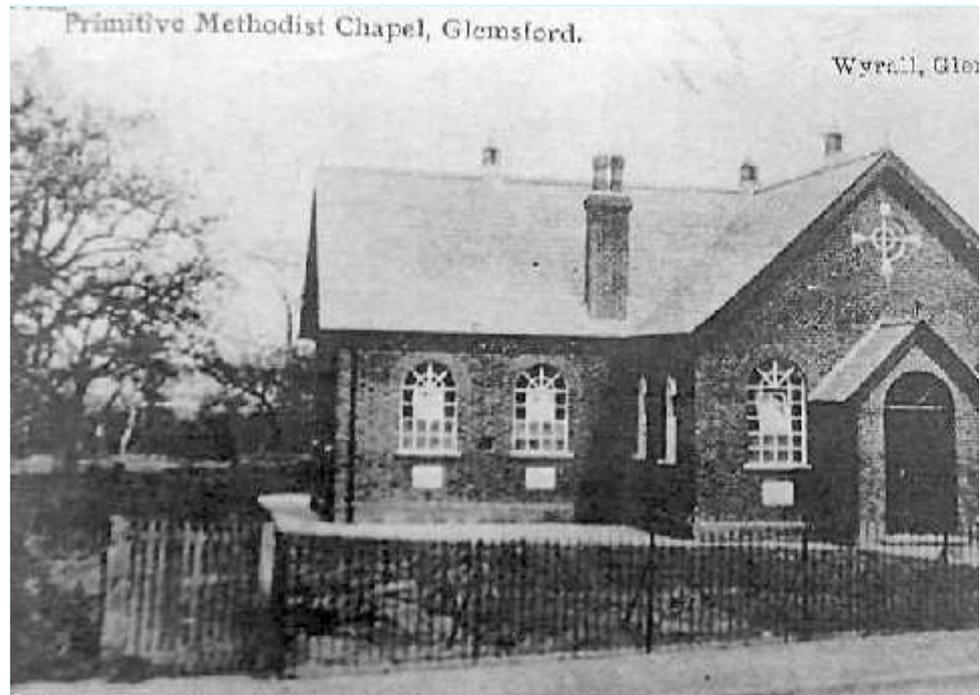


Glemsford Local History Society

from the archives



Society Newsletters: 1995

[Autumn 1994 Edition](#)

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The long hot summer being almost over, we assume, it is time to turn our thoughts to more serious matters and activities for the coming season. Most of you have received details of the speakers booked, and I am pleased to say that every one of them was happy to be invited - no pressure needed:

I am sorry to have to inform you that our present Chairman, Chris Britton, has had to resign from that position due to extreme pressure of work and the traveling that it involves. However, he will still remain a member and attend as many functions and meetings as possible.

Chris, together with Richard Deeks and Stephen Clarke, was instrumental in the formation of Glemsford Local History Society, and I am sure you would like me to pass on your sincere thanks to him for the work he has done. He will, of course, remain the Village Recorder, so his commitment

to history will continue. Stephen, as Vice Chairman, will be acting Chairman until the Annual General Meeting and I know you will give him your support.

The Manor House Museum has an interesting programme of events, some of which you might like to attend in a group, or individually. I will bring the details to our first meeting. Our outing to the museum in June was so successful that I thought it would be nice to do a follow-up event. If anyone has any ideas, or places they would like to visit, please let the Committee know so that arrangements can be made.

Clive Paine is keen to do "A Tour of Bury St Edmunds" or Culford about which he has recently published a book, sometime in 1996.

The VJ Day celebrations and Service Remembrance occupied several members Committee and Gillman Game's book on Suffolk Soldiers was very popular.

Finally, I hope you all spent an enjoyable summer, visited interesting places and brought back some tangible mementoes, or ideas which you would be pleased to speak about on future occasions.

Mary Chapple

Stanford Battle Training Area:

This was an outing much enjoyed by all those who participated, and the story of the area is fascinating.

In 1942 the War Office decided to use an area of the Breckland as a much needed battle training round in preparation for the invasion of Europe. Therefore, at four weeks' notice, six villages had to be evacuated and the inhabitants re-housed elsewhere, never to return. These villages included West Tofts, Tottington and Stanford, and are still in use to this day for the training of soldiers. There is an air of sadness about the place as though the former inhabitants were watching, covertly, to see the desecration of their homes, many of which are marked by a small plinth sympathetically placed there by the MOD.

A flight of steps, all that remains of a once splendid mansion, leading down to a parkland designed by Humphrey Repton, has a poignant air, as do the well kept avenues leading to houses which are no longer there. The whole area is beautifully administered by the MOD and provides a haven for a host of rabbits, thousands of sheep, muntjak deer, stone curlew and sandpipers whose housing requirements have been specially taken care of by the military, together with a rare Barn Owl. Battle training of course, continues and one area, including the lake, is forever known as 'Warmington on Sea', for many episodes of 'Dad's Army' were filmed there.

The Church at West Tofts is magnificent and a tribute to Roy Tricker's

Church Conservation Trust.

This was a delightful tour; we were shown a film of 'how it was' and a video of present day life. Sincere thanks to Eileen Lynch who organised the tour, and to Mrs Anne Webster our guide provided by the Commandant; also to Cuttings Coaches for careful driving round this vast estate.

Description of the tour with Woolpit in next issue - something to look forward to.

CONVEYANCES/TITLE DEEDS

In the last newsletter, Tony Schaffer raised the interesting question of Title Deeds and how to describe them. I have always believed that "conveyance" is the generic term for any deed that literally conveys a property. Indenture is a description of the shape of the actual document as described by Tony, deriving from, the Latin "dens" - a tooth, and these deeds usually begin "This Indenture ..."

Title deeds are confusing, to say the least, and unless one knows exactly what type of deed it is, and what the transaction is about, one can be easily misled; for instance, before this century the word "mortgage" rarely appears - one has to look for a specific phrase, usually near the end of the document.

Deeds, or conveyances, come in varying shapes and sizes, from 12th Century feoffments and grants a few inches long, to the 18th and 19th century marriage settlements, or the lease and release (one transaction) which sometimes runs to 10 large sheets of parchment each about a yard square. Latin, with abbreviations, was used until the late 16th century, but very early deeds may be Anglo-Norman or even Anglo-Saxon.

One of the earliest forms of conveyance is the feoffment whereby, under feudal law, the property was transferred by "livery of seisin" or the physical entry to the property by the purchaser, duly witnessed by others who endorsed the parchment. Over the centuries lawyers devised various schemes (no doubt to their own advantage) one of which enabled the vendor to transfer property for the benefit of a third party, thus the bargain & sale was created. The Statute of Enrolments of 1536 stipulated that these must be enrolled in an official Court. Even more complicated transactions were later thought up whereby a third party inter-venes - the fictitious Hugh Hunt - the purchaser accusing the vendor of having deprived him of the property which he claims to possess already - borne out by Hugh Hunt! This transaction is known as a Common Recovery and with it went a Final Concord (or "Fine") . It was enrolled in the Court of Common Pleas, being in Latin until as late as 1733, and in a very difficult

script.

There are many other types of deeds - charters, deeds of gift, etc.. and many bear seals ranging from elaborate armorial ones to the modern gummed wafer seal. The seal of the Court of Common Pleas is large and usually encased in a tin box. If the deed is a Royal Charter or grant, then the Great Seal of England is appended, and a portrait of the monarch appears in the initial letter of the grant. With regard to copyholds, the title deed is a copy of the entry on the manorial court roll - hence "copyholder".

Old title deeds are fascinating, but now that the Law of Property Act (1925) requires only 30 years' evidence of title, modern deeds are unhelpful and do not contain the information that the earlier ones do - locations in respect to adjoining properties, field names, acreages, state of cultivation, and sometimes even an inventory of the house; in fact invaluable aids to the local historian, if one knows what to look for, and, of course, can read the script!

To go into the subject in more detail would take up a whole Newsletter, but I hope I have given you a rough idea of some of the types of title deeds/conveyances of the past - but have no doubt managed to confuse you even further!

Eileen Lynch

Suffolk Soldiers - 1939

(continued from previous Newsletters)
by Gillman Game

The 58th Medium Regiment RA had batteries at Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Sudbury equipped with the 1918 vintage 6 in. Howitzer throwing a 100 lb shell about 5 ½ miles. (I served on one of these guns in India in 1946. One of our roles was to supply gun detachments to help train potential officers and also NCO's of the Indian Army. The British Army was preparing to leave India and as there was a surplus of 6in shells it was decided that we would use them up on the ranges, so some of us had to retrain to use guns of the previous war.

With a white or grey cloud background, from the rear of the guns it was quite easy to see the shells climb high into the sky and then start to drop onto their target.)

The Regiment joined the BEF in France in January 1940, returning via Dunkirk. It was eventually equipped with the 5.5 gun capable of throwing a 100 lb shell about nine miles. By December 1942 it was in north Africa with the 1st Army, then to Italy until VE Day, eventually being disbanded in Germany in January 1946.

The 67th Medium Regiment at Ipswich was the 2nd stream regiment to the

58th Medium Regiment, formed in 1939 when the size of the Territorial Army was doubled. They saw service in Libya 1941-42 and took part in the invasion of Europe as part of the 21st Army Group.

One would expect to find Gunners from the Glemsford. locality in the 58th Mediums although I believe the village was represented in the Yeomanry (Dermot Goodchild ?) and certainly in the 67th Mediums (Arthur Browne who was taken prisoner in North Africa). Artillery Regiments are not awarded battle honours.

What has happened in the last fifty years to those battalions and regiments that came from Suffolk in 1939?

The Suffolk Regiment has amalgamated with the Royal Norfolk Regt., the Essex Regt., the Cambridgeshire Regt., the Lincolnshire Regt., the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regt., the Northamptonshire Regt., and the Leicestershire Regt. to form the Royal Anglian Regt.

The 1st Battalion is at Colchester with an Airmobile Brigade. This is one of those quick response formations. When those large Chinook helicopters arc over the village they could well be taking some of the Royal Anglians on exercise.

The 2nd battalion is in Germany after recently returning from a tour of duty in Bosnia.

The 5th, 6th and 7th Territorial Battalions of the Royal Anglian Regt. are at Peterborough, Bury St Edmunds and Leicester although it has been announced that they will be reduced to two Bns in 1995/6.

Post war the 58th Medium Regt. was reformed but eventually amalgamated with the Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry, 67 Medium Regt. was not reformed.

The two Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry Regiments together with the 58th Medium Regt. and some element of the Coastal Defence regiments have now been reduced to one battery - 202 (Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry) Battery, Royal Artillery (Volunteers), stationed at Bury St Edmunds. This is part of 100th (Yeomanry) Regiment Royal Artillery (Volunteers), equipped with the 8 ton FH 70 Howitzer capable of firing a. 95lb shell about 15 miles.

This account is incomplete in so far as it only deals with the Suffolk infantry and artillery.

In 1939 there were other TA units in the County.

Gillman Game

Roy Tricker's 25th Anniversary

Three of us were privileged to attend St Peter's Church, Sudbury on the 10th June for Roy Tricker's Jubilee Mass in which he celebrated 25 years as a Reader in the Church of England. As you know, Roy is the Field Officer in charge of the Care of Churches in the Church Conservation Trust, of which St Peter's is one.

The Mass was magnificent, with splendid music and a good congregation.

Roy, as I am sure you will remember, has twice been to speak to the Society, has preached in St Mary's Church, Glemsford and has known Eileen Lynch almost all of his life. His abundant love of churches, and all things pertaining to them was evident in his sermon, coupled with his care of the people who worship in them. Congratulations on your 25th birthday as a Reader.

GLEMSFORD'S AUSTRALIAN CONNECTION

by Sid Watkinson.

I have long been fascinated by the stories of the men and women from Glemsford who, along with many thousands of others, were transported to the penal colony of Australia in the 18th and 19th centuries. I had previously found out from Richard Deeks's booklet 'Those Transported from Glemsford to Australia 1787-1868' that an ancestor of mine, a James Watkinson, had been transported in 1838, so when I visited Australia in March of this year for a family wedding and holiday, I took the opportunity to research some of the records in the New South Wales State Library in Sydney.

The information in the microfiche of the ships log and the nominal roll of prisoners records that he was convicted at Suffolk Quarter Sessions of Highway robbery, he was 20 years old, single, a weaver by trade and could read and write! I subsequently found out by reference to the Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths that he eventually married, presumably after his 10 years sentence, and his descendants live in Australia to this day.

I regret I did not have the time to research any of the other Glemsford transportees but it is fascinating to see what harsh punishments were meted out for relatively minor offences, a sentence of transportation for life for stealing a sheep for example, was not uncommon but it is a reflection of those poverty-stricken times that ordinary people were driven to such desperate measures to avoid starvation or the workhouse.

Sid Watkinson

(It is good to know that James survived the journey and settled in Australia. Perhaps, one day, some of his descendants may visit Suffolk - just a thought)

"... a great man, a simple man ..."

I recently attended the launch of a new book - the biography of Col. Arthur Martin-Leake, V. C. and Bar (1874-1953). It was made all the

more interesting by the fact that the party was held in the house where the family had lived - "Marshalls" at High Cross, nr Ware.

Members of his family had held many high offices in the past, from C-in-C the Queen's Fleet Queen Anne, to Garter King of Arms; they were also great adventurers and travellers.

Arthur was the 7th of 8 children - 6 boys and 2 girls - born to Stephen and Isabel (nee Plunkett) Martin-Leake who at one time owned, and lived at, Thorpe Hall, Essex. All the brothers travelled abroad, as engineers (involved in the Bengal-Nagpur Railway), one in the Navy, others in the Army (the youngest was killed in a ballooning accident in 1907), and Arthur, who qualified as a surgeon and served in the Boer War (where he won his first V.C. and was wounded while tending other wounded), Albania during the Balkan War of 1912-1913 and finally Flanders, where he won the Bar to his V.C., afterwards doing medical work in India.

The most interesting aspect of the lives of these brothers, is that they all wrote home to "Mammy" regularly - particularly Arthur. His detailed descriptions of the events of the Boer War are rivetting - the sort of day to day happenings that do not appear in History Books.

It is appropriate that this should have been launched this year, when we are celebrating 50 years of peace; it has been meticulously researched by the author, Ann Clayton, from his letters (now in the Hertford Record Office with the rest of the family letters & papers) and is a fitting tribute to this brave, but unassuming, quiet man whom I remember driving his blue Trojan car around the country lanes accompanied by his little dog, he having returned home and retired in 1936 from India. I am sure that on Remembrance Sundays the members of the local British Legion marched to church that much more proudly and briskly alongside "Colonel Arthur" wearing his V.C. and Bar. As the British Medical Journal's obituary summed him up "He was a great man, a simple man a character to admire and to love".

I can thoroughly recommend this book to anyone interested in "behind-the-scenes" exploits in War.

Eileen Lynch

("Martin-Leake VC" by Ann Clayton publ. Leo Cooper, Pen & Sword Books 1994)