

Don Walker's Memories of Deddington

Old Parish ditty

The Editorial in the Deddington News of June 2018 quoted the old ditty about Deddington as recorded in *A History of the County of Oxford*, Vol. 11, 1983 - part of the *Victoria County History* (VCS) series. It goes: *Aynho on the hill, Clifton in the clay, dirty drunken deddington, Hempton high way* and is the one recognized by people today. However, Don Walker says the original version he and school friends recited in the 1930s went: *Hempton on the hill, Clifton in the Clay, poor old drunken Deddington, always in the way*. So - which version is correct? Research shows that the VCS was published in 1983 using material from HM Colvin's *A History of Deddington, Oxfordshire* which was itself published in 1963 some 25 years after Don was at school; perhaps it was this eminent historian who changed the sense of the ditty. If anyone has any other information to support either version it would be good to know.

In recounting this, Don pointed out that in his youth, in local dialect, the 'o' in 'ton' was silent as in Deddint'n (no 'g' either), Hempt'n and Clift'n and Aynhoe was pronounced Ayna with a long 'a'.

Parish WWII air raid shelter

This was in what is now the car park to the Health Centre. Don says it was for 'the Deddington worthies whoever they were meant to be!'

The Undertakers

The Stile House on New Street had a notice positioned as an archway over the gates saying 'Beesley Undertakers'. The same family also had an undertaking business in North Aston.