



# FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY

*"To save Fulbourn's past for the future"*

**NEWSLETTER NO. 55 Spring 2022**

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## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY

Dear Members

As we come to the end of our 2021-22 season, I am pleased to report that, despite the pandemic, Fulbourn Village History Society has continued to function admirably. Our Talks were not cancelled and instead took place by Zoom - a learning curve for all! Once restrictions were lifted from The Fulbourn Centre, Alison our Archivist, assisted on occasion by myself, continued to re-organise the Archive Store. It will now be much easier to locate and examine documents etc.

On your behalf, I take this opportunity to thank the Committee who have still managed to carry out their responsibilities by email and Zoom. One of the Officers, Rose Tristram, will be taking a well deserved retirement from her duty as Secretary at the coming A.G.M. Her contribution over a difficult time (and before), has been invaluable and we wish her well in the future.

However, it does bring up an immediate concern. Fulbourn Village History Society needs more members to serve on the Committee. Otherwise, we may not be able to fulfil the terms of our Constitution which require there to be three Officers - Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. If these positions cannot be filled, then the viability of the Society is put into question. I am still willing to be Chair but the role of Secretary is also essential. It is not onerous eg. minute taking and consultation/ collaboration with other committee members when arranging the programme and social events. Involvement in research is optional but you would be very welcome to assist!

We have had to delay our planned 20th Anniversary celebration but intend to instead mark the occasion of our 25th Anniversary in 2024. This can only happen with your continued support.

Kind Regards

Glynis Arber

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### THE HOME FRONT IN FULBOURN 1939 -1945 Part III by Glynis Arber

**Much of the information Fulbourn Village History Society has about the village between 1939 -1945 comes from extracts in The Fulbourn Chronicles Vol IV whose earliest entry relating to the war years occurred on 22 September 1939.**

The following article continues the story of fundraising efforts for WWII by the village Fulbourn.

#### **Community Campaign Weeks in Fulbourn during WWII**

The War Savings Campaign encouraged thrift at an individual level but also brought together

the community by fund raising for large-scale campaigns such as the 'Spitfire Fund' (1940), 'War Weapons Week' (1941), 'Warship Weeks' (1941 / 1942), 'Wings For Victory Week' (1943) and 'Salute the Soldier Week' (1944).

The pattern of these campaign weeks involved a community being set a large monetary target. Ostensibly, the idea was to save a sufficient amount of money to support the airman, sailor or soldier by having the means to win the war.

During WWII Fulbourn held several such campaign weeks. The first was War Weapons Week and the Chronicle on 30 May 1941

*Fulbourn's War Weapons Week opened on Saturday with a parade round the village of Army tanks, Bren guns, armoured cars, Home Guard, Red Cross nurses, V.A.D. Detachment and fire fighters. At 4 o'clock Captain C.E. Townley opened a fete in the Manor grounds, at which there were many attractions. On Sunday afternoon the parish church was crowded for a united service, conducted by the Rector and the Rev. B McCollough, C.F.*

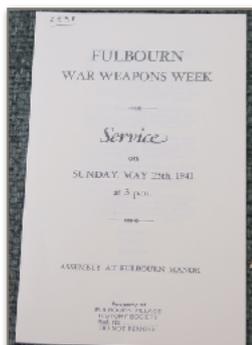
*It was a successful event and the Target of £10,000 [approx £393,464.00] exceeded as*

*£15,950 [approx £627,575.08] was raised. Apparently some of this money could be used locally and about £70 [£2754.25] was allocated from the War Weapons Week Fund for the upkeep of the almshouses and invested in War Loans.*

In Fulbourn Village History Society's Archives we have original notices for the War Weapons Week. The Programme is somewhat faded and has therefore been transcribed - as far as possible - in the style it was typewritten.

FULBOURN WAR WEAPONS WEEK	
May 24th to May 30th	
PROGRAMME	
Saturday	
<u>May 24th</u>	2.30: Procession: assembly outside Village Hall.
	4.0: Fete: Manor Grounds, Park Entrance. Broad Green (Sports, Side Shows etc.)
	THE FETE WILL BE OPENED BY MR. TOWNLEY
Sunday	
<u>May 25th</u>	3.0: Open-Air Service at the Manor
Monday	
<u>May 26th</u>	6.0: Football Match at Recreation Ground between teams of the Kings Royal Rifles from Fulbourn and Wilbraham. The Band of the K.R.R. will attend.
Tuesday	
<u>May 27th</u>	8.0: Military Concert in the Village Hall.
Wednesday	
<u>May 28th</u>	8.0: Vaudeville Entertainment in the Village Hall.
Thursday	
<u>May 29th</u>	6.45: Display by Local Organisation in Manor Grounds. 8.0: Whist Drive in Village Hall.
Friday	
<u>May 30th</u>	7.30: Dance in the Village Hall. (K.R.R. DANCE BAND).

An additional note at the end of the Programme provides information about the many methods people could use when contributing to Fulbourn's War Weapons Week including, it seems, payment at a branch of Lloyds Bank actually located within the village!



Stamps, Certificates and Bonds may be bought during the week through the Banks, or at the Selling Centre at Lloyds Bank Premises, Fulbourn, or at the Fulbourn Post Office, or through your local group. Stamps may also be purchased at any of the above entertainments.

Any surplus accruing from the week's entertainments will be invested in War Bonds for the benefit of local charitable organisations and Regimental Funds.

A year later, on 20 March 1942 The Chronicle described the attractions arranged for Warship Week which included

*an old English Fair to-morrow (Saturday); service at St Vigor's Church on Sunday afternoon; cinema show on Monday; "Journey's End" presented by H.A.C. Players on Tuesday; whist drive on Wednesday; concert on Thursday; gala dance on Friday.*

The total amount of money raised was not disclosed in the Chronicle, but on 1 July 1942 an extract from them reveals that the

*Warship Week Committee had handed a cheque for £25 [approx £983.66] to the Trustees of the Almshouses for the installation of electric light. As, however, the B., C. and H. Company are unable to carry out the work owing to shortage of material and labour, it was decided to invest the money in War Loan until the work could be put in hand.*

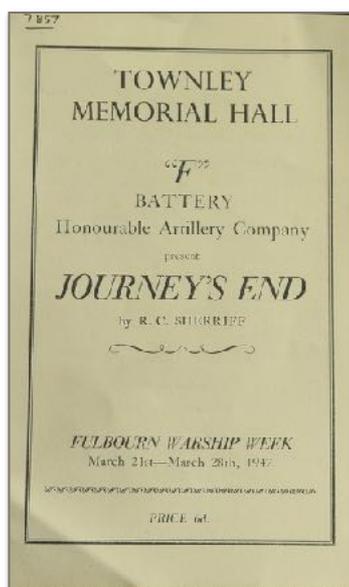
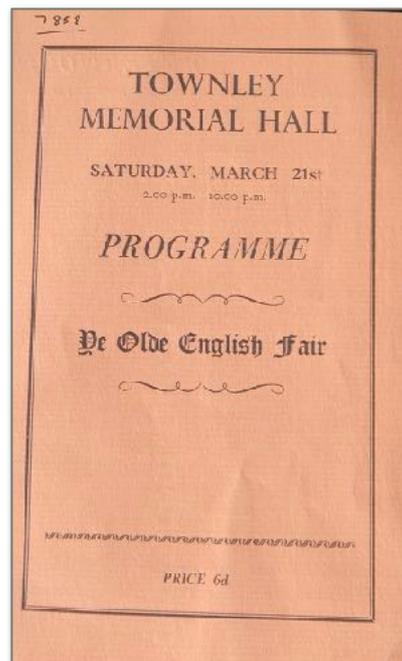
This is an indication that the war was affecting local business and infrastructure.

The Wings for Victory Week which began on May 15th 1943 involved a great many activities starting with a fete in the Manor ...

*...at which over 700 people were present to hear an inspiring speech from Air-Vice-Marshal N. MacEwen, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., and the many entertainments and side-shows were well patronised.*

It was followed next day by

*A church parade was held in the Manor grounds on Sunday, 16th, which was attended by the Home Guard and all the village organisations.*



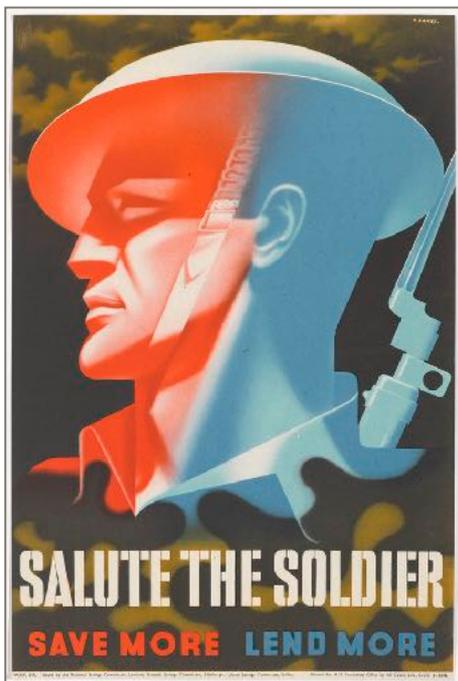
The play, Journey's End was performed by members of the "F" Battery Honourable Artillery Company.

Another example of the close relationship that Fulbourn Village had with those who served.

while on each evening of the week

*...concerts, dances, plays or whist drives took place in the Townley Memorial Hall, ending with the comedy "Yes or No", played to a large and appreciative audience. Sports were held on the 19th, and on the 22nd there was a children's Empire parade and a cricket match.*

It must have taken a great deal of time and effort by the organising Committee's to co-ordinate all these various events which proved a great success as the target of £7500 [approx £295,098.00] was easily passed and the total raised being over £13,000, [approx £511,503.20] £110 [approx £4328.10] of which was allocated to the Almshouses, £20 [approx £786.93] to District Nursing Fund and £20 [approx £786.93] to the Army and Navy Blind Fund.



The Fulbourn Chronicle stated that £11,573 [approx 411,437.51] was raised with the sum of over £125 [approx £4,443.94] going to local charities about £90 [approx £3199.64] of which went to Welcome Home to the Troops Fund. It would appear, by June 1944 there was acknowledgement that the war, at least in Europe, was drawing to a close.

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## HIDDEN HISTORIES OF ARTEFACTS HELD IN OUR STORE:

### Keeping the Beard Trimmed by Glynis Arber

We have in our Archive Store several razors. Information about these objects has been obtained from the internet at the following websites:

<https://www.classicshaving.com/pages/a-brief-and-none-too-formal-history-of-the-art-of-shaving>

<https://www.dovo.com/en/ratgeber/the-history-of-the-straight-razor/>

<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/22490/brief-history-shaving>

<https://www.theenglishshavingcompany.com/blog/history-of-shaving/>

<https://www.britannica.com/technology/razor>

## THE STRAIGHT OR CUT THROAT RAZOR



Three so called ‘cut throat’ razors are kept in our Archive Store. Their basic design is very similar with the blades having a hinged safety cover. They probably date from the early 20C.

### HISTORY OF THE RAZOR

Prehistoric cave drawings show clam shells, sharpened flints and shark’s teeth were used to shave the beard. It is probable this was done more to control vermin than for aesthetic reasons!

Solid gold and copper axe-like razors have been found in Egyptian tombs of the 4th millennium BC. Beards were a sign of authority and were associated with being divine. A Pharaoh wearing a beard emphasised his (or her) status as a god on Earth. However, these were stylistically long and narrow false beards, placed over a close shaven chin. It took time to achieve a perfectly clean shave and was a sign of luxury and sophistication.

A full beard was the height of fashion for the Ancient Greeks until Alexander the Great forbade his Macedonian troops to grow them because it was a concern that enemies could grab a warrior’s beard during a fight.

According to the Roman historian Livy, the razor was introduced by Lucius Tarquinius Priscus a legendary King of Rome in the 6th

century BCE. Shaving did not become popular though until around 296 BC when pumice stones, depilatory creams and an iron razor called a Novacilla, which looked a bit like brass knuckles were used.



During the Middle Ages, the popularity of beards depended on the style of the monarch in charge. Members of the clergy, however, tended to shave both beard and hair. By the early modern period, razor production had increased with the blades being wedge-shaped and broad at the tip.

The invention of hard and pure cast steel made self-shaving much easier and the 19C was a golden era of the straight razor. Blades crafted in Sheffield and Solingen were in great demand and the first hollow grinds appeared by 1825 with the shape of such razors more or less unchanged from what you can buy (usually by high end barber shops!) today. The nick name ‘cut-throat’ razor which appeared in the 19C is self explanatory - as by then it was an easy weapon to obtain.

In 1847 William Henson invented the hoe-shaped razor but the term ‘safety razor’ was patented for the first time in 1880. It had

additional safety clips and attachments to make the blade glide more smoothly over the skin. In 1895, a travelling salesman, King Camp Gillette, combined the hoe-shaped razor with the idea of having a disposable double-edged blade. This would remove the inconvenience of having to sharpen a razor's blade after every few shaves.

However, it was MIT professor William Nickerson who found a way to stamp the blades out of high-carbon steel and by 1903 the first batch was manufactured. Three years later, Gillette's design was moving 300,000 units a year. Yet Gillette actually sold the razors at a loss - his fortune was made by selling the blades at a huge profit. (A business model that ink cartridge printers seem to have copied!)

By the early 1960's stainless steel blades which could be used for longer, began to be manufactured. Then followed the development of inexpensive cartridge-style injector blades which could fit into disposable handles. While the cartridge had only one cutting edge, it was possible to place two blades on one side and by the early 21st century, up to five blades were common.

It was not until 1928, that Jacob Schick patented an electric razor he had designed - the first ones successfully manufactured reached the market in 1931. An electric razor, driven by a small motor, has a shearing head divided into two sections. The outer one has a series of slots to grip the hairs and the inner a series of saw blades.

Fulbourn Village History Society do not possess an electric razor, but we do have a hoe-shaped metal safety razor.



The transition from shaving using soap and brush resulting from modern technology has certainly made it easier to keep a beard trim - or at least invisible. Though perhaps it was of most benefit to the badgers who were sheared because their bristles were highly prized for wet shaving brushes since they held water so well!

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## FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY PROGRAMME OF TALKS 2021-2022

Regretfully, we were not able to meet up in person for our Autumn and Winter series of Talks, owing to a cautionary approach regarding Covid 19 as many of our members are particularly vulnerable. However, Rose managed to book speakers who were willing to deliver their presentations via Zoom and she also very kindly acted as host for this. Participants who attended these sessions were very complimentary about the quality of the material provided and how the lecturers coped with, what was to many, a new form of interaction with the public.

While it would have been wonderful to mingle with friends and members in the Meeting Room as happened two years ago (yes, that long) it was also a real pleasure to see faces, albeit via video, whom we had not met for many months. Before the Talk commenced and after it ended, we were able to chat amongst ourselves and catch up which was a positive experience. It was also admitted that in some sense, during the winter months, it was an advantage having the Talks programme by Zoom as you did not have to go out into the cold!

Your Committee do recognise, however, that Zooming is not for everyone. For those of you who have missed the interesting subjects discussed by the speakers, I have therefore included in this Newsletter the reports which appeared in The Mill for each talk. Hopefully, in 2022-2023 we will be able to resume a programme using our normal venue at The Fulbourn Centre.

## **21 October 'The Archaeology of Roads: evidence from the A14 and A428' by Dr Steve Sherlock**

There have been amazing discoveries by the Archaeologists in the areas of the recently constructed A14 bypass of the Huntingdon area. Here are some of the highlights of a very detailed talk on zoom by Dr Steve Sherlock. An enormous tusk of a mammoth opened the zoom lecture! So these magnificent beasts trod the earth in our neighbourhood. We were given evidence that Iron age and bronze Age man made homes here. Many little axe heads and arrow heads had been found up and down the length of the new A14. Most unusually a little woodwind instrument of the same vintage was found. Who knew that Iron Age man had the leisure to make music?

Dr Sherlock also presented evidence of Roman presence near Girton with the discovery of a coin picturing the Emperor Laelianus. This emperor only ruled for two months so these coins are particularly rare. Graves with skeletons minus their legs were a more unsettling find. Apparently, these legs were cut off after death so that the bodies could be accommodated in short coffins! Other more mundane artefacts were also found such as bowls and mosaic fragments.

Many trenches were excavated by the Archaeological team. Ancient holes, systematically placed for construction of posts/pillars as a basis for buildings were carefully unearthed. Such buildings may have been halls or barns. A full skeleton was discovered, seemingly a sacrificial victim placed at the threshold to a doorway.

Evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlements throughout the area was also prevalent.

One aspect that was of particular interest was the way in which the Archaeologists and Developers collaborated. Each of course, had differing ideal time scales for the proposed work but by carefully planning ahead and being fully aware of each other's intentions, they were able to speed matters along to everyone's satisfaction. Although it emerged that many archaeologists before the pandemic came from abroad - especially Spain and Italy - and have not returned, Steve explained that an apprenticeship scheme is now in operation which will enable them to continue with their digs during the re-development of the A428. In a few years time, we hope to once again, discover their results!

**Rose Tristram and Glynis Arber**

## **18 November 'The private life of Oliver Cromwell' by Stuart Orme**

Oliver Cromwell, his private life, was presented in an informative and entertaining manner by Stuart Orme, Curator of the Cromwell Museum in Huntingdon. The latter is housed in the oldest building in Huntingdon dating to the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century. It was originally part of the hospital of St John the Baptist but in 1565 it became Huntingdon Grammar School which both Samuel Pepys and Oliver Cromwell attended although separated by some years. Stuart's talk concerned some of the controversies surrounding Cromwell - villain or hero? He married Elisabeth Bouchier daughter of a wealthy fur dealer at St Giles church in 1620. They had 9 children and seemed to have a loving marriage. Examples of a loving correspondence between them is held in the museum.

So, to the first controversy. Was he really glum and dour? He could be moved to tears and laughter. Pictures of him by Dutch and Royalist painters, who had axes to grind, are where these doleful images first appear. However, when he was at Sidney Sussex in 1616 it was recorded that he was more noted for exercises in the field than in the schools.

Another controversy concerns his being an iconoclast. Only a third of cathedrals were subjected to iconoclastic treatment by soldiers out of control. Peterborough was the only cathedral vandalised when Cromwell was present as a junior officer.

More controversial still was Cromwell's role when he was commanding the army in Ireland for 9 months in 1649. Although a lot of towns surrendered with no bloodshed Drogheda was an exception. Around 3000 people, civilians and soldiers were killed. The extent to which civilians were targeted is a significant topic of debate among historians even today.

The charge of regicide levelled against him was true. He was one of the key power brokers in the 1640s and one of the 59 signatories to Charles's execution. Originally resisting, after the King's escape he backed the court's decision. Cromwell rejected the request from Parliament that he should accept the crown and so England became a Republic. On Charles II's return, the Oblivion Act was passed pardoning those who had committed crimes during the Civil War and Interregnum apart from, amongst others, those 59 signatories. Some were hung drawn and quartered or hung. Those who had already died were disinterred, hung, decapitated and flung into a pit beneath the scaffold. Cromwell's head was placed on a spike facing the site of the king's execution. After 20 years the spike broke and the head was bought and sold several times until it was buried reputedly in a biscuit tin in Sidney Sussex.

**Tim Vaughan-Lane**

## 9 December 'Beer and Spirits: Tales of our haunted hostleries' by Julie Boundford

Julie Bounford reminded us, courtesy of zoom, that people from the past are still with us in many ways. So "spirits" are sightings, sounds or sensations of one kind or another. "Beer" may also have something to do with these sightings as many of them have taken place in pubs! Pubs have been important in communities not just for socialising but also as places used for recruitment, eg farm labourers, chapels of rest and even mortuaries! They were named "public houses" from the Eighteenth Century onwards because anyone with enough money to buy a pint had access to them.

Julie gave us several examples of "spirits", although she freely admitted it was hard to find empirical evidence to prove these tales of the weird and unexpected. Well known sightings include visions of Mary Queen of Scots en route to Fotheringay and Dick Turpin astride his horse. Pint glasses have been seen to move from table to table unassisted, lights turning on and off by themselves, cards shuffled and dealt, babies crying, weird knockings and footsteps. Perhaps most disturbingly of all, the tap on the shoulder...don't look now...and strange odours sometimes of tobacco other times of lavender.

Julie told us more about individual pubs. The **Bell Inn at Stilton** seems to have "enjoyed" more than its fair share of sightings. These include a lady sitting on a bed and pacing up and down the corridors. Among many other claims are that Dick Turpin appeared, Daniel de Foe, sitting by the fireplace, and objects appearing and disappearing of their own accord. The **Queens Head at Harston** has its own grey lady seen outside the pub. Members of the WI saw her one evening walking down to and into the river. The **Black Bull at Brampton** has the unnerving story of a drummer boy whose throat was slit, his killer caught and brought to justice. The body lies in the local cemetery. Apparently Samuel Pepys frequented this pub, as this would have been his local when growing up.

The **Caxton Gibbet Hotel** not surprisingly has more than its fair share of sightings as there were so many hangings there in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries. Just as gruesome were the stories of Mary Anne Weems and her husband Thomas. He murdered her and he was brought to justice, hanged and his body dissected. The **White Hart at Godmanchester** suffered mysterious bangings as heavy items were reported to have been thrown around by painters when redecorating in 1990 and attributed to the bodies not resting in peace.

Turning to Cambridge, Julie told us of sightings of two boys who died near the **Eagle Inn**, reappearing holding a candle and a girl, killed by fire, seen at an open window. At the **White Horse Inn (now the Museum of Cambridge)** a Civil War soldier has been seen. In 2019 a visitor saw an apparition of Dick Turpin there. Her description apparently appears remarkably similar to that of Aiden Turner of Poldark fame!

The talk concluded with the reading of a story about **The Old Waterman** by Trevor Bounford. His story ended intriguingly with a man lost in a thick fog somewhere to the East of Huntingdon. He entered an Inn where hospitality was in short supply, made a swift exit only to find he had lost his bearings completely. Was the Inn a figment of his imagination or was he able to return to it to spend the night in safety...? The answer may lie in Julie and Trevor Bounford's book bearing the same title as her tales of ghostly happenings.

Rose Tristram

## 20 January 'The Industrial Revolution and its Heritage by Professor Martin Daunton.

Professor Martin Daunton described the rise of the British Empire with its supplies of raw materials. This led to Britain becoming the first industrialised nation.

Working from home is not a new concept. From the 17<sup>th</sup> century merchants "put out" materials to be worked at home. Lavenham Guildhall controlled the output of woollen cloth. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century such work moved north to Yorkshire. Piece Hall is a Grade I listed building in Halifax, West Yorkshire, built as a cloth hall for handloom weavers to sell their "pieces". It is as grand a building and "piazza" as any in continental Europe, now full of smart restaurants bijou shops and jewellers.

The jewellery quarter in Birmingham is still there but under threat from developers keen to produce high rise office buildings. Re-purposing buildings rather than building new ones reuses their carbon. By 1836 Temple Mill in Leeds was the largest mill in the city, its façade an imitation of an Egyptian palace. Having been empty for 10 years it is to become the British Library of the North at a cost of £20 million pounds.

Saltaire is a world heritage site which housed lots of facilities for its workers. It was bought by Jonathon Silver, a friend of David Hockney, and now houses the biggest collection of his works in the world. Dean Clough Mill houses works by modern artists as well as a thriving business centre.

Shrewsbury Flaxmill was heralded as the first iron frame fireproof building, built in 1797. It now houses a museum in its ground floor and businesses on its upper floor, all funded by Historic England. Queens Mill in Burnley is the only one left in its original state, closed in 2018 but now partly reopened and run by English heritage. It is difficult to capture the sheer drudgery working at Stott Park Bobbin mill, inserting a length of wood, machine turning the bobbins and starting again for 12 hours a day.

The coal industry fuelled the industrial revolution. Blaenavon is the only pit that tourists can experience. Mines left unattended fill with water and gas. Chatterley Whitfield, near Stoke-on-Trent, is one such mine but is now being considered as a ground source heat pump. The surrounding area could have parkland, houses and hi-tech business facilities.

At a steel works in Essen, Germany, Bessemer convertors have been incorporated into parkland. Consett steel works have been celebrated by a sculpture of metal work but not retained. One iron structure that has been retained is the famous iron bridge near Telford. Built in 1779 it is the first cast iron structure in the world. Its recent conservation was funded by a German industrialist!

Priorities need to be given as to what to retain and perhaps grant “listed building status”. Less tangible is how we retain just what Mills were all about. How do we deal with the contested history of the Mills - the cotton produced by slaves and the start of carbon emissions? This beautifully illustrated talk gave us a picture of what the Industrial revolution was all about and much food for thought for about its preservation.

**Tim Vaughan-Lane**

### **17 February ‘Charles Darwin in Cambridge’ by Murray Jacobs**

Murray Jacobs, a Green badge guide, gave us a most informative talk about the young Darwin and showed us places around Cambridge where he had lived and most of us were unaware of. He started off by asking us to close our eyes and think about what image of Darwin came into our minds – bearded, balding, bewiskered and serious immediately sprang to mind.

However, Murray went on to describe Darwin’s life in Cambridge and give us a different picture of the youthful Charles.

Darwin came from a wealthy family in Shrewsbury, his mother, Susannah, being heiress to the Wedgewood pottery business started by her father Josiah. His father, Robert, was a very successful and wealthy society doctor. Charles had one brother, Erasmus, and four sisters. He was the fifth of the six children, born in 1809 in Shrewsbury. His mother died when he was eight and his elder three sisters brought him up.

When he left Shrewsbury school he later wrote "I believe that I was considered by all my masters and by my father as a very ordinary boy, rather below the common intelligence." His father had an even worse opinion of him and considered that he cared for nothing but shooting, dogs and ratting and that he would be a disgrace to himself and all his family. His father was however keen that Charles should study medicine and so he started at Edinburgh University in 1825, just 16 years old. In his second year he attended lectures in Zoology and Geology but found that they were so boring he never intended studying them again. On the medical side he attended what he described as two very bad operations on children and left before their completion. So ended any medical career and he never finished his Edinburgh studies.

His thoughts then turned to becoming a clergyman and so he went to Christ’s where his brother Erasmus and a cousin William Fox were studying. Charles was to study Classics but his grasp of Greek was so poor that he had to undergo 3 months of intensive Greek studies with a tutor in Shrewsbury before he could commence his studies in Cambridge in January 1828. By this time there were no rooms in Christ’s, he had to take lodgings in a house opposite the front gate of the college. If you look up above the entrance to Boots you will find two plaques commemorating his time there, one of which is shown below.



When he returned to Cambridge for the Michaelmas Term on 31 October 1828, he found a room was now available in Christ's College and the Tutor assigned him to a comfortable set on the south side of First Court. As he recalled - 'in old court, middle stair-case, on right-hand on going into court, up one flight, right-hand door & capital rooms they were.' Darwin had a panelled main sitting room with an adjoining dressing room and bedroom. These were renovated in 2009 to their original state.

He enjoyed music in Cambridge although he admitted that he could not "hold a note or sing a tune". He used to get up early to listen to the anthems in Kings. He paid choirboys to sing in his rooms. Darwin loved paintings and frequently visited Old Perse school, in Free School lane, where there was a gallery of fine works. (It is now the Whipple Science museum.) He decorated his rooms with prints of these pictures. He tried literature but later confessed that he found Shakespeare dull. He attended the first Boat Race at Henley in 1828.

One of his tutors thought that he was frequently cracking a whip in his rooms. He was, however, firing his unloaded gun such that the puff of air it produced would put out a candle. He described there being no more enjoyable pursuit in Cambridge than collecting beetles. On one occasion he had collected two beetles but wished to collect a third. With one in each hand, he put the third in his mouth. It emitted a furious spray of acrid fluid and he was forced to abandon it. The only time he swore in his journal was when he discovered that a purveyor of beetles had given first pick to a rival and was minded to kick Mr H downstairs if he ever found him in Christ's again!

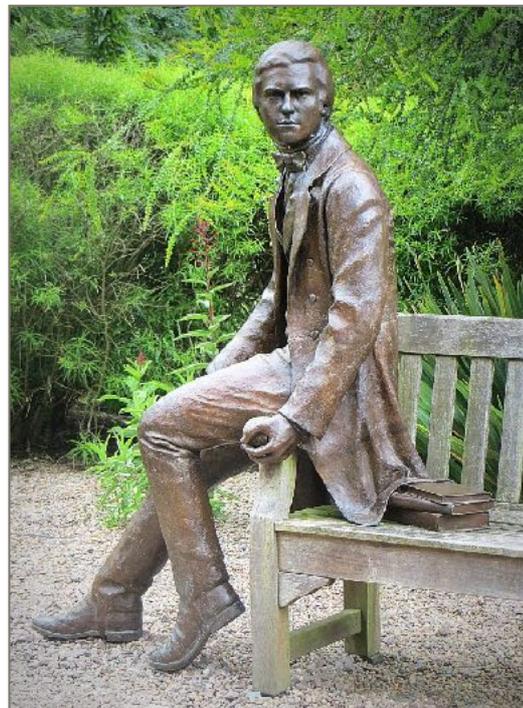
So what was Darwin's diet like in Cambridge. He was woken at 7am by his servant Impey, the Chapel bell summoned him at 7.25 and he had to be in chapel at 7.30. Breakfast in his rooms, where the fire would have been lit, consisted of a quarter loaf and butter. Dinner was meat and beer. Pies and cheese were extra as were vegetables which he paid £80.90 for in the first quarter of 1828. In his 3<sup>rd</sup> year he became one of eight founder members of the Glutton Club where meals were taken in each other's rooms. The club liked to enjoy strange meats. The club disbanded after an old brown owl was served!

Although members of the club did become canons and an archdeacon, Darwin never studied divinity. This was despite his writing to his cousin that he "hoped to become a country parson like you". As soon as he graduated BA he was interviewed by Captain Fitzroy for the post on the Beagle. He was

the third to be recommended for the post the previous two having declined for family reasons. Fitzroy was a keen student of physiognomy (character in the face) and was all set to refuse Darwin's application on account of his nose. However, the contour of his forehead redeemed him! In 1831 he started on the 5-year expedition. On his journeys he was keen to stay on land as much as possible. He was sea-sick! He sent samples home but also brought back a lot on his return home.

On his return he planned to go to London to demonstrate his collections. No one seemed to be interested so he changed his plans. He stayed in rented rooms at 22 Fitzwilliam Street for four months from December 1836. He spent his time organising his collections. He was able to renew old friendships including those with his old professors Henslow and Sedgewick. There is another wall plaque to commemorate his stay. He then moved to London only returning to Cambridge for occasional visits. He later described his time in Cambridge as being "the most joyful of my happy life".

**This bench bronze by Anthony Smith, of the young Charles Darwin, is situated in the Darwin Garden of Christ's College.**



**Tim Vaughan-Lane**

## 17 February 'Miss Wright's Autograph Book and Guest Book : Part II' by Glynis Arber

In her brief introduction, Glynis explained that Fulbourn Village History Society have in their archives a number of original documents one of which is an Autograph Book belonging to Miss Wright of Hall Farm. The signatures cover the period from 1911 to 1926 and in 2019 a presentation was given which described entries made by convalescent soldiers who were at Fulbourn's Red Cross V.A.D. hospital during WWI.

The Talk in March 2022 was a follow up to this and concentrated on friends, relatives and guests of the Wright family, all of whom had contributed to the Autograph Book. This took various forms including illustrations, poems and homilies. Flowers were a favourite subject and there were some quite accomplished water colour pictures. Glynis pointed out that in Victorian and Edwardian culture, many flowers were assigned a particular meaning for instance, purple violets symbolised that the giver's thoughts were occupied with love for the recipient and echoes the message from Ethel Wright to perhaps, her sister Mary (known as Dolly) the probable owner of the Autograph Book.

Glynis observed it must have taken a considerable time to execute some of the coloured paintings which may account for the number of sketches using only ink or pencil. This would have been quicker and could have been undertaken at Hall Farm rather than being worked on elsewhere. A few of these drawings were essentially cartoons



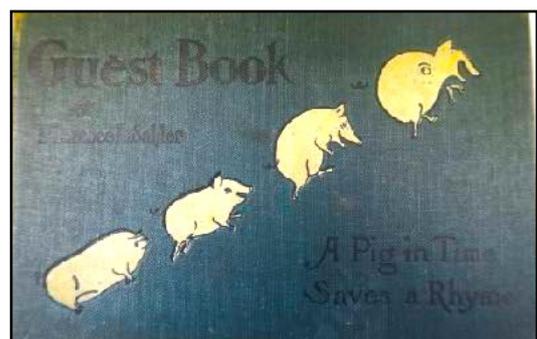
and had a humorous element such as an image of triplets in a tin bath.

There were also messages containing homilies and puns with witticisms. From this content it was speculated that Miss Wright must have been known to have had a sense of humour shown by a poem written in the book by J M

'Little dabs of powder  
Little puffs of paint  
Makes the ladies faces  
Look like what they ain't'

As well as the Autograph Book, F.V.H.S. have a 'Guest Book' belonging to the Wright Family with the majority of signatures written between 1908 to 1913. It actually took the form of a parlour game where one person was blindfolded and had to draw the outline of a pig in the book. Each page had a title consisting of a misquote eg 'The course of true Pigs never did run smooth'. Glynis speculated that identifying the correct quote was another aspect of the game.

She concluded the Talk by making several points which are relevant to historical research in general: that both books show how difficult it is to identify specific persons without having a full name, address and date on a document. When the primary source is very fragile (especially so with the Autograph Book) digital technology helps - photographs of the pages have been enhanced and a Presentation compiled which provides a good record without having to handle the original material. Finally, such local records provide an insight into the lives and activities of individuals who formed part of our community in the past and which help us understand our collective heritage today.



## **FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 21st APRIL 2022 AND COFFEE MORNING 2022**

It has been decided, after much consideration, to hold our 22nd A.G.M. via Zoom rather than in the Meeting Room of the Fulbourn Centre. This is due to the current high number of Covid cases in the region and fact that many of our members - including the Committee - for medical reasons need to take an especially cautious approach to the pandemic.

We do still plan to hold our Coffee Morning in mid July 2022 outside (weather permitting). This is an opportunity to meet up again in person at last and entrance, including coffee/tea and biscuits will be FREE!



A small Exhibition of memorabilia relating to the Royal Family and the Queens Coronation will be on display. Also available are membership forms for the 2022-2023 season together with the Programme of Talks which will be once again, held in the Meeting Room of the Fulbourn Centre.

We urge past and current members to renew their subscriptions - and pass the word that Fulbourn Village History Society is Open for Business. Although it has not, in effect, been closed as research and Presentations have continued throughout the pandemic

Indeed, we are presently involved with supporting Fulbourn Primary School in their Jubilee celebrations. Photos of the school (buildings and/or pupils) as it was in the past would be very welcome - if you have any please contact me [glynisarber48@gmail.com](mailto:glynisarber48@gmail.com)