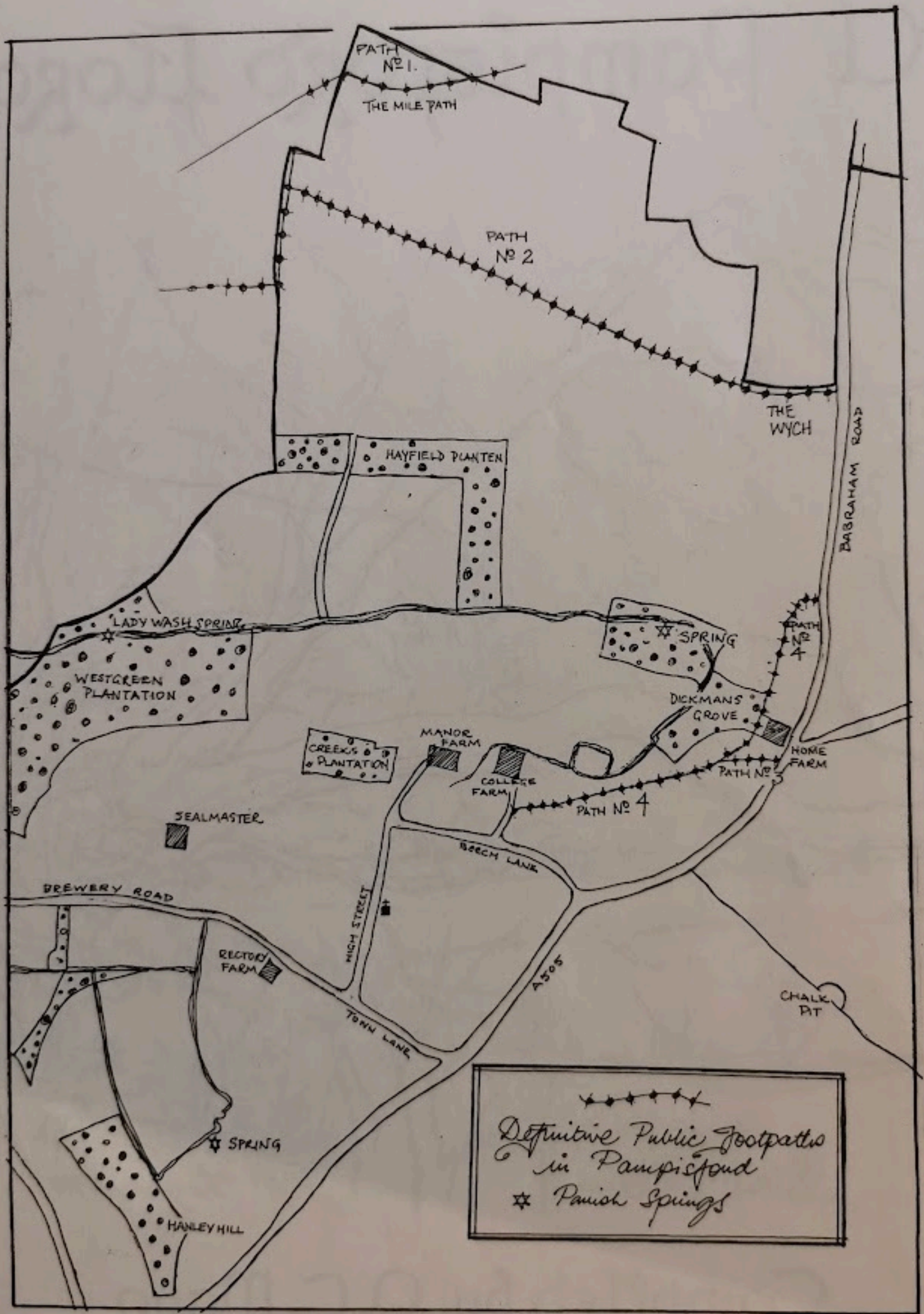


A Pampisford Flora



Compiled by O.C. Mayo



◆◆◆◆◆
 Definitive Public Footpaths
 in Pampisford
 ☆ Parish Springs

RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION PARISH FOOTPATH SURVEY SOUTH
CAMBS DISTRICT - SURVEYOR K. PIPE 1982

Date	General description of path	Signs of use (e.g. none, occasional, frequent)	Brief description of problems or obstructions, if any (give Grid Refs. if possible)	Owner of land if known (important if any obstructions)
27.10.82	<p>A path leaves minor road in Babraham at GR 505495 going WSW, & becomes Pampisford No.1 at parish boundary GR500498. The first leg is a headland path, ploughed, but not sown, & overhung by hedge. At the end of the field map suggests path turns SW & becomes Babraham No.9 & Sawston No.12. This field is ploughed & sown & no sign of path. A farm machine track going left turns right round edge of field & rejoins the path.</p>	None.	<p>Headland path ploughed, overhung by hedge.</p> <p>Field path ploughed & not reinstated although farm track alternative could be used.</p>	<p>Mr. Rozier, manager Home Farm, Babraham, for Babraham Estates reports that there has recently been a sale, & Babraham Estates are no longer responsible for any ground South of the line of the old railway. Savilles of Chelmsford are the new owners. (Agent - Mr. Bennett).</p>
27.10.82	<p>Reasonable path. From east end is wide path used by farm implements. Then ploughed & currently sown with sugar beet. Path reinstated between 4th & 5th row of beet. (Headland path). Then at left turn becomes implement track again.</p>	<p>Evidence of use by horses over final section.</p> <p>Frequent other use.</p>	<p>No signpost.</p> <p>Muddy, but no real problems.</p>	<p>Mr H Binney (?) Pampisford Hall</p>
27.10.82	<p>Rough grass & nettles</p>	Rarely	<p>Necessary to push through the hedge to get out onto the A505.</p> <p>From A505, no indication that a path exists.</p>	<p>Mr. H. Binney Let to tenant farmer</p>
27.10.82	<p>Starting at College Farm, signposted to Babraham. Just before farm buildings, waymarked through gate into large meadow to iron gate, junction with path No.3. From here on, No.4 is impassable; firstly due to brambles etc., then ploughed & currently sown with sugar beet.</p>	<p>Tenant farmer at College Farm reports that the meadow is widely used as a recreational path, but the stretch from Home Farm to Brent Ditch he had not seen used for many years.</p>	<p>Signposted.</p> <p>Stretch Home Farm to Brent Ditch either overgrown or ploughed, and currently impassable.</p>	<p>Mr. H. Binney { Farms let to tenants.</p>

TREES AND HEDGEGROWS

Chalklands in the local region were cleared of woodland cover in Pre-Saxon times. Villages, surrounded by large open fields were established by the Old English-(it was these same open fields that survived in Pampisford until inclosure in 1801). Ancient trackings, sometimes a mile wide traversed the country. Pampisford lay within the spread of the Ickniel Way and for this reason could not be considered isolated even before the Roman era.

Apart from the roads built by the Romans, no major highways existed in Great Britain until the 18th Century. Even moving from village to village could be difficult with very few minor roadways or lanes. Those that did exist were often rough rutted or impassable.

In medieval times, according to Travis Teversham, many more of the native trees such as Maple, Ash, Willow Hazel etc., lined the local roads and lanes, along green side-walks. Common pasture was abundant and many acres of rough meadows, moor, marshland and woodland existed.

Wood was also plentiful in supply for the homesteader and at the time, (populations were small) people were admonished for not collecting kindling and dead wood from the forests and wild woods. However, live trees were a different matter and in 1350 a local man was fined for felling a live tree. As populations grew the woodlands were carefully cropped and husbanded, old timber was conserved and replanting practised.

The woodland in Pampisford appears to be of the secondary or plantation-type, planted by man rather than being of ancient origin. Many of Pampisford's trees would have been grown along roadsides and the edges of fields, even before inclosure, and no doubt the Parker-Hamond's interest in trees helped in giving Pampisford a reputation for fine trees. John Seymour writing in recent times, noted that Pampisford had some of the largest maple trees (Norway and Common) in the British Isles.

Many hedgegrows appeared at the time of inclosure and can be identified by the predominance of only one or two species; typically Hawthorn and Blackthorn. The older hedgegrows display numerous different species.

A well known correlation of hedge-dating exists, whereby the number of different species that are growing in a 30 yard length will give you an approximate age in centuries. Any hedgegrow with 10 or more species in it over this kind of length is likely to be pre-conquest.

Exploitation of woodlands and the decline of woodland conservation began in the late 19th Century, further degeneration occurred when a great deal of timber was felled during, and between, the two World Wars.

Road widening schemes and modern farming methods have also added to a further loss of the local trees and hedgerows that are so important in supporting wild flowers and wild life. Travis Teversham noted in the 1940's that the social and economic development of England was taught in local schools but not the element of our history that lay all around us, namely that of the common fields and countryside. It would be interesting to know if this remains the same today.

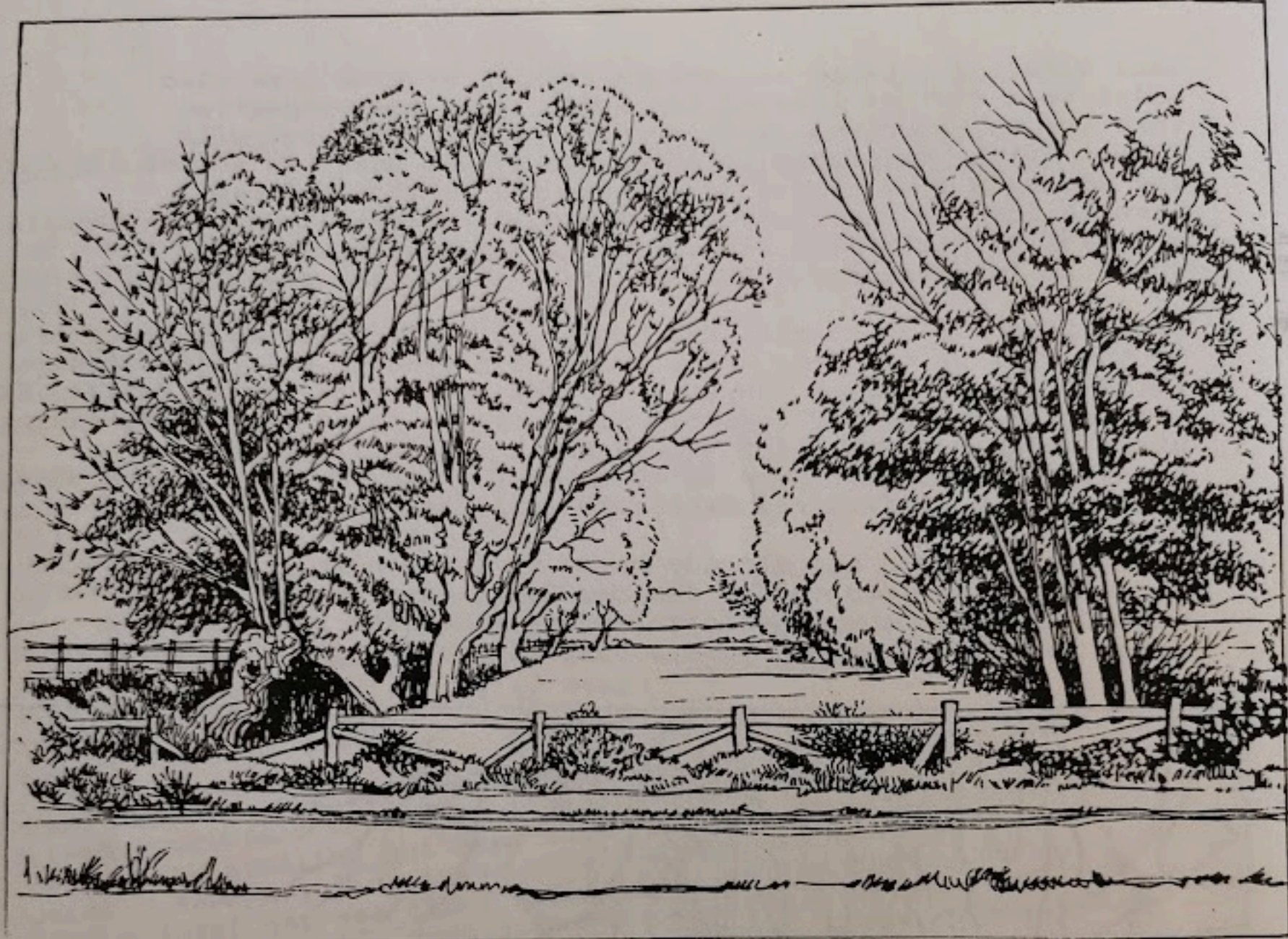
Pampisford Parish Council are hoping to replant suitable trees in the village at sites where trees have been or are being lost. It is possible that a properly thought-out scheme can be devised for the whole parish. If suitable sites can be found for re-planting mixed hedgerows this too may become a possibility. New plantings do however have to be cared for and the council are always pleased to hear from residents who would be willing to help.

Mrs Anne Blackman has already begun an independent scheme of her own at the rear end of the new Recreation Ground. The selection of the various species was made with great care in order to include native plants that support native wild life.



BEECH LANE

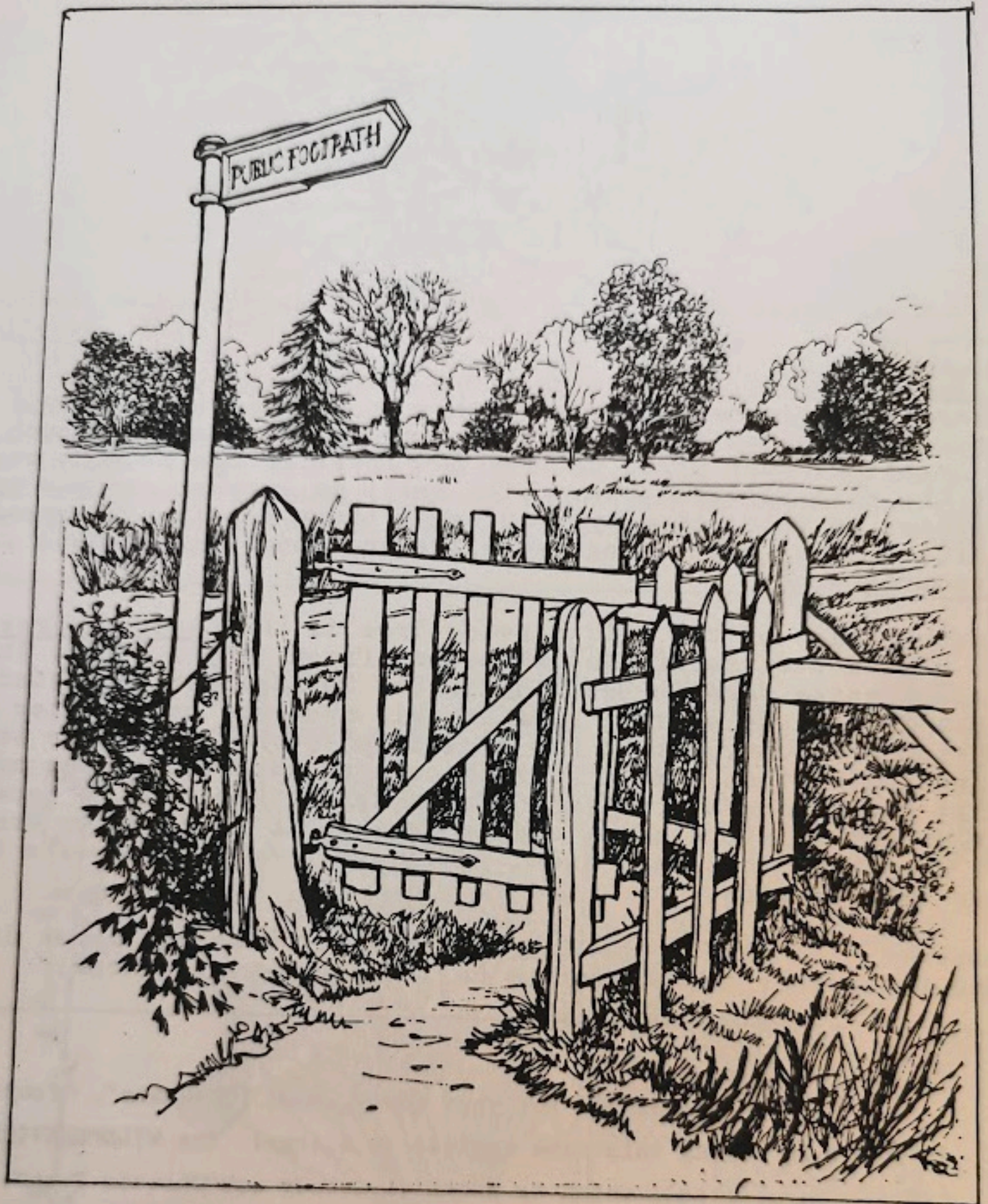
A scene that is bound to change in the near future as these aged trees come to the end of their life.



CLAY PIT MEADOW

One of the few remaining examples of the old landscape in this part of the village. Originally this area was very damp and boggy. The village pond lay in this meadow on the boundary with the old Cambridge Road, (now Brewery Road). To the left of the meadow there once existed a small farm known as "Cock Farnhams".

In 1882 the meadow was no longer used as a clay-pit and the ditches which ran either side were deepened. (It is possible that the village pond was also drained-off at this time). The meadow is, today, a drier site than it once was but within living memory villagers can remember certain wild plants growing there that are particularly associated with damp meadows. The meadow is owned by Pampisford Parish Council and in recent times steps have been taken to replant the old dying willows with new trees of the same species.



THE KISSING GATES

Built especially to allow access to pedestrians along footpaths while debarring cattle from escaping the fields. With the decline of dairy herds and footpaths, these gates are disappearing from the Cambridgeshire scene. At least two of these gates still exist in the Parish, the one illustrated above is made of wood the other of iron.

The gates lie at each end of the footpath through the Grove. For the nature-lover this is one of the most interesting areas in Pampisford.

LOCAL SPECIES OF PARTICULAR INTEREST



THE WILD SERVICE TREE which grows in East Anglia is an example of species that flourishes in abundance in ancient woodland and yet hardly ever appears anywhere outside such a location; even woods of over 300 years of age show no evidence of the Wild Service Tree. (The oxlip is another example of a species in this category). Clearly these plants have great difficulty in colonising new sites and need a great deal of encouragement.

Another name of the Wild Service Tree is the Chequers Tree, so called because of the chequered effect on its wood. It is now quite rare in East Anglia but it has been suggested that the reason so many pubs in this area are named after the Chequers is due, not to the game of chequers but rather to the tree of that name. This theory is supported by the notion that the Chequer's fruit, which although rather hard, is capable of ripening into a sweet edible fruit that is good for brewing. It is thought that many local publicans grew the Chequers tree for this purpose.

However, Ted Ellis, the T.V. Naturalist, does not agree despite the fact, that the theory is well supported elsewhere:

Dear Olive Mayo,

Thank you for your query about "Chequers". Your friend is right in saying this name applies to a tree: the WILD SERVICE TREE (Sorbus torminalis), which is known variously as "Chequer Tree", "Chequer Wood" and "Chequers" chiefly in Kent and Sussex, where it is most often to be found. It is rare and very local in woods of East Anglia. The name comes from the pitted appearance of its wood.

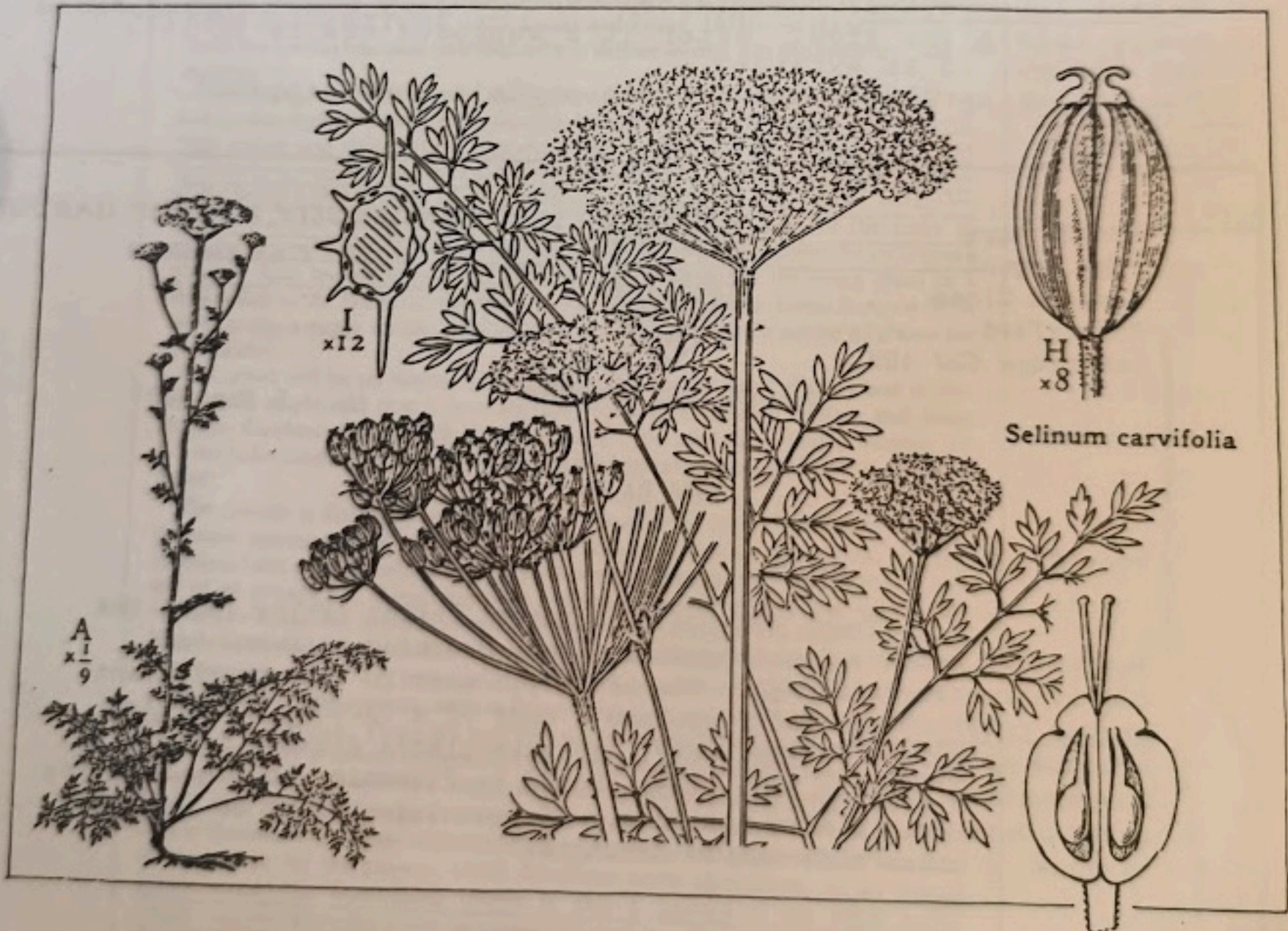
I do not think that there is necessarily a connection between the rather common pub name and this tree, especially since the latter has a very limited distribution in the countryside. Association with the game of "Chequers" seems the more likely.

Yours sincerely,

Ted Ellis



Another unusual fruit tree, rarely grown these days, is the Bullace. This fruit is related to the greengage in the same way as the damson is related to the plum. Several bullace trees still exist on land in Hammond Close that was once part of an old orchard called Bullins. It was partly owned by the Church Charities. Although this land is now in private hands the bullace trees are still maintained. The fruit is small hard and green, somewhat like an olive, but is sweet once it has turned yellow and is ready for harvesting.



The plant Selinium Carvifolia is another rarity that grows locally though one of it's last known habitats was just outside Pampisford's boundary, namely on the moor at Sawston Hall.



The most particular and outstanding natural-history event in the Parish of Pampisford concerns an unusual rare grass - Bromus Interruptus. Pampisford was the last place in the world where this grass grew. After it's supposed demise in 1972 it was thought to be extinct.

The following letter and article explain what happened.

Mrs O. Mayo
 "The Hogan"
 Hammond Close
 Pampisford
 Cambridge CB2 4EP.



350101
 Telephone (0223) ~~50101/39466~~

UNIVERSITY BOTANIC GARDEN
 CAMBRIDGE
 CB2 1JF

5 May 1981

SMW/BA

Dear Mrs Mayo,

Thank you for your recent letter asking about the supposedly extinct Cambridgeshire plant recently re-found in cultivation in Edinburgh. The plant you mean is the annual grass Bromus interruptus, and I enclose a copy of a recent illustrated article about its re-discovery. We have plants growing here in the Conservation Display Bed; they should be flowering in June, and you are welcome to visit to see them. If you need a piece to take away to draw, I think that can be arranged.

Yours sincerely,

Dr S.M. WALTERS
 Director

BROMUS INTERRUPTUS (HACK.) DRUCE
DODO OR PHOENIX?

Duncan Donald

In an article published in *Nature in Cambridgeshire* in 1962, Dr F. H. Perring described the curious cyclical history of this unusual grass, interrupted brome—from its original collection in 1849 from a field at Odsey, and its baptism as a new species by Hackel and Druce; through its rapid spread (or recognition?) in Britain, so that by 1920 it had been recorded from scattered localities in 27 vice-counties across south and central England; to its subsequent dramatic decline and possible extinction. He listed the only six records made of the plant in the previous 25 years, saying that it was imperative that the sites should be recorded the following year. He ended his article: "This call to help save a species which is in danger of becoming completely extinct is surely one of the strongest which can be made to a Naturalists' Trust. Druce (1927) records that *Bromus interruptus* is carved in stone on a corbel on the north side of the court of the University Museum in Oxford. Let us hope this is not to be its tombstone, and that in Cambridge we shall soon be able to celebrate its rebirth with living material growing in the Botanic Garden!"

Two of the sites he listed were in Cambridgeshire, at Little Abington and at Pampisford; and searches were made in 1963, during which the plant was refound at the Pampisford locality. It continued to appear there sporadically until 1972, since when, despite the active co-operation of the farm manager in maintaining the open conditions the plant needs, it has not been seen. Material was brought into cultivation in the Botanic Garden in the 1960s, but the stock was finally declared lost in 1975 when the remaining seed, stored at room temperature for four years, was found to be no longer viable. (This was before the present Conservation Section came into being!) Dr Perring's "dodo" was thought to be completely extinct (Perring and Farrell, 1977; Lucas and Syngé, 1978)—in the world that is, since this species has been recorded only in Britain (being, like the dodo, an "island endemic").

I am therefore delighted to be able to report that the dodo has become a phoenix and is once again growing in the Botanic Garden. One of the people who read the 1962 article and visited the Pampisford site in 1963 was Dr Philip Smith, who specialises in research into the evolution and chemical taxonomy of the grass family at the Botany Department of the University of Edinburgh (e.g. Smith, 1972). He collected a few spikelets from a single plant and has maintained the stock in cultivation ever since—for some time unaware that this had become the only living material now known to survive. He dramatically unveiled the living plant at a conference of the Botanical Society of the British Isles in Manchester in April 1979, while giving a paper on his research, and presented me with a potful of plants for Cambridge.

The plant will be on display from 1980 in the conservation display bed at the Garden. I might add that I have already forwarded material to Kew and Ness Botanic Gardens, Butser Hill Ancient Farm, Kew seed bank and a number of private individuals: that way we cannot be held entirely responsible if it is ever lost again!

The species is distinguished chiefly on a number of floral characters: for the botanists among you, it is the only brome known to have a split palea; and the spikelets have a characteristic compressed ovoid shape, are more or less sessile and are often grouped in threes, forming a dense spike-like panicle but with interruptions—hence the name, though you may have thought this resulted from its history! I should warn you that many of you will probably not consider it to be a very attractive plant; it is very similar to soft brome, *B. mollis*, which is a common weedy species. Nevertheless, several features recommend it as a species worthy of our special attention. There are very few plants endemic to Britain, and no other grasses; we have a special responsibility, to the scientific world at least, to protect those plants only known here. Research, such as that at present being done by Dr Smith, may yet tell us how such apparently new species could have arisen, a subject that is fundamental to our understanding of plant breeding and perhaps nowhere more so than for the grasses, which dominate world agriculture. As an annual arable weed, the interrupted brome is also a symbol of the other arable weeds—maybe more attractive or potentially useful to man—that are increasingly threatened by modern agriculture; and, while we may decide that we would prefer not to have them as competitive weeds, I for one cannot agree that we can afford to lose them, altogether as plants. This plant has had a very special association with Cambridgeshire, and I hope it will long continue to have a special place in cultivation at the Botanic Garden, if only to remind us how narrowly it escaped extinction. Come and see it—and tell me where you know that is still grows in the wild!

* I am grateful to Mr Graham Easy for his drawings of *Bromus interruptus* and for his permission to reproduce them here. O. G. M.



EXTRACT FROM

"NATURE IN
CAMBRIDGE"

No. 23 1980



EXTRACT FROM A REPORT COMPILED BY A PARISHIONER
IN 1984/85 FOR THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTRYSIDE
ADVISORY WORKING PARTY

"The Parish has two significant Archeological features, the Brent Ditch and the moats near College farm. I expect these are known well, but from the point of view of wild life Pampisford is very poorly off in terms of rich, diverse, natural habitats. There are no ancient woodlands, wild wetlands, common heath or downlands and only a few fragments of not very species-rich or partially improved pasture.

The soil is mostly of a chalk loam-type which is easily worked. Also, being close to old major transport routes, it has long been an important arable Parish, all the land being accessible probably since pre-Roman times.

The only remaining natural features are the two rivers, the River Granta from Linton and the River Cam both of which feature briefly as boundaries. All the other features are man-made. However some of the man-made features are very old. The Roman Road is an important Boundary feature (now All), the Brent Ditch and the moated sites in the Grove at College farm probably date from the Saxon era. Some of Pampisford's few remaining hedges are pre-1800. All these features are the last havens of wild, self-sown herbs, shrubs and trees. Since we have so little wild life in this intensively arable parish these old and ancient man-made features, though they do not compare with more species-rich sites elsewhere, are very precious to our Parish.

The Plantations and the disused railway line which date from the last century also play their part in providing a home for self-sown plants and associated birds, insects and mammals.

I have conducted a very brief survey of the Flora of the Parish. It is not complete because most of the parish land is in private hands and inaccessible.

1. ANCIENT SITES

A. The Roman Road The ancient roadside verges here have been gradually destroyed by numerous road improvement schemes such as widening and levelling. The plants now growing on the present verges are species that take advantage of disturbed soil. For example, flax, wild strawberry, mignonette etc. A few remnants of the old vergeside flora have managed to re-establish themselves, even orchids have been found recently.

B. The Brent ditch This forms part of a private estate belonging to Mr. Binney. This strip of land must be the oldest piece of land that has not been cultivated since it was formed, though it may have been managed for grazing or used in some other way. It is now very overgrown but I have no idea what plants it contains since it is not accessible to the public.

C. The Public Chalk Pit This is also on land owned by Mr. Binney and access here is rather difficult. Apparently it is rich in fossils and numerous wild violets grow there but I have not been able to visit it as yet.

2. GRASSLAND

A. The Moated sites and the Grove near College Farm contain quite a number of plants. The trees include Ash, Elm, Willow and Field Maple, Hazel Shrubs and herbaceous plants including Iris foetidissima (the Roast-Beef plant). In the damp soil of the moated ditch, Water-forget-me-not, Brooklime and Large Bitter Cress grow, along with Water Mint.

Various broad-leaved plants that must have abounded in the Grove at one time can still be found, - mauve and white violets, for example as well as yellow Lady's Bedstraw and Self-heal. Cowslips too because they can be still found thinly scattered and trying to re-establish themselves.

B. Meadows at the back of Manor Farm contain a wide variety of broad-leaved plants including Bugle, Meadowsweet, Salad Burnet and Cowslips.

C. The Churchyard A large number of herbaceous species grow in the turf of the churchyard, just the ordinary wayside plants and flowers that once used to be so common and all country children knew. These are now hard to find elsewhere in the parish except for a few rather special sites to be described. They include Common Mullein, Yarrow, Ox-eye Daisy, White Campion, Hawkweed, Sweet Violet, Herb Robert, Hoary Plantain, Ratstail Plantain, Ribwort Plantain, White Clover, Black Medick, Common Forget-me-not, Common Vetch, Creeping Cinquefoil, Burnet and Ground ivy. It is felt that the churchyard should be tidy and certainly where graves have been partially cleared relatives of those buried do appreciate this, especially when visiting from elsewhere. Mowing the plants prevents flowering but at least they are not killed and the Churchyard now acts as a reservoir of wild plants, and an example of what used to grow here. It is increasingly recognised how important churchyards are as havens for wild life, as old grasslands are improved for grazing animals or disappear all together. If trees are to be planted the species of tree and site for planting need to be chosen with care. Dense shade would destroy this rich mix. In one corner, under a stand of Yew, Box and Sycamore nothing but Ivy grows. However the owls appreciate the trees. Fine, non-competative grass is the best type for any small areas needing re-seeding with the bonus that it needs less frequent mowing. Weed killers are an indiscriminate tool in a churchyard and are not to be recommended.

This Churchyard along with others in Cambridgeshire is in danger of being lost as a haven for wild flowers and associated wild-life. Such habitats are, as you know, of increasing importance at a time when so much has been lost from the surrounding countryside.

D. The Meadow by Bourne Bridge is old grassland containing fine grasses such as Fescu. Because of the predominance of these species it is obvious that the area has never been sown with the modern forage grasses such as rye.



3. ROAD-SIDE VERGES

The lanes of the village, judging by old photographs, were once very narrow and deep, and the banks appear to have been very rich in broad leaf species. Over the years the lanes have been widened, road levels raised, and footpaths have replaced the steep banks. The hedges and old fences have been uprooted for the most part and replaced with walls or just left bare - so not a lot remains of a once rich hedgerow flora. Violets and Garlic mustard and Wild arum grow in Beech lane. An isolated clump of Violets and some Lesser Celandine grow on Brewery Road.

Lesser Celandine also grows on the lane leading to Babraham. An isolated plant of the Great Leopard Bane also exists on the Babraham Lane by the junction of the 505. It flowers later than the garden variety and has a more leggy appearance. It was once cultivated for medicinal purposes and was an early introduction. Snowdrops have become naturalised along the footpath at the back of Home Farm Babraham.

There are some patches of fine grasses on the Babraham Lane close to the parish boundary with Babraham. Wild rose grow in the hedge-row and Knapweed, Toad flax, Mouse Eared Hawkweed, Hoary Plantain, White Campion and Wild Scabious grow on the high verges.

There is one interesting patch of verge on the A505 between the lay-by and Town Lane on the turning into the village. The soil has been excavated to the subsoil here when the 505 was widened, so it is very poor but it supports a large variety of native chalk loving plants. Perhaps the seeds had fallen into cracks in the soil in the past. Once exposed to the light these were then able to germinate. There are at least two Galium species (Lady's Bedstraw), Birdsfoot-trefoil and various members of the pea family. There are also a large number of Common Broom-rape plants. Often a number of meadow butterflies, mostly browns, can be found on either side of this stretch of road because there is the remains of a hedge on the east side.

All these plant and insect communities are threatened by the proposed road developments. Perhaps if some of the road side turf could be carefully removed and replaced on the new verges, continuity of wild life could be maintained. Elsewhere on this stretch of the A505 Sainfoin, escaped from cultivation decades ago grows, and also Burnet grows.

4. OLD HEDGES

There are some old hedges in the Parish. One very thick and over-grown hedge, (bounded on one side by a very deep ditch fed by an ever bubbling spring, and on the other side by a track) runs north-south to connect with the plantation at Hanley's Hill. This hedge has some large trees, mostly Elm, which have died; but also Hazel and Spindle bushes, all in a rather poor state. The Spindle has begun to colonise the plantation nearby.

There are some other old hedges around the small fields associated with Home Farm. Ash was obviously part of the hedge which borders the Grove with a small over-grown field used as pheasant cover. It had been kept cut as part of the hedge but has been left to grow unchecked now for decades. Ash is one of the most common trees in the hedgerows, perhaps because it is such a good burning wood. One of the hedges along the Babraham Lane is predominantly Wild Plum.

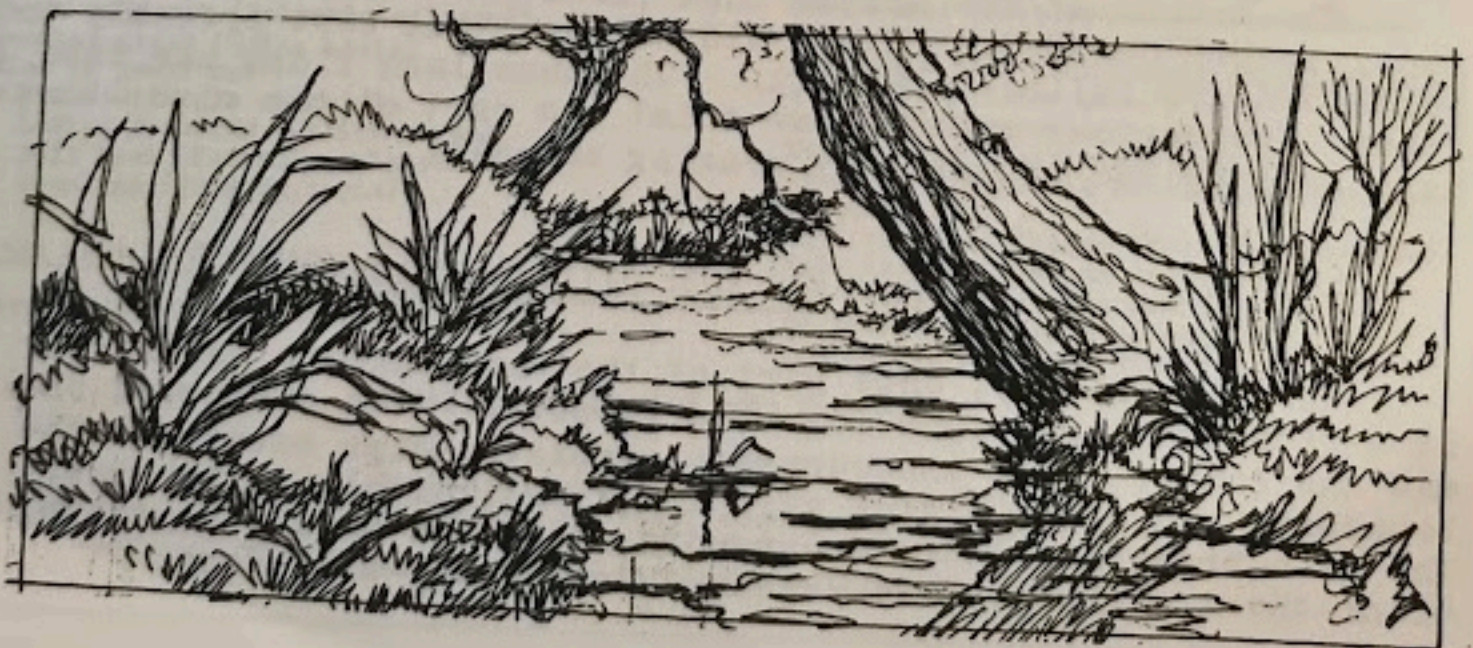
There was no coppiced woodland in the Parish until after the main enclosure of the land in the early 1800's, so hedgerow trees must have been very important. There are also a large number of Sycamore trees which are said to provide good faggots, that may be why they were grown, but once sycamore becomes established it spreads very fast. Elm was also a very common hedge tree, especially in the village itself, but they are all killed by the Dutch Elm disease. There are some very fine beech trees in Beech Lane. It is thought they have become dangerous, and three are to be felled.

The Parish Council is planting a lot of trees in the village in the new recreation ground and along road side verges, nearly all native species.

Most of the hedges especially if planted before the main enclosure of the land are not maintained and are decaying. The hedges associated with the last enclosure of 1801 are in quite good health but are not very species-rich, mostly blackthorn and hawthorn with some wild damson.

5. DITCHES of running water

The ditches are frequently kept clear but some wild plants grow still e.g. Water-forget-me-nots and Water-cress. Willow is frequently found along the ditches and water-courses.





6. PLANTATIONS

The main trees in the plantations are Elms. Since most of the plantations are on what would have been much wetter soils before the water authorities started pumping ground water, perhaps elms were grown to help dry out the soils. In Hanley's Hill Plantation, at Rectory Farm, the elms were once coppiced although last time appears to have been at about the turn of the century. Alder, Ash, Willow and Oak also grow in this plantation. The Brimstone yellow butterfly is very common in the Spring.

I am not familiar with the other plantations, Hayfield Wood and Creaks plantation, but Elm was an important tree here together with Ash. Elder is the most common shrub, some others do occur including *Viburnum*.^{sp} Ash trees have seeded themselves well in these plantations.

7. RIVERS

There are rushes growing in the river near Bourne Bridge. Most of the growth on the banks is rank i.e. nettles etc. There are some large old Willows, many now fallen and split.

The branch of the Granta that flows past Pampisford Mill is today rather denuded. Again old willows that were probably once pollarded are fallen and split. The once lush flora has been lost (there are various reasons for this) and part of the river banks have been eroded possibly by grazing animals.

8. THE OLD RAILWAY TRACK

The old railway, once part of the Cambridge to Colchester line is a rich hunting ground for wild flowers. The disturbed chalk and the cinder track discourage vigorous species except on the boundary, and allow a wide variety of smaller plants to grow. The main trees are Ash and Sycamore, the main shrubs Hawthorn, Black-thorn, Privet, Wild Damson, Bramble and Wild Rose.

This survey is in no way complete. It can only act as a guide to the types of habitat in Pampisford and what may be found there. The species mentioned will also be influenced by the time of year when the areas were visited. Although at first glance, especially when considering mainly the area in the "village envelope" there is not a great deal to discover, some special species-rich areas still survive in the Parish as a whole

Yours sincerely,

A.K.R. Blackman Pampisford 1985 "

SYNOPSIS OF SPECIES

Roadside verge A505 between the Pampisford turn off and the Northbound Lay-by.

Grasses include bromes and fescues
Ladies Bedstraw (*Galium verum*)
Hedge Bedstraw (*Galium mollugo*)
Vetches
Hoary Plantain (*Plantago media*)
Salad Burnet (*Poterium sanguisorba*)

Various legumes including:

Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*)
Birdsfoot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*)
Hop Trefoil (*Trifolium campestre*)
Black Medick (*Medicago lupulina*)
Common Broom Rape (*Orobanche minor*)
Knapweed (*Centurea scabiosa*)
Sainfoin (*Onobrychis viciifolia*)

Grove meats

Water Forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*)
Brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*)
Large Bittercress (*Cardamine pratensis*)
Water mint (*Mentha aquatica*)
Cowslip (*Primula veris*)
Sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*)
Roast-beef Plant (*Iris foetidissima*)
Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*)
Grasses including:
Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*)
Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
Trees include:
Willow
White Poplar

Fine Grassland on site of old road in the Grove

Chalk milkwort (*Polygala calcarea*)
Quaking-grass (*Brixa media*)
Also in grove are:
Violets (*Viola odorata*)
Ladies Bedstraw (*Galium verum*)
Self heal (*Prunella vulgaris*)
Cowslips (*Primula veris*)

Field next to Home Farm.

Sweet Rocket (garden escape)

Wooded areas elsewhere

Violets (*Viola odorata*)
Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*)
Wood Forget-me-not (*Myosotis sylvatica*)
Herb Bennet (Wood Avens) (*Geum urbanum*)
Common Forget-me-not (*Myosotis sylvatica*)

(Manor Farm) - Once damp grassland

Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*)
Meadow sweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*)
Cowslips
Salad Burnet

The Old Railway

Bladder Campion (*Silene vulgaris*)
White Campion (*Melandrium album*)
Burnet (*Poterium sanguisorba*)
Ox-eye Daisy (*Chrysanthemum segetum*)
Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)
Mint (*Mentha* sp.)
Mouse-ear Hawkweed (*Hieracium pilosella*)
Black Medick (*Medicago lupulina*)
Hop Trefoil (*Trifolium campestre*)
Kidney Vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria*)
Horseshoe Vetch (*Hippocrepis comosa*)
Common Vetch (*Vicia sativa*)
Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*)
White Clover (*Trifolium repens*)
Toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*)
Mignonette (*Reseda lutea*)
Common Forget-me-not (*Myosotis arvensis*)
Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*)
Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*)
Knapweed (*Centurea scabiosa*)
Wood Avens (Herb Bennet) (*Geum urbanum*)
Hedge Bedstraw (*Geum mollugo*)
Pineapple weed (*Matricaria matricarioides*)
Stone Crop (*Sedum acre*)
Self Heal (*Prunella vulgaris*)
Meadow Sage (*Salvia pratensis*)
Creeping Cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*)
(*Geranium* sp.)
Squirrel-tail Fescue (*Festuca bromoides*)
Tall Fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*)
Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*)
Cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*)
Red Bartsia (*Odontites verna*)

Junction of Babraham Lane with A505

Celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*)
Great Leopard's-bane (*Doronicum pardalianches*)
(Introduced found woods and plantations)
formerly cultivated as a medical drug
Common Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*)

NATURALISTS' LAST EXCURSION OF THE YEAR

The last joint excursion to be held this year by the Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely Naturalists' Trust and the Cambridge Natural History Society was a fungus foray held at Pampisford Hall at the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. C. Binney.

The leader was Mr. E.J. Corner, whose knowledge of mycology is encyclopaedic and whose lively manner of instruction was much appreciated by the party of 40 members and friends.

There were few fungi after the great spell of them this August and the ground was unusually dry.

However, many Devil's Fingers, *Xylaria polymorpha*, were seen and two interesting species only common in East Anglia were found, both growing on dead elm trees.

These were *Auricula mesenterica* and an old specimen of *Pleurotus sapidus*; neither is included in the common guides to fungi though the *Pleurotus* is delicious to eat when fried crisp in butter. A lot of species were found for the microscope but nothing for supper.

Miss K Gingell again offered a prize for the best collection of fungi made by a schoolchild and before rain dispersed the party, the collections were laid out on the lawn and judged by Mr. Corner with the help of Mr. Palmer and two mycology students from Jamaica and Singapore. The winner was Katherine Montefiore with a remarkable collection of 23 species.

The many unusual and magnificent trees planted in the park were much admired and the beautiful foliage leaves of the Norway Maple made members wonder why this tree was not planted more often.

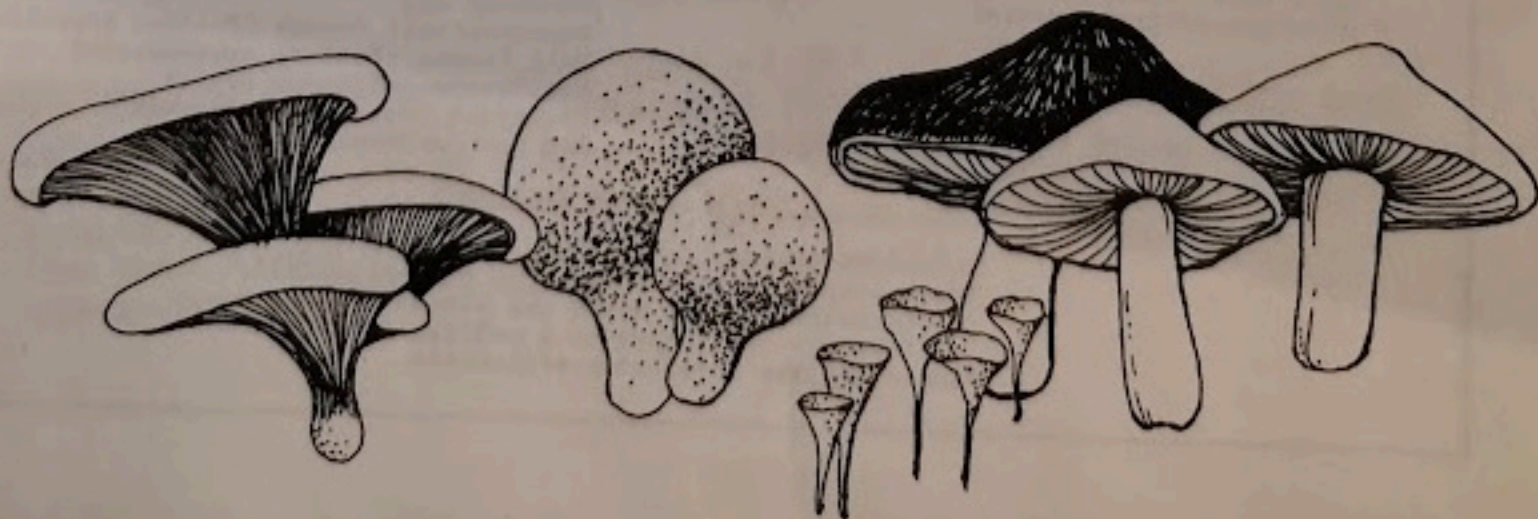
DEER SIGHTED

The botanists were delighted to see so much unploughed chalk grassland dominated by the False Brome, *Brachypodium pinnatum*: and it proved to be a new record for the 10 km square.

Some plants of the Deadly Nightshade, *Atropa belladonna*, with large black berries, were shown to the children as an example of extremely poisonous fruit never to be eaten.

There were many thrushes in the woods and a tree creeper and a marsh tit were heard.

The most interesting record made in the afternoon was the Muntjac Deer seen by one member. This little deer is the most recent addition to the list of mammals found in the county; it was seen for the first time only in 1962.



Farmers are getting the conservation message

By Peter While, the county
Countryside Officer

"WHO will stop the rot?" asks the "Observer" in its "Save Our Countryside" campaign.

Having lived and worked in Cambridgeshire for over 20 years I am aware of the destructive changes. I am also aware that increased efficiency on the farm has brought many benefits. Can there be a satisfactory balance between efficient farming and conservation?

That is really what we would all like to achieve, but I think during the 60s and 70s efficiency had taken over in men's minds as well as in the fields. The prospects for conservation seemed as bleak as the 100-acre fields.

Now the tide has begun to turn. Public concern has come to a head, the Government wants better balanced agriculture and environmental policies, and farmers as a body are somewhat anxious about their public image.

Some farmers blame public relations, but others realise that actions speak louder than words. Cambridgeshire farmers, in gathering strength, are getting involved in conservation.

An excellent start has been made with tree planting. I should think that one in three have planted trees during the last 10 years. The unsuspecting public will surely be surprised and delighted when thousands of trees, too small to see now, start springing up

all over the countryside.

Less easy to grasp is the idea of conservation as part of the routine of farm management. It involves time, money and commitment. But farmers like a challenge and many are getting stuck in. Hedges, ditches, ponds, meadows and woodlands are benefiting

Farmers want to carry on farming efficiently and be considered worthy custodians of the countryside. The public wants a countryside attractive to people and wildlife. My job is to help bring both together, so that rights and responsibilities are shared.

In Cambridgeshire, we have a flourishing partnership. The public, through grants and advice from the Countryside Commission and the county council, are joining with the farming community to invest in our future countryside.

But one word of warning. Let's look after the remaining old established meadows, hedges, ponds and woodlands of Cambridgeshire.

Soil erosion is widespread

SOIL erosion is more widespread in England than has been realised and the area affected is increasing year by year.

This is the conclusion of a 10-year study by staff of the Soil Survey of England and Wales' Cambridge office, whose research using air photography and ground survey has monitored the process of wind erosion in the peat Fenland and of water erosion in the sand lands of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and Bedfordshire.

Over the same period other researchers in the South of England have revealed severe losses of topsoil on the chalk downs and on light land in the West Midlands. This accelerating rate of soil erosion should not be thought of as natural and unavoidable.

It is the result of recent trends towards maximisation of cereal production which has led to removal of protective hedgerows and ploughing of steeply sloping hills with unstable soils that were previously under grass.

It is ironic, therefore, with the revelation of this threat to our soil and the growing public interest in the environment and conservation, that the Soil Survey itself is under threat from Government cuts.

Details of the services offered by the Soil Survey of England and Wales can be obtained from their office in Block B, Government Buildings, Brooklands Avenue, Cambridge.

Paul Wright

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PARISH FROM ANNE BLACKMAN

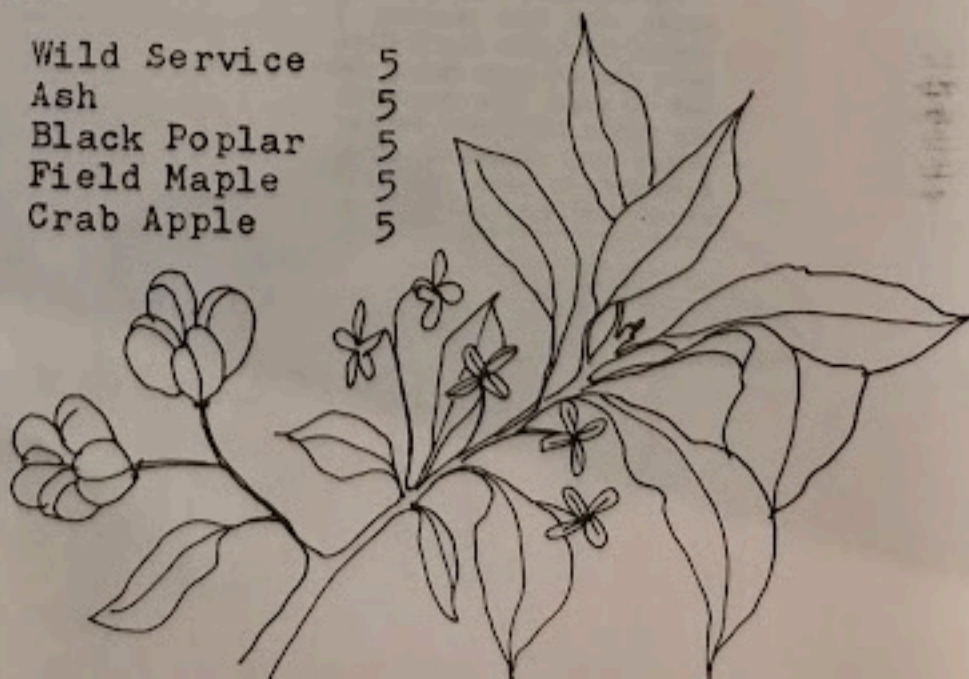
Although we live in a village surrounded by countryside, I was disappointed when we moved to Pampisford to find there was not much 'countryside' to explore. The footpath through the Grove is special, but elsewhere we are confined to road side footpaths where there are not many wild plants for the children to discover, and even the most accessible bramble bush disappeared when the churchyard wall was rebuilt. Modern traffic also makes hedgerow and wayside watching very dangerous. I have heard from older inhabitants about the hedges that used to be in the village, how "there was always something interesting", and I thought the boundary fence of the fine new Recreation Ground in Pampisford would make an ideal location for a new, but very mixed, hedge of wild British native plants. It would be on land accessible to everyone and safe from traffic and also its polluting fumes. The Parish Council and the Church Charity kindly gave their permission for the project.

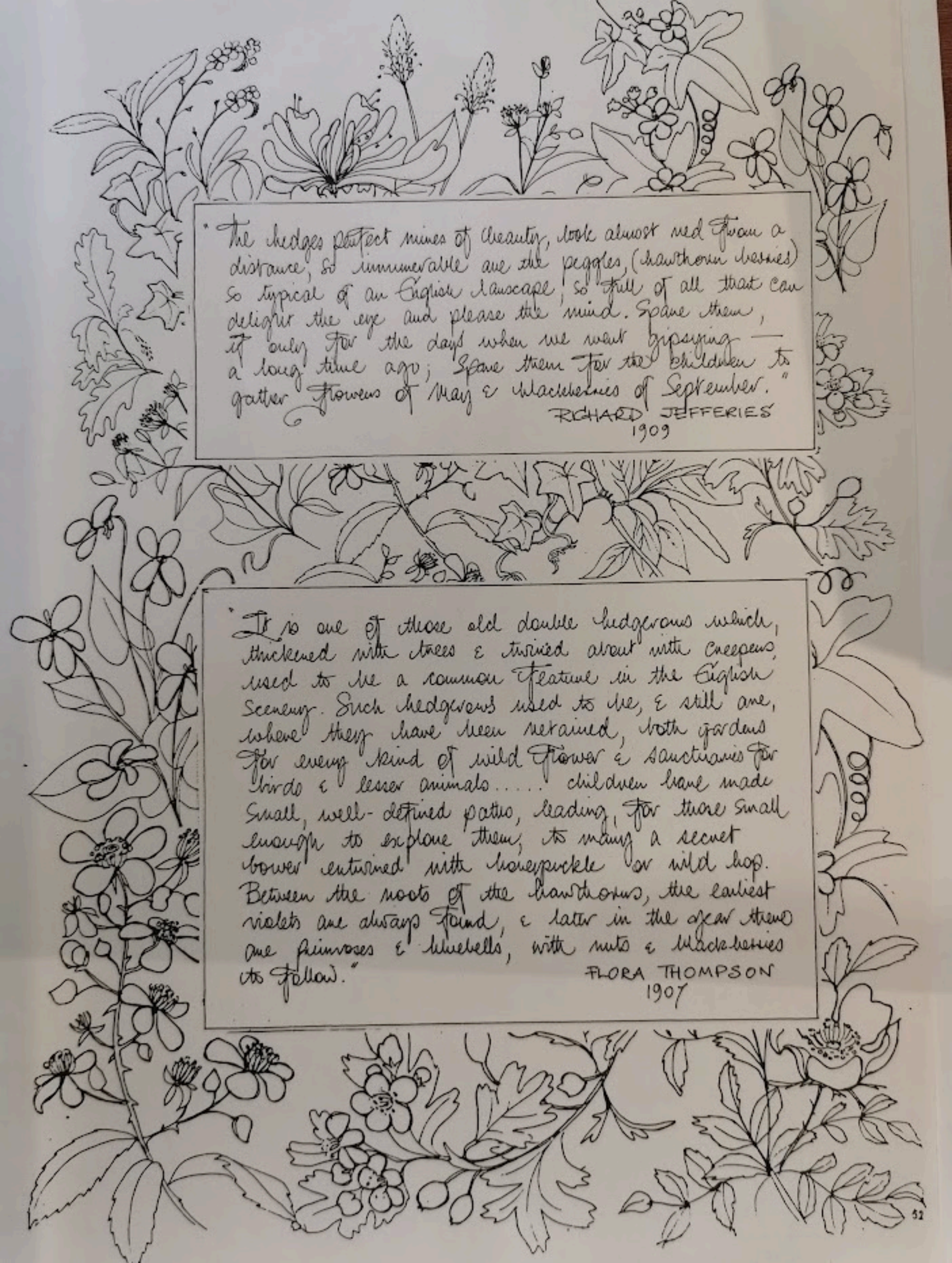
I hoped to collect seed and take cuttings of as wide a range of species as I could from the locality, but decided this would take too long. I then asked the County Tree Officer, Mr. Megginson and his colleagues for help. I was extremely grateful for their offer to supply 380 hawthorn plants, 10 each of 9 other hedging species and 5 each of 5 tree species. Two tree species, the Black Poplar and Wild Service tree are very rare in Britain now. The County Council awarded a grant for a large proportion of the cost of plants, stakes, guards and compost and the Pampisford Parish Council have kindly offered to pay much of the balance. These plants will form the back-bone of the hedge to which I will continue to add different species such as Oak, Bird Cherry and Wild Plum. The birds will sow Elder, Holly and perhaps Bramble. Wild Clematis, Honeysuckle and Wild Hop will be introduced, and the hedge will be underplanted with a large number of hedgerow wild flowers which I am raising from seed. When they are mature any help in planting these will be gratefully received.

I hope there will be something for everyone in this hedge, for it is not only children that like to go "Gipsying"! There will be sloes, elderberries, and blackberries for jams, jellies and wine, and holly, yew and ivy for Christmas decorations. This rich mix species I hope will also create a varied habitat for bird, animal and insect life.

The Hedge at the moment contains:

Hawthorn (Whitethorn)	380	Wild Service	5
Field Maple	15	Ash	5
<u>Viburnum opulus</u>	10	Black Poplar	5
<u>Viburnum lantana</u>	10	Field Maple	5
Spindle	10	Crab Apple	5
Wild privet	15		
Hazel	15		
Blackthorn	15		
Holly (mostly killed in the winter)	5		
Yew	5		





"The hedges perfect mines of beauty, look almost red from a distance, so innumerable are the pebbles, (hawthorn berries) so typical of an English landscape, so full of all that can delight the eye and please the mind. Spare them, if only for the days when we went gipsying — a long time ago; Spare them for the children to gather flowers of May & blackberries of September."

RICHARD JEFFERIES
1909

"It is one of those old double hedges which, thickened with trees & twisted about with creepers, used to be a common feature in the English scenery. Such hedges used to be, & still are, where they have been retained, both gardens for every kind of wild flower & haunts for birds & lesser animals. . . . children have made small, well-defined paths, leading, for those small enough to explore them, to many a secret bower entwined with honeysuckle or wild hop. Between the roots of the hawthorns, the earliest violets are always found, & later in the year there are primroses & bluebells, with nuts & blackberries to follow."

FLORA THOMPSON
1907