

News

Volume 7 Issue 3



Letter

Summer 2014

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FORTHCOMING SPEAKERS

**at: Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Theatre Street, Trinity Close,
Dereham NR19 2EP Starting 7.30 pm**

- 18 June** Trade Directories and Gazetteers by Gill Blanchard
- 16 July** School Records and Log Books by Dr Colin Chapman
- 20 August** DNA Tests for Family Historians by Dr Geoff Swinfield

A few words from your Editor ...

Hello again and a big thank you to everyone who has written in with contributions for the Newsletter this time. If you have a story about your WWI ancestor please write in, I would like to make it a regular feature of the Newsletter throughout this WWI Centenary Year.

Also in this issue is an article from Sue Harris about her life vs the life of her Gran, I know we can all relate to this, it makes you realise how much change has taken place in the last hundred years.

I look forward to hearing from you with your stories, and if your letter or article is not in this issue look out for it in the next.

Kate (Editor)

Format for Newsletter Contributions Preferably typed using Microsoft Word or Works, or handwritten, then please either:

- email the file to me at kate.easdown@btinternet.com or
- post handwritten copy/CD/floppy disk, to me at the address on the back of the Newsletter

Please contact Sheila Moulton, the Membership Secretary if you change your address or email address (contact details on back cover).

Deadline for inclusion in the next Newsletter - 16 July 2014

LET'S LOOK AT A CHURCH

No.74 – St. Margaret, Lyng



Lyng is a lovely compact little village of fewer than a thousand souls on the River Wensum, deep in the heart of our county with a picturesque old bridge and mill house. The Parish church of St. Margaret is approached past a small row of houses in the very centre of the village – no excuse for being late for service here unless one was tempted to linger at the ***Fox and Hounds*** which is located close by, to the left of the churchyard gate. The church's oldest feature is its tower which is a plain unbuttressed structure with no battlements and probably not even corner pinnacles when it was erected in the thirteenth century. The church is rightly proud of its ring of five bells, the most ancient of which is over five hundred years of age and the heaviest weighing over 520 kilograms. The bell frame was extensively restored in the early 1990s, and these venerable instruments can be heard ringing out across the surrounding fields, by anyone who cares to listen, every Friday which is practice night. The porch is rather younger than the tower and though somewhat battered with age remains tall and dignified. Inside the building itself, we find features dating from all periods of the church's history from the precious 'Lyng Pall' or altar cloth, at least six hundred years old and embroidered with pictures of saints and biblical figures, to the striking painting by Irene Ogden called ***Christ over Lyng*** and which rather in the spirit of James Ensor or Stanley Spencer shows Jesus over a contemporary (1956) montage of the village with a heavenly Lyng in the background. Also representing twentieth century art is a rather striking 1968

depiction of St. Margaret of Antioch, the dragon slayer herself, who we met last year at her church in Swannington. She is shown in all her glory in one of the chancel windows where we see the 15 year old shepherdess, although you wouldn't think so to look at her purple robes, who with somewhat less fuss than her contemporary St George saw off a fiery dragon with little more than the cross about her neck. It wasn't easy being a dragon in those days. Our interest was also aroused by a number of pews with cast iron plaques bearing the legend 'free', a reminder of the once widespread practice of pew rent. As Roy Strong relates in his invaluable *A Little History of the English Country Church* (Vintage Books, 2007), in Georgian England, in some ways the heyday of many of our Norfolk churches, although not everyone attended Sunday worship any more as they were compelled to do in earlier days, there was still enough pressure to ensure that on the Sabbath, most of the village attended what was very much a social as well as a spiritual event and one which both reflected and reinforced the local hierarchy, then very much seen as in the words of Mrs Alexander's Victorian hymn as comprising 'The rich man in his castle/The poor man at his gate/God made them, high or lowly/And order'd their estate.' Seating was allotted according to a person's 'qualities and due respects' with the great and good in box pews which might be passed down in the family, purchased for life or rented on an annual or quarterly basis unless that is you came early enough to grab one of the free pews. Apart from the Primitive Methodist chapel of 1857, now a house, Lyng has had two places of worship. As well as St Margaret's there was, in the Middle Ages, St. Edmunds Chapel the church of the nearby Benedictine nunnery but this was abandoned in 1176 and now all that remains are a few small sections of ruined flint wall to remind us that, now out of the way, Lyng was once an important settlement.

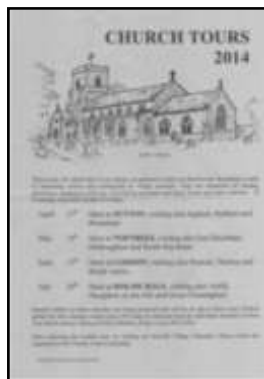
The original registers are held at the Norfolk Record Office (Cat. Ref. PD 374), and comprise Baptisms 1538–1933, Marriages 1539–1837, Burials 1567–1895 and Banns 1754–1946. Microform copies cover the same dates except in the case of Baptisms which end in 1901. All Archdeacon's and Bishop's transcripts start in 1600 with Baptisms and Burials ending in 1871 and Marriages in 1837. There are many nineteenth and twentieth century documents in the Parish Chest including Terriers 1784–1955, a Tithe Account Book for 1836–62, apportionments dating 1839 and a map from 1842. Also to be found are Court Books 1612–93 and 1729–1927, Overseer's Account Books 1794–1835, Churchwarden's Accounts 1875–1946 and vouchers from 1809 and 1869–70 along with a survey of the parish made in 1811.

Roderic & Denise Woodhouse

FREE CHURCH TOURS

Every year, the Church Tours Committee in association with the Norfolk Churches Trust organise monthly tours of Norfolk churches, between April and July. The tours, for which there is no charge, are planned to help you discover the fascinating wealth of interesting history and architecture in village churches. They are organised for Sunday afternoons, starting at 2.30 pm. Tea is provided and the tour ends with a service (optional) of evensong, at 6 or 6.30 pm.

Essentially it is a car trail. You make your own way to the start church and the organisers sign post directions to the other three. You've missed the first two for 2014 but the remaining tours are:



June 15th

Apton

Meet at LODDON to visit also Sisland, Thurton and Bergh

July 20th

Meet at HOLME HALE to visit also Ashill, Houghton on the Hill, and Great Cressingham

RECENT SPEAKERS

At the April meeting of the Society the speaker was Peter Christian, his topic was 'Finding Family Histories on Line'. He gave an interesting and detailed talk about finding information on the internet and left us with a website address to access outlining his talk – www.spub.co.uk/lectures/finding.pdf

At the March meeting Helen Bainbridge spoke about 'The Sweated Industries – 1906'. Helen left a handout sheet (1 page) giving a brief resume of her talk. I will be happy to email a copy to anyone who wants one. *Kate (Ed)*

NORFOLK ELECTORAL REGISTERS ON LINE – UPDATE

In the Spring Newsletter (P14) we reported that Electoral Registers for Norfolk 1844 – 1952 had been put on line at <https://familysearch.org> This is not strictly true as currently there is nothing after 1915. Later copies can be seen in Norwich at the Local History Library (in the Forum) and Norfolk Record Office (NRO), in hard copy or microfilm.

Electoral Divisions. Further research revealed that Norfolk was divided into nine Electoral Divisions – N, NW, E, S, SW, Mid, Norwich and Yarmouth. The NRO has a (black) information folder, listing all Norfolk parishes with their Electoral Division for specific years. Under ‘East Dereham,’ we find: W (1832-1867), S (1867-1885), Mid (1885-1918), SW (1918-1948), SW (Norfolk CC) 1948 onwards.

Electoral Districts. Each Division is further divided into Districts. For example in 1891 Mid Division had 19 Districts, identified as Districts ‘A’ to ‘S’ with Dereham in District E.

Returning to the Norfolk Electoral Registers website, if we click on ‘Browse through images’ - ‘Norfolk’ - select a Division and then a year we are presented with many, in some case hundreds of pages to search for our parish of interest. In the above 1891 example the Mid Division. has 447 page images. Joy Lodey sent us an email highlighting the problem, suggesting that it would be very useful if “someone” could compile an index of ‘image’ and ‘page’ numbers. It was while looking into the possible format of such an index that brought the above information to light and the conclusion that it would be a vast project with limited value.

Instead, further practice using the website revealed that the ‘Name Search’ option is exceptionally good. For example, putting in the name of a known Dereham resident and “East Dereham” as residence, we get a list of all the occurrences of that name, with year, parish and Electoral Division in the database. The list will be headed by East Dereham occurrences, but further down other locations of the same name appear. ‘Clicking’ on a name on the list (in blue) takes you to the LDS Church source reference and a ‘view document’ box. Clicking here takes you to the actual page image where the name occurs, which in turn provides a starting point for finding electors of East Dereham, listed in alphabetical order.

But if you just want to search the electoral role with no particular person in

mind – insert a* as last name and your place of interest, let's say "Scarning", click on search and you get hundreds of names beginning with "A" on the Electoral Roll for Scarning in all years. Clicking on a 'blue' name, in most cases, takes you to the first page of the Electoral Roll for that year at Scarning.

Hopefully this simplified explanation and examples will go some way towards clarifying the Electoral Register website, encouraging members, with Norfolk ancestors eligible to vote before 1915, to see what they can discover. Let us know how you get on. TG

MIDDLESEX MILITARY APPEAL TRIBUNAL 1916-1918

In the First World War, men wishing to appeal against conscription into the army could apply to Local Military Service tribunals for exemption, with the possibility of appealing against their decision to the County Appeal Tribunal. In 1921, the government directed that case notes regarding these appeals, should be destroyed. However, for some reason, those of the Middlesex Military Appeal Tribunal survived and in partnership with the Friends of The National Archives (TNA) and Federation of Family History Societies, they have been digitised and may be downloaded from TNA 'FREE of charge' (until 2014)

As they relate only to the Middlesex Appeal Tribunal, you will not find your Norfolk Ancestors included but they do give an insight into some of the problems conscription caused. The records are in MH47 but the following route gives easy access, further details about the documents and the seven grounds for appeal

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

homepage >click on **Explore Records**> scroll down, click on **Online Records**> click on **Army and Conscription**>scroll down and click on **Middlesex military appeal tribunal**

Down the page you will find a **search box**, but if you are just searching 'out of interest', you only have to fill in **one box**, simply a surname or forename (Robert, or John will produce several results), will do. I looked up two cases:

1. Sydney Fountain: He had volunteered for the army. The local tribunal notes tell us that originally he had two horse drawn vans and employed two men. Both men had joined-up, he had to sell one van and horse leaving him a reduced round selling groceries and oilman's produce with a weekly turnover of £35. With no one

to carry on the business in his absence he argued, it would fold and bring financial hardship to his wife and four children if he joined-up. The local tribunal were less than sympathetic, concluding that he was just a roundsman, had no premises and did not earn enough to pay income tax, Therefore, without his own upkeep, the family may be better off with the 34 shillings and 6 pence Separation Allowance, they would receive from the army.

Decision of Middlesex Appeal Tribunal: Appeal dismissed, given 28 days to sort out his business affairs.

2. Thomas Brown – head assistant at a gents outfitters. He wrote a very eloquent appeal explaining that although the local tribunal had offered him a non-combatants role in the army he felt that nothing short of complete exemption would meet his firm conscientious objections. Interesting note by local tribunal: ‘The Military Representative made no observation in this case’. Decision of Middlesex Appeal Tribunal: Appeal dismissed.

Warning: There are 8000 Middlesex cases for you to browse. I drew the line at these two feeling it could easily become addictive.

Note: Amongst the information on the TNA website is the suggestion that some Local Tribunal cases may have survived, which might be in Local Record Offices. However, a search on A2A, failed to identify any for Norfolk.

MY LIFE VS MY GRAN

Approaching the age of 60 and having retired already I can’t help but think what an easy life I’ve had compared with that of my grandmother. I had an idyllic childhood, able to play in the streets and in the nearby countryside, cycling around the country roads, fishing, climbing trees and playing in meadows. I went to a good school with small classes and when I was about to leave school I applied for 3 jobs and got offers from all three companies. My office job did have lots of pressure and stress at times, and I had to do things I didn’t enjoy doing, such as sack a person or make people redundant. I had to work many unpaid hours but my job was never physically demanding, I never “got my hands dirty” and rarely was the office cold. More importantly I have never experienced hunger, had to worry where my food was coming from, or lived through the horrors of war.

My grandmother Kate Soanes was born in Beccles in 1882. She was the

fourth of ten children, 5 boys and 5 girls. Her father was a small-time farmer, keeping cattle on land that regularly flooded. They lived in a crowded 5 room house. When Kate left school, probably at the age of 12 she went into domestic service until at the age of 29 when she married my grandfather. They lived in Great Yarmouth. One year later a daughter was born, and a further 20 months later, a month after World War 1 was declared, a son was born.

The fortifications of the Norfolk coastline began. Yarmouth soon became an important Naval Submarine base. The fishing industry was suspended and many of the town's fishermen volunteered for the Royal Naval Reserve, carrying out minesweeping duties and later, convoy duties and hunting for submarines. In November 1914 a blackout was imposed in Yarmouth and other coastal towns. On 3rd November the town was shelled by a force of seven German cruisers and attendant destroyers. No damage was done, the shells falling short of the town. But war now began to feel real for my grandmother.

My grandfather enlisted into the army on 24th January 1915. His army records have not survived but I've been able to ascertain that he was in the Royal Army Medical Corps serving in Salonica, Greece. Meanwhile my grandmother was left to bring up two very young children. A soldier's wife with 2 children, such as my grandmother, was given a 'separation allowance' of 21 shillings per week.

Great Yarmouth residents were in fear of invasion as a result of being so close to the Continent. The enemy were only 80 miles away across the North Sea. In February 1915 Yarmouth town hall issued instructions as to what to do in case of an invasion.

In the case of bombardment do not go into the street, but keep in your cellar or on the ground floor of your home. In the case of a hostile landing and the necessity arising of leaving the town, vehicles from Yarmouth must travel by Caister Road. Foot passengers from Yarmouth must proceed past Vauxhall Station on to the Acle New Road. Both Vehicles and Foot Passengers from Southtown and Gorleston must use the road to St Olaves via Bradwell and Ashby

It must be borne in mind that in case of any of the roads being required for

the movement of troops, civilians must be prepared to move off the roads temporarily into adjacent fields if necessary in order that they may not hinder the movement of the Troops. Persons leaving the town should provide themselves with food and warm clothing. If you wish for advice ask one of the Special Constables who will be on duty in case of danger, and be prepared to obey the directions given to you. If any alarm comes during school hours, the children attending the elementary schools will be sent home at once.

This notice would have terrified many of the civilians and no doubt my grandmother with her two children aged 2 years and 5 months was among them, her husband having left for the army only 2 weeks earlier. In addition to this Germany would try to starve out their enemy and although food was not rationed it did not mean that it was readily available or affordable.

The first ever air raids on Britain were on the night of 19th January 1915. Zeppelins dropped bombs on Yarmouth, on Albermarle Road, Crown Road and St Peter's Plain. Two people were killed. These were areas very close to where my grandmother was living. As well as being the first town attacked by a Zeppelin during the war, Yarmouth was also the last town, this final raid being on the night of 5-6th August 1918.

On 15th April 1915 there was another bombardment from sea where damage was sustained. Later bombardments in 1916 were also successful resulting in deaths, injuries and doing considerable damage to the town. By April 1917 food rationing was introduced meaning compulsory use of land for cultivating crops.

The war ended on 11th November 1918. My grandmother had remained in Yarmouth throughout the war. Demobilisation of the soldiers took a long time. However, as my grandfather was in poor health he was one of the first to be released from the army. On 1st January 1919 he was discharged 'due to sickness'. I recall my father telling me that my grandfather had been ill as a result of inhaling mustard gas. However, it would also appear that he contracted Tuberculosis during the war.

During WW1 Kate would also have been concerned about her five brothers. George joined the Navy in 1916. A year later he was invalided out of the Navy as a result of a fractured skull. He had served as a stoker on

HMS Bristol. His injuries must have been serious as he later received a pension. Frederick enlisted in the army in 1916. He was a private in the 7th Battalion Royal Fusiliers. His army life was to be short. He was killed on 13th November 1916, during the Battle of Ancre – one of the many Somme battles. He is named on the War Memorial in Beccles. Her third brother, William, does not appear to have served in the forces. I am uncertain as to why. Possibly he was allowed to work on the farm with his father, or perhaps his health was not good, although he lived until his 70s. Alfred, Kate's fourth brother, served in the army between 1915 and 1919, in the Suffolk 12th Battalion and then the Royal Field Artillery. Kate's youngest brother, Benjamin joined the Navy in 1916 where he served until 1919 before transferring to the Merchant Navy.

Kate's husband was one of 11 children, 8 of which were boys. Some served in the war and one died. And of course they both had sisters who had husbands who served in the war. So there were many family members to worry about.

By the end of 1919 my grandparents had a second son, my father, and 21 months later a second daughter. Now with 4 children my grandfather was receiving an army pension as a result of his poor health. Yet despite the poor condition of his lungs he was working as a barman in what was probably a very smoky bar, no doubt having no choice of where to work because of the serious unemployment problems following the war. His poor health was to deteriorate further and he was sent to Kelling Hospital, a 'Sanatorium for Working Men' (near Holt in Norfolk) as a result of his Pulmonary Tuberculosis. Treatment for this condition was very basic and unpleasant at this time. My grandmother, now caring for four children, would have found it very difficult to visit my grandfather. Public transport from Great Yarmouth to Kelling would have been very restrictive and no doubt very costly, so I doubt she was able to visit very often. My grandfather died 9th August 1925 at the age of 34. My grandmother was now alone with four children aged between 4 and 12 years. To make matters worse she discovered that she was not entitled to my grandfather's army pension. How my grandmother managed to support her children is uncertain but it is obvious that she had to work, probably long hours doing menial tasks.

Then in 1939 it all happened again. World War 2 was declared. By this

time Kate's older daughter was married with a child. However her youngest daughter was to join the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service), her elder son went into the Military Police and my father, the younger son, joined the 4th Battalion of the Royal Norfolks. Although he initially served in the UK he was later to be sent to Singapore where on 15th February 1942 the army was ordered to surrender to the Japanese. He was to spend the next three and a half years as a FEPOW (Far Eastern Prisoner of War) where he worked as slave labour building the infamous 'Railway of Death', the Siam - Burma Railway, which would wind its way through tropical jungle. Here he suffered from malnutrition, torture and many tropical illnesses including Malaria from which he continued to suffer throughout his life. Her son, together with his army friends were treated brutally throughout the war and were to suffer the consequences for the rest of their lives. Back at home my grandmother would have been worried as to whether he was still alive.

I have inherited a number of documents relating to my father's capture and imprisonment. On 3rd March 1942 a letter was written to my grandmother advising her that her son was "missing". Army records do not show my father as being a prisoner of war until an entry on 24th September 1943, i.e. 18 months later. Is this possibly the first time my gran knew that her son was still alive? I also have a 'postcard' from my father to his mother dated 12th January 1944 advising that he was working in Camp No. 2, POW Camp, Thailand.

At the lead up to the war gas masks were distributed, shelters constructed and air-raid precautions planned. Civilians were to live in terror again. During the first three days of September 1939 over 7,000 people, mainly women and children arrived from the London area by steamers, staying in the town of Yarmouth for a few days before being transferred by road to safer inland areas. Many people were evacuated from Yarmouth in the early years of the war, reducing the population to almost a third of its pre-war figure.

The last three months of 1939 and the first few months of 1940 was a period known as the 'phoney war'. Rationing and the blackout were a reminder of the war but for many life continued with little change. On 10th May 1940, Germany invaded Belgium and the Netherlands. In Great Yarmouth, only 90 miles from the battle, the sound of warfare crossed the

Channel. On 2nd June 1940 France agreed an armistice and Germany occupied the north of the country, making Britain feeling very vulnerable to invasion. Norfolk felt itself particularly at risk of invasion and many began to panic. Invasion plans were implemented and exercises were held in many towns and villages to see how the plans would work. There were many rumours and false alarms. The area of sea off Great Yarmouth was nicknamed 'E-Boat Alley' as so many German boats were there waiting to attack convoys. Flotillas of coastal defence craft were based at Yarmouth.

The first air raid on Yarmouth was 11th July 1940 resulting in deaths, injuries and damage to houses. 1941 was the worst year of the war for Yarmouth with frequent air raids during which 7,000 incendiary bombs and 800 high explosive bombs were dropped. Bombing raids left large numbers of people with no homes to return to. Yarmouth suffered very badly from raids between 1941 and 1943. During this time 217 civilians were killed in raids on the town. This number could have been much higher if the children and many other civilians had not been evacuated from the town. It was during these raids that Kate lost her house and many of her possessions. She was evacuated to 'The Beeches' in Norwich Road, Dereham where for a short time she stayed with the Tovell family. Later she was to move to Lynton House in Commercial Road, Dereham, in which three evacuated families were to live.

At the end of 1945 Kate was to see her younger son return to England from the Far East. He was in a sorry state; badly malnourished, greatly underweight, suffering from tropical illnesses and very withdrawn, unable to forget the terrible conditions he endured and the hundreds of comrades he saw die of illness, disease or as the result of torture while captives of the Japanese in Siam (now Thailand) and Burma.

From early on in the war food rationing was introduced. It commenced in 1940 with the rationing of bacon, butter and sugar. Gradually other items were added and it was not until 1954 that meat was finally removed from rationing.

Steadily my grandmother's life improved as food became easier to obtain, housing conditions improved and people began to enjoy life again. She now had her family around her and soon she was to enjoy becoming a grandmother. However, Kate was becoming an older woman, her hard life

telling on her health, and she was to die in 1954 at the age of 72, a few days before I was born.

My life, to date, has been easy compared to that of my grandmothers. I have enjoyed so many luxuries that she did not experience. We owe so much to her generation. God bless you Nan, I wish I could have known you.

Sue Harris

THE DEREHAM WAR MEMORIAL BOOK

Following on from the Spring Newsletter the following soldiers are commemorated on Dereham's War Memorials:



Company Sergeant Major Albert Edward Barker served with the 1st Battalion Norfolk Regiment. Albert was born in Hoe, Norfolk. He served in the South Africa Campaign. He died of wounds age 40 on 26th June 1918 and is buried at Tannay British Cemetery, Thiennes, France. On the 1911 census Albert Barker is a Corporal in the Norfolk Regiment, stationed at Oudenarde Barracks Aldershot. Initials on the War Memorial are given as A.C. but on his headstone the Commonwealth War Graves gives his Christian names as Albert Edward.



Private Horace Barnes served with the Northumberland Fusiliers. He was born in Dereham in 1894. He had been employed by Hobbies but joined up at the commencement of the war. He died of wounds on 7th September 1917 aged 23. He is buried at Tincourt New British Cemetery, Somme, France. Horace was the youngest of 6 brothers in the army. Sadly an older brother Herbert died just 10 days later. (see above) A joint memorial service was held in St. Nicholas Church Dereham.

Private William Barnes served with the Norfolk Regiment. He was born in Dereham. He was killed in action on 17th February 1917 aged 31. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, Somme, France. He left a widow and one child. Tragically their son James died aged 2 in October 1917.

NORFOLK RECORD OFFICE (Norwich)

Revised opening hours - With effect from 3 Apr 2014

Mondays	0900 - 1700	
Tuesdays	0930 - 1700	(late start)
Wednesdays	0900 - 1700	
Thursdays	0900 -1900	(late closing)
Fridays	0900 - 1700	
Saturdays	CLOSED	
Sundays	CLOSED	

Car parking/Getting there

Local members will all be all to aware that the building works at County Hall is causing problems with car parking for visitors to the Norfolk Record Office.

But did you know that the Sprowston/Postwick Park and Ride busses go to County Hall (Record Office) and call at the Bus Station every 15 minutes between 0900 and 1800 Monday to Friday?

Alternatively, of course, if you are reasonably fit you can walk to the Record Office from the town centre in about 30 minutes

NEW MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Submissions and changes must be made before April 1st for inclusion in the directory.

Member 778 – Mrs G Cxxxxx, -----, -----, -----,
-----, -----@-----

FULLER FAMILY Crows Hill Farm, Shipdham NFK 1830 -
1890

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR WWI ANCESTOR?

Thank you everyone who wrote to me about their WW1 Ancestors, if yours isn't this issue it will be in the next one.

From ... Colin C Fysh

This is the story of my Grandfather John William Fysh, a casualty of the "Live Bait Squadron" disaster of September 22nd 1914, he was 22 years old, his only son (my father) was born November 15th 1914.

Three ill equipped Cressy class Dreadnoughts, HMS Hogue, Aboukir and Cressy brought out of retirement at the outbreak of WW1, were ordered to patrol the Broad Fourteens off the Dutch coast to draw out the German fleet. These ships were manned by regular and reservist crew.



*John William Fysh
21st October 1891
22nd September 1914*

*Baptised November 13th St Nickolas
Chapel, King's Lynn, Norfolk.*

Married Alice May Stacey Dec 1911

*RNVR service number A2986.
Died when his ship HMS Aboukir was
sunk in the North Sea after being
Attacked by the German Submarine U9.*

His body was not recovered.

*Remembered in True's Yard Museum, St
Nickolas Chapel and on the King's Lynn
War Memorial, Tower Gardens.*

Their "newer" escorts which were equipped with radio were ordered to port due to bad weather, but as the Dreadnoughts had no such equipment....stayed out. Early the next morning in a calmer sea a German U-Boat (U9) commanded by Otto Weddinger spotted the 3 ships

cruising in formation and was able to torpedo each ship killing 1459 known British seamen, my Grandfather being one.

There is a book entitled "Three before Breakfast" by Alan Coles.

From ... Robert George Catton

We were fortunate that the three Catton ancestors who joined the army in W.W.1.all came home alive, one was my father. They were son and grandsons of Mary Ann Catton of Kennel Farm, Great Fransham. Her son John who was born in Holme Hale was in the 6th East Surrey Regiment was sent home from the trenches with shell shock. He was discharged from Norwich War Hospital Thorpe as an invalid in December 1917 and spent the rest of his life in institutions. My father Frank Robert Catton born 29.12.1896 joined the Hertfordshire yeomanry T.A.in 1914 aged 17. In February 1916 he joined the Machine Gun Corps becoming an instructor at Belton Park in Lincolnshire where he remained until the end of the war as a Sergeant Major Instructor. He used to say he spent the war breaking horses to pull gun carriages. The one I need help with is Ernest Catton born 1895 Great Fransham, his army records were destroyed in W.W.2. He was Private 23624 2nd Battalion Norfolk Regiment, and we know he was in hospital three times 28.1.17. in Ankara,13.6.17. in Ankara and 17.7.17.Baghdad, but nothing else about his army life. Ernest Catton married 22.10.1923. when he was working as a railway clerk in Wymondham. He went on to become a station master in Essex and died 19.6.1951.

We hope to visit the Imperial War Museum in London when it is open in July. If you know of any W.W.1.war diaries about the 2nd Battalion Norfolk in Baghdad or any planned exhibitions in East Anglia I would be very interested in visiting them. *Can anyone help please?*

From ... Ann Jones

Ernest Trollop (my great uncle) was born 19th July 1880 at Woodgate, Swanton Morley, he was baptised in All Saints Church on 29th August of the same year, his parents were George & Sarah Ann (Walker) Trollop. Private 203526 - 8th Battalion Norfolk Regiment he was wounded on 2nd

August 1917. He was sent home and was honourably discharged on 29th November 1917. He died 7th August 1918 in Norwich Hospital, the cause of death was given as an abscess on the brain caused through gunshot wound, and was buried 11th August. He was awarded the Victory and British Medal. All Saint's Church has recently been recognised by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as a Commonwealth War Cemetery.

Ernest Albert Peachment was born in 1898 in Billingford, the son of Sydney James and Margaret Peachment (my great aunt and uncle). He was a private in the 176th Battalion Machine Gun Corps (Infantry) and was killed in action on 27th August 1917, aged 18. He is buried at the New Irish Farm Cemetery, Ypres, Belgium (Grave No: XXII C5). He was awarded the Victory and British Medal and there is a memorial in Billingford Church.

From ... Dennis Lincoln

**Not all died on the Battlefields.... Grace Margaret Bolton....
Munitions worker.**

My Aunt Grace Margaret Bolton left her parents and her sibling at their home at New Farm Beeston next Mileham, Norfolk to do her bit for the war effort. She was fated never to live there again, and to meet her death in an extremely violent manner.

The daughter of Edward Gowing Bolton and Ellen Mary Bolton (nee Starling), Grace had brothers serving in the Army and no doubt she wanted to make her contribution to the war effort. She was to work at No. 6 Shell Filling Station at Chilwell, Nottinghamshire.

Work would not have been easy, the demand for ammunition was very high, production went on all day and night, the workers doing 12 hour shifts based on 6am and 6pm. Heavy hard and dangerous work was the order of the day, and safety at the factory was dependant on many factors.



I do not know how long Grace had worked at the factory (women were recruited from April 1916) or what job she did within the works. Like many others she reported for the night shift at 6pm on Monday 1st July 1918, and no doubt set about her duties. At the beginning of the shift the buildings and machines would have been checked to ensure everything was clean, and that the machines were not overheating. Staff would have been searched for forbidden items before being allowed on the factory floor.

At 7.10pm there was a series of massive explosions which resulted in several buildings being completely destroyed,

these included the mixing house and the TNT mill. All the people working in these building would have been “blown to pieces”.

Newspapers the following day suggested that over 60 persons had been killed in the explosion. This figure turned out to be an under estimation as the final death toll was 134, of which 109 were males and 25 were females.

Amongst the 25 females that perished that evening was my Aunt Grace. Her body was never found, and as far as I am aware, none of her remains were ever identified. We can only assume that she was one of those described as being “blown to pieces”. I have a copy of her death certificate which gives her cause of death as; “Presumed killed as a result of explosion. Deceased known to have been in works at the time and since missing”

Grace was born on 31st July 1898 and died 1st July 1918, a short life not even reaching her 20th birthday. She gave her life for King and Country. Grace is remembered on two war memorials, that for the No 6 Shell Filling Factory Explosion at Chilwell, Nottinghamshire, and also on her local war memorial in the grounds of Beeston Church.

Her brothers survived the war and went on to live full and active lives, it crosses my mind that this simple ambition was taken from Grace and the thousands of others that perish in war.

For further reading on the Chilwell Explosion, Beeston and District Local History Society have published a book entitled "Canary Girls of Chilwell"

YOUR LETTERS

We have two requests for help ...

Peter Hamilton from Australia is researching the name ISBELL/ISBILL (and variations). Peter will be visiting Norfolk in November 2014 and would like to contact and possibly meet anyone researching the same name. Peter can be contacted on qchhook@ecn.net.au or you can contact Kate (Editor) who will pass any replies on.

Are you researching the name Woodhouse from Mattishall, Elsing or Foxley? Joyce Gormley (née Woodhouse) has offered help with information on the name. If you have a query please write/email me – Kate (Editor) and I will pass it on.

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April's Family Tree magazine reports that familysearch "have added" UK WW1 Women's Army Auxiliary Corps Records. The collection contains the records of 7000 women who joined the WAAC/QMAAC between 1917- 1920 (from the TNA series WO398). However, yes they are listed on the website (as are WW1 Soldiers records) BUT you will get the message "Image not available" if you try to access them on-line . The reason being that familysearch has limited rights, granted by the record custodians (The National Archive). Images in these series may only be viewed at LDS Family History Centres. There are plenty of these centres around the country but it is recommended that you check, BEFORE your visit, that the centre has the capability to view these restricted images.

Meantime of course individual records can be downloaded from the TNA for £3.30 (fee reduced from £3.36 wef 1 April 2014)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

West Surrey 40th Anniversary FHS
Family History Fair and Open Day
Saturday 1st November 2014 between 10am and 4.30pm
At Woking Leisure Centre, Kingfield Road, Woking GU22 9BA



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