



FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY

"To save Fulbourn's past for the future"

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FULBOURN AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR: THE V.A.D. HOSPITAL by Glynis Arber

The people of Fulbourn were very supportive of the Voluntary Aid Detachment hospital sited within the village, as newspaper reports show. Extracts from the Fulbourn Chronicles Vol. III are reproduced in Italics with the date when they appeared in print provided in brackets.



Staff and patients outside the V.A.D. hospital in Fulbourn c. 1918

Members of the Red Cross at Fulbourn (the Rev. Charles F. Townley was County Director of the Society), [27.11.14] *'have been very busy preparing the Assembly Room and the Infants School for 25 to 30 wounded soldiers from the 1st Eastern General Hospital, Cambridge, and they arrived on Monday and Tuesday.*

A meeting was called on Friday night to form a Voluntary Aid Detachment for Men, to relieve the nurses at night, when about 40 members joined'. (This number must have fluctuated eg. [24.01.17] 'The V.A.D has lost three more of it members, who joined the forces last week, viz. Montague Charles

Miller, Charles Matthews and Albert Knowles' and [27.04.17] 'Amongst those who have recently joined H.M. Forces three are V.A.D. Members: Arthur Mathews, Fred Rolph and Arthur Patten. William Matthews, of Home End, joined about three weeks ago).

The Working Men's Institute is open for the soldiers as a mess-room and for recreation. The Infants' School has removed to the Congregational Schoolroom, and all arrangements are working most satisfactorily, everyone doing his or her part to make the "Tommys" happy and comfortable'. [27.11.14]

Training for Fulbourn members of the V.A.D. was also arranged within the village.

'A meeting of the Voluntary Aid Detachment was held in the Institute, presided over by Mr P. Hollman. It was arranged to hold the weekly stretcher drills on the Manor Cricket Ground.....' These were obviously necessary:-

'On Thursday evening the members of the V.A.D. joined a section of the Cambridge V.A.D. to help in unloading the wounded at Cambridge Station. The following members were present: Messrs. P. Hollman, A. Gedney, H.G. Smith, S. Austin, L. Knights, F. Gates, J. Sallows, J. Foreman E. Richmond, F. Plumb and J. Drury.' [01.10.15]

The V.A.D. members also undertook drill training *'An interesting presentation was*

made by the members of the V.A.D. to Mr Walter Ward for his kindness in allowing the use of the garage at the Manor when the members were unable to drill outside. The gift was a silver-plated cigarette case, and was presented by Mr F. Page. [17.01.17] and **marches** when they 'met at the Waterworks on Tuesday last and had a route march through Old Cherryhinton. [04.05.17]

Having a motor Ambulance in the village was a great help to the V.A.D.



Nurses and Driver posing (somewhat nervously) on the Red Cross Ambulance outside Fulbourn Manor Stables c. 1918

'Members of the V.A.D. were conveyed to Cambridge by the Rev. C.F. Townley's motor and ambulance on Wednesday to help unload the wounded at Cambridge Station.' [14.07.16].

The importance of the ambulance driver also, can be indicated by a hearing of the Chesterton Tribunal [02.06.16]. *'Rev. C.F. Townley applied for Walter Ward (35). The military Representative recommended conditional exemption. Mr Townley said that his work would be hindered if the man were lost to him. He had been driving an ambulance since the beginning of the war, and always drove an*

ambulance when a convoy of wounded arrived in Cambridge.

The Military Representative asked if a man of non-military age could do the work.

Applicant: I would get a man not of military age if I could.

Conditional exemption was given.'

Support for the V.A.D. hospital within Fulbourn took many forms. Those that were able to, gave gifts in kind eg.

'The Commandant of the Red Cross Hospital begs to acknowledge with thanks the following gifts: Rev. C. Townley, ten pheasants, Mrs Brown, bloaters; Miss Doggett, three sponge sandwiches; Mr Pettit, vegetables: Mr Austin, apples; Mrs F. Chaplin, stewing pears.' [17.12.15] and again, two months later *'Mr Wright, apples, vegetables and six rabbits; Mrs Nicholls, buns; Mrs Stalley, cakes and jam; Rev. J.V. Durell, celery; Mrs F.J. Chaplin, vegetables; Miss Chaplin, hamper of apples; Mr Hardwick, cabbages.'* [09.02.16].

However, perhaps of most **psychological benefit to the patients** was the mutual interaction, on a social level, between members of the V.A.D., villagers of Fulbourn and their own leisure activities. For instance, [28.05.15] *'On Monday the wounded soldiers paraded the village with their band and played selections of music. Those that could not walk were wheeled in bath chairs, and collected £2 0s. 7d, for the soldiers' home at Lowestoft.'*

Later in the war, [03.01.17] *'The wounded soldiers greatly appreciated the kindness of Dr and Mrs Nicholls, who entertained them to a splendid tea and games and spent a most enjoyable time'*.

A few weeks later, the village was entertained by the patients. [31.01.17]

*‘A most successful concert was given in the Institute by the patients of the Red Cross Hospital, Fulbourn, to a large audience. At the close the Rev. C.F. Townley **thanked the patients for their excellent entertainment**, and a collection for the Red Cross Fund realised £3 13s.*

As the concert was such a success it was given again on Saturday evening to another full audience. Much credit is due to the soldiers for the efficient way their part were sustained’.

In March, 1917, the **members of the V.A.D. ‘and friends’ also staged a concert** which raised £6 17s. 1d. for the Red Cross Fund, Bottisham Division. **The titles give a good idea of popular culture of the time**, eg.

“Little Brown Jug”, “Farmer’s Boy”, “There’s a Tavern in the Town”, “A Hundred Years Ago”, “The Village Pump”, “Old John Braddledum” “The Village Blacksmith”, ... “Keep the Kettle Boiling”humourous song “She’s Proud and Beautiful”.

There were also recitations such as “How Betsy and I fell out”..... “When Father Carves the Duck” “How Betsy and I fell in” ... “Praying Posters”. [28.03.17]

During the Christmas of 1917, **the patients of the V.A.D. hospital, together with the nurses, ‘sang carols in the village on Saturday night and Monday night, to the delight of the village folks’** and again *‘at the Christmas service on Christmas Day at the Congregational Church’* [28.12.17].

Members of the V.A.D., and the villagers, also shared social activities with the patients of the hospital. *‘The members of the V.A.D. spent a pleasant evening with the wounded soldiers on Saturday night last in a game of billiards’.* [22.12.16]



A Tea party at Fulbourn Manor, c.1918, included both staff and patients of Fulbourn V.A.D. Hospital.

“KEEP THE HOME FIRES BURNING” by Glynis Arber

Fulbourn Commemorated the 100th Anniversary of WWI with a Living Exhibition held at Townley Hall on Sunday, 9th November 2014. Before the production began, background research into the period and people, who lived in Fulbourn during the First World War, was initially collated by Jenny Culank, Director/Devisor of Keep the Home Fires Burning.

Cast Members of Fulbourn Community Theatre undertook to find out about the lives of their ‘characters’ by consulting local families and also primary sources. They were aided by such organisations as the Cambridge Record Office, Cambridgeshire Collection and - of course - Fulbourn Village History Society.

‘Keep the Home Fires Burning’ Living Exhibition recreated the Fulbourn Red Cross Voluntary Aid Detachment Hospital which opened in November 1914 and closed on 30th November 1918.

It was the first convalescent hospital for wounded soldiers in Cambridgeshire and was housed in the Infants School which, within 4 days, had been evacuated to the Congregational Church. In the period between 1914-1918 Fulbourn V.A.D. Hospital helped to bring back to health 1,378 servicemen.

The whole ‘Living Exhibition’ experience was intended to allow members of the public to engage with ‘real’ characters from the past, and they were encouraged to interact with the convalescent ‘patients’ and residents of the village circa 1914-1918.



It was a memorable afternoon, when Fulbourn Community came together to Remember and Celebrate the heritage of their village.



Other Community Events, held in the Foyer of the Townley Hall at the same time, complemented and added to an appreciation of the period. Norman Osborne displayed photographs of Fulbourn Men who Fought in the Great War. Stories by The Fulbourn Library Writing Group were on view as well as artefacts from the period leant by local residents while **Fulbourn Village History Society presented their 15th Anniversary Exhibition ‘Fulbourn and The First World War’.**



TWO STONE BIRDS: A TALE OF TWO FALCONS.

For nearly fifty years, two stone birds have stood guard on Fulbourn Manor gateposts. They are now an accepted feature of the Fulbourn scene and many will have passed by them, giving them only a casual glance. But theirs is an interesting history going back nearly five hundred years which needs to be told.

A closer look shows what appears to be two long necked birds, facing the road, their heads turning slightly towards each other and standing on ornamental stone plinths, each, together with its plinth, about a metre high.



Their heads are small, making them at an initial glance seem headless, as are their eyes. They have somewhat flattened, probably weathered beaks; their breast and wing feathers are beautifully sculpted in a scale like fashion and their

ribbed legs end in falcon like talons - for falcons they are. Not ordinary falcons but heraldic falcons, hence their artistically elongated necks.



Furthermore, the breast of each rests on a heraldic shield, the details of which have also been worn away but which could have shown the arms of the Beaupre family.

Such heraldic statues were often used on gateways, and so this is an appropriate place for these birds. However, it is not their original home. They were acquired by Captain and Mrs Charles Townley, parents of the present Lord of the Manor, Richard Townley, from **Beaupre Hall**, Outwell, in Norfolk, which is a hall with Townley connections, as we shall see. In 1966, this 16th century house suffered the

fate of so many historic houses in the post World War Two period and was demolished.

Beaupre is an Anglo Norman name (meaning “fair meadows”) and the Hall takes its name from the family who came to live there. It was built by Nicholas Beaupre in 1493 on the site of a previous manor house which can be traced back to 899. At the time of the Conquest in 1066, Hugh de St. Omer, a follower of William the Conqueror, was awarded land in Outwell and Upwell. The Manor eventually passed to Christina de St. Omer who, in the reign of Edward III, married John de Beaupre, the son of Gilbert de Beaupre of the “Welles” (the combined name of Upwell and Outwell). From then on, their Beaupre descendants lived there for the best part of two hundred years, ending with Dorothy de Beaupre.

Dorothy’s ancestor was Nicholas de Beaupre (d. 1512) whose marriage in 1493 to Margaret Fodryngaye of Suffolk, “provided the finance to enable him, together with his son Edmund, to build the Tudor house we came to know as Beaupre Hall, replacing a dilapidated more modest dwelling” (W.P. Smith, Outwell in a Nutshell). In the course of the 16th century, Nicholas and his son enlarged the house, starting with the central block and building a vast chapel at the extreme end of the north west wing. In 1525, after Nicholas’ death, Edmund finished the central turreted gatehouse. There was also a dovecote, and the house was surrounded by a moat.

Built of red brick, which at the time was reserved for only the grandest of houses

(such as royal colleges and large country houses - see, for instance, nearby Oxburgh Hall, built 11 years earlier) and with its fine gatehouse, Beaupre Hall was indeed a house on a large scale. It would have stood in an extensive parkland, which, it has been suggested, could have been as much as 3,000 acres.

Edmund was the last Beaupre. He died in 1567 and, having no male heirs, left the estate to his daughter Dorothy, who in 1559 had married Robert Bell. The latter (who became Speaker of the House of Commons and was knighted by Queen Elizabeth) added the name Beaupre to his own, becoming (Sir) Robert Beaupre Bell. He further improved the Hall by adding the south wing and raising the level of the old wing. He is also thought to have built the outer walls and the pillared entrance with the falcons. During the 19th century the falcons were moved when another entrance to the Hall was built.

In 1677 a descendant of his, Beaupre Bell, inherited the estate at the age of 16, but for a while led a dissolute life before returning to the Hall, marrying and having seven children. It is said his mind was badly affected by his earlier exploits and the Hall deteriorated while he lived there. He spent his days drinking and it was he who sold off parts of the estate to the tenants. He was passionately fond of horse breeding and kept up to 500 horses in the meadows surrounding the Hall, “allowing them to roam in the very Hall itself.”

His only surviving son, Beaupre Bell the younger, who became an active member of the Society of Antiquaries, was the last true Beaupre to occupy the Hall, but when

he died of consumption in 1741, Beaupre Hall passed to his sister Elizabeth, who married William Greaves from Fulbourn.

William Greaves, who added the names Beaupre Bell to his own, was Commissary of the University of Cambridge and had purchased Fulbourn Manor in 1746 from the then owner, the Rev. John Perkins, Rector of St. Vigor's. (Readers of the Newsletter will recall that, from at least 1682 until well into the 18th century, the previous Lords of the Manor were the Tyrells, - see no's 37 and 38). Thanks to the Beaupre wealth he refurbished a large part of Beaupre Hall in 1750, and "brought the manor house some way back to its former glory" (Smith).

The link with **Fulbourn Manor**

William and Elizabeth Greaves had no children, whereupon on William's death his properties passed to his sister Jane

Greaves (who herself died the following year). The properties were passed on in 1787 or 1788 - the Victoria County History and Don Crane give different accounts. In 1729, she had married Richard Townley of **Belfield Hall** in Rochdale, Lancashire - in the previous year he had inherited property in Lancashire - so both Beaupre Hall (which she inherited on the death of her father, William Beaupre Bell Greaves, in 1741) and the Greaves' Fulbourn Estate later became Townley properties, as Richard and Jane's son, Richard Greaves Townley of Belfield Hall, inherited both Beaupre and Fulbourn. When he died in 1823, his son, the second Richard Greaves Townley (d. 1855), thus inherited both Fulbourn and Beaupre Hall. Fulbourn Manor has remained in Townley hands up till the present day.

Ursula Lyons, with grateful thanks to Richard Townley



FULBOURN PLACE NAMES WITH FARMING ASSOCIATIONS

by Ursula Lyons

1. Farmers/landowners:

ALEC ROLPH CLOSE - named after Alec Ward ROLPH (b. 1895), one of the Rolph family of farmers who farmed Poplar Farm. Poplar Farm was in Hinton Road opposite Teversham Road and its land is now where the Close is.

BIRD FARM ROAD - named after William BIRD who owned a farmhouse on the site in 1845. It became Low Farm in 1908 when Howard Chaplin became the owner. Eventually it passed out of farming hands and the site was developed and Bird Farm Road built with 33 houses.

CHAPLINS CLOSE - named in 1982 after Joseph Graves CHAPLIN of the Fulbourn farming family, (d. 1978), for his role as parish and district councillor, trustee of the Almshouses and churchwarden (URC) for many years.

COX'S DROVE - also COCK'S Drove, after the farmer John Adolphus COCK (1815-1865) who lived at Spring Hall Farm in the area.

DOGGET LANE - in 1279 Hundred Rolls Roger DOGET and his son Henry both had land in Fulbourn.

FARMER'S ROW named after William Farmer, who, in his will of 1712, bequeathed his farmhouse and land in Brinkley to benefit the poor of Fulbourn.

FROMONT CLOSE - named after Samuel FROMENT [sic], a one time landowner, mentioned in the Parish Award of 1806.

MARCH'S CLOSE - named after the sister of William Farmer: she died in 1722, having settled on a farm in Oakington. bequeathing its annual profits to the masters of 5 schools,

which included Fulbourn.

OSLAR'S WAY - after the Oslar family, a well known old farming family. Thomas Oslar in his will of 1722 left land for the poor widows of the parish, called the Widows' Charity. Oslars were still farming in the 19th century.

STANSFIELD GARDENS - = Stan's Field. Built on land once occupied by the market gardens and nurseries of the Hardwick family. Stan HARDWICK ran the business started by his grandfather at the beginning of the 20th c. until his retirement in 1987.

2. Farms

THE CROFT - built 1963 on a field which formerly belonged to CROFT FARM. The 17th century farmhouse is in Pierce Lane.

HIGHFIELD GATE - named after HIGHFIELD, one of the four pre-Enclosure open fields. Also HIGHFIELD FARM in Apthorpe Street, which ceased to be a farm when the farm buildings were sold in 1954 and later the land, when the house became a private dwelling.

NORTHFIELD - a recent name, first used 1912. Formerly known as Chafy's Farm. Site of NORTHFIELD farmhouse and buildings, demolished in c.1968.

3. Agricultural etc

THE CHERRY ORCHARD - named after the farmhouse of that name - a market garden which had an orchard on the site.

THE CORNWAY - a road used for transport of grain. Name found in a charity deed of 1557 ("a message called Kynges")

PIERCE LANE - the earliest reference to this name is in 1577. Derives from *perce/pirge/pear tree*. A road with pear trees. Also a former farmhouse known as Pear Tree Cottage.