

Soldiers in the Town



In the Market Pace



On Church Plain

Cavalry arriving in Reepham

Passing Gibbs shop



....then on through the Market Place



Army Cyclists on parade in the Market Place



Entertainment in the Market Place



Reepham Town Hall transformed into a hospital ward



This item appeared in the Thetford & Watton Times on 5 December 1914

transcribed on following page

REEPHAM.

WOUNDED SOLDIERS.—The Parish Hall is now occupied by wounded soldiers. Under Dr. E. V. Perry's supervision, it has been transformed into an excellent hospital. The large room of the hall has been comfortably fitted up as a hospital ward, containing at present twelve beds. The small room at the back of the ward has been furnished as a sitting-room for convalescent soldiers, while the ante-room has been comfortably fitted up as a nurses' sitting-room, and the whole is warmed by means of a hot water installation. The Boy Scouts' Club-room, placed at the convenience of the local hospital authorities by the Scoutmaster, Mr. Sam Bircham, affords an excellent kitchen, being close to the hospital. This has been fitted up with cooking stoves and all culinary requisites. Thus equipped, the institution is complete with lavatories and bathroom. Two trained nurses have been engaged, who will be assisted by nurses attached to the Eynsford Red Cross Society. Miss S. Kendrew, who has been appointed matron, will be assisted by Miss Daisy Bruce. Lady Grace Barry, as president of the Eynsford detachment of the Red Cross Society, and the Rev. W. A. Partridge, who has undertaken the hon. secretaryship, have rendered valuable assistance. Dr. E. V. Perry has been appointed the resident medical attendant. The patients are conveyed from Norwich in motor cars lent by local gentlemen. The first batch of wounded arrived on Thursday, 25th ult.

REEPHAM

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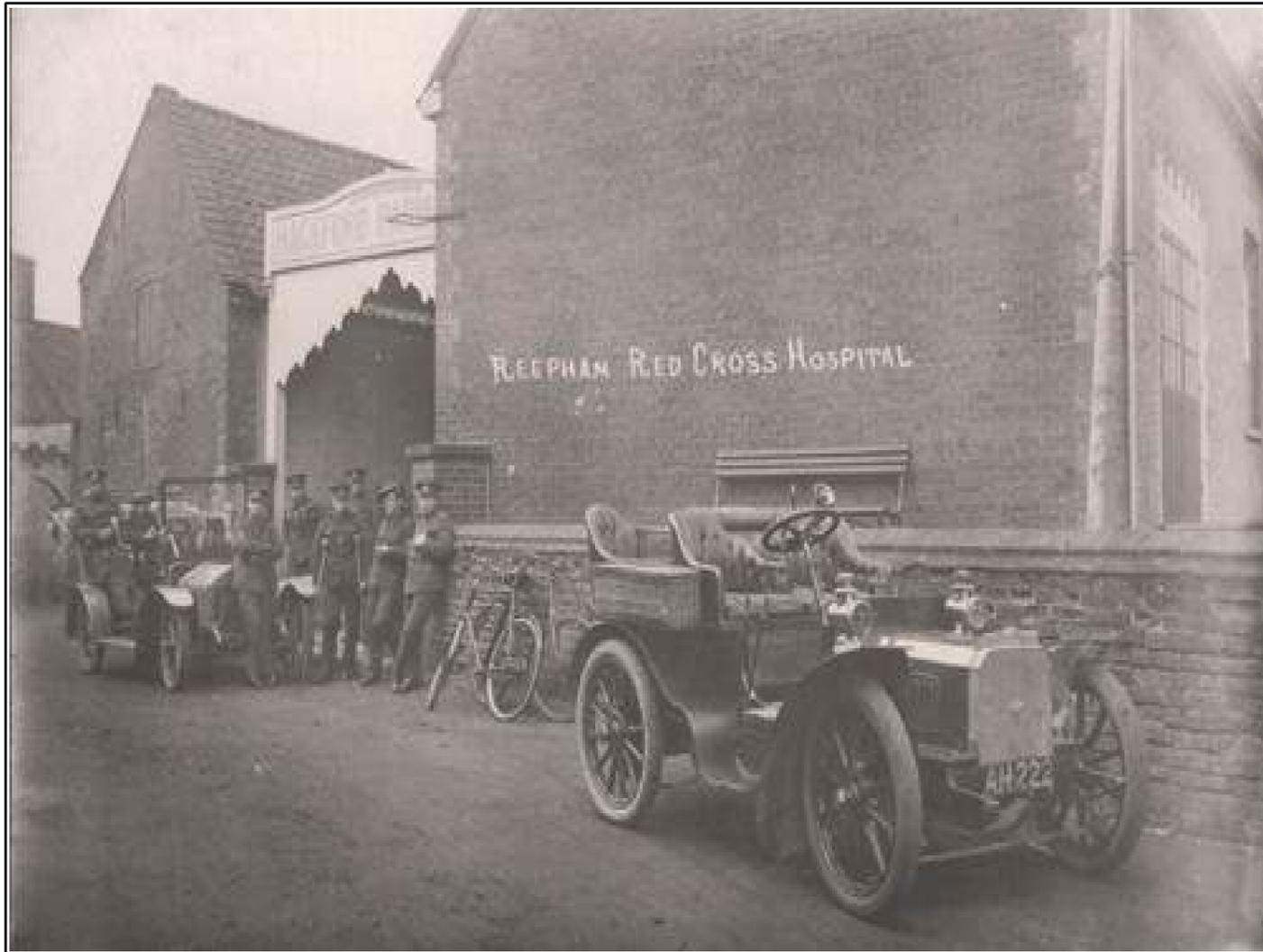
[Sarah Kendrew was the daughter of John Kendrew who had purchased The Ollands in the 1880s. Daisy Bruce was the sister of Agnes (Nan) Bruce. Agnes had married Samuel Bircham's son Francis in 1903.]

This second image of the parish hall was published in the British Farmers Red Cross Fund booklet published about 1917.



Veteran car with local connection still on the road

The Reepham Life 2018 Calendar for February showed recovering wounded soldiers from the First World War outside Reepham Town Hall, then known as Hackford Parish Hall.



Although we could not identify any of the soldiers, we found out some interesting information about the car in the foreground, AH222.

Due to the persistence of Reepham Archive volunteer Ann Middlemas we found that this car was still in existence and was well looked after. It has competed in the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run in more than 50 occasions since 1936.



The London to Brighton Veteran Car Run was first organised in 1896 to celebrate the Red Flag Repeal. In that year the speed limit was increased from 4 mph on open roads and from 2 mph in towns to 14 mph.

To qualify for entry in the modern run, cars need to have been built no later than 1905.

In the top photograph you can see the pannier baskets, still in evidence in the modern picture.

AH222 is a Peugeot Type 49 which left the Peugeot works in 1902.

The current owner tells us that it still has its original engine, wooden chassis and body – amazing for a car of its age and it was capable of speeds up to 25 mph.



Outside Harrods in 2018



2019



At the start of the Veteran Car Run 2024

Nurses



Mabel Neale Dewing 1890-1974



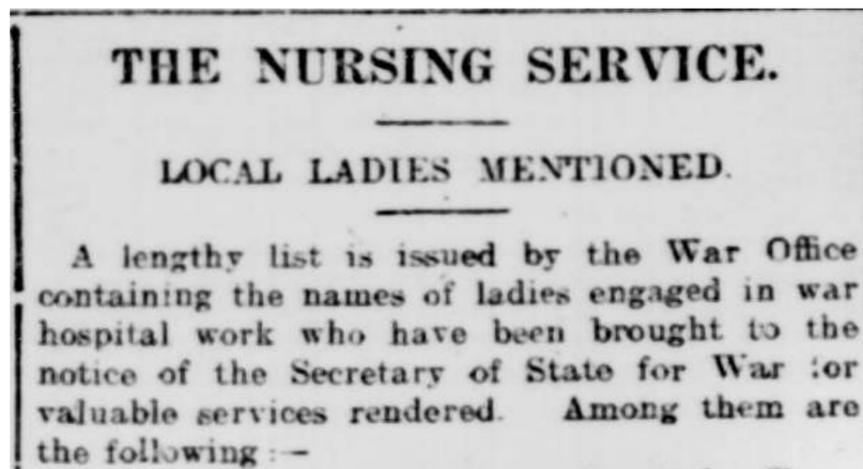
Mabel was the younger daughter of Martin Luther Dewing and his wife Annie.

A framed photograph in Reepham Archive is annotated "Blanche Dewing" and has always been believed to be accurately named.

British Red Cross records from WWI reveal that it was Mabel Dewing, not her older sister Blanche, who worked at Reepham VAD Hospital from January 1915, soon after the first patients arrived to recuperate, until April 1919.

An article in the Downham Market Gazette in October 1917 listed all the hospital staff who had 'rendered valuable service'.

This explains the 'Mentioned' entry at the bottom of Mabel's Red Cross record.



Deacon Miss G., Acting Staff Nurse, Norfolk War Hospital; Dent Mrs. M., Nursing Member, Auxiliary Hospital, Colne House, Cromer; Dewing Miss M. N., Nursing Member, Auxiliary Hospital, Reepham; Dowse Miss E. A., Matron, Q.A.I.M.N.S.R. (retired), Lakenham Military Hospital, Norwich; Dunell Mrs. M., Matron, Auxiliary Hospital, Garboldisham;



Rec'd 3 1 MAY 1919
NORFOLK 52

Surname Dewing

Christian Names Mabel Neale (Mr., Mrs. or Miss)

Permanent Address: The Nest, Hackford
Nr Norwich.

Date of Engagement Jan 1915 Rank Nurse Pay

Date of Termination April 12th 1919 Rank " Pay

Particulars of Duties Nursing

Whether whole or part time, and if latter No. of hours served permanent

Previous engagements under Joint War Committee, if any, and where

Honours awarded Mentioned.

By the time of the census in 1921 Mabel was a assistant matron at Homerton Training College, Cambridgeshire. Five years later, on New Year's Eve Mabel was on board the Mantua, a P & O ship sailing for Hong Kong. Her home address is given as Brighton, Sussex. In Hong Kong she worked at the Diocesan Girls' School in Kowloon.

Name of Ship, "MANTUA"	2	Date of Departure	31st December 1926.	1926			
Steamship Line	P.&O.S.N.CO.	Where Bound	Yokohama				
NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF BRITISH PASSENGERS EMBARKED AT THE PORT OF London							
Dewing	Miss Mabel Neale	9 Percival Terrace, Brighton	Hong Kong	Assistant Matron	36	1	Hong Kong
Neale	Walter Edward	74 York Rd. St. Yermouth	Bombay	Master Mariner	34	1	India

In 1928 the following notice appeared in the London & China Express. Mabel had married the Rev. Charles Brodie Shann. Charles had already spent time working for the Church Missionary Society, travelling extensively, and also, in the 1930s, taking posts in Yorkshire. They returned to Hong Kong in 1945 where Charles was Archdeacon of Victoria.

Shann—Dewing.—Jan. 12, at Hongkong, the Rev. Charles B. Shann, C.M.S., to Mabel N., daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Martin Dewing, of Reepham, Norfolk.

In 1947 Charles and Mabel returned to England again, first living in Yorkshire then finally taking up residence in Salisbury when Charles was appointed as Vicar of Farley with Pitton.

SHANN, Charles Brodie"	63	Underwood, W. Witton	Clerk in Holy Orders
" Mabel Neale "	57	Leyburn Yorks.	Housewife Hong Kong

This news appeared in the Western Gazette in September 1947.

Diocese of Salisbury
Recent Appointments

The new Vicar of Farley with Pitton will be the Rev. Charles Brodie Shann, who was curate of Christ Church, Clifton, from 1908 to 1910. He then went to China for the C.M.S. In 1932 he returned to this country, and was curate of Knaresborough from 1932 to 1935, and vicar of Bolton-on-Swale from 1935 to 1945, when he returned to China and was Archdeacon of the diocese of Victoria until quite recently.

Charles died in Salisbury in 1960. Mabel's life ended in a nursing home in Sheringham in 1974.

SHANN, Mabel Neale of Sun Ct Nursing Home 1 Morris St Sheringham Norfolk died 3 June 1974 Probate Winchester 11 July £12772 743310079L

Below is Mabel's admission record when she started at St. Mary's School on Norwich Road in 1895. Her older sister, Blanche is entered a few rows above.

417	12	Moore Lybil		Reepham	Lebanon	90	4	16		
418	95	18	Dewing Blanche	Martin	Reepham	86	10	8	Reepham Rd	1895, 1896, 1897, 1898-9
419	1	14	Elle William	Albert	Witchingham	88	10	19		1897, 1898-9, 1900
420			Whel			87	3	21		1897, 1898-91
421	3	18	Barry			90	12	25	No school	1899
422			Dewing Mabel Neale	Martin	Reepham	90	4	27		1898, 1899, 1900
423		19	Loke Hilda Maria Estrode	Benjamin	Jordan	90	2	2		
424		25	Long Hilda	Thomas	Boston	91	1	12		

Entry from the National School Admission Registers & Log-Books 1890

In 1911 Mabel was living with her parents in Reepham Moor and helping her father in his grocery shop.

(For order of entering names see Examples on back of Schedule.)	1st Males	of Females	Age	Sex	Married	Single	Widow	Divorced	(See Instructions 1 to 3 and Examples on back of Schedule.)	State what body. (See Instruction 9 and Examples on back of Schedule.)	(Name of address employing others not working for a trade employer.)	Wales, state whether "Resident" or "Visitor" in this Country.	"Russian," etc.	100
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
1	Martin Luther Dewing	Head	49	Married	25	2	2	-	General Shopkeeper, Grocery	Employer	At Home	Swanton Norfolk	British subject	
2	Annie Lane Dewing	Wife	50	Married	25	2	2	-	Housewife	Worker	At Home	Lyng Norfolk	British subject	
3	Mabel Neale Dewing	Daughter	20	Single					Shop assistant	Worker	At Home	Witchingham Norfolk	British subject	
4														
5														

England & Wales Census 1911

Her father Martin Dewing ran a grocery shop in Reepham Moor. The photograph shows the row of cottages in Reepham Moor with adverts for Robin Starch and Zebra Grate Polish.



Blanche Dewing 1886 - 1950

In 1911 Blanche was registered as a school teacher boarding in the household of postman Robert Leeds in St. Nicholas Street, Dereham.

(For order of entering names see Examples on back of Schedule.)		Ages of Males.	Ages of Females.	How many write "under one."	Born Alive.	Still Living.	How have Died.	(See Instructions 1 to 8 and Examples on back of Schedule.)	(Government, Municipal, etc.) state what body. (See Instruction 9 and Examples on back of Schedule.)	(that is neither employing others nor working for a trade employer.)	Home.	born elsewhere than in England or Wales, state whether "Resident" or "Visitor" in this Country.	("German," "Russian," etc.)	
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
1	Robert Leeds	Head	58	Married 31.	3	2	1	Postman	403	0	Wife	Norfolk Dereham		
2	Mary Ann Leeds	Wife	55	Married 31.	3	2	1					Norfolk Dereham		
3	Ernest Leeds	Son	23	Single				P. O. Clerk	402	0		Norfolk Dereham		
4	Blanche Dewing	Boarder	25	Single				School Teacher	411	0		Norfolk Dereham		
5														
6														

Ten years later she was living in Shalford, near Guildford in Surrey, teaching at Gosden House School, Bramley. The building had been bought in 1919 with money bequested by Lord Wandsworth to provide education for orphans "with an agricultural background" and opened as Gosden House School in November 1920 with a roll of 17 children.

on back hereof.)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	No. 2.	(See Instructions 3 to 11 and Examples.)	(See Instructions 3 to 8, 11, and Examples.)	(is retired or out of work.)
			years, months.					(a)	(b)	(c)	(m)
1	Mary Margaret Mill	Head	57 10	Single	Wingfield Herbs	British		Own account			At home
2	Blanche Dewing	Boarder	39 8	Single	Norwich Nob. G.	British		Teacher	450/6	Trustee of Lord Wandsworth Mansions	Gosden House Shalford Bramley 6794/12

Blanche was still a teacher at Gosden House in 1939, living in Kerry Cottage.

Lord Wandsworth Schol	Kerry Cottage Bramley	147	1	Dewing Blanche E	F	80th 87	8	Resident School Mistress
Gosden House Bramley	148	1	Boutcher John	M	100th 45	10	Resident School Mistress	

Blanche's last recorded address from about 1947 was in Brighton, where she may have retired. Later, presumably needing care she became a resident at a nursing home in Salisbury, near where her sister Mabel was living.

DEWING.—Blanche Emma (Peg), formerly of Lord Wandsworth Preparatory School, Gosden House, Bramley, at a nursing home in Salisbury, on January 8th, 1950.

from The Surrey Advertiser

DEWING Blanche Emma of 125 Marine Parade Brighton spinster died 8 January 1950 at The Spero Nursing Home Campbell-road Salisbury Probate Lewes 18 February to Barclays Bank Limited. Effects £2428 2s. 8d.

from Probate Records

Love in the air at WWI hospital



Frank and Ethel Leiper, pictured probably in 1918 to celebrate their marriage

Previously, the Reepham Archive had no records of any of the soldiers who came to Reepham to recover from their wounds during the First World War. There are several photographs that record 30 or more faces, but no names.

In 2022 we were intrigued and pleased to receive an enquiry: "Did we have any records about Frank Leiper and Ethel Keeley who met in Reepham during World War I?" This was soon followed with further details and photographs.

We learnt that Ethel died young, only 36, but her daughter, now 98, wanted to learn more about her parents. This set the Archive volunteers on a flurry of research to find out more.

Their grandson, who sent the initial enquiry, visited Reepham the summer of 2023 and spent time walking around the town, visiting Hackford House, the gardens, the Market Place, the town hall and the churches that his grandparents would have known more than 100 years ago.

We found that Ethel Keeley was listed in the information given with a photograph of all the VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) hospital staff taken in the gardens of Hackford House (the present-day Bircham Centre, Market Place, Reepham). Sadly, she is named as the night sister and must have been off-duty when the photograph was taken as none of the nurses look like her.

Red Cross records confirm that Ethel was indeed engaged as a night sister from October 1916 until June 1918 in Reepham VAD Hospital. On her record she is named as Mrs. Ethel Leiper. The stamped date of 31 May 1919 tells us when these record cards were finalised ready for filing away and by that date Frank and Ethel were married.

Surname	Leiper	Rec'd 1 MAY 1919	NORFOLK 52
Christian Names	Ethel		(Miss Mrs. or Miss)
Permanent Address:	15 Dufford St Timley Sheffield		
Date of Engagement	Oct 1916	Rank	Nt Sister (Pay. Joint War Committee)
Date of Termination	June 1918	Rank	
Particulars of Duties	Night Sister		
Whether whole or part time, and if latter No. of hours served			
Previous Engagements under Joint War Committee, if any, and where	?		
Honours awarded			

Frank Leiper 1888-1960

Frank's army records show he was enlisted with the Glasgow Pals Battalion in January 1915 and sent overseas. He was wounded twice, in 1916 and 1917, and it is not known after which incident he came to Reepham.

Serving in the 17th Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry, with the rank of sergeant, Frank was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal in 1917, and demobilised and transferred to the Army Reserve in 1919.

We could not find a face to match Frank in any of our photographs but we did discover that they married in Edinburgh in 1918 and that Ethel gave her occupation as certificated nurse at the Red Cross Hospital, Reepham, Norfolk. Frank's occupation is shown as a farmer but he is still recorded as a company sergeant major of the Highland Light Infantry.
Information above compiled by Ann Middlemas



Ethel's first 'pink card' giving June 1915 as the starting date, probably as a temporary nurse.

A Sheffield address is given with a later address in Warrington. Ethel grew up in Sheffield. After their marriage Frank and Ethel lived in Warrington where Ethel died in 1926 after having had three children. Frank married a second time to Ethel's younger sister Minnie. Frank was a credit draper - Items of drapery would have been bought on credit from the drapery shop and he was responsible for collecting the weekly payments.

Surname *Leiper* Reg'd 1 OCT 1919
 Christian Names *Ethel* (Mrs. or Miss)
 Permanent Address: *40 Mrs. Keeley 25 Rhodes Street Warrington, Lancs. 573. Attercliffe Common Sheffield*
 Certificate No. _____ Age when engaged *25*
 Date of Engagement *10. 6. 15* Rank *T.N* Pay _____
 Date of Termination *13. 4. 18* Rank *T.N* Pay _____
 Previous engagements under Joint War Committee, if any, and where _____
 Dept. for References *T.N.*
 Honours awarded _____
 Character _____ *25 Rhodes St Warrington Lancs.*

Frank and Ethel's Marriage Record in January 1918

1918	(Signed) <i>Frank Leiper</i>	39	<i>Bridgton</i>	<i>Robert Leiper</i>	(Signed) _____	1918
on the <i>fourteenth</i>	<i>Frank Leiper</i>		<i>Southdown</i>	<i>James</i>	<i>William Dick</i>	<i>January</i>
day of <i>January</i>	<i>James</i>		<i>St. Andrew</i>	<i>James</i>	<i>Minister at</i>	<i>15</i>
at <i>the house</i>	<i>Wm. H. Leiper</i>		<i>stated at</i>	<i>Mary Ann Leiper</i>	<i>Widdington</i>	<i>At</i>
<i>Stunnington</i>	<i>Highland Light Infantry</i>		<i>the Military</i>	<i>W.D. Wood</i>		<i>Portobello</i>
	<i>Parochial</i>		<i>Church</i>	<i>deceased</i>	(Signed) _____	
<i>After Dinner</i>	(Signed) _____	24	<i>Red Cross</i>	<i>James Joseph Keeley</i>	<i>James J. Cook</i>	
<i>according to the</i>	<i>Edith Keeley</i>		<i>Hospital</i>	<i>W.D. Wood</i>	<i>Witness</i>	
<i>of the</i>			<i>Residence</i>	<i>deceased</i>	<i>Maggie Jane Keeley</i>	<i>Wm. Bainbridge</i>
<i>of</i>	<i>W.D. Wood</i>		<i>North</i>	<i>deceased</i>	<i>Witness</i>	<i>Registrar</i>
<i>Scotland</i>	<i>(Minister)</i>		<i>Street</i>	<i>W.D. Wood</i>		

Medal Citation & Card for the Distinguished Conduct Medal

2797 Sjt. F. Leiper, High L.I. (LG 13 Feb. 1917).
 For conspicuous gallantry in action. Although wounded before the attack he returned to his platoon and led it forward under very heavy fire. He has previously done fine work.

No.	Corps	Name
<i>2797</i>	<i>HLI</i>	<i>LEIPER</i>
<i>SJT</i>		<i>F.</i>
Operations	Vol.	Page
<i>DCM LG</i>	<i>13.2.1917</i>	<i>B70-11</i>
File Nos. :-		

Campaign :- **1914-15.** (A) Where decoration was earned.
 (B) Present situation.

Name	Corps	Rank	Reg. No.	Roll on which included (if any)
(A) <i>LEIPER</i>	<i>17th High L.I.</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>2797</i>	<i>MEDAL ROLL PA-143</i>
(B) <i>FRANK</i>	<i>W.O.II</i>			<i>BRITISH 15 STAR 2/20 B. 29</i>

Action taken *Sendd.*

THEATRE OF WAR. *(1) France.*

QUALIFYING DATE: *22-11-15.*

1914-15 Star was awarded for service in France or Flanders between 23 November 1914 and 31 December 1915

Victory Medal was awarded for service between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918. It was issued to individuals who received the 1914 and 1914-15 Stars and to most individuals who were issued the British War Medal.

HOUR OF SUCCESS.

The Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held in our church on Sunday, Sept. 26. The preacher at the afternoon service was the Rev. E. A. Osborne, Rector of Bawdeswell, whom we were very glad to welcome and whose address was much appreciated by all who heard it. The collections taken were on behalf of the Local Hospital and amounted to £5 17/6. Our correspondent's account of the work of the hospital is as follows:—“No review of what these parishes have done for the war would be complete without some notice of the hospital. The hospital in the Hackford Parish Hall has been a complete success, which makes us very proud of our hospital. But we must not take too much parochial credit to ourselves, for the hospital would never have come into existence (“Materialist” I think is the modern word) if it had not been for the very liberal contributions and active support of friends outside these parishes. Hackford gave the room and a beautiful ward it makes, and the successful carrying out of the work has been due to the unwearied energy of Dr. Perry and the nurses and the organised and effective assistance of the Red Cross Nurses, all under the presidency of Lady Grace Barry. The hospital had at first twelve beds but afterwards room was found for fourteen, and this number was increased by the hospitality of Dr. Perry to seventeen or eighteen, when he took three or four additional patients into his own house. Of course very critical cases are not as a rule sent here, but there have been many cases of a serious kind. Frostbite has been one of the most serious and painful ailments. It is really remarkable that at the present time there are no less than three patients who have lost their left legs. They of course are in the way to convalescence. It is also gratifying to know that the friends of some of the patients have been able to come to Hackford and visit at the Hospital. For instance, the wife and children of Private Stokes, of the Royal Scottish Fusiliers, are at present here for a visit of some weeks. The mother of Corporal Harris, of the Coldstream Guards, has been here for a few days, so has the wife of Private Winter, of the Middlesex Regiment. She has now returned home. We hope our visitors were pleased with what they saw. No doubt they did good to those they visited.

A. GEAKE.

Residents of Hackford House

In 1891 Hackford House was occupied by John Redman Spencer, his wife Harriet and his two daughters Fanny and Florence. John was a farmer who had farmed at Hall Farm, Guestwick for 22 years and also at Mill Farm, Great Witchingham for 5 years. All the stock and related implements from Great Witchingham were put up for auction in the autumn of 1889. Harriet died in 1908 and was buried in Hackford Cemetery and John died the following year. By 1911 Fanny and Florence were living together in Norwich.

In 1910 the Eastern Daily Press published details of the sale of a house in Hackford, described as in the occupation of the Misses Spencer.

HACKFORD-BY-REEPHAM

Within 10 minutes' walk of Great Eastern Railway station and 1^{1/2} miles from Whitwell Station, and 12 miles from Norwich.

A substantially built FAMILY RESIDENCE

facing the Market Place of Reepham, with small and secluded Garden, Lawn, Shrubbery, and Vinery, Stabling for 6 horses, Motor and Carriage Houses, Barn, Fowls' House.

The house is very conveniently situated, commodious, with large lofty bedrooms, and in good, tenatable repair.

In the occupation of the Misses' Spencer.
Early possession can be arranged.
Auction on Saturday, September 10th
Royal Hotel Norwich

In the Norfolk News of November 1910 Samuel Bircham chaired a meeting proposing the the formation of a Boy Scout Troop in Reepham. He had recently bought Hackford House and intended to make part of it into a Boy Scouts' club room. Samuel had already engaged an Assistant Scoutmaster ready to begin at the end of the month, and he asked for the town of Reepham to find 15 shillings a week for a Scout Master.

HACKFORD-NEXT-REEPHAM.

Through the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Bircham, a meeting was held at Hackford House, the object being to consider whether a company of Boy Scouts be formed for this district. There was a good attendance. Mr. Samuel Bircham presided, supported by Mrs. Richards, Miss G. and Canon Wilkinson, Mr. D'Arcy Collyer, Mr. W. R. Collyer, Dr. E. V. Perry, and a large proportion of the tradesmen of the town. The Chairman explained the Boy Scout movement, and said he had recently purchased Hackford House, part of which he intended to make into a Boy Scouts' home. An assistant Scout master had been engaged, and would take up his duties on the 28th inst., and all that he and Mrs. Bircham asked was for the town of Reepham and surrounding parishes to find 15s. per week wages for the Scout master. A committee was formed, consisting of Mr. S. Bircham, Mr. W. R. Collyer, Dr. E. V. Perry, Mr. E. Gibbs, Mr. H. C. Peck, and Mr. Youngman, Mr. Peck being appointed treasurer. A vote of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Bircham, on the proposition of Canon Wilkinson, brought a successful meeting to a close.

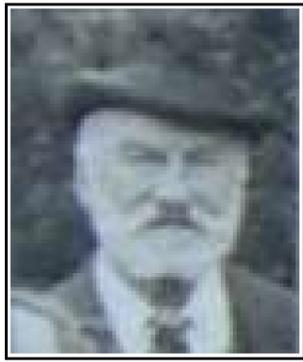
In response to this article in the Norfolk News Samuel wrote a letter which appeared in the Eastern Daily Press a few days later, emphasizing that it was the offer of the use of a room for the scouts rather than a 'home'.

"I do not propose a 'Home', but a kind of club-room, where the boys may meet, play games, and receive instruction, which may lead them to pass tests in various qualifications, handicrafts, etc., such as are likely to be of value to them in their future careers."

He adds that a portion of the house will provide a residence for the Assistant Scoutmaster.

Finally he gives his address as the Old Brewery House.

This photograph shows the Hackford Troop of scouts posed outside Hackford House in 1911 and includes Samuel Bircham himself. The notice states that the club room is open daily from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.



CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.

Number of Schedule 103
(To be filled up by the Enumerator after collection.)

The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.

NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family.	AGE (last Birthday) and SEX.	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE.				PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards.				BIRTHPLACE of every person.	NATIONALITY of every Person born in a Foreign Country.	INFIRMITY.	
			For Infants under one year state the age in months as "under one month," "one month," etc.		State, for each Married Woman entered on this Schedule, the number of—		Personal Occupation.		Industry or Service with which worker is connected.					
1. <i>Jemima Bruce</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>Widow</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Private Means</i>	<i>37</i>			<i>Port Glasgow, S. S.</i>	<i>519</i>	
2. <i>Margaret C. Bruce</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>Single</i>									<i>Ramsey, L. M.</i>	<i>495</i>	
3. <i>Mary E. Douglas</i>	<i>Servant</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>Single</i>					<i>Servant domestic</i>	<i>90</i>		<i>M.B.</i>	<i>Cawston, Norfolk</i>		

(To be filled up by the Enumerator.)

I certify that—
(1) All the ages on this Schedule are entered in the proper sex columns.
(2) I have counted the males and females in Columns 3 and 4 separately, and have compared their sum with the total number of persons.
(3) After making the necessary enquiries I have completed all entries on the Schedule which appeared to be defective, and have corrected such as appeared to be erroneous.

Initials of Enumerator *BB*

Total.		
Males	Females	Persons
	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>

(To be filled up by, or on behalf of, the Head of Family or other person in occupation, or in charge, of this dwelling.)

Write below the Number of Rooms in this Dwelling (House, Tenement, or Apartment). Count the kitchen as a room but do not count scullery, landing, lobby, closet, bathroom; nor warehouse, office, shop.

8 Rooms

I declare that this Schedule is correctly filled up to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature *J. Bruce*
Postal Address *Hackford House Reepham*

The 1911 census of England and Wales took place on 2nd April. The residents occupying eight rooms are Jemima Bruce and her daughter Margaret. She is 58 years old and Margaret is 35. They have very different birth places. Jemima gives her birthplace as Port Glasgow, Renfrew, Scotland, and Margaret was born in Ramsey on the Isle of Man. They have one living-in female servant, Mary Douglas from Cawston, and Jemima states that she has Private Means.

The crossed out numbers also reveal that Jemima has been, or would have been married for 36 years and that she has had 4 children, with three still living.

How have this mother and daughter ended up in Reepham, living in an imposing house, with garden and stabling? Where were they in 1901?

The Bruce Family

Both Alexander Bruce and his wife Jemima (nee King) originally came from Scotland, Alexander's family from Banff and Jemima's from Port Glasgow. By 1871 Jemima's family was resident on the Isle of Man. Alexander and Jemima were married in Douglas in 1874 and had three daughters, Margaret (known as Daisy), Agnes (known as Nan), and Dorothy.

In the 1901 England & Wales Census we find Jemima Bruce, widow, as a visitor at 20 Campbell Road in Boscombe, near Bournemouth in Hampshire. The residents here are single sisters Sophia and Charlotte Robinson. They are both in their fifties and are financially independent. Charlotte's birthplace is given as Douglas, Isle of Man. Also with Jemima is her daughter Dorothy, 5 years old, born Douglas, Isle of Man. Jemima has recorded that she is living on her own means and was born in Scotland.

Sophia Robinson	Head	S	56	Living on own means	Leicestershire, Mottle
Charlotte do	Sister	S	52	do do	Isle of Man, Douglas
Lucy Joe	Serv	S	23	General Serv Domestic	Dorset, Steamin
Jemima Bruce	Visitor	Wid	48	Living on her own	Scotland, Southdown
Dorothy do	do	do	5	do	Isle of Man, Douglas

So, where are Margaret and Agnes in 1901?

Vertunde Stearnson	Serv	J	17	General (Domestic)	St. Austell
Thomas Attoe	Head	Mar	67	Sharpener	St. Austell
Margaret C. Bruce	Daughter	S	25	Living on own means	Isle of Man
Agnes C. do	Daughter	S	22	do	do do
Winifred Cornall	Serv	S	17	General (Domestic)	Norfolk, Bintry
William D. Ford	Head	M	38	Maker	St. Austell

Margaret Campbell Bruce age 25 and Agnes Catherine Bruce age 22, both born in the Isle of Man, (both wrongly entered as daughters to Thomas Attoe) are living on their own means in Reepham Market Place with a living-in servant Winifred Cornall age 17, from Bintry. As they are next door to Ford's the baker it can be assumed that Margaret and Agnes are staying in the Old Brewery House.

Tracing the family group, i.e. Jemima Bruce and her three daughters, back to Onchan on the Isle of Man, gives us a few more clues. The 1891 census shows a family headed by Alexander Bruce with wife Jemima, and daughters Margaret and Agnes. There is a visitor Emily Wilson, from the Isle of Man and two live-in servants. The youngest daughter, Dorothy was not born until 1895.

William Ford	do	Son	J	13			do (Bradham)
Alexander Bruce	Head	M	47		X		Scotland (Banff)
Jemima do	Wife	W	38				do do
Margaret C do	Daughter	S	15	Schooler			Isle of Man (Ramey)
Agnes C do	Daughter	S	12	do			do do
Emily Francis Wilson	Visitor	J	25			X	do do
Samuel McCaulane	Serv	Widow	54			X	Scotland (Perth)
Robertson Ferguson	Serv		22			X	Isle of Man (Artery)

But what brought this family to Norfolk and what was the connection with Reepham?

Alexander Bruce had worked in Scotland for the City of Glasgow Bank before taking up a post on the Isle of Man at the Bank of Mona, a branch of the Glasgow bank. In the 1880s he became the manager of Dumbell's Bank. Mismanagement of loans and investments led to the failure of the bank and a financial crisis for the Isle of Man during 1899/1900. Many leading financiers on the island were made bankrupt, including Alexander.

Dumbell's Bank Failure
Death of Mr. Alexander Bruce

Mr. Alexander Bruce, Justice of the Peace, late chairman of the Isle of Man Tramways, and manager of Dumbell's Banking Company Limited, died at two o'clock on Saturday after a long and painful illness at his residence in the island. The deceased was the head of many important Manx enterprises. The remarkable development of electric traction in the island is chiefly due to him, and he took a leading part in public loans for the Manx Government and the Douglas Corporation previous to the lamentable failure of Dumbell's Bank, which has carried a crop of disasters in its train. The prosecution instituted against him along with other officials in connection with Dumbell's Bank, was recently abandoned in consequence of the hopeless state of his health.



from the Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser - Saturday 21 July 1900
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The Reepham Connection

Researching Francis Richard Samuel Bircham (1881-1941), the son of Samuel Bircham, the following information was found. After attending Aysgarth School in Yorkshire, Francis went to Eton College where he took 'extras' like Electricity and Physics. He spent a short time at Freiburg University in Germany and during college holidays (1895-97) he worked at the Nine Elms Locomotive Works.

In 1838 the London and Southampton Railway Company opened its terminus at Nine Elms. The line was extended to Waterloo in 1848 and Nine Elms became the site of a goods yard and locomotive works. The site was responsible for the repair & construction of steam locomotives.

Francis's grandfather, Francis Thomas Bircham (1810-1883) was the original solicitor to the London and Southampton Railway Company, which later became the London and South Western Railway (LSWR) and Francis's father Samuel Bircham took the position until his retirement in 1910.

Francis was a member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers and his CV has the following entry :-

Apprenticeship (Age):-

As above in holidays and when at home at Nine Elms Works and in estate workshop—general millwrighting, carpentry and repairs.

1 year, 1897–98 or 9; Easton and Bessemer, Taunton, general engineers.

2 years, 1898 or 9–1900; as pupil and promoted to 2nd Asst., Isle of Man Elec. Rly. Co.

During his time on the Isle of Man Francis would doubtless have met Alexander Bruce and his family. After the years of financial troubles and ill-health Alexander's widow Jemima and her daughters may have been offered a place of sanctuary by Francis's father Samuel. There must have been a social and a romantic connection since, in 1903, Francis married Agnes Catherine Sinclair Bruce in Reepham.

Bruce Family Portraits



Jemima Bruce



Alexander Bruce

Margaret Campbell Bruce



Margaret Campbell Bruce & Agnes Catherine Sinclair Bruce



In 1903 Agnes married Samuel Bircham's son Francis.

By 1911 Mrs. Jemima Bruce was living in Hackford House with her daughter Margaret. Agnes is with her husband in Hampshire, but returned to Reepham to live in the Old Brewery House until her death in 1969. Agnes was always called Nan, or Mrs. Nan Bircham. Her daughter Ann continued living in Reepham. Ann died in 2006 and is buried in Salle churchyard.

≡≡≡ 1914. ≡≡≡

SPRING ARRANGEMENTS.

In the Annual "**TURN OUT**" for Cleaning, it frequently happens that Customers would like to make an **Exchange of Furniture, Carpets, &c.** We want it generally known that we are prepared to allow the utmost value for Goods in part payment for

New or Second-hand Furniture.

ENQUIRIES INVITED.

A REPRESENTATIVE WILL CALL ON RECEIPT OF POST CARD.

WALLACE KING, LTD.,

Prince of Wales Road, Norwich.

Branch Distributing Depots, at **ATTLEBORO', STALHAM** and **REEPHAM.**

Free Delivery by Vans and Motors to all Parts.

Wallace King was a well-known furniture store based in Norwich. By 1914 a branch had opened in Reepham, using rooms in Hackford House and buildings on Back Street which are now the takeaway and The Granary. During the First World War these buildings were used as a kitchen/utility for the hospital. Wallace King finally closed the Reepham branch in 1919.



Images showing advertising boards fixed to the front of Hackford House and a door which presumably gave access to a showroom/office on the ground floor.



The boards are advertising furniture, bedding, upholstery, picture frames, bedsteads, linoleum, carpets etc.



Cropped from a postcard view towards the Market Place from Dereham Road.