

AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



West Elevation of Market Place

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Cover Picture: - A view of the west elevation of the Market Place, from a drawing in the "Aylsham Conservation area report" published by the Planning Department of Norfolk County Council in 1972.



AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY
SOCIETY

JOURNAL & NEWSLETTER

Vol. 5

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NETHERHALL

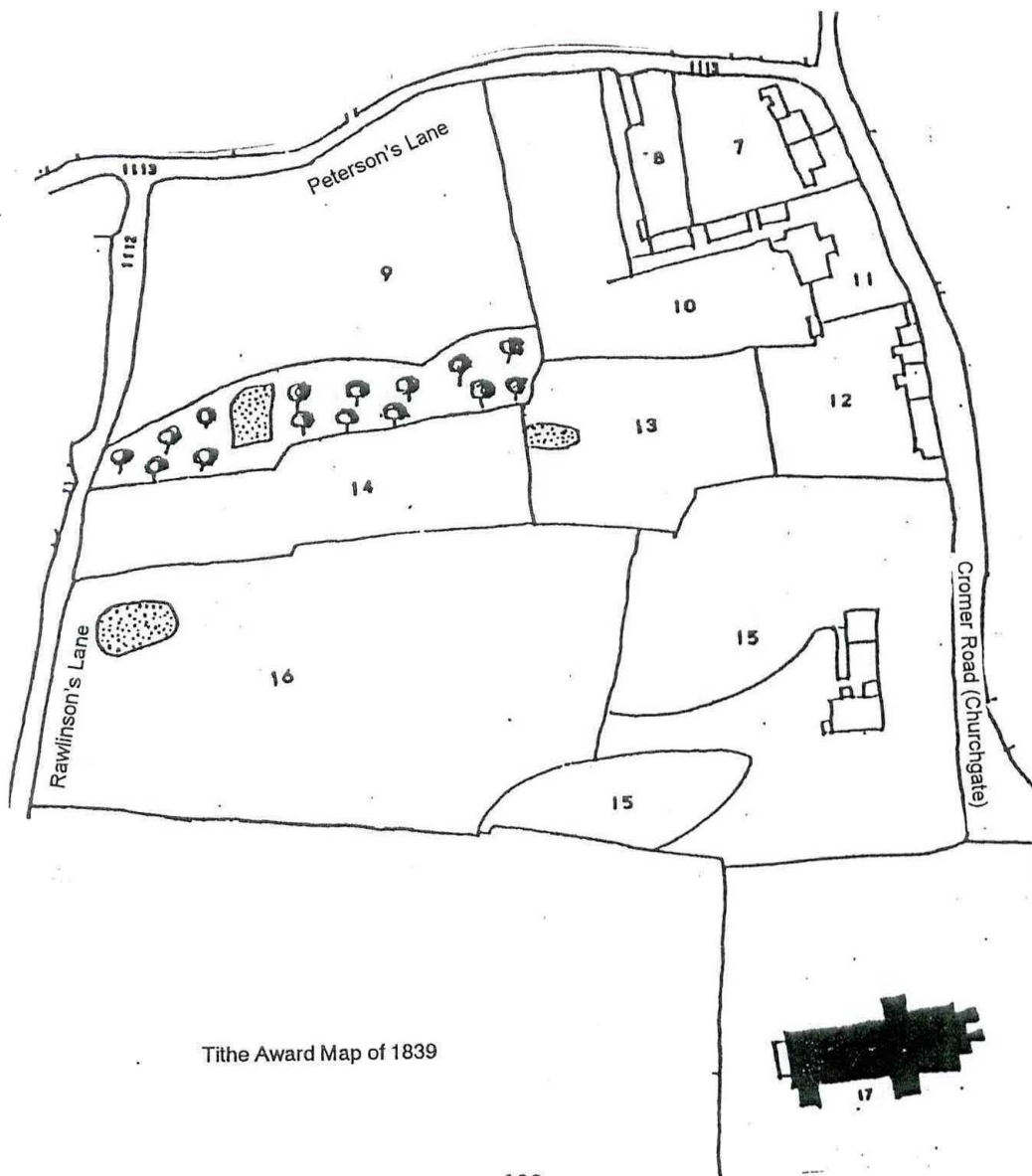
Joan Turville-Petre

The house called Netherhall was not included in the Aylsham Rental;¹ it had no part in the manors of Aylsham, for it was church property. The terrier of 1620² includes it in the Rectory land. According to Blomefield,³ the Rectory was granted to Christ Church, Canterbury by Henry VIII.

Two deeds of the seventeenth century describe the whole property. In 1636⁴ the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury granted to John Hobart and four others "the rectory of Aylsham and all the tenement called Netherhall, now or late in the tenure of Thomas Norgate" for a term of 21 years, at a rent of £20 a year.

In 1662,⁵ after passing through other hands, the Rectory and Netherhall are granted to John Jones and Edward Townsend. The Tithe Award map of 1839 shows that the whole area between the churchyard, Cromer Road, Peterson's Lane and Rawlinson's Lane was probably church land. The two plots [15 and 16] immediately north of the church, were held by the late vicar. North of this tranche, was a narrower band [plots 12-14] also held by a cleric (Rev. Samuel Pitman). By this time The Grange in Cromer Road had been built. Its owner, Thomas Rackham, held the third tranche [plots 7-11] bordering on to Peterson's Lane. A band of woodland is shown here; the Dean and Chapter had throughout reserved the right to take timber. It seems evident that this

tranche (of about four acres) was the site of Netherhall, and that Netherhall Street was the earlier name of Peterson's Lane.



Houses in Netherhall Street occur occasionally in the seventeenth century Court books of Aylsham Lancaster. Descriptions are hard to follow, but they mention multiple occupancy and suggest a run-down area⁶. The clearest is an entry of 9th. August 1632⁷. Here a widow, Katherine Leeds, transfers her tenement with garden in Netherhall Street; the north abutment is 'the public highway leading from Millgate to the Old Market'; the south, another property; the east is 'the King's highway leading from Aylsham to Ingworth', here called 'Netherhall Street'.

Other entries (and corrections) show that this is a mistake for "Nethergate" which is appropriate for the continuation of Churchgate towards Ingworth. It seems that Mrs. Leeds's property stood on the corner of the two streets. The public way between Millgate and the Old Market is often mentioned without allusion to that part called Netherhall. It was a link in the route between North Walsham and Blickling. The Old Market was already so called in 1462.⁸

The description of Netherhall in the terrier of 1620 shows it to be a modest farm. Its title points to an age long past. The prefixes over- and nether- survive in field names, but have not been applied to buildings in recent centuries. John Field, *A History of English field names*. 1993. quotes the 'obsolete: Le Netherhallorcharde [1384] and Netherhousemede. [1552]

"Hall" would normally denote the house occupied by the lord of the manor. There were indeed 'Overhalls' and 'Netherhalls' in Norfolk, but none has survived into modern times. Walter Rye⁹ lists nine Norfolk villages with a Netherhall. Blomefield shows that most of these had an Overhall as well. Neither of these authorities mentions the state of things at Haddiscoe in the fourteenth century. Here the chief administrative district was known as "Overhall and Netherhall". Records of its court exist for some years between 1362 and 1403¹⁰. It seems that an Overhall existed then as site of the court. But the unit outlasted any building, and was still keeping records in the nineteenth century.

NOTES

- 1 *Aylsham in the Seventeenth Century*. A.L.H.S. (1988)
- 2 NRO. NRS/12921 27 E 7
- 3 *An essay towards a topographical history of Norfolk*, by F. Blomefield
 Vol vi 282 (1741)
- 4 NRS 12935 A
- 5 NRS 11063
- 6 eg NRS 16616, 2v
- 7 NRS 16614
- 8 NRS 19247 a
- 9 *Index of Norfolk Topography*, by Walter Rye. 1881
- 10 NRS Aylsham Collection 221

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NOTES & QUERIES

MARMOR NORFOLCIENSE: a postscript

The article in the last issue of the *Journal* provoked a greater response than I ever anticipated. The article itself was written by the late Dr. John Sapwell, many years ago. I am not sure how long ago that was, but he intended it for publication in the *Eastern Daily Press*. However, it was not used in the newspaper and the feature, together with other Sapwell papers eventually ended up in the parish archives. These are the same papers that I have been plundering and reproducing in the *Journal*. Some of the articles were never previously published. Others which had appeared in the EDP have re-appeared in the *Journal* by kind permission of the editor of the newspaper.

In his article Sapwell mentioned that the pamphlet *Marmor Norfolciense* "was quite scarce, and copies were quite difficult to come by". The first response I received was from one of our members, Ron Fiske, who confirmed that not only were copies exceedingly scarce, but because of their scarcity they were valued at between £900-£1200 each,

and that was a valuation figure of some ten years ago. What the value is today makes interesting speculation.

The second response came from a reader who quotes from Boswell's *"Life of Johnson"* where Boswell states that " *...Marmor Norfolciense became exceedingly scarce, so that I for many years endeavoured in vain to procure a copy.*" It seems that Boswell never did acquire a copy of the original 1739 publication, and had to wait until a malicious pirated edition appeared in 1775. This was published by one of Dr. Johnson's adversaries. The publication in 1775 was intended to embarrass Dr. Johnson, but it missed its mark. Boswell records that the great Doctor had never heard of the reprint until he, Boswell, drew his attention to it long after it had been published.

Needless to say, the copy of the original edition of 1739 no longer sits on the open shelf of the Cathedral Library. It is now safely under lock and key!

VILLAGE LOCK-UPS - The article on Village Lock-Ups in the last issue also produced a comment and further information from one of our members. Mrs Margaret Bird from Kingston upon Thames replies to my speculations on the meanings of various gruesome items to be found in certain village lock-ups. viz.

Cat's Paw - The name of a knot illustrated in the Admiralty Manual of Seamanship. The knot is used for hoisting gear, and I suppose could refer to a knotted rope or scourge.

Darbies - Slang for handcuffs (used in two of Sherlock Holmes's cases, *The Cardboard Box*, and *The Red-Headed League*.) Dictionaries give its rather interesting etymology, apparently from the 16th. century phrase *Father Darby's bonds*, referring to a rigid agreement between a usurer and his client.

Heretic's Fork - Here I am on shaky ground, but it might just be a reference to the pitchfork used to toss straw around the base of the stake towards the burning martyr. Presumably parishes would have needed pitchforks when despatching martyrs, and the fork might not be slang for some horrific implement.

Necklaces - Again, only a guess, but this might be the hangman's rope. In the 18th. century a neckinger was a neckerchief, and in

the fascinating book *The Lost rivers of London*, (1962) Nicholas Barton writes that the name of the River Neckinger came from Neckinger Wharf, "at its termination, which appears on a map of 1740 as the '*Devols Neckenger*', this is supposed to derive from the fact that Thames pirates were executed there, and the rope which was used to hang them became known as the Devil's neckcloth or Neckinger"

Noise maker's fifes - I am reduced to outright guess-work - the pipes played as prisoners were drawn to execution on their hurdles, in order to draw the crowds??

I am grateful to Margaret Bird for her extra information on this slightly weird topic. I might add that this is not her usual area of expertise. She is more familiar with a more gentle and civilized age as she is preparing for publication the diaries of Mary Hardy of Letheringsett (1773-1809) These are still some way off from publication, but should be a treat worth waiting for.

Frederick Strange of Aylsham

Derek and Helen Bacon correspond with a friend in Australia who is currently researching Elizabeth Gould, the wife of the famous nineteenth century ornithologist, John Gould.

During the researches, the following snippet which has Aylsham connections has come to light:-

Frederick Strange (1826-1854) - Strange, a young professional collector, who was born at Aylsham, Norfolk, England, was with Sturt on the Murray. He collected for Gould at the Flinders Range, Lake Albert and the "River Courong" in South Australia, doubtless in the 1840s; also in southern Queensland, and in northern New South Wales where he discovered Prince Albert's Lyre-bird.

He kept bower-birds in captivity, and watched them making their bowers. He also visited New Zealand and New Caledonia, went to England in 1852 and returned to Queensland where he was killed by the blacks whilst collecting on Percy Island, Queensland on 10 October 1854.

(From: *EMU*, The Journal of the Victorian Ornithological Society. Vol 38. October 1938. pp 95-118)

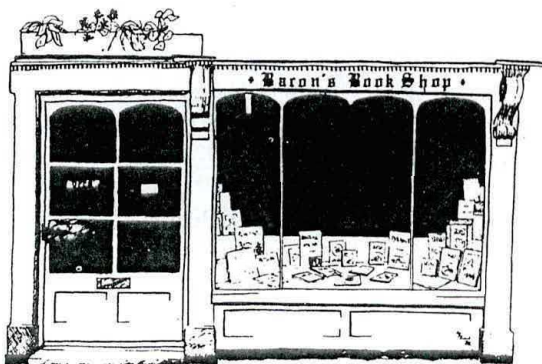
I have checked for other references to the surname 'Strange' in Sapwell's history and also amongst the names recorded in the schedules of the Wright's map of 1839, but it does not occur anywhere. I have not yet had chance to check amongst the names recorded in the WI Survey of Aylsham churchyard.[Ed]

(Finally, don't miss the notice on p160 for details of the Broads trip)

SOCIETY NEWS

New Year's Party - or more correctly, 'Winter Party' was held as usual on Friday 29th. January. Attendance was unaffected by the weather on this occasion, but numbers were relatively low. Nevertheless, a sufficiently large gathering enjoyed a social evening. We have come to expect a good quality meal, in pleasant surroundings in excellent company. This year the standards were as high as ever and the evening as enjoyable as ever. To tax our brains, Peter Holman had prepared one of his photographic quizzes, and there were two prize-winner this year, to whom many congratulations. Peter spends a considerable amount of time in preparing these quizzes, but that is what makes them all the more enjoyable!

Bacon's Bookshop - I am sure all our members are aware by now that Helen and Derek Bacon have retired (again!) from their latest profession as booksellers, and the business is now closed. Their contribution to the artistic life of the town has been considerable and has been appreciated by artists and writers of all standards, as well as by the ordinary customer wanting to order or buy a book. What, perhaps, is not so widely known is what a great help they have always been to our society. They have both belonged to the society from its inception, and in that time have helped to sell our publications as we manage to produce them. In particular, they have always sold copies of our *Journal* for us to non-members who have seen them in the shop. This they have done at no profit to themselves. All the income from the



sales of the *Journal* have been quietly passed over to our treasurer and over the years this has amounted to a considerable sum. We owe them many thanks and wish them a long and happy retirement, although I suspect they are already considering what their next profession should be.

Six High and Lonely churches - Peter Holman's latest publication which was launched at our meeting in October of last year, is selling steadily and satisfactorily. It is a most attractive book, and there are still several copies available for sale and remains a snip at £3. Copies available from the editor.

The Drovers - The audiences for our public meetings seem to increase with each occasion. Well over 60 members and visitors turned out to hear the talk given by Miss Janet Smith, at the Friendship club, on 19th. February; all about the 'Drovers' - that specialist band of mainly Celtic origin who moved the vast numbers of cattle and other animals across the length and breadth of Britain to feed the growing population.

A great deal of this movement affected Norfolk. Scottish, Irish and Welsh drovers brought up to 40,000 head of cattle a year into Norfolk to be fattened up on the lush marshes ready for selling on a year later to the London slaughterhouses. Many factors boosted their trade. Apart from the booming population, there were long periods during the eighteenth century when Britain was at war and salt beef and other supplies were constantly needed to re-victual the navy and other armed forces. The drovers were described as - "*great shaggy, hirsute men who*

enjoyed a wee dram" and who, surprisingly, spent their limited leisure time knitting socks which would replace what they wore out en route and also earned a few shillings as sales. Roads were deplorable and not much improved by the passage of up to 2,000 beasts at a time. Amongst the problems encountered en route were the enclosures of what was once common land and the introduction of the Turnpikes which added to the drovers' costs. Great efforts were made to beat officialdom and avoid payments.

Much of the cattle entered Norfolk through Wisbech and ended up either at Hempton Fair or at St. Faiths. A vast industry grew up alongside this movement of animals. There were tanners and leather merchants using the by-products. Hooves and horns went to glue makers, bones were ground as fertiliser - nothing went to waste. We learnt many things - vast sums of money changed hands at these sales, and the success of the whole operation was dependant on the integrity and honesty of the drovers. A lot depended, also, on the skills of the intelligent dogs which accompanied the drovers, and who knew exactly what to do. At the end of the long trek, the drover could either return home by stage-coach or sea-passage. The dogs were let loose to walk home, and invariably arrived safely. The drovers were superseded by the advent of the railways, and we cannot imagine today what it must have been like. Although well and truly dead now, Janet Smith brought it vividly to life and kept us all enthralled and entertained. TWM

THOMAS BROWNE, Gentleman. Jane Nolan

(Following Jane's death, several of her papers on which she had been working, have been lodged in the town archives. They mostly represent uncompleted work which will probably be of use to future researchers, and also two completed articles which, as far as I can tell, have not previously been published. I know Jane would not have wanted them to go to waste, so we will publish one of them here and the second in a later issue of the Journal. Ed)

Thomas Browne, who died in 1689, was an affluent and influential member of Aylsham society, living with his wife, Mary.

Though we have no indication of where his house was situated in Aylsham, nor whether it still stands, it must have been substantial, as under the Hearth Tax in 1664 it was rated as having six hearths for which 2/- each was paid. However, of the eight rooms listed in the inventory of 1689, there were only four with fire accessories and hence hearths. These four rooms, namely the kitchen, parlour and chambers over, seem to have been those used mainly for domestic living. There may, of course, have been unused hearths in some of the lesser rooms, possibly in an outhouse, or in a buttery, and a likely one in the study, unused since the master's health had declined. Though the detailed layout of the house can only be conjectural, the main rooms can be imagined as on opposite sides of the house with common chimney breasts serving lower and upper rooms. The two butteries would have been on the ground floor with, probably, the study and little bed chamber over them.

There is every sign that the Brownes enjoyed comfortable living conditions; leather upholstered chairs and couch, carpets, pictures, a tapestry wall hanging, mirrors, a clock, a violin and other furniture together with two four-poster beds would command a fortune nowadays! Towards the end of the seventeenth century furnishings in the homes of the more affluent were becoming more lavish. Books worth 25/- were listed in the study, but frustratingly their titles are not given. Brass and pewter utensils were still prized, but those of silver had become a statement of social standing; - Thomas Browne could boast of £7 worth, though whether these were for the table is not stated. Watches were invented in the late fifteenth century, but they could not have been in common use at this time, Thomas's silver one, albeit probably an indifferent timekeeper, would have been a treasured possession, and of great interest. (We know from Samuel Pepys's diary of 13th. May 1665, that he found the ownership of a watch filled him with great excitement).

Thomas's financial situation appears to have been secure. When his probate inventory was taken, he had kept a small fortune of £30 in cash to hand with over £166 lent out in bonds and bills and £8/15/- in book debts. We are given no clue about his source of income, other than £12/10/- per annum in rents from lands in Aylsham, and must conclude that he had interests elsewhere yet to be discovered. The Aylsham Poor

Rate register for 1674-1720 gives some indication of his wealth, as he paid one of the highest rates, being assessed at 16s at 2/8d in the pound.

There appear to be no surviving children from his marriage to Mary, as judged by the will. However, the Aylsham parish register for 1671 records the baptism on March 7th of one Fauntaine Browne of parents Thomas and Mary. That date fits well with the possibility that a child did exist, but had died later. Further search of the registers may confirm this, or in view of the many 'Brownes' recorded, whether Fauntaine was of a different family. The estate was left in the main, to Mary, the sole executrix, and comprised lands and tenements at Thursford, Hindringham and Barney. Mary was to pay £3 annually to each of Thomas's sisters, Anne Hambleten and Catherine Newman, during the life time of one Hannah Knapp, a widow of Thursford, but on Hannah's death Mary was to pay £55 to each sister. The sisters were to retain such of Thomas's household goods as they already held, suggesting that he had at some time provided help with setting up their homes. It seems that these ladies had other interests in Thomas's property, but the reasons behind his financial arrangements for them remain a mystery. Payments were also to be made to kinswomen Hannah and Dorothy Hambleten, who may have been sisters-in-law or, more likely, nieces.

Thomas was clearly a leading figure in the local oligarchy, appointed as one of four surveyors in 1667, 1675 and 1684 responsible for overseeing the maintenance of roads and bridges in Aylsham. He also became a churchwarden in 1669. Surveyors were chosen from among members of the "better sort" and in those days, only the higher echelons of town society could expect to attain the office of churchwarden, an honoured position, carrying privilege and status. The records show a rapid turnover in this office, suggesting that it was much coveted and those occupying it usually served for only one year to allow others to take their turn.

Many questions remain unanswered about Thomas Browne and his connections with the Fakenham area, where his roots may have been. Obviously a man of wealth from unknown sources, he came to Aylsham for reasons we can only surmise. Perhaps he intended to establish himself as a leading citizen before enjoying retirement in comfort and style. Nevertheless, some dissension may have been

brewing within the family as is shown by Mary Browne with one James Smyth making careful arrangements in 1689 to keep the will safe pending possible challenges, or claim in it.

SOURCES

Will of Thomas Browne, ref. NCC 1689 OW 20 (MF 425)
Inventory of Thomas Browne, ref. (MF/X 18) DN/INV 65A/59F Thomas Browne
Aylsham Poor Rate Book. (Aylsham Archives)
Aylsham Hearth Tax Schedule.
Aylsham Parish Registers (Archdeacons transcripts) Aylsham Archives.

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THE FAMILY HISTORY CENTRE

The main interest of our society's members is obviously the study of the history of Aylsham and its district. However, the interests of many of our members also includes the study of family history, usually the history of their own family. Anyone exploring this avenue is aware of the difficulties encountered along the way.

Our member, Colin Ulph from Shoreham, is a perfect example of this latter interest. His primary concern is with the history of the Ulph family, and we have enjoyed his company in the past at the meetings he has arranged in Aylsham for members of the Ulph family. Colin also produces and circulates a regular "*Ulph Family News*" newsletter to keep members of the clan in touch with each other, and I always enjoy reading the copy which he sends regularly to Ron Peabody. In the most recent copy of the "*Ulph Family News*" Colin includes an extremely useful article of his own about the new Family Records Centre opened last year in London, which he describes as a *major step forward in family history research*. As there are certain to be many members of our society also interested in family research, and who are painfully aware of all the difficulties encountered in trying to consult all relevant records, I have reproduced below, with Colin's consent, his article, hoping it will make life easier for others with the same interests:-

UNDER ONE ROOF - A New family History Centre in London,
Colin Ulph.

When I first caught the family history bug in 1978 I found that source records were inconveniently situated all over the place! Registers of births, marriages and deaths, census schedules, indexes of probates and administrations, and the Mormons' international genealogical index (IGI) were at four different buildings in London (except Scottish records which were in Edinburgh) and although most parish registers were housed in County Record Offices, many were still stored in cupboards in cold, damp church vestries under the "care" of the incumbent.

Today, nearly all original parish registers are stored in ideal conditions in County Record Offices, and in any case most have now been filmed for safer access by researchers. Many counties also now have microfilm copies of the indexes of births, marriages, deaths and local census records, as well as fiche copies of the IGI for their counties, so a lot of research may now be done without going to London at all.

Research in London itself took a major step forward earlier this year with the opening of the smart, new Family Records Centre in Islington. For the first time, the national indexes of births, marriages, deaths and adoptions, microfilmed census records for England and Wales, indexes of pre-1858 wills and films of nonconformist birth and baptism registers are all under the same roof. There is also access, via computer terminals to Scottish births, marriages, deaths and divorces, and various American produced indexes held on compact disc. When you are on the trail of something, it's great to be able to move from one type of record to another without having to walk across London in all weathers! The building is also close to the London Metropolitan Archives Centre . . .

The building is at 1 Myddelton Street, London EC1. Telephone number - 0181-392-5300. The centre is open Mondays to Saturday. It is closed on Sundays and Bank Holiday weekends including Saturdays.

I was also pleased to read in the *Ulph Family News* a kind tribute to Jane Nolan who welcomed the gathering of the Ulph Clan to Aylsham back in 1990.

—ooOoo—

ROBERT COPEMAN'S LETTER BOOK

1789-1791

Robert Copeman was the Land Agent for the second Earl of Buckinghamshire at Blickling. There is a letter book at Blickling Hall which contains copies of the correspondence from Copeman to His Lordship (and also to her Ladyship) when they were both living away from Blickling. The letter book is now the property of the National Trust, but it came into the hands of the Trust through Nicolas Corbin, when he was Eastern Area Agent for the Trust at Blickling Hall. He in turn had received it from Dr. John Sapwell in July 1961. By 1961 Dr. Sapwell had completed and had published his "*History of Aylsham*" and presumably had no further need of the book. Sapwell, in his turn, had received it from Miss Copeman of Cambridge who was the sister of the late Robert Copeman of Roydon Hall near Diss. By placing the book in Blickling Hall, Nicolas Corbin had completed the circle, and the book had returned to the place where it had been created.

Copeman had been Land Agent since about 1770. He died twelve years after the period covered by the letter book, in 1803, and was buried in Aylsham. The contents of the letter book are reasonably easy to decipher, with a few exceptions. It seems fairly certain that Copeman used the book in which to draft the first version of his letters to the Earl. There are frequent amendments and alterations to the original. The copy that was finally despatched was probably a re-phrased and improved version of the first draft. The first letter is actually dated 21st. December 1788 and contains comments on the planting and thinning of young trees. It is also quite short as one would expect from the memorable phrase it contains:-

"knowing your dislike of long letters, I shall use as few words as possible." which sets the tone of the correspondence!

On 7th. January 1789, he writes that Mr. Johnson, tenant of the Helmingham(?) estate:-

"having a son who is very soon going to the East Indies, would your Lordship permit young Hooper to shoot him a brace of pheasants in your wood, as a compliment.?"

Of course we never read his Lordship's replies, but a reference in a later letter indicates that permission was received for this to be done. It also implies that young [Thomas] Hooper was a gamekeeper on the estate, as Copeman reports that he has passed on his Lordship's instructions regarding game to Hooper. Despite the Earl's absences he clearly retained a keen interest in the affairs of the estate and Copeman kept him well informed of day-to-day affairs. The few letters I have read so far reflect this. At this particular time the weather was also a serious problem. Copeman writes:-

"The weather is exceedingly severe. The turnips are almost as hard as stone with the frost, and are obliged to be beaten to pieces before the cattle can eat them."

In a letter a few days later [11th. January] he adds:-

"the weather is understandably severe, and so much stock makes great consumption . . . I know not where there is any hay for sale. I never bought hay for you Lordship, but once, and that was the first work of my coming to Blickling, nearly 21 years since. . ."

He adds that he is threshing more corn now, more than he used to, and makes use of the straw instead of hay to such stock as will bear it. He also introduces news of individuals:-

"Thomas Gardiner's(?) son is again very bad." He asks for a letter of recommendation to the Norwich Hospital, *"not as an in-patient, but that he might be permitted to attend for advice."* On the same day he also wrote to her Ladyship mentioning many people being relieved by the Overseers of the Poor at Blickling; also that John Parker and his son are still very poorly,

" . . they have a great part of their usual pay, for which, when they

recover their health, I hope they will endeavour to make some amends to his Lordship by some means in their power. . "

Whether these were the effects of the severe weather, or not, we do not know. He finished this letter with a personal request:-

P.S. May I have the favour of a newspaper now and then, after your Ladyship and family have read them?"

On 15th. January he wrote again to the Earl, having received proposals from him to fence off part of the land where trees were to be planted, and comments that it would take a mile of fencing to complete it. He implies that it would be better to leave things until his Lordship returns, and also to delay planting of fresh trees because:-

" . . . there is much snow on the ground, and of trees planted in Spring 3/4 of them die; of those planted in Autumn, few or none. . "

Reading one half of any correspondence leaves a lot of questions unanswered. The last letter I have managed to read, so far, is intriguing, and leaves one guessing about what it refers to:-

17th. January 1789

My Lord,

*I suppose Stephen Selth(?) would not, at least did not prepare the bottle of ingredients I mentioned in my last, * till yesterday in the afternoon, and therefore had no opportunity of forwarding it by the Aylsham carrier. I cased the bottle round with a hop bag in such way that I think it cannot easily be broken. Wrote Glass on the direction which was to be forwarded it by mail coach to your Lordship - carriage paid to Norwich.*

With the bottle is inclosed all the direction I could obtain. viz. ' a small piece of fine linen is to be fixed on the end of a stick and dipped in the liquid in the bottle, and with it moisten the part affected. This is to be repeated three times in 24 hours' - and he further said it would cause some degree of pain at the time of using, but would have no ill effect; that the same medicine had been used

by a number of different women that had applied to him; that some were cured by it, others not. He blames the latter for not persisting and using it long enough, and he may be right - but with submission to your Lordship, I think it would not be amiss of your Lordship, if he was to advise the person, for whom it may be intended, to have some gentlemen acquainted with these things to examine the liquid before they use it. It contains something very strong I have no doubt, and I am fully persuaded there must be danger in using such sort of [medicine for the recommendation?] of people totally ignorant of the nature of it.

* There is no copy in the book of the letter referred to!

Whatever was the medicine, and what was it intended for? However mystifying that letter is, there is another intriguing paragraph at the foot of one page. It doesn't actually look like a letter. It is undated and un-addressed. It looks more like Copeman's musings on something troubling him:-

To know oneself is said to be a difficult task, yet I am fully persuaded to know one's own disposition is no hard matter - in my way of thinking, tho' one can be ignorant of it.

I know from the sincerity of my heart, I wish to serve your Lordship with integrity, that it is my constant aim. Yet strange as it might appear. I find my intentions very often misunderstood - my actions condemned and myself despised, while fawning flatterers which seek only their own interest are in high favour."

What prompted that? one wonders

Robert Copeman would have been born about the year 1740. As already mentioned, he died in 1803 and is buried at Aylsham. A memorial inside St. Michael's Church, Aylsham reads, "In a vault near this place are interred the remains of Robert Copeman, Gent. late of this parish, who departed this life on the 4th. day of April 1803 in the 64th. year of his age". Buried in the same vault is his widow, Katherine Copeman, who survived him until 24th. June 1832 when she died in

her 84th. year.

Copeman would have been about 30 when he became the Earl's agent and nearly 50 at the time these letters were written.

I am indebted to Nicolas Corbin for making me aware of the existence of this letter-book, and for arranging the way for me to see it. I am also indebted to the *National Trust* for permitting me to examine it and to quote from it. I hope that there will be more extracts to follow after I have further opportunities to examine it (Ed.)

—ooOoo—

HISTORY OF NORFOLK.

R.H.Mason

In the last issue but one we started to reproduce that part of Mason's *History of Norfolk* that covered the history of Aylsham. We broke off half way through the account of Sexton's manor [on p.96 of Vol.5 part 3 - September 1997]. When reading this history one must remember that it was published in 1885, and much has changed since then. The account continues:-

Sextons Manor (cont)

In 1285 the Abbot had view of frankpledge, assize of bread and ale, free-warren, and a ducking-stool. In 1296 the Abbot asserted his right to the profits to be derived from grinding for all the tenants at the watermill. In 1304, Edward I made a grant that the men of the manor should not be required to plead out of the Abbot's court. The value of this manor to the Abbey in 1428 was returned at £27, but it subsequently declined to £20 per annum. At the Dissolution, Edmund Wood, having made a proposal to purchase this manor with its appurtenances, it was referred to the proper authorities to make enquiry and valuation, with a view to a grant to him of the same, and from this report we learn the particulars relating to its several parts, and the sum of £516 - 15 - 2d, its estimated value, was paid by Wood, to whom it was granted by letters patent under the Great Seal, dated Westminster, 20th. May, 37th. Henry VIII.⁷ There was the fortieth part of a knight's fee included, and an annual rental of 55s. 8½d. Edmund Wood died 31st. October, 1548 and was succeeded by Robert, his son and heir, then twenty-two years of age. In Blomefield's time Thomas Wood of Braconash was lord.

Sexton's Wood, containing 18 acres; Oldwood Cop containing 1½ acres. There is an alderkerr of 1 acre. Altogether 20 ½ acres, whereof 8½ acres of four, six, eight and ten years growth, reserved to William Neve, farmer there, for his sufficient fire boot and fuel, which he has by covenant, as appears by an Indenture, sealed with the seal of the late monastery dated 1st. July, 28 Henry VIII.

One acre;	(8d)	of one year's growth
One acre	(16d)	of two year's growth
One acre	(2s.)	of three year's growth
One acre	(2s.8d.)	of four year's growth
One acre	(20d)	of five year's growth
One acre	(4s. 8d.)	of seven year's growth
One acre	(6s.)	of nine year's growth
One acre	(7s.4d.)	of eleven year's growth
Two acres	(16s.)	of twelve year's growth
Two acres	(18s.8d.)	residue of fourteen year's growth

The wood of every acre aforesaid valued as it appears, is in the whole, 61s.

The spring (?) of the wood or ground of 8½ acres aforesaid, not valued, because they are reserved. And of 12 acres residue, rated yearly at 8d. the acre, which is yearly, in the whole, 8s, and amounts , at 20 years purchase to £8.0s.0d.

In the woods about the site of the manor aforesaid, and divers tenements, and in the land pertaining to the same, there are growing 400 oaks, of forty, sixty and eighty years growth, part usually cropped and shred, whereof 200 are reserved for timber to repair the houses standing upon the site of the manor and tenements, and for stakes for hedgeboot to repair and maintain the hedges and fences on the said lands; and 200 residue valued at 4d. the tree, which is in the whole 66s8d.

Altogether £14.7s.8d.

Farm of seven acres of land, lying in Aylsham, near the Little Bridge, formerly in the tenure of John Rasborough, and now or lately in the tenure of Henry Clive, paying at the Feasts of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin and Michael the Archangel, equally by the year 3s 8½d. Rent of farm of three roods of land, lying in the north field of Ingworth, formerly Hastings, per annum, 1d. Farm of the manor situated in the town of Aylsham, called the Sexton's manor, formerly belonging to the office of Sacristan of the late monastery, with all lands, meadows, pastures, feedings and heaths belonging to the manor, in the hands of divers tenants at the demise of the late Abbot, prior, and convent of the former monastery, or his successors from ancient time, and at the present

time being granted to the same tenants, and demised by copy of the court. And also except the profits of the courts and leets, wards, marriages, escheats, as well of free tenants as of natives, belonging to the manor, chattels of felons and fugitives, and waste, waifs and strays, and all other royalties of the manor belonging in any way.

Except also 1 piece of meadow called Collrake Meadow, and 1 pightle called Magdeburgh, divers pieces of land called Bulwer's Lands, 1 piece of land called Smethywongs, and 1 piece of Alder called Turpetts, as by the indenture sealed under the conventual seal of the late monastery of Bury, dated 1st. July, 28 Henry. VIII, to the farm demised to Wm. Neve, his executors and assignees, that is to say, at the feast of St. Michael the Archangel next to come after the date of this indenture, until the end of the term of 20 years at that time next following and fully completed. And the farmer shall have sufficient fuel in woods and hedgerows during the term aforesaid. Repairs of the manor in sufficient clay, with the carriage of the same at the charge of the farmer. Paying for it at the feast of St. Michael the Archangel only p. ann. 106s 8d.

Perquisites of the court there for the common year, 108s. 8d. The manor of Aylsham is a manor of itself, no parcel of any other manor, and of the yearly value above mentioned, and the same lyeth not nygh to any of the King's Howsses, forestes, chaces, or partes reserved for the access of his Majestye. Itm. what fyne hathen ben geven therfor, or who ben desyerouse to bye the same other than the bringer hereof I knowe not. Also what sp'uall pmocyon dothe thereunto belonge, it will appear amongst the Recordes of the court of furst fruytes and tenthes. And theyse ben the furst picles therof. Also ther dothe apteygne to the same manor one deed stocke or stoore to be delyvered at the ende of the same terme to the Lord of this manor, whiche is preased and valued to be worthe as hereafter is declared.

A deed stock or stoore and 2 formes, 1 lecturne for an altar, one cheste for evydence bound w' yron, w' locke and key to the same, one shelf, one great borde table with 2 trestells, 3 longe formes, one lytell forme, 2 shelves, 5 beddes, one borde table bound w' yron, 2 trestills, one other borde table, 2 trestills, one benche, and three longe formes, one olde table, 3 benches, 4 shelves, 2 beddes, 2 formes, one lytell table, one dressinge borde, one coop for pollen, 3 mawniours in the stabulls, 3 racks, one great ladder, one kyll for to dry malte w' all fornyture to the same, 7 lockes and keys for dores. (That pcells cannot be valued w' out the seing of them which is referred unto your order thinking neverthesse that they be not much worthe and verye necessarye and nedeful for the fermor.)

Ex. by me THOS. MILDMAY, Auditor

The parcel above, excepted in the farmer's lease being parcel of the said manor, and answered amongst the rents of Assize and other customary rents there, as appears in the Survey of the manor.

THOS. MILDMAY

The manor of Aylsham, parcel of the possessions of the late Monastery of Bury St. Edmunds by the year clear, £27 16s 9d.; for tenths, 55s 8½d.; and remains clear, £25 0s 12½d. Which after the rate of 20 years purchase amounts to £501 0s. 10d.. Add thereunto for the wood £14 7s 8d., and for the dead stock, 26s 8d. So the whole sum for the purchase of all the premises is £516 15s. 2d. The King must discharge the premises of all incumbrances except lease and the tenths before reserved, and except such charges as the farmers are bound to discharge by force of these indentures. And also except such repairs as have been contained in the particulars.

OLLKRID NORTH

Every year there were held for the lord of this manor four courts, of which two were assize and two tofte courts. The first assize court with a leet was held yearly upon the Monday before the feast of St. Michael the Archangel; the second court, called tofte, on the Monday next before the feast of St. Agnes the Virgin; the third court, called an assign court, with a leet, on Monday next after Whit Sunday or Low Sunday; the fourth court, a tofte court, on Monday next after the feast of St. Peter, usually called St. Peter-at-bonds.⁸ There were forty-four tofts belonging to and parcel of the manor.⁹ The defaults at the tofte courts were punished by a fine of 2s 8d. for not appearing, but it appears that if one of the copyhold tenants holding land in one of the tofts appeared, that served for all the occupiers.

After the Wood family, Sexton's manor was held by one Peterson, who sold it to a Copeman, of whom there has been in succession, Katherine, Robert, George, and Thomas Copeman the present Lord. The heriots in this manor, as well as in Lancaster, are certain, but in the former many of the copyholders out of Aylsham pay 10s. instead of 2s. 8d. as in Aylsham.

This manor extends into Tuttington and several other parishes. A few years since it was found to extend into thirteen parishes, including Aylsham, but in four of them there was found to be only one tenement, and that held in free or common socage. Dower, or as it is

called in the case of copyholds free-bench, is said to be in this manor during chaste widowhood. At the court of the manor the jury were accustomed to impose fines on tenants who made default in going the "purrell", or bounds of the leet at appointed times, and it appears that the persons liable to go the purrell were inhabitants of copyhold ancient messuages, only one inhabitant for each messuage. In the time of Charles II, Elizabeth Brady was elected bailiff of the manor and employed a deputy who could not obtain from Wood a perfect rental, and so refused to serve, whereupon he caused her copyhold lands to be put in proclamation and a siezure to be awarded.

Bolwick Manor was likewise an offshoot of the original manor, first separated by King John to Hugh de Boves, and from him to Henry de Bolewic, after whom it was called. It was for some time held by the family of Whitwell, and after Sir Robert Salle was killed in Littister's rebellion it was found that he had willed it to his wife, Francisce, for life; after her death it passed to her nephew and heir, Sir William Trussett, and in 1420 was released to Sir John Hevenyngham and others by gift of feoffment, and on the 1st. September 1429 Sir John Hevenyngham and others leased and assigned this manor in the same deed that they conveyed to William Paston, of Paston, and Agnes his wife, (daughter of Sir Edmund Berre and Alice, his wife), the manor of Oxnead, the advowson of the church there, and the manors of Skeyton, Brampton, Burgh, Tuttington and Marsham.¹⁰ In 1476, Thomas Abbys was Lord, and after passing through various hands, it belonged to the family of Woods. The manor was sold by Mrs. Suffield, a descendant of the Woods, about the beginning of this century, to Mr. Warnes, whose granddaughter, Mrs. Calvert, is the present lady.

The Vicarage Manor as its name shows, was an ecclesiastical heritage of which we may more appropriately treat presently in connection with the church.

Thetford Nunnery held some lands in Aylsham, which on 21st. October, 38 Henry VIII were sold to Andrew Manfeld and Jane, his wife, who paid for them and several other lands in other parishes, £966 15s. 11d. In this place it will be convenient to give a copy of an old manuscript which was found, according to Dr. Tanner¹¹ in 1721,

amongst the writings of Mr. Baispoole, of Aylsham, and which gives:-

*The Bounds and Lymitts of ye Parryshe of Aylysham, in ye yeare of
Our Lord God 1444¹²*

The Lymytts of Aylsham. At Saresmore is one bounde, and there begineth a certain Dyke, and it extendeth to a certain river of Aylsham called Aylysham river, and ye said river extendeth unto a meadowe of ye Vycare of Aylysham, and there begineth a certain mere, and it extendeth itself nygh the said meadowe unto the said river inclosing the said meadow within the parish of Aylysham. And the said river extend itself further unto the Manner of Sir John of Colbye, Knight, which sometimes belonged to Alice, sometyne ye wife of Peter of Brampton, and by these is divided the parishes of Aylsham and Blickling. And there begin a certain olde dyke and extend unto one Moat in the said manor and from that dyke goeth straight forth beyond the said moat and further in ye said manor unto a post where ye gates of ye said Alice were set, and there being a certain common way which leadeth unto Erpingham Sygate, and from the said way begineth a certain dry dyke and extend itself unto the Abuttalls between the lands of ye said Sir John of Colbye, of the one part, and Jeffery and Roger Elys of the other part, and the said abbuttalls extend unto a certaine Mere lying between the lands of the said Sir John of Colbye, and the said Mere extend unto a Closse sumtyme Walter Abbe, and there begin a certaine dyke and extend unto a certaine way called Banyngham Upgate inclosing the said Closse, and the said way extend unto a certain Mess' sumtyme Willyam Barkers, inclosing the said Messe' and there begin a certaine Patch and extend unto a certayne Mere lying between ye Londe sumtyme of Edmund of Ketyll, and the said Mere extend unto a Messe' of the said Edmund, and from the said Mere goeth forth straight by ye middle of the said Messe' unto a certain common way called Woodgate, and further by the Mydd' of Messe' of John Wath Nicholas of Woodgate and John Mabes unto a certain Mere lyeing between the Londes of the said John Mabes, and the said Mere extend unto certaine headlonds, and these headlonds extend unto a certain dyke, and there is a certain way unto Ederistes gappe, and there begin a certayne path which extend unto a certain londe called Benescrofte, and there begyn a certain Mere and extend unto Tottington Heath next a certain garden called Benes Yard, excluding the said garden. And from that garden drawing straight forth unto a certaine Dyke Hyll called Starlings Hyll, and from that Starlings Hyll going straight forth unto a certain dyke lying between Stokescroft and the old Haught extend the parish of Aylsham. The said dyke goeth forth unto the river of Aylsham, and the said river extend further unto a olde E. E. next the medowe of Thomas Edmund and that olde E. E. reacheth

further unto ye said river of Aylysham, called the new E.E. next the medowe of John of Buxton, including the said medowe, and the said river extend further unto a certaine Brigge called Burghbrgge, and further extend the said river unto a certain caussey called Burgh Sponge and the said Sponge extend further unto a certaine river which divide in that part ye parishes of Aylsham and Brampton, and the said river extend from the said Sponge unto a brigge called Brampton-Brigge, and further extend the said river unto a brigge called Bolwicke-Brigge, otherwise called Marsham-Brigge. And further extend the said river unto a Brygge called Hom Reyndyll, and from thence unto a stake in ye corner, and so right square to ye river called Bolwicke river, and further extend ye said river unto a watermill called Paddock Myll, and yet further extend ye said water unto Hockbrgge which is set in a place called Cawston Hall, and further the said water extend unto a dyke nygh to a dyke next Cawston Parke, and the said dyke extend next Cawston Parke and Jerbergeswood unto a certaine way which leade unto the market of Heydon, and there against the head of the said dyke beginneth a certaine way and extend itself unto a certaine path called Hubberdesty, and the said path extend unto certaine Abuttals and the said Abuttals extend the self [themselves?] unto a certain Mere that there extend unto a certain path which is between the fields of Aylsham and ye meadows of Blickling, and the said path extend unto a certain Thorne, and there begyn a certain dyke called Appledykes, and the said dyke extend unto Brabons ryde, and there begin a certain common way and extend it into Frenelgate, and there begyn a Myd Dyke and extends itself unto the Abuttals next the meadowe longe meadowe. And those abuttals extend unto the medowe sumtime of Roger Mann and from that meadow extendeth the parish of Aylsham by the bounds and meres being betwene the meadows of the said Roger William Fyn Cecyly Gilbert of the one part, and the meadows of Blickling of the other part and further unto a certaine path lying between the fields of Blickling of the one part and the meadows and fields of Aylsham of the other part, which pathe extend unto a Closse of Adam Maloz, and from the said path leading straight forth by the Mydd' of the said Closse and the messuage sumtime of the Adam, and further beyond the common way unto the said bounde and the said dyke at Saresmore where first the parish of Aylsham began to divide and extend itself. And they say that the said boundes and Lymitts divide and part the said parish of Aylsham from all parishes lying about That is to say from the parishes of Blickling, Ingworth, Erpingham, Tuttington, Burgh, Brampton, Marsham, Cawston and Oulton. And they say that the said piece of meadow whereof is a doo in this behalf lyeth and is within the said limites and bounds appearing.†

† I have attempted to reproduce the above extract with all the variations of spellings which were in the original. However I have not succeeded in every case, but at least all the words are correct!

On the 3rd. March 1519, Henry VIII granted a licence to Richard Cross, the bailiff, and to the inhabitants of the town or lordship, part of the Duchy of Lancaster, their heirs and successors to hold a weekly market on Saturdays, and an annual fair on the eve-day and morrow of St. Gregory the Pope [March 12th.]¹³ This continued until the time of Queen Anne, when a Privy Seal warrant was granted on the 31st. August 1705 ¹⁴ to Sir John Hobart, Bart. and his heirs, of a market to be held on Tuesday in every week for ever, in lieu of the market formerly held on Saturdays, *"for the buying and selling of all manner of goods and merchandizes commonly sold in markets. And also one fair, to be held on the second Tuesday and Wednesday in the month of September yearly for ever for the buying and selling of all manner of goods and merchandize, with court of piepowder and reasonable picage and stallage. And with a proviso for determining this grant if the said market formerly held on Saturday be at any time kept after thirty days next ensuing after the date thereof. Subscribed by Mr. Attorney General, by warrant under Her Majesty's Royal signe."*

In early times, Aylsham established a linen trade, which became famous throughout the kingdom. The historical MSS of the See of Carlisle testify that in 1297, the bailiffs of that city received a writ directing them to levy a toll, among other things brought to their market, upon Aylsham linen cloth, and the household book of Bishop Swinfield, of Hereford, in 1289, shows that he paid eighteen shillings for four yards of Aylsham linen for his rochet, and four yards was but the sixth of a piece. This proves that the material must have been of the greatest delicacy. Another entry is of three half pence paid for mending this rochet at Kensington.

The woollen trade afterwards was an industry much practised here, and in the seventeenth century a large portion of the population found employment as knitters of stockings, etc.

Aylsham Mill was let in 1648 to Captain Doughty for £60 per annum, out of which there was a fee-farm rent of £8 6s. 8d. to pay, so that it was valued at £723 6s. 8d. being fourteen years purchase at the net proceeds of £51 13s. 4d. ¹⁵ A tithe suit in 1682, elicited some

evidence as to the rights of the vicar to tithes from the mill, and incidentally one or two minor matters of interest. The plaintiff was Robert Fawcett, and the defendants William Thorry, Bartholomew Willis, William Purdy and Robert Sexton. The enquiry was held at the *Black Boys* on the 13th. June. Among the deponents were :-

Richard Bloome, miller, had known the mills for about 50 years, and had heard that John Neave had farmed them at a rent of £100 a year, and that Mark Thorry farmed them at £70 or £80. The defendants were successively occupiers of the mills, and whilst they were there the mills were well wrought, and did grind great quantities of corn and grain. Thorry had told him that he paid £4 per annum to Mr. Phillips, the vicar, for tithe of the mills.

Katherine, wife of William Allen, of North Walsham, formerly wife of Edmund Green, had known the mills for 40 years. Her father, John Neave, was formerly tenant of the mills under Sir John Hobart, at a yearly rent of £50 for sixteen years, and at her father's death, her mother continued the occupation for some time at the same rent.

William Smyth used to pay £80 per annum. His father and mother used to pay £5 a year for tithes, and about two years before the death of his father he gave Mr. Phillips a mortgage on a meadow in Aylsham, as security for arrears of tithe, and it had never been redeemed.

On the other side, Thomas Barker of Aylsham, who had known the parish and vicarage for sixty years, testified to a custom or usage that tenants, owners or occupiers of an orchard, paid two pence by the name of port, in lieu of tithe of fruit growing in orchards, at Lammas or such other time as the vicar demanded. There was also a custom for the vicar to accept two pence yearly, at Lammas in the name of Hearth silver, instead of tithe of the wood or fuel spent in their houses, and had heard that some paid a penny for port and a penny for Hearth silver only.

Richard Curteis, Snr. had known the mills and the vicarage for sixty years. The mills had always been reputed ancient corn mills, and the King's mill, but he had no knowledge whether they paid a fine. He confirmed Mr. Barker's evidence as to Hearth silver, etc. He had heard Major Doughty say that the mills ought not to pay tithe.

Elizabeth, widow of Matthew Barker, who had farmed the plaintiff's tithes on the north side of the river for many years, was aware that Sexton had paid tithes for five acres, because one year her husband had received payment, and she herself had another year from him.

Purdy had occupied the mills from Lady Day 1670 to Lady Day 1671. Thorry next held for about a year; Willis from Michaelmas 1675

to Lady Day 1678, and Sexton until 1680. Their defence was that they had hired the mills tithe-free, but the court ordered each to pay at the rate of £3 per annum for the period occupied.

In the reign of James II, there were lawsuits in reference to this mill, between Edward, Earl of Sandwich, plaintiff, and Miles Baispoole and Robert Doughty, defendants, who were occupiers of the same. Charles II on the 9th. March 1662, granted the fee-farm rent of £8 6s. 8d. to the Earl's father, who died in 1672, and until 1684 plaintiff had received the same as his inheritance, but at that time Baispoole purchased Doughty's interest,¹⁶ and had refused payment to plaintiff, but in the end he was ordered by the Court of Exchequer to pay, and condemned in £10 costs of suit.

Another suit in the Court of Exchequer possessed more interest, which began in the year 1700 and was not finally decided until Easter Term 1702. The Earl of Sandwich found himself again called upon to enforce his right to the fee-farm rent of £8 6s 8d. issuing out of the mills, and the defendants were Hamond Claxton, Henry Rippengall, Robert Ryall, Philip Hart, Robert Curtis, John Curtis, Nathaniel Hallifax, Robert Rumppe, John Parker, Samuel Soame, John Warkhouse, Michael Frere, and Peter Lawes who appear to have been trustees at that time, of Aylsham Free School, the two last named, on whom the burden of the defence fell, being successively schoolmasters. The defendants set up a claim to have been entitled to £10 per annum payable by the owner of the mills, and that not receiving that they had permitted Frere and Lawes (who had obtained a decree in Chancery) to enter the mills to re-imburse themselves the sum due for arrears. The matter in the end resolved itself into a question of account, and the Deputy Remembrancer of the Exchequer reported that he found there was owing to the Earl of Sandwich for thirteen years of fee-farm rent, ending Michaelmas 1699, the sum of £108 6s 8d: that defendants had received £115 for three years and a half rent arising out of the mills, and had paid plaintiff's agent £16 13s 4d. so that the balance remaining due was, £91 13s 4d. and that defendants had paid in taxes and repairs £50 2s 10½d, and thus retained £48 3s. 4½d. which must go towards defraying the arrears due to plaintiff. Judgement was entered accordingly.

William Smyth, who was tenant of the mills from 1696 to 1699,

rented them for £30 a year for the first two years, and £40 for the last year. He gave evidence that they were in his time *'very ruinous and out of repair'* and that it required an outlay of £100 to make them tenantable. The mill now belongs to Messrs. John Thornton and Stanley Bullock who purchased it from the Parmeter family.

LOCAL CHARITIES

The Aylsham Free School - Robert Jannys,¹⁷ a Norwich grocer, (Mayor in 1517 and 1524) by his will directed his executors to purchase lands and tenements which should produce £10 yearly towards founding a grammar school in Aylsham, and finding a schoolmaster. On the 20th. June 1554, the Corporation of Norwich covenanted with the bishop and the representatives of Jannys for a yearly payment of £10 to the schoolmaster, and it was agreed that, upon a vacancy in that office, the churchwardens of Aylsham should nominate to the bishop and mayor three persons *"well learned in grammar"* of whom one should be chosen for life, provided he would perform the ordinances specified in an indenture duly made. What these ordinances were cannot now be ascertained, as the indenture has been long lost.

Archbishop Parker founded a scholarship in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, for a boy from this school, and one from Wymondham, each to have *".....12d a week for commons, their chamberer, barber, larderer, and other necessities free."* Alderman Norgate of Norwich, gave £160 to the school, which his son and executor, Thomas Norgate, expended in the purchase of lands to provide £10 annually, in reference to which I find the following statement in a Bodleian manuscript:-

"In the year 1650, Captain Osborn, owner of the lands charged with this annuity, with the consent of the inhabitants of Aylsham, put £200 into Major Robert Doughty's hands of Aylsham to settle the said annuity of ten pounds per annum upon the mills of Aylsham, and the said Robert Doughty did thereupon, by deeds of feofment to Trustees of the said town, charge the said annuity upon the mills of Aylsham aforesaid. The annuity was constantly paid for 34 years by Major Doughty, the father, and Captain Robert Doughty, the son.

In the year 1683, Miles Baispool of Aylsham, gent., purchased the said mills. He (upon the delivery and perusal of one of Major Doughty's deeds) after in July '84 (Capt. Robert Doughty being then with him) paid

fifteen pounds to the then schoolmaster for half-year's salary to the said school due and ending Christmas '83, and promises to pay the remainder then due presently after the assizes, and to pay it for the future. But after this he denied the payment of said annuity, with the arrears, having got one of Doughty's deeds into his hands, which upon request to re-deliver, he owned he had, but had mislaid it somewhere. But since denies the deed and refuseth the payment of the annuity.

An inquisition has been taken at Norwich before Sir Roger Potts, bart. Ralph Hare, Isaack Preston, Edm. Themilthorp, Wm. Oldfield, and Francis Repps. Esqrs., by virtue of a Commission out of the Chancery for Charitable uses, and the substance of the aforesaid particulars was found by the Jurors, and after it a decree was made by four of the said Commissioners for payment of the arrears to the said school, and for the time to come.¹⁸

(To be continued)

NOTES

- 7 The manor, after Wood's purchase, was generally called Aylsham Wood, and is so described in several deeds, leading many to suppose that the Great Wood was there situate, which, on the contrary, occupied the west side of the town, where Woodgate, the property of Mr. R.J.W. Purdy, is now.
- 8 Exch. Dep. by Com., 17 Chas II. Easter
- 9 *Toft*, a messuage of house, or rather the place where a messuage once stood that is fallen into decay. - Crabb. "Technical Dict."
- 10 Ad. Ch. 14,806
- 11 Tanner MS xcvi f.121
- 12 This section has already appeared in the *Journal* (Vol.2 pp.172-174) 1989 as part of another article, but as it is an essential part of Mason's history of Aylsham it warrants including again.
- 13 State Papers Dom.: 10th. Henry VIII. No. 106
- 14 Pat. 4th. Anne. p.4, No. 25
- 15 Tanner MS. xcvi, f.97
- 16 On 16th. September 1683, Miles Baispoole gave Robert Doughty £3750 for the mill and its lands, tenements and appurtenances as was testified in depositions taken at Norwich Castle on the 16th. April, 1687, the deponents being Thomas Bulwer of Buxton, Henry Palmer of Hautbois, James Ashley and Henry Rippingall of Aylsham, all of whom were cognisant of the transaction. The Robert Doughty who sold, was a son of Robert Doughty, who had held the mill for twenty years before settling it on the vendor, in 1673, upon his marriage. In another inquiry, held at the Rampant Horse Hotel in Norwich, at Easter 1691, Edmund Themilthorp, who was receiver for the Earl of Sandwich, testified to the payment of the fee-farm rent all the time of the Doughty tenancy.
- 17 His portrait is in the Guildhall at Norwich.
- 18 Tanner MS cxxxvii p.144

—ooOoo—

Outing to the Norfolk Broads, Saturday, June 27th.1998

The Norfolk & Norwich Branch of the Historical Association and the Aylsham Local History Society are planning a joint expedition with Broadland Passenger Craft Ltd. Riverside Road, Wroxham.

Our aim will be to learn about the history and ecology of Broadland, and our guide will be Dr. Martin George, Regional Officer for the Nature Conservancy in East Anglia from 1966 until his retirement in 1990. Dr. George's book, *"The Land use, Ecology and Conservation of Broadland"* was published in November 1997.

The boat will leave the yard at 10am., and we shall return at 4pm. Light refreshments will be available, and there are toilet facilities on board. The route will take us through Woodbastwick, Cockshoot and Hoveton Broads, and there will be opportunities to walk for those who wish. A packed lunch and stout footwear will be essential!

The cost will be £12.50 for members and £15 for guests. Applications from members will be accepted in order of receipt, and the closing date is **Tuesday, April 21st**. After that date guests will be accepted on a first come-first served basis.

If you would like to come, please fill in the separate slip enclosed, and send it with your cheque to Miss V.R. Belton, Cherry Tree Cottage, Ingworth, Norwich. NR11 6AE

It is suggested that we use our own cars to get to Wroxham. A map showing the parking area at the Boatyard will be provided.