

His Christmas Goose

“You wait till I comes off dooty!”

A Bairnsfather Christmas cartoon – from Robin

Not Only Christmas

We have just had a very good AGM, in the form of our 25th Anniversary. Our secretary, Margaret King, gave an enjoyable and informative resumé of the Society's history, illustrated, via help from technology and Patrick Hemphill. We saw photos of founder members, Richard Deeks and Chris Britton, as well as the late Eileen Lynch and more recent committee members.

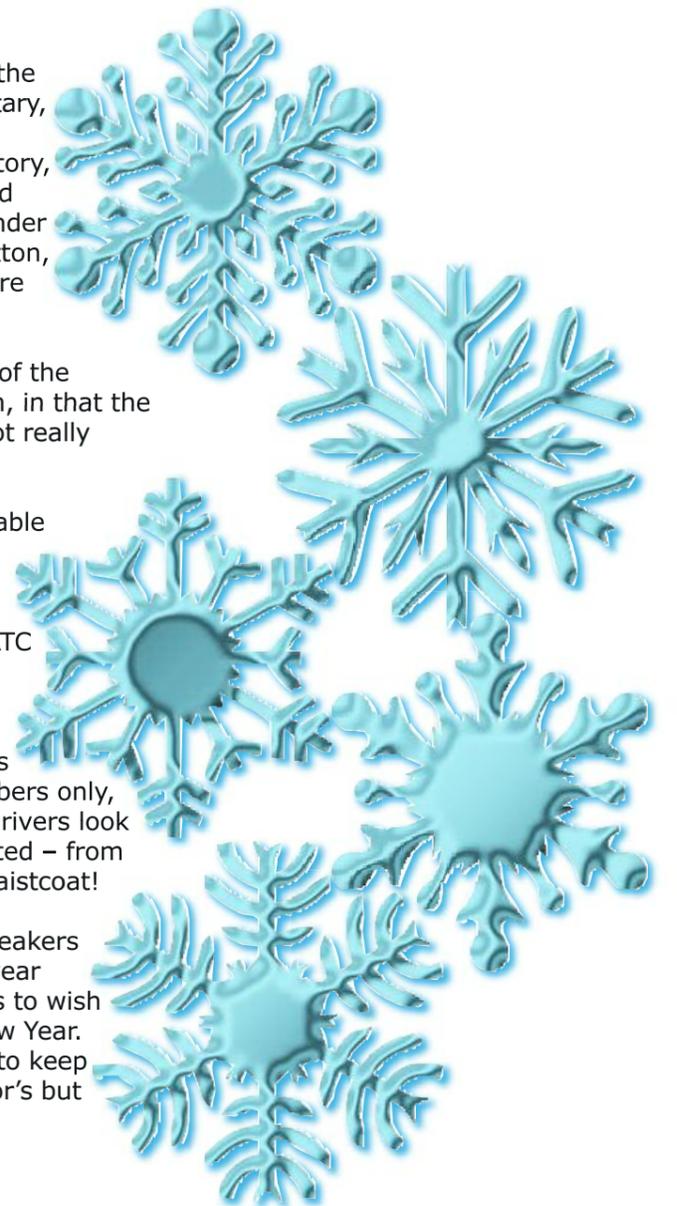
The “standing-down” and (re)-election of the committee took a slightly different form, in that the posts of Chairman and Treasurer will not really change until the new financial year!

As ever, a much appreciated and enjoyable cold buffet with wine came before the second half of the evening – thanks to Pauline. After the break Mr. Sid Eaves gave a short talk on his time with the ATC in the 1940s, followed by some WWII poetry from Mr. Copp.

Our next meeting will be our President's evening at Chequers. It is strictly members only, and please do not arrive before 7.20. Drivers look out for guidance on parking – very limited – from Rowan who will be wearing his hi-vis waistcoat!

We have enjoyed a year of excellent speakers and outings and with the forthcoming year looking equally enticing, it only remains to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year. Oh and don't forget, items are needed to keep the Newsletter going – it's not the editor's but yours!

Jenny Wears, Editor





Christmas 100 years ago

THE RED CHRISTMAS

a poem by William H. Draper, 1915

Oh take away the mistletoe
 And bring the holly berry,
 For all the lads are gone away
 And all the girls look sad to-day,
 There's no one left with them to play,
 And only birds and babes and things unknowing
 Dare be merry.
 Then take away the mistletoe
 And bring the holly berry.

But oh its leaves are fresh and green,
 Why bring the holly berry?
 Because it wears the red, red hue,
 The colour to the season true,
 When war must have his tribute due,
 And only birds and babes and things unknowing
 Can be merry.
 So take away the mistletoe,
 Yet keep the holly berry.

And shall we never see again
 Aught but the holly berry?
 Yes, after sacrifice sublime,
 When rings some later Christmas chime,
 When dawns the new and better time,
 Not only birds and babes and things unknowing
 Shall be merry,
 But you shall see the mistletoe
 Twined with the holly berry.

Christmas Charity

The Suffolk and Essex Free Press reported on the 1st December 1915, that "On Tuesday afternoon the distribution of Hammond Charity – known as 'Old Man's Gift', took place at the Council School. Out of 28 applicants the following were selected by the Trustees:

Charles Watkinson,	Egremont Street,	79
Abraham Brown,	Egremont Street,	67
William Slater,	Fair Green,	69
Samuel Rutter,	Brooke Street,	92
James Slater,	Hunts Hill,	84
Oliver Garwood,	Egremont Street,	65

Each applicant received £2.19s."



The poor of Glemsford had various charitable gifts paid out within the Christmas period. They were classed as 'Doles' and made up from a number of historical charities, paid out in money, coal and bread.

In 1636 John Corder bequeathed his house, which stood in 18 acres at Lawshall, to provide for the distribution of bread among the poor of 9 parishes.

Glemsford was one of those and received bread to the value of 20 shillings. The above mentioned Hammond Charity came from Thomas Hammond. A wealthy Glemsford clothier, he bequeathed in his will of 1670, 9 acres of land to be let at £12 per acre. This provided monies for six poor old men of the village.

Other money came from the Poley Charity, £7.7s. per. annum, rent from Workhouse Pasture and £4 from Town Field, (sold in the 1920s). £5.15s. came from six other rent charges, left by various donors. Finally another charity took care of the soul rather than the body, namely the rent from Bible Meadow.

This dates from 1699 following a bequest from Dr Edmund Boldero (Dr. of Divinity) and was to provide bibles for the poor of Glemsford.

The total of the charitable gifts amounted to £29.12s. in 1844, and £32 in 1912 and 1937. These gifts are distributed today as Glemsford United Charity, in December. Men need to apply for this but the women's charity is for widows or spinsters only!



A Festive bite from the above newspaper, dated 22nd December, 1915:

Christmas Conundrums

When is a pie like a poet?
When it's Browning.

What goes up and down a hill yet never moves?
The road.

How long did Cain hate his brother?
As long as he was 'Abel'.

What month is most frequently mentioned by the Drill Sergeant?
March.

Why is Buckingham Palace the cheapest Palace ever built?
Because it was built for one sovereign and furnished for another.

Earlier in the year I mentioned a bit of serendipity, while searching for connections between Magna Carta and Glemsford; this is it! Nothing to do with Magna Carta but it caught my eye!

Jocelin of Brakelond

Little is known of Jocelin's life. He entered the monastery at Bury St Edmunds in 1173, taking his name from a street in the town. He was chaplain to the Prior when Abbot Samson was elected in 1182, becoming Samson's chaplain some four months later.

It is written that Jocelin was not the best of scholars, although he received a good education. His writings concentrated on day to day life at the monastery – the minutiae, as perhaps ignored by the more learned recorders. Unfortunately his grasp of time and order were erratic and he often forgot to complete a tale, even getting muddled when the story became complicated.

“His description of the quarrels between Abbot Samson and the Bishop of Ely over their respective rights at Lakenheath and Glemsford is, despite its liveliness, both careless and obscure” (Exact wording from the translation's introduction.)

The Matter of Timber for Glemsford – sometime between 1182-1188. (An abbreviation of the original text.)

Abbot Samson of Bury St Edmunds was asked by Geoffrey Ridell, Bishop of Ely (1172-89), to provide timber “for the making of certain great buildings at Glemsford”. The Abbot was not happy about this request but not wanting to cause offence, reluctantly agreed to do so. Things then become rather muddled!

The Abbot was staying at Melford when a clerk of Bishop Ridell came with a message, asking if the promised timber could be taken from his (the Bishop's) domain at Elmswell – the clerk made a mistake – he meant Elmset, the name of a large wood of Melford. The Abbot thought

this a little odd as such timber would not be found at Elmswell and this was confirmed by a quiet word with Richard the forrester at Elmswell. Richard told the Abbot, in secret, that the Bishop had sent his carpenters to the wood at Elmset, where they had marked the best trees. Of course the Abbot realised at once that the clerk had made a mistake in his message giving, but to tell the Bishop he would gladly promise the wood!

However, as soon as possible, the Abbot went with his carpenters and had all the marked trees and a further hundred, cut down – to use for the top of the great tower of St Edmund's. Bishop Ridell, hearing that the timber was coming from Elmswell, proverbially cuffed his clerk and sent him back to correct the mistake – the messenger was too late – the trees at Elmset were down and the timber would have to be found elsewhere.

No further mention is made in the Chronicle of any building at Glemsford – so were “certain great buildings” ever built at Glemsford?

On modern maps no wood is shown at Elmswell, near Woolpit, although c.1200 it covered about 160 acres. The wood at Elmset, N.E. of Hadleigh, is marked as Elmset Park Wood, suggesting that it was indeed a Park, an enclosed area owned possibly by Bury Abbey, for hunting and forestry. No evidence of an Elmset Wood at Long Melford. (Park Farm here in Glemsford and fields to the east of Park Lane were part of parkland, belonging to The Bishopric of Ely.)

The book *The Chronicles of Jocelin of Brakelond*, translated from Latin by H E Butler MA can be found in the reference section of both Bury and Glemsford libraries.

GLEMSFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY News

LOCAL SPEAKER, Anne Grimshaw, opened the new season to a very supportive audience when she spoke on the subject of 'A Weaver at Waterloo' in this the bi-centennial year of the famous battle.

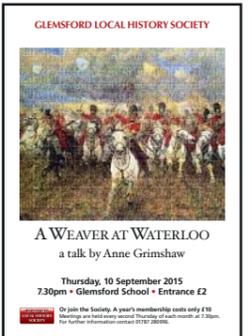
Family history research led Anne to Lancashire and the early 18th century army discharge papers of eight Grimshaws, one of whom, John, hailed from the Oswaldtwistle area. Investigating further and employing the many tools now available, Anne has brought alive the life and times of this humble Private Grimshaw.

Born in 1789, a weaver by trade, and possibly disillusioned with the onslaught of mechanisation, (or desiring maybe a better life), in 1806 John enlisted in the army. For 12 years he served in the Coldstream Guards, often overseas. He was wounded four times, twice when

serving under the Duke of Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo.

Napoleon had escaped from exile on Elba and resumed his hostilities. June 16th 1815 saw the decisive action and John Grimshaw was there, in the midst of battle, helping to defend the large farmhouse with his regulation musket and bayonet, but witness to a great British victory!

On retiring from the army and returning home, John resumed his former occupation although by this time the development of steam loom weaving had superseded the hand loom variety. He married Phoebe late in life and following his death, aged 61, was buried in a local country churchyard. While there is no stone memorial, through Anne's efforts a wall plaque is displayed in the church to remember this Waterloo soldier – a small cog in a very large wheel indeed!



SARAH DOIG AND Tony Scheureggar's joint interest in early music and East Anglia led them to research the famous story of Will Kemp's Jig which made for a most fascinating and unusual subject at our October meeting.

Combining the use of late 16th/early 17th century written records and playing musical instruments of the period such as the viol, baroque guitar, pipes and drum, Sarah and Tony brought to life that period of history.

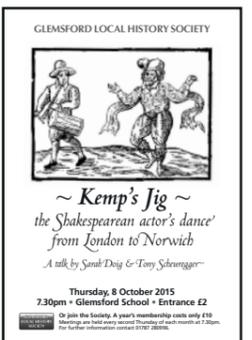
Will Kemp was a contemporary of Shakespeare and an actor in his troupe. Most plays (be they comedies or tragedies) ended with the clowns being allowed to perform dances, known as jigs, for comic relief. Kemp's forte was comedy and dance; his stage jigs were noteworthy.

For a wager he proposed Morris dancing from London to Norwich, a journey of

some 120 miles. Accompanied by a couple of servants and one Thomas Sly, a pipes and tabor player, Kemp set out in the early spring of 1599. Travelling from East London through Essex and into Suffolk Kemp visited Sudbury, Long Melford and Clare before reaching a snowy Bury st. Edmunds.

Everywhere he was welcomed by cheering crowds and regularly encountered a wealth of quirky characters and incidents. After several weeks he completed his 'Nine Days Wonder' of actual dancing arriving in Norwich to great acclaim where, on tripling his original investment (some paid up, some did not!), he nailed his dancing shoes to the Guildhall and became something of a short-lived celebrity.

However what a remarkable achievement remembered still today in a wooden carved monument of Kemp standing in the Chapelfield Gardens for all to admire.





25 YEARS ON. A very large gathering of members attended the November AGM which proved to be a most sociable evening. Patrick Currie was warmly thanked for his 12-year reign as chairman and has now exchanged this role for that of treasurer. Rowland Hill was likewise given an appreciative vote of thanks for his invaluable work as treasurer over the same period. He remains on the committee, while Rowan Cain takes over as the next chairman. Two new members were welcomed onto the committee.

Following the closure of official business, a cheese and wine buffet was enjoyed by all. The 25th anniversary year of the society was highlighted by the chairman in his report and further marked by the secretary, Margaret King, who gave a short resumé of early days, focusing

upon some of the characters whose work and contributions over the years have ensured the continuity and vibrancy of the thriving society it is today.

Two speakers concluded the evening. The first a guest, Sid Eaves, entertained us with his description of life as a young Air Training Corps cadet in Sudbury during World War II. Continuing upon this theme, and as we commemorate 70 years since the ending of the conflict, Mike Copp spoke of some notable World War II poets reading some of their poetry and emphasising the differences between it and that of the more widely known works by the soldier poets of the First World War. A vote of thanks was given to both speakers by the chairman and extended to all present.

Margaret King, Secretary

Last month a local history query was passed on to the History Society, regarding searchlight sites in Glemsford. The answers were provided by retired member Gilman Game and current member, Sid Watkinson.

The village searchlight was in the grounds of Churchgate Farm. Glemsford also had

cover from three other lights at the following sites:

Townsend Farm, Hartest. Mrs Game's father's farm.

Burton's Farm, on the left, just up the hill from the River Glem going towards Melford.

Constitution Hill, Sudbury.

Incidentally, Glemsford did not have its own Air-Raid siren but relied on nearby ones – depending which way the wind was blowing! (With thanks to Mary Chappel's book *Glemsford, a Story of Everyday People*).

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, **President's Evening at Chequers.**
December 12th Members only

Thursday, **Pip Wright:** Lady Alice of Acton –
January 14th a Medieval Gentlewoman and her Household

Thursday, **Bryan Panton:** The History of Downs Engineering –
February 11th Coir to Potatoes

Thursday, **Adrian Walters:** The History and Conservation
March 10th of the Sudbury Riverside