



BAHS Newsletter

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January 2014

Then. And Now...



News from the History Centre

The Centre was busy throughout the summer supporting Blakeney Methodist Cafe open weekends at their Church by providing a series of exhibition boards. Then in August we were off to Cley Memorabilia Day where our focus was on revealing 'Cley in 1841'; who was who, who did what, who lived where and who owned what! This was based on the census and Tithe records transcribed by Richard Dunn and proved very successful for those looking to find out more about their house history and or ancestors. These records, together with many more relating to Cley, are available for viewing at the History Centre.

In September, the History Centre supported 'Norwich Heart' Heritage Open Days with a four-day exhibition. This was Ships Ahoy, an event that used Blakeney church to showcase 500 years of maritime history revealed through graffiti, stories of adventure and misadventure from the churchyard, exhibition boards, paintings of ships, master mariners, lifeboats, port books and the display of the presentation model lifeboat Hettie immediately in front of her Service Board.

The Hettie, one more time

The amount of interest raised by the lifeboat model Hettie has been incredible. In less than a year, she has featured in the press and at the AGM of the Parish Council, been visited in the Centre by many including a visit from a direct descendant of the master of the ship *Aid* of Hull (rescued in 1877), photographed for a book, exhibited in St Nicholas and had a Close named after her. The new Avocet View housing development in Langham Road, was gently persuaded by Blakeney Parish Council to come up with meaningful, relevant names for their development. The result is that we now have an inland 'Harbour Way' with Brightwell, Hettie and Caroline Closes; all named after four of the five Blakeney lifeboats. Remember, there were two *Brightwells* while the missing lifeboat is the *Zacchaeus Burroughes*.

During the year we have been collecting donations to purchase a security case for the *Hettie* as well as looking for a more suitable home for her where she can be seen every day of the week, rather than on occasional Tuesday mornings as at the Centre. In this

quest, we hope to be making an announcement soon.

Estimates for the security case, including transport costs and assembly, are upwards of £1,000. There is still time for you to show your support if you wish. Kindly send donations to the History Centre, Blakeney Village Hall, Langham Road, Blakeney, Norfolk NR25 7PG. Please mark your envelope "Lifeboat Fund" and make your cheques payable to History Centre Blakeney, thank you.

Roots and Branches

Current Family History research and enquiries for individual people includes;

Baines of Blakeney and Cley
Burton and **Baynes** of Cley
Cadamy of Wiveton, Sheringham and Cley
Framingham of Cley
Lincoln, Anderson and **Hurn** of Wiveton and Blakeney
Mann of Cley
Mitchell of Weybourne, Cley and Blakeney
Porritt of Cley
Rutland and **Ives** of Salthouse and Blakeney
Samuel Markby Starling of Cley, London and Blakeney
Temple of Morston

Looking forward to 2014

As we say goodbye and thank you to Richard Dunn from the sub committee we welcome aboard the Rev Tim Fawcett in his place. Exciting changes are planned for 2014 with even more openings. The Centre will reopen after the Xmas/New Year break on Tuesday, February 4th from 10.30 am till 1pm and thereafter as usual on the first and last Tuesday of every month at the same time. However these openings are being extended in 2014 to include every Tuesday morning in April, July, August and most of September. For more details see the Back Page and check on our web site nearer the time of your visit.

Pamela Peake



Ships Ahoy exhibition, 12-15 September, in the north aisle of St Nicholas, Blakeney. photo by John Peake

Book Review

At long last Stiffkey and Cockthorpe have a book which provides a coherent history of the two villages. The Stiffkey Local History Group (SLHG), formed only in 2008, began work on it in 2010 at the suggestion of the Revd Tony Hodgson, a curate in Stiffkey in the 1960s who has maintained links with the village ever since. In a two-page spread on 16 November the EDP outlined the origins and content of ***Stiffkey with Cockthorpe: A Story of Norfolk People***. With chapters written by five SLHG members, this 192 page book with many illustrations in colour looks at every aspect of Stiffkey from geological origins, the arrival of early inhabitants, Roman rule, and through the Norman period to medieval Stiffkey. Particular topics include the glacial formation of the river valley, the importance of Warborough Hill, and the puzzle of two early churches in the same churchyard.

It was the Group's intention to focus on the inhabitants of the villages rather than their physical development, but it is only in the Tudor period that names turn into real people with documentary evidence about their lives. The dominant character then was Nathaniel Bacon, son of Nicholas Bacon (one of Elizabeth I's closest advisers), a major landowner and builder of the Old Hall, part of which still stands by the church. As the book relates: 'His importance today lies in his extensive archive of papers relating both to his official duties and to the management of the estate. The value is all the greater because of his practice of retaining not only incoming letters but drafts of outgoing ones'.

Beyond the Tudor period, individual chapters cover agriculture from c.1600, covering the trend towards ever fewer landholders, village life between 1830 and 1930, with analysis of census returns and directories, and Stiffkey from 1933 to 1965, a period of considerable change – from agricultural village with a variety of services to a base for second hom-

ers. A separate chapter is devoted to Cockthorpe, always very small but still the birthplace of Admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovell, lost when his fleet piled up on the Scilly Isles in 1707. Another chapter describes in detail how important the shoreline has been to the livelihood of coastal communities – fish, sheep and smuggling all feature in the story.

Readers will also meet some latter-day residents of Stiffkey. One of the rectors, Lord Frederick Townshend, installed in 1792, murdered his own brother on a coach journey to London, was declared insane, and remained in the care of his family until he died. Yet he remained Rector for the intervening 40 years – so had better luck than Harold Davidson whose notoriety kept Stiffkey in the national headlines throughout the 1930s. His ministry was pursued in London rather than Stiffkey and he eventually fell out with the local landowners, was found guilty of immorality in a Church trial, defrocked, and died protesting his innocence in a lion's cage in Skegness in 1936. Tony Hodgson comments that for the country parson collecting butterflies or protecting birds 'were entirely acceptable occupations but to collect down and outs from the streets of London and to protect vulnerable young women from being led into prostitution certainly were not'.



Other notable characters in Stiffkey include Colonel Bailey, explorer, spy and naturalist in Tibet and Turkestan in the early 1900s, Henry Williamson, prolific author and farmer, Lord Buxton, co-founder of the World Wildlife Fund, Bernard Feilden, conservation architect of international repute, and Denis Lotis, a household name in popular music.

The book is published by Poppyland Publishing at £14.95 and is available from good bookshops around the county. Hurry – buy your copy now while stocks last!

Website Update

The Glaven Historian issues 1-6 are now on the website in fully downloadable and searchable form free, gratis, for nothing.

When GH1-5 were first made available on CD they were direct scans from the printed originals and as such are rather hefty downloads. GH1 has now been reset which has given both clearer type and much smaller file sizes. The others will follow suit in due course – when your Editor can find the time and energy to do it.

The online version of GH6 is taken from the original digital files as will be later additions, GH7-9. GH10 onwards will remain in print for some time to come.

When Apples Fell Closer to the Tree

by Liz Matthews

This is a story of a family, striving to make a living in the North Norfolk countryside two centuries ago, glimpsed briefly from census material, parish records and county records. William and Dorcas (née Loose) Wright, born in 1811 and 1813 respectively, were the grandparents of my mother's father.

William was born at Hindringham in February 1811, the second son and third child of his father William, to whom I shall refer as William the Eldest, born in 1778, and his wife Susannah née Leverett, the daughter of Henry Leverett, a blacksmith, and his wife Alice at Houghton St Giles, or Houghton in the Dale. William the Eldest and Susannah had both signed their banns of marriage with a X.

Little William was born and baptised only a few weeks after the death of his older brother Henry the first-born son, aged only six years. His older sister, named Susannah like her mother, had been born in 1808. When William was eight, a younger sister, Elizabeth, was born in 1819, and then another sister Alice Martha three years later. William's three sisters married and produced a number of children, living locally into old age until the 1880s and 90s.

William and Dorcas grew up towards the end of the very expensive Napoleonic Wars and many of Norfolk's traditional patterns of farming were being eroded as the result of the Enclosure Acts. I imagine William Wright the Eldest, like John Clare becoming dispossessed of any traditional rights to land, tramping the footpaths from village to village looking for employment as an agricultural labourer, but without Clare's literacy and poetic ability to express his anger. There were local protests and riots across Norfolk from 1816 leading to the Swing Riots of 1830. Norfolk people were not alone in their anger and the British Governments during those years and their privileged voters

were concerned to avert revolution as in France. Their concerns led to the Reform Act of 1832.

The young William grew up to be a butcher and married Dorcas Loose in 1833.

Dorcas, born in 1813 to Anne Loose, was the grand-daughter of Andrew Loose and his wife Mary Ann née Boyce. Andrew Loose was a tenant farmer of the Manor of Wolterton & Gibbs in Field Dalling and both he and his wife, Mary Ann, came from families with enough land to allow their fathers to vote at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries. There had been notable Looses in Field Dalling as far back as 1471. With the Enclosures of 1812, Andrew Loose, at Little Marsh, also saw his land diminished in circumstances beyond his control.

Andrew Loose died in 1824 and left most of his property, bordering Hindringham, to his wife Mary Ann but, the year before his death, he had added an amendment to his Will which left some of his property to his daughter Ann, born in 1796, and her 'natural child' Dorcas. Anne had one older sister Mary who had married John Burrell of Bale and had three daughters.

In the first full Census of 1841, I found William and Dorcas with their three children, Mary Ann (8), Dorcas (5), and two year old William, at Binham where William was a butcher. Three years before this, in 1838, a previous baby William had died in infancy. In 1841 Dorcas was expecting her fifth baby.

William Wright the Eldest was listed, in the 1841 census, as a farmer at Little Marsh with his wife Ann and daughter Martha aged 18. Andrew Loose's widow, Mary Ann, aged 73, was living nearby. These bald facts led me to delve further into the Norfolk Records and Parish Records and to discover that, a year after the marriage of Dorcas and William, William the Eldest, aged 56, married Ann the mother of Dorcas in

1834, when his younger daughters, Elizabeth and Martha were 15 and 12 respectively. His eldest daughter Susannah, who was 26, had been married to Mark Daplyn of Hindringham for several years and had a growing family of her own.

In 1842, the year of baby Andrew Loose Wright's birth, Dorcas's grandmother, Mary Ann Loose, died. In that same year Mary Ann's daughter, Mary, the older sister of Ann, who had married John Burrell and had three young daughters, had died at Bale, still quite a young woman. These three cousins of Dorcas were Mary, Elizabeth and Lucy Burrell.

In 1844, Dorcas and William who had moved to Langham, had another baby, Frederick, who would become my great grandfather. That same year, William the Eldest died and Ann, still only 48, carried on farming at Little Marsh. Martha, William the Eldest's youngest daughter, now 21, married William Sands and moved back to Hindringham.

Despite the move to Langham, Frederick and Andrew Wright, baby sons of Dorcas and William, were baptised at Binham. In 1846 another baby, Henry was born, but probably died in infancy as there appears to be no further record of him. An eighth baby, Walter Henry, was born in 1850.

In the 1851 census, Mary Ann (17), and William (11), were staying with Ann on the farm at Little Marsh, Field Dalling. They were described respectively as 'domestic' and 'labourer'. Listed at home in Langham in that census, were Dorcas, a scholar, aged 16, Andrew (9), Frederick (7), and Walter (1).

In 1854 the siblings had another little sister, Amelia. Their aunts, William's three sisters, were all living in the nearby villages of Hindringham or Binham and raising substantial families so there were lots of cousins who had descended from William the Elder and Susannah née Leverett.

Ann Wright died, aged 66, at Little Marsh in October 1859. Two months later, in December 1859, her second grand-daughter, young Dorcas (23), married Frederick Howman, a carpenter from Briningham, living in Field Dalling with his parents who were grocers and drapers there.

In July or August 1860, her older sister Mary Ann (27), and unmarried, gave birth to a baby, Edith, and, less than a month later Mary Ann died. Dorcas and William had the baby to bring up with six year old Amelia and the four boys.

By April 1861, William and Dorcas had moved back to her old home at Little Marsh, Field Dalling, to take over Ann's farm where their three oldest sons, William (21), Andrew (19), and Frederick (17), also worked. Walter was 11 and Amelia was 7. Their elder sister Dorcas, and her husband Frederick Howman, in the main village of Field Dalling, had a baby girl named Mary Ann after Dorcas's dead sister and great-grandmother.

In June 1861, Dorcas and William obtained just over two further acres of land which had been left by Andrew Loose in his Will of 1823 to be shared between his two daughters Mary and Ann, both of whom were now dead, and which had all been inherited by Mary's three daughters after her death. In July the baby Edith died.

In 1863 the younger Dorcas, little Edith's aunt, had a baby son Frederick William who was baptized at Field Dalling Church. There seems to be no further record of this little baby who probably died in infancy.

By the Census of 1871, this Dorcas, the eldest surviving daughter of Dorcas and William, had moved up to Horsforth near Leeds with her husband Frederick and daughter Mary Ann. Dorcas and William were 59 and 60 respectively. The same year, 1871, they 'surrendered' the extra two acres and two roods of land left by Andrew Loose to Edward Bowyer Sparke for £100, but they had a 16 year old domestic servant named Harriet Spragge from Houghton in the Dale.

There had been some substantial changes in the intervening

years. The three older brothers had married and left their parents' home at Little Marsh, although the youngest, Walter, aged 23, and Amelia (19), were still at home, plus a grand-daughter aged 4. This was Nancy, the eldest daughter of William, now 29. He was living with the parents of his wife Mary Gidney at Langham. William and Mary had two other children, Walter William aged 2 and a baby named Edith, perhaps after his sister's baby.

His brother Andrew, aged 27, was married to Harriet Massingham and lived on the Langham Road with their two year old daughter, another little Edith. He was listed in the census as an agricultural labourer. Frederick, aged 26, a cattle dealer, was at Blakeney at the time of the 1871 census with his new wife Harriet Dew and her parents.

Meanwhile, William's sisters, Susannah Daplyn, Elizabeth Twiddy and Martha, or Alice Martha Sands, were still alive, Elizabeth and family in Binham, and Susannah and Alice Martha in Hindringham with their families.

In 1879 Amelia (27), the youngest daughter of Dorcas and William, married John Cletheroe a carpenter from Briston. William (70), and Dorcas (69), and their grand-daughter Nancy, aged 14, were still at Little Marsh in 1881.

Dorcas and Fred Howman were still living in Horsforth near Leeds where he was chapel keeper and carpenter joiner. Their daughter Mary aged 20 was living with them and was employed as an assistant schoolmistress.

In 1881 all four surviving sons of William and Dorcas were still living in Norfolk. The eldest, William, now 40, who was married to Mary Gidney from Langham, had Edith (11), Rosa aged 5, Catherine or Kate (3), John (2), and a baby Ethel. Their eldest son, young Walter William, aged 12, was staying with his Aunt Amelia's family at Briston. Amelia and John Cletheroe, a carpenter and wheelwright, now had a baby son of their own, William J.

Andrew Wright (38), now a butcher at Field Dalling and his wife Harriet had four children in 1881: Edith (12), Harriet Eliza-

beth (9), a son William Andrew (7) and a daughter Dorcas Louisa (3), named after her aunt in Yorkshire as well as her grandmother. Harriet was also expecting twins who were born later that year, named Alfred and Arthur.

Frederick or Edward Frederick (36), was a cattle dealer living at Field Dalling Cross with his wife Harriet, three sons, Frederick H (9), Ernest R (7), and Herbert (5), and a little daughter Harriet M aged 2. The youngest son, Walter Henry, aged 30, had married and moved to Norwich as a butcher, living in Afghan Terrace, Stafford Street, with his wife Mary, also 30 and children Nellie, aged 4 and Sidney aged 1 year.

Dorcas, née Loose, died in April 1883, aged 71. All three of old William's sisters were still alive in Hindringham and Binham in 1881 but his older sister Susannah Daplyn, died in 1889, aged 81.

By the census of April 1891 William Wright was also dead. He had died in January of that year, aged almost 80, at the home of his youngest daughter Amelia and John Cletheroe in Briston. They had three children: Henry (10), William (6), and Minnie (4).

William's and Dorcas's daughter Dorcas, married to Frederick Howman, who had been living for two decades in Horsforth, Leeds, had now moved to Norwood in London with her family. She died in September 1892, in her mid 50s.

In 1891 William, the oldest of the four sons, now aged 50, was living at Little Marsh with his wife Mary and eight of their eleven children. Nancy, Walter William and Edith R had left and were making their own lives. At home in Field Dalling were Rosa (15), a domestic servant, Catherine or Kate (13), John (12), who was still at school, Ethel (10), George (8), Dorcas (6), Emma (3), and Blanche (1).

Next to William's family at Little Marsh was the family of the third son, Frederick, now 46, farmer and cattle dealer, with his wife Harriet, their eldest son, Frederick (19) and already a cattle dealer himself; Ernest R (17), Herbert (15), young Harriet (12), Florence, (8), Henry (3), and Donald, just 9 months.

Their cousins, Edith (22), Harriet (19), William, and Dorcas (13), were living up on the Langham Road, Field Dalling, with their parents Andrew, butcher and labourer, aged 48 and Harriet. It does not appear that their little twin sons, Alfred and Arthur, survived. Their grandmother Sarah Massingham, was living with them aged 79.

Walter Henry, the fourth brother, was a foreman, aged 40, living in Southwell Road, Lakenham, with his daughter Ellen or Nellie, who was a pupil teacher aged 14, and son Sidney (11). There was no mention of his wife Mary. In June 1892, Walter Henry apparently died, three months before his elder sister Dorcas Howman.

William, Andrew, Frederick and Amelia were the only children of William and Dorcas to see in the new 20th century, all three sons still in Field Dalling, just across the fields from Hindringham, and 'an apple's fall' from where both parents had been born.

Their mother Dorcas, a child without siblings or father, died surrounded by extended family including thirty grandchildren, most still in North Norfolk at the end of the 19th century. William might have been proud to have left some family property and land even if it could never sustain his remaining children and their families. By the end of the 20th century many of their great grandchildren would have dispersed.

I wonder how many of their descendants remain, or have returned to their roots in North Norfolk after seeking their fortune elsewhere, in the 21st century.

References for the sources of the above material can be found in a longer version of the research in Across the Fields and Down the Lane at the BAHS Library.

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The North Sea and Medieval Trade

Dr Bryan Ayres; 24 Sept 2013

In September Bryan Ayres, a former Norfolk County Archaeologist, gave a large audience a very enjoyable talk, fluent and informative, about the 'material culture' of the medieval North Sea. His expertise was in urban archaeology and his aim was not just to study objects recovered but to construct history from archaeological evidence and from surviving buildings and documents.

For his talk Bryan expanded the North Sea to include the Baltic and thereby defined the area which for some 300 years was dominated by the Hanseatic League. Lübeck and Hamburg were the core members of an association joined at various times by some 170 cities in an area extending from the Netherlands to Russia. Their economic power enabled them to establish steelyards (trading centres) in ports elsewhere, chief among them Bruges, Bergen, Novgorod and London, and including King's Lynn and Boston. Lübeck, on the Baltic coast, was the 'Queen of the Hansa', its pre-eminence based on long-standing links with the salt-mining area of Lüneburg. At that time the Baltic was the centre of the herring fishery for which much of the salt was needed. Excavations at Lübeck show that the town expanded by 40% in the 13th century even though no documentary evidence for this exists.

The Viking warships, such as the Gokstad ship on show in Oslo, were designed for speed but for carrying cargo the *cog*, flat-bottomed and squarer in section, soon became dominant. The remains of several have been recovered, the best known being the Bremen cog, washed away in a storm before its completion in 1380. The remains were raised in 1962 and a replica visited Lynn in 2004. The cog was not the only cargo-carrying ship, for the banana-shaped *hulk* also appears in documents and on town seals, including the seal of New Shoreham, once known as 'Hulksmouth'. Unfortunately no remains of a hulk

have been found so there is much uncertainty about their design and function.

Early ships berthed on hards and were loaded and unloaded over the sides. In his own excavation by the Cathedral Close in Norwich, Bryan had found such a hard from the 11th century, constructed with brushwood laid over soft ground. Soon wharfs were being built for greater convenience – cranes could be used for unloading. These wharfs were difficult to build against the river banks: water pressure built up behind them and the buttressing on the seaward side was inconvenient for ships. Eventually techniques were developed for tying quays to the landward side and often successive quays were built outwards towards deeper water so river channels became narrower, as happened at Lynn. Here, at Thoresby College, the first medieval wharf-top in the UK was discovered. In Hull an excavated wharf stands 10ft high, with one timber dating from c.1343, and the river has been narrowed to such an extent that the High St now lies over an old wharf line.

Few medieval warehouses now survive. Many in Hamburg were destroyed during WW2 and fires in Bergen destroyed much old warehousing, although this has allowed excavations followed by sensitive redevelopment. In Lynn, Hampton Court is a 14th century warehouse, with arcades for storing goods and a trading floor above, and adjacent is St Margaret's House (now Hanse House), the only surviving Hanseatic *steelyard* in Britain. In Norwich, Dragon Hall was built along similar lines. All these are fine properties by local, even national, standards but compared with the warehouses in the Hanseatic heartland they are distinctly downmarket. Warehouses in Lübeck, by contrast, were not half-timbered: they were substantial brick buildings, some rising to seven storeys. The main Hansa cities were much richer than Norwich, itself one of the richest in England.

Though English merchants did not take to the European tiled stoves and preferred their inefficient open fires, Bryan found

some English evidence for European material and ideas. Sain-tonge jugs (from an area north of Bordeaux) used in the wine trade are found in England – but only in ports and on ecclesiastical sites. More widespread is German salt-glazed stoneware, perhaps for the beer drinkers. Beguinages, residential quarters for single women dedicated to God but not bound by a strict vow, are found in the Low Countries and in the Rhineland but not in Britain – unless the Briton Arms in Norwich is an example. Here a contemporary doorway leads into the churchyard of St Peter Hungate, and an oak timber of c.1410 came from the Baltic. The building had a number of small attic rooms, suggesting a hostel rather than a normal residence, so perhaps this really is the only known English example of a Flemish idea. Bryan also noted that Cologne had walls with 12 gates, modelled on the heavenly city of Jerusalem. Did the same concept apply in Norwich with its 12 gates? Pottergate would have been an obvious 13th – but it never existed.

Bryan drew on archaeological evidence for fishing. Hull, for example, had great casks by the dockside in which to store live fish. After noting that it was possible now to tell from teeth where people grew up, he said that in Norwich and Gt Yarmouth isotopes in cod and herring bones showed that in the 13th century half the catch was coming from the northern North Sea, perhaps suggesting over-exploitation in the south – in which case fishing ‘crises’ are nothing new.

Throughout his talk Bryan made brief references to the Glaven area. He noted that Carezza Lewis’s test-pits showed that Wiveton was a medieval port and suggested that more work could be done in the Glaven valley. Blakeney ‘Guildhall’, with its undercroft and two storeys above, would have had mercantile origins. Undercrofts were common in Norwich – 60 existed still and at least another 40 had been lost – but Bryan thought the Guildhall was an under-appreciated building.

He concluded by saying that big excavations in medieval ports

may be a thing of the past, though more ship remains might be found and boreholes into the fill behind medieval quays could be informative, especially if the revetments could be dated by dendrochronology (tree-ring dating). He referred to the publications *North Sea Archaeologies* by Ian de Noort and *East Anglia and the North Sea World* (UEA), although the latter was expensive at £60. He made no reference to his own forthcoming book but his excellent illustrations may have a place in it.

John Wright

Recent coin finds from the Iron Age to Post Medieval period

Dr Adrian Marsden, Shirehall Museum; 29 Oct 2013

The Society’s second meeting of the season was an illuminating talk by Dr Adrian Marsden of Norfolk Landscape Archaeology on recent coin finds in Norfolk. I had rather expected a run down on who had found what and where but by presenting his slides in date order of the coins he was able instead to give us a history of coinage which to a numismatic ignoramus like me was most informative. Most coins are, of course, found by metal detectorists but with the few dug up in gardens the annual total is in the thousands which explains why he was able to show us such a comprehensive sequence from ‘Norfolk Wolf’ staters which pre-date the Roman invasion to the ‘Swag Hoard’ buried sometime after 1878 in a Wisbech garden.

The inscriptions on Iceni coins show the Iceni’s Germanic origins and I was surprised to find that Roman coins were around in Britain before the invasion which indicates that the people we think of as woad-covered British savages were trading on the continent. There were apparently some 40–50,000 Roman troops in Britain who had to be paid so it is possible to relate the poorly produced local coins of the mid first century AD to the fact that no coins were struck in Rome in

Nero’s reign. Coins also reflect the growth of Christianity in Britain, many which had crosses on them being adapted to be worn as badges or broaches.

After the Romans left there was a break in the minting of coins in Britain until c.650AD. Some coins with the image of a bird have become known as ‘porcupines’ because the stylized feathers look more like quills. We were shown silver sceattas from a huge find, half of which were British and half continental coins and a penny from the reign of Edmund of East Anglia killed at Hoxne in 870AD, 25 of which were found together with two pieces of Anglo Saxon jewellery but I don’t remember where.

The Vikings used coins only as bullion but a late 9th century Persian coin probably travelled with them via Russia and Scandinavia to reach Norfolk while 200 years later a Byzantine bronze coin found here probably came back with a crusader. Dr Marsden was able to relate several coin finds to such historical events. For instance he could make a case for 14 Henry VIII groats found near Wymondham having been hidden at the time of Kett’s rebellion in 1549.

The talk also touched on the religious connections of coinage with a coin of 1210-13 folded in half to give power to prayer and a coin of c1280 related to the Bury St Edmunds Boy Bishop ceremony later turned into a pilgrim badge and a 9ct gold ‘touch piece’ of James ii which would have been given at a King’s Evil ceremony. Dr Marsden discussed plated coin copies of silver and gold coins and showed us not only clipped coins but some clippings from an Elizabeth I silver shilling that the clipper must have mislaid.

His final slide was of a magnificent hoard of bright gold, mint condition coins spanning from ancient times to the 19th century and from huge 5 guinea pieces to a tiny by comparison Victorian half sovereign. It was all probably, he said, stolen from a serious coin collector and hidden in Wisbech by the thief who for some reason never recovered his swag.

Frank Hawes

Winter/Spring Programme 2014

Events

All the following meetings are on Tuesdays in the Harbour Room at the British Legion Hall in the High Street, Blakeney starting at 7.30 pm

Entrance: £2 for members and £3 for visitors, including refreshments.

28 January 2014 Members' Night

details to be announced

25 February

Margaret Forester: Birds, Beasts and Monsters

A welcome return of a very popular lecturer. Margaret will be revealing beasts and monsters in medieval art.

25 March

Mary Fewster: East Anglian Goldsmiths 1500 - 1750

Surviving objects show how local craftsmen working in gold and silver provided church and secular objects for the wealthy.

29 April

Margaret Bird: Supplying the Beer: life on the road in 18th century Norfolk.

The lecture will focus on the hardships and dangers of work delivering to public houses on top of all the tasks in the fields, maltings and brewery.

History Centre Diary: New opening hours

Please note, the History Centre is closed during December and January for essential maintenance and stocktaking.

The Centre will reopen in February on Tuesday morning the 4th and 25th from 10.30am till 1pm and thereafter on the first and last Tuesday of the month in March, May and June, at the same time.

New for 2014: the History Centre will be open every Tuesday morning during April, July, August and September, same hours as given above.

Researchers and visitors wishing to use maps, film or fiche readers are strongly advised to book in advance and reserve space as both equipment and table space are limited. Arrangements can be made by phone 01263 740388, by writing to the History Centre, Blakeney Village Hall, Langham Road, Blakeney, Norfolk NR25 7PG (Remember to include a SAE for confirmation).

Special openings at other times are strictly by prior arrangement and will usually incur a small charge. Please note that these openings are only possible if a volunteer is available. Again, use contact details given above to make your booking.

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