

## Flies and Birds.

From as far back as I can remember into my youth, all the houses that we visited would have hanging from a ceiling a fly catcher of some sort. When we lived in the old house opposite the village Hall in Bugbrooke, mother would have one or two hanging in every room in the house, also in the house we were later to move into up Camp Hill Bugbrooke.

The type of flycatcher that I am referring about, was cylindrical in shape of about one inch in diameter and two inches in length, with a tab that would allow it to be fixed to the ceiling with and another tab that allowed one to pull and extract a twelve inch length of curly sticky tape out from this small cylinder, on what would catch the flies if and when they were to settle on it, in the summer months, they would be full up with flies within one or two days, from the golden sweet and sticky trap when it was first pulled out, would turn into a black mass of dead and dying flies, and would have to be replaced with a fresh one.

Also during this period in time a fly killer called Flit was advertised, it came in small tins and was sprayed into the air with a Flit Gun, this was a devise with a pump and chamber that contained the flit, so when pumping it would spray out this fly killing substance that as since been banned (DDT) as it was known.

Towards the back end of the summer months every year, all the electric and telegraph wires would be full of hundreds of house martins and swallows sitting in a row on them, when asking as a child about them I was told that they were sitting in school having lessons, like I would have to do when the time for me to start came along. Also there were many of these birds nesting under the eaves of the houses around Bugbrooke, or in the many barns that were in and around the local farms, and the sky would be full of Swallows House Martins and Swifts gliding and doing acrobatic moves while catching flies.

But as I grew up and started to venture onto the local farms and in the farmyards, that were full of livestock of different sorts, and with these animals came the by-product of manure heaps, it was a period in time when tractors were just starting to replace all the lovely horses that pulled or moved the farm equipment of the day, such a carts and wagons, and by this time the tractor was to be used to do all of the ploughing and harrowing in the fields as well as cutting and hay and the wheat at harvest and haymaking times.

The horses that were still around would always be swishing their tails about to keep the flies away, or nodding and shaking their heads about and flicking their manes from one side to the other, or they would flinch the skin on their legs or body to get rid of the flies that were bothering them.

Most of the farmers in Bugbrooke when I was a young boy, had a heard of milking cows of about a dozen or more, and the milk marketing board would send a lorry around every day to collect the milk from all of these farms,

At this moment in time, Feb 2005, and now there's not a single farm in Bugbrooke producing milk.

One thing that I noticed when the Country had an out break of Foot and Mouth disease, in the mid 1990s, the bird population plummeted due to the lack of flies being about shortly after, as flies rely on animals being about to flourish with all of the excrement etc, so with no flies it means less food for the birds, the balance of nature is so finely balanced, as for quite a long period all the fields were empty of livestock, Cattle Sheep etc.

Our environment is so finely balanced with mother nature, the mass media seem to never notice as to what is going on around them.

Stanley Joseph Clark.