

MINUTES OF THE 94th MEETING OF AYNHO HISTORY SOCIETY HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, AYNHO ON WEDNESDAY 22nd FEBRUARY 2017

Present: - Rupert Clark – Chairman
Peter Cole – Secretary

Peter and Rupert presented the Constance Mary Irons collection, 31 postcards and 17 photos, which had been collected or taken between 1902 and 1920 by, the daughter of Fanny Watts who had been born in Aynho in 1840. These depicted views of Aynho in those times, and had been annotated with some family names and other details.

Also presented was a photo of Eli Seccull, the last of the stone masons in Aynho in his garden at 3 Skittle Alley, with his son Rupert William's wife Jennie and daughter Joyce in 1930. Also a picture of Arthur William Seccull, son of an Aynho man, who became a cricketer with the South African team, who played in a test match against Lord Hawke's England men who toured in 1896.

From the Cartwright Archive is the 1615 indenture which details the purchase of Aynhoe from the Marmions to the Cartwrights. Peter will approach Wikipedia and Aynhoe Park to update their websites around the detail of this transaction. We therefore have a set of signatures of the key members of the families. A copy of the 1641 mortgage on Charlton farm demonstrates that this type of money lending is far from new. William Ralph bought Newbottle Manor in 1796. The Hinton land registry shows that the Cartwrights owned much of the village. To emphasise the magnitude of the Cartwright family as landowners look no further than the 1925 mortgage on their holdings. Land and buildings across Aynho, Charlton, Newbottle, Clifton, Souldern, Deddington, Hinton, Cropredy and Adderbury is all detailed. Interestingly, their charitable commitments are also listed being the provision of bread to the poor and elderly of many of the above villages at on average £5 per year. Loans to cover repairs to farm barns but also the chimneys of Aynhoe Park £251.18.4 and installation of electric light to the house and immediate building £2115.9.4 are also recorded. Until the Land Registry centralised records, each property on this document would have had a copy when it was sold off, as many were in 1941.

In addition, photographs of and taken by Sir Fairfax Leighton Cartwright were presented recording his travels across Portugal (including military exercises in 1904), Mexico, Persia and Germany pre WW1. This was during his time with the diplomatic service. Maria (Chigi) is often seen in the photos. Held in the Cartwright archive are a number of postcards (some signed and autographed), from a little earlier of German and London based actresses. Certainly there was the potential for scandal as it was not unknown for aristocrats to follow their hearts and marry below their stations. A study the lives of these actresses show a range of singing, dance and performance skills and also huge highs and the inevitable insecurity of the life style.

Photographs of the graffiti on the Church exterior walls were presented, many of these marks are recognisable as initials and from the style would be late C19th. Remember that the church walls were covered in ivy in the late Victorian period so many of the marks probably pre date, the earliest being 1770.

Again from the Cartwright Archive, excerpts of a Cartwright child's exercise books were shown (possibly Victorian or earlier). History included the Norman invasion and Wars of the Roses. Maths included compound interest calculations; and as a reminder that evening entertainment was often self-generated, notes on how to perform card tricks.

March meeting - The remarkable story of Stowe House