

Aylsham Local History Society



AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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DIARY DATE

"Behind the scenes at the Castle Museum"

A visit has been arranged to see what sort of things
go on at the Castle Museum, Norwich
to produce the many and varied activities
in which the Norfolk Museums Service
is involved.

The emphasis will be on the historical and archaeological
work of the museum.

DATE

Monday 5th. April

TIME

7.30 pm

Meet just before 7.30pm outside the museum entrance on the top
of the Castle Mound. There will be parking space available, and
members can make their own travel arrangements. Numbers will be
strictly limited, so it is essential to let Tom Mollard know in
advance if you wish to attend. [Cromer 761638]

COVER PICTURE

Aylsham Methodist Church in White Lion Street. This picture was
drawn by Ivan Morris in 1989.



AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

JOURNAL & NEWSLETTER

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AYLSHAM METHODIST CHURCH

In volume 2 of our Journal (pp.247-251), we published a short history of the Aylsham Baptist Church, compiled by H.F. Proudfoot in 1894. This was a useful, if brief insight into the Baptist Church which has flourished in the town since the 1790s.

Another denomination with an equally long history in Aylsham, is the Methodist Church. The history of Methodism in Aylsham, like that of the Baptists, is an essential part of the history of Aylsham itself, as members of both churches have had an influence on the forming of the town's history. After recording the history of the Baptists, it is appropriate that we should record the history of the Methodists, particularly as last year was the celebration of the 150th. anniversary of the present church building in White Hart Street.

The following notes are from "The short History of the Methodist buildings in Aylsham" written by B.L. Phillips in 1980 to coincide with the opening of the New Meeting Rooms made from the cottages attached to the chapel. I am grateful to Barry Phillips for his permission to use his history, which forms the basis of this article.

EARLY DAYS OF WESLEYAN METHODISM IN AYLSHAM

The earliest record of Methodism in Aylsham is contained in a licence granted to a farmer named Richard Jex, who licensed a school room - "formerly a combing shop" as a preaching place. This was on 20th. June 1789. The property belonged to William Rackham, and was hired to Richard Jex.

A new building was, however, rising at that time, and a new licence for the newly erected Methodist Chapel was granted very soon afterwards on October 8th. 1789, on an application from the Reverend Thomas Tattershall of Norwich. It is recorded that in later years this building was sold to the Baptists, and it is believed to be their present church building. Thomas Tattershall was a close travelling companion of John Wesley, as he rode on horseback through his 'parish' in this part of the world. They are recorded as travelling together during 1790, leaving King's Lynn on 20th. October and journeying via Stoke Ferry and Thetford to Diss. Wesley was then aged 89 years.

There is no record that John Wesley ever made visits to North Walsham, Holt or Aylsham, although it would seem from his Journals that he tried to visit each area of the country about every two years. Wesley first visited Norwich in 1754 and is known to have been at Fakenham and Wells in 1781 and Sheringham in 1783. His last visit to Norfolk was in 1790 and after an estimated 250,000 miles, preaching 52,400 sermons, he died on 2nd. March 1791. The spread of Methodism following John Wesley's evangelising work resulted in both progressive activity and stormy periods of strife. At Holt in July 1783, a "mob raised a riot on account of the Methodist Meeting" and some of the rioters were taken into custody.

Very little information is available on the history of local Methodism from 1790 until 1837, but we know that, by that time, there were both Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist Chapels existing in Aylsham. Between these dates, the local Methodist Societies would have been firmly established and gaining in strength. The first generation of Methodists would have been establishing a firm tradition to take root in the town. Amongst the second generation

of local Methodists, was a strong group of visionaries from all walks of life. The Leaders and Stewards at that time were J.Haddon, a glover; James Ones, a labourer; William Rust, a cordwainer and William Wilson, yeoman. They were described as "of the Society of Protestants of the late John Wesley's connection in Aylsham". We know, too, that by the year 1840, William Hall, a labourer was looking for land on which to build a new chapel and other associated buildings.

THE CHURCH IN WHITE HART STREET



In May 1838 a piece of land in White Hart Street was sold to a local ironmonger named William Barnard Cook for the sum of £295. The area comprised one rood and six perches. This land was to the west of William Cook's existing property, and within two years he had sold part of it, for the sum of £105, to William Hall. It would seem that William Cook had obtained the property for a short time, for the benefit of protecting his boundary, as a condition of the sale to William Hall was that the purchaser would build a six foot boundary wall, so that the vendor would be able to "nail his fruit trees on the east side". The northern boundary to the property was White Hart Street itself, and to the west it was property owned by Robert Harvey and Rev. George Coleby. This would be the building now known as the Old Baptist Manse. The transaction was legally presented at the Manor Court in April 1842.

Having completed the purchase, William Hall set about the building of a chapel and two adjoining cottages, and this was carried out by a local builder named Robert Bowers. By this time William Hall is described as a 'carter'. A number of chalked inscriptions can still be seen on the rafters in the roof which covers both the chapel and the cottages - a workman signed his work, "W. Spink Aylsham 1842", and a boy, "William Tomlin, September 8-11 1842, aged 14, carpenter" left his mark for posterity.

On 8th. February 1844, the first appointment of Chapel Trustees was made. The following twelve men undertook as their first duty to take a 20 year lease of the Chapel building from William Hall at the sum of £17-10-0 a year:-

1844 TRUSTEES

William Butler	- Blacksmith	William Rust	- Cordwainer
David Evans	- Currier	James Sands	- Butcher
James Haddon	- Glover	John Skidmore	- Schoolmaster
James Kidd	- Painter	John Ward	- Farmer
James Ones	- Labourer	John Wilson	- Cordwainer
George Roe	- Yeoman	William Wilson	- Yeoman

Before the Chapel could be sold to the Trustees by William Hall and his wife, Lydia, a part release had to be granted from a previous mortgage when the title was held as security against a loan of £150 lent by Henry Peel of Erpingham (a brewer) to William and Lydia. In the meantime a small plot of ground (ten perches) was surrendered to the Particular Baptists at the southern end of the property in April 1849. William Hall died in 1866. Before he died, therefore, he had purchased the land, built the Chapel and the cottages, raised funds by mortgaging all his property, sold the chapel to the Methodist Trustees, and a plot of ground to the Baptists, but he was still in the possession of the two cottages. These were to pass through various hands before eventually being re-purchased by the Methodist Church.

The Methodist Chapel Trustees were reformed in 1858, with only one of the original 1844 Trustees remaining; this was James Ones

whose name in the new Trustees' document of appointment is now spelt as 'Wones'. The other eleven Trustees were:-

George Day	
John Fox	
Richard Frankland	[gravestone dated 1836-1894]
William French	
John March	[gravestone dated 1828-1894]
John Robert Moore	
James Thomas Neech	
John Neech	
Horatio Ranson	
William Christmas Rivett	
Samuel Smith	[gravestone dated 1800-1867]

The two daughters of William Hall are recorded in his will as Elizabeth Watson and Mary March, and it is possible that Mary married either John March or his son. Amongst the 1844 Trustees all but two were from Aylsham, but by 1858 only five were from Aylsham and the remainder were from the surrounding area, such as North Walsham, Brampton, Cromer, Gimingham, Felmingham and Northrepps.

At this time, the Chapel itself looked quite different to what we see today. There was a domed ceiling, a gallery across the rear and no outside porch. The renovation to its present appearance took place in 1910. It is not known who occupied the two cottages at the time of William Hall's death, but the income from the two cottages was left by him in his will to his two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth. His only son, Edward was executor with the task of settling outstanding debts which were due from the estate. After suitable alternative arrangements had been made, it became possible to sell the cottages, and pay off the outstanding debt of £100 which was still due to the widow of Henry Peel of Erpingham. The cottages were sold at auction to J.E. Coleby in August 1866 for £220. The cottages came back on the market again in 1883, and by this time the Trustees were able to buy them back, for the express purpose of - "enlarging the site of the Aylsham Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, and for other purposes".

In December 1891 new property Trustees were appointed. These were:-

John Bugden (Farmer - Suffield)
Henry Coe (Decorator)
Stephen Westney Faircloth (Miller)
Richard Howard (Grain & Coal Porter)
Stephen Hubbard (Plumber and Glazier)
Robert Lovelace (Grocer)
John March
Thomas Miller (Bootmaker)
James Walter (Postmaster)
Elijah Wright (Boatbuilder)

The chairman of the Trustees was the Rev. George Killick Osborn, the North Walsham Superintendent. Richard Howard was to remain a Trustee for the next 54 years, and John March was the only Trustee left from those appointed back in 1858.

The first task of these Trustees was to provide a new schoolroom at the rear. A committee to arrange this was formed with Elijah Wright as Treasurer and L. Lowe as secretary. Their brief was to "erect a schoolroom, starting five feet from the Chapel, measuring 20 x 25 feet, with large windows on all sides, and access through the pathway beneath the cottages". The committee was appointed in May 1895, and before the end of the same year, a builder had been appointed [Mr.F.Culley] a contract agreed [£142] and the work completed so that the official opening of the new schoolroom was able to take place on 30th. December 1895. To meet the full cost of the building, the Trustees personally made individual loans, all these were paid back exactly one year later. So the school which eventually became the basis of the present Church Hall and facilities, was financed by the efforts of the Trustees and the support of those whose names appear on the foundation stones.

The opening ceremony of the schoolroom is fully recorded in the 'Wesleyan Methodist Monthly Messenger' produced by the North Walsham and Cromer Circuit, which reported that the new building

was intended to be "a memorial to our late dear brethren, Mr. John March and our young friend and preacher, Christian Willie Austin". Records of that time tell that the Aylsham church activities included meetings with "over 70 persons sitting down to tea often followed by addresses by visiting preachers lasting for fully an hour".

During 1909 plans were considered for the complete overhaul and refurbishment of the Chapel. The detailed layout of the Chapel during the previous 68 years is not known, but no doubt the seating was on benches, probably backless, and there was an extensive balcony across the rear. There was no entrance porch, and the window headings were square. The centre of the ceiling had been domed and lighting would have been by oil lamps and candles. The new plans, drawn up by the Norwich architect, A.F. Scott, provided for a new porch to be built and the windows to have rounded heads, with the dome of the ceiling being closed in. There was to be a complete new floor and pews installed "as in Cromer Church" and, with the removal of the balcony, a picture rail and match-boarding to be affixed to the walls. The aisles would be laid with cork lino and gas lighting installed in both the Chapel and the schoolroom. The contract for all this work was awarded to the builder J.H. Tuddenham in July 1910. To complete the refurbishment, a new pitch-pine Communion Table was ordered, and the central feature was to be a new rostrum and seat. The front panel of the new pulpit shows a carving based on the famous picture by Holman Hunt "The Light of the World" - this was carved by Mr. Bewick.

The layout of the Chapel and schoolroom remained unaltered for 65 years, until the scheme to add the large multi-purpose Hall was undertaken in 1975. This extension was based on the 1895 schoolroom into which new kitchen and toilet facilities were added. The original two tenements, built at the same time as the Chapel, became vacant in 1980, and being declared unfit for habitation, were then fully reconditioned and modernised as a suite of rooms to be used for a variety of purposes, thereby completing a complex suitable as a community centre. The former gardens were re-laid to a large lawned area with cultivated flower beds, and thus the 150 year old buildings arrived at the state in which we know them today.

This very brief survey, based mostly on the research carried out by Barry Phillips, tells us of the evolution of the bricks and mortar and a little about the people who inspired and carried out the various changes that have taken place over the years. It would take a separate study to do justice to the spiritual and social impact that the Methodist church has made to a town like Aylsham over the last two hundred years. It is clear that that impact was felt when we read in Frederick Starling's memoirs how, on Oakapple Day, 29th. May:-

"if the 29th. happened to fall on a Monday, so much the better, as on the Sunday, the Primitive Methodists held their open-air camp meeting on the Buttlands, and there you would find shaking of hands between visitors and their relatives, and those from the outlying parishes. There used to be scores come to this meeting from the parishes, so indeed our town, at this time, was full of visitors. The Camp Meeting was held in a circle, some sitting and some standing, and sometimes there would be for the preacher, a small elevation from the ground"

Starling was describing scenes which he had witnessed for himself in Aylsham in the 1870s. The various strands of Methodism; The Wesleyan, Primitive and United preserved their own identities, and followed their own paths until 1932 when the Act of Union wove these separate strands into a single united church. In Aylsham this led to the eventual closure of the Primitive Methodist Church in Millgate and a strengthening of the White Hart Street Society.

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THE COTTAGE HOSPITAL

Tom Mollard

The idea of a Cottage Hospital for Aylsham arose in conversations between Dr. A. C. Holman and Mr. Sears. They both felt that a Cottage Hospital would be a more fitting War Memorial for Aylsham than a barren, nettle covered stone monument. In July 1944, at a public meeting in Aylsham Town Hall, Dr. Holman put forward the proposal that there should be a War Memorial Cottage Hospital, and that a fund should be set up towards the building of it. At that time Dr. Holman was also Chairman of the Parish Council.

The idea was well received, and a start was made to raise funds for the project. Collections made in Aylsham and the surrounding villages very soon raised the sum of £2,791. Shortly afterwards, when the National Health Service came into existence, in 1948, other monies were added to the fund. These came from:-

Aylsham & District Ambulance Fund	£1,278
Aylsham Nurses Fund Committee	£29
Aylsham Welfare Committee	£518

These organisations had all been wound up following the creation of the new Health Service, and their remaining funds were given to the Cottage Hospital Appeal. Despite the considerable funds already raised, it was a matter of some concern that running and maintenance costs would present a formidable problem for the organisers. The problem was put to the East Anglian Regional Hospital Board. The Board generously agreed to accept responsibility for the running costs, and also agreed to allow a wing of St. Michael's Hospital to be converted into a Cottage Hospital.

Work started in 1954, converting a single storey wing of St. Michael's Hospital (formerly the Union Workhouse) into the new memorial hospital. At that time, this particular wing was being used to accommodate mentally defective children. Work commenced

after these children had been transferred to Little Plumstead Hospital. The architects for the project were Messrs. J.Owen Bond of Norwich, and the builder was J.W. Palmer of Aylsham. The work of converting the old premises into a new 11 bed cottage hospital progressed well, and the Opening Ceremony was performed on Wednesday, 16th. May 1956. The newspapers of the time reported that:- "an eleven bed hospital has been created as a living War Memorial".

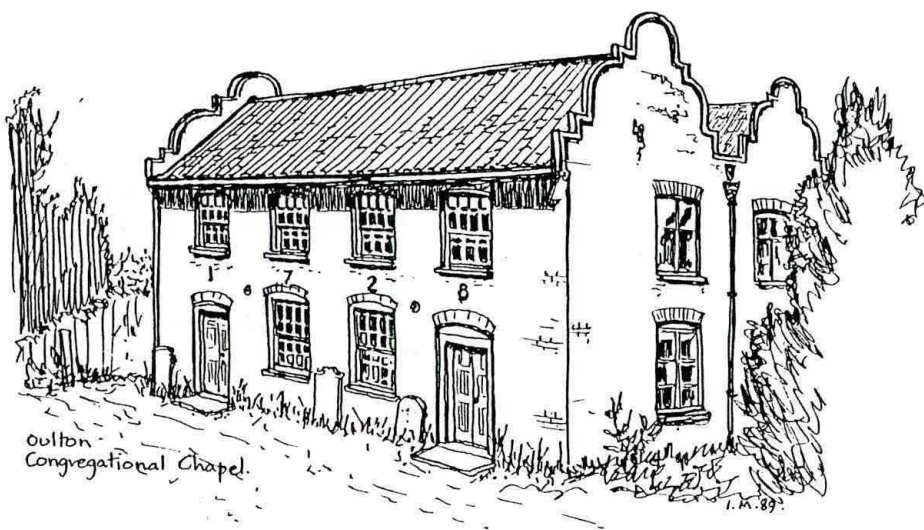
The Opening Ceremony was, very fittingly, carried out by Dr. Holman who had done so much to ensure its existence. The hospital was dedicated by Canon A. Marsham, the hospital chaplain. A vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. J. D. Youngman, Chairman of St. Michael's Hospital House Committee, and this was seconded by Dr. J.I. Sapwell, who was Chairman of the Aylsham Parish Council. After the ceremony, guests were invited to inspect the new hospital.

The aims of the founders of the new hospital were that it would make it possible for General Practitioners to treat their own patients under hospital conditions in instances where the facilities and specialist services of a General Hospital were not needed. The new hospital would also be a place where patients could get well after treatment at a parent hospital, and to where they could go when they were ill, but not seriously enough to need specialist treatment and had no facilities at home.

The townsfolk of Aylsham regarded the welfare of the new Cottage Hospital as part of their responsibility; the Aylsham Flower Club, for instance, undertook to provide flowers weekly for the new hospital.

A commemorative album of photographs and newspaper accounts of the opening ceremony was compiled at the time. The key which Dr. Holman used to open the hospital was preserved and presented to Dr. Holman in an elegant wooden box together with the inscription that it was presented by the Chairman and Members of the Cromer Area Hospital Management Committee.

The key and the album are both carefully preserved in the Aylsham Parish Archives.



OULTON CHAPEL

Jill Fletcher

In the December 1989 Journal (Vol. 2 No. 8) there was an article on the NARG Non-Conformist Chapel Survey of Norfolk, with particular reference to Oulton Congregational Chapel, with illustrations by Ivan Morris, and which I helped to survey with Ted Hicks.

I am now able to give you an up-date on the restoration of this very fine chapel. In 1984 some emergency repairs were carried out by the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches who had bought the chapel from the Congregational Union. The Norfolk Historical Buildings Trust purchased the chapel in June 1989, plus the manse and coach-house. Restoration work started fairly soon after, and was finished a year later. The builders were G.F. Atthowe of Norwich who worked under the supervision of architect Colin Jeffries. The total cost was in the region of £120,000.

The inside of the chapel has been painted in its original colours - white walls with the dado and gallery in pale green and

light beige pillars. There are two brass chandeliers and brass wall lights. The original pews have all been rescued, polished and put back in place. The old stove is still there, but they have brought the flue inside to give more warmth. The Vestry at the back, which was used as a schoolroom at one time, has been converted into a small flat with study/bedroom, kitchen, shower and two toilets. This is available for hire, along with the chapel with modest charges of £10 for a half-day and £20 a whole day. Prince Charles visited the chapel in 1991.

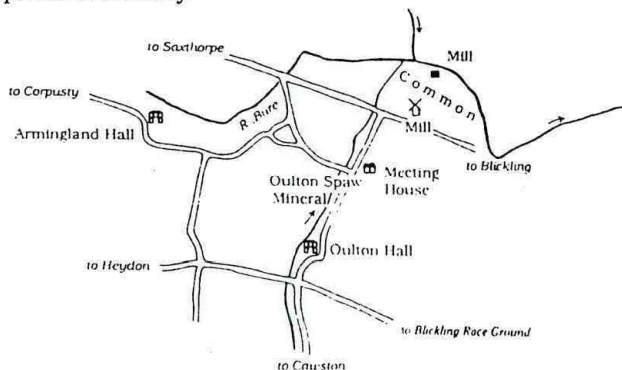
Work is now going on to restore the coach house, and Mr. & Mrs. Cutting in the manse have the key to the chapel for anyone wishing to visit it. A history of the chapel, from research by Mary Manning reads as follows:-

Charles Fleetwood c. 1618-1692, a fanatical dissenter, became Major-General over the Eastern Counties in 1657 and Commander-in-Chief in 1659, during the Commonwealth. He was a trusted and loyal general of Oliver Cromwell. He married, first, Frances Smith of Winston Hall, now part of Gillingham, near Beccles. She was an heiress, whose family owned Irmingland Hall, near Oulton. He then married Bridget, Cromwell's eldest daughter, in 1651. The Fleetwoods maintained a dissenting chapel at Irmingland Hall.

A pastor at Irmingland Hall hoped to be appointed to Guestwick Chapel (established 1694). He was the Rev. Abraham Coveney who was married to Mary Fleetwood, the grand-daughter of Charles, whose father, Smith Fleetwood had inherited Irmingland Hall. Piqued by failure to secure the appointment to Guestwick, Coveney moved the Irmingland chapel to Oulton and set about building a chapel there, which seems to have been completed by 1728 and was officially opened in 1731. The manse was completed before 1784.

This is the chapel the Trust has restored. The design is typical of Congregational chapels, with its timber pews, gallery with two staircases built over cupboards, hanging lights, raised pulpit and with small graveyard outside.

Research is continuing, but visitors may be interested to know that a small spa existed near the chapel by 1797. This was called the 'Spaw', the lane from Irmingland to Oulton being called Spaw Road, the pronunciation being preserved locally.



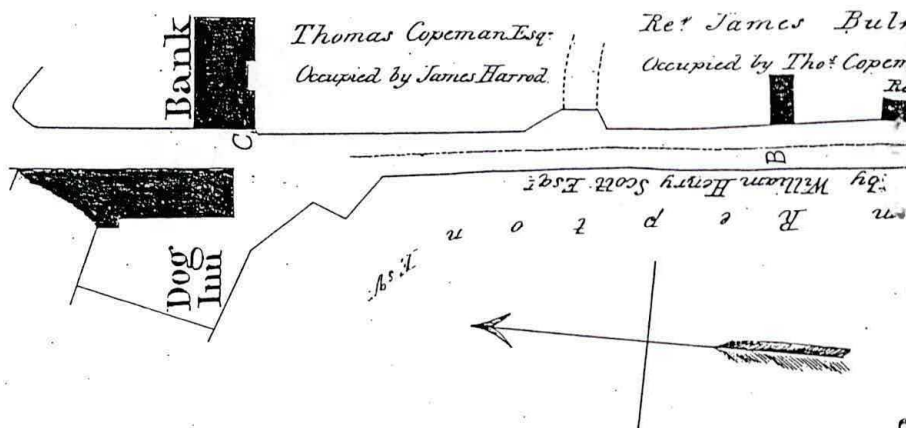
Sketch map from Faden 1797

CONSIDER YOUR VERDICT!

Valerie Belton

In the Norfolk and Norwich Gazette of March 19th. 1853, there is a report of an action for damages heard at the Norfolk Lent Assizes before Lord Chief Justice Campbell. The plaintiff was William Elvin, a corn miller from Marsham. The defendant, John Chapman, was the innkeeper of the Red Lion, and he was also a butcher, farmer and proprietor of the "Prince of Wales", a coach which ran every Saturday from Aylsham to Norwich and back.

The action arose out of a collision, which occurred about 6.30pm on February 7th. 1852, between Elvin's horse drawn cart and the two-horse coach, "Prince of Wales", driven by Robert, John Chapman's son. Elvin was going home to Marsham, and the coach was returning to Aylsham from Norwich, having left the city about five o'clock. It was getting very dark, and Chapman had no lamps. Perhaps he thought he did not need them, as the Aylsham Gas Company had been established in 1850, and there were three lamps, already lit, on the section of the road where the accident occurred. The positioning of one of these lamps became a major part of the defendant's case.



There are in the Aylsham Archives, documents which set out Chapman's defence, together with comments on the plaintiff's grounds for complaint. One is the rough draft of the solicitor's brief to the defending barrister, Mr. Prendergast Q.C. Included is a plan of the scene of the accident, together with background information.

"The town of Aylsham is lit with gas, and there were at that time three lamps on the Turnpike road from the town towards Norwich, two of which were on the near or left side on going towards Aylsham and one on the off or right side - the positions in which they were placed are marked respectively **A B C** on the plan. It will be seen that the lamp at **A** was so placed as to be directly facing any person coming along the road from Norwich, and was exceedingly annoying as it dazzled any person driving from Norwich so that if it was very dark it was some time before he could distinguish objects after passing it. This lamp was much complained of by coachmen and others passing along the

could drive. The coach was on its wrong side. I called out, and the driver on coming up struck my cart; it was less than a quarter of a minute. I did not see a lamp beyond the coach. The coach had no lamps. I was thrown into the roadway and became insensible. I was taken to Mr. Symond's, a chemist, and attended to. I borrowed another cart and went home. I was hurt on the left side; the shoulder, the hip and the leg. Was confined to my bed a fortnight, and to the house six or eight weeks. I have not recovered of my lameness; am obliged to ride after my business. Cannot walk to church. Dr. Copeman prescribed for me from February to May. Wrote a letter to the defendant after the accident. . . asking for compensation in damages. Defendant's son called the following day; asked how I was. I went a fortnight after to the defendant's house at Aylsham; saw the defendant, and asked for damages. He said he should not give any, only pay for the cart. I said I should take legal proceedings. The cart cost £1 to repair. Medical bill about £2. My business by being neglected has become smaller. It is a loss to me of from £40 - £50. I suffered a great deal of pain, and do still."

In cross-examination, sixty three year old Elvin admitted that "he was formerly troubled with rheumatism, but not lately." He knew Mr. Bulwer's stable and the gate to his lawn, which was about the spot where the accident took place,

"I was 150 yards from the coach before it struck me. I called out when the coach was 30 yards distant. Mr. Chapman, when I called upon him, did not say that it was not his son's fault. He did not say it was more my fault than his son's."

The plaintiff called two witnesses. One was James Charles Boulton, a Yarmouth pilot, who was with Elvin when the accident happened. He said that the cart was on the correct side,

"near to the wall, perhaps 7-8ft. from it. The coach appeared to be just in the turn to the other side when it struck us. The coach pulled up and the defendant's son came round and said something about the lamp being in the wrong place."

The other witness for Elvin was William Spink, a boatman living in Aylsham,

"On the 7th. February, 1852, I was going home. The coach overtook me, and I got on the step to ride. I heard someone call out as we were coming into Aylsham. The coach ran against a cart, which turned out to be the defendant's*. I jumped down and found Mr. Elvin on the ground. The cart was close to the wall when the person called out; the coach was on the same side of the road as the plaintiff. The road where the accident happened is between 18 and 19 feet wide."

Mr. Prendergast, defending John Chapman, said that the accident was not the fault of his client,

The unfortunate position of a particular lamp in the road was the main cause of the accident."

He described the section of the road involved, and said that the coach was on the right [correct] side. Robert Chapman gave evidence. He had driven the coach for 10 years,

"There is a wind in the road before you get to the lamp; the lamp appears to be quite before you, and the glare of it dazzles you so much you cannot see anything. I saw no object on the road; I was driving from 7 - 8 miles an hour; the road towards the lamp is downhill. When I was opposite Mr. Bulwer's stable I was on the right side of the road. I heard no one call out till the moment the accident occurred. I pulled up immediately; the splinter bar of the coach caught the wheel of the plaintiff's cart. My coach, when I got down, was only about 2 feet from the bank on the near side."

In cross-examination, Chapman said the night was dark, but not dark enough for lamps. The street lamp had been in position

* He must mean the plaintiff's !

for 12 months. He was,

"not conversing with the person on the box about the lamp after we had passed it. Previous to reaching the lamp I had complained of it. The back of the cart was about two feet from the wall when he came up [presumably after the crash]. He had visited the plaintiff, who asked for £20 in settlement."

There were three witnesses for the defence. Daniel Spurrell was on the box of the coach when the accident happened. He thought it was travelling about 9 miles an hour "a moderate pace". He did not hear anyone call out. The glare of the lamp prevented seeing anything on the road. "The coach was somewhere about the middle of the road." Thomas Gotterson was on the forepart of the coach, which was on the proper side of the road. He neither heard nor saw anything. Richard Hook, a farmer from Crownthorpe, said he thought the coach was being driven at about 9 miles per hour, and he also heard and saw nothing. The coach was on the proper side of the road - "I think quite on the proper side of the road."

The judge in his summing up, commended the way in which "the evidence has been given with great forbearance on both sides." Had he known what had been going on before the trial he might not have been so complimentary. Tempers had obviously cooled during the interval between accident and trial.

We are told in the Aylsham documents, collected for the defence, that immediately after the collision, Elvin got up from the road saying, "I'll make Chapman pay for this", to which Gotterson, one of the travellers on the coach, is alleged to have replied. "Dear me, Mr. Elvin, it was no fault of Mr. Chapman's. See what a space there is between the coach and the cart." Elvin then walked into the town, and went home in a cart, "it being so dark that a person led the horse down the Norwich Road and had to call out two or three times to warn others whom they met."

After this, it is surprising to find that Elvin made no application to the defendant until May 11th. when he sent a note

requiring compensation. Robert Chapman went to see him with the witness, Spurrell,

"and amongst other things asked him if he had seen a surgeon. Plaintiff said, no - I know my complaint and described it as affecting him sometimes in one part and sometimes in another part of his body clearly not arising from any injury but something like chronic rheumatism, and his wife also said she thought if he had had a doctor he would have been well in two or three days. . .he then said he must have £20. . . Chapman said he had no £20 to pay and left him. . .the next application was made by Messrs. Jay & Pilgrim to the Defendant which was answered by a letter of Messrs. Repton & Scott, Defendant's solicitors" who said they could not attribute blame to Chapman and added, "pray do not let there be any quarrel between these neighbours, surely Mr. Elvin will refer the matter to some mutual friend. . . to say what should be done. . .he did not have any surgical advice, and the damage to the cart may be easily adjusted. Messrs. Jay & Pilgrim refused to assent to any amicable arrangements and demanded £30 as a compensation. This the Defendant's Solicitors did not notice and the present action was commenced."

Matters went from bad to worse after this. At some point in the wrangling the Aylsham documents make the astonishing statement that the plaintiff was claiming compensation of one thousand pounds (written in words not figures). Elvin listed his losses: the cost of repairing his cart, paying medical expenses, replacing his apparel to the value of £20 "greatly soiled and damaged", and compensation for the loss of business. Most important of all,

"the plaintiff has been rendered lame for life, and has been permanently injured in his health and the plaintiff claims one thousand pounds in this behalf."

Someone must have talked him out of this preposterous claim, assuming it was ever made, before he came to court.

Meanwhile, the defendant and his solicitor were trying to

discredit Elvin's witnesses. They noted that James Charles Boulton was Elvin's brother-in-law. William Spink, the only witness to say that he had heard a warning shout from Elvin before the collision, was a man of bad reputation. He had twice been convicted recently of poaching, once for "trespassing in pursuit of game at Hanworth", and the second time at Aylsham for a similar offence. Whether Mr. Prendergast used this information in court I do not know, as the press report makes no mention of it. The defendant's solicitor concludes that,

"this action ought to have been tried, if at all, in the County Court. . ." The reason given by Messrs. Jay & Pilgrim for not trying in the County Court is that "the Clerk, Mr. Scott, [who could not have been concerned for the defendant in that case] would have summoned an Aylsham jury. This is a futile argument, as the case might have been tried without a jury at all. . .and if one was wanted, no one in Aylsham could have been on it, as all the inhabitants in Aylsham are exempt by Charter from serving on juries and are not included in the jury lists, although the inhabitants of Marsham, the Plaintiff's Parish are, and some of them might have been summoned."

After all this, the verdict went in favour of the plaintiff, but the damages he was awarded amounted to £30 only. John Chapman, however, had to pay the costs of £59-8-4 as well. Was justice done? What is your verdict?.

[Much of the above is quoted from the newspapers of the day, and the punctuation and random capital letters are as in the original.

This account is also a tail-piece to the earlier article on the Norwich-Cromer Turnpike which appeared in the last issue of the Journal. The author wishes to record a correction to the earlier article:-
p.231 para. 4 should read ". . . John Warnes of Bolwick Hall, when the road was moved westward for the length of 729 yards"
Ed.]

SOCIETY NEWS

PLANT REMEDIES - For our meeting on the 26th. November, we were given a most entertaining talk by Mrs. Gabrielle Hatfield on the many and varied healing properties of wild flowers and herbs. Our speaker used some beautiful slides to illustrate her topic, and amused us all with her humorous tales collected during her researches. She began her project in a fairly remote area of Scotland, where it appears herbal remedies were extensively used in these scattered communities, as doctors were few and far between, and many folk unable to afford the expense.

On moving to Norfolk she was able to continue her studies, and found our county to be very knowledgeable in plant remedies, and most cottagers cultivated certain plants for this purpose. To give just a few examples - an infusion made from the roots of the dock plant, and drunk over several days, was very good for clearing boils, a common complaint years ago. Coltsfoot was for coughs, and primrose leaves steeped in olive oil for burns. Comfrey leaves were used for damaged bones and bruising, and nettle tops with a dash of lemon juice for anaemia - the list is almost endless.

In conclusion, Mrs. Hatfield commented that it was sad that so many of these useful and sometimes attractive plants had been banished from modern gardens. There is now more interest and research into the properties of some of these plants for use in modern medicine, and she was sure there is still a great many more uses to be discovered. I notice that our local chemist has several leaflets on this very subject. Approximately 40 people attended, including some guests and Garden Club members, and I am sure Mrs. Hatfield's talk was thoroughly enjoyed by all. K.P.

NEW YEARS PARTY - held on the last Friday in January was, as usual, a great success. Over 60 members and guests attended at the Friendship Club and enjoyed an excellent evening. The mulled wine, the tastefully prepared dinner and Peter Holman's photoquiz all maintained the high standard of previous years. This annual dinner party has now acquired a regular pattern which always seems to

to produce some published record of its work. There will be plenty to do to get it all into a publishable form, but something should eventually emerge. The group is still engaged in producing a record of the Millgate study, and although it may all seem a long time coming, progress is still being made.

ORAL HISTORY - A committee with the responsibility for Oral History has been formed under the chairmanship of Jane Nolan. A number of committee meetings have taken place, and the committee has also met Geoffrey Hodson and Derek Lyons from the Mardler (Talking Newspaper for the Blind) and Alec Douet from the Centre of East Anglian Studies Sound Archive. The contact between these interested parties should prove to be of mutual benefit in the future.

Numerous changes have taken place in Aylsham during the last few years and many of these changes have not yet been documented. Older citizens are able to recall aspects of their lives, and details of the town, both of which are interesting to record. Many will find it easier to speak of the past, rather than to write it down. In many instances, they would consider their memories of little historical importance, but nevertheless it is important that these memories are not forgotten. How many of us now wish that we had asked more about the lives of our parents and grandparents?

The Oral History Group will make recordings of some Aylsham residents over the next few months. Each recording will be transcribed, and the tape and transcript added to the collection of the Aylsham Local History Society's Archives, and to the Centre of East Anglian Studies Sound Archive. All the material will be preserved as a public reference resource for use in research, publication, education, lectures and broadcasting. Those who are recorded will be entitled to copyright protection. If you have any particular knowledge of Aylsham which would be of interest to record, or know of anyone whose memories should be recorded, then contact:-

Elizabeth Gale, 2 Mash's Row, Millgate, Aylsham. Tel. 734252

AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY LIST OF MEMBERS

Below is a list of the membership of the Society as it stands at mid-February 1993. It appears with the inevitable apologies due to those members who have paid their subscription just as the list was compiled, and whose names fail to appear. From June '93, copies of the Newsletter will be sent only to those whose names are on the list, or who have paid their 1993 subscription since.

The current subscription is £5.50 which should be sent to the Membership Secretary, Miss Maureen Strong, 33 Jannys Close, Aylsham.

ALSTON Miss R.
APPLIN Mrs.E.
BALLS Mr.R.
BATES Mrs.B.
BAYES Mrs.R.
BELTON Miss V.
BLASTLAND Ms.F.
BRATT Miss R.
BUSSY Mrs.S.
CASE Dr.D.
CASSEY Mrs.T.
CHAPMAN Mrs.T.
COOK Mrs.M.
COOTE Mr.A.
CROUCH Mr.R.
DACK Mr.S.
DAGG Mrs.I.
DAINES Mrs.E.
DAINES Mr.J.
DUCKER Mr.G.

DUCKER Mrs.
DYER Miss S.
ELSEY Mrs.M.
EVE Dr.J.
FISKE Mr.R.
FLETCHER Mrs.J.
FORDHAM Mrs.D.
FOREMAN Rev.P.
FOSTER Mrs.U.
GALE Mrs.E.
GALE Mr.G.
GAYMER Miss G.
GEE Mrs.B.
HARRISON Mrs.C.
HARTLEY Mr.J.
HOLMAN Mrs.B.
HOLMAN Mr.P.
JONES Mrs.H.
KEMP Mrs.E.
KEMP Capt.W.

LAMB Mrs.J.
LONG Mrs.M.
LYONS Mr.D.
LYONS Mrs.M.
MacGREGOR Mrs.W.
McINTYRE Mrs.E.
MADDISON Mrs.J.
MOLLARD Mrs.S.
MOLLARD Mr.T.
NOLAN Mr.F.
NOLAN Mrs.J.
PEABODY Mrs.M.
PEABODY Mr.R.
PIKE Mr.K.
RADFORD Miss N.
RUST Mr.B.
RUST Mrs.L.
SKILLERN Mrs.L.

STEWART Mr.P.
STRONG Miss M.
SUTTON Mrs.G.
TURVILLE-PETRE Mrs.J.
ULPH Mr.C.
VINCENT Mr.A.
VINCENT Mrs.J.
VYSE Rev.Canon J.

WARREN Mrs.U.
WEST Mr.T.
WILES Miss W.
WILSON Ms.C
WINTLE Mrs.S.
WOOD Mr.S.
WORSENCROFT Mrs.K.

NOTES & QUERIES

Mrs. S.Bussey, of Acle has written to the Society seeking further information about her mother's ancestors. Her mother was Ethel Susanna Payne, born at Ivy Cottage, Drabblegate on 8th.January 1893. She had 10 brothers and sisters; one of them was Fred Payne who married and had 21 children. They lived in Hungate St.

Mrs.Bussey's parents were William and Anna Sophia Payne (nee Bircham). Her mother's parents were George and Mary Bircham (nee Beck). George Bircham worked a wherry, taking coal from Yarmouth to Aylsham. It is possible that in later life, George Bircham had a second marriage to a lady named Spinks.

Can anyone with local knowledge add to Mrs.Bussey's information?

write to: 9 Englands Rd. Acle, Norwich. NR13 3EG

AN HERALDIC PUZZLE

R. C. Fiske

The appended illustration, figure 1, is an inked-over rubbing (reduced) taken about fifteen years ago from one of two identical doors at Aylsham Manor. The doors were situated in a large room, called the Barn, which projected from the back of the building. Within the room, which was at a lower level than the main house, there was a date stone, but my notes only tell me it was early 17th. century. In the corners of the two doors were the initials B.I. (top) and H.P. (bottom) and the heraldic panel was flanked by Egyptian figures.

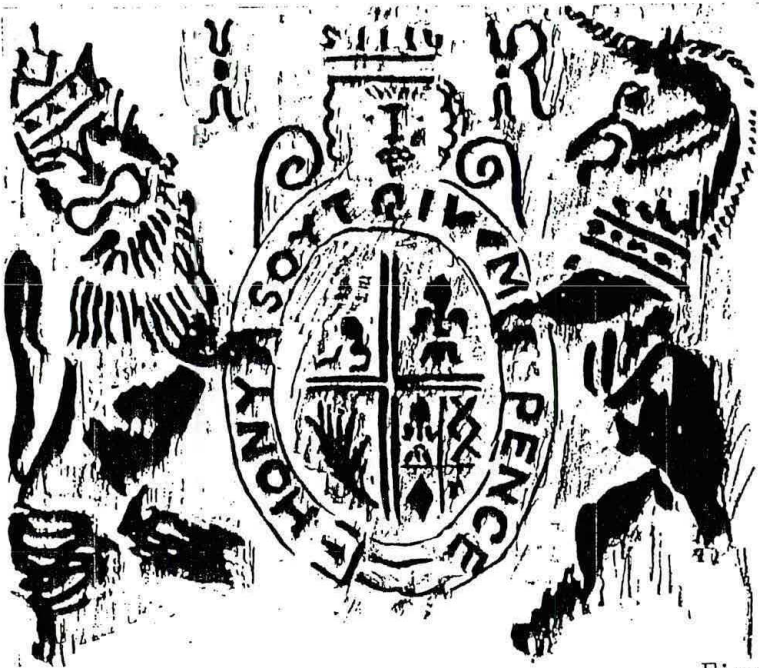


Figure 1

As to the panel, the initials I.R. would seem to denote James Rex and this accords with the supporters which were introduced by James I. His ancestor, James V of Scotland, introduced two unicorn supporters to support the Scottish arms, and when James VI of Scotland became James I of England he introduced one of the unicorns to the royal arms - on the sinister side to support the English arms, and on the dexter side to support the Scottish arms. The garter around the oval shield is just as one would expect while the crest appears to be artistic licence.

But it is the oval coat of arms which is the problem. It should look like figure 2, but is totally different. Perhaps the design was too intricate for the carver to copy, so he gave a rough allusion to a lion, a fleur-de-lis and a harp in the first three quarters and something unknown in the fourth.

Perhaps there is another answer which has escaped me for fifteen years?.



Figure 2

DERIVATION OF SOME AYLSHAM ROAD NAMES

Amongst the Aylsham archives is a list of some Aylsham road names with a note of their derivation. The note is in Dr. Sapwell's handwriting, but the list first appeared in the Aylsham Association Newsletter: No.10, August 1971. Possibly Dr. Sapwell compiled the original list. With all the new residents who have moved into the town since 1971, the list should make even more interesting reading today, and I am grateful to the Aylsham Association for permission to reproduce it in our Newsletter.

CLOVER ROAD: Joseph Clover (1779-1853) was born in Aylsham and became a well known portrait painter in London and Norwich. Joseph Thomas Clover (1825-1882) his nephew, also born in Aylsham, established himself in London as England's first full time consultant anaesthetist

COPEMAN ROAD: Robert Copeman and his sons George and Thomas were members of a firm of solicitors and bankers, and leading members of society in Aylsham in the early 19th. Century.

CROMPTON ROAD: has no very close Aylsham associations, and is said to have been named after a former landowner in that part of the town.

FORSTER WAY: William Forster (1827-1906) practised as a solicitor in Aylsham for many years, and was Clerk to the Magistrates. He lived at Spratt's Green and later at Blickling Lodge.

HOLMAN CLOSE: (off Holman Road formerly Pound Road) was named after Dr. Alec George Holman who practised in Aylsham from 1925 until 1952, and was a magistrate and Chairman of the Parish Council

JEGON CLOSE: John Jegon. M.A. D.D. (1550-1617) was Master of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and later Dean and Bishop of Norwich. During his last years he lived at the Manor House,

Aylsham, where he died. There is a monument to him on the north side of the Sanctuary in Aylsham church.

JOHN OF GAUNT CLOSE: John of Gaunt, fourth son of King Edward III was Lord of the Capital Manor of Lancaster in Aylsham, and the traditional founder of the parish church, about 1380.

LAYER CLOSE: Christopher Layer (1683-1723) was a hot headed young lawyer who was articled to Henry Rippingall. He went to London and was implicated in a Jacobite plot for which he was hanged at Tyburn. There is a memorial to him on the bank wall. [Barclay's Bank]

MORTON ROAD: is named from a family of doctors who served Aylsham for the best part of a century between 1838 and 1925.

PARMETER ROAD: The Parmeters were a leading Aylsham family in the 18th. and 19th. centuries. Robert William Parmeter (1795-1880) practised for many years as a solicitor. Other members of the family were millers and maltsters and built the watermill (1798) and the malthouse in Millgate (1777)

PARTRIDGE ROAD: Three generations of this public-spirited family, Daniel, James and Philip have carried on business in the town, and taken an active part in public life.

REPTON CLOSE: Humphry Repton (1752-1818) was a landscape gardener of nation wide repute. He is buried in Aylsham churchyard. His son, William Repton (1783-1858) practised as a solicitor in Aylsham, and was a churchwarden for nearly 50 years.

RIPPINGALL ROAD: Henry Rippingall (d.1714) was a solicitor who lived and practised at No. 1 Market Place, (now Barclay's Bank). He was a churchwarden in 1692, 1696 and 1710.

SAPWELL CLOSE: Col. B. B. Sapwell of Sankence commanded the 3rd. Volunteer Battalion of the Norfolk Regt. He was a magistrate and alderman of the County Council. Dr. B. B. Sapwell,

his son, was a member of the Parish Council. Dr. John Sapwell, his son, was Chairman of the Parish Council from 1952-73. [Dr. John Sapwell died 1977]

SIR WILLIAMS'S CLOSE: (off Sir William's Lane which is so named on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1885) His surname remains unknown

SOAME CLOSE: is named after a very old Aylsham family. John Soame was a churchwarden in 1603, and the family continued in Aylsham until about 1920.

STUART ROAD: off Bure Way (formerly Commercial Road, formerly Workhouse Lane) was developed by Mr. Charles Bizley and named by him after his grandson.

SWAN CLOSE: is named after the adjacent Swan Inn, dating from 1694 which stood in the south-west angle of the junction of Mill Road and Hungate St. and was demolished in 1969. .

WADE CLOSE: was named after an old and well respected family who have lived in Aylsham for at least 300 years and continue to do so [1971].

WRENCH CLOSE: is named after a distinguished family of that name. The Rev. Jonathan Wrench (1667-1741) was Vicar of Aylsham from 1700 to 1731 and built the old vicarage on the north side of the churchyard in 1700. His brother, Sir Benjamin Wrench, M.D. was a well known Norwich physician. His son, Jonathan Fountain Wrench, succeeded his father as vicar from 1731 to 1765. His son, of the same name, practised as a doctor in Aylsham from 1761 to 1803.

After reading this list, one thing stands out clearly - what about all the other Aylsham road names which are not included?. There are many lanes particularly all named after people - Yaxley's Peterson's, Rawlinson's, Jewell's etc etc. The editor offers an invitation for someone to research these and let us complete Sapwell's very useful list. Any offers?