

# HISTORY OF THE PRUSSIAN QUEEN

Dating back over 230 years, the Prussian Queen has been the last remaining pub in Saltfleetby since the closure of the Angel Inn in the early 1920s. Thought to be the only inn in the country ever to have that name, a country pub in a beautiful location that's played an important part in rural life.

## THE MYSTERY OF THE NAME

The exact origins of the unique name are long lost in time, and have caused much speculation.

### A Wrecked Ship?

Many believe it was named after a German ship called *The Prussian Queen* that was wrecked off the coast nearby. A large four sailed barque, her timbers were salvaged and used to rebuild the pub. The ship's carved wooden figurehead of a queen was displayed outside as the pub sign, disintegrating over the years but retaining traces of the original red and gold paint. The wrecks' rusting rudder post could be seen stuck in the beach sand for years.



It's certainly true that there were many shipwrecks on the Saltfleetby shore, with their wood salvaged and used for buildings (such as the 1874 wreck of *The Rimac*), but no-one has yet found evidence of a wrecked *Prussian Queen* anywhere here. The most common version of the story states that it occurred in the 1850s, but evidence shows that the pub had been called *Prussian Queen* decades before this time.

### A Stamp Called the Prussian Blue?

The story goes that it's named after a rare stamp, in the collection of a local philatelist, depicting the face of the Queen of Prussia, or was it a notorious forgery? But the *Prussian Queen* pub had its name long before postage stamps were even invented, the first being the *Penny Black* in 1840.



1857 Prussian stamp  
King Friedrich Wilhelm IV

The first stamps produced in Prussia were in the 1850s, when they showed the face of the King Friedrich Wilhelm IV. None showed a queen. There is a valuable rare *British* stamp called the *Prussian Blue*, named after the colour which was used in error to print only 480 of these stamps in 1935 depicting King George V. They are now worth about £15,000.



Rare British stamp from  
1935: The Silver Jubilee 2½d  
*Prussian Blue*



Queen Sophia Dorothea of Prussia,  
1737 portrait by Antoine Pesne

### Named after the daughter of King George I?

Princess Sophia Dorothea (only daughter of George I) married Crown Prince Frederick William of Prussia in 1706, they became King and Queen of Prussia in 1713. The story goes that she had a connection to our area having sailed to the continent from Saltfleet Haven. But she was born and raised in Hanover, Germany, when her father was George Louis of Hanover. He didn't become king of England until she was 27 years old, already married and Queen of Prussia, in fact she never visited England at all.

Maybe a different Prussian Queen is the namesake of our village pub?

## Saltfleetby During the Napoleonic Wars

After the French Revolution, France was at war with Britain for over two decades. The last invasion of the British mainland by a foreign power was in 1797, when the French were defeated at the Battle of Fishguard in Wales. Further invasion was feared, especially after Napoleon Bonapart declared war against Britain in 1803.

Volunteer Corps were raised, such as the *Loyal Lincolnshire Village Volunteers*, said to have members in every village. Members of the upper-classes were founders of the local groups, leading the lower-class volunteer soldiers. Lord Brownlow of Belton House, who was the patron of Saltfleetby St Clement's Church, took command of two of the volunteer companies, at Belton and Hougham. By the end of 1803 the Lincolnshire Volunteers totalled 587 cavalry and 6,720 infantry.

A series of signal beacons were established along the coast at Cleethorpes Cliff, Marshchapel, Donna Nook, Saltfleet Harbour, Mablethorpe, Sutton (in-the-Marsh, now Sutton-on-Sea), Anderby Creek, Ingoldmells Point, Skegness (on a sandhill, now part of Seacroft Gold Links) and Gibraltar Point. The beacon at Saltfleet would have been visible from the pub in Saltfleetby. Additional beacons were placed on uplands further inland. Flags would be raised to indicate the sighting of enemy ships in the day, or the beacons lit after dark, the signals relayed to alert the surrounding area to the impending attack. A code of signals was displayed on a mast with tall topmast, from which a system of flags and balls were flown. A blue flag meant enemy vessels had been sighted. A red flag with black shapes of varying number indicated the urgency of the situation. Flag displayed with a ball meant that a scouting force of frigates (with three masts and up to 40 guns) had been spotted and there was time to begin evacuation of the area. Two balls above the red flag meant enemy small cruiser battleships containing 74 guns were in sight. Three balls above the red flag meant extreme urgency, the approaching invasion force was large and/or close and the area was to be evacuated quickly. The system was tested on 7th November 1803 to make sure the chain was complete. Flags were hoisted at noon, and the beacons lit at 8pm. Ministers in the parishes warned their parishioners at Sunday services the day before, not to be alarmed if they saw the signals deployed. The system worked successfully, but it never had to be used for an actual invasion.

A *Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe Volunteer Corp* was raised and commanded by local gentry. William Marshall (1759-1847) was a Justice of the Peace, chairman of the drainage committee, and son of the late Sheriff of Lincolnshire, William Marshall of Theddlethorpe St Helen's Hall. During the war he was Acting Assistant Commissary for the County of Lincoln, who planned the local beacon system, which was discussed at meetings held at the Windmill Inn in Alford. Charles Dennis (1746-1828) was a Theddlethorpe farmer, grazier and drainage surveyor. They were assisted by Captain Langley. Two Saltfleetby farmers were lower ranking officers: Lieutenant Langley Gace Hodgson (1772-1804) was the nephew of the vicar of Skidbrooke, and the church warden of Saltfleetby All Saints. Ensign Thomas Showler (1759-1830) of Saltfleetby St Peter, was also a drainage surveyor who oversaw work to the River Eau draining into Saltfleet Gowt. The pub in Saltfleetby had long been the venue of an annual auction to allocate sections of drainage dyke to be cleared of reeds by local farm labourers.

Napoleon considered the British a nation of insolent shopkeepers. He attempted to bring hardship to Britain by destroying our trade with Europe. In 1806 a decree was issued blockading vessels coming from Britain from entering into any port under French control. In response to Britain's counter measures, in 1807, another French decree ordered that all ships touching British ports before sailing into French territorial waters were to be confiscated. The busy ports in our coastal area like Grimsby and Saltfleet would have been adversely affected as valuable exports to Europe drastically fell, and merchant shipping suffered.

## A Royal Ally in Prussia

The British King George III was married to Queen Charlotte, who came from the small European Dutchy of Mecklenburg-Strelitz in Northern German. Her brother Charles became Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. His eldest daughter Duchess Louise Auguste Wilhelmine Amalie of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, married the heir to the Prussian throne, Crown Prince Frederick William, in 1793 when she was 17. When he succeeded to the throne in 1797, Louise became the new Queen of Prussia.



The Kingdom of Prussia in 1800



1802 portrait of Queen Louise of Prussia by Josef Grassi

Queen Louise was a very popular public figure, who soon became a beloved celebrity. Large crowds turned out to see appearances by the celebrated young queen. She enjoyed interacting with the public during tours of their kingdom, even when it meant breaking royal protocol by stooping to pick up and kiss children in the crowd. Her husband King Frederick was shy and introverted, whereas she was seen as an energetic, glamorous fashion icon.

She was well-known in Britain too, with portraits displayed in London, reports and articles about her featuring in newspapers and magazines. One of the most important women's magazines of its time was *Bell's Court and Fashionable Magazine (London)*. It featured a long article about Queen Louise in August 1807 as part of their *Illustrious Ladies* series.

She started a fashion trend of wearing a neckerchief or scarf, which she did to keep from getting ill, and later conceal a scar.

In 1805 she advised her husband that Prussia should no longer remain neutral in the war, and helped forge the alliance of Prussia, Russia and Austria against Napoleon's French forces. As a result, Napoleon called her "my beautiful enemy".



French Engraving of Queen Louise in Cavalry Uniform, (from the British Royal Collection)

To encourage and support the allied forces, she joined them on location as they prepared for battle, sometimes dressed in military uniform herself. Whilst accompanying troops into battle at Jena in 1806, apparently dressed like an Amazon warrior from Greek mythology, she had to flee from French troops and narrowly evaded capture.

She also visited the barracks of sick and wounded allied soldiers to help boost their morale.

In 1807, after harsh losses for the Prussians, she and the King were forced to meet with Napoleon in person to sign a peace treaty. She requested a private meeting with Napoleon, to plead for a more favourable treaty. He was said to be impressed by her determination, but refused to make any concessions.



Illustration of Queen Louise of Prussia from the August 1807 edition of *Bell's Court and Fashionable Magazine*





Detail of painting: Napoleon Bonaparte receives the Queen of Prussia at Tilsit, July 6, 1807 by Nicolas Gosse in 1900

As Prussia was occupied by France, Napoleon attempted to destroy the queen's reputation, she had to endure harsh personal insults. While the royal couple were staying elsewhere, their Charlottenburg Palace in Berlin was ransacked, they returned to find that Napoleon and his commanders had stripped its rooms of precious paintings, sculptures and other antiquities.

Whilst staying at her father's home in summer 1810 she became ill, developing a fever. She died on 19<sup>th</sup> July, at the age of 35, leaving seven children between the ages of one and fourteen.

In Britain the Lord Chamberlain ordered the Court to go into mourning for three weeks. Announcements and tributes were published in newspapers across the country.

It is with much regret that we record the death of the unfortunate Queen of Prussia, which took place, at Hohenzierietz, the country seat of her father, the Duke of Mecklenberg-Strelitz, on the 19th ult. in the 35th year of her age, nearly seventeen of which she had been married to his Prussian Majesty. She has been invariably described as a most elegant, amiable, and altogether lovely woman.

Chester Chronicle 10<sup>th</sup> August 1810

The Queen of Prussia died on the 19th ult. at a country seat of her father's, in the territory of Mecklenburgh. With the exception of Bonaparte, there is not a person in Europe who will not bear homage to the numerous virtues as well as admirable talents of this most amiable woman. It was perhaps not her least merit that she excited the mortal hatred of the ferocious Corsican; witness his scurrilous and unmanly invectives against her after the battle of Jena.

Cambridge Chronicle and Journal 10<sup>th</sup> August 1810 (also circulated in Lincolnshire)



Louisa, Queen of Prussia by Peter Edward Stroehling, in The Royal Lodge, Windsor Park.

This painting may have been one that was first displayed in London at Somerset House, later taken from the possession of the Prussian King and hung in the Paris apartment of Napoleon's second wife. In 1816 (after the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo) it was in the Prince Regent's mansion, Carlton House in Westminster, then taken to Windsor in 1823.

Perhaps Louise, tragic heroine of the Napoleonic Wars, was the Prussian Queen who was honoured by a Lincolnshire Marsh village pub?



Luise von Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Queen of Prussia by Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun, 1802, in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

# THE FIRST RECORDS OF THE QUEEN OF PRUSSIA ALEHOUSE

## Early Licencing Agreements

It had been law since 1552 that keepers of alehouses had to enter into a bond, promising to maintain good order in their houses and not to permit unlawful games. Victuallers (person who had a licence to sell alcoholic liquor) had to bind themselves by recognizance each year at special licensing sessions in front of two Justices of the Peace. In our area this took place in Louth Guildhall, which used to be where Cornmarket is now. From the mid-1790s until 1802 one of the Justices of the Peace that signed and certified the recognizances was William Marshall of Theddlethorpe (founder of the Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Volunteer Corps). The annual sessions were held one day each September, when the fifteen or so alehouse keepers from the Loutheske district (covering Alvingham, Burwell, Covenham, Grainthorpe, Ludborough, Manby, Saltfleet, Saltfleetby, North and South Somercotes) came together, along with their sureties (a friend or relative acting as guarantor) to renew their recognizance for the year. Applicants not previously licensed had to produce a certificate of good character signed by the minister and churchwardens of the parish.

## Alehouse Recognizance

These local alehouse recognizances from 1792 until 1828 (after which the system was changed) are now held in the Lincolnshire Archives in Lincoln. In 1792 Saltfleetby had three licenced public houses, the following year onwards only two. **James Smith** was named as alehouse keeper in Saltfleetby All Saints from the earliest records in **1792**. It wasn't until 1823 that the name, or sign by which the pub was known, was recorded on the recognizance forms.

So, the first known written record of the pub's name was on its **1823 alehouse recognizance** which reads: "*Upon condition that... **James Smith at the Sign of the Queen of Prussia in Saltfleetby All Saints in the said parts Victualler...** do and shall keep the true Assize in uttering and selling Bread and other Victuals, Beer, Ale and other Liquors, in his House, and shall not fraudulently dilute or adulterate the same, and shall not use, in uttering and selling thereof, any Pots or other Measures that are not of full Size, and shall not wilfully or knowingly permit Drunkenness or Tippling, nor get Drunk in his House or other Premises; nor knowingly suffer any gaming with Cards, Draughts, Dice, Bagatelle, or any other sedentary Game in his House, or any of the Outhouses, Appurtenances, or Easements thereto belonging, by Journeymen, Labourers, Servants, or Apprentices; nor knowingly introduce, permit, or suffer any Bull, Bear, or Badger-baiting, Cock-fighting, or other such Sport or Amusement, in any part of his Premises; nor shall knowingly or designedly, and with a view to harbour and entertain such, permit or suffer Men or Women of notoriously bad Fame, or dissolute Girls and Boys to assemble and meet together in his House, or any of the Premises thereto belonging; nor shall keep open his house, nor permit or suffer any drinking or tippling in any Part of his Premises, during the usual Hours of Divine Service on Sundays; nor shall keep open his House or other Premises during late Hours of the Night, or early in the Morning, for any other Purpose than the Reception of Travellers, but do keep good Rule and Order therein, according to the Purport of a Licence granted for selling Ale, Beer, or other Liquors, by Retail, in the said House and Premises, for One whole Year, commencing on the Tenth day of October next, then this Recognizance to be void, or else to remain in full force"*

At first the two named people, who appeared at the Guildhall in person, pledged to pay **£10 each** if any of these conditions were breached. These were usually the innkeeper themselves and their surety. Other local innkeepers often vouched for each other, acting as their sureties. After 1823 the pledged amounts had increased to **£30** and **£20** (equivalent of about £4,500 and £3,000 today).



## JAMES AND SARAH SMITH

James Smith was born in about 1729. In 1766 he was working as a carpenter in Theddlethorpe. He married Sarah Ryley in Theddlethorpe All Saints Church on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1766.

Sarah was born in 1745, the daughter of Joseph and Sarah Ryley who had **The Ship Inn** at Theddlethorpe. At this time the Ship was the only licenced alehouse in Theddlethorpe, The Kings Head was still just a private cottage (originally built in the 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> Century) before it became a pub called the King William Inn in 1830. Sarah's father Joseph, died in 1799 age 89, then her mother Sarah took over the licence for their pub. James Smith acted as her surety on the 1806 alehouse recognizance. It remained run by other members of the Ryley family until 1813. Now long closed-down, the remains of the old inn can still be seen on Saltfleet Road, opposite Churchill Lane.



**The old Ship Inn, Theddlethorpe: photographed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and in 2025, now derelict, on the A1031. Formerly the home of the first known landlady of The Prussian Queen, Sarah Smith (nee Ryley) and her family in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.**

James Smith remained the licenced victualler of the Queen of Prussia alehouse until his death in 1826 at the age of 97. He was buried in the graveyard of Saltfleetby All Saints Church on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1826.

**Smith, James, Victualler . . . . .**

James Smith listed in the June **1818 Poll Book for Lincolnshire**, as a freeholder eligible to vote, residing in Saltfleetby

His widow Sarah then took over the licence of their alehouse. Thomas Leach Cross, a miller, baker and merchant from Louth was her surety, as his father William had been for James in 1792.

As a new licensee, the curate of the parish, Richard Kilvington, wrote a letter of recommendation submitted to the Justices of the Peace, also signed by churchwarden John Duckitt. He stated that the alehouse in Saltfleetby All Saints, known by the sign of the Queen of Prussia had been kept by her husband, John Smith to the time of his death and since by Sarah Smith *"and that the said Sarah Smith is of good fame, sober life and conversation and a fit and proper person to be entrusted with a licence for the purpose of keeping an alehouse and Victualling House and to sell Ale, Beer or other excisable liquors by Retail"* dated *"the Nineteenth day of September 1826"*. [the day before the licencing session took place at Louth Guildhall]

She died the following year, aged 82, having run the Queen or Prussia for about two years after her husband's death. She was buried in All Saints Churchyard on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1827.

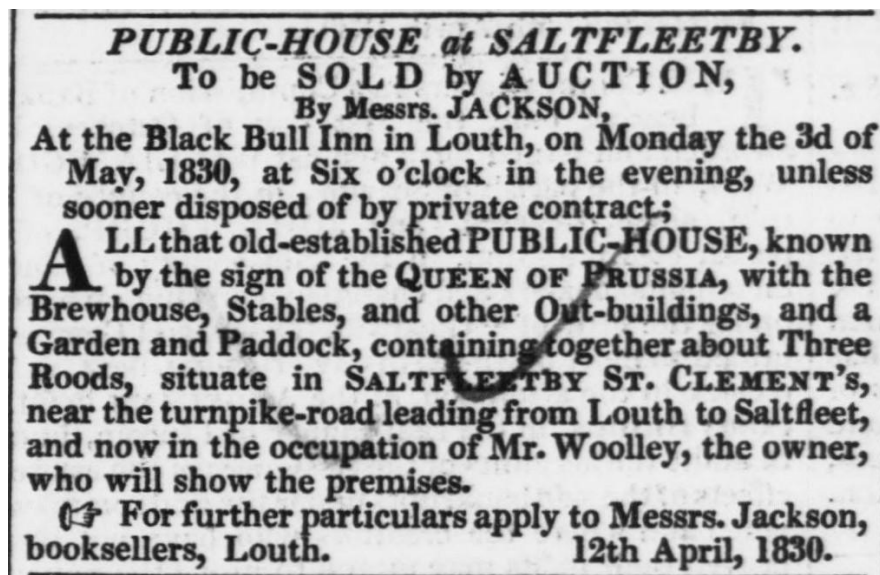
## EMERSON WOOLLEY

Emerson Woolley was born in Louth in 1753, the son of Stephen and Eleanor Woolley (nee Emerson). He was christened in Louth St James Church on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1753. His mother died in 1756. His father remarried and had further children in Louth.

In 1777 Emerson was working as an attorney in London. At this time an attorney was someone who deputised for another, such as carrying out business for a client, acting on their behalf. On 16th April 1777 he married Mary Ryley (the sister of Sarah Ryley, born in Theddlethorpe in 1750) in Saint Mary Le Bow Church, London. Their wedding was witnessed by Lincolnshire publicans Joseph Ryley and James Smith. At first Emerson and Mary lived in Floyd's Yard on Coleman Street, in the City of London. They had children: James (in 1778, baptised at St Stephen's Walbrooke), Sarah, Mary Ann and Robert (in 1784, 87 and 89, baptised in St Luke's Finsbury). His wife Mary died in 1815 and was buried in St Marylebone churchyard, London on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1815.

Emerson came back to live in Lincolnshire for some time before applying to take over the pub licence in 1828. Again, the local curate, Richard Kilvington, wrote a letter of recommendation for the Justices of the Peace. He stated that Emerson Woolley had *"inhabited or dwell for the space of six months and upwards in the said Parish of Saltfleetby All Saints and been there a Housekeeper and kept a certain alehouse called or known by the name or sign of the Queen of Prussia" ... "a proper person to be entrusted with a licence"* ... etc, signed also by churchwardens and overseers John North and William Chapman on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1828. His surety on the alehouse recognizance (who pledged £20) was (his half-brother) Jenkins Woolley, a hairdresser living in Butcher's Market in Louth, who had also been surety for James Smith in 1823 and 1824.

### Sale of the pub in 1830



Stamford Mercury 16<sup>th</sup> April 1830

This is the first known newspaper reference to the pub, in April 1830 announcing that the owner Mr Woolley was selling *"All that old-established Public-House, known by the sign of the Queen of Prussia"*, at auction in Louth on 3<sup>rd</sup> May that year. As well as a brewhouse, stables and other outbuildings, it had a garden and paddock of about 3 roods (or  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an acre).

Emerson Woolley died in 1831, at the age of 79, and was buried in Saltfleetby All Saints churchyard on 31st March 1831.



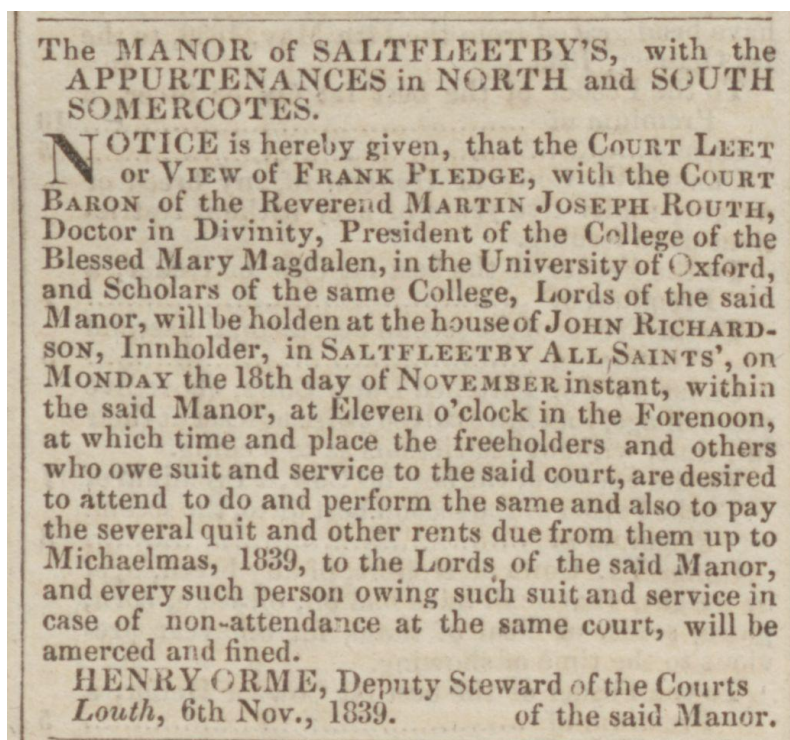
## THE RICHARDSON FAMILY

From the 1830s, John Richardson was the publican and also a butcher at the Prussian Queen. His grandfather, farmer Thomas Richardson, had been surety for James Smith on the 1790s alehouse recognizances. John was born in Saltfleetby All Saints in 1804, the third of ten children, of David Bancroft Richardson (1774-1843) a farmer and butcher, and Mary (nee Whitworth, 1779-1866). He was christened in All Saints Church on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1804.

Ann Garton was born in 1809 in Crofton, near Swarby, Sleaford, the fifth of ten children of Samuel Garton (1773–1860), a farmer from Helpringham, Lincolnshire and his wife Ann (nee Baily 1778–1842). She was christened in Swarby St Mary & All Saints church on 17th Sept 1809. John and Ann married at Saltfleetby All Saints Church on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1832.

John Richardson's younger brother Thomas and Ann's sister Mary also married there four years later, and lived on the Main Road in Saltfleetby All Saints where they had a 20 acre farm.

John and Ann had seven children: Mary Ann in 1833, Susannah in 1835, George in 1836, Victoria Azabah in 1840, and three boys who died in infancy: William in 1837 aged 18 weeks, another William in 1839 age 10 weeks of whooping cough, and John David Bancroft in 1843 age 2 months of thrush and whooping cough.

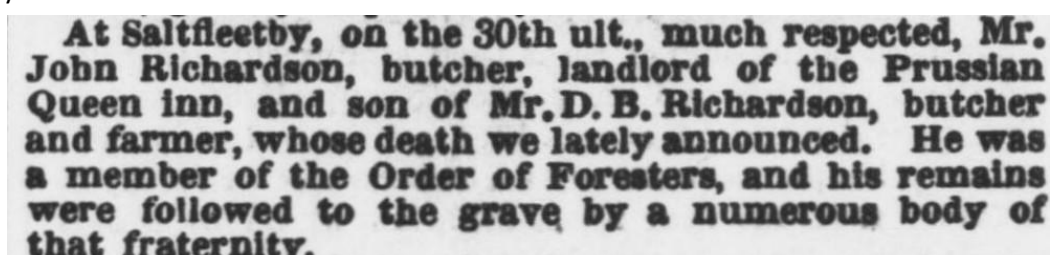


The Lincolnshire Chronicle 8<sup>th</sup> November 1839

Local landowners held regular courts in the village inns, in order to collect rents and exercise their ancient rights as lords of the manor, including trials for minor crimes in the community. Mr Richardson hosted some of these meetings in his inn on behalf of Magdalen College, Oxford, who were also the patrons of All Saint's Church.

Remnants of the medieval system of local government and law enforcement, The *Court Leet* and *View of Frankpledge* (the pledge of responsibility made by each freeman) were overseen by the Sherrif twice a year. The *Court Baron* had to be attended by all free tenants of the manor, and dealt with a range of matters affecting the local community.

John died at home on 30th May 1844, at the age of 39. His cause of death was recorded simply as *Decline*. A member of the Order of Foresters, an organisation founded in 1834 to offer financial and social support to their members, many of whom attended his funeral. He was buried in All Saints churchyard on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1844 with his infant sons.



The Stamford Mercury, 7<sup>th</sup> June 1844





**The grave of John Richardson in Saltfleetby All Saints churchyard.**

The inscription reads: "*In Memory of, John Richardson, who departed this life, May 30<sup>th</sup> 1844, Aged 39 years. Also 3 of his children who died in their infancy*".

At Louth Petty Sessions Court on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1844, the licence of the *Queen of Prussia* was transferred to newly widowed Ann Richardson. Despite facing many more family tragedies, she remained the licensee for the next 37 years.

## Sale of the pub in 1853

Occasional auctions of local property and agricultural land were held at the Prussian Queen, including in November 1853 when the first of six lots was the pub itself.

**SALTFLEETBY ALL SAINTS and ST. PETER'S,**  
*near LOUTH, Lincolnshire.*  
**To be SOLD by AUCTION,**  
 By Mr. THOS. JACKSON,  
 On Monday, 21st of November, 1853, at the house of Mrs. Richardson, known by the sign of the Queen of Prussia, in Saltfleetby, near Louth, at Five o'clock in the Afternoon, subject to such conditions of Sale as will be then and there produced ;

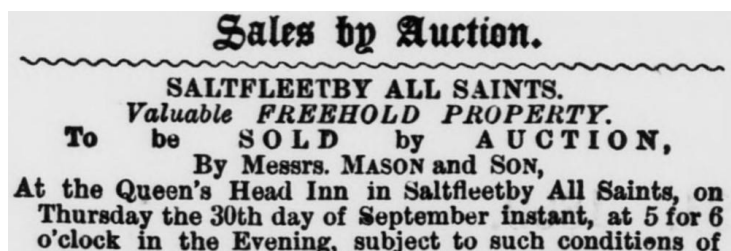
**T**HE following valuable FREEHOLD ESTATE, situate in SALTFLEETBY ALL SAINTS and SALTFLEETBY SAINT PETER'S : viz.—  
*In SALTFLEETBY ALL SAINTS.*

Lot 1. All that well-accustomed brick-built Pub- A. R. P. lic-house, known by the sign of "The Queen of Prussia," with the Stables, Carriage-house, Butcher's Shop, and other Out-buildings thereto belonging, together with Paddock and Garden adjoining thereto, numbered 273 and 274 on the Tithe Apportionment Plan, now in the occupation of Mrs. Ann Richardson, and containing together about..... 0 3 4

The Lincolnshire Chronicle 11<sup>th</sup> November 1853

Ann and her children remained as tenants. The census shows she had several lodgers: In 1851 60-year-old gardener and agricultural labourer William Plumtree from Salmonby who was still living with the family in 1861 age 70. In 1881 14-year-old Alice Bradley from North Cockerington was living and working at the pub as a general servant.

Ann was listed in the Lincolnshire directories as Victualler or Inkeeper. At this time when literacy was low, it would not have had a written sign displaying the pub name, just a picture or carving to show the name. This is why some Victorian newspapers and directories occasionally referred to the pub as the "*Queen's Head*", the writer not realising that the sign depicted a *specific* Queen, as all locals knew. It never actually changed its name; it was just a mistake.



**Stamford Mercury 24<sup>th</sup> September 1869** Detail from an advert for an auction of Saltfleetby All Saints farmland that took place at the village pub, incorrectly named.

**Richardson Ann (Mrs.), *Prussian Queen***

The Post Office Directory of Lincolnshire 1861

**Richardson Mrs Ann, victualler  
Prussian Queen**

White's Directory of Lincolnshire 1872

## Mary Ann Richardson

John and Ann's eldest daughter, known as Mary Annie, went to live with her elderly widowed grandfather, Samuel at his 40-acre farm in Helpringham, to act as his housekeeper in the early 1850s. She married Richard Forman (1828-1911), a printer from Louth, where she worked as a dress maker. They had two daughters: Susannah in 1859 (born in Surrey) and Mary Ann in 1860 in Saltfleetby. She returned to stay at her mother's house whilst suffering from illness. She died on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1862 age 28 at home in Saltfleetby, of pulmonary consumption (tuberculosis). She was buried in All Saints graveyard on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1862.

Their younger daughter, Mary Ann, stayed with her father, Richard who moved to Shieldfield Newcastle Upon Tyne, and remarried in 1865, having a further four children with his second wife Mary Bright Lakey (1835-1901). Their older daughter Susannah Forman stayed living with grandmother Ann in Saltfleetby, and grew up at the Prussian Queen.

## Susannah Richardson

Susannah was working unpaid assisting in the family pub from her teens in the 1850s. She was later listed as the cook there in the 1860s. Susannah married Alfred Fowler (born 1839 in Fotherby), a baker and grocer in Saltfleetby. They had a daughter: Georgiana Elizabeth Fowler on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1862. Susannah died of consumption (TB) aged 28 on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1863, her husband was present at her death. He remarried and had a further five children with his second wife Margaret.

Georgiana remained with her father and step-mother growing up at their grocer's shop in the village, which the family ran for many years. She married sailor Gustav Everson (son of carpenter Leules Everson) at St James' in Grimsby on 8<sup>th</sup> June 1884.

## Ann's Sister Mrs Mary Richardson

John's brother Thomas died of consumption aged 52 in January 1859. His widow, Ann's sister Mary, continued to run their farm. But, on 18th February 1866, Mary died by suicide after taking vermin killer. She was 51, the tragedy shocked the village. The inquest concluded that she had "*destroyed herself whilst labouring under temporary insanity*".

Ann and her brother Samuel in Helpringham were left to deal with her estate and affairs.

## SALT FLEETBY.

On Sunday morning last the inhabitants of this peaceful village were horror-struck on hearing a report that Mrs. Richardson, widow of the late Mr. Thomas Richardson, of this place, had committed suicide by taking three-pennyworth of Battle's Vermin Killer. The intelligence, alas, proved too true, the deceased having for some time been in a desponding state of mind, and had evidently previously contemplated committing the rash act, having sent to the shop for the poison on the Wednesday. An inquest was held on the body on the following day before T. Sharpley Esq., M.D. Coroner, when the jury returned a verdict that "deceased had destroyed herself whilst labouring under temporary insanity." No motive can be assigned to have induced the deceased to so rashly sacrifice herself, as her position was not at all embarrassed with difficulties.

## MRS. MARY RICHARDSON, DECEASED.

**A**LL Persons having any Claim or Demand against the Estate and Effects of Mrs. MARY RICHARDSON, late of SALT FLEETBY, in the County of Lincoln, deceased, are requested to send the particulars forthwith to Mrs. A. RICHARDSON, of the Prussian Queen Inn, Saltfleetby; and all Persons indebted to the said Mrs. MARY RICHARDSON, at the time of her decease, are requested to pay the amount of their respective Debts on or before the 22nd day of June, 1866, to the aforesaid Mrs. A. Richardson, of Saltfleetby.  
*Saltfleetby, May 18th, 1866.*

The Louth and North  
Lincolnshire Advertiser, 24<sup>th</sup>  
February 1866

Louth and North  
Lincolnshire Advertiser,  
26<sup>th</sup> May 1866

## Victoria Azubah Richardson

Ann's youngest daughter Victoria Azubah, worked as a barmaid in the pub. She never married, and died at home on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1869 of *phthisis pulmonalis*, the lung infection known as consumption or tuberculosis. She was 28 years old, her mother Ann was present at her death. She was buried in All Saints with her sisters on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1869.

## Death of Ann Richardson

Ann continued to live with her son George, who worked as an agricultural labourer and butcher. She died at home on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1881 of coronary artery disease, age 71. Her son George was present at death. She was buried in All Saints on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1881.

## George Richardson

George married Lily Georgiana Elizabeth Fowler (born 1861), the daughter of Albert's brother Edwin Fowler, a farmer in Saltfleetby St Clements, in December 1881. They had a daughter, Edith in 1892, who died at the age of 11. George died in 1915 at the age of 77.

## Susannah Forman

Ann's granddaughter Susannah, lived with the Richardsons at the Prussian Queen after her mother Mary Ann died. On 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1875, the wife of the Rector of All Saints, Mrs Elizabeth Hutchins,



died three hours after giving birth to their 7<sup>th</sup> child, a son, at the rectory. In 1879, 20-year-old Susannah married the 47-year-old widowed Rev. William Horace Hutchins. She lived with him at the rectory on the Main Road, step-mother to his children, then aged between 15 and 3. After her husband's death in 1906 she went to live in Knossington, Leicestershire, later at the Clergy Widow's Hospital there. She died in Melton Mowbray Infirmary in October 1945, age 87.

## THE CUTHBERT FAMILY

The next innkeepers of the Prussian Queen were Thomas and Sarah Cuthbert.

Thomas Cuthbert was born in December 1824 in South Elkington, Lincolnshire, the son of Thomas and Sarah (nee Headland). He was christened at South Elkington All Saint's Church on 25<sup>th</sup> December 1824. Like his father, he became a carpenter.

Sarah Wilson was born in Fotherby in 1825, the oldest child of Thomas and Rebecca (nee Day). She was christened in Fotherby St Mary's Church on 5<sup>th</sup> September 1825. When she was a child the family moved to Louth, where her father worked as a publican and coal carter. She married Thomas Cuthbert on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1847 at Louth St James Church.

They lived in South Elkington where Thomas worked as a wheelwright, carpenter and joiner. Here they had nine children: Thomas in 1848, Sarah in 1850, George in 1852, John Wilson in 1853, Emma in 1858, Annie in 1860, Henry in 1862, Frederick in 1865 and Robert in 1867. Their oldest daughter Sarah moved to Saltfleetby in about 1880 with her husband John Horton, who worked as a blacksmith on the Main Road. They had young sons, John Henry and Charles Horton, and then had a further four children in the village.

**SALTFLEETBY, near LOUTH.**  
**To be SOLD by AUCTION,**  
**By Messrs. MASON, SONS, and KIDD,**  
**At the Prussian Queen Inn in Saltfleetby, on Thursday**  
**the 18th day of August instant, at Seven o'clock in the**  
**Evening precisely,**  
**THE undermentioned valuable CROPPING now**  
**Growing on land in the occupation of Mr. John**  
**Graves, in such lots and subject to such conditions as**  
**may be determined on at the time of sale, namely—**  
**In the Thirteen Acres Close, containing 13A. 0R. 27P.**  
**Beans..... 4 Acres (more or less).**  
**Oats ..... ½ Acre (ditto).**  
**Wheat ..... 4 Acres (ditto).**  
**Oats ..... 4½ Acres (ditto).**  
**At the same time will be Let by Auction, up to the 1st**  
**October next, the GRASS KEEPING in the Paddock**  
**adjoining Mr. Grave's house, containing 1A. 2R. 16P.**  
**(more or less), and also the Grass Keeping in the Close,**  
**containing 6A. 0R. 35P. (more or less), adjoining.**  
**The last-mentioned Close has not been stocked and is**  
**full of Grass.**  
**New-street Corner, Louth, 9th August, 1881.**

Stamford Mercury 12<sup>th</sup> August 1881 Sale of cropping, and letting of grass paddocks at auction on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1881 at the Prussian Queen Inn

Following their daughter to Saltfleetby, Thomas and Sarah took over at the Prussian Queen which was thriving as a village inn, also serving as the venue for meetings and occasional auctions.

**Cuthbert Thomas, Prussian Queen P.H**

Kelly's Directory of Lincolnshire 1885

Sarah Cuthbert died at home age 61, on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1886 of *Cardiac Disease and General Dropsy* (swelling due to a build-up of fluid). Thomas was listed on the death certificate as being present at death. She was buried in Saltfleetby All Saints churchyard on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1886.

Different members of Thomas's family lived or stayed at the pub with him over the following years. His daughter Emma Cuthbert worked there as housekeeper. Son George, who had moved to Nottingham, was a frequent visitor staying at the Prussian Queen with his wife and children.

The Cuthbert family were active in many village issues and events. Thomas hosted and took part in the annual meetings to elect a *dyke-reeve* (who was in charge of the dykes and sluices etc involved in keeping our low-lying marshland well drained) held each December. A meeting to elect a new surveyor of sewers for Saltfleetby All Saints was adjourned from All Saints vestry, to the inn on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1892. Reverend Hutchins worked to raise money for the *All Saints Church Restoration Fund*, as the architect had estimated essential work would cost a total of £997, by March 1892, £200 of which was urgently needed to stabilise the structure from further dilapidation. Thomas pledged to subscribe £1 to the fund (equivalent of about £162 today). His daughter, Annie Cuthbert helped at a fund-raising bazaar at the rectory in July 1892, presiding over tables in the tea marquee in the afternoon. Anne remained in Saltfleetby after marrying church warden George Chapman.

LOUTH (LINDSEY) PETTY SESSIONS, WEDNESDAY.  
—Before Major Smyth, Dr. Fawssett, Major Allott,  
and W. Hyde, Esq.—Thomas Cuthbert, landlord of the  
Prussian Queen, Saltfleetby, for permitting drunken-  
ness on his licensed premises, on the 26th August last,  
was fined 2s. 6d., and 9s. costs.—

**Lincolnshire Chronicle 24<sup>th</sup> September 1892** Thomas Cuthbert appeared at Louth Petty Sessions Court on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1892, where he was fined for allowing drunkenness in the Prussian Queen.

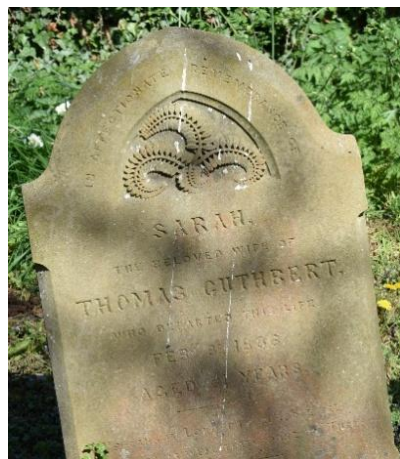
### Retirement and Sale in 1896

**THE PRUSSIAN QUEEN,  
SALTFLEETBY.**  
TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION, BY  
**Messrs. John Taylor and Son,**  
On THURSDAY, OCT. 8th, 1896,  
Upon the premises of Mr. Thomas Cuthbert, of the  
Prussian Queen,  
**THE whole of the HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE,  
JOINERS' TOOLS, STOCK-IN-TRADE, &c.**  
For particulars see Bills.  
Sale to commence at 12 for 1 o'clock.

**Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser, 26<sup>th</sup> September 1896**

Thomas Cuthbert retired in 1896. He sold off his joiners' tools and household furniture from the pub in October 1896, and went to live with his son eldest son Thomas at 80 Gregory Boulevarde in North West Nottingham.

Thomas Cuthbert died on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1898, age 74, in Nottingham. He was buried on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1898 in All Saints, next to his wife Sarah.



Their daughter Sarah also moved to Nottingham where her husband John Horton worked as a blacksmith. Two of their sons also became blacksmiths, including Charles who died in 1918 whilst serving in the army. Sarah Horton died in 1933 age 82.

**The Graves of Sarah and Thomas  
Cuthbert in Saltfleetby All Saints  
churchyard.**



## SOPHIA WARD AND ELIZABETH HATTER

Elizabeth Cartwright was born in Ryland near Welton, Lincolnshire in 1811 the daughter of George and Mary (nee Gowshall). When she was very young, the family moved to Minting near Horncastle. She married Thomas Hatter on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1828 in Minting St Andrew's Church. They had daughters Eliza and Betsy in Timberland in 1834 and 1840. In about 1841 they moved to Hatton near Horncastle where Thomas was publican of the **Midge Inn**, and farmer of 46 acres. Elizabeth's brother George kept the near-by public house in Minting (now known as the Sebastopol Inn). In Hatton, Elizabeth and Thomas had another daughter Mary Jane in 1842, and twins Matilda and Sophia on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1845.

Thomas Hatter died in November 1857 age 62. Elizabeth and her daughters moved to Saltfleet where she took over as publican of the **Rodney Inn**. Formerly called The Admiral Rodney, after 18<sup>th</sup> Century Royal Navy hero Admiral George Rodney, it used to be on Pump Lane next door to the Crown Inn and had previously been run by the Fields family.

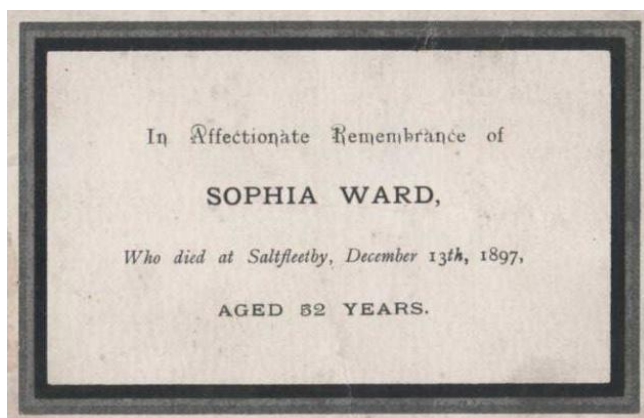
At the age of 21, Sophia married 21-year-old George Dunstan Ward, a hotel keeper from Louth. They were married on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1866 at St Michael's Church in Handsworth (then in Staffordshire, now a part of Birmingham). They went to live at Sculcoates in Hull, where in 1871 her sisters Betsy and Matilda were visitors.

Her mother Elizabeth continued to live at the Rodney Inn, Saltfleet with her eldest daughter Eliza and her young daughter Edith Parker. By 1881, Elizabeth was hotel keeper of the **Plummers Hotel**, Shore Road, Freiston, Lincolnshire. George and Sophia assisted in the business, at this time a popular seaside and bathing destination. It's now *Pummers Place Guest House*, overlooking the RSPB Nature Reserve. By 1885 Elizabeth was innkeeper of **The Anchor Inn**, at Friskney, Boston. In 1889 they were running the **Bay Horse** pub in Winteringham near Scunthorpe, Elizabeth as innkeeper with George and Sophia serving at the bar.

On 13<sup>th</sup> June 1896, George Ward died at Winteringham, age 51. Elizabeth and Sophia then soon went to Saltfleetby to take over the Prussian Queen. Sophia was the licence holder, assisted by her mother who was then in her mid-80s.

### Sophia's Fatal Accident

On 13<sup>th</sup> December 1897, a travelling chimney sweep called William Gall was sleeping in a stable attached to the house. At about 11 o'clock that night he was woken by the sound of Elizabeth crying out, saying that Sophia had fallen downstairs. When he got into the house, he found Sophia *"on the staircase with her head downwards and her feet fast in the steps. He believed she was then dead"*. He lifted her but there was no sign of life, blood could be seen. He called for assistance and Dr Walter Longheed, who lived at North Somercotes, examined her body and concluded that her



neck was broken, death would have been instantaneous. The coroner for Louth, Frederick Sharpley, held an inquest at the Prussian Queen on 15<sup>th</sup> December. The verdict was *"Accidental death"*. The cause was recorded as: *Dislocation of the neck caused by accidentally falling downstairs*. Sophia was 52 years old. She was buried in South Somercotes on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1897.

Elizabeth died in 1900, age 89, she was buried in South Somercotes on 27<sup>th</sup> January 1900.



## MARTHA AND GRACE ADAMS

Grace Dorothy Tate was born in Knottingley, Yorkshire, in 1855, the youngest daughter of Richard and Martha (nee Colley). Her family quarried and sold lime for the building trade. In her teens she worked as a dressmaker. She married sailor Edward Adams in Pontefract in 1873. Their first daughter Martha Jane Adams was born in 1874 in Knottingley. The family moved to Saltfleet where Grace and Edward were publicans at the **Rodney Inn**, and had four more children. Edward died in 1887 age 36 and was buried in Skidbrooke St Botolph's churchyard.

By 1891 Grace was innkeeper of the neighbouring **Crown Inn** in Saltfleet, with her three youngest surviving children. Martha Jane, then 16, was working at the **Ship Inn** in Saltfleet, helping the publican Mr Adlard with his grocery business there. In January 1898 they moved to take over at the Prussian Queen, with Martha as the licensee. The pub was then owned by the Alford and Louth brewery *Soulby, Sons and Winch*.

### Application to Move the Licence to a New Pub

In August 1898, Martha published a notice of her intention to apply to remove the licence of the Prussian Queen and transfer it to a proposed new public house that was to be built near the railway station (which opened 21 years earlier in 1877). On 28<sup>th</sup> September 1898 the proposal was debated at Louth County Police Court, before five Magistrates with Reverend Freshney of Saltfleet, in the chair. Miss Adams was represented by her solicitor, William Haddon Owen of Eastgate, Louth (the legal firm he founded merged with Bridge McFarland in 2000). Henry Frederick Valentine Falkner, solicitor on Eastgate, Louth, represented Evison Barker, landlord of the **Angel Inn**, Saltfleetby St Peter, who opposed the idea. Frederick John Ingoldby, of Bell and Ingoldby solicitors, Corn Market, Louth, spoke on behalf of the British Women's Temperance Association and the Parish Council.

Mr Owen explained that the Prussian Queen was in an unsuitable position, and the Angel Inn was over a third of a mile from the station. Most of the population of the village lay to the west of the station, which was supplied by the Angel. So, he suggested the new pub wouldn't be poaching on their business. Miss Adams was not concerned with pushing local trade, but meeting the need of the railway. He said that station users had experienced inconvenience as those driving in traps had nowhere to put up, so neighbours had obliged by placing their stables at the disposal of friends, with some people not caring to accept such personal favours. There was very little accommodation at the station by way of a waiting room for people waiting for trains. 157 people had signed a petition in support of the application, which had been at the Prussian Queen for about 6 weeks. Louth architect Reginald Fowler had prepared plans for the proposed new house, with special attention paid to the stable accommodation for seven horses. The owners, **Soulby Sons and Winch**, had instructed him, it was to front the main road and cost about £500.

Miss Adams was asked why she wanted to leave the Prussian Queen. She explained that it was in a bad condition, and she thought there was going to be more trade than there was. Mr Owen put forward that it would be better for both her and the public if the licence were removed to a more used location. The number of signatures on the petition was questioned, she admitted that she hadn't observed them all being written and signed some names herself on behalf of some customers when asked to do so. A number of farmers who used the station to transport produce spoke of the inconvenience of lack of stable accommodation.

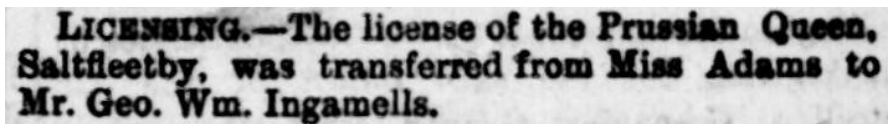
Mr Falkner said the owners of the Angel Inn had pointed out that the Prussian Queen was the only public house in the parish of All Saints, so removing it to another parish where there was already a

licenced house would be inconvenient to the inhabitants. William Doe, chairman of Saltfleetby St Peter Parish Council (who had voted against it, but not unanimously) thought that the proposal wouldn't be of benefit to the parish, there was enough stabling already, and 190 people had signed a petition against it. Mr Ingoldby, speaking against the proposal, said that no horses has suffered, they only come five or six miles with corn. He suggested that the firm of brewers just wanted to create more trade by "putting temptation in the way of travellers" and urged the Magistrates not to give power to "a brewery company that had only one motive, to do this harm to the inhabitants"!

The bench retired to consider the case, and returned stating that (though they were not unanimous) the application was refused.

### Martha Adams Moves On

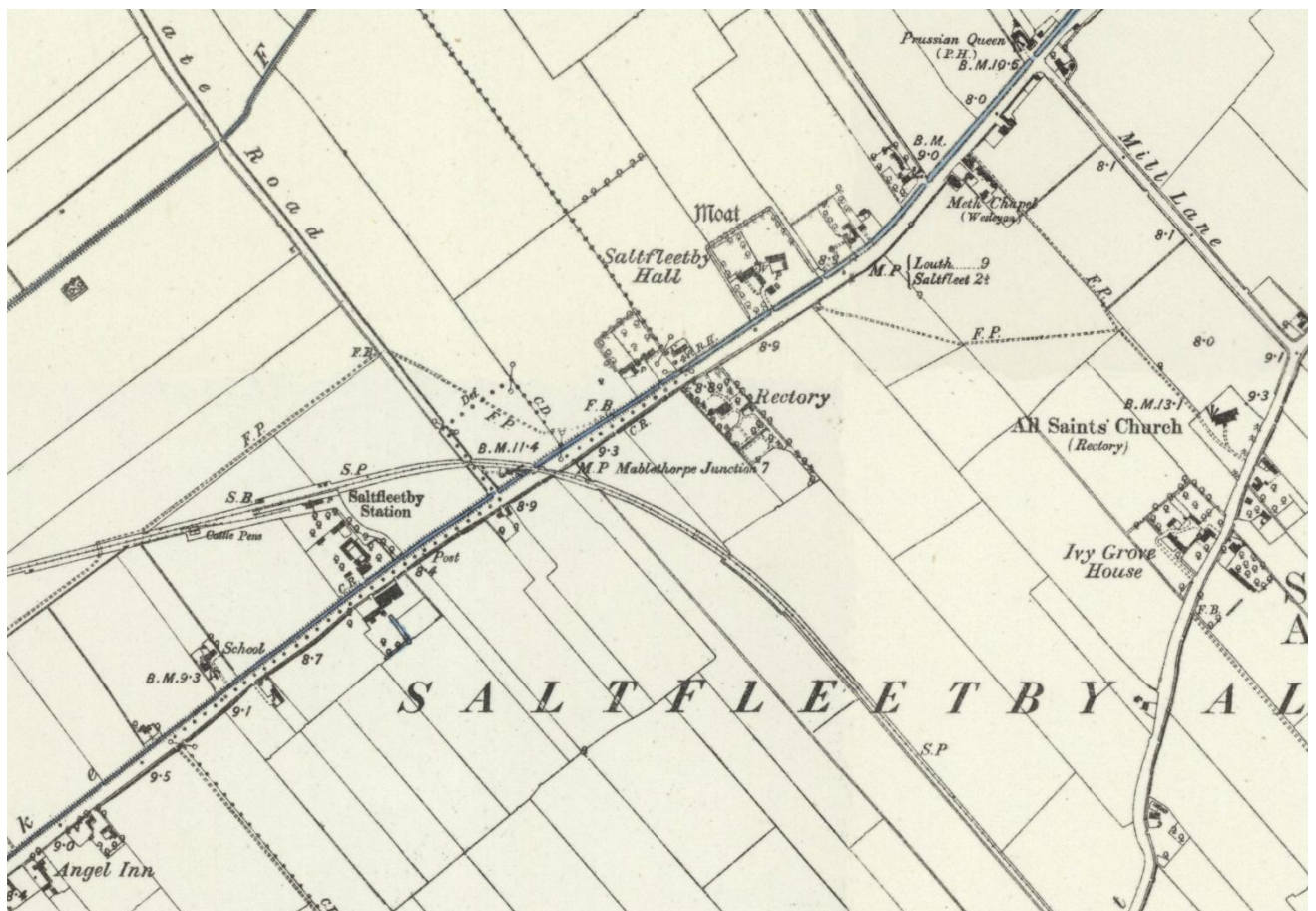
Miss Adams had stated that if the application wasn't granted, she would only stay at the Prussian Queen for a short time. Less than a month later the license was transferred to the new landlord, George William Ingamells.



Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser 15<sup>th</sup> October 1898

Martha went to work as a parlour housemaid at 24 George Street in Louth. She married Holland Kendall Morwood Lingard, a farmer from Caistor, at Bishop Norton on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1901. They had a farm at Atterby Cliff, where daughter Edna was born in 1903.

Her mother Grace continued to work as a licenced victualler, as did her son Edward, who was innkeeper of a pub in Hutton Cranswick, Yorkshire, where Grace lived with him. Martha died on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1923 at Brigg, age 68. Grace died in Hutton Cranswick on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1933 age 77.



1888 Ordnance Survey Map showing the distance between the Prussian Queen, the Railway Station and Angel Inn

## SOULBY, SONS & WINCH

Edward Harding Soulby was a maltster and brewer in New Bollingbroke, later in Coningsby alongside his brick and tile business. He bought a long-established small brewery on West Street, Alford in 1868. He made his sons Edward and Frederick partners in the business in 1870, who had already taken over by 1890 when their father died age 76. **E H Soulby & Sons** built up a portfolio of properties, including malthouses and public houses, owning 83 pubs by 1896.

Thomas Montagu Winch was born in Chatham, Kent in 1873 into a prosperous brewing family. His father bought a brewery for him in 1896, in Maiden Row, off Queen Street, Louth. **T M Winch & Co** were soon producing 6 cask ales and 4 bottled beers, and began buying up local pubs as they came on to the market.

Meanwhile Soulby's were experiencing difficulties. Frederick suffered depression after the death of his wife, which led to his suicide in 1896. After this Edward also suffered from depression, for which he was committed to an asylum in 1897 (where he died of a heart attack in 1903). The management of the business was taken over by their solicitor who arranged for a merger with T M Winch & Co of Louth. In December 1896 this became **Soulby, Sons and Winch Ltd.**



Tom Montagu Winch

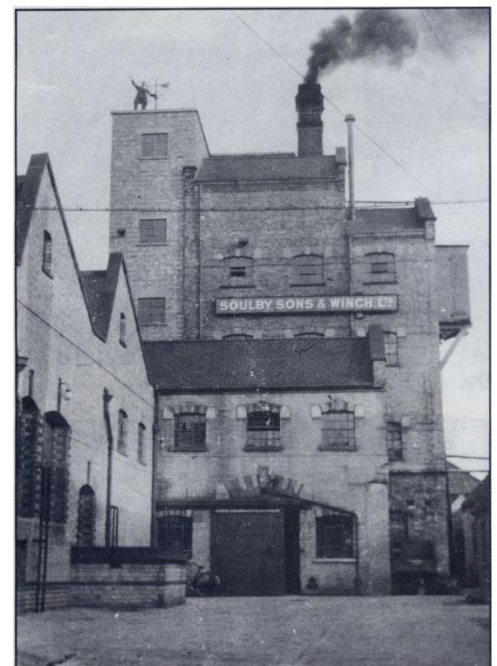
**Soulby, Sons  
& Winch, Ltd.**  
BREWERS,  
MALTSTERS,  
Wine & Spirit Merchants,  
MANUFACTURERS OF AERATED WATERS,  
**Louth, Alford & Boston.**  
BEG to inform the Public that they are now  
delivering their  
**GOLD MEDAL ALES,**  
Which are Brewed from Barley purchased in the  
district, in Casks of 4½ gallons and upwards, with-  
out charge for delivery.  
Particular attention is called to their Ales,  
which are remarkably sound, brilliant and in high  
condition.  
**Bottled Beers & Stout**  
IN PINT AND HALF-PINT BOTTLES.  
**WINES & SPIRITS**  
IN BOTTLES AND JUGS.  
All orders addressed to the Firm,  
**QUEEN STREET,  
LOUTH,**  
Will receive careful and prompt attention.  
**ALF. DALES, MANAGER.**

Louth and North Lincolnshire  
Advertiser 12<sup>th</sup> February 1898

The company expanded, enlarging the *Anchor Brewery* in Alford, doubling production, buying new sites including offices and a bottling plant in Boston, in 1900 taking over the *Phoenix Brewery* in Sleaford and *Red Lion Brewery* in Alford. By 1904 they owned around 150 pubs covering a wide area of the county, with a further 100 or so free-houses taking Soulby's beer. Thomas Winch moved from Alford to the large house *Legbourne Abbey* on Mill Lane, Legbourne near Louth. He died in 1942, age 69.

Brewing ended in Louth in 1923, all production moved to Alford, where a serious fire gutted two floors of the brewery tower in October 1945.

In 1951 Soulby's was sold to J W Green of Luton (later called Flowers Brewery). The last brew took place at Alford in September 1952, then production was moved to Grantham. They sold off their Lincolnshire pubs in 1956, 30 in our area were bought by Hewitts of Grimsby.



Soulby, Sons & Winch: The Anchor Brewery  
on West Street, Alford in about 1940

The old brewery in Alford became a clothing factory, which closed in 2001. The building was demolished in 2008.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Lincolnshire had around 30 breweries. After Hewitt's closed in 1968, Bateman's of Wainfleet was then the last remaining large Lincolnshire Brewer.



## GEORGE AND MARTHA INGAMELLS

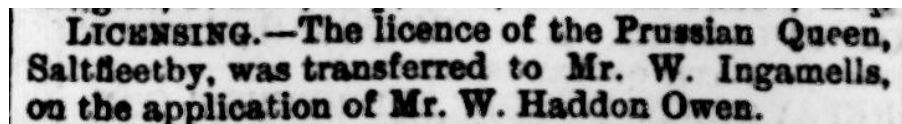
George William Ingamells was born on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1860 in Louth, the oldest child of William Ingamells (1834–1873) from Stickney, and Anne Elizabeth (nee Atkinson, 1843–1923) from Tetney. His father was a miller, working at Baines Flour Mill on Thames Street, Louth, then at Grimoldby Windmill.

George did an apprenticeship with Thomas Cartwright, assisting at the mill and bakery in North Somercotes. He then went on to live at Bolingbroke, before moving to Saltfleetby All Saints, to run the windmill with adjoining bakery, and working as a corn merchant. In 1890 his business was in financial difficulties, when he had to make assignment for the benefit of his creditors, having liabilities amounting to £120 and assets of only £45.

Martha Davy was born on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1863 at Mumby, the daughter of Jarvis Davy (1828-1894) from Stickney and Ruth (nee Barker, 1834-1922) from Withern. Her father was also a miller, working at Mumby, then Fotherby and Horncastle. In her teens Martha worked as a domestic servant at her uncle's farm in Withern.

George and Martha married on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1891 in Withern. They lived at the Mill House on the Main Road, Saltfleetby, where they both ran the mill and worked in the bakery. They had a son, Archibald Cecil (known as Archie) on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1892, and Edward Horace on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1901. Martha's brother Edwin Davy ran a grocery shop on the Main Road, where her sister Annie also lived for a while. Her mother Ruth also came to live in the village.

George was elected as rural district councillor for Saltfleetby All Saints in March 1898. When they took over the licence of the Prussian Queen in 1898, they initially continued to live at Mill House and run the windmill and bakery at the same time. He was active in the Saltfleetby Lodge of the Louth and East Lincolnshire Conservative Benefit Society, organising an annual supper for them, applying for an occasional licence to sell alcohol at this event in the granary, in February 1910



Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser 26<sup>th</sup> November 1898

### A Tragic Death

On 26<sup>th</sup> August 1903, 36-year-old Arthur Bratley, a printer from Church Street in Louth, went to Saltfleetby by train for a day's fishing with his 5-year-old son Charles Frederick (known as Fred), and 9-year-old nephew John Fowlkes. Mr Bratley went into the Prussian Queen for lunch, leaving Charles and John outside playing with the Ingamells boys. While on a bridge crossing the Mardyke Drain, Charles fell into the water. The children ran for assistance and Mr Bratley was fetched from the pub at once, but it was too late. Mr Ingamells, Edward Chapman and others assisted in the search, but the dyke was very full of water (about 3 ½ feet), it took about half an hour to recover the body, 10 yards from the bridge.

An inquest was held at the Prussian Queen the following day. One side of the bridge had a fence, which had been put up by Mr Winch, but Charles had fallen from the side of the bridge which didn't have a fence. Deputy coroner Herbert Sharpley said it was a simple but very sad matter, and returned a verdict of accidental death. He strongly recommended that the other side of the bridge should be fenced. The funeral took place at St Michael's Church in Louth on 29<sup>th</sup> August 1903, and he was buried in Louth Cemetery.

## Saltfleetby Windmill

George Ingamells continued to list his profession as miller and publican, whilst living at the Prussian Queen. He advertised the windmill to let in 1904 and again in 1909. By 1909 the mill was described as having steam attached.

**SALTFLEETBY.—To LET, with possession on the 6th of April next, a TOWER WINDMILL, driving 3 pairs of stones, with Flour Machines, &c. Also adjoining HOUSE, BAKEHOUSE, and 1½ Acres of LAND.—For particulars apply to G. W. Ingamells, Prussian Queen, Saltfleetby, Louth.**

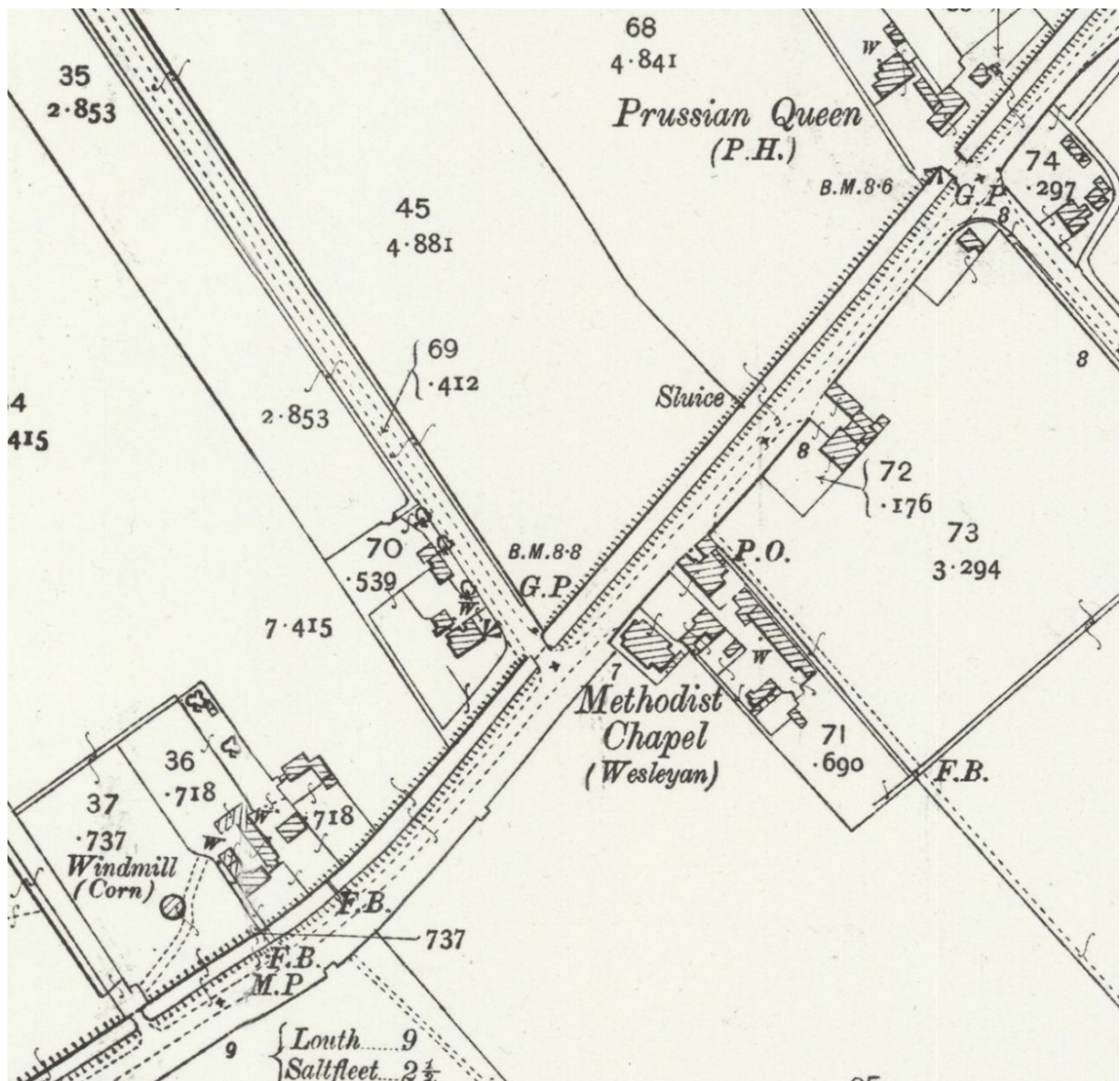
Stamford Mercury 18<sup>th</sup> November 1904

It was last sold as a working mill with bakehouse, dwelling house, piggeries and over an acre of land, in 1912, auctioned at £280. It remained occupied by Henry Stubbs and Mr Ernest E Luck, paying a rent of £34. It had ceased to be working by the early 1920s when Mr E E Luck returned after the war to live at Mill House, and for many years used the land as a market garden for growing fruit.

The mill has now long been demolished.



Saltfleetby Windmill



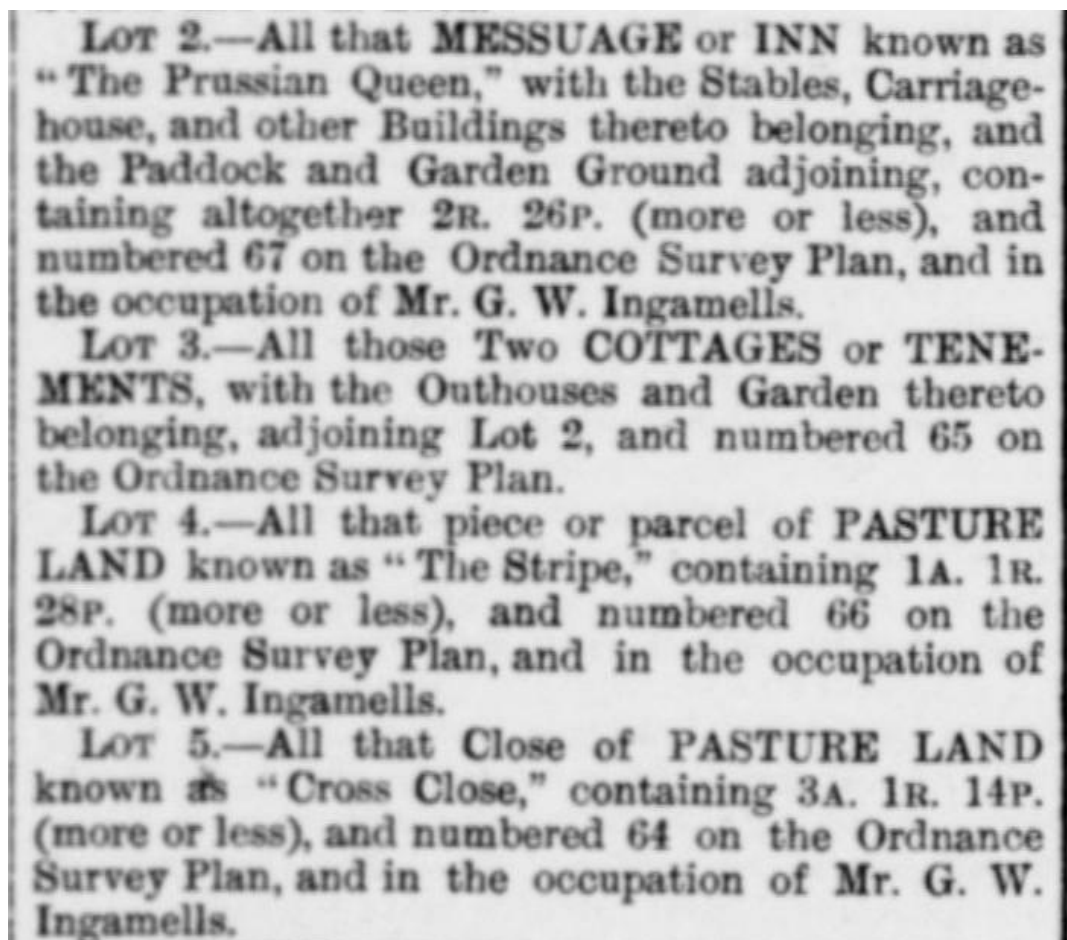
1905 Map showing the Prussian Queen and Windmill, owned by pub landlord and miller, George Ingamells

## Inquest into a Tragic Death

On 30<sup>th</sup> November 1911 an inquest was held at the Prussian Queen into the death of farmer, 53 year old William Tidswell of Saltfleet, whose body was found in Mardyke, between the windmill and the pub. He had returned on the train from Mablethorpe which arrived at Saltfleetby Station at 8pm on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> when he was last seen alive by witnesses. His body was noticed by Henry Stubbs the following day as he and his wife were driving to the station. Mr Tidswell was recognised and recovered from the dyke, having been dead for some considerable time. The coroner's jury of 12 local men, including George Ingamells, viewed the body and listened to witnesses give their evidence at the pub. They agreed that there was no evidence to suppose he was intoxicated and wondered if the light from a window across the road had misled him, when it was not a very dark night. They returned a verdict that he had drowned by accidentally walking into the Mardyke.

## The Sale of the Prussian Queen in 1912

The pub, windmill and other pieces of nearby land were put up for sale by auction at the Masons' Arms Hotel in Louth on Wednesday 4th September 1912 at 3.30pm.



Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser, 24<sup>th</sup> August 1912

The Prussian Queen and the adjoining two cottages were bought privately before the sale for £450 by George Ingamells younger brother Charles Christopher Ingamells (1866–1937), a miller then living at Little Carlton. Bidding at the auction he also bought the two pieces of land near the pub, "The Stripe" containing 1 rood 28 perches (about 0.17 hectares) for £20, and "Cross Close" of 3 acres, 1 rood 14 perches (about 1.3 hectares) for £225, which continued to be let to his brother George.





George Ingamells can be seen (in front of the horse) in this early 20<sup>th</sup> Century photo of the Prussian Queen. The name of the brewery: Soulby, Sons and Winch Ltd is displayed over the door, the stables and cottages are on the right.

## Louth Petty Sessions Court

Mr Ingamells appeared in court at Louth for several minor charges. The building, formerly the police station, is now owned by Louth Town Council, called Sessions House, on Eastgate, was at first the Petty Sessions Court, then called the Police Court. In June 1900 he was fined 2s 6d and 4s 6d costs for allowing a pony to stray after Pc Clark observed it unattended on the road.

In 1905 before magistrates at the Petty Session Court he was charged with using a carriage without having a licence at Saltfleetby on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1905, and was fined £5 and costs. On 14<sup>th</sup> July 1908 he allowed a horse to stray, for which he was fined 5 shillings with costs of 4s 6d.

At Louth County Police Court on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1911, he was summoned for keeping a dog without a licence. He pleaded guilty. P.c. Cole stated that the defendant had two dogs and had an exemption for one. He was fined £1, including costs.

In June 1914 he appeared as a witness in a case regarding a possible breach of licencing laws. Mr Ingamells had for several years been a regular customer of Thomas Cuthbert, a grocer in Queen Street, Louth, who also manufactured mineral water, and was licenced to sell alcohol for wholesale only. Mr Cuthbert was summoned to court on a charge of unlawfully selling Mr Ingamells a quantity of beer LESS than he was licenced to sell. On 7<sup>th</sup> May Mr Ingamells instructed John Statham, a carrier of Saltfleetby, to "*Go to Cuthberts*" to get for him two dozen half-pint bottles of stout, giving him 2s 4d to pay for it. Mr Cuthbert told Statham that he wasn't allowed to sell less than six dozen, but he eventually took the money and sent the two dozen bottles to the Prussian Queen, with a label saying "*part lot, rest to follow*". The next day Mr Ingamells went to Louth and took another four-dozen bottles, and was given a receipt for a total of six dozen. The magistrates decided to fine Mr Cuthbert £2 and £1 19s costs.

In February 1917 George Ingamells was again at Louth County Police Court, charged with driving a horse and cart with only one light in front, at Grimoldby. He was fined £1, *"this not being his first offence"*. Another £1 fine was issued in December 1917 for driving a rully without a red rear light.

## Saltfleetby During the First World War

Our quiet village suddenly became filled with soldiers, as large training camps were built along the coastal area. About 12,000 troops came through Saltfleetby Railway Station to stay at the hundreds of wooden huts in the dunes at Saltfleetby and Saltfleet, before they were sent to fight on the front line. It was a major training centre for soldiers of the Lincolnshire Regiment and others. The Notts and Derby "Sherwood Foresters" manned the concrete look-out station at Sea View. The Royal Artillery Service Corp set up shelter for 72 horses. D company of the 5<sup>th</sup> Yorkshire Regiment were stationed at the school, while the children's lessons had to be moved to the Methodist Sunday School rooms. Many facilities were set up for the men on the coast, including a YMCA hut (for which locals donated, books, magazines and games etc), a church hut was blessed by the Bishop of Grantham, and local civilians also helped out working in the canteens. Five soldier tragically died at the coastal camps between 1916 and 1918.



**An Officers' Mess Hut at Saltfleet in the First World War**

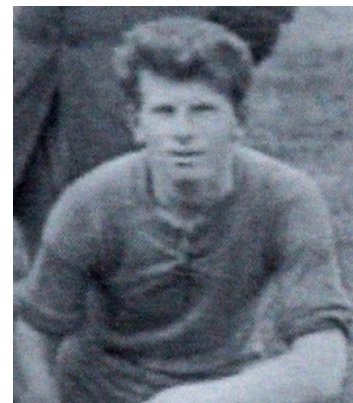
About 25 young men from Saltfleetby St Peter, and 26 from All Saints and St Clements, joined-up to serve in the armed forces, of which at least five didn't make it home alive.

## Archie Ingamells's Military Service

George and Martha's oldest son, joined-up before the war at the age of 18, on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1911 in Saltfleetby, as a member of the Territorial Force with the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Lincolnshire Regiment. His trade was recorded as *"Publican's Assistant", 5 foot 10 inches tall, in good health.*

In his miliary records he's described as of *"Very good"* character, *"A steady, sober and reliable man"*, a *Baker* by trade. He was promoted to Lance Corporal on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1915, whilst serving as infantry in France. He gained qualifications listed as: *"Bombing & Light YM Instructor"*.

He was with the 5<sup>th</sup> Lincolns when they embarked from Marseilles on the troopship *HMT Anchises* on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1916, reaching Alexandria, Egypt on 13th January. The troops disembarked the next day and went into camp, but the division's move to Egypt was countermanded and they boarded *HMT Megantic* at Alexandria on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, landing back in France on 9<sup>th</sup> February.



**Archie Ingamells, playing for Saltfleetby United Football Team in the 1920-21 season**

After serving over 5 years with the 5<sup>th</sup> Lincolns, he was discharged for completing his period of engagement in May 1916, he then enlisted in the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment in June 1916. He was confirmed as a Corporal on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1918 whilst stationed at Skegness, returning to the front a week later.

He remained posted on active service until February 1919, and was demobilized on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1919 at Harrowby Camp in Grantham. He was awarded the 1914-1915 Star Medal, The British War Medal, Victory Star, and Military Medal in 1916 *"for conspicuous service at the front"*.

**MILITARY MEDAL** — Lce.-Corpl. A. C. Ingamells, of the 5th Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment, son of Mr. G. W. Ingamells, of the Prussian Queen Inn, has now received the military medal which he was awarded a short time ago. It bears on one side the striking words, "For bravery in the field."

Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser 26<sup>th</sup> August 1916

## The Pub Trade During the War

During the war, with so many troops based in the villages, there are stories of pubs frequently running out of beer. The East Yorkshire Regiment stationed at Theddlethorpe are said to have frequently drunk the Kings Head dry, so the landlord, James Wilson had to go with his horse and cart the following day to get more beer. Soulby's brewery had difficulties with supply owing to a shortage of fuel for delivery trucks, mainly affecting their pubs further away from the Alford brewery.

The "Prussian" part of the pub's name may have caused some embarrassment whilst we were at war with Germany, so might have been temporarily omitted. Queen Louise's grandson, Frederick III, married Queen Victoria's daughter, their son was Kaiser Wilhelm, German Emperor and the last King of Prussia.

Ingamells George William, Prussian  
Queen P.H

1919 Kelly's Directory of Lincolnshire

## Bankruptcy Court

After the war George Ingamells was again in financial difficulty. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1923, age 62, he appeared at Grimsby Bankruptcy Court. He was referred to as licenced victualler who dips into several branches of trade, also a coal and corn merchant.

He was in debt by £409 8s 9d, which he attributed to bad trade and bad debts, as well as the loss of some pigs. He said that nine pigs, worth about £70 had died of swine fever in 1922. He said that when he started at the Prussian Queen, he had capital of £10. He had also started in the coal trade about 20 years ago, gradually increasing the business. The turnover in the business is said to have been about £1,220 for 1921, and £485 for 1922. He said one of his failings was giving too much credit.

He was questioned by the Official Receiver with regard to a statement he made to a bank at Louth that his book debts amounted to £500. He couldn't account for this and the Official Receiver said the bank regarded it as an attempt to deceive them. Mr Ingamells promised to produce further books if he could find them as the examination was adjourned.

**GRIMSBY BANKRUPTCY COURT.**  
**YESTERDAY.**  
Before the Registrar (Mr. Cecil R. Stephen).  
**LOST HIS PIGS.**

Grimsby News 4th May 1923

**SALTFLEETBY PUBLICAN'S FAILURE.**  
**Alleged Statement to a Louth Bank.**  
**DEBTOR TO SEARCH FOR BOOKS.**

Louth Standard 5<sup>th</sup> May 1923



## An Unusual Collection

After the war George Ingamells bought one of the old sectional army huts from the Saltfleetby camp and put it up as a store behind the pub. It became filled with all kinds of unusual items that he collected, said to include furniture, clocks, an old German made Otto gas engine, cases of stuffed fish and birds, and an old belt-driven acetylene-lit Douglas motor-cycle. He managed to salvage a petrol tank from a Zeppelin L70, shot down over Norfolk in August 1918, that washed up in Saltfleetby. A German anti-aircraft gun on wooden artillery wheels, a war souvenir, was set up at the back of the pub. In the 1930s his collection was sold off. The gun (which others think was more likely a German field gun) was bought by Mr Borman, landlord of the Black Horse at Grainthorpe, where it was positioned in front, pointing at the pub with a notice reading "*Shoot over to the Black Horse Inn*". It is believed to have been donated for scrap metal during the second world war.

Ingamells George William, Prussian  
Queen P.H. & coal & corn mer-  
chant & dealer in cattle spice &  
chicken foods & basic slag

Kelly's Directory 1926

## The Ingamells Family

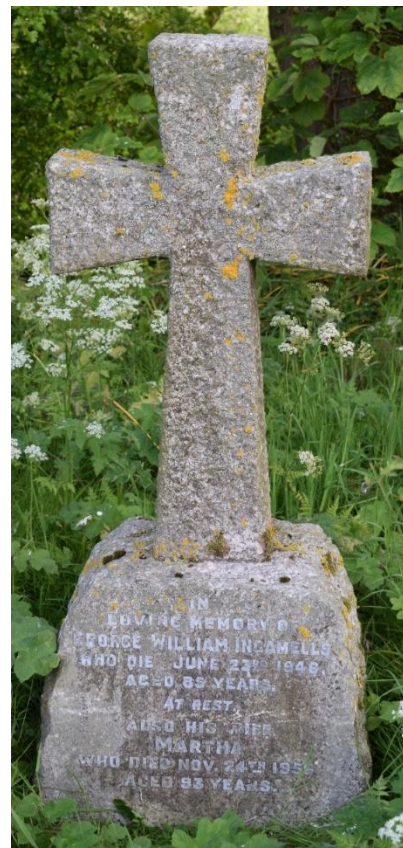
Both Archie and Horace Ingamells played for Saltfleetby United Football Club, which formed after the war, all the original players came from the village. Horace, who usually played in goal, went on to also play for Mablethorpe FC, when they won two cups in the 1926-7 season. Archie married Florence May Proctor (known as Florrie) in 1920. He worked as a railway crossing keeper, first at Orston Lane Crossing in Bottesford, Nottinghamshire. Whilst there they had their first son Gordon William in September 1920. They returned to live at the gatehouse on the Main Road, Saltfleetby, having another son, Donald Cecil in 1924.

Martha Ingamells cooked a hot meal for the football club, of which Horace was secretary, at their annual dinners held at the Prussian Queen from 1923.

The family were active at Saltfleetby East Wesleyan Chapel, where the boys attended Sunday School and took part in concerts and services. Donald died on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1932, at the age of 8, whilst being cared for at Louth Hospital for osteomyelitis and sinusitis. A memorial service was held for him at the East Methodist Chapel, he was buried in All Saints graveyard.

George and Martha continued keeping the Prussian Queen until their retirement in 1937. They stayed in the village, moving to a house on Fishmergate. George died on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1946, age 85. Martha died on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1956, age 93. They are buried together in Saltfleetby All Saints Churchyard, near their grandson Donald.

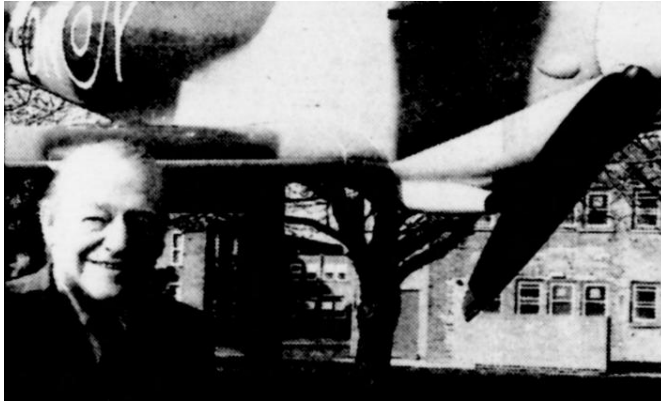
After the closure of the railway line in 1960, Archie and Florrie went to live at the Mill House in Grimoldby. He died on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1977, age 84. Florence died on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1983 age 85.



The grave of George William and Martha Ingamells in Saltfleetby All Saints churchyard

Horace Ingamells married Gladys Kirton Clark in January 1931 in Louth. They had a son, Colin Edward in 1931. The family moved to Billingham where Horace was innkeeper of the **Cross Keys Pub** on Victoria Street (which closed in 1956).

Colin was the father of four children when he died suddenly in Boston in 1974 age 43. Horace died in October 1977 age 76. Gladys died in Sleaford in 1979 age 88.



**Sleaford Standard 8<sup>th</sup> April 1993:** 72-year-old Gordon Ingamells recalled his time as a spitfire pilot during the Second World War.

Archie and Florrie's son Gordon Ingamells attended Saltfleetby School, then Monk's Dyke in Louth, before winning a place at Louth Grammar School in 1933. He volunteered with the RAF in 1940, first training as a wireless operator and air gunner, then qualifying as a pilot in 1942. During the war he flew 200 hours on Spitfires, and served around the world flying aircraft as a Warrant Officer. He married Mrs June Wilson (nee Parker) in 1963, lived in the Sleaford area, working as a clerk, and was an active member of the cricket club. He died in 2012, age 92.

## LEONARD AND ELSIE DUTTON

Leonard Hopkinson Dutton was born in Nottingham on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1889, the only child of postman William Dutton (1865–1940) and Julia (nee Hopkinson, 1865-1942) who worked at home making lace. He was christened in Nottingham St Ann's church on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1889. He married Lillian Widowsen in 1910. She died in April 1922 age 36 of Septicaemia. In 1923 he married Elsie Clara Kelham (born 1888 in Beeston). They had daughters Doris Lilian in 1923 and Elizabeth Julia in 1928.

He first worked in the lace industry as a lace machine carriage trimmer and comb hand/straightener. By 1926 he had started working as a bus driver and owner. He established the Dutton Bus Company based in Radcliffe-on-Trent. From 1929 he ran a service from Trinity Square, Nottingham on a route which served many small villages such as Plungar, Plumtree, Cropwell Bishop and Cropwell Butler. The business grew with more routes. In 1935 he decided to concentrate more on the garage headquarters in Radcliffe.

### Preserving the Prussian Queen

In 1937 he bought the Prussian Queen, with a view to bring about changes and modernisation to the run-down old building.

First, he applied for a **protection order** for the pub. Many old buildings were simply pulled-down without much heritage protection, until the Town and Country Planning Act of 1932 offered local authorities the first tools to protect historic buildings. Mr Dutton was represented by his solicitor Basil Sharpley of Louth, who put his case before the magistrates on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1937 at Louth Police Court. The application was successful.

The agreement for Mr Dutton to buy the pub was completed in April 1937. His intention to make extensive alterations and re-modernise the pub throughout was reported in local newspapers.

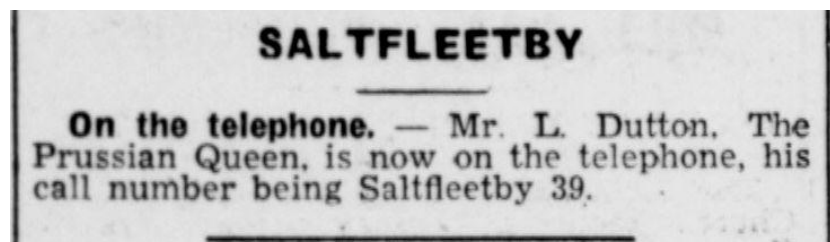
**THE PRUSSIAN QUEEN. —** This historic old inn, situate at Saltfleetby, for so many years occupied by the Ingamells family, well-known in Mablethorpe, has been purchased by Mr. L. Dutton, of Nottingham, a retired bus proprietor. Mr. Dutton is having the building modernised, after which his wife and daughter will take over. In the meantime a manager has been installed.

Louth Standard 17<sup>th</sup> April 1937

On 2nd June 1937, he applied successfully to transfer the licence of the Prussian Queen. Basil Sharpley appeared at Court for Mr Dutton to ask for approval for plans for alterations to the pub. He mentioned that the police had no objection to the alterations. The Chairman, Colonel Edward Kyme Cordeaux, asked if the plans made for better supervision. It was believed they would, and for better accommodation all round. They also wanted to know if the drinking space would be increased. The bench approved the plans.

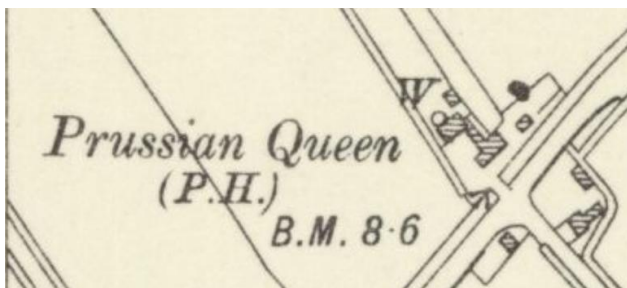
#### Installation of a Phone

Mr Dutton's modernisations involved having a telephone installed at the pub for the first time, in May 1937.



Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1937

#### Demolition of The Cottages



Details from Ordnance Survey Maps showing the Prussian Queen, published in 1907 (above) with the cottage buildings in front, and 1956 (below) after they had been demolished.



Mr Dutton also owned the two old cottages that were in front of the pub (that can be seen in the old photo). They were in a bad state of repair, so he wanted to demolish them.

Both the cottages had been condemned in November 1936, when inspected by the council housing sub-committee, who deemed them unfit and overcrowded. Statutory notices were served upon the owners, who were then Mr Ingamells and Mrs Jane Taylor. The tenants were given notice to leave. The tenant in Mrs Taylor's property, Mr Rowlett, moved out, leaving one of the cottages empty.

The other was occupied by 36-year-old Mr Charles Bertie Jacklin, a roadman employed by the Rural District Council, his wife Lily and their four children, Ralph, Roy, Thelma and Derek.



The Jacklin family remained, refusing to leave. There was a communicating door that had been plastered up with paper, leading from their cottage to the empty one next-door. Mr Jacklin removed the covering over the door and moved his furniture through it into the empty adjoining cottage, without having to take their things outside. He didn't have permission to move to the vacant cottage. He offered to pay Mr Dutton rent, but he declined to take it and served him notice to quit, telling him continually that he must get out. When he later saw Mr Jacklin, he read to him a notice of ejectment proceedings. After the Jacklins moved into the other cottage, Mr Dutton pulled down the other, now empty, that they formerly rented.

Mr Dutton believed the cottage was insanitary, unsafe, very damp with a lot of rats and filth. He said it was very dirty, small and unfit for a family of six to live in, with only two very small bedrooms. He considered the Jacklins to be trespassers. The matter was decided at Louth County Police Court on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> August, when he applied for an ejectment order against Mr Jacklin. The Rural District Council representative stated in court that the cottage would be condemned. They were proposing to build a pair of new houses for the Jacklins and another man, at a new site, but this could be a year before they were completed. The district valuer was still in negotiation for the site for the new houses.



Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser  
28<sup>th</sup> August 1937



Louth Standard 28<sup>th</sup> August 1937

The bench retired to consider the matter and quickly returned to grant an ejectment order, allowing the Jacklins 30 days to find other accommodation. The family moved to South Road, North Somercotes.

The Dutton family were back living on Bingham Road, Radcliffe-on-Trent by September 1939, where Leonard continued working as a garage proprietor. They later moved to 5 Northfield Avenue in Radcliffe. Elsie died on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1970 age 81. Leonard died on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1975 age 85.

## THE HULSE FAMILY

By 1938, Samuel Hulse and his adult children were living at the Prussian Queen. Samuel Hulse was born on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1875 in Tranmere, Birkenhead, Cheshire, the second child of six children of Samuel, a dock porter and coppersmith, and Sarah (nee Duckworth). The family lived at 19 Queen's Building, large tenement blocks known as "Dock Cottages", which were then the crowded home to 3,000 dock workers and labourers. His father was fined at least twice for not sending his children regularly to school. At the age of 10 Samuel was in court for illegally firing a gun in Ship Street, Frodsham, he was chased by a policeman who managed to capture him. He was fined 5s.

He married Caroline Elizabeth Prosser (born 1882 in Barnsdale, Yorkshire) on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1906 in Elham Kent. Here they had a daughter Josephine Carrie in 1908 and son Samuel Donald in 1910, who died in 1918. After moving to Hull, they had sons Philip Joseph Prosser in April 1912 and David William in December 1913. They lived at 1 Dock Cottages, Queens Dock Side, Sculcoates, Hull where Samuel worked as a driver and shipwright for the North Eastern Dock Co. The family moved to

Holderness Road area in 1930. Caroline died on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1936, age 54 of a stroke and high blood pressure.

Philip Hulse was fined 10s 6d in 1932 for a mirror offence whilst driving in Hull, and in 1934 for not having a horn on his car. He married Esme Beadle (born 1911 in Hull where her father was a labourer) at Hull Register Office on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1938.

The newlywed couple then went on to take over the licence of the Prussian Queen.

**HULSE—BEADLE.**—On Saturday, March 5th at Register Office, by special licence, Esme, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs David Beadle, to Philip J., elder son of Mr and the late Mrs S. Hulse. Future residence: Prussian Queen Hotel, Saltfleetby, near Louth, Lincs. P7

Hull Daily Mail, 7<sup>th</sup> March 1938

**SALTFLEETBY**  
**NEW LICENCE.**—An application to the Louth County Justices on Wednesday by Mr. P. J. Hulse for a protection order in respect of the licence of the "Prussian Queen," Saltfleetby All Saints, was granted.

Louth Standard 12<sup>th</sup> March 1938



Philip Joseph Hulse (photo from the collection of Louth Museum)

Samuel's daughter Josephine married George Ernest Tunnicliffe in Hull in July 1938. They lived in Haltemprice, Hull, where George worked as a chemist, and enlisted in the ARP gas detection service during the war.

The family had moved from the Prussian Queen to 20 Bow Road, Poplar, London by September 1939. Here brothers Philip and David worked as *wine, spirits and beer merchants*, and Samuel was retired.

Esme and Philip had a son, Martin in 1942. They moved to 71 Eaton Terrace, Westminster. David later worked as an engineer and lived in Chester Square with his father, Samuel.

**T**HE wedding took place at St. Mary's Church, Lowgate, Hull, on Saturday, of Mr George Ernest Tunnicliffe, only son of Mr and Mrs G. F. Tunnicliffe, of 28, Belgrave-drive, Anlaby-road, Hull, and Miss Josephine Carrie Hulse, only daughter of Mr Samuel L. Hulse and the late Mrs S. Hulse, of The Prussian Queen Inn, Saltfleetby.

Hull Daily Mail 18<sup>th</sup> July 1938

On Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May 1952, 40-year-old David got into a heated argument with his 42-year-old-brother at 12.30am on Chester Row. Their 80-year-old father tried to stop the fighting brothers, but all three were arrested for the disturbance. The brothers were fined 20s each at Marlborough Court. Mr Hulse Senior was discharged, the magistrate remarking "*he was trying to keep his two sons in order I suppose*".

Philip died on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1959 at Westminster Hospital, age 47. Esme then married his brother David Hulse in 1961.

Josephine remained living in Yorkshire and died in October 1952. The rest of the family remained in Westminster, where Samuel died in July 1964, age 89. David died in November 1976 age 61, and Esme in July 1991 age 81.

## **WILLIAM AND EDITH SYKES**

William Wallis Sykes was born in Sculcoates, Hull on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1898, the eldest child of Frank (1871–1924) a railway shunter from Drax, Yorkshire, and Elizabeth (nee Abbott, 1875–1956) from Wheldrake, Yorkshire. He grew up in Hull where he lived with his parents and younger sister Winifred at 5 Hawthorne Avenue, Hull. From 1903 he attended Hull Westbourne School. The family later moved to King Edward Road, Balby, Doncaster where his father was a freight guard and William worked as a railway clerk in the Mineral Department.

In January 1917, age 19, he joined the army, entering the Royal Flying Corps, and training at the School for Wireless Operators, in Aldershot in December 1917. He served with the No. 59 Squadron based at Narborough Airfield in Norfolk. This became part of the newly formed Royal Air Force (RAF) from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1918.

He later served with 12 Squadron until February 1920 when he was transferred to the RAF Reserves. Returning to Doncaster he continued to work in the clerical department, mineral section of the Great Northern section of the London and North-Eastern Railway.



**William W. Sykes in the army  
during the First World War**

On 5<sup>th</sup> August 1924 William married Edith Evelyn Wilton at St James' Church, Ravenfield, Yorkshire. The couple went on honeymoon to Cornwall.

Edith was born on 10 February 1901 in Doncaster, the oldest daughter of Frank Herbert Wilton (1871-1939), a clerk/shopkeeper from Doncaster and his wife Edith (nee Pashley, 1876-1936). She was christened at St James' church Doncaster on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1901. The family lived at 58 Jarrett Street, moving to 4 Morley Road Wheatley Doncaster, where Edith grew up with her younger sister Gladys Muriel. Her father worked as a secretary for Doncaster Mutual Co-operative and Industrial Society. Edith worked for Pearl Assurance Co. Ltd at Baxter Gate, Doncaster. They later moved to "The Moorlands" in Ravenfield near Rotherham.

William and Edith moved into The Moorlands at Ravenfield, where they had a poultry farm breeding Rhode Island red, white leghorn, buff rock and light Sussex chickens. Here they had daughters Evelyn Muriel in 1928 and Joyce in 1930.

In March 1939 the licence of the Prussian Queen Inn was transferred to William Wallis Sykes. Mr and Mrs Sykes lived with their children who attended school and Sunday school in the village. William worked as an inn keeper and poultry farmer.

**AN APPLICATION to the Louth  
County Licensing Justices on Wednes-  
day for the full transfer of the licence  
of the Prussian Queen, Saltfleetby All  
Saints, to William W. Sykes, was granted.**

Louth Standard 11<sup>th</sup> March 1939



**30 White Leghorn 1938 Pullets for Sale,  
4/- each, to make room; mostly  
through moult; some laying. — Sykes,  
Prussian Queen, Saltfleetby.**

Lincolnshire Standard and Boston Guardian 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1939

The family moved back to Yorkshire in around early 1940. Their daughters married men from Cornwall and moved down to the south west.

William died on 29th December 1963 in Yorkshire at the age of 65. Edith died in November 1988 in Kerris, Cornwall, aged 87.

## THE MARFLEET FAMILY

Bertie Marfleet was born in Sherwood, Nottingham in 1899, the youngest child of Edward Marfleet (1865-1932, from North Hykeham, Lincoln) and his second wife Agnes nee Hardwick (1861-1948 from Wragby). His father was a tram driver, then when they moved back to Lincolnshire, a carrier, at first using horse-drawn carts, in Brinbrook.

At the start of the First World War, his older brother Henry enlisted in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Coldstream Guards. He had been at the front for 15 weeks when he was killed in action, on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1915, age 18. Bert enlisted with the Royal Berkshire Battalion in 1918 and later served with the Military Mounted Police as a Lance Corporal. He was sent to serve in France, Ireland and Italy and was badly wounded and gassed on active service. He was awarded the Victory and British War medals.

From 1919 Bert was the first of the old carriers to operate a motorbus service from Binbrook, a 14-seater Model T Ford. One passenger was said to have thought it so unsafe that they jumped out at the top of Limber Hill.

Florence Alice Hewson was born in 1899 in North Thoresby, the daughter of farmer's son, Anthony (1867-1936) and Rebecca, nee Cooper (1871-1936) from Ludborough. The family moved to Binbrook where her father worked as a shepherd.

Bertie and Florence married in 1921, and had son Charles Stanley on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1921. He continued to drive his motorbus in Binbrook, by 1922 having a 20-seater bus. He also ran a taxi, but incurred some fines for not having the right licence for his different vehicles' passenger services. In about 1927 they moved to Thurlby Rectory, Auburn, where they worked for the owners, the Campbell family. Mr Colin Campbell was the founder and first president of the National Farmers Union. Bert worked as a gardener and chauffer, Florence as housekeeper, and by 1939 Stanley as a tractor driver.

In early 1940 the family moved to Saltfleetby, where Bert became the new licence holder of the Prussian Queen. Stan began work as a lorry driver.

In March and April 1940, they held a number of whist drives at the pub to raise money for school children's sports, and comforts for troops, Saltfleetby stationmaster, George Ingham acted as MC.

### An Absentee from the R.A.F.

Stan registered for military service in February 1941. In March 1941 he submitted an application as a conscientious objector, which was refused. After being medical examined, he was ordered to report on deferred service at an RAF depot in July 1941. He applied for postponement, but this was also rejected. He was legally enlisted into the Royal Air Force on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1941, but he did not report for duty. Ordered to attend the RAF on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1942, he failed to do so. They got in touch with the police at Louth to report his absence. Sergeant Tuxworth of Louth Police investigated the case and

saw Stan on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1942, warning him that he would have to report himself. 20-year-old Stan promised to obey the order. He apparently left home to report. A witness saw him on a bus the next day, believing him to be on his way to the depot, but when he didn't arrive, the RAF requested his arrest. The police visited the Prussian Queen several times to try to find him, but were unsuccessful.

His father, Bert declared that he hadn't seen him since he left. He later said that he unexpectedly found Stan in the kitchen on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1942, he asked for a meal and said he was going to report the next day. He was given food and some money. His father was serving at the bar at the time, when he returned to the kitchen, he said Stan was gone.

That night after 10pm, a police sergeant and four constables visited the inn looking for Stan, asking to search the house. Bert allowed them to, telling them that they wouldn't find his son there, he didn't know where he was. After searching all the likely places, Pc Baumber went up a pair of steps where there was a trap door, but it was shut fast. Bert told them that it had been nailed up in winter to keep out snow and draughts. The officers went out on to a flat roof where there was a door which gave access to the false roof, but it was secured and nailed. Going back to try the trap door again they exerted pressure on it. Pc Baumber forced up the trap a little and said *"he's here sergeant, I can see him standing on the trap"*. Stan had finally been found hiding in a false room in the loft of the Prussian Queen. After some persuasion he came down and was taken into custody. Bert was reported for harbouring and concealing an absentee.

## **Bert on Trial**

On 19<sup>th</sup> August 1942, Bert was charged at Louth County Police Court, for aiding his son to evade military service and helping to conceal him. Mr Marfleet replied to the charges that his son had not joined the RAF, he was waiting for a tribunal in London, for which he had all the papers and a solicitor on the case.

The chairman, Colonel Edward Kyme Cordeaux, asked *"how do you think this country would get on in a time of crisis if all young men said they had no intention of going into the forces and would not go?"*. Bert said that his own experiences in the last war, when he was badly wounded and gassed, did not encourage him to advocate that his son should join up.

Col. Cordeaux replied *"Other people had that and others got their sons killed. It is your duty to your country, no matter what it costs you. It is the same for everybody. If you want this country to keep its place in the world and be free, you would, if you thought the matter over, have acted differently"*

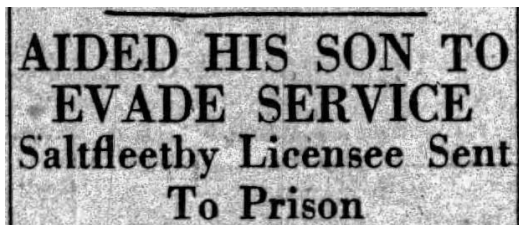
Bert said that as a result of his injuries he had to have morphia injections and expected to go into hospital for an operation. Col. Cordeaux declared that imprisonment was the only penalty for the offence, but in view of the defendant's physical condition, a report would be awaited from the medical authorities and the case would be adjourned.

Mr Marfleet was examined by police surgeon, Dr Arthur Henry Russell on 21<sup>st</sup> August.

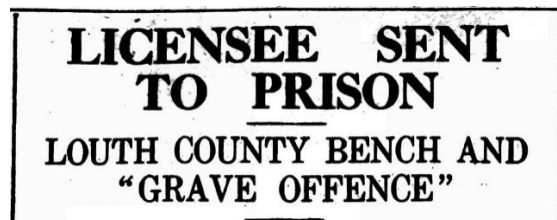
Another hearing took place on **2nd September**, after the court received the medical evidence, a letter from Dr Russell stating that Bert was suffering from a duodenal ulcer and should have an operation as soon as possible. Having ascertained that he was *"quite ill"*, Col. Cordeaux took it on himself to inform Mr Marfleet that he need not attend the Court that day. He stated *"The decision of the Court is that the case be adjourned for a further fortnight and if, in the meantime Marfleet does not have an operation, he will have to appear here. If he does not, we shall then consider the length of sentence of imprisonment that we shall award him. He has to have that operation in that time or else he will have to appear here and we shall send him to prison"*

On 15<sup>th</sup> September Bert entered a nursing home in Lincoln for an operation but the doctor who was due to perform it was incapacitated with a foot injury and would not be able to operate for a day or two. So, he left and returned home for a few days. Mrs Marfleet had contacted the police to inform them that he was in the nursing home and asked if it would be in order for her to carry on the inn in his absence. That night Superintendent Stevens then phoned the nursing home, confirming that Mr Marfleet was there. The following morning, he received a call from the home saying that Bert had left earlier that morning, leaving a note to say he would be back when the doctor is better. The police kept observation on the buses and Bert was seen waiting for a bus to Saltfleetby, when he was warned that if he wasn't in hospital he ought to appear before the court. He said that he had left hospital with the approval of the night nurse.

He was ordered to appear in court immediately, on **16<sup>th</sup> September**. After hearing the story, the magistrates consulted in private. Col. Cordeaux then declared that the offence was *an exceeding grave one* and the *only sentence they had power to impose was one of imprisonment*. He was sentenced to six months in prison and ordered to pay £7 17s cost, or serve a further month's imprisonment in default.



Grimsby Evening Telegraph 18<sup>th</sup> September 1942



Skegness Standard 23rd September 1942

The family left the Prussian Queen and returned to live in Binbrook. Bert entered an appeal against the sentence. The now former licensee had his appeal heard at Lindsey Quarter Session in Lincoln on **26<sup>th</sup> October 1942**. Mrs Elizabeth Lane appeared to put the case for Mr Marfleet. Mr Norman Winning represented the respondent, Supt. Stevens. Mrs Lane argued that, although it was the father's duty to tell the police when he saw his absentee son, many fathers in a similar position would have hesitated to hand over their only son to the police under such circumstances. Mr Marfleet gave evidence saying that he honestly believed that the trap door was nailed-up, a workman had previously been into the false roof and he thought had left it refastened-up. Evidence was also heard from Supt. Stevens, Dr Russell, and Dr Leon Gabbe who had seen Bert in 1940. The Court reduced Mr Marfleet's sentence to six weeks' imprisonment from that day.

Stan served in the RAF for the rest of the war, some of the time stationed at RAF Binbrook, a Bomber Command station in the Lincolnshire Wolds, where he served as a driver. His name is on the Saltfleetby Second World War Roll of Honour that is displayed in St Peter's Church.

## Marfleet Coaches

After the war Bert and Stan continued to run a bus and taxi service in Binbrook, as *Marfleet and Son*. Stan married Ivy Lillian Richardson, from Caistor, in 1954 in Louth. In 1960 Stan established *Marfleet Coaches*, when they purchased several coaches for private hire and contract work, including providing a school bus services for the local authority in Market Rasen, Caistor, Louth, Binbrook and Ravendale.



A Marfleet School Bus in the 1970s (photo from Marfleet Coaches: [marfleet.co.uk](http://marfleet.co.uk))



Florence died of cancer on 12th November 1959, age 60, in Binbrook. Bert died on 8th July 1961, age 62 of peritonitis, at Louth County Hospital. They were buried at Binbrook St Mary & St Gabriel's church.

The coach company continued to grow with an expanded fleet. They bought their first double decker in 1963 (an ex-Nottingham Corporation bus) and their first new bus in 1973.

Stan died suddenly whilst on holiday in Torquay, Devon, on 19<sup>th</sup> August 1981, age 59. With no immediate family to continue the business, his estate fell into the hands of the banks, who sold off the company's assets, ending the Marfleet Coach company. His wife Ivy died in April 1995, age 72.

## THE HOME GUARD

On the evening of 14th May 1940, the Secretary of State for War, Anthony Eden gave a radio broadcast calling for volunteers to join the new **Local Defence Volunteers**. Within ten minutes half a dozen people went to Louth Police Station to volunteer. People outside the age for the regular army (18-41), or in reserved occupations that provided essential services like farming or the railways, were eligible to volunteer.

In our village there were many veterans of the First World War, who formed the core of the Saltfleetby Home Guard. These included railway-crossing gate-keeper, Archie Ingamells whose father ran the Prussian Queen for years. Also:

Percy Epton, a market gardener on North End Lane, who saw action in the Middle East as a member of the Lincolnshire Yeomanry. Civil engineer Jack Vickers had lied about his age to enlist in the Lincolnshire Yeomanry in 1915, age 16. Both men were aboard the troop carrier Mercian when it was attacked by German U-boats in November 1915.

Other old soldiers included Ernest E. Luck, market gardener at Mill House who had served with the London Scottish Regiment; former acting corporal in the Machine Gun Corp, James Stubbs a small holder on Rimac Road; coal, corn and offal merchant Charles Meanwell, who became a Home-Guard Lieutenant; his brother, farmer Alfred Meanwell; Walter Jacklin, a builder from Saltfleet; smallholder, Charles Merrit Adlard who served with the 1st Battalion Worcestershire Regiment in India and Burma; his brother-in-law, farmer Wilfred Kettlewell had served in the West Yorkshire Regiment; and many others.

### Major Jim Odlin

In charge of the local platoon was farmer, Jim Odlin of Poplar Farm, Saltfleetby. James Edward Odlin was born in Grimsby in 1897, his family moved to Saltfleetby when he was about 5 years old. He joined the 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Lincolnshire Regiment at the beginning of 1915. He went to serve in the trenches in France the following year, where he became a sergeant. He was invalided back home in October 1918. He had been in hospital at Stratford-Upon-Avon for a week or two when the Armistice was signed. He then had a period of convalescence in Skegness.

In Birmingham in November 1918, he was awarded the **Distinguished Conduct Medal** *"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty for a period of nineteen months, and especially during six months' operations. This non-commissioned officer is always trustworthy and an example to his men. When the battalion was holding a sector which was repeatedly bombarded, he was always cool and courageous."*



Major Jim Odlin,  
Grimsby Daily  
Telegraph 14<sup>th</sup> March  
1973

He was selected to represent his battalion at the Victory March in London in 1919, being granted three days leave by King George V to do so, before returning to camp. He spent the next four years with the regiments' 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion and was a member of the advance party that was sent to India in 1919. When he returned to civilian life in 1923 he held the position of Company Sergeant-Major, instructor of musketry.

He married Mary Louise Rainthorpe in 1923, their children grew up in the village and worked on the family farm. Jim Odlin was active in village societies such as being vice-president of the Social Club and a player for Saltfleetby United FC. A keen billiards player, Saltfleetby were frequent league winners in the late 20s and early 30s. In 1935 Mr Odlin won the Horsewood Billiards Cup in Louth. He was president of the Mablethorpe branch of the Royal British Legion, and Saltfleetby representative on the Rural District Council in the 1930s. His wife Mary Odlin died in 1937, age 43.

Jim became Captain of the Saltfleetby Home Guards Platoon, and was later made a Major, Second in Command of the Louth Battalion of the Home Guards.

Jim's younger brother Jack Odlin (born in Saltfleetby in 1913) joined the forces in March 1941. He was in England and Scotland early in the war, taking part in the D-Day landings in 1944. He served in the British Army of the Rhine and the Royal Army Service Corps. He died in a driving accident in Germany on 10th November 1945, age 32. He was buried in Kiel War Cemetery, Germany, and his name appears on the Saltfleetby War Memorial outside St Peter's Church.

Jim Odlin remarried in 1955, to Eileen Abbot from Bolton, who died in 1970. Major James Edward Odlin DMC, died in Louth Hospital on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1981, age 83.

## **Saltfleetby During the Second World War**

As a coastal area, our village had to again prepare for enemy attack, and needed to be guarded against invasion. From 30<sup>th</sup> June 1940 the public were banned from going onto the foreshore.

From August 1940, defending brigades were sent into the village. The 2nd Battalion of The Hampshire Regiment set up Forward Section Posts including constructing pillboxes to defend the beach and some further inland. These small concrete structures were fortified lookout stations of the Lincolnshire three-bay type, consisting of two roofed parts joined by an open central bay with fittings to mount a light anti-aircraft gun, and fittings inside the windows to hold a machine gun. Four inland pillboxes still remain in the village, seven along the nearby coast (including one dating from the first world war at Sea View) others have been removed. Other defences such as anti-tank cubes on the coast and a concrete cylinder on Church Lane can also still be seen. Anti-tank mines were laid in some areas, bridges leading from the coast were mined and roadblocks established. The home guard manned lookout stations and roadblocks throughout the village.

As the Prussian Queen was closed after October 1942, it became the headquarters of the Saltfleetby Home Guards. There was a roadblock directly opposite the pub on the Main Road, and a Home-Guard store in the field to the west.



**A Lincolnshire three-bay pillbox on the nature reserve, north of Sea View, used by the Home Guard**



**The former Home Guard store in the field at the west side of the Prussian Queen**

### Saltfleetby Home Guard in around 1945, outside their headquarters, The Prussian Queen



**Back Row, Left to Right:** John Taylor, H. Plaskitt, Walt Appleby, Fred Willey, Herbert Lusby, Ernie Hutton, Les Vines, Herbert Stapleton, Fred Kettlewell, Alf Meanwell

**3rd. Row:** Frank Pennell, John Hoyes, Herbert Richardson, Roger Chapman, Tom Tuxworth, Tom Riggall, H. Horton, Jack Drury

**2nd. Row:** John Stubbs, Harold Stubbs, Station Master C. Wood, Alan Monk, Jim Stubbs, Bert Pinder, W. Stone, John Tuxworth, Jack Stubbs

**Front Row:** Archie Ingamells, Frank Maddison, Major Jim Odlin, Major Butt, Walt Jacklin, Bill Harrison, Charlie Meanwell, Chris Stubbs, Tom Barber, Merrit Adlard.

There was a searchlight camp at Sea View, with a recreation hut that was later bought by the village to be used as a village hall and moved to the Main Road. Evacuated children moved into the Saltfleetby where they attended the village primary school. Several land girls were sent to the area by the Women's Land Army to help on farms. Some stayed on after the war and married local men. Incentives were given to encourage increased farm production such as the Ministry of Agriculture's Victory Churn Contest, for which Mrs Lowis of Kerlow Bank Farm, won a certificate of merit for increasing her milk production by 10% in 1943.

### Home Guard Training

At first the volunteers wore their civilian clothes with armbands, the men armed with twelve bore shotguns, Captain Odlin had a .22 rifle. Later they were issued with uniforms and .303 rifles. Training sessions were held every Sunday morning and at least one evening during the week. Members of the regular army trained them in the use of rifles on the ranges at Elkington. On Saltfleetby beach they learnt to throw hand grenades and use the new "Projector, Infantry, Anti-Tank" (PIAT) rifles. They were sent on weekend camps to take part in manoeuvres against the army, in order to become an effective fighting unit.



## Fund-Raising Events for the War Effort at the Prussian Queen

The Lindsey 9<sup>th</sup> (Louth) Battalion Home Guard commanding officer was Lieutenant-Colonel Oscar Dixon of Kenwick Hall, Louth, whose family had a large paper mill in Grimsby. He granted permission for the Prussian Queen to be lent for occasional social events to help the war effort. Miss Jacques organised a whist drive (in which players compete in rounds of the card game, whist) in February 1943 that raised £5 15s 6d for the Marsh District Nursing Association. In November 1943 the Women's Voluntary Service held two whist drives at the pub that raised £10 7s for the British Sailor's Society.

The Home Guard organised a whist drive in November 1943 in the Prussian Queen. Captain Odlin was master of ceremonies (MC). Several gifts of hares, chickens and produce were sold, raising £9 18s, giving a total of £20 0s 1d for Red Cross Funds.

In December 1943 Capt. Odlin and Mr G. T. Jaques organised a whist drive in which £10 15s was raised for the Red Cross Agriculture Fund. Among the prizes won that night were soap, envelopes, a hare, whisky, two partridges, a chicken and rabbits. Another organised by the secretary for Louth and District Hospital on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1943, where Percy Epton was MC, raised £9 10s 6d.

**J. E. Odlin and Mr. G. T. Jaques** in aid of the Red Cross Agriculture Fund, a whist drive was held in the Prussian Queen, lent by Lt.-Col. O. Dixon. Winners were: Ladies:—Mrs. Kidd (hare). Mrs. Wilkinson (envelopes). Miss Tuxworth (whisky). Gents.—Mr. T. A. Lusby (partridge). Mr. Godhold (soap). Mr. W. Appleby (whisky). Knock-out, Mr. H. Meanwell (rabbits). Mr. J. Jacklin (partridge); darts, Mr. H. Holmes (hare). Mr. E. Grundy (Muckton). Competition, Mr. D. Hoyes (chicken). Mr. P. Epton (rabbits). Proceeds totalled £10 15s.

Louth Standard 25<sup>th</sup> December 1943

**A WHIST DRIVE** in aid of Red Cross funds, was held in the "Prussian Queen" (by permission of Lieut.-Col. Oscar Dixon), on Friday. Capt. J. E. Odlin was M.C., the winners being: Ladies—1 Miss A. Rainthorpe; 2, Miss E. Chapman; 3, Miss R. Hoyes. Gents.—1, Flt.-Sergt. G. Ingamells; 2, Mr. G. Appleby; 3, Mr. H. Meanwell. Partner drive: Mrs. J. K. Bartholomew and Mrs. A. Jacklin. Competition winners were:—Darts, Mrs. C. Meanwell and Mr. A. Monk; dog (made by Miss Barbara Taylor), Miss K. Hoyes (realised £1 18s. 6d.); hare, Mr. H. Holmes; chicken Mr. A. T. Brown. Several gifts of hares, chickens and produce were sold and realised £9 18s. 6d. £20 0s. 1d. was cleared for the Fund. The organisers were Mr. G. T. Jaques and Mr. J. E. Odlin.

Louth Standard 20<sup>th</sup> November 1943

Another whist drive organised by Capt. Odlin and Mr Jaques in December 1944 raised £16 for Red Cross Funds.

## A Theft from the Home Guard Headquarters

On 14<sup>th</sup> December 1944 local policeman Pc Wastell visited the Home Guard headquarters at the Prussian Queen, and found the back door had been forced, breaking the lock, and a number of articles taken. After checking with Home Guard Quartermaster, Thomas Lusby, he commenced enquires. A missing clock was later recovered from Mablethorpe. A Scottish soldier, Peter Duffy from Glasgow was apprehended for the theft and taken to Lincoln Prison charged with breaking and entering. He was held there until appearing before magistrates at Louth County Court where he pleaded guilty to taking the clock, but denied taking a hammer and some field dressings, claiming that he found the door open. It was decided that somebody else might have interfered with the lock at the Home Guard stores, so the charge was reduced to larceny. There were already a number of convictions against him in Glasgow Juvenile courts and for army offences. He was fined £3.

## FRANK YEXLEY

Frank Maurice James Yexley was born in Fulham on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1911, the son of a labourer Charles William (1872–1944) from Whitechapel, and Jessie Mary Adelaide (nee Newton, born 1896). The ninth of eleven children, he grew up in Fulham. The large family lived in a 4-room house at 45 Ryston Road, before moving to a 5-room house at 119 Market Road, SW6. His love for boxing started early. He first fought professionally at the age of 13, for which he received the sum of 3s 6d. He was a schoolboy champion in 1926, and continued to compete as a featherweight. He married Grace Elizabeth Marion Shrimpton from Fulham in December 1932. They went to live at Colehill Lane.

In April 1933, age-22, whilst working as a lorry driver, Frank was involved in a violent incident in a café in Lillie Road. The 23-year-old male café proprietor attacked him with a bread knife, that he was using to make sandwiches behind the counter. Frank's hand was slightly cut, he was later found collapsed in the street and was taken to hospital, though he said the collapse had nothing to do with the cut and attributed it to being "mad with neuralgia". The café owner told police that Frank had assaulted him, and had previously threatened him with a knife, but the cut was an accident. He was charged with causing grievous bodily harm, at West London Police Court. Frank appeared as prosecutor, with a bandaged hand, and said he didn't want to proceed with the charge, as it was an accident. The magistrate didn't object to the charge being withdrawn.

Frank began officiating at Sunday shows at boxing clubs all over London from 1934, becoming a well-known boxing MC. In January 1935 Frank and Grace had had daughter Betty Grace, born in Fulham, then in June 1938 daughter Patricia June in Twickenham. They lived at Westcott Crescent in Hanwell, London. He was the secretary of the boxing section of his local sports club, The "Heslow" Club, an amalgamation of the Heston and Hounslow Gas Light and Coke Company sports club. He helped organise a concert for the club's supper evening in December 1938.

### Military Service and a new Family

He enlisted into the army at Ealing in May 1939, initially as a Bandsman in the Royal Engineers. He then entered the Army Physical Training Corps where he rose to the rank of Sergeant Instructor. He was described as 5 foot 4 inches tall, weighing 147 pounds, with a dark complexion, black eyes and brown hair. Whilst at the Army School of Physical Training in Aldershot he served alongside sportsmen such as Matt Busby and Joe Mercer. He first came to Nottingham in 1940 where he ran boxing courses at Norton Street Boys' Club for the Army School of Physical Training. He separated from his first wife, Grace, who remained in Hanwell, and met his second wife, Mary, in Nottingham.

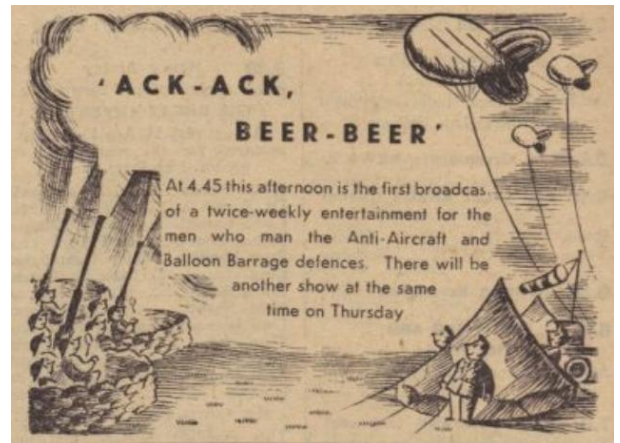
Mary Elizabeth Wright was born on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1903 in Nottingham, the second child of William Wright (1882-1964), a coal miner at Clifton Colliery, and Martha Emily (nee Pitt, 1882-1961), both from Nottingham. She grew up with older sister Rose, younger brothers Joseph and William and younger sisters Jenny and Edna. The family lived at 12 Bradmore terrace, Meadows, Nottingham, then at 166 Queen's Walk. In 1921 she was living with her family in Queens Walk, age 17, working as a "Cornely Machinist", operating a specialist embroidery sewing machine, producing chain-stitch designs. In 1924 she married William Ramsbottom from Bridlington, who had moved to Nottingham with his parents, and was then working as a butcher. They had a son, Dennis, in 1927. Mary and William appeared to be separated by 1939 when he was living in Waterway Street, working as a fitter, and Mary was working as a shop assistant and fish monger, living in Annarth Terrace. After her second marriage the new Mrs Yexley moved to 44 Radford Road. Frank became a beloved step-father to Dennis, who later emigrated to Australia where he raised a family with his wife Gladys.

Company Sergt. Instructor Frank Yexley was MC at numerous boxing matches during his time in the military. He toured the country with Captain Jack Peterson, former British and Empire heavyweight champion, to raise money for the Army Welfare and RAF Benevolent funds.

Frank would make appeals from the ring for extra audience donations, including in 1942 in Port Talbot Drill Hall collecting a further £30 1s 3d for The Glamorgan County Welfare Fund.

He said that one time he stepped into the ring to introduce Winston Churchill.

Frank gave talks on sport to the Army and RAF and was featured with Jack Peterson on the BBC Services' radio programme "Ack-Ack, Beer-Beer", a twice weekly variety series for men in Anti-Aircraft and Balloon Barrage units.

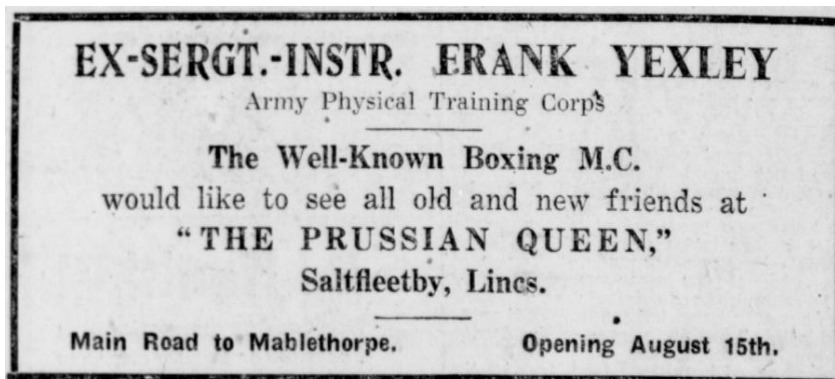


Radio Times, 28<sup>th</sup> June 1940

He proceeded on terminal leave from the army in October 1945. He was awarded the Efficiency Medal in 1946 in recognition of his 12 years of efficient service. He remained a reserve in the army until 1956 (when over the age limit of 45).

## The Prussian Queen

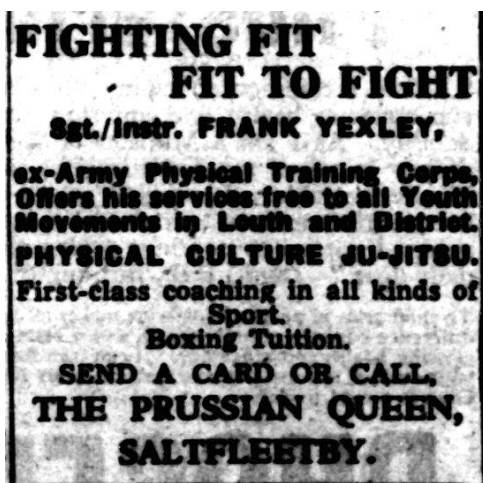
Frank and Mary took over the Prussian Queen in August 1945, placing adverts in the local papers announcing its re-opening on 15<sup>th</sup> August. Later adverts called it "The Brightest Spot in Lincolnshire"



Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser 11<sup>th</sup> August 1945



Frank Yexley in The Louth Standard 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1949



Louth Standard 20<sup>th</sup> October 1945



Louth & North Lincolnshire Advertiser 20<sup>th</sup> October 1945

Frank offered his services as a physical instructor free to all youth movements in Louth and district. He offered to work as a coach in all kinds of sports including physical culture and ju-jitsu, under the headline: "Fighting Fit, Fit to Fight". He was also a referee with the British Boxing Board of Control.



On 31<sup>st</sup> October 1945, the Mayor and Mayoress of Louth (Councillor and Mrs John Robert Sanderson) were invited to the Prussian Queen for the first of a series of charity darts and dominoes matches. Donated goods were sold during the evening. The event raised £17 for the British Sailors Society (for which Coun. Sanderson was the local chairman). Jim Odlin was captain of the home darts team, who beat the visiting "Skylarks" team from the Woolpack at Louth. But the home dominoes team, captained by T. Jaques, lost to the Skylarks team, which included several former footballers from Louth Town FC.

**To All Organisers of Dances.**

**IF YOU WANT THE BEST FULLY LICENSED BAR ENQUIRE**

**"THE PRUSSIAN QUEEN"**

Mine Host, Frank M. J. Yexley, B.B.B.C.

**MUSIC, SNACKS, VARIETY, CIVILITY.**

'Phone: SALT FLEETBY 39.

Louth Standard 19<sup>th</sup> October 1946

The Prussian Queen had two darts teams (A and B) that played in the Louth and District Open Division. The pub's licence was officially transferred to Frank on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1945 at Louth County Police Court. In March 1946 his application for a music and singing licence was granted.

Mr and Mrs Yexley organised darts matches and other social functions at the end of 1945, managing to raise £35 for a Christmas party for the children in Branston Sanatorium. When handing over the cheque Frank promised to raise funds to give the children in the institution a day at the seaside. Further fundraising events in 1946 achieved this, when in January the Prussian Queen hosted an evening of darts and dominoes matches against the Louth Fur and Feather Club. Frank was MC, as "The Queens" won the dominoes, but the darts was declared a draw. In February visitors to the Prussian Queen "enjoyed a capital musical evening". Gifts of "many useful articles" were sold raising the sum of £32 11s 6d for the children's seaside trip. Originally a country house, Branston Hall was used as an RAF hospital during the second world war, then a sanatorium, becoming derelict in the 1970s, now restored and converted to a hotel.

When teams of darts and dominoes players from the Wheat Sheaf, Louth, were entertained at the pub in January 1946, £12 was raised for the St Margaret's Children's Home (that used to be on Victoria Road in Louth). St Margaret's was opened by the Waifs and Strays Society in 1912, accommodating up to 30 girls, becoming a mixed home after the war, until its closure in 1969. The building is now the Beaumont Hotel.

In May 1946 a charity darts match was held between two local families: the Dales of Louth vs the Applebys of Saltfleetby. Nine members of the Dale family came to the Prussian Queen to form their team. But with only six members of the Appleby family taking part, numbers for the home-team were made up by Jim Odlin, Albert Wilkinson (who was married to Mary Appleby) and L. Brown. The Dales won 8-1. The Trelawney Band, from Mablethorpe's Café Regent and Trelawney Ballroom (which used to be where Spanish City is now) played music for the evening. Donated gifts were sold, Mrs Yexley gave a bottle of sherry, Frank gave a function tray. The event raised £50 5s, which the Louth Standard thought "must be a record for any village inn in this district." Of the proceeds £25 2s 6d was sent to the Mayor of Louth's St. Dunstan's Fund (for blind veterans) and £25 2s 6d to the Lindsey Blind Society.

THE PRUSSIAN QUEEN

MINE HOST:

**FRANK M. J. YEXLEY, B.B.B.C.**

**SALT FLEETBY**

Near Louth, Lincs. :: Tel.: Saltfleetby 39.

★

**MUSIC :: VARIETY :: SNACKS CIVILITY.**

Grimsby Daily Telegraph 15<sup>th</sup> May 1947

The Louth Ramblers made their way through ploughed fields and ditches to reach the Prussian Queen in March 1948, where Frank provided tea.

In 1949 Frank and members of the darts team gave the children of Saltfleetby a Christmas party, held at the Trelawney Ballroom. It was attended by over 50 children and a number of mothers.

**Open Every Night**

"The Prussian Queen." Book your parties by 'phone (Saltfleetby 39). Mine host, Frank Yexley. 7239a

Grimsby Daily Telegraph 24<sup>th</sup> July 1947

**A Happy New Year and the Compliments of the Season to all Old and New Customers**

from

**Frank M. J. Yexley**

**"THE PRUSSIAN QUEEN"**

**SALT FLEETBY**

★

Whisky, Gin, Rum, Cherry Brandy, Advocaat, Sherry, Port, and all other Drinks can be obtained.

LICENSED BARS PROVIDED AT ALL DANCES AND DINNERS.

★

Telephone: Saltfleetby 32.

Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser 28<sup>th</sup> December 1946

## Boxing and Wrestling at Louth

In August 1946 Frank announced that he would be holding boxing contests in Louth Town Hall every month, which would include the appearance of well-known fighters. On 15<sup>th</sup> August he was MC for the first part of a popular boxing programme, which featured British Heavyweight Champion, Bruce Woodcock. During the interval Frank asked for donations for the Mayor's Hospital Fund, in support of Louth County Hospital. Cash was collected, including a £5 note from the personnel from RAF Binbrook. He then auctioned some items including a cake which realised £3, a half-bottle of whiskey which made 30s, and a bottle of cherry brandy £2 10s. A total of £53 18s 4d was raised over the evening.

Frank brought many boxing "All-star programmes" to Louth, frequently raising money for various local charities, such as Louth Youth Club. Buses ran from Grimsby, Mablethorpe and other parts of Lincolnshire to bring in the crowds. He was also involved in boxing tournaments held at Mablethorpe, in the field behind Café Regent, acting as MC and selling tickets from the Prussian Queen.

From 1947, he was promoter of a number of Free-Style Wrestling contests at Louth Town Hall. Advertised as a "Terrific All Action Programme", featuring star names such as the British Heavyweight Champion Bert Assirati. The programme sometimes commenced with "boy boxing contests", featuring local lads from Skegness and Grimsby.

## Other Events at Louth Town Hall

In April 1946 Mr Yexley organised a dance at Louth Town Hall for the 83<sup>rd</sup> Field Bakery Company, stationed at the barracks in Kenwich Road, Louth as a farewell party to the commanding officer Captain Ladbrooke, and a number of the men who would be released from service at the same time. Frank described them as "one of the best-behaved Army units", having been established for several years and "not a single member of the unit had ever been before the Louth Courts".

Frank made the arrangements for running a licenced bar at the Town Hall for some musical entertainment events presented by Don Luck Productions. John William George Luck lived at Saltfleetby House, and set up an entertainments company under the name "Don Luck" in 1944. He put on a variety of musical acts, dances and entertainments at seaside and other venues across the region. In October 1946 Frank ran the bar when Mr Luck arranged an "Old Time Dancing" event led by "Harry Davidson with his famous dance orchestra of 15 performers". Tickets cost 12s 6d.

Frank joined the social activities sub-committee of the Louth Divisional Young Conservative Committee in June 1946. He organised the Louth Young Conservatives' Ball, held between 9pm and midnight on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1946.

When applying for a "Miss Personality" dance on 19<sup>th</sup> December 1946, Inspector Ford of Louth Police commented that they were not impressed by the title! During his explanation of the event Mr Yexley said that it was an endeavour to try and make the dark winter nights a bit happier. The licence was granted.

In January 1947 Frank organised the Louth Nats Football Club annual ball held between 8pm-1 o'clock. Louth Nats merged with Louth Town later in 1947 to form Louth United FC.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1948 Frank organised the first Annual Licenced Victuallers' Ball at the Town Hall, between 9pm and 2am. The music was provided by renowned Nottingham bandleader and composer *Billy Merrin and His Commanders* featuring singer Penny Nicholls.

## Footballer Tommy Lawton visits the Prussian Queen



The famous Notts County and England centre forward, Tommy Lawton (1919-1996) visited his old army friend Frank at the Prussian Queen for a few days in February 1948. Lawton, from Bolton, was playing for Everton and England when he was called up into the army in 1940 and was recruited to the Army Physical Training Corps, where he served with Frank.

In November 1947 he was sold from Chelsea to Notts County for a British record transfer fee of £20,000 (the equivalent of over a million today), making him, at the time, Britain's most expensive player. Whilst in our area he chatted to Mablethorpe United players, where Frank was an official. Lawton had scored 22 goals in his 23 England appearances, made a cameo appearance as himself in the film "The Great Game" in 1953, and became a manager and author of 5 books based on his years of professional football experience.

Later in February 1948 Frank became the chairman of *The Marshes United Sports Club*, a new club that used Saltfleet Institute for meetings, and the New Inn field for matches. Louth British Legion band held an evening concert in the grounds of the Prussian Queen on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September 1948.

## Mablethorpe Events

In August 1947 Frank raised money to give 50 children from St Anthony's Orphanage, Grimsby (that used to be on Victor Street until its closure in 1957) a day out to Mablethorpe, ending in a party at the Trelawney Ballroom. The piano and accordion were played by Ron Appleby for the children to sing along to. Frank gave each one a toy, stick of rock, four 3d pieces and a bag of fruit to take back.

Licensed events in 1948 included a Territorials Dance at the Drill Hall on Victoria Road. In August he ran the bar at an Officers' Dance invitation ball held by the commandant and officers of the Army Cadet Force (Warwickshire Brigade ACF, who had a camp at Mablethorpe) in the Trelawney Ballroom, attended by over 150 guests. The following day (Saturday evening) Frank announced on a loudspeaker from the roof of the Café Regent the programme of events, before the ACF Band gave a marching demonstration in tattoo style in the vicinity of the pullover, which was watched by hundreds of visitors. In 1949 he organised a dinner for Alford police on 12<sup>th</sup> January, and then on 20<sup>th</sup> January the Boarding House and Hotel Keepers' Association dinner and ball, both at the Trelawney.

## Reviving the Mablethorpe Carnival

The old Mablethorpe Carnivals had been popular before the war. In July 1948 the Mablethorpe and Sutton Council gave approval that a carnival should be held again from 20<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> September, serving to lengthen the season and give the area good publicity. Frank Yexley was appointed as organiser without salary. They believed that Frank had considerable experience, was an excellent organiser, raiser of money and "could get things done". He earned the nickname "Ideas Frank" for his efforts in creating a varied and successful event.

Six thousand programmes were printed. British Rail arranged daily excursions at single fare rates from Nottingham, Grimsby, Boston, Lincoln, Louth and other places. The week was packed with activities that drew large crowds. Frank made announcements through loud speakers, and was aided in comparing by the "Carnival King", Capt. Carl Berrington, a lion-tamer from Skegness Zoo.

The opening ceremony was at the Dunes Theatre (which was then an Open-Air stage), followed by the first of several talent competitions. Daily heats of the "Ideal Holiday Girl" contest, were held there attracting about 17 entrants per day. The winner was selected based on the volume of



audience applause. The final on Friday was won by 19-year-old Elaine Walne of Leicester who was staying for two weeks at Trusthorpe Holiday Camp with her parents and younger sister. The opening carnival ball took place at the Imperial Hotel, Sutton-on-Sea in the evening, while a whist drive at the Trelawney was so popular it had 55 tables in play.

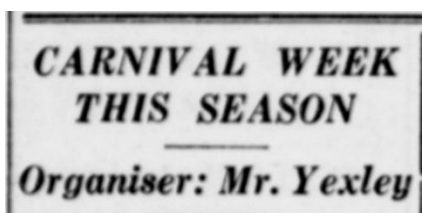


Louth and North  
Lincolnshire  
Advertiser 25<sup>th</sup>  
September 1948

Elaine Walne who  
won the *Ideal  
Holiday Girl*  
contest at the  
Dunes Open Air  
Theatre

Daily activities included the hunt for “Mr Carnival”. He could be any man in a given whereabouts throughout the day. When stopped with the words “*are you Mr Carnival? I claim today’s prize*”, he gave the prize money of £1 1s to the winning child. His identity remained a mystery until late Monday afternoon. He was not discovered at all on Tuesday, so the prize money rolled over for Wednesday, when it was announced that he would be disguised hiding in the crowd watching the “Donkey Derby” and evening sports on the beach.

There were competitions for the best decorated boarding house, and best dressed shop window. An art exhibition was held at the Imperial Hotel all week. The baby show at the Trelawney was so popular it had to be closed to further entrants after 149 babies were entered into the competition. Prizes were awarded for best baby in show (won by Baby Shelton of Leicester), best twins, and for various age categories up to 5 years old. Another baby show at the Bacchus Hotel had 36 entrants.



Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser  
10<sup>th</sup> July 1948



Louth Standard 25<sup>th</sup> September 1948



Other attractions were an Olde Tyme Dance at the Trelawney; children’s and adults’ fancy dress; a dog show with awards for such categories as ugliest dog, most soulful eyes, most dignified and daintiest dog; an evening sing-song at Johnny’s Bar (where Heron Foods is now); a mannequin parade in the Trelawney; a men’s knee competition at the Dunes; a carnival ball at The Grange and Links Hotel in Sandilands, and much more. Frank compered a packed Friday afternoon concert at the

Dunes which consisted of music, dancing, acrobatics, magic and marionettes. There were fireworks on the foreshore donated by Mr Butlin, who was giving daily spot prizes during the carnival at the Butlin's amusement park in Mablethorpe, some half-price tickets and an hour of free rides.

The highlight of the week was the big parade on the Saturday afternoon, which proceeded from the station along the High Street. Many local organisations and businesses took part such as the Grimsby Sea Cadets drum and bugle band, The WI, The Boy Scouts, The Mary Elvin School of Dancing, Louth British Legion and Brigg Town Bands. The gas company had an "Olympic Flame" powered by Calor gas. The town councillors and the Ideal Holiday Girl winners rode in decorated landau carriages. Frank commentated with a microphone from a platform on a lorry behind them, followed by children in fancy dress, horse drawn decorated vehicles, decorated cycles, motor vehicles and tableaux. Prizes for the best were awarded. The festivities concluded with a "Crazy Night" in the Trelawney ballroom where Frank received a "tremendous ovation". On Sunday the Dunes Theatre hosted Rev T. W. Harrison conducting community hymn singing, led by Louth British Legion Band. Frank read the lesson.



Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser  
2<sup>nd</sup> October 1948

The carnival made a profit of £209, of which Frank was awarded an honorarium of £30. It was decided that in future years Mablethorpe and Sutton would hold separate carnivals.

### **The Derbyshire Miners' Holiday Centre**

Frank was unable to take part in the following years' carnival as he accepted a post as entertainments organiser to the Derbyshire Miners' Welfare Holiday Centre near Skegness. Originally opened at Winthorpe in 1939, it was used as an army camp during the war and reopened in 1947. It was run by Derbyshire Miners' Association with the co-operation of the national Coal Board, the only one of its kind in the country, give miners and their families an affordable seaside holiday.

In 1949 the seven-acre site was being developed to include a concert hall and bar. 100 staff were employed at the site. "Uncle Frank" was described as a "real live wire" who arranged all the

amusements including Donkey Derbies, talent competitions, variety shows, baby shows and holiday girl contests. He also took physical training classes on the beach in the mornings, and arranged boxing tournaments and dances.

By the early 50s Frank and Mary had returned to live in Nottingham.

### **William and Martha Wright**

Mary's father William worked at Clifton Colliery for 37 years, where he became a deputy. He left the pit during the depression of 1937 and moved his family to Mablethorpe. William and Martha ran a boarding house and lived in Alexandra Park. He worked on the development of the resort until he retired. When their daughter and son-in-law took over at the Prussian Queen, they moved into the pub as well, where they lived for 5 years. In 1950 when the Yexleys left Saltfleetby, William and Martha moved to Theddlethorpe, living at 2 Station Villas. They celebrated their Diamond Wedding anniversary in 1960.

They were married at Wilford Parish Church Nottingham on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1900.

Martha died in February 1961 age 79 at Springfield Hospital, Scartho, Grimsby. William died in December 1964 aged 83.

Their two sons and four daughters lived in Nottingham, and they had eight grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.



**William Wright**

Photos from Ancestry.com



**Mrs Martha Wright (nee Pitt) in  
about 1929**

### **Nottingham's Famous Boxing MC**



Back in Nottingham, Frank continued to be a regular official at boxing matches at different venues throughout the Midlands. Recognisable in his immaculate dinner jacket, known for his humour and showmanship, he worked with promoters such as Reg King, and introduced many famous competitors like Henry Cooper and Cassius Clay. He frequently stepped in to keep order and deal with unruly behaviour.

Many matches were broadcast on television when he became a well-known local celebrity, "The Voice of Boxing", commencing proceedings by distinctively booming into the microphone "My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen".

He promoted international free-style wrestling at Skegness Festival Centre every Monday from July to September 1958, though it didn't always draw in big crowds, and he said it lost him money overall.



He also had a number of jobs including a steward at the miner's welfare institute at Newstead Colliery, and a stallholder at Bulwell Market. He was manager of the New Boulevard Supermarket on Radford Road in Hyson Green, which went Bankrupt in 1961 after just 12 months. He then worked as a sales rep.

He remained active in charity fund-raising, and local politics. As organiser of the Trentside Action Committee he campaigned for the repair of potholes near Beeston Marina.

In 1968 Frank joined the pools office staff at Notts County FC. In 1970 he took over organising their fund-raising activities including regular lottery, pools and bingo games. He also becoming the public relations officer of the Supporters Association. At their gala day on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1971, he conducted community singing with the Commodore Show Band.

He relinquished his British Board of Control licence because of ill health, making his farewell appearance as MC for the Great International Sporting Club at the Albany Hotel on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1971.

### Football Fraud and Swindles Exposed

In November 1971 *The People* newspaper investigated allegations that the pools and other games at Notts County were rigged. Notts County themselves had known that it was true for a few weeks and the fraud was being investigated by the police. Frank tendered his resignation immediately when it came to light.

His predecessor in the job, Eric Brazier had masterminded the crooked competition and instructed Frank in how to run the fraudulent games. Frank would have to memorise the "winning ticket numbers" before going to public prize draws in local clubs and pubs. There, irrespective of the number drawn, he would call out the numbers memorised – the tickets for which were in his pocket. Nobody else at these draws ever saw the actual numbers. Supporters then bought sealed tickets for 1s, hoping they contained the pre-drawn winning numbers entitling them to prizes worth up to £100. Fictitious winners would be made-up for the big prizes, while the actual tickets, that Frank hid in his pocket, were destroyed or given to friends of Mr Brazier. Bingo and other games were rigged in similar ways, numbers removed so no one could get a full house. When taking over as the main fund-raising organiser from Brazier, Frank at first continued rigging the games in the same way. Unlike Brazier though, he put all funds back into the club and kept none for himself.

Frank made a full confession to the newspapers and said he was ashamed of his part in it. Though the swindle had been going on for 10 years, Frank was the only person to appear in court for it in April 1973, Brazier had died a few months before the trial. Frank pleaded guilty to conspiring to cheat and defraud, falsifying a ledger and six other charges. The prosecuting council said "There is no suggestion that he feathered his own nest. The money went into the club funds". He was given a 12-month conditional discharge.

Frank continued to live with Mary at Trentside, Beeston Rylands. He died suddenly on 24<sup>th</sup> September 1974, age 63. His funeral took place at Wilford Hill Crematorium, Nottingham. Mary died in Nottingham in 1995, age 91.



Toys and children. Stallholder Frank Yaxley interests five-year-old Vincent Walton in a cuddly French poodle.

**Nottingham Evening News 9<sup>th</sup> October 1957: Frank working at Bulwell Market**

## FRANK AND VERA SEARBY

Frank Searby was born in Grimsby on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1904. The second youngest of 6 children of William (1872-1914) and Hannah Searby (nee Brogden, 1876-1953). The family lived at 96 Hamelton Street, where his father worked as a dock labourer and fish curer. He was christened at St Andrew's Church, Grimsby on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1904. He attended St John's School that used to be on the corner of Cleethorpes Road and Rutland Street. After his father died in 1914, his mother married fisherman, Percy Leggett and the family went to live at 43 Montague Street, Cleethorpes. Frank worked as a tram driver for the Grimsby Corporation Tramways.

Vera Daniels was born in Sheffield on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1905, the second daughter of Lawrence (1878-1961) a clerk, and Elizabeth Ann (nee Carrick, 1880-1938). She was christened at Sheffield St Michael and All Angels, Neepsend on 5th July 1905. As a young child she moved to Cleethorpes with her parents and older sister Dorothy, where the family lived at 15, then 27 Douglas Road. Here her father worked as a railway shunter and then a railway traffic inspector. In 1921 16-year-old Vera was working as an apprentice tailoress in Grimsby, her 17-year-old sister Dorothy was a milliner in Cleethorpes.

In April 1937 Frank and Vera got married in Grimsby. They lived at 73 Lestange Street, Cleethorpes. During the war Frank was in the ARP (Air Raid Precautions) as a part-time warden.

When Frank suggested to Vera that they take over the Prussian Queen, she was wary, it was not in a very good state structurally or financially, she'd never even been in a pub before! Up until then a pub had been taboo, she said *"mother was dead against anything like that and I had never been in a pub before, but I told Frank I would go if I could do some catering, and not serve in the bar"*. She recalled that she was amazed at what they did there, just the two of them, whilst still having to cope with rationing. Vera says that she spent most of her time in the kitchen.

In March 1950 Frank Searby's application for a protection order for the Prussian Queen was granted by the County Sessions magistrates. The pub licence was transferred to Frank in June 1950, at this time the pub was owned by Hewitt Brothers brewery of Grimsby.

### Famous Sunday Breakfasts

From about Easter to October Vera's Sunday breakfasts at the Prussian Queen were famed far and wide, with regular bookings. The biggest number one Sunday was 100, in two sittings. The menu consisted on half a slice of gammon, two eggs, sausage and friend bread, followed by hot scones and butter.

The Searby's invited visitors to sign a guest book, which contained pages of autographs, many from air force personal who came from around the world. Many customers came from the nearby RAFs stations at Manby and Binbrook. Signatures were added to the book from practically every state of the USA, plus the European, African and Asian continents. The pub soon became popular for its hospitality and superb catering, Mrs Searby's freshly home-cooked meals were in demand.

### Harvest Festival Suppers

Frank had an interest in history and had the idea of reviving an old English custom, that use to be held in large barns and old alehouses. The first of their Harvest Suppers was held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 1950. The room and bar were decorated with sheaves of corn, bowls of fruit, baskets of vegetables of every conceivable size and type, giving a warm and festive appearance to what many considered to be the event of the year. 62 villagers sat down at trestle-tables filled with harvest produce and other foods. Among the guests were the rector of St Clements, Rev. Robert G. C. Carr-

Gregg, and the local policeman P.c. Roy Norman. Following the supper entertainment was provided by Joe Crook, Edna Keys, Ron Appleby and Peter Tasker. The next day all the produce that had formed the decorations were taken to the Louth County Infirmary.



Photo of the first Harvest Supper at the Prussian Queen on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1950. Frank and Vera Searby are behind the bar with some of the 62 guests at tressle-tables in front. Appeared in *The Louth Standard* on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1950

The Harvest Suppers became an annual event. In 1951, ninety people attended the knife and fork meal, which included ham and tongue, salad, trifles and cakes. Vera Searby did all the catering, a few voluntary helpers assisted with serving. Rev. Carr-Gregg said grace, Archie Ingamells was toast master for the evening. After the tables had been cleared community singing began, followed by a concert with Mr Ron Appleby accompanying. Frank called it a little family gathering and joked that if the numbers kept increasing as they had, they would soon need the Town Hall at Louth! The next day a van load of produce was sent to the Lindsey Blind Home at Louth.



Louth and North Lincolnshire Advertiser, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1951



On 24<sup>th</sup> October 1952, 110 people were present. Among the esteemed guest in 1952, Rev Carr-Gregg was joined by the new Vicar of Saltfleetby All Saints, Rev. Francis Kenyon; Deputy Chief Constable of Grimsby, Supt G.L. Smith and Mrs Smith; Inspector H. Thom of Grimsby; P.c. and Mrs Victor Marshall; and P.c. and Mrs Norman. Archie Ingamells acted as master of ceremonies. The loyal toast was proposed by Mrs S. Richardson. Major Jim Odlin proposed a toast to the host and hostess, and Mr Searby replied. Entertainment was provided by the *Co-optimists Concert Party* of Grimsby. Guests gave gifts of chickens, rabbits, eggs, fruit and flowers, which were again collected together with the harvest decorations and donated to Louth and District Hospital the following day. In 1953 eighty people attended the meal, with donations given to the Lindsey Home for the Blind.

In 1955 a hundred people attended, Rev. Carr-Gregg said grace. The loyal toast was proposed by Jim Odlin; the toast to the host and hostess was proposed by Police Sgt. K. Ganderton; and the toast to the artistes by Walter Johnson of Saltfleetby. The artistes who provided entertainment after the meal were Sgt. Cook of RAF Manby, Mr George Turner and Miss Edna Keyes and partner of Grimsby. Gifts of garden produce were later sent to the Sycamores Blind Home in Louth.

In 1957 the event was attended by a reporter from the Louth Standard, who wrote: *The entrance to the Prussian Queen at Saltfleetby on Wednesday night looked like the foyer of a church. There were sacks of potatoes, huge cabbages and other harvest produce. Stepping into the main bar, the usual tables and chairs were gone and in their place were gleaming white tablecloths and immaculately laid tables, decorated with immense vases of flowers. The bar itself was adorned with bread, eggs, fruit, vegetables and all the good things from the land. Mr Frank Searby the genial host welcomed his guest to the seventh harvest supper. Soon the room was filled with the 100 guests from Mablethorpe, Theddlethorpe, Louth and Grimsby. The Vicar said grace and the jolly party sat down to an excellent meal. Afterwards the piano was played and the party sang and had a really good time. REAL FRIENDS: One guest from away told me: "There are no greater friends to have than country folk. This couldn't happen in a town. Here the people are friends, real friends – and it's good to be here". All the produce brought by the guests is to be taken to the Society for the Blind at Louth. On Sunday they will have their party with all those good things, chickens, hares and everything. Thus out of good comes more good. It was a night to remember. There were no politics. Atom bombs were never mentioned. And so home and to bed, pleasantly and comfortably full of good food and drink, and at peace with the world. It should ever be this.*

#### **100 attend harvest supper at Saltfleetby**



**Louth Standard 18<sup>th</sup> October 1957**

## Louth Darby and Joan Club Visit Saltfleetby

Darby and Joan Clubs were established after the war, with the help of the Women's Voluntary Service, to support the elderly and provide them with social activities. On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> July 1951 the elderly members of the Louth club attended a service at St Clement's Church led by Rev. Carr-Gregg, after which they adjourned to the Prussian Queen. The Searby's provided an excellent supper for 132 people. The bad weather prevented the group from a planned visit to the seashore, instead they took a short tour and had them all back home in Louth by 9.30pm.

On Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June 1952, three buses and several private cars conveyed the elderly people for another evening's outing to Saltfleetby. That year it was a beautiful warm evening for their visit. They were first welcomed to the village with the ringing of bells in St Clement's. Rev Carr-Gregg had arranged special seating in the church for the large congregation. He gave out special souvenir programmes and led the service and hymn singing, with pauses so they could listen to the accompanying pealing of bells. Following the service they visited the Prussian Queen for supper, provided by the Searbys for 130 people. They were delighted that the nice weather allowed them to dine al fresco in the late evening sunshine. A vote of thanks was made for all who worked hard to make it such an enjoyable and memorable evening. They all arrived home by 10pm.

## The Night a Bomb Dropped on the Prussian Queen

On Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> August 1952 one of RAF Binbrook's first jet-powered bomber planes left the air base, about 16 miles away from Saltfleetby. Number 9 Squadron had only been flying the new Canberra B2 since May. A crew of three flew through the night sky at 15,000 feet in a circuit pattern as they carried out bombing on the range at Donna Nook. The pilot, Flight Lieutenant Ted Flavell sat on his own in the cockpit, the navigators Sergeants Wilf Crank and Morris Rhodes were behind him side by side. For bombing one navigator had to crawl forward, past the pilot into the nose of the aircraft and lie prone looking out through the perspex nose-cone to take aim and release the bomb.



**English Electric Canberra B Mk.2 WD932, the plane that dropped a bomb on the Prussian Queen in 1952**

The weather for night flying was good with visibility of about 20 miles, a small amount of cloud 10,000 ft below the aircraft had thinned, the wind was just a light breeze.

Wilf Crank was in the nose-cone for the first half of the sortie dropping a single bomb on each attack run. The night target on the coast were made up of a circle of lights for visual bombing. They dropped 25lb practice bombs that contained a small explosive charge that went off with a flash and a puff of smoke to aid ground staff on the range in their job of plotting the position of the bomb

Just before 11pm Wilf climbed back into his seat behind the pilot and Morris Rhodes went forward for his turn as bomber. They could see the countryside below them, the lights of houses and farms like small pinpricks of light in the inky blackness. The aircraft ran in towards the target and the circle of lights came into the bomb sight. Sergeant Rhodes pressed the bomb release button.....

Meanwhile the Prussian Queen had been full that evening with a mixture of local regulars, holiday makers and airmen from nearby RAF Theddlethorpe. Frank had called “time” nearly half an hour earlier. The customers had left except for a couple of friends who had stayed chatting over the bar. Vera and two helpers were clearing up empty glasses in the bar room.

Frank stood just inside the entrance to the pub. Shopkeeper Bill Platt, who ran *Platts Grocery Store* at 35 Eastgate in Louth (the one with the upside-down sign, now *The Foot Doctor*) walked round the corner to say “goodnight”, then left from the back door to fetch his car from the car park. He remarked “I’ve been watching the airplane”. Then there was a sudden loud explosion on the spot that he had just passed.

Frank later described “We heard the bomber going over then there was a terrific flash and clouds of smoke”.

When the glare went from their eyes, they saw that the ladies’ toilet three feet away from them, had been severely damaged. They rushed out to find it in a state of ruin, with a hole where the window had been, the cistern and lavatory pan a pile of rubble on the floor. Bill Platt stood a few yards away, shaken but unhurt.



**Bill Platt in his Louth grocery shop in 1982**

The 25lb flash bomb had gone through the window, smashing glass, blowing out brickwork and twisting the metal window. No one was injured.

Frank told reporters “It was just lucky the Bill walked by that split second earlier. It was like a small gun going off. I did not think it was as near as that. It happened so quickly. I thought maybe it had dropped in a field”. “If the bomb had dropped a yard to one side it would have come through the door and then some of us might have been badly hurt”. Mr Platt said “it was a narrow escape, I had been watching the very plane that dropped the bomb”.

An emergency call was made to the RAF authorities at the bombing range, and a bomb disposal squad turned out to remove the bomb. Frank commented to the Grimsby Evening Telegraph the following day “It was a narrow squeak, but it was business as usual again today. Only the toilet was damaged”

It seems that by a chance in a million, the lights in the pub car park were arranged in a circle, and were mistaken for the target on the range, just a short distance on to the east and the practice bomb had scored a direct hit right in the middle!

Villagers had been awakened by the explosion. Mr Geoffrey Cabot, who lived nearby, commented to the Standard: “There are lights on the bombing range and I wondered if they bombed the Prussian Queen by mistake. If so it was good aiming”. RAF officers and representatives of the brewery (Hewitt’s of Grimsby) came out to examine the damage.

The following evening the crew of the Canberra bomber and some of their colleagues from RAF Binbrook visited the Prussian Queen to apologise for the damage caused. Navigator Wilf Crank later recalled: “when we realised there were no injuries, we did see the funny side of it”. The RAF held a court of inquiry and the captain was reprimanded.



**Canberra B2 WD932**

The squadron's poet composed a ditty commemorating the incident:

*Oh dear, what can the matter be?*

*Three old ladies locked in the lavatory,  
Hiding from bombs from Monday to Saturday,  
9 Squadron knew they were there.*

*The first one's name was Elizabeth Bonner,  
She moved away for safety from Donna,  
But the bombs that were dropped still fell upon her,  
For 9 Squadron knew she was there.*

*The second one's name was Mary Lou Giles,  
She thought she was safe by four or five miles,  
Till down came the bomb which banished her smiles,  
For 9 Squadron knew she was there.*

*Our third victim's name was Mrs O'Conner,  
The other two ladies, they blamed it upon her,  
But Flavell knew better upstairs in his bomber,  
For he knew the ladies were there.*

*Our story's nearly over and I'm sorry to say,  
The 9 Squadron's aircraft are bombing today,  
So the ladies of Saltfleetby are moving away,  
For the Prussian Queen bog is their target today.*



Grimsby Daily Telegraph 21<sup>st</sup>  
August 1952



Lincolnshire Standard and Boston  
Guardian 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1952

The accident was mentioned in Parliament when the issue of dangerous stray RAF bombs on the Lincolnshire coast was debated in the House of Commons on 19th November 1953. Louth's Conservative MP, Cyril Osborne, had received a lot of complaints from his constituents concerned about the increase in near-miss practice bombs falling close to farms and houses.



Sir Cyril Osborne in 1962  
(National Portrait Gallery)

Regarding the Prussian Queen Bomb he said in his speech:

*"Just after last August Bank Holiday a rather heavy smoke bomb was dropped on a public house called the "Prussian Queen." It went through the window of a lavatory. Had it dropped half an hour earlier someone would have been knocked out, or killed. Complaints have been made of a series of bombs which were dropped miles from the target. I think my Honourable Friend will agree that more than a dozen have dropped wide of the target".*

On 1<sup>st</sup> December 1953 the Air Ministry announced that it would suspend the use of the bombing range near Saltfleet.

When asked his opinion by the newspapers, Frank Searby said "Will it be permanent? I understand it would cost a lot of money to move the ranges. Look at the lads who go in the air. They are risking their lives for us every minute. Ours is just a flash in the pan. They cannot practice with pop guns".

In 1954 shopkeeper Bill Platt won £12,000 in the football pools, when his customers asked him what he was going to do with the money, he answered by smiling and carrying on working. In 1986 Bill



retired from his family's Louth grocery store that he took over in 1913 at the age of 16. He died in 1996 age 87.

Wilf Crank from Farnworth near Bolton, reached the rank of master navigator, spending the last few years of his service as an air traffic controller at Strubby. He retired to live in Fotherby with his wife Enid, then lived at Friskney near Boston, Lincolnshire. Wilf died in 2015 age 94.

Flight Sergeant Morris Allen Rhodes was from Kirk Hammerton in North Yorkshire. He married Lilian Mary Calvert in June 1956, they lived in Nun Monkton, Yorkshire. On 19<sup>th</sup> October 1956, he departed with 9 Squadron from Binbook, to Nicosia in Cyprus as part of the Suez operation. On 6<sup>th</sup> November he was one of three crew members onboard a Canberra B6, when a fire developed. The pilot shut down the starboard engine, the controls were lost and the aircraft crashed just short of the runway. All three crewmen were killed. Morris was 32, the other crew members were 24 and 25 years old.

Pilot Edwin James George "Ted" Flavell, the son of Brigadier Edwin Flavell, was born in Battersea, London. He was promoted to Squadron Leader in January 1956. Assigned to 49 Squadron, he was one of the first pilots to fly the new Vickers Valiant B1 aircraft. He proceeded to South Australia to take part in the British nuclear tests, "Operation Buffalo".

On 11<sup>th</sup> October 1956, flying a Valiant bomber 30,000 feet over the Maralinga Desert, he became the first British pilot to drop a live nuclear bomb from an aircraft. Britain's first operational nuclear weapon, the "Blue Danube", equivalent to 10,000 tons of TNT, exploded at 1000ft above the ground. 200 miles away children in a school near Adelaide felt their building shake with the explosion.

In 1957 Flavell and his navigator were awarded the Air Force Cross for their part in the operation.

He retired from the RAF in 1968 after over thirty years of service, and lived with his wife Sheila and their children in Shipton Gorge, Dorset. He died in 2014 aged 91.



**Squadron leader Ted Favell leaving the Valiant after dropping the atomic bomb in 1956, 4 years after he dropped a bomb on the Prussian Queen.**

**To be Continued.....**

'Phone: Saltfleetby 39

# Free Pass

This pass is good in all bars, providing that the bearer walks, crawls and carries his own baggage and stops for all drinks and smokes at—

## THE PRUSSIAN QUEEN

SALTFLEETBY  
LOUTH

**This pass is not transfer-  
able except to another  
man with money.**

**Licensee - Robin D. Evil**  
alias Frank Searby

### Frank Searby's "Free Pass to the Pub" Leaflet

1950s

Thanks to Louth Museum for sharing their copy of this humorous "Free Pass" that was printed in the 1950s as an imaginative way to promote the pub.

### TEN COMMANDMENTS

I—When thirsty thou shalt come to my house and drink. Thou shalt honour me and my barman, so that thou may live long in the land and continue to drink at my house for ever.

II—Thou shalt not take anything from me unjustly, for I need all I have and as much more as I can get.

III—Thou shalt not expect glasses too full or glasses too large, for I must pay my rent.

IV—Thou shalt not sing or dance too long for it is wasted drinking time.

V—Thou shalt honour me and mine, that thou may'st live long and see me often.

VI—Thou shalt not break or destroy anything on the premises, else thou shalt pay for double the value. Thou shalt not dare to pay me in bad money, "crook cheques," "chalk," "slate" or foreign currency.

VII—Thou shalt call at my place hourly. If unable to come, I shall

consider it an insult unless thou sendest a substitute or an apology.

VIII—Thou shalt not offend thy fellow customers, nor cast base insinuations upon their characters by hinting that they cannot drink too much.

IX—Thou shalt not take the name of my goods in vain by calling my beer "slops" or with a glance at the sky remarking "it looks like rain again," for I always sell the best the market affords, and am always at home to my friends.

X—Thou shalt not forget thy most honourable position and high standing in the community as to ask the barman to "shout" but thou may'st "shout" for him (or me) often.

### The Disasters that Happened to Three of my Customers

One said: "I'll pay Saturday night as sure as I live."—**He's dead.**

Another said: "I'll see you tomorrow."—**He's blind.**

The other said: "I will pay this week or go to hell."—**He's gone.**

Moral: The best-laid schemes, etc.