

Clement and Edith (“Peg”) Drury

Clement Jacob Drury (usually known as “Clem”) was born at Ticehurst (Sussex) on 1 September 1893. In 1896 (when aged two or three) he moved to Dover (Kent) with his parents. After leaving school he was apprenticed to the wheelwright trade (making and repairing wooden wheels, carriages and carts), and after completing his apprenticeship he moved to London to obtain work. This would have been in 1912 or 1913. When war with Germany was declared on 4 August 1914 he was out of work, and so on 11 August, when he was 20, he volunteered for military service. In view of his skills he was appointed to the Army Service Corps as a wheeler. Six weeks later, on 22 September 1914, he was sent to France. He was subsequently promoted to Corporal.

In January 1916 he returned to England, and was stationed at Larkhill on Salisbury Plain. One Sunday he made his way to Netheravon Baptist chapel,¹ arriving just as the children were coming out of Sunday School. The young lady Sunday School teacher invited him to her home at the nearby hamlet of Fifield, where she lived with her widowed mother.

Edith Jane Dweatt was always known as “Peg”. She had been born on 13 September 1888 at *The Sheiling* at Fifield, where her father Albert was a baker and grocer, running his bakery and shop from the part-cottage that formed part of the property they occupied. Albert had been born at Fittleton in 1845, his wife Jane (nee Dykes) at Enford in 1850. Peg was the youngest of their nine children, two of whom had died in childhood. Peg’s father Albert died in 1906, so by the time Clem came on the scene in 1916 her mother Jane was running the business, while Peg was working as a teacher at Enford school (about one mile north of Fifield).

Clem was sent back to France in February 1917, serving there until March 1919. While on leave in England during this period he and Peg became engaged. They were married on 23 April 1919 at Netheravon Baptist chapel, soon after he was demobilised. He was then aged 25, she was 30. After marriage Clem moved into the *The Sheiling* and helped run the business, while Peg continued to work as a teacher.



The Sheiling at Fifield is a 17th century listed building, a timber-framed house with a thatched roof and a gable end of brick and flint. In about 1900 (along with much other property in the area) it was purchased by the War Office (the Ministry of Defence from 1964). The family occupied not only *The Sheiling* but also some rooms in the neighbouring cottage just visible on the right-hand side of the photograph, which is where the former bakery was located.

¹ **Netheravon Particular Baptist church** was formed in about 1816, and a chapel was built in 1820. The pastors were firstly Stephen Offer and then Robert Mower. The chapel was destroyed by fire in 1946, partly rebuilt, but later closed and demolished. The cemetery is all that remains.

<http://history.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/getchurch.php?id=928>

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=115493>

Jane Dreweatt (Peg's mother) died in 1929, and the business was closed down. Clem subsequently had a variety of jobs, while Peg eventually became headmistress of Enford primary school. A former pupil (Mr Fred Phillimore) wrote of his time at the school in the 1920s: "I was about 12 years old and at Enford School under a very strict schoolmistress called Mrs Drury, who taught at least 60 to 70 children in her class. Talk about the Iron Lady – she was harder than iron. She was the person that used the cane and who had the respect of the children and of the parents because of her very strict control over everyone".²

For a while Clem and Peg attended Netheravon Baptist chapel (about one mile south of Fifield), and then in the 1930s they began to attend the Baptist chapel at Enford³ (about one mile north of Fifield). Clem was baptised (by immersion) in 1939 and was appointed deacon at Enford Baptist chapel in 1943.

Peg worked at Enford school for 42 years until her retirement in 1949. On her retirement she wrote: "I cannot resign without placing on record the great joy and inspiration my work has been, and the help, sympathy, and encouragement I have unfailingly received. The loyalty and co-operation of other members of the staff and parents of the children have been most marked and I here record my very deep appreciation."²

Enford Baptist chapel was destroyed by fire in 1959. (The obituary on the next page says the fire was in 1957, but this is evidently an error.) After this, services were held in the home of Peg's brother Frank Dreweatt, and then, from about 1960, at *The Sheiling*. Two members were added to the church during this period, including George Bird, whose infant son Christopher drowned in the local river, the Avon, in 1962.

Clem died very suddenly, on 22 August 1974, aged 80. Peg had previously suffered a stroke and was unable to care for herself. So, after living at *The Sheiling* for 86 years, she spent the final 1½ years of her life at the Bethesda Home in Croydon (Surrey), dying there on 6 March 1976, aged 87. They had no children.

Their graves are at Netheravon, in the cemetery of the chapel that is no longer there, where they first met and where they were married.

The following obituary was published in the *Gospel Standard* magazine in April 1975 (pp.126-7). It was evidently written by Clem's friend Leonard R Broome (pastor of Bethesda Baptist chapel, Southampton, 1940-86).

Also attached are:

- (a) a newspaper report of the fire that destroyed Enford Baptist chapel;
- (b) an example of Clem's art; and
- (c) a photograph of the gravestone at Netheravon.

² <http://history.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/getschool.php?id=1271>

³ **Enford Particular Baptist church** was formed in 1799, and a chapel was built in 1819. The chapel was in private ownership, and the property was purchased by the War Office in 1899. The thatched roof caught fire in 1959 and the chapel was destroyed, never to be rebuilt. (The obituary on the next page says the fire was in 1957, but this appears to be an error.)

<http://history.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/getchurch.php?id=1233>
<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=115488>

Clement Jacob Drury, deacon at Enford chapel, died on August 22nd, 1974, very suddenly and within two weeks of his 81st birthday.

He was born at Ticehurst, Sussex, in 1893, of God-fearing parents, who moved to Dover when he was very young. In course of time, the Lord met with him whilst still in his teens, under the ministry of Mr. Hubbard. In those days he would often walk from Dover to Folkestone after he had finished his day's work in search of the truth. Later he worked in Southampton and in London.

He joined the army in 1914, during which time he saw active service in France, and in 1916 was posted to Larkhill on Salisbury Plain when, whilst attending Netheravon chapel, he met his wife. This was the means of him eventually coming to Enford chapel, where the aged deacon sought his help in the services. He was baptized by Mr. Caleb Sawyer, pastor at Mayfield, in January 1939, and appointed deacon in 1943. A good many of our friends who were engaged in the 1939-45 War, and who were posted to the plain, will remember the warmth of the welcome they had at Enford.

In 1957 the chapel was burnt down through the electric wires, which fed the chapel, fusing immediately under the eaves, and catching the thatch alight. This was a grievous and solemn blow, and as the land and the chapel were both War Department property, the chapel was never rebuilt. Worship was, however, continued for two or three years in a house at Enford and, owing to death, later transferred to Mr. Drury's home in the hamlet of Fifield. Here it was that for some twelve years he conducted mostly reading services with occasional preaching, until another was constrained to join the church and thus afford him encouragement and help. It is upon these shoulders that the main burden now falls, the services being held at Upavon chapel.

After Mr. Drury's death it was found that, not being a good sleeper, he had often risen early and written down what he calls his "inmost thoughts." These cover a long period, and show how deeply concerned he was for himself and those who met with him; also his heavy trial when his wife had suffered a severe stroke.

The following is one extract:

Sunday, 16th July, 1972. "O Lord, many days have passed since I last recorded my inmost feelings. O Lord, Thou knowest my soul is cast down within me, and yet with the psalmist, I have hope; that is why I plead for help this day. O magnify Thy Name among us. Grant, I beseech Thee, the lifting up of Thy countenance and bless us in our gathering together in Thy Name. Satan thrusts at me with the intent to bring me down—that Thou art not with us, that it is of no use to carry on. O heavenly Father, I plead in the Name of Jesus, according to the promise given, for a token for good. O help us this day, if Thy sovereign will, and manifest Thyself in peace. Bless my dear one, for Thou art able."

Mr. Drury laboured under more than one physical disability and had undergone several operations. His end came suddenly whilst he had gone into his garden to cut some grass. When called for dinner, he made no response, and was found in a semi-conscious condition. Being removed to hospital he died there the same evening.

In company with our fellow-labourer, Mr. J. S. Green, we laid his mortal remains to rest in the burying ground of Netheravon chapel in complete assurance of a blessed resurrection. The large gathering of friends from far and near gave proof of the esteem in which Mr. Drury was held.

L.R.B.

A newspaper report of the fire that destroyed Enford Baptist chapel in 1959.

Smouldering
remains of the
old Baptist
Chapel. 1959.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 1959

THE CAMERA'S RECORD



Smoke rises from the smouldering remains of the Baptist Chapel at Enford after an outbreak of fire on Wednesday evening.—G. & H.

CHAPEL

Enford Baptists' Loss — 18-3-59

The Strict Baptist Chapel at Enford, close to the village school, was destroyed by fire last Wednesday night.

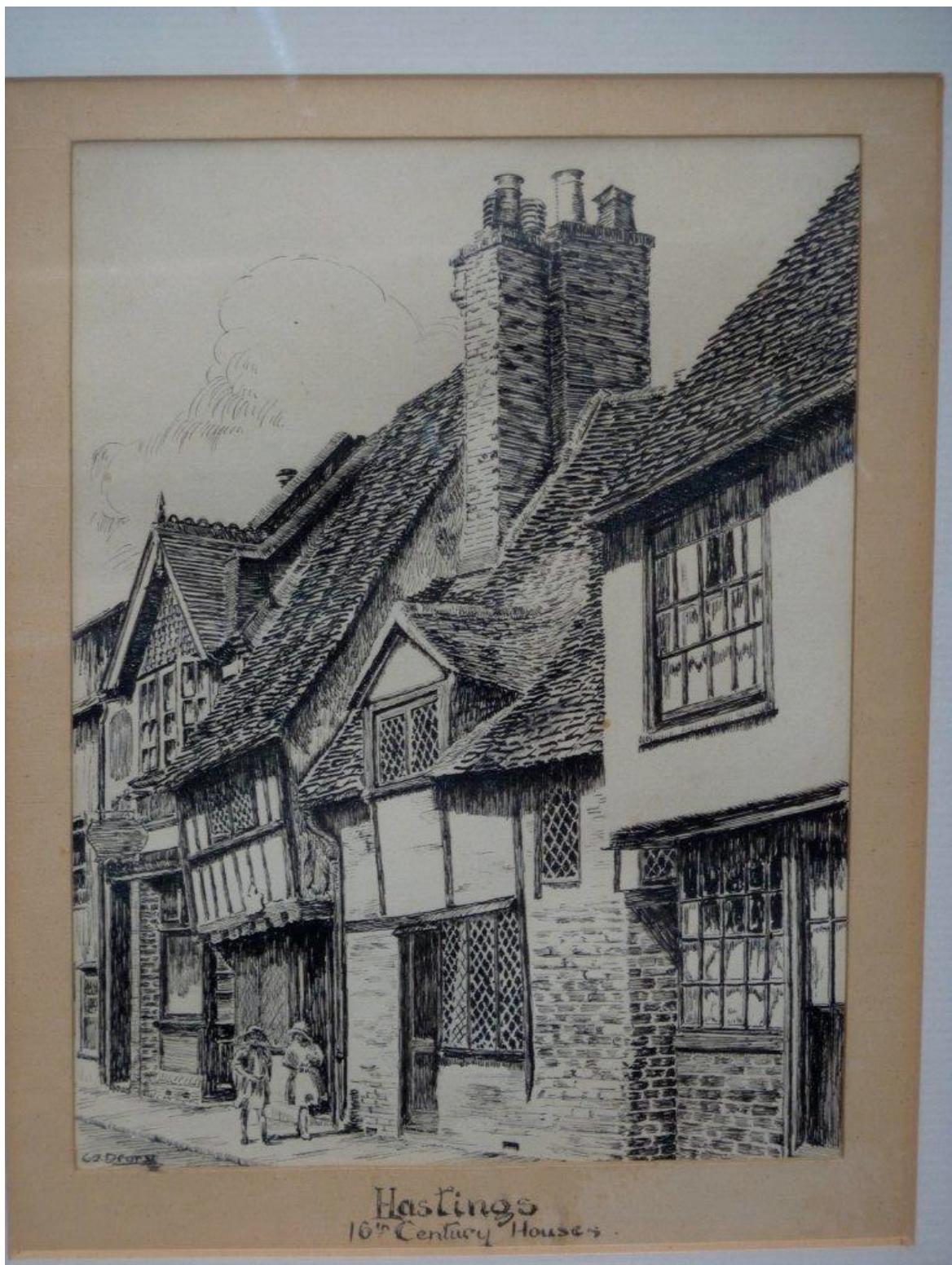
About 10.15 Mr. W. Holmes, who lives at the garage nearby, saw that the building was on fire and he told the deacon, Mr. C. J. Drury, who lives at Flield, Amesbury. Firemen were re-enforced by units from Ludgershall and Salisbury and were directed by Divisional Officer Hollingsworth of Salisbury.

Water was obtained from the River Avon and was pumped across the main Upavon-Salisbury road.

Immediately the alarm was raised the villagers removed the furniture. The building is surrounded by thatched cottages.

The chapel had been in use about 150 years. There had been a service on the previous evening.

Clem's many interests, apart from his greatest interest (the Christian faith), included photography and art. Here is his drawing of 124-126 All Saints Street, Hastings.





David Mitchell
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Clem was my grandfather's brother. So Clem and Peg were my great uncle and great aunt.

This document has been compiled mainly from memories of surviving relatives, Peg's own brief notes, censuses, war service records, and official records of births, marriages and deaths, together with the results of some internet searches. Unfortunately I have not been able to obtain any usable photographs of Clem and Peg apart from that of Clem in army uniform on page 1.