

AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



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The **JOURNAL & NEWSLETTER** is the Quarterly publication of the Aylsham Local History Society. It is published each March, June, September and December, and is issued free to members. Contributions are welcomed from members and others.
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COVER ILLUSTRATION -

The Aylsham New Association - Property mark, once affixed to a building in Erpingham.



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SOCIETY

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THE HOUSE OF SUFFLING (Sarah Suffling of Hanworth. (7.1.1852 - 29.9.1943))

Roger Crouch

Born in Hanworth in 1852 of parents, Joseph Suffling, a butcher, and Sarah, née Gibb, probably in Lake Cottage (later to be known as the Homestead), Sarah Suffling, the youngest of six children, lived for the rest of her life in the same cottage, dying there during the Second World War [1943] in penury, and buried in an unmarked grave in Hanworth churchyard on 4th. October 1943, aged 91.

The Suffling family moved from Aldborough to Hanworth between 1846 and 1848, indicated by the fact that the four eldest children were born in Aldborough, where Joseph had a butcher's shop behind his house. Sarah's elder sister, Anne [b.1848] most probably started the dress making business which was to be continued and expanded by Sarah for the next 50+ years. Sarah, [b.1852] was known for the rest of her life as Sally. On leaving school she joined her sister Anne as a dressmaker. At the age of 19, Anne had a baby boy, Hector Ernest, born out of wedlock. While Hector was still a young boy, Anne left him in the care of her mother and sister and went to London where she married George Browne. Strong rumours persist in Hanworth to this day that Hector was Sally's son. This may not have been denied by Sally

at the time, to help her sister's marriage prospects.

By 1881 Anne had left for London, and Sally had taken over as head of the household. Now 29 years old, Sally is listed in the Kelly's and White's directories for the next 47 years as a milliner and dressmaker. In 1881, Sally had an apprentice staying with her, Rosa Reynolds (18) from Metton, and also a general servant. Sally's dressmaking business flourished over several decades until c.1930.

She employed young girls for a seven year apprenticeship, on the understanding that they would not marry during that time. The youngest recruit would be nominated 'pin' girl, patiently holding a large pincushion for Sally as she fitted her clients. A group photograph c1913, shows fourteen girls, along with Sally's companion, Marjorie Gaze (my grandmother standing directly behind Marjorie). The workroom for the apprentices was about 24ft. by 12ft. with a large bay window on one side. There was a fireplace at each end and a long work table ran the length of the room. It was lit by an oil lamp which hung from a stout hook in the ceiling - the hook is still there.

As well as a maid, Sally seemed always to have a live-in companion. At the beginning of the First World War Marjorie Gaze was in charge of the household, and later on Lizzie Perks lived at the 'Homestead' for many years. She taught at the small Hanworth school, which was closed when the new and much larger Aldborough school was opened in 1907. Some of the apprentices also lived at the 'Homestead' at various times.

Sally's business flourished. Amongst her customers were the landed gentry at a time when ball gowns were in much demand. Perhaps, during her visits to Hanworth Hall and other local estates, she rubbed shoulders with influential guests, because each year, she was invited to Sandringham, where, with the assistance of her team of senior apprentices, she would make and repair the royal gowns. Sally went to London once a month to choose her materials and necessary dressmaking accessories. She owned a horse and carriage, and delivered finished garments to her clients. Sally was also well known



Sarah Suffling

for keeping livestock, primarily chickens, both on the common, and at (and in) the 'Homestead'. The demand for ball gowns declined, and the last entry, in Kelly's directory for 1929, signalled the end of her dressmaking business. Sally was 77 years old. To make ends meet, Sally provided bed and breakfast to supplement the income from rearing chickens and turkeys and selling eggs.

When the Second World War began Sally was 87. A German bomb destroyed a nearby Hanworth cottage which made her nervous, and when Lizzie Perks died in 1941, Sally felt her loss deeply and asked a Hanworth family to move into the 'Homestead' for company. In 1943 Sally was 91 and suffering from heart disease. Mrs Fish was with her when she died on September 29th. 1943. She was buried next to her friend, Lizzie, in Hanworth churchyard on October 4th. After her interesting and productive life it is hard to believe that she died penniless, but this does not detract from the fact that Sarah Suffling is still remembered as a remarkable woman.

—ooOoo—

SOCIETY NEWS

Visit to Wymondham - Our group of 25 were met at the award winning Wymondham Heritage Museum by the former curator. He directed us to the garden of the Bridewell where he gave a fascinating talk, describing how the group of buildings originated, how they were changed and the various uses to which they were put. From a terrible, old Elizabethan Bridewell of crowded, multi-occupation underground cells, it was rebuilt as a more enlightened prison of single cells after a visit by the prison reformer, John Howard, in 1784. From 1831 until 1878 it became a gaol for women only, but some parts were used by the police. Then, from 1878 the whole complex was available for police use, and included a Magistrates Court. In 1991 the Bridewell was put up for sale, but it remained unsold, so the price came down and the Wymondham Heritage Society were able to buy it with help from the Architectural Heritage Fund. The Society was able to move out of its existing, overcrowded one-room museum to the site, and those parts of the complex that they did not need were converted for six projects serving the local community. In a very short space of time the volunteers had designed and made display cases, and organised their move just in time for the 1996 official opening.

We saw one of the old underground cells and felt the weight of leg irons and of a flat-iron from the days when the women prisoners did

the laundry for Norwich Gaol. We then went inside and saw a reconstruction of one of the eighteenth century cells, learnt about the brush making trade of Wymondham, and saw exhibits relating to the Kett Rebellion.

Afterwards we began our walk, guided by Janet Smith. She pointed out some of the interesting buildings as we walked towards the Market Cross. This dates from 1618 and is known to be the third, the earlier two having been destroyed by fire. The octagonal first floor room now acts as the Tourist Information Centre. The supporting pillars and beams of carved wood are a sign that Wymondham was once known for its wood turnery.

We walked along Brewery Lane and down Chain Entry to Damgate, where the party divided into the riverside walk enthusiasts, and those going more directly to the Abbey. Janet Smith told the River Tiffey walkers about the Abbey and about the bridges which were washed away in the 1912 floods. They passed the Becket's Well Conservation Area and approached the Abbey from the west.

The sun shone and the Abbey was a fitting finale for our trip. The existence of two dissimilar towers is the result of a series of disputes between the Benedictine monks and the town in the 15th. century, mainly over the hanging and ringing of the parish bells. Apparently the Priory was never quite finished and after the destruction at the Dissolution of monasteries only the nave and aisles of the original Abbey were left. The blocking up of the east end of the nave, next to the partly ruined octagonal Monks' tower, left a blank wall. This was covered by a great gilded screen, designed by Sir Ninian Comper as a memorial to the Wymondham men killed in the Great War. As we walked back to the bus we passed Becket's Chapel which has had many uses and is now the library. It was an enjoyable afternoon, and we left feeling that we wanted to return some day for further exploration.

Patricia Hawkins

Day Classes - Our Chairman reports that the day course arranged with the University of East Anglia has got off to a good start with fifteen attending and the likelihood of more to come. With a good quality lecturer and an interesting subject, it should be a successful course.

Programme Card - Members will have noticed from the Programme Card that the traditional Winter Party will not take place this year. A **Members Evening** has been arranged instead for 7.30 on Thursday, 27th. January 2000, but this will not consist of a formal dinner, and a new format has been arranged, and details of the evening's programme should accompany this issue of the *Journal*. It will be an informal evening with wine and light refreshments. There would be an opportunity to meet other members, hear short talks, join in a quiz and even watch a short video on a local topic. Read all about it in the slip which accompanies this issue of the *Journal*.

Frery family - the expected visit of US members of the *Frery Family Association* took place. The visitors were joined by Peter Pink for dinner and a talk, and later for a brief walk round the Market Place before moving on.

Nelson's Norfolk - On 28th October the Society enjoyed a lively and informative talk from Bob Brister, a member of the Nelson Society and author of the book "Nelson's Norfolk". A Nelson enthusiast, his address ranged over the whole of Admiral Lord Nelson's life (1758-1805), from his early years as the weakling son of a Norfolk clergyman to his death at Trafalgar. Nelson's naval career started at twelve and a half, and showed clear promise in that he became captain of a vessel in his early twenties. Apart from a period on half pay, during a lull in hostilities with France, his prowess during active service established Nelson as a national hero.

In Norfolk particularly, during his lifetime, he enjoyed "favourite son" status, which showed sadly how the present County authority's regard for Nelson has diminished in that they have refused to allow Norfolk to be visually presented as "Norfolk - Nelson's County". As apparently this would have cost them little or nothing, one can only wonder at their lack of interest. Perhaps heroes are no longer fashionable ? Nelson's private life showed him married when very young, but clearly swept off his feet later by Lady Hamilton.

A curious touch introduced by Bob Brister was his allusion to a kind of "menage a trois" involving the Hamiltons and Nelson. The

In Memory of
Lieutenant Philip Ward
25th. Bengal Native Infantry
Died 12th. September 1865
aged 33

Youngest son of the late Reverend
Philip Ward, Vicar of Tenterden, Kent

Also in memory of Eleanor Philppa
Ward, spinster, eldest daughter of the
above named Reverend Philip Ward,
who was accidentally killed
6th. August 1872 aged 18.

Here also rests Horatia Nelson Ward
who died March 6 1881 aged 80 -
beloved daughter of Vice-Admiral
Lord Nelson and widow of the above
named Philip Ward.

[Tombstone in Pinner cemetery]

*Above is the detail from a gravestone in
Pinner cemetery recording the death of
Nelson's only daughter, Horatia. (supplied
by Barbara Richardson)*

irony was that Emma
Hamilton died in penury,
despite being the mother of
Nelson's only child, Horatia,
whereas Nelson's wife enjoyed
a substantial pension until her
death.

The slides shown during the
talk illustrated places in the
county, and further afield,
connected with Nelson's life.
From Burnham Thorpe,
where Nelson grew up, to
Norwich and Paston where he
spent his schooldays. Then to
Yarmouth where he was feted
by the townspeople on his
return with the Hamiltons
from Naples.

Some enigmas remain such
as his place of birth - was this
prematurely in a barn on the
edge of the Holkham estate or
in the old rectory at Burnham
Thorpe? Also, did his

disapproval of Coke, in rticular for the shabby treatment of farm
labourers, stem from his own experience of farming his father's glebe
land during his time on half pay? Nelson memorabilia are now very
collectable and it is a sad reflection of our modern times that some
pieces have been stolen from the places in which they were displayed.
At present Norfolk does not have a museum in which the remaining
artifacts could be displayed in safety and security. It is to be hoped that
we will not be left with only the sign boards on pubs and hotels to
honour the name of our greatest naval hero.

Angela and Mervyn King

MORE ABOUT NELSON

The Norfolk Hero is increasingly in the news as the 200th anniversary of his greatest victories approaches. The good news is that a museum entirely dedicated to Nelson is to be opened at Great Yarmouth. The official appeal has just been launched. The museum, to be opened on the South Quay, will house the considerable collection of the Ben Burgess memorabilia Trust.

Annual General Meeting.

The AGM was held at the Friendship Club on 7th. October and the usual business of an Annual General meeting was speedily conducted. Secretary, Betty Gee, reported on the many and successful activities of the society throughout the year, and reminded members of the visits and lectures we had enjoyed throughout the year. Membership now totals 102, and Betty thanked all those members and officials who had contributed to the successful year we had all enjoyed.

Treasurer, Eileen Daines, recorded a healthy financial state of affairs which keeps the society on a sound footing, and also means that for the coming year there will be no need to increase members' subscriptions.

The *Journal* editor thanked all those who had supplied material for the *Journal* and begged for more. He also conveyed the best wishes to the society, of our first chairman, Canon Jack Vyse, now living in retirement in Lincolnshire. Canon Vyse had also responded to the appeal in our last *Journal* for back issues of the Parish Magazine, with the promise of all his personal copies dating from 1974 to the date of his retirement. This should fill quite a few gaps and his offer is much appreciated.

Geoff Gale reported on the activities of the Publications Committee which is still preparing to publish the Starling manuscript

when the editorial work being carried out by Ron Peabody is complete. A new edition of *Millgate* is also to be undertaken as all copies of the first edition have been sold and fortunately we are now able to recover the original text which makes a new edition easier to produce. Geoffrey also produced one completed copy of the survey of monumental inscriptions at Oulton Chapel. This has since been handed over to the Trustees, and a second copy will be placed in the Aylsham Archives.

Election of officers and Committee - Following Julian Eve's decision to stand down as Vice Chairman and from the committee, Geoffrey Gale was elected as the new Vice-Chairman. Tom West has also retired from the committee, and the result of all these changes created two vacancies on the committee. These vacancies were filled by the election of Peter Pink and Gillian Fletcher to the new committee, and the other officers were all re-elected. Sheila Mollard remains as a co-opted member and continues as Membership Secretary. Acknowledgement of the hard work and valuable contributions of the two retiring members was duly recognised.

Chairman's Report: Peter Holman completed the business meeting with comments on the previous year and on the forthcoming programme. A membership/programme card can now be produced and circulated following the AGM. Peter reported that he was still hopeful of arranging a visit to selected Aylsham buildings. He also reported that as a society we support the attempts being made to arrange Town Twinning with the French town of La Chaussee-Saint-Victor. He also reported that there would be no Winter Party this year, but that a Members' Evening would be arranged instead, and that during the summer of 2000 he would plan a Millennium Mystery History tour, possibly with a lunch, at a date still to be arranged.

Finally, Ron Peabody put forward the suggestion that the society might arrange for commemorative plaques to be erected on appropriate Aylsham buildings. These could be similar to the one already fitted to Joseph Clover's birthplace. The idea was favourably received and it was decided that the committee would explore the subject at its next meeting.

Norwich Cathedral Library - Following the formal Annual General Meeting, Tom Mollard, our editor, gave a most interesting talk on the history of the Norwich Cathedral Library. It was illustrated by slides which gave an idea of the position of the library; of the extent of the bays housing the books, and of the beautiful manuscripts and old books stored therein. There was a library attached to the Benedictine Priory in the 12th. and 13th. centuries, for St.Benedict's Rules gives directions for the brothers to read for several hours a day. This first library was destroyed by fire in 1272, and following this, a second library was gathered together with many gifts from monks, only to be abandoned at the Dissolution in 1538.

The present collection really dates from 1681, when a special chamber was set aside for a library and each prebendary was ordered to contribute ten pounds , either in books or as money. From that time, Dean Humphrey Prideaux had great influence on the administration of the cathedral and on the library. It became not just a theological library, but an illustration of clerical tastes and interests. The oldest manuscript is the "Norwich Domesday", an early fifteenth century survey of all the parishes in the Norwich diocese. However, in the last two centuries, many distinguished Norfolk clergy and writers have left their collections of books to the library, for example, Nicholas Penny and Frank Sayers and Dean Goulburn.

In 1913 the library moved to the south walk of the cloisters where its present home is in a specially adapted room over the cloister. An ongoing problem is the safe preservation of books, so a steady programme of rebinding selected volumes is taking place. The scale of preservation work required is enormous, and is an expensive process. The library is open on Wednesdays for readers and visitors. Tom was kind enough to say that a society visit could be arranged on another day, preferably but not necessarily, on a Thursday, and members would very much like this to be arranged. The talk and the excellent slides were very much appreciated by all and our thanks go to Tom for sharing his expert knowledge with us.

Betty Gee.

AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

LIST OF MEMBERS - DECEMBER 1999

Below is a list of paid-up members of the society, correct at the time of issue of this number of the *Journal*. This list appears in each December number of the *Journal*, together with the notice that it will form the distribution list for future issues. So - if your name does not appear on the list, then this is the last issue of the *Journal* to be automatically delivered to you!

However, all is not lost. If your name does not appear, you can easily put that right. Just forward your annual subscription to our Membership Secretary and she will be delighted to add your name to the list.

Mr. B.M. ADAMS
Mr. D.W. BAKER
Mr. R. BALLS
Mrs. G. BARWICK
Mrs. R. BAYES
Mrs C. BELL
Miss V. BELTON
Mrs. M. BIRD
Mr & Mrs.D.
BRASNETT
Miss R. BRATT
Dr. D.E. CASE
Mrs. B. CLARKE
Mrs. M. COOK
Mr. A. COOTE
Mr & Mrs N. CORBIN
Mr & Mrs A. CRIPPS
Mr. R. CROUCH
Mrs. E. DAINES
Mrs E. DOWNING
Mr. G. DUCKER
Miss A.J. DYBALL
Dr. & Mrs. J. EVE
Mrs G. FLETCHER
Mrs. H.C.A. FULLER
Mr & Mrs G. GALE
Miss O. GARDNER
Mr & Mrs A. GARRATT

Mrs B. GEE
Mrs M. GOODWIN
Ms M. HALFORD
Mr. J. HARRIS
Mrs J. HAWKE
Mr & Mrs A. HAWKINS
Mrs C. HENDRY
Mr & Mrs P. HOLMAN
Miss B. HOWES
Mr G. JOHNSTON
Ms M.R. KEABLE
Mr & Mrs M. KING
Mrs. J. LAMB
Dr. J.M. LEADLEY
Mrs T. LLOYD
Mrs. M. LONG
Mr B. LOWE
Mr D. LYONS
Mrs. J. McCHESNEY
Mrs S.M. McMANUS
Rev'd. P. MARSH
Miss C. MILLER
Mrs E. MINNS
Mr & Mrs T. MOLLARD
Mrs J. NEWELL
Mr G. NOBBS
Miss E. NOLAN
Mr & Mrs R. PEABODY

Mrs. M. PERRY
Mr P. PINK
Mr & Mrs I. POWELL
Miss N. RADFORD
Mr G. RICE
Mrs. B. RICHARDSON
Mr M. SEWELL
Mrs J. SHERINGHAM
Mrs. E. SMITH
Mrs L. STEWARD
Mr H.J.F. TAYLOR
Mr & Mrs B. TULLOCH
Mrs J. TURVILLE-
PETRE
Rev'd. Canon J. VYSE
Mr D.A. WADLEY
Mr D. WALKER
Mrs. R. WARREN
Mrs U. WARREN
Mr T. WEST
Dr & Mrs G. WICKENS
Mrs M. WILLCOX
Mr & Mrs G WILLIAMS
Mrs S. WINTLE
Mr J. WRIGHT

With apologies to any members who might have renewed their subscription within the last few days and still missed inclusion on the list

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions remain unchanged from last year, i.e. £7 for an individual and £12 per couple. Subscriptions for 1999-2000 fall due following the AGM.

NOTES & QUERIES

Howe family - A Mr. Philip Howe [01603-860657] asks for any local knowledge of a Miss F. Howe (his aunt), born in Horstead c1896. He has a postcard addressed to her and clearly dated - 6.1.1917. The address given is "The Beeches" Aylsham. What he wants to know is what was she doing in Aylsham, as he knows of no other connection with the town that might have brought her here. Kelly's Directory for 1916 shows that "The Beeches" was occupied by Dr. Augustus Charles Morton, Surgeon and Medical Officer for the 6th. District and also for the Workhouse, Aylsham Union.

Levick, Lovick, Livock or Lubbock - Mrs Fuller, Linley, Forder, Lane, Dartington, Totnes, Devon TQ9 6HT Telephone: 01803-864156, raises a family history query. Her great-great grandfather, James Fish (who probably came from Hindolveston) married Susannah Elizabeth Lovick/Lubbock, the illegitimate daughter of an Elizabeth Lubbock. She welcomes any information on any of these and any Wileys. We have already supplied some, and linked her up with a similar enquirer, but any more information would be welcomed.

HAPPY HOUR AT AYLSHAM

from **THE TIMES** 31.8.1858. (*Supplied by Geoffrey Nobbs*)

AYLSHAM - The annual gathering, or harvest-home feast for the town of Aylsham, was celebrated on Thursday last, the 26th. Aylsham is a small agricultural parish on the turnpike road from Norwich to Cromer, and contains 2,500 inhabitants. The population is purely agricultural; there are no large resident land owners, the property of the parish being held by two or three noble lords resident in the neighbourhood, and by several other non-resident landlords.

This fact is mentioned as showing how little the gathering, which has just taken place, rested on the influence of the owners of property. It was mainly supported by tenant farmers. It was held in the vicarage grounds under two wide-spreading walnut trees. It commenced with the afternoon service in the parish church, and a short sermon or address from the words of the wise man in the 15th. chapter of Proverbs:-

"A word spoken in due season how good is it"

To this the harvestmen and their families were invited, but no compulsion or persuasion was used, the attendance being left entirely to their own proper feeling.

At 2 o'clock the feast was spread and after grace 375 men women and children sat down to tables plentifully supplied by the employers with roast joints of beef and mutton and plum pudding, each master having a separate table for his men, and sitting at its head, and carving for them, and joining with them.

A subscription had been previously raised for the general expenses, which was gladly contributed to by the tradesmen, who hope by means of these feasts soon to see the end of the baneful system of largesse. A pint of good mild ale was supplied to each man, woman and working boy at dinner, and three pints of Barclay and Perkins best London porter to the men, and one pint to the women and boys during the afternoon, with a harvest cake to each at half past 6 o'clock.

This, with providing the tables, paying the band, and the merry-go-round which was in attendance, and a plentiful supply of pipes and tobacco, exhausted the funds. But, various prizes for the sports were provided for the men by the vicar and his family, and for the children by some kind and active ladies of the town - Bibles, prayer books, spades, scythes, shovels, waistcoats, caps, etc.

The afternoon was beautifully fine, and the whole passed off with the greatest harmony and good feeling, and with a hearty wish that the experiment may be repeated another year. The conduct of all parties was most exemplary, showing how we may carry on our harvest frolics without rioting and drunkenness, yet to the satisfaction of all concerned.

At about 7 o'clock the band struck up a merry country dance tune, and for more than an hour 50 or 60 couples joined in this amusement in a most orderly and becoming manner. At half past 8 o'clock there was a display of fireworks, and at a quarter past nine o'clock the band struck up "God save the Queen" and the party dispersed with three cheers for the next happy meeting. This is the third year that the harvest home has been celebrated in the parish of Aylsham by a dinner, and the seventh since the attempt was first made to supersede the disgraceful public house frolics by a more rational kind of meeting, and every year the attempt has met with increased success.

JOHN FRANSHAM (1730-1810)

I am grateful to Geoffrey Nobbs for this note about John Fransham, the learned and eccentric Norwich schoolmaster, and his brief association with the theatre in Aylsham.

"... It was probably about this time that - strange to say - Fransham joined a company of strolling players who were accustomed to perform in a barn at Aylsham in Norfolk. He was deemed the fittest person to perform Acasto, in the *Orphan*; Foigard in the *Beaux Stratagem*; Iago in *Othello*, and Shylock in the *Merchant of Venice*.

The performances did not 'draw' and the manager paid his company with turnips. Fransham had proffered his services for whatever value the manager might set upon them. He expressed himself perfectly satisfied with turnips and water, till one of the performers, aware of Fransham's honesty and his rising merits as an actor, told him the turnips were stolen from the neighbouring fields. It proved to be a fact and Fransham indignantly threw up his articles. . . ."

From: Hone's Year Book, 1832.

According to Bayne's *History of Norwich*. (1869) John Fransham was the Norwich Polytheist, a very eccentric character who was born in St. Georges, Colegate. He was an excellent mathematician and was a great admirer of the ancient writers on this science. He frequently took rapid solitary walks with a broad-brimmed hat slouched over his eyes, and a plaid on his shoulders, and he was supposed to sleep often on Mousehold Heath. He died on February 1st 1810. His biography was written by his pupil, Mr. Saint.

The above incident dates from about the 1750s. Other details about the theatre in Aylsham can be read in earlier issues of the 'Journal' - i.e. Vol. 1 pages 55-58 and 75-82

THE AYLSHAM NEW ASSOCIATION

Tom Mollard

In the March 1999 issue of the *Journal* (vol.5 No.9) we published the Rules and Regulations, and brief account of the AYLSHAM ASSOCIATION, founded in December 1786. This was founded to counter the rising level of undetected petty crime, and to provide some protection for the members of the society and their property.

When it was formed, it was made quite clear that the particular crime of horse-stealing would be excluded, possibly because the

association's funds would not stretch that far. The problems of horse theft still remained, and this led to the formation of a NEW AYLSHAM ASSOCIATION, specifically designed "*for prosecuting horse stealers and other felons*". Possibly the original Aylsham Association had ceased to exist by then and the new association was something of a revival of efforts for general self-protection.

We now have, thanks to Geoffrey Ducker, a copy of the rules of the new association, adopted at an inaugural meeting in June 1825, and like its predecessor was launched at the Black Boys Hotel. Like the Fire Insurance offices, the Association issued its own 'marks' to affix to properties covered by the association. Some of these marks still survive. There is one in the archives at Aylsham, and our cover photograph is of another which until quite recently was fixed to the wall of a stable at Erpingham House, Erpingham. The photograph was supplied by Mary Willcox.

RULES
of the
Aylsham & South Erpingham

NEW ASSOCIATION
for
PROSECUTING HORSE STEALERS
and
OTHER FELONS.

RULES

At a meeting of the Land Owners and farmers in and near Aylsham, held at the Black Boys Inn, this 28th. day of June 1825 (pursuant to public advertisement) it was resolved that a society should be immediately established for Prosecuting Horse

Stealers and other felons. The Society to be called the
AYLSHAM and SOUTH ERPINGHAM NEW ASSOCIATION
and the following rules shall be adopted for its government:

I

THAT a deposit of one pound be made by each member, as entrance money, and that the annual payments shall be regulated according to the several occupations of each member, and are as follows, viz.

	£.	s.	d
Every member keeping from one to five horses	0	8	0
Ditto from five to ten	0	15	0
Ditto from ten to twenty and upwards	1	0	0

II

If any member shall neglect to pay his annual subscription at the general meeting, or within fourteen days afterwards, he shall forfeit the sum of 5s. and if the subscription be not paid within three months after the annual meeting, he shall be excluded.

III

That the general meeting which establishes this society shall elect six members who shall be constituted a Committee for the ensuing year, and the same to be repeated annually.

IV

Any person (residing within ten miles of this town and) who in future shall be desirous of becoming a member of this society,

shall signify the same to the Treasurer, who shall communicate it to the committee, and if they assent to it, then such person shall, on paying the admission fee, become a member, and be entitled to the benefit of the society.

V

The general meeting shall be held annually in June, whereof fourteen days notice shall be given by public advertisement in the Norwich papers, at which meeting the annual accounts of receipts and disbursements shall be laid before the members, (having been previously examined by the committee) who shall make their report to the Association.

VI

At every yearly general meeting, a dinner shall be provided, towards which every member, whether present or not, shall pay two shillings and sixpence.

VII

At the general meeting, the members shall have power to determine on all matters and things relating to this society, to alter and amend these rules, and to make additional ones, provided always, that due notice be given of such alteration or additions.

VIII

The Treasurer shall be empowered to call a special meeting of the committee when necessary, and the major part of those present shall bind the rest, but if the numbers for and against

shall appear equal, then the Treasurer shall have the casting vote.

IX

If any of the committee die, or refuse or neglect to act, the rest of them may, at their next meeting, (after the decease or refusal of such member) elect another or others of the members to serve in his or their room.

X

The general meeting has the power to expel any member who may have committed any fraud upon the Association knowingly, and to whom fourteen days previous notice shall be given of the intentions, and of the time and place of holding such meeting, (unless he shall have previously satisfied the committee that he ought not to be expelled) and every such expelled member shall forfeit all claim upon the fund of this society.

XI

The committee shall have the power of calling a general meeting at any intermediate time, if they find it necessary, by giving the same public notice, and specifying in the notice the purpose for which such general meeting is convened.

XII

All members sustaining losses which they suspect to be by theft, shall use every means in their power to find out the

offender or offenders, and shall give immediate notice thereof to the Treasurer, with a description of their loss &c. and shall also describe the manner the robbery was committed, also the route probably taken by the offenders, and such members under the direction of the Treasurer, shall immediately take every necessary step for detecting and apprehending the thieves, for bringing them to justice, and for the recovery of the property, and all reasonable expenses incurred by such pursuit and prosecution, shall be ordered by the committee, at their first meeting after the same can be properly ascertained, to be paid out of the fund.

XIII

If any member neglect his duty in the apprehending or prosecution of a thief, by compounding with him, or otherwise, he shall be expelled the society and forfeit all claims upon its fund.

XIV

This society shall not be liable to any expenses for property stolen, when lent to any other person, except to one of the members.

XV

All county or other allowance to which any member may be entitled, for the apprehension, prosecution, or conviction of horse stealers, &c. shall be added to the fund of the society, except for property mentioned in the preceding rules.

XVI

If any member's horse, mare, or gelding, shall be stolen, and not afterwards found, the Treasurer at the annual meeting, shall pay two thirds the value of such horse, &c. to the member to whom such loss has happened; the value on any horse, &c. shall not be rated at more than £30 and that valuation to be made by two competent judges, residing near the loser of such horse or horses, &c. and also it is further agreed that the value on any other description of property lost, shall not exceed the sum of £10, nor any member to claim for property lost for less than £1-10-0, and such valuation shall be proved (as before mentioned) to the satisfaction of the committee, or the annual meeting, before such payment takes place

XVII

The Treasurer of this society shall be furnished with books for entering the members' names therein, also an account of all monies received and disbursed by him and to be acted with, in compliance with rule the 5th.

XVIII

When the death of any member takes place, then the heirs, executors, or administrators of any such member, shall be entitled to the benefit of these rules, by continuing the annual subscription.

XIX

Should any horse or livestock stray, and occasion expense to the society, under the supposition that the same was stolen, the

owner thereof shall repay the society all expenses incurred in consequence, (except for handbills, &c.) all doubts, whether stolen or strayed shall be determined by the committee present at any meeting.

XX

The following rewards shall be offered for the conviction of offenders against the property of the members of this society, which shall be ordered by the committee at their next meeting, (after such conviction) to be paid out of the fund, viz:

	£	s	d
Burglary, or other capital felony.....	10	0	0
Grand Larceny.....	8	0	0
Petty Larceny.....	5	0	0
Robbing gardens.....	1	0	0
Stealing turnips or other field produce.....	0	10	0

If more than one person claim such reward, then the mode of distributing it shall be determined by the committee, who may also give a further reward for exertions made towards detection, apprehension, or conviction of a thief, or the recovery of property stolen, though ultimately unsuccessful.

XXI

The committee reserve to themselves the discretionary power of allowing compensation to members whose loss may not, at any one time, amount to the sum of thirty shillings.

XXII

If the fund of this society shall at any time be insufficient to defray the expenses, the deficiency shall be forthwith supplied by an equal contribution of all the members.

XXIII

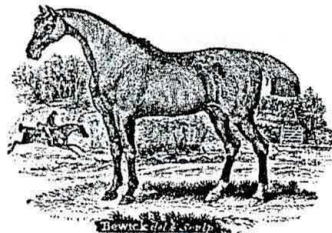
Three fourths of the whole number of the members may dissolve this society, in which case, the then existing fund (after defraying all expenses) shall be divided amongst the members in proportion to their respective contributions.

RESOLVED - That Mr. Jas. Harrod accept the office of Treasurer of this Association

RESOLVED - That Mr. J. Warnes, sen. Mr. John Amies, Mr. Robert Woods, Mr. John Colk, Mr. John Peterson, and Mr. John Cook be requested to form the committee for the year ensuing.

FINIS

E. SILENCE. PRINTER AYLSHAM



The Hunter

ROBERT COPEMAN'S LETTER BOOK 1789-91 (Part 2)

It seems like a lifetime ago since the first part of Robert Copeman's letter book appeared in the *Journal*. I had intended to follow it up in the next issue but circumstances intervened. I have not had the time or opportunity to examine the letter book since March 1998 when the first part appeared, which is a pity as there are many letters still to see. However, I have enough notes from my previous visits to Blickling to provide a final article on Copeman's letter book.

In the previous article, I was bemoaning the fact that the letter book presents a one-sided picture as we never see the letters and replies that are received. I now discover that there are one or two original letters and other papers tucked away at the back of the book, which do broaden the picture for us.

One letter is from Buckingham; addressed to Mr. Copeman. It is dated 8th. February 1774, slightly ahead of the period covered by the letter book

"I was setting down to write you word that there were two vacancies in (?)Plymouth School that might be filled up from Blickling, when your letter was brought to me.

The parish have an undoubted right to put out the children of those who receive collection.

You will acquaint those parents who are so infatuated as rather to see their children starve than well-educated and enabled to earn their living, that they and their families shall always be excepted from any favour of mine.

I have applications from some of my friends, to let them recommend to these vacancies. You will therefore inform me, as soon as possible, if the Blickling fools will be better advised, or not.

.. "

One gets an impression that Mr. Copeman might not have been a very adventurous man; perhaps a little slow, or timid. He seems slow to put into effect Buckingham's suggestions about planting. He

suggests it might be better to await his Lordship's return before venturing into new ideas. It is easy now to mis-interpret his character. Perhaps he was just a very shrewd man and made sure he never put a foot wrong. Nevertheless, I get the impression that he was a little dull and over conscientious. There is a brief document dated 21st. November 1790 that he obviously persuaded Buckingham to sign:-

"As Copeman seems apprehensive of its being insisted that he was the cause(?) of breaking off the treaty with Mr. Nolley(?) for the new lease of the farm, I formally declare that he persuaded me to offer more favourable terms than was my original intention.

B

He does not appear to have been altogether lucky as the following documents reveal:

Robert Copeman of Aylsham in the County of Norfolk being desirous of changing the situation of the orchard in his occupation, I hereby give my licence and consent that he may throw the present orchard into the Inclosure at the back of his garden, and keep the same on plow tilth together with that Inclosure so as the same be treated as the rest of the arable land of the farm in his occupation. Provided that the said Robert Copeman so inclose with a good fence, and keep and leave the same in repair, a proper orchard out of the aforesaid inclosure, near the said garden, [?] out of the Pond Piece on the opposite side, across the road, and plant the same at his own expense. . . ."

"Whereas on the 25th. day of March last, I gave my consent that Robert Copeman of Aylsham in the County of Norfolk, might throw the present orchard in his occupation into the Inclosure at the back of his garden and keep the same on plow tilth together with that enclosure on condition that the said Robert Copeman should inclose and plant another orchard in lieu thereof, And whereas neither of the places in which the said Robert Copeman then proposed to make such orchard have, on examination, been found proper for the purpose.

For which reason, the said Robert Copeman has re-planted the said present orchard, and as the young trees are liable to injury from cattle feeding in the orchard, and would receive benefit from its being ploughed, hath requested my permission to break up the same. Therefore, I do hereby

give my licence and consent that the said Robert Copeman may break up the present orchard and continue it in the the same course of tillage as before mentioned . . . provided that the said orchard be left laid at the expiration of the lease. . . ."

It reads as if it might have been a costly exercise on the whole for Robert Copeman. The remaining letters in the letter book that I have been able to read leave me wishing that I knew more of the background to the contents and to what had gone on before and afterwards.

There is a letter to a Captain Rofe(?),

dated Blickling 20 Jan 1789

Sir,

I should have acknowledged the receipt of yours sooner, but had not an opportunity of seeing or hearing from Mr. Dagless till now.

He is 26 years of age and five feet eleven inches and a half high, and an upright, well looking young man. Wears his own hair, and has a very good character. In case you wish to have anything further said to him, I shall be obliged to you to direct your letter to me as before, and I am your obedient servant. . . .etc.

Who, I wonder, was Mr. Dagless, and what was he being considered for? Copeman also wrote to Her Ladyship occasionally:

Blickling - 22 Jan 1789

My Lady,

There has been an amazing rapid thaw lately. - The cases will be sent to the Aylsham River tomorrow morning, as I hear Mr. Parmeter will sail for Yarmouth tomorrow afternoon. None of the goods have been taken out, at least I hope not, and shall be glad that they arrive safe.

I beg leave to acquaint your Ladyship I have not received one newspaper since the time your Ladyship was pleased to mention them.

Copeman had been promised that Her Ladyship would send down to Blickling the newspapers once she had finished with them, and he was obviously keen to get an opportunity to read them.

Copeman kept well in touch with Buckingham and kept him well-informed, and his third letter in five days reads:

25th. January 1789

My Lord,

The work proposed at the Carr by the river shall be done agreeable to your Lordship's order.

I have enclosed another letter intended as answer to Mr. Rofe, if your Lordship thinks it a proper one, and will be so good as to direct it; or Mr. [Tomkins?] will do so. Mr. Richard Gurney of Norwich having told me he liked young Mr. Dagless and should be glad to help him to some employ and would give a good character. Mr. Dagless tells me Messrs. Birbeck and Taylor of Lynn would likewise give him a good character.

A few days later, he writes again to Her Ladyship:

Blickling 13 Feb. 1789

My Lady,

The entertainment your Ladyship has ordered shall be prepared accordingly tomorrow. I hope your Ladyship will excuse me saying, it was short notice to prepare a wedding feast.

I am very glad to hear it will take place, being so agreeable to both noble families.

I am greatly surprised to find the goods sent by sea are not yet arrived and write by this post to Mr. Carman(?) to know the reason.

The wedding was Lady Sophia's. The following day Copeman was writing to His Lordship again:

My Lord,

I have received your Lordship's of the 12th., and hope the wedding is over by this time to the satisfaction of both families.

I am surprised to find Mr. Dagless is not arrived in London. I have neither seen nor heard of him since the day I gave him the letter I mentioned to your Lordship. Possibly it might take more time for his poor mother to prepare him for the journey than I expected, at least I hope no accident has befallen him.

Thos. Hooper has catch'd some of the hares, the number I do not know. . . "

I will leave the last letter to be one to her Ladyship that he wrote on 3rd. March 1789:

My Lady,

The girl Wright brought my wife an apron of your Ladyships, and the girl Blog 4 pieces of spotted muslin (and 15 ? of worsted) which I have packed in a case and will send them by the Aylsham carrier tonight for Norwich to be forwarded direct by coach to your Ladyship in London.

And hope they will arrive safe. The girl Blog wish me to mention there being 4s due for overcasting . . . "

And this happy domestic note makes a convenient point to end this selection of letters from Robert Copeman's letter book. It is by no means the last letter in the book - far from it, but it is the last I have found time to examine. I am sure it would make interesting reading for anyone with time to continue with the work.

The letter book is at Blickling Hall and I am grateful to the National Trust for allowing me to examine it and copy from it. I am even more grateful to Nicolas Corbin who first alerted me to its existence.

Tom Mollard

And Finally . . .

"Mummy, asked the little girl, *do men ever go to heaven?*"

"Why yes, of course, my dear" answered her mother, "why do you ask?" "Well," said the little girl, "*because I've never seen angels with whiskers.*"

"Ah," said the mother. "*some men do go to heaven, but they only get there by a close shave.*"

1st. Bellringer: "Come on, Bill, put your back into it. It's our privilege to summon the faithful to the Lord's House."

2nd. Bellringer (exhausted) "Wouldn't it save a lot of bother if the vicar just gave them both a ring?"

---ooOoo---

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE ACCOUNTS 1999			
Income & Expenditure on Publications as at 31.8.99			
Income	Expenditure		
Balance at Bank b/f	477-48	Postages, publicity etc	14-45
Cash in hand b/f	11-22	Photocopies	1-21
Sales- <i>Backward Glance</i>	91-35	Printing costs <i>Backward glance</i>	77-75
Sales- <i>Aylsham in 1821</i>	20-00	"Disk Doctors"	<u>20-00</u>
Sales- <i>Six high and lonely churches</i>	17-00	Total	113-41
Sales- <i>Millgate, Aylsham</i>	38-00		
Sales-Back issues of <i>Journal</i>	17-75	Balances in hand-Bank	584-48
Sales-Income from J.Eve's pubs.	6-00	-Cash	46-96
Sales-Postcards	16-40		
Sales- <i>Wrights Map 1839</i>	33-15		
Sales-Misc. various	<u>16-50</u>		
Grand total	744-85	Grand Total	744-85

AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY **Account for the year ended 31st. August, 1999**

	<u>1998</u> £	<u>Income</u>	<u>1999</u> £	<u>1998</u> £	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>1999</u> £
53		Sales of books - Bacons	-	84	Officers' expenses	137
63		Sales Publications & Books	142	274	Journal printing	287
628		Subscriptions	671	202	Visits	620
228		Visits	747	311	Party	444
320		Party	450	192	UEA Course	654
320		UEA Course fees	1000	27	History Fair fee	-
105		Day School	-	126	Friendship Club rent	133
70		Visitors' fees	70	275	Broads Tour	-
260		Broads Tour	-	60	Quaker Room rent	36
15		Donations	25	47	Day School	-
23		Maps receipts	-	40	Donation	20
9		Refreshments	24	85	Lecture fees	115
34		Bank interest	33	20	Subs NAHRG & FNHAO	20
				29	Programme Cards	31
<u>2128</u>		<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>	<u>3162</u>	<u>1772</u>		<u>2497</u>
		<u>Balances 1st. Sept 1998</u>			<u>Balances 31st. August 1999</u>	
79		Treasurer Account	55	55	Treasurer Account	149
628		Moneymaster account	959	959	Moneymaster	1388
15		Petty Cash				
425		Publications account	489	489	Publications account	631
			<u>1503</u>			<u>2168</u>
			<u>£3275</u>			<u>£4665</u>
			<u>£4665</u>			<u>£4665</u>

Checked with records and found to be correct. 7th. October 1999. Graeme Johnston, Accountant, Treasurer, Mrs. E.E.Daines