

FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY

"To save Fulbourn's past for the future"

NEWSLETTER NO. 40

Autumn 2014

FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY COMMITTEE

At our 15th AGM, the following members were unanimously re-elected onto the Committee of Fulbourn Village History Society:

Chair: Ursula Lyons

Vice Chair: Tony Goodall **Secretary:** Glynis Arber

Treasurer: Richard Bennett **Keeper of the Records:** Pat White

Assistant Secretary: Rose Tristram **Webmaster:** John Timperio

Fabulous Fund Raising Results!

So far, F.V.H.S. fund-raising events for this year have been very successful. At Fulbourn Feast 2014 we had a net profit of £56.39 from the Bottle, Jar etc. stall (despite horrid weather)

while our Coffee Morning raised £138.96 including door entry fee, Cake Stall and Raffle. (Jackie Newell also received £30 for her lovely hand crafted cards).

This makes a total amount of £195.35 which covers the cost of four speakers OR almost two months rent for

our Archive storage and room hire!! Many thanks to all who baked cakes, brought raffle tickets, donated prizes etc.

Our Coffee Morning in particular, held during the summer has proved a wonderful social occasion, as well as a fundraiser. We do, however, rely on the generosity of members to provide the venue.

In our fifteenth Anniversary year, this seems a good opportunity to ask for 'new' hosts who would be willing to offer their garden (and kitchen facilities) for use by the Society.



Coffee Morning and Cake Stall held at The Manor this year by kind permission of our President Richard Townley and Judith Townley.

Refreshments, crockery etc. would all be provided and volunteers set up, clear away and serve from around 9.00 am until noon of that morning.

In the past, our Coffee Morning has been advertised around the village with the intention of

publicising the activities of Fulbourn Village History Society. It may be

that we now make this an 'in house' only event, open to just members and their guests.

Feedback on such a development would be most welcome, especially if you feel this could influence any decision about making your own garden available.

FULBOURN & FARMING Part IV (Farming Families – conclusion.)

4. THE WHITE FAMILY

To conclude this series of articles on Fulbourn's Farming Families, I shall tell the story of the **WHITE** Family, who, like the Wombwell family, came to farm in Fulbourn in the early part of the twentieth century. From about 1906 to the present day, four generations of Whites have farmed in Fulbourn and can be associated with six farms - Barnsbury, Caudle Corner, Fernleigh, Highfield, New Shardelowes and Northfield farms. Of these six, three are still in White hands.

In 1906, some twenty years before the first Wombwell came to farm in Fulbourn, two brothers, George Frederick and Bertram (known as Bert), moved to Fulbourn from Cambridge where their father, Thomas White, whose family originally came from Gt. Gressenhall in Norfolk, had been running a successful dairy business in St. Philip's Road.

Thomas, who died in 1901, had set up the business with two of his sons, pasturing his small herd of 20-30 cows on Midsummer Common, on common land rented from Cambridge County Council. He became a successful dairy farmer, but he also dealt in property, becoming wealthy enough for his sons to go into farming and to buy their own farms.

In 1906, George Frederick, (born in 1870), with his brother, Bert (born in 1883), bought **Barnsbury Farm** in Cox's Drove, transferring the dairy there and taking the cows from Cambridge. For a while, they farmed together, buying some more land in Teversham Road, until 1912, when they split up: Bert bought took the land and farm at **Fernleigh Farm**, while George stayed on at Barnsbury Farm.

Bert's descendants continue to farm at Fernleigh Farm. The brothers also rented some land from the church in Fulbourn Fen, but acquired no more land until 1929, when George Edward, George Frederick's eldest son, moved into **Highfield Farm**. In 1953 Bert bought **Caudle Corner Farm**

from Fulbourn Hospital, and in the same year, **Northfield Farm** was bought from the Chaplin family.

Finally, in 1989, Bert's son, Frederick Bertram Basil, bought **New Shardelowe's Farm**. It is the descendants of Bert who remain farming in Fulbourn at the beginning of the 21st century - i.e. his son Frederick and the son and grandson of his daughter Jane, both of whom chose to retain the White family name: Frederick still farms New Shardelowes, while his nephew Timothy and Timothy's son, Daniel, farm Caudle Corner Farm.

As for George Frederick and his descendants, he continued to farm at Barnsbury Farm, living there and farming in partnership with his four sons until his death in 1955. His youngest son, Harold, continued to live a while at Barnsbury Farm but the other two sons had moved out, and in 1967 the farming activities ceased there. Some of its land was then sold off and eventually the farmhouse was bought by Horace, one of Thomas Frederick's five sons. together with a couple of acres of land.

Horace who still lives in the farmhouse, did not go into farming but became a publican and the landlord of the Six Bells public house. When George Edward took over Highfield Farm, with its 88 acres and 44 acres of church land, he was living in the farmhouse on Apthorpe Street, but when in 1964 that house was sold, (its outbuildings and land had already been sold in 1957 and the site is now occupied by Greater Foxes), it ceased to be a working farm.

He left the village and went to live in Felixstowe, leaving his two sons, Ted and Derek, to continue farming what was still called Highfield Farm, though farming activities continued from their houses in Apthorpe Street and Shelford Road.

THE FARMS



Fig 1. Barnsbury Farmhouse, 1980

1. BARNSBURY FARM in Cox's Drove

Originally known as either Spring Hall or Cock's Farm (after John Adolphus Cock who died in 1868), this farm is of some antiquity, with its thatched cottages going back to before the Enclosure. When it was bought in the 1870's by Richard B. Holmes, a property developer who lived in Barnsbury, London, it became known as Barnsbury Farm. He also built nearby Barnsbury House.

In its heyday under the White family, the farm, while also growing arable crops, was the centre of a very successful dairy business. Fathers and sons ran this business in partnership, first by George Frederick and then his three sons (George, Harold and Thomas). Thomas Frederick, born in 1903, had eight children, but of them only John and his brother David entered farming.

John worked for his great uncle Bert at Fernleigh Farm from the age of fifteen and then for Bert's son (his uncle) until 1959, when for the next eight years he went back to work and run Barnsbury Farm. He did not live there, however; between 1959 and 1967 he and Pat were living at **Northfield Farm** which had been bought by the Whites from the Chaplins in 1953, and which, with its outbuildings, was sold and then demolished in 1968. From 1967-1969 he was farming in Devon with his brother David, and then returned and continued farming until his retirement in 2005.

THE DAIRY

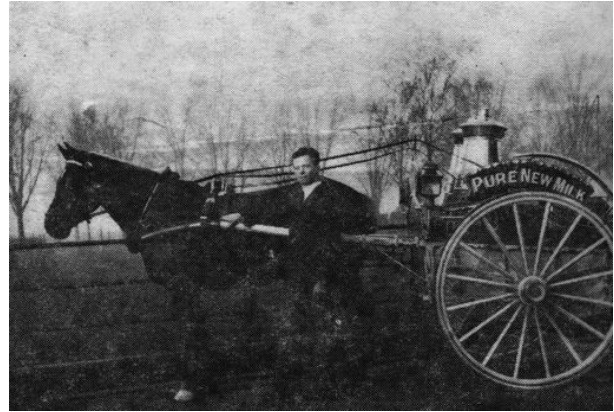


Fig 2. Tom White, Milkman c.1930.

John recollects : "there was a big dairy unit at Barnsbury Farm - at one time they were milking 100 cows - and they had big milk rounds, in Cambridge (and that included a couple of Colleges), Romsey Town, Cherryhinton, the Wilbrahams and Fulbourn. There had been other dairies at one time: the Lacey's, who had quite a big herd at Queens Farm, and the Stalley's, who had eight or nine cows at Home Farm, were selling milk up till the end of the 1960s. But they never had a milk round. Miss Stalley, later to become Mrs Beeton, sold milk through the window at Home Farm, opposite Hall Farm, and people would collect it from there. They had little cowsheds round at the back.

At Barnsbury Farm, my father's cows were kept in a big cowshed. The cows were of all sorts, including Shorthorns which they mixed with Friesian and Guernsey cattle: when you sold milk on milk rounds, a lot of people used to like their rich Jersey or Guernsey milk - you kept them separate and bottled them separate because you'd get a penny a pint more for that. (When I first started, milk was 4 pence halfpenny a pint - it must have been getting up to 20 pence when I stopped and now it's at least 67p!)"

The cows were pastured on the land at Highfield Gate, and the Whites also rented some pasture land from Cambridge Water Company - it went right down from Cox's Drove to Teversham Road. "That land was all pasture meadows. I think there were about a hundred acres left as grass, and they

used to grow crops for the cows such as mangolds, cow cabbages, beet tops and things like that. They also made hay for fodder”.

As a boy John never got involved with the cows but “I used to have to go behind as a little lad and strip out. You’d get some milk in a bucket and then the cow would tip it over and you’d get sworn at.” But when milking machines came in in the 1940s, it led to a great change in the daily routine. Two men could then milk a hundred cows while before that it needed 11-12 men to do the milking.

As for bottling, “we had a bottling machine but we sold a lot in churns and cans because during the war, you couldn’t always get enough bottles. They bottled the milk out of the churns and sold it on the rounds. People would come out with a jug. You had a half pint measure and a pint measure in a can”.

John remembers how a lady in Cherryhinton would produce a jug and ask for two pints, only to be told it wouldn’t hold two pints: “Mr Prior [who had a farm in Ventress Court] has been getting two pints in there for the last two years”, she protested. John admits that on occasions the thumb would go in (hygiene was not often an issue), thus reducing the milk in the can, so it could go further. When milk was short, extra supplies would come in by rail from Stetchworth dairies which, in hot weather, could have turned sour. Also, there were some very strange and often grimy receptacles which were offered when milk was ladled from the churn, which had to be first washed.

The Whites’ dairy was the last one left in Fulbourn ; the end of their dairy business came when Horace bought Barnsbury farmhouse and the business, together with the arable land, was all sold off in about 1960.

Even though they had quite a lot of machines for their 500-600 acres of arable land, the Whites also used and kept horses. When John started working on the farm as a boy, aged seven (“you always worked on the farm in school holidays”),

like other farming boys he would lead the horses at harvest time, and he remembers horse-raking and harrowing “and getting your toes trod on by the horses”. The horses were kept at Highfield Farm, some six of them - Suffolks and Shires. But by the time he was about fourteen, the horses were got rid of as more machinery was bought for use on the farm.

2. FERNLEIGH FARM on Teversham Road

This, like Caudle Corner Farm and New Shardelowes, was, with its house and buildings, a post Enclosure farm, situated outside the village boundary and surrounded by its own fields. It was the second farm acquired by the White family - as mentioned above it was bought in 1912 and was first farmed by Bert and then by his descendants, who continue to farm there to this day. Bert’s son, Frederick Bertram Basil, is now the owner.

3. HIGHFIELD FARM on Apthorpe Street



Fig 3. Highfield Farm buildings and dovecote, 1929.

This farm, the third farm bought by the White family, was situated in the heart of the village and has a long history as a farm. The farmhouse itself, still called Highfield Farmhouse, was/is one of the oldest houses in Fulbourn, being originally a 14th century hall house. Members of the Payne family lived and farmed here from the late 19th century until the 1920s. In 1929 it came into the hands of the White family when George Edward White and his family came to live there until 1954, when it ceased to be a working farm. The farm buildings were then demolished and the land was sold for building (which is where Greater Foxes now is). Later, the house itself was sold.

4. CAUDLE CORNER FARM off the Teversham Road

This farm is another of the post Enclosure farms, situated very near Fernleigh Farm. It was bought off Fulbourn Hospital in 1953 by Bert White. It is still in the hands of the White family, being farmed by Bert's grandson, Timothy.

5. NORTHFIELD FARM

Known, since the beginning of the 19th century up till about 1912, as Chafy's Farm, this farm and farmhouse stood on what is now Northfield and, like Highfield Farm, has a long history as a farm. For fifteen years, from 1953-1968, it was owned by the Whites who bought it off the Chaplins. Between 1959-1967, John and his wife Pat lived there. "It was a lovely old house, surrounded by outbuildings" where they kept dry sows, as well as bullocks. But "now nothing is left of the farm". In 1968 it was sold to the Lacey family who, while continuing to farm the land that went with the house, demolished the fine farmhouse and sold the site for housing.

6. NEW SHARDELOWES FARM Balsham Road

This is the sixth and last farm to be bought by the White family. With its yellow brick farmhouse, it, too, is a post Enclosure farm. Situated along the Balsham Road, a good mile to the south east of the village, it was bought in 1989 by Bert's son, Basil, who continues to farm it. Previously, it had been owned by the Wombwell family who had farmed it from 1952-1982.

Conclusion

All four farming families I have chosen to describe* - the Wrights, Wombwells, Chaplins and the Whites - came to farm in Fulbourn in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, after the Enclosures, supplanting families who for generations, perhaps, had lived and farmed here. I refer to such names as the Oslars, Battyls, Kings, Paynes, Furbanks, Mannings, Hancocks, the story of whom should eventually be told after a lot more research has been done. The Enclosure Award, in particular, needs to be consulted to work out how the incomers bought

their way in and what happened to the old farming families and to the land.

Present farming families (other than those I have written about) include the names of Bullen, Stalley, Lacey, Rolph, Barnes, and also of the Townleys. The latter, were/are, of course, as much landowners as farmers who, as lords of the Manor since the late 18th century, have farmed their estate both before and after the Enclosure and experienced all the different changes that the four families I have concentrated on have seen - whether the introduction of mechanisation and technology and of new crops and fertilisers, the purchase and sale of land, or the disappearance of livestock from the land.

Farming families have experienced many a change in fortune as well as the vicissitudes of the agricultural situation in the country as a whole, among which the weather, too, has played a considerable role. The story of the Townleys as farmers must be part of a wider account of their estate and their role in the village and in agriculture in general.

As for the changes witnessed by all of the farming families I have described, I have referred to the introduction from as early as the 19th century of new machinery, but which was hastened eventually after World War 2, resulting in the disappearance of horse driven machinery, but also the introduction of new crops and ways of improving those crops by weed control and fertilisers.

The reduction in the work force employed on the land has been striking, so that while farming still continues on the land and fields around the village, the number of people employed on the land has declined dramatically and farming is no longer a major employer of labour. Fulbourn can no longer be called a farming community.

Apart from Hall Farm, which, no longer has any farm buildings in use, all the farms are situated in the outlying fields to the south, west and east of the village. In the village, all the farmhouses have become private dwellings. And while

tractors continue to pass through the village streets, gone are the carts and, more significantly, the livestock.

The farm buildings are empty, having for the most part been demolished or converted to other uses. No herds of cows or sheep pass through the streets

Fig 4. Driving sheep along Station Road 1900 - 1910



(the sheep that pasture on the Manor lands and the cows brought in to control the pasture in the Nature Reserve are brought in by truck and belong to a farmer from outside the village). No pigs squeal, no cocks crow, no cows moo, no sheep bleat. The village sounds have changed completely in this now motorised age.

At one time, every farm was a mixed farm. As John White recalls : “most people had their own cow for their own purposes and everybody had pigs, chickens, ducks, geese. Barnsbury Farm had cows, horses and hens, but no pigs until after they packed up the cows. There were pigs at Highfield Farm and at Hall Farm in the stackyard opposite.” While he and Pat lived at Northfield Farm, they kept dry sows and bullocks, but now there is nothing left of that farm, neither house nor outbuildings. With the concentration on arable crops, the village has become silent, except at harvest time when the sound can be heard of the combine harvesters ceaselessly at work in the fields around the village.

Also gone within living memory are the trades that depended on agriculture - saddler, blacksmith, farrier, wheelwright, carter. For example, the Knights family who lived in Highfield House (where to this day David Knights still lives) from where they ran their carpentry business, derived fifty per cent of their business from agriculture. Although they made their last cart in the 1920s and wheels up till World War 2, they also made fences, pig arks and chicken houses, until all this gave way to their undertaking business.

Farming continues, however, in the fields surrounding Fulbourn, and also, as can be seen below, the farming legacy lives on in the names given to many of the streets in Fulbourn.*

Ursula Lyons, with grateful thanks to John and Pat White

** The choice of these families has not been entirely haphazard (it has helped that members of all four families belong to the History Society, and thus have a keen interest in the history of the village). Two of them, the Wrights and the Chaplins, were chosen to illustrate both the 19th and the 20th centuries, while the other two (the Wombwells and the Whites) the 20th. All of them were incomers. In writing about them I have been able to pick out different aspects of farming practices and the changes that farming has seen in the course of the last two centuries. However, the history of farming in Fulbourn prior to the Enclosure Act remains to be researched and written in order to investigate how the Enclosure affected the land and those who farmed the land and who were the winners and who the losers.*

[* Owing to lack of space, a list of Fulbourn Place Names with Farming Associations will appear in our next Newsletter].

On behalf of Fulbourn Village History Society, I would like to congratulate Ursula, for her dedication and hard work researching ‘Fulbourn Farming Families’ over the last few years. These fascinating articles, which have appeared in our Newsletter, will be of great assistance to anyone with an interest in the history and heritage of Fulbourn - its people and places. [Editor].

FULBOURN AND THE ONSET OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR by Glynis Arber

Fulbourn Village History Society held an Exhibition at Fulbourn Feast 2014, which displayed photographs and extracts from the Fulbourn Chronicles for the years 1914-1919. These showed how the people of Fulbourn were affected by the First World War. Over the next few issues of our Newsletter, the contents of this Exhibition will be re-produced, with (hopefully) additional material. Indeed, we would very much appreciate the opportunity to copy personal family documents relating to Fulbourn during the war years should these exist.

Seven and a half weeks after German armies marched into neutral Belgium on 4 August 1914 and so initiated Britain's entry into the War, a Public Meeting was held in the Assembly Rooms, Fulbourn, on Monday, 25 September to 'further Lord Kitchener's appeal for recruits'.

It was a 'crowded' audience who listened to addresses by four Military Officers and who were further entertained by two patriotic songs sung by Mr Dew ("The Old Brigade") and Miss Coulson ("Fall In"). Afterwards, *'several recruits gave in their names, but only one passed on Tuesday'*. This was Walter Plumb, of Home End. The others returned home *'disappointed'*. It is probable that they had failed the required medical examination.

Again, many former soldiers were already in the reserves - they had finished their service in the Army but were ready to rejoin. Indeed earlier, on 18 September, ten Fulbourn men had been reported as being on Active Service and **Fulbourn's Roll of Honour, appearing in the Newspaper for 25 September, numbered 51**. It must be noted that an accurate figure for these lists is not always possible, and some names appear more than once.

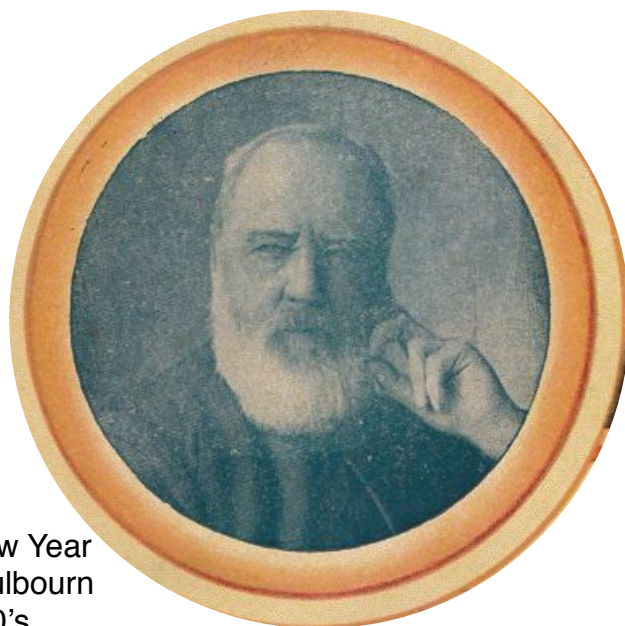
The number of men serving was a source of village pride, as can be seen by a somewhat annoyed letter sent to 'Our Readers' Parliament' from Dr F.L. Nicholls on 23 July, 1915. He disputes the account in the issue of the 16th July whereby Fulbourn is credited with a percentage of 'only 7.9' on war service based on a total male population of 839. Dr Nicholls calculates that a generous estimate of the male population would be 350. **'With 70 on war service we thus have a percentage of 20'**. He believes that the inmates of Fulbourn Asylum had *'unwittingly'* been included in the total figures.

Throughout the war, the names of Fulbourn men were continually acknowledged when they joined the services, reserves or Voluntary forces. Three months before the War ended, a United Service was held at St Vigor's Church on Sunday, 7 August 1918. Here the **'Fulbourn Roll of Honour, containing 197 names, was read'**.

THE REV. J.V. DURELL, AND 'THE CRAVEN SPIRIT'

Patriotic feeling during World War I was expressed in Fulbourn as elsewhere in Britain. An insight into attitudes towards the war can be gained by a leaflet, partially reprinted in the Chronicle [2 October 1914] by The Rector of Fulbourn, Rev. J.V. Durell, entitled **'A Few Words to the Men of Fulbourn, Married and Unmarried, between the ages of 19 and 35, who have not yet responded to England's call'**.

Print of the Rev. Durell, taken from a New Year Greeting card sent from the Rector of Fulbourn St. Vigor and All Saints' in the early 1900's.



Rev Durell believed that it was ‘**the craven spirit**’, ie. the unwillingness to forgo, ‘the comforts and society of home’ that is really the ‘deterrent motive’. **Based on interviews with parishioners**, Rev. Durell found ‘**the excuses for not joining**’ may be summed up under three headings:-

1. My parents refuse their consent, and my first duty is to obey them.

Answer - If you are really whole hearted in your resolve to join, no parent will raise a valid objection, but if you are only half-hearted, and are secretly disinclined to join, they will naturally say ‘you had better stay at home’.

2. My employers cannot spare me; their business will suffer, and I shall lose my situation.

Answer - Possibly your employer may suffer inconvenience, we shall all have to suffer in some way or other, but probably he will find someone to take your place temporarily, which will be kept open for you against

3. I don’t like killing people.

Answer - A sportsman takes out a license in order to kill game; but no soldier enlists for the purpose of destroying life. **The soldier’s duty is to protect the weak and defenceless, and to save life. Your comrades at the front are devoting their all to save your life and mine.....**

For my part I fail to see how a man who reads the accounts of the wonderful bravery and endurance

of our soldiers in the battlefield, and who **yet refuses his support in this moment of great national danger when the country calls upon him for his aid**, differs from the deserter who turns back in the day of battle.....

His associates from the front will never taunt him with cowardice, but he will suffer the reproaches of his own conscience, how he lost the splendid opportunity of proving his loyalty to his king, and of doing the duty which England expected of him; he has also lost his self-respect, and the respect of his fellow men; **he has forfeited the right to call himself a dutiful son of his Fatherland, a worthy member of the British Empire.**

At the time he wrote this leaflet, Rev. Durell was 78 years old (he retired in August, 1917) and was certainly not able to serve himself.

However, he had four sons who were at the Front, one of whom Pte. David Durell, Middlesex Regt. was killed on 1 July 1916 ‘in the great advance made on that day’. [Fulbourn Chronicles]

Note: The Five volumes of the Fulbourn Chronicles, covering the years 1750 to 1966 have been compiled from extracts relating to local news items contained in the ‘Cambridge Chronicle’, ‘Cambridge Independent Press’ and ‘Cambridge Evening News’. They are still available for sale through Fulbourn Village History Society Archive Store and our website www.fulbournhistory.org.uk

Programme of Talks for 2014/2015 at the Fulbourn Centre (Doors open 7.30 pm.)

16 Oct.	<i>Francis Young</i>	Witches in Cambridgeshire
20 Nov	<i>Helen Harwood</i>	The Great War in the Countryside
12 Dec.	<i>Dr John Sutton</i>	A Cavalier’s Christmas (Social Event. Ticket only).
15 Jan.	<i>Kari Maud</i>	The Vikings
19 Feb.	<i>Susan Woodall</i>	Sin, Sex and Salvation
19 Mar.	<i>Shirley Wittering</i>	Feather Beds and Frying Pans
16 Apr.	<i>Mike Good</i>	Boffins and Coffins: the Ascension Burial Grounds
21 May.	<i>16th A.G.M</i>	