

# **The Journal of the Framlingham and District Local History and Preservation Society**

**7<sup>th</sup> Series Number 1  
October 2015**

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*Heir of Antiquity! - fair castle Town,  
Rare spot of beauty, grandeur, and renown,  
Seat of East-Anglian kings! - proud child of fame,  
Hallowed by time, illustrious Framlinghame!*

From: *Framlingham: a Narrative of the Castle,*  
by James Bird (1831)

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L. R. Squirrell's pastel drawing of the *Castle Gateway* in 1924 is held in a private collection. Permission to reproduce free of Artists Rights has been generously granted by the artist's daughter, Mrs Annette Kenny

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# FRAM

**7<sup>th</sup> Series Number 1  
October 2015  
Registered Charity No:274201**

As President I am pleased to introduce the first issue of this new series, and it will be obvious to everyone that we have a new cover style which I hope you like. The recent move to providing electronic copy for the printer means we can be more flexible in our layouts, and provide better quality illustrations.

It is 101 years on from the outbreak of World War 1, and we have the story of local man Morgan Watts who joined up in 1915. More recent history is covered by Jo Rothery's article on the Fulcher School of Tennis which flourished in Framlingham for several years. There are also some recently discovered recollections of Percy Stannard who was the Honorary Secretary of our Society in 1953.

The first Society newsletters were printed on both sides of foolscap paper in 1968. When I look back at them, I see remarkable gems of information that were jotted down by people with long memories. If they had not done so, the details would have been lost forever. For example, George Cooper referred to the bomb that was dropped by a Zeppelin, and exploded on what is now called the Pageant Field.

It is six years ago that our historical photo archive came into life, and we now have around 550 photographs, the earliest being from 1865, showing the College before the chapel was built or the statue in place. More recent photos have also been added which show buildings that no longer exist, for example the Bibby's mill complex at Haynings and in Station Road. Although of no architectural merit, they do provide a record of what was there for future generations. Visit <http://framlinghamarchive.org.uk>

The website is seen by people around the world, including many who were brought up in Framlingham and now living far away. We have had several people contact us via the CONTACT section on the site, and recently had an enquiry from someone whose ancestors were butchers in the town in the early 1800s. They were to make a visit to the town, and wanted to know if we could tell them anything about their ancestors. We duly met them one Sunday morning, and were able to show them the location of their butcher's shop (now Panorama), where they lived (The Old Bank House), the pub he later ran (Crown and Anchor) and where he finally retired to (Farriers Arms, now 2-4 Double Street).

It becomes more difficult to find new views of old Framlingham that have not been seen before, but there must be some out there. If you only have one photo, please contact us, so we can copy and return it to you. My contact number is 01728 723557.

I hope you enjoy the new issue, and perhaps be inspired to contribute to a future one. The Journal cannot exist without contributed articles.

John Bridges  
*President*

## FRAMLINGHAM WEEKLY NEWS 1859 to 1939

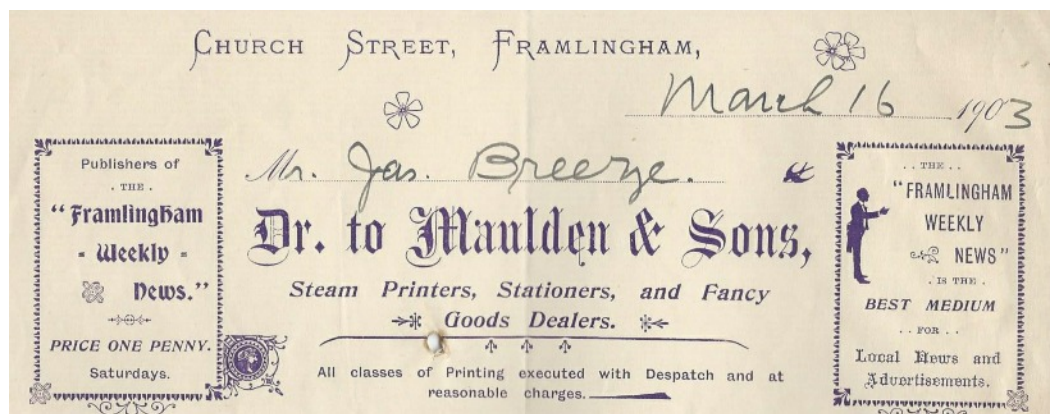


The most exciting news for those interested in local history is that the Framlingham Weekly News (FWN) is now available to view on line. The railway into Framlingham opened on June 1<sup>st</sup> 1859, and on 3<sup>rd</sup> September that year Robert Lambert issued the first edition of FWN as a Railway Gazette. The paper contained

sections of national and international news that were printed in London, to which he added the all important sections on news from Framlingham and the surrounding villages along with advertisements. The paper was initially produced on a hand press from premises in Church Street. There followed a move to Double Street and then to Church House (Regency House), where in later years the production was greatly increased by a new steam powered Wharfedale press.

When Robert Lambert retired in 1896, the business was bought by James Maulden, who was a successful miller in the town, having introduced the new roller mill process in 1891 to his works in Bridge Street (location of present Mauldens Mill). Two of his sons, Harry and Edwin Maulden ran the business. In early 1939 it seemed that production of the newspaper would cease. It was saved by a change of ownership, being published and printed in Lowestoft by the Lowestoft Mercury Company Ltd. This was to be a short lived venture as the final edition rolled off the presses on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1939. By then photographs of local events were commonly used, with the later editions carrying details of Framlingham's Air Raid Precautions (ARP). The cost of the paper was still one penny (0.42p.), the same as in 1859. The digitisation process has been carried out by Find My Past in conjunction with the British Library. The really useful feature is that all 4,154 editions are searchable by entering key names or events etc, to bring up a list of articles where those items occur. Another good aspect is that the newspapers can be accessed for FREE on a laptop in the Bridge Street library, where staff will be pleased to show you the procedure. If you wish to have the convenience of accessing this wonderful archive at home, you will need to pay for the service by going to [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk). However, if you already have a personal subscription to Find My Past, you can access it there.

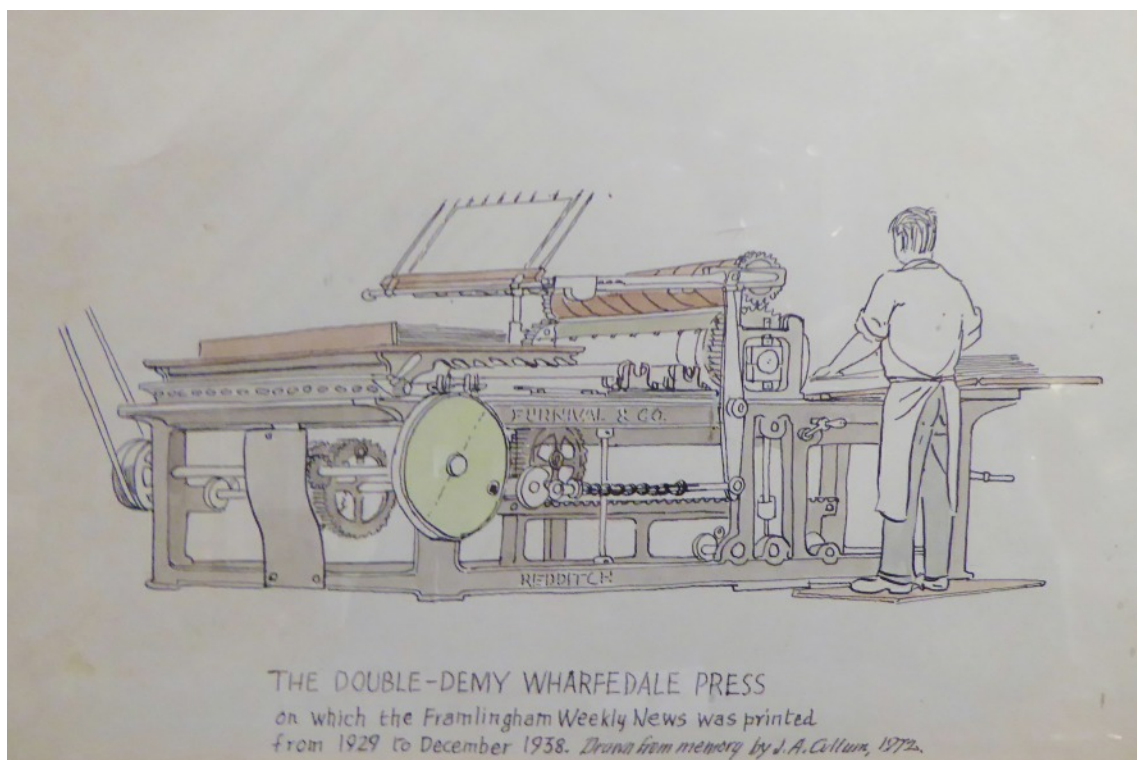
The British Library copies of FWN were filmed several years ago, and formed the basis of the microfilm versions which could be viewed at The Suffolk Record Office and elsewhere. The original films are the basis of the digitised



version, but the new system is far clearer and easier to search and view. Anyone who had the dubious pleasure of winding those films backwards and forwards, and trying to get it all focused and at the right size, will be appreciative of this new 21<sup>st</sup> century method.

The Lanman Museum also has a set of FWN in the printer's original bindings. In recent years these have been kept in special steel cabinets within a store-room in the Bridge Street library, but were not generally accessible. These precious artefacts of our town's history will be moving to the museum's office in the castle.

Whether you are in the library or at home, there are no end of interesting searches that you can make on names, places and events etc. Enjoy!



*(Courtesy of the Lanman Museum)*

*Malden items from the James Breese Collection*

## PERCY STANNARD RECOLLECTIONS

*Percy Stannard was one of the prominent names involved with setting up the Historical Society and Museum in 1953. These notes have recently come to light. There is no date on them but they were probably written in the late 1950s, as he refers to the loss of the rail passenger service, which finished in 1952.*

I wonder how many of you stopped to think what has been lost in Framlingham during the last decade. How much various local activities have been centralised or done away with. Dealing with just a few, we can remember the old Poor Law system where local residents were elected to sit on the Board of Guardians who held their meetings at Wickham Market, such personalities as the late Mr Robert Lambert, Mr John Self senior, Mr Francis Read the leather cutter and whose son owned the tan yard where Mr Leonard Walne's garage is now, plain James Fuller whose letters to the Framlingham Weekly News were always very humorous? And would always express his views in very simple language. He could neither read nor write properly.

What I first remember about Framlingham is we had a Superintendent of Police living at the Police Station in Bridge Street (on site of present library car park), and in November 1906 I had my first encounter with the police. The late Mr F G Ling was at that time Clerk to the Magistrates. I had only been at the office a few days when my employer sent me down to the Court with his bag of books and papers ready for the Police Court Petty Sessions which were then held on a Saturday morning in the Court House. Off I went with my bag and duly arrived at the Court House. My employer had previously told me to go up the wooden stairs which were used by the Magistrates and the like. I put the bag on the landing near to what was called the Retiring room door. Well, I did as I was told and everything that day went off all right. A fortnight later I was sent again to the Court House with the bag ready for the Petty Sessions that day with strict instructions to place it where I had put it previously. But no, our Superintendent of Police, a great burly policeman weighing at least 16 stones was waiting for me at the entrance to the hall leading to the wooden stairs, filling the doorway with his huge figure and preventing me passing up the stairs. He said to me "Young man, these stairs are not for the likes o' you, you will take your bag up the stone stairs". I pleaded that I was only doing what I was told, but he was adamant, and for ever after, while he lived there, I had to use the stone stairs.



*View down Bridge Street with Police Station on right*

Somehow, after my little bout with him, I didn't take to him kindly. He seemed much too officious and threw his weight about in more ways than one. I don't mind telling you I liked his daughter much better than I did him. Her father used to drive a horse and cart in those days and occasionally had to be away from home all night, and more than once have I helped to hump a piano up the stone stairs for a supper and musical evening in the Court House. When he left, we had a Police Inspector, and a sergeant as well as two or three constables. Now you see we have to make do with a sergeant and constables.

About that time too, we had a County Court Office with a permanent clerk on duty, and every other month the local County Court judge would come in his wig and gown and hear cases in the Court House. We also had a local Excise Officer who dealt with, amongst other things, Old Age Pensions, and we had a Committee of local gentlemen who dealt with the various claims. That was in what is known as the good old days when pensions were 5/- per week (25 pence). Then in 1934, on the reconstitution of the various District Councils, the old Plomesgate Council of which Framlingham formed part, was done away with and Framlingham became absorbed in the newly formed Blyth Rural District Council. With this we saw the last of the local Rate Collector and the Overseer of the Parish who made the Rate.

With the coming of the Second World War we lost Lloyds Bank, there was some kind of understanding between banks at that time (no doubt on instruction from the government) that certain banks in various towns were to close down, and here and in Saxmundham it fell to the lot of Lloyds to have to go. The Post Office seems to lose status too, and instead of Framlingham being any office working on its own, it became a sub-office to Woodbridge. We also lost our local Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths, and now we have to go to Saxmundham in case of urgency in that way. Then came the National Insurance Act centralising your Health Insurance cards and benefits, and what was once run as your local Friendly Societies is now dealt with from Woodbridge.

Another serious blow was the closing of the railway line to passenger traffic. We knew that with the coming of buses it could not possibly be made to pay, but it is something we sadly miss from our little town. Our nonconformist ministers too we have lost owing to changing conditions and we have to rely on our friends coming from a distance to attend to our spiritual needs.

Going back to the Police Court, even the Clerk to the Justices is no more, the whole system of Clerkship being centralised and a most efficient lady solicitor now comes from Ipswich to attend at the magistrates Court as Clerk.

38.—Notice to Plaintiff of Payment of Instalment.

No. of Plaintiff *J6062*

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF SUFFOLK, HOLDEN AT FRAMLINGHAM  
AND AT SAXMUNDHAM.

*J. Breese* v. *J. Gorrod*

I HEREBY give you notice, that \_\_\_\_\_ the Defendant has paid into Court the sum of £ = *14 : 9* under the Judgment obtained by you against him.

Dated this *28<sup>th</sup>* day of *August* 19*06*

RICHARD C. MAYHEW, Registrar of the Court.

To the Plaintiff.

N.B.—Upon your applying for the above amount, it will be necessary that you should produce or send the Plaintiff Note given to you on the entry of the Plaintiff.

Hours of attendance at the Office of the Registrar, *Broad* Street, Framlingham, from Ten till Four o'clock, except on Fridays, when the Office will be closed at One o'clock.

JOHN SMITH & Co., Printers, 52, Long Acre, London. 591...330

County Court at Framlingham,  
Notice of 1906  
From James Breese Collection

Another institution which has disappeared is the Corn Hall at the Crown Hotel where merchants and farmers met on market days (then on Saturday) to buy and sell corn. All the things I have mentioned are a loss to the town, in some instances perhaps they are best gone, but generally speaking, they all had their part in trying to benefit the town and neighbourhood. We also had a live and dead stock sale on Saturdays on the Sale Yard in Bridge Street, but this has also gone by the boards.

10. 10. 1903

Mr. James Breese.

**SOLD AT THE STOCK SALE,  
FRAMLINGHAM.**

---

**ALFRED PRESTON, Auctioneer and Valuer,**  
The Grove, WORLINGWORTH, and  
The Arcade, IPSWICH.

| Lot |               | £     | s. | d. |
|-----|---------------|-------|----|----|
| 29  | Fat Hogs      | 2     | 14 |    |
|     |               | 3     | 1  |    |
|     |               | 2     | 12 |    |
|     |               | 2     | 15 |    |
|     |               | 2     | 11 |    |
|     |               | <hr/> |    |    |
|     |               | 13    | 13 |    |
|     | Com'n.        |       | 4  |    |
|     |               | <hr/> |    |    |
|     |               | 13    | 6  |    |
|     | Insurances    | 2     | 1  | 9  |
|     |               | <hr/> |    |    |
|     | $\frac{1}{5}$ | 11    | 4  | 3  |

Sale Yard bill (1903)

From James Breese Collection



THE FULCHER SCHOOL OF TENNIS  
The Framlingham Years 1974-1980  
By Jo Rothery, Earl Soham

Preamble

So, how did this relatively modern piece of research come about? I worked for the Fulchers when they moved to Long Acre up until the time when they relocated to Ipswich. Clearing my garage, I came across a Fulcher School of Tennis (FST) racket cover. Shall I put it in the skip? No, I will give it to the Lanman Museum, in Framlingham. Neither John Bridges, President of the Framlingham Historical Society, nor Bob Roberts, the Editor of the "Fram" magazine, had never heard of FST, and thereby started a chain of events, that culminated with a short paper being given to the Suffolk Local History Council on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2014, and this article.

Sue and Larry Fulcher married on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1970, after Framlingham tennis tournament and before harvest so that Larry could help his father on the farm! They moved into Multry Cottage, 11 Mount Pleasant, (opposite the Framlingham Surgery,) and it was from there that Sue and Larry were to launch the tennis school in 1974.

As Susan Mornard, Sue came from a tennis family on the Isle of Wight. Her father was the organiser of the Ryde Open; her mother was a tennis player and Sue at just ten years old, was not only playing but also umpiring senior matches. At the age of twelve she is credited with playing 65 games of tennis in a day, eventually beating her seventeen year old opponent!! Tennis was obviously in her blood. By the time she was married, Sue had already obtained a Diploma from Bedford College of Physical Education, passing Part II of the LTA Coaching Course at Crystal Palace as early as 1963. For the first two years of marriage she was Head of PE at Kesgrave High School, Ipswich, while Larry pursued his electrical business "RETA" in Well Close Square, Framlingham, coaching in his spare time. A member of Kesgrave Tennis Club, Sue also undertook other coaching activities at clubs and schools. Both Sue and Larry were still heavily engaged in County and inter-county tennis whilst also participating in tournaments such as Framlingham, Felixstowe, Harwich (Open American) and Frinton.

Larry, on the other hand, had started coaching Framlingham College pupils around 1967, and having won a County Cap for Tennis in 1969, he starting to take his tennis much more seriously after his marriage. In an interview in 1973 with Peter Mornard he disclosed that he had passed Parts I and II of the LTA coaching course in 1971 and 1972 respectively, and that he and Sue had together undertaken Part III, the professional course, at Lilleshall in November 1972. Part III was not an examination to be taken lightly. It was imperative that those taking part were fit in mind and body. Firstly, one needed to have passed Parts I and II and then it was necessary to be recommended, have a near-county level standard of play and an ability to demonstrate well. The course ran for nine days from 9.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. and also included a theoretical paper. Fitness was essential!

With all their tennis contacts came the germ of an idea... a professional tennis school. Research showed that there was a gap in the market and the idea was generally well received. As far back as 1973, Larry was already voicing his ideas of county coaching at senior and junior level and his wish to "...start a school of tennis, with all-weather coaching facilities and modern aids." In the same interview, his hope for the future was the formation of a Tennis Coaches Association for all counties. In Suffolk, this last wish was about to be fulfilled.



*Sue and Larry at Lilleshall in 1972*

*Sue and Larry are second and third on the right of the middle row. (Sue with a hair band on)*

The formation of the Suffolk Tennis Coaches' Association (STCA) is an important part of the formation of the FST. Formed in 1973, it was the first coaches' association to be formed in the country.

In June 1974 STCA set out its aims.

- i. To organise refresher courses in the Suffolk Area
- ii. To circulate information
- iii. To encourage and publicize development opportunities for junior players, schools and clubs
- iv. To promote a Performance Award Scheme
- v. To arrange Social occasions, coaching demonstrations etc.

Larry was the first Chairman, holding the post from 1973-1979. Sue took over in 1979 resigning in 1999, the Fulchers between them serving the association for 26 years. John Ager, who would become one of FST's coaches, was also a very long serving member of the STCA. Membership of STCA was open to all coaches and also to those generally interested in promoting the sport, as well as parents wishing to help their own children. In 1974 there were "...over 40 members, [the membership being] open to tennis clubs, even parents wishing to help children..." The organisation struggled somewhat during the early years but eventually gained momentum, with coach numbers increasing to eighty by 1996, and more members taking Parts I and II. The subscription in 1973 was £1 per annum doubling by 1980. Sue and Larry were both heavily involved as players and coaches, developing a year-round training programme and also piloting a Winter Training Programme for the County. They realised that there was a call for more intensive training for all standards of players. Amazed at the response to their ideas, FST was born.

*The Fulchers Business Card*

## **SUE & LARRY FULCHER**

**Registered Professional Tennis Coaches**

11 Mount Pleasant, Framlingham, Woodbridge, Suffolk

Tel.: Framlingham 723590

Secretary Tel.: 723784



- ★ Individual and Group Lessons
- ★ Residential Courses & Weekends
- ★ Restrings, Repairs & Re-gripping
- ★ Indoor Court for Guaranteed Play
- ★ Expert Advice on Rackets & Courts
- ★ Annual Winter Tennis Holiday Abroad
- ★ Equipment: Discounts for Regular Pupils

1974 was a very busy year with the opening of Suffolk's first professional tennis school in Framlingham. In the early years, with limited facilities, they had to turn down many requests; it was a situation they were able to remedy when they moved to the Thurleston Tennis Centre, Ipswich in 1980.

Through their tennis contacts, the Fulchers had ascertained that there was a gap in the market for a tennis school. The business card sets out their aims:

Residential Courses and Weekends  
Restrings, Repairs and Re-gripping  
Indoor Court for Guaranteed Play  
Expert Advice on Rackets and Courts  
Annual Winter Tennis Holiday Abroad  
Equipment Discounts for Regular Pupils

Professional from the start, coaches initially wore a very distinctive red, white and blue track suit with FULCHER SCHOOL OF TENNIS emblazoned on the back. This was at a time when the use of logos was in its infancy; very few people went around covered in advertising!! Later the tracksuits were replaced by two-tone blue, in line with their FST Squad tracksuits. December 1974 saw the Wimbledon finalist, Christine Truman, opening the Fulcher's Sports Shop at 11, Market Hill. The shop offered a re-stringing service and stocked a full range of sports equipment, as well as the wire baskets specially designed to pick up tennis balls effortlessly, and made especially for the Fulchers by a small firm in Ipswich.

To help things get up and running Sue contacted local primary schools, offering six free lessons to children with an aptitude for tennis. These lessons took place at Framlingham Sports Club. An awards system with grades 1-6 was instigated, thought to be the first in the country. It was a system that many feel has never been bettered. With groups of boys and girls, and individual lessons for adults and children, sessions took place on the Mills Grammar School courts (now Mills Meadow), at weekends, and anywhere else that was available. Fitness training was undertaken at Framlingham Modern School (now Thomas Mills High School) and covered stretching exercises, sprints and racket skills, with a form to fill in to prove the work had been done!! Indoor winter training (possibly a first in the UK), began in Suffolk in 1971 in the converted chicken hut at Saxtead Lodge Farm. Very cold in winter, no heating and no lobs!! Tennis normally went on whatever the weather, but on one particularly snowy night Sue has vivid memories of a parent in a four-wheel drive turning up at the house wondering why the tennis was not on!! No mobile 'phones in those days! Whilst all this was going on Sue and Larry were also coaching at various schools such as St. Felix, Ipswich High, Amberfield, Ipswich and Northgate Grammar (now Northgate High School). From their various groups it was hoped, eventually, to form their own Fulcher Squads comprising their most talented pupils. The system worked well, and at one time many of the FST Squad members became County Squad members.

That first year was hectic. To supplement their income, Sue offered bed and breakfast to visiting students at "Multry Cottage". The cottage was so small that accommodation was in bunk beds. Sue often wondered what visitors thought of their chaotic lifestyle. In March FST announced The Suffolk Indoor Championship. Teams from around the county would compete for FST trophies.

Next on the agenda was the Junior U14 Tennis Tournament held on the grass courts at Northgate School, Ipswich. Sixty four pupils took part (four boys in eight teams, four girls in eight teams). "Many of the competitors were pupils of the Fulchers... [the] first and only LTA Tennis School in the county promoting tennis throughout the county..."

The 1974 Countywide LTA Green Shield Coaching scheme held at about 25 different venues, was started in Framlingham by FST. It was a six week course held during the summer on the

grass courts at Framlingham Modern School. It was a pattern for county talent spotting under the direction of Colin Hall. The cost per child was 75p for the course.

One of the biggest undertakings that first year was the Tournament for U12s held at Framlingham Modern School. It was run concurrently with the main Framlingham Tennis Tournament, held at the beginning of August each year. In later years this tournament would move to the hard courts at Framlingham College and in 1986, with the closure of Thurleston, the running of the event was eventually handed over to the organisers of Framlingham Tennis Tournament, and is still an integral part of that tournament today, in 2015.

**FULCHER SCHOOL OF TENNIS**

## Summer Tennis Camps

1978

RESIDENTIAL HOLIDAYS FOR BOYS & GIRLS

Ages 10—14

Week 1 JULY 23rd—JULY 29th, 1978

Week 2 JULY 30th—AUGUST 5th, 1978



Apply:  
THE SECRETARY, FST, LONG ACRE  
MOUNT PLEASANT, FRAMLINGHAM, SUFFOLK  
Tel. 723590

1975 saw the first of the weekly Summer Tennis Camps (two) held at Old Buckenham Hall (OBH), by kind permission of Mr and Mrs. J. D. Sewell. The Fulchers were to run these camps, with the help of John Ager, an LTA Assistant Coach and Associate Member of the PTCA, and other OBH staff until 1984, after which John continued to run them until 2010. When they ceased they had been running successfully for over thirty years! The age range was from eight to fourteen years, boys and girls, with a maximum of forty eight pupils. The cost that first year was £30 per week, rising to £99 in 1983. As well as children from the Eastern Counties they came from London, Yorkshire, France, Tehran, Holland, Hong Kong to name a few.

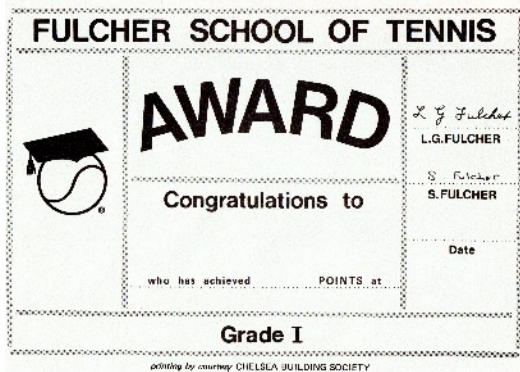
What was on the programme? Tennis was obviously the main occupation but at various times swimming, table tennis, gymnastics, golf and later squash were on offer. Everything was catered for – wet weather programme, tuck shop, camp photograph, film show, treasure hunt, round robin tennis tournaments, the highly popular Saturday night disco and, of course, prize giving! On

sale were T-shirts, pens, racket covers, badges etc. all emblazoned with the FST logo. It was a very modern approach to marketing.

It is safe to say that everyone learned a great deal from that very successful first camp. It very nearly made a loss "...due to the rising inflation since the Course Fee of £30 was agreed Jan/Feb. 1975..." and it was evident that Sue, Larry and John definitely needed another resident coach to help with the workload. John's fees for the week were £33.33, and by 1977 they had risen to £48 with full board.

It was in 1975 that Sue and Larry visited the United States with the intention of studying American coaching methods, visiting tennis clubs and centres, including the John Newcombe Tennis Ranch in Austin, Texas. After visiting the USA Annual Tennis Trade Show, Larry began importing ball machines, holding the sole UK agency for "The Lobster" until 2011.

1976 saw yet another addition to the annual calendar. The 'Find A Champion Tournament', devised by Sue and Larry, was intended to encourage children with potential talent. It was run in conjunction with the STCA who absorbed some of the costs, and catered for children U10, U12 and U14. It was not open to past winners of various tournaments, or FST or County Squad players. The following year there was a record entry of a hundred children. By 1979 "...over five hundred children had taken their first steps in competitive tennis..." The tournament was obviously a great success as it was still going ten years later, organised by Sue and Larry and sponsored by the Chelsea Building Society.



### Grade 1 certificate for awards system

In 1977, with the business expanding, the Fulchers moved to Long Acre, Mount Pleasant. There was a grass court at the back of the bungalow. Stock for the shop was stored in the garage along with the stringing machine which Larry used to repair and re-string rackets.

That same year, John Ager, who had worked with them from the beginning, set up the Deben Junior Tennis Club at Woodbridge. He had noticed a gap in the market coaching the younger players. He used the FST grading

method of teaching and the club attracted 70 members. It has now been absorbed into the Woodbridge Tennis Club.

The Suffolk Junior Club Tennis League ran from 1978 to 1985. It was considered a good way to introduce youngsters to team tennis, and to make transport easier, the teams consisted of just four players. In 1990, after a gap of five years, the League was resurrected with John Ager as chairman and Sue Fulcher as secretary/treasurer. It was sponsored by Ipswich Building Society.

The Fulchers introduced Short Tennis to Framlingham in 1979, and this scheme also ran very successfully for a period of years. Inspired by Bjorn Borg, the five times Wimbledon Champion, it was a pre-tennis game very popular in Sweden, played on badminton courts with lowered nets. Lessons took place in the Sports Hall at Framlingham Modern School. The children, mostly U8s, played with a short racket and soft foam balls; my, how they could whack those soft balls! Nowadays there is specialised equipment with an easy folding net, meaning that play can take place in any space such as school playgrounds and across full-sized courts. It helps the transition to the senior game.

It is sad to reflect that in 1978, planning permission for a house and tennis courts at Mount Pleasant, applied for by Larry's father Cyril, was turned down. It was to have been their wedding present from his father. The rest is history, and in 1980 Sue and Larry moved the business to Thurleston Tennis Centre, Ipswich, where they had three covered courts and three outdoor courts, opened by Roger Taylor. The centre closed in 1985 and it would be another 25 years before Suffolk had another professional tennis school, The Elena Baltacha Academy of Tennis, started in 2010.

2015: The Internet shows that Larry still has a presence in Ipswich through his FST business. His experience of playing and coaching combined with his background in electronics has come together to provide a quality floodlighting for tennis clubs, local authorities and private individuals. Ball and stringing machines along with other tennis requirements are still available.

In conclusion, it is evident that the Fulchers devoted much of their time and energies to tennis in Suffolk and there are many firsts that can be attributed to them; the formation of the first tennis coaches' association in the country in 1973; the opening of Suffolk's first professional tennis school in 1974, the development of year-round coaching and the piloting of a Winter Training Programme in the county (and possibly the country). They took a modern approach to teaching and marketing, and their Awards System for young players may also have been the first in the country. The Green Shield Coaching Scheme and Find A Champion courses were used as an opportunity to spot potential county talent. They were responsible for instigating the Summer Tennis Camps, Suffolk Junior Club Tennis League and numerous other small competitions. It is, however, interesting to speculate. Had planning permission had been granted, would they have moved to Ipswich and would we still have a tennis school in Framlingham?

## Acknowledgements

I would particularly like to thank Sue and Larry Fulcher for their full cooperation whilst writing this article; also John Ager who contributed the papers relating to the Tennis Camps and the Suffolk Tennis Coaches' Association.

## End Notes

1. Scrapbook. Ryde Open, undated newspaper cutting
2. Scrapbook. Newspaper cutting. Interview with Peter Mornard 1973
3. ibid
4. Suffolk Tennis Coaches' Association, AGM, 31.3.1979
5. *East Anglian Daily Times (EADT)* 3.6.1974, p. 3
6. Papers made available by Mr. John Ager
7. *EADT* 20.6.1974 P.3
8. Mrs Dorothy Woodcock of Earl Soham ex inf.
9. J. Ager, ex inf
10. Scrapbook
11. S. Fulcher, ex inf
12. *EADT* 8.3.1974, p.3
13. *EADT* 3.6.1974, p.3
14. S. Fulcher, ex inf
15. *EADT* 1974
16. Framlingham Tennis Tournament 1993 Centenary Tournament Brochure, p.30
17. J. Ager, ex inf
18. ibid
19. ibid
20. S. Fulcher. Email dated 16.12.2014
21. STCA AGM, 31.1.1979
22. S. Fulcher, email 16.12.2014

## SOURCES

### (a) The Fulchers

- a. Verbal
- b. Original documents
- c. Newspaper cuttings scrapbook

### (b) John Ager (papers relating to summer camps and STCA)

### (c) Mrs Dorothy Woodcock, Mrs Gay Clarke and other parents

### (d) East Anglian Daily Times (EADT)

### (e) James Lightfoot (Chairman, Framlingham Tennis Tournament 2014)

### (h) Christopher Bushby, director of Suffolk Show

MORGAN WATTS  
A Story of Motoring and the Great War  
by John F Bridges

In preparing the Society's tribute to Framlingham in the Great War, one of the difficulties was to find substantial information on local men who returned to their home town. They all died many years ago and invariably left little to record their part in that great conflict. Back in 1985, I made an attempt to record some local reminiscences about Framlingham and approached Morgan Watts who lived in Albert Road. After my visits I had several hours of tape recordings, which now form an important record of how local and international events moulded his formative years. At the outset I had no knowledge of his involvement with AG Potter, or that he had served in the First World War. The picture slowly unfolded when the tape transcripts were put together.

Morgan Russell Watts was born at Cold Fair Green, Knodishall on May 13<sup>th</sup> 1894. Ironically, he died in 1986 in a Rest Home also in Knodishall. When he was two years of age, the family moved to Wickham Market when his father got the job as steam engine operator at Rackham's mill, where a new Whitmore and Binyon roller mill had been installed in 1893. (The Whitmore and Binyon factory was only just along the road, the entrance still visible by the gate posts with spiked balls on top).

Leaving school at thirteen, he was keen to be involved with bicycles and if possible the 'new fangled' motor car, which could now use the road at speeds up to 20 mph. Such vehicles were rarely seen, and even on the 'turnpike' (as Morgan called what is now the A12), the approach of a car was evident by the large cloud of dust thrown up from the unmade road. A motor garage opened in 1906 in Wickham Market run by Mr Castell who was an agent for the Talbot Car Company. This purpose-built garage was at the bottom of the hill, and later used by Potters, and was recently demolished to make way for housing. Morgan applied to work there, but the job had already been filled. However, his brother was working at Dew's bakery in Double Street, and heard that there was job going with Mr AG Potter who had set up his business as a basket maker in Well Close Square in 1898, but was now also dealing in bicycles. This was just the opportunity he had been looking for, and was taken on as the first person on the payroll in 1907. Initially he cycled in every day from Wickham Market, arriving at 8 am and leaving at 7 pm.



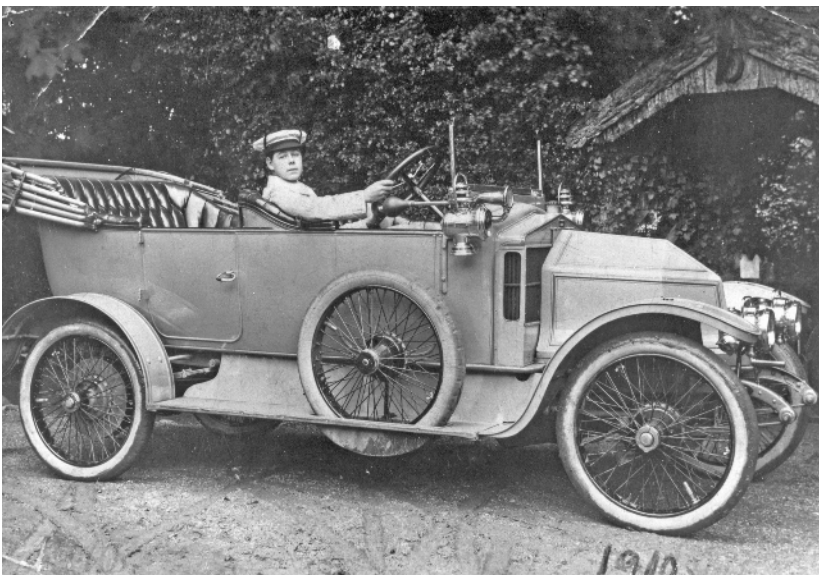
*Potter family with the AC Sociable in Brook Lane. Morgan is second from left at back*

By this time AG (as he was usually known) was living in Tomb House, using the old Reading Room in Brook Lane as his workshop, and running a three-wheeled AC Sociable car. He built a new workshop on the corner of Station Road and Brook Lane (commonly called Potter's Lane for many years).

Morgan's mechanical skills were being well developed, but he was quick to avoid any involvement with basket making! Although there were few cars about, there was already competition in the town for servicing them, as Charles Garrard had opened the first garage in 1900 (The present Coach House in Fore Street). He had been set up as an ironmonger (present Bridges and Garrards shop) with the help of his father Hatsell who had a prominent grocery business on the Market Hill. Consequently Garrard was able to develop his new line of motor garage quicker than AG, and became agent for prestigious makes such as Argyll, Gladiator and Napier, then by Ford around 1908, although this was prior to the Model T.

It is difficult to comprehend the difficulties faced by the early motorists. Petrol was brought to Framlingham in two-gallon cans on the back of a horse-drawn wagon, from the Anglo American Oil Co. depot at Campsea Ashe station. Punctures were very common due to the unmade roads having sharp stones and many nails from horses' shoes. The tube usually had to be patched with the wheel still in place, as in the early days they were not generally detachable from the axles. Engines were also temperamental, and there were few people around who knew anything about them.

After a couple of years Morgan was tempted away from his employer by the offer of becoming chauffeur to Alfred Preston, the local auctioneer. Professional people were buying cars but needed to employ the services of a mechanic and chauffeur. The attraction to Morgan was of course a brand new expensive car. The Siddeley Deasy cost around £900 (over twenty years wages for a farm worker). Although he was provided with full board and food plus ten shillings (50 pence) a week, he soon tired of the long periods of waiting for his boss at auctions and farm visits etc., and decided to pack it in after eleven months. There had been an understanding with AG, and he returned to work for him again. Dr Jeaffreson also wanted him to be his chauffeur, and swore at him when he refused. Not many people have decided to give up a career as a chauffeur when just sixteen years old!



*Morgan at the wheel of Alfred Preston's Siddeley Deasy*

Morgan soon settled back into his old job, with more involvement with cars and motorcycles, along with AG's own make of bicycle, the 'Fram'. The business was growing, and in 1913 Potter became a Ford sub-dealer under Charles Garrard. He was contracted to sell three cars a year in an area that was based on a two mile radius of the railway station. In that same year, Morgan married Hetty Self.

It was only a year later when that incident in Sarajevo would lead to the start of the Great War. Morgan recalled that the declaration of war seemed to happen rather suddenly,



and trade became flat soon after. He had seen adverts recruiting for Despatch Riders, but you needed to own your own motorcycle. AG was the agent for Bradbury motorcycles and told him he could have one if he was accepted. He went to Ipswich to enlist, but was confronted by a very long line of people in front of him, and had to wait several weeks until January 1915, and then not as a Despatch Rider. He went, along with two of his work-mates, Bob Hawes and Walter Godbold to Cambridge, where they were examined for Mechanical Transport, and would be getting six shillings (30 pence) a day, compared with his usual pay of six pence (2.5 new pence).

From there, they went directly by train to Grove Park, near Bromley in Kent, where they were all put in a mobilisation block. Struggling to put on his puttees, he had to be on parade at 6am the next day when the first 100 drivers were counted off and would soon make their way overseas. Morgan was not one of them, but volunteered to go to Catford and collect a Daimler 'Silent Knight' 3 ton lorry. The next day he was detailed to drive it to the new LGO (London General Omnibus) garage at the Woolwich Arsenal. He remained there with the 274 Company Royal Army Service Corps (ASC) for the next eighteen months. While he was based at Woolwich, the family came and stayed in digs on Plumstead Common, and he was able to get a 'sleeping out' pass. Their son Russell had been born in January 1915, and Jack in September 1916.

There were steam engines, motor cars, motorcycles, lorries and three-wheelers there, which would become the largest home services depot. It was mechanical bliss for this young



*Driving the Belsize lorry while based at Woolwich*

country man, but there were hidden dangers. On one occasion, while rushing to get a load to Woolwich North station, he jumped out of the lorry, but the running board was missing. His hand was trapped in a carriage handle and severely injured. Several bones were broken and hospital treatment was needed for many weeks.

November 1916 saw them leaving Woolwich en-route to Southampton and France. The ship was overloaded and initial attempts to leave were thwarted due to submarine activity. They were eventually led to Le Havre by a destroyer on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Conditions on board were very bad, and compounded by not being let ashore for a long time after arrival. Their first move was to the ASC depot at Rouen, where he was classified as a 'first class driver', and would be selected for transport duties to the lines when required. After a few days he moved to Albert where he saw the dislodged crucifix on the church caused by shelling. The well known story was that if the 'Leaning Virgin' fell, the war would end. It was finally knocked down by British shellfire in 1918.

Just before Christmas 1916, Morgan joined the 88 Anti-Aircraft (AA) Battery which was attached to the 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Division on the Somme. Heavy rain had created difficult conditions, being knee deep in mud and having to sleep in tents. Their new driver was soon in the thick of it, and quickly learning all about these lorries with Anti Aircraft guns fixed to them. They usually had to leave their base at 3am to reach the forward lines in open country. There were two AA lorries, a Ford Model T van and another lorry, and were always first to arrive and last to leave. The lorry-mounted gun was in its infancy. It was essentially a 13 lb artillery gun bolted onto a strengthened lorry chassis with slide out jacks to control the gun recoil. Thorneycroft lorries were initially used, but problems with gearboxes and drive shafts saw a change to American chain driven lorries.

The 18 lb charge for the shell was fitted with a timed fuse. A key was used to alter the timing as required, before giving the shell to the loader to put in the breech. The Barr and Stroud range finders were about six feet long, and used to check the range of an enemy aircraft. A typical command would give the distance, direction, angle and fuse setting, followed by three shots before taking corrections". The plane inevitably changed direction, and Morgan recalled that they rarely hit anything.

He also had to do 'plane spotting', when he would have to lay on his back for an hour and look up for any enemy aircraft. Observation balloons were also sent up from lorries, and the AA unit would have to provide covering fire if attacked by aircraft. The observer would then jump out of the balloon and often had to screw his parachute to avoid drifting over the German trenches. Being an observer was clearly not a popular job. One Major would take up officers for instruction purposes, and sometimes had to kick their knuckles to make sure they would jump. Another time, they forgot to bring the balloon down in a thunder storm, and it was struck by lightning.

The AA lorries were always on the move. Jack O'Hara was a driver Morgan knew well, and was sent in a lorry to collect more ammunition. He later recalled how he was slithering along a mud covered road which had been constructed by the Germans from wooden sleepers. Unbeknown to him, there was a battery of 18 pounder guns half buried either side of that road. The salvos were fired just as he was going past, which completely blew the tarpaulins off the lorry, and deeply shocked him. Jack was keen to stay with the gun rather than doing these hair raising deliveries. The AA guns eventually took up position next to the 3<sup>rd</sup> line of infantry, who then moved up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> line. The infantry did not want to be near the AA guns as they were always a target for the German artillery.

One morning, a German plane spotted them and opened fire with its machine gun. They quickly got off the lorry and took cover below it. The officer on duty should have reported it, but did not do so and went off duty. Suddenly the air was full of 'coal boxes', these being shells that exploded with much black smoke, and were sent to gauge the location of the enemy. Morgan was sure this was a consequence of the recent aerial action. Further shells then exploded around them, with one very close to the front of their lorry. They needed to move position quickly, but the lorry in front was blocking the way. Before they could move, they also had to bring in the recoil jacks which were chained to the lorry. The second driver was on the running board and holding on to the oil lamp bracket when another shell exploded. The shrapnel went through the bonnet, and blew off the lower arm and part of the second driver's chest. Morgan was now desperately trying to extricate the lorry and get the wounded driver to the dressing station, but Jack O'Hara was dead when he got there. All he could do was wash the blood off the lorry and return to his position again.

The crew of the anti-aircraft lorry consisted of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> drivers, range finder, limber gunner and breech loader. They moved around a lot, and were always at risk being in the forward positions. According to his army record, he was caught in a gas attack in March 1918, and was hospitalised for about three weeks. He returned to J AA Battery and was on the move again, eventually taking their gun along the badly cratered roads into Lille. They were well in advance of the infantry and welcomed into the town by the French people.

Eventually, news came through that the Armistice had been signed, but it would be some time before troops were demobilised. The ASC were to go to the Rhine, and Morgan transferred there to work on the Four Wheel Drive lorries. In January 1919, he got his first leave, and on reaching Dover got a train to London and stayed overnight in the Salvation Army hostel. The next day he was on the first train from Liverpool Street and soon back in Framlingham. While in France he had been getting six shillings (30 pence) a day, and sending back 28 shillings (£1.40) a week to his wife and family.

AG now wanted him to stay and work for him again, as there was quite a backlog of work, partly due to the shortage of spare parts for bicycles. They went to the Ipswich Labour Exchange in order to get his papers endorsed for his release. He then had to return to Woolwich Arsenal with his release papers, and then onto the dispersal camp at Thetford. They were not best pleased to know he had left his rifle and all equipment in France.

Back in Framlingham, there was a knock on the door. Superintendent Mann was standing outside with a warrant for Morgan's arrest, which claimed he should be in France. They

**IF FOUND, please drop this Certificate in a Post Office letter box.** Army Form E. 11.  
**NOTICE.**—This document is Government property. It is no security whatever for debt, and any Person being in possession of it, either as a pledge or security for debt, or without lawful authority or excuse, is liable under Section 156 (9) of the Army Act to a fine of twenty pounds (£20) or imprisonment for six months, or to both fine and imprisonment.

**PROTECTION CERTIFICATE AND CERTIFICATE OF IDENTITY**  
 (SOLDIER NOT REMAINING WITH THE COLOURS).

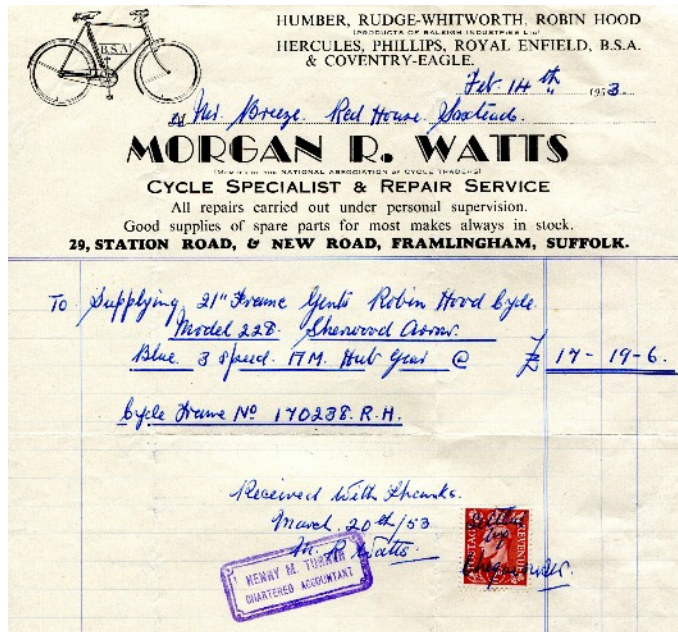
Dispersal Unit Stamp and date of dispersal.  
 No. 1 DISPERSAL UNIT  
 17 JAN 1919  
 T. HET FORD

Surname (Block letters) A T T S  
 Christian Name Thomas  
 Regt. No. 34526 Rank \_\_\_\_\_ Record Office \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unit ASC Regt. or Corps ASC Pay Office 16717  
 I have received an advance of £2. \_\_\_\_\_ Address for Pay \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Signature of Soldier) \_\_\_\_\_  
 The above-named soldier is granted 28 days' furlough from the date stamped hereon pending \_\_\_\_\_ (as far as can be ascertained) which will date from the last day of furlough after which date uniform will not be worn except upon occasions authorized by Army Orders.  
 \* If for Final Demobilization insert 1.  
 Disembodiment insert 2.  
 Transfer to Reserve insert 3.  
 This certificate must be produced when applying for an Unemployed Sailors and Soldiers' Donation Policy or, if demanded, whenever applying for Unemployment benefit.  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_ Office of Issue \_\_\_\_\_ Policy issued No. 866646  
 20 JAN 1919  
 (3)

The Z11 document, without which he would have been arrested

knew each other well so it was a bit of a quandary as what should be done. Fortunately, he had his Z11 form showing he was discharged from the army for one month providing hostilities did not recommence.

He then continued to work for AG on cars, motorcycles and bicycles through to 1938, when he started his own business in a rented shop from Frank Baldry in Station Road (now part of Fram DIY). His former employer was not at all happy, as they now had to share an agency for BSA and Raleigh bicycles. Soon after, he built his own premises in New Road (now Fram Motor Cycles). The bicycle was still the commonest way of getting about, as cars were still out of most people's range, so being a cycle dealer was a good business in which to be involved. In the last war, Morgan sold many bicycles to the American personnel on the nearby Parham airbase, but he recalled they did not look after them at all well.



Invoice for a bicycle.

James Breese Collection

Morgan lived to the age of ninety two, and along with his peers, witnessed great changes in technology, from horses, through bicycles and the many varied forms of mechanical propulsion on land and in the air, which were his great interest. He was also one of the many who went to France in the war, and was fortunate to return.