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NEWSLETTER OF THE FRAMLINGHAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY AND PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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As Others See Us "Near the head of the Alde there is a town with old, narrow streets, pink and white cottages and a grand church half-hidden by trees, overlooking the little market place. It is Framlingham, the finest small town in East Suffolk; for two reasons I am almost inclined to put it above Melford, Lavenham and Clare. Firstly, it lies in a strip of country which has all the qualities that are the essence of Suffolk; secondly, it has a castle. This castle stands on high ground directly above the Alde, now only a small stream but once navigable as far as the town. Clare is as nothing beside it nor Burgh not yet Wingfield. Not only is it by far the most magnificent castle in this county but also as a ruin nearly the best in England; if only the hill on which it stands were just a shade higher then there would be no question about its supremacy."

(from 'SUFFOLK SCENE' by Julian Tennyson - almost the swan song of this young author who had only six years more of life - killed in the Burma campaign. Book kindly lent by Mr. Geo. Cooper.)

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A Nine-Year Lifetime The fourth Duke of Norfolk in the Mowbray line died in 1475 without a son and the Framlingham Castle and Estates devolved on his three-year-old daughter Lady Ann Mowbray who had been born and baptised at Framlingham. She was married at the age of five to Richard Duke of York but he and his brother Edward were the two young princes murdered in the Tower of London. Ann did not survive long and died at the age of nine.

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Army Surplus, 1553 The supporters of Mary I collected an army of about 13,000 at Framlingham prior to her declaration as Queen. When the Queen and her entourage left for London in July 1553, Stow, the historian, records that such was the quantity of provisions left behind that a barrel of beer with the cask was sold for sixpence and four great loaves of bread for a penny.

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Seen any good Ghosts lately? On the death, at the age of 66, in 1306 of Roger le Bigod, fifth Earl of Norfolk and Marshal of England, all his honours and possessions passed to the Crown. He was the last le Bigod of Framlingham but the family still has a place in Suffolk folklore and stories of ghostly apparitions of these warrior earls, in phantom chariots drawn by airy horses that flash fire, are still remembered in the places where they dwelt for six generations. *(from Booth's 'HISTORY OF FRAMLINGHAM', lent by Canon Bulstrode)*

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Framlingham's links with National History Roger Bigod, fourth Earl in the Bigod line, who owned and lived at Framlingham Castle was one of the twenty-five barons who in 1215 forced King John to assent to Magna Carta. This document was quite unashamably intended to make the world a better place for barons, but it was an important step in bringing the King into the legal system and not above it as he had been. In the course of time the freedoms gained by our townsman and his associates became applied to the levels below the barons. And in due course to many of the newer nations of the world.

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The name of our town used to be Framlingham-ad-castrum. Latin declined as the classical language after the Reformation.

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Who were the Anglians? Our ancestors, the Anglians, had few, if any, written records before they settled here. We cannot be entirely sure who they were; currently archaeologists assume that the whole of the Anglians came here whereas many Saxons remained on the Continent. It seems probable that 'Saxon' was the name applied to the whole group, the Angles being a sub-group. Support is lent to this theory by recorded instances such as a letter to Rome in which an undoubted Angle of York in the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria refers to himself as a Saxon.

Framingham, Massachusetts, Mr. Louis Varrichione, Executive Director of the Framingham Civic League, visited our town in April. At a special meeting of the Society at the Crown Hotel our Chairman provided an 'English' tea during which Mr. Varrichione was able to meet us informally. He presented to the Society prints etc. of our daughter town, and we presented for transmission to the Framingham Historical Society a bowl made by Mr. R. Jones, one of our committeemen, out of a beam from his house at Saxtead. This would have been standing when Danforth, founder of Framingham, lived at New Street Farm almost within sight. Mr. Varrichione visited New Street Farm and his obvious interest in the mother town led to many members contributing facets of information on local matters. Canon Bulstrode showed him the record of Danforth's tithe payment of 1634. Mr. A. Martin showed the record used by the Rev. Golty in 17th century. Mr. Varrichione recorded in an article in the *Framingham News* how so many made his visit memorable. Brian Nobbs of Dennington was headlined as having *'whisked him up the hill to the Crown Hotel in style in his minicar'* though Mr. Varrichione was unknown to him. The article described Brian as a fine young man, ready smile and alert.

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Two Wives, One Roof - Chinese writing characters are simplified pictures and it is said that the character for 'Strife' consists of a roof and two women below. The Bigods, Earls of Norfolk, were a rebellious lot and in 1173 Hugh Bigod welcomed to Framingham Castle the Earl and Countess of Leicester and a large army of Flemish mercenaries in rebellion against Henry II. The troops, variously estimated at from 3,000 to 10,000, were all lodged within the walls of the castle. The two earls marched their armies against Dunwich whose burghers however resisted strongly inflicting great losses on the Flemings. They left Dunwich for an easier prey and captured and razed Haughley Castle, returning to Framingham. Feeding such a large body of troops became irksome and perhaps more important "Hugh Bigod's lady could not well agree with the Countess of Leicester, neither could she endure the troublesome guests". Thus Leicester, his Countess and the Flemings had perforce to leave our castle. Soon afterwards they were defeated by the King's army at Fornham St. Genevieve near Bury St. Edmunds.

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North Anglia Prospers We humans seem to have almost a genius for adopting illogical namings. Take Scotland, for example. The Scots were a small minority of Irish immigrants. 'Pictland' might be a more correct name until the Anglians came, as came they did. The Anglians created the kingdom of Northumbria which ran from the Humber to the Forth. Like East Anglia, that country took the brunt of the Danish invasions, but the northern portion, the district round Edinburgh (itself an Anglo-Saxon name), survived to form the nucleus of Scotland as a modern nation. Anglians, Saxons and Scandinavians colonised the fertile lowlands between the Grampians and the sea right up to the Moray Firth. Up to comparatively recent times highlanders were treated as vermin, killable on sight, much due to the highlanders' inveterate custom of raiding lowland farms. The clans were disunited and in a constant state of warfare but the stable government at Edinburgh - and the effect of union with England - led to pacification and accelerated inter-marriage. Anglo-Saxon Scotland, aided by Queen Victoria's romantic attachment to Balmoral and things Scottish, adopted the glamorous traditions of Gaelic Scotland. Good luck to them, the world can do with this colour. The traditions are even spreading south of the border - we may yet see bagpipers skirling up Market Hill wearing the MacBaldry and MacRunnacles tartans!

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"The Architecture of East Anglian Country Houses" was the title of a talk given by Mr. R. Barraud to members on 25 March. Explaining that geology and geography determine architecture Mr. Barraud showed how East Anglia's lack of stone led to the use of its almost endless supply of timber. The timber houses were basically on the same principle as today's steel girdered buildings, and East Anglia developed a distinctive style, particularly in Suffolk of vertical studs or timbers fairly close together. Early domestic dwellings were a development from the single great hall of the Castle in which everyone lived and slept. Basically this lasted right up to the 18th century with only minor modifications, such as the screening off of the owners' room(s), the addition of outbuildings for kitchen, storehouses etc. Mr. Barraud related how Inigo Jones (1573-1652) became the first English architect. Before his time it was the practice to employ a master builder who started off with only a rough unscaled drawing. Inigo studied Renaissance architecture in Italy and was thrilled by it. He was no copyist and developed a distinctively English style. An excellent draughtsman he made clear scaled plans and also perspectives. He even planned the layouts for the dwellers' convenience. His influence made architecture a serious study and others followed in his steps.

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NEW MEMBERS WANTED!

Invite your friends and neighbours to join the Society.
Minimum subscription 10/- p.a. or Two Dollars.

Many of us have memories of the Victorian convention that the only permissible reading on a Sunday was the Bible, Pilgrim's Progress and Foxe's Book of Martyrs.

Foxe was born at Boston in 1517. He distinguished himself at Oxford and was elected a Fellow of Magdalen College. He had, however, developed advanced views on religion but deviation from accepted tenets was liable to be dealt with brutally. Foxe therefore deemed it expedient to move to London where he was less conspicuous. He nearly starved there but the Duchess of Richmond, who was interested in religious reform, offered him a post as tutor to her three grandchildren lately orphaned by the execution of their father, the Earl of Surrey. Foxe lived with the family at Framlingham Castle and was loved and respected by his pupils. So much so that when, on the accession of the Roman Catholic Mary, he contemplated flight to the Continent, his eldest pupil, now heir to the Norfolk earldom and leader of the Romanist faction, advised him to stay under his protection. Unfortunately when Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, a bitter enemy of Foxe, was visiting the castle, Foxe happened to enter a room where the host and his guest were conversing. It was clear that the Bishop recognised Foxe and the host decided to send the tutor immediately to the Continent. The ship on which Foxe embarked was driven back to port in a violent storm. In the meantime the Bishop had issued a writ for the arrest of Foxe, but the officer on finding from Foxe's lodgings that he had embarked luckily returned home. Foxe prevailed on the captain of the ship to brave the storm. He did and Foxe lived to write his three enormous volumes entitled '*The Acts and Monuments of the Church*'. It took eleven years and was in Latin. The Victorian '*Foxe's Book of Martyrs*' was a very much abridged version in English.

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Asa Danforth, grandson of our Nicholas who emigrated to New England in 1630, built a road through wilderness in the Toronto, Canada, area at a contract price of 90 dollars a mile. There is today a major modern bridge in Toronto named the Danforth Bridge. (from the FRAMINGHAM NEWS as having been told by Miss Hamilton of Framlingham to Mr. Varrichione of the Framingham Civic League.)

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The Tourists were Locals It seemed a record gathering of the Society when members met their Chairman, Mr. Herbert Fiske, outside the lovely Tudor of the Hitcham Almshouses on May 6 for a tour of the town on a very lovely spring evening. Mr. Fiske's welcome and his talk on the history of the almshouses and their founder, Sir Robert Hitcham, led on to a tour of the almshouses. Then on to the Old Meeting House where Miss Ella Brownsord described the interesting past of the 253-year-old Unitarian Chapel including why, despite the many alterations over the years, the 'antediluvian antecedent' (a dove) always remained in the same position. Next, in parties of eight, round the Council Chamber of the Guildhall used by lay members of the Guild of Our Lady, with its 1710 panelling, 1610 oak chair, and the processional way outside to St. Michael's Church. Finally on to the Church where Canon Bulstrode greeted the party and told us of the church's origins, foundations, roof and organ. His talk was followed by Mr. Nevile's voluntaries on the newly-repaired organ which dates from 1674 and is still in its lovely 1630 casing. An evening to remember.

(BRIGADIER PACKARD)

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We are so level-headed as a nation that we eye with the greatest suspicion any new or unconventional idea. John Constable, now regarded as the greatest English painter of landscape was, in his lifetime, either derided or ignored in Suffolk and in the rest of Britain. His '*Hay Wain*' was exhibited in London in 1821 and was received with a minimum of enthusiasm. Almost as a joke he sent it to Paris. "Think of the lovely valleys and peaceful farmhouses of Suffolk forming part of an exhibition to amuse the gay Parisians," he said with a chuckle. But the fashionable Parisians were far from amused. They came flocking to the Louvre, they fairly chattered with delight and admiration and for his picture they gave Constable a gold medal. The Frenchmen clamoured for more Constable, more lovely valleys and peaceful farmhouses. And 70 years later after the scoffing voice of Ruskin, Constable's most ardent detractor, was silent at last England awoke to find that a new school of landscape painters called the 'Impressionist' had arisen which was to become the most famous in the world. A revolution in landscape had taken place all over Europe - a revolution which had originated in a remote valley in Suffolk. (from '*SUFFOLK SCENE*' by J. Tennyson)

(We are proud to number a direct descendant of Constable among our members)

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On May 30 the Society's Coffee Morning at St. Michael's Rooms, organised by Mrs. Faith Packard and Miss Ella Brownsord, was well patronised and a devoted band of helpers saw to it that everything ran well and smoothly. Besides the provision of coffee and homemade goodies there were Bring & Buy and Produce stalls. The excellent prizes for the raffle had kindly been donated by a number of members. The net result was a welcome addition of over £35 to the Society's finances.

The Coffee Morning was made the occasion to introduce the Society's 'GUIDE TO FRAMLINGHAM', so ably written by Commander Sitwell, and nearly a hundred copies were sold. It is an excellently produced document consisting of a historical review, a walk by walk dissertation on the town and a chronological survey. The Guide satisfies a distinct need and a number of shops in the town are giving prominence to it. This first edition (potentially of value as such?) looks like requiring a reprint soon. The price is reasonable though one purchaser insisted that five shillings was nearer its value - and paid that! Copies, 2s.4d. post paid, may be had from Commander Sitwell, The Ancient House, Framlingham, or from the address at the end of this newsletter.

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From Chas. Danforth Saggus, descendant of Nicholas Danforth, comes a cutting from the newspaper of Augusta College (Georgia) of which he is a professor. This invites students who have an interest in college teaching to apply for 120 Danforth Graduate Fellowships. Each is for four years, the maximum grant being 2,400 dollars (single) or 2,950 (married) plus tuition and fees. The money comes from the Danforth Foundation of St. Louis, Missouri, which was set up by the late Mr. and Mrs. Danforth in 1927 and which is a philanthropy concerned with people and values. The cost of these 120 fellowships must be well in excess of £600,000, a magnificent and responsible use of money, whether yearly or less frequently.

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Lord Beeching did an excellent job when he answered the question "How can the railways be made to pay?" We now realise, with hindsight that he was asked the wrong question and that it should have been "How best can all forms of transport be integrated nationally?" A fallacy arising from the question asked of Beeching is exemplified in his proposed closure of the main line Ipswich - Great Yarmouth. Passengers and goods would thereby have been transferred to the already overloaded main road A12, the stretch of which just north of Ipswich already has the worst accident record in the county. "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance" and the East Suffolk Travellers' Association was formed to fight the closure. It has succeeded to a major extent but it has now broadened its campaign both to get the rail authorities to become more enterprising and to get the public to use the facilities more. Our Vice-Chairman, Mrs. Packard, and husband Brigadier Packard are in the forefront of the campaign respectively as Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer. More power to their elbows.

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Framlingham Castle and Estates were assigned in 1489 to Thomas Howard Duke of Norfolk. He was present at the Field of the Cloth of Gold and later commanded the English army at the battle of Flodden. His funeral procession started from Framlingham on 22 June 1524. Six gentlemen and six knights attended the richly-decked chariot and also 400 men bearing lighted torches each habited in a gown and hood with heads bowed. The procession was led by three coaches of friars, then came the Minister of Framlingham and his chaplain. The standard followed and knights, esquires and gentlemen of the household and heraldic and other officials. The Windsor Herald carried the deceased's helmet (probably the one still preserved in our church). After the chief mourners came 900 lords, knights and gentlemen. This lengthy retinue halted at Diss for the first night, the corpse lying in the church attended by 12 yeomen, 12 gentlemen, 2 yeomen ushers, 2 gentlemen ushers. The next day the cortege travelled to Thetford and the corpse lay overnight in the Abbey church lighted by 700 wax candles and attended by 100 bedesmen. The ceremony of interment took place next day, 300 priests singing the Mass each being given 12 pence and a dinner. In all 1,900 persons received liveries of black cloth gowns and cloaks. On its way the procession had been met by all the ministers of the towns and villages through which it passed, the choirs chanting the church service, every church receiving 6s. 8d. and 5 escutcheons of the ducal arms. The whole cost was £1,340, a large sum in those days.

(from 'FRAMLINGHAM CASTLE OR VISIONS OF THE PAST' by Rev. B.S. Tucker - kindly lent by Canon Bulstrode)

(At a time when travel and communications were extremely limited this miles-long procession and its ceremonies must have been almost the big event in the lives of many of the spectators)

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Church Bells In many of our Suffolk churches the bells no longer ring. Campanology once a traditional art in generation after generation of farmworker families, is dying out. Here, in Easton, the bellringers faded some years ago when the Rector insisted on them attending the services when they called the faithful to prayer! The oldest of our six bells is No.4 dating from the 15th century. It is inscribed 'Missus Vero Pie Gabriel Fert Leta Marie' which readers can no doubt translate for themselves. No.3 was made by Miles Gray 'the Prince of Bellfounders' in 1627; No.1 by Gardiner of Sudbury in 1731; No.2 by T.Osborn in 1791; No.5 recast in London and rehung by Day of Eye in 1884; No.6 also by Day, presented by the Duke of Hamilton in 1893.

(BRIGADIER PACKARD)