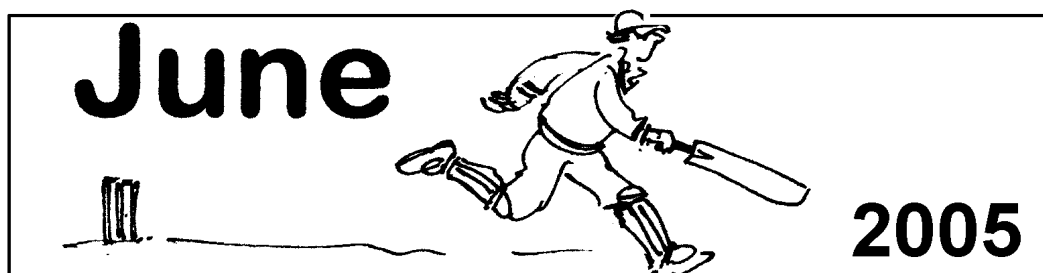


ELSTOW PARISH MAGAZINE



Dear Parishioners,

PENTECOST

The Church's year is changing its focus. Between Advent and now we have prepared and celebrated Christmas, Epiphany and Easter. Forty days later came Ascension and now we are into "Sundays after Pentecost", which will run for nearly half of the Christian year until we start the whole process again.

At the beginning of Chapter 2 of The Acts of the Apostles we read: *'When the day of Pentecost came (the apostles) were all together in one place... All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.'* Devout Jews from many other countries were in Jerusalem and were amazed that they could understand what was being said as though in their native tongues.

God is eternally Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It was the Holy Spirit that spoke through King David (Acts 1, v16), and through the prophet Isaiah (Acts 28, v27). The Holy Spirit is God in every age revealing his truth to all people and something special happened at that Pentecost.

There were three great Jewish festivals to which every male Jew living within 20 miles of Jerusalem was legally bound to come – the Passover (usually mid-April), Pentecost (50 days later, in early June) and the Feast of Tabernacles. Many came from further away: the crowd that day in Jerusalem was indeed international.

So, what actually happened? Well, we really do not know, except that the apostles had an experience of the power of the Holy Spirit flooding their beings such as they had never had before, and were inspired. In consequence, the Jews who were gathered there could hear and understand the speakers in their own languages. The power of the Spirit was such that it had given these simple people from Galilee a message that could reach every alien heart.

To illustrate this month's thoughts, let me share with you the account (abbreviated) of a Methodist American congresswoman, Mrs Park, captured by the North Koreans whilst attempting to escape the attack on Seoul. *"After being questioned she was told she would be shot the next morning. The next day, a young soldier of about twenty took her at gun point to where she was to be executed. She said 'My eyes filled with tears as I began to remember all of the major events of my life. I said, 'God, I do not deserve it, but please forgive this old woman her sins and save me like you did the thief on the cross'. Despite her incredible circumstances, she began to sing aloud an old hymn she remembered. This was more than the young soldier could cope with. 'Shut up, old woman! Stop your singing now!' he shouted. But she continued to sing.*

The soldier took out a shovel and began to dig her grave. As he dug, she sang. When he had finished digging he blindfolded her and asked, 'Old woman, do you have any last words you want to say?' 'Yes. I woke this morning full of fear. Now I have peace and joy. You see, I was only a nominal Christian this morning, but now I am fully committed to God. May I spend the last moments of my life praying for your soul?' She then stepped down into the hole and knelt and prayed. After a few minutes she could hear the young soldier crying. 'You may shoot me now: I have finished praying', she said. But the young soldier told Mrs Park that he had had a vision and could not shoot her. He stepped down into the grave, released her and told her to run into the hills for safety.

The Holy Spirit touches us, renews us, gives us life, love and hope. The more open we are, the more the Holy Spirit will be part of us. Let us encourage each other to be open to the Holy Spirit, open to God's love and life that the world may see God in us and that we may find life in all its fullness.



With Best Wishes,

Jeremy

A Journey into Faith

The 'Journey into Faith' study course continues through June and concludes on Monday, July 4th. Each session starts at 7.30pm with refreshments and finishes around 9.15pm, at Elstow Church Hall. It is a course for those without faith or searching and for those who have faith and want to grow further. All are welcome.

Mon 6th June	Knowing the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
Mon 13th June	Sin, Death, Judgement and Eternal Life
Mon 27th June	Learning to Pray
Mon 4th July	Images of the Resurrection (Lecture by Bishop of St Albans)

If you would like to come to any of the remaining meetings, please call in at the Rectory or just give Jeremy a ring on **01234 261477**. All are welcome.

A THANK-YOU

An evening to say thank you for Miriam's 24 years as Churchwarden.
Saturday, June 4th 2005 - Church Hall / Margaret's garden.
Buffet with refreshments from 7.30 p.m.

All are very welcome.

ELSTOW CHURCH FÊTE

It's time again for the Church Fête – **Saturday July 16th** commencing at **1.00pm** in the Church Hall and by their kindness Tony and Margaret's garden.

We will need:

- Bric à Brac for Bric à Brac stall
- Cakes for the cake stall - these are always very popular
- Books for the bookstall
- Tombola prizes
- Prizes for the children's games
- Bottles of wine for the 'Wine Hamper Raffle'
- Raffle prizes

The Social Committee wish to make the Summer Fête a really enjoyable, fundraising event. So, please may we have YOUR support on the day? We look forward to seeing you on Saturday 16th July. Any help in the morning would be much appreciated. This year the Fête begins at 1.00pm. There is a list at the back of the Church if you will be able to help.

Hot Dogs – Children's Games – Wine Hamper Raffle – Personalised gifts by 'Adaptability' – Children's Soft Toy stall – Cake stall – Tombola stall – Bric à Brac – Bookstall – Cream Teas.

The Hillersden Ruins

Last month I wrote that work was about to start on the Hillersden ruins. If all has gone according to plan by the time this magazine reaches you work should have been in progress for two weeks or more and it is due to be completed by 17th June at a cost of £27,000 .

Congratulations

To Derek And Olive Norman on their Golden Wedding on Saturday 11th June. Also to John and Gretta Crookall on their Ruby Wedding on Sunday 19th June.

Lyn and Alan Bromage

I recently had an e-mail from Lyn and Alan and they asked me to pass on their best wishes to all their friends at Elstow Abbey.

Alan and Lyn seem to be slowly settling back into life in Australia and are getting the house and garden back to rights. Lyn is working hard on her PhD thesis again after 2 years off and Alan has renewed his local interests and is trying to get his N gauge trains running. Both are involved with St. Margaret's again and Lyn has rejoined the Parish Council and has also joined the roster for the Society of Organists so she has opportunities to do locum work in various churches.

Australia has had a coolish summer, but autumn has been warm and the good weather has lingered on but Alan says that his lawn needs rain. All the family are well. Alan and Lyn said that they are giving two talks in the next few weeks, one at a friends church on "Elstow and John Bunyan" and one at their own church on "Living in England" They have promised to be kind about us.

Colin Albon

Bill Pilsbury: A loyal member and Server at the Church of St Michael and All Angels for many years – a tribute.

In the three years plus in which I have known Bill, I have always found him to be a most sincere man. Bill was one of those quiet Christians who did not talk a lot about his faith, but it clearly influenced his life deeply and the ways in which he interacted with those around him.

For many years Bill has been the Server at St Michael's and quietly got on with all those jobs which needed to be done before the service as well as taking part in the service. Thus I never needed to worry about whether there would be enough wine and wafers for Communion services, and also, he always knew how many people had communicated (I used to guess!). Likewise, he ensured that we had sufficient candles for the services, especially those for Baptisms and Christingle Services, as well as reminding me in good time that a new Pascal Candle needed to be purchased for each Easter. Bill would also take his part in reading lessons, and would be ready cover at the last minute if anyone failed to turn up when they were down to read.

In terms of supporting the Church quietly, it was Bill who would put out the wheelie bin and ensure that it was safely back in the church after being emptied. Likewise, it was often he who would ensure that workmen could gain access for repairs. At the Church fairs, it was always Bill who took on the roll of being gatekeeper - collecting the entrance admission from all who came. Likewise, he would prepare the church if there was going to be a wedding or a funeral, although he would always leave the flowers to Rita and her team.

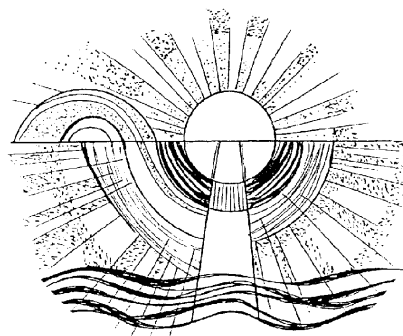
Because Bill had lived in the area for many years, he knew a lot of people and was very much aware of what was going on. Thus, he would often know if anyone had died in the area, or was ill, or was going through a difficult patch.

In his spare time, Bill supported the amateur dramatic group the Marianettes, often by providing the percussion. He also enjoyed playing bowls, and in the time before services in the summer, he would often talk about the previous day's bowls match - as someone who has never played bowls, I could only listen and make appreciative noises at appropriate times!

Bill was very supportive of his wife, especially as she became increasingly frail towards the end of her life. In addition, he must have been a good father because of the way in which his family have supported him over the last years, noticeably since his wife died in 2004.

Obviously Bill's family will miss him, certainly St Michael's will miss him, and definitely I will miss him. Knowing him was indeed a privilege because of the quiet example he set for all.

Peter Littleford, Team Vicar, St Michael and All Angels



Bird watching

Cycling along the river bank in Bedford it's easy to see why the swans have been adopted as an unofficial emblem of the town, majestic and elegant on the water they seem to encompass those ideas of civic pride which their symbol is intended to represent. What a contrast to the geese, noisy, ungainly and in the way. 'So shy he wouldn't say boo to a goose' a saying that shows that in the popular imagination they are thought of as all fuss and bluster with no courage; to disperse them you really only need to say 'boo!'.

Last month we celebrated the birthday of the Church at Pentecost, when the followers of Jesus received the inspiration of the Holy Spirit 'like tongues of flame' to begin their God-given tasks. As well as a flame, the dove because it features in Christ's baptism and is also a traditional symbol of the Holy Spirit. Again the dove has an excellent symbolic pedigree. Released from the ark, it returned with an olive leaf in its mouth, the sign of a new creation. It also represents love and 'Greenpeace' the environmental group which have it as their logo.

Yet in Scotland from the influence of Celtic Christianity and the Iona Community a new symbol of the Holy Spirit has emerged, that of a wild goose. This unlikely candidate becomes spectacular in flight. Apparently one goose can only fly so fast and so far but speed and distance are dramatically increased when together they fly in their distinctive 'V' formation.

This simple yet profound lesson in co-operation is a wonderful image of the importance of a community in church and village. A flight of wild geese working in harmony, cutting down wind resistance informs us of something we hopefully know already, that we are most efficient in the movement towards our common goals flying together.

Somehow with this understanding even the geese on the embankment, perhaps half cousins of those amazing 'in flight' Scots may be seen in a different light.



Stephen Smith

CARDINGTON CHURCH FÊTE

Saturday, July 2nd 2005 from 2.30pm in the garden at Home Farm (opposite the Kings Arms)

- Cadets,
- Biddenham Upper School Steel Band,
- Bouncy castle,
- Refreshments and more ...

All from Elstow Abbey are welcome! Do come along ...

Yvonne Champion.

TUNES OF GLORY

This month we sing the hymn No. 383 *Jesu, lover of my soul* by Charles Wesley (1707-1788), to the tune *Aberystwyth* by Joseph Parry (1841-1903).

The hymn was written not long after Wesley's evangelical conversion on 21 May 1738, and reflects the startling change which the experience made to his faith. He tells how, a month or two before the event, when he was seriously ill, his Moravian friend Peter Bohler came to visit him. "Do you hope to be saved", Bohler asked as he stood by Wesley's bedside. "Yes," answered Wesley. "For what reason do you hope it?" asked Bohler. "Because I have used my best endeavours to serve God," said Wesley. Bohler shook his head but said no more. And Wesley wrote: "I thought him very uncharitable, saying in my heart, 'What, are not my endeavours a sufficient ground of hope? Would he rob me of my endeavours?' I have nothing else to hold to." But it was a very different Wesley who later wrote, "*Other refuge have I none, Hangs my helpless soul on thee.*" Instead of resting on his own endeavours, he was now trusting wholly in God. And again he wrote, "*Plenteous grace with thee is found, Grace to cover all my sin*". Here is the expression of evangelical religion, the language of a man who had found full assurance of salvation in Christ.

Equally memorable is the tune *Aberystwyth*, which is predominantly in a minor key. Hymn tunes generally tend to be in a major key, but this one alternates between minor and major, as incidentally does *Kingsfold* with *I heard the voice of Jesus say* (No. 376), and *Greensleaves* with *What child is this* (No. 40). Both the latter are based on English folk songs, and both are evocative and popular hymns. Dr Joseph Parry's tune *Aberystwyth* was so named because he composed it there! He was a diligent composer of hymn tunes, writing one every Sunday for a number of years, this one probably being his most popular. It first appeared in print in *Ail Lyfr Tonau ac Emynau* in 1879, and made its way into other Welsh tune-books. Rather few fine Welsh tunes have been introduced into English books, but as well as *Aberystwyth* we also have *Hyfrydol* and *Ton-y-Botel (Ebenezer)*. The hymn we shall sing is full therefore of memorable pictures and phrases, and speaks to the heart.

John Crookall

BELL-RINGING NEWS

Bedfordshire Association – Elstow Beds - Abbey Church of SS Mary and Helena
Saturday, 30th April 2005 in 2hrs.47mins (Tenor 9cwt) 5040 Minor being
4 extents Cambridge Surprise, and 3 extents of Plain Bob

1. Wendy Piercy
 2. Christopher M. J. Spencer
 3. Susan J. Spencer
 4. Stephen H. Stanford
 5. Michael J. Matthews
 6. David I. Stanford
- Conducted by Stephen H. Stanford

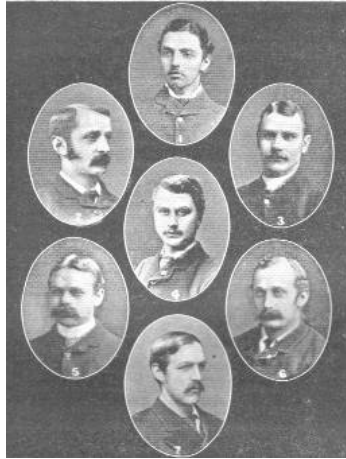
Best wishes to Christopher Spencer for his 18th Birthday (28th April 2005)

Steve Stanford (Steve.Stanford@EmersonProcess.co.uk)

Cecil and Arthur Polhill-Turner of Howbury Hall

Continuing last month's account of **The Cambridge Seven**, the young men of wealth and social standing who caused a sensation in 1885 when they gave up all to serve God in Inland China. Two of the men, Cecil and Arthur Polhill-Turner were from Bedford and their story merits a closer look.

1. C. T. Studd (Top)
2. D. E. Hoste (L)
3. W. W. Cassels (R)
4. S. P. Smith (Centre)
5. **C. H. Polhill-Turner** (L)
6. **A. T. Polhill-Turner** (R)
7. M. Beauchamp (Bottom)



The Polhill children (the additional name of Turner was added when their mother Emily inherited a fortune) had been born and bred at Howbury Hall, a typical eighteenth-century country house at Renhold, Bedford. The three boys and three girls had all that they needed - hunting and amateur theatricals in the winter, cricket and boating in the summer with friends of their own age from neighbouring houses. Their father, to whom they were devoted, was Member of Parliament for Bedford, and High Sheriff for the county in 1875.

In Ravensden, the next door village, an elderly widow, Mrs Symons felt led by God to pray for the children of Captain Polhill-Turner, and this she faithfully did, day by day.

Cecil and Arthur, the second and third sons, were closest to one another and in due course went to Eton. Their careers were already planned according to the custom of the day. Frederick, the eldest, would inherit, Cecil, as second, would enter the cavalry and Arthur would be ordained and take the family living. Arthur's views on religion were hazy enough, despite the wonderful stories told at bedtime in nursery days by Nannie Readshaw, who talked as if Jesus Christ was her personal friend; but he presumed he would acquire the necessary learning at Cambridge, and no doubt would enjoy a pleasant and worthy life as a country rector.

Eton days could scarcely have been happier, and both boys excelled on the sports field. Only two shocks disturbed their even lives. The first, was the sudden announcement by their elder sister Alice that she was going to renounce the world, and give up hunting and parties to serve Christ. Unaware of those who had been praying for her she had quietly made the discovery of her spiritual need through reading the Bible, and at a mission service in Bedford had taken Christ as her Saviour. Her odd decision, the talk of the hunting field that winter, the boys could not understand. The second shock was more severe. During Arthur's last half at Eton, when Cecil had just received his commission in the Queen's Bays (2nd Dragoon Guards) their father died at the early age of fifty five.

The shadow of Captain Polhill-Turner's death lay on Cecil as he joined his regiment in Ireland and Arthur as he went up to Trinity Hall in the Autumn of 1881. But both were soon happy in the new life opening up, their paths smoothed by ample allowances.

On returning to Cambridge for the start of his second year, in October 1882, Arthur Polhill-Turner was amused to find town and University placarded with posters announcing the forthcoming visit of the American evangelists Moody and Sankey. Arthur and his friends thought it a great joke that the two uneducated Americans should be coming to preach at the university, but every undergraduate had received an invitation and a large crowd went along to the Corn Exchange on the Sunday night to see the fun. Before the meeting began, there was plenty of rowdiness and as the platform party of dons and clergymen entered with the evangelists there was much clapping and cheering. There were cries of 'Encore' when Sankey sang, and 'Hear! Hear!' when Moody prayed.

As the week progressed, the opposition or amused tolerance was giving place to a spirit of the most earnest searching after God. The University had been stirred to its very depths by the preaching of Moody and many young men had surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ, including on the last day, Sunday 12th November 1882, Arthur Polhill-Turner who now determined to offer himself for missionary service in China.

Cecil had not been so moved as his brother at this time, but two years later, when on holiday in Germany, he was equally stirred with thoughts about service in China and resigned his commission in 1885 on hearing the call to missionary service. Mrs Polhill-Turner had viewed the enthusiasm of her two sons with some misgivings, but accompanied by her three daughters, she was present at that great missionary meeting in London's Exeter Hall, on 4th February 1885 and was there to bid them farewell at Victoria Station, the following morning.

The Cambridge Seven never looked back, each one continued to serve Christ to the end of their lives. Cecil Polhill-Turner repeatedly tried to get the gospel into Tibet even though he and his wife nearly lost their lives in a violent riot in 1892. He did not give up, and on recovery returned to the border near Tibet, until in 1900 his health failed again and he was sent home to England and forbidden to return. His heart was still in China however, and throughout the rest of his life he made seven prolonged missionary visits. He died in England in 1938.

Arthur Polhill-Turner was a faithful gospel worker and became ordained as a minister in 1888. He then moved to the densely populated countryside to reach as many people as he could with the gospel message. He continued to serve through the Boxer Rebellion and the Revolution that followed some time later, finally retiring at the age of sixty six.

What became of the others? D. E. Hoste worked for several years in association with a native Chinese evangelist and eventually became head of the China Inland Mission. C. T. Studd founded the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade and Montagu Beauchamp conducted several preaching tours across China and also served as an army chaplain during World War 1. Stanley Smith learned to preach as fluently in Chinese as in English and William Casels, with a strong love of order, became a bishop in China.

It is impossible to fully convey the impact that the Cambridge Seven had on their generation or to adequately show how this move of God was in answer to many prayers. I hope you will be encouraged to delve further into this inspiring story.

Sources:

"The Cambridge Seven" by John Pollock (Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1956)

<http://www.wholesomewords.org/missions/mscambridge7.html>

Christian History Institute website.

All Saints Church Renhold website

A.V.K.

BOOK REVIEW

“The Passion” by Geza Vermes (Penguin £6.99)

This book is short: 122 pages. It is cheap: £6.99. It is very recent: March 2005. You may very well choose to buy it rather than read what *Bookworm* might write about it.

“The Passion” is the revisiting by one of the world’s foremost writers on the Bible of the established historical fact of Christ’s crucifixion. Professor Vermes, currently Professor Emeritus of Jewish Studies at Cambridge, was a Catholic priest until 1957. He has had a wide teaching role in Universities in the United Kingdom. Of himself, he writes: “*I was born in a [Hungarian] Jewish family, brought up as a Christian, but after years I found myself back at my Jewish roots.*” Both his parents were murdered in Hitler’s holocaust. If I was asked to sum him up, I would describe him as “wise”, with all the connotations of sensitivity and knowledge that the word has.

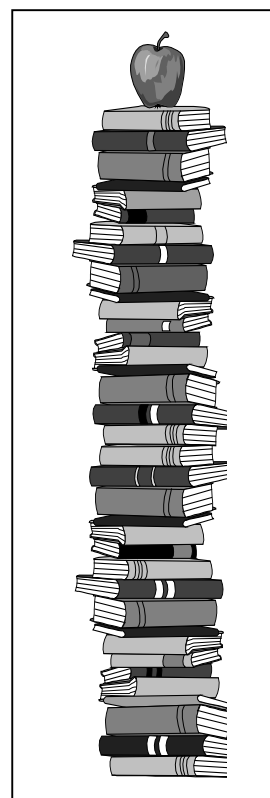
Although he sets out to try to demonstrate what really happened in Jerusalem around the year 30 AD, adopting the stance of the intellectual historical detective, he is meticulous in not questioning the mystical basis of the Christian faith.

The procedure he adopts is to demonstrate what could **NOT** have happened among the events of that fraught Passover period. For example, the Sanhedrin would never have convened on the eve of the Passover (blasphemy); no death sentence could be passed by common acclamation (the law).

His objective is to examine in detail what the four gospels have to say, isolating and highlighting the points of agreement and of disagreement. Three of the gospels, the synoptic gospels [literally “sharing one view”] of Mark (the earliest), Matthew and Luke, have significant similarities; the fourth gospel, that of John, offers a very different witness.

And that is where the problems start: none of these witnesses was in fact contemporary with the events they describe. The synoptic Gospels, presenting one tradition, are thought to have been written between about 70 and 110 AD. The earliest is thought to be that of Mark and it is closely followed in content and language by those of Matthew and Luke. Modern scholarship identifies Mark as being a certain John Mark, a cousin to Barnabus, Paul’s colleague, and closely linked to Peter. He is thought to have written his account shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD. Matthew seems to have been a Greek-speaking Jew and to have written at least a decade later. Luke was not a Jew (he is thought to have been a close associate of Paul) and to him is ascribed the composition not only of his Gospel (written down in around 180 AD) but of the Acts of the Apostles which is the sequel to that Gospel.

John, though, and presenting a different tradition, is a much more mysterious figure. In the final chapter of his Gospel, there are those famous and confusing references to “*the disciple whom Jesus loved*” and there seems to be a closer link to the events than in the other Gospels. But we can not know for sure who John was. The oldest known surviving fragments of his writings date from between 125 and 150 AD. Internal evidence (especially and for example, the split between Christianity and Judaism) points to a date of composition in fact later than the synoptic Gospels.



It is strongly suggested that the ultimate responsibility for the killing of Jesus lies at the door of the Jews. This conclusion was convenient for the nascent Church and was encouraged by the Gospel narratives. It also forms yet another piece of evidence to a historian: the Gospels were designed to bear witness not so much to Jews (the converted and the earliest followers of Jesus) as to Gentiles (those converted later and fervent haters of the Jews). Both, though, had to tread warily where Rome was concerned – which explains the way that Pontius Pilate’s part in the proceedings is so carefully handled.

If professor Vermes’ book has a weakness, it is that he does not - or chooses not - to underscore the extent to which the Jews themselves were disunited. The Jews of Judah (with Jerusalem as its capital) considered themselves to be the urban sophisticates, the intelligentsia, the aristocracy, the commercially astute; Galilee, separated from Judah by the significant and hostile land of Samaria, was considered, in contrast, to be rustic, even boorish, common and “country”. The Romans ruled physically from Jerusalem; Galilee was part of the responsibilities hived off by the Romans to the Herodians. Jesus came from Galilee, and he came with Jewish followers from Galilee. Tensions would be and were inevitable.

This short book is not tendentious: it is informative as it treads its wary way through the misty minefield of times past and lost. I most strongly recommend it.

Bookworm

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Rhubarb is in season now, and this recipe is a change from crumble and stewed.

Rhubarb and Lemon Tart

Line a tart tin with pastry. Chop 1 lb rhubarb and put it in the pastry case. Mix together 6 oz sugar, 1 tbsp flour, rind of a lemon and a beaten egg. Add lemon juice plus enough water to bring it up to half a pint. Put all this in a pan and bring to the boil, stirring constantly. Pour it over the rhubarb and bake in a hot oven for about 40 minutes.

Eat hot, warm or cold, with cream if you like.



JMCE

NELL GWYN

I have, as you know, had a few surprises while leafing through that dusty leather-bound volume which was the brain-child of our royal author *Spurius Historicus*. “**FAMOUS LITTLE-KNOWN PERSONAGES**” contains some strange heroes and heroines, but none is an apparently stranger choice than Nell Gwyn, given her reputation and the puritanical inclinations of **Spurius**’ fiercely moralistic other half.

Nell Gwyn? Seller of oranges turned actress. In fact she was rather a good actress and one of John Dryden’s favourites. Commoner. Middle class would be a better classification, her father being a respectable army officer ruined by the Civil War. Trollop. Well, wasn’t almost every disadvantaged pretty girl, especially if she was an actress? Mistress of Charles II. Why not? Died of the pox. There is no real evidence for this scurrilous rumour.

But surely not a dish to set before a Queen.....

And yet, what do we really know about her? From internal evidence, it seems that **Spurius** had access to the now lost St Albans family papers (Nell’s elder son by Charles was created Duke of St Albans shortly after his birth in 1670) and that, for once, he had more information at his ink-stained fingertips than we do. Further, and contrary to what his straight-laced wife might have thought, Nell Gwyn, for all her rackets background, was in reality a most honest and self-effacing lady. Well, not actually a “lady”, but you know what I mean.

Before I go any further, I must give you some vital information and draw some conclusions, otherwise **Spurius**’ chapter on Nell Gwyn will not make sense as part of his *oeuvre*. As fact № 1, and unlike Ivanhoe who so nearly cost me a broken leg, **Nell Gwyn does not feature in the index to the book**. As fact № 2, we have a scion of the house of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha who is i) a frightful snob (he only counted peers among his circle of friends – mere baronets were beneath his lofty attention) and ii) thoroughly repressed. Put the two together, and I am forced to conclude that **Spurius** is indulging in some sort of hole-and-corner, even guilty, fantasising.

Spurius’ starting point proves my point: “*All rulers to relax must ...*” he writes revealingly, if ungrammatically, at the beginning of the chapter. “... *King Charles Scottish was*” he adds, rather inaccurately, as though that was all he needed to give as an explanation. The contemporary background was that monarchs were expected to have mistresses. I mean, how would you have coped with Catherine of Braganza (“*La barrique portugaise*” – the Portuguese fatty – as she was rudely and unkindly nicknamed by Louise de Keroualle, one of Charles’ more aristocratic mistresses) as your wife? But, on the whole, a king’s mistresses were expected to be from the upper classes, my dear. Where **Spurius** allows himself to be led astray is to fail to say (or realise?) that Charles had 14 other mistresses over the years and that he was at least Nell’s 4th lover. **Spurius**, though, seems to create a kind of purity in their relationship: “*Nelly – Charles’ pet name for her – loyal and zuverlässig* [a very interesting choice of word for “faithful”: it means “trustworthy”] *was*” and there is no doubt, apparently, that once Nell had picked up with Charles, she was wholly faithful to him (even if the reverse was not always the case – but then boys will be boys) and remained so for the fifteen-odd years of their attachment and for the two years that she survived him before she died at the age of 37. She is even reputed to have clouted no less a person than the Duke of Buckingham in the chops for wanting merely (¿?) to kiss her.

Nell had other qualities, too. Unlike Charles' other – and usually but not invariably more highly born – mistresses, Nell was utterly uninterested in feathering her own nest. She took an interest in projects such as the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. She was generally admired and popular.

I wonder, though, what **Spurius** would have done and said if he had known that her name was really Nell Gwynne and that she was Welsh?

Elstow Timewatch



ELSTOW PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council was pleased to see so many residents at the recent Annual Parish Meeting. Concerns were expressed about continued overnight parking in the layby and parking in the bus stop opposite The Swan. The Parish Council is working with Environmental Health and the Police to prevent parking in the layby and has contacted the Police about parking in the bus stop.

The proposal to extract sand and gravel from the fields around Medbury Farm is also causing great concern although we understand that only eighteen residents have written to the County Council to object. Cards setting out the impact that this development would have in the village and which can be sent to the County Council are available from Cllr. Sharples or the Clerk (Tel: 376256). Cemex is also holding an exhibition explaining the plans in the Playing Field Hall on Friday 17th and Saturday 18th June.

The Planning Inspector has reached a decision on the flats and shops in Abbeyfields and has supported the Parish and Borough Councils' objections and dismissed the appeal. However, the Inspector did comment that a petition by residents about disturbance from anti-social behaviour and all day opening did not influence the decision!

At the AGM, Sam Clark was re-elected Chairman of the Council and Joan Bailey Vice-Chairman. Councillors also continue in their roles on outside committees. The role of a village caretaker was considered and the Council would like to thank those residents who have been picking up litter on a regular basis in the roads where they live. It was also agreed to plant trees at the entrance to Abbeyfields in place of the gates but as it is too late to plant now this will be discussed again in the Autumn. In the meantime, if residents have any views on the type of trees that they would like, please contact the Clerk.

Ann Paice

CALENDAR FOR JUNE – JULY 2005

JUNE

Thursday 2nd

11.00am Holy Communion (Rev. Len Moore)

Saturday 4th

7.30pm Buffet supper and presentation to Miriam Clark in
The Church Hall

Sunday 5th Pentecost 3

9.30am Family Communion (Rev. Jeremy Crocker)
(Preacher Rev. Richard Huband)

11.00am Morning Prayer (Rev. Jeremy Crocker)

6.30pm Evensong (Robert Heley)

Monday 6th

7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse

7.30pm Bible Study 'A Journey into Faith' including a hot meal in the Church
Hall.

Tuesday 7th

8.00pm Meeting of the Finance & Standing Committee at
43 Armstrong Close. Wilstead

Wednesday 8th

1.00pm Visit by Elstow Lower School

Thursday 9th

11.00am Holy Communion (Rev. Jeremy Crocker)

7.30pm RAFA Concert

Saturday 11th

2.00pm St Michael's Summer Fayre

Sunday 12th Pentecost 4

11.00am Parish Communion (Rev. Jeremy Crocker)

6.30pm Evensong. (Rev. Jeremy Crocker. Preacher
The Rev. Canon John Tibbs

Monday 13th

7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse

7.30pm Bible Study 'A Journey into Faith'. Church Hall

DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR JULY MAGAZINE

Tuesday 14th

10.00am Visit by Robert Bruce Middle School

Wednesday 15th

10.00am Visit by Robert Bruce Middle School

Thursday 16th

11.00am Holy Communion. (Rev. Jeremy Crocker)

6.30pm Wedding Rehearsal

Saturday 18th

2.00pm Wedding of Nathaniel Abbey and Emma Stephens

7.00pm Summer Barbecue in Tony and Margaret Baron's
garden

Sunday 19th Pentecost 5

9.30am Family Communion with Children's Groups
(Rev. Stephen Smith)
11.00am Morning Prayer (Canon Philip McDonough)
3.00pm Concert by Jackie Frost
6.30pm Evensong followed by Holy Communion and the
Laying on of hands for Healing. (Rev. Jeremy
Crocker)

Monday 20th

7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse

Thursday 23rd

11.00am Holy Communion (Rev. Jeremy Crocker)
7.30pm Meeting of the Parochial Church Council
in the Church Hall

Saturday 25th

2.00pm Children's Workshop

Sunday 26th Pentecost 6

9.30am Young People's Service (Team)
11.00am Morning Prayer (Mattins Group)
6.00pm Open-air service of praise at Cardington
NO EVENSONG AT ELSTOW

Monday 27th

7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
7.30pm Bible Study 'A Journey into Faith'. Church Hall

Thursday 30th

11.00am Holy Communion (Rev. Jeremy Crocker)

JULY

Saturday 2nd

10.00am Puppet workshop. Church Hall
2.00pm Cardington Church Fete @ Home Farm
2.00pm Wedding of Kevin Ellis and Clare Dear
4.00pm Wedding Blessing of Andrene and Ervine Robinson

Sunday 3rd Pentecost 7

9.30am Family Communion with Children's Groups
(Rev. Jeremy Crocker)
11.00am Morning Prayer. (Mattins Group)
6.30pm Evensong (Rev. Jeremy Crocker)