

The Elsworth Chronicle 21st Anniversary Edition



Holy Trinity Church

Issue No. 30

December 2011

ELSWORTH CHRONICLE

[Established 1990]

Editor: Alan Farrow. The Old Rectory, Elsworth,
Cambridge CB23 4JQ Tel: 01954 267472

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CHEESE AND WINE EVENING

A cheese and wine evening was held in the Sports Club pavilion on the 14th October in aid of the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

An enjoyable time was had by approximately forty people who attended and, aided by a raffle, the sum of £325 was raised for the Poppy Appeal. Many thanks to everyone who supported the event.

The total amount collected for the Poppy Appeal was the magnificent sum of £1661.

Roger Fensom

ELSWORTH COMMUNITY SHOP

What a delight it is to have a shop again in the village. It is so attractively set out inside and so well stocked - the Shop Steering Committee well deserves the marked appreciation and congratulations of us all. Now the shop's success lies in the hands and purses of the people of Elsworth. With its creation, the venture is not over but just beginning - the stage has been set so that action may result.

In a way, the re-emergence of a shop in Elsworth may be likened to a relay race, with the baton passing through the hands of successive people or groups, all of whom had [or have] its destiny in their hands. To pursue this simile, at the outset [the closure of B & A News] it was necessary to obtain professional advice not only as to the feasibility of a shop in a village such as Elsworth, but also embracing organisational structure, vital contacts and the all-important fund raising. Such backing would at least bring us to the starting line.

Feelings were low with the loss of the post office and shop, but fortunately the writer of these words was able to make contact with a consultant - Ian Toye - of a charity which specialises in promoting and supporting community shops. Ian was interested and prepared to discuss the matter further. ***In the form of the relay simile, the gun had set us off.***

A stumble followed near the outset when a small appraisal meeting in the village was convened but only one of the nine invited turned up to join us. Luckily for Elsworth Ian Toye did not pack his brief-case in disappointment but was prepared to accept our eagerness and go on to speak at a meeting of parishioners. Momentum was now gathering - the church, where the meeting was held - was not far from overflowing and the strength of feeling in favour of a shop was overwhelming. Volunteers for a steering committee came forward - ***the baton was now speeding along*** and the Committee has worked wonders to bring us to where we are now.

In paying tribute to the members of the Steering Committee and the ever-cheerful team of volunteer shop assistants, appreciation should not be lost of the vital role of our consultant advisor Ian Toye. It was Ian who presented draft business plans without which no funds would be forthcoming; it was Ian who was able to put us in line for £40,000 if we could fund-match with £20,000; it was through him that the experiences of other shops he had assisted in establishing could be drawn on, including the all-important cash projections and likely stock flow. We have been so fortunate in sharing his expertise. He gave us an excellent start. ***Now the baton is in the hands of the householders of Elsworth - we must carry it forward to the next generation.***

Alan Farrow

Obituary



Noreen Armstrong

Wherever she went Noreen brought good cheer, and her infectious laughter had been a feature of the Elsworth scene for so many years - in fact Noreen had been part of Elsworth and Elsworth part of her for some 84 years.

Noreen was born in Gamlingay in 1925, and came to Elsworth when her parents decided to move here when she was two years of age. She was one of five children in the family. Sadly her mother died when Noreen was only 11 years of age but the family stayed together as her sister Aileen took on her mother's role. Noreen attended our village school in Brook Street, and when she left she worked at Papworth Industries and was later to become housekeeper for a number of families.

Noreen met her husband George when he was stationed in the village during the war as a guard at the prisoner of war camp at Boxworth Road. They were married here in January by the Rev. Audrey of 'Thomas the Tank Engine' fame and

were to have three children - Carol, George and Denis - and six grandchildren. Sadly George senior died in February 2005 - an obituary was included in the December 2005 edition of the Elsworth Chronicle. During his last 25 years he had been an invalid, and Noreen dedicated herself to his care and well-being.

Her family was the centre of Noreen's life - she was so proud of her children and grandchildren. She entered into the life of the village being, for example a member of the Jubilee Club and a regular attender at the Elsworth Lunches at the George and Dragon. She remained fully active until the closing phases of her life. Noreen will be sadly missed not only by her family but also by so many in the village.

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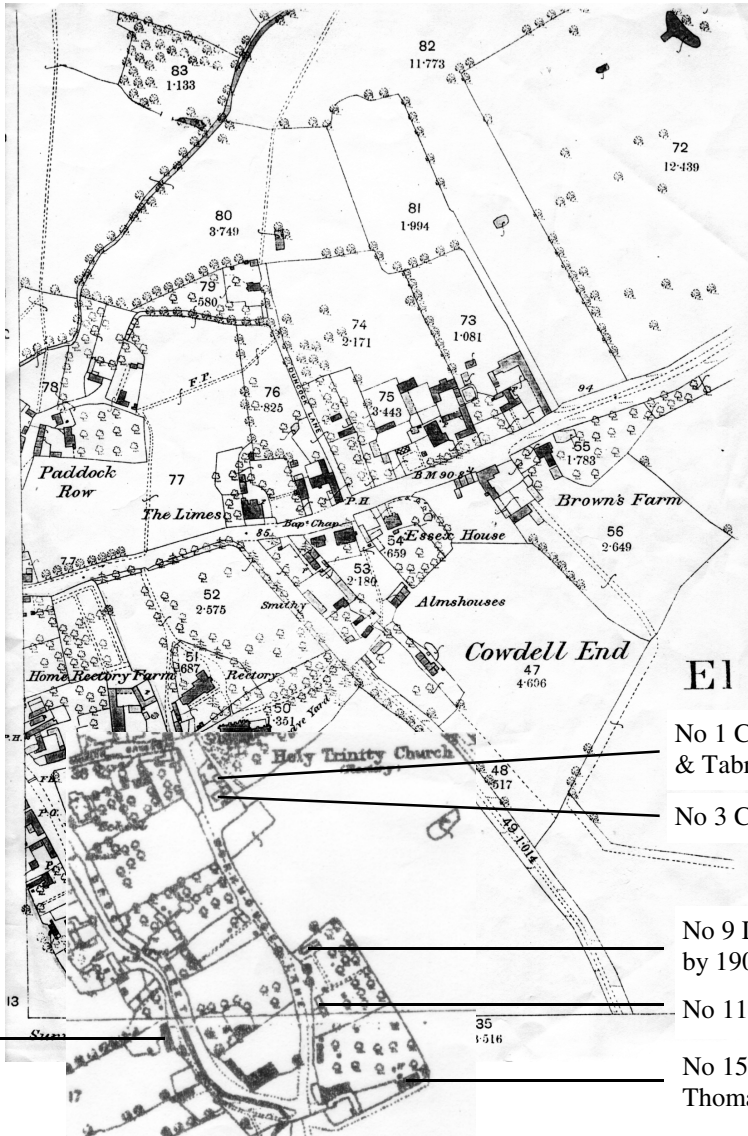
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Dwellings in Church Lane with possible occupants' names

CHURCH LANE FROM 1841 TO 1911

By John Catto

It is possible you may have wondered why the numbers along Church Lane are so jumbled: on the 'even' side they jump from 2 to 10, 12,14, then 18, 20, not 22, ending at 24, whereas the 'odd' side [which has more houses] finishes at No. 15. My own interest in all of this began when I tried to find some information about who may have lived at No.11 over the course of three centuries.

The fact is, house numbers are a relatively modern invention, and while scanning old census records [available at www.ancestry.co.uk] I found that the enumerator invariably assigned a schedule number as he collected the results from the head of each household, but this number bore no relation to the street numbers that we are now familiar with. Indeed Church Lane was rarely named as such, being referred to variously as 'near the church' and Howlatt's Causeway, as shown in Table 1 below. Worse still, in the 1881 census, what we now call The Drift was misleadingly listed as Church Lane. Also, the old name that historians always mention 'Workhouse Lane' was never used on a census form for Elsworth. My guess is that the vast majority of houses in the village were owned by farmers or similar landlords, and the families living in them as tenants were largely agricultural labourers, even down to boys as young as eleven or twelve. We possibly forget just how labour-intensive agriculture was, right up until tractors were introduced.

Table 1: Street Names used for Church Lane on Census forms

1841	Howlet Corsway and The Lusen Close
1851	Streets were not named in this census
1861	Howlett's Causeway
1871	Church Lane [includes Lucerne Field]
1881	Howlett's Causeway [includes Lucerne Field]
1891	Near the church, Howlatt's Causeway and Lucerne Field
1901	Church Cottages, Howlatt's Causeway and Lucerne Field
1911	Howlatt's Causeway and Lucerne Cottage

Old maps indicate a variation in the number of dwellings, and it is not

always easy to distinguish actual houses from barns and outbuildings. Nevertheless, it is fairly clear that some cottages fell into disrepair and were eventually abandoned. As farm-related jobs diminished, and young people migrated to the towns to find work in service or in factories, dwellings became less densely occupied or were abandoned altogether. By tracing through the census records available on-line, it has been possible to relate old dwellings to modern numbering, as suggested on the map on page 6. Attaching a definite family name to any particular house, however, is much more difficult, as none of the enumerators used a house number as such. Nevertheless, from legal documents I have been able to discover that in 1906 numbers 11a,b and 15a,b,c were occupied by the five families Brand, Warden, Thomas, Ninson and Parnell. It's likely that Warden is a misprint for Murden, and Ninson for Hinson. These are all names familiar from census forms going back 50 years. No.13a,b had disappeared by 1906, though it was re-built as a single house around 1960, and the row of three cottages at the top of No.15's plot were ruinous by that time. The pair 18a,b sat right at the edge of the lane, where there is a concrete platform now, whereas the three cottages in the Lucerne Field were someway down the slope. 9a,b were slightly up the slope on the opposite side of the lane, but not as high up as 15a,b,c. There was no house where Upperfield is now: 5a,b was set lower down, near the edge of the Lane. Between 3a,b and 5a,b there was a wide gap, providing access to the large Glebe field beyond it; this had two ponds near the hedgerow below The Drift. In the south-west corner of the churchyard there remains to this day a small gate in the old boundary wall, for the footpath that ran all the way along the demarcation between the Glebe and the cottage gardens below.

Table 2: Number of dwellings occupied in Church Lane
from 1841 to 1911

Year	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911
Dwellings occupied	20	20	20	21	17	16	11	9

Another mystery remains, who or what was Howlett or Howlatt? Actually, Howlet is another spelling of Owlet, a young owl, but it seems

more likely that a farmer or landowner called Howlatt reinforced the lower end of Church Lane and it subsequently became known as his Causeway. I would be interested to see any old map or document that might confirm this. The internet offers us a wealth of readily-accessible information, but vast quantities of papers still lie unscanned and effectively invisible in archives and libraries, and doubtless many more remain undisturbed somewhere in 'grandma's attic'.

Trawling through recorded incidents in the village's history to focus on Church Lane inhabitants has proved rewarding. The following are noted in the Elsworth and Knapwell Chronicle.

June 1864 An accident of a serious nature happened to a boy named Frederick Braybrook. It appeared he was driving a dungcart when the horse ran off as he was riding in the cart; he endeavoured to get out and fell on to the hard road. A man was working near at the time, saw him, and went to his assistance. He was placed in a cart and conveyed home when Mr. Brook, Surgeon at Caxton, was sent for, who was quickly in attendance, and upon examination found a severe fracture in the back of the head: he gave no hopes whatever of the boy's recovery.

Note. In 1901 a Frederick Braybrook is noted as living at Howlatt's Causeway. At the time he was 45 years of age, which would make his date of birth 1856 - 8 years of age, then, in 1854. It would seem he made a miraculous recovery.

June 1864 A man by the name of Hinson was in a windmill during his dinner time to ascertain if his grist was done, and having a mind to try his skill at drawing up the sack [contrary to the wishes of the miller] got his hand entangled in the pulley wheel of the sack tackle, by which means the middle finger was smashed and one or two others injured. [Could this be the Robert Hinson of the 1891 census? Perhaps unlikely as he would only have been 14 years old at the time, although, on the other hand, this was of working age.]

September 1884 W.Parnell was at work on a tree in this village when one of the branches broke and he fell on to his bill, severely cutting his knee. He was conveyed to Addenbrookes Hospital and is progressing favourably.

July 1940 [But outside the period under review]

Mrs Emma Circus of Church Lane, aged 75, was severely burned when her pinafore caught fire, and died in hospital. Mrs Amy Fenson of Brook Street identified her mother. She said she had good eyesight but was severely deaf and had high blood pressure. Witness was sent for to her mother's house and found her sitting in a chair with her clothes burnt. Her mother told her she had been putting sticks on the oven grate for the morning when her pinafore caught alight. Her father, an invalid who could not get around well, had tried to put the fire out with a brush and burned his hands. Mrs Circus went into the other room and poured water over herself. The pinafore of net had been a birthday present from her daughters.

Arthur William Childerley of Church Lane, labourer, was at home when he heard a man calling and saw smoke coming from the Circus's house. He went in and found the room full of smoke and Mrs Circus's clothes burning, and beat out the material with a brush and pulled off the pinafore. The doctor at Addenbrooke's said Mrs Circus had burns to about one third of her body, and she died a week later of cardiac failure and pneumonia following shock.

June 1936 A house occupied by Mr. & Mrs W. Murden was struck by lightning, which hit the chimney and damaged the bedroom.



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A VIEW FROM THE BACK BENCH

There would seem to be many stories in children's literature of items being buried so as to be out of sight or mind, only to come to light as the story unfolds. A song of the 'Ink Spots' [I wonder how many now remember that name!] considered items buried under the snow - this though would seem to have its limitations come the thaw.

The above came to mind when I was informed that two items requested for the agenda of the November parish council were not to be included - to remain buried perhaps! In spite of a lengthy exchange of e-mails, it would seem that my efforts alone are making no progress - hence these words, which will serve to bring matters into the public domain, where, in fact they should rightly be, and by so doing hopefully serve to focus minds of our present officers. The items raised are important to parishioners with whom I have spoken, and certainly warrant discussion at the parish council and not be sidelined.

One of the rejected agenda items related to honorarium payments for winding the church clock, which apparently have been allowed to lapse over a long period. When this matter was raised at the March meeting it was kicked into the long grass by the expedient of seeking a report, indicating last payments etc, which is still awaited some eight months i.e. five meetings later. In its stead, the views of another body have been sought on behalf of the parish council, but this cannot negate the issues posed in the agenda item requested. The proposed but rejected item sought [1] to clarify with councillors the background to the commitment of the parish council with respect to payments; [2] to seek opinions as to whether we should rectify with a lump sum the non-payments, now going back several years, and if so by how much?; [3] to seek means by which lack of payments in future years may be overcome, taking into account how it came about that payments were not made over a considerable period; [4] to discuss whether the payment authorised in 2003, raising the amount, remains the agreed amount or should be set higher.

By contrast to the buried item of the clock winding honorarium, the executive placed on the agenda their own item to sanction a payment of £30 per issue for the delivery of the Elsworth Times [£180 a year] without a preliminary background paper being circulated. Why there should be such a different attitude is hard to understand. On the one hand The Elsworth Times is a commercial publication with advertising income of some £2,970 a year and it could surely meet distribution costs out of the £450 per annum **additionally** paid by the parish council? [A request that a similar distribution amount should be paid to the deliverer of the Papworth Surgery News and the deliverer of the Elsworth Chronicle was rejected!!]. In contrast to the amount given without hesitation to the Elsworth Times, a small honorarium for winding the clock is being withheld. It seemed [and seems] intolerable that the parish council's commitment regarding the clock should not be honoured, for it has never been revoked by resolution of the council. The village owes so much to the clock winder, who has undertaken this service over so many years - it demands a **weekly commitment and a somewhat precarious ascent and descent of the unlit interior of the church tower**. It became a parish council responsibility as the clock looks out from the church and clearly serves the village and not those inside the church.

A second item for the agenda was also blocked by our present officers. Many may have noticed the unsightly chain link fence erected by the County Council near Bob Empson's garage. A proposal that a letter be sent to the County seeking permission to disguise it with wooden cladding was not allowed to go forward for discussion, in spite of the fact that the County erroneously stated they were replacing 'like for like'.

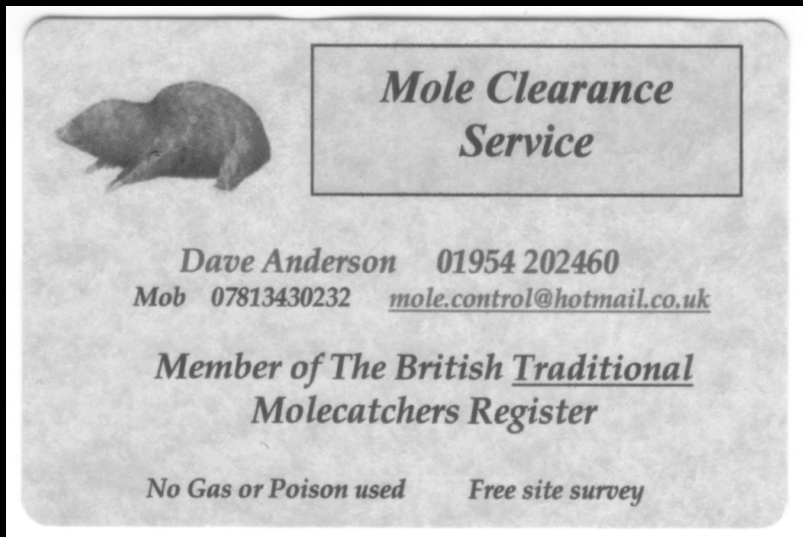
Views of councillors should surely be welcomed not denied. To bury matters because they are not to the liking of an officer contravenes statutory powers - it is for the council to determine at the parish council meeting.

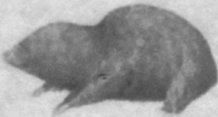
The question now arises is whether those of us on the council are regarded as councillors or as puppets on a string. Or have 'Animal

Farm' days arrived?! Not only are items requested for the agenda now subject to a veto, which is unconstitutional, but as 'Matters Arising' has been abolished as has also 'Any Other Business', it would seem the officers of our parish council have placed themselves in an all-commanding position. This should not be, and it is to be hoped that now there will be a better understanding by our present officers of the responsibilities and limitations of those holding office.

To return to the different treatment accorded the Elsworth Times and clock winding, the unfairness grates. Can more be done? Don Quixote is famed for tilting at windmills; maybe so, but he persevered against what he felt were marked injustices - his spirit, but devoid of fantasies, would not come amiss in Elsworth with focus on the reality of buried issues which need to be brought to light. No doubt the writer will be accused of telling tales out of school, but this is to miss the point that all we do and decide on the council should be available for public scrutiny. We are, after all, the servants of parishioners. Hopefully no more matters will be buried under the snow or sent to the long grass.

Alan Farrow





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ELSWORTH SPORTS CLUB

The cricket season, which finished in September, for Elsworth could be described as 'average'. The first team, playing in Division 3B of the Cambs Junior League, finished the season in fifth place out of nine teams. The second team, playing in Division 5A of the same league, finished the season in seventh place [of eight teams]. Unfortunately two matches had to be forfeited due to a lack of players so anyone interested for next season please contact the club.

After the end of the season much work has taken place on the playing field. The cricket square has been re-laid; fencing has been erected on the perimeter adjacent to the nature reserve in an attempt to reduce the damage to the playing surface by rabbits; and there has been a general tidying of the outskirts of the field.

The football season started at the beginning of September. After entering two teams in the Cambs BIS Juniors League it was discovered just before the start of the season that because a number of players had decided to switch to other clubs one team would have to be withdrawn. In the circumstances the League officials allowed the first team to be withdrawn. The circumstances were disappointing as the first team had finished third last season in Division I, narrowly missing promotion to the Senior League. However, the remaining team has enjoyed a bright start to the season in Division 4B, with a goal difference the best in the division. The team has reached the third round of the John Ablet Cup and is due to play Foxton Reserves on 7th January, having beaten Willingham Wolves in the last round. The team is also into the fourth round of the Lower Junior Challenge Cup and is due to play Stretham Hotspurs on the 14th January 2012.

The remaining home league fixtures for the season are:

17 December	v	Fenstanton Reserves
21 January	v	Burwell Swifts Reserves
28 January	v	Cottenham United A
11 February	v	Chatteris Town A
10 March	v	Willingham Wolves
7 April	v	Milton A
14 April	v	Haddenham Reserves
21 April	v	Benwick Athletic

The table tennis season started at the end of September, with Elsworth fielding two teams in the Ely League. The first team, in Division I is currently second, while the second team in Division II are currently in fourth place. Both teams have drawn byes in the preliminary round of the Handicap Cup and play their first round matches in the week commencing 5th December.

Carpet bowls continues to be played throughout the year on Wednesday afternoons in the pavilion. Bridge sessions take place on various Friday evenings, and whist drives are held monthly on Friday evenings, commencing at 7.30pm.

For further information on club activities contact Bill Knibbs [tel. 267266] or Roger Fensom [267534].

Roger Fensom

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ELSWORTH, KNAPWELL & CONINGTON W.I.

We meet at Elsworth School on the second Wednesday of each month, except August. At most meetings there is a talk and/or a demonstration. The subjects cover a wide range with recent examples including talks on 'The History of the Cam', 'The work of Emmaus', 'Pickwick's Cambridge', and 'The Red Balloon Organisation'.

In August we had a very enjoyable coach trip to Highclere Castle, which is used for the setting of Downton Abbey. All the members are now looking forward to our Christmas Party.

Visitors are always welcome. If you are interested please contact Lyn Hogan [267254] or Isobel Farrow [267472].

Lyn Hogan

JUBILEE CLUB

We meet on the first Thursday of most months in Elsworth School Hall from 2.30 to 4.30pm. We have a speaker or entertainment, afternoon tea and a raffle. Also a good chat with people not seen for a while.

January 5th starts off 2012 with our New Year Lunch at The George and Dragon. If you are thinking of trying us out this may be a good time to start!

For more information please contact Betty [tel: 267470]. You will be made most welcome.

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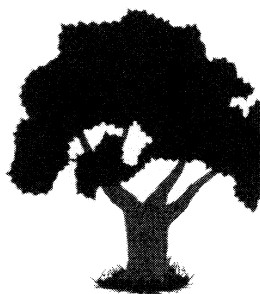
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We meet bi-monthly at the George and Dragon with people gathering beforehand from 12.30 to 12.59pm. If you would like to be informed of the dates of future meals, but are not on our circulation list, please contact Isobel or Alan Farrow on tel. 267472 or e-mail: farrow16@googlemail.com.

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Legal advice

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