

Editor's Comments



Dr Len Holden
Editor of the
Harborough Historian

This year's edition serves mainly to commemorate those Harborians who served in the Great War 1914-18. There are three excellent accounts of individual soldiers who record their personal memories of the conflagration through diaries, memoirs and later written accounts. Jack Belton's story is a lively and well-written chronicle of a young man eager to join his mates in the fray but the experiences he underwent in the trenches leaves him disillusioned with the glories of war and indeed the army. Fred Tuff's account written from interviews by Dave Allen shows an equally terrifying experience of the horrors of trench warfare. The second part, Douglas Wooldridge's father's experience of the war takes us from the beginning of 1918 to the conclusion of the conflict and his return to 'Blighty' - a thrice wounded and grateful survivor. Finally, Dennis Kenyon gives a fascinating account of the efforts by Fabian Ware and Frederick Kenyon to honour the memory of the dead soldiers by creating a war graves commission to record the deaths of soldiers and pay tribute to them with military cemeteries and monuments designed by the top architects of the day. This was an endeavour not without its trials and tribulations, but eventually met with success preserving the memory of the dead and their sacrifice.

Successive articles deal with a variety of local subjects of great interest. A regular author, Alan Langley, writes on yet another fascinating subject on East Farndon, this time concerning charities. He must now be considered the local historian of that village so near to Market Harborough. John Tillotson, another regular contributor to this journal, presents a history of the well-known firm of local solicitors Wartnaby Hefford whose origins reach back to the 18th century. This history adds to John's own personal account of the life and times of a country solicitor in a previous edition.

Renowned local historian Bob Hakewill is another regular contributor to The Historian and provides us with a fascinating account, based on recently received archives relating to properties and owners on St Mary's Road, which had a number of brickworks located there. Michael Stroud, now the Historical Society's treasurer, contributes once again by offering a piece about Kettering man William Knibbs, who became enthused with a burning ambition to abolish the iniquities of the slave trade. Accounts of the abolition of slavery in England are dominated by William Wilberforce and it is good to see other equally dedicated individuals, such as William Knibbs, a local man, have their contribution to the eradication of this evil trade receive some recognition.

Regular contributor Janice Morris and her husband Phil provide an interesting snippet on fire insurance relating to Market Harborough which they unearthed in the London Metropolitan Archive.

Sadly this edition records the deaths of four individuals who gave time and effort to preserving the local history of the town. Andrew Bovey, David Jarvis and John Bury were all faithful and enthusiastic members of the Friends of the Harborough Museum. Andrew Bovey was also a long time member of the Historical Society as was Tim de Rousset-Hall. Tim was a well known figure around the town and served on many public bodies. It is pity he was never able to write his version of the history of W Symington with promises of correcting the mistakes of other accounts.

Correction to article 'Frank Hall Ltd: Bespoke Tailors 1908 to the Present'

by WRH Hakewill

The daughter of Mr John R Green who was mentioned in the article in the last issue (The Historian No. 30) about Frank Hall Ltd and its owners, has asked we put the record straight.

Frank Hall employed John Green as manager in Harborough after the wartime death of William L Hall. John was offered a chance of buying into the business over the years, increasing his share progressively to 100%. For this he would incorporate the clients and workforce into the Harborough business. This he achieved before he sold to Peter Ripley. John Green died 23 May 1996. The final correction is to the last paragraph of the article. There never was an "uncle" in the Green Bros of Brixworth business.

The author and editor are happy to make these corrections.