

News

Issue 15 -2/4



Letter

Summer 2015

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PROGRAMME

Meetings are held at: Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Theatre Street,
Trinity Close, Dereham NR19 2EP ... Starting 7.30 pm

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 17 June | Digging Deeper into Family History PART 2 -
Gill Blanchard |
| 15 July | Education in Victorian Village Schools -
Sarah Doig |
| 19 August | Researching Your WW1 Family -
Elizabeth Budd |

A few words from your Editor ...

Hello again, and thank you for your contributions to the Newsletter.

Has anyone made any exciting discoveries? I always watch 'Who Do You Think You Are?' on the TV and the celebrities featured all have a good story to tell, I'm still looking for mine!

I look forward to hearing from you, all your letters and emails are very welcome.

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, 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 - 15th July 2015

LET'S LOOK AT A CHURCH

No.78 – St Margaret's, Garvestone



The subject of our article, St. Margaret's, is in Garveston or perhaps more commonly Garvestone, one of the many Norfolk places named for an individual - in this case an Anglo-Saxon called Gaerwulf who probably had a farm here. This small Breckland village lies in the hundred of Mitford, a hundred being a geographical area formerly used to divide a larger region into smaller administrative divisions and originally containing roughly a hundred homesteads and thus able to provide about a hundred men at arms when required. The village today has barely six hundred souls but in Victorian times, when its population was half that number, boasted three pubs, a post mill, a nearby railway station and a Primitive Methodist chapel. Black Shuck, the devil dog of East Anglia is also known to frequent these parts being known locally as 'Skeff of Garvestone' so it is perhaps as well that our visit was during the hours of daylight. The old Parish Church of St. Margaret's is, to be honest, not the most distinguished in our county and there isn't really a great deal of interest inside but along with its graveyard it is not without charm. The handsome 14th or 15th century Perpendicular tower with its pleasing tracery, bold crenellations and large belfry windows presents an imposing sight when approached from beyond the village and was probably even more striking before the large statues of saints which most likely graced its four corner

pedestals were inevitably removed by your friendly neighbourhood iconoclasts. Like the rest of the church, the tower was re-built and otherwise modified on a number of occasions over the years. Of interest on the west side of the south doorway is a good example of what is known as a scratch dial or Mass dial, a type of sundial consisting of radiating lines centred on a hole in which was placed a wood or metal peg or gnomon to cast a shadow which when it fell on one of the lines told the clockless parishioners it was time for Mass. A rather sad memorial in the graveyard records Harry Holland who died at Willow Farm in August 1919 'from the effects of his rigorous captivity in Germany'. It seems from my research on the web that Private Holland, who was aged 34 and serving with the 1st Norfolk Regiment, is not on the local war memorial as the organising committee, sticking to the letter of their law, only included those who actually died prior to the armistice of November 1918. This struck a chord with me as one of my grandfathers was captured during the final German offensive and had to work down a coal mine as a POW where his wounds were not properly cared for resulting in many years of severe pain before he finally had to have his leg amputated. The Great War, like all conflicts, was not just a tragedy for those killed but affected countless others, often for long afterwards.

The original parish registers are held at the Norfolk Record Office (Cat. Ref. PD 324) and comprise Baptisms 1538-1675 and 1712-2006. Marriages 1539-1674 and 1712-1837, Burials 1561-1675 and 1712-1959 and Banns 1754-1896. Microform copies cover the same dates except for Burials which are 1567-1675 and 1712-1902. There is a modern transcript and index covering Baptisms 1538-1812, Marriages 1539-1812 and Burials 1561-1812. Archdeacon's and Bishop's Transcripts all start in 1698 but end in 1908 for Baptisms and Burials and 1837 for Marriages. The parish chest is mainly twentieth century but there are some older items including terriers (a register of landed property described by site boundaries and acreage) 1716-1912, Overseers of the Poor records 1685-1846, Copies of court rolls relating to parish land 1632-1909, Records of various charities 1640-1953, Churchwardens, Overseers and Constables vouchers 1771-1846 and Churchwarden accounts 1831-1888.

Roderic & Denise Woodhouse

YOUR LETTERS

THE BRADFIELDS OF NORTH ELMHAM, PRE 1870

I am researching the family of Robert BRADFIELD (b.1792 - d.1847). Robert was the Inn Keeper and the licensee of the Kings Head, North Elmham from 1830 to 1846. He was succeeded as licensee by his wife, Frances CHAPLING until 1858, and preceded by his father Charles BRADFIELD.

Anyone who has been to North Elmham will know that the Kings Head is a significant building in the village. It may seem large for a small place, but it was a coaching inn and sat on the cross-roads of the main north/south, east/west routes across mid Norfolk. Until the coming of the railways, this would have been an important junction for travellers.

The Inn, at that time, was the property of Lord Sondes, the Lord of the Manor of Elmham Nowers (which formed the southern end of North Elmham). Robert BRADFIELD was also a tenant farmer for Lord Sondes, farming the fields to the southeast of the Inn, as far as the parish boundary and the southern fields along the Brisley road, as far as the Ramsley Farm. On a family visit we enjoyed looking across those same fields. My niece stayed at the Inn and revelled in family 'vibes'.

Robert also owned properties (some of these still stand) which were rented out, some to relatives; I am in the process of trying to work out which are which, using the census results of 1841/51, the 1839 Tithe Map of North Elmham, and the properties described in Robert's Will. You'd think it would be easy, with that amount of information - but many of the entries are complicated by - well - too many Bradfields! It seems churlish to grumble! Robert and Charles were top favourite names amongst 'my' branch of BRADFIELD. Other branches there seem to have legions of James, William, John and Thomas - these, I'm sure, are all linked somehow - 'a work in progress'!

In researching those properties which Robert owned, apart from the joy of reaching back across time with the sensation of being able to say 'hello - there you are - nice to meet you', it seemed to be the only way to pin down Robert's father, Charles. One of the Charles BRADFIELDS had left

property in a Will to a son Robert - which seemed to match the description of the property which Robert-the-innkeeper later left to his son. That added up, until I found that this Charles (snr) named his wife as Sarah in his Will; but Robert's mother should have been Mary, who probably died in 1810, pre-deceasing her husband. However, I have found no record of a second marriage, so that is a puzzle.

Robert-the-innkeeper and his wife Frances CHAPLING had 5 children between 1823 and 1842. Of the 3 sons Charles BRADFIELD, the eldest, was a farmer, John CHAPLING BRADFIELD died aged 4 years, but Robert, the 2nd eldest seemed to disappear from the records after 1851. The two girls, Frances and Hannah, were reasonably easy to trace - and it was in following Hannah that I finally discovered the whereabouts of the missing Robert; he had emigrated to Australia. And the cherry on the cake? I found a new MNFHS member in Australia researching the same family, who was able to corroborate this and reveal a whole flourishing branch of BRADFIELDs. Thank you MNFHS. Thanks also for your MI and NBI work on North Elmham - invaluable. I am also indebted to North Elmham's experienced Local Historian, who has put another Australian descendant in touch with me. I live in the UK, but on the south coast, and have only been able to visit North Elmham twice, so I am most grateful for local contacts. On each of my visits I was generously helped through chance encounters with local residents.

I have become fairly well acquainted with the 19th century BRADFIELDs of North Elmham, both 'my' BRADFIELDs and the other branches, through studying the 1839 Tithe Map and its Allotments (this fascinating map is at the Norfolk Records Office), and the Census. Interestingly the enumerator for the 1841 Census was Joshua Mayston, the brother-in-law of Robert BRADFIELD the-innkeeper. Joshua was the miller at Worthing mill, which stands exactly on the border between North Elmham parish and Worthing Parish; North Elmham had a larger mill - the Grint Mill. Both are still standing, converted very prettily to private residential properties. Hannah, Joshua's wife, was born Hannah BRADFIELD and had inherited land from her father which I think spread across the southern end of North Elmham from Worthing mill to the land farmed by her brother Robert which abutted the Dereham Road.

My branch of the BRADFIELDs (Robert-the-innkeeper's family) had all

left North Elmham by the late 1860's. They had particular connections with the following other families: CHAPLING, ELMER, CURSON and HOPSON, and were probably related to the other BRADFIELD families living in North Elmham at the time of the census in 1841, 1851 and 1861. Delving further back, using what Parish Registers are available online plus my father's much earlier research, I believe Robert's grandparents may have been Charles BRADFIELD and Mary FISHER.

I would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in these North Elmham families, particularly before the end of the 1860's. (*Contact Kate (Ed) – and any information will be passed on*).

Ann Hart

BOOK REVIEW

GEORGE BORROW AND DEREHAM

Setting the record straight!

Now available:

***George Borrow and Dereham*, by Angus Fraser and Ann M. Ridler (The Lavengro Press, 2015). Pp. xvi, 56. ISBN 978-0-9928463-3-6. B5 Paperback, edition limited to 100 copies. Price £10.00**

Biographers often perpetrate myths about their subject, which can be slow to dispel. In the case of George Borrow (1803-1881) his first biographer, W.I. Knapp, in 1899 originated some myths about Borrow and Dereham, which were not fully dispelled until 1972, when the late Sir Angus Fraser first questioned the location of Borrow's birthplace as claimed by Knapp.

Another myth concerned a theory that Borrow was of Gypsy ancestry, an idea promoted especially by Brian Vesey-FitzGerald in his *Gypsy Borrow* (1953). In both instances Fraser has persuasive arguments. A version Fraser had revised before his death in 2001 was issued for private circulation for Borrow's bicentenary in 2003. This version is reprinted here with a number of further corrections.

Writers of autobiography, as Borrow was, can equally suffer from a blurring of vision where the mind's eye refracts a distorted picture, things past not remembered but mis-remembered. In our subsequent researches we made some—to us—startling discoveries, but these should not detract from Borrow's view of Dereham, portrayed in his *Lavengro* (1851).

Borrow's primary concern was to conjure up by 'the magic of the words' the 'dear enchanting past', and, as the historian G.A. Carthew rightly noted in 1857, *Lavengro* was a work '*which, with some substrata of truth, is doubtless intended as a Romance*'. Perhaps the most striking aspect of Borrow's view of Dereham is his deep affection for the Church of St Nicholas, memories of which returned to haunt him when he was '*[n]o longer an innocent child, but a moody man, bearing in my face, as I knew well, the marks of my strivings and strugglings, of what I had learnt and unlearned*'.

This study is rounded off with some appendices on Dereham notabilities relevant to our knowledge of Borrow's life, in particular James Philo, the parish clerk; the historian G.A. Carthew; the Revd Benjamin Armstrong, Vicar of St Nicholas; the antiquary Goddard Johnson; S.H. Baldrey, stepson of Borrow's solicitor John Pilgrim; and finally the Gypsy's parson, Borrovian and Romanophile, the Revd George Hall, who visited Dereham some thirty years or more after Borrow's death.

Orders may be placed either through the Lavengro Press website at www.lavengropress.co.uk, or direct from the Lavengro Press at 61, Thame Rd, Warborough, Wallingford OX10 7EA, e-mail info@lavengropress.co.uk.

The Lavengro Press was established in 2014 by Dr Ann Ridler and Dr Clive Wilkins-Jones in order to offer reprints of scarce material relating to George Borrow and to make new research available. Borrow was born in Dereham but grew up in Norwich, describing it as 'A fine city'. He is best known for his autobiographical novels *Lavengro* and *The Romany Rye*, and for his *Wild Wales*, but originally made his name with the best-selling *The Bible in Spain*.

Dr Ann Ridler and Dr Clive Wilkins-Jones

NEW MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

Member 782 – Mr R Txxxx, -----, -----, -----,
----- --. email: -----@-----

COLTON	Reading BRK	All
FISHER	Barford/Welborne/Mattishall NFK	All
GRINT	Stoke Holy Cross/Lakenham NFK	All
HORNE	E Dereham/Mattishall NFK	All
LUXTON	Brushford/Winkleigh DEV & Reading BRK	All
READ	Henpnall/Saxlingham/Sprowston/Norwich NFK	All
TAYLOR	Norwich/Brooke/Kirstead/Shotsham NFK	All
TOLMAN	Carbrooke/Lt Cressingham/Watton NFK	All
TONG	Lakenham/Norwich NFK & Ashford KEN	All

Member 783 – Mrs H Hxxxx, -----, -----, -----,
----- --. email: -----@-----

HOWARD Samuel Edward Lakenham Norwich NFK bap 25.3.1847

Member 784 – Ms S Dxxx, -----, -----, -----,
----- --. email: -----@-----

TROLLOPE Brightmer 1900	Scarning NFK	1700 –
TROLLOPE Farmer 1900	Scarning NFK	1700 –

Member 303 – Mr R Marsh

The Society has been informed of the death of Mr Marsh and wish to send their condolences to his family.

. HELEN BUNNETT: THE OWL-EYED GIRL

Searching for local information on the internet, surgeon Mr. Webster's careful examination in 1787 of 13-year-old Helen, an inmate of Gressenhall House of Industry, came to light. A modern diagnosis shows the progress made in medical knowledge since those days.

London Medical Journal. Vol. VIII. Part III. Art. V.

An Account of a Peculiarity of Vision in a Girl at East Dereham in Norfolk.

Communicated in a Letter to Dr. Simmons by Mr. J. S. Webster, Surgeon at East Dereham.

I BEG leave, Sir, to communicate to you the following account of a remarkable defect of sight, which (with your approbation) I wish to see inserted in the "London Medical Journal." — I think it right, however, first to observe to you, that my appointment of surgeon to the House of Industry, in which the girl, who is the subject of the case, is at present maintained, has afforded me frequent opportunities of examining into the particulars attending her defect of sight; and as in all my inquiries I have been upon my guard against deception, so likewise I doubt not but you will give me credit when I assure you I am as unwilling to deceive as to be deceived.

Helen Bunnett, or, as she is commonly called, the owl-eyed girl, is thirteen years old, of a fair complexion, with brown hair, and has all her life enjoyed a good state of health. She was born in a workhouse belonging to East Dereham, in the county of Norfolk; but is now supported in a House of Industry belonging to the hundreds of Mitford and Launditch, in the same county.

This girl has from her infancy laboured under a peculiarity of vision. What particularly strikes one's attention, on her entering a room in the day time, is, her looking towards the ground, and her eyes appearing, as it were, sunk in her head; so much so, that the whole ball of the eye seems lost within its orbit, and of course the eyelid so covers it, that you would at first imagine the humours of the eye had escaped from their coats.

No appearance of disease is perceptible in the coats of the eye. The choroid is of a whitish or light gray colour. The iris is peculiarly perfect. The pupils are entirely black; and the appearance of each eye is the same.

I first put her faculty of vision to the test by exhibiting large objects before her eyes, such as a watch, a broad button, the key of a door, &c. These she certainly

was able to distinguish, though with difficulty; and I observed that she is very near sighted.

I next offered to her bottles filled with medicines of different colours, such as blue vitriolic water, vegeto-mineral water, and others; but in attempting to distinguish these she, in general, failed. I then presented to her view small objects, such as a sixpence, a shilling, pins, &c; but these she could not discover at all.

Upon closing the windows, and darkening the room suddenly, I had my attention fixed upon her eyes, which instantly dilated, and the pupils became as perfect, and as large in proportion, as in any human body whatever; on the contrary, upon opening the windows as suddenly as I before had closed them, the pupils became instantly contracted, and the balls of the eyes appeared, as it were, sunk. I then closed her eyelids, and rubbed them frequently, but without observing any appearance of dilatation in the eyes. Having now again darkened the room so much that I could not myself distinguish objects, I had in readiness the same bottles of medicines as before, and likewise some pieces of cloth of different colours that I had offered to her when the windows were not closed, and which she had then not been able to distinguish: but upon my again offering the same to her in the darkened room, I was agreeably surprised to find that she could tell me the colours of the different fluids in the bottles, as well as the quantities therein contained, and also the various colours of the cloths, excepting of those which we may term mixed cloths; and perhaps in these she failed not from a want of perception, but from not being sufficiently practised in the distinctions of complicated colours. I likewise took a pin, and having dropped it upon the ground, at a considerable distance from that part of the room where she stood, changed places with her, and desired her to look for the pin, which she very soon found. All the time the room remained darkened her eyes were fully dilated, and continued equally so, neither contracting nor increasing in their dilatation.

The expression of owl-eyed girl, which I have made use of, is not a term given to her by me, but is a distinction she goes by among the paupers in general in the house where she now is.

I lately asked her the following questions, which I shall give you, with her answers, as I minuted them upon the spot:

Q. "How is your eyesight when in the sun?"

A. "I cannot then see in the least."

Q. "Are your eyes ever painful to you?"

A. "They are very painful in summer and in hot weather."

Q. "In what direction do you look when you wish to distinguish any thing?"

A. "From the corners of my eyes, as one cross eyed."

She has informed me likewise, that she can distinguish objects as well by moonlight, or in the twilight, as in the dark.

East Dereham, August ix, 1787.

Helen and her family:

Helen Bunnet(t) was born in East Dereham Workhouse on 10th May 1775, and baptized on June 30th 1775. Her parents were John Bunnett, widower, and his wife Diana (née Sparrow), spinster. For these entries, the family name appears with only one "t" in the East Dereham Parish Register. (Norfolk Record Office MF/RO 98 and MF/RO 95/1.) Joy Lodey kindly found that Helen's sister Sarah was baptized at Hoe in 1770 under the surname Bonnett, and her sister Elizabeth was born on March 3rd 1772, but baptized 3rd March 1773 (Dereham Baptism Register for 1773).

Helen was living at Gressenhall House of Industry (opened 1st July 1777) when the surgeon Mr. Webster examined her in 1787. No burial is recorded in East Dereham Parish Register, nor in "The parish registers for St. Mary's Church, Gressenhall" (transcribed, edited and indexed by Jennifer J. Purple, 2002), nor in the National Burial index.

An Ellen Bunnett appears in most of the Poor Law Union records' weekly Spinning Lists from November 20th 1796 to April 9th 1797. So her vision must have been sufficient for that task. She was one of the Wheel Girls under Mary Spratt. <https://familysearch.org/> or NRO C/GP 14/1A "Weekly record of spinning work Oct 1796-Apr 1800" (latter not consulted)

If still living at the end of the 18th century, Helen would have been transferred to the re-established Dereham Workhouse, which was on the Neatherd with access from Norwich Road down what is now Union Drift.

John Bennett died aged 61 in 1813, and was buried in St. Nicholas churchyard, Dereham on 24th November 1813. Presumably he was Helen's father: he was described as "a married man from the (*Dereham*) Work House. Service conducted by Curate W. Thorpe." [MNFHS: "The Burial Registers of the Church of St. Nicholas East Dereham Norfolk. Part II (1776-1908)"]

Mr. Webster reported his findings in detail in the London Medical Journal; they

were subsequently reprinted in a number of contemporary sources, including *The New Lady's Magazine*, and *The Scots Magazine*. In 1800 he was President of Norfolk and Norwich Benevolent Medical Society, which still exists today. It is a Friendly Society established in 1786. It is only open to medical practitioners in Norfolk, and provides help to members in need. Anthony Batty Shaw wrote a history of the Society in 1986: "The Norfolk and Norwich Benevolent Medical Society: 1786 – 1986", copies of which are in the Millennium Library, Norwich, and at Norfolk Record Office. The latter also holds Records of the Society from 1786-1832 including a Minute book, treasurer's account books, and account book of monies paid in relief (primarily to the widows and children of surgeons and apothecaries).

Ophthalmologist Wendy Franks kindly provided this commentary:

Thank you for passing on this fascinating account by Dr Webster of his patient Helen Bunnett, known as the 'owl eyed girl'. Alas I suspect her ending was as sad as her life. As you know historians balk at retrospective diagnosis and the contemporary one of 'owl eyed girl' is much the most satisfactory. However with my ophthalmologist's hat on I suggest that the physical appearance of Helen's eyes was due to microphthalmos - Greek for small eye. Microphthalmic eyes are very long sighted - Helen's near vision would have been much worse than her distance vision and in modern times she would be prescribed very thick convex lenses or preferably contact lenses to help correct her sight.

Microphthalmos is frequently associated with other eye diseases and in Helen's case this was probably retinal cone dystrophy. This condition affects the light detectors - known as photoreceptors of the light sensitive layer at the back of the eye. This condition is sometimes known as retinal dysplasia and colour vision is usually present in infancy and childhood but declines with age. Helen is already described as having difficulty distinguishing multicoloured cloth at the age of 13 and alas this problem is likely to have worsened and she may well have lost her sight altogether in adulthood.

It is possible that her parents were related. Microphthalmos with retinal dystrophy is most likely to be inherited in autosomal recessive manner - which means that off spring of parents carrying the defective gene have a one in four risk of developing the condition - a common example of a gene defect with autosomal recessive inheritance is cystic fibrosis. The gene defect for microphthalmos is however rare so consanguinity is likely.

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to Joy Lodey for guidance and sources and help with Bunnett family background, and Miss Wendy Franks FRCS FRCOphth for her comments on Helen's affliction. Ms. Franks has recently retired as Consultant Ophthalmologist and Director of the Glaucoma Service at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London. She is Research Advisor to Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and an advisor to the World Sight Foundation. <http://www.worldsightfoundation.com/> Reg. Charity No. 1148762.

WSF aims to deliver sustainable solutions for the alleviation of blindness, and for preserving sight, anywhere in the world. It works to enhance the skills of locally-based eye care professionals through education. Currently, WSF supports nursing and ophthalmic assistant education in Rwanda and Lesotho and the training of ophthalmologists in Zambia. It helps to train ophthalmic nurses in Gaza, two Yemeni ophthalmic surgeons in Aden, and contributes to the education of rural ophthalmologists in mainland China and in Malaysia.

Thanks also to Debbie Heatlie, Librarian at the Joint Library of Ophthalmology, Moorfields Eye Hospital & UCL Institute of Ophthalmology, for responding to my enquiry.

B. Scholes

FEEDBACK FROM LIVES OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR



In the last Newsletter (Spring 2015) I asked for feedback on the use of **www.livesofthefirstworldwar.org**. As usual your written responses were few. But I had two emails which confirmed my experience that all is not as easy as Mel Donnelly's presentation (last October) implied, and I was particularly interested in Keith's comments (2. below) regarding the dangers of subscribing without fully realising what you are signing up for

1. From Hilary:

I've just seen your article about difficulties with the IWM website. It is many months since I took a look at it, immediately after I was enthused by Melanie's

talk. I was keen to enter information about my paternal grandfather, who was invalided out of the 1WW, and I have lots of physical paper documents etc. However, the IWM website, from what I recall, was only interested in "properly authenticated" records - i.e. records from official sources for which you had to pay. So I gave up. I am sure my experience was not what Melanie described in her talk. So I guess my experience was similar to yours!

2. From Keith:

Like you, we were inspired by Melanie into investigating this web-site and trying to make our contributions. Like you, we have been irritated and frustrated at the difficulties encountered. We had 4 family members who served in WWI with details we should have been happy to provide to the project. Unfortunately, we had service numbers for none of these and there was no unambiguous means to identify them in the existing database. Furthermore, there appeared to be no way to contribute without subscribing to the project. We found that subscribing involved a permanent commitment to monthly subscriptions with no easy means to unsubscribe. We had to send e-mails to various addresses to get them to stop our monthly payments. The only contribution we were able to make was nothing to do with our families. Keith has in his Bristol postcard collection one written from the War Hospital there with a service number that enabled us to identify the soldier, scan the postcard and enter it into the database. Some review of the procedures is needed to make the whole project more user-friendly and enable data to be entered without the need to pay a subscription.

Regards

However, despite a lack of the written replies, I did quiz a couple of people who didn't see why I had a problem as they had successfully added information. Jean, a Norwich member, who professes not to be computer literate, even offered to talk me through it by phone as it is so easy. I took up her offer and the problem changed to one of communication and battery power – which I won't go into, but I did learn quite a lot before all went silent.

Basically I was expecting too much – I came away from Melanie's presentation with the idea that I would be able to easily input information about anybody who was alive at the time of the First World War, then read on one page what had been submitted, which is clearly not quite correct.

Some facts which I have discovered:

1. To add information you DO have to log in (no commitments)
2. You do NOT have to subscribe to contribute if you already have the information (use 'external sources')

3. It appears that to ensure only authentic information is added, before you start you need a service number that ties up with an already installed medal index card.
4. I found my grandfather's medal index card (despite not having his medals, his service number was confirmed from his family held 'honourable discharge' certificate)
5. My interrupted conversation with Jean enabled me to add the details from his birth certificate (not the certificate – just the facts) By clicking on 'adding to life stories' and 'external sources'
6. To my mind the site it is not user friendly but by 'playing' and clicking on the boxes (or in some cases clicking on words) is possible to make it work. It gets easier with practice.

Tom Garland

BIRTH, MARRIAGE AND DEATH CERTIFICATES

A New Service from the Norfolk Record Office
and a possible glimpse into the future

Since 1 July 1837 Births, marriages and deaths (BMD) have been registered in local Register Offices (RO). Every three months each RO in England and Wales have sent copies of their registers to the General Register Office (GRO) in London. At the GRO the details (from the copies) were transcribed into 'national' registers. It is these registers (quarterly indexes) that we used to search at Somerset House/St Catherine's and on microfiche, or today, on the much more flexible and easy to use, freeBMD website (www.freebmd.org.uk). However, today the GRO will supply certificates (at £9.25 each) even if you are unable to supply the reference (www.gro.gov.uk) Providing of course you can supply enough information for them to produce it.

But what happens to the local RO registers? Over the years the number of RO offices has been rationalised. As ROs closed the existing registers were transferred to the new RO taking over responsibility for that area. They too were indexed for it has always been possible to order a certificate from the

RO that originally raised the entry. Obviously the register index identification at local ROs are different from the same 'certified copy' at the GRO.

Now to the Norfolk Record Office (NRO) involvement. Most of the NORFOLK RO registers and their indexes are now held in the strongroom at the Norfolk Record Office.

Births & Deaths	1 July 1837 – 31 March 1969
Marriages	1 July 1937 – 31 Dec 2012

Certificates (certified copies of register entries) cost £11 for first certificate, and £10 for second and subsequent certificates ordered at the same time. Payment is required in advance and they aim to post the certificate to you within 5 working days. You can order by e mail, in person at the NRO, or by telephone (01603 222559)

They also offer a priority service for which the cost is **£21.00** for the first certificate and **£20.00** for subsequent priority requests received in the same order. They aim to issue these within 24 hours.

When you visit the NRO, the relevant RO register indexes have to be ordered from the strongroom. To simplify their use new finding aids are in preparation. Remember, if you wish to use this service the GRO and RO references are NOT the same but the Registration District and dates will be.

Finally it is stressed that only the indexes can be consulted at the NRO, the actual registers are not being made available to the public by the direction of the GRO.

By coincidence April's Family Tree reported that at long last The De-Regulation Bill has now passed all stages of the Commons and the Lords. BUT the final form of the bill has yet to be finalised.

Should this be approved it will allow publication of information from BMD

certificates for England and Wales to be issued in a form other than 'certified true copy' This could be the end of the expensive certificates for family history purposes.

But don't hold your breath we are NOT there yet!

TFG

OUR LATEST MEMORIAL INSCRIPTION BOOK

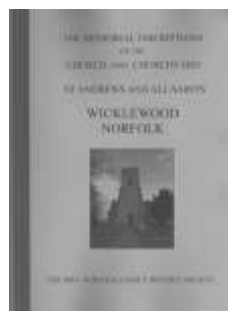
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See our website for full publication list (rear cover)

All may be purchased via Kate (Editor)



RECENT SPEAKERS

At the April Meeting Frances & Michael Holmes gave a very interesting and detailed talk about the Norwich Boot & Shoe Trade, an industry, which for many years, was the heart and 'sole' of the city.

More information, and details of the book they have written, can be found on the Norwich Heritage Projects website - <http://www.norwichshoes.co.uk/>

WICKLEWOOD WORKHOUSE – DESIRABLE RESIDENCE

Wicklewood! Most of us have never heard of it. It is a small village about two miles east of Wymondham within our 12 mile radius of Dereham which, many years ago, we declared our area of interest. During the winter of 2014/15 we recorded the MIs in the churchyard and during the process discovered something of the story behind the Wicklewood workhouse, a Grade II listed building



The workhouse was established in 1776 for the ‘Better Relief and Employment of the Poor within within Forehoe hundred’, except Honingham which joined the St Faiths Union. Forehoe hundred consists of 24 parishes and includes a large number within our area, for many of which, we have produced booklets of their church and churchyard memorial inscriptions (identified by asterisks below)

Barford *

Barnham Broom *

Bawburgh

Bowthorpe

Brandon Parva *

Carleton Forehoe*

Colton *

Costessey

Coston *

Crownthorpe

Deopham

Easton *

Hackford *

Hingham *

Honingham

Kimberley *

Marlingford *

Morley St. Botolph

Morley St. Peter

Runhall *

Welborne

Wicklewood *

Wramplingham *

Wymondham

To defray the construction costs £11,000 was borrowed at 5% using the Tontine system. 110 subscribers contributed £100 each and nominated a

young person who would receive the annual interest of 5% during his/her lifetime. On a death that share would be divided between the surviving shareholders. A Whites Trade Directory for Norfolk suggests that by 1845, seventy years later, only about 30 of these nominees were still surviving – one wonders who the last survivor was.

With the advent of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, the workhouse adopted most of the rules set out by the Poor Law Commission and according to the same 1845 Directory, Honingham joined the Forehoe workhouse Union

Wicklewood burial registers suggest that inmates were buried at Wicklewood but as paupers it is very unlikely that they will have memorials.

A report on Wicklewood workhouse in 1894, printed in the British Medical Journal suggests that, although broadly favourable, it was noted there were no indoor toilet facilities in the building. At night the inmates were provided with a commode, in the middle of each ward. There wasn't any running water laid on, in any part of the building and hot water was only available from a copper in the kitchen. The children's nursery was described as 'a cheerless stone paved room, destitute of comforts, not even a mat for the children to crawl on'.

Sometime early in the 20th century the workhouse was renamed Hill House and with the creation of the National Health Service in 1948, became Hill House Hospital. Three years later it was renamed, yet again, as Wicklewood Hospital where it provided care for geriatric patients, until its closure in 1974.

The hospital closure caused local concern as reported in the following piece of artistic journalism which was found as a 'titbit' on The Wicklewood Archive website and is reproduced, with the archive webmasters permission:

A planning application to turn the former Wicklewood workhouse into a boarding school for boys whose fathers were serving abroad in the Armed Forces, was received by South Norfolk DC in 1977 and later approved. The

possible closure of the hospital sparked a huge furore in the EDP and the local weekly newspaper, and many people opposed the idea. Nevertheless, it did close, in 1974, whereupon 29 elderly lady patients were moved to Dereham Hospital in a convoy of ambulances. The oldest to be moved was a lady of 98. Sometime later it was reported that the RSPCA had trapped 15 'wild cats' evidently living in and around the hospital grounds. Some people, however, disputed the figures. They estimated the village's entire cat population at no more than a dozen, with four of those living at the Cherry Tree pub.

A postcard photograph on the same website page shows 'Wicklewood Union' house which looks remarkably similar to the photo taken in 2015 above.

After a short life as a boarding school, where it made newspaper headlines for its use of corporal punishment and from 2010, for an ex mathematics teacher's involvement in historical sex abuse, it closed in the summer of 1980. Sometime later the buildings began to be developed for residential use. Today the whole complex retains the name 'St Georges' and has been converted into very desirable apartments. A quick look at 'Rightmove' on the web will reveal a strange turn of fortune for the establishment – from a 'Paupers Palace', to be avoided at all costs, to a beautiful Georgian mansion where even the smallest flat costs many times more than the original cost of £11,000 for the whole facility.

More information:

The inmates of Wicklewood can be found on census returns. The Norfolk Record Office holds The Guardians Minute Books , Admissions and Discharge Books 1786–1934, Births 1786–1837 (with gaps) and Deaths 1777–1781 & 1786–1930. Wicklewood Workhouse, Union House and Hospital burials are also recorded in the Wicklewood Burial Registers

Tom Garland



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