

The Buckworth Experience

FOREWORD

We have called this book The Buckworth Experience as we have recorded the changing aspects of village life over the past 100 years not just from records but through experiences of past and present residents. The phrase was first coined in the 1980s by the then Bishop of Ely to describe his visit to the parish. He enjoyed the warmth of his welcome, and although it was early spring, he was able to appreciate Buckworth's unique panoramic views. The church went on to use this catchphrase on many occasions and it appeared on T-shirts and sweatshirts, sold in aid of the church restoration.

There have been many changes but what stays constant is the 'spirit' of Buckworth and its people. We hope this continues in the twenty-first century as it did in the twentieth and that villagers at the end of this new century, looking back as we have over the past 100 years, will appreciate and recognise the 'Buckworth experience'.

Over the past 18 months, we have contacted and spoken to many people, searched county records and newspaper archives and spent many hours battling with new technology. We would like to thank all those who contributed to this book. We recognise that there are some omissions as not all the detail we wanted was accessible, but we hope we have put together an interesting and informative book.

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INTRODUCTION

Buckworth lies to the west of the main A1 road from London to Edinburgh and Ermine Street, the old Roman road from London to York. It is some three miles from Alconbury in the upland clay soils of the old county of Huntingdonshire. In 1974 the county was absorbed into Cambridgeshire. It is a small village with a population of about 120. Although the intention of this book is to show the changes and continuity of life in this small village over the past 100 years, Buckworth obviously had a history before 1900 which we must mention in order to put our observations of twentieth century life in context.

There is little physical evidence of any pre-Roman or Roman settlement in Buckworth but the elevated site and abundance of natural springs would have made the area attractive to settle and there was probably a settlement from about 700 BC. *The Victorian County Histories* Vol. 1 mentions 'in the large grass field to the south of Black Lodge Farm are many curious mounds the origin of which it is difficult to understand'.

These were flattened during the war years when ploughable land was at a premium and so no real explanation for them has been found. A Roman coin of Magnetius was found in Brickyard Field near the line of the Roman road and various other small rough implements and flakes of flint of uncertain date.

The first written evidence of occupation comes with the Domesday Book. Buckworth or Buchesworde is quoted as meaning Bucc's enclosure. It was said that ten hides had been the property of the Earl of Eu or Ow in Normandy and which had formerly belonged to Tosti, Earl of the Northumbrians. The Earl of Eu was one of William the Conqueror's chief councillors. Its pre-conquest value of £10 remained unchanged. According to the *Domesday Geography of Eastern England* by H C Darby the population of Buckworth in 1086

was 20.

The village's wealth in the Middle Ages came from sheep, the wool being used for high-quality textiles which were produced in the Huntingdon area. Cox's *History of Huntingdon in 1730* comments that 'the soil is very fruitful referring to the lowlands and produceth great crops; and tho' the hilly parts do not answer the labour of the husbandman so plentifully, yet it makes amends for it by the wholesomeness of the air and the pasture for sheep'. Buckworth was also one of the parishes which fattened cattle for the markets further south including London. Hence the right to hold a market every Tuesday which was granted to the parish in 1256 with a fair on the Monday and Tuesday of Whitsun week. These were held on the site of what is now Bream Close.

Although agriculture was and still is of prime importance, the upland clay soils in western Huntingdonshire gave rise to the firing of bricks in the area during the nineteenth century with production at Brickyard Farm finally ceasing in 1929.

Census information from 1891 shows the population of the village to be 178. Villagers were employed for the most part on the land, or in service to those who either owned or let that land. Our informal survey in 2000 revealed less than 10 people working in agriculture, most people travelling out of the village to their work. The following census information shows the village population from 1831 onwards.

1831.....	136,
1841.....	160,
1851.....	191,
1891.....	178,
1901.....	154,
1931.....	112,
1951.....	105,
1961.....	138,
1971.....	121,

Social Life

For such a relatively small community, Buckworth over the past 100 years has had a very varied social life. Although much of the village's life obviously centred around the church, the pub and cricket club, of which more later, from the beginning of the century entries in the *Hunts Post* show regular village events such as whist drives and Mother's Union meetings held mainly in the school room and also at the rectory. Dances were sometimes held in the school room until the Local Education Authority declared the building unsafe for such high jinks.

Great national events were marked in Buckworth as well as the rest of the country. In 1935 parish records show plans being made for the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of George V. The heartfelt plea in the parish minutes that 'unless we pull together nothing can be done' will strike a chord with all those who have organised such events in the past and will do so in the future. It appears that tea and sports, along with commemoration mugs for the girls and medals for the boys marked the occasion. In 1937 the Coronation of George VI was celebrated with a 'meat tea' paid for by subscription. The sum of £3/5s was collected in the village. Three gentlemen of the parish, Mr Nichols, Mr Brown and Mr Rose 'provided for the children and mothers, tea, sports, mugs and medals'.

The Victory Day celebrations in June 1946 were marked by a service in the church, followed by games and sports in the Rectory field. Children's tea of paste sandwiches, cakes and fizzy lemonade was prepared and served by ladies of the special Victory Day committee which had been organised by the Parish Council. For the adults, there was a dance and refreshments in the school room with music provided by Mr Taylor's radiogram at a cost of £2. Sadly we have no photographs of any of these events.

In 1953, Buckworth joined with the

villages of Barham and Woolley to celebrate the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and much effort went into organising the day. The programme of events is shown as well as the order of the food for the teas. Some 90 adult teas and 47 children's teas were provided and although the amount of condiments look strange to modern tastes, it is perhaps rather an indication of the way village events were funded and run rather than an excessive desire for salt. In the past, funds would be raised from direct collections and events such as whist drives and all expenses would be taken from that fund. Nowadays, most village events are operated with people contributing directly to the event either with goods or money. A nice touch was the sending of a wallet as a memento of the occasion to a Barham boy, J.W.Revell, who

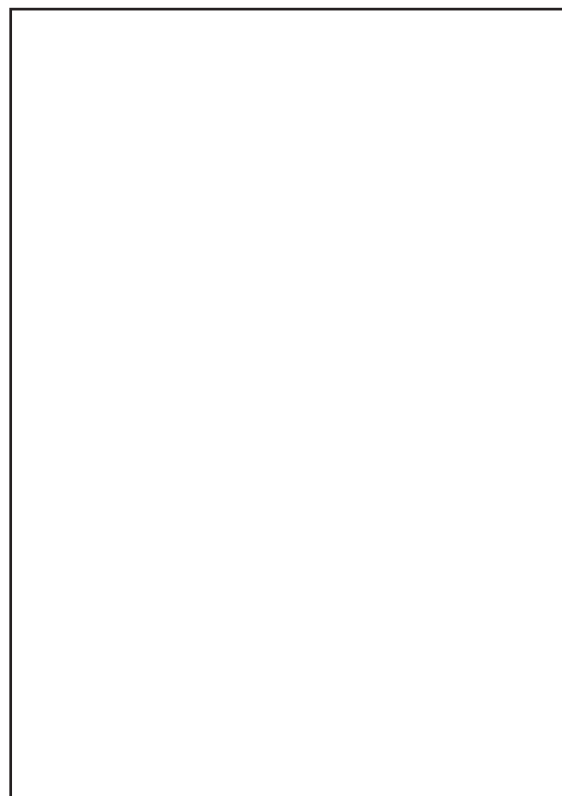


Fig. 1
Joan Arnold (née Bream) with her
Coronation Mug

On the occasion of the Queen's Silver Jubilee on 7 June 1977 Buckworth once again joined with the villages of Barham and Woolley. A special Jubilee service had been held in Barham church on the previous Sunday, but the day itself began with a Communion service held at 11 a.m. in All Saints' Church, Buckworth. In the afternoon the cricket club field was used for a children's fancy dress parade with prizes for the various age groups. This was followed by races of various kinds, including obstacle and running races. For the adults there was the egg and spoon race and a three-legged race among others. The highlights of the event would have been the knobbly-knee contest for the men, the

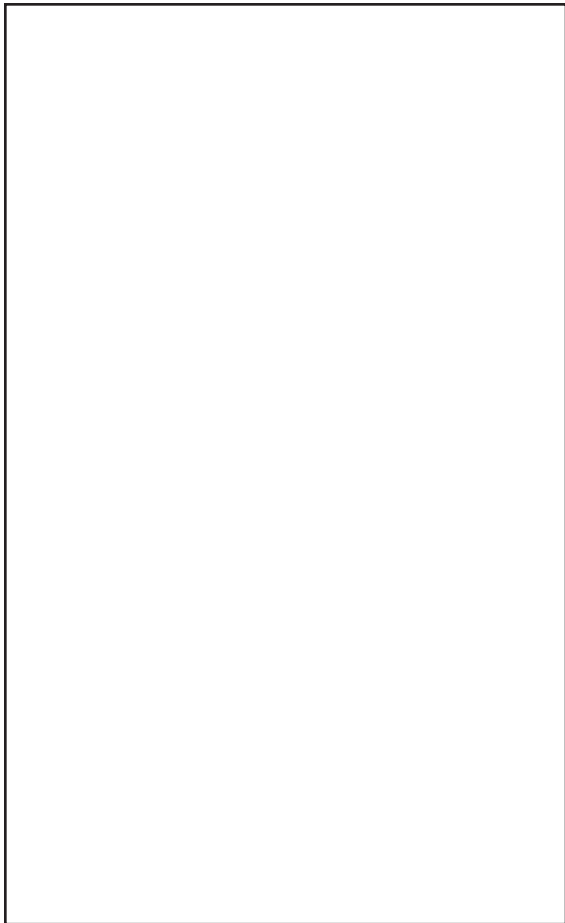


Fig. 6
Programme for Silver Jubilee, 7 June 1977



Fig. 7
Knobbly-knees competition at Silver Jubilee Party, 1977

nicest ankle contest for the ladies and the tug of war.

Side shows at the event included kill the rat, ball through the tyre, welly-throwing and guess the number of sweets. It is interesting to note that these games are still enjoyed at fetes and sports' days nowadays. At 4.30p.m. the day moved into the cricket club itself with the presentation of prizes, refreshments and a toast to the Queen. One suspects that the celebrations went on well into the night.

When the school closed in the late 1950s social events moved to the new cricket club building. Prior to the new clubhouse, the Fox and Hounds public house had been the headquarters for the cricket team, with matches being played at that time on the flat part of the field adjacent to Brook Lodge farmhouse. It must have been difficult for the teams to play on as there were valuable racehorses on the field in the week and the team were not allowed to fence off the pitch itself. The team was shattered by the announcement in October 1957 that the pub was to close but fortunately George Brown, a Buckworth farmer, came to the rescue with the offer of a building next to the

Fig. 8
Buckworth cricket club opening night, 1958



Manor House and the necessary materials to turn it into a clubhouse.

After much enthusiastic hard work by the cricket team and local people the clubhouse was ready for opening some five months later at an estimated cost of £500. It was at this time that the club moved its matches to a field behind the schoolhouse. Once again livestock proved troublesome as access was through a grass field where cattle grazed, but at least this time the pitch was fenced off. Unfortunately, spectators were inclined to leave the gate open! Shortly afterwards, the club were able to take a lease on part of the field directly behind the club building and the team played there until their demise in 1984 when the last match was played.

In spite of the moves in venues the Buckworth cricket team improved and flourished in the competitions in the 1970s and 1980s. Team members came from Alconbury, Leighton Bromswold, Hamerton and other nearby villages to complete the full eleven. Matches were played on summer evenings during the

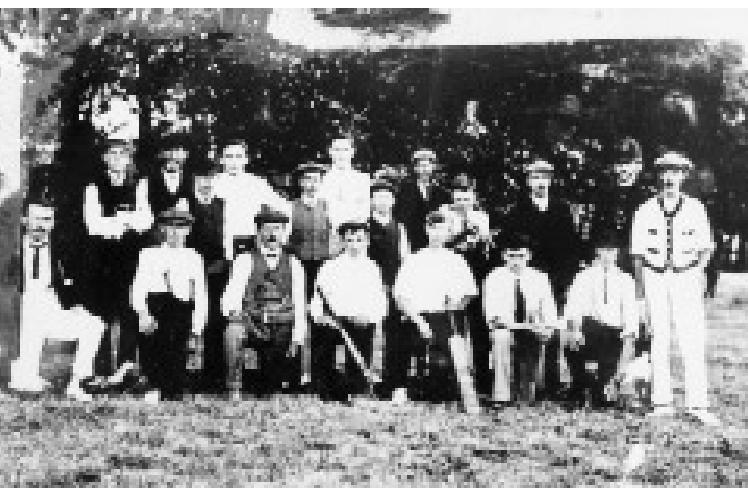


Fig. 9
Buckworth cricket team *circa* 1906

week as well as on Saturday afternoons. It was impossible to find a full eleven from those living in the village for all the league games as well as for cup knock-out competitions. Bream and Hubbard families supplied many of the players as well as the umpires. Buckworth Cricket Club played in the local Cranfield and Christmas Leagues

Fig. 10
Buckworth cricket team *circa* 1980, 3rd on left is Michael Bream, 4th left, Ray Hubbard.

and were entered in the Coote Cup, a knock-out competition for villages within the Huntingdonshire area with a population of less than 300. During this period the club ran a second eleven as well as the first team. After major successes in the Christmas League they were accepted into the Peterborough League, a significant move up the ladder. Ray Hubbard, who lived in the village, was selected to play for the Huntingdon County team, a feather in the cap for the Buckworth Cricket Club, as well as a great personal achievement.

On a few special occasions, Jack Nichols, who lived in the village but normally played for the county, played for Buckworth but he was unused to this type of rough pitch! Buckworth was the first village team to win the Jaidka Knock-Out Cup, a competition over two evenings. The Jaidka Cup involved such teams as the

Fig. 11
Headline from *Peterborough Advertiser*



Fig. 12
The Fox & Hounds public house
(photo courtesy of *Hunts Post*)

Peterborough businesses Baker Perkins and Brotherhood's. In the early 1980s, the Buckworth cricket club hit the headlines by winning the Jaidka Cup and retaining it for a second season.

Once Alconbury developed their Sports and Social Club the decline of Buckworth cricket club was inevitable as many of the Buckworth team came from Alconbury. The advantage of a level playing field and sight screens all enticed players to the Alconbury ground away from Buckworth.

When the old Fox and Hounds pub finally closed its doors in 1957, the seventeenth century building, the last remaining timber-framed, plastered and thatched residence to survive in the village, was bought by Mr Hindle from London who wished to convert and renovate it for

his family's use. Sadly the work was never completed as the building caught fire in 1958 and was totally destroyed. The cricket club was then established, as previously mentioned, and this has continued to function, despite the demise of the cricket team. Buckworth is unique in having such a facility and its fame extends well beyond the boundaries of Cambridgeshire. The 40th anniversary of the club's founding was celebrated by a party in 1998, when many 'old faces' returned to Buckworth to celebrate the event

A medieval fayre was held in 1987. This came about as a result of reading the board of incumbents and patrons in the church. King John had granted a charter to the village in 1215 allowing the village to hold a market or fair on certain days of the year. It was quite amazing, the whole village rallied round and put in some very hard work. A group of strolling minstrels and entertainers including a snake charmer was booked, the village was closed to through traffic and Alan Hatfield and Phil Cooper designed the most wonderful canopy which was erected over the road near the church. Stalls appeared in driveways including Buckworth Bloomers, Ellie's Emporium,

Fig. 13
Buckworth cricket club 40th anniversary party
(photo courtesy of *Hunts Post*)



Fig. 14
Alan Hatfield and Phil Cooper in medieval garb

Fig. 15
June Cheney and her sheep at the
medieval fayre



Fig. 16
Hubbard family at the medieval fayre

Fig. 17
Ella's Emporium, medieval fayre





Fig. 18
Tug of war, medieval fayre

Fig. 19
Procession of 'Lord and Lady de Buckworth'
with Mrs Llewelin's son



Fig. 20
View of medieval fayre from 'Fourwinds'

June's sheep on the grass around the telephone box and a soothsayer in the box! Pat and Paula organised wonderful children's games and the cricket club kept up the supply of drink and there was a wonderful raffle and tug of war. Hazel and Phil Cooper presided over the fayre (and the car parks) as Lord and Lady de Buckworth and everyone wore medieval dress. John Llewellyn (Mrs Lew's son) read a proclamation to start off the proceedings and away it went. The event was well advertised and well attended despite disappointing weather. The precaution had been taken of insuring the event against inclement weather, and when the rainfall was measured (in Wyton) there was sufficient for the policy to pay out, which more than made up for anyone who might have been put off by the weather! Among the strolling medieval mob, Barrie Brown of Fourwinds added a touch of the twentieth century by filming the event with a video recorder, the film is still in existence!

The church calendar also plays a part in the social life of the village. The Service of Lessons and Carols held before Christmas by candlelight and oil lamp with nativity scenes made by long-grown-up village children is most moving. It is also a social event with mince pies and wine being served afterwards and a chance to meet with people you only see once or twice a year. The harvest auction and harvest supper with food baked by various ladies in the village was a regular event, and whether you went to church or not you came and enjoyed the harvest supper served in the church. Both events died out for a while but in the last two years the auction has been very successfully reinstated with the traditional wheeling of the produce from the church to the cricket club and the traditional buying back of your own produce at inflated prices! The church garden party held in the summer in the gardens of Peacehaven and the Rowans is also very popular with both locals and people from outside the village.

Most village events could not run without the efforts of many willing helpers. For the Coronation the Parish Council records show the forming of a special tea sub-committee made up of local ladies. Food features greatly in village social events. Hazel Cooper remembers the importance of the catering when asked to do the cricket teas. The sandwiches had to be ham, with cheese from a particular shop, and the cake had to be a certain type too. However, the ladies since 1997 have been catered for with Ella's ladies lunch in aid of church funds. In 1980 a ladies group was established with regular monthly meetings moving from house to house mostly with guest speakers. The most hilarious example was the hypnotising of Becky Nessbach. It apparently turned into a very giggly occasion.

The need to raise funds for the restoration of the church led to the creation in 1990 of the now almost legendary musical evenings. These incorporated a picnic in the interval. Through Hazel Cooper's friend Judith Tinston, a member of the Manchester Chorale, a group of



Fig. 21
Picnic at the interval

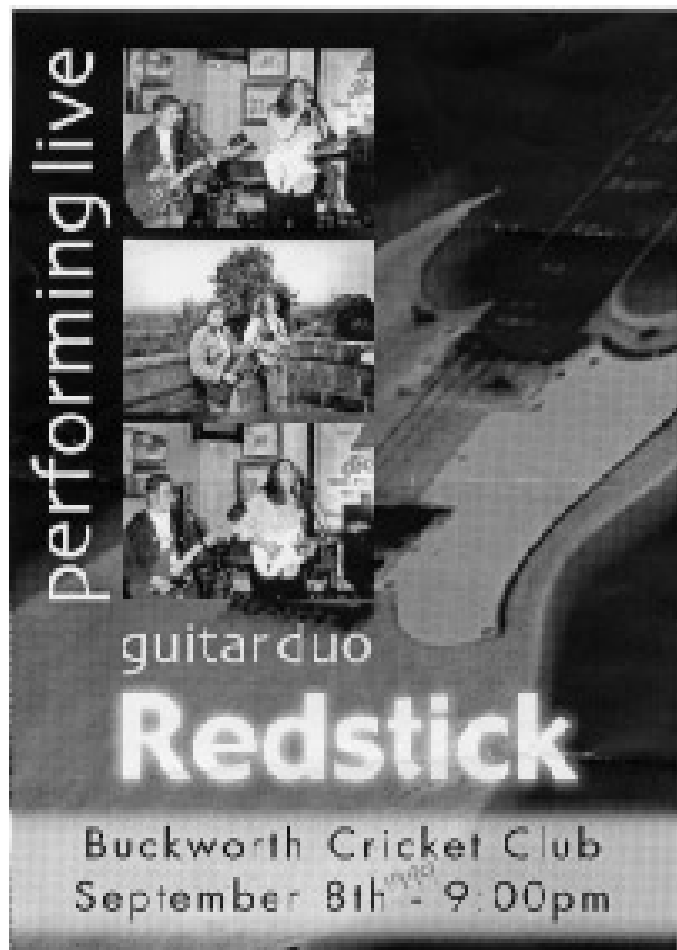
singers were booked for the first concert. Ella and helpers were to conjure up the most super picnics and serve them with champagne. Beds were arranged for the singers at any house willing to put them



Fig. 22
Judith Tinston and choir members

up and Hazel and Phil Cooper were to give them tea, with a party and barbecue after the concert. The singers called themselves Canzonetta. They came, sang and were wonderful. Each summer since then they have returned, although the group is now called Amici. For the millennium, a Last Night of the Proms finale was the theme of the evening and this was a tremendous success. The concert attracts visitors from all around the country and tickets are much sought after. The singers themselves fight for the privilege of being allowed to come to Buckworth and sing. Over the last ten years, £20,000 has been raised in this way for the church restoration fund.

Music of a different beat has also come to Buckworth with the introduction in 1999 of fortnightly rock music evenings at the cricket club and several highly successful gigs by the band Redstick, organised by Richard Farrar the group's guitarist. In July 2000, Richard dived into a swimming pool and dislocated his neck, paralysing him from the neck down. In order to help Richard and his family a fund was set



was stormy but 20 children had arrived by 9 o'clock, however John and Charlie Tilley were so wet they were sent home again! You can just imagine the miserable walk they had had to school only to be sent back out again. Over a foot of snow on 22 December 1938 made the roads impassable and only 7 children came to school out of 19. A period of bad weather followed right through to the January and the school Christmas party had to be postponed three times which must have been very disappointing for the children. A snowfall of 12 inches in 1940 meant only 6 out of 22 children were present, the thaw started by 5 February but there were still only 9 children at school. Such a rural school was obviously ruled by the weather and the amount of daylight but it does really look as if winters were colder in those days. The



Fig. 4
School 1928

Problems with health often caused attendances to drop and diseases such as scarlet fever, whooping cough and measles regularly caused the school to close. These have become relatively rare due to the advent of mass inoculations and antibiotics. Ringworm also caused absences.

On 21 April 1925 the school log book first mentions the inspection of the children's heads. Two families were found to be verminous and exclusion forms were sent to their parents. These children returned to school on 29 April, certainly improved but not yet absolutely cleaned. Some things remain constant in children's education and the head louse certainly is one of those. Headlice letters are still being sent out regularly from schools although children are no longer excluded because of them. In the 1930s and 1940s national improvements in health provision came to Buckworth. A dental inspection took place on 14 July 1933. Six parents also attended and the dentist later returned with his caravan to give treatment. Eye tests took place alongside the regular inspection of heads in 1934 and on 11 March 1940 there is the first mention of immunisation, for diphtheria.

Special events and regular rural occurrences also determined the pattern of school life and attendances. Most children were expected to help in the fields at important times of the year. The pattern of holidays for schoolchildren followed the agricultural year and this pattern exists



Fig. 3
School 1925

school itself must have been very cold and draughty. The school room roof was very high and the cold caused the school to close on 21 January 1945 as the temperature had only reached 45°F. Records show temperatures in the school room of as low as 38°F which must have been very uncomfortable. It is little wonder then that one of the children who attended school during the headmistressship of Mrs Oakes remembers her warming her behind on the stove while the children froze.

today, although children no longer have to help on the farms. The spring holidays would be used to help with muckcarting, the holiday at Whit for haymaking, harvest in the long summer break and time off in October for the potato-picking. The Fitzwilliam Hunt regularly came through Buckworth and Ted Mills who attended the school between 1934 and 1943 remembers skipping school to follow it. The fair at Alconbury which took place in late June of each year was another temptation to the children. There is still a fair in Alconbury at this time of year. The annual village vegetable and flower show took place in the school in late July or early August up until 1909. Dances were also held in the school room and after school on a Friday the boys cleared the room for the dance. Admission was 6*d.* for adults and 3*d.* for children.



Fig. 5
Ted Mills and relatives

In the 1920s first mention is made of holiday outings taking place. It is hard from a twenty-first-century vantage point to imagine the great excitement such a trip to the seaside must have engendered. The first trip was to Hunstanton on 12 July 1921 and trips seemed to have taken place regularly thereafter. Skegness was the resort visited in the 1930s. Ted remembers his trip there clearly. It was the first time he had seen the sea. More vividly, he remembers the African dancers at the end of the pier show with their spears and headdresses. When they came off into the audience at the end,

he was so terrified he ran away!

In school the character and presence of the headmistress was all important. The first headmistress was Kate Waterfield and according to HM Inspectors' reports from that time under her leadership the school was 'a pleasant little school. The discipline and tone are most praiseworthy. The written work is fair in the upper standards. Drill is smart and vigorous. English and Recitation of first and second standards and readings throughout are creditable. Infants, though fairly taught, must improve in spelling and arithmetic'.

In 1908 Mrs Oakes and her husband, as her assistant, took over the school. Mrs Oakes started with 43 children on the roll. In 1909, HM Inspectors' report states 'The scholars are in good order and the Upper Division at the school is in a fairly satisfactory state of efficiency but the condition of the Lower Division and the Infants Class leaves much to be desired. The instruction in this part of the school is characterised by great want of care, thoroughness and intelligence and the children are not being taught suitably to their age'. However, a year later Mrs Oakes would seem to have made much progress and the Inspector states 'the school has improved since it was last reported upon and its general condition may now be considered fairly satisfactory'. Mr Oakes was remembered as a very strict man who chewed tobacco and had a moustache and beard. Much delight was afforded to the children when the big brass rail from which hung the curtain dividing the school room, fell down on Mr Oakes cutting his head and causing him great pain. Even better for the children was the fact they were subsequently allowed the rest of the day off. Mr Oakes is noted as being absent from the school from May 1916, helping farmers out on the land due to a shortage of labour caused by the First World War. During Mrs Oakes's era, both boys and girls were taught needlework and darning, one boy recalling that this was the only school he went to where he had to learn patching and

darning. Mrs Oakes used to bring in her own mending for the children to tackle.

In 1922, Miss Hutchinson, who became



Fig. 6
School photo showing Mrs Seward (née Hutchinson) seated

Mrs Seward during her time at the school, took over. Ted Mills, remembering his first day at school, recalls how he kicked her in the shin in his attempt to run away from school. The door handle was too high for him to reach and after kicking her when she caught him, he received a caning. He never tried to run away again! HM Inspector was also impressed by Mrs Seward 'she is a vigorous worker, there is keener interest and more life in the pupils and the work reaches a higher level'. During her time, Hilda May Bream won a prize for art and needlework in the national Ovaltine competition out of a field of over 3,000 competitors. A 'clean hands' campaign was started by Mrs Seward in October 1933 supported by Lever Bros who provided the soap and books. The use of the wireless in lessons is mentioned for the first time during her tenure, for example, on Armistice Day 1932 the children listened to the bands of the Grenadier, Coldstream, Irish and Welsh bands playing special music and then observed the two-minute silence and joined in the service from the Cenotaph. The rest of the morning was spent in stories and talks concerning the Great War. The funeral service of King

George V was also listened to on 28 January 1936.

Mrs Cornell took over as head in 1936. She remembers her time in Buckworth vividly. On seeing the vacancy for the position in the *Hunts Post*, she cycled from St Ives to the village to see the rector, and after her appointment she came from St Ives daily, taking the train to Godmanchester from where she was driven to school by car. This continued until the rector was able to arrange for Mrs Cornell and her daughter, Penelope, to lodge with the Smithers at Holly Cottage, while the school house was being redecorated. Penelope remembers that it was quite a shock to leave St Ives and move into Buckworth where there was no electricity, a toilet outside in the back yard, and where water had to be collected from the well,

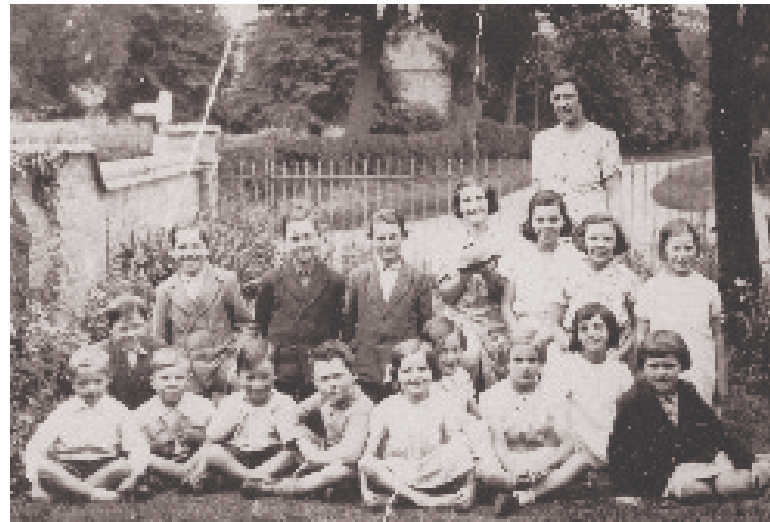


Fig. 7
School photo showing Mrs Cornell, daughter Penelope (second right) and Ted Mills (third left). Ted's sister, Iris, is holding the tortoise which leaked causing great hilarity and smiles all round.

even if it was very near to the house. Penelope and Ella Pentelow remember fondly the weekly sweet delivery from Spaldwick. An exciting diversion during afternoon lessons.

At that time there was an average attendance of 20 children at the school ranging in age from 5 to 13. On 29

September 1938, outside events impacted on the small school when a telegram was received instructing the school to close the next day to facilitate the reception of evacuee children and then reopen on the Monday. Mrs Cornell, as head teacher, was responsible for allocating the evacuees to homes in the village once the children arrived. She had to visit each house in the village to determine the number of rooms and assess how many children could be taken in. However, no children arrived at this time and it was not until a year later on 11 September 1939 that seven children were evacuated to the village. An additional responsibility of the headteacher was the issuing of identification cards with a particular number for each household and each member of it. Ella's number, which

during this year that the greatest number of evacuee children arrived. During the Whit holiday the school was opened specially to receive a further 20 children and the school roll increased from 19 in 1938 to 39 in 1940. By 29 May 1942 the evacuees had all returned to London but not before the school nurse had received complaints about



Fig. 8
Bridget and Elizabeth Cameron from Sidcup, Kent, were evacuees to Buckworth

she still remembers, was TFCG12/3, which indicated that she lived in the twelfth property in the village and that she was the third member of the family. Her mother bought her a bracelet and had the number engraved on it just in case she was lost. Ella, however, mislaid the bracelet in the garden of Home Farm the day after receiving it and no amount of searching unearthed it. Needless to say the bracelet was never replaced.

In 1940, Mrs Pentelow became headteacher of the school and thanks to the war she had an assistant to help her. It was

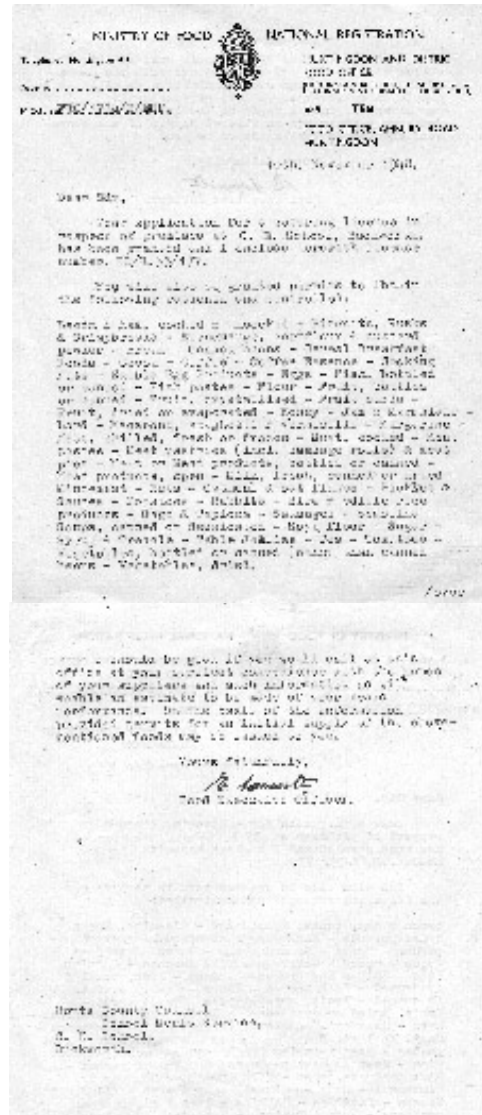


Fig. 9
Catering licence for school meals

certain of the children's heads. The advent of flying bombs over London brought another group of 10 unaccompanied children to the village along with an assistant teacher from Sidcup, Kent. To mark the end of the war in Europe the school was closed for two days, 8 and 9 May 1945 and on 28 May that year the assistant teacher returned to Kent.

Ted remembers these evacuees well, especially one little girl who cried and cried and could only be comforted by drinks of milk and lemonade. At that time Ted had a belt which looked like a snake. He thrust it, hissing, at one of the London boys who ran off into the field behind the church. Unfortunately, he fell into the ditch which was full of slime and when Ted went to apologise to the Brown family at the manor house, where the boy was lodging, he found Mrs Brown washing the boy. Instead of getting a clip round the ear from her when he told the story, it was the evacuee lad who

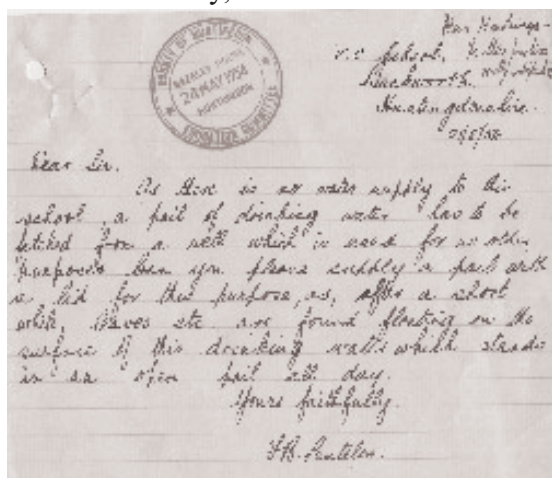


Fig. 10
Mrs Pentelow's request for a lid for bucket

was punished for being so stupid.

In 1948 the older children were transferred to Sawtry school at age 11. School meals were offered there, parents of the children remaining at Buckworth demanded school meals. As a result they became available at a cost of 5d. each. Each day the lunch for 10 was delivered from Sawtry and the children would go to the rectory to eat. Until that time the village children had returned home for their midday meal, while those from the outlying parishes brought something from home to eat. When the rector left the village and the rectory was sold meals were served in the school room. This made the room very smelly in the afternoon! Mrs Pentelow had to request from the Education Authorities a lid for the drinking water bucket as water from the school was still being drawn from the well. As there were no facilities for washing up the dirty dishes in school Mrs



Fig. 11
School photo 1948
From left to right, back row; Derek Bosworth, Reg Bream, Tony Risely, Freda Smith, Peter Rewel, unknown, Robin Drage, Geoffrey Hufford
Front row; Joan Bream, Maud Bosworth, Sheila Smith, Maritze Ibbott, Catherine Hurdle, Clarissa Bosworth, Dorothy Kauffman, Ginny Favell.

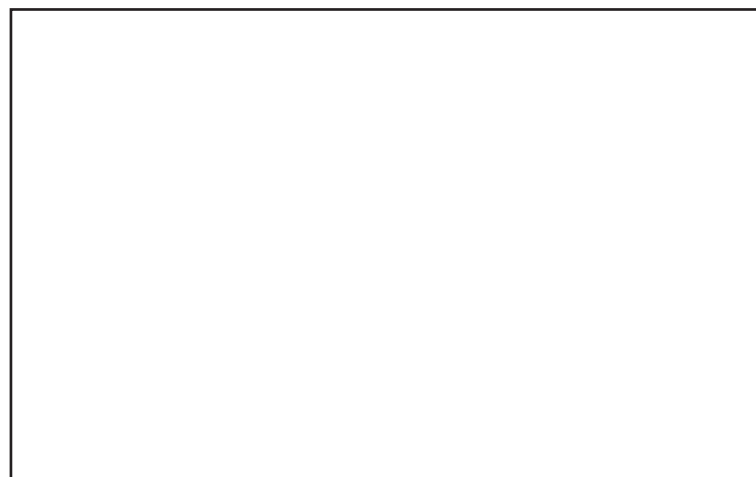


Fig. 12
School photo 1950s showing drinking water bucket (without lid) in corner
From left to right, back row; Unknown, Geoffrey Hufford, Reg Bream, Robin Drage, Clive Splewings, unknown
Middle row; Norma Hirst, Gilda Mash, Sheila Smith, Freda Smith, Maritze Ibbot, Pasquale Ibbot, Joan Bream, Lillian Hubbard
Front row; Keith Lalor, Sheila Drage, Mary Jolly, Ann Bream, Lawrence Ibbott.

Homes and Services

The shape and infrastructure of the village has changed quite considerably over the past 100 years. At the beginning of the century, as was usual in country areas, electricity, telephone and piped water were unknown. Lighting was by candle and paraffin lamps and the lamps are still used in the church today as the main source of lighting in winter months. While



Fig.1
Photo of oil lamps in church

this creates an evocative atmosphere, the resulting air is not conducive to good singing. Pylons carrying the overhead cables for the National Grid passed through the parish long before electricity was provided to the village. This did not occur until 1955 but suddenly, as well as light at the flick of a switch, items such as refrigerators, cookers, electric irons, vacuum cleaners and other household appliances gradually began to be purchased. Previously cooking had been done on coal ranges or with paraffin and calor gas stoves.

Water was not piped into the village until 1953. Before then people collected water for all uses from one of the three wells, supplemented by a rainwater tank which collected water from each house roof, this water was used mainly for washing. These wells were to be found outside the school on the site of the present bus shelter, at



Fig. 2
Iris Mills and friend collecting water with bucket

the front of what is now the garden of Khususi on Church Road and the Spring Well down the hill on Hamerton Road. Great excitement for the children was when a bucket was lost down the well, having become detached from its chain on the winding mechanism. Much effort was spent in retrieving it as each household had its own galvanised bucket. A replacement involved a journey to Huntingdon and extra expenditure on the household budget. Remember only a few people had their own transport at that time and although there was a weekly bus service, it was still a major expedition to go to town. Another source of excitement for the children was the appearance in the bucket of a stickleback. Now where did it come from?

One of the principal sources of water for the village was the spring down the hill

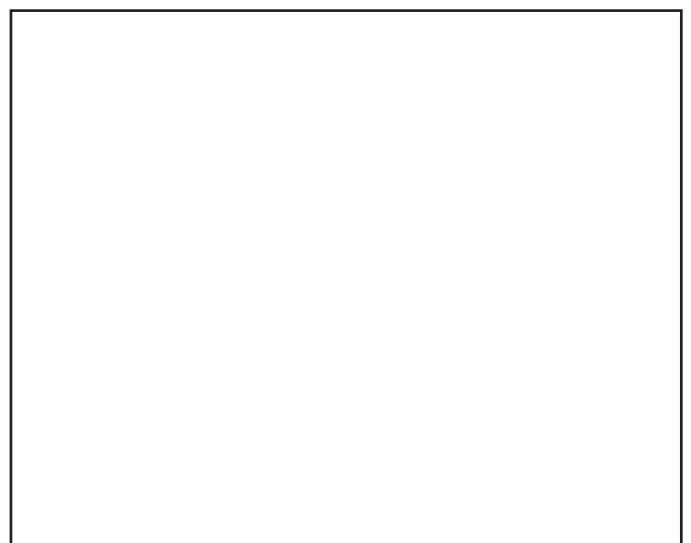


Fig.3
The Spring Well shed

in Hamerton Road. After the death of his wife Ellen Grey in 1908, the Rev. Mostyn expressed a wish to give something useful to the parish as a memorial to her. The people of the parish requested a pump and a covering for the well. A picturesque canopy, designed by Mr S. Inskipp Ladde, a Huntingdon architect, was unveiled in 1925, after a short service of dedication. The canopy is constructed on oak posts and covered with oak shingles. The construction is listed in the booklet *Huntingdonshire's Curiosities*. Although still in situ on the side of the road, sadly the canopy is now in a poor state of repair, despite several attempts to renovate the area. The oak windlass and well cover were removed when the Spring Well was no longer needed by the village after the laying of piped water.

As a result of the mains supply flush toilets could be installed, the waste water was discharged into newly built cesspits. The need for the night soil cart, provided by the local authority, slowly disappeared. In 1955 Parish Council minutes show that there were many problems with foul-smelling waste water lying in ditches throughout the village, this was only one of many such references. Mains drainage has still not arrived and households continue to arrange for their cesspits or the more modern septic tanks to be emptied.

Other household waste was disposed of by the people themselves, either by burning or burying it in the garden. Today's gardeners still find buried treasure, albeit old clay pipes and bottles!

The first mention of garbage collection in the Parish Council minutes is in March 1946, at the same meeting there were requests for a telephone kiosk and sub-post office. To begin with the rubbish was collected once a fortnight but over the years this evolved into the weekly collection we still have today. However, householders are now encouraged to recycle as much of their rubbish as possible, and as of December 2000 Buckworth has skips for the collection of glass and paper waste, situated behind the cricket club. Other household waste for

recycling has to be taken to the dump at Alconbury Weston.

The request in 1946 for a telephone in the village resulted in the siting of a kiosk on the corner of Church Road-Barham Road. The Parish Council had to ask for a grant of £20 from the Rural District Council in order to acquire the kiosk for the village. After prolonged negotiations and

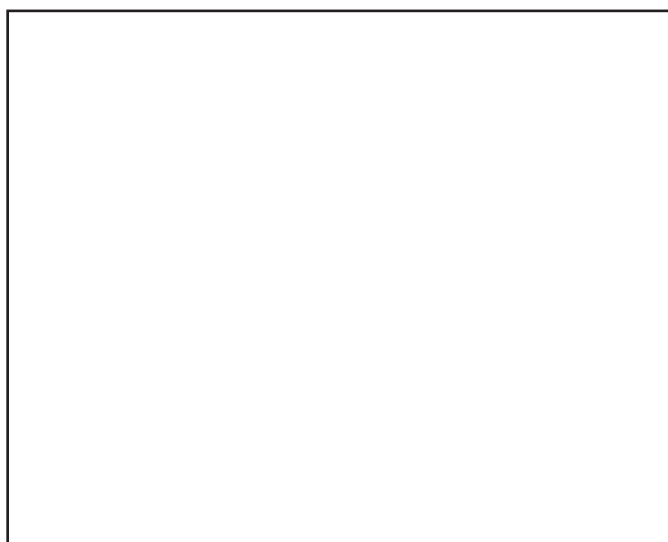


Fig. 4
Phone box on corner of Church Road-Barham Road

intervention by the local MP, Lord Renton, the cost was waived and the call box was operational in May 1947. We still have a red phone box. Buckworth is served by the automatic exchange at Woolley. This installation is still operational and has now moved into the digital age, although services such as ISDN are not yet available. Cable services are unlikely ever to reach the village. It is also unlikely that the mains gas supply will be brought into the village, even though the major pipeline lies within two miles and some nearby villages do have this service.

Requests from the villagers and the Parish Council, also supported by Lord Renton, resulted in the opening of a sub-post office in one of the thatched cottages in Hamerton Road, now the site of Fourwinds and Home Farm bungalow. It was run by Mrs Mills (Ted's mother) in her front room. Prior to this, if you did not have a stamp

for your letter, it was customary to put the appropriate money in a screw of paper along with the unstamped envelope. The village had long had a post box which was sited in a pillar on the boundary wall of what is now Redwood Lodge in Church Road. When the sub-post office opened, the pillar box was resited in Hamerton Road. In the 1950s, the post office along with its post box was moved to 3 Shafto Cottages in Barham Road where it was run by Mrs Atkins. After one more move to Capricorn Cottage and under the care of Mrs June Cheney, the post office finally closed its doors in the spring of 1998. However, the post box continues to be emptied twice daily although post is delivered just once a day.

Records suggest that the roads in the parish were not tarred until the early 1930s, prior to this they were probably cart tracks hardened with local stones, cobbles and brick rubble from the local brickyards, these being flattened by a steam-roller. When the roads needed attention, a gang would be formed of workers from nearby villages to do the work. Ralph Bream, who lived in Buckworth, was one of these workers. The boiling tar was thought a



Fig. 5
William Ray (son of Rebecca Ray) with horse and cart

good remedy against colds and children were sent out to smell the fumes. Any leftover chippings were used to cover the

churchyard path.

Public transport was non-existent in the early part of the century, people either walked to the town of Huntingdon or paid a token price for a lift on a cart going to market. It was not until the mid-1930s that a weekly bus service came through the village. The Saturday bus allowed people to go to the first showing at the cinema in Huntingdon. The bus arrived from Old Weston at 2.45p.m. and returned back in the village at 8.45p.m. There was even time to do some shopping as well.

Billy Allen was a carrier in the 1930s. He had a four-wheeled cart from which he sold fruit and vegetables, also buying up chickens on his round for a shilling. The children used to creep up behind to try to release the chickens from the cages on the back. They were never successful. In a cloud of feathers, he used to kill and pluck these birds on his way down the road.

Until the 1960s home deliveries arrived two or three times weekly, Three bakers came into the village, Old Weston, Alconbury Weston, Alconbury and Sawtry. One of these bakers delivered by horse and cart. Other deliveries were two butchers, one from Brampton and the other from Alconbury Weston, groceries also came from Alconbury Weston. Milk was bought directly from Home Farm until milk deliveries began in 1953 from Spaldwick. John Pentelow used to bottle the milk on the farm. The milk bottle tops were made of cardboard. The evacuee children who lived at the farm helped to deliver milk to Hamerton before starting school in the morning. Coal was and continues to be delivered in the village. Newspapers were delivered in the 1930s by Dan Dunmow on his old bike and sidecar, coat flapping in the wind, spooking the horses in the fields as he passed. Those working in the fields were always relieved when Dan had passed around 8a.m. and the milk lorry, rattling with churns, around 11a.m. When Dan gave up delivering the papers, Ted Mills used to pick up the papers from Corner Farm in Alconbury Weston in his school lunch hour

and deliver them. He was in trouble if he was late back to school and was rewarded for his efforts only by a few pennies from the customers when he collected the paper money on a Saturday. Miss Newman, who supplied the papers, did not pay him. Today only *The Villager*, a monthly free newspaper, is delivered. Local people make

and more houses in the village become connected to the Internet, this way of shopping will surely expand. Overnight courier services and other delivery vans are now very regular visitors to the village. They are often to be seen searching for houses, as, to this day, very few of the houses in Buckworth are numbered.

In today's world car ownership is the norm and many households own more than one vehicle. For most families driving is essential and learning to drive is a normal part of growing up.

There is still only one tarred footpath in the village, along part of Church Road, and people make their way at night by




Fig. 6
Mrs Ray (seated)

their own arrangements regarding the daily and Sunday newspapers.

Over the years, various people ran small shops from their front rooms in different cottages round the village. A Mrs Ray at one time ran a shop in a thatched cottage on the site of Fenhurst. She sold everything from paraffin to penny liquorice. She always wore a long full skirt with a white apron and had on her right side a large pocket hidden in its folds. She walked with a stoop leaning to this side and the children believed she kept all her money in this pocket which weighed her down.

Milk and juice are delivered four times a week from Spaldwick. A fish van comes on a Tuesday all the way from Grimsby and has done so for many years. Alongside coal, oil and calor gas are also delivered. Although we no longer require the night soil vehicle, all cesspits and septic tanks need regular emptying by 'Stan the man' and other of his ilk. Internet shopping is becoming more widespread with several food retailers offering this facility. As more

Farming

What a change Buckworth has seen over the centuries. Buckworth was once on the route from the north of England for driving farm animals to the London markets, there was a plentiful supply of water and grazing. Up until the end of the First World War, it would seem that all of the farming land in Buckworth belonged to one estate which interestingly has changed hands many times in the last 1,000 years. There is no one family associated long term with the village. It appears that the estate was not broken up until its sale by Lady Fox in 1918 and it is then that the manorial rights were lost.

The most dramatic changes to farming in Buckworth came in the twentieth century, especially during the 1939 - 45 war when Great Britain was to depend on home-grown food. Land which had previously been non-productive was cleared of scrubby blackthorn, ploughed and drained. The government dictated that farmers do this by paying subsidies. Fields on either side of the road towards Barham were particular examples where trees grew towards the road from either side creating a dark tunnel.

During the Second World War there were far more grass fields and animals grazing on them. Evacuees living in the village helped deliver bottled milk from Home Farm to the villages of Hamerton, Little Gidding and Steeple Gidding before attending school. The cows had been milked by hand, the milk cooled and bottled at the farm with no electricity supply and no piped water. Local people collected their milk in cans from the farmhouse door. The need for extra help on the land was answered by farmers requesting POW's to work. Two Italians were employed at Home Farm and lived there in a wooden gypsy-type caravan. Later on in the war, German POW's, who were housed on the outskirts of Sawtry, replaced the Italians. They were brought to Buckworth daily by lorry.

Ploughs and binders were horse drawn.

The first combine harvester in the village arrived in the 1940s packed in crates from America, probably on the lease-lend scheme. It was assembled on Home Farm lawn and put to use immediately, drawn and powered by tractor. Two people could now

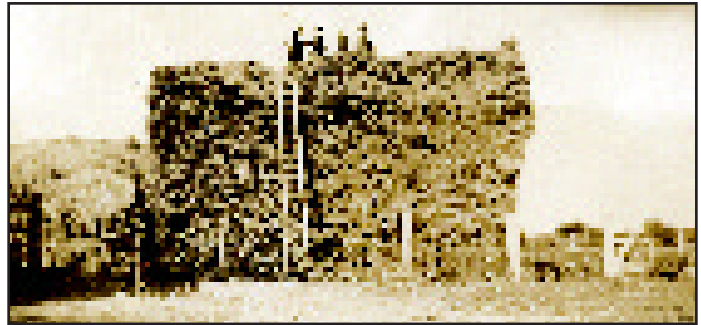


Fig. 1
A Corn stack, a familiar sight prior to the advent of the combine harvester

harvest the crop, one to drive the tractor and one to control the bagging of the grain, as the corn was threshed and bagged before being dropped on the field. The bags were

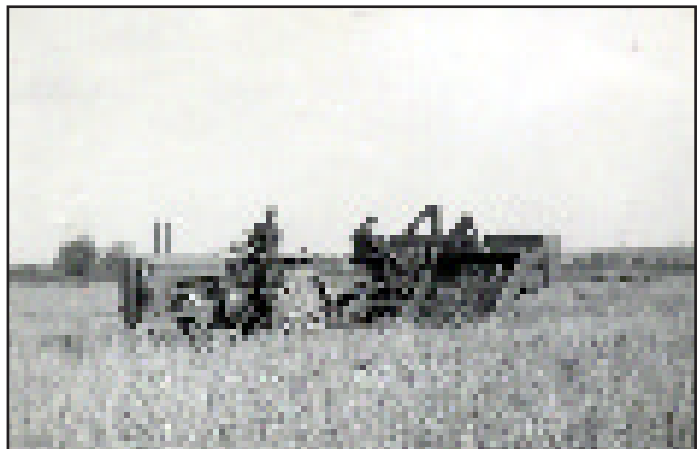


Fig. 2a
Combine harvester drawn by tractor in the early 1940s

collected on a trailer and taken to the farm buildings. The moisture content of the grain was critical at that time there were no moisture meters.

During the last 50 years the number of people employed on farms in the village has decreased dramatically because of technological advances. The number of farmers has decreased with the

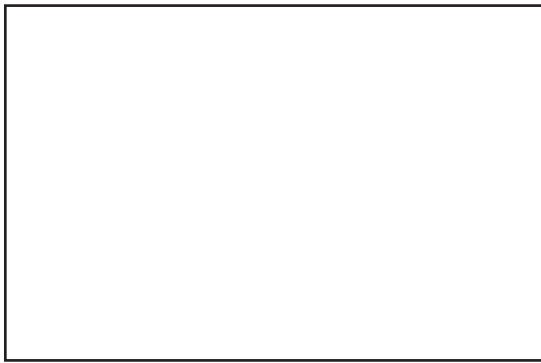


Fig. 2b
Pea Harvester, 1962

amalgamation of farms: the acreage per farm is much greater. At one time, Irish workers would arrive in spring to help with the labour-intensive work such as hoeing sugar beet, potato picking and pea growing. They returned to their families in Ireland in late autumn. These crops are no longer grown in Buckworth. As the soil is mainly heavy clay, the concentration has been on cereal crops together with oilseed rape, an innovation in the 1980s. As time has progressed the yield of grain per acre has gone from 30 cwt to in excess of 3 tons.

The loss of houses in the outlying parts of the village indicates the reduction of



Farm Figs 3-5
Modern harvesting on Home Farm

manpower required to run the farms. There were at least two houses in each of Black Lodge, Fuller's Lodge and Top Lodge. During the 1940s and 1950s all these homes were occupied by farmworkers and their families. At the end of the twentieth century, out of a population of approximately 104, less than 10 are employed directly on the land. As a result there are now many people living in the village who have little or no knowledge of the farming year. The Parish Council along with some of the local farmers have over the past 12 years, organised farm visits for people living in the village. Families have



enjoyed petting the calves and lambs, learning about beef production as well as the factors governing grain prices, and under strict supervision the children have explored modern-day tractors - a must for a small boy. For several people it was the first time they had



Farm Figs 6&7
Farm visit

been so close to a sheep or a cow!

There are now five farms within the parish of Buckworth: Home Farm, Manor Farm, Holly Lodge Farm, Brickyard Farm and Park Farm.

Home Farm

Home Farm has been farmed by Brian Whittaker in partnership with his brother since 1964. They also farm land in Northamptonshire, just on the borders with



Fig. 8
John Pentelow with horse at Home Farm

Cambridgeshire. Home Farm is based on cereals and oilseed rape. No animals are raised here.

The farm was run from 1932 by John Pentelow together with his father (known to the village children as Puff Pentelow), then by Geoffrey Haylock from 1952 to 1964. In



Fig. 9
Agricultural repair business on Hamerton Road

the 1930s an agricultural implement repair business was run at Home Farm by Arthur Pentelow, John's brother. It was based in the farm buildings but once the volume of work expanded, it was transferred to the bungalow, now the home of the Hennessys in Hamerton Road, where there was space to put up a garage, the bungalow was used as an office and stores. A few years later, after the Second World War the business vacated these premises and moved to Alconbury Hill. As well as mending tractors, ploughs and such like, the mechanics repaired Mrs Brentwood's tricycle. Mrs Brentwood was the publican's wife who lived at the Fox and Hounds opposite. The men had great fun testing the tricycle to check it was roadworthy after the repairs! Mrs Brentwood used the tricycle as a means of shopping in Alconbury Weston but it is doubtful if she ever got as far as Huntingdon on it.

Holly Lodge Farm

Holly Lodge is now the hub of several farms in the parish farmed by Richard Warrener and his son Geoffrey both of whom live there. These are Holly Lodge, Brook Lodge and Wood Farm. The majority of the land produces cereal crops with some oilseed rape and field beans, although there is a large herd of cattle centred on Brook Lodge Farm and a small flock of sheep at Holly Lodge itself.

Cattle have now become an important part of the farm's life, and as well as working with his father, Geoffrey is a marketing agent for a co-operative in East Anglia, covering 75 farms, all selling cattle to such companies as Marks & Spencers, McDonald's and Safeway. As a result of the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) crisis in the 1990s, which put many farmers out of business and gave rise to a change in the meat-buying habits of the nation, there was a huge change in the recording and tracking of cattle in the United Kingdom. While this has resulted in restricting the

illegal movement and sale of animals, a major benefit to the consumer and to the farmers has been the introduction of a bar coding system which ensures that meat bought over the counter can be traced back not only to the original farm but to one particular animal on that farm. Annual government inspections take place to ensure that the system is properly managed and adhered to and this ensures that Holly Lodge Farm is able to carry the label, 'Farm Assured'. Cows now calve on the farm and rather than the calves being sent to market to be fattened up elsewhere in the country, they now remain as part of the herd until they are sent for slaughter.

In 1931, Alice Nichols the daughter of Ralph Nichols from Brook Lodge Farm married William Rose of Holly Lodge. Will Rose farmed there until 1940 when ill health forced his retirement and they moved to Spaldwick. Gilbert Leach from Lincolnshire followed Will Rose. Gilbert's son, Peter, was a dress designer, among his commissions were coronation robes for local dignitaries. He also made an ill-fitting school dress for Ella Pentelow which she hated and refused to wear. The farm was then taken over by Robert Ayres and in 1949 William Warrener from Derbyshire moved to Buckworth with his wife Gladys, son Richard and daughter Elizabeth. Black Lodge Farm (off the Salome Wood Road), Brook Lodge Farm (at the crossroads to the north-east of the village) and Wood Farm

Fig. 10

Extract from *Hunts Post*



are all farmed by Richard and Geoffrey Warrener. Farm cottages were attached to each of these outlying farms. The two cottages at Black Lodge came to an untimely and dramatic end in 1975. Two ladies, tenants of the cottages, were moving a paraffin heater (already lit) down the stairs when it was dropped setting the houses on fire. They had to escape via an upstairs window. Caroline Topping escaped unhurt with her children, her sister, nine

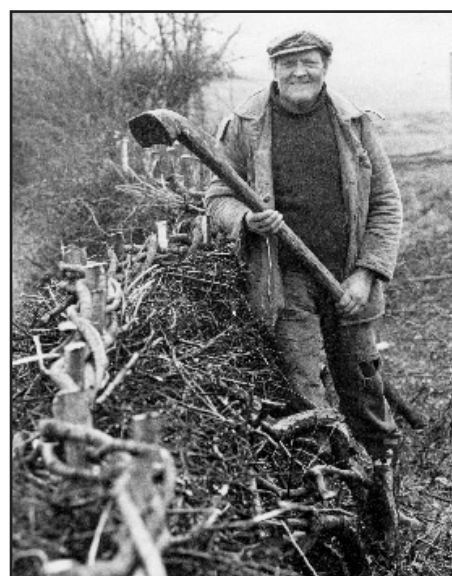


Fig. 11

George Buck hedging

months pregnant broke her pelvis in the fall but was safely delivered of a healthy baby one week later. The two houses were demolished as they were no longer required for farm workers. Some of the farm buildings still survive. The two thatched cottages on the site of Fenhurst on Barham Road, also belonged to Holly Lodge.

The Nichols family farmed Brook Lodge Farm prior to the Warrener family. Jack took over the farm from his father Ralph. Jack and Molly lived in the farmhouse which was adjacent to the existing farm buildings and very near to the Alconbury Weston Road. The large farmhouse was demolished around 1970 and Jack and Molly had a bungalow built alongside the garden. The hall in the original house was reputedly the length of a cricket pitch. Jack was a keen cricketer, Molly a keen hockey

player and both represented the county in their respective games. Two cottages near the farm belonged to Brook Lodge Farm and the farm shepherd and labourer lived there. These were sold to a private owner

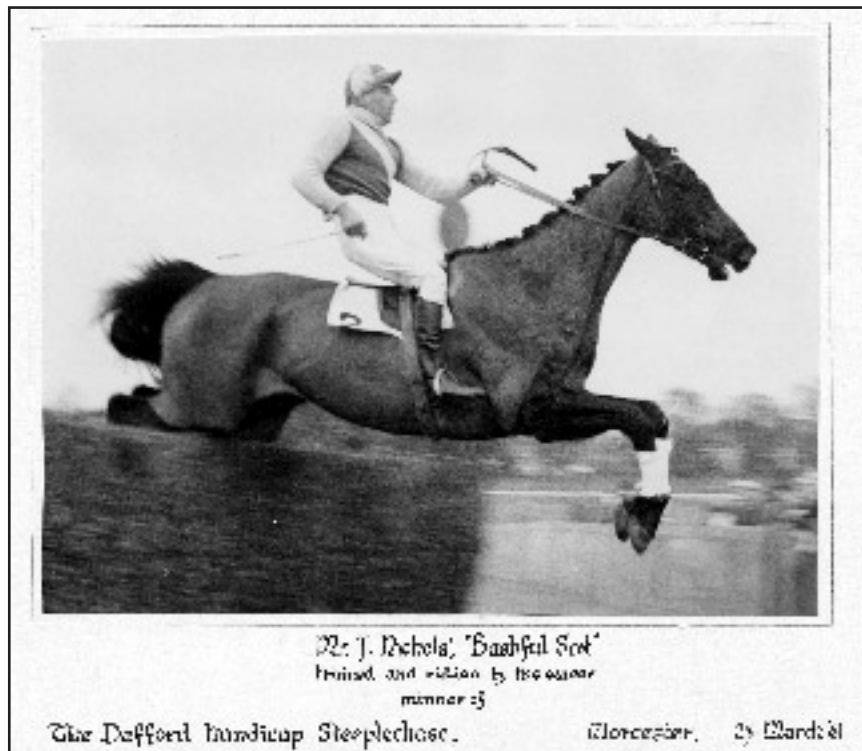


Fig. 12
Jack astride one of his winners

who converted them into one house, recently run as a bed and breakfast. Owl Cottage in the village also belonged to the farm. George Buck lived here, he was an expert hedge layer, a craft not often seen these days.

Jack Nichols was involved in national steeplechasing as well as farming. He inherited his love of horses from his father Ralph, a well-known owner and trainer of steeplechasers. Jack was a very able amateur jockey, riding many winners in the 1940s and 1950s. He was also a renowned trainer and his horses were often seen in the fields and lanes of the village. One of his horses, Flag of Convenience, which he bought in 1960 for 115 guineas, later went on to win the 1966 Grand National. The horse had been sold to Fred Winter and renamed Anglo. Jack's place in racing history is assured as he was the first jockey

to ride both the winners of the Foxhunter Chase at Liverpool, when it was run over the full Grand National course and the identically named race at Cheltenham, in the same year 1947. He often raced at Huntingdon racecourse and in 1955 received two members' passes and a car pass for the course.

George Slack, a well-known jockey who came to the area as a teenager from Cumbria, resided with Jack and Molly. Although a much sought after jockey he did not win his first race until 1947. In 1954 George initiated a series of Grand National rides which were to result in him finishing second on three occasions. On his retirement from racing, George became a farmer and moved to Gunby, Lincolnshire, although he continued his interest in racing by being licensed as a finishing judge.

It is noted in a copy of the *Hunts Post* of 1940 that executors of the late Mr W. Shelton sold Wood Farm to Jeremiah Innes of Stevenage for £800. The farm covered 94 acres with two cottages, pasture and woodlands. The



Fig. 13
Aluminium storage bins

cottages listed are now known as Holly Cottage and Clematis Cottage in Barham Road. From 1952, John Pentelow farmed Wood Farm which consisted of the original acreage plus land which surrounded the

rectory to create a viable farm. The rectory was used as the farmhouse, the last rector to live in the parish left in 1948. It is suggested that the original farmhouse for Wood Farm stood at the junction of Church Road and Barham Road on the triangular piece of land where the telephone kiosk now stands. The farm buildings for this farm were erected in the early 1950s and included a Nissen hut bought from Warboys

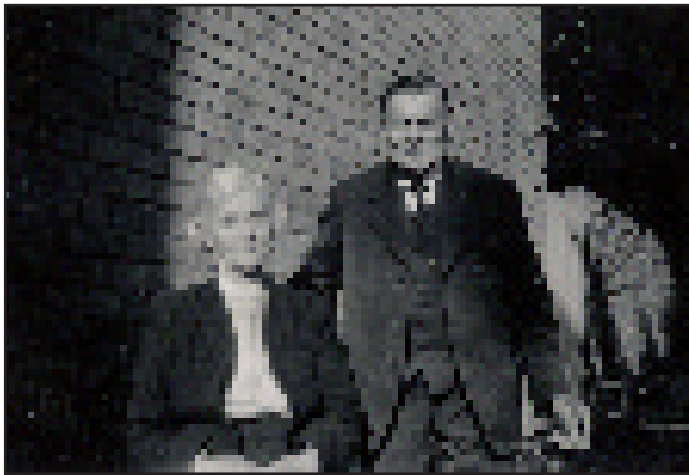


Fig. 14
George Brown Snr and wife

airfield and transferred to Buckworth. The three aluminium bins were put up in the 1960s as corn storage with a corn drier included. These buildings are situated alongside the brook at the bottom of the hill beyond the old rectory. On John Pentelow's retirement from farming in 1967, Richard Warrenner bought the land. The farmhouse was sold as a private residence, now known as the Old Rectory.

Manor Farm

We know that George Brown Senior, known as 'Gimp', was living at the manor house in the village in 1947 but at this time his son George was farming the land



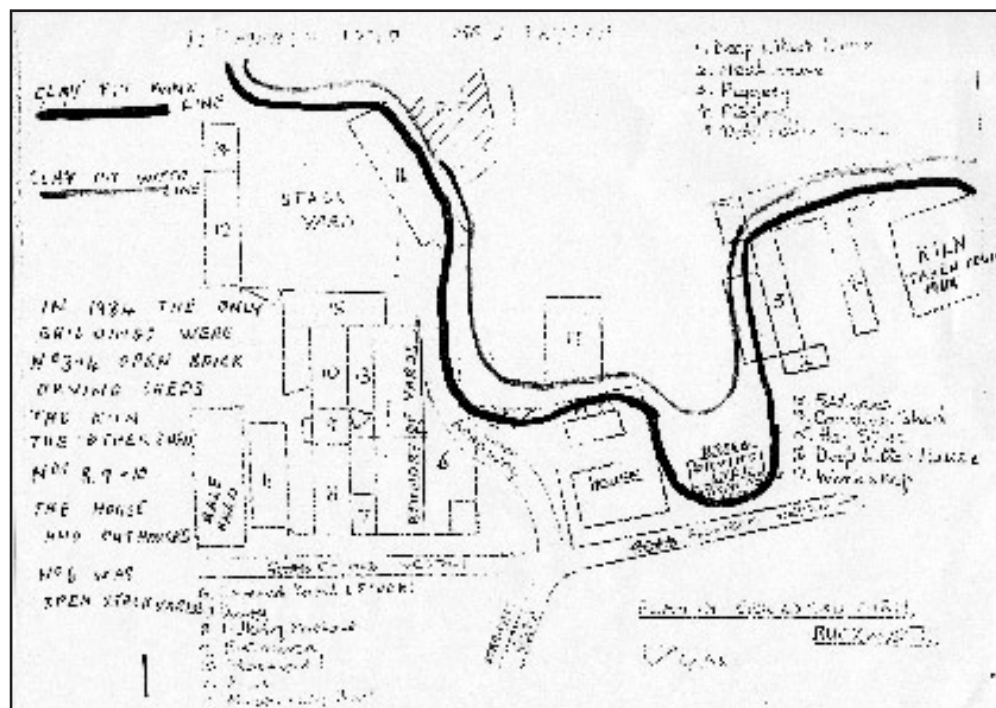
Fig. 15
Elm trees which bordered straight road leading to Brickyard Farm, pre 1964

but living at Park Farm. Laurie Brown took over Manor Farm together with other land in the adjoining parish of Woolley. Laurie and his wife had the thatched house, Manor Lodge on the Barham Road, built in 1958, many of the bricks and wooden beams being brought from disused farm buildings at Woolley. The house has since been sold away from the farmland. Manor Farm currently concentrates on cereal crops as well as oilseed rape and is farmed by Bill Turney from Alconbury. Several houses in the village belonged to Manor Farm but these have been sold and the owners are not connected with farming.

Brickyard Farm

In 1929, the brickyards which had been

Fig. 16
Map of Brickyard Farm



managed by Alf Drage closed down. The cottages on the site had been built in the late 1880s. In 1932, two out-of-work brothers, Arthur and George Taylor, rented the farm, which was all rough with high hawthorn hedges and clay pits, for the sum of half a crown (about 12p) per acre. Their partnership lasted until the war. During the war a land army girl called Mabel and a POW called Jim both worked on the farm. Cows were kept and the milk bottled and delivered round Buckworth and Barham. Arthur Taylor went around the local villages with a wind-up gramophone, amplifier and speaker providing music for dancing. Arthur bought the farm in 1946 and in the 1950s the old brick drying sheds were made into pig sties, poultry houses and a workshop. Apart from 1966, when the grazing was let for a year when the family went to New Zealand, the farm remained with the Taylors until it was sold along with its dairy herd to Jack Nichols in 1971. The farm was sold again to the Warreners in the early 1980s and later again to Brian Baker at the end of the decade. Brian Baker has 60 acres of arable land and a small flock of sheep and single suckler cattle, fed on grass which is brought from other farms out of



Fig. 17
Buckworth footpaths in use

the village which Brian also farms. There is a new house under construction, the original two cottages having been converted and sold. The old brick pits were filled in with the clay from excavation work for the Alconbury bypass, when the A1 was transferred from the west to the east side of Alconbury village.

The Rights of Way Network

In 1990 the Parish Council applied for



Fig. 18
Presentation of 1993 Rights of Way Award

and received a small grant to be spent on the parish's footpaths and bridleways. It was then realised that the £135 received would not go far on the 13½ miles of rights of way in the parish when at that time only 100 yards were usable. It was decided to make a major renovation of the network and with the help and funds of the County Council and the co-operation of local farmers, the footpaths and bridleways of Buckworth were brought back into use.

New bridges were built and culverts

Buckworth Church, dedicated to All Saints.

A landmark visible for miles around, its spire one of the highest in the county, Buckworth church is mentioned in the



Fig. 1
Buckworth church from fields

Domesday Book. The earliest parts now visible are the eastern external angles of what would have been the original aisle less nave. These are Norman work of the twelfth century. The one at the north-east angle is more complete.

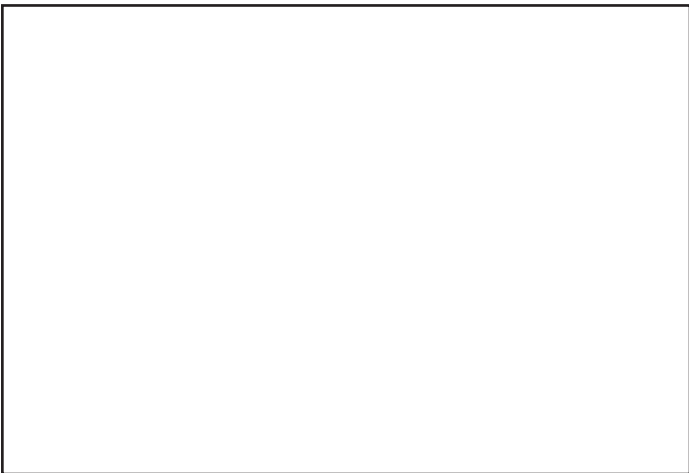


Fig. 2
Buckworth church in 1926

Major work took place around 1300 when the aisles were constructed. The south aisle was the earlier with round pillars dating from the end of the thirteenth century. The north aisle with octagonal

pillars is a few years later. The chancel was rebuilt at about the same time.

About 1490 many changes were made to the Church. The south aisle was rebuilt, the porch added and an upper storey was erected over the existing aisles giving more light to the nave. A blocked door next to the organ led to a now demolished vestry and the south door remains from this time. The east window of the chancel is described as new in 1851.

The church was restored in 1862 when the roof was rebuilt.

The three windows facing east have Victorian stained glass in them. All the windows are memorials to the Duncombe Shafto family. Wall plaques of other members of the family can be seen together with war memorial tablets for the Boer War and Great War (1914-18) Perhaps the thing that will most impress visitors is the tribute to a father and his sons. He was Walter Yeatherd who fell fighting for his country at the relief of Ladysmith and left two boys behind who fell fighting for the country in the First World War in France. There is also a memorial erected by the parishioners of Buckworth to those who died in the First World War. Buckworth luckily suffered no fatalities during the Second World War.



Fig. 3
Spire being repaired after lightning strike in 1926

The spire was restored in 1884, the tower in 1908 and the spire again needed repairs after being struck by lightning in 1925 and the early 1950s. A lightning conductor is now in place.

There are five church bells which were rehung in 1885.

In the 1980s the interior plaster was repaired together with the chancel roof. During the 1990s the lead on the major expanse of the roof was replaced and 2001 will see the repair of the tower plaster.

Lighting is mainly by oil lamps but the chancel is now lit by a minimal number of electric lights discreetly hidden by the roof structures. Currently no heating exists in the church, the coke stoves have been removed having last been used in the 1940s

In 1944, the church records show that R. Bream was paid £2 per year for the lighting of the stove and the organ blower £2 per year for his services. An electric organ was purchased in the 1980s as the pipe organ was rendered unusable when the chancel roof was damaged in 1984 by wind and rain pouring in. This was soon after Jim Groom and Richard Cheshire had spent many hours renovating the pipe organ. In the days when the pipe organ was in going order, each Sunday Jo Hubbard pumped the organ, a weight on a string at the side of the organ indicated when there was sufficient air for the music to be played.

In 2000 the current pattern of services is:

First Sunday in the month
Evening Prayer at 6p.m. using the Prayer Book form of service.

Second Sunday in the month -
Family Service at 11a.m.

Fourth Sunday in the month -
Holy Communion at 11a.m. using the Alternative Service Book.

In 1982 the Series 3 form of service was introduced. Rite A superseded this form in 1997 and discussions are currently under way as to which course will follow from

2001.

Fund-raising appears as a major item throughout the minutes of meetings recorded in the record book started in 1943. Whist drives, barbecues, lawn-mower racing and garden fetes have all featured.



Fig. 4
John Burrows and Alan Hatfield repairing the church roof after gales

Bowling for a pig raised £7 at the 1946 fete. The pig was won by the village policeman's wife. Sponsored walks and a medieval fayre took place in the village in the 1980s. Then in 1990 the annual concerts in aid of church funds began their 10-year run; friends from Manchester have used their talent and enthusiasm to support Buckworth church. It remains to be seen what the millennium trend for fund-raising will be. Local people, as well as fund-raising, have



Fig. 5
Alan Hatfield and Phil Cooper mending lawnmower

given generously of their time maintaining the fabric of the church. The church is now very welcoming with flower arrangements and hassocks stitched and given by Mrs Llewellyn (the village's oldest resident). The churchyard is also well tended.

There are no actual records for church attendance but numbers have gradually increased recently, partly due to new church members from the Bream Close houses (completed in 1999) and also from church members in Alconbury and Great and Little Stukeley. The group of four churches were under the leadership of the Reverend Geoffrey Dobson until December 2000. The last rector to live in the parish was the Reverend T.V. Hurdle. Since that time Buckworth church has been linked with Alconbury, the rector living in the vicarage there. The average number of communicants is 7, the number attending services is 12, these figures being for January to August 2000. The millennium was marked in the parishes by a walk between the four parishes on the last day of the twentieth century starting at Great Stukeley, calling in at Little Stukeley, Alconbury, Oakleigh Home in Alconbury Weston and finishing at Buckworth. It had been hoped that we would see the sun set in the west but it was a grey misty afternoon. On the first Sunday of the new millennium the walk began at Buckworth early in the morning with a short service. Whistles were blown and a drum roll by Jamie Morrison heralded the new millennium. This time the walk set off towards the east. At each church part of the Eucharist was celebrated, the service was completed at Great Stukeley.

Church registers for baptisms, marriages and burials started in the mid-nineteenth century and are still in use. In the nineteenth century, occasional signatures are replaced by X (his cross or mark). Interestingly, such entries have not been made since the beginning of the twentieth century. Records make interesting reading

The First and Second World Wars

We do not know how many men from the parish of Buckworth joined up during the first World War. However, a war memorial in the church records that George Cobley died at Vinny Ridge in 1917 and, in the same year, George Coles died at Ypres and Sydney Read died at Agnez. Another memorial tablet is dedicated to members of the Yeatherd family, who farmed Holly Lodge, and marks the deaths of Montagu Locke Yeatherd in 1917 at Arras and Raymond Gilbert Yeatherd in the Battle of the Somme in 1916. Five young men from a tiny village in Huntingdonshire lost their lives in France. We can only guess at the impact on such a small community of this loss.

There is no mention of the war in the Parish Council records. There is very little recorded in the school log book. One can infer from the school log book that when Mr Oakes on 17 April 1916 is noted as being 'absent helping a farmer out of a difficulty owing to a shortage of labour' that this is due to the war. Mrs Oakes subsequently notes on the 2 May 1916 that 'Mr Oakes at the suggestion of the Education Authority is to go to agricultural work'. A half-day closure is recorded on 24 January 1918 in order to clear the school after a social event had been held for the benefit of soldier parishioners. Later in that year, the school has to close on 14 October 1918 because of the impossibility of obtaining coal. There is no mention of the ending of the war.

Buckworth suffered no fatalities during the Second World War, as nobody from the village was in the services, agriculture being an essential occupation. Len Bream, from the village originally, who had been living in Luton, did however join the Royal Marines in 1939 and merited a mention in the *Hunts Post*. His father, Harry, worked at Brook Lodge Farm for Jack Nichols and

Len had been brought up in Buckworth.

There was, however, a detachment of the Home Guard in Buckworth. The *Hunts Post* of 9 December 1943 records that Eric Drage, a Buckworth tractor driver was fined £7 for failing to comply with a directive to join the Home Guard. Jack Nichols was a sergeant in the Guard, Arthur Pentelow a Special Constable and John Pentelow an Air Raid Warden.

The war did impact on Buckworth directly when, on 16 April 1942 at 00.47, British aircraft, returning to base, jettisoned five land mines near Brook Lodge Farm. Four exploded causing some damage to farm buildings, the rectory and the schoolhouse but there were no casualties. Ella Pentelow remembers as a child of eight, the night she was woken by shattering glass in her parents' bedroom in the Schoolhouse. She jumped out of bed and ran into her parents' room where her mother was cross with her for not putting on her slippers, to protect her feet from the broken glass. The fifth bomb was detonated the following day, when the villagers were advised to open all their windows to lessen

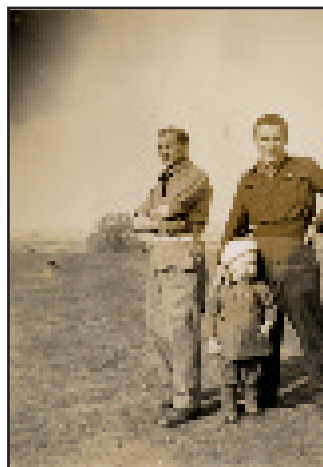


Fig. 1
Italian POWs

the effect of the blast. Shirley Elsdon, née Powers remembers the crashing of an enemy plane in a field by Fuller's Lodge, the uninjured pilot was quickly taken away by the military police.

Prisoners of war were present in the village to help farmers on the land. Two



Fig. 2
Italian POW, Gioacchino
di Stefano

Italians were employed at Home Farm and lived there in a wooden gypsy-type caravan. Later on in the war, German POW's, who were brought to Buckworth daily by lorry from Sawtry replaced the Italians. While the Italians appeared to have had no restrictions placed upon them, the Germans were under constant supervision.

Land Army girls also helped on the land. There was a hostel for them at Woolley and at Yaxley. The parish records show the marriage in March 1945 of Rachel Bruce,

A Bream Remembers memories of a Buckworth childhood.

by Joan Arnold née Bream

The Bream family first came to Buckworth when my grandfather Charles decided to leave his home in nearby Woolley, proclaiming he was off to see the world. However, he only got as far as Buckworth and there he remained, the next 100 years of Breams living in Buckworth had begun.

I was the third of five children born to Albert (better known as Boxer) and Grace Bream and was born in April 1943 at Top Lodge cottages.

In April 1948, I started school. Mrs Pentelow was the teacher and she insisted that all the children learn their tables up to 12, forwards, backwards and even and odd, something I can still do today. She encouraged us to learn about wild flowers and to get us really interested she said, 'The first child to put the latest bloom on my desk in the mornings will get a mark and at the end of term, the one with the most marks will receive a prize.' The race was on, all the children were determined to get that prize. What a rush it was to get to school first and Mrs Pentelow could proudly say, 'My children are never late for school.'

As we had no mains water, the well on school corner or the spring down Jack Nichols's hill kept everyone supplied with water. As I grew older, I was allowed to go to the well. You had to tie the bucket on the hook, something I was not very good at, which resulted in me seeing the bucket fall off just as I got it full. Off I would go to Evelyn and Harold Bream's house to borrow the creepers to find it. Usually, I would find everyone else's bucket before mine.

To help at home, I used to take a sack around the hedgerows and trees to gather wood. This was used to burn under the copper to heat our water for washing

clothes and our weekly bath in front of the fire, what a treat that was!

My dad worked for Mr Brown on the farm and he kept cows for milk. These were milked at Park Farm. My dad used to bring our milk home but at harvest time my eldest brother and sister with me tagging along fetched it. When I was eight, they were both at work so it was my job. Over the field I would go, it was the shortest way, hoping I would be in time to see them milking the cows. With my tin can full of lovely warm milk, I would make my way home, hoping that the last gate, one field from home, which I had to climb over because it was locked, would be negotiated without me spilling the milk.

Mum and dad kept hens and one cockerel in a run in the garden, so we always had lovely fresh eggs. They reared their own chicks to keep up the stock. I loved feeding them and collecting the eggs until one year the cockerel took an instant dislike to me. As soon as I appeared in the run, it would chase me and peck me and try to escape out of the gate. It was me against the cockerel, no way was he going to escape but I did wonder if he knew he was going to be my next Christmas dinner.

Farm workers' wages were very low, so most weekends my dad would go off with the dog and ferrets to catch rabbits to feed us all, we never realised that most days we ate rabbit. On Sunday night, my dad would sort them out, the ones the ferrets had damaged too much were ours and the good ones (my mum used to sit sewing some together to make them look perfect) were sold to the butcher.

All the children would meet on the school corner to play. Springtime was spent picking violets, hunting for bird's nests or walking to Buckworth Wood for the primroses, bluebells and the few rare wild orchids that grew there. In the summer we would play tip bat and run and hopscotch on the school corner, hide and seek in the field by the church or go fishing in the pond at the back of the manor for newts. One year we made a tree house in a willow

tree by the brook, down Allotment Lane. Of course, at times we were naughty and mischievous. We were very lucky to be able to play in all the grass fields around Buckworth but Mr Pentelow Snr banned us from playing in the pond at the back of the school which dried up in summer. We would sneak up by the school wall to get there. Once there, we would keep an eye out for him, out of the back school gate he would appear with his walking stick. He was rather old and short of breath, so we would wait until he was nearly up to us and then off we would run shouting, 'Grandfather Puff our nickname for him can't catch us.' We would round up the sheep to one corner of the field and try to ride them, luckily we were never caught doing this.

September was a busy month for us, no time to get into mischief to the relief of our parents. We were all raiding the hedges for blackberries so our mums could make jam and bottle them in Kilner jars for use in winter. At the end of September came our next challenge: to scrump the apples, especially the ones from Mr Smithers's garden in Holly Tree House. They were the sweetest apples in Buckworth. One day he caught us red-handed at the tree, we thought he had gone out. He took the apples off us and gave us a clip round the ear and then we watched him pick the rest off the tree. We decided he should be punished and put our plan together, we waited our chance, he drew the curtains, now was the time. He had a radio with a wire and conductor outside to get a signal. We crept into his garden and cut the wire with my dad's wire cutters and stole the conductor: no apples for us, no conductor for Mr Smithers was our motto. We were never caught for doing this. About a week later we returned the conductor, we left it on his front doorstep.

Another big day was the Coronation. We now had mains water and electricity but only one or two families had the luxury of a television. Mr and Mrs Pentelow invited the children to watch it at their house. We

sat there our eyes glued to the screen, to us it was magic. After dinner we had a street party. There was fancy dress for the children, which was won by Norma Hurst as a weather girl. Every child was given a Coronation mug and spoon which to this day I treasure.

Every family grew their own vegetables either at home or on the allotments. Everyone would try to grow the best. One lad called Tony Allen said to my dad, 'Boxer, next year say you can grow the tallest runner beans'. 'But how,' asked my dad. 'Plant them round the telegraph pole,' he replied. Dad put out the challenge, of course he won easily as he was the only one with a telegraph pole in his garden. His win was tinged with sadness as Tony was killed in a tank accident in the army and never saw the result of his idea. He was only 23 years old.

Another time when my dad was having a pint he told everyone he had peas in flower. It was early springtime and they said, 'Impossible Boxer.' 'Bet you a pint,' said my crafty dad. 'I will bring them to show you tomorrow.' The next morning dad began his job of producing peas in flower. 'Easy free pint this.' He laughed as he went off for his pint. When he walked in everyone said, 'Come on Boxer, where are the peas in flower?' Putting his hand in his pocket, he took out a jam jar containing dried peas in flour and said, 'Peas in flour.' Everyone saw the funny side of his trick and agreed they owed him a pint. Boxer and his friends played many tricks in the village when they were younger. At night they would swap over gates, putting black gates on white fences and vice versa. They would climb the pub sign and tie bikes to it. One night they took the landlord's duck home and returned it the next day saying they had found it in Church Road. He was very relieved as he had found the gate open and thought a fox had taken it.

Cricket was the sport of Buckworth. My dad played for 30 years. They first played in the field down Jack Nichols's hill, then they moved to the field behind the school

house along with the cows which made the outfield rather messy. Mr Pentelow owned the field and the only condition he made was that no vehicles were allowed in the field without his permission. One hot summer the pitch was very dry and cracking, my dad borrowed a tractor and water tank to water the pitch. He went through the gate and watered the pitch. When he arrived back at the gate, he could not believe his eyes, there was a lock and chain on it. With no way to get out, he knew he had to go to Mr Pentelow's house. He went very sheepishly, knowing he was in the wrong for not asking first. He was greeted by Mr Pentelow with the words, 'Hello, Boxer, can I help you?' Dad asked if he could let him out of the field, to which he replied, 'Boxer, you did not ask to go in but I knew you would have to ask to get out. In future, it will be locked so you will have to get the key from me, that way you won't forget to ask.' For once it was not my dad laughing, it was Mr Pentelow.

When I was 14, we were short of bellringers at the church, they could only be chimed. Joan Hesling and myself decided to give it a go. One night a week we would practise, myself chiming three bells (one in each hand and one with my foot). Joan chiming four and five as they were the heavy ones. A few weeks later we had got it to perfection, then we had an idea, maybe we could chime a hymn on them. Several weeks later, much to the villagers relief, we could chime 'Now the day is over'.

All the villagers were shocked when it was announced that the Fox and Hounds was closing. Where would the cricketers have their tea, the children buy their sweets but most important the men drink their pints? Mr George Brown came up with an idea. His building next to the manor house in which he had kept animals was not being used any more, maybe they could convert it into a club. Everyone agreed it was a good idea but how could they do it? The cricket club had a few pounds but that was not enough. Do all the work ourselves and only buy anything we can't cadge was

the answer! After many hours of sweat and problems, the goal was achieved: a clubhouse everyone was proud of and they all agreed to call it Buckworth Cricket Club. Thoughts turned to the grand opening. They had a club complete with bar but no stock and worst of all no money to buy any. On hands and knees they approached Hunter and Oliver who delivered beer from Huntingdon and explained their case. Very impressed with what they had achieved, they agreed to stock the bar and be paid at a later date. The final hurdle had been jumped. At the opening Mr George Brown gave the building to the village; without his idea

Memories of a Village Policeman

by Walter Hurst (born 28.2.20)

I joined Huntingdon Constabulary in March 1947 and with my wife Doreen and daughter Norma moved to Buckworth at the end of July 1947 as rural policeman. I believe I was the first policeman to have a permanent residence in the village.

We occupied 3 Shafto Cottages, one of six new semi-detached houses built by Huntingdon Rural District Council (HRDC). The houses were built to accept mains water and electricity but at that time neither had reached the village. Lighting was by paraffin lamps and water for general use was from a large communal tank supplied by the HRDC. Drinking water was collected as required from the well at the side of the village school.

Norma attended the village school from the age of five until we moved. All the children loved going to school and the teacher's word was final.

The population of the village did not vary a great deal and I recall that when a tea was arranged to celebrate the present Queen's Coronation in 1953, it was for exactly 100. We had several whist drives and other events to raise money for the spread and I was honoured to be the secretary. I think someone must have said that I had a biro and could write.

There was a resident rector, he and his family residing at the rectory, later to become Wood Farm. Each year a summer garden party was held in the grounds to raise funds for the church.

It was quite an event because one year my wife won the 'bowling for a pig'! We duly took delivery of the small animal keeping it in a sty, one of the outbuildings now the cricket club, at Manor Farm. It was well fed and grew to a large size. At the time my mother-in-law came to stay the pig was taken to Alconbury Weston for

slaughter. Mother turned the meat into pork pies, haslet, etc., and the legs and back were salted for hams and bacon. These were hung in the wash house at no.5.

There was a small post office in the front room of a cottage although this was later transferred to 3 Shafto Cottages. Mail was delivered by the GPO and the post box outside was cleared at the same time. The butcher delivered orders for meat on Tuesdays and Fridays and the baker came twice weekly, at first someone from Old Weston and later from the baker at Sawtry. Groceries and paraffin could be ordered from the post office and general store in Alconbury Weston and these would be delivered to Buckworth each week.

At this time, there were two buses per week, one on Fridays from Huntingdon to Old Weston travelling via Buckworth. One could stay in the village for one and a half hours before having to catch the bus back. On Saturday you could catch the bus to Huntingdon at 3p.m., returning to Buckworth at around 8.30p.m. That was it, unless you cycled to the Wheatsheaf public house at the top of Alconbury Hill; from there it was possible to catch buses to Cambridge and Peterborough, as well as Huntingdon. You could also call the local taxi service; some people in the village did own cars and were often kind enough to invite others to travel with them.

As for myself, my beat was very rural and covered a large area. I was provided with a police motorcycle and carried out my responsibilities in the villages of Hamerton, Winwick and the Giddings, as well as Buckworth. I was often called upon to assist on the Great North Road, prior to it becoming a dual carriageway.

I established an excellent rapport with local landowners and a major part of my work was making regular visits to the farms to follow the regulations governing animal movements. These had to be recorded by the owners and could be inspected on demand. Apart from reading these records, I also had to see the animals. I remember that pigs had to be kept isolated for 28 days after

purchase. One had to be up to date with these animal movement regulations as well as the diseases of livestock, some of which had to be reported to the Ministry of Agriculture, for example, foot-and-mouth and fowl pest. I also had to report on and attend any sheep-dipping that was done.

There was crime, there always has been and no doubt always will be while there are people intent on making a 'quick buck'. Rationing after the Second World War was still present and poultry thefts both large and small scale were common. I recall going to a house one Sunday morning and removing the roasting fowl from the oven and then digging in the garden to recover the feathers and drawings of the bird to help secure a conviction.

Lead and metal were also in demand as a high price could be obtained from scrap merchants. One time I recovered the lead from a church roof from a culvert of the outskirts on the Giddings and through a process of persistent enquiries traced the culprits and saw them off to prison.

Each village had its own characters and informants and I am sure I knew everyone living on my patch. I probably knew something about most people and once having gained their confidence knew where to go for information. This knowledge often proved invaluable.

I kept a few hives of bees and apart from the honey harvest between May and September, depending on the weather, I found them to be extremely irritating creatures. Sugar rationing was still in place and I remember the rations as being 6lb per hive. One old beekeeper told me how to look after the bees properly to ensure the sugar did not have to be used to feed them over the winter, then the housewife could lay claim upon the sugar for making jam.

Before I was moved from Buckworth, mains water was laid on, a great event welcomed by all. The installation of water provided 'hot and cold' and a flush toilet. We later no longer need the services of the night soil cart supplied by the local authorities to empty bucket toilets. Their

visit was usually in the early hours and set all the dogs barking in the village.

I was moved from Buckworth in 1955 into a town.

I was very happy in Buckworth as were my family and I still have very good friends there. Regretfully, some have passed on and some have moved out. I still return from

Memories of Black Lodge

by Jane Greenhalgh

Charles Wilfred Greenhalgh was employed as a tractor and lorry driver by Mr Warrener of Holly Lodge Farm between 1950 and 1951. He and his wife Kay lived in one of Black Lodge cottages. When they moved in their neighbours were a couple called Gotobed who were not employed on the farm. New neighbours called Hall then moved in and Mr Hall worked on the farm. They moved from near Grantham and had a daughter called Dot who used to work for the Duchess of Gloucester at Barnwell. They also had two sons who built a platform and type of treehouse in the tree opposite the cottages.

Charlie and Kay had a daughter, born in 1950, called Jane. Charlie remembers that the Duchess of Gloucester sometimes gave Dot Hall a lift home on her day off. The family used to go to the bottom of the lane to see the limousine. On one occasion the two sons of the Duchess played with Jane in her pram.

Charlie also remembers the grocer from Alconbury who had a mobile van to deliver supplies and who invited Charlie along with others to his home to see the television.

Memories of Fuller's Lodge

by Shirley Elsdon née Powers

and the pilot parachuted and landed close by. Military police were on the scene immediately and the pilot appeared unhurt.

We moved into Fuller's Lodge in 1942. We originated from Bethnal Green, London E2. My father Albert Victor Powers owned a lorry and when our house was blitzed we left London for Kettering. From there we went to Alconbury Weston as my father had work for his lorry carting gravel to help build the runways of Molesworth Airfield. The house in Alconbury Weston was a temporary measure before we moved into one of George Brown's cottages at Park Farm, Buckworth. George Brown was a friend of father's whom he met in the village pub in Spaldwick some months before. Eventually, George Brown needed the cottage for one of his workers and so let us rent Fuller's Lodge in 1944.

It was a large semi-detached house with an outside toilet and very large garden. Another family called Norfolk lived next door. Mrs Norfolk had two daughters Sybil and Dorothy. Sybil married a USAF officer and I was bridesmaid. Mrs Norfolk had two babies whom she fostered.

There were several very large barns surrounding the house. Horses and bullocks were kept there and the stockman, Mr Abbott, came daily from Alconbury Weston to look after the animals in the pens which surrounded some of the barns.

Italian prisoners of war came daily to work with Mr Abbott. They wore brown dungarees with a very large circle of yellow sewn on their backs.

As Alconbury and Wyton aerodromes were close to the lodge, there were many instances of aircraft flying very low trying to get back to base. I recall twice when they jettisoned their bombs, just missing the farm buildings. They were later detonated by the bomb disposal unit away from the building. An enemy plane (a fighter) crashed in the field next to our house

Farming memories

by Geoffrey Warrener

My grandfather bought Holly Lodge and Black Lodge in 1949, he had moved down from Derbyshire. The farm made up of 439 acres was a mixed enterprise. The crops were wheat, barley, oats, clover seed, sugar beet and potatoes. A suckler herd was kept on the grassland and pigs were also kept as well as turkeys for Christmas. At this time, after the war, tractors were replacing the last of the horses but farming was still very manual and there were five to six full-time men.

In the mid -1950s my father Richard came back to the farm after his national service in the army. Also at this time, Cis Deller from Upton came to work for my grandfather, he was to stay for 40 years and receive his long-term service medal to agriculture from the Queen at the East of England show.

I was born in 1963 and my earliest memories of the farm are from the late 1960s. Frank Chester who was retired did all the gardens and grew vegetables for the farm. I spent a lot of time helping him, particularly mole catching. Also I learned my way round ferreting with Cis Deller and his sons.

By the early 1970s farming was changing fast, tractors and combines were bigger and more efficient. However, Brook Lodge, which was owned by Jack Nichols, came up for sale, it was bought by Milton Estates and rented to my father who had recently bought Wood Farm from John Pentelow. This more than doubled our acreage to just over 1,000 acres. We still employed four to five men, among them members of the Head family and George Buck whose hedge-laying skills gained him some notoriety.

By the end of the seventies, the farm had lost some of its diversity. Sugar beet and potatoes were no longer grown and the

cattle had moved from a suckler system to a more intensive fattening system. Also with mechanisation, less labour was required and we were down to three full time men.

In the early 1980s, we bought Brickyard Farm which was sold again at the end of the decade to Mr Baker.

From the late 1980s to the present day, there have been many changes. The autumn burning of stubble has been stopped and the Common Agricultural Policy has left us with 10 per cent of all our land fallowed each year. The machinery has reduced labour on the farm and as we entered the new millennium, there was one full-time person employed on the farm: Fred Williamson who came to this area from Norfolk 15 to 20 years ago and with whom father and I discuss all farm policy and

Joan Jolly remembers

(extracts from a letter to Paula Hennessey)

I had always thought that I stayed in Buckworth for a few months during the war years but after looking at the gravestones in the churchyard, I realised that I must have been there earlier, about 1937/38 before Elizabeth Drage died as I stayed with her for a short time.

My paternal grandmother was the sister of Alfred Drage and it was when she came to stay with her brother and sister-in-law that she brought me along too. We stayed in the houses in Barham Road, near the school and I remember going to the well by the school to fetch water and waling down to the allotments to meet Uncle Alf.

They (Lizzie and Alf) had a son Dick who was married to Queenie and they lived in the first thatched cottage by Home Farm. Then there was Cyril or Cis as he was known, I remember he had a perm while I was there and it was considered very daring for a man to have a perm in those days. Then there was Nobby or Knocker as he was nicknamed. He was a cowman and I remember him coming in with his book after some calves had been born and we sat around thinking up names for them. The only daughter was Lena and she married Harold Bream. She used to work at the manor house and could leave our back garden by a gate and cross a fieldget there.

Later my grandmother and I moved down to stay with Dick and Queenie in the cottage and I would go with the can to fetch milk from the farm. I would also draw water from the well down the hill, look at the turkeys that were in the field opposite and then visit a horse that was always in a barn at the end of the road. I think it must have been Brook Lodge.

Of course the pub was there then and there were several vans that called during the week, my favourite being the sweet van.

I believe the bus came by once each

week and I think it was on a Saturday, the passengers would wait near the pub. Huntingdon seemed to me to be a very long way away though I never visited it while I was there.

My grandparents either owned or rented one of the brickyard cottages and I believe the Drages had the other one at that time, though I may be mistaken. I have photographs in my late father's album of the brickyard and the Drage family paddling in the stream and lying in the hay.

When I was coming to Buckworth the other week, it was with a feeling of apprehension for I was sure it would be a very different place from the one that little girl knew so long ago. Instead I was so pleased to find that it had hardly changed at all except for the thatched cottages that had burned down and the pub no longer being there. I hope it may always remain just as it is, a little haven surrounded by all the noise

Catherine Hennessey remembers

During the summer the village was always a 'hive of activity', a lot of the time was spent playing games on the corner. Games would range from Bulldog Acki, Acki 123 and my red letter, children from all ages would meet and play together. If we were not at the corner, we would be in one of the fields, usually the one in the centre of the village, next to the church, this was the main den-making area. Dens had been made in this field for years. Some would be up trees, some built on the ground but it seems the majority were built underground. Huge holes were dug, mostly by the boys, corrugated iron was then laid over the top with a sprinkling of mud etc. to act as camouflage. This field was also the main base for building camp fires, this happened on quite a regular basis. A fire would be built, sticks and hay gathered from around the field. When the fire was lit, we would collect food from the houses and cook potatoes and toast on a number of gardening instruments. One that sticks in my memory was the use of my dad's rake, great for toasting bread and raking up what the dogs left behind in the garden for some reason I never really considered this! The other fields we used to play in were the farmland surrounding the village. Rape fields at full growth were great for hide and seek although you would always come out tinged with yellow. The most fun though was with the hay bales, what with Buckworth being on a hill and the invention of round bales say no more! The bales were also used for making homes and dens.

When the weather changed so did the games, still the same children, still the same fun. I always remember one winter when the snow was particularly bad and everyone had to remain in the village, sledging down Hamerton Hill, kids and parents alike. I also remember the drifts, when the snow came off the the fields, filling the ditches and

roads, jumping into snow waist-high and of course the usual snowball fights, snowmen and igloos.

From the age of five, I was bussed into school, like the majority of children I went to Sawtry. I attended the infants, the juniors and the village college. As a young child, I was not particularly keen on the bus and was bribed on many occasions by my mum and bus drivers alike. As I grew older, the school bus became a social activity of its own. Mixing with the children from other villages, learning the structure of who sat where (what year you were in determined where you were allowed to sit). It was an essential part of growing up. It was said 'if you can handle the school bus, you can handle anything'.

I, along with most girls in the village, joined the recorder club. This was held weekly at the home of the Cheshires. Our aim was to be good enough to play in the church, this we did on several occasions. I don't think we were ever actually that good but someone was kind enough to let us play. We usually played too quickly and the congregation would struggle to keep up. The club lasted for a couple of years and then as people started to leave the village and we all got older it ended.

I have lots of memories of the cricket club. I even remember back to the days when the village had a team and there were matches down on the cricket pitch. The best memories though are of the parties we used to have there. Every year there was a Christmas party. Children would come from the local villages and we would have games, food and a disco. As I got older, I started having birthday parties there, friends from school would come to 'the back of beyond' and a good time was had by all.

When I was about seven or eight, I was sleeping over at a friend's house in the village. We got up very early, crept out of the house and decided to go and call for one of the other girls. We knocked and her mum answered, dressed, and said that her daughter would not be coming out as it was very early. So we continued down the road

and decided to knock at the door of Mr and Mrs Groome, who we often saw and swapped novelty rubbers with. They too thought it a little early and sent us back home. Shortly afterwards, we were found by my friend's parents and I was taken home. I later found out that the reason our other friend's mother was up and dressed was because there had been a bereavement in the family. To this very day, I still cringe at the unfortunate timing of this event. On the positive side, Mr and Mrs Groome still laugh at the thought of two little girls at their front door, very early in the morning, wanting to play.

As a teenager, I also remember causing trouble. One summer evening, myself and a friend had walked round to the other end of the village and bumped into another of our friend's brother. After a few minutes winding him up and calling him names, he armed himself with his mother's washing line pole and chased us up the road,

Buckworth impressions

by Lynda Farrar

Move 200 miles to the middle of nowhere, with a four-week-old baby in the middle of October, I must be mad.

These were my thoughts as I moved into Buckworth in October 1998, not really knowing anything about the people, the place or even the area.

True to what we now know as being typical of Buckworth, on the first day we were invited for tea and biscuits and somewhere warm and comfortable to sit with a new baby. And even included for dinner that night . Where else would complete strangers be invited into your home like this?

And so it went on, literally from the time we moved in we have been welcomed and included in the life of the village. Our friends from outside were constantly amazed by how much we did and where we went and always with James too. The phrase became coined that 'it's not a party until James is there', and our socialite son did his best to live up to this saying.

When the village was described to us as being a large family, we were not really sure of what this would be like. Now two years on and especially after Richard's accident in the summer of 2000, we count as one of our biggest blessings our Buckworth family.

The future? Well I can think of no greater

The Burrows remember

Jenny Burrows

Not long after I arrived in Buckworth, two very momentous things happened to me; on 16 November 1985 Victoria was born, and then exactly one month later my mum died. I find it hard to believe that had I lived anywhere else I would have had the overwhelming feeling of love and support that helped me somehow get through the awful months after I lost my mum, while trying to look after a new baby. It's interesting to us how the girls still regard the people who were around them in Buckworth as they grew up as their 'extended family' surrogate aunts and uncles who have a very special place in their memories. They wrote their pieces entirely separately but there's a similar thread running through both.

I'm very proud of the part I played in the medieval fayre. For an idea conceived over a few bottles of wine with Tricia and Alan Hatfield, which then grew to encompass the entire village; the residents who all willingly gave up their time and even managed to convince the authorities that we could shut off the village to traffic for a day what a coup it wasn't at all bad. Even though I had to wear a medieval maternity smock and had to endure Alan's teasing that I had to climb a ladder to get into Mrs Braikevitch's house, from where we were doing the commentary, because 'I wasn't allowed to walk through the house'!

I am also very proud of the 'house that John built', Redwood Lodge. I think he did a great job of building something that enhanced the look of the village and was entirely in keeping.

I didn't want to live in Buckworth; when John told me, a committed city girl from Southampton, that he'd found our 'perfect cottage' and then showed me a run-down cottage in the 'middle of nowhere' as I thought, I was less than impressed. But I'm so glad that we lived there; what a great place to bring up our family.

My family left Buckworth, when I was seven. I had lived there since I was born and consequently, I have so many memories. We lived in Old Corner Cottage, before moving next door to Redwood Lodge. I can just about recollect most of the birthdays that I spent in Buckworth; there was the clown party at the cricket club (where many villagers spent their time playing darts or fiddling with the jukebox), going to see Walt Disney's World on Ice, my first bike there's quite a few! And of course, I have vague memories of the christenings of Adam and Kirst, which took place in Buckworth church, just across the road. Next to the church, the field with the 'climbing tree', where I played with Helen, my best friend in the village.

Speaking of which, the people in Buckworth are the best! It's a real village atmosphere, and events like the medieval Fayre demonstrated that closeness. People like 'Auntie Llew' (whose kneeling cushions we still have), Boxer (with the three-wheeled car), Christine and Barry (with the amazing house and pool), Hazel and Phil (I remember playing croquet in their back garden), Trish and Alan, Helen's family and many others will stick in my memory like Superglue.

Other small memories such as playing tag up by the old red phone box and the bus shelter... walks down the 'Lane' to the farm, the walk around the village and dad crashing his car on his way down the hill, will be up there with those memories as well.

Vicky Burrows, 15

My family and I moved away from Buckworth when I was just five, my brother three and my sister seven but that doesn't mean that I don't remember anything. We used to live at the Old Corner Cottage until

the house that my dad was building was ready. This new house was situated next door. I can remember that opposite our house and across a bit to the right was the church. The same church in which my sister, my brother and I were christened. The reason I loved and still do love Buckworth was the friendliness between the residents. I can remember everyone. I remember walking two dogs for the lady on the corner, and each of us receiving church kneeling pads from 'Auntie Llew' and the house where my brother broke his leg. I remember cutting my leg while going on a walk with our two dogs and going in the cricket club when I was allowed. Of course that's not forgetting Christine and Barry's house where we often visited, oh and the people living in the house with the massive gate and the lovely garden with the swimming pool! I can't remember the names of all these people but I remember their faces. My sister's best friend Helen lived just down the road too, as well as the Grays. It is surprising come to think of it

Houses in Buckworth and their occupants in 2000

The Bungalow, Hamerton Road

This is purported to be the oldest house in the village, the present bungalow is bricked around the original wattle and daub shell.

It was used as a business site for the repair of agricultural implements by Arthur Pentelow in the 1930s and 1940s.

Present occupants Pat and Paula Hennessey

Owl Cottage, Hamerton Road

This was probably originally a dairy. It was once the home of George Buck who was a renowned hedge layer. It was named Owl Cottage in the late 1990s.

Present occupants Richard and Lynda Farrar and son James

Fourwinds, Hamerton Road

Built in the 1960s and called at that time 'Hokianga' on the site of a pair of thatched cottages, one which at one time housed the post office.

Present occupants Barrie and Christine Brown (clerk to the Parish Council)



Home Farm Bungalow, Hamerton Road

Replaced prefabricated bungalow once occupied by Mr and Mrs Reginald Bream.

Present occupants David and Ginny Proud



Home Farm, Hamerton Road

Built in the 1800s. Ella Pentelow born here in the 1930s.
Present occupants Brian Whittaker and Elaine Brittain



Sundial House, Church Road

Built in 1964/5.
Present occupants Peter and Anne Scarlett

'Khususi', Church Road

Built in 1964/5. The front garden is the site of one of the village wells.
Present occupants Piers and Justine Harding

The Old Manor House, Church Road

The present house probably replaced a much older building. This was where Mr and Mrs George Brown lived. Just after the Second World War it was subdivided and let to American personnel. Now the location of 'Simply Flowers'.

Present occupants Nic Clarke and Veronica Dunn



Bungalow 1, Church Road

Built in 1960s by Laurence Brown, son of George Brown, for his farmworkers on land which was originally part of the garden of the Old Manor House.

Present occupant Margaret Thomas

Bungalow 2, Church Road

Built in 1960s by Laurence Brown, son of George Brown, for his farmworkers on land which was originally part of the garden of the Old Manor House.

Once occupied by Albert ('Boxer') and Grace Bream till 'Boxer's' death in 1994 when Grace moved to Alconbury.

Present occupants Jason Baziliauskas, Justin Basiliauskas, Andrew Ellis and Kay Freeman

Redwood Lodge, Church Road

Built in the garden of Corner Cottage by John Burrows in 1989-90. The original boundary of Manor House garden is now the garden wall.

Present occupants Alex and Hanna Button and children Christina and Elizabeth

Corner Cottage, Church Road

Originally a farm cottage belonging to Manor Farm and home to Mrs and Miss Bosworth.

It was renovated and extended by John Burrows.

Present occupants Brian and Michelle Schimp and children Josephine and Nicolette



1 Barham Road (Holly Cottage)

Originally a farm cottage attached to Wood Farm and home of Mr Smithers, one time church verger in the 1930s. Occupied by USAF families in 1960s and 1970s.

Present occupants Will and Christine Willcocks

2 Barham Road (Clematis Cottage)

Originally a farm cottage attached to Wood Farm and occupied by Joe and Alfred Hubbard. Joe had a wooden leg and he pumped the church organ. Alf worked for George Brown. They kept the dog under the stairs. Also occupied by USAF families at one time.

Present occupants Jeff and Carol Greed

1 New Cottages, Barham Road (Capricorn Cottage)

Front room once in use as post office (closed 1998)

Present occupants Terry and June Cheney



2 New Cottages, Barham Road

Occupied by Ralph and Louie Bream. Also let at some point to USAF personnel

Present occupant Mrs Llewelin

Shafto Cottages, Barham Road

Built in 1947, as part of post-war housing programme.

1 Shafto Cottages

Present occupants

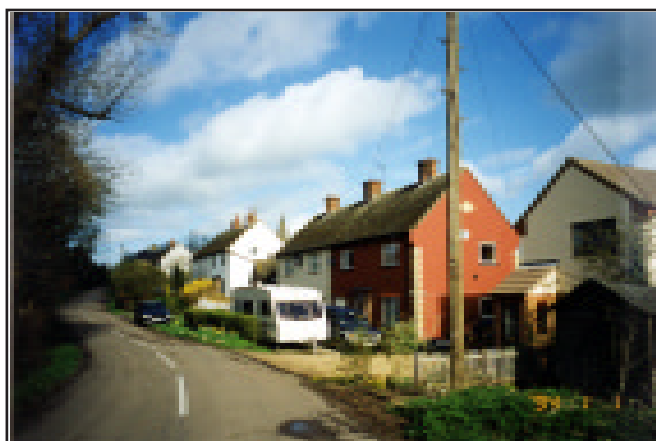
2 Shafto Cottages

Present occupants Chris and Linda Holt and family, Christian, Jonathan and Helen

3 Shafto Cottages

The front room once used as post office, hence the position of post box.

Present occupants Brian and Christine Hubbard and family Brian Jnr and Sarah



4 Shafto Cottages

Present occupants Philip, Wendy and Gary Head

5 Shafto Cottages

Walter Hurst the village policeman lived here from 1947 to 1955.

Present occupants Mark and Deborah Harris

6 Shafto Cottages

Present occupants John, Alannha and Damien Grimes

7 Barham Road

Built in 1990s.

Present occupant Anthony Kingsley

Manor Lodge, Barham Road

Built in 1958 by Laurie and Jean Brown, as the farmhouse for Manor Farm.

Present occupants Alan and Heather Bright and children Amelia and Clementine

Fenhurst, Barham Road.

Built in 1965 and originally called 'Marandellas' when Ella Pentelow lived there. The original thatched cottage once housed the shop run by Mrs Ray.

Present occupants James and Nellie Groom

The Rowans, Barham Road

Built in the 1970s.

Present occupants Alan and Trish Hatfield

Peacehaven, Barham Road

Built in the 1970s.

Present occupants Phil and Hazel Cooper

The School House

Built in 1870 and lived in by the headmistress and family until the school closed.

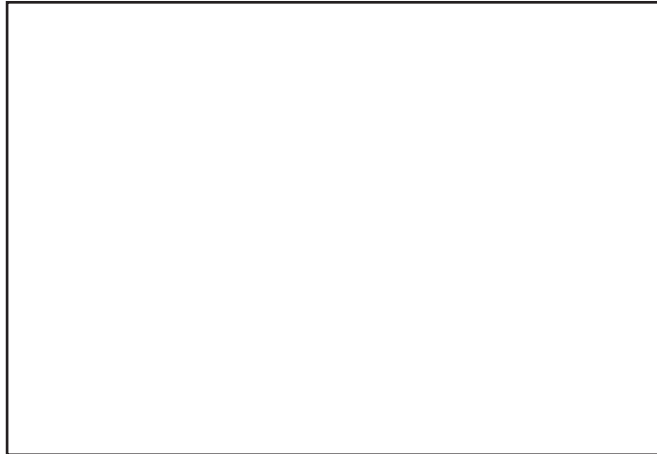
Present occupants Stuart and Jane



Martin

The Old Rectory

There has been a building on this site since 1670 and this has been continually modified since then, doubling in size in 1850, later reducing to its present size. It was occupied by successive vicars until sold by Church Commissioners in 1951. In 1960s was home of the MP, for Hendon



North, Mr John Gorst and family.

Present occupants Richard and Berdina Corey-Pearce

Corner House

Built in 1964 on a grass field by John Pentelow. Let at various times to USAF personnel.



Present occupants Argo and Fiona Morrison and children, James, Duncan and Grace

Marandellas

Built in 1979 and named after a town in Zimbabwe.

Present occupant Ella Pentelow

Bream Close

Built in 1999 on site of 'Fox and Hounds' public house and named in memory of local family, the Breams.



1 Bream Close (Church Cottage)

Present occupant Joanna Dailey

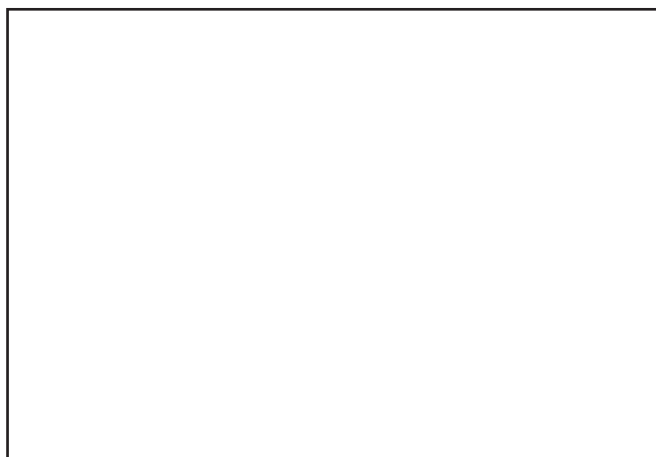
2 Bream Close (The Elms)

Present occupants Don and Diane Simmonds

3 Bream Close (Longview)

The Players were the only family in Buckworth to have a baby in 2000. Oliver was born at home.

Present occupants Mark and Vicki Player and children Megan and Oliver



4 Bream Close (Ashridge House)

Present occupants Andrew and Jane Wallis and children, Charles and Emily

5 Bream Close (Limewood House)

Present occupants Malcolm, Sheila and Gordon Lovett

6 Bream Close (Millbrooks Cottage)

Present occupants John and Cornelia Davison

Brook Lodge Bungalow

Built to replace Brook Lodge Farmhouse in 1960s.

Present occupants David and Mary Crockatt

Brook Lodge Cottage

Originally two cottages attached to Brook Lodge Farm and where Jack Nichol's lads and jockeys were housed. Once a bed and breakfast.

Present occupants William and Ann Crowfoot

Brickyard Farm

The new farmhouse was building was built in the late 1990s.

Present occupants Brian and Helen Baker and son Ben

Brickyard Farm Cottage

Originally the two cottages attached to the brickyard. They were converted into one family house in the early 1990s.

Present occupants David and Sue Crunkhorn and children, Emma, Edward and Simon

Holly Lodge Bungalow

Present occupants Richard and Margeret Warrener

Holly Lodge Cottage

Present occupants Frederick and Angela Williamson

Holly Lodge Farm

Present occupants Geoffrey and Lucy Warrener and children Emily and Rebecca

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