

HADDENHAM

— PAST AND PRESENT —

compiled by Lorna Delanoy

with illustrations by Ann Biggs

*Glimpses of life in this Cambridgeshire Fen Village
over the last thousand years*

Money for this publication was provided by Haddenham Charities: its contents will, hopefully, give children leaving Robert Arkenstall Primary School a "background" to "their" village. Material included has been gathered over the past 30 years: conversations with lifelong residents, taped interviews, notes, documents etc. To the best of my knowledge the writings are accurate: I cannot accept responsibility for anecdotes coloured by Time! A big Thank You to all who have helped in any way, especially Yvonne Alden for deciphering my handwriting!

Lorna Delanoy

For readers who want to learn more about Haddenham there is:

Village Guide (published by the Parish Council)

Village News, a monthly newsletter

Village Column in Ely Standard (weekly)

Quarterly Bulletins of Conservation Society

Museum Friends' Newletters

Haddenham: A Parish History by C. F. Bester (who was Clerk of the Parish Council for 40 years): copies are held at Haddenham, Ely and Cambridge Libraries and may be loaned on request.

Collection of photos and ephemera made by Freda Crofts at Haddenham Library.

Books, newspapers etc., at Cambridgeshire Collection, Lion Yard, Cambridge

County Records Office, Shire Hall for Parish Records

Diocesan Records Office

Homerton College research on Haddenham Village in connection with Educational Publications for the Farmland Museum.

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HADDENHAM NOW

Haddenham is a cross-road village built on the highest point (120' above sea-level) of the old administrative county of the Isle of Ely.

The East-West (A1123) road carries heavy lorries from the East of England ports (e.g. Felixstowe) to the old Roman Road, the A1. The South-North route follows one of the main entrances to the Isle of Ely from Cambridge and the South. It is thought that Hereward made a last stand against William and his Normans at Aldreth some 1½ miles South of the Village centre.

Geographically it is 7 miles South West of Ely and 14 miles North of Cambridge and is on the Ely-Huntingdon (171), Cambridge-March (124) bus routes.

Haddenham is renowned for the architectural features of Mansard Roofs (those which have 2 distinct angles in the slope), market gardens (particularly asparagus in pre-war years, flowers more recently) and the fact that whichever route one approaches the village from, there is a hill to climb.

Until the 1950's Haddenham was predominantly a farming and horticultural village: many adults were employed on the land, and seasonal work (fruit picking, sugar beet singling etc.) was available for the women folk. Farms generally were small, in the region of 50-100 acres.

New housing estates — Linden End, Chewells Close, Glebe Way etc. — brought new families to the village whose breadwinners seek employment in Cambridge, Huntingdon and some even commute to London. Few people in 1989 work "on the land".

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"A Haddenham Sunset" — from the book of poems entitled 'Thoughts from Haddenham' published in 1920 price 1/- by Hilda Everitt.

*"Climb the Hill to Haddenham Village
Come and learn of Haddenham Folk"*

"for the TOWN of HADNAM on the hil" — inscription on a Silver Chalice for church use, 1569.

Audrey's Well (or Etheldreda's Well) marked on 1902 Ordnance Survey Map — (see Vent Stone and gravel on exhibition at Museum) thought to yield *"a sort of mineral water and good for healing properties"*.

"I can no longer bear to think of myself banished to this village" — A. C. Benson, who wrote 'Land of Hope and Glory' and was a tenant at Hinton Hall 1906-1910, while Master of Magdalene College.

"I started work at 9 years of age" — Charles Wright of Hadden Hall, Station Road, who wrote 'My Life Story' — (copy at Haddenham Library)

"Haddenham is a microcosm of the universe" — George Fox, Vicar of Haddenham 1965-1979

"If you have half an hour to spare, don't come and spend it with those who haven't" — Will Freeman to neighbour Bob Sulman, both fen farmers.

"the good old bells of Haddenham will again be heard summoning the parishioners to assemble for prayer and praise in the restored Church of the Holy Trinity" — Rev. J. M. Freeman, curate of Haddenham, February 1876.

"from the sale of cheap goods at the Aldreth Fair, the word "TAWDRY" has come into our language meaning cheap and nasty" — Walter Ivatt, in a paper read to Haddenham Wesley Guild.

"a long straight path through Long Stanton and Willingham then across the terrible 1/2 mile to Aldreth" — William's plan to get into Ely as quoted in Charles Kingsley's 'Hereward the Wake'.

"Nothing was found remotely suggesting that this was the battlefield" — T. C. Lethbridge who organised a 'dig' in 1930 to establish where the 'battle of Aldreth' took place.

At a Public Meeting, called to discuss bringing mains water to the village in the late 1920's — *"we don't want that new fangled stuff! It has neither colour, taste nor smell"*. Often wells were situated close-by stock yards and pig sties — hence the quality of pump H₂O. Where are all these wells now? (1926 a petition signed by 540 ratepayers against mains water.).

"Alldrey" old spelling for Aldreth.

DATES AND PEOPLE

- 1086 Hadrehan mentioned in Domesday documents
1169 causeway mentioned from the south to Ely
1221 survey of Haddenham (Manuscript in British Museum) for Bishop of Ely
1279 bridge over River Ouse (locally known as Old West River)
1463 school mentioned
1562 most populous village in county (188 households)
1612 Right granted for market at Aldreth
1640 Robert Arkenstall died: funding for education of boys
1665-80 Graye Bell Foundry.
Bells cast for Witchford, Cambridgeshire and Salle, Norfolk
1727 Haddenham Level Drainage Board: first in this area
1766 Manors obtained by Earl of Hardwicke
1801 Still largest village in Isle except Littleport and Thorney
1843 Haddenham Enclosures (Parish Council has map)
1860 Gas Company formed
1861 Grunty Fen enclosed (very poor land)
1876 Restoration of Church: tower rebuilt in memory of Charles, 4th Earl of Hardwicke
1916 field bought by Parish Council for £900: now known as the Recreation Ground
1947 Haddenham and Hill Row Fens flooded
1960's Quaker Burial Ground excavated (Friends active in village 1667-1756)
Probable site of St. Etheldreda's Well excavated on Aldreth Hill
1980's the most important archaeological finds in Europe are being excavated in Hill Row Fen at the present time (see Doctor Hodder's papers)
Ovin, Steward of Queen Etheldreda had a memorial stone here with a Latin inscription '*LUCEM TUAM OVINO da DEUS et requiet AMEN*'.

Earls of Suffolk and Norfolk were Lords of Manor here 1612-1766.

Nicholas Guppy, the anthropologist, lived in Haddenham 1960's-1980's: his grandfather gave his name to the tropical fish.

Last surviving granddaughter of Queen Victoria, Alice, Countess of Athlone, stayed at the vicarage (now Church End) as guest of Reverend and Mrs. Fox.

Rt. Hon Margaret Thatcher opened the playgroup there when she was Minister of Education.

Jessie Tebbutt, daughter of Nonconformist shopkeeper, became the first woman Parish Councillor, a J.P., and founder of the Friends of Haddenham organisation. She was actively involved in village life until 1970, officially opening the Camping Close Development.

A WALK AROUND THE VILLAGE PRE FIRST WORLD WAR

Excerpts from a tape made by Frank Steel in the 1970's for Haddenham Farmland Museum.

The horse was the source of power for farms and allied tradespeople including the 'vet' (Peters), the saddler and harness maker (Newman), wheelwright and carpenter (Savage), the blacksmith and farrier (Miller). All lived locally.

Steam power for threshing corn and ploughing was available from Burkitts, Peacocks and Hephers.

A list of shopkeepers, starting at the 'Top Corner' included Tebbutts at the Top Shop (now Spar) where 2 men, 4 girls and a milliner were employed.

The G.P., Doctor Howe, lived next door at St. Ovens where a 'speaking tube' was the method used to 'wake up' the doctor for night calls (before telephones!).

Adam Palmer, the watchmaker, was next to D'Oyleys, the grocer and draper, who was open from 8 am-10 pm.

Arthur Palmer's butcher's shop was situated where the hardware shop now is and Alf Drake supplied and mended bikes on the Post Office site.

To the south of Camping Close was Harry Savage's wood working shop and opposite was the basketmaker's where willow potato-picking baskets were made for 1/6 (7½p) and a speciality of the area, asparagus baskets with lids. Next door, in what is now the extension of No. 44, was a tailor's shop where suits and overcoats were sewn. The butcher's shop belonging to Ernest Peters (who was also the 'vet') was in the lower end of No. 53. A well-stocked grocer and draper's shop belonging to Robert Collins was where the fish and chip shop now is (this building has a special Sun Insurance Sign on its front wall).

At the lower end of the High Street, at Stone Cross Corner, was another tailor's shop belonging to Robert Peters, next door to the Old Brewery. On the Aldreth side was Millers the blacksmith's (see horse-drawn implement, a broadshare, made by Miller, at Museum).

Village ponds were important in a horse-orientated economy (for drinking, washing animals' feet in and soaking wooden cartwheels) and these were at Aldreth Road (where the silver birches now grow), the top of Lode Way (opposite Nelson's Lane), at the bottom of Station Hill (now grassed over and accommodating a seat for weary walkers) and Hill Row (opposite the Porch House).

The railway, opened in 1866, carried farm produce (including milk) as well as passengers and it was not until after the war that the first lorry (owned by miller H. T. Setchell) and the first car (driven by Doctor Howe) made their appearance. Carriers, operating horse-drawn carts, went to Ely on Thursdays and Cambridge on Saturdays.

Other sources of employment were brick works at the North end of the parish (some survive as part of Guppy's naturalised gardens and others have been infilled with domestic refuse): one yard owner, Frank Jewson of Earith, became chairman of the first Parish Council, and not being a member of the Church of England, refused to pay rates towards Church Schools. (His name lives on in the national builders firm as advertised on T.V.) Each year some of his bricks were confiscated and sold — bought usually by William Burkitt who built several houses in the village. One of his more interesting buildings is Covent Garden (or Poplar Lodge) on the Aldreth Road — where bricks were actually 'fired' on site. An Eiffel Tower-like windmill, built by Burkitt and Kidd, in the yard there was blown down in a gale late last century. Two other mills (one on the site of Herewake) and the other still standing (built in 1803) are also in Aldreth Road (old name Mill End and Sand Way).

Domestic buildings of note include the Porch House, Hill Row, built in 1657 and in the sale information of 1906 described as having "a good supply of well water", the Limes in Station Road which until the 1950's had its own gardener/handyman and Hinton Hall, a Victorian edifice built by Feasts the local builders, replacing the original hall of the 15th Century.

'The Factory' marked on old Ordnance Survey maps in Sand Way (the road to Aldreth) dealt with dead animals which were used for hide, glue etc., and as recently as 1946 'hams' could be taken there to be smoked (most smallholders kept 'a pig for the house'). Another 'factory' at the North end of the parish at York Villa was Hepher's Cambridgeshire Cheese Works where 'soured milk' drained on hand-stitched straw mats (made by local women in their own homes). The cheeses were sent by rail to London shops. The Garden Factory at Histon built by Chivers, preserved soft fruits grown in their Aldreth orchards (a modern factory, English Provender, now operates in Chivers old farm premises at Aldreth).

A sweet maker carried out her operations in a cottage near the Green (Gooby's Corner) as did a bootmaker and barber. The butcher there, Harold Alsop, sold ½ bullock, 1 sheep and 3 pigs each week: no fridges in pre-war days. Cattle for slaughter/sale were 'walked' to St. Ives market: a herd crossing the Top Corner was a common sight on Sunday evenings.

"THINGS TO DO" PAGE

- 1) Explain how or why: Station Road
Lode Way
Cherry Orchard
were so named.
- 2) Make a list of house names
Where is Homantin, Mill End Cottage, Liverpool House?
- 3) Draw/paint your favourite building in the village
- 4) Ask older residents what the village was like years ago. Tape them if possible
- 5) Go to Ely Cathedral and draw St. Ovin's Stone — removed from Haddenham two hundred years ago! The only piece of Saxon masonry surviving, (a copy made by local builder R. F. Bethell is in Holy Trinity church), from the time of Etheldreda.
- 6) a. Make a LIST of all the SHOPS AND BUSINESSES in the village
b. Make a LIST of all the CLUBS AND SOCIETIES (Village News will help you to answer this question!)
- 7) On a walkabout around the parish, give the address of the following:
Sports and Social Club
Bowls Club
Arkenstall Village Centre
Doctor's Surgery
Anson Packaging
Lloyds Bank
Farmland Museum
Senior Citizens' Flats
Forest Schools Camp
English Provender
- 8) Unscramble the following areas of Haddenham:
RRYPE ESCLO
GHHI TTEESR
EDOL YAW
NELA CKDU
TTYECH DARORCH
POH WOR
SDEIFL EICKWHADR
EHT ROBGHOU
LOSEC WHEERRDA
WEN NTOW

- 9) Draw a map from memory of a small section of the street in which you live. On it mark your house, trees, street lamps, fire hydrants, telegraph poles, telephone box — or any other feature.
- 10) Draw a WORDSEARCH GRID 12 x 12 and fix in it as many words as you can to do with Haddenham e.g. OVIN, HEReward, CHIVERS, CAUSEWAY, RAMPART, LODE.
- 11) Look at the map on the centre pages: the road from the North starts at Sutton Road, Station Road, High Street, Aldreth Road, High Street Aldreth and then a drove to High Bridge which crosses the Old West River. Make a LIST of all the small roads, housing estates etc., which branch on this.
Can you do the same for the West/East route, beginning with the Causeway and ending with Wilburton Road (old name Perry Way).
- 12) Using the letters H, A, D, D, E, N, H, A, M, make as many proper words as you can.
Then add E, L, Y, C, A, M, B, S, and the number is enormous!
Do you know your own POST CODE?

HADDENHAM AND ITS MUSEUM

At the north end of the Bygones Building are displayed Village Memorabilia. From these items, see if you can find answers for the following:—

- When**
- was Haddenham to Ely Railway opened?
 - was Holy Trinity Church restored?
 - were the Fen Floods?
 - did Mrs. Gray donate £20 for the cost of water at the Methodist Chapel?
 - was Bert Miles appointed Head Master of Arkenstall Boys' School?
 - was gas installed at Wesleyan Chapel?
 - was Haddenham Foresters Band photo taken?
 - was the Ancient Order of Shepherds seal signed?
 - was the Farmland Museum started?
 - was the Baptist Chapel built?
- Where**
- else is 'Haddenham' mentioned in the museum?
 - were the brickworks situated? (see map on wall)
 - did the local 'Grunty Fen Express' travel?
 - in the case is 'Haddenham' written?
 - is Haddenham situated and in what 'old' county area?



ISLE OF ELY

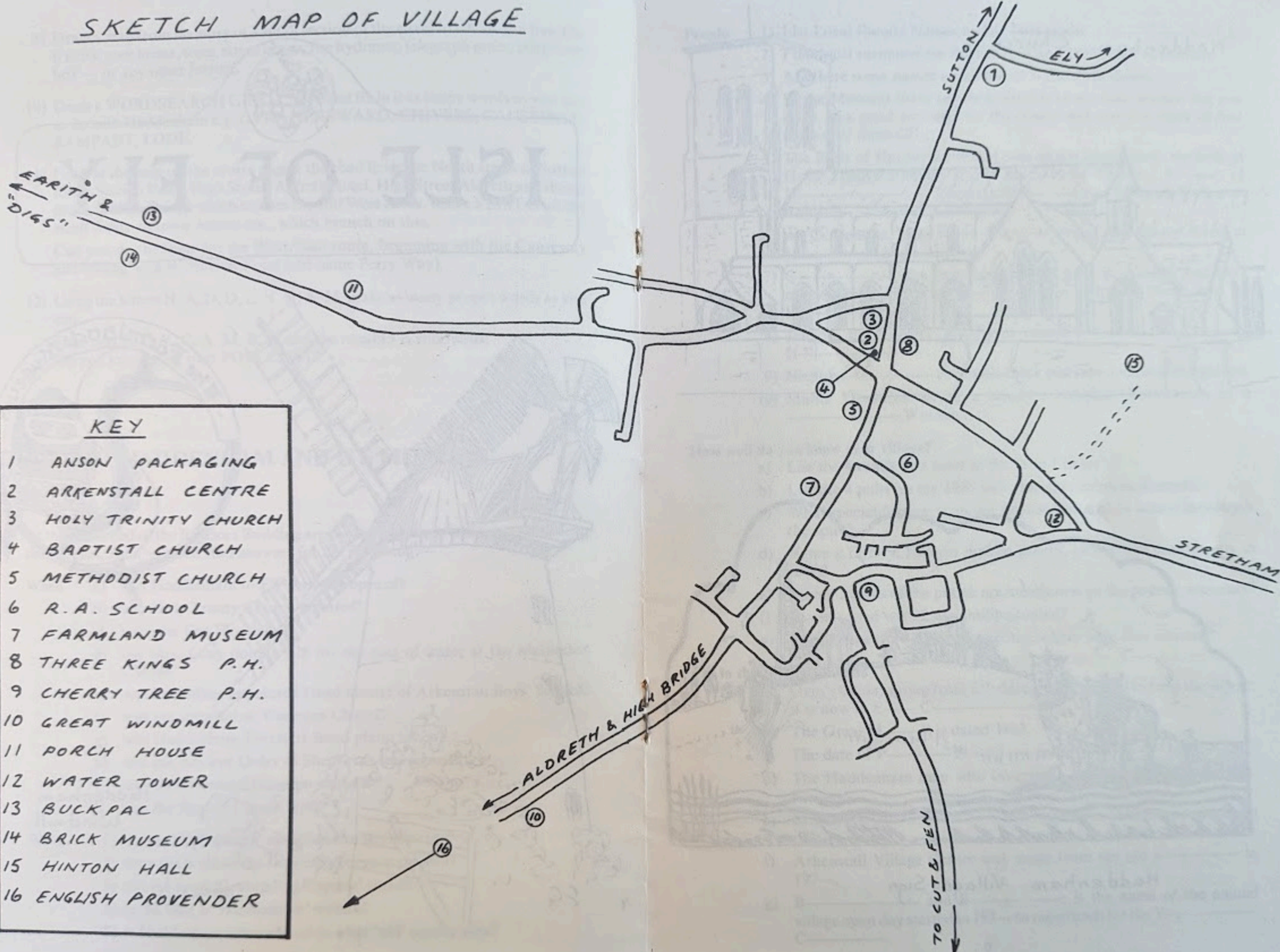


Haddenham
Windmill

1989 Ann Biggs

SKETCH MAP OF VILLAGE

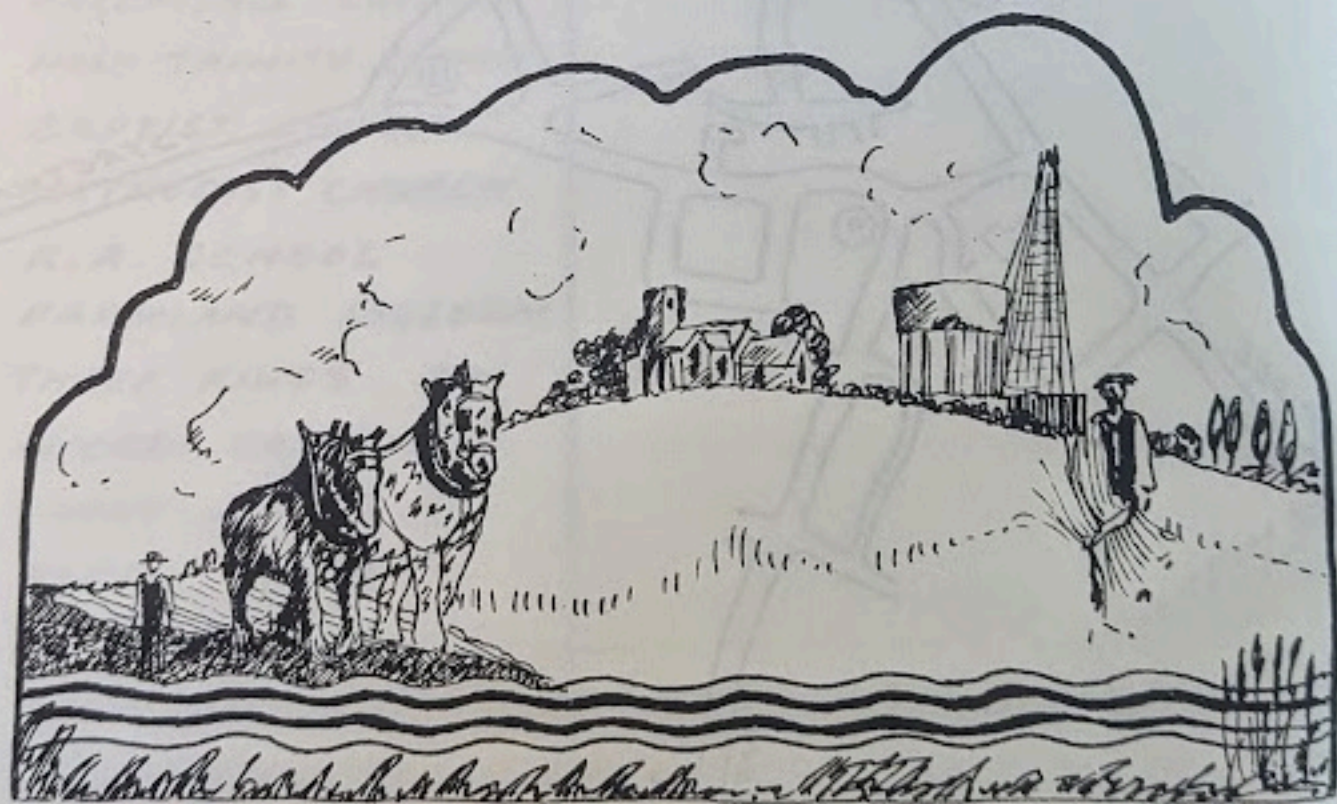
EARITH &
"DIGS"



KEY

- 1 ANSON PACKAGING
- 2 ARKENSTALL CENTRE
- 3 HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
- 4 BAPTIST CHURCH
- 5 METHODIST CHURCH
- 6 R.A. SCHOOL
- 7 FARMLAND MUSEUM
- 8 THREE KINGS P.H.
- 9 CHERRY TREE P.H.
- 10 GREAT WINDMILL
- 11 PORCH HOUSE
- 12 WATER TOWER
- 13 BUCK PAL
- 14 BRICK MUSEUM
- 15 HINTON HALL
- 16 ENGLISH PROVENDER

Haddenham Church



Haddenham Village Sign

People

- 1) List Local Family Names on the 1804 poem.
- 2) Find local surnames on BOTH 1914 and 1939 Rolls of Honour.
- 3) Are there some names on all three? Write them down.
- 4) In the Museum there are three models in the little rooms: can you think of a good surname for the family and can you think of first names for them all?
- 5) The Earls of Hardwicke were Lords of the Manor here: the bells of Holy Trinity Church are in memory of Charles, E—— of H———. Their family h——— was Wimpole Hall, near Royston.
- 6) A. C. Benson, who wrote 'Land of Hope and Glory' lived at H——— Hall.
- 7) C———, the jam firm, owned land at Aldreth and gave money to build the B——— Chapel there and at H———.
- 8) Jewson, the builders' merchants owned b——— w——— in H———.
- 9) Nicholas —— has made brick pits into a naturalised garden.
- 10) Mable Demaine wrote a booklet entitled 'Reflections of a —— Woman'.

How well do you know your village?

- a) List the 4 roads that meet at the 'Top Corner'.
- b) List the 4 pubs on the 1906 pub map that mention animals.
- c) What special feature is on the Baptist Church? In whose memory is the spire?
- d) Name a farmer, harness maker, grocer, pharmacist (see objects in case).
- e) Which 3 areas of the parish are mentioned on the pottery souvenirs?
- f) In what road were 2 windmills situated?
- g) Look at the drawings of dovecotes: where were they situated?

Fill in the Missing Letters

- a) Ovin's Cross, dating from Etheldreda's time, used to be in the village: it is now in E—— C———.
- b) The Great M——— is dated 1803.
- c) The date of P——— H——— in H——— R—— is 1657.
- d) The Haddenham man who invented a motorised plough was Mr. K——.
- e) Robert A——— left funding in 1640 for the education of b——.
- f) Arkenstall Village Centre was made from the old s——— in 197—.
- g) B——— and B——— is the name of the annual village open day started in 197— to raise funds for the V——— C———.

ANSWERS TO 12 QUESTIONS ABOUT HADDENHAM

1. Where is Haddenham?

Haddenham is a large village in the fens in East Anglia, 7 miles south-west of Ely.

The hamlet of Aldreth is a short way from the main village.

2. What does the name mean?

Like most place names, 'Haddenham' has been spelled many different ways over its long history. One possible meaning is 'Haeda's homestead'. Haeda was a Saxon leader.

Aldreth may mean 'loading place by the alders'.

3. Is Haddenham very old?

Yes. It was probably formed by the merger of three separate hamlets, two of which are mentioned by King Edgar as early as 970 AD. It is called Hadrehan in the Domesday Book.

4. Has it ever been flooded?

Yes, indeed, many times over the centuries. Although Haddenham is the highest village in the Isle of Ely, houses in the fen have been flooded to their eaves. The 1947 flood was one of the worst.

5. Were there any official schemes to drain the fens around Haddenham?

Yes. The first official drainage scheme was announced in 1727.

6. What is the main church called?

Holy Trinity. The present building was begun during the 13th century.

7. What special features can we see inside the church?

The font was made 500 years ago, with Tudor roses around the bowl and lions around the base.

8. Is there a windmill?

Yes, on the road between Haddenham and Aldreth. It was built in 1803.

9. Are there records of early schools?

Yes. There was a school in Haddenham as early as 1463, and other schools were established in the centuries that followed. The Farmland Museum has some old records on display.

10. When did the railway come to Haddenham?

1866. It was called the Grunty Fen Express.

11. How many people live in Haddenham today?

Approximately 2,500 people. Is this a larger or a smaller population than the place where you live?

12. When was the Farmland Museum started?

In 1969. It grew from a small boy's collection of pieces of broken pottery. He charged his friends a penny to see his collection, to raise money for children 'who can't see and can't walk'.

Marked 1. reside at Aldreth; and 2. at Hilrow.

Davis C.J. surgeon
Hughes Rev. Henry, M.A.
jaeambeat
1. King Rev. Fred. (baptist)

Farmers

2. Amory Robert
2. Biddal James
1. Brand Robert
Clay Frederick
Clay Benjamin P.
2. Collett Frederick
Cockle John Read
2. Cockle John Thomas
1. Cockle William
Drage Thomas
Drage John

Fison Jonathon
Furbank William
2. Gibson Thomas
Goodman William
Gothard Benjamin
Gothard William
Goobey Robert
2. Green Charles
Grauger Thomas
Hawes Francis
Low Edward
Martin William
Mitchell Henry
Pate William
Pate William. Jnr
Pate Rebecca
Pate Robert
Pate Robert. Jun.
Porter William
Porter Robert

Prime Watson
Procter John
Wallis Thos., vict., *Chequers*
(& horse dealer)
Whiteing William, shoemaker
2. Procter Thomas
2. Read John
1. Read Jacob
Roberts William
Roberts Edward
Sutton William
Sutton John
2. Tubbs Robert
1. Uffindell Elizabeth
Vipan Walter
Waller John
2. Wayman Samuel

Traders

1. Ashberry J., vict., *Three Tuns*
Alsop Thomas. Blacksmith
Charter T., relieving officer
Clark M. vict., *Rose & Crown*
Coatman Wm., beer retailer
1. Croxton Jas., beer retailer
1. Freeman Eliz., shopkeeper
Dewey Richard, shopkeeper and
letter receiver
Gooby Robert, butcher
Grounds Thomas, plumber and
glazier
Green Richard, blacksmith
Harding Henry, vict., *White Hart*
(and tailor)
Hall Mary, vict., *Red Lion* (and
butcher)
Hopkins Thos., wheelwright

Johnson Richard, vict., *Greyhound*
(and farmer)
1. Kempton John, beer retlr.
Kidd Gothord, vict., *Hare & Hounds*
(and wheelwright)
Metcalf Joseph, beer retlr.
Morris F., brewer & builder
Morris William, grocer
Newman John, carpenter
Nightingale Henry, vict., *Bell*
(& butcher)
Phillips Joshua, surveyor
Porter H., beer retlr. & tailor
Porter Richard, brewer
Porter H., brewer & farmer
1. Prime Willm., shopkeeper
& farmer
Procter Richard, vict., *Three Kings*
(& farmer)
Purver Thomas, baker
Rose S.J., grocer & draper
Robinson Hy., schoolmaster
& registrar of births, &c.
Robinson John, shopkeeper
Robinson Robert, tailor
Robinson —, beer retailer
Robinson William, grocer
Robinson William, tailor
Seal William, farrier
Setchell O., miller & baker
Salmon John, horse dealer
Stubbins John, brazier
Waters Charles, builder
Watts J. & W., blacksmiths
Wayman John, watchmaker
Wayman James, blacksmith
Wheeler John, shoemaker
& surveyor

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS OF THE VILLAGE OF HADDENHAM AND THE NEARBY HAMLETS OF ALDRETH AND HILROW IN 1851

'*incumbent*' means the person who holds a particular position, usually refers to clergy holding a position in a church.

'*retlr*' is short for retailer.

'*vict.*' is short for victualler, someone licensed to sell food and drink.

1. Were women ever included in such a Directory?
2. 'Farmer's sons never stayed on to farm land in Haddenham' — True or false?
3. Is there any evidence of a Baptist chapel?
4. How many pubs were there in Haddenham?
5. What evidence is there that pub-owners (victuallers) followed other occupations as well?
6. How many blacksmiths were there?
7. What did a 'farrier' do?
8. What occupation did a 'brazier' follow?
9. Who was the official registrar of births?
10. What were the two most popular names for men in this area at the time?

CHILDREN AT WORK

Read the following extracts:

EXTRACT A: *Mabel Demaine, Cambridgeshire, 'CHILDHOOD IN THE FENS' early twentieth century.*

We all loved the days when the Threshing Tackle came to our yard. How we ran home on those days and all the other children became friendly and trooped home with us, there was such fun to be had in our yard. The puffing steam engine — my father giving orders — so many jobs to be done. Three men sent to the cornstack — three on the straw stack — another feeding the 'Drum', another minding the chaff, and one or two strong men carrying those big sacks of corn into the barn for storage.

One job my father gave us children was chaff treading. We had a 'chaff house' and it was our job to pack as much chaff into it as possible. Round and round we stamped, falling over and rolling about in the chaff, we got chaff in our hair, down our necks, and even in our mouths.

Another job we were expected to do was to keep the tub of water which fed the steam engine full. Up and down we worked the pump handle, it wasn't hard work but it was monotonous.

What we liked best of all was to be armed with long sticks, spits they were called, to kill the rats and mice which were usually to be found at the bottom of any stack. We waved our arms about, shouted and screamed, many a time we were late for school because we stayed too long in the dinner hour taking part in this enjoyable sport.

EXTRACT B: *SERIOUS ACCIDENT AT HADDENAHM, CAMBRIDGE CHRONICLE, 19 February 1886*

A lad named George Coxall, living in Haddenham, was admitted to Addenbrooke's Hospital on Tuesday last, with both his hands cut off. It appeared that the unfortunate young man was feeding a chaff machine when his hands caught in the machinery, and were instantly cut off.

WORLD WAR 2 COMES TO HADDENHAM

A FENLAND WOMAN REMEMBERS:

'Searchlights were used a great deal during the war, moving across the sky at night to search for the enemy planes. I remember when they were first used, my father went down to the Fen early one morning to find a number of frightened and excited gypsies on the Cut Bridge, who could not understand what was happening to the 'Heavens'.

Iron railings from the front of the local churches and houses were taken up to be used in ammunition works for the War Effort. Some of these railings had been hand-made by local blacksmiths and it seemed a shame for them to be removed.

Farmers had Land Army girls and Prisoners of War to help on the farms and grass fields were ploughed up and every bit of land was used to grow more food.

I shall never forget one of the first coachloads of evacuees to arrive from London on a Sunday afternoon. They were a number of expectant mothers with young children; with their gas masks and bundles of belongings, they were a pathetic sight, frightened and bewildered. They missed the noise and bustle of Whitechapel with its fish and chip shops, its cinemas and pubs. Before a week had passed many had returned home, preferring, as they said, to be bombed out in London than to stagnate and die of boredom in a quiet country village'.

LISTEN TO TAPES AT THE MUSEUM IN WHICH OLD PEOPLE TALK ABOUT THEIR MEMORIES OF THE HOME FRONT

Compare these 'oral records' with written accounts on subjects such as rationing. In conversation, people often admit to things, or expand on things, which they would be reluctant to put on paper. Why do you think that what people say often differs from what they write?

A FENLAND WOMAN REMEMBERS:

Her Written Evidence

'With the restrictions of rationing of food it became increasingly difficult for housewives to satisfy their hungry families.'

Her Oral Evidence

Question: 'Did you find rationing difficult?'

Answer: 'Not really, no. You see, it, 'cos, went on that I'd got one thing, somebody else had got another. 'Cos I could never make my tea ration last out, you see, but I could easily get a quarter of tea for a bit of butter. All this went on you see. All the villages were the same.'

'FOLK' STORIES — TRUE OR FALSE?

The Three Kings doorstep is level with Ely Cathedral Roof.

An underground passage connects this Public House with the Parish Church.

A ghost — that of an old lady dressed in black — walks down Aldreth Road and disappears in Chivers' Sand Pit (now filled in) at the top of Aldreth Hill.

The Battle of Aldreth took place in the sombre grass fields to the right of the Cut Bridge — known as the Boot.

“Haddenham Church stands on a hill
Sutton Church is higher still.”

Can you finish this verse?

Sutton — good mutton,
Ely — good beef,
Haddenham — a pretty town,
Wilburton — a thief.

The parish church should have a spire on it — public subscriptions were made and the collector (son of a well-known family) ran off to U.S.A. with the money.

There was not enough WIND to keep 2 mills going in Aldreth Road (C.F.B. humour).

Nightingales used to sing in Bury Lane in the evenings before the war.

The rail service from Ely to Sutton (1866-1963) was called the Grunty Fen Express: quicker to bike to Ely market (because of the time taken to walk to and from the stations).

Dates on buildings in Haddenham collected '94.

- 1657 Porch House, Hill Row.
 1704 Tinden Cottages, High Street, 54.
 1789 Brick on end wall at Stone Cross Farm.
 1837 Liverpool House Shop, Shippey's.
 1865 Cottage now Collins' garage (Old Police House)
 x 1803 The Great Mill on the way to Aldreth. (1913)
 1851 R.P. on Peter Steel's old bakery house.
 1843/1891 Wesleyan Chapel, High Street.
 1861 High Street School (infants and girls)
 1862 Churchyard extension (now Conservation garden)
 1863 Arkenstall Boys School (now Village Centre)
 1881 Paradise Cottage (opp. wheelwright's shop)
 1885/1988 Feast Lodge 48, High Street.
 1889 Downieville Place, 53, Station Road.
 1894 Honduras Place (Henry Thomas Camps, Mill End.
 1904 Baptist Chapel with Chivers' spire }
 1906 Church Hall, now a house. }
 G. & C.C. Caius Cottage, Aldreth.
 1908 Baptist Chapel, Aldreth.
 Ware Hall (orig. Hadden Hall) ex Wright's Station Road
 1915 Ypres House built by Bethells, Froize End.
 Midfeather Villas, Earith Bridge.
 1921 Home Industrial built by F. Peacock and son.
 1938 E.R.D.C. Duck Lane houses, now Hereward Housing.
 1972 Arkenstall Centre Hall, Denis Adams, architect.
 1988 bungalow built by Purell in Alsop's garden.

The above were collected on the N/S Aldreth - Sutton road with a few diversions off.

- x 1914 Church Room, Hill Row, now a private house 24⁺²
 1866 WL Jo's house West End
 1899 ES, AS, CL Porter (barn behind Highfield House)
 1923 E J Waddelaw June 16th
 1865 WM 18 Hill Row (ex Nick Lynn)
 1807 TC TH IWIT (dates on old pub at Three Tuns opp. Playpark