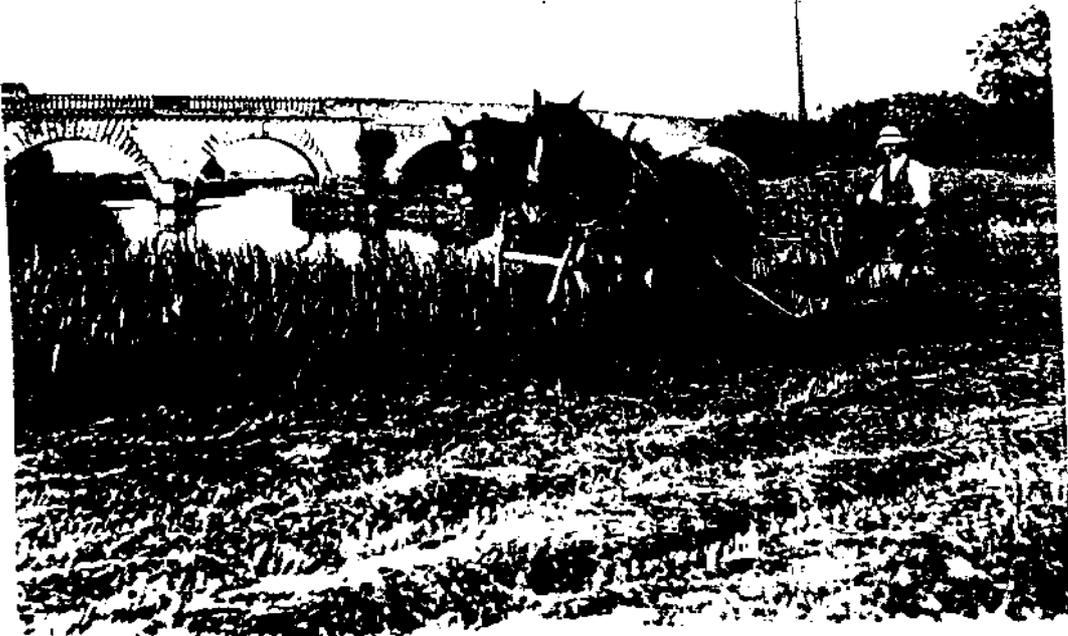


GOOD HISTORY

**Journal
of the
Eynsham Junior
History Group**



**Number 7
Winter 1999**

GOOD HISTORY

The Journal of the Eynsham Junior History Group

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Front Cover: Hay turning at Swinford Farm. We thank Mrs Gladys Garner and Mrs Hilda Cornish who both gave us copies of this photograph.

Acknowledgements

We are indebted to Mrs 'Polly Clifton, Mrs Hilda Cornish Mrs Eileen Mace, Mr Steve Bentley, Mr Blake Pullen, The Revd. Michael Farthing and Mr Martin Harris for photographs and documents reproduced in this issue. The map on page 11 was copied by Victoria Rose from that given in *Eynsham Record No.9* in the article by James Bond. Additional information on White's Bell Hanging firm was gained from an article in the *Oxford Times Limited Edition* of June 1999.

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EDITORIAL

Once again this edition of *Good History* links two sets of History Group members. At the end of the summer term we had to say goodbye to some long standing and hardworking members who have moved on to other schools. Luckily, some of them left articles for inclusion in this the seventh edition of our journal. However, this term we have again welcomed a large number of new members who we hope will be as keen as the members we have lost.

Unfortunately, this last year we were unable to include a trip to Oxfordshire Archives. This was due in part to a larger than expected burden of teaching encountered by the Senior Member. To compensate, the members who were moving on were invited to join Eynsham History Group on its visit to Whites of Appleton, the oldest bell hanging firm in the country.

This will be the last journal of the century and perhaps it is a happy coincidence that this is issue No 7, believed throughout history to be a significant, if not lucky number. We would like to wish all our readers a very special happy new year as we continue to look back to where we have come from as we move into the future!!

As always I have to thank all those who come to talk, those mentioned in the Chairman's letter and Mrs 'Polly' Clifton and Mr Martin Harris; lend or give us photographs and other documents and above all to Mr Whelan our Chairman, who despite uncertain health has continued to support us. It goes without saying that we also rely on the support of Mr Keates and the Staff.

Pamela Richards, Senior Member & Editor.

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Our main theme this year has been farms and I am reminded how much the character of Eynsham has changed over the last forty-five years since I came to live here. At that time there were several farm houses in the village with an adjoining meadow with milking sheds and it was quite usual at certain times of the day to see herds of cows being driven down the streets on their way to be milked. At that time there were quite a large number of farm workers living in the cottages.

I remember the late Mollie Harris used to organise groups of farmworkers wives to go "tater picking" and sorting on the farms in the Autumn and Winter.

We have been fortunate in the speakers we have had to tell us about farming in the past: Mr Blake Pullen showed us some of his models of farm machinery, Mrs Hilda Cornish has let us have copies of old documents relating to Swinford Farm and Mrs Jennet Blake has promised to come and talk to us about Twelve Acre Farm.

E.F. Whelan, Chairman

WYTHAM WOODS by Jessica Scott



Some of my family were born and brought up in Wytham Woods, for example my Great Uncle Les, my Great Auntie Connie, my Great Auntie Heather and my Nanny, who are all still alive. My Nanny is the youngest of the four and was born in Bean Cottage.

On a trip to Wytham Woods I took with my Nanny, my Great Auntie Connie and my Mum during the summer holidays we stopped outside Bean Cottage where my Nanny had been born. They told me that when they were very young they had planted some snowdrops just outside the house and they are still there now.

When they lived in Bean Cottage it was thatched not tin as it is now. When the roof was being rethatched and all the straw was on the ground they used to jump out of the roof onto the straw until most of it was taken away.

There was a broken old branch on a tree near Bean Cottage where Nanny and my Great Aunts and Great Uncle used to play on the swing that was made by their father the Game Keeper.

While we were there we saw Wytham Abbey and lots of other old buildings, as well as the memorial of Hazel Ffennel. It said:-

"These woods known as The Woods of Hazel, were presented to the University of Oxford in 1943 in memory of Hazel only child of Raymond and Hope Ffennel of Wytham Abbey."

We also saw lots of animals, birds and plants. A robin even came and perched on a tree that was very close to us.

I was fascinated by how much my Nanny and Great Auntie Connie remember. They even remember things from when they were younger than three years old which for me seemed especially impossible.

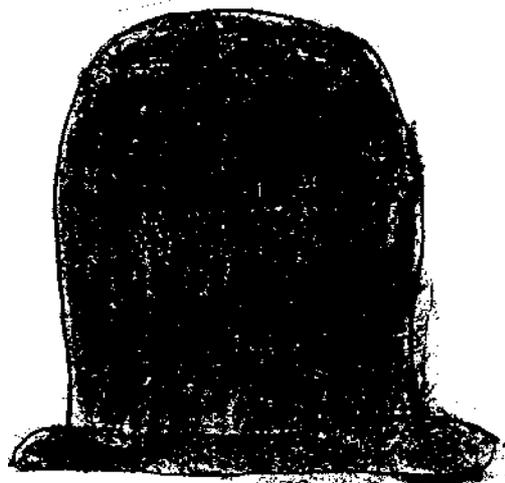
THE BELLS

[Taken from an Assembly prepared by Emily Beech, Helen Crump, Erica Gornall, Christina le Galloudec and Jessica Scott]

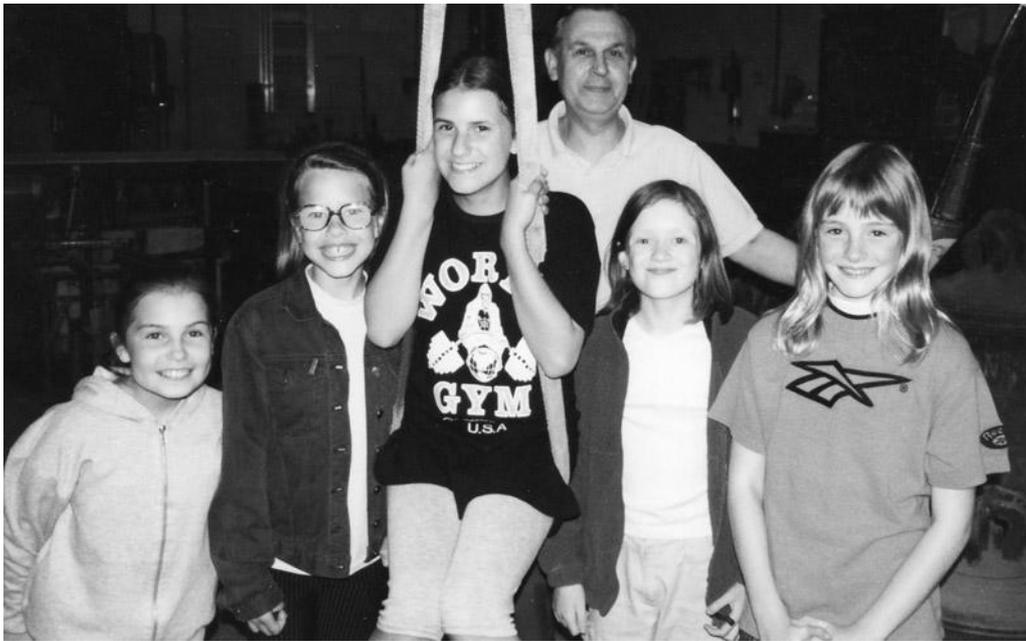
We went with the Eynsham History Group to visit White's bell hanging business at Appleton. Mr Brian White, who is the great-great-grandson of the founder of the business talked to us about his work with the bells.

First we looked at the big wheels on which the bells are hung. Originally these were made from oak, but this is now too expensive to use and a foreign wood is used instead. The 'heads' of the bells also used to be made from wood but although they do make wooden 'heads' these are increasingly made of metal.

Mr White told us that the oldest bell there was made in 1220 It was the smallest of the bells and it was a different shape and looked a bit like the one illustrated below on the left while the usual bell shape is illustrated on the right. [drawings by Jessica Scott]



The fairly big bells and the biggest bells were bigger than Jessica!



Mr White treated the girls like bells (or belles) and weighed them.
From the left Jessica, Helen, Erica, Christina and Emily.

A bell is a hollow cup-shaped instrument of cast metal which gives out a musical note when struck. The note is produced by the vibration of the metal when it is struck by the clapper which hangs inside the cup. We were told that a cracked bell went clonk and sounded as if somebody was hitting a cow's bottom with a spade.

What is called bell-metal is bronze made in proportion of four parts of tin to thirteen parts of copper. The shape and proportions affect the tone and pitch, the heavier and larger the bells having the deeper notes.

Although he does not tune bells Mr White was able to explain how a bell was tuned. The fine tuning of a bell is done by taking some of the metal off the bottom 'skirt' of the bell. You cannot change the note of a bell by adding metal to the bell. If you make a mistake on one bell you have to retune all the bells in that peal so that you can make a correct scale.

While we were at White's we went up a ladder to watch the bells ring. There is a small set of bells in the loft. We saw that the bells do not turn right over but go from side to side. Each bell has a different sound because of its size and the way it is tuned. We also had a chance to ring the bells and we all found it difficult. Some of us got lifted off our feet.

Christina ringing in her birthday

In church towers there is usually a set of bells, known as a peal, numbering up to twelve or more. Here in Eynsham we have a peal of 6. Each bell is tuned to a definite pitch, and by pulling the bell ropes in various orders, the bell-rings can play a great variety of bell-tunes, called 'changes'. The greater number of bells, the greater number of changes possible -with twelve bells it is nearly 480 millions!

Only certain changes are normally rung, such as Grandsire Triples, Bob Major and Oxford Treble Bob. You can see a kneeler in church on which the patterns of two changes are picked out in colour, each colour representing the pattern for each bell. This kneeler is dedicated to Clifford Bennett, who for many years was Tower Captain at St. Leonards.

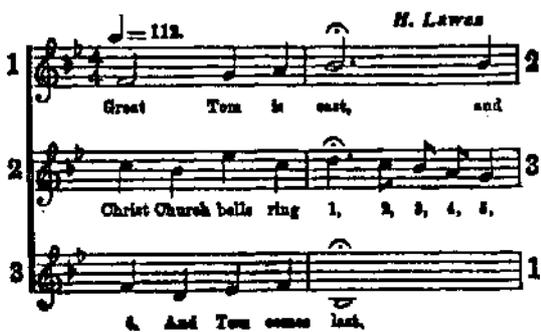
Looking back in the records we found that citizens of Eynsham often donated money to the bells in their wills.

1542 I bequeath of the bells xiid (12d) John Wappes

1556 I bequeath to the church towards the maintaining of the bells vis viiid (6/8). I give to them that shall ringe the same bells at my burial and masses xxd (20d) and their dinners Nicholas Gilbert.

1596 Towards the repairing of the bells iis (2/-) William Boulter.

There is also a record that on old bells names of local men were inscribed in the way we saw names on bells at Whites. On the 2nd and 3rd Bells at Eynsham with the dates 1655 and 1654 were the names Nicholas Heart and Thomas Allyn and on the 5th bell with the date of 1659 the names of William Brotherton and Robert Butler.



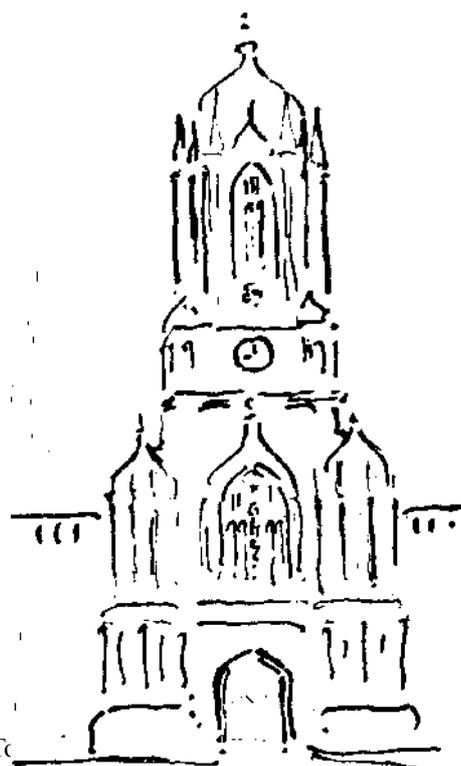
Most people know of Big Ben, the bell in the tower of the Houses of Parliament which weighs 13.55 tonnes but in Oxford there is another famous bell. This is the largest bell which hangs in the tower of Christ Church which is both a college and the cathedral. The bell is called Great Tom and we found a song written in the 17th century, which is generally sung as a round.

After hearing our Assembly, Mr S. Bentley, gave us some more information about Great Tom which he had come across.

Apparently, the present Great Tom has a birthday on the 29th May, which some may know as Oak Apple Day, and was first rung in 1684. The tower of Christ Church was designed by Christopher Wren.

The original 'Tom' was one of a peal of eight bells which was transferred from Osney Abbey to the college on the orders of Henry VIII after the dissolution of the monasteries. Tom seems to have been named in honour of Thomas à Beckett having been inscribed in Latin

"I toll in praise of Tom, Bim, Bom! Bim Bom!" It seems the bell had rather an odd history, at one time having its name changed to 'Mary' during the reign of the Queen of that name. It also seems that the clapper had to be renewed more than once and in 1612 Tom had to be recast. It took two different bell-founders before the job was properly done and the bell we hear today was finally hung.



Tom To

CHURCH KNEELERS

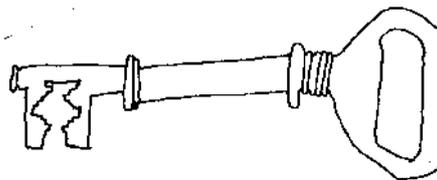
During the month of June the group met on Tuesdays after school. We walked through the village looking at various buildings and ended our meetings at St. Leonard's. With the Revd. Ian Bentley's permission we used the church as our meeting house and again learned more about the building and its monuments. As we walked around the church the children noticed the embroidered kneelers and learned how the project to make these kneelers came about.

The first thoughts on the idea had come from Mrs Ann Chalmers and she got together a group of ladies including Miss Mollie Cooke, Mrs Gladys Garner and Mrs Pamela Richards. Mrs Richards had seen beautifully embroidered kneelers in St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem while she was living there. These were offered to the Cathedral by groups of pilgrims coming from parishes all over the world. As Mrs Richards had some time on her hands then, she sewed a kneeler which was given on behalf of St. Leonard's.

The guidelines for size, materials, colours etc. given out by St. George's seemed so sensible it was decided to copy their form but substituting the background colour from the gold used in Jerusalem to the dark blue which seemed to suit the architecture of St. Leonard's.

The children noticed that among the kneelers already sewn was one on behalf of Eynsham History Group and they thought it would be a good idea if the Junior History Group could offer one. A Summer Challenge was issued for a design and eventually, that suggested by Jessica Scott was chosen.

In her design she has included our logo 'of the open book and the key which was featured on the cover of Good History No 1. The sewing has been started and the kneeler should be in the church before the next Flower Festival.



HORSES ON BRITISH FARMS. by Lydia Ferres

Some 30 or 40 years ago we stopped using horses for farming and began to use the tractor instead. 800,000 horses, apparently, worked on British farms in 1812 and these numbers increased to a recorded total of 1,137,000 in 1910.

Unfortunately, after the first World War (1914-1918) their numbers began to decrease, and by 1921 there were only 962,000 working horses recorded. 18 years later, only 649,000 were left.

Until the 13th century, oxen had been used instead of horses but farmers realised that horses were faster and more profitable. The commonest breeds were: Percherons, Suffolk Punches, Clydesdales, Clevedon Bays and the Old English Black, thought to be the father of the magnificent Shire Horse.

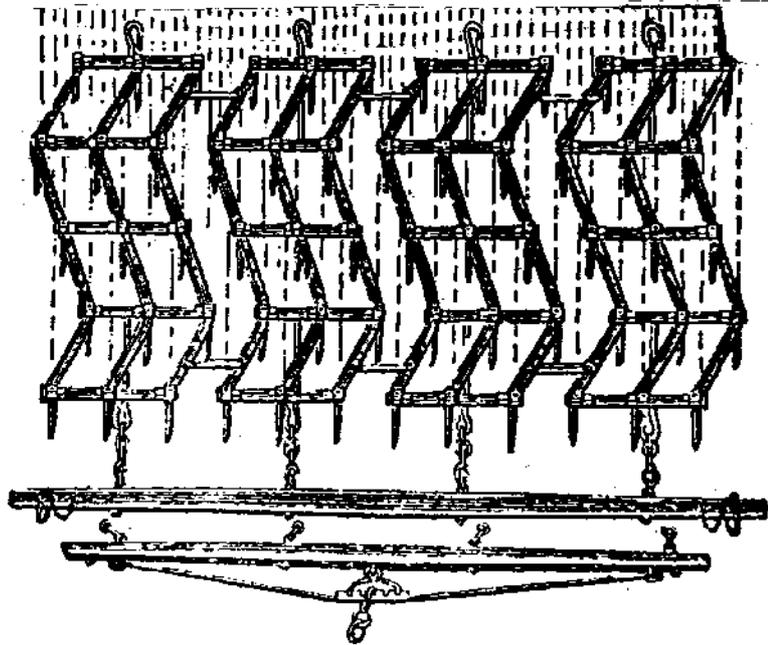
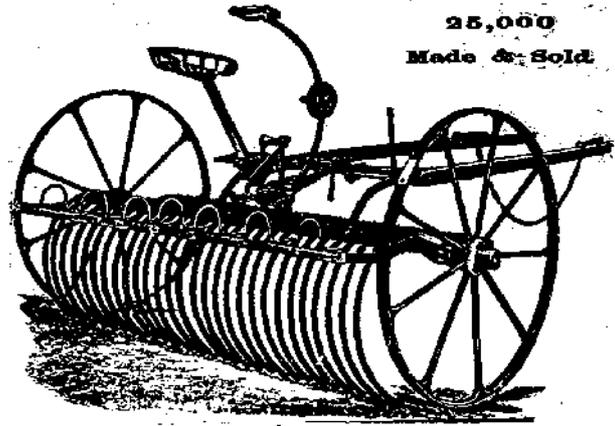
Horses were chosen very carefully to suit their working conditions: the Percheron or Suffolk Punch was better for heavy clay and wet soils due to lack of feathers on their fetlocks. [Feathers are tufts of hair. Fetlock is the ankle joint]

Many different types of plough were used with a variety of methods. The chilled iron plough share was made from molten metal and was proved to last longer than the previous metal plough shares, having been cooled quicker after being fashioned.

STAMFORD" HORSE RAKES

25,000

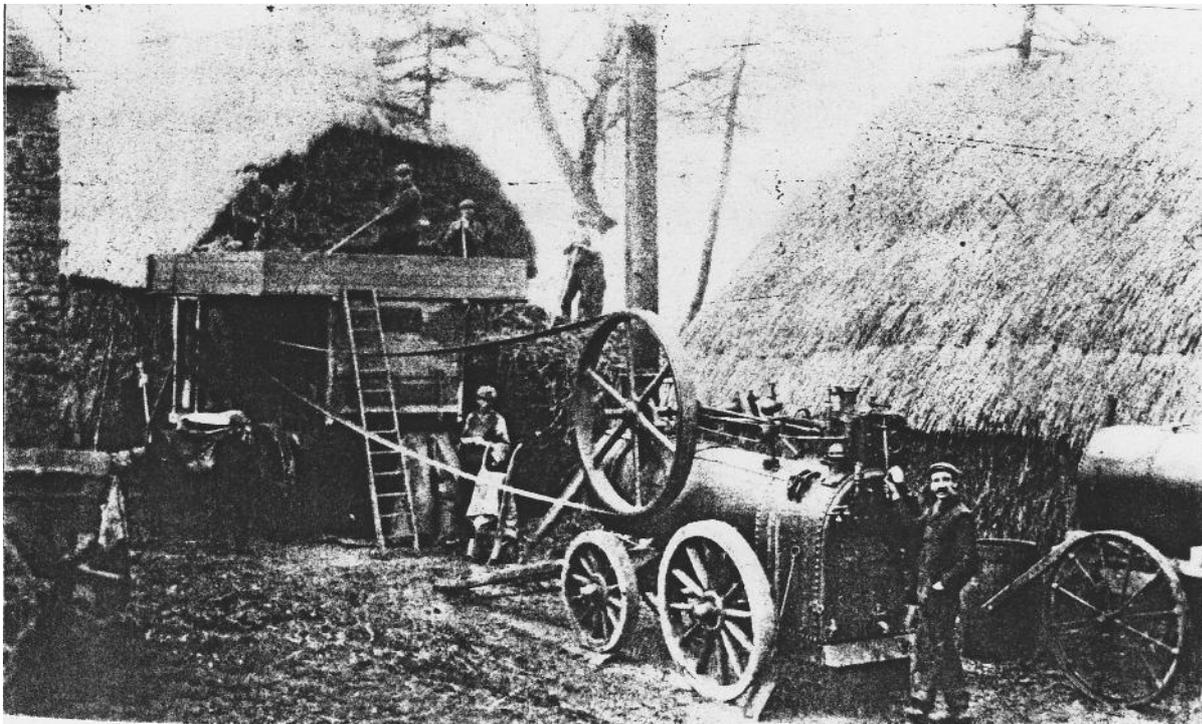
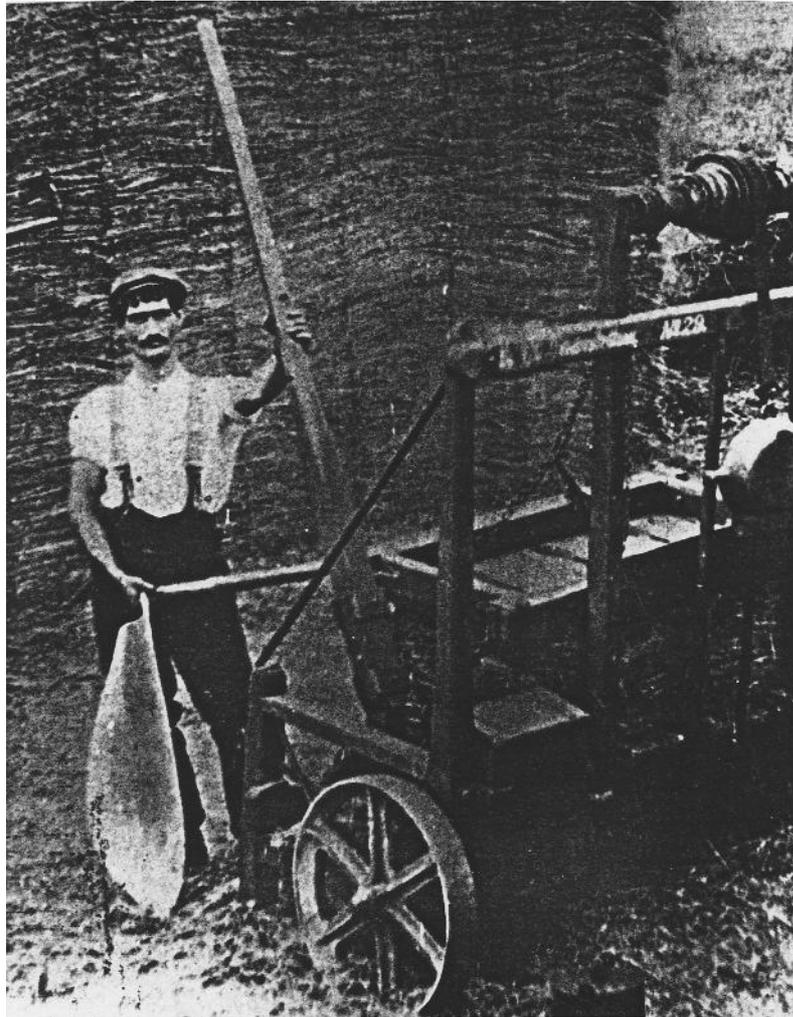
Made & Sold



A Harrow [We are indebted to Mr Blake Pullen for his pictures]

A "Seed Drill" was invented by Jethro Tull in 1701, which could also be pulled by horses and did away with hand sowing. A small trench was made in the soil and a measured amount of seed put into it, then covered by gentle harrowing.

If the horses were not treated properly they would become unwilling workers and be less happy to be taught the vocal and physical commands being given to them by their masters.



Photographs of early farm machinery
[Thanks to Mr Blake Pullen for making these available]

HARVEST FESTIVAL

For the first time the Group took part in the School's Harvest Festival and read out some poems and talked about early fanning.

Harvest is the time of the year that corn and wheat are being gathered in. People go and pick their apples from the orchard. Carrots and potatoes are being pulled from the ground. The smell of fresh bread is floating through the air. Harvest is when we give and share with the elderly.

Harvest is part of the history of Eynsham which was mainly a farming community for hundreds of years.

In earlier times the farmhouses were within the village and the farmers or yeomen would own strips of land in the various large fields which surrounded it. The Open Field system was introduced by the Saxons. There were usually three main fields divided into strips of approximately one acre each. Only two fields could be cultivated in any one year allowing the soil in one field to rest. This gave them a variety of soils suitable for different crops.

Oxen were first used to pull ploughs. Horses were used later. Ploughing was a hard job particularly on clay soils.

In early times farmers were expected to give a tithe or tenth of their harvested crops to the church. There are records of such tithes in documents from the abbey.



The golden yellow corn is swished gracefully by the wind.

Tasty, juicy carrots are being pulled up by farmers.

The golden potatoes grow unseen in the ground.

Red beetroot is sweet and juicy,

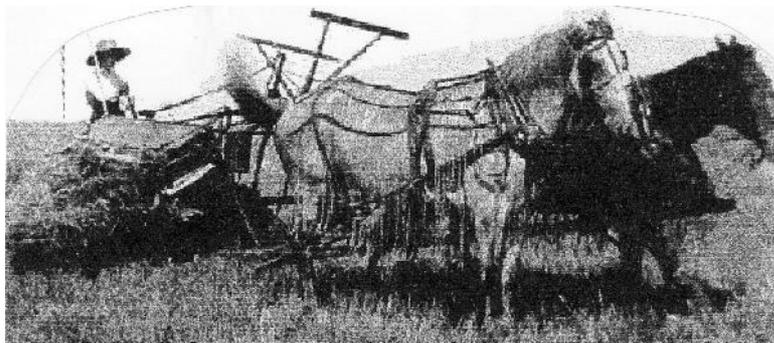
Sweet sweetcorn sits in the sun.

The delicious wheat is made into bread

The harvest sun shines orange and bright, as the leaves go golden and brown.

FARM CROPS - ANCIENT AND MODERN by Nicki Leech

It is claimed that farmers first started planting crops in the Middle East at least 10,000 years ago, but there are signs that crops were grown almost as long ago in many other parts of the world, including the Far East, India and Latin America. The crops grown then were mostly the same as those grown now - wheat and barley, rice, oats and beans. The crops of today may be the same but the methods of farming is very different and varies throughout the world.



THE ABBEY FISHPONDS

We went for a walk with the History Group to see the fishponds in Station Road. We saw five ponds that used to have lots of fish in for the Abbey.

by Kieran Burden

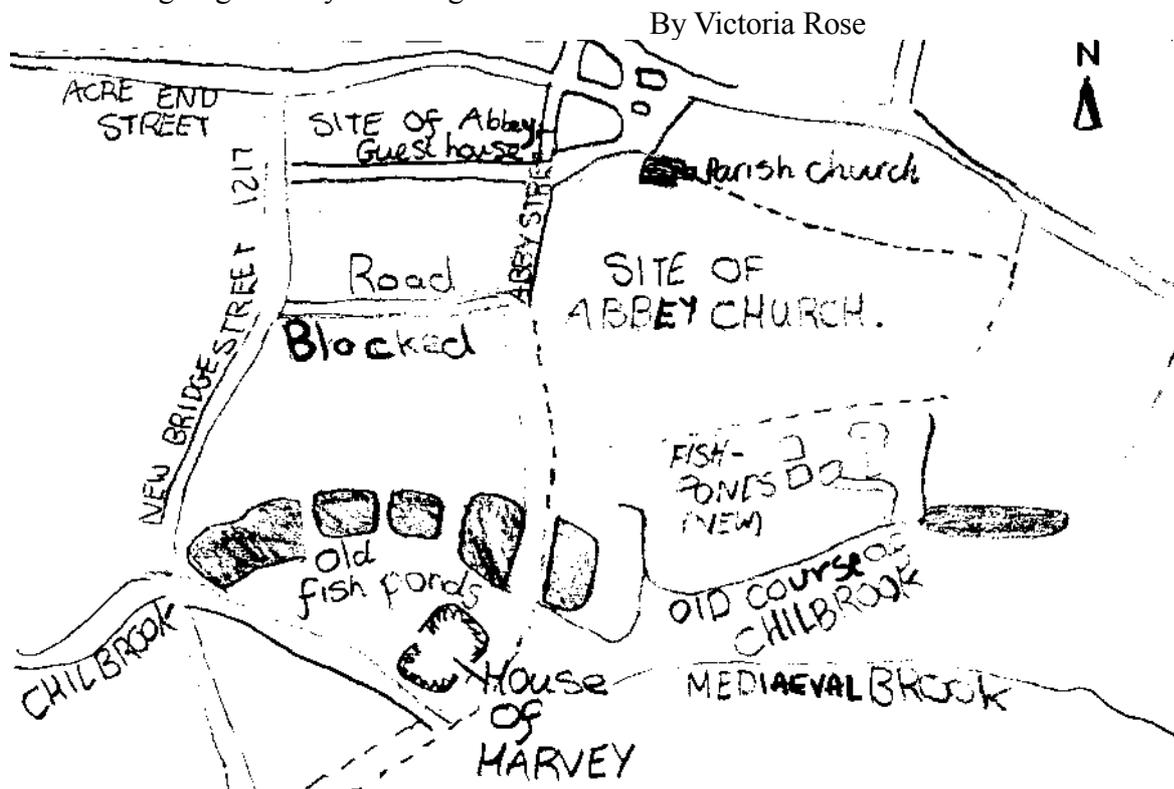
We went on a trip to the fish ponds, down by the old Abbey. When we were walking to the ponds, we saw a skull. Mrs Richards thought it may have been a sheep's skull. Unfortunately, we did not have a bag to carry it in, so we could not bring it back to school to examine. The walk to the ponds was very muddy, we saw a badger's set along the way. The ponds were full of reeds. We had to take a big step to get across to the other side of the old Chilbrook stream. We saw water that had been frozen by the cold weather. We also saw the old farm of which part looks ruined.

by Grace Shayler.

This term we have been studying farms so we thought it would be appropriate to investigate the local fish ponds. The fish ponds belonged to the abbey for breeding fish. They are now overgrown by nettles and greenery. As we walked around the old circular walk we discovered several items, for a start we found a sheep's skull, that's a sign that there was farm life around the area. We also discovered a little stream as we rummaged through the foliage. It looked as though it came from the top of the hill down past the fencing and down to the fish ponds. We actually found one fish pond that you see where a stream flowed along and into it. We could also see a lot of water plants that gave us a lot of clues to which ponds were cared for the most. Along the landscape you could see what looked like ditches which were in fact what we know were the ponds of the abbey. These are some of the reasons why we know they are fish ponds and not ditches.

- 1)The ditches were surrounded by water plants.
- 2)The abbey documents describe some sort of ponds
- 3)Aerial photographs have confirmed the information in the documents.

We have learned from this trip that if you look a little closer at nature you can find out amazing facts without going out of your village.



SWINFORD FARM

Mr Whelan contacted Mrs Hilda Cornish (nee Franklin) who now lives in Watchet, and she has sent us some wonderful documents about Swinford Farm. The documents include letters from the Earl of Abingdon to her Grandfather, copies of An Account Book from 1837, extracts from the Household Accounts and a recipe from her grandmother's recipe book for Orange Wine which we are trying out, although in much smaller quantities.

Orange Wine 1929
Mrs Treadwell's Recipe
90 Seville Oranges
9 Gallons of Water
32 lbs of Loaf Sugar
Break up Sugar & put it into
the Barrel where it will remain
Peel Oranges very thin
Squeeze out all juice
Strain & put in barrel on
the Sugar
Then have two pans, put
peel in one - pulp in other
Pour in each 2 qts water let
it remain 24 hours
then strain & put in cask
add same quantity of water
& repeat process every day for a
week then barrel ought to be
full. Press and put some
quantity of water each time

Orange Wine 1929

Mrs Treadwell's Recipe

90 Seville Oranges
9 Gallons of Water
32 lbs of Loaf Sugar
Break up Sugar & put it into
the Barrel where it will remain
Peel Oranges very thin
Squeeze out all juice
Strain & put in barrel on
the Sugar
Then have two pans, put
peel in one - pulp in other
Pour in each 2 qts water let
it remain 24 hours
then strain & put in cask
add same quantity of water
& repeat process every day for a week
then barrel ought to be
full. Be sure and put same
quantity of water each time

because I will have
to be round there
catching rabbits soon.

Yours faithfully
J. W. McKeuzie

Mr Thomas Franklin
Swinford Farm
W. Wykeham

Wykeham
near Oxford
Oct. 29th 1897.

Dear Sir,
Mr. Franklin
was speaking to me about
you removing your wire -
netting from the side of
your arable field to the
wood side. I see no
reason why you should
not do so providing
you put the wire on
your own land &
the sooner the better.

A letter dated 1897 and
addressed to Mr Thomas
Franklin of Swinford
Farm about wire netting
which needs to be
moved.

Mrs Treadwell whose recipe we have seen was Mrs 'Polly' Clifton's mother. She was in
service with the Franklins and Polly's father also worked on Swinford Farm.

Polly's mother in her uniform.

Polly with her parents

January 1914.

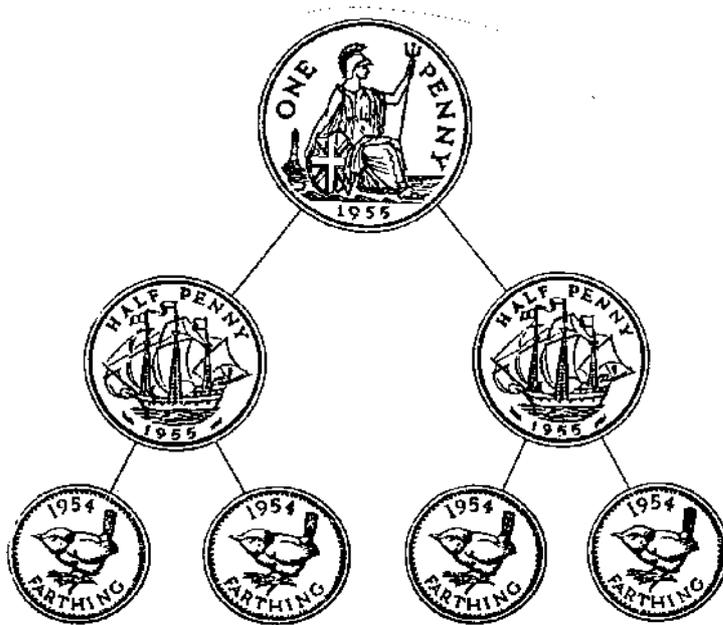
1	MFHowe 2/6 Bason 3 1/2		2	9 1/2
3	Church 7d Magazine		1	7
	Laxative Vegetable			10
6	Rent & board to 7th	£1	1	0
6	Gloves 1/3. 1/2 Ch Asey [?]		1	5 1/2
14	Rent & board	£1	1	0
	Confection Senna			2
	Frilling Veiling & Band		1	8
21	Rent & Board	£1	1	0
23	Note Paper 8. 1/2 Oranges 1/-		1	8 1/2
	Flanelette 1/- Stamps 1/-		2	0
30	Biscuits 4. 1/2 Washing		1	2
31	2 Collars 1/3 Lace 7. 1/2		1	10 1/2
	Rent & board to 28th	£1	1	0
		£4	19	3 1/2

The writing in the Account Book is difficult to read, although we all had a try to read it, so why don't you? We will be pleased to hear from anyone who can find a better reading, particularly of the item after Gloves.

We think the accounts for January 1914 are as follows

1	MFHowe 2/6 Bason 3.1/2		2	9.1/2
3	Church 7d Magazine 1/-		1	7
	Laxative Vegetable			10
6	Rent & board to 7th	£1	1	0
6	Gloves 1/3.1/2 Ch Asey [?]		1	5.1/2
14	Rent & board	£1	1	0
	Confection Senna			2
	Frilling Veiling & Band		1	8
21	Rent & Board	£1	1	0
23	Note Paper 8.1/2 Oranges 1/-		1	8.1/2
	Flanelette 1/- Stamps 1/-		2	0
30	Biscuits 4.1/2 Washing		1	2
31	2 Collars 1/3 Lace 7.1/2		1	10.1/2
	Rent & board to 28th	£1	1	0
		£4	19	3.1/2

Before 1972 and the introduction of the decimal system we used the imperial system of measuring, and money was counted in pounds, shillings and pence and parts of pence. A pound was worth 20 shillings, A shilling was worth 12 pence and a penny could be divided into halfpennies and farthings (quarter pennies). You see it was important to know about fractions in those times because you were always adding up farthings and halfpennies.



A Halfpenny (written 1/2d.) is worth half a Penny.

There are 2 halfpennies to 1 penny.

A Farthing (written 1/4d.) is worth a quarter of a Penny.

There are 4 farthings to 1 penny.

ODD INFORMATION ABOUT EYNSHAM

Mrs Eileen Mace brought our attention to a leaflet which was brought out for tourists in 1971. It is in three languages, English, French and German.

Among other things it says *An ancient custom, The Lamb Ale was performed here until the latter half of the 19th century - it bears traces of an ancient sacrifice and was almost unique in Oxfordshire. "The Sport of the Lady's Lamb" is described as follows: , the Maids of the town, having their thumbs tied behind them, ran after a lamb; and she that with her mouth takes hold of the lamb is declared the Lady of the Lamb. She was then taken to the Green, and the rest of the day was spent in glee and mirth. Next day the lamb was cooked for the Lady's Feast when she sat majestically at the upper end of the table, her attendants with her.*

The same leaflet also claimed that 'Eynsham Pickled Eggs' were famous, with people walking up from the river to sample them. As the leaflet has got the two John Bartholomews [one the carpenter, the other the goldsmith] mixed up, we would be interested to hear from anyone who can throw more light on these Eynsham peculiarities.

The Good History Quiz Page

If you are not busy over the coming weeks making your Orange Wine perhaps you would like to have a go at some pre-1972 arithmetic.

1. I had 5s. I spent 3s.8d. How much have I left?
2. David had 11 s.6d. He bought a ball for 2s. and a pencil box for 3s.6d. Then his uncle gave him 4s. How much had David then?
3. To get to work Father paid 5d. on the bus and 1 s.9d. on the train. How much did it cost him to go to work and back home again?
4. Jack has 6 pennies, Jim has the same number of half-pennies and Tom has the same number of farthings. How much have they altogether?
5. Mother pays the milkman 5s.7d a week. How much does she pay in a month (4 weeks)?
6. Add up the following things and discover what sum of money they make.

A poorly fish
A boy's name
An old form of transport
A singer
A weight
Mars, Saturn, Venus
A girl's name
A kind of pig
A maker of leather

7. The following are old titles for various occupations, most of which are associated with country life. Can you identify who or what they were?

a) Leightonward
b) Litster
c) Pikeman
d) Whittawer
e) Cafender
f) Costermonger
g) Hacker
h) Badger
i) Ackerman
j) Lavender
k) Hillier
l) Cashmarie
m) Elliman
n) Caffler
o) Furner
p) Couper
q) Pigman
r) Hogringer
s) Lorimer

If answers are handed into the School or No. 6 Abbey St. by 6th January they will be considered for a prize!