

A LOCAL PERSONALITY Our Curator, Mr Lanman, has found original blocks from which some of Crabbe's pictures were printed. George Crabbe, born at Aldeburgh in 1754, had many associations with our immediate district. After a fair education at Bungay and Stowmarket (both schools he disliked extremely) he was, at 14, apprenticed to a doctor at Wickhambrook. This was even worse than the schools because the so-called doctor was more a farmer and George was put to work in the fields. After three unhappy years he was transferred to a surgeon at Woodbridge and for Crabbe life began. For the first time in his life he met young men with whom he could converse intelligently and he met Sarah Elmy whom he married in 1782. Having little success as a doctor he entered the Church and became curate at Aldeburgh and later at Sweffling. He lived at Great Glemham Hall for five years. Sarah had proved a worthy helpmeet through difficult times. Before and after marriage she, and later Crabbe also, had spent much time with her well-to-do uncle Tovell who lived at a large moated farm called Ducking Hall at Parham, now replaced by the New Hall. Crabbe wrote some grand descriptions of the life at Ducking Hall. Near the road from our town to Saxmundham there is a plaque on the house at Rendham Grove recording that Crabbe had lived there. Not perhaps a first rank poet he had a social conscience at a time when few had this sensitivity. He described the terrible conditions in his day for those at the bottom of the pile and these weighed heavily upon him.

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Our member, Mr W.L. Stuart of Badingham, mentioned that coarse flax used to be grown in Suffolk from which the sails of the sailing ships were made. The oak trees along our roads, many still standing, were, of course, deliberately planted to provide timbers and knees for men-of-war.

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LOCAL FARM LORE 'One boy is nearly as good as a man, two boys equal half a man and three boys are no good at all.'

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'GAYS' IT IS Mrs Jones started it when she reminisced that the old 'uns used to borrow the "Marcury" to see the "gaze", as we spelt it in our Ninth Issue. Then we came across Allan Jobson's *'IN SUFFOLK BORDERS'* wherein it was spelt 'gays'. Now Mr Turner writes "Forby's *'THE VOCABULARY OF EAST ANGLIA'* states 'Gays, s.pl. prints to ornament books. The word is in Johns on the sole authority of L'Estrange who was a Norfolk man, and not infrequently betrays it.' Allan Jobson is correct." (Tell it not in Gath, however, but no one has a clue to who 'Johns' or 'L'Estrange' were).

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HISTORIC LINK Among our distant members is Mr Charles Danforth Saggus of Danburg, Georgia, descendant of the Danforth who left our town in 1634. A cheery letter from Mr Saggus assures us of his wish to continue the contact.

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James II said of St.Paul's Cathedral 'amusing, awful, artificial.' In to-day's words he meant 'amazing, awe-inspiring, artistic' - the meanings of the words having altered over the centuries.

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100 TONS A DAY During the last war a hundred tons of cement a day were delivered to Horham Station on the now-defunct Mid-Suffolk Light Railway for Horham RAF Aerodrome. An example of the reserve capacity that a railway provides in time of need. It supports the contention that the Ipswich - Yarmouth Line should in wisdom be retained though conversely means should be found to make it pay.

(Information from MISS BRUNGER)

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AN AIR PHOTO OF YOUR HOUSE The whole of East Suffolk has been photographed from the air by Aerofilms of London. Contact photographs covering about three square miles are available at £2.25 or enlargements (20" x 20") at £5.00 each.

(MR BROAD, Brandeston)

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WATCHMAKERS' DISCS Mr Lanman has a grand collection of about 200 of these. Placed in the watch when sold or repaired they served a number of purposes, e.g. advertising, reminder. Watches were mainly of the verge type and bulbous, real 'turnips', as they were nicknamed. Probably as a protection against rough usage when the wearer was working they were usually in an outer rather loose case and the paper discs acted as padding. Mr Lanman had come across watches with a dozen discs therein.

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ARMOUR KEEPERS Green's charmingly written history of our town published in
AT THE CASTLE 1834 enumerates many of the officers of the Castle. He shows that the Chambers family, rich yeomen of the town, provided two of the Armour Keepers, John from 1383 and Richard from 1496. Richard's will, proved at Helmingham in 1524 and running to several folios, gives an indication of his personal wealth in armour. Among the many items he left to his sons were: William, his eldest, a standard of mail, a fold of mail, a sword, a buckler, a sallet (helmet), a new jack (sleeveless military tunic), a pair of splints and a pair of gussets. John, the second son, a sallet, a standard of mail, a fold of mail, a pair of gussets, a pair of splints, a long knife. Thomas, 3rd son, a jack, a sallet, a woodknife, a standard of mail and a pair of gussets. Richard, 4th son, a jack and a sallet. Philip, 5th son, his best crossbow. (BRIGADIER PACKARD)

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Dennington Rectory has been described as the finest Queen Anne house. It is a very pleasing example of that style but actually was built in 1820, i.e. in George IV reign.

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OUR DAUGHTER TOWN From 'MASSACHUSETTS' in the American Guide Series:
'Framingham - town, altitude 189 ft. pop. 22,651, settled 1650, incorp. 1700. For 35 years after its settlement it had indefinite boundaries and organisation and was generally known as Danforth's Farms. By 1700 Framingham had about 70 families including refugees from the witchcraft persecution in Salem Village (now Danvers). Crispus Attucks, a mulatto resident of the town, was a member - some historians say a leader - of the mob that attacked the King's soldiers in Boston on 5th March 1770 in the famous Boston massacre; he was one of the five killed. Shoes, paper and rubber products and carpets are now produced. Dennison Mfg Co is the dominant industry and also market gardening and fruit growing.'

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FISH(Y) STORY Further to the mention in our last issue of the sea serpent sighted by several persons off Thorpeness in 1931, Mr Turner sends us this extract from Clay's 'HISTORY OF FRAMLINGHAM': 'In 1205 some fishermen at Orford caught a sea-monster in their nets resembling a man in shape and limbs. He ate fish and flesh raw or boiled; the raw he pressed in his hands before he ate it; he would not or could not speak; though to force him to it, the governor's servants tied him up by his heels and cruelly tormented him. The fishermen carried him one day to the sea and let him go having first spread three rows of strong nets to secure him; but he diving under them appeared beyond them and seemed to deride the fishermen. The monster did however, return and stayed some time until, weary of living ashore he stole away to the sea and was not heard of again.'

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING About sixty members, including our Vice-President, Miss P. Butler, M.A., attended and heard the Chairman report a year of solid progress. We now have 110 members and are regarded as one of the premier societies of its kind in the area. Our museum is, too, considered to have the best collection of local items outside the official museums. We had however, to cope with the loss of two of our leading members, viz. Mrs Packard, Vice-Chairman, who had left the district, and Mr Charsley, Hon. Treasurer. A sincere vote of thanks was accorded to both; similar appreciation was expressed to all the other members whose work and co-operation had made our society the success it is. Mrs Tripp had earlier been co-opted to the Committee and she and the rest of the Committee were re-elected. Mr C. Seeley was also elected. Mr J.F. Kerr was unanimously elected Vice-Chairman - a popular choice.

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COFFEE MORNING Many members supported this well in giving produce etc. and/
27 NOVEMBER or assisting with the stalls and general amenities. Attendance was good and all seemed to enjoy the occasion - and our funds benefited by about £28.00

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THOSE SOUTHWOLDERS! Not all of our neighbours attain fame; some become infamous. Take ship's captain John Stewart of Southwold, to whom in 1830 a New Zealand Maori Chief offered £1,200 worth of flax if he would transport him and fifty warriors to pay off a score against another chief. At the destination Stewart inveigled the unsuspecting chief on board his ship that person coming with an entourage including his wife, two daughters and two sisters. Having killed or captured those, the fifty fell on the unsuspecting village at nightfall and a mass slaughter ensued. The dead were cut up and one account says 500 baskets of human flesh were brought on board Stewart's ship, the ELIZABETH, much of it being cooked in the ship's coppers. The Chief, his wife and two sisters were taken back to the aggressors' village and were duly eaten. Eventually that Chief's 15-year-old nephew complained to the Governor of New South Wales and Stewart was charged with murder. The Crown Solicitor made the proceedings ineffectual and eventually delayed arrests. The principals skipped the country and the case had to be abandoned. Incidentally, Stewart did not get his £1,200 of flax. (Early British settlers in N.Z. used to leave a salt jar outside their houses as a reminder to Maories that they did not taste so good - they ate too much salt). (From 'COASTS OF TREACHERY' by Grayland)

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EXCELLENT WORK AT THE MUSEUM

At the AGM Miss Ella Brownsord distributed copies of a Museum Report. This recorded that in the six months May-October there were 417 visitors to our Museum which was opened on 62 occasions. The fifteen members who had acted as 'sitters-in' were recorded, particularly Mr Jones (9 times), Mr Lanman (8), Mr Stannard (6), Mrs Packard and Miss M. Brownsord (6). In addition, thanks were expressed to Mrs Packard Mr and Mrs G.W.Cooper, and Mr and Mrs Jones for the three whole days they spent spring-cleaning the Museum; to Comdr. Sitwell and Mr Jones for shelving and tabulating the copies of 'FRAMLINGHAM WEEKLY NEWS'; to Mrs Packard and Mr Lanman for erecting the show-case and displaying the treasures donated by the Rt.Rev. de Candole. The meeting cordially thanked all concerned in the happy co-operation of so many members.

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55 FORE STREET

The State and Local Authorities carry out a great deal of preservation of the relics that have come down to us from the past. Very much is however, done by individuals quietly working to improve their property intelligently. For example, Mr Reg Leech found that his fireplace wall rang hollow when tapped. He investigated and found that a false wall, built about 1820, hid a delightful old-style fireplace 7 feet long, 4 feet deep of shallow long bricks and a beam 5 feet 6 inches from the ground. It included an inglenook and a window each side. The only find was a George III Penny.

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LONDON SOCIETY OF EAST ANGLIANS

That excellent library at the London Guildhall has just one item under 'East Anglia' - the list of members 1924-25 of the London Society of East Anglians long since extinct. Local patriotism shone from the preamble. Founded in 1896 the Society had done some astounding work. It designed and produced the East Anglian Flag (which incidentally the College flies on occasion) and established 21 October (anniversary of Trafalgar) as the flag-day for East Anglians. The Society's charitable fund had already distributed £2,168. The booklet mentioned that Domesday Book shows that the proportion of freemen in East Anglia was enormously greater than in the rest of the country; that East Anglia has contributed 58 Lord Mayors to London; that Miles Hobart, a Norfolk member, shut the door of the House of Commons when Charles I sent for the mace. According to the 1911 census there were 186,173 East Anglians in London (33,000 more females than males) though over 50% came from the two counties surreptitiously shanghaied into East Anglia, Essex and Cambridge. The only member quoting our town as his origin was H.M.Parkinson.

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THE ELMS SITE

This is the pleasant garden behind and east of Read's Bakery in Bridge Street. BLYTH RDC is proposing to build small blocks of council dwellings there and the Society's AGM registered its objections to the scheme on quite justifiable grounds. On 24 November, three officers of the RDC, Mr Lillie (Clerk to the Council), Mr Meggs (Architect) and Mr Hale (Dep. Surveyor) attended a special general meeting of the Society so that both sides' points of view could be put. Some members objected to flat-roofed buildings as being out of character, some that the site was prone to flooding. A profitable discussion ensued and the Council's officers indicated that they would consider the matter further.

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The Dennington Playing Field (behind the Church) is said to have been a mass grave for the victims of a plague.

24 NOVEMBER MEETING Mr A. Moore, FRCS, spoke interestingly on 'The City Livery Companies'. The idea of associations of craftsmen or merchants goes back to Roman times. Some of ours must have originated in Saxon times, the root of the word 'guild' meaning to pay a subscription. In the 1200's many companies had already a long history and it was the practice to adopt a distinctive uniform from which the term 'livery companies' arose. A clear order of precedence had been established primarily for when they attended civic functions but not without dissension. For example, the Skinners and Merchant Taylors fought for over 100 years for sixth position until in 1484 the Bilsden award established (a) that each company took sixth position in alternate years reverting to seventh in intervening years, and (b) an annual sumptuous 'peace' banquet (which is still held). This was the origin of the phrase 'at sixes and sevens'. Mr Moore gave glimpses of how the details of our intricate social organisation were hammered out. The Society of Apothecaries had been established under the patronage of James I's queen, Anne of Denmark, but in 1703 the College of Physicians tried to suppress it as impinging on their territory. Eventually the House of Lords decided that the Society should continue. In 1815 the right of that society to examine candidates for doctors was established and continues to this day. Among those who became doctors in this way were the poets Keats and Crabbe. On the other hand, the Company of Barbers and Surgeons divided in 1800 the latter becoming the Royal College of Surgeons.

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ALDE ASSOCIATIONS The river Alde meanders pleasantly from its source on the borders of Badingham and Dennington. Those intriguing water-splashes or fords have been bridged over like that on the road to Colston Hall. Gone too, have the ponies and horses that dropped to an amble to savour the cool water and perhaps a drink. In certain circles, two at least, the Alde has attained national, even international, renown. Among archaeologists - the 'Alde Head' needs no explanation. Its story merits the separate paragraph below, but suffice to say that it was fished out of the Alde in 1907 by a boy who sold it for 5/- - in 1965 it was sold for £15,500. Among geologists and the like it is the mouth of the river that is unique. The small river reaches the sea by its namesake, Aldeburgh, but not quite by fifty yards because a bank of shingle diverts the river to the south. Erosion on this coast results in the debris being thrown up by the sea to the south. In the course of centuries the cliffs around Dunwich have been eaten away and the cobbles etc. have built the bank from Aldeburgh eleven miles long, now approaching the mouth of the Deben.

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THE ALDE HEAD The Iceni, our ancestors in this district, revolted in 61 A.D. as a result of quite unnecessary oppression by the Romans. Under their queen, Boadicea or Boudicca, they sacked Camulodunum (Colchester) and London but were later defeated. The Romans exacted dire vengeance on the tribes concerned. It is thought that the Alde head was loot that was too 'hot' to be found with and consequently 'hulled' into the local river (only ten feet wide) at Rendham. It was surmised that the head was from the cult statue in the temple to Claudius (who after death had been declared a god) at Camulodunum but it is now considered more likely to have been a statue in some other public building, e.g. theatre or basilica in that town. Because the eyes gaze out to the distance it was probably an equestrian statue.

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THE JULIA STONE The near-success of Boudicca's rebellion was a shock to the Romans and the Emperor Nero sent Julius Classicianus to investigate the reasons for that revolt. Preparations had been made for the extermination of the Iceni and the laying waste of our district. Classicianus however, reversed this policy and his wife Julia is accredited with interceding to save the Iceni. She was the daughter of a pro-Roman noble of the Treveri (Treves or Trier in the Rhineland is named after them) and therefore of similar race to the Iceni. In 1852 part of the monument she raised to her husband was found (it had been used to make foundations) and in 1935 the missing parts were also found. The reconstructed tombstone is now in the British Museum but a copy is on Tower Hill in London. A letter in the *EAST ANGLIAN MAGAZINE* (May 1960) stated that each year the Dereham, Norfolk, guides and scouts make a pilgrimage to lay flowers on the Julia Stone, as the tombstone is now called, on Tower Hill to honour the memory of Julia and Classicianus.

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The game of Bowls has been played on our Castle Bowling Green for some 600 years.

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NEW MEMBERS WANTED! Please invite your friends and neighbours to join the Society. Minimum subscription 50p a year.

Articles or information for this Newsletter are welcomed and should be sent to E.C.SHANKS, 5 Howden Road, London SE25 4AS or Maypole Green, Dennington, IP13 8AH.