. Those of us who climbed the church tower were rewarded for their efforts by a panoramic view against a blue summer sky – a high point on which to end a most interesting day.

Caroline Driscoll

NOTICES

Book Notice

Aylsham Baptist Church by Lynda Wix & Jim Pannell. Full colour, 17 x 24 cm, 24 pp. Published by Aylsham Local History Society, July 2015. Printed by Barnwell Print. £6 (£5 to members). Available from the Society, the Heritage Centre and Barnwells. The book arises out of the survey of the burial ground survey undertaken by the Society in the summer of 2014, extended to a history of the church, a story of belief, determination, self-respect, disappointment, persistence, care, despair and money. Tom Williamson says in the Foreword that 'this is a scholarly yet accessible book which will be enjoyed by all with an interest in the town of Aylsham, and in that of the county of Norfolk more generally.

Autumn Course

The Pastons and their Norfolk. Elizabeth McDonald will give a course of 8 sessions, starting Tuesday 22nd September 2015 at 2 pm in the Friends' Meeting House, Pegg's Yard, Red Lion Street. The course fee is £35, payable at the second session. During this course we shall follow the Pastons on their turbulent journey from their lowly origins as freemen to knights at the court of Edward IV. Booking essential – phone Jim Pannell on 01263 731087.

WEA Course

Norfolk's Industrial Past 1750-1940. Mary Fewster will give a course of ten weekly sessions, for a fee of £48, starting on 16th September 2015, starting at 2.30 pm in the Friends' Meeting House, Pegg's Yard, Red Lion Street. The course tells the stories and analyses the evidence of Norfolk's industrial past, from brick kilns to mills, textiles to heavy engineering and the spread of transport and service industries. Booking essential – phone Jill Sheringham on 01263 733140 or email weaaylsham@gmail.com.

Heritage Open Days

Heritage Centre, Saturday 12th September 10.30–3.30: display, demonstration and participation in cleaning and archiving pottery from the Roman site at Woodgate, Aylsham. Catherine has put many hours of painstaking work into cleaning and archiving the finds and will provide the opportunity to help in the cleaning process and learn more about the archaeology of the site. Children will also be able to make their own mosaic tiles. All activities free.