FRAM

The Journal of
The Framlingham & District
Local History & Preservation Society

4th Series

Number 7 August 2003

Fram

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

4th Series Number 7

August 2003

All enquiries concerning Society membership should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, 28 Pembroke Road, Framlingham, IP13 9HA, telephone 01728 723214

For back issues of the journal, correspondence for publication, and proposals for articles, contact the Editor, 43 College Road, Framlingham, IP13 9ER, telephone/fax 01728 724324

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

SOCIETY NOTES

The Society, as part of its programme of summer evening outings in 2003, will visit the Earl Soham Brewery on Wednesday 17th September. Meet with cars at 6.00 p.m. at the Elms car park, Framlingham. This will be an opportunity to savour the delights of a very local beer, to learn about its brewing, and sample the brew itself.

The Annual General Meeting for 2003 of the Society will take place at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 29th October at the United Free Church Hall, Riverside, Framlingham. Amongst matters to be discussed then will be the amount of the annual subscription. The business meeting will also include a review of the Society's activities during the past year. Mr. Adrian Craddock, Planning Officer for Framlingham with the Suffolk Coastal District Council, will then give a short illustrated talk on Framlingham planning matters.

The Society's Annual Dinner for 2003 will take place at 7.00 for 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 3rd December at the Conservative Club, Church Street, Framlingham. Details of the Dinner will be included in the papers sent to Members introducing the Society's coming winter lecture season. No more than sixty people will sit down to the Dinner, and places must be pre-booked.

The first lecture of the Society's Winter Lecture Season 2003-04 will take place at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 19th November 2003 at the United Free Church Hall, when our outgoing President, the Revd. Canon R. Willcock, will speak on the Christian and the First World War. This lecture will be taking place exactly thirty years after the approval and signing of the Society's Constitution - how appropriate, then, that our long-serving President should be speaking!

FRAM

4th Series Number 7
August 2003

Registered Charity no. 274201

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

"All history is bunkum" as Henry Ford notoriously said seventy-odd years ago, and in 2003 history as a subject for undergraduate study is said by some senior academics to be more than somewhat passée.

But what about the people?

Last November, I was persuaded to join a family visit to the ancient borough of Kidderminster. More particularly, I and my brood sampled the delights of the fine Victorian pile that is Kidderminster Town railway station, just a stones-throw from the erstwhile BR station. The latter boasts two or three plastic shelters and a booking-office shed, in contrast to the more traditional Town station with its extensive booking hall, busy refreshments rooms, bookstall, and (not least) well-appointed toilet facilities.

However, this Town station was actually built just a few years ago, and serves a revived branch line that meanders up the valley for a mere ten miles.

And then the interesting part.

Even aside from the crowded neo-antique station premises, the eight elderly carriages of the train that I caught from there to Bridgenorth were packed to the doors, not with the dreaded "anoraks", but with eager and excited families, more of whom joined the train at stations en route.

In short, there was on that grey and miserable day, a large and engaged public whose affinity with history and heritage was sufficient to make them pay well over the odds for a nostalgic journey that they didn't need to make, and which they could have accomplished in their own cars in about a quarter of the time that it took our elderly steam locomotive to puff up the line.

And another thing.

Think of a small village near Framlingham, population a few hundred, with a pub, a fish and chip shop, and a small museum. So many thousands of people want to visit the place each year, that the locals are trying to find ways of keeping them away.

Why this influx of milling hordes?

Just to look out to sea to see a city that isn't there any more.

How strange!

****

School examinations, be they GCSE, AS or A levels, seem to get a lot of attention nowadays, with the unending debate as to whether we have declining standards or ever brighter or better-taught candidates. There have even been questions (perish the thought!) about possible manipulation of the results themselves.

I am reminded of early experiences of my own, many years ago, as a pupil in a small country grammar school in Hertfordshire. To help to occupy my time at the end of the second-year sixth - you had to stay on at school right to the last day of your final summer term in those days! - the head of history passed to me to mark (provisionally) a large pile of A-level history papers, bestowed upon him as one of that dedicated and underpaid crew of external examiners engaged by an examination board that it were perhaps better that I do not identify here. The scripts, all lengthy, legible and literate, were full of accurately recalled facts, names and dates.

However, in those distant days, while the history O-level was largely a memory test, history A-level examinations were actually intended to explore the individual candidate's ability to think - to assess the validity of different interpretations of historical events, and even evaluate the wider significance of past historical outcomes. In short, no interpretation or evaluation, no pass. Sadly, on that basis, very few of the young ladies whose worthy and well-meant scripts were scrutinized by my mentor and myself achieved the magical forty per-cent, which in those days represented the A-level pass-mark.

Now that we have all the benefits and blessings of the computer, with its capacity to hold and retrieve data exponentially greater than that possessed by mere humans, I devoutly hope that, for history students at A-level and beyond, thought processes more sophisticated than mere data-recovery are still being tested, evaluated, and valued.

Should this not be the case, perhaps it would be both more realistic and more efficient to hand over our "history" and our destinies to that computer.

****

Hot from the press comes *Framfare: the Framlingham News*, the first totally local news-sheet for the town of Framlingham since *The Advertiser* enjoyed a brief existence in 1955-56. For many years, from 1859 to 1938, *The Framlingham Weekly News* was the staple diet of the town, until rising costs and declining sales led to its demise. *Framfare* comes to us for free, sustained by its paid advertising, as was *The Advertiser*: both of those were one-person enterprises, *The Advertiser* by Leslie Heron, *Framfare* by Stephanie Bennell. One hopes, devoutly hopes, that the latter paper survives longer than the former!

THE NORFOLK LION

By A. J. Martin

In February 1968, the chancel of St. Michael's Church was redecorated. Scaffolding was erected and, for safety reasons, the Flodden Helm was removed. While it was thus grounded, so to speak, it was thought opportune to ask the Tower Armouries in London to record and conserve the piece, and to seek their opinion regarding its authenticity. In due course, correspondence between the Tower and the Rector ensued; the Helm was dismantled, cleaned and conserved; the lion crest was regilded and repainted, and the whole was returned to Framlingham in 1971. It was my personal pleasure to see the lion at close quarters, handle it, and photograph it, before it was replaced high on the wall where, unhappily, it is too distant to be fully appreciated. I don't suppose I, or perhaps any of us, will ever see it so closely again.

For the December 1971 *Parish Magazine*, the Rector, Martin Bulstrode, asked me to write up the story of the Helm, and to relate what we had been told by the Tower Armouries. The article appeared as a supplement to the magazine. The cover reproduced a drawing that I asked John Western to do for me. Many of us remember John with affection, and the tenth anniversary of his tragically early death, twenty-one years after he drew the lion, was marked earlier this year by an exhibition which showed how his artistic skills developed before they were taken from us. My photograph shows a beast with a deeper chest and more power in the hindquarters, and the head is set lower on the body, the legs are shorter and the teeth more ferocious. The armourer made the teeth an ivory white, set in blood-red gums and the tongue coloured similarly. The eyes have big black pupils, and there are touches of red at the corners of the whites. The coronet is silver and the gilding is a deep gold and beautifully smooth.

The Norfolk Lion is, in fact, a heraldic device. It is the crest to the coat of arms for the Howards. He appears at the feet of the Earl of Surrey's effigy, and there are four little feet on the stone helmet on which the head of the effigy of the 3rd Duke rests. The crest is described heraldically: A lion statant guardant [standing, looking out from the shield], his tail extended, or, [gold] and Ducally gorged argent [wearing a silver duke's coronet].

The legend that grew around this helmet and crest was that it was worn by the 2nd Duke of Norfolk at the Battle of Flodden in 1513. There is much wrong with this statement, and the article in 1971 set out to correct the fallacy and to disprove, through the correspondence that came from the Armouries, that the helmet was worn at that battle.

After the Battle of Bosworth in 1485 when John Howard, 1st Duke, died and his son Thomas, Earl of Surrey, had fought on the losing side with him, the titles were attainted, and it was not until 1489 that the Earldom of Surrey was restored to Thomas - but not the Dukedom. The Framlingham estates and other properties were restored to Howard by Henry VII, and later he became Lord Treasurer of England and an executor to the King. Surrey retained these positions into the new reign of Henry VIII, who made him a Privy Councillor and Earl Marshall for life.

In 1513, Henry went to France leaving the septuagenarian Earl of Surrey as his Lieutenant in the "North Parts of England to observe the motions of the Scots" in his absence. The culmination of the "motions" was the approach to the border of 80,000 Scotsmen under King James IV, the siege and taking of Norham Castle, and a six-mile march "To a great mountain called Flodden in the Cheviot Hills".

Surrey had marched the length of England, collecting men as he went, many from East Anglia, until he arrived at the Borders with 26,000, where they were reinforced by a further 1,000 under the command of his eldest son, also Thomas, the Lord High Admiral. His third son, Edmund, was Marshall of the House under his brother Thomas, who led the vanguard. The left wing was commanded by Sir Marmaduke Constable.

Friday September 9th, 1513 was a hot day and a little river runs with clear Scottish water at the bottom of Flodden Hill. By a cunning manoeuvre, Howard kept the Scots from the water, and forced them onto a smaller hill where they were vulnerable. Thus it was that at the end of the day, King James of Scotland, together with about 8,000 of his men, including three bishops, two abbots, twelve Earls, seventeen Lords

and many Gentlemen lay dead on Flodden Field. Several English soldiers were taken prisoner, but only about 1,000 were slain in the battle.

For his services at Flodden, the Earl of Surrey was created Duke of Norfolk by Henry VIII on his return from France. Thomas became the new Earl of Surrey, a father to son succession continued to this day.

The deliverance of England from her age-old enemy, the Scots, would have been seen then as on a par with the achievements of Nelson, Wellington and Churchill; Howard was a hero in the land. To recognise this, the King also granted to the Howards and their descendants in perpetuity, an Augmentation of Honour to their arms. On the "bend" - the silver diagonal - between the six crosslets there now appears "A demi lion [the top half] gules [red], pierced through the mouth with an arrow [holding an arrow] within a double tressure counterflowered as the Arms of Scotland". [The double red border containing the Scottish lion which we see today on the flags at football matches]. The Howard arms appear frequently in Framlingham church, of course, and the augmentation is clearly seen.

As befitted a national hero, when the Duke died at Framlingham in 1524, aged eighty years, his funeral was of heroic proportions. It was the last of its kind and no Englishman was to be buried in such style again - at least, not until Nelson, Wellington and Churchill. Nine hundred mourners accompanied the body on the three-day procession to Thetford. Four hundred sat down to a funeral feast, and thousands more were given alms on the occasion. A substantial proportion of the population of East Anglia must have witnessed this gigantic parade, and they would most probably have seen the Flodden Helm go by.

As with the crown on the Queen Mother's coffin and the insignia of Garter Knights on theirs, it has long been the custom to place items personal to the deceased on their coffins. It was the custom of undertakers to make use of old armour for this purpose, and the importance of this Duke would have necessitated the carving of the crest. Following the interment at Thetford, the helmet and the crest would have been placed prominently above the tomb. Another example of this practice can be seen at Wingfield, where a Turk's head surmounts a helmet above the tomb of Sir John Wingfield. After the Dissolution of Thetford and the likely removal of the 2nd Duke's remains to Framlingham, the helmet would have been re-erected, perhaps in its present position. It follows, too, of course, that it would also have been used at the funeral of the 3rd Duke of Norfolk in 1554.

The Framlingham helmet is comprised of three parts. However, a medieval helmet of the early sixteenth century was made of five main parts. The basic one of these was a skull-piece onto which all the others were added. The visor hinged to the skull-piece, covering the upper part of the face and there was a brow re-inforcing piece fitted to the top half of this. The chin-piece was pivoted onto the skull-piece at a point just in front of the ears, and onto this was rivetted a chin re-inforcing piece for extra protection. When the headgear was to be worn, the wearer brought it onto the back of his head, the chin-piece pivoted down to be locked at a point on each shoulder, and the hinged visor was closed across the face from one side to the other to complete the full enclosure of the head.

The above description refers to a helmet used in battle. For a tournament, a further procedure was followed. The chin-piece was covered by a large re-inforcing plate which provided extra protection for the whole area from throat to eyes, and was held in place by straps round the neck. This also came up to meet the plate on the visor. This plate is clearly seen on the Framlingham helmet, but it has been rivetted on to the skull-piece, thus making it impossible to wear as it will not pivot to admit the head. This helmet has no visor. But a brow-re-inforcing plate has been taken off another one and rivetted directly on to the skull-piece itself. Thus there is a dangerous gap at eye level.

It will now be clear that the helmet could not possibly have been used in its present form at the battle of Flodden. It will also be obvious that no helmet, even in a wearable condition, could ever have been managed by a man on horseback in the thick of battle, surmounted by a carved wooden lion crest standing on its wood cap of maintenance. Plumes and cockades were identification devices, necessary to differ between friend and foe in the anonymity of armour, but they weighed very little. Cloth surcoats bearing heraldic devices were clear identifications of the sides in battle and hence, even today, we refer to "coats of arms".

However, as the Tower armourers point out, there is no reason why the three parts which are all that form the Framlingham Helmet itself, should not have belonged together when they formed parts of the whole. The date of the parts is about 1500, and they are of a kind worn in England, although some were made

on the Continent and imported.

It seems, in conclusion, that the Helmet in its present form was made thus by a medieval undertaker whose job it was to provide a heraldic device suitable for the funeral of a Duke of Norfolk. He may have taken an existing helmet and dismantled it to the bare essentials which can be seen, or he may have put some spare parts together. We shall never know. But we can take pride in an object which was once surrounded by all the pageantry of medieval ceremony. It reminds us of our place in history and those who once dwelt in Framlingham and formed the land in which we live.

****

It is odd how one thing leads on to another. Amongst the papers I read when I wrote the article for the *Parish Magazine*, was the following poem. I did not know then who the signatory, R. Abbay, was. Many other people must have known (tho' none told me!) for he was the great and good Rector of Earl Soham from 1880 until his death on July 4th 1927. A force for practical improvement in the parish, Richard restored the church, improved the water supply and, by his own example, fostered practical training in agriculture and gardening. Each householder was given an apple tree, some of which still exist in Earl Soham. Canon Abbay became a county councillor and a county alderman.

Canon Abbay took a lead in agricultural co-operation, trying to alleviate the agricultural depression which afflicted the eastern counties right up to the 1920s and especially following the wet season of 1879. It was largely due to his efforts that the Framlingham and District Farmers' Co-operative Society was formed. Initially this traded in other goods besides the collection and marketing of eggs, and later of dressed fowls. However, that general part of the business was taken over by the young Eastern Counties Farmers Co-operative, and the Framlingham enterprise then dealt solely in eggs. The original premises were in Station Road, between what is now Walnes Seeds Ltd and the offices of BQP. Later they were moved to Badingham Road and there was an office in Burrell Road, Ipswich. Canon Abbay was Chairman of "Fram. Egg" until he died.

From 1893 to 1913, he was Rural Dean of Loes and from 1906, an Honorary Canon of Norwich Cathedral. Amongst all his activities, he found time to contribute articles to the *Proceedings* of the Royal Astronomical, Geological, Physical and Linnean Societies, and he published some thoughtful poems on his philosophy of life. But this is what Canon Richard Abbay wrote about:

THE FLODDEN HELMET IN FRAMLINGHAM CHURCH

Wast thou with Marmion, dusky helm,
Cold steel and tarnished gold,
Grim relic of the Northern wars,
And battle-fields of old?

Wast thou with Marmion, when he clave
The Scottish ranks in twain?
The bravest knight of all the host
That day on Flodden plain!

And wast thou in that stormy strife,
Where Marmion's falcon flew,
Now high, now low, but ever on,
The foremost crest in view?

Till, wavering in the crowded fight,
It sunk amid the foes;
And Scotland's shout of victory
In vengeful triumph rose.

Wast thou with those who charged amain
And back the foemen bore,
And rescued Marmion's lifeless form,
All stained with mud and gore?

'Tis said that in thy narrow cell
Was crowned upon that day
All England's genius for the war
And wisdom for the fray.

'Twas Surrey chose the battle-ground
And marshalled all the host;
'Twas Surrey brought the battle on
And seized the vantage post.

The mind that ruled the strife was his;
His was the victor's task;
The thoughts that thought out victory
Were thought within thy casque.

Wast thou with Surrey when the cry
Of battle first awoke,
And all the shock of Scotland's might
On England's centre broke?

And all the heart of Scotland's pride
Around the Royal plume -
King James and thrice a hundred knights -
Came rushing to its doom?

And wast thou in that direr press,
Slow closing on its prey,
That lessening ring around their King,
The remnants of the fray?

That stoutly fought and bravely died,
With all but Honour lost;
Till James by unknown hand was slain,
The last of all his host.

Was Rumour true, his charger slain,
That Surrey once was down,
That Wilton mounted him again,
Be-mired from heel to crown?

It may be in thy vizor's fold
Mingled with ancient rust,
Still lingers, relic of the fight,
Some speck of battle dust.

Perchance, when Flodden Day returns,
Upon thee, bright and plain,
Some scenes of Flodden come and go,
And Marmion fights again.

And still may issue from thy shell
To ears that hear aright,
Faint and afar, an age-worn sound,
Some echo of the fight.


JOHN WESTERN

A COUNTRY UPBRINGING:
Life at the D'Urban's Farm, Framlingham

By A. R. Staniforth

I was born and bred at the D'Urbans Farm, so named because it had belonged to a Dr. John D'Urban, whose son, Sir Benjamin D'Urban was Governor of the Cape of Good Hope from 1834 to 1837, and after whom the chief port of Natal was named.

Much of the farmhouse was built of wattle and daub, but the front was covered with cream-coloured pargeting. From the upstairs window we looked east, in company with the house-martins that nested under the eaves, to Framlingham and the flint stone tower of St. Michael's church, about a mile away. Church-bells were a feature of life in those days. As well as the peals for services, there was the mournful tolling for funerals or the occasional great clanging to call the firemen to their station, and every four hours the bells played Home Sweet Home. In addition, when there was an easterly breeze there would drift across an intermezzo from the bells of Dennington church, surely one of the sweetest peals in England.

Another sound that would come in through my bedroom window on a summer's morning was the splashing of the horses when they came down for their early morning drink at the horse-pond. There was a shallow, gravel-bottomed entrance at one end of the pond, and they loved to splash themselves with their fore-feet when the weather was warm.

I was not on the scene at the beginning of the First World War, but I was told of an episode that occurred during the period of spy mania. Night watchers on the tower of St. Michael's detected a light flashing at intervals in the distance, and they trained a telescope on the offending spot. It turned out to be the Oaks Farm, where my parents had started farming, and they had to explain that it was the opening and shutting of the back-door that caused the signal to the enemy.

It was my good fortune to be born and brought up at the D'Urbans Farm, and, although it was a time of deep depression in arable farming, to me the farm was a sort of earthly paradise, and a delightful place in which to grow up.

A tiny stream, one of the very beginnings of the River Ore, ran down the northern side of the farm, bordered by a thin, straggly wood. This was called the Gulls[1], and it provided a fine home for wildlife. Rabbits in particular loved the pockets of glacial sand and gravel which were interspersed in the boulder clay, and many sorts of birds nested in the trees and bushes.

Four ponds had been dug into the boulder clay around the farm-house. One of these provided the domestic water supply, via a pipe to the big hand-pump that stood beside the stone scullery sink. We used to fill the wood-fired copper by hand on wash-days. Another pipe led from the copper to the bathroom above, where a small rotary hand-pump was used to fill the enamelled bath. When my younger sister and I were small, we were bathed in one of those two-handled galvanised iron baths, and the big bath upstairs was for my mother and father and two elder sisters, and was not used every night! During one or two very dry summers, the water in the domestic water pond would turn a pinkish colour with algal growth; we then had to cycle down to the town, where there was a reliable well with a hand-pump from which we could fill our cans of drinking water. We had no car in those days and my mother's bicycle, with solid rubber tyres, acetylene gas-lamp and back-pedal brake, was our best wheeled mode of transport. We had a large rain-water tank at the back of the house, and it supplied soft water for clothes-washing. But this supply dried up, too, in dry weather, and we had, in any case, to be extremely careful

to turn the tap off tightly, so that the rain-water did not run to waste. The big pond where the horses drank had an island on it, and waterhens nested there.

For milk we had Daisy, the Jersey cow, and as a small boy I would bring her in, in the mornings, from the orchard to the cow-house, where my father milked her. When Daisy was no more, we got our milk from Rolfe's, the neighbouring farm, in cans, again by bicycle. In the town, milk was still being delivered in churns carried on a yoke and dispensed to customers by pint measures. (There was no compulsory tuberculin testing in those days, and tuberculosis was much commoner than today. There is no telling what counts of dangerous microbes, such as E-coli, would have shown up if laboratory tests had been made on those pre-war milk supplies).

There was, however, one aspect of house-keeping on the farm seventy years ago that compares quite favourably with modern practice. Every Friday Mr. Gray from Carley's grocery would ring the front door-bell, and he and my mother would sit down at the mahogany dining table and make out a list of groceries which would be delivered without fail on the following Tuesday. We would also buy a few items direct from Carley's, and the girl at the pay-out would put our bill, with prices marked and the money to pay, in a small container which she whizzed on a taut wire to the cashier in his office, whence it would be whizzed back with receipt and change.

Our house must, in earlier times, have housed a small retinue of servants in the attics. However, in our day, to help my mother there was just Mrs. Bridges, wife of the foreman on an adjoining farm, who would come over on wash-days. She was a small, bustling woman with a family of her own - Freddy, Gerald and Victor (who later came to work at the D'Urbans) and an elder pretty daughter who disappeared from the scene; I can dimly recall that it was said that she was "in the family way", and I hope the girl had a happy life, wherever it was that she went.

We had no other young children as neighbours, although Major and Mrs. Rolfe had two grown-up sons. Mr. Brown, a retired clothier and a "gentleman farmer" lived with his sister at Red House Farm Kettleburgh, and Jack Priest now farmed the neighbouring Oaks Farm, where my mother and father had started farming. Jack was a rough type with no known antecedents and no apparent relations or friends - a true recluse.

I was still very small when the Oaks farm-house was burned down, and I can dimly remember the horse-drawn Framlingham fire engine galloping by on its way to the blaze - a hopeless enterprise. There were dark rumours that Jack Priest had set fire to the house to get insurance money; he was reported as saying that the fire started because he had left his socks in the oven to dry, which did not sound too plausible an explanation. For some years after the fire Mr. Priest resided in a calf-house among the farm buildings, and I can remember peeping in during one of my bird-nesting sorties, and seeing the rough-made bed and his twelve-bore shotgun leaning in a corner.

There were nominally five cottages on the farm of which two, semi-detached and of poor lath-and-plaster construction, were unoccupied for most of our time. Frank, the foreman, and Sam Banthorpe, his brother, occupied a pair of small brick, single-storied cottages with their old father and mother, while David, the horseman, and his wife and two sons, lived in another small, brick-built cottage. I only saw the inside of these cottages once or twice; they were primitively equipped; you went upstairs in David's cottage by way of a ladder with a rail. It hardly needs saying that none had a bathroom or bath. Our cottages were, of course, rent-free, and they have long since disappeared.

There were in Framlingham a variety of places of worship. Canon Lanchester, a benevolent,

white-haired figure, was vicar of the parish church, and he would cycle out to the farm on occasion, and take tea with my mother. There was no telephone, so she could not have known when he would push his bicycle up the drive-way, but she seemed always to have some scones or Suffolk rusks, and of course some home-made jam to put on the hand-embroidered linen cloth. We seldom went to church, but when we did, it was more likely to be to the Methodist church, which was considerably nearer to the farm than St. Michael's.

The Methodist parson, the Reverend Bywater, had a great interest in bird photography, and he got some good pictures from a hide he built in our garden, of blue-tits that nested in a hole in our Beauty of Bath apple tree. I remember once going with him to photograph young owls in their oak-tree nest on a neighbouring farm in Earl Soham. The farmer strode across the meadow while we were about our photography business intending to send us off, but he was surprised to see Bywater's dog-collar, and I remember him saying "I'm sorry I did not notice your cloth"; and we got our photographs, which I still have. The Methodist parson had a young family, and was very sadly drowned when sea bathing one summer at Thorpeness. What would he have thought of an apparatus made and patented by my son which consists of a tiny infra-red camera set above a blue tit's (or other) nest, and which transmits the moving picture to one's television screen?

Birds and Egg Collecting

O tempora, O mores. I have to admit that I collected birds' eggs. My father impressed on me that I must not disturb nests or take more than one egg, and I still do not consider that I deserved to be branded a wildlife vandal; rarely if ever did a bird desert its nest because of my attentions. I eventually had about a hundred different eggs in my collection, and I can only commiserate with those who have never seen the heavenly blue of a dunnock's egg or the romantic olive of a nightingale's.

Why should the dunnock's egg be so beautiful? It is laid and then just sat upon by a parent bird till it hatches after which the broken shell is tipped unceremoniously out of the nest. It is hard to find a Darwinian explanation. Some eggs, such as the mottled and spotted brown eggs of the lapwing, are camouflaged to make them difficult to spot in their shallow nest scratched in the soil. Others, like martins', owls' or kingfishers', are laid in dark holes and are plain white, a sensible economy of pigment. But why the cerulean blue of the dunnock's egg, or for that matter the pretty, speckled robins' or blue tits' eggs, which are also laid in dark, covered nests?

Most of the eggs I found on our own farm, but some were from other, sometimes inaccessible, places. I had to climb the walls of Framlingham Castle for my jackdaw's egg, and my rook's egg was from the rookery at neighbouring Kettleburgh rectory. There was a nest there that I thought was reachable. It meant throwing a long length of weighted binder twine over a high branch of a Scots pine and pulling up an attached stout plough trace that I borrowed from the stable. I climbed up the rope, reached over to the nest, popped one of the five eggs in my mouth and abseiled down to terra firma. If my mother had known of this dangerous escapade, I am sure she would have been horrified.

I knew some heronries too, but in those the birds nested right at the top of very tall trees. I never came across a nest that I could climb to, even with the aid of a plough trace, and no heron's egg ever found its way into my collection.

Predators did much more damage than I ever did. My one nightingale's egg came from a thick hawthorn bush in the Gulls, and I later found that the four remaining eggs had been broken up, perhaps by a magpie or more probably a jay that had a nest nearby. Magpies were not common

in those days, with every gamekeeper's hand against them.

My guide in the quest for eggs was a small volume by J. C. Atkinson, published in 1862[2]. This handbook was based on many years' observations by the Victorian vicar, and is directed to "the youthful nest-hunter and egg-collector". It has much to say about the birds themselves and their habits and songs, as well as about their nests and eggs. Something of the flavour of the text comes over in a passage about a hawk

> If you hear some careful, Martha-like, housewife of a hen skirling and fussing, in dire alarm, her terrified chicks, the while, seeking any possible shelter, you may be almost certain that the gliding form you caught a glimpse of rounding the corner of the barn and making a rapid, but by no means noisy stoop, among the young poultry of various kinds in lively attendance of their mothers, you may be tolerably sure that the intruder was a Sparrow Hawk, and that some hapless dove or chicken has lost the number of his mess.

This long-out-of-print book is a charming period piece of information. The illustrations, given the limitations of Victorian reproduction processes, have kept their colours well and they helped me to distinguish between, say, a linnet's and a skylark's egg.

Incidents and Events

On Saturday, Charlie Gooch, who was said to have gypsy blood, and wore a thin gold ring in his ear, would come with horse and cart from the corn merchant with the week's poultry food. The bags of meal were easy and I could carry them in, but the maize in eighteen stone sacks was heavy. Yet it was normal in those days to carry these back-breaking loads of grain on a man's back, even up a steep flight of granary stairs.

One day, Frank appeared at our back door looking worried, and asked to see my father. The two of them went off and came back a little later with the news that Charlie Gooch had drowned himself in the pond between the two horse meadows. Why had the poor man wandered all the way from the town, up Soham Lane and across the fields until he came to this pond, to commit suicide? One suggestion at the time was that he had just had to get a set of false teeth and that the trauma caused by visits to the dentist had unsettled his mind. It was not an idiotic theory. The only dentist in Framlingham at that time was an unqualified practitioner who came once a week to a small room beside Barclays Bank on the Market Hill. His methods, which I remember well, were primitive, and his drill, operated with a foot pedal, was particularly painful.

A year or two later there occurred another event that sticks in my memory. At weekends I used to take our dog Lassie for a walk round the farm; she loved to chase rabbits but rarely caught one. We were in Stonelands when we heard a far-off cry for help. We made for the sound, across three fields and, on the farm boundary, came across Mr. Brown, wedged in a ditch and unable to get out - he was afflicted with dropsy. I managed to haul him out and get him back to his house. He was regularly chauffeured into Framlingham in one of those early, high-backed Citroens for a visit to the Conservative Club and a shave from Sonny Moore, the town barber in Castle Street. I had my hair cut there at three pence a time, and, while I waited my turn, enjoyed watching an artist at work with his lather and cut-throat. Incidentally, my father must have been one of the early users of a Gillette safety razor, and I never knew him go to the barber.

However, my father had his opinion of proper form, and was indignant when Mr. Brown, the morning after his escape from a possibly sticky end, had his car stopped when he saw me sharpening knives on the binder cutter bar beside the road and presented me with a florin. My father insisted that I give it back. No hard feelings resulted, and Mr. Brown often lent me his two-speed bicycle.

The bunnies were not exactly our furry friends. Those who romanticize rabbits conveniently forget that they breed six times a year (or more) with litters of six (or more), and that they have caused untold damage to forestry and farming over many years in this country.

At the D'Urbans Farm there were many burrows along the Gulls, and also a small warren at the far end of Stonelands, as well as odd rabbit holes in ditches round the fields. There was always some grazing of growing wheat and barley crops. Stonelands, and the long narrow field that ran alongside the Gulls were particularly prone to attack, and at least half the crop would commonly be lost on them. However, even before the arrival of myxamatosis, the population seemed to vary from year to year, perhaps because of some disease or extra severe predation by stoats or cats.

We had stoats on the farm though we seldom saw them. However, I once saw a stoat confronting a rabbit in the Lower Horse Meadow. The rabbit was completely petrified, but managed a terrified squeal as the stoat dispatched it.

Billy Wright, an antique dealer in the town, who used to come from time to time to tune our piano, had, I suppose as a *quid pro quo*, an open invitation to shoot rabbits in the Gulls, but he did not kill many. In those days the cruel gin-trap had not been outlawed, and I have to admit that, as a boy, I became adept at setting these traps in the sandy entrances to the burrows, and caught a good many in that way.

Another way of trying to reduce the rabbit menace was ferreting. Rabbits are terrified of ferrets, as they are of their cousins, stoats. By letting ferrets into their burrows they can be made to bolt into nets. But the procedure is not straightforward, and you always have to bring a good spade. The ferrets, normally tethered to a line, can become entangled underground, particularly if there are roots in the warren. The only time I ever went ferreting we spent most of the time digging out a lost ferret. (Nowadays the ferret is tagged electronically so that it can be located wherever it is holed up).

A more exciting attack on the rabbits was at harvest-time. Imagine the scene as the binder gradually reduced the area of rabbit-infested corn until it was, perhaps, no more than six yards wide. A few wise bunnies would have escaped while the going was safer, but now the rest were hemmed in, with fifty yards or more of open stubble to cross before they could reach safety in their burrows. A bunch of local lads would be there with heavy sticks while Gerald patrolled the diminished plot of standing corn with his catapult and pocketful of pebbles. Now and then he would spot a rabbit lying crouched in a weedy patch of corn and he was deadly with his elastic-powered missiles. My father would stand at one corner with his 12-bore and he was a good shot, too, when the rabbits broke cover. We boys would chase escaping rabbits with sticks; some would reach safety, others would be struck down and some would hide under sheaves. The trick was to fling oneself over the sheaf where you thought the animal was hiding and grab it with one hand, hold it up by its back legs, and despatch it with a karate chop behind the ears.

When the binder had finished its work, the rabbits - perhaps 30 or 40 of them from a badly infested field - would be heaped on the platform canvas and distributed to the hunters. Young ones were the best - there is nothing more tasty than a well-fried three-quarters grown wild rabbit.

Life on the farm ran a regular and usually placid course. On Fridays my father would put on his trilby, polish his black leggings, and bicycle down to the bank to collect money for the wages.

A seasonal land-mark was the delivery of a cart-load of steam coal and a barrel of beer which my father tapped in the workshop. It was the signal that Nestling's steam engine and threshing tackle would shortly appear to thresh our corn stacks. The farm always supplied the coal to fuel the engine, extra labour came in from neighbouring farms, and the beer was to ensure that work went with a swing. Two men were needed to pitchfork the sheaves from the corn stack on to the threshing drum, where another man fed them to the operator who cut the bands and fed the beaters. Two men built the new stack of threshed straw as it came off the pitcher (elevator), with a third in the "bully hole" when the stack got high; another was assigned to bag off the grain and tailings as they issued from the drum, and yet another had to remove the chaff and cavings. The grain and wheat chaff were taken to the barn. It was hard and dusty work, and dealing with the chaff and cavings was a particularly dirty job.

The horse beans were always the last to ripen, which was just as well because their coarse, woody stems played havoc with the binder canvasses. We had a good crop in 1929, and the size of stack required was under-estimated, so that there was no room in the roof of the stack for the last two wagon-loads. These had to be drawn into the barn to be threshed by flail. There were still three flails tucked behind the wainscotting in the barn - museum pieces, really, left over from Edwardian times. David, our old horseman, was the only workman who had ever used a flail, and he instructed us in the procedure. It must have been one of the last occasions on which threshing was done by flail since the threshing drum took over in the nineteenth century.

One is apt to forget that extracting clean grain from a crop was (and still is in some countries) a most laborious business. In some parts of the East, grain is dislodged from the ear by literally threshing hand-held bundles of the crop over a frame. Another system is to drive animals round and round over a layer of the cut crop, after which the straw is raked away and the grain is winnowed from the chaff. A primitive method in parts of Africa is to simply beat the cut crop on the ground. Now, in many countries, the combine harvester is king and threshes as it devours the crop and delivers the clean corn through elevators into ministering trailers. The drawback is that the straw is dumped on the field, straw which used to be essential for feeding and bedding the livestock that produced the manure to feed the crop.

What an extraordinary transformation it has been from that era of "honest toil" to the present arable crop systems with huge tractors drawing multi-furrow ploughs, and sowing, herbicide and fertiliser machinery, and the combine harvester with its air-conditioned cab and radio. Our harvest, with the corn and beans cut by binder and stooked and carted and stacked, needed at least five men, with me (when I was old enough) to lead the waggons to and from the harvest field. Stooking (or shocking as it was called in Suffolk) was hard work, particularly when the sheaves were damp and full of thistles.

When all was safely gathered in, my mother would put on a supper for the regular and part-time harvest workers. There would be roast beef and beer and one of the Smith clan, who had a pleasant baritone, would sing songs like Buttercup Joe. But who, today, would want to go back to those old, ill-paid, back-breaking routines? Yet there is one, perhaps sentimental, cause for regret - the passing of the farm horse and its replacement by the soul-less tractor. I recall Matchet and Smiler and Duke and Prince and Britain and Diamond enjoyed my curry-combing as they stood in the stable eating their meal after a hard day's work. I remember especially

Diamond, a black mare with a white blaze on her forehead, gathering her strength to pull a wagon-load of sheaves up Prykes Hill. She was getting on in years, and literally "died in harness" one day, at the end of a furrow in the ten-acre. They said it was a heart attack.

Framlingham in the Twenties and Thirties

Framlingham had a Saturday market[3] and, as a small boy, I would be sent down to buy fresh Lowestoft herrings from the fish-stall. Next door there was often a riveting performer who would eat glass and whose *tour de force* was to swallow a watch, while keeping hold of the end of the chain. We were invited to listen to the ticking of the watch through his singlet.

The town at that time had a small gasworks[4] for street lighting (electricity did not come until 1945) and domestic supply, but no piped water or sewage system.

At the end of the Market Hill, beside the Queen's Head public house, was Durrants the butcher, with whom the D'Urbans Farm had an arrangement which may have gone back to the Victorian era. From time to time David would take a cart-load of straw to the lairage (the yard where livestock were kept before slaughter) behind the butcher's shop, and bring back a load of manure. There was no money involved in the deal, and it was at least a mile from the farm to the abattoir. The arrangement would seem ludicrous today, but one has to remember that farmyard manure was the basis of soil fertility in those days. Nothing illustrates the revolution from traditional methods of husbandry more clearly than the fact that the author, as a consultant in the nineteen eighties, has been called in to advise large abattoirs on methods of disposing of their straw-based lairage bedding - farmers simply do not want this manure.

To have an abattoir and its lairage in the middle of the town would seem grossly unhygienic today. There was a second one, too, in a barn on the edge of the town near a butcher's shop on the Saxtead road[5]. I used to pass this on my way to school, and occasionally peeped through a crack in the door to watch in horrified fascination the slaughterman pole-axe a bullock or cut the throat of a shrieking pig.

However, gentility also made its appearance in town around 1930, with the opening of the Condul Café on the Market Hill, well away from Durrants the butcher and opposite the entrance to St. Michael's Church. It owed its name to the two sisters, Constance and Dulcie, who ran it. My mother would very occasionally take us there for tea and a slice of Swiss roll.

Another important event in the 1930s was the arrival one day of the Michelin team to demonstrate their tyres. The Market Hill was cleared, rain arrived on time, and the drivers, with Gaulloises hanging from their lips, flung their skidding, squealing cars around, to universal delight. Did it affect sales? I can only say that my family always use the *Guides Michelin* when touring in Europe and I have Michelin tyres on my present car.

The Farm Worker

The farmworker's regular weekly wage was thirty shillings, but Frank Banthorpe, the foreman, earned thirty-two shillings, and also had the privilege of keeping a hut full of hens in the Lower Horse Meadow, and of feeding them with the tail corn from the threshing machine. Even allowing for their rent-free cottages, free firewood and well-kept kitchen gardens, these wages were pitifully small. Expectations were also small in comparison with modern needs, but it still astonishes me that David Smith, the horseman, had never seen the sea, only fourteen miles away at Aldeburgh.

David had known really hard times when his two sons, who now brought two standard wages into the cottage, were still too young to work. It was normal for the men to stop ploughing for "elevenses" - invariably bread and cheese - but David was reduced to taking a hunk of stale bread instead of the Cheddar which he could not afford. He ate bread and bread instead of bread and cheese, and hoped the others would not see how poor he was. Times were better in the nineteen-thirties, and he could afford a weekend pint of beer at the Crown and Anchor and some shag tobacco for his short-stemmed clay pipe (short-stemmed because the long stems of these pipes were fragile and soon got broken). It was quite remarkable how many bits of broken pipe stem were turned up in the ploughed fields - generations of broken stems thrown away in field and farmyard.

David took Lloyd George's pension at age 70 when I was still a small boy, but I can remember enough of him to realise that he was the epitome of Victorian/Edwardian skilled farm workers. He had a wonderful way with horses; he was always in charge of our steerage drill and the lines of corn were immaculately straight.

People today cannot conceive the care that was taken with farmyard manure. Our muck hill was not the sloppy, rain-washed heap of waste material that one now sees, but a square-walled edifice which David had turned and composted. He would then take the manure out in a horse-drawn tumbril and set it out, with his muck croomb, into identically sized heaps, spaced with geometrical precision. He would not have to lead the horse by hand, but would guide it by means of the three commands - "Wheesh" or "go right", "Coobi" or "go left"; and "Whoa" for "stop" - so that he could pull off the manure exactly where he wanted it. Later he would spread the manure with his spring-tined fork with perfect evenness. His work was the foundation of a way of arable farming that had prospered in the golden age, but which became completely uneconomic with the exploitation of the prairies.

His cottage garden was a delight to behold, and I have never seen rows of garden peas so neatly trained to their sticks as were his in the early summer. However, these farm workers were not burdened by bourgeois proprieties. David lived with his "common-law wife"; it had been financially impossible for them to cover the expenses of even the most modest wedding. And, sadly, there is no head-stone to mark his grave in Framlingham Cemetery. Yet, socially, men like David Smith, though financially poor, had a status beyond that implied by a proletarian labouring class. His eldest son, Ernest, would sometimes enliven the summer evening air with a tune from his melodeon as he sat outside the cottage door. His bachelor brother George made a living from a small pig farm a mile up the road from the D'Urbans Farm. George would walk down to Framlingham once or twice a week and repair to the Conservative Club on Castle Street, where he would rub shoulders with other local worthies, including masters from Framlingham College.

Education

Framlingham's early benefactors, Sir Robert Hitcham and Thomas Mills both build almshouses to be occupied by the old and needy, and both built and endowed schools for the education of the young. One of the latter was Hitcham's Elementary School, where I started my formal education, and the other was the Mills' Grammar School for Girls, which my three sisters attended.

I began in the infants' section, where we still used slates, and where my earlier lessons at home with Miss Button, the daughter of the farmer at Ivy Farm, Kettleburgh, gave me an advantage. When I moved to the senior part of the school, we got a good grounding in the three Rs as well

as some religious instruction, once a week, from Canon Lanchester, and some mild social training. I achieved special commendation when in the second form for my artistic lettering and lay-out of the injunction that CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO GODLINESS.

A sad incident that has stayed in my memory was the death of little Tommy Rose, who was knocked down and killed as he ran across the road to the school, by a van from Tannington. His small body was carried in and lay under an overcoat in the dark cloakroom until an ambulance came. There were no pedestrian crossings in those days.

There was a playground behind Hitcham's School, but no school games such as football or cricket. There was a favourite pastime, however, known as "Fag Cards", played in the following manner. You put a cigarette card between the first and second fingers and, with a flick of the wrist, from a kneeling position, propelled it perhaps six or eight feet. Your competitor, or competitors, did likewise, with the aim of landing his card on yours, whereapon the successful player claimed both for his pack. If you missed, as was most likely until there were several cards on the ground, you continued to flick your cards until you landed on another, enabling you to gather in all the cards on the ground.

I did not stay long at Hitcham's as, along with several others, I passed the entrance exam for Framlingham College, and started there as a day-boy. The Albert Memorial College in the depressed 1930s was woefully short of pupils; the total of boarders was only around 150. We started at age ten, there being no separate preparatory school, and went on to take School Certificate and, if we stayed the course, the Higher School Certificate. There was a conventional curriculum. We were taught Latin and French (but no Greek), History, English, Geography, Maths and Chemistry, and Physics (but no Biology). The afternoons, except Wednesdays, were devoted to games, with athletics in the spring and swimming in the big open-air baths in the summer. The games were taken seriously, and our fixture list included the main East Anglian independent schools. It was a Church of England school, and boys were expected to be confirmed after suitable instruction by the chaplain. There were one or two non-Christians, and one recalls seeing them wandering around the museum and the library during the regular morning chapel services. The Officer Training Corps paraded every Wednesday afternoon. The junior forms were taught carpentry on one period per week, and older boys had the option of continuing with carpentry instead of some games. During the morning break every day we did P T on Sergeant Major Vale's instruction.

It might be thought that education at Framlingham would have instilled a conservative attitude, and in some ways it did. However, in one particular, its influence was quite the opposite. The course for our Higher School Certificate was set by the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board, and the set books for main subject English included such radical texts as Disraeli's *Two Nations* and Tressel's *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, a book that illuminates the evils of unrestrained capitalism more brightly than Karl Marx.[6]

My memory of the nine years I spent at the school are mainly a blurred mass of lessons, exams and games, but a few events come to the front of my mind. One was when the visiting team of German schoolboy hockey players scored a goal. The eleven young Aryans sprang as one to attention when the ball hit the back board, thrust out their right arms, and shouted "Heil Hitler" in exact unison. It was a three-all draw, so we had a triple demonstration of Nazi fervour and had an early, first-hand, intimation of what was to come.

Philip Mead (Hampshire and England) became our cricket coach in the late nineteen-thirties, and, though into his forties, he still bowled accurately in the nets, and one cannot forget his

distinctive batting style, all nudges and pushes, but designed to accumulate runs. He demonstrated what a really good coach can do, and the eleven became a formidable school side. He was a thoroughgoing old-style professional; he qualified to play for Suffolk in their few minor counties matches, and seemed invariably to make the century for which he was guaranteed £100.

Discipline at Framlingham College was good, and essentially self-imposed by prefects and sub-prefects. Their word was law, backed up eventually by house-masters and the head-master, who had a cane but was very rarely called upon to use it. Mr. Whitworth, the head, was an austere figure who had an artificial leg, the result of a flying accident in the First World War. He nevertheless was a keen sailor, and had a small yacht moored at Pin Mill, which he sailed over to Dunkirk to help with the forces evacuation in the Second World War.

Return to Framlingham

I recently went back to Framlingham after many years, prepared to suffer the mixed feelings of nostalgia. In fact the centre of the town had hardly changed over half a century, though it looked more prosperous than it did in the thirties, with the Market Hill newly paved and the Crown Hotel promoting itself in gilded lettering. The flintstone tower of St. Michael's Church no longer chimed "Home Sweet Home" every four hours, but I went inside and little had changed. The verger told me about some of the personalities of my youth, but few seemed to have survived. He did not know about Carrie Smith and I had to point out to him the oak pews with their carved inscription which said that they had been bequeathed by Caroline Smith.

Carrie Smith, born in 1865, was a spinster of some standing and we knew her well. She was the daughter of a harness maker in the town, William Smith, listed under "traders", 1871 Census, as reproduced in Muriel Kilvert's *History of Framlingham*[7], and she decided at an early age to leave home and seek her fortune in the empire. She found herself in Vancouver when the great expansion was beginning. She opened a milliners shop when ladies' hats were real embellishments and ostrich feathers abounded on them. Carrie Smith made a small fortune, but she had never forgotten her roots and she came home to Framlingham in the 1930s to enjoy her well-earned retirement. She seemed to have no surviving relatives in the town, but she found accommodation there and this included long periods as "paying guest" at our D'Urbans Farm at a time when "diversification", as they now call it, was needed to keep the farm solvent. She was socially inclined and helped, I remember, to run Koon Can parties in the town and at the farm. From time to time she would disappear to Wiesbaden or Bath to take the waters or to Weston-super-mare or some Swiss resort. She walked everywhere using a stick emblazoned with continental badges, and wore steel-rimmed glasses over her long, pointed nose.

After we had left Framlingham she went back on a visit to Vancouver and I have been able, through the courtesy of the present archivist of that city, to obtain a few details of her life there. It appears that she visited the archives office and the first Vancouver City archivist, Major J S Matthews, made the following notes about her visit:-

> ... A most charming and vivacious old lady, she must have been a regular prima donna in her day. She called at the city archives today, 23rd November 1943, to look around, "I came to Vancouver", she said, "in 1894 ... Father said, why cannot you stay at home? But I wanted to go". And she clenched her gloved hand. "I came here first to the leading dry goods store ... to be a milliner Before investing. To see what was what. Then I opened my own store on Hastings Street ... I had the biggest millinery store in town, [with some emphasis] I had, sometimes, as many as fifteen girls". Miss Smith talked of many old pioneers and evidently was well acquainted with the elite of early Vancouver.

A regular church-goer, she left her estate to St. Michael's Church. The oak pews remain as her memorial, but there must be few indeed who can now recall this daughter of Framlingham.

I found some changes in the town, of course, with new houses on Brook Lane and on the old Framlingham Town football ground on the Saxmundham Road. But I had a shock when we went to see the D'Urbans Farm. Gone were the thatched granary and hay-loft over the stables; gone was the great thatched barn, built of old ships' timbers, now replaced by huge manufacturing sheds. Diversification had truly taken over, in the shape of a large enterprise making farm machinery.

References

1 "Gill, from old Norse gil [meaning] a steep glen with a stream at the bottom" (Dairmaid O'Muirithe, *The Oldie*, October 1999.)

2 J. C. Atkinson, *British birds, eggs and nests popularly described ... with illustrations by W. S. Coleman.* (London, Routledge, 1862).

3 This is, of course, still the case, a Tuesday market being added in 2002.

4 The site of the gasworks can still be clearly identified on the west side of College Road, a hundred yards north of the White Horse public house.

5 The editor would welcome further information on this abattoir.

6 See also *Fram*, 4th series, no. 5, December 2002, p. 4.

7 M. L. Kilvert, *A History of Framlingham*. (Ipswich, Bolton & Price, 1995), p. 159.

THE TERCENTENARY OF THOMAS MILLS' DEATH

By J. E. McEwan

Thomas Mills' death has been much written about and John and Faith Packard have produced a very informative biography of him,[1] in which they quote from Richard Green, who wrote of Thomas Mills' death:[2]

> The testator died 13th January, 1703-4, and in the Parish Register appears the following entry: - "January ye 17th, 1703, Mr. Thomas Mills interr'd *in his garden*, without any office or form, and put in linnen, whereof affidavit was made before Justice Alpe by Henry Benham, yeoman, Jan. ye 25th, 1703, - *worth £200 per annum.*" His will was proved on the 10th February, 1703-4, in the Court of the archdeacon of Suffolk.
>
> The place of his interment, as pointed out by the Burial Register, is to be easily found, and deserves a visit. In the garden, in front of his house standing on the right hand side of the road leading from the Town to Wickham-Market, between the Almshouse and the Bridge, is a neat Tomb-house, which was erected agreeably to the verbal directions of the deceased, and which is now tastefully decorated with the ivy, the jasmine, and the rose, over which hang the branches of the pendant willow and the bright laburnum. In each side is a small three-light lancet shaped window, and upon the end next the road, on a tablet of black marble, is the following inscription:-

IN MEMORY OF THOMAS MILLS,
(who died Jan^{y}. 13th, 1703)
Founder of the adjoining Almshouses, and Donor
of several Estates to charitable uses.
Also of his faithful Servant
WILLIAM MAYHEW

> On a table monument within the house is the following inscription on a black marble slab:-

Here Lyeth Interred y^{e} Body of
THOMAS MILLS, late of Framlingham,
in the County of Suffolk, who
Departed this Life January
the 13th Anno Dom. 1703. in the
Eightieth year of his Age.

Who Gaue an Almeshouse, & other
Large Gifts to the Town of
Framlingham & to six other
Towns where his Estate lay.

However, Thomas Mills died when the Julian calendar was still in use in Britain and the new year began on 25 March, Lady's Day. This explains why Richard Green wrote above the year as 1703-4 and why the stonemason rightly inscribed January as being in the year 1703 and not 1704.

The use of the Julian calendar was a relic of English antipathy to Roman Catholicism. For at the council of Nicaea in 1582 meeting nearly fifty years after Henry VIII's break with Rome, Pope Gregory XIII had issued a decree adding ten days to "the day following the feast of St. Francis, that is to say the 5th of October, to be reckoned the 15th of that month". This brought in force the Gregorian Calendar for the continent. The British remained stubborn for nearly two more centuries until:

> The Calendar (New Style) Act 1750 was passed for the adoption of the new style in all public and legal transactions. The difference of the two styles, which then amounted to eleven days, was removed by ordering the day following the 2nd of September of the year 1752 to be accounted the 14th of that month; and in order to preserve uniformity in future, the Gregorian rule of intercalation respecting the secular years was adopted. At the same time, the commencement of the legal year was changed from the 25th of March to the 1st of January.[3]

Thus the tercentenary of Thomas Mills' death should be commemorated on 24 January 2004. But then the millennium was celebrated one year early.

References

1 John and Faith Packard, *Thomas Mills - Suffolk Baptist and Benefactor*. (Ipswich: East Anglian Magazine, [nd. *c.* 1979])

2 Richard Green, *The History, Topography and Antiquities of Framlingham and Saxsted, in the County of Suffolk* ... (London: Whittaker, Treacher, 1834), pp. 197-98.

3 *Encyclopædia Britannica.* 14th edn 24 vols (London: Encyclopædia Britannica, 1929) IV, pp. 570-72.

PROPOSED COMMUNITY CENTRE, CHURCH STREET, FRAMLINGHAM. FML 039. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION, AUGUST 2001 DOCUMENTARY SEARCH

By Anthony M. Breen

Introduction

The research for this report was carried out at the Suffolk Record Office in Ipswich. The history of this site has been traced through the use of the glebe terriers back to the beginning of the eighteenth century. During this period the land was part of the grounds of Framlingham's rectory. The rectory was a manor in its own right, and a published source states that it had been granted in the early twelfth century to the Priory of Thetford. Apart from the Parish Room shown on the Ordnance Survey maps, there is no documentary evidence for any other buildings or structures on this site. The boundaries of the site are defined to the north by the ditch of Framlingham Castle and to the east by the line of Church Street; however the boundaries to the south adjoining the churchyard and to the west adjoining the grounds of the former rectory are not defined in manuscript sources.

There is limited potential for further documentary research, that would add significant information to the archaeological interpretation of this site.

Maps

The site is shown on the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey maps sheet number XLIX. 13. On the first edition of this map surveyed in 1883, the site is shown situated between the churchyard to the south-west and the Castle Brewery to the north-east. The only feature shown on this map is the main drive-way leading from the rectory to Church Street. The parish room is shown on the 1904 and 1927 editions of this map. There are no other significant features. On these maps no boundary is shown between the parish room and the rest of the rectory grounds.

The tithe map of Framlingham (ref. P461/104) dated 1842 has been copied for this report. The site is included with the rest of the lands of the rectory and given the apportionment number 964 and measured as 3 acres 1 rood and 12 perches. The plot of land to the north of the grounds, "Castle Hills", numbered 835 was added to the rectory in about 1923. Before that date this piece was owned by Pembroke College.

The site is not shown in detail on a plan of the Framlingham Trust Estate dated 1790 (ref. HD11:475). The boundary between the rectory grounds and the estate is the same as in 1842. The description of the rectory as "Glebe Lands" has been crossed through and the words "Parsonage House and Gardens" inserted. There is an earlier plan of the park and castle of Framlingham dated 1589 (ref. X6/1/2). Once again, the site is not shown in detail and the boundary between the castle and the rectory appears to be the same as in 1790. The maps is a rough sketch of the park with measurements given for fixed points around the boundary. From these points a number of measured lines cross the park forming a triangular pattern. The plan is part of a survey of the park and castle made in that year, and may have been made to assess the acreage of the park. There is a small sketch of the castle, which does show two buildings either side of the ditch at the entrance to the outer bailey.

There are no other earlier maps relating to this site.

Glebe Terriers

Terriers are descriptions of the property of the church and usually include a description of the lands, tithes, church furniture and townlands of a parish. Those for Framlingham are unusual in that they also

include the rents of the rectory manor. The terriers form part of the papers returned to the archdeacon or bishop during their visitation. The archdeaconry collection (ref. FF569/F48) has terriers for Framlingham from 1633 to 1912; however, after 1633 the next surviving return was in 1725. In the parish collection there are copies of most of these documents with the additional years of 1709, 1813 and 1923 (ref. FC101/C4/1, 10 & 20). There is an additional terrier dated 1635 amongst papers returned to the bishopric (ref. FAA2701/19/41).

In 1908, the terrier begins

> A Mansion House, Barn and Stable with the yards, gardens, and all Homestall containing by admeasurement 3 acres 1 rood and 12 perches. The said Mansion House, Gardens and Homestall abut upon the Churchyard and Public Street towards the east and the Mere Meadows towards the west and upon the Castle Hill towards the north and upon the Meeting House, Police Station and Houses of George Dale, Tom Dale and Mr. Charles Spurrell Kiddall towards the south.

The description is the same in the terrier of 1923 and both fail to mention the parish room. The 1923 terrier does mention that the Castle Hills had been acquired by the parish from Pembroke College. The 1908 terrier also mentions

> In the said parish, a little manor of Freehold tenants belonging to the rectory, but the rents anciently payable by these tenants have not been paid for upwards of 60 years

In 1845, the first terrier completed after the tithe survey, the description of the mansion house etc. has an additional comment.

> formerly described as containing 2 acres 1 rood 29 perches but containing by recent admeasurement of the parish for the purpose of commuting the tithes of the parish including the Church Pightle now laid to the gardens and pleasure grounds of the said Manor 3 acres 1 rood and 12 perches.

This is followed by the description of the abuttals and a note describing the parsonage house

> 122 feet by 22 feet part of the front of which is brick and the rest lath and plaster covered with slate.

The terrier lists the rents of the manor and its tenants.

In 1834 following the description of the Mansion House, there is

> Also Church Pightle formerly described as "One Pightle" and as containing 2 roods and 35 perches but containing by recent admeasurement 2 roods and 30 perches abutting upon the homestall aforesaid towards the west and upon the King's Highway next the street towards the east and upon the churchyard aforesaid towards the south and the Castle Hills towards the North.

This is the site later used for the parish room.

The description of Church Pightle is the same in 1827 and 1813, but in 1806 the description of "one Pightle" gives the area as "2 roods 35 perches". The "recent admeasurement" must therefore have been between 1806 and 1313.

In all but one of the terriers for the period 1709 to 1801, the description for the pightle is the same as in 1806. The exception is in 1747: the area is given as 2 roods and 25 perches, but this may be an error. In the terriers of 1633 and 1635, the description is

> Imprimus the parsonage or mansion house together with a barne and stable thereunto belonging, Item the yards and orchards thereunto adioyning containing by estimation 2 acres or thereabouts.

The pightle is not described.

The Rectory Manor

In a history of Framlingham begun by Robert Hawes but completed by Robert Loder and published in 1798, there is the following description of the Rectory Manor.

> Tho' this church was given by William Bygod Patron thereof in the reign of Henry the First to a Monastery at Thetford of the Order of Cluny to be holden in free and perpetual almes: yet soon after it escaped the misfortunes of other churches, under the like unhappy circumstances, by recovering and preserving to this day, her ancient revenues for those uses, to which they were originally designed. Which revenues arising from a Manor, Glebe Lands, Tythes and late Donations are as followeth:
>
> This Manor named Framlingham Rectory, now consists only of Demesnes and Freehold Tenants. The Demesnes are the Parsonage House, with a barn, stable, Gardens, Yards and Orchards, containing two acres, one rood and nine and twenty perches.
>
> The churchyard, including the church, containing one acre, one rood and three and twenty perches.
>
> One piece of pasture called Church Yard Pightel, adjoining to the Parsonage yards towards the west and to the Church Yard towards the south, containing two roods and five and thirty perches. And the freehold tenants are now but nine.

Each property is described and nearly all adjoin the rectory buildings or the churchyard. The total rents for the manor were four shillings and a half penny. The account concludes by stating "Out of this Manor the rector pays to the Queen an Annual Fee Farm Rent". It should be noted that this is Queen Anne who died in 1714; the description is therefore the work of Robert Hawes the steward of Framlingham Castle who died in 1731.

William Bygod or Bigot was the son of Roger Bigot who was granted the castle of Framlingham in 1101. Roger died in 1107 and was succeeded by his son William who in turn died in 1119; however Copinger suggests that William simply confirmed his father's gift to Thetford. The priory at Thetford was founded in 1103 by Roger Bigod, and "was originally established in the redundant church of St. Mary which from 1075 until 1094 had been the cathedral of East Anglia". If Copinger is correct, then the original grant of the Rectory Manor to Thetford priory had been sometime between 1103 and 1107.

In the Domesday Survey normally dated to 1086, there was a small estate in Framlingham of just twenty acres but valued at four shillings, held of the Bishops of Thetford. This estate was formerly in the possession of a freeman "under the commendation of Bishop Almar". Almar, Aelmer or Aethelmaer had been bishop of Elmham 1047 to 1070. It was his successor Bishop Herfast who moved the bishopric to Thetford.

Further Research

There are surviving churchwardens' accounts for Framlingham from the late sixteenth century and archdeaconry visitations from the late seventeenth. It is possible that both sources may contain references to either the construction or repair of the churchyard wall. It would take a considerable amount of time to trawl these papers for a possible date of construction of this boundary between Church Pightle, which is the historic name of this site and the churchyard. Equally important are the medieval visitation and bishops registers, which may also contain references to the rectory, its grounds and churchyard. It should be stated here that even if a clear reference were found, it would not guarantee that part of the site had been formerly used as a churchyard at a point of time immemorial. For this reason it would appear to be the case that further research would not achieve significant results.

Conclusion

The parish room that formerly stood on this site was constructed at a date between 1883 and 1904. Before that date a strip of land sometimes referred to as Church Pightle had been incorporated into the grounds

of the rectory. The northern boundary was established before 1589 as shown by the map evidence of the sketch plan of Framlingham Park and later 1790 map of the castle and the tithe map of 1842. The western and southern boundaries are unclear, though by the early eighteenth century the pightle was a defined area and known to have been part of the rectory manor.

The rectory manor formed part of the possessions of Thetford Priory from at least 1107, and the lands owned by Thetford may relate to a Domesday Manor valued at 4 shillings which had been granted out by Bishop Almar sometime before 1070.

The site may have been part of the churchyard at an early period, but this cannot be established without careful archaeological investigation of the site.

(This Report was commissioned by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service as part of their archaeological evaluation of the site of the proposed Community Centre, Church Street, Framlingham, and was prepared by Anthony M. Breen as their sub-contractor. Due acknowledgement is made to Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service and to Anthony M. Breen. Copyright in this paper is held by Suffolk County Council, and no reproduction of any part of its contents by any means electronic or otherwise may be made without the prior written consent of the Suffolk County Council. Mr. Breen states in subsequent correspondence with the Editor that "Incidentally as a result of this report, I was able to identify a document held in Ipswich, previously ascribed as an 'unidentified manor' to the manor of Framlingham Rectory. There are other rectory manors in Suffolk which often appear to be associated with large Anglo-Saxon settlements such as Halesworth, Coddenham, Laxfield and Long Melford, a topic worth further research").

References

Maps

1:2500	Ordnance Survey map sheet no. XLIX.13	1927 }	Reproduced
1:2500	Ordnance Survey map sheet no. XLIX.13	1904 }	on the pages
1:2500	Ordnance Survey map sheet no. XLIX.13	1883 }	that follow
P461/104	Framlingham Tithe Map	1842 }	
HD11/475	Framlingham Trust Estate	1790	
X6/1/2	Survey of Framlingham Park	1589	

Glebe Terriers

Archdeaconry Collection		
FF569/F48	Terriers	1633-1912
Parish Collection		
FC101/C4/20	Terrier	1923
FC101/C4/10	Terrier	1813
FC101/C4/1	Terrier	1709
Diocesan Collection		
FAA2701/19/41	Terrier	1635

Published Works

Copinger, W. A. *The Manors of Suffolk.* (1905-1911) Vol. IV

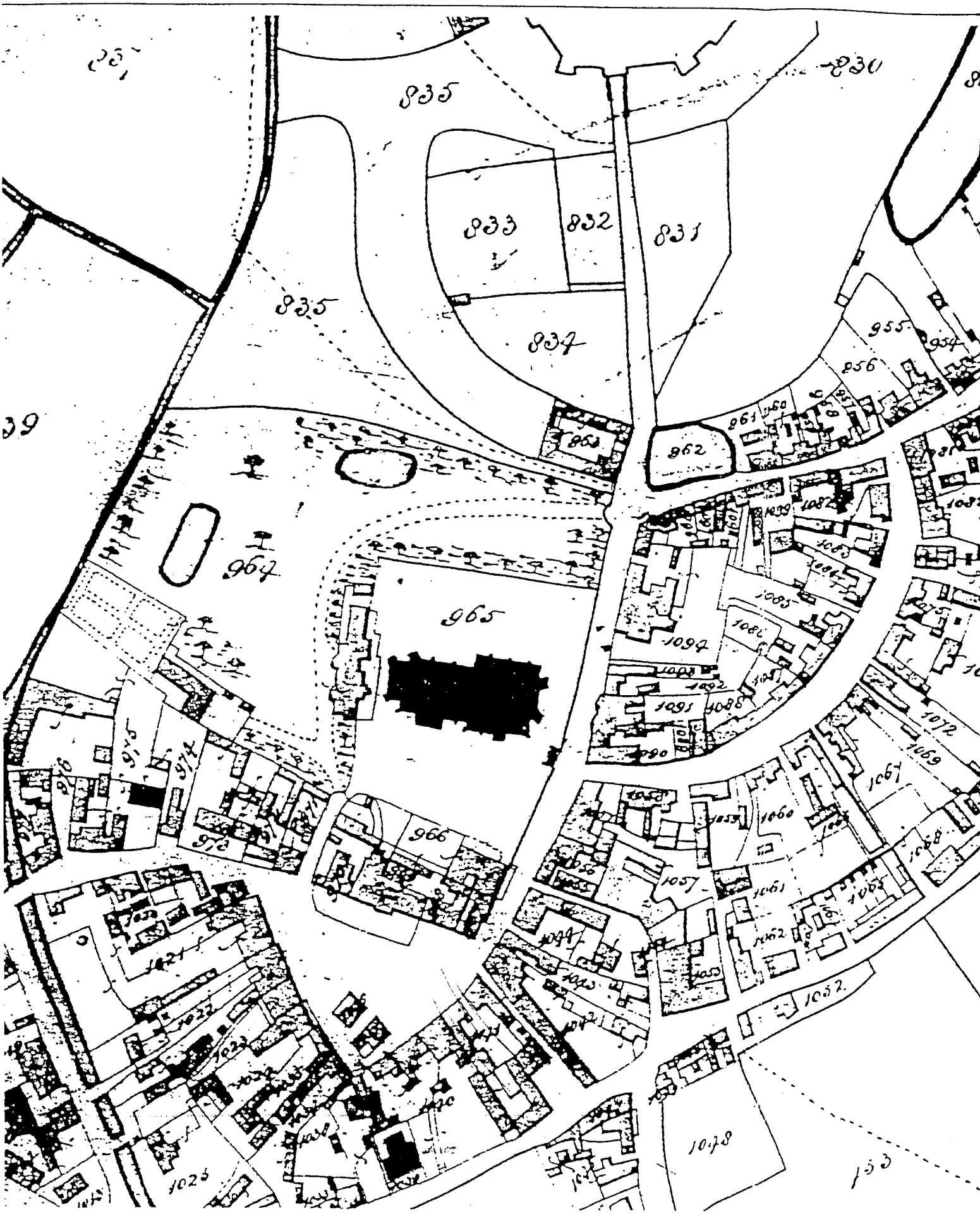
Dymond, D. *ed. The Register of Thetford Priory. Part One 1482-1517* (Norwich, Norfolk Record Society, 1995)

Green, R. *The History, Topography and Antiquities of Framlingham and Saxted.* (London, Whittaker, Treacher & Co., 1834)

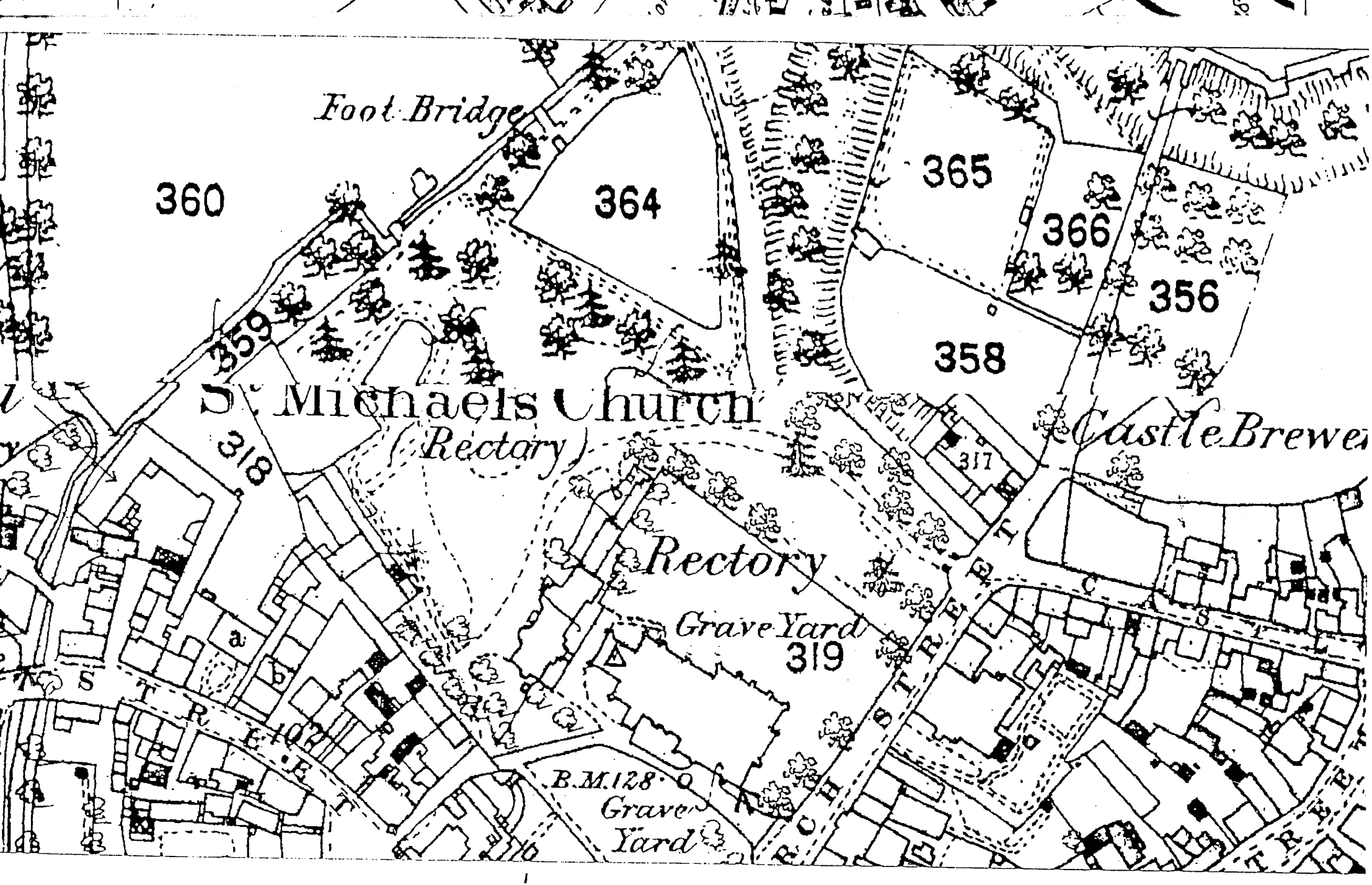
Loder, R. *The History of Framlingham ... Begun by the late Robert Hawes ... with ... additions and notes by Robert Loder.* (Woodbridge, R. Loder, 1798).

Raby, F. J. E. *Framlingham Castle.* (London, English Heritage, 1991).

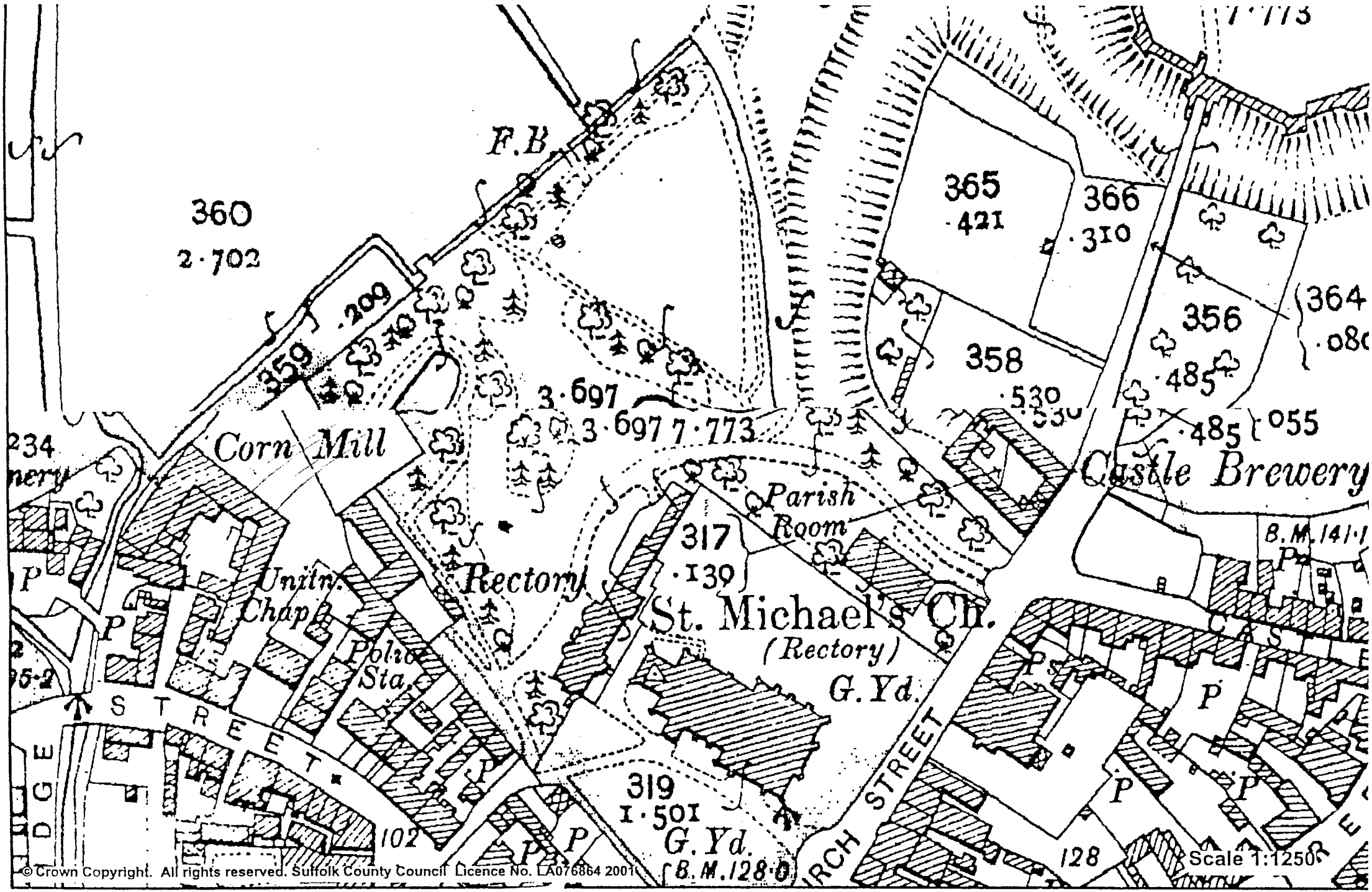
Ridgard, J. *Medieval Framlingham: select documents.* (Ipswich, Suffolk Record Society, 1985).



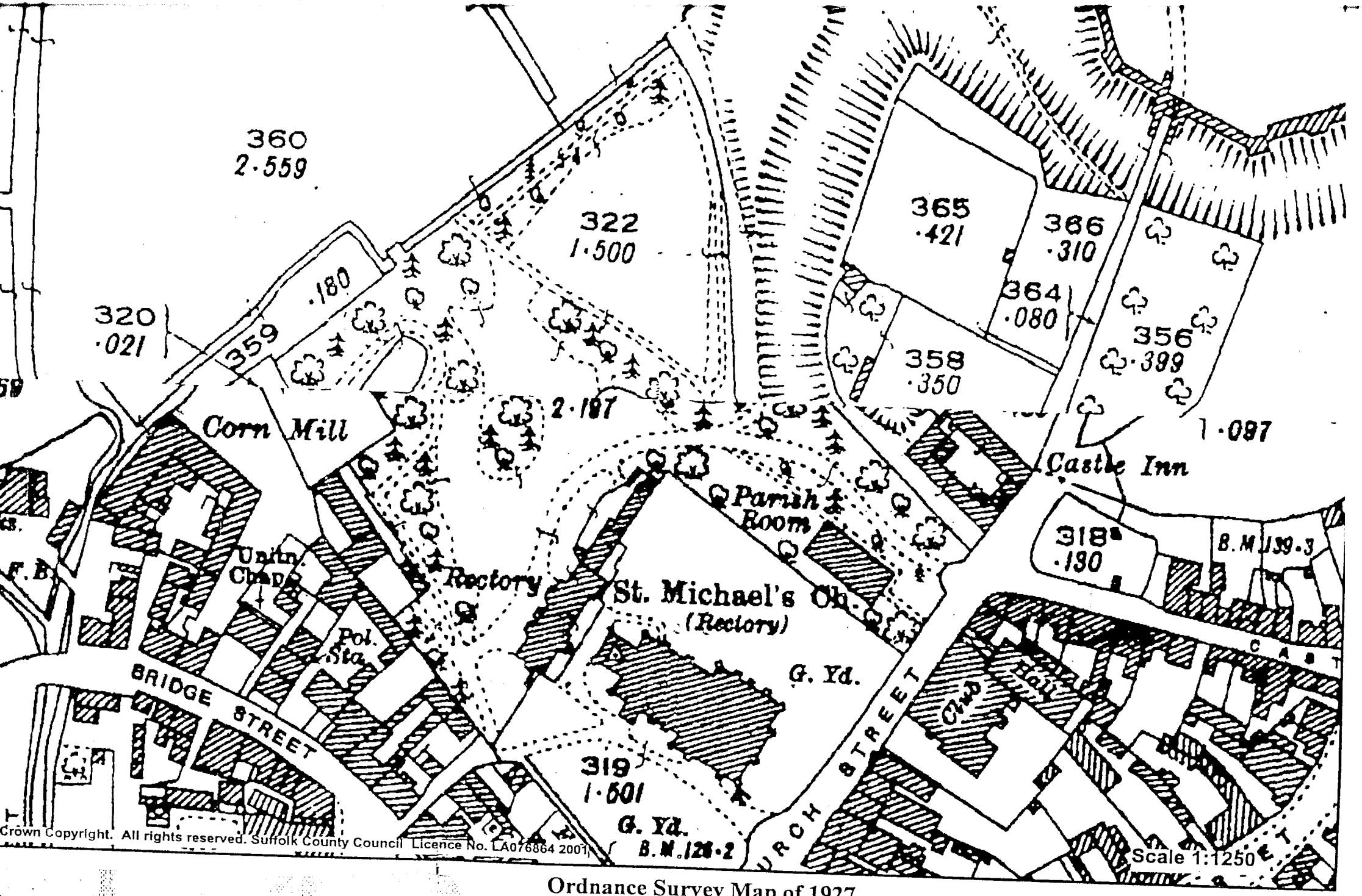
Tithe map of 1842



Ordnance Survey Map of 1883



Ordnance Survey Map of 1904



Ordnance Survey Map of 1927

Departure Point

At the opening of the twentieth century England may be compared to a garden, a ground cut up for purposes of cultivation by hedgerows and lines of trees. The regularity of this garden is pleasantly broken by woods and coppices artificially maintained by man for his use or pleasure. But through this fertile territory, the new economy of industrialism is pushing out its iron claws, changing vast tracts of garden into town, and altering the character and appearance of the rest by introducing, even in agricultural districts, materials and houses of uniform type. That part of the population which lives permanently under the influence of industrial sights and sounds, is larger than that which lives in the garden; and even the inhabitants of the rural districts have lost their own characteristic ideals of life under the all-pervading influence of the towns. One condition of modern life is, that what pays best is generally ugly, and that whatever man now touches for a purely economic reason, he mars.

From: G. M. Trevelyan. *England under the Stuarts.* (London, 1904).

THIS JOURNAL HAS BEEN PRODUCED WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM BRITISH ENERGY GENERATION PLC

"History is five minutes ago"

THREE THOUSAND PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN
ARE MAKING HISTORY

Framlingham and District
Local History and Preservation Society

RESEARCHING

RECORDING

SUSTAINING

history and heritage in Framlingham and mid-Suffolk through

LECTURES

VISITS

CAMPAIGNS

PUBLICATIONS

Join our Society and make history

BETTER