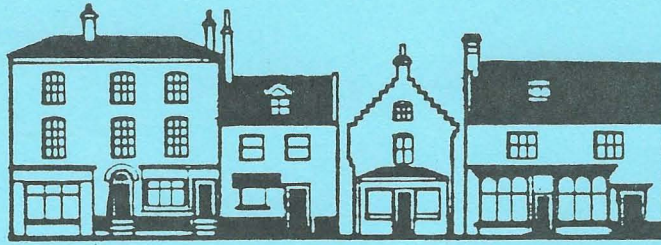
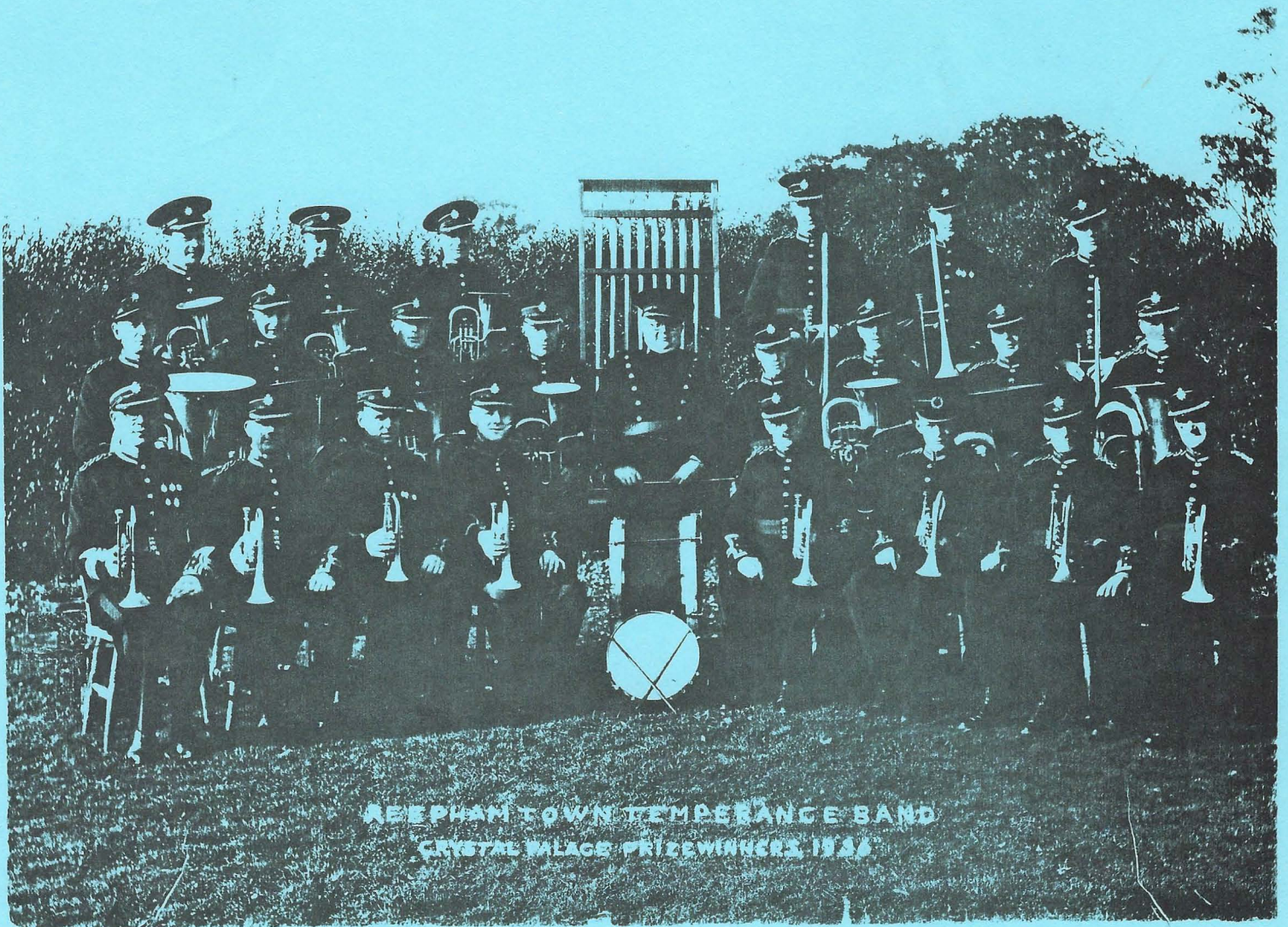


435  
Miss Mayhew Swan Close  
Swannington



# THE REEPHAM SOCIETY



REEPHAM TOWN TEMPERANCE BAND  
CRYSTAL PALACE PRIZEWINNERS 1934

**SUMMER 1988 NEWSLETTER**



1988/89 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE REEPHAM SOCIETY

OFFICERS

|               |                  |   |          |          |
|---------------|------------------|---|----------|----------|
| Chairman      | A H Ivins        | Hillside, Whitwell                                  | NR10 4RE | 870368   |
| Vice-Chairman | M C Black        | Middlemarch,<br>Broomhill Lane                      | NR10 4QY | 870936   |
| Treasurer     | J E Ames         | Barwick House<br>The Street,<br>Bawdeswell, Dereham | NR20 4RT | 9688 455 |
| Secretary     | Mrs M A Hemmings | Cheville,<br>Whitwell Road                          | NR10 4JS | 870759   |

COMMITTEE

|                 |   |  |          |          |
|-----------------|---|--|----------|----------|
| Mrs I Ames      | Barwick House, The Street, Bawdeswell,<br>Dereham |  | NR20 4RT | 9688 455 |
| R.V. Galley     | 47 Bircham Road                                   |  | NR10 4NG | 870813   |
| Mrs S Ivins     | Hillside, Whitwell                                |  | NR10 4RD | 870368   |
| Rev W E B Jones | 37 Bircham Road                                   |  |          | 870738   |
| Mrs P Large     | The Little House, Norwich Road                    |  | NR10 4JN | 871789   |
| T J Large       | " " " " "   |  | " "      | " "      |
| Mrs H Pottle    | 24 Smugglers Lane                                 |  | NR10 4QT | 870945   |
| R F Vincent     | Vale Cottage, Hackford Vale                       |  | NR10 4QU | 870554   |
| Mrs J L Waring  | 6 Elizabeth Close                                 |  | NR10 4JF | 870748   |

The Committee has for a number of years always been short of members, there are 12 vacancies and we have 9 members. We would dearly like to have a full complement of members and if anyone feels that they could usefully offer their help as a member of the Committee, then please do not hesitate to make your views known to us.

### Annual General Meeting of Reepham Society

This was held at the Old Brewery House on Thursday 28th April and was attended by about 50 people. Annual General Meetings are not the most rivetting of occasions so it is encouraging that so many people turned up. The Society has for some years combined this meeting with some other light entertainment and the venue of the Old Brewery House is refreshing to say the least. The formula seems to work, the business of the evening was completed in about 40 minutes, this included the report of the Executive Committee given by the Secretary, the Chairman and then the Treasurer's Report and the appointment of Officers for the forthcoming year. The second part of the meeting was given over to Mr David Joice's friend Parker who related, in his own inimitable style, some of his Norfolk tales. The meeting concluded at about 9.30 p.m.

The Society remains in a healthy financial state as can be seen from the statement of account for 1987/88.

### New Members since last newsletter

Mrs H A Rose  
Mrs J Benstead  
Mr and Mrs W Howard  
Mrs V Davidson  
Mr W Marshall  
Mr A C Burton  
Wing Comm. and Mrs A Reed  
Major and Mrs J Child  
Mr and Mrs J Rowe  
Mrs M Hanbridge  
Miss R Richens  
Canon and Mrs A Foottit  
Mr and Mrs A Wellcome  
Mr and Mrs R Gray  
Mrs M and Miss F Cameron  
Dr and Mrs E W Price  
Mr and Mrs J Claxton  
Mr and Mrs D Cronne  
The Kings Arms, Market Place  
Mr C P Noble  
Mr and Mrs P Caston  
Mr and Mrs G Cutts  
Mr and Mrs R Ellis  
Dr and Mrs P Crisp  
Mr and Mrs L Mynard  
Mr and Mrs D Plant  
Mr and Mrs H Dean  
Mr and Mrs P Staples  
Mr and Mrs P McLeod  
Mrs K Beard

GENERAL ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 1988

| <u>RECEIPTS</u>                             | £                | <u>EXPENSES</u>   | £                |
|---|------------------|---|------------------|
| Subscriptions (1987 £30 50; 1988 £336 50)   | 366 50           | Secretarial   | 106 62           |
| Donations to funds                          | 77 00            | Photocopying, post, printing,<br>publicity, stationery, telephone |                  |
| 1987 Wine and Cheese Party                  |                  | Newsletter Printing   | 67 55            |
| Receipts £659 67                            |                  | Share of Cost of Reepham Newsheet                                 | 28 00            |
| Expenses £248 62                            | 411 05           | Hire of Rooms   |                  |
| Collections at Open Meetings                | 143 65           | Old Brewery House Garden Room                                     | 105 00           |
| Reepham Fun Day Stall                       | 9 20             | Bircham Centre Committee Room                                     | 39 00            |
| Half share of profit from Talk by Dr Butler | 50               | Speakers Fees/Expenses  | 60 00            |
| Coach Outing to How Hill Water Gardens      | 168 00           | Coach Outing to How Hill Water Gardens                            | 168 00           |
| Bowling Green Rent                          | 20 00            | 1987 Gardens Competitions   | 33 39            |
| Sales                                       | 89 35            | Repair of Old Burial Ground Gate                                  | 20 00            |
| Postcards, Greeting Cards, Newsletters,     |                  | Bolts for Footpath Signs  | 4 20             |
| Footpath Walk Leaflets, 1972 Conservation   |                  | "Town and Country" Advertisement                                  | 14 00            |
| Area Book                                   |                  | Subscription to Civic Trust                                       | 15 00            |
| Refund of expenses for repair of Old Burial | 20 00            | Donations   |                  |
| Ground Gate (Parish Council)                |                  | RSPB Storm Appeal £25   | 45 00            |
| Unpresented cheques (036 and 057)           | 13 00            | C P R E £20   |                  |
|   |                  | Replacement cheque (original lost)                                | 10 00            |
|   |                  | Excess of income over expenditure                                 | 602 49           |
|   | <u>£ 1316 25</u> |   | <u>£ 1318 25</u> |



THE REEPHAM SOCIETY  
CAPITAL ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 1988

|  |                 |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|--|-----------------|
|  | £               |  | £               |
| Barclays Bank Current Account at 31.3.87                 | 234 33          | Barclays Bank Current Account at 31.3.88 | 430 59          |
| National Savings Investment Account at 31.3.87           | 1099 73         | National Savings Investment Account      | 2139 96         |
| Cash in hand at 31.3.87                                  | 12 54           | Cash in hand                             | 18 77           |
| Repayment of loan to Bircham Centre                      | 500 00          |  |                 |
| Interest on National Savings Investment Account for 1987 | 140 23          |  |                 |
| Excess Income over Expenditure                           | 602 49          |  |                 |
|  | <u>£2589 32</u> |  | <u>£2589 32</u> |

I have audited the above statement of affairs and attached revenue account of The Reepham Society for the year ended 31 March 1988 from the bank statements and vouchers presented to me, and confirm that the said financial statements therefrom show a true and fair view of the results arising.

32 Red Lion Street  
 Aylsham  
 Norfolk NR11 6ER

R Greenway FCA  
 Chartered Accountant  
 April 1988

## The Ollands

After Mr Kett's interesting article in the Winter Newsletter, some further reminiscences of the Ollands may be of interest. I would however query some of the dates given. I can well remember Mr Oppenheim coming to live at the Ollands, the article stated that this was in 1920, I was only 3 years old at that time and my earliest recollections, at a slightly older age are of the house standing empty. It must have been 1923 or 24 when Mr Oppenheim moved in but I am open to correction if anyone knows better or has a longer memory.

Mr Oppenheim brought with him a butler and a chauffeur. Mr London, the butler, lived in the cottage now known as Echo Lodge in Ollands Road. It was not really a lodge but the coachman's cottage, it being adjacent to the coach house and stables. Mr Mair, the chauffeur, lived in one of a pair of cottages in Norwich Road, opposite St Mary's School (where the entrance is to Ollands Park). The other cottage was occupied by a gardener, Mr Jimmy Smith, and his wife (formerly Polly Hill), both of them well known Reepham characters. Jimmy liked half a pint but Polly tried to get him to change his drinking ways. At mid morning she could be heard over half of Reepham calling 'Cocoa, Willy'. Why she said Willy when his name was Jimmy we never knew. Mr Oppenheim hired some local shooting and also employed a gamekeeper.

The field, now covered by the housing estate called Moor House Close, was nothing to do with the Moor House but was part of the Ollands grounds. It had been let to a farmer as arable land but Mr Oppenheim stopped letting it and laid it down to grass. Two or three of the boys living in the New Road area went as a deputation to call on Mr Oppenheim to ask for permission to play on the field. This was kindly granted on condition that they did not go into the plantation. Thus we had a splendid place on which to play football or cricket after school. The Band of Hope football team played their home matches there as well. On the fifth of November each year, on this field, Mr Oppenheim provided a great firework display, supervised by the butler and other members of the staff. There were enormous rockets and other fireworks such as we had never seen before and us youngsters were given sparklers and such like to hold in our hands. The fireworks stopped after Mr Oppenheim moved permanently to France but we could still use the field till the property was sold. This privilege was appreciated and no-one ever abused the conditions that we were not to go into the plantation.

This came to an end when Mr Harmer who, I believe, was connected with the Norwich clothing manufacturing firm of F W Harmer Ltd bought the Ollands. He immediately banned everyone from the field. He required the field for exercising his two riding horses. His groom, Mr W Sturman, lived in the cottage formerly occupied by Oppenheim's chauffeur.



After Mr Oppenheim had gone the Ollands was occupied for a time by Mr and Mrs Rider-Smith. Mrs Rider-Smith was Mr Oppenheim's daughter. The similarity of name may account for the story Mr Kett mentions of Sir Henry Rider Haggard living at the Ollands, which I had never heard before. It is certainly not true that Rider Haggard lived here and I doubt if the house ever had any connection with him.

Wesley Piercey

Mrs Ann Dickinson of Hunstanton has written of her childhood memories in Reepham, a childhood which she says she looks back on with great affection in her beloved Reepham.

Ann Dickinson's parents were married in 1918 and she was born in 1923. She started at Miss Bull's kindergarten school in 1926 and her memories are of events between 1926 and 1935. Her father died in 1935 and both she and her friend Peggy Hurn went to Dereham High School as weekly boarders; later they both became nurses.

#### Childhood memories of Reepham

After obtaining an extra copy of the Reepham Society Magazine for my lifelong friend, Peggy Hurn, I reflected on a wealth of memories of Reepham. To begin with (at the age of three years) we attended Miss Bull's Kindergarten School at the back of the Old Brewery House - there was Peggy and her brother John, Pat Hall, Kendal, Barbara Hilton, Joyce Wagg and myself.

At a year or two older we attended dancing classes at Miss Hoolah's, these were held at Rookery Farm. The dancing school put on shows for parents and friends at the Town Hall, I remember dancing in the "Wedding of the Painted Doll" with John Kerridge, son of the Bank Manager, who was Jumping Jack.

Sunday School was conducted by Mr Donald Chapman, who with his sister Olive ran the Post Office (Iona House). Donald ran a very flourishing, well attended Sunday School, we had wonderful outings and prize givings. Miss Wacey taught the senior children and when we reached her class she insisted we learned the Collect for the coming Sunday off by heart which we had to recite in turn. I remember her with great affection and appreciation.

My mother was organist at St Michael's Church when the Rev. Geake was incumbent at Whitwell Rectory. Often I had to pump the organ for her, watching the lead weight rise and fall and to pay attention and not let the lead fall below a certain mark - otherwise the organ gave a tremendous sigh and faded out. Both Churches were used for Sunday worship, frequently the congregation of St Michael's would be waiting for the sermon to end as we listened to the congregation of St Mary's singing their last hymn. The Rev. Moore, in charge of St Mary's, invariably finished his service first.

With the retirement of the Rev. Moore and the Rev. Geake leaving in the early 1930s the Rev. B P Lipscombe was installed and the two churches and four parishes of Reepham, Whitwell, Hackford and Kerdistone were amalgamated and a communicating door was installed between St Mary's vestry and the chancel of St Michael's.

The Rev. Luscombe was extremely musical and could coax ability from the least able. We had a fantastic choir under his leadership, singing oratorios at special Church Festivals, the Messiah, Elijah, Olivet to Calvary to mention just a few - occasionally incorporating the voice of Mr Broad from Heydon, although Donald Chapman did very well in solos and supported by his fellow tenors, Fred Alford among others.



Mother took over St Mary's organ from Miss Jewel. As Mother had played a church organ from the age of fourteen she became an excellent organist under the Rev. Luscombe's jurisdiction.

Apart from Church music, various members of the choir founded a group to entertain during the year putting on many Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. The Group included Donald and Olive Chapman, Elsie Varley, Mabel Utting, and Mr Cocking - the latter running a boot and shoe shop now Gwen Hardesty's fruit and vegetable shop.

The Market Place was a grandstand for the Reepham Town Silver Band under the baton of Mr Ruffles from Fakenham. When the weather was kind and it invariably was, they played for the town's entertainment after evening service at Church on Sunday evenings until nine or ten o'clock. Reepham also boasted a fine Salvation Army Band and shared the Market Place as its meeting place - alternating with the Town Band. Memories too of carol singing with the choir in the snow, and with the handbell ringers. Picking primroses at Broomhill, snowdrops growing like a carpet at Catch Back and the perfume from the violets at Reepham Moor was unbelievable - the seasons seemed more seasonable in those days.

Father, who was invalided out of the Navy with T.B., put his great talents to effect when he settled in Reepham. My mother loved to tell the tale of when motor cars were the "in thing". My father built one around an engine and chassis and so anxious to try it out that one Sunday afternoon he drove Mother and Aunt and Uncle to Cromer and back. Father, being the driver, sat on the kitchen chair and his passengers on upturned orange boxes. The sides of the car consisted of chicken wire draped with old curtains but when they reached 10 mph the curtains flapped alarmingly and had to be removed.

Mother started a business making hats which flourished and this eventually became a fully fledged drapery, millinery, tobacco and confectionery shop. Father, in between bouts of illness, dabbled in photography, watch and clock mending, garage and battery charging and when confined to bed built models, two of which, a ship and a traction engine, drum and elevator, are now housed with the Reepham Society.

The garage, erected to service the growing car trade, was built at the rear and side of the shop, over an old Baptist immersion pool. (This site is now rebuilt as a hairdressing salon and Reepham DIY.) I am sure it needed very little demolishing as it was built chiefly of corrugated iron but the side facing our garden was all glass, consisting of photographic plates of every photograph, well almost, my Father ever took - I wonder what happened to those?

Part of the garage was given over to the engine room where Father had a generator from which he produced electricity and proudly wired our house - the first in Reepham to have electric light, 1928 or 29. He also made me a doll's house and fitted that with electric light powered by a battery.

Towards the end of my Father's life I remember the trees in our orchard had to be felled, they were very old and barren and had given shelter to the goat and bantams we kept there. Mother's ambition of having a tennis court built in the old orchard began to take place, Father wanted to oversee the project and to make sure the ground was level but because he was now on constant oxygen this proved a problem. Not to be outdone he asked Dick Hatley, who worked with him, to get an inner tube from a car wheel and inflate it with oxygen - a piece of rubber tube to connect with the valve and by slinging the tube over his shoulder and a clip to control the flow of oxygen he was able to walk up the garden and inspect the new tennis court for himself, returning before the tube was deflated.

We were now able to have tennis parties - comprising Donald and Olive Chapman, Jean Hawes, Evan Symonds, Ricky and John Lambert, Ruby Barnes, Len Wilkinson, Mother and myself.

My great friend, Peggy Hurn and I had other delights in common - her Father, Mr Fred Hurn and both my uncles, Mr Edward Gibbs Senior and Junior were among the company which formed the "Black Minstrel Troupe" and we look back with great affection to our childhood in our beloved Reepham.



## TRAGIC FLIGHT FROM FOULSHAM

The following is an article by Mr George Kett, one of our regular contributors, it is slightly outside our normal range as it concerns the eventual consequences of a wartime flight from Foulsham airfield. Much of our recent local history is steeped in the wartime RAF and USAF bases and their activities and whilst Reepham did not have a local airfield it was close enough to bases in Foulsham, Swannington, Weston Longville and Oulton for many Reepham residents to be affected both in employment and socially. It is an interesting yet at the same time a sad story of a wartime occurrence which started just a few miles from Reepham.

This account of a wartime mission from Foulsham airfield is based on records held by the Public Record Office at Kew, with the assistance of a colleague who was researching information for a German historian. Permission to reproduce verbatim the König War Crimes Trial report has been obtained from the P.R.O.

Towards the end of 1943 No.192 Squadron, part of 100 group whose H.Q. was at Bylaugh Hall, operated from Foulsham. This was a highly specialised squadron fitted out with equipment for listening to and interfering with German radio and radar transmissions.

This mission set out at 4.00 pm on 21 Nov. 1944 in a Halifax on a special duty flight to investigate transmissions from rotating Freyas (radar), joining Lancaster bombers bound for Aschaffenburg near Frankfurt. No bombs were carried by the Halifax but a 'Special Ops' engineer was part of the crew.

After skirting the target area they ran into heavy gunfire which left the two starboard engines on fire necessitating the order to bale out, after destroying the secret equipment held on board.

Four of the crew managed to bale out: Sgt S. Wharton (Navigator), F/Sgt. J.G. Smith (Wireless Op.), Sgt. A.P. Bloomfield (Gunner), and Sgt. R.B. Hales (Flt Eng.).

The other four crew members met their death in the crash. They were W.O B.H. Harrison (Pilot), Sgt. R.P. Clancy (Gunner), Sgt. T.D. McGill (Gunner) and W/O J.R. Sutton (Special Ops) who were interred at Durnbach British Military Cemetery.

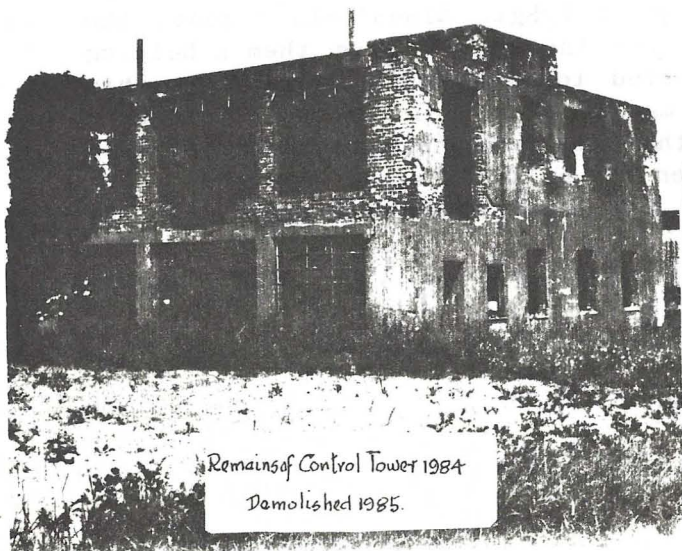
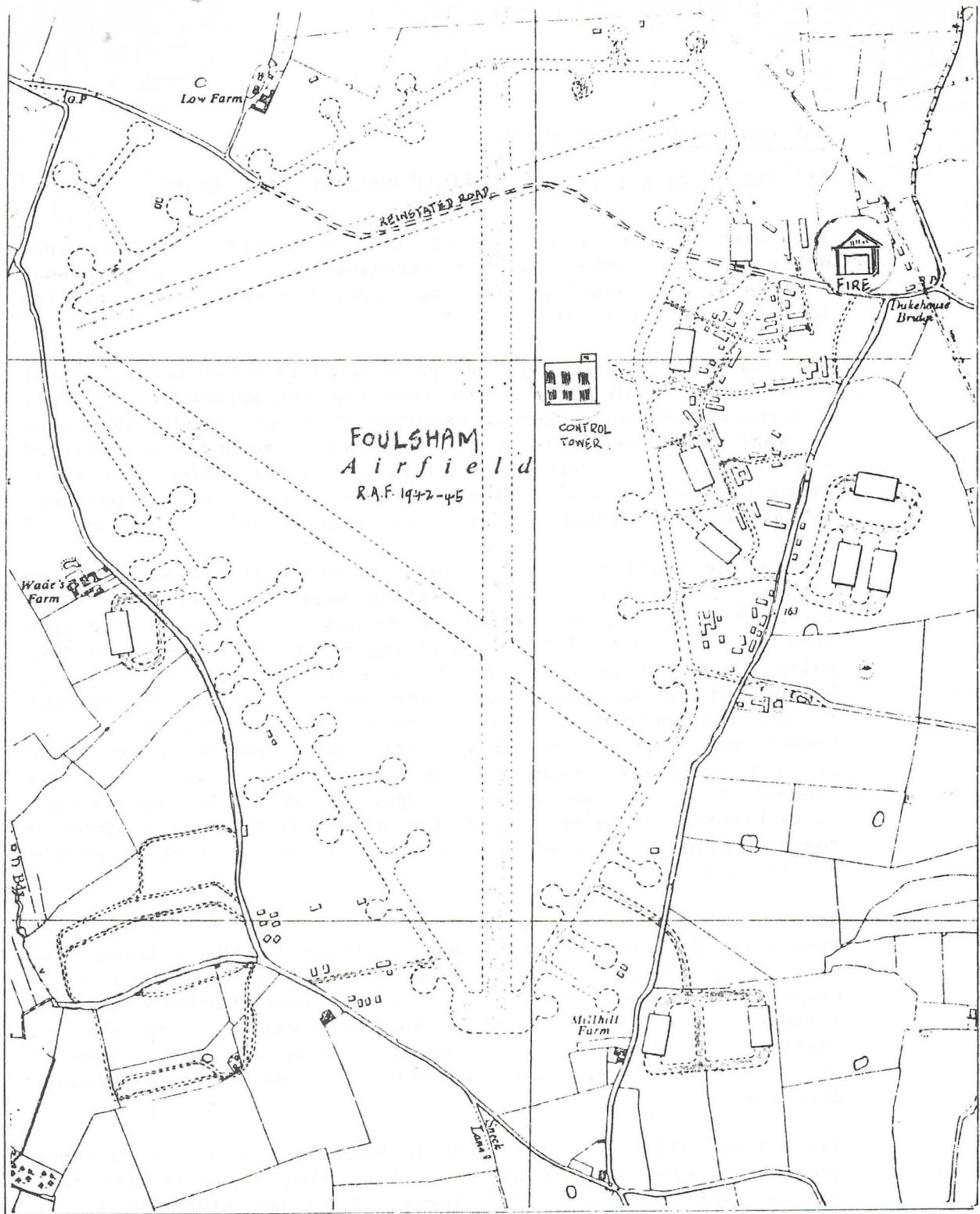
St. Wharton landed heavily in a field around midnight and, in spite of a broken ankle and damaged ribs, managed to crawl along country lanes and eventually reached the village of Hembach about 30 miles south of Frankfurt. There he knocked at the door of a house, was taken in, given food and drink and was generally well treated before being taken to a nearby military hospital.

He later met up with his wireless operator, Australian F/Sgt. Smith, and they remained together in various P.O.W. camps until liberated by the Russians in May 1945, eventually being flown back home the following month.

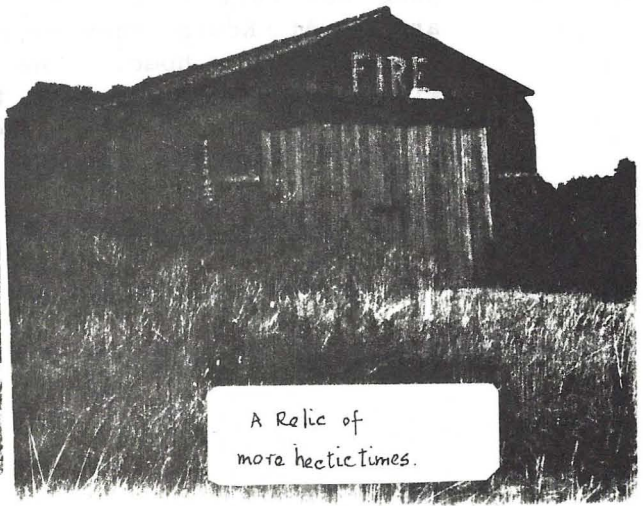
The shocking fate of the other two airmen who baled out, Sgt. Bloomfield and Sgt. Hales, is related in detail by the König War Crimes Trial report reproduced here.

Justice was done - to some extent at least.

George Kett



Remains of Control Tower 1984  
Demolished 1985.



A Relic of  
more hectic times.



## THE KÖNIG WAR CRIMES TRIAL

### Killing of F/Sgt. A.P. Bloomfield and Sgt. R.B. Hales

This case was tried at Hamburg on 18 July 1947. The long delay has been caused by the endeavours to trace all persons concerned and ensuring that the right persons were extradited to this Zone for trial.

The evidence at the trial may be divided into two parts. First - given by local persons who received the surrender of F/Sgt. Bloomfield and Sgt. Hales, escorted them and handed them over to what they thought to be the appropriate authorities. Second - the evidence of how the victims met their death. This was given by the accused as there were no other witnesses present. It may be safely assumed that it was what actually occurred.

During the night 21/22 Nov. 1944 the aircraft crashed near the village of Nieder Kinzig, 12 miles north of Erbach. Erbach is about 30 miles south-east of Frankfurt. Some of the crew died in the crash, others including F/Sgt. Bloomfield and Sgt. Hales landed by parachute in the neighbouring villages. F/Sgt. Bloomfield and Sgt. Hales were arrested by villagers and brought to the Burgomeister's house. There they were well treated by people who came to see them. Sgt. Hales had a slight wound in his upper leg caused by a splinter of metal. This was dressed by the Burgomeister. F/Sgt. Bloomfield had lost a shoe when leaving the aircraft so the Burgomeister's wife produced some sacking which was used to wrap round his foot to enable him to walk.

Their capture was reported to the police in a nearby town. Meanwhile they sat in the house, talking to the villagers to whom they showed their photographs and who behaved in a perfectly friendly manner. This is understandable as the witnesses for the prosecution who had dealings with the two captives at this time all appeared simple country people, all over middle age and apparently of honest and friendly disposition.

The police told the Burgomeister to send the two prisoners under escort to the town of König. There they would be put into custody for the night and forwarded to the Army and P.O.W. authorities next morning. Accordingly they were taken away by four members of the Rural Guard, an auxiliary police organisation for country districts. Due to Sgt. Hales wounded leg and the bulky wrapping of F/Sgt. Bloomfield's foot, the pace was very slow. At times the escort gave them a helping arm. At König they reported to the police sergeant in his office at his home. The man in charge of the escort arranged with the police sergeant that the prisoners should be allowed to keep their watches. Then the police sergeant and the escort set out to take them to the local gaol where they were to spend the night.

Meanwhile, at Erbach (the principal town of the district), the Volkssturm (Home Guard) had just completed a short course of instruction and were having a farewell party for the Army Officer in charge of the course and the five NCO's who had helped him. The soldiers got slightly drunk and the Officer - 2nd Lt. Maurer, one of the accused - went to the Cinema. After he had gone, the fact that an aircraft had crashed was reported to a man, Jaeger, who was at the party as a leader of the Volkssturm. Jaeger was also a member of a gang of enthusiastic party members who were at the more or less constant disposal of the Party Leader of the District, the Kreisleiter, for any emergency that might arise.

This Politische Staffel was intended to supply replacements for party officials incapacitated in air raids on local large towns and to organise emergency billeting, feeding and rescue work after air raids. It is much doubted if such welfare work was their only purpose. Jaeger immediately got in touch with other members of the Politische Staffel (some were also at the party) and sent to the Cinema for Maurer.

All were summoned to the Kreisleiters's. There the Kreisleiter, the accused Schwinn, told them that an aircraft had crashed and members of the crew probably baled out. They were to be captured. He finished in an ironical tone, "You know what to do." This was a clear reference to the propaganda prevalent at the time about the way which captured airmen should be treated. Maurer in his statement said what he suspected (and what must have been clear to all present) that it was not intended to bring any captives back to Erbach.

Maurer with four of his soldiers, Jaeger and members of the Politische Staffel called Mayer, Horn, Haigis, Giesler and Sauer, got into a large car belonging to the local fire brigade and set off in search of the baled out airmen.

First, they went to the scene of the crash and made enquiries. They then called at the house of the Burgomeister and later at the home of the man in charge of the escort. Only when they came to König did they catch up with the prisoners as they were being taken from the Police Sergeant's house to the gaol. At the various stops en route, people in the car made remarks to witnesses suggesting their actual intentions.

Jaeger stopped the car and he and Maurer got out and approached the prisoners and escort. To this the Police Sergeant agreed readily enough as he knew the Army were the proper authorities for looking after POWs. He then took Maurer to his office and handed over the papers found on the two prisoners. The prisoners meanwhile were marched away under escort of Horn, Mayer, Haigis and Geisler in the direction of Erbach.

After collecting the papers, Maurer and Jaeger drove in the car and overtook the prisoners and escort a little way out of the town. The car stopped and Jaeger got out.

The prisoners were walking along in between Mayer and Haigis with Horn and Geisler behind. It was a very dark night. Suddenly they were told by Jaeger, who had waited at the roadside, to turn left off the road on to a pathway.



Soon after, Haigis who was walking on the left was told to go left again. Some shots rang out and F/Sgt. Bloomfield collapsed almost at once. Sgt. Hales disappeared in the dark and could not be found. Mayer and Haigis claimed that Haeger and Horn fired those shots.

Next day the local authorities found the bodies - that of F/Sgt. Bloomfield was apparently where he had been shot and that of Sgt. Hales was found about 100 yards away. It was assumed that he had run this distance before collapsing from the one bullet wound he received in the right side of his chest. There is no other evidence about the actual shooting.

The Police Sergeant tried to initiate an investigation when he heard what had happened. Jaeger openly admitted the shooting afterwards and claimed that the two prisoners were trying to escape. The Chief of the Gendarmerie refused to accept any report on the incident and pointed out it was a Party matter and the police should not interfere. This Gendarmerie Chief killed himself when the U.S. forces entered Darmstadt. Before doing so he shot all members of his family.

Jaeger and Sauer were killed three weeks after the murder of F/Sgt. Bloomfield and Sgt. Hales when the car in which they were travelling was involved in an accident.

Giesler has never been traced and it is presumed that he is in the Russian Zone. Horn committed suicide by hanging himself ten days before the trial commenced.

As a result, only Schwinn the Kreisleiter, Maurer the Army officer and Mayer and Haigis the escorts at the moment of the shooting were put on trial.

The evidence of the actual shooting was not very strong, nor was the evidence of the part played by the Kreisleiter Schwinn. Nevertheless all four were found guilty and sentenced as follows:-

|         |   |    |       |              |
|---------|---|----|-------|--------------|
| Maurer  | - | 15 | years | imprisonment |
| Schwinn | - | 12 | "     | "            |
| Mayer   | - | 7  | "     | "            |
| Haigis  | - | 5  | "     | "            |

## Tidy up Reepham

I'm sure some of you will remember the well publicised attempt in 1986 by the Government in getting Mr Richard Branson to assist in an unpaid capacity in the "Keep Britain Tidy" campaign. A much publicised start to the campaign is about as much as anyone now remembers. Mr Branson went off to America and proceeded to set records on his return by arriving by powerboat and then hot air balloon. Perhaps the cost of recovering Mr Branson and his enormous balloon from the sea off Ireland did not equate with a proposed policy of keeping Britain tidy at as low a cost as possible.

In the Spring of 1988 Mrs Thatcher attempted to stir our consciences towards a tidier Britain by arranging another auspicious start to a campaign which is supposed to make us aware of how untidy a nation we are and what a much better place we would have to live in if we all dealt with our litter properly and tidily. We must admire the intentions and any campaign must be worth noting if it can gain the personal support of the Prime Minister. The item gained a maximum media coverage but unfortunately for the wrong reasons. The City of Westminster Council duly arranged for a supply of ironed and sanitised crisp packets which were scattered around Hyde Park for Mrs Thatcher to pick up whilst the country's press recorded the occasion.

Mrs Thatcher did not need to have her litter delivered, she should have come to Reepham, we have ample quantities already in place just waiting to be picked up. The Reepham Society has been concerned for some time about this litter, it is a problem which we feel is permanently with us and one which we feel has been getting worse in recent years.

We felt that it was time for this problem to be tackled and it seemed an ideal project to tackle as part of the Civic Trust Environment Week which was held during the week commencing 22nd April. Arrangements were made to directly involve all local organisations and the schools who cooperated in the responsibility for certain areas from which they removed an accumulation of litter and other larger items of rubbish. These organisations etc. concentrated on the town's public places such as the market square, car park, churchyard, cemetery, the main streets and most of the footpaths. To make the pick-up of litter an acceptable task we even arranged for a supply of disposable gloves and rubbish bags to be available if required.

We felt that such a venture should not exclude the householders of Reepham so the day before the start of the tidy-up over 700 leaflets were delivered with the morning papers. The leaflet urged individuals to help by clearing up those areas around their homes - we hope you responded!

Was the clean up a success; Yes, there is little doubt that it was.

Everyone cooperated and during the week an enormous amount of litter and general rubbish was collected and disposed of.



A clean up such as this takes a lot of arranging and the Reepham Society has taken the initiative. It must not however be a one off, litter is a continuing problem in Reepham and it would be nice if the clean up could be maintained. Reepham regularly enters the Best Kept Village Competition; one of the judges' criticisms in the past has been the amount of litter, a criticism which has not helped Reepham towards a prize.

Does Reepham have a litter problem which is perhaps worse than in other places? I think that probably the answer is that it does. We live in a small market town which has the facility of a large High School, during lunchtimes particularly there is a large influx into Reepham of children, many of whom seem to have scant regard for litter going into bins or into their pockets. If you are aware of the areas around Broomhill Lane, along Park Lane and in the Market Place and along Back Street then you know of the problem. The hedges along Park Lane are the ideal cover for a surreptitious cigarette and the Lane is constantly littered with empty cigarette packets, drink cans and other paper.

These areas were well covered by the school in the clean up but it was ironic that the children who were doing the clearing up were the younger pupils and certainly not the older ones who caused the problem. It is sad to reflect that the Lane was cleared in the morning and lunchtime brought the usual band of smokers who by 1.15 pm had left further empty cigarette packets. A restart of our accumulating problem.

The Reepham Society has taken the initiative with this problem, they will continue with their involvement but to succeed it has to be a corporative effort. Firstly the Parish Council must not leave it to our Society to deal with this, they should make a greater effort particularly if they are to enter the Best Kept Village Competition and they can start by making a much wider provision of litter bins particularly in and around the Market Place and the High School. Secondly there has to be a greater effort by the School, regular collections in and around the School should be made and a clampdown on the smokers would be helpful.

Let us all make an effort, if everyone can cooperate as they did during that week in April then Reepham would be a much cleaner and tidier place. Let us take a leaf from the book of Mrs Mary Archer (the wife of novelist Jeffrey Archer), she is Choir Mistress at Grantchester Church in Cambridge. Every time she walks to the church for a choir practice or a service she carries a small plastic bag and picks up all the litter that she finds on the way. If we all did this and it takes no more than a little time, then we would have a Reepham kept tidy.



## How Norwich was deluged by the biggest flood ever recorded

# The day the rains came . . .

Special reports by JANE FLATT

**I**T CAME at the end of a dismal August, another one of those summers when it seems never to stop raining.

The cloudburst and gale-force winds slashed across 1800 square miles of Norfolk and north Suffolk. It began at 3am on Monday the 26th, and continued mercilessly until mid-morning on Tuesday.

A huge volume of water built up near Fakenham, and raged down through the narrow channel of the river Wensum through Norwich, shaking ancient buildings to their foundations, and causing devastation in the riverside suburbs, from Hellesdon to Carrow.

The surface drains were blocked within minutes, and several streets caved in. All public services except gas and water were suspended, the Post Office was reduced to sorting letters by candle-light, the factories were crippled, and all trains to and from the city were suspended.

Earth washed away from Castle Mound slid down on to the tramlines and clogged up that part of the public transport system. Something like 10,000 people were made temporarily homeless.

Even the cathedral, on its low-lying meadows, was threatened at one stage, the flood-water reaching the cloisters.

Released from the funnel of the city, the water then spread out eastwards to create a great swamp of the Broads. In Norfolk alone, 52 bridges and culverts were broken, including those at Trowse and Lakenham.

At Wymondham, the River Tiffey flooded and cut off the town. Some houses at Damgate Bridge collapsed.

**T**he normally peaceful River Bure thudded against Wroxham Bridge, which shuddered and would have collapsed, except that the river burst its banks, roared off down a side-road, and flooded a wide area round Wroxham old church.

Tens of thousands of acres of farmland and pasture were ruined. Tomato and cucumber-growing were wiped out for many months, after acres of glass-houses were submerged.

Roads were several feet deep in places, and with bridges down everywhere, whole communities were cut off.

In Norwich itself, 6.31 inches of rain fell in 12 hours. The river level rose to 16ft 6in above normal, easily exceeding all previous records, including that of the "great flood" of 1878, which was 13ft 8in, a level reached by 4pm on the Tuesday.

The centre of the storm was just to the east of the city. At Brundall, 8.06 inches, nearly four times the average for the whole month, were recorded in 29 hours.

No trains could get through on the Cromer, Yarmouth and Lowestoft branch lines, leaving passengers stranded in waiting-rooms. A party of 12 day-trippers from Grimston, near King's Lynn, spent four days at Yarmouth Beach Station, not having enough money to stay anywhere else.

As evening fell on Tuesday, the rain had stopped, and the city's bridges were lined with anxious people, watching for the effect on the flood-water of the incoming high tide. There were gales at Yarmouth, which held back the flood-water.

The water-level in the streets rose inexorably, and the bridges had to be cleared, with only a few inches to spare below the tops of the arches.

**A**t dawn on Wednesday, with the worst over, people had their first chance to examine the full effects.

Among the highest casualties were the world-famous Norwich breed of canaries: hundreds of the little birds were drowned, and some particularly valuable strains were wiped out.

The water subsided rapidly all day, and on Thursday, although it was still rushing through Norwich with the speed of a mountain stream, and huge tracts of the countryside around were sodden, the danger was over.

put it, "without distinction of position and social standing, men and women of high and low degree responded to that one touch of nature which makes the whole kin."

A national flood relief appeal was launched, with donations including £150 from the King and Queen, £50 from the Prince of Wales, and £21 from the King and Queen of Norway.

One of the most touching gifts was from the children of the Railway Mission Sunday School in Melton Constable, who donated the £12 put aside for their summer treat.

The 1912 disaster was far from the first flood Norwich had endured. The records show that twice or three times every hundred years, heavy rainfall used to swell the winding channel of the Wensum through the city and flood the riverside. Slum clearance, war damage and the shift to the suburbs between

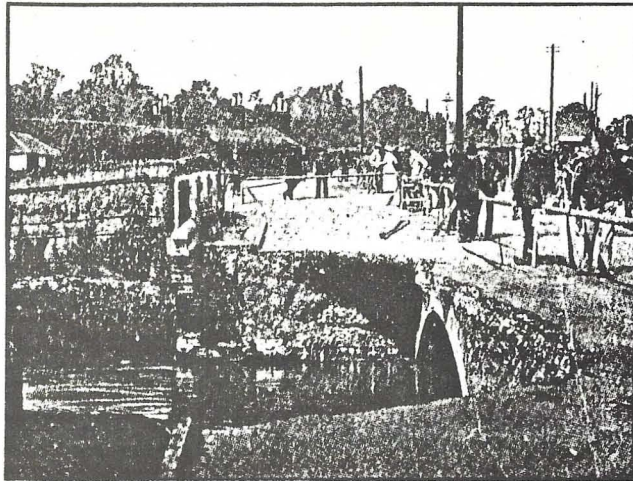
them have cut the number of people living in those areas.

The 1878 flood, which until 1912 was called the "Great Flood," followed a fortnight of heavy rain in November. The rivers Yare and Wensum, swollen by six inches of rain in just over a fortnight, overflowed into the low-lying land between Norwich, Yarmouth and Lowestoft, and the Helgham district of Norwich became a lake nearly a mile wide.

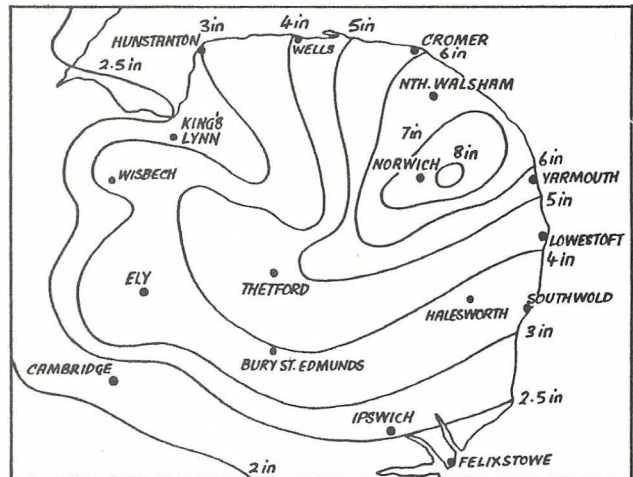
### Infested

The only loss of life then was among the rats which infested the city at the time. Thousands of them fled up the drains, to drown under the gratings.

Some survived, including one large colony which found its way into the cellars of a local brewery. They were discovered drunkenly trying to balance themselves on floating barrels — as inebriated as rodents, as the saying nearly goes.



★ Trowse Bridge, wrecked by the flooding.



★ A map showing where the heaviest rain fell.



★ Prince of Wales Road under water.

## Four reported dead in floods

FOUR deaths were recorded, including three drownings, although in those days of limited communication, others may have gone unnoticed by the press at the time. Edward Poll, a baby boy in Canterbury Place, North Heigham, was swept away while his family was being rescued by a boatman called Williamarrison, who was credited with the rescue of 100 people.

A postman at Saxingham also drowned, trying to get through the floods in his horse-and-cart. And a Mrs Kemp, of Goat Yard, Oak Street, Norwich, was reported as having died of "fright and shock."

George Brody, a fish porter, of Sawmill Yard, Oak Street, had already rescued several people when he apparently lost his footing in the raging torrent on his way to another rescue.

### Astounding

Mr Brody's body was found floating near Bullard's Wharf. After his funeral, his widow was given a weekly pension for life, in recognition of her husband's heroism.

There were many acts of astounding courage during those terrifying days. One of them resulted in the saving of the centuries-old Bishop Bridge, which spans the Wensum at the bottom of Gas Hill.

On the Tuesday night, its ancient stonework was being hammered by timbers washed down from the woodyards above Cow Tower.

Harry Abel, a council workman, lowered himself from the bridge on to the bucking timbers and tied ropes to them, so that they could be pulled clear.

Mr Abel was presented with a gold watch-chain, an inscribed medallion, and best of all in those days, an enlarged photograph taken of him at work on the floating timber the following day.

## Clearing up after the disaster

ORGANISED relief measures in the city were held up at first, because the Lord Mayor, the deputy mayor and the city surveyor were all on holiday at the time, and the Sheriff was ill.

Public buildings, including seven schools, were opened up for the thousands of refugees from the flooded areas, and every home cut off by the water was given a 24-hours' supply of food, plus two candles and a box of matches.

### Touching

An emergency council meeting was convened on Wednesday morning, to form a relief committee. Other organisations and individuals joined in. It was said, both at the time and later, that the one good thing about the flood was that it brought home to the middle-classes the appalling conditions in which many of their fellow citizens were living.

As one contemporary account



