

**Further recollections of life in Quinton,
the people and where they lived in
the 1940s.**

Notes from a conversation between
Fran, Connie and Syd,
with Kathey Bailey and Graham Saunders
on Wednesday 3rd June 2023.

(Recorded and written up with their permission)

With thanks for this unique view of life in Quinton
during that period.

Syd suggested that we start with 1940 and look at a 10-year period (next time do the 50s etc.) talking about the village in the 40s (before there were many houses in School Lane) - the individual houses and the people they knew.

They showed us their father's 'Social Club record book' (**SCR**) of meetings - a handwritten notebook of takings, events, competitions and attendees etc of the Quinton Social Club, featuring also records of Christmas parties, whist drives and other events (numerous) of the period, eg 10th Dec 1943.

There are references to this record book in this document and some pages have been photographed and are on the village website under 'Historical Quinton'.

Firstly, **1 Manor Cottage**. Doreen **Raine**, a friend of the girls lived here. Her father was Edward, her mother called herself Charlotty Maud.



Doreen, Ann and Connie (L-R) selling flags on the road outside Manor Cottages



Edward Raine and 'Captain' the horse

Doreen's father worked on Hensman's Farm (The Manor) and was a farm labourer so didn't

have to go to war (he had done so in the First World War). He was also in the Home Guard and was a very quiet person, a big strong man who would offer the children a ride on the cart - he was never harsh but never laughed either or showed any emotion.

Next house, **2 Manor Cottage**, was the **Newcombes**.

Mrs Newcombe lived there with their two children - John her husband died very young and is buried in the churchyard. Mrs Newcombe was a kindly person but stone deaf.

(Mrs Newcombe was in service at The Manor, where she met her husband. They moved to Rothersthorpe but he sadly died young of tuberculosis. They had three children, John and the twins. She eventually moved back to Quinton, living in The Cottage (now September Cottage) and then to Manor Cottage (see above) before finally moving to the **School House**.

Fran went around to get her pension for her in later years and walk her up to her husband's grave. She too is buried in the churchyard. She said one day in the churchyard "these are all my friends" referring to the other graves. Kathey has a recollection of Mrs Newcombe when living in School House coming back from Euston on the train one day and waking up in Carlisle – the station staff put her back on another train. She is remembered as a lovely lady.)

Manor House – the Hensmans. Both were very nice people; he was Churchwarden for years. All the children were invited to the Manor House for tea, Syd was still a small boy and chased the guinea fowl around the garden (but Syd doesn't remember doing so...). They remember a big table at the back of the house, servings of strawberries and children really packed in. Mr Hensman sat at one end of the table, Mrs Hensman at the other end. It's not recalled the reason for the get-togethers. They were 'old time farmers', he'd walk around with his stick. When he died his coffin was brought down School Lane on a horse and wagon and up Back Lane to the church.

At the **School House** were **Mr & Mrs Moore.**

Mr Moore went to work on his bike and they had one daughter called Marjorie who went to School with the other village children. When Mr Moore came back from the war he brought home one banana, a very exciting thing to see. He was in the RAF and there is mention in the SCR of bananas being sold to raise money for the General Hospital, Red Cross or The Troops. Whist Drives also were used to raise money for Children's parties.



Marjorie Moore and
Ann Piercy outside the
School House

The next house, **to the left of the School Room** (now the Village Hall), was the **Tyson**s.

This house was owned and rented by the Wakes. Mr Tyson was the first person in the village that Connie remembers dying and he's buried right outside the church door. They had three sons – Charlie, Walter (killed in the 1st World War), and John. Dick Foster also lived there but was a lodger, who worked up at Hensmans Farm. Dick did live there a long time and is also buried in the churchyard. He was very much part of the Tyson family.

They used to have a bath situated in the kitchen, its lid was the table and they used to keep ferrets in it. Dick used to light the church boiler every Sunday morning. They used coke from the village hall/school room which cost 40d. Some mornings the church was so smoky from the burning coke they had to hold the service in the porch.

The School Room had all the desks in it after it closed and the toilets were located up the yard. You entered through the porch, to the left was a cloakroom then on into the schoolroom itself. It was rebuilt in the 1990s.

The next house after the Tysons, was **3 School Lane** (where Pete Collyer now lives) - **Auntie Davies** lived there. Auntie was their old nextdoor neighbour who had also moved up from Sidcup. Her husband was a fireman in London. They had been bombed out. Mrs Piercy's sister Mathilda Price lived there with her daughter Rosie (her three boys got sent away as evacuees to Witney).

Peggy also lived there and got married in the village, she was Syd's Godmother. Fran and Connie were bridesmaids to Peggy - mum only had one pair of white shoes which were too big, Fran wore them padded out. Mum whitewashed a brown pair of sandals for Connie to wear and even in the photos they looked speckled!

They weren't there for all the war, and following on some **prisoners of war (POWs)** got billeted in the house. One POW was Giovanni and he picked bulrushes from Moat Pond and wove two little baskets. On the day of the wedding he went to Salcey and picked Primroses to go in them, so it must have been held around April time. The first POWs were Italians: Giovanni and Pasquale, then followed by Germans, who were less friendly than the Italians.

These prisoners worked for Hensmans and on all the farms. In the Victory Party photo held at Quinton Rising the POWs are in the picture.

At **2 School Lane** were the **Frosts**. They had three sons – the eldest was Ken, then Derek, then Bernard. Ken went in the Navy, the others were too young to enlist. Mrs Frost played the chapel organ. In his later years Mr Frost worked at The Rising. He walked the path through the Rectory garden (as many did) to access the fields for work. Mr Frost was very shy and was also in the Home Guard.



Bernard and Constance Mary Frost
with Jill the dog

The house next to the Frosts is now **Post Box Cottage** and was occupied by **Mr & Mrs Goodman**.

Mr Goodman used to ride a bike, though he got knocked off it at the Queen Eleanor junction one day. Mrs Goodman was nice but Mr Goodman was remembered as being grumpy and not liking children. He had a waxed



moustache and peered out from behind his curtains to see what the children were doing - and would shop Fran, Connie and Syd to their mum at times. Opposite the house was a drain, just a hole in the ground that ran into the stream, and he would shout at any children playing near it.

They were grandparents to Winnie of Matthews the Blacksmiths, she was engaged to John who had been killed in the war.

Some land beyond the School and School House in School Lane was rented out as allotments - Dick Foster's shed was here where some donkeys were kept. A lot of blue flowers are remembered growing along a hedge here.

Charlie Tyson built a shed there – then Alfie Mills in turn built a replica one.

Westlakes Farm (now Park Farm) was technically in Preston Deanery but the **Westlakes** were regularly in Quinton. Sidney and Alfie Mills worked near here. The road to Preston Deanery was gated then.

Coming back into Quinton there **were 3 terraced cottages on the right** (now just 2), the **first** occupied by **John Hankins**. He lived by himself and was a retired shepherd who worked for Mr Gawthrop. He had told their mum he wanted to live long enough to see the smoke coming out of the chimneys of the new houses being built on what is now The Green. Mum used to send Syd up to Mr Hankins with an egg - he had to hold hands with Ann whilst carrying the egg safely.



Mr Eden lived in the **middle** cottage, he used to bike to work in Northampton. Fran and Connie remember his funeral when they were hiding behind a hedge to watch. **The Whites** lived there afterwards, he was a milkman or possibly worked on the buses.

These cottages were single story thatched originally but by the 1930s were 2 storey and the thatches had gone. The **end** cottage (now the Bakehouse) was lived in by the **Grieves**. Mrs Grieves had two children. One was named Janet and was the same age as Syd. Mrs Grieves used to ride with Syd to school while she took Janet on the back of her bike. The **Mills** then lived there before being occupied by an **Irish family** with twins, Joseph and Julian.

The oven structure still in place in the cottages was in the middle cottage when the row of cottages comprised three dwellings.

September Cottage was then called **The Cottage**, the landlord was Mr Gawthrop. It had four rooms and was nearly empty but villagers put some pieces of furniture in there before the **Piercy family** arrived (Fran still has two of the chairs).

It was used as a chapel beforehand. The Cottage had a big kitchen/living room that you walked straight into, but only a back door. Methodists used it in the 20s and 30s as a place of worship before they had the 'mobile' chapel elsewhere in the village.

The two rooms upstairs had one leading on through from the other. The internal door height was very low. A parlour was downstairs from which the stairs went up. The upstairs bedroom windows were on the floor, the sills being at floor level.



The above picture is of the three children (Syd, Connie and Fran) sat outside The Cottage when they first lived there.



The picture on the left is outside September Cottage (barn, washhouse and toilet to right, then Bakehouse with window)

A **Vicar** lived at the **Rectory** with his two sisters. He didn't do many services but Mr Eden's funeral is remembered for the Vicar calling down the road for the men to hurry up bringing Mr Eden up to the church.

The Rising was owned at the time by **Mr and Mrs Crockett of Crockett and Jones shoe business**. They had four children. The Crocketts were regulars in the village. Mr Crockett had been badly scarred from a fire (grate) accident. They were very kind people. A record of Mrs Crockett winning a sack race at an event exists. The Rising was commandeered by the army in the war and a school was run there at one time. A gardener called **Mr Meakins** lived at **the gatehouse**, he had a daughter called Eunice. He won quite a lot at the Horticultural Society events; he used to grow big gooseberries.

Hornsbys Farm was where the **Shorts** lived but possibly later (now Glebe Farm where the Bentlys live). A road there was called **The Lane** which had four or five thatched cottages.

Mr & Mrs Mills lived in one, as did two of their sons.

'**Old**' **Mrs Newcombe** (not a relation to the other Newcombe's in Quinton) lived in the bottom one. She had been a lacemaker, previously a cottage industry in Quinton.

There was no water or electric until the 50s and the new houses were built, and the toilets were at the end of the garden.

The last house was **Foxfield**, a new one, which was **Mr Gawthrop's** house. There were also two cottages on the right-hand side towards Wootton, now gone, where the **Derbys** lived. (This is where Lower Farm is now). Renee Derby lived in the first one with her mum and dad (Vic) and Vic's parents lived next door with his adopted sister Jean Cornish. (Vic's brother had died when he was a baby, and sadly his sister was run over when she was about 9 years old – they are both buried in the churchyard opposite the bench.)

That was the end of the houses belonging to Quinton at the time.

Other houses in the locality:

Mr & Mrs Newcombe lived at **Quinton Green (QG)** and worked on Turney's Farm (they lived in the middle of one of the red brick cottages on the right as you leave the village). Freddie Newcombe was Gerald Rooks' Gt Uncle, on his father's side. Mrs Newcombe made a lot of wine and often kept cowslips steeping in a tin bath outside the back door.

The **Turneys** lived in the **farmhouse** with their wider family and all the Turney children went to boarding school.

First house at QG was the **Cores** - they were not there early on as they came after the war; then Nellie Allen and her father Eli, and next door, her sister Annie and her husband Wilf), and the **Sharps**.

Land girls may have lived in the cottages there too.

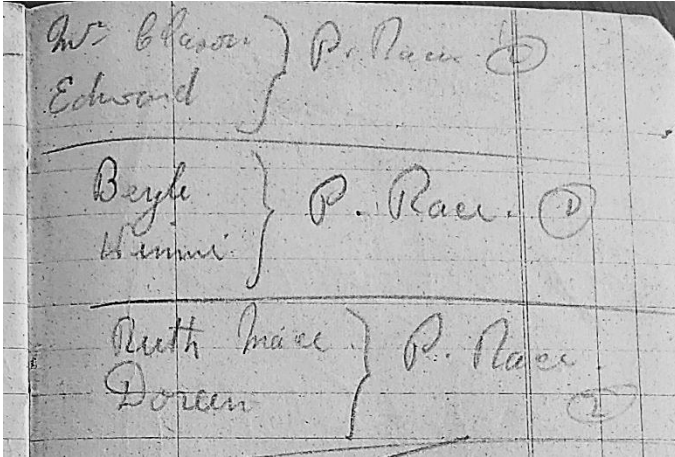
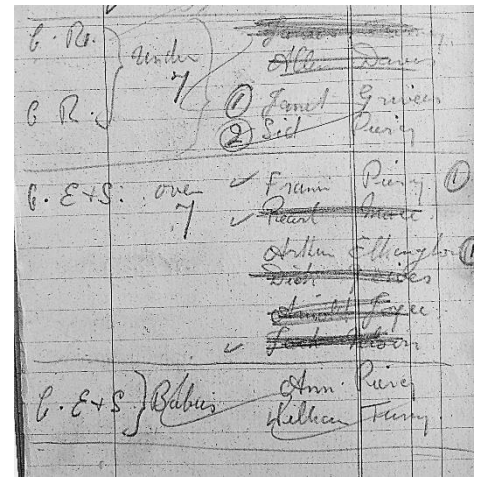
Bill Maule lived at **West Hall** and **Mrs Sharp** lived there at one point. Connie and Doreen used to sell flags and call there. Halfway down between West Hall and the farm was a windmill water pump. Turneys Farm was predominantly light Sussex poultry for both laying eggs and selling chicks. **Harry Cook** and his family lived in one of the **farm cottages** and he was expert at sexing very young chicks at a day old, a valuable skill at the time. They moved on to Hartwell where he built his own house; Hilary and Geoffrey were their two children, with possibly a third.



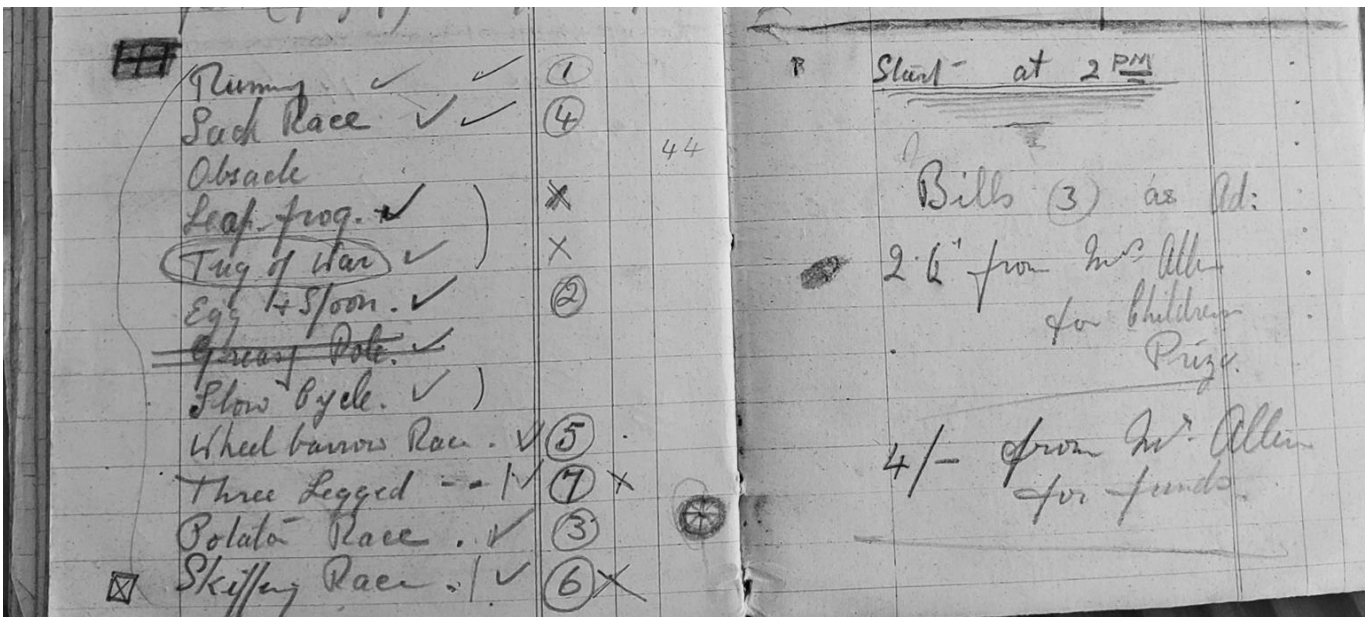
Mrs Frost with Mr and Mrs Sharpe (L-R) who ran the Sunday School at the Methodist Chapel

Other aspects of village life

In the 1940s there were only oil lamps in the School Room. In the **SCR** (Social Club record book) there was a class for babies recorded at an event, possibly a beautiful baby competition - two babies were named, Ann Piercy and William Turney, although it's not sure if they were the same age.



The SCR also says who ran in some of the races which took place.



The SCR shows many 'half pennies' in the receipts as was the currency of the time. It also shows what went into the children's parties then – bread, jam, paste and margarine! Games were largely homemade. Syd recalled his dad making a 'spinning jenny' - a square board with a cycle hub in the middle moving an arrow. Wherever the arrow stopped, that person won.

The book shows membership fees of the Horticultural Society amounting to 13 shillings, so the society must have been official. There is also recorded a loan made to the Horticultural Society by the Social Club.

Horticulture Society		Expenditure	
Sub: from members =		Subscription Cards = (50)	12-6
23/2/46	1-6-0	membership fee to	
8/3/46	- 19-0	National Society	13-0
Total Receipts to Date = <u>£2-5-0</u>			<u>£1-5-6</u>
16/3/46	Total Receipts = £2-9-0	IN =	2-9-0
		out =	1-5-6
		16/3/46. Balance in Hand.	£1-3-6
(6/4/46 - Borrowed from	22. General Fund. 5 0 0)	6/4/46 From Gen. Fund -	5-0-0
		6/4/46 Balance to Hand	6-3-6
7/5/46. Subs -	- 2-0	6/4/46 Printing of Leaflets.	3-18-0
Added to Funds		6/4/46 Balance to Hand.	£2-5-6
from Whist Drive		7/5/46 Subscription	- 2-0
on 14/6/46 = * 5-19-7		7/5/46 Balance to Hand =	2-7-6
Total Receipts		14/6/46 From Whist Drive	5-19-7
14/6/46 =	13-10-7	Total to Hand. =	£8-7-1
Balance to Hand	£1-16-8	17/6/46 500 Programmes =	1-18-0
		Total to Hand =	£6-9-1
		17/6/46 Newspaper Adv.	1-2-6
		Total to Hand =	£5-6-7
		Printing of Posters	£1-16-0

Horticulture Society		Membership of Horticulture S.	
Mrs Goodman	P - 1-0	Mrs Rami	P - 1-0
Mrs Goodman	P - 1-0	Mrs Rami	P - 1-0
Mrs J. Lawson		Mrs Mills	P - 1-0
Mrs Edwards	✓ - 1-0	Mrs Frost	P - 1-0
Mrs Cook	- 1-0	Mrs Mills S.	P - 1-0
Mrs Cook	- 1-0	Mrs Mills et.	P - 1-0
Mrs Maul	- 1-0	Mrs Eldridge	P - 1-0
P. Newcombe	- 1-0	Mrs Stone	P - 1-0
D. Frost		Mrs Frost	P - 1-0
Mrs Parker	P - 1-0	Mrs Jean Holton	P - 1-0
Mrs Parker	P - 1-0	Mrs Parker	P - 1-0
Mrs Hughes	P - 1-0	Mrs Piercy	P - 1-0
Mrs Turney	P - 1-0	Mrs Piercy	P - 1-0
Mrs Turney	P - 1-0	Mrs Meakin	P - 1-0
Mrs Eldridge	P - 1-0	Mrs Meakin	P - 1-0
Mrs Eldridge	P - 1-0	Mrs Eldridge	P - 1-0
Mrs Newcombe	P - 1-0	Mrs Eldridge	P - 1-0
Mrs Newcombe	P - 1-0	Mrs Allen	P - 1-0
Mrs Mace	P - 1-0	Mrs Allen	P - 1-0
Mrs Mace	P - 1-0	Mrs Sharp	P - 1-0
		Mrs Sharp	P - 1-0
26 paid members			
32 paid members 2/2/46			

Mr Hensman	- P.	- 1-0	Mr Brockell ✓	2-10-0
Mr Hensman	- P.	- 1-0	Mr Gantledge ✓	2-11-0
Mr Westlake	- P.	- 1-0	Mr Apple ✓	2-7-6
Mr Westlake	- P.	- 1-0	Mr Turner ✓	2-0-0
Mr Lucan	- P.	- 1-0		<u>9-8-6</u>
Mr Lucan	- P.	- 1-0		
Mr Lucan	- P.	- 1-0		
Mr Michael	- P.	- 1-0		
Mr Gantledge	- P.	- 1-0		
Mr R. Foster	- P.	- 1-0		
Mr J. Tyson	- P.	- 1-0		
Mr G. Tyson	- P.	- 1-0		
Mr Wilson	- P.	- 1-0		
Mr Wilson	- P.	- 1-0		
			Darts:	
			Skittles:	
			Band:	
			Automatic Gram:	
			Program with Miss Nibby	12.
			Mr. Entwain	32.
			7/5/46	- 52 - Paid Members
			7/3/46	- 48 - Paid Members
			8/3/46	- 45 - Paid Members
			16/3/46	- 49 - Paid Members

All activities took place in the dark because of the black out during the war years. The School had shut in 1935 but the desks, with books in, still remained. Pictures of the King and Queen were hung on the wall. Syd recalls (although probably in the 50s) a Christmas Party in the School Room and Canon Hopkins came. Whilst getting presents off the Christmas tree, which had mum and dad's coveted Christmas lights on it, Canon Hopkins cut the wires to the lights as he cut the presents off the tree, which did not go down well!

Fran remembers socials in the VH/School Room. They were lit with only the oil and it was so dark when you came out because there were no street lamps, plus the black out. There was no official blackout warden in the village unlike in towns, but mum was emphatic about it because of having been in London previously - you couldn't pull the curtains back.

The role of the Home Guard was not as now where people laugh at it. Dad was in it, they had uniforms and had guns and helmets and met up regularly. There was a real fear of being invaded - the Home Guard built a barricade across the road through Salcey as this was the main road to London. When the family travelled to London they got on the A5 at Cosgrove, Watling Street.

The Home Guard did make people feel safer. It was quite a body of men, from Quinton and Wootton and they met up in Wootton. Dad did have a gun at home. They trained once a week, not always with a rifle each but having to share. Dad said at the end of the war they

put residual ammunition and also some weapons into the Moat pond in the village as they had no other instructions of how to dispose of them. Dad said he did this with Mr Raines. Sometimes grenades were brought back to the home at The Cottage. Everyone was pleased the war was over and were keen to get rid of the arms.

Loads of Whist Drives still took place. Whist Drive 14 raised £6-0-10½d.

Details of Whist. (14)			
By Tickets & Draw.			
M ^r Gantrop		10-0	
M ^r Frost		1-11-9	
At Door		-11-0	
M ^r Treacher		3-5-6	
Refreshment		-11-4½	
Auction		-4-6	
"		-4-0	
M ^r Rain		-19-9	
M ^r Percy		-15-9	
D. Tickets & Hall		-3-9	
406 D.T. Sold		8-17-4½	
85 Score Cards		2-16-6	
EX 3	Lemonade Set	8-6	£6-0-10½
	Spoons	14-3	
	Teapot	5-9	
	50 Cigarettes	6-9	
	Ash Tray & Hookah	6-6	
	Jug	6-6	
	Cooley	1-3	
	Coke	4-6	
	Bread Etc	2-6	
		<u>£2-16-6</u>	

M ^r Gantrop	} 4 out	13/-
M ^r Treacher		
M ^r Gantrop	} like	
M ^r Treacher		
Cricket 11 th		
Fancy Dress at	1-7-0	
	2-0-6	(5-1-6)
	13-9	
	14-9	2-15-0
M ^r Hansman	3-5	
M ^r Gantrop	9	7-16-6
	11	
	2-5	
2-30	6	
	1	80
	5-5	4-00
		2-15-0

Wm	Eggs & Spoons.	Trade
	Blindfold Race.	
	Sack Race - Home Post	(Pillar fight)
	Wheelbarrow.	
	Tug of War.	Sacks.

Balance to Hand Bt. For:	8-12-8½	4/6/44
Total (EX) on Spots =	6-13-11	
Balance to Hand.	1-18-9½	
9/6/44 } To Funds from	-14-3	Whist Drive no 13.
Balance to Hand	2-3-0½	
28/6/44 (EX) Score cards & blank T.K.Ts.	-4-1	
Balance to Hand.	1-18-11½	
30/6/44 } To Funds from	6-0-10½	Whist Drive no 14
Balance to Hand	7-19-10	
24/7/44 } To Funds from	1-17-9	Whist Drive no 15
Balance to Hand	9-17-7	
6/8/44 (EX) On Spots =	4-10-9	
Balance to Hand	5-6-10	
17/8/44 (EX) On Coke	4-7-3	
Balance to Hand	-19-7	
11/9/44 } To Funds from	1-10-0	Whist Drive no 16.
Balance to Hand	2-9-7	
23/9/44 } To Funds from	3-17-6	Whist Drive no 17.
Balance to Hand	6-7-1	
8/10/44 } To Funds from	-4-0	Whist Drive no 18
Balance to Hand	6-11-1	

Balance to Hand Bt. For:	6-11-1	8/10/44
(EX)		
8/10/44 Score cards & blank T.K.Ts.	4-6	
Balance to Hand =	6-6-7	
(EX) Glass for Jam	4-6	
Balance to Hand =	6-2-1	
23/10/44 } To Funds from	15-0	Whist Drive no 19.
Balance to Hand	6-17-1	
18/11/44 } To Funds from	1-4-0	Whist Drive no 20
Balance to Hand =	8-1-1	
3/11/44 } To Funds from	2-0	Whist Drive no 20
Balance to Hand =	8-3-1	
26/11/44 } To Funds from	-3-6	Whist Drive (21)
Balance to Hand =	8-6-7	
(EX) For Whist cards & P.T.	-5-0	
Balance to Hand =	8-1-7	
15/12/44 } To Funds from	-17-0	Whist Drive no 23
Balance to Hand =	8-18-7	
(EX) Grant to Troop	7-6	
Balance to Hand =	8-11-1	
(EX) Blank tickets	2-0	
Balance to Hand =	8-9-1	

Fetes also happened during the war years. Summer fetes were at the Rising most years, often involving fancy dress. Mrs Turney brought all her boys dressed as red Indians to one of the fetes. Some children did get bored sometimes despite playing games and Mrs Cook or Mrs Frost playing on the piano.

‘Skittling for the Pig’ is mentioned in the SCR. Someone usually donated a baby pig for the prize. When it was harvest time they used scythes, together with a binder, before combines were available. Sidney Mills and Alf (his son) always kept a pig at the bottom of their next-door garden (as did many people in the village), but the pig was in fact nearer the children’s house than it was the Mills.

The pig was fattened and then the butcher called in. This must have been a big contrast to mum having come from London. Mrs Tyson was an expert on dissecting the pig and doing the butchering. She came over to help mum as Dad had arranged for the family to have half of someone else’s pig and tried to help identify a certain cut. Mrs Tyson wasn’t the most hygienic person (who kept the ferrets in their bath!)

In church there were big hanging oil lamps, where the electric lights are now.

Church with old oil lamps and chimney for the stove on the left



In the 1940s the village was like most others and had little media access. Some homes had radios and these were generally powered by accumulators, early types of battery, which needed recharging. The bus driver provided a service to take them away for charging and delivering them back. They were just left at the bus stop for this to happen. Subject to the radio’s usage the accumulator may last a few days.

Some of Fran's other memories were about:

- "what we ate during these years! Strict rationing for a long time. We always seemed to be eating rabbits, and their fur made into mittens".

- Harvesting, when the families would take tins of tea to the men working in the field.



Doreen Raine and her mother in the hayfield

Edward Raine in the field up towards Preston Deanery at harvest



These tins were of white enamel in different sizes, usually about a foot tall with a lid and handle. Every morning the eldest child would go round early in the morning to each cottage in the village.

A can was on the doorstep from the night before and the empty cans were taken along Church Lane to the Hensman's Farm (now Glebe Farm) to the Milking Parlour while the cows were being milked. The cans were filled up with the warm creamy milk and carried back to the doorsteps.

Fran remembers Bernard Frost insisting that she should be able to swing a full can of milk in a circle by her side, including above her head, without spilling a drop before she was allowed to have the job of collecting the milk.

When the harvest was done, the message went back to the village that the 'field was ready for gleaning' and the women and children would go to glean the field of dropped ears from the crops just harvested – it was used to feed the chickens through the winter. "The stubble of the stalks always went just where your socks ended and cut your legs!".

"The 1940s – it was a different village."

We then started to talk about the Church Youth Groups. Also Guiding, which was started in the 1950s by Miss Allen, a highly respected PE teacher in Northampton, who lived in Wootton and worked hard for Quinton. She also revived May Day after the war.

These seem to be good topics to explore further at another time.