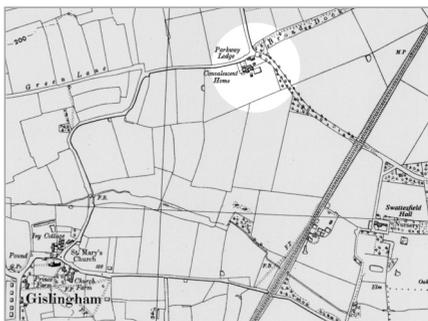


## NOTES FROM THORNHAM

Set in a garden wall at Thornham Hall is this stone, inscribed “Thornham Memorial Cottage Hospital A.D. 1870”. The short-lived hospital was actually in Mellis Road, Gislingham, now called Greens Farm, but more usually Parkway Farm or Hospital Farm. Perhaps chosen for its isolation the place was not quite as inaccessible as it seems as the Parkway lane ran from here to Swattisfield Hall (demolished in the 1920s) and to Thornham Hall.

Between 1860 and 1890 there was a thriving cottage hospital movement and at least 240 were built. The aim was to provide basic care locally for the poor



with better comfort, hygiene and food than at home, while avoiding the dread of going into the workhouse.

At the harvest home in September 1871 Lord Henniker said that a cottage hospital would soon open locally and he hoped it would also be used by surrounding parishes. He had built this simple cottage as a memorial to his father.

Very little information is to be found, but it didn't work out as hoped. At the harvest home only six years later Lord Henniker announced that although the hospital had done much good and many people had been relieved, some of those who had helped him with it from the first thought it was not doing sufficient good and that it ought to be given up. It would carry on until the end of the year and he left it to the inhabitants to decide whether it should continue after that.

It was not to continue and soon became a children's convalescent home run by the Waifs and Strays' Society, staffed by a matron, nurse and sometimes a servant, and caring for eight or nine children, mostly boys from London. It closed in 1901 and Hospital Farm was one of the outlying portions of the Estate sold in 1948.

✳ All Notes from Thornham are now on [www.thornhams.org](http://www.thornhams.org)

### SEPTEMBER EVENTS IN THE THORNHAMS

- Wednesday 11th: Magna Village Meeting, Parish Hall, 7.30
- Friday 27th: Parish Hall film, *Rocketman*, £5, bookings 07858 934440