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Perpetrators of evil murders in cold blood must be stopped

The sheer savagery is difficult to comprehend: David Haines – a British aid worker and father-of-two – murdered in cold blood by jihadists from Isis, and a video of the wicked deed placed online.

This was an act of utter evil, no less shocking for the fact that it was the third such killing, after the earlier murders of the Americans James Foley and Steven Sotloff.

The sequence may have become sickeningly familiar, but there is no danger we will ever become accustomed to such depravity.

Our first thoughts must be with the friends and family of the 44-year-old Mr Haines – and also with Alan Henning, a former cab driver from Manchester, revealed yesterday as another hostage of the jihadists and the next to be threatened with the same fate.

But our next thoughts must be how we can respond to such evil. The prime minister has vowed to “hunt down” the killers.

That is only the start. We must confront their poison and eradicate it.

The revulsion provoked by these murders is widespread and felt not just in the West.

Indeed, most of the jihadists’ victims are not westerners, but the men, women and children living – and dying – under their so-called rule.

We must harness the support of other powers in the region, to not only find these culprits but also root out their evil ideology.

Cruellest fate of all

There can be no greater devastation for a parent than to lose a child.

The pain of losing two – and to the same condition – is beyond imaginable, the cruellest fate of all.

For many of us – if we do try to imagine – it seems as if there would be no way back from such an overwhelming blow.

But from that pit of utter desolation Gina Weston, and her family, have managed to find a way back.

They have done so by raising money to help scientists find a way to combat the killer condition, meningitis, and – just as importantly – by raising awareness of it, to ensure others are on the lookout for signs of the illness.

In her own words, today she tells her story – and that of the two sons she lost, Joe, at seven weeks, and Ryan, aged 19.

There can be few more moving tales, more eloquently told, and we thank her for sharing it with us. She is an inspiration to us and, we hope, to our readers.

Daisy leads a dog’s life

What a heartwarming story in a world which, at times, seems so full of despair.

The future looked bleak for Daisy, the fawn, when her mother died after being hit by a car on the A11, near Thetford. But now she has found a new home at the Foxy Lodge wildlife rescue centre at Hemsby where she is leading a dog’s life with her two new best friends Lhasa Apsos, Roxy and Maisie.

READER’S PICTURE OF THE DAY

iwitness24



■ Paul Reynolds spotted this pair feasting on blackberries at Lyng. If you would like to submit a picture for possible publication in the EDP, visit www.iwitness24.co.uk

What’s in a name? A whole world of difference

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The far east of Norfolk must have been the scene of very considerable ethnic and linguistic contact – and maybe even conflict – a thousand or so years ago. It’s well-known that there was very heavy Viking Scandinavian settlement on the island of Flegg in the ninth century. The names Filby, Mautby, Ormesby, Scratby, Stokesby, Ashby, Oby, Thrigby, Herringby, Billockby, Clippesby, Hemsby, and Rollesby all have the Old Norse ending -by, ‘village’, corresponding to modern Danish ‘by’ meaning ‘town’. Flegg itself was an Old Danish word referring to a boggy area overgrown with marsh-plants such as iris (flag). But the Old Danish speakers in Flegg Hundred – ‘hundred’ was the old Germanic label for a subdivision of a county, in use until 1894 – were surrounded by people who spoke Old English. To the north of Flegg Hundred was Happing, an Anglo-Saxon name meaning the followers of a man called Hæp, as also in Happisburgh, dating back to an Anglo-Saxon settlement which had been there for 400 years before the Vikings arrived. And Flegg’s other neighbour across the Bure, Walsham Hundred, also had an English-language name: it meant the ham (modern ‘home’) or homestead of an



■ The village of Flegg may have got its name from the flag iris.

Anglian leader called Walh.

But the Scandinavians didn’t even have Flegg all to themselves. There must have been an ethnic dividing line across the area, because immediately to the north of Hemsby, Rollesby and Ashby there are places with names like Bastwick, Martham and Somerton. Place-names ending in -ham, -ton (modern ‘town’), and -wick go back to the original Anglo-Saxon settlement of our county. So in the north there were English speakers, with Norse speakers on their southern flank.

But we can’t be certain about the actual location of the language boundary. Repps, in the Danish-English borderlands between Bastwick and Ashby by the river Thurne, is thought by some experts to be an English name deriving from the Anglo-

Saxon word ‘ripel’, meaning ‘a strip of land’. But others maintain that it’s from Old Danish “rep”, meaning ‘community’.

The River Thurne is also linguistically ambiguous.

The river is named after the village of Thurne which, according to experts, comes either from Old English ‘thyrne’, meaning ‘thorn bush’ – or from Old Norse ‘thyrnir’ meaning, well, ‘thorn bush’. The two languages weren’t that very different in many respects. Very likely someone from Bastwick and someone from Ashby, coming across each other as they quanted around the marsh, would have been able to talk to each other without too much difficulty.

Let’s hope it was a friendly conversation.

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Seek God while he’s here to be found.
Isaiah 55:6

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