

Glemsford Local History Society

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NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2007

FREE TO MEMBERS (50p where sold)

As you see the time has come round for the latest newsletter of the Glemsford Local History Society (or "Hysterical Society" as our regular visiting speaker Roy Tricker would put it). Many thanks for your continuing supply of articles which make the journal so much more relevant to our collective interests.

I'm afraid my attendance at meetings of late has been patchy due to other commitments, although I arrived in time for tea at the last one! I'm pleased therefore that Margaret keeps us up to date with the events, a list of which appears in this issue.

It is good to report that Glemsford is a living village, despite the decline of local industry. Just witness the rash of new houses off Brook Street, and the Elm Close development behind Turner's. While any change will always excite comment or disapproval at least the developments must be an expression of confidence in the local economy. Whether they are affordable to all is yet another issue... In my almost daily travels towards Newmarket through various villages I can see the same efforts at "infill", mostly detached properties on tiny plots.

Now here is an opportunity to take an active part in the Society - to edit the Society newsletter and become a member of the hardworking committee. I have had the pleasure of producing it three times a year since the first of this series in May 2005, and have found it a rewarding experience to be able to print the wonderful articles members submit. If you own a computer (or have access to one) and are interested I can brief you on the



(from "A Place of Your Own" – Thelwell)

details; it's also your chance to improve a winning formula. Members seem only too happy to contribute articles or titbits so the prospective editor will probably find it more difficult to know what to leave out than what to include! See me or contact any committee member before the AGM so we know there might be a successor...

Well, included in this issue is a joint effort from Robin Ford and Dee Hamilton; a second instalment of "Happy Vacky"; an offering from Sid Watkinson and more besides.

Don't forget to view our website www.glemsford.org.uk for the latest gossip and news. Steve Clarke also has a page where enquirers, perhaps past residents, contact the Society to find friends and neighbours and to seek news of Glemsford. Why not take a look?

GLEMSFORD HAWKS – Robin Ford (Photo: Dee Hamilton)

At an evening meeting held earlier this year, I was shown this photograph, taken in 2006, of a pair of Privet Hawkmoths (*Sphinx ligustri*) mating on a post in a member's garden. Belonging to the same family as the Hummingbird Hawkmoth (*Macroglossum stellaturum*), the Privet Hawkmoth is easily recognisable by its size (over 10 cm in length) and is widely distributed, but not common, in the southern half of the British Isles. Apart from privet, the caterpillars have been recorded feeding on lilac, guelder-rose, holly, honeysuckle, snowberry, forsythia and spirea. Privet Hawkmoths fly in June and July, and any other records from Glemsford gardens would be most welcome. Look on vertical surfaces such as tree trunks and fence posts where the moth tends to rest during daylight hours.



HAPPY VACCY by Jean Cook

Although there was a war on, we had a very happy childhood, brought up in the relative safety of the countryside - I say relative, because one evacuee was bombed out. A doodlebug, off course, passed low over our house. Two British planes collided in mid-air; one crashed into a field close to the school, the crew of the other (a Lancaster bomber, I believe) parachuted to safety. A canister full of incendiaries was jettisoned from a shot-up plane; and a German airman fell from his aeroplane. The incendiary bombs landed on a factory at the bottom of our garden. The local fire-tender was called out with their rather antiquated equipment. The rather aptly-named leading fireman, Mr Sparks, in his haste to alight hit his head and was out for the count. The hose was placed in our well, but when pumping started only a trickle emerged from the end, due to a number of holes, so a human chain was formed and buckets used. It really was like a scene out of "Dad's Army". In view of the danger, we were given the day off school while the area was searched and though many incendiaries were found in the surrounding properties and fields

not one was in Mr Cranfield's large coal yard or garden.

Someone I feel was watching over us that night, which is more than I can say for the Younger family who lived nearby. Their son Ivan was a simple lad. On the night the incendiaries set the factory ablaze, the firemen were unaware that the Younger's bungalow was alight. I was told that Ivan had woken to find his bed smouldering and woke his parents to tell them, only to be told not to be silly and to go back to bed, which he did! The German airman was the rear-gunner in a plane being chased from the coast and fell from the damaged plane into a field just down the lane from where we lived. I suppose it was a morbid fascination that drew villagers- myself included- to the spot to see the blood-soaked soil. If my memory serves me-right, Mr Cranfield had the task of conveying the body to the undertakers. There are two pilots, one from each of the two world wars, buried in-the cemetery at Glemsford church and he was one of them. He rests looking over the beautiful Suffolk countryside. Looking back with the benefit of hindsight I find this episode quite sad, but at the time this German airman was the

enemy - or was he? He was someone's son and maybe husband and father.

The girls travelled to nearby Clare school for their Domestic Science lesson. This meant having school dinners and it became known that most of us hated the sloppy, overcooked greens. I got a little tired of the "Glemsford kids don't like greens" from a local lad, so before boarding the bus for home I hit him. Another incident still involving greens was when our teacher told us to "eat our greens because they're nice", I cheekily said, "If they're nice, you can eat them." This resulted in me being sent to the Headmaster who set me sums for the afternoon - preferable to eating greens, I thought.

I am still in contact with friends I made during the seven years I lived at Glemsford, so I couldn't have been all that naughty, but no doubt a few villagers were glad to see me go. My three best friends throughout the war years were evacuee Heather McMurray (now Collings), and villagers Betty Bloomfield (now Slater) and Pat Davies (now Bray). I have corresponded with Pat since I left Glemsford in 1946 so she has been a life-long friend.

Saturdays were looked forward to when we could go to the cinema at Cavendish, usually finding on arrival that Italian prisoners had all the front seats. They had a lot of freedom to roam the countryside, work on the land and, in the case of one, help Mr Cranfield with his coal business. The fuel arrived by goods train at the local station, the coal then had to be bagged up and taken by lorry to the coal-yard. My mother learned many skills during those years, plucking and cleaning chickens, skinning rabbits, winemaking, bottling, pickling, making preserves, milking goats and, of course, shovelling coal!

My first date, if you can call it that, was to the cinema with Eddy, one of Mr Cranfield's grandsons. I remember that the film was "How Green Was My Valley". I don't recall if we even held hands. On another occasion, cycling with his brother Neville around the lanes, I nearly fell off my bike when he asked if he could kiss me. He was a very handsome lad, but at about eleven years old I wasn't ready for such close contact with boys, so I said, "When I'm older." He lives in Australia, so no chance of claiming it now. Anyway, at that age I was used to just being the one they wanted in their team on Sports Days or on their side for rounders and cricket matches.

There was no street lighting in those days, so returning from the cinema at night could be quite scary to a youngster with a vivid imagination. The dark lane to the house seemed a mile long, but in fact was probably only about 100 yards, but I ran like a bat out of hell to reach safety.

My sister Margaret would have been about three-and-a-half years old when Mr Cranfield called my mother to say that Margaret - knickers round her ankles- was squatting under a hedge in the garden, only to have her protest that she only wanted to lay an egg like all the chickens do. There was never a cross word from him in spite of the mischief we got up to, even when he found Pam and me sitting on the back seat of his car choking on Mother's dog-ends.

News time, we had to be quiet. Margaret's favourite pastime then was to stand behind Mr Cranfield's chair, polishing his almost bald head with a duster. Pam and I would try and catch flies that had settled on the walls. What simple pleasures we had.

To be continued...

A Glemsford family in the 19th Century

by Sheila Willmoth

Part Three

William Hempstead Pearman died in 1897, aged 80yrs., and is buried in Glemsford church-yard. His father, also William, was buried 8th March 1879 and ended his days in Sudbury workhouse. His mother Kezia had died in November 1867.

It appears that if one commits a crime then there are plenty of records to research. The Petty

Sessions put down all the details and local newspapers have their say as well.

The evidence remaining for the legitimate members of the family is patchy, though there are census details for most of them. There will also be information I have yet to find. If we can locate various factory records of Glemsford we may find comments on some of the other Hempsteads.

The eldest daughter, Susan was on the 1841 census, aged 20 and a silk weaver. Mary Ann was born in 1834. In 1851 she was aged 27, living with her parents, but no occupation given. Perhaps she just did the house-keeping or was disabled in some way. Her burial is in Glemsford Parish Registers, 29th May 1859.

Edward is on the census aged 15. William Pearman's wife had a daughter, Ellen in 1847, this child allegedly fathered by Edward while William was in Australia.

We have discovered a marriage of Edward Hempstead to Eliza Norman in 1859. There is also a death of an Edward in 1870, aged 50. The dates fit but there were other Hempsteads in Sudbury, including a son James Edward born to these two in 1759.

Isabella was born in 1826 and went to Halstead with her sister Elizabeth to work in the silk factory. In 1851 they are lodging with Walter Wiseman, a silk worker. She is also on the census in 1861, aged 34 " a crepe twister". By 1871 she was at Southweald Asylum. In 1901 she was at Mistley in Essex and died aged 83 in 1909.

Hannah is only recorded by her date of birth 19.6.1828. She is not in Glemsford in the 1851 census.

Elizabeth Sarah was born in 1832. In 1851 she was with her sister Isabella in Halstead, working in the silk factory and also lodging with Walter Wiseman and his family.

She is recorded in the Petty Sessions Book for Long Melford. 13.7.1853. Walter Wiseman of Halstead was charged by Elizabeth Hempstead with being the father of her bastard child. Session adjourned till 12th August 1853. The same charge brought but dismissed for lack of evidence?!

Census details 1851 Halstead.

Walter Wiseman Aged 28 (Cordwainer)
born Glemsford

Susan Aged 29

Susannah Aged 5

born Glemsford.

Therese Aged 3

born Halstead.

Agnes Aged 1

born Halstead

Isabella Hempstead Lodger Aged 21
Weaver born Glemsford.

Elizabeth Hempstead Lodger Aged 19
Weaver born Glemsford.

On 25th June 1860 Elizabeth married Asa Twinn, (son of Henry and Hannah) who was a weaver and a widower.

Census 1871

Asa Twinn Aged 42 Cocoa-mat maker

Elizabeth Twinn, Wife, Aged 39 Late
horse hair weaver (or curler- difficult to read)

John Twinn Aged 21 Cocoa-mat trimmer

Hannah Twinn Aged 18 Horse hair
drawer, Born Halstead?

Asa was buried in Glemsford 22.9.1880 aged 54
years.

Elizabeth is also in the 1881 census
Census 1881.

Egremont Street.

Charles Byham Aged 30 Labourer.

Hannah Byham, Wife Aged 28 Hair
weaver.

Emily Byham Aged 1

Elizabeth Twinn Widow, Mother-in-law.

Elizabeth was buried in Glemsford 5.5.1886 aged
53 years.

Benjamin Hempstead. Was born 1834. On the
1851 census he is 17 and a cocoanut mat weaver.

He married Elizabeth (maiden name unknown) in
1864 in Chelmsford.

Census 1871.

Purleigh, Essex, Blacksmith's Shop.

Benjamin Hempstead Aged 36

Blacksmith Born Glemsford.

Elizabeth Hempstead, Wife, Aged 27

Born South Hanningfield.

Arthur Hempstead, son, Aged 5

Born West Hanningfield.

Alfred Hempstead, son, Aged 3

Born West Hanningfield.

Census 1881 Benjamin is an Innkeeper at the
Malstster's Arms, Willingdale Doe along with 5
children and 2 lodgers.

Census 1891

Blackmore, The Green, Chelmsford.

Benjamin Hempstead, Aged 56, Carrier,
Born Glemsford.

Elizabeth Hempstead, Wife, Aged 47

Alfred James Hempstead, son, Aged 23
Born West Hanningfield.

Ada Ann Hempstead, dau., Aged 12

Born Rettenden.

Kate Hempstead, dau., Aged 10

Born Willingdale Doe.

Minnie Hempstead, dau., Aged 3

Born Blackmore (Ongar)

Ebenezer Hempstead. Was born in 1836, a year
before his mother died. In 1851 he was 15 years
old and an "assistant in hair weaving". He married
Sophia Andrews in Liston in 1858. He remarried in
1875 while working in Norwich where he was a
door-mat maker. He married Mary Ann Cobb, a
door-mat binder. By 1881 he was in Diss.

Census 1881

Ebenezer Hempstead Aged 45 Matmaker
Born Glemsford.

Mary Ann Hempstead, Wife, Aged 40
Born Diss.
With children Alice aged 14, Caroline aged 12,
Edward James aged 9, Hannah aged 7 (all born
before 1875) and William aged 5, born Diss
Census 1891
Bradford Street, Bocking.
Ebenezer Hempstead, Aged 55, Widower,
Matmaker.
Census 1901.

Ebenezer was in the asylum at Upminster,
St. Lawrence.

Ebenezer Hempstead, Aged 65, Widower,
Born Glemsford.

That is the tale of the older Hempsteads. The
children of Kezia make up the second family
which contained my great grandmother.

(to be continued)

Extract from "The Bury and Norwich Post" submitted by Sid Watkinson, who enquires
whether the County Archaeologist is aware of this? (previously appeared in 1999 Newsletter)

December 28th 1850:

"At Glemsford on Thursday last some
men employed in raising stone in field in
occupation of Mr. Corben Morley near Glemsford
Bridge found the bones of two bodies two feet
below the surface near the hedge."

January 8th 1851, Letters to the Editor:

"Re. skeletons found near Glemsford
County bridge. I have visited the spot several
times, the skeletons were a male and young female,
they ranged side by side, the male on the right side
with no vestige of a coffin. Many think there must
have been foul work but from their position east to
west which imply's (*sic*) it was a Christian burial
which is confirmed by two sticks laid across them.
It might have been a "strangers corner" on a former
burial ground as tradition says there was an ancient
site of a monastery in that field. Old men say when
ploughing within half a century or not much more,
they have felt the plough jump over foundations.

There is also a spring, a 100 yards away from the
spring there is strong and unfailing sweet water
and cold as well known in this locality as "Holy
Water" and frequently the thirsty labourer will go
half way across the field for draughts of this cold
sweet water from this spring. There is more
evidence that the men struck the foundations of a
wall 6 – 7 feet high from the surface, the stones
appear about 4 lbs in weight and of regular size.
Two coins have been found, the supposition is that
anyone buried would have been furnished with a
St. Peters fee actually put in the hand for admission
to heaven and to pay St. Peter as he is supposed to
hold the key to heaven. The first coin is a penny
piece of the reign of Henry the 3rd who reigned
from 1216 till 1272. The second is a silver two
penny piece from the reign of Charles 1st who
reigned from 1625 to 1649. A copper token was
found of Thomas Reynolds of the Star Inn and
Huckster (*a door to door seller of knick knacks,
etc.*).

W. Boutell."

Forthcoming events

Thursday 12th July A Guided History Walk down Brook Street followed by a
Cheese & Wine Evening at Park View, Park Lane. Meet at Fair Green @ 7 pm

NEW SEASON

Thursday 13th September Clive Paine: "Thomas Clarkson, friend of slaves".

Thursday 11th October Stuart Bowell: "Suffolk Breweries, past and present".

Thursday 8th November A.G.M. Members' talks.

For an update of events come along to meetings or, if you are a subscriber check the
Glemsford pages of "Contact" magazine.

Printed and published by Glemsford Local History Society. Editor: Patrick Hemphill. The views expressed in this newsletter
are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Society as a whole.