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LOWESTOFT AREA BETWEEN THE WARS*by Mr. W.J. Goode*

It was in 1920 that my family moved to Bungay from the Isle of Sheppey, in the mouth of the Thames. I can just remember that our living room looked out on to the churchyard of St. Mary's Church and the gravestones. Bungay, in those days was far different from what it is today.

Our loo, was either a two or three-seater, of large buckets that were emptied by the council once a week, early in the mornings. There was no mains water supply, but we were lucky, for our pump was either in our scullery, or just outside the back door. I cannot remember what lighting we had, but most probably it was candles and oil lamps. There was no baker in the town, but I believe that one came round with a horse and cart once a week. My mother, with five children to feed, decided to bake her own bread for the first time in her life. It was very solid, but we children thought it was just a different type. Most probably the room was never warm enough for the yeast to rise properly.

I remember the short time I was at Bungay School, mainly because I was continually told off for curling the bottoms of my letters, the a, s and d, s etc., as at my previous school we were just beginning to learn joined up writing. When we moved to Lowestoft, I again was in hot water, because the school there wanted joined up writing and I carried on printing.

Our first move to Lowestoft was to Kirkley, and I went to Morton Road School. The most vivid recollections were the games periods, when we were marched to the Denes, north of Belle Vue Park to play cricket or football. During the summer, we were again marched to the swimming pool, and after our swim, which would have finished about 3.30, we were dismissed, and had to make our own way home to Kirkley or Pakefield. This also happened after cricket and football.

It was while we were living in Kirkley, that the Kensington Gardens were made from an old waste sand pit.

When we moved from Kirkley to Tanning Street, there was only gas lighting in our house, and we used candles for the bedrooms. There was only one room in the house that was heated, the living room, by a black cast iron cooking range. The rest of the house was freezing in the cold weather. To warm our beds, we used the old flat irons heated on the range and wrapped in pieces of blanket. Although my father had electric light installed well before the second World War, mother would not use it for anything except the light. No one could persuade her to use the new fangled electric iron until shortly before 1959.

I well remember the start of the B.B.C. with its call sign 2 L.O. My elder brother had just started work, and with a circuit diagram, made his first crystal set. We would all sit around in strict silence, while he adjusted it and listened intently on his headphones. Suddenly he would shout, "I've got it! take the kettle off" (it was drowning the speech or music). Then, "stop the clock!" another distraction from the faint sounds reaching us from Savoy Hill, or rather reaching my brother, for no one else

could hear anything. As the younger brother, I was sometimes permitted to listen to this wonderful sound, perhaps using one earpiece each. Very soon, the novelty of this wonder, that caused all the family to remain mute and silent, not daring to move, became too much for our parents, who banished us to the scullery. It was bitterly cold there, but the thrill of this new invention, that brought sounds all the way from London without wires, was too great to let that bother my brother and I.

Some time after this, my brother embarked on the ambitious plan of building a three valve set. He had probably set his sights too high, for he could not get it to work very well. Finally, he brought in the expert; Mr. Hughes, (the father of Peter Hughes, head of the present business). Mr. Hughes was, I believe, self taught, and he had lost a leg in the first world war, and was receiving a war pension. He did his wireless work from a shed in his garden. Anyhow, he altered the design of my brother's set, and it did us good service for many years.

Well, as wireless grew in popularity, Mr. Hughes, rented a larger shed in Junction Passage. The passage has now been levelled to make way for our relief road. His name and trade grew, until he decided to move into a shop. The first shop was opposite my Pork shop in Tanning Street, and I understood, that he remitted his war pension for a lump sum to start him on this venture. A very risky move in those times of mass unemployment. Anyhow, from this shop his business grew steadily to what it is today.

Tanning Street used to be a thriving community in the days before the last war. There was Jeeves, the chemist at No. 1, Smith's the Pawn shop Nos. 7 & 8, No. 8 was Seeley, or Soaley, tobacconist and sweets, and 9 was a Pork shop, run by Mr. Woolston until I took over in August 1938. Next to us was a cobbler, a man with deformed short legs. It is rather strange, how many cobblers had deformities, especially to their legs. Perhaps, it was because it was a trade that they could well manage as a one man business and they may have found that their knowledge was useful to repair their own footwear, so costly for them with no National Health.

There was a dairy, a baker who baked his own on the premises, and, of course, a fish and chip shop and two pubs. There were at least 16 pubs within 5 minutes walk of Tanning Street.

There were two grocers shops, a greengrocer (fruit shop to you); a picture framer's and a printer's business. A hardware business that sold all the usual soaps, soda, pans, paraffin oil for the lamps, also paints and wallpapers. Next to the Eagle Public House was a cornchandler, by the name of Lowe, who sold flour and corn for the many back yard chickens kept by most working people. On the corner of Tanning Street and Flensburg Street was a laundry owned and run by Mr. & Mrs. Flaxman. This was in the days before the home washing machine. At the end of Tanning Street, on the corner of Trafalgar Street, was the secondhand shop of Mr. Vale. Although he would sell anything, his main stock was old books. He was an authority on books, and sent a number to the U.S.A. for visitors to Lowestoft. There was a newsagents and sweet shop at this end of the road, besides a clothing shop that specialised in clothes for fishermen and school children. Then there was the barber; almost as much shaving in those days as haircutting. If you were a regular, you would have your own shaving mug on a shelf as a personal gesture. In Trafalgar Street, opposite the end of the road, was a net factory, making nets for the fishing industry. During the war, they turned over to making camouflage nets for the services. But I have moved away from the eastern end where my shop was. Between the dairy and the hardware shop was Soanes, the general butcher. He had a slaughter house behind his shop, and killed his own meat each week. The cattle and pigs would come by rail to the pens in Denmark Road. There were also two churches. The Wesleyan Methodist, now Chadds warehouse, and one at the end of the road that is still open, 'Tanning Street Hall' a Brethren Meeting House.

You can tell by this list, that most of your shopping could be done almost on your doorstep. The prices also compared favourably with those in the High Street. Bevan Street, running across the eastern end of Tanning Street, was also full of busy shops. There were three pubs and three fish and chip shops, besides, Collens, the name that was a legend, as it was said you could get served any time up till midnight.

This is but a small section of Lowestoft life during those years. The trams and fishing industry are separate sections in their own right, and I will not attempt to talk about them.

CARLTON COLVILLE FUEL OR POOR'S ALLOTMENT CHARITY*by Mr. L. Chase*

How the Charity came into being, and it's aims and purpose.

The enclosure acts of the late 1700 and early 1800 hundreds deprived the cottagers of their possession of small bits of land, which they cultivated, or from which they cut Furze for fuel, and grazed the animals.

To compensate for these loss of rights, the Government awarded bits of land to the Parishioners who had suffered by the previous acts, e.g. land for cultivation as garden allotments, or for letting. The rents obtained thereby to be used in providing fuel for the poor.

The Charity was created by an enclosure award made by the Commissioners appointed in and by an Act of Parliament, made and passed in the forty first year of the reign of His Majesty, King George 3rd in 1801.

An act of entitlement for dividing and enclosing the common and heath, marshes, fen grounds, dooles, and waste grounds within the several parishes of Carlton Colville, Oulton, Kirtley (otherwise Kirkley) in the County of Suffolk and to provide heating for the poor and needy.

Beneficiaries to reside in the Ancient Ecclesiastical Parish of Carlton Colville. This covers an area, bounded by the west side of Kirkley Run, westward along Lake Lothing, Oulton Broad, River Waveney to the boundaries of Barnaby and Gisleham, to Bloodmoor Roundabout, northwest of Long Road, to the junction of Kirkley Run.

The Constitution of The Trust

It comprises of 8 Trustees; two appointed by Carlton Colville Parish Council, two appointed by the Lowestoft Charter Trustees (via Waveney District Council), the Rector of Carlton Colville, and the Lords or Ladies of the Manors of Broomholme, Mufford and Carlton Hall.

NOTE: The only Lord of the Manor in Communication with the Trustees is E. Liddell, Esq., of Hesle, North Humberside.

The titles and records are under the charge of the Master of the Rolls.

Income of the Trust

The present income is derived from marsh letting, shooting and fishing rights, and interest from the capital sum from the sale of allotments in Kirkley Run, for housing development to Lowestoft Borough Council in 1972. The capital sum is invested by the official Custodian for Charities, St. Albans House, London, and the interest being paid into the National Westminster Bank.

Until 1971 the Carlton Colville marshes were little used. The main source of income was from allotment rents at Kirkley Run, although a drainage rate had to be paid for the marshes from the existing income. This reduced the money available for heating relief. The sale of the Kirkley Run allotments increased, the Charities Income, enabling a higher fuel relief than before.

In addition to fuel relief the Charity pays for the coaches for the over 60s Club at the Carlton Colville Community Centre, it also pays for the coach for the annual Xmas Dinner organised by the Carlton Wives group, with a donation to help with costs. It also paid for the concrete ramp at the Carlton Community Centre, and made a donation to the Carlton Community Centre when it was opened. This year, 1988, the Trust will pay for a coach to take people to the Xmas Carol Service organised by the Carlton Parish Council.

An outing for the residents of Coppice Court and Whitton Court once a year, several of whom are Carlton people, is paid for by the Trust, a donation is also given for their Xmas festivities, in lieu of a heating allowance as they live within the Ancient Ecclesiastical Parish of Carlton Colville.

A donation has also been made to the Uplands Community Centre to buy equipment. Emergency assistance to the elderly and handicapped has been given when the need has arose. The object of the Charity is to give heating relief or assistance to the elderly and or the handicapped on low income within its boundaries.

The trustees may administer the funds for heating relief or other purposes without reference to the Charity Commission. They may not sell land or property without the reference to the Charity Commission. They may not sell land or property without the permission of the Custodian for Charities, nor may they apply any funds for relief for rates or taxes, or public funds. In giving

assistance to any person they are not committed to repeat relief thereafter. The appointed Trustees serve a four year term, and are not paid for their work.

There is no record in the deeds that a sum of money was left to the village for coal or fuel relief, as has been mentioned to the Clerk.

Persons can apply for fuel relief who normally meet the following considerations:-

- (a) that they are 70 years of age
- (b) their main income is the basic state pension
- (c) they live within the boundaries of the Ancient Parish of Carlton Colville

NOTE: Consideration can also be given to persons under the age of 70 for special hardship reasons.

Applications should be made to the Clerk of the Trustees, Mr. L. Chase, 12 Cromwell Court, Carlton Colville, Lowestoft 585425

This article was first published in "The Key"; Carlton Colville Parish Magazine, February 1989, and permission for it to be reproduced has been given by the Curate and the author, Mr. L. Chase.

60 YEARS OF W.I. IN CARLTON COLVILLE

by Mary Goffin

A sewing class for the women of Carlton Colville formed the nucleus for the establishing of a Women's Institute in January 1929. Mrs. Beckett of Lodge Farm, Gisleham and her sister Mrs. Williams of "Holly Trees", Rushmere, the daughters of Mr. & Mrs. A. Harper-Bond of Rookery Farm, Carlton Colville, a local farmer and land owner, ran this Wednesday afternoon sewing class. When the idea of W.I.s, first formed in Canada in 1897, spread, the women of the sewing class decided to widen their interests to encompass the W.I. message of "For Home and Country", which, is the abbreviated motto of the aims of the W. I :- "To unite in promoting any work which makes for the betterment of our home, the advancement of our people and the good of our Country". The main purpose of the Institute is to improve and develop conditions of rural life by providing a centre for educational and social intercourse and activities. The sewing class already had a policy of having books read aloud to them while they worked.

The meetings of the newly formed Carlton Colville W.I. were held in the ex-W.W.1 army hut in Beccles Road, which was originally bought and erected for use as a Mens and Boys Club, but as some of the lads misbehaved, there was a fire and the Club was disbanded in 1930. By then Mrs. Bond had died and her husband gave the hut and the land surrounding it for the use of the W.I. for as long as they needed it, the building and the land to revert to his family if and when the W.I. had no further use for them. Over the years the W.I. hut in Beccles Road has served the local community as a very useful meeting place; concert hall and venue for whist drives, dancing classes and jumble sales etc. - the focal point for many village activities. The W.I. hut and the local Church of England School buildings were in constant use for all the social activities in the village until the Community Hall was erected in Hall Road in 1978. The C. of E. school closed in 1932 when the new County School was built and the schoolroom was used as the Church Hall until 1986 when the premises were sold to be converted to residential use.

The W.I. hut has been used extensively for W.I. activities as well as being available to other organisations. Charities like the British Legion and the Red Cross paid as little as five shillings (25p) per session plus half-a-crown (12½p) for the use of the piano, or 7/6d. (37½p) without. These activities funded the cost of improvements; an ex-beach hut was purchased to serve as a kitchen at a cost of £10.10s. (£10.50p) but cost another £5. to have it erected. Electricity was installed in 1955, five years before the Parish Church was lit by it, and the superseded oil lamps were sold off at three shillings (15p) each. A Whist Drive was held in October 1933 to raise funds to pay for chairs whose cost was not to exceed two shillings (10p) each. Four years later a further 36 chairs were purchased from the British Legion and a ruling was made that no chairs were to be taken out of the W.I. hut. After damage to the piano by a hirer of the hut it was decided in 1935 that in future no intoxicating liquor should be allowed on the premises.

In 1938 a talk on Air Raid Precautions was given at the W.I. meeting and later that year A.R.P.

wardens were allowed free use of the hut for meetings, but by 1939 they were charged 10/- (50p) for their use of the hut. The contribution made by W.I.'s in general, and Carlton Colville in particular, was an enormous help to the War Effort and the need in Britain to reduce the amount of imports. During W.W.2 the hut was used as a depot for collecting waste paper, a canteen for the troops, a collection centre for rosehips (15½ stone were collected in October 1941) and, of course, that celebrated contribution to the War Effort, the jam making sessions. Local members made 515lbs of jam in 1941 but by 1943 they made 943 lbs that year. Special allocations of sugar, by then rationed to 4oz. per head per week, were made available by the Ministry of Food. All these activities were organised and run by W.I. members.

The social activities combined with fund raising continued but the monies raised went chiefly towards the cost of sending each serviceman from Carlton Colville a Christmas gift (172 gifts sent in 1944), the P.O.W. Appeal and other similar War Effort activities. The W.I. programme for 1940 included a demonstration for eggless and butterless cakes and a talk on National Savings. As well as organising the Carlton Colville Preserving Centre to make jam and to collect rosehips and acorns (to provide pig food) members received seeds from Canada and the resulting vegetables grown were sent to Lowestoft Hospital. By 1944 members were being asked to make clothes and shawls for European Clothing Relief and a sewing box filled with cottons, buttons, needles etc. was fitted out and sent to villages in Holland as a Christmas gift.

In 1945 an appeal was made for boys knickers (they all wore short trousers then) to be made for liberated Europe and Carlton Colville W.I. sent 55 pairs of these knickers and 94 other types of woollen garments. Clothing was still rationed at this time so all these articles were made from larger garments being cut up and the best parts turned into "new" garments. Clothes which had been stored in the hut for emergency use as a Rest Centre were given to British distressed families. The last Christmas parcels for Carlton Colville servicemen serving overseas were sent out in October 1945 and the remaining monies from the Parcel Fund went to provide extras for the war-widows and orphans in the village.

After the flurry of Government directives to help the War Effort, the Carlton Colville W.I. settled back quietly into its usual routine of monthly meetings but also widened its horizons, becoming involved with other local W.I.'s to form area groups sending delegates to County Federation and also to the National Meetings, and participating in the resolutions sent to Government, and so forming a strong pressure group particularly, but not solely, related to improving the conditions of the family in Britain. "For Home and Country", the W.I. motto still sums up our aims. We are not all "Jam and Jerusalem" but have many very diverse interests; crafts, cooking, and chat are well catered for but so are darts, dance, and drama, and many more wide ranging activities. All women, whatever their interests and need, are welcome at W.I. meetings and many social activities also welcome men.

The high cost of maintaining the ageing W.I. hut in Beccles Road, keeping it both warm and weatherproof, finally caused Carlton Colville W.I. to decide in 1986 to cease to use that building and to utilise the facilities available at the Carlton Colville Community Centre in Hall Road from June 1987, where all their activities are now held on the first Friday afternoon of each month. Under the terms of the original transfer Deed the premises then reverted to the family of the late Mr. A. Harper-Bond.

I am indebted to Mrs. A. Myall, a founder member of Carlton Colville W.I. and to the President, for allowing me access to the Minute Book of the W.I. and for their help in recording another aspect of the history of our village.

OUR DRY ROT

by Miss. E. Marley

Sometime in June 1988, in the vestry of the church of St. Peter and St. John, at Kirkley, we noticed some red-brown dust on the floor, which made us curious. A week later, someone put a foot through the floor, and there was a lot more dust around. In July, this was brought to the attention of the Parochial Church Council, who decided to ask Norwich for advice.

There were three large safes in the room, and there was the danger of them going through the floor. The room had fitted wall cupboards, some with hanging space for cassocks, capes and cloaks, and

some with shelves for books, cards and brass plates. There was also one enormous, free standing cupboard, containing shelves and drawers which are used for books, records and linen. An inside wall of this cupboard had a quarter inch coat of what looked like white felt.

We were told that everything movable had to be moved from the vestry, and all contents had to be either washed or dry cleaned or wiped with disinfectant. An old piano had to be discarded. Luckily, we had a side chapel which could be enclosed and locked, and all the cleaned things from the vestry were brought to this place. The two larger safes, which contain our silver, were left in the vestry. All this work was done by our verger, Mr. John Moore.

In October 1988 the contractors came. The inside and outside of all cupboards and drawers, and shelves were sprayed to kill the spores, and left for several days. Part of the large cupboard had to be cut off and burnt, and part of a wall cupboard had to be removed and eventually repaired with new timber. About one third of the floor was replaced by new floorboards and stained.

Finally, all wood flooring, panelling, and cupboards were re-sprayed, and the men left in November 1988. The room was then cleaned and decorated, and reopened for use by priests and choir in December 1988. A new piano was donated by Mrs. B. Rose and was gratefully accepted. Expenses for removal and tuning were met by an anonymous donor.

The cost of this dry rot is about £4,000.00. The books are at the auditors so figures cannot be checked.

A BOOK REVIEW

by Dr. N.B. Eastwood

'Dowsing and Church Archaeology' by Richard N. Bailey, Eric Cambridge and Denis

Briggs. Published by Intercept Ltd., Wimborne, Dorset, at £14.95

An interesting development in 1983 was the appearance of this book demonstrating the application of dowsing to the archaeology of Northumbrian churches, and especially in the location of the footings of earlier buildings at the site of presently existing mediaeval churches. The authors include an experienced and skilled dowser, Mr. Denis Briggs, who has a scientific background, whose findings were examined by Richard Bailey, Professor of Anglo-Saxon Civilisation at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Eric Cambridge of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Durham, neither of whom is able to dowse. The book is an attempt to validate by excavation and to assess the findings of Mr. Denis Briggs.

In the nature of things, excavations inside churches in current use present difficulties, but by seizing opportunities as they arose in connection with underfloor repairs, it was possible to make excavations at eight churches. Twelve excavations were made in all, and in light of these, excavated structures correlated well with dowsing predictions, while in the other four, attempts to establish correlation failed. Some of the successes were very striking in that the predictions almost exactly pinpointed the edges of concealed footings.

This account centres round the question of validation and this is dealt with fully in a chapter which describes in detail what was predicted and what was found. In the course of this the peculiar problems and difficulties of dowsing are thoroughly explored, and mention is made of the curious selectivity of dowsing whereby the dowser is able to locate one class of hidden structure, while ignoring other classes of structure such as pipes and wires. Also discussed is the very puzzling phenomenon known as remanence, which has been remarked on by other dowsers, in which the dowser discovers underground structures previously present, but subsequently removed. An instance is given in which dowsers found a complete apse, whereas, in fact, part of it had been dug out during previous alterations to the floor.

This is not the first attempt to make dowsing explorations before archaeological digs. In Christopher Bird's book, 'Divining', an account is given of the work of the Russian dowsers Ogilvy and later Pluzhnikov in exploring the sites of notable ruined palaces and religious buildings. Pluzhnikov also successfully excavated the Napoleonic battlefield of Borodino.

In this country, the work of General Scott Elliot is excellent in that he successfully identified and confirmed by digging a number of archaeological sites from the Bronze Age and Iron Age onwards. He also mentions reminiscence as a puzzling feature.

The present volume from Northumbria is further evidence of the value of this approach to

archaeology; the main benefits being in the location of hitherto unknown sites and the economy of effort in indicating the most profitable places to dig.

PAKEFIELD REMEMBERED

by Mr. A.M. Turner

Mark Adams was born, the son of a Pakefield longshore man, in the early years of this century. He lived all his life in Pakefield and loved his native village. The following is an edited account of a conversation that I had with him in January 1980 in which he recounted some of his memories of Pakefield. They do not bring out any staggering new historic facts and they are memories, (and we all know what tricks our memories play !), but they do bring out a number of points that are worth following up and they do add colour to our knowledge of Pakefield. As far as is possible I have kept strictly to his words and phrases, note the repeated use of 'they say that', and I have also left in various well recorded historical facts for the sake of continuity.

Sadly Mark, whom I had known all my life, died in 1986, and his widow, whom I had known since the early 1940's died in December 1988.

Turner Mark, you were born in Prospect Place and you once told me that the houses there had their own fish curing houses.

Mark Adams Not all of them, no, but several of them did. I've got one of the old speets, look. You can have that for the Museum. They were for putting herring on, for bloatering. For kippers they had wooden slats with hooks on.

T. Your mother did both, did she?

A. Yes. I can remember three (fish houses) along there. Mr. Lincoln had one, Mr. Warford had one and we had one.

Lincoln is an old Pakefield name. His grandson was Stanley Lincoln who was with Lowestoft Electrical. I went to school with him. His brother, Dudley, died last year (1979), I think. He was a hairdresser at Kessingland.

T. Going back to the fish houses, did your mother 'cure' for herself or to sell?

A. No, just for her own use. My stepbrothers they were fishermen, you see, and they used to bring these herring home. They used to do red herrings. People years ago, they used to live practically on herrings and turnips. There used to be an old man coming from Kessingland every Saturday, with a horse and cart, selling turnips. Gret big turnips - four a penny - we used to call him the four a penny man.

T. Parts of Pakefield that are built on now, was that farmland?

A. Yes, there were two farms. There was a farm near the church. There was an old barn there near the church on the sea side of the Causeway. That was all farmland at the sides of the Causeway. I remember when they turned that into allotments and dug up a lot of old rubble. Brick rubble. They said that was where the farm was.

I went through there the other day and they were digging a trench to lay a sewer where those old cottages were. Built a new house there. I noticed a trench went right through one of the old wells what used to belong to those old church cottages. I remember the old well when I was a boy.

The conversation at this point returned to fish curing.

A. We mostly cured fish during the Home Fishing. They used to keep for weeks. They keep for months and months red herring do. I can remember when I was a little boy going down with my mother last thing at night to make the fire up. That was like a big square hole in the ground where the fire was in and we used to throw handfuls of oak sawdust on, cos that was what you burnt, all oak wood during the day and oak sawdust at night so that smouldered all night and the smoke would gradually rise up.

The fish house was about 20 feet high you see, and the rafters were right at the top and the speets would hang across the rafters and the herring would hang on them. They used to hang in there two to three days to smoke - they used to say a week to a fortnight to smoke the reds. Yes,

they were lovely red herring were. That was the main diet of people in them times, them years ago when I was a boy. Things weren't very good then.

T. There is a flint house near the church with a bricked up archway in it.

A. Yes. With letters and 1827 on it. There was a man with a donkey and cart that used to go right through that archway. He went right through to the garden. He was a pedlar of some sort. That one, (house) at the bottom, that was an old farm house. Just along Saxon Road, past those brick houses, there's one that stands alone isn't there. When they were renovating that I went in and they had a great big fireplace, with a seat either side right inside the fireplace and you could look up through the chimney.

The mill was pulled down in 1888.

T. Before your time then!

A. Yes, but I remember Mr. Foreman: his father was the last miller. He lived in Florence Road this Mr. Foreman, and his grandson is living in Grayson Drive now.

T. The mill was on the corner of Millers Lane which is now Saxon Road was it?

A. Yes. It was Millers Lane on the other side of Florence Road and Church Lane on this side. The miller used to live in Mill Villa in London Road.

(At this point we were looking at the 1882 O/S map).

A. There are those old cottages that stood in where the churchyard is now. This is what we used to call Clarke's Meadow. That's part of the churchyard now, and this was glebe land here. (North of Saxon Road - about where Sunningdale Avenue is now). That was let as a football field. Y.H.C.A. used to play on there. That was nearly all farmland along the Causeway and Pakefield Street, almost up to the Church - up to those cottages they pulled down recently. (That is the cottages that stood on the right as you approached the Church from the Causeway, just outside the church wall).

T. Do you know where Beccles Road, Pakefield used to be?

A. No, never heard of it.

T. According to the 1840 census the population of Pakefield was really confined to Pakefield Street, Church Lane and Beccles Road.

A. There is a Beccles Road in Carlton Colville, but I have never heard of one in Pakefield before. Must have been before my time - before 1900.

T. I wonder if it was a former name for Stradbroke Road?

A. I wouldn't be surprised, it is the road to Beccles. (I have since been informed that this was the case!)

T. I suppose that the Barnyard was always there within your memory wasn't it?

A. Yes, from Beach Street. On the east side was a little row of cottages. The old cobble pavement all in front of them, and they had little shutters to the windows. One house, a little further back, was Fred Thompson's. He was a bathing machine proprietor, and deck chairs, and a member of the lifeboat. He had the bathing machines at this end (north) of the beach and at the other end there was another lot. They belonged to Mr. & Mrs. Peake. Mr. Peake was a cooper but Mrs. Peake used to manage the bathing machines in the summer. They lived in Pakefield Avenue.

T. Where was the lifeboat? Were there two in your time?

A. No. Only one. The other one gave up about the 1890's.

(Pakefield No. 2 Station 1871 to 1895. Boat Henry Burford R.N. 30' 3" x 9' 2" paid for by legacy of John Legrew. 5 launches, 11 lives saved, - R.N.L.I, archives).

That was (kept) up at the end of Cliftonville Road. There was a score there - Lifeboat Score. I can remember the James Leath well.

T. Ever helped to launch it?

A. Well, I used to go down. They used to have the horses from the farm pull it up. It got too much for them to launch it from the beach. That was a heavy boat. Then they had one here called the Hugh Taylor. That was a smaller boat. That was the last lifeboat we had. It was only launched about twice.

(R.N.L.I, archives show 5 launches. No lives saved. Also show a James Leath 42' x 12' 6"

and Hugh Taylor 34' x 10')

T. What was the 'run-a-down'?

A. It was at the end of Pakefield Street. That was sort of a wooden staging so that people could get down onto the beach, you see. We'd slide down there in the winter time, as boys, when it was frosty on like a little sledge.

I don't really remember the barometer down there on the beach but I remember when that was moved from there to outside Mariner's Cottage. Mr. Warford, coxswain of Pakefield lifeboat, had it moved there. That was in a wooden case.

(Here we were looking at the 1905 O/S map).

That's Pakefield House. You see that's roughly opposite the church. (On the cliff edge then and now long since disappeared into the sea). Hubbard lived there; he owned the brick works. (Pakefield Brick Works). The first brick works was opposite Pakefield School, just passed the school on the left hand side, (going towards Kessingland). There is a big pit up there now where they used to be. Then they moved when they worked that out, up here to Gisleham what is now the toxic pit. Mr. Hubbard, he built Prospect Place where I lived. They were all built of Pakefield bricks, yes it was a hard white brick made at the Pakefield Brick Works. That was before it moved to Gisleham. I can remember the two old kilns up there at the corner of Arbour Lane. That used to be called Harbour Lane years ago.

I can remember the old German Band playing in Prospect Place about 1910. The road wasn't made up then and there was like a little grass field at the end. They used to stand up there every summer, they used to come over from Germany. They reckoned that they were spies but I don't know. There were a number of German bands. They wore blue uniforms and gold frogging. Yes they were good and they used to play in different parts of the town.

T. You've seen a lot of cliff go in your time.

A. Yes. I saw a wooden bungalow go over - the whole lot - went down and fell in. The remaining three houses in Cliff Road, Pakefield, were washed into the sea February 12th-13th 1938. That was said to be the highest tide in living memory.

(At this point we were looking at some Pakefield photos).

A. This one of the church, that's not very old.

T. No, it's got the cliff path on it - I think that it is sometime in the 1930's.

A. Yes, when the thatch before this didn't have those little spike things on it. It was a plain thatch. They only did one side in this fancy thatch. This cottage at the edge of Church Green used to be a fish house. In the end it went into the sea. I remember when it was a fish house it caught fire and burnt and then they converted it into a cottage.

This one (of the beach) is about 1930 I should think. There were a lot of tents then - bell tents. They used to let them out, bell tents and deckchairs. Frank Lincoln owned them. He was related to the one we were talking about earlier.

The trains used to run up as far as Coles the butchers. They said that building on the triangle use to be an old toll house.

T. The Lodge - is that the one which was the fire station during the war?

A. No, the fire station was lower down. That was where Mr. Woodgrievies used to live - that was turned into Pakefield Hotel.

That is what we call Hill Green there. (The triangle opposite Pakefield Hotel). The Church Commissioners bought all this and they were going to build a new church and rectory here after that got destroyed (during the war).

A Mr. Wilson used to live in Westmorland House. He was a retired gentleman who owned a lot of property in Pakefield. He owned all those little cottages on Saxon Road - the ones with the letters on. Wilson Road was named after him.

I was issued with a rifle during the war. (He was a Special Constable). We all had rifle drill you know. (Lee) Enfield rifles. I can remember laying on the cliff tops many nights in the long grass when the invasion scare was on, on guard. Us and a lot of the Czech soldiers.

T. You must remember the night Pakefield Church went up?

A. Yes, I was on duty in Grand Avenue that night. It started about 10.00 pm when the plane dropped all its incendiaries. It was a miracle really, that night the Church was burnt. If that fog hadn't come up, well, they'd have laid this part of the town low. They'd have done some damage that night. I think they were after the A. A. battery on the golf-course. (His memory has slipped a little here as the battery he refers to did not come until later in the war. In 1941 there were not the guns available. AMT)

I remember the Zepps too in the first war, and getting under the kitchen table with my mother in Saxon Road. (They moved there in 1914).

In the 1st World War there were two A.A. guns on the green in front of Alexandra Road, Pakefield, in front of Hammond's shop. Mr. Hammond's shop was in Nightingale Road. One Sunday morning two Taubs came over - they were a World War 1 German plane. I remember seeing them. They dropped two or three bombs. One fell in the middle of the road, Mill Road, along that place that was a Methodist Chapel, or a Wesleyan, that's now Mann Egerton (demolished 1986). I remember the guns up there were ready to fire but the officer wasn't there to give the command. He came rushing up on a motorbike but it was too late. The Taubs were too far away over the sea. I remember those guns - they were in round, wooden (i.e. wood lined) pits - two of them.

The Caravan Mission used to come each summer to Clarke's Meadow - that's where the Churchyard is now. Every year they used to come.

Yes, I remember when they launched the lifeboat some of the lifeboat crew used to come round if that was during the night, when people was in bed, shouting "Hurea, Hurea". That's to call the crew out you see, and they used to fire a rocket; (something like the maroons we know).

Yes. That used to stand on the cliffs. There used to be a Mr. Colbie fired that. Mr. Colbie that lived in Cliff Road.

T. Who else lived on Cliff Road?

A. The Rev. Stevens lived in the first one. He was a retired clergyman. He come from Pulham St. Mary and his daughter, Mr's. Smith, lived after that house went down in Cliff Road, in the White House in All Saints Road. He had a son, too; he was a prison chaplain, and when he retired built a house in Arbour Lane. It's still there. Sort of bungalow place, built like a prison. Built it himself.

There was a bungalow in Florence Road - a Mr. Reade - he used to keep the Post Office at Pakefield years ago, and after the old lifeboat shed went down onto the beach he used to cart all that concrete and bricks and he built this bungalow in Florence Road. That was called the Silver Poplars. That was there until a few years ago and they pulled it down and built a big house there, corner of Millers Lane.

T. Were you involved in getting the furniture and things out of the Church when it was bombed during the war?

A. Yes, we were up to our knees in water. We were out there when some of the high explosives came down. (Actually he and the Rector, Canon Hunt, were on the roof of the church trying to put the incendiaries out. They were the first on the scene). You couldn't get to the incendiaries - they went right through the thatch - to put them out. They set light to the beams underneath.

T. Was the font cover there until then?

A. No. That was put in store somewhere. I think that was taken to Cunningham Hall and that rotted away. Got the worm, I believe. That was made by a Pakefield fisherman, I don't know his name. He made it with a shut knife - that's a type of clasp knife, the old fishermen used to call them shut knives. That, (the font cover) was made of driftwood from the beach and it was a representation of Norwich Cathedral spire.

T. From then until the church was rebuilt they held services in Cunningham Hall, didn't they and also used it as a forces' canteen?

A. Yes. Up to the time the Reverend Hunt came that was a very Evangelical church, and there were a lot of things, when he came, that he didn't like. There was a lot of opposition in the parish when he first came. The older people didn't like the changes you see. The Rev. Price (1871-1900) he was a Welshman and he was very Evangelical. My father was one of the bearers that carried him to his grave. They called him "the fiery Welshman". He used to go up

into the pulpit and thump about. Everybody was going to Hell except him! They buried his Bible with him in his grave so my mother told me.

My mother came to Palkefield about 1900. She came down here with a family from London. She was a Norfolk person, but she was in service. Nanny to the Reverend Phillips. They used to come down every year to 'Oak Cottage', that was their summer residence. That's in Pakefield Street. There's 'Fern Cottage' and then 'Oak Cottage' just this side of the Quakers' Chapel.

'The Firs' along the cliffs, that was a boarding-house. A woman kept that by the name of Mrs. Swain. She had two or three dogs and we used to be afraid of going past there.

T. Just pass the fish and chip shop in Pakefield Street are the remains of some flint work. I think that you said this is the remains of the old Pakefield Lock-up.

A. Yes. I remember the stone over the top, - 1828. I remember it when it was used by a Mr. Dunnett - kept his donkey in there. He used to go round with a little cart with oil. He used to live in Church Cottages and he was the caretaker of the church. He used to light the lamps for the service at night. He had a little ladder and used to light the gas lamps. (I suspect that he is now talking about the gas street lamps). He used to go right round Carlton Colville with that donkey and cart, and up over the bridge.

They say that the Trowel and Hammer is the oldest public house in the district, and that the people who built the church lodged there (i.e. in a former building on that site). They say that is why it is called the Trowel and Hammer.

When Cunningham Hall was built the Reverend Cunningham paid for that. He used to be Rector of Pakefield and then he left and went to Lowestoft. He built the Cunningham Hall at Lowestoft. When he died he left a sum of money to have two Bibles printed (purchased?) each year and awarded to the, supposed to be the, two best scholars in the Sunday School. I got one in 1922. It's got Cunningham Bible on the front - I don't know why I got it! It was awarded to one boy and one girl each year and when they first came out they were great big Bibles with pictures in, but mine is a smaller one. They don't get them now. I suppose the money finished or something.

THE LOWESTOFT SCENE 1988 to 1989

by Jon Reed

This has been a relatively quiet year compared to the previous two. One significant event was the opening in October 1988 of the Marina Theatre Centre as an 850 seat multi-purpose centre. It has been funded by Waveney District Council and is putting on a wide variety of entertainment.

The Marina is close to the pedestrian precinct. Until the opening of the Britten Centre the road called 'The Marina' ran into a very short remaining section of London Road North and on into The Prairie. The Prairie no longer exists and the other roads, nearly up to the Marina Centre, have been brick surfaced and form a continuation of the precinct.

The space between the Britten Centre and the Library now houses an open air market three days a week. There are some shops around the edge of this open space, which have all been let. W.H. Smith have opened a side entrance directly into the Britten Centre plaza.

Still on the commercial scene, Hailey's building on London Road South, which was burnt out two year ago, has been demolished and the site is still empty. Liptons Supermarket in the same road has closed down. Texas Homecare has taken over the Building Scene DIY store in Commercial Road. Safeways have opened a new superstore; at Beccles on the corner of the new bypass roundabout. The service station on Beccles Road, Oulton Broad, has been completely rebuilt as the Broadland Service Station, selling Esso. The car servicing continues as a separate business. Incidentally, the lane beside the service station, which crosses the Ipswich railway line, has been closed off beyond the bridge by a lady who has moved into the farm. She is apparently also trying to prevent people using the Waveney Way public footpath and has created some controversy in the area.

A few more mini-roundabouts have appeared. On Long Road, west of Bloodmoor Lane, a new roundabout serves the latest housing estate. Gunton Church Lane has acquired a new roundabout and another has appeared at the junction of Victoria Road and Kirkley Run. A new road is being built

from North Cove to Ellough. This crosses the site where the lost church of Worlingham Parva was discovered when the North Cove bypass was built.

On the industrial scene. Mortons has duly closed down. Suggestions for use of the site include the possibility of town housing and a small yacht marina. Fletchers boat yard on the north shore of Lake Lothing has been taken over by International Boat Builders. They have erected a new building and have put a gantry over the footpath.

The housing estate in Colville Road on the Hodges Nursery site is virtually complete and several dwellings are now occupied. A development of flats and sheltered accommodation on Hollingsworth Road is nearing completion. The Suffolk Wildlife Preservation Society museum on Burnt Hill Lane is also nearly complete.

A well-known landmark is disappearing. The South Pier Pavilion is coming down. I have no information on what will replace it. For years the kittiwakes have nested there, so a kittiwake ledge is being constructed on the S.L.P. site north of the harbour mouth. Kensington Gardens has a new bridge in the very pretty lake garden.

There are many other small changes which should be recorded, such as the post box in Stradbroke Road which has been moved across the road opposite the Ship, but these are not often reported to me.

Nearly all the trees blown down in October 1987 have now been cleared and replanting has been going in many places.

As a foretaste of next year's article, two new road schemes are causing a great deal of heartache. Although no action has been taken yet, firm plans have been approved for:-

A new crossing of Lake Lothing which will cut Normanston Park in two.

A new roundabout at the junction of Victoria Road and Bridge Road which will mean the destruction of several houses and a chapel.

One sure thing is that the effect on traffic during these road works will be pretty devastating.

One other proposal concerns a gipsy transit camp to be sited in a field on Beccles Road next to Burnt Hill Lane. This is still being argued out at local and county levels.

HISTORY – A PERSONAL VIEW

Editors Note: - At the Society's local history night, on 23rd February, I put forward a personal and controversial view of history in the hope of stimulating members to write down their view of history and why the subject interests them. I acknowledged that this might be a long term project for future Annual Reports, but I have received one article with the very reasonable request that it should only be published in this series with at least one other view for contrast. Therefore, an accompanying article has been put together in the hope that publishing these two articles will ensure several more for next year.

HISTORY – A PERSONAL VIEW

by Jon Reed

History is a study of the past, whether recorded or deduced from visible remains. It is an attempt to get inside the skins of our ancestors.

There are many aspects of history - political, social, religious, cultural, environmental, developmental, industrial, medical, nutritional - the list is very long. Generally it is just one of those aspects which is paramount to an individual amateur historian, set against the background of all the others. This background sometimes springs surprises. For example, many of the greatest mediaeval works of art were produced when virtually the whole of the civilised world was in a ferment - engaged in anything from local skirmishes to out-and-out war. That such an unsettled era should produce so much beauty is surprising enough, but that so many works of art and scholarship should survive is quite astounding.

The aspect of history which intrigue me is the ordinary domestic lives of-peoples of the past. Such enterprises as the Jorvik Centre and the Beamish Museum are fascinating to me because they recreate the way people lived. One of the interesting things is that everybody seemed to know the techniques for making life comfortable. There were obviously experts such as potters, smiths, weavers, jewellers

and so on, but nearly everybody knew the basic principles, with the increasing complexity of artefacts, which began with the industrial revolution, this general understanding faded out. How many of us nowadays know how to make a radio, an electric motor or a car?

I am, by profession, an engineer. A light-hearted definition of an engineer is somebody who can make for sixpence what anybody else can make for a pound. This implies a simple solution to a problem and a knowledge of modern techniques. It also implies the need to produce quickly and cheaply. This need was barely discernible before the industrial revolution. What was much more important was self-sufficiency and craftsmanship. The engineers of the past were the flint knappers, the bronze smiths, the bow makers, the potters, the loom builders, the armourers and so on. They were all, in their way, working at the leading edge of technology. The difference is that they were not so constrained by economic factors as we are now. Another way of putting this is that the rat race was an unknown concept until around a century ago.

The significance of this can be seen in the way basically simple things were turned into individual works of art. A spoon is now produced as a plain functional item. Carved wooden spoons had rings, figures, or foliage carved on the handle. A door frame is a plain straight timber assembly, but it used to be a matter of pride to produce elaborately carved door posts.

Our ancestors had ingenious solutions for everyday problems. They demonstrate a high degree of observation and lateral thinking. The early grain storage pits (as at Butser) are a good example. They keep grain dry and cool - the two essentials for preventing germination. Still on agriculture think about the seed drill, the saddle quern (who first discovered flour?) and the plough. Then again most well known tools were originally designed so well, and so aptly for their purpose, that their design has remained unchanged in essence since their invention. The axe is still the same shape which has simply been refined, as new techniques and materials came along, since its inception in Neolithic times. Saws have been found in the Middle East which date from around 3000 B.C. Such examples can be found in many human activities. It is amazing how well these early tools worked. It is difficult to envisage that a lump of stone can be made into a tool that will cut down a tree in a few minutes, or that a wooden wedge could be used to shape great stone blocks.

When one comes to the great structures of antiquity, the ingenuity used in moving and lifting huge blocks of stone, weighing many tens of tons, is quite astounding - leaving aside the complex organisation needed to control, and indeed originate, such an activity. How far could you lift a 40 ton Juggernaut and how would you go about it?

We are a long way from controlling our world but, in the geologically infinitesimal time that we have existed, we have made a very significant impact, for better or worse, on its appearance and ecology. From tiny beginning, which we can now only occasionally discern (or infer), we have steadily improved our living conditions. Whether the quality of our lives has improved is both a subjective conclusion and a subject for debate. However, if one put a half-starved, freezing family from the fourteenth century into a modern, centrally-heated house with a well-stocked fridge, it is likely that they would be pleased at the change in their condition.

HISTORY – A PERSONAL VIEW

by Mike Reeder

My interest in history has not much to do with facts, dates and artefacts. I willingly go round old buildings and churches and listen to architectural historians and read their books. Less willingly I listen to the achievements, strife, and genealogy of the famous. Most goes in one ear and out the other for my interest is how man has, and does, view the past, the general principles or philosophy of history.

This is a very loose, ever shifting area of interest and not immediately overwhelmingly attractive. Unlike the delights of many physical remains, which did, and still do, attract me for awhile. It may have been through a surfeit of these many years ago that my appetite became dulled, for a few years after the last war I did several leisurely, by today's standards, mini grand tours of Italy. During one of these in St. Peter's in Rome, with an enthusiastic Vatican guide, and the whole classical religious atmosphere, I could so easily have become a devoted disciple of that vision of the past and future. Fortunately, I moved on to Naples and in unseasonable low temperatures and rain I explored the slums and shanty town to the south. Back in my then home on the Baltic coast, with its Viking past, and present, the whole Roman, Italian, Classical edifice seemed no more or less a myth than any other

phase of history; and each phase of history is a myth and has no more substance than the interpretation placed upon it by people. So it seems began my interest in what interpretation people have, and place upon, the past and why.

Some of this is directly connected to artefacts - for instance bricks, still today many experts automatically classify existing brick in this country as no earlier than the 16th century, and deny totally any manufacture or use of new brick after the Roman period until that date. Is this because brick was plastered to imitate stone, then in the 16th century the leaders of fashion discovered this new material unadorned and so the myth continues today?

Within the study of Vernacular Architecture delusion seems rife. What is vernacular and what is polite? When did vernacular cease and polite reign supreme? This subject fascinates me for it seems the Vernacular Architecture students are intent upon creating a respectable academic discipline. Therefore, if, as I do, one points out that vernacular architecture continued today and can be seen on almost any area of allotments in this country, hackles rise. They wish to create and perpetuate the myth that at all times in the past the mass of buildings were definable timber and/or stone structures. Is this because the earth and stick structures which predominated here in the past, as they still do in many parts of the world, are too insubstantial to sustain an academic discipline?

Ideas without artefacts are more difficult to chase. The quest is endless and leads in all directions. Historians, whatever their political leanings, all seem to see history in terms of solely human activity. Alas, since about the 1950's, western historians have credited humans with almost complete freedom of action. Reasons for this are not difficult to find, for historians are employed by the society they serve, to provide a firm foundation for that society. Societies, like individuals, are, in the main, creatures of fear and therefore continually need their importance emphasised. Since the end of the last war, as state and international surveillance of individuals and organisations has increased and become increasingly sophisticated, history has had to be created to placate this by emphasising individual freedom.

Only recently have I stumbled upon a historian with a philosophy which enables him to produce history of wide range and depth, with humans playing a part alongside and ultimately controlled by natural cyclic forces. He downgrades events, politics and heroes; for these are all short term, largely irrelevant, change. More significant are the intermediate scale changes taking say, 10 to 50 years to become obvious. These changes include trade prices, wages, population, technological and social change. Then come the long duration structures upon which everything is built and which control everything. These include biological, geophysical, and climatic, and can take centuries to indicate their cyclic nature.

All this comes from Fernand Braudel; a Frenchman who died recently in his mid 80s; his major works have, over the last few years, been translated into English and republished. Thus, it is only recently that the English speaking layman has been able to read this largely neutralist natural history. It may well be argued that if one looks for patterns within the vast amount of data available from the past, many are sure to be found, and a sceptic could dismiss them as unrelated coincidences. Until more historians are prepared to escape from the human, national, racial view of history, these sceptics cannot be answered in detail; but then in history, as in all things, only a whiff of evidence is enough to prove a desired case, while an unpalatable decision cannot be accepted, no matter the evidence.

List of books by Braudel and translated into English

Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II – Collins Vol. 1 - 1972,
Vol. 2 - 1973

Capitalism and Material Life 1400-1800 – Weidenfeld & Nicholson 1973

Afterthoughts on Material Civilisation and Capitalism – John Hopkins University Press 1977

On History – Weidenfeld & Nicholson 1981

The Structures of Everyday Life – The Limits of the Possible – Collins 1981

The Wheels of Commerce – Collins 1982

The Perspective of the World – Collins 1984

WHAT HAPPENED TO PAKEFIELD?

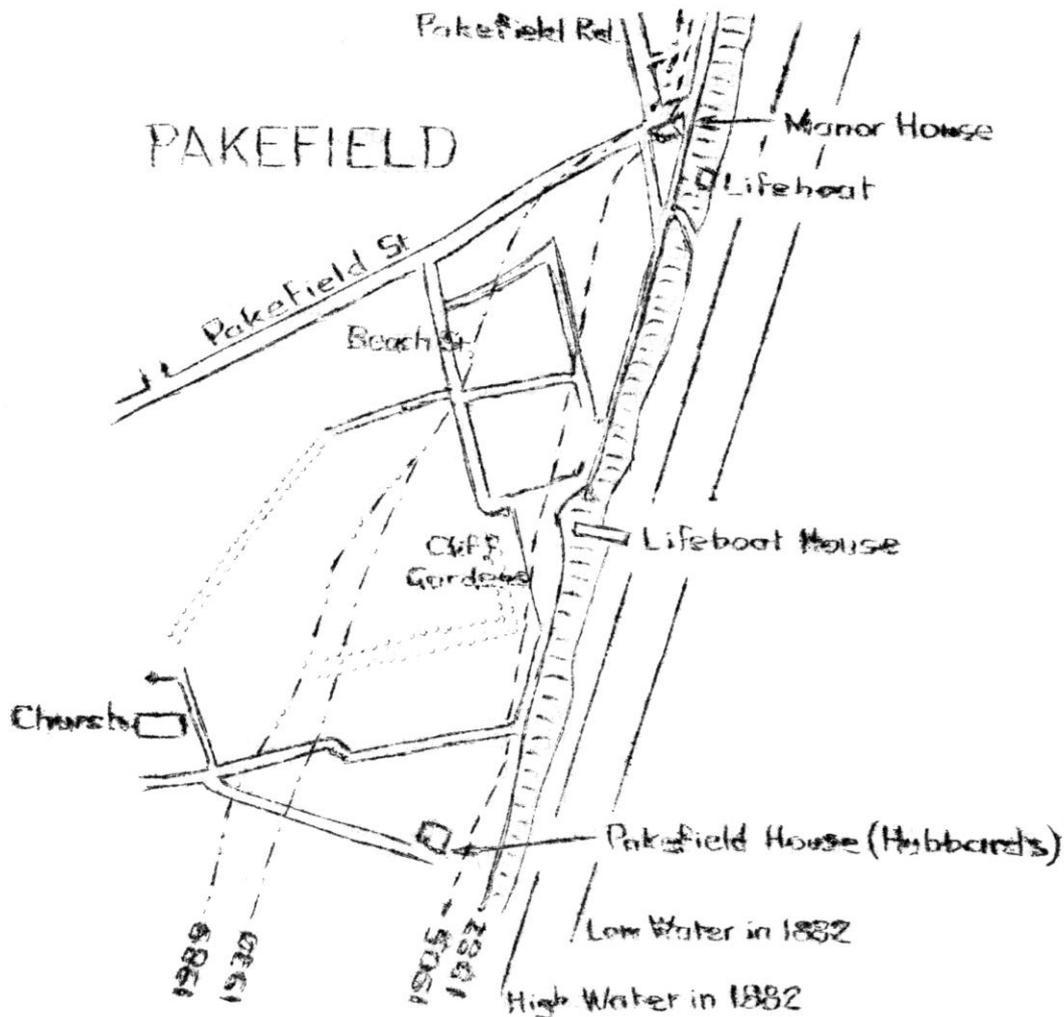
by Lilian Fisher

As I walk round Pakefield, where I live, the spreading developments - more and more houses, new roads, loss of open spaces are, to me, depressing sights. Of course the same thing is happening all over Lowestoft - indeed throughout England. Faced with such deterioration of the environment, thoughts turn nostalgically to the past. What, for example, was Pakefield like in the past?

Well, according to a past Rector of Pakefield, Canon Stather-Hunt, in his book, "Flinten History", many years ago, when England was joined to the Continent, the River Rhine flowed as far west as Pakefield, when it turned northward, and as recently as 1834 remains of extinct species of elephant, cave boar, giant elk and rhinoceros were found in the forest bed off Pakefield - all now covered by cliff falls and in the sea. From Neolithic times until the coming of the Saxons (when the village became known as Pagafella), there were settlements near Bloodmoor Hill, and there is evidence that the Romans were here, too. At one time, Pakefield was more important than Lowestoft, and there was a thriving trade with the Continent, particularly with Holland.

But what of more recent times? What was Pakefield like in, say, the early 19th Century? Well, then the threat to Pakefield was not over-development, it was the sea itself, and according to Stather-Hunt, it is doubtful whether there is any place which has lost more inhabited houses. Can this be true? What about Dunwich? However, we can see from this map what a lot of land has been lost.

In 1842, the cliff top was considerably further east, and Pakefield was described as being situated on a bold headland, with bays to the north and to the south. The cliffs were higher, too, and the further east the cliffs went, the higher they became. The famous thatched church, now a few feet from the cliffs, was originally an inland church, described as being in a similar position in relation to Pakefield, as St. Margaret's church is in relation to Lowestoft.



If we refer to White's Suffolk of 1844, the parish then consisted of 670 acres of land only, having lost 70 acres since 1824. Between 1844 and 1902 a further 70 acres were washed away, with many houses, and in the following thirty years some 90 more houses "went down the cliff". In White's days, the old coach road from London used to run down Pakefield Street (London Road and Pakefield Road were not yet built), and turning north at its end, run east of the present line of cliffs. Before the South Pier was built, the road crossed a ford, and continued into Lowestoft. During holiday times, men would wait at the ford, and hoping to earn a few coppers, would carry foot passengers over the water.

At the top of Pakefield Street, as it was in the early 19th Century - stretching further eastwards, was a house called the Manor House, owned by a Dr. Crook, who had purchased two small houses and rebuilt them as one. The beach in front of the Manor House was very wide and partly covered with Marram grass. On this beach, in a house made from a boat sawn in half, with the ends pointing upwards, lived a Mr. and Mrs. James Thompson. Further along the beach was an old seaman called "Rux" Colby, who lived in the galley of an old ship, and always wore a red nightcap. Near the old Manor House was a green, which even in 1882 was over an acre in extent, and here a Fair - Pakefield's own Fair - was held at Easter, with side shows, roundabouts and all the traditional entertainments. The artist Holman Hunt used to stay in Pakefield, in a house overlooking the green. The old Rectory, also in Pakefield Street, was left teetering on the edge of the cliff after further cliff falls in the Autumn of 1905, and a new Rectory was built on the site of the old George and Dragon. By 1900 then, little of the Pakefield of 1800 was left.

There was, it seems, a windmill in Pakefield as early as 1512. The last windmill was taken down in 1888; the sails had been blown off in 1882. It was situated behind Mill Villas in London Road, and the road known as Saxon Road used to be called Mill Lane.

Near the bottom of Arbour Lane (there are those who think this was originally either Harbour or Harvey's Lane) was a large shed where boats used to discharge cargoes of coal and it was here that smugglers are said to have landed their contraband. Wrecks seem to have been a familiar sight. In 1862 there were 23 wrecks off Pakefield and 50 off Lowestoft, and in those days Pakefield had two lifeboats of its own. A favourite pastime for children was to go "poltering", that is picking up flotsam from the wrecks, strewn on the beach.

Why was Pakefield so vulnerable to the ravages of the sea? There is evidence to think that as early as 1510, houses were being swallowed up by the sea. Most of the destruction was not caused by great storms, but by abnormally high tides licking away at the foot of the cliffs and thus bringing it down from above. Many Pakefield people at the end of the 19th century blamed Lowestoft Corporation for some of the damage, for after a period of comparative quiet, the destruction of Pakefield was renewed and hastened (so it was claimed) by the building of Lowestoft sea defences which stopped at Pakefield Street, as erosion tends to be south of any obstruction built at right angles to the beach. But, it appears that the people of Pakefield had stubbornly refused to be incorporated to Lowestoft, when invited at the turn of the century, and, surprising as it may seem, we are told that many Pakefield people even said that it was wicked to attempt to fight the Lord's sea! The building of the Claremont Pier was said to have further exacerbated the problem.

However, Pakefield was finally incorporated in 1934, but before defence work could be carried out, there was more damage. In 1936, one of the highest tides for 40 years washed away three houses and wrecked others. In less than three hours, several yards deep of cliff had gone. In 1938 a still higher tide caused even greater damage, and the sea defences were extended a further 60 feet. Then the war intervened, and it was not until after the war that work could commence to save Pakefield cliffs from further erosion. After considerable sea defence work, now, at last, the cliffs seemed safe and the beach began to build up again.

So, although we may wonder what Pakefield looked like in the past, there is little of the old village left. Only memories, some old photographs or paintings, and a few collections of treasured slides remain to give us tantalising glimpses of what was old Pakefield.

DOCKLANDS – THE EXTRAORDINARY PLACE*by David Cuming*

Today a walk through the London dock areas of Wapping, Limehouse, or the Isle of Dogs, will show a skyline filled with cranes. The old fifteen to twenty foot high dock walls are breached in many places and in some places long stretches have been completely removed. On every side the old and new stand uneasily cheek by jowl; without doubt a new evolutionary stage in the history of docklands is unfolding.

The East End of London has evolved out of a long, complicated, but interesting social, political and geographical history. Before concentrating on the history of the docks, I will give a brief outline of what went before. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, sole trading rights were granted to the City of London. The City Corporation set up 'Legal Quays' on the north bank of the River Thames, between London Bridge and the Tower of London. Vested interests refused to agree to any port expansion. The river became more and more congested as ships arrived heavily laden with rich cargoes from the Indies and had to wait their turn to be unloaded - during this process large scale pilfering took place.

To the east of the city, just outside the citywalls, were Spitalfields and Tower Hamlets. Further afield were the hamlets of Bethnal Green, Bow, and Poplar, Spitalfields took its name from a medieval priory and hospital, St. Mary Spital. The area later came to centre on Brick Lane where, in 1687, as a result of the Edict of Nantes, persecuted Protestant French Huguenot merchants and weavers set up a fine silks industry. Following the assassination of the Russian Czar, and a wave of 'pogroms', Ashkanazim Jews fled west in 1881 to form a ghetto there around clothing workshops. Their numbers rose to over 100,000 by 1914. By the 1970's the area had been populated by the Bengali's who have taken over the clothing workshops.

The East End of London gradually expanded eastwards, in about one and a half centuries, to cover the area now occupied by the modern borough of Tower Hamlets. The area first prospered in food processing such as bakeries, breweries, slaughter houses, and sugar refineries, also on finishing trade workshops such as clothing, furniture, shoes and cigars. There are several reasons why the East End developed in the way it did. Firstly, the close proximity of the large London market for the finished goods, secondly, a booming colonial trade ensured a steady supply of imported raw materials, and thirdly, the East End attracted immigrant communities who established and maintained workshop industries.

Another factor, partially due to the unique geographical character of London, was the marked division between West End and East End inhabitants social status. In medieval times immigrants were excluded from working and trading within the city by the City Guilds. Cromwell, in 1655, re-admitted the Sephardic Jews from Spain and Portugal in order to attract merchant bankers from Amsterdam. They paved the way for more numerous and generally poorer immigrants. The Port of London would have been their point of entry, making reception areas for successions of immigrants who were particularly vulnerable to exploitation due to cultural, and language problems, so setting the cultural tradition for sweat shops in the East End of London.

As London grew and drifted eastwards the location of specific industries was affected. In 1888 London County Council was formed, its eastern boundary being the River Lea just beyond Poplar. In the earlier period inner East End had attracted noxious industries such as slaughter houses, and sugar refineries. In order to escape metropolitan restrictions on offensive trades, in today's language 'bad neighbour industries', these were relocated along with such dangerous plant processes as paint, soap, and glue-making, east of the River Lea. Sugar refining, a traditional East End small plant industry - there were over fifty in London - moved east. In 1878 Henry Tate built a large new refinery near the Royal Victoria Dock at Silvertown, and four years later Abram Lyle built another nearby. By the 1920's they were the only two left and they amalgamated to become Tate and Lyle Ltd.

Up to the 1850's the Thames was one of the main shipbuilding centres in Britain. Ratcliffe, at the eastern end of Wapping, was an important shipbuilding district from the fourteenth century onwards. After 1850 the transition from wooden sailing ships to iron steamships began the decline of craft industries such as sail making and ropy making. Thames shipyards were unable to compete with the new shipyards elsewhere, which were closer to sources of coal and iron. The industry never recovered from a financial collapse in 1867, and the ancillary industries of iron foundries and marine engineering also declined, leaving only ship repair work. The Great Depression created crisis conditions after

1870 and the shipbuilding work force fell from 17,000 in 1865 to 9,000 in 1871. This story has parallels with events in the present century.

Returning to the story of the docks themselves. The Napoleonic Wars forced ships to sail in large convoys causing even worse congestion, and this finally broke the mercantile hold on the port. West Indies Merchants and plantation owners threatened to transfer their trade to another port unless the legal quays were extended. After six years of wrangling Parliamentary permission was given, and the West India Dock Company was formed. They went to the Isle of Dogs in 1799 and excavated, out of marshland, the West Indies Dock which opened in 1802. Pilfering and congestion were reduced, and ships were unloaded in eighteen days instead of twenty five on the river.

This marked the port era of laissez-faire which spawned a proliferation of separate dock companies. The earlier docks, West India, London, East India and St. Katherine's were built for sailing ships, the later ones Victoria, Albert, Commercial, Surrey, Millwall and Tilbury for steamships. The dock system was unplanned, and poorly co-ordinated. The supply of dock space far exceeded demand leading to intense competition, rate reductions, low revenues and financial difficulties. Continued rivalry forced amalgamations resulting in eight companies being reduced to three by the beginning of this century. The East and West India Dock Co. built and opened Tilbury Docks in 1886, but ran it at a loss for two years before abandoning it. Ironically, later this century, Tilbury Docks proved the key to the closure of the London docks.

I digress to introduce another immigration phase, that of the Irish and their part in the docklands story. There had been a sizeable Irish community in the East End for some time, and when the dock construction began, early in the nineteenth century, large numbers of Irish labourers were drawn to the area. The Irish had always traditionally flocked into building and construction, which needed their muscle and readiness to work in huge spurts. Some came to make as much money as possible and return home, but many stayed on to work as Dockers. With the Irish famine of the 1840's the East End Irish population swelled to 100,000 but they were never geographically compact, or segregated. Cable Street was a traditional Irish area, but they were spread throughout Wapping, and north into Whitechapel and Bethnal Green. Their community was, however, characterised by strong kinship, and enduring mutual help. Relationships essential in the insecure labour market of dock gate hiring's. They nearly all remained working class, retaining family links with their rural origins.

The final part of the docks story marked the end of laissez-faire, and the beginning of monopolisation. In the mid-eighteenth century London still handled fifty-five per cent of overseas trade, despite the rise of northern ports, but by the turn of the century continental ports were growing and taking trade from London. The ports of Rotterdam, Antwerp and Hamburg, owned by the state or local municipality, were more efficient and cheaper. A Royal Commission concluded that the London Docks, then owned by three competing companies, must be unified and brought under co-ordinated control if it was to compete successfully with continental ports, and so the Port of London Authority was set up in 1909.

The final phase of docklands commenced with the post World War II years. The London docks had suffered badly in the wartime blitz, and had precipitated decentralisation, which it is claimed may have been the first signs of decline for docklands. Plans for revitalisation and post war development of East London were overtaken by external events. Firstly, Britain no longer had an Empire, Commonwealth trade was in decline, and by the 1970's Britain was involved with the E.E.C. Employers had long been disenchanted with militant and well organised registered dock labour, as well as the interference in the organisation of labour by the Dock Labour Board.

The technological advance to containerisation meant bigger ships, quicker turnaround, more profits. It also meant a need for deep water ports, particularly favouring ports nearest the Continent for European trade. The new ports were mostly de-regulated which meant cheaper labour costs and more control for employers. The handling of containers could be carried out at depots far from port areas by cheaper, non-dock labour. It was the death knell for docklands. Dock company owners were able to bypass the London Docks and set up their containerisation port at Tilbury. Less and less shipping came up river and in any case most of the docks were too small to handle the new container ships. London Docks were closed, starting with the East India Dock in 1967 and ending with the Royals in 1981. As a result the whole area from Wapping, to Canning Town became vast areas of wasteland, many of the associated industries moving off to greenfield sites.

At the beginning of this decade the whole area has been returned to private development. The Isle of Dogs declared a private enterprise zone, de-regulated for ten years. National and multi-national high tech industries have moved into the modern glossy glass and modern material architecture. Many of

the old warehouses have been face-lifted into up-market, fashionable dwelling's. Some docks have been filled in and built upon. Canary wharf, at the East India Dock, is said to be the biggest development in Europe to become a Wall Street on water. Most of Fleet Street seems to have been re-housed in some part of docklands. Sadly, so far, very little of the vast wealth that has poured into the area has been of any benefit to the local community.

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THE EARLY CARPENTERS

by Paul Durbidge

During the late summer of 1988 the excavation team at Brampton, Norfolk, were involved in the uncovering and recording of another 3rd century Romano British wellshaft. As a carpenter, such excursions into ancient woodworking practices are obviously extremely interesting, and after spending much time in measuring and examining the shaft the principles of bracing and strutting were found to differ little from those of the present day.

The timbers used in the construction were mostly of heavy section, forming the traditional box layer construction approximately four foot square. In each internal corner were the remains of four six by six inch oak posts, which in turn hold back deep planks of oak up to three inches thick and in the region of twelve inches deep. It would appear that after three layers of boards had been laid, four flat planks were cut around the corner posts, the shoulders of which held the posts in position, while at the base of the shaft two by four inch rails were tenoned into the posts, resisting pressure at the bottom. Water continually poured into the shaft and pumps were used to contain the flow. This gave an excellent opportunity to examine the woodwork in some detail. Without exception, all the oak was in first class condition with clear indication of adze marks on several pieces and all the edges had been dressed square and, for the most part, parallel.

On two of the flat planks it appears they were cut short, as timber wedges had been driven in between the shoulders and posts, which somehow made the construction a little bit more interesting. At this stage I wondered who those carpenters were all those year ago; they, like us today, had made a mistake either in the marking out or cutting, but had got over the problem by the wedges and obviously saved valuable timber at the same time.

Woodworking tools go back in time over many thousand years and take many differing forms to suit the purpose, though some have remained in various updated forms.

Perhaps the earliest specialised woodworking tools went well back to the Stone Age where many examples of comparatively long narrow pieces of flint or stone, with one edge carefully ground, were used as chisels.

The earliest metal tools of copper and bronze had a very similar form and were used without handles, but with progress in the techniques of casting, socketed tools, as well as weapons, began to be mastered, another early woodworking tool was, by necessity, the axe and for many years it was the only woodworking tool of any kind and was still important to the end of the medieval period. At the present time it is still used a good deal for its original purpose, the felling and dressing of timber and is still carried in many modern-day carpenter's tool kits. As far as Europe is concerned, the development of the axe can be attributed to the Mesolithic peoples living on the fringe of the Northern forest about 8,000 B.C.

The earliest axe like tools were made of reindeer antler and were known as Lyngby axes, from the type site in Denmark, while in later years these axe types took another development with the insertion of a hard stone.

From another site in Denmark, dating about 6,000 B.C., an early culture known as the Maglemosian began to place the flint head in a short sleeve of antler perforated to take a wooden handle. However, it was not too long before it was realised that a great deal of efficiency of an axe lay in the sheer weight of the head, though there were obvious problems to mount a large head in anything like an antler sleeve. Other methods of hafting a heavy flint axe varied from letting the head into a piece of wood or antler, to the use of suitable branches of trees with short ends at a required angle, with the

heads inserted into slots or lashed to the prepared ends.

The development of the axe and adze continued through the Bronze Age, up to sometime between 500-200 B.C., when finally the traditional method of hafting was abandoned and the implement finally took the familiar form to us today. During the Roman period such flat butted axe heads with lugs to provide the fixing were used extensively, along with axe hammers, the latter being about seven inches long with the cutting edge prolonged downwards to form a "beard".

Undoubtedly, much of the timber was dressed and prepared by using an adze and the iron adze was derived from the Egyptian bronze adzes; throughout the Roman period the blade was fixed to a bent handle by means of an iron collar and wedge, this being the earliest example of a wedge used to secure the blade of a woodworking tool.

Iron saws were very much in evidence at this time and varied in both style and size; the Romans had taken over the simple handsaws of the Iron Age and introduced more variation in design. One thing they had studied was the need to ease the passage of the blade through the timber, so the teeth were set to allow for this as well as helping to discharge the sawdust from the cut. A saw found at Hohenrain-Ottenhausen had such feature, as well as teeth pointing slightly forward to enable the saw to cut on the push stroke. The blade is roughly 14 inches long with only 8 inches of the blade equipped with teeth, those being spaced at about seven to the inch, which compares with the modern rip saw used by carpenters today.

From a relief, as well as a painted bowl, we can see that a common way of sawing was to lay the timber on tall trestles with the top sawyer above and a second man underneath; the saw being a blade in a wooden frame with one man pulling and one man pushing. With green timber such methods were reasonably successful and variations on these types of frame saws are still used in Cairo up to the present day. It would have been on this principle that the oak planks used at Brampton would have been prepared with any irregularities removed with adzes. Smaller cuts for the jointing etc. would be carried out by smaller hand saws and framed saws, the latter being tensioned by twisted cord and a short stick, which was occasionally twisted round to keep the tension on the blade. Iron chisels would have been used to cut out the mortices in the corner posts, and for anybody interested in seeing a good collection of socketed chisel and gauges, the collections at Reading and Shrewsbury are well worth seeing.

Examination of the rails in the shaft suggest that they may well have been planed or the carpenter was exceptionally skilled with the adze. Iron and wooden planes were used in many settlement towns as one would expect, and the remains of several have been found at Caerwent, Verulamium and Silchester, and all have a striking uniformity of both size and type.

An example of a wooden plane from Saalburg was found in good condition, having been thrown in a wellshaft when the settlement was attacked, although the best example found so far has come from Cologne. It is 12¾ inches long and two inches wide, with a box like construction in the middle containing a cross piece which supports the iron cutter, which in turn is held by a wedge.

Numbers of scattered plane irons have also come to light over recent years on many German sites, with some being also found at Newstead in Scotland, and these include moulding plane irons, beads, hollows and plough irons, which once again shows how advanced the Roman joiners were at this very early period of history.

In spite of the numbers of tools found on the various settlements, very little fine woodwork has been found in this country, the reason being the poor climate. There are, of course, some exceptions but the majority of timber remains from this period tends to be found in waterlogged situations, such as wellshafts, and the massive timbers that formed the waterfront in Roman London.

To see really fine work Herculaneum near Naples would be the place to go, for here a well established city was buried beneath a sea of mud, thus preserving large amounts of domestic material. This includes couches, small wooden cupboards, panelled partitions, doors, and even staircases; two small doors belonging to a shrine had been stub tenoned, haunched and pinned, exactly the same as we do today.

To carry out such joinery the Roman craftsman must have had an extensive array of tools and he had the skills to produce the end results. In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that during the 3rd and 4th century A.D. the joiners were making panelled doors with fully mitred mouldings, a feature that did not occur in English furniture until 1700; prior to this it was usual to mitre the top corners and scribe the lower.