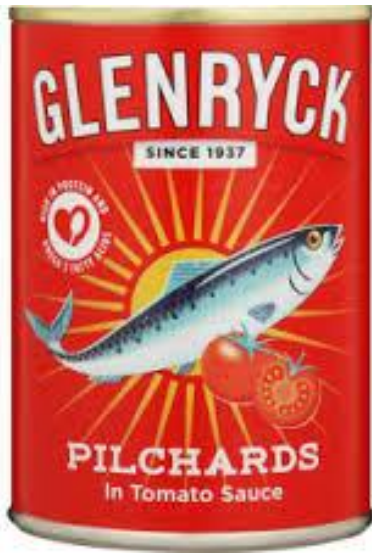


THE GLENRYCK PILCHARDS

A fishy tale.



In the late 1960s through to the 80s, Harvest Festival was followed by Harvest Supper in the Village Hall on the following Monday evening. The Village Hall would be full for this with 75 people attending in 1979. The supper, often roast pork and baked potatoes, was followed by entertainment which always included music and singing. The Ashdon Waits presented a 'very amusing and varied programme' in 1977 which was enjoyed by all and there were often plays or poetry recitals. The evening would also feature an auction of the donated harvest produce to raise money for the Church. The

auctioneer would be, in the early years, John Double who was our local village Bobby for Ashdon and Hadstock and later Brian Marshall.

In one year, there was a tin of Glenryck Pilchards left at the end and a group of 'likely lads'* decided as a joke that it should be subject to special attention, bidding against each other to up the stakes. The Pilchards turned up again the following year and the next, and the next right up until 1987 by which time the tin (and almost certainly the pilchards inside) was well past its sell by date. Bidding had become more competitive and, like the pilchards, the joke was past its sell by date and the pilchards were retired. There is no record of what happened to them.

The Pilchard auction had though obtained some notoriety. Someone told the owner of the Glenryck brand of this village eccentricity and they took an interest in it, donating a silver cup in 1972 and using it for publicity. Each year the successful bidders name and the amount paid was engraved on the reverse of the cup. John Crawley paid £1.50 in 1972 and the

THE HADSTOCK
HARVEST FESTIVAL 1972
Cup Awarded to the
8oz "GLENRYCK" PILCHARD
OWNER

highest bid was £50 in 1980 by Brian and Jenny O'Donnell who were landlords of the Kings Head. In 1974 the 'likely lads' duped Ashley Edgar into bidding the sum of £4.75 but still the tin, and now the cup as well, came back the following year.



The Press were also alerted to the Pilchard auction and the leading article in the Cambridge Evening News of 16th October 1976, "a New Bible Story at Hadstock", was very funny and related the auctioning of the tin to the story of the loaves and fishes.

"And one spake and said ' Brothers, fear not. We have been blessed with the fruits of the sea, some pilchards in a tin, which have been given as a gift to the temple.
And it was even as the elder spake, that the faithful gave gold for the blessed pilchards and there was gold enough to warm the temple with a new heating system and cast out the dry rot."

There was also a short feature on Anglia TV the following year.

* John Crawley, Glyn Abrey, Ray Cooper, Brian Marshall and Tony Cropper.

From the Hadstock Magazine archives and with thanks to Crocky and Tony Cropper.

The reverse of the cup is engraved with the owners:

1972 – Mr J. CRAWLEY	£1.50
1973 – Mr G. ABREY	£3.00
1974 – Mr J. A. EDGAR	£4.75
1975 – Mr A. CROPPER	£6.35
1976 – Mr G. TATTERSALL	£11.00
1977 – MRS L. DAWSON	£15.50
1978 – ANONYMOUS	£8.00
1979 - ANONYMOUS	£20.00
1980 – BRIAN & JENNY O'DONNELL	£50.00
1981 – Mr R. COOPER	£6.00
1982 – Mr K.W. PHILLPOT	£13.50
1983 – CHARLIE SAVILLE	£14.00
1984 – ALAN & CHRIS NOAKES	£20.00
1985 – Mr A. DEVLIN	£21.00
1986 – BILL RICHARDS	£20.00
1987 – JAMES BACON	£8.00