# SMHS JOURNAL 21

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JUNE 2021


*Mary Everard's headstone features a carved image of what may be her Trinity Pilot husband's three-masted Yawl of which she was part owner.* *See article , Page 3.*

## Who were Southwold's Trinity House Pilots?

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE…



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# SOUTHWOLD MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL

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Editor: Barry Tolfree

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# *EDITORIAL*

I am proud to be taking on the editorship of the SMHS Journal from my friend and mentor, Paul Scriven. Paul founded this magazine, then known modestly as 'The Newsletter', at the turn of the Millennium, 21 years ago.

Paul intended it primarily to provide a platform for members to share their own research projects with one another. Whilst that is still very much its *raison d'être,* I believe there is also an opportunity for our journal to carry articles by specialists which contribute to our understanding of Southwold's past. So, in this issue, we welcome an intriguing contribution by David Sherlock of the Suffolk Records Society (P13) on the will of a 15th century Southwold vicar, and a piece by a local numismatist on the 17th century phenomenon of 'homemade' currency, or tokens of which our museum has a substantial collection (P9).

I hope you enjoy our 21st issue. And next year, perhaps, we can look forward to your own contribution. Let me know what you are planning. Remember that the Museum library has extensive reference material if you know where to look. Contact our archivist Bob Jellicoe (hallfarmwenhaston@gmail.com) to arrange your visit and he will help to point you in the right direction.

*Barry Tolfree*

*barry@southwoldmuseum.org*

**DAVID LEE**

With the death of David on 16th January at the age of 98, Southwold Museum lost a former longstanding Librarian and Archivist. He had also served as a trustee, and a member of the old museum sub-committee.

A quiet unassuming man, he provided invaluable help to the cataloguing group, when doubts arose, with his knowledge of Southwold, the museum collection and 'antiques'.

David's earliest association with the town was holidaying here as a young boy with his parents. Later he and his wife moved to Southwold and opened an antiques shop.

In 2015, he was the proud recipient, at a ceremony in Ipswich, of the Russian Ushakov Medal, in recognition of his wartime R.N. service on the Arctic Convoys.

His great interest and researches culminated in 2019 when the book "The Southwold Railway 1879-1929" was published with his co-author, Rob Shorland- Ball. On his retirement from the museum, a few years ago, he was succeeded by Bob Jellicoe as Librarian & Archivist.

*P.S.*

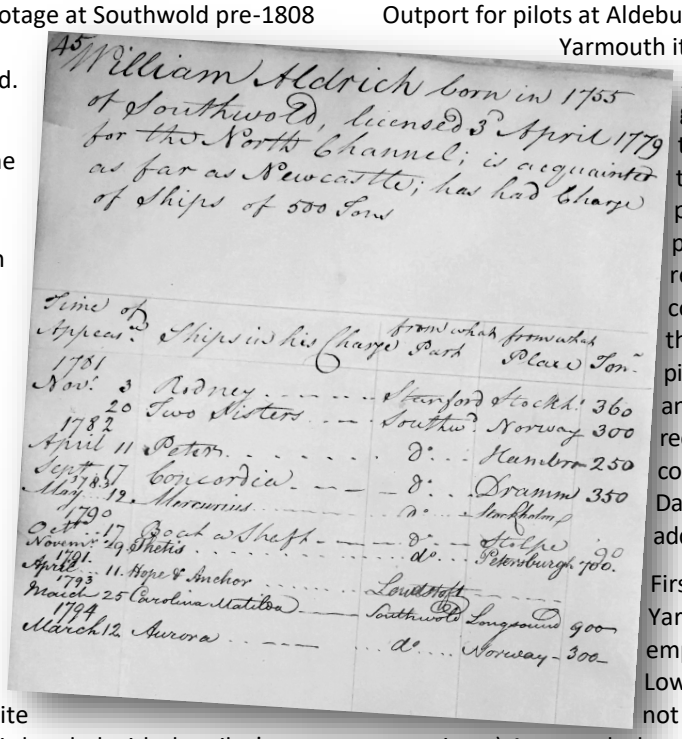
We are pleased to announce that PDFs of SMHS JOURNAL ISSUES 17—21 may now be downloaded from the Museum's website: www.southwoldmuseum.org
Click on 'Members Area'

# WHO WERE SOUTHWOLD'S TRINITY HOUSE PILOTS?

In the first of a series of articles, Bob Jellicoe delves into the history of this important profession and unearths some interesting new evidence

A hitherto overlooked aspect of Southwold's maritime history is the part played by its Trinity House pilots whose job it was to pilot ships up to the lower reaches of the Thames at Gravesend.

Pilotage had been the responsibility of Trinity House since 1514 but had been haphazardly regulated until 1808 when Parliament passed an *Act for the better Regulation of Pilots and of the Pilotage of Ships and Vessels Navigating the British Seas.* The Act, in effect, gave the Corporation of Trinity House state control of pilots and pilotage in England and Wales (with some ports exempted) and thus of all that entailed—the qualification, examination, regulation and licensing of pilots, rates of pilotage in the ports and so forth. The Act professionalised the service, making it an attractive career for ambitious young men. In this first article I will attempt to piece together a picture of pilotage at Southwold pre-1808 based on the scraps of information that have survived.


45 William Aldrich born in 1755 of Southwold, licensed 3d April 1779 for the North Channel; is acquainted as far as Newcastle; has had charge of Ships of 500 Tons

| Time of Appear. | Ships in his Charge | from what Port | for what Place | Tons |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1781 Nov. 3 | Rodney | Stanford & Stockh. | | 360 |
| 20 | Two Sisters | Southw. | Norway | 300 |
| 1782 April 11 | Peter | d. | Hamburgh | 250 |
| Sept. 17 | Concordia | d. | Drammd | 350 |
| 1783 May 12 | Mercurius | d. | Stockholm | |
| 1790 Octr. 17 | Boat & Shafts | d. | Stolpe | 90 |
| Novemr. 19 | Thetis | do. | Petersburgh | 700. |
| 1791 April 11 | Hope & Anchor | Lowestoft | | |
| 1793 Maid 25 | Carolina Matilda | Southwold | Longsound | 900 |
| 1794 March 12 | Aurora | do. | Norway | 300 |

A useful starting point is with the documents acquired by the Museum between 2016 and 2018, first spotted on ebay by the eagle-eyed ex-curator, Jan Holloway. The provenance of these is unknown but they appear to have been taken from a dismembered ledger, perhaps once held by Trinity House. The documents give details of twenty-five Southwold pilots licensed in the 18th century. The oldest, George Everard, (whose wife's tombstone, pictured on our front cover, is of great interest) was born in 1723 and the youngest, Samuel Waite [Wayth?] in 1767. Each sheet is headed with the pilot's essential details, thus taking William Aldrich as an example, we read:

> *William Aldrich born in 1755 of Southwold, licensed 3rd April 1779 for the North Channel; is acquainted as far as Newcastle; has had charge of ships of 500 tons.*

The *North Channel* began at Orfordness and ended at Gravesend. The fact that Aldrich also knew the waters up to Newcastle suggests that he might have picked up vessels from as far north as there. Only twenty-four when licensed, Aldrich must have been a very competent seaman to have taken on so much responsibility so young.

Beneath the details of each pilot are lists of ships piloted beginning in 1781 and ending in 1797. The list notes the date the ship appeared, its name, off where it was picked up, the name of its home port and its tonnage. Aldrich piloted ten ships between 1781 and 1794, all from Scandinavia, eight picked up off Southwold, the largest being the *Carolina Matilda* of Longsound [Norway] at 900 tons on March 25th, 1793. Over the 16 years most pilots did not even make the double figures achieved by Aldrich and only two piloted over twenty ships which suggests that pilotage was lean in the latter part of the 18th century and could not have been a full-time occupation.

The next evidence is in some notes added to a letter sent to Trinity House in 1808 from Yarmouth by Allison Davie. Trinity House had jurisdiction of pilots and pilotage for the London District which ended at Orfordness. The regulation and management of pilots and pilotage outside the District was undertaken by Sub-commissioners appointed by Trinity House in what were known as *Outports*. Yarmouth was the Outport for pilots at Aldeburgh, Southwold, Lowestoft and Yarmouth itself. In preparation for the 1808 Act, information had to be gathered from each port. Thus, the letter sent to Davie asked him to list the Southwold Harbour pilots, the rates of pilotage for the port and whether he could recommend anyone to be a sub-commissioner. The return shows that many, but not all the Harbour pilots were also Trinity House Pilots and that there was no-one he could recommend to be a sub-commissioner. The real interest of Davie's return, though, is in the additional information he appended.

First, he said that most of the Yarmouth Pilots were currently employed by the Navy but that the Lowestoft and Southwold Pilots were not eligible for this work. (No reason was given.) As a result they had *'little employment, many of them declaring to me they have not earned £5 this year by Pilotage & have been at great expence [sic] in maintaining their cutters etc owing to very few Foreign Ships arriving from the Baltic and the British Ships not taking Pilots.'* This seems to corroborate the evidence of the Museum documents that pilotage was lean at this time, perhaps because of threats to shipping from the French with whom the country was at war.

Next, he listed three Pilot Cutters which rendezvoused off Southwold, adding his own observations, viz:

*Montefour* 29 tons Master James Points

*Providence* 32 tons Master Henry May jnr.

*Samuel* 32 tons Master James Sterry

*Observations: These vessels on the same footing with Lowestoft Cruising Cutters i.e. those are deck'd cutters & occasionally cruise*

*between Orfordness & the Dogger Bank & occasionally on ye Wells Bank, Brown Bank & Smith's Knowl & are maintained by poundage from the Pilots same as the Beach Boats. The cutters begin their cruise in March and finish in November.*

Points, May and Sterry are listed as Trinity House pilots in the Museum documents (and also as Harbour pilots by Davie) but hardly undertook any service, suggesting perhaps that a better living could be made as a Master of a cutter than as a pilot, as fees for each service by the shipped pilot were levied both for the maintenance of the cutter and for the Master. This note also tells us that Pilot cutters were used for an eight -month period each year, cruising both locally and at greater distance. The word 'occasionally' used twice, again suggests that around 1808 there was not much work to be had. It is not clear who owned the cutters, a point I will return to, or whether certain pilots used certain cutters.

Finally, Davie added still more interesting information, viz:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Southwold Cliff: | *Contest* | 4 tons |
| | *King George* | 8 tons |
| | *New Reindeer* | 17 tons |
| | *Sailors Friend* | 12 tons |

*Observations: These are open boats belonging to ye pilots kept ready on ye beach with extra people to launch them.*

It seems to me that this is hitherto unknown documentary evidence about the *New York Cliff Company*. Maggs tells us that this was the first of the Southwold Cliff Companies and that it was formed at some time in the mid-18th century. The purpose of a Cliff Company was to ship pilots to vessels requiring their services and to profit from rescuing vessels in distress. I would venture that these were the boats belonging to the Company in 1808. The observation tells us that, unlike the cutters, they were open boats, kept ready on the beach in preparation for a quick launch by the 'extra people', known as *cliffmen* at Southwold, elsewhere as *beachmen*, most likely fishermen. The cliffmen were paid from the pilot's fee for launching and crewing the boats and this was a way of supplementing meagre income made from fishing. The tonnage of the boats indicates why the cliffmen were needed. A comparison makes the point: the *Alfred Corry* weighs a little over 8 tons. Thus, many men were required to launch the boats into the breaking waves from the beach, a skilled operation which mostly, but not always, succeeded. I would further suggest from their tonnage, that *New Reindeer* and *Sailors Friend* [sic] were yawls.

We can now speculate a little further about ownership of the cutters. William Critten the boat builder, who died in 1807 and who had businesses both at Aldeburgh and Southwold, left his wife, Mary 'the 1/16th part of the Montifield Cutter…' in his will. *Montifield* must be Davie's *Montefour.* Shares in ships were customarily divided into 64ths, so Critten owned 4 shares. If a local businessman had shares in a cutter (which he may have even built), others may well have done so. Return on the investment would have come from pilotage fees and salvage fees which latter could be very lucrative. This suggests that small groups of pilots and businessmen owned and ran individual cutters and quite possibly that a similar group constituted the New York Cliff Company having invested in the boats mentioned in the Davie letter.

Launching and beaching the New York Cliff boats was potentially hazardous. Maggs tells us that on December 26th 1802, '*the Pilot Boat "Sailors Friend" upset on coming ashore-4 men drowned-vitz John Bokenham, Jacob Spenser, George Barber, and Joseph Wright. The Sea Fencibles attended the Funeral.'* Spenser was one of the Trinity House Pilots mentioned in the Museum documents. A note kept by E.R. Cooper in one of his scrapbooks says he was originally from Shetland.

Further evidence from Maggs provides a little more information.

*~ On December 14th 1792, 'The "Lowestoft" Wm Aldrich Master a Pilot Cutter belonging to this Port lost on the Coast of Holland with a Brief. Crew saved.'*

*~ On November 6th 1795, a combination of a 'tremendous heavy gale of Wind…[and] an exceeding high Tide much higher than ever remember'd by any person living' caused 'a Pilot Cutter [to be] driven out of the River over the Wall into the Marshes.'*

*~ On January 20th, 1802, the Pilot Boat "DOVE" saved a crew from a collier. [A pilot boat as opposed to a cutter, usually refers to a beach boat]*

*~ On May 29th 1806, the Pilot Cutter Samuel took the crew of a "Galliot" "Zeeland" to Yarmouth, the crew having abandoned her.*

Each of these incidents contains a story, now irrecoverable. And indeed the lack of any narratives or records of the work of the pilots means that the life remains in the shadows.

Finally, regarding the ownership of pilot boats, the grave of Mary Everard, the wife of the pilot, George, has a three-masted vessel carved into the top of the headstone. (See front cover photograph) Yawls were originally three-masted so this suggests that Everard and his wife were owners or part-owners of this one, though no details are recorded.

To sum up. The Museum documents and the Davie return tell us that there were two dozen or so Trinity House pilots at Southwold in the late 18th century and that pilotage was infrequent. Pilots operated both from cutters at sea for an eight-month period and from off the beach, picking up ships to take to Gravesend via the *North Channel*. Pilots had an interest in the cutters and the beach boats because they had to pay for their maintenance from their own pockets, at times with difficulty, in the case of the cutters. Local businessmen were also shareholders in the cutters and probably the beach boats as well. Return on their investment came from the pilots' fees and from salvage. The New York Cliff Company kept a variety of boats on the beach from small to large, ready for launching to vessels requiring a pilot or to those in distress. These were launched and crewed by the *cliffmen*, mostly fishermen, who were also paid from the pilot's fee or from salvage money.

Following the 1808 Act, pilotage became a far more attractive proposition than the rather irregular activity this evidence has shown, a development I will write about in a future article.

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Bob Jellicoe would be very interested in hearing from any reader who has any documentary evidence or photos of pilots and pilotage. Please contact him direct on hallfarmwenhaston@gmail.com.

Simon Loftus pays an urgent visit to the town records before they are relocated to Ipswich, and returns with a treasure trove of

# SCRAPS FROM THE ARCHIVES—Part 1

When I first explored the Southwold archives, long ago, they were stored in cardboard shoe boxes in a cupboard in the Town Hall. The past seemed very close as I read those scraps of paper – beer to refresh the bellringers at the restoration of Charles II; payments for burying dead seamen, washed ashore after the Battle of Sole Bay; supplies to the Pest House during an outbreak of smallpox; glimpses of borough intrigues.

Then this treasure trove was deposited at the Lowestoft Record Office and the pleasure of research was dampened by the need to make a journey, fill in forms, twiddle my thumbs as documents slowly made their way to the reading room – and in any case I had other things to do. But last year the Museum was notified that most of the older archives at Lowestoft were to be transferred to a new Suffolk repository – The Hold – based in Ipswich. The Trustees agreed to fund a project to have a selection of these documents scanned for us before the move, and I enlisted the help of Paul Scriven and Bob Jellicoe to join me in a series of exploratory trips to Lowestoft. With the patient help of the team at the Record Office, we acquired digital scans of a wonderful range of material.

These documents provide clues to dozens of fascinating stories, far too many to explore in a single article, but here for your interest are some of the snippets that caught my attention. I have begun with the contrast between pomp and poverty, and how the town responded to the needs of its poor. In the next instalment I shall consider the way that Southwold dealt with its Church, Mill, Harbour, Gaol and the farm at Walpole – and the costs of going to law. I am leaving Bob Jellicoe to analyse the clues from the Admiralty Court, and the structure of the fishing industry.

**Feasting at the Swan**

The Restoration of Charles II in 1660 took place a year after the catastrophic fire which destroyed so much of Southwold – along with most of the town records. But the church bells were rung, beer was drunk in cheerful quantity and on St. Nicholas Day, 6th December, the annual election of the Bailiffs was celebrated at the Swan, as it always had been. Twenty-four sat down to dinner, for which Robert Rous charged 6 shillings per head, plus a further 25 shillings 'for wine and tobacco'. The total was nearly twice what Goodman Wiggins had been paid 'for the feast at Nicholas Day', in the dour days of the Commonwealth, two years earlier.

A dozen years later, at the end of May 1672, the English fleet was based in Sole Bay and one of the bloodiest battles of the Anglo Dutch wars took place off Southwold - described by the Dutch Admiral de Ruyter as 'the hardest fought he ever saw'. For weeks afterwards dead seamen were washed ashore and had to be buried. This melancholy task is recorded in the archives by scraps of paper authorising the town Chamberlain to pay to the bearer 'one Shellon for buroin of a dead man'. As I read those words, allowing the phonetic spelling to shape the sounds in my head, I can hear the Suffolk accent, a voice from the past.

In the aftermath of the battle senior naval officers were still quartered in the town, and some of these distinguished visitors were invited to the feast in December. Thirty-three sat down to dinner at the Swan. The cost of the meal (six shillings and sixpence per head) was little more than it had been in 1660, but an extravagant £5-14-0 was spent 'for wine & beer, firen & tobacco'. Everyone got royally drunk.

**No one drank water**

Again and again, trawling through these accounts, I am struck by the prodigious consumption of alcohol. Any excuse was sufficient for the Bailiffs and Chamberlain to call for a pint of sack (sherry) - whether totting up the town rents, drinking the Queen's health, celebrating 'gunpowder treason' day (5th November), or in anxious discussions about the Town Bull, 'when sick' - and everyone doing work for the town expected to be given an allowance of beer. Sometimes the amounts were startling.

Even when sick, they drank. William Milburne, Overseer of the Poor, was responsible for provisioning the Pest House during an outbreak of smallpox in 1742. Three women, one youth and seven children were incarcerated between the beginning of March and the end of April, cared for by a nurse and a small number of other watchers and helpers. During these few weeks they consumed over a thousand pints of small beer, twelve of strong beer, nine and a half pints of sack and three pints of gin. Only one woman and two children died from the combined effects of smallpox and alcohol, and the following year Milburne was elected Bailiff.

At least once a year the cannon on Gun Hill were fired with great ceremony and bills survive for several 'Chaldrons of Coals to the Gun House' and for a barrel of Gunpowder, costing exactly £5-4-2. Equally necessary was beer to slake the thirst of those involved. Mary Allen charged ten shillings and sixpence in 1744 'For beer for Raising ye Guns and fireing them off at Severell Times.' Another bill, in May 1755, suggested greater restraint - only three shillings was spent on beer when 'firing ye guns' – but included a charge of nine shillings and tuppence 'for Beer for ye Children at ye Rambelation'. That would have been sufficient for more than two hundred pints of 'small beer', which is probably what the children drank during the 'Beating of the Bounds' - the ancient Perambulation intended to teach them the limits of the Borough and its jurisdiction. I think there must have been a swarm of children, given a pint each to celebrate.

Mary Prew, a most redoubtable woman, was frequently employed to scythe the commons or marshes. A bill from 1769, shows that for six days 'mowing weeds' – hard physical labour - she was paid the same rate as a man, a shilling a day. Like most men she was illiterate, signing her name with a cross, and like most men she had a thirst. In December 1773 four shillings and ten pence was spent on 'beer for Mary Prew'. The price of beer had doubled over the previous century, but that still equated to almost sixty pints at

standard strength, or twice that amount of small beer.

**Pomp and circumstance**

The Borough of Southwold had a high sense of its own dignity. In 1754 Thomas Gardner listed the officers of the town - two Bailiffs, a Recorder, two Chamberlains, Town Clerk, Coroner, two Serjeants-at-Mace, Sexton, two Fen Reeves, Clerk of the Market, Bellman – plus a number of unsalaried roles (four Constables, two Surveyors, two Churchwardens, four Overseers) who earned what they could from various fees. Highest paid was the Recorder or High Steward, valued for his legal expertise, but the most splendidly clothed were the Serjeants-at-Mace, whose official uniform (scarlet coats and breeches) was intended to reinforce their status as servants of the bailiffs, executing warrants within the town.

Those scarlet coats were handed down from year to year, and sometime needed modification to fit the latest individuals to be appointed to this office. In 1725, for example, the tailor John Plumbe charged a shilling 'for widning of the Sergents coate' - and thirty years later John Golding was paid three shillings and sixpence for 'olturn [altering] 2 Sargens Coats'. But eventually these garments, however sturdily made, had to be replaced.

A wonderful bill survives detailing the work required when John Clubb the tailor was commissioned to make two new 'Coats for the Searjants', in September 1769, and the following April to make them some breeches. He charged eight shillings for his labour in making each coat and three shillings and sixpence for each pair of breeches – but the cost of materials came to over £8, for these were garments of exceptional splendour. The coats required six yards of scarlet broadcloth, nine yards of scarlet shalloon (a woollen material used for linings), a yard and a half of buckram, the same of 'Pockett Fustian', six dozen Coat Buttons and lots of silk thread, twist and tape. There was more scarlet broadcloth for the breeches, plus 'Searge flanell, Dyed Ducke and scarlet ferrett' (a strong tape of cotton or silk).

It was all wonderfully gaudy.

**Poor relief**

Every parish was obliged by law to levy a poor rate on all who could pay, to provide relief for those who were too old or young or ill to work, and to finance a workhouse for the able-bodied poor - who were set to work beating hemp or other repetitive tasks. Before the notorious House of Industry opened at Bulcamp, in 1766, it seems that Southwold must have had its own, but the only mention of it that I could find was in a bill from the blacksmith Simon Pankes, in May 1739, listing various items that he was employed to mend 'for the workhous' - 'a pair of tongs, a ceandle stick, a moustrap, 2 pair of pothucks.'

Small sums, from fourpence to a few shillings, were paid in cash to those in need. In 1677, for example, almost 50 such payments were made to the numerous victims of shipwrecks or fire, or simply to penniless travellers who begged for assistance as they passed on their way. Sixpence each was given to three 'ship broken mane', a shilling 'to 2 pore woman that was burnt', two shillings and sixpence 'to 2 travelling woman and 2 children, sixpence to 'A por Blind man', eighteen pence to '3 Irish man Travallars'. Social status was recognised even amongst the poor; a shilling was given to 'A Travelling man which was a gentill man'. Very occasionally someone was whipped for begging (as the law demanded) but nonetheless was given sixpence afterwards to help them out. In its rough way, this was charity.

By the 18th century more substantial assistance was also given – providing clothes for the poor of the town and their children. Four shillings and sixpence 'for makeing a coat Waistcoat and breeches for the Boy Pinkine' and threepence for his shirt; several pairs of shoes at two shillings each for the Widow Collet's daughters and for the children of Goody Stollery and Mighell; smaller sums 'for shoes mended several times' for the children of Comines and Olcock; checked shirts, waistcoats and stockings for the Boy Deek, the Boy Everat and the Boy Kilwick.

Sometimes the needy were given the materials to make their own clothes. In 1762 Lancelott Davies charged the town for cloth and yarn given to several children, including 'Mary Prue's Girl' - daughter of the thirsty mower. In the same year he listed a month's supply of groceries 'for the Girl Wiggs' - Sugar, eggs, Raysons, Corants, figgs, candles, soape, Oatmeal, butter, Cheese, Tea, Frankincense. John Clubb provided a similar range for Mary Moss & the Widow Baspole in 1773, but his list included 'starch & blew', plenty of tobacco and a lot more soap. These gifts, for whatever reason, were well above the level of basic sustenance – but that, too, was provided to the poor – most often bread and 'biscakes' but once a load of Sprats, costing 4 shillings.

Lancelott Davies seems also to have acted as a doctor, charging £5 in 1740 for 'Medicins in Physic & Surgery for one year as by Agreement'. Three years earlier Jeremiah Petre had claimed 'for ten Weeks attendance Medicins & Cure of a Mortified Breast on Susan Nikerson, & for Cureing three Sores on the other Breast.' In 1762 William Hurr's wife was ill. Robert Jaques provided 'Beer, Wine Coles &c' to keep her in good spirits, and Mr Shribbs attempted to cure her - with 'Bleeding, Vomit, Saffrons, Phisic, Anadines, Purging Draughts'. But that same year brought a reminder of the limits of medical competence - ten shillings was spent on 'Mr Wakefield's coffen' and sixpence to bury him.

The annual cost to the town, for all these forms of assistance, provided a strong incentive to prevent vagrants from settling and claiming residence, and hence a right to poor relief. One of the main tasks of the Town Constable was to accompany such 'strowlers' to the parish boundary at Might's Bridge, and see them on their way. In 1759, for example, Thomas Burner charged the usual fee, a shilling a head, for putting a total of 32 strowlers 'over the Bridge', but he also listed a more sinister item - 'For searching a Jew as a Spye'. A later bill included a charge 'for seeing the Lewnitek Woman over the Breggs.' Any mark of difference bred suspicion and fear.

But all things considered, I was surprised at the frequent evidence of real generosity when dealing with the poor of the Borough, quite unlike the harshness typical of larger towns. Perhaps it was related to the strong non-conformist streak in the leading families, who filled the major offices, year by year.

# The Doctor will see you now

**Paul Scriven refers us to some past Southwold medical men**

**John Sutherland** (b. Aberdeen 1782) is best known for the house which is named after him in the High Street. He was Mayor of Southwold 1841-1844, the seventh to hold that office. His daughter Henrietta married Francis Henry Vertue (see below). Sutherland was one of the two bailiffs 1822-1824 and again in 1827- 1828 and on the formation of the Town Council (under the 1835 Act) he became an Alderman.

In a series of advertisements in the local press e.g. *Suffolk Chronicle and the Bury & Norwich Post* from November 1846 to July 1848 his name was among many medical men who endorsed the products of Messrs Keyzor, opticians, 24, Cattle Meadow Norwich "Their newly invented spectacles immediately they are placed before extremely imperfect vision at once brings it back to its natural and original state, and every object becomes clear and distinct".

It has not been possible to list his qualifications other than having an honorary diploma of the National Vaccinators.

He died in 1852 and is buried in Southwold churchyard together with his wife Mary Ann (1789-1875), his son (1824-1872) and his mother Elizabeth (1747-1827)

**Robert Wake M.D., MRCS, LSA** was the author of a history in "*Southwold and Its Vicinity*" (1839). He lived in Queen Street and was High Steward 1852-1867 having been Mayor in 1840 and a J.P. in 1841. He was a Harbour Commissioner September 29,1866 (*Suffolk Chronicle*) He was a supporter of the proposed railway Ipswich- Yarmouth through or near Woodbridge,Saxmundham, Yoxford, Halesworth and Beccles.

He was present at the Annual Meeting (19th anniversary) of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association at Brighton (Sussex Advertiser 19 August 1851)

On December 12 1846 he wrote to the journal of this association calling attention to having been duped. *Norfolk News* (same date) stated that "on Wednesday an officer of the Borough of Southwold came to this city with a warrant against Dr Wolff, the celebrated corn and bunion curer, charging him with having illegally obtained a sum of money in Southwold.… The Warrant was granted by Daniel Fulcher, mayor of Southwold and was backed by the Norwich Mayor and the professor was soon apprehended by a serjeant Steward, who afterwards accompanied him to Southwold. He was put in Beccles Gaol. Wolff had resided in Norwich but made excursions over Norfolk and Suffolk. In a lengthy report in the Norfolk News December 19, 1846 it stated that one of these 'excursions' was to Southwold where he had "contrived by his peculiar practice to levy £11 or £12 upon 4 or 5 of the principal inhabitants (including Mrs Lillingstone) and extracting corns from their feet. He also treated Dr Wake although he made no charge for the services as was customary with professional men. Wake introduced him to his friend W.C.Fonnerereau of Christchurch Park, Ipswich where Wake became suspicious of Wolff as he tried to watch him in operation. Consulting his legal friends and magistrates, but having parted with no money himself he could not proceed himself in having Wolff charged with obtaining money by false pretences but made a complaint under the Rogues and Vagabonds Act. Although Wolff made claims to a distinguished clientele, after his arrest it was ascertained that he was not a doctor neither had he had any medical education. It was found that two like 'chiropodists' had been arrested in Cheltenham on charge precisely as that for Wolff, with the latter admitting he had knowledge of those parties.

When the case came before the Beccles Christmas Sessions on January 4, 1847, Wake gave evidence (during which there was much laughter in Court). William Blowers, blacksmith gave evidence saying he had seen the prisoner outside his father's shop picking up parings from some horses' hoofs but did not know whether he took them and the Revd. S. Clissold, who had examined some of Fonnereau's removed corns likened them to fish bones. Two Norwich residents gave good reports of the 35 year-old and he was found 'Not Guilty'. He was described as having a" pleasing countenance". Perhaps this is what won the day! Wolff probably had learned his lesson as he told someone that he thought he would take out a Hawker's Licence.

**John Williams Esq.,** surgeon commenced practising on September 20, 1848 in place of Dr Wake who had disposed of this to him. He was well qualified. He had studied at St. Bartholomew's Hospital where he became House surgeon. L.S.A. 1838, MRCS 1838, FRCS 1847 and M.D. at St. Andrews in 1855. He was the Dispensary Medical Officer for the Blything Union and a member of the B.M.A. (*Association Medical Journal* October 24,1856)

Dr Williams died of bronchitis on January 9, 1862 aged 46 years.

**Francis Henry Vertue** (b. Woodbridge c.1822) lived at Red House and became surgeon for Southwold and Walberswick in place of Dr Williams March 2, 1862. Vertue married Henrietta Maria Sutherland (aforementioned) and they had 3 sons. He was admitted as a member of the Royal College of Surgeons on March 23, 1860. Clearly, he was in Southwold during Dr Williams time. The 1881 Census shows him as MRCS (London) L.A.S. and J.P. (He was appointed as a magistrate July 7, 1866).

As hon. treasurer he appealed to the Mayor and Corporation for funds to establish a competent company of bellringers (February 9, 1865).

Some cases he attended were:

Amputating an arm of a 14 year old following a fall on the vessel, "Resolution" of Seine in the Red Lion (September 17, 1852) with Dr Williams, etc.

Multiple injuries when a 19 year old fell from the topsail of a vessel, and Vertue dealt with his broken arm, leg and head fracture on November 10, 1852. On December 19, the lad

was sent home.

In December 1852 the brig "Ann and Mary" of Sunderland sank. The Master was brought ashore where he was revived by Vertue and Dr Williams.

Suicide by a 71 year old (March 17, 1862) He reported on his previous mental health problems.

In 1875 he had attended an accident, as Dr Blackett was not at home, when an employee at Hill Farm, Wangford, fell from a load of straw and received a bad leg fracture.

At Walberswick a man had dislocated his arm, when putting the anchor overboard on the fishing boat "Alice". Vertue was sent for but the man was able to return to his home at Westleton. He attended another fracture of a leg at Walberswick by a pork butcher (October 1, 1864).

A much more difficult accident was at Uggeshall (January 24, 1871) when the horse harness broke on a wagonette, frightening the animal and the driver fell out of the carriage and the wheels ran over both his legs. A 58 year-old Southwold passenger tried to get out of the vehicle but was knocked down. She was carried home and was able to walk upstairs. Vertue was sent for, but with the help of another their efforts failed and the lady died the next morning.

In one of his talks to this Society in the 1960's Col. Jarvis related the following story.

Andrew Critten (1890-1964) had told him that as a boy he had a very severe bout of toothache with his cheek bulging. There being no dentist he went to Vertue who ordered him to sit on a chair and got hold of the tooth with a fearsome instrument. However, the tooth would not be drawn and after a hard struggle, Critten found himself on the floor with the doctor's knee on his chest. Extraction was at last achieved and the patient staggered to his feet, holding a bruised jaw and a bleeding face. Whereon the doctor said "Don't make such a fuss" and held out his hand for his fee of 1s 6d.

Vertue died at the Red House, Southwold on April 2, 1894 aged 72 and his funeral at Knodishall was attended by the Mayor, Town Clerk and councillors. Mr. G. Gage of the Crown Hotel supplied the hearse and carriages. Vertue was buried in the family grave of his parents, his wife and later his daughter Henrietta Maria (1858-1936). It was the latter who acquired the Maggs diaries following the death of Eustace Grubbe.

**Edward Ralph Blackett, Gent.,** was appointed by the War Office April 4, 1855 to be acting surgeon (London Gazette December 5,1856). He was appointed as Acting Surgeon to the 1st Norfolk Regt November 18,1882

He had qualified M.D. at Queens University (Coleraine Chronicle October 19,1861) When applying as a candidate for House Surgeon at the Suffolk General Hospital (Bury St. Edmunds) he stated through the course of his medical education had served as acting surgeon in the Army for nearly 2 years, the greater part in the Crimea. (*Bury & Norwich Post* September 15,1857). The Governors elected him by a large majority (*Bury Free Press* October 3, 1857)

In 1858 at University College Hospital, Capt. Charles Rayley R.N. the proprietor of the College donated £500 to the hospital and nominated Edward Ralph Blackett, house surgeon, to the Suffolk General Hospital to be constituted as a Life Governor of University College Hospital. (*London Daily News* November 18, 1858) (see paragraph on Sailors' Reading Room -below).

He came to Southwold to succeed Dr Williams on 13 January 1862 and became a magistrate in January 1863. That same year, in April, he married Agnes Gwyn at Tasburgh, Norfolk by whom he had two daughters and a son. He was appointed a Harbour Commissioner in 1867 and was second highest in the poll for the Town Council elections in 1869.

In November 1870 he moved with three small children to Wangford where he had a governess, cook, nurse and housemaid. In 1873 his 38 year old wife died.

On September 15, 1875 he married at Cheltenham, Laura Jane Grey (Marriage conducted by the Rev. W.R .Blackett & the Rev. G.P. Griffiths) (Gloucester Journal September 25, 1875) and they were to have 2 sons and 2 daughters. Interestingly, Laura had been staying in 1871 with her cousin Mary Lillingstone, the widow of Alfred, in Southwold.

In 1871 Mrs Rayley who had had the Sailors Reading Room built (at a cost of £561.4s.6d (£561.20) left it to her nephew Dr Blackett and this remained in the Blackett family until 1914 (see "The Sailors Reading Room; the First 150 years" by Douglas Pope). Mrs Rayley was the sister of Mrs Elizabeth Blackett.

Blackett is listed in 1883 as physician and surgeon, medical officer and public vaccinator.

A painting "Southwold Seafront at the Sailors Reading Room" dated 1876 by Blackett is owned by the Southwold Town Council.

He was one of the executors of the will of May Elizabeth Grey, spinster of Cheltenham who died July 16, 1888 whose assets included shares in the G.W.R. These were valued at £7785. 8s. 11d.

Blackett died on June 18, 1893 aged 58 (Ipswich Journal September 22,1892) and was buried at Wangford. Probate to his will was granted on September 22,1893 to his widow Laura Jane. Effects were the same amount as those left by Miss May Elizabeth Grey.

By 1901 the widow was living at New Market, Beccles with 3 children and 2 domestic servants but in 1911 she was with two unmarried daughters and had moved to Falmouth. She died on March 24, 1913 aged 70 and is buried in Falmouth Cemetery. Probate to her will was granted on June 21, to Henry George Grey, Capt. R.N. (retd) with effects of £171.8s.1d exactly the amount she held in G.W.R. shares. Her son Charles Edward seems to have been the beneficiary but he was in Manitoba, so it was referred to E.R. Cooper, solicitor, Southwold.

*Paul Scriven (2020)*

Sources include:

The Southwold Dairy of James Maggs 1818-1876 ed. Alan Bottomley

British Newspaper Archive.

# The 17th Century tokens of Southwold

**by numismatist, Simon Monks**

17th Century tokens were the first genuine trade tokens to appear in this country. The failure of parliament to provide sufficient small-denomination coinage drove desperate traders to issue their own. The inscriptions of these tokens commonly consist of the Christian and surname of the issuer, his trade and occupation and the town or village in which he resided. Additionally, we often have the value, initials of the issuer and his wife, and a device or coat of arms.

The tokens were usually struck in copper or brass, the commonest denomination being farthings, followed by halfpennies and some pennies. The majority of tokens are round, but square, heart shaped, diamond shaped and octagonal tokens were made.

Originally the tokens were struck for traders, shopkeepers and particularly innkeepers and alehouses, the majority emanating from these sources. Their issue by local authorities of the day gave them considerably more respectability and some of these municipal tokens are the commonest in the whole series, having been minted in the greatest numbers. Additionally tokens were also conveyors of the message that the issue had a business and as such were a useful advertising medium

In towns where several traders had businesses in close proximity to one-another, tokens of a known issuer would be acceptable in other shops and boxes with small compartments were used to separate the different ones. When enough had been accumulated, a trader would exchange tokens either for silver coin or his own tokens.

It is interesting to note how their issue reflects the relative importance of towns and cities at the time. For example Liverpool had 13 issuers, whereas Norwich had 90. In Suffolk, Bury St Edmonds led the way with 42, followed by Ipswich with 38. Southwold had 3 issuers and one issued by the town as follows:

**Judeth Luscoe**

The only record found that might be relevant (but probably is not) is the marriage of a John Luscomb to a Judeth Browes at Rattery in Devon on 8th November 1631. A Judith Luscoe was married to an Edward Rose at Brundish in 1694 – presumably a descendant of the issuer.

Obverse: IVDETH LVSCOE = *Bakers' Arms Reverse:* OF SOVTHOVLD I666 = *Brewers' Arms*
Southwold Museum collection

**Daniell More.**

The issuer is almost certainly the Daniel More, son of Daniel and Helen, baptised at Southwold on 15th October 1637. Daniel Moore was assessed for four hearths in 1674 and the will of Daniel More, maltster, was proved at Ipswich in 1701.

*Obverse: DANIELL MORE IN = M / D M*
*Right: SOVTHWALD GROCER = M / D M / I663*
*(The initial 'M' is probably that of his wife) Pryke Collection*

**Thomas Postle.**

This is the commonest Southwold token. Thomas Postle was a merchant, grocer and draper trading at premises in the market Place at the end of the 17th century which stills stand today, housing Collen & Clare's fashion boutique. The weather vane from the old Market Cross bears the initials TP and JW; those of Thomas Postle and John Wigg. Postle was Bailiff in 1662 but refused to take the Oath of Allegiance and was removed from office. However, he was elected Bailiff again in 1671, 1688, 1690 and 1692.

A Thomas Posttle married a Mary Perrman at Great Yarmouth on 5th August 1643. Mr Possele was assessed for five hearths in 1674.

Obverse: THOMAS POSTLE = *Grocers' Arms*
*Reverse:* IN SOVTHWOLD I652 = T P *over heart*
Earl of Cranbrook collection. There is another variety of this token dated 1659


The weather vane from the Old Market Cross, bearing the initials of Thomas Postle and John Wigg. On display in Southwold Museum

**Tokens issued by Southwold Corporation**

These were issued as a form of charity for the poor.

Obverse: THE ARMES OF SOVTHWOVLD
= Arms of Southwold
Reverse: A ½ FOR THE POORES ADVANTAG 1667
Ashmolean Museum Collection

*Acknowledgements: Many thanks to Dr Adrian Marsden of Norfolk Historic Environment service for providing images of the tokens. The two standard works on the subject George Williamson's "Trade Tokens Issued in the Seventeenth Century" and Michael Dickinson's "Seventeenth Century Tokens of the British Isles" have provided much useful information.*

# THE WITCH TRIALS OF ANN CAMELL

The top end of Victoria Street used to be called Camells Lane after a wealthy Elizabethan family of that name. It was Thomas Camell and his mysterious second wife, Ann, who fascinated local artist, Laina West. So much so that she has just completed a novel about her. Here she shares with us some of her intriguing research.

Research is a rabbit hole down which I could happily spend the rest of my days. I had first heard mention of Ann Camell in Geoffrey Munn's '*Southwold: An Earthly Paradise'* which was given to me as a leaving gift when we moved to Reydon in 2009. Ann had been accused of witchcraft three times at the height of the East Anglian persecutions in 1645/6 but had, seemingly, been acquitted each time. In 2019, I idly typed in her name into a genealogy website and to my amazement record after record popped up.

**Bewitched a sailor**

She had been accused of bewitching a local sailor, William Whitton in Southwold, on 10th September 1645, employing '*…divers evil and wicked spirits…*' and I became so engrossed in her story that, when I had exhausted Google, I extended my search to the National Archives at Kew. I used a researcher who found not only a request from the Justices of the King's Bench at Westminster for further information on her case, dated 28 November 1645, but a reply from Southwold describing her indictment for bewitching William Whitton, a sailor, dated 14 January 1646, together with a piece of parchment naming the Bailiffs who had to provide the information and the Justices who requested it. (KB 9/831, TNA). I also found a reference to her in a book of advice for lawyers on how to try cases, published around 1730, which describes Ann's arraignment under a Writ of Habeas Corpus at the Westminster Court in 1649 (Term Trin. 24 Car 1 BR Styles Rep p116, The King versus Camell). These documents suggest that, although she stood trial in Southwold, the town did not know how to proceed with her case and so they contacted the King's Bench at Westminster for advice. She was taken before the King's Bench in 1649 after a further accusation.

*"...divers evil and wicked spirits"*

My researcher also found a record of a 'gaol delivery', a court hearing, which confirmed that the High Steward at the time of her trial in Southwold was Miles Corbett (C181/5 folio 257d, TNA). Tantalisingly, the document does not mention the name of the accused and I have had to resist the urge to assume it was Ann.

I have not been able to find any record of Ann's birth or death, or of her marriage to a wealthy merchant, Thomas Camell, and I still I have no idea how a woman with such an elevated position in society came to be accused of witchcraft by a sailor, but the joy of fiction is that you can fill in the gaps.

Ann's husband, Thomas Camell, appears on local records. On 26 January 1607, he married Mary Jentillman in the church of St Edmunds, Southwold. There are baptism records for their children, Thomas, 24 November 1608 and Susan, 14 April 1611 and a rather poignant record of Mary's burial, at St Edmund's Church, on 24 March 1611, which suggests that Mary died during or after giving birth to Susan. Two years later, on 26 September 1613, there is a baptism record for another son, John. John's father is shown as Thomas Camell but, interestingly, no mother's name is recorded. There is then another baptism record, for Judith, on 24 April 1615, again with no mother's name recorded so for the purposes of my novel I have assumed that Ann was their mother. Further baptism records come every two years, for Ann on 20 March 1617, Joseph on 6 August 1619, Robert on 20 June 1621, Benjamin on 27 April 1623 and Mary on 13 April 1625 and all these do name Thomas and Ann as the parents. There is also a burial record for Benjamin on 3 December 1626 - he was just three years old.

Thomas's Will is also in existence and is a fascinating document (PROB 11/240, TNA). It is dated 17 February 1652 and was proved at Westminster on 1 January 1653. In it, his three daughters Susan, Ann and Mary are mentioned, as is their son John, and the husbands of Susan and Ann, John Benefice and Henry Wheeler. Mary is described as a 'singlewoman'. Ann is named as his sole Executrix.

Ann's accuser, William Whitton, is mentioned not only in the witchcraft documents but also in the records of St Edmund's Church, where his marriage to Rebecca Wolfe took place on 7 August 1620. There is then a baptism record for a son, William, on 24 March 1621, just over seven months from their marriage, a not-uncommon occurrence then, and further baptism records for two daughters, Elizabeth on 13 October 1633 and Ann on 20 November 1636. I've not been able to find any trace of William senior's death or burial.

**Sutherland House**

I have based the home of Thomas and Ann on the Southwold hotel and restaurant, Sutherland House. Their records show that a Thomas Camell lived there in Elizabethan times and, although I have been unable to verify this, I think it reasonable to assume that our Thomas may have inherited the house from his father and lived there, firstly with Mary, and then with Ann. Two of the rooms still have original, C17th, intricately-carved ceilings, which give a real sense of the time and in the main room downstairs there is also a finger-shaped witch's mark burned into the lintel over the fireplace. Sutherland House and St Edmund's Church are among the very few buildings known to have survived the fire of 1659.

All the names of the men who were involved in her trial are listed and Robert Mellinge presided over the event as the

Deputy High Steward. Why Miles Corbett did not try her himself is unknown, but, given his responsibilities in other parts of the country, I think it reasonable to assume, though still High Steward, that he was attending to other legal matters elsewhere.

**Regicide**

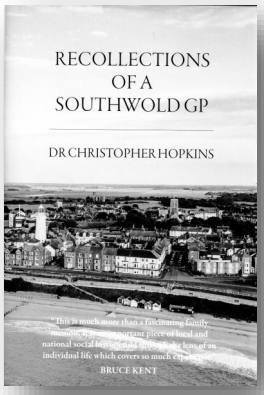
But Miles Corbett is, nevertheless, the most notorious character in this story. Born in Sprowston, Norfolk in 1594/5, he was educated at Christs College, Cambridge, and called to the Bar in 1623/4, becoming a barrister and serving at Lincolns Inn. He was appointed Recorder of Great Yarmouth and was installed as their MP in 1653. He served on numerous legal committees and commissions and is known to have presided over witchcraft cases brought by Matthew Hopkins. I could find no evidence that Hopkins, the self-styled Witch-finder General, ever came to Southwold - it appears from the records that he was called back to Essex at the time Ann was accused and so missed the town. Corbett was a Parliament man through and through, being sent by Oliver Cromwell to Ireland in the 1650s, to 'settle' affairs there. He was described as extremely unpopular, zealous in his prosecutions, known for his self-interest, but his biggest claim to fame is that he was the last person to sign the death warrant of King Charles I. After the failure of the interregnum, Charles II actively hunted down all those who had been responsible for his father's execution. Corbett was found in Holland in the company of two other regicides and brought back to England to stand trial. On 19 April 1662, with others, he was taken to Tyburn, where he was hung, drawn and quartered.

Interestingly, in nearly all the publicly-available information about Southwold, the High Steward for 1645/6 is listed as 'not known' but the gaol delivery document proves that he had a strong connection to the town. Given that the Town Hall, with its contents, was one of the many buildings destroyed in the Great Fire of Southwold in 1659 (England's first declared 'national disaster', I do wonder if future High Sheriffs and Bailiffs, not wanting the town to be linked to a regicide, and needing state funds to rebuild, used this as a reason to just 'lose' any direct evidence that he was here. We will never know!

I have been thrilled to be able to find so much out about this case. From the stereotypical image of Ann as a vicious hag I have found that she would only have been around sixty when she was tried, was the mother of seven children and step-mother to two more. Her husband owned properties in several local villages and was clearly prosperous so the family must have been of some standing in Southwold and I can only think that the accusations against her were made out of malice, but we will never know. I have sought to build a believable story around the available facts, sticking closely to real events where I can. After all, that is what fiction is.

***Laina writes as L M West. Her novel, 'This Fearful Thing' will be published by the time we go to press. Full details can be found on her website at*** lmwestwriter.co.uk

## *BOOKS*

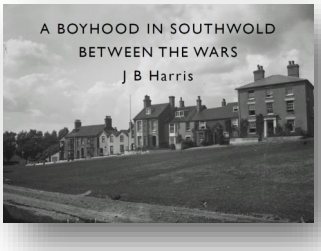



**'*Recollections of a Southwold GP*' by Dr Christopher Hopkins**

201 pp ISBN 978-1-913532-21-5 (2020) £20

This memoir, spanning more than 90 years, 32 of them as a Southwold family doctor, makes a fascinating read.

Dr Hopkins' life has truly been action-packed. He seems to remember every moment of it and every person he met along the way. He takes us from his idyllic and rather privileged childhood in Egypt, through his schooldays at Ampleforth, his encounters with the opposite sex, culminating in his long, happy marriage to Mary. For a man so active and so apparently extravert, his career choice as a country doctor seems surprising but he appears never to have regretted it. It is instructive to be reminded how the role of GP has changed since the early days of the NHS when Hopkins spentwhich he relished, his medical training, his rich social and sporting life to his early relationships with most of every day visiting and treating patients in outlying villages, connected to his surgery only by a rickety system based on the goodwill of local phone owners. It was the bureaucratisation of the NHS leading to the loss of all this front-line stuff that resulted in his eventual resignation and the redirection of his energies into alternative therapies.




**'A boyhood in Southwold between the Wars' by J B Harris, 52pp edited by Mary Harris. Published free online by southwoldandson.co.uk.**

A gossipy memoir of life in Southwold in the 1920s and 1930s John Harris spent boyhood summers here with his well heeled family who later moved here permanently. The memoir is liberally sprinkled with illustrated asides by Barry Tolfree. Download the pdf here: Memories of Southwold.pdf (southwoldandson.co.uk)

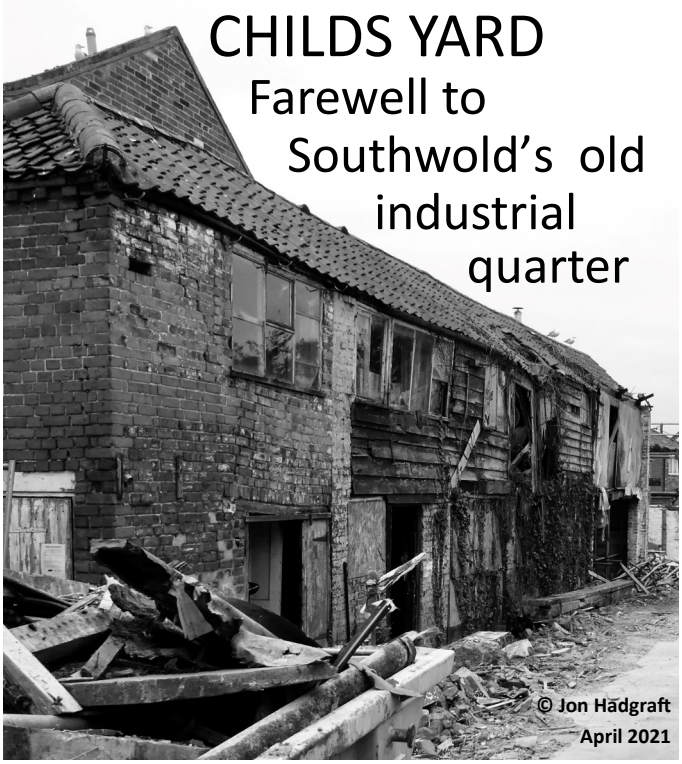
***Coming soon…***

**'*Shorelines*' by Bob Jellicoe, to be published Autumn 2021**

Until the early 20th century, longshore herring fishing was Southwold's dominant industry by far. In this book Bob recounts the unique way of life of the longshore fishermen of Southwold.

# CHILDS YARD

## Farewell to Southwold's old industrial quarter



© Jon Hadgraft
April 2021

By the time you read this, the bulldozers will have completed their work and the rather haphazard history of Child's Yard, just off Southwold Market Place, will have been erased. The hotch-potch of sheds and ruined workshops were undistinguished and ripe for removal but in Southwold they were exceptional in that they had somehow managed to remain untouched except by time. Before their story fades with them, I thought I'd set down what I've discovered about Child's Yard in the course of developing the website southwoldandson.co.uk

The **Child family business** began here in April 1803 when the 22-year-old Edmund Child arrived from Gt Yarmouth with his wife, Maria, and set himself up as a blacksmith. But it was their son, George Edmund, who was to take metal working to a new level. In the 1841 census, at the age of 31, he was describing himself as an ironmonger, brass founder and engineer and he was to find his vocation in the emerging miracle of gas power. In 1848 he became design engineer for the infant Southwold Gas Light Company and soon made it one of the most pioneering coal gas innovators in the country. His design for Southwold's first gasometer in Blyth Road became the prototype for similar constructions throughout the country, many of which George Edmund was himself commissioned to oversee. By the early 1860s he was employing 13 men and two apprentices and had a seat on the Borough Council.


© Southwold Museum P1014

Sadly cash flow got the better of him and by 1867 he had accumulated such massive debts that he was declared bankrupt. By the time he was discharged, his business was still operating under the command of his disabled 20-year-old son, George Edmund Junior, but it was much diminished, employing just 6 men. Nevertheless it was in this period that the Child foundry produced some of the striking ornamental street furniture still around today, most notably the Town Pump in 1873, personally commissioned by the Mayor, John Eustace Grubbe.

In 1898 the foundry closed and Child's Yard was bought by brothers **Frederick and Charles Henry Denny** the tailors next door who were in expansive mood having just doubled the size of their shop. They already had a sitting tenant in the shape of **Frederick Wright**, the coachbuilder who had moved into the Child premises a couple of years earlier. Some ten years later the coachworks seems to have been taken over by **Frederick Fulcher** who described his business as that of 'coach, cart and van builders'. In 1911 he was a 30-year-old single man lodging in Hurn Crag Road with his married elder brother who worked for him as a blacksmith. The business thrived for at least 30 years, building delivery vehicles for local trades people, including the High Street bakers, Frederick Eastaugh See photo below. A strange Fulcher sideline was running what he called a 'Miniature Menagerie' of performing birds and animals to amuse the tourists. Strange because, literally feet away on the other side of the back wall at No 5 Mill Lane, undertaker and carpenter, **Frederick Hill**, was running a remarkably similar attraction in the form of 'Southwold's Miniature Zoo'.

After the Second War, for a few years, the tradition of coach building, or rather automotive bodywork, continued in Childs Yard after LC Dawson and WO Burnell started **LC Coachworks Ltd** here.

By the 1950s, the south side of Childs Yard had been divided up into a number of small workshop units. One of these was taken by a Polish immigrant artist and potter, **Frank Zajdowski.** Another was occupied by **Southwold Electrical Services** where Frank Mortlock and Harry Chapman carried out repairs to domestic electrical equipment. Other units at various times were occupied by two carpenters, **David Gill and David Tyrrell,** painters and decorators **J E Barber & Sons** and a charity shop for Leukaemia Research run by **Rosemary Muffett.**

On the north side of Childs Yard was a dairy and milk bottling depot which had its shop front at No 3 High Street. Until the War it was run by **Herbert Aldred** as **Wangford Dairy Supply** but in 1949 it was taken over by **Victor Harry Boggis** and renamed **Elms Farm Dairy** after Victor's dairy farm at Reydon Smere.. In the '50s he became a member of the new Milk Marketing Board and started collecting, processing and distributing milk from numerous farms in the area. His son, Harry took over in the 1960s and employed **Tony and Rose Hooper** to help run it, In time, they took the whole business over, adding fruit and vegetables to the product range. By the 1980s the dairy side was sold to **Blythvale Dairies** while Tony and Rose built up the retail greengrocery business as **Rose's Fruit Fare,** later taken over, as many readers will fondly remember, by their daughter, **Sharon Doy** who ran it until March 2013.

*Barry Tolfree 2021*

# The will of Robert Scolys
## vicar of Southwold 1444–70

David Sherlock

**David Sherlock is Co-ordinating Editor of the Suffolk Records Society. This is an abbreviated version of his contribution to a collection of essays entitled 'Shaping the Past' published by the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History in honour of David Dymond. We are grateful for the author's permission to reproduce it here.**

Robert Scolys was a doctor of theology at Cambridge University by 1454 and became a professor of theology[1]. He must have been a man of some standing to have been named in the royal foundation charter for Christ's College in 1442, and he was admitted a fellow of Clare Hall (later Clare College) in 1448.[2] One of his gifts to Clare library is recorded in a college inventory as well as in his will.[3] A list of college benefactors states: 'Mr Robert Stolys [sic] had chained in the said library Giles's commentary on the first book of Sentences which he gave with other scientific books but those are not chained' [*cathenavit in dicta libraria Egidium super primum sentenciarum quem librum cum aliis libris specialium scienciarum dedit Mr Robertus Stolys, sed non cathenantur*].[4] The gift of Giles's commentary on Sentences is also in his will, from where almost everything else known about Scolys is derived.

He combined his academic role with that of vicar of Reydon with Southwold, styled ecclesia de Reydon cum Sowthwold, from 1444, after the disastrous fire of c.1430 had destroyed Southwold's chapel.[5] The building and furbishing of the splendid new church on the site of the chapel was still not complete when he died in 1470, as some of his bequests towards its beautifying suggest. Scolys' vicarage was at Reydon, but he also had a mansum (dwelling-house) at Southwold.[6] He desired to be buried in Southwold church, which was by then regarded as the more important. As vicar he would have probably been buried in the chancel, but we do not know where and no memorial survives.

### The will translated from Latin original[7]

In the name of God amen. I Master Robert Scolys, professor of theology and vicar of Reydon with Southwold, on the 6th day of the month of June in the year of our Lord 1470 being in sound mind and in good memory make my will in this mode.

Firstly, I bequeath my soul to almighty God, Blessed Mary, Blessed Margaret, Blessed Edmund, king and martyr, and all the saints, and my body is to be buried in a grave in the church of St Edmund of Southwold as it shall please those who bury me.

Item, I bequeath to the said town of Southwold all my armoury, namely bows, arrows, helmets, hauberks, jacks, sallets, lances, battle axes and the rest of my weaponry for defence in all event of the said town or to be sold and disposed of for the repair of the said church to the church of Southwold, as it pleases them, except for one jack which I give and bequeath to John Goodman and except for one sallet and one bow which I give and bequeath to Robert Goodman.

Item, I bequeath to the said church of Southwold one Golden Legend and my smaller book Magister Sententiarum, and one annotated breviary for the choir.

Item, I bequeath to the said town a wooden cross to place where they wish.

Item, I bequeath for the work of the said church all the tiles which I have at my house.

Item, I bequeath to the said town a retable of alabaster.

Item, I bequeath to the said town a black vestment for celebrating [Mass] for the dead.

Item, I give and bequeath to the said town for the information of priests officiating there one Diet of Salvation, one Pupilla Oculi and one glossed Psalter. I bequeath to the said town a book commenting on difficult words of hymns, sequences and other words which they frequently use in church and two abridged service book manuals.

Item, I give and bequeath towards the making of the decoration of the holy crucifix in the said church 22s which John Conyvere owes to me. Item, I bequeath to the same work 4s which Thomas Fraunseys owes to me.

Item, I bequeath to the fabric or repair of Reydon church 40d which Richard Gardere and Ralph Wattes owe me for small tithes.

Item, [I bequeath] to the said church of Southwold 20d which George Bacon owes to me for the work of the said crucifix.

Item, I give and bequeath to the library of the venerable college in Clare Hall all my astronomy books and an astrolabe. Item, I bequeath to the same hall Alacen's In Perspectiva and Bacon on the same. I bequeath to the library Giles's Concerning the First Book of Sentences.

Item, I give and bequeath to the church of St Margaret of Reydon all my sheaves of reed (?) at the vicarage. Item, I give and bequeath to the church of Southwold all the goods due to me by reason of the administration of the goods and tenement of Helen Burgays except for 26s 8¼d which the said girl living so to speak with Joan Metsharpe shall have, when she reaches the agreed age of marriage.

I make, ordain and constitute as my executors of this will Master William Jermouth, vicar of Covehithe, otherwise called Northales, Sir Thomas Crow, rector of Easton Bavent, and Sir William Hulverdale, parish priest of Southwold, to whom I give and bequeath the residue of my goods, moveable and immoveable, both of the fruits, tithes, offerings and other issues belonging to my church and of the other things of which the aforesaid will can be made of right, or according to the tenor of a certain synodal constitution beginning 'Walter Suffield', to pay my legacies and debts and also to distribute in pious uses for my soul and the souls of all those for whom I am bound according to their discretion, as they see best to please them. Furthermore, I wish that my said executors concerning my liturgical things which I used to have may at their will in some way buy them before others and at a better price so long as they are not valued much more than those first given and bequeathed here at Southwold aforesaid, on the day and year written above, under the witnesses of Robert Bysshop, Richard Joyye, John Joyye, Robert Goodman and John Goodman and others. And to the witness of the above I have fixed my seal.

The will was proved by the official of the consistory court of Walter Suffield, bishop of Norwich, at Hoxne on 19 June 1470 with administration granted to the executors and the seal of the bishop appended.

The bequests in Robert Scolys' will come under three headings: his armoury; his books; and his other bequests. His donations to the town of many church items, such as the vestment, the alabaster and service books, go to emphasise the close connection between church and secular at this time. Likewise, his armoury was to go towards the defence of the town 'in all event', or to be sold for the repair of the church.

***Armoury—***His formidable armoury included at least eight different items, all listed in the plural, so there was more than enough for one man.[8] There were bows and arrows. There were helmets and sallets, the latter a helmet with a tail piece to protect the neck made either in one piece or with a moveable visor. A hauberk was a mail shirt made of small, closely interlocked and riveted rings. It was worn by men-at-arms under plate armour or by common soldiers as a principal form of body armour, usually over a thickly padded coat. Less costly than the mail shirt was the jack, a body defence made of a large number of small metal plates stitched or riveted into a padded jacket of multiple layers of canvas or linen. A lance – often made of ash and about fourteen feet long – by Scolys' time usually meant a horseman's spear. Forms of battle axe included the poleaxe, an infantry weapon, its four- to five-foot shaft mounted with a head combining a thick spike, axe and hammer. For a shorter form we need look no further than the Southwold church clock-jack, a painted figure in late fifteenth-century armour striking a bell with his battle-axe reversed.

The chamber above the church porch, with its strong door, secret latch mechanism and iron-banded chest, could have safely held Scolys' arms and armour, as the chamber above Mendlesham church porch still holds armour today.[9] But why did a priest, whom one would judge to be a man of peace, own all these items, which he places right at the start of his will? Was there a threat to the peace of the town at this time? The 1460s had been turbulent years, with the threat of a Lancastrian invasion and civil war, while, judging by the Paston letters, local violence between competing magnates had been a serious problem in East Anglia. So the men of Southwold might have been called to muster to meet a range of dangers. The explanation for the vicar's ownership of the arms originates in 1369, in the orders of Edward III that required clergy to possess arms and to muster. Clergy were in the army raised against the Scots by Richard II in 1385, following royal summons for all clergy to be arrayed in arms, and they were listed among the rebel forces at the battle of Shrewsbury in 1403.[10] The evidence for their military activity consists of royal writs of array and the bishops' returns to these writs, some still preserved in the National Archives, ordering a bishop to 'cause all … ecclesiastical persons of your diocese whatsoever to be armed and arrayed, furnished with arms … so that they shall be ready with other [of] the king's lieges to march against the said enemies … '.[11] The returns give the number of clergy arrayed according to the weapons with which they were furnished: the well- armed having lances (so probably mounted), hobelars (light cavalry), archers, and a fourth category that were armed with an assortment of weapons, including battle-axes.

Defence of the south against the French and of the north against the Scots were the perennial concerns of the kingdom, but Richard II ordered the abbot of Bury St Edmunds to proceed in person with all his men at arms, hobelars and archers to his estates on the coast of Suffolk, 'as heretofore used to be done by him and his predecessors in time of war', because he was informed that the French planned an invasion that summer with great force.[12] The last of these royal arrays of clergy was in 1418 and the returns for the Norwich diocese survive. They list 'armed men, all appearing with lances, hobelars, and archers arrayed with hauberks, bows and arrows, swords, shields and daggers'. A scale was established that determined the arms with which each was to be furnished and to appear in the array, according to the annual value of his benefice. Clergy with good livings were expected to have 'competent arms' for fighting on horseback, which would explain Scolys' possession of lances.[13] In 1463 Edward IV ordered the archbishop of York to assemble the clergy of his province in defensible array at Newcastle in January in order to help him resist a threatened Scottish invasion in support of the Lancastrians, and they were again ordered to muster at Durham in July.[14]

Despite canonical and traditional prohibitions on the bearing of arms and the shedding of blood by persons in holy orders (was this why there was no sword in Scolys' armoury?), the religious authorities in the later Middle Ages were willing to commit their clergy to the defence of the realm. A muster roll and clergy list survive for Holt hundred as late as c.1523.[15] The clergy are praised for their military training in Robert Reyce's Breviary of Suffolk of 1618.[16] In 1798, with another threat of French invasion, the vicar of Coddenham enlisted in the Suffolk Yeomanry with the approval of his bishop.[17] But, whatever the national position in 1470, Scolys donated his own arms to the town.

***Books—***To Southwold church Scolys left his Golden Legend. This was a collection of lives of saints compiled around the year 1260, widely read in the later Middle Ages and added to over the centuries. It had a strong influence on the imagery of poetry, painting and stained glass. Any such glass in Southwold church was doubtless destroyed when William Dowsing's men came in 1644, along with Scolys' alabaster and crucifix (see below).[18]

The *Magister Sententiarum*, 'Master of Sentences', by Peter Lombard (c.1100– 1160), was an important theological work in four books (though Scolys called it his 'smaller book') which became the standard textbook of theology, and for which Lombard earned the accolade *Magister*. Scolys left this to the church with an annotated breviary for the choir. But, apart from those bequeathed to Clare Hall (see below), he left all his other books to the town. A *Portiforium notatum* was a portable breviary containing daily prayers, annotated with music. The *Dieta Salutis*, 'Diet of Salvation', a daily office book by St Bonaventure, 1221–1274, would have been useful for priests officiating at Southwold. The *Pupilla Oculi* by John de Burgo, c.1386, was a book of instructions for parish priests, its full title being *Pupilla oculi omnibus sacerdotibus tam curatis quam non curatis summe necessaria per magistrum Johannem de Burgo cancellarium alme vniversitatis Cantabrigiensis et sacre theologie professorem compilata*; 'The Pupil of the Eye, for all priests both those with the cure of souls [that is, a benefice] and

those without, of the chief things necessary, compiled through Master John de Burgo, chancellor of the nurturing university of Cambridge and professor of sacred theology'. Scolys also left to the town a glossed Psalter – the book of psalms with a general commentary; another book commenting on difficult words of hymns, sequences and other words frequently used in church; and two abridged service book manuals. These are anonymous, but as a former professor of theology Scolys could well have written some of them himself.

Many parish churches once had libraries and the books that Scolys bequeathed to Southwold were not rare. Assington had Peter Lombard's works and St James's, Bury St Edmunds, had Bonaventure's seven volumes, though these were in editions printed long after Scolys' time. As late as 1739 Coddenham vicarage had a library created for the 'free use, custody and perusal by the vicars of Coddenham for ever'.[19] To Clare Hall Scolys left unspecified astronomical books and his astrolabe, an instrument for solving astronomical problems, as well as books by Alhacen, Bacon and Giles. Alhacen's 'Book of Optics' is the work by the Arabic writer Ibn al-Haytham, which was translated into Latin c.1200 as De Aspectibus and covered physics, anatomy and geometry. Roger Bacon, the Franciscan scholar (c.1220–1292), drew heavily on this for his own Perspectiva (Book of Optics), which was concerned with light, colour and vision, leading to the spiritual truths to be gained from their study.[20] Scolys also bequeathed to Clare his copy of the commentary by St Giles of Rome (1243–1316) on Book I of the Sentences by Peter Lombard (see above).

***Other bequests—***Scolys' other bequests included a wooden cross for the townsfolk to erect where they wished. John Lokles had already bequeathed 10s for making a cross in the churchyard in 1460, so if Scolys' cross was erected at the market place it might have been the one burnt in the town fire of 1659, which was replaced by a stone cross dated 1661.[21]

Whether the tegulae that Scolys had at his house and left to Southwold church were roof or floor tiles is unclear. The present church would seem always to have had a lead roof, but there may have been some other building adjoining it or in the churchyard that needed roof tiles. On the other hand, there survive areas of fifteenth- century floor tiles in the church to which he could have contributed. To St Margaret's, Reydon, he left the 40d owed to him in vicar's tithes and all the sheaves of reed – if this, not firewood, is the correct interpretation of calam – at his vicarage, suggesting that Reydon church was reed-thatched in his day.

An alabaster retable would have been carved and painted with a religious scene and placed above an altar, although Scolys bequeathed it to the town. It would have been made from Nottingham alabaster. From there, a prolific school of carvers in the Middle Ages exported such alabasters all over England and on the continent.[22]

In 1471, the year after Scolys' death, John Tyll bequeathed £20 *ad facturam unius vestimenti*.[23] Scolys' bequest of a black funeral vestment would have doubtless cost about the same to make, unless it was simply a cope for a priest to wear at a graveside in cold weather. Again, this was bequeathed to the town.

If the sacred crucifix was intended for inside the church it was presumably destroyed with the four vestry crosses by Dowsing's men in 1644.[24] Scolys also gave towards this cross the 4s and the 20d owed to him by two men. He bequeathed to St Edmund's what was due to him from the goods and tenement of Helen Burgays, except for 26s 8¼d that he reserved for a girl then living with Joan Metsharpe when she reached 'the agreed age of marriage'.

Robert Scolys was a man of many talents. Having been professor of theology at Cambridge with an interest in physics and astronomy, he fulfilled his duties as a parish priest, leaving books to help explain the faith to parishioners and townsfolk. He helped to look after the fabric of his two churches and he fulfilled his obligations for military array. His will shows the very close relationship between the sacred and secular in the Middle Ages.

1. *A. Emden, Biographical register of the university of Cambridge to 1500 (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 512– 13.*
2. *W. Harrison and A. Lloyd, Notes on the masters, fellows, scholars and exhibitioners of Clare College, Cambridge (Cambridge, 1953), p. 23.*
3. *R.W. Hunt, 'Medieval inventories of Clare College library', Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society, 1 (1950), pp. 105–25, p. 111, inventory of c.1440, no. 23, Alacenna in sua perspectiva, on which see my discussion below. There is a thirteenth-century copy of this work inscribed in a fifteenth-century hand, Liber iste est collegii Clare Hall, which is now in Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Hunt,'Medieval inventories', p. 124.*
4. *Ibid., p. 118.*
5. *R. Wake, Southwold and its vicinity (Yarmouth, 1839), p. 88. The title cum capella de Southwold continued long after Scolys, and Southwold gained ecclesiastical independence from Reydon only in 1752. There is no church at Southwold recorded in Domesday Book. I am grateful to David Gill for information about the earlier chapel under the nave of Southwold church, which he has recently excavated.*
6. *A deed of 1458 mentions the south part of the chapel cemetery 'where in antient Time the Parish-Priest's Apartment [camera] stood': T. Gardner, An historical account of Dunwich, Blithburgh, Southwold (1754), pp. 209–10. This camera was presumably the predecessor of Scoly's mansum.*
7. *NRO, NCC, register of wills, 83 Betyns. I am very grateful to Dr Elisabeth Leedham-Green for much help with reading the Latin.*
8. *For arms and armour of the period see A. Boardman, The medieval soldier in the Wars of the Roses (Stroud, 1998), pp. 118–54, and R. Woosnam-Savage, Arms and armour of late medieval Europe (Leeds, 2017). I am very grateful to Professor Matthew Strickland for help with references to arms, armour and the medieval clergy.*
9. *H.M. Cautley, Suffolk churches and their treasures, 5th edn (Woodbridge, 1982), pp. 329, 348. Perhaps the arms and armour remained there after Scolys' bequest because Gardner, An historical account, p. 209, says the chamber is 'the Arsenal for the warlike stores of the Town'.*
10. *M. Strickland and R. Hardy, The great warbow (Stroud, 2005), pp. 259, 263.*
11. *McNab,'Obligations of the church in English society: military arrays of the clergy, 1369–1418', in W. Jordan, B. McNab and T. Ruiz (eds), Order and innovation in the Middle Ages. Essays in honour of Joseph R. Strayer (Princeton, 1976), pp. 293–314 and 516–22, p. 295.*
12. *Ibid., p. 518 n. 22.*
13. *Ibid., p. 306.*
14. *J. Raine (ed.), The priory of Hexham, its chroniclers, endowments and annals, 2 vols (Durham, 1864– 5), vol. 1, pp. cvii–cviii.*
15. *B. Cozens-Hardy, 'A muster roll and clergy list in the hundred of Holt circa 1523', Norfolk Archaeology, 22 (1926), pp. 45–58.*
16. *F. Hervey (ed.), The breviary of Suffolk by Robert Reyce, 1618 (London, 1902), p. 97.*
17. *M. Stone (ed.), The diary of John Longe (1765–1834), Vicar of Coddenham, Suffolk Records Society 51 (Woodbridge, 2008), p. li.*
18. *T. Cooper (ed.), The journal of William Dowsing (Woodbridge, 2001), p. 296.*
19. *A.E. Birkby, Suffolk parochial libraries. A catalogue (London, 1976), pp. 19, 89, xvi.*
20. *D. Lindberg, Roger Bacon and the origins of perspectiva in the Middle Ages (Oxford, 1996).*
21. *SROI, archdeaconry of Suffolk wills, R2/44; Wake, Southwold, pp. 255–6. Anon., 'Ancient crosses of East Anglia', East Anglian Notes & Queries, new series 1 (1885), p. 75.*
22. *There are no alabasters from Southwold recorded in F.W. Cheetham, English medieval alabasters (Oxford, 1984).*
23. *Wake, Southwold, p. 250.*
24. *Cooper, Dowsing, p. 296.*

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