



BAHS Digital Newsletter

Issue 7

13th November 2021

www.bahs.uk

Welcome

Welcome to the latest digital newsletter of the Blakeney Area Historical Society. This newsletter is being sent to all current and past members plus individuals who have signed up to our information emails.

Printing the newsletter: A few days after the digital newsletter is published a copy is placed on the website. If you wish to print the newsletter it is best to use the one on the website.

In this newsletter, along with much else, we have articles on:

- The Duke of Edinburgh and his early visits to this area by Pam Peake.
- The Pier Harbour at Blakeney by Jonathan Hooton.
- Blacksmith's Mate J. W. Grimes, part of the Cley 1914-1918 War Project follow up by Richard Jefferson.
- Sylvia Claxton's Scrapbooks by Michael Archer.
- Book reviews by John Wright.

The editor would like to thank all those who have provided contributions to this and previous issues as they make it possible to publish the newsletter. Contributions are always welcome and may be sent to the editor at any time and we will endeavour to publish in one of the upcoming issues.

Feedback: If you have any thoughts on how the newsletters may be improved, please let us know by emailing info@bahs.uk.

Finally, before you settle down to read the newsletter, please note that information contained in the newsletter is copyright of the author and is published as provided and with their permission. Despite best efforts, the occasional mistake may slip through. If so, please blame the editor not the contributors.

Richard Daley, Editor

Christmas Lights at Blickling 2021

Enjoy the colours, smells and sounds of Christmas at Blickling. Begin your visit through the magically lit walled garden, before discovering our garden of lights and lit acorns on the Parterre. Warm up with mulled wine and a mince pie as you soak up the magical atmosphere at night.

Instead of organising a Christmas Lunch this year, we are planning to visit Blickling Hall on Tuesday 14th December. Logistically, however, we will need to book individually for timed tickets. If we aim for the 4.30 to 5pm slot, then we can arrange to meet up at some point. There were 77 tickets available when I booked on 4th November. They cost £12 for National Trust members, as well as non-members, and include parking. The gardens will be open until 8pm but the House will be closed. There will also be access to the shop, café and toilets.

Further information may be found at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/blickling-estate/features/christmas-garden-of-lights-at-blickling-estate

To keep members informed about our plans, updates will be provided on the BAHS website at www.bahs.uk/activities/outings/planned-outings

Diana Cooke

2021/22 Lectures

The 2021/22 series of lectures continues with:

- Tuesday 30th November 2021 at 7:30pm
Privateers, the press gang and service in the Sea Fencibles: the pressures on Blakeney and Cley's seafarers c.1800 by Margaret Bird
Followed by the 2021 AGM.
- Tuesday January 25th at 2:30pm
Talks by Members
 - *Captain Fox: From Cley to New Zealand* by Pam Peake
 - *Rudolph Ackermann to Gerald Ackermann* by Richard Jefferson
- Tuesday 22nd February at 2:30pm
Octavia Hill, Co-Founder of the National Trust by Rob Knee
- Tuesday 29th March at 7:30pm
Murder Sex and Mayhem in English Churches by John Vigar
- Tuesday 26th April at 7:30pm
- *The King of the Norfolk Poachers and his life story edited by Lilius Rider Haggard* by Charlotte Paton.

All lectures will be at Cley Village Hall at the time stated above. If possible, they will run simultaneously on Zoom so those who cannot attend in person may do so online.

[Click here](#) for further details and updates.

Recorded Lectures

Lectures that have been recorded may be viewed by visiting

www.bahs.uk/activities/events/lecture-recordings.

New Membership Year

The Society's new membership year began on 1st September. If you pay by standing order then you have nothing to do. If you cannot remember how, you pay your subscription you can check your past subscriptions by logging into the members' area at www.bahs.uk/membership/members-area.

Information on paying subscriptions may be found at www.bahs.uk/membership/paying-subscriptions.

Standing orders were introduced last year and many members have set up a standing order which helps the running of the Society through improved cashflow and by simplifying administration. So, thank you if you have arranged a standing order, if not could you think about doing so? Details may be found on the above link.

2021 Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on the evening of Tuesday 30th November following the lecture.

Members may view AGM papers by logging into the Members' area at www.bahs.uk/membership/members-area

Committee Retirements

At the AGM we say goodbye to John Wright as he retires from the Committee. John has been involved in one way or other with the Society since its formation as the Blakeney History Group. John re-joined the Committee a few years ago and has been working hard in the History Centre, which has involved producing an updated Accessions Register, of which a public version will appear on the website later this year.

Michael Archer was co-opted onto the Committee in 2020/21. Unfortunately, Michael is not able to offer himself up for election to the Committee at this AGM. The Committee wishes to thank Michael for his efforts during this last year.

Committee Vacancies

With the loss of John and Michael, the Committee is once again running low on numbers. If interested in joining the Committee or just helping out, please contact Diana Cooke, the Society's Secretary to discuss. Diana's contact details may be found on the website or at the end of this newsletter.

The Duke of Edinburgh Makes An Early Start

The death of Prince Philip earlier this year resulted in a plethora of tributes and articles celebrating his life even including a brief note in an earlier BAHS Newsletter. While readers may well recall many relatively recent visits to Cley by the Duke and those to Blakeney in the sixties, many will not know of his first visit in 1926 when he stayed at Wiveton Hall.

Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark was just five years old that year when he came on a summer holiday to the UK, and ultimately Wiveton, from France with two of his sisters, the Princesses Sophie and Cecelia. They were in the care of their maternal grandmother the Dowager Marchioness of Milford Haven who was born Princess Louise of Hesse, grand daughter of Queen Victoria and a cousin of King George V.

Colonel Kennedy was the owner of Wiveton Hall, a good friend of the King and perhaps this is the connection that brought the families together that summer. His wife, Mrs Watson-Kennedy, had a grand daughter, Diana who often visited her at Wiveton and she had found "suitable children" for her to play with. These same children were subsequently introduced to Philip and his sisters as companions for the summer. Mabel Kay, one of those children, was the youngest of three daughters of Dr Kay, the local GP. The family had moved from Zetland House, Cley, where Mabel was born in 1912, to Manor House in Blakeney and it was Mabel who wrote an account of that holiday. Mabel was 14 years old, of similar age to the Princesses while her youngest brother, Patrick, was exactly the same age as Prince Philip, both being born in 1921. It was Patrick who had to amuse Prince Philip, "a good looking little boy with very blond hair".

The children all came across to Blakeney where there was plenty of opportunity for adventure. Manor House had recently been a working farm and had many exciting barns and sheds to play in. The old Horse Pond (now the Duck Pond) was full of toads and frogs while a herd of pedigree black pigs were kept in the yards and the gardens had an orchard of Cox's Orange Pippin trees and soft fruit such as blackberries as well as all the bee hives. Sales of pigs and fruit raised much needed income with the apples being sent from Norwich by train to Jacksons of Piccadilly in time for Xmas when they raised 5p each. Mabel claimed that this income was needed to pay the school fees for herself and her two sisters at St. Felix, Southwold, Suffolk.

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Manor Hotel showing many features of its earlier existence as a farm and then as a home when Mabel Kay lived there and the Duke came visiting.

Mabel recorded that Prince Philip and Patrick played on the marshes and the girls either played tennis on the hard court at Priory (Friary) Farm, home of Commander and Mrs Jones, or joined the boys on the marsh. The boys would paddle across the creek at low tide to play on the sand opposite the newly built Blakeney Hotel. They would while away the hours surrounded by birds; all taken for granted. The National Trust was already here but there is no evidence that the children ever visited the Point during that summer.

Many years later, the Duke was back. By now he was very involved with environmental issues. In addition, he enjoyed shooting game and pursued these activities with his friend Major Aubrey Buxton who lived in the Red House, the Georgian mansion lying at the west end of the Quay in Blakeney. On these occasions he stayed privately, none the less, a number of press reports emerged including two that noted the following visits.

In January 1961, he made a visit with Charles and Anne. During the overnight visit he was recognized by a couple of workmen repairing a sewer on the Quay. The Duke spent the Saturday shooting on a nearby marsh with Major Buxton while the children visited Cley Nature Reserve. On another occasion, The Duke arrived by helicopter on a Sunday evening. This was the start of a two-day private visit to nature reserves in East Anglia when he was accompanied by Major Buxton.

The Duke and Major Buxton were Patron and Treasurer of the Council for Nature, respectively. The Council was formed in 1958 from the groundswell of activities involving scientists, government agencies and other concerned amateurs and naturalists. Determined efforts were being made to find the best way forward to involve national organisations and for them to accept their environmental responsibilities. Then in 1961 the Duke of Edinburgh and Major Buxton were two of the co-founders of the World Wildlife Fund with the Duke being the first President of the UK branch and later President of the International WWF after the death of Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands. Meanwhile Major Buxton was a Director of Anglia Television and was the initiator of the award winning documentary series, 'Survival'. It is not surprising to learn that the Duke was closely involved with some of those documentaries, presenting three editions during the sixties and seventies.

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Major Buxton became Extra Equerry to the Duke in 1964 and was made Baron Buxton of Alsa of Stiffkey in 1978. He had by then left the Red House in Blakeney and moved to Stiffkey where he first lived in the Rectory while Henry Williamson's old house was made ready to be his new home. Colin Cobon of Blakeney, looked after the wildfowl at the east end of the property that lay next to Morston. This occupied three days a week for Cobo (as Colin is more often called) with the British Legion taking up the rest of his time. Cobo also acted as a beater for Lord Buxton and recalls that the Duke made many visits for shooting each year. On these occasions the Duke never stayed overnight but arrived before dawn accompanied by security staff and, more often than not, the Queen and then Princess Anne who would pick up the birds during the shoot.

If you are interested in reading more of Mabel's account you will find a copy in the History Centre. It was written for her sons as *Memories of a Norfolk Childhood* and is filed under her married name, Mabel Simonds.

Pamela Peake, Honorary Member

The Pier Harbour at Blakeney

The following account is taken from the *Norwich Mercury*, published on 21st March 1835 and comes from the paragraph headed BLAKENEY & CLEY March 19th. Unfortunately, I have not found out anything else to do with this so I would be delighted if anyone else could supply more information about either the Pier Harbour Project or Lieutenant Howes R. N.

“On Wednesday se’nnight a meeting of merchants, ship-owners, and others, was held at the Fishmonger’s Arms Inn, in this town, when a plan of a Pier Harbour was submitted to their inspection by Lieut. Howes, RN. who in the most satisfactory manner answered any doubts as to the practicability of the measure. A document sanctioning the plan was signed by those present and will be sent to the various merchants and ship owners along the coast for their signature prior to its being transmitted to Lord Calthorpe, by whom an engineer will probably be sent down and if his report be favourable, steps will be taken to procure an Act of Parliament for carrying the object into effect. No place on this coast presents such advantages for a harbour of refuge, there being a greater flow of water here than at any point between Harwich and the Humber, and considering the great loss of life within the last three years, humanity demands such a measure.”

The *Norfolk Chronicle* for 14th March had a very similar account, dated Cley 14th March.

“Yesterday a meeting took place at the Fishmonger’s Arms Inn, in this town, of Merchants, Shipowners, Shipmasters, and others interested in the Port of Blakeney and Cley, when a plan of a Pier Harbour was submitted to their inspection and opinion by Lieut. G. Howes, R. N. Mr J Temple was called to the chair, who, after stating the object of the meeting, proceeded to show the dangerous state of the present harbour. Lieut. H. at the same time, and in the most satisfactory manner, answering any doubts that existed as to the practicability of his scheme. We believe Lieut. H.’s plan to be quite practical and from the time and trouble he has devoted to the object, and likewise he manner in which the meeting received his report it is likely to be brought to a favourable issue. A document was signed by those present and will be sent for signature to the various merchants, shipowners, & along the coast sanctioning the plan; prior to its remittal to Lord Calthorpe who will no doubt send down an Engineer to make a report, should which (and scarcely a doubt exists) be favourable, immediate steps will be taken to procure an act of parliament to carry it into effect. It is almost needless to add, no place on this coast presents such advantages for a harbour of refuge, humanity loudly demands it from the great loss of life during the last three years. There is the greatest flow of water at this coast of any place between the Humber and Harwich.”

One assumes that the Pier Harbour would resemble the later plans of the Lynn & Fakenham Railway in 1882 when they wanted to run a line out over the marshes to a new quay on the south side of deeper water of the Pit. Maybe the Pier would have done the same, particularly since emphasis was made of Blakeney being a harbour of refuge and that is the area where ships would have sheltered during a storm. The recent loss of life that was mentioned would have referred to the disastrous effects of the 1833 summer storm. It is also interesting to note that the date of 1835 coincides with the production of Palmer’s map of the harbour, with depth soundings, that accompanied the 2nd Report of the Tidal Harbour’s Commission, although there is no mention of a Pier on the map. That report, of course, highlighted the damage that had been done to the Pit by the embanking of the marshes which had been carried out as part of the 1824 Enclosure Act. James Spooner who had been a pilot for 21 years at Blakeney said that in the past “he has known 140 sail take refuge in one tide; they used to lie in the pit afloat, where

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were then 10 or 11 feet at low water, now there are not more than three or four feet, and two vessels are the greatest number that could now be there.” He felt the harbour wanted more backwater to improve it. Richard Mays, another pilot, gave that report the information that he had seen as many as 140 vessels anchored in the Pit, taking refuge from a northerly gale. He also added that that was impossible by 1845 because the Pit had narrowed and silted up so much that it would only hold 4 vessels. He concluded that “there is now five hours’ flood and six hours’ ebb, but the last quarter ebb had no scour in it, as it used to have before the Cley embankment and sluice were put up.” (Tidal Harbours Commission Appendix B p467 Evidence taken on the 28th Oct., 1845). The lack of scour would certainly have reduced the effectiveness of the Pier Harbour and may have been one of the reasons why they did not proceed. Lord Calthorpe was one of the beneficiaries of the Embankment Act and may have not been as in favour of the scheme as the mariners had hoped. It was also not clear where the finance for such a scheme would have come from. Whatever the reasons, the scheme was not proceeded with. However, it would be of immense interest to find out the details of what was actually proposed.

Jonathan Hooton

1953 Flood Letters continued

In the last newsletter, two letters about the 1953 flood were mentioned, the one by Nancy Gull having been published on the BAHS website. The other letter was published in the July issue of the Glaven Valley Newsletter by Alice Atkinson. Alice has kindly allowed the letter by her great aunt, Joan Barclay, about her experience of the flood in Wiveton, to be added to the History Centre Accessions.

This letter has been transcribed and is now on the BAHS website along with another letter by Margaret Spurrell about her experience of the flood in Cley.

The three letters may be found at www.bahs.uk/history-centre/collection/local-area-and-events

Richard Daley

The 1921 Census

The National Archives has announced that the 1921 Census for England and Wales will be published online at www.findmypast.co.uk on 6 January 2022. It has been the largest project ever undertaken by The National Archives and findmypast, involving over 30,000 documents occupying 1.6km (1 mile) of shelving. Digitising the Census records has taken nearly three years.

The 1921 Census not only follows the devastation and social upheaval of WWI it also offers more detail than all previous England and Wales censuses. Individuals were asked not only about their occupations but also their place of work, employer, and were given 'Divorced' as an option for marital status.

It is, in a way, the last normal Census that will be released until the 1951 Census is released in 2051 or 2052. This is due to the 1931 Census being destroyed by fire and the 1941 Census being cancelled due to WWII. The apparent gap of 30 years between 2021 and 2051 of a released Census isn't quite as bad as it might seem due to the 1939 Register. The register taken at the start of WWII has similarities to a standard Census although it was quite unlike a standard Census as it was continually updated. Some of the records in the 1939 Register are available today.

See www.familyhistory.co.uk/1939-register for details.

Richard Daley

The Cley 1914-1918 War Project - A second follow up

Having access to photographs of medals relating to Cley men killed in the Great War has spurred me to write these follow up articles, adding detail to my writing in the Glaven Valley Newsletter from 2014 to 2018.

Blacksmith's Mate J. W. Grimes

His 1914-15 Star was bought at auction by the medal collector: obverse (figure 1) and a clearly named reverse (figure 2). Just the one medal, and not the three (Pip, Squeak and Wilfred).



Figure 1



Figure 2

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My research for my article to go in the Glaven Valley Newsletter in May 2016 did not include my going to the National Archives at Kew, but along with the medal came Grimes's Service Record (figure 3).

309857 / Portsmouth 309857

Name in full: James William Grimes

Date of Birth: 19 July 1887

Place of Birth: Cley, Norfolk

Occupation: Blacksmith

Date and Period of C. S. Engagements.	Age	Height Ft. in.	Hair	Eyes	Complexion	Wounds, Sores, Marks, etc.
26 March 1906 - 12yrs	21	5.9 1/2	B. Cro	B. Cro	Fair	2 scars left forearm.

Ships, etc., served in.	List and No.	Rating	Sub-ratings.			Badges	Period of Service.		Character	If Discharged, Whither, and for what Cause.
			Rating	From	To		From	To		
Nelson	15 th 212	Sto 2nd				Sto 2nd	11 June 06	27 31 06		
Forward	114 26						12 June 06	28 Aug 06		
Furious	500 124	Sto 1st					29 Aug 06	28 Sep 07		
Victory	180 2514						17 Sept 07	14 31 07 18		
Glory	5 th 231						18 Sep 07	20 Apr 09		
Victory II	150 2572						01 19 09	21 Apr 09		
Lochary	502 29						1 Aug 09	10 11 09		
Frigate	15 th 1176	Act. Sto					11 Dec 11	28 Feb 12		
Victory II	500 2550						23 June 12	26 June 12		
Invincible	502 308						27 June 12	31 Dec 12		
Frigate	502 25	Act. Sto					31 Dec 12	31 Dec 12		
Victory II	150 1190						31 Dec 12	31 Dec 12		
Invincible	502 3						31 Dec 12	31 Dec 12		

N. P. 4060 / 1918 D. D. 31st MAY. 1918.
KILLED IN ACTION

PAID WAR GRATUITY.

Figure 3

What a mine of information is stored therein, the first details being those recorded at his signing on for 12 years on 26th March 1906, with his service number 309857 twice stamped - *Date of Birth: 19 July 1887; Place of Birth: Cley, Norfolk; Occupation: Blacksmith.* So, on leaving school at the age of fourteen he started learning his blacksmith skills at the forge in Cley, on the site of Picnic Fayre on Mackerel Hill. (My late wife Pauline in the mid-1950s was taking her pony there to be shod).

The first ship Grimes served on was *HMS Nelson*, an armoured cruiser built in 1876, which became a training ship in 1902 before being sold as scrap in 1910.

He signed on as a Stoker 2nd Class. Within five months, assigned to *HMS Furious* he was promoted to Stoker 1st Class. Four times during his Naval career he was on *HMS Victory* - not as grand as it sounds, but *Victory II (2)*, a shore based training

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establishment for stokers and engine room artificers. By December 1911 he was Acting Leading Stoker, and June 1912 Leading Stoker.

While on his first assignment on *HMS Invincible* (figure 4) in 1912 he was promoted to Blacksmith's Mate.

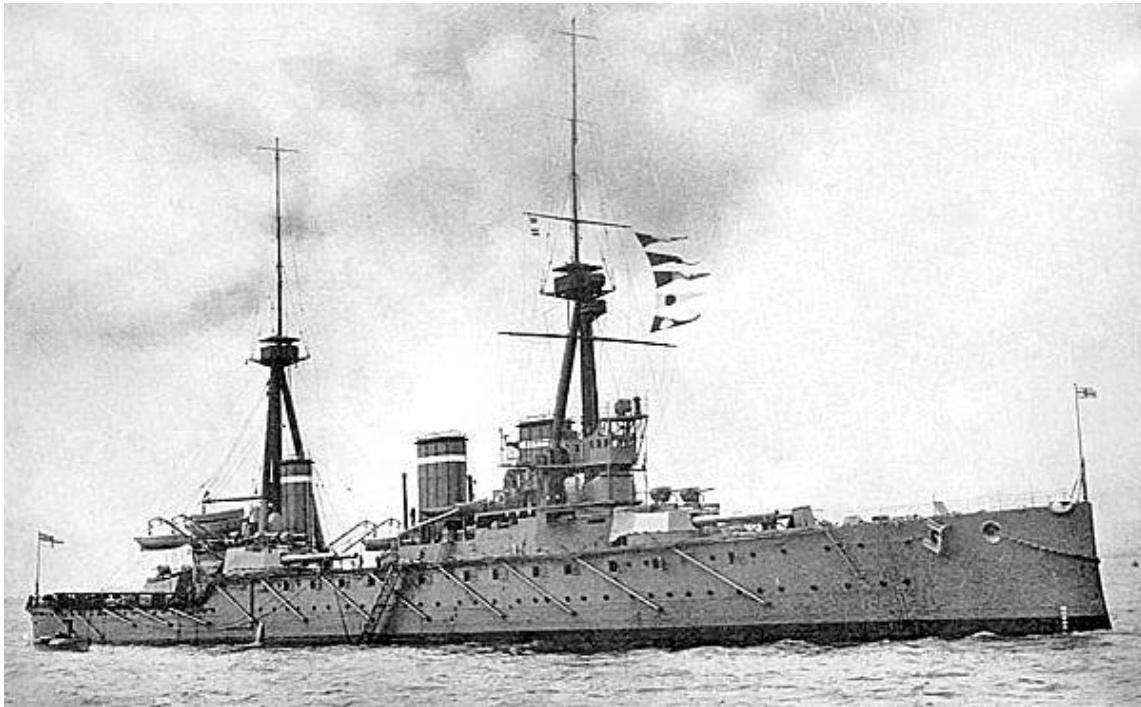


Figure 4

After a last four month posting to *HMS Victory II* he rejoined *HMS Invincible* on 3rd August 1914, the day war was declared. At the Battle of Jutland *HMS Invincible* blew up with the loss of 1026 lives. A rectangular rubber stamp conveys the sad information on Blacksmith's Mate J. W. Grimes's service record: D.D. 31st MAY 1916 KILLED IN ACTION. The rubber stamp saw much use as over 6000 British sailors died that night in the North Sea.

Raven Cozens-Hardy

With his family connections and status, it is not surprising that a small obituary on Lieutenant Raven Cozens-Hardy appeared in *The Times* (figure 5) only days after his death. The *Norwich Mercury* for 10th November 1917 printed a long article regarding a 'MEMORIAL SERVICE AT CLEY' when the community came together to remember those who had died in the war, 'whether they came from the hall or the cottage'. At the end of the service a 'special thanksgiving was said. At this point came the reading of the Roll of Honour, twenty-two names in all' – the last being Raven Cozens-Hardy.

OCTOBER 19, 1917.

FALLEN OFFICERS.

“THE TIMES” LIST OF CASUALTIES.

We have received news of the death of the following officers, in addition to those whose names have been published in the official lists:—

BEACHCROFT, Lt. C. S., Household Bn.	MAUDE, Capt. M. D. W., Yorks. R.
COZENS-HARDY, Lt. R., Norf. R.	MEADE, Lt. E. G. T., Hrs.
DALBY, Maj. H. E., R.A.M.C.	NEWALL, Lt. N., W. Gds.
DARBYSHIRE, Capt. G. H., R.F.A.	RITSON, Sec. Lt. A. S., Durh. L.I.
DE LACEY, Sec. Lt. J. M., W. Yorks. R., attd. R.F.C.	SALTREN-WILLET, Lt.-Col. A. J., R.A.
FANSHAWE, Sec. Lt. H. V., I. Gds.	BAYERS, Lt.-Col. A. W. F., R.A.M.C.
FROST, Lieut. R. W.	SMITH, Sec. Lt. A. C. V., E. Yorks. R., att. D. of Well's R.
GAYNE, Sec. Lt. E. J., Linc. R.	TETLEY, Capt. J. C. D., G. Gds.
HARDMAN, Capt. A., Yorks. L.I.	TWEEDY, Lt. C. F., Lan. Fus.
HARTER, Lt. H. H., G. Gds.	WAYMOUTH, Maj. E. G., R.G.A.
HILL, Lt. R. G., M.C., R.A.M.C.	WHEATLEY, Sec. Lt. E. R., R.F.A.
JAMIESON, Capt. J. P., R. Lan. R.	
MACLEOD, Lt. N., Can. F.A., att. R.F.C.	
MARKHAM, Sec. Lt. M. W., S. Gds.	

LIEUTENANT RAVEN COZENS-HARDY, Norfolk Regiment, who fell on October 9, aged 31, was the only son of Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Cozens-Hardy, of Cley Hall, Norfolk. He was educated at Kendal Grammar School and Exeter College, Oxford. He joined the Inns of Court O.T.C. in September, 1914, and received his commission in the Norfolk Regiment on October 21, 1914. A brother officer writes:—“He died perfectly, splendidly doing his job in that splendid, thorough and cheerful way which he always had in everything he did. I can only say that we have not only lost a perfectly splendid officer, but one of the most popular men in the unit amongst all ranks. I have already spoken to many of his men, and they one and all speak as if they had lost a friend as well as an excellent officer. Without the least exaggeration he is a loss not only to his regiment and the Army, but to the nation. There are very few men for whom I have had the liking and respect which I always felt for him.”

Figure 5

Cley Hall was the Cozens-Hardy home and they were Lords of the Manor of Cley and Letheringsett. The stained glass window in the north aisle in St Margaret's is dedicated to Raven Cozens-Hardy. (full page illustration in [The Glaven Historian Volume 17 2020](#)).

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The medal collector acquired Raven Cozens-Hardy's Memorial Plaque (figure 6), also known as the Dead Man's Penny. 1,385,000 plaques were issued after the First World War to the next-of-kin of all the British Empire personnel who were killed as a result of the war. The plaques are 4.72 inches in diameter and made of bronze.



Figure 6

Richard Jefferson

Sylvia Claxton's Scrapbooks

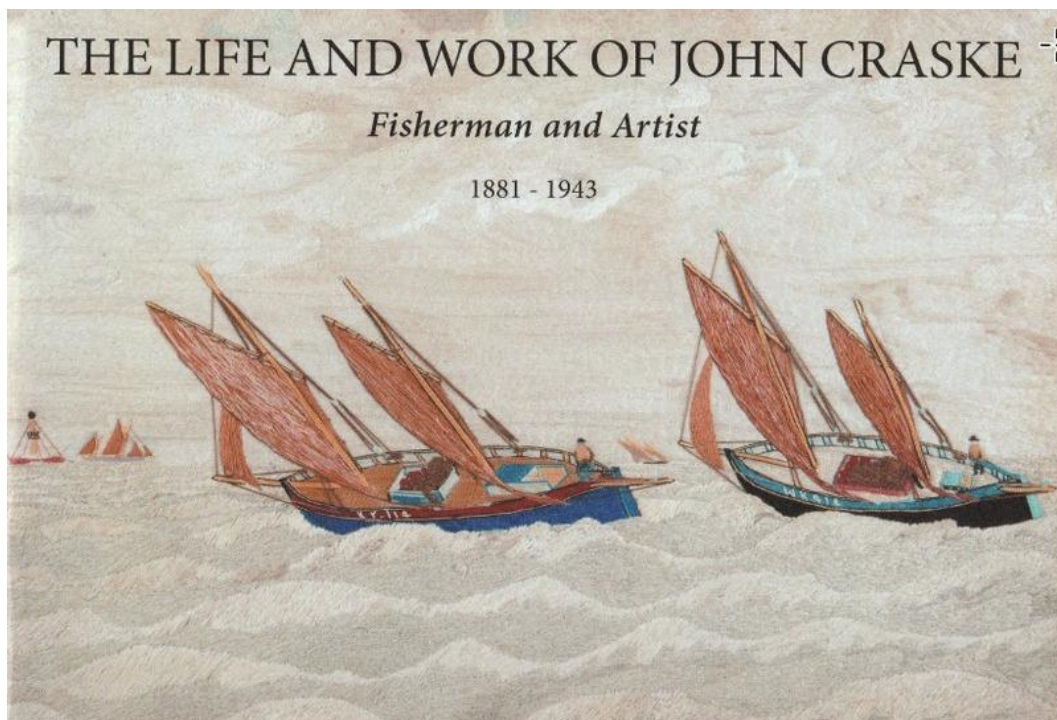


Sylvia Mary Claxton was born in 1920 and lived in Blakeney all her life. She died on 12th December 2020 aged 100 years; her funeral was held at St Nicholas Church, Blakeney on 8th January 2021. During her long life, Sylvia kept scrapbooks recording events in and around Blakeney. Her niece, Michelle Hewitt, has kindly donated Sylvia's scrapbooks to Blakeney Area Historical Society and they have now been placed in the History Centre, where around thirty other scrapbooks are already held. Blakeney Area Historical Society extends grateful thanks to Michelle for this donation.

The scrapbooks date back to the early part of the twentieth century and the first volume was started by Sylvia's father. He copied articles from the Eastern Daily Press in the 1920s by hand into the scrapbook, later pasting in cuttings from the paper. The early entries make fascinating reading: there was strong opposition from local fisherman to protection of terns, which they believed were competing with them for fish, and there was opposition from numerous sources to the National Trust when it acquired Blakeney Point. After the first few years, Sylvia took over from her father, following which the scrapbooks take on a consistent pattern. Each year starts with a page detailing the baptisms, marriages and deaths in the parish and newspaper clippings for the year then follow. The scrapbooks thus provide both a record of baptisms, marriages and deaths in the parish and also a record of notable (to the local papers at least) events in Blakeney and the surrounding area.

In addition to the scrapbooks, there are photographs, including a school photograph in which Sylvia herself is depicted, postcards and leaflets concerning Blakeney and Blakeney institutions. We plan to feature some of these in future editions of this newsletter.

Two New Books



THE LIFE AND WORK OF JOHN CRASKE: Fisherman and Artist, 1881 - 1943

The History Centre has received this new booklet about John Craske, a Norfolk artist who produced many paintings and needlework pictures of maritime subjects. It was originally written by Terry Davy in 1993 but Carolyn Coleman has prepared a new and longer 18-page edition with many coloured photographs and has presented a copy to BAHS.

John Craske was born in Sheringham into a family with a long sea-faring tradition. They moved to Grimsby where John left school for a spell as a deep sea fisherman. His parents then moved to Dereham where they opened a fish shop with John's help. In 1908 he married Laura Eke and by 1914 they had their own fish shop in Dereham. John was called up for war service in 1917 but soon developed physical problems which plagued him for the rest of his life - he spent much of it in bed or in a wheelchair.

In 1920, having been advised to recuperate by the sea, John rented the Pightle in Westgate Street, Blakeney, but after 6 months he and Laura returned to Dereham having found the cottage unsuitable because 'all they could see were the legs of people passing by'. In 1923 they returned to live in this area, in a cottage they had bought in Wiveton, but by 1926 they were back again in Dereham where John died in 1943.

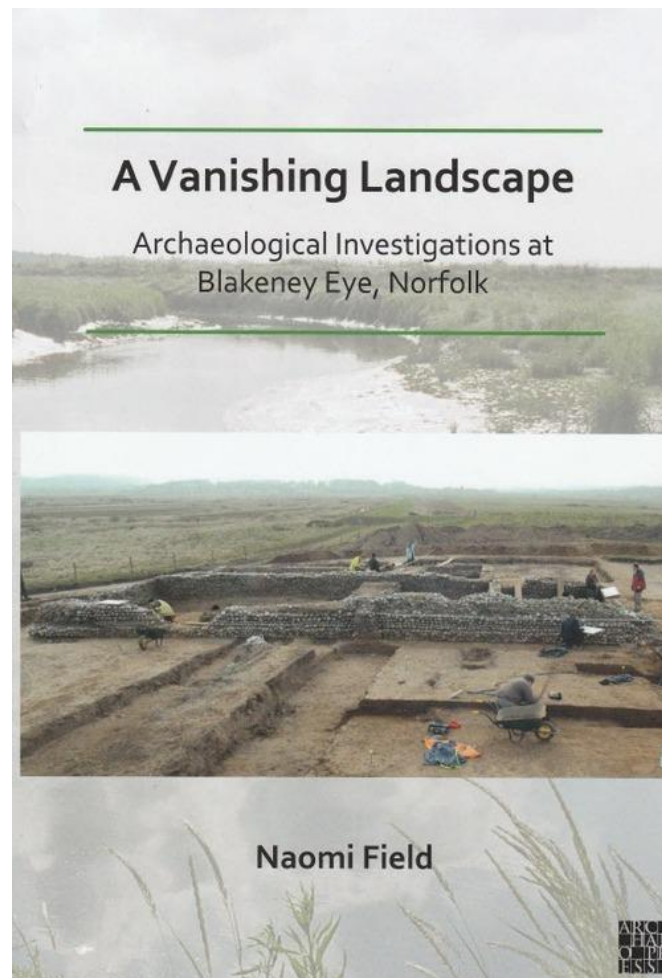
It was around his time in Blakeney that John began to paint, using whatever flat surfaces he could find - including the back of Laura's bread board. In Wiveton John began to make and sell model boats, which he continued to do while living for a while in Winterton. It was there, during the sale of a boat, that his paintings were

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'discovered' and one was taken to a London gallery where an exhibition of his pictures soon followed.

In Dereham one evening Laura suggested they make a picture with wool. On a piece of calico intended as a pudding cloth John drew a boat and Laura showed him how to do the needlework. John took to this method of producing pictures and soon developed his own style, including padded stitches for rolling waves. Embroidery soon took over from his painting.

His needlework pictures were admired during his lifetime and often exhibited after his death: in London, New York, and in Boston where one was priced at \$1,200. Occasionally a picture didn't sell, such as the large *Panorama of the Norfolk Coast* exhibited in London in 1941. That needlework, one of his most impressive, did not go to New England: it now hangs in the Shell Museum in Glandford.



A VANISHING LANDSCAPE: Archaeological Investigations at Blakeney Eye, Norfolk

The Chapel on the Eye

Those who have read the early issues of the [Glaven Historian](#) will know that some 15-20 years ago the so-called Chapel on Blakeney Eye, in the north-east corner of the Freshes, was the subject of various studies concluding with its complete excavation. In 1998 this Society was given permission by English Heritage to undertake non-invasive surveys on the Eye. Between January and May 1999 BAHS members surveyed the area around the Chapel using a theodolite to produce a contour map, a resistivity meter to produce a 'moisture map', and a magnetometer to map magnetic

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variations. In addition, a large number of molehills were examined to see what moles had brought to the surface – human digging being prevented by the Chapel's status as an Ancient Monument.

The results of these surveys were written up in the [Glaven Historian No. 2](#) for 1999. Peter Carnell's article described the results of the Society's fieldwork. The principal conclusion was that the highest part of the Eye contained no buildings other than the two cells outlined by flints protruding from the turf. These appeared to represent two different buildings: the northern one being larger and more substantial than the southern one built on to it later.

At the same time, records in the Norfolk Record Office were searched for documents relating to the site. Very few were found but a deed of 1596 did refer to 'the decayed chapel' which confirmed the antiquity of the description if not its validity.

Very soon afterwards a decision was made to dig out a new channel for the River Glaven before the existing one became choked with shingle rolling in from the beach. This would leave the Chapel on the seaward side of the new course of the river and therefore subject to erosion and eventual disappearance. For this reason English Heritage agreed to fund surveys of the Eye and the excavation of the Chapel.

The initial work, undertaken by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit (NAU), began in December 2002 with geophysical surveys and continued in January 2003 with a series of boreholes. There followed an 'evaluation' in the form of 51 trenches each 50 m long and 1.8m wide over the whole area of the Eye, with 6 more on the Chapel site. In trench 51, very close to the building, was a Saxon gold bracteate (medallion), but relatively little archaeological material was found away from the Chapel.

Even so, enough was found in one particular area of the Eye to warrant the more detailed excavation in 2004 of a small area, termed 'Area 1'. This produced struck flints and a scatter of Neolithic pottery, with 77 pieces in one spot, as well as a horse skeleton of indeterminate date.

The excavation of Area 2, the Chapel buildings, was carried out between September 2004 and March 2005 by Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS). The finds were substantial, with flint tools, pottery, sheep and cattle bones, fishbones, seeds, charcoal, slag, building material and a variety of metal objects. All needed detailed examination, using many different techniques, in order to obtain from them as much information as possible.

These studies are described in detailed, unpublished reports for the contracting organizations (NAU report No. 808 and LAS Nos 756 and 817). They were summarised for the [Glaven Historian](#) by the directors of the excavations. Chris Birks described the trench-based evaluation of the Eye in [No. 7 \(2004\)](#) and Richard Lee wrote about the excavation of the Chapel building in [No. 9 \(2006\)](#). Some of the conclusions about the Chapel site were tentative, partly because continual activities over a long period made the deposits difficult to interpret, and partly because detailed analysis of the finds, including C14 dating, had not yet been undertaken.

In his article Richard Lee suggested that pottery finds from the 1300s and 1400s could be associated with the more substantial of the two buildings whose remains lie on the Eye. After a period of disuse, the second building was erected on its southern side in the later 1500s and remained in use, together with some re-use of the first building, during the 1600s. The main building could have had a variety of uses in its

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long life; there was no evidence to suggest that it had ever been a chapel, although such a use could not be ruled out.

The new book

Now, 15 years later, the detailed studies of the finds are complete and the final report on all the excavations has been published by [Archaeopress Publishing Ltd](#), based in Oxford. The principal author is Naomi Field and 17 others provide technical contributions. The book is a thick softback containing 236 pages with 76 coloured photographs and numerous graphs, plans and drawings. The high quality presentation and a relatively limited market no doubt contribute to the retail price of £45, although an Ebook version can be downloaded for £16.

A printed copy has just arrived in the History Centre and a commentary on it will appear in the next issue of the Glaven Historian, due out next year. Much of the book consists of technical reports on the finds but there are also sections of 'discussion' which present an interpretation of the evidence. One conclusion is that the main building was not constructed until the later 1500s. The pottery and other finds from the 1200s and 1300s strongly suggest that a farmstead was present then but no clear evidence of a building could be seen.

Those with an eye for the 'bottom line' may well be tempted to turn first of all to page 216 and the sub-heading Chapel or no chapel? Alas, no firm conclusions are given about the use of the main building, there being 'little hard evidence for its use, and none at all to suggest that it was ever a chapel. Indeed the archaeological evidence points to an entirely secular use for the present building.'

The book is not solely about the excavations. It sets the Eye in its physical and geological context, it is complimentary about the studies undertaken by BAHS, and it describes the documentary evidence for the site. Anyone already interested in the 'Chapel' and its place in the history of this area might consider £16 well spent – or you could wait expectantly for Christmas!

John Wright

Recollections of a North Norfolk Schoolboy and His Second World War Years in India

Hazel Douglas has kindly donated a copy of her late father's memoirs. Vivian Harry High, of Salthouse worked at Pye's Garage, Blakeney and Cley Garage and they both feature in the book.

Anne Boleyn

In Ireland the 1533 law was only repealed in 2015. The law made it an offence, punishable by death, for any person in Ireland to speak against or in any way to criticise the marriage between Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn following his divorce from Catherine of Aragon.

This was one of almost 6,000 obsolete laws that were repealed.

Richard Daley

Interesting Websites

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission honours and cares for the men and women of the Commonwealth who died in the First and Second World Wars, ensuring they will never be forgotten. It is funded by six Member Governments.

Their work started more than a century ago building cemeteries at 23,000 locations all over the world.

www.cwgc.org

The War Graves Photographic Project

The War Graves Photographic Project have undertaken the immense task of recording, archiving and making available to the descendants, images of the graves or memorial listings of every service casualty since the outbreak of the First World War.

www.twgpp.org

The History Press

The History Press is the UK's largest dedicated history publisher. We publish across a broad range of topics and periods, covering the exceptional people, places and events that have shaped our lives today.

www.thehistorypress.co.uk

You may also sign up for their newsletter on their home page.

Richard Daley

On This Day: 13 November

1002

On St Brice's Day, King Ethelred II ordered a mass killing of Danish settlers. It was not in revenge for pillage, but in response to reports of a Danish conspiracy to assassinate him.

1312

Edward III, King of England (1327-77) born in Windsor Castle.

1553

Lady Jane Grey and her husband Guildford Dudley, his brothers Ambrose and Henry, and Archbishop Thomas Cranmer were tried for treason at a public trial at London's Guildhall.

On foot, they were led from the Tower of London in a procession led by a man carrying an axe which turned away from the prisoners, to signify that they had not yet been found guilty treason, a capital crime.

1613

"A dreadful inundation of the sea on 13th November", laments the historian Dugdale. The sea rose 13 ft Norfolk marshland sustained appalling damage. At Terrington the collapse of the sea banks was total and the town suffered enormous losses. Dugdale records that "a bridge was shattered, over 2,000 head of livestock drowned, 480 acres of land sown with corn were swamped and 13 houses ruined". During the same storm the three mile-long

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bank at Walpole was breached in 20 places. The total losses suffered by Norfolk Marshland exceeded £37,000.

1789

Benjamin Franklin writes "Nothing . . . certain but death & taxes".

1841

On this date was published [in the Norfolk Chronicle] the judgment given in the Consistory Court of Norwich, by Mr. Evans, in the suit, Loftus husband _v._ Loftus wife. The suit was brought by the Rev. Arthur Loftus, of Fincham, against Mary Anna Ray Loftus, for restitution of the conjugal rights of marriage. The Court ruled that Mr. Loftus was fully entitled to judgment, and admonished Mrs. Loftus to return to her husband.

1856

The Great Bell of Big Ben first chimes at the foot of the still unfinished clock tower outside the Palace of Westminster.

1901

Caister Lifeboat Disaster claims lives of nine lifeboat men off the coast of Norfolk.

1941

On the way back from Malta, the Ark Royal was hit by a torpedo from German submarine, U-81. The torpedo hit low, close to the boiler room, on the starboard side. Whilst it was initially thought the ship may be saved, water eventually flooded all three boiler rooms. On 14 November, fourteen hours after being struck, the Ark Royal capsized and sank. Fortunately, only one crewman was killed.

1945

Charles de Gaulle is elected president of France.

1956

US Supreme court rules race separation on buses in the state of Alabama unconstitutional under the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment.

1971

Mariner 9 is the first space craft to orbit another planet (Mars).

1982

Vietnam Veterans Memorial opens in Washington, D.C., featuring the names of over 58,000 US soldiers killed or missing in the Vietnam War.

Computer Tips & Tricks

This column of the newsletter, whilst not about historical matters, provides tips and tricks that may help in improving your use of your computer and the Internet for historical research and in general.

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Finding Text in Italics or Bold or ...

When putting together this newsletter I receive copy from contributors, normally in Microsoft Word. The newsletter is created using the website www.mailjet.com. On the website the newsletter is prepared and then sent to members and those receiving Society information emails.

When adding an article, the text of an article is selected in Word (using Ctrl-A and Ctrl-C, that is, Select All and Copy). Then the text is pasted (Ctrl-V) into the newsletter in Mailjet. So far straightforward. Unfortunately, any formatting of text such as underlining, bolding or italics is lost. It is, of course, possible to read through the original article and then update the text in Mailjet but it is easy to miss something so I use the Find option in Microsoft Word.

You may have used the Find option to find a specific word or phrase but it is also possible to do far more as in this example where it is used find text that is in italics.

As this isn't going to be of interest to everyone and to keep the size of the newsletter down, the guide for doing this has been put on the website at www.bahs.uk/website-and-computer-tips

Richard Daley

Non-BAHS Activities

BALH Talks

The Society is a member of the British Association for Local History. The BALH has published a collection of free ten-minute local history talks.

[Read more...](#)

Norfolk & Norwich Archaeological Society

The Society is a member of the Norfolk & Norwich Archaeological Society. Their series of online lectures ended in March and will start again in October.

Their talks are now listed in the diary of the of Federation of Norfolk Archaeological and Historical Organisations

[Visit Diary](#)

Norfolk Record Office

To view Norfolk Record office events please visit www.archives.norfolk.gov.uk and follow the Events link to Eventbrite (where you need to register for events) and scroll down to see events. Eventbrite is used by many organisations to control access to online talks.

The NRO blog lists their Autumn and Winter talks for 2021/22. <https://norfolkrecordofficeblog.org/events-winter-2021-22>.

The BAHS

Joining BAHS

If you are not a member and wish to join you may join online or download our membership form from the BAHS website.

[Click here](#) to join.

Information Emails

If you receive this newsletter then you are receiving information emails.

Members automatically receive information emails. Non-members may receive information emails by signing-up.

[Information Emails sign-up](#)

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due from 1st September for the year 2021/22.

Membership rates are unchanged at:

- Individual £12
- Family £18
- Corporate £25

Renewals & Standing Orders

Many members have renewed their subscription using standing orders and others have paid online using faster payments.

If you can pay this way it helps as it creates less work for the Committee.

If you are planning to renew, details may be found by [clicking here](#).

Helping the BAHS

The BAHS Committee has many things that it would like help with and you don't have to serve on the Committee!

History Centre

The History Centre is a small confined area. We are opening to individuals by appointment only. There is normally a charge.

History Centre Collection

The History Centre is always interested in items of historical relevance to the Blakeney Area. These may be old wills, deeds, postcards, Blakeney Regatta programmes, ... the list is endless.

Please don't bin it before checking if it is of interest to the History Centre.

Blakeney Area Historical Society

BAHS Committee

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