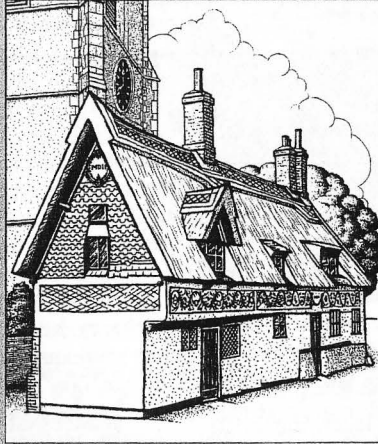


Newsletter free  
to Members of DAS

Dereham's  
Local  
History  
Group



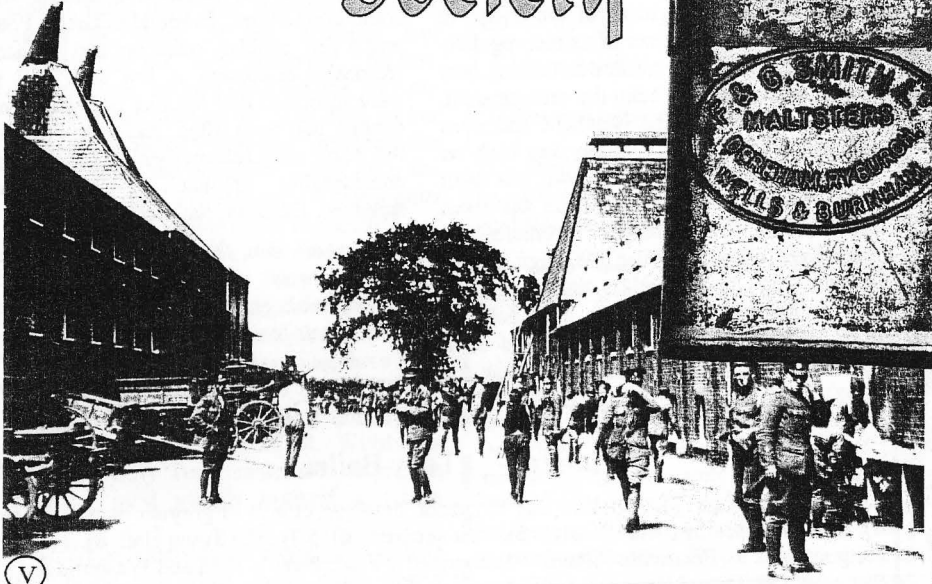
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WINTER 2006

Educational  
Charity No.  
293648

# Dereham Antiquarian Society

Newsletter Editors—  
Cliff Allwright (0362) 693357 &  
Kitty Lynn (01362) 695397



(V)

Quick Quiz

What do the object and the photograph have in common?  
(Answers inside on page 19)



## Letters

Letters will be answered by the appropriate person, i.e. a member of the committee, society, archive gang, museum or muse group

Dear All,

Begging pardon for mistakes this year.

Firstly we'd like to apologize for a repeat performance which you might not have noticed as I didn't until I began sorting out Cliff's newsletter articles. In the Summer of 2005 there was an article entitled Old Well (The Vault—page 19) and then in Summer 2006 it's written as A Mysterious Medieval Well (The Vault—page 20). Sorry we blame our ages or memories, choice is yours. Secondly I (Kitty) missed out the article on the society outing to Peterborough so have included it in this newsletter. Finally—We wish you a HaPPY Xmas & NeW YeAr, Cliff was it you or I who spilt cherry brandy on this computer? I don't know, Kitty but its your computer.

*Cliff & Kitty*

Cliff, we've got another letter. Hurray!!!!

### Silly Roads by Sheila Jones

I was interested in the reference to 'silly roads' in the last newsletter. 'Silly Roads' were not unusual in Dereham. In the early 1980's I was a member of 'Friends of the Earth' in Norwich and went there once a week to help in the office, cum shop, cum drop-in-centre for unemployed post-graduates. Then a gentleman called Jim contacted me about starting a group of 'Friends of the Earth' in December. A small number of us met regularly at Jim's house and spent hours discussing how to stop pollution and help the environment. We planted trees on the Neatherd and even entered the town quiz. Cycling was high on our list of priorities. Then the town was dealt a big blow—the traffic system in the town was re-routed! Only emergency vehicles and buses were allowed to use the High Street. Cyclists were banned unless they agreed to push their bikes; they certainly must not ride them. We 'Friends' felt that this was

unacceptable and decided to stage a protest. We set to work making banner and posters, and then a group of cyclists, with me in front carrying a large banner, proceeded through the Market Place and down the High Street. We had our photograph on the front page of the 'Dereham and Fakenham Times'. Next day we all went to County Hall where we were joined by my daughter and a group of her student friends to swell our numbers, and requested a meeting with some councillors. Eventually Leslie Potter and a few officials came out and we had a reasonable discussion. A few days later we were informed that the ban on cyclists and cycling had been lifted, and soon after this the whole road scheme, which had caused a considerable amount of chaos was scrapped. Dereham returned to normal.

*We assume that, that is the normal chaos. Thanks Sheila  
Anyone else got anything, views, exploits, extra for us to write here? Kitty & Cliff*

### Winner and Answers to last issue's Competition



Answers: -

Winner: - Tony Bailes

1). A Roman Toga 2). A yellow sky at sunset, between clouds of greyish purple. 3). sex 4). Every six months (twice yearly) 5). You sneezed. 6). 5 7). The Town Hall 8). To bring her good luck 9). Bourmville Village. 10). Banyard's Yard, Perry's Yard and Washbridge 11). Seaweed. 12). Harold Hemment owned a sweet shop and was a kind and considerate man.

## Archive Open Day 17<sup>th</sup> October 2006 By Cliff Allwright

So where were all of you? We thought this would be a great opportunity for members to visit us and see what we get up to, but the total members who got to the Archive numbered just thirteen out of a membership of about sixty – and that includes the "regulars".

People have pleaded "We didn't know anything about it", but it was listed in the previous newsletter, and Tony reminded everyone at the Dinner, which was less than a week prior to the event, and I find it very discouraging. Believe it or not, although we enjoy it, we work very hard down there, and we'd hoped that a few members might find it sufficiently interesting and join us, especially anyone willing to learn to take over my own job, which consists mainly sorting all the files full of documents, maps, photos, etc. From the bits I put in the newsletters you can see what a cornucopia of information is there to be unearthed.

Having had my little nag, I'd like to think that those who did come found it interesting. Most visitors' interest, of course, focused around Kitty, who was steadfastly feeding details of some of our artefacts into "Catalyst" on the "new" computer. This new database even accepts photographs, so Kitty takes a series of shots of each item on her super-duper digital thingummy and feeds the pictures onto the computer along with the appropriate data. I reckon myself that it hints of black magic. (*White never black Cliff*).

I restrict myself to the old computer, with the original database that Terry and Bertram concocted (with myself as referee), when the Archive was first set up way back in 1995. At that time all we had were just three little rooms, a steel desk and three filing cabinets, plus one of Terry's old Apple Mac computers, in the annexe to the rear of St. Withburga House. If only Terry could see our present set-up – he'd wangle himself a return ticket.

It would be interesting if those good people who made the effort could write just a short bit telling of their impression of what they saw there. Any offers?



Sue (right) shows Janet some textiles

### What's that symbol on the photos?

From now on a small symbol such as below will appear in the corner of most photos. This is so that the copyright remains with the person who took the photograph and to save on newsletter space. Over the last three years photos have come from various people but normally the same ones. i.e.

- (K) Kitty Lynn
- (C) Cliff Allwright
- (S) Sue White
- (P) Peter Bradbury
- (V) From the Archives
- (A) From the author of the report, letter etc.
- (U) From an unknown source

This should make my life a little easier when laying out the newsletter but keep us in the legal guidelines on copyright issues. Thanks, Kitty.

### Society Snippets



This is a gentle reminder that the annual subscription is due at the beginning of next year. A final reminder will be sent out to those who haven't paid with the Spring (March) 2007 Issue of this newsletter. Unfortunately failure to pay by the end of April will result in the termination of your membership—i.e no more newsletters, trip information etc. If you wish to check to see if I have received your fees please contact me. Thanks. Joan Cole (Membership Secretary).

## Programme Details By Sheila Jones



|                      |         |   |  |
|----------------------|---------|---|--|
| <b>10th January</b>  | Place   | - | Trinity Methodist<br>Schoolroom Theatre Street, Dereham. |
|                      | Time    | - | 7.30pm   |
|                      | Speaker | - | Natasha Hutcheson  |
|                      | Topic   | - | Boudica and the Iceni.                                   |
| <b>14th February</b> | Place   | - | As above for January                                     |
|                      | Time    | - | 7.30pm   |
|                      | Topic   | - | Annual General Meeting                                   |
| <b>14th March</b>    | Place   | - | As above for January                                     |
|                      | Time    | - | 7.30pm   |
|                      | Speaker | - | Janet Smith  |
|                      | Topic   | - | The Life of the Drover                                   |

It is possible that a few extra local visits might take place during the spring, using public transport or 'car share'.

### Reading Room &

### Research Group

All Members welcome.  
We will be meeting at the Archives during the winter once more.  
1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month 11am—3pm beginning on Feb 1<sup>st</sup>.  
Phone (01362) 695397 or 693357

## Museum Special Events for 2007

**Ancient History Discovery Day**—June ~~10th~~<sup>23rd</sup>, 11am—5pm.

**Handicraft Experience**—August 4th, 11am—5pm.

**Images of Dereham**—September 22nd, 11am—5pm.

Also there will be some special walks and tours of Dereham organised by the Museum team—i.e. **A Historical Pub Crawl** with Miss Lucy Elastic (hopefully Kitty dressed up as a Victorian Lodger Lady from Baxter's Row)

Want to know more? Look for details in the Spring/Summer Issues of this newsletter

## Comedy Corner from Cliff Allwright



"Hello, is that the FBI?"

"Yes, what do you want?"

"I'm calling to report my neighbour Billy-Joe Atkins! He's hiding marijuana inside his firewood"

"Thank you very much for the call, sir".

The next day the FBI agents descend on Billy-Joe's house. They search the shed where the firewood is kept. Using axes, they burst open every piece of wood, but find no marijuana. They swore at Billy-Joe and left.

The phone rings in Billy-Joe's house.

"Hey, Billy Joe, Did the FBI come?"

"Yeah"

"Did they chop your firewood?"

"Yep"

"Happy birthday, buddy"

### ADVICE TO PARENTS

Get your own back on your kids.  
Live long enough to be a nuisance.

### MY FAVOURITE CAR STICKER

Is there intelligent life on earth?  
Yes, but I'm just passing through.



## Chairman's Corner

by Tony Jones

Since the last newsletter we have had the remainder of this season's outings which have been well attended and, I hope, enjoyed by all.

Then followed our Annual Dinner on 11th October. We gathered at Hill House—some forty-seven of us including, I'm pleased to say, our president, the Reverend Jonathan Boston, who was unable to join us last year. Bob Davies organised the raffle which certainly helped our funds and I like to think that everyone had a good evening. It was pleasing to have the company of so

many members and to those who were not there I can only say we missed you!

Later that week Lyn Stilgoe conducted an interesting tour of Scarning Church. This was an Arcadian Club event though, of course, open to all our members.

The following Monday was the Archive Open Day. Most interesting, giving an insight into the work being done there, but a shame there were not more visitors.

Well, as I write these notes, Christmas seems quite a way off but, nevertheless, I'll take this early opportunity to wish you a happy festive season and may 2007 be a good year for us all.

## Food for thought

*The final five*

- 1). Once you've seen one shopping centre you've seen a mall.
- 2) Those who jump off a Paris bridge are in Seine.
- 3) When an actress saw her first strands of grey hair she thought she'd dye.
- 4) Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead to know basis.
- 5) Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.

## Museum News by Liz Russell



I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those people who gave up their time to help in the museum this year. Without these willing volunteers we would not have been able to keep the museum open four afternoons a week all through the season. So thank you all very much indeed for your support. It is the first year that I have organized the rota and, although it has entailed a lot of phoning around, I have met some very interesting people both helping in the museum and visiting.

It has been mooted that we should perhaps curtail our opening hours next year if we can't get enough helpers. However, before we do this, I should like to find out how many members would be willing to offer to help in the museum perhaps one afternoon a fortnight or a month on a regular basis. This would make the rota easier to organize and, hopefully, if we get a sufficient number of volunteers we could continue to open four afternoons a week. There might also be members who have not helped in the museum before but who would be willing to volunteer for next season. When I have collated the list of volunteers we can then organize the days we are able to open and the rota of helpers accordingly.

The Museum is the oldest domestic building in Dereham and, as such, is a valuable resource for the community. So please consider offering to help next year. If you would like to volunteer or wish to discuss it further please contact myself Liz Russell on 01362 694566.



Our youngest member Miss Jessica Lynn of Yaxham got married to Mr Matthew Ebbage of Dereham, on 18th November 2006 at Dereham Registry Office. We wish them well for the future.

The newsletter reporters have been busy this time and two have sent in reports of various trips so here they are. N.B. The weather was fine for the Aviation outing as stated in the Summer edition this year. Kitty

### Visit to Peterborough

12<sup>th</sup> July 2006 by Cliff Allwright

Our members arrived at the Cherry Tree Car Park to find another coach parked alongside ours and, on enquiring of one of the few men on the coach where they were heading, I was gravely informed that the ladies in their party were going skinny-dipping at Lowestoft. This appeared somewhat far-fetched when considering that not one of the ladies could have been much less than sixty years old, and even more so when one learnt that they were members of the local Salvation Army. I politely declined an invitation to join them, and swiftly climbed aboard our own conveyance.

And so it was that thirty-one members were whisked away through the beautiful weather to the City of Peterborough, where we arrived just before 11 o'clock, and were promised a guided tour of the Cathedral at 2.30, so we had plenty of time for inspecting the town and having a meal first.

On regrouping at the Cathedral as arranged, our members were divided into two groups and were treated to an hour and a quarter's pocket history of the Cathedral, beginning with its earliest unveiling as an Abbey in 655, only to be razed by Danish raiders in 870, as were so many holy sites in that era.

Its second phase began with its foundation by King Edgar, the Bishop of Winchester, and the Archbishop of Canterbury. This one was damaged after 1066 by warring parties following the Conquest, and finally demolished by fire in 1116. This time it took 120 years to rebuild it.

Henry VIII closed the Abbey in 1539 and made it into a Cathedral in 1541.

Cromwell's thugs badly damaged it in the 1640s, stabling their horses in the nave, which must have been fun for the congregation.

Thenceforward the Cathedral had its ups and downs over the years, with periods of damage, decay, repairs and restorations, and it was saved twice during WW2 by ARP wardens dealing with incendiary bombs on the roof. Our guide also mentioned that there was a fire in the Cathedral in 2002, which I have to admit was news to me. I didn't do it.

So that briefly dealt with the Cathedral's history, but I personally thought our guide's comments on many of the items in the Church of far more interest, and the £1.50 that I'd paid for a Photographic

Pass proved to be very good value, with my camera doing sterling service as usual. Long live digital cameras. At the conclusion of the tour there was still plenty of time either to

have a final poke around the Church or to enjoy the beautiful weather outside, and we opted for the latter, making our way down to the River Nene, with its narrow boats and dozens of swans doing what swans do, just swanning around looking to the many visitors to supplement their diets.

And so our visit ended as it began in gloriously hot and sunny weather, and we climbed aboard the coach duly worn out for the journey home, with our thanks to Sheila and our driver for yet another great day out. Let's hope our visit to the Lincolnshire Aviation Museum next month treats us as kindly.

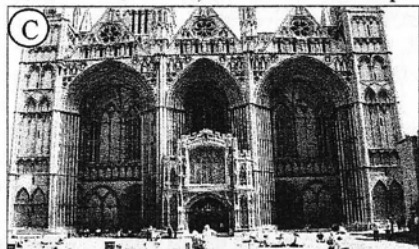
### Framlingham Castle Visit

13<sup>th</sup> September 2006 by Cliff Allwright

This was the last of the Society's summer outings, and attracted thirty-one members and friends for what turned out to be a very enjoyable trip in warm September sunshine.

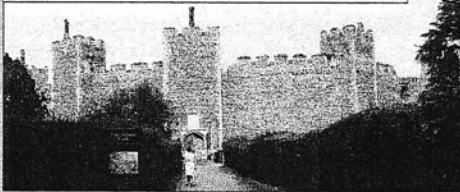
A drive through the green countryside of East Anglia and we arrived in this old Suffolk town at about 11 o'clock, but as our visit to the Castle was not until 2 o'clock we had about three hours to give the town the once over, but priority for most people was in finding a coffee. A small café in the Market Place must have wondered what it was getting as a fair number of us descended on it, soon filling all its tables.

Now sated, we set off in search of other places of interest, and inevitably the most prominent was the Parish Church, which in this instance was the Church of St. Michael, with its 96 foot high tower, where it has stood for many centuries. Parts of the Chancel Arch date back to the 12th century, with nave arches from the 14th and clerestory windows and towers from the 15th



The West Entrance of the Cathedral

### Approach to the Great Gate of the Castle



century.

Built by wealthy wool merchants, it contains the magnificent brightly-coloured tombs of, amongst others, several Dukes of Norfolk, who were the most powerful Barons of their period, and Henry Fitzroy, acknowledged bastard son of Henry VIII. Altogether, a very impressive Church - I

trust a few of you managed to include it in your itinerary.

Time for lunch, and then off to meet up at the Castle at 2 o'clock as arranged. We hoped we might get a guided tour, but that wasn't to be, although we were offered small but very informative portable audio units that told the history of the Castle

as one moved around. The castle with its thirteen towers, was built as a Motte and Bailey fort by Roger le Bigod, during the 12th century in the days of King Richard I, known as "Coeur de Lion" because of his achievements in the Crusades. The Castle walls, forty foot high, which are guarded by the now overgrown moat, enclose an area of more than an acre.

The audio guide took us up onto the walls, offering views to our right of rolling countryside over the Mere to Framlingham College on the horizon. To our left we looked out over the courtyard, the Poor House, and the ruined walls that surround it.

The sole remaining building within the walls was the Poor House, the earlier part of which was built in the days of Charles Stuart, with an extension built in the early 18th century, and with several small sculptured heads believed to be Dukes of Norfolk.

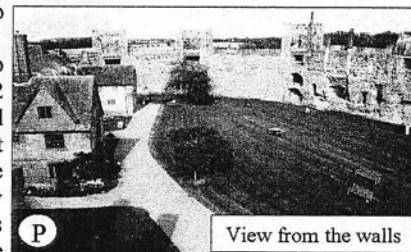
Each tower had an elaborate tall medieval chimney, later restored by the Victorians.

Just time for a coffee, and then it was back on the coach for the journey back to Dereham, to conclude the last of five very interesting summer outings, for which we must thank Sheila and Tony Jones,

who, I think you'll agree, have done us proud.

### Visit to Framlingham by Peter Bradbury

Under a cloudy sky we left Dereham and headed for Framlingham in Suffolk on this the last of the summer outings. Within thirty minutes of the journey time the clouds cleared to give blue skies and we were able to appreciate the lovely undulating countryside as we passed through delightful Suffolk villages with their pink-walled cottages. As we passed through Saxtead village we were able to admire the Post Mill on the green. The town of Framlingham was reached around eleven o'clock giving us plenty of time, before lunch, to explore this charming medieval market town.



View from the walls

The dominating buildings are the Castle and the Church. The Castle was the seat of the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk for hundreds of years and it was here in 1553 that Mary Tudor mustered her supporters ready to march on

London to claim her throne, and unseat Queen Jane (Lady Jane Grey).

The church had as patrons the powerful Howards, Dukes of Norfolk, who on the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII moved their family tombs from Thetford Priory to St Michael's church, after re-building the chancel which is as long as, and wider than the nave.

After lunch we all met at the Castle Reception Centre to collect our admission tickets before exploring the impressive curtain walls and the local history museum within the castle precincts. The castle dates from 1100 when Roger Bigod built a stone castle, and the curtain walls were added in 1190. Most of us climbed the stairs to the "Wall Walk" where we were afforded magnificent views of the landscape.

It proved to be an enjoyable day out and a worthy close to the summer part of the Events Programme.

Our thanks to Sheila and Tony Jones for arranging all the trips, and we are now looking forwards to the indoor events during the winter months.

Thanks boys. Hope you continue with the reporting so I can have some more for the next issue. Kitty

# Old News

by Kitty Lynn



This article has grown from my research whilst cataloguing the old Dereham and Fakenham Times which started in 1880. Continuing from last time—the Scavenging of Dereham Town in 1880. I have quoted the Dereham & Fakenham times precisely so you can get an idea of just what the Town Board was like.

## Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 1880 THE SCAVENGING OF THE TOWN— RESIGNATION OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER

Mr G H COOPER then, in accordance with a notice of motion given, moved “That the Board undertakes the scavenging of the town, and that the tender of Mr Gamble be accepted.” Referring to an observation made by Mr. Stebbings at an early part of the proceedings, that one or two members seemed to have the conduct of the business of the Board, he said he had always been actuated by a desire to conduct the public business for the public benefit. He contended that the Board was bound to scavenge the town this year, inasmuch as it had provided for the money in the rates, and it was unjust and unreasonable now to turn round and call upon the ratepayers to do that which they were paying for in the rates. He was a strong advocate for compelling the owners of property to provide proper accommodation, but it rested with the Board to keep clean the structures the owners provided. Perhaps, after the result of the Board’s deliberations at a prior meeting, he might have been content to let the matter rest, but when he heard the report of the Medical Officer read at the committee meeting, he was so strongly impressed with the general importance of the subject from a sanitary point of view, and knowing they were the guardians of the public health, that he felt bound to bring the matter forward again. If the opinion of the Medical Officer was worth anything, it made it incumbent upon them to do something, and as a member of the Board he felt they had been guilty of neglect in not having done something earlier.

The report of the Medical Officer would go before the Local Government Board, and he should be glad to know that the Board of Dereham was continuing in its scheme of improving the sanitary condition of the town. Mr Gamble’s tender stipulated for the payment of £150, with the use of an extra slush cart, but of this the Board had already provided £100, and as the contract would not finish till October in next year, the Board could, next March, as the commencement of it’s financial year, make provision for the payment of the other £50 required upon the contract. Mr COMER enquired if the proposal included the whole rating district, or simply the lighting district. Mr COOPER replied the lighting district, but he should be happy to include the whole of the district. Mr WARREN asked that Mr Cooper should expunge from his motion the clause for accepting Gamble’s tender, because other tenders had been since received. Mr COOPER, consented to this, and there-upon Mr WARREN seconded the motion. Mr ELVIN said at the last meeting a resolution was carried affirming that the Board should not undertake the scavenging of the town, and this resolution must be rescinded before Mr Cooper’s could be submitted to the meeting. Mr COOPER contended that, as his motion was for the abatement of a nuisance, and that looking at the report of the Medical Officer, this was a case of emergency, and his motion was in order. The CHAIRMAN ruled the motion in order. Mr GIBBS said Mr Cooper had presented only one side of the question. He considered it unjust to the ratepayers who lived out of the town, and who contributed largely to the rates that they should be called upon to pay for doing for others what they had to do for themselves. The ratepayers lying outside the scavenging district were heavily assessed, and he moved that the Board does not undertake the scavenging of the town. Mr BRETT seconded, and after dwelling upon the injustice that would be done to those

ratepayers in the outlying district who contribute to the expense, but who nevertheless would receive no benefit therefrom, said the provisions of the Public Health Act would enable the Board to compel the owners to do that which the Board now proposed to do by contracting Gamble. He furthermore contended that the former resolution ought to be first rescinded before the present one could be entertained.

Mr COOPER, in replying, said those who lived in the town and travelled a great deal by railway, yet had to contribute heavily towards the maintenance of railways, which were almost exclusively used by farmers. When the inspector was down here he was exceedingly pleased with what was being done by the Board in scavenging the town, and whether the Local Government Board would, in consequence of the Medical Officer’s report, direct a local enquiry to be held, time alone would prove.

The amendment was then put and carried by 6 to 2, Messrs. Elvin, Studd, Brett, Askew, Gibbs, and Comer voting for it, and Mr Cooper and Mr Warren against it.

The Medical Officer then said that the report he had that day presented, with the result of

that meeting, he should send to the Local Government Board. Certainly the arguments which had been advanced that day against Mr Cooper’s motion were of the most selfish character. (Order)

The CHAIRMEN – You must not say that. Mr GIBBS – No personal remarks.

The Medical Officer said he would not withdraw the remark.

Mr ELVIN said that Mr Vincent had no business to refer to members of the Board. It was quite lawful for him to make a report, but he had no right to interfere with the way in which the business was conducted.

Mr GIBBS said the Medical Officer had made a very unseemly remark, and he advised him to keep to his business.

The Medical Officer said one half of his salary was paid by the Local Government Board, and it would be his duty to report to that authority the failings of the Board in sanitary matters. He had brought forward several matters of pressing importance, and all of them, with the exception of one, had been calmly discarded. There was thus very little dignity connected with the officer, and it made him very ridiculous. He had on that

(Continued on page 18)

## D.A.S.

## Past Newsletter Competition Volume 3, Issue 4



(Block capitals)

Name .....

Address .....

Post Code ..... Tel: (.....)

**Closing date**  
**24th Feb, 2007**

Please return the competition answer slip form to: -  
Winter Competition, c/o Kitty Lynn, Well House, Paper Street, Clint Green, Yaxham, Dereham, Norfolk, NR19 1RY.



# Competition

Be warned — keep those old newsletters, you could win £5.

All the answers to this quiz can be found in the last newsletter—but to find them you'll have to re-read some of the articles. Ha, Ha!

Lost it—shame it's only a month ago, the museum sells them at £1 each, if you really need one. The prize is a voucher for £5.00 which can be used either as money off the 2007 outings or a year's subscription for the Dereham Antiquarian Society.

All correct entries will be put into a draw and the winner notified and given their voucher in the next newsletter. Correct answers will be in the next newsletter along with the winner's name.

- 1) What ale was sold in churchyards in between the 15th and 17th centuries?
- 2) How many days had Mrs Jemima Steward been indisposed before her death?
- 3) On the 5th August what was it Joya and Anne showed visitors how to do?
- 4) Name the three wealthy families Peter explained about in Church.
- 5) Why did Kitty have a feeling of déjà vu when typing the Jessopp section in?
- 6) What's the name for a person who's both stupid and an a\*\*\*hole?
- 7) Who was born in Chestnut, Hertfordshire in 1823?
- 8) Who's Christmas Window does Joan Cole reminisce about in her letter?
- 9) How much was the sum that for the sake of, the Town's Health would be endangered in October 1890 according to H.M.?
- 10) Where was Richard Bowles landlord of?
- 11) Why does my husband always worry when my left hand itches.
- 12) What happens in the Archives during the winter period on the first Thursday of the month ?

## Answers (Block Capitals Please)

- |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1) .....  | 2) .....  |
| 3) .....  | 4) .....  |
| 5) .....  | 6) .....  |
| 7) .....  | 8) .....  |
| 9) .....  | 10) ..... |
| 11) ..... | 12) ..... |

# A Potted History of Herbs

researched by Kitty Lynn

Widely used as flavourings in cooking and highly valued over the centuries for their medical and cosmetic properties, herbs have long been given a special corner in many British gardens.



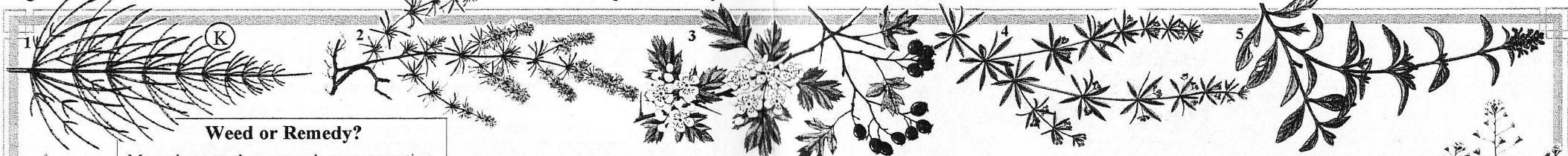
### Medicinal Plants

The formal cultivation and use of herbs in cooking and healing was introduced to Britain by the Romans in the 1st century AD. By Tudor times, herb gardens, like the one above, were well established as sources of healing herbs.

For centuries herbs have been valued for their medical properties and for their role in cosmetic preparations. Sweet smelling pot-pourri, herb vinegars, marigold skin cream, chamomile tea, lavender soap, mint sauce, rosemary shampoo .... all belong to a tradition as old as history itself. And today the use of herbs has become more widespread than ever as our experience of their usefulness has steadily increased with the cumulative knowledge passed down from generation to generation.

Although primitive peoples in Britain added native greens like nettles, wild garlic and plantains to their pre-historic stewpots (as well as relying on them to cure all ills), it was the Romans who properly introduced herbs and their cultivation to these islands.

Most Roman herbs, grown in special plots on villa estates, were valued for both culinary and curative properties. Fennel, for example, was eaten as a salad vegetable and also baked in bread as flavouring. It also doubled as an antidepressant, an eyesight restorer and later a slimming aid to the Victorian ladies of society. In addition to flavouring food, chervil soothed rheumatic aches; sage promoted long life, and grief. Lovage cured almost everything from tonsillitis to indigestion, while spearmint improved the memory. Ground elder or 'goutweed', the scourge of modern gardens, was cultivated both as a vegetable and as a treatment for gout and sciatica. But some herbs, like poisonous henbane – a dog-bite antidote – were important solely for their medicinal properties.



### Weed or Remedy?

Many plants we class as weeds were at one time the only remedy for many ills. Here they are listed by Culpeper's names and remedies, but please **don't use them**.

1. **Horsetail**—It is very powerful to stop bleeding either inward or outward, the juice of the decoction being drunk, or the juice, decoction, or distilled water applied outwardly
2. **Lady's Bedstraw**—The decoction of the herb or flower is good to bathe the feet of travellers and lacqueys, whose long running causeth weariness and stiffness in their sinews and joints.
3. **Hawthorn**—The seeds in the berries beaten to powder being drunk in wine, are good against the stone and dropsy.
4. **Cleavers**—It is familiarly taken in broth, to keep them lean and lank that are apt to grow fat.
5. **Self-Heal**—A special remedy for inward and outward wounds.
6. **Shepherd's Purse**—If bound to the wrists, or the sides of the feet, it helps the jaundice.
7. **Knapweed**—It is of especial use for sore throat, swelling of uvula and jaws, and excellently good to bleeding, and heal up all fresh wounds.
8. **Dock (Common)**—All docks being boiled with meat, make it boil sooner.
9. **Groundsel**—Taken in ale, it acts against the pains of the stomach, strangury and jaundice.
10. **Horehound (white)**—The syrup of this is excellent for cold rheumns in the lungs of people, and for those who are asthmatical or short-winded.
11. **Herb Robert**—All Geraniums are vulneraries, but this herb more particularly so.
12. **Hawkweed**—Good for the heat of the stomach, and gnawings therein.
13. **Dandelion**—This herb helps one to see farther without a pair of spectacles.
14. **Willowherb (Hairy)**—The root, dried and powered, is good against haemorrhages.
15. **Plantain**—It is good to stay spitting of blood and bleedings at the mouth, or making of foul and bloody water, by reasons of any ulcer in the veins or bladder.



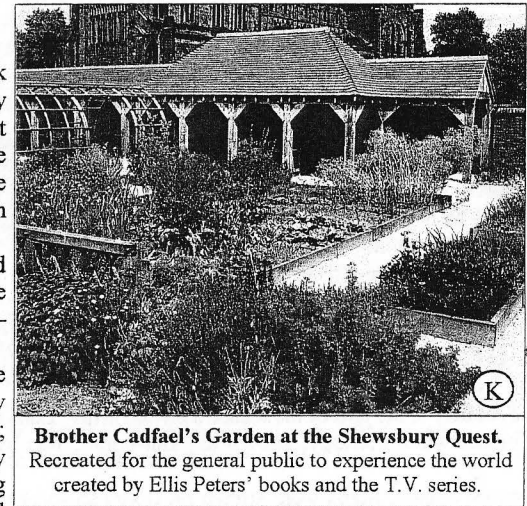
When the Romans left, much of the culinary, medicinal and gardening expertise, which they had instituted, went with them. Many plant varieties, too, deprived of careful tending, died out. But the use of herbs – on a less sophisticated level – persisted; people gathered weeds from the meadows and pathways to supplement and flavour their staple pottage. They continued to value herbal medicines, often practising, cures evolved by the Druids, centuries before the Roman invasion. One of the most potent of these remedies was based on the mauve-petalled vervain, a flower that has had magical associations since Celtic times. Traditionally it was picked with the left-hand during the Dog Star's ascent. It could combat witchcraft and was efficacious against the most dire diseases, among them tubercular King's Evil (this was also relieved by the Sovereign's touch); later, when firearms were developed, gunflints were boiled in vervain to ensure accurate shooting.

### MONASTIC HERB GARDENS

It was mainly monks who continued the cultivation of herbs during the Dark Ages. In each foundation, the monks developed large herb gardens where they grew plants for treating the sick, both in monastic infirmaries and throughout the neighbourhood. These herbs were also used to decorate churches. The cloister at Westminster Abbey is part of the old monastery herb yard, while Peterborough Cathedral has recently established a new herb garden, sown with plants typical of a medieval monastic garden.

In addition to actually cultivating plants, the monks compiled manuals, called 'leechbooks', describing the herbs and how to use them. Herbal cures were often administered as potions – mixed in with ale, milk or wine, or as ointments – made by beating the ground herb into butter.

But there were many other ways of taking medieval medicines. Juice squeezed from thecelandine stems was rubbed on to warts to cure them; clary seeds, swollen after being soaked, were swallowed as a remedy for sore eyes; a garland of violets was tied around the head to relieve headaches; while rosemary wood ash was rubbed on to teeth to keep them trouble free. The oldest surviving English Herbal is the Leech Book of Bald, written in Anglo-Saxon, around 900. Bald, an advisor to King Alfred, was almost certainly a monk. (I have a recent copy amongst my collection if anybody is interested).



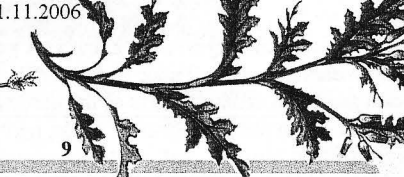
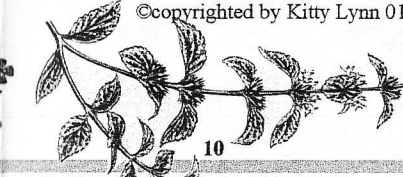
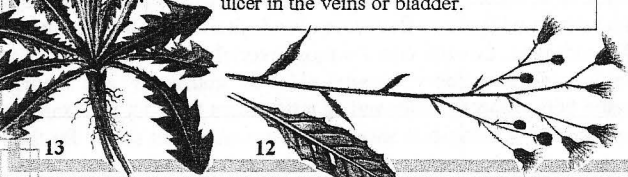
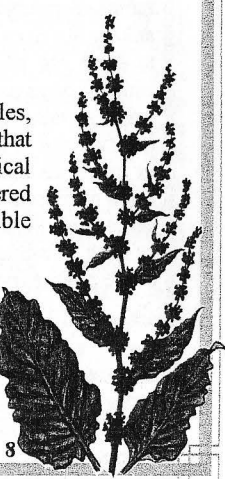
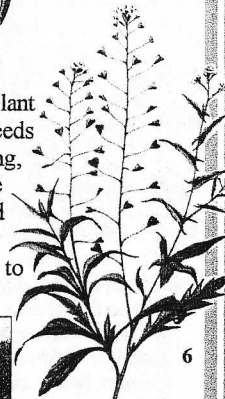
**Brother Cadfael's Garden at the Shewsbury Quest.**  
 Recreated for the general public to experience the world created by Ellis Peters' books and the T.V. series.

### THE SPREAD OF HERBS

The herb habit spread beyond the monasteries and from Norman times onwards, every cottage and farm had its own supply of nettles, parsley, dandelions, savoury, violets, borage, avens, daisies, marigolds and garlic, for use in joute or porray – a thick vegetable puree that had become the standby dish of most country people. At this time, too, simple herbal remedies were imbued with magic and mythical powers. Periwinkle was believed to keep witches at bay; house leeks diverted lightning; wormwood repelled evil spirits; verbena tempered storms and St. John's Wort, strained with the Baptist's blood, was the blessed herb which protected common folk from 'horrible charms'.

At the other end of the social scale, noblemen and rich landowners established herb gardens on their

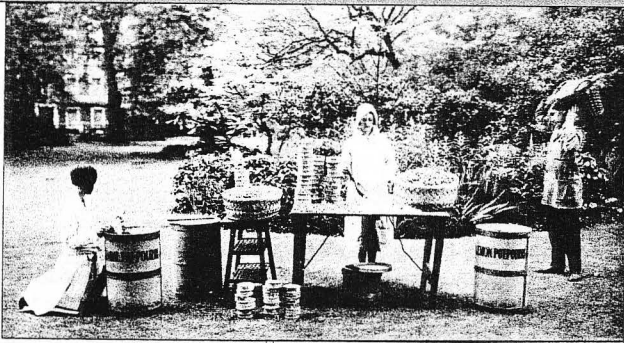
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**Culpeper: Old and Modern**

Top right—Assistants from Culpeper House mix dried flowers to make pot-pourri. Culpeper House, the Society of Herbalists, was founded in 1927 by Mrs C. F. Leyel, an enthusiastic interpreter of the work of the 17th century herbalist, Nicholas Culpeper.

Right—Culpeper, an astrologer and physician of Spitalfields, London, wrote, in 1649, what has become one of the best known English herbals. In it he linked herbs to astrology and advocated a system of natural healing known as the Doctrine of the Signatures, where 'like cures like'. His book brought him into disfavour with his fellow physicians, for it made available to ordinary people the basis of cures and medicaments, which had hitherto been the private and expensive preserve of physicians. The shops founded by Mrs Leyel still exist, but the Society of Herbalists, now incorporated within the Herb Society, no longer has any commercial link with the shops.



estates that were just as comprehensive as the monastic herb gardens. They used their herbs extensively in cooking – probably to disguise the boring taste of salted meat and fish – and to flavour drinks; ground ivy and rosemary were commonly added to ale.

**HEALING HERBS**

Herbs were also used to make potions and unguents for treating wounded soldiers of the lord of the manor's private army. Lemon balm was thought good for staunching blood, while comfrey, known as 'knot-bone', was used to help mend broken limbs.

In castles and manor houses, herbs were strewn on floors to scent the air of badly ventilated rooms. Aromatic plants like meadowsweet, lavender, water-mint and germander were scattered among the floor reeds to combat any unpleasant odours. Pennyroyal, often thrown down wells to drive out pests, was found particularly efficacious in the control of ants and fleas from which it takes its Latin name, *Mentha pulegium* (*pulex* is Latin for flea). At church, southernwood was a popular strewing herb, since it reputedly prevented drowsiness. Even today some motorists hang a sprig of this attractive plant in their cars to keep them awake.

In towns, as living and working conditions became more congested the demand for disinfectant herbs increased. Rosemary was burnt in streets and in private courtyards to purify the air. Various herbs were thought to ward off the plague; a root of angelica held in the mouth was thought to be most effective in this instance, while rue, fixed to doors and windows, counteracted the spread of the plague (possibly true, since rats, by which the plague was spread, detest rue.)

**TRANQUIL RETREATS**

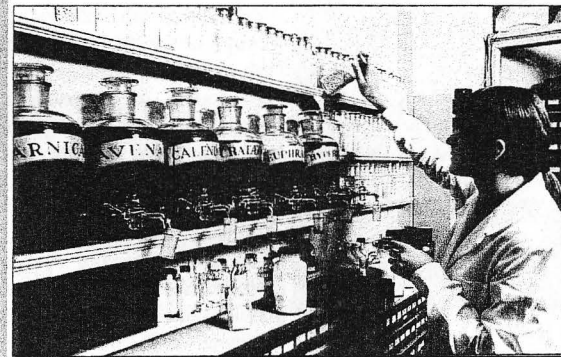
Herbs and herb gardens reached a peak in Tudor and Stuart times. It was then that flowers and herbs were separated and grown in different parts of the garden. Gardening itself became more of an art, and this was reflected in the management of the herb garden itself. No longer purely utilitarian, herb gardens became tranquil and aesthetic retreats; often they were designed as

knot gardens – intricate geometric arrangements of beds possibly inspired by a tapestry or tile design. Low, evergreen hedges of thrift box lavender, or rosemary, or edgings of brick and tile formed the borders of the plots. Paths in between the beds would be laid with different coloured sand, gravel or chalk or sown with sweet smelling plants. Tudor herb gardens also invariably contained 'conceits' like statues, fountains, chamomile seats or sundials, which became the focal points.

The herbs themselves were in ever increasing demand. By the 1500s large houses had their own still-rooms where the mistress of the house would transform the summer's harvest of herbs into essential oils, sweet-waters, bath-bags, flower syrups, vinegars, teas, moth-bags, perfumed candles and polishes.

In the stillroom a whole range of airfresheners – pot pourris, pomanders and sweet-bags, fragrant with rose petals, rosemary, marjoram, basil and lavender – were manufactured. For outdoor use, posies called tussie-mussies were made. Women carried these herbal nosegays to combat offensive street odours and airborne germs. Similarly, gentlemen's canes incorporated a tiny compartment for a phial of herbal vinegar. This was sniffed as a disinfectant. Remnants of these air purifiers still exist – Old Bailey judges still carry floral posies as the beginning of each session, recalling the days when the courts were strewn with herbs to counteract the stench and pestilence of nearby Newgate prison.

In the kitchen, however, the range of acceptable greenstuffs contracted. Plantains, daisies and many other 'weeds' disappeared from the stewpot leaving more or less the same selection of herbs that are used today. Many of those remaining were of Mediterranean origin and their use was greatly encouraged in the 1600s when the influence of French cooking was in the ascendant in Britain.

**Herbal Cures**

In the 20th century, probably as a reaction to the use of synthetic drugs, there was a marked revival of interest in herbal and homeopathic remedies.

**Sweet Lavender**

Taking its name from the Latin, *lavare*, to wash, lavender has always been associated with fragrance and cleanliness.

In the 18th and 19th centuries it was sold by itinerant street sellers calling 'Will you buy my sweet lavender ..' Today the only place in Britain where it is grown on a commercial scale is at Heacham, Norfolk.

**PHYSICK GARDENS**

Following the dissolution of the monasteries, herbal treatments were prepared and administered by apothecaries, many of whom were keen gardeners with their own herb gardens. To ensure plant supplies and to preserve space for scientific cultivation and research, several scientific or physick gardens were established. The first of these was set up in Oxford in 1621. Within a hundred years many purely commercial physick gardens, usually near large towns, were in operation providing a wide range of herbs specifically for medicinal purposes.



The 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries produced a further crop of written herbals. One of the most important, by John Gerard, appeared in 1597. Gerard was a physician and gardener who became apothecary to James I. Equally famous is Nicholas Culpeper's herbal, *A Physical Directory*, dated 1649. Culpeper, herbalist and astrologer, was an advocate of the then fashionable Doctrine of Signatures. Culpeper was influenced in this by the writings of the 16<sup>th</sup> century doctor and professor known as Paracelsus (Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim).



Pulmonaria Officinalis—Lungwort

Paracelsus did not invent the theory but he was fervent in his promotion of it. The Doctrine maintained that 'like cures like' with every plant carrying a clue as to its specific medical power. Thus the greater celandine's yellow juice was thought to cure jaundice. Walnuts, being skull-shaped were used as remedies for head injuries, and blood disorders were treated with plants bearing red flowers. Lungwort, taken for pulmonary complaints, was so named because its spotty leaves resemble infected lungs.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a temporary decline in the role of herbs in everyday life. New food preservation techniques, such as bottling, canning and bulk freezing, eclipsed the need for them in the kitchen. Herbs, like parsley and mint, in daily use in the kitchen, survived but many did disappear from larder shelves. In medicine, too, science overtook age-old practices and synthetic substances replaced simple herbal remedies.



An Informal Herb Garden

After a temporary decline in popularity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, herbs are once again in great demand in gardens, whether grand or ordinary. Informally planted (above) bergamot, rue, mint, chervil and sage amongst others, provide as attractive display as well as being useful in the kitchen

Even garden fashions changed and secluded fragrant corners were swept away in favour of landscaped lawns and borders. And where herbs were grown in quantity, they were primarily used to provide the raw materials for perfumes and cosmetics.

Today, however, herbs and herb gardening are enjoying a new found, if paradoxical, popularity. For the same science, which in the 19<sup>th</sup> century swept aside homespun remedies has subsequently confirmed the efficacy of many herbal remedies. And for an increasing large number of people such traditional cures, combined with the cosmetic and culinary uses of herbs provide a magical link with a far simpler, more natural way of life. That's the way for me.

## Remembering the Times of the Cattle Drovers

This is an excerpt from "Window on East Anglia" in a battered copy of the Eastern Daily Press edition dated Friday, April 12, 1985.

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Recent references to droving, and to a particular drover called "One-arm White, produced some interesting material from a number of readers.

Mr. S.R. Hayward, at Wood Farm, Mautby, told me that as a boy he rode in a pony and cart to meet White on Monday morning to collect 15 to 20 bullocks.

"I can still picture the tall, gaunt old chap plodding along with one or two dogs in the wake and dust of up to 100 head of cattle", he wrote.

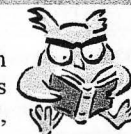
To aid identification, White used to scissor-cut marks on their sides.

"I recall one Sunday morning both White and "Nock" Bracey coming over Acle Causeway, each with a drove, about half a mile apart", Mr. Howard said. If White had cattle for Potter Heigham, they would meet him either at Billockby Bottom, if he was going with the other deliveries into the Filby or Ormsby area, or at Addy's Mill, Repps, if the others were bound for Martham, Somerton or Hemsby.

Mr. Howard also recalled 'Puggy' Smith, Bob Applegate, who worked the Acle and Flegg area, and Jack Beavor, of Ludham, who worked the Wroxham and Stalham locality. Acle, Stalham, and Norwich markets were familiar to all these men.

"It has been known for one of these drovers to bring 120 cattle off the old Cattle Market in Norwich on a Saturday", he concluded. "A good dog was half the battle. Very often they would have a very young dog with them as a learner, and many would have three dogs"

### WEEKEND AT MARKET



Another reader connected with droving for a number of years is Mr. Cecil Howard, of 8, King's Park, Dereham. Now 73, Cecil was born at Welbourne. During his teens, he worked at Heath Farm, Mattishall.

His regular trip involved leaving Mattishall on a Friday afternoon with a collie dog and perhaps 20 head of cattle, stopping over-night at Easton Dog pub, and arriving at Norwich Market early the next morning.

The cattle were penned overnight in a meadow at the back of the pub at Easton, and watered in a pit still visible by the side of the A47 road, not far from the church.

Five or six lots of cattle, perhaps numbering 80 to 100 head, might leave Norwich Market together - "I can still see them stampeding down St. Andrew's Hill - each one numbered with a gummed label"

Herds heading for the Dereham side of the city would "split" at the Larkman or the Round Well. Others, for various farms, might be "split" at Honingham. The journey home was always faster than the walk to market.

Mr. Howard also recalls taking about 50 head from Trowse stockyard - he stayed at the Pineapple - to Haddiscoe.

"It was a hot day, and they got their tails up and stampeded to the river. By the time I caught up with them they were well in the water. It was the worst fright I ever had. They came out on their own though"

Cecil pointed out there was little motor traffic, but the herds did sometimes cause damage to the city. If he moved a flock of sheep to one side to let a car past, the driver might hand him sixpence.

The end of his droving came in the 1930s with the arrival of the first cattle floats. Instead, he turned to lorry driving.

"Droving was not difficult, but you need a good collie dog" he told me.

(Continued from page 9)

day presented a very strong report, and now he had the satisfaction of seeing it calmly set on one side. In fact, according to the past practice, he was receiving the ratepayers' money, and very little advantage resulted to the town.

Mr ELVIN complained that the Medical Officer had presented one sided reports. The officer ought not to have selected a single person's property, but reported upon the whole defective accommodation. Mr Vincent had no right to reflect upon the conduct of those who voted against his proposals.

The Medical Officer said the post of medical officer was such an unsatisfactory one, that he should that day place his resignation in the hands of the clerk.

Mr BRETT questioned if Mr Vincent could resign, his engagement being for a year.

Mr WARREN remarked that the report of the Medical Officer would bring on an enquiry, and Mr ASKEW added that it would be so much the better.

The Board then adjourned.

#### Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 1880 SANITARY MATTERS

The Inspector reported that he was employing Mr Gamble to remove the sweepings from the streets at a daily charge of 10s., including two men and a horse; and he asked the advice of the committee on a further system of so removing the sweepings and the distribution of the carbolic powder. The committee resolved to recommend the Board to issue bills, inviting tenders for the removal of all street sweepings and gully deposits, and recommended that the Inspector of Nuisances be authorised to use the carbolic acid at his discretion.

Mr WARREN elicited from the CHAIRMAN that the question of removing the night soil by the Board was, for the present, abandoned, and the Chairman ruled that this was not a proper time to receive the discussion upon the matter. Notice must be given for the rescinding of the minute which now stood on the books of the Board, before a motion could be submitted authorising the Board to undertake the work. The report, upon the

motion of the CHAIRMAN, was adopted.

Mr STEBBINGS asked if any steps had been taken for remedying the evil spoken of in the Medical Officer's report, presented by Mr Vincent at the last Board meeting, as existing at Bate's cottages, where, with 60 inhabitants, there was a limited privy accommodation. Mr Stebbings obtaining no answer, Mr ASKEW remarked that there were numbers of large establishments in the town as badly provided for as the cottages in question. The Clerk said Mr Askew would remember that at the time fault was found because the Medical Officer had not reported other premises, but had singled out the present one for censure. Mr ASKEW remarked that six months ago Mr Vincent commenced his report with the observation that his duty was a pleasing one, and that the town was in a very healthy state. Now, at the end of six months, he presented a report which censured the Board for what they had done, and stated that the town was in an unsatisfactory condition, and then tendered his resignation. He did not know how to characterise such conduct. The Medical Officer had not given the Board time to consider his report. The CHAIRMAN also commented upon the inconsistencies in the reports of the Medical Officer; but Mr WARREN said he did not discern the disagreements that the members had spoken of as existing reports. He reminded the Board at the time of the first report named, the Board had under its control an efficient system of scavenging, and that at the time of the second and last report the Board had abandoned that system. Mr BRETT remarked that the system had only fallen into abeyance a fortnight. Mr WARREN replied that Mr Vincent had contented himself with pointing out the most glaring case, which showed that the conditions in many places in the town were such that constant attention was required to maintain sanitary matters in a satisfactory condition. The Medical Officer had said this place required frequent attention. The Board had not power to enforce the owners of their cottages to provide extra accommodation, inasmuch as they were built before the Board began its

existence. Mr STEBBINGS questioned if the Board had not power, and directed attention to bye-law 73, which he said gave the Board the necessary power. MR WARREN said the Board had not the power which Mr Stebbings assumed it had. The Board had only the power to empty these places, and charge the owner with the cost of the work. The Surveyor, in answer to the CHAIRMAN, said he had served twelve notices, which had had the desired effect, and some others he had under notice. The Surveyor explained that there were only two cesspools to receive the slops from the houses, and those places filled with every rain, so that the inhabitants were obliged to put the water into the pits, which accounted for the unsatisfactory condition of things. Mr STEBBINGS subsequently moved that at the next meeting the Board shall take into consideration that part of the report of the Medical Officer showing that there was an insufficiency of outhouse accommodation at Bates' cottages, and that steps be forthwith taken to remedy the same. The CHAIRMAN explained that where it was apparent there was an accumulation of manure, &c., which ought to be removed, the Inspector must give notice to the owner or occupier to remove the same, and if at the expiration of twenty-four hours the notice had not been complied with, the Inspector must remove it himself, and charge the owner with expenses. The Inspector had given notice, and the nuisance had been removed; and the same course would be taken, it was hoped as efficaciously, in the future. The motion not finding a seconder, it fell to the ground.

#### THE RESIGNATION OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER

The CHAIRMAN then read a letter from the Medical Officer, written immediately after his retirement from the last Board meeting, resigning his position as Medical Officer to the Board. Mr Warren remarked that the Board could do nothing in the matter, and the CHAIRMAN added that the Local Government Board had also to accept the resignation if it thought fit, as that authority paid half the officer's salary. The Clerk said it

happened that the Medical Officer's term of office would expire on the last day of October, but he explained that Mr Vincent had consented, by filling up a form sent down by the Local Government Board, to hold the office subject to a three months' notice, and this notice would not come into operation for three months. But the Medical Officer could not hold office during a part of these three months, as his annual term of office would expire on the last day of October, and if not re-elected the Board would be without an officer. There were two bodies to be consulted about the resignation, the Local Board, and the Board above, which latter might persist in retaining the services of Mr Vincent. Mr COOPER then in harmony with the explanation of the position given by the Clerk, gave notice that at the next meeting he should move the re-election of Mr Vincent, and a similar notice was also given with regard to the Surveyor (Mr. Nankivell).

#### Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 1880 THE SANITARY CONDITION OF THE TOWN

The Sanitary Committee, at their meeting on the 3rd inst., received the following letter from Mr Baxter, the Clerk to the Guardians of the Mitford and Launditch Union: -

"Dear Sir, - I am directed by the Governors of this Union to call attention to the report of their Medical Officer for the parish of Dereham on the case of typhoid fever in the house of James Bone, shoemaker, of that parish.

*Find out what happens in the next issue.*

The link connecting the photograph and object on the front page is F & G Smith, one of the owners of the Neatherd Maltings in Dereham. The photo features the 2/3rd City of London Yeomanry at their barracks in the Neatherd Road Maltings (c.1915), now demolished and the houses of Maltings Court cover the site. The object is a cigar case probably given to customers as Christmas Gifts by F & G Smith, Dereham.

## Doctor Jessopp, Scarning Vicar

*Taken from the third newsletter dated October 1999, which I found in our archives luckily. One question is the Mr. H. B. Vincent mentioned at the end the same as the Medical Officer mentioned in the Old News section featured earlier in this DAS Newsletter? I think it is but does anyone know different?*

### Dr Jessop on Ecclesiastical Dereham

*The following article giving details of a lecture presented by Dr Jessopp, has been submitted by Mr Ron Fiske. We are sure readers will find it of considerable interest.*

The Rev. Dr. Jessopp gave an interesting lecture on Tuesday evening at a public meeting under the auspices of the Churchman's Society. The vicar presided, and notwithstanding the rain, a good audience assembled. The title of the lecture was announced as 'Dereham and its Parson,' but this the worthy Doctor, in a few humorous prefatory remarks said was misleading. He did not propose to libel the chairman, nor to speak any disagreeable truths.

The lecture was an historical one, and was delivered with the Doctor's quaint humour, its title properly being 'Dereham Church and Parson,' and commenced with the reign of Anna, King of the East Angles, and the foundation of religious houses by his daughters Sexburga and Etheldreda at Ely, and Withburga at Dereham, after their father and brother and the rest of the family had been killed in warfare—200 years after the foundation of the monastery here by St Withburga on pretty much the same site as occupied by the parish church.

There was a fearful invasion by the Danes or Norsemen all over the country, and the civilisation of England was almost obliterated; the monasteries of Ely, Peterborough and most of the religious houses in the land were pillaged, and their inmates slaughtered. Amongst other places destroyed was the monastery at Dereham. In the next two centuries

Ely and Peterborough revived, but the obliteration of the Dereham monastery was complete.

When the monasteries were founded, large tracts of land were given for their support, and it was pretty certain that the land which formerly belonged to Dereham extended from Honingham to and including Shipdham, and carried with it the two very valuable livings of Shipdham and Dereham, and until quite late times the living of Shipdham was one of the very good plums of the Diocese of Ely, and down to the Conquest, the Rectory of Dereham was one of the prime pieces of preferment the monks of Ely kept in their hands.

William the Conqueror, wanting to find out how far his people were capable of being taxed, caused a survey to be made in 1085, or thereabouts, known as the Domesday Book, but the record relating to Dereham was undiscovered until about 20 years ago. Before that time Dereham was put down as having no church at the time of the survey.

It was now known that there was a church in Dereham at that time, surrounded by about twenty acres of land, and that the living was very considerable indeed. The church was probably built about the year 800, and was certainly a timber church, as until the time of the Conquest, the Anglo-Saxons had no faculty at stone working; they were, however, wonderful men at woodcraft, although their only tool appeared to be the axe; this they used skilfully upon wood, and with deadly effect upon the craniums of their enemies in battle, and it was also certain, from the evidence of their early attempt at working in stone, that they used the axe for that purpose also.

Quite two generations passed before they took to the mallet and chisel. There were several instances hereabouts of early Saxon churches; the church at Great Dunham was one, and some parts of Gressenhall Church were the work of the Saxon. There was great rivalry in those days between the Bishop of Ely and the Bishop of Norwich, who was then living at Elmham. After Elmham had



its stone church, the of people of Dereham thought they too must have one, and it was accordingly built about the year 1100, some portion of the Norman work still visible in the fluted column near the chancel.

In those days there were no roads; how then did these good people get the stone here? There was no stone in Norfolk and they did not get it from France. The stone they used was Lincolnshire stone, and this was doubtless brought by sea to Yarmouth or Lowestoft up to Norwich, thence by Swanton Mill and Worthing, and turning along the stream near the Workhouse they brought it quite up to their own doors by the little stream dividing Dereham from Scarning, running along by the bottom of the churchyard.

The doctor explained that the rainfall in those days was five times as much as now, and consequently many of our narrow streams were then navigable with flat bottom boats used for that purpose. He went on to describe the probable shape of the early stone church, illustrating his meaning by diagrams drawn upon the blackboard, and traced the development of the apsidal termination at the east end into the present chancel. The Holy Table was placed in the apse, and the celebrant then stood, his back to the east and his face to the people.

In the beginning of the 13th century the tithes in Dereham were divided, and Jeremiah Caxton was the first rector. There was a great distinction made between the rector and his assistant, or vicar. The rector was always a non-resident. All he did was to take the revenues, and the vicar had to content himself with the tithe egg, the tithe onions, and such smaller articles. The lecturer incidentally mentioned that a similar division was made in Scarning, and for several centuries the Rector was a non-resident. He jokingly referred to the composition of the Scarning Parish Council, and the weakness of the people for non-residents, and mentioned that on the Council there was only one man who was born in the parish.

Proceeding with the lecture, the Doctor said Caxton died in 1244, and Robert Passileau, Prime Minister in King John's reign, an

immoral and extravagant man, and not a cleric, who had just before been put forward by King John for the Bishopric of Chichester, and was refused, was appointed by the Bishop of Ely as Rector of Dereham.

The 13th century was very celebrated for a great revival that has left its mark and effect upon the work of the churches. The buildings were made handsomer, and not only was there a religious revival, but some remarkable reforms were made. The Clergy were not allowed to marry, but some did marry, as he was in a position to prove. The Romanists said nay but he said yea. Several instances had been collected by him from records between the years 1270 and 1290. One great cause of this prohibition was that the clergy in many instances disposed of the valuables of the Church, gave their glebes to their own children and otherwise dispossessed the Church of her property.

Another great reform resulted from the religious awakening. Preaching, which had almost come to a stop in England, was revived by the Mendicant Friars, and again became popular.

The lecturer having given some account of the old-fashioned pulpits and rood lofts and screen, said he had not carried his audience very far, and in fact, had hardly touched upon the parson, but proposed to continue his lecture at a later date.

As to the ownership of the fabric of their church: the chancel, which was of 13th century date, belonged to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; but the lecturer had to the present been unable to ascertain to whom the remaining part of the fabric now belonged. Perhaps some of his learned friends would enlighten him upon the subject when he came to give a continuation of his lecture.

A hearty vote of thanks was passed to the doctor, on the proposition of Mr H. B. Vincent, at the close of the lecture.

*Next time—a newspaper article on Jessopp that we've found in the back of one of his books that has been given to us. Something new for the Arcadians? Perhaps!*

## The Vault

By Cliff Allwright

Another bit of Dereham history, as usual from the Archive. There is an original copy in long-hand scrawl which someone has kindly typed out for us, but unfortunately there's no mention of this kind benefactor or the date of the item. Anyway, this is what it says:-

It was the winter of 1942, when everyone was inches deep in hard furrowed snow. The town was full of evacuees. A meeting was called in Miss Harrington's at the corner of Cowper Road and Wellington Road to plan a programme for a concert by the school children.

As I started out I was asked to deliver a message in Crown Road. Hurrying along Wellington Road I could see Mrs. Galloway coming from Neatherd Road. Good, I thought, I'll have word to say why I shall be late. I glanced down to avoid a lump of snow, and on looking up again there was no-one in sight! There was no doorway or gateway into which the figure might have disappeared.

I finished my errand and returned to Miss Harrison's. I knocked and entered, full of apologies for being late, only to be told that I was the first to arrive. I explained about Mrs. Galloway and was told I was stupid, as the front door could not be unlocked until he light was out! I told what I had seen and she said many people had heard footsteps, but I was the first to see a figure.

We had our meeting and life went on. Although we worked together we never mentioned the subject again.

Now the oddest part. Some years later several of us sat chatting. Someone said ghosts were impossible, so for fun I said I had seen one. Imagine the bombshell! I finally told the honest truth as I tell it to you.

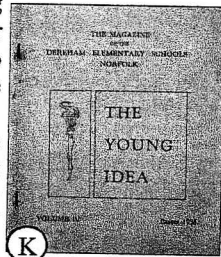
Minutes later my mother, then about 70, said quietly "Your grandfather made me promise never to tell anyone, but he saw exactly the same thing on his way home from work one February evening about 1895"

Terry Davy always intended to compile an

article on Dereham ghosts, but unfortunately never made it. I wonder whether this was one he'd collected.

I was on duty in the Museum around 1997-98 when an old chap came in who said he had a collection of Dereham's ghosts, and I gave his address to Terry hoping that he would follow it up, but he never got round to it.

Has anyone else got a ghost story we could have or borrow? I promise we'll give it back.



### A SCHOOLGIRL'S PREDICTION IN 1934.

Here's an interesting article that I thought quite unique. It comes from the Easter 1935 edition of

'The Yong Idea, the Magazine of the Dereham Elementary Schools, Norfolk' which as usual come from the Archives, and is full of fascinating articles written by Dereham school children.

The article, according to the note, was written in 1934 by Phyllis Howard, aged 13 years 9 months, and is her prediction of how life in Dereham might be fifty years hence, at which time she would have been 63. I wonder if she ever remembered her childhood predictions and compared them with life as it had panned out. Thinking about it, if she were alive today she would be 95, and possibly no longer with us, but I wonder whether there are any of her peers or descendants still living in Dereham. They might like to have a copy of the article, if that's permissible.

I remember one afternoon in 1995, when the Archive was in its infancy and occupied three small rooms in the annexe to Withburga House, Terry Davy, who founded it, together with the late Bertram Harrison, with myself as referee, came across this magazine, and spent the best part of an afternoon reading articles from it, and this was the one that interested him most. I hope you'll find it equally out of the ordinary.

## DEREHAM IN 1984

(V)

Phyllis Howard 13 years 9 months.

Last night I had a curious dream about which I will tell you. I dreamt I was living in Dereham in 1984.

My house, like every other, was composed of steel, cleverly made to look like bricks, and was both gas and bomb-proof. It had a flat roof on which we sun-bathed as much as we liked, undisturbed. Now this house overlooked the large smoothly paved Market Place, at one end of which was a gentle slope leading down into a car-park beneath. Overhead a great raised platform had been erected, from which aeroplanes rose every few minutes, bound for all parts of England and also for foreign towns. They travelled so quickly that you could quite easily spend a week-end with your aunt in New York or have your lunch in Italy any time you like.

From the market went many broad roads, composed of cement, edged with beautiful kerbs, and covered with a soft substance resembling grass which would not wear out nor lose its beautiful colour. Motor cars sped along these roads, but how different were those beautiful "stream-lined" cars, capable of moving at two hundred miles per hour from our Fords and Austins. Overhead thundered snakeline electric trains suspended from a glistening network of rails.

The Exchange Theatre still occupied its corner, but how different it looked with its green roof and front. No box office attendants were to be seen for machines gave admittance to each section of seats. If we did not desire to leave our houses we awoke to find myself still a girl of 1934.

could see the show at home by putting a shilling into a slot and gazing into a mirror.

On the opposite side of the market was a large building containing what appeared to be an extraordinary large looking glass. With the other people I placed two shillings in a slot and took my seat. Presently a robot appeared and touched a button. I looked into the glass and saw there the new show at the London "Magnificent", featuring the return of two old film favourites, namely Shirley Temple, and Dickie Moore. On leaving there I felt hungry so went to a place where once stood the Conservative Club. That had gone but a machine was there. I placed three pennies in it and received a pill which I swallowed. Immediately I felt refreshed and my hunger was appeased.

I next strolled to the Neatherd. Gone were the gorse bushes but in their stead appeared short green grass, and dotted about on this were all kinds of amusements for children, this being a children's park. Every school boasted an open-air swimming pool and a playing field for sports, for recreation occupied a large portion of the time-table, learning having been made so easy.

Wandering homewards, I pressed another button and received at once a neatly printed newspaper bearing the title "Dereham and Fakenham Times". Inside was a picture of a school fifty years ago. How I laughed at those school children, they looked so queer in their old-fashioned dresses. I should have liked to read the account which the editor had written beneath but unfortunately at that moment I

## Dereham Antiquarian Society

### Dereham's Local History Group



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### Newsletter Articles & Letters Address



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Charity No. 295648

## Well I Never by Kitty Lynn.



### VALENTINE

If you see any of the following birds on Saint Valentine's Day it will indicate something about your future love life, as this little chart indicates.

Blackbird: clergy, Redbeast: sailor,  
Goldfinch: millionaire, Yellowbird: reasonable riches.  
Sparrow: love in a cottage, Bluebird: poverty,  
Crossbill: quarrelsome; Wryneck: no marriage  
Flock of doves: good luck in every way.

### SPECKS IN YOUR FINGERS

Specks on fingers,  
Money lingers,  
Specks on the thumb,  
Money to come.

White specks on your fingernails indicate good fortune; on thumbnails means you'll get a gift; on the forefinger, the number of friends; on the middle finger, the number of enemies; on the ring finger, a letter coming or some money to come; and on the little finger, a journey.

But remember, the total number of white specks on your nails shows the world how many lies you've told!  
(I'm waiting for my letter/money then I'm on a journey, Yah)

### BIRTHMARKS

A mole on your arm, can do you no harm;  
A mole on your lip, you're witty and flip.  
A mole on your neck, brings money by the peck,  
A mole on your back, brings money by the sack.  
A mole on your ear, brings money year by year.

*"Kenny (my hubby), have I got a mole on my back?"*  
Reply: - *"NO wrong season, they're hibernating." Mmm !!!*

### CROWS

One means anger, two means mirth,  
Three a wedding, four a birth;  
Five is heaven, six is hell  
But seven is the devil's own self.



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**14<sup>th</sup> March**  
**2007**