

Patron: Lord Cobbold DL
Ivry, Lady Freyberg

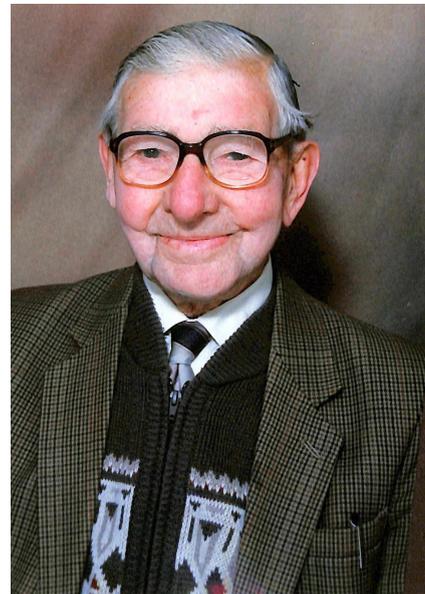
Arthur Syrett

April 2020

Born at The Case is Altered on Woodbridge Road in Ipswich – his father was the landlord – it was beer instead of milk that Arthur first supped on.

Leaving school at fourteen he trained as an apprentice draughtsman, making detailed plans and designs, but the tuition fees were costly, forcing him to give up.

In 1926, and most likely with the encouragement of his father, Arthur approached Cobbold's for a job and was subsequently offered the job of a drayman – this was in the time of horse-drawn drays. But it wasn't long before the drays became mechanised and Arthur moved onto lorries. The hours were long and the work hard, but the country was in the midst of the Great Depression, so there was little to complain about.



Arthur about 1990

Like many young men football was the sport, and it wasn't long before he joined Cobbold's football team. Unfortunately, a broken ankle finished his playing days. But he wasn't finished with football. 'Ivan' had bought into Ipswich Town and turned the club professional in 1936 with Arthur sinking money into the club's shares and so began a life-long commitment to the club.

During that period, he was offered the chance to train as a landlord. Accepting, Arthur began his 'education' at the old Mulberry Tree in Ipswich. It was about this time he met and married Agnes. But whilst at the Mulberry Tree, Arthur had the shocking experience of encountering a ghost! He'd been upstairs collecting a stock of cigarettes when a grey apparition of a woman floated towards and then through him! He came downstairs faster than he went up!

Having completed his training, and seeing no more ghosts, Arthur and Agnes took on the Half Moon at Walton, near Felixstowe, and soon began enjoying the life of a landlord in a popular country pub. Probably following the death of his father, 'Ivan' tasked his Surveyor, Cleere Cutting, to devise a plan to move the family silverware from Holywells to Glemham Hall.

Cleere approached Arthur and asked if he would do the job. It was agreed it would have to be in the dead of night and without a word to anyone else. Also, there'd be no pay and no entry into the lorry's logbook. Pleased he had the right man, Cleere asked Arthur what he'd like for the deed. The answer was short. An

original 'The Cliff Brewery 1723 – 1923' book. Cleere said he'd see what he could do but could make no promises.

A few nights later Arthur eased his lorry to a halt outside Holywells Mansion. Thankfully, no one was around as he carefully loaded the dray before hauling the valuable and much prized haul on to Glemham. A month or so passed before a small brown package fell through the letterbox. The much-cherished book had arrived.

Eventually, Arthur received his call-up for war service, though leave saw him return on the odd occasion. In 1941 Agnes gave birth to a daughter at the Half Moon, naming her Carol, but the excitement was short-lived. The temporary landlord had almost bankrupted the business and the pub closed. Being away at war there was little else he could do, and Agnes and Carol had no option but to go and live with relatives in Peterborough.

In July 1943, a son was born, and Arthur named him Ivan after 'Ivan'. Sadly, he contracted meningitis and died just two months later. Knowing he was close to a nervous breakdown, 'Ivan' asked Arthur if he would consider being his batman. However, for reasons unknown, Arthur decided against. Tragically, 'Ivan' was one of many killed at Guards Chapel in June 1944 when it was struck by a V1 'flying bomb'.

The war ended and Arthur returned home to Ipswich to seek work. Cobbolds offered the pub back again but Arthur said no, and he returned to be a drayman again. Cobbolds generously offered Arthur a tied cottage (built at the same time as the Mansion) almost inside Holywells by the Nacton Road entrance. It was a gesture he was forever thankful for and perhaps reflects the mutual respect between him and the Cobbold family. Settled once more, four years later a second daughter, Sandra, was born completing the family.

Retiring from the drays in 1971 after 45 years' service, Arthur remained at Pound Cottages. Agnes passed away in 1982 and Arthur in 1995, thus ending the story.

Finally, Cobbolds and Holywells have played a deep and central part in our family's lives and continue to do so, though restricted these days to visits to the park. Sadly, the brewery is no more. However, the Cobbold name still resonates in the town having enriched many lives across the years. It's an integral part of our local history, and one Ipswichians are proud and protective of.

Bob Pearson
April 2020

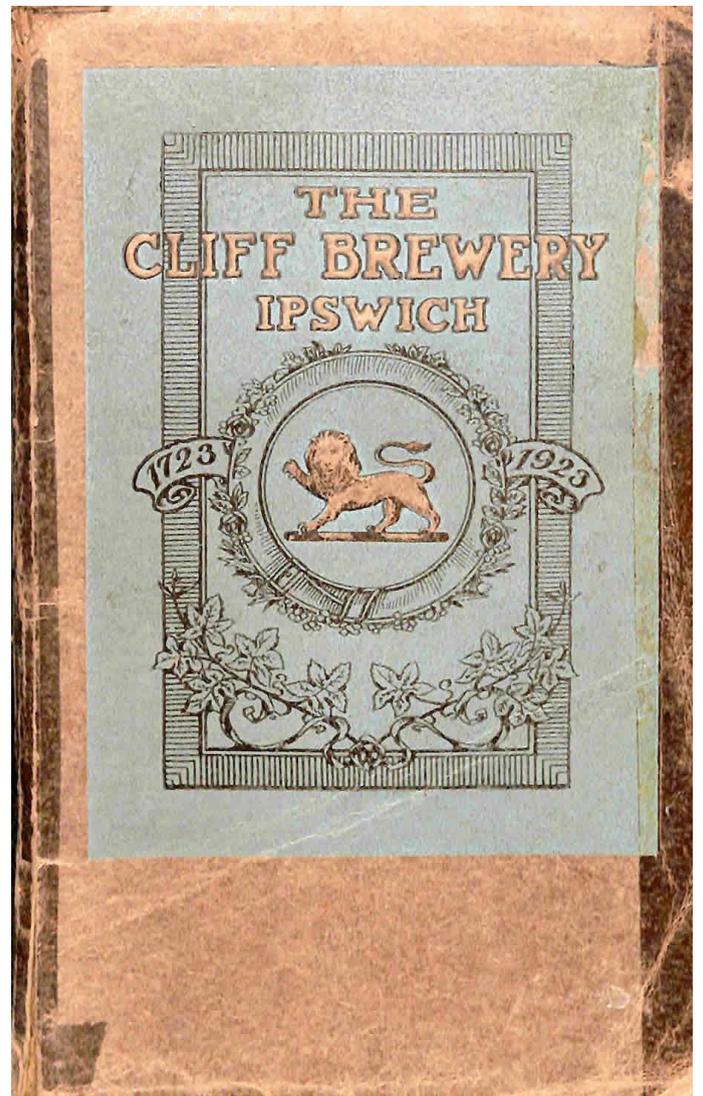
Photograph of Half Moon Inn (late 1920s or early 1930s) by courtesy of John Michael Smith.



Cliff Brewery FC 1926/27. Arthur with ball and Cleere Cutting back left



Half Moon Inn, Walton



1923 Souvenir book celebrating the Bi-centenary of Cliff Brewery