



IN TIME

Ely U3A History Group Members'
Newsletter



Edition 23

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Welcome to edition 23 of IN TIME. This week we learn about the history of a well known seaside town, how Cambridge men were press ganged in the 17th century, why a queen was imprisoned at Fotheringhay and we also hear about the remarkable achievements of Josef Dallos.

I still need your articles please keep on sending them: to Maggie Haverson (email address supplied in the email containing this newsletter).

[How Prittlewell Village was swallowed up by its little brother - Heather Carruth](#)



People first settled by the Prittle Brook at least 10,000 years ago in the late Stone Age. Next to settle were the Romans; then following the decline of Roman Britain, the area came under the influence of Saxon raiders, over time becoming established as part of the kingdom of the East Saxons. During this time (largely the 5th and 6th centuries), the historic Saxon name of Prittleuella came into being.

Life moved on and at the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, there were two manors in the area, Prittlewell and Milton, the owner of the former, Robert FitzSwein, founded Prittlewell Priory, which prospered and grew into a sprawling complex, supporting the well-to-do village of Prittlewell. The Priory also owned land right down to the sea, where a poorer part of the

community made up of fishermen and small farmers lived. This area was still regarded as part of Prittlewell and as such was named the Stratende, Sowthende or as we know it today Southend. The priory did not escape the dissolution of the monasteries and as a consequence, the area began to decline.

By the 1790s, the then landowner sold off land either side of what was to become Southend High Street, and the Grand Hotel (now Royal Hotel) and Grove Terrace (now Royal Terrace) were completed by 1794; new stagecoach routes from London made the town accessible. However, there was not the rapid development during the Georgian Era, which resorts like Brighton enjoyed because transportation links between Southend and London remained poor by comparison.

It was the coming of the railways in the 19th Century and the visit of the very popular Princess Caroline of Brunswick that kick started Southend's status as a resort. The 19th century also saw Southend pier's initial construction with many tourists from London then opted to start their holiday with a leisurely sail down from London rather than a long train journey. In the summer months Southend's seven miles of beaches and safe sea bathing proved a real magnet. Time had moved on again and Prittlewell was now just a part of the blossoming Southend.



Southend Pier

Some snippets from 1660's Cambridge - Clinton Tweed

As recorded by Alderman Newton in his diary

Your country needs you – 6th April 1665

“There was a presse here in Towne for Souldiers in his Majestys service against the Dutch, there were prest out of Cambridge between 3 and 4 score.....who were gone this day toward Harrage where at which this time lay our ffleete consisting of about 190 and odd ships, the number of men that man'd them was about 25000 great guns about 4600.”



3rd June, 1665

“Saturday all day long was heard the noyse pf guns in the ayre and I myself heard the noyse of them between 4 and 6 and again between 9 and 10 the same night. It was generally thought here in Cambridge that the English and Dutch were at the same time engaged in fight.”

Note: This was the second Anglo Dutch War fought between March, 1665 and July, 1667.

Fotheringhay and The Talbot Hotel, the stuff of legends – Maggie Haverson



Fotheringhay Motte

It was fascinating read Wendy Rolf's article last week about old inns and their stories and legends. In particular for me (having visited Fotheringhay and its castle) The Talbot Hotel at Oundle which houses a staircase from Fotheringhay Castle said to have been walked down by Mary Queen of Scots to her execution.

Fotheringhay is a small village a few miles from Oundle in Northamptonshire, its castle dates back to the 12th century. The original castle was a motte and baily structure initially made of wood, but this was replaced with stone in the 13th century. By the mid 1600s the castle was falling into ruins and today all that remains is the mound on which it stood and its inner and outer moats.

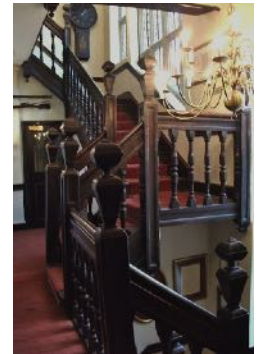
Fotheringhay castle may have been obscured by the mists of time except for one important fact, it was the place of execution of Mary Queen of Scots.

Mary was imprisoned in the castle in September 1586 and found guilty of treason at her trial there in October of the same year. Queen Elizabeth 1 finally signed her death warrant on 1st February 1587 and Mary was beheaded in the great hall of the castle a week later on 8th February. For her execution Mary was dressed almost entirely in black - her black satin dress was embroidered with black velvet, and set with black acorn buttons of jet trimmed with pearl and she wore a white stiffened and peaked head-dress edged with lace. However when the time came for Mary to kneel at the block and her ladies removed her black

dress, the queen was left standing in her crimson velvet petticoat, red sleeves and crimson-brown satin bodice – she was left wearing all red, the colour of blood, and the liturgical colour of martyrdom in the Catholic Church.

When Mary was led to her execution, unbeknownst to those present her Skye terrier was hiding underneath the large skirt of her dress. After she was beheaded, her dress began moving and upon closer examination, her beloved dog was found shaking and clinging to his mistress's garments, refusing to leave Mary's body. It was eventually removed, washed and given food, but it refused to eat and, pining for its mistress, died shortly afterwards. Mary's body remained for some months at Fotheringhay and was then buried at Peterborough Cathedral, but later moved by her son, James I of England, who in 1612 had her exhumed and re-interred at Westminster Abbey only a few feet away from her cousin, Elizabeth I.

There are many legends associated with Mary one of which involves the Talbot Hotel at nearby Oundle which was built using some of the materials from Fotheringay Castle, notably the Elizabethan hotel has an oak staircase taken from the castle that Mary is said to have walked down on her way to her execution. Wendy referred to these in her article. Who knows how true they are but they make an excellent story.



Josef Dallos 1905 – 1979 - Ian Forrest



Josef Dallos was born in Budapest Hungary in 1905. He was the eldest of two children of Alexander Dallos & his wife Margit. Alexander was a school teacher and Margit the daughter of a respected lawyer. He had a sister who was two years younger than him.

At the age of 25 Josef qualified as a doctor, the first position he held was in the First Ophthalmic Clinic at the Royal Pázmány Péter University in Budapest. At that time this clinic was recognised as being the foremost postgraduate training institutes in the world. Dallos started working with contact lenses in 1928. At that time there were two designs of contact lens in use. He found that the Zeiss ground glass lenses gave good vision but poor tolerance while moulded Müller Söhne lenses gave better comfort but poor visual correction and zero reproducibility. He decided to improve things.

At this time there were no antibiotics and so any corneal insult could lead to an ulcer causing the loss of an eye. Therefore the use of contact lenses for anything except extreme cases of keratoconus (conical cornea) or lagophthalmus (incomplete eye closure) or similar extreme conditions was considered to be almost irresponsible. Dallos worked in a methodical manner to establish the rules of contact lens fitting.

The lenses must have precision worked optic zones to give good vision and to be reproducible in the event of replacement and a moulded scleral portion for comfort. Some of the early Dallos lenses used “flashed opal” glass. This was clear glass with a fine layer of white translucent glass on the surface, he removed the white layer centrally to give clear vision while the translucent scleral zone mimicked the Müller brother's lenses by hiding any conjunctival redness.

In 1930 Dallos heard about Pollers Negocol an anatomical impression material made from seaweed & used by dentists for dental impressions. The Negocol used cotton fibres to give it strength and to bind it and it was resistant to both bacteria and fungi. It was boiled before use and applied at a temperature of between 106 - 108°F so Dallos used to anaesthetise the eye before



Dallas Negocol

application. The Negocol set as it cooled and he converted the mould to a positive cast using a wax like substance called Hominit; this was converted into a brass positive. Dallos then pressed glass over the positive and ground the optic zone to achieve the correct power. Dallos's fame spread and keratoconus patients from all over the world flocked to Budapest. In 1936 Dallos made some painted lenses for albinos and painted cosmetic lenses to hide corneal disfigurement.

Theodore Hamblins Opticians were holders of the Royal warrant for the Royal family at this time. Their managing director Gerald Wingate heard of Dallos's work and sent a group of eminent ophthalmologists, Ida Mann, Andrew Rugg-Gunn, Frederick Williamson – Noble and T.J. Phillips to Budapest to evaluate Dallos's work. They worked as apprentices under Dallos and found that while the work was interesting and rewarding it was time consuming and left no time for their routine practice, so they tried to persuade Dallos to move to London. At first he refused, but after several months with the spread of Nazism and the pleading of Ida Mann he agreed. Dallos came to London in 1937 accompanied by his then wife Dorothy and his brother in law George Nissel. After he had settled in London his parents came to visit and decided to stay. His sister Hanna did not want to come, eventually she died while being transported to a concentration camp.

Initially Dallos worked at No 9 Wigmore Street next door to the Hamblin showroom. However, it was not thought to be professional for an ophthalmologist to share commercial premises, even if those premises had a white gloved doorman to open the car doors of royalty and the rich. The contact lens clinic was soon relocated to 18 Cavendish Square. This was the first practice in the UK to be solely devoted to contact lens fitting (there is a Blue Plaque to commemorate Josef Dallos and his practice attached to this building). The original idea of the practice was to teach ophthalmologists how to fit contact lenses, but it soon became evident that due to the amount of time required to fit a lens, UK ophthalmologists were more interested in clinical work. So with time on his hands Dallos taught his technicians his fitting technique.



Dallos's practice moved several times eventually ending up in Devonshire Place. He was a workaholic working most Saturday mornings and some Sundays, he never wanted to retire. He achieved this dying of cancer of the colon in June 1979. He was still fitting glass lenses up to his death.



Taking a Eye Impression using modern silicone materials

George Nissel, his brother-in-law founded an extremely well thought of contact lens manufacturing laboratory, specializing in unusual lenses for complex fitting, for films and even for animals (horses are common patients, fitted by specialist vets).

By training his technicians in contact lens practice he changed optical practice in the UK where contact lenses are routinely fitted by opticians whereas on the continent it is only the last 20 years or so that opticians have started fitting lenses, previous to that ophthalmologist held an almost total monopoly.

My wife and I are the professional descendants of those technicians, both of us being specialist contact lens opticians.

Petty's Pick of the Week

Every day Mike Petty posts on his Facebook group "Fenland History on Facebook" a number of newspaper clips from his massive archive of local events reported "on this day" <https://www.facebook.com/groups//102684982076955>



Mini pockets - Cambridgeshire Daily News August 31st 1959

The new baby BMC car designed by Issigonis has caused much commotion.

have now tested both the Mini Minor and Austin Seven versions which look, drive and behave in the traditional 'car' manner.

It seats four adults in comfort and cruises at 45 mph.

The useful boot is supplemented by enormous pockets in the doors.

It is not without faults: the gear lever is long and inclined to be whippy but the worst is a cable release for the door which is handy for a passenger to grab in an emergency.

Prices start at £497, de luxe £537.

Rodney Tibbs