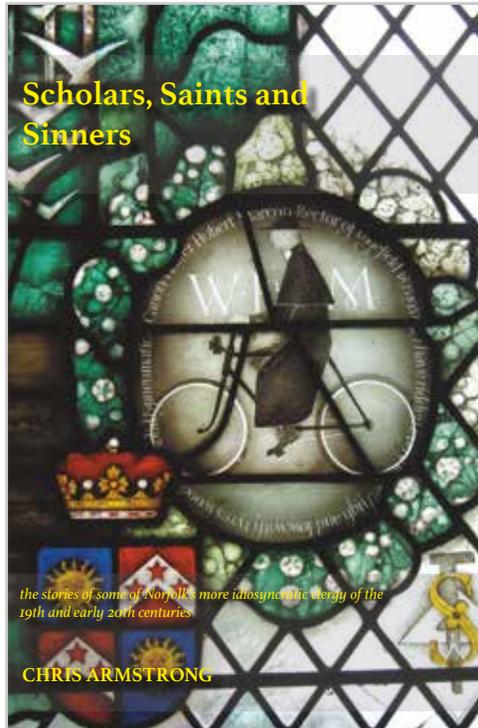


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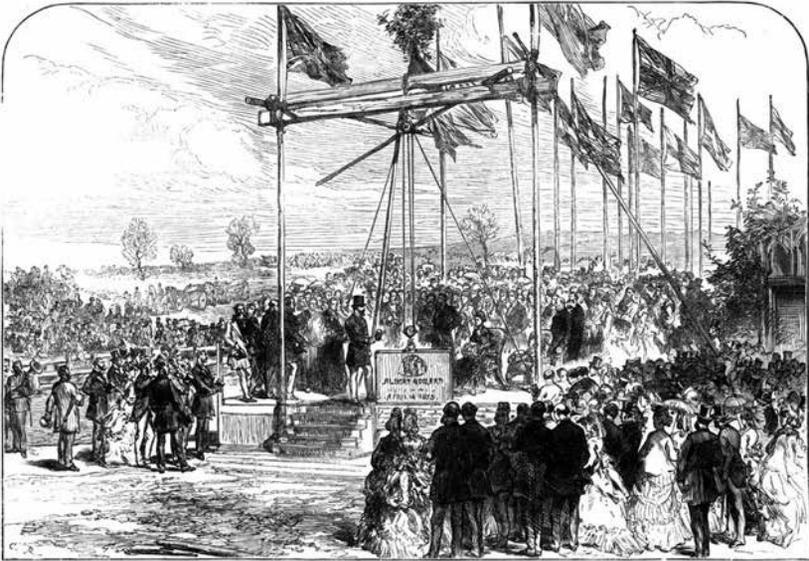
Alphonse de Neuville – 'The Defence of Rorke's Drift 1879' is based on eye witness accounts and depicts several events of the battle occurring at once. Central to the action is The Revd George 'Ammunition' Smith handing out cartridges from a haversack. Born in Docking, West Norfolk, his claim to hero status comes not from a long and sustained series of actions, but from his courage on one violent and bloody day in January 1879 when eleven Victoria Crosses were awarded. He was not among them.

Poppyland Publishing is pleased to announce *Scholars, Saints and Sinners: the stories of some of Norfolk's more idiosyncratic clergy of the 19th and 20th centuries* by Chris Armstong.

At a time when there were perhaps three or four parish priests caring for an area, which today may have just one, some Norfolk clergy found they had ample leisure time. How they used this time depended upon their own inclinations. Augustus Jessopp and Whitwell Elwin of Booton became well known in literary circles. Walter Marcon indulged his passion for cycling while rebuilding the church at Edgefield, Joseph Brereton was a leading educational reformer, while the eccentric Harold Davidson of Stiffkey claimed to have devoted his ministry to the salvation of London prostitutes – an approach which finally resulted in his being de-frocked in a notorious case, the equity of which, is still a matter of debate today. Norfolk born George Smith emigrated to South Africa and became one of the heroes of Rorke's Drift.

Some were less than exemplary. Thomas Berney, having successfully appealed against a court judgement that he had 'solicited the chastity' of both the wife and sister-in-law of a neighbouring clergyman became a legal groupie, bringing a series of bizarre actions, to the irritation of the court, while writing extremely eccentric pamphlets, largely influenced by his Francophobia. Edmund Holmes, suspected of the attempted rape of a young girl underwent an amazing transformation in a mental home, from inmate to chaplain in a matter of weeks, while the extraordinary Arthur Loftus recruited his housemaid and cook from a local brothel, sharing their less domestic services indiscriminately with his manservant.

The allegedly fratricidal Lord Frederick Townshend, the agriculturist Thomas Munnings, the would be Indian missionary Frank Lillingston and the short-fused Augustus Beavor complete this collection of the stories of some of Norfolk's idiosyncratic clergy.



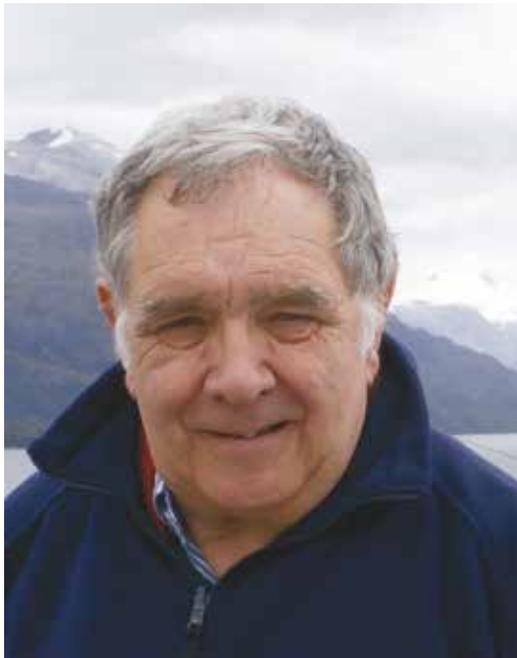
The laying of the foundation stone of the Norfolk County School in 1873 by the Prince of Wales at North Elmham. The brainchild of The Revd J L Brereton, his vision was to create an affordable private education, under a broad religious umbrella, for the sons of middle-class parents in schools not controlled by the state or the Church but by shareholders.



Mannington Hall where, in 1879, Augustus Jessopp, while sitting late at night examining and taking notes on various ancient documents, claimed to have seen an ecclesiastically dressed figure of a man examining the books on which he had been working.

About the author

Chris Armstrong is the son, nephew, grandson (twice) and great grandson of Norfolk clergy with a combined total of over 100 years ministry in the Norwich Diocese. Educated at Gresham's School he broke with family tradition by following a peripatetic career in the financial sector. In retirement he has served as a trustee of a number of local charities, and as a magistrate on the Norfolk Bench, combining these roles with the completion of a First Class Honours Degree from the Open University. After graduating he began to research some aspects of Norfolk's social history and his books on Norwich's 19th century entrepreneurs and the history of Norfolk's independent department stores followed the publication of a new edition, which he edited, of extracts from the diaries of his great grandfather. In this book he has returned to the study of the 'family business'. When not researching or writing he is usually to be found adding to his already extensive collection of Test Match grounds around the world on which he has witnessed an English batting collapse.



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Excerpt from *Scholars, Saints and Sinners: the stories of some of Norfolk's more indiosyncratic clergy of the 19th and 20th centuries*

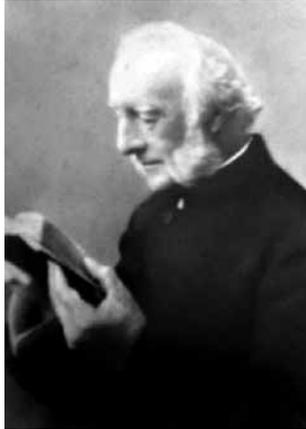
Canon Augustus Jessopp

Headmaster, Parish Priest, Antiquarian and prolific Author.

Augustus Jessopp was born in December 1823, the youngest of ten children, into a comfortably off family. His father was variously a barrister, a tax inspector and an unsuccessful parliamentary candidate. He had an unsettled childhood, spent in a variety of places; although the family home was in Cheshunt, the Jessopps, like many contemporary English families of their class, lived on the continent for fairly lengthy periods. The reasons were usually financial, but that seems unlikely in this case, and his father still practiced in the English courts, even when the family lived in either Brussels or the Hague.

Jessopp's schooling began at a small preparatory school near Epping Forest whose advertisements in *The Times* bragged that the boys had separate beds! He went on briefly to a senior school in Stockwell before moving to another school in Germany. What all his schools seem to have had in common is that Jessopp didn't particularly like them and was unhappy at each. These experiences must have influenced him to set out to do things differently at the two schools of which he was later headmaster.

On leaving school, Jessopp's ambitions of following his brother to Cambridge were initially ruled out by his father on financial grounds, and he was found a place in a shipping company in Liverpool, in which one of his brothers-in-law was a partner. Although it was only a



Canon Augustus Jessopp.

Dr Jessopp preached one of his eccentric sermons without reference to the object which had brought us together.

Diary entry of The Revd B J Armstrong, 2 September 1880.

couple of years before he was able to persuade his father to relent and allow him to go up to Cambridge, his stay in Liverpool was to prove a major factor in his future life. It was there that he met the daughter of the senior partner of the firm, Mary Anne Cotesworth, who was to become his wife.

From an early age Jessopp had literary interests and aspirations. An admirer of Coleridge from a young age his time at Cambridge reinforced and broadened his literary taste. He developed a great interest particularly in the work of John Donne. Indeed the first, some years later, of the many books he published was *Essays in Divinity by John Donne DD*, which he edited.

Graduating BA in April 1847 he was ordained Deacon just a month later and became curate of the parish of St Agnes, Papworth. He soon discovered that there was more to working in a country parish than simply preaching. He became the arbiter of village disputes and the 'first (and sometimes only) responder' in medical crises. The following year he married Mary Anne Cotesworth and together they became involved with education as providers for the first time in the village school founded by the Rector.

One of the attractions of a country living was that, despite the various expectations of his role, there was plenty of time to indulge his interest in writing and the research which preceded it. The downside was that although he was still quite close to Cambridge, there was not immediately available to him the amount of material needed to feed his appetite to complete his work on Donne. After seven years he resigned his curacy and returned to live in Cambridge where he was not only able to access such material but also to find a publisher for his

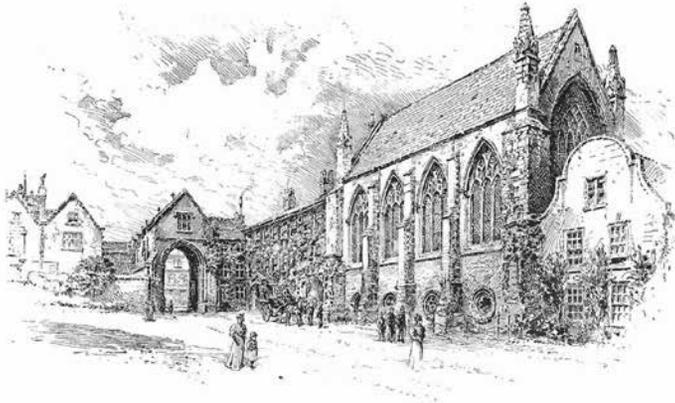
work. The book was published in 1855.

Despite some inherited wealth, life was not easy financially when he returned to Cambridge and he applied for various posts, initially with limited success but, after a year, and with his first work published, he was appointed as Headmaster of a school in Cornwall, Helston Grammar School. Teaching afforded, as with appointment to a country parish, at least during the holidays, the opportunity to indulge his taste for research. He found a school in decline, with very few pupils. Jessopp brought enthusiasm and energy to his role and was so successful that when, after three years, he applied for the Headmastership of Norwich Grammar School, he could point to how his stewardship at Helston had tripled the number of pupils.

His selection as Headmaster of Norwich came at a difficult time for that school. Established originally in 1096 it had received a Royal Charter in 1547, moving shortly afterwards to its current site, by the cathedral. Like Helston, the number of its pupils had waxed and waned, but hit a low of eight in the early 19th Century.

By the time of Jessopp's appointment it had recovered a little, with 30 pupils on the roll. The city of Norwich was just beginning to recover economically from a long decline and its renaissance was largely the result of the genius of a small group of predominantly Baptist and Methodist entrepreneurs. The traditional, classical, nature of the Norwich School's educational focus and its clear Anglican traditions did not have obvious appeal for the increasingly non-conformist professional classes who would have constituted its natural constituency.

Jessopp set out to change that, and his approach was



THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

Norwich Grammar School.

symptomatic of the age. Thomas Arnold, at Rugby, had led the way. Although continuing, and valuing, the classical tradition Arnold had broadened the scope of the curriculum with the addition of subjects such as Mathematics and Modern Languages. He had changed the whole tenor of his school by the introduction of monitorial roles and by a focus on moral development. His practices were an influence on many other headmasters and Jessopp was no exception.

A broader curriculum was quickly introduced at Norwich and Jessopp went out of his way to align the ethos of the school more closely with that of the Public Schools which were increasing both in numbers and popularity. Unlike Arnold he was also an enthusiast for organised team sport – his especial fondness was for cricket – and the time he had spent both at home and at school on the continent made him especially at ease with the introduction of French and German to the curriculum.

Jessopp introduced additional examinations and believed firmly in the motivational benefit of these and the resulting prizes and scholarships to encourage pupils

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