

FRAM

Newsletter no. 3

March 2021



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The committee was absolutely thrilled by the number of members who participated in our first Zoom lecture on February 17. Many thanks to Tony Clarke for a talk that so many enjoyed, and which has encouraged several new members to join the Society. Our next two Zoom Talks are:

17 March 11 a.m. Dr James David *Re-evaluating Suffolk's medieval markets*

21 April 11 a.m. Edward Martin *Lost Gardens of Suffolk*

Now that we are able to offer members a monthly programme of Zoom talks, which will continue throughout the summer, we will not be issuing any further Monthly Updates. The next Newsletter, number 4, will be sent out in the Autumn. It will be prepared by our usual team, to whom we are very grateful. They are very keen to hear from any member who has articles or contributions to be included in it. Contact details are above.

We are also very pleased with the response to our request for subscriptions to be paid. Payments have been received for just over 75% of the membership. If you are one of those who has not paid yet, there is still time for you to do so. The sub remains unchanged at £12 for an individual and £18 for a couple at the same address. You can pay

- By Bank transfer direct to the society's account
- By Cheque posted to The Gables, Fore St, Framlingham, IP13 9DF

David Ransom (Chairman)

FRAMLINGHAM CHEMISTS 1820 TO 1950

John Bridges

And the Tragic Story of Reginald Betts

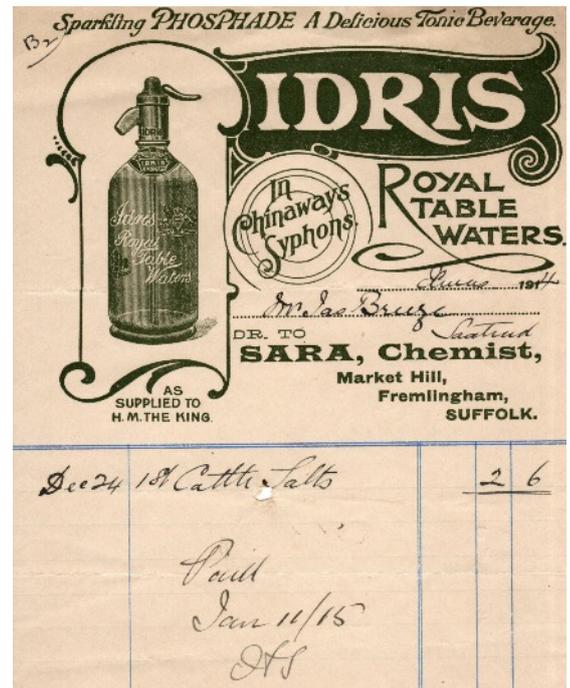
The chemist provides an important service in any town, and Framlingham has been well represented over many years. Pigot's directories of 1823 and 1830 list William Manning as a chemist and druggist. A series of articles in *Framlingham Weekly News* indicates that William Manning was the only chemist here in 1828. He had purchased the Bull Inn in Double Street and demolished it to make way for his new chemist's shop. On his death, the business transferred to his wife Sarah. She is listed in White's 1844 and 1855 directories as a chemist in Double Street. When she died in 1858, her son Thomas inherited the business and moved to new premises on the corner of Church Lane and Bridge Street.

He sold the business to Henry Hutchins who in turn sold to James Hulland in 1879, who was there until 1904. After that George T Cooper acquired the premises, where he ran his ladies' and gentlemen's outfitters. After that it was again a chemist's, run by Alfred Last who was there until around 1950.

The Victorian chemist sold a wide range of goods, including hair dressings, dyes, soaps, tooth powder and bed pans, along with less obvious commodities such as spices, tea, ink, candles, lamp oil, cigarettes and, eventually, petrol. Large coloured carboys were often displayed in the windows, with powders and herbs stored in jars and drawers.



These premises have been the main location of chemists for a very long time. Herbert Sara was the chemist from 1912 to about 1930. (Framlingham Historical Archive)



A range of medicines was available, stored in specie jars and the smaller 'shop rounds'. Powders were mixed with liquorice and glucose to form a pliable paste which was then used to make pills.

One of the earliest colour photos of Framlingham c.1939. Although primarily of Cyril Mutum's hairdressing shop, it does show part of A J Last's Dispensing chemist on the corner of Church Lane. (Framlingham Historical Archive)



A pestle, mortar and pill-making machine were essential parts of a chemist's equipment. A popular medicine was laudanum, made from morphine dissolved in alcohol, which could be taken on its own or with water or wine. It was also mixed with syrup and used as a 'quietening' mixture for children.

The chemist's shop we know today is located on the corner of Market Hill and Church Street. This site was bought by Henry Clutten in 1832 and has been a chemist's since that time. White's directory of 1844 lists Henry Clutten as a chemist on the Market Hill. The next directory of 1855 now has Henry Goch as the chemist.

REGINALD BETTS,
Agricultural Chemist,
OIL, COLOUR & PETROLEUM MERCHANT,
 MARKET HILL,
FRAMLINGHAM.

BETTS' CONDITION POWDERS for HORSES
 1/- and 2/- Tins.

BETTS' COUGH POWDERS,
 1/- and 1/2 dozen, for Horses and Cattle.

BETTS' CONDITION BALLS, 3/- dozen.

BETTS' COUGH BALLS, 2/- dozen.

BETTS' GRIPE DRINKS, 1/6 each, 15/- dozen.

The above are all Manufactured from the old recipes of the late John Betts, M.R.C.V.S., of Woodbridge, and were employed by him for over 50 years in an extensive practice; they are confidently recommended to all Horse and Cattle Keepers or Rearing, as safe, efficient, and cheap.

Special Agent for all Gostling & Co.'s Diss Preparations, Thorley's Food, Simpson's Spice and Calf Meal at lowest prices.

LARD OIL & MACHINE OILS, LINSEED OIL & TURPENTINE.
 Every shade and description of

PAINTS, ENAMELS, VARNISHES, &c.

N.B.—Paint mixed to match any shade of paper, wood, or old paint work.

In 1866, Clutten sold the premises to Henry Gooch and his brother, who was a chemist. His name is listed in several trade directories up to 1888.

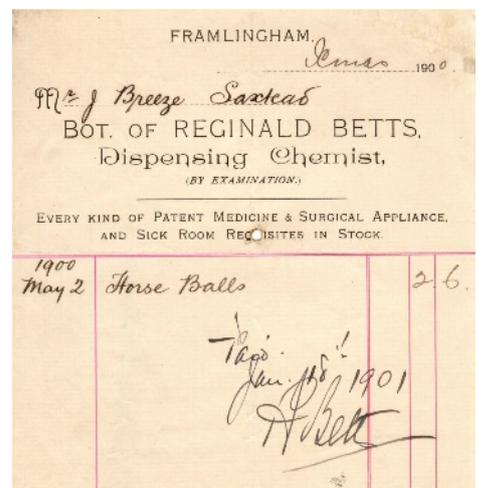
In 1892, Gooch's executors 'beg to inform their friends and the public generally that, having disposed of their business to Mr Reginald Betts, they hope the support so freely accorded them for the past 40 years may be continued to the successor. Mr Betts is in possession of all trade books and private recipes, and our friends can obtain the family medicines as heretofore.' The new chemist was familiar with the profession as his father John was a chemist in Woodbridge. The Pharmacy Act of 1896 required all newcomers to the profession to pass examinations. They would then be able to dispense various chemicals including scheduled poisons, which were sold in green bottles. Betts' accounts proudly proclaim that he is 'dispensing chemist by examination'.

Reginald's time in Framlingham was troubled and finally ended in tragic circumstances on the other side of the world. In 1893 he married 22-year old Edith Dring of Boundary Farm, Cransford, but less than three years later, on 6 January 1896, Edith died after she 'succumbed to a distressing malady'. Her death certificate records that she died of 'phthisis' (tuberculosis) which she had for 'some years'. Within about 18 months, in late 1897, he married Florence Pankhurst of Norwich and they had a son, Maurice, born in 1899. Her father was Edward Pankhurst of Town Close, Norwich.

Betts had started his business with borrowed capital but later got into financial difficulty and tried to borrow money from friends. Matters became critical in December 1901 when he was advised to put himself in the hands of his several creditors, which included major names such as the Anglo American Oil Company and Kodak through to the local businesses of S G Carley and Charles Garrard. It was estimated that his assets were £1,075 against debts of £1,464. His London solicitor advised that the details were not sufficiently detailed and that he should return home to complete a fuller assessment. That showed his liabilities were much more than originally thought. At the same time he decided to sell his business and within a week it had been acquired by Gostling and Co. of Diss.

Betts did not attend the hearing in Ipswich and was declared bankrupt on 18 December when his whereabouts were stated to be unknown and that he had left home with intent 'to defeat or delay his creditors'. His movements are not fully known but what is certain is that he assumed the false name of Robert Hayward, because letters later found in his possession were addressed to that name at the Albany Hotel, Ryde, along with a ticket to Southampton. He sailed from there in early January on the *SS Bremen*, arriving in Sydney on 12 February. He is recorded as living at a boarding house from 3 April 1902, where he told the proprietor he was looking for work as a chemist and showed him papers in the name of Reginald Betts.

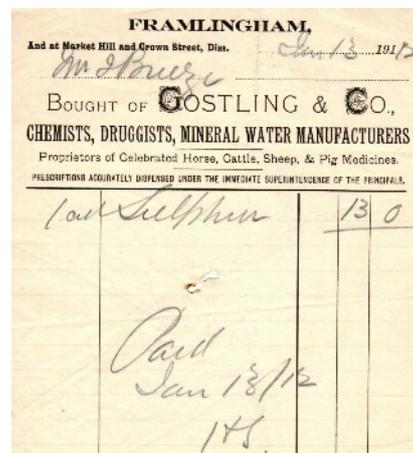
Some days later his landlord had seen him lying on his bed and assumed he was intoxicated. However, the next day there was no reply from his room and on entering he found Betts was dead. Doctor Jamieson said the body showed signs of poisoning and there was a strong smell of chlorodyne. The cause of death was opium poisoning. In his room three bottles were found which had the smell of chlorodyne, along with the letters previously mentioned. A jury returned that death was due to poison, 'but there was not sufficient evidence to show if self administered or with determination towards suicide'.



In fleeing to Australia Betts was presumably looking to establish a new life. Although declared bankrupt he likely had money from the sale of his business. But it was no doubt difficult for him to get work as a chemist under an assumed name, and it was perhaps this that precipitated a downward spiral. His wife's brother had emigrated to Australia in the 1880s, and it is possible that Reginald and Florence had also visited at some time. If he was planning to start a new life, his wife and baby son were not to be any obvious part of it.

Only a few months earlier the 1901 census tells us that Florence was living at the Market Hill premises with Reginald and their one - year-old son Maurice, together with a servant and a nurse. Her dramatic change in circumstances probably necessitated a return to her parents in Norwich. In April 1903 Florence married Herbert Bullard at Easton St Andrew, Norwich – her second marriage in the city within seven years.

Gostlings had other branches and was a forerunner of such businesses with multiple outlets. Their manager, Herbert Sara, ran the Framlingham branch until 1912 when he took it over himself and traded under that name until 1931. G W Hales then acquired the business, with Mr Bennet as manager until around 1950 when C H Stevens took over. There have been many changes since then, all with the common element of serving the residents of Framlingham with their medicinal needs from the same location on the corner of Market Hill and Church Street. A brief timeline for the two locations follows.

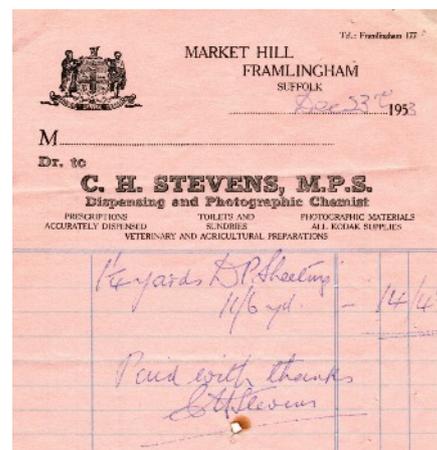
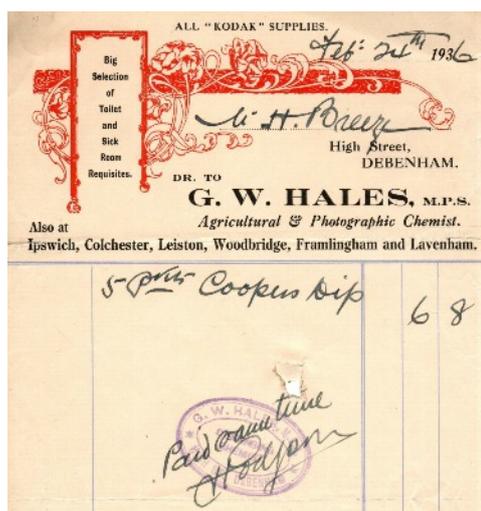


Church Lane and Bridge Street

- Thomas Manning c. 1858 to 1863
- Henry Hutchins 1863 to 1879
- James Hulland 1879 to 1904
- G T Cooper (tailor)
- A J Last 1929 to c. 1950

Market Hill

- Henry Clutten 1832 to c. 1855
- Henry Gooch c.1855 to 1892
- Reginald Betts 1892 to 1901
- Gostling 1901 to 1912
- Sara 1912 to 1931
- G W Hales 1931 to c. 1950
- C H Stevens 1950s



The main sources of information are: *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal*, *County Directories*, *Diss Express*, *East Anglian Daily Times*, *Framlingham Weekly News*, *Lambert's Family Almanacs* and Public Record Office, Victoria, North Melbourne. Adverts are from *Lambert's Family Almanacs* and bill heads from *James Breese Collection*. Photographs are from *The Framlingham Archive* <http://framlinghamarchive.org.uk/>

FRAMLINGHAM AND WOODBRIDGE IN 1823

The following information was kindly sent by Yvonne Coppard to the Framlingham Archive website:

I am a writer currently working with the hand-written original of a travel journal written in 1823 by Dr Anthony Todd Thomson, a well known figure in the medical establishment of the time. Dr Thomson records his journey from London to the Highlands, in August - October 1823. I thought your society might be interested to see the attached extract, in which Dr Thomson records his observations of the castle, church and town of Framlingham. You are welcome to include the extract in any archive or local publication.



THOMSON, ANTHONY TODD
(1778–1849) Lithograph by T.
Bridgford
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=33499754>

We found the Castle of Framlingham a total ruin, nothing remaining but the exterior walls, which are of prodigious strength and capable of still long resisting the dilapidating hand of Time. Many of the outworks are now levelled with the ground, forming an irregular mound around the moat, which was between them and the existing structure. The valley at its base, which is now covered with swampy meadows, was originally a large lake or mere, which communicated with the sea. The standing wall is of an irregular circular form, and consists of thirteen square towers, at nearly equal distances from one another, with intervening battlements and ramparts. On entering the gate, which still remains entire, under a warder's tower, what was our astonishment to find the interior occupied with a workhouse, and some almshouses. There was something revolting at this prostitution of an ancient abode of regal pomp. The retrospective view which the mind naturally conjured up of its former splendour, when Knights and Barons, ladies and Princesses crowded its halls and courts, formed a striking contrast with the real picture of poverty and wretchedness which now presented itself before us. On cool reflexion, however, it may be justly questioned at which period its walls had rung with the deepest groans of misery. Its present inhabitants are the outcasts of Society, dependent, for even the miserable subsistence they enjoy, on the bounty of the public.

But if their groan be hollow, it is that of bodily suffering only, not that of oppression and a deeply wounded spirit, such as must have echoed in the dungeon of the Captive when the banner waved on the wall and the shouts of festive mirth and joy sounded in the halls of Framlingham.

The church is an elegant structure of the fourteenth century and is kept in good repair; injured, in some degree, by a septennial douching of whitewashing. It contains monuments of the Duke of Richmond, natural son of Henry the eighth; the Duke of Norfolk, who, when Earl of Surry, won the battle of Flodden; of Henry Howard, the poetical Earl of Surrey, his son the Earl of Northampton; and his wife, Frances Devere, daughter to the Earl of Oxford. There are also monuments of two duchesses of Norfolk, wives of the second Duke of Norfolk, who, if not flattered by the sculptor, must have been very beautiful women. The monument of the Duke of Richmond is painted and gilded, in vile taste; we were informed that such was the original state of the erection. An annual sum is given by Pembroke College for keeping it in repair. There are some customs which are more honoured in the breach than the observance. It would redound to the honour of the college were the sum bestowed for destroying this elegant monument with paint and gilding expended in cleaning it, so as to bring out the pristine sharpness and beauty of the carving. We returned to a late dinner, much fatigued with our ride but highly pleased with what we had seen.

Next morning, Thursday the 26th, I crossed the Deben to take a view of the town from the opposite side of the river. There is no bridge; passengers are conveyed over by a ferry boat for the easy fare of one penny. A blind man led by a dog, and his wife, entered the boat at the same time with me. The dog sprang in with alacrity, and lay down, as if accustomed to the conveyance and glad to be free from his irksome task of leading his master, who had the appearance of a beggar. I thought the opportunity was a good one of receiving a

blessing at a cheap rate, so when we reached the shore, I paid for all the party, and received it. I believe the benediction was sincere in this instance, for the act which called it forth was both unsolicited and unexpected.

The most picturesque view of Woodbridge is obtained from the heath on this side of the Deben. The church is the most prominent feature in the landscape. The tower and body of the building are seen rising, in a commanding manner, above the red roofs of the houses, which cover the gentle declivity between it and the river. Several windmills crown the ridge that forms the boundary of sight and give great liveliness to the scene, which is composed chiefly of enclosed meadows and corn fields, the ships and boats in the river, and a few villas. The trees are well grouped and rich in diversity of foliage, with the exception of several stiff rows of poplars towards the South. The Deben, at high water, has more the aspect of a lake than a river but, at low water, it is seen, for many a mile, winding in a serpentine direction through the vale. This heath is seldom visited, except by the sportsman, or the rabbit shooter; at this moment whilst I am lying upon the turf, not a soul is in view. Nor does a sound break the silence that prevails, except the crackling of the pods of the Furze, as they burst to scatter their seeds, and the hum of the wild bee, as it seeks the blossoms of the Heath and wild Thyme to ransack them of their sweets. The Heavens smile, and all is peace and repose. In the language of romance, I would enquire, gazing upon the little town before me, what does man, eager, anxious, toiling, shutting himself up in narrow streets and noisome places, ask for? How simple and easily attained are his pleasures, if he would limit his desires!

EXTRACTS FROM EARLIER NEWSLETTERS

September 1969. Miss Rivers, almost 89, has lived in the same house in Castle Street for over 85 years. Blind owing to an operation which went wrong, Miss Rivers is hard of hearing but retains a lively mind and keeps in touch with most modern developments by means of her precious radio. Her father farmed Boundary Farm near Earl Soham and Brandeston, and she remembers the farm-workers being paid with a gold farthing (10/-) a week. Butter was 6d. or 8d. a lb. Miss Rivers attended Miss Fairweather's school in a private house in Double Street, near Dew's the bakers. The 20-25 pupils paid £1 a quarter. Each girl carried a small basket containing her needlework. The mornings were devoted to lessons, but in the afternoon it was sewing, patchwork, lace etc.

Books of Local Interest...*Ask the Fellows Who Cut The Hay* by George Ewart Evans. This records social conditions remembered by older inhabitants of the village of Blaxhall. For example, the economics of stone picking. Wives and children did this usually to pay for some essential, often the children's boots. 3/- for 80 two-gallon pail-fulls. Ironically, tests had shown that land unpicked of stones had bigger crops than picked land, but stones were wanted to repair roads. In 1901 however, it was stated that 'the primary cause of the unsatisfactory conditions of roads is the doing away with the system of picking stones in fields due to the advance of education.' The children were in school.

Market Hill. Within the 2 and 3 storey buildings of Market Hill are two detached blocks which look as if they could be squatted property. They could also be the last remaining of several such units. The two-storey one, Dolly's Café [The Prince of India], has been well and intelligently restored and improved by Mrs Warne who came to Framlingham six years ago. A tradition attached to the building is that it was originally a mud hut. This could be true. Years ago most buildings were of this material though today we dignify it by the name of clay lump or clunch.

East Anglian Magazine, March 1957. One bid to another: 'No, you don't have to tell them your age — You only have to put the date of your birth.'

December 1969 Quoted from the 1966 parish magazine via *Framlingham Weekly News* of 1870 re Framlingham in Australia: In 1805 the Rector of Dennington was the Reverend and Honourable Frederick Hotham who used incidentally to drive into Framlingham with coachman and footman both dressed in blue livery with silver buttons, the carriage being painted yellow and black and hung on broad leather straps

attached to springs with a flat standing place behind for the footman. His son subsequently became Governor-General of Australia. There is a parish named Hotham and another named Dennington near Melbourne, no doubt owing their names to the Governor-General's early associations. It seems reasonable to assume that the nearby Framlingham derived its name from the same source. Framlingham, Australia, is however a very insignificant place, now nothing more than a settlement for aboriginal natives. These are in abject poverty though the Aboriginal Welfare Board is trying to help. The Framlingham settlement was however, at the time of the report the only enlightened one in Australia. There has recently been a recrudescence of interest in the 'abos' and conditions are improving. [Framlingham is a rural township of 158 people (2016), in Western District of Victoria, about 20km NE of the city of Warnambool. There is much more information on the Internet].

Kenneth Howard, saddler and harness maker. Anyone who was living in Framlingham around 1960 or earlier will no doubt recall Kenny Howard. The family business had been in various premises in the town. The final move was from Fore Street to Albert Place, where his wife ran the newsagents and he continued with the leather work. It was then that he made the decision to emigrate to Australia in the hope of finding more work for his line of trade.

A video of about 25 minutes has just come to light, which was made in 1982 by the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia. If you have access to YOU TUBE, go to the SEARCH section and put in **Ken Howard, saddler and harness maker**. You should eventually find it, where he discusses his family roots in Framlingham and his successful new life in Australia. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XdePD4C5KJI>)



Ken moved the business to Fore Street around 1935, and lived in the house on the left. He along with his three brothers were educated at Framlingham College, and he won a scholarship to Oxford to read mathematics. But, as so often happened, the eldest son had to carry on the business (Framlingham Historical Archive)

Summary of a talk given, via Zoom, by Tony Clarke to the Framlingham and District Local Historical Society on 17th February 2021, attended by many members of the Clarke family.

Introduction

This talk focused on both the history of the Clarke family as well as the history of EG Clarke and Son and other businesses built up in the town. This can be traced back 170 years, through the founding of Framlingham College and two World Wars.

1849-1914

Edwin George Clark was born in 1849, one of twelve children. He founded EG Clarke and Son. In 1879 he married Harriett Cracknell. He also bought the maltings in Station Road. At that time malt was used for home brewing. Edwin and Harriett prospered, having six children. The company diversified into corn, coal, and cake. In 1901 his two sons joined the business.

To put this in context, it should be remembered that in 1859 the railway came to Framlingham and in 1865 the Albert Memorial College (now Framlingham College) was founded. At this time, the town had a population of approximately 2500. The 1901 census tells us that 25% were in domestic service; 21.4% worked in agriculture and 10% were drapers. Framlingham was, and continued to be a prosperous market town.

1914-1918

Edwin and Harriett's son Percy had a successful military career. He joined the Suffolk Regiment and was in France in 1914. Letters from Captain Clarke were published in the *Framlingham Weekly News*. Although these were reports from the front, the horror of the reality of this experience was not mentioned. In January 1917 Percy was awarded the DSO. In September 1917, the regiment saw extensive action and in December 1917 it moved to the front at Passchendaele.



Officers of the 4th Battalion, Suffolk Regiment. In command was Lieutenant Colonel Frank Garrett (front row, far left) age forty four, head of the large Leiston engineering works. He was to suffer a nervous breakdown early in 1915 and was ordered to hospital and then back home, when he resumed his management of the works. His brother Captain Stephen Garrett (front row, 3rd from right) was killed in March 1915, age 36. Captain Edwin Percy Clarke (front row, 2nd from right) age thirty two, worked for the family business of E.G. Clarke corn merchants, the largest employer in Framlingham. Another local man was Lieutenant Hubert Ling (middle row, far right) age twenty nine, who was a solicitor in Church Street.

1918-1939

Re-adjustment was required in the malting business as home brewing was no longer allowed and big breweries were developing. Clarkes shipped malt all over the country. The Black Granary in Station Road also made animal foodstuffs.

Percy and Hugh Clarke (Tony's grandfather) took over the business and Edwin retired at the age of 70 years. In 1931 times were hard and many farms went out of business. However, Clarkes flourished. They owned farms and property and became the biggest employer in Framlingham. War approached.

1939-1940

Hugh's son, Geoffrey (Tony's father) joined the same battalion as his uncle Percy, the 4th Suffolk Regiment. In 1940 Lieutenant GH Clarke and Miss EE Ensor (Tony's parents) were married.

In the same year, a bomb fell in College Road and a woman was killed. There was a growing role for women in agriculture and industry at home while men were away fighting.

In 1941 the 4th Battalion, Suffolk Regiment sailed to Canada on route to Bombay. However, there was a change of plan and the ship was diverted to Singapore.

The Japanese army was advancing rapidly. Singapore fell and the troops were imprisoned. The Japanese wanted to build a railway from Bangkok to Burma as part of their plans to invade India. Without this the only route was by a long sea voyage.

The Japanese used the imprisoned Allied troops, as well as thousands of Burmese and Malaysians to build the 415km long railway. It was completed in fifteen months. Conditions were horrendous, the terrain was difficult and there were food shortages. There were 97,652 deaths: one for every 4 ½ metres of track.

In 2010, Tony and his wife Susan visited Thailand and the railway. Following in his father's footsteps, they were able to visit the camps he was detained in. Tony's mother lived at Parham during the war, close to the American airfield. 3000 American servicemen were based there – a huge influx of men. There were bombing raids going night and day and one can only imagine the stress of living with such constant noise.

In August 1945, the Americans left. Geoffrey saw nothing of this as they had come and gone while he was away.

1945 – 1960

These were tough years, with rationing continuing and the need to re-build after the war. The family moved to Saxtead Lodge. The business was busy, with a new feed plant being built in 1950. Percy was running the business. It was now a large concern, with grain sold weekly in the markets in Ipswich and Norwich.

Goods train No. 65467 in the 1950s. To the right a bulk wagon is visible next to Clarke's granary. This trade was important to the continued use of the line for freight.



1960 – 1969

In 1960 the business was sold to J Bibby Agriculture. This was probably Percy's decision. Times were changing and business consolidation was taking place. Bibby's wanted to concentrate on animal feed and many buildings fell into disrepair and in 1965 the railway closed.

Geoffrey stayed on until 1969 when he left and set up a new business trading grain, with offices on Market Hill.

In 1987 Geoffrey retired. In 1998 the grain business was sold to Nidera and the Clarke name disappeared.

1989 – 2021

Geoffrey's son Christopher (Tony's brother), along with Mike Simpson set up Clarke and Simpson in 1989, with offices in Framlingham and now has approximately 50 employees.

Framlingham College

The College has played a significant part in the Clarke family history. Over the generations 16 Clarkes have attended between 1856 and 2016.

170 years of Clarkes in Framlingham.

A recording of the talk can be found at <http://framlinghamarchive.org.uk/>