

A WALK THROUGH OUR PAST

Welcome to Theberton and Eastbridge where we invite you to take a walk around our Heritage Trail and through our past.

You will find one of these boards to help you in each of our village pubs, the Lion at Theberton and the Eel's Foot in Eastbridge.

Sites you may visit include:

St Peter's Church, and the old school (now Village Hall) in Theberton village and nearby Theberton House. There is a children's playing field in Church Road, Theberton and another in Eastbridge beside the cemetery. Near Eastbridge and the surrounding Minsmere levels are the Tuppenny Bridge and the site of St Mary's Abbey, close to the North Sea Coast. Complete your walk with a drink or meal at the Lion or the Eel's Foot Inn.

Theberton & Eastbridge Heritage Trail

A HISTORY

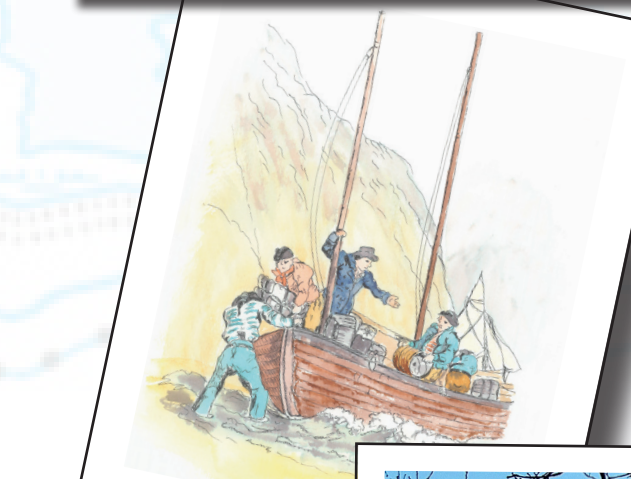
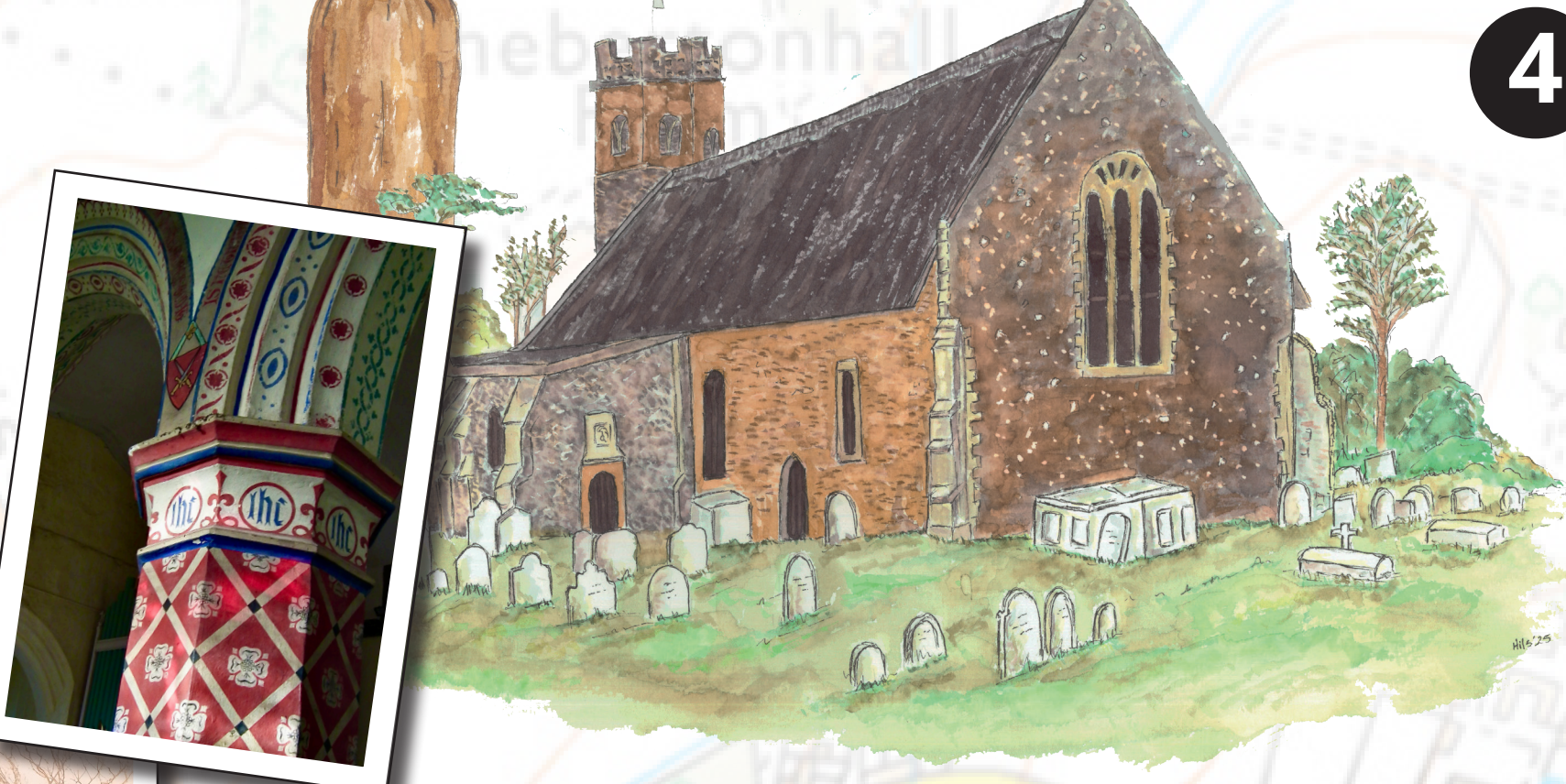
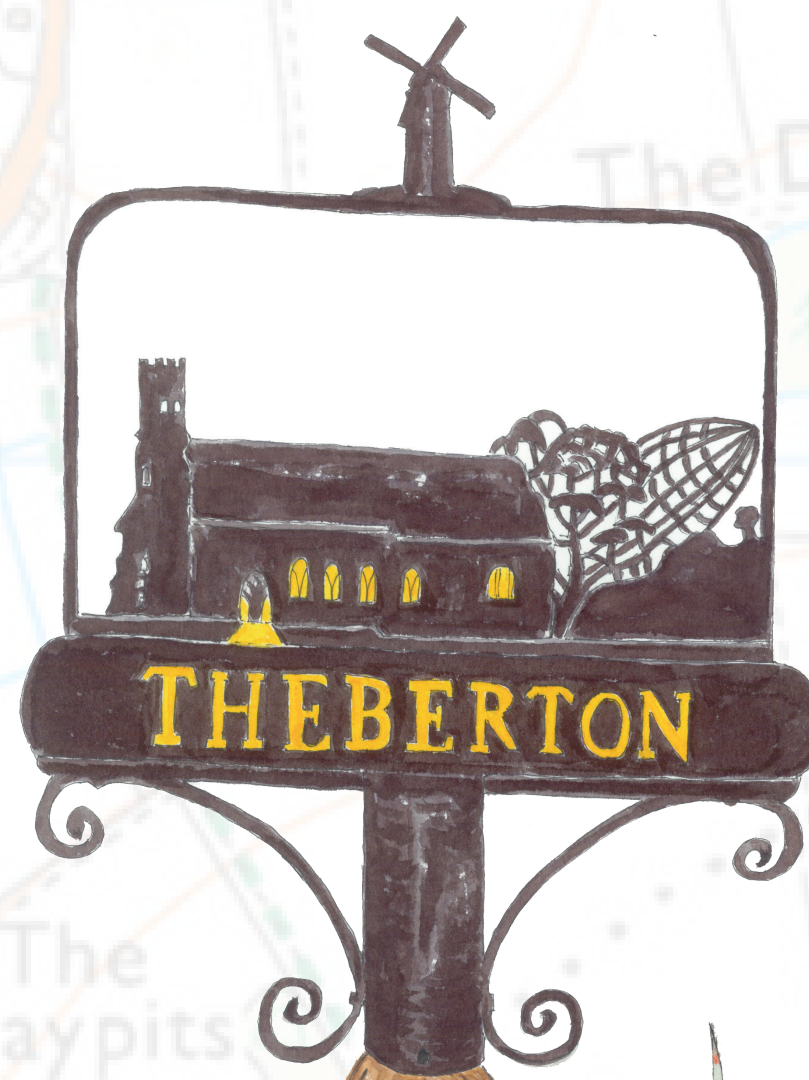
4 Theberton and Eastbridge are sited within a rural, and previously remote, area of coastal Suffolk and have a chiefly agricultural past. Records from 1500-1640 report sheep rearing and barley growing as the main activities. Following enclosure in the 1800s, a wider variety of crops were grown, which have given way to intensive cereal and sugar beet production in recent years.

Lady Evelyn Balfour, a pioneer of organic farming and co-founder of the Soil Association in 1946, lived in Theberton for many years.

The history of the parish has also seen the construction of an important church and abbey in medieval times, the widely reported shooting down of a Zeppelin in WW1 and the use of land as an American airbase in WW2.

KEY

- 1** Eel's Foot Public House
- 2** Tuppenny Bridge
- 3** Old Eastbridge Chapel
- 4** Zeppelin Crash Site
- 5** Old School (Jubilee Hall)
- 6** St Peter's Church
- 7** Theberton Lion Public School
- 8** Theberton House
- 9** Eastbridge Cemetary
- 10** Leiston Old Abbey (ruins)



FACT The present Eel's Foot Inn dates from 1642, its name likely derived from the trapping of eels in the surrounding wetlands, prior to drainage for smugglers travelling up the Minsmere river from the coast. In December 1747 a band of well armed smugglers, who were running goods near Sizewell, clashed with a detachment of fusiliers in the Inn's yard. Two smugglers were captured and sentenced to death at the Old Bailey.

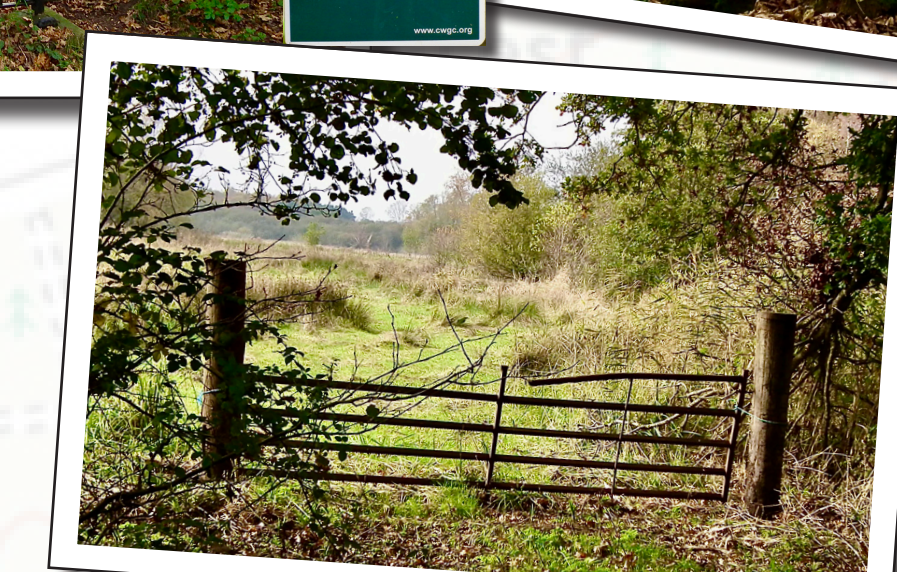
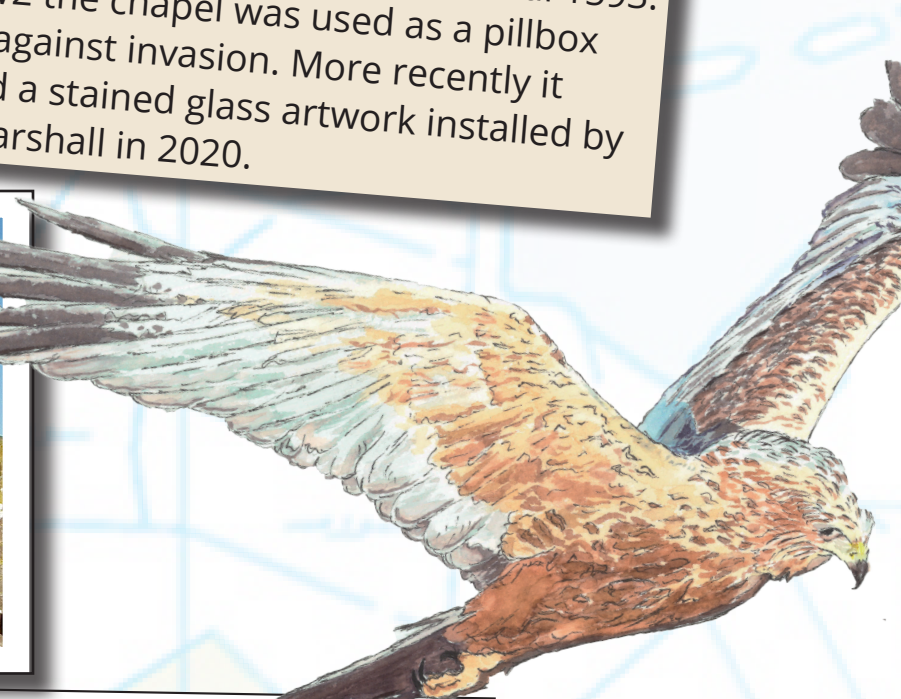


FACT Priests of the Premonstratensian order (White Canons) founded a monastery here in 1182 on a marshland isle connected to Eastbridge by a causeway. The site, however, was prone to flooding and mosquitoes, and the abbey was moved to its present site near Leiston, leaving St Mary's chapel, which remained in use until 1593. During WW2 the chapel was used as a pillbox to protect against invasion. More recently it has housed a stained glass artwork installed by Abella Marshall in 2020.



FACT The Eastbridge Wind Pump was built in the mid 19th century, one of four levels. It collapsed in February 1977 and was later incorporated into the restored mill in the Food Museum at Stowmarket, Suffolk.

The levels themselves were created from common land in the early 1800s, but as erosion of the local coastline continues, the Environment Agency suggests that maintenance may be impractical over the next 50 years.

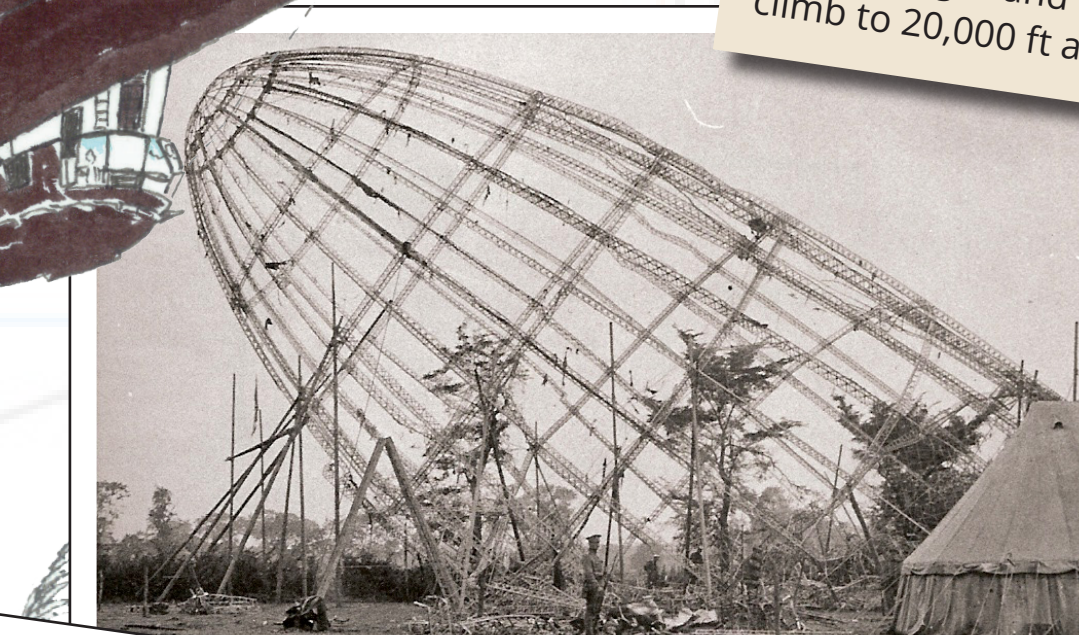
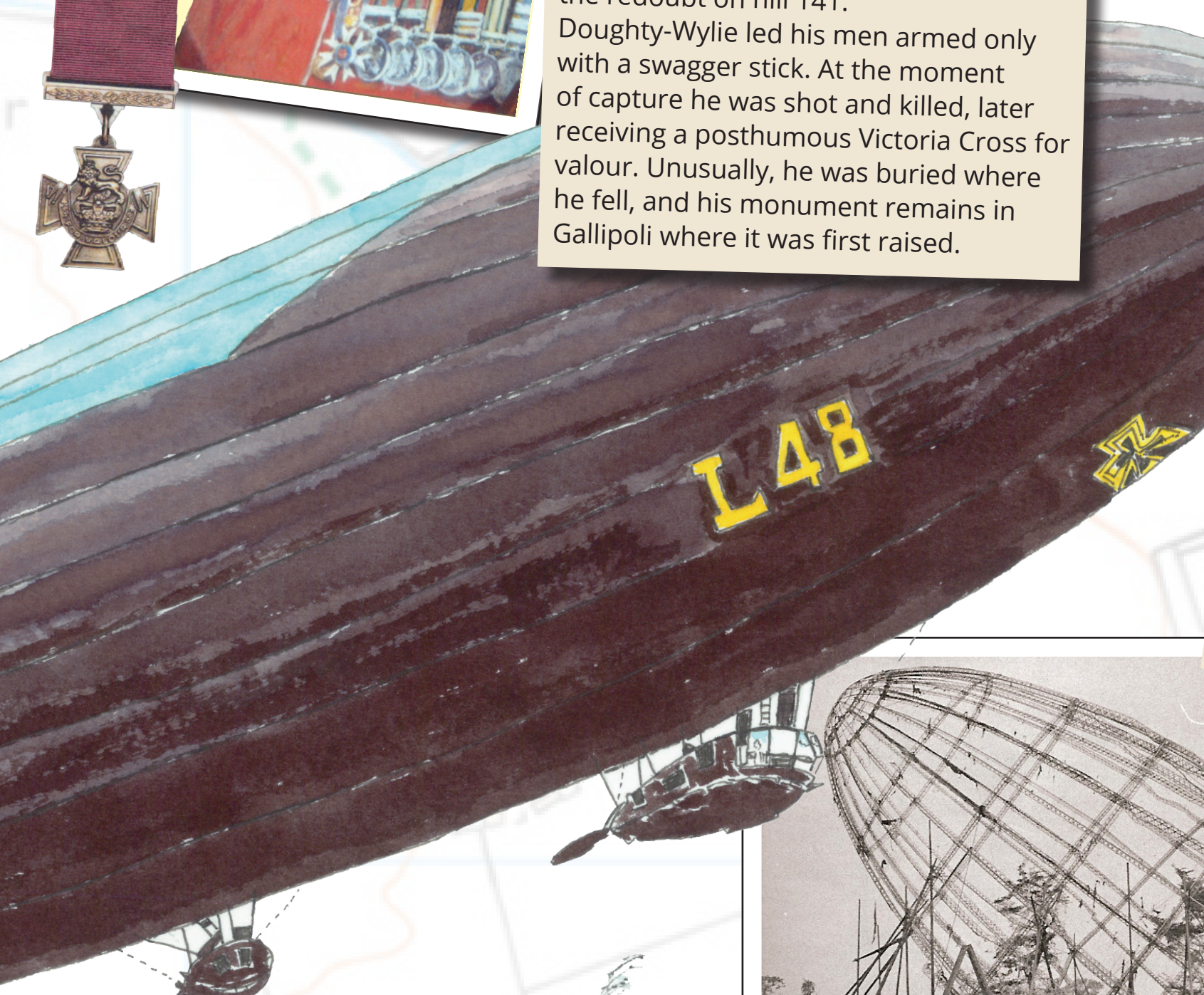


FACT Lt Colonel Doughty-Wylie landed on the Gallipoli peninsula (in modern day Turkey) in April 1915 during WW1, where he and his troops stormed and captured the redoubt on hill 141. Doughty-Wylie led his men armed only with a swagger stick. At the moment of capture he was shot and killed, later receiving a posthumous Victoria Cross for valour. Unusually, he was buried where he fell, and his monument remains in Gallipoli where it was first raised.



FACT During WW1, on the morning of 17th June 1917, a German Zeppelin L48 was shot down close to Theberton. 16 crew members died and only 3 survived the crash. The deceased were buried in the annex to St Peter's churchyard until 1966, when their remains were moved to the German Military Cemetery at Cannock Chase.

The L48 was 650ft long (the length of the 3 Jumbo Jets), contained 2 million cu.ft. of hydrogen gas and weighed 60,000 lb. It could climb to 20,000 ft and travel at 60 mph.



Theberton has been home to many individuals who have contributed significantly to national life:

William Light (1786-1839), Soldier, surveyor and town planner of Adelaide, Australia. Lived in Theberton Hall with George and Ann Doughty who commissioned the building in 1780.

Thomas Milner Gibson (1806-1884) Politician and Free-Trader; lived in Theberton House.

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Charles Doughty-Wylie V.C (1868-1915) Nephew of Charles Montague. British Consul and Army Officer.

Lady Evelyn Balfour. (1898-1990) Pioneer of organic farming and co-founder, in 1946, of the Soil Association.

THEBERTON

Theberton is a thriving village of approximately 170 people and 90 houses, with a pub, a village hall and a caravan park. Look out for: Grade 1 listed St Peter's Church with its thatched roof and round tower. Round towers are an unusual medieval feature, found mostly in East Anglia.

Theberton is twinned with Thebarton, a suburb of Adelaide, the Australian city planned by Theberton resident Thomas Milner.

EASTBRIDGE

Eastbridge is a hamlet of around 70 people and 40 houses in a rural setting with a historic pub and a working farm that rears prize-winning Simmental cattle. This gentle Swiss breed can be seen grazing in the surrounding fields and marshes. Eastbridge borders the Minsmere river and is a gateway to birding heaven.

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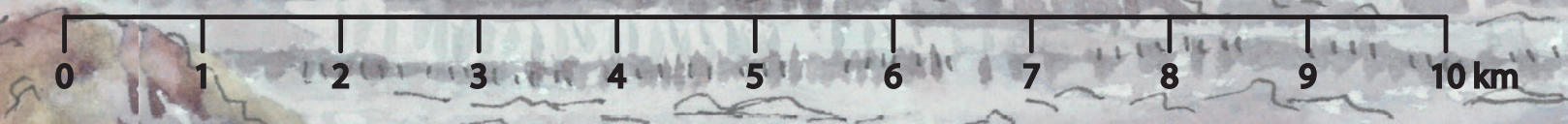
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Illustrations - Hilary Ward©

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QR Code



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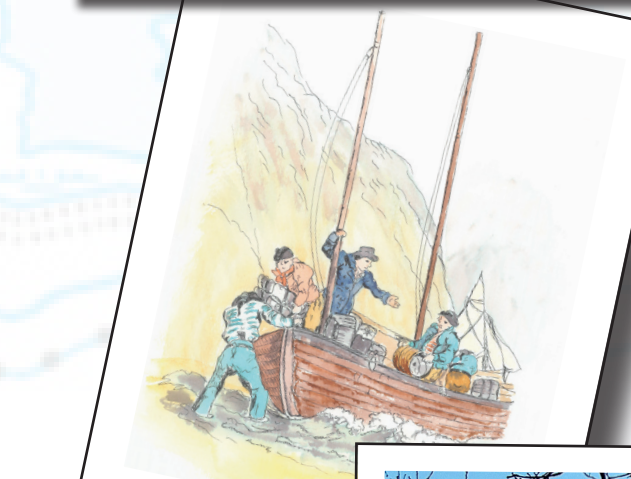
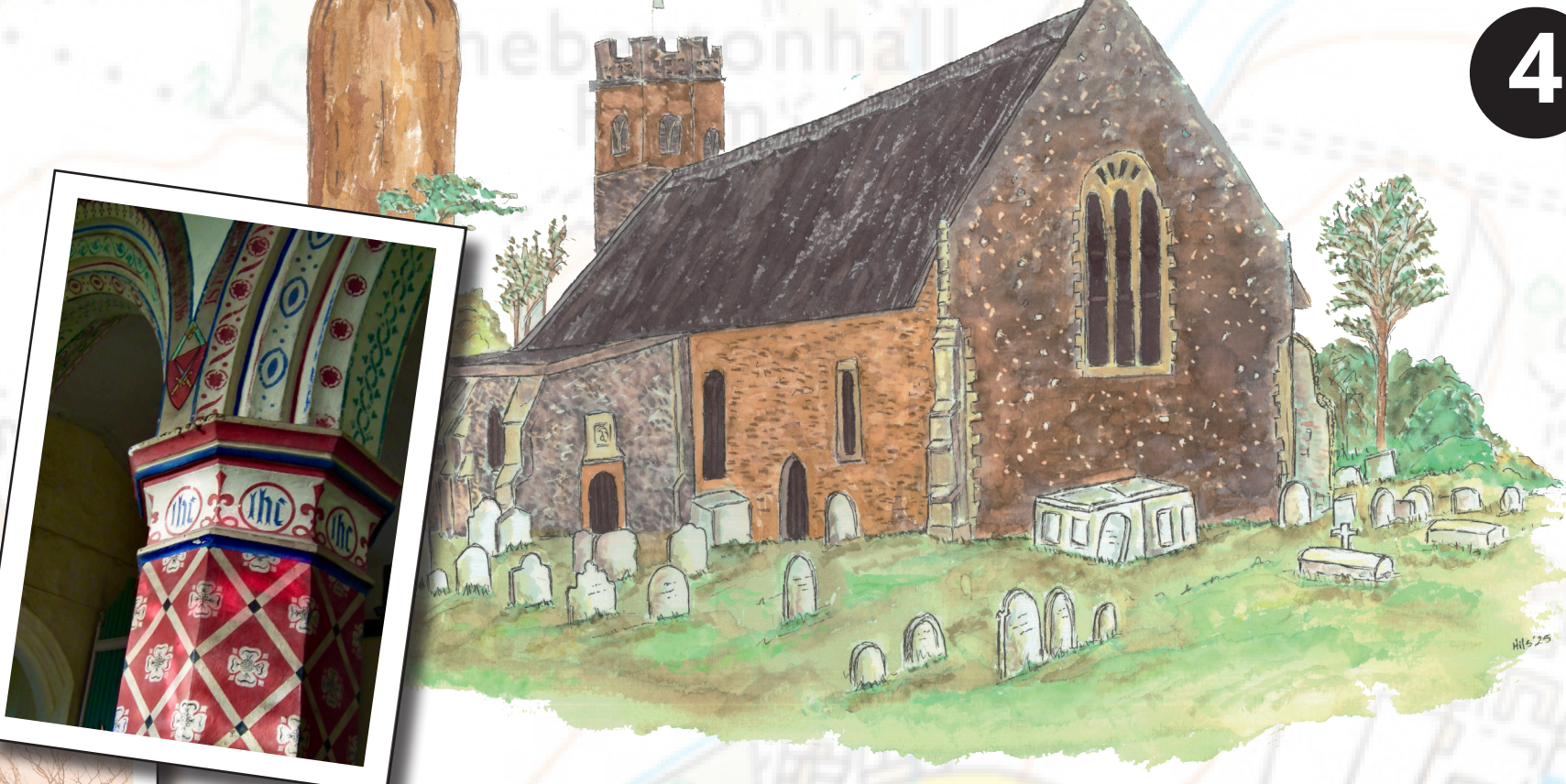
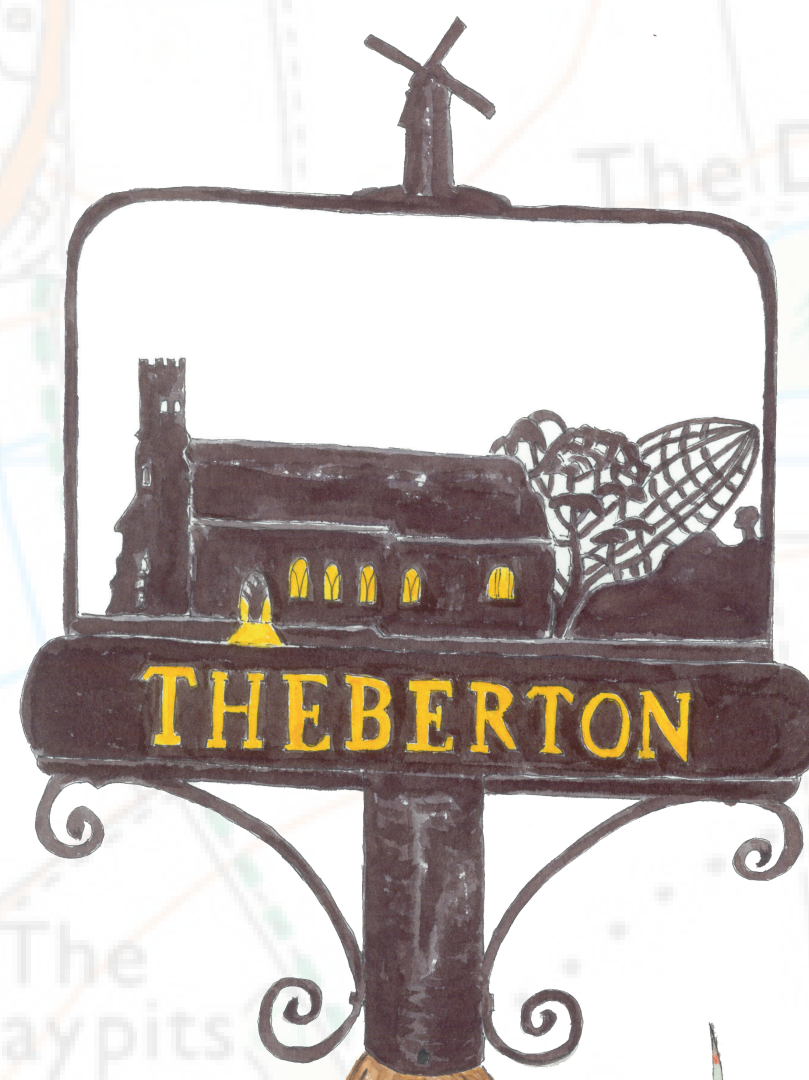
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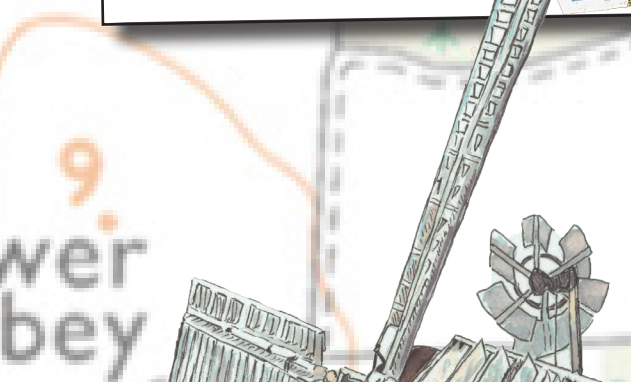
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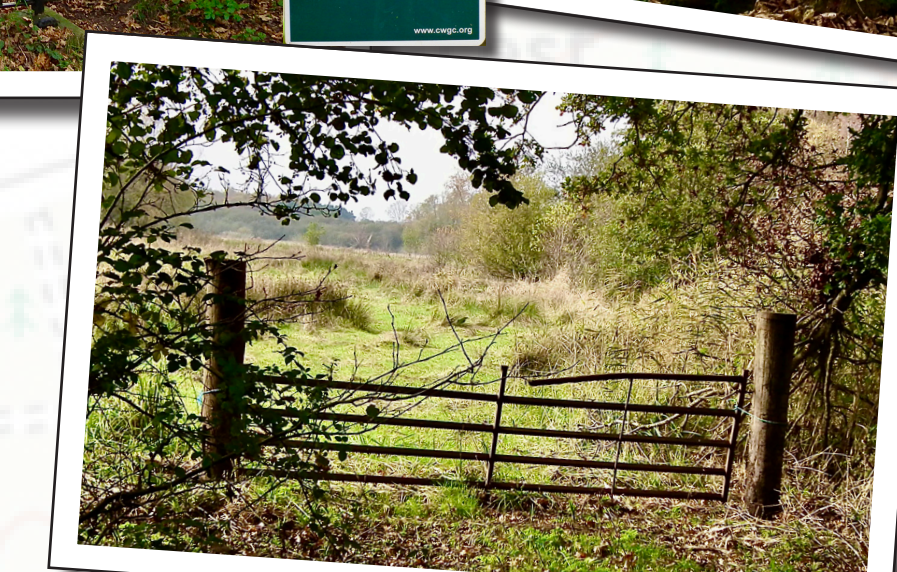
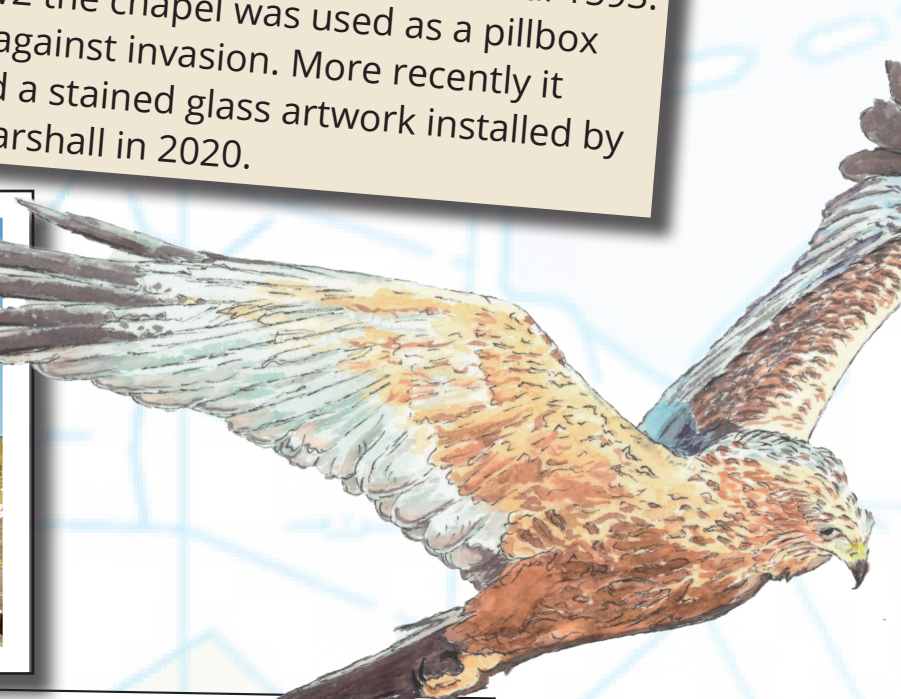


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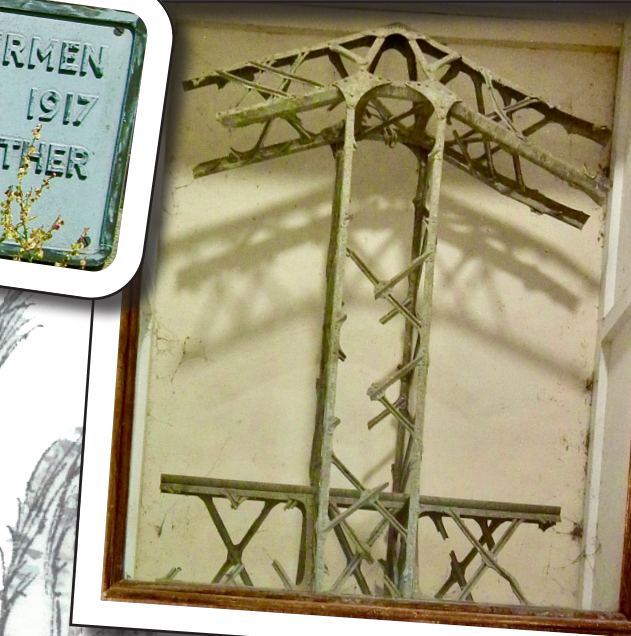


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