

FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY

"To save Fulbourn's past for the future"

NEWSLETTER NO. 32

Autumn 2010

PROGRAMME PREVIEW FOR 2010-2011 SEASON



along your friends, pit your wits against other teams (which can be formed on the evening) and have fun, helped of course, by delicious warm home made mince pies and a convivial glass of wine. (Quiz entry and refreshments included in the ticket price and there will be a prize for the winners!).

Your membership card with the dates of Talks will be delivered in early September for those who have already paid their subscription. Late renewals can collect the card at our meetings.

Programme Dates

Our exhibition at Fulbourn Feast 2010 allowed members of the public to view and handle a few of the objects which are kept in the Fulbourn Village History Society Archive Store - and in some cases, have 'a go' at guessing what they were!

Three Power Point Presentations in the forthcoming season of Talks also focus on artefacts of an esoteric nature. Chloe Cockerill (of the Churches Conservation Trust), will be talking about, 'Oddities in Churches' including dog whips, dole cupboards and devil's fingermarks. Sarah Kerrison (Assistant Curator of the Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey), promises an interesting evening of discovery with 'Curiosities of the Farmland Museum' and Veronica Bennett (National Trust Talk Service) should provide us with fascinating facts about the Anglo Saxon ship burial at 'Sutton Hoo'.

In 'The History of R.A.F. Duxford' a journey into the rather less distant past will be recounted by Les Millgate, and still remaining within our local area, a later talk by Mike Coles on 'Brick Making in Cambridgeshire' might well throw into perspective the ongoing 'Swifts' development. We are also very fortunate to engage as speaker Dr. Neville Silverston whose recent book 'Thirty Years as a Country Doctor' was largely based on his experiences in Fulbourn.

As part of the Society's initiative to encourage new members, our Social Event in December will be a 'History and Seasonal Quiz' which allows everyone to mix together and get to know each other. So bring

- 21 Oct 2010 'The History of R.A.F. Duxford'
Les Millgate
- 18 Nov 2010 'Oddities in Churches' Chloe Cockerill
- 10 Dec 2010 History and Christmas Quiz
(Social Event. Entry by Ticket only)
- 20 Jan 2011 'Curiosities of the Farmland Museum'
Sarah Kerrison
- 17 Feb 2011 'Brick making in Cambridgeshire'
Michael Coles
- 17 Mar 2011 'Thirty Years as a Country Doctor'
Dr Neville Silverston
- 21 Apr 2011 'Sutton Hoo' (National Trust Talk Service)
Veronica Bennett
- 19 May 2011 Annual General Meeting



NOTICE TO MEMBERS



As part of our recruitment drive your Committee are delivering leaflets about FVHS to households in Fulbourn as a 'staged' process over time.

Should you receive one and have already renewed your membership for 2010/11, please pass on the pamphlet to anyone you may feel would be interested in enjoying the same benefits as you do. Thank you.

FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2010-2011

Familiar Faces and Two New Ones!!

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The Committee of Fulbourn Village History Society recognises and values, those members who, whilst not serving on the Committee, contribute their time doing research, keeping records up-dated, helping with fund-raising events etc. We are very grateful for any offers of support, regular or on a 'one off' basis. Please contact a member of the committee if you feel you can assist in this way.

WAR DITCHES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY - by William Foot

The following article appeared in Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke Newsletter No. 31. I thought it would be of interest to members of the Fulbourn Village History Society and with the kind permission of the author (contacted via Julia Napier - with many thanks), it is reprinted below.

I first became interested in the Cambridgeshire Dyke systems when I was researching 1940 defence landscapes for English Heritage a few years ago. As we know, the Saxon dykes defended East Anglia from attack from the south, and were probably constructed in the immediate post-Roman period: the Heydon (or Bran) Ditch, however, may well have had an Iron Age origin. These defences of a massive bank fronted by a deep ditch ran from the forest edge growing on the higher land to the east up to the watery wastes of the undrained Fens to the west. The open chalk land in between forest and fen, probably always heathland until recent centuries, was traversed by the Icknield Way, the principal route into the fastnesses of East Anglia, and it was the blocking of this route that was the main purpose of the dykes.

It was the tensions in pagan Saxon society that led to the dykes being surveyed and built, but hundreds of years earlier this vital route must have been used by other armies in conflicts which are largely lost to us. The Romans would certainly have realised the strategic value of this broad, firm swathe of land running towards what had been the wealthy Icenian kingdom. They built early forts at Great Chesterford, at Cambridge, and possibly at Saffron Walden, to control the crossing of the Cam Valley. A marching camp, perhaps from the very earliest years of the invasion, has recently been identified on Pepperton Hill above Ickleton. The Icknield Way, the ancient route of which seems to have been engineered by the Romans, might even have been the direction of the re-conquest of Icenian territory after the defeat of the Boudican rebellion: indeed it is my

conjecture that the great battle of 60AD that crushed the rebellion may well have been fought at a point on the low hills overlooking it.

To turn now to the defences by which Britain sought to defend herself against a feared German invasion in 1940 - my own research enables me to write perhaps with more authority about these! Inland from the coastal defences that were established in depth from the sea's edge, a remarkable system of stop lines was developed.

These were basically anti-tank lines, the main intention being to prevent the feared German armoured columns breaking out and running amok as they had done during the blitzkrieg in France. The principal stop line was known as the GHQ Line. Its purpose was as a back line - a 'last ditch', if you like - behind all the other defences from the coastal edge in front of it, to protect London in particular (which had three additional rings of anti-tank defences) and the industrial Midlands, as well as the hinterland of the country generally. It ran west-east from the North Somerset coast (passing to the south of London) as far as the Medway in Kent, where it turned north to meet the Thames: it was then continued through Essex into Cambridgeshire. Its eventual destination, always running parallel with the coast, was Richmond in Yorkshire, from which further defence lines linked the English defence with that of Scotland.

Stop lines formed continuous barriers, making use where they could of natural waterways, but, where these were not available or an insufficient obstacle, there were machine cut anti-tank ditches (hundreds and hundreds of miles of which were dug throughout the country, by far the most extensive system of defensive earthworks this nation has ever seen). Sometimes as well the barrier was formed by row after row of fixed concrete obstacles. Where roads and railways crossed the Line, these points were defended by anti-tank gun emplacements and infantry pillboxes, as well as by obstacles that could be moved into place to block the carriageways should the invasion threat become reality. Other hardened defence works (as concrete pillboxes and emplacements are more correctly known) were placed at intervals along the Line, normally at points where they could lay down enfilading fire. All this was constructed in a few short weeks from June 1940 until the period of greatest danger invasion in September 1940.



Map showing the 1940/41 GHQ anti-tank line in relation to Fleam Dyke and the Roman Road, from GSGS Sheet 85 War Office 1941

To return to a consideration of the defences in Cambridgeshire, those of 1940, of course, had an entirely different strategic purpose from the dyke systems that had centuries before blocked the route of the Icknield Way (It is worth an aside here to make the point that, had that not been the case, the dykes would undoubtedly have been incorporated in some way into the 1940 defence planning: there are many cases of medieval castles being refortified in the Second World War, and even Iron Age hillforts: Chanctonbury Ring on the South Downs is one example of the latter). The purpose in 1940, however, was to protect the heartland of the country from possible German landings on the Suffolk and Norfolk coast, so the defences were set out against an expected attack from the east. From Essex, the GHQ Line ran along the Cam Valley, passing through the grounds of Audley End house, where some components of the defence still survive. Reaching a point south of Stapleford, the Line was taken up by an artificial anti-tank ditch, passing to the west of the Gog Magog Hills and crossing the A1307 road near to the present Park and Ride terminal (a Neolithic settlement was discovered in this area when the ditch was being excavated). The Line then swept around to the east of Cambridge (thereby forming a sector of the all-round anti-tank defences of the city) until it made a junction with the River Cam again, then following it as the Ouse to Ely and Littleport.

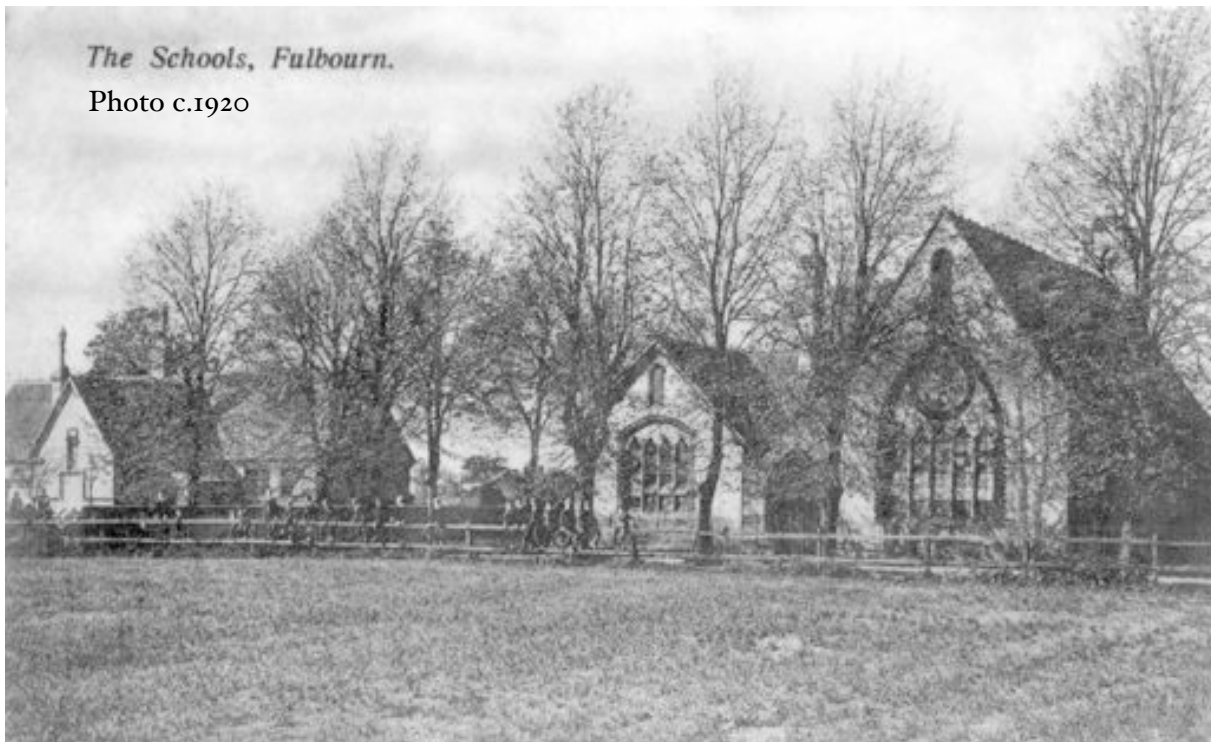
If you look at some of the aerial imagery of the Wandlebury area available on Google Earth, you can make out the infilled line of the anti-tank ditch - a fascinating mid-20th century addition to the earlier military earthworks of Cambridgeshire.



German reconnaissance photograph showing the anti-tank ditch of the GHQ line south of Cambridge. The present day A1307 runs at the bottom. (Imperial War Museum, Duxford)

William Foot is a military archaeologist. He was for several years the project manager of The Defence of Britain Project, which won the Silver Trowel Award run by the Council for British Archaeology. His study of the 1940 defences for English Heritage resulted in a research report published by the Council for British Archaeology entitled 'Beaches, Fields, Streets, and Hills: The Anti-Invasion Landscapes of England 1940'. Subsequently he wrote two more 'popular' books entitled, 'The Battlefields That Nearly Were' and 'Defended England 1940'.

For more information google Defence of Britain Project, or more precisely, <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/cba/projects/dob/> The Project is now closed.



The following 'history' is amongst many of the documents kept in our store. It was written in 1969 and clearly shows that Pippa (then age 11 years) had inherited the 'historical research' gene from her mother, our Archivist, Pat White!

Fulbourn School 1859-1879

On Friday October 9th 1857 a meeting was held in the vestry of St. Vigor's Church, Fulbourn.

Among the people there were Rev. D. Hall, who was in charge of building schools in Cambridgeshire, Rev. J. Usill, the rector of Fulbourn Church, C.W. Townley and Mr Chaplin. They were discussing the idea of building a school in Fulbourn. They decided to have one.

The villagers gave about two hundred pounds of the five hundred and ninety six pounds, fourteen

shillings and ten pence needed. The Universities gave some money and the Church of England gave the rest.

Mr Townley, in 1858, gave a quarter of an acre of land in Wrights Lane. This land was near the church as the school was a church school.

On May 17th 1859 the first people went to school. There was nearly a hundred children there. The first teacher was a Miss Radford. She was not a qualified teacher because she was ten days too young to get her degree. Some of the first children's names were George Rolph, Eliza Hawkins, Harry Hardwick, Harriet Peachey, Jane Banyard and George Banyard.

On the evening before the school opened another meeting was held. This was to decide the rules. Here they are:

1. Any child above the age of five could attend
2. Each child had to pay some money to the teacher. For the oldest it was tuppence and a penny for any other child in the family.
3. An entrance fee for one child in a family was three pence. For two children four pence.
4. Any child absent for four weeks without permission had to pay the entrance fee again.
5. The hours of attendance 9 a.m. - 12 a.m , 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Five pounds was given to the school to spend on books. It cost five hundred to buy all the books in the school library.

On the 19th December 1859 Miss Radford was asked to resign. Miss Harriet Smith took over. She was the first proper headmistress of Fulbourn Church School. She left in 1871 to get married.

In those days the teacher chose two of the oldest pupils to be teachers. They were called pupil teachers. They were paid two shillings a week rising to six shillings a week. If they were pupil teachers for five years they became a teacher. The first pupil teachers were Henrietta Hunt and Fanny Riches.

In March 1864 a map of America was given to the school. In this month the school hours were extended half an hour. The first caretaker was Miss Halls. The second Mrs Peachy.

The lime trees up the lane were planted from 1861-1863.

The children sat on hard benches. The teacher sat on a very high stool with a very high desk. She had a cane in her hand. The children had slates on their laps. The older ones practised copper plate handwriting; some of them had exercise books not slates. The younger ones did single letters in copper plate. They had the same lessons in the same order every day. They had to learn parts of the bible off by heart and the Catechism as well. Every week the Rector used to come and test them on them. Sometimes they went to Church to do them. They very rarely did arithmetic. They had a lot of Geography. It was Miss Smith's favourite lesson. The sanitation and lighting in the school were poor. They got their water from a pump outside. In winter it froze up. They had paraffin lamps.

In the afternoon they always did needlework. This was to pay for the school. They took their own material but Mrs Townley supplied other things. Either Mrs Townley, her daughters, or the rector's wife came to help. No children were allowed to write with their left hands. They were beaten for this.....

.....they had no P.E., games or play times. They worked solidly from 9 a.m. -12 a.m. and 2.0 p.m. - 4.0 p.m.. In 1864 the time was put up from 4 - 4.30 p.m.

There was a harvest holiday when the harvest came, so that the children could help their parents. Children were absent for other reasons: illness, ploughing time, seed time, and some played truant. There was a week off for the Fulbourn Feast. Everybody ate so much they were ill.....

Pippa White continues to describe developments after the 1870 Education Act and names many of the teachers. Significant events included: the building of a new boys school, completed in 1875. It cost the government two hundred and twenty pounds. Girls stayed in the Church School room and had a separate playground to the boys. In 1880 a Headmistress, Miss Christine Mennie was appointed to the Infants school which was located in the girls old class room and in 1893, girls and boys were again together in a mixed school (excluding the infants). New heating stoves were provided in 1904 and water taps installed in 1911. Milk was introduced in 1934 (on payment of half a penny), and electric lighting in 1938. The Infants school became a military hospital during World War I and the children were moved to the Chapel Sunday School and in 1916, following an outbreak of

diphtheria, to the Six Bells P.H. They only had electric lights in 1950, and it closed in 1956. A new infants school was built in Haggis Gap in 1969.

Copies of photographs relating to Fulbourn schools, pupils and teachers are displayed on Fulbourn Village History Society Notice Board in The Fulbourn Centre until after our first meeting in October. Perhaps you can identify some of the faces?

LAMP POST POSTSCRIPT

..... FIFTY SEVEN MINUS ONE !
- BY URSULA LYONS.

Since my article in the last Newsletter (no. 31), Fulbourn has lost one of its precious old cast iron lamps about which I wrote. One of the lamps in Manor Walk suddenly disappeared in the spring. It was apparently removed - without warning - by the City Council, as it had been damaged by a car and was consequently considered unsafe. The inevitable result was that it has been replaced by a plain aluminium lamp similar to many to be found elsewhere in Fulbourn. So Fulbourn's historical links with the past are being eroded - and still the remaining 56 lamps stand peeling and unloved...

On a similar theme, e-mailed to the Editor by a new Fulbourn Village History Society member, Richard Bennett



.....FIELD STILES

....I have several pictures of field stiles in Fulbourn taken between about 10 years ago and this year. Basically I have been making a study of these from all over the country. Cambridgeshire and other authorities have a policy to replace these with kissing gates or wicket gates, so the old stiles which have been a part of the rural scene for centuries are now disappearing.

I don't know if anyone in Fulbourn has recorded these but I have some photographs (digital) with details if the Society could make use of them. The latest one to disappear in Fulbourn was located at the far corner of the playing fields leading into Stonebridge Lane which has been replaced by a black metal kissing gate. This was replaced in April of this year. (See Below.)

Thank you, Richard. We now have his photos on our database. (Can anyone else add to our collection?)

Personally, I mourn the passing of the old wooden stiles, which in my youth gave great pleasure as they were climbed over, under or through!! However, time passes, the joints get stiffer, and a kissing gate is certainly easier to negotiate - they even build them for push chair and wheel chair access as I gratefully discovered when walking with my small grandson at Byron's pool recently.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Well, Gill Aslett's earth closet (last issue) provoked interest including one message from a foreign gentleman received on 1st April. Mr. Kemel (who I believe is not a FVHS member) writes:-

"I am interested reading of your ladies' outside toilet facilities seating 3 persons simultaneously. Perhaps you would be interested also in my more sociable outside facility in the accompanying photograph. As you will see my own is superior in accommodating numbers of persons, is more than 2,000 years in age and made in more durable material with greater craftsmanship. It is true that I find the marble most surprising in the winter time but marble does not leave splinters of wood into difficult to reach body parts.

Respectfully yours,

Mustapha Kemel.
Ephesus. Western Turkey.



FARMING IN THE FORTIES



This 'Farming in the 1940's' Float won first prize at Fulbourn Feast 2010. Can you identify the 'labourers' and their Society/Group? Contact any member of the Committee if you can help.



The 2010 - 2011 Season has started on a very positive note. At Hall Farm in July, around seventy visitors enjoyed drinking coffee, munching biscuits and chatting with friends - whilst also generously supporting our Bring and Buy stall and Raffle. The Summer Sale of hand-crafted cards proved most popular and together these fund-raising efforts resulted in a very satisfactory £230. Many thanks to all who helped, and especially of course, to our host and hostess, David and Elizabeth Wright.

We are very please to welcome the new members who joined after (some during!) attending the Coffee morning and earlier, at our Exhibition Tent

on the day of Fulbourn Feast. As a consequence to these events, orders for photographs have been received which help mitigate the expensive (but very necessary) running costs of our printer/ photocopier.

The Raffle will continue to be held at the monthly meetings from October to April - thanks to Ivy Smith - and I urge members to support this easy, and cost effective way (tickets are only 50p) of contributing towards our funds. If everyone brought a ticket, (we usually have about 60 members and guests on these evenings), it would pay for three quarters of the average speakers fee!!

From Fulbourn Library : MOVING ON - a writing project based on Fulbourn's past, present and future.

The aim of this project is to use the installation of an engraved granite wall on the Swifts estate in November as an inspiration for some writing by Fulbourn residents about what living in the village means to them. We are hoping to establish two writing groups - one based in Fulbourn Primary School and one in the Library - who will meet two or three times over the winter to produce poems, personal memoirs, essays etc.

With the rebuilding of the Windmill estate, the village itself is 'moving on' to a new stage in its development. What will be the effect of the increase in households? Can we become a sustainable village? We expect the past, present and future to be involved in writing.

We hope to produce an anthology of this writing by summer 2011, to be edited by Gill Aslett and Helen Kingsley (Library Volunteers). Depending on what writing is produced, the drama groups 'Classworks' and 'Public Arena' may follow up the writing with a performance around various sites in the village.

For more information contact Gill Aslett, 1A Ludlow Lane, Fulbourn (01223 881254)

gillaslett@phonecoop.coop

Details of the wall engravings are on www.fulbournarts.org and will be in The Mill in September.



A TIMELY SEASONAL WARNING! CHRISTMAS IS COMING !!!

Help the Society and impress your friends and relatives at the same time by sending FVHS Greeting cards.... even customised for you by special arrangement. (Contact Jackie on 01223 880611). Quality and value totally assured - look out for them at our meetings in October and November and come prepared!