

FRAM

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The Framlingham & District
Local History & Preservation Society

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

**4th Series Number 12
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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)

CONTENTS

J. McEwan	<i>Sir Robert Hitcham</i>	4
	<i>Leslie Heron, printer: a file note</i>	12
R. Willcock	<i>Aspects of Framlingham in the First World War</i>	13

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FRAM

4th Series Number 12

April 2005

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Editor: M. V. Roberts, 43 College Road, Framlingham

This issue concludes the Fourth Series of the journal *Fram*, so it seems appropriate briefly to analyse the contents of the twenty-four issues that have appeared since *Fram* was reborn in 1997.

About thirty articles published since then in the journal related to notable people/families/landed estates, twenty related to buildings (and their contents), six to surrounding villages, two to local societies, ten to source materials (in the broadest sense), six to archaeology, five to individual events, five to local government and judiciary, and four to transport.

In addition to these, there were barely a dozen articles concerned with the individual life experiences of ordinary working people in the town and the surrounding areas. I am here thinking of items such as "The Headmaster's book" (x 3), Framlingham in 1900 (x 2), Plague (x 2), and our own past-President's article in this issue.

That trend has been repeated in innumerable village, town and county histories covering every part of England over the past several hundred years, not least, until very recently, the *Victoria County History* itself. The physical fabric of the place concerned (especially ecclesiastical), noble and manorial descents, notable local worthies, endowed charities, all have been very fully addressed, but not (for example) the impact of charitable beneficence upon the lives of the poor.

The trend is changing. We have many more universities, therefore many more post-graduates seeking suitable PhD subjects; local history itself has vastly expanded in its producers, themes and outputs. No longer the preserve of the leisured antiquarian, local history has now (almost) achieved academic respectability, and the time may not be far away when amateur and professional historians can talk the same language, publish in the same journals, and even talk to each other. Parallel with this, the de-gentrification of history itself (and not just local history) proceeds apace. Oral history – capturing the memories of just a few decades ago, of life as it was lived then from day to day – has obviously had an important part to play here.

In this context, some areas of the country have been more favoured than the town of Framlingham and its surrounding area. As I have said before in *Fram*, east London was blessed in having as a long-time inhabitant that great historian Raphael Samuel, who captured in his writings, published and unpublished, the very essence of life present and not so long past, in what he had adopted as his home patch. Not least, due to his instigation, memory became of key component of the historical record.

Taking an example from closer to home, within living memory, in a small two up two down cottage very near where I live, there was a family (or families) of twenty-two people. How did it feel to live – indeed, to value living – in such an environment? How did one cope with the sheer practicalities of life (of course, no indoor sanitation or piped water)? An account of village life in Rushmere St. Andrew from which I published an extract several issues ago evoked something of the feeling of being an ordinary person in a semi-rural community on the periphery of a prosperous county town a few decades ago. We have, so far as I know, no equivalent account for this immediate area.

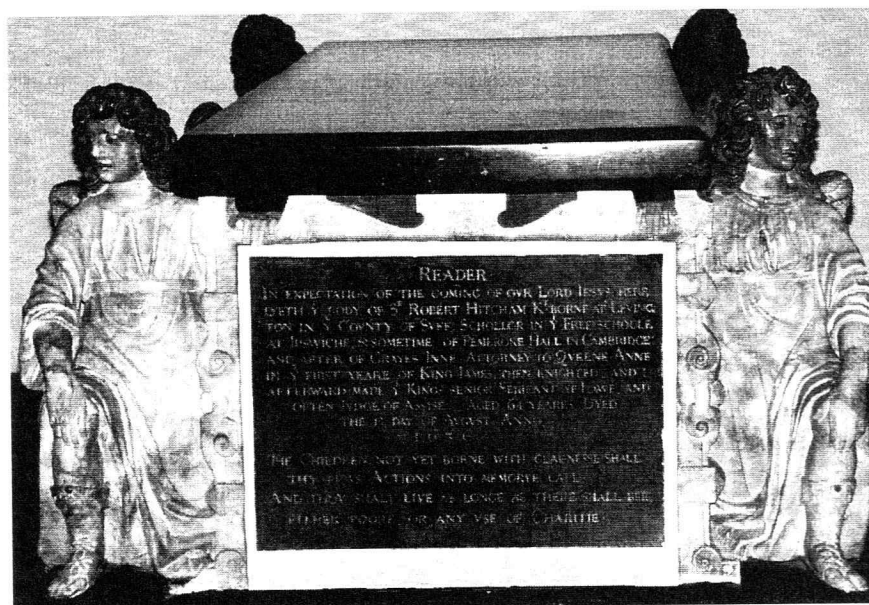
In my editorial to issue nine of *Fram* third series, I wrote (apologetically) "This issue focuses on small matters". But for community history, the "large" matters – fine buildings, important people, the affairs of state, manor and municipality – provide only the frame to the picture: it is those small matters of individual existence that form the image which that frame surrounds, and which are, I believe, of far greater interest to readers of this journal.

Sir Robert Hitcham

By John McEwan

An edited extract from 'Sir Robert Hitcham (1574-1636): An example of social mobility of common lawyers in the late Elizabethan and early Stuart periods' (unpublished bachelor's dissertation for The Open University, 2003)

Figure 1 Inscription on Sir Robert Hitcham's Tomb



READER :

IN EXPECTATION OF THE COMING OF OVR LORD JESVS, HERE
LYETH YE BODY OF SIR ROBERT HITCIAM, KT. BORNE AT LEVING-
TON, IN YE COUNTY OF SVFF : SCHOLLOR IN YE FREE-SCHOOLE
AT IPSWICHE, & SOMETIME OF PEMBROKE HALL, IN CAMBRIDGE ;
AND AFTER OF GRAYES INNE : ATTORNEY TO QVENNE ANNE
IN YE FIRST YEARE OF KING IAMES, THEN KNIGHTED : AND
AFTERWARD MADE YE KING'S SENIOR SERIEANT AT LAWE, AND
OFTEN JVDGE OF ASSISE : AGED 64 YEARES, DYED
THE 15 DAY OF AVGVST, ANNO

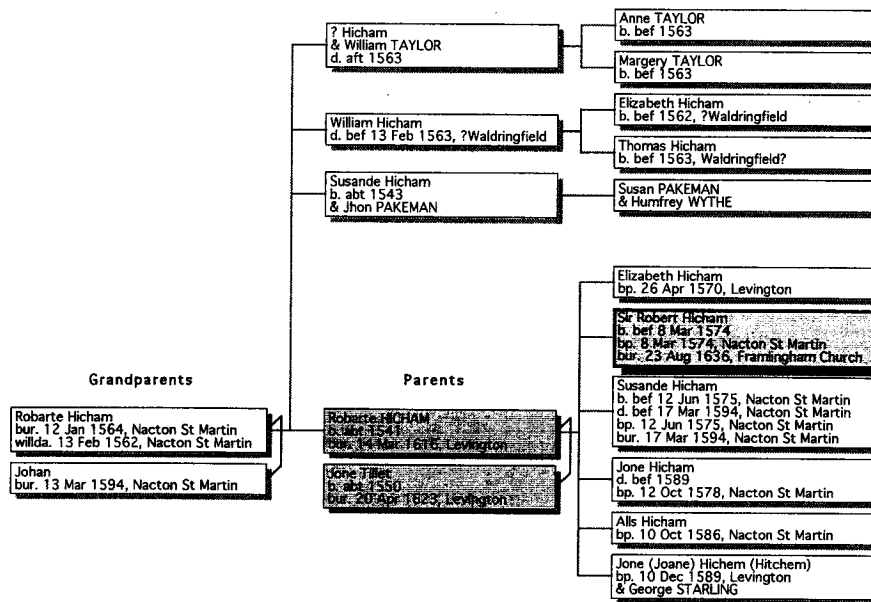
1636

THE CHILDREN NOT YET BORNE, WITH GLADNESS SHALL,
THY PIOUS ACTIONS INTO MEMORIE CALL ;
AND THOV SHALT LIVE AS LONGE AS THERE SHALL BEE,
EITHER POORE, OR ANY VSE OF CHARITIE.

Most Framlinghamians know of Sir Robert Hitcham and the briefest of facts of his life are carved in stone on his memorial in South Aisle of Framlingham Church (Figure 1). The inscription states he was born in Levington and died aged sixty-four. Twenty

years after Hitcham's death, Robert Ryece also states Hitcham was born in Levington,¹ but Fuller, published in his *Suffolk Worthies* a decade later in 1662, that Hitcham 'was born (if not at) near Nacton in this County.'ⁱⁱ Robert Hawes completed his manuscript *History of the Hundred of Loes*, in 1717, eighty years

Figure 2 Sir Robert Hitcham's Family Tree



after Hitcham's death. Hawes was the steward of manors of Framlingham and Saxted for Pembroke College. His manuscript was transcribed by Robert Loder to form part of his book and Richard Green repeated much of it in his *History of Framlingham* published in 1834.ⁱⁱⁱ

However, it is fortunate that the registers of the two neighbouring parishes of Levington and Nacton both begin in 1562 for they reveal a number of entries with the surname Hitcham, variously spelt and this enables a family tree to be constructed (Figure 2).

The register for St Martin, Nacton, reveals the burial of Robarte Hicham, his grandfather, in 1563/4*; the marriage of Robert Hicham and Jone Tillit in 1569, his parents; the baptism of their first child, Robert's sister Elizabeth (1570); followed by Robert himself in 1573/4: 'Robarte Hicham the sonne of Robarte Hicham was baptysed the viijth day of March'.

Three more sisters followed: Susande in 1575 (who died in 1594), Jone in 1578 and Alls in October 1586. The next baptism is of another 'Jone Hycham but it is in Levington register (December 1589), indicating the family had moved from Nacton to Levington. In 1615, the Nacton register reveals 'George Starling &

* The new year at this time began on 25 March, Lady's Day. Thus Robert Hitcham was entered being baptised on 8 March 1573, which would be the year 1574 in the modern calendar (which is used in figure 2).

Joane Hitcham were married June 29.' The burials of Hitcham's parents, Robert in 1615/6 and Jone in 1623 are in the Levington register.^{iv}

In Richard Green's book, there is a transcription of the entry in Ryece's manuscript mentioned above. He also included the annotations made in a different hand. Green has interpreted the entry as meaning that Hitcham's ancestors held land. Hitcham's

grandfather, Robarte Hicheham's will of 18 February 1562/3 confirms this. He owned land in five parishes, most of which he bequeathed to his son, Hitcham's father, Robarte Hicham, and the residue of his goods to his wife Jone, Hitcham's grandmother. Other bequests went to his daughter Susande, grandchildren, nieces and nephews.^v

His bequests to his wife and son were large enough for them to appear in the *Assessment for Subsidy* for 1568, where each householder was assessed 'for every pound in coin, or pound's value in plate, stock of merchandise, corn and grain, household stuff, and other goods and moveables [...] jewels, gold, silver, stone and pearl [and] for every pound (annual value) in lands, tenements, annuities, etc.'. The values of their assessment were at the minimum amount: his son (Hitcham's father) for land to the value of one pound and his wife (Hitcham's grandmother) for goods worth three pounds. No other legatee appears in the return.^{vi}

The annotation 'Nor to 20l. Nor to 2' written against, 'he was not borne to £200 p.a.' on the Ryece MS in a different hand mentioned by Green also lends support to this being Hitcham's family. The other annotation Green transcribed as *Brother Sterling*, should read *Brother Starling*. He was Hitcham's brother-in-law George Starling who married Joane Hitcham again indicating that the annotator knew of Hitcham's family.^{vii}

Hitcham had 'a codicil of my legacies' added on the day of his death, implying it was done in a hurry, possibly dictated and incomplete. It refers to two unnamed sisters, the first the mother of Robert Butts, his nephew, who was already deceased. The second was Joane, to whom he bequeathed £100 in trust and instructed 'her husband to have not meddling with the same.'^{viii}

Hitcham requested that:

My body to be privately buried in the Church of Framlingham in one of my Ilces [Aisles] there only with a faire Stone or such like over it the same to be buried tenn foote within the ground and the same not to be stirred nor Cutt And I give unto my servant John Wright tenn poundes more if he be my sextant at my death.^{ix}

The result is much more pretentious (Figure 1) and the lengthy inscription is unsound on a number of points about his early life. The information for this could have come from Starling's wife, Hitcham's sister Joane. She was born in Levington when Hitcham was already at Gray's Inn and with her parents being buried there, she probably assumed her brother was born there also. The Nacton parish register shows he was baptised on 8 March 1574 and thus died aged 62 and not 'aged 64 yeares.' Further, his signature which appears on two manuscripts, one dated 1616 and the other 1635 just before his death, is clearly *Hicham*.^x

Ipswich Free School

Hitcham would have started school, like his near contemporaries Sir Francis Bacon and Sir Richard Hutton, at the age of six in 1580. According to his memorial, Hitcham attended Ipswich Free School and was a Free or Foundation scholar. Nevertheless, there is no primary evidence to support Hitcham ever being there.^{xi}

If he did attend Ipswich school, then it could have been when it re-opened after the plague of 1579 under the headmastership of Ipswich born John Smith, a 'worthy godly and learned schoolmaster.' Robert Browne was the usher. In 1586, the school closed again due to the plague. The school had a 'long and close connection with Pembroke College' beginning in 1488, when Pembroke elected the

headmaster Thomas Head a fellow and the borough allowed him ten marks to stay in Cambridge for a year.^{xii}

The period at school coincides with the period when neither baptism nor burials for the Hitcham's siblings occur in the Nacton or Levington registers. This probably indicates that the family had moved away. The registers of ten of the twelve parishes comprising the Elizabethan borough of Ipswich contain no records of baptisms or deaths of his siblings. It could be the family was in the parishes of either St Helen or St Margaret, where the registers are missing. The return to Levington sometime before the baptism of Alls in October 1586 coincides with the plague in Ipswich and perhaps this caused Hitcham and his family to move before he went to Cambridge. The other school in Suffolk that sent boys to Cambridge was the Grammar school in Bury St Edmunds, but he is not listed there.^{xiii}

Cambridge, Pembroke-Hall

Robert Ryece, compiled mini-biographies of early seventeenth-century Suffolk families, ranking them by 'degrees of calling.' From the bottom to the top, they were the Poore, The Husbandman, Yeomanry, Townes-man, The Gentleman, Knights, Barons, Earles, etc. There is no direct evidence that Hitcham's father as a yeoman could afford to keep his son in Cambridge. The comments on the Ryece MS would suggest not (see above). However, there were many scholarships for bright minded boys once noticed by the master. He could have received a scholarship from one of the Ipswich charities whose philanthropic benefactors left funds for scholarships to Cambridge Colleges. In addition, there was potential for boys from the free schools to enter Pembroke through private charity.^{xiv}

Venn records that Hitcham matriculated (i.e. registered) as a pensioner from Pembroke College at Michaelmas 1587. Hitcham would have been thirteen years old when he was formally admitted as a student into the university and his record should have stated that he was *impubes* i.e. under fourteen.^{xv}

He may have benefited from the generosity of a patron like Lancelot Andrewes as suggested

by John Booth. In 1575, Pembroke had elected Andrewes a Fellow and appointed him their Catechist in 1578 but he went north with the Earl of Huntingdon in 1586 and may have still been there when Hitcham arrived at Michaelmas 1587. Hitcham had left well before the death of Doctor Fulke, on 6 September 1589, when Pembroke elected Andrewes their Master. Nevertheless, Andrewes was known for his charity and had a penchant to help 'diverse good Schollers' who were too poor and 'sent them to the University: where he bestowed preferment upon them.' He was not alone as others sent him donations for the same cause.^{xvi}

Gray's Inn

The brief stay of Hitcham at university was not unusual for the time as Venn points out the typical career of 'many sons of the country gentry [...] - followed the precedent of Mr Justice Swallow and his friends - was to reside for a year or two at the University, and then to enter one of the Inns of Court. Sometimes they became barristers and followed the legal profession, but more often, their only object was to secure some qualification for the post of justice of the peace in their own county.'^{xvii}

The teenager 'Robert Hitcham, of Levington, Suffolk, gent, late of Barnard's Inn' was admitted to Gray's Inn on 3 November 1589, and 'at a fee of 40s. to the clerks' mess, or third table, the members of which waited on the rest of the company in Hall.' He was fortunate that, in spite of the governors of Gray's Inn 'highly developed sense of social distinctions, [...] they continued to permit even plebeians whose origins could not be disguised under a satin cloak to enter the inns.' Prest's study of the same period using a similar classification to Ryece showed those below the degree of calling of gentlemen represented less than fifteen per cent of the intake to Gray's Inn although by the time of Hitcham's death, it had dropped to eleven per cent. Gray's Inn admitted Hitcham as a "gent." and this fits with Prest's premise that "gentleman" was applied by the Inns to those of a lower degree of calling as well. For Hitcham this may have been in deference to his possible patron.^{xviii}

He was also fortunate to have the cost of his training. The 'accepted minimum cost of

maintaining a student at the inns was about £40 a year,' although some like John Hollis's brother lived on £30 a year. 'It seems unlikely that any but the most prosperous small farmer or citizen could have found £40 or £50 a year to maintain a son at the inns of court.' Hitcham could have been in that minority of students, who, like Thomas Powell and others, had to take 'casual attorney's work' to supplement his income.^{xix}

Perhaps at the age of fifteen years he had chosen Barnard's Inn, being the East Anglian Inn of Chancery, and then Gray's Inn for having lower fees than other Inns, or for religious reasons, or it was recommended by a patron. Andrewes himself was admitted to the Gray's Inn four months later (16 March 1589/90).^{xx}

Nothing further is said of his stay at Gray's Inn for five-and-half years until May 1595, when Mr. Richard Barker, the Lent Reader, presented four names including 'Robert Hytcham, whom he called to the Bar in his reading, and prayed they might be allowed utter barristers, his desire was granted.'^{xxi}

A year later, he may not have been so successful, for the Judges at Serjeants' Inn issued an order on 20 May 1596 in which the first three items state that: first, 'non shalbe admitted into Inns of Courte till hee may have a chamber within the house,' which Hitcham probably didn't have, for he applied for permission in January 1600/1 to renovate 'the ruinous chambers on the right hand at the goinge;' second, 'non be admitted to the Barr but onelie such as bee at least seaven yeres continuance, & have kept his exercises within the house & abroad in the Inns of Chancery,' which he hadn't, even with his time at Barnard's Inn; third, 'where the Reader by order of the house doe call, then onely [...] two by the Lent Reader in his readinge,' his Reader had called four to the bar. The fourth item stated 'that such students bee called who be fittest for their learninge & honest conversation & well given.' Hitcham found the other six items concerning the conduct of Readers and Readings used against him later.

In January 1603/4, Gray's Inn received a King's commandment from the Judges that 'none shall hereafter bee admitted into this Societie unles he bee a gentleman by descent untill his majesties pleasure bee further

knowne.' This was surely aimed at stopping Hitcham, but didn't succeed as it is recorded that 'Mr. Robert Hitcham, the Queenes Attourney Generall is called to bee of the company of the Auncients & allowed to sitt at the Readers table in the Hall taking his place due to his office.' He is chosen Reader in the following November and becomes a full member of the Pension (the governing body) of Gray's Inn.^{xxii}

Five months later, the neglect of readings and the performance of the Readers is the subject of a new Judges' Order. It names, criticises and sequesters for a term or less one Reader from each of the Inns, except for:

Sir Robert Hitcham Knight late Reader of Grayes Inn in respecte of his great excesse used in time of his Reading to the ill ensample of those that shall succede him, & for not holdinge out his full tyme of readinge nor number of Readings. Wee hold it fitt & soe doe advise that hee bee alsoe sequestred from the Benche & com[m]ons of the house until xviii Trinitatis next.^{xxiii}

His absence from the Pension until June 1605 shows the Judges succeeded in sequestering him. On his return, the Judges remind the Inn of the past rules 'in any wise touchinge the matter of the Readers diet, guests & other his chardges take you care that the same former orders be in all things observed. And even soe wee bid youe hartilie farewell. Att Seriants Inn in Fleet Streete this 7th June 1605. Your loving frinds.' There are no records of further machinations from the Judges regarding Hitcham.^{xxiv}

Nine years later, the Pension book records this his last entry:

Sir Robert Hitcham the Quenes Attorney Generall went forth Sergient out of Graies Inne 29 of June 1614. He bestowed his drinke in the morninge before he went uppon all the gent[leman] of this house & uppon all the gent[leman] of Staple Inne & Barnards Inne who accompanied him to Sergients Inne & so to Westminster & he gave exedings the same day at dinner through Graies Inne Hall & he gave rings unto all the Readers & unto all the offisers of the house.^{xxv}

Patronage

There is circumstantial evidence that Hitcham, early on in his career, had at least one powerful patron. Andrewes may have been the one who got him to Cambridge and through Gray's Inn. Nevertheless, Prest's suggestion he was a 'follower of Sir Robert Cecil,' also seems probable. Cecil became secretary to James I on his accession and was appointed Lord High Steward to Queen Anne in October 1603. Hitcham's rapid recognition under James I would imply the court knew him or he had a powerful patron or patrons.^{xxvi}

However, Cecil was anathema to Bacon, who was the King's Counsel in 1603 and may have persuaded the Judges to oppose Hitcham at Gray's Inn. The machinations from the Judges at the Serjeants' Inn stopped when Cecil became Lord Treasurer. The death of Cecil on 24 May 1612 gave Bacon the opportunity to remove the Cecil clique and in June, 1614 Hitcham is promoted to Serjeant-at-law but loses his more powerful position at Court as the Queen's Attorney. Judge Hutton recorded Hitcham's creation as a Serjeant-at-Law in his diary where he comments that Hitcham had been promised he would continue as the Queen's Attorney. He was 'discontent' when after serving the Queen for eleven years and defending her in Parliament against criticism of her extravagance, without his knowledge, another was appointed. He had to be content with being a Judge.^{xxvii}

Judge

As a Commission Judge, he would have ridden the 170 miles of the Home Circuit with its 'heavy goal calendars' that lasted seventeen days. He did both Winter and Summer circuits in his first year and one a year thereafter until 1635. The annual salary for a judge was £23 6s. 8d. with an allowance of £5 14s. per diem for 'two judges' diet', a total of £96 18s. This was their main source of profit, as most expenses were still 'defrayed by the hospitality and gifts of money, drink, game, fish, and other provisions which the judges received from sheriffs, gentry, and corporations on their circuits.' Cockburn claims 'since the judges gave a token gift of money in return for such presents, and the practice was, in any case, so common that any suggestion of bribery was vitiated by the quantity of gifts received, they

cannot be regarded as corrupting.' Nonetheless, this practice caused the impeachment of Bacon in 1621.^{xxviii}

His increasing wealth probably included income from judicial appointments such as recorderships for Hadleigh and Ipswich, and being a JP and MP. Recorderships were often in the purview of the Lord Chancellor, and presumably, Hitcham obtained these through the influence of his patrons or by purchase, which he could now afford.

Parliament

At the age of twenty-three in 1597, he entered parliament as M.P. for West Looe in Devon. He went on to represent various other places including Cambridge, [King's] Lynn, Ipswich and Orford in Suffolk. He 'sat in seven parliaments, if not eight,' and took 'part in the proceedings about the Union with Scotland.' In 1614, he was a member of the Committee of Privileges.^{xxix}

Death

Attwater states that 'on the advice of Matthew Wren wishing to benefit the College [Pembroke Hall] he bought from the Earl of Suffolk the castle, manor and advowson of Framlingham in Suffolk and bequeathed them to the college.' The bargain and sale by Theophilus Howard to Hitcham is a lengthy document and merits Fuller's comments. 'Herein he met with many difficulties [...] so that, had he not been one of a sharp Wit, strong Brains, powerful Friends, plentiful Purse and indefatigable Diligence, he had never cleared the Title thereof to him and his heirs'. Booth suggests that Lancelot Andrewes may have been 'the prime inspiration of his love for the college'. Neither he nor Attwater give sources for their information. Nevertheless, Hitcham did make Wren supervisor of his will and Attwater claims he was 'the only man surviving who could have known the testator's intention.'^{xxx}

Richard Hutton noted in his diary 'que Serjant Hitcham devie al son meason nere Ipswich, et il est sepult in Framlingham et per son volunt il done grand chose at ter al Pembroke Hall in Cambridge et appoint hospitalls destre erect et mults charitable choses destre fait.'^{xxxi}

Conclusions

Hitcham entered a world where those of the degree above gentleman formed the majority in the Inns of Court. Those who were below were expected not to be called to the bar but to become attorneys or clerical officers. Hitcham did not follow the route expected of him for his "degree of calling" but joined the gentry in the climb to "rule and government."^{xxxii}

It would appear Hitcham, like Andrewes had strong humanist beliefs in using their wealth for the betterment of the poor and, in particular, helping them to be educated. Wren was an acolyte of Andrewes and had advised Hitcham how to best endow Pembroke Hall purchasing the Hundred of Loes from the Earl of Suffolk.^{xxxiii}

It is Prest who hints at the secret of Hitcham's progress: 'a barrister's professional success probably depended as much on access to patronage and native wit as on formal legal learning.' More so, for someone who is from the lower degrees of society. Hitcham triumphed over his social origins and once he succeeded, his antecedents were ennobled in the minds of his contemporaries. He even obtained the right to bear arms, which were placed in the windows of the Serjeants' Inn, Fleet Street.^{xxxiv}

Hitcham's career in the legal profession is an interesting example of social mobility. He probably benefited from the concern and charity for meritorious men of the lower degrees in the late Elizabethan period, and the right sort of friends.

John McEwan, Framlingham © 2004

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SRO is the Suffolk Records Office, Ipswich and PRO the Public Records Office.

- ⁱ British Library, Manuscripts, BL MSS 15520, folio 365. For Green's transcription see pp. 108-10.
- ⁱⁱ Thomas Fuller, *The history of the worthies of England, who for parts and learning have been eminent in the several counties: together with an historical narrative of the native commodities and rarities in each county / endeavoured by Thomas Fuller*, (London: Williams, 1662), Chapter Suffolk Worthies, p. 72.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Robert Loder, *The History of Framlingham in the County of Suffolk: Including brief notices of the Masters and Fellows of Pembroke-Hall in Cambridge, ...* (Woodbridge: the author, 1798), pp. vi, 203-206. Richard Green, *The History, Topography and Antiquities of Framlingham and Saxsted in the County of Suffolk* (London: Whittaker, Treacher, 1834), pp. 104-10.
- ^{iv} Suffolk Records Office (Ipswich), FC/41/D1/1, pp. 2-8, 10, 13, 77. FC/42/D1/1, p. 7, 15-16.
- ^v Green, p. 106. SRO(I) IC/AA1/18/350. SRO(I) FC/41/D1/1, p. 2.
- ^{vi} *Suffolk in 1568*, ed. by S. H. A. H[ervey] (Bury St. Edmunds: [n. pub.], 1909) pp. x, 102-03.
- ^{vii} Green, p. 106.
- ^{viii} Public Records Office, PROB 11/173, folio 250^v, line 17; folio 251, line 10. *Ibid*, lines 23-25.
- ^{ix} *Ibid*, folio 251^r, lines 1-7.
- ^x Surrey History Centre, 643/3/13. SRO(I), HD/1538/226/6.
- ^{xi} Wilfrid R. Prest, *The Rise of the Barristers: A Social History of the English Bar 1590-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 342. *The Diary of Sir Richard Hutton, 1614-1639*, ed. by W. R. Prest (London: Selden Society, 1991), p. xiv. Ipswich school's archives were struck by lightning in July 2003. See <http://www.ipswich.suffolk.sch.uk/html/lightning.html> accessed 10 July 2003. Also, see Wallace Morfe, *Ipswich School: An alphabetical List of Ipswichians* (Kettleburg[h]: the author, 1976, rev. edn. 1988), pp. 2, 20; and I. E. Gray and W. E. Potter, *Ipswich School 1400-1950* (Ipswich: Harrison, 1950), p. 47.
- ^{xii} John Blatchly, *A famous antient seed-plot of learning: A History of Ipswich School* (Ipswich, Ipswich School, 2003), pp. 60-63. *Ibid*, 19-20.
- ^{xiii} *Biographical list of Boys Educated at King Edward VI Free Grammar School, Bury St. Edmunds: 1550-1900*, ed. by S. H. A. H[ervey] (Bury St. Edmunds: Paul & Mathew, 1908).
- ^{xiv} Robert Reyce, *Suffolk in the XVIIth Century: The Breviary of Suffolk*, ed. by Francis Hervey (London: Murray, 1902), pp. 56-73. Geoffrey Martin and Frank Grace, 'The Governance of Ipswich', in *Ipswich Borough Archives 1255-1835: A Catalogue*, ed. by David Allen (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), pp. xvii-xlvii, (pp. xxx). Attwater, pp. 49-50.
- ^{xv} John Venn and J. A. Venn, ed., *Alumni Cantabrigienses: Part 1: From the Earliest Times to 1751*, 4 vols. (Cambridge: University Press, 1922-27), I (1922), xxvii, II (1922), 379 and IV (1927), 528. Jane Greengross, archivist to Pembroke College, informed the author that they have no records concerning Hitcham's admission to the college: a conversation held on 14 May 2003. See also Aubrey Attwater, *Pembroke College Cambridge: A Short History* (Cambridge: University Press, 1936), p. 53.
- ^{xvi} Booth, p. 28. Trevor A. Owen, *Lancelot Andrewes* (Boston, MA: Twayne, 1981), pp. 18-21. [Henry Isaacson], *An exact narration of the Life and Death of the late Reverend and Learned Prelate, Lancelot Andrewes, Late Bishop of Winchester* (London: Stafford, 1650; repr. London, Hodgeson, 1817), p. 6. Venn, I, p. 30. Venn puts Lancelot Andrewes as being absence between 1585-1605. Isaacson, pp. 12-13.
- ^{xvii} Venn, I, p. xiv.
- ^{xviii} *The Register of Admissions to Gray's Inn, 1521-1889*, ed. by Joseph Foster (London: Hansard, 1889), p. 76: transcribed from the original MS register, folio 168. *The Pension Book of Gray's Inn: Records of the Honorable Society*, ed. by Reginald J. Fletcher, 2 vols (London: Chiswick Press for the Masters of the Bench, 1901), I (1569-1669), p. xxxiii. Wilfrid R. Prest, *The Inns of Court under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts, 1590-1640* (Harlow, Longman, 1972), p. 42. *Ibid*, pp. 29-32.
- ^{xix} *Ibid*, pp. 27-32,
- ^{xx} *Ibid*, pp. 36-39. Foster, p. 77.
- ^{xxi} *Ibid*, p. 108.
- ^{xxii} *Ibid*, pp. 120-21, 152-53, 164-65.
- ^{xxiii} *Ibid*, pp. 169-70.
- ^{xxiv} *Ibid*, pp. 171-72.
- ^{xxv} *Ibid*, pp. 209-10.
- ^{xxvi} Prest, *Barristers*, p. 369.
- ^{xxvii} John Booth, 'Sir Robert Hitcham', in *Sir Robert Hitcham's Tercentenary Celebrations* ([n.p.]: [n. pub.], 1936), pp. 24, 26, 28, (p. 28).

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- ^{xxx} Attwater, p. 72. SRO(I), HD/1538/226/6. Fuller, p. 72. Booth, p. 18. Attwater, p. 78.
- ^{xxxi} Prest, *Hutton*, pp. 108-09.
- ^{xxxii} C. W. Brooks, 'The Common Lawyer in England', in *Lawyers in Early Modern Europe and America*, ed. by W. Prest (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1981), pp. 42-64 (pp. 55-56).
- ^{xxxiii} Attwater, p. 72.
- ^{xxxiv} Prest, *Barristers*, p. 115. William Dugdale, *Origines Juridicales, or Historical Memorials of the English laws, Courts of Justice, Forms of Tryall, Punishment in Cases Criminal, Law Writers, Law Books, Grants and Settlements of Estates, Degree of Serjeant, Innes of Court and Chancery* (London: Printed by F. and T. Warren, for the Author, 1666), p. 326.

LESLIE HERON, PRINTER: A FILE NOTE

Born *circa* 1920, it is thought in Framlingham, Leslie's parents were from the east London suburbs. Parents, and then Leslie, had a sweet shop, tobacconist and general stores at 39/41 College Road, which has recently been restored and put back to two dwellings. They also owned the vacant plot north of 45 College Road, previously occupied by a row of small cottages that were gutted by the bomb on Miss Harvey's house on the opposite side of the road (see Tony Martin's article in our April 2004 issue). Leslie referred to the vacant plot as his "orchard", and had a small printing workshop there, backing on to the gable-end of 45 College Road. The family is said also to have had a shop just north of the "orchard" for a while (dates not known).

Leslie was a jobbing printer, working on his own, for many years, dealing mainly with ephemera (posters, handbills, etc.) although for a brief period in the mid-1950s, he did produce, single-handed, a free newspaper, *The Advertiser*, dealing with local topics. His peak period as a printer was the 1950s and 1960s, but he was still taking small orders in the early 1990s, (though he was eager to accept the jobs, but reluctant to send out the bills!).

A teetotaler, and very thrifty, he would happily cycle to Saxmundham or Ipswich to save a few pence on a loaf of bread. He also owned a vintage motorcycle, and a motor scooter; and was an accomplished piano-accordion player.

Diagnosed with cancer in 1995, he was at various specialist hospitals 1995/96, then to a hospice, and prayers were said for him at St. Michael's, Framlingham, on Christmas Day 1995. These were marginally efficacious, as he died, of a stroke, several years later, on November 13th 1999.

Leslie's activities in Framlingham hark back to an earlier age in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century, when in every town of any consequence, the small jobbing printer was as ubiquitous as the blacksmith or saddler.

Various posters, handbills, and ephemera produced by Leslie are held in the Lanman Museum, which also has a few printers' blocks and other equipment used by him, together with surviving issues (some gaps) of *The Advertiser*. One of his original printing presses is now preserved in a museum in East Anglia, quite where, your Editor has yet to establish.

MVR

ASPECTS OF FRAMLINGHAM IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

By Richard Willcock

War was declared on Tuesday 4th August 1914.¹ In John Bridges' pictorial history of Framlingham around the turn of the twentieth century, there is a splendid photograph taken the very next day, of the Framlingham Company of the 4th (Territorial) Battalion the Suffolk Regiment on parade at Framlingham station under the command of thirty-three year-old Captain E. P. Clarke.² Among the other officers present were Lieutenant Hubert Ling and Surgeon Lieutenant Jeaffreson. There was no obligation on Territorials to serve overseas: nearly all (90%) of the Framlingham Company had agreed to do so, nevertheless.

At that time, the Territorials were not taken seriously. They were known as Saturday-night soldiers, who liked nothing so much as impressing the girls with their uniforms. Now, smartly turned out, they marched to the station behind the Territorial Band, followed by a group of grown-ups and children. Perfectly drilled, the Territorials fired a salute with their Lee-Enfield rifles before departing, a rousing speech of Shakespearean proportions by Alfred Pretty of Framlingham College ringing in their ears. He had congratulated them on the privilege to be called forth in the hour of their country's need to defend all that they called most sacred – "their Country and their Homes" – and had urged them to quit themselves like men.³ Their first taste of action was to come in the Spring of 1915 at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle in the coalfields of northern France.

What kind of town (and nation, even) were they leaving behind? Were we to be transported back nine decades to the Framlingham of 1914, we should find much to make us feel at home: the Market Hill and the Guild Hall, Well Close Square and Riverside; the town dominated by three buildings of considerable grandeur, two ancient, one modern – the Castle, the Parish Church of St. Michael, and, more recent, the College. And the people: the same family names as today; the Durrants, the Scotchmers, the Mayhews, the Manns, and so on. There are a few who have childhood memories of that time, and many more who have had stories handed down to them.

Amid familiar landmarks we would not get lost.⁴ We would even be able to purchase our groceries at Carleys, same shop (more or less) on the same site. But the differences would manifest themselves immediately we took our purses out; bacon at 1s a pound and eggs 1d each. At the bakers a four pound loaf of bread cost 5d, and at the butchers a pound of meat between 6d and 8d. Against that, however, the average wage for the agricultural labourer was less than £75 per year. Mrs. E. Stopher of Dennington won a competition on how to keep a family comprising husband, wife and five children between one and twelve years old on 18s a week. Whether she actually put her proposals into practice, we are not told. If she did, then of the 11s and twopence-halfpenny budgeted for food, 4s went on flour alone.⁵

Framlingham as a place was set in a highly stratified society. Britain in 1914, claims Jay Winter, Professor of History at Yale, and formerly of Pembroke College, Cambridge, was the most inegalitarian society in Europe west of Russia. That takes some swallowing, but the inequalities of income were quite breathtaking. Leaving to one side for the moment the Duchess of Hamilton and her son-in-law and daughter, the Marquis and Marchioness of Graham (Easton was one of their smaller estates), Framlingham had no aristocratic associations. The Lords of the Manor and owners of the Castle, the Master and Fellows of Pembroke College, were of course non-resident, and visited infrequently. They appointed the Rector⁶ who in 1914 had an income of £1,500 a year, making him the richest man in

Framlingham by some margin. His successor, the saintly Canon Lanchester, Rector from 1917 to 1947, who died in 1948, could afford at the Rectory two outdoor servants and two indoor servants. Even today in the largely unexplored territory which is the Rectory garden of two acres or so, occasionally in the undergrowth you come across vestiges of former terraces and plantations. The Rector in 1914, the Reverend James Hulme Pilkington, chaired (among other offices) the Parish Council (later to be known as the Town Council)⁷ and had done so for years. His successor continued the tradition (not by automatic succession, but it seemed pretty much like it!).

The middle class – the doctors of Framlingham, like Jeaffreson⁸, and lawyers like Ling, and merchants like Clarke – would earn about £340 a year on average (but I speculate: there is no knowing what they did actually earn; it could well have been much more), and have one or two servants. To this class belonged also the prosperous businessmen, and the shopkeepers like John Self and James Carley, and engineers like A. G. Potter, and brewers like John Page of Yew Tree House by the Castle Pond.

Farmers were an unclassifiable group ranging from working class in some instances through to gentry in others. The countryside was suffering from an agricultural depression which had begun in the 1870s, taking with it some of the most able of its people to the colonies and the Americas, and would last until the beginning of the Second World War. The population of the town had declined from 3,592 in the 1851 Census to 2,400 in 1914 (though the 1851 figure is undoubtedly inflated since the Census was taken on Mothering Sunday, when families were more likely to be back under the same roof at least for that day). Food production was poor. On the eve of war, the nation depended on imports for 80% of its wheat and 40% of its meat.

Routine Parish Council business in Framlingham meant, for example, having the wheeled bier at the cemetery painted and varnished on acceptance of a quotation of 35/- from Moores. It meant negotiating with the Gas Company over the cost of the town supply. It meant dealing with frequent complaints about the pump on College Road. Framlingham's water supply came from the pumps, from private wells and from ponds. The residents of College Road were convinced that they were being poisoned. They wanted to know from the public analyst if the bicarbonate of iron, present in large quantities, was attributable to the metal in the pump or to the water itself.⁹ The result, which relieved the residents, but did not satisfy them, was that the iron content was natural to the water, and therefore harmless (?).

Concerns about health were high on everyone's agenda, and not just the Council's. It was only a few years since the Medical Officer of Health for Ipswich had stopped in its tracks the last attack of bubonic plague to be reported in Britain.¹⁰ While the nation's housing was on the whole bad, the health of the population had improved over the last decade. Child and infant mortality rates had declined considerably, partly due no doubt to the innovation of free school meals and free school medical services.

Nurse Shepherd was a regular visitor to the Sir Robert Hitcham School, usually to deal with verminous heads. This seemed to have been a concern more of the Girls' Department than of the Boys' Department, whether because the girls with their longer hair were more likely to attract nits than the boys, or because the teacher in charge of the Girls' Department was more concerned about hygiene than her senior colleague in the Boys' Department, we shall never know. On September 29th 1914, Dr. Kerr, the local Medical Officer of Health, closed the school because of an outbreak of scarlet fever. It re-opened after two months. In 1915 it was closed for another two months; and again for nearly a month in 1917, all because of scarlet fever. The Junior Department's registers show that two pupils died during the War, one of

them in the 1915 scarlet fever outbreak, and two after the War, within days of each other, in May 1919.¹¹

For the majority of children who did not go on to Framlingham College or Mills Grammar School, education finished at the age of fourteen, and very often earlier. Personal expectations were not high. The head teacher of the Sir Robert Hitcham School complained frequently about poor attendances, not always ascribable to winter weather. There was much absenteeism in the afternoons if the army was putting on a display, for instance, or if an entertainment was on offer at one of the churches. Choir boys from the Parish Church were routinely abstracted for special services. At other times the head teacher bowed to the inevitable and gave half-days for the children to pick blackberries, or to attend the Colt Show, or a Fete for Suffolk Prisoners of War.¹² Most contentious was absenteeism at harvest time. Each year the boys were used on the farms, the girls helping, too, by taking lunches out to the workers in the fields. The head teachers possessed neither the authority nor the social standing to oppose the farmers: children were cheap labour. Many children in effect finished their schooling well before they reached fourteen. The youngest school-leaver I have found in a random scan was Edward Cotton of Coles Green, who left school aged ten in 1912 for a labouring job.¹³ During the War, Labour Certificates were issued officially allowing under-age pupils to finish their schooling early. The villains of the piece, it has been claimed, were the farmers, and also the clergy who wanted the girls as servants in the vicarage. Against such a background, it is hardly surprising that many Framlingham people regarded education as unimportant.

Into this society war broke out in the late summer of 1914. It came almost as a relief from the domestic troubles of the nation. Ireland was in revolt with killings in Dublin and the threat of civil war between Ulstermen and Irish nationalists. Industrial unrest seemed endemic, with repeated outbreaks of serious strikes. The militant action of suffragettes caused bloodshed. Violence was very much in the air in rural areas, too, where the Union of Agricultural Workers flexed its muscles, especially at harvest time. If you add to all that, the popular culture of jingoistic music-hall songs and doggerel cries for more battleships ("We Want Eight and We Won't Wait"), you might conclude that the country consciously looked forward to war. That would be to say too much; but there can be no doubt that across the land moved a spirit which made war, when it came, intensely welcome. And to some depressed agricultural labourers, the chance to get off the land and enlist was even more welcome.

Immediate and necessary activity turned upside down the routine of country life. On the day after the Territorials left, an emergency meeting was held in the Corn Hall under the chairmanship of the Rector.¹⁴ The matter to be considered was the needs of families in Framlingham. With no social services to speak of, and the breadwinners away at the war, how were families to survive? There was an almost spontaneous drawing together of the social classes in the town. Mr. Stocks, the Headmaster of the College, offered rooms there for families if needed; that brought applause all round the hall. That remarkable scholar and agriculturalist, Canon Abbay of Earl Soham, encouraged the use of allotments to produce cash crops, for which he would supply seeds. (This was the man who in the course of a long ministry planted apple trees in as many gardens as he could in Earl Soham, a Johnny Appleseed of East Suffolk).

Some of these charitable efforts were overtaken only two days later by the unprecedented but vital intrusion of the State. This took the form of the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA), which aimed to secure the safety of the nation from people communicating with the enemy

and to ensure the safety of all methods of communication as well. Under the Act, the railways and the docks were nationalised immediately. The Act unleashed unwittingly a flurry of spy scares. In Framlingham the Volunteers (the Great War equivalent of the Home Guard) searched the railway line for spies without success. Others, too, scented a quarry, but here, too, their hopes were dashed. Mr. A. R. Staniforth recalls being told as a child that a light flashing in the night in the vicinity of Oaks Farm had raised the suspicions of the night watchers on the tower of the Parish Church. The signals, it turned out, were caused by the opening and shutting of a back door.¹⁵

Under the terms of DORA, a constant stream of orders and regulations flowed from many different ministries, especially in the later stages of the War. These covered lighting, the introduction of what we now call British Summer Time, early closing, food control, censorship of the press, and the requisition of private property for military purposes. Once war had broken out, Army officers went quickly around the farms requisitioning horses in return for good money. The farmers of "Akenfield", according to Ronald Blythe, hid their best ones even so.¹⁶

Those of us dating from the Second World War will find nothing unusual in the sudden imposition of emergency regulations. In 1914, however, placing such power in the hands of the State was unique, the only remote precedent being the apparatus of Tudor government. In normal times the State was expected to interfere with individual liberties very little indeed. Now the Headmaster of the College could be up before the magistrates and fined (as indeed he was) because lights were showing at the College (as indeed they were).¹⁷

In short, DORA catapulted the Parish Council into uncharted territory. The Government, having taken draconian measures, seemed wary of using its new powers and delegated many of them to local councils. This could cause confusion, because the rules might be applied more severely in one area than in another. Street lighting had to be reduced, for instance, but specific details were left to the Parish Council under the supervision of the police. There was much disagreement in Framlingham, especially over whether the Market Hill should be lit or not. There was never a black-out by the standards of World War Two, but from the start the regulations were rigorously enforced. The Crown Hotel, for instance, was given an exemplary fine of £1 for not sufficiently shading or obscuring certain windows: the blinds had not been drawn by the required length of at least eighteen inches.¹⁸

For a while the quarter-hour chimes were taken off the church clock with the striking of the hour kept on.¹⁹ To many this was a blessed relief! The carillon, in effect a giant musical box, played Home, Sweet Home, which was not only wearing out, but also getting on the nerves of a lot of people. Later the procedure was reversed, with the chimes back on, to the dismay of some, and the hour strike off. It was all something of a muddle.

Behind these regulations concerning lighting and public clocks was the fear that they might serve as navigational aids to enemy fliers. No air-raid on Framlingham was reported in the First World War, and so far as we know none occurred, though on June 22nd 1917 on the warning of an aircraft approaching, the children at the Sir Robert Hitcham School evacuated the building and went to scattered positions.²⁰ For some time Garrards advertised Pyrene fire extinguishers under a drawing of a Zeppelin, with the words "Be Prepared For Air Raids".

Such precautions were wise. At various times in the War, there were attacks by sea and air on towns down the East Coast, most of which went unreported in detail in the press, no doubt through censorship. Lambert mentions in retrospect that a Zeppelin had been seen over Saxmundham in April 1915, and another later in the month over Melton.²¹ The authorities feared an invasion along the East Coast, the kind of thing prophesied by Erskine Childers in

Riddle of the Sands a few years earlier. John Booth has written that secret plans were drawn up by the civil and military authorities for the evacuation of the whole area, including Framlingham.²² One of the earliest indications of danger had been the severe (and unreported) raid by German ships on the naval base at Harwich very early in the War. The dead of both sides are buried in the churchyard at Shotley.

The fear of invasion helps to explain why the Volunteers, under the command of Captain Stocks of the College, were inspected at regular intervals by very senior officers indeed, including General Sir Horace Smith Dorrien and Field Marshal Sir John French (both, it should be said, after they had been relieved of their commands in France). There was even talk of the Volunteers being paid, or at least given compensation, for loss of pay from work, and throughout these years an occasional background noise of rumbling reminded the citizens of Framlingham that there was a war on. The dull, distant thudding was not firing practice along the coast but the real thing; the sound of the artillery in Flanders and on the Somme. At times the War seemed very close.

So far as enlistment into the services was concerned, the issue arose should that be voluntary, as tradition had it, or should it be by conscription? It was a question which went to the heart of a liberal society: John Bull was a free man. While both France and Germany had large conscripted armies, the British had depended on a small regular army, the very existence of which had to be voted on annually by Parliament, such was the fear of standing armies after the experience of Cromwell's Republic more than 250 years earlier. The Liberal Government of Asquith relied on volunteers to respond to the pointing finger of Lord Kitchener at every street corner and his unequivocal message that "Your Country Needs You", and hoped that would do the trick. It did not. No-one could have foreseen the appetite of the monster of war. From Framlingham, the regulars went into action immediately with their regiments or their ships; the reservists rejoined the colours; the Territorials quickly moved they knew not where. A month after the declaration of war, a thousand people attended a recruitment meeting in the Corn Hall. Sergeant Finch of the Constabulary was put in charge of recruitment. In four months fifty volunteers had come forward, with the names of those who had volunteered listed each week in the newspaper. The Harveys had four sons serving, the Girlings in College Road six. Speakers at recruitment meetings deployed the carrot and stick: Framlingham had responded magnificently; and yet it had not done enough.²³ The pressure to volunteer was immense; recruitment meetings, reports of the sacrifices of those at the Front, the return of those on leave, the sight of the mutilated, the insistence of public opinion. Down in Essex, the Vicar of Great Leighs reported resentment among farm labourers at the young ladies from the big houses urging them to volunteer. Their response was "We'll go when we like or when we are ordered".²⁴ It would have been the same in Framlingham. Conscription, when it finally arrived, was a relief: you knew where you stood then.

The clergy of the town were present at that recruiting meeting attended by a thousand, which was chaired by the Rector. The Bishop of the Diocese addressed a similar meeting in Framlingham in July 1915, when the 4th Suffolks were home on leave after their baptism of fire at Neuve Chapelle. John Self, probably the most influential man in Framlingham and a pillar of the United Methodist Church, appealed for recruits at a service at the Parish Church, using the occasion to emphasise the unanimity between the Established Church and the Free Church on this issue.

Once the Government had finally decided on full conscription in May 1916, the other side of that coin, conscientious objection, was revealed. It was a most unpopular cause, and those who espoused it attracted considerable odium. Even so, some in Framlingham defended the right to conscientious objection. In 1917 the United Methodist Circuit in Framlingham, John Self's Circuit, passed a unanimous resolution calling for the immediate release of all

"absolutists" from prison. Absolutists were conscientious objectors who refused to take part in any project which might be seen as furthering the war effort, like service in a non-combatant corps, for instance, or ambulance work. Whatever your views on conscientious objection, the Methodists took a brave stand. I am indebted to Elizabeth Watthews of the Ipswich Methodist Circuit for this information.²⁵ Miss Lucy Tagart of Bedfield and Framlingham Unitarians was an active supporter of conscientious objectors, and after the War gave protection to them in the cottages of her property in Bedfield: they needed it!²⁶ (One, Alan Snowling, was the father of Beatrice "Nobby" Snowling, who as Beatrice Williams became a teacher at the High School).

I have uncovered disappointingly little material from the churches of Framlingham for this period. They were on good terms and worked together and held united services, which included the Unitarians. Throughout the War they offered prayers for those who were serving (the Rector expressed his sadness that not more people attended these services at the Parish Church), bewailed the dreadfulness of war, offered solace to the bereaved, and maintained the right to fight evil and pursue good. The churches undertook good works in playing host to detachments of the Royal Field Artillery and the Bedfordshire Yeomanry, which were based in the town for periods. The United Methodist Church gave the YMCA a room in Albert Place, where soldiers could relax with notepaper, envelopes, literature and refreshments twenty-four hours a day.²⁷

The town benefited from the presence of the soldiers. There were military displays, dances at the Assembly Hall and St. Michael's Rooms, concerts, a boxing tournament, and even a Pierrot Show. The soldiers were very popular. Romance was in the air, and at least one marriage was solemnised (there may well have been more). None of this goodwill prevented the Council from charging the RFA encamped in Gun Park for repairs to Jeaffreson's Well after they had sensibly attached a steam engine to it to make the drawing of water rather easier; Baldrys got the work. The popularity of the soldiers was a problem to Miss Fisher, Headmistress of Mills Grammar School. She was sufficiently concerned to draft a letter to parents about the conduct of their daughters with soldiers in public places.²⁸

By the end of 1915 Framlingham had its first woman postman. It is still a moot point whether the employment of women in men's jobs brought about votes for women and the opening of wider opportunities in employment, or merely accelerated a process which was happening already. Until conscription came in, there were few opportunities for women to take over men's jobs. And, as far as one can gather, the demand for female labour in agriculture was not very great until later in the War. In these parts, farmers preferred to hire the cheap labour of schoolchildren rather than pay adult wages to women workers. Nevertheless, one cannot overestimate the desire of women to contribute to the war effort with an enthusiasm equal to that of their menfolk. On the domestic front, this manifested itself at first in two traditional responses: bandaging and knitting. Girls bandaged and unbandaged their reluctant brothers. Women knitted socks, mitts and balaclavas at every opportunity.²⁹

One former pupil of Mills Grammar School wrote in the school magazine about her work on the land. Though a farmer's daughter, she found her parents shocked that she should make such a decision. The farmer she worked for set her to digging up docks, cheerfully explaining that unless she got the whole root out, she was wasting her time. It was hard work. At harvest by trial and error she learned how to work with horses, how to "drive away", and how to get a wagon through a gateway without touching the posts. Her sense of achievement was palpable.³⁰

The War also saw the flowering of private charity. Foremost in Framlingham was the work of the Red Cross, its local flagship being the Hospital at Easton, with the Duchess of Hamilton its Commandant. In 1916 the annual Red Cross Sale took over from the abandoned Whit Week Gala. It began with a farmers' sale, and continued over several days with a concert in the Assembly Hall, a house-to-house collection, the Duchess's own stall on the Market Hill, a Sports Day, and a film show.³¹

From the Red Cross Hospital issued a regular stream of information. One wounded soldier reported that when he heard that he was to convalesce at Easton, his mates told him what a lucky beggar he was. It was, he said, "a haven of rest". New arrivals were welcomed by the Duchess in person. The nurses spent much of their time scrubbing the place clean. Our wounded soldier was incredulous. These were the daughters of the country gentry, he exclaimed, and would never have done anything like that in their lives before.³²

A Red Cross nurse from the Mills Grammar School, identified by John Hibberd as Kathleen Moakson, wrote from a hospital in Oxford. She spoke of her terror at being left on night duty on her own on a ward of sixty-four beds. She was convinced the men would play her up. And sure enough, when she put the lights out at 9 p.m. they started whistling and talking. "Boys", she pleaded, "be sports", and they stopped at once, apart from one ribald spirit who started whistling again, but his mates quickly shut him up. She never had any trouble again. Much of her duty comprised sweeping and dusting, scrubbing, boiling instruments and doing dressings. One is struck by the absolute priority in nursing given to defeating infection by constant scrubbing and cleaning. However, work had its sad side, especially when a patient they think is going to recover "slips through our fingers", as she puts it. "They speak very little of what they have gone through", she reports, "and if they do they joke about it. Whether this cheerfulness is assumed or natural I have not yet been able to discover, but I have noticed it again and again".³³ A young lady wise beyond her years.

Any detailed description of the War at the Front lies beyond the scope of this paper. I wish we had the time to examine the contribution of former pupils of Framlingham College. The names are recorded of 950 old boys who served. Of those, 138 and four masters perished.^{33A} Three old boys won the Victoria Cross, a truly heroic achievement. The College Register itself gives a tantalising snapshot of a public school in the colonial tradition, sending its sons to all corners of the Empire, and drawing them back, as it were, in 1914. During the War, Framlingham people would know only of those College pupils who came from the town, such as Robert Brunger.

We left the Framlingham Territorials on their way to France in 1914. To speak of them undergoing a baptism of fire is not to overstate the case. Neuve Chapelle was a botched enterprise, relieved only by conspicuous gallantry. Even so, the experiences of the battalion in the Somme battlefield were far, far worse. After the middle of 1916 there was scarcely a family untouched by death or mutilation. While the newspapers were prevented from carrying details of the horror of the fighting at the Front, they did publish casualty figures which induced a sorrow of their own. So there was relief at seeing familiar faces returned on leave from the fighting: Herbert Bonney from the bakery in Well Close Square looking well; Robert Brunger, robust; anxiety when it was reported that he was suffering from pneumonia; joy that he recovered. Brunger, aged twenty-one when the War started, was a local hero. Another was Private Scoggins. His career was followed up to Company Sergeant Major and an award of the Military Medal. He was the son of Mrs. Jarvis Scoggins of Well Close Square. Sergeant Major Tom Packard, brother of Mrs. Kerridge of Fairfield Road, was

promoted into the commissioned ranks, which was taken as evidence of upward social movement.³⁴

A dinner was held at the Crown in late October 1916 to celebrate Robert Brunger's award of the DSO. It was a grand affair. Thirty guests assembled with Robert Nesling, farmer and East Suffolk County Councillor, in the chair. In presenting Brunger with a pair of binoculars, he confessed that he knew little of how he had won his DSO, because Robert in his modesty had not told anyone. In reply, Brunger declared briefly that if he could break his medal into a million pieces he would, and give one to each British soldier fighting in the War, so gallant were they all. The Rector, James Hulme Pilkington, proposing the toast of the Armed Forces, began by making the point that it was difficult to be brief on such a topic. It was a difficulty he was unable, or unwilling, to overcome, as he settled into a eulogy on the Army and Navy, first quoting from Homer and Livy before moving on to Alfred the Great, Shakespeare, Grenville of the Revenge, Nelson at Trafalgar, Hearts of Oak, Rule Britannia, and even W. S. Gilbert. The evening ended with songs from F. W. Stocks, Aubrey Wicks, Robert Brunger's father, A. G. Potter, and others.³⁵ It was an occasion of charm with the older generation of Framlingham saluting one of its sons.

Such jollification was much needed. It is not easy to judge the mood of a nation or a town. But as the war ground on relentlessly, one can sense a cloud of weariness and numbness descended on Framlingham. Soldiers on leave brought home stories of narrow escapes. It must have been hard to go back: there was at least one instance of a man (unnamed) having to be returned to his unit under military escort. In John Bridges' pictorial history, next to the photograph of the Territorials firing their salute before departing, is another of later volunteers (or perhaps conscripts, or perhaps of men returning to their units) being seen off from the station. It reveals an altogether more sombre scene: a crowd jostling on the platform, heads leaning out of the carriage windows, but no smiling.³⁶

Messages arrived from the wounded: from Private Herbert Etheridge, now in Norwich Hospital, that though injured in his hands and legs he looked forward to being home soon.³⁷ Word came of those who had suffered nervous breakdowns: the term shell-shock entered the language. After the major battles of the Western Front the trickle of news of casualties and losses became a stream. Often there was uncertainty about whether someone was dead or alive. Private William Warner of Station Terrace was reported over a period of six months to be wounded, dead, and finally (and correctly) a prisoner of war.³⁸ One can hardly begin to imagine the anxiety, grief, and eventual relief of his family; already one son had been killed.

News accumulated of more and more men killed in action. Such information was received not with outrage but with muted resignation: yet another one gone. Bonney, Mann, Carley, Brunger, they all fell, along with the others whose names are on the War Memorial, and more. Each death was poignant, though none more than that of Edward Stannard. By craft a cabinet-maker for Dan Scase, he was for twenty-two years first a member of the Volunteers, then a Territorial. He had offered to serve in the South African War, but had been turned down on medical grounds. He fell on the Somme at the age of 41.³⁹ The stunned population could not find words to express what was happening to its sons. The *Framlingham Weekly News* strained after words: "sorrow has entered the home of Mr and Mrs Bloomfield of Saxtead", "this week has again brought sorrow to our town", "the decree of relentless fate".

The winter months of 1917 and 1918 were dark and hard. The Parish Council paused to remember the losses to the families of its own members or servants, and then went on to consider ever more plans for public health, street lighting, the growing of food, and so on, into 1919. Advice from Whitehall and the County Council stiffened into directives: to make land available for allotment holders in order to increase the supply of home-grown produce,

and to supply them with Scotch seed potatoes at wholesale prices. The formidable Lady Rendlesham pressed the Council to appoint a Village Food Production Committee. The intervention by Lady Rendlesham was the last straw. In a desperate response, the Councillors attempted the unconvincing diversionary tactic of claiming that food production was a matter for the War Savings Committee. It failed; they were made to take action.⁴⁰ To these burdens was added the pain of rationing. At first this was voluntary, the clergy being asked to preach self-restraint from the pulpit. When that did not work, it became compulsory; with much confusion because no-one knew how to fill in the forms. The whole thing seemed never-ending.

Prosecutions for breaking the lighting regulations seemed to increase. Standing by the Sale Yard, poor Private Charles Henlen made the mistake of striking a match to light up a cigarette right under the nose of Sergeant Mann. He was arrested immediately.⁴¹ There seemed to be more arrests, too, for poaching and for egg thieving. Squire Chevallier of Aspall Hall, for instance, apprehended four men poaching conies. The magistrates fined them 7/3 each. How hungry were people becoming? It is not easy to know. On the one hand, in February 1917 the Government declared open season on pheasants, hares, game, even foxes: on the other, in Framlingham there were vacant allotments.

One bright feature, at least, was the achievement of the Egg Co-operative. At the Annual General Meeting in 1916 under the chairmanship of Canon Abbay, it was reported that 45,750,000 eggs had been despatched from Framlingham Station in the past year, and nearly 2,000 turkeys. The next year the Egg Co-op took over the running of all egg co-operatives in East Anglia. Thereby the most businesslike and efficient egg company in East Anglia was empowered to run the whole region using for transport the nationalised railways. Station-masters were even given good breeding strains for sale to travellers and the public at large.⁴² Articles appeared in the *Framlingham Weekly News* about poultry-keeping and a course was put on at the Sir Robert Hitcham School. These are good examples of initiatives being taken by Government and County agencies under the Defence of the Realm Act.

The end of the War came almost as unexpectedly as it had begun, a revolution back in Germany precipitating the surrender of the Axis forces. In Framlingham many had been reconciled to the view that it might well go on for another year or more, so when the Armistice was announced, rejoicing was mixed with mild surprise and weary relief. It was greeted by a celebratory meet of the Hunt, which had managed to keep going throughout the War (as had the Bowls Club), a united Victory service in the Parish Church, and a worsening of the 'flu' epidemic, which was beginning to take hold.

I don't suppose we shall ever know what was going through people's minds here in those four years. We need to approach that time with humility. The past, said L. P. Hartley, is a foreign country. We are handicapped by the gift of hindsight. We know what happened, and it clouds our judgement. It was all new to them. Some have criticised, for instance, Alfred Pretty's stirring speech to the Territorials as they left Framlingham to "quit themselves like men"⁴³ and the part which the clergy took in recruitment meetings. We may find something distasteful about old men from the comfort of their armchairs sending young men to their deaths. Yet they could not have foreseen what lay ahead. Framlingham between 1914 and 1918 should be viewed, if we can manage it, from as near to the perspective of its own time as we can get, not through the accumulated debris of the following ninety years of brutal history.

What strikes me about those days is that you have here ordinary people thrust into most extraordinary circumstances. And as they went about their daily lives, both at home and at the Front, they coped, these ordinary people whom everyone knew – from home, from

school, from work – not with resignation, for that is too negative a word, but with quiet, stoical determination, and sometimes with spectacular heroism, all of which was a triumph of the human spirit over adversity.

Notes:

1. [This article is an edited version of the paper given by the Society's Past President at the Society's meeting on 19th November 2003. Additional notes by the Editor are enclosed in square brackets].
2. [J. Bridges, *Framlingham: portrait of a Suffolk town* (1975) [p. 26] no. 38].
3. *Framlingham Weekly News (FWN)* 8 August 1914.
4. [For a detailed evocation of the town of Framlingham a few years earlier, see A. A. Lovejoy, "Framlingham in 1900", in *Fram*, 3rd series, no. 8 (December 1999) pp. 5-26].
5. *FWN* [5 April] 1913 [quoted by W. Woodland in *Fram*, 3rd series, no. 2 (December 1997) p. 17].
6. [The Reverend James Hulme Pilkington; see also Lovejoy, *art. cit.* p. 16].
7. [B. Whitehead, "Framlingham Town Council .." in *Fram*, 4th series, no. 4 (August 2002) p. 24].
8. [See also A. A. Lovejoy, "William Jeaffreson of Framlingham 1790-1865 .." in *Fram*, 4th series, no. 8 (December 2003) pp. 8 – 15].
9. Framlingham Parish Council Minutes, 30 July 1915.
10. [See also J. and D. Black, "Plague in east Suffolk 1906-1918" in *Fram*, 3rd series, no. 10 (August 2000) pp. 7-12].
11. Sir Robert Hitcham School. Boys Department log-book; Girls Department log-book, *passim*.
12. *Ibid. passim*.
13. Sir Robert Hitcham School. Boys Department admissions register.
14. *FWN*, 8 August 1914.
15. [A. R. Staniforth, "A Country upbringing .." in *Fram*, 4th series, no. 7 (August 2003) p. 9].
16. R. Blythe, *Akenfield* .. (1972) p. 62.
17. *FWN*, 21 August 1915.
18. *Ibid.*, 4 September 1915.
19. *Ibid.*, 27 March 1915.
20. Sir Robert Hitcham School. Boys Department log-book; Girls Department log-book.
21. *Lambert's Almanac*, 1916.
22. J. Booth, *Framlingham College, the first sixty years* (1925) p. 146.
23. *FWN*, 1 May 1916 (for example).
24. A. Clark, *Echoes of the Great War* .. (1985) p. 59.
25. E. Watthews, *Methodism at War* (2003).
26. From notes by the Reverend Clifford Reed attached to a transcript of Bedfield Unitarian School Record Book, August 1916 to October 1920.
27. *FWN*, 15 September 1915.
28. J. Hibberd, *Think on these things* (2002)
29. A. Marwick, *The Deluge* (1965) p. 78.
30. *Magpie*, June 1917.
31. *FWN*, 3 June 1916.
32. *Ibid.*, 25 March 1916.
33. *Magpie*, January 1917.
- 33a [Booth, *op. cit.* p. 141]
34. *FWN, passim*.
35. *Ibid.*, 4 November 1916.
36. Bridges, *op. cit.* [p. 27] no. 39.
37. *FWN*, 20 March 1915.
38. *Ibid.*, 11 May 1918.
39. *Lambert's Almanac*, 1917.
40. Framlingham Parish Council, Minutes. *passim*.
41. *FWN*, 2 October 1916.
42. D. Pitcher, *All Change for Framlingham* (2002) p. 21.
43. Page 13 above.

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[Specific page references, where applicable, are given *passim* in Notes above].

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Departure Point

... It is entirely feasible to make these raw materials of history available via computer networks or by means of CD ROM at remote points. It would also be possible to tailor such material in units relating to particular topics or places and suitable for enjoyment and study by the non-specialist.

If we expect society to make available the considerable resources necessary to protect and enhance the heritage ... conserving damaged records, or undertaking archaeological investigation, it is of the utmost importance that all sections of the community both appreciate and value it. To achieve this may necessitate a re-appraisal of the roles of archivists, archaeologists and museum curators who will need to place increasing emphasis on communicating with a wider constituency of potential users ... More than ever it will be necessary to engage the interest and support of the layman by interpreting the raw data ... using the media which are most accessible to the public.

From: K. Hall, "From past historic to future perfect ..." in *Essex: 'full of profitable things'*; edited by K. Neale (1996).

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