



WALBERSWICK LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

NEWSLETTER NO. 13

February, 1998.

There were two meetings in the Autumn. In September Ivan Sparkes guided a group of members on a most interesting town trail through the central parts of Halesworth that go back a long way in history. He was a mine of information and showed us familiar buildings (the Wine Bar: the Adshop etc.) parts of which date back to the 14th Century. Our walk took in no less than four small prisons which had been needed in one century or another for Halesworth's wrongdoers. In December we heard an entertaining and informative talk by John Bridges on 'Early Motoring in Suffolk'. He spoke of the time when there were independent firms of car manufacturers to be found in places such as Leiston, Woodbridge and Lowestoft, and of prominent early enthusiasts like Mr. Egerton whose motor engineering companies continue today. (Walberswick can claim its own pioneer. Mr. Fred Bennet, a Lancashire engineer, lived at one time in retirement in Millfield. He imported the first Cadillac car in 1903 - which was still functioning in 1955 after 200,000 miles. Mr. Bennet was reputed, as no doubt were many others, to be the inventor of the self starter.) After John Bridges' talk we concluded the evening with another very enjoyable Christmas Celebration.

In this issue we are greatly indebted to two members of the Local History Group who have contributed pieces of original research. Maurice Godbold came across the will of John Fearnmes when he was looking into family history matters in the Record Office at Kew. He has very kindly deciphered the will for the Newsletter but a full copy lies in our archives. The information about the Wells of Walberswick in the article by Tony Rees has never been assembled before and gives an important insight into the past of the village. His research is accompanied by maps and photographs which we hope to display at a future meeting.

David Davison, Editor.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1998 - A reminder that subscriptions were due on the 1st January. If yours is still outstanding Angela MacKay will be collecting at the Spring Lecture or would be glad to receive the money at Pembroke Cottage, The Street. The subscription remains at £3.00 per adult and £1.00 for Junior Members.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

TUESDAY 24TH MARCH, 1998. PIONEERS OF CHANGE: LANDOWNERS & THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION - A talk by David Alderton at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall.

SATURDAY 28TH MARCH, 1998. - Societies' Day at Mendlesham.

TUESDAY 28TH APRIL, 1998. Annual General Meeting at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall Annexe.

The Will of John Fearmes of Walberswick 1580

The will of John Fearmes, shows that he was a fisherman, probably mainly for mackerel, the owner of two houses, a boat and land in Walberswick and Southfield. He and his wife, Lucy, had three sons in order of descending age, Henry, Richard and Simon and a daughter Judith. As was usual at the time, John's will was made when he thought he was going to die and the fact that his wife was pregnant at the time suggests he died young or relatively young.

The will begins with the normal declarations of the time. Firstly, in large letters "In the name of god amen", then a declaration that the testator was "whole in mynd and of good and perfecte remembrance". It was dated according to the then length of the reign of Queen Elizabeth who was styled as Queen of England, France and Ireland. John bequeathed his "soule to allmightie god and my body to be buried in the church or churchyard of Walberswick". Interestingly, Walberswick was referred to as a "towne"

More careful provision was made for his wife than was often the case at the time, conditions were included to ensure she paid off her debts and for his eldest son to help his mother pay off her husband's debts. The will was drafted so that his sons or their heirs ultimately inherited his wealth substantially according to the rule of primogeniture with his daughter(s) getting relatively small amounts of his estate if any of his sons or their heirs survived. Thus he left his main house to his wife "during her naturall lief" provided she put in sufficient bonds "to release her dowry to Robert W", if not Robert W would be entitled to enter the house and "enjoy the said house during her life as she should have done" He left land at Southfield and a house "wherein Henry Smith now dwelleth" to his wife until such time as his son Henry reached the age of 23 years when he would be entitled to "enter and enjoy the house". Upon Lucy's death, the main house passed to Henry and "the heires of his body lawfully begotten" whilst the Henry Smith house and land went to Richard under the same conditions.

Judith was not entirely forgotten as she was to get 20 shillings from his wife within two years and 33 shillings from Henry within two years of acquiring the Henry Smith house.

Henry was left one quarter of John's boat with 12 mackerel nets and ropes to stretch them "conditionally" that Henry "remain and continue always diligent and willing to aid and assist his mother in the furtheringe of things needful for the paying of my debts" for four years after his father's death. Otherwise Henry lost his share of the boat and the nets and ropes and the matter was referred to a Robert Harrys plus another appointed by Robert Harrys. If Robert Harrys died the matter was to be put in the hands of "the substantiallest men of this towne"

Simon was left ten pounds which Henry had to pay at 50 shillings a year starting within two years of John's death. Similarly the unborn child was left, if a son, 7 pounds, if a girl four pounds to be paid by Richard at 20+ shillings per year. Richard also had to pay Judith 20 shillings within one year after the death of Lucy.

There are long passages in the will requiring that property should pass to the next son if the older one died without "issue", including the child his wife was "now withall" if it was a son. If the child was a daughter, the property was to be shared between the daughters then living.

Finally, Lucy got the remainder of his estate except for two heaving nets which were left to Judith. Lucy was made responsible for John's debts and made sole executrix. The will was put into the hands of Robert Harrys in the presence of John Boone and Luke Fennell.

In essence the will, in terms of the customs of the times suggests a caring, prosperous man but one can wonder what a maiden of Walberswick was supposed to do with two heaving nets.

Maurice Godbold

WALBERSWICK WELLS

1. DOMESTIC WELLS IN WALBERSWICK

There are over forty domestic wells in Walberswick. These are supplied by the surface sand, gravel and crag aquifers which lie very close to sea level. Dr. S.J. Wood, National Rivers Authority Groundwater Protection Officer, tells me that the water quality from this source of supply is considerably better than that of the underlying chalk which is saline.

The O.S. map of 1905 marks only fourteen domestic wells and the additional wells constructed after 1905 were almost certainly built before 1927 when piped water came to Walberswick.

A large number of the wells constructed in this twenty-two year period were built by Mr. Henry Fisher, the grandfather of Mr. Michael Fisher. Henry Fisher is listed in Kelly's Directory of 1925 as 'Well Sinker, Plumber and Pump Maker'. His services were in demand in areas well away from Walberswick too and tragically he was killed in an accidental fall down a well in Orford in 1926.

The wells I have seen, though not necessarily typical are beautifully constructed and cylindrical in shape. The brickwork is in pristine condition, immaculately coursed and pointed. In addition of course to his skills in brick Henry Fisher added motor engineering before his death.

By the mid-1920's, it is reasonable to assume that all householders in Walberswick had either wells on their properties or else had access to a well - as for example those living in terraced properties.

2. UNDERGROUND WATER SUPPLIES

Beneath the surface aquifers, the underground water resources of East Suffolk were properly investigated and identified by the East Suffolk County Council Water Supply and Sewerage Committee in 1963. Underground aquifers are formed upon an almost impervious stratum of London Clay. Above the clay lies chalk which is the chief water bearing bed of Suffolk with a thickness of up to 874'. (However chalk aquifers east of Halesworth are liable to be saline and therefore not drinkable.) The chalk, porous and fissured, supports the sands, gravels and crags of the coastal sandlings through which surface water can percolate and generally provides for public supply and for private shallow wells. In 1963 it was estimated that these sources yielded over twenty million gallons of water per day for East Suffolk.

3. 1927 PIPED WATER COMES TO WALBERSWICK

Unfortunately it was not only water that percolated into the surface gravels etc on which the properties of Walberswick stood. The Walberswick Parish Council identified a crisis in 1925 and circulated the following analysis and appeal -

"Samples of water taken from fourteen wells in Walberswick have been analysed and thirteen of them have been found to be quite unfit for domestic use.

The report of the analysis is that "most of Walberswick is on a soil sodden with Sewage."

There is only one way that sewage can get into wells and that is by seepage from cesspools, and therefore we find that the poor people of the place will have to pay heavy rates for a new water supply made necessary by the thoughtless deeds of their richer neighbours.

When the Terrace was built the water in its wells was analysed and found to be of the highest quality.

To-day it is unfit to drink.

The cost of putting in the water will be not less than £1500, which would be raised by the District Council on loan and repaid by annual instalments for 30 years. The loan being a direct charge on the rates of Walberswick.

It has been suggested that the owners of houses with cesspools should subscribe such a sum of money that the burden on the poor may be lessened.

If only £800 were subscribed in this manner, the water rate would be halved, and already two ratepayers have promised £50 each towards the cost of the new water scheme provided at least £800 is raised in this manner. Cheques may be sent to Mrs. Williams, Chairman of the Parish Council, or to Mr. Crighton."

'Soil sodden with sewerage' and 'pollution of Wells by Seepage from Cesspools' had obvious public health implications. Alarms however had not been sounded before 1925 by the annual reports of the County Medical Officer of Health. In 1920, for example, he concluded that the situation was good/satisfactory and in comparison with other areas certainly above average. Mortality was quite low. Blyth R.D.C. had a population of 17,000, the deaths were 200 of whom 90 were over 65.

Blyth R.D.C. was the local authority in the 1920's responsible for ensuring both safe water supplies and for cleansing open sewers and ditches (domestic cesspools in Walberswick, as elsewhere, were the responsibility of householders). At the beginning of 1925 a survey was commissioned for connecting Walberswick to the supplies of the Southwold Water Company. The route recommended was from the Water Tower on Southwold Common along the line of the Southwold Railway to Walberswick Station and from there across Walberswick Common to the junction of Church Lane and the Street: then down the Street to '150 yards beyond the Bell.' However in April, 1925, the Civil Engineer in charge (H. Mackworth Wood) was asked to prepare a revised scheme to overcome certain technical problems. The pipes in the end were laid via Southwold harbour under the River Blyth to Ferry Road in Walberswick. The contractors named were Gill and Hipperson, Cooper and Harrison and Noller and Block. The Ministry of Health sanctioned the

raising of a loan of £5,250 (not £1,500!) to cover the costs. Work started in May 1927 and was completed in October 1927.

In 1955 alternative arrangements were made for supplying piped water to Walberswick. The present Tower at the crossroads from Walberswick south of Blythburgh was built to support a water tank and latterly a forest of telecommunications material. As we know our access road is dug up periodically for laying replacement pipes.

4. LIST OF WALBERSWICK PROPERTIES WITH WELLS

I am much indebted to all those who let me know of the existence of wells on their properties and to Mr. Philip Kett for providing me with a lot of information.

This list is provisional and I would welcome further information whether by way of correction or addition.

| | | |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Anchor Cottages | Ivy Cottages | Seahome |
| Anchor Hotel | | Seascape |
| Ardmay | Knoll Cottage | Saltlick |
| Bell Cottage | Leveretts | Tamarisk |
| Bell Hotel | | The Lodge. |
| Blythbarton | Mafeking Cottage | Three Ways |
| Church Cottages | Manor Farm | Thorpe View |
| Coopers Thatch | Manor Farm Barns | Tinkers Barn |
| | Mariners Cottage | Todds Cottage |
| | Marsh End | Torridon |
| Dutch House | Mill Cottage | Tower Cottage |
| | Millfield House | |
| Eastwood Lodge | | Valley Farm |
| | Old Corner House | Vine Cottage |
| Gorse View | Old Farm | |
| | Old Farm Cottage | Westons |
| Heath House | | Westwood |
| High Field | Ryecroft | White Barn |
| House on the Green | | Windynook |

5. MAINS DRAINAGE COMES TO WALBERSWICK

Here is a further extract from Miss Browton's diary:

"Walberswick in 1965, or as it might be called the 'Year of the Sewer', after the fashion of some Eastern lands where the years were named for some outstanding event.

Must all progress be paid for so heavily and not merely in money but in things which matter more and will be a complete and permanent loss.

What used to be called "Nightingale Corner" has gone for ever, not of necessity so far as one can tell, but to suit the convenience of the Contractors. The large bushes of wild plum on either side of the entrance to Little Common Lane from Leveretts Lane which were a favourite haunt of nightingales have not merely been cut down, but grubbed up so that they can never grow again; and the pleasant little triangle of grass where the lanes joined is completely obliterated and we have a large area of churned up mud and heaps of unwanted sand.

Our soil is pure sand a few inches below the surface and for some reason known only to the engineers this is replaced when filling in the trenches with tons of pebbles brought from a distance and the surplus sand is being dumped on any and every piece of land not actually under cultivation, obliterating all green growth. Some on the Saltings or Flats by the side of Ferry Road, some on what was a nice expanse of grass by the side of Palmers Lane leading up to Moorside.

A large area of the Common has been devastated to create a clear space for the contractors' various sheds and for parking mechanical monsters when not in use, completely spoiling the view from a row of little houses, which admittedly ought never to have been built there, but the surroundings and views from the windows of which have given much pleasure to the occupants for a number of years.

Again the gorse bushes appear to have been grubbed up and are not likely to grow again as they do after a heath fire. In any case this sordid scene is likely to be with us all this year and possibly for years to come; or the contractors bound to make good, as far as humanly possible, all they have destroyed.

Alas! Poor Walberswick, once the haunt of artists."

The consequences were not as dire or as long-lasting as Miss Browton feared. Most people in Walberswick in 1965 and the years that have followed have almost certainly every reason for approving mains drainage and every reason too for giving thanks that the village is no longer 'Sodden in Sewage'. And artists do not appear to have been deterred.

Tony Rees.

ADDITIONS TO THE ARCHIVES

Papers relating to the Golden Age Club - Contributed by Mrs. Coleman.

Will of John Fearms 1580 - Contributed by Maurice Godbold.

Extract from Churchwardens' Accounts 1676 - Contributed by Mrs. Bloomfield
of Chediston.

John Doman Turner Exhibition brochure - Contributed by Mr. Ungless.



Walberswick Local History Group

NEWSLETTER NO. 12

August, 1997.

The Local History Group has had two successful events since we last issued a Newsletter. In April there was a well attended meeting to hear David Lee, helped by Mr. Lee (no relation), give an illustrated talk on the Walberswick and Southwold Railway. This had a certain topicality as the site of Walberswick station platform has recently been graced with a commemorative seat. We were fortunate to have the railway's history told by two experts with a deep knowledge of their subject.

In May the Group held an Open Day for an exhibition of local paintings by Roger Smithells which offered many fascinating glimpses of Walberswick as it used to be. It was extremely kind of his daughter, Jancis, to give us the opportunity to see this collection as a whole and to be with us for the day. At the same time we mounted a display of the Group's collection of old photographs, and were grateful for the loan of Mary Clayton's valuable collection of old postcards. A stand about the old shipyard and the building of the 'Basing' occupied one corner of the hall, and maps showing the track of the lost Dunwich River another. What with all this and offerings from the R.N.L.I. and the Suffolk Coast and Heath Project, a lot of interest was generated both within the village and from wider afield.

In this issue of the Newsletter we would like to express our thanks to Mrs. Beevers of Hoylandswaine, South Yorkshire, for her notes on Samuel Gayfer, an influential resident of Walberswick in the nineteenth century. Her article throws fresh and interesting light on many local landmarks, including the Parish Lantern, the vanished Mill and the Southwold Brewery.

More events are planned to take place before the end of the year so make a note of the next item.

We are only delivering one copy of the Newsletter to married couples who are both members, but please let us know if you would both like a copy.

David Davison, Editor.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Thursday 25th September, 10.30 a.m. to approx noon.

A WALK AROUND HALESWORTH led by Ivan Sparkes. The group will be limited to about 20 people so please telephone Pat Wythe on 724142 if you would like to book a place.

Saturday 13th December - "Early Country Motoring in Suffolk" by John Bridges and Christmas Celebration.

WESTWOOD LODGE AND ITS FARM

The House.

To write about a house which stands in the Parish of Blythburgh might be described as poaching on the part of this Local History Group. In our defence it has to be said that until the middle of this century, it was from this manor farm house that the whole of the western half of Walberswick was farmed. Many of its labourers lived in the village: its marshes drained into Walberswick rivers: and its trading outlet to the sea was Walberswick Quay.

A manor house at Westwood has been a landmark for some six hundred years. The site provides a natural focal point from which to run an estate stretching from Blythburgh to Walberswick. In 1430, when John Hopton inherited it from the Swillington family, the house consisted of a rectangular medieval hall with a thatched roof. This hall probably stood where the western end of the Lodge now stands (i.e. the side furthest away from Walberswick village), and 15th Century account books show how a master carpenter from Wissett, Matthew Hunne, kept the 'Long Room' and its kitchen thatched and in good repair. Outbuildings came as sheep framing prospered, and it was a more sophisticated house by the time Sir Robert Brooke bought the estate from the Hopton family in 1592. During the next fifty years the Brooke family demolished the original Long Room and the house was extended eastwards taking on its existing shape. By about 1660 it had passed to the Blois family. Over the next two hundred years the Lodge was much altered to suit prevailing tastes. Here, for instance, is an extract from Janet Becker's 'History of Blythburgh' describing alterations in 1835.

" ... the garden front was raised three or four feet. The crow stepped gables were removed. A superstructure was put on the old tile roof and covered with slate. The walls were encased in white brick. Inside wide fireplaces were bricked up, old beams hidden by deal, large rooms made small by partitions, windows pushed out or filled in to meet requirements, and the old broad staircase removed, and substituted for it one with cast-iron bannisters and narrow, high treads. The garden (i.e. the south) front then became the front proper. Such a handsome house as this could not be expected to look on to the farmyard ... "

The Tenants.

In the mid-eighteenth century the Blois family moved to their grander property at Cockfield Hall, Yoxford, and thereafter Westwood was farmed by a succession of tenants who all left their mark on Walberswick. Their activities are well described by Rachel Lawrence in her book 'Southwold River'.

There was John Grimsby (1752-1771) who made great use of Walberswick Quay for his sea-borne imports and exports, and served as a River Commissioner. He was followed by Nathaniel Howlett and his son Robert (1771-1809). It may well have been Nathaniel who built the brick wind-pump on the marshes in order to improve the drainage of Westwood's pastures: he also tried (unsuccessfully) to improve the outflow of the New Dunwich River into the Blyth by creating 'Howlett's Cut' pointing upstream instead of down. For some thirty years after 1823 the tenancy was held by the Cooper family. James Grinling Cooper was a figure of great authority in the farming world: he steered the farm through the agricultural depression which followed the Napoleonic Wars into more prosperous times in the 1840's: he was a Churchwarden at St. Andrews, and played a major part in drawing up the Parish Voluntary Agreement under the 1836 Tithe Act. It was his grandson - Ernest Read Cooper who published several books about Suffolk history,, including 'A Suffolk Garland'.

The Farm

Arthur Young in his 'General View of the Agriculture of the County of Suffolk' (1813) gave high marks to the farm.

"Westwood Lodge near Dunwich, in the occupation of Mr. Howlett, and belonging to Sir John Blois, Bart, consisting of above 3,000 acres, is without exception the finest farm in the county."

Writing, as he was, at the time of great agricultural prosperity enjoyed during the Napoleonic Wars, he took the view that large farming units on sandy soils, produced greater wealth than small farms on 'wet lands'. Perhaps one key to Westwood's prosperity throughout the 18th and 19th Centuries was its happy balance between dry arable uplands and lush marsh pasture for livestock. Walling the banks of the River Blyth and draining Paule's Fen amounted to capital well spent. Another big advantage was easy access to Walberswick Quay. Ship loads of coal and chalk were turned into lime fertiliser for the farm by Samuel Gayfer/Isaac Wales at the kiln near the village green. Equally wagon loads of corn could be trundled down Lodge Road for shipment by sea to London.

The Park.

One of the glories of Westwood Lodge in medieval times was its 240 acre Park containing some seven hundred timber trees. The open ground sloping down to the marsh in front of Westwood is a surviving fragment of this Park which originally surrounded the house. Herds of deer and warrens of rabbits - '4,000 conies' - provided bountiful trade. Bit by bit the trees were cut down (50 oaks were sold to a Yoxford carpenter in 1646) and the uplands turned over to the plough. In 1750 Thomas Gardner described how the Park had shrunk. What

survived, he wrote, was the 'Grove' - woodland on the north and west of the Lodge. This, he said, 'was the last mark on terra firma ken'd by seamen leaving these parts for Holland'. A vision of the Park, as it was, is evoked by the group of villagers beating the bounds in 1678 round what is still the western boundary of the Parish as they climbed up from Paule's Fen and crossed the ridge northwards before going down to the River Blyth:

" ... right against the Park House, going in at the great Garden Gates and then right forth cross the Park, where there are several Trees marked with Letters and Marks of our Inhabitants and thence to the Maple by the Park side where there is a cross upon the Common and thence right cross to Deadman's Cross where the boys heaved stones to the old heap according to their old custom ... "

Somewhere in Deadman's Covert there ought to be a hillock of stones, but perhaps they disappeared in the nineteenth century under the newly laid railway sleepers nearby.

Past and Present.

With the changing economics of agriculture the Lodge has gradually ceased to be the central farmhouse for its surrounding land. There have been other changes as well. For some three hundred years the marshland to the south-east was progressively drained and good summer grazing was developed. Jane Blois helped this along significantly when she arranged for a creek to be dug in 1742 providing a new outlet into the River Blyth at Walberswick. Today the remains of a majestic avenue of trees leading down from the Lodge to the marsh below offer evidence of the link between the house and its principal pastures. In 1940 however all this low lying land was flooded as an anti-invasion measure and the Westwood marshes reverted once again to wet land. they now form part of a National Nature Reserve rich in rare plant and bird life, and reed has replaced grass. In one respect however, things have not changed. The Lodge stands in the position of an isolated manor house today as it did in the days of John Hopton back in 1430. This perhaps is part of its lasting charm.

SAMUEL GAYFER - 1810-1855

by

MARY F. BEEVERS

When I was about seventeen years of age I went to a large house where a garden fete was taking place, and on coming down the steps at the front of this house with my grandmother, Alice Maud Gayfer, I happened to say, "I wish I lived in a house like this," to which my grandmother replied, "You might have done if circumstances had been different." I always remembered her words, then in 1990 I decided to search for my Gayfer ancestors.

Samuel Gayfer was my great, great grandfather. He was born on 17th January, 1810 in Darsham to William and Rebecca Gayfer. His father William who was a farmer later moved to Middleton. Samuel had two sisters - Sarah born 9th November, 1802 (married name Elworthy) and Mary born 25th March, 1805 (married name Fuller), also two brothers William born 3rd June, 1808 and Henry born 11th April, 1811.

Samuel married Sophia Bokenham on 14th September, 1829 at Southwold - witnesses being Thomas Bokenham, father, Thomas Bokenham, brother and Sarah Bokenham, mother.

Samuel and Sophia had seven children - Mary Ann Sophia born 29th July, 1833 (this daughter was born on the same day that the launch of 'Sophia' took place, the first to be built by master Twaddall at Blackshore (opposite Walberswick) for 70 years. George Elworthy born 26th October, 1836. Jane born in 1839, Henry and Frederick - twins - born 9th November, 1845 and Charles John born 24th May, 1847.

In the 1841 Census Samuel and Sophia were living in Quay Street with four of their children together with two female servants and one male servant and in the 1851 Census they are shown as living in the High Street with two female servants. In spite of the different addresses it is almost certain the house they lived in was what is now the 'Parish Lantern' gift shop and tea rooms.

In 1851 Samuel and Sophia moved to Reydon Cottage, and it was here that Samuel died on 7th April, 1855, aged 45 years. His grave is in Reydon Churchyard, near the wall on the main road, just to the right of the main gate.

His wife Sophia is also buried there. She lived to the age of 81 and died on 31st October, 1889 in West Hackney at the home of her niece H.K. Bokenham. The gravestones to Samuel and Sophia were erected by their youngest son, Charles John, who lived in the U.S.A.

Samuel Gayfer had varied business interests and was a very successful entrepreneur as will be seen from the following facts I have been able to discover from James Maggs Diary and other records. (James Maggs was Town Clerk of Southwold.)

In 1829 Land Tenancy was granted to Samuel Gayfer and John Leverett by the Lord of the Manor. [John Leverett is the farmer who gave his name to Leveretts Lane and lived in the Old House.]

In 1830 Samuel and Maggs' wife were witnesses at the wedding on 6th September, of Maggs' niece Miss Mary Ann Banks to Mr. Amos Barker at Walberswick officiated by the Reverend Eardley Norton.

In 1828, May, a Mr. Efferson of Bungay erected a windmill at Walberswick upon a piece of land purchased by Mr. William Chapman, the first tenant being Mr. Woods from Lowestoft. [This mill was in the garden of what is now Mill Cottage.] On 23rd April, 1829 the mill was hired by Samuel Gayfer and it was afterwards purchased by his son George Elworthy Gayfer on 25th May, 1861. Two weeks later on 8th June, George was accidentally drowned in the harbour. I have a copy of his Death Certificate. The mill was subsequently purchased at auction by Mr. Smith of Halesworth on 8th June, 1861.

The lime kiln on Walberswick Green was built by Samuel Gayfer in 1839 which burnt the lime and made coke under one process. This stood on what is now the garden of Greenways. In this year 1839 Walberswick had increased its population from less than 200 to 339 souls, and had a quay for vessels of 100 tons.

Samuel Gayfer's interests extended beyond Walberswick and Southwold as on 13th October, 1849, a Notice of Assignment of the goods of Arthur Beldray Grey of the Tuns Inn, Yoxford, innkeeper and farmer to Samuel Gayfer of Walberswick, merchant and brewer.

On 20th June, 1850, Notice of Assignment of the property of Simon Spicer, mariner of Southwold, to Daniel Fulcher of Southwold, builder, and Samuel Gayfer, brewer and merchant of Southwold and Walberswick.

On 23rd November, 1851 Samuel, on his way home from Halesworth to Walberswick with two of his children, was thrown from his gig as he approached Wenhaston. His horse had taken fright at the light from a gypsy's tent pitched at the roadside. (It makes one wonder if this fall could have been a major contribution to his death four years later as the death certificate stated that 'the cause of death was Paralysis 3 years certified.")

On 20th January, 1851, Daniel King, coal merchant, had his credit stopped - he went to London on 26th January and returned

on 9th February, 1851 and put his business into the hands of Abbott and Gayfer.

On 13th June, 1851 - Mrs. Elizabeth Booty, Sluice House, Leiston - Samuel Gayfer took valuation of the effects of the late John Booty who died on 29th August, 1850.

On 19th May 1853 - Sold effects of Mrs. Elizabeth Palmer [of Palmer's Lane] for Mr. Samuel Gayfer.

On 27th April, 1854 - Lease of Hare & Hounds Inn, Framlingham, Samuel Gayfer merchant and brewer to Henry Bloomfield, Framlingham, innkeeper.

The brewery in Southwold was bought by John Woodley for his nephew William Matthew Woodley to set up in business in partnership with Samuel Gayfer of Walberswick. The partners took over the fixed plant for the brewery at a valuation of £278 10s. 6d. and traded under the name of Gayfer and Woodley.

The partnership was dissolved on 1st May, 1851 and Samuel bought out Woodley's share of the business assets (excluding the brewery) for £700. At about this time Samuel acquired the freehold of the brewery and the High Street maltings from John Woodley and continued to trade by himself as 'brewer, maltser, corn miller and coal merchant' until his death.

I would just like to add that I always feel that Sophia had a very tragic period during her middle years as, soon after the death of her husband, their son Thomas died at the age of seventeen two months later of a fever on 17th July, 1855 in the Bosphorous on board the 'Midlothian', a casualty of the Crimean War. Then six years later George Elworthy Gayfer died at the age of twenty-six.

WALBERSWICK VIDEOS - Pat Wythe has copies of the following television programmes relating to Walberswick and Southwold and would be glad to lend them to anyone interested:

The Beach Hut - featuring Mrs. Orbell and Derrick Allen.

The Bridge - film shot in Walberswick and district.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh - programme in which Mrs. Denny appeared.

East of Ipswich - Comedy set in Southwold written by Michael Palin.

Heritage Programme featuring Mrs. Rafferty.

Programme on Southwold Beach Huts.

Travel Programme which includes an item on Southwold.

Unnatural Causes - Ruth Rendall (shots of Walberswick & Southwold).

All Mod Cons - featuring Mr. and Mrs. Hyne.



WALBERSWICK LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

NEWSLETTER NO. 11

February, 1997.

Since our last newsletter the Local history Group, at a well attended meeting, enjoyed a most stimulating and knowledgeable talk by Ray Easterbrook on Sir Isaac Newton. This was followed by the Group's Christmas Celebration - now becoming an annual event.

Several people who are researching their family roots have been in touch. In all family research matters Hanns Lange has been an invaluable source of help. Elsewhere in this newsletter he has contributed an article which explains the information he has collected. Pat Wythe has been helping the descendents of Samuel Gayfer who lived in the Parish Lantern and we are planning to publish an article about him in the next newsletter.

Our local archive continues to grow, and we thought it might be a good idea to extract an item from time to time and reproduce it in a Newsletter, partly in the hope of eliciting more information. We start with an item about Blacksmiths in Walberswick. There is however another mass of information waiting to be explored, and this is at the County Record Office in Ipswich. They have an easy-to-use catalogue, and much that is relevant to Walberswick will be found in the papers of the Blois estate (Reference HA 30). Some volunteer researchers would be very welcome indeed.

David Davison, Editor.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1997 - Subscriptions were due on the 1st January. Many of those who attended the Christmas Social Evening paid then, but if yours is still outstanding our new Membership Secretary, Angela MacKay, Pembroke Cottage, The Street, will be glad to take in the money and issue you with a Membership Card. The subscription remains at £3.00 (£1.00 for Junior Members).

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

- Tues 25 Feb - Annual General Meeting in the Village Hall Annexe at 7.30pm
- Tues 8 Apr - "Walberswick & the Southwold Railway" by David Lee and John Bennett - Main Village Hall at 7.30 pm.
- Sat 17th May - Exhibition of Paintings by Roger Smithells, Photographs and Documents relating to Walberswick - Main Village Hall all day.

VOLUNTEER NEWSPAPER READERS REQUIRED - Do you take a local paper regularly? If so, do you usually read it 'from cover to cover'? We would like to collect all press cuttings relating to Walberswick for the archives. If you are willing to do this would you please ring the Secretary, Pat Wythe, on 724142.

MEMORIES OF WALBERSWICK

by

Mrs. M.G. Fryett (nee Cox).

Dad was born in North Walsham and went to work at Stead & Simpson's as soon as he left school. In 1900, at the age of 21, he was promoted to manager of a new branch in Southwold. He went to lodge with Mrs. Henry Waters and four years later he changed the name of her youngest daughter to Mrs. Frederick Cox!

When he dressed his shop windows in late summer he placed heather in the shoes and boots. The result was extremely eye-catching and a number of people remarked on this. When my sister and I were old enough we used to go to Walberswick and gather large bunches of heather for this purpose. We sometimes walked to the harbour and crossed over on the ferry which was running at that time. We had a picnic and gathered our heather as we processed across the heath towards Walberswick station to ride home on the Southwold Railway, affectionately known as the Crab & Winkle.

Hilda and I attended the Sunday School at the then Congregational Church situated opposite to the shop and some years our summer treat was a ride to Walberswick in a brake drawn by two horses. Once there we played games and ran races on the heath, and of course, had a really good picnic tea. We thoroughly enjoyed these outings and went home tired but very happy. Adders were very rare at that time although they appear to be very plentiful now.

Little did I know at that time that I was doomed to riding daily on the said Crab & Winkle, but at the age of 13 I decided to take the opportunity of a transfer to Halesworth Pupil Teachers' Centre. This meant travelling five days a week on the Southwold railway. Dad's shop was quite 10 minutes walk from the station and I had to catch a train at 7.30 a.m. Needless to say, I was quite often late, but the accommodating station staff would say, "Molly isn't here yet, we had better hang on a bit longer."

There were two long wooden seats, one on each side of the carriages and with wooden supports underneath at suitable intervals, and they were covered with stair carpet. No Springs!!! Fastened on the walls at both ends of the seats were oil lamps for use on dark nights. I specially remember one night coming home from Halesworth when the Matron of the Southwold Cottage Hospital was on board. She had settled herself in one of the corner seats under the oil lamp. I knew that the lamp in that particular corner leaked oil, so I plucked up courage to tell her as I didn't like the thought of her lovely fur coat smelling of paraffin.

On another occasion a cow had strayed out of its meadow on to the railway line, so we had to stop. Blowing the engine's whistle proved ineffective, so the guard had to get out and drive it back to pasture.

At the age of 17 I underwent an appendectomy and Dr. Borham decided I should no longer travel on springless seats, so my season ticket was transferred to the Eastern Counties buses which had then started to run between Southwold and Halesworth. The East Suffolk County Council decided that they would transfer the season tickets of all the other girls travelling daily to the Halesworth Pupil Teachers' Centre. Very soon after that the train stopped running, so I guess the blame for the closure of the Crab & Winkle lay fairly and squarely on my shoulders.

The last year of my teaching career was spent as assistant mistress in Walberswick School. So I lived at home and cycled to the harbour and crossed over on the ferry each day. Mrs. Piper was the head mistress and I can truthfully say that that year was the happiest year of my career. I had a class of lovely kiddies aged from 5 years to 8 years, and although my memory fails me as to the names of all of them, one name has stayed with me down the years: that of Heather Block, who I recently learned went to be with the Lord on Christmas Day 1995. She was a sweet child who was always ready to help and one who made a lasting impression on all who were fortunate enough to come into contact with her.

I remember we collected empty match boxes and started to build a dolls' house during handycraft sessions. Sadly I wasn't with them long enough to see it completed. I say "sadly" because although I left to marry, I was sad to leave that very happy school atmosphere. In my contacts with the parents I always found them warm, friendly and very supportive; in fact all the villagers I met were really friendly.

I remember during my many visits to Walberswick, noticing how popular it was among artists. there were invariably one or more endeavouring to capture the beauty of the village and get it down on canvas for appreciative viewers to feast their eyes on.

Molly Cox taught at Walberswick School 1932/33. She was born "over the shop" of Stead & Simpson (now Southwold Shoes) where her father was manager. She remembers the horse and cart bringing greengroceries to Walberswick and says "that would be Hubert Smith's father". The Red Cross were at Henham Hall during the first World War; her father was Assistant Commandant and used to ferry the wounded to Henham from Halesworth Hospital. Dr. Boreham (aforementioned) was the Commandant. Molly was his first case when he started practice at Southwold in the late 20's. We have to thank Ruth Bassett for getting this article for us. Mrs. Fryett was Ruth's Sunday School teacher at Charsfield and now lives at Carlton Colville. She left Charsfield in the late 50's and went to Providence Cottage, Halesworth Road, Reydon.

WORLD WAR REMINISCENCES

Memories of the village in wartime are being collected by David Shirreff and Arthur Sharman who are also compiling a list of those from Walberswick and Blythburgh who served in World War 2 (Full details in 'Village News'). If any 'out of town' members have any information at all on the village in wartime please let us know.

FAMILIES OF WALBERSWICK

by

Hanns Lange

This book of "Walberswick Families" is a genealogical study of its inhabitants. It has been solely compiled by myself and is meant to assist anybody who wishes to trace his or her roots in the community of this village or who takes a keen interest in the history of the Walberswick. It is a comprehensive list of persons who have been born, lived and died in the village during the period from about 1600 to 1900 and has been compiled after intensive research into the mainly three most important sources of information: The Parish Register, Census and the Public Record Office, in the latter of which all entries of births, marriages and deaths from July 1837 onwards are kept.

Parish Register: This consists of entries by the local priest (vicar) of christenings, weddings and burials at the local church. These entries can be inspected on microfilms at the County Record Offices (Lowestoft, Ipswich etc.), but the very early entries - before the 18th century - are very sketchy and often illegible and, as these entries are also very difficult to check, they have to be accepted at their face value. A further element of inaccuracy, which has to be taken into account, is the erroneous spelling of names, which was often carried out by copying the phonetic sounds, as in those days many of the inhabitants were illiterate and signed their names with a cross.

The marriage entries are always correct to the day of the wedding, while the death entries denote the day of interment which can take place from approximately three days to one week after death.

The baptismal entries are far less accurate in relation to the date of birth, because a christening can take place any time from the day of birth (private baptism) to an interval of weeks or sometimes years after the birth and occasionally parents have several of their children baptised simultaneously. For this reason I have recorded both dates - that of the birth as well as that of the christening - whenever they were given in the Parish Register. Also parents who did not belong to the Church of England, i.e. Non-Conformists, etc., did not have their children baptised at the local church, but at the appropriate chapels which, in case of Walberswick, had their nearest centre of administration in Southwold and therefore no proof of accurate place of birth could be obtained in these circumstances, as both places come under the same register of Blyth in the Public Record Office and some of those birth entries may have been "lost" in that way.

It may also be worth mentioning that prior to 1752 the church year ended on Lady Day (25th March) and some - but not all - ministers used this method with the result that entries from January to March were given the date of the previous year, which could be confusing.

To minimize all possible errors it was essential that all these entries were checked at the Public Record Office, St.Catherine's House, London, providing they occurred after July 1837, the beginning of the compulsory registration, and this has been done. Although the P.R.O. is the most reliable source of information, on rare occasions omissions of entries have been encountered but these checks, both successful and unsuccessful are shown in the document.

A further and most essential source of information can be obtained from the Population Censuses which are taken every decade, starting (in case of Walberswick) in 1841 and ending in 1891, the last census available to the public to date. The 1841 census is rather basic for it does not give the occupation, place of birth, relationship of families, nor the correct age which has been rounded off to the nearest figure ending in 0 or 5. The following censuses correct all this, but also these contain errors and omissions. Here too misspellings of names have occurred for the same reasons as in the Parish Registers and, in addition, the handwriting of the officiating clerk is sometimes so careless that it could only be deciphered with difficulty - even on enlarged photo copies - or even guessed when no other check-up was possible. In the 1891 census many entries of the ages were written in very small figures which were then obliterated by a bold tick. A further consideration as to the possible inaccuracies in the censuses has to be given to the fact that all information was given by the head of the household at a certain date (as is still the case today) and this information, especially of ages was occasionally incorrect and did not tally with later census data. Also, if the birth and consequent death of an infant occurred in the decade between the two censuses and providing they were not entered in the Parish Register, they could not be traced.

Further information has been added from the following sources.

Tombstone inscriptions in the local churchyard not only give the correct date of death, but in most cases also the age or even the date of birth of the deceased and the relationship with others interred in the same family grave.

Wills which are kept at Somerset House which provide the precise date of death. Very few people left wills which was not the rule in a fishing and agricultural community like Walberswick.

Gardner's History of Dunwich and other historical books provided ancient records. Maggs' Diary, with many entries about Walberswick affairs and "Ferry Knoll" provided useful information.

All these collected data have been assembled in alphabetical order of surnames and arranged into families, wherever possible, for easy reference. The various entries of the same family name are mostly kept in chronological order, with some exceptions, when for the sake of grouping the families together, further details of the same person appear closely below the first entry. In order to preserve strict privacy, none of the entries refer to living persons.

While no efforts have been spared to check and countercheck every entry in order to maintain a high standard of accuracy, errors and omissions may

have occurred for reasons mentioned above and for which the author offers his apologies. Any corrections and additions will be gratefully received.

I would like to convey my thanks to those members of the History Group who have helped in the research, Canon John Murrell, Mrs. Merle Rafferty, Mrs. Pat Wythe and, last but not least, my gratitude goes to my wife Edna who helped me tirelessly by copying lists of birth, marriage and death entries from the Parish Register and deciphering the entries in the various censuses.

FROM THE ARCHIVES:

BLACKSMITHS

There was often a Blacksmith located in the village during the last two or three centuries. The name of George Whincop is listed in White's Directory for 1844 and 1855.

By 1912 George Rogers presided over the blacksmith's forge, which stood on the land now occupied by the public toilets. He was to be the last of the line of local blacksmiths. After World War One, like many smiths, he moved into the garage business. His garage and petrol pumps were on the site which is now the Potters Wheel. Visitors used to leave their cars for locking up at night - as many as twenty cars, which involved some shuffling about so that those which were needed earliest were parked in front. His pumps supplied "Pratts Motor Spirit". You pulled a lever which primed the pump to deliver a gallon at a time into the car's tank. In 1940, as an anti-invasion measure, all petrol pumps were drained. Mr. Rogers also ran a shop near the river where he assembled bicycles. Later he built what is now the Wine Shop, using it as an ironmongers.

Much of this information was supplied by Mrs. Nan Osborne, his daughter, who until recently lived at Blythburgh.

RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE ARCHIVES:

Family Trees - Baker, Crisp, Gayfer, Wales.

Papers relating to the Golden Age Club.

Poems by H. Spall.

Village Hall - Copies of Parish Council Minutes relating to the building of the Hall.

World War 2 Welcome Home Fund.

(All returning servicemen and women were given sums of money and, thanks to Arthur Sharman, we now have all the relevant bank statements, also the actual cheques which were issued to each individual.)



W ALBERSWICK L OCAL H I STORY G ROUP

NEWSLETTER NO. 10

August, 1996.

It is my sad task to write the editorial for this Newsletter. The loss of Derrick Allen is being deeply felt by his many friends in the village and by all the organisations to which he gave his enthusiastic support, not least by the Local History Group, of which he was a founder member. He was so interested in all aspects of the village and delighted in discovering details of life in the past. We shall greatly miss his knowledge of Suffolk and his contributions to the record of our history. The Committee would welcome recollections of Derrick from members (either written or that we can record on tape). We feel it would be a fitting memorial if we could compile a memoir of him for the archives. I know that many people will remember him for his friendship and his many kindnesses and we must see that he is suitably remembered in the story of Walberswick.

In spite of bad weather David Davison's second "Walk along the New Dunwich River" was much enjoyed on the 26th March and, as several people had been unable to go on either of the two dates he kindly agreed to a third walk in June. This time the weather was kind and all enjoyed the morning. If anyone has still missed out, perhaps David can be persuaded to lead another walk in the Autumn?

Members of the Blundeston History Group visited the Village on the evening of 22nd May. It was a very wet evening and, although they had asked us to show them round the village, this was quite impossible. Eric Bassett gave them a talk about the Church and, at extremely short notice, Philip Kett showed them slides of the Village Scroll. Would members be interested in such visits to nearby villages? If so please tell a member of the Committee and let them know whether you would prefer day or evening visits.

Our latest project is collecting video recordings of any television programmes relating to Walberswick for the archives. We hope to publish a list of those available for members to borrow in the next newsletter.

Pat Wythe.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY:

Our CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION and LECTURE on "SIR ISAAC NEWTON" by RAY EASTERBROOK will take place in the Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. on SATURDAY 14TH DECEMBER-1996.

MEMORIES OF WALBERSWICK

by

JANCIS SMITHELLS

In 1936/37, my parents made several trips to the Suffolk coast in search of a base for family holidays. One snow swept day in January, they found East Point in Walberswick. This clapboard house is a curious L-shaped structure on 'stilts', consisting of a two-story 'box' with a studio extending from the back. Built on the Walberswick foreshore, at the junction of the Blythe estuary and the creek, it was then one of the few residential buildings among numerous fish warehouses. In those days, it was painted green, and only very recently conformed to the dense black of other wooden buildings in the vicinity.

In those days, it was possible to rent East Point on a permanent basis, which my father arranged through Mr. Block the builder, who had his workshop, also on stilts, nearby. This building has since been swept away, but it has been recorded in one of my father's paintings. The Block name remained over the door of his office on the Village Green until 1993, and one of his daughters still lives in Walberswick. [This refers to Heather, who sadly died last Christmas. - Ed.]

East Point was furnished, much as it is now, with miscellaneous cottage furniture and fabrics - tough enough for children and requiring minimum housekeeping by their parents. The views from all the windows stretch for miles.

There were two children in the family that first Easter holiday in 1937, myself (4) and a brother (2). By the following year, there was another brother and we were joined by various cousins, other families, the grannies, and occasional students from the London School. As now, it was heaven for children. The fathers came down at weekends. Uncle Jack took photographs, and my father took the opportunity to set up his easel.

I went out painting with my father one day, and we perched on the dyke, bordering the river. To his surprise (though unremarkable to me) my painting recorded the cows that I had noticed grazing in the meadows behind us rather than the boats moored below. I, in my turn, was long puzzled by my observation that, having chosen his subject, my father promptly obscured the view by interposing his easel and board.

It was in this way that the set of paintings, recording parts of Walberswick in the period 1937 - 1939, came into being. Because of the need to keep an eye on the children, most of the paintings are of views from the vicinity of East Point, such as Valley Farm, the Kissing Bridge and the salt flats. Two

paintings were done from the Southwold side of the river (the car ferry made it easier to cross than now), and there are paintings of the Water Mill in the marshes, of the Windmill from Palmers Lane and a group of Scots Pines.

The paintings around the foreshore show many more buildings than exist now. Mostly they were associated with the fishing fleet, but there was also the Ocean Wave Tea Room, serving refreshments for those waiting to make the ferry crossing, and periodically joined by the ice cream man on his bicycle. This was also a meeting place for fishermen. One of Uncle Jack's photos shows a Bentley and an Austin Ruby Saloon lining up for the ride to Southwold.

My father's paintings around the ferry and across the fisherman's flats to the seaward side of the village show Walberswick as it was before the floods of 1953, and the World War II bomb which destroyed one of the perimeter cottages. In recent years, a flood barrier has been built to protect the village, and only the roofs are visible from East Point. One painting includes a chimney in the middle of the salt flats, destroyed in the levelling to make nets. I remember finding this chimney very intriguing but, along with many other safety hazards around the boat yard, it was strictly 'out of bounds'.

Missing altogether from the collection of paintings is the Village Green, facing which there was a double fronted shop with a veritable Alladin's cave of seaside essentials including wooden and metal spades (allocated by age), windmills on sticks, kites of varying complexity, shrimping nets and sun hats. Periodically there would be a Fair on the Green, with a full scale Merry-go Round, and a distinguished gentleman entitled 'The Professor' would provide a Punch and Judy show from a pink striped tent. Perhaps parenting came before painting on these occasions.

On one memorable occasion, my mother returned from a shopping trip to the village, with a pram and brood of children in tow, only to find an unusually high tide was completely covering the fishermen's flats and the approach to the ferry, thus preventing us from reaching home. I recall the strange sight of dustbins bobbing about on the flood water. A rowing boat drew up where the road levels out at the edge of the village, but for some reason the offer to ferry us across the water was declined. Instead, we sought refuge in the village Tea Room, and visited my mother's friend 'Pauline' in the Pottery (now the Parish Lantern). When the tide receded we pushed the pram back over the mud.

When my father died in 1993, we discovered that his portfolio contained not only a miscellaneous collection of paintings from various times, but also this record of a specific place at the particular period - a period which coincided with the end of

long, hot summers by the sea for everyone in Britain for the five years of World War II.

In September 1939, when the War broke out, my parents were having a solo holiday in Cornwall (an earlier favourite haunt of theirs). They were touring, and overheard the news by chance on a radio in a shop. They hastened back to Walberswick where my brothers and I had been joined by another family and were happily making our last sand castles, shrimping (now the Walberswick Crabbing Competition has an 'international' following), and flying kites, in traditional fashion, only to have it all brought to an abrupt end.

The furniture was put in store, the London School was closed for ever, and we moved out of London. We were not to see East Point again until my brother, on a sentimental return journey to the area in 1975, found that it was still there, miraculously intact and barely changed. At that time, it was a pottery owned by Michael Jeans. While attending a conference in Nairobi in 1985, I wrote on impulse to 'The Owners, East Point' to find out whether a holiday let was possible. As a result, my father and I spent two Easter holidays in the old home - it felt uncannily familiar. Like Virginia Woolf's 'To the Lighthouse', I could almost hear the voices of my mother and my aunt as they organised the assembly of buckets, spades, woollies, towels, Aero chocolate and Osborne biscuits, before a trip to the beach. From the dunes, I looked back at East Point half expecting to see the red jersey hung out of an upstairs window, which used to be the signal for 'lunch'. I recalled the delicious sense of conspiracy associated with flying a kite while keeping well hidden in the marram grass. I have been coming back to Walberswick two or three times a year ever since.

I had the collection of my father's thirteen Walberswick paintings, water colours and post paints, framed, and it occurred to me that they might be of interest to the many who know and love Walberswick, the few to whom it is home, and the even fewer who knew the village before the war. The replacement of the old chain ferry across the Blyth with the rowing boat of today has perhaps been the saving of Walberswick, and anyone looking at these paintings will see that, considering the natural and man-made disasters which have taken their toll, the village looks not so very different from nearly sixty years ago.

Roger Smithells (1905-1993), was a journalist. At the time he was painting in Walberswick he was co-director of the London School of Interior Decoration in St. John's Wood and editor of their journal 'Decoration'. He worked for the Ministry of Information during the war, and afterwards set up his own editorial services. In the latter part of his professional

life, he turned to travel journalism, writing under the name Sebastian Cash.

Jancis Smithells is a member of our Group. She lives in Reading but usually comes to stay in the village twice a year. We are planning to arrange an exhibition of her father's paintings when she comes next Spring.

WINDMILLS

For the more mechanically minded amongst us, we have found some more information on Walberswick Windmills. The following details are taken from "Suffolk Windmills" by Brian Flint which was published in 1979 by the Boydell Press of Woodbridge. Unfortunately we do not have a copy in the archives and the book is no longer in print but copies are available from the library. If you are particularly interested in windmills it seems a pretty definitive work and it may be worth looking for a second-hand copy. The ISBN number is 0-85115-112-4.

Tribute is paid in the preface to the late Herbert Simmons and Stanley Freese who started a survey of Suffolk windmills in the 1930s. They gathered as much information as they could but neither of them lived in the county until 1964, when Mr. Freese retired to Wenhaston.

The following entries relate to Walberswick:

Corn Mills.

Type: Post with Roundhouse.
Nat. Grid Ref: 496746
Date built: Earliest map on which it is shown 1838
Blown down c 1923

Drainage Mills & Pumps.

Westwood Marshes:

Type: Tower
Nat. Grid Ref: 487737
Date built: Earliest map on which it is shown 1897

The chain-wheel was connected to the striking rod by a bollard or drum around which chains were wound."

Nat. Grid Ref: 478762
Date built: Earliest map on which it is shown 1903

Tinkers Marshes:

Nat. Grid Ref: 490756

Date built: Earliest map on which it is shown 1882 "Gone by 1925"

The following extracts relate to Walberswick:

p.77 "James Nunn was a millwright at Wenhaston in 1844 and is said to have helped build Westleton postmill a few years previously. Simon Nunn was working with his father in 1874 and carried on after his father's death."

p.78 "Returning to millwrights, we come to Ted Friend, who was born around 1876 and apprenticed to Si Nunn. Friend also worked with Nunn on the Walberswick marshmill."

p.99 "Moving back up the coast to Westwood Marshes, south of Walberswick, we find a little derelict red brick tower in a lovely setting surrounded by acres of gorse and broom. This mill was a picture in its working days, before the last war. With boat cap, common sails and tailpole it presented a romantic image silhouetted against the sunset and featured on several attractive picture post-cards.

"The cap ran on a dead curb and the tailpole was steadied by a wooden wheel near its lower end which ran on a cement band round the tower. A winch was also provided on the end of the tailpole for pulling the cap round to wind by hitching to a series of posts as at Herringfleet mill. The iron windshaft carried a wooden brake wheel meshing with a wooden wallower on the square wooden upright shaft. At the lower end of this an iron spur wheel drove the mortise-tooth wooden pit-wheel on a wooden shaft. The iron scoop-wheel was equipped with wooden paddles. Before the first World War Jack Stannard was the marshman but he left for the war and was not seen hereabouts again. Bob Westcott succeeded him and it is he whom we see on the photograph of the mill, taken in 1936.

"There are no windows in the tower, only hatches but unusually a pair of millstones was at one time installed to grind feed for horses on the estate to which the mill belonged. Bins and sack-traps were still in position after the war during which time the mill suffered grievous damage from gunnery practice. Some time after this, the breaches in the tower were patched up and the cap and sails renovated. Unfortunately in 1960 the mill was seriously damaged by a fire lit by boys and the cap, sails, brakewheel and wallower were destroyed. Restoration plans have been mooted since but to date nothing has been done."

p.111 "Stanley Freese had hopes that the little marsh mill south of Walberswick would be put back into repair after it had been wantonly damaged by fire in 1960. It had been repaired a few years previously but its remote marshland location makes it vulnerable and to date no scheme for its restoration has been proposed."



WALBERSWICK LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

NEWSLETTER NO. 9

29th January, 1996.

In October David Dymond gave us a talk "Leisure and Recreation in History. It was interesting to learn that camp was an ancient English form of football - hence a "Camping Field" adjoining many of our churches. Many other games were played. The field was a centre of activity for villages which then were quite isolated from the outside world. David Dymond and Peter Northeast have written "A History of Suffolk" and I mention this for the people who were unable to attend the talk. It is extensively illustrated, some with colour, an absolute pleasure to read and gently absorb one of the best books I know of that deals with where we are. The publishers are Phillimore & Co.Ltd.

Our Celebration Christmas film show was wonderful. Cattle being fed on proper food, Southwold Railway, Ministry films of producing food to see us through and one about the Singing Postman, who, as you know, reached No.1 in the charts - "Hev ya gotta loight booy". The poor old fellow liked a tippie and ended up in a hostel, but isn't it nice to think he gets 25 quid a time for his "voice over" on the Ovaltine Light adverts on TV.

The entertaining by us of the Suffolk Local History Council was a great success. They were given a picture of present day Walberswick, a summary of its ancient history, including boat building, the influx of the artists and a glimpse socially of the future. The event took place in September. I think our fame is spreading for we have since been asked to organise a walk for Blundeston History Group. If anyone is prepared to help on these occasions please tell a member of the Committee.

Derrick Allen,
Editor.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Wednesday 14th February THE MAGICAL PROTECTION OF BUILDINGS a lecture by TIM EASTON of the Suffolk Historic Buildings Group.

Tuesday 26 March A WALK ALONG THE NEW DUNWICH RIVER - led by David Davison, starting at 10.30 a.m. from the Village Hall.

Saturday 30th March SUFFOLK LOCAL HISTORY COUNCIL SOCIETIES' DAY AT MENDLESHAM. There will be short talks on subjects relating to Local History in the morning and displays by various member societies (including Walberswick) in the afternoon. Please contact Don Thompson for details if you are interested.

Monday 29th April Our Annual General Meeting in the Village Hall Annexe starting at 7.30. Please tell Don Thompson if you have any items for the agenda.

SUMMING UP OF 1995.

The year was one of considerable progress, activity and success for our Group. It started with a well attended lecture given by Richard Scott. We are always grateful to Richard for his informed treatise of the artistic, with particular emphasis on Walberswick - certainly he is the only lecturer I know who faces the same way as his audience, when delivering his talk! - many thanks again Richard.

The AGM was reasonably well attended; changes in the Committee occurred as changes will, the result being that we have a strong Committee, one that has been an invaluable asset in a very busy year.

"The Day Visit", when we entertained sixty members of the Suffolk History Council was deemed to be highly successful, so much so that on the day we were invited to join the Council's Executive Committee, which we have since done and to participate in the Council's Open Day at Medlesham on 30th March.

Those of you who missed David Dymond's "Sport and Leisure in History", missed an outstanding lecture by a most informed and accomplished speaker. David is one of the leading authorities on Suffolk History. On the 14th February we have yet another much sought after speaker on the Suffolk circuit. He is Tim Easton and his subject "The Magical Protection of Buildings" - a highly recommended date for your diary.

Finally we come to the Christmas Celebration, featuring a film show presented by the UEA Film Archive Unit.

Our membership strength reached just short of 100, which is most encouraging and, you will be pleased to know, we are financially in good health.

Oh yes, we also produced two Newsletters during the year, both of which have been the subject of very favourable comment and not a small amount of well deserved praise.

May I wish you all a somewhat belated Happy New Year!

Don Thompson - Chairman.

INLAND TRANSPORT (WALBERSWICK FERRY)

by

D.M. LEE

A ferry from the Southwold shore to the Walberswick shore of the river Blyth is known to have existed in 1236 when Margery de Cressy, Lady of the Manor of Blythburgh and Walberswick was enjoined to keep a ferry on her side of the river. An early reference to a tragic accident is recorded in Agnes Strickland's story of Dunwich Fair, St.James Fair held at Dunwich, when on 25th July, 1616, most of a party of 22 people returning to Southwold were drowned when the strong current carried the ferry boat against a cable which over turned it (see annexed extract from the Parish Register of Deaths.)

The franchise of the ferry was vested in the Blois family who would grant leases to an operator. In the latter part of the 19th century a Mr. Todd of Walberswick held the lease and conveyed passengers in a rowing boat. The right of ferriage was granted on 16th July, 1885, to H.J. Debney and E.M. Underhill Adnams who had assigned the lease to the River Blyth Ferry Co.Ltd., which was registered on 28th September, 1885, for the purpose of establishing and working ferries over the river, and in particular between Southwold and Walberswick, with a capital of £500 in five pound shares. There were three directors and the Secretary was Walter C. Tuck, Solicitor of Southwold. Subsequent Secretaries were:

W.G. Bridal former Station Master at Southwold and school proprietor

E.R. Cooper solicitor, Southwold

The first craft was a pontoon guided by chains and at first was propelled by a manually operated mechanism, being mechanised with a steam driven engine at a cost of £111 in 1899. This pontoon was replaced about 1924 by one of similar design but larger with tall gantries at each corner and fitted with the same type of machinery. No plans or dimensions of either pontoon have survived nor are builders known, but the pontoon is said to have been built at Blackshore. Also statistics are scarce as to the traffic conveyed, which included pedestrians, carts, animals, and later bicycles and motor vehicles. To assist vehicles on and off ramps were fitted at each end, counter balancing each other, and raised or lowered as necessary. The machinery of both pontoons was in an engine house on the land side, being a welcome shelter for passengers on cold windy and wet days. A coal fired vertical boiler provided steam to the winch hauling the pontoon back and forth.

The ferry ceased operating in February, 1942, when the Company went into liquidation due, it is understood, to the lease not being renewed, and the pontoon was stored on the Walberswick side resting on a frame to keep it upright where it remained until swept away in the floods of January, 1953. The loss of the amenity was a blow to Walberswick's inhabitants for whom the Bailey bridge, on the site of the former railway bridge, was built in 1947 and replaced in 1977. A rowing boat ferry still operates during the summer season only.

Newspaper extracts (probably from the Ipswich Journal):

4 to 6 October, 1885:

The Ferry -- The inhabitants of Southwold are about to substitute a pontoon ferry for the present slow and imperfect means of transit across the Blyth. Messrs. Debney and Adnams have obtained a lease for thirty years of Sir John Blois, and a company has been formed to raise the required capital. At an expense of a little under £400 an excellent and not uncomely apparatus will be erected, to be worked upon chains capable of carrying over with safety and comfort a van and pair of horses, with eight tons of merchandise and thirty passengers. The fare for foot passengers will not exceed the charge heretofore made, and at a very small expense a new drive will be opened up for visitors, and a shorter means of communication with the southern district for commercial purposes.

28 to 31 May, 1886:

At Southwold many manifestations of loyalty marked the day (So ran the opening report in connection with Queen Victoria's silver jubilee celebrations.)

The Artillery, under command of Capt. Adnams, having fired a 'feu de joie' on Gun-hill and given three cheers for Her Majesty -- "The Battery then had a march out to Walberswick, crossing the river by means of the new pontoon, which worked admirably.the Battery ... numbered upwards of 70 rank and file."

From the E.R. Cooper Scrap Books (Book II p.107); in 1905 total taken for tolls was £396 and average expenses during past four years was £170. Since conversion in 1899 a dividend of 20% paid. Not a bad investment.

From the Southwold Register of Deaths for 1616:

The names of those that were drowned and fonde again; they were drowned in our haven comeing from Dunwich fayer on St James daye in a bote by reason of one cable layeing over warf the haven for by rason the men that brought them downe was so negligent that when they were redie to come ashore the bote broke lose and so the force of the tide caried the bote against the cable and so overwhelmed. The number of them were xxii but they were not all found:

The wedow ROBSON,

JOAN BOOTES,

MARYE YEWELL,

SUZAN FROST,

MARGARETT BLACKBORNE and the wedow LANGLEY were all buried upon the 20 daie of Julye being all cast away comeing from Dunwich fayer on St James day

Wedow FOSTER was buried the 27 daie of Julye

BENNET ALLEN was buried the 30 daie

Goodie KERISON was buried the same daie

MRS WARD and ELIZABETH YONGES daughter to MR YONGES vicar and minister was buried the 31 daie of Julie

All these were found againe in this towne and buried.

FERRY OR WALK?

From the Southwold Diary of James Maggs (Vol 1)

"1832 Oct 24. A bet was decided between Mr. John Cottingham and Mr. Robert Bird - the former bets the latter that he could not walk from Southwold to Dunwich in One hour and a half - Mr. Bird performed the task in 47½ minutes, Mr. Jonathan Gooding Umpire. Where Mr. Cottingham was disappointed - he expected Mr. Bird would have crossed the river in the ferry boat - then he would not have walked the distance - but Mr. Bird had a range of Boats placed across the River forming a bridge - Mr. Sutherland walked with him."

WILLIAM DOWSING

In the last Newsletter we thanked Jane Tibbles and Mrs. English for donating a copy of the Journal of William Dowsing relating to Suffolk. The following extracts will be of interest to those members who haven't already come across this book:

Introduction. To record the sacrilegious acts perpetrated during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the mob, and much more those acts committed by "Authority of Parliament" under the pretence of purging our dear Island of superstition, would of necessity place in the hands of readers so many tomes that many would vote the great work excessively dry. In the present case we only look at some such acts committed by one person who was appointed Parliamentary Visitor under a warrant from the Earl of Manchester, "for demolishing the superstitious pictures and ornaments of the churches in the county of Suffolk in the years A.D.1643 and 1644," and has bequeathed to us in a most boastful spirit an account of his desecrations in that county.

The whole introduction is most interesting. There follows a horrifying list of desecrations all over the county, but the entry that most concerns us is:

No.110. WALBERWICK. Brake down 40 superstitious Pictures; and to take off 5 Crosses on the Steeple and Porch: and we had 8 superstitious Inscriptions on the grave Stones.

The entry is not dated but the previous one was Southwold, April the 8th and the following one is Blyford, April the 9th, so the desecration must have been on one of those days. The year was 1643.

THANKS TO:

Richard Baldrey of Easton for a copy of Mea Allen book on Westwood Cottage.
Jancis Smithells for her recollections of staying in Walberswick pre WW2.
Jean Pappworth for a copy of "Ferry Knoll" by Carol Christie.
Gill Walford for the filing cabinet.
Richard Webster of Southwold for "Southwold Days" - a transcript of interviews with people who remembered George Orwell.

THE CRISPS OF WALBERSWICK

The following is a transcript of a letter from Mary Crisp of Walberswick to Ann Coverdale of Middlesborough. Mary Crisp's son, William, married Ann Coverdale's daughter, Sarah Ann, in 1865 in Middlesborough and their great-granddaughter, Dorothy Jones of Hartlepool, sent us a photocopy of this letter:

Walberswick
Sept 29 1848.

Dear Friend,

I now embrace the opportunity of writing to you hoping through the helping of God these few lines will meet you & your husband & little girl quite well as Thanks be to God these leave me & My husband & family at this time dear friend. I was glad to here by Mr. Sawyer that you were quite well. My husband is still at home. I do not know when he will be down at Middlesbro he have only just got his boats unloded. He have been fishing about here he had caught a good many herrings.

Dear friends I was glad to here that you were quite recovered of the smallpox My children had it very favourable indeed they have not the least mark about them from it it is a good thing when it is over

Dear Friend I often think of the excursion we had when we went to Stockton me & my husband often talk about you. I should like to see you at Walberswick if Mr. Povel (Powell?) [I think Mr. Coverdale] could spare you if you want to come you should have the Best my house can afford as you treated me so very kindly when I was at yours. My little girl was quite pleased with her doll. She wants to see your little girl I should like to you both my husband joins with me in best respects to you & your husband.

I shall be glad to have a few lines from you if you can make it convenient to write. Having no more to say at this time, I must conclude after wishing both for you health & happiness.

I remain yours respectfully M. Crisp

My adress is Mr. William Crisp Walberswick,
Near Southwold, Suffolk.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are now due. It would help if these are paid at the lecture on 14th February. If you are not able to attend a Committee Member will call to collect after then. The subscription is being kept at £3. Those people who joined at the end of last year need not pay again until 1997.

CORRECTION: Apologies for a typing error in the Tennis Court Paper in the last newsletter. Mrs. Newton-Trier's name was wrongly spelt Newton-Treer.



W ALBERSWICK L OCAL H I STORY G ROUP

NEWSLETTER NO. 8

August, 1995.

The interest shown by us in the history of our village signifies an active living community. So many villages have died in the last fifty years, but Walberswick, probably due to its erratic history of survival, soldiers on.

The two following contributions are the result of a lot of effort. Thanks to Jean Turnbull and David Davison who worked hard on them. The first deals with the physical aspect of the marshes, the second a social phenomenon beginning in the early part of the twentieth century. There grew thousands of tennis courts countrywide. The game was played mostly by the middle class and has given us a picture of romance, decency and Englishness at its best. The "Anyone for tennis" phrase emanated during those times and John Betjeman's Miss Joan Hunter Dunn gives us, for posterity, a picture of play.

Some of us remember horses and cattle grazing the marshes. Ginger Winyard, as a young man, used to drive and collect his cows for milking at the Anchor. Owing to a decrease in erosion it looks as though we will still have access to a most beautiful and typically Suffolk scene.

Our very best wishes to you and don't forget that every day we make history even if we don't make anything else.

Derrick Allen,
Editor.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Tues 5 Sept A WALK ALONG THE NEW DUNWICH RIVER - led by David Davison, starting at 10.30 a.m. from the Notice Board at the top of Stocks Lane.

Sat 14 Oct LEISURE & RECREATION IN HISTORY
- a talk by David Dymond.

Sat 16 Dec ARCHIVE FILM SHOW & CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION.

THE MAKING OF THE NEW DUNWICH RIVER. 1808-1828.

by

David Davison

(The notes on the map at the end of this article identify the places which are mentioned.)

Shoreline and Rivers.

Three early maps of Walberswick, spanning four centuries, illustrate the background of the land drainage problems which beset the village between 1808 and 1828.

The first is the Ralph Agas map of 1587 'Exhibiting the Remains of the Antient City of Dunwich. Also its River. Part whereof is Southwold Haven with Places of Note bordering between.' It shows the old Dunwich River winding its way from its mouth at the River Blyth southwards through the Dingle marshes to Dunwich. Much of the bed of the river now lies under the sea, especially at the Dunwich end, but stretches of it at the Walberswick end can still be seen, and so can some of the wall built to protect the river on its sea-ward side (Note 1). This protective wall must have been built, and kept repaired, by the men of Dunwich in the 15th and 16th Centuries to safeguard their dwindling river traffic. It is perhaps the oldest piece of man-made scenery on the marsh today, and although breached in places, serves to mark the boundary of the Corporation Marshes.

The next glimpse we get of the changing marsh scene comes in Hodskinson's map of 1783. This shows the Walberswick end of the Old River still intact (though now much nearer the beach), and shows, further inland Jane Blois's new 'creek' which had been dug in 1743, with its separate entrance to the River Blyth. The Cliff Field, and what is now the Cliff Field car park (Note 2) separated the Old River from the creek. In those days Cliff Field was known as Black Ness, and although to us it looks like a small pimple, it was quite a big obstacle to those digging the new channel. To minimise the effort, they made the big bend in the creek following a lower contour which we see today close to the Village Hall. Meanwhile the Old River meandered tentatively to the seaward side of Cliff Fields and thence out into the Blyth. The mouths of the Old River and the creek were only 100 yards or so apart, running into the south side of the River Blyth. The track of the Old River is shown by a broken line on the map.

Sixty years later, in 1840 there was issued the Survey of Southwold Harbour prepared by Lieutenant Ellis R.N. A great change has overtaken the Old River. Shingle from the back of the beach has blocked it up in front of Cliff Fields and for several hundred yards to the south (Note 3). The Old Dunwich River had become a lagoon, landlocked both north and south. This blockage took place in the early years of the nineteenth century and caused a major problem for the Dunwich Corporation and the Barne family - the landowners of all the land southwards through the Dingle marshes to Dunwich. They had relied on the Old River to drain their water out to the Blyth, and thence to the sea. This article will examine the steps they had to take to find a solution.

The 1808 Agreement.

Until the seventeen forties the Dingle marshes and the Blois marshes stretching up to Westwood Lodge both drained into what remained of the Old River. At about that time however it had become profitable to bring more marginal land into production, and landowners throughout the region were busy cutting drainage 'creeks', and building raised earth 'walls' with great gusto. When Jane Blois had arranged for her 'creek' to be dug in 1743, she was only concerned to drain the Blois land up to and including the Westwood marshes. Her workmen dug a channel straight towards Walberswick quay, well inland from the meandering Old Dunwich River (Note 4). She put a sluice where her creek crossed the Town Lands and this also came to serve as a bridge for 'the road to Dunwich'. In those days the flat land at the back of the beach offered the best and the most direct track to Dunwich - much quicker than the inland route (Note 5).

The Barne family had a longer and more tortuous drainage run to accomplish. They had dug their creek northwards through the Dingle marshes parallel to the beach and brought it close to their boundary with Blois land near the brick mill. Thereafter they had relied on the bed of the Old River to take their water round the seaward side of Cliff Fields and out into the Blyth. After the blockage they had no option but to negotiate with the Blois estate for permission to connect their creek to the Blois creek. There was no other way to drain their marshes. Accordingly, in 1808 the Blois family solicitor Mr. Bohun of Beccles drew up an Agreement. In his words, the Old River "owing to an extraordinary inundation of the sea was completely choked up, and the sea having made a considerable encroachment on the coast it was thought impossible to again open the said creek, with any prospect of continuing open so as to drain the marshes belonging to Mr. Barne and the Corporation of Dunwich". The Barne estate was to be allowed to build a connecting creek and either build an additional sluice or enlarge the existing one. If the Barnes built a new sluice they were to keep it in repair and they were to pay two shillings and sixpence a year for the privilege. There were clauses about three years notice on either side, and about compensation.

Nobody seems to have anticipated the sheer volume of extra water which would now debouch into the Blois creek. It says something about the morality of the times that the Blois estate did not drive a harder bargain since they undoubtedly held the whip hand. The Agreement was finalised in the dying days of the 5th Baronet, Sir John Blois. His son Sir Charles Blois, the 6th Baronet, may well have felt that the terms were too soft. As we shall see later on, in times of stress, he was wont to threaten to block the Barne creek. ".... I shall put down a sluice of my own equal to the drainage of my marshes and you must find a passage to the sea through another channel if you should not comply with my proposal I may set my Carpenter to work with a new sluice without further delay" But it was only too clear there was no other channel the Barnes could possibly find.

Poor Barne Barne, for it was he who was destined to run the Barne estate for the next twenty years, was in for a bumpy ride. He had no luck with his sluices, with his contractors, or with the ever changing flow of local advice! Fortunately he had a sunny and optimistic disposition, and was by nature a big spender.

The Sluice Saga.

From maps published both before and after 1808, it seems likely that B.B. connected to the New River by reopening an old creek, which can still be seen if you know where to look (Note 6). It was probably much later in the 19th Century that the present channel closer to the Mill was dug. It has been easier to locate where B.B. built his succession of sluices. All evidence points to the stretch of river running behind Cliff Field. Firstly it is the only stretch running between steep banks, and these would be important in siting a sluice: secondly the documents have a recurring theme of 'the road to Dunwich' which we know ran over the top of Jane's original sluice: thirdly 1840 maps show that the sluice ended up in its present position, behind Cliff Field.

Jane Blois's original sluice and bridge was near the beach camp site, close to where we now have a footbridge. B.B. built his first sluice downstream of this, near the bend level with our village hall (Note 7). We know it crossed the river at an oblique angle. This and subsequent events were faithfully recorded by Mr. Bohun of Beccles whose task often seems to have been to calm down an exasperated Sir Charles as B.B. bungled from one sluice to the next. "Some time in 1813" Mr. Bohun records "it was suggested to Mr. Barne that a sluice on an improved principle might be constructed, and in consequence he proceeded to erect a brick sluice on the plan suggested This sluice cost a very heavy sum of money, and either because it was improperly built or not sufficiently protected afterwards, was blown up in the course of the year by a high tide and was replaced by Mr. Barne with a new wooden sluice placed in the same situation" By this time the river was slightly re-aligned and the sluice position had moved round the bend towards the river mouth (Note 8). On 2nd July 1818 he had a letter from Mr. Read, Sir Charles Blois's land steward, a conciliatory, gossipy letter, but hardly good news.

Mr. Read, Sir Charles and Mr. Taylor, the current farmer at Westwood Lodge had paid a site visit to the sluices.

"... We find as I stated in my former letter that yours is very much out of repair, and I am sorry that your offer of a new one completed before the winter, if Sir Charles would contribute £50 towards it, did not reach me sooner: for having fully considered every circumstance relating to it, particularly the handsome and liberal manner which has marked the conduct of the matter on your part from the beginning, Sir Charles is not unwilling " But the £50 could not be found until the next year. "What Mr. Taylor may be disposed to do in this business I know not, but it is only fair and reasonable he should contribute in the way you mention in your last paper. His conduct to Sir Charles last Monday was so unbecoming a tenant that I do not wish to communicate with him upon the subject ... "

The letter conjures up a vivid picture of Mr. Taylor gloomily surveying the two inefficient sluices which were demonstrably failing to drain his pastures up on the Westwood marshes, and finally speaking his mind. In the event BB went ahead and put in a new sluice in the same position (his fourth try). Round about this time it seems to have been agreed that Jane's original sluice should go out of use, and that Sir Charles would channel his contributions into B.B.'s efforts. Perhaps B.B. thought as the year 1820 dawned that his troubles were over. But not for long.

By 1826 the occupiers of Walberswick Town Lands (Note 9) were complaining that the latest sluice was too high and failing to drain their marshes. B.B., ever obliging, lowered his sluice, 'encountered a quicksand', and this, his fourth sluice 'blew up'. There was a pause while the Trustees for the Town Land clamoured ever more loudly and B.B. argued with his sluice contractor. It was during this trying time that BB received a furious broadside from Sir Charles, dated 19th January 1827.

" ... In the latter part of your letter of 13th inst you talk of having Right on your side. Without meaning to be uncivil I will thank you to point out where the Right lay, because I consider that both in equity and law, the Right is exclusively in myself, and that it has been a matter of favour, and of no ordinary kind, to let so large a body of Water pass through my land for so trifling a consideration as half-a-crown a year for perhaps you are not aware that by your marshes laying on a considerably higher level than mine, you get the first drainage and that my Water is kept back till yours has dropped to the same level and that consequently I am benefitted only one half of the Ebb Tide instead of the whole and not considering myself well treated for the great accommodation I have already afforded you, I now repeat that I consider myself absolved from the present contract "

There followed angry threats to block Barne's creek and demands that Barne pay Blois "a sum annually for the injury done to my marshes by the passage of your water through my creek."

Enter the emollient Mr. Bohun of Beccles who tactfully wrote to Sir Charles "on the subject of your misunderstanding with Mr. Barne." He pointed out that as in earlier years Sir Charles had contributed toward B.B.'s drainage works he might be deemed to have agreed with them, "and whether so or not, it cannot be otherwise presumed that you concurred in the measure by participating in the benefit."

Diplomacy took over. In February 1827 there was a well attended site meeting. Mr. Read and Mr. Cooper (Westwood Lodge) represented the Blois interest: Brinkley Easy of Dunwich represented the Barne interest: Francis Robinson and Mr. Dix spoke for the Dunwich Corporation, and Isaac Wales, Mr. Chapman and others came for the users of the Town Lands. No record was made of the meeting but it was agreed by all where the next sluice should be built. It involved a further realignment of the river, which put the whole access road on the north side of the creek. As it happens this is the position it still occupies to this day (Note 10). The sluice had, in the course of twenty years, moved all the way round the cutting from the south side of Cliff Fields to the north. Land was donated by Blois and the Trustees of the Town Lands, the new sluice was built, two thirds of the cost borne by B.B. and one third by Blois. Afterwards a complaint was made by Isaac Wales on behalf of some of the users of the Town Lands. Some of the inhabitants, he said, would now have a longer drift for their cattle to traverse on the way to feed on the Town Marshes, which was true, but only by about 250 yards. He wanted Sir Charles to restore Jane Blois's original bridge on the south side of Cliff Fields, and pay the Trustees "an annual acknowledgement."

Mr. Bohun briefed Sir Charles. Isaac Wales and his fellows had attended the meeting at which the new position was agreed "Surely that was the properest time to have made objections and not after £200 had been expended to complete the work." But Mr. Bohun suggested that some

sympathy was due because the grass on the Town Lands would take three years to recover from the effects of the salt water flooding. A reasoned reply was sent to Isaac Wales

"Sir Charles Blois disclaims all Intention of Infringing on the Rights or Injuring the Property of any Individual, nor is the land which the sluice and intended road occupy taken for any private advantage but for general advantage of the level land particularly for that part of it belonging to the Parish of Walberswick which is most liable to Injury and is effectually protected by the Sluice built at an expense of upwards of £200 without the Parish contributing a shilling, and from its very nature subject to heavy annual expenses to keep up. He appeals to the Parish generally and Individually for the truth of these Observations, under the circumstances he do not think it fit that in Principle he ought to be called to pay any acknowledgements for the Town Lands which the Sluice occupy but he will make no objection to paying a small annual sum so far as the land and proposed road are concerned. With regard to the Bridge where the old Sluice stood, Sir Charles denies any right or liability on his part or that of Colonel Barne to build one. He has no objection to afford the Public a Passage over the new Sluice, the same as was enjoyed over the old one ..."

There is in the Record Office a document dated May 1828

" Now the said Sir Charles Blois do give the said Barne Barne Notice that it is my intention at the expiration of three years to be computed from 6 July next to stop and to prevent all Water running from and across Dingle marshes into my aforesaid Creek, and that upon the stopping of the said Water I shall be ready to pay you the amount of half the land wasted in making the said creek and aforementioned Sluices and also half the expenditure that attended the forming of the said Creek"

It seems never to have been enforced, perhaps because Sir Charles only wanted to put a shot across the Dunwich bows, or perhaps because Barne Barne himself died in June 1828, leaving the Dunwich estate, full of debts, to be run by a less exuberant successor.

An Early Relic.

One other man-made piece of landscape deserves to be mentioned. Here is an extract from Chapter XIX of Thomas Gardner's "Historical Account of Dunwich, Blythburgh and Southwold" published in 1754. He is writing about the marshes that lie to the south of the Mill.

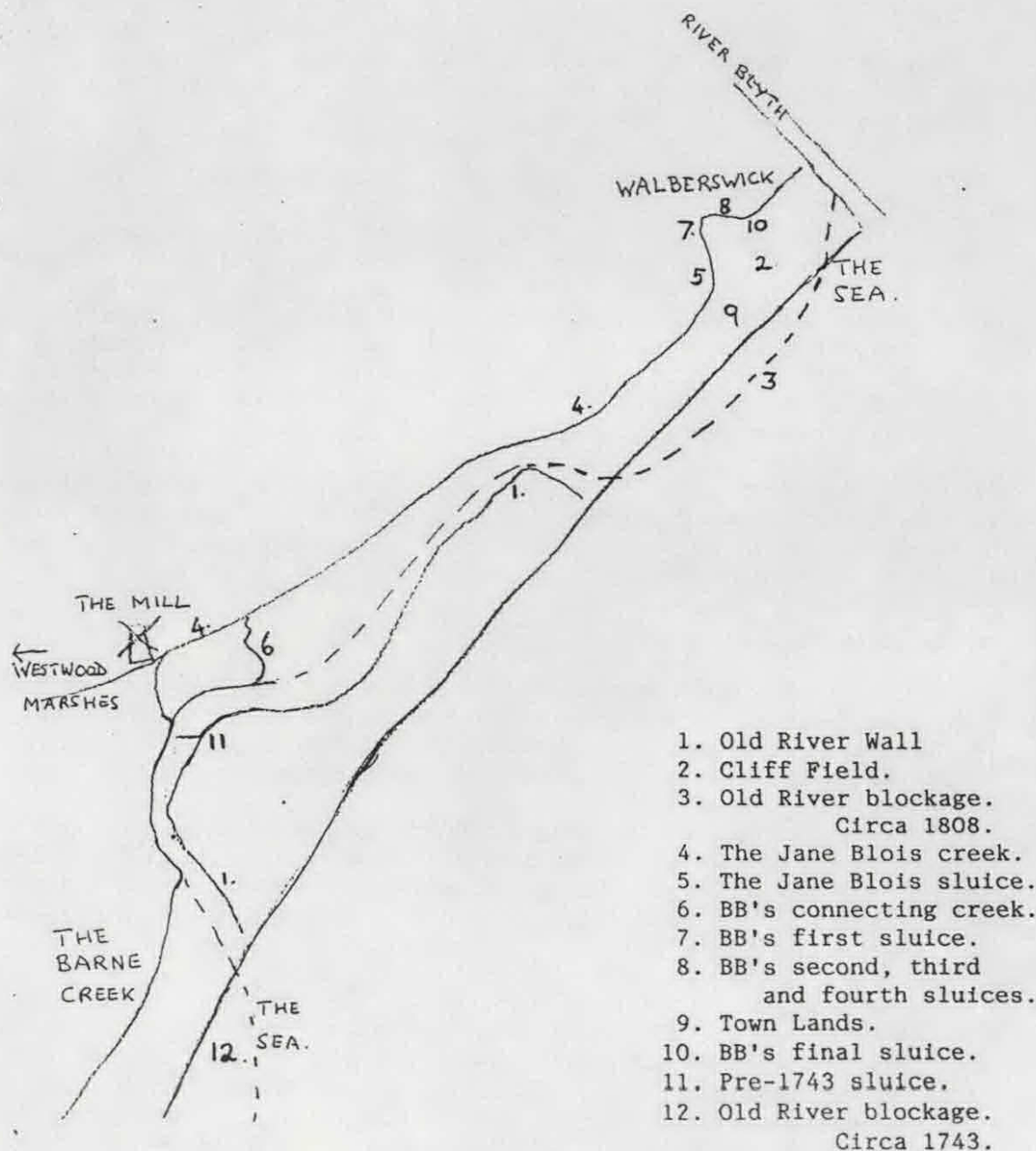
"The River ran by Cuckold's Point on both sides the Marshes, which were subject to be drowned at such times as the Sea overflowed the Beach by extraordinary Tides: and to discharge the Water, there was a sluice, which being rendered ineffectual by the Stoppage of the Channel, 1743, a Mill was erected to supply the Defect."

The outline of the sluice which was 'rendered ineffectual' was first pointed out to me by Philip Kett. There is a spur of grass bank stretching more than half way across the bed of the Old River some 200 yards to the south of the Mill (Note 11) which looks very much like a buttress to support one side of a primitive sluice. There does not seem to be any other purpose for building an earth bank across the flow of the

Old River. The objective must have been to protect the fields inland from a salt water flood across the Corporation marsh and its enclosing wall. Similarly "the Stoppage of the Channel, 1743", must have occurred where the grass walls now run into the back of the beach (Note 12). Here was a foretaste of the similar blockage which was to take place a mile or so to the north some sixty years later.

Epilogue.

After 1828 there were no doubt more sluice crises, but it had reached its final resting place and it more or less worked, and the track to the sluice from the village has remained the same. Until 1940 the marshes up to and beyond the mill were used for summer pasture and lush grasslands presented a very different landscape from today's. Then came the flooding of the marshes as an anti-invasion measure and a further chapter in the history of Walberswick's scenery was opened up.



TENNIS COURTS

by

Jean Turnbull.

Although Real Tennis dates back some one thousand years, it was not until the 1870s that the game we know was invented by a Major Walter Clopton Wingfield. He called the game "Sphairistike" and played it for the first time on a grass court in Wales in 1873. In 1874 he patented it but this clumsy name soon gave way to "Lawn Tennis". The first Lawn Tennis Championship was staged at Wimbledon in 1877 and three members of the then All England Croquet Club drew up a set of rules which are still in use today.

There were very few games at that time which men and women could play together and it soon became very popular. Also tennis parties were pleasant social occasions where young people were able to take exercise and get to know each other. Most of the large houses in Walberswick were built at the turn of the century and by that time a tennis court would be a popular feature to include in a garden which was large enough.

Only three courts have been built in the village since WW2 - at Mulberry House, Sandy House and Sunningdale.

The following houses have tennis courts now in use:

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| The Lodge, The Street. | (Grass - Pre-WW2) |
| Millcroft, Millfield Road. | (Grass - Pre-WW2) |
| Mulberry House, Millfield Road. | (Grass - Post WW2) |
| Sandy House, Manor Close. | (Hard - Post-WW2) |
| Sunningdale, The Street. | (Hard - Post-WW2) |

The following houses are known to have had a court before World War Two. They were all grass courts unless otherwise noted.

Ferry Road:

The Old Vicarage - 2 courts.

The Green:

Briar Cottage or Walber House. It is uncertain to which house the court belonged.

Leveretts Lane:

Knoll Cottage, Saltlick, White Barn.

Lodge Road:

Halsey (This was a hard court and was used for a PT area during WW2), Lilliput, Adyar (now Martins - Seven Acres was built on the site of the tennis court), Westwood (Pleach Cottage was built on the site of this court owned by Mea Allan).

Millfield Road:

Millcroft (The court is pre-war and still in use), Mill House (There is a famous postcard showing the tennis court and the Mill).

Stocks Lane:

Boxbush.

The Street:

The Lodge, Manor Farm, Mercers Hall, Old Farm, Sou'Wester, Three Ways, Tower House, Lane Corner.

Doubtful Pre-War Courts.

There may have been courts at the following:

Millstones, then owned by Mrs. Newton-Treer (unlikely).

Wayland Cottage. Three sisters lived together. They had a green but it was used for bowling.

Spinners Lodge. Owned by Mrs Violet Laing who played tennis.

Elphinston Corner (formerly Oak Barn) - unlikely as the house was not built until 1936 for Mrs. Hess.

Summary.

It is thought that there were 22 courts in use before World War Two and I have been able to account for all but one of them. If any reader of this paper has any recollections of tennis being played in the village or any further information I would be most grateful for details.

The Court at Millcroft.

I first saw Millcroft in November 1961. It wasn't what I was looking for, until from a bedroom window, surprisingly I looked down on a long stretch of ground. One end was covered in brambles. There were four long rose beds in the centre and on the right were young bushes, trees, and chickens. There was a little grass. It suddenly hit me. Why of course it had been a tennis court. The house was mine and a new court was born. Francis Perowne and Douglas Muttitt helped to restore it.

Many thanks to Tony Hunter, Philip Kett and Pat Wythe for their help in researching this paper.

MANY THANKS TO:

Mr. D.M. Lee of Southwold for his paper on the Ferry. (We are planning to publish this in the next newsletter.)

Mrs. Jane Tibbles and her mother Mrs. English for:

The Journal of William Dowsing.

The History of St. Andrew's Church dated 1961.

Memories of the Southwold Railway by A. Barratt Jenkins.

Dunwich dated 1924

The History of Dunwich dated 1907,

Walberswick by Carter & Bacon.

Walberswick by the Rev. T.H.R. Oakes 1889.

Three Over-Seas Club Certificates

(presented to William English).

A Night to Remember by Caroline English.

Members are reminded that any books or papers of special interest to them may be borrowed from the Archives.



WALBERSWICK LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

NEWSLETTER NO. 7

FEBRUARY 1995

Recently a book came into my possession whose title "St. Andrews Walberswick - History of the Church - Together with programme and souvenir of the August Bank Holiday Fete held (by kind permission) in Mr. Fairs Stockyard 1929 - Price 6d." It has tempted me to mention the highlights and at the same time paint a picture of our village in the period between the two World Wars. It was a time of a gradual fading from the bright colours of the late 19th and early 20th century created by mainly artists and a successful fishing industry. There were farm workers, fishermen and remnants of an avant-garde still living in the village in the twenties and thirties. Life was peaceful for them, but unknowingly they were watching over the social change which became the Walberswick which we know today.

There were two dairies which delivered milk twice daily, as they used to say, "straight from the cow". In due season Samuel Goodwin would deliver, direct from the smoke house, bloaters in time for breakfast. It was in an atmosphere of decency and gentle change that the Bank Holiday Fête took place.

A letter from the Churchwardens headed "Needs of the Church" said:

Dear Reader,

Do you know that our Church Tower is considered by some to be the most perfectly proportioned tower in Suffolk? And yet it is not protected by a Lightning Conductor!!!

Do you also know that our Church is still lighted by oil lamps? This does not trouble you in the Summer and may then look picturesque. But it is very unsatisfactory in the dark winter months. And electricity is in the village!! Surely we are right in wishing to install it in the Church!! And do you know that our Parochial Quota is £19 and we want to fulfil our obligation and pay it in full!

Several other things are crying out for funds - the care of the churchyard, the care of the ruins, new books, an improved organ, cassocks and surplices for the choir etc etc.

...2

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

"THE UNFOLDING ENIGMA" by RICHARD SCOTT on SATURDAY 18TH MARCH

A.G.M. followed by a COMMITTEE MEETING on MONDAY 24TH APRIL

"LEISURE & RECREATION IN HISTORY" by DAVID DYMOND on SATURDAY 14TH OCTOBER

all starting at 7.30 p.m.

We ask you to help us. We ask you to spend liberally at the Fête at which we hope to raise at least £100 for the first three of these things.

We also ask you of your generosity to send donations for the purpose (if you can spare it and care for these things) addressed either to the Vicar at the Vicarage Cottage or to Mr. C.J. Scott, "Adyar", Walberswick.

Yours sincerely, C.J. Scott) Churchwardens.
H. Block)

The Vicar was Rev. A.D. Thompson AKC, later Canon.

In 1929 a Village Fête was a great event. Young and old mixed freely and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The Fancy Stall under the supervision of Mrs. Turner and Mrs. Buncombe had a poem extolling their wares and at the end in large letters "DO NOT TURN OR BUNK. COME". There were ten listed amusements, among them Bowling for the Pig (presented by Mr. Winyard), the Slippery Pole (Prize - leg of mutton), Hidden Treasure 10/- and of course Jam Jar and Ping Pong Ball Competition - a very good money spinner to which Peter Avis (who carries on the tradition) would agree. There was a Miscellaneous Stall/Housewifery, etc. under the supervision of Miss Miller and the W.I. A Sweet Stall advertisement which ended "Bring your friends and don't forget your purses". The Produce Stall run by Mrs. Philip Foggo and Mrs. Rees-Gabe. Raffle organised by Mrs. Stewart and Mrs. Kyrke-Smith. Teas were under the supervision of Mrs. and the Misses Cornish. "Cheap Teas will be provided for 3d. and 6d. (Please pay at the time). Teas (ad lib) will also be provided at small tables for 1/6". The Wrentham Town Band provided 24 items of music including:

Fantasia - Rustic Revelry - J.A. Greenwood.
Valse - Beauty's Bower - J.A. Greenwood.
Waltz - Fond and True - H.A. Wilson.

finishing with God Save the King.

The One Man Band was manipulated by Mr. W. Leon. The Eastern Counties Bus Co. announced that they would augment their service to and from the ferry. I am sure that Miss Marple would have given her blessing and approval to this cameo of village life.

The Southwold Railway had ceased to run in May of 1929. However the steam ferry took care of the movements of people and all forms of transport between Walberswick and Southwold. Village people congregated there to chat, and the fishing boats of the village laid by the quay. Wave Crest Tea Rooms were nearby, together with many rather picturesque wooden buildings, all of them washed away in the 1953 floods.

World War II brought about the end of the ferry, a hole was blown in the middle of the railway bridge and the locks were destroyed which enabled water to stay in the upper reaches of the River Blyth. At the end of the War Walberswick licked its wounds and became alive again, but in a totally different way.

I was handed the following letter published by the East Anglian Magazine of February 1972. It deals with an event in Walberswick in 1923 which is appropriate to this Newsletter:

The Southwold Ambulance.

I was very intrigued to read the letter in the November issue. In April 1923 I was obliged to be taken for a nightmare ride. As you will see, I survived. If you know our district, you know Walberswick is the other side of the river Blyth from Southwold.

I was taken ill with severe pains, in the middle of the night, and Dr. Mullock saw me at mid-day and ordered me to hospital at once for an immediate operation. In the first place, the ambulance had to be collected from Southwold, necessitating a trip, over the steam ferry, four times, which was a slow procedure, if it happened to be the opposite side, when you arrived at the river. To cut a long story short, my husband and friend arrived to load me up. On arrival at the ferry, it was on the other side, and it was dead low water.

The approach to the ferry was over wood baulks, and I was bumped down, down, down. It seemed years with this black hood over my head. I remember hearing the clock strike four as I arrived at the Cottage Hospital. The doctor was waiting at the hospital door for me, in a white coat, and it struck terror into my heart. The next thing I heard was the church clock strike seven. The doctor told me and my husband afterwards, another half hour would have been too late, as I was suffering from an appendix abscess. In those days no drugs etc., but after six weeks of good nursing and Dr. Mullock's skill, I pulled through. But to this day I remember that ride. I must have been tough as I've now passed my 75th birthday.

Lilian Block, Poplar Cottage, Walberswick, Southwold.

I should point out that the ambulance was not motorised. It was pushed by hand and it had a black hood.

Very many thanks to Ray Easterbrook and his technical staff for his talk on the "Hooker Family of Halesworth" which was most informative and much appreciated by the audience. Together with the social event following it was a lovely evening.

In the last Newsletter I asked for more enlightenment about Samuel Gayfer's coke burning activities. I was hoping that someone knew where the finished product ended up. However it was not to be although Mr. Lange of Anchor Lea provided more information on the man himself. He was born at Darsham in 1809 and his wife in the same year at Southwold. There were six children, two of them twins. He bought the Southwold Brewery and moved to Reydon Cottage in 1852. Their son Thomas was drowned in the Bosphorus while serving on the Midlothian. He was only 16 years of age. This was four months after the death of his father, who died at the age of 46 in 1855. Rather a sad story.

I wish all the members a happy Spring and Summer in our venerable village.

Derrick Allen

WALBERSWICK 1841

The Local History Group has now acquired a reproduction of the 1841 Tithe Map of the Parish of Walberswick, and has recorded details from the Apportionment Book showing the owner and occupier of every house and field in the Parish at that time.

Through the good offices of the Blyth Valley Computer Society, Ifor Williams has executed the explanatory note on the map. The Village Hall Management Committee have kindly agreed to provide wall space. Don Thompson is now organising the framing and we look forward to it being displayed soon. Anyone interested in tracing the ownership of a property or land in the village can have easy access to the Apportionment List which can be borrowed from Tony Rees our Archivist.

Several strange field names crop up. Why was land behind the Village Hall called 'Bird in the Hand'? Why was land on the South-East side of Lodge Lane called 'Good for Nothing'? What was the story of 'Burnt House Marsh'?

The main woodlands were already mature and are shown on the map - Hoist Covert, Sallow Walk, Old Covert, and the woods to the west of what is now Eastwood Lodge Farm. The track towards Blythburgh followed much the same route towards the cross-road, but what is now a footpath leading down to the estuary is shown as a possible alternative route: the gravel pit which is now the Hoist car park was being quarried: John Leveritt lived in the farmhouse on the corner of Leveretts Lane (now the Old Corner House) and Elizabeth Palmer on the corner of Palmers Lane where Tower House now stands. There was a barn behind the Leveritt farm house which was moved down the village and became Hidden House. 'Mary's' was occupied by Edward Wigg, who farmed much of the land behind. James Gayler occupied Valley Farm, and Lawrence Varah ran "The Bell Public House" but also rented the neighbouring Quay; nearby, as Derrick Allen mentioned in Newsletter No.6, was Mr. Gayfer living in what is now the Parish Lantern and operating his Lime Kiln - Lime being greatly in demand both as a fertiliser and a building material.

Most of the land on the west side of the Parish (except the woodland reserved for game) was farmed from Westwood Lodge. This farm, described by Arthur Young as "without exception the finest farm in the county" has a most interesting chapter devoted to it in Rachel Lawrence's book "Southwold River". This was Blois land and the relatively prosperous tenant farmer in 1841 was James Grinling Cooper (misleadingly recorded in the Apportionment Book as James Grinling). As the largest tenant farmer in Walberswick he must have had a major voice in the discussions leading up to the voluntary agreement about Tithes.

The ownership of tithes in this parish had passed from the Church in 1538, three hundred years before when the Crown granted Sir Arthur Hopton of Westwood Lodge all the tithes which had belonged to the Priory at Blythburgh. Thereafter any tithe income passed on to support the parish church and its Minister depended on the inclination of the tithe owner and the conventions of the time. The 'Notes on the History of St. Andrew's Church, Walberswick' give some details of the ups and downs of this sometimes stormy relationship.

In 1841 the tithe owner was Sir Charles Blois, the 6th Baronet. Described by Rachel Lawrence as 'a conscientious man who had due regard to his public duties and great concern for his landed property', he would probably have felt it proper to contribute generously to church finances. We know for instance when he was a young man in 1811 (four years before he was wounded at the Battle of Waterloo) he gave the house near the Ferry for a parsonage. No doubt he also contributed to the stipend of the Reverend Thomas Harrison, the incumbent in 1841.

Until the Tithe Act of 1836 there had been no universal basis upon which the level of tithe payment could be calculated. Arrangements varied from one tithe owner to the next. It was widely felt that 'tithes had become a charge which was increased by good farming, or diminished by bad - a tax on every additional outlay of money and labour - a check upon enterprise and improvement'. The Act offered a formula which related future tithe payments to the average price of wheat, barley and oats over the preceding seven years. As a consequence tithe payments went up and down in succeeding decades.

The first job was to fix the start line and in common with most parishes Walberswick reached a Voluntary Agreement at a meeting "... duly called and holden by adjournment on the 29th July of the year 1839 and since perfected by and between the several persons owners of land within the said parish ...etc, etc." The Agreement provided for £180 for the first year to come from Sir Charles' tenants and £13 from thirteen parishoners who owned their own land. Another fifteen residents whose properties were deemed very small were let off altogether. The Trustees of Walberswick Town Land - some 217 acres - (James Wigg and others) were already exempt from tithes 'by prescription'. The Apportionment Book gives details of how the £13 was to be shared out, but none about the £180. No doubt the largest contributor here would have been James Grinling Cooper of Westwood Lodge, incorporating his tithes within his annual rent.

The 1836 Act was thought at the time to be a very sensible and statesmanlike solution for what had become a much disputed imposition giving rise to riots and unrest. It was so successful in calming protest that it added another hundred years to the life of a tax which had long lost its medieval purpose and on logical grounds was hard to justify. Perhaps however we should be grateful because it at least bequeathed to us the Tithe Maps and Apportionment Books which are a lynch pin for Local History Studies.

David Davison.

MANY THANKS TO:

Wendy & Chris Sinclair for donating a "Report made 25th August 1841 to the Commissioners of Southwold Harbour on the State of the Harbour, Bar, and River; and the Measures Advisable to be Adopted for their Improvement." by James Walker, Esq.

Canon & Mrs. John Matthews for the donation of the East Anglian Magazine of February 1972 containing an article and letter relating to Walberswick (the letter quoted in this newsletter).

Grahame Godsmark for two photographs of the well behind Windy Nook.

Dorothy Jones of Hartlepool for the photocopy of a letter written by Mary Crisp of Walberswick in 1848.



WALBERSWICK LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Newsletter No. 6

It is recorded in White's Directory of 1844 that since the erection of piers at the mouth of the river "the population of Walberswick increased, by less than 200 to 389 souls, and has now a quay for vessels of 100 tons, and a lime kiln which burns the lime and makes coke under one process, built in 1839 by Mr. Samuel Gayfer, the present proprietor." This gentleman had many business interests in the area and could be described as an entrepreneur. He lived at what is now the Parish Lantern. The lime kiln was situated to the south of what was Reynolds Grocery Shop and where "Greenways" now stands. He eventually bought the Southwold Brewery and moved to Reydon. Why did he produce coke? I can only assume that it was used in a foundry. What other use could there have been? Smyths of Peasenhall manufactured farming implements. Garretts of Leiston were engineers. Both firms were internationally famous.

The resulting clinker from Mr. Gayfer's Coke Manufacture can still be seen in our village. It is visible in a flint wall by Freud's stable, and in the house to the north of the old Blue Anchor also in the wall that leads to the ferry. However, the eventual destination of the coke is only an assumption on my part. It would be of great value to our society if light could be shed on this puzzle.

At the beginning of the year Norman Scarfe gave us a talk called "A long look back over the Suffolk Landscape". He told us that our church tower was one of the finest in England, and a second detailed look at the beautiful workmanship bears this out. We were reminded of some of our early saints, St. Felix, St. Botolph and St. Fursa. John Betjeman wrote of Norman Scarfe's book, "The Suffolk Landscape": "Your book on Suffolk is magnificent. You write beautifully, you inform without dehumanising. There is no hint of art history, thank God, but love of the unexplored and mysterious county of Suffolk."

Walberswick is part of this heritage and we can feel the mystery with every step we take.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: The Committee are arranging a MEMBERS EVENING for WEDNESDAY 30TH NOVEMBER when RAY EASTERBROOK has kindly agreed to give a talk on "THE HOOKER FAMILY OF HALESWORTH". As this talk will be of interest to gardeners as well as historians non-members will be welcome. The talk will be followed by our Christmas Social evening.



W ALBERSWICK L OCAL H I STORY G ROUP

Newsletter

No. 5

February 1994

Our last Committee Meeting produced new ideas and a realisation that we are now beginning to be a mine of information regarding our village. It was suggested that the time had come to undertake specific projects that would be of general interest. David Davison has already made a start - a Tithe Map of 1841, showing the occupants of all the houses then comprising the village. This will eventually be framed and displayed in an appropriate place.

Jean Turnbull has agreed to start a study of tennis courts. It is believed that there were once about fifty in the village. If you know where any of the vanished ones were, do please let us know.

We felt that the people whose names appear on the War Memorial must not be forgotten. Following the work done by David Shirreff on the circumstances of the death of James Cross, we would like to prepare a folder on all the names on our War Memorial.

If you have any ideas for future projects, please bring them forward, either at the AGM on Wednesday the 23rd March or to a Committee member any time.

The railway lecture entitled "Our Railway - from Private Ownership to Privatization in 140 Years" given by John Allen on the 7th December last year was a great success, very well attended and it is no wonder that we all wanted to be engine drivers. A fascinating thought too, that we were able to board a train at Walberswick Station change at Halesworth and then through to Liverpool Street without further changes.

Norman Scarfe (author of the Shell Guide to Suffolk) will be our next speaker on the 16th March at the Village Hall. His subject, "A Long Look Back over the Suffolk Landscape". Watch for the posters giving all the details.

It is a fact that people of villages and towns, generally speaking, know little or nothing of interesting and notable people that have graced the community. Pat Wythe is researching and will continue to write about such people, not only about their achievements, but where they lived.

Winter has left us sorrowful at the loss of a number of our friends. They lived through a period already rich in history. Their deeds, travels, and exploits have been recorded by our Society so that we and future generations will always remember them.

Derrick Allen, Editor.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

ADDITIONS Thanks are due to Wyn Riddell and Peggie Rogers for further recollections, Philip Kett for Census of the "Neptune", Merle Rafferty for papers on the Supernatural and the Women's Institute, Vic Rowlands for a summary of the deeds for Elphinston Corner, Arthur Sharman for a paper on the Royal British Legion, Walberswick & Blythburgh Branch, and David Shirriff for details of James Cross for the War Memorial File.

AMENDMENTS to the Last Newsletter (No.4) - Wartime in Walberswick.

During the First Dutch War, in 1653, Admiral Robert Blake, sick and wounded, was brought ashore to a house in Walberswick (not after the battle of Sole Bay (1672)).

The rumour that Mrs. Hess was a German spy has in no way been substantiated. She bought Oak Barn, now called Elphinston Corner, from Sir Ralph Blois in 1935 according to a conveyance dated 11th June of that year, but sold this house in February 1939, so it would appear that she no longer lived in Walberswick when the war started. She was the wife of Fritz Hess of Highgate, London, who was a refugee from Nazi Germany. Her brother was Colonel Fritz von der Schulenberg, a distinguished man of great courage who was involved in the plot to assassinate Hitler and was hanged as a result.

We do depend upon feedback from readers of the Newsletter and are not only grateful for additions but also amendments. It is very important to get our records as accurate as possible.

PEOPLE AND HOUSES

MISS JESSIE BROWTON taught art at Skinners Girls School in Ware. As a young teacher she used to stay with Mrs. Gilbert at Blyth House for summer holidays. She spent many happy holidays painting and you will have seen some of the results which were on display at our meeting in April 1992. When she retired in the 1950s, she bought BLYTHWYK COTTAGE in the Street (formerly 1 GLADSTONE COTTAGES) and started keeping her diary. Eventually she left five ring binders containing accounts of anything interesting that happened in the village together with other items of interest relating to the village. Most of it is in her own handwriting but there are press cuttings, photographs and post cards as well. When she died her friend, Mrs. Croucher, who realised the value of these documents, gave them into the safe keeping of the Southwold Museum Library together with the folio of paintings where they remain today.

BLYTHE HOUSE, where Miss Browton stayed for those holidays before the war, formerly stood on the flats, backing, broadly speaking, onto Ferry Cottage, then called "Cooks Corner". Blythe House faced the harbour and was last occupied by the Gilbert family. It was subject to frequent flooding. It was very badly damaged by the blast of the land mine which fell in the Old Vicarage garden, as were the two small cottages to the left of Blythe House, and was dismantled as a result. Mrs. Gilbert was the grandmother of Mrs. Elsa Hopewell and Mrs. Peggie Rogers. Fortunately she was away in Warwickshire when the bomb dropped.

THOMAS GARDNER Local historians owe much to the author of "Gardner's History of Dunwich, Blithburgh, Southwold" which was published in 1756. Copies may be seen in Record Offices but are now extremely rare. We can't

think that they can still be found in second hand bookshops but if you find one in an attic don't throw it away! They are very valuable. We think Thomas Gardner may have lived at Walberswick before he went to Southwold as two children of his were baptized here. In the register can be found an entry on the 24th May, 1723, Redshaw Gardner, son of Thomas, and Rachel his wife, and on the 7th June, 1724, George Redshaw Gardener, son of Thomas Gardner and Rachel his Wife. We have no way of finding out where he lived and no doubt his house has vanished as there are only four houses still standing which were built before the fire of 1752.

The REV R.W.M. LEWIS, M.A., F.S.A., was a resident at GORSE COTTAGE on the Common for a number of years after his retirement. He was a keen archaeologist. He collected a great deal of information about the history of Walberswick. He transcribed the Walberswick Churchwardens' Accounts from 1450 to 1499 and this work was published in 1947. This too has been of immense use to local historians. He was particularly interested in a tumulus at Toby's Walk near the Heronry. He secured the interest of authorities at the British Museum who were willing to excavate if £100 could be raised locally for the necessary equipment but this was not forthcoming. He was also an authority on Church Brasses. He died in 1954 at the age of 86.

Motoring enthusiasts will be interested to read about FRED BENNET, who lived intermittently at GAZEBO, Mill Field Road. He was a well known character in the motoring world. A Lancashire engineer he imported, in 1903, the first Cadillac car seen in Britain, a 6 h.p. single-cylinder model. During that year he drove it in a 1,000 mile eight day reliability trial and in 1953 he drove the same car in a similar test. By 1955 it had covered 200,000 miles. He was a familiar figure at all veteran car rallies and was a former president of the Veteran Car Club and a vice-chairman of the Royal Automobile Club. He was responsible for the introduction of the electric starter into England. Phyllis Winyard remembers him and going for rides in his car. He was known as "Cappy". He died at the age of 84 in 1958.

GAZEBO is now called Mill House. This was also the home of the JENNINGS family at one time. In fact they may have been the first residents as the house is not shown on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1904 and HUMPHREY JENNINGS, the well known documentary film maker, was born there in 1907. The area on which the house stands is shown as a cornfield for the Windmill in 1904.

His father, FRANK JENNINGS, the architect, subsequently moved his family to MARSHWAY in Leveretts Lane. Bettina Wilson has in her possession a picture postcard of Marshway, bought at a postcard fair in Kensington in 1988. The text is dated 1909 and says "This is Frank's new cottage where I am now staying." Marshway is only one of the houses in the village he had built from old materials salvaged from buildings being demolished inland. We are at present working on histories of these houses which we hope to publish in another issue of the Newsletter.

A.E. COPPARD the author 1878-1957 lived in another house built by Frank Jennings Due South (now Toby's Cottage) Leveretts Lane.

GEORGE ORWELL spent time at Walberswick. His parents had a house in Southwold and we believe he tutored a young man who lived in Millfield Lane. Can anyone give us any more information on this? He is said to have seen a ghost appear from the ruins of Walberswick Church.

SHIPPING

Quite by chance, while searching in the 1871 Census for Snape recently, Philip Kett came across the following reference to the NEPTUNE. The Census was taken as at Midnight April 2 1871:

Off Orfordness West Distance about 9 miles

Tonnage 14 87/100 Dandy Fishing Vessel

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|----|------|----------------|
| Master Benjamin Kerridge | Married | 38 | born | Walberswick |
| James Spence | Mate | " | 32 | born Southwold |
| Thomas Kerridge | " | 33 | born | Walberswick |
| Robert Kerridge | " | 28 | " | " |
| John Baker | " | 54 | " | " |
| William Clifford | Widower | 46 | " | " |
| George Stannard | Married | 24 | " | " |
| Henry Hurr | Boy | 13 | born | Southwold |

While on the subject of ships:

TWO COMPLAINTS (from "Mardles of Suffolk" by E.R. Cooper):

CHRISTOPHER

20th of Henry viii - A complaint was made from "your poor widow Cristian Balard of Walbertuswyke, late wife of Richard Balard," alleging that Robert owned a ship called the "Christopher" of Walberswyke which had been wrongfully seized at Sandwich, and detained whereby "the said ship decayed, and lost all cables sails bitts and other necessaries belonging to her," and that she had to "hire another ship in the season for fishing for the time of six weeks to her cost of £7 and because the fishing was so far spent before she could get another ship whereby she lost her fishing and by reason whereof the master and mariners attempted an action against your said plaintiff for the loss of the fishing which was to the great hurt, harm, damage, and hinderance of the said beseecher above £40."

JAMES

1561 - Wm. Caston of Walberswick, and Thos. Gray master of the "James" of Walberswick, 100 tons burden, complained to Mary, Queen of Scots that being in haven at Westmoney in Iceland they were cruelly underset, and invaded by some Scotchmen who spoiled tham to the value of £2800.

and A RESCUE

The gallant rescue, on December 6th of Messrs. George English, Gilbert and George Buckenham by Messrs. W. English, W. Cross, Charles Cross, C. Gilbert, Charles Jackson, W. Page. The danger was great, the mercy most real, the relief heart-felt. We thank God. All honour to the rescuers, of whom we are proud. Mr. Docwra, of Southwold, was one of the first to notice the danger and give alarm.

This last item comes from the Parish Magazine of January 1915, which also recorded a collection for "our true and deeply distressed Belgian friends".



W ALBERSWICK L OCAL H I STORY G ROUP

NEWSLETTER NO. 4

August 1993

Our last letter quoted recollections of the 1953 floods as recorded by Miss Browton in her diary. Specifically the rescue of people in the vicinity of the village green. There was a good response to our request for, if possible, more details, most of which I obtained from ex-Special Constable Arthur Sharman who lives not too far away from the scene of his salvage operations, which he performed from a dinghy complete with oars which had been left providentially in the vicinity. The Clerk to the Council, Mea Allen, rang Arthur at about 7.30 p.m. warning him of the flooding.

The most difficult rescue was that of Mrs. Cowley at "Hidden Hut". She was a lady of large proportions and, when the boat arrived, the water was lapping the mattress of her bed. By now Arthur had been joined by Harry Meekins (Jimmy's Brother). After a lot of persuasion they enticed her to the bedroom window and lifted her into the boat, which was no mean task.

Ruth Goodwin and her two very young children were rescued from "Harbour View", also Mrs. Harvey and family living in the second bungalow on the right, situated in the road that turns off the lane leading to the sluice bridge. Mrs. Harvey was the daughter of Mr. Adams who will never be forgotten as long as Adams Lane exists. Mr. and Mrs. Scott at Samphire Cottage, where the water had reached the top of the porch, refused the offered salvation, nevertheless they survived.

The water eventually reached the Anchor before the tide turned. A lot of people were involved through their kindly acts. Crises within a community always bring out the best in us.

Pat Wythe has collected information about war and its effect on our village. She poses some intriguing questions that hopefully will be answered to go into the archives for the benefit of us and future inhabitants.

Don Thompson carries on with his recorded interviews, the latest with Elsa Hopewell.

A happy winter to you. Whether we like it or not we shall continue to make history!

Derrick Allen, Editor.

THANKS TO ALL OUR CONTRIBUTORS, and in particular Mr. & Mrs. Cross, Mr. Denis Fairs, Mrs. Hopewell, Mrs. MacKay, Mrs. Peggie Rogers, Mrs. Riddell, Mr. & Mrs. Stannard, Mrs. Winnie Webb and Mrs. Phyllis Winyard for recollections; Mr. Davison for information on Birds, WW1, WW2 and the Marshes before WW2; Mr. John Winyard for "The Geology of Southwold and of the Suffolk Coast" by W. Whittaker 1887 and Mrs. Phyllis Winyard for two pictures of the Anchor.

WARTIME IN WALBERSWICK

We have gathered the following information so far, and would welcome confirmation and any further details:

During the First Dutch War, after the battle of Sole Bay (1672), Admiral Robert Blake, sick and wounded, was brought ashore to a house in Walberswick. In the Third Dutch War, 800 wounded men were brought ashore at Southwold and Walberswick during the Battle of Sole Bay. Although so many sailors and soldiers were wounded, and one must suppose a number of those would have died, there do not seem to be any records of burials. There are none recorded in Walberswick Church records. This is a puzzle and any ideas or information would be welcomed.

We have not yet found any details of Walberswick connections with the BOER WAR, though it is most likely that some residents served in South Africa. Has anyone any information about the Boer War?

We have heard that Welsh soldiers occupied Dingle Farm during WORLD WAR I and legend has it that they dug up a stone Saxon coffin on Dingle Great Hill. Medieval documents record an old chapel at Dingle, but it has never been located. The Army left a concrete gun platform on the west side of Dingle Great Hill, near the bottom, which was presumably designed to shoot high projection over the top of the hill towards the beach.

At the end of World War I, a pill box on Walberswick beach was pulled down to make the grey wall in the garden of Walber House.

The War Memorial in the church records the following killed in action in the First World War:

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Charles B Cross | James Mackean |
| William N Cross | William H Smith |
| George H List | Leonard J Thompson |

It is much easier to collect information about WORLD WAR II, this conflict being well within living memory, and this task is now in progress. So far we have gleaned the following:

ARP - Medical. Mrs. Stannard remembers ARP Drill in 1938 (there is a snapshot of her in Miss Browton's diary Vol 3 & 4). She got her Red Cross medallion and certificate and her St. John's medallion and certificate. During the war she used to help the Southwold doctor by giving insulin injections also, to save him coming over she would visit patients, take temperatures and report back. She used to go out at night during air raids. She tended the injured when the bomb dropped behind the Old Vicarage.

Bomb Damage. During the war there was a great deal of damage to property caused by enemy aircraft. A land mine fell in the back garden of the Old Vicarage (Marsh House), doing extensive damage. No one was killed and only one soldier injured (a slight injury in the wrist) although there were about 22 men in the building at the time. Mr. Jack Reynolds called for Mrs. Stannard was then living at Lorne Cottage. She looked out and saw Jack Reynolds and they hurried to the scene together. Blythe House and two small cottages were damaged by the blast. The two cottages were subsequently demolished by the 1953 flood.

Short Lane Cottage not far from the Church was also wrecked in a similar incident. It was damaged in the middle of the day. The owner, Mrs. Taylor, was at home but fortunately at the opposite end of the house from the bomb blast. She suffered from severe shock but was not otherwise injured.

What is now Mill Cottage was two cottages and an incendiary bomb fell on what is now the garage, going through the roof, but fortunately it did not go off. Mr. Denis Fairs remembers watching, from the school playground, a German plane on its way home, dropping 15 to 18 bombs on the marshes. The pilot could easily have dropped them on the village.

Camps & Billets. There were two camps - one by Eastwood Farm and one on Seven Acre Lane.

Soldiers were billeted in the Old Vicarage and Tower House and in many of the empty holiday houses, but we do not know yet which ones. The Parish Lantern was a NAAFI canteen. Briar Cottage was a Sergeants' Mess. There was damage by troops to some of the requisitioned houses but the owners were recompensed.

The Army occupied Dingle Farm from 1940. The Officers' Mess was in the house. There were nissen huts in the wood to the south and the foundations are still there. Most of the big bangs came from the Battle School at Scots Hall - now the RSPB reserve.

Coastal Defences. This East Coast area was restricted and only people whose homes were here or had some reason for coming were allowed into the village. Residents were supplied with passes and those working away from home remember having to show their passes when they came home on holiday.

Tubular scaffolding was erected along the beach with dragons teeth (pointed iron bars embedded in concrete) at low tide line. The sea was let into the marshes which were flooded up to the Westwood Lodge Valley as far as Dunwich. Concrete pillbox strongholds were built on the higher points of ground with apertures for lookout and rifle fire. Two searchlight emplacements were built behind the beach towards Dunwich near where the mill wall runs to the beach. Another was built on the Common towards the old railway station. The station building was taken down and re-erected in a dell nearby for the use of the searchlight crew. A pine tree near the station was cut down as it was considered to be a landmark. Half the old railway bridge was blown up. The kissing bridge, white bridge and the bridge over the went near Stocks Lane (Spongs Bridge) were all removed (all flooded?). Artillery units stationed at Westwood Lodge used the Marsh Mill as a target and infantry practised throwing hand grenades at the mill and keepers cottages until one side of the mill was wrecked and the cottages reduced to rubble. The steam ferry was moved from its position and moored upstream and an old vessel was sunk in the mouth of the river as an obstacle. The Lifeboat which was moored on the river below Blackshore was stationed elsewhere when the river was blocked.

The Army put the gun emplacement on the brow of Dingle Great Hill and that is the structure which is now a holiday home in the ownership of the Crittall family (who once had a house in Walberswick).

Curfew. There was a curfew but we have no details as yet.

Rations. During the war people had to register with a grocer for their rations. Goods generally were in very short supply and it was a matter of luck if you happened to go to the shop when desirable items, not on the ration, came in. Boxes of margarine were washed ashore in one incident and, in spite of the mines, the inhabitants managed to salvage it.

Recreation. There used to be dances once a week at the Eastwood Lodge Camp.

The Jeans started a cinema in a barn of Valley Farm as entertainment for the soldiers. We have been told that the cottage now called Longshore was originally located opposite to Valley Farm and housed the Cinema. There are two good pictures of the inside of the cinema in "Southwold to Aldeburgh in Old Photographs" by Humphrey Phelps p.44. It had 48 seats and closed in 1949. It was half-timbered with exposed beams.

The river silted up and sand appeared so children could play there. They could not play on the beach because of the mines/defences. At low tide it was sometimes possible to walk over the river bed to Southwold.

Spies. Mrs. Hesse who lived at Oak Barn was a German spy. She was caught at the airport when returning from Germany. Violet Cooper who worked at Brandon Lodge said she saw a plane land one night.

Units Stationed in Walberswick. The following regiments were stationed here but we do not know when: 2/4 South Lancashire, Cameronians, Royal Berkshires, Wiltshires. Seven Acre Lane was said to be a practice track for tanks, but we think these must have been Bren Gun Carriers as there were no definite recollections of tanks but Denis Fairs remembers Bren Gun Carriers. In fact Victor Fairs was knocked down by one when he was pushing a wheelbarrow in the Street outside Mrs. Bloomfield's cottage.

The War Memorial in the Church records the following killed in action:

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| James Cross | Geoffrey Fairs |
| Ronald Leon | Jack Fairs |
| Peter Reynolds | |

WALBERSWICK WOMEN'S INSTITUTE - 75TH BIRTHDAY

We were delighted to make a small contribution towards the 75th celebratory activities of the Walberswick Women's Institute, by providing from our archives an enlarged photograph of the one time WI meeting hall, now the Gallery on the Green. I believe that the photograph, which was displayed on the day, is to be included in the local branch WI scrapbook.

Included within our archives is an audio record of interviews with members of the WI local branch, conducted by Radio Suffolk and broadcast after the One O'clock News on Wednesday 4th August, 1993.

Will members please let it be known that the Walberswick Local History Group will be happy to provide information from its extensive archives to any local group or society wishing to refer to matters of local history.

Don Thompson, Chairman.



W ALBERSWICK L OCAL H I STORY G ROUP

NEWSLETTER NO.3

January 1993

I would like to start this Newsletter with an extract from Miss Browton's diary. She realised the importance of a recorded village history. Many of you knew her and the following is a tribute from us of the Local History Group:

"The flood in 1953 when the dykes overflowed was very severe at this end of the village and for hours the roadway became a roaring stream. A family consisting of a mother and three small children had to be evacuated from their cottage with the aid of a boat from their bedroom window and it was a sad sight for days afterwards when furniture and goods were carried out on to the Green to dry and get rid of mud and water. It was two or three years before the land recovered. The marshes were ruined for cattle feeding. It is to be hoped the high banks and other protection work that is only just finished will prevent another such disaster. "

From that entry our curiosity is aroused as to who the children were, and what has happened to them, now that they are in their forties. A wealth of information can be gleaned from a diarist who bothered to write Walberswick's life. In the past, village history was recorded by word of mouth, the deceased were talked about and the stories of them handed down until all was lost in the mists of time. Every human being, every house, every community has a tale to tell. To record it makes sure of the continuity and pride of future inhabitants.

The Committee, which you elected at the AGM in September, held its first meeting on the 10th November. On your behalf I would like to thank Don Thompson, Chairman, Pat Wythe, Minute Secretary, and Mary Clayton, Treasurer, for their work in the past and for a lot more in the future as our society goes from strength to strength.

David Shirreff is writing a book about HMS Guernsey. He would like to know, before publishing, if anyone has knowledge of where the furnishings cordage nails etc came from. Indeed any relevant information.

I cannot finish this letter without relating the following tale, told by George Rogers' daughter, Nan Osborne of Blythburgh. George owned a garage on the Green, now the Wine Shop. When the floods subsided and everything was still damp, he borrowed Leighton Block's saw to make a mark of the flood level on the left hand post facing the sea part of the Jubilee seat near the hall. Go and have a look. Do you think we should have a plaque to record this unusual disaster?

There are many historical mysteries to be solved in the village. In the next newsletter I shall acquaint you with some of them and hopefully you will be able to provide a solution. In the meantime thanks for your support. We will keep in touch regarding future events of the Group as well as things which may interest you.

Happy New Year!

Derrick Allen, Editor.

ARCHIVES

Very many thanks to all those who have contributed papers. We have already acquired a useful collection and it is hoped that members will borrow anything of particular interest to them. There is a comprehensive index which is a bit too long to publish in this newsletter and which is constantly being updated. If you are thinking of doing research on any subject please consult the index first to avoid duplication. A copy of the Index has been sent to the Suffolk History Council and they confirm that we are working on the right lines. In fact they were rather complimentary, so that is encouraging! You will find the archives either with Pat Wythe or Don Thompson until Joanna Sheldon is settled in her new Moorside home in the Spring.

You may be interested in the following (thanks again to Miss Browton):

HEARTH TAX - 1674

A payment of 2/- for every hearth was in existence from the time of the Conquest; the money was to be used for the maintenance of the Church and the poor. It was legalised in 1674 and abolished in 1688.

This is the list of those who paid in Walberswick in 1674 and the number of hearths for which they paid:

Thos.Earne 2, Wm.Harman 1, Henry Hills 2, Wm.Barrowe 2, Jo.Blowers 3, Sam Bond 2, Ed.Barfoot 4, Wm.Taylor 4, Thos.Harman 2, Wm.Chapman 3, Widow Preston 4, Bar Mosse 2, Edw.Mills 2, Dan Studly 2, Jo.Hearne 3, Thos.Burnett 2, Henry Barnes 3, Mrs. Chapman 4. 47

These had been empty 2½ years:

Mr.Cooper 2, Henry Barwick 2, Wid.Britting 3, Isa Kettle 4, Wid.Mills 1, John Mills 3, Sam Bond 4, Jas.Aldridge 3, Isa Borwood 4, Mr. Warren 4, Honor Moneys 3, Crowe 4, Mr.Roger Cooke 3, Wm.Harman 3, Mr.Bacon 2. 45

Out of 33 houses at that time 15 were empty.

31 persons, including 11 widows were certified as poor.

The Thomas Earne above is most probably the one mentioned in the following will which is in Somerset House:

1639 July 14 JOHN EARNE left to his wife, Susan, £100 and all moveables in his house; to brother Robert £10, to Thomas, son of Thomas Earne, £10, to John, son of John Newman of Walpole £10, to Thomas Earne of Walpole "one carte, one plowe, one cloake". To Daniell, son of Philip Earne £12, to Dorotheie, wife of Thomas Grimston, 20/-, to Bridgett, daughter of Thomas Allen, £5 at the age of 19. A ¼ part of the crayer Arne was to be sold "I wish twoe stoones and spindeall and a horse to be sould to pay debts." All corn standing on ground was to be sold. Daniell Earne was to have his "best suite" and Robert Earne another suite.

JAMES MAGGS

Many of you will have read his diary but the following does not seem to have been generally published:

JAMES MAGGS (from a letter to Rev R.W.M. Lewis from Mrs. Critten, The Manor House, Southwold.)

The following account of his life is in his own writing in his diary:

"James, son of Thos. and Ann Maggs. Born Feb 9th 1797 at ye "Blue Anchor" Public House, Walberswick. 1804 put to school to a Mr. Tutthill Wenhaston. 1811 was articled to Mr. Tutthill as Usher for 3 years. 1814 went as Clerk or Transcriber to Mr. Jermy of Southwold who was compiling an "English Gradus" and a "Dictionary of Epithets". 1816 took a Teachers Situation in the Grammar School, Dedham. Afterwards to St. Margaret's Hospital, Green Coat School, Westminster. 1817 opened a school in Walberswick. 1818 opened school in Southwold to 1841. Conducted Sunday School in Southwold from 1822-1840. 1818 married Elizabeth only daughter of Thos. and Ann Roberts of Wangford by whom he had 5 sons and 7 daughters. 1822 opened Grocers Shop in Southwold. 1833 declined the shop. 1823 elected Coroner for the Borough."

He was also Auctioneer and Rate Collector and an antiquary collecting local curiosities and records.

Was Assistant Overseer for 43 years.

Died March 3 1890 aged 93

His father died early in life but his mother lived to be 96.

The following throws an interesting light on Walberswick peccadilloes at the turn of the 15th century. Sunday Trading was an issue - nothing changes!

BISHOP REDMAN'S VISITATION 1597 (Norfolk Record Society 1946)

Walberswick (Humphrey Thomas, Thomas Meene), Robert Hawes, Robert Boneck, Churchwardens. They want a Cover for the Communion Cuppe, a poore man's box and a table of the degrees in Marriage.

(A cup and a cover provided.)

Richard Bower. He useth to sett open shoppe and sell wares on Sabaoth dayes and holidayes. (Said) that he doe not sett upp his wyndowe or dore - -- but in parte for the releife of poore, selling butter and cheese to them. (Dismissed.)

Humphrey Thomas, Eleanor Richardson, Richard Buskye, Henry Crispe, bucher. For the same.

William Roydon. He hath bene excommunicated a moneth.

William Savadge, John Curman, sen., Etheldreda Waller. For the same.

(blank) wife of George Waller. She hath been excommunicate ij [2?] monethes.

(None of the last nine appeared.)

Gregory Walters, curate. He doth not use to Catachise. (Suspended)

We are finding that these old records are few and far between but just as valuable to posterity will be our accounts of today's events. Nothing is too modern to be included in our archives.

WORK IN PROGRESS

There is already work in progress on the following subjects:

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Amusements | Houses |
| Artists | The Green |
| Authors | Mariners |
| Building & Architecture | Medical |
| Businesses | Post |
| Chapels | Restaurants |
| Crafts | Schools |
| Ferry | Shipping |
| Fires | Societies |
| Floods | Wartime |
| Food & Foodshops | |

Some of the papers are still very brief so if you feel you may be able to add information (or if you know anyone who can) please ask for a copy of the notes we have already. Every recollection will be valuable and is needed to make up as comprehensive a picture as possible. PLEASE HELP!

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

In keeping with the natural development of the Group a number of changes in our activities were adopted by the AGM, held on September 22nd 1992. You will note that I have avoided stating 'Constitution' because that which we have is awaiting the approval, or otherwise, of members at the next AGM.

The most important change agreed by the AGM was that of our Financial Year. Previously September 1st of each year was adopted and so published.

As from the beginning of this year (1993) our Financial Year will commence on January 1st. The effect of this change has been to extend those annual subscriptions paid on or after September 1st, 1991, through to August 31st, 1992, by four months, until December 1992.

Renewal subscriptions paid on or after September 1st, 1992, will not be due again until January 1st, 1994.

Throughout 1993 the annual subscription will remain at:

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| Adults | £3.00 |
| Junior (under 16) | £1.00 |

It is our earnest wish to equal, at least, the progress made in the two years since our inception, hence it is essential that we should have adequate funding. Within the next few weeks therefore, a member of our committee will call upon you for your 1993 subscription - do please give your support.

Don Thompson.



W ALBERSWICK L OCAL H ISTORY G ROUP

Newsletter

No.2

The outstanding event since Newsletter No 1, was our Open Meeting in the Walberswick Village Hall on April 28th., 1992. For those of you who were not present at that meeting, something in excess of one hundred people attended to enjoy, by arrangement with the Southwold Museum, the first ever public exhibition of Miss Browton's paintings of Walberswick, two showings in the annexe of the late Barrett Jenkins' Video, "Southwold", including scenes of the last journey of the Southwold Railway and a spectacular Son et Lumiere finale, arranged and presented by John Allen of the Blythburgh Soc'. Judging by the reactions both on and after the evening, the event was considered by the majority to be a resounding success.

The main objective behind the occasion was to encourage long established members of the village, who were either born here or have lived here for many years, to help towards our researches into the history of the village.

We were delighted to be given support by such people as Florrie Denny, Ellen and Bertie Stanard, Elsa Hopewell and many others such as Ruth and Leslie Goodwin, Ruth, of course, came here many years ago and has since been prominent in village matters. We hope that in time we may persuade these and other long established villagers to assist by allowing us to record, in what ever way, their reminiscences, as historically they are important to us all.

On March 28th., 1992 several members of our Group attended the Suffolk Local History Council's, "Societies Day 1992", at Mendlesham - as many of you will know we are Group Members of the S.L.H.C. The day comprised brief talks in the morning and stands/exhibits during the afternoon, presented and attended by the various Groups and Societies. The subjects/projects covered were varied, ranging from Heraldry to Railways and Art to Archaeology, all in all a very worthwhile day - perhaps in 1993 we may also participate?.

We were represented in March at the Saxmundham and District Local History Society presentation, "Godspeed - voyage to America 1985", commemorating the first successful English settlement in America in 1607. The slide/talk was presented by Mr J. Moesson of Otley Hall which has a link with that historic event that took place some 13 years before the Pilgrim Fathers voyage.

Just a thought, St. Andrews Parish Church tower at Walberswick had been a landmark some 45 to 50 years before the discovery of America by Columbus in 1492.

David Shirreff is continuing with his research into H.M.S. Guernsey

and has acquired a very attractive picture of the contemporary H.M.S. Guernsey which now adorns the wall in the village hall. Incidentally, it has come to light that the ship depicted in the Village Sign on The Green is not the Guernsey but is in fact H.M.S. Prince, flagship of the Duke of York, a first ship of the line which was presumably engaged in the Battle of Sole Bay - just one more indication that our Group is proving to be effective!

Before the next Newsletter we shall reach the end of the present membership year, hence subscriptions will become due, furthermore, during the month of September we shall hold our first A.G.M. May I make a special appeal in advance to all existing members to attend the A.G.M. (date to be advised) and to respond to the renewal request which will reach you in due course. A sound paid up membership base is essential to the well being of the Group, in order to cover our expenses, hire of hall, electricity, copying and stationery etc.

You will see that we have a new letter/Newsletter logo, I hope you will approve the use of Old English script and the extension of it for the Newsletter - incidently the Newsletter is your Newsletter hence your contributions would be welcomed.

Once again we have a display of artefacts in the Heritage Centre on The Green; the display is merely a repeat of last year, whereas it was hoped that we would have something more venturesome. We have two splendid 7' x 4' display cabinets, which we obtained from the Mildenhall Museum but for a variety of reasons we have been unable to use them. We urgently need volunteers for this activity otherwise we shall, once again, miss a golden opportunity to record and display our historic past, those of you who remember Blucher (I hope I have spelled the name correctly) English, will recall the missed opportunity he provided when, with his passing, his collection was to all intent and purpose lost.

Nell Starley, a member who lives in London asked that we may include her advert in this issue anyone who is interested in the service she has to offer should contact Merle Rafferty on 723371.

Whereas the next Members meeting will doubtless be the A.G.M., at the very earliest our next Open Meeting will be held in mid to late Autumn, any ideas for the theme we should adopt for that meeting will be more than welcome

D.A.H. Thompson - Co-ordinator

July 1992.

*Pat & Robert
W. G. the*

FAMILY, SOCIAL & LOCAL HISTORY

& HISTORY OF PROPERTIES

Tracing Living Relatives,

Adoption Cases etc.

Courier Service to St Catherine's House

All Academic Research Undertaken

.....

No Enquiry Too Small

WALBERSWICK LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

NEWSLETTER

For those of you who attended our first Members meeting on January 7th., 1992 this, the first W.L.H.G., Newsletter, will to some extent be covering familiar ground.

On the night of the 7th., 30 Members attended out of a total of 50, prior to that night the figure was 49. We were very pleased that Mike Marshall could join us, Mike has been extremely helpful towards our cause by virtue of his co-operation over the use of the Heritage Centre on The Green, where throughout the Spring and Summer months of 1991 he allocated a cabinet and space for the display of artefacts, both loaned and donated by Members and Residents of the Village.

While on the subject of the Heritage Centre, last Autumn we wrote to the Education Liaison Officer attached to Ipswich Museum in the hope that directly or indirectly he could assist us towards obtaining larger display units, through which we may set-up a more extensive area in the room at the rear of the Heritage Centre. We are yet to hear, you will, of course, be kept informed.

The meeting on the 7th., gave us, among other matters, an opportunity to report on **the progress** of the Group during the first year ending January 22nd., being the date of our inaugural meeting.

In order to clarify the titles we give to certain activities the Co-ordinator explained that:-

The Working Group - is, in effect, The Committee comprising 15 Members, 12 of whom are Founder Members.

Project Groups - comprise a Leader and however many each Leader may decide to recruit into his team. The objective of each Project Group is to study a subject of particular interest to it's Members and, through the Leader, report it's findings to the Archivist. This activity is open to all Members, all we ask is that we should be informed of your intention, thus avoiding unnecessary duplication; it is quite in order for two Project Groups to research the same or similar subject provided, of course, that they keep each other informed on a regular basis.

Although not yet formed into Groups, those members who have carried out research on their chosen subject were invited to give a brief Project Report.

David Shirreff spoke on the ship H.M.S. Guernsey, originally launched as the State Ship "Basing" from Walberswick Old Quay in 1654. At the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 the Basing was renamed H.M.S. Guernsey, a ship of the line. The present day H.M.S. Guernsey, fifth in line successor to the original, is an Island Class Off Shore vessel, also bearing the name H.M.S. Guernsey.

The ship depicted on the Village Sign on the The Green is the

original "Basing"/H.M.S. Guernsey. Incidentally, it is said that other ships were built locally but Guernsey was by far the biggest and most notable.

David would welcome any contribution members or indeed non members maybe able to make towards this important aspect of Walberswick's past history, coupled with which he is interested to obtain information on those who lived in and around the Village during that period.

Richard Scott referred to the numerous Artists who have been associated with Walberswick, some known nationally and some to a lesser extent. Naturally, Richard is keen to obtain as much information as he can from all local sources, with particular emphasis on those who concentrated their talents on Walberswick. Any paintings of the Village during the period 1820 to 1910 would be of outstanding interest to him.

Pat Wythe was sorry she could not be with us on the 7th., as she was unwell but nonetheless sent a summary of her Project, a 'Summary of Houses'. Pat enumerated her requirements on houses as follows:-

1. When built.
2. Name of builder.
3. Name of person initiating the building.
4. Purpose for which built
 - (a) family home
 - (b) holiday cottage/second home.
 - (c) speculative, ie., to sell or rent.

Please let Pat know if you have or know the whereabouts of any relevant information.

Merle Rafferty gave a brief summary on matters of a general nature but would I know welcome any information on personalities whether 'characters' or just people in general.

Looking to the year ahead we are hoping to arrange an evening visit to the Records Office in Ipswich, this we may have to do in conjunction with Saxmundham/Blythburgh or both, the Archivist at Ipswich insists upon a minimum of 20 in a party to justify bringing in his Staff.

At our next Working Group meeting we shall be considering the possibility of a public meeting featuring a Speaker combined with a film or slide show - perhaps you may have some ideas in this general direction.

In time, I am hoping that our NEWSLETTER will take a more attractive and certainly more imaginative format but it is, after all, a start.

It is proposed that we should hold our first A.G.M., in Aug/Sept 1992 - our year ends on August 31st.

Co-ordinator

Pat Wythe

ccs to Working Group Members

Unless inconvenient to the majority, I propose that our next Working Group meeting should be held at Greenways on Tuesday February 25th., at 7.30pm. Unless I hear to the contrary by Feb 4th., I shall assume the arrangement to be acceptable.