

East Brent Parish History Group

Meeting 4th September 2013

Meeting Notes

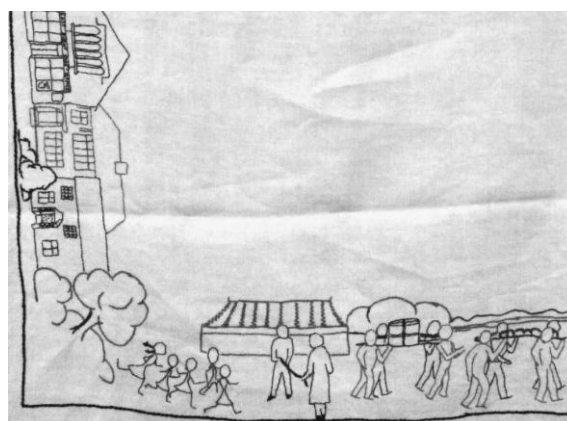
After our summer break the East Brent Parish History Group met on 4th September 2013 in East Brent Village Hall.

Future Talks

We reviewed the suggestion that the Group should have more talks from outside the Group as was discussed at the last meeting. Various speakers have been suggested with topics varying from the Workhouse through Bridgwater Carnival to Postal History. These will again be considered and a schedule made available. Other suggestions for topics would be very welcome.

W.I. Tablecloth

The tablecloth made by Jean Bowman of the W.I. which was mentioned at the last meeting, has now been photographed as a whole and in sections. Part of one section depicting the East Brent Harvest Home is reproduced here. If anyone would like to view it this can be seen by appointment or if you would like a photograph of a section or the whole, please let me know.



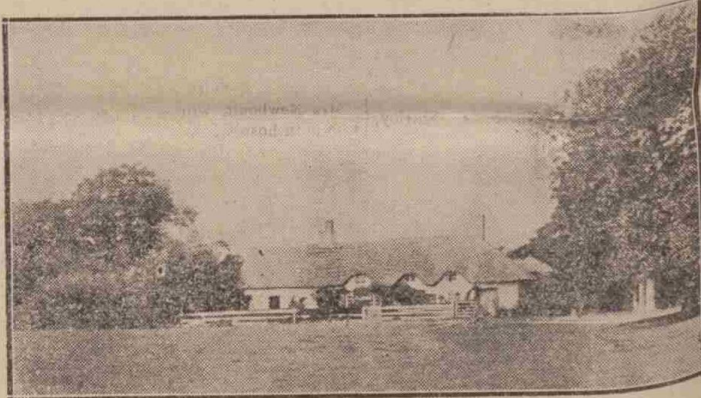
Painting of Nut Tree Farm (The Last Thatch in East Brent)

John Rigarsford mentioned that he had been in contact with Marlyn and Ray Truckle. Marlyn is the granddaughter of Ernie Bishop who was an agricultural contractor as well as a painter and sold many of his paintings (see the meeting report of 6th February 2013). Marlyn was kind enough to offer the painting to the Parish through the EBPHG. This offer has been gratefully accepted and the painting has been collected from them.

It is not actually damaged but the painting and the frame could do with some cleaning and renovation. If there is anyone or who knows anyone with any experience that could assist in its renovation, please could you contact me. We would hope that the painting will eventually be hung in some public place for all to see.

Further information concerning Nut Tree Farm and a debate about its location, comes from the Western Daily Press of nearly 90 years ago. On 20th November 1926 the newspaper published this article and photograph asking if anyone knew the location of the building in the photograph shown here.

WHERE IS THIS HOUSE?



A few days ago we reproduced, for the purpose of identification, the picture given above, from a photograph sent in by a lady residing at Blackpool and whose mother was a Bristolian. Two of our readers believe they have identified the house, but, curiously enough, in different localities.

Mr C. Roberts, of 20, Cornwallis Crescent, writes: "I can identify the house in question. It is situated not very far from Durdham Down, on the way to Coombe Dingle. On entering Parry's Lane (formerly Paddy Well Lane) you will find a small iron wicket gate a little way down, on the right-hand side, and passing through this you will find the house away on the left."

Mr H. Williams, of Oldbury-on-Severn, writes: "This house is situated at Hill, half-way between Thornbury and Berkeley. It was in my younger days (I am now 80) occupied by the Jenkins family. I believe it still has an old-fashioned fireplace. The sweep at Thornbury told me lately it was the only one he now went up when cleaning it. It is still thatched."

Two days later, a reply was received from Miss M. Popham and the article reads:

The Bristol lady's daughter residing at Blackpool set an interesting problem to our readers in asking if anybody could identify the house of which a picture appeared in our columns on November 16 and again on Saturday. We published at the week-end letters written by two readers, one of whom stated that the house in question is situated near Parry's Lane, on the way to Combe Dingle; whilst the other one said it is at Hill, between Thornbury and Berkeley. A third letter has arrived since, saying the house is—or rather was—at East Brent, and enclosing a photograph in which the house appears exactly the same, although the adjoining trees, which are in full leaf in the original photograph, are bare. The writer of this third letter is Miss M. Popham, of Manor Farm, East Brent, who states: "In answer to the advertisement in the 'Western Daily Press', regarding the identification of a photograph of a house, the house is situated in the village of East Brent, near Highbridge, Somerset. It was purchased by my grandfather and my parents lived there for three years after which was pulled down and rebuilt some 16 years ago. At present my grandfather is living in the new building. It was old thatched house called Nut Tree Farm."

So there is more than one photograph of Nut Tree Farm taken at different times of the year. But are there two paintings?. In the "East Brent Memories" booklet there is the following:

Weston Mercury and Somersetshire Herald May 1971

Clerk to East Brent Parish for more than 30 years until her retirement a short time ago, Mrs. Rosa Chivers, of Brent Knoll, has acquired a painting which shows what she thinks may well be the last thatched roof building in East Brent. She writes: "Recently an oil painting of Nut Tree Farm, East Brent, has come into my possession. It was painted by the late Mr. Ernest Bishop of Burton Row, Brent Knoll. The painting shows a thatched farmhouse which is most attractive. You will not find this farm anywhere in the parish today for this building was burnt to the ground. A farm does stand on the same site, although it is comparatively modern and is known by another name. It would seem that this was the last building with a thatched roof in East Brent and maybe within quite a large area. Even today some farms and cottages have traces of thatch under their tiles."

On the back of the painting is written "E W J Bishop 1914". Marlyn's mother does not recollect where the painting came from as it has not always been in their possession. So does the report about Mrs. Rosa Chivers in 1971 refer to the same painting or are there two? If anyone has any information concerning this, please let me know. The painting is again reproduced here. It is understood that Red House Farm is now on the site of Nut Tree Farm



Future Meetings

The next meetings will be on **Wednesday, 2nd Oct. and 6th Nov. 2013** and thereafter on the first Wednesday of each month. All are welcome, please do come along. There are many stories to be told.

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