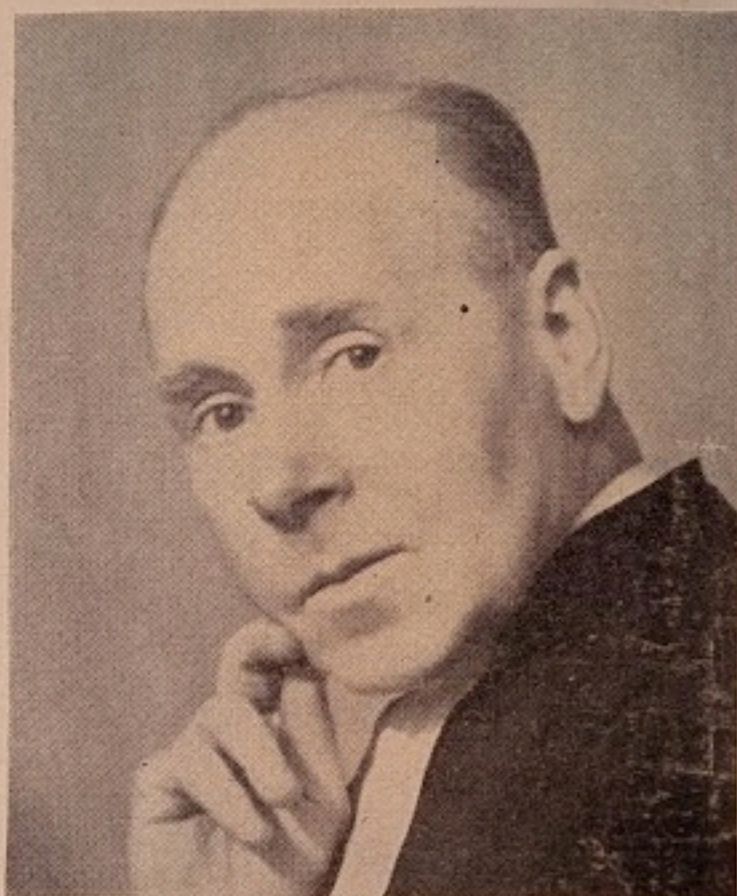


A PAGEANT OF THE FENS

PRESENTED BY
THE ISLE OF ELY FEDERATION OF
WOMEN'S INSTITUTES



THE REV. BASIL MAINE, M.A., is a well-known broadcaster, a music critic for several papers, a composer and author. He is busy this year on a 'cello work, a new motet for the B.B.C. and a new book. He has written a motet for Norwich Quincentenary celebrations this year. He is best known, perhaps, for his rendering of the narrator's part in Sir Arthur Bliss' work "Morning Heroes," which he always takes whenever the work is performed.

NARRATOR: BASIL MAINE

PAGEANT MISTRESS: MISS MARY GILL

EPISODE

1. ST. ETHELDREDA
2. KING JOHN
3. MEDIEVAL PILGRIMAGE
4. THE PLAGUE VISITS WISBECH
5. THE DRAINAGE OF THE FENS
6. THE LITTLEPORT RIOTS
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8. THE HIRING FAIR

FOREWORD

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We extend to you all a very warm welcome to this production of a Pageant of the Fens.

The idea was approved last year, in the hope that every Institute in the county would make some contribution in re-enacting episodes of our past history.

We are only a small Federation and today we present the result of our efforts, in the sincere hope you may enjoy these scenes of the past.

Our thanks are due to all Institute members and friends whose enthusiasm and hard work have made this production possible.

IDA M. PAYNE (County President).

F. A. BARRETT (Pageant Chairman).

EPISODE I

ST. ETHELDREDA

ELY GROUP

IN THE YEAR A.D. 673, Etheldreda, daughter of Anna, the King of East Anglia, was inspired to lay the foundations of the towered Cathedral of Ely, which rises majestically and pays lasting tribute to the integrity of the ancient craftsmen, and to the faith and vision of its founder.

After a period of trial in the Abbey of Coldingham Etheldreda is now ready to receive the habit and veil from the hands of Bishop Wilfred. To share her happiness on this day of her consecration come many of her relations and friends, their happiness tinged perhaps with a little sadness.

Etheldreda is brought into the Church by the Mother Prioress. For the last time she is wearing her royal robes and crown. She kneels before the Bishop, and takes off her crown which is placed upon the altar. The Bishop cuts off a lock of her hair, reminding her that she must cut off all worldly vanities; he hands her the habit of dark woollen cloth. There follows further ceremonial rites and finally, helped by the Mother Prioress, he places the veil upon her head. The Bishop blesses her and she is taken to the Abbess, by whom she is led into the monastery with her new sisters in religion.

Etheldreda	Evelyn Waters
Mother of Etheldreda	Essie Wilson
Ebba, Abbess of Coldingham	Rose H. Churchyard
Mother Superior	Marguerite Coleridge
Companion Nuns	D. Beckett and G. Whetstone
Wilfred, Archbishop of York	Clifford Cousins
Deacons to Archbishop	H. S. Barwell and K. Day
Monks	A. Buck and B. Fenn
Sisters of Etheldreda	Muriel Newstead, Mildred Aveling and Gladys Senior
Cross Bearer	Christopher Bent
Acolytes	Michael Wilson and Michael Bunting
Novices	June Mann and E. Dixon
Nuns	Ely Centre

Ely and Little Thetford Choirs trained by Allison Darrell

Producer : F. Vernon Cross

Assistant Producer : Rose H. Churchyard

Wardrobe Mistress : Ellen Black

KING JOHN

GUYHIRN GROUP

THE YEAR IS 1215 and the scene is laid in the grounds of Wisbech Castle, where soldiers are finding life very dull. A messenger arrives to say that the King and his knights are approaching. At once there is great activity and the Warden and his wife prepare to receive the King and offer hospitality. The King arrives and is welcomed, but before he is able to partake of the dinner an exhausted, pale rider appears with the tragic news that the King's baggage train, with all the horses, men and goods is lost beyond recovery.

King John	Stanley Russell
Knights	Tom Clarke, Ernest Langley, P. Shaw, J. Heading
Warden of the Castle	Brian Tibbs
His wife	Martha Tegerdine
Milkmaids	Phyllis Britain, Elizabeth Fowler, Iris Lakey, Doris Scott, Fanny Snushall, Gladys Williamson
Burgesses	Stella Culpin, Doris Franklin, Elsie Mote
Page	Colin Pryke
Captain of the Guard	Neil Payne
Soldiers	George Carter, Winston Jordan, Ronald Ramsey
Messenger	Ambrose Russell
Horseman	Cyril Webb
Friar	Margaret Howard

Producer: Lady Ballance

MEDIIEVAL PILGRIMAGE

ELY GROUP

Group 8

WE ARE NOW in the middle of the fourteenth century and pilgrims continue to make the journey to the Island of Ely, to visit the shrine of St. Etheldreda. From all parts of the land they come and as they journey they mingle stories and entertainment with their devotions, like happy children. They are met by sellers of "Tawdries" (souvenirs of their visit to St. Audrey). Today they are met at the Gallilee Porch by Prior Crauden himself. The pilgrims make their way into the Cathedral.

But the Prior has been expecting a distinguished pilgrim today and he is now warned that she is drawing near to the monastery. It is none other than the Queen of England. She and her husband, Edward III, have taken much interest in the building of the Octagon, and today Queen Philippa has come down to see for herself the progress that has been made.

The Queen brings with her today a very important robe of State "powdered with golden squirrels wherein she was robed on the day of her churcing," after the birth of her son the Black Prince. At the end of vespers she asks the Prior to accept this robe as a gift to make into copes and vestments in the service of the clergy.

And so, as evening draws on, the pilgrims leave the Cathedral to make their way to the hostels where they will be lodged.

Prior John of Crauden	Clifford Cousins
Philippa, Queen of England	Winifred Haylock
Queen's attendant	F. Langley
Ladies-in-waiting	Phyllis Trevers and Ellen Black
Bodyguard	H. S. Barwell and K. Day
Attendants	F. Buck and G. Leonard

Crowd scenes by Adelaide, Coveney, Little Downham, Mepal, Haddenham, Little Thetford Stuntney, Stretham, Pymoor, Witcham, Witchford and Sutton Institutes.

Producer : F. Vernon Cross

Assistant Producer : Rose H. Churchyard

Wardrobe Mistress : Ellen Black

THE PLAGUE VISITS WISBECH

WISBECH GROUP

DURING THE REIGN of Queen Elizabeth the town of Wisbech grew and prospered. But floods of great severity sweep over all the town and cattle and sheep are destroyed in hundreds. Then in 1587 the Plague breaks out. Ten men, known as the Body Corporate, rule the town, and during these anxious days they take stringent measures to prevent the spread of the disease. Travellers entering the town are not allowed to leave for fear of carrying the plague. All offenders are brought before the Body Corporate and punishments, mainly of detention, are meted out to them. Among these is one, Edward Wright, of Old Market Ward, who has been seen casting filthy clothing into the River Nene. He is sentenced to a term of detention in the House of Isolation. Two other offenders are Godfrey Smith and Robert Smythe. The former has been known to visit a house where the plague is suspect, taking Smythe with him. When brought before the Body Corporate, he pleads that he meant no harm, but that his sweetheart was there, whom he was to have wed; she was sickening of the plague, having lost both her parents. While the men are discussing a punishment to fit the crime, the dreaded cart comes into view carrying the wife of Smythe away to die, whereupon the crowd disperses in terror.

The Body Corporate	E. Eagle, C. Godby, E. Bellamy, B. Bushell, R. Rush, L. England, E. Smart, B. Crow, M. Dawson, M. Wales
Traveller	Stanley Russell
Wife	
Son	Ambrose Russell
Edward Wright	L. Fisher
Smith	T. Freeman
Smythe	Roland Russell
Official's Servant	J. Hall
Woman in Tumbril.	G. Palmby
Crowd	Wisbech, Elm, Fridaybridge, West Walton, Gorefield and Leverington Institutes

Producer : Anne Pletts

THE DRAINAGE OF THE FENS

MARCH GROUP

Douglas Coy

Performers from

Benwick, Chatteris, Coates, Doddington, Manea, March, Whittlesey and Wimblington.

THE SCENES RANGING from 1500 to 1652 show the gradual draining of the Fens. First Bishop Morton and Sir John Popham attempt it with partial success. Then the Earls of Bedford and the Adventurers employ the Dutch engineer, Vermuyden, to drain the whole Level. Despite opposition by the Fenmen and others they are finally successful.

A Bishop	J. Brown
Henry VIII's Commissioners	R. Boulton, R. Day
King James I	E. Lowe
Sir John Popham	Charles Murfitt
Fourth Earl of Bedford	Douglas Coy
Sir Cornelius Vermuyden	William Holland
Oliver Cromwell	Ernest Langley
Fifth Earl of Bedford	John Wilson
Bishop of Ely	Fred Clarke
Adventurers	Cyril Webb, Tom Clarke

“Lament” and “The Powte’s Complaint,” March and Wimblington W. I. Choir.

Conductor: Mr. Eric Smith.

Thanksgiving Hymn, Coates and Whittlesey Choir.

Conductor: Mr. Nicholas.

Script writer and adviser on costumes and historical background: W. E. Dring, F.L.A.
 Composer of music for “The Powte’s Complaint” and musical adviser: A. L. Stockton.

Producer: Ken Dunn

THE LITTLEPORT RIOTS

Presented by

LITTLEPORT, BLACK HORSE DROVE, PRICKWILLOW AND LITTLE OUSE

FOR MORE THAN 100 years the men of the Isle of Ely had tilled and reclaimed the land in peace. Then came twenty long years of war and the soldiers returned after Waterloo thinking to enjoy the fruits of victory. They find hunger and hardship; discontent simmers and on an evening in May 1816 it explodes into the Littleport Riots. The mob starts looting houses and shops, throwing the furniture into the street. The men decide to go to Ely and demand higher wages. News of the rioting soon reaches Ely, and the citizens, alarmed, send young Mr. Archer, on a fast horse, to Bury St. Edmunds to bring help from the Dragoon Guards. The Ely magistrates meet the rioters; some listen to reason, but others ransack the shops of Ely, before returning to Littleport with their loot. Next day the soldiers overpower the rioters and seventy persons are arrested and brought to Ely. A special commission is set up to try the prisoners. It is a ruthless trial. Twenty-four men are sentenced to death. Most of these have their sentences commuted to transportation or imprisonment, but five are sent to the gallows.

Innkeeper	Mrs. Missin
Innkeeper's wife	Mrs. Benton
Potboy	Mrs. Sewell
Pastrycook	Mrs. E. James
Vicar	Mrs. E. Lofts
Vicar's wife	Mrs. Crabb
Vicar's daughters	Misses B. and D. Cole
A mimic	Mrs. O. Watson
A cripple	Mr. B. Laws
Condemned men	Mesdames Adams, Watson, Ambrose, Clarke & Rogers
Magistrates	Mesdames Elsegood, Skipper, Reynolds and Mr. J. Underdown
Soldiers	Prickwillow Institute
Children and crowd	H. & D. James, S. Missin, D. Easey, J. Watson, J. Pettingell, C. Clarke, F. Sizer, V. Elsegood, R. Peachey and R. Ambrose

Producer and Script : M. S. Martin
 assisted by Mrs. E. Lofts, Mrs. Missin and Miss E. Gill

COUNTRY DANCING

" Gathering Peascods "

Performed by teams from Benwick, Chatteris, Coates, Doddington, Manea, March, Turves,
 Whittlesey and Wimblington.

Choreographer and director of dances : Jean M. Hall.

EPISODE 7

PRINCESS VICTORIA VISITS WISBECH

UPWELL GROUP

IT IS THE YEAR 1835. The townspeople of Wisbech are waiting to greet the young Princess Victoria, who is passing through the town on her way to Holkham Hall, in Norfolk. The carriage arrives, escorted by the Town Band and gentlemen of Wisbech. The carriage halts for a while in the town and the Bailiff presents the Princess with a copy of Colonel Watson's "History of Wisbech." The procession then moves on.

Princess Victoria	Margaret Chamberlain
Duchess of Kent	C. Preston
Bailiff.	W. Carley
Standard Bearer	W. Rolfe
Trumpeters	S. Russell, E. Langley
Mounted Escorts	P. Shawl, J. Heading

Carriage by courtesy of Mr. Wrycroft, St. Neots.

Driver : A/c. Brian Carrington, R.A.F., by permission of O.C., R.A.F., Stradishall.

Crowd : Outwell, Upwell, Welney, Marshland and Christchurch Institutes.

Producer : C. Sparrow

COUNTRY DANCING

"Cumberland Long Eight"

Performed by teams from Benwick, Chatteris, Coates, Doddington, Manea, March, Turves, Whittlesey and Wimblington.

Choreographer and director of dances : Jean M. Hall.

THE HIRING FAIR

Performers from

BENWICK, CHATTERIS, COATES, DODDINGTON, MANEA, MARCH
WHITTLESEY AND WIMBLINGTON

THE HIRING of 'Mop' Fair originated in the sixteenth century from yearly Statute Sessions held to regulate wages. Gradually stalls and amusements grew up around these meetings. The scene shows first the formal opening by the Mayor and then the hiring of servants by ladies and gentlemen. Finally all join in the fun of the fair.

Town Crier	H. Oldfield
Grand Marshal	F. Fletcher
Mayor	H. Acred
Ladies and Gentlemen	Miss B. Sutton, R. Boulton, Mrs. P. Driver, Mrs. Knight, Mrs. A. Maxim, Mrs. Player, Mrs. Southwell, Mrs. Winters, Mrs. A. Hawes, Mrs. Noyes, Mrs. Richmond and Fred Clarke

“Come to the Fair” and “Oranges and Lemons”

Coates and Whittlesey Choir—Conductor: Eric Smith

“Johnny so long at the Fair” and “Strawberry Fair”

March and Wimblington W.I. Choir—Conductor: Mr. Nicholas

Chatteris Town Band. Bandmaster: J. Salisbury

FINAL TABLEAU

Massed singing of Pageant Hymn by all the performers accompanied by the Band.

PAGEANT HYMN

NOW WE THANK THEE, heavenly Father,
At the ending of our day ;
For our happy hours and moments,
For our work and for our play.
May our busy lives be witness
Of a spirit in us sown,
That enriched with love and kindness
Makes Thy children all Thine own.

For our fertile lands we thank Thee,
In our rich and teeming Fen ;
Mist enfolded, heron haunted,
Home of kingfisher and wren.
Not for us the mighty mountains,
Rushing streams or angry sea ;
But the gilded sunset's glory,
Pale reflection, Lord, of Thee.

So we ask a benediction
On our loved ones far and near,
Strengthen all the bonds of friendship
With Thy children gathered here.
May our aim be ever higher
For the progress of our race,
Thus exalted may we journey
Blessed and strengthened by Thy grace.

GENERAL COMMITTEE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Pageant Chairman	Mrs. H. Barrett
County Chairman	Mrs. H. Payne
Organising Secretary	Mrs. P. West
Hon. Treasurer	Mrs. J. Larham
Mrs. R. H. Churchyard and Mrs. J. Gilbert	

PAGEANT AD. HOC. COMMITTEE

Group Secretaries

Mrs. C. W. King Church	Doddington
Mrs. C. C. Edwards	Ely
Mrs. Watson	Christchurch
Mrs. M. Payne	Guyhirn
Miss A. Pletts	Wisbech

Group Treasurers

Mrs. Heaton	March
Mrs. Bedford	Ely
Mrs. T. Wilson	Guyhirn

Press Publicity	Mrs. Tuckett, Chatteris
Programme	Mr. & Mrs. F. W. Wilson, Ely
Music Librarian	Miss J. ff. Tebbutt
Music Advisers	Lady Ballance & Miss C. Baxter

Stewards : Members of Chatteris Women's Institute

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Isle of Ely Federation of Women's Institutes extend their grateful thanks to :

- Mr. A. Heading, for use of The Manor Park.
- Mr. Cyril Swinson, Mr. Don Borrill and Mr. Nugent Monk, for scripts.
- The Red Cross.
- Mrs. D. Beckett, for the use of garden for rehearsals.
- " Bert " of London, for wigs and make-up,
- and to everyone who in any way helped towards making the production possible.