

AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



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Front cover: Clarkes shop, Market Place, Aylsham, courtesy family.

Back cover: Repton family wall memorial on Aylsham Parish Church

Photo Geoffrey Sadler.

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We are coming to the end of another successful winter lecture season. I haven't always been able to get there myself because of my Rotary commitments. However, I have been kept well informed by our Committee about these events. All talks have been very successful but the evening on Harriet Martineau in particular seems to have filled the Friendship Hall to capacity.

So now we move into our spring and summer activities. On 6 April we are having afternoon tea at The Dales, Sheringham, which is a departure from our normal evening dinner. Let us know what you think about an afternoon rather than evening social. Then we have trips out to Earsham Hall on 18 April and the Paston Treasure Exhibition at the Castle Museum on 29 June. So plenty for you to do. And if you have ideas for talks or visits then please let us know as we are always on the lookout for ideas.

Society Social

Friday 6 April. Afternoon Tea at The Dales, Sheringham, 3 pm, with an opportunity to visit Sheringham Park, with its Repton connection before tea. £12.95. Still some places: please contact Sue Sharpe 01263 733441.

Society Outings

Wednesday 18 April. Visit to Earsham Hall, tour and tea, starting at 2 pm. Waiting list only.

Friday 29 June. Visit to Paston Treasure, an exhibition at the Castle Museum, Norwich, based on the C17th Dutch painting made at Oxnead. Limited to 20 places. Waiting list only: please contact Caroline Driscoll 01263 731808.

A Shop in Aylsham Market Place

Roger Polhill



Breese, Tailors, early 1900s. Aylsham Town Archive.

Alan Clarke gave the Aylsham Town Archive a batch of documents about his shop in the Market Place labelled “29/30 Market Place and 9/11 Red Lion Street”.¹ The principal document in the file is an Abstract of Title which runs to eight handwritten pages from the year 1715 to 1826. It details the relevant deeds to ensure that the seller of a property is legally the owner. This building was copyhold in the Manor of Aylsham Lancaster and any purchase, mortgage or surrender was recorded on the Court Roll. Also in the file are two Sale Notices of the 19th century. Betty Gee used this and other information available at the time for an article in this Journal in 1995.² The auction sale of Clarke’s shop in 2017 provides a timely opportunity to revisit and upgrade that article with due acknowledgement. Like Betty Gee we divide the material into periods.

- a) The 18th Century – the Curties Period
- b) The Napoleonic War Period and aftermath (1802–1819)
- c) The 19th century, with two properties 176 and 177
- d) The Period since 1894.

The 18th Century – the Curties Period

The Abstract is entitled “Abstract of title of Thomas Curties to an estate copyhold of said Manor”. Thomas Curties, Rector of Scottow and Brampton, died in 1698 and the Aylsham property passed to his widow Anne Doughty, daughter of Francis Doughty of Aylsham. Thomas’s grand-father Robert was a farmer and moved to Aylsham in 1624. His son Richard married Jane, the daughter of Thomas Cressy, and the family continued to accrue land particularly around Millgate and take a prominent place in the town as churchwardens. A family tree and further account of the family is given in *Millgate*.³

Anne Curties, Thomas’s widow, died in 1715 and their son John was admitted to a shop or tenement in the Market of Aylsham by her will. It is reported that, following her husband’s death, Anne had been assisted in bringing up her three children by her sister Kathleen Doughty of Aylsham, and Anne left Kathleen, in her will, part of the Mileham meadow at Ingworth. Anne’s two other children were Frances, who died young, and Jane who died unmarried. Possibly Anne lived in the house as a widow. The Window Tax of 1739 details a John Curties with 19 windows in his house, indicating a substantial property.⁴ John was originally a weaver and later a tanner in Aylsham and Hanworth, and was described in a memorial tablet as shopkeeper in Aylsham. In 1741 John Curties became Church Warden of Aylsham parish church. Late in life, he moved to Hevingham. Mary’s memorial tablet in 1750 states that she was the wife of John Curties, grocer. John died, aged 69 years, in 1760, and left his children well provided for. It is stated that he left a well in Aylsham with provision for all his family and friends to have access. (John and Mary’s eldest son John also became a tanner, he married twice – firstly to Everett Parker and secondly Mary Paul – but does not appear in the Abstract).

John and Mary Curties surrendered this property in 1748 to their second son Thomas, who was also a grocer. Unfortunately he died only a few months after his father, and his wall plaque states that “his assiduity in Business, affectionate regard to his parents, family and friends, and Truly Religious Life made his death the concern of all that knew him”. Thomas’s son, Thomas, was admitted to the premises in 1761 (by the will of his father dated April 1760 which referred to messuages, lands and tenements lying in Aylsham in use of Thomas Curties and of Thomas Smyth and his under-tenants). Thomas, the son, took out two mortgages, the first from James Curties, his uncle in 1776 and the second from Samuel Taylor in 1791. Thomas the son died in 1798 and his only child Ann, then a spinster, had to surrender the premises to James Curties, her great uncle, at court in March 1800. James, a younger brother of

the Thomas who had inherited the shop in 1748, had acquired extensive property in Aylsham. He was probably living in Repton House when he died, a bachelor, in 1801.⁵ His will, dated January 1798, bequeathed to Stephen Ashley, shopkeeper, any real estate lying in Aylsham, Erpingham, Banningham, Colby, Felmingham, Skeyton, Marsham and Matlaske. Stephen Ashley had married a niece of James (and presumably a son-in-law of Thomas Curties) and was later referred to as a liquor merchant.

It would seem that during the Curties period (the greater part of the 18th century) the shop in the Market Place traded as a grocer's shop. Stephen Ashley was admitted to the premises in March 1802 and possibly changed the type of goods sold.

The Napoleonic War Period and aftermath (1802–1819)

During this period the premises changed hands several times. Stephen Ashley took out two mortgages, one in 1803 and one in 1814 from a London wine merchant.

There is a very interesting entry for 19th June 1816. Stephen Ashley, in consideration of £400, paid by William Simpson, gentleman, Treasurer for the County Stock of the County of Norfolk, surrendered all that messuage or dwelling house situated in the Market Place....with the shop warehouse cellars and appurtenances thereto belonging, part whereof was then lately in the occupancy of John Steward and the residue was then or was then lately used as a depot for arms, accoutrements and clothing of the Eastern Regiment of the Norfolk Local Militia. Which said surrendered Messuage and premises were bounded by the Market Place of Aylsham towards the West, by a road or open space leading from the said Market Place to a street called Red Lion Street towards the North, by the said street called Red Lion Street towards the East, by a footway or a passage leading from the said Market Place to said Street towards the South....to the absolute use of Thomas Cubitt of Horning, Robert Marsham of Stratton Strawless and John Preston Mott of Barningham. (Trustees).

There appears to have been a requisition of the premises until the “restoration of peace between Great Britain and other nations”. The Justices had then to order, direct and appoint the price for the sale of the messuage buildings and premises. In June 1818 the premises were formally purchased from Stephen Ashley by the Treasurer, William Simpson and then sold to William Weaver of Aylsham, yeoman. He is referred to in another document as the quartermaster occupying the premises.

The premises were then sold by William Weaver to William Wilson and

wife Sarah. On 11th March 1819 William Wilson and his wife Sarah sold the premises to William Lowe of Aylsham, carpenter. Wilson surrendered “all that messuage wherein William Lowe did live with the small yard adjoining, as the same were then occupied by William Lowe, and also the moiety of the wall then lately built for dividing the same yard from the yard then late of the said William Wilson and then of Stephen Breese which was to be kept in repair by, and at the equal expense of the said William Lowe and Stephen Breese....which said premises are situated.... in Aylsham between the messuage and yard then late of William Wilson and then of Stephen Breese on the north past the Street called Red Lion St on the east....”

By this period the intervening yards divided equally by a wall had long since gone, the phraseology just a relic of the way the Manor kept record of sequential sales. Studies by the Norfolk Historic Building Group explain that there were two medieval timber-framed buildings on the site facing the Market Place with the original eaves at second floor level, marked now by a moulded and dentilled brick string course.⁶

The 19th century

From the sale in 1819 to 1894 the building was subdivided into two properties, the southern end marked as 176 on the Tithe Map of 1839–1840 facing the Market Place and the northern end, 177, facing Red Lion Street.⁷ The demarcation of the two premises is shown more clearly in the Inland Revenue Valuation Office assessments 1910.⁸

176, Burrell and Edwards

In 1821 William and Newell Lowe sold this property to Thomas Cullam, a farmer from Carleton, near Langley, who rented it to George Elden Burrell. George Elden Burrell is listed as a carpenter and building surveyor in 1822 in the Aylsham Directories.⁹ He would have been about 21 then (40 in 1841 Census). By the 1830s he lists himself as an auctioneer, joiner and cabinet maker, by the next decade also a builder and in the 1860s also an agent for the European Assurance Company. He rented workshops and yards on the north side of Burgh Road where there is now a car park a little west of Oakfield Road, and bought these in 1864.¹⁰ In 1868 he goes into partnership with the builder Robert Tuddenham, and after his death in 1872, that part of the business is sold to Tuddenham in 1875.

He passes on the 176 premises to his son, also called George Elden, who was about 36 (43 in the 1871 Census). The son remains in partnership with his father as an insurance agent, auctioneer, valuer and land agent, but ventures into a new career on the Red Lion Street premises in 1865 as wine and spirit,



Tithe map of 1839–1840 showing the shop and yards. The National Archive.



Map showing Inland Revenue Valuation Office assessments 1910. TNA.

ale and porter merchant, and cigar merchant, house agent and auctioneer, agent for manure and bones. The shop is usually described as on the Market Place, but for a short period it seems to use the Red Lion Street entrance for its Directory address.

After George Elden Burrell senior dies in 1872 John Edwards, a glass and earthenware merchant, takes over the Market Place shop. He moves only a few doors from the shop he had occupied since 1839 on the west side of Red Lion Street one shop beyond the road into the Market Place. The photo of the shop in 1875, compared to that of 1856 before the Town Hall was built, suggests that the shop front had been smartened up a bit by this time. By 1888 his widow Elizabeth was running the shop with her daughter Fanny and continued until she retired to Burgh Road in 1904.

177, Breese

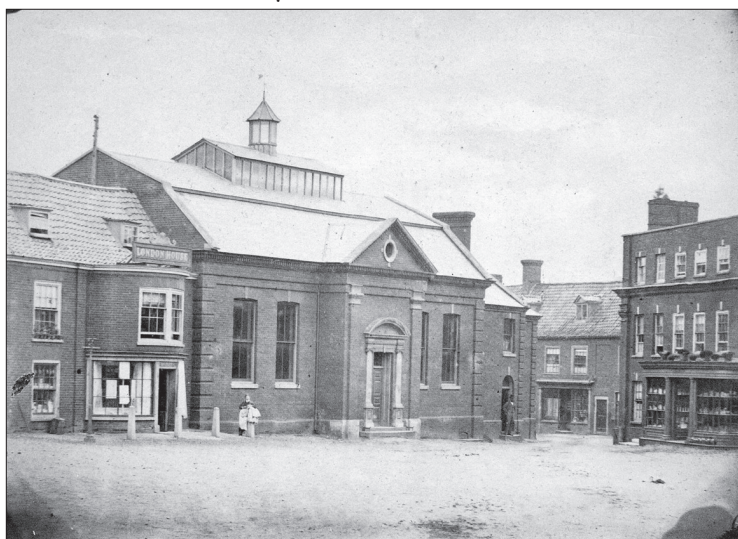
Stephen Breese, tailor and draper in Red Lion Street, is listed in the Directories from 1822 and the family continued with the business until 1930. Stephen was baptised on 8 May 1786 in Saxthorpe, the son of James Breese and Elizabeth née Danham. In later times the family claimed the business started in 1810 and it seems likely that Stephen may have set up the business as a young man of about 24 before he acquired the Red Lion Street premise. He had his first son Stephen in 1811, apparently with Mary, was married to Sarah, who had James in Aylsham in 1813, Robert in 1815 (died 17 weeks) and Sarah in 1817, before she died in 1819.

The rating book for March 1821 lists Stephen Breese with a house rated at £8 and a barn and yard rated at £1.¹¹ In the 1823 rating books, the barn was referred to as a stable. This refers to a property he owned about halfway down the Loke from White's butcher's shop to Oakfield Road on the north side, referred to on Wright's map of 1839 as a cottage rented out to Susan Hurrell, together with buildings, yards and gardens, No 261 and 261.01.⁷

Stephen soon remarried in St George's Hanover Square, London, in April 1822 to Harriet.¹² They had four children, Harriet Abbott 1823, Charles Abbott 1828, Henry William 1830 and Roseanna Amelia in 1833. The marriage may indicate some increase in fortune and the census of 1841 shows Stephen as a farmer in Scottow with Harriet 41 and children Charles, Henry William and an infant Ellen Abbott just one year old. Meanwhile the 1841 Census shows the Red Lion premise with Stephen Breese aged 30, as the tailor with an assistant John Burton, aged 35. Unfortunately the young Stephen dies in 1842 and is buried in Aylsham churchyard in the south-east corner near the east wall just north of the pathway to Candle House.¹³ So the second son James was now called in to run the business. James, as indicated above, born in 1813, is listed as tailor and draper in the directories from 1843 and by the 1851 census he is said to be 50, born in Aylsham, a tailor and draper employing five men. By 1856 James is listed as "victualler 'Black Boy' Commercial Hotel and posting house, Inland



NE corner of Market Place in 1856, before Town Hall was built. Photo courtesy Aylsham Town Archive.



Same view by Juba 1875. Photo courtesy Aylsham Town Archive.

Revenue Officer, and farmer, and Bowling Green, Market Place”.

In 1851 Stephen senior was visiting his sons in Yarmouth, Charles 23 and Henry 21, both master drapers. His wife Harriet died in 1853 and by 1861 the

Census lists him as a widower in Aylsham with two unmarried daughters Emily 34 and Rosanna, 27, both schoolmistresses, with three boarding scholars. He died in May 1864 and left the Red Lion premise to James. The small plot of land down the Loke is now described as “whereon a Barn formerly stood but which has lately been converted into a cottage now in the occupation of Robert White and a stable and chaisehouse now in the occupation of the said James Breese together with the right of passage”. Stephen had borrowed £400 from Herbert Sturmy of Southwark in 1835 to buy a farm in Banningham from John Sexton and to keep it James now had to borrow £300 from Lewis Hiram Smith to pay off the residue of the loan.¹⁰ By 1871 James is in the Red Lion Street premise with his wife Dorcas, now 44, and five children, Sarah, 18, dressmaker, Helen, 17, draperess, James Thomas, 16, tailor, Henry, 12, scholar, and Charles 1 month. In 1875 James is able to buy cottages and plots of land from the executors of Henry Edward Soame in the hinterland along Cawston Road.

William Frederick Starling recollects in 1937 “I had a whole suit made about 60 years ago [of box cloth], and have the cape now, but very dirty. I have a splendid cape made about 55 years ago, both by Mr James Breeze, which is as good as new, and it is a very fine cape indeed. No rain or wet can get through it.”

James Breese died in 1887 and in November 1890 James Thomas and his sister Sarah Emily inherited the properties in Red Lion Street and also the cottages and lands along Cawston Road. The Arnold Tuddenham memoirs have an interesting reference to Breese’s tailor shop up two flights of stairs in the oblong windows over Edwards’ china shop, and he goes on to say, “My grandfather taught the late James Breese the trade”. James Thomas Breese puts this advert in the Aylsham Almanack for 1888. “James Thomas Breese in thanking the numerous employers for the kind Patronage and Support offered his father, the late Mr. James Breese, begs to inform them that he will continue to carry on the above business and solicits a continuance of their favours.” And in the Aylsham Almanack of 1893 “J.T. Breese wishes to call the attention of the Gentry and Clergy of the Neighbourhood to his well assorted Stock of all the Newest Goods for the present Season. The old and high-class connection he is favoured with is the best evidence of the sterling qualities of his Goods and desire to give every satisfaction to his Patrons”.

The Period since 1894

In 1893 Joseph James Restieaux, son of the former owner, City of Norwich Committee Clerk, puts up No. 176 for sale and it is purchased by James Thomas Breese, reuniting ownership of the whole building.¹⁰

The Sale Notice in the Abstract of Title is dated October 31st 1893 and issued by Messrs Barcham & Son. The Agreement of Purchase is signed by Mr James Thomas Breese – the Vendor’s solicitor was Messrs Tarry & Sherlock. Here follows a summary of the Particulars:-

“All that well built brick and tiled dwelling house and shop....Occupying a commanding position in the Market Place of Aylsham and in which a lucrative business is carried on. As the same comprises:- On the ground floor double fronted shop, entrance hall, dining room, kitchen, scullery and cellar.

On the 1st floor, drawing room and 3 bedrooms, and on the 2nd floor 2 bedrooms together with necessary offices thereto.

The same is now in occupation of Mrs Edwards at an annual rent of £15.10.0 and abuts on the Market Place, Red Lion St, a passage leading from the Market Place to Red Lion street known as the Loke and property of Mr James T. Breese.”

James Thomas Breese remained a bachelor and is listed in the trade directories until 1931, but had probably gone the year before. Geoffrey Ducker remembers the small shop facing down Red Lion Street remained a tailor’s shop for some years. By about 1938–39 Mr Eastwood was selling second hand goods in what was known locally as “Junkies”. Residents still have oddments their parents or they themselves bought in the 1950s as youngsters that are still valued.

After Mrs Edwards retired from the shop facing the Market Place in 1904 it became the china department of Henry Page’s stores, the main part of which was across the Market Place west of Barclays Bank up to where Lloyds pharmacy is now, later trading as the North Norfolk Supply Store. Around 1933 when Geoffrey Ducker was a boy it was still Page’s china shop run by Monica Lake.

In the 1930s Charles Clarke was the ironmonger in No 1 Red Lion Street, now Santander. Mike Bush remembers the shop in the 1950s as not the tidiest, to say the least, with “stuff” everywhere. The floors were completely covered with stock apart from very narrow footways from the front door across to the stairs and the back rooms. However, whatever anybody asked for Mr Clarke knew where to find it and he would disappear and return a few minutes later with whatever had been asked for. How he remembered where everything was kept was a complete mystery.

The main shop was more of a storeroom. Mr Clarke ran a delivery service to the surrounding villages. He had a large green van, with shuttered sides that was fully stocked with ironmonger goods and a large tank which held paraffin for delivery to the villages. Paraffin heaters were very common in the 1950s and 1960s. Mr Tom Davison, Noreen Clarke’s father, drove the van.

Alan Clarke joined his father and his sister Pat when he was 15 in 1962. To set up the Market Place shop quite a lot of building work was needed at the rear on Red Lion Street and to refurbish the old cottages into shop space. On one of the gables facing Red Lion Street Alan had metal ties inserted in the form of “SB” for Stephen Breese. They also had storage space in the cellars under the Town Hall opposite and for a time they had an underground passage to the old shop on Santander’s site.

Sadly Pat died at a very young age, but Noreen joined Alan after they were married in 1975 and Anne Brown was a long serving and loyal employee until the shop closed due to Alan’s failing health in 2012 after a working life of 50 years. The shop is universally remembered with much affection and appreciation and it is hoped the new owners will be equally successful in their own way.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Noreen Carke and several residents of Aylsham for memories of Clarke’s shop, including Mike Bush, Roger Crouch, Daphne Davy and Geoffrey Ducker. I am also most grateful to Maggie and William Vaughan-Lewis for helping me trace sources of information on the shopkeepers.

Sources

- ¹ Selection of documents relating to 9 & 11 Red Lion Street and 29 & 30 Market Place from originals at Messrs Stanger, Solicitor, Burgh Road. Aylsham Town Archive.
- ² Gee, B. (1995). A shop in Aylsham Market Place. ALHS Journal 4: 206–214.
- ³ Gale, G. & Mollard, T. (2006). Millgate. Aylsham Local History Society.
- ⁴ Aylsham Window Tax. Aylsham Local History Society Journal 3: 39–45.
- ⁵ Vaughan-Lewis, W. & M. (2017). 18 Market Place Aylsham: Holman House and the undercroft. ALHS Journal 11: 3–16.
- ⁶ Legacy Record TG 182617 Aylsham Market Place 3/74 (East Side) 10.5.61 No 30. NGR: TG1932 726918, TG 182617. Crouch, Roger – observations from Norfolk Historic Building Group.
- ⁷ Aylsham Tithe Map. TNA, IR 29/23/22 and Wright’s Map [A Survey Map of Aylsham Prepared by James Wright 1839. Aylsham Local History Society].
- ⁸ Inland Revenue Valuation Office assessments 1910 at TNA maps and NRO ledger.
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- ¹⁰ Court Books and Minutes of Manor of Aylsham Lancaster NRS 19228, Acc 2008/257. Acc 2008/28. Norfolk Record Office.
- ¹¹ Poor Rate Books. NRO 2017/18 and digitally at Aylsham Town Archive.
- ¹² Census Returns for Aylsham 1841–1911, Freebmd and the Norfolk Transcription archive.
- ¹³ Aylsham WT’s Graveyard Survey – St Michael’s church 1980–81. Aylsham Town Archive.
- ¹⁴ Peabody, R. (2000). Memories of Aylsham by William Frederick Starling 1851–1937. Aylsham Local History Society.

Repton 200: The Repton Family in Aylsham

Roger Polhill



The Repton family memorial, Aylsham Parish Church. Photo Geoffrey Sadler.

The Aylsham Parish Church will be at the centre of a nationwide celebration of the bicentenary of the year Humphry Repton was buried here. Events from March to September will have started with a launch in the church on Friday 23 March, with displays, talks and workshops over that weekend. The Society has been asked to contribute a poster to link Repton 200 with “What’s in a Name”, an exhibition revealing the stories behind the street names in Aylsham, in the Heritage Centre. Broadland District Council has prepared materials for a “Repton Red Book Exhibition” and “Repton Family Tree”. The family tree exhibit aims to trace living relatives of Humphry Repton and their achievements. What we had prepared on the history of the family in Aylsham overlapped that so it seems sensible to use the text here. It is taken from the fulsome account in William and Maggie Vaughan-Lewis *Aylsham: A Nest of Norfolk Lawyers* (2014), much of which was new.

Geraldine Lee has produced an excellent leaflet entitled *Why is Humphry Repton buried in Aylsham?* as a contribution from U3A. There are several useful websites under Repton 200 with links to social media. And again we very much recommend a visit to the exhibition on Aylsham street names in the Heritage Centre with the accompanying leaflet *People of Aylsham Through its Street Names*, produced by Sue Sharpe last year.

The Repton Family in Aylsham



No 1 Market Place, Aylsham, now Barclays Bank, sketched by Humphry Repton and John Adey Repton in 1814. Courtesy private collection.

Humphry Repton is born

Humphry Repton's grandfather, also Humphry, was baptised at Lichfield, Saint Michael, in November 1668. He was from a farming family of Ediel, just west of the city, and ran a butcher's premise in central Lichfield. Humphry's father John was baptised at St Michael in 1715, was well educated and by the age of 22 was appointed as a Customs and Excise officer in Suffolk. Here he married Martha Fitch whose elder brother John Fitch inherited the family home of Hall Moor in Stoke by Clare.

Martha resided in Stoke while John was posted to various places, raising three surviving children, Dorothy born in 1746, Humphry in 1752 and John in 1754. The next year Humphry's father got the prestigious post of Collector of Norwich and the Port of Yarmouth, which he kept until his death in 1775. The family lived in the parish of St George Tombland.

John sets up his daughter Dorothy in Aylsham

Humphry's father, John, bought No 1 the Market Place, now Barclays Bank, with 50 acres of land in 1764. At the same time he bought the adjacent property, now Norfolk House, where John Adey had recently taken up residence. John



Norfolk House, Hungate Street, bought by John Repton in 1764. John Adey resided here until 1768, marrying Dorothy Repton the next year.

Adey moved into No 1 in 1768 and in July 1769 married Repton's 23 year-old daughter Dorothy at St George Tombland. They were happily married for 39 years but to their great sadness had no children surviving infancy.

John Adey was born in Lichfield in 1736, his father and grandfather both lawyers living in a fine house in Tamworth Street. John trained as a Lichfield lawyer and in 1762 moved to Furnival's Inn in London and then to Aylsham in 1764. The commission that may have first attracted John Adey to Aylsham was the family friend Thomas Anson of Shugburgh Hall, MP for Lichfield, who owned the Oxnead property downstream from Aylsham. Anson had been a proponent of the great Trent and Merseyside Canal being built past his Midlands estate. John Adey took on the negotiations and implementation of the Aylsham Navigation in the 1770s, making the River Bure navigable for wherries from Coltishall to Aylsham, bringing much trade to the town. John Adey was clerk to the commissioners for many years, was estate agent to the great north Norfolk estates, and later Commissioner for the King's Bench, Clerk of the Peace and under-sheriff of Norfolk.

He died in 1809, but Dorothy lived on until 1822. Both are buried here in the south chancel of the Aylsham Parish Church.

The sons Humphry and John established

Norwich was on the threshold of a boom in the export of fine cloths. Humphry was sent to school in the Netherlands in 1764 and at 16 was apprenticed by his father to a Norwich firm that specialised in fabric export. Humphry was much more interested in cultural pursuits, leading to the inference 'that the exercise of his talents for poetry, music and drawing, occupied more of his time than was quite consistent with the views of his affectionate though in this case not very discriminating [father]'.

After Humphry's marriage to Mary Clarke in 1773 his father gave sufficient capital for Humphry to set up as a landscape designer, influenced by Robert Marsham and particularly Nathaniel Kent, the new agent for the Anson estates in Norfolk. He lived first at Sustead, then in Romford, but worked all over the country. He and Mary had ten children of whom seven reached adulthood. He and his sister Dorothy remained close and he was a familiar visitor to Aylsham, spending some of his last days here before he died in 1818.

The younger brother John started as an assistant to his uncle John Adey, but keen to farm, his father took a lease from Thomas Anson of the old Paston estate at Oxnead, where he remained a respected landowner until the end of his life in 1809. John had married Elizabeth Knight in 1799 and they had one daughter.

The next generation

Humphry and Mary's eldest son, John Adey Repton, was born in 1775 and although deaf from birth trained as an architectural draughtsman. He formed a partnership with his father in 1800 and took on an increasing part of the work as his father aged, notably at Sheringham and lived at the Oxnead estate.

William was born at Sustead in 1783, was apprenticed to his uncle's flourishing solicitor's practice at No 1 the Market Place. He was probably made a partner around his 21st birthday and soon took over much of the responsibility as John Adey sickened and died in 1809. William took a prominent role in the town's affairs as churchwarden, steward to the manors, clerk to the Aylsham Navigation, commander of the Aylsham Light Infantry Corps, as well as supporting charities and initiatives for horticulture, arts and sport.

In 1840 he took on William Henry Scott, making him a partner in 1843 at the young age of 25. Scott may well have been recommended through social connections between the famous architect Sir George Gilbert Scott and William's brothers, John Adey and George Stanley, also an architect. Scott married Eleanor (later Helen) Panton in 1840. There is little doubt now that she was William's illegitimate daughter born in 1815 and brought up by a couple in Marsham, though the family secret seems to have been well kept.



The Orchards, about 1920. It was designed by John Adey Repton in 1843 in the neo-Tudor style for William Henry Scott and his wife Eleanor, illegitimate daughter of William Repton. Aylsham Town Archive.

William built The Orchards, designed by John Adey Repton, in Norwich Road for them in 1843. They inherited it when William died in 1858 and No 1 the Market Place became Copeman's bank. Scott figures prominently on the wall monument outside Aylsham Parish Church and he must have organised its erection before he died in 1882. Helen died in Aylsham in 1907.

In Memoriam

Road sign in memory of Humphry Repton, the famous wall monument on Aylsham Parish Church and the memorial window at the west end. There are further memorials to the Repton and Adey families in the chancel. Repton House by the church gate, formerly the Saving Bank, is newly named in memory of the family but was never in their possession.



Jean McChesney, 17th November 1934–31st December 2017
Jim Pannell



Jean moved in to Aylsham following the tragic death of her husband in Australia. She obtained a teaching position at Manor Road Primary School, North Walsham and moved in to St Michael's Close where she lived to the end of her life.

Jean had many interests and, in particular, the arts. She enjoyed music, dance, fine art, travel and history. She was curious to learn how people lived in the past, and for this reason she appreciated the visits to historic homes organised by The Society. I once offered to act as 'sweeper' for a group visit led by Charles Lewis around old Norwich. Jean needed to see around every corner and up every alleyway. She was indeed a challenge to keep in line!

Jean became a member of the ALHS committee in March 1997 and remained a committee member until October 2011. She took on many tasks that may have gone unnoticed, such as delivering leaflets, giving lifts, and posting notices in local villages. Despite being unwell, Jean attended her last ALHS meeting in October 2017 where, true to form, she asked the speaker to speak up so that she could hear!

Membership of ALHS was only one part of Jean's life in the community. She had many friends in the town and beyond, some of whom she knew through her support of Aylsham Care Trust. This involved preparing and serving meals for elderly folk – many of whom were younger than her! She served on the committee of Aylsham Music Society for many years, and was often to be found in Aylsham Library. She enjoyed living in Aylsham and Norfolk, and played a full part in the community.

Jean was a very tolerant person, though this didn't extend to cases of unfairness or injustice. Rather than just speaking about such things, she preferred to be active. Typical of this was her presence at the vigil in the town to protest at the outbreak of the Iraq war.

Jean spent a short time in the Norfolk and Norwich hospital, and died on 31st December, 2017. A celebration of her life was held at Cromer crematorium on 19th January 2018 beautifully led by Jean's daughter-in-law Julie, and after at the Ex-Servicemen's Club, Aylsham. Several members of Aylsham Local History Society were present. The good-natured conversations throughout bore testament to a life well-lived, and the depth of affection and respect in which Jean was held. She leaves two sons, Mark and Simon, and two grandsons, Sam and Jo.



Early Dance Group at 20th Anniversary of the Society in 2004, organised by Jean McChesney. Photo: Derek Lyons.

Black Shuck – a talk by Peter Ransome, and reported by Jean McChesney



Ladies and Gentleman

On the 22nd of January 2009 Mr Peter Ransome tickled our tastebuds with an illustrated talk on “Black Shuck”, the phantom Hellhound of East Anglia.

Legends of Black Shuck, a calf-sized dog roaming the Anglian countryside, date back to the time of the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings. Seamus Heaney writes of him in his poem “Beowulf”:

*A dreadful thing from the cliff did spring,
And its wild bark thrilled around,
His eyes had the glow of the fires below,
T’was the form of a spectre hound.*

His name may derive from the Anglo-Saxon word ‘scucca’, meaning ‘demon’, or possibly from the local dialect word ‘shucky’, meaning ‘shaggy’ or ‘hairy’. He has appeared as a bloodhound, wolf, shaggy dog or labrador – sometimes headless, or often with eyes like burning coals, and accompanied by mist or fire and in howling winds and gales. According to folklore the spectre often haunts graveyards, country lanes and dark forests.

His appearance usually bodes ill to the beholder. He terrifies his victims, but leaves them alone to continue their normal lives. In some cases his appearance occurs before close relatives of the observer die or become ill – sick people, it was said, “had the look of black dog”.

We were reminded that dogs have long been associated with Death in some cultures. For example, in Ancient Egyptian tombs the black dog guarded the



Blyburgh Church, courtesy of parish website.

jars containing the viscera of the deceased king, as in the tomb of Tutankhamun. ‘Man’s best friend’ has been heard to howl on the death of his Master – as in the case of the sudden death in 1923 of Lord Caernarvon, who funded the Tutankhamun excavation. So, our local legend fits well into the ancient depiction of the dog being associated with Evil.

There have been numerous ‘supposed’ sightings of Black Shuck in Norfolk and Suffolk over the centuries. One of the most notable reports is of his appearances on the same day of August 4th 1577 at Holy Trinity Church, Blyburgh, Suffolk, and at St Mary’s, Bungay. On this occasion during the service at Blyburgh, the Hellhound is said to have burst through the main doors with fire and a whirlwind, causing the church tower, spire and bells to collapse through the roof. In the terror and panic ensuing a man and boy were killed, whilst the Beast escaped through the North door and on to Bungay church. In 1933 this door was restored revealing scorch marks from the hound’s claws, and that can be seen to this day. The encounter on the same day at Bungay was described in “A Straunge and Terrible Wunder”, by the Rev. Abraham Fleming in 1577, the same year. Again panic followed but with no loss of life. The event is commemorated in the church weather vane (from which the above image is taken).

Sightings continued in the 19th century – particularly near the coast and on the road between West Runton and Overstrand. Sheringham fishermen claimed they heard the howlings of Black Shuck during storms – or is this a

crafty ruse to discourage interest in their nefarious activities of smuggling and pillaging from shipwrecks?

In the 1890s a Cromer teenager was rescued from the sea maintaining that the Black Dog had chased him into the foam – or was it the demon drink?

In March 1901 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Creator of Sherlock Holmes and a dabbler in the supernatural, stayed at the Royal Links Hotel, Cromer, on a golfing holiday. Here he heard of sightings of Black Shuck from his friend Bertram Fletcher Robinson. Did these tales inspire him to resurrect Sherlock Holmes, his famous detective, in the “Hound of the Baskervilles” a year later as was the case? Although the story takes place on Dartmoor where a similar legend exists, and where the author spent some weeks in the same year, it would be gratifying to think that our local legend had contributed to one of the finest Victorian crime novels in our language.

More recent sightings have continued to occur, particularly in south-east Norfolk near the coast. During the Second World War an A.R.P. messenger, cycling down Church Lane, Gorleston, at night suddenly saw a ‘huge black dog’ that ‘fixed his steely gaze on him’. A police dog-handler (surely a reliable witness?) spotted a large dog (the size of a calf) run across the A12 north of Blyburgh and disappear into the marshes. Later he had a second sighting in the churchyard and heard blood-curdling howls. Alice, aged 14, travelling with family and friends in Suffolk, saw a huge, black creature overtaking cars; and a birdwatcher, pursuing his solitary hobby, took a photo of a large shaggy dog in the distance – possibly a forlorn Irish wolfhound – hardly convincing!

“A load of old squit!” I hear you say, but such is the nature of myths, and whilst many can be explained away, our culture and imagination is all the richer for them. We thank Mr Ransome for bringing them to our attention, with the accompanying slides and recordings. No doubt further sightings will occur. It would be interesting to speculate how this “shaggy dog” story would develop.....Perhaps Black Shuck will meet up with the current phenomenon, the huge Black Cat*.....now that’s a confrontation worthy of the front page of the EDP – and even the A.L.H.S. Journal.

Jean McChesney

*Seen in a field of the Brick Pit Farm to the north of Weavers’ Way a little before the Blickng Road, as I well remember on an evening walk some four years ago and seen thereabouts independently by our neighbour Cheryl Parkes several times – Ed.

Hearths and Heaths: Dispersed Settlements in Aylsham's Early Modern Landscape by William and Maggie Vaughan-Lewis (2017)

Reviewed by Edmund Perry, Hon. Gen. Sec. NNAS

The authors aim is “to understand the layout and development of the wider parish” with its dispersed settlements and farmlands forming a circle of occupation around the market town of Aylsham. They have made extensive use of NRO records including court rolls and books of the main manors, the Poor Rate Books, wills, administrations and inventories and the Purdy Archive, to establish ownership of copyhold properties, occupiers of houses/land, leaseholders/rate payers and to show family relationships and some occupations. As such this book is a gift to local and family historians, containing a wealth of information about places and people from the 14th to the early 20th century,

Up to the 18th century a great heathland stretched from Itteringham towards Norwich along the parish boundaries. This was often treated as common land providing the peasants with furze (gorse), heather (ling), broom and wood for domestic fireplaces and hearths, rabbits for food, pasture for the grazing of sheep and cattle, and it was a source of sand and gravel for roadworks. Around Aylsham the surface was well-watered by the Bure river, the Mermaid beck and Mary's beck, so it had potential for intensive farming. If the sandy and loamy soil was improved with organic matter, dung and clay marl, then it could be cultivated with crops rather than left as meadow. Such land was being taken into cultivation well before the 12th century, a process which has continued right up to the present.

In the post Domesday period, a manorial system arose based upon a substantial number of ‘tofts’ (landholdings with a dwelling) and ‘crofts’ (the arable land belonging to the house or cottage) of free tenants and small holders farming a bundle of strips across open fields scattered throughout the parish. All this changed as a result of the Black Death and Peasant Revolts during the 14th century. Manors became derelict, villages shrank or became deserted especially settlements on marginal land like the heaths. With fewer people in the countryside the size of landholdings increased. By 1500 the peasant smallholder had been replaced by tenant farmers with larger holdings. Sizeable estates grew during the Tudor and Stuart monarchies especially in the west of the region along the Cawston, Oulton and Blickling parish boundaries where there developed an interesting mix of crown held grazing land, sheep farms and copyholders.

By exploring the Parish boundaries and edge settlements, the authors provide an accurate account of the complexities of the old meadow, pasture, toft and open field system. Clockwise around Aylsham they give details of the major manors (Lancaster, Sexton's (later Wood's), Vicarage, Bolwick and Woodgate) plus about a dozen farmsteads (such as Millgate, Stapleton's and Bure Valley Farms, Stonegate, Fengate, Moorgate, Manor Farm, Abbey Farm) and their fields, etc. The Appendix includes an account of the Dog Inn which was demolished in 1966; the White Horse and the Swan alehouse in Millgate; plus histories of Sexton's Mill in Drabblegate, Lancaster Mill in Millgate, Bolwick Paddock water mill and Vicar's mill at Sares Moor.

So much information is provided that maps are essential for the reader to follow the text. The numerous colour photos and pictures of the landscape and properties are very clear throughout the book but the photographic images of the tithe and enclosure maps leave much to be desired. Often they are too small and indistinct, requiring a magnifying glass to pin-point places, tracks, field names and land plot numbers. Apart from providing larger pictures, an alternative might have been to trace the major outlines over images of the older maps and mark on the significant features relating to the text. A modern map of the Aylsham landscape plus aerial photographs would have been very helpful. The authors explain that for a more manageable overview of the parish they have used an Admiralty Survey 1 inch map from 1865 to show the area before major industrial change but it might have been better to use the 6 inch to a mile 1885/6 Ordnance Survey Map which gives clearer details about field names and boundaries, roads, houses, etc.

Although the Aylsham area wasn't the classic 'champion' landscape of fields in strips and a few parcels of meadow, a 'foldcourse' system operated whereby the manorial lord had a right to graze sheep and cattle over the open fields and on fallow land after the harvest until sowing next spring. Sometimes the tenants' sheep and cattle could do the same. Manure from the sheep drops was of great benefit to the arable crops. This mutually beneficial operation only worked when there was cooperation between the manorial sheep-owning landlord and the arable farmer tenant. However, as the demand for wool increased parts of the old heathland were enclosed. C16th court rolls are full of cases about landlords abusing the system by increasing the period when sheep were on the land, excluding tenants' livestock, and enclosing the heathland. In retaliation the tenants combined their strips in the open fields and erected fences to keep out the sheep. The whole subject of common land access became very fraught at the end of the 16th and 17th centuries resulting in numerous legal actions between landowners and tenants over grazing rights for cattle and sheep, field sizes, ditches, fences and access to the common land or 'waste'

and its natural products. The authors deal at length with a typical case involving pasture rights on Cawston Heath and Jerbridge Park in the 1580s. Such actions provide valuable information about ownership and inheritance.

The Manors managed property tenure whereby tenants paid 'fees' and gave obligations in return for an agreed mechanism for conveyancing property (surrender and admission, bargain and sale, copyhold to freehold) from one generation to the next. Holdings were described the same way for decades even centuries, with the names of former tenants found in the summaries of property and land descriptions including pasture rights on the common heaths. New owners took away a parchment copy (hence 'copy-holder') and the rolls/books were carefully preserved for future reference. In each manor, officials were elected annually to oversee local affairs – the Bailiffs and Collectors who enforced rents and tithes. Along with a Steward they organised the manorial courts, held quarterly, which fixed rents and settled property/land disputes.

Anyone who has used the manorial court books knows how Biblical they can read about who gained what, when and how from rented or owned property plus the legal repetition and use of specific terms like the demesne, appurtenances, moity, messuages, tenements, heriots, etc. (a Glossary is provided). Much of the book follows this intricate format with lengthy quotes from the documents especially when dealing with manorial records and actual court cases. The latter provide insights into the difficulties of anyone inheriting property at the time. An action in the Court of the Star Chamber, July 1603, concerns a riotous assembly at Kettlebridge, southeast of Stonegate. In his death-bed Will, an elderly Christopher Horne left his estate to his recently married and younger wife Emma. A group of Aylsham farmers and tradesmen were granted a letter of administration over the estate to settle debts. They, along with local labourers, invaded Emma's house and tried to remove property, money and goods. The family resisted and beat off the intruders. Eventually Emma kept the property and sold it to a Bishop Jegon whose widow married Sir Charles Cornwallis. The inheritance of Stonegate, Kettlebridge and The Spa is traced right down to Robert John Woods Purdy in the late C19th.

The lengthy chapter on the Woodgate estate, to the east of Aylsham and south of Blickling, is especially interesting and well-illustrated with plans, pictures and photos of the building changes at Woodgate House and its grounds. Ownership is traced from the Elvered Family in the C15th to the Some/Soame family, then Robert Woods and eventually to RJW Purdy (1839–1916). Part of the Appendix deals with the Woods/Berwick and Purdy connection with Foulsham. Family Trees of these and other owners are

provided throughout the book but smaller line versions would have been more useful in the text where numerous individuals and dates are mentioned. Similarly, extra lists of owners/tenants for each manor/farm would have made such information more easily accessible. The reader is left wanting to know details about the actual people, their lives, character, occupation, etc. which probably isn't possible without personal correspondence and diaries.

A few paragraphs, highlighted at intervals in each chapter, could have been used to give the historical context – the political, social, economic background - of the changes in settlement and ownership during the six hundred years under consideration. The book deals substantially with property and family inheritance but it has little to say about crops and animals, the demand for cereals and wool, the income of farmers and the manors. For instance, whilst a short chapter deals with the provision for the poor in wills, the creation of almshouses and the parish workhouse, there is no examination of the reasons behind rural poverty, the lives of the peasantry and farm labourers, their living conditions, etc.

Admittedly this is a somewhat academic “reference book for future historians”. There is an excellent list of sources at the front of the book plus extensive footnotes at the end of each chapter and a comprehensive Index of names. Reading requires concentration and effort plus patience in studying the maps and making one's own notes. However, anyone can dip in and out looking for the ownership history of a property or building, for the names of tenants and copyholders, and family descendants through the centuries. The authors hope “everyone will find something of interest among the range of detailed depictions of the landscape and people”.



Paperback 210 × 295 mm, 236 pp, Itteringham History. 2017. £10, Woodgate Nursery.

Other books in the series by William and Maggie Vaughan-Lewis are;

See You in Court The Potts Family of Mannington Norfolk 1584–1737 (2009)

Aylsham: A Nest of Norfolk Lawyers (2014)

A Striking Village – a talk by Anne May



Burston Strike School museum. Photo David Berwick.

The school building at Burston is unique in the world. It is now a museum with free entrance, the key hanging available to all visitors and trusting that they will leave the building as they found it. It is a monument to a truly extraordinary example of a rebellion of the common people and one that lasted for 25 years!

In the mid-1850s the average wage for a farm labourer was 7 shillings a week. A 4lb loaf of bread was 1/6 and tea was 6d a 1lb. By 1900 the average wage had risen to 15 shillings, but in Norfolk it was only between 11 and 14 shillings. In contrast the rector of Burston earned £11 a week, £495 per annum, plus £86 per annum through renting out glebe land. The rectory had 20 rooms and an indoor and outdoor servant.

Tom Higdon and his wife are the heroes of this tale. Tom had been strongly influenced by Joseph Arch and George Edwards. Arch was born in Warwickshire, a self-educated son of an agricultural labourer whose ancestors had fought at Edgehill.

*Joe Arch he raised his voice, 'twas for the working men,
Then let us all rejoice and say,
We'll all be union men.*

Edwards was the son of a farm labourer who couldn't read or write until he married, but he became a JP and later MP.

Apparently one of the first branches of the agricultural union was in Aylsham.

Tom Higdon, himself the son of a farm labourer in Somerset, had attended Arch's union meetings and became a pupil teacher.

He married Annie Schollich who was better trained, musically talented and spoke German and French. Her educational methods were way ahead of their time, children enjoyed going to school!

They came to an appointment at Wood Dalling school where it wasn't long before she started to annoy the governors. The school was cold and damp and she wanted improvements.

Tom started a local branch of agricultural workers union and then went on to the Parish Council where he stirred matters in relation to the tithe rents.

Back at the school, children now legally bound (1902) to be in school had regularly been removed to help on the farm.

For young Cotterall, this was a regular occurrence. Despite polite requests from Tom a confrontation ensued and Tom knocked the farmer down. He was fined, and the school governors used the misdemeanour to move the couple on, despite the support they had from parents. They were offered only one post, at Burston, and although they didn't want to leave, this is where they did move.

Burston also had a rector. Rev Charles Tucker Eland who saw himself as a country gentleman – he was a rector of the old school. The Higdon's tried to get on well with him but discovered the situation was worse than at Wood Dalling, so they started to go to Chapel – meeting local labourers and realising that what they needed was a branch of the agricultural workers union! Tom subsequently was elected to the Parish Council and the Rev Eland voted off – although he was still chair of the school managers.

A series of events led to the beginning of the strike.

* Mrs Higdon lit a fire in the school room when the children came in soaked – it was out of season.

* She closed the school during an outbreak of whooping cough (with the Deputy Chair's permission, but to Rev Eland's displeasure)

* Two Barnardos children staying at the home of a Mrs Philpott (who received money for them through the representative for Barnardos - Rev Eland) accused a little boy of exposing himself. Mrs Higdon knew he couldn't have done it as he was in detention at the time.

*She was accused of beating the girls (she was a pacifist)
There was an Enquiry and they were given notice.

On 31st March 1914 some of the children stayed behind to help them clear up, one of them was **Violet Potter who was our speaker's aunt.**

On 1st April the children marched around the village with cards hanging from their necks demanding that "We Want Our Teachers Back". The march passed both Mrs Philpott's and the Rev Eland's houses.

Initially lessons were held on the village green, but then they were offered the use of a carpenter's shop. The School Management Committee continued with their plan of attack. 18 parents were summoned to court and fined for not sending their children to a state-recognised school (the fines were paid out of collections made outside the courtroom). Though the parents were fined repeatedly, it soon became clear that they had made a choice as to the education of their children.

As the strike neared its first birthday, the lease on the workshop also drew to an end but support and donations from trade unions and branches of the Labour party across the country raised over £1,250 to keep the school going. In a time of distress in the country due to the horrific losses during the war, the Burston Strike School managed to offer a spark of hope for thousands who, prior to the protest, had never even heard of Burston.

It also became a place of pilgrimage for trade unionists long after the strike itself had come to an end.

Eventually through donations from all over the world (including from Leo Tolstoy - the son of the writer) a new school was built and opened by George Lansbury (grandfather of the actress Angela Lansbury) on 13th May 1917. Violet Potter officially opened the front door.

Tom Higdon died in 1939 and with his death came the end of the strike. Annie died in 1946 and they are both buried in the churchyard at Burston.

Since 1983 the Burston Strike School Rally has once more become an annual event, with the day now being fixed to the first Sunday in September. The event is completely funded by trade unions which allows it to be free of any ticketing and charging (except for those wishing to have a campaign stall). Although today the trustees are not exclusively members of Unite, as the inheritor of the 'rural and agricultural tradition' UNITE remains the organiser of the Rally.

Sue Sharpe

Harriet Martineau



On Thursday 22nd February Nigel Wilmhurst gave us an engaging, informed account of the life of Harriet Martineau, an extraordinary nineteenth century woman.

Born in Gurney Court, Magdalen Street, Norwich in 1802, she spent her early life in the city. The decline of her father's hand loom worsted business, as Yorkshire power looms grew, was a financial disaster, but which determined and liberated Harriet to look beyond the domestic household.

Her childhood was beset by terrors of the dark or fears of slipping through the planks on Cromer pier into the water beneath. She said her life at this stage had 'begun with winter, there was no spring'. Relations with her mother were emotionally cold and blighted by her feeling the other sister was preferred, but Harriet's strong will and belief she was always right did not smooth family dynamics.

Her development of deafness could have affected her sometimes low self esteem but Harriet's selective use of her ear trumpet ensured she could still have some control.

She had moved to her aunt's school in Bristol in 1818 where she learned Latin and modern languages. This education caused her family to be dismayed at Harriet's support of Mesmerism, widely believed to be quackery, later in her life. How could any intelligent person believe that the manipulation of the hands could control magnetic moods of the body to cure illness? She even mesmerised her cows on her farm in the Lake District.

In 1825 she became close to John Worthington. Marriage was proposed but Harriet urged a wait. She felt she was unsuitable for marriage. John in fact

became insane and died in 1827. Although she had a history of family spats Harriet believed emotions should be controlled: 'feelings are given us to be directed and controlled, not to be thought about much less talked about'.

Her reaction to the death of John was extremely short lived. 'Get over it' was her mantra. Control or lack of feeling?

Norwich had been a centre of religious radicalism in the eighteenth century. The Martineau family was of Huguenot, French protestant descent and found refuge with the Unitarians in the Octagon Chapel in Colegate, Norwich. Harriet was an earnest Christian in her early years. She wrote articles, unpaid, for the Unitarian Monthly repository. In 1830 she won all three prizes in the Unitarian Association essay competition.

But her support drained away after a visit to the Middle East in 1846. Contact with another culture led her to question. Unitarians believed Jesus was only an exemplar. She moved to believing there was no God to pray to or to punish you. Her journey settled on the need to progress in understanding of universal laws and principles. These views led to more splits in the family.

Harriet was living in a time of political ferment caused by the economic revolution in industry and agriculture. People moved to towns and factories. Work and living conditions and social discipline outgrew the settled structure of society.

Harriet supported the free market which advocated everyone should be left alone to do what they could most efficiently. She developed opposing views of society struggling to work out where to draw the line. Working people should be treated properly, but if they withdrew their labour to increase wages this would be a deterrent to the free market.

She believed in personal responsibility near factory machines. It was not the job of the government to legislate for health and safety.

She believed you should only have children if you could afford to bring them up.

She supported State not Church of England schools. People needed to be educated to understand economic laws, not to be taught a particular moral framework.

There was support for anti-slavery and rights for married women.

She supported extension of the franchise with her own distinctive opinions. Women had to earn the right to vote. They needed to be educated.

Unless the working man was educated he would not achieve the level of education necessary to be trusted with the vote.

Harriet supported herself by her farm in the Lake District, given by her supporters, and by her prodigious writing of pamphlets, booklets and novels. Harriet had wider horizons than marriage and domesticity. She challenged

the norms of religion, economics and politics. She knew Wordsworth, Cobden and Peel.

She was a strong willed, complex woman. Some of her views might jar today, others, such as more or less state control, surprisingly of today.

She died at Ambleside in the Lake District in 1876.

Nigel was full of enthusiasm for his subject. This he communicated to his audience .

Think of Harriet Martineau when next you are near Martineau Lane, Norwich.

Lynda Wix

NOTICES

Society Notices see page 38.

Heritage Centre

The new exhibition in the Heritage Centre – “what’s in a name?” – is all about the people who have had roads named after them in the Town. It looks at the person behind the road names and what their contribution to the town was. The exhibition builds on the fantastic work undertaken by Sue Sharpe to produce the recent leaflet about Aylsham’s road names, and covers all areas of the town, including the new estates. Many of the friends of the centre attended an opening evening despite the snow, and judging by their reaction there should be lots to interest from residents and visitors alike!

We are open: Monday 10.30–1 pm; Tuesday–Friday 10.30–3.30 pm; Saturday (1st in the month) 10.30–1 pm.

Visit ***www.aylshamheritage.com*** to find out more about the events in the year and to become a Friend of the centre.

Aylsham Roman Project

The Aylsham Roman Project is entering its third year with a number of events planned, including a further 3-week dig in August 2018.

On March 5th and 6th a further geophysical survey by project volunteers, guided by Britannia Archaeology, to establish where 2018’s dig will take place.

In June 2018, Monday 25th to Friday 29th, schools have been invited to experience a dig with guidance from volunteers.

The big dig will start Monday 6th August for three weeks, Monday to Friday, and there will be activity on both sides of the lake.

In late September there will be an attempt to build a replica kiln, with some expert guidance, and fire the pots made during the schools’ week.

Further information on the website: ***www.aylshamromanproject.com***