

Newsletter

HALESWORTH AND DISTRICT MUSEUM : XMAS 2011

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

An On-Line Future for the Museum

This year, as in previous years, the Museum has served the interests and requirements of many local and outside visitors. Queries about family history, the story of a locality or building and many other aspects of the past have all been answered by our team led by the curator, Mike Fordham. All this is the unseen part of the Museum service.

In the future we hope to build upon this good work and make the research and investigations easier to carry out by the setting up of a Museum website which in due course will make the available material that much more accessible from the comfort of your own PC.

The Museum Trustees have been lucky enough to recruit four new members, all of whom have expertise and skills in computer recording and information retrieval. We hope that, by the time we open for the 2012 season, this facility will be available. Details of how to access the new website will be publicized in the local press at the appropriate time.

This is a great step forward in the life of the Museum, made possible by funding from the Allocation Allowance of our Suffolk County Councillor, Tony Goldson. The Trustees express their great gratitude to him for recognizing the importance of the Museum and its work.

For those who do not have internet access at home, the Museum will continue to maintain a comprehensive catalogue of the collections held. The list includes archives of shops and businesses, maps and plans, photographs from 1882 up to the present day, including 24,000 negatives from the Robbie Page collection, all relating to the Halesworth area. There is also a refurbished folder containing the burial records of the Holton Road Cemetery.

All this is available by a visit to the Museum or, eventually, at the press of a button. We wish you all a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.



B. A. Holmes

THE WEALTH OF JOHN DE ARGENTEIN

Mike Fordham reveals the worth of Halesworth's Lord of the Manor

The INQUISITION POST MORTEM (an inventory of his 'home farm' and the rents and services due from the customary tenants) taken after the death in 1318 of John de Argentein, Lord of the Manor of Halesworth from 1307 before the following Jurors: Peter Goxlyn, John Goodson, Seman son of Isabel, William le Baxter, Thomas King, William Smith, Richard le Peddere, William son of Sarie, John le Palmere, Ralph Cliekfot & Thomas Prime.

The demesne (now Church Farm) was held by knights fee –

Capital Messuage & 3 acres	Value of fruit and pasture	2s 8d
Dovecote in ruins		
20 acres of arable land in one piece	Value per acre 10d	15s 8d
80 acres of arable land in another piece	Value per acre 3d	20s 0d
18 acres of mowing meadow	Value per acre 12d	18s 0d
12 acres of private pasture	Value	6s 0d
A certain Park 12 acres of underwood	Value	12s 0d
Wood called Harepark 4 acres	Value	6s 0d
A small grove called Holmere	Value	3d
A small grove of 3 roods	Value of underwood	1d
Aldergrove	Value	6d
Waltermill and Windmill	Value	16s 0d

Market on Tuesdays Value 10s 0d

Fair in the same place Value 6s 8d

Fixed Rents:

Nativity of our lord £4 13s 1½d Easter £4 18s 11¾

Nativity of St John £4 13s 1d Feast of St Michael £5 1s 0¼d

Other rents: ½ of pepper; one plough share value 6d; 32 hens value 1s 4d; 100 hens value 8s 4d and 168 eggs.

In the same place there are 118 carrying services on foot value ¼d each (4s 11d)*; 8 carrying services away from the Manor (18s 0d) and 9 services (1s 1½d).

There are in the same place 33 ploughings value 3d each (8s 3d).

There are 360 works between Michaelmas and Lammas by the short hundred and value per work ½d (15s 0d).

There are 68 works in winter and spring and the value per work ¼d (1s 5d).

There are 9 customary tenants who each reap in autumn 12 acres of corn or give the lord for each acre 4d (the sum is £1 16s 0d).

There are 8 customary tenants who each reap in autumn 2 acres of corn or give the lord for each acre 4d (the sum is 5s 4d).

There is a customary tenant who does 8 works in autumn and shall have for each work a loaf from the lord.

In the same place there are 17 boon-works in autumn for food.

The homage (customary tenants) will mow 10 acres of meadow for food.

The profits from the Court with view of Frankpledge £1 0s

Sum £29 9s 10½d

The lord also holds of William de Roos (Wissett?) 40 acres of land in Halesworth for 13s 4d and owes suit at Court for three weeks.

**The services or works were given a money value, which the tenant could pay as a 'quit rent,' thus allowing the lord to hire labour to perform the task instead.*

STAND AND DELIVER, HALESWORTH-STYLE

Vic Gray reopens the file on a long-forgotten Halesworth crime of Georgian times

On a November night in 1782, Joseph Crouder, a hickler (a travelling dealer) from Ellingham, was riding home late from Halesworth. He rode his horse up the Bungay road (now Station Road) and had ridden about a quarter of a mile out of the town when suddenly a shadowy figure loomed at him out of the dark. To his alarm he made out a pistol, pointed straight at his chest. A voice boomed out “Damnation to you. I’ll shoot you if you don’t deliver your money and what you have. Don’t stand to contend, for if you do, I’ll blow you in pieces in a moment.”

It sounds like a passage from a Georgette Heyer novel but the words spoken are exactly as they were recorded in a deposition or formal statement made by Crouder in the presence of two magistrates four days after the events described.

Through the darkness, Crouder could make out that the figure who had stopped him was wearing a military uniform. He knew that, at that time a group of men of the 20th Regiment of Light Dragoons were billeted in the town.

The 20th Regiment had been formed out of the Dragoon Guards just three years earlier, in 1779, at a time when Britain was not only fighting its rebellious colonists in North America but had declared war also on their allies, the French, Spanish and Dutch. In five short years, from 1775 to 1780, the size of the British army was increased from 45,000 to 182,000 men.

The dragoons were (literally) a dashing regiment, formed for rapid reconnaissance and patrol work. During this war they were never fully exploited, since the British could not overcome the problem of getting fodder and horses across the Atlantic. Rather they were retained here in case the European situation blew up and the country needed defending. It seems likely that their presence in Halesworth was connected to the possibility of countering any possible threat across the North Sea.

But here was one of the Regiment bent, it seemed, on highway robbery. Crouder quickly protested that he had no money on him, only a key, but the soldier would have none of this and thrust his hand into his watch pocket, pulling out a silver shilling, which Crouder quickly insisted was all he had.

The shilling seemed to satisfy the uniformed robber who turned his horse back towards Halesworth. Crouder – a bit bolder now – determined to follow –

at a safe distance. He did not have far to go. At the edge of Halesworth, on the corner of what is now Station Road, stood the King’s Head. The robber appeared to Crouder to have come no further than this and now he dismounted and went straight into the inn where he found several other soldiers, among them one Corporal Hemming, to whom he recounted the details of the robbery and told him he thought the man concerned was now in the fields behind the pub. Hemming went out in search and came back with the soldier, now identified as Private Thomas Palmer. Palmer was searched and a pistol found concealed in his jacket. It was not loaded and Palmer had no powder or bullets on him.

Palmer was straightaway marched to the Angel Hotel where the commanding officer, Lieutenant Savory, was found. Palmer quickly broke down and confessed.

Meanwhile, at another Halesworth alehouse, The Hawk, the landlord, Mr. Mayhew, was hammering on the door of Sergeant Hillyer, who was billeted there along with four other soldiers. Word of the robbery was spreading around town. It was only a quarter of an hour or so since it had taken place. Hillyer went off to search the two rooms in which his men had been lodged, two to a bed. In the first room he found both men present. In the second, only one was to be found. Palmer was the missing man. A search was then made of the arms in the house. He was able to confirm that Palmer’s pistol was missing.

Four days later, in the presence of two local magistrates, Thomas Manning and T.J. Woodward, Crouder the hickler, Private Palmer, Corporal Hemming and Sergeant Hillyer were all required to make sworn statements. Palmer was formally charged with feloniously assaulting and robbing Crouder of one shilling. He pleaded guilty.

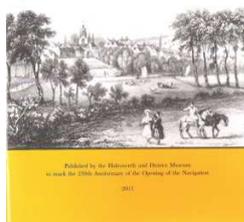
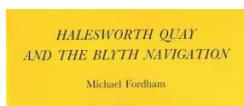
It would be nice to relate what happened next but here the story stops. The case never came to Quarter Sessions and there is no record of what happened to Palmer. It is only because a clutch of depositions from various Suffolk cases in the 18th century fell into private hands and ended up in the Suffolk Record Office in Ipswich (ref. HD1538/43) that we know this much. But at least this chance survival has left us a vivid snapshot of Halesworth life that otherwise would have been lost to us forever.

NEWS IN BRIEF

AT the Trustees meeting on 3 November four new Trustees were appointed. Pat Norris, Brian Howard, Sue Clapson and Vic Gray, all active volunteers for the Museum, stepped up to join the Trustees and to help steer the Museum forward over the next few years.

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HAVE you spotted the new Museum publication yet? *Halesworth Quay and the Blyth Navigation*, by our



Curator, Mike Fordham, is available at the

Halesworth Book Shop and at the Library, price £2.50. Or you could fill in the order form with this Newsletter, return it to us and we will deliver your copy. What better stocking-filler for this, the 250th Christmas since

the Navigation opened. And buying one will help the Museum to publish more, so it would be a Christmas present for the Museum as well!

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KEEP an eye on the Museum's regular displays in the window of Halesworth Library. Thanks to the enthusiastic support of the Library staff, we now have a permanent place in town to show off our wares. We aim to change the displays every month and include, as often as possible, mystery photos or objects so that people can help us identify them. Already, one new Museum acquisition which had had the team baffled, has been identified for us by this means as a tin-opener from the early 1900s, recognized by one

one exactly the same in her mother's kitchen, 80 or more years ago.



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The Museum is planning to restart its once regular series of local history lectures, beginning with a Spring Lecture next year. Look out for notices around the town nearer the time.

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YOU may have noticed that next year is an Olympic Year. How could you not. The Museum is considering a display on Sport in Halesworth through the Ages and we hope to work with local sports clubs and associations to bring this about. If you have contacts, or know of any possible sporting exhibits that might be loaned, please get in touch with Vic Gray at 01986 872437 or grayvw@globalnet.co.uk

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STOP PRESS

It's arrived!

www.halesworthmuseum.org.uk

It's only in its test format at the moment, so don't be too critical of either content or look. Nevertheless, it exists. The Museum website is now accessible.

Any suggestions for things we could or should include or items you would like to see on-line should please be addressed to the Webmaster, Brian Howard at brian@minter.co.uk

THE HALESWORTH AND DISTRICT MUSEUM

The Station, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 8BZ

Curator: Mike Fordham (01986 873030)

Winter Opening Times: Closed during January and February except by appointment.

February to April: Tuesday and Thursday 10am to 12.30pm.

The Museum is an Accredited Museum and a Registered Charity (No. 1002545)