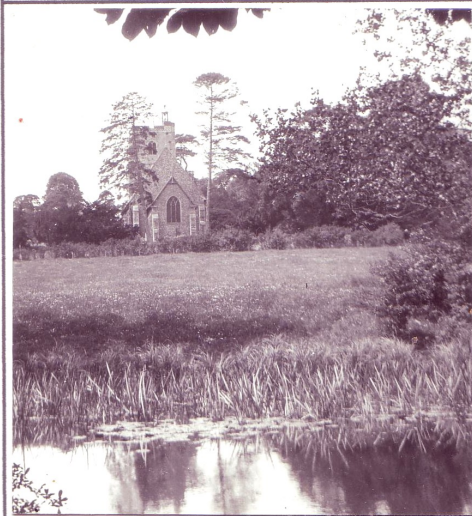


# SNAPSHOTS

An English Village Childhood: 1929 to 1945

Robert Hawksley



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by

Robert Hawksley



1. *The Cock and Blackbirds, Bulmer, 1929. It closed for the last time in 1997.*

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**Front cover:**

*Top left: 50. Family outing.*

*Top right: 47. Back garden of Cherwell.*

*Centre left: 84. St Mary's, Belchamp Walter.*

*Bottom left: 72. St. Andrew's, Bulmer.*

*Bottom right: 46. My sister Janet at Deal Nursery.*

# SNAPSHOTS

An English Village Childhood 1929 to 1945

by

Robert Hawksley

with a Foreword by

ADRIAN CORDER-BIRCH, F. INST.L EX. M.I.C.M

Patron, The Halstead and District Local History Society

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2. *St Andrew's, Bulmer, taken from The Avenue. 1929.*

For my father, who took the pictures.

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## Preface to the 1998 Edition

Just over fifty miles north east of London is the Essex village of Bulmer. I grew up in Bulmer and, even though I've been in Australia 40 years, I've now written a book about it and all because of a remarkable coincidence.

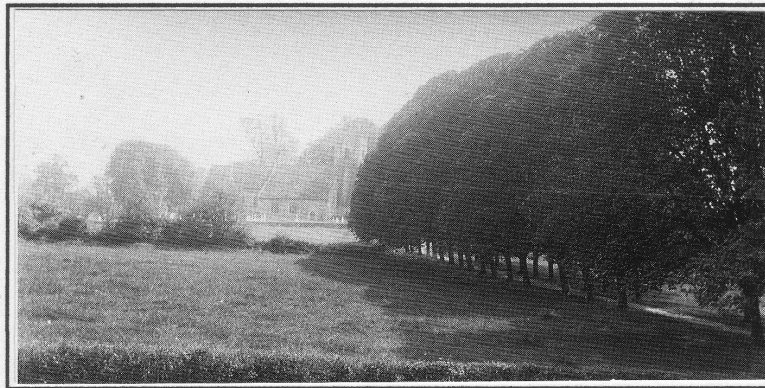
After my parents died some of my father's things were shipped out to me and with them came a totally unexpected treasure trove: a shoe box with over a thousand negatives, all the photographs that my father had ever taken. Some went back his childhood in the 1890s and at least a quarter of them covered my own childhood in Bulmer. These pictures now form the backbone of this book, my part being a description of life as I saw it as a village child.

I wrote this book to be enjoyed. It's not a social history, it's a personal retrospective. Moreover, it's the sort of book that you can pick up and put down at any time. Best of all, perhaps, it's an ideal Christmas or birthday present since it doesn't matter if you've never heard of Bulmer or Essex.

Finally, a word about the map of Bulmer in the middle. It's not as Bulmer exists today or even yesterday but simply as I remember it. That's why it has places marked on it that won't be found on any other map.

## Preface to the 1999 Revision

In this revision the most visible change is using the hitherto blank sheets of Pages 90 and 91 to display a facsimile of one of the invasion notices that appeared everywhere in the summer of 1940. I collected this notice myself and kept it in my archives. In addition, I have taken the opportunity to make innumerable corrections the great majority of which were brought to my attention by the many readers who were good enough to write or telephone me. To them I remain most grateful for it is their interest and vigilance that has led to the success of this book.



3. *The Avenue, Bulmer, from Cherwell, taken in the early 1930s. The new copper telephone wires can be seen going across the middle of the picture.*



## Acknowledgements

First and foremost I must acknowledge my father's skill as a snapshot photographer. It was a skill that I'm certain he was not aware of and undoubtedly he would have been astounded (and delighted) to find that his photographs now constitute the backbone of a book. In fact all but two of the photographs are his, the exceptions being Gosfield School (Cut Hedge House) on Page 67, and the Bulmer Home Guard, on Page 75, which were very kindly provided by Adrian Corder-Birch, Patron of The Halstead and District Local History Society, and of whom more anon.

As to the text, I wish to thank my brother, Mark, of Cambridge, and my sister Janet, of Norwich, for their comments upon my initial notes, Angus and Julia Handoll, of London, who obtained the Ordnance Survey maps for me; and Jean Kropper, of Sydney, Australia, for her advice regarding layout as well as drawing the map of Bulmer.

I cannot forget Lucy Twomey, of Palm Beach, NSW, who encouraged me to write *Snapshots* in the first place, nor Dolly Deeks (née Moulton), of Cavendish, my childhood playmate in Bulmer, who kindly provided me with the aerial photograph of Bulmer and from which I derived the map.

I owe a special debt to John Penny and near neighbour of Bayview, NSW, for not only did he provide other maps but, while visiting his mother in Clare, Suffolk, he showed a draft of *Snapshots* to a family friend, Keith Mison. Keith then showed it to Adrian Corder-Birch and the upshot of that was that Adrian invited me to submit the book for publication. Thus my sincere thanks are due to both Adrian and Keith for their part in this matter.

I am also indebted to Ashley Cooper, John Dixey, Evelyn Reeves and Peter Rowe of the Bulmer Historical Society who all generously gave of their time to check the accuracy of my text, and to Chris and Norah Griffith of Dee Why, NSW, who assisted me in many ways. Finally, to my family, who made the whole thing possible by letting me disappear for ages into my darkroom or seated before my PC. To all I am very grateful. But as I conclude these words I am conscious of many many other people of Bulmer and elsewhere who have not been drawn into this narrative but who, in one way or another, shaped my life. Thus, of the errors remaining, both of omission and commission, I alone am responsible.

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4. In the early 1930s a common means of transport was a horse and trap. Here my mother is in the trap and to the far left can be seen the coach house (fully described in Chapter 4). To the right are Brickwall Farm Cottages.

# Foreword

by

ADRIAN CORDER-BIRCH, F. INST.L EX. M.I.C.M

Patron, The Halstead and District Local History Society

*NOTE: This Foreword appeared in the 1998 edition.*

SNAPSHOTS is an excellent account of the life of the Hawksley family in the north Essex village of Bulmer during the somewhat turbulent decades of the 1930s and 1940s when the country suffered from a severe depression, the abdication crisis and the Second World War. Against this background village life in Bulmer continued in much the same way as in earlier years. The author has recorded his memories of various aspects of agriculture including harvesting and threshing and the families who carried out this vital work. The other village occupations such as the blacksmith, brickmakers, garage proprietor, postman, publican, shopkeepers and thatchers are also detailed. The effect on the village caused by the Second World War is recalled with references to aeroplanes that crashed locally and the valuable work of the Air Raid Precaution, Home Guard and the Royal Observer Corps.

The book is really the work of two men: Robert Hawksley, the author, who has meticulously written about his family and village life in Bulmer and his late father Charles Hawksley, who took the majority of the photographs which adorn the text. These illustrations are a permanent record of Bulmer as it was between fifty and seventy years ago. The text by Robert Hawksley is perhaps even more remarkable when it is realised that it is mainly written from his memory, over fifty years later. To both of them we are grateful as otherwise these splendid photographs and reminiscences of our social history may have been lost forever.

I was privileged to be asked to write this Foreword as I have a particular interest in Bulmer as some distant relations were living and working in the village earlier this century when James Newman Corder was landlord of the Cock and Blackbirds Public House and Albert Corder was the wheelwright. Although Bulmer no longer has a wheelwright the Public House which is featured in this book is still standing as are the majority of the houses and cottages recalled by the author. It is fortunate that the village has changed very little and remains unspoilt. Some of the same families who are referred to in the book still live in Bulmer or in nearby villages. The Coe, Cornell, Dixey, Felton, Hyde-Parker, Humm and Rowe families are amongst those who have taken a prominent part in the life of Bulmer this century. This book is a tribute to all of them and particularly the Hawksley family and the part they played in the history of Bulmer, I recommend this book to all its readers.

*Adrian Corder-Birch  
Little Yeldham, July, 1998*



5. *The Hawksley family, 1936. Back row, left to right: Mark, my mother, my father and Geoffrey: Front row: Adrian, myself and Janet.*



6. *View of St. Andrew's Bulmer, from the field opposite Grigg's farm. 1930. During the 1950s Sam Andrew, who rented Grigg's, kept a really beautiful Jersey cow. He called her Miss Mars.*

# 1

## INTRODUCTION

If at this moment you are browsing by a bookstall leafing through these pages and wondering what it's all about then, very simply, it's a sort of snapshot album. All the photographs bar two are those taken by my father during my childhood and like any snapshot album they are in no particular order. What I've done is to complement them with vignettes which provide a child's-eye view of life as I saw it during the same period.

My story begins in 1929, when I was nine months old, and my family moved about 90 km north-east of London to the Essex village of Bulmer, and 4.5 km from the market town of Sudbury, Suffolk. I was the youngest of four brothers and a sister, the two eldest being Mark and Geoffrey, then my sister Janet and lastly Adrian and myself. As a family we were essentially middle class and our coming to Bulmer was as a result of my mother's foresight.

With five children to bring up and living in rented accommodation in London (quite the norm in those days) she was uneasy about the economic times ahead. Having firm views on all sorts of things she formed a determination to bring up her family in a home *without a mortgage*. About that she was adamant. Using her entire fortune of £500 (today's equivalent would be at least two years' average annual salary if not more) she purchased Cherwell, a house in Bulmer Street between the then pub The Cock and Blackbirds (closed down 1997) and Brickwall Farm Cottages which formed part of Brickwall Farm. She put the house in her own name and so secured a roof over her own and her children's heads. Since Sudbury was comparatively near we were within easy reach of the shops and railway and my mother was well satisfied with her purchase.

Her foresight was well rewarded and to begin with everything went well. My father was a scientific instrument maker and proprietor of Hawksley and Sons with premises at 83 Wigmore Street, London W1. Its business was in surgical and scientific instruments, especially blood pressure instruments, his father, Thomas Paton Hawksley (1837-1908), having founded the firm in 1869. To supplement his London premises, my father built himself a small workshop at Cherwell and once or twice a week he would go up to London to keep an eye on things. He would walk to Sudbury station in the morning, catch the ten o'clock train, return to Sudbury that evening and walk back to Bulmer. In those days people did a great deal of walking so this form of commuting was not considered unusual. I venture to suggest that in today's four-wheel world such exertions would be approaching the unthinkable.

Once a blizzard was raging when he arrived at Sudbury. Naturally anxious to get home but being unable to pass a message to Bulmer (the telephone hadn't reached there then) he popped into The Anchor, a pub at the

There he fortified himself with a couple of stiff whiskies and went out into the night. In the soft silence all about and only his muted footfalls for company, he tramped down Friars Street and on through Ballingdon, past a ghostly Batt Hall and over Kitchen Hill until he happily returned into the bosom of his family.

Whatever the weather, for a year or two all went well. But with the gathering storm of the economic depression my father began to find himself in financial difficulties. His firm was the largest export distributor of W. A. Baum Co. Inc. of the United States which also made and distributed blood pressure instruments. In order to protect their access to the British market W. A. Baum Co. Inc. advanced my father funds needed to keep Hawksley and Sons afloat. In the event these transfusions were of no avail and, by 1934, along with millions of others, my father found himself out of a job.

Six lean months of unemployment followed until Watson Baker Ltd, a well-known company of scientific instrument makers, invited him to be their Eastern England representative with the brief to advise, assist and repair, all users of their instruments. For this new job he bought and learnt to drive a second-hand Morris 10 and from then on until he retired in the 1950s, he visited numerous laboratories and research facilities, from Hull in the north to Barnet in the south. Meanwhile my mother ran the house and, as was the custom in those days, friends and relatives contributed to the cost of our education. This meant being sent to boarding school only coming home to Bulmer during the holidays.

But war was looming. In 1938 Geoffrey joined the RAF as aircrew. Upon the outbreak of war in September, 1939, Mark, found himself automatically in the Army because he happened to be in camp at the time as a Territorial in Thetford, Norfolk. A few weeks later and for what proved to be the very last time, the family met for a couple of hours on the heath outside Thetford. We were not to meet again under one roof for another 20 years but minus Geoffrey. He was killed in action in Yugoslavia in November 1940.

Thus the scene is set and in the vignettes that follow I tell of life as I saw it during that period, from the first happy, carefree, pre-war days through the gloom of war and the final emergence of peace.



*7. The coach house with the trap safely stowed and Bess stabled.*

## COMINGS AND GOINGS

"Tom Knox will get you!" We weren't very sure who Tom Knox was but we were absolutely certain that he would get us if we didn't get into bed. We knew where he lived. It was in an old falling-down house at the beginning of the footpath to Upper Houses, behind the cottages near the church. We would go past Tom Knox's house when walking to Upper Houses but that meant passing through the churchyard. We didn't linger in the churchyard because some of the graves were falling to pieces and we *knew* that the people inside were peeping out at us. So we kept a brisk pace.

What the story behind Tom Knox's house was I'll never know. It had old battered doors facing the west and we could peek through the cracks and see the dusty sunbeams lighting up pieces of derelict farm machinery. It was probably a big shed or small barn but, to our creative imaginations, the wild tilt of its roof gave it a sinister appearance.

Living in the country as we did we were as close to the soil as it was possible to get. We didn't have mains electricity, gas or water and so, at night, the house was lit more by shadows than anything else. Downstairs we used paraffin-oil lamps and upstairs we had candles. My eldest brother, Mark, had a long triangular boxroom and he made do with one candle. But Geoffrey, my second brother, would get as many candles as he could so that his room was always a blaze of light. Janet, my sister (we called her Plocky but I don't know why), my brother, Adrian, and I all slept in the same room and Janet would read to us by a solitary candle.

Bulmer was my entire world except for visits to another planet called Sudbury. In those days a child could wander about without the least concern on anybody's part, least of all its parents. I would often visit Mr and Mrs Dodds who lived in a bungalow opposite Brickwall Farm. Whenever I went there Mrs Dodds always had a piece of cake for me. Mr Dodds was a carpenter and he had a wonderful white beard. He had a long greenhouse in his back garden in which he grew tomatoes. And there was Bill Humm, a sort of carrier, who would take chickens and rabbits for folk to Sudbury on Market Day (Thursdays). He had a donkey and a cart and I only ever seemed to see him either on his cart or standing beside it. He lived with his son Charlie in a cottage next to the chapel.

A common sight was the Vicar, the Rev. Pannell, to whom all the village boys raised (or should have raised!) their caps as he went by on his daily walks. Miss Softley, the village school mistress, was a familiar sight. She always wore blue and walked very rapidly. If I had a penny I would go to Mr Edgar Tibbett's shop near the church (up a footpath from Church Road). A penny bought some bulls' eyes or pear drops and the shop had lovely big jars of sweets and a smell of soap powder. Sometimes there was even a clockwork toy and one I

remember especially was a motor boat. With it was a picture of a beaming driver with equally beaming passengers surging through brilliant blue sea with a great wash of foam. I had never seen the sea and to my eyes everything looked absolutely marvellous. I coveted that motor boat but whether I ever got it I don't remember. When Mr Tibbetts moved away and the shop closed, Mr and Mrs Basil Moulton opened another one opposite Brickwall Farm (this must have been around 1938) but things were never ever quite the same.

There was another little shop we would often visit when in the pony and trap and that was Emma Felton's in Ballingdon on the right-hand side going towards Bulmer and near The King's Head pub. She was a kindly lady and there were steps down into her shop and a bell on a spiral spring that clanged incessantly the moment one opened the door. Emma Felton's shop sold flour, bacon, eggs, and groceries of all sorts. When the River Stour flooded (as it often did) the water would come up as far as The King's Head and right down to the bridge so poor Emma Felton's shop would be awash.

Looking back on life is like browsing through a series of snapshots and these pages are just that. Yet somehow, in the 1990s, snapshots don't engender the same excitement as those of the 1930s. Then they were much more exciting. Collected with the utmost care, they were put lovingly into albums, neatly annotated, sometimes even painstakingly tinted with special paints and looked over with admiration by relatives and visitors. A sign of marked favour was being "shown the photograph albums".

Films were taken to the chemist who developed and printed them *out of* trading hours. That was the on-going chore for every chemist in the land and they did marvels in making the best of bad shots. All such snaps were contact prints, usually taken on 120 or 620-size black-and-white roll film with eight or twelve pictures a roll. Snaps usually took a week to come back and there was great anticipation to see how and even if they had come out. Each print would have cost about 'threepence' (three pence) or so, the equivalent of two Mars bars.

Mostly we took our films to Mr Brampton in Sudbury, on the left-hand side of Market Hill facing St Peters. He had a rather small shop with an immensely high counter and when I was small I could just reach the top of it with my hand. He always listened most attentively to whatever was said and dispensed excellent advice in a quiet, calm voice. In his window he would often have a camera or two on display and it is difficult to recapture the interest generated at seeing one. Most snapshot cameras were of the box type and the excellence of their view finders was much extolled. "Sharp" and "Bright" were the key words and against the camera would be a display photograph of a radiantly happy maiden of unparalleled beauty. All one had to do was to buy a camera and ever afterwards secure nothing but magnificent prints.

To have a camera at all in the 1930s was very much a middle-class acquisition and roughly on a par with having a good wristwatch. Every Christmas Day, and at any other major family gathering, my father would take our pictures but we never had our photograph taken by a professional photographer. In those days group photographs were very formalised





8. *Bill Humm and his donkey. Bill was a well known Bulmer "identity" and earned his living as a carrier. I remember him as a rather shy man but he always had time for us children and would let us pat and pet his donkey. To all appearances he lived very modestly but it was believed by some that he and his donkey shared the same accommodation...*

with everybody looking mildly gormless and the hair of the young men brylcreamed flat. At home, the photograph albums were always the most looked-at books. We loved them and giggled at seeing how our parents looked "in the olden days" - anything in excess of 10 or even 5 years! - and the curious clothes they wore and their funny styles. "Did you really look like that, Mummy?" accompanied by shrieks of laughter. But most of all we looked for the photos of ourselves.

The photos told the passage of time and time or rather, time-keeping, was a passion of my father. We had seven striking clocks in the house: two that cuckooed, two that donged and three that dinged. Our best was a donging clock which my father had bought for tuppence at a fete held in the grounds of The Cedars opposite The Vicarage, the "big house" of Bulmer Street occupied by a stately lady called Miss Heyworth. My father promptly took the clock down to Ray Hills, in Sudbury, whose premises were at the bottom of the Market Hill facing St Peters. In no time it came back keeping magnificent time and from that day forth was the equivalent of Greenwich Mean Time in the house. My brother, Mark, in Cambridge, now has the clock and I'm assured that he has kept it in pristine working order.

Ray Hills had a heavy solemn clock directly in front of the door at the back of his shop and I think there was a glass sphere full of water on his workbench. If there was then this would have been an heirloom from times past when such spheres were used to concentrate the light of a candle into a spot so as to illuminate the insides of a watch. After breakfast on Sunday mornings my father would wind the clocks and set them right. It was an essential ritual and he would report on how each one had performed during the week. They were all eight-day clocks except one cuckoo clock in the drawing room which had weights beneath it and which could just about do 30 hours before calling it a day. At noon there would be a splendid show of unison: cuckoos, dongs and dings all came in together but by noon the next day there would be signs of unrest and by the end of the week each clock struck in its own time in its own way except the tuppenny one which kept perfect time.

We loved going for walks and probably the best was to a place we always called The Pine Trees but its real name was Deal Nursery. This spot lay beyond Upper Houses and was a delightful fairyland of sandy places to play in, blackberries to feast upon, graceful pines and bushes for hide and seek. The walk to The Pine Trees could go either by Tom Knox's house or straight up Bulmer Street, past Mr Fouracre's house (he pruned our apple trees), Tin Tops, Grigg's Farm and down the lane to Upper Houses. When we had the time we would go all the way down to Mr Minter's brickfields where we would watch the men making bricks and putting them in the kilns to be fired.

Then there was the walk to Bardfield Bridge which spanned Belchamp Brook. It was definitely a summertime walk and it took us along Smeetham Hall Lane with the family walking line abreast. Immediately before the bridge we would turn right into the fields and go along the footpath to a spot where the brook widened. There we could bathe, while away the time chasing minute fishes, build little dams, race small twigs and have a picnic of jam sandwiches.

During the winter we would often walk along Sandy Lane (a dirt road) but rarely went much beyond The Auberies (of which more anon) or the long long hill down towards Sudbury. That hill was absolutely marvellous for cycling down because one could freewheel all the way down past the chalk pits and right into Ballingdon.

But on a winter's afternoon with the light closing in, the still pond almost opposite the Auberies was quite far enough away from home. In the failing winter evening light its water would gleam cold and sheer like the lakes of Scandinavia. The Auberies was where Colonel Burke lived, the Squire, and he owned much of the land around Bulmer and Bulmer Tye. In former times Thomas Gainsborough, the famous painter who was born in Sudbury, painted "Mr and Mrs Andrews" with a realistic background landscape of The Auberies. There are lots of Andrews buried in the churchyard at Bulmer.



9. Sandy Lane from the top of the great hill near The Auberies. 1930.

We never went to The Auberies (closer to the truth would be that we were never invited and why should we be) but up until the mid-1920s there was always a Christmas party there to which all the village children were invited. A huge Christmas tree would be set up and on it a present for every child.<sup>1</sup> But times changed and this custom was discontinued. From then on the children went downmarket and had a party in the village hall for which they had to put on a concert to pay for it! We Hawksley children weren't allowed to go to these bun fights because my mother considered the children "rough". By her austere standards they probably were and, by reason of our background, we must have appeared stuck up. And we probably were.



10. *Bulmer Street in the snow, 1948. The sign on the telegraph pole says "Telephones, Telegrams at The Post Office". In this instance it referred to a shop-cum-post office in a house near The Cedars.*

Belchamp Walter was a lovely walk too and the brook always offered the greatest of excitements. Freshwater mussel fish were there and we would paddle about collecting the shells which later we would stick onto wooden boxes with a fierce glue called *Seccotine* which seemed to get everywhere. Beyond the brook was marsh and in the winter the reeds would be surrounded by large sheets of ice. We were able to get across because the footpath was on a slightly raised spit of land. In those days the brook boasted a tiny waterfall reached if one walked along it towards Gestingthorpe. Sooner or later it did a sharp right-turn and there was the fall. It could also be reached along the footpath that ran above the cottages just down the hill from Belchamp Hall.

Beyond the marsh lay the dark lake. On the map it's marked as a moat but Belchamp Walter's position does not suggest itself as being of strategic importance. At the Hall end there were one or two derelict, half-sunken, elegant boats and so it was easy to imagine young men in straw boaters deftly rowing

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<sup>1</sup>I am indebted to Evelyn Reeves of Gestingthorpe for this information. As a child she attended these parties at the Auberies.

young ladies up and down the lake and gently gliding into the discrete shadows of the weeping willows there to steal a kiss.

By going along the footpaths we always passed the ripening wheat and inevitably we would pick straws to make harvest tokens. We understood that young men made harvest tokens for young ladies as a declaration of their undying love. The basic token consisted of five straws with good heads of wheat woven into a spiral-shaped cage large enough for a small bunch of sweet-smelling herbs. To soften the straws we soaked them in cold water for two or three hours although I later discovered that hot water did the job in minutes. To begin the token, we tied the straws with the heads together and then wove one straw over the other to make an expanding twist. The weave was continued by sliding in additional straws and when the token was three to four inches wide we put in a little pouch or sprig of lavender. Then the weave was reversed so that the twist got smaller and the token was finished off with a ribbon or suchlike.

Now I did this once and sent a token to a maid in Belchamp Walter. She was as wise as she was fair and, behold, she was very fair. Her name was Betty. But to my consternation she wrote to say that she had never seen anything like it before and knew nothing about harvest tokens but it was lovely all the same.

Now what was a chap to do about that? A token, lovingly made, rich in the lore of rural England, despatched with the utmost care, is received more as an object of curiosity than anything else, its significance uncomprehended. As setbacks go I had to admit to myself that it was decisive and so the romance withered on the vine. After all, how could there be mutual happiness twixt A and B when B knew nothing about harvest tokens? 'Twas a void that could not be bridged. I looked up to Albert Rowe, of Grigg's Farm, who made brilliant harvest tokens of complex design. I remember that he made one that was a windmill with great vanes that went round and round in the wind. I saw it in his garden one summer's eve. There was a master craftsman indeed.

In our ramblings ponds were always fascinating and in the meadow opposite Cherwell there was one pond in which there were quantities of newts. These were easily caught with a worm on a bent pin tied to a piece of cotton. The newts would bite on the worm and not let go so we could haul them out of the water and put them into buckets. On this pond too, during the war, Gordon Rowe, who lived next door to me at the Cock and Blackbirds, built a raft with empty five-gallon drums and we launched it on this pond. It had practically no freeboard and an alarming list but despite these drawbacks we sailed across to the opposite bank. Opposite the south side of the church beyond the churchyard wall there were two ponds: one on the right-hand side of the path leading up to the church, the other nearer Church Road. Both were home to all sorts of bird life including moorhens. The one nearest the Bulmer Tye road was magnificent for slides in winter time. After a day or two of deep freeze the ice would be thick enough to bear our weight and we would run down the slope and whizz right across to the other side. Wonderful!

All the ponds produced thousands of frogs and the son of Dr David Griffith, our dentist, would swallow a little frog for sixpence. We would collect the required sum and all stand round him and witness the fate of the luckless

creature disappearing down his throat. Opposite Grigg's Farm was another good pond which always had ducks on it. Next to this was a field from which one got a good view of the church. This field lingers in my memory because immediately after the war a Mr Sam Andrew took over Grigg's farm and in this field he kept a beautiful Jersey cow he called Miss Mars. So on my map I've marked her field but on the ordnance survey map it appears that her pastures are now built over.



11. Barn near Hilltop Farm, beside the lane that led to Deal Nursery. 1930.

Sam was one of the first post-war gentlemen farmers in the district. A cultivated man of literary tastes he was, to my parents' immense relief, a staunch member of the church and so he became a church warden. In the early 1950s he was responsible for running a hugely successful village fete which was held at The Auberies and to which Mr Rab Butler came, then Deputy Prime Minister and our MP. Sam was immensely good-natured but not a good businessman. For three years he contracted with Spencer Coe to harvest and thresh his corn and for the first two years Spencer Coe didn't present a bill. But after the third year's harvest he did with the upshot that Sam had to sell up. He retreated to Winchester to teach agriculture at the college there. Only a few years later, while having a pint before lunch, Sam suddenly fell down dead and he wasn't yet 50. He left a wife (Molly) and three children one of whom (Catherine) was baptised at Bulmer. I know this because I went to her christening.

Since Cherwell backed onto Brickwall Farm, harvest time was a source of great activity: rabbiting, making the stooks, gleaning and helping with the threshing. A tractor pulled a binder which cut and bound the corn into sheaves and ejected them as it went along. Behind the binder came lots of people who stacked the sheaves into stooks. Pictures of the time show splendid rows of stooks stretching away to the distance like soldiers on parade. The sheaves were

forked up onto a wagon and when it was full we children would sometimes be allowed to ride home on top of the load - a great treat.

We always kept our sticks handy in case a rabbit bolted. Usually they didn't make a run for the hedgerow until the area of standing wheat got too small. Then the terrified creatures had nowhere to go and so they made a bolt for the safety of the hedgerows. Some of the men had their shotguns and so harvest time was always a time for rabbit stew but it was a lucky boy who ever got within a bull's roar of a rabbit with his stick.

During lunchtime the men would sit in the shade and drink cold tea with milk and sugar added, which was reckoned to be very refreshing. Their womenfolk would bring down their lunches and drinks but every man kept a bottle of tea handy in his haversack to help him during the heat of the day. Harvesting continued from dawn to dusk because it was so important to get it in before the rain came down. Many a time I would see the last cart load coming in long after the sun had set over Belchamp Walter.

After a field was cut and the stooks made, the carts would be loaded and would go to where the threshing was being done. This was just opposite Cherwell and provided a constant excitement. The threshing machine was often driven by the coal-fired traction engine but sometimes Mr Coe would use a tractor instead. One end of a long driving belt was put around the flywheel of the traction engine and the other end went around the drive wheel on the side of the threshing machine. Two men were stationed on the top of the machine to feed the sheaves which were forked up to them. The men had short curved knives and deftly cut the string around the sheaf before ushering it onto a moving platform within the thresher. On the ground there were two main outputs: on the left-hand side there were two for chaff and, at the end nearest the traction engine, four for grain. We small boys were allowed to attend to the chaff bags, the stronger boys and men attending to the grain sacks. These sacks were put on another cart and taken to the barn at Brickwall Farm and stored on the first storey. From there it went to Clover's Mill in Sudbury, hard by the River Stour at Stour Street.



12. Bulmer Street on a winter's afternoon. Late 1940.



13. Threshing behind Cherwell on Brickwall Farm, early 1930s. The men on the right are on top of a fully laden cart of sheaves and are forking them onto the threshing machine (centre). On the machine two other men feed the sheaves into the interior conveyor belt. Lower centre two more men are attending to the chaff, the worst job of all because it always got into one's eyes.

To their left is the elevator which is taking the straw and dropping it on a new stack (foreground). A steam traction engine drove the machine and the lower portion of the drive belt can be seen just to the right of the men attending the chaff.

As many as ten men were required for threshing and they all wore caps except Mr Coe who always wore a trilby but whether this was a badge of office I don't know. Threshing was arduous, backbreaking work and always a race against time in case it rained. It would go on from dawn until dusk but children were allowed to help as well as they were able.



14 The Nonconformist chapel, cottage and barn of Brickwall Farm, 1930. In front of the barn is the hand-operated petrol pump from which Mr Spencer Coe sold petrol to the occasional passing motorist. Between the cottage and the barn is the entrance to the Public Footpath to Belchamp Walter.



15. Mr Dodds, the carpenter, with Mrs Dodds to the right, taken on Silver Jubilee Sports Day, 1935.



16. Thatching the roof of the cottage next to Brickwall Farm, early 1930s.



17. Silver Jubilee Sports Day, 20th April, 1935, held in Church Meadow, Bulmer. Everywhere were the colours of red, white and blue.



18. Bert and Olga Moulton, Silver Jubilee Sports, Day, 20th April, 1935. They lived next door to Cherwell in Brickwall Farm Cottages. Mrs Moulton often helped out at Cherwell.



## ST ANDREW'S, BULMER

St Andrew's, Bulmer, dominated the view from the front of Cherwell and in many ways dominated our lives as well. Church attendance for the family was a mandatory requirement. So off to church we would go, every Sunday, rain, hail or fine in a spirit of resigned optimism, or, as my brother, Mark, would say, "presenting a solid front". Of the people at the church, the sexton always engaged our curiosity. He had a red face and yellow teeth with a few stumps awry which gave him a fearsome look especially when he smiled. This was before national health or orthodontics. It was the sexton who tolled the bell for funerals and he followed the age-old custom of tolling the age of the person who had died. More often than not funerals were in the afternoon because it allowed the men to get away from the fields. They would be done before it was time to get the cows home for milking at Brickwall Farm. The cows went home anyhow in the afternoon, but somebody had to open the gate.

Because the parish was always shared with the neighbouring village of Belchamp Walter, there were two services on one Sunday and one the next. The two-service Sundays had Holy Communion at 8.00 a.m. and Evensong at 6.00 p.m. but the one-service one was Matins at 11.00 a.m. followed by Holy Communion. That was the peacetime routine. During the war, blackout restrictions in the winter brought Evensong forward to 3.00 p.m. which was a deadly time to have any service.

The Rev. Arthur Pidgeon Pannell came to Bulmer in 1898 and was 59 years old when we arrived in Bulmer in 1929. A bachelor and somewhat shy, he had a large, round, pink face and he always spoke very rapidly especially the hymn numbers. I never recall him coming to tea at the house but he probably did. He wasn't the sort of parson to whom young children could warm. Of course, he lived in an age when the influence of the local parson was declining along with the squirearchy and by 1939 the only times when the church was really full were Christmas, Easter and Harvest Festival. Mr Pannell always sat in the choir stalls nearest the pulpit on the right-hand side of the aisle with the lectern alongside. Harry Winch, later landlord of The Fox at Bulmer Tye, was his chauffeur.

Soon after we came to Bulmer, my father became a church warden and joined company with a Mr Sidney Clover who, together with his two sisters, lived in Clover's Mill, between Batt Hall and Ballingdon. The Hyde Parkers always sat in the second pew in front of the organ and we sat five pews back from them with the Clovers right behind us. The Clovers were most energetic and would walk or bicycle from their home near Batt Hall all the way up Sandy Lane. The job of the church wardens was to take and count the collections, fill in the church register (that meant counting the people who went to Holy Communion), attend church

council meetings and generally occupy themselves with the administration of the church. My father and Mr Clover were joined later by a Mr Harry Weavers as a third warden.

In those days the church was heated by an enormous coke stove which was on the right-hand side by the door as one entered the church. The coke was kept in the crypt which was got to through a door on the south side and down a ladder. On very cold days the sexton would get the stove going until its sides positively glowed a dull red. The back of the pew immediately in front of the stove was covered with asbestos sheeting and just as well too because otherwise it would have been burnt to a cinder. As for heating the church, the stove did its best and at least took the bite out of the air. After the service we would stand around the stove heating up our gloves and the insides of our coats before braving the freezing air outside.



19. *The Vicarage, Bulmer, 1930*

The best bit of going to church was the hymn singing because it gave us children something to do. My father was tone deaf and my mother nearly so, but all of us children had an 'ear'. My brothers Mark and Geoffrey and my sister Janet played the piano as I did later and while my third brother Adrian did not inherit much of a musical gift that did not deter him from joining in. So our hymn singing maintained the "solid front". Evensong was the most endurable because it had the merit of not lasting all that long. The oil lamps and candles by the lectern lent a comfortable glow to the gathering dusk and the one occupation which did engage our attention during prayers was trying to gnaw our initials on the pew in front. It was not particularly successful but I have no doubt our efforts are still visible today.

The organ was a small affair with two keyboards. It was on the left-hand side of the aisle facing the altar just by the chancel arch and the lady who played it always appeared to wear the same clothes: brown shoes, brown stockings, brown skirt, brown blouse, brown coat and brown hat. In those days all grown-up ladies wore their hats in church. During the war I used to do duty as the organ blower. The pump handle was by a pillar which had a little door in it and a staircase which led, in pre-Reformation times, to the rood loft (now gone). By about the third step there's a scratched sketch of a parson in breeches which was

During the period after the Rev Pannell's retirement, there were a number of lay readers who would take a service, one of which was Stanley Kay, the history master at Sudbury Grammar School. Then came a new vicar, the Rev. Hamond who was followed by the Rev. George Adams.

I remember the Rev. Hamond very well and yes, he spelt Hamond with one 'm'. He had a ginger toupee hair, was a scholar of Oriental languages and had spent much of his time in the Middle East as chaplain at Port Said. He and his wife elected to live at the Vicarage in Belchamp Walter and known as The Munt House. The Rev. Hamond did something no other parson I've known has done before or since and that was, after going up into the pulpit to preach, he would then disappear like the captain of a submarine going down the conning tower. After a while he would surface and begin his sermon. What was he doing? When asked he was quite unabashed. "I always pray before I preach" he said, "and one can only pray on one's knees!".

The Rev. Adams came from Birmingham. "He was not a countryman but he was good with cars," so says my brother Mark. His one claim to fame is that he sold Church Meadow without consulting the Church Council but to whom he sold I don't know. After he left Bulmer, to be succeeded by the Rev. Trevor Howard, he joined the army as a chaplain.

St Andrew's had a peel of four bells and before the war they would ring for Matins and Evensong but only one bell would be tolled for Holy Communion at 8.0 a.m. As children we would reproduce the peel of the four bells on the piano, one of the peals going like this (make 4 to be C major):

4-3-2-1-2-1-3-2-4-1

When war broke out, in September 1939, all church bells were silenced and their use reserved for signalling the invasion. In fact we didn't hear them again until November 1942 when Mr Churchill, the Prime Minister, ordered them to be rung as a celebration for the victory at El Alamein by General Montgomery. They were rung for a second time the day the war ended but not on the orders of the Prime Minister but upon the singular initiative of Jacky Cornell. I was at Gosfield School at the time but very recently Jacky Cornell's sister (Mrs Evelyn Reeves of Gestingthorpe) wrote and told me that as soon as Jacky heard that peace had been declared, he went straight up to the church and rang the bells. This was probably on Monday afternoon, May 7th, the following day, Tuesday, being declared VE (Victory in Europe) Day. Jacky Cornell's initials (JC) can still be seen on one of the church pews.

Gordon Rowe, my friend from the Cock and Blackbirds, Arthur Day, from Hilltop Farm, and myself were all confirmed by Bishop Henry Chelmsford at St Andrew's, Bulmer. This was in 1943 and we were "prepared" by the Rev. Hamond. For several evenings during that summer we were penned together in the drawing room of Cherwell and taken through the Catechism. Uphill work it must have been too for while three youths may never have been more in need of the sacraments of Holy Church, truth to say we were not impressed. There was an expectation among our elders that we should believe in God as firmly as we *knew* that Sudbury was just down the road. This we found difficult to accept and

so Arthur, Gordon and I agreed that, for the sake of peace and harmony, our elders would have to be humoured and, like puppets on a string, we went along with everything.

During our preparation classes Arthur Day would sometimes steal a look at me and, with his slow smile, he would roll his large, expressive eyes heavenwards as if to say "What have we got here?" In response Gordon Rowe and I would scratch the back of our newly-washed necks and steal glances into the freedom of the sunlit meadows opposite. And so it came to pass that the good bishop laid his hands upon us and afterwards came to tea at Cherwell.



22. *St Andrew's, Bulmer, and as the Rev. Pannell knew it. The hymn numbers are 299 (Come, let us join our cheerful songs / With Angels round the Throne), 238 (As pants the hart for cooling streams / When heated in the chase), 294 (O Praise our Great and Gracious Lord / And call upon his Name) and 31 (Saviour, again to Thy dear Name we raise / With one accord our parting hymn of praise) - Hymns Ancient and Modern. The staff on the left-hand side indicates my father's pew since he was a church warden. It is likely that this photograph was taken during a church-cleaning morning since, in the foreground, there are three kneeling mats lying in the aisle.*



23. *St Mary's, Belchamp Walter, early 1930s.*



24. *Interior of St Andrews, Bulmer, October, 1948. Electric lighting was not installed until the early 1950s..*

## CHERWELL, HOUSE AND GARDEN

Cherwell originally consisted of two cottages but a hundred or so years ago they were knocked together and made into one house. That there has been a dwelling on the site for ages is without doubt and when the roof was being refurbished in the 1950s my father reckoned that some of the timbers dated back to the 17th century.

When we first came to Bulmer, the house had a grand porch by the front door but it was later removed because it was unsafe. Inside, and at the back of the house, was a hallway paved with dull red-brick pavers and a low ceiling of exposed black-painted beams. The larder was at the end nearest the Cock and Blackbirds pub and was by far the coldest part of the house. Butter kept very well there in the summer, especially if we used a butter cooler. This was really no more than a flower pot turned upended in a large bowl of water whereupon it acted like a Persian water cooler.

The kitchen was next to the larder, then came the back door, the hall and finally the bathroom. A curious feature of the house was that it was on two levels, the back being much lower and older than the front, the dividing line between the two levels being quite distinct. Access from the back to the front was either up a substantial step from the hall or from the kitchen. The latter led to the drawing-room through a tiny room just big enough for one person to stand in. In this room we stored the best china and old newspapers. On an upper shelf I found a pair of wet electric cells (except that they were bone dry) which, before 1929, had powered the front door bell. Cherwell boasted a magnificent brass bellpush but we never got the bell to work and we always relied upon the knocker.

At the front from the Cock and Blackbirds end was the drawing-room, front-door vestibule, dining room and sitting room. In the early 1930s an archway was made in the dividing wall between the dining and sitting rooms and this made for a much more convenient living space. Nevertheless, we continued to call one space the sitting room and the other the dining room.

The stairs went up from the hall around a tight corner lit by a small casement window. During the evening a diminutive hurricane lamp was hung by the window to illuminate the bottom steps. Further up, attached to a beam on the landing, the friendly glow of a night-light oil lamp relieved the stygian gloom.

When my father became less nimble he attached a strong grasp handle halfway up the stairs and very handy it proved too. At the first landing to the right there was a triangular cave with a window at the far end. This was my brother Mark's room and he plastered it with pictures from the film magazines of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.

Two more steps led to the "new" room built at the end adjacent to Brickwall Farm Cottages which was my father's workshop. Before that area was an attic where we children would all congregate and play the gramophone. Another two steps took us to the three bedrooms along the front of the house, which were directly over the downstairs rooms.

The one on the right was my parents' room which, in winter, was absolutely freezing. Originally it was reached by a corridor that formed the back of the middle room. To give more light and air all round, the dividing wall was removed thus removing the corridor but our ghost (an invisible one, thank goodness!) walked this "corridor" during the day. We heard it many many times when we were downstairs during lunch and it was always the same. The door of my parents' bedroom would slam and then strong footsteps would be heard walking along to the east bedroom and then that door would slam as well. End of haunt. We grew so used to it that we finally took no notice of it but visitors paled significantly when told of the nature of the sound.

The middle room was occupied by my brother Geoffrey and he covered it with World War 1 pictures of aeroplanes. The bedroom over the sitting room was slept in by Janet, Adrian and myself. We were always told not to jump about in this room because the vibrations made the ceiling plaster fall down in the sitting room below. When this happened, and it happened fairly frequently, the Dixey brothers from Bulmer Tye would be called who would replaster it. Then the brothers would tell us not to go "astampin and adancin" on the floor above.

Off my parents' room was a tiny little room which was called the "Powder Room" because it always had a particular scent about it that wasn't present anywhere else in the house. In the late 18th century this room was used as the wig room and it served as a nursery for myself. It had a front window all to itself. My very first memory is looking out of that window from my cot and seeing my brother, Adrian, and sister, Janet, playing in the garden below in a pile of sand that had just been delivered for the front path.

We drew water from a surface well in the back garden and pumped it into buckets with an up-down handle type pump. For the bathroom we pumped up water with a hand-operated rotary pump. Often both pumps had to be primed, i.e. water poured into them to make them work. During droughts our surface well never ran dry whereas the other nearby wells in the village did. When that happened people came around with their pails and filled up from the garden pump, some using halters to carry them.

In the back garden rainwater was collected in two square-shaped tanks by the bathroom door and one by the coach house. In the bathroom we also had a timber-fired copper which we originally used for washing clothes. This fell into disuse when we began to use the laundry service in Sudbury. The laundry man would come once a week and deliver the clean clothes and linen in a strong, grey, cardboard box.

At meals we used filtered drinking water, the filter itself being a porous clay cylinder in a porcelain container. For tea and cooking we used the water straight from the well. So why we had the filter at all is now a mystery unless,



25. *The Powder Room from my parents' bedroom from where our ghost always started his walk. The wallpaper was a ferocious green and purple floral pattern. Enough to make any ghost walk.*

of course, it was a fad much as it is again today. Our well water was as hard as flint and we reckoned that our insides were lined with stone.

In the bathroom was a 10-gallon copper boiler with a tap at the bottom. This was heated by a blue-flame paraffin lamp. Lighting the lamp in the afternoon ensured that the water was near boiling by bath time and the bathroom got reasonably warm. One of the household chores was having to pump water into the boiler so that hot water could be available during the evenings. This would take about five minutes of good pumping. The bath was of the cast iron type and just big enough for three small children. The whole family used the same water in turn since there was only enough hot water with cold added to fill the bath once. In the winter we bathed quickly (when we bathed at all) and then nipped smartly into the sitting room and crouched by the fire like Arabs in a sandstorm. For handwashing we used an enamel basin in a wooden frame placed over the bath and used hot water from the boiler and cold water from a jug kept for that purpose.

Drainage was a problem because there wasn't any. Well, not really. Cherwell's sole drain fed into a ditch behind the property line of the Cock and Blackbirds on Spencer Coe's land and into it went the water from the cooking and the washing up. When we were above the ditch, as on the first floor of the coach house and looking down, the pong was powerful in the extreme.

The lavatories were taken care of in a different way. They were chemical types and we had two: one in the bathroom and one outside in a little house all on its own. They went by the name of *Elsan* and we used them until the mains water arrived in the 1950s when flush toilets were installed. Our toilet system always posed a problem for people who came to stay with us from grand towns like London and my mother would take them aside and explain matters. One of the ways we judged a visitor's strength of character was how they adapted to Bulmer ways. When the household was full, a man would come once



a week and take away the buckets for use on his allotment. During the war my mother used to empty the buckets into a pit which was dug against the back garden wall. The sewage was covered with lime and a bit of earth and, in consequence, we had some very fine rhubarb.



26. Brickwall Farm as seen from the first floor of Cherwell. A traction engine is bringing in the harvest.



27. The mildly useless oil lamp that my father donated to the Colchester Museum. It gave a genial glow.

In Brickwall Farm Cottages, next door, there were two families and each had an outside family two-holer which were straightforward buckets without the benefit of *Elsan*. The subsequent manure was always used on their allotments and vegetable gardens and around the fruit trees. To revive an ailing apple tree, the shot is to dig a trench all around it just under the edge of the outermost branches and use human manure. Peps it up in no time.

For the curious, the *Elsan* chemical toilet had a fierce but not unpleasant smell. Toilet paper was a brand called Bronco and it served as an excellent tracing paper for school homework. For those who couldn't afford toilet rolls, newspapers were cut into squares but the most highly prized were seed catalogues. And in case anyone was caught out in the night we all had chamber pots under our beds, parents included, and very handy they were too. These were taken down in the morning and washed out and replaced for the next night's usage.

Each of the three main downstairs rooms and the two bedrooms upstairs at each end of the house had fireplaces. Downstairs we had a stove in the drawing room and another in the sitting room. A fire was also often lit in the dining room fireplace and it's there that I learnt to use bellows. We had a little rhyme for that but I've forgotten all but the last three lines of which went: *First you blow it gently, Then you blow it rough, Puff, puff, puff.* (If anyone knows the full rhyme please let me know.)



28. Hold-up in Sandy Lane. Enid, my mother's sister, urging Bess to get a move on. Courtesy always prevailed along Sandy Lane: motorists meeting a horse and trap would always reverse into a field since there was no room to pass until The Auberies.



29. My sister, Janet, reading by the sittingroom fireplace. The chimney of this fire emerged as the centre pot of the three at the top of the house. When the chimney sweep came we would wait in the garden to see the brush poke out of the top.

During the summer the chimney sweep would come and the rooms had to be covered in sheets. We would all rush outside to wait for the brush to poke out of the chimney pot. The chief fear was a chimney fire and the sweep always had to clean three chimneys: drawing room, dining room and sitting room.

The stove in the drawing room was a brand called a *Cosy Stove*. It was excellent for warming the room and making toast at tea time. The damper could be opened up until the coals were incandescent and my brother, Geoffrey, was adept at making golden-brown toast which we much admired. None of us could get near his skill. Sometimes when we held the bread too close to the coals it would burst into flames. This would result in the flaming mass being withdrawn and us having to decide whether to scrape it clean in the garden or return it to the flames. But of all the family Geoffrey's toast was superb.

Both stoves were efficient and burnt coal or anthracite. At night they were banked up and then revived in the morning. Another of the household chores was having to get the coal in before the family settled down for the evening and this meant a trip to the coal shed outside the bathroom. It was no great distance, barely a couple of steps, but when it was well below freezing point outside, there was a natural reluctance to budge an inch.

Coal was delivered regularly by a horse-drawn cart from Sudbury. The men carried the sacks upon their backs and emptied them into the shed. Not surprisingly they were always grimy and my mother always tipped them sixpence each (enough to buy a packet of ten cigarettes).

As I've said, two of the upstairs bedrooms had fireplaces but the chill was more often taken off the bedrooms by either a blue-flame lamp or a taller type of free-standing lamp which had an adjustable ventilator at the top. This latter stove was called a *Valor Perfection* and its yellow flame cast delightful patterns on the ceiling.

Lighting was by paraffin lamps or candles. A few of the lamps used asbestos mantles and were trade-named *Aladdin*. They gave off a good light but were liable to smoke if the wick was too high or there was a draught. For his workshop and microscope work, my father used a lamp with a large mirror that rotated about the glass tube. There were also very small lamps that would burn all night. We kept one at the head of the stairs where it was always dark even in daytime.

The piano was lit by two candles one on either side of the music stand and we all had candlesticks to go to bed with. My mother had a large silver one which she had had as a child. It had a fixture on it to hold a box of matches.

In the drawing room we also had a large Victorian two-wick lamp which my father finally donated to the Colchester Museum. It gave a genial but utterly useless light and was hopeless for reading by. It stood on the table and glowed vaguely in all directions. My mother had a beautiful lamp from Germany which had six translucent china shades depicting German beauty spots one of which was Berchesgarten where Adolf Hitler lived. When the lamp was lit (an *Aladdin*) all the scenes were illuminated from behind. Later it was converted to electric light.

On first coming to Cherwell my mother cooked on a coal-burning range which was supplemented by a couple of table-top paraffin stoves called *Beatrices*. (I bought one recently from an Australian Red Cross shop for 20 cents!). These were quite excellent and provided all the heat needed for a small oven. The ovens were made of metal and were perfectly capable of cooking a turkey in about 10 hours to 12 hours.

My mother was an excellent cook and on looking back one wonders how she did so well with so little. She told me once that it was all a question of time. "Twenty minutes for a kettle to boil gives one time to do all sorts of other things." Of course, we had no television to ruin our lives, the most important feature being the 9.00 p.m. evening news bulletins on the wireless.

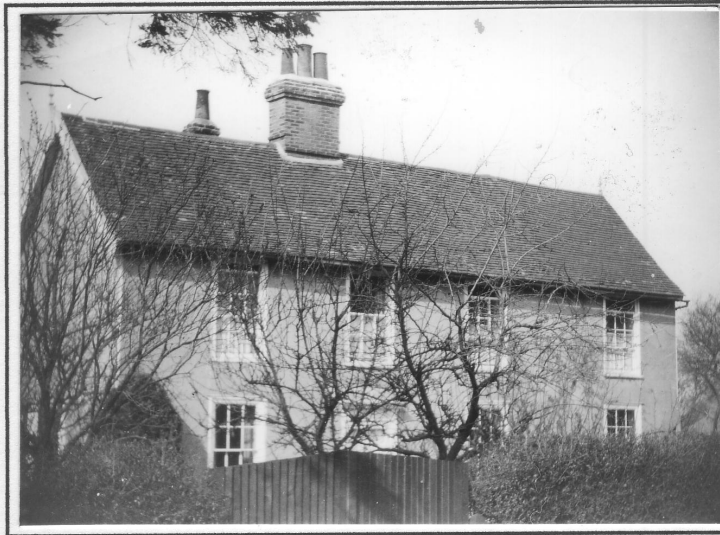
We ate simply but well. On Saturdays we had a leg of mutton (never lamb because lamb was very expensive) and we always had puddings. The best were what my mother called Majorie Pudding (probably jam and custard), Apple Charlotte and princely Apple Suet Puddings in which heaps of apple were encased in a skin of suet. In those days suet was bought in lumps from the butcher and it was grated as required in the home.

By the front lawn there was an espalier cherry tree which produced cooking cherries. The trouble with these cherries was that they look absolutely marvellous to eat but as soon as you popped one in your mouth the bitterness was unbelievable. Tamed when cooked, they yielded stones and stones with pudding meant telling fortunesfortunes.

The simplest one was "*She loves me, she loves me not*" which I always considered a bit of a swindle because the odds were so short. Then there was "*She loves, she doesn't, she would if she could,*" which smacked of the age old problem of people marrying where they do not love and loving where they cannot marry. But the odds were just a touch better than the first one. "*This year, next year, sometime, never,*" (when one was to be married) was better still



30. The coach house, Cherwell, 1930.



31. Cherwell, 1933. After the white-painted wooden finials at each end of the roof were blown down, my father had a weather-vane mounted at the left-hand end with my mother's initials incised into the tail - JCSH..

because it tied in with whom one was going to marry "Blonde, brunette, negro, Chinese" and how one was going to be transported to the wedding "Coach, carriage, wheelbarrow, dustcart," and what one was going to wear "Silk, satin, cotton, rags."

My mother had a magnificent German fortune which we could never manage to remember. It graded the love that your sweetheart had for yourself and began "She loves you with all her heart". This was fine and devoutly to be wished but then the next stone indicated a somewhat diminished passion which took the gloss off things. How many stones one needed to get back to the first stone I can't remember so if anybody knows this fortune I'd be delighted to hear from them.

There were the traditional occupational ones of "*Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor, Rich Man, Poor Man, Beggarman, Thief*" and the other "establishment" one which indicated one's future profession "*Church, State, Medicine, Law, Army, Navy, not at all.*" During the war another occupational fortune came out which was "*Army, Navy, Air Force, Fireman, Warden, Spy,*" the fireman being a member of the Auxiliary Fire Service and the warden being an Air Raid Warden.

Out in the front we had a lawn and a small orchard consisting of three upright and two espalier apple trees. The upright trees produced magnificent Bramleys. The acacia tree by the front hedge was planted by my mother but Bess, the horse, ate the leader and gave it an unusual shape.

At the back of the garden was the coach house, a substantial two-storey building made of clap board, consisting of a stable and housing for the trap. The stable had a stone square-tiled floor, a drainage grating (which fed into the ditch behind), manger and hayrack. In the trap house was a small pit covered with boards which before our time was used for storing logs. A vertical ladder attached to the inside wall of the stable allowed access to the first floor where straw and fodder for the horse was kept.

The back garden was spanned by the coach house on the left and the outside lavatory on the right which was a stand-alone building with a tiled roof and small loft. In deep mid-winter the path to it became a lethal sheet of ice so we always had to spread ashes or sand upon it.

In the back garden was a scruffy-plum tree which yielded wonderful plums and made excellent jam. Near the stable and adjoining the Cock and Blackbirds fence was a temperamental Victoria-plum tree which only now and again gave splendid crops. Wasps were the chief enemy. To counter them we would hang up 2-pound jam jars filled with water and jam smeared around the rim. The wasps would go for this and then obligingly fall in the water and drown.



32. Cherwell, 1931. To the right can be seen Brickwall Farm Cottages in which two families lived: the Cansells with four children and the Moultons with eight.



*33. Old and new. One of Spencer Coe's traction engines on its way to Brickwall Farm and my father's first car, a Morris Ten, PV 81. 1934*



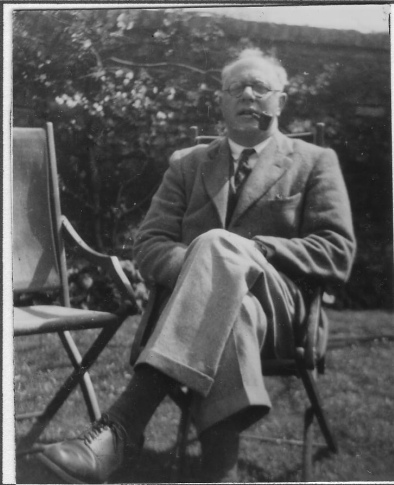
*34. The cottage next to the Nonconformist chapel in Bulmer Street. Just inside the front gate on the left-hand side was a deep brick-lined well which dried up during the drought of the early 1930s. On the right of the cottage began the public footpath to Belchamp Walter. This photograph was taken before the signpost indicating that was erected. Early 1930s.*



35. My brother, Adrian, with his Fairy Cycle, a very popular child's bicycle of the 1930s. It had solid rubber tyres and a single front brake in the form of a metal shoe which pressed down on the tyre.



36. The porch of Cherwell in 1929. Later it had to be removed because it was judged unsafe and my parents felt that the house looked better without it.



37 & 38. My mother and father in the garden of Cherwell, taken in the 1950s. They were married on January 29th, 1918, at All Saints, Margaret Street, London. From the age of 11 until he married, aged 34, my father served there as an acolyte. My mother's family (two elder brothers and three sisters) lived in Nevern Square, Earls Court, then a seriously middle class district of London. My father's family (five sisters and three brothers) lived in Fellows Road, Hampstead. My mother (born 1893) was educated at St Paul's, London, after which she spent some time in Germany and New Zealand. During World War 1 she worked in the German section of the Censorship Office. My father was apprenticed to his father to become an instrument maker and, upon the death of his father in 1908, assumed control of the business.

## SMITHIES AND BICYCLES

Apart from walking, we had a pony and trap. The pony's name was Bess and she was looked after by my mother. Bess and the trap were kept in the coach house. When Bess had to have shoes we would go to one of three smithies and the closest was just down the road at Spencer Coe's. He needed a forge for his farm horses (Daffodil and Tulip - both Suffolk mares) and to carry out repairs on his farm equipment. I often used to visit there. The forge was a place full of interest and as a treat I would be allowed to operate the bellows and get the fire up to near-white heat (or so it seemed). It was fascinating to watch the men heating up the shoes, banging away at them and shaping them until they were the correct fit and finally putting them on the horses. As the hoof met the hot shoe, heel to the front, there would be a sizzling sound and a waft of smoke.

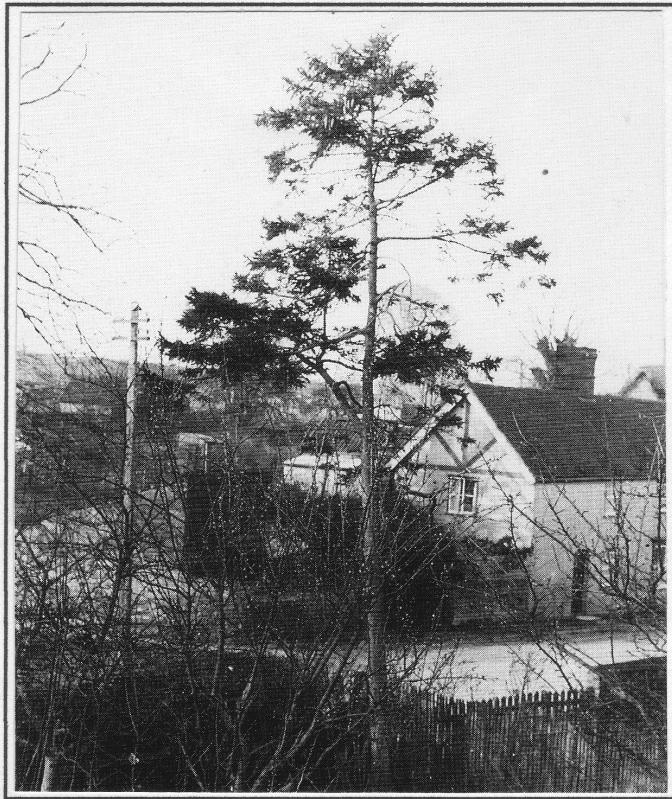
The next blacksmith was at Bulmer Tye and his name was Jefferies. His smithy was in Blacksmiths Lane, not far from The Fox. One afternoon he was kicked in the head and died shortly afterwards. He lies buried in Bulmer near Mr Cornell and Bridget Hyde Parker. The third one was at Ballingdon and was run by a Mr Turkentine. The Ballingdon one stays in my mind because we often called there on our way back from school. It was on the left-hand side of Ballingdon Street going out of Sudbury and not quite opposite Emma Felton's shop. From it one could see The King's Head at the corner of the turn-off to Bulmer.

We would stop at Mr Turkentine's for repairs to the harness as well as shoes. He had a mighty anvil just inside the door and I would watch wide-eyed as he would pull a piece of glowing metal out of the fire and bang away at it. At home my brother Mark would play *The Harmonious Blacksmith* by Handel on the piano and, in unison, we would bang away at anything that came to hand in a fair imitation of the mighty Mr Turkentine.

When I was six I was given a new bicycle which meant that we could all go cycling on our own machines. Hitherto I had to sit on the carrier of my mother's bicycle or, more perilously, on the crossbar of one of my elder brothers. In those days it was possible for a whole family to go cycling in complete safety and often side-by-side across the road. My brother Geoffrey taught me to ride and I did my first solo along Sandy Lane along the straight bit that leads to the Village Hall. It was a dirt road then but it had some smooth sandy bits which were fine for the learner rider.

With a good wind behind us it took about 10 minutes to get to Sudbury but against the same wind going back would easily take up to 40 minutes. Even without a wind it would take about 25 minutes. We timed ourselves from the clock in the hall (the one my father bought for tuppence - 2d) when we





39. *Bulmer Street taken from the box room of Cherwell in 1929. The picture opposite of the same scene taken in 1948.*

passed All Saints church. My brother Mark had a Raleigh cycle with a 3-speed Sturmey-Archer gear on its rear wheel and the gear-change lever on the crossbar. By 1940 I had a medium-sized Hercules without any gears. But whatever bicycle one had, the trip down to Sudbury usually took the same time give or take a minute.

Cycling at night was fine and until the war we only had to have a reflector on the back and a lamp on the front. We used oil lamps which provided a gentle shine because they were not intended to illuminate the countryside but simply to indicate that one was there. To get the best out of them the lens had to be kept clean and the wick trimmed otherwise the lamp would smoke famously. Police constables in the latter part of last century and in the early part of this used similar lamps and in the Sherlock Holmes stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle they are referred to as *Bullseye Lanterns*. Towards the end of the 1930s oil lamps gave way to electric torches but the shelf life of the batteries was poor. They cost around ninepence each, their life was short and it was never a surprise to find the battery oozing out its materials and corroding the interior. When, during the war, lamps became difficult to get, the old oil lamps were pressed back into service and kept going until the stocks of oil ran out. Some people even devised lamps with a candle within but this practice was not widespread. Candles were also difficult to get.



40. Bulmer street taken from the box room of Cherwell in 1948.

Acetylene (or carbide) gas lamps were very popular and gave out a "very superior light" as the advertisements put it. In fact they gave out a silvery sort of light. They were in vogue in the early 1900s and we read about them and their care and maintenance in bound editions of *The Captain*, a popular boy's magazine of Edwardian times and before.

Acetylene gas was made from grey pellets (bought from a cycle shop) and water. But acetylene gas enjoyed popularity for another reason. It allowed boys the means of making explosions. A little water would be poured into a vessel, such as a treacle tin, a few pellets of acetylene added, the lid firmly banged down and a hasty retreat made. After a few seconds the lid would be lifted off accompanied by the most splendid bang. Corks from bottles would soar into the air but bottles themselves were treacherous because sometimes they burst before the cork was pushed out with serious injury often being the result.

The advent of the cycle dynamo was a giant step forward for mankind but, in 1940, they cost around a day's wage each (ten shillings). These dynamos were driven from the edge of the tyre and so they required more pedal power. The invention of the hub dynamo got over that problem but early on in the war it became mandatory to have a "red light to the rear" as the statute had it and this resulted in the market being flooded with a cylindrical torch for fixing to a rear-wheel bracket. It used a single-cell 1.5-volt battery (the precursor of today's D-size battery) and the wise cyclist always carried a spare bulb. Most of these rear lamps were switched on by screwing in the end which housed the bulb with more upmarket ones having switches.

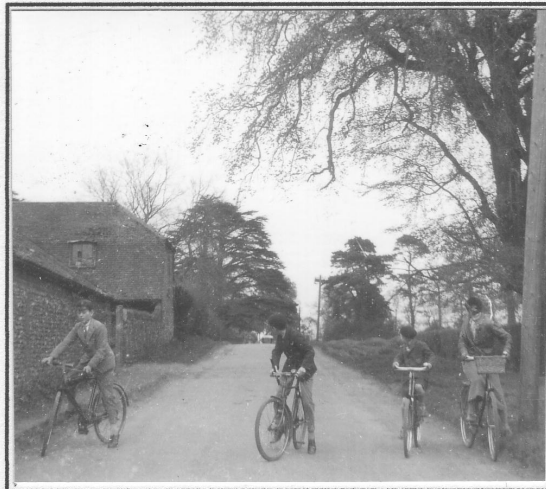
Maintaining a cycle was a major concern and one of the shops in Sudbury was Webbs in Friars Street, a few doors down from Station Road. Greens in North Street was another cycle shop. Many boys regarded their bicycles as status symbols and adorned them with the latest gadgets. One I recall was a siren

operated by a cord which would engage the siren drive to the front wheel. My brother Adrian acquired a second-hand one and he would beetle along, pull the cord and produce a most satisfying whine.

The threat of a puncture was ever present. Every bicycle had a place for a pump (as now) but there was always and a small leather bag attached to the back of the saddle which carried a puncture repair kit. This consisted of rubber solution, French chalk, abrader, patches, a small purple indelible pencil and tools to get the tyre off and on again. The roads around Bulmer were very good (the traffic on them was always light) but the chief cause of punctures were tiny flints. These would embed themselves in the tyres and finally puncture the inner tube.

In the early 1930s Sudbury still had gas street lighting. The gas lamps were always more *noble* and one evening, as I sat in the trap, I watched the lamplighter walking along Ballingdon Street. As he came to each lamp he put up a long stick with a hook on it and pulled down a lever whereupon the lamp lit with a soft silvery glow. Sudbury station had both gas and oil lamps but the station was always lit in a subdued manner.

I recall during the war, after a wait at Marks Tey, the porter came along the two-carriage train asking in each compartment "Wherefore please?" This was normal for his purpose was to redirect those passengers who thought they were in the right carriage to Halstead but were not. Halstead passengers were meant to sit in the rear carriage and Sudbury passengers in the front one. At Chapel, the rear carriage would be detached and the Halstead-bound passengers taken to their destination by another locomotive. On this occasion, with everybody sorted out, we Sudbury passengers sat in the solemn silence of the blackout staring at the slowly shifting shadowy landscape. Chugging with muffled puffs, we made our way through the night, with now and again an errant spark fleeing from the engine. At Chapel the rear carriage was decoupled and we moved on to Bures. There a door banged and footsteps echoed along the empty platform. On the last leg to Sudbury the gleam of the River Stour showed through the darkness until we came round the last bend and slid into the soft welcoming smells of Sudbury station and home.



41. *Cycling in safety. It was common practice for us to ride line abreast. In this picture my father, who couldn't ride a bicycle, captured a rare moment of a warning obviously being heeded of a vehicle approaching from the rear. At the time we were just drawing opposite Brickwall Farm Cottage*

## 6

### SHOPS AND DOCTORS

Once a day we would walk to Albert Rowe's at Grigg's Farm to get milk and for this purpose we carried a household milk can with a wire handle. Albert Rowe's daughter, Maudy and niece Dorothy Humm attended to practically everything on the farm or so it seemed. Dorothy minded the dairy, and Maudy the ducks and chickens down the lane towards Upper Houses. If nobody was in the dairy I would knock at the back door which entered onto their kitchen and hold out my can to Dorothy. I recall her as not being particularly chatty but that may be because she worked so hard. Often we would arrive just as the men came in from the milking shed carrying buckets of warm, white, creamy milk straight from the cow. Dorothy would put a muslin cloth over a very wide steel dish and the milk was poured through the cloth to catch bits of grass and stuff that found their way into the bucket during milking. Then the milk was ladled into our can and we would take it home and try not to spill it. What excellent milk it was! After a few hours we would steal a look at the jug and see the rich cream at the top. A surreptitious finger dipped in did the rest.

Sometimes my mother would want cream and so we would ask for it and Dorothy would take a very shallow scoop and skim it across the wide dish in which the milk had been standing for several hours. The scoop picked up the delicious, rich, golden-coloured cream and put it into our can. On these occasions we were allowed to have a taste of it on the way home.

During the war when so many fields were under cultivation for crops, fodder grew scarce for the cows and at one time sugarbeet leaves were tried but these were a dismal failure. The milk went sour within an hour or two. Milk in bottles was a post-war innovation along with mains water and electricity.

As for meat, the word "Butcher!" would ring out and there at the back door would be Mr Raymond from Batt Hall with his basket of meat. He called two or three times a week, the other regular caller being the baker. Sliced bread was unknown. A lot of the simple day-to-day grocery shopping was done at Mr Tibbett's shop near the church and later at Mr and Mrs Basil Moulton's shop opposite Spencer Coe's house. Big shopping was reserved for a trip to Sudbury and the International Stores on Market Hill near Martins, the book and toy shop.

The International Stores had butter, fats and bacon on the left-hand side on a large marble counter and other goods on the right-hand side which had a wooden counter. The men all wore aprons and flat straw hats. Nearest the door on the left was the cheese, a great solid cylinder of cheddar on a special plate with a wire cutter which the man deftly operated. Next came the butter in the shape of a vast cube and the man would cut off a lump and place it on the scales. My mother would sit on a stool and give her order out of a notebook, and each item would be brought along and collected together on the counter.



42. My father's premises at 83 Wigmore Street, London. Judging from the ladies' hats this photograph was probably taken during the early 1920s.

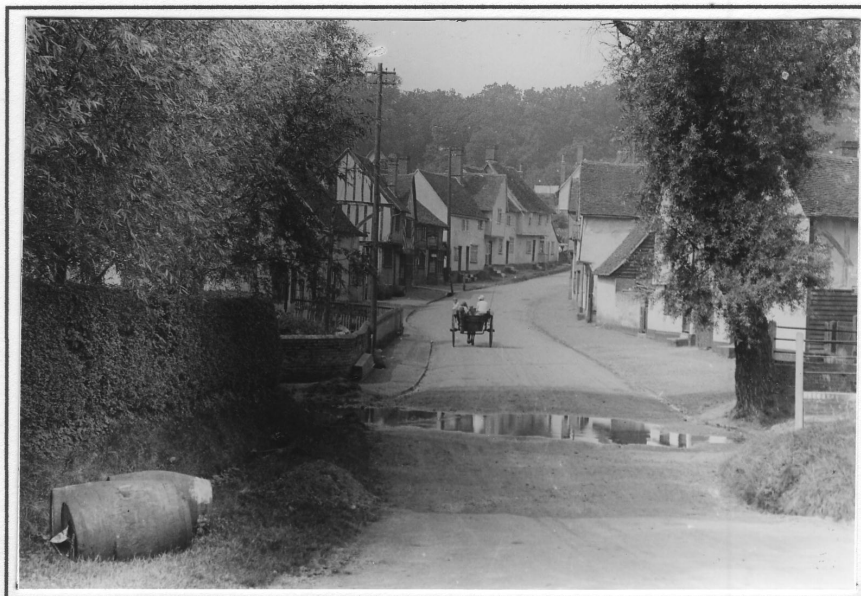
There was always a sort of bacon and cheese smell in the International Stores. Cheese was cut and packed in white paper and the butter likewise. Bacon was sliced on a splendid machine that made the side of bacon flash backwards and forwards with the rashers being sliced by a large rotating knife. It always looked thoroughly dangerous to me. The man would turn a large flywheel and catch the rashers in his hand as they were sliced off. Flour was ordered by the pound, scooped from a large sack, weighed and then put into white bags. White sugar was shovelled out of another sack and put into blue bags. Brown bags were used for what we called "golden-brown" or "sandy" sugar. Prunes, sultanas, raisins, currants were all scooped up from their respective bins, weighed and bagged. Eventually the order would be complete, written up in a little book and paid for and then whisked away for delivery next day. The International Stores van would work its way around Bulmer and the man would deliver the box to the back door.

Breakfast cereals were fairly new but we sometimes had Post Toasties (cornflakes) or Rice Crisps (still with the 'Snap, Crackle and Pop' even in 1933 and, incidentally, known in Australia as Rice Bubbles) but mostly we had porridge oats. Porridge was prepared by putting some in a saucepan the night before and covering it with water. Next morning the saucepan would be put on the *Beatrice* stove and the porridge would be cooked in about 10 to 15 minutes and a full kettle would boil in about 20 minutes.

We seldom bought any jam or marmalade because my mother and sister would set to in the autumn and make enough to withstand a respectable siege. (For boarding school we all took 12 pounds each in our tuckboxes.) Then there were blackberry, loganberry and gooseberry jams and a tremendous amount of bottled fruit until the entire larder was stacked from floor to ceiling with fare for the coming winter. We never bought any chutney since my mother made a

magnificent tomato chutney from green tomatoes. The only tinned fruit that I recall we ever bought were pineapple cubes.

These were regarded as great treats. Peel, for the Christmas pudding, was bought as complete peel and was chopped up. It seemed to take hours. Eggs we bought from Spencer Coe's (Mrs Gertie Coe looked after the chickens) and in order to keep the eggs for a long time we would lay them down in a large earthenware pot having dipped them first in a china-clay mix which totally sealed the shells. Like that the eggs kept for months. For the boys' clothes my mother would go to Mr Mattingly's shop at the bottom of Market Hill facing St Peters. It had bare floor boards and pale young men who served. At the top end of the shop was a large table which was used by the tailor. Up North Street there was a wonderful toyshop run by a Mr Tricker and our hair was cut by a Mr Raymond for sixpence. His first shop was next to Dyers, the fish shop, by Weaver's Lane and Gainsborough Street, but later he moved upmarket close to Mr Mattingly.



43. Kersey, early 1930s. On the left are three tar barrels, a common feature along road verges in those days together with neat piles of metalling. Road maintenance was carried out using a tar engine (for heating the tar so that it could be sprayed on the road) and a steam roller to even up the work.

Stationery we bought mostly from Payne and Essex (opposite Dyers) or Martins, next to the International Stores. Martins, which also had a lending library and toy shop, was heated with an upright paraffin radiator which was good for drying out wet gloves. Cundy's was a flower shop halfway down the Market Hill. The Cundy girls, contemporaries of my eldest brothers, wore slacks which was considered very 'forward'.

On the other side was the Westminster Bank where my parents banked and going into it was like entering a holy place. The chief cashier was a Mr Ruddock and he weighed out coins on a pair of brass scales and conducted

business in a most reverential manner scarcely speaking above a hush. The contrast between the almost religious ritual of the bank and the ribald Market Hill on Thursday afternoons could not have been greater. There the honest citizens of Suffolk and Essex gathered stonefaced around stalls selling all sorts of wares and I recall one very saucy man selling highly decorated chamber pots with pretty flowers in the bowl. "There you are, love," he would say holding a magnificent pot above his head. "Fit you to a tee!"

Also on the Westminster Bank side of Market Hill was a millinery shop which transported its money around on a small overhead railway. The assistant would put the customer's money in a little cartridge together with the docket and then pull a lever. The cartridge then whizzed along the line and disappeared into the cashier's office. A moment or two later it would rocket back and thunder down to the waiting assistant.

The district nurse lived near Bulmer Tye in one of the houses near the junction of Church and Hedingham Roads. The house probably went with the job. She was large and cheerful and did her rounds on a bicycle and visited as occasion demanded. She was midwife to many a Bulmer mother and probably had no better customer than a Mrs Younger of Bulmer Tye who had seven children.

For dentists and doctors we had to go to Sudbury. A Dr David W. Griffith was our dentist and his surgery was in Friars Street. As dentists go he was as good as any other in those days since dentistry was more an exercise in damage control than anything else. But Dr Griffith liked a drink and eventually it claimed him. Originally he had trained as a doctor but as he said of himself to me one day "I didn't have a bedside manner," and that made it difficult for him to make a living as a doctor. So he upped and qualified himself as a dentist where his self-confessed lack of bedside manner was not so critical. In all fairness, I never found him either forbidding or inefficient. In fact he was highly intelligent and that might have made him impatient.

His surgery looked out onto Friars Street through white net curtains. The electric light was on a pulley so that it could be pulled up and down. On the instrument tray burnt a small, blue, gas flame through which he would pass his mirror to de-mist it before starting an examination. For drilling he used a foot-operated machine and he would trundle the pedal with his right foot and attend to the tooth in question at the same time. Injections were given with a large glass syringe which he would sterilise in a steriliser at the back of the room. In the cupboard under the steriliser he also kept his beer and on several occasions I remember him fortifying himself during a consultation.

The surgery was the front room of a town house a couple of doors to the left of Crantock, the detached house in which Mrs Austen-Brown and her three children lived. Originally Dr Griffith's family lived in a barn of a place in Newton Green opposite the 'non-Sudbury' end of the golf course. They also had and still have a substantial cottage in the woods in Assington which today would be called a 'weekender'. Later the family all came to live in Friars Street.

Dr David Griffith's wife was also a doctor: Dr Grace Griffith. She was born in China where her father was an English missionary and she spent her childhood there. Later she trained in London where she met her husband and

during the Spanish Civil War went out to Spain and did voluntary medical work. I recall her telling my parents about the air raids and the hideous conditions under which she had to work. During the latter part of her career she did research into cancer at Cambridge. By today's standards she might be called a feminist since she espoused the doctrine that a woman can have a career and bring up a family. Her family were not altogether unanimous in agreement but somehow they retained cohesion. Of the children, Michael, the only son and frog-swallower, became a dentist as did their eldest daughter, Joan. The second daughter, Rosemary, took up farming in Wales, Gillian, the third, was evacuated to the USA during the early part of the war and stayed there. Bidy, the fourth, became a lawyer in London and Veronica, the youngest, lives in Cambridge. The family were all very good natured, hospitable and generous hearted. But bedside manner or no, Dr David Griffith was able to earn a living as a dentist and, because we knew them socially, we went to him as our dentist. We kept our pulled teeth in a box but the tooth fairy didn't exist, at least not for us. The first time I heard of this generous sprite was in Australia.

Our doctor was a different kettle of fish altogether. His name was Dr Alexander and he was a Scotsman. His surgery was also in Friars Street, in the house opposite the football ground and next to the Lymes School kindergarten run by Miss Marsland. He practised with a Dr Higgins, who wore a wing collar, and a Dr Rix. Dr Alexander's surgery had a partition behind which was his dispensary. I remember him well since, to my mind, he had exactly the right idea about doctoring - he always wanted to know how his patients were when they were *well*. I recall one summer's day when he came and examined us in the back garden at Cherwell. He sat in the kitchen chair and one by one he tapped us all over, saw our tongues, asked questions and took notes. This occasion may have been entirely routine but it has always stuck in my mind.



*44. Puncture! Mr Moulton of Brickwall Farm Cottages is changing the tyre while my mother reads blithely nearby. The bonnet is open because this type of car had a toolbox inside the engine compartment on the near side.*

Living as we did in as near a natural environment as it was possible to get did us nothing but good. We rarely needed a doctor and many things were dealt with by homespun remedies. Cuts and bruises were all treated with 'pink



ointment'. This was the standard remedy lustily called for by the patient and its effect was always miraculous! For colds we had lemonade with lots of brown sugar. For a poor chest we had *Thermaline* wool put over it to keep it warm which it did.

For upset stomachs we waited until they were less upset and then they were brought back to normality with thin soups and toast (regarded as a treat). If we were run down we were sometimes given cod liver oil (vile). If we had a temperature we were put to bed and told we had a chill. By and large we were never ill and the practice of medicine at Bulmer was not a lucrative trade. Broken limbs were treated at St Leonard's Hospital in Sudbury. Otherwise people either had fevers or chills. Fevers could last for weeks, chills for a few days at the most. Some chills would turn out to be fevers and some fevers chills. Certain children's diseases were well known and expected: measles took six weeks from which to recover, chicken pox and mumps four.

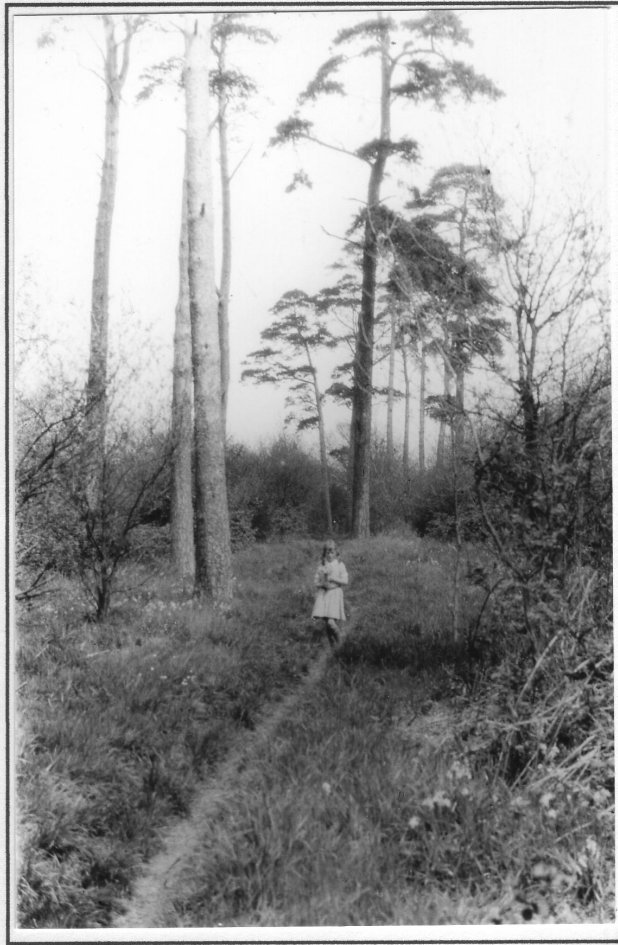
The most common last illness among old people would be pneumonia which was also called "old man's friend" because it would "take 'em off nice and quick without fuss". There was a tall gentleman in Sudbury of gloomy countenance by the name of Mr Major. He was an undertaker and he may also have run a coal retail business. His premises were right next to the River Stour at Ballingdon Bridge on the All Saints church side.

Mr Major gave splendid funerals. He had a magnificent horse-drawn hearse and a pair of jet black horses. One day I saw him coming out of his yard in full funereal regalia wearing a shiny black top hat, a long frock coat, a whip decently decked in mourning and driving his hearse drawn by his glistening black horses, their harness gleaming and their heads adorned with black cockades. Very swish.

Mr Major was a well known figure in the town and if he knew somebody was probably about to go to the other side he would call and see them with tape measure in hand. "Come to see how you are, Charlie. Thought this might be a good time to measure you up because I've got a nice bit of elm in the workshop that will do you proud." Somehow death and dying in those days was more a natural part of life than today.

45. Mr Dawson of Dawson's Garage, Friars Street, Sudbury. The registration numbers of the vehicles are left CT 9916 and right OV 4952. This photograph was taken at the rear of the premises entered from Christopher Lane. At the Friars Street front he sold petrol from a hand-operated pump and he also had a shop which sold a variety of motoring accessories. It was to his shop that we always brought our wireless accumulators for recharging.





*46. My sister, Janet, in the glades of Deal Nursery, early 1930s. As a family we always called this area The Pine Trees.*



*The back of Cherwell before any modifications were made. The hand-pump on the left brought up water from the surface well which lay beneath the garden. Even during severe drought this well never went dry. The tanks at the rear held rainwater.*



48. Bess refuelling watched by my mother. For a long trip we would also carry a bag of oats. My mother understood horses and was a good horsewoman. She learnt to ride in New Zealand where she stayed for two years before World War I. The basket at the back carried the whip. The little boy in the trap is me.

49. Farm buildings in the Bulmer district.



50. For trips in the neighbourhood the entire family went in the trap. Here my sister Janet, in her Lymes School cap and blazer, Geoffrey, myself on Mark's back and Adrian, in his Lymes School hat, pose for the mandatory photograph.