

AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



Volume 7 No.5

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The **JOURNAL & NEWSLETTER** is the publication of the Aylsham Local History Society. It is published three times a year, in April, August and December, and is issued free to members. Contributions are welcomed from members and others. Contact: EDITOR: Mrs Betty Gee, Oakfield End, Oakfield Road, Aylsham NR11 6AL. Phone 01263 734834 E-mail bettygee@tiscali.co.uk

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COVER PICTURE is from a postcard in the Archives and shows the Market place - Laxen's shop (see page 129) .



AYLSHAM LOCAL HISTORY
SOCIETY

**JOURNAL &
NEWSLETTER**

Volume 7

No 5

Since the last edition in April the Society has celebrated its Twentieth Anniversary in style. It was very interesting to read about the early days of the Society on the "year boards" and to be reminded of the local and national events of each year. The Garden Party was a delightful occasion, despite the showers. The Event at the Town Hall on 3rd July was attended by a large number of people, attracted by Derek Lyon's slide presentation "Changes in Aylsham 1850 – 1950"; they stayed to look at archives, displays and books.

The Society's newest publication, "Aylsham Directories 1793 – 1937", was also on sale for the first time. It is certainly the longest of our books and it was a great achievement of all concerned, and particularly the Editors Geoff Gale and Tom Mollard, to produce it for the anniversary. It is bound in a handsome red cover and now costs £11.00. Copies may be obtained from Tom Mollard, Flint Cottage, Calthorpe Rd, Erpingham, Norwich NR11 7QL. Phone 01263 761638 mollard.tom@btopenworld.com. There will be an extra charge of £2.00 for postage & packing.

VISIT TO OXBURGH

A circular is enclosed giving details of a visit to the National Trust Oxburgh Hall and Gardens on

WEDNESDAY, 8th SEPTEMBER 2004

Leaving at 10.15 am Returning by 5 pm

There are attractive gardens and an interesting Catholic chapel in the grounds, as well as St John's Church (C of E). The tea room/licensed restaurant serves lunches from 12 – 2 pm; there is a kiosk in the Car Park and picnic tables for those taking sandwiches. Visitors may join short garden tours by stewards. The basic cost for the coach will be £8.50; National Trust members have free admission; non-members pay £4.65 each on entrance. Please return the slip by 29th August.

SOCIETY NEWS

Course on "The Dark Ages" by Mike Hardy January - March 2004

Mike Hardy, a popular tutor, has been entertaining us by attempting to shed some light on "The Dark Ages". I use the word entertaining deliberately since his enthusiasm gets us quickly over what might be heavy going. Even in ten sessions the period covered is a challenge, since there is infinite room for conjecture in the absence of reliable written records. As an archaeologist, of course Mike Hardy can give us authoritative views on the exciting discoveries made recently at Southend and disabuse us if we needed it of having faith in the reporting of such finds by even the broadsheet press.

The Dark Ages naturally followed on the previous term's insights into late Roman Britain and the contrast between what can be confidently given as facts based on writings and relics of the great Roman civilisation and the lack of any but archaeological evidence of the immediate succeeding period was very clearly demonstrated.

At the end of several classes, Mike Hardy told us that if we were confused, so much the better, this state being preferable to believing in the factual existence of some of the myths about possible events of this period.

However, for the latter part of our period he was able to provide numerous readings from ancient manuscripts mainly dealing with the power and property belonging to the church and particularly the monasteries.

He also has a splendid collection of slides which we much enjoyed. He was able to show many of the "Celtic" stone crosses whose purpose is still a mystery in some ways. Some of these crosses are in isolated areas and it is remarkable how many of them he has visited. There were also pictures of churches and, of course, archaeological excavations showing brown bones et cetera et cetera.

All in all we enjoyed these classes and looked forward to the "field trip" planned for April, when we hoped to visit Beeston Regis and Binham.

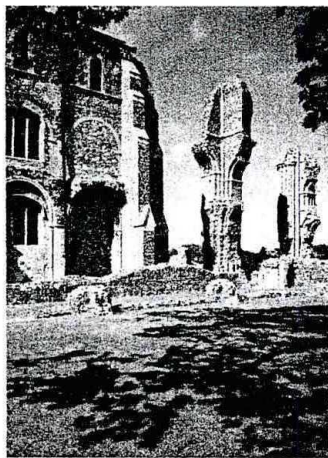
MAM

Visit to Binham and Beeston - Course on "The Dark Ages"

On the 6th April 2004 we had our "field trip" organised with his usual efficiency by Peter Holman, who unfortunately this time was unable to control the weather. The wind blew strong and chilly and rain threatened most of the afternoon, but members of our Society can be depended upon to face such conditions with fortitude.

Binham Priory was founded in 1091 as a Benedictine monastery and is Norman and very early Early English. Even in ruin it is awe inspiring, massive and strong. About one-sixth of the original great church was blocked off and taken over by the parish. The patched up result, tall and lofty with wonderful Norman dog tooth arches is somehow out of scale and there is no resonance of whatever parish activities took place between the dissolution and the present day. Those who worshipped here have left no memorials or grave slabs. The font is a very fine piece but it is almost marooned on a very high pedestal with steep steps requiring some chamois-like certainty of footing when officiating at a baptism. We were told, however, that the acoustics are out-of-the ordinarily good and the venue is much prized for its concerts.

Coming out of the church tall stark remnants of the rest of the building loom high like jagged teeth. Excavations have brought to light much of the other



monastic buildings and our group, not normally sympathetic about such matters, gazed at the fireplace in the warming room with some appreciation of the need for such comfort, standing as we were on one of Norfolk's airy uplands on a cold Spring day.

We travelled on to Beeston and found the priory there almost like a folly in the grounds of a private house. This priory was founded in 1216 for four Augustinian canons and the ruins are quite substantial giving a clear demonstration of the strength of its flint walls. The original fishponds also survive.

Our tutor, Mike Hardy, accompanied us and readily discoursed on the topics raised by us. We all came home feeling that the afternoon had been very worthwhile, despite the weather.

MAM

THOMAS PAINE - Is he relevant today?

Talk by Chad Goodwin

As they say, "If you want the best, go straight for the top" and this was clearly evident in the choice of speaker for this lecture on Tom Paine at the Friendship Hall on March 25th.

Chad Goodwin is the chairman of the Thomas Paine Society, and you cannot go much higher than that, and he enthralled us with his lively talk on the life and character of Tom Paine. His knowledge of his subject was remarkable and his enthusiasm came over very quickly to us all. The speaker's assessment of Paine became all the more credible when he made it clear that although a great supporter of Paine, he was also able to recognise his weaknesses and inconsistencies in his character, and that he was a man who could be something of a loner.

Chad Goodwin outlined Paine's life. Born in Thetford in 1737, his father was a small farmer, a staymaker and a Quaker. His mother was an Anglican, so Tom Paine would have seen at an early age that conflicting beliefs could exist even in his own home. After receiving a good education, he became an excise officer, and first brought himself to public notice with a pamphlet arguing for increased payment for excise men. He moved to Kent, and married twice, although not much is known of his married life. He later moved to America and wrote a series of pamphlets in favour of independence from Britain. These writings brought him great fame and popularity in America and brought him into contact with influential people like George Washington and Benjamin. He did return later to England, and produced amongst other things, the first part of *The Rights of Man*, in 1791. This really did bring him to the notice of the government, and he hurriedly moved to France just in time to escape imprisonment.

In France he supported the early revolutionary movement which endeared him to the French and he was granted French citizenship. Later, by opposing the execution of the French king, he only just managed to escape the guillotine himself and suffered a period of imprisonment. Later he was able to travel back to the United States where he found that the great popularity he had enjoyed there had waned, and he passed the remainder of his life there in relative obscurity. He died in 1809.

It was interesting to hear the speaker say that he (the speaker) had been able to quote many of the words of Thomas Paine to modern American schoolchildren, who could recognise them immediately, but assumed they were the words of George Washington or Benjamin Franklin. They were surprised to be told that they were the words of an unknown Thetford corset maker of whom they had never heard!

At the end of the lecture I was equally surprised to learn that amongst the evening's audience were two people who could claim to be descended from the Paine family. What we never did really learn was whether Tom Paine is relevant today.

Tom Mollard

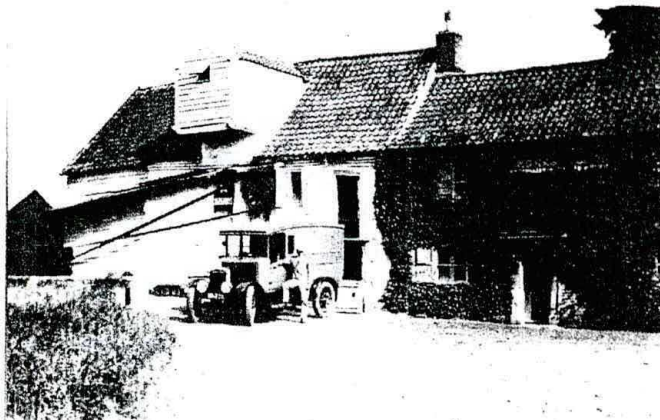


TALK on "Aldborough - the Story of a Village" by Keith Entwistle

This talk was given on 22nd April to a large audience. Peter Holman, our Chairman, introduced the speaker and said that he considered the book on Aldborough to be one of the best ones about villages he had read. Keith explained that there would be two interwoven strands in his talk - how the book "A Century of Faces and Places A History of Aldborough & Thurgarton 1900 - 2000" came to be written and Aldborough itself.

The Aldborough Village History Society formed in the year 2001 held an exhibition in September 2001 as part of the Aldborough Village show. This aroused much interest and many more people became involved. Contacts were made with former residents and the families of former residents. The object from the outset was to publish a book as a permanent record in the autumn of 2002 and this object was achieved. The Society Committee under Ruth Bayes asked him to coordinate the large amount of material offered and to write the book, but he emphasized that it was a team effort. Tape-recorded interviews were used as a way of preserving information given by word of mouth. Group sessions were used with particular topics, and, gradually, key events and people began to emerge.

The excellent WI History of Aldborough and Thurgarton, handwritten by Mrs Phyllis Eddy in 1937, gave an excellent base for the first forty years of the century. It is kept in the Norfolk Record Office. There were also good school and church records, but as well older residents had written personal memoirs for their families. *Picture below of Aldborough Mill*



A particularly fascinating memoir was by Clifford Craske who visited his mother's family every summer as a young boy at Aldborough Mill from

1902 - 1909. He recalled being collected from Aylsham Station by his uncle Harry in an old-fashioned vehicle, drawn by an aged horse with a mind of its own. Mr Henry Cooke had created lovely water gardens around the working Mill, with islands, bridges and little waterways. Sunday School treats went there for the day and were given trips in a rowing boat. The original buildings of the mill site were later converted to three houses.

Another good source were the diaries written by Mrs Gay of Aldborough Hall and her daughter Margaret Lilly, wife of the Rev Christopher Lilly. The latter kept a daily diary until her death in 1953. She was a very busy person - a landowner (due to the death of her elder brother in the 1st War), Chairman of the Parish Council and President of the WI. "She biked everywhere with her big bicycle basket, always giving something to someone."

Keith explained that he had deliberately tried to preserve in the book the rhythms of daily speech. It had been difficult to know what to leave out in the mass of material. Aldborough Green was noted for its Fair; the original charter was granted by King John. In the early years of the 20th century there was a stock fair, a pleasure fair and on the second day a horse fair and then roundabouts and stalls. Cricket had been played on the Green for over a hundred years.

Many businesses flourished around the Green and Keith gave us a quick tour in pictures of some of them. Bone & Co was the biggest grocer and two of its employees started up successful grocery/general businesses of their own. He also told us about notable personalities and families in Aldborough and Thurgarton.

In the early years of the 20th century the village was isolated to a great extent, so they had tradespeople of all descriptions. Sports and pastimes were centred on the village green. The Friendly Societies held their Annual Club Feast on the second Thursday in May, with a church service, procession, special meal and then sports for all.

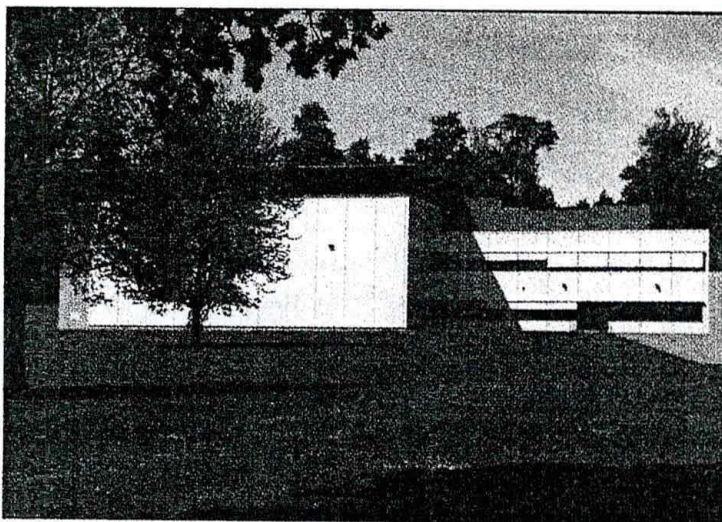
The map of Aldborough and Thurgarton shows that the parishes are separated by the Beck. The Great Flood of 1912 damaged all the bridges over the streams and is still a vivid memory. Both parishes have churches although Thurgarton Church is only used two or three times a year.

Molly Cook expressed the thanks of the Society to Keith for a fascinating talk, which gave us much new information about a lively Norfolk village.

Betty Gee

Visit to the Archive Centre at the Norfolk Record Office On 13th May 2004

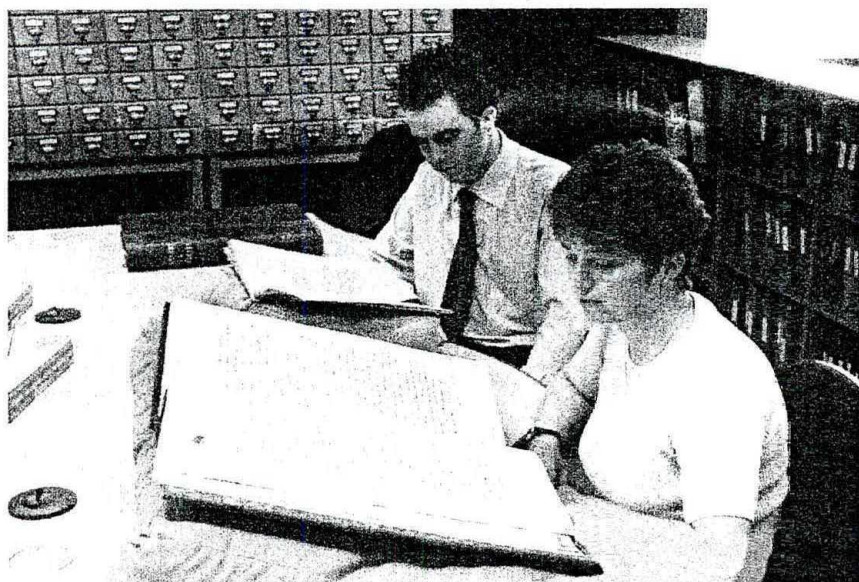
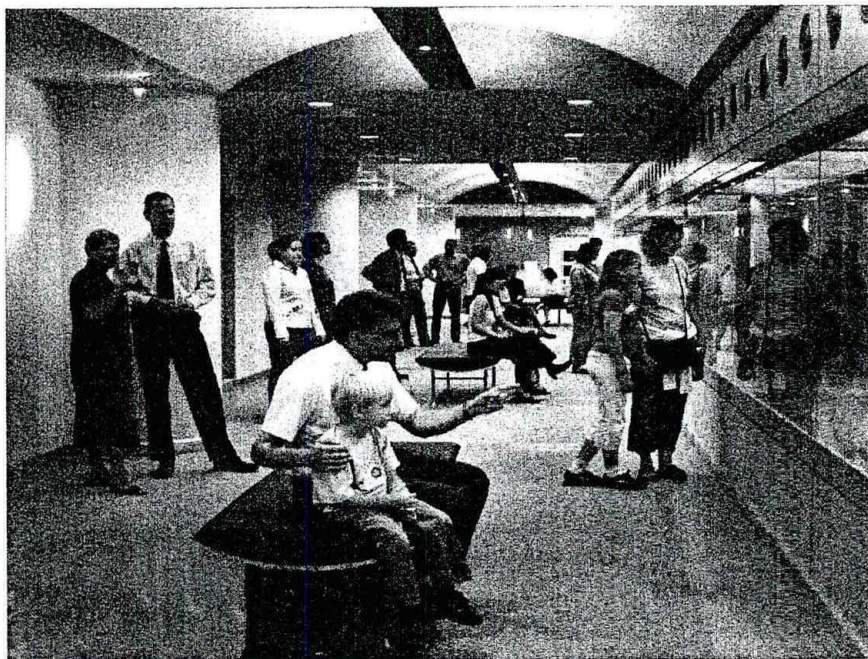
The Society arranged a visit to the Norfolk Archive Centre on Thursday, 13th May. We assembled at the Archive Centre, and were given a talk about its history, from the first central archive in 1963 in the basement of the City Library, its accumulation of documents from all over Norfolk, through the trauma of the fire in 1994 (ten years ago - amazing!), to its current home alongside County Hall. This building is designed to house the current archive of twelve million documents, planned expansion for the next thirty years, plus a contingency of 25% on current numbers to cover the surge caused by the publicity of the opening. It was explained that archives are largely regarded as unpublished material, with published material being housed in the library. The building also houses the East Anglian Film Library.



After the lecture, we were split into two groups, and shown some archives relating to Aylsham. These included a ledger from Aylsham Bridewell, documenting the prisoners held. One pathetic entry was a twelve-year-old male servant, in the Bridewell for a fortnight's hard labour for misdemeanours. The other group was taken to the reading room, one of the strong rooms and the conservation department. This was then reversed.

Two and a half hours were spent very pleasantly, although it was a traumatic experience to be made to store our handbags in lockers for all that time - for security reasons, obviously.

Daphne Davy



Inside the Archive Centre

20th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

SATURDAY 19th June 2004

The First Saturday of the Celebration of Twenty Years of the Society
Peter Holman

Up early to get into the Barclays Bank corner car park and to put out the *'year boards' between the bollards. They fitted well and soon the full display was out. It was a fine morning with a slight breeze and boards fell flat on the pavement with a loud pistol-like report, to the surprise of some passers-by! However, a quick answer was thought of and a ball of string was purchased from Clarkes (the ironmongers); we lashed the boards to the bollards and the display began to draw attention from passers-by.

Geoff Gale, Peter Pink and John Harris spoke to those interested and handed out leaflets with further details. These ran out and we had more photocopied. A few passers-by looked at all the boards, some glanced at one or two and others passed by in conversation. The crowd increased by eleven o'clock, even more asking questions. By mid-day, we had stood for long enough and the shoppers having thinned we decided to put the boards away. Job done, and not a sign that we had been there.

- Note: The year boards were Peter Holman's idea; each contained a summary of the Society's activities (lectures, courses, visits and publications) and of local and national events. BG



THE PARTY

Ursula Warren

The 20th Anniversary Party of the Aylsham History Society took place on Saturday, June 26th, in the well-tended garden of Mr & Mrs Polhill.

In the morning, the members of the Committee gathered, and we prepared the three gazebos, and set out many chairs. All this was done with much laughter, although it was quite hard work.

Diana Polhill had prepared the garage as a tearoom. Here we put up tables and arranged the cups and saucers (which the WI had kindly lent). In the kitchen she had, with great efficiency, left all the essentials for making sandwiches. She had also obtained plastic bowls in which we put the hulled strawberries. Feeling quite exhausted, we all went home and met again at 2 pm.

We and the assembled guests sat on the chairs round the lawn, the edges of which were lined with the boards recording the events of the last 20 years. These had been laboriously assembled by the men on the Committee. The gazebos were bright with swirling gaily-coloured balloons, and the sun shone benignly down on us. The omens seemed good.

Roger Polhill had made a delicious fruit punch which we sipped, as Peter Holman, our Chairman, welcomed us and then introduced a team from The Early Dance Group, who were going to entertain us with 17th and 18th century dances, ending with the familiar cotillion. All the dancers wore elaborate and colourful dresses and looked charming.



Sadly, in the midst of the performance, the rain came. Not at all upset, we moved into the Drawing Room, which had been prepared for such an eventuality - carpet rolled up and furniture moved out.



At the end of the performance, Betty Gee thanked the dancers for their delightful performance and Diana and Roger for providing the setting for the elegant dancing. On behalf of the ladies of the Committee, she asked the assembled company to wait to be served with bowls of strawberries and cream and a selection of sandwiches and short breads.

Derek Lyons, who had been taking photographs, came in and was there to record the cutting of the Anniversary Cake. This had been made and iced by Rosemarie Powell, and decorated by Diana Polhill with a picture of John of Gaunt.



The cake was mouth-wateringly delicious. The afternoon ended with us all drinking a glass of white wine. It had been, despite the inclement weather, a truly memorable occasion.

SATURDAY 3rd July 2004

The Third and Final Saturday of the Celebration of Twenty Years of the Society

Peter Holman

This time at the Town Hall, with displays and Derek Lyons talking about changes in Aylsham and showing a fine set of illustrations from the Archives.



A postcard of the Market Place from the archives; this corner is now Lloyds the chemist.

Work for preparing the Hall for the events went on from ten o'clock on Friday night because of the Hall being in use until then. Some of us were there at eight in the morning to continue the preparations. Visitors started coming in from before ten and we were delighted with the numbers who showed interest in the displays of archive material, display work, and publications, including the newly published Aylsham Directories 1793 - 1937 which was "hot off the press". Before eleven o'clock people were seated ready for Derek Lyons and we had to put out more and more chairs. There was a second performance at 2.30 pm, again with a large audience.

During all this, refreshments were available, including Ploughman's Lunches and cream teas, thanks to many in the kitchen.

By four o'clock it was all over and everything had to be taken down and put away at the end of a long day, but it was all well worthwhile, and our intention to bring the History Society to the people of the town had been well done whilst members had enjoyed the garden party - not even letting a little light rain spoil the event. Thanks to everyone who took part in all this.

And Afterwards

Members will be pleased to hear that the year boards and two of the main displays were taken to the Bure Valley School, by arrangement with the Acting Head Mr Davies, to be displayed around the School. The 1912 Flood display and the Aylsham Poor Law were of particular interest to Year 6. All the boards and the displays were on view during the School Open Evening and thus seen by a new audience of parents; they generated much interest. Bure Valley School has kept the above two displays and also three easels. Four easels have been given to St Michael's School and other easels to two small art groups in Aylsham. The posters which were on the boards are being stored by our Vice-Chairman, Geoff Gale.

From information supplied by Margaret Rowe

A LITTLE PIECE OF AYLSHAM'S HISTORY SAFELY PRESERVED IN CALIFORNIA

David Case

Readers of this Journal may recall my earlier articles about the Laxen family of Aylsham; it is of interest to me as I am a descendant of this family. My great grandmother was Anna Laxen (d 1870) daughter of Henry Laxen, saddler and harness maker of Market Place, Aylsham. Laxen is a very rare surname and I have been collecting information about this family for many years. Having been introduced to the wonders of the internet I have naturally searched for references to the name and much to my surprise I recently found the following message posted in September 1998:

“Recently I was in Norfolk in the Aylsham area metal detecting with a group and I found half of a brass hinge which I was told was part of the decoration of the head piece of an ornate horse harness . . . The hinge (I only have the left half of it) has the initials A. R. L. across the top, in the middle Ma and on the bottom AYL . . . I would love to hear from someone about this family and this artefact.”

The finder, Margaret James, goes on to describe how she was staying at the time in Cromer and with the help of the curator of the Museum in Cromer, it was deduced that AYL must be one part of the word AYLSHAM. It was found from directories that one harness maker at Aylsham had been A.R.

Laxen. Had the two halves of the hinged article been intact, the wording would probably have appeared as:

A. R. LAXEN
Maker
AYLSHAM

I contacted Margaret James who lives in California, north of Los Angeles, and informed her that Albert Richard Laxen was my grandfather's cousin. . after the lapse of five years since posting her message, I think she was somewhat surprised to receive this response. However, she told me that the "little hinge was the favourite thing I found . . . it just seemed so real and personal". From the map reference she sent me it appears that the hinge was found in a field about two miles south-east of Cromer, not far from Northrepps.

The half-hinge is made of heavy brass and is 1 ½" at its greatest width and approximately 2 ½ inches long. The original complete noseband decoration would therefore have been about 5" across.



A little research shed further light on her find. Books on harness for heavy horses describe these articles as hinged nosebands and they were fixed across the leather noseband of the bridle. They therefore appeared in just about the most prominent part of the harness - and served as a wonderful vehicle on which to advertise the harness maker's credentials! Several examples were readily found from illustrations of horse harness and it appears that the format of the wording was always as set out above with the maker's name and location.¹ It is not clear whether these brass nosebands

were always hinged in two parts - but presumably the hinge allowed some flexibility across the leather noseband to which it would be attached. E-mails were rapidly exchanged across the globe to discuss these findings and illustrations were compared; A R Laxen would have been astonished by our interest in this little piece of brass.

It appears that the harness maker's business was established in the Market Place in about 1800.² My great great grandfather Henry Laxen, apparently the third saddler and harness maker of Market Place Aylsham, died in 1868 and the business was continued by his widow Ann. When she died in 1892 her grandson Albert Richard Laxen appears to have followed as the saddler and harness makers; I believe he was known as "Bertie". The shop was at No 10 the Market Place - now the *Break Charity Shop* and a number of postcards³ and photographs taken around the turn of the century show the shop frontage - with saddles lined up on a rail in front of the premises. A Mr Ulph⁴ eventually took over the business in about 1923. Five generations of the Laxen family had worked as harness makers in Aylsham spanning well over a century.

It would therefore appear that this brass noseband was probably made in the 1890s or the early part of the 20th century when A R Laxen was the harness maker at Aylsham. It is not clear of course whether Albert R Laxen would have actually made the brass piece himself or whether such things would be made to order *for* him, by someone else, to decorate the leather harness work - which he undoubtedly would have made up himself.

Margaret James and I would be very interested to know if any other example of this form of brasswork from Aylsham is known to have survived as it would be fascinating to be able to make comparisons. Until very recently, this fragment of Aylsham's history was being carefully preserved on the other side of the world by its proud finder. Now, much to my surprise, Margaret has kindly sent it to me on loan and for a while at least, I shall enjoy this little brass reminder from the past.

- 1 See, for example, *The Heavy Horse Its Harness and Harness Decoration* by Terry Keegan (Pelham Books 1973)
- 2 *Aylsham Remembered* (published 1995, Aylsham Town Council) page 11 shows a a bill-head (dated 1904) on which appears:
ESTABLISHED 1800 A. R. LAXEN (Late ANN LAXEN)
SADDLE AND HARNESS MAKER, MARKET PLACE AYLSHAM
- 3 A postcard from the beginning of the 20th century has been used for the

cover of this Journal, showing A R LAXEN's shop in the Market Place; the shop of Ward & Son, family grocers, is also shown.

- 4 A saddler is listed in Kelly's Directory 1925 Ulph, Harry, whereas the Town & County Directory 1928 lists a saddler Ulph, R, both in the Market Place.

THE DOCUMENTS BELOW WERE KINDLY SUPPLIED BY ROGER CROUCH

Copy of Indenture dated 1876

This Indenture Witnesseth That **Alfred Easton** of Cawston in the County of Norfolk an infant of the age of Fifteen years or thereabouts the son of **Robert Easton** of Cawston aforesaid Farmer by and with the consent of his said Father testified by his executing these presents doth put himself Apprentice to **Thomas Gotterson** of Aylsham in the said County Carpenter and Wheelwright to learn his Arts and with him after the manner of an apprentice. To serve from the fifteenth day of May instant for the term of Five years thence next following and fully to be complete and ended (Except nevertheless and always reserved unto the said Apprentice during the said term the right to absent himself from his said Masters service twenty one days during the Harvest time in every year of the said term. During which term the said Apprentice his Master faithfully shall service daily Sundays & Christmas days and Good Fridays excepted from the hour of six in the morning till the hour of six in the evening save the usual hours for meals and save also that the said apprentice shall not be required to be at his work until the hour of seven on Monday mornings and shall be allowed to leave off work and go home at the hour of four on Saturday afternoons. He shall his Masters secrets keep, his lawful commands everywhere gladly do. He shall do no damage to his said Master nor see to be done of others, but to his Power shall tell or forthwith give warning to his said Master of the same. He shall not waste the Goods of his said Master nor lend them unlawfully to any. He shall not commit fornication nor contract Matrimony within the said Term. He shall not play at Cards or Dice Tables or any other unlawful Games whereby his said Master may have any loss with his own goods or others during the said Term without Licence of his said Master. He shall neither buy or sell. He shall not haunt Taverns or Playhouses nor

absent himself from his said Masters service unlawfully. But in all things as a faithful Apprentice he shall behave himself towards his said Master and all his during the said Term. And The said Thomas Gotterson in consideration of such Good and Gainful services and of the sum of Five Pounds Sterling to him paid by the said Robert Easton. Upon the execution of the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged doth hereby for himself his heirs executors and administrators covenant with the said Robert Easton his executors and administrators that the said Thomas Gotterson his executors administrators and assigns his said Apprentice in the Arts of Carpenter and Wheelwright which he useth by the best means that he can, shall teach and Instruct or cause to be taught and instructed and also will pay unto the said apprentice weekly, the weekly wages following,+ namely Three Shillings per week during the first year, Four shillings per week during the second year, five shillings per week during the third year, Six shillings per week during the fourth year and Seven shillings per week during the last year of the said term. Provided always that no wages shall be payable to the said apprentice during such part of the said term as shall absent himself from his work or service from any cause whatever or be incapacitated from illness or otherwise, and the said Robert Easton his executors and administrators will find and provide the said apprentice with suitable and sufficient clothes, meat, drink, tools, lodging, washing, mending, medicines, medical attendance and all other necessities during the said term..... And for the true performance of all and every the said Covenants and Agreements either of the said Parties bindeth himself unto the other by these Presents. **In Witness** whereof the Parties above named to these Indentures interchangeably have put their Hands and Seals the thirty first day of May and in the thirty ninth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria by the grace of God of the United Kingdom of **Great Britain** and Ireland **QUEEN** Defender of the faith and in the year of our **Lord** One Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventy Six.

Alfred Easton
his
Robert X Easton
mark
Thomas Gotterson

Editor's Note The above Indenture is for an apprentice to a Carpenter and Wheelwright for five years; the first year's payment is 3/- per week and the fifth year's for 7/-d. The father Robert Easton Farmer made a payment of £5 (which covers the weekly payments for five months); it also has a clause allowing the boy to absent himself for twenty-one days during the Harvest time in every year. It sets out the hours of work for the boy. Below is another apprenticeship agreement for a shoemaker's apprentice for four years – a lower starting rate of 1/6d per wk, no mention of Sundays excepted and no fee being paid by the parent (in this case a widow).

The restrictive clauses regarding behaviour and morals would appear to make it easy for the Employer to terminate the indenture.

Apprenticeship agreement between George Burrell and Thomas Newton – 7th June 1887

This indenture witnessed that George Edward Burrell of the age of fifteen years or thereabouts the son of Susanna Burrell of Aylsham in the county of Norfolk, widow. By and with the consent of his said mother testified by her executing these presents doth put himself apprentice to Thomas Newton of Aylsham aforesaid, shoemaker, to learn his art and with him after the manner of an apprentice to serve from the fourteenth day of March last unto the full end and term of four years from thence next following to be fully complete and ended during which term the said apprentice his master faithfully shall serve his secrets keep his lawful commands everywhere gladly do. He shall do no damage to his said master nor seek to be done of others but to his power shall tell of forthwith give warning to his said master of the same. He shall not waste the goods of his said master nor lend them unlawfully to any. He shall not contract matrimony within the said term nor play at cards or dice tables or any other unlawful games whereby his said master may have any loss with his own goods or others during the said term without licence of his said master. He shall neither buy nor sell. He shall not haunt taverns or playhouses nor absent himself from his said masters service day unlawfully but in all things as a faithful apprentice. He shall behave himself towards his said master and all his during the said term and the said Thomas Newton in consideration of such good and faithful services doth hereby for himself his heirs, executors and administrators covenant with the said Lucy Susanna Burrell her executors and administrators that he the said Thomas Newton his executors and administrators and assigns his said apprentice in the art of a shoemaker which he useth by the best means that he can teach and instruct or cause to be taught and instructed and also will pay unto the said apprentice the weekly wages following, namely the sum of one shilling and sixpence during the first year, two shillings per week during the second year, three shillings per week during the third year and four shillings per week during the last year of the said term provided nevertheless that if from sickness or any other cause the said apprentice shall absent himself or shall become incapable or shall refuse or neglect to fulfil his said apprenticeship then during the time of such absence, incapacity, refusal or neglect such weekly payments shall cease and the said Lucy Susanna Burrell in consideration of the premises doth hereby covenant with the said Thomas Newton that she the said Lucy Susanna Burrell her executors and administrators shall and will find & provide the said apprentice with suitable and sufficient clothes, meat, drink, lodging, washing, medicine, medical attendance, mending, tools and all other necessities during the said term, and for the true performance of all and every the said covenants and agreements either of the said parties bindeth himself and herself unto the other by these presents. In witness whereof the parties have named to these indentures interchangeably have put their hands and seals the seventh day of June and in the fiftieth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. QUEEN Defender of the Faith and in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty Seven,

George Edward Burrell

Lucy Susanna Burrell

Thomas Newton

Signed sealed and delivered by the above named George Edward Burrell, Lucy Susanna Burrell and Thomas Newton with presence of Robert Howlett, Aylsham, Norfolk

AYLSHAM NAVIGATION

Tom Mollard

By the time this item appears in the Journal I feel sure all members will have read through the Society's most recent publication – *Aylsham Directories*.

At the beginning of each directory you will have read the historical introduction, where it describes how the Navigation was opened in 1779 and thereafter the river was navigable to Great Yarmouth for the transport of goods – a situation which continued until 1912 when the great flood destroyed the locks and killed off the Navigation.

One would believe from this that the movement of goods on the River Bure only ever took place between these two dates, but this may not be the case. Some time ago Geoffrey Nobbs sent me an extract from a book *1* which I never had space to include in the Journal, but it does throw an interesting light on the probable river trade on the Bure:

“The Yare, the Waveney, and the Bure were the normal channels of trade for much of East Anglia. We shall never know the exact courses they followed in the sixteenth century as they meandered down to find their outlet in the North Sea together at Yarmouth. In a characteristic phrase Fuller remarked that the Yare was ‘*so wanton that it knoweth not its own mind which way to go*’; *2* and the weekend sailor on the Broads can only imagine that by means of some stream, similar to the one he is cruising along, many a village smithy got his Wealden iron and Tyneside coal and many a yeoman marketed his dairy produce and corn in ages past. In 1588 lighters of up to 30 tons could use the Bure, while a little later Speed noted it was a river ‘*of great service for water carriage*’ being navigable from Aylsham. *3* How far the Waveney and the smaller rivers were navigable we shall never know. But every river is ‘navigable’ if a small enough craft is employed, and that adjective is meaningless unless related to statements of draught and tonnage.

Here is one example of trade along these three rivers. In March 1580 the *Repentance* was loaded at Yarmouth with various packs of bayes by clothiers in turn from Norwich, from Aylsham, and from Bungay. Henry Barker had his cloth brought along the Yare from Norwich, and the Aylsham clothier almost certainly used the Bure for his. Henry Palmer of Bungay may have had his packs carried down the Waveney

either right to Yarmouth, or only as far as Beccles, where the river met the London road, and used pack-horses for the remaining two-thirds of the journey.⁴

So perhaps wherries were seen in Aylsham long before the navigation was constructed.

My thanks to Geoffrey Nobbs for supplying this extract.

Notes:

- 1 *Maritime trade of the East Anglian Ports 1550-1590*, by N J Williams (1988)
- 2 *Church History of Britain* ed J S Brewer (1845)
- 3 Tanner MSS 241 fo.57
- 4 YCR Court Rolls 21-2 Eliz.

NORFOLK AND NORWICH ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Presents an evening with

Time Team's Carenza Lewis

At the John Innes Centre, Colney Lane, Norwich

On 18th September at 7 pm

TICKETS £5/£3 (Members/Cons) Free Parking Refreshments

Advance Bookings:

Cheques/PO payable to NNAS to Time Team Evening

'Maplin' Brundall Rd, Blofield Norwich NR13 4 LB

(On sale at door if available)

A visit to Bolwick Hall Gardens

One Sunday afternoon in late May we noticed that these gardens would be opened to the public and decided to visit them. We drove in the direction of Marsham (down the A140) and found a sign on the left hand side to Bolwick Hall. Once through the gate, following other cars, we arrived at Bolwick Hall and then parked along another lane which would provide an exit for cars (and turned out to be the turning opposite *The Plough*).

We walked past the large house and found the entrance to the gardens. We received a sheet of notes from which much of the following information is taken. There is a large lake and, near the house, outbuildings, vegetable gardens and flower beds. We were amazed to think that we had driven many times from Marsham with no knowledge of the large estate over the hedges. We remembered that the route from Marsham to Aylsham in the 1980s was between a long avenue of trees. It is still there but it is now the cycle path.

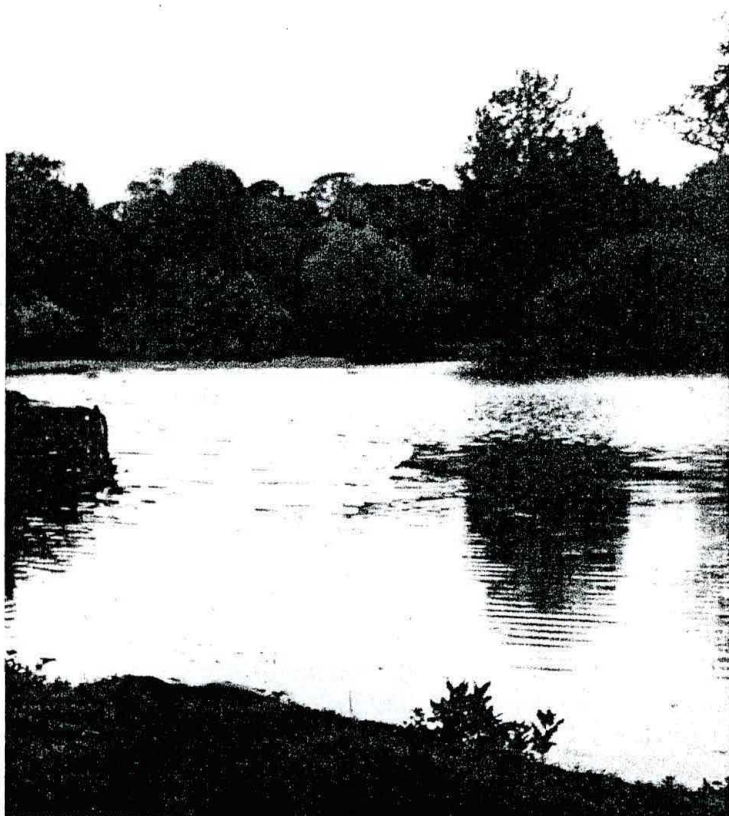
The present owners, Mr and Mrs Fisher, came about two years ago and, with the gardener who has worked there for over 25 years, are setting about the task of nurturing this garden. The garden was laid out in roughly the present form in the early nineteenth century, probably by Humphrey Repton, though no documentary evidence exists for this. The overall landscaping of the Park, the decorative mill pond, and the 'open' vegetable garden surrounded by woodland, seem characteristic of his approach. The magnificent *Wellingtonia* on the lawn was planted at the earliest in the 1850s when seeds of the *Sequoiadendron Giganteum* were first brought over to Britain from the Californian forest.

At one stage the lawn was laid out as large formal beds, later a pergola was placed in the middle. Other plants such as the Ginkgo tree and bamboo were brought back from India by the Buxton and Wathen families in the early twentieth century.

The present house was probably built on the site of a Tudor manor house, mainly in the early 1800s but with Victorian additions. In the sixteenth century the manor of Bolwick was held by Sir Robert Wood, who was Mayor of Norwich when Queen Elizabeth I made her visit to Norwich in 1578. There is written evidence of a settlement here in the Domesday Book, and Roman remains have been found on the land here, and nearby.

We walked round the lake and found a fast-flowing stream leaving the lake towards a large building in the distance in the trees. Possibly this was

Bolwick Mill which was built at the outfall of the lake in 1812 and continued in use until about 1925; it is now derelict. In 1810 the Mermaid



beck between Aylsham and Marsham followed a different course; it was then diverted and the lake was formed. ¹

Bolwick Hall stands just inside the parish boundary. It was remodelled externally by John Warnes, Sen early in the nineteenth century. The turnpike originally ran through Bolwick Park and was diverted by John Warnes. A toll house remains on the turn to Bolwick Hall and has specially sited side windows for looking up the road. We enjoyed our stroll round Bolwick Hall gardens and met several other Local History members.

Betty Gee

¹ from *A History of Aylsham* by Dr Sapwell

ALHS AUTUMN AFTERNOON COURSE

This year's Course in ten Sessions entitled "Market Towns of East Anglia" will be given by Nesta Evans on Tuesday afternoons starting on 27th September 2004 at the Friends' Meeting House, Pegg's Yard, Aylsham.

Further information from Peter Holman, Class Secretary, 3 Forster Close, Aylsham NR 11 6 BD 01263 733434

NEW SEASON'S EVENING PROGRAMME

The following is the Thursday evening programme at the Friendship Hall, Cawston Road, Aylsham, commencing at 7.30 pm, unless otherwise stated.

- 7 October at 7 pm ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING followed by a talk
by Geoffrey Gale on "Mrs Girling and the Children of God"
- 28 October "The Life & Work of George Skipper, Norfolk Architect" by
David Summers
- 25 November "Clement Scott & Poppyland" by Peter Stibbons
- 27 January 2005 Winter Party
- 24 February Members' Contributions
- 24 March "The Great Hospital of Norwich - the first 750 years" by
Keith Leesmith
- 28 April "Henry Despenser, the Fighting Bishop, a man of God or
Square Peg in a Round Hole" by Elizabeth Armstrong

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

With this Journal you will receive an early notice of the Society's Annual General Meeting on Thursday 7th October 2004 at 7 pm at the Friendship Hall, Cawston Road, Aylsham. Officers are elected annually. The Chairman, Peter Holman, owing to problems with his eyesight, is not standing for re-election as Chairman; he has been Chairman since 1997. He is, however, willing to serve on Committee in another capacity. Betty Gee retires from the position of Secretary. She will continue to edit this Journal. Two elected Committee members retire each year. This year they are John Harris and Jean McChesney. Both are eligible for re-election. Nominations should be sent to the Secretary, Mrs Betty Gee, Oakfield End, Oakfield Road, AYLHAM NR11 6AL by 30th September 2004.

VACANCY FOR SECRETARY

As mentioned in the April Journal, I shall not be Secretary as from the AGM. After seven years in the office and having become the Editor of this Journal from January 2003, I have found it difficult to combine the two positions without other commitments suffering.

The Secretary's duties are concerned primarily with the Thursday evening meetings and Committee Meetings. The programme from October until April 2005 has been arranged; lecturers would be reminded of the date.

(We have a Minuting Secretary who takes Minutes at Committee Meetings, which are held on Thursday afternoons six times a year, and a Membership Secretary who deals with Members). Agendas are prepared by the Secretary. There is a small amount of correspondence and the Secretary would, in the spring of 2005, write letters booking lecturers for the following year under the instruction of the Committee. She keeps Minute Files.

The organisation of the winter party, next year's visits and publicity would be taken on by other members of the Committee.

We have just organised a very enjoyable 20th Anniversary Celebration. I hope that someone will come forward to join the Committee in planning the future of our Society.

BETTY GEE

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The following lectures are advertised in the Diary issued by the Federation of Norfolk Historical & Archaeological Organisations.

September

1st Wed Norfolk Monuments & Brasses 1450-1800 by John Bayliss
Norfolk Heraldry Society meets United Reform Church Princes St Norwich
at 7.45 pm

9th Thur William Morris & the Arts & Crafts Movement by Jill Arnold
Reepham Society meets Bircham Centre Market Place Reepham at 8 pm

TIME AND TIDE

Museum of Great Yarmouth Life

Opens 14 July 2004

Discover the Great Story of Great Yarmouth!

Come and explore this new museum and take an exciting journey into the past. Find out about Great Yarmouth's fascinating history, its rich maritime and fishing heritage and some of the colourful characters who made their living from the sea.

Wander down a typical 1913 'Row' and see inside the home of a fisherman. Experience the heady atmosphere of a 1950s fish wharf. Take the wheel of a coastal Drifter and hear gripping tales of wreck and rescue.

Relax in the spacious courtyard beneath a spectacular canopy of sails. Enjoy lively hands on displays, games, puzzles, free audio guides and archive film shows for all the family.

Time and Tide is located in a Victorian herring curing works on Blackfriars Road, just a short walk from the sea front and the Historic South Quay.

Opening Times

14 July - 31 October 2004

Mon - Sun 10am - 5pm

1 Nov 2004 - 24 March 2005

Mon & Fri 10am - 4pm

Sat & Sun 12noon - 4pm

Closed 24, 25, 26 December 2004

Admission

Adult £5.45, Conc. £4.90,

Young Person (5-16) £3.50

Discounts for family groups



For further information tel. 01493 745526

www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk

