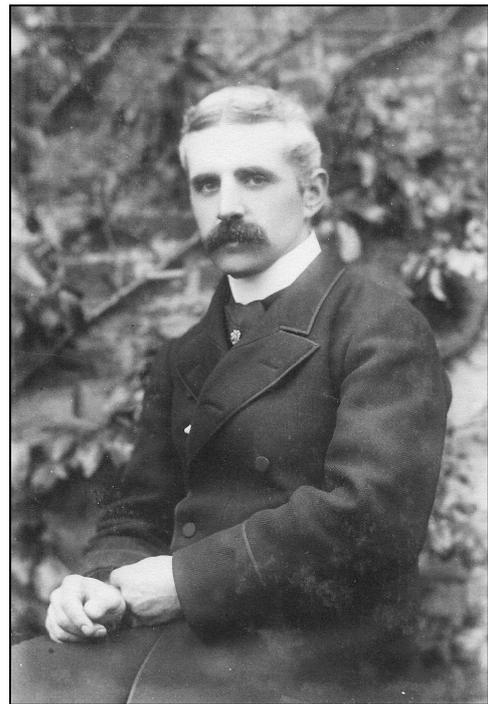


SIR ALAN REEVE MANBY (1838-1925). K.B., K.C.V.O., L.S.A., F.R.C.S. (Eng.), M.D. (Durham). – Physician extraordinary to King Edward VII and King George V.

“To such men we owe much of the luxury of the modern car; his first car, if I remember rightly, had neither hood, windscreen or pneumatic tyres.”

Dr Maurice Mottram, *British Medical Journal* (1925).

Sir Alan Reeve Manby (1848-1925) [Epsom College 1859-1864] was for many years the trusted medical attendant of the Royal Family in their home life at Sandringham. He came from a long line of medical practitioners, his father, Dr Frederick Manby, and grandfather both being surgeons in Norfolk, and his brother, Frederick Edward Manby, F.R.C.S. [Epsom College 1857-1861] was a Consultant Surgeon at Wolverhampton. From Epsom College he went to Guy’s Hospital, qualifying in 1869. In 1888 he took the M.D. of Durham University, and in 1918 was elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons as a member of twenty years’ standing. As a village doctor he was medical officer and public vaccinator for East Rudham. In 1885, he was appointed Surgeon-Apothecary to the Prince of Wales at Sandringham, and when the latter became King Edward VII, Manby was appointed Physician Extraordinary, a position that was continued under King George V and Queen Alexandra. Alan Manby accompanied King George V and Queen Alexandra, then the Duke and Duchess of York, during their tour of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa in 1901. He received the honour of knighthood in 1903, and was created K.C.V.O. in 1913. Sir Alan Manby was in professional attendance at York Cottage, Sandringham, at the births of Princess Mary, the Duke of York, Prince Henry, Prince George, and Prince John. He was also in attendance at the birth of Prince Olav, son of King Haakon of Norway and Queen Maud, when they resided at Appleton House, Sandringham, as Prince and Princess of Denmark. Following this, he was made Knight Commander



(Second Class) of the Order of Dannebrog. It is of interest to note that he was in attendance upon Queen Alexandra after his 75th birthday, so it may be said that he was in active medical practice for well over half a century.



Sir Alan Manby was a native of Norfolk and lived at Wensum House, East Rudham (see illustration), the family home since 1800. He was President of the Norfolk Medico-Chirurgical Society from 1892 until 1893, and President of the East Anglian Branch of the British Medical Association (1896-1897). He was Vice-Chairman of the Obstetrical Section of the British Medical Association at Oxford in 1904, and at Toronto in 1906, as well as Secretary of the Therapeutic Section of the B.M.A. at its annual meeting in Ipswich in 1900. As a busy committee man he

served as a member of the Parliamentary Bills Committee of the B.M.A., as well as Honorary Secretary of the Medical Benevolent Fund. Throughout his career he contributed a number of papers to the medical journals; in 1873 he invented a flexible spiral probe and, in 1886, a modified form of lithotrite (an instrument for crushing stones in the bladder). He was also one of the first to foresee the introduction of certificated midwives. Although a countryman, he was not perhaps as keen a horseman as were some of his contemporaries, and it was not surprising to find him among the pioneers of the motoring movement when the transition from horse-drawn to motor conveyances set in. In his obituary it was written: "One cannot but feel that if every newly qualified man could put in one year at least as assistant to a man of Sir Alan Manby's stamp it would be greatly to the advantage of the profession as a whole."