

MOGGERHANGER

1777 – 1977

Horatio Stanley Brown[©]

Editor's Note

Little is known about Mr Horatio Stanley Brown except that he came to live in Moggerhanger with his wife in one of the flats in West Road. Sometime after writing this history he died and his wife moved to a home possibly in Arlesey.

I read his original book in 1997 soon after I came to live in Moggerhanger and enjoyed it immensely. In 2014 my wife Judith brought a copy home from the Bedfordshire Family History Society and I felt it would make a good addition to the Moggerhanger Village Website of which I was the webmaster at the time.

I have scanned the pages with ABBYY FineReader, a computer program, and converted the diary to produce both a Microsoft Word document and a PDF one. I have adhered to the original wording and only corrected the typographical errors that were evident. In a few cases I have changed spellings and inserted obviously omitted words. In all instances I have tried to do justice to the author's intention.

I am grateful to my wife Judith for her valuable suggestions and for proof-reading the document for me.

I have made enquiries but have not been able to locate any of the author's relatives. I acknowledge that any residual copyright remains with H.S. Brown and I do not seek to establish any copyright for myself.

I believe from my enquiries that the book of 100 photos mention in the Dedication was not produced.

T.M.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to my wife who suggested that I write it, to my mother who was born in a thatched cottage and to the people of Moggerhanger who accepted me, a stranger, into their midst and always treated me with the utmost courtesy and kindness. My feelings towards the place are expressed in the following:-

I 'wake at dawn to cockerel crow and distant bell,
To glorious 'morn' and fresh air smell,
And often see a croaking toad,
As I walk the St. John's Road.

H.S.B.

It is the intention of the author to produce at a later date, a pictorial record of approximately 100 photographs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Writing about a place whilst living in it means that much of the subject matter arises from daily conversations sometimes reinforced with conscious reminiscence and photographs of yesteryear. Thus many, completely unaware of their valuable contributions, may be deserving of acknowledgement yet remain unnamed. The book is the only adequate acknowledgement which I can give to the people of Moggerhanger, Chalton and South Mills and this I do thankfully.

I recommend the County Archivist, Staff of the Records Office and Staffs of Bedford County, Bedford Central and Biggleswade Libraries for their untiring help during my study of so many documents in those establishments.

H.S.B.

CONTENTS

- 1 THE THORNTON INFLUENCE Page 1
Morhanger House, Morhanger Park. Sir John Soane, Humphrey Repton. Beachcroft letters. Cost of labour. Armstrong's plough. Mrs. Dawkins, benefactress. St. John's Church. Students from Godwin College. Sanatorium.
2. LAND DISTRIBUTION Page 7
Farm ownership. Work and wages. Horse power and horsekeepers. Blacksmith and Bunny Ashwell. Lacemakers. Servants and service.
3. RENTS AND LIVING Page 12
Allotments and smallholdings. Tenants and thatched cottages. Home-made cures and the midwife.
4. TRANSPORT Page 15
Carts and coaches. Buses and bikes. Dan Albone and tractors. Water and fire-engines. Sewage the fertiliser.
5. RELIGION AND RELAXATION Page 18
Church and Chapel. Rose and Guinea. Ale and yard glasses. Beer and spirits.
6. EDUCATION Page 21
Mrs. E. Dawkins and parochial school. Teachers and parent dedication.
7. POSTAL SERVICE Page 23
Penny Black and Twopenny Blue. Letter Receiver to Sub-Postmaster.
8. COMMUNITY SPIRIT Page 25
Davisons of Willow Hill. First village hall. Wartime activity. Sport and playing field. Coronation celebrations. Old age and village hall. Formation of MG60 Club. Goodbye old friends. A new village hall. Jubilee celebrations.
9. CHALTON Page 40
Chalton House and Dovecote. Midwife and shirt maker.
10. SOUTH MILLS Page 42
Earl de Grey and Charles Powers. Beesons and Hargreaves. Oil cake to granulated fertiliser. Bedford to Cambridge railway.
11. IN CONCLUSION Page 45
Diseased trees. St. John's and Sue Ryder. Lodge Cottage. Brown's field. Romany Cottage and Susan Miles. Milk maids. Moggerhanger's secretary.
12. BIBLIOGRAPHY Page 48

CHAPTER 1

THE THORNTON INFLUENCE

During my quest for information about this delightful parish which comprises the villages of Moggerhanger, Chalton and the area called South Mills and covers some 1,815 acres I travelled through books of reference such as Domesday 1086, Bedfordshire Magazine, General Post Office Directories, Harrod's Directories, Buildings of England, County Families of the United Kingdom plus Kelly's Directories 1885 - 1940 and have, in imagination, met many interesting families who, at some period, owned the estate and had surnames of Gascoigne, Lucy, Aley, Bromsall, Astel, Thornton, Dawkins, Mercer and Fayne but it is on the Thorntons and Dawkins that we should focus our attention because they had the greatest influence on the development of the parish as we, in 1977, now know it.

In 1777 the estate became the possession of Robert Thornton who apparently took up residence in Morhanger House, Morhanger Park (now known as Park Hospital) but he considered the house far from suitable for a gentleman of his status and sold it to his brother Godfrey, who was at that time a Director of the Bank of England. In 1790 Godfrey employed the well-known architect Sir John Soane to modify and make the house more comfortable. This work was carried out between 1792 and 1793 at a cost of £3,287. Godfrey then employed the landscape gardener Humphrey Repton to improve the grounds which he did by the introduction of special trees, laying of an excellent lawn and an impressive driveway lined with elm trees that led up to the house from the Bedford Road. By the side of this driveway was also built an octagon cottage that had eight windows so arranged that the gamekeeper could look out in all directions. Unfortunately the cottage has been demolished and the driveway is no longer in use.

In 1797 and 1799 Sir John Soane was again employed to advise on further improvements and additions but, before these could be carried out, Godfrey died in 1805 and the estate passed to his son Stephen who was also a Director of the Bank of England. In 1806 Stephen had Soane carry out the work previously considered which included the present impressive front that replaced the old side entrance of the house. This work was completed in 1809 at a cost of £21,000.

We observe from such superior thatched cottages as 57/59, Bedford Road (G. T. 1800), 5, St. John's Road (C. G. T. 1813), Romany Cottage and 59, St. John's Road and photographs of many other thatched cottages since demolished or burnt down that Godfrey and Stephen were concerned in providing many dwellings in which to house their workers. From old maps we see about eight in St. John's Road, eight in Bedford Road, twelve in Blunham Road and about seventeen in Chalton. There is also a farmhouse, mill and mill-house at South Mills that may be attributed to the influence of the Thorntons in some respects.

Letters, addressed to Lady de Grey of Wrest Park, Silsoe, from the Rev. Robert P. Beachcroft of Blunham indicated the relationship between Blunham and its hamlets Moggerhanger, Chalton and South Mills:-

Dated 1821 "Some little idea of our loyalty on the day of the coronation of King George IV

in this parish was that Mr. Stephen Thornton, Mr. Campbell, my mother and myself, united in an order to every family for 1 quartern loaf and 3lbs. of meat. This gave us the opportunity of leaving home for Biggleswade when, reaching the parish church with a band of music, I was requested to read the morning prayer and preach. We had anthems and every appropriate peculiarity which could mark the day. At ½ past 2 the whole population dined at tables beautifully arranged. Unanimity was the order of the day. I adjourned with Mr. Campbell's family to a banquet, for so we must term it, at Morhanger House. In the evening the tenants were invited to a dance of young people upon the lawns. Fireworks followed then a supper."

Dated 1826 "Every other Thursday meeting at Moggerhanger or Chalton pleases the distant poor exceedingly. We have four or five cripples at Moggerhanger who can never get to a place of worship. This service is admirably attended. We say from time to time where the following meeting shall be held and the poor take a pleasure in getting chairs (borrowed) and room ready with the bible on the table."

It will be of interest at this stage to note the general conditions of life and employment of the average farmworker whose wage of 10/- (50p) was spent as follows:-

Rent	1/-	(5p)
1½ quartern loaves	1/3	(6p)
3½ lbs. bacon	2/4	(11½p)
7 pints beer, delivered	1/9	(9½p)
Tobacco	6	(2½p)
Tea, coffee and sugar	6	(2½p)
Clothes and firing	2/8	(13p)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	10/-	(50p)

We should also note that, in 1826, people were so desperately poor that they had to resort to stealing which included body-snatching from various graveyards. One police report indicates that two men were caught taking a body out of Biggleswade on a handcart and in January 1829 there were 96 prisoners for trial in Bedford Gaol, of whom 76 were able-bodied men, in the prime of life and, chiefly, of general good character, who were driven to crime by sheer want. In this number there were 18 poachers all of whom were parish paupers. Some of these men were hanged for firing on a gamekeeper and the others were transported for life or for 14 years.

The Thorntons were considered to be progressive gentlemen farmers and purchased one of the very first Champion Ploughs of England that was designed by John Armstrong of Wilstead and then manufactured by John Howard of the Britannia Iron Works, Bedford. Workmen were very enthusiastic about this plough and one actually wrote a poem about it. The Thorntons also used one of the first threshing machines but it was reported that it left so much corn in the straw that the ricks were as green as a meadow. Another interesting item is that, in 1838, a reply to a Board of Trade enquiry regarding parish activities stated that Blunham and Moggerhanger had the greatest number of sheep.

CHAMPION PLOUGH OF ENGLAND

“Still the palm bedecks that plough
Of Armstrong's, made by Howard now.
While other ploughs take horses three,
Two draw the champion easily
And other honours yet belong
Unto the genius Armstrong.
When you commit the seed to ground,
The zig-zag harrows best are found;
'Twas he conceived the happy knack,
No time to trace another's track
At harvest, when the crop of grain
Is carried off, some will remain,
This with the fork you cannot take,
But can by using Armstrong's rake.”

It should be noted that although Armstrong's rake was of great benefit to the farmers it robbed the farmworkers of their gleanings which was the grain left on the land after the harvest had been gathered in. This grain was picked up by the wives and children of farmworkers and either ground into flour or given to chickens. It should be remembered that the loss of a loaf of bread or a couple of eggs was a very serious matter to these families.

Stephen Thornton died in 1850 the estate passing to Colonel Godfrey Thornton and, it is interesting to read the following taken from the General Post Office Directory of 1854:-

MUGGERHANGER

Gentry	Colonel Godfrey Thornton, Morhanger House. Colonel William Thornton, St. John's House.
Traders	A. J. Atkinson, farmer. Mrs. A. Aubon, cowkeeper. B. Brown, farmer. T. Clark, farmer. Mrs. A. Fisher, Guinea. T. Hills, blacksmith. Miss A. Pope, shopkeeper. C. Smith, farmer. G. Smith, cattle dealer. H. Smith, market gardener.

CHALTON

Traders	W. Andrew, market gardener. E. Dudley, farmer.
---------	---

J. Haynes, shopkeeper.
J. Prigmore, beer retailer.
J. Simms, carpenter and wheelwright.

SOUTH MILLS

Traders	W. Brown, farmer. M. J. Norman, miller.
Carriers	Samuel Mardlin and Robert Reid to Bedford and return same day, Mon., Wed. & Sat.
Post Office	at Blunham, William Judd, Postmaster. Collection 6. 30 am dispatch 6. 45 pm.

Colonel Godfrey Thornton of Morhanger House died in 1857 and Colonel William Thornton of St. John's House died in 1865 but before these dates the estate had passed to the Rev. Edward Henry Dawkins of Over Norton and his family took up residence in Morhanger House. The Dawkins were responsible for changing Moggerhanger, Chalton and South Mills from hamlets of Blunham into a parish in their own right; therefore, since this is so, we should learn something about their family background:-

The Rev. Edward Henry Dawkins, of Over Norton, Oxon, married Elizabeth (daughter of Sir William Coope, Bart., also of Over Norton). To them were born a son Edward Henry Frederick (5 November 1838) and two daughters.

In 1859 Frederick married Louisa (daughter of Charles Barnet of Stratton Park, Biggleswade, Beds.) and to them was born a daughter who eventually married Lt. Colonel W. G. Renton. (see gravestone in churchyard).

It is also recorded that the Reverend Dawkins purchased Chalton Farm from Major General Sir Robert F. Massey on 19 Feb. 1858 but, he did not realise that the owners of the farm were responsible for payment of a tithe to the Rector of Blunham Church:-

BEDFORDSHIRE. EPIPHANY QUARTER SESSIONS, 4.1.1859 Muggerhanger Tithe Change

Application by Rev. Edward Henry Dawkins of Morhanger House, Morhanger Park, Muggerhanger:

The Justices reduced the Blunham Corn Rent from £239.3.11¼ to £189.10.4½
The reverend gentleman died in 1859 and the estate passed to his wife Elizabeth and son Frederick. Elizabeth then had St. John's Church built as a memorial to her husband.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, MOGGERHANGER

This beautiful little church, which was consecrated on 31 July 1860, was built for Mrs. Elizabeth Dawkins of Morhanger House as a memorial for her husband the Rev. Edward Henry Dawkins who died in 1859. The builder was a Mr. Conquest of Kempston and the designer was William Slater of London. It was built in the Norman style, of Kempston stone elegantly varied with red sandstone from the quarries at Silsoe. It consists of a nave, aisles, centre tower and chancel with apsidal end. The pillars are of Ancaster stone carved with capitals; the arcades are of the same material intermixed with Harlestone stone for the sake of variety and effect. The apse is of a more highly decorated character than the rest of the church as containing the mausoleum in which rest the remains of the Rev. Dawkins and his wife Elizabeth who died in 1863. The roof is open and constructed of oak grown on the Moggerhanger Estate.

In front of the altar is a slab of Derbyshire marble inlaid with a floriated cross of brass with an inscription alluding to the purpose for which the church was erected. The three east windows (above the altar) are filled with stained glass (by Messrs. Clayton & Bell of Cardington Street, London) and are of the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension. Other stained glass windows, added at a later date, are to the memory of Lucy Emma Thornton (1860), Caroline Margaret Thornton (1881), Harry Thornton (1885), Jerimiah Titmas (1888), Gertrude Emily Duberly (1898), Louisa M. Dawkins (1907) and (1909), Edward Henry Frederick Dawkins (1912), Arthur Stephen Thornton (1913), Charles Stuart Thornton and Harry Godfrey Thornton. The space between the altar rails is inlaid with different coloured marbles. Near the south door is a handsome font which accords well with the rest of the building. The vestry and belfry (which has one bell) and central tower with pyramidal roof are thoroughly substantial and handsome. The internal fittings and decorations are in excellent taste.

The organ (first played by a Mr. Rose of Bedford) was the gift of Colonel William Thornton of St. John's House (died 1865) and does credit to Messrs Bevington who built it. Above the organ is a screen 'ER 1902 AR' that was fitted to commemorate the coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. The original altar cloth was the gift of the Misses Dawkins. The communion plate was the gift of E. H. F. Dawkins Esq. A very interesting plaque, presented by parishioners and friends, commemorates the long and faithful service of Annie Maria Housden who was the Parish Clerk from 1897 to 1936 and also Postmistress and Churchwarden (this lady was a truly remarkable and outstanding person). Another plaque is to the memory of the Rev. Marmaduke Alan Pricket who was vicar of the parish from 1900 to 1908 and another is to the memory of Arthur H. Jacobs and Reginald W. Hall who died whilst being prisoners of the Japanese during the 1939/46 war. The church is beautifully situated and is surrounded by old timber trees in a large burial ground fenced by a handsome stone wall and there is an excellent parsonage adjoining that is now being used as a private dwelling.

In the southeast corner of the churchyard there is a gravestone inscribed "To the memory of Mrs. Louisa M. Dawkins (1907), Mr. Edward Henry Frederick Dawkins (1912) and their daughter Ethel Louise (1954)."

The first marriage ceremony was on 23 August 1860. The first baptism took place on 12 August 1860 and the first burial service 21 September 1861. The officiating minister was the Rev. Thomas Horace Cookes.

VICARS WHO HAVE RESIDED AT THE VICARAGE

1860	Thomas Horace Cookes	1908	W. Foster Smith
1863	Nathanial Roydes	1910	S. A. P. Kermode
1865	Charles James Lombarde	1915	John P. Cook
1877	Anthony W. Lefroy	1938	T. I. L. Davies
1879	John R. Lane	1947-1970	Harold Phoenix
1883	George Sutton Hack	1971	The vicarage was sold
1884	Edward Mayo		to be used as a
1900	M. A Prickett		private dwelling.

It should be noted that the majority of the reverend gentlemen above had private means or a second source of income because the normal income from the church was totally inadequate to maintain a vicarage of such large dimensions.

In 1888 the Dawkins sold Morhanger House and the estate to the Mercer family who, in 1909, sold it to Mrs. V. Fayne

During a severe storm in 1916 many trees were felled in close proximity of the house and Mrs. Fayne decided that she should put the property up for sale. From local reports I gather that it was purchased by two local farmers Odell and Wagstaff who, it is said, made their money back on the sale of the trees alone. There is a photograph that indicates that the diameter of the trees was six to eight feet.

In 1916 the staff and students of Godwin College of Margate rented Morhanger House and moved north in order to get away from bombs being dropped on the southern counties by German Zeppelins. In 1919 they returned to Margate ready for the Easter term. During 1920 the house was unoccupied but was then taken over by the Health Authority and converted into a hospital for the treatment of sufferers from tuberculosis. Since 1960 it has been known as the Park Hospital and Rehabilitation Centre.

It is sad to note that the appearance of the building has been greatly impaired by the addition of many outhouses and the erection of a fire-escape down the front of the section that was designed by Sir John Soane in 1806.

CHAPTER 2

LAND DISTRIBUTION

Records indicate that from 1858 ownership of land spread to other families in addition to those residing at Morhanger House and we see from the following table names of farmers who provided the essentials for a successful and progressive community which are housing, work, wages, recreation, religion, education and some form of social security (unemployment benefit).

Year	Willow Hill Farm	Manor Farm	Park Farm	Village Farm
1858	B. Brown	-	-	-
1876	"	R. Malkin	-	-
1885	"	"	R. Malkin	-
1890	W. Cooper	H. Underwood	J. Underwood	-
1903	F. Davison	J. Bunch	"	-
1906	"	"	"	J. Cartwright
1914	"	F. Wilson	"	"
1920	L. V. Davison	"	"	E. G. Hart
1921	"	F. Stanton	"	F. W. Mathews
1928	"	"	S. W. Fowler	"
1936	"	F. & N. Hall	F. Odell	"
1945	"	F. E. Hall	T. C. Berridge	"
1950	"	G. Hall	G. Emery	"
1955	"	"	E. W. Seal	"
1964	E. E. Davison	"	"	"
1968	D. P. Davison	"	K. Peacock	"
1977	D. P. Davison	"	"	"

From account books kept at Willow Hill Farm during the period 1827-81 we can gauge the farmer to worker relationship and we should remember that, in those days, the word worker included the wives and children of farmworkers.

Property tax	£458
Fire Insurance	£2
Poor rate (this was paid monthly)	£5

The need for payment of the Poor Rate was expressed by the Rev. Beachcroft as follows:-

“A pauper could not starve to death but he could be very hungry for most of the time. The Parish Overseers would see that the pauper was not naked but he could be very cold and very dirty without warmth or bedding or any comfort. To have the minister to take an interest in him was a real help towards a more bearable existence.”

Joe Adams	6 days	13/-	(65p)
Joe Cooper	4 days	8/8	(43p)
Asher	5 days	9/-	(45p)
Chapman	4½ days	9/-	(45p)
Johnson	4 days	8/8	(43p)
Mrs. Sims	3½ days at 1/- (5p)	3/6	(17½p)
Mrs. Seymour	"	3/6	(17½p)
Mrs. Emery	"	3/6	(17½p)
Girl Seymour		1/9	(8½p)
Boy	2 weeks	5/-	(25p)
Prentice	3 days and boys	10/6	(52p)
Prigmore	5 doz. hurdles	5/-	(25p)

oOo

Harvest men done (at 10/6 (52½p) per acre)	Acres	Roods	Poles	
	46	0	26	barley
	28	0	26	wheat
	28	7	28	beans

The harvest was reaped by hand and as many as thirty mowers would start scything corn at one end of a field, each one cutting eleven rows at a time, and they would gradually work along to the other end. Each mower had a partner who followed him stacking the sheaves as he went. The fanner allowed each man seventeen pints of home-made beer each day and, it is said, that none of it ever left the field. Any left over was always kept until Saturday when a real jolly party was had by all. Women and children would glean the stubble. Farmer would kill a couple of sheep to provide everyone with a good supper after which the workmen and their families would go singing on their way home.

Note: It sounds a happy affair but actually it was all hard work for little pay and very little time to play yet these people were contented in so many ways.

Some idea of the working conditions of agricultural workers during the nineteenth century can be obtained from the fact that potatoes were planted by teams consisting of two men and a woman. The first man dug out the soil, the woman dropped the potatoes in the hole and the second man replaced the soil. They continued this work over acre after acre. Women would crawl between rows of vegetables whilst they weeded either side for a wage of 1/- (5p) per acre. During harvest time the children were taken out of school to work in the fields until long past sunset. Bean picking was started at first light to get the beans whilst they were still dew-damp so that they would not shell out.

During this period the only power available to work a farm was that provided by horses and people plus that generated by steam engines or wind and water-mills. Therefore we can assume that the most important worker on any farm was the horsekeeper.

A HORSEKEEPER'S DAY

- 0430 Rise, have cup of tea.
0500 Arrive at farm. Feed, water and clean horses.
0600 Go home to breakfast.
0645 Return to farm. Harness horses ready for day's work according to type of work to be done that day.
0715 Take two or three of the horses and proceed to plough or cultivate land. Other farmhands would take the remaining horses for other work.
1000 Stop work for half hour's tea break.
1030 Resume work as before.
1300 Stop for a sandwich and a cup of tea.
1315 Resume work as before.
1500 Disconnect farm equipment from the horses and return to farm via some convenient pond where the horses' hooves would be washed. It was expected that by this time the team would have ploughed or cultivated an acre or acre and one rood dependent on the furrow required by the farmer.
1515 Unharness horses, water and feed them then rub them down with straw before putting them into the stables.
1545 Go home to dinner.
1615 Return to farm. Take horses out of stables for a drink whilst stable lad cleans out the stalls. Whilst horses are drinking prepare their evening meal. Return horses to stables and give them a thorough clean which, it should be noted, was extremely hard work. During the winter the horses were bedded down with straw but in the summer they were turned out into a meadow.
1715 Return home for tea.

On Sundays he would go to the farm at 0700 to clean and feed horses and he would repeat that at 1530.

The horses were considered as friends and were loved by all who tended them. A ploughman would talk to his team of horses all day long and they would listen to him intently. Each ploughman had his own distinct method and mark and it is said that farmers could go on to any field and know which ploughman had worked on any particular area. Another method of ploughing and cultivating land was by the use of two steam engines situated one at each side of a field and pulling a very large plough between them by means of cables. The engines and plough were moved along after each cut.

Since horses require shoeing this service was provided by a Mr. T. Hills, blacksmith, who, it is assumed, lived in the Forge Cottage and worked in the forge both of which are still at the corner of Blunham and Bedford Roads. It is also possible that he would have made the gates which are at the church entrance and the hinges for the church doors. After the demise of Mr. Hills the work was carried out by Mr. Barker of Willington who used to walk from Willington, do a day's work, then walk home again in the evening. He was ably assisted by a delightful rascal of a man who was affectionately known to everyone as Frederick (Bunny) Ashwell from Chalton. It is said that this character was drunk more times than he was sober but could still strike the hot iron held by the blacksmith during the manufacture

of such items as horseshoes, ploughs, farm gates, ornamental garden gates, lamp brackets, harrows, hurdles and the repair of farm machinery. It is also recounted that he was once taken before the Biggleswade magistrates for riding his cycle without lights. The police constable stated that "he observed Mr. Ashwell's cycle had no lights but that his left coat pocket was on fire due to his having put a lighted pipe into it" at which point the magistrates said that, "If Mr. Ashwell's pocket was on fire, the cycle must have had a light" and the case was dismissed.

Directly opposite the forge was a block of four thatched cottages where lived the Atkinson, Brown, Lowe and one branch of the Ashwell families. It is said that the ladies from these cottages were in the habit of taking jugs of water over to the forge and asking Mr. Barker to drop a few hot cokes into it. The water was then called cinder water and given to their children as a cure for wind.

A census taken in 1841 indicates that the population of the area we now call the Parish of Moggerhanger was approximately 375 and that most of the inhabitants were employed as agricultural workers. The exceptions were domestic servants, shoemaker, blacksmith, inn keeper, beer retailer, gamekeeper, rat catcher, wheelwright, carrier and tailor.

The census of 1851 indicates a large increase in population to 496 and additional forms of employment such as lacemaker, confectionery maker, straw plaiter, mill manager (William Tatman), miller (Samuel Johnson), journeyman miller (Thomas Gurney) and lawyers (Charles and Samuel Simms). Seven people were classified as paupers.

In 1861 the population decreased to 471 but the production of lace increased with 76 people producing it. There were also stonemasons due to the church and parsonage having been built and this was the year that the parochial school and the lodge to St. John's House were built. The census also indicates the domestic staffs employed by the gentry.

DOMESTIC STAFFS

Mrs. Elizabeth Dawkins, Morhanger House.

Cook	Nurse maid
Lady's maid (2)	Footman
Laundry maid	Coachman
Under Laundry maid	Groom
Kitchen maid	Gardener (2)
Housemaid	Gamekeeper
Under housemaid	Stable boy
Coach maid	Trot boy

Colonel William Thornton, St. John's House.

Cook	Coachman
Lady's maid	Groom
Kitchen maid	Gardener (2)
Laundress	Gamekeeper
Footman	

To be a domestic servant was a highly desirable form of employment because it guaranteed that a person could eat regularly, have a clean comfortable bed to sleep in and by observing the actions of those around you, learn how to dress correctly, speak correctly, table etiquette, manners, which really means 'how to live a good clean life'. Young people of the nineteenth century could never hope to live so well in what were, by today's standards, homes that were little more than hovels and where the weekly income was barely adequate to feed the family. The girls of most poor families were sent into service as soon as they left school which then permitted the rest of the family to eat more.

A HOUSEMAID'S DAY

- 0630 Rise, wash and dress (including large white apron), clean drawing room, Master's study and Lady's den, clean out fire places, polish, re-lay fires then awaken the family. Prepare hot water for baths. After the family have gone down to breakfast, run out water and clean baths, make beds and tidy bedrooms. Fill coal scuttles.
- 0830 Have breakfast in servant's hall.
- 0900 Collect oil lamps from downstairs rooms and candlesticks from bedrooms, clean and refill.
- 1200 Have lunch then dress in black dress with frilly white cap, white apron, stiff collar and cuffs, black stockings and shoes.

During the afternoon repair household linen and also do the 'special weekly work' according to the day of the week.

- 1600 Have tea in servants' hall.
- 1900 Take hot water to bedrooms. The family would then wash, dress for dinner and go down to a seven course meal.
- 1945 Turn down beds, fill hot water bottles, set candlestick on bedside tables but, if there was a guest for dinner, housemaid helped wait on table to assist parlour maid.
- 2100 Help parlour maid to wash silver in the parlour maid's pantry.
- 2200 Have supper in kitchen then go to bed.

SPECIAL WEEKLY WORK

Monday	Clean drawing room and spare bedroom alternately, collect and count laundry.
Tuesday	Clean two bedrooms
Wednesday	Clean servants' bedrooms and housemaid's pantry
Thursday	Clean bathroom, lavatory and staircase.
Friday	Clean library and morning room.
Saturday	Put away linen from washing and make things generally tidy ready for Sunday.

CHAPTER 3

RENTS AND LIVING

From the 'Record of Allotments and Smallholdings' dated 17 July 1920 we observe that the following cultivated plots of land of 1 rood (1,210 square yards) for which they paid the sum of 10/- (50p) per annum:-

William Hall, Albert Hall, Allan Hall, Arthur Hall, Herbert Hall,
Frank Hall, Owen Hall, George Watts Jnr., Joseph Watts, A.
Buckle, T. Loved, P. Giddings, F. Harding, A. Street. F. Prentice,
G. Daniels, H. Ashwell, A. Lowe, G. How and George Watts Snr.

From maps drawn up at the time we see a group of allotments situated where now stand the houses 1-35 Bedford Road and another group on the west side of Blunham Road opposite the space between the Village Hall and the bungalow called 'Dunromin'. It is interesting to record that, in this space, there was a block of five cottages and a single larger cottage at their rear. The five were occupied by families named Butcher (who used to keep a sweet shop), Smith, Storton, Randall and Davison. The single cottage was occupied by a Mrs. Odell who is well remembered for baking bread for the whole village. This single cottage had the words 'Live and Let Live' embedded in one side and it is assumed that it was once a public house. It is sad to note that these picturesque cottages were all burnt down one afternoon whilst the tenants were away working in the fields.

Another account, kept by a Chalton landlord, indicates the annual and weekly rents paid by tenants of thatched cottages that once occupied the area where now stand numbers 18 - 30 Blunham Road, the bungalow named Heaton Croft and the house named White Gables:-

W. Hall, F. Battle and Jos Watts	£3.0.8 (£3.04)
W. Longhurst, W. Humphries,	2/- (10p)
Mrs. Atkinson and P. Giddings	2/- (10p)
Mrs. Emery, F. Longhurst and F. Ashwell	1/- (5p)

Although it appears that rents were ridiculously low it should be remembered that what was paid represented some ten per cent of a person's income and the facilities provided were of the absolute minimum. Water had to be obtained from a single tap situated about 25 yards from the rear of each block of cottages. One washed oneself and the dishes in a bowl placed on a table in a kitchen cum living room and a bath was taken in a hip-bath placed in front of the fireplace. Clothes were washed in a communal wash-house some distance from the back door. The lavatories were in line with the wash-house and had never heard the word 'flush'. Some cottages had two rooms down and two rooms up, others had only one down, one up and a small box room. This provided very poor accommodation since it should be remembered that most of the families in those days had about seven or more children. Lighting was by candles or oil lamps. The one good point about these tenancies was the fact that they had a very long garden which the people cultivated in order to improve their general standard of living.

Each family would keep a number of chickens and ducks and the men would go out and shoot a couple of rabbits as and when required. Nothing was wasted, the meat was eaten,

the feathers were used to fill pillow-cases and the rabbit skins were cured then secured to the steps of the stairs or made into a bedside rug. Wood was the main source of fuel. It was the practice to buy a side of bacon which was then cured with brine and hung up in the kitchen after which pieces were cut off for the various meals. (I was informed that there was an abattoir behind what is now the delightful thatched cottage 5 St. John's Road from where it was possible to purchase various parts of a pig at different times of the year). In each cottage there was always a quantity of onions and shallots plaited and hung from the ceiling. These were used in stews, roasted or eaten raw. It was possible to go to the farm and buy skimmed milk for very little cash and this was generally poured over boiled potatoes to make a very satisfying meal. Wine was made from potatoes or various plants picked by the children who would also spend many happy hours picking blackberries which were then made into jam. Another type of jam was made from vegetable marrows. Fruit was bottled and the jars were sealed with paraffin-wax (candle fat) boiled in an old saucepan. A type of 'freezer' was then made by digging a hole in the garden, placing the jars into it and then covering them over with soil. Father would dig out a jar whenever fruit was on the menu.

The people were, for the most part, contented and happy providing they were always able to obtain employment but life was extremely difficult for those who were not so fortunate. Before a person declared they were unable to work they had to be near to death's door. A severe headache or a nasty pain in the back was considered a very minor detail. Pains would be shifted with Mother's favourite goose oil and some would even use horse liniment obtained from the farm stables. Bronchitis was cured with a mixture of camphorated oil, olive oil and powdered mustard rubbed hot on to the chest and back. Cuts and bruises were treated with Ma's special ointment made from bees-wax and liquid from stewed marsh-mallow leaves or some would rub in a good portion of honey that was said to be a cure for all things. Coughs and sneezes spreading diseases were soon checked when Dad would close up all windows and doors then, putting some hot coals and a quantity of gas-tar or sulphur on to the fire shovel, he would allow the whole cottage to be fumigated by the ensuing fumes. There was also the old saying 'An apple a day keeps the doctor away'.

Such items as boils, large and small, were soon dealt with. Ma would make a daily inspection until the boil was considered ready when one of three actions would be taken. A red-hot poultice could be applied, the boil could be lanced or a bottle would be filled with hot water, the water poured out again and then the neck of the bottle would be placed on to the boil. Any of these actions would burst the boil after which all would be well. Before sending children to school some mothers used to put camphor in a linen bag and then hang it round their children's necks. A roasted onion placed in a sock was applied to ears whenever they ached. Some men thought that the best cure for flu was to drink half a pint of rum, dress in thick long pants, put on a couple of sweaters then go to bed and sweat it out. They were generally ready to go to work the next morning. Strains and sprains were treated by applying large comfrey leaves that were boiled just prior to being used.

In each village there was always some self-appointed midwife recognised by every woman in the parish as the person to send for when baby was due to arrive. Mothers would work right up to the last moment then send one of their brood to "Get Mrs. So and So" (midwife). Other ladies would also arrive, boil up lots of water, cut up lots of linen, then sit

around awaiting the happy event during which time they would all be agreeing that “The first is the worst”. It will be extremely difficult for to-day’s younger people in any village to believe that, although life was hard, there was still a lot of contentment and pleasure whilst living in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A very wise old blacksmith expressed the difference between living then and living now with the following:-

“The village is so quiet now, nobody walks about it. You don’t say ‘You saw your neighbour’ you say ‘You passed his car’. People wave and toot where they used to stop and talk. Nobody goes to look at what somebody else has made and have a chat about it.”

CHAPTER 4

TRANSPORT

Transport to and from the parish can be said to have been adequate and no more. We have already seen that, originally, horse-drawn coaches and carts transported people and goods to Bedford on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Another widely used vehicle was the bicycle designed, manufactured and sold by Dan Albone of Biggleswade (1860-1906) who was undoubtedly one of the greatest engineers who ever lived in Bedfordshire. Local farmers remember him mainly for the first British petrol driven tractor that he designed and manufactured for their use and which had the following fascinating specification:-

THE IVEL

First internal combustion engined tractor.

Horizontal, water-cooled, 2 cylinder, 4 stroke engine (177 cu. inches, swept volume), one forward and one reverse speed. All controls hand operated.

Engine:-

Automatic inlet valve, mechanically operated exhaust valve. Drip feed lubrication and trembler-coil ignition. Cylindrical fuel tank. Float and mixing chamber. Wicks suspended to reach fuel. Suction engine draws fuel through petrol-soaked wicks into control chamber and two independent hand-operated valves control mixture and air. There is no governor. A differential and rear-wheel brakes.

If one wished one could walk over to Blunham and board a train of the old Bedford and Cambridge Railway Company (the station and station yard of which have now been converted into the Lord's Tree Centre).

In 1912 buses started to run between Sandy and Bedford via Muggerhanger which was the sign they displayed at that time. These buses were double-deckers with the upper deck open to the elements, which was very pleasant in the summer but very trying during the winter even though a piece of waterproof sheeting was provided by the bus company which one was supposed to hold up when it rained. During the 1914/18 war the buses were commandeered by the Army Authorities for use as troop carriers and ambulances both in Great Britain and France.

When the "U" in Muggerhanger was changed to an "O" is not known but it should be noted that for some considerable time the postal address was Muggerhanger, Nr. Sandy, Beds. and Bedford Road was known as Sandy Road. It is also interesting to learn that our village has had many names, such as:-

MOKEHANGRE (1242)

MOUKERAUNGRE (1276)

MOKEHANGER (1287)

MOUKEKHANGER (1289)

MOGGURHANGGER (1347)

MOKERAUNGRE (1394)

MOWGRANGER (1629)

MOREHANGER (1679)

MUGGERHANGER (1750)

There has been suggested a number of possible meanings for the place-names given to our parish but the one that I consider most descriptive is 'Bog on the hill' because wherever one digs, one will always find water.

Prior to piped water being supplied from Biggleswade all parishioners and their animals had to rely on wells and ponds of which there was a great number. There were four ponds in Chalton, two of which have now been filled in and a third is in the process of being obliterated. Moggerhanger had thirteen ponds four of which have been filled in and, of these, the most picturesque was the one by the side of the road opposite Village Farm on which ducks would swim daily. One wonders if the legal procedure regarding the filling in of ponds was observed as was done at Blunham in 1850.

BLUNHAM VESTRY MEETING

- 9 December 1850 Agreed that the 'Pond' be filled in and that Earl de Grey and the Parish surrender claim to the soil covered by the pond on the condition that the pond is drained and filled in by the new owner.
- 16 December 1850 Earl de Grey and this Vestry on behalf of the Parish agree to resign all claim to the land covered by the old pond.

It is said that, in 1930, Mr. W. G. Watts, landlord of the Rose and Mr. R. Reid of Blunham used three hundred cart loads of soil to fill in the pond that once existed at the rear of Number 34 Blunham Road, Chalton. It is therefore assumed that a similar amount would have been used to fill in the ponds at the entrance of Tom Gurney's meadow (now the Playing Fields) and the one by the side of the road opposite Village Farm. In addition to ponds and wells we have the moat down the slope at Manor Farm. It would appear that this moat was made by excavating soil from an area that was already waterlogged and piling it up in the centre to form an island.

One story about water in Moggerhanger relates how a water-diviner came to the parish and traced an underground stream that is supposed to run from Brown's field, under Mathews' meadow, the A603, West Way, Wilsher's smallholding and then all the way down to Barford Bridge. This was apparently authenticated when a large stone was lifted on Wilsher's land and fast running water was found under it. The stone was replaced to prevent the possibility of accidents.

In the days of yore, ponds, wells and moats belonged to the farmer but, in these days of Water Authorities, all water on or under any land belongs to that Authority and, before extracting water from his ponds or moats, a farmer must request permission and must state the number of thousands of gallons he intends to use per year. If the Authority agrees it gives him permission and the farmer then pays for the water that he extracts. Householders on the other hand should consider themselves extremely lucky because they get piped water and sewage treatment and disposal for approximately 50p per week in this year of 1977 which is a far cry from the days when Mother got the water from a spring, well or

pond and, if it was from the last referred to it had to be boiled before it was fit to drink. Another source of water was the rain-tub situated under the guttering of all houses and, after straining it to clear the smuts, it was considered the finest washing water available.

Sewage was removed from cesspits in the early hours of the morning and deposited in the corporation muck cart which was then taken to some farmer's field where the contents were run out as a form of fertilizer. It was said that the vegetables grown on these fields were of the finest quality but there was the possibility of catching some disease. Today the sewage is treated to remove all harmful bacteria then the sludge is run in to tanks to dry and, whilst doing so, it gives off a gas called methane which is used for heating and lighting the Sewage Works and sometimes for driving machinery. In this way the amplitude of our water rate is kept to a reasonable level.

CHAPTER 5

RELIGION AND RELAXATION

It is a known fact that, wherever one sees a church one will always see a public house and, it is said that the reason for this state of affairs is because, after a church service, where the congregation would have sung many hymns, people would retire to the nearest place where they could obtain liquid refreshment to ease their dry throats, but, this statement did not originally apply to the Guinea that once stood on the same foundation as the more elegant building of today. The old Guinea would have been built some 200 years before St. John's Church (1860). Its actual date would be around 1622 which is the year that the White Hart Inn (now called The Timbers) at Willington was erected. The White Hart and the smithy opposite would have served the horse-drawn coach traffic proceeding towards Barford and coaches going to Sandy and Biggleswade would have stopped at the Guinea at Moggerhanger.

One old photograph actually shows wheel tracks covering an open space that is now the lawn in front of the present inn. It also shows Forge Cottage which we can assume was built about the same time and we can also consider the possibility that the forge would be in demand for the repair of coach wheels and horseshoes by blacksmith Tom Hill and his father before him.

Prior to 1860 people of Moggerhanger would walk the foot paths down to a point where they would meet those from Chalton and together they would take the footpath that went diagonally across the fields (see Ordnance Survey maps) as a short cut to Barford bridge over which they would go to attend service at Barford church. Others would go down to the South Mills turn and then travel on to Blunham church where, until 1857 they sang to the music from a barrel organ. Methodists and Baptists would walk to Sandy where they would attend service at the local chapel or they would go to the Bunyan Meeting House at Blunham. The chapel folk had to continue this practice until 1928 when, due to their concerted efforts a fine chapel was built in St. John's Road but this may have been unnecessary if the following had been activated:-

METHODISTS QUARTERLY MINUTE BOOK DATED 27 MARCH 1843

"It is suggested that a Wesleyan Chapel be built at Muggerhanger providing that it does not cost more than £100 which is to include land."

We have already read a considerable amount about the church but something about the congregation will be of interest. From reports it is obvious that the church's 300 seats were always occupied until about 1912. The choir numbered 15 to 20 and, I was informed by an ex-member of the choir, that boys were paid the sum of 1/- (5p) per quarter for their melodious efforts. One section of the church seats was filled by men only, another by women only and the remainder by children due to some peculiar custom of the time.

It appears that, after the buses started to run through the village, the numbers attending the church started a steady decline and this tendency was accelerated still further after the wireless was made available to the people in 1922 and we are all aware of the fact that, since the introduction of television, congregations have fallen alarmingly to less than 20 per service. It is also known that the same attendance figures apply to the chapel. It is not that people are much less godly but that there are so many other attractions on a Sunday.

The appearance of the church is the same externally as it would have been in 1860 except for the trees in the churchyard which have naturally grown considerably over the years but, internally, the church is even more attractive with some fine stained glass windows and altar cloth. Each year the Flower Festival is a sight to behold and is greatly appreciated by everyone in the parish. The same applies to the Chapel display at Harvest Festival which is always a blaze of colour.

The brewers who supply the Guinea were less than helpful in, at my request, supplying any information about the old Guinea but various sources in the County Records Office indicate the landlords as being Mrs. Annie Fisher (1841), F. King (1871), W. King (1914), J. W. King (1936) and W. J. King (1960).

In 1963 the old Guinea was demolished with the exception of the area about the large fireplace and the present Guinea was built on the old foundations. In 1964 Mr. B. R. Ambrose became the landlord and he was followed by G. Green (1968) and E. J. Evans (1969).

In addition to the usual beer and wines the King family (1871-1963) supplied sweets and other goodies to children through a small window on one side of the building. They also sold and repaired bicycles from two barns that ran at right-angles to the road. They also farmed the adjacent piece of land and, at the start of the motorcar traffic they installed a couple of petrol pumps by the roadside.

The new Guinea can be recommended as a place in which one can have dinner and a bottle of wine or partake of a few pints of the landlord's best brew whilst letting one's eyes roam over the many interesting items that are secured to or hang from beams and walls such as toby jugs of various design and size, horse brasses, harness and paraphernalia, flint guns, numerous coins of the realm, old maps of Bedfordshire, historic brewer's accounts dated 1888 and a yard glass manufactured by Thos. Webb & Co., Dennis Glass Works, Stourbridge who also used to provide the following advertisement:-

ALE AND YARD GLASSES 1750

Freak glasses of this period include Yards and Half Yards, Boots, Cocked Hats, Frog glasses and trick glasses designed to send their contents into any direction but that which the consumer intends.

The Yards and Half Yards are great curiosities they resemble a coaching horn in shape and size. There are two kinds, one is

the genuine Old Cambridge Ale Yard and the others were trick glasses, which had the knack when partially emptied, of suddenly expelling the remainder of their contents into the drinker's face, to his great discomfiture and the huge delight of the onlookers, who had probably arranged the whole thing for the benefit of some innocent person, the spectators often betting upon the result. This was a common occurrence in wayside inns of the eighteenth century. To "floor the long glass" at Eton is also an accomplishment that many never achieve.

Unfortunately in the sudden startling shock of receiving the contents of the glass 'in one' the vessel was frequently damaged and so specimens of Ale Yards are difficult to obtain.

It will be of interest to note the derivation of the word Guinea.

Much of the gold for Charles II's coinage came from Guinea. It was supplied by the Africa Company whose mark on the coins - An Elephant and Castle - can still be seen on many a public house. The Guinea was a token of Britain's wealth especially abroad. Paper money might do at home but our allies wanted gold. In the 19th and early 20th centuries these gold coins were referred to as the Sovereign and Half Sovereign or, vulgarly, as the Tiddly Quid.

If, when passing the Guinea at Moggerhanger, one should look at the chimney stack, one will see the base of a glass bottle into which it is said a Mr. T. A. G. Ibbotts placed a list containing all the names of men who were employed on the building of the new Guinea. It is now possible that the list will be of great interest to some workman doing a demolition job in the year 2277.

One form of relaxation is to visit cemeteries and graveyards and, whilst enjoying the peaceful atmosphere, permit the mind to dwell on the historical background of those indicated on various gravestones. After some such visits I was prompted to write the following:-

Drinking beer does make us fat and dimwits,
But wine and spirits keep the frame within its limits.
All of these bemuse the brain,
Should we tip them down a drain?
Smoking makes us cough and splutter.
When paying for them our heart does flutter.
Some say "Smoke" and some say "Cancer",
Who is right and who romancer?
On gravestones we are often told
That occupants, now so very cold,
Always smoked and drank a plenty
But, they all lived way passed ninety.

H.S.B.

CHAPTER 6

EDUCATION

We see on various documents such as marriage certificates and bills of sale that the principal character has made crossed lines in the space reserved for a signature and under this cross some learned person has written 'Mr. A. N. Other, his mark' or 'Miss I. Amshe, her mark' and from this we deduce the fact that, during the nineteenth century, a large number of people could not read or write and, if such people ever left the village, they had no means of communication and were generally lost for ever. In order to overcome this sorry state of affairs a parochial school was built in 1861, on the site now occupied by the new Village Hall, and to which a number of our present parishioners remember going at the start of this century, to receive a basic education consisting mainly of reading, writing and arithmetic. The school was provided by Mrs. Elizabeth Dawkins and later, in 1894, enlarged by her son Edward Henry Frederick so that it could accommodate sixty pupils. Since paper was very expensive the children used slates on which to record their lessons and one old photograph depicts the Class of 1901 holding a slate on which is recorded the date. It is interesting to note that members of this class were from families with surnames of Buckle, Brown, Jeeves, Watts, Mathews, Baxter, Gammon, Norman, Fitts, Lowe and Jarvis.

It is possible that the first Schoolmistress was Miss Emma Titmas, a daughter of Jerimiah Titmas, Tailor and 'Letter Receiver' (Sub-Postmaster) to the Parish, but the first Head of Teaching Staff was Miss B. Brown, appointed in 1876, and she was followed by Miss L. Chadwick (1890), Miss E. Lambert (1894), Miss M. J. Carwright (1896), Mrs. E. Harradine (1916), Miss M. Markham (1920), Mrs. B. Wood (1944) Mrs. D. E. Morrison (1968) and Mrs. J. U. Croot (1974).

In 1911 Miss Cartwright, staff and pupils, moved to the present more elegant County primary school and, until 1938 the old school building was used as a store for farm produce and machinery, (more about this later).

From various reports and my own observations it is obvious that the standard of primary education received by children of the Parish of Moggerhanger is of the highest order due to the dedication of the teachers concerned and the great increase in educational aids provided by a benevolent Education Authority. The teachers are also backed up by an enthusiastic domestic staff made up of ladies of the parish. We should also remember that, today, parents take a much greater interest in school activities than ever before. In the early days of poverty parents were more concerned with how much the child could earn in the fields rather than concern for the child's educational standard which is possibly why, in 1907, Miss Mary Pope was giving private tuition to children of people whose incomes were at a higher level than most and could afford not to send their children to the parochial school.

Mary and her sister lived in a cottage-cum-shop where now stands the house 2, St. John's Road. By the side of the cottage was a small building that Mary converted into a schoolroom.

Today's parishioners, especially agricultural workers, should be very grateful for the high standard of education provided because they now need to use more brain than brawn in the execution of their daily tasks. They need to be able to calculate such items as machinery capacity in terms of hectares (2.47 acres) per litre of petrol or diesel oil used, fertiliser or seed required in kilogrammes per hectare, VAT, National Insurance, percentages, cost productiveness in terms of man-hours plus cost of energy per tonne (2204.6 lbs) of grain or vegetables produced and costs of transport and repairs. It now appears that it would be advisable to constantly remind children to "pay attention at school or you'll be a fool."

Reports indicate that, where now stands the swimming pool, there was a number of small plots of land where children were given instruction on gardening by Mr. George Battle who, it is said, had only one arm but could still dig with great efficiency and that he also harnessed his horse and cart without any assistance. It would appear that his type of tuition was discontinued due to the lack of interest in the growing of one's own vegetables in allotments and back gardens and the mechanisation of all farms and smallholdings.

CHAPTER 7

POSTAL SERVICE

Prior to the introduction of the Penny Black and the Twopenny Blue stamps on 4 May 1840, sending or receiving a letter was a rather expensive business and one delightful story is told about how one old lady overcame this difficulty. She arranged with her son, who lived in London, that, if they were in good health, they would send an addressed but unstamped envelope with nothing inside. On receipt they would hold the envelope up to the light and, seeing no letter inside, would refuse to accept it.

As far as Moggerhanger is concerned it was the practice to walk to Blunham to send or receive a letter or to give the letter to someone on a coach that stopped at the old Guinea and request that it be posted at some point on their journey but, in 1876, Mr. Jerimiah Titmas, Tailor to the Parish, was appointed as Letter Receiver for Moggerhanger. Jerimiah had a daughter who was, for that time, very well educated and we see from records that, on his demise in 1888, Miss A. M. Titmas became Sub-Postmistress. She was relieved of the position in 1903 by a Mrs. S. Grantham and later, in 1906, the well-remembered lady A. M. Housden of 59 St. John's Road was Parish Clerk, Churchwarden and Postmistress. In 1924 the postal business was taken over by shopkeeper Mrs. Mann at the corner shop 2 St. John's Road and in 1928, the same business was taken over by Mrs. G. Craft until 1936 when the shop and post office moved to its present address of 1 Blunham Road, occupied by Miss A. M. Daniels. Since then the premises and post office have been owned by Mr. J. Jackson (1943), the Misses Edith and Helen Eldridge (1956), Mr. D. W. Green (1960), Mr. D. Hammond (1965), Mr. F. J. Sutton (1966), Mr. A. Flack (1971) and the present owner Mr. D. A. Green (1977).

At one time it was thought that we would lose this valuable asset of shop-cum-Post Office at 1 Blunham Road, because at about midnight on 18 December 1954 Numbers 3 and 5, which were thatched cottages situated at right angles to the road, were burnt down and there was the possibility that flames would reach the thatch of the Post Office but this was prevented by the timely intervention of Sandy Fire Brigade and various parishioners.

It will be of historic interest to note that both Blunham and Sandy had fire engines prior to 1860. In 1862 the Vestry (Parish Council) of Blunham invited Moggerhanger to subscribe £10 towards the cost of building a fire engine house. The men who manned these engines were all volunteers and, from a photograph in the Fire Station at Sandy, it is seen that these men assumed the rather exotic titles of Captain, Lieutenant, Engineer and Brigadier which now have the equivalent of Fire Officer, Leading Fireman and Fireman.

One amusing item about the Sandy Fire Brigade is that "In March of 1880 it was decided that, if any man had to be replaced for any reason, his replacement must be of the same physical proportions so that he could wear the uniform of the man whom he replaced."

To call out the Fire Brigade one had to continue to ring a large bell hung outside the Station; 'call boys' who lived nearby would then mount their cycles and go round the town alerting the firemen.

The first engines were horse-drawn but were later followed by 'steamers' and, in 1900, Sandy took possession of a magnificent double vertical steam fire engine that cost the Urban District Council £329. This engine could throw 260 to 300 gallons of water to a height of 150 feet through a one-inch jet. On its arrival it was christened at a civic reception after which it was paraded through the streets led by three brass bands and a large procession.

CHAPTER 8

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Situated just inside the west side of the parish boundary is Willow Hill Farm which has been, since 1903, the home of the Davison family who have, unobtrusively, made large contributions to the furtherance and welfare of Moggerhanger. The following recorded details of the buildings make rather interesting reading:-

Old farmhouse at Willow Hill. Date on front of building is G. T. 1791 but it is probably of much earlier origin. (It is possible that it was purchased by Godfrey Thornton and then marked accordingly).

Barns at Willow Hill. Early eighteenth century, 2 ranges, weatherboarded, pantile roofs and half hipped ends.

During work on the farmhouse a Mr. Bernard West found some newspapers and a book of music stuffed between sections of a wall:-

Leeds Times 6.1.1883

This was addressed to Thomas Sims Muggerhanger, Nr. Sandy, Bedfordshire and consisted almost entirely of advertisements at 3 lines for 6d. (2½p).

Deseret Semi-Weekly News (Salt Lake City, Utah, U. S. A.)
20.12.1889.

This gave details of the farm equipment that should be taken by anyone intending to emigrate to Utah and become a member of the Mormon Sect.

Reynold's Newspaper, London 1.9.1889.
(Government of the people, for the people, by the people).

The editorial stated that "We have been, during this week, in the fiercest fight between labour and capital that has ever been staged."

The music book had belonged to the Blunham C. E. T. S. Brass Band formed in October 1888.

The farmland at Willow Hill was 268 acres and was worked by F., F. W. and L. V. Davison with great efficiency but they felt the need to expand and, in 1909, they contracted to rent the 237 acres of Chalton Farm for a period of nine years but, before the expiry date of this period, F. W. purchased the land in 1913. It has always been the accepted policy that all

members of the Davison family should take an interest in parish matters and that they should employ as many parishioners as possible and the fact that they have always been good employers was highlighted when their horsekeeper, F. J. Harding, was presented with the Long Service Agricultural Award by the Duke of Gloucester for working at Willow Hill for a period of 56 years and eight months.

F. W. Davison is well remembered for the tea parties he gave to the children of the parish and for starting the practice of presenting Coronation and Jubilee mugs at the appropriate times but the member of the family who took the most active interest in the parish was Leopold Victor who was undoubtedly the most outstanding personality that Moggerhanger has known. He weighed in at 22 stone (some say 26) but all the ladies state that he was an excellent dancer. Outwardly he appeared to be a hard ungenerous person but actually he was both sensitive and kind which is indicated by the fact that he often asked his friends to tell him exactly what people really thought of him and the report of one of our present parishioners who states that, when she used to ask him to subscribe to some charity or other, he would always curse but she always left with a sizeable donation.

He was an obvious leader of men who always liked to have his own way but, once he got it, he would work tremendously hard to make any project a success which is illustrated by his efforts in providing the first village hall. He was a churchwarden, member of the Parochial Church Council, Chairman of (Sandy Branch) Farmers Union, Captain in the Home Guard during 1939/45, Trustee and Chairman of the Board of Management for the first village hall and carried out many other public functions during an extremely busy life. Present parishioners state that, when they were children, Victor would put seats in his lorry, take them down to Sandy railway station, see them off on a holiday and then collect them on their return. It is also said that he would get his workers to decorate horses and carts and then take part in the Biggleswade Horse Fair.

During 1937 there had been some discussion by the parishioners about the possibility of them having a village hall and, in respect of this, a meeting was held in the primary school on Monday 13 December, Mr. L. V. Davison was voted into the chair and he was supported by Brig. General W. B. Thornton, D.S.O., J.P., D.L. and Messrs F. W. Mathews and H. A. Usher (Clerk to the Parish Council). The meeting was very well attended by members of families with surnames of Longhurst, Reid, Peacock, Minney, Simmonds, Underwood, Hall, Ashwell, Harding, Street, Storton, Smith, Hales, Whiteman, Watts, Braybrooks, Daniel, Breed, Randall, Winter, Giddings, Craft, Dean, Simms, Ward, Buckle, Lawrence and Jacob.

Mr. L. V. Davison informed the meeting that he was willing to sell the old school building (that had been used as a farmer's store between 1911 and 1937) for the sum of £75 and that he would give £25 to start a fund. Brig. Gen Thornton also promised a sum of £25 which then left the parishioners with only £25 to find.

After some discussion it was decided to accept the offer. It was also decided to appoint Brig. Gen W. B. Thornton, L. V. Davison and H. Reid as Trustees and ex-officio members of the Board of Management. The following were also elected to be ordinary members of the Boards Messrs. Davison, Underwood, Reid, Longhurst, Simmonds, Hall and Ashwell.

EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES OF MOGGERHANGER VILLAGE HALL

17 March 1938 Sandy Building Society was asked for a loan of £100 the old school building being given as collateral. The money was to be used for renovation and installation of better sanitary arrangements. The work was to be carried out by Mr. Hendry for a sum of £118. It was also noted that a sum of £4.10.0. (£4.50) balance from the Coronation Fund (King George VI) would be available towards this. After this the parishioners put in a tremendous amount of work to turn the old building into a presentable village hall.

Also a door-to-door collection was arranged the appointed collectors to be Mesdames Davison, Reid, Harding and Street. The following were appointed as a sub-committee for entertainments and caterings:-

Mesdames Longhurst, Storton, Smith, Street, Hales and Whiteman and Messrs. Watts, Minney, Braybrooks, Daniels, Smith, Breed and Hall.

5 April 1938 The first Village Hall was opened at 3.30pm by Mrs. E. Y. Orlebar of Crawley Park, Bletchley and this was followed by afternoon tea and a Whist Drive and Dance was held in the evening for which 9d. (4p) was charged for each event or 1/6 (7½p) for both. At a subsequent meeting it was decided to make the following charges for the use of the hall:-

10/- (50p), plus 2/6 (12½p) for the caretaker per day
3/- (15p) per hour for use of the large room
2/- (10p) per hour for use of the small room

21 October 1938 A Young Men's Social Club was formed 4 July 1939. It was decided that in the event of war the village hall should be used as an ARP Warden's Post and First Aid Point.

9 September 1939 Payment of £9 was made for the installation of a radiogram.

During the war years the hall was used for ARP activities and for a great number of other functions, designed to help the war effort and also to lessen the tensions that build up on such occasions, such as entertaining the troops with dances, bingo sessions, whist drives, tea parties and inviting visitors from the surrounding villages. One group of Air Force personnel came from the R. A. F. Station at Tempsford from whence Whitley, Lysander and Halifax Aircraft transported British Secret Service agents and stores for Allied resistance groups in enemy occupied Europe. Interesting items in the stores were razor blades that could be used as very good compasses and maps drawn on silk handkerchiefs for use by prisoners of war during their attempts to escape to the Allied lines.

A Service Committee was formed by Mesdames Whiteman, Dean and Phillips and Messrs F. Hall, Braybrook, F. Randall, H. Reid and G. Whiteman to send comforts such as socks, scarves and cigarettes to men serving in H. M. Forces. It is also said that Mrs. O. Dean was a member of the First Aid Team and that her duties included driving a horse and cart to Sandy and Blunham railway stations.

To counteract the effect of bombs dropped by enemy aircraft Moggerhanger, like every other place in the land, provided a Civil Defence Organisation with its Headquarters at Village Farm.

F. W. Matthews was Chairman and Food Officer.
Brig. Gen. W. B. Thornton was Vice Chairman.
L. V. Davison represented Moggerhanger Home Guard.
W. C. Hill and G. E. Braybrook were Senior ARP Wardens.
F. E. Hall and L. Hill were Special Constables.
P. Pitts and F. Frith represented National Fire Service.
Mrs. Hales (First Aid Point).

It was noted that three wells were still functioning and could be used as an emergency water supply. Twentyone men had volunteered to fill in bomb craters. There were 29 picks, 30 axes, 149 shovels, 22 crowbars, 27 wheelbarrows, 20 tree-felling saws, 28 ladders, 8 water tanks, 22 stirrup pumps, 26 ropes, 150 sandbags, 145 buckets and four water-carts that could be used if it became necessary. In the ARP Centre (Village Hall) there was 1 stretcher, 66 mattresses and 132 blankets.

In 1940 the 2nd. Bedfordshire Battalion of the Home Guard was formed and was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel the Hon. M. C. H. Bowes-Lyon who had for his Second I/C Colonel G. H. Wells. Men from Moggerhanger, Blunham and Northill joined the Home Guard and they became B Company commanded by Brig. Gen. W. B. Thornton, D. S. O., J. P. His Platoon Commanders were Lieuts. L. V. Davison (Moggerhanger), W. H. Rose (Blunham) and F. Vincent (Northill).

Members of the Home Guard did two parades per week when they were given instruction about such weapons as rifles, Tommy guns, Sten guns, Lewis gun, Browning machine gun, Solothurn AA machine gun, Northover projector, Spigot mortar, Smith gun, revolvers of various design, grenade throwers, the Sticky Bomb, land mines and a 'bomb on a little wooden truck' (details about these bombs were not recorded). The main duties of the Home Guard were to provide security for railway stations, tunnels, water works, electric power stations, gas works, ammunition factories and to keep a good look-out for enemy agents being dropped by parachute.

On 23 July 1944 Her Majesty the Queen (now the Queen Mother) inspected the 2nd Bedfordshire Battalion Home Guard that paraded on the Fairfield Football Ground, Biggleswade and afterwards she took the salute at the march past.

On 31 July 1944 the Battalion received the following message:-

SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

Message from
Her Majesty the Queen
to 2nd. Bedf. Battn.
Home Guard.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

July 31st 1944.

To Lieut. Colonel The Hon. Michael Bowes-Lyon.

It gave me great pleasure to visit the Battalion of the Home Guard under your command on July 23rd.

I was much impressed by the appearance of all ranks, and by their admirable steadiness on parade.

Their arms drill was exceptionally good, and as I went down the ranks I thought with pride and gratitude of the splendid spirit of loyalty and determination which brought the Home Guard into being during those critical days of 1940, and which carried it on until a great and well-trained army is now guarding our land. This has only been achieved by the sacrifice of much leisure and the unselfish zeal of all ranks.

To all the Battalion, I send my heartfelt congratulations and good wishes.

Elizabeth R.

On 25 May 1945 notification was received that the village hall would no longer be required as an ARP Post and First Aid Centre.

On March 21 1946 a village hall committee was formed for the purpose of raising money for improvements to the hall and a start was made in economising by selling the radiogram because it was stated that "The village now had its own dance band". This band was called Rhythm Boys and the instrumentalists were Ted and Bill Wilsher, Cliff Watts, Ken Little, Nip Taylor, Pete Buckle, John Oliver, Ken Reid, Doug Dean, George Chessum and D. Edwards who, although blind, came over from Thorncote to play the piano. The instruments used were piano, drums, violin, accordion, piano accordion and saxophone. For some years this band played music in the Village Hall at football and cricket dinners and dances, wedding receptions, social evenings and for many events arranged to raise money for worthy causes.

Another man who had the right kind of community spirit was George Whiteman (Sgt. Major G. Whiteman, M. M.), Churchwarden, Chairman of the Ex-Servicemen's Committee, Chairman of Boy's Club, member of various fund-raising committees, School Caretaker and President of Moggerhanger Football Club who first played, in 1946, on Mathews' meadow, by kind permission of Mr. F. W. Mathews of Village Farm with equipment that was obtained in exchange for coupons saved out of tins of Bourneville cocoa and with goalposts and nets purchased from the proceeds of a door-to-door collection.

One interesting feature about this football pitch was that it had to be cleared of cowpats before the start of each game and whenever a player slipped and landed in the residue, the spectators would shout "Muck for luck" or "It'll make you grow". During half-time the players were refreshed with cups of strong tea brewed by Mesdames Mathews and Dean who also sold tea to the spectators in order to raise funds for the club. The first chairman of the club was F. Randall and, for the last thirty one years, the office of Hon. Secretary has been filled by Mr. C. Street.

ACQUISITION OF A PLAYING FIELD

We have already observed that the old school building (village hall) was acquired by the parishioners before they had the money to pay for it and it appears that the land now known as the playing field was obtained in the same way. It is reported that all the land adjacent to the church was owned by Mr. Tom Gurney and that he wished to sell it in one complete transaction, so Mr. F. E. Hall of Manor Farm purchased it and then informed the parishioners that they could measure out the amount they required after which it would be valued and they could pay for it as and when it was convenient. It was also decided that the Parish Council would negotiate the legalities and that a committee would undertake to raise the necessary cash.

On 6 May 1949 the following formed the Moggerhanger Playing Field Committee:-

Mr. F. E. Hall	Chairman
Mr. F. C. Collis	Secretary
Mrs. F. Mathews	Hon Treasurer
Mesdames:	Dawson, Randall, Phoenix, Storton, Braybrook, Buckle, Hall, Dean, Phillips, Watts, Craft, Smith, Hammond and Welling.
Messrs:	Phoenix, Mathews, Davison, Whiteman, Reid, Emery, Braybrook, Longhurst, Street, Fuller, Lawrence and Phillips.

The Parish Council reported that the complete playing field would cost £1,117 which included the price of a children's corner and the cost of the land which had been valued at £570. After this all members of the committee worked extremely hard on a multitude of projects such as the removal of six oak trees that were cut down and the wood sold for £47. A contractor (Mr. F. M. Sparrow) was also paid £95 to remove the tree stumps and to level

the land. A swamp area was filled in by members of the committee and the entrance to the field was covered with heavy gravel and cinders.

TREASURER'S REPORT DATED 20 MAY 1949

Donation from Boy's Club	£200.0.0
Donation from Football Club	10.0.0
From house-to-house collection:-	
Mesdames Braybrook and Storton	20.8.0
Miss E. Craft	9.4.0
Mrs. O. Dean	19.0.0
Miss E. Mathews	50.8.0
	<hr/>
	£309.0.0

By 28 June 1949 cash in the bank was £410, by February 1950 it was £574 and on 29 November 1950 the Playing Field Committee gave a cheque for £638 to the Parish Council towards the payment of the required £1,117.

It would appear that the first game played on the field was a Ladies v. Gents cricket match in which the Gents had to bat the wrong way round. The Ladies playing were: Mesdames Phoenix (Capt.), Braybrook, Storton, Stock, Dean, Hall, Buckle, Mathews (2) Watts and Craft.

In 1949 cricket of a more serious nature was being played on Reid's meadow at Chalton by teams picked from F. Reid, K. Reid, R. Reid, S. Reid, E. Reid (Umpire) C. Street R. Phillips, Rev. H. Phoenix, T. Sanderson, W. Wilsher, E. Wilsher, E. Street, W. Daniels, M. Daniels, D. G. Thomas, P. Rawlings, D. Jones, C. Watts and the famous C. Cooper who was unofficial groundsman and most unusual batsman who, it is said, made more runs off his body than his bat which he only took to the wicket to make it look right. Apparently the only time he scored with the bat was when a bowler from Blunham sent him down a beetroot instead of a ball. He hit that vegetable so hard that everyone within a radius of ten yards got a free sample. During the 1949 season this cricket team won the Second Division Championship of the Bedford & District Cricket League before transferring their activities to the playing field in 1951 to play on a table expertly prepared by George Whiteman.

Since the playing field could offer a reasonably flat surface always clear of cowpats Moggerhanger United Football Club transferred all their equipment from Mathews' meadow and played their first game on the present pitch on 3 November 1951 in the Third Division of the Bedford & District League. Training, under the direction of Mr. J. Craft, was carried out during the evenings in the light from three Tilly lamps but these were later replaced by the present floodlights which, by kind permission of the Vicar, take their power from a connection in the Church.

The team was generally selected from D. Smith, K. Reid, R. Rice, W. Longhurst, S. Reid, G. Welling, R. Dean, W. Fage, P. Buckle, L. Hull, C. Watts, F. Beddall, R. Anderson, T. Emery, D. Longhurst, P. Hall, J. Searle, J. Baldwin, J. Cooper, D. Hagarty, E. Street and B. Rice and

these were backed up by a number of enthusiastic supporters who raised money in various ways to keep the club financially sound.

The Playing Field Committee continued to function until 4 February 1953 after which their efforts were switched to preparing for the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Celebrations on 2 June 1953 which, by all accounts, was a great success.

Moggerhanger Coronation Celebrations:-

- 1130 Judging the best decorated house frontage.
- 1200 Judging best vase of cut flowers.
- 1330 Fancy dress parade for children and adults. Parading on the Guinea square.
- 1500 A United Service in the Recreation Ground.
- 1530 Children's sports.
- 1630 Tea for children and Senior Citizens. (Children's souvenir mugs will be presented at tables).
- 1745 Sports continued for adults.
- 2000 Dancing and other entertainments in the school playground.

During this coronation year of 1953 Moggerhanger Cricket Club again won the Second Division of the Bedford & District League and, in 1958 they won the First Division of the same League but, after this, the club went into a steady decline and ceased to function in 1962. It is possible that the younger members of the parish switched their sports because, in 1961, the Football Club decided to start a reserve team and this proved its value because in 1964 the First Team won the Britannia Cup.

OLD AGE AND VILLAGE HALL

At the beginning of 1969 the old building, built in 1861 and used as a village hall since 1938, was showing signs of its 108 years of age and there were grave doubts about its structural stability. It was therefore decided to close the hall temporarily and obtain a report from Mr. Sid Morris (Secretary, Beds. Rural Community Council) and architects Chrystal & West. It was also decided that, in the event of a demolition order being made regards the building, every endeavour should be made to obtain permission to site a new hall at the Playing Fields and that, temporarily, the Board of Management would hold its future meetings in the Football Club hut.

At a meeting on 4 December 1969 members present were Brig. General W. B. Thornton and Mr. H. Reid (Trustees), Hr. W. Darville (Chairman), Mr. J. Miller (Vice Chairman) and Mr. D. Thomas (Hon. Sec and Treasurer) with Mesdames Dean, Prentice and Hall, Mr. J. Harding and the Rev. H. Phoenix. After reading the report received from Chrystal & West it was decided to give a contract, for the necessary repairs, to the building contractors Messrs. Chambers & Bull. By 25 July 1970 the structural repairs to the village hall had been completed at a cost of £150 to Chambers & Bull and £20 to Chrystal & West. Members of the Board of Management then made strenuous efforts during the next nine months in

repairing ceilings, floors, door panels, windows, internal and external painting and improving the toilet arrangements. The Village Hall was re-opened on Saturday 17 April 1971.

At a future meeting it was decided to make every possible effort to raise the necessary cash (estimated at many thousands of pounds) to build a new village hall through sponsorship, gala days, raffles, whist drives, auctions, bring-and-buy and rummage sales, coffee mornings and a 100 Club whereby members paid 12½p per week to partake in a monthly prize draw. Some idea of the efforts made during the next five years can be obtained by noting that by 1976, the sum raised was £4,500 and the Board of Management started to discuss the possibility of proceeding with the building programme. It should also be noted that, during this five year period, the composition of the Board of Management changed a number of times due to members dropping out for various reasons such as health or business commitments (more of this later).

FORMATION OF MG60 CLUB

It would appear that the germ of the idea for the formation of such a club already existed in the fact that it was the practice of Mr. & Mrs. E. Evans, landlords of the Guinea, to arrange regular annual events for the 'Over 60s' but it was considered that Moggerhanger should have a Club formed in keeping with those affiliated to the National Federation of Old Age Pensions Associations (NFOAPA) and the Bedfordshire Old People's Welfare Council (BOPWC) which Clubs had names such as Emma Gee, Over 60, Golden Age, Senior Citizens, Darby & Joan, Evergreen, Elder People's and Good Companions.

On Wednesday 28 November 1973 a meeting was held between Miss P. Martin (Secretary BOPWC), Mrs. E. Evans (Guinea), Mrs. E. Street, Mr. & Mrs. W. Lovesey and Mr. H. J. Harding at which Miss Martin explained the organisation and activities of such clubs.

On 10 December 1973 a further meeting was held at which the officers to represent the Emma Gee 60 Club were elected as follows:-

President	Mr. E. Evans (Guinea)
Vice Presidents	Messrs. Baxter, Flack, Davison, McCrae and Thornton
Chairman	Mr. H. J. Harding
Vice Chairman	Mr. R. Fox
Secretary	Mrs. E. Street
Treasurer	Mr. A. H. Harpur
Committee members	Mesdames Emery, Cox, Evans, Phillips, Wagstaff, Little, Lovesey, Flint, Harding, Prentice and Lawrence.

Approximately sixty senior citizens joined the Club and they all enjoy meeting in the Guinea (by kind permission of Mr. & Mrs. Evans) on the third Wednesday of each month when tea and biscuits are served, tombola played and a raffle is held. All activities are organized by the very enthusiastic committee members and the staff of the Guinea who also

freely supply the necessary provisions and prizes and, since no charge is made for the use of the premises by the club and committee, the subscription paid by club members is kept at a very low level.

The first Treasurer's report, produced on 28 January 1974, indicated the following details:-

Grant from BOPWC		£10.00
Donation from	Mr. H. J. Harding	5.00
"	Mr. & Mrs. Emery	2.50
"	Mr. & Mrs. Evans	5.00
"	Mr. & Mrs. G. Baxter	8.00
Income from other sources		<u>5.58</u>
	Total	<u>£36.08</u>

It was also reported by Mrs. Evans that £20 would be donated by Mr. Ian Jacobs which represented half the sum raised at the Guinea when he agreed to have his hair cut at so much per inch (the other half of the sum went to another charity). She also stated that she intended to have a pedometer attached to her leg during the holiday period to check the mileage covered during the execution of her duties after which she intended to raise money for the MG60 Club by holding a competition to guess what the meter reading was (as a result of this she later gave the Club £28 but the mileage covered was not recorded).

The club finances have always been maintained in a healthy state by annual donations from a large number of Vice Presidents, Mr. Evans (the President) and money raised at coffee mornings, raffles, rummage and bring-and-buy sales, auctions and an occasional social and dance.

Club activities include visits to shows at the Civic Theatre and Corn Exchange, Bedford, annual trips to places such as Norfolk Broads, Skegness and Great Yarmouth, shopping trips to various towns, whist drives and garden parties at Willow Hill Farm and St. John's House. During the visits to the seaside Mr. & Mrs. Flint (members of the St. John's Brigade) generally travel with the club and the Brigade also provide special wheelchairs for use of members who find some difficulty in walking. It should also be noted that, during these various visits, Baxter's Coaches were used but the proprietors generally forgot to make any charge for use of their vehicles. Mr. McCrae (Vice President) gives a film show annually and talks are given by members of the Community Health Council, Bedford.

The Committee interest themselves in many directions such as, visiting club members in their own homes or when they are in hospital, when they deliver presents and get-well cards paid for out of the contents of a 'sunshine box', checking that senior citizens are getting correct pension, meals on wheels, home help, chiropodist service, DHSS allowances and adequate medical service. Christmas gifts, carefully wrapped for the occasion, are provided out of club funds and distributed by a real live Father Christmas and club members are kept in touch with all items of interest to senior citizens with the receipt of the monthly publications YOURS (issued by the Help The Aged Organisation) and Pensioner's Voice (issued by NFOAPA).

Since Wednesday 18 May 1977 club meetings have been held in the new village hall for which a payment of 75p per hour is made but the Committee still meet in the Guinea by kind permission of the proprietors of that establishment.

AN APPRECIATION

Give thanks to those of this parish of ours
Those who work for hours and hours
With many appeals
For the playing fields
And numerous stalls
For the Village Halls
For their efforts and many a sub
To senior citizens of the MG Club
Their efforts for the hospital
Are surely not a little
Their work for the Church and work for the Chapel
With gala days and harvest apple
Give thanks to those of this parish of ours
Those who work for hours and hours.

H.S.B.

GOODBYE OLD FRIENDS

During 1976 Moggerhanger lost one of its "true sons of the soil" about whom one local farmer has said "When Bill Storton worked for us he was worth five men on the field". My own impression of Bill can be expressed by part of a poem written by A. W. Watkin in his book "True Tales Told of Biggleswade of Old":-

"Yes, gone are the days of that wonderful age,
When only a few had an education;
But some men of low birth were like the salt of the earth
And were an asset to the nation."

We also lost the valuable services of Mr. C. R. Wathen who died on 25 November, aged 68, and was Clerk to the Blunham and also Moggerhanger Parish Councils. It seems incredible that this fine man could have undertaken so many duties at such an age because he was also Manager of John Donne School, Blunham and Sandy Lower Schools and Governor of Sandye Place School. He was also Chairman of Mid. Beds. Area Youth Committee and Treasurer of the Civil Service Pensioners' Association. At the funeral service held in Blunham Church it was said that "His only concern was for the welfare of others". It should now be recorded that the duties of Clerk to the Moggerhanger Parish Council are being efficiently carried out by Mrs. B. J. Darville.

In this same year a building of vintage 1861 was demolished. It had faithfully served the parish as parochial school (1861-1911), farmer's store (1911-1937) and Village Hall (1937-

1976) but down it had to come to make way for the building of a new village hall on the same foundations because, in this year, the necessary finance had been obtained from the following sources:-

New Village Hall Fund	£4, 500
Grant from Parish Council	2,000
Grant from County Council	1,625
Grant from District Council	1,625
Grant from Dept. of Education & Science	<u>3,250</u>
Total	<u>£13, 000</u>

Another grant of £600 was made by donors to the Help The Aged organisation on behalf of the MG60 Club, the money to be used for the purchase of tables and chairs.

After the architect's plans had been approved and planning permission obtained, the contract for the demolition of the old and building of the new village hall was given to Messrs. Dean & Hunt, General Building Contractors, 43 Western Way, Sandy, Beds, who everyone agrees "did an extremely fine job". They also suggested and incorporated a number of ideas of their own which have since proved very beneficial to everyone who uses the hall.

After the builder, Mr. Dean, had handed over the keys the new Village Hall was opened by the Rev. Harold Phoenix (vicar of the parish 1947 - 1970) at 3 pm. on Saturday 2 April 1977 (time and date approximating those for the opening of the old hall on 3 April 1938) in the presence of Mr. Sid Morris, General Secretary of the Rural Community Council, Miss E. K. Wallen, Miss J. Wallen and Mrs. E. Warren, representing the Help The Aged organisation, Mr. Peter Davison, Mr. George Baxter and Mr. Joe Bridges, hall trustees, members of the village hall committee and a large number of parishioners. After the opening, a plaque commemorating the occasion was unveiled by the Rev. Phoenix and another plaque, commemorating donors to Help The Aged, was unveiled by Miss E. K. Wallen (ex-Headmistress of High School, Bedford) and Mrs. E. Warren, the well-known personality at Help The Aged shops in Luton. During the afternoon tea was served and enjoyed by all concerned and, during the evening, a dance was held and declared to be a great success.

Everyone in the parish has expressed their thanks to all members of committees concerned with raising the necessary money to pay for the hall especially to those who comprise the present committee, who are:-

Chairman	Mr. M. Hall
Secretary	Mr. K. Hall
Treasurer	Mr. B. Wilkes
Committee members	Mesdames Smith, Dean, Street Prentice and Wagstaff Messrs. Plumley and Prentice

It may be of interest to compare charges made for the old hall in 1938 to those charges for hiring the hall today:-

WEDDINGS

Parishioners	until 1800	£10
Non parishioners	"	£12 plus £1 per hour afterwards

DANCES

Parishioners	1900-2400	£10
Non parishioners	"	£12 plus £1 per hour before or after
Non-profit making organisations		75p per hour
Commercial bookings		£15 per day

JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

MCMLXXVII is the year that will always be noted as being the Jubilee of Elizabeth Rex the second (EIRR) but, for me, it will be remembered as the year when the people of Moggerhanger demonstrated their community spirit by giving of their money, time and energy to make the celebrations a great success.

The Jubilee Celebrations Committee, formed on 10 February 1977 consisted of Mr. H. J. Harding (Chairman) Mr. K. Hall (Vice Chairman), Mr. D. Burley (Secretary), Mr. H. S. Brown (Treasurer) and Mesdames Darville, Emery, Harding, Plumbley, Street, Yates, Sedgman and Jilbert plus Messrs Emery, M. Hall, Sedgman, Prentice, Green and Prigmore. At this meeting it was decided that every effort should be made to raise the necessary cash to pay for the numerous events that had been proposed.

The following extracts from the Treasurer's report give some indication of the response made by all who live within the Parish boundary:-

Door-to-door collection	£92
Raffles in Guinea, Post Office and Village Hall	£45
Bring-and-buy and jumble sales	£46
Direct donations	£7
Social and dance on 23.4.1977	£122
Coffee morning at Willow Hill Farm	£26
Jubilee dance on 7.6.1977	£214

It was also reported that Mr. D. P. Davison had given 150 Jubilee mugs for distribution to the children of the parish and that the housewives had baked a total of 1,190 assorted cakes and produced a multitude of sandwiches.

On Saturday 7 June 1977 the celebrations took the form of various competitions, sports (serious and hilarious), presentations, teas and a grand dance during the evening, all of which was later described in the following:-

MOGGERHANGER CELEBRATIONS

What a day we had for Jubilee,
With lots of laughter and lots to see.
The judges started to tot up their score,
As they moved through parish door by door
And dwelling on their deliberations.
After looking at such decorations.
Then grand spectacle of fancy dress,
Presenting judges with more to assess.
Little Bo Peep had lost her sheep,
With black-faced Amin, a little too deep
Jubilee Mug and Vanished Spirit, What a shock!
Sure indicated life-style after 5 o'clock.
Bunny Girl with tray of wine,
With My Fair Lady, choice of mine,
The Dirty Tramp so all alone,
With radiant smile ever shown.
The judges looked at Scottish Lass,
'Twas pity they had to pass,
To Coal Scuttle with lady in a (?)
And Drummer Boy and Ballerina,
Humphries, Humphries, What was the clue?
Means nothing to me, What to you?
Rule Britannia and Old Scarecrow,
Then 'twas all over, so on we go,
To Tug-of-War with lots of hope,
By two big teams at ends of rope.
Erect the easels, get on with the painting,
Much artistic talent to us acquainting.
The Football Match of Mock F. C.,
Such a great game for all to see,
The female (?) team sure did impress,
With falsies and much coloured dress,
The male (?) team looked so very prim,
Some not so much but others slim,
The referee (?), bi-sexual,
Was somewhat unusual.
The day was taken to its limit,
With pints of ale and glass of spirit,
And then to dance, to dance around,
To dance, a dance to Broadway Sound.

H.S.B.

The final report by the Treasurer stated that, after all debts had been paid, £207 was still left in the bank account. The Committee therefore decided to give £50 to the MG60 Club,

£30 to the Children's Playgroup and £127 to the village hall with the stipulation that the Village Hall Committee purchase a picture of Queen Elizabeth II to be displayed in the hall and a flagpole to be erected adjacent to the hall.

CHAPTER 9

CHALTON

In the Domesday Book of 1086 Moggerhanger is indexed as "See Chalton" which indicates that Chalton was of greater importance at that time. From details given it would appear that they represent both Chalton and South Mills:-

Place name	Chalton (Cerlentine)
Value of land (in 1086)	£10
Area	10 Hides
Area under plough	10 "
Plough teams there	2
Plough teams short	3
Villeins (man who farmed 60 acres)	5
Bordars (man who farmed 30 acres)	9
Meadow (to feed a family)	10
Wood (to feed pigs)	16
Mill (South Mills) value in 1086	30/- (£1. 50)
Name of Hundred (County)	WINCHESTANESTOU

A hide was the amount of land required to feed a family of four. Its size depended on the quality of that land.

Chalton House and Dovecote (built between 1735 and 1765) are of red brick. The house has 3 gabled dormers, tiled roof, 3 window range of sashes in segmental heads, band between stories. The Dovecote is square with tiled roof and gabled louvre, band, modern windows in west, south and east sides also a small blocked opening on the east side. Pigeons from the Dovecote provided the occupants of the house with squob pie (a young pigeon being called a squob). A police report dated 1822 says that a John Thomas and John Adams, fishmongers of Clerkenwell, were caught stealing pigeons from dovecotes in the area, found guilty and sentenced to seven years deportation.

We have already seen that, in 1858, Chalton Farm belonged to the Rev. Edward Henry Dawkins (died 1859). In 1862 Mrs. E. Dawkins sold a piece of the farmland to the Bedford and Cambridge Railway Company on which to build Blunham Station and station yard and, now, since the railway line represents our northern boundary, we can consider that part of the station is in the Parish of Blunham and the remainder is in the Parish of Moggerhanger.

The railway line between Blunham and Sandy was single track and, before a train was allowed to proceed to Sandy, the driver had to obtain a brass train staff from the signalman. Any train coming from Sandy had to bring the staff back again. After operating for more than one hundred years, the Bedford and Cambridge Railway was closed down on 30 December 1967 in accordance with the Transport Act of 1962.

We can now produce a pen-picture of what Chalton looked like during the 19th Century. Opposite Chalton House was the old Rose inn which was probably built about 1800 and,

according to records, had landlords of John Prigmore (1841), Nathaniel King (1871), J. Mardlin (1876) and T. S. Mardlin (1894). A block of four thatched cottages just north of the Rose (18-24 Blunham Road) and another block of four ran at right angles to the road and were 26-32 Blunham Road. Number 26 was occupied by a Mrs. Mary Ann Brown who had the distinction of making some delightful toffee that she sold to the children of the village and, in the privacy of her cottage, smoking an old clay pipe. Next door to Mary Ann lived Lucy Watts about whom it is said "she brought them into the world and eased their way out" which means that she was an efficient midwife and also prepared those who died before the undertaker arrived. Another Mrs. Watts was renowned for the shirts that she made for all the men of the parish.

Number 34, Blunham Road was much as it is today except that it was a grocer's shop with a large end window and, in 1841, the owner of the shop was a Mrs. Elizabeth Tatman. The shop was later taken over by the Grantham family and the additional trade of selling and repairing cycles was added. It is said that Mr. Grantham was coachman to the Dawkins of Morhanger House (now Park Hospital). Where the bungalow Heathcroft now stands were two thatched cottages and a block of four and a detached thatched cottage was in the position where now stands the house White Gables. The house called Little Orchard (36 Blunham Road) was originally a delightful single storey thatched cottage which, in 1912, was recorded in an oil painting by the wife of the Rev. S. A. P. Kermode. The painting now being in the possession of Mr. H. M. Rawlings at 8 Blunham Road, which farmhouse is still as it would have appeared in about 1830. Chalton Terrace (52-62 Blunham Road) was built in 1868 and the long but delightful thatched cottage (which was once three cottages), which will now be 64 Blunham Road, was possibly built about 1800.

Inhabitants of the village were mostly employed as agricultural workers with the exception of the landlords of the Rose, lawyers Charles and Samuel Simms, the grocer, straw plaiter, wheelwright and a number of lacemakers.

At the beginning of the 20th century (1904) we see that the block of six houses (40-50 Blunham Road) called Ewelme Terrace was built in line with Chalton Terrace but why the new terrace was called Ewelme has not been ascertained. In 1906 the Rose was taken over by Mr. J. Cann, and he was followed by G. Truin (1914), W. G. Watts (1920) and G. A. Rice (1938-1975) after which the public house was vacated until in 1977, it is being converted into a private dwelling.

CHAPTER 10

SOUTH MILLS

The area known as South Mills is actually situated in the northeast corner of the Parish of Moggerhanger therefore we should ask ourselves "How did it get its name?" and the answer is apparently due to the fact that it is south of Blunham Corn Mill and, it should be remembered, that, prior to 1860, South Mills was part of the Parish of Blunham which, at that time, had two mills about which details are recorded in the Survey of Water Mills in 1086:-

Name of Water Mill	ASSIGNED TO	Value in 1086
Blunham (Corn)	Blunham	20/- (£1.00)
Cerlentine (South Mills)	Chalton	30/- (£1.50)
Bistone (Beeston)	Sandy & Muggerhanger	30/- (£1.50)

In 1553 it was purchased by the Earl de Grey of Wrest Park, Silsoe, Beds, for the sum of £60 and the details given were "Fulling Mill with four going stokkes and two going wheels, with house newly built."

It is recorded that, in 1812, it consisted of a wheel-house, mill-room and roasting kiln with a tall chimney and that it was owned by Charles Powers & Company, seed crushers and pure linseed and cottonseed cake manufacturers. It is also recorded that the grinding stones used weighed three tons.

In 1851 it was recorded as an Oil Mill owned by C. Powers, the Manager and Miller being Samuel Johnson and Journeyman Miller being Thomas Gurney. In 1853 William Tatman was appointed to be the manager and a Mr. William Winters was appointed as Oil Engineer.

In 1864 a large warehouse was added to cater for the increase of business due to the opening of the Bedford to Cambridge Railway, the building of Blunham Station and a spur from the line to and through buildings of the Mill.

At 10 pm. on Tuesday 23 July 1873 a fire started in an area where there was stored ninety tons of oil, fifteen cubic feet of oil cakes and many tons of seed. The manager, Cornelius Pope, immediately sent for the Blunham and Sandy fire-engines but, such was the nature of the burning material, their efforts to control the conflagration proved useless and the fire spread to all parts completely destroying the buildings which, it was stated, were insured with the Norwich Insurance Office for the sum of £30,000. It was also stated that some forty employees were thrown out of work.

In 1898 Messrs. C. Beesons Ltd., acquired the property and, in the following year, they built a new factory around the old burnt-out buildings and called the installation Chemical Manure & Bone Works for the production of fertiliser from bones and slaughter-house

waste. The pride which the owners had in their factory was expressed in a speech by one of them whilst taking newspaper reporters around the various buildings:-

“The Ivel gives us power. The force of water grinds the bones to make Beesons bone meal. Can't you smell it? Healthy too! There's few die in Blunham (South Mills) before their time. We've got good air and no rush. That's what keeps us well.”

The following extracts from a Beesons' advertisement dated 1934 will be of interest:-

“Beesons organic compound containing Hoof, Horn, Meat,
Bone and Blood 50%”

“Our Salesman is in every bag”

“Organic compound No. 1 at £6. 15. 0 per ton
Organic compound No. 2 at £6. 0. 0 per ton”

In 1962 the Mill was taken over by Cross Bone Fertilisers Limited (a subsidiary of Hargreaves Group Limited) who operated a fertiliser factory at Bridlington. In the same year Cross Bone Fertilisers Ltd. started producing 'Granulated Fertiliser' and the production of Bone Meal Fertiliser was gradually phased out and ceased altogether in 1964 and, since the slaughtering of animals ceased, there was no longer a supply of hides to W. Cheverton & Co., leather dressers at South Mills, and the building they had used was later demolished.

In 1966 a Company jointly owned by Hargreaves Group Limited and Imperial Chemical Industries was formed and the name Cross Bone Fertilisers was changed to Hargreaves Fertiliser Industries Ltd.

From a report in the Bedfordshire Times dated 11 February 1966 it was understood that the original South Mills was to be demolished in the summer of that year but, according to Mr. A. Sims, a long-serving employee at the Mill, this was a reporter's error because the demolition started in 1970 and was completed in 1971 with the exception of the water-wheels which were built in 1802 and about which a preservation order had been made. The shell of the old slaughter-house was retained and is now used as an engineering workshop but the remainder of the present factory is of modern design.

Two of the original grinding-stones can still be seen on the ground near the weighbridge and it can also be observed that the power-drive from the waterwheels must have gone into a building that would have been where now stands a very modern canteen.

A report by Mr. F. W. Kuhlicke, Curator of Bedford Museum, indicated that:-

“Much of the machinery obtained from the demolition of the old mill would be removed to the Luton Museum at Wardown Park where, with the aid of scale plans provided by Cross Bone Fertilisers Ltd., a scale model of the mill and machinery would be made”.

I was informed by the present Curator of the Luton Museum that no model was ever made and that the old burnt-out machinery was far too large to be accommodated at Luton.

Another report by J. Kenneth Major, B.Arch., ARIBA, and dated October 1965 states that:-

“The outer of the two water wheels did not serve the mill, but is believed to have been connected to a pump which stood still further to the north of the mill. This wheel is the same as the main wheel, but only has two sets of spokes supporting its bracket. The main wheel consists of two bays, and the spokes and rims are made of cast iron, with wooden supports for the buckets.

The present buckets are of sheet iron though they would have been made of wood when first installed. The hubs and axle are of cast iron, and there are six spokes mounted in two semi-circles on the axles. The other interesting feature of the wheel is that the bucket supports are wedged and not bolted into place.”

In accordance with the 1962 Transport Act the Bedford to Cambridge Railway was closed down on 30 December 1967 since which date all products going to and from South Mills have been taken by road. It will be of interest to note that this railway line was in operation for one hundred years. It was first envisaged by the Bedford & Cambridge Railway Company on 29 May 1862.

CHAPTER 11

IN CONCLUSION

We are now well into 1977 and I would like to invite the reader to accompany me on a walk around the parish whilst we observe the changes that have been made or are in the process of being made. Starting at Sheerhatch Wood we note that many trees have been felled from the side of St. John's Road and from Morhanger Park due to the Dutch elm and sooty bark diseases that attack elm and sycamore respectively. We also note that the lodge (built in 1861) to St. John's House has been expertly renovated and enlarged to become the desirable residence of Major and Mrs. G. W. Thornton, the previous owners of St. John's, that had been the home of one branch of the Thornton family for some 170 years, but was acquired by the Sue Ryder (Bedford) Foundation in March and, in the words of Mr. G. Fuller, Chairman of the Foundation,

“St. John's House, Moggerhanger, will eventually be opened to accommodate people with chronic illnesses for convalescence, rehabilitation or continuing care as this will ease the strain on the families of such people and release hospital beds for other patients.”

It will be of some interest at this stage to learn that Miss Sue Ryder, C. M. G., O. B. E. is the wife of Group Capt. Cheshire, founder of the Cheshire Homes.

She was born in Leeds in 1923 and has been connected with some form of social work since that time. She saw service with resistance groups in Europe during the war and has since worked with relief teams caring for the sick and homeless. She travels some 50,000 miles each year whilst raising funds for the Foundation and pays all her own expenses whilst so doing. It should also be noted that, at the present time, various local parishioners are giving their services to this worthy cause.

Leaving St. John's Road and turning into Park Road we see that a number of detached and semi-detached bungalows have been erected on what was known as Brown's Field which, it is said, will accommodate thirty such dwellings. The first section of these has now been named Park Close. This change in the local scenery has been aptly described in a poem by Mrs. I. M. Thomas:-

A CHANGING VIEW

Where once the golden corn waved fair
New bungalows now stand;
Piles of bricks and sand and wood
Foretell more changes on the land.
Tiled roofs, brick walls, a wooden fence,
Conceal the view we knew so well,
And only from our bedroom now
The Sandy hills can cast their spell.
The changing face of Bedfordshire
Has reached our village small,
But welcome to our neighbours new,
And may God bless you all.

Whilst walking along Park Road we glance to the left and notice that Peacock's barn was built in 1858 and, passing the entrance to the hospital, we see a delightful cottage (built about 1800) then, moving on towards the Guinea we observe that Romany Cottage (GT 1800) is being renovated and enlarged which brings to mind that this cottage used to be two and that its previous owner was Mrs. Ursula Roberts, a lady of some distinction. She was born in India and, it is said, that she became a close friend of the King of Ethiopia. She married the Rev. W. C. Roberts, Vicar of Sutton. She also wrote many books under the pen-name of Susan Miles the following being of particular interest:-

Adventurers All (1916)
Dunch (1918)
Annotations (1922)
Childhood (1923)
Little Mirror (1924)
An Anthology of Youth (1925)
Blind Men Crossing a Bridge (1934)
Rabboni (1942)
Portrait of a Parson (1954)
Lettice Delmar (1958)

One old photograph shows her standing outside the cottage with a large glass case that contained the head of an Indian tiger. At the rear of the cottage is a small glass-house in which she spent many hours whilst writing about her favourite subjects. It is said that this retreat was made for her by Mr. N. Dawson out of what had been a pigsty.

We next come to Bridge's Garage that was built on ground where once stood Dawson's painters and decorators shop and dairy from whence the well-known Miss Violet Dawson used to drive a donkey and cart whilst delivering milk to all parts of the parish.

Adjacent to the old forge we now see a bus bay that was constructed by the County Council in August in response to repeated requests from the parishioners.

Turning into Blunham Road we see the base of a glass bottle cemented into the chimney of the Guinea and we understand that this bottle contains a list of the names of all the men who worked on the building of the inn. We also note that the old vicarage (now a private dwelling) is becoming a really attractive part of the village scene and, further down the road, we see the new village hall that has become a great asset to all concerned and is now used for dances, wedding receptions, dinners, meetings, play groups, auctions, bring-and-buy activities, youth club and coronation and jubilee celebrations.

At Chalton we observe that the old Rose is gradually being renovated to eventually become a private dwelling but, it is sad to relate, that the dovecote adjacent to Chalton House is now deteriorating at an alarming rate.

We must also note with some pleasure that there will soon be a number 32, Blunham Road in the space that was left for that purpose. Lastly we look over the fields at the new factory of Hargreaves Fertiliser Industries Ltd. (South Mills) which stands out from the green of its surroundings.

I consider that it would be quite wrong of me to end this narrative about parish life without making specific reference to "Moggerhanger's Secretary", "Edna the milk" and "The Utilitarian". We have already read (see Treasurer's report to the Playing Field Committee, 20 May 1949) that a Miss Elizabeth Craft collected £9.20 and a Miss Edna Mathews collected £50.40 and, since that time, they have, in their own particular way, continued to serve the community.

Miss Craft eventually became Mrs. E. Street but is still known to one and all as Betty who has been or still is secretary for or an active member of committees for Parochial Church Council, Mother's Union, British Legion (Ladies), MG60 Club, Lower School, Coronation and Jubilee celebrations and the M. U. F. C. I also learn that she was awarded the long service medal by the National Savings Organisation for work done during the period 1944 - 71.

Miss Mathews (Edna to one and all) will always be remembered for the peculiarity of delivering milk between the hours of early morn up to, and sometimes past, midnight. The wide expanse of this period is due to the fact that each delivery is interspersed with acts of kindness such as collecting doctor's prescriptions, tablets from chemists, pensions from Post Office and goods from local shops for people who cannot do so themselves. She also makes house-to-house collections for various charities and conducts the business of the Methodists Chapel that was founded by her father in 1928.

Since I arrived in Moggerhanger I have constantly heard such phrases as "Jim'll be chairman", "Jim will have some of those", "Jim can arrange gala or fete", "Jim will be auctioneer" or "Ask Jim, he'll know". This Jim turned out to be Mr. H. J. Harding.

Finally I hope that you will have found some pleasure and interest in reading this book because, if so, I shall feel that any effort made by me has been well rewarded.

Horatio Stanley Brown[©]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Domesday Book 1086
Survey of Water Mills 1086
Post Office Directory 1854
Harrod's Directory 1876
Kelly's Directory 1894
Title deeds of Chalton House
Gordon's Map 1735
Jefferies Map 1765
Beachcroft papers 1817
Account Books of Willow Hill Farm 1827-81
Registers of St. John's Church 1860-1977
Bedfordshire Times: 7 August 1860
23 July 1873
11 February 1966
Census for 1841, 1851, 1861 and 1871
County Families of the United Kingdom 1885 and 1899
Railway Magazine Vol. 8, 1901
History of Bedfordshire by Joyce Godber
Bedfordshire Magazine, Vol. 8, 63, Winter 1962-63
Railway Age in Bedfordshire by Cochran
Bedfordshire Historical Record Society Vol. 3, 1916
Ploughing by Steam by J. Hainning and C. Tyler
Farming by Steam by H. Bennett