



FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY

"To save Fulbourn's past for the future"

NEWSLETTER NO. 42 Autumn 2015

At Fulbourn Village History Society's Sixteenth Annual General Meeting, the following members were unanimously elected to the Committee of Fulbourn Village History Society:

Chair: Ursula Lyons

Secretary: Glynis Arber

Keeper of the Archives: Pat White

Webmaster: John Timperio

Vice Chair: Tony Goodall

Treasurer: Richard Bennett

Assistant Secretary: Rose Tristram

Committee Member: Alison Rash

We especially welcome a 'new face' - Alison Rash - who has already been helping to re-organise our Archive Store, sort the photograph albums and research the historical background to some of the artefacts we have in our keeping. Many thanks to her - and to all on the Committee who willingly work on behalf of YOUR Society.

PROGRAMME OF FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY TALKS

2015 - 2016

Oct 15th	'Victorian Ghost Hunter'	ANDREW SELWYN
Nov 19th	'Fulbourn Hospital'	DAVID EDWARDS
Dec 11th	'Sherlock Holmes in Cambs.' [Entry by Ticket Only]	MIKE PETTY
Jan 21st	'Tudor Cambridge'	HONOR RIDOUT
Feb 18th	'To Clapham's we go: an 18C Cambridge Coffee House'	CRAIG CESSFORD
Mar 17th	'A very Cambridge Celebration'	TAMSIN WIMHURST
April 21st	'Roman Cambridge'	QUINTON CARROLL

MAY 19th 2016 17th A.G.M

FULBOURN EXEMPTIONS FROM SERVICE 1914-1918: Based on Reports abstracted from the Fulbourn Chronicle 1901-1930 Vol.III

Within a year of Great Britain declaring war on Germany in August 1914, it had become obvious that it was not possible to continue fighting by relying on voluntary recruits.

The government saw no alternative but to increase numbers by compulsory active service ie. conscription and in March 1916 the Military Service Act was passed. This imposed conscription on all single men (extended to married men in May 1916) between 18 and 41 years, but exempted the medically unfit, clergymen, teachers and certain classes of industrial worker.



It would also appear from reports in the Cambridge Weekly News of the findings of Chesterton District Council Military Service Tribunal, which heard claims from Fulbourn residents, that work associated with agriculture (an important part of the war effort) was also a valid reason for exemption from service.

This was of obvious importance to a rural village such as Fulbourn and **the accounts of the Tribunal offer an interesting insight into the problems which lack of labour might cause an economy largely involved with farming.** Indeed, many of those who came before the Tribunal did so via the application of their employer - usually a farmer. **It also reveals the concerns of those who had dependents.**

However, the decisions of the Tribunal do sometimes appear inconsistent and unfortunately the newspaper does not provide any record of the arguments involved.

For instance, *Cecil White* (27), High Street, Fulbourn, stated in his claim he had **‘a widowed mother and two sisters depending on him** and had three brothers already on foreign service’. No exemption. [22.03.16]

However, *P. White* (18 3/4) applied on personal grounds as **‘the only and youngest son left out of five to help support his widowed mother.** Four brothers have been serving since the outbreak of the war.’ Exemption was granted for 6 months ‘in consideration of the fact that the four brothers are serving’. [17.01.17]

Again, *Francis N. Peak*, ‘cycle agent, motor spirit dealer and small holder, who **supports a paralysed father,** and has 24 acres of land’ was granted conditional exemption. [16.06.16].

Skilled agricultural mechanics were also in demand. Mr Chaplin, of Fulbourn, applied for exemption for *Richard Hawkins* (26) and *Herbert Mason* (27), **‘both engine drivers’.** Conditional exemption granted. [12.04.16]

A later application [15.09.16] shows how desperate matters were becoming. Mr John Chaplin applied for his employee *William Edwards* (36) married, and an agricultural

machinist. He had ‘lost 11 men and has now only 7, while **some of his machines are standing idle for want of workers.**’ It is interesting that Mr Chaplin also stated ‘he was using women where he reasonably could’. It appears though, that ‘Edwards is a **skilled mechanic and indispensable**’.

With the benefit of hindsight, this Tribunal provides an indication of attitudes in the early years of the war. Mr Chaplin ‘wanted Edwards only till next March, by which time he would have broken the back of the work’. The Chairman replied ‘We hope to have broken the back of the Germans by that time. (Laughter)’.

Four months exemption was granted, conditional on Edwards joining the Volunteer Training Corps.

Other skilled rural tradesmen who were granted exemptions included [27.09.16] *Albert Knowles* (28), married, with one child, ‘**a thatcher**’, as was *Jonas Turner* (34), married, with no children. [13.10.16]. The latter stated ‘he was **in a certified occupation (thatcher)**. He employed two men and also had 10 acres of land’.

Knowles, who had previously been exempted for 4 months, had this extended for another month, and Turner was given six months exemption, ‘conditional upon joining the Volunteer Force’.

Another rural craft also allowed exemptions from service to be made. [22.03.16] *L. W. Knights* (35), Highfield House, ‘**wheelwright**, in partnership with his father and engaged principally on agricultural work’. Temporary exemption was allowed for two months. It is perhaps of interest that a verdict of ‘No jurisdiction’ [19.06.18] was passed on Frederick William Gates (44), of ‘East View, Fulbourn, **agricultural wheelwright and carpenter**’. However, details as to why this decision was applied are not reported.

It appears the semi-skilled were also in demand. Mr Bailey, builder, Fulbourn, claimed

on behalf of *William Henry Matthews* (29), Hope Terrace, Fulbourn, ‘**horsekeeper and general labourer**’ who was granted two months exemption. [29.11.16]

Many villages at the time of WWI were dependent on ‘hawkers’, ie. a person who travels around selling goods.

This may have been why *Arthur Charles Coburn* (31), ‘the keeper of an oil and hardware business at Fulbourn’, received a sympathetic response from Chesterton Tribunal (30.06.16). He was the ‘**only hawker who called at outlying farms**. He also carried on a small grocery business’. Six months exemption was allowed and he re-applied the following January, this time being described as a ‘licensed hawker, oil and hardware merchant, who serves 15 villages and among other things retails 250 gallons of oil weekly’. [17.01.17] He was exempted for three more months.

The village butcher also played an important part in the community. It is possibly the reason that *Oliver T. Pask* (40), ‘married, with two children, of High Street, **master butcher**, was granted exemption, conditional upon him joining the Volunteer Force.’ [13.10.16]



Pask’s the Butcher shop on the Corner of High Street and Church Lane c. 1918

Similarly, *Albert D. Whitmore* (44), of High Street, Fulbourn, a **'butcher and small holder'**, was given three months exemption. [19.06.18].

Another person essential to the welfare of the village, was the miller and this possibly was reflected in the conditional exemption of *Eliot Mann* (38), **'miller, corn merchant and coal merchant.'** It was also noted that the mill was driven by an oil engine (perhaps requiring skilled maintenance) and that Mann was 'in delicate health'. [13.10.16]

Producing food was a priority especially when the impact of the German U-boat campaign led to food shortages in Britain.

Rationing was not officially introduced throughout the country until the summer of 1918, but **the importance of allotments and small market gardens during the war years** meant that such growers were a valuable resource.

However, it seems that there was a conflict of interests with the military when *Percy James Hardwick* (24), **market gardener**, was, on the application of his employer, James Hardwick, granted exemption until 16th August. The military appealed against this decision, but 'the appeal was dismissed conditional on no fresh appeal by the man after 16th August'. [07.06.16].

There seemed to be no such problem for *Albert S. Gibbs*, **'nurseryman and market gardener, who has 1½ acres of ground'**, as he received exemption for 3 months, nor for *Frank N. Peak*, **a small holder with 24 acres of land**, who was granted conditional exemption. [16.06.16]

Similarly, *Johnnie Stalley* (35), who 'stated he was a **coal merchant and farmer, with four cows and four working horses**, besides which he **did considerable carting for the Rural District Council'**, was given conditional exemption from service. [02.06.16]

Applying on behalf of his employee *Charles Missing* (30), Mr John Plumb described himself as a 'coal merchant and carting contractor' with a **'farm of 53 acres'**. He asked that Missing, considered 'indispensable', be allowed to stay with him. Four months exemption was the verdict of the Tribunal. [02.06.16]

Other farmers in Fulbourn were also obviously feeling **the stress of operating with a minimum amount of labour.**

Mr Henry Rolph, farmer, applied for exemption for his two sons, *Reginald Rolph* (19), **horsekeeper and ploughman**, and *Alex Ward Rolph* (20), **stockman and milkman**, 'on the **ground of indispensability'**. The Tribunal granted the younger son conditional exemption, and in the case of Alex the decision was no exemption. [12.04.16] A month earlier, *Sidney Charles Moule* (23) Hills Farm, **farming 20 acres**, also had had no exemption. [22.03.16]

Mr H.F. Chaplin applied for the exemption of *Arthur J. Butler* (29), **a horseman and farm worker** on Hills Farm. 'There were 210 acres, with 6 men and a boy'. Presumably the tribunal felt he was not over staffed for the size of the farm, as three months exemption was made. [30.06.16]

Mr W.H. Wright, Chesterton Road, Cambridge, 'applied on behalf of two employees on Shardelow Farm, viz., *Levi George Taylor* (32), **ploughman**, and *Joseph Livermore* (26), **stacker and general labourer'**. Both men were exempted for three months. [26.07.16]

A somewhat complex situation arose in the case of *George Ed. White* (18), of Barnsbury Farm. He asked for exemption and stated 'he had completed two years in the Army, and then being only 17 years old and 7 months of age he was placed on reserve. He was a fully trained man, and had seen active service in France with the Cambs. Regiment. If called up ten months hence - he was now only just 18 - this

would still leave him two months for a “fresher’s course” before he could be sent on active service. He was **at present working on his father’s farm.**’

The Tribunal seem to have taken full account of these circumstances (he must have been very young when he enlisted), as they ‘felt that as the applicant **had done what he could in the past he was entitled to what he asked for now**, and they gave him exemption for ten months’. [28.02.17]

Unfortunately, the original proceedings of the Chesterton District Council Military Tribunal do not appear to have survived. It is therefore impossible to discover the arguments and

counter arguments which led to any decision made by the Tribunal.

There are, however, copies of letters sent by the Clerk of Chesterton District Council, Mr John Symonds, in reply to queries - some relating to the Military Tribunals. Research into these is ongoing and it is hoped that more information about Fulbourn Village during the years of WWI will eventually be obtained from this primary source.

Glynis Arber

Note: The numbers in square brackets refer to the day, month and year the report appeared in the Cambridge Weekly News.

ARCHIVE STORE: A work in progress

Since Fulbourn Village History Society was founded in 1999, we have received donations from individuals and organisations of documents, photographs and objects, mostly with a local connection.

These are carefully accessioned, ie. provided with a number, described and written down in a Register by our Keeper of the Archives, Pat White. They are then entered onto a database by John Patten. Thus we put into action the first objective laid down in our Constitution ‘To research, keep and maintain records of all aspects of the village’s social and historical development’.

However, the ongoing accumulation of such material meant that our Archive Store in the Fulbourn Centre (essentially a large walk in cupboard in the Committee Room which we hire from

the Fulbourn Centre) had reached bursting capacity. An extra filing cabinet and shelving (both kindly donated to the Society) has helped Pat, assisted by Alison Rash, to re-organise the location of documents etc.

Also, fortunately, the opening of the new Multi Purpose Hall freed up more space and the map cupboard, with a large metal cabinet plus artefacts, have now been re-located to secure areas outside the Archive Store. It has provided us with an opportunity to ‘take stock’ of the various articles and research the history behind them.

As a way of showing what we have in our care, Fulbourn Village History Society Newsletter will produce a series of reports relating to a few of the items, together with their photographs.

HIDDEN HISTORIES OF ARTEFACTS IN OUR COLLECTION

A considerable number of the artefacts deposited with F.V.H.S. have a health related background. These include bottles which contained remedies for particular conditions and were often designed for self-medication, (the National Health Service was not founded until 1948, and many of the objects date to the early part of the 20C) .

Researching the background of these items reveals a fascinating insight into developments within medicine and their impact on the wider community.

We have a small bottle (empty!) with a printed label stating it to be ‘**Tabloid**’ (this is significant) of **Cascara Sagrada** which was manufactured by ‘**Burroughs Wellcome & Co**’.



It (perhaps) owes its existence to an invention by British artist and explorer **William Brockedon**, who improved the quality of pencils by designing a mechanised method of crushing graphite to a fine powder and then

compressing it to produce a better quality lead. In 1843 a patent was granted and the American drug firm, **John Wyeth and Brother**, hired Brockedon to make compressed medicines using the same technique and it became a popular process.

In the United Kingdom, not only were there few manufacturing drug companies but very few medicines were produced on a large scale. Pharmacists still used the traditional, time consuming and less precise pestle and mortar method to prepare medicines.

Silas Burroughs was Wyeth’s sole agent in London and recognised the potential marketing opportunity. He invited Henry Wellcome to join him in business and, following a contract from McKesson & Robbins giving him exclusive agency to sell their products in ‘Europe, Asia, Africa, East Indies and Australia’, the deed of partnership between the two men was executed on 27 September 1880.

In 1883 they purchased their first factory at Bell Lane in Wandsworth and Wellcome bought the machinery needed for making their own compressed medicine tablets from Wyeth in America. Five years later Wellcome put together a team of engineers to design a more efficient machine which produced 600 compressed pills per minute, each one bearing an unprecedented standard of precision.

To eliminate competition, in 1884 Wellcome registered as a trademark the word ‘Tabloid’ - which he devised from combining the words ‘tablet’ and ‘alkaloid’ to denote his firm’s pills.

Legal battles followed to prevent other companies from using that name, culminating in 1904 with Burroughs Wellcome & Co. v. Thompson & Capper. The prosecution argued that doctors prescribed ‘tabloid’ products because they had faith in the purity and accuracy of Burroughs Wellcome & Co

products and the judge ruled that ‘tabloid’ specifically referred to the products of that firm.

Eventually, the name ‘Tabloid’, being associated with quality and precision, was applied to the full range of the company’s products, including ‘Tabloid’ first aid kits, medicine chests and even ‘Tabloid’ Tea. The term has now passed into general use and means anything in compact form such as ‘condensed’ newspaper format - and possibly ‘tablet’ computers. However, technically it is the property of Burroughs Wellcome & Co.

So, what exactly, is Cascara Sagrada? It derives from a species of buckthorn native to western North America from southern British Columbia south to central California and eastward to northwestern Montana. The dried bark of cascara (a large shrub 4.5 - 10m tall) has been used for centuries as a laxative by Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest and then by Europeans/US colonisers. It has an intensively bitter flavour that remains in the mouth for hours, and it is easy to understand the popularity of a tablet formation!

Another object in our collection, is this box which contained **Chlorodyne**, one of the most famous patent medicines sold in the British Isles.



It was invented in the 19th century by a doctor in the British Indian Army, **Dr. John Collis**

Browne. Its original purpose was in the treatment of cholera. Browne sold his formula to the pharmacist **John Thistlewood Davenport.**

Widely advertised as a treatment for cholera, diarrhoea, insomnia, neuralgia, migraines, etc., its principal ingredients were a **mixture of laudanum** (an alcoholic solution of opium), tincture of **cannabis and chloroform**. Not surprisingly, it certainly lived up to its claims of being an **effective sedative and pain killer!**

Chlorodyne sold extremely well for many years and as its active ingredients were well known, local chemists shops would also make up cheaper generic versions for sale to their customers.

Though the drug was effective in many ways, its high opiate content (liquid tincture of Opium ie 10% Morphine) also made it **very addictive, and deaths from overdoses, either accidental or deliberate**, became a frequent occurrence. A common feature of the coroner’s report in such cases would be the description of the deceased’s body being found in a flat or bedsit littered with empty Chlorodyne bottles.

Over the decades of the twentieth century, the cannabis was removed from the formulation, and the amount of opiates in the medicine were progressively reduced. The name of Collis Browne lives on in Britain in a mixture sold under the trade name of “J Collis Browne’s Mixture” for the relief of coughs and diarrhoea. This **modern formulation contains morphine and peppermint oil.**

NB One problem with patent medicines of this period was that a successful formula was often copied by rival manufacturers such as ‘Freeman’s Chlorodyne’. Consequently, strong warnings regarding the authenticity of the product were printed on the advertising material - and on the packaging.

Glynis Arber

with grateful thanks to Alison Rash and the Google Search Engine!

THE HISTORY SOCIETY GOES BACK TO SCHOOL IN 'Keep the Home Fires Burning'.

Report by Rosemary Tristram.

Members of the History Society reprised their roles in "Keep the Home Fires Burning" all over again in Fulbourn Primary School in June this year, following the success the previous November in the Townley Hall. The school had decided to mount a History Week in June to commemorate the First World War. Many events were planned, including a trip to Belgium for final year pupils to visit the war graves. The History Society was asked to contribute ideas to include an activity for the whole school to demonstrate what was going on in the village during WW1.



**Recreation of
Red Cross
V.A.D. hospital
in the Old
School
building where
convalescent
soldiers were
looked after
during WW1.**

So it was that "Home Fires" came to be reproduced, given that the school itself ie. the Old School, was taken over to become the first convalescent hospital for soldiers in Cambridgeshire, under the leadership of the Rev. Charles Townley, Director of the Red Cross (played in the original production by his grandson, our President, Richard Townley), and his wife, Mrs Townley, who became honorary commandant.

I can report that the whole school did indeed throw themselves into keeping the home fires burning! Children were really well prepared by their teachers. On the day they arrived, teachers as well as children, dressed as either nurses, doctors, wounded soldiers or entertainers. Three of the children who appeared in the original cast,

Kirsty Rye, Isabelle Cory and Emily Norcott, reprised their roles as pupils in the school, with Glynis Arber as their Headmistress in the morning and Karen Rye in the afternoon. Three other members of the History Society played their part too: Chris Bennett as Miss Elizabeth (Bessie) Turner the Postmistress, Phyllis Scott as Mrs Sarah Ellis the mother of baker Percy Ellis, and Rosemary Tristram as Mrs Townley. David Wright kindly lent his family's soldier's helmet, pack and gas mask (a source of considerable mystery to the children). Class by class throughout the morning and afternoon, the children were cast back to 1914.

An authentic WW1 bed, lent along with many other artefacts by Jenny Culank, was the centrepiece of the hospital. Classworks provided the costumes, so that the old primary school was transformed once again into a place providing comfort for wounded soldiers with nurses and doctors in close attendance. As the Head of History said "The event was a resounding success! The teaching staff all said their classes loved it and were buzzing on their return to their classrooms. Being able to meet "real" people and touch real artefacts had a big impact on them and has generated some fantastic discussions and written work during the day".



**Members of F.V.H.S getting in on
the 'act'!**