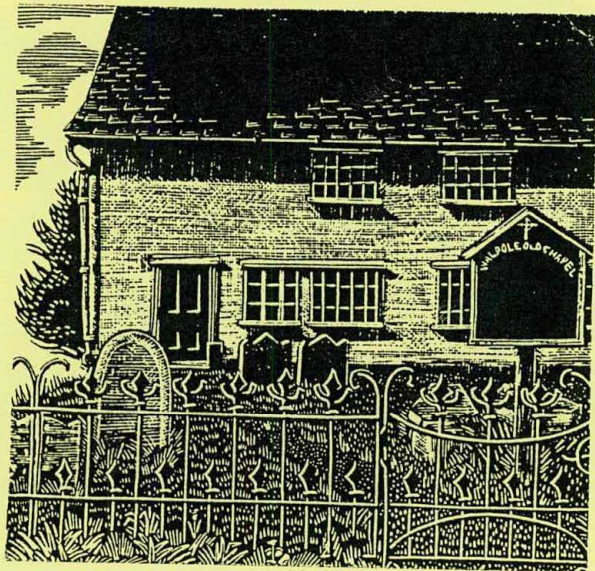


AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



Vol. 5 No. 2

June 1997

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. Contact:-

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COVER PICTURE: Walpole Old Chapel, in Suffolk. One of the places visited on our recent churches tour.

WANTED A NEW SECRETARY

Valerie Belton has given ample notice of her intentions to give up the post of Hon. Secretary of the Society which she has carried out with great success for several years.

The Society needs a secretary to replace her and anyone willing to follow in Valerie's footsteps should let Valerie or Peter Holman or Jane Nolan know.

We cannot function as a society without a secretary so a replacement is vital. Any volunteers?



AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY
SOCIETY

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AN EARLY NORFOLK ACCIDENT

John Sapwell

from EDP 15 Sep 1967

It would be interesting to know the circumstances of the first recorded collision between two motor cars. The accident to be related here must be among the earliest, as the lower speeds of which cars were capable and their comparative rarity must have made accidents far less numerous than they are today.

In these days when such occurrences are an unpleasant commonplace, and indeed a national problem resulting in death and injury to thousands of people every year, it is interesting to note how radically (amongst other things) our conceptions of speed have changed. There was at that time a statutory speed limit of 20mph., the exceeding of which rendered a driver liable to be caught in a "police trap" and prosecuted. Anything approaching that speed was considered 'going it' and an estimated speed of 15 mph. by the defendant's chauffeur was considered by the judge to be dangerous - a conception which makes us smile today.!

On August 19th 1908 a doctor emerging from his private drive on to a main road in North Norfolk in his motor car, collided with another car which was passing at the time. The doctor's car was a 1902 model Wolseley four seater, of which there are at least two

among the veteran cars in Norwich today. It had no doors in the front, no windscreen and no hood, a chain drive, solid tyres and oil lamps. The other car, the make of which is not recorded, belonged to a London gentleman and was being driven by his chauffeur, who unfortunately for himself was giving the maids a joy-ride, unknown to his master at the time.

The doctor who was also a barrister, subsequently sued the owner of the other car in the County Court for £18-14-00 damages to his car. The defendant denied liability and put in a counter claim for £8 similar damages. At the hearing three witnesses testified to hearing the doctor sound his bulb horn three times, but not the driver of the other car, whose speed they estimated at 12 to 15mph. The defendant's chauffeur and his passengers blamed the doctor who they said emerged suddenly from his drive and could have avoided a collision.

The judge who had probably never travelled on the road in anything faster than a gig, inspected the scene of the accident, found that it was near the junction of four roads, though not an actual cross roads. In view of this, he considered it a dangerous place where a speed of 15 miles per hour was too excessive, and after discoursing learnedly on the questions of negligence and contributory negligence, gave judgement for the plaintiff with costs and dismissed counter claim with costs.

Two days later the doctor's chauffeur found himself in the humiliating position of steering the damaged car, drawn by a cart horse through the main street of the nearby town, followed by a hooting crowd of small boys, to the local foundry where it was repaired. Meanwhile, the doctor, temporarily reverted to the quieter and slower means of a horse and gig for his rounds.

It may not have been the first recorded collision between two motor cars, but it must surely rank as one of the earliest miscarriages of justice concerning a road traffic offence.

Ed.

DR. WYNNE'S DIARIES

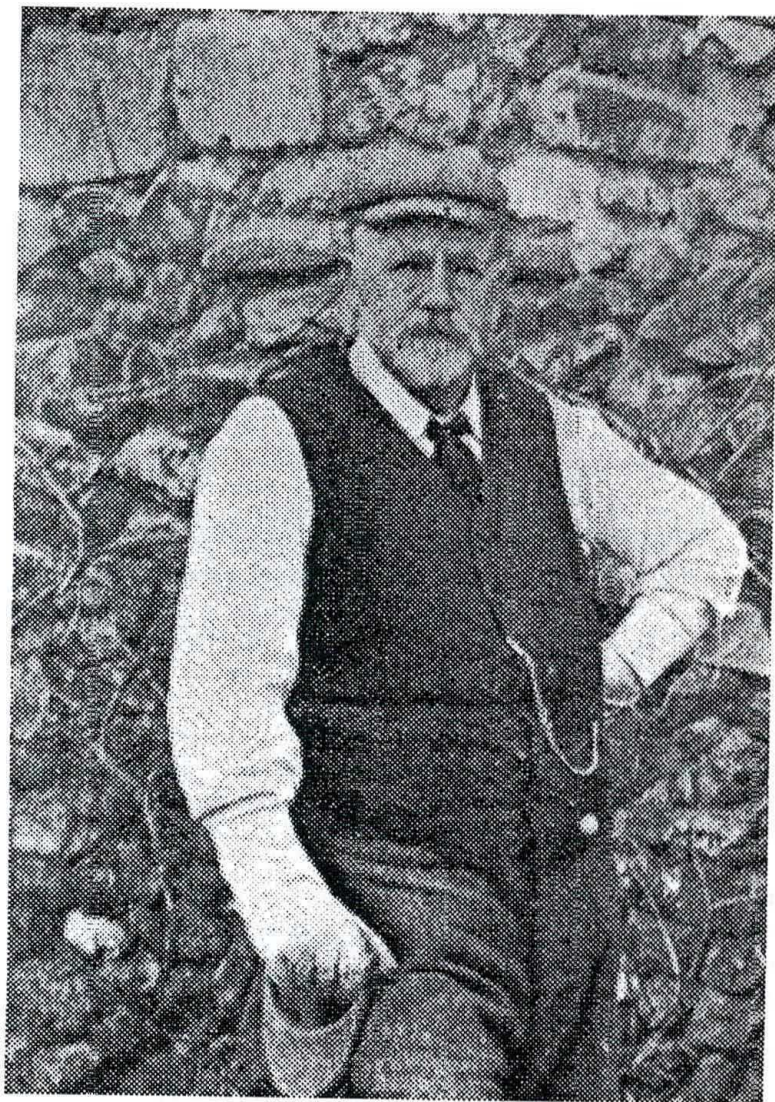
We have reached the end of the diary excerpts taken from Dr. Wynne's sailing logs, from which we have been publishing instalments. Just when I thought we had run out of material on this interesting, former Aylsham man, I received from one of our members, Ron Fiske, a feature on Dr. Wynne which was written by Jonathan Mardle and appeared in the *Eastern Daily Press* for 31st. March 1965. With the kind permission of the Editor of the EDP, it is reproduced below. I am much indebted to Ron Fiske for discovering the article:

THE GOLDEN AGE

In July 1920 there died at Herringfleet in Suffolk an old doctor named William Arnold Smith-Wynne. He was born in 1834, and spent most of his medical career in India, where he served through the Mutiny. He rose to the rank of Surgeon General, but his own health was impaired. When he came home in the 1870s to his native East Anglia it was, in the opinion of his professional brethren, to die. He contradicted them by living to the ripe old age of 86.

By that time his Indian career had faded so far into the past that he was chiefly remembered as a yachtsman, an archaeologist and a meteorologist. He restored St. Olave's Priory, where he lived, and wrote its history. He bequeathed to the Royal Norfolk & Suffolk Yacht Club a silver tankard won by his father, racing his yacht *Daphne* in the early years of the 19th. century. And to his daughter he left 24 volumes of diaries, in which he kept notes of every cruise he made on the Broads. His diaries are now in the archives of Norwich Public Library, and I am indebted to Mr. H. Bolingbroke, formerly keeper of the Strangers Hall Museum who has made extracts from the earlier entries for the benefit of the Norfolk Nautical Research Society.

As I have noticed in other Victorian accounts of the Broads, these whiskered or heavily moustached gentlemen who look so grave in their photographs were playing on the placid rivers of Norfolk and Suffolk an elaborate game of sailors. They played it as seriously as boys.



Dr. William Arnold Smith-Wynne

When they went cruising, they would make up convoys and appoint, with naval punctilio, a Commodore. Moored at Wroxham Broad, Dr. Wynne would startle the neighbourhood by firing a sunset gun when he lowered the burgee of his 21 ft. cabin boat *Mosquito*. When he set sail on a gusty day he noted that the *Mosquito* was under storm canvas, and the nice judgement of the last of the ebb tide down the Bure and the beginning of the flood up Breydon Water, were recorded like an adventure comparable to sailing round the Horn.

Dr. Wynne designed *Mosquito* himself in 1876 and had her built in a yard at Limehouse. He must have crazed the builder, for when he went to London in April 1877, to look at her fittings and rigging, he stayed for a week, and left behind him a list of 120 odd jobs to be done. It was another month before he consented to take delivery of *Mosquito* by railway, and proudly went to Lowestoft to superintend her launching.

Her rig sounds odd for a little craft that was to do a lot of tacking in narrow rivers. She was two masted, with a big balance lug sail on the foremast and a spritsail on the mizzen. However, Dr. Wynne was mighty proud of her. She was sketched and every detail of her equipment was noted in his diary. he once sailed her up to Norwich on purpose to get her photographed.

Life was not all honey, even in that Golden Age on the Broad. It was customary in those days to employ watermen, even on small craft like *Mosquito*. Sometimes they were [dubious characters?] and very seldom were the poor fellows perfect. Reading between the lines of Dr. Wynne's diaries we get a delicious character sketch of his man - Thaxter - willing horse when it came to towing *Mosquito* the length of Haddiscoe Cut against a head wind, but often lacking in other respects: Thaxter, making use of a cruise up the Yare to visit his uncle at a riverside farm, and describing every horse and cow for miles along the banks as his uncle's property, so that Dr. Wynne drily notes that the uncle must be a man of substance. Thaxter confidently pointing to a dyke in the neighbourhood of the farm as containing six feet of water - and *Mosquito* running aground in an unplumbed depth of mud, from which it takes half an hour to free her; or Thaxter, on another occasion, taking the tiller at the entrance from the Bure to Breydon Water, pro-

claiming that he has known the channel all his life, and steering straight on to a shoal. Thaxter, again, on the port tack steering across the bows of a fast wherry, and going about in the nick of time, in response to the united objurgations of his employer and the wherryman.

Wherries, which we are now taught to regard as a bygone glory of the Broads, were regarded with mixed feelings when they constituted the main traffic on the Norfolk Rivers; they were so big and heavy, and the wherryman were so apt to insist, by *force majeure*, that it was the yachtsman's business to yield the right of way. Many was the time when Dr. Wynne tied up to the bank, or ran ashore into a reed-bed, to keep clear of a fleet of them, but so far as I have got with the diaries he does not note that they were picturesque.

And even in 1879, I find him complaining of overcrowding: "*I have only once been on Oulton Broad, this year. . . I dislike Oulton Dyke, and the Broad is overrun with Lowestoft locals and London visitors*". In 1881: "*Horning Ferry Inn does not seem to be the place it was, being frequented by Norwich fishing clubs and a class of people far from pleasant.*" At Wroxham in 1903: "*The banks were quay-headed and tarred, with white fenders strung along the top edge, and a well-kept green lawn and flower beds instead of nature's lovely assortment of wild flowers. To my mind it was revolting and out of place. It was suggestive of a riverside tea garden, and only required a few marble-topped iron tables to complete the effect.*"

Obviously, the Broads, like "*Punch*" never have been what they were.

Note: The sailing diaries are in the Norfolk Record Office now, and not in the Public Library. Two weeks after this article appeared it was followed by another by Jonathan Mardle [Eric Fowler] sparked off by the response to the first article. Again by courtesy of the editor of the EDP and with thanks to Ron Fiske, we will produce that in our next issue.

---ooOoo---

CAPTAIN RICHARD BEARD M.B.E.

Liz Gale

Many members of the Society may remember Captain Richard Beard and his daughter Margaret, who were Aylsham residents for many years. Papers and documents relating to Captain Beard have kindly been donated to the Society by Mr. Alec King and will eventually be deposited in the Aylsham Town archives. This documentation gives a fascinating history of the life of one Aylsham resident.

Richard Beard was born on the 16th. September 1889 at Dunmow in Essex and was the son of the headmaster of the local National School. At the age of thirteen, the young Richard joined the Merchant Service and went to sea as a messroom boy on the *S.S. Trewin*. He was ambitious and determined to rise in his chosen profession and subsequently passed examinations which qualified him as second and first mate, and he obtained his master mariner's certificate at the age of twenty one. In his time at sea, Richard Beard sailed from English ports with cargoes bound for many parts of the world.

In World War I, Richard Beard was commissioned in the Royal Naval Reserve Service and appointed Principal naval transport officer for the Dardanelles and Salonika, and later served as a torpedo officer in the celebrated Dover Patrol. At the end of the war he was seconded to the aircraft carrier *Ark Royal* as the navigator, when she went to the Black Sea to assist in the rescue of Russian refugees. After further service on another carrier, HMS *Empress*, Richard Beard rejoined the Mercantile Service and was made the captain of his own ship at the age of twenty-nine. For his war service he was awarded the Mercantile Marine Medal and the British War Medal.

Captain Beard resigned from the Merchant Service after the war, and in 1926 he moved with his wife, Violet, and two young daughters to Aylsham, where he became the landlord of the Black Boys Hotel. His younger daughter died a few months later at the age of fourteen months. It was a great change of lifestyle for a man who had spent more than thirty years at sea, and his time was now taken



Captain Richard Beard MBE

up in running a hotel which catered for guests and private functions. It was hard work for Captain and Mrs. Beard, and in 1930 they left the Black Boys and moved to the Red Lion Hotel in Red Lion Street, Aylsham. This was a smaller establishment, and they remained there until 1936.

Prior to leaving the Red Lion Hotel, Captain Beard had purchased a piece of land in the Blickling Road and built a bungalow for himself and his family in which he incorporated many artefacts obtained from demolished buildings. The family moved into the bungalow before it was completed, and Captain Beard became employed as a member of the staff on the Eastern Area of the National Trust until his retirement.

In World War II Captain Beard served in the RAF and trained Air Force personnel in air-sea rescue. He was later appointed technical adviser at the Air Ministry for the marine craft side of air-sea rescue. When the war ended, he was demobilised as a Squadron Leader, and awarded the MBE by King George VI for the contribution that he had made with his work in the RAF. He was very proud of this award, and in future years added MBE to his name in all his correspondence.

Captain Beard had a great interest in music and musical instruments, no doubt inherited from his mother who was a church organist, and in his retirement he devoted his time to music. This entailed teaching himself to play the double bass and for a time, he played in the orchestra of the Cromer and Sheringham Operatic and Dramatic Society, and had his own dance band for a few years. Apart from playing music, Captain Beard became proficient at restoring and making new violins and collected stringed instruments. One instrument in his collection was made from a Caley's wooden chocolate bar box and has been given by Mr. King to the Caley company for their growing memorabilia archive. An article and photograph of this unusual instrument was published in the EDP on the 17th. April 1997.

In addition to this musical aspect of his life, he wrote stories about his early sailing days under the pseudonym of "Master Mariner", and these were printed in the Eastern Daily Press newspaper from 1956 until 1967. Many of these stories were broadcast by the BBC. It was in 1961 that Captain Beard decided to publish his sea faring stories as a book and, unable to find a publisher to undertake the task, he decided to publish it himself. He typed the stories, printed them with his own

George R.I.

George the Sixth by the Grace of God of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India and Sovereign of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire to Our trusty and well-beloved Richard Beard Esquire Acting Squadron Leader in Our Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve **Greeting**

Whereas We have thought fit to nominate and appoint you to be an Additional Member of the Military Division of Our said Most Excellent Order of the British Empire We do by these presents grant unto you the Dignity of an Additional Member of Our said Order and hereby authorise you to have hold and enjoy the said Dignity and Rank of an Additional Member of Our aforesaid Order together with all and singular the privileges thereunto belonging or appertaining

Given at Our Court at Saint James under Our Sign Manual and the Seal of Our said Order, this Thirteenth day of June 1946 in the Tenth year of Our Reign.

By the Sovereign's Command

Mary R.
Grand Master

Grant of the dignity of an Additional Member of the Military Division of the Order of the British Empire to Acting Squadron Leader Richard Beard, R.A.F.V.R.

illustrations and having taught himself bookbinding, bound the 200 copies that he produced. Many of these copies were given away, including one to the Duke of Edinburgh, and the others were sold.

Captain Beard died on 22nd September 1967 having lived a life which few could hope to emulate. His daughter, Margaret, made a recording for the Society's Oral History in 1994 and her memories of her father are now preserved along with all the paper documentation.

---ooOoo---

SOCIETY NEWS

Landscape Archæology - On 20th. March, David Gurney addressed a large audience of members and friends at the Friendship Club on landscape archæology. There were several visitors as well as society members eager to hear what he had to say. Perhaps our reputation is spreading, or perhaps we have chosen a good series of speakers this year. David Gurney was no exception and as a member of the Norfolk Museums Service he gave us a most interesting account of the work of the Landscape Archæology Unit which is based at Union House, Gressenhall.

As an East Anglian, his own enthusiasm for archæology was sparked off by living in Colchester, where every time a spade goes into the ground something is bound to be uncovered. His professional career has brought him to Norfolk where his role is now curatorial i.e. safeguarding our heritage. Working one step ahead of the developer, his role is to record and safeguard archæological sites which are likely to be disturbed or destroyed by the developer. Fortunately, archæologists must have the opportunity to carry out this work before developers are allowed to start, and even more fortunately, the rules are that the developer must pay for the work to be carried out.

It is also necessary to plot and record all known sites and finds throughout the county. This includes known sites, recorded but as yet untouched, newly discovered sites as revealed by aerial photography, and also finds made by ordinary members of the public and metal



Norfolk Landscape Archaeology is part of the Field Archaeology Division of the Norfolk Museums Service.

detectorists who report their finds to the Museum Service. Norfolk Museums Service enjoys a good relationship with metal detector enthusiasts and benefits from this good relationship, although there are sometimes little local difficulties. So far over 32,000 sites are plotted and recorded in Norfolk. Maps, and computer records of all this are stored at Gressenhall and the information contained there is available to the general public. This is worth remembering for us when researching our own area of the county.

It was reassuring to hear that archaeologists do not feel compelled to dash out and start digging into every reported site. They are often very happy to leave well alone for the present, confident that as techniques improve and knowledge increases, it is better to leave it to the archaeologists of the future, with much more sophisticated methods to do the job more efficiently. It is an indication of how interesting all this was that one of our members said that he was so enthralled he had forgotten how hard the seat was until the lecture was over!

TWM

Churches Visit - On April 22nd. the second and final visit by the group which had been studying East Anglian churches, took place. Our first

visit was to West Norfolk churches (reported in the *Journal* Vol 4 p.371), but on this occasion we set off in the opposite direction to visit churches in Suffolk. Twenty-five of us, with our tutor, Gerald Randall, crossed over the border and started the tour with a visit to Walpole Old Chapel, one of the earliest Independent chapels in the country. In 1649, what was then a late 16th. century yeoman's house, was converted into an Independent chapel which continued to serve a local congregation right up until 1970, when the chapel closed. It is now under the care of the Historic Chapels Trust and only an annual service is held there. The interior is unchanged and retains all the atmosphere of its earlier days.

St. Andrew's church at Bramfield was a complete contrast. The remains of an ancient wall painting survive together with a delightful rood screen with its, surprisingly, undamaged figures. There are many memorials to the Rabett family, and also an interesting ledger slab to Bridget Applewhaite who died in 1737. After losing her first husband, she "*ran the risk of a second marriage bed*" according to the inscription, but death rescued her from such a fate!

At Wenhaston St. Peter's we saw the remarkable Doom painting which once stood behind the figures on the rood screen. The positions of the figures in the crucifixion scene can be clearly seen, where the background scene was painted around them. The painting had been whitewashed over and was found by accident in the last century. We dispersed into various hostelrys in Southwold for lunch, but still had time to visit St. Edmund's church there to see, amongst other things, another excellent screen. This one has been damaged, but its attractions are still visible.

Our last visit was to Blythburgh church. Despite restoration work still in progress it was still a rewarding visit. There is so much to see there, and it made a fitting end to the two days of church visits which brought to a conclusion the study course led by Gerald Randall on the churches of East Anglia. TWM

James Edward Smith (1759-1828) - All our recent lectures in the Friendship Club seem to be extremely well attended, and the talk by Mrs. Barbara Miller on 24th. April was no exception. A large audience heard Mrs Miller talk on the Life of Sir James Edward Smith, the English botanist, born in Norwich, but buried in Lowestoft, the home

town of his wife who survived him by some 40 years and died at the age of 103 in full possession of all her faculties.

Mrs Miller's interest had been sparked off by the memorial to James Smith in St. Peter Mancroft church, where the inscription had convinced her that behind the sparse details on the memorial lay a very interesting story. Her researches proved that she had judged correctly and we all shared in that interesting story as she told us of the life of James Edward Smith.

He was born in Norwich, as a weak sickly boy. His major interest in life was botany, but he studied medicine at Edinburgh, and qualified as a doctor at Leyden. He did not seem over keen on medicine, and may well only have studied the subject because he was barred from the Oxbridge colleges by reason of his non-conformity. His main interest was always botany. He founded the Natural History Society of Edinburgh and throughout his life he moved in those circles which kept him in constant contact with like-minded colleagues. He was a friend of Joseph Banks who accompanied Captain Cook on his voyages. He bought the entire library of Carl Linnaeus from his widow and brought it back to London where he became founder and first president of the Linnaean Society. His writings included 4 volumes of "English Flora" (1824) and the 36 volumes "English Botany" (1790-1814) in addition to 76 other publications. Before her death, his widow edited and published his many letters. Despite his national and international reputation, he left London and chose to live for nine months each year in Norwich and just three months in London - but who could blame him!

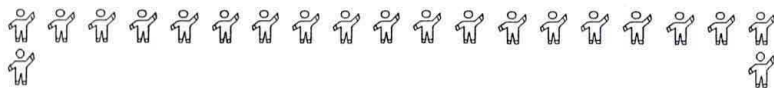
It was a most enjoyable talk, and sadly brings to an end our official series of open lectures until the new season begins in September.

TWM

A DAY IN SOME HISTORIC AYLSHAM HOUSES - On 10th. May a group of members were shown round some interesting and historic houses which are not normally available to the public. We were guided by Christopher Barringer and Vic Nierop Reading. It has not been possible to report fully on this fascinating day out in time for this issue of the *Journal*. However, I hope to have a full report for the next issue in September.

STUDY COURSE - Our next formal study course arranged with UEA will be a study of the history of the Norfolk countryside. This will be given by R. S. Joby. Again, full details will be available by the appearance of our next issue.

---ooOoo---



...from our Vice Chairman

Sadly, Jane Nolan has been ill for most of this year, and we have missed her presence at classes and lectures, as well as her quiet work behind the scenes. A combination of symptoms has led to a long spell in hospital which it is hoped will end before too long. We send her our best wishes for recovery and look forward to seeing her out and about again, back with Frank, who has given her so much support during these difficult and worrying times.

Peter Holman

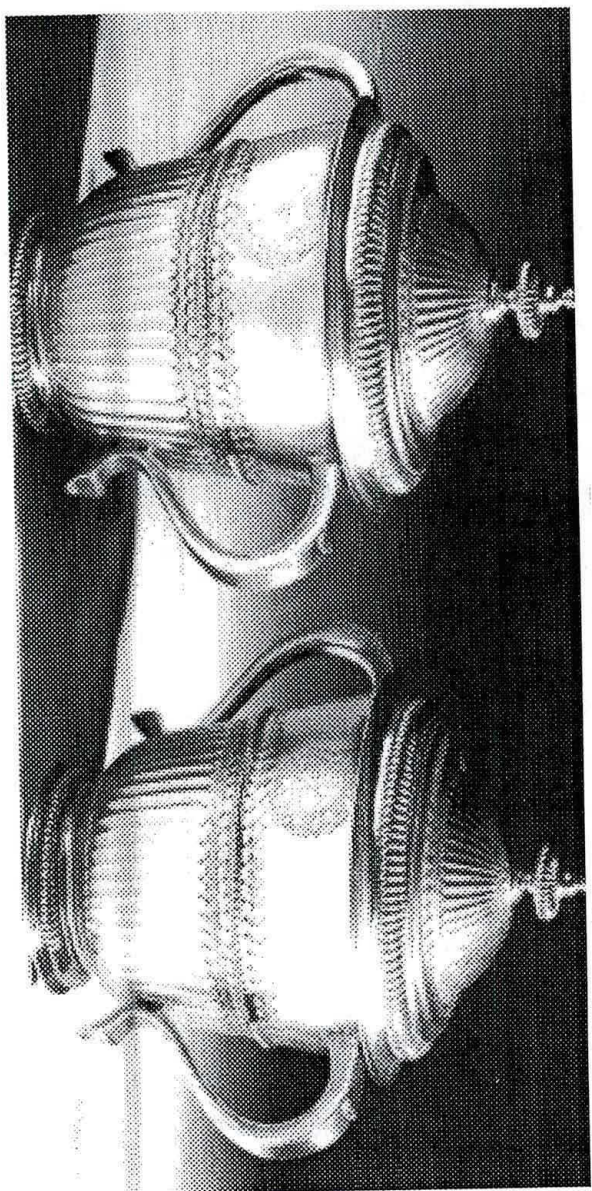


HENRY RIPPINGALL

Tom Mollard

The name Rippingall is fairly well known to Aylsham people. We are all familiar with Rippingall Road and Close even if not everyone knows that they are named after Henry Rippingall who died in 1714. The most information we have about Henry comes from Dr. Sapwell's *A History of Aylsham* (1961) where he writes.....

"Henry Rippingall, the leading attorney in Aylsham and an ardent Tory flourished in the late 17th. and early 18th. century. He lived at No. 1 Market Place¹ where Christopher Layer² was articled to him about 1700. He was churchwarden in 1692, 1696 and 1710. He married Hannah Lawes of Aylsham and assumed the arms of his wife's family



Queen Anne cups of Henry Ripplingall

which appear on her gravestone. His wife died in 1701 and is buried in the south aisle of Aylsham church. The lower half of her gravestone has been left blank, presumably for the addition of her husband's inscription which was never done although he was buried at Aylsham on 4th. February, 1714.

More recently, in a letter to the parish Clerk in 1993, a descendant of the family, Major J. Rippingall wrote asking for information about his ancestor, which our archivist, Ron Peabody, replied to. In the letter Major Rippingall mentioned that he had recently seen in a London silversmith's two small silver loving cups engraved "*H. R. Aylsham 1704*". These had intrigued him, but as they were priced at £24,000 he resisted the urge to purchase them.

The cups were on sale at Tessiers of New Bond Street, London, and subsequent correspondence between Major Rippingall, Ron and Tessiers has brought out the following information. Brand Inglis of Tessiers has supplied the excellent photograph reproduced here, plus a brief account of what is known about the cups. Brand Inglis is also one of the 'silver experts' that many of us will have seen on the Antiques Roadshow, and he describes them thus:-

"A PAIR OF QUEEN ANNE CUPS AND COVERS"

...of slightly bell-shaped outline, they each rest on a tightly-drawn gadrooned foot and the bodies are lightly chased with flutes below a wire girdle. The upper portion of the body is quite plain except for an engraved coat-of-arms within a baroque cartouche. The low domed covers are each decorated with a band of gadrooning and a band of fluting with a gadrooned baluster finial. [Made] by Samuel Wastell, London. 1705.

The arms are those of Rippingall quartering Aslake, or Asloke of various towns in Norfolk and Suffolk. The Rippingalls are a well-known family of Aylsham in Norfolk, and their descendants still live in that general area today.

The maker, Samuel Wastell, was the son of Henry Wastell of Kings

Lynn in Norfolk and was apprenticed to Benjamin Bradford in 1694, and subsequently to John Fawdery. He was Free on 10th. October 1701, working first in Finch Lane, and then in 1705 he moved to the Mitre, Leadenhall Street. It is perhaps interesting that he kept his ties with Norfolk, gaining this particular commission from an old Norfolk family and also taking an apprentice, Thomas Sharp, also from Kings Lynn."

We still do not know very much detail of the life of Henry Rippingall, but our knowledge is widened slightly with this small exchange of letters. I am grateful to all who have added to the picture.

NOTES

1. The Bank House. see also Jane Nolan's article in *Journal* Vol.4 p.244
2. Christopher Layer is interesting in his own right. In addition to the memorial to him on the wall of the Bank House, there is also a full account of him in R.W. Ketton-Cremer's *A Norfolk Gallery* 1948 pp.125-148

---ooOoo---

THE CELLAR BOOK

Tom Mollard

My infrequent trips to the local bottle-bank are usually made with a slight sense of embarrassment. By the time I have loaded up the car with empty bottles, I have convinced myself that nobody else ever had such an enormous quantity to dispose of. As the bottle bank is prominently sited outside the Village Hall, I have even taken to choosing times when I think fewer people are about to witness the event, but I usually get it wrong and arrive just in time to be observed by all the members of the Mother & Toddler group as they leave the hall and witness this wild-looking individual firing bottles as fast as he

RACKHAM'S
CELLAR-BOOK;

OR, THE

BUTLER'S ASSISTANT

IN KEEPING A REGULAR ACCOUNT OF LIQUORS.

SUITABLE FOR ANY YEAR.

(PRICE ONE SHILLING).

BURY ST. EDMUND'S:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. RACKHAM, BOOKSELLER, ANGEL-HILL:

SOLD ALSO BY ALL BOOKSELLERS IN SUFFOLK, NORFOLK,
ESSEX, AND CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

can through the little hole, and my reputation as the village soak is enhanced even further.

In earlier time, people were not quite as sensitive as this. They did not bother quite as much about the quantity consumed, but they still were very meticulous in making sure none of it went astray, nor that they inadvertently ran out of supplies. This is well illustrated in an interesting little book loaned to me by David Walker. It is called:-

Rackham's Cellar Book; or, the Butler's Assistant in keeping a regular account of liquors. Priced at one shilling, it was printed and sold by Rackhams Bookseller of Bury St. Edmunds.

It is a six-month [27 weeks] record of all liquor supplies consumed, probably by the occupiers of the Old Bank House, Aylsham, starting with the week beginning July 13, 1817. It is clearly a continuation of an earlier record, and it is interesting to see what was in the cellar when this volume started.

Drink	Bottles	Drink	Bottles
Port	729	Cyder	33
Sherry	28	Porter	14
Madeira	6	Sweetmountain	14
Claret	51	Sutern	14
Brandy	2	Barsac	11
Rum	0	Brucellas	12

The cellar book is largely a record of what went out of the cellar, as there was enough laid down to keep it well stocked. The only wine added over these six months were 5 dozen bottles of Brucellas to replace what had been consumed. It was clearly a popular drink and I discover it was a sweet white Spanish wine. Most of the wines listed are recognisable today. Sutern is presumably Sauternes, but I am still puzzled at what "Sweetmountain" might have been. Whatever it was, it was not much in demand and only one bottle was drunk over the whole period. Statistically, there were 269 bottles consumed over 27 weeks, which makes me feel positively abstemious. Porter and cider are listed

MEMORANDUMS.													
		Pot	Cherry	Alumina	But	Bromine	Quin	Cyan	Coccol	Chlorine	Iodine	Bismuth	Mucilage
24	In the Cellar	70	25	5	44	5	0	25	4	44	14	11	24
	Added												
	Together												
	Sunday												
	Monday	1				1							
	Tuesday												
	Wednesday	1						1					
	Thursday	1		1	2			1			1	1	
	Friday	2			1			1			1	1	
	Saturday												
	Drank	5	1	3	1			3			2	2	
	Remains	69	25	4	41	4	0	22	4	44	12	11	22

To Dinner, Dinner
Ladies and others
Ladies, Order and others
Dinner

but not beer, although beer was certainly there. A note records the following:-

"at home 37 weeks, drank ale 15 hogsheads, In the cellar 10. . "

One must bear in mind that a fair amount of entertaining was included. The cellar book records when guests were entertained. The most frequent guests were Admiral and Mrs. Lukin. There was also a Mr. Wodehouse, a Mr. Ormby(?), and a Mr & Mrs Glover. In one particular week the admiral was a guest on Thursday night, followed the next night by Lord Orford. There were many more simply recorded "as others". The recorded consumption then was not excessive. Certainly everything consumed was accounted for. There is even a note which reads:-

1 bottle of sherry for the cook; 1 pint for food.

Was the sherry for the trifle, or a sweetener for the kitchen staff?

I was curious at first as to who Admiral Lukin might have been. Most probably he was William Lukin (1768-1833), a naval officer who succeeded the widow of William Windham as owner of Felbrigg Hall in 1824. He then changed his own name to Windham. He had gone to sea at the age of 13, and by 1795 was in command of the sloop *Hornet*. By 1806 he commanded the *Mars* a 74 gun ship of the line which engaged a French squadron en route for the West Indies and captured four enemy troopships. Lukin was described as a

'firm but not harsh disciplinarian. Sometimes months would pass without a single flogging. . . '

He left the Navy in 1814 and was advanced to the rank of Vice-Admiral. He retired to Felbrigg Cottage where he could farm whilst waiting to inherit Felbrigg Hall. So, when he was being recorded in the cellar book as a guest being entertained at Aylsham, he had just left the Navy three years previously. Before taking up residence at the Hall he also spent at least two years living in Brussels [1820-21]. What I have

not yet discovered is, who was living at the Bank House in Aylsham in 1817 and entertaining such distinguished company?

—ooOoo—

ST. FAITH'S PRIORY - VISITATION BY THE BISHOPS OF NORWICH 1492 & 1532

Julian Eve

Once every six years, the Bishop's duty was to visit every religious house within his diocese. The reports of some visits made by the Bishops of Norwich between 1492 and 1532 were discovered in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, by Dr. Augustus Jessop in 1885. He published these reports (still in Latin) in 1889. Two visits to St. Faith's Priory, one in 1492 and another in 1532 feature in his publication. The first visit was made by Bishop Goldwell.

Bishop Goldwell

James Goldwell, whilst acting as English ambassador on a visit to Pope Sixtus IV (1414-84) in Rome, was made Bishop of Norwich on 4th. October 1472. On his return to England he also became principal secretary of State to Edward IV. On arriving at his Norwich See, he made his brother, Nicholas, collector of his first fruits in the diocese, and later (1483) he made him Archdeacon of Norwich. Bishop Goldwell raised a lot of money to restore and improve his church (Norwich Cathedral) by selling indulgences for which he had obtained the Pope's consent. All who attended the cathedral on Trinity Sunday and Lady Day, and made offerings, were granted 12 years and forty days pardon. He died on 15th. February 1499 having been Bishop for 27 years. [see Blomefield, Vol III p.541 for details and his will.]

The 1492 Visit

On Thursday, October 11th. 1492, Bishop James Goldwell

arrived at St. Faith's Priory accompanied by his brother, Nicholas Goldwell who was the Archdeacon, Henry Falk, Doctor of Divinity and John Apphowell, notary and scribe. They were met at the north door (*ad borealem portam*) by the prior and all eight monks. They formed a procession, and while singing the Response to Holy Trinity, entered the priory church and proceeded up to the high altar with the organ playing and the bells ringing (*campanis pulsanibus organisque psallentibus*). After prayers and the usual elaborate Benedictine ceremonies, the service ended with the Bishop's blessing.

All those in Holy Orders then retired to the priory's Chapter House. Laymen were excluded. The main doors of the priory were locked, for there was to be no disturbance. Their discussion was confidential to themselves alone.

Apart from the Bishop and his party there were present:-

The Prior - Dominus John Rysle

Robert Jille (Sub-prior)

Thomas Anyell

John Swenyinton

Thomas Norwich

William Fakenham

Thomas Rudelsham

John Carter

William Atwode.

When their turn came to speak, the monks complained about the following:-

- that the brethren did not get enough to eat and that they were kept waiting for their food.
- that the servants of the house had become the masters and the provisioner took away the food that the brethren wished to keep for their visiting friends.
- that the buildings were in a bad state of repair, and that as there was no water in the cloister they had to go and fetch it.

Complaints about the prior were, that he kept the service books in his own care and the brethren were unable to use them; that he locked up the books lately kept in the library, in a chest where no one could use them, and finally, that when he went to inspect the manorial lands he insisted on going alone.

The brethren complained that the sub-prior did not correct them in the proper place, but reproved them in front of the laity; that the secrets of the chapter were revealed to lay people; that the service book in the choir was so tattered that the juniors did not understand how to say the office, and that the juniors wanted a grammar master to teach them within the house. Their final complaint was that there was no inventory of the jewels, goods and vestments of the house.

After hearing their complaints, the Bishop issued his injunctions. A grammar master was to be provided before next Easter. The new ordinal, now in the hands of the prior, was to be placed in the sacristy and the brethren to have access to it. Private matters of the chapter were not to be revealed to lay people. The prior was to make a list of the jewels, goods and vestments of the house and show it to the brethren. Then the Bishop, reserving his right to compel obedience, declared his visitation over.

The second visit in 1532 was made by Bishop Nix or his deputy.

Bishop Nix

He was Bishop of Norwich from 1501 to 1535 (actually 24th. March 1500 to 24th. January 1534 by the Julian Calendar, as the new year started on 25th. March). Blomefield claims "*he was certainly a man of bad character and lived a vicious life*". He renounced the Pope's supremacy in order to keep his bishopric, but secretly opposed the Reformation and corresponded with the Pope. He was imprisoned and fined for his treachery, and in order to pay his fine he was forced to hand over most of the large revenues of his See to the king in exchange for the revenues of St. Benet's Abbey.

His most infamous act was the persecution of Thomas Bilney whom he condemned as a heretic and had burned at the stake. He became blind and decrepit in his old age. Four days before his death he recommended to the king that John Sarisbury (Salisbury) be made suffragan Bishop of Thetford. He is buried in Norwich Cathedral.

The 1532 Visit.

The particulars of this visit are recorded only briefly. The visit was made on Thursday 17th. August 1532, only a few years before the dissolution of the priory. The Bishop of Norwich was Richard Nix, but it is not clear if the visit was actually made by the Bishop himself or by a deputy. The monks in St. Faith's priory are listed as:-

Dominus Launcelot Wharton (Prior)
Walter Thornham (Sub-Prior)
John Atmer
Edward Wood
Thomas Norwich
William Cambridge
Nicholas Colteshale

Thomas Norwich was listed in 1492 and must have been at St. Faith's priory for 40 years. Walter Thornham, the sub-prior, said that all things were done properly and so did John Atmer, but other evidence revealed that there had been some squabbling. Thomas Norwich claimed that seventeen days ago Edward Wood had struck him with a 'croke' [an earthenware pot], while he was in the infirmary, and he had done the same before. The same Edward Wood was also accused of using abusive words to the sub-prior when called to service. Other complaints were that John Atmer came to Divine Service *"only when it pleases him"* and that silence was not always observed in the cloisters

The record shows that the Bishop concluded his visit with a blessing, but it does not record whether he issued any injunctions. The visits made by Bishop Nix in the diocese are of particular interest as they were made only three years before the Royal Visitations organised by Thomas Cromwell, the King's Vicar General, and a comparison can be made with eighteen houses visited by both. The Bishop found only one canon who had fathered a child, while the King's Visitors found serious sexual irregularities in all but one of the eighteen houses.

Cromwell employed his own agents, not local men, who were told to expose examples of 'vicious, carnal and abominable living'

wherever they could be found. The small religious houses, worth less than £200 a year, which Henry VIII intended to close were to be shown to be in need of reformation. Transferring the monks to larger, more virtuous establishments would rehabilitate them. In reality this turned out not to be the case and it was the larger monasteries that tended to be corrupt.

The inquiries made by Royal Visitors were along different lines from the diocesan Bishop's. Cromwell's agents sought answers to five questions. Firstly, the names of the nuns or monks guilty of any offence against their vow of chastity. Secondly, the names of those who wished to be relieved of their vows. Thirdly, the presence of "superstitions" in the house [relics and idols etc.] Fourthly, the name of the founder or living heir, and lastly the income of the house. The Bishops, on the other hand, heard complaints from the brethren and pursued religious matters. Did they all attend Matins, or was there slackness in observing the daily round of services?

When Cromwell's agents called at St. Faiths Priory in November 1535, they made no adverse comment, and even when the Suppression Commissioners visited ten months later, to dissolve the monastery, they reported that "*the neighbours report of them is all to their credit*". This is not too surprising, as the prior by then was John Sarisbury [Salisbury] appointed in 1534, of whom everybody spoke well. After the dissolution of St. Faiths priory he was made Abbot of Titchfield in Hampshire, and promptly surrendered that Premonstratensian house to the Crown also. As one of Henry's "placemen" he was made Suffragan Bishop of Thetford and Archdeacon of Anglesey. Later, he was appointed canon and then Dean of Norwich Cathedral (1539) where it was said that he acted as Cromwell's watchdog. In 1540 he assisted the King by signing the decree that annulled the royal marriage to Anne of Cleves.

SOURCES

- Atherton et. al. "*Norwich Cathedral, Church, City and diocese. 1096-1996*" (1996)
- Blomefield, Francis. "*An Essay towards a topographical history of Norfolk*" Vol. 3 [11 volumes 1806]

Jessop. Revd. A. *"Visitations of the Norwich Diocese 1492 to 1532"*
Camden Soc. NS XLIII. 1887

Hoskins. W.G. *"The age of plunder"* 1976

Woodward G.W.D. *"Dissolution of the monasteries"* 1966

NORFOLK WHERRY TRUST

On the 24th. October 1996, the Society had a most interesting lecture on Norfolk wherries and members may be interested in the following information. The Norfolk Wherry Trust offers bookings on the wherry *Albion*, as follows:-

Rates for non-members.

A week of 7 days:- £850 (deposit £250)

Weekend plus attached weekdays £145 per day (deposit £50)

Weekdays not attached to a weekend:- £130 per day (deposit £40)

Half day, or evening trips:- £85 (deposit £25)

Lets over 7 days:-£120 per day (deposit £30)

Cruises £15

Length of trip is from 9am to about 5 or 6 pm depending on the weather and when it gets dark

OPEN DAYS

The Trust has open days which are free of charge. Locations and dates as below:-

2nd July - Womack

23rd. July - Ranworth

3rd. September - Wroxham

for any further details contact:

Christine Tusting

NWT Charter Secretary

7 Low Road

HINGHAM NR9 4NG

Tele. 01953-850 181

FOR SALE

I have recently received a letter from a Mr Bennett in Crewe, with some interesting information. Mr. Bennett writes:-

" . . . I am interested in local and family history and try to pass on information and resources wherever possible. A lot of documents for your area, particularly Aylsham, have appeared in book and document dealers shops and auction houses in the Midlands recently, and wherever I could acquire them, at a reasonable price, I have purchased them, knowing from experience that somebody in your area would probably dearly love them, rather than being framed on some American or German lounge wall.

I have given brief details [below] of the documents I hold and will be willing to forward them to interested people in your area for the purchase cost plus postage. . . . I assure you this is a non-profit making request. . . "

1. Enclosure Act for East Ruston 1806 and sale documents for a cottage in the village (names of Helsden and Baker) 1818
2. Estate papers for the Revd. Coleby of Colby - 1842/3
3. Office paper copies of property deeds and others:-

a) Burgh next Aylsham	1833	Holley, Cooper
b) Blickling property sale	1828	Will of J.H.Holley
c) various places	1832	Knight, Holley
d) Briston propert deed	1832	Knight; Holley
e) Burgh next Aylsham	1862	Holley property deed
f) "	1862	Burr; Holley "
g) "	1862	Scott; Holley; Cuddon
h) Several for Holley around 1835 (Burgh next Aylsham) with other names including Palmer; Vickerman; Jackson; Stracey; Scott; Forster; Kett; Sewell; Blake; Barclay; Stafford.		

i) Various estates	1847	Windham mortgage
j) Plumstead & others	1846	[?] and Marsham
k) Foxley with Bawdeswell	1853	Cozens; Woodhouse
l) Aylsham Vicarage	1852	Soame and Woods.
m) Aylsham manor tenancy surrenders	19th. century	

OTHERS

PLACES:- Hackford; Reepham; Erpingham; Swannington; Wood Dalling; Thurning; Foxley; Cawston; Alby; Ingworth; Thurgarton; Roughton; Downham Market; Colby; Wells; Hainford; Saxthorpe and many others.

NAMES:- Warner; Aldiss; Marquis of Lothian; Howlett; Hildyard; Gay; Bacon; Shepherd; Cozens; Grounds; Woodhouse; Blyth; Gaff; Howes; Easto; Earl of Oxford; Fish; Park; Leamon; Balls; Cook; Turner; Copeman; Knight; Kittle; Pratt; Dix; Shaw; Gunton; Clover; Ringwood; Parmeter; Durrant; Edgecumbe etc etc.

I have no way of knowing what the papers contain or what their commercial value or cost is. However, members are free to follow up any of the above directly with Mr. Bennett who can be contacted:-

Mike Bennett, 22A London Road, Woore, CREWE, Cheshire. CW3 9SF. or by telephone: 01630 - 647311

And finally. . .

The parson had just enjoyed a chicken dinner at the home of one of his parishioners. Looking out of the window after dinner, he remarked, "*That rooster of yours seems to be a mighty proud and happy bird.*"

The host replied, "*He should be, his eldest son has just entered the ministry.*"