

# Martham's Twin Ponds

By Peter Dawson



## Martham's Twin Ponds

Martham can be found about 10 miles north of Great Yarmouth in the Norfolk Broads.

The Village is known to have had at least nine ponds but the twin ponds refer to the two that were in the centre of the village. One is the existing main pond opposite the King's Arms but its twin is one that has disappeared but once graced the area of village green in front of the Co-op. The history of the ponds will allow a nostalgic look back at associated features of the centre of the village and not just keep to the ponds themselves.

## 1842 Martham Tithe Award Map

One of the earliest references to the twin ponds is from the Martham Tithe Award Map of 1842. The tithe map was drawn up because the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 asked that payments of tithe in the form of farm produce should be replaced by money payments. Tithe was a tax, which was paid to the local church. The Tithe Award Maps generally show the boundaries of woods, fields, roads and waterways and the location of buildings. The aim was to show the boundaries of all areas for which tithe was owed, usually fields. The map also shows the twin ponds -



illustrated in blue - and another pond half way up the east side of Black Street just past the former Oddfellows Hall footpath. That pond no longer exists.

To the south of the ponds you can see a plot marked as 316 and this is Cranes Green Cottage. This thatched cottage was listed in the Award as a house and garden of 1 rod, 7 poles in size and owned at the time by Mr William Thompson. The annual tithe payable to the church for this property was 1s 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d payable to the Vicar. William Thompson was a farmer at the property in the 1841 census.

Just above this you can see a small cottage with the Award number 315. This was listed as being 25 poles in size and was owned by 'Jay & Others'. Its tithe was 8d (old pence) per annum which is the equivalent today to about 3.5 pence per year. John Jay was a gardener at the cottage in the 1841 census.

Award No 323 referred to the Village Greens (2 acres and 2 poles) and the ponds were not separately numbered as they are part of the village green.

### 1842 Cranes Green Cottage

Cranes Green Cottage is one of the oldest in the village and was listed as No316 in the 1842 Tithe Award and the photo here shows it as it is today now called Oaklands which is situated on the cut through from the Green to Holly Close.

The grounds of the cottage were much larger than they are today and it gave its name to the green in front of the Co-op and Ross Villas called Cranes Green where the second of the twin ponds was situated.

The grounds of the house also once included the house built as the former Doctor's Surgery and currently occupied by Murrant' Family Funeral Services.



### 1880 Twin Ponds Cottage



This is the little cottage listed in the Tithe Award map as No315. The cottage was occupied by the Jay family in 1841 according to the census of the time and one of the occupiers was a saddler. This is one of the earliest photos of a cottage on the south side of the Green with the Cranes Green pond in front of it. The pond has long since disappeared but further on we will look at when this happened. This photo dates from around 1880. Notice the haymaking to the left of the photo and the small window at the front and the white picket fence. There was no

concrete surround to the pond at the time of this photo.

This photo is of the same cottage about 10 years later in 1890.



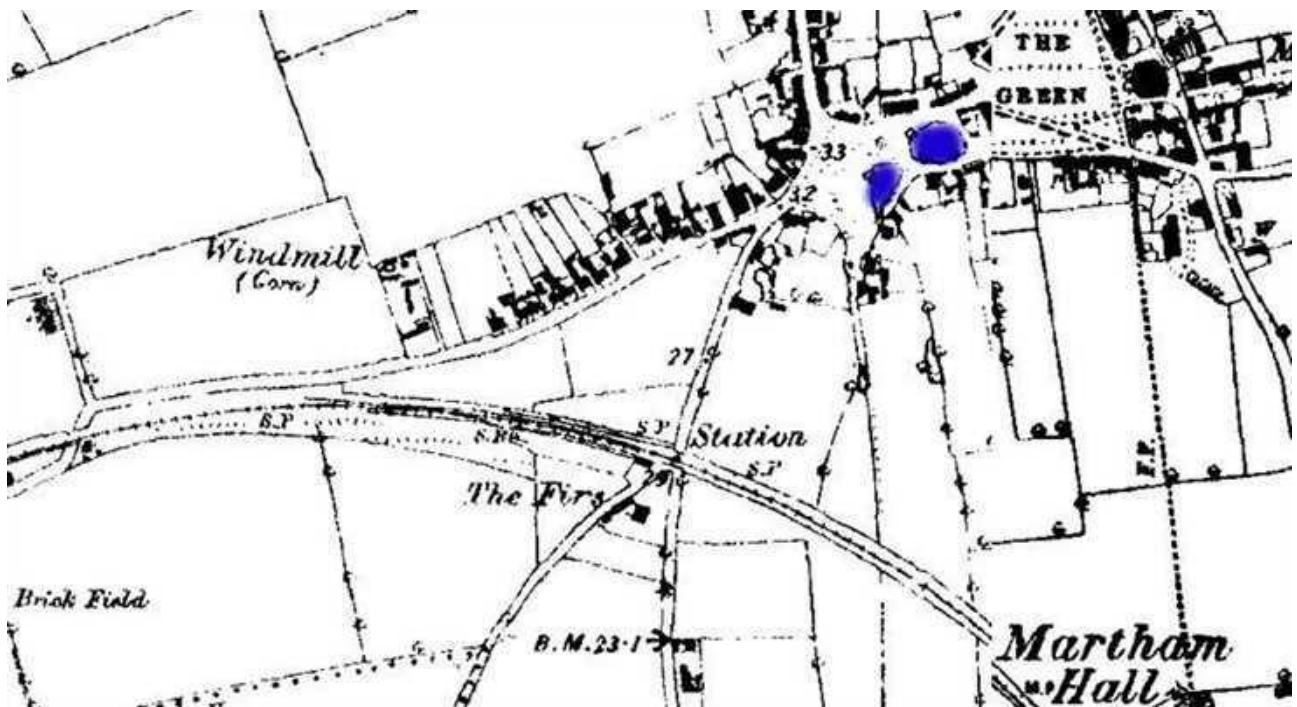
The white picket garden fencing shown in the previous photograph has gone and the front window has been made bigger, there is a sign over the door that indicates it has become a shop. It seems to read G E or perhaps G L Rose who was believed to be the saddler previously mentioned. The pond in front of the house on Cranes Green clearly shows how large it was. Notice there was still no concrete surround to the pond at the time of this photograph. This cottage was demolished and replaced by Ross Villas in 1899.

I am indebted to Gladys Moore for information about the house to the right of the small cottage which was called The Laurels where she was born. She can remember her brother Robert (born in 1915) who fell into the pond whilst dressed in his sailor boy outfit. So this must have been around 1922'ish and in those days there was no fencing to stop him falling in. I don't suppose his parents were best pleased at the time. The Laurels was later demolished and a new property was built there as the doctors surgery which has since become Murrant Family Funeral Services.

The map shown below dates from around 1888. As with all maps you have to be a bit sceptical about its age as they were often dated at one period but copied from a much earlier version, however this is believed to be fairly accurate in terms of date.

It clearly shows the twins ponds with the 'lost' one on Cranes Green.

The railway line is there. Martham railway station opened ten years before this in July 1877 and closed in March 1959.



## 1896 King's Arms Inn

The very early photograph of the King's Arms on the opposite page showing a group of children in front of the pond is believed to date from around 1896 when it was called an Inn as opposed to a pub.

It is certainly before 1908 as there is no concrete edge to the pond and obviously no footpaths. At this time the Inn was already 100 years old as the first licensee was Robert Reed in 1794.

This photo shows the Inn with a big sign on a pole and shutters at some windows.

Few vehicles on the roads meant they were little more than compacted mud tracks so there is no car park next to the inn just field gates.

The Cottages on the left are where Broadland Fuel is today.

In 1881 James Edmonds (aged 59) was the Inn Keeper, his wife Elizabeth helped him. By 1891 James had died and his wife, who was 14 years younger than him, had taken over the inn and was listed in the 1891 census as a widow and Inn Keeper. She was still there with her son, John, in 1901. She was born in Winterton. Her 43 year old son, John, lived with her but he was listed in the census as being a farmer rather than helping at the inn.

Robert Futter (aged 36) was the publican from 1910. He was married to Elizabeth who succeeded him as licensee.

Licensees :	
ROBERT REED	1794
Mrs REED widow	Aug 1806 & 06.02.1808
Mr PLUMMER	1830
WILLIAM ROGERS age 46 in 1851 & wheelwright	1836 - 1854
RICHARD ROGERS	1858 - 1877
JAMES SAMUEL EDMONDS	1879 - 1883
Mrs ELIZABETH EDMONDS	by 1888
FREDERICK ALBERT SMITH	17.10.1905
WILLIAM PICKARD	15.10.1907
ROBERT FUTTER	19.07.1910
ELIZABETH HANNAH FUTTER	10.07.1917
Fined 6 July 1920 £1 (or 14 days detention) for selling out of hours.	
BERTIE GRAPES	25.06.1929
NORMAN GIBBS	21.09.1937
ARTHUR HAROLD DULLEY	31.10.1939
Fined 21 Jan 1941 £1 for selling out of hours.	



1896 King's Arms Inn

## 1900 King's Arms Inn

The photograph below of the King's Arms is very much the same as the one shown on the previous page but believed to be a little later in around 1900.

The pond still has no concrete boundary.

The pub sign has disappeared, or the photo was taken before the last one, but there is an addition of a light over the front door when few people had electricity so this may have only been candle lit. (No gas in Martham).

The shutters are still there but one of the field gates has become a fence.



**C1900 King's Arms Inn**

## Council Minutes 4<sup>th</sup> Sept 1896

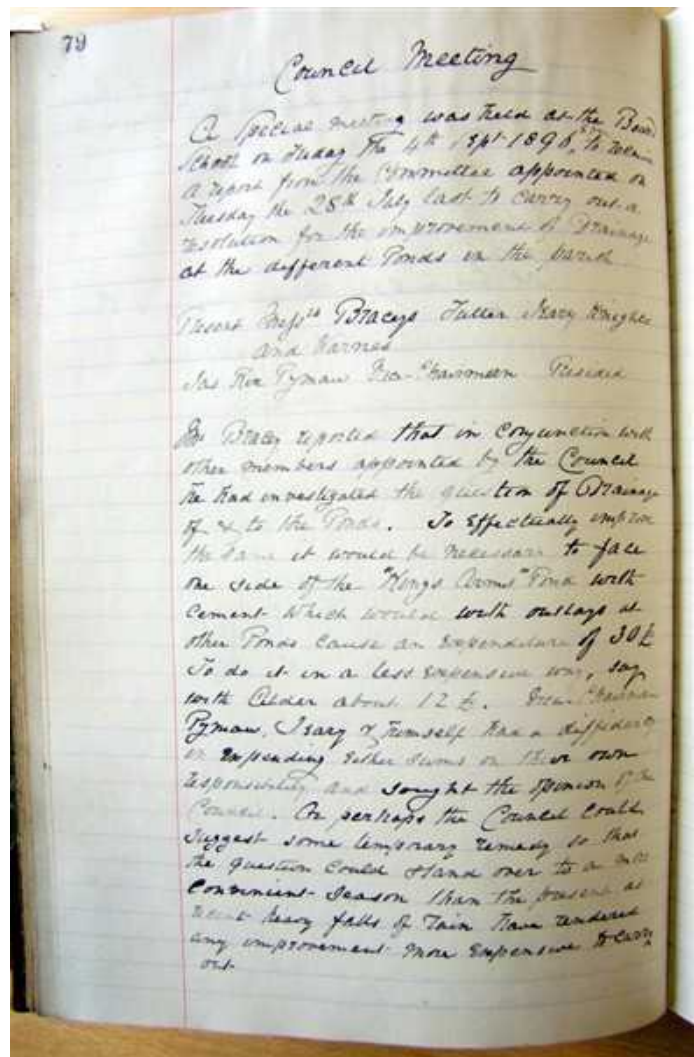
In 1896 the Parish Council was very concerned about the drainage of the twin ponds and had set up a special sub-committee in July 1896 to make recommendations. On 4<sup>th</sup> September 1896 one minute of the Council read:

"Mr Bracey reported that in conjunction with other members appointed by the Council he had investigated the question of drainage of, and to, the Ponds. To effectually improve the same it would be necessary to face one side of the "King's Arms" pond with cement which would with outlays at other ponds cause an expenditure of £30. To do it in a less expensive way, say with Alder, about £12. Cllrs Chapman, Pyman, Jeary and himself had a difference in expending either sums on their own responsibility and sought the opinion of the Council. Or, perhaps the Council could suggest some temporary remedy so that the question could stand over to a more convenient season than the present as recent heavy falls of rain have rendered any improvement more expensive to carry out."

£30 in 1896 is the equivalent of £3,220 today.

This is a copy of those minutes.

I can't find any indication in the minutes that this work was done at this time, in fact photo evidence and minutes of 10 years later would suggest it was not done.



## 1900 Mrs Dack & Cranes Green pond

This is a nice old photo of Mrs Eileen Dack (left) and her sister May but our main interest is that it records the lost pond on Cranes Green behind them.

There is no concrete surround to the pond so the photo is pre 1908.

The photo looks north and the cottages to the right in the background have long since gone and have been replaced by the buildings currently occupied by Broadland Fuels.



## 1902-07 map by Norfolk County Council

This map backs up the size and shape of the two ponds in the 1902-07 period and as we have seen it in the earlier photos.

It shows Cranes Green Cottage and Ross Villas but of course a vacant plot where the Co-op is today.



## Postcard sent in 1904

This is a copy of a postcard sent in 1904 so the photo may have been earlier.

The small trees on the edge of Cranes Green pond can be seen and are an indication of it being there at the time the postcard was produced which fits in with the other photos.

The main pond, has no concrete surround so the photo is definitely pre 1908/10.

The main pond is known by several different names. Many people call it Chapman's pond after the butchers family, sometimes in the Council minutes it is called No2 pond which I assume means that Cranes Green pond was No1. in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century but most of the time it is simply referred to as the pond opposite the King's Arms.

There was another pond in the village called Porters Pit. I am told that was on the corner of Black Street and Staithe Road where there are bungalows now.



**1906 postcard posted in 1911.**

This post card clearly shows the former pond on Cranes Green, labelled as the Duck Pond.

It was posted in 1911 but the photo was probably taken around 1906.

Note the small trees we have seen before around the edge of the pond.

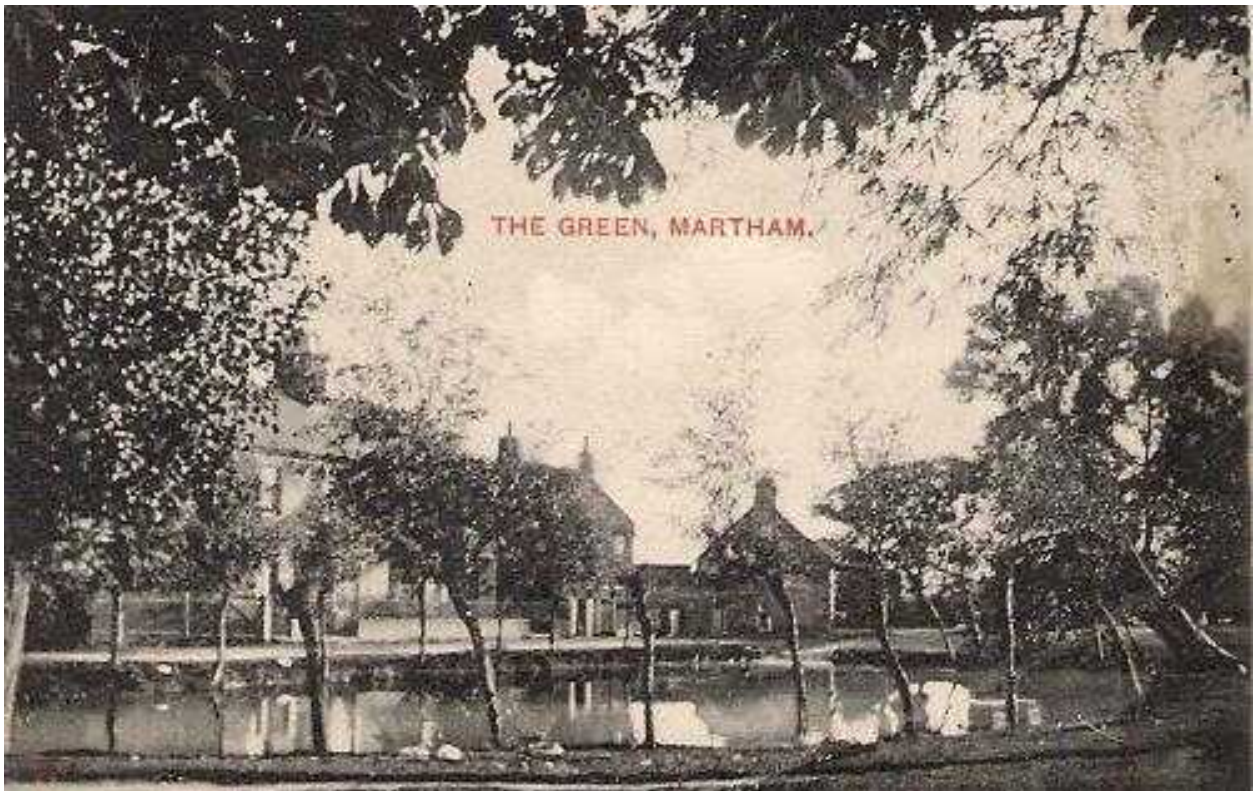


There is a nice clear view of Hollydene House next to the Post Office on the right.

**1906 Cranes Green pond (The Green, Martham)**

Here is another clear photo of the Cranes Green pond with its small trees surrounding it.

Ross Villas semi detached cottages that were built in 1899 are also shown.



Parish Council Minutes 11<sup>th</sup> February 1908 (folio 164)

In Feb 1908 the state of the ponds gave rise to a busy Parish Council meeting with several decisions made about the ponds. These minutes read:

"Tenders for cleaning out the ponds.

Mr H Futter (all) four ponds £26.

Mr J Whittaker, pond near Town Farm £7 (believed to be the one in Back Lane).

Porters Pit £1.

Mr J Gallant. Pond at Cranes Green £7.

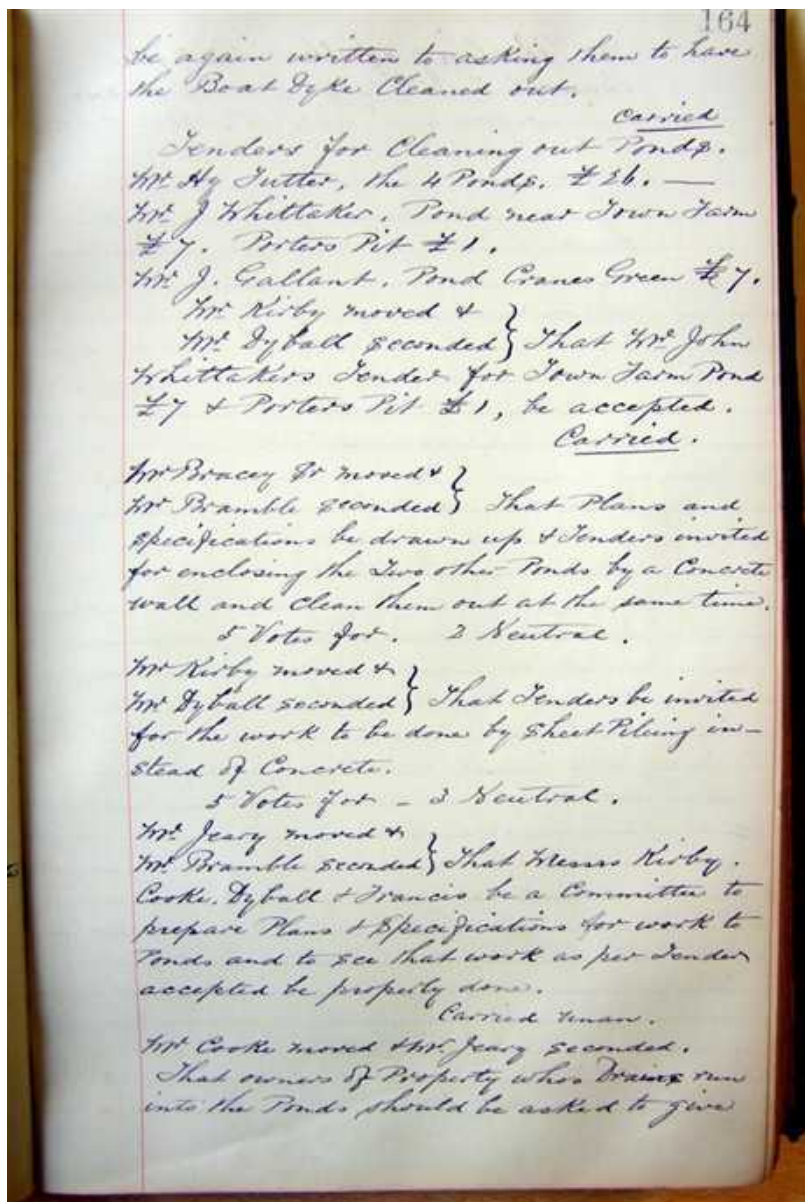
Mr Kirby moved and Mr Dyball seconded; That Mr John Whittaker's Tender for Town Farm Pond £7 & Porters Pit £1, be accepted. Carried."

"Mr Bracey moved and Mr Bramble seconded that plans and specifications be drawn up and tenders invited for enclosing the two other ponds by a concrete wall and clean them out at the same time. 5 votes for. 2 neutral."

"Mr Kirby moved and Mr Dyball seconded; That Tenders be invited for the work to be done by sheet piling instead of concrete. 5 votes for. 3 neutral."

"Mr Jeary moved and Mr Bramble seconded; That Messrs Kirby, Cooke, Dyball & Francis be a Committee to prepare plans & specifications for work to ponds and to see that work as per Tenders accepted be properly done. Carried unanimously."

At the suggestion of Mr Cook and Mr Jeary it was also agreed to seek voluntary contributions towards the cost of the this work. It was fairly normal in those days to expect local business men to subscribe to such schemes as the Council had limited ways of raising money. There was no Council Tax in those days.



Parish Council Minutes 25<sup>th</sup> February 1908 - folios 168 & 169 Tenders for Ponds

"Tenders for Ponds.

Mr Bracey moved & Mr Kirby seconded; That whosoever Tender be accepted, the Contractor is required to sign an agreement that the foundations of work be put into the ground not less than 9 inches." Carried."

"There were three tenders received for work in Ponds.

Mr Mays, concrete work £37, Cranes Green Pond.

No2 pond £35, the wood piling same price.

Mr Futter, Cranes Green Pond. Concrete £36 2s. Wood piling £31.

No2 pond. Concrete £35. 16s. Od. Wood £31. 5s Od.

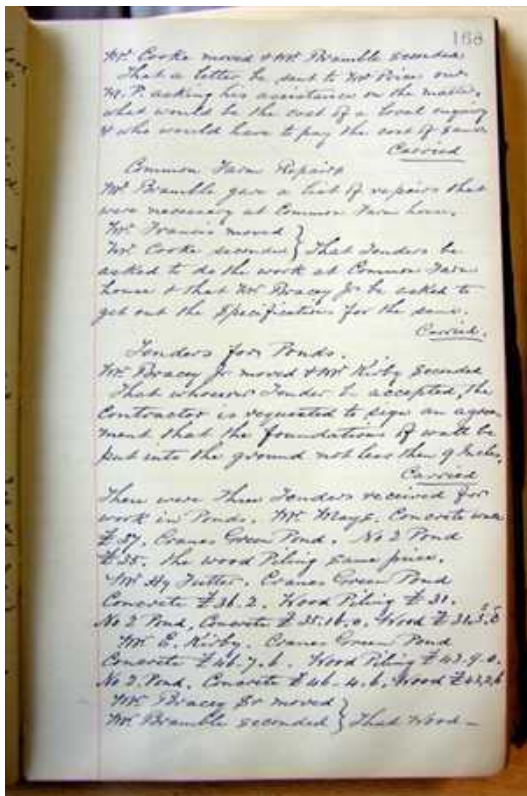
Mr E Kirby, Cranes Green Pond. Concrete £46 7s 6d. Wood piling £43. 9s Od.

No2 pond. Concrete £46 4s 6d. Wood £43. 2s 6d.

Mr Bracey moved & Mr Bramble seconded; That wood piling be not accepted. Carried.

Mr Kirby moved & Mr Bracey seconded; That Mr Mays Tender be accepted if half the cost of work is met by subscriptions & that Mr Francis assist the Clerk in collecting subscriptions for the same. Carried"

In those days there was no such thing as Council Tax so if the Council wanted to carry out a major project it would go cap in hand to local businesses or those residents who were better off. This is what is meant by subscriptions.



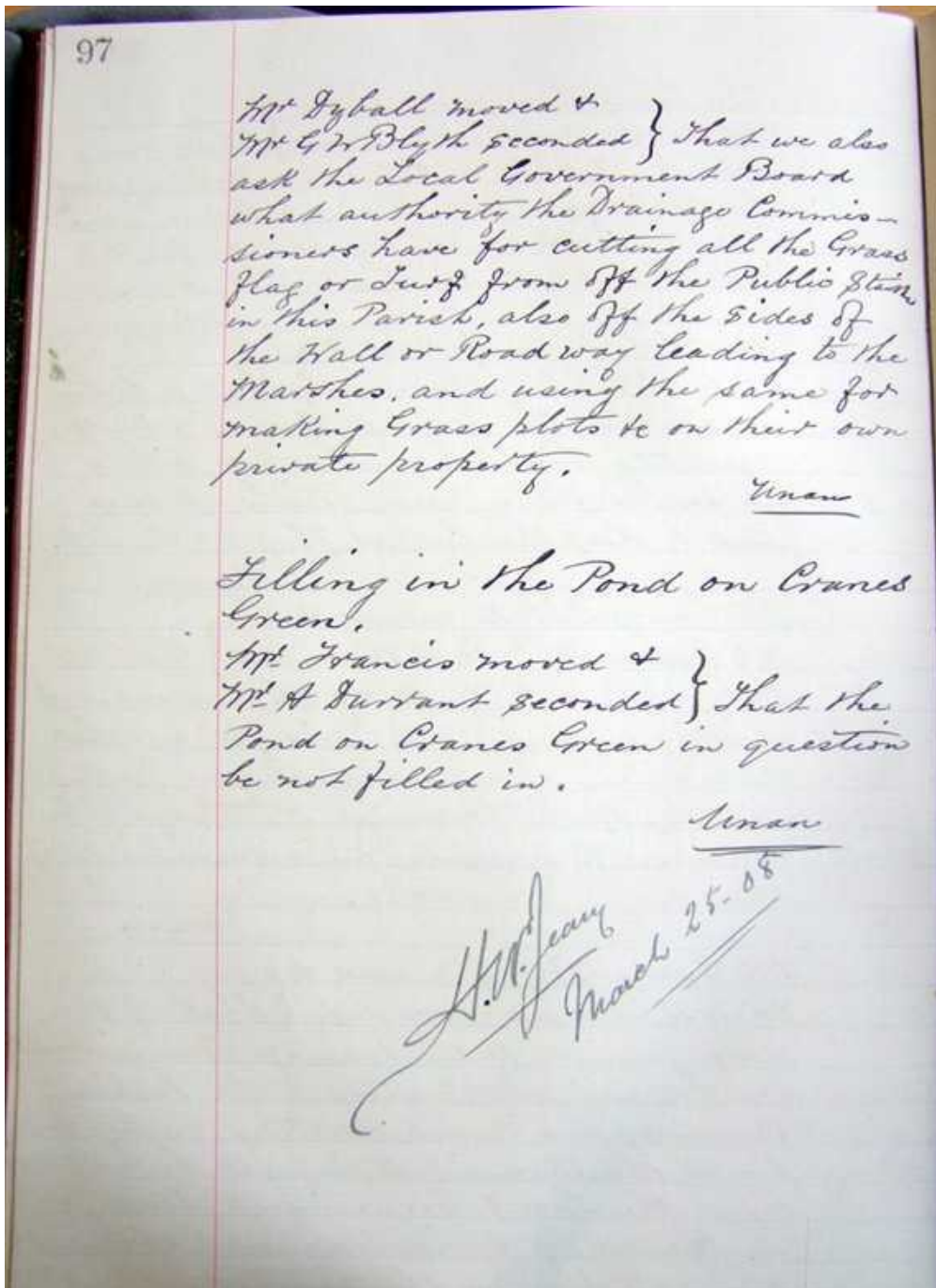
1908 March 25<sup>th</sup> - Cranes Green Pond (folio 97).

After the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1908 there must have been some second thoughts and further discussion because only a month later a minute was signed on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1908 that said:

"Filling in the pond on Cranes Green.

Mr Francis moved and Mr A Durrant seconded. That the Pond on Cranes Green in question be not filled in. Unanimous"

It was carried unanimously but I imagine the cost at over £3,000 in today's money must have caused some discussion in the village.



**Parish Council Minutes - Subscription Lists**

We have seen that according to the Parish Council minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1908 work was to be done to build a concrete surround to the ponds subject to subscriptions being given and this is a list of those that gave money to the project.

Notice that both George Chapman and William Chapman top the list by giving £5 each which would be something like £525 each in today's money. £1 being about £105 now.

Messrs Lacons & Co (presumably the owners of the King's Arms) gave £2. 10s.

*Subscription List.*

*Funds in aid of Cleaning out the Martham Ponds. 1908.*

	£	s	d
Mr James Rowe	2		
Mr Butt £1. J Thompson 5/-	1	5	
Mr George R. Ollett.	1		
Dr J H L. Deales.	2		
O A Starling 10/-, G H Dyball 5/-	15		
Mr Jas. Sutton 10/-, H W Jeary. 10/-	1		
Mr George Watson		5	
Mr George H Chapman	5		
Mr Jas. Town £1. E A Dyball 10/-	1	10	
Mr William Chapman.	5		
Mr John. E. Clowes.	3		
Mr A Langham	1		
William Watson		10	
Mr A H Wiseman	1		
Mr Arthur Wiseman	1		
Debbage Bros 10/-, Mr Francis £1.	1	10	
Mr R. Harman 10/-, Mr E. Edmonds 10/-	1		
Mr W Chubbuck 5/-, Mr A. Astle 10/-		15	
Mr G. B. Kenneth Esq	2	10	
Miss Bane £1. A Langham £1.	2		
Messrs Lacon & Co	2	10	
Educational Charity Trustees	1		
Mr George Daniels		10	
Mr Lovell Blake for Cockings Landlord	1		
	£	39	0 0

### 1908 Chapman's pond & rough roadway

The photograph below shows the result of the concreting work carried out around the pond and so must have been taken after 1908. Given the slow way things progressed then it was probably taken in about 1910.

Note the strong buttress that today has the footpath up against it.

Very few people would have had cars at this time and the muddy road is deeply rutted by cart wheels.

The odd thing is that after all that expenditure I can't find anything in the minutes about the work having been actually carried out.



## 1910 - The King's Arms

The photograph below shows a plain King's Arms Inn and was taken in about 1910.

There is an open window upstairs and the rather odd, but distinctive full stop at the end of the sign that I will refer to again in a moment.

The pub sign on a pole that we saw earlier has gone but there is still a lamp over the entrance. The shutters have gone.

The short concrete posts with their chains had been there a long while.





This lovely photograph of the King's Arms again is probably just after 1910 as the concrete surround to the pond is in place.

Incredibly I wonder if this photo was taken at the same time as the one on the last page because even the upper window to the building next door to the Inn is open in the same way as the above photograph and on close inspection the curtains are the same in all the windows. The sign has the clear full stop at the end.

The delivery cart has a sign on it saying *LAWRANCE*. This was a delivery cart of *Lawrance & SON* -- Henry Lawrance & Son were established in 1860 in Beccles, although in 1865 they had premises at Fullers Hill, Great Yarmouth as *Ginger Beer Manufacturers*. By 1869 the firm had moved to the corner of Northgate Street & Hammond Road and were *Manufacturers of soda water, Ginger Beer and syrups etc.* The business continued there until the 1970`s. So here they were delivering to the King's Arms Inn all the way from *Great Yarmouth*.

There is a fence to the side of the pub that we have also seen earlier rather than the wicket gates. There are buildings where the pub car park entrance and toilets are nowadays. There are no footpaths and the road is still not made up.

The barn in the centre of the photo has an advert on it for *Arnolds Beds*. This tends to date the photo to not much after 1919 because *Arnolds* was a department store in *Great Yarmouth* which was destroyed by a major fire in 1919 but was restored and later became *Debenhams*. The sign may have remained in place after the fire but not for long so this photo was probably taken after 1910 but before 1919.

### 1911 Cranes Green Pond

This is a fine picture showing the outline of the pond on Cranes Green with its new concrete surround so it was taken after 1910 when we know this work was done. Some copies of this photograph show it as around 1900 but that is before the concreting was done.

Ross Villas with their bay windows, on the right, were built in 1899.



### 1913 Chapman's butchers shop

I have included this simply because I think it is a lovely old photograph of Chapman's Butchers shop at Christmas 1913. The shop is at the south side of the main pond. I love the meat hanging outside and those delivery carts would have been the ones helping to rut the village roadways.



### 1913 Cows Drinking from Main Pond

This shows a clear view of the new concrete buttress, agreed in 1908 by the Parish Council, on the road side of the pond and the access provided for cattle to cool off sadly probably before slaughter at Chapman's Butchers.



## 1915 Cranes Green & Ross Villas

See here a group of children on Cranes Green in around 1915 with some signs of the pond but not shown very clearly so perhaps it was drying up. Ross Villas are in the background which means this was taken after 1899 when they were built.



Compare the above picture to the 2014 view of Ross Villas below which thankfully shows that little has changed in the last 115 years.



### 1913/14 Chapman's pond surround.

Here we have a photo attributed to about 1913/14 because it clearly shows the pond fully concreted in and the slope left for cattle and horses to access it to drink or be washed down after a days work. The concrete looks to be in pristine condition so it was taken not long after being completed. Lovely picture of the children and the bike looks quite new. It even has a bell.



### 1920/21 Trojan Cars

There is not much to mention about the ponds from the lovely photograph on the next page but I have included it because of the two boys although I don't know who they are. This photo dates to about 1920 because of the wonderful two cars in it which are Trojans.

The Trojan Company was founded by Leslie Hounsfield at Clapham in South London. He got the idea to make a simple, economical car that would be easy to drive and started design work in 1910. He produced a prototype in 1913. Solid tyres were used as you can see in this photo. Before production could start war broke out from 1914 to 1918 which delayed production whilst the factory made tools for the war effort. In 1920 the first series of six cars were made from a works in Croydon and the final production version was shown at the 1922 London Motor Show. During the following seven years 11,000 cars and 6,700 vans were made. The Trojan Utility Car went onto the market at £230, which was reduced to £125 in 1925, to match the price of a

Model T Ford. The cars were almost certainly either owned by or sold by Mr. Francis who had a cycle shop and garage in the village.

Martham had a vicar from 1921 to 1927 who owned a Trojan car. He was Bishop Nathaniel Hamlyn, a former bishop of Accra. He had a crest on the door. He most probably bought it from Mr Francis. The lower photo shows a Trojan in the centre of the village c1930.



## 1928 Chapman's Pond

The photo on the right is believed to date to the late 1920's. The only posts on view at the main pond are opposite the King's Arms but there are no other railings. There are no footpaths. The former 'Manship' barn in the centre of the photo has been converted into a shop.



The fencing remains to the side of the King's Arms so there is still no demand for a car park.

## Snow in August



The postcard view to the left was taken in August 1930 because of the unusual event of snow falling. It shows that posts have been installed along the road edge of the main pond but there are no other railings.

The fencing next to the King's Arms has gone and the old building beyond the King's Arms has been demolished and a vacant plot is where the entrance to the car park is today. There is an advertising sign on what became Mountfields haberdashery on the left. By 2014 Mountfields had become a private residence.

## 1930 Chapman's Pond

This view of the main pond is believed to date to the 1930's. Cranes Green Pond has gone. Horses graze on the green there. The posts on the main pond can be seen opposite the King's Arms' but no other railings. Notice that the King's Arms now has bay windows on the far side ground floor that were not in earlier photos.



It is still about 1930 and there are some railings and posts on the main pond opposite the King's Arms' which look as if they are made of wood and are taller than the concrete ones we have today. The road extends



right up to the railings as there is no clear footpath for the man in the cap. The Co-op Store had not been built (opened in 1936) so the photo pre-dates 1936.

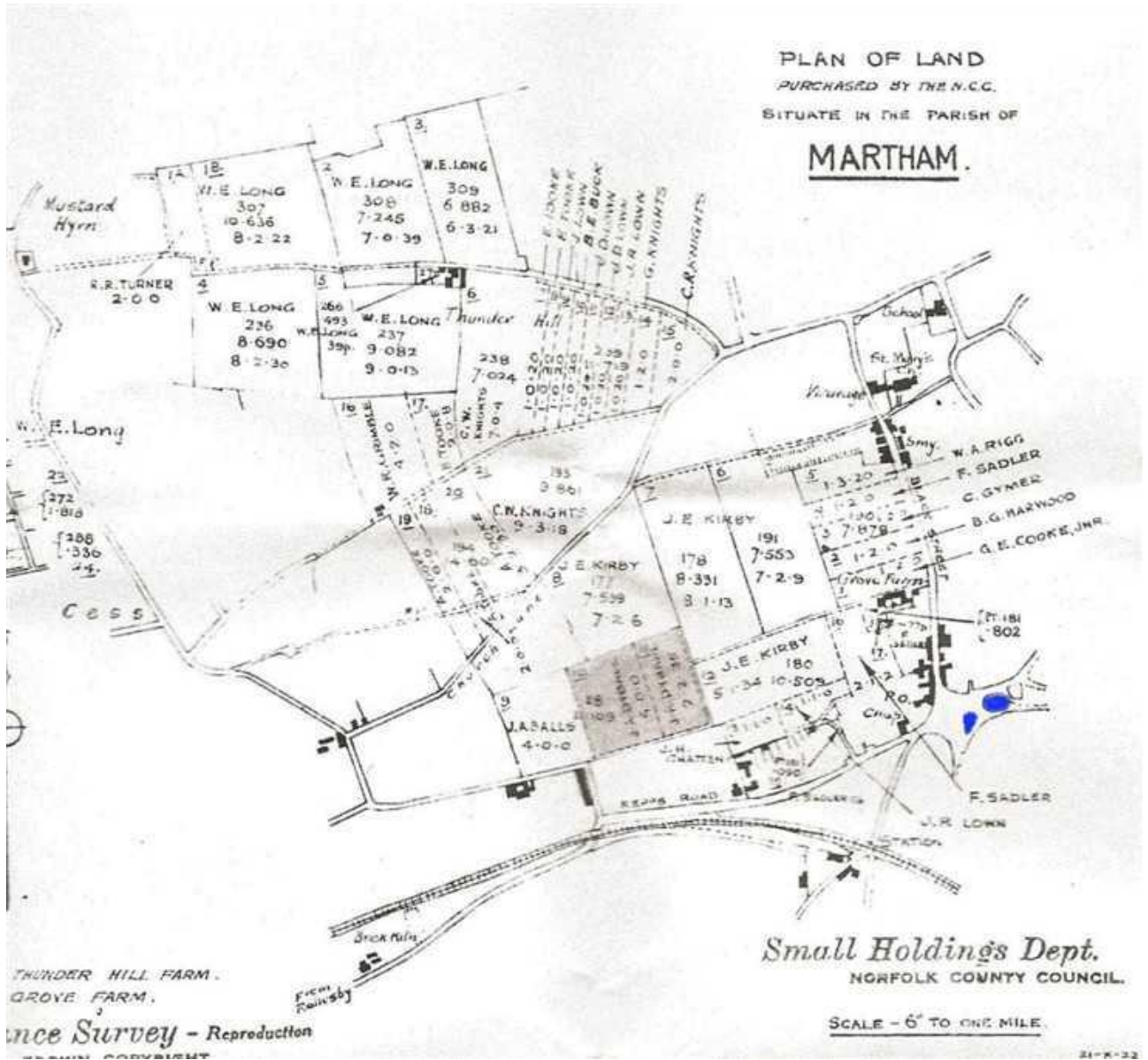
### 1930 Post Office

We are still looking at the mid 1930s and Cranes Green is only grass. A telegraph pole has appeared on the Green. The photo provides a good view of Hollydene House with its distinctive white brick coynes on both sides of the house. These are normally provided in stone to provide strength on the corners but as there is no stone in Norfolk were probably only there as a decorative feature. The ones on the right hand side, as you look, have gone today because the end wall was rebuilt and strengthened. Derby house, to its right, had the same design so presumably it was built by the same architect or builder but you cannot easily see the distinction in the bricks nowadays because it has all been painted. In the 1930's there was a tailors shop in one of the downstairs rooms whilst the family lived above. Later on the tailor moved further along Black Street. Later still Mrs Bracey had her cake shop in the front. The Post Office had not been extended at the front when this photo was taken.



*The Green and Post Office, Martham.*

Norfolk County Council allotments map



The map above is accurately attributed to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1935 because it was produced by Norfolk County Council as part of an agreement to rent land to the Parish Council for use as allotments off Cess Road. The problem is that it shows both the twin ponds but the Cranes Green pond had been filled in by 1935 as we have seen from the previous photos. So it seems the map was perfectly acceptable to show the allotments but must have been based on an earlier version that included the twin ponds. It just goes to show how difficult it is to gather accurate evidence of these things.

There are some interesting village family names attached to various plots and give a clear indication of land ownership of plots dating all the way back to Medieval times. Well known local names that are featured include: Lown; Cooke; Gymer; Harwood; Kirby; Knights; Buck; Tooke; Turner and Long as well as others.

## Co-Op Stores

The Co-op opened in 1936 and this photo may have been taken then because it has bunting flying over the shop or it may have been something to do with Edward VIII coming to the throne after the death of George V.



Cranes Green pond had gone by this time although the grass is long and fresh in what may have been a remaining wet spot. A path has been worn in the grass where the pond was so it had been in use for some time before 1936.

## Horsey floods and cars queuing



Taken in 1938 and showing cars queuing through the village to visit the Horsey floods this photo also shows a short section of railings to the pond now painted white. The road looks in better condition but paths are absent.

Derby House has not been painted and so the coynes show clearly. It also has its original front door which nowadays has been converted into a window whilst the front door is in the extension added to the left.

Francis garage has petrol pumps.

## Horse Grazing.

A horse grazes next to the main pond in around 1940. The concrete pond surround has been there a while and weeds are growing in it. The grass on the Green is long as it was only cut a couple of times a year in those days. A tribute to how well it is kept today.



### 1942 - Drowning - Ernest Henry William TWITE.

There have been at least two drownings in the main village pond. Mr Ernest Henry William Twite drowned in the pond opposite the King's Arms on or about 10<sup>th</sup> September 1942. On the next page is a copy of the newspaper report of the time. It reads on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September 1942:-

#### FATAL FALL INTO POND

##### Black-out Tragedy at Martham

A Coventry man's fatal fall into the pond on Martham Green in the blackout whilst on a visit to his uncle was the subject of an inquest conducted at Martham on Saturday by the County Coroner (Mr G W Barnard).

The man: Ernest Henry William TWITE (57) of Ribble Road, Coventry was reported missing on Thursday evening and his body was recovered next morning.

The Coroner returned a verdict that death was due to accidental drowning in the pond into which he fell when he lost his way in the dark.

Stanley Twite, a sheet metal worker, of 220 Ferren Road, Wyken, Coventry, said his father lived at Martham with his uncle in his youth and regarded the village as his home.

**HAD NO TORCH**

John Frank Oliver, of Gaze's Terrace (Cess Road) Martham, Twite's uncle said he arrived at Martham on Thursday evening and at 9.15 left witnesses house to go to the King's Arms. When he did not return witness went to the public house and inquired of the landlord if he had seen him. He was told that his nephew had left just before 10.30. Witness informed the Home Guard thinking that his nephew had lost his way and men were sent out but he could not be found. He sat up all night waiting for him and next morning reported his disappearance to the police. It was an exceedingly dark night but his nephew had no torch as he left it at Coventry.

Edward William Warner, labourer of Damgate, Martham, said he was on Home Guard duty when he heard that a man was missing. When going to work early on Friday morning he saw a man in the pond on the green about ten yards from the road, and with help pulled him out.

Arthur Harold Dulley, licensee of the King's Arms, said Twite called in at the house at 9.20 and had a pint of mild and two pints of bitter. When he left at 10.25 he was quite sober. The distance from the door of the Kings Arms to the edge of the pond was about eight yards.

**SHOULD HAVE GONE TO RIGHT**

PC Copeman said there was about three feet of water in the centre of the pond. The direction Twite should have taken to return to his uncle's house was to the right of the pond.

Answering the Coroner, witness said he himself had found it difficult on a dark night to discover when he had reached the pond. Other people had fallen into the pond and 17 years ago a man was drowned in it.

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Stanley Twite, a sheet metal worker, of 220, Ferren-rd., Wyken, Coventry, said his father lived at Martham with his uncle in his youth and regarded the village as his home.

**HAD NO TORCH**

John Frank Oliver, of 6, Gaze's Terrace, Martham, Twite's uncle, said he arrived at Martham on Thursday evening and at 9.15 left witness's house to go to the King's Arms. When he did not return witness went to the public house and inquired of the landlord if he had seen him. He was told that his nephew had left just before 10.30. Witness informed the Home Guard thinking that his nephew had lost his way and men were sent out, but he could not be found. He sat up all night waiting for him and next morning reported his disappearance to the police. It was an exceedingly dark night but his nephew had no torch as he left it at Coventry.

Edward William Warner, labourer of Damgate, Martham, said he was on Home Guard duty when he heard that a man was missing. When going to work early on Friday morning he saw a man in the pond on the green about ten yards from the edge, and with help pulled him out.

Arthur Harold Dulley, licensee of the King's Arms said Twite called at the house at 9.20 and had a pint of mild and two pints of bitter. When he left at 10.25 he was quite sober. The distance from the door of the King's Arms to the edge of the pond was about eight yards.

**SHOULD HAVE GONE TO RIGHT**

P.C. F. Copeman said there was about three feet of water in the centre of the pond. The direction Twite should have taken to return to his uncle's house was to the right of the pond.

Answering the Coroner, witness said he himself had found it difficult on a dark night to discover when he had reached the pond. Other people had fallen into the pond and 17 years ago a man was drowned in it.

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## 1943 - Drowning - George Richard Turner.

Sadly within six months of the last drowning another happened. Shown below is the Yarmouth Mercury report of the death by drowning of George Richard Turner who drowned in the pond on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1943. It says:-

### LOST WAY AND FELL INTO POND

#### Martham Man's death In Black-out

A verdict of "Accidental death" was recorded by the Norwich District Coroner (Mr G W Barnard) at an inquest at Martham on Monday on George Richard Turner (76) of 4 Gaze's Terrace, Martham, whose body was recovered from the pit at the village green on Sunday (3<sup>rd</sup>).

The Coroner found that Turner, who was a widower and lived alone, fell into the water after losing his way in the darkness on Saturday night.

There was evidence that he was a man of sober habits, who went out on Saturday nights only, to have one pint of beer. He had never used an electric torch.

The remarkable thing is that both Mr Twite and Mr Turner lived at Gaze's Terrace and both drowned in the same pond within six months of each other.



## 1943 Parish Council Minutes and the Drownings. folio 213. Drownings

The drownings prompted actions locally. These minutes (folio 213) for the Parish Council meeting that took place on 3rd January 1943 said. :

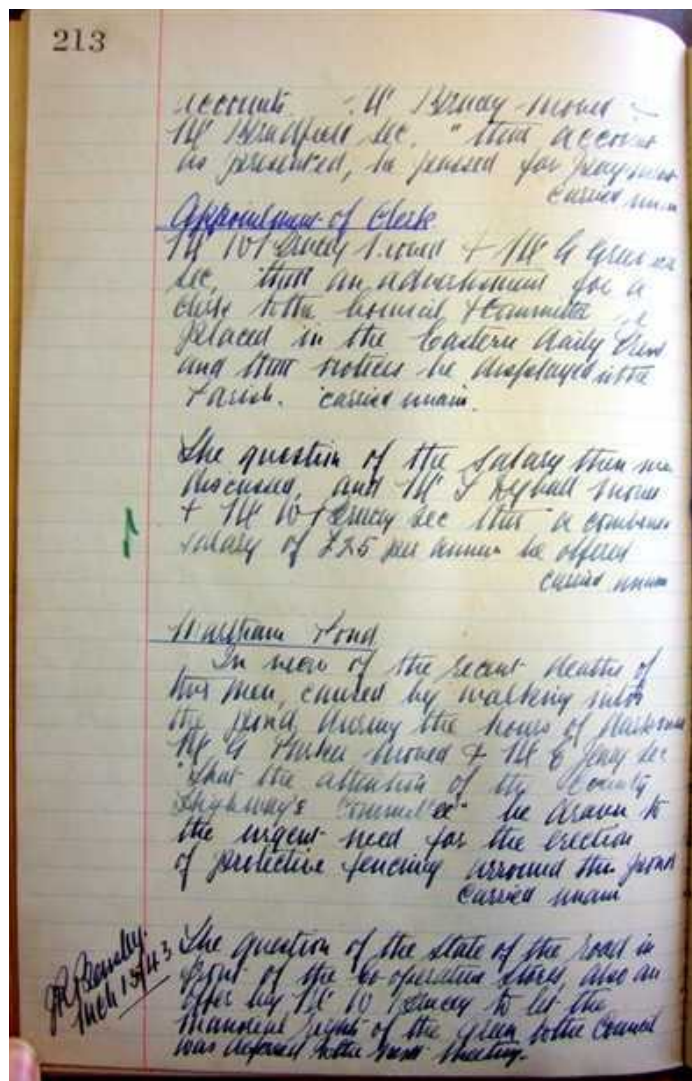
"Martham Pond

In view of the recent deaths of two men, caused by walking into the pond during the hours of darkness Mr G Parker moved & Mr E Jeary seconded: That the attention of the County Highways Committee be drawn to the urgent need for the erection of protective fencing around this pond. Carried." AND

On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> January 1943 the Yarmouth Mercury again reported:-

"MARTHAM POND DANGER

At Tuesday's (5<sup>th</sup> January 1943) meeting of Blofield and Flegg RDC at Acle. Mr O A Starling called attention to the danger to the public of Martham Pond in the black-out, and referred to recent fatal accidents there, and it was decided to approach the county highways authority with a view to securing protective fencing."



In Ann Meakin's book *Martham in Times Past* (page 11) there is an interesting quote from Bob Kights where he said:

"People used to walk out of the pub on *The Green* and fall into the pond. Several got drowned that way, so they filled it in. My father fell in once. He'd not been drinking, only gone to fetch a bottle of stout, but he came back all muddy and said he'd been in the pit (that's what we called the pond). It's so dark out there after all them lights you can't see where you're going when you come out." (Date unknown).

This may refer to *Cranes Green* pond and provide a reason for it being filled in or it may refer to *Porters Pit*.

### 1940-45 Ponds

Attributed to somewhere between 1940 and 1945 this photograph clearly shows that *Cranes Green* pond has gone. It is another good picture of *Ross Villas* but there is a wall along the front rather than picket board fencing.



## 1946 OS Map

Below is a copy of an Ordnance Survey map of 1947 which confirms that only the main pond exists and that the Cranes Green pond has gone.



### 1950 - Ice on main pond

Global warming may be making us hotter now unlike in 1950 when it was so cold people were confident enough to skate on the frozen pond. Chapman's Butchers is to the left and Cranes Green at the top.



### 1950 - Pond and Identification by Cars

In this photograph the car parked outside the pub is a 1948-1954 Wolseley 6/80 and the one behind it is probably a Morris (8 Series 1 or 2, with the spare mounted on the back) although it could also be a Ford (Model Y), both pre-war types.

The car on the far left could be a Ford Popular or an Anglia, both post-war cars but based on pre-war designs. So the photo was taken about 1950.

The pond is surrounded by full railings as requested by the Parish Council in 1943.



Again identified by the cars the photo below seems to show the same 1948-1954 Wolseley and which dates the photo to around 1950. The scene looks in the other direction to the last one.

The advert over the door of the shop seems to be the Wills Gold Flake cigarette advert seen in other photos of the shop in the 1950's.



On 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1950 the Parish Council minutes noted that:-

#### "Pond Railings

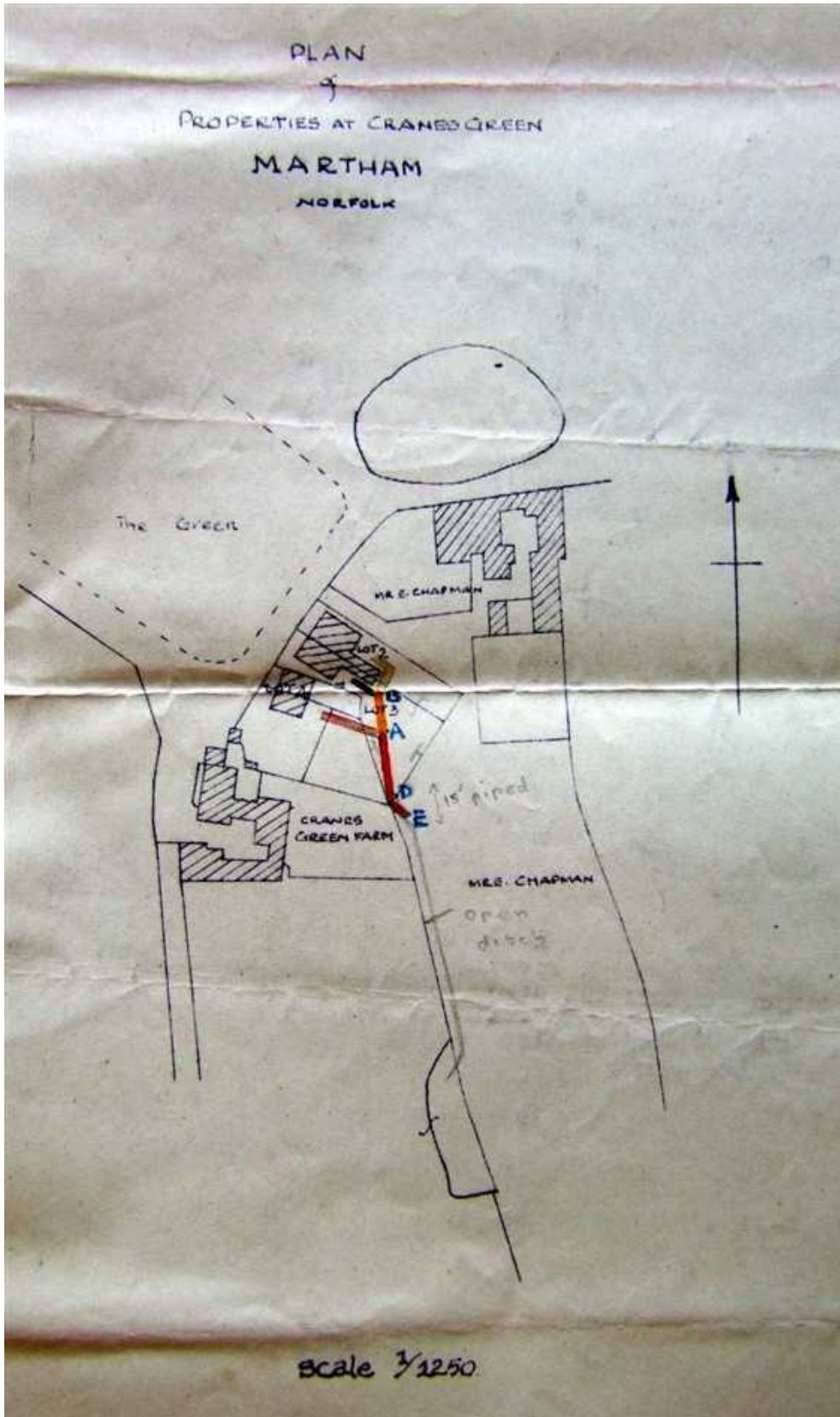
Mrs F A Francis, stated, she had received complaints from people about damage to their clothing from rust when leaning against these railings and asked for something to be done about it. On proposal of Mr R J Bensley, it was decided to write to the Highways Committee asking to have them re-painted.

This was seconded by Mr A A Francis and carried.

Later it was reported at the 12<sup>th</sup> September 1950 meeting that the work had been done.

### 1951 Plan of Cranes Green Farm

Here we have a plan of Cranes Green Farm dated in a document to 1951. It clearly shows Cranes Green Farm and the main pond opposite Chapman's Butchers but no pond on Cranes Green.



## Elizabeth Maggs & Barbara Lown

I am grateful to Liz Toll for this photo with a definite date of her and a friend taken in 1951. The background shows the full set of posts and railings around the pond. The grass on the Green is long and was only cut about six times a year in those days.



## Coronation Year

Only two years after the above photo and we come to the carnival Coronation year in 1953. The railings around the pond and the state of the grass are about the same.



In those days Highways looked after the posts and rails but after Local Government Re-organisation in 1974 they refused to do it and the Parish Council took up responsibility

### **Aerial photograph of Cranes Green Farm**

This aerial shot of Cranes Green Farm (the white thatched house) is thought to have been taken in the mid 1950's. Cranes Green pond has gone. Laurel Cottage, to the left of Cranes Green Farm, is still standing which is a good indication of how the site was before it became the former Doctors Surgery which was actually built on the garden section whilst the house was where the parking area is now.

When the photo was taken none of Broom Close and Rowan Road existed which would now be at the top of the photo. I am grateful to the Moore family for letting me take a copy of this photograph.



### **Main Pond and Centre**

Bringing us up to about 1960 this photo has progressed us through to white painted rails and posts around the main pond. The petrol pumps existed at the time but I am not sure that they were in use.



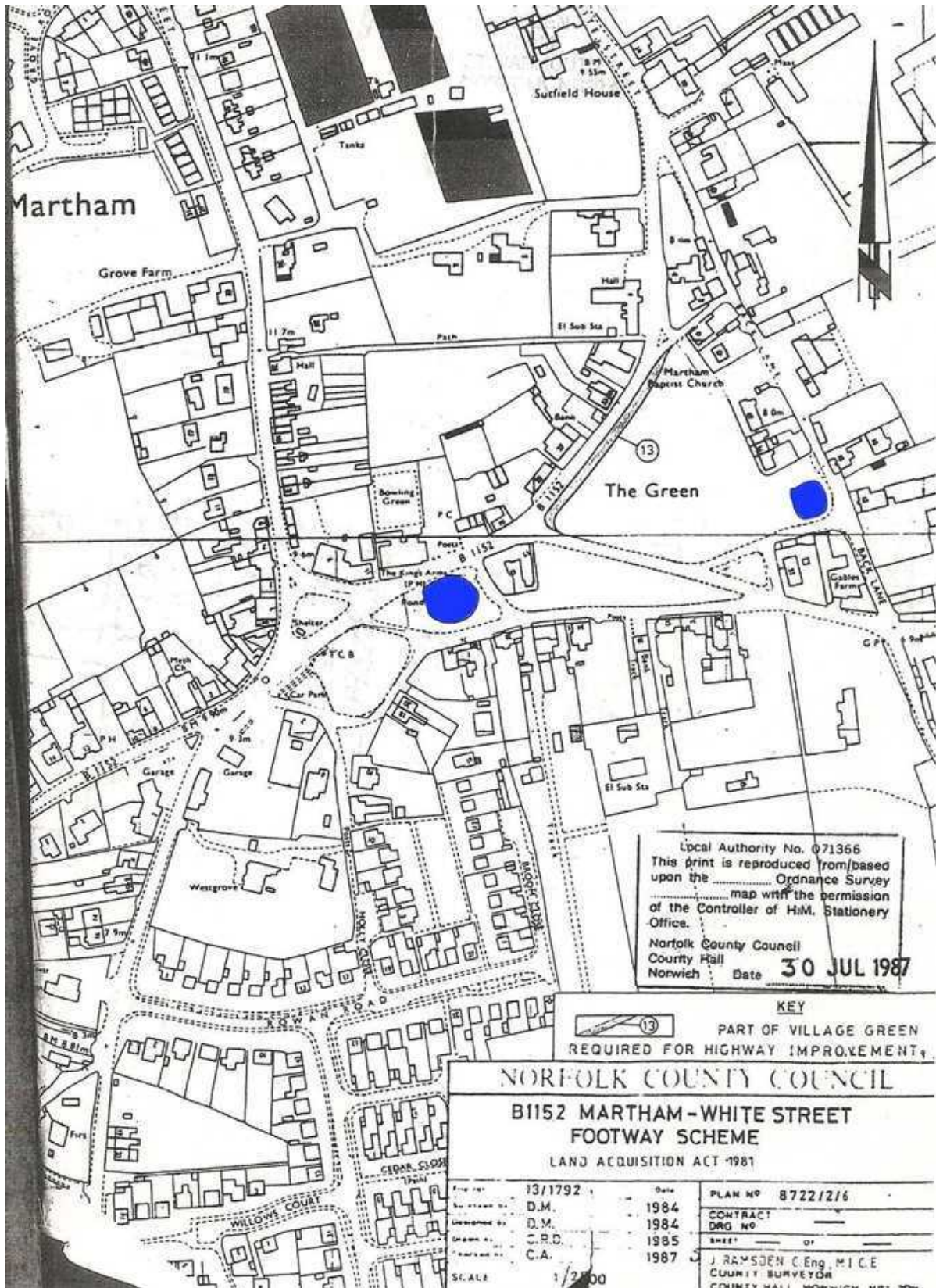
### **Two Men in Boat**

Here is John Goodrum and Keith Roofe cleaning out the pond in 1977. The pond is shallow at the King's Arms end but apparently at least 5' deep just about where the boat is.



## Ordnance Survey Map

Here is a 1987 Norfolk County Council produced map showing the main pond when the White Street footway scheme on the north side of the Green was published. The Back Lane pond is illustrated for reference.





### **Flooded Cranes Green**

Does the pond flood? Well it shouldn't but this is what happened after sudden heavy rain in 1987 on Cranes Green. The former pond was almost reinstated for just a few hours before it drained away. The grass can get squishy in heavy rain but most of the time is dry. Well, the ducks liked it!



## Flooding

The pond opposite the King's Arms should not flood. It is fed by drains from the roadways and some rainwater runs in from nearby properties but it should not flood because there is a grating grill outlet on the west side of the pond which is connected to an outflow system that eventually connects to the Ormesby Broad catchment area via the Willows Estate. This photo shows the small grating in the centre of the picture. It is rather overgrown and in a poor state but nevertheless takes overflowing water out under the service road and across under *Cranes Green*.



Perhaps the pond should not flood but here is a photo taken after what was the equivalent of a monsoon in August 2010. It is not like this often and more problems are caused when there is a lack of water in the summer and short term algae forms on the water and a lack of oxygen in the water can kill the fish.



### **Inspection Chamber Cranes Green**

This photo shows one of the inspection chambers on Cranes Green where overflowing water from the main pond begins its underground journey out via the Willows Estate to the drainage catchment area of Ormesby Broad. In a strange way the drainage under Cranes Green is the equivalent of the former pond.



.....and the Village Pond in 2015

