



FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY

"To save Fulbourn's past for the future"

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Spring
2006

Since our Society was formed, the 'History Hut' has been the guest of Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit in Haggis Gap. Our kind hosts are now re-locating to Bar Hill and while sorry to see them leave, we wish them well in this new development.

Obviously, Fulbourn Village History Society have had to find alternative premises and from Summer 2006, our archive collection's new home will be a purpose built secure storage area in Townley Community Centre. An adjacent light modern room, with specially designed furniture (see article on Awards For All Grant) will also be available for use by members and interested individuals who wish to undertake research projects into local and/or family history. These research facilities are offered by Fulbourn Village History Society on Monday afternoon from 2.00 pm until 4.00 pm and on Wednesday morning from 10.00 until noon.

Your committee has also negotiated, as part of our rental 'package', a change in venue for

evening lectures. These will now be held in the meeting room at the new Fulbourn Centre, 1 Home End on the third Thursday of the month, from October until May. Members can expect comfortable surroundings in a smoke free atmosphere while alcoholic drinks may be purchased on site. Additionally there will tea and coffee making facilities available. For those who do not favour a brisk walk there will be plenty of car parking spaces available and we will also be making arrangements to ensure the provision of lifts for those members who may require them..

A varied programme of speakers for 2006-7 has already been booked, and commences in October with the ever popular Mike Petty who will be talking about 'Ghosts and Witches' - a very appropriate subject for the Hallowe'en season. We all look forward to an exciting future with Fulbourn Village History Society.

IN SEARCH OF FULBOURN



The Fulbourn Village Research Project which was established three years ago to investigate the origins and development of our Village with special reference to the medieval period, has now completed its report.

In association with the Local Heritage Initiative, this report, "In Search of Fulbourn," will be published in summer 2006.

Free copies are available to members of Fulbourn Village History Society on the basis of one per household. A CD-ROM version of this report will be also available for those who prefer this format to a printed version.

Those who would prefer the CD-ROM version should write requesting this format to Fulbourn Village Research Project, C/o 6 Cambridge Road, Fulbourn, Cambridge. CB1 5HQ.

LOCAL STUDIES NEWS

May 2006 is National Local History Month and Cambridgeshire Libraries will be celebrating with a variety of events. For further information see website www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library.

THE J .PALMER CLARKE/RAMSEY & MUSPRATT PORTRAIT COLLECTION

The photographic studio of J Palmer Clarke, situated in Post Office Terrace, Cambridge, was in business from the 1890s to the 1930s. During this time many thousands of people visited the studio to have their photograph taken. Many negatives have survived and are held in the Cambridgeshire Collection, the Local Studies Department of Cambridge Central Library. The website forms part of a project that will eventually see many negative images copied and made available to researchers and family historians worldwide. Find the site at <http://hipweb.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/cambscoll>.

TAKE A WALKING TOUR OF CAMBRIDGE WITH YOUR MP3 PLAYER AS YOUR GUIDE

These digital walking tours are designed to be played on a personal MP3 player or personal CD player, or you can hire a pre-loaded MP3 player from the Tourist Information Centre. Tours can be taken at your own pace but it is recommended allowing around 30 minutes for each one. The Cambridge Tour Pack contains:

Tour 1: Trinity College, Magdalene College, the river Cam, Round Church, Sidney Sussex College.

Tour 2: St Mary's Church, Senate House, King's College, Mathematical Bridge, The Eagle and maps to help

Tour 3: The market, King Street, Jesus College, Midsummer Common, Christ's Pieces - you find your way

Tour 4: Corn Exchange, Geology Museum, Emmanuel College, Parker's Piece.

You can download the Cambridge Tour Pack from www.tourist-tracks.com or hire from the Tourist Information Centre, Wheeler Street, Cambridge.

HELP !!!!

Perhaps you would like to become more involved with the Society at a time which is convenient to you. There are many occasions when assistance is welcomed by your committee for various short activities, working alongside them such as pasting newscuttings into our archive scrapbook or assisting with the organisation and smooth running of summer visits etc.

If you have the occasional spare time for such non-arduous and sociable activity, please contact your Secretary (Glynis) on 01223 570887 and discuss further.

FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY FUNDRAISING EVENT

NEARLY NEW Clothing Sale



Plus good quality bric a brac & Raffle

Saturday 8th April 10 - 12 Noon
At the Six Bells Function Room

Please sort out your suitable donations and phone 880783 or 880203 by Friday 7th April.

REMEMBER THIS ?



Featured in an earlier newsletter, the above photo shows a medieval bookclasp found by the Cambridgeshire Archaeological Unit during their excavations of what is believed to be the Colvilles Manor site. Watch out for more fascinating artefacts in your copy of "In Search of Fulbourn"... coming soon.

FULBOURN FLORA

Wild plants with local folk uses

- Peter Reeves

No.6 YARROW (*Achillea Millefolium*)



Also known locally as 'Milfoil' or 'Nosebleed', Yarrow is a common plant of grassy places especially on calcareous soils. It is of medium height (approx. 50 cms.) and has easily recognised flat clusters of flower heads of white or sometimes light pink. Its foliage is finely divided, deep green in colour and highly aromatic. A long standing medicinal herb associated with healing soldiers wounds in the past it is claimed in legend that Achilles used it for this purpose and this legend is reflected in its proper name. The young leaves when chopped may be added to omelettes, stews, soups, etc. as a flavouring herb or to salads to add an aromatic, peppery flavour.

Both the leaves and flowers, used either, fresh, dried or as aromatic oil have a long list of claimed attributes, often as an infused drink. Yarrow tea being still a very popular herbal tea and is said to improve the digestion and appetite (two teaspoons fresh or dries leaves added to a cup of boiling water and infused for about 15 minutes.)

It is also said to be beneficial in treatment of internal bleeding, colds, flu, hayfever, menstrual and circulatory problems, liver and gall bladder complaints. That famous medieval herbalist Nicholas Culpeper tells us that "As a medicine this plant is drying and binding." It reduces heavy bleeding and is effective against piles when a strong infusion of the leaves is drunk. An ointment made from the leaves is said to be effective for healing wounds as is a poultice of the leaves or fresh leaves applied and held in place with a bandage.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

A RANDOM SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS BY MRS. PAT WHITE

FULBURN c. 1790

(Having called several times at this village without effect, I was at length favoured with this account by letter, from R. Greaves Townly, Esq)

The soil in general is of a thin, light chalky, and gravelly nature' some part of which is a strong deep staple, and is good wheat land, containing ? acres. The enclosures in severalty, containing ? acres, are rented at ? per acre (The timber, hedgerows and natural herbage, seem to indicate a warm and kindly soil.) A few of these enclosures are capable of being overflowed, which in a dry season, has been found to answer very well.

A common of about four hundred acres is appropriated to the feeding of cows, from April to the 26th day of November, from which time, to the ensuing 13th day of February, it is allotted to the feeding of sheep. The upper part of this common, towards Wilbraham, is of a light and sandy nature, with sufficient substance to pay well for enclosing; this improvement has not yet been proposed, although there can be little doubt of its beneficial consequences, particularly as the open fields lie in general, in pieces of three roods, half acres, roods and half roods, and three quarters of a rood; the expense, and great inconvenience of which, is inconceivable: temporary exchanges are frequently made amongst the occupiers, but as these agreements are of necessity loose, and uncertain, little advantage arises from them; and as much of the land is in mortmain, no permanent exchanges can be made without the authority of parliament. The largest farm in this parish is rented at one hundred and sixty pounds per ann. which, with all the others, is held at will. Common open field husbandry, with natural and artificial composts, produce per acre ?

The cow cattle are small, but equal to the present herbage of the parish; in which are kept about two thousand eight hundred sheep amongst which I was not able to learn that any particular disease prevails. There are one hundred and sixty-six houses, and distinct families, amounting to six hundred and forty souls



"A BRIEF HISTORY OF INFLATION"

- By Peter Reeves

OK - I knew a snappy title like that would grab your attention but any article which starts with the line 'I was on a guided tour of a brothel organised by Saga' would, I as sure get everyone yawning immediately. Mind you it was true, I was on such a tour but to be fair it was part of a larger one in the ancient biblical city of Ephesus.

This very celebrated city was already affluent with a thriving port in the 6th century BC and with earliest human occupation which can be traced back to 1400 BC. Our guide, though young, was well informed and enthusiastic for this site and shepherded us methodically through the extensive and impressive excavated area (much remains hidden beneath the soil still waiting to be revealed) with explanations which brought the actual everyday life of the city and its previous inhabitants into clear understanding.

Whilst we were at the entrance of the Temple of Hadrian, completed - we were advised - in AD138, having had its main features pointed out I recall hearing what seemed an unnecessarily strident voice enquire 'Where is the brothel then?' The voice was a familiar one mine! The group from Saga was composed largely of staid-looking matrons and one could sense almost physically a ripple of alarm engulf the group and a mass edging away. 'Oh yes, the brothel' he remarked casually, 'It is the next building - we can go there now'. And so it was! I found myself in company with a group of mature ladies for whom this was very likely - but I cannot be sure of this- a similarly unique experience, in the remains of a Turkish brothel only a few feet from the impressive Temple of Hadrian.

Well, nobody needs to be unduly concerned over the consequences of this visit, since the establishment had not been operational, I understand, for well over a thousand years. Only the ground floor, or what was left of it, was evident but like most ancient domestic buildings it struck me as being very small. The guide went on to tell us that the extremely well-known small bronze statuette of Priapus (the genial little fellow with the outsized .. er personality) so beloved of local picture postcard sellers was found in the ruins of this establishment. A fertility symbol we were told. He further advised us that it was reputed a tunnel existed for the benefit of the shy from the nearby immensely impressive and beautiful Library of Celsus to this establishment. Mind you, we saw no indication of this but the library, or its remains, was absolutely breathtaking, having been built by a son in honour of his father. A most impressive testament to satisfaction at his inheritance, one assumes; I cannot imagine even a bird box being erected for me by mine! Then the same voice as before sent more shock waves through the distaff side of the group with the totally unnecessary enquiry 'How much did it cost here then?'

This time the young guide was unprepared for the question but a smile spread over his face as he responded. 'Of course such matters give us an interesting indication of relative values in earlier civilisations. I do have some information and will let you have a translation later. Meantime we can now see what is possibly the World's earliest known roadside advertisement for this brothel on the marbled street round the corner'. I took this promise of a translated price list to be a fob-off but, true to his word, I was supplied later with some papers which I find a fascinating insight into earlier life, economy and inflation. Part was a hand-written translation of a form of receipt, presumably before the temporary introduction of Christianity which brought about many changes, not always beneficial. I quote exactly from his translation: 'Two obols for the lady you spent the night with. Two obols for dinner. Half an obol for the hay we gave your mule.'

Prior to the use of coins as currency copper sticks were employed termed obols. One obol weighed 0.73 grammes, drachmae which means 'handful' was 4.36 grammes and looks to still have some relationship to the Greek unit of currency. It seems that the daily wage for a slave (I am surprised they got paid) in the 4th and 3rd century BC was one obol per day with which a slave could purchase 4 loaves of bread or 375 grammes of olive oil. It would seem that the state was then surprisingly generous by allocating 'Needy ones' 2 obols per day - something I take to be worth currently £5 per day judging by Tesco's prices.

At the same time the wage for an unskilled person (not enslaved) was 1 tetradrachma (16 obols) which would buy 3 litres of wine or 1.5 kilos of meat. Four tetradrachma would have purchased 0.5 kilos of nails or one ladder. A house (what type or size is not specified) would then cost 580 tetradrachma - about 20 months' work for an unskilled worker or twice as long for the ladies of pleasure or circa £5,800 in current Tesco related equivalents! As an indication of inflation, which seems to have been in existence even then, in the 4th century BC an ox would cost ±312 obols but by the 2nd century BC this had risen to ±480 obols.

Although the ladies in that group may have formed the impression that I was unduly interested in vice, I would wish to quickly refute this. I find the more human aspects of everyday life in earlier times quite fascinating and for me, at least, together with the well recorded activities of the well-known and powerful, the essence of what history is all about.