

Dragon Hall Heritage Volunteers & Local History Study Group NEWSLETTER No. 2 July 2020



Hello from the Heritage Volunteers. We hope that this second 'miscellany' will contain something of interest to you. In these lockdown days many of us have had to use the **internet** more than normally and some may prefer not to use it more than necessary, so we have provided a fair amount of 'old - fashioned' **print**, as well as links to websites. But we have become more aware of the wealth of material available on the net which would not otherwise be accessible, so we hope that you might try out a few of the websites listed, e.g. the stained glass ones mentioned below.

We hope also that you will **send in any items or snippets of interest**. We are aware also that this is a very significant period in our history and wondered if any of you would like to send in any comments and thoughts on '**Life in Lockdown**' as experienced from your own home, garden, Zoom meetings, family events, reading etc. It doesn't have to be anything momentous. Remember: we are 'making history'!

Glass Painters, Angels and Mother Julian

At the Jan 20th Study Group Richard Matthew and Elizabeth Koznian talked about the history of glass painting, especially in relation to the Norwich school of glass painters of the 15th and early 16th century. The **Robert Toppes window** in St Peter Mancroft featured strongly and many of us went away wanting to explore further. May Wallace's booklet in the King Street group's series is very helpful. She tells us that two districts of Norwich are associated with the glaziers: Coslany, with John Wighton working there among others and **North Conesford**, associated with the workshop of **William Heyward**. In 'Medieval Norwich', Chapter 5, David King writes that '*Norwich was one of the most important for the medium, rivaling the better known centre of York*' producing glass for not only churches, private homes and the Guildhall in Norwich but for many buildings in its hinterland.

Here are some useful websites for looking at some superb examples of **Norwich 15th century glass**:

collections.vam.ac.uk - enter 'stained glass Norwich' in the search box. On the first page are 3 exquisite roundels of 1480.

www.norfolkstainedglass.org: enter **East Harling church** to see a fantastic example of work completed c1465 to c1480. There is much more of interest on this site.

On a website you can see the images and the glorious colours so much more easily than in situ and you can zoom in to see the detail.

I also enjoyed reading '**Colonel Unthank's Angels**' from colonelunthanksnorwich.com.

Finally **a few words from Julian**, the anchoress, who died in 1416 just 11 years before Robert Toppes began his Dragon Hall alterations across the road from her cell:

“And in this he showed me a little thing, the quantity of a hazel nut, lying in the palm of my hand, as it seemed. And it was as round as any ball. I looked upon it with the eye of my understanding, and thought, ‘What may this be?’ And it was answered generally thus, ‘It is all that is made.’ I marveled how it might last, for I thought it might suddenly have fallen to nothing for littleness. And I was answered in my understanding: It lasts and ever shall, for God loves it. And so have all things their beginning by the love of God.

In this little thing I saw three properties. The first is that God made it. The second that God loves it. And the third, that God keeps it.”

“All shall be well, all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.”

Julian of Norwich

Heather Pfeiffer

The Conesford Photo Quiz – where and what are they?

(Answers at the end of the Newsletter)



A



B



C



D

Hon. Quiz Master & Photographer: Shea Fiddes

More about plagues: The Plague in Harleston 1626

from Redenhall with Harleston Overseers' Accounts [1]

There can be little doubt that the malady which visited Richard Middaye's household in **1626** was the true bubonic plague of the period. 1625 was a great plague in the metropolis and the mortality there was terrible. "In June", writes Whitelock, "by reason of the Plague increasing, the Parliament was adjourned to Oxford." In the same year occurred the great outbreak in Norwich. The infection is said to have been brought from Yarmouth in the end of June, but the presence of the disease in the latter town is not

recorded. The death-rate from **the plague in Norwich** reached a maximum of seventy-three per week. "The infection", says Dr Creighton, lingered on until December 1626 and the total number of victims was 1,421" [2]. There was also a plague at Lynn in the end of 1625. The severity of these outbreaks gave rise **to a feeling of apprehension and uneasiness throughout the country** and there are frequent references to this period in the records of parishes not themselves afflicted, as "the time of sickness" and so on. Fasts were observed and prayers offered for the cessation of the scourge and I think it probable that the "alteration of the Markett" at Harleston, in 1625, may have been some measure of precaution against infection. The town was, of course, in almost daily communication with Norwich and the risk was certainly great.

The contagion was brought at length by a stranger who, sickened with the plagues at Richard Middaye's house and died there, apparently in October. He was buried by the overseers for greater security in a *coffin* – with one exception, the first mentioned in our accounts, the general practice then being to bury the poor in a simple winding sheet.

Middaye and his family were **strictly isolated** in a building referred to as "the watch house" and one, Richard Buck, was employed to look after them. For this he received the liberal pay of 3s. 6d. a week and the whole party were amply supplied with food and drink, firing and all other necessaries. By these precautions, the plague was confined to Middaye's family, though a child of Robert Gooding was at one time under suspicion. In the single household visited, however, there appear to have been three deaths [3]. The entries cease at the end of December when "the watch house" was cleaned, fresh daubed with clay and generally renovated.

1. Candler, C. *Notes on the Parish of Redenhall with Harleston* (Jarrold and Sons, London, 1896) pp.105-106.
2. Creighton: *History of Epidemics in England*, II., p.525.
3. Mary and James, daughters of Richard Midda (sic), were buried 11th and 14th November, 1626.

Adrian O'dell

'Norfolk Archaeology'

The title of the journal of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society is somewhat of a misnomer as it contains nearly as many **excellent articles on history** as on archaeology. All the contents are now **available to read on line**, from as far back as 1847 up to 2008 at:

<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/library/browse/series.xhtml?recordId=1001327>

It's very easy to search for a specific topic: you click the SEARCH box (not the green one at the top, but the one a few lines further down in a dull brown); enter the topic you want in the Search box and click the search symbol. You'll see all the articles that mention your topic; you click on 'Access the PDF', then click on 'Download' in the green box and you'll see the original article as printed. You can even select an extract to copy and paste into your own document.

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A Good Read: TOMBLAND by C. J. SANSOM

Having resisted reading any of C. J. Sansom's Tudor detective series, I finally succumbed when it was announced that the next was to be set in Norwich at the time of **Kett's Rebellion**. I therefore felt compelled to read the lot, in chronological order, before tackling Tombland - a mammoth task, as all the seven books are pretty lengthy reads, but a very enjoyable one.

Sansom deserves his reputation as a historical novelist as I found his plots to be complex and convincing, and the historical background and depiction of real people feel authentic. The hero, the lawyer Matthew Shardlake, develops and matures as a result of his experiences, and I liked the continuity of the minor characters through the series.

Tombland can certainly be read as a 'stand - alone' novel but I enjoyed meeting again so many of Shardlake's old associates and in the Norwich of 1549. I found myself frequently **checking locations and routes** described in the text with the excellent map which is provided at the front and back of the book. Two of the minor characters actually live in a tenement opposite **Dragon Hall!** The main plot - the crime and its solution - is carefully woven into the development of the real events in Norwich in that momentous year. Robert Kett and the Rebellion have been thoroughly researched; his camp at **Mousehold** and the battles there, and in the streets of Norwich, play a large part in the book. This was a positive for me but possibly not for the general reader. Although I am not sure that a real life Shardlake would have taken the risks he did in relation to the rebellion, it made for **a good story!**

Mary Bradford

N.B. Please send in **your own comments** on this or any other book.

Apostrophe Corner

No doubt some of you were horrified by the apostrophe 'typo' in the heading for the item about **The Lad's Club** (sic) in the first Newsletter - despite a different, correct, version in line 4. After an eagle-eyed reader in my family had spotted it, I realised (not being an 'apostrophe fundamentalist'), that an apostrophe was not necessary - in fact rather pedantic - in the title of an organisation where there is no real possessive meaning. I call in evidence the venerable firm of **Jarrolds** (sic). If you look above their main entrance you'll see **Jarrolds** - but just inside above the glass doors you'll see **Jarrold** - inconsistent maybe, but not an apostrophe in sight! I rest my case. To show how usage is very inconsistent, I've also found **Sainsbury's** but **Morrisons** !

I also can't resist quoting from the 'Visit Norwich' website of some months ago - just a typo I'm sure: '*Norwich punche's above its weight*' easily done, as I'm all too well aware! It was soon corrected. Incidentally, *Visit Norwich* has now dubbed our area - or Conesford as I prefer to call it - '**King Street Quarter**'. It seems that 'quarters' are all the rage.

RJM

House History & Family History on line workshops from the Norfolk Record Office

The workshops are free but earlier dates are full so it might be worth trying to check regularly for future dates. Available at the time of writing are:

House History: Wednesday 22nd July: 11.00 – 11.45 a.m.

Family history: Thursday 23rd July: 11.00 - 11.45 a.m.

For full details and to book: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/norfolk-record-office-4418147045>

Parish boundary markers & 'Beating the Bounds'

Re the **photo quiz** in the last Newsletter: the photo is of parish boundary markers on the wall of number **168 King St**, opposite the Music House, aka Wensum Lodge. They denote the boundary **between St Julian parish and St Etheldreda parish** - confusing for two reasons: one is that 'Julian' is denoted by the capital 'J' and the second is that St Julian parish was and is, very unusually, split into two parts: the largest part centred on the parish church, but separated from this southern part by the parish of St Etheldreda. There are similar markers on the wall of the Music House opposite. But why are there several markers with different dates? The answer is that they were placed there as part of a specific parish ritual or event in a specific year, namely that of '**Beating the Bounds**'.



'Beating the Bounds' or 'The Perambulation' was a procession round the boundaries of a parish to remind everyone where the boundaries were, often by actually beating the markers with sticks. This was important since parishes had many responsibilities, such as looking after the poor. Thus for financial reasons especially it was important to know precisely where the parish boundary was. This ceremony was originally mainly religious, usually during the 40 days between Easter and Ascension Day and often on Ascension Day itself. The markers, often called '**leads**', were made and placed there specifically as part of the whole event.

Interestingly, in the parish records for **St Etheldreda** we have a record of the maker of the leads in 1786 and the payment for it. The accounts for that year show the expenses for 'going the bounds' on May 25th, a total of £3.11s.8d. This was all for '**victuals** and **beer**'; by this time the event had become a sort of 'parish party' and no doubt the free drink tended to encourage a good turnout. The maker is shown as Mr Foster, for an unspecified amount, for 'his truble and leads' – these being the markers. He occurs again in 1787 when he's paid £2.4s.4d, and again in 1789 for only 8d. This time he's described as a **glazier**; he would have worked in lead for making stained glass windows so could make the lead markers also.

There are also extant two parish markers for **St Peter Parmentergate**: both dated 1827, one in the Bridewell Museum and one in St Peter Mancroft church. We also have records of expenditure in seven separate years between 1706 and 1753 for 'ye Perambulation'

and the 'Peramalation' (sic) in **St Julian's parish**, for sums of between £2.18.6d and £4.19s.8d.

[Information from '*Beating the Bounds in Georgian Norwich*' by David Berwick – an excellent compilation of all the parish markers in Norwich, some 90 in all. Also from *The History of the Parish of St Peter Parmentergate* by Rev. W.Hudson]

Richard Matthew

Local Films 2

Black Anna kept The Jolly Butchers in Ber Street and was famous for her blues singing – a formidable lady! See her in action:

<https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-life-and-music-of-black-anna-1973-online>

Interesting websites No.2: 'norwich360'

https://norwich360.com/centralnorwich1.html?fbclid=IwAR1FFAIEt9VOFpPtiPbK30I56QOUxcHbdgwiTlhMeVKqZfJzy_mdr7Bx5pg

This consists of some stunning moving **panoramic photos** of 32 iconic Norwich buildings and locations, including Dragon Hall. It is pretty intuitive to use but to save you time:

Click on the building of your choice - wait for it to load. **Either:** left click and hold down while pulling the photo in any direction you like – but beware, it can make you dizzy! – **Or**, probably safer, click on the question mark and see simple instructions on how to use the various arrows – or just click on the arrows to move the panorama in the desired direction.

Some may feel it is somewhat of a toy or a gimmick but we feel it is worth experimenting with to become more aware of **the wealth of images** that the internet has made available. The clarity and colour of the photos is very impressive, for example, the glorious flowers in the Plantation Garden.



The Plantation Garden – now re-opened



The Mayor's Court Room in The Guildhall

Answers for Conesford Photo Quiz:

A Dragon Hall; B Mountergate (entrance to Co-op Shoe Factory);
C: Cannon Wharf, Novi Sad Bridge; D Howard House

News from Dragon Hall and the National Centre for Writing

The staff of NCW are all working mostly from home or are furloughed. They are planning for re-opening with social distancing etc. at a date yet to be decided. We don't know when tours will resume. But you will be glad to know that Chris Gribble, the CEO, has adopted **the garden** and it's in fine fettle; he has even planted some fruit trees on the south wall of the northern extension. Building maintenance has re-commenced.

Heritage Open Days 2020: confirmed for 11th to 20th September. Details not known yet.

David Vince

Some sad news of the death of David Vince on Wednesday 17th June on the Isle of Wight. Many of you will have known David as the Volunteer Co-ordinator at Dragon Hall from around 2006 and/or latterly as St George in the Dragon Hall Mummers play. David had retired to the Isle of Wight in the last year or two and had recently been diagnosed with leukemia.

David had had a varied career: a spell in the Army, then working as a professional actor on stage and TV, and finally at Dragon Hall. After that he became very involved in amateur drama in Stowmarket and was also much in demand as an adjudicator for amateur drama competitions around the country.



But many of us got to know him and appreciate his talent, sense of fun and large presence as the mainstay of the Mummers as St George in 'St George and the Dragon' which we performed at Dragon Hall, Strangers Hall, the Maddermarket and elsewhere – never with exactly the same lines!
