



Dereham Antiquarian Society

Open to Everybody Interested In Local History

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Welcome

Hello everyone,

As the year draws to a close, it's a time often for looking back over the previous months. As we're a history group - I thought it might be interesting to look a little further back in time! A trip down memory lane, or more specifically, around Dereham's market square, is a treat provided by Muriel Winn. Her daughter has generously shared her mother's fascinating memoir of growing up in Dereham in the early part of the 20th century. I'm sure it will awaken a few memories amongst our older members, and be of great interest to all. A most enjoyable, local, Christmas read!

On another note, I've been contacted by Elizabeth Crawford who has been researching the suffragette movement, and has discovered Kate Frye's brave attempts to bring the 'votes for women' campaign to Dereham between 1911 and 1914. In her book "*Campaigning for the Vote: Kate Parry Frye's Suffrage Diary*", Elizabeth details daily accounts of the periods Kate spent in Dereham trying to inspire interest in her campaign. The entries include Kate's many interactions with Dereham people, and Elizabeth believes that this will be of huge interest to family historians. Elizabeth was wondering whether anyone in our group has come across references to the suffrage campaign in Dereham, and would be most interested to hear from them. She is happy for members to contact her either via her website (most interesting!) or by phone on 0207 278 9479 for those without computer access. The link referring to Kate Frye's Dereham experiences is: <http://womanandhersphere.com/2013/10/14/kate-fryes-suffrage-diary-following-in-kates-footsteps-norfolk/>

Once again, I encourage you to send anything you feel might be of interest to our group. I look forward to hearing from you!

All that remains is for me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas, and a happy and healthy New Year.

Susan Keeler

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Chairman's Report

The last month of year is upon us already, this year certainly appears to have flown by. We have had quite an eventful year, having celebrated sixty years of the Society, fifty years of the setting up of the Museum, and gaining full Accreditation from the Arts Council.

The Society has around sixty members and over the next 12 months we need to make every effort to grow this number. To this end, in 2014, we will continue with our monthly evening meetings throughout the year, with the exception of August. Our outings will also continue but on a reduced scale and not on a meeting date. Meetings and outings will be advertised to the general public in an effort to attract new members.

During 2013 all our evening meetings have been well attended, very informative and entertaining; likewise the outings. Our thanks must go to Sheila and Tony Jones for making the arrangements, and to Peter Bradbury for his input.

As you know we took a postal vote on the change of the name of the Society to History Group which failed, by 2 votes, to gain the two-thirds majority needed. The idea of changing the name to History Group was purely to make our Group more accessible to members of the public.

Our volunteers continue to rationalise the Archives to reduce the items to those specifically relevant to Dereham and local areas in accordance with our constitution. In carrying out this work we have to take into consideration items for future displays. We are currently in discussion with Dereham Town Council regarding future Archive space and hope to have a solution early in 2014.

With regard to the Museum we are now preparing for our exhibition to commemorate the onset of the First World War where we are looking to cover all aspects of its impact on both the soldiers and those at home. If any member has stories and/or photographs of their families during this period we would appreciate hearing from you. Our Museum volunteers are still very active although unfortunately we have had several who for one reason or other have found it necessary to stand down for 2014 season. As always we are indebted to this valiant band for their dedication and commitment during the summer months and our grateful thanks go to each and every one of them. We are always keen to enlist the help of new volunteers and again please contact us if you feel this might be something you would like to get involved with.

On the financial front we have secured an annual grant from Dereham Town Council to help with the running costs of the Museum/Archive with an agreement that any application for special grants will be considered.

Finally, may I, on behalf of the Management Committee, wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New Year.

Regards,

Ray

Archive Update

There is the tantalizing chance that the Society will be offered some archive space in the offices of the Town Council. There is one room, now used for storage, which the Town Council may be able to allow us to use. We have to wait till January-time to see if it will happen.

The archive is now three-quarters sorted out into 'keep' and 'go' artefacts, and a general advertisement has been placed for the things we wish to pass on to another museum. It becomes ever-more important to get the things we wish to keep to another store.

We shall therefore be seeking 'man and van' type help if we do get the use of the room at the Town Council offices, and 'man with screwdriver' help to move the Dexion-type shelving. Of course, a lady with van or screwdriver would be equally welcome!!

Most members will now know that the postal vote on the name change resulted in 20 people wishing to retain the current name and 39 wishing to change it. As we have to have a two-thirds majority, the name must remain as it is. The Committee will now consider carefully how we publicise the Society to attract new members to our dwindling numbers.

February lurks, and there will be a need too for new committee members, and possibly someone to look after the money – please do consider offering to join the committee.

Stef Spooner

*Taken from our website:***BREWERS AND BREWING IN DEREHAM**

Norfolk has been the premier barley-growing county in England for centuries, and from the 13th century onwards, much of the crop was transported by sea from King's Lynn, Wells, Great Yarmouth and other ports to London, and indeed across the North Sea to the Baltic and Low Countries. Yeoman farmers from the 16th century onwards are known to have their own malt ovens and kilns and brewed their own ale. It was not until the 18th century that hops were introduced and beer, as distinct from ale, was produced. Indeed in the late 18th century Parson Woodforde recorded in his diary in 1797 "*Busy brewing of strong beer yesterday and today.*"

In the 19th century commercial breweries became established, and in Dereham in Victorian times there were at least four. There was the Dereham Brewery, at Baxter Row, owned at one time by John Ward, who left it to William Taylor, who in turn left it to his cousin William Tuthill. There was also South Green Brewery, at what is now called Rash's Green, built by the Rash family, but by 1845 owned by the Bidwell family from Thetford. The Duke's Head had its own brewery, and there was the Crown Brewery in Norwich Street. In addition Whitbreads, already one of the biggest breweries in the country, owned the massive maltings in Neatherd Road.

The principle of tied houses was well established in the 19th century, and when William Tuthill retired, in addition to the brewery, he sold 34 public houses and many cottages, plus 110 acres of land. The business was obviously a very substantial one, and its break-up and sale probably caused quite a stir, as it took four days. First sale was at Fakenham for the northern group of public houses, moving to Swaffham, and then to Dereham where the brewery and local pubs were sold.

The Rash's Green brewery evolved into the major Dereham brewery and this made it attractive to larger brewers, and a possible target for takeover. The Bidwell family had been connected with the Rash's for many years, and we know that in 1794 Samuel Rash had left £20 to his niece, Sarah Bidwell. The Bidwells became the major brewing family in Dereham and remained so until the 1890s, when a complicated series of sales broke up the company. Bidwell's had owned well over 20 public houses in the area, and the sale included the Bell, the Half Moon, the Red Lion, the Light Horseman and the Fox and Hounds.

James Maris is recorded as being the brewer in Duke Street in 1845, but little is known about him. His will gives little detail about his business, merely instructing his executors to sell "*his stock and trade, horses and carriages*", and states "*his dear wife Elizabeth shall inherit 15 chairs, table, clock, and all the furniture in general use in the little parlour, bedding on which we now sleep, the chest of drawers and six chairs in the same room, also one dozen of silver tea spoons, two silver table spoons, and four silver dessert spoons, to be selected by her from my plate; also the watch and all the trinkets and ornaments of the person worn by her except the chain and seal attached to the said watch.*"

He also left Elizabeth £20 per year as long as she remained a widow.

In 1920 the Crown Brewery in Norwich Street closed, so Dereham ceased to have its own local beer. By 1988 the ease of transportation together with economies of scale saw no breweries left in Norfolk, although it was and is the premier barley-growing area. Local brewers do now exist.

Sue White

Smells and Things of Old Dereham

A strange title maybe but then there are smells and smells.

Our first smell is that of Mr Rayner's hairdressers' shop-cum-tobacconist situated opposite Canterbury House right on the corner. It was a lovely smell: a mixture of hair oil, shampoo and tobacco.

Next we come to Mitchells, the bakers and sweetie shop, with the lovely smell of freshly baked bread wafting through to the sweet shop, where rows of sweets in jars are on display – aniseed balls, humbugs, dolly mixtures and all the other highly-coloured delights. I have watched Mr Mitchell kneading bread, a loaf in either hand. We had homemade bread and my mother was quite “put out” when I told her of his skill.

The next building was the Athenaeum (which became the Council offices). Here on the ground floor were billiard tables and a reading room, above was the court room used on Fridays for court sessions. The whole building seemed to smell of cigarette smoke and general fustiness. Also on a Friday there was a library. The books seemed very ancient and dog-eared to a small girl. Nothing for children.

Moving to the rear of the building was a lovely blacksmiths. How often I had watched Mr Brunton in his leather apron shoe horses; how he wakened up his fire by a foot pump, and had the horse's foot between his knees and drove the nails in the foot of the horse, which to me seemed cruel. I can still hear the sizzle of the red-hot shoe being immersed in water prior to being put on the horse. The ring of the hammer on the anvil is quite an unforgettable sound. (When a farmhand brought a big carthorse to be shod, I noticed when they went for home the rider flung a sack across the huge back and just sat sideways, seemingly enjoying his ride. I agree there were few cars about, but how did he guide the horse with no harness? Maybe he pulled its mane or was a ‘horse whisperer’.) I even enjoyed the smell of singeing, it was a cosy sort of environment in semi-dark.

Opposite the blacksmiths was the town pump, set on a large square of concrete. The pump squeaked: nobody dreamed of putting a spot of oil on it. If sometimes the water at our house ran a funny colour and was sandy and gravelly, great was my and my brother's delight to fetch a pail of water from the pump. I was not big enough to pump but helped to carry the pail.

On the opposite corner and facing the market was a wonderful ironmongers owned and run by Mr Oldfield. He was a very nice man, always happy and cheerful. Step inside his shop and the smell of paraffin oil, new tin kettles, pots and pans, nails and screws assailed the nostrils. He also sold farm needs: wire netting troughs and corrugated water butts, which he displayed outside on a corner of the market place. His shop now is owned by someone selling blinds.

Next we come to a café, never very exciting. But on further, Cooks the leather shop and harness maker: a lovely smell of new leather. Often have I watched Mr Cook making big leather collars stuffed with straw for carthorses. He could sew with two needles at the same time. The shop now has been modernised and is run by his great grandson who sells handbags, suitcases, shoes, dog leads etc.

Moving on was the Post Office, a really nice building, which sadly was demolished. It always amused me how the caretaker used to come out into the market and shake a bright yellow duster. However, there was still a smell of notepaper, stamps and rubber stamps, and a general human smell.

Next door was the International Stores. I liked shopping with my mum first thing in the morning for the floor was always strewn with fresh sawdust, which is a smell I have always liked – freshly cut wood.

The next shop was a very smart sweetie shop by the name of Perrys. They sold large boxes of chocolates etc. One day I witnessed a funny sight. A Miss Hood from Dillington Hall came trotting to market on her pony. It was a really hot summer afternoon, not a soul was about, it being early closing day. She made straight for Perrys, slid off her pony and entered the shop. A minute after, the pony decided to follow her. I had heard of a 'bull in a china shop', but never a 'pony in a sweetie shop'. I had been gazing out of my bedroom window. I was so excited I ran downstairs to tell my mother, and so never saw what happened. It's now a 'Farm Kitchen' café.

Yarmouth bloaters, Cromer crabs and all kinds of fish displayed on a huge white tiled slab was next, owned by Mr Shearing. It now still deals with fish but with a difference, as it is now a fish and chip shop.

We leap over a cutting and there was the Corn Hall, a splendid building with a glass roof and, standing on the very top, a life-sized statue of Coke of Norfolk. All sorts of functions took place here. On Fridays, farmers and merchants took their corn to be sold. A series of desks were within, and I often wondered why the men would take a corn sample and sniff it or maybe nibble it. The late Mrs Craske told me that the church used to hold their Harvest Supper there, and she remembered that the long tables were decorated with red apples. I have watched people arriving for the Hunt Ball staged there, all smartly dressed – long dresses and dinner jackets. Every year, a grand concert was held in it. Lead singers were hired from London. The Choral Society were very talented and conducted by Mr Barnaby. My father and mother always attended and those nights we were allowed to make toffee.

At the top of Church Street, right on the corner, was a branch of H H Aldiss which sold furniture and prams. Every Christmas they launched out on a few toys. The lady in charge, who was called Maude, had a very gruff voice but a heart of gold, and she arranged a display of dolls, with china heads and hands and feet, and pink cotton bodies stuffed with sawdust. She put them either side of the doorway: dark haired (wool) all down one side, and blonde haired on the other. How tragic it was if the bodies got snapped and a gutless doll had left a trail of sawdust. Sometimes, I would go there with my mother to buy sheeting by the yard, and I used to love the smell of new material, and watching the assistant rip the required length off. Old H H would frequently go to London to buy. Their tailoring shop smelt strongly of cord trousers and new suits, cords being much worn by workmen.

Further along the High Street was a bakers' shop owned by Mr Brunton. He was a master craftsman at wedding cakes and any local girl getting married usually had her wedding cake displayed in the window. As well as all kinds of cakes, they made a wonderful potted meat – it would be paté today. It was sold in white china containers and when one took the container back, you'd get a rebate of threepence. It tasted grand. Going into their shop was a lovely smell, just as though a new tin of biscuits had just been opened.

I must mention Dereham's two pork butchers. They were great; spotlessly clean, selling nothing but pork and their own lard, sausages and brawns. It made one hungry to visit these shops. One was where the library now stands, and the other in the market where the office of Green is.

Great was the children's delight on seeing bill poster Mr Peacock aloft on his ladder, posting bills announcing a circus coming to town. These were great events. To me the greatest show was a 'Wild Beast Show'. I'm not sure but I think it was the Bostock and Wombwells show. A huge oval of vans circled the market, the sides let down facing inward, revealing the animals. I forget how much it was to go in. There were monkeys, wolves, lions, elephants and foxes. They stayed a few days and it was so exciting for my sister and I to hear the lion roar during the night – we felt we were in deepest Africa.

Harvest Fridays was another lovely event held the first two Fridays in September. The big roundabouts, with their horses and cockerels going round and round and up and down, was always outside what is now Big Fry. They had a wonderful organ with many tunes and it played the whole day long. The tiny tots roundabout was on the piece of ground outside the Corn Hall, as were the swinging boats. Various stalls were around the market: darts, coconut shies, hoopla, fortune telling and a wheel of fortune giving away smart prizes – big, coloured, teddy bears, tea sets, sets of saucepans, goldfish and lots more to the lucky winners. There was no War Memorial on the Obelisk then, so quite often either the cakewalk or the dodgems was in place there. When it was closing time, around 11pm, the big organ played the National Anthem. Then the fun would start. Stallholders began to dismantle their stalls. The big fair seemed to come to pieces; the odd drunks started fighting. We had very little sleep that night, and believe it or not, every sign of the fair was gone by morning. They had made tracks to Swaffham. Just four council workers with extra wide brooms walking abreast, sweeping the marketplace so as to be all spick and span for Sunday, when all shops closed. There was an air of peace and quiet.

The Salvation Army featured a great deal in Dereham life. They boasted a very good band, and on a Sunday night they held a service and played selections whilst standing on the Obelisk. There was no transport out of town so the young men and boys used to sit around on the railings or lean against the Eagle pub walls and listen to the music, often eating what was then known as monkey nuts. Small heaps of shells would be seen around.

One of my greatest delights was when the Army, on the stroke of 12 midnight on Christmas Eve, would play 'Christians Awake'. Christmas had really started, they made a tour of the town but always started outside my bedroom window.

Two well-known pubs, the Eagle and the George, had good ostlers. On a Friday, which was market day, they would arrange the farmers' carts in neat rows in their yards with all shafts in line and horses stabled for the day. They took a great pride in their work. I have seen a man in his cart pulled by a frisky horse rearing for a run home go across the Obelisk on his hind legs.

One Saturday in late autumn, my brother and I were gathering oak leaves in sacks for my father's garden. Cemetery Road was just a lovely archway of big oak trees: no houses. A man in a horse and cart came by, heading toward Dereham. A while after, he came back at the same time that a half dozen small children came out of a field opposite, gnawing turnips. The man jumped from his cart, took his horse's whip and, one by one, held the kids on the ground and whipped them. They ran shrieking and crying towards Northall Green. This happened exactly at the entrance of the present Dereham Hospital. I was told later he was the bailiff for the Quebec Hall Farm.

Going back to the shops, I must mention Kingstons the grocers. They occupied the lower end of Norwich Street and a stretch of High Street, taking in the whole corner and beyond (now Argos) – always known as Kingstons Corner. I have seen a huge pile of Brazil nuts in one of their windows with a scoop ready to meet the customers' needs. But at Christmas, they really excelled themselves, putting on a splendid display of groceries, chocolate and wonderful boxes of crackers enhanced with Christmas trimmings. All the children could be seen with noses close to the windows. The firm employed many staff and had horses and carts which the drivers took around the outlying villages, collecting/delivering goods. A most obliging family store. My mother bought her salt in nine-inch blocks from them and great fun was had cutting it up and making models prior to putting it in storage jars.

Before Dereham had electricity, the lamp lighter used to come around with his long pole and light the lamps. There were quite a few around the market. They were put out at 10pm.

The Theatre Street Surgery now stands on the site of the old theatre. I never attended a performance as it was closed, but my mother had a friend whom she used to visit who lived at the back of the theatre in a nice house. There was a door which led into the theatre and she would let my brother and me through to explore while the ladies chatted. It must have been very nice in its heyday: velvet seats, a pit for the orchestra, and boxes. The floor was a bit wonky then, and we had to tread carefully. However, we would pretend we were actors. I would stand on the stage and recite whilst my brother would be way back in the gallery. He would shout if he couldn't hear me. We had always been told by my father that audience wanted to hear beyond the front seats. Then we would change places and he would try out his voice. We always came away awfully dirty, but happy.

Another smell, an unpleasant one, happened on Wednesday nights. We, my sister and I, slept with our window open but not on Wednesdays. The 'Violet Wagon' passed by about midnight. We could hear the slish, slosh of the contents of the wagon and the nightman's hobnailed boots as he walked along the concrete pavement, urging his horse to gee-up. There were cottages at the back of the now Boots store that were not on the main sewerages that needed attention.

The cycle and repair shop was owned by Mr Charlie Holman, who was always smiling and happy to see us kids. The smell of rubber tyres, bicycle oil and carbide was a lovely mixture. He would have a huge pile of carbide in the window and would fill tubular tins, wrapped around with his name and instructions printed on bright paper. These lamps, which were a step forward from oil, were sold by him. They were alright until the carbide got wet, then the smell was horrid. He sold bells for bicycles. I wish they used them nowadays for anyone who is hard of hearing, as having a bike appear suddenly from behind is frightening.

When peace was declared after the 1914-1918 war, people did funny things to my childish way of thinking. I attended the Church Infants School and every so often the vicar of Dereham, Rev McNaughton-Jones, came to school. We children thought he was almost God, and then to see him going round and round the market place on his bicycle, trailing a line of empty tins making a hideous noise, was really queer to me. The first day of my schooling at the above school, my mother had made me a new dress to start with. The teacher bid us stand on our chairs, which we did. Coming toward me she said "That's a nice soft dress", and proceeded to polish her glasses on my new dress. I hated her.

by
Muriel Irene Leeds
1912 - 2004

Muriel's father was the manager of Stead & Simpsons shoe shop, which was in the market place, Dereham

Muriel married Douglas Dingle in 1937. He died in 1961, and Muriel later married Ivor Winn, Town Clerk of Dereham until 1974.

MEETING THE ANCESTORS

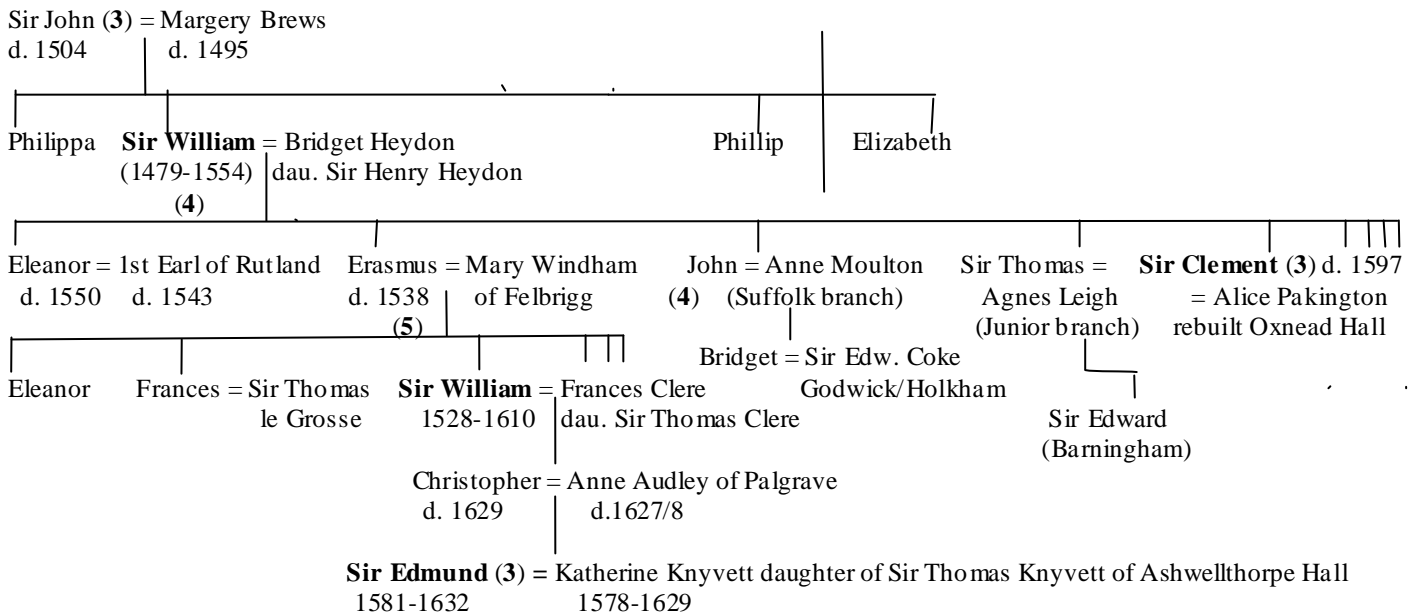


This photograph was discovered in a London collectors' market.
Does anybody recognise this rather serious lady?
Or know how she 'cycled' all the way to London?

Photograph kindly supplied by Patricia Skittrall

THE RISE AND THE FALL OF THE PASTON FAMILY

Peter Bradbury



The numbers in brackets () cross refer to the text

Part 3: The Tudor Years

After the turbulent period of the War of the Roses, and with the accession of Henry VII to the throne in 1485, the country began to recover under a stable government and the restoration of law and order. Following the death of Sir John (3), the male line is continued by his son Sir William (4). There is not a great deal of information available on Sir William (4) but it's recorded that he married Bridget, daughter of Sir Henry Heydon of Baconsthorpe Castle. This was another example of the Paston method of nullifying an old enemy by marrying into their family (ie Anne, wife of Sir William Yelverton). Sir William (4) was 23 years old at his inheritance and had followed in the footsteps of his ancestor and namesake 'The Good Judge', becoming a distinguished lawyer. He was a member of the court of Henry VIII, from whom he received his knighthood; he served as Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk in 1517 and 1528. He accompanied Henry VIII as a member of his suite to Calais for the meeting with the king of France at the famous 'Field of The Cloth of Gold' in 1520. Sir William died at Paston Hall in 1554 and was buried in Paston church.

At this point it is interesting to look at the four sons born to the Lady Bridget Paston. The first-born was Erasmus who married Mary Windham of Felbrigg Hall (near Cromer); unfortunately he died before his father. Both Erasmus and his wife were buried in Paston church where his monumental brass can be seen: his wife's brass is missing.

The next eldest, Sir Clement (3), inherited his father's estates. This son was probably the most adventurous and courageous of the Pastons; he was a great fighting man both on land and sea. While still a teenager he joined the navy of Henry VIII and rose to be a captain of a ship of war. During a sea battle fought between the French and English he captured a galley of the king of France carrying Baron St Blanchard, the Admiral of France. He imprisoned him at Caister Castle, releasing him after the payment of seven thousand crowns ransom money: the galley he claimed as booty. He was knighted by Henry for the capture of Baron St Blanchard and Henry favoured him with the title of '*his Champion*'.

King Henry VIII died on 28 January 1547 and his nine-year-old son Edward VI was crowned King, with his uncle Edward Seymour, the Duke of Somerset, appointed Lord Protector. Up to the time of his death Henry had pursued a policy of war with Scotland in an attempt to convert them to the Protestant religion. In September 1547 the Duke of Somerset, continuing this policy, invaded Scotland. In a small valley called Pinkie, near Musselburgh, he won a decisive bloody battle. Taking part in this battle was Sir Clement Paston who was wounded so many times that he was nearly left for dead in the field. The Duke of Somerset later honoured him by referring to Sir Clement as '*his Soldier*'.

After only six years on the throne at the age of fifteen, in 1553, Edward died of tuberculosis. He was succeeded by his sister, Mary Tudor, the Catholic Queen. During her tragic reign of only five years there was a rebellion raised in Kent by Sir Thomas Wyatt, who marched on London with a force of seven thousand men in an attempt to prevent Mary from marrying Prince Philip of Spain. He was surrounded by a superior force of loyal Londoners at Ludgate Hill and forced to surrender, and Sir Clement Paston was appointed by the Queen to accept the rebel's surrender. Queen Mary possibly promoted Clement to Admiral, he certainly was in charge of some of her ships at Newhaven, and she referred to him as '*her Seaman*'.

On the death of Queen Mary I in 1558, her sister, Elizabeth, came to the throne and Sir Clement, who was now aged 63, became a courtier in Elizabeth's court. Early in her reign she sent an English army to Le Havre to help the French Protestants (Huguenots) and Admiral Sir Clement commanded the English Fleet. While the English were still assembling at Le Havre the Huguenot leader surrendered and the garrison at Le Havre in 1563, after three months' siege, was forced to surrender, having lost a third of the troops to bubonic plague. Queen Elizabeth, who had little taste for war, learnt from this humiliating experience, and afterwards, for 22 years, gave her people much-needed peace. Admiral Sir Clement was now sixty eight, the Queen affectionately called him '*her Father*', but now his thoughts were turning more and more to his estate of Oxnead near Buxton in Norfolk.

He retired from the court of Elizabeth and began to live a quiet family life with his wife Alice and stepson Edward at Oxnead Hall. About 1580 he decided to have a new hall built to replace the existing one: this new residence was later to become the seat of the senior branch of the Paston family. On his death in 1597 at the grand old age of eighty two, he was buried at Oxnead in the little church adjacent to the Hall, where a magnificent tomb, complete with an effigy of himself in armour and his wife kneeling in mourning, was erected over his grave. (The church and monuments are still there, next to the remains of the Hall, beside the River Bure, near Brampton village.)

The next interesting son was Sir Thomas Paston. He was a favourite of Henry VIII and a gentleman of the King's Privy Chamber. At the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536 the King granted Sir Thomas seventeen manors in Norfolk including Binham Priory and estate, Great Walsingham, Dersingham, and Wells. In 1544 he was knighted in the field by Henry VIII after the capture of Boulogne and on his return was elected MP for Norfolk. When Henry was on his death bed he made known his intentions to reward the members of his Council and Chamber. This was honoured by his son, Edward VI, and Sir Thomas was granted the manor of Thorpe next Norwich. He moved into the Earl of Surrey's old house which was built on the site of the Priory of St Leonard, Mousehold Heath (this was to figure largely in Kett's Rebellion two years later). Sir Thomas's wife Agnes gave birth to a son who was sponsored by Edward VI. He naturally was named Edward, and Sir Thomas had the joy of having an heir a few months before his death in 1550. His son Edward inherited his father's estates and in later years built three Paston mansions at Appleton, North Barningham, and Thorpe next Norwich. This family became the junior branch of the Pastons in Norfolk.

The last son was John (4) who married Anne Arrowsmith (nee Moulton) of Huntingfield in Suffolk. She was a very wealthy widow and John (4) left Norfolk to live in her lovely mansion of Huntingfield Hall where later were born two daughters: Bridget and Elizabeth. When John died he was buried in Huntingfield Church where his widow erected a large monument. She was married for the last time to Edmund Bedingfield of Oxburgh Hall, but continued to live at Huntingfield Hall from where her daughter Bridget Paston was married to Sir Edward Coke of Mileham, Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and who was the founder of the Cokes of Holkham dynasty! Their beautiful monuments are in the chancel of Tittleshall church.

When Admiral Sir Clement Paston died he left no son and heir, so he left his estate to Sir William Paston (5) of Paston Hall (the son of his brother Erasmus who had died before their father). Sir William, who had lived all his life either at Paston or Caister, was 69 years old when he inherited Oxnead Hall, and probably feeling the need to escape the cold east winds of the coast, moved to the lovely Tudor house in the valley of the river Bure. So Oxnead Hall from this time on became the seat of the Paston family.

During his time at Paston he built the Great Barn 1581; the barn is still there near to the church, with a carved block displaying W.P. 1581 inset in the wall nearest the road. He was a generous landlord and created a village charity which is still administrated today. Sir William married Frances, daughter of Sir Thomas Clere of Stokesby, by whom he had two sons and a daughter. He was Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk 1565, and of Norfolk 1585; knighted 1578. Today he is remembered mainly for being the founder of the North Walsham Grammar School in 1606, now named Paston College, whose most famous pupil was Admiral Lord Nelson. In the College reception room hangs a large portrait of Sir William, painted in his old age. He died aged 82 in October 1610 and was buried in the chancel of North Walsham parish church beneath a magnificent monument which he designed and erected *two years before* his death. So for two years, every time he attended church, he could sit and admire his final resting place! There is no doubt that he intended to be remembered, and until the 1960s, on the first day of October each year, the boys of Paston Grammar School would walk in procession past his stately tomb.

Queen Elizabeth had died in 1603 and James I had been king for seven years when Sir William's grandson, Sir Edmund Paston (3), inherited his estates. Christopher Paston, father of Sir Edmund, did not inherit: he was judged at an inquisition held in Norwich 1611 as being insane for the past 24 years (the Curse of the Pastons?). His father Sir William had provided Christopher and his wife Anne with a house at Swanton Abbott and £800 a year for life, and they died there in 1628/9 within a year of each other.

Sir Edmund had married Katherine Knyvett, daughter of Sir Thomas Knyvett of Ashwellthorpe Hall, on 28 April 1603, and they had two sons, William and Thomas. The family lived at Paston Hall where Edmund managed his estates, and all was well until about 1618 when he developed problems with his leg (this was most likely gout) and became seriously ill. From this time onwards his wife Katherine managed her husband's estate. She died in 1629 aged 51; Sir Edmund died in 1632, aged 47. Both are buried in Paston church where two impressive monuments can still be seen, one with a life-size effigy of Lady Katherine.

James I died in 1625 and Charles I became king. The following 35 years saw a king beheaded; Civil War; a Commonwealth State; and finally the restoration of the monarchy.



Sir Clement Paston



Nth Barningham Hall



Tittleshall Hall



Bridget Paston



Sir William Paston



Lady Katherine Paston



N Walsham Church

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Events Listing 2013

Please call Events Secretary Sheila Jones (01362 820580) for further information

Talks are held at Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Theatre Street, Dereham,
at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated.

Admission for each evening talk is £1 for members and £3 for non-members.

Visitors are always welcome, with the fee payable on the door.

The Old and the New China *Gill Page*

Wed 11 December

An illustrated talk comparing the modern face of China to its famous ancient monuments and buildings.

Events – 2014

Working Horses in Norfolk *Steven Pope*

Wed 8 January

An illustrated talk about the rise and fall of horse power and its effect on farming. Scenes from Gressenhall Rural Life Museum of the working 19th C farm.

Society AGM

February
Date to be confirmed

The Mysterious Green Man *Mr & Mrs Worton*

Wed 12 March

Exploring the legend of the Green Man from pre-Christian times, and where to find different depictions of him in Norfolk churches etc.