

FRAMLINGHAM LOCAL HISTORY AND PRESERVATION SOCIETY NEWS LETTER

EDITOR: Mr.G.Willett Cooper, Old Tithe Barn, Framlingham; who would welcome contributions from Members.

Our Museum in Double Street has a very good collection of memories. We have a letter from Nurse Edith Cavell to her cousin, Eddie. Edward Cavell lived half way up Rendham Hill and his sister lived at The Nook, Rendham Road, Saxmundham. They were both very well known in this district before and after World War I; they were often to be seen riding their Dursley Pederson bicycles. Your Editor, whilst on a visit to Canada, was able to visit Nurse Cavell Mountain which is the most beautiful mountain in the Rockies. Another is called Captain Fryatt Peak in memory of another English person shot in the 1st. World War by the Germans; this time, because as a civilian, he tried to sink the submarine which was attacking his ship.

Rights of Way. When one looks back to one's boyhood in our little town of Framlingham, what a lot of nice walks it was possible to take; short cuts in those days from Cherry Tree Farm across to Red House Farm - Earl Soham Lane from Lincoln's Barn to Earl Soham - Holgate Hill to Parham and, most interesting of all, College Road (Known in olden days as Yarn Hill - Does anyone know why?) to Dennington which led right through the College front door. This Right of Way was kept open by Mr. Harry Coleman (of whom more later in this News Letter) every Christmas Day by requiring the College to open up for him. This he did till he died. It is believed that this Right of Way has now lapsed because no one carried on after he died. There is a very nice Right of Way from the Castle, alongside the Meres, across Lord's Meadow and then branching two ways - one up to the Dennington Road and to Saxtead and the other up to Top Lodge (Great Lodge) and through to Ivy House right on the boundary of the parish of Framlingham. The late Leslie Dorling did much to keep most of these Rights of Way open but now many of them have been ploughed up and the stiles no longer exist.

Craftsmanship. In February this year a Lantern Clock in brass by Dickerson of Framlingham was sold at Clare at an auction sale for £485. It was not a very early one as it had two hands. Dickerson worked in Framlingham around 1780 to 1830 and made long cased clocks. He made the Framlingham Act of Parliament Clock which has his name on it. This clock was the result of a useless and unpopular law introduced by the William Pitt administration in 1796/7 (it only ran for a year) taxing silver watches at 2/6 a year, gold ones at 5/- and clocks at 10/-. Public Place Clocks have square Georgian faces, all black with white lettering; the same type of clock after the Act was repealed had a white Chapter Ring up to 1850. The Round Faced Clock was for public houses or coaching inns. There are examples of all three types in this area. The Framlingham Act of Parliament Clock hung in the Cupola on the Market Hill. When this was pulled down the clock was sold to Mr. S.K. Barker, another well known maker of watches and long cased clocks. The clock passed to his daughter who married Mr. Thomas Wright, a much loved Church Organist for 50 years. For a long time the clock hung in the Old School (now the Masonic Hall); it was lent to the Crown Hotel where it hung in the old Corn Hall and when that was converted into more hotel accommodation the Editor bought it from the Wright family and still has it in his home. It is worth mentioning that public spirited places such as Framlingham, Woodbridge and Ipswich bought these clocks by public subscription.

Craftsmanship continued). Mention earlier of Mr. Harry Coleman reminds me of his workshop on the Market Hill (Now occupied by Mrs. McLeish, Olivia's, Violet Hill Cleaners and Rawlings). The foreman was Mr. Alfred Kerridge, who died only a few years ago, and the last apprentice was Mr. Asher Symonds who is still at work in Riverside. For many years Miss Coleman ran the shop. It was possible to buy ladies' and gentlemen's hand sewn boots and shoes and, of course, men's working boots. They did not let the water in; I still possess a pair of shoes hand sewn by Mr. Kerridge.

Alarms. Some will remember an earlier issue of this News Letter in which I wrote of the "Tocsin" as a way of summoning the Fire Brigade and the people to help put out fires. The same method was to be used in the last war to announce invasion by the Germans. This reminds me of Mendlesham when the late Canon Percy Wareham showed me the weapons and armour stored in the Priest's Room over the porch and the Orders of the Day in Old English with a typewritten translation. These orders were for the men of the district to help repel the invasion of the Spanish Armada in 1588 and were worded in almost exactly the same way as the Orders for the Home Guard in the last War.

In 1798 the Framlingham Volunteer Infantry was instituted under the command of Major John Stanford who is buried at Badingham where a stained glass window has been erected to his memory. We have some of the silver buttons in the Museum inscribed "For God and King". We also have a medal presented by Lord Henniker and several cap badges of the Castle Gateway. These, strange to say, are made of lead because this metal was easy to cast and did not need the expertise needed for casting in brass.

The French actually made a landing at Felixstowe and captured part of Landguard Fort, holding it for six hours. They left in a hurry when they saw the Suffolk Hussars coming at full gallop. What a fine sight that must have been. The fighting with the garrison was quite a bloody affair during the six hours the French were ashore.

In 1932 the Eastern Command Army Manoeuvres were held in the Framlingham area and some meadows on Manor Farm, then owned by Mr. William Woodgate, were used. To provide sufficient water (we had no mains water then), Jeaffreson's Well was tested and continuously pumped for a fortnight. It was found to be of excellent quality and quantity so a pipe was laid up the lane past the Sick House (Tall Trees). The Artillery with their guns and horses arrived and so did the rain! It never stopped for three weeks. The troops really suffered but the manoeuvres went on. The pipe line was left because of a request from the Suffolk Show Committee who held their Show the following year on the same meadows. I am informed by Canon Bulstrode that the Suffolk Show was held previously at Framlingham in 1912, that time on the Fairfield or the Fens. It is a remarkable thing that our town with such a fine supply of water, now has to have its water brought all the way from Holton.

Colourful Characters. One of these was the Reverend George Wilkes, Rector of Worlingworth, who married a sister of the late Lord Henniker. He was a man of great generosity and much adored by all the people of his parish, in particular the youth, several of whom he put on the road to success, even in the difficult years of the late Twenties and Thirties. He ran a young men's club in his barn which he fitted out as a gymnasium and with a workshop for repairing cars and motor cycles.