

FRAM

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

Number 5

**5th
Series**

December 2006

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

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

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FRAM

5th Series Number 5

December 2006

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

Fram has been well served over recent years, by successive Presidents of the Framlingham and District Local History and Preservation Society. The issue for April 2005 (fourth series number twelve) included a long and evocative article, "Aspects of Framlingham in the First World War", by past-President Canon Richard Willcocks.

This present issue features an account of the history of Glemham House, by the Society's President for 2003-2004, the Earl of Cranbrook (who also assisted Tony Martin with Tony's piece "Lord Cranbrook's wall at Great Glemham" - *Fram*, fourth series number six April 2003).

Finally, the Society's current President, Canon David Pitcher, provides us, also in this issue, with a further instalment in this journal's occasional series "Popular Legend". This series explores local myths that cannot (entirely) be substantiated, such as that Framlingham was only to be a staging post on a proposed through railway from Campsea Ashe to Laxfield and beyond (*Fram*, third series number three) and that the "Community Hall" by the Conservative Club was built to accommodate soldiers returning from the Western Front in the Great War (*Fram*, third series number five).

David Pitcher's paper is all the more engaging in that it re-visits the Framlingham railway, and the photograph reproduced at its conclusion is followed by another Popular Legend procured from a quite different (local family) source.

Local legends may be derived from popular and harmless delusions, or even in the last-mentioned case, from verifiable facts, but there are other legends that are less savoury in their origins. In *Fram* fifth series number one, I quoted from M. de Lozowski's "letters à un ami" (1784), published by Suffolk Records Society (volume XXX 1988). That extract is reprinted here:

.. Mary Tudor of England came to Framlingham at the critical moment of her accession in 1553: Lozowski, disgusted, wrote: "Queen Mary .. was imprisoned in this castle and we hoped we might still find some vestiges of her rooms, for I was with a man equally passionate about her as I am: we were looking for details, but cruelly misled. An old woman led us to a murky recess in the thickness of the walls and gravely assured us that it was there that the queen was engendered of a serpent. There is no absurdity that religious fanaticism and antipathy will not produce: Queen Mary was catholic, the people of Framlingham are protestant: that explains everything .."

This came to mind when I read the Framlingham section in Jennifer Westwood's and Jacqueline Simpson's truly monumental work *The Lore of the land: a guide to England's legends ...* (London, Penguin Books, 2005):

Mary Tudor ... was for a time at Framlingham Castle and left her mark on local tradition. The Revd. F. Barham Zincke, in *Some Materials for the History of Wherstead* (1887), notes

... the only incident in the whole range of English history I have ever heard people of the labouring class in this part of the country refer to and I quite believe it is the only incident tradition has preserved among them, is that of the burning of Dr. Taylor, at Hadleigh, in the reign of Queen Mary ... I have sometimes heard the same person who had just spoken of Dr. Taylor's martyrdom add: "And at Framlingham Castle, bloody Mary, who ordered Dr. Taylor's burning, was brought to bed of a viper".

The article later continues:

One person who knew the viper tradition ... was "H", the old gardener in the employ of Camilla, Lady Gurdon, who in 1892 reports them as saying of Mary:

... They say that when she lived at Framlingham ... Castle she were confined of - some say a serpent, some say a devil. I believe that myself, for we read of things as wonderful in the Scriptures.

This particular local legend is especially cruel, as Mary longed to have issue from her marriage to Phillip II of Spain in 1554 (the year after her accession), to ensure a Roman Catholic succession to the English throne.

Incidentally, the only commemorative plaque in the whole of England to Mary Tudor was commissioned and placed in Framlingham Castle by the Framlingham and District Local History and Preservation Society, as a Millennium project, superintended by past-President Canon Richard Willcocks, and the small room where Mary was (according to local legend) brought to bed of a serpent, still survives, adjacent to and to the north-east of, the Lanman Museum's display area at the Castle.

A "BUTCHER'S BOY" IN WARTIME

By John Durrant

I was still at school when war broke out in September 1939.

At that time my father employed several men and boys in our butchers' business on the Market Hill. The business had been in the Durrant family since the mid-1890s¹, and had been handed down through the family to my "old" great uncle, to my "young" great uncle,² to my father, then to me.³ (My older brother had been the bright boy of the family and had passed "the scholarship" - no eleven plus then - which took him to Framlingham College, and thence on to bigger and greater things).

One by one, Father's employees were called up for military service, and I was called upon to do more and more work, often being absent from school. The Attendance Officer was a frequent visitor to our establishment, but a pound of stewing steak would soon soften his attitude!

I think, after all these years, I dare disclose that Father was not averse to dealing a bit in the "black market", and I recall trips out at night to remote places, and bringing home great "rounds" of cheese and boxes of soap powder (cheese was rationed and soap powder was in short supply).

As soon as I arrived home from school, as my 1940 diary records, I would be plucking pheasants and skinning rabbits or making deliveries on the "trade bike". My favourite task was accompanying our very attractive cashier home in the black-out. It was a sad day for me when she was "called up" into the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service). She still lives in Framlingham, and I visit her often!

When I eventually left school, there was not enough work for me in the shop. The meat ration was so small, we had to supplement it by selling rabbits: I went out rabbiting with Charlie Page (landlord of the Railway Inn)⁴ three days a week. It was he who taught me how to catch rabbits using ferrets.

This routine carried on until I was myself "called up" for military service, and I was then grateful for my thorough training in the butchery trade, because after initial military training, I was appointed regimental butcher!

Editor's notes

1 *Kelly's Directory of Suffolk ... 1900* (1900) p. 137 lists "Durrant Benjamin, butcher, Market Hill"

2 *Kelly's Directory of the Counties of Suffolk and Essex ... 1922* (1922) p. 151 lists "Durrant Frederick, butcher, Market Hill". The same listing appears in *Kelly's Directory of Suffolk* until 1937. (Publication of the *Directory* ceased during the Second World War).

3 It is interesting to note the decreasing number of butchers in Framlingham as listed in *Kelly's Directory*. In 1900, seven are recorded, four of

them described as "pork butchers", in 1933, six are listed (with two "pork butchers") and in 1937, five (one "pork butcher"). At the time that your Editor moved to Framlingham in 1994, the number had come down to two.

4 Charles Page is generally accepted as being the longest serving public-house landlord in Framlingham. He first appears as licensee of the Railway Inn in *Kelly's Directory of Suffolk ... 1930* (1930) p. 159, and left there in 1980 (testimony from his successor, George Coleman, deceased).

GLEMHAM HOUSE: 'REBUILT ON THIS SPOT 1814 S.K.'

By Gathorne, Earl of Cranbrook

On the rear (north) face of the main block of Glemham House, Great Glemham, there are two juxtaposed foundation stones, placed curiously high on the wall. The top stone simply bears a date, 1708; the lower is inscribed: REBUILT / ON THIS / SPOT / 1814, / S. K. The source of the upper stone is conjectural, but there is no doubt that the builder of the new house, thus commemorated, was Rev. Samuel Kilderbee, Doctor of Divinity, at that time rector of Campsey Ashe, Easton and Trimley in Suffolk.

Thus far, the origins of the house and its builder have already been elucidated by Charles Seely in his contribution, 'The last of the Kilderbees' (*Fram* 4th series number 11, December 2004). Our 'S.K.' was the third of that name, the son of Samuel who was Ipswich Town Clerk and lifelong friend of the artist Thomas Gainsborough (whose portrait of his friend Kilderbee is now in the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco). In 1759, the elder Samuel (1725-1813) married Mary Wayth (1724-1811), daughter of Daniel Wayth, who is shown as principal landowner in the parish of Great Glemham on a contemporary map (see David Dymond, Ed., 2004. *John Kirby's Suffolk his maps and road book*. Introduced by John Blatchly. Suffolk Records Society, vol. 47. Boydell Press. Enclosure 12). Samuel Sr bought the Manor of Great Glemham in 1787 and, by 1806, father and namesake son together owned a considerable acreage of land in and around the parish. Apparently at their instigation, at the Quarter Sessions of 8th November 1796, two Justices approved the diversion of the Great Glemham - Sweffling road. The certificate survives (Suffolk Record Office 276/114) and the attached map marks land belonging to the two Samuel Kilderbees, including an L-shaped 'Mansion House' adjoining the road in the position of 'Mill Farm' house on Hodskinson's map of 1783. On the diverted road, a new entrance is proposed exactly where the present drive of Glemham House emerges.

The original Great Glemham Hall stood some 600 m west of this point, on low ground near the village. At this position, the map of Suffolk by Richard Collins (1736, see D. Dymond, *op. cit.* enclosure 4) placed the symbol for a mansion house, occupied at that time by W. Edgar Esq. In John Ryland's map (1766) this house, now shown to be set close to a curve in the road, was occupied by Hon. N. Herbert. During 1796-1801 it was the residence of the poet George Crabbe, then being the property of his patron, Dudley North, of Little Glemham. The poet's son, also George Crabbe, wrote rhapsodically of his childhood at this place, and summarised the fate of the mansion: "Glemham itself is, and ever will be, the Alhambra of my imagination. That glorious palace yet exists; ours is levelled with the ground [*Footnote: A new and elegant mansion has been built on the hill by Dr. Kilderbeck (sic), who bought the estate.*]" (see *The poetical works of the Rev. George Crabbe: with his letters and journals and his life*, by his son. 1834. Vol. 1. John Murray).

Evidently this purchase enabled the Kilderbees to amalgamate the two adjoining properties. Both houses were demolished, and their grounds combined to form a landscaped Park, on a central eminence of which the new mansion was set. Building began in 1813 and continued until 1824. Five years later, however, the Reverend Dr Samuel Kilderbee was obliged to put the house on the market together with three farms, in Great Glemham & Stratford St Andrew, Cransford and Framlingham, amounting to 720 acres in all.

The sale (on 30th June, 1829) was handled by Winstanley and Sons of Paternoster Row, London. The published particulars, accompanied by a hand-drawn map, provided a full description of the house, garden and Park. It was stated that the house, a 'capital mansion' of

Suffolk white brick, was built 'under the superintendence of Mr Hopper'- presumably the architect Thomas Hopper (1776-1856), patronized by the Prince Regent and consequently in great demand at this time. The landscaping is not separately attributed. Pevsner (1961. *The buildings of England: Suffolk*. Penguin p. 216) mistakenly wrote that the grounds were laid out by Humphry Repton. It is the design for the Park at Little Glemham that appears in Repton's *Theory* (1803), and the dates are wrong: Repton was incapacitated after 1811 and died in 1818.

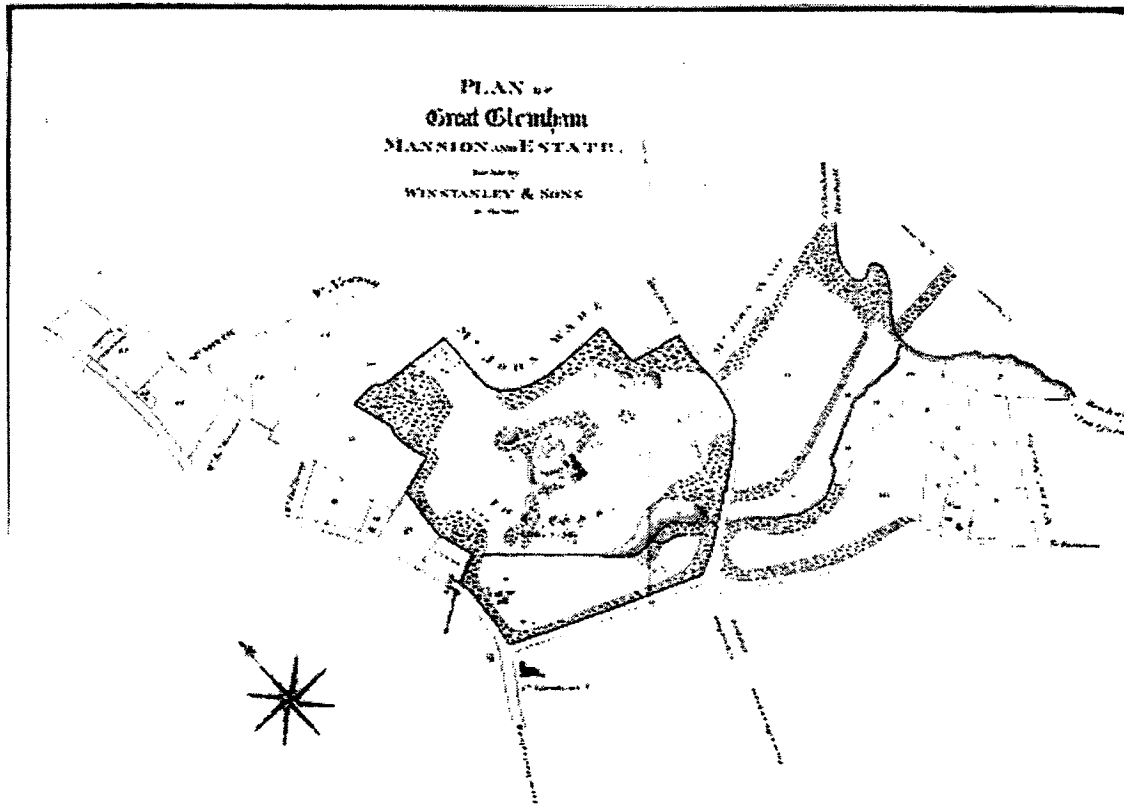


Figure 1. Winstanley's map of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Kilderbee's mansion and estate at Great Glemham in 1829

(A larger copy of this map is at the conclusion of this paper).

The map accompanying the sale particulars [Figure 1] shows the main features of the Park (with its extension east of the Sweffling road), the layout of plantations and an ornamental lake, and the design of the 7-acre garden, including: the irregular octagonal walled kitchen garden, in which there is a central "ornamental bason", and crossing paths running diametrically from a peripheral path within the wall. As described in the sale particulars for Glemham House:

"The Mansion is approached by a neat Entrance Lodge and Carriage Drive, is surrounded by a Lawn with clumps of American Plants, Shrubs and Evergreens, with an Invisible Iron Fence [Fig. 2] dividing the same from the Park, which comprises One Hundred Acres, of which about Seventy-two Acres are rich Pasture, and the rest in Plantations."

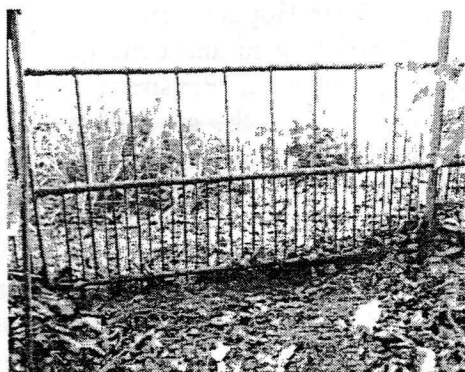


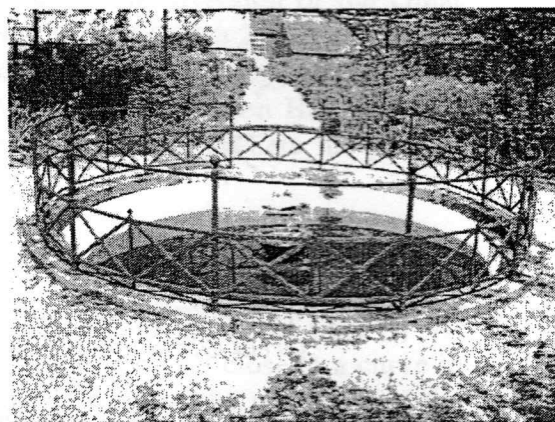
Figure 2. A short surviving stretch of the intricate 'invisible iron fence', comprised of hand-forged rods of different lengths, presumably a defense against rabbits.

"A Conservatory; Vinery or Forcing House, about 63 feet long, with some fine Grape Vines; a Kitchen Garden of nearly Two Acres, entirely enclosed by a lofty Brick Wall, clothed on both sides with the choicest Fruit Trees; an Ornamental Bason [Fig. 3] for supplying the Kitchen Garden with Water; a Tool House, Seed Room, and Apple Room.

"An Ornamental Sheet of Water of about Two Acres; a Boat House; Ice House, completely filled with Ice; Melon Ground; Pony Stable and Shed, well supplied with Soft Water."

There is also reference to "Two Garden Closets, with Water laid on, placed in the Shrubby"; and the stable yard was supplied with "Soft Water laid on from the Pond". And, certainly, "Shaded Walks extend to every direction through the Plantations, one of which leads to the Bailiff's Farm House."

Figure 3. The 'ornamental bason' at the centre of the walled kitchen garden. Also visible, in the background, is one of the two halves of the 'vinery or forcing house', i.e. glasshouse.



At the 1829 sale, the purchaser was John Moseley, a larger-than-life Regency widower (who set up his gardener's daughter in the Stone Cottage, Great Glemham, and fathered a son and daughter). Moseley built more commodious stables, suitable for a gentleman of his style, and added two greenhouses inside the walled garden and a conservatory on the outside. He also greatly enlarged the associated farmland estate, which ultimately extended to 1658 acres. John Moseley died in December 1863, aged 91, and was buried in Great Glemham. The property passed to his great nephew Henry Capell Lofft¹, who took the additional surname Moseley. But Henry lived only a few years at Great Glemham, dying on 29 December 1866, only 38 years old and unmarried. In a Dickensian manner, in 1867 the inheritance fell under the jurisdiction of Chancery (Rowley v. Lofft). Ultimately, following an order in the High Court of Chancery, Glemham House and estate once again came up for auction in 1871 and were bought by the Duke of Hamilton, of Easton Park.

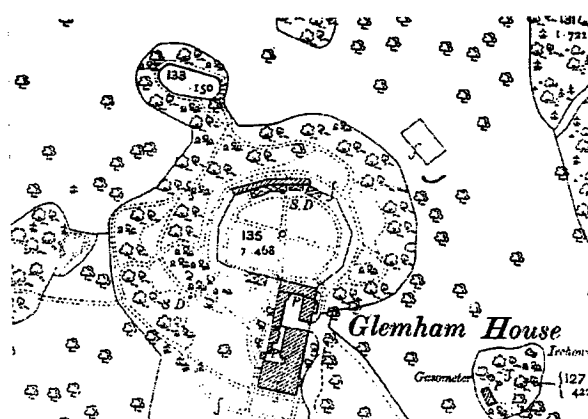
¹ Henry's maternal grandmother, Letitia, wife of Col. Francis Richardson of Ousden, was John Moseley's sister (H. Hawes, 1966. "Capel Lofft: some genealogical notes". *Suffolk Review* pp. 86-90).

At the start of the Duke's ownership, in 1871-2 (as Tony Martin has recorded, 'Lord Cranbrook's wall at Great Glemham', *Fram* 4th series number 6, April 2003) the long red brick wall wrapping round the southern half of the Park was built, taking two years to complete. Soon after, a plantation of Scot pines (the 'New Wood') was established on about 16 acres of light land, formerly known as Mill Hill, enclosed by broadleaf belts in the east arm of the Park. The lake was re-excavated, its outflow altered and new weirs built. In line with the industrial spirit of the late 19th century, a small gas-works was installed to supply the house, which was let.

After his demise, the Duke's daughter and heiress (then the Marchioness of Graham) disposed of her Suffolk inheritance in 1911-12. The Great Glemham properties were acquired by an 'estate breaker' for sale in separate lots and, in October 1913, Glemham House, the Park, woods and White House Farm were bought by my grandparents, Gathorne, 3rd Earl of Cranbrook and his wife Dorothy. They made internal alterations to the house, to suit their taste and their family of five children, and rationalized the outer boundary of the garden, enlarging it to just over 10 acres. A century after being built, when the landscape of the Park and grounds was probably at its peak, Glemham House was again occupied by resident owners. At one time, my grandmother employed 26 people, indoor and outdoor staff. The house (with its own DC electric generator, water from its well, a laundry and baking ovens) and garden must have been busy places.

In 1932 my parents, newly married, settled in to Glemham House. To meet prevailing standards, extra bathrooms were installed and a new well was dug within the kitchen garden walls to supplement the water supply. The conservatory was demolished, for economy; the bunker containing its subterranean stove still exists, a great trap for toads. Kilderbee's original vinery was replaced by a contemporary glasshouse, but two others, with distinctive small panes and double sliding sashes, were re-glazed and repainted. The artisan scratched his name and the date on a glass pane in the old peach-house: 'E(aster) Eley, 1933'.

Figure 4. The house and grounds (in 1904), as bought by Gathorne and Dorothy Cranbrook. Ninety years after the original landscaping, all features of original design survive. The landscape was then probably at its peak.



Jointly with Nelson Abel, my father bought back part of Kilderbee's original holding in Stratford St Andrew, which had been refigured as the Duke of Hamilton's Stud. With ample stabling, they formed an amateur polo club; sunny memories of pre-War summers! But 3rd September 1939 altered everything. In 1940 the house was vacated for evacuees from the London blitz, and it was subsequently requisitioned by the Army. After some temporary moves, the family settled at the White House Farm, then powered by two Suffolk Punches and one tractor. Trenches were dug in the woods and around trees in the Park (killing some) and 'Nissan' huts were erected around the house and at various points in the Park. The New Wood was compulsorily felled, the timber converted to pit-props for the coal mines. The northern part of the Park was compulsorily ploughed; some has since been restored to pasture, through the ESA scheme, but most of this sector remains arable land.

In 1947, a year of harsh winter and great deprivation (I think the only period when even bread was rationed), my parents boldly moved back into the 'Big House', and the process of post-War recovery began. Mains electricity was connected, and the house rewired to take 240 volts. A few years later, the water main reached the Lodge. My father simply connected the existing pipe, reversing the flow of water between Lodge and the header tanks on the roof of the Big House. This iron pipe ultimately failed and has since been replaced by alkathene.

The New Wood was replanted in 1948 with a mix of Scots and Douglas. Eastwards, riverside land, osier beds and marshy meadows in Kilderbee's day, had naturally regenerated to a thicket of ash and willow, earning the new name 'Ashground'. This my father felled, replanting with hybrid poplars, which became his landmark tree of the 1950s. Rampant from the late 1950s, myxomatosis killed thousands of rabbits, releasing the sycamore as a new weed tree in Kilderbee's oak and coppice plantations. In this period, with his one farm in hand and Ted Cobbin his foreman, my father embarked on a process of agricultural expansion, buying and selling as opportunities arose, rolling over his funds and progressively homing in on Great Glemham. Ultimately, he restored the associated farmland estate to about Kilderbee's original holding in acreage, but better disposed for management in hand. Years later, after his death, in 1981 my wife and I extended his example, and acquired a group of fields that had formed the north-western arm of Kilderbee's land in Great Glemham, still carrying the name of 'Friars'.

In 1967 my parents moved to one of their purchases, Red House Farm, and in 1970 my wife and I returned from Malaysia to live in Glemham House. We made small internal alterations to the house, amalgamating the butler's pantry and housekeeper's room to form a new dining room and re-occupying the 'old' (pre-War) kitchen, which we remodeled. The 'very old' kitchen (still with 19th century ranges) and the laundry we obtained planning permission to convert to ground-floor apartments, for rent. Thus began a phase of development of the service wing and back yard accommodation, to provide a total of six apartments. This entire range has been re-roofed, under the supervision of Tim Buxbaum, architect, and the watchful eye of English Heritage.

In the early 1970s, Kilderbee's northwestern plantation, Sovereign Grove, by then mature oaks at 10 to the acre, was clear-felled under a license from the Forestry Commission. The gross income, over the lifetime of this plantation, worked out at £3 per acre per annum. A few years later, a small area of oak and ash near Kilderbee's eastern border was felled. The ash, for 'sporting goods' such as tennis racquets, fetched a better price than oak, so I replanted the whole compartment with a pure stand of ash. Now, before these trees come to maturity, all tennis racquets are made of synthetic materials. It is not in hope of profit that woodland is grown in Suffolk!

In 1974, some Framlingham businessmen asked and were given permission to dig out the lake, by then completely silted up, to make a trout fishery. Unfortunately, we failed to take professional advice; September turned wet, and over-enthusiastic mechanical removal of the silt breached the clay seal of skillful 19th century predecessors. Ever since, the lake has leaked. It now fills only when the seasonal stream that feeds it is in flood, and drains within ten days. Kilderbee's boathouse, with a wooden superstructure and reed thatch had by then collapsed. The redirected force of floodwater ultimately washed away the northern weir. Some twenty years later, the adjoining picnic house was restored by Argus Gathorne-Hardy, but shortly afterwards two oaks fell onto it, and it remains to be repaired again.

By the 1970s, many of Kilderbee's original trees reached maturity or senescence. Since then, in the garden, Park and surrounding plantations, most large beeches have died, invariably attacked by fungus. But it was an imported plague that so rapidly destroyed the entire local population of mature elms, including some beautiful specimen trees. One of the first in the Park to go measured 90 feet tall, when felled. Its butt fetched £90, but soon elms were worthless and the Park and hedgerows were denuded. Of three great Atlantic cedars in the garden, two fell; the survivor lost its top to the 1987 gale, was later blown apart by lightning (with a fantastic explosion, that scattered pieces across the lawns) and thereafter died. Solitary sycamores, planted as specimen trees, have also succumbed, but not before they seeded their progeny throughout the surrounding woodland.

The 1987 gale also toppled one in five of the oaks in the Park, and many others in the woods; the wall was breached by falling trunks, and it was three days of chain-saw work before vehicles could reach the house. Other oaks have since died standing, probably because their roots were damaged at that time. The same gale entirely destroyed my father's poplar plantations, snapping the trunks or up-turning the big rootplates, and also wrecked the second generation of conifers in the New Wood. Jason Gathorne-Hardy oversaw replanting with a broadleaf mix. But rabbits had returned in huge numbers, and the fencing practices of 1948 provided inadequate. It took several years, and individual protection of the young trees, to achieve a successful establishment.

The last red squirrel was seen here in 1974; we now have greys, exclusively. The first muntjac was shot in 1994; these ugly little deer are now abundant in the woods, thinning the brambles in winter and often preventing the regeneration of coppice stools. Fallow are more or less permanently resident, and red deer move through in most years. A hitherto unprecedented population of foxes removes our unfortunate hens, but fails entirely to control the swarms of rabbits, apparently now immune to myxomatosis. At the time of writing, no badgers have been recorded, but they are very near.

Within the garden fence, there has been better success in preserving and restoring key Regency elements. In the shrubberies, the evergreens that ramped untended in the 1940s (chiefly a mix of laurel, laurustinus, yew and hollies, with some *Ponticum* rhododendrons, filled and, in places, edged with box) have progressively been lopped and, in most places, pruned down to their designed level: chest-height. The footpaths, formerly gravel, raked and swept weekly, are now buried under turf or leaf mould, but their routes are still open and trod on the daily round. The upper pond, which supplied "soft water" to so many points, has been emptied of 18 decades of accumulated leaf litter. Originally supplied by a hand-laid land drain running under the northern Park, it is now filled by a segment of the modern agricultural under-drainage.

The octagonal walled kitchen garden has been the focus of greatest care. The north-south axial path is still flanked by borders of traditional hardy perennials, which flower in sequence during the year; Caroline Cranbrook introduced rose hedges that back each border. All paths have been resurfaced, using pea gravel, and are now kept clean by chemical means, needing two treatments annually, with a light hoeing. Low box hedges still border the compartments. In the 1970s, the superstructure of the easternmost glasshouse (a Moseley addition) was replaced with a modern aluminium frame. The central 'bason' has been relined with waterproof plaster. Although it is still not wholly impermeable, enough water has been retained (even in the hot dry summer of 2006) to support waterlilies and three large carp.

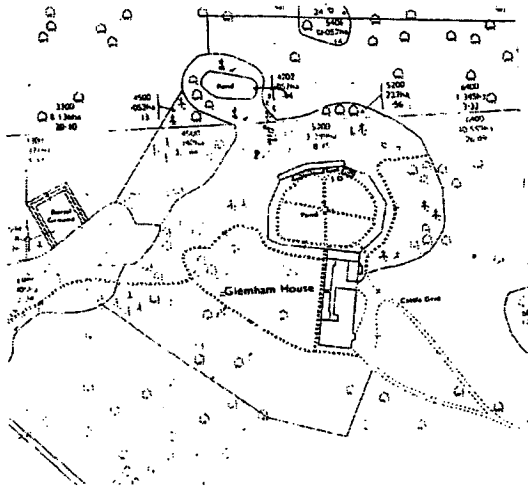


Figure 5. 1974 OS map of the garden, now including the two enlargements made by Gathorne and Dorothy Cranbrook after 1913. Although there is less detail than in the 1904 map, Kilderbee's landscape design remains clearly imprinted and its main features survive.

The surviving glasshouse of the central pair built for Kilderbee is truly unique. It has double sash glazed slides, of which every minute pane is an angled parallelogram, 5° from perpendicular to the wall, and its horizontals are tilted 2°. Some surviving panes were original crown glass, therefore pre-1835 and presumably earlier. In 1999 a careful restoration was undertaken by Caplin Building Services, supervised by Brian Morton. The original timber of the frame and glazing was pitchpine, and the base-plate oak. Douglas and iroko, respectively, were used as modern substitutes, with the rule that, if 60% of the original piece was sound, new wood was to be spliced on; below that proportion, the replacement was total. All surviving glass panes in place were coded and marked, and original accessories were retained.

* * *

Altogether, the second half of the second century of Glemham House has presented a full hand of natural, social and financial challenges. None the less, comparison of the present OS map (Fig.5) with the plan produced for the 1829 sale (Fig.1) shows that many elements of the Regency design have survived. The underlying landscape created at that time was sufficiently robust, and durable, to be fully identifiable today.

The outer aspect of the mansion is little altered, but its internal usage has changed, so that seven independent households now enjoy the prospect designed for one. As for Dr. Samuel Kilderbee, the original householder, Jeaffreson, not too kindly, wrote: "the amiable and amusing clergyman had no serious failing, apart from the vanity that impelled him to build and live so much beyond his means, that he would have fallen into indigence in his old age, had he not been preserved from so hard a fate by his wife's jointure, which enabled him to pass his closing years in comfortable, albeit straitened, circumstances at West Cowes in the Isle of Wight, where he died in September, 1847".

And what of the upper foundation stone? A widely copied picture from the pedigree of the Edgar family of Great Glemham in Ipswich Borough Library shows that the demolished Hall near the village centre was an E-shaped Tudor house. It therefore cannot have been the source of the 1708 stone. Its former stable block (now nos. 1-3, Timber Yard) has an obviously 18th century elevation, plausibly of that date, but were not 'rebuilt' elsewhere. Is it not more reasonable to assume that the stone came from Mill Farm house which, as the original mansion that the Kilderbees owned, and perhaps dwelt in, and themselves demolished, would be the house 'S.K.' naturally considered to have been 'rebuilt' on the new spot.

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THE REAL BEGINNINGS OF RADAR

The experiences of my husband Arnold Frederick Wilkins OBE (1907-1985)
by his wife Nancy Wilkins (1918 -)

Dictated to Jo Rothery April 2006

The Experiment

We have to go back to 1934 at the time when matters in Germany were causing much anxiety to the leaders of our armed forces, who knew our own resources to be far short of the necessary strength to match the German highly-trained and well-equipped troops, let alone their vast numbers and armoury. New ideas were called for, and a committee was set up named initially the Committee for Scientific Survey of Air Defence, but this was rapidly reduced to "The TISART Committee" (H. T. Tisart was the Chairman). They very soon found they needed more expertise, and they called upon the Superintendent of the radio research station, a Mr. Watt, to help them. (I shall call him WW (Watson Watt) henceforth: he had a habit of changing his name as his fame grew). One thousand pounds had been publicly offered to anyone who could produce a ray to kill a sheep at a hundred yards - nobody tried that! The idea of a sort of death ray lingered on, so WW called on his senior assistant, Arnold Wilkins, to do a proper calculation. This he did, and reported that it was quite untenable, and the cost of it would be astronomic. WW asked Wilkins if he had any other ideas to offer. In fact Arnold Wilkins had been seriously considering a conversation he had been having with several post-office engineers a short time ago, when they mentioned that there was always a flutter of some sort when aircraft flew near their receivers. They had laughed it off as nothing more than a nuisance. Arnold had begun to think about it seriously, because the flutter must mean that some reaction was coming back from the aircraft itself. He put it to WW that it might be worth considering as a possible starting point. WW agreed and said "Keep thinking". Meantime he himself took the suggestion to the Committee, who received the idea with many doubts and disbeliefs, and hummed and hawed to such an extent that Sir Hugh Dowding, a man of great character, stopped all this argument and said that what was wanted was a properly conducted experiment. To be ready in ten days!

Ten days! This job was given to Arnold, and indeed it was a race against time. WW took over, as it were, the external jobs. These were first to visit Daventry, and persuade them to alter their power on February 15th 1935 until midnight, and also slightly to change their usual call-off. Then he phoned Farnborough Air Station to ask if they would arrange for a plane to fly two sorties down a precisely given path, preferably a Heyford Bomber on February 16th, very soon after 9 a.m. This was readily agreed. Meantime, Arnold was busy trying to do everything at once. There was the finding of just the right spot somewhere near Daventry, which would test his great skill as a map reader.

(Let me tell you about Arnold and his maps. Arnold's father was a much loved and revered headmaster in Chester. Arnold had recently had his fifth birthday, but he was not yet at school, and this was eventually spotted by the authorities, who sent an official to make enquiries. He saw the small boy lying on his tummy poring over a large family atlas. The visitor, used to children, at once said

"Hello Arnold, do you like maps?"

"Yes", came the enthusiastic reply.

"Can you show me where Paris is?"

"There".

"Quite right".

"What about this curly river, what is its name?"

"The Seine".

Then came quite a series of questions, all of which were answered accurately. The visitor also noted slips of paper, some of which were written in quite good handwriting and some covered in numbers, so he knew the child could already read and write and had some idea of numbers. He turned to the father and said, "Well, that's all right for now. He's forward for his age, but the minute he is seven he must go to school". This was readily agreed. No wonder Arnold could read maps so very well; he had done it all his life).

Then to take the experiment forward, there was the very tricky business of collecting together all the necessary gear to find anything suitable from what he called "gash equipment" left lying about. No money had been offered - the radio research station was always woefully under-funded. Secrecy was vital. Several members of the staff must have wondered whatever he was doing. The whole thing had to be his own secret work, and I will emphasise that it was *his own* secret work. This made the collection of these materials very difficult indeed. In the meantime, Arnold had decided that only a small signal was necessary, and so he reduced everything to the utmost simplicity required. A vehicle had also to be found, and this turned out to be an old First World War ambulance already converted to look like a van. With it came the driver, a Mr. Dyer, who was to play a much bigger part than he could ever have envisaged.

So, on February 15th 1935, they travelled up the A5 into Northamptonshire, and then took a turning into the quiet lane Arnold had located on his map. He now found it to be quite satisfactory. He was lucky to find the farmer nearby, who readily agreed to allow them to do "a small experiment needed by the government". They would need some poles and wires, but they would do no damage to his land and the whole matter would be over before 11 a.m. next day. The weather was very fine but very cold. First they positioned the necessary poles and wires, and when they were satisfied they drove to a hotel at Weedon to fix up their night's stay, but were back soon to start the vital and delicate wiring needed for the next morning. Poor Mr. Dyer had to be banished to the bottom of the field, because he had no official clearance. Gradually the day grew darker. Arnold reached up for the light, only to find that it was not only minus the battery but also totally useless. Suddenly Dyer heard himself called urgently, and as he ran up the field he heard Arnold cry

"Have you got matches with you?"

"Yes" he cried to Arnold's relief.

It then became Dyer's job, with just two boxes of matches, to keep the light going, whilst Arnold grappled to connect the delicate fitments. They had very nearly finished when they heard the promised signal from Daventry. (The signal that WW had arranged with Daventry was "That concluded the variable amplitude tests".)

They must have been exhausted as they prepared to leave, but mother nature had a nasty surprise for them, because on this very, very cold night they found the van well and truly frosted up. They got the spade out again, but even so, it took them a full hour to get the vehicle movable; they must have reached their hotel very late indeed. Nevertheless, they were back at the site by eight o'clock the next morning, Arnold very pleased to see that his apparatus was quite safe. The last final adjustments were accomplished right on time, and WW and A. P. Rowe, secretary of the TISART Committee, arrived with WW's nephew about ten years old, who had to be sent to keep company with Mr. Dyer at the bottom of the field! It may be that the nephew was being used as a decoy - no-one would take any notice of three adults and a child on a car journey - they certainly would not be thought of as spies!

The tension inside the van must have been considerable! The time came for the first flight. All seemed right in the van, but no signal appeared on the screen. Arnold kept cool, because he guessed the airmen had made an error, and sure enough the second try was spot-on, and best of all there came at last on the screen the small clear steady sign that they were all waiting for.

As soon as it stopped, the two visitors rose and immediately made for the car, both talking excitedly, and disappeared. Not so much as a thank-you or well-done - or anything! Arnold was a bit stunned, but he knew that the experiment had been a success. Incidentally, WW completely forgot his nephew. They had got quite a distance towards London before they remembered the poor child, and had to come back and pick him up!

Clearing Up

It remained for the original pair, Dyer and Arnold, to clear the site. Dyer looked after the aerials and supporting poles, leaving the field apparently untouched, while Arnold, always aware of the possibility of spies, undid all the careful work put together the night before. When all was satisfactory, they set out for RRS (Radio Research Station) well ahead of the promised 11 o'clock. WW meantime hastily added to his memorandum the great news of the success of their experiment. This led to the immediate decision by the TISART Committee to go ahead with the further work at top speed. Some money was at last provided - £10,000!!! Years later I heard that Dyer regarded the whole experience as a huge adventure. He was very enamoured with the secrecy business, and after the war dined out on his experiences.

Orfordness - 14th May 1935

This was the most marvellous success of all the early Radar history. You will be able to see the work done, since there are two tabulations of their progress and achievements, and the personnel involved, in the Appendix to this paper.

It started on a quiet evening with the arrival of two huge RAF vehicles piled high with their equipment. The next day, all of this had to be transported across to the island in hail, sleet and a howling east-coast gale. Under Arnold's guidance, they performed wonders to erect two seventy-five foot towers for the project, together with all kinds of pieces of equipment. They certainly had to adapt themselves to the vagaries of Orfordness weather all the time they were there, but they very soon settled down to serious work.

Imagine those eight young men who must have been so pleased and excited to be chosen for this vitally important work, and their eagerness to get to grips with all the problems which had to be addressed and overcome in order to fulfil all the ideas of WW's memorandum as soon as possible. This challenge built up in this group a wonderful comradeship and understanding. It was here that Arnold won his famous nickname of Skip, by which he was known for the rest of his life. He was a natural leader and worked as hard as the rest, but was always ready to give time to problems of either individuals or groups. He certainly helped to solve difficulties.

Work raced ahead, and in the five months that they were there they had achieved it all. Their efforts were of course wrapped in secrecy, which may well have added to their excitement. They started work at 8.30 each morning, but often worked into the late hours of the night. They became known as "The Islanders", though Orfordness is not an island in reality. One of their gang, E. M. Bowen, had his transmitter beside a camp bed with a piece of cake and a bottle of beer for supper, and the same again for breakfast! They all enjoyed the village of Orford for itself, and were often grateful for warmth and a bottle of beer at The Jolly Sailor. Sandwiches were the order of the day, and the evening meals and breakfast, were their only real sustenance in their respective billets. Arnold and two other men were looked after by two wonderful sisters, who were superb cooks, delighted at having three chaps to look after. They loved to spoil their three young men - it was not yet wartime!

Bawdsey

Meantime much thought had been given to the future need for a much larger site. One morning, WW, Arnold and one of his team, E. G. Bowen, drove to Aldeburgh. They found many large houses, but none had sufficient grounds. Arnold was asked if he knew of anywhere else. He said he had only recently driven to Bawdsey for the first time, and had seen somewhere on high ground overlooking the sea; it seemed to him a very nice place, and he had heard a rumour that the Quilter family wanted to sell it. WW, never one to lose time, said "Right, let's go". They did and what did they find? The glamour, the sheer loveliness, the beautiful buildings, a kitchen garden to die for, and best of all acre upon acre of glorious space. It was like a dream come true! Negotiations went speedily, and all this was passed over for £23,000. The project was organised with as much speed as possible, but it was a huge undertaking involving the construction of laboratories, workshops and quarters for the staff etc. It was called, at first Bawdsey Research Station, and towards the end passed into the hands of the Air Ministry. WW and his wife were handsomely housed in the original building overlooking the sea. Arnold, a senior scientist, was given a roomy office, but no other privilege. He continued his usual work, backed up of course by his Orfordness team. He had acquired a fine batch of new men, who very soon caught the splendid approach to their work. In time, the place swarmed with young men and women, all of whom showed great devotion to duty.

And now I am going to quote a key pronouncement by Lord Bowden of Chesterfield in his Foreword to *Radar Days* by E. G. Bowen (Bristol, Hilger, 1987).

Wilkins was primarily responsible for constructing the Home Chain, which helped defend the Thames estuary during the Battle of Britain. He extended the Chain all over the country. It was he who chose the sites, took the responsibility for buying them, and made sure that proper access roads were built. All this was difficult enough, especially in wartime, but he was firmly instructed by the Air Ministry not to build radar stations where they might interfere with grouse shooting! By the time the Chain was finished TRE had recruited a great number of graduates from universities. They often ignored Wilkins, but he never seemed to mind. He knew what he had done and, in a modest way, he was rather proud of himself. I am very glad to have been able to count him among my friends ...

It is here I must leave you because others have more right than I to tell of the many triumphs and great happiness of Bawdsey.

APPENDIX

ORFORDNESS

Arnold Frederick Wilkins' Verbatim Notes 1935

Left RRS 13.5.35 Started work Orfordness 14.5.35

Party consisted of L. H. Bainbridge-Bell (SO), A. F. Wilkins (SO), E. G. Bowen (JSO), G. A. Willis (A3), A. Muir (LA), A. Bullard (Inst. Maker).

Attached for moving-in period: J. E. Airey (A2), R. A. J. Savage (Carpenter).

In July 1935 - R. A. H. Carter (A3) joined the team.

In September 1935 - G. Dewhurst (SO) was transferred from Radio Dept. R.A.E. but remained Air Min. employee.

Up to November 1935 the staff from RRS (i.e. Radio Dept. NPL) had achieved the following:-

1. First pulse echoes from aircraft June 1935 + measurement of range.
2. By Aug-Sept 1935 had achieved detection at 70km on aircraft at 7,000 feet using 70 foot high aerials (T + R).
3. In Nov obtained azimuth on aircraft using crossed dipoles.
4. In Sept first measured height of aircraft using horizontally spaced aerial system.
5. In July counted number of aircraft in small formation and saw possibility of estimating number of a/c in large formations.

We had therefore demonstrated the feasibility of carrying out all the items mentioned in RAWW's memorandum of Feb. 1935.

In Sept 1935 (16th) Air Defence Sub-Cttee of CID recommended, with concurrence of Air Council, that a chain of radio detection stations from Tyne to Soton [Southampton] should now be established.

On 19 Dec 1935 Treasury sanctioned a 5-station chain covering the approaches to London (Bawdsey to South Foreland).

[All this as a result of the Radio Research Station staff.]

ABOVE NOTES PUT IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

Left RRS 13 May 1935. Started work Orfordness 14 May 1935.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Party consisted of: | L. H. Bainbridge-Bell (SO) A. F. Wilkins (SO) E. G. Bowen (JSO) G. A. Willis (A3) A. Muir (LA) A. Bullard (Inst. Maker) |
|---------------------|--|

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Attached for moving-in period | J. E. Airey (A2) R. A. J. Savage (Carpenter) |
|-------------------------------|---|

| | |
|-----------|--|
| June 1935 | First pulse echoes from aircraft and measurement of range. |
|-----------|--|

| | |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| July 1935 | R. A. H. Carter (A3) joined the team. |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|

| | |
|--------------|---|
| In July 1935 | Counted number of aircraft in small formation and saw possibility of estimating number of aircraft in large formations. |
|--------------|---|

| | |
|------------------|---|
| By Aug-Sept 1935 | Detection at 70km of aircraft at 7,000 feet using 70 foot high aerials (T + R). |
|------------------|---|

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Sept 1935 | H. Dewhurst (SO) was transferred from Radio Department R.A.E. but remained Air Ministry employee. |
|-----------|---|

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Sept 1935 | First measured height of aircraft using horizontally spaced aerial system. |
|-----------|--|

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 16 Sept 1935 | Air Defence Sub-Committee of CID recommended, with concurrence of Air Council, that a chain of radio detection stations from the Tyne to Southampton should now be established. |
|--------------|---|

| | |
|-------------|---|
| In Nov 1935 | Obtained Azimuth on aircraft using crossed dipoles. |
|-------------|---|

| | |
|-------------|---|
| By Nov 1935 | The staff from RRS (i.e. Radio Department NPL) had therefore demonstrated the feasibility of carrying out all the items mentioned in the R. A. Watson Watt's memorandum of February 1935. |
|-------------|---|

| | |
|----------------|---|
| On 19 Dec 1935 | Treasury sanctioned a five station chain covering the approaches to London (Bawdsey to South Foreland). |
|----------------|---|

JOHN CLARKSON AND THE SUFFOLK CONNECTION

By John Black

The Clarkson family had a strong connection with East Anglia, and with Suffolk in particular. Thomas Clarkson was born in Wisbech in 1760, and John was born, also in Wisbech, on April 4th 1764. Their father, the Reverend John Clarkson, headmaster of the Free Grammar School, Wisbech, married Anne Ward in 1755, when he was forty-five and his bride twenty. He died when John was not quite two years old, in 1766.¹ The Ward side of the family could trace their ancestry to George Warde of Brooke, in Norfolk, who married Martha Alpe, daughter of Edward Alpe of Framlingham, in 1654.² One of their seven children, Robert Warde, died in Norwich, leaving one child, Alpe, aged twenty. Alpe became a physician in East Dereham and at the age of twenty-seven married Anne Banyer; their only child, Anne, was the mother of Thomas and John Clarkson.

John Clarkson was much influenced by his elder brother Thomas, who entered the church, and was one of the prime movers in the crusade for the abolition of the slave trade, and it was through Thomas that John became involved in the movement. However, John's career began in the Royal Navy, which he joined at the age of thirteen when the war with America was in its second year. He came under the command of Captain Joshua Rowley. After fourteen months' service he was made a midshipman, at the age of fourteen. On Christmas Day 1778, John sailed to the West Indies in *H.M.S. Suffolk* which reached Bridgetown in Barbados in February 1779. On October 16th 1782, Rowley promoted John to acting lieutenant on *H.M.S. Bloodhound*, and five months later he was made a full lieutenant. At the end of the American War of Independence in 1783, John was put on half-pay and was unable to obtain another posting. At this time Thomas was becoming involved with the slave trade campaign. While at St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1784, he heard a sermon by Dr. Peter Peckard, Master of Magdalen College, denouncing the slave trade as a "monstrous iniquity". As Vice-Chancellor in the following year, Peckard proposed as the subject of a Latin essay prize the title "Anne Liceat Invitos in Servitutem Dare?" (Whether it is lawful to put into slavery those who are unwilling?). Thomas submitted an essay and later translated and expanded it into a 256 page indictment of slavery and the slave trade; this was published in 1786, by James Phillips, a Quaker bookseller and printer. Through Phillips, Thomas met Granville Sharp, one of the campaigners against the slave trade. Thomas vowed to devote himself to the cause, and approached William Wilberforce who was already working for abolition. Thomas toured the country, speaking to committees and meetings, and asked John to become his secretary and general assistant.

During 1786 and 1787, the Clarksons became aware of the plight of the "Black Poor" in London, many of whom had served with the British forces in America. They set up the "Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor". In the spring of 1787, 411 black settlers sailed, with the help of Granville Sharp, to Sierra Leone, where they founded the Province of Freedom, and built Granville Town. In December 1789, Granville Town was burned by traders and an African chief, King Jimmy, whose village had been burned down by a stray bullet from a frightened sailor. The survivors sought refuge with a friendly chief, King Naimbana, and in the neighbouring islands.

In November 1790, Thomas Peters arrived in London as an emissary of two hundred blacks in Nova Scotia, who had heard of the Province of Freedom and wished to go there. Peters publicized the unsatisfactory conditions of the blacks in Nova Scotia. He had escaped from slavery in North Carolina and joined the British forces. In London, Peters met General Sir Henry Clinton who had been his commander in America, and through him, Wilberforce and the Clarksons who, with Sharp, had formed the St. George's Bay Company, with the aim of developing trade between Sierra Leone and London. The arrival of Peters provided a stimulus to the supporters of the Province of Freedom, who were looking for new settlers to go to Sierra Leone. Some difficulty was experienced in finding a leader for the expedition, and John volunteered to go.

At this point it is necessary to explain the presence of ex-slaves in Nova Scotia. During the American War of Independence, large numbers of slaves escaped and fought on the British side, though some joined the Americans. In return, the "loyalists" (to the British side) were granted their freedom and were given land in Preston, near Halifax, Nova Scotia. They soon became disillusioned with the poor land they had been given, and many were then forced to work as indentured servants and poorly-paid manual labourers. Thus, Peters petitioned for the settlers in Nova Scotia to join those in Sierra Leone.

John Clarkson kept a journal called "Mission to America", which he started when he embarked at Gravesend on August 19th 1791, on the *Ark* for Halifax. On May 30th of the same year, an Act had been passed setting up the Sierra Leone Company, in place of the St. George's Bay Company.³

On October 7th 1791, John arrived in Halifax. He made his first visit to the black community there on October 12th, and decided that they would be better off in Africa. By mid-November, there were more than a thousand settlers wishing to go to Sierra Leone. On January 15th 1792, John boarded the *Lucretia*, and a convoy of fifteen ships, led by the *Felicity*, left Halifax. During the voyage John nearly died, probably from typhus; the voyage took fifty-two days, during which he made a slow recovery.

Before he left England, John was informed that an unemployed army officer, Henry Dalrymple, had been appointed Governor of the new colony which was to be called Freetown. However, on arrival in Sierra Leone, he was told that Dalrymple had resigned and that the directors in London were asking him to be the first "superintendent". John was initially doubtful of his abilities for the post, but was unable to see that any of the other white settlers would be capable of taking on the necessary responsibilities.

The councillors in Freetown appointed by London behaved, with a few exceptions, in an irresponsible manner, and were high-handed with the black settlers. John's difficulties were increased when it was found that the Company had sent goods appropriate to trade, rather than food and building materials.

Since Nova Scotia, John had not got on well with Thomas Peters, who regarded himself as the representative of the black settlers, and presented John with a series of complaints, which were mainly quite justified. John was sent two petitions, dated June 25th and 26th 1792, asking for black-settler representation on the administration of the colony. On the night of June 25th, Peters died, after three days of fever. (Mortality was very high: on the day that Peters died, there were six hundred sick and five deaths. Among the black settlers between one hundred and four hundred had died, as had thirty-eight whites).

On August 28th the directors decided that John should be appointed Governor, assisted by two councillors. The most important building in the colony was a community centre, named by John Harmony Hall; this was intended to help the unification of the original settlers from Granville Town with those from Nova Scotia. On September 13th 1792, forty families were settled on five-acre plots.

There were still difficulties in equating John's judgements and policies with those of the directors in London, and by November 1792, differences had reached a stage which could only be resolved by a visit to London. On December 29th, John left Freetown on board the *Felicity*, and reached London on February 10th 1793. In London, he had further disagreements with the directors, who were, however, unwilling to get rid of him, because of his popularity with both the black and the white settlers. They therefore agreed that John should return to Sierra Leone for another year. However, on receiving some disturbing and critical dispatches from Freetown on April 23rd 1793, the directors changed their minds and told John that he would not be returning; they asked for a letter of resignation, which he refused. He emerged from these difficulties with a dislike of public officials and a distrust of men in high places.

On April 25th 1793, John married his fiancée, Susan Lee, at St. Michael's Church, Beccles. He was now unemployed and was eventually offered a ship, but refused it on the grounds that "he did not approve of the war" against France, which had broken out on February 10th. During his absence in London, the black leaders sent a petition for his return, "The Body of the Colony is Bent for your honer to come and Be our Governor", but this was disregarded by the directors.

Clearly there was now no possibility of return to Freetown, and John was put in charge of an estate in Purfleet in Essex belonging to Samuel Whitbread, the brewer, and a long-standing family friend. The Purfleet estate contained a chalk pit, and John was asked to take on a chalk and lime business, which he built up into a flourishing concern. An iron railway was constructed for horsedrawn wagons to take chalk to the kilns and barges. Arthur Young saw the railway in 1805, during his tour of Essex, and was greatly impressed.⁴

In January 1796, Thomas married Catherine Buck, daughter of a yarnmaker in Bury St. Edmunds. The abolition campaign revived in 1804, and slavery in the British Empire was finally abolished in 1807. In 1816, John and his brother set up "The Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace", known as the "Peace Society". A London stockbroker, Robert Marsden, became the first chairman. He was not a Quaker, and only seven of the original committee of twenty belonged to the Society of Friends. John was the first treasurer, and held this office until he moved to Woodbridge in 1820.

In 1815, Samuel Whitbread, John's former employer in Essex, committed suicide, and his son, also Samuel, took over the limeworks in 1820. John was offered a partnership in a bank in Woodbridge, a branch of the Alexander banking business; the Alexanders also traded in grain and owned a brewery. As resident partner, John lived "over the shop", in the large house in Stone Street (now Church Street). The clerks were Mr. S. Vertue and the Quaker poet Bernard Barton, who was at that time a popular poet. (Thomas and his wife were now living at Playford Hall, between Ipswich and Woodbridge). John was soon involved in Woodbridge affairs; he also contributed to the foundation of University College, London.

Of John's daughters, Anna married John Rose, a local physician, Louisa Anne married Thomas Carthew, a solicitor and son of the Rector of St. Mary's Woodbridge, Sophia married the Reverend Forster Maynard, the vicar of Melton, and Mary married her cousin Tom, who was a lawyer. John's only son, John Brassey, entered the Stock Exchange; he died at the age of twenty-five on November 9th 1824. He was buried at St. Mary's Woodbridge. Less than a year later, Emma, the youngest child, died aged fourteen, after a long illness; she was buried beside her brother.

John never lost touch with Sierra Leone, and regularly received the *Gazette* from Freetown. On the morning of April 2nd 1828, he died while reading its "Anti-slavery Report"; he was buried in the churchyard at Woodbridge. Thomas died in 1846, aged eighty-six, and John's wife Susan died at the age of eighty-two.⁵

Notes

[Editor's interpolations enclosed in square brackets].

- 1 The sources for this article have mainly been derived from *John Clarkson and the African adventure*, by Ellen Gibson Wilson (London, The Macmillan Press, 1980) and, to a lesser extent, from *Rough Crossing: Britain, the slaves, and the American Revolution*, by Simon Schama (London, BBC Books, 2005).
- 2 [Edward Alpe, described as "Esquire" and "gent", was the head of a distinguished armigerous local family, with extensive land and property holdings throughout Framlingham and the surrounding area, and prominent over most of the seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries. He died in 1654, the estate, at that time comprising both copyholds of the Manor of Framlingham and freeholds, passing to his son, also Edward (1643-1715), whose tomb and monument may be seen in the chancel of St. Michael's church. Edward (junior) had three sons, all of whom died without issue. (R. Hawes, *The History of*

Framlingham ... (Woodbridge, Loder, 1798) pp. 358-401 *passim*; R. Green, *The History, topography, and antiquities of Framlingham ...* (London, Whittaker, Treacher, 1834) pp. 146-7). There are no references to the surname in Framlingham in nineteenth century directories, *Lambert's Almanack*, or Framlingham Cemetery inscriptions.]

- 3 [31. Geo 3 c.55 (1791)].

- 4 [Arthur Young, *General view of the agriculture of the county of Essex* (London, 1807)].

- 5 Domestic slavery, largely confined to [the service of] rich Africans, continued in Sierra Leone until 1928. In September 1927, an ordinance was passed abolishing the practice; this came into effect on January 17th of the following year (F. R. Cana, "Sierra Leone" in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th edit. (London, The Encyclopaedia Company, 1928) vol. 20 pp. 623-6).

POPULAR LEGEND

"THANKS TO DOCTOR BEECHING FRAMLINGHAM LOST ITS PASSENGER TRAIN SERVICE"

By David Pitcher

It was in 1923 that the East Anglian railway companies were made part of the new London and North Eastern Railway Company. Even then, there was a question mark over many branch lines, including Framlingham's, with growing alarm at the decline of passenger and seasonal use throughout Suffolk. By 1939, the January figures reached only 21,000 passengers for the whole county, and imminent closures were avoided only by the outbreak of World War 2, although the LNER itself had invested in buying out several private bus companies. The provision of a new Halt at Hacheston, without any shelter or platform and with only a nameplate and an oil lamp, did not make much difference in 1923!

The single event which ensured the wartime survival of the branch was the building and serving of the American air-base at Parham; the story of the previous two decades was so desperate that it is amazing that the branch was not closed in the 1920s. In *All Change for Framlingham*,¹ I referred to a report of the ill health of the whole network in 1921, and how

The impact of this difficult year had its own effect on the Framlingham branch. No Whitsun Bank Holiday trains were run. Sunday postal deliveries were cancelled, gas supplies were confined to three hours from noon and three in the evening and, far from being a disaster, "every available motor coach will be mobilized for the Whitsuntide holidays."

In July of that year the Mothers Union and Methodist Sunday School treats traveled by coach to the seaside and betrayed their loyalty to the Fram Flyer!²

After 1945, the decline of the British railway system accelerated, and various closures were effected in the 1950s well before the Beeching report was published, in 1963. In 1964 began what has been described as "the slaughter of the railways", although it must be remembered that all steam traction on the Eastern Region of British Railways was withdrawn the year before the Beeching report. I have described the events on November 3rd 1952, when regular passenger services were withdrawn from our branch, in my *All Change ...*, with help from reports in the *East Anglian Daily Times* and the *Daily Telegraph* of what happened.³

Until 1954, there were beginning- and end-of-term steam specials for Framlingham College, but they were the final huff and puff steam-powered services, though open to the general public too.⁴ Freight traffic continued on the branch, and was profitable for users and the railway until the final closure on April 19th 1965. Doctor Allen described what happened because that day was Easter Monday and the last train ran on Thursday 15th.

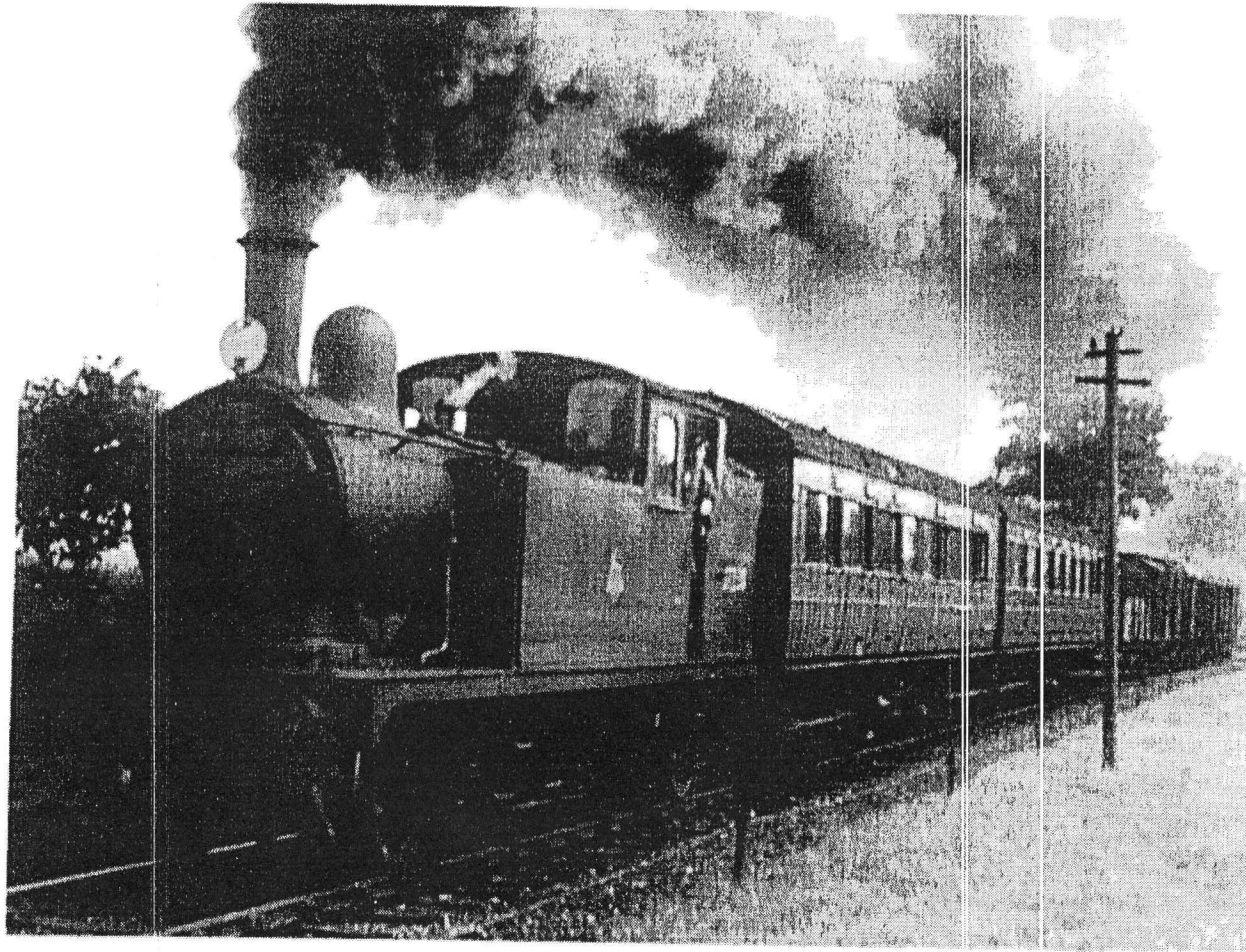
The final working took place on the 22nd April when the up Leiston freight train was propelled down the branch from Wickham Market Junction to Marlesford to pick up a truck which had been unfit to travel on the 15th.⁵

A photograph taken later, on August 14th, shows how the track had already been lifted and was beginning to get covered by undergrowth with a few piles of wooden sleepers and rusty nails lying about. Some of those sleepers are probably not far away in a garden somewhere, or burned to dust and ashes, but I have been given the wooden bowl that once sat in the desk-top at the booking office at Framlingham, for purposes of loose change when buying a ticket. The bowl is stamped underneath with the letters GER.

Editor's Notes

- 1 D. J. Pitcher, *All change for Framlingham* (2002) p. 10
2 *Ibid.*

- 3 *Ibid.* p. 41.
4 *Ibid.* p. [13].
5 I. C. Allen, *Diesels in East Anglia* (1980).



*Acknowledgements to Mr. David Kindred
and to the East Anglian Daily Times*

Readers may also be interested to see this photograph of the "Framlingham Flyer", a "mixed" (passenger and freight) train from Wickham Market to Framlingham, with Ray Moore visible on the footplate. Ray Moore was a driver on the branch for many years without an accident, and brought the very last freight train into Framlingham station. He then transferred to main-line duties driving up to London, where, following a medical, it was discovered that he was colour-blind!

CORRESPONDENCE

Laminga
Southview Road
Wadhurst
East Sussex

3rd May 2006

Dear Editor,

I refer to 5th Series Number 3, April 2006 issue of *Fram*, and to the letter on the final page. I am sure you will have many readers with memories of the Wicks family at the Guildhall and so my contribution here will probably be superfluous. However, I will send them by the way.

Your correspondent refers to "Miss Wicks". Mrs Wicks (Beatrice or "Beattie") was my mother's best friend and was her bridesmaid. Her husband Bob Wicks ran the men's outfitters next to Beattie's draper shop. It was a wonderful shop and when I returned to Framlingham as a child (having left it at the age of three), I would have to wile away the time in the shop while my mother and her friend caught up with the gossip since they had last met. The metal pole still exists in the shop on the left-hand side of the entrance around which I would twirl away endlessly to pass the time. I was also given huge cards of wonderful buttons to play with to keep me quiet. I remember Dolly Morris who was in charge of the corsetry department. I loved to hide amongst the ladies' dresses and coats stored in the stock-room in the room with the ornate coving. I can still smell it if I stop and conjure it up.

Bob and Beattie had a daughter, Marion, but I did not keep in touch with her.

My mother was Lucy Lazell, whose mother was stewardess of the Conservative Club in the 1930s, and my father was Cecil Dorling, son of F. C. Dorling, grocer, of Bridge Street.

I love receiving the magazine as it evokes happy memories.

Yours faithfully,
Angela Stevens

Ashford Mill House
Ilton
Ilminster
Somerset

16th August 2006

Dear Editor

Goodness me! Can I be the only person alive today who took part in The Pageant!

Having had a couple of telephone calls from my brother Arthur and now having read articles in *Fram*, I think I must let you have a few memories of mine.

In 1931 aged eight years I was a "rose petal girl" dressed in a ragged pink dress. I had to throw rose petals at The Duke of Norfolk as he rode past on his gigantic, rearing horse. The more petals the more rearing, and one terrified little girl (even though we had eight very large horses at The D'Urbans) but HE WAS THE DUKE OF NORFOLK. Of that I am still convinced!!

In 1931 I would have been attending the kindergarten, entrance near the Condul Café (Constance and Dulcie) on the Market Hill. I seem to remember a Miss Woodgate looked after us. The garden at the back had a big mulberry tree. I could never understand why we were not allowed to play under it when the fruit was ripe. I know now!

Perhaps relatives of the kindergarten staff are contactable. That little school must have had something to do with The Pageant.

I have absolutely no other memories re The Pageant or of those taking part.

After the kindergarten I moved on to Mills Grammar School. Mary Carley from the grocers was my senior. Twenty-odd years ago I spent a day in and around Framlingham. Mary was in Lanman's antique shop opposite the way up to the Castle.

Brenda Self, who was at Mills with my two older sisters, Florence and Joan, was very kind to me, and organised a taxi to get me back to Leiston, so that I could catch my "Coachliner" back to Great Yarmouth, where I was staying.

On arrival in Framlingham I asked my taxi man "but where is the Hill?" Every place seemed so flat!

I visited the D'Urbans, now Western Brothers. I have a feeling of nostalgia when I spot their trucks and machinery passing along this road. I walked almost to Kettleburgh, back up on to the Saxtead Road; looked at the big Area School, ambled up the drive in front of the College; a thing that was forbidden when I was at Mills, even though my brother was there!

I walked around my old school and was taken inside by the caretaker (who remembered the Staniforth name). Walking down the corridor I saw

a door marked "Gents". I remember letting out a cry of "Men?" and was told that there were boys as well as girls. The two Head Mistresses - first Miss Fisher and then Miss Pricker - would have turned in their graves at the thought.

Looking at the map I hardly recognise Framlingham, but I was not quite sixteen when I left Suffolk.

The fish-man from Southwold - yes. My first call was to him - cod steaks - then across to the International Stores just about where the charity shop is marked, where I bought a small tin of pineapple for fourpence-halfpenny. With the halfpenny I went across to Oxborrows and got a huge bag of mixed sweets.

Down Bridge Street at the bottom on the right, Mrs. Simmons' wool shop. Over the bridge on the left Mr. Simmons' china shop; round the corner, buses let down and picked up by another sweet shop, Brackenberrys. Opposite, cycle shop Fairweathers which was beside Self's shoe shop. Across the road Heath's paper shop then the Almshouses; Potters garage on the corner opposite. Over the road a little row of shops, Scarfs for wireless sets then on to the Railway Station.

Going back to Fore Street on the corner Bonny's bakery; leaving the pump and post office to the left, going up the hill and left into Queen's Head Alley. I don't remember the abattoir, though my brother does; a butcher's shop was at the end entering the Market Hill.

The Mansion House? I remember it as Warings, a big haberdashers and the chemist on the corner of Church Street was Bennetts chemist. Ruth Bennett was also at Mills. Further along on the right at the corner of Double Street was Freemans, men's clothier, maybe women's clothes as well.

Halfway up Fore Street on the left we went from Mills to our domestic science lessons; for games we went up the hill to our playing field, possibly on the Badingham Road.

Going back to the Pageant. Are there not photos of it in the Castle Museum? During the TV programme "Who do you think you are?" Jeremy Paxman visited the Castle. It reminded me of having to show our visiting hockey teams up onto the walls - not a task I enjoyed as there was almost no railing then.

Why do I think there is an old photo of me as a rose petal girl in the museum and surely there are at least some records of the Pageant there.

Yours faithfully
Patricia Staniforth (Patsy)



[There are, as Ms. Staniforth surmises, many photographs in the Lanman Museum at Framlingham Castle of the 1931 Pageant, many of which were displayed in the exhibition mounted by Tony Martin in St. Michael's church in 2001. Editor]

Victoria Mill House
Victoria Mill Road
Framlingham

21st August 2006

Dear Editor,

I was interested to see in "All our yesterdays" in the August 2006 issue of *Fram* (5th series number 4 page 19) that in the eighteenth century, as a warning that customs officers were active in the area, the sails of windmills were set in the form of a cross.

A few days later, I read in the Autumn 2006 number of the Suffolk Local History Council *Newsletter* (number 73 page 13) J. Fairclough reporting that millowners "up and down the country" had set their sails in a cross in a traditional tribute to Bob Wright of Knodishall, a well-known expert on windmills, who died recently at the age of ninety-one.

If both these traditions had been observed in the eighteenth century, it would have been difficult for people to decide whether to hide their contraband or put on their mourning clothes!

Yours faithfully
John Black

DEPARTURE POINT

Major projects in recent years, many funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, have provided a number of major digital resources that are now available on-line. These include English Heritage's Images of England project ... which aims to publish a defining image of every listed building in England, and the Council for British Archaeology's Defence of Britain project ... which pulls together information on Second World War anti-invasion sites across the UK. The ... key factor that connects these two projects is that the content for the digital resource was primarily provided by hundreds of volunteers working across the country, facilitated by a small staff team. Even more people are now engaging with the results of these projects, utilizing the resources for educational projects and linking in with their [own] personal research.

There is a general thirst for knowledge about the historic environment, and for many people the easiest way to engage with the accumulated information now is through on-line services.

from M. Heyworth, "Encouraging engagement:
opening up the datasets ..."

in *Conservation Bulletin, English Heritage* issue
51 (Spring 2006)

“History is five minutes ago”

**THREE THOUSAND PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN
ARE MAKING HISTORY**

**Framlingham and District
Local History and Preservation Society**

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**history and heritage in Framlingham and mid-Suffolk
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