

1918/1984/2018

November 11th 1918 was Armistice Day, and it is reflected in this Autumn newsletter. You will see that five Glemsford men died in August, possibly during one of the final battles, Amiens, while others were to die after the Armistice, one of influenza in distant Salonika.

Did Glemsford still have a Town Crier in 1918 and would he have announced the ending of hostilities? I can find no evidence, perhaps Mr Adams was the only one.

An American couple took a piece of Glemsford to California in 1994, read about this recent history here.

A year ago, David Newell wrote an article about the Baptismal Font at St Mary's, you can now learn about its renovation in another, illustrated, article from David.

Finally, I really would welcome other members to contribute to the newsletter. There was no summer edition as I had nothing to publish apart from a few bits from my visits to the Record Office. I would be pleased to know what subjects or sort of articles you would like to see in the newsletter. If you don't have access to a computer, a typed or handwritten piece would be fine, you can send it to the email address at the bottom of this page, deliver it to me (15 New Cut), or give it to any one of the committee members.

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Remember these men

1918, 17th August: William SPARHAM. A private with 1st Battalion, Cambridge Regiment. He enlisted at Bury St Edmunds and was killed in action, aged 19. He had lived on Brook Street, his parents being Walter and Ann. He is at Ribemont Community Cemetery Ext, Somme, France.

22nd August: Ambrose SUTTLE. Lance Corporal. with 1/24 Battalion London Regiment. Aged 25 when killed in action, he was the son of John and Ellen, but was boarding with Charlotte Suttle, his aunt, on Egremont Street. Possibly also buried at Ribemont.

22nd August: Walter Wallace TWINN, Aged 24, son of Alice and Wallace, a private with 7th Battalion Royal Sussex Regiment 12th Division. He was killed in action. No known grave but commemorated on the Vis-en-Artois Memorial, Pas-de-Calais.

22nd August: J H COLE, possibly a private with 1st Battalion Cambridgeshire Regiment. Enlisted at Croydon, where his parents lived, he was living in Holloway with his wife. He was killed in action in France or Flanders and buried at Ribemont Community Cemetery, Somme, France. His connection with Glemsford is not known.

22nd August: S. DOWNS either Samuel a private in 1st Royal Marines Battalion OR, Sidney a private with 1st Battalion King's Shropshire Light Infantry (died 9th August 1915), listed on the Menin Gate.

6th November: Frank C GAME, aged 26, Private with Mechanical Transport Army Corps. The son of Ann and Walter, of The Crown Public House, Brook Street. He was a victim of Influenza and died in hospital at Salonika, buried at Veles Military Cemetery, Yugoslavia.

26th November: William CHATTERS, aged 24, a private with Suffolk Regiment, then Labour Corps. Died at home in Glemsford, having been discharged from the Military Hospital in Bury St Edmunds. He is buried in St Mary's Churchyard.

With thanks to Martin Edwards and Steve Clarke, for Roll of Honour details.

The War has Ended

Finally on November 11th 1918, the First World War ended. At 5 o'clock, on the morning of that day, the 1,586th day of war, the German delegates at Compiègne signed the Armistice. The fighting may have ceased but there were still German troops occupying France and Belgium. It was not until after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, on June 28th 1919, that the true celebrations and plans for the building of memorials began. A dinner was organised and held in the hall of the Board School, a joyous parade walked through the village with decorated carts and girls in all their finery, with ribbons and banners aplenty. The War memorial was built in 1923, on land donated by a Mr W G Fenn in gratitude for the safe return, from The Great War, of his four sons. The other Memorial to those who died in the 1st World War, is in St Mary's Church and was presented by Canon Herbert Hall, who was the incumbent 1887-1921. (More detail about the War Memorial to follow in a future newsletter.)



what effect this had in Glemsford, the only hint being a newspaper item. On 27th November, a report from Glemsford, in the Suffolk Free Press, states that 'Owing to an outbreak of Influenza the council schools have been closed for the present. In some areas, whole families are infected, while many children are suffering, there being nearly 200 under treatment'. I suspect this report covered not only Glemsford but the surrounding villages. Coincidentally, two young men were buried at St Mary's on the 3rd December that year. One was William Chatters, d. 26th Nov. and listed on the War Memorial; did he die of wounds or Flu? The other was a German POW, Erich Pfar aged 28, who died at



You may be interested to know that when the Armistice Ceremony became established, the start and end of the 'silence' would be marked by the firing of a cannon on Tye Green. The cannon was owned and fired by Mr Ernie Hartley the wheelwright. (This piece of information comes from the Memoirs of Tom Brown.)

Meanwhile, in the autumn of 1918, another 'enemy' was making its presence felt worldwide: Influenza. I don't know

'Glemsford Workhouse' according to the burial register. The cause of death is not given in the burial register, so it is impossible to know if several burials in a short period of time would have been a result of Influenza. (I don't know if the severity of the outbreak was 'played down' in the Press, but apart from the above piece, I could find no other reports between October 1918 and January 1919). Do any members know what effect the 1918/9 Influenza outbreak had in Glemsford?

Glemsford to California



A stunning 15th century house, possibly built for a Glemsford wool merchant, is to be found in the Napa Valley, California.

Not dissimilar to Chequers, Monks Hall or Peverells, this transported house had, for some reason, been left to become derelict. It once stood back from Egremont Street, in the area between Wong's old take-away and modern houses called Seabrooks.

In the 1839/40 Tithe Apportionment list it was numbered 110, the owner was a Cassandra Wyatt, but it was unoccupied. Later owners of the property, gleaned from census returns, are not so easy to pinpoint as it may have been divided into several households (as was Monks Hall), and the enumerator did not always note the house numbers. Local memory states that it was called Seabrooks, as they owned it at the time of demolition. Electoral registers of 1960/61 and 65/66, show the number as 31A, being occupied by Mr and Mrs Williams. (The old Cutting's shop/Wong's is still clearly numbered 31). Details from The Listed Buildings for Glemsford, possibly 1970's, describe it as 'a Medieval timberframed and plastered building on a half H plan with a

gabled wing projecting at the south end and a gable at the north, 2 storeys. Standing at the rear of 33 and 35 Egremont St and is not seen from the road'.

Quite when or why the property was left to deteriorate is unknown but by 1979 it had been condemned. Local memories recall it being used as a warehouse/distribution point for Cutting's the grocers, who occupied the shop that became Wong's, and also that chickens were 'kept' there.

In 1984 an American couple, Mike and Linda Reid were living and working in Suffolk, he at USAF Lakenheath and his wife a student at Cambridge. They "fell in love" with the timber framed buildings of the county and discovered that the derelict and condemned property used as a warehouse, in Glemsford was for sale. It had recently been bought by another American couple who then put it up for sale in an American Property Magazine, which is where the Reids found it. They bought the salvaged oak beams in 1984 –

20 tons for £12,500, the salvager having labelled each one, ready for future reassembling. In 1994 the Reids had the 'house' shipped to San Francisco for £5,000. Repairs to the wood cost £25,000 and a further £6,500 for the reconstruction of the frame. According to a local memory, the move was featured on the local Anglia News and featured in the local press. (The report was almost the same as those in two national papers,



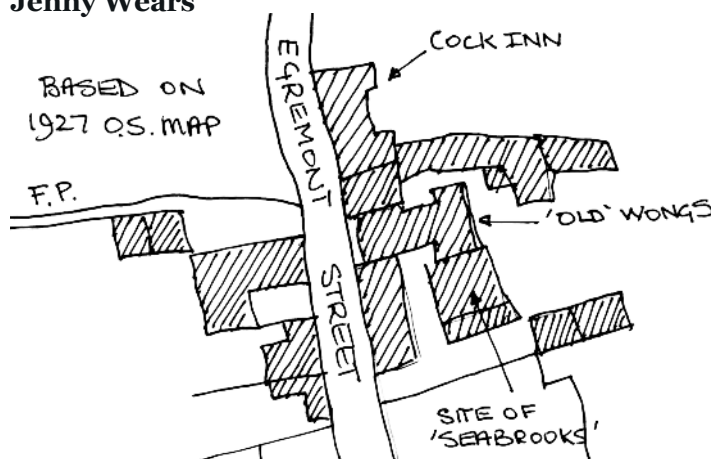
Erecting the timber frame in California

In 1995, eleven years after first discovering the Glemsford building, The Reids moved into their timber framed 'Suffolk' home. Not quite the original medieval manor

house but it certainly must be an unusual property in the Napa Valley landscape.

In the two national newspaper articles about this house, it is numbered as 31 Egremont Street, but 31 is actually Wong's. Thanks to Sid Watkinson for passing the 1995 newspaper cuttings on to me.

Jenny Wears



which is where some of this information was gleaned). Despite paying only £100 for some 1840s windows, the costs continued to rise and the final bill was approximately £250,000.

The restorer/assembler, a Mr William Clement-Smith, travelled from Suffolk to California to assist in the rebuilding. As well as the initial labelling, all the timbers had been colour coded to ensure that each room's timbers stayed together. It took the five man team 10 days to reassemble the original frame of the house. Two new wings were added to the rear of the property, to house all the modern conveniences, rather than spoil the medieval look of the original rooms. The house has an artificial slate roof and wall insulation. Local planning in California refused the use of wattle and daub and they were initially reluctant to grant planning permission because of the safety standards relating to earthquakes.

The Conservation of St Mary's Font

After four years of fundraising, the conservation work to St Mary's Church font was carried out by conservation specialists Skillingtons over a three week period in June and July. Dr David Carrington was the project director and the conservators on site were Emma Teale (Senior Conservator) and Russell Bell.

Dismantling and Repairing

The font is in five parts. They are, from the top down, the bowl, the chamfered cornice moulding, the shaft, the top step and the bottom step. All parts except the shaft are believed to be Caen Stone from Normandy, but the shaft is a softer limestone found in Normandy and Eastern England called Clunch (halfway to being chalk). It is softer, therefore easier to carve, and over time has deteriorated at a faster rate. The damage to the font has been mainly attributed to rising damp and this needed to be addressed which required the font to be fully dismantled. Further damage has been blamed on Cromwell's supporters with damage on one face of the shaft and two faces of the bowl.

The conservators protected and dismantled the font into its five sections. Mistakes that were made when the font was moved in the 19th century from near the south door to its present position were revealed. Considerable damage to the chamfered cornice moulding and the shaft were found, and compounded by the methods used in making repairs. These two sections were in a number of pieces and joined together by iron staples, which had rusted and caused further damage.

At ground level an area of glazed tiling was very carefully removed and set aside to be replaced on completion. It was found that the underside of the tiles were very wet,

moisture not being able to escape through the impervious tiles. (The ground could not breathe.) The only escape for moisture was through the limestone of the font.

The shaft and the chamfered cornice moulding had to be repaired, a hint of a jigsaw puzzle to put all the parts back in their right place. A lot of photographs were taken as the font was dismantled which helped identify all the pieces. An approved epoxy resin was used together with stainless steel staples and dowels. (The high grade stainless steel is supposed to last 900 years – so it should see us out!)

Rebuilding

It was decided to have the font sitting above the tiles rather than under so as to minimise the exposure to damp. This means that the font is now about an inch higher than is used to be. A suitable screed was laid and a damp proof membrane introduced. The waste pipe from the bowl was welded to the drainage hole in the damp proof membrane. With the waste pipe sticking up in the air it meant that the heavy sections of the font had to be lifted and threaded over the pipe. A gantry and a broom handle helped.

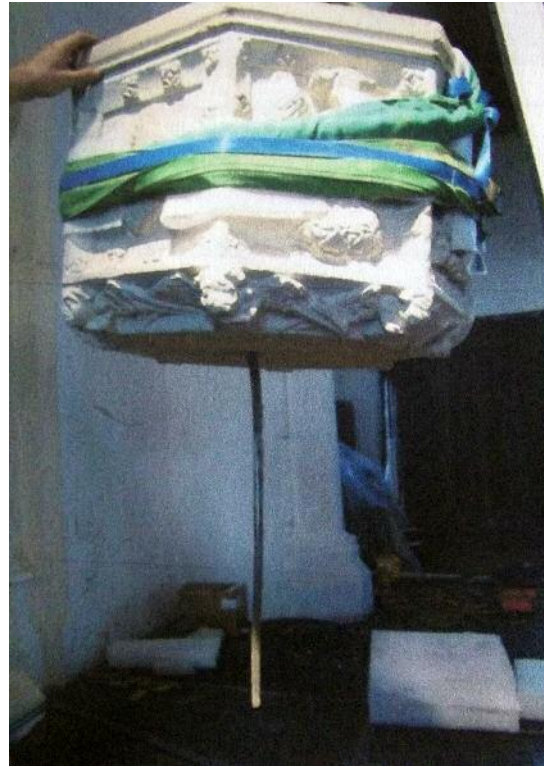
In addition to an approved lime mortar vertical stainless steel dowels were used to join the sections together. All surfaces were carefully cleaned and the loose surfaces of the shaft consolidated with an approved limestone material.

Conclusion

The font does not look new – this was never our intention. We did not want to replace any sections, just preserve for the future what we have now. It should not deteriorate any further for the foreseeable future.



Bowl ready for removal



Shaft being fed over new waste pipe

Want to know more?

A photo display "The Story of the Conservation of the Font" is on the noticeboards in the tower space behind the font.

A copy of the conservators' full report is available to borrow if you would like to read it. Please speak to me.

David Newell



Completed font

GLEMSFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY News



THE FINAL MEETING of the year took the form of a guided walk down memory lane led by local resident Rodney Bullock and member Gill Leech.

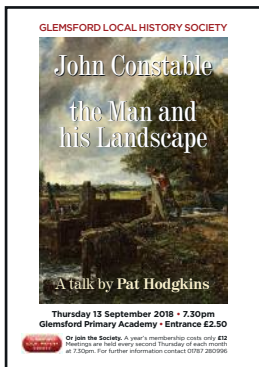
Rodney was born in Windmill Row (site of a windmill in the past), and very near to the starting point of the walk, which was opposite the former Prince of Wales public house in Churchgate. His memories of places, events and village characters stretch back to the fifties and include some very funny and engaging stories.

Gill supplied a large number of facts which she could recall as we made our way down

Bells Lane, past the former Horsehair Factory to Fair Green and Lion Road, discovering and pointing out where old landmarks had stood.

The walk came to a close at the Primary School where Rodney kept us entertained with a number of his own experiences there as a boy! Our thanks go to both Rodney and Gill.

Following the walk members enjoyed drinks and a finger buffet in the lovely garden of our Chairman, Rowan Cain. We extend our thanks to him and Sally for hosting such a pleasurable evening.



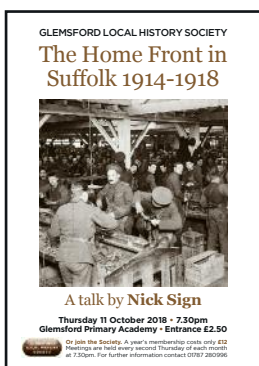
NATIONAL TRUST SPEAKER, Pat Hodgkins, opened our new season with an excellent talk on 'John Constable – the Man and his Landscape'. Concentrating primarily upon the Flatford area, so synonymous with the scenery of many of the artist's famous paintings, Pat told the large audience how Constable was born in East Bergholt (1776) into a very wealthy middle class family, his father owning mills, land and property.

It seems that the young John was destined to become an artist, although, reluctant to adopt any sort of self-promotion, it was many years before he received the true recognition he deserved from the Royal Academy and other notable establishments.

It seems fortunate that the family money sustained him throughout.

Pat added humour and quirky details as she examined paintings such as The Haywain and Boatbuilding near Flatford Mill showing comparative photographs of the scenes today. She stressed that most pictures show work being carried out (not a fashionable subject for paintings in the early 19th century), as she pointed out tiny, yet relevant, details.

John Constable married, fairly late in life, Maria Bicknell, a lady 12 years his junior. Seven children were produced before, tragically, Maria died of consumption just 12 years later.



AS WE COMMEMORATE the 1918 Armistice, our October speaker, Nick Sign, succinctly outlined for us the state of the Home Front in Suffolk during WW I.

The Defence of the Realm Act, instituted just four days after war was declared, curtailed many rights and freedoms. Banned were kites, bonfires, alcohol on public transport; licensing hours were restricted; anti-war activists were imprisoned; horses and vans were commandeered by the army.

Anti-German feeling was very strong as young men, at first, quickly volunteered to join up. Vast defence lines were established around strategic the coastal ports of Harwich, Felixstowe and Lowestoft. Airfields were

developed, while at sea the British fleet grew ever bigger.

After 1916, when conscription was introduced, women were left to do "men's work" – farming, driving, assembling plane parts and ammunitions. As the horrors of war were revealed, wounded soldiers came home for treatment and convalescence in large country houses transformed into hospitals, while their lands were used for training and food growing.

When peace was finally declared, and the Treaty of Versailles signed, it was clear that the Home Front period had left many legacies for the future.



Glemsford's Town Crier

It was reported in the Suffolk Free Press (April 29th 1885), 'That Mr Charles Adams, sextant [sic] of the Parish of Glemsford has undertaken the position of Town Crier of Glemsford'.

Mr Adams is listed as a mat weaver and sextant in the 1881 census return. He was 39 and living at Churchgate, with his wife Susan and six children. The eldest, Walter aged 14, was a factory hand and Mary Ann, aged 12 was a silk worker.

Charles was listed simply as 'mat weaver' in 1891 and 1901, still at Churchgate but no mention of his sextant or town crier duties, but he and Susan had a seventh child, Alice E, aged 13 in 1901, a scholar rather than a worker.

I have not come across any record of Mr Adam's duties, but presumably he did cry 'Oyez!' 'Oyez!' around Glemsford Town when called upon to do so.

Jenny Wears

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, **Annual General Meeting**
November 8th (with some entertainment, not just business!)

Thursday, **A Christmas Get-together**
December 13th at Glemsford Primary Academy

Thursday, **Martin Hedges: The Miser, the Murderer and the
January 10th Headless Horseman – historic tales from Acton**

A List of 1st World War Memorials and Cemeteries in France and Belgium which name the men who are also on Glemsford's Memorials:

Menin Gate, Ypres 5	Souvenir Cemetery, Longuenesse, St Omer, France 1
Thiepval Memorial, Somme. 4	Essex Farm Cemetery, Ieper, West Vlaanderen, Belgium* 1
Tyne Cot, Zonnebeke, Belgium 3	Cambrai Memorial, Louveral, Nord, France 1
Vis-en-Artois, Pas-de-Calais, France 2	Bertruncourt Military Cemetery, Somme, France 1
Balleul Community Cemetery, Nord, France 2	Basra War Cemetery, Iraq 1
Arras Memorial, Pas-de-Calais 2	Aeroplane Cemetery, West Vlaanderen, Belgium 1
Ribemont Communal Cemetery, Somme 2	Les Gonards Cemetery, Versailles, France 1
Douai British Cemetery, Cuincy, Nord, France 1	Tincourt British Cemetery, Somme, France 1
Duisans British Cemetery, Etrun, France 1	<i>*This where Colonel John McCrae (Canadian Army), wrote 'In Flanders Fields' in 1915; he died in 1918.</i>
Chatham Naval Memorial, Somme, France 1	
Wytshaete Military Cemetery, Belgium 1	



Newsletter | Autumn 2018 edition

Annual Subscription: £12.00 **Visitors:** £2.50 per time

We meet on every 2nd Thursday of the month in Glemsford Primary Academy at 7.30pm.

We welcome your continued support and that of others. Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join us.