

Editorial

'A man travels the world in search of what he needs and returns home to find it.'

George Moore 1852-1933

Once again the Thriplow Society provided a tree for the pleasure of the village, outside the Village Hall. This year the tree came from the Wittering's garden. I should like to thank Bill Wittering, Lewis Stone and David Easthope for putting up the Tree. As the Society's lights and baubles have never turned up since their loss last year, Anthony Cooper kindly gave us some this year, many thanks Anthony.

As one of the aims of the Society is to encourage Social Cohesion, the Barn Dance in November was a wonderful success and a great pleasure to all who took part. Thanks must go to all the Committee and friends who worked so hard to make it such a good evening.

The Society's Committee have yet to arrange next year's programme, if you have a subject for a talk or an outing you would particularly like, please get in touch with Geoff Axe (Chairman) or Anthony Cooper (Secretary).

Plans are going ahead for an open day at Newditch Plantation (see Journal Vol. 16/2, Winter 2008) on Sunday February 1st, meet at the Lodge at 11.0am. The area is noted for its Snowdrops and will be well worth visiting. As Newditch Plantation is a nature reserve please no dogs.

It has been a sad year for the Thriplow Society and the village, we have reported seven deaths of members. Yet membership stands at 83 households, which makes us the largest Society in the village; we try to keep the subscription low and the large number of members means that we can continue to produce the Journal and pay for good speakers.

Our next meeting is on Thursday January 22nd when Jacky Cooper a noted local historian from Clavering will be talking to us about the History of Allotments. Do come.

May we take this opportunity to wish all our members a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

Shirley Wittering and Anthony Cooper, Joint editors

Thriplow 'New Town'

It is easy to kid oneself that Thriplow is a charming rural village which has remained largely unchanged since the Middle Ages. This is reinforced by the Society's own publication "About Thriplow" which concentrates on the oldest, and arguably the most interesting buildings, and on the fact that most of the village is designated a Conservation Area by the planners. The annual Daffodil Weekend also carefully fosters this image, with its Morris Dancers and heavy horses in the streets.

The reality is very different. The village has renewed itself by fits and starts over the centuries so that surprisingly little of it which existed before the First World War still remains.

The chart set out below shows that there are 188 dwellings in the village, 114 of which, or nearly 2/3rds, appear to have been built since the end of the Second World War. Only 46 dwellings, about a quarter, appear to have been built before the First World War. This leaves only 28 which appear to date from the Interwar years. The words "appear to" are used because it is sometimes difficult to date a dwelling which has been extensively modernised, especially if the windows and doors have been replaced.

These percentages do not necessarily represent the actual growth of the number of dwellings in Thriplow as some dwellings would have been built on the sites of others which have been demolished, but it is suggested that they are close enough to gauge the extent of that growth.

The biggest single accretion to the housing stock occurred when Sherald's Croft was built, an estate which comprises about a fifth of the total housing in the village. Pigeons Close, in School Lane, is the only other significant housing development which has taken place in the village.

The growth in the number of dwellings does not reflect the growth in the population of the village as occupancy rates have gone down sharply, (see article on single occupancy in Vol 15/2). 'Bassetts' in Lower Street is said to have been home to at least four and possibly as many as nine families (there is census evidence of four families but not nine!) at one time and Bacon's Manor in Church Street was in multiple occupation until the present owners refurbished the property, as was Cochranes and Manor Farm. The range of houses in Lower Street now called Cochrane's Farmhouse was, until recently, four separate dwellings but is now occupied by one family. In the larger houses there would also have been domestic servants living in.



Flint and slate cottage built in the grounds of 'messuage' in Church Street, Thriplow, 1855



The two houses that replaced the above cottage in 2005. The only acknowledgement of local distinctiveness being the flint wall of the garage.

The scarcity of Interwar development must reflect the parlous state of the English countryside at the time. Most development appears to have taken place during the 1960s and 1970s before stricter planning control was introduced and when the installation of mains electricity and main drainage made development more attractive. It was during this period that many young families arrived in the village, most of them employed in Cambridge and elsewhere. At the same time employment in the local farms declined sharply.

THRIPLow DWELLINGS

	Pre WWI		Interwar		Post WWII		Total
Church Street (a)	17		7		19		43
Middle Street (b)	11				17		28
Lower Street (c)	9		1		6		16
The Green	2		4		3		9
School Lane (d)	1		1		16		18
Sheralds Croft					37		37
Foremans Road	3				7		10
Brook Road (f)			4				4
Lodge Road (e)	2						2
Fowlmere Road	1		11		9		21
Totals	46		28		114		188
Percentages	24		15		61		100

Notes

- (a) Includes Paddock House & Church Paddocks
- (b) Takes Thriplow House as one dwelling plus the lodge
- (c) Excludes "The Green Man"
- (d) Includes the flat in the school
- (e) Includes The Bury as one dwelling
- (f) Takes Thriplow Farms as 4 dwellings

Many of the dwellings built since the end of the First World War are not without interest. Next to the Sheldricks' builders' yard are two pairs of Addison Homes which, although extended and modified, are still examples of the first Council Houses and incorporate a great deal of reinforced concrete. The façade of the Sheldricks' garage/workshop recalls the Art Deco of Odeon Cinemas. The flat roofed bungalow next to the Holmes's in Middle Street was designed by Mr Twiss, an architect and the late husband of Eunice Twiss, who left the

village to live in Girton quite recently. “Lansdown” in Middle Street and 4a Lower Street were designed by the Terrys. 22 Middle Street and “Alderley” in Church Street reflect a style popular about 20 to 30 years ago where the principal reception room is carried into the upper storeyⁱ. Betty Boothroyd’s house was originally in Middle Street; it was taken down and rebuilt on its present site in the 1960s. Professor Martin, of the University School of Architecture, designed Townsend Springs for Lord and Lady Walstonⁱⁱ. Thriplow Farms and the little house adjoining the school reflect a New England style, possibly because Anne Walston hailed from that part of the United States. We now have a selection of recently built or rebuilt houses in Middle Street which demonstrate a wide range of styles. Three old houses now have modern Siamese Twins attached to them sited in such a way as to retain the appearance of the originals namely the Webbers’ Old Bakery on The Green, the Holmes’s house in Middle Street and No 4 Lower Street, the property of the Aldreds.



Old house in Middle Street taken down in 1972 and rebuilt in School Lane

The future of the village must be uncertain, not because of the current financial crisis but because of planning policy. The planners are determined to concentrate all new development on our existing cities and large towns in order to reduce the need for travel. Villages like Thriplow will become enclaves of the seriously well off, dependent on their cars not only to reach their places of employment, shops and other amenities but also upon services provided by tradespeople coming in from elsewhere, thus tending to increase the amount of travelling which urban concentration was intended to reduce.

Anthony Cooper

ⁱ It is understood that this feature has now been removed from 4a Lower Street

ⁱⁱ It is understood that it was Professor Martin’s only private commission.

THE VILLAGE CONSTABLE



Arthur Alfred Chamberlain, the last parish constable of Thriplow, pictured with his wife Emily at their Golden Wedding in 1957

In 1285 King Edward I of England "constituted two constables in every hundred to prevent defaults in towns and highways", but these officers were a far cry from the local village constable who were originally elected by the parish, and from 1617 elected by the JPs, (Justice of the Peace).

The first documented mention of Thriplow's village Constable is from the Overseer's Accounts for 1765 when there were two constables, Bennet Cranwell and John Cowling; there were two constables until 1782 when only one was mentioned Bennet Cranwell Junior, his father having become Churchwarden. It seems to have been the lowliest parish job, rising through the ranks of Surveyor, Churchwarden and finally Overseer of the Poor. His job was to see that law and order was carried out, taking those arrested to Cambridge Goal and making sure vagrants and vagabonds were chivvied out of the parish. In 1784 the Constable's budget taken from the parish Rates was £18-7-8½.

By 1835 parishes were spending more than other local bodies put together, amounting in total to one fifth of the budget of the National Government. This was largely due to the economic depression and the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, leading to extensive unemployment and thus a great increase in the expenditure by parishes on poor relief. Apart from this, parishes were liable for the maintenance of the church and its services, keeping the peace, the repression of vagrancy, the relief of destitution, mending of roads, suppression of nuisances, the destruction of vermin and the furnishing of soldiers and sailors.ⁱⁱ

Something had to be done and in 1888 County Councils were formed and in 1894 the Local Government Act instituted Parish Councils, a secular body, elected by Rate Payers, and separate from the church which continued to run its own affairs as Parochial Church Councils, (PCC).

But the office of Constable continued, merely transferring to the Parish Council from the Vestry. I have yet to find a list of Parish Constables but in 1937, David Wade retired as Parish Constable after 21 years. Every year it was his job to make sure the vans left the Green after the 'Feast' early. He was replaced by Mr A A Chamberlain, Tony Charter's great grandfather, assisted by Mr Cecil Gambie.

In 1940 the office of Parish Constable expired.



Truncheon belonging to Arthur Chamberlain, note the 'V' of 'V R' at one end the royal coat of arms in the middle and the beginning of the word 'Triplow' by the handle. I should like to thank Toni Charter and Colin Fuller for their help.

Shirley Wittering

Source – A Century of Cambridgeshire Parish Councils, 1894 – 1994, Kenneth Batchelor, Cambridgeshire Public Libraries, 1994.

A Saracen's Mystery Photo

This picture below was given by Wendy Gregory, it shows the Saracen's Head pub with the Green and Smithy beyond. Standing outside are a woman and a man holding a horse; behind them is a horse and cart tethered to the fence. The woman is wearing a long white apron and a knitted shawl with a small hat; the man is in working clothes with a cap. You can just make out that there is writing above the door, showing that it was still a pub or had recently ceased to be one.



The picture below is from Martin Sheldrick and shows children dancing round the Maypole at the Bury in 1922.



‘WE SHALL REMEMBER THEM’

*They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn.*

For some time Peter Speak and I have wanted to write about the people whose names are on the Thriplow war memorial, but were held back by lack of information. Now the 90th anniversary of the First World War and more information on line make it a good time to start. Depending on how much information we can access we will feature one or more people in each edition of the journal. We would certainly like to hear from anyone who has memories or pictures of the people mentioned.

There are 14 names from the First World War and three from the second. Details in italics are from: www.roll-of-honour.com/Cambridgeshire/Thriplow.html

Allan SKILLINGS

Private 3/9262 2nd Bn., Suffolk Regiment who died on Thursday, 22nd April 1915. Age 31. Son of Thomas and Sarah Skillings, of Thriplow, Royston; husband of Edith Ruth Skillings, of Thriplow, Royston. Buried in WYTSCHAETE MILITARY CEMETERY, Heuvelland, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium. Grave III. C. 14.



Under this picture in the newspaper it reports that:

‘Private Allan Skillings, of the 2nd Suffolk (aged 31), who was the village blacksmith of Thriplow, Cambs. was mortally wounded in the trenches on April 22nd (1915), and died upon reaching the hospital. He had served in the South African War and was in the Reserves on the outbreak of war. He was a typical soldier, of fine physical proportions, and was sent in a few weeks to France. The Sergeant of his Company, in a letter to Mrs Skillings, said “We regret very much to lose such a good man out of the Company as he was respected and loved by everyone.” His widow – a daughter of Mr and Mrs Wiggins, of Market Hill, Royston – is left with five little children. A memorial service was held at Thriplow Church on May 5th, and on Sunday evening, May 2nd, the vicar, Rev H F G James, feelingly referred to the sad event.’

Allan Skillings, as reported was the son of Thomas Skillings the village blacksmith and we are lucky to have several pictures of the family given us one Daffodil Weekend by a descendant of Allan Skillings.



Alan Skillings standing by the door of the Smithy



Allan Skillings, his wife Edith and their children William, Harry, Lilian, Walter and Ada (later Johnson, middle front) at their house in Lodge Road (Lower Street) 1913

We shall feature Leonard Hagger in the next issue of the Thriplow Journal.

“WELCOME TO THRIFLOW”

For the past ten years or so the Society has published a little eight page booklet with the above title. As best as we can, we try to give a copy to all new residents of the village. The idea is that it gives them information about services available in the village and around to overcome that difficult period when they move into a strange place and don't know what goes on there. It also acts as a bit of publicity for the Society for we hope that having read about us, they will come along to a meeting and become members. In the past, this booklet has resulted in the recruitment of several new members.

The booklet deals with public transport, local government, places of worship, schools, shopping, doctors' surgeries, local services, clubs and societies, nearby places to visit etc.

Of course, we have to know when a house changes hands or when people move into a newly built house. This is where you come in. If you are aware of a change of resident in a property near you, please tell us. Ring Bill Wittering on 208269.

If you have not seen a copy of this booklet, we will have some on the table at the next few meetings. They are given free of charge to the new residents. If you would like one, we have to make a token charge of £1. If you know of something you think should be included in it, please tell us.

The content is prepared by Bill Wittering and Pat Easthope and is typed and printed by Pat. The content changes so rapidly that we need a new edition practically every year.

Bill Wittering



THE WEATHER IN 2008

2008 will be remembered for its wetness, its dull days and the lack of high temperatures. The hottest day was 88°F on 5th August and the coldest night was 7th February when the thermometer dropped to 19°F. The gardeners among us will remember having the ‘best’ show of weeds for years but runner beans put up a poor performance and small slugs enjoyed boring their way into potatoes.

2008 – Temperature and Rainfall

	2008		Mean 1980-2008	
	°F	°C	°F	°C
Daytime temperature	60.1	15.6	58.4	14.7
Night time temperature	45.3	7.4	47.8	8.8
Average day/night	52.8	11.5	53.1	11.7
	2008		Record 1980-2008	
Hottest day	88 (28 Jul)	31.1	97 (3.8 90)	36.1
Coldest night	18 (7 Feb)	-7.8	10 (31.1.87 & 12.12.91)	-12.2
	2008		Annual Mean 1982-2008	
	Inches	Mm	Inches	Mm
Rainfall	29.2	741.7	23.0	584.2

Precipitation

Rain fell on 189 days in 2008 compared with 116 in 2007. In fact, 2008 was the wettest year since 2001. The driest February (0.6”) since 1999 was followed by the wettest March (3.6”) I have recorded since I began collecting weather data in 1982. The only snow we had fell on Easter Sunday, March 23rd, but it was the earliest Easter since 1913 and the next one as early will not occur until 2228!

The last frost of Spring was on 20th May (71 days later than 2007) and the first frost of winter was on 28th October (9 days later than 2007).

Guy Fawkes Night

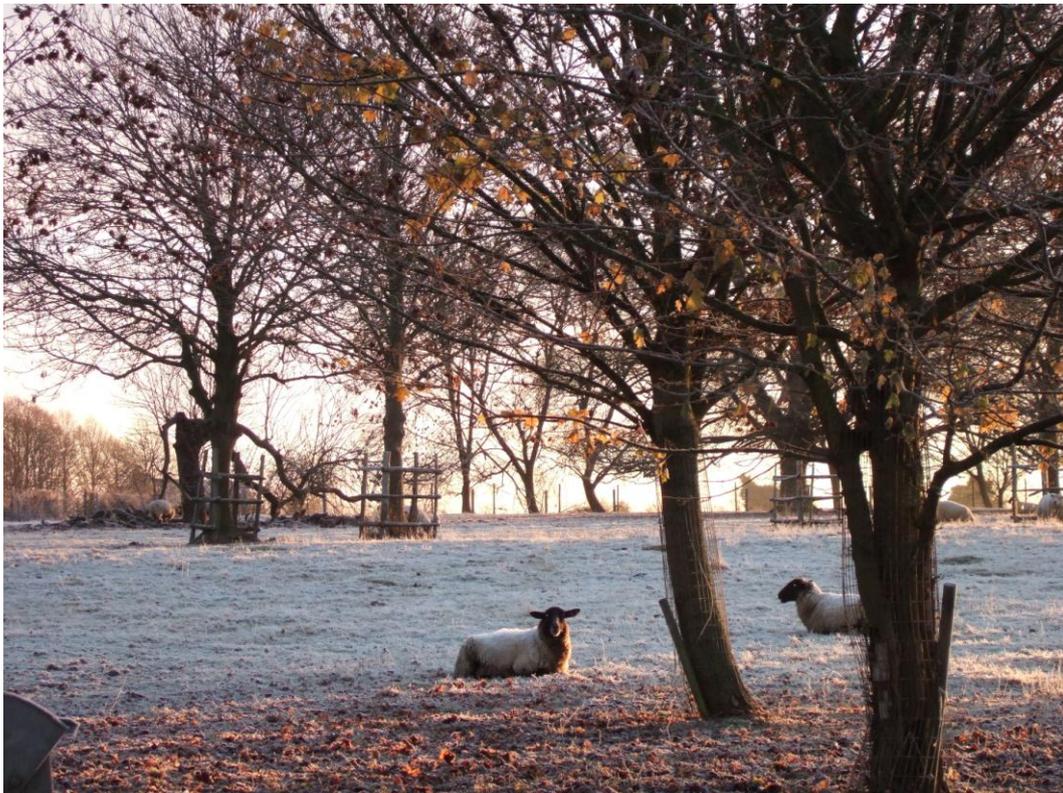
November 5th was dull and drizzly with a temperature of 56 degrees F, not one of the best nights for blowing up parliament!

Daffodil Weekend (12th and 13th April)

The Saturday was mainly sunny with the odd shower giving 1.2 mm of rain. It was relatively warm and the temperature rose to 59 degrees F. The Sunday was similar with 4.4 mm of rain and a temperature of 59 degrees F which dropped to 52 degrees in the rain.

Fewer people seem to be concerned about global warming now. Christopher Booker, a *Telegraph* columnist wrote on 31.12.2008: “Easily one of the most important stories of 2008 has been all the evidence suggesting that this may be looked back on as the year when there was a turning point in the great world panic over man-made global warming”.

Bill Wittering



Frosty morning in the View

TREES OF THRIFLOW

8 The Monkey Puzzle



Chile Pine in grounds of Whitehall, Fowlmere

A strange name for a tree whose proper name is Chile Pine (*Araucaria araucana*) – named after a tribe of South American Indians, the Araucanians, for whom the seeds were part of their diet. Although it is called Chile Pine, it is not a pine at all but it is nevertheless a conifer. The experts have put it in a family called the Chile Pine family. It is a strange looking tree in that it is covered all over with spiky scales which are very sharp and stay on the tree for many years but eventually drop off, except in the crown. The tree produces excellent, virtually knot-free, timber and bears enormous cones containing edible nuts.

Naturally, it grows in Chile and the bordering part of the Argentine though there are now said to be more growing in the gardens of Britain than in their native homeland. One reason for their scarcity is that they are not very happy growing in forest conditions and, for that reason, in 1990 the Chilean Government declared the Chile Pine a national monument!

They first came to Britain in 1795 as a result of a famous Scottish plant collector named Archibald Menzies who was dining in Chile one evening and was unable to identify some nuts on the table. He put a few into his pocket; some of them sprouted on the way home and the resulting plants became part of rare plant collections in Britain. It is thought to be then

that a visitor to one of these estates saw a Chile pine and remarked that it would puzzle any monkey to climb it, hence the common name which stuck to it from then onwards.



Top of same tree showing cones.

You may have noticed an item in the *Daily Telegraph* of 24th May 2008 reporting that Swansea Council were considering having one of these trees (a 150 year old specimen, 50 ft tall) felled in case school children were hurt by the “syringe-like” needles! It was subsequently reported that the Council had changed their minds.

Sadly, I know of only one Monkey Puzzle in Thriplow and that is a very young one in the front garden of Penny Grant in Church Street. There is another, a mature specimen, in the front garden of the late John Ison's home, “Whitehall”, in Chapel Lane, Fowlmere, and this is shown in Shirley's photographs.

Bill Wittering.

Gleanings

A Great big Thank you to The Committee (and their spouses) who worked so hard in making the Barn Dance on November 15th such a success, first in decorating the Village Hall and then in providing such a delicious home cooked supper which was enjoyed by over 60 people and finally in tidying up afterwards. A big thank you too, to Jackie Lightbody who came and helped us decorate the hall, it looked great. We have made a profit of £527 which will go towards paying for speakers and publishing the Journal. Clive the Caller says he would be happy to come again next year!

Thanks to Wendy Gregory for a lovely photograph of Saracens with the Smithy in the background, probably taken about 1910, we hope to find the names of the two people in it. See item elsewhere in this edition.

Thanks also to Martin Sheldrick from Fowlmere for some fascinating photos of Children dancing round the maypole at the Bury in 1922, one of the children dancing has been identified as Gladys Ward aged 9 (second from left in front), She married Cecil Hawkins from Yeovil Somerset who came to the village to work at the leatherworks in Sawston.

Thanks to Barbara Pointon for giving the Society some vintage folk tunes and music originally collected by Cecil Sharp. Also some newspapers about the robbery in the shop in 1985.

A big thank you to Bill Wittering, David Easthope and Lewis Stone for putting up the Christmas Tree out side the Village Hall and to Anthony Cooper for giving us the lights as the Thriplow Society ones have never been found after their loss last year. Many thank, too, to Geoff Axe for taking down the tree in time for Twelfth Night.

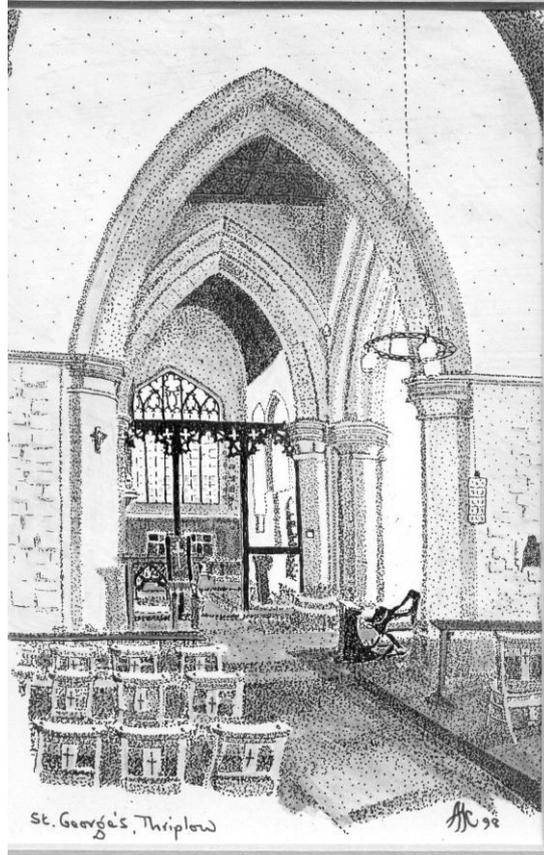
In Memoriam; we are sorry to hear of the death of Tony Webb on Saturday November 22nd. We send our condolences to all his family.

We are also sorry to report the death of Nicholas Terry who died on November 30th, we send our condolences to his family.

We are also very sorry to report the death of Malcolm Perry on Monday December 29th 2008. Malcolm was the Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee and worked hard for the Prostate Cancer Charity. We send our sincere condolences to Brenda and his family.

Our condolences also go to Betty Parker whose husband Cliff died on January 5th 2009.

Next Meeting: Thursday 22nd January 2009, Jackie Cooper on the 'History of Allotments'.



Drawing the Thriplow Church by Anthony Cooper