

MINUTES OF THE 28th MEETING OF AYNHO HISTORY SOCIETY HELD IN AYNHO VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 28th APRIL 2010

Present: – Brian Reynolds - Chairman
Peter Cole – Secretary.
Ian Parkes – Treasurer

Altogether 31 members and guests attended.

1. Apologies

There were nine apologies for absence.

2. Correspondence Peter Cole

The Secretary said that for the fourth time in four months he has been able to use the census records to assist someone. This time it was Angela Andrews, who was researching her family history, and who came here, as her ancestors were both Wrightons and Bortons.

Regarding the Census details on last month's Appendix, about the vast majority being agricultural labourers, he has had an email from Dawn Griffis who points out that although all farm workers were lumped together as agricultural labourers, many of them were in fact skilled workers. One of her ancestors was a master hedger and water diviner, another focused in growing and training fruit trees. Others were specialised in ploughing, planting or harvesting, and some were responsible for looking after horses, cows, sheep and birds, etc. These were all more experienced than the "clodhoppers", who merely broke up the clods of soil after the plough had done its work. Dawn also mentions that at the school she never saw the coke stove used in her time (1944 to 1948). The large room was heated by coal and wood in two large open fires on the left wall. Everyone brought jacket potatoes, which were marked to identify them and placed on two metal stands directly in front of the fires.

Finally Peter Phillips has provided copies of the original invoices for the carillon, which plays the hymn tunes on the bells in the Church tower every day. This cost £180, which may have seemed a lot of money in 1913, but when you consider that it has been going for almost 100 years, it is only about £1.80 per year, which seems remarkable value. There are also invoices for removing, recasting and rehanging the eight bells in the same year.

3. Finance Report

Ian Parkes

The Treasurer reported that funds currently stand at £1238.11.

An invoice from Brian for £99.88 for book binding, batteries for the projector and a case for the microphone system was approved.

4. Chairman's Report

Brian Reynolds

Brian said that Angela Andrews had visited Aynho the previous Saturday. After visiting the Church, he had taken her around the village, including Bortons Farm. With Peter they had gone through the Wrighton and Borton family trees as far as her ancestors were concerned.

It had been agreed that the Cartwright Inn sign would be placed on the Village Hall wall just above the fire extinguisher.

The Fringford walk is now fully booked. Details will follow. On 4th July the Flora Thompson plaque will be unveiled in Fringford Church.

John Fulcher is hoping to visit Aynho on Wednesday May 19th.

Brian has arranged for the book of plays by Shackerley Marmion to be rebound. It is now in excellent condition. The Aynho school log book has also been rebound.

Brian attended a meeting of Banbury History Society and gave a presentation on the Aynho tunnels and Sydenham quarry.

Aynho History Society will have a stall at the Village fete in June.

Brian said that Ian had tendered his resignation as Treasurer due to commitments as a grandfather.

We ought to sort out a more formal structure at our next AGM, and get more people running the Society. In the meantime he will ask Eileen to collect the money at meetings.

5. The Cartwrights at Edgcote

Sally Strutt

Brian introduced Sally Strutt, who is the historian at Edgcote House, where she has worked for four years. She has just written a book about the history of the building, with an accompanying CD.

Sally said that the house is Georgian, built in the mid 18th century. It is a private house, set in an estate of about 1800 acres, located about a mile south east of Chipping Warden. The Church of St. James's is situated close to the house.

The Chauncy family had acquired the estate from Anne of Cleves in 1545. In 1742 Richard Chauncy, a wealthy London merchant, inherited it. During the period from 1748 to 1753 he had a substantial house built on the site of a former Tudor mansion.

The estate passed to his son, William Henry and then William's sister Anna Maria Chauncy. As she was unmarried it passed to Thomas Carter, whose mother had been Richard Chauncy's niece.

Julia Frances Aubrey was the second wife of William Ralph Cartwright of Aynho. She was a distant cousin of Thomas Carter, so she inherited Edgcote on his death. The Cartwrights came to Edgcote in 1847, and stayed until 1926.

There have been very few changes since the house was built, so it is very much the house that the Cartwrights would have known.

Julia was a busy person, with a large family, but she still found time to paint, enjoy poetry and read a great deal. Her stepdaughter Lili often visited, and Sally showed pictures of rooms at Edgcote painted by Lili and Julia.

Julia's eldest son, Richard Aubrey also moved to Edgcote, and ran Home Farm there. He had been a midshipman on board HMS Samarang age 14 in 1825, and he had visited places such as Cape Town, which he described in a letter as being bigger than Banbury. He saw slave ships, which had by then been banned in Britain. He brought back a cockatoo as a memento. As he grew up he became a quite gentlemanly person. He won the heart of a Mary Freemantle, and married her. They had nine children. The eldest Harriet never married, but devoted herself to charitable works, helping in Islington's Fever Hospital, while living in the Docklands slum area. When she died at the age of 80, she was known as the Grand Old Lady of Wapping. William Chauncy Cartwright became a diplomat. Emma Cecelia married Edward Slater Harrison of Shelswell Park (the squire before whom the young Flora Thompson signed her declaration of allegiance on joining the Post Office). Beatrice became the first female County Councillor and magistrate in Northamptonshire, and later Mayor of Brackley. Stephen Cartwright became Rector of Edgcote. Julia Mary Cartwright kept a diary for virtually the whole of her life, which makes for very good reading, with details of her life at Edgcote over many years. A large part of this diary has been made into a book, entitled "A Bright Remembrance". When she was 14 in 1865 she made a sampler, which was recently bought at auction and is now in the House. She recorded particulars of a tour of Renaissance Italy including Lake Como. In addition to novels, she wrote about croquet on the lawn, and dances, parties and marionette shows at Edgcote House. In later years of her diary in the 1880s and 1890s she records the impact that farming problems were having. Poor harvests, combined with cheap grain imports from America were hitting farmers badly. Tenants were struggling to pay their rents, land values fell, and she wrote that these problems marred her father's final years.

One of Edgcote's records is a terrier or land inventory in the form of a book started in Carter's time recording all the field names, tenants, rents, etc., with beautiful maps. This shows that in 1869 the estate had 1350 acres worth £2,500, but by 1890 the land was only worth £2,000.

The estate passed to Richard Aubrey's eldest son, Aubrey Thomas Carter Cartwright. He too really struggled to keep the estate going. He died quite young at the age of 55 in 1904. Ralph Cartwright took the estate over when he was only 24. He wasn't really cut out to be a country squire or estate manager, and he made matters worse by losing a lot of money gambling. In 1905

he was forced to sell off a lot of the original house furniture. Finally in 1926 Ralph and his wife Kitty sold Edgcote to the Courage family, and fled to France to escape their creditors. The Courage family invested in the house to bring it back to a reasonable condition. It was fairly recently sold to a retired businessman, David Allen, but he does not encourage visitors to the house.

Brian thanked Sally for her interesting talk, and mentioned that our Society has a copy of the book "A Bright Remembrance", which can be borrowed.

5. Forthcoming Meetings

May 26th	Those Coaching Days	Barry Smith
June 30th Greenwood	Flora Thompson Trail 10.30 am	Martin
Ditto	Landscape and Early Settlement in the Banbury Area 7.30 pm	Deborah Hayter