

East Brent Parish History Group

Meeting Notes for 4th December 2013 & 8th January 2014

As the East Brent & Rooksbridge Magazine is published every two months, this report covers the two meetings held in December 2013 and January 2014.

Laurel Fisher

Laurel had contacted the Parish History Group to ask if anyone can help her find Greens Road near Hurne Lane that was part of Berrow in 1840s and 1850s. Due to efforts by Pete Williams, we now know that Greens Road/Lane is the first right hand turn past the RSPA site on the Brent Road from Brent Knoll to Berrow. It runs for about a mile and then turns left towards the back of the large caravan park and Brean Leisure Park where it joins up with Red Road and Hurne Lane.

Tunnels from Lakehouse Farm to St. Mary's Church

This continues to raise interesting comments from some people and I will endeavour to investigate this rumour/legend further. It is understandable to think that any tunnels built in this area would be expected to readily flood but who knows?

St Mary's Church, Berrow

At the November 2013 meeting there was a talk on St. Mary's Church, Berrow which included a photo of a feature in the wall. No one guessed its purpose so I will now say that it was a "Leper's Squint". Lepers were not allowed to enter the church but could observe service from this viewpoint. It is now closed over but the feature still exists.

Meeting Notes for 4th December 2013.

In the November edition of the Magazine, John Rigarsford published the latest results of the WW1 Roll of Honour which he is preparing to commemorate the centenary of the beginning of The Great War. I was able to pick up and use much of his research to expand on this theme.

The Armistice began on "The Eleventh hour of the Eleventh day of the Eleventh month" of 1918. A front-line soldier is quoted as saying "At 10-59 we were being shelled. 11-00 Silence... The first time in 4 years."

John points out that nearly eighty young men — and maybe young women?, possibly more — from families and farms in East Brent Parish served during the conflict. Eighteen died during active service and sixteen of those are commemorated on the war memorial. After 4 long years our weary soldiers returned home and wives and mothers were reunited with husbands and sons they thought they might never see again.

They came home to a completely different country and way of life to the one they left. Many were suffering the effects of years of hardships and traumatic experiences and would have to live the rest of their lives with the affects of wounds, gas and shell shock. The Women's Rights movement had also gained strength and many of the women who had stepped in to do the absent men's work resented having to stand down after getting used to earning a regular wage. These ex-servicemen returned and integrated back into village life and in many cases have been forgotten! Let us not forget also, the wives and mothers of these young men.

On active service discipline was tough. In serious cases such as striking or disobeying a direct order from a Superior Officer, field punishment Number One was given. This consisted of the convicted man being placed in fetters and handcuffs or similar restraints and attached to a fixed object, such as a gun wheel or post, for up to two hours per day.

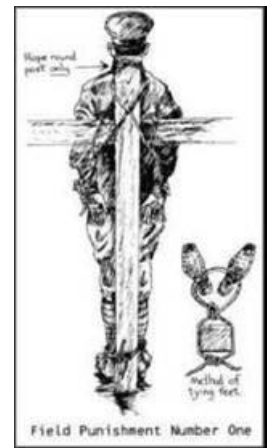
During the early part of World War I, the punishment was often applied with the arms stretched out and the legs tied together, giving rise to the nickname "crucifixion". During World War I Field Punishment Number One was issued by the British Army on 60210 occasions.



John has had a few new names from residents to add to his list such as William Henry(or Arthur) Ham with a photograph. A photograph of Jesse William Ham in uniform has also been provided (left).

If you know or can tell anything at all about the lives of these brave men and women of our East Brent parish and what became of them and their families after the war ended, we would love to include it, please get in touch.

Contact John at jonrig@rooksbridge.org.uk or myself as below.



Meeting Notes for 8th January 2014

This meeting occurred during the Inquiry into the Appeal against the decision by Sedgemoor District Council to reject the Planning Application by Broadview Energy Ltd. for 4 Wind Turbines at the Pilrow site in Rooksbridge. I had been asked by the NoPilrow Ltd. group to provide a Witness Statement to the Inspector on the effects to the Heritage and History of the area and the Levels by the turbines.

I took the opportunity to relate the main features of my statement which covered such wide-ranging topics such as :

Domesday Book, Abbot's Manor, 10,000 year old Cemetary, Battleborough, Monmouth rebellion, Harvest Home, Murmurations, Celebrations on the "Knoll" its Hill Fort & the impact of Wind Turbines on the views, St. Mary's Church and the Church School in 1841.

Unfortunately, there is insufficient space to go into detail here. However, if you would like a copy of my statement, please let me know.

In the interests of fairness and balance, I would like to hear from anyone who feels these turbines could enhance and add to the cultural heritage of our Parish.

Future Meetings

East Brent Parish History Group Meetings take place at 7:00 pm in East Brent Village Hall generally on the first Wednesday of each month.

The next meetings will be on **5th February 2014** and then on **5th March 2014**.

Please note that at the meeting on **2nd April 2014**, Pat Hase will be giving a talk titled:
"The Shadow of the Workhouse".

All are welcome at any meeting. If you have any photos & memories, please bring them along. There are many stories to be told. I look forward to seeing you there.

Colin Loader

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