

# AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



**Volume 12 No 3**

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Cover:

*Aylsham Heritage Centre 2021. Picture: Jeremy Worth*

# AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

## JOURNAL AND NEWSLETTER



Volume 12

No. 3

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### CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Preamble .....  | 38 |
| Aylsham Heritage Centre: the first ten years by Jayne Andrews.....        | 39 |
| Harry Proudfoot (1869 – 1961) by Roger Polhill.....                       | 42 |
| William Repton: the untold story by Maggie Vaughan-Lewis.....             | 53 |
| 1841: A Census Year by Jim Pannell.....                                   | 55 |
| Sir William's Lane: a deliberate misnomer? by Maggie Vaughan-Lewis        | 58 |
| Industrial activity in nineteenth century Norfolk a talk by Adrian O'dell | 62 |
| Ann Dyball†.....  | 64 |
| Aylsham Local History Society AGM 2021 Minutes and Accounts.....          | 67 |

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Many of you will know of the sudden death of Ann Dyball on Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> October. Her obituary starts on page 64. She will be greatly missed not just by members of the Society, for which she did so much as a member of the Committee, organising visits and contributing to the Journal, but by her many friends in organisations across the town.

It has been a relief to restart meetings in person, beginning with our well attended AGM on the 7<sup>th</sup> October, which was followed by a talk from Adrian O'dell on nineteenth century industry in Norfolk.

Looking ahead to coming events for next year, all at the Friendship Hall Cawston Road Aylsham, starting at 7 for 7.30 the first is a talk on the M&GN and North Norfolk by Nigel Digby on January 27<sup>th</sup>. On February 24<sup>th</sup> Clare Haynes will talk on A letter to Mr Urban: John Adey Reptons's account of the "Altar Piece in Aylsham Church". Then on 24<sup>th</sup> March Rob Knee will talk on Thomas Fowell Buxton of Northrepps, anti slavery campaigner.

A possible visit to Sutton Hoo is being investigated to include a tour of the burial ground, and also reinstating the planned visit to Wymondham Abbey. We are also planning a selection of films and talks entitled 'Spotlights' for the summer.

## **Aylsham Heritage Centre: the first ten years**

### **by Jayne Andrews**

It looks like the risk I took 10 years ago to sign a temporary 2 year contract and become the learning officer at Aylsham Heritage Centre was a good one! We've made it to our 10 year anniversary ... despite funding problems and global pandemics trying to slow us down!

The 10 year journey began when I was working as a Literacy Advisor for Norfolk County Council. A funding cut had meant that the main part of my role was in jeopardy and we faced many interviews for our posts as the restructuring process took place. On the eve of yet another interview I said to my Husband "what I want is a job where I can work with children, be able to use my creativity, be able to organise my own time and my own work load and work with people – something like a museum job would be great". He laughed and agreed.

The next day I happened to look at Jobs 24 to see what was available .... And there it was .... The exact job I had just described. Almost as though I had written the job spec and the person spec. Only snag was the closing date was the next day. My application arrived minutes before the closure time! And the rest is history – quite literally! The interview day was great. I was so excited – which I think the panel understood as I seemed to tell them every five minutes how excited I was! And by the end of the day I had my dream job.

The real work began then and the enormity of the task I was facing became clear. Giles Margaron and Alan Quinn brought me to the centre and showed me the building. The building was the old Parish Rooms and was built in 1890 by Benjamin Cooke, a miller in the town, for the grand sum of £400. It was equipped for £60 and then donated to the church. It opened on 1st October 1890. The building has had many uses ranging from wedding receptions, children's parties, a temporary library and as a meeting room for the church choir and for the WI. Local residents recall the choir sitting around an organ with a stove for warmth. Refreshments for meetings were often prepared on a gas stove ... One resident vividly recalls being lifted through the window by the vicar to unlock the door from the inside to assist a group who had been locked out!

At this point however it had no floor, the mezzanine floor was incomplete, there was no toilet, and no running water. This was progress from the chaos represented by the picture at the end of the article, but, it was empty!

Everything had to be purchased from scratch – display boards, office furniture, wall frames, chairs, cabinets – the whole lot! And I needed some ideas for what to exhibit! I visited the town archives and tried to wrap my brain around the masses of material that is held there – what would be interesting? What would be possible to borrow? I remember very clearly sitting with Roger Polhill and Jim Pannell who very kindly took time to tell me more about the history of the town and what was available to help me. I remember so many people saying there was so much history – which is true but I really didn't know where to start – I needed “Stuff” to help me to stage an exhibition! I didn't know where to source such “stuff”

Gradually the work in the building was complete, deliveries of display materials were made and after spending plenty of time with the photographic archive and with “Sapwell's history of Aylsham” I began to see a way forward! We had an open morning in May 2011 and also hosted an exhibition as part of the Aylsham festival before we installed our first exhibition. The first theme was “Celebrations and Events” and included costumes from the Masque of Anne Boleyn on loan from Blicking Hall. The doors officially opened on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2011. We still had no running water, or a toilet but we were up and running! And so long as I had a full kettle then all was well!

We have grown from strength to strength since then. Additional exhibition boards and wall frames have been purchased so we can exhibit more information for locals and visitors. We have staged around 14 exhibitions in total – covering topics such as the war, street names, oral history, shops, transport and childhood, as well as hosting exhibitions from Aylsham Rotary and the History society. And a toilet and kitchen have been added!

We try to run as many events as possible from craft sessions for children and adults, wine tasting evenings, annual May talks, evening walks, as well as our now traditional Breakfast with Santa. I work with schools in the town to try to involve as many children as possible in the history of their town. We have produced town trails for adults and one specifically aimed at children too. Our website has grown considerably to include lots of information about the history of the town and our eventual plan is to put as many of the previous exhibitions on the site as possible. We even have a website written by children for children about the town. We have a strong “Friends of the

Heritage Centre” group – we are always willing to welcome more – who support us throughout the year.

The pandemic threw some specific challenges our way, and the centre was closed for around 10 months in total. But thanks to some amazing support we have survived so that we can continue to illustrate and exhibit the fascinating history of this wonderful place and begin once again to host events to welcome people into our building. We look forward to welcoming back all of our wonderful volunteers soon too so that we can open to our full capacity. Ten years on and I can safely say that it is still my dream job!

### Our Exhibitions

|      |  |        |                          |
|------|--|--------|--------------------------|
| 2011 | Celebrations and events                  | 2012   | Childhood; War           |
| 2013 | Rotary exhibition; 3D images – Jamie Fox | 2014   | Trade and Transport; WW1 |
| 2015 | 100 years since WW1                      | 2016   | Voices of Aylsham        |
| 2017 | History of St Michaels                   | 2018   | What’s in a Name         |
| 2019 | Pubs                                     | 2020/1 | Now and Then             |



*The Heritage Centre before building work began*

## Harry Proudfoot (1869–1961) by Roger Polhill



Harry Proudfoot was a remarkable character recently lost from living memory. The town owes him much for his exceptional public service and 60 years since he died it seems appropriate to remember him.<sup>1</sup> Tom Mollard published a couple of articles in the Journal thirty years ago, partially to document his contribution to the Parish archives and principally to reproduce the autobiography of Harry Proudfoot's youth, as Tom says, grandly titled "A history of the parish of Aylsham since the year 1873 to 1934".<sup>2,3</sup> Tom goes on to say it was clearly used as source material by Dr Sapwell in his history of Aylsham<sup>4</sup>, and

as Sapwell says – "this is really an autobiography up to the time of his marriage in 1892...what a pity he did not continue it up to 1934 or later".

(The account begins)... "I am simply putting down what I remember since I was about four years of age. I was born at the old corner shop on Bank Plain facing toward the Norwich Road, on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1869, my father's name being Robert Proudfoot, and my mother's Elizabeth."<sup>5</sup>

I had three brothers – Robert Thomas, William Freeman and Herbert Miles, also two sisters – Elizabeth Louise and Phyllis Gertrude.

My father was a joiner and cabinet maker and his workshop was in Red Lion Street, behind Mr. Dale's shop (this place was afterwards used as a Mission Room by the Plymouth Brethren when they opened up in Aylsham). In the year 1875, I was sent to the National School, the new part of the Schools being opened this year. Mr. Thomas Hill was the schoolmaster.<sup>6</sup> My parents had to pay twopence per week for our education, half of which was refunded if a certain number of attendances were made during the year.

In those days, we had to take our slates and pencils, with a sponge attached to our slate (after each lesson we spat on our slate to clean it ready for the



next lesson). The subjects taught were Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. Grammar, Geography, History and Singing were also taught with a smattering of Algebra and Euclid.

Mr. Hill was a fine old master, and took the deepest interest in his scholars. This was the only education I received, and I estimate the total cost of the same at about twenty-five shillings for the seven years that I attended school. There being five of us, my parents always looked out to get the half fees returned.

During the seven years that I attended school, I was employed out of school hours, especially between the age of eleven and thirteen (when I left) as follows: – At 7 o'clock in the morning I had to take out about twelve copies of the Eastern Daily Press to the principal houses in the parish, some of which were a mile from the market place; for this I was paid threepence weekly, my employer being Mr. Charles Clements (now Mr. F.C. Barnwell). After I came out of morning school, I had to go to Miss Clover in the Market Place (now the Post Office) and also on Saturday mornings I had to run errands, help in the garden, clean knives and forks for all of which I received another threepence per week.

In the summer months, with my brother Freeman we were on the Dog Hotel



*The Dog Bowling Team in 1900. Town Robert Proudfoot 3 from right in front row; Harry Proudfoot 5 from right in second row, with bow tie. Aylsham Town Archive*

bowling green, wiping bowls. My father was secretary of the club. Very often we would be there until 11 o'clock at night, but we quite enjoyed this work as we did not always account to our parents for all the money we had picked up.

In those days, the game of bowls was a more sociable one than that of today. Farmers, tradesmen and their friends would sometimes meet in the afternoon, and play until late at night. Among the many I have wiped balls for, I well remember the following – Lawyer Henry Scott, Charles Roger Dewhurst, Samuel Hatcher, Horace Laxen, Major Archdale, Philip Elden, James Watt, James Sands, James Gambling, Dr. Little, William Gay, Dr. R.J. Morton and his father R.K. Morton, Henry Page, Charles Harvey Ward, Christmas Stapleton, Charles Clements, William Calver, James Breese, James Cornish, Edward George, William F. White, John Goulder, Charles Goulder, Thornton Bullock, George Fitt, William Payne and Charles Wade.

At the age of 13 I left school. My first place was at Mr. E. Nuthall's, a chemist in Red Lion St. His manager was Major Maude (he is still alive and lives at Cawston). There was a large family; I had to be at work at 7 o'clock each morning, cleaning boots, knives and forks and lighting the fire before the shop was opened. Early closing was on Wednesdays at 5 o'clock, and on Saturdays, the shop did not close until 10 pm. I was at this place for about two years, my wages being two shillings per week for the first year and two shillings and sixpence for the second year.

I left this place and went to Mr. England's, a grocer in Red Lion St. as a warehouse boy. I did not stay there very long. I left and went to Mr. Bexfield's, he had a baking powder factory in some buildings situated in Red Lion St. up a yard behind present International Stores, he occupying the shop which is now owned and occupied by Mr. James Roofe. We made baking powder and all sorts of bottled sauces. At this time, the present International Stores was used as a coffee tavern and refreshment house carried on by the late Mr. James Applegate. He was a brickmaker on the Blickling estate, and later, a member of the Norfolk County Council and an Alderman. He was a leading light of the old Radical Party.

At the age of 18 I was employed by Messrs. Brady & Pert, painters and plumbers whose workshops were on the Cromer Road on part of the Vicarage Glebe (now occupied by Mr. James D. Partridge). I was a bricklayer's labourer to Charles Dove, and from May 1887 was at work at Burgh Hall until the September following. I had to be at the workshop by 5.30 in the

morning and walk to Burgh Hall, leaving there about 6 o'clock at night. On Saturdays we left about 4.30 to be home at the workshop by 5 pm for payment of my wages, viz. Nine shillings per week for 60 hours work.

I had to do all kinds of jobs making up mortar, painting wood and ironwork, helping the paperhangers and making myself generally useful. My employers, Mr. William Pert and Mr. Harry Brady, were very kind to me and the workmen (some ten in all). We were a very happy party. We took our food with us, and generally had same out in the plantations attached to the Hall. In the June of this year, the Norfolk Agricultural Show was held in the east park at Blickling. It has been held at Aylsham since that year i.e. 1887. In October 1887 we had finished at Burgh Hall, and I then went to work at painting a house at Banningham occupied by a Mr. G. Frostick and owned by Benjamin Cook of Aylsham. About the middle of October, there was no more work for me with Messrs. Brady & Pert, and for a fortnight I was unemployed. My parents were getting a bit upset at my not being able to earn something toward my keep.

My father at this time had given up his cabinet-making business, and had been appointed assistant overseer and rate collector for the parishes of Aylsham and Blickling at a combined salary of about £75 per annum. My eldest brother, Robert, had left home leaving five of us with our father and mother to provide for. We each of us had to do some work for the house, when children, and looked forward to Saturday when we each received a half-penny for sweets (that is if we had done our allotted work during the week).

At the latter part of October 1887 I was called into my father's little office, and there asked to sign a document to apprentice me to a Mr. Fred Culley, a builder of Cawston Rd., Aylsham, as a bricklayer for three years. This I refused to do, and I well remember saying to them "I am not going to be a bricklayer" ending up with these words, "Father, you have no idea what I have got in my skull". After this, things were none too pleasant in the old home!

At this time, Mr. Culley had a lot of work in hand, employing several men & boys. Dove, with whom I had previously worked at Brady & Pert, had left there, and gone to Mr. Culley. I had been making out his timesheets, and being fond of writing, my works had been seen by Mr. Culley, and a few days after our meeting at my father's office, he saw me in the market place and arranged that I should try my hand at carpentering but under no agreement whatever. My father provided me with some tools, but I never did much in

that line. I was fond of my writing, and I was soon engaged on clerical work with Mr. Culley.

This was a great starting point for my future, and I shall ever remember how kind Mr. & Mrs. Culley and their daughter (later my dear wife) were to me. I have much to thank them for. At this time, there were no motor vehicles, and I have seen ten to twelve horses and carts go out of Mr. Culley's yard at 6 o'clock in the morning to the various works then in progress. It was a worry every Friday to get in the cash to pay the wages bill. Twenty five shillings was the highest then paid for a week of 60 hours. I started with a wage of fifteen shillings per week.

During the first three years, the largest job we did was the building of Weybourne Hall for Mr. Walpole (afterwards Earl of Orford). This place was built for a sum of over £2,000, and when it was completed, Mr. Walpole came there to live, from Burgh Hall near Aylsham. I remember all this place as a ploughed field, and the present drive was planned by me, assisted by the late Mr. Mark Witham who was then Mr. R.J.W. Purdy's gardener at Woodgate, Aylsham. Weybourne church door was given by Mr. Walpole, and I designed the ironwork scrolls on the same; the top one has the initials R.H.W. (for Robert Horace Walpole) and the lower one L.M.W. – his wife's initials. The ironwork was cast by Messrs. Barnes & Pye of Norwich.

In the year 1892, on September 27<sup>th</sup>, I was married in our old parish church to Mr. Culley's only child, Edith Sophia, the ceremony being performed by the vicar, John Gurney Hoare. Our first home was on the Pound Road, and here we stayed some six to seven years, moving later on to the market place where my father and grandfather had lived. This house is now (1934) occupied by the Aylsham Rural District Council for their offices.”<sup>7</sup>

The account ends here, somewhat abruptly, but the story can be picked up to a considerable extent in an article Harry Proudfoot submitted to the Cromer Post in 1934 near the end of his career<sup>9</sup> and his obituary<sup>1</sup>, as well as other more general sources mentioned below. By 1883 his father, Robert, was Registrar of Marriages and Harry was later appointed as his deputy. Since 1879 Robert had been accumulating parish responsibilities, starting as Assistant Overseer for Aylsham and other parishes in the Aylsham Union.<sup>8</sup> In 1894, when the structure of the Parish Council was formalised with an elected council, Robert was appointed Clerk to the Aylsham and Blickling Parish Council. By 1900 Robert had retired to the house in Pound Road where Harry had been in the first years of his marriage and Harry took over most of

his duties as assistant overseer and clerk to the Parish Councils of Aylsham and adjacent parishes, assistant overseer and collector of taxes for Cawston, deputy registrar of marriages for Aylsham and secretary to the Aylsham branch of the National Agricultural Union.

The December 1934 article continues with an account of his public services. He became clerk to the councils of Aylsham and Blickling and for over 40 years never missed a meeting and nobody but he ever entered the minutes. For many years he collected the rates for 11 surrounding parishes. He was on the Norfolk County Council for over 10 years and served on over 25 committees. He had also been chairman of the Aylsham and St. Faith's Guardians' Committee. In the 1930s he became a JP.<sup>1,8</sup>

He was chairman of the No. 1 Area Assessment Committee of the County Council and had just attended his 100<sup>th</sup> meeting in that capacity. In recent months he had been chairman of a committee to upgrade the town's water supply and sewerage system. When that was achieved he had no hesitation in believing that in a very few years more than 50 houses would be built.

Aylsham Rural District Council was set up in 1894, the same year as the Parish Council. The Clerk was Henry James Gidney, the principal solicitor of the town at No 1 Norwich Road, the office attached to his house No 3 Norwich Road, Bank House. Harry Proudfoot assisted his father as Registrar of births, marriages and deaths in the office there and had taken over by 1912, continuing until the office was closed in 1935 and subsumed into what is now Broadland District Council.<sup>4</sup> David Walker took over the solicitor's practice at No 1 Norwich Road in 1930 and was appointed clerk to the Parish Council in 1937, a post he held until 1951, when he was succeeded by John Pumphrey.<sup>10</sup>

Proudfoot was Aylsham's Bellman, the town crier, from 1899 to 1929.<sup>11</sup> He meticulously listed his 'cries' in two stiff-covered exercise books, all 223 from January 1899 to October 1923. About a quarter are for lost property, a few were public warnings in wartime, a good number for commercial and charitable sales, but most are for social events. The job gave him unprecedented insight into the town's events and he relished taking part and was always keen to be the secretary, organising the participants, publicity and accounts. He was proud of being the secretary for the celebrations for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, when 1800 people were seated in the Market Place, and also for the coronations of Edward VII in 1902 and George VI in 1937. *A Backwards Glance*<sup>12</sup> gives an insight into the detailed records



*Harry Proudfoot standing in the doorway of his house in the Market Place, now Postles, for the celebrations of Edward VII's coronation in 1902. Aylsham Town Archive.*

Proudfoot made for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and shows his house festooned with decorations and flags from the roof top. He was a stalwart of G Company of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Volunteer Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment and he published a detailed account of the annual distribution of prizes in 1897 and his role in decorating the Town Hall and arranging the dinner.<sup>13</sup>

By the turn of the century the Directories indicate that Robert Proudfoot had moved back to the house in Pound Road and Harry was at the family house in the Market Place, now Postles, which was also used for the offices of the Aylsham Branch of the National Agricultural Union for 24 years. William Forster, Aylsham's leading solicitor bought the Town Hall in 1892<sup>14</sup> and intended to leave it for the use of the town but died in 1906 without making the necessary arrangements. The Parish Council was hesitant to face the expenditure, but after a strongly favourable parish vote it was purchased in 1908. William Frederick Starling comments that it was through Harry Proudfoot that the hall became the property of the town.<sup>15</sup>

The Directories<sup>8</sup> record Proudfoot as Secretary to the Town Hall in 1912 and Manager from 1916 until his retirement in 1937. By 1922 he had bought a bungalow in Blickling Road he called 'Wayside' that became an important part of his life as his wife, Edith, became crippled and died in 1931. This is one of many details that can be picked up from Proudfoot's collection of press cuttings.<sup>16</sup>

He continued his youthful enthusiasm for bowls at the Dog Inn and was for three years president of the Recreation Green Bowls Club. He was involved with the Parish Council allotments for at least 21 years and organised the show of produce at the Town Hall on occasion. And of course he enjoyed every opportunity to be involved with theatricals and the novelty of cinema. He was one time President of the Aylsham and District Conservative Association. The 1934 article in the Cromer Post<sup>9</sup> was specially to record the dedication of the ambulance acquired for the Aylsham Division St. John Ambulance Brigade. He proudly records that he personally collected £185 of the £200 needed for its purchase and equipment. At the time he had been president of the association for the last two years and was appointed a life governor of the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital.<sup>1</sup>



*Dedication of Aylsham's first ambulance in December 1934. The Rev Archibald McNeile is the clergyman with a beard, Harry Proudfoot is prominent to the left of him and John Pumphrey is the choir boy to the left of the one with dark hair just behind them.<sup>10</sup> Aylsham Town Archive.*

A youthful project in 1894 was a *History of the Aylsham Baptist Church*, published in 1904<sup>17</sup> and a plethora of good works followed throughout his career. He belonged to three Friendly Societies – the Oddfellows (M.U.), the Foresters, and the Ancient Order of Shepherds. He was Chief Ranger of the Foresters, and Chief Pastor of the Shepherds, and sub-Chief Pastor for the whole of England, going once a month to London for official business.<sup>9</sup> A few months before the death of his wife a notice in the Parish Magazine for October 1931 says he had raised enough subscriptions to build a shelter on the cemetery, in addition to 29 “In Memory” seats he had raised subscriptions for in the last year.<sup>18</sup> He was conscientious too in maintaining the John Soame Pump and Molly Cook says he was commonly called the ‘mayor of Aylsham’.<sup>19</sup>



***Harry Proudfoot in retirement at his much-loved bungalow, Wayside, in Blickling Road. Aylsham Town Archive***

He appeared a rather lonely and somewhat eccentric figure. He enjoyed taking boys like Ben Rust (pers. comm.) into Norwich and show

In his own words in the 1934 article he comments as follows.<sup>9</sup> “In the religious life of the town, Mr Proudfoot has always tried to help every denomination and especially the Salvation Army. He claims connection with no religious body, and considers his home – a charming bungalow on the Blickling-road – his church. In the same article he makes his last personal comment. “The greatest tragedy in his life occurred in December 1931, when his wife passed away, and since that time he has severed himself from many public posts, but is still, perhaps, the busiest person in the town for the public cause. Mrs Proudfoot was a great help to her husband in his public life”.

He had not been well paid for his work and after his retirement in 1937 he became impoverished and had to mortgage his house to the Partridge



them around the office and print rooms of the EDP, where he was well known to many of the staff and knowledgeable about the business. Afterwards he would take them to the tearooms in Jarrolds and they would listen to the Palm Court Orchestra there. Neither the boys nor their parents considered anything improper in these avuncular treats. The town was shocked when, at 76, he was arrested for consorting with a soldier on 16 July 1945 and held on remand. At the assizes on 18 October 1945 he was found guilty and agreed to pay recognisances of £5 and to be of good behaviour for 12 months. This one-off incident did not mar his reputation but he went to live for his last years in Yarmouth. John Pumphry continued to keep in touch with him.

In 1954 he was consulted by Col Tom Purdy about the future of the old documents which he had so carefully retained during his years on the Council.<sup>20</sup> Harry agreed they should be handed over to Dr John Sapwell the new Chairman of the Council ‘to preserve for future generations’. He also wanted Purdy to take for himself various keepsakes, added pertinent comments on various current affairs and concluded “I have gone stone deaf, perhaps it is a good thing”.

The deposit that came to be known as the “Proudfoot Collection” formed a major source of information for Sapwell’s *History of Aylsham*<sup>4</sup> and subsequent publications of the Society. The Aylsham Town Archive now extends from the original Muniment Room into the old Council Chamber. A great legacy.

<sup>1</sup> Lifetime of Service for Aylsham Ends. Eastern Daily Press 3 January 1961.

<sup>2</sup> Mollard, T. (1990). Endpiece to H.F. Proudfoot, *History of the Aylsham Baptist Church*. Aylsham Local History Society Journal 2: 247–251.

<sup>3</sup> Mollard, T. (1990). Harry Proudfoot (1869–1961). Aylsham Local History Society Journal 2: 279–284.

<sup>4</sup> Sapwell, J. (1960). *A History of Aylsham*. Jarrolds.

<sup>5</sup> Robert married Elizabeth Miles from Yarmouth. The corner shop was, until recently, Santander, and is now Aesthetics and Tanning.

<sup>6</sup> Dale’s shop was to the south of the Cross Keys. Thomas Hill and wife Mary ran the school from the early 1870s to 1904.

<sup>7</sup> Now Postles, see photo above and Ron Peabody in *Memories of Aylsham* by William Frederick Starling pp. 24, 34 Note 5 (2000) and Roger Crouch &

Maggie Vaughan-Lewis, *No 33 Market Place, formerly Barnwells*, Aylsham Local History Society Journal 12: 3–18, particularly p. 6, and note 2 on p. 18 (2021).

<sup>8</sup>Gale, G. & Mollard, T. (2004). *Aylsham Directories 1793–1937*. Aylsham Local History Society.

<sup>9</sup> Mollard, T. (2000). Harry Proudfoot of Aylsham. Including text from an article in the *Norfolk Chronicle* from December 1934. Aylsham Local History Society Journal 6: 121–124 (2000).

<sup>10</sup> Pumphrey, J. (2008). *About Aylsham*. Aylsham Local History Society.

<sup>11</sup> Peabody, R. (1992). The Bellman. Aylsham Local History Society Journal 3: 227–233.

<sup>12</sup> Gale, G. et al., ed. (1998). *A Backwards Glance*. Aylsham Local History Society.

<sup>13</sup> Nobbs, G. in T. Mollard (2001). Volunteer Prize Distribution and Dinner 1897. Aylsham Local History Society Journal 6: 163–168.

<sup>14</sup> Vaughan-Lewis, M. (2020). Before the Town Hall: London House and its neighbours. Aylsham Local History Society Journal 8: 227–233.

<sup>15</sup> Peabody, R. (2000). *Memories of Aylsham* by William Frederick Starling. Aylsham Local History Society.

<sup>16</sup> Proudfoot, H.F. (1905–1938). Ledgers of press cuttings from the *Eastern Daily Mail*. Aylsham Town Archive.

<sup>17</sup> Mollard, T. (1990). *History of the Aylsham Baptist Church* by H.F. Proudfoot. Aylsham Local History Society Journal 2: 247–251.

<sup>18</sup> Mollard, T. (2000). Shelter on Cemetery. Aylsham Local History Society Journal 6: 127.

<sup>19</sup> Cook, M. (1989). The John Soame Memorial Pump. Aylsham Local History Society Journal 2: 127–128.

<sup>20</sup> Crouch, R. (2007). Old Documents, etc at the Old Bridewell Room. Aylsham Local History Society Journal 7: 93–94.

## **William Repton: the untold story by Maggie Vaughan-Lewis**

Members who are familiar with *Aylsham: Nest of Lawyers* or who recall our recent article on The Orchards (Vol 11 (9): 259-262) may wonder why I did not mention Helen Panton in my review of *Humphry Repton and his family: Correspondence 1805-1816* [[[refer to last issue editor's decision]]. I was disappointed but not surprised to see that there was no mention of the birth of an illegitimate daughter of William Repton, the main correspondent, in the letters after January 1815, the month of her baptism in distant Yarmouth. There are several likely reasons for this: firstly, by this date, the letters decrease in number with none surviving between the summer of 1814 and March 1815. After that there only 11 of which 3 relate to business. The rest show the great concern of the sons for Humphry's declining health. Secondly, William, as a respected lawyer and the Vicar's churchwarden, would have wanted to keep his daughter's birth a secret. He was well aware of the effect of gossip on a professional man's career. Thirdly I think he would have wanted to save his parents and his beloved Aunt Dorothy (to whom he was as close as a mother) the knowledge of his behaviour. Their disappointment he might not have felt able to bear. Fourthly, even if there had there been any acknowledgement in writing, William would have destroyed the letters to preserve Eleanor's (later Helen) anonymity.

I believe he kept in touch with the child, having found a husband for her mother (also Eleanor later Helen), and perhaps, after the death of his parents and aunt, when Helen was a young woman, asked his unmarried sister Elizabeth to take care of her at the family home in Springfield near Chelmsford.

William Henry Scott who was about the same age as Helen and later became Repton's partner, may have been encouraged to marry her. Certainly Repton built The Orchards in Norwich Road for them to live in and paid their family expenses for years. If we had had any doubts about this story (for the full details see *Nest* pp 186-191), I was recently convinced having ordered the marriage certificate of the couple. The wedding took place at Springfield on June 11 1840 with William Repton as one of the witnesses and the usual priest was replaced for the occasion by a Repton (the initials are not clear). However not only is Helen's father's name not entered but, very unusually,

her place of residence is also blank. As the marriage was by licence, banns in Aylsham and Springfield would not have been called and perhaps the family minister was used to avoid requests for her baptism details. William Henry Scott's address was given very briefly as 'Westminster' although he started working in Aylsham at around that time. Anything that could have led back to Aylsham seems to have been deliberately omitted.

As the affair was not revealed in the published letters, it was not of course in Dr Falvey's brief to pursue this element of William Repton's life and therefore was not relevant to my review of her book. However I feel it is necessary to show that Helen was very much a part of William's life and that he went to great lengths to legitimise her status. Scott was of course not going to reveal his wife's origins and he gained a secure position and later a partnership and a new house. William, who never married, seems to have protected his child's identity very successfully despite what must have been constant fear of discovery. For me, this otherwise almost saintly character is better understood for knowing he had failings like everyone else.



*The Orchards c1920, courtesy Aylsham Town Archive*

## **1841: A Census Year by Jim Pannell.**

This year, 2021, is census year, as has been every year ending in 1 since 1801, except 1941 due to WW2.

The Romans held censuses (census Latin *censere* ‘to assess’) in order to assess the numbers for future armies, and to determine taxes.

Normans conducted the Domesday survey at the instruction of King William 1 in order to find out what he owned, what others owned, who could fight, and what tax should be paid.

Towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, interest was being shown in population numbers, trends of growth and decline, and other features of the population. This culminated in the 1801 census which asked six questions aimed at determining the size of the national population and trends, living arrangements, and occupations. The census was not well standardised, and many areas were missed or double counted. There was no coordinating body. For the 1841 census, a registrar-general was appointed, and 35,000 enumerators (ref. 1). The process was standardised, and has remained recognisably similar ever since, with additional information collected which was relevant to the time. Each coordinated census could now bear some comparisons with previous census data.

For the 1841 census, Aylsham was divided into three enumeration districts, each allocated an enumeration officer as follows (ref. 2):

District 1 was all that part of the parish which lay to the west of the turnpike road from Ingworth including the west sides of Market Place and Hungate Street to The Swan Inn, the North side of Butland Lane, and the east and west sides of Cawston Road to Cawston Beck, Blickling Road, Petersons Lane, Heydon Road, School Lane, Pinfold Street, Fox’s Loke, Stonegate and Cromer Road.

District 2 was all that part of the parish which lay south of the Swan Inn and Butland Lane to Marsham, Bolwick Hall, the east side of Hungate Street, the Rookery, the south side of Market Place, Bank Street, Norwich Road, Burgh Road, Buxton Road, south side of White Hart Street, Widows’ Row, Unicorn Street, Red Lion Street, the remainder of Market Place, and Spratts Green.

District 3 was all that part of the parish which lay to the east of the road to Banningham comprising Workhouse Street and Millgate Street, as well as

Drabblegate, Dunkirk, Town Lane, Butts Common, and the north side of White Hart Street.

In 1841, the working population of the Aylsham parish (comprising the three enumeration districts as above) was approximately 750. Some of the census records are still quite clear and in splendid copperplate writing. In others, the writing is faded and written in a script which makes it difficult to read. Additionally, there are some occupations which no longer exist. Examples are as follows with numbers employed and explanations in brackets: groom (4), cooper (barrel maker 2), coachmaker (6), charwoman (cleaner 6), hostler (ostler; man who attends to horses 8), harness maker (6), wheelwright (6), drover (man who drives livestock 3), hawkler (itinerant dealer 5), currier (leather worker 3), basket maker (3), dealer (5), glover (1), brazier (brass worker 3), weaver (4), straw bonnet maker (1), boatwright (5), horse breaker (1), coachman (1) (ref. 4).

The Pigott and Co Trade Directory for 1842 (ref. 3) lists 142 traders. This figure is significantly less than the census number employed (c. 750) but only lists some of the traders, and not the broader range of employment. There are two groups of employees whose numbers are remarkable and do not feature as traders. First, agricultural labourers. There are 155 of these spanning the age ranges. They tend to be located in the outlying areas of the parish, though some lived in the poor, cheap accommodation in town such as Beasy Rookery. Second, female servants. There are 117 of these and they are found in the homes of the more affluent. Both labourers and servants would have been low-paid and worked long, hard hours for little reward.

Other significant occupations include: shoemakers (30), tailors (25), carpenters (23), and dressmakers (19). Most trades and professions are represented in Aylsham in 1841 which meant that the town was quite self-reliant, and travel out of town was not generally necessary. For example, there were publicans, drapers, builders, bricklayers, barbers, glazier, plasterer, police officer, clergy, carters, bankers, butchers, and plumbers. Reflecting on this list, there appears to be a dearth of food outlets, although there was a fishmonger, 7 butchers, and 9 bakers. There were also 20 farmers and 10 'gardners' who may have provided food directly. Additionally, many people would have grown their own crops and reared livestock for slaughter.

An interesting 'employment' in the 1841 Aylsham census is 'inmate'. There were 31 people described as 'inmate'. Of the 31 inmates, 7 were in the area described as 'Beasy Rookery' on Hungate Street. The Rookery was an area

of housing divided into small tenements. The low rent was an attraction for some. The inmates may have been those people living off poor relief distributed from the union workhouse, or apprenticed from the workhouse for periods of from one to five years (ref. 5).

Since 1841, occupations to do with transport and local travel have transformed from harness makers, hostlers, wheelwrights, coachmakers, drovers, coachman, carters, and horse breaker to car mechanics, petrol station and garage services, travel agents, airport and flight engineers, and rail employees providing for global travel. What trends will emerge in this 21<sup>st</sup> century as we currently, gratefully, add epidemiologists, virologists, immunologists, and other branches of science to the list?

References:

1. The Official History of Britain....as told by the Office for National Statistics, Starling B. and Bradbury D., Harper Collins, 2020.
2. Office For National Statistics, [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)
3. Aylsham Directories 1794-1937, Eds. Geoff Gale and Tom Mollard, ALHS 2004.
4. National Dictionary, Ed. J.B. Foreman, Collins, 1966.
5. The Poor in Aylsham 1700 to 1836, Ed. J. Eve, ALHS, 1995.

1

City or Borough of \_\_\_\_\_ Enumeration Schedule

Parish or Township of Aylsham

| PLACE       | HOUSES   |               | NAMES<br>of each Person who abode therein<br>the preceding Night. | AGE<br>and<br>SEX |         | PROFESSION, TRADE,<br>EMPLOYMENT,<br>or of<br>INDEPENDENT MEANS. | Where Born        |   |
|-------------|----------|---------------|---|-------------------|---------|--|-------------------|---|
|             | Occupied | Unoccupied    |   | Males             | Females |  | Within the County | Out of the County, but within the Kingdom of Great Britain or Prince of Wales |
| Bromer Road | 1        |               | Edmund Sydes  | 30                |         | Prep   | No                |   |
|             |          |               | William do  |                   | 25      |  | No                |   |
|             |          |               | Samuel Blaind   | 15                |         | W. L   | No                |   |
|             |          |               | Elizabeth Blaind  | 35                | 25      | W  | No                |   |
|             |          |               | Elizabeth Money   | 20                | 25      | W  | No                |   |
|             |          |               | Martha Blanchflower   | 15                | 25      | W  | No                |   |
|             |          |               | Thomas Sydes  | 65                |         | Wagoner  | No                |   |
|             |          |               | James do  | 55                |         |  | No                |   |
|             |          | George do     | 15  |                   |         | No   |                   |   |
|             |          | 1 Sarah Sydes | 45  |                   |         | No   |                   |   |

*The first page of the 1841 Census for Aylsham with details of the Vicar's household*

## **Sir William's Lane: a deliberate misnomer? by Maggie Vaughan-Lewis**

People have often wondered why Sir William's Lane is so-called. Dr Sapwell in his *History of Aylsham* (1960) does not mention the name nor did any earlier historian. In the last few years people have looked around for the nearest 'Sir William' and assumed it must be connected to Sir William Paston (1528-1610) of Oxnead Hall, which being east of Aylsham, lies roughly in the right direction although some miles away. However, the Pastons held no land in Aylsham nor had any role in the town so it seemed a rather loose connection. Now research in the court rolls have shown that there is a much more interesting story to the name - one involving saints, wooden crosses and protestants. This article was first published in *Norfolk Archaeology* in 2017 (Vol 47 Pt 4).

### **ST WILLIAM OF NORWICH: NEW EVIDENCE OF HIS CULT**

*by Maggie and William Vaughan-Lewis*

Much has been written about the story of the boy murdered and supposedly crucified in Thorpe Wood in 1144, especially concerning the religious and political situation in England at the time. Two recent detailed articles in *Norfolk Archaeology* on the iconography of the saint give full bibliographical references. Trevor Nuthall has also looked at the physical and documentary evidence for the cult in Norwich.<sup>1</sup> Apart from the Cathedral records and the Lynn and Norwich guild returns, however, there is little mention of how he was venerated in the wider county. The five surviving rood screens depicting him are well documented but may of course be only a small sample of those originally painted. Now reference to the existence of a cross dedicated to St William has been discovered in Aylsham, in the northeast of the county.

To the east of the town, the road now called Sir William's Lane, connecting Gashouse Hill and Burgh Road, runs across what was open agricultural land and rises up to what was earlier known as Puttock Hill or Overhill, on which a school now stands.<sup>2</sup> It was known that the Aylsham Lancaster manor court rolls routinely referred to the lane as Sir William's from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards.<sup>3</sup>



However in December 1565 a three-acre property was given as abutting 'Saynt Williams Lane' east, a common way west and a highway from the Market Place to Millgate north.<sup>4</sup> This land was probably at the western end of Sir William's Lane at the junction with Gashouse Hill which leads from the market to Millgate. In March 1595 part of this land was described as having 'S' Wyllyams Lane' to the east. Here the word is contracted.<sup>5</sup> At first sight it would appear that a later scribe misread the English contraction as being Sir because by 1622 the name was firmly established as Sir William's Lane.<sup>6</sup> If the Latin for saint had been used, the experienced clerk would have been less likely to have made an error. However, it is equally possible this was a Protestant renaming and as such an interesting occurrence.

Further research has now uncovered a property, half an acre lying in Eston Field, described in April 1548 as abutting northwards on a 'common way leading from Burgh to the Cross of St William'.<sup>7</sup> This shows that at some time there had been a roadside cross dedicated to the saint a little way out of the centre of the town. Court roll entries depended on repetition for identifying small pieces of land so we cannot assume that the cross was still physically there in 1548. The half acre is similarly described in 1546, 1536 and 1522.<sup>8</sup> The 1522 entry relates to John Purry as the holder of the half acre. He also had 3 rods of land which he sold in 1514 which abutted 'super cruce', here unnamed. The descriptor could have been in use far earlier but it is interesting that no reference to the cross has been found in the court roll of 1461-1483.<sup>9</sup>

It is not clear whether the cross sat at the junction of Sir William's Lane with Burgh Road or at the top of the Lane, up the hill. Nicola Whyte, in her detailed discussion of roadside crosses, gives examples both at road junctions and, in more open countryside, at the top of mounds.<sup>10</sup> Here, given the topography of Aylsham and the site of Eston field it seems more likely the cross was at the lower end of the Lane where it meets Burgh Road, the main road out of Aylsham to the east. Nor is it known whether it was made of stone or wood although the lack of any remaining structure would suggest it was a wooden cross.

In the 1930s Cozens-Hardy recorded over a hundred stone crosses in Norfolk of which the majority were either churchyard crosses or boundary markers. The rest were roadside crosses and some of the other examples may have originated as such but later been moved to other locations.<sup>11</sup> He found evidence for some having wooden pre-cursors and, given the lack of natural stone in the county, there would presumably originally have been many more

wooden examples. Most crosses were bequeathed by individuals at death or set up as thanks and often bore the details of the donor. A mechanism for both honouring the dead and praying for a safe journey, some crosses were set on roads which pilgrims followed. The Aylsham example, however, does not fit with Cozen-Hardy's suggestion that roadside crosses usually lay near or between monastic houses. There were no such houses in Aylsham nor was any land in the parish ever held by religious institutions.<sup>12</sup>

What is striking about Cozen-Hardy's inventory and Nicola Whyte's more recent coverage, is that neither source has found a cross recorded as dedicated to a particular saint. Does that make Aylsham's cross exceptional or merely reflect the lack of record for other examples?

Perhaps a clue lies in the inclusion of the saint on rood screens in the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries? William does not appear on Aylsham's own fine rood screen but that in Worstead church, dated to 1512 and bearing a detailed image of William, was only eight miles away to the east.<sup>13</sup> If the cult was having a revival around 1500 - offerings were still being made at the cathedral in 1521 - perhaps travellers were staying in the thriving town of Aylsham before travelling to Worstead.<sup>14</sup> The Burgh Road leads directly to Worstead via Swanton Abbott. A cross on the route out of town would be a helpful direction post to non-locals.

With the decline in saint veneration after the reformation, the cross would presumably have been dismantled or left to fall into decay. Whyte suggests that some features, particularly those important to the local community as part of the way they understood and valued their landscape, may have been retained despite losing their ritual significance.<sup>15</sup> The change of name of the lane from St to Sir may well have also been a deliberate Protestant act, although, through our experience of the inconsistent work of the court clerks, we feel it could have been an accidental mis-transcription which had an acceptable outcome.

How many more Norfolk villages had crosses dedicated to William? This discovery perhaps suggests a brief but important flourishing of his cult in north Norfolk in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.

1 C.A.Bradbury, 'A Norfolk Saint for a Norfolk Man: William of Norwich and Sir James Hobart at Holy Trinity Church in Loddon', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 46/4 (2013); Julian Luxford, 'The Iconography of St William

of Norwich and the Nuremberg Chronicle', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 47/2 (2015); Trevor Nuthall, 'St William's Chapel, Mousehold Heath, Norwich - The Site of Three Chapels', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 47/3 (2016).

2 NRO, NRS 13434, 28B2. Image 152. The court roll covering the reign of Henry VIII roll has been digitised and is available for view at the NRO.

3 It is worth noting that part of the reason for the few early references to this lane derives from what lay on either side of it. To the east was Millgate Field and a large parcel of lands that at an early date became part of what is now Belt Farm and which were not described in detail in court rolls and books. To the west, a large area between the lane and Oakfield Road was once the market fairstead and thus not in the copyhold system at all. To the south was the larger Eston field which covered much of south Aylsham. This reduced the potential for property descriptions using the lane as an abuttal.

4 NRO, NRS 13683. The courts were written in Latin but place names, such as here, were given in English.

5 NRO, NRS 19562, court roll MF/X 68/9.

6 TNA, E 315/360 Aylsham Lancaster manorial survey and later court rolls.

7 NRO, NRS 12131, 27B4 m7, 'abutt' ... sup' co'em viam ducen' a Burgh usque Cruce Sci Willmi' versus borialeml'.

8 NRO, NRS 13434, 28B2.

9 NRO, NRS 19247A, 33F4. The authors have transcribed most of this roll.

10 N. Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape: Place, Custom and Memory, 1500-1800* (2009).

11 B.Cozens-Hardy, 'Norfolk Crosses', NA 25/2 and 25/3 (1934-35). He excluded post-Reformation market crosses.

12 For details of the manorial tenures in Aylsham and of the surviving records see W. & M. Vaughan-Lewis, *Aylsham: A Nest of Norfolk Lawyers*, 2014 and *Hearths and Heaths: Aylsham's Early Modern Landscape*, 2017.

13 See Plate 3, Bradbury, 454.

14 Ben Nilsen, *Cathedral Shrines of Medieval England*, 1998; earlier swings in William's popularity are covered by John R Shinnors, 'The Veneration of Saints at Norwich', *Norfolk Archaeology* 40/2 (1988).

15 Whyte, 32-69. While saint veneration was well covered by Eamon Duffy in *The Stripping of the Altars 1400-1580* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed (2005), little has been written on wayside crosses. Whyte's contribution is a useful addition.

## **Industrial activity in nineteenth century Norfolk a talk by Adrian O'dell**

Adrian O'dell began by reminding us that from late Saxon times until the 17th century Norfolk was the wealthiest, most densely populated and most economically precocious area in England. But it lacked the coal seams that fuelled the Industrial Revolution of the north of England. However, Norfolk still enjoyed its reputation as an agricultural leader and advances in agricultural practice spawned an innovation in implements and machinery.

Adrian's talk concentrated on the nineteenth century industries of six Norfolk towns: Dereham; Diss; Downham Market; Fakenham; North Walsham; and Aylsham, showing how, with a few exceptions, they largely depended on servicing Norfolk's agriculture or processing its products.

He reminded us first of Norfolk's infrastructure: in the early part of the century its network of turnpike roads and improved rivers and canals, and, later in the century, its railways. Norfolk may not have had coal, but it did have abundant supplies of clay for brickmaking although the Carr stone in the west was the only building stone, making nearby Downham Market the 'Gingerbread' town on account of its rusty red colour.

All the six towns grew substantially in the nineteenth century, increasing by 50 to 100% between 1801 and 1851. So it is no surprise that brickmaking features in most of these towns, mostly for local use. North Walsham brickworks supplied one million bricks for the 9 mile North Walsham and Dilham canal opened in 1826.

Malting and brewing figure prominently, processing the barley from Norfolk farms. The greatest success story in malting belongs to Great Ryburgh near Fakenham. Brothers Frederick and George Smith started with two maltings in Dereham. They took advantage of low wheat and barley prices in Norfolk during the agricultural depression which started in the 1870s, but also bought the cheap grain from the USA and Canada which had undercut prices in England. They prospered, and are thriving still as one of the largest maltsters in Europe.

At first sight, the prevalence of iron foundries throughout these Norfolk towns is surprising. Norfolk in the nineteenth century had four times the number of iron founders as Leicestershire with its coalfield. The needs of a modernising agriculture drove much of the demand. For example, in 1879 Elijah Young was in business at the Waveney Ironworks and four other sites

in Diss. They were engineers, iron and brass founders. They manufactured portable steam engines and a wide range of agricultural machines and implements including the ‘Swootman’ plough which became world famous.

Diss was also home to a range of textile brush and matting manufacturers, whose enterprising owners sold their products nationally and internationally. In 1831, a customer of Robert Aldrich the grocer told him, “I can’t find a good brush anywhere in Diss”.



*Filling brushes Diss*

Aldrich decided there and then to do something about that. He industrialised the process. With improved technology and new machinery he streamlined manufacturing, and increasing trading opportunities became available with the arrival of the railway in 1849.

Aldrich imported coconut fibre from West Africa and started weaving floor matting. He became the biggest employer in Diss and one of the largest manufacturers of it in the country.

Turning to Aylsham, in the nineteenth century it did not have the scale of industries described in some of the other towns. Rather it had a wide range of small scale tradesmen catering for the needs of the town and the surrounding farms. The industrial activity which had the greatest physical impact on Aylsham and its neighbouring parishes was the Aylsham navigation. It was also a vital part of the Bure Valley economy for 100 years. It linked Aylsham via Coltishall to Great Yarmouth and the world beyond and proved to be a cheaper and more efficient way to carry bulky goods compared with road transport.

Perhaps many would concur that the county’s lack of mineral resources might have been a saving grace which prevented the despoliation of Norfolk’s landscape in the nineteenth century and further dereliction as other nations usurped Britain’s role as the world’s powerhouse in the twentieth century.

A lucky escape?

Jeremy Worth

## **Ann Jennifer Dyball**

**19 October 1937 – 12 October 2021**

*Edited from the tribute by Rev Julie Boyd at Ann's Memorial Service*



“a woman with great energy and vitality, she was always going somewhere and doing something. A great loss to the town”

“a true renaissance woman with a wide range of talents and passions”

“Knowledgeable, enthusiastic and endlessly kind”

Ann was born in Croydon. Sadly her father died when she was just 2 years old. She lived with her mother and older sister Valerie of whom she was very fond. She attended Croham Hurst School and then went on to study at Reading University where she read classics and gained a ‘first’. Cousin Jean has happy memories of time spent together with their grandparents during Christmas and the summer holidays when they were very young and later as Jean visited Ann with Adrian and Sarah and how they would go and fly a kite on Holkham Sands.

In her working life, Ann initially taught in London and then moved to Norwich and to **Norwich High School for Girls** where she spent many years in charge of classics, both Greek and Latin. She really had a special fondness for the Greek classical studies and enthusiasm for her subject.

Ann was a member of the Workers’ Educational Association and served as secretary for many years. During that time the association grew and offered more courses and more varied courses. Each year Ann organised 2 courses of up to 2 hours a week for 10 weeks. Ann was also a member of the Aylsham Local History Society for many years having joined in 1998. She was co-opted on to the committee for the society in 2004 taking on responsibility for organising the Society’s visits. Over the eleven years that she held this role she arranged 31 visits contributing a good number of articles and reports to the journal.

Many people here will know Ann through her voluntary work at the National Trust second hand book shop at Blickling Hall for many years. Being a classicist, she looked after the Latin and Greek classics section in the

book shop. But she also looked after the gardening section as her knowledge in horticulture was quite considerable.

Ann loved her garden. She would seek and plant the best species she could track down. Her garden and plantings were very important to her and brought her great joy. Jean's daughter Sarah has great memories of Ann with many a discussion about planting plans for gardens, with all the proper names for the plants of course, which Sarah says they needed to ask Ann to write down for them.

There are many stories about how Ann enjoyed travelling both at home and abroad, with a school group, or with friends.

When Ann retired from work in her 60<sup>th</sup> year, she and her cousin Jean spent a fortnight travelling around B&Bs in the Scottish islands enjoying the walking and exploring the area together, making the adjustment to retirement.

There were many occasions when Ann enjoyed holidays with close friend Elizabeth Hunter “with our copy of *The Blue Guide to Greece*, we visited major and minor archaeological sites, and ‘botanised’ in many locations. On one occasion, after a sunny morning studying a specialized plant colony, high on the hillside, we sat down to have our picnic lunch. Around the hill came a young shepherd with his flock of sheep and goats. We were all surprised to see each other! We beckoned to him to come and share our lunch of bread, cheese, olives and oranges. Hesitantly, he came. Ann had a limited vocabulary of modern Greek, but with the help of smiles and gestures, they managed to converse. Ann then quoted to him one or two of the very well-known speeches of classical Greek literature. Our young shepherd was astonished!”



Some of Ann's travelling would be very purposeful and adventurous indeed, once embarking upon 'a mighty drive' to Russia with medical supplies. The journey took several days by land and sea, and included a scary border crossing before they were met by friends, and escorted to Kondopoga near the Arctic Circle. Ann was very worried before she left and felt she might never return. The expedition was however very successful.

For Sarah one of her abiding memories of Ann will be her great way to recount stories of activities she had been involved in. Quite often the story being told would start quite in the middle with all people involved already half way through actions, and then meander through many side routes as more people were added to the ensemble for the story, finally passing back through the opening credits to a fully rounded summary and satisfactory story end. Wonderful!

She loved to cook and was very good at it. However you always had to be patient and never turn up at Ann's place for lunch or supper already hungry.

Ann was endlessly kind, she regularly visited and supported friends locally when they were unwell. It seems that she has always been doing this in some form or another. Just being there.

There are many stories of the difference Ann made to people's lives and her concern for others went beyond friend and neighbour.

Ann used to read newspapers for the blind, the North Norfolk Newspaper 'The Mardler', first as a reader and then later on in copy and dispatch and she was also a long term supporter of the charities Medecin sans Frontieres.

### **Stephen Grellet....**

I shall pass through this world but once

Therefore any kind thing that I can do

Let me do it now

For I will not pass this way again



# **Aylsham Local History Society**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Thursday 7th October 2021 at 7 pm

### **MINUTES**

**Apologies:** Ian & Susan McManus, Maggie Vaughan Lewis, Mike Bush, Marigold Penkett, Lorene Rouse, Michael & Veronica Goodwin, Lesley Cannon, Martin & Carol Sullivan, Vic Morgan, Rosemary Warren and Enid Parry

**Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting** 25.03.2021 were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising. *Proposed: Jeremy Worth, Seconded: Hazel Jones. Approved unanimously*

### **Society Constitution**

The revised Constitution was accepted. *Proposed: Geoff Sadler, Seconded: Jeremy Worth. Approved unanimously*

### **Secretary's Report**

The year of 2020 had started normally with good attendances at:

*The Ups and Downs of Elm Hill. The History of Norwich in One Street* By Victor Morgan; *The story of the women who worked at Narborough aerodrome in the FWW* By Daryl Long; and *The effect of the Norman Conquest on the city and county* By Barbara Miller

We had an enjoyable event in the Town Hall with **Chanter's Jigge**, joining them for a stroll through a 500 year history of street music as heard by pilgrims, pedlars, paupers and princes. Tea and cake went down well - but we proved to be their only performance of that show for the year.

Our summer programme had to be cancelled as did the lectures organised for the autumn, but from January we set up a Zoom programme of lectures usually attended by between 25 to 35 people.

These ranged from Shardlake's Norwich - CJ Sansom's Tombland and Kett's Rebellion by Paul Dixon, who returns this coming autumn to give us the Black History of Norwich. A study of the Buildings of Walsingham by Ian Hinton from the Norfolk Historic Buildings Group, and 'Sugar Rolls, Marchpanes and the Very Best of Ham' with Vic Morgan - chocolate being the required accompaniment.

A fascinating insight into the work being carried out at Norwich Castle entitled 'Gateway to Medieval England' was next by Andrew Ferrara Project Curator at the museum followed by 'Viking Age East Anglia' a talk given by Tim Pestell also from Norwich Museum. We paid him in lieu with the sponsorship of a gold bracelet for the museum - It was found by a metal detectorist in Alby with Thwaite in 2006.

We are hoping that a summer programme will be set up by the New Year - we will keep you posted.

### **Treasurer's Report**

The financial statement, this year, has been prepared using the Income and Expenditure Accounts convention. In the past the Society has used the Receipts and Payments basis. Using the receipts and payments basis, the statement has merely shown a reconciliation of the bank statement at a given point. Accrued costs, items prepaid, and payments received in advance – items accountants call adjustments - were ignored.

The inclusion of adjustments ensures that the statement gives a 'true and fair' of the financial affairs of the Society at an exact point in time. In other words, how much the Society has in funds at the end of the fiscal year.

This alternative method is usually preferred by charities and societies in general as it requires the inclusion of outstanding items at the year end. The method is also preferred by grant makers a fact to be borne in mind if the Society were ever to apply for a grant to fund a special project.

Turning to the contents of the financial statement you will see that because of the pandemic there was not as much financial activity as in a normal year. For instance, there was no activity for events, such as training courses or outings.

You will also notice a drop in the amount of money received in respect of Membership subscriptions. This was mostly due to the 50% reduction in the actual subscription requested for the year. But we should also recognise that under the old accounting system, no adjustment would have been made for subscriptions paid in advance. This year, as you will see from the reconciliation at the bottom of the statement, a lot of Members paid their 2021/2022 subscription before the end of August. These early payments added up to £315 but as a result of the new accounting method have been excluded from the receipts shown on the statement.

In total, so far for the current year, over £1,200 has been received in Membership subscriptions. This compares to the most recent ‘normal’ year when, in 2019, £1,175 was received for the full year, some of which might well have been payments in advance.

It is safe to say that the pandemic has not had a major negative influence on the number of Members in the Society, which is excellent news.

Back to the statement and you will no doubt notice an increase in the value of ‘Sales of Publications’ in the year.

Reflected in the sale’s figure is the true value of the books sold. Whereas, in the past, postage and packing charges and costs were netted off the income for books, this year postage receipts postage costs have been shown separately, both as income and an expense.

During the year just ended, the Society introduced an internet banking facility and, I am pleased to note, that, so far, 55% of the Membership have taken advantage of what I believe is an easier and safer method of payment.

The new facility also provides a better and more efficient system for the payment of expenses, and it allows me to obtain instant updates for the bank account.

I commend the report to you, and in so doing, I suggest that the Society has weathered the pandemic, and presently, has sufficient funds to continue its valuable work going forward.

A vote of thanks was given to Graeme Johnson who audited our present accounts and it was proposed that he should audit next years as well.  
*Proposed: Geoff Sadler Seconded: Gillian Barwick Approved unanimously*

Our new Treasurer also thanked Ros Calvert for the work done in previous years.

### **Report on the Journal**

I would like to begin my brief report by paying tribute to Roger Polhill, who first began editing the Journal in December 2007 at the beginning of Volume 8, and signed off at the end of Volume 11 in December 2020. What an achievement! I would also like to thank him most warmly for all the help he has given me as I have taken up the reins, not only by documenting all the things the editor has to do, but by generously continuing to write articles for the magazine.

I hope you like the move to printing the Journal in colour throughout, not just the cover. Barnwells, who are now printing the Journal, generously eased the transition by sponsoring the first issue of Volume 12 with its main article on the history of the Barnwells shop in the Market Place. That said, most of the contents of the forthcoming issue do not lend themselves to colour so I hope you will bear with me.

Now, a question for you. Would you be prepared to share some of your experiences for a description next year in the Journal of what Aylsham was like during lockdown? If this sounds familiar, I wrote about it in the preamble to the April Journal issue. Email me, or have a word with me during the coffee break.

### **Report on Membership**

To date number of members is 154 which includes 6 life members and 4 prize winners.

11 have not renewed for various reasons, however one of those standing down sent a donation towards our work which is very kind.

### **Election of Officers and Committee members**

It was agreed that the present committee should continue for another year.  
*Proposed Geoff Sadler Seconded Daphne Davy. Approved unanimously*

Chair Geoff Sadler, Vice Chair Roger Polhill, Journal Jeremy Worth,  
Secretary Sue Sharpe, Membership Secretary: Hazel Jones

### **Committee Members:**

Roger Crouch, Rosemary Powel, Victor Morgan

Caroline Driscoll stood down from the committee at the last AGM and we thank her for the work she did organising trips for us. Ruth Harrison has also laid down being Minuting Secretary, which leaves a space on the present committee.

### **Honorary Members**

Lord & Lady Walpole have been staunch supporters of the Society in previous years and it was proposed and accepted that Lady Walpole should be offered an Honorary membership in light of this.

*Proposed: Geoff Sadler Seconded Roger Polhill. Approved unanimously*

# Aylsham Local History Society

## Receipts and Payments 31 August 2020

| Year to<br>31st<br>August<br>2019 | <b>Receipts</b>                   | Year to<br><b>31st<br/>August<br/>2020</b> | Year to<br>31st August<br>2019 | <b>Payments</b>                    | Year to<br>31st<br>August<br>2020 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1,085                             | Members' Subscriptions            | 1,185                                      | 400                            | Course                             | -                                 |
| 42                                | Visitors                          | 39   | 170                            | Programme - Lecture Fees           | 380                               |
| 510                               | Summer Course                     | 1,550                                      | 50                             | Travel costs & Expenses            | -                                 |
|                                   |                                   |  |                                | Summer Course - refunds            | 1,550                             |
|                                   | <b><u>Visits &amp; Social</u></b> |  |                                | <b><u>Visits &amp; Social</u></b>  |                                   |
| 1,010                             | Chanters Jigge                    | 240  | 1,147                          | Chanters Jigge                     | 200                               |
| 500                               | Cliftonville                      | 667  | 500                            | Cliftonville                       | 667                               |
| 665                               | Elm Hill (Britton's Arms)         |  | 665                            | Elm Hill (Briton's Arms)           | 15                                |
| 3,398                             | Sales of Publications             | 434  | 8,154                          | Publications (books &<br>Journals) | 569                               |
| 2,605                             | Donations (for publications)      | -  |                                | Membership Cards & Fliers          | 161                               |
| 52                                | Admin & Postage                   | 3  | 461                            | Stationery & Postage               | 161                               |
| 86                                | Refreshments                      | 60   | 177                            | Hire of Halls                      | 235                               |
|                                   | Misc                              |  | 95                             | Professional Subscriptions         | 95                                |
| 2                                 | Bank Interest (Savings A/c)       | 2  |                                | <b>Donations Out</b>               |                                   |
|                                   |                                   |  | 150                            | AHS Prize and Trophy               | 100                               |
| <b>9,955</b>                      |                                   | <b>4,180</b>                               | 11,969                         |                                    | <b>4,133</b>                      |
| 2,014                             |                                   |  |                                | Excess receipts over payments      | 47                                |
| <b>11,969</b>                     |                                   | <b>4,180</b>                               | 11,969                         |                                    | <b>4,180</b>                      |

### Reconciliation

|                               |               |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Bank Balances B/Fwd           |               |
| Current A/c                   | 4,601         |
| Deposit A/c                   | 1,091         |
| Cash Balance B/Fwd            | 15            |
| Excess Receipts over Payments | 47            |
|                               | <u>£5,754</u> |

### Represented by

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Bank Balances C/Fwd |               |
| Current A/c         | 4,606         |
| Deposit A/c         | 1,093         |
| Cash Balance C/Fwd  | 55            |
|                     | <u>£5,754</u> |

The accounting records and supporting documents of the Aylsham Local History Society for the year ended 31 August 2020 are found to be correct and in accordance with the above statement.

Graeme Johnston (Accountant)

Dated: 6th October 2021

## Aylsham Local History Society

### INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st August 2021

| <u>Income</u>                         | Current year<br>to<br>31st August<br>2021 | Previous<br>year to<br>31st<br>August<br>2020 | <u>Expenditure</u>                            | Current year<br>to<br>31st August<br>2021 | Previous<br>year to<br>31st<br>August<br>2020 |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
|                                       | £   | £   |   | £   | £   |
| <u>Members &amp; Visitors</u>         |   |   | <u>Members &amp; Visitors - meeting costs</u> |   |   |
| Members' Subscriptions                | 585                                       | 1,185   | Programme - Lecture Fees                      | 240                                       | 380   |
| Visitors & Donations received         | -   | 39  | Travel costs & Expenses                       | -   | -   |
| Refreshments                          | 43  | 60  | Hire of Halls                                 | -   | 235   |
|                                       |   |   | Refreshments at meetings                      | 26  |   |
| <u>Publications</u>                   |   |   | <u>Publications</u>                           |   |   |
| Sales of Publications                 | 749                                       | 434   | Publications (Books & Journals)               | 1,134                                     | 569   |
| Publication sales - Postage recovered | 80  |   | Publications - cost of sales P&P              | 131                                       |   |
|                                       |   |   | Membership Cards                              | 245                                       | 161   |
| <u>Visits &amp; Social</u>            |   |   | <u>Visits &amp; Social</u>                    |   |   |
| Chanters Jigge                        | -   | 240   | Chanters Jigge                                | -   | 200   |
| Cliftonville                          | -   | 667   | Cliftonville - Refunds due to cancellation    | -   | 667   |
|                                       |   |   | Payment for cancelled meal                    | -   | 15  |
| <u>Courses</u>                        |   |   | <u>Courses</u>                                |   |   |
| Summer Course receipts                | -   | 1,550   | Summer Course - refunds                       | -   | 1,550   |
| <u>Administration</u>                 |   |   | <u>Administration</u>                         |   |   |
| Admin & Postage                       | -   | 3   | Stationery & Postage                          | -   | 161   |
| Bank Interest (Savings A/c)           | -   | 2   | Professional Subs/Insurance                   | 75  | 95  |
|                                       |   |   | Web Hosting etc                               | 98  | -   |
|                                       |   |   | <u>Donations Out</u>                          |   |   |
|                                       |   |   | AHS Prize and Trophy                          | -   | 100   |
| <u>Total Income</u>                   | <u>1,456</u>                              | <u>4,180</u>                                  | <u>Total Expenditure</u>                      | <u>1,950</u>                              | <u>4,133</u>                                  |
| <b>Excess expenditure over income</b> | <b>493</b>                                |   | Excess income over expenditure (2019/2020)    |   | 47  |
| <b>TOTALS</b>                         | <b><u>1,950</u></b>                       | <b><u>4,180</u></b>                           | <b>TOTALS</b>                                 | <b><u>1,950</u></b>                       | <b><u>4,180</u></b>                           |

Details above and below reconcile to the bank statement dated 31st August 2021

#### Reconciliation

##### Balances b/f at 1st September 2020

|                                    |       |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Bank - Current A/c                 | 4,606 |
| Bank - Deposit A/c                 | 1,093 |
| Cash in Hand b/fwd                 | 54    |
| Movement in year to date - Deficit | (493) |

TOTAL FUNDS b/fwd £5,260

#### Represented by

##### Balances c/f at 31st August 2021

|                    |       |
|--------------------|-------|
| Bank - Current A/c | 4,417 |
| Bank - Deposit A/c | 1,093 |
| Cash in Hand c/fwd | -     |

|                            |       |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Membership fees in advance | (325) |
| Debtors                    | 220   |
| Creditor                   | (145) |

TOTAL FUNDS c/fwd £5,260

The accounting records and supporting documents of the Aylsham Local History Society for the year ended 31 August 2021 were found to be correct and in accordance with the above statement.

Gordon W Evans (Treasurer) & Graeme Johnston (Accountant)

Dated: 6th October 2021

Back Cover

*2020/21 Now and Then exhibition at the Heritage Centre*

*Picture: Jayne Andrews*

