

Whaddon Scrapbook 1897 to 1990

Facts, Features and (occasional) Fallacies  
reported in Cambridge Newspapers

summarised by

Mike Petty

Most of these stories originally appeared in the Cambridge Daily/Evening/News or the  
Cambridgeshire Weekly News, its sister title.

They are supplemented by some articles published in the  
Cambridge Independent Press or Cambridge Chronicle

Most were featured in my 'Looking Back' column in the Cambridge News from 1996-2014

The complete 'Cambridgeshire Scrapbook' of which this is a small section is published online at  
[bit.ly/CambsCollection](http://bit.ly/CambsCollection)

I have digital and other copies of most of the stories summarised.  
I hope to publish these online one day. If you would like them in the meantime then please get in  
touch.

The original volumes are housed in the Cambridgeshire Collection at Cambridge Central Library  
where there are many other indexes dating back to 1770.

They also have detailed newspaper cuttings files on over 750 topics that have been compiled since the  
1960s.

Newspapers sometimes get things wrong. I copy things out incorrectly. Do check

There are a multitude of spelling and layout errors. Please forgive or correct them

News never stops but this file was finished on 31 August 2016.

I will maintain supplements and corrections – contact me for anything you need

Please make what use of these notes that you may. Kindly remember where they came from

See my website – [www.mikepetty.org.uk](http://www.mikepetty.org.uk) for further notes.

Mike Petty, Stretham

2017

1898 08 23  
Brewster, Whaddon, p2

1904 12 13

Whaddon rectory was completely destroyed by fire. Owing to the inflammable state of the old woodwork and the old-fashioned internal arrangement of the building the fire spread with great rapidity. Whaddon is a peculiarly isolated village and on their arrival Melbourn Fire Brigade saw there was no hope of saving the rectory. It was not sufficiently ancient to be of antiquarian interest nor sufficiently recent to be of modern design. The Rector and his family have suffered considerable inconvenience and much irreplaceable furniture is destroyed but they are none the worse for their terrible experience. Various outlying portions of the Wimpole Estate in Whaddon & Gt Eversden were sold by auction with many being sold to tenants. In Eversden Mr G. Ellis bought a residence with modern bakehouse and shop, three rough-cast and thatched cottages while Holbein Farm sold to Mr Banks. A block of six modern cottages at Whaddon fetched £2,000, three thatched cottages £140 and a small-holding at Whaddon Green £550. Cambridgeshire County Council bought Pickering and Town Farms with various cottages. Only one lot was withdrawn 13 11 28 p2 CIP

1932 04 21

A number of farmers claimed they were unable to pay tithes because of the very bad times they were passing through. Those on heavy land were in a particularly parlous condition. A Whaddon farmer of 80 acres owed £10 13s which was suspended until mid-September to enable him to pay it out of the proceeds of the harvest. An agent for Queen Anne's Bounty agreed to suspend other distraint orders on payment of monthly instalments. 32 04 21

1935 09 03

Six families are rendered homeless and a Methodist chapel has been destroyed at a fire at Whaddon. One man had to jump out of his bedroom windows clad only in a pyjama jacket. The blaze started in an eight-roomed farmhouse. In the same block are the chapel and six four-roomed cottages, five of which were occupied. The cause of the outbreak remains a mystery 35 09 03 & 03a

1941 09 19

Childerley of Other Days. A correspondent's remarks about the Cambs village of Childerley (writes Watchman) have brought me the following very interesting comment by a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, who signs himself "G.H.K." In the 1833 edition of Gorton's Topographical Dictionary, Childerley is given a population of 50. It is stated that 'the church is actually demolished.' Actually, Childerley once possessed two churches, both of which, it is stated, were demolished and the village depopulated, by Sir John Cutts, Bart., at the beginning of the 16th century, for the purpose of forming a deer park. How this high-handed procedure was permitted, as regards the churches, we are not told. Richard Cutts, a squire of Arkesden, inherited the Childerley property about 1670 and was father to General Lord Cutts, author, soldier, and Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, who took part in most of the battles of his day with conspicuous gallantry. His second wife was the daughter of a Cambridgeshire baronet, Sir Henry Pickering, of Whaddon. Childerley Hall stands on the site of the old Cutts' mansion. If the Pickering home exists, it must now be a farmhouse, several of which in Whaddon have attractive architectural features. Referring to another note, this time about Nell Gwyn, my correspondent says: "Nell Gwyn is traditionally associated with old houses at Clavering and Newport and with the Crown House, formerly an inn, on the Newmarket Road at Great Chesterford."

1959 01 07

A number of roads flooded following overnight rain and early morning snow. The Caxton village crossroads had water up to eight feet deep and a large lorry was stranded in the middle. Ickleton High Street was flooded and several pigs drowned at Church Hall Farm, Whaddon. Queen's Road, Cambridge, was flooded opposite St John's College with traffic diverted along Grange Road. The level of the Cam was the highest since 1947 and overflowed Pye's Sports Ground. 59 01 07

1961 12 09

Five villages, Graveley, Ickleton, Hauxton, Toft and Whaddon, have been stimulated into getting their own village halls through the closure of their local church schools. In the past they have been unable to afford the cost but now hope to purchase the buildings and convert them. The Ministry of Education has made grants for new halls at Stetchworth, Barrington and Lt Shelford while the Carnegie Trust has funded others at Newton, Orwell and Weston Colville. 61 12 09

1963 02 01

A retired farmer died when fire swept through his thatched-roof home at Pickering Farm, Whaddon, despite efforts by firemen wearing breathing apparatus to save him. After battling through dense black smoke, they found the stairs leading to the bedroom had collapsed. Even as they unrolled their hoses flames shot from one end of the thatched roof to the other; there was no hope of saving the house which was completely gutted. 63 02 01

1977 04 21

Cambridgeshire County Council could be saddled with an expensive white elephant if it ever decides to use Whaddon Gap, near Royston, as a permanent site for caravan-dwellers. They are usually very superstitious people and some believe the site is haunted. One woman who stayed there said there was a sort of smoky mist coming up and she smelled burning and heard a horrible scream. When the same thing happened the next night she packed up & left. Residents say a tramp's body was found in a dug-out in 1940 and several aircraft came down in the area during the war. A few years later a Canberra bomber crashed and the three-man crew were killed. Nine years ago a gypsy who was living there was brutally murdered and caravan dwellers have never been there since.