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Wheathampstead Local History Group

Publications

The Wheathampstead Local History Group have produced a number of booklets about Wheathampstead.

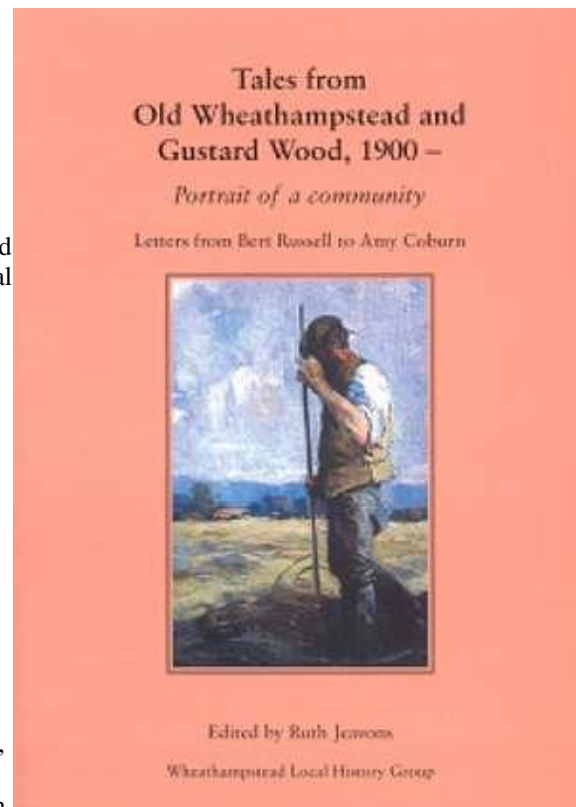
"We were self-reliant. We pulled our water up from the wells. ..had candles for lighting. ..kept a few poultry in the back garden, fed with scraps and gleanings ...had no holidays at all... But we were contented."

Bert Russell spent all his life in one place, and got to know it well. His memories are sharp and strong, also entertaining. The range of his social contacts is comprehensive. Within these pages we meet a prince and a poacher, a famous playwright and a humble stone-breaker, an Antarctic explorer and an old soldier from the Boer War. We also catch a glimpse of Lady Cavan singing solo in St Peter's church, and learn that there was a portrait of 'Lady' Garrard in every cottage.

Read this book, and you will find yourself marching around Nomansland common with Wheathampstead schoolboys before the First World War, then, later, playing football with soldiers convalescing from that war. You will rise at dawn and breakfast with the ploughman, following him for a day, learning how not to ride a cart over the furrows. You will also learn exactly how to thatch a straw stack and when to harvest wheat, oats and barley.

These letters reveal a hidden, hundred-year old Wheathampstead at play, at work, in a state of war, and at peace. There's even a taste of the weather at its hottest, wettest and coldest extremes, and an adventure thrown in for good measure. If you enjoy anecdotes about local characters and hanker for the days when people were skilled with their hands and worked with animals, this is a book for you.

Amy Coburn was born in 1927 and lives in Harpenden with her husband Leslie. She was a founder member of the Harpenden Local History Society, and received an award in recognition of her services to local history from the British Association for Local History in 2001.



Ruth Jeavons has lived in Wheathampstead since 1972 and established the Wheathampstead Local History Group in 1986 with the purpose of publishing and exhibiting more of Wheathampstead's past for the present, and future generations.