

The Norfolk Ancestor



DECEMBER 2020



The Journal of the Norfolk Family History Society

Formerly Norfolk & Norwich Genealogical Society

The Thursford Story

The picture on the front cover shows some steam-driven engines at the Thursford Steam Museum decorated for the Christmas Spectacular. Sadly, due to the Covid 19 virus, this event will not take place this year. Here we take a brief look at the history of the Thursford Collection.

THE man who started the collection was George Thomas Henry CUSHING MBE. He was born in 1904 and appears in the 1911 census when he was living with his father Thomas (49), his mother Clara (33), his sister Ada (5) and his brother Herbert (5 months). His father is listed as being a lime burner.

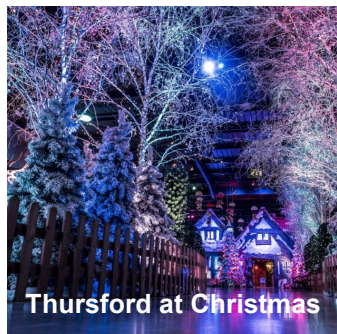
George left school at the age of 12 and got a job as a farmhand. However, at a very young age, he developed a fascination for steam engines. He went to King's Lynn Market in 1920 and got a job driving a steam roller. Later, with his savings of £225, he bought a 1913 Aveling and Porter roller from the local council. He set up his own sub-contracting business which by the start of World War Two, had expanded to 15 rollers and a steam waggon.



George Cushing in 1979

In December, 1932, he married Minnie BECKS (1907-1995) the daughter of William and Rose Becks from Tatterford. William was a hawker and had two other daughters, Cissy, who was Minnie's twin and Bertha Anna who was a year older. The couple lived at Laurel Farm where George had worked as a child and had later purchased. They brought up their family of three boys whilst living there.

As World War Two approached in the late 1930s the use of steam-driven vehicles was in decline. Companies turned to diesel lorries to carry out their commercial business. George was worried that many historic steam engines were being sold for scrap and started to buy up redundant examples to restore at Laurel Farm. His collection grew steadily and attracted more and more steam enthusiasts to Thursford to help with the restoration. It was in the 1970s when he decided to open a museum.



Today the Thursford experience has expanded to include a spectacular Christmas show which attracts thousands of visitors to Norfolk each year. To find out more about the development turn to page 20.

Norfolk Family History Society

A private company limited by guarantee
Registered in England - Company No. 3194731
Registered as a Charity - Registration No. 1055410

Headquarters and Library

Kirby Hall, 70 St. Giles Street, Norwich NR2 1LS
Telephone No. (01603) 763718
NFHS Web site: <http://www.norfolkfhs.org.uk>

NFHS Board of Trustees

Vacant post	Chair
Richard Ashberry	Data and Minutes' Secretary
Ellen Carr	Library
Vacant post	Publicity
Vacant post	Transcripts' Checking
Carol Reeve	Volunteers' Co-ordinator
Peter Steward	Ancestor and Facebook Editor
Steve Tarttelin	Transcripts' Co-ordinator
Vacant post	Treasurer
Carole Taylor	Membership secretary
Phil Whiscombe	Company Secretary and Kirby Hall Maintenance

IF you have an interest in Family History and would like to help to shape our future or have some spare time and would like to become involved in the life of our society please contact Volunteers' Co-ordinator Carol Reeve who will be able to give you more details of how you can help us. Carol's contact details are available towards the end of this edition.

ISBN 0141 4505

© Copyright 2020 NFHS and Contributors

CONTENTS The Norfolk Ancestor December 2020

Front and Inside Cover - The Story of Thursford

Editor’s welcome to the December edition 6

News From Kirby Hall..... 7

A Local History of Lockdown by Ellen Carr 8

Under the Griffin’s Wing by Chris Cobb..... 9-13

Finding The Links by Richard Hodge 14-16

A Love Affair and Drink by Keith King 17-19

Looking After Steam’s Heritage by Roger Morgan..... 20-21

Hanged As A Witch—Great Yarmouth’s Rebecca Nurse by Peter Steward..... 22-23

A Botanist of Great Note by Edmund Perry 24-27

More Memories of Chamberlins by Jane Gray 28-29

The Norfolk Pygmy by Roger Morgan 30-32

New Members and Members’ Interests 33-36

Road Name Memories by Roger Morgan 37-42

Letters, Notes and Queries 43-45

History of a Toast by Gus Honeywood 45-47

Stories of the Johnson Family by Les Cockrill 48-49

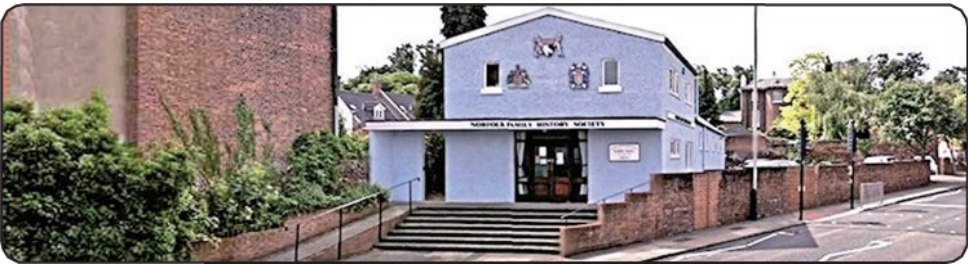
Rob’s Round Up—Helping You With Your Search with Robert Parker 51-56

A Norfolk Enigma by Edmund Perry..... 57-61

Ancestor Bookshelf 62-63

Guide to Submitting Articles..... 64

Norfolk Family History Society Contacts 66



The Norfolk Ancestor

The Norfolk Ancestor is a quarterly journal published in March, June, September and December. Opinions expressed in this journal are those of individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of either the Editor or the Norfolk Family History Society which cannot take responsibility for the accuracy of facts in the articles submitted.

All advertisements are commercial and their inclusion does not indicate endorsement by the Society, which accepts no responsibility for any loss suffered directly or indirectly by any reader or purchaser as a result of any advertisement or notice published in this journal.

No part of this journal may be reproduced in any form whatsoever without the prior permission of the Society.

Kirby Hall Library Opening Times

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

10.00am - 4.00pm

First Sunday in the month

10.00am - 1.00pm

(Please note that Kirby Hall is currently shut due to the Coronavirus pandemic)

Group Meeting Venues

LONDON Society of Genealogists, 14 Charterhouse Buildings,
Goswell Road. London EC1M 7BA

(Approximately every six months, 2.00 - 4.00pm)



ALL IS NOT LOST!

Your torn, creased & faded family photographs

can be repaired and restored

For further details please contact

PPF Images, Millennium House, Gapton Hall Road,
Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR31 0NL

Tel: 01493 655222

www.ppfimages.co.uk



Welcome to your December Edition



Hello once again and welcome to the December edition of Norfolk Ancestor which completes another year of this publication.

And what a year it has been. Certainly the most unusual in the lifetime of most of our readers (although there may still be a few who remember the war years when I would suggest things were even more frightening than they are today). Nobody seems to know when this virus pandemic will be over and that has made things difficult for the society. We have had to shut Kirby Hall and will only re-open when we feel it is safe to do so. We have also had to postpone the annual general meeting which was due to take place in October and will now be held in 2021. On page seven you will be able to read more about this.

We prepare this edition primarily in September and October at which time it is difficult to think about Christmas but by the time we hit the doormats of the world we will all be in the festive season, albeit a different kind to the usual. We send all our members the compliments of the season and good family research hunting in 2021 whatever the fates will throw at us.

Peter Steward MN 14801

Current Rates for Membership (rates)

Membership Type	One Year	10 Year	Life
Worldwide E Ancestor	£10	£75	£165
UK Posted Ancestor	£15	£120	£265
Europe Posted Airmail	£21	£157	£346
Rest of the World Posted Airmail	£25	£187	£412

Norfolk Ancestor Editorial Team

Peter Steward	Joint Editor
Roger Morgan	Joint Editor
Rob Reeve	Proof Reader

Message From the Acting Chairman

THE Society's annual general meeting has been postponed until next March.

The AGM is traditionally held in October, but the trustees have decided to put this back until the latest possible date allowed by law.

The meeting will take place on Saturday, March 27th. At the present time this will be via the zoom social media platform but we reserve the right to revert to a physical meeting at Kirby Hall if virus restrictions have been lifted sufficiently and it is safe to do so by then.



If we have to use social media it will at least give more members the chance to “attend” the meeting. Full instructions on how to attend any virtual meeting will be given in the March 2021 edition of Norfolk Ancestor.

In this copy of the magazine you will find a proxy voting form containing the motions to be voted on at the AGM.

If you are unable to attend the AGM either physically or virtually, this form can be filled in and either posted back to us or sent electronically.

Meanwhile Kirby Hall continues to be closed to the public and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. We will inform all members once it is safe to re-open our library again.

Trustees of the society are still going into Kirby Hall on a weekly basis to undertake essential tasks and are occasionally joined by a limited number of volunteers with specific responsibilities. Rules regarding safety and social distancing are observed and followed at all times.

We are still looking for more volunteers to help with the running of the society. If you are interested in helping in any way and would like to find out more about what is involved please contact our volunteers' co-ordinator Carol Reeve by emailing her at: volunteers@nfhs.co.uk

Best Wishes

Phil Whiscombe (acting chairman)

An Historic Record of Lockdown

By Ellen Carr

IT seems strange to think that we are living through a great period of history and that family history researchers in the future might want to know about us and what life in lockdown was like.

Brian Jarvis thought just this and decided to make a photographic record of one road in Stalham during the Covid 19 pandemic of 2020. He took photographs of people living in St John's Road on May 7th.

The result is a beautifully presented spiral bound book with an introduction that explains the idea behind the book and background information of the development of the pandemic and then the UK lockdown.

There is a glossary of terms we are all too familiar with now—PPE, The R Rate, Social Distancing etc.

There are 79 colour photographs complete with the names of the residents and their addresses. At the back of the book is a list of the residents and their house name and number.

This is a brilliant record of a snapshot in time as we live through this pandemic.

A
PHOTOGRAPHIC
RECORD OF
ST JOHN'S ROAD
STALHAM
NR 12 9 BE
'CLAPPING FOR
CARERS'
MAY 2020
(INCORPORATING V.E. 75
CELEBRATIONS)

THE HOLLIES
Amanda Applegate
and
David Sedowski



ROSE COTTAGE
Glyn and Jacqui
Wilson

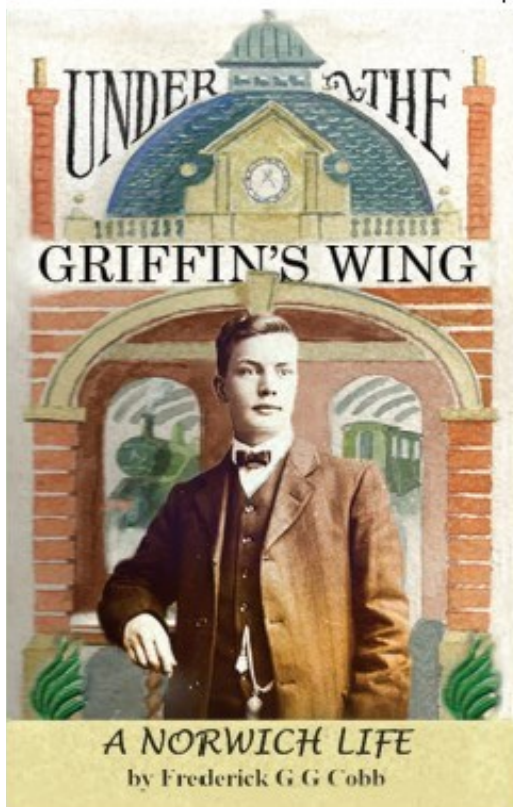
Under the Griffin's Wing

Avid Norfolk Ancestor reader and NFHS member Chris Cobb tells the story of a new family book written by his great uncle Frederick Cobb which has just been published by the family.

MY great uncle (Frederick George Goodson Cobb - 1896 to 1976) was born in Thorpe Hamlet and, apart from National Service in World War One and a 10 year 'exile' in Ipswich, lived his whole life in Thorpe. He spent over 50 years working on the railways, mainly at Thorpe Station. He was also an accomplished writer.

During his working life he was regularly commissioned to write articles for the LNER Magazine and, after retirement, was a regular contributor to the Eastern Daily Press/ Evening News. "Whiffler," a columnist in the Eastern Evening News, once described him as a writer of "no mean journalistic ability" and "a really good writer."

Those words of commendation encouraged him in 1973 to write this autobiography. As we grow older, memories become more vivid and people and places from the past come alive again. So when Fred discovered some old sketches of France, he began to look back on his life and write the book.



The autobiography sat in the family archives for nearly 50 years.

As well as being well written, it contains interesting insights into growing up in Norwich in the early 1900s. He was born overlooking the chalk pit which later became Norwich City's 'The Nest', a football ground where he played on a number of occasions. His experiences in World War One, after enlisting in 1914 at the Norwich Drill Hall, are fascinating as are his descriptions of his travels around East Anglia trying to convince businesses of the wisdom of sending their goods by rail.

My father Alan (Fred's nephew) has long been of the opinion that Fred's narrative deserved a wider audience and, at the age of 92,

Dad digitised the entire manuscript by reading it into his computer (initially saving the work onto 85 different files).

Myself and Fred's daughter, Janette, and other family members then took over and carried out the fact checking, proof reading, obtaining the necessary permissions to repro-

duce photographs, researching printers, cover design and a multitude of other tasks to arrive at the finished book.

We've now polished it up and published it as a book under the title ' Under The





Griffin's Wing' - the griffin being the symbol of the old Great Eastern Railway. Initially the book was passed around the family and the consensus was that it was good enough to be published.

Under the Griffin's Wing is now on sale in Jarrold's of Norwich (and other good bookshops) and is also available online through Bittern Books (<https://bitternbooks.co.uk>). On the next page you can read an exclusive extract from the book.

Footnote—I was very interested to hear Chris' comments about the Whiffler column as I worked on this in 1973 and 1974. Editor



Frederick's Golden Years

Below are two extracts from "Under The Griffin's Wing—A Norwich Life" by Frederick Cobb. The extracts are taken from the beginning of Chapter 10 simply entitled "The Golden Years."

Extract One

MY golden years commenced at the age of twenty-three. I enjoyed riding my new motor bike on the open road, and they were really "open" in the year 1919. There were few other vehicles to distract one's attention and the only hazards were the roads themselves, surfaced as they were with sand and tiny flints that caused punctures galore in tyres that were far inferior to present day standards.

I did not have one of those big, powerful Indian motorcycles that used to roar past like a red tornado but a modest Excelsior with a 2 1/2 horsepower Villiers engine with no kick starter. You had to push and run to get the engine to start and then jump on the saddle quickly. The first time I tried it, I threw myself off the saddle again, just as it reached the wheel of a horse and cart that was passing along the main road. It was a near thing, and the old man in charge stopped long enough to call me all the choicest names he could think of, laced with swear words, which I well

deserved. It taught me to be careful.

In the streets of Norwich there was no real evidence of the changing pattern. The general opinion amongst traders and industrialists was that the horse was the ideal motive power for delivery and collection services and that motor vehicles could not satisfactorily negotiate the narrow streets and the approaches to factories.

The District Goods Manager of the Great Eastern Railway, who controlled the large fleet of horse drawn railway vehicles, held this view very strongly and was sceptical when his head office in London sent two army surplus 30 hundredweight Shefflex motor lorries to Norwich. They were to be tried out in the City for the collection and delivery of rail traffic, to decide if they could profitably replace horse drawn vehicles. The cost of a horse and vehicle had been worked out at £1 per week and a motor lorry at the equivalent of two and a half horses. The experiment was an economic and operational success and as motor lorries gradually

replaced the horse teams there was an awareness that the wind of change had reached East Anglia.

With the advent of the cheap family car, the motor industry began to expand. Thousands of army surplus motor lorries were bought by demobilised soldiers with their gratuities and used for short hauled goods and parcel traffic in towns and villages.

Extract Two

Norwich Thorpe Station was built in 1885/86. to the design of William Ashbee and John Wilson, and by the famous contractor, Sir Morton Peto. It is an impressive building, now Grade II listed. There was a standard type of desk fitted at Norwich Thorpe and in every Great Eastern Railway office. The desks were built in rows according to the size of the office; on a high framework, with sloping tops so that the clerk could write standing up or sitting on a high stool. As one can imagine they were somewhat antiquated. I sat on a high stool by the window which gave me an unobstructed view of the whole of the station forecourt. I could work and still be conscious of the comings and goings of the outside world. Therefore I had a grandstand view through the years of the arrivals and departures of members of the Royal family and other high dignitaries who came to Norwich on official visits.

The most memorable one to me was when Edward Prince of Wales came to Norwich in 1923 to officially open the

new Carrow Bridge. From an office window inside the station I saw him step out of a train onto Platform No 1, shake hands with the Station Master who was dressed in frock coat and tall hat, and after being introduced to County and City representatives, I watched the procession come down the platform and past my father who was standing on duty at the barrier. Rushing back to my desk, I looked down from the open window onto the corn-coloured head of the Prince of Wales who stood, bowler hat in his hand, on the pavement below. His entourage was standing a little removed behind him and he looked very much alone as he awaited the arrival of an official car. He was handsomely attractive and the people of Norwich took him to their hearts that day, many a girl being heard to murmur "Oh! Isn't he lovely?"

NOTE: - Edward Albert Christian George Andrew Patrick David Windsor, Prince of Wales was born in 1894. He became Prince of Wales in 1910 and in 1936 became King Edward VIII only to abdicate later that same year, after which he was titled Duke of Windsor.



The Prince of Wales as he would have looked on his visit to Norwich in 1923

Finding The Links

NFHS member Richard Hodge tells the heart-warming story of discovering his Norfolk roots and a family he never knew about.

ALTHOUGH this story is peculiar to me, I will hazard a guess that there are/were many others who can tell a similar tale. What connection, you may ask, has someone who has lived in Scotland for over 50 years with Norfolk? To be honest, the author of this piece (me) hadn't a clue until 1974.

I had always known when my birthday was, but never where I was born. It is also puzzling that, even when I first "signed on" back in 1959, Dad Hodge was in charge of the "paperwork" other than the signature I wrote on my attestation form. This was to be my "life" for the next 12 years, the first five of them in the UK before going to Germany.

When I needed a birth certificate for marriage I was advised to send to Somerset House for one. What did this certificate tell me? Next to nothing really apart from my name, date of birth and that I was born in England. Also that I was a boy. Not good enough for the Consul General in Hanover so I was asked to write home for it and give the reason why. The information was sent directly to him and returned to my parents by him. I was not given sight of it at all. This was in 1965 when both my wife and I were serving in the Forces.

From Germany I/we were sent to Hong Kong and obviously needed a passport. Oddly enough, my short certificate was good enough and I think probably because the Passport Office was able to tie up with my original details. My service was completed in mid 1970 and, because my wife was a born and bred Scot, we decided that it would be better all round if we stayed in Scotland.

What happened in 1974 then, which changed what I knew or rather, what I didn't know? In September of that year when I was working in Cromarty, I phoned home as usual and was given the sad news that Dad Hodge had been taken into hospital. Sherborne in Dorset had been the Hodge family home for 20 years so, with a quick stop on the way for a meal, I packed a suitcase and headed off to Sherborne by train. I arrived around breakfast time and made my way up to the house. Sadly, by the end of the weekend Dad Hodge had passed away. Following his funeral and on the evening before I travelled home again, Mum Hodge called my sister and I to the dining room and took out the old metal deed box, unlocked it and gave each of us an envelope with the words, "I think you should now have these". We each took our envelopes and went back to our bedrooms. I popped mine in my suitcase to read once I got home again. My first reaction

when I finally read the contents of the envelope was one of disbelief, then came the question “why was I not told ?”. This was the first time in my life that I knew that I had been adopted. My birth and adoption certificates were in that envelope along with a number of letters from my foster mother to Mum and Dad Hodge. Along with my birth certificate, these letters told me who my biological parents were and a bit about them.

This is where my connection with Norfolk began. I was born in the David Rice Hospital in August, 1943, to a married but separated mother who, at the time, was living in Surrey Street, Norwich. At the age of 10 days, I was taken down to Boxford, Sussex, and fostered for about a year before being adopted through the Woolwich Courts in 1944.

At the time Mum and Dad Hodge lived in Greenwich where he worked as a Principal Clerk at the “Arsenal”. Not, I suspect, the best place to work at the time. In 1946, they adopted my sister (not blood related) who I have since found out had been born at her aunt's house on Thor Road in Thorpe. Had I not seen her birth name on her envelope, I would never have known that fact. It wasn't until I bought my own computer in the mid 1990s, after Mum Hodge had died, that I thought about trying to find out more about my origins.

I really didn't know where to start and, at the time, the Internet was comparatively new and access wasn't cheap, especially using a phone line. I did very little more about it until Broadband came along and I found out how to get some of the information I was looking for. I had, in the meantime, tried various adoption agencies but to no avail. One of the main problems was that, along with many others, my adoption files, other than court records, had seemingly been lost due to enemy action. The Adoption Society in Baker Street were the organising agency at the time. One also has to bear in mind that adoption law over the years has been quite strict especially with those adopted before 1974.

What then have I found out over the past decade of searching? Firstly that, contrary to what I believed, the David Rice had given over a wing to the Norwich Hospitals due to bomb damage at the main hospital. I had thought that maybe my mother had suffered some sort of mental illness but that has been dispelled. My mother was actually born in Llangynidr in Wales and her father was born in Cambridge. The family returned to Cambridge during the 1920s. It would seem that “Granny” Kirbyshire may not have been a nice person as both my mum and her sister left home in their later teens. My aunt, the older of the two, left home and married at the ripe old age of 16. My mum married at the age of 19 in Manchester. Granny Kirbyshire left no trace after 1937 and Grandpa Samuel died in 1953.

Granny Kirbyshire's maiden name was actually Rayner and she was born in Stowupland. She had ancestors who came from the Norwich area so there is another connection. These relatives were Robert Rayner and his wife Susannah (nee Mason). Try as I might, in spite of all of the information out there in family history land, I could not find out what had happened to my mother. Then, towards the end of 2011, whilst looking for information for a cousin, I noticed an obituary which mentioned the names of my grandparents, Samuel and Alice. I

had found out finally what had happened to my mum. She had used her sister's married surname (naughty girl) and emigrated to the USA as the "nanny" to a US Air Force Officer she had worked for in Cambridge. She had re-married following her divorce and it was her obituary I had come across. She had died about four months before I found that "gem". Undeterred, I got in touch with the people who had arranged her funeral to ask if they could obtain for me a photo of my mum. Her "new" family were obviously a bit reticent at first as they would have known nothing of me at all. However, they and I are now in touch occasionally and I have not only the one photo I was wanting but a whole lot more besides. I also have a lot more of an idea of what she was like as a person.

My "bio" Dad ? He was named as Benjamin P Hall and was serving with the USAAF during World War Two. He and his unit started out at Alconbury which is probably where I was conceived. I'm not sure what my mum was doing at the time but I believe she may have been working with the US Forces in some capacity. It is of interest that in that bundle of letters I had, was the name and address of his mother in the USA. Ben's unit was part of the Ted's Travelling Circus which, in early December, 1942, was sent at short notice to North Africa. On their return some months later, they were stationed at Hardwick where the 93rd Bomb Group Museum now is. Due to circumstances I can only guess at, Ben was not aware of my birth although my mum had seemingly written to both him and his mother about me.

Using the facilities of Ancestry and other similar sites, I managed to build up my Family Tree and a picture of the people on it. I also managed to get in touch with a person who I knew to have been related to my half brother. Once again, I asked her if it would be possible to get the family to provide me with a photo of him. About four years later and completely out of the blue, I had a message through everyone's favourite, Facebook, from a lady whose name I recognised from my tree. Having been given my details and told my story by my previous contact, I was now in touch with one of my half sisters in the USA. Slowly but surely, we made further contact, this time by email, and then a couple of years ago, we managed a video call or two with the whole of my new family. This included a brother and both of my sisters along with their families.

Since then my younger sister and I have had a video chat every couple of months and we are hoping to link up before long with other cousins who live in the USA. I am also in touch with other relatives through Facebook.

All of this just goes to show that, with a little luck and careful research, many good things can happen. The best of these good things for me was that, around the end of May last year (2019), my youngest sister and her husband came to Scotland for a holiday and we met up on more than one occasion during their time here. Although I'm currently not able to travel too far, my oldest son and his family are hoping to visit them next year as the planned visit this year has had to be cancelled due current circumstances. Just as a matter of interest, not a single DNA test has been harmed in the making of this little bit of history.

Richard Hodge (born McKinsty) - richardmchodge@hotmail.com

A Love Affair and Drink

NFHS member Keith King was researching his own family history when he came across the intriguing story of George Woolsey and Beatrice Cook and wanted to share it with other members.

I WAS researching a 1914 Great Yarmouth newspaper into my family history when a tragic article caught my eye. The Woolsey family has no relationship to me but I thought a short article for the Norfolk Ancestor would interest readers.

The story began in February, 1860, with the baptism at Great Yarmouth of George WOOLSEY. He was the son of William and Elizabeth Woolsey, formerly CROME. The couple had married on 11th April, 1848, in Great Yarmouth.

George was the seventh child of the couple, the first five being girls, followed by two boys, William and then George. William Senior worked as a twine spinner, an occupation involved in rope making usually by hand. The 1861 census identified the family living at Stanley Road in Great Yarmouth.

At the age of 21 George Woolsey worked for his relatives, George and Mary RAYSON, formerly Woolsey, a master coach builder. He lived with the couple in Cemetery Road, Great Yarmouth. George learned the trade from his uncle and, after leaving, identified his employment as a wheelwright. At this time he met 18- year-old Mary Ann BARBER. She worked in a silk factory in the town. Her parents William Barber, a boat builder, and his wife, also named Mary, lived at Apollo Walk in the town a short distance from the Woolsey family.

George Woolsey and Mary Barber married in Great Yarmouth on 3rd February, 1883. During the following years the couple, like their parents, would have large families. Mary Barber gave birth to a child in 1884 and named the little girl Rose Ellen.

The family rapidly expanded with other births every two or three years. The Woolsey couple named their other children George Arthur, Arthur Wilfred, Percy Edward, Elizabeth May, James Stanley, Selina Victoria, James Redvers, Stella Doris and Cyril Claude. The youngest, Cyril Claude, was born in 1906.

The National Census of 1901, recorded the family of George and Mary Wool-

sey living close to the homes of their parents. They lived in a property at 25, East Road in Great Yarmouth. Towards the end of 1909, the Woolsey family suffered a major upset. Mary Woolsey, formerly Barber, passed away at the age of 42. George Woolsey had to care for seven of the children who remained living with him. Four of the children were under the age of 12. However, 16-year-old Elizabeth May possibly helped to care for the younger children.

George and his children had moved to a six room house at 133, Palgrave Road, at the time of the 1911 census. A year later 52-year-old George Woolsey met a younger woman. In the spring of 1912 the marriage took place between George Woolsey and 30-year-old Ruby COOK.

This is the name provided on the PRO Birth Register in the fourth quarter of 1912. Ruby Cook was baptised on 16th August, 1882, in St Ann's parish in Nottingham. Her parents Frederick and Sophia Lucy Cook, formerly MORRIS, gave her the name Beatrice Elsie Ruby Morris Cook.

Frederick and Sophie Lucy Cook both originated from the town of Bedford. He earned his living as a bricklayer builder. The 1901 National Census identifies the Cook family living in Nottingham with at least four children including Florence who was married to Thomas HOPWORTH or HOPEWELL with a young child. My research has been unable to identify what happened to Frederick Cook after 1901. Thomas and Florence Hopworth have moved to Hendon in Middlesex by the 1911 Census. I am unable to identify in 1911 Beatrice Ruby Cook and her mother Sophia Lucy Cooke who moved to Great Yarmouth by 1912.

On 15th August, 1914, the newspaper Yarmouth Independent reported on the death of 33-year-old Beatrice Elisa Ruby Morris Woolsey. The coroner held an inquest at the town hall on Monday, 10th August. The newspaper related the following details of George Woolsey, the main witness:

"Deceased's husband said he was in the employ of the Yarmouth Corporation. He identified the body as that of his wife. Asked by the Coroner what his wife's full name was he could not say, remarking that he had been married two years. He last saw his wife alive on Friday night at 7.30, when she was asleep with her clothes on. He could not say if she was in drink on this occasion. However, he had not slept with her for two nights on account of the drink.

On Saturday morning he came home to breakfast at 8.30 am and understood from his son Stanley, that his wife had been downstairs, given the children some milk and had gone upstairs again. At dinner time he came home again and asked the children where their mother was, receiving the reply that they had not seen her. Witness went upstairs, tried the door of the bedroom and found it was fastened.

He could see a chair and went downstairs, got a spline, pushing it under the door and forcing the chair away by this means. He then found his wife sitting on a chair by the side of the bed in a corner of the room. She had her left leg

in a bowl and had a cut in her leg. There was a lot of blood in the bowl. Deceased was dead. She was attired in a nightdress. He noticed no razor or sharp instrument by her side. Witness immediately fetched a neighbour and also went for a policeman and a doctor."

The coroner, Mr J TOLVER WATERS, asked questions of George Woolsey regarding how often Beatrice Ruby would get drunk and why he did not stop the money from her. He also asked if George considered if Beatrice Ruby, "Was at all queer in her mind?" George replied "I don't think so." The coroner then questioned Sophia Lucy Cook.

Sophia Lucy Cook, No 4, Trafalgar Place, the mother of the deceased, said she saw her daughter at 5.30 pm on Thursday. She then seemed a little quiet. The Coroner asked was she the worse for drink? Sophia Lucy Cook replied "No, she was not so far gone that she could not bring a cup of tea." The witness added "that after Mr and Mrs Wolsey were married she left him and he brought her back. There had been little differences since. A trouble came to her about six years ago and she then took to drink, and this had continued off and on since."

The Coroner asked "Had she attempted to commit suicide?" Sophia Lucy replied "Yes, about six years ago. By getting into the water. Whether she walked in or jumped off the Pier I can't say. I never did know." The coroner questioned "What was the trouble she had?" She replied "It was a love affair. When she was about to be married six years ago she ran away."

Dr T LETTIS said: "Deceased was dead when he arrived. There was a wound in her left leg. There was a large varicose vein and this had been opened, evidently by deceased. She had bled to death. There were a pair of scissors and a table knife by her side. She had been dead two hours at the outside. Owing to the vein being diseased when it was cut the blood would pour out."

James Stanley Woolsey, son of the last witness, said he had never known his father to quarrel with deceased, who was frequently drunk. She was in the habit of fetching drink herself. PC PRATT said he found the knife and scissors on a chair beside the deceased. He found nothing in the shape of a letter.

The jury returned a verdict that deceased committed suicide during temporary insanity brought on by excessive drinking, and the foreman, Mr J D GOBBETT, said they desired to express their sympathy to the husband and relatives.

Sophia Lucy Cook died in 1927 in Great Yarmouth at the age of 76. Her son-in-law George Woolsey died at the age of 79 in 1939 in Great Yarmouth.

Keith King MN5521 email: keithkng2@gmail.com

Looking After Steam's Heritage

Roger Morgan continues his story of the Thursford Collection and museum from the inside front cover.

THE museum was originally housed in a series of old farm sheds and George would often talk to the visitors between exhibits. Dressed as a countryman with tweed jacket, baggy jumper, trousers and Wellingtons he would shake the visitors' hands and ask them, "*Did yer loik it then?*"

The attraction continued to grow and a gift shop and tearoom were added. During the summer season it opened seven days a week. George was awarded an MBE in 1989 in recognition of his efforts to save Britain's steam heritage.

In the 1970s, the running of the collection was taken over by John Cushing, one of George's three sons. John, like his father before him, developed a passion for steam engines at an early age and, under his leadership, the collection of steam engines and organs grew to become the largest in the world.

However, it was in 1977 when John made a decision that would have long lasting effects on the museum. He decided to organise an event on Christmas Eve in a shed at the museum.

It was a small carol singing evening which attracted around 50 visitors. Since then the Christmas Spectacular has grown into an annual event drawing in about 180,000 visitors to North Norfolk over the Christmas period. It has been estimated that over the last 40 years, over six million people have been to see the show.

It is the largest performance of its kind in the whole of Europe and it is thought to generate around £10 million for the local economy. Every year, hundreds of



Burrell Victory steam engine



dancers from across the world apply to be in the show, but only a handful are chosen to perform. The show features a cast of around 130 professional singers, dancers and musicians.

George Cushing realised that his collection could be subject to death duties should he pass away, and so set up the Thursford Collection as a trust endowed charity, now run by John. Minnie Cushing died in 1995 and George Cushing died on February 26th, 2003.



The Thursford Christmas Show

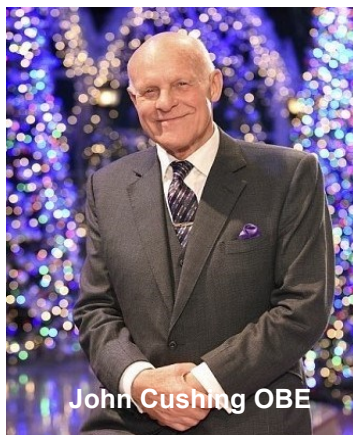
The collection today includes a Mighty Wurlitzer organ which is the fourth largest in Europe and has a total of 1,339 pipes. The Wurlitzer came from the Paramount, a 3500 seat cinema in Leeds where it was installed in 1932.

There is also a two foot narrow gauge railway and a 19th-century gondola merry-go-round which was built in the King's Lynn factory of Frederick SAVAGE. The merry-go-round is decorated with carved heads depicting Queen Victoria and her family, including the German Kaiser Wilhelm II.

Visitors to Thursford can also take part in a behind-the-scenes tour, seeing the dressing rooms, costume stores and wardrobe used for the Christmas Spectacular, as well as an engine yard with videos of how the engines would have been used.

John Cushing, now in his eighties, is the CEO of the Thursford Collection Trust and continues to direct the Christmas show each year. In the 2019 New Year's Honours list he was awarded an OBE for services to charity.

John is married with two children Charlie (29) and George (27), both of whom continue their father and grandfather's legacies with management positions at the Thursford Collection. Sadly, there will be no Christmas Spectacular this year due to Covid 19, but hopefully it will return in 2021.



John Cushing OBE



George and Minnie in 1994

Hanged As A Witch

OUR Facebook page is a never-ending source of information and stories. We now have over 2,700 members. If you haven't visited it, have a look by going to:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/familyhistorynorfolk/members/>

There's only one rule—posts must be relevant to family history, Norfolk history in general or historic items that are likely to be of interest to other members.

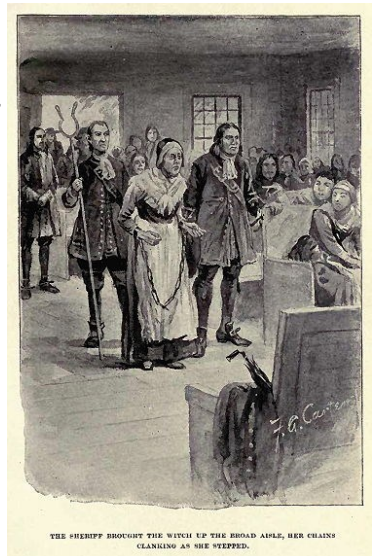
Membership is free and many members have been able to break down brick walls by helping each other.

Sometimes messages throw up interesting stories as was the case of a post about Rebecca Towne Nurse who was born in Great Yarmouth and hanged as a witch in the notorious Salem Massachusetts trials. This is her story.

ON the face of it there isn't much to connect Great Yarmouth in Norfolk with Salem in Massachusetts. But there is a connection in the person of Rebecca Towne NURSE who was born in the Norfolk coastal town in 1620 and who was baptised in St Nicholas Church on February 21st, 1621. She was the daughter of William TOWNE and Joanna BLESSING and emigrated to the Salem area with her family as a child.

She married Francis NURSE and they had eight children (four sons and four daughters). Francis and Rebecca were upstanding members of the local community with Francis a constable responsible for keeping the peace, apprehending offenders and even collecting taxes. Rebecca was a leading member of the local church.

Everything went well until February 1692 when a form of hysteria took over. Many theories have been put forward as to just what happened in Salem but the facts are that three



Rebecca Nurse in Chains by John R. Mu-sick — This file has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights.

girls—Abigail WILLIAMS, Elizabeth PARRIS and Ann PUTNAM— along with others claimed they were being attacked by the spirits of a number of women whom they accused of witchcraft.

They were taken seriously and Rebecca Nurse was targeted as one of the principal witches. On March 23rd, 1692, Rebecca was arrested despite being aged 71 and being in poor health. She was incarcerated in Salem Prison.

Rebecca was sent for trial. Initially she was found not guilty, thanks in no small amount to a series of character witnesses who heralded her as an “upstanding member of the local community.”

The hysteria continued and the Massachusetts Governor ordered a second trial. Rebecca by this time was very deaf and it is likely that this prevented her from understanding and answering some of the questions put to her and this time she was convicted by a jury. She was excommunicated from the church and hanged on July 19th, 1692.



Jean Adair who played the part of Rebecca Nurse in the 1953 version of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*.

Previous to her trial Rebecca had been renowned for her piety and at such an advanced age she was one of the most unlikely people to be accused of witchcraft. More modern day research has suggested that politics may have played a large part in the conviction.

This included boundary disputes between the Putnam family and other Salem residents with Francis Nurse having land conflicts with the Putnams.

Rebecca's death is often credited as the impetus for a shift in public opinion about the validity of the witch trials and it certainly wasn't the end of the matter. At the request of Rebecca's children, the notice of her excommunication was erased from church records. Her accuser, Ann Putnam, apologised to the Nurse family for accusing innocent people and the Nurse family was compensated for her “wrongful death.”

Today the Nurse homestead is open to the public. Rebecca is a central character in Arthur Miller's play “*The Crucible*,” which has appeared in at least three different versions on Broadway with Rebecca being played by Jean Adair (1953), Helen Stenborg (2002) and Brenda Wehle (2016).

Peter Steward MN 14801

A Botanist Of Great Note

Norfolk Family History Society Honorary
Life Member Edmund Perry tells the story
of a Norfolk man's association with
Charles Darwin



IN THE same way as Isaac NEWTON stood on the shoulders of Robert HOOKE and Edmond HALLEY, Charles DARWIN was indebted to a number of eminent botanists in the 18th and early 19th centuries, who collected and classified plant and animal specimens into taxonomies (groups based on similarities of structure or origin).

These men are mainly forgotten but one of the most important was born in Norwich on 2nd December, 1759, the eldest son of seven children. His father James, and Uncle William were wealthy woollen merchants, a family of Dissenters with one grandfather having been a Unitarian vicar.

James Edward SMITH was a shy, delicate but precocious child with an avid interest in the natural world and a fascination with flowers. Schooled at home, he decided to study botany rather than take over the family business. Excluded from Oxford and Cambridge due to his religious background, James enrolled in the medical course at Edinburgh University in 1781. He was influenced by John HOPE (1725–86, professor of medicine and botany) an early apostle of the Swedish natural historian and botanist Carl Von LINNAEUS (1707-1778).

James never really enjoyed the study of medicine and spent much of his time going out into the countryside studying plants and devoted his energy to founding a natural history society. When one of his lecturers offered a prize for the best native Scottish plant collection, James was the clear winner. He also published his first scientific paper, entitled *Phaenomen of Vegetable Odours*. In 1783, James moved to London to enrol in the School of Anatomy but disliked dissections.

He became a friend of Sir Joseph BANKS (the botanist and Cook's chief scientist on the ship Endeavour) who was offered the entire collection of Linnaeus, now known as the 'father of taxonomy' who systematised biological classification. Previously botanists had tried to group plants by characteristics such as leaf shape and size, the colour of flowers, but Linnaeus classified plants according to their reproductive organs, using such terms as stamens, pistils, and nuptials. In Britain this was seen as mildly erotic and even pornographic.

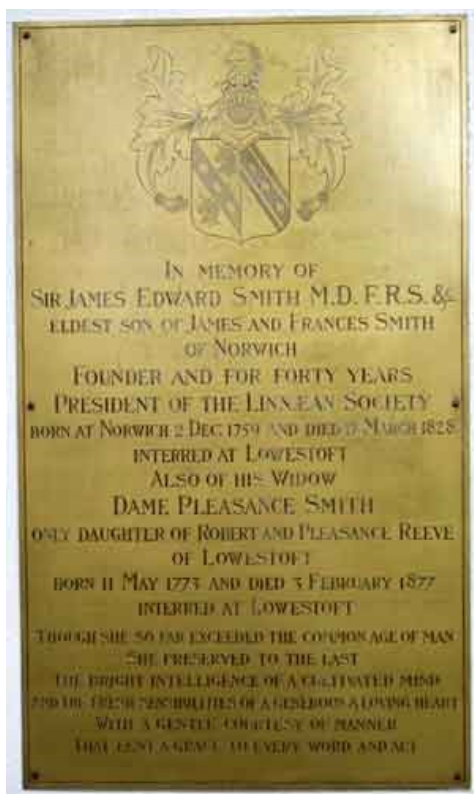
There were letters in the press urging the protection of young women from the corrupting influence of botanical education. Banks declined the offer but persuaded James Smith to purchase the collection from the wife of Carolus Linnaeus the Younger for the princely sum of £1,000 borrowed from his father. It turned out to be a bargain price for this great collection.

James rented a house in Chelsea and started to study the manuscripts, publishing some of Linnaeus' translated works and, in 1785, he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society.

He didn't see himself practising medicine professionally and so decided instead to travel to Europe, first to Leiden where he actually sat and passed his examinations to finally become a doctor. Between 1786 and 1788 he made the grand tour through the Netherlands, France, Italy and Switzerland, visiting botanists, picture galleries and herbaria, receiving lessons from renowned professors and collecting some plants of his own. In Paris he even worked for a while in the Cabinet du Roi, studying Rousseau's herbarium.

Back in London in 1788, along with Samuel GOODENOUGH (1743–1827) and Thomas MARSHAM (1748–1819), he founded the Linnean Society of London, becoming its first president, a post he held for 40 years. This Society enabled members to view the Linnaeus collection in Smith's house in Great Marlborough Street, where he entertained and gave talks when not lecturing in botany and zoology at Guy's Hospital.

He also began his prolific writing career, starting with the plant descriptions for James SOWERBY'S *"English Botany."* In 1792, he was elected a foreign member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences before publishing an account



of his European tour in 1793, as well as finding time to tutor members of the royal family at Windsor. The hectic schedule caused exhaustion and James began to suffer from a nervous illness which would plague him for the rest of his life.

In 1796, he married Pleasance, only daughter of Robert and Pleasance REEVE of Lowestoft, and he left London to return to Norwich with the Linnaeus Collection. Thereafter, three months a year were spent in London, with the rest of his time back in Norwich writing. In 1797, James published "*The Natural History of the Rarer Lepidopterous Insects of Georgia*," the earliest book on North American insects which included illustrations and notes of John ABBOT, with descriptions of many new species by Smith. Between 1806 and 1817, his friendship with William ROSCOE saw James contribute 5,000 plants to supplement the Roylean Herbarium. This has now become the Smith Herbarium held by the Liverpool Botanic Garden.

Over the next 30 years he produced a number of publications: "*Introduction to Physiological and Systematic Botany*" (1807); "*Flora Britannica*" (1800-1804); "*Exotic Botany*" (1804-1808) and "*The English Flora*" (four volumes, 1824-1828). He contributed 3,348 botanical articles to Rees's Cyclopaedia (1808 - 1819) plus 57 biographies of botanists and then edited seven volumes of "*Flora Graeca*," the major botanical publication begun by Professor John SIBTHORP.

He also supplied pictures and descriptions of flora to the publisher and illustrator, James Sowerby, and the growing interest in gardening and natural history saw new illustrated publications, such as the exotic "*A Specimen of the Botany of New Holland*" and the 36-volume "*English Botany*," reach a much wider audience.

By any standards this huge output was a major achievement. James' library and botanical collections acquired European fame and were visited by numerous botanists and entomologists from all over Europe. The Linnaeus Collection includes 14,000 plants, 158 fish, 1,564 shells, 3,198 insects, 1,600 books and 3,000 letters and documents. James Smith's Collection includes 27,185 dried plants, botanical, entomological and ornithological specimens; drawings and engravings; and a personal reference library of over 2,000 books many of which were sent to him as gifts or exchanges with fellow naturalists. The correspondence of 3,000 letters from 400 correspondents contains detailed discussion of plants, habitats, publications, and other scientists, as well as first-hand accounts and opinions on botany, medicine, social unrest, contemporary culture, politicians, and wars of the period.

The Linnean Society holds archives relating to Smith's life, including diplomas he received from societies and institutions from around the world, manuscript copies and proofs of several of his works, drafts of papers and letters, notebooks, catalogues of plants, various scientific pamphlets, general papers and lists, and other printed material.

In 1814, James Edward Smith was knighted. He had campaigned to become

Professor of Botany at Cambridge University but was rejected, solely because of his religious background. Despite struggling with illness, the fourth volume of "*The English Flora*" was published the year he died at his Norwich home in Surrey Street on March 17th, 1828, aged 68. Dame Pleasance survived him by 49 years, living to the grand old age of 103. She was painted as a young gipsy by John Opie in 1797 and photographed in Norwich on her 100th birthday in 1872. She edited James' memoirs and correspondence (deleting much personal information) and sold both the Linnaeus Collection and her husband's library to the Linnean Society for £3,150, where they now reside at Burlington House, Piccadilly.

Sadly, Sir James Edward Smith is a forgotten figure in Norfolk. There ought to be a statue of him in Norwich to celebrate his remarkable achievement. A bust by Francis Leggatt CHANTREY exists at the Linnean Society.

In St Peter Mancroft Church in Norwich, half way down the aisle on the left going towards the altar, there is a brass memorial with a coat of arms recording him and his wife buried at Lowestoft. However, the epitaph is dedicated to his wife (see page 25).

Edmund Perry

***cine – slides – video* 2 DVD**

Have all your treasured
Memories transferred to disc

- 8mm & 16mm cine films converted to DVD
- VHS & camcorder tapes converted to DVD
- 35mm slides, negatives & prints scanned and saved on disc. These can also be compiled into a slideshow with music and transferred to DVD for viewing on your home TV

Contact Michael on:
01708 735810



www.slides2disk.co.uk

More Memories of Chamberlins

When NFHS member Jane Gray read our September article about Chamberlins Department store it brought back some family memories as she recounts here.

IN April 1995, after a request for memories and memorabilia in "The Eastern Evening News" newspaper for a proposed exhibition in the window of Tesco, my mother submitted the attached piece. She worked in Chamberlins from September, 1931, until she married in September, 1939, and had many fond memories of the time she spent there.

"I came to Norwich to Chamberlins in September, 1931. I came as an apprentice for three years and my father had to pay £25. It was intended that I should work my way through all the departments, but I actually only worked in the haberdashery and underclothing departments. During my apprenticeship I was paid 2/- a week for the first year, 3/- the next year and 5/- the last year.

I first went into the haberdashery department where they sold cottons etc. This was where everyone started. To begin with, I just tidied, dusted and filled the shelves. We weren't allowed to do any serving at all. After about a year I moved into the underclothing department, where I did the same general duties to start with and then gradually moved into fitting.

We would measure the customers – their bust, waist and hip measurements, – would enter the information on a chart, and would then decide the "foundation garment" (corset) best suited to them. Chamberlins didn't actually make the corsets, but kept a large range in stock. Our buyer was Miss Inverarity, a Scottish lady of about 50 who had been there for some time. Her first in command was Miss Sharman. The two had been working together for several years.

During my apprenticeship, I slept in a big room with four other girls. It was on the top floor overlooking the market and had arched windows. The other girls were all first timers away from home like me. We had to be in the shop to uncover all the fittings at half past eight in the morning and were there until six o'clock in the evening.

We lived in on a full board basis, with a cooked breakfast at 8 am, a main meal with meat, two vegetables and a sweet at lunchtime, and tea immediately after the store closed. Lunch was presided over by the housekeeper, Miss West. After tea we were then free for the evening, but we had to be in by 11 pm. When I finished my apprenticeship, I moved to another bedroom – still on the top floor but this time sharing with just one other girl.

During the time I was there, they pulled down the old municipal buildings – where the City Hall is now – and we were overrun by rats! One evening when I came in, I found a rat sitting on my dressing table, so I fetched the night watchman and his dog to chase it out. The dog was a little terrier. There was such a to

-do chasing around after this rat! And we always had mice. They used to chase the fish 'n' chip papers up and down the floor at night after we had eaten the food in bed. We used to get a two and one, which I think was a piece of fish and a penn'orth of chips.

All the business houses in those days had hockey teams and I belonged to the one for Chamberlins. On a Thursday afternoon, which was early closing day, we used to travel to play the other teams – Arnold and Palmer's in Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Bury (YWCA) and Halesworth. Buntings used to have a team, and Boots. I believe Jarrold's had a team at one stage. In the summer we used to play tennis. The first tennis club I joined was at Heigham Park.

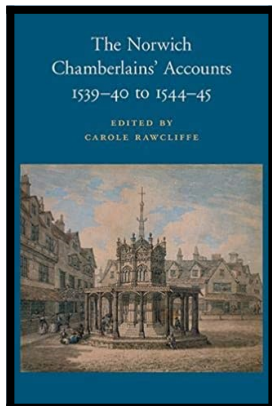
The main door into the shop was on the corner of Guildhall Hill and Dove Street. If you turned left immediately on entry, you found yourself in the underclothing department. This ran behind the stairs (leading up to the counting houses and offices) and parallel with Guildhall Hill. Immediately in front of you were the household linens and materials (silks and woollens), and then up two steps and running along the top were the fashion showrooms.

To the left was hosiery and gloves, with another door to Guildhall Hill, and millinery was off to one side. The furniture showroom was across the other side of Library Court, with the factory somewhere at the back. When Dad and I married in 1939, we bought our table and chairs, the sideboard, the desk/bookcase, a dressing table and chest of drawers all from the furniture department.

The store manager was an important person in those days. He wore a black tailed coat and striped trousers and would be seen welcoming people to the store – especially valued customers – and conducting them to the departments they wanted. I think his name was Mr Graham."

Jane Gray MN 3950

For even more memories of Chamberlins please go to page 44.



THE Norfolk Record Society has brought out another learned book of records covering the Norwich Chamberlains' Accounts from 1539 to 1545, edited by Carole Rawcliffe..

In the 16th century Norwich was England's largest provincial city. The records give an insight into finance, government and culture.

The records give a wonderful insight into domestic and public records. For more information visit

<https://norfolkrecordsociety.org.uk/>

The Norfolk Pigmy

In our March, 2020, *Norfolk Ancestor* we featured an article about Robert Hales, the so called 'Norfolk Giant'. In this edition Roger Morgan takes a brief look at the life of John Coan, the 'Norfolk Pigmy'.

IT IS estimated that John COAN was born in 1728 in Tivetshall but he wasn't baptised until 31st March, 1730, at St Mary's in Tivetshall. The church is now a ruin after it merged with St Margaret's.

John Coan's parents were John and Sarah (née NEGUS) who were married at St Margaret's on 5th December, 1727.

The house at the Five Fields where Coan the Norfolk Dwarf "exhibited himself"



It is likely that he was an only child as there are no records of any siblings. It is assumed that for the first two years of his life, he grew like a normal baby because his baptism was not rushed.

However, his growth started to slow down and, by 1744, at the age of 16, he was just three feet tall and weighed around 27.5 pounds (12.5kg). John was regarded as a freak or curiosity and was 'exhibited' at the Lower Half Moon, Market Place, Norwich, in July of 1744.

According to 'The Cabinet of Curiosities' written in 1824, the surgeon William ARDERON wrote to his colleague Mr Henry BAKER FRS on 12th May, 1750, and gave a detailed description of John Coan aged 22. According to Arderon, John weighed no more than 34 pounds with all his clothes on.

He measured him and found that he was only 38 inches tall, including his wig, hat and shoes. He noted that his limbs were no larger than those of a child aged around three or four and his body was perfectly straight.

Dwarfs were very popular with the upper classes and also the monarchy in the early part of the 18th century which may explain why John moved from rural Norfolk to London. According to *The London Magazine, or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer*, Volume 20, he was presented to Frederick,

Prince of Wales at a party in Leicester House on the 5th December, 1751, and then, exhibited to the Royal Society.

When he was 23, John appeared at the Swan in Smithfield during the Bartholomew Fair of 1751. In his 1874 book about the old showmen, Thomas Frost described the show with these words:

"The principal show seems to have been containing two dwarfs, a remarkable negro, a female one- horned rhinoceros, and a crocodile, said to have been the first to have been seen alive in this country. The more famous of the two dwarfs was John Coan, a native of Norfolk, who at this time was twenty-three years of age, and only three feet two inches in height, and of thirty-four pounds weight."

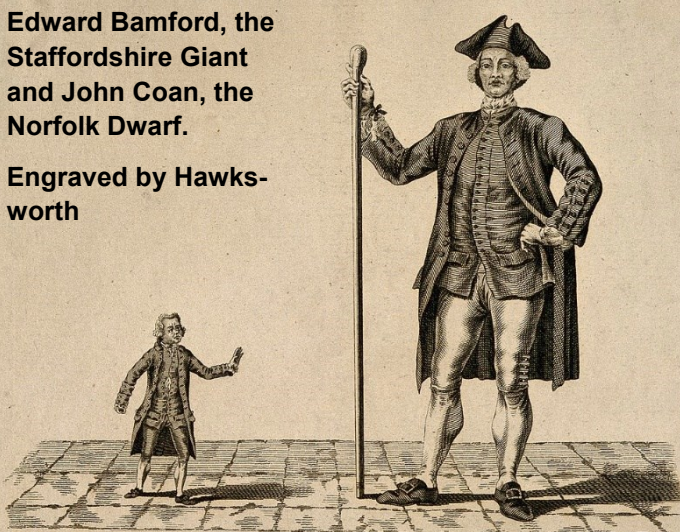
John's popularity increased and he appeared in taverns such as the Ship, the Anchor and the Windmill near Temple Bar. At the famous Star and Garter his humorous show during dinner was often followed by a firework display.

His name often appeared in the newspapers of the time and on Friday, 10th January, 1752, he was introduced to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Prince Edward and all the other Princes and Princesses, where he stayed upwards of two hours.

John had a jovial personality and impressed everybody with his sharp wit and intelligence. He was described as being, 'a perfect man in miniature' and people were willing to pay a shilling just to see

**Edward Bamford, the
Staffordshire Giant
and John Coan, the
Norfolk Dwarf.**

**Engraved by Hawks-
worth**



The exact Representation of those two very remarkable Persons. M. Bamford the Staffordshire Giant & M. Coan the Norfolk Dwarf. Drawn by M. Richardson's Pencil, as he has sketched them from the Life, & are to be seen there as of late. The one measuring full 7 feet 4 inches in height the other not exceeding 3 feet high. Each of these extraordinary Persons separated the Life at the Age of thirty five. While they lived the latter part of his Life in London. One now complements the Dwarf near Dublin. Published according to the Order of M. Bamford. May 8 1771. Sold by James Roberts Engraver at M. Hawksworths Seller near the Sun Tavern in Gray's Inn Lane. J. Roberts A. 50. 2. Colborn.



Bartholomew's Fair 1721

him. He would usually dress in bright clothing, sometimes blue and gold, other times purple and silver.

In London in the 18th century, it became fashionable to build pleasure gardens which were places of entertainment, like the Chelsea Spring Gardens and the Knightsbridge Spring Gardens. One of them was connected with a couple of taverns, the Star and Garter and the Dwarfs' Tavern.

In the late 1750s, the showman Christopher PINCHBECK, established the 'Dwarf Garden' at Chelsea, between Ebury Street and Belgrave Terrace, where John soon became a fixture, entertaining visitors with his charm.

For a short time, he became the co-proprietor of the Dwarfs' Tavern, alongside the landlord of the nearby Star and Garter. A quote reprinted in Faulkner's History of Chelsea, states that John laid on *"a most excellent ham, some collared eel, potted beef etc, with plenty of sound old bright wine and punch like nectar"*.

In 1762, it was visited by the Cherokee king and his two chiefs, who were so pleased that they returned the following day.

Soon after this, John's health began to deteriorate and he began to show symptoms that would normally be associated with somebody much older. His skin became increasingly wrinkled and his complexion took on a sallow appearance. John Coan died at the Dwarfs' Tavern on 16th March, 1764, at the age of 36, his death being reported in The Daily Advertiser of 17th March.

Sadly, this was not quite the end for John, because his manager continued to exhibit his body after his death, to make as much money as possible. When the corpse began to deteriorate, he had a wax model of it made for use in future shows. John's body was finally laid to rest in St Luke's chapel in Chelsea.

The picture above shows a porcelain model of John Coan made at the Chelsea Porcelain Works around 1745-69. It shows John wearing a beefeater costume and holding a spear in his left hand, with a dog standing at his side. He is surrounded by flowers and foliage, on a white and gilt scroll base.



NORFOLK FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

FORM OF PROXY (for the 24th AGM on Saturday 27th March 2021 at 12.00 noon [GMT])

If you do not wish or are unable to attend the 2020 Annual General Meeting you may appoint another person to attend and vote for you. If so, please read the Agenda and Notes (as on the website) before completing this form.

I hereby appoint the Chairman of the Meeting **OR** *(insert name and address of alternative proxy below)*

.....
.....
.....

To attend for me and vote on my behalf at the 2020 Annual General Meeting of the Norfolk Family History Society and at any adjournment of the meeting.

I wish my proxy to vote as indicated on this form.

RESOLUTIONS: *(tick or circle your choice of how you wish your Proxy to vote for **each** resolution i.e.- For, Against or Abstain)*

1. To accept the Minutes of the 2019 A.G.M.	For	Against	Abstain
2. To adopt the Trustees Report for the year ended 31st March 2020	For	Against	Abstain
3. To adopt the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2020	For	Against	Abstain
4. To re-appoint ARGENTS as Accountants	For	Against	Abstain
5. Re-appointment of Mr Richard Ashberry	For	Against	Abstain
6. Re-appointment of Mrs Ellen Carr	For	Against	Abstain

7. Re-appointment of Mrs Carol Reeve	For	Against	Abstain
--------------------------------------	-----	---------	---------

OR

I wish my Proxy to vote for the resolutions as she/he thinks fit	
--	--

NAME:

Membership Number Date

Signed:

This signed and completed form must be returned to:

The Secretary
Norfolk Family History Society
Kirby Hall
70 St. Giles Street
Norwich
NR2 1LS
UK

OR scanned and sent by email to secretary@nfhs.co.uk
to arrive no later than **Wednesday 24th March 2021.**

New Members and Members Interests



Compiled by Carole Taylor
Membership Secretary
email: membership@nfhs.co.uk

Welcome to the December issue of The Norfolk Ancestor.

What a year this has been for us all. We have all had to find different ways of working. Fortunately, several of us, have been able to work from home to keep the Society running.

We have welcomed a lot of new members this year and they, and current members, have taken the opportunity to contact members with similar surname interests and search NORS. We would like to hear your success stories.

We have implemented procedures in Kirby Hall to keep our volunteers safe and a few are returning to pick up tasks to improve the library and website content.

However, we are no closer to opening the hall to the public but will keep you advised as things change.

As we move towards the end of the year, I would like to wish you all a very happy and healthy Christmas and best wishes for a more 'normal' 2021.

Carole

Members Interests Search Area Codes

KEY

CN = Central
NC = Norwich & District
NE = North East
NW = North West
SE = South East
SW = South West
YM = Gt Yarmouth



*Other areas
are identified by Chapman codes.
A copy of these can be obtained from Kirby Hall.*

New Members

The Society welcomes the following new members

Mr K. Playford	18499	GB	Lcdr P. Vickridge	18539	AU
Mr A. Barrett	18500	GB	Miss C. M. Barber	18540	GB
Mr P. Comeau	18501	GB	Mr K. Mason	18541	AU
Mr A. Maris	18502	GB	Ms D. Crosby-Browne	18542	AU
Dr D. Cummins	18503	GB	Mrs P. Haines	18543	GB
Mrs F. Tucker	18504	GB	Mrs F. Cordel	18544	GB
Mr R. Pycroft	18505	GB	Ms J. Hazell	18545	GB
Mrs B. Clements	18506	US	Mr D. J. Harrison	18546	GB
Mr M. Redhead	18507	GB	Mrs C. Robinson	18547	GB
Mr R. Crisp	18508	GB	Mr A. Dunn	18548	GB
Ms K. Dimancescu	18509	US	Mrs E. Manners	18549	GB
Mrs N. Hanks	18510	GB	Mr D. Corston	18550	GB
Mrs J. Kasper	18511	US	Ms J. Collins	18551	AU
Mrs C. Campbell	18512	GB	Mrs F. Curtis	18552	GB
Ms W. Narang	18513	CA	Mr M. Allen	18553	GB
Ms M. Bond	18514	AU	Mrs K. Agger	18554	GB
Mr V. A. Faulkner	18515	GB	Mrs J. Dunigan	18555	US
Mr R. Cator	18516	GB	Ms T. Nunn	18556	GB
Ms S. Sowders	18517	US	Mrs L. Kent	18557	GB
Mrs A. Skillen-Thompson	18518	GB	Ms L. Ward	18558	GB
Miss K. Semmence	18519	GB	Mrs J. Stennett	18559	AU
Ms M. Rix	18520	AU	Mr J. Crane	18560	GB
Mr G. Foster	18521	AU	Mrs. J. Clayton	18561	GB
Mrs D. McNamara	18522	IE	Mrs E. Richardson	18562	GB
Mr R. Shaul	18523	GB	Miss L. Dolan	18563	GB
Miss N. Tastula	18524	AU	Mrs A. Birkett	18564	GB
Ms J. Crossen	18525	GB	Mr S. Lytle	18565	US
Mrs S. Sturgeon	18526	CA	Miss H. Lambert	18566	GB
Mrs M. Hall	18527	GB	Mr G. Howell	18567	GB
Mr A. Ransom	18528	GB	Ms. B. Gardiner	18568	AU
Mrs S. Ascough	18529	GB	Ms P. Moed	18569	US
Mrs S. Peacey	18530	GB	Mrs P. Parsons	18570	GB
Mr S. Isaacs	18531	GB	Mr A. Bowden	18571	GB
Mr C. Whitehead	18532	AU	Mr R. Tait	18572	GB
Mr L. Page	18533	GB	Mr. E. Blair	18573	US
Ms J. Young	18534	GB	Mr K. Ayres	18574	AU
Mrs P. Lincoln	18535	GB	Mr G. Read	18575	GB
Mrs S. Brailsford	18536	GB	Mrs S. Cossey	18576	GB
Mr M. J. Bennett	18537	GB	Miss D. Webster	18577	GB
Mr G. Cook	18538	NZ	Mr J. Loome	18578	CA
			Miss S. Flatt	18579	GB

Mr	S.	Bell	18580	US	Mrs	L.	Kenny	18624	GB
Mr	S.	Swinburne	18581	GB	Miss	R.	Manser	18625	GB
Mrs	B.	Butler	18582	GB	Mr	K.	Finlay	18626	GB
Mr	A.	Goggs	18583	GB	Mrs	B.	Thomas	18627	GB
Mr	M. W.	Smith	18584	GB	Ms	C.	Upton Browning	18628	GB
Mrs	A.	Mackintosh	18585	GB	Mr	K.	Bennett	18629	MT
Mr	B.	Howell	18586	US	Me	E.	Hunter	18630	US
Mrs	A.	Ellis	18587	GB	Mr	P.	Craig	18631	GB
Miss	C.	Easton	18588	GB	Mrs	K.	Lohrding	18632	US
Mr	P.	Mcquail	18589	GB	Mr	G.	Conridge	18633	GB
Miss	K.	Cooke	18590	GB	Mr	A.	Stevenson	18634	GB
Mrs	G.	De Meij	18591	NL					
Mr	R.	Short	18592	GB					
Ms	F.	Ashton	18593	US					
Mr	G.	Allen	18594	US					
Mrs	E.	Jackson	18595	GB					
Mr	L.	Passmore	18596	GB					
Mrs	C.	Terry	18597	GB					
Mr	M. D.	Colman	18598	GB					
Mr	S.	Gales	18599	GB					
Mrs	J.	Southenwood	18600	GB					
Mrs	N.	Wilson	18601	GB					
Mr	J.	Blackburn	18602	CA					
Mrs	J.	Kemble	18603	AU					
Mrs	A.	Smalley	18604	GB					
Mr	D.	Norton	18605	GB					
Ms	S.	Felton	18606	AU					
Mr	S.	Tumbridge	18607	GB					
Mr	S.	Yallup	18608	GB					
Mrs	J.	Begg	18609	GB					
Mrs	P.	Lawton	18610	GB					
Mrs	J.	Fuller	18611	GB					
Ms	A.	Auld	18612	GB					
Mr	R.	Wells	18613	GB					
Mrs	E.	Thurling	18614	AU					
Mrs	S.	Wood	18615	GB					
Mrs	C.	Care	18616	GB					
Mrs	J.	Rayner	18617	GB					
Mr	S.	Webster	18618	GB					
Mr	B. R.	Annison	18619	AU					
Mr	L.	Bone	18620	GB					
Ms	J.	Szabo	18621	US					
Mrs	J.	Sumbler	18622	GB					
Mrs	M. E.	Williams	18623	AU					

On the following page you can see the latest list of members' interests.

To contact other members researching the same surname.

First login to the NFHS Website (success indicated by 'Logout' top right), then under the 'Membership' / 'Members Interests' menu select the required Surname from the drop-down list and click on "Contact".

An e-mail address or postal address will then be forwarded to you.

If an e-mail is not received soon, please check e-mail spam folder. When corresponding by post please remember to include a stamped self addressed envelope.

The Trustees and Volunteers at Norfolk Family History Society would like to wish all our members a Happy Christmas and we look forward to returning to some form of normality in 2021.

If you have features or any news you would like to share with other members please do get in touch. Contact addresses can be found towards the end of this edition of Norfolk Ancestor.

Members Interests

MN	NAME	CNTY	AREA	DATE	MN	NAME	CNTY	AREA	DATE
18532	ALEXANDER	NFK	SE	17C-19C	18529	JEWSON	NFK	ALL	ALL
18197	ALLUM	NFK	ALL	18C-19C	18237	KELF	NFK	ALL	ALL
18531	AYERS	NFK	ALL	17C-18C	18610	KNIGHTS	NFK	ALL	ALL
18437	BARKAWAY	NFK	ALL	18C-19C	18531	MALLOWS	NFK	ALL	ALL
18621	BARNES	NFK	ALL	ALL	18603	MOY	NFK	ALL	15C-18C
18603	BIRCHAM	NFK	CN	15C-18C	18558	NEWLAND	NFK	ALL	ALL
18603	BOUGHEL	NFK	ALL	15C-18C	18531	NEWTON	NFK	ALL	18C-19C
18532	BRUNDELL	NFK	SE	18C-19C	18596	PARMENTER	NFK	ALL	16C-18C
18603	BUCK	NFK	CN	15C-18C	18596	PAYNEL	NFK	ALL	16C-18C
18477	BUGG	NFK	ALL	ALL	18477	PEARCE	NFK	ALL	ALL
18513	CANN	NFK	NC	16C-18C	18477	PITCHER	NFK	ALL	ALL
18513	CANN	NFK	SE	16C-18C	18513	RISING	NFK	CN	16C-18C
3338	CATTON	NFK	ALL	ALL	16863	RUST	NFK	ALL	15C-19C
18596	CHAMBERS	NFK	CN	16C-19C	18610	SALMON	NFK	ALL	ALL
18437	COOK(E)	SFK	ALL	17C-20C	18527	SETCHELL	NFK	ALL	ALL
18603	COOKE	NFK	CN	15C-18C	17262	SILVERS	NFK	ALL	ALL
18287	COOTE	NFK	NC	19C	18531	SIZELAND	NFK	ALL	17C-18C
18508	CRISP	NFK	SW	ALL	18477	SKIPPER	NFK	ALL	ALL
18532	CRISP	NFK	SE	18C-19C	18629	SOFTLEY	NFK	ALL	ALL
15948	CRITOPH	NFK	ALL	ALL	18629	SOFTLY	NFK	ALL	ALL
18527	DEXTER	NFK	ALL	ALL	18237	STEWARD	NFK	ALL	ALL
18532	DUNCKS	NFK	SE	ALL	18558	SYDER	NFK	ALL	ALL
18527	FAKENBRIDGE	NFK	ALL	ALL	18532	TAYLOR	NFK	SE	17C-19C
18603	FIDGET	NFK	CN	15C-18C	18407	TOOLEY	NFK	NE	ALL
3586	FLINT	NFK	SW	18C	18237	TUTTLE	NFK	ALL	ALL
18531	FODDER	NFK	ALL	17C-19C	17009	ULPH	NFK	NW	ALL
18237	FOUNTAIN	NFK	ALL	ALL	17009	ULPH	NFK	NC	19C
18532	FULCHER	NFK	YM	17C-19C	18477	VINCENT	NFK	ALL	ALL
18558	GEDGE	NFK	ALL	ALL	18603	WAKEFIELD	NFK	CN	15C-18C
18531	GIBSON	NFK	ALL	ALL	18577	WEBSTER	NFK	ALL	ALL
18531	GORE	NFK	ALL	17C-18C	18532	WHITEHEAD	NFK	SE	18C-19C
18541	GOULTY	ALL	ALL	ALL	18532	WHITEHEAD	SFK	ALL	18C-19C
18603	GOWERS	NFK	CN	15C-18C	18603	WILKINS	NFK	CN	15C-18C
18477	GREEN	NFK	ALL	ALL	18237	WRIGHT	NFK	ALL	ALL
3586	HERRING	NFK	NE	ALL					
18567	HOWELL	NFK	NW	16C-19C					
18531	ISAACS	NFK	ALL	17C-19C					

Key—MN—Membership Number. CNTY—County.
Area—Artea of Research. Date—Period of Research

We wish all our members happy hunting with their genealogy. Don't forget we now have a very active Facebook presence where members have met with considerable success in tracing ancestors.

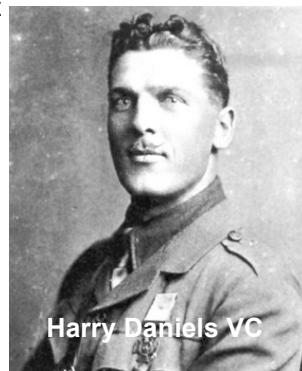
Road Name Memories

Roger Morgan recounts the story of one of Norfolk's finest heroes from World War One and takes a look at his remarkable life.

I AM fascinated by street names, particularly those that have been named after people. Whilst on a walk around Wymondham in August, I came across the name of Harry Daniels Close, a turning off Silfield Road.

Further research revealed that Wymondham born Harry DANIELS was one of the bravest soldiers in World War One, being awarded not only the Victoria Cross but also the Military Cross.

Harry was born in Market Street Wymondham in 1884. His father was William Daniels who was a baker and confectioner from Norwich and his mother was Elizabeth or Eliza Daniels née SNELLING. The couple were married in Norwich in 1866 but later moved to Wymondham to run a bakery in Market Street. The records are a little vague, but it is generally thought that Harry was the 13th of 16 children, however, as only the records of ten children can be found, it is assumed that several died in infancy.



Times were tough and the business only lasted six years before the Daniels were forced to return to Norwich. Things went from bad to worse for the young family because both William and Eliza died of cancer between 1893 and 1894. Harry was an orphan at the age of ten. The older children were able to look after themselves but the five youngest were taken into care and separated.

His two sisters, Gertrude and Lily, were sent to the Girls' Orphanage in Chapelfield, while Harry and his older brother, Robert, were taken to the Boys' Home in St Faith's Lane. A younger brother, Joseph, was sent to Downend Cottage Homes near Bristol.

Harry was educated at Thorpe Hamlet Boys School, Norwich. He was a daring, spirited young boy and it was this trait that earned him the nickname 'Spitfire'. He absconded from the school twice and, on one occasion, made it as far as Great Yarmouth, where he signed on as a cabin boy on a herring smack. He was eventually apprenticed as a carpenter and joiner but did not complete the apprenticeship.

He worked at Duke's Palace Steam Joinery Works, but such mundane work did not satisfy his longing for excitement and adventure. He learnt that his eldest brother, William, while serving in the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards, had been

The 2nd Rifle Brigade enter Neuve Chapelle



killed at Magersfontein in South Africa during the First Anglo-Boer War (1899). At the age of 18, he decided to follow his brother into the army and enlisted in the Rifle Brigade on the 31st January 1903.

He trained at Gosport and Chatham and then travelled to India with the 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade in 1905. Army life really suited Harry, and, over the next nine years, he rose rapidly through the ranks.

He was promoted to corporal in 1909, sergeant in 1910 and colour sergeant in 1914. He also

displayed a lot of sporting prowess and was an outstanding gymnast. While serving in India he won the regimental lightweight and welterweight boxing championships and was considered a star of the battalion's dramatic club.

At a Christmas dance in 1912, he met Kathleen Mary PERRY, the daughter of a Warrant Officer in the Manchester Regiment. They were married on 21st January, 1914, in Calcutta, but they did not have any children.

In August, 1914, the battalion was recalled to Britain and on September 20th it sailed for England. After passing through the Suez Canal it reached Liverpool on the 23rd October and immediately transferred to Winchester. Just 46 days after leaving India and joining with other brigades, they departed Southampton on board the SS Victoria bound for France.

Harry appears to have thrived in the trenches of Northern France and he quickly made a name for himself as a frontline soldier. He was made Compa-

Cutting the wire



ny sergeant major in D Company and he was considered to be a 'born leader' by some of his officers. His bravery was an inspiration to the rest of the men and his natural enthusiasm increased company morale. By March, 1915, the company were preparing to take part in the Battle of Neuve Chapelle.

The attack on Neuve Chapelle was the first attempt by the British Army to break the stalemate of trench warfare. The plan hatched by Field Marshall Sir John FRENCH was to carry out a sustained artillery bombardment of the German trenches before sending the infantry over no-man's land to capture the village of Neuve Chapelle and the strategically important Aubers Ridge. The task was given to General Sir Douglas HAIG'S First Army.



Harry and Kathleen Daniels

The intense bombardment started at 7.30 am. on March 10th, 1915 and lasted for 35 minutes before the order to advance was given to the infantry. It was in no-man's land that they encountered the problem of barbed wire defences which needed to be cut. By midmorning Neuve Chapelle had been taken. The Rifle Brigade followed the Royal Berkshires into the village and made contact with the Indian Corp and the Irish Rifles. Permission to advance further was denied and they were ordered to entrench.

On the second day, poor communications between Divisional HQ and the front line prevented an advance to Aubers Ridge and allowed the Germans to strengthen their defences. Rifle Brigade casualties gradually mounted throughout the day. On the third day, the Germans counter attacked twice but were beaten back and Harry's battalion was ordered to attack.

The D Company assault was impeded by uncut wire and this had to be removed. Harry was ordered to send a work detail out to cut the wires, but always wanted to lead from the front. He asked his friend Corporal Reginald 'Tom' Noble, to join him, as they had been on many dangerous night patrols in the past. The two friends, now armed with heavy steel wire cutters, shook hands before setting out.



Informal tea at the Boys. Home

They managed to cover the few yards to the wire unhurt and, lying on their backs, began to cut the lower wire. This done they raised themselves to sever the higher wire and finally to a kneeling position to reach the highest wire. It was then that Daniels was hit in the left thigh and dropped to the ground. After a few minutes he heard Noble gasp. Daniels asked, "What's up Tom?"

to which Noble replied, "*I am hit in the chest, old man*". Daniels managed to roll into a shell hole and applied rudimentary first-aid to his wound. He remained there for four hours before trying to return to the battalion's trenches after dark, when he was seen and picked up by his comrades.

The action at Neuve Chapelle ended on 13th March. The British losses in the four attacking divisions was 544 officers and 11,108 other ranks killed, wounded and missing. The 2nd Bn Rifle Brigade lost 12 officers and 365 other ranks. The German losses were estimated at approximately 12,000.

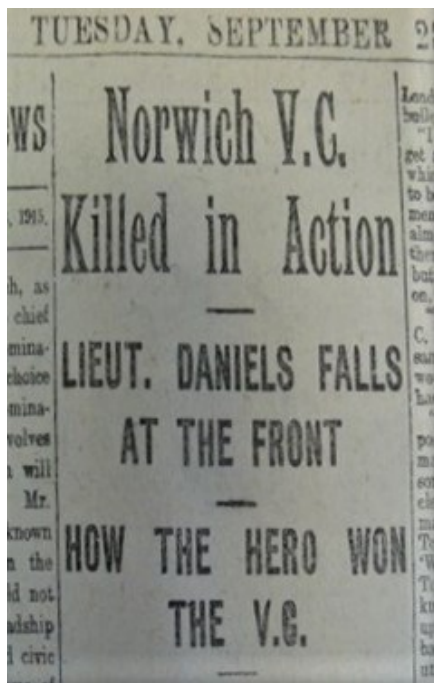
Harry Daniels was evacuated to England and treated at the Military Orthopaedic Hospital, Hammersmith. Corporal Noble was put onto an ambulance train and taken to St Omer but sadly died of his wounds on 13th March, 1915.

He was buried in Longuenesse (St Omer) Souvenir Cemetery. Both men were subsequently awarded the Victoria Cross for conspicuous bravery. Harry learned of his award from a newspaper. He received his medal from King George V at Buckingham Palace on 15th May, 1915.

Harry came back to Norwich to a hero's welcome in June, 1915. He was accompanied by his wife Kathleen, and they were greeted by cheering crowds wherever they went. He was given the nickname 'Dan VC' and was regarded as Norfolk's first great hero of the war. He was given a civic reception where he was presented with a purse of gold by the Sheriff, Frances HORNER. He visited the boys' home in St Faith's Lane, where he had spent four or five years of his childhood and there were speeches and an informal tea.

The following morning, he went back to his old school in Thorpe Hamlet and then went to London Street to see the Eastern Daily Press newspaper being prepared. In the evening, he and his wife were the 'star turn' at the city's Hippodrome Theatre, where they took to the stage to the prolonged applause of a packed house.

After his recuperation he was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant in July, 1915, and returned to France a little later. In September, the newspapers announced that he had been killed in action. The Lord Mayor of Norwich was sent a telegram to this effect, but in October Harry's family received field postcards which proved that he was very much alive and well.



His incredible bravery was evident again the following year, when on the 2nd March, 1916, at Fromelles, France, he rescued a wounded man from the edge of the enemy wire and carried him 300 yards to safety.

On another occasion, when two successive patrols failed to find a wounded corporal, he volunteered to take out a third patrol and brought in the corporal's body.

For these actions he was awarded the Military Cross. He was wounded in July, 1916, when his arm was fractured. He was promoted to Lieutenant in August and from 1917 to July 1918 he was Assistant Superintendent Physical and Bayonet Training.

After the war he was appointed Adjutant at the Aldershot HQ, Gymnastic Staff. In 1920 he represented Great Britain in the boxing at the Olympic Games held in Antwerp. He was appointed Assistant Provost Marshal, Aldershot Command from 1921 to 1925, and retired from the Army in 1930.

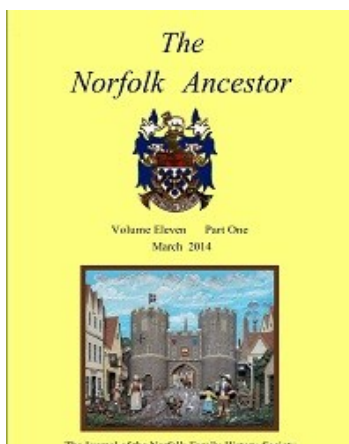
He then briefly managed hotels in Dovercourt and Chester, but was re-employed by the Army in 1932 as the Chief Recruiting Officer, North Western Division, with the rank of Captain. He ended his employment in 1942 and was given the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Harry never came back to Norwich when he finally left the Army, and spent a



Cpt Daniels

ADVERTISEMENTS in *The Norfolk Ancestor*



Single one-off advertisement

Cost: ¼ page	£12.50
½ page	£25.00
1 page	£50.00

Four consecutive adverts prepaid

Cost: ¼ page	£40.00
½ page	£80.00
1 page	£160.00

**The NFHS thanks all its advertisers
for their support**

brief time managing the Crown Hotel in Woodbridge, Suffolk. In 1943 he became the manager of the Grand Theatre and Opera House in Leeds where he was very popular with the artistes, the staff and the general public alike. His wife Kathleen became terminally ill in 1949, and sadly died later that year.

Harry was invited to attend the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, but he suffered a heart attack in London shortly before the event.

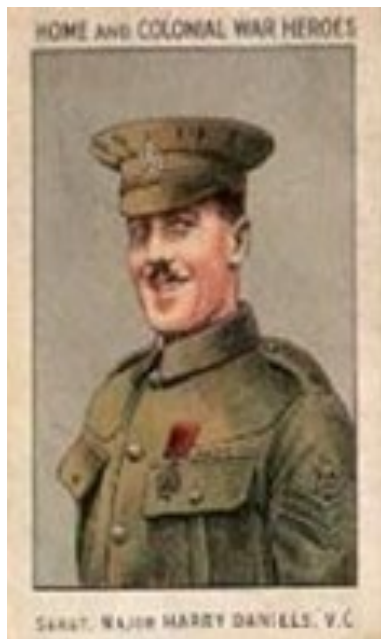
He died later that year in the Ida and Robert Arthington Hospital in Leeds on the 13th December, 1953, the date of his 69th birthday. He was the 13th child who was born on the 13th and died on the 13th. He was cremated at Lawns-



wood Crematorium and his ashes were scattered on the fields of Aldershot Cricket Club.

Harry's many medals are held by the Royal Green Jackets Museum in Winchester. His face was featured on cigarette cards of the day and in 2015 an engraved commemorative stone was unveiled alongside Wymondham's war memorial in a ceremony attended by General Lord Dannatt, the former head of the British Army.

Roger Morgan MN



Letters, Notes and Queries

This is the area given over to society members. If you have a query or a nugget of interest please send it to us along with your membership number and email details so that other members can contact you. Don't forget that you can also use our Facebook site to request and receive help. This is free of charge.

Research Luck at Aldeby

Most burial registers before 1812 state the name of the person buried, sometimes not even describing an infant as such and not giving any age for the deceased. How very different is the burial register of Aldeby, Norfolk, between 1784 and 1811? Almost every entry is full of detail. Not only is the age of the deceased given in most cases, but very often the maiden or former surname of a woman is also given. Two examples are these:

"Susanna, the wife of Benjamin Rising, Farmer, late Susanna Bexfield (aged 26 years) was interred Novr 15th 1785"

"Elizab. Partridge (D. of Hannah & William Partridge late H Freestone spinster) was interred Feby 5 1786"

This practice appears to have been introduced by Stephen Webster, clerk and minister, and was continued by his successors. As well as appearing to be a caring minister, could he have been a genealogist on the side?

Peter Cowell MN 824—cowell_peter@hotmail.com

More Beach Photography

I was pleased to see that the topic of Great Yarmouth's beach photographers has been revived on page 44 of the September, 2020, edition of the Norfolk Ancestor with the email from Stephanie Moore.

It was Lionel Jones' letter of 2013 that aroused my interest in NFHS after seeing a friend's copy of the Norfolk Ancestor. Initially I simply joined NFHS just to reply to Lionel's letter and to say that the motorcycle on Yarmouth's sands was a posing prop used by one of the many beach photographers that traded on the beach. I did not know who this particular beach photographer was, but one possibility was "Little Bill the Postcard King."

I have been researching Great Yarmouth's beach photographers for many years and I collect examples of their work. The attached is a recent on-line auction purchase of an unknown couple, by another unknown photographer, posing on a motorcycle combination near the Britannia Pier. Just look at all the people in the background, a very busy and animated scene that was taken after World War One. The motorcycle's registration plate is not visible on this photograph but I have other examples that show it was EX243. The



EX series of registration numbers were issued by the Motor Vehicle Taxation Department of Great Yarmouth Corporation.

So seven years from joining NFHS I am still enjoying reading the Norfolk Ancestor and look forward to its arrival each quarter. The September, 2020, edition has quite a Great Yarmouth flavour so I will get back to reading it. Thank you for producing such an interesting journal.

Paul Godfrey MN13998 Lowestoft

More On Chamberlins

I must congratulate and thank you for a super edition. I was especially interested in the excellent "Chamberlins" article by Roger Morgan and wonder if I can make one or two comments and ask a question.

I remember going into Chamberlins when a teenager (1950s) and thinking how "very posh".

I was interested that a Chamberlin is on the St Peter Mancroft Church war memorial. I have a Great Uncle Louis John HOWLETT also on the memorial. He died of Spanish 'flu' in 1919 whilst waiting to come home. I have visited his Commonwealth War Grave in France.

You mention George Chamberlin taking a review of the 2nd Battalion Norfolks on their return from Mesopotamia in World War One. Do you have a date for this event please? My Grandfather served in Mesopotamia with them, but unfortunately I cannot find any details of his service so it would be nice to know when

he came home. My mother was born in December, 1916, so he went out after March, presumably with the conscripts, and I have two Christmas cards 1917 and 1918 from him in Mesopotamia.

I believe the Chamberlins are buried in The Rosary Cemetery (Thorpe St. Andrew Cemetery is further out of Norwich on the same road past the Church). I have a 2 x great grandfather buried in The Rosary but no big memorial. The Society had a very interesting Friday night talk on the Rosary Cemetery by Jim and June Marriage who published an excellent small book (2005) which I believe is in the Society's library.

I'm sorry to go on, but Roger's article was really interesting bringing back my memories and also tying in with two branches of my Norwich family. Thank you.

Jean Palmer MN 1499

You can read more memories of Chamberlin's elsewhere in this edition.

History of A Toast

The Norwich Branch of the Royal Naval Association includes a number of society members. Here Gus Honeywood talks about Trafalgar and the history of toasting.

THE Battle of Trafalgar, which took place on 21st October, 1805, was a naval engagement of the Napoleonic Wars, which established British naval supremacy for more than 100 years. It was fought west of Cape Trafalgar, Spain, between Cádiz and the Strait of Gibraltar. A fleet of 33 ships (18 French and 15 Spanish) under Admiral Pierre de VILLENEUVE fought a British fleet of 27 ships under Admiral Horatio NELSON.



Horatio Nelson

The Battle of Trafalgar is usually celebrated by commissioned officers of the Royal Navy by holding a Trafalgar Night dinner in the officers' mess. Other interested parties also hold Trafalgar Night dinners in commemoration of the battle and Lord Nelson and every year the Norwich Branch hosts a Trafalgar Night Dinner on the Saturday evening closest to the 21st October, which is usually attended by between 80-100 members and their guests, with the majority of male guests wearing dinner jacket, cummerbund and miniature medals and female guests normally wearing either an evening or cocktail dress. However, in these unprecedented times, the 2020 Trafalgar Night dinner hosted by the Norwich Branch has had to be cancelled.

During the course of the dinner organised by the Norwich branch, attendees are invited to stand for grace read by the branch president before enjoying a three-course meal. Following the meal four toasts are made; the first being the 'Loyal Toast' given by the branch chairman, then a toast to 'Guests' given by the Trafalgar Night dinner organiser, then the 'Royal Naval Association' given by the guest of honour and finally the toast to the 'Immortal Memory' given by one of the branch committee. Finally, Nelson's Prayer is read out.

LORD NELSON'S PRAYER

Spoken on the morning of 21st October, 1805; the combined fleets of France and Spain then in sight:

"MAY THE GREAT GOD, whom I worship, grant to my country and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory: and may no misconduct, in any one, tarnish it: and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British Fleet. For myself individually, I commit my life to Him who made me and may His blessing light upon my endeavours for serving my Country faithfully. To Him I resign myself and the just cause which is entrusted to me to defend."

AMEN ~ AMEN ~ AMEN"

An Explanation of Toasts

The tradition of toasting, in the sense of offering a dedication to a shared round of communal drinking has ancient roots. In various cultures it was not uncommon to pour off the first bit of a drink "for the gods" or to offer a libation in the form of pouring some wine onto an altar. So, where does toast fit in?

In England, it was common to flavour wine with a bit of browned or spiced toast. In the early 1700s a poet wrote of a lady whose name would "flavour a wine like spiced toast". This seems to be the origin of associating a specific individual or institution with the ceremony of "toasting".

Unless there are foreign visitors in the wardroom, it is forbidden to propose any toast prior to the Loyal Toast to the health of the British Sovereign. If there are foreign officers present it is considered good manners to drink to the health of their head of state first.

Never clink glasses. If a glass is heard ringing it is said to herald the death of a sailor. If you stop the ring the bad omen is converted to the death of two soldiers. That is not considered to be much of an issue.

On shore non-drinkers may politely drink a toast in water. But aboard ship this is bad luck and suggests that the object of the toast will die by drowning.

The Loyal Toast: Staying seated during the loyal toast—a Naval tradition.

There are numerous stories as to why and how the naval tradition of officers having the privilege of sitting during the loyal toast to the Sovereign began. Many cannot be substantiated but remain current to this day.

1. Charles II: King Charles, on his return from exile in Holland, in May 1660, was

aboard the Naseby, re-named Royal Charles. He is reputed to have bumped his head on a low beam in the cabin when responding to a toast. He is reputed to have exclaimed: "When I get ashore, I'll see that my naval officers run no such risk, for I will allow them from henceforth to remain sitting when drinking my health.

2. Restoration: The Navy had a large influx of gentlemen volunteers who formed a considerable mess. As they were not seamen by upbringing, they would have had great difficulty keeping their feet.

3 George IV: As Prince Regent, while dining aboard a warship, is reputed to have exclaimed as the officers rose to drink the King's health, "Gentlemen, pray be seated. Your loyalty is above suspicion." The prince was at constant variance with the King and favoured the Whig Opposition, but it is a matter of speculation as to whom their loyalty was directed. The Navy generally consider that loyalty to the person of the Sovereign takes precedence over political ties.

4. William IV: While he was Duke of Clarence, he was dining on a man-of-war and is also reputed to have bumped his head on a deck beam when he stood up.

Probably more realistic are the following:

5. It was impossible to stand upright "between decks" except between the beams, so consequently only every third person would have been unable to stand erect.

6. The table was often fixed to the deck against a settee, so it would have been impossible for half the officers to stand with any degree of dignity.

All officers must stand if the National Anthem is being played during the toast.

Officers of the Royal Yacht also stand as a distinction of the honour of serving on the Yacht.

In 1966, the Queen extended the privilege to Chief and Petty Officers of the Royal Navy.

The Norwich Branch of the Royal Naval Association meet on the second Tuesday of the month at The Canary Social Club; however during these unprecedented times all branch meetings and social events have been suspended until further notice. Full membership is available for current and former Naval Service personnel including: RN, RM, WRNS, QARNNS, RNR, RMR, RFA, RNXS and Associate membership is available for families, friends and anyone who supports our Naval Service.

During these unprecedented times, the branch hosts a monthly branch meeting and is holding regular virtual meetings using Zoom software and will be raising a tot to Admiral Lord Nelson on the anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar on 21st October. For more information, please visit <http://rna-norwich.org.uk/> or Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/RNANorwich/> or Twitter: <https://twitter.com/RNANorwich>

Stories of the Johnson Family

NFHS member Les Cockrill tells us about his Great Yarmouth family.

WILLIAM John Budds JOHNSON (1845 – 1908) Mayor of Great Yarmouth from November, 1889, to November, 1890, and also a JP was the eldest brother of my great grandmother Caroline Thirza COCKRILL nee Johnson.

William J B Johnson was the eldest son of John William Johnson (1823 – 1902) and his wife Caroline Tammason nee BUDDS. Almost the whole family were part of the very large and successful firm known variously over the years as Johnson and Sons Ltd., Johnson and Co., and Yarmouth Stores.

The firm was built upon its reputation for the manufacture of seamen's clothing, in particular oilskins, and had factories in Great Yarmouth and Gorleston plus shops in many ports worldwide.

John William Johnson's grandfather, Robert Johnson, born circa 1770, is reputed to be the first of this particular Johnson family to be in Great Yarmouth (Norfolk Families – Walter Rye, 1913). He married Sarah KNOWLES/KNOLLS in St Nicholas Church, Great Yarmouth, on 6th October, 1794, and they subsequently had at least six children. Robert seems to have worked all of his life as a shoemaker in Row 21. He died in 1855.

Robert and Sarah's eldest son was John Johnson (1795 – 1878): he led quite a life. At the age of 15 he enlisted "for life" in the 28th Regiment of Foot. He was stationed at many locations and then went with his regiment to take part in the Peninsular War and then to the Battle of Waterloo. His Waterloo medal is with family in South Africa. In 1820 he was discharged because of ill health from Corfu and the discharge was confirmed on 17th May, 1821, having been admitted as a Chelsea Pensioner on 18th April, aged only 25.

By the time of the 1841 census, John and his wife Elizabeth nee SMITH and their seven children were living in Row 36 and he was a shoemaker, the same as his father. John Johnson and Elizabeth Smith married in St Nicholas Church on 13th April, 1822, and had seven children of whom John William Johnson was their first.

By 1859, aged about 64, this man who was discharged on health grounds started to receive 6d a day out-pension to continue to live at 6, Jury Street, Great Yarmouth.

However, by 1st October, he had been admitted at the Chelsea Royal Hospital as an in-pensioner. In the absence of other information, I believe that he remained an in-pensioner until 1st July, 1872, when he came back to Great Yarmouth once again as an out-pensioner. On 4th February, 1878, the old

soldier, survivor of Waterloo died at 6, Neptune Terrace, Great Yarmouth aged 81.

There is controversy concerning the start of the business of Johnson and Sons. Some catalogues and advertisements proclaim it to have been founded in 1801. Some older family sources say that it was started by John Johnson, the Waterloo veteran. Well, he was six in 1801. Additionally, no census returns for Robert or John Johnson indicate their occupation as anything other than as shoemakers, with the exception of John's time in the army and as a Chelsea Pensioner.

Unfortunately the 1841 census for John and Elizabeth Johnson attributes no occupation to their eldest son, John William Johnson, then 18 and living with his parental family. However, even in 1851 John William Johnson is a draper in Belgravia Place, St George's Road, Great Yarmouth, with his wife and three children.

It is my belief that the change in his fortunes may relate to his marriage and to his wife's family business as well as to his own family's business. John William Johnson married Caroline Tammason BUDDS on 15th July, 1844, in St Nicholas Church. Her father, William Budds, was a sail-maker in Great Yarmouth, but the Budds family were from Whitechapel, where the family business was oil and tallow factors.

I believe that their marriage brought together all the knowledge of oils and tallow, the skills of working with heavy materials such as canvas and leather, required to begin to manufacture weatherproof and waterproof clothing for seamen.

My understanding is that seamen's oilskins used to be permanently tacky or sticky and Johnson's created the first "dry" oilskins. Certainly the Johnson brand went on to become one of the world's leading manufacturers and vendors of seamen's clothing, later also moving into workingmen's clothing, such as overalls, dust-coats, seamen's and wellington socks and even, at their Gorleston factory, workingmen's shirts.

This was the family business into which the Mayor, William John Budds Johnson was born, brought up and engaged in for the whole of his life. He only served one year as Mayor and the Great Yarmouth Mercury paid him the back-handed compliment by saying that he had done well considering his young age; I believe that he was, at the time, the youngest mayor for Great Yarmouth. He did not have a long life, unlike his predecessors, but died aged 63 in 1908.

There is an excellent and well illustrated book about the family firm called: *The History of Johnson & Sons Ltd. of Great Yarmouth* by Ann Green; which was published in 2013.

Les Cockrill MN 2889

Group Reports

Correspondence about individual groups and meetings should be addressed to the following organisers:

London: Mary Fisk, Flat 3, Butterfield House, 7 Allen Road, London N16 8SB
Email: mary975@btinternet.com (home) and ms28@soas.ac.uk (work).

LONDON branch meetings have been postponed due to the pandemic until 2021 following a consultation with members who regularly attend.

I will let people know once the Society of Genealogists have released next year's dates. Hopefully, by then, we will be able to make full use of the SoG's resources and people will feel more comfortable with travelling in and around London.

Mary Fisk



More Notes and Queries

Buttolph Search

I have been trying to track the baptism for one of my BUTTOLPH ancestors, Jonathan Buttolph, who died in Wymondham in 1830 aged 41 (making his date of birth ca 1789) but I have exhausted all possible sources, ie your own NORS, all the Norfolk baptisms on Find My Past and Family Search websites. When I was a subscriber to Ancestry, it was flagged up to me that several members had him down as being the son of one William Buttolph (1728-1798) and his second wife, Elizabeth GOLDSMITH in Wramplingham. However, as Elizabeth died in 1787, Jonathan would have had to have been born prior to 1787 but, as I've said before, I can find no trace of a baptism for him around that date. Also, in William's will (of which I have a copy), although he mentions both the children from his first wife, Ann FISHER (and from whom I am descended) and the children from his second marriage to Elizabeth Goldsmith, there is no mention of Jonathan. As it is possible that I am descended from both wives, I would love to get to the bottom of this mystery. Just to add that I have mentioned this previously on the Norfolk Family History Society Facebook page and, while I had several responses, no-one was able to help me.

Anne Harvey, MN 9590 — lankyladyanne@gmail.com

Rob's Round-Up

Robert Parker brings you details of the latest family history records that may be of use in members' genealogical research.

Australia. TheGenealogist has added to its Australian records a set of new resources which can be used to find ancestors who lived in this country in the past.

Brazil. FamilySearch adds 300k Brazilian civil registrations.

Cambridgeshire. FamilySearch adds Cambridge Parish Registers (1538-1983).

Canada. Over 29k emigrants who arrived in Ontario (1865-1883) have been indexed online at the Ontario Archives site: <http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/index.aspx>.

Derbyshire. FindMyPast adds 60K records to its deaths and burials collection.

Devon and Cornwall. FamilySearch adds marriages (1660-1912).

Durham. FindMyPast releases 80,000 records for the Home Guard (1939-1945).

England. FindMyPast adds England Roman Catholic Parish Baptisms for the Archdiocese of Southwark (213k), Roman Catholic Parish Congregational Records (126k) for Southwark and Roman Catholic Parish Marriages (52k) from the Archdiocese of Southwark.

England. FindMyPast adds 106,000 records to its BillionGraves Cemetery index.

Lockdown Free Content

All content on British history online <https://www.british-history.ac.uk> is currently free. Read more at: shorturl.at/IJS25.

Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives is closed temporarily due to the Coronavirus crisis, but the team are still working to answer local history enquiries, put more digital content from our collections online, and to improve their catalogue and collections management. They are only contactable via email:

localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk.

You can also explore hours of rare archive films and videos of Tower Hamlets on their new YouTube channel: <https://bit.ly/2KJmAux>.

Over 400,000 pages from newspapers published in the Isle of Man 1792-1960 were made free to view in April, as a temporary measure. Now Manx National Heritage has announced that they are going to be free permanently

England. FamilySearch adds 200k English church records.

England and Wales. TheGenealogist has expanded its growing International Headstone Collection with new additions from 71 new cemeteries in English and Welsh counties: Buckinghamshire, Cheshire, Conwy, Denbighshire, Devon, Dorset, Essex, Flintshire, Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Lancashire, Merionethshire, Merseyside, Oxfordshire, Somerset, Warwickshire, West Midlands, Wiltshire and Worcestershire.

Essex. FamilySearch adds non-conformist church records (1613-1971).

Gloucestershire. FamilySearch adds non-conformist church records (1642-1996).

Hampshire. FindMyPast adds 21k to its Hampshire baptisms records, 15k to its Hampshire marriage records and 16k to its burial records.

India. Memorials at Christ Church Cnl, Kamptee are now part of the FIBIS Cemeteries Project.

Ireland. 137k Dublin related records added to FamilySearch.

JewishGen. Adds a number of holocaust records to its database:

- Hungarian Women Transport list from Auschwitz to Buchenwald, 14 October 1944.
- Karlsruhe, Germany Survivors and Polish Jewish Survivors.
- Lubeck, Riga Transport Survivors.
- Holocaust Survivors located in Venice (30th June 1945).
- Sered, Slovakia Deportations (1944).
- Stutthof Survivors.
- Bardejov, Slovakia Deportees.
- Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland (RVD) card file.
- Selected lists from the Boston Jewish advocate.
- Klooga, Estonia forced labour camp prisoners (July 1944).

London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) re-opened to visitors on the 7th September.

Maps. TheGenealogist has added extra tithe maps to map Explorer™; Berkshire, Cambridgeshire, Leicestershire and Oxfordshire.

Middlesex. FamilySearch adds parish registers (1539-1988).

Montgomeryshire. FindMyPast adds over 17k Monumental Inscriptions.

Newspapers. FindMyPast releases:

- Middleton Albion (1893-1895)

- Newmarket Journal (1897 -1912)
- Patriot; or, Political, Moral, and Philosophical Repository Consisting of Original Pieces (1792-1793)
- Bootle Times (1887)
- Ashbourne Telegraph (1926)
- Shetland News (1885-1919)
- Kirkcaldy Times (1879-1892)
- Northman and Northern Counties Advertiser (1881-1884)
- Helensburgh News (1877-1892)
- Kelso Mail (1869-1885)
- Bolton Free Press (1835-1846)
- Star of Gwent (1853-1903)
- Waterford News Letter (1838-1878)
- Pontypridd Observer (1897-1950)
- Carmarthen Journal (1821-1911)
- Manchester Daily Examiner & Times (1856-1894)
- Port Talbot Guardian (1927-1937)
- Radnor Express (1898-1910)
- Strabane Weekly News (1912)
- Manchester Guardian (1821-1828)
- Gloucester Mercury (1871-1884)
- London Gazette (1665-2018)
- Edinburgh Gazette (1797-2018)
- Belfast Gazette (1922-2018)
- Dublin Gazette (1750-1800)
- Sporting Chronicle (1889-1916)
- North Wales Weekly News (1956-1980)
- Rochdale Times (1872-1923)

Parish Chest. The Family History Federation formally launched this important resource at its AGM on 31st May.

Police. The Metropolitan Women Police Association www.metwpa.org.uk was formed in 1976. The METWPA has a database of the women who joined (1919 - 1992).

Post Office. Nearly 13,000 Post Office employees lost their lives fighting in the

two World Wars, and the GPO War Heroes site lists them all: <https://gpowarheroes.org.uk/>

Public Sector. 1.2 million+ records from The UK National Archives have been added to FindMyPast (1700s – 1973).

Scotland. Findmypast adds 63k new burial transcripts from parishes of Restalrig Churchyard and Edinburgh St Cuthberts.

Scotland. FindMyPast has added Banffshire and Moray Life Events (Scotland, Banffshire and Moray births and baptisms, Banffshire and Moray marriages, Banffshire and Moray deaths and burials.

Scotland. FindMyPast adds Burgess and Guild Brethren Index, 60K in additions, including exclusive portrait photos.

Scotland. FindMyPast adds 69,000 records to it - Roman Catholic Parish Baptisms covering 11 parishes across Scotland, 55K Roman Catholic Parish Congregational records and 27,000 Roman Catholic Marriages across 11 parishes.

School. FindMyPast adds National School Admission Registers and Log-Books (1870-1914) for Stone, The Brent School (1894-1920) and St Mary Cray School (1867-1920). Provided by our partners at North West Kent Family History Society

Surrey. FindMyPast adds 1.3 million new records to its registers; Surrey baptism, marriage and burials

UK Census. The Census (England) Regulations 2020, Census (Wales) Regulations 2020 (and Rheoliadau'r Cyfrifiad (Cymru) 2020), Census (Scotland) Order 2020 and the Census Order (Northern Ireland) 2020 are now in force; census day is set as 21st March 2021 across the UK.

USA. FamilySearch adds indexed obituaries.

USA. FindMyPast adds 16 million+ United States Marriages.

Wales. FindMyPast make their Wales Probate Records (1544-1858) fully searchable.

Wales. FindMyPast adds Caernarvonshire Parish Registers (Baptism, Marriage and burial) from Llanbeblig parish.

Wales. FindMyPast adds Denbighshire Burials (37k) from Wrexham Cemetery,

Warwickshire. FindMyPast adds 140k to its burials collection.

Warwickshire. FindMyPast adds an unusual collection of Coventry pawnbroker tickets (1915-1923).

War Office Registers. FamilySearch has released 269k new records in this collection (1772-1935) covering England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

Worcestershire. TheGenealogist has added over 85k individuals to their Parish Records in association with Malvern Family History Society.

World. FamilySearch adds 16 million+ new indexed family history records from all over the world; Argentina to the USA. New record sets include:

- England, Yorkshire Marriage Bonds and Allegations, 1613-1887
- England, Northumberland Non-Conformist Church Records, 1613-1920
- England, Middlesex Parish Registers, 1539-1988
- England, Lancashire Non-Conformist Church Records, 1647-1996
- England, Cumbria Parish Registers, 1538-1990
- England, Derbyshire, Church of England Parish Registers, 1537-1918
- England, Gloucestershire Non-Conformist Church Records, 1642-1996
- England, Herefordshire Bishop's Transcripts, 1583-1898
- England, Isle of Wight Parish Registers, 1538-1983
- Scotland Church Records and Kirk Session Records, 1658-1919
- Wales, Marriage Bonds, 1650-1900

World. FamilySearch expanded its free online archives with almost 57.2 million new indexed family history records from all over the world:

- Australia. South Australia Prison Records, 1838-1912
- Canada. Nova Scotia Church Records, 1720-2001
- England. National Index of Wills and Administrations, 1858-1957
- England. Death Records, 1998-2015
- England. Cumbria Parish Registers, 1538-1990
- England. Essex Non-Conformist Church Records, 1613-1971

World. MyHeritage have added 8 million+ historical records from collections from the U.K., Spain, and New Zealand:

- UK World War I Medal Index
- Vitoria Diocese in Spain (Baptism, Marriage, and Death Index)
- New Zealand; a World War I Service Index and an Index of Early Settlers

World. FamilySearch expanded its free online archives in June of 2020 with over 25 million new indexed family history records from all over the world.

World War One. FindMyPast adds to its British Armed Forces, First World War Soldiers' Medical Records collection with over 2,000 records.

World War Two. TheGenealogist has released a further 1.2 million records. The 2nd batch of RAF operations record books is fully searchable.

World War Two. FindMyPast introduces Faces of the Fallen, 1939-1945; over 1,000 photographs of those who lost their lives during the conflict.

Yorkshire. Findmypast adds 7k records for memorial transcriptions.

Yorkshire. FamilySearch adds marriage bonds and allegations (1613-1887).

Recommended twitter account to follow Filae.com—the number one website for French records

@filaedotcom. Filae is the world's largest resource for records: civil and parish records, census, militaria #genealogy #familyhistory #frenchroots #frenchtech #ancestry.

Rob's Round Up is bought to you by Robert Parker,

<https://myfamilygenealogy.co.uk>.

New record sets are identified from the world wide web and Social Media including Facebook and Twitter, Family Tree Magazine, FindMyPast, Ancestry, FamilySearch and others.

VOLUNTEERS

The Norfolk Family History Society relies on the work of an army of volunteers and we are always looking for more.

If you can spare anything from a couple of hours a week, or even a month, to come into Kirby Hall on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday or require further information, please email volunteers@nfhs.co.uk, please include your membership number.

Any help at any time will be very welcome.

NB. It may be possible that some tasks could be undertaken at home. Any help you could offer would be greatly appreciated.

DIANA SPELMAN BA Norfolk Research Specialist (since 1982)

Medieval to Modern
Family & Local History
Latin translation
Document transcription
Manorial records
Photography



74 Park Lane
NORWICH NR2 3EF
Tel: 01603 664186
Email: dianaspelman@waitrose.com

A Norfolk Enigma

Life member Edmund Perry recounts the strange story of Norfolk enigma Reginald Eric Pleasants (17th May 1913 – July 1998).

DURING a recent conversation with neighbours, reference was made to Eric PLEASANTS who used to live in an old lodge house a mile away from me along the Wymondham Road towards Hethel. They had known him in his latter years as a real character, full of energy despite suffering a massive stroke in 1985 from which he fought back tenaciously, even walking the London Marathon on crutches, to raise money for the Norwich and District Ex-Boxers' Association in 1995. I was given two newspaper cuttings from the Eastern Daily Press newspaper: one by Colin Chinery, April 4th, 1994, and another from January 9th, 1995, about his circumstances then but they didn't delve too much into his past. Neither of the two most well-known books about his life get to grips with the real facts behind his wartime activities: "*I Killed to Live – The Story of Eric Pleasants as told to Eddie Chapman*," 1957; and "*Hitler's Bastard: Through Hell and Back in Nazi Germany and Stalin's Russia*," unpublished memoir written by Eric Pleasants," 1981, later edited by Ian Sayer and Douglas Botting and published in 2003 and again in 2012. I must pay tribute to Dr Gilly Carr whose article at www.frankfallaarchives, critically examines the facts and claims made in these books. Much of this information is taken from the internet and Wikipedia.



Eric was born at Saxlingham, 17th May, 1913, the son of a gamekeeper. He had unusual strength and became interested in physical fitness, body building and sport. Leaving school at Norwich, aged 14, he worked as a trainee electrician and forester but also attended local fairgrounds making five shillings a time accepting challenges from boxers in the ring. He fought professionally at featherweight for three years, twice taking on legendary Norwich boxer, Ginger Sadd, before his doctor diagnosed double-vision causing him to switch to wrestling using the name 'Panther Pleasants'. He also appeared as a Circus strongman. The Bowes-Lyon family employed Eric as a bodyguard and it is claimed he often looked after the little Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret. The family arranged for him to attend Loughborough College, where he obtained a diploma in physical education and physiotherapy.

Like a number of British people in the mid-1930s, Eric was attracted to Fascist ideology and the apparent success of Mussolini in Italy and the rise of Hitler in

Germany. He joined the Norwich branch of the British Union of Fascists, formed in 1932 by Oswald Mosley. At the impressionable age of 23 he was drawn to the black uniform and the new movement's dynamic image. Membership gave a sense of belonging and making friends often with the opposite sex, especially as he became a bouncer at meetings and a bodyguard to local and visiting Black-shirt speakers, as well as a physical trainer to new recruits. Eric fully immersed himself politically by reading a wide selection of pamphlets which became increasingly radical. In 1936, the BUF renamed itself the British Union of Fascists and National Socialists, embracing Nazi-style anti-semitism which led to increasing political opposition and anti-fascist violence. That year, Eric claimed to have attended the Berlin Olympics as a reserve for the British team, and was mightily impressed by the staging of the event. The British Union was finally banned by the British government in 1940 amid suspicion that its remaining supporters might form a pro-Nazi 'fifth column'. A number of prominent members were arrested and interned under Defence Regulation 18B. Luckily for Eric he had left the organisation in the Autumn of 1939.

Supposedly Eric worked as a Redcoat sports instructor at the Butlins Holiday Camp, Dovecoat Bay but, with war looming, he decided that he wanted no part of it and became a conscientious objector, joining the Peace Pledge Union (PPU). He went to Jersey with his newly married wife to take up potato picking. A version of his story has him joining the Merchant Navy and serving on a freighter bringing potatoes from Jersey to Southampton. When the Germans invaded the Channel Islands in July, 1940, Eric was trapped on Jersey. Records show that Eric was thrown in prison for two weeks for threatening the PPU representative on the island followed by further short stays in jail for 'political offences' and theft during 1941. In prison he teamed up with a safe-breaker, Eddie CHAPMAN (later known as the British double agent *Zigzag*) and spent his spare time stealing from empty properties and joining in black market trading. His marriage broke up when his wife left him to become housekeeper to a German by whom she conceived a child. She would later testify against Eric at his German military trial. According to Dr Carr, the court charge sheets surviving in Jersey Archives show that, on 24th January 1942, both Eric and John Leister were convicted of 'infracton of the registration order' because neither had papers to prove their identity. They served four days in prison added to an earlier four-week sentence for receiving stolen goods. In his memoirs and the 1957 book, Eric claimed he was arrested by the Germans for stealing petrol to escape in a motor boat to England (a more honourable offence) and sentenced to two years hard labour. However, archival evidence does not back up his version of events: on 31st July, 1942, both men were given another sentence of six months, again for receiving and concealing stolen articles. The occupying German authorities sent them to Fort d'Hauteville prison near Dijon, France. Interestingly, his German Occupation Registration Card says he was born 17th May, 1910, and yet his marriage certificate, among his papers in the Imperial War Museum, states he was born 17th May, 1911. This double deception may have been an attempt to hide his true identity but also points to deliberate fabrication which makes it difficult to trust everything contained in his memoirs.

Eric was due to be released 3rd February, 1943, but, on 21st January, 1943, he was transferred to the German work bureau via Dijon Prison. Eric's memoirs contain contradictory stories about this time, including breaking out of prison after six months; working on the Atlantic wall, escaping, being caught by the Germans in the Pas de Calais area and put in St Malo prison for three months. A further story has him escaping from Dijon, reaching Paris, taken in by a Jewish family, re-captured and then held at St Malo. None of this adds up as the dates do not match and Dr Carr says there is no record of any sojourn in St Malo Prison. What we do know is that the list of deportations in Jersey Archives show both Eric and John were deported on 25th February, 1943, from 17 Garden Lane in St Helier and not from the prison. They were considered 'undesirables' and taken to Kreuzberg Internment Camp (not Kreuzberg Prison, where Eric claimed they were interned for eight months). Eric made other claims of trying to escape and being so disruptive to camp life that he was transferred to the prisoner of war camp at Marlag and Milag north-east of Bremen.

The truth is probably more prosaic. Eric had become a petty criminal, intent on saving his own skin at all costs, safe in prison rather than fighting at the front. He admitted as much in the EDP articles: *'I was trying to avoid the war. Not escape it but to avoid being forced into active combat'*. Yet he had not lost his Fascist sympathies. At Marlag the prisoners were given a lecture by a propaganda agent in May, 1944, about the fight against international communism. Eric volunteered to become an SS-Shutze in the British Free Corps and was sent to the HQ of the International SS Brigade at Hildersheim for training. The BFC (Britisches Freikorps) was a unit of the Waffen SS during World War Two, consisting of British and Dominion prisoners of war who had been recruited by the Nazis. It was originally known as the Legion of St. George, but there were never enough recruits to incorporate the unit into the 5th SS Panzer Division *Wiking* and send it into action, so BFC members occupied themselves by drinking and womanising, taking German lessons from the fanatics Thomas COOPER and Francis MacLARDY, with PT sessions run by Eric.

After the war he described joining the BFC as a *'foolish decision'* and *'a matter of bad judgement'*. He didn't have *'the slightest intention of fighting for them on the Russian front or elsewhere. We were determined to survive; we were opportunists'*; *'The fact that I joined Hitler's army has no political or moral significance for me. In a war forced upon me I was on nobody's 'side' except my own, neither traitor nor partisan, and I never fought for anybody except myself ... I most certainly was, and still am, anti-war and anti-establishment.'*

However, in his memoirs Eric claimed he was invited to join the German Broadcasting Service in Berlin sending propaganda news to Allied and neutral countries; to have met William Joyce ('Lord Haw-Haw') and had an affair with Joyce's wife Eileen; and to have been friendly with John Amery the founder of the BFC. Both Joyce and Amery were hanged for treason at the end of the war.

Adopting his mother's maiden name, Eric became a German, Erich DORAN. Both he and John Leister became military police in the Corps which was sent to the SS Wildemann Kaserne in Dresden for military training to fight on the Rus-

sian front. However, Erich refused to go. He had fallen-out with Thomas Cooper and demanded to be returned to a POW camp. Other BFC members supported him. This led to them being stripped of their uniforms and summarily dispatched to an SS punishment camp at Bandekow near Schwerin where they were forced to work in a road-making gang guarded by East European SS auxiliaries. After three months they were sent to Dresden to be reunited with the rest of the BFC with Erich responsible for Physical Training. He was selected to box for the SS pioneers against the SS Police in Prague in late 1944, winning his bout. The BFC's commanding officer was SS Obersturmführer Dr Walther KUHILICH. Erich pursued a relationship with Kuhlich's young secretary, Annaliese NIETSCHNER with whom he later conducted a bigamous marriage.

On the evenings of February 14th and 15th, 1945, Erich, Annaliese and her parents, were in their house in the hills at Wilmsdorf, 20 miles from Dresden, watching the destruction of the city by British and American bombers. Amidst the chaos and death, the British Free Corps were sent out onto the streets, digging for survivors and bodies in the rubble. As he travelled through the wreckage, Eric was dumbfounded and later said: '*I couldn't understand how one human being could inflict this on another*' (up to 500,000 people are estimated to have died in Dresden). After this the BFC were transferred to Berlin where they were meant to fight the Russians. To evade action, Erich managed to get himself attached to the embryonic 'Peace Camp', set up by former British Royal Flying Corps Officer turned Major in the SS, Vivian STRANDERS. Eric spent his time giving exhibition bouts in German officers' messes against the German

Situated in the centre of Norwich, we have a large selection of new, second-hand and antiquarian books on Norfolk, Suffolk and the Broads.

*We always seek
to purchase
small and large
libraries in any
subject*



THE CITY BOOKSHOP

10 Davey Place, Norwich, NR2 1PQ

TEL: (01603) 626113

heavyweight Max Schmeling. When the Third Reich collapsed and the Russians stormed Berlin, Erich and Annaliese took refuge in the city's sewers. While trying to escape into the countryside, he claimed to have killed with his bare hands two Russian soldiers who attempted to arrest him and rape his wife.

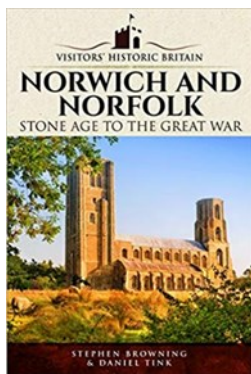
Erich and Annaliese returned to Dresden and then moved into the American zone, where the couple were put in a displaced persons' camp in Halle. Erich earned money by trading Nazi militaria with American soldiers and people-smuggling between the Russian and American zones, before deciding to become a strongman in a Russian theatre and then in a German circus. In 1948, he was arrested by the Russians over his alleged 'German identity' and charged with espionage. When they realised he was British he was sentenced to 25 years in a Gulag camp at Vorkuta, Siberia. The first two years were spent in solitary confinement in Höhenschauenhausen in Berlin, followed by six months in Lichtenberg Prison, and then Sachsenhausen concentration camp. He was then sent, via Lubyanka prison in Moscow, to the labour camp, where he worked in a coal mine. Evidently Eric was picked on as the only Englishman there. This resulted in many fights until he killed a fellow prisoner who tried to throw him out of the camp kitchen. The 1994 EDP article quotes Eric. *'I turned round and thumped him good and hard. He fell back, hit his head hard on the ice and died'*. After that he was treated with more respect, but another five years were added to his sentence. He claimed to have survived by becoming involved with the local Russian mafia, the Blatnoys, which upheld its rackets with terror and harsh discipline.

The stories read like a wartime adventure book, worthy of a film, but whether one can believe everything is another matter. Eric was released in a British-Soviet exchange but never saw or heard from Annaliese again. Strangely enough, Eric didn't stand trial like other members of the BFC, even though he could be considered a renegade if not collaborator, and very close to being a traitor to the British war effort. The British authorities brought no charges, deciding that he had served his time and suffered enough. He returned to the UK landing at Harwich in July, 1954 (see Video on internet) and went first to his Mother's at Rackheath in Norfolk, then to Saxlingham.

His wartime story appeared in various national newspapers in 1956. He qualified in physiotherapy and massage and taught martial arts. In 1965 he married Eileen HARDINGHAM and spent the last 20 years at the lodge near East Carleton where he had a forge making iron gates and railings plus wood carvings for the locals. He painted pictures, kept chickens and goats and drove around on a two-stroke Russian motorbike. In 1984, aged 71, he had a massive stroke which paralysed him down one side confining him to a wheelchair. Within six months he taught himself to stand, and speech therapy enabled him to talk but he still had to use an electric wheelchair and walking frame. His story was told on the BBC 2 tv programme *"Man of Iron"* (26th August 1987). Of his life he said: *'I have no apology and no regrets'*. Eric died in July 1998 aged 87.

Edmund Perry MN

Ancestor Bookshelf

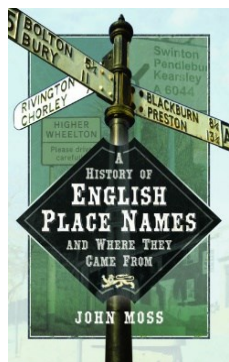


Norwich and Norfolk: Stone Age to the Great War. Pen and Sword Books. Paperback 269pp £11.99.

A history book and travelogue designed to appeal to those who want to get out and about exploring – “a toolkit to unlock the secrets, history, sites and stories”. The section on Norwich includes the castle, cathedral and churches, plus famous places and people. Around the Coast covers King’s Lynn to Great Yarmouth and Central Norfolk deals with the Broads, Peddars Way, numerous towns and villages. Each section outlines major walks, highlighting places of interest, personalities, features, legends and stories plus contact details for

information about opening times, addresses, phone numbers, emails and websites. It is well illustrated with 120 black and white photos, maps and illustrations. There is a good bibliography and Index. A well-produced, interesting and useful addition to local history.

Edmund Perry



A History of English Place Names and Where They Came From by John Moss. Hardback, Pen and Sword History; pp 408. Illustrations: 9 black and white maps. £25.

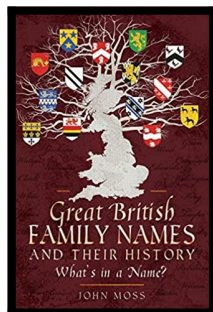
The origin of the names of many English towns, hamlets and villages date back as far as the Saxon times but a few are even earlier, being Romano-British. Some relate to the Danes and the Vikings and a number of settlements were established and named by the Normans following the Conquest. Most began as simple descriptions of the location; some identified its founder, marked territorial limits, or gave tribal people a sense of their place in the grand

scheme of things. Whatever their derivation, place names are inextricably bound up in our history and they tell us a great deal about where we live – no more so than in East Anglia, where numerous surnames are derived from their village origin. The author admits there are far too many places in all for him to cover, but he does make a good fist of explaining why the more significant are so titled and gives handy background information regarding who came over, when and what place-names they chose. With this knowledge,

Ancestor Bookshelf

the reader can work out pretty much what any place name might have meant. A very useful reference book for local and family historians.

Edmund Perry MN 3181



Great British Family Names and their History by John Moss. Pen and Sword Books. Paperback 314pp. £12.99.

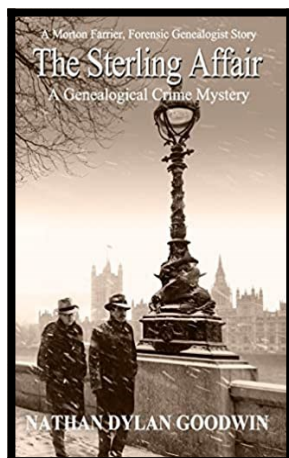
In many ways a companion volume to the English place name book reviewed by Edmund Perry. Obviously due to limited space this book can only focus on a relatively small number of names. In reality it is a snapshot of a few hundred prominent family names and their place in history

The book is split into geographical areas and could act as a taster for people wanting to research further into a specific area. Norfolk names are included in the East Anglia section

and names featured include: the Bigod Family, the De Walcott Family, the Howard Family, the Lestrange Family and the Townshend Family,

I'm sure keen historians would have liked a book specifically on Norfolk names but this is a good way to dip into different parts of the country to learn a little about customs, traditions and, of course, family history.

Peter Steward



Norfolk Family History Society member Nathan Dylan Goodwin has just brought out his eighth book in the forensic genealogist story and this once again features Morton Farrier in another first class mystery.

This involved mystery with plenty of twists and turns opens with an unannounced stranger knocking on Farrier's door.

Farrier is transported back to the 1950s as he tries to unravel the most complicated case of his career as a forensic genealogist.

For more information on Nathan go to the following website: www.nathandylangoodwin.com

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES

Articles for future editions are always welcome . Please note, the Editor cannot guarantee the issue in which your article will appear. Every effort will be made to reproduce articles as presented, but the Editor reserves the right to edit as necessary. The Editor will assume that all necessary authorisation for attachments, photographs, etc., has been obtained and the Norfolk Family History Society will not be held liable in the case of a subsequent query.

Articles should preferably be typed. **Please keep articles to 3 pages maximum - 1200 words approx.** Electronic versions are most helpful.

All material from **regular contributors** for inclusion in the **March 2021** issue should be sent to the Editor at Kirby Hall or e-mailed to him **NO LATER** than **12th January**. Our thanks in advance to all those who submit material for publication.

Notes and Queries

We welcome Notes and Queries, offers of help and items of information and general interest. Entries as brief as possible please, preferably less than 150 words. **Membership number and email address should be included.**

Non-members should include a cheque for £6 (drawn on a UK Clearing Bank) made payable to 'The Norfolk Family History Society', for each item intended for publication. Address correspondence to:-

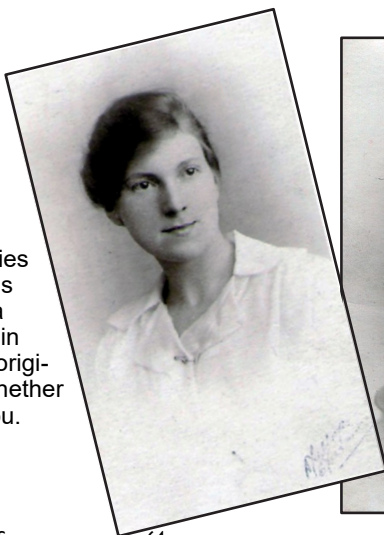
The Editor, c/o Kirby Hall, 70 St. Giles Street, Norwich, NR2 1LS.

or by email to:

ancestor@nfhs.co.uk

Photographs

Photographs are always welcome, they liven up the layout. Preferably send in your photographs by email as a **JPEG** attachment (**Please scan at 300dpi if possible**). Photocopies do not always reproduce well as they need to be scanned into a computer and they lose clarity in the process. If you send in an original photograph please state whether you wish it to be returned to you.



Norfolk Family History Society

Let Us Know What You Think



WHAT articles do you enjoy reading in the Norfolk Ancestor and what would you like to see more of? We would like to hear from you.

With your help we can make the magazine more vibrant. We would welcome any comments (good or bad). They can be sent to the editor via e-mail at the contact address on page 62 of this edition or can be sent to him at Kirby Hall.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Don't forget that there's lots more information on our official web site.

<http://www.norfolkfhs.org.uk>

Full Colour Experience

IF you want to see the Norfolk Ancestor at its best, just visit our web site where members can view this publication and many of its photographs in full colour mode.

NORFOLK FAMILY SEARCH

*Experienced Professional Genealogist
Offers a range of Research and Photographic Services
Brick Wall Specialists*

Website: www.norfolkfamilysearch.co.uk

Email: enquiries@norfolkfamilysearch.co.uk

Or write to: Norfolk Family Search
14 Silver Street, Norwich, Norfolk, NR3 4TT, United Kingdom

NFHS contacts and how to contact them

Please state the nature of your enquiry in the email subject box and quote your **Membership Number**

Title	Responsibilities	Name	email address
Ancestor Editor	Editor	Peter Steward	ancestor@nfhs.co.uk
Bookstall	Bookstall	Bookstall	bookstall@nfhs.co.uk
Chairman	Chairman	Vacant	chair@nfhs.co.uk
Copy Request	Family trees and wills copies	Judith Parks	copyrequest@nfhs.co.uk
Family Trees	Donations of family trees, pedigrees and BMD certificates	Di Vanderson	familytrees@nfhs.co.uk
Library	Library Content	Ellen Carr	librarian@nfhs.co.uk
Look-ups	Look up queries	Paul White	lookups@nfhs.co.uk
Maintenance and IT	Kirby Hall Maintenance & IT	Phil Whiscombe	khmaintenance@nfhs.co.uk
Members' Interests	Members' Interests	Peter Spurgeon	membersinterests@nfhs.co.uk
Membership Secretary	Membership	Carole Taylor	membership@nfhs.co.uk
Monumental Inscriptions	MI Co-ordinator	Mary Mitchell	minscriptions@nfhs.co.uk
Secretary	Company Secretary	Phil Whiscombe	secretary@nfhs.co.uk
Transcript Organiser	Transcript allocation and co-ordination	Steve Tarttelin	transcripts@nfhs.co.uk
Treasurer	Treasurer	Vacant	treasurer@nfhs.co.uk
Village Boxes	Village Boxes	Judith Kilbourn	villageboxes@nfhs.co.uk
Volunteers	Kirby Hall Volunteers Co-ordinator	Carol Reeve	volunteers@nfhs.co.uk
Webmaster	Web site	Webmaster	webmaster@nfhs.co.uk
Wills	Donations and Indexing of Wills	Denagh Hacon	wills@nfhs.co.uk

**Or by post to the appropriate person at
Kirby Hall, 70 St. Giles Street, Norwich, NR2 1LS**

Eaton Park History

AT the start of the 19th century, the Norwich Corporation (now known as City Council) began to buy up land around the city with a view to developing parks for recreation. Eaton Park was one of several that received government funding after the First World War, and 80 acres of fields and market gardens were bought for £900.



**Cpt Sandys-
Winsch**

A key figure in the development of Norwich's parks was Captain Arnold Edward SANDYS-WINSCH. In World War One, he served with the Royal Field Artillery, and was then attached to the Air Service as a pilot. In 1919 he became Parks Superintendent in Norwich, a post he held for 34 years. Before he started, Norwich had very few open spaces but after he retired there were about 600 acres of parkland. He also created model allotments and organised the planting of 20,000 trees in the parks and streets.



After demobilisation in 1919, there were many unemployed men in the country and it was proposed to put this potential workforce to good use. In Norwich in 1921 there were 7,000 unemployed people with another 1,040 on short time. A total of 1,500 married men and 1,200 single men were registered for relief work.

In 1906, the council bought four large grazing fields between Eaton Hall and Earham Hall from the Church Commissioners. The rough area to the south-west of the city was at one time the site of the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Show and during World War One it served as a practice ground for trench warfare. Between 1924 and 1928 around 103 men were used to build the park.



Bridge building



Bridge in 2020



Building the pavillions

The field nearest Bluebell Road was left as rough grass for the travelling circuses and is now a mini golf course. Other features included tennis courts, cricket squares, bowling greens, a model boating pond, a lily pond, a formal rose garden and quadrant pavilions surrounding a domed bandstand. The park was opened in 1928 by Edward, Prince of Wales. In World War Two plans were made to use trenches in the park as air raid shelters and the pavilions as mortuaries. Sandys-Winsch created similar formal areas at Heigham Park, Waterloo Park and Wensum Park. You can read more about its history at friendsofeatonpark.co.uk.



Domed bandstand

Roger Morgan MN 17267

Then and Now



The top picture was taken in August 1934 by renowned Norfolk photographer, George Plunkett. It shows the lily pond and pavilion at Eaton Park in Norwich. The bottom picture shows a similar scene taken in August 2020. Little has changed, but to find out about the history of Eaton Park look inside the cover.

